Modernized Classicism:

The Architecture of Paul Philippe Cret in Washington, D.C.

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Preface

The origin of my interest in Paul Cret and modernized classicism can be traced to a Washington car-pool in 1975-77. The most vivid memories of an otherwise uninspiring twenty minutes of morning and afternoon rush-hour traffic are of the Federal Reserve Board Building. The dignity of that facade was apparent even then, to someone not versed in visual aesthetics. More than once, usually on an early spring morning, the members of the car-pool would remark on the superiority of the Federal Reserve's landscaping. There was just something about that building which made you look twice. The fact that the car-pool's destination a few blocks from the Federal Reserve was also a modernized classical building (the Department of the Interior), only stimulated some latent questions regarding that style. The opportunity to write a term paper on the Federal Reserve Board Building in the Fall of 1977 did not satisfy the unanswered questions, it stirred them. As the feasibility of a thesis topic took form the scope became an all important question. Naively beginning with a whole style by the tail, the scope was repeatedly reduced by the advisor's terse remarks that this was a thesis and not a dissertation! Even with the accepted scope of one architect's work in one city, it could still be argued that the tiger at the end of that tail was too large.

There has been a great amount of pleasure experienced in dealing with Paul Cret and a small part of his work. To intimately study an architect through his drawings, writings and works is to know him; to step inside his mind in those brief moments when your thoughts and his seem to merge, is to comprehend what being a historian is all about. To be sure, many frustrations were also felt. To know that there are still so many areas where the thesis could be improved is a nagging thought.

A note on the primary sources, and the people who always politely welcomed me to their collections, is necessary. The Archives at the University of Pennsylvania contain a wealth of newspaper clippings on Paul Cret, extremely important for a biographical background. Mr. James Dallet, Archivist, and Mr. Elliot of that office took a keen interest in my research on Cret and were very helpful in providing directions to Cret's works around Philadelphia. The most important collection concerning Cret is in the rare book collection at the Van Pelt Library, University Pennsylvania, the repository for many of Cret's drawings. Mr. Riley was very accommodating as I came in for a few days with two cameras, a tripod and assorted paraphernalia. Cret's successor firm, H²L², still holds some drawings in storage, which will hopefully join the other drawings in the library.

In Washington, appreciation is due Dr. O. B. Hardison and Dr. Phillip Knachel of the Folger Library for allowing

me access to the drawings and correspondence pertaining to Cret and Folger. A special thanks goes to Mrs. Nadi Kravatsky at the Folger, who proved a successful lobbyist on my behalf, as did Jeff Carson at the Commission of Fine Arts. Few institutions can match the civility the Folger shows its researchers with high tea twice daily.

At the Federal Reserve Board Building two people were most helpful: Mariane Goley, Fine Arts Consultant, and Mr. Doome in the Freedom of Information Office.

A continuing debt is owed Mr. Charles Atherton, Secretary, and Mr. Donald Myer, Assistant Secretary of the Commission of Fine Arts. During my many visits to the Commission to read their invaluable Minutes I was provided with pleasant diversion by catching up on new architectural developments, which are ever-linked by that body to the earlier development of Washington. Mr. Atherton could give me personal insights because his father had collaborated with Cret on one of the war memorials in France after the First World War. My periodic visits to the Commission, extending back to my early days in Washington, have always proved rewarding and stimulating and will no doubt be so in the future. I am also thankful for the use of their photograph collection.

Finally, appreciation goes to my thesis committee: Richard Guy Wilson, Advisor, Frederick D. Nichols, and Dora Wiebenson. They guided me and provided a critical sounding

board. Mrs. Joan Baxter, impeccable typist and moral supporter, was also indispensable in the whole endeavor.

In reaching this last stage of almost three years of graduate work and just beginning another stage of professional life, it seems appropriate that I now acknowledge other key influences in my development. For the initial spark of interest in architectural history I am indebted to Tom Hines and his wonderful course at the University of Texas in 1974. For the opportunity to develop a self-confidence and for encouraging me to return to school I owe a great deal to Hank Judd, Clarence Meek and Hugh Miller of the National Park Service. Also providing wise council concerning an academic path was Carolyn Pitts of the National Park Service (now of HCRS). And instrumental in a critical decision was William Seale of Alexandria, whose example as a historian will always be a motivating force. No words will suffice to even hint at the appreciation I continue to feel for his guidance, both professional and personal.

Paul Cret, an excellent educator, once said: "We see at once that superiority in design is mostly knowing how to study, that is to say, to give form to an idea to make it constructible, and to improve it by good proportions." This, it seems to me, is the essence of graduate school, learning how to study. I owe many people at the University of Virginia's School of Architecture for sharing with me their thoughts and experience. It has been more rewarding

than I had ever dreamed. Occupying a large part of my studies has been Richard Guy Wilson. His influence is incalculable, but most of all, I thank him for being a friend.

 Last, but not least, my family deserves any honor I manage to receive. My sister has never failed to offer encouraging words after hearing of my woes. And as a foundation for all of my accomplishments stands the support and pride of my parents. They might not have always understood but they were always there. It is the least I can do to dedicate this work to my father, Travis McDonald, and to the memory of my mother, Frances Haverson McDonald (1917-1979).

"Modernism does not need to be a formula any more than tradition needs to be such. It may be, instead, a state of mind, out of which beauty may emerge if the passion for beauty be there."

Royal Cortisoz

Royal Cortisoz, in Paul Cret, "The Building," The Folger Shakespeare Library (1933).

Introduction

The life of Paul Philippe Cret coincided with a period of great social and cultural upheaval. This French-born American architect lived from 1876 to 1945. During this span of years the polarization between architects looking to the past for guidance and inspiration, and those looking toward the future, created a contemporary diversity of architectural styles, at times balanced only by architects who tried to be neither imitative nor original. Cret found himself on middle ground between these dogmatic poles. He did not feel bound stylistically, for he felt that there were no specialists in architecture. He believed that every architectural problem should be handled in the same way: an analysis of the needs and functioning of a certain type of building, a knowledge of the methods of construction, and the ability to design a beautiful form. Cret was very interested in form and beauty; he was of a strong conviction that architecture was a fine art and one which evolved slowly by individual effort. He worked in a variety of styles but his effort at developing one similar form led to his contribution to the larger context of American architecture. He slowly stripped traditional classical forms to arrive at a modern expression, and in doing so his modernized classical