

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

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

OMB No. 1024-0018

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: The College of Physicians of Philadelphia Building

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 19 South 22nd Street

Not for publication:

City/Town: Philadelphia

Vicinity:

State: PA County: Philadelphia Code: 101

Zip Code: 19103

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local: ___

Public-State: ___

Public-Federal: ___

Category of Property

Building(s): X

District: ___

Site: ___

Structure: ___

Object: ___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

1

Noncontributing

___ buildings

___ sites

___ structures

___ objects

___ Total

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

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other 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

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 3**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	Commerce/trade Education Recreation and Culture	Sub:	Organizational (professional association) Library Museum
Current:	Commerce/trade Education Recreation and Culture	Sub:	Organizational (professional association) Library Museum

7. DESCRIPTIONARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Tudor Revival

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Stone (granite)
Walls: Brick
Roof: Slag
Other: Stone (limestone trim), Metal (wrought iron gate)

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 4**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance**Significance**

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia Building houses the headquarters, library, and museum of the oldest private medical society in the United States. Founded in 1787 as a membership organization of physicians, the College of Physicians has been distinguished for its contributions to medical research and education. Its membership has comprised some of the leading American physicians and surgeons of the last three centuries. One of these, S. Weir Mitchell, America's first neurologist, was also very responsible for the construction of this property in 1909, the College's second building. The College's medical library is one of the country's oldest and a nationally important research collection. The Mütter Museum has an international reputation with its unique nineteenth-century gallery of specimens, teaching models, instruments, and photographs. In addition the building was designed by the firm of Cope & Stewardson. With their design highlighting a combination of a rather opulent club-like character with an efficient and progressive library and museum facilities, this building illuminates what is perhaps the central theme of the history of American medicine, the transformation of an exclusive and somewhat guild-like trade into a modern profession.

Description

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia Building is an unusually bold example of an early twentieth-century institutional building designed in the classicism of seventeenth-century England. Built to house America's oldest private medical society, it drew freely on the forms of the Royal College of Physicians in London (1673-77), designed by Robert Hooke. Its ornate program of architectural sculpture--consisting of carved swags, panels, heraldic devices, and scrolls--is noteworthy, as is its exceptional state of preservation.

Three principal functions are housed with the College of Physicians Building: a library, a lecture hall, and the Mütter Museum. These are contained within a freestanding rectangular structure, two stories in height, built of red brick with a considerable amount of carved limestone trim. It comprises three highly decorated facades: the principal façade on South Twenty-second Street, a secondary façade to the north on Ludlow Street, and another facing the courtyard to the south. Apart from two unobtrusive additions to the southeast and to the east, it preserves its original form intact.

The building is rectangular in form, although its masses are somewhat broken up by projecting and recessed elements which animate its otherwise blocky mass. In particular, the north and south facades are slightly recessed in the center, which has the effect of dividing the building into three blocks, and of offsetting the principal section to the west. Otherwise the entire building is united by three broad bands that run continuously about the building: the limestone basement story, by the thick belt course above the first story, and the richly molded balustrade above,

The Twenty-Second Street Front

The main western façade has the richest ornament of the entire building, emphasizing the grand entrance and the principal hall above it. Fronting on Twenty-second Street, and recessed from the street behind a monumental gate and wrought iron fence, it forms the building's principal public face. It is arranged symmetrically in five large bays, the central three of which project slightly and are more ornate in treatment.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 5**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The central entrance is a classical composition enriched by distinctive carving. To either side of the door are unfluted Roman Doric columns, their capitals enriched with rich moldings. To the outside of this pair of columns are two pilasters, similar in their detail, each of which is carved with the seal of the College of Physicians. These supports carry a Doric entablature, whose principal feature of interest consists of four triglyphs corresponding to the pilasters and columns below. Highly original in form, they consist of a scroll from which hangs fringed drapery, delicately carved in limestone, while tassels at the bottom take the place of the usual guttae. Between these triglyphs is carved the name of the College of Physicians and, to either side, the dates 1787 and 1909—the date of its founding and of the building.

Each of the façade's other four bays consists of a single window under a flat arch, of gauged brick and a limestone key. The outer pair of windows is more simply treated, with plain limestone surrounds, while the inner pair has decorative keys and quoined surrounds, with distinctively tooled surfaces which depict waves that suggest flowing water.

The upper story is highly monumental in character and is treated as a *piano nobile*, its projecting three-bay central block expressing the grand main hall within. Lighting this hall are three grandly overscaled windows, which rest on the slender belt course that encircles the three formal facades of the building. These windows are divided by stone mullions into nine lights, the most prominent of which is capped by a delicately carved fleur-de-lis. Further ornament is provided by the richly profiled window surrounds, the carved keystones and the scroll brackets beneath each of the windows.

Enframing these three openings are four pairs of fluted Ionic pilasters, which are themselves divided by a shallow niche capped by a carved shell motif. The wall against which these pilasters are set consists of alternating bands of limestone and brick—corresponding to the quoins that mark the corners of the building—whose striped horizontals serves to offset the slender verticals of the pilasters.

To either side of this full-height grand hall, the building contains an additional mezzanine story, which is expressed by the distinctive fenestration: a flat-arch-headed window capped by a pediment, above which is placed an oculus at mezzanine level. These oculi consist of richly carved drapery and swags surrounding a window of square form.

The Southern Elevation

The southern or garden elevation consists of three parts. To the west is the side elevation of the Twenty-second Street front block, whose pedimented windows and festive pilaster array it retains. Measuring three bays in width, divided only by single pilasters, it is distinguished by the highly original piers that separate the windows of the mezzanine level, which are treated as colossal scrolls fronted by a leaf motif. There is a central entrance at ground level, with a simple entablature lighted by a small window above, which is flanked by cartouches and headed by an eared surround. To either side of this entrance is a trio of windows headed by flat arches surmounted by elaborate keys.

To the east of this section is the slightly recessed central block, arranged in five bays, each marked by a round-arched window at second story level. What was originally the easternmost section of the building was extended to the south in a remarkably restrained and windowless wing, extending as far as the south property line, with no other ornament than its simple masonry cornice and the surface of its brick wall, built in Flemish bond.

Ludlow Street Front

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 6**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

With only a few minor alterations, the north elevation along Ludlow Street repeats the form of its counterpart to the south. The westernmost section retains its pedimented windows and pilasters, as well as the scroll-formed piers of the mezzanine. Only in the absence of a central opening at ground level does it differ, this place being taken by an ornamental plaque of exceptional richness. It consists of a blank panel enframed by garlands, which are adorned by a lush mass of flowers, including naturalistically carved roses of especial richness. Presumably left blank for a future inscription, the tablet itself has never been carved.

The recessed middle section is identical to its southern counterpart, with the same five-bay organization of round arches above flat arches. To the east of this is the slightly projecting end block, which is of unusual interest, for this is the one section of the building that clearly expresses its interior function on the exterior. Here a colossal window, divided by stone mullions into five by three lights, takes up most of the space of the ground story. This brings indirect northern light into the Mütter Museum, which was placed in the northeast corner of the College of Physicians Building. Apart from this functional feature, there is no other architectural expression of this principal space of the interior. Above this the façade is treated simply in three bays, each bearing a flat-arched window at second story and at mezzanine level. Limestone quoins mark the ends of this section.

The Van Pelt Street Front

The east elevation is the only one with neither ornament nor formal architectural treatment. It is treated in utilitarian fashion as a simple brick wall, which is articulated by four stories of narrow openings headed by shallow segmental arches, giving the wall the character of an arcade. Only its simplified limestone cornice links this elevation to the rest of the building. This façade has been compromised by later additions. To the south extends the unfenestrated block of the 1955 stack addition. Finally, at the center of the façade is the more recent rear entrance block, consisting of a trio of brick towers that project from the original building to comprise the loading dock, fire tower, and employee entrance.

The Interior

The classical formality of the exterior is even more opulent in the interior. It is an example of disciplined Beaux-Arts planning, based on a symmetrical disposition of hierarchically treated spaces about a main axis. Immediately behind the entrance, a marble vestibule, measuring sixteen by twenty feet, establishes the grand axis of the building: an east-west sequence that includes the vestibule, a short stair into an octagonal rotunda thirty feet in width, and the main hall itself, which terminates in a formal marble stair of considerable richness. Running to the north and south of this central axis, the principal rooms of the building are organized in a north and south range. With little variation the second story follows the same plan.

From the octagonal rotunda, the principal rooms of the Twenty-second Street block can be reached. These are primarily devoted to administrative functions, and comprise two offices to either side of the vestibule. The most lavish of these is the corner room to the northwest, the Gross Room (formerly the Board Room). To the north, the rotunda continues into an open reception hall (the Hutchinson alcove, which leads to the Gross Room) while to the south are an array of small functional spaces, including a cloak room, lavatories, a private stair, and the secondary south entrance. To the east of the rotunda, the grand hall separates the museum and exhibition rooms on the north flank from Thomson Hall to the south. The museum galleries consist of three rooms; from west to east these comprise the Cadwalader Room, the Mütter Room, and the Mütter Museum. The first two of these are simply treated, spacious

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 7**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

and open rooms with prominent plaster ceiling beams. Much more spatially complex is the Mütter Museum in the northeast corner of the building, a two-storied space surrounded by a gallery, its basement level reached by a central stair. This room is surrounded by built-in wooden display cabinets on all four sides as well as large display cases on the basement level. A broad archway with wood paneling divides the Museum from the Mütter Room to the west. The Museum was sensitively renovated in the 1980s to improve conditions for the collections. Although new lighting and venting was installed, the original wood and glass wall cabinets were preserved along with the nineteenth century character of the museum, with its open floor plan and simple pipe railing around the perimeter of the stairwell.

To the south of the hall is Thomson Hall, a lecture room that originally measured about 33 by 60 feet, although it has since been somewhat reduced by the insertion of two administrative offices to the west. Behind this, to the east, is the stack room for the library, along with its 1955 addition to the south. This originally comprised the end wall of the building, but a small recent addition has provided additional entrances, a loading bay, and an elevator at the east end of the building.

The handsome stair, built of marble with a bronze railing, is the dominant visual feature of the first story, and it indicates that the building's formal sequence continues upstairs. Its central flight rises to a landing, which is dominated by a niche bearing a sculpture of Aesculapius,¹ the god of healing. From this landing, the stair returns in two flights to the upper hall, which directs the visitor back toward the front of the building. With its marble wainscoting, deeply paneled walls, and a cove cornice carrying an ornate skylight (now filled in), the stair hall establishes a theme of ceremonial formality. Here the axial sequence of spaces that began below at the vestibule culminates in Mitchell Hall (originally the Hall of Portraits), the grandest space of the building.

Measuring over 71 feet in width and 48 in depth, Mitchell Hall takes up most of the Twenty-second Street block. Intended as a ceremonial hall, to be outfitted with portraits of celebrated members of the College, it is distinguished by rich wainscoting, carved pilasters and pedimented doors, and a plaster cove cornice. A large and intricate skylight originally crowned the space; this has been covered over. Striking a note of dignified and festive collegiality, it is the architectural embodiment of the College's understanding of its function. It is essentially intact, although the original auditorium seating has been removed. In place, however, is the three-part mahogany rostrum that originally was located on the west elevation. Its carved wreath details include the dates 1787 and 1863, recording the College's founding and the date of its first building. The room also contains the only leaded glass windows in the building; in the central window is the seal of the College. Mitchell Hall, originally designated the Hall of Portraits, contains many of the College's most important works of art, including paintings by Robert W. Vonnoh and William Merritt Chase. To the north and south of this great hall are ranges of small rooms containing offices for the President and Fellows, and stairs to the mezzanine level above.

Apart from Mitchell Hall, the second story is arranged like the first: large reading rooms to either side of the central hall, and book stacks to the rear. Two of these are of unusual architectural distinction. To the north of the central hall is the library's reading room, the Ashhurst Room, a handsome essay in seventeenth-century English classicism. It consists of a single large space under a coved vault. Bookshelves and wood wainscoting line its lower half while above this the walls are of plaster with

¹ The statue is a copy of one in the Vatican collection, dated 150 A. D. It was carved by Carlo Manetti, a firm in Rome that specialized in the manufacture of marble museum copies. It was purchased for the College by Dr. Richard H. Harte and installed in 1911. Julie S. Berkowitz, *The College of Physicians of Philadelphia Portrait Catalogue*, Philadelphia: College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 1984.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 8**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

recessed panels. The door surrounds are elaborate and carry pedimented gables. The most prominent ornament in the room consists of the colossal fireplace surround at the south end of the room, which is treated as an architectural frontispiece, formed by a pair of Corinthian capitals carrying a segmental pediment, which enframe a portrait of Dr. John Ashhurst for whom the room is named. This room, like Mitchell Hall, is lined with portraits, primarily of Fellows who made significant contributions to the library. A carved frieze bears the names of fourteen outstanding men of science: it begins with Hippocrates and runs chronologically. The last name is Joseph Leidy, the Philadelphia biologist and naturalist, who was the leading anatomist of his time.²

To the south of the main hall is the Norris Room, which has been divided by freestanding partitions into the Historical Collection to the west and the Norris Room to the east. The latter contains one of the most unusual pieces of ornament in the entire building, a carved stone fireplace of late Gothic form. This fireplace was moved from the College's Locust Street building, where it had been donated by George W. Childs, the publisher of the *Philadelphia Ledger* and well-known philanthropist. Designed by architect Theophilus P. Chandler in 1885, as part of his addition to the building, it consists of a massive stone mantel, elaborately carved and carried on triplets of columns to either side. Apart from this, the Norris Room is treated simply, with a simple cornice and beamed ceiling. Norris originally served as the periodical reading room for the College; it is now working areas for staff although its architectural finishes are unchanged.

The Norris Room and Historical Collection are lower in height than the corresponding space to the north, permitting a low mezzanine to be inserted above them. Here a narrow central corridor provides access to a double range of small offices and storage rooms, of simple utilitarian finish.

The basement of the building contains the mechanical room, museum storage spaces, and offices. It repeats the plan of the first story, although the main hall and many of the rooms have been subdivided to make small offices. Apart from the lower level of the Mütter Museum in the northeast, all of the spaces are strictly utilitarian and without architectural distinction.

Landscaping and Grounds

The wrought iron fence surrounding the building is an integral part of the composition, and its regular sequence of brick and limestone piers repeats the palette of the building. The principal entrance posts are entirely of limestone, and are treated as classical compositions of a base, shaft and capital.

The complex is completed by the garden located to the south. The lot was donated to the College in 1911 and the garden planted in 1914. In 1937, it was converted to a medicinal herb garden that is divided into four raised beds or parterres, which occupy the west end of the site. These are planted with medicinal herbs that were in common use at the time of the College's founding and are divided by herringbone-set brick paths. At the center of the parterres is a brick and stone pedestal that supports a sculpture. The east end of the garden has ivy-planted beds and benches around the perimeter. At the center of this section is a small bronze statue, *A Girl With Basin*, by the Philadelphia artist Edward Fenno Hoffman III.

² Joseph Leidy (1823-1891), a Fellow of the College, is considered one of the most important American biologists of the period. Leonard Warren, *Joseph Leidy: The Last Man who Knew Everything*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 9**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The College of Physicians Building and site retain a remarkable degree of historic integrity. Despite continued growth of the collections and programs, all of the primary spaces are fundamentally intact from their completion in 1909. Although some of the historic furniture has been lost—primarily the seating in the lecture rooms—the extensive wood wall finishes, mantles, plaster moldings and other features designed by the architects are all in place and well-cared for. The greatest change has been the loss of the skylights over the grand stair and in Mitchell Hall, which were removed several decades ago. Other changes are the stack extension, added by Philadelphia architect Robert Rodes McGoodwin in 1955-56, and more recent additions for a fire tower and loading dock. These, however, have been discreetly placed at the rear of the building and have minimal impact on the most important historic fabric and features. The College of Physicians Building is further distinguished by retaining extraordinary documentation of the building, the construction process, and its holdings. Here is a rare case where not only the architectural fabric but the furnishings, collections, and documents are together preserved, providing an exceptional resource for the history of medicine in America.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 10**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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_ D_

Criteria Considerations

(Exceptions): A_ B_ C_ D_ E_ F_ G_

NHL Criteria: 1, 2, 4

NHL Theme(s):

II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements:

1. clubs and organizations

VI. Expanding Science and Technology:

3. scientific thought and theory

4. effects on lifestyle and health

III. Expressing Cultural Values:

1. educational and intellectual currents

4. architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design

Areas of Significance: Health/Medicine; Education; Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1909 to 1914

Significant Dates: 1909

Significant Person(s): S. Weir Mitchell

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Stewardson, Emlyn L., architect (1863-1936)
(Cope & Stewardson)

Historic Context:

XIII. Science

F. Medicine

2. Non-Clinical Specialties

G. Scientific Institutions

XVI. Architecture

M. Period Revivals

4. Jacobean

XXVII. Education

G. Adjunct Educational Institutions

4. Other Specialized Institutions

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 11**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

“To review the activities of this institution, venerable in years but young in spirit, would be to recount the development of American medicine, for every important advance in the understanding and treatment of disease has been laid before its Fellows.”³

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia building, and the institution it houses, are among the most important monuments of the history of American medicine. The building houses the headquarters, library, and museum of the oldest private medical society in the United States.⁴ The College’s medical library is one of the country’s oldest and a nationally important research collection; its Mütter Museum, with a unique nineteenth-century gallery of specimens, teaching models, instruments and photographs, has an international reputation. Since its founding in 1787 as a membership association of physicians, the College of Physicians has been distinguished for its contributions to medical research and education, its membership comprising some of the leading American physicians and surgeons of the last three centuries. One of these was S. Weir Mitchell, America’s first neurologist.

In addition, the College of Physicians building is of exceptional quality in design, decoration and construction. It is the product of an unusually prolonged and intricate process that ultimately resulted in the firm of Cope & Stewardson eventually designing the College building. In its combination of a rather opulent club-like character with efficient and progressive library and museum facilities, it illuminates what is perhaps the central theme of the history of American medicine: the transformation of an exclusive and somewhat guild-like trade into a modern profession. Because Philadelphia was a principal center of medicine and medical education in America during the first 125 years of the College of Physicians, it documents as does no other building the development and professionalization of American medicine.

The College of Physicians is uniquely important for its association with the leading figures in medicine since the early days of the republic. This includes founder Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; surgeon Samuel D. Gross, the author of the nineteenth century’s most important manual of surgery; and particularly associated with this building, S. Weir Mitchell along with more recently, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, who helped establish the College’s Community Health Information Center, a public health reference service.

History of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia

In England in the centuries prior to the founding of the College of Physicians, medicine was divided between physicians, surgeons and apothecaries. The former were responsible for internal medicine and were university-educated (often in Edinburgh, an important source for eighteenth-century medical education) while the latter were typically not, handling the coarser manual operations such as

³ Frederick P. Henry, *Founder’s Week Memorial Volume, Containing an Account of the Two Hundred and Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the City of Philadelphia, and histories of its Principal Scientific Institutions, Medical Colleges, Hospitals, etc.*, Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company, 1909. p. 3.

⁴ Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., *The College of Physicians of Philadelphia: A Bicentennial History*. Canton, Massachusetts: Science History Publications, 1987. W. S. W. Ruschenberger, *An Account of the Institution and Progress of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: privately printed, 1887.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 12**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

amputation, or dispensing medicines.⁵ The guild system that regulated these professions in England did not exist in colonial America but the difference between a university education and the more common apprenticeship-based training remained an important professional distinction. During the eighteenth century, as physicians sought to regulate the profession, medical education was gradually regularized and made less haphazard. Because of the longstanding tradition of Quaker philanthropy and humanitarianism, Philadelphia came to play a leading role in this development.⁶ Here the nation's first public hospital, the Pennsylvania Hospital (NHL, 1965), was founded in 1752, followed in 1765 by the first medical school at the University of Pennsylvania (then the College of Philadelphia). Here, also, were some of the nation's earliest public health measures, including measures for the prevention of the annual summer fever epidemics as well as the establishment of the nation's first public water supply, both campaigns begun in the 1790s in the wake of the founding of the College of Physicians.

The College was preceded by several other short-lived medical associations, including the Philadelphia Medical Society, founded in 1766. Other medical associations were organized in New York, Boston, and even Litchfield, Connecticut, where the grandiloquently titled "First Medical Society in the thirteen United States of America" was founded in 1779.⁷ Most of these came to naught or were absorbed over time into other organizations. A combination of factors ensured that the Philadelphia College of Physicians took root and flourished, including the local tradition of public-spirited activism as well as the College's association with prominent and dynamic doctors at key moments in its history.

The College of Physicians was the brainchild of the brilliant doctor and humanitarian Benjamin Rush (1745-1813). A Philadelphian who trained as a physician in Edinburgh, Rush united his interest in medicine with broad-based reformist impulses, publishing spirited articles in favor of temperance, exercise, and the abolition of slavery.⁸ In 1776 he was among the signers of the Declaration of Independence. During the early 1780s, Rush proposed the founding of a society modeled on the Royal College of Physicians in London; it is first referred to by name in a letter to Rush by a doctor in Jamaica as early as June 25, 1783.⁹ Rush promptly entered into correspondence with a London physician from whom he received encouragement, and was told to "set your men of science upon studying your own country, its native and improvable productions. Your resources would influence Europe, your reflections would instruct her."¹⁰

Rush's careful groundwork ensured that the organizational structure, philosophy, and constitution of the College of Physicians were in place well before its first recorded meeting on January 2, 1787.¹¹

⁵ Richard H. Shryock, *Medicine and Society in America, 1660-1860*. New York: New York University Press, 1960.

⁶ Frederick P. Henry, *Standard History of the Medical Profession of Philadelphia*. Chicago: Goodspeed Brothers, 1897.

⁷ Bell, pp. 2-5.

⁸ "Benjamin Rush," *Dictionary of American Biography*, XVI, Dumas Malone, ed., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935, pp. 227-231. Rush studied under the most prominent physicians of his day: he was a student under Dr. John Redman from 1761 to 1766, attended the first medical lectures at the College of Philadelphia, and received his medical degree from the University of Edinburgh in 1768, where he became a disciple of William Cullen. He received additional training in London and Paris, before returning to Philadelphia in 1769. See also W. F. Bynum and Roy Porter, *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*. London and New York: Routledge, 1993.

⁹ Ruschenberger, pp. 16-19; Henry, pp. 97-98.

¹⁰ Henry, p. 100.

¹¹ Bell notes that at least three meetings were held previously but the College has used January 1787 as its founding date from the beginning. The constitution was published in *The Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser* (February 1, 1787).

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 13**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Fourteen Fellows were present, including John Morgan, the founder of the University of Pennsylvania's medical school and a pioneer of medical education in this country.¹² Within the next few weeks of its founding, steps were taken to organize a library and produce a pharmacopoeia, reflecting the College's interest in both the theory and practice of medicine. At the same time it devised its Latin motto, *non sibi sed toti* [not for oneself, but for all], which forms the main decorative inscription of the present building. Within a year, the regular presentation of learned papers was underway, and they were soon anthologized in the *Transactions* of the College of Physicians, the first volume of which appeared in 1793.

From the beginning, the College of Physicians had loftier aspirations than had earlier medical societies, whose interests were either narrowly professional—such as excluding incompetent competitors—or essentially intellectual, involving the exchange of new research. Instead, it was intended to serve for medicine the role that the American Philosophical Society served for general investigation. Nor was it a direct copy of any foreign model.¹³ Brooke Hindle's groundbreaking 1956 study, *The Pursuit of Science in Revolutionary America, 1735-1789*, assesses its novel role:

The College of Physicians was designed to be more than a medical society. As such, it would of course, collect and publish medical papers. . . Its function as a college was a little more subtle, for in that role it must acquire the dignity and prestige that adhered to the ancient colleges of physicians at London and Edinburgh. It would serve not only the profession but the nation as the American Philosophical Society aspired to serve in a wider sphere. Mere fellowship would convey distinction and, indeed, election as one of the twelve senior fellows of the college was an honor from the outset. Thus established, the college would be in a position to assume a quasi-public role—to give sanction to an American dispensatory and to guide the government in medical matters.¹⁴

The College began almost immediately to act on its mandate to advise on medical matters. In the fall of 1787, it issued a statement to the Pennsylvania Legislature on behalf of temperance, a popular cause of Quakers and Rush. Although nothing came of the petition, the College continued to support the reform, appealing to Congress in 1790, although this too was tabled. The first instance where the College of Physicians did indeed guide the government came quickly, in six years, in fact. In 1793, Philadelphia experienced a deadly Yellow Fever epidemic that may be regarded as the first public health crisis of the United States. At the peak of the epidemic, in September alone of that year, 1,442 victims were claimed; total mortality was estimated at 5,000 or about one-tenth of the population—a devastating toll in a city that was then the nation's capital. Acting at an emergency session called by the Mayor of Philadelphia, the College of Physicians proposed a battery of eleven public health measures, including quarantining of infected houses, the cleaning of the city streets, and the establishment of “a large and

¹² “John Morgan,” *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIII, D. Malone, ed., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, pp. 172-174. Morgan, a member of the first class to graduate from the College of Philadelphia [University of Pennsylvania] in 1757, spent five years studying in London and Edinburgh, where he received his M.D. in 1763. Morgan's *Discourse upon the Institution of Medical Schools in America*, a critique of medical practice in the colonies, advocated the establishment of a program of instruction modeled on those at the great European universities. The *Discourse* was delivered at the commencement of the College of Philadelphia on May 30, 1765 and the medical department opened in the fall. See Martin Meyerson and Dilys Pegler Winegrad, *Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Franklin and His Heirs at the University of Pennsylvania, 1740 – 1976*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978. The other senior fellows present at the first meeting included a roster of Philadelphia's most distinguished physicians. John Redman was a graduate of the University of Leyden, the most important medical center in Europe. A teacher of both Morgan and Rush, he was elected first President of the College of Physicians.

¹³ Henry, p. 99, Bell, p. 10.

¹⁴ Brooke Hindle, *The Pursuit of Science in Revolutionary America, 1735-1789*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956, pp. 295ff.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 14**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

airy hospital” outside the city.¹⁵ While these proposals reflected the limitations of eighteenth-century epidemiology, they marked the beginning of the College’s long and vigorous tradition of public health activism, which proved a model for the rest of the country. During virulent returns of the epidemic in 1794 and 1797, the College again organized the municipal response, proposing in the latter year the formation of a city “health law” along with a Board of Health that would have the authority to enforce quarantine by force of law.¹⁶

Rush himself left the College that he had founded in a dispute over the proper treatment of yellow fever. A believer in radical intervention to save victims of the disease, involving heavy bleeding and liberal doses of mercury, Rush was quickly at odds with his colleagues. The question divided the Philadelphia medical profession for more than a decade but Rush’s resignation in 1793 did little to damage the prestige or authority of the College; in fact, it indicated that its distinguished membership was already beyond dependence on any one member.

In subsequent years, the College remained at the forefront of enlightened public health measures. In 1803 all of its members but one endorsed vaccination for the prevention of smallpox.¹⁷ In 1834 a committee on public health was established, which offered recommendations for “improving the sanitary conditions of the city,” including the regulation of cemeteries; in 1841 the committee played a role in persuading the city to begin buying the upriver estates along the Schuylkill, in order to guarantee the purity of the city’s drinking water. This led in the 1850s to the establishment of Fairmount Park, the nation’s largest urban park. The College of Physicians’ humanitarian activism was reflected in its efforts to prevent the mentally ill from being executed. In 1824 the College was requested by the governor of Pennsylvania to make a pronouncement on the mental health of John Zimmerman, a convicted murderer sentenced to death; the determination of his insanity resulted in a reprieve.¹⁸

Early College of Physicians Buildings

The College held its earliest meetings in rented rooms at the College of Philadelphia’s building at Fourth and Arch Streets but the establishment of a library collection, a key element in Rush’s plan, soon made that space inadequate. In 1791, the College moved to a room on the second floor of the American Philosophical Society’s new hall at Fifth and Chestnut Streets, in the group of public buildings surrounding Independence Hall.¹⁹ For the next sixty years, until it erected its own building in 1863, the College struggled to balance the need for additional space – to house meetings, the library and eventually the growing museum collection – against the income provided by its limited membership.

The College lost some of its institutional vigor in the early part of the nineteenth century but experienced a resurgent vitality in the years before the Civil War. Its membership then included two of the most important figures in the history of American medicine in the nineteenth century, Samuel D.

¹⁵ Bell, pp. 26-27; Henry, pp. 108-117. For a detailed history, see John H. Powell, *Bring Out Your Dead: The Great Plague of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1793*. Philadelphia, 1949. Powell cites the meeting with the Mayor as the first time in American history that a government body had appealed to an organized medical society for advice.

¹⁶ Bell, pp. 32-35; Henry, pp. 181-121.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-41.

¹⁸ Bell, pp. 57-58; Ruschenberger, pp. 120-122. The Fellows had written to the governor to request postponement of the execution until the prisoner was properly evaluated. When local doctors disagreed about Zimmerman’s sanity, the governor asked the College to examine him. A committee of three made the trip and was paid for by the College.

¹⁹ Although Philosophical Hall is still standing, it has been altered and restored numerous times and there is no evidence of the College’s period of occupancy.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 15**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Gross (1805-1884), the subject of Thomas Eakins' famed Gross Clinic and the author of the standard textbook *System of Surgery* (1859), and S. Weir Mitchell (1829-1914), the psychiatrist, surgeon, and well-known novelist.²⁰

With its revitalization, the College rapidly outgrew its quarters. In 1845 it rented the third floor of the Mercantile Library Company at Fifth and Library Streets. In 1854 it moved again, this time to the "picture house" of Pennsylvania Hospital, but the need for a permanent home was clear: a building fund had been started in 1849.²¹

The reinvigorated institution, constrained by its outdated quarters, was now the recipient of an unexpected boon. In early 1859 Thomas D. Mütter died, having just transferred to the College his pathology collection, and an endowment of \$30,000 to support it.²² According to the terms of the gift, the College was obliged to build a fireproof building to house it within the next five years—a building which could simultaneously serve as the home of the College of Physicians. A lot was immediately purchased on the northeast corner of Locust and Thirteenth Streets.

The building fund was inadequate—nearly half the \$21,545 collected had been spent on the lot—but the following year brought yet another unexpected opportunity.²³ The election of Lincoln in the fall of 1860 made Civil War inevitable, and in the general uncertainty building activity trickled to a halt. This ensured that labor and materials would be cheaper, at least for the moment. At a meeting on December 5, far-sighted members suggested that the College of Physicians should capitalize on the slump and immediately begin building.²⁴

On January 14, 1861, Edward Hartshorne proposed that the College of Physicians offer the commission to the young Philadelphia architect James H. Windrim (1840-1919).²⁵ Windrim would later win fame as the architect of the Masonic Temple of Philadelphia, but he was still something of an unknown quantity. Nonetheless, he was known to the medical community; he was then acting as assistant superintendent of construction at Philadelphia's Episcopal Hospital, where several members of the College were involved.

²⁰ "Samuel D. Gross," *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, D. Malone, ed., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932, pp. 18-20. Immortalized in Eakins' painting, Gross was the leading surgeon in the city and a distinguished educator. He was a founder of the American Medical Association and also founder and first President of the American Surgical Association. "S. Weir Mitchell," *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIII, D. Malone, ed., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, pp. 62-65; Ernest Earnest, *S. Weir Mitchell: Novelist and Physician*, Philadelphia, 1950.

²¹ Henry, *Founder's Week Memorial Volume*, p. 133.

²² Ruschenberger, pp. 142-148. Bell, p. 119. The museum of the College was begun in 1849, with the donation of a teaching collection by Isaac Parrish. In June of 1856, S. Weir Mitchell convened a special meeting to announce Dr. Mütter's intent to present his collection and an endowment of \$30,000 to the College provided that the College erect a fireproof building to house it. In December 1858 the College signed an agreement with Mütter allowing five years for the building to be finished.

²³ A seven-member committee was appointed to solicit the additional contributions needed for construction. Members included Edward Hartshorne and S. Weir Mitchell, in whose office the committee usually met. Bell, p. 120.

²⁴ Minutes of Board, December 5, 1860. College of Physicians.

²⁵ Letter, Edward Hartshorne to I. Minis Hays (January 14, 1861). College of Physicians. Windrim was the subject of an M.A. thesis: John Poppeliers, "James Hamilton Windrim." M.A. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1962. Also see the entries in Sandra Tatman and Roger Moss, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1700-1930* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1986); and in James F. O'Gorman, ed., *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 16**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

A building committee was formed, and at a meeting of May 8, 1861 it presented Windrim's design.²⁶ By now, however, war had already broken out and the project languished. Not until December 18 did the Fellows of the College vote again to invite proposals for the hall. On February 5, 1862, Windrim presented his revised plans and specifications, which the College authorized on February 19. These depicted a two-story building of rather utilitarian architecture, built of brick, and unornamented apart from its brick cornice. It was to house the Mütter Museum and the College library, as well as a lecture hall and various administrative rooms. A photograph of Windrim's lost perspective drawing shows the rather austere block he proposed.²⁷ The building opened on March 4, 1863, having cost a total of \$40,858.²⁸

The completion of the hall created new momentum for the College. It now became the most visible of Philadelphia's medical societies and also the central location for many of their meetings. The County Medical Society, the Pathological and Obstetrical Societies, and the Philadelphia and Rush Medical Book Clubs all met at the College building, their rental fees adding significantly to the annual income. The College's resources also became more available to its members through extended hours for use of the library and museum collections and by opening the hall in the evenings for "conversation meetings."²⁹ Other collections grew as well, as the hall needed to be furnished and decorated. President George Bacon Wood had copy portraits made of the founding members, including John Redman, and convinced his friends to give paintings of their fathers and grandfathers.³⁰ Expanded membership, increased obligations and expenses, and a greater variety of activities created problems that could not be adequately handled during the monthly meetings. To address these issues, new by-laws were passed in 1863 that codified operational practices and created a new council of elected officers who were charged with general supervision over the affairs of the College.³¹

The College soon outgrew its building. Within a decade both the library and the Mütter Museum had consumed their available space, and it became impossible to make new accessions to the museum. By 1875 a building committee was discussing with Windrim the building of a third story, which his original plans had envisioned.³² Here again financial woes delayed action, particularly since the College's principal endowment—the Mütter bequest—was strictly intended for the museum, and could not be used for a general building campaign. Not until 1883 was a compromise struck, whereby the museum would provide \$5000 to the building fund, a nominal loan that was in fact a gift. With this seed money, the sum was quintupled and by 1885 funds were at last sufficient to build the addition.

The prime mover in this campaign was S. Weir Mitchell, now chairman of the building committee, who raised money by soliciting his wealthy Philadelphian patients and friends. Beyond his reputation as a physician, Mitchell was something of a bon vivant, whose high social standing raised the public profile

²⁶ Building Committee Report. May 8, 1861. College of Physicians. Also see Bell, p. 121. The building committee was directed by I. Minis Hays and also included George Fox, one of the founders of the American Medical Association.

²⁷ James H. Windrim, perspective drawing of College of Physicians, ca. 1862. *Founder's Week Memorial Volume*.

²⁸ Bell, p. 122.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³⁰ Julie S. Berkowitz, *The College of Physicians of Philadelphia Portrait Catalogue*, Philadelphia: The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 1984. pp. xvii-xxii. The portrait collection is another of the College's historically significant holdings. The first recorded donation was in 1850 but active collecting began with the move to the new building in 1863.

³¹ Bell, p. 124.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 159.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 17**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

of the College of Physicians. The distinguished sociologist E. Digby Baltzell ranked Mitchell among the city's three most historically important personalities (one of the other two being, notably, a fellow member of the College): "S. Weir Mitchell—physician, psychiatrist, author, and conversationalist par excellence—became the First Citizen of Philadelphia as no one had been since Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush."³³

Mitchell also chose the architect for the addition to the building. Since Windrim was occupied with other work, the prominent Philadelphia architect Theophilus P. Chandler (1845-1928) added the third story. On the exterior this was quite modest in character, following the simple treatment of the original. The interior was more thoroughly transformed, and not only with the provision of new functional spaces. Instead, with the installation of commemorative marble tablets, the establishment of a smoking room, and the building of an enormous ornamental fireplace, the College took on more of the character of a fashionable gentleman's club—which corresponded to Mitchell's idea of a gregarious and vital institution, but also one with all the comforts of Victorian life.

The fireplace mantel is the one architectural element of the original building that survives in the present College building. An excellent example of Chandler's romantic medievalism, and his love of the late French Gothic, its profusely sculpted overmantel bears symbols of the College. It was the gift of George W. Childs and cost \$2500—nearly a tenth of the budget for the entire addition!³⁴ Such was the home of the College of Physicians for the next two decades.

Current College of Physicians Building

By the turn of the century, the College had again outgrown its building. Collections were expanding rapidly and new services, such as the Directory for Nurses,³⁵ put additional pressure on the available space. The library was so desperately overcrowded that S. Weir Mitchell himself suggested in 1900 that the Mütter Museum might be given up in order to make space for books.³⁶ Moreover, there was growing dissatisfaction with the building itself. Its plain brick character—which had once expressed mid-century rationalism and scientific sobriety—now seemed prim and drab, especially for a highly fashionable institution whose members were part of a social elite.

If realizing the first building had been a lengthy process, consideration of their next move proved even more difficult. Despite increased membership dues and income from rentals, the College was in no better financial position to build than it had been in the 1850s. From Mitchell's proposal in 1900 to eliminate the museum until the final vote in 1907 approving the move to Twenty-second Street, the membership remained deeply divided on a course of action.

Mitchell's appeal for the library in December of 1900 resulted in a flurry of committee activity. The Museum and Hall committees developed a variety of schemes for building alterations, and a special

³³ E. Digby Baltzell. *Philadelphia Gentleman*, p. 152.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 160-162. For Chandler, see Tatman and Moss. Also see, William B. Bassett, "Monograph on Theophilus Parsons Chandler, Jr.," unpub. paper, 1967, at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

³⁵ The Directory for Nurses was another of Mitchell's initiatives. He encountered a similar service in Boston and in 1882 had his friend W. W. Keen propose it to the College. The Directory opened in the spring of that year and operated successfully until 1897, producing income for the College and a source of qualified nurses for doctors throughout the city. Bell, pp. 157-158.

³⁶ Bell, p. 206. The Philadelphia architectural firm of Baker and Dallett was asked in the spring of 1901 to see if the upper story might be able to support more books; they determined it could not.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 18**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

committee was appointed to consider the current needs of the building and the future needs of the College. But none of the committee work produced solutions beyond recommendations for minor adjustments of space. Mitchell, however, was intent on providing for the library and his efforts finally bore fruit on January 3, 1903, when he announced that his friend Andrew Carnegie had agreed to contribute \$50,000 to the building fund.³⁷ This swiftly set events into motion. Horatio C. Wood, the College's new president, took decided steps to either remodel or replace the building. He consulted Dr. John Shaw Billings, an expert in hospital and library construction, who designed the Johns Hopkins Hospital and the University of Pennsylvania Laboratory of Hygiene.³⁸ Billings estimated that an adequate replacement for the College would cost \$220,000. Wood also consulted Frank Furness (1839-1912), the well-regarded Victorian architect, who was an eminently logical choice as consultant: he was an authority on fire-proof construction and on building technology, and was an expert in library design, having recently completed the library at the University of Pennsylvania (NHL, 1985).³⁹ Furness gave a figure of \$200,000.

Two weeks after Mitchell revealed the Carnegie bequest, Wood presented these estimates and the sketches at his presidential address. Forming a Committee on Plans for Alterations and serving as its chairman, he continued to work with Furness to explore other options. Furness pronounced the building in good condition, and suggested that it could be remodeled cheaply and effectively. He suggested adding two stories to the existing building, with space for perhaps 250,000 books, to cost \$65,000. These would be carried by "iron bridge structure columns" which would be placed outside the existing building and covered with brick or tile "so as to have the appearance of ordinary buttresses."⁴⁰ The addition was to be of "the best possible character; the bookstack lined with opalite tile and lighted from a skylight made double, with six feet of interspace, so as to prevent heating in summer."⁴¹

Of all the three possible remedies for the cramped building—to enlarge it, replace it with a new building, or build on a different site—this was the cheapest and the most conservative solution. It also drew on the strong sentimental attachment to the existing site, which was convenient to Pennsylvania and Jefferson Hospitals and, together with the nearby Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the Library Company of Philadelphia, formed something of a cultural center. Such a frugal enlargement of the existing structure exercised a great appeal to a substantial number of members. Still, as a solution for a prestigious society, it was rather uninspiring. Furness's plans were not enthusiastically received: Wood's committee voted to a three-three deadlock, unable to commit to a remodeling of the building.

The defeat marked the end of the efforts to salvage the existing building. In the aftermath, support mounted for a new site, and a lot at Twenty-second Street, between Chestnut and Market Streets, was

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

³⁸ [Horatio C. Wood], "Report of the President of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia upon Rebuilding," February 24, 1903, p. 4. John Shaw Billings (1838-1913) was a key figure in the development of American medical practice during the late nineteenth century. A graduate of the Medical College of Ohio, where he received his M.D. in 1860, he served active duty as a medical officer during the Civil War. He was assigned to the Office of the Surgeon General at the end of the war, where over the next thirty years he developed the library from a modest collection into what became the National Library of Medicine. His design of the Johns Hopkins Hospital became a national model as did his plans for its medical school. He was a pioneer in field of public health and was one of the founders of the American Public Health Association. "John Shaw Billings," *Dictionary of American Biography*, II, Allen Johnson, ed., New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929, pp. 266-269. See also Bynum and Porter, *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*.

³⁹ Michael J. Lewis, *Frank Furness: Architecture and the Violent Mind*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001.

⁴⁰ "Report of the President of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia upon Rebuilding," p. 1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 19**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

found. Property values were lower there, and it was possible that the sale of the original building would provide enough funds both to purchase the lot and to pay for a substantial part of the new building. Persuaded by these arguments, the membership voted on March 30, 1904 to move the building to the new lot.⁴²

Nonetheless, in such a tradition-conscious organization as the College of Physicians, the decision was controversial. A substantial minority of members resisted the new site, although they failed to form a unified body, some favoring alternative new sites while others preferred to remain on Thirteenth Street and replace the existing building.

For two years the two factions remained deadlocked until April 6, 1906, when Dr. Arthur V. Meigs was appointed chairman of the new building committee. Other members included fellow physicians James Tyson, William Thomson, J. C. Wilson, George McClellan, and William J. Taylor.⁴³ Their charge was to select the architect of the new building, by whatever procedure they decided. At their May 8 meeting, Dr. Wilson proposed that the committee select an architect without going through the steps of a competition. The motion passed, and two weeks later the Philadelphia firm of Cope and Stewardson were chosen unanimously by the committee.⁴⁴

Presumably S. Weir Mitchell brought the firm to the College's attention. He was a trustee at the University of Pennsylvania where Cope & Stewardson had just built an innovative dormitory and the new law school building. At the time, one of the nation's preeminent architectural firms, it was an inspired choice. In their characteristically tasteful and refined historicism, the architects had made their reputation with their educational buildings. During the early twentieth century, when American architecture was strongly affected by the formal classicism of the French Ecole-des-Beaux Arts, Cope & Stewardson were one of the country's few major firms to remain firmly picturesque. They preferred the intimate human scale and delicate detailing of England's collegiate architecture. Their personal style was a creative synthesis of the late Gothic, Tudor, and Elizabethan architecture of Oxford and Cambridge, and it came to be the standard expression of American collegiate architecture for half a century—helping shape Princeton University, Bryn Mawr College, and Washington University.

Although its founding members had died, John Stewardson in 1896 and Walter Cope in 1902, the firm was as vigorous as ever, and was directed by Emlyn L. Stewardson (1863-1936), John's brother. Stewardson had studied civil engineering at the University of Pennsylvania, and had become a capable designer in his own right following the death of his brother.⁴⁵ Together he and James P. Jamieson, the firm's chief designer in these years, were the authors of the College of Physicians Building design. On

⁴² The process again stalled. Not until May 1905 did the College approve an appropriation of \$50,000 for acquiring the lot.

⁴³ At its first meeting the committee asked for an additional member in case of a tie. Mitchell's son, John K. Mitchell, was added to the committee on May 4. Minutes, The College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

⁴⁴ Nonetheless, resistance to the new site dragged on for years. The final chapter came in March 1907, when Richard G. LeConte, the leading advocate of the old site, at last gave up his opposition. Proposing that the college consult "three distinguished financiers" on the wisdom of exchanging their old site for the new one, he was chagrined to report that all three had resoundingly endorsed the move, noting that "it was a very excellent business proposition" and that the College could not make a better investment. Letter, William W. Keen to William Osler (March 9 1907), Building Committee records, series 1.3, Samuel D. Gross Library.

⁴⁵ Repositories of Cope and Stewardson materials include the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania and the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 20**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

May 23, 1906, they agreed to prepare designs for a fee of \$1500, and the following day the College accepted their terms.⁴⁶

There then transpired six months of regular meetings, during which the architects repeatedly presented their sketch plans, only to be instructed by the assertive committee members to refine their ideas still further. On June 11 and again on June 22 Jamieson presented his preliminary sketches to the College.⁴⁷ These evidently called for a large meeting room on the first floor, which the building committee now decided against. Instead the architects were instructed to place the principal meeting hall at the front of the building on the second story. With Stewardson now taking Jamieson's place, drawings to this effect were presented on June 29. This basic scheme was approved, and the firm went to work preparing detailed plans and specifications.

When these were presented to the building committee at its meeting on October 30, 1906, they were rejected as too expensive.⁴⁸ Instead, Stewardson was again instructed to revise the designs in response to criticism, and to see that the estimates did not exceed \$200,000.⁴⁹ In the meantime, there came a providential intervention. Mitchell had continued to inform his friend Andrew Carnegie of the progress of the building and the philanthropist once again contributed to the fund. On November 5, 1906, Carnegie wrote Mitchell:

You are the right kind of a man. You don't say go, you say come--you give yourself very largely out of your means--I shall duplicate my gift, giving the last of the \$200,000 you need, to the extent of \$50,000--success to you--I have no doubt your Philadelphia friends will rally round you.⁵⁰

Spurred on by this donation, a flurry of contributions came into the College over the next two months. With the building now within reach, plans were pushed to completion. A set of three undated floor plans in the collection of the College seems to show the building at this stage. One shows the building fairly close to its present form, measuring 154 by 97 feet and containing 138,000 volumes. On the other hand, it places the museum in the middle of the north side and a large magazine room to the north of the main hall, along with minor other differences in room use. These were the final changes that the building underwent in the course of 1907, resulting in the move of the Mütter Museum to its current location in the northeast corner. By October 1907 the drawings were completed and ready for bid.⁵¹

Construction began in the winter of 1907-08.⁵² The cornerstone was laid on April 29, 1908.⁵³ In the same month, Cope & Stewardson exhibited the design in the annual exhibition of the T-Square Club at

⁴⁶ This represented 1% of the expected cost of the building, or \$1500, which was the usual rate for preliminary drawings. Minutes, College of Physicians. May 23, 1906.

⁴⁷ Minutes, College of Physicians. June 11 and June 18, 1906.

⁴⁸ Further building committee meetings were held on June 29, Sept. 28 and Oct. 30, 1906. Minutes, College of Physicians.

⁴⁹ Minutes, College of Physicians. December 28, 1906.

⁵⁰ Building committee records, 1904-1914, Series 1.1, folder 1.

⁵¹ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, v. 22, n. 34 (September 25, 1907), p. 625; and v. 22, n. 44 (October 30, 1907), p. 707.

⁵² Originally J. E. and A. L. Pennock, the large Philadelphia contracting firm, was the successful bidder. Their success was reported in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, 22, n. 46 (November 13, 1907), p. 745; and v. 22, n. 47 (November 20, 1907), p. 761. In fact, the Roydhouse-Arey Company completed the building, and are shown as the contractors in the T-Square Club's *Year Book and Catalogue of the Fifteenth Annual Architectural Exhibition* (Philadelphia, 1909), p. 177.

⁵³ Bell, p. 212.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 21**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, showing floor plans, details, and a handsome model by the model-making firm of Tognarelli and Voigt.⁵⁴ During the year, the building continued to receive favorable attention in the architectural press, most importantly in the widely read *American Architect*, which provided a full set of plans and details in its December 9, 1908 issue.⁵⁵

The building was formally dedicated on November 10, 1909, with an academic procession and ceremony at the College building followed by a celebration dinner at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel. Among the 452 guests were many of the principal medical figures in the country—such as John Shaw Billings, who advised on its construction—as well as civic and business leaders from Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. In his toast Carnegie paid tribute to Mitchell, recognizing that the completion of the hall represented the culmination of almost sixty years of devotion to the College: “I believe this to be the apotheosis of his career...nothing, no triumph, no ceremony, no honor can be bestowed upon him that can quite equal this night, at the very apex of his life.”⁵⁶

The College building was finally completed at a cost of \$289,266, excluding the furniture and finishing of many of the principal rooms. Instead these had been outfitted through a clever fundraising plan that solicited donations from the families and friends of distinguished Fellows, for whom the rooms were then named. The large lecture rooms on the first story were thus named Cadwalader (for Thomas Cadwalader, an ancestor of S. Weir Mitchell’s wife, who made the contribution) and William Thomson. The principal second story rooms were named for John Ashhurst, Jr. (the Reading Room) and William Norris (originally the periodical room). Other memorial rooms were designated quickly: the family of Samuel D. Gross furnished a room for his library and the families of James Hutchinson, Frederick A. Packard, and George Bacon Wood followed suit. The College building’s most prestigious space, its great meeting room—the Hall of Portraits on the second story—was renamed Mitchell Hall at the opening reception on November 11.⁵⁷

Despite its careful monitoring of costs, in January 1909 the building committee projected a gap of \$77,803 against the amount raised. To make up the difference, the College would have to sell its old building or obtain additional gifts. Mitchell came through again, this time with a gift of \$75,000 from Philadelphia financier Edward T. Stotesbury. This left the College debt-free and Mitchell could rest at last: “Thus ends my 7 year struggle. Thank God.”⁵⁸

In 1903, the College had been offered \$150,000 for the Locust Street property but the members were still debating whether to move. They declined another offer in 1907 because they believed the property to be worth more. Instead they rented the building to the city and it served as the main branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia beginning in 1910. For fifteen years, while the library’s new permanent building on Philadelphia’s Parkway was under construction, the library remained there. When the library moved to its new building in 1925, the Locust Street building was vacant, and four years later it was demolished.⁵⁹

The completion of the new Hall left the College free for the first time in many decades to expand its collections and functions. Aside from the memorial donations to furnish the rooms, the Fellows

⁵⁴ *Catalogue of the Fourteenth Annual Architectural Exhibition* (Philadelphia, 1909).

⁵⁵ *American Architect* XCIV, no. 1720 (December 9, 1908).

⁵⁶ Quoted in Bell, p. 213.

⁵⁷ Bell, p. 213. Also, Building committee records, 1904-1913. College of Physicians.

⁵⁸ Quoted in Bell, p. 213.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 22**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

enthusiastically contributed art and other adornments designed specifically for the new building, most visibly the Aesculapius statue for the niche at the head of the grand staircase. The portraits and memorabilia from Locust Street were joined by a growing collection of mementos of great physicians and scientists, a tradition that started in 1910 with the presentation of a gold watch that had belonged to Benjamin Rush. Custodians were named to tend to these collections and in 1921 an endowment was created to “perpetuate and enhance” them. With a multitude of spaces for meetings and talks, the lecture program too was expanded and for the first time, public lectures and programs of general interest were presented. The inaugural series was offered in 1910-11 and appropriately, Mitchell was the first speaker.

The College of Physicians Building as it exists today was substantially complete by 1914 when the College acquired the lot to the south and planted a garden. At the building’s opening, a stable and three old houses had stood on the site, and the Fellows were concerned that they would be developed for a garage. In 1911 Wharton Sinkler, vice-president of the College, persuaded his nephew Eckley B. Coxe to purchase the buildings to protect the College building from encroachment. Coxe did so and, when Wharton Sinkler died, offered the ground rent-free on condition that whatever was erected should be a memorial to his uncle. Mitchell proposed putting in the garden, which was planted in 1914 and included a sundial at the center. At its 150th anniversary in 1937, the College converted part of the garden for medicinal herbs, recalling Benjamin Rush’s proposal in 1788 that the College create a botanical garden. The garden was enlarged in 1953, and like the College building, has been continuously enhanced with memorials that recognize the contributions of its many distinguished members and supporters. The only additions after the garden was the construction of the library stack in the rear in 1955-56 and the more recent rear entrance block at the center of the Van Pelt Street façade.

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia Building as the home of the College of Physicians is of national significance for its role in American medical history, its association with major figures of American culture and science, and its architectural distinction.

College of Physicians Role in American Medical History

The College today embodies very nearly the role that Benjamin Rush envisioned for it in 1787 as well as the ambitions and goals of its nineteenth century champion S. Weir Mitchell. It remains a private membership organization of physicians, the Fellows, who benefit from regular meetings, professional education and development, and use of the facilities. The Library and Museum, once accessible only to members, now serve a broad public, and constitute nationally—even internationally—important collections in the history of science and medicine. The Francis Clark Wood Institute for the History of Medicine, founded in 1976, supports fellowships for scholars and seminars and conferences in the history of medicine. The founders’ aims to address matters of public health are expressed through recent program developments as well: a gallery that presents exhibits on contemporary and historic issues, such as infectious diseases, and the C. Everett Koop Community Health Information Center, begun in 1995, that serves the community directly by providing current information about medical and health topics.

As America’s oldest private medical association, the College of Physicians powerfully represents the history of American medicine, especially during its years of professionalization, from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. It is the first successful institution to carry out a program of professional meetings, lectures, and published papers, paving the way for the transformation of American medicine from a trade to a profession. The collections document the early phases of this history, while its

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 23**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

building records successive stages, from the mid-nineteenth century Mütter Museum teaching collection and the early twentieth-century lecture halls and library.

Through its distinguished membership, the College of Physicians is closely associated with the lives of a large number of nationally significant people. It is historically connected with many pioneering figures of American medicine, such as John Morgan, founder of the first American medical school and Samuel D. Gross, the surgeon hero of Thomas Eakins' *Gross Clinic*. Two figures of national stature are especially connected to the College of Physicians: Benjamin Rush, its founder, and S. Weir Mitchell, who shaped its twentieth century agenda and created the current building.

Benjamin Rush is the best-known physician of eighteenth-century America. An inexhaustible humanitarian and social reformer, Rush was the founder of the first free dispensary for the poor and succeeded Benjamin Franklin as president of the Pennsylvania society for the abolition of slavery. Besides being a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a member of the state convention that ratified the Constitution, he was also the first professor of chemistry in the country and the author of the first textbook on the subject. A polymath involved in many cultural and scientific institutions, Rush's greatest significance lies in his forward-looking contribution to the American medical profession. He is considered the founder of American psychiatry and was the first American physician of great repute in Europe.⁶⁰

S. Weir Mitchell

The individual most closely associated with the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, and whose life and importance it best represents, is S. Weir Mitchell (1829 – 1914). Mitchell is a central figure in the history of American medicine, whose pioneering work in the treatment of nervous disorders helped to establish neurology as a medical specialty.⁶¹ Graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1848, he received his medical degree from Jefferson Medical School in 1850 and subsequently studied in Paris.

Mitchell came to national attention in 1864 with his groundbreaking study of nerve injuries. He was the principal physician at Philadelphia's Turner's Lane Hospital during the Civil War, where he treated countless gunshot wounds, making a systematic study of their neurological effects. He played a significant role in treating the wounded from the battle of Gettysburg, which provided many of the case studies for his treatise. Mitchell's great service was to shed light on the complex interaction between physiological and psychological processes, and he paid particular attention to the phenomenon of "phantom limb syndrome," where an amputee still feels sensations in a missing arm or leg.

The experience of the war offered Mitchell the theme for the rest of professional life. The hundreds of gunshot wounds he treated and studied led him to believe that the doctor who conducted experimental

⁶⁰ Old West, Dickinson College, for which Rush drew the charter in 1783, is a National Historic Landmark (1962). That institution is able to represent his political and intellectual ideals—his commitment to American independence and individual liberty. However, the College of Physicians should be considered a monument to him as it records better than any other organization his towering influence in early American medicine. He also had a long association with the University of Pennsylvania Medical School and it also, like the College, does not occupy the same building or location as when Rush was active. However, his role in shaping the medical school was far less than his role in the College.

⁶¹ "S. Weir Mitchell" in *Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth Edition, 2001. The principal biography is J. P. Lovering, *S. Weir Mitchell* (New York, 1971); also see Anna Robeson Burr, *Weir Mitchell, His Life and Letters* (New York, 1931) and Ernest Earnest, *S. Weir Mitchell, Novelist and Physician* (Philadelphia, 1950).

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 24**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

research was far more capable than those with merely empirical clinical training. It also aroused in him a great curiosity about the complex interactions between the physical and the mental, and also the stresses caused by the pace of modern life.⁶² After the war he investigated the connection between diet and mental health, publishing *Blood and Milk* in 1877. Here he presented his celebrated “rest cure”—his single most famous achievement—which provided a humane alternative to institutionalization for the treatment of nervous disorders. Even at the time the rest cure was controversial and it was the subject of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s scathing *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1899).

Mitchell was also a popular novelist and an internationally prominent literary figure, whose friends included Robert Louis Stevenson, Andrew Carnegie and Oliver Wendell Holmes. He wrote several bestsellers, including *The Red City* and *Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker*. He maintained a summer residence at Newport, which brought him into contact with the cultural elite of his day. Mitchell continues to be a major figure of interest in contemporary scholarship and is recognized as one of the most important neurologists in American medicine.⁶³

Throughout his life, Mitchell was closely associated with two institutions, the University of Pennsylvania and the College of Physicians. He was an alumnus and trustee of the university, and established the progressive program of the medical school in the late nineteenth century. His principal concern was that medical schools should be involved in active research—not merely training doctors in established routine but working constantly to expand the boundaries of knowledge. He worked vigorously to transform the university’s medical school to a more scientifically oriented, research-based institution, even over the opposition of the faculty.⁶⁴ He pushed through the hiring of the first non-Philadelphian faculty member, helping make merit rather than social standing the sole criterion for teaching.

As close as Mitchell was affiliated with the University, he was even more closely identified with the College of Physicians, as is widely acknowledged: “No man of his generation, perhaps no single individual in its long history, did so much for the College as Silas Weir Mitchell.”⁶⁵ A fellow of the College for fifty-eight years, he left his mark on all three of the College’s successive homes. He was a fundraiser for the original 1861-63 building at Thirteenth and Locust Streets; he was the building committee chairman responsible for the drastically enlarged and modernized building of 1885; and he was the dominant figure in creating the present College of Physicians Building. Throughout its protracted design and construction, from 1903 to 1909, he was the guiding spirit. It was he who

⁶² His key works include *Fat and Blood, and How to Make Them* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1877); *Lectures on Diseases of the Nervous System, Especially in Women* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1881); *Wear and Tear, or Hints for the Overworked* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1897).

⁶³ An account of Mitchell’s early career was published in the American Pain Society Bulletin of March/April 2003 (Vol. 13, No.2), by Dr. Nancy Cervetti, dean of humanities and associate professor of English at Avila University. The American Academy of Neurology reprinted his landmark work, *Injuries of Nerves and Their Consequences*, in 1965 and referred to Mitchell as “the father of American neurology.” As a rough gauge of his continuing importance, a search of the internet provides over 8000 links.

⁶⁴ During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, massive changes took place in medical education and the practice of medicine. The incorporation of laboratory-based science into medical research, a model based on German university teaching and methods, is generally recognized as the contribution of the new medical school at Johns Hopkins University. Several of the key leaders of this movement were at the University of Pennsylvania, such as William Osler, whom Mitchell had the foresight to recruit in 1884. Osler left Philadelphia for the position at Johns Hopkins in 1889. Meyerson and Winegrad, pp. 102-103, 133-138.

⁶⁵ Bell, p. 169. Bell observes that the years between Mitchell’s election to membership in 1856 and 1909, when the Twenty-second Street building opened, “may fairly be called the age of Weir Mitchell.”

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 25**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

persuaded the College to build the new structure and to move to its Twenty-second Street location. By providing it with a new and vastly expanded library, lecture rooms, and public meeting facilities, he modernized the College for the transformed nature of twentieth-century medical practice.

At a critical moment in American medical history, S. Weir Mitchell personally revitalized two key institutions, the University of Pennsylvania Medical School and the College of Physicians. In the case of the College of Physicians, Mitchell moved a venerable 19th century institution into the 20th century. No other building so effectively documents the role of this influential medical pioneer and his activities, as does the College of Physicians Building. None of the other buildings associated with Mitchell have survived intact. His house at 1524 Walnut Street has long since been demolished although a plaque marks its location. The University of Pennsylvania's hospital and medical school were repeatedly remodeled, most recently in the 1990s, and the vestiges of its late-nineteenth century complex have been obscured. Finally, the original 1861-63 College of Physicians building, with which he was closely associated, has also been lost.

Because of the importance of hygiene and the constant march of technical progress, medical buildings rarely last for very long in their original state. As a result, the history of American medicine is poorly represented by buildings. For example, although the exterior of the original 1756, 1796 and 1802 portions of the Pennsylvania Hospital retain their original appearance the interiors have been generally remodeled for current use. The surgical amphitheater of Pennsylvania Hospital, which has been restored, is an exception; however, in most cases, if older hospital buildings survive, they have been massively altered inside and out. The College of Physicians Building, being an important medical institution other than a hospital building, has survived intact.

Cope & Stewardson, Architects

Finally, the College of Physicians Building is a superbly well-preserved example of an early twentieth-century medical society with a museum and library--an unusual building type. It is a distinguished specimen of creative eclecticism by the firm Cope & Stewardson, who were a Philadelphia-based firm with a national practice, active from 1885 to 1912.⁶⁶ Both its founding members were trained in the offices of prominent Philadelphia architects: John Stewardson (1858-1896) was trained by Frank Furness while Walter Cope (1902) was trained by Addison Hutton and Theophilus P. Chandler, and spent over a year sketching in England and France.⁶⁷

Cope & Stewardson belong to the creative generation that came between the Victorian and the Early Modern, whose work was distinguished by a tasteful, scholarly and aesthetically sophisticated style. They quickly won national fame, for their collegiate Gothic buildings at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania and for their eclectic houses in the Philadelphia suburbs.⁶⁸ Two of the firm's buildings are already National Historic Landmarks, the M. Carey Thomas Library at Bryn Mawr College (NHL, 1991), honored because of its role in the history of women's education, and the campus of Washington University, in St. Louis (NHL, 1987), recognized for its association with the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. They won the commission for the latter building in 1899 in competition with some of the nation's leading architects, including Cass Gilbert and

⁶⁶ Sandra Tatman and Roger Moss, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1986). *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* (New York: Free Press, 1982), volume 1, pp. 450-451.

⁶⁷ The website www.Philadelphiabuildings.org/pab maintains a comprehensive database of Cope & Stewardson's buildings, along with those of other Philadelphia architects.

⁶⁸ The most prestigious journal of American architecture, the *Architectural Record*, gave the firm consistently fulsome praise. See, for example, Thomas Nolan, "Recent Suburban Architecture in Philadelphia and Vicinity," *Architectural Record* 19 (March 1906): pp. 167-193.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 26**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

McKim, Mead & White. All the competitors submitted rigidly symmetrical classical schemes with the exception of Cope & Stewardson, who proposed a relaxed and informal hierarchy. The project established them as one of the country's most prominent architectural firms.⁶⁹

After Cope died in 1902, the firm was turned over to John Stewardson's brother, Emlyn Stewardson (1863-1936) and James P. Jamieson (1867-1941). Stewardson received a degree in engineering at the University of Pennsylvania in 1884 and ran the technical side of the firm. Jamieson was born in Scotland, and trained at the South Kensington Museum, with its rich program in ornament and decoration; he seems to have given Stewardson's plan aesthetic shape.⁷⁰ The two men are the designers of the College of Physicians Building, and it is their last major collaboration before the firm dissolved in 1912, with Jamieson moving permanently to St. Louis to complete Washington University while Stewardson formed a partnership on his own in Philadelphia. The College of Physicians Building is their last major institutional building.

The architecture of Cope & Stewardson was distinguished by an unusually sensitive adaptation of historic prototypes, with careful attention to scale, materials and trim—but also to the requirements of program and character; this was recognized by their contemporaries.⁷¹ Their adjustments were often quite subtle. For Bryn Mawr, a Quaker women's college, they used local rubble schist to make a Gothic campus, providing a modern cloister for women. However, for nearby Haverford, they chose a simple stuccoed Colonial Revival style as more in keeping with the hardy spirit of a male college. This same careful stylistic adjustment is apparent in the College of Physicians Building, which is in their characteristic "Jacobethan" style, a creative amalgam of Jacobean and Elizabethan sources drawn from across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Like most of their work in urban Philadelphia, it is of red brick with white limestone trim. But it differs from their College Gothic style, striking a fine balance between symmetrical formality and domestic coziness, an appropriate mix for a building that is both a scientific institution and a clubhouse. While most of Cope & Stewardson's academic buildings have been altered (most commonly for fire safety), the College of Physicians Building is exceptionally well preserved, even in its museum and library (spaces that are most vulnerable to renovation).

Cope & Stewardson clearly regarded the College as a significant work and exhibited plans and models of the building repeatedly at the annual exhibition of the T-Square club. Their evolving designs were published three times by the club in its *Catalogue of the Annual Architectural Exhibition of the T-Square Club* (1907, 1908 and 1910) and once in the *American Architect* (1909). The building is a distinguished specimen of creative eclecticism, whose form is the result of a prolonged search to find an architectural language appropriate to the peculiar nature of the College of Physicians.

Conclusion

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia is one of those rare institutions whose significance spans its entire history. At its founding, it represented the aspirations of the nation's best-educated physicians who, through a synthesis of European models and American ideals, sought to redefine the role of the medical profession. S. Weir Mitchell was simultaneously a major figure in American medical history, a major figure in bringing the College of Physicians into the new era of twentieth-century medicine, and

⁶⁹ For a comprehensive treatment of Cope and Stewardson's collegiate work in comparison with their contemporaries, see Paul Venable Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1984).

⁷⁰ Charles C. Savage, *The Architecture of the Private Streets of St. Louis: The Architects and the Houses They Designed* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1987); also see Jamieson's obituary in Michigan Society of Architects' *Weekly Bulletin* 15 (16 December 1941), p. 8.

⁷¹ For a contemporary appreciation, see Ralph Adams Cram, "The Work of Messrs. Cope & Stewardson," *Architectural Record* 16, no. 3 (Nov. 1904), pp. 407-408.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 27**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

the principal visionary who created the current College of Physicians Building. The building is the work of one of the most influential firms of the period. Its interior preserves not only the original architectural character but also much of the early furniture and decoration. The library, archives, museum and portrait collections mirror the history of the organization and themselves comprise invaluable resources in the history of science and medicine.

The history of the College of Physicians reflects the transition of American medicine from its roots in the eighteenth century to a modern scientific profession, with high architectural distinction and remarkable historical integrity. Its nineteenth-century teaching museum reflects the earlier system of instruction from casts and specimens, even as the College of Physicians of Philadelphia Building itself reflects the new modern profession that S. Weir Mitchell helped to shape. It is an outstanding property in the medical and cultural history of the United States.

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Karl Lutz Collection; Pennsylvania Hospital Collection; Stewardson & Page Commission Cards; The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository): Library of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Less than one (1) acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	18	484880	4422400

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is located at 19 South 22nd Street in Philadelphia, and is bounded by 22nd Street on the west, Ludlow Street on the north, Van Pelt Street on the east, and contains in width along 22nd Street 171'2", as registered with the city of Philadelphia, in Deed Book W. S. V. No. 236 Page 122 (9/15/03) and Deed Book W. S. V. No. 1318 Page 410 (6/24/10).

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the building and the lot on which it stands that has historically been known as the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. It comprises the parcel originally purchased by the College in 1903 and the land acquired to the south in 1910.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA BUILDING**Page 33**

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NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS PROGRAM
May 1, 2008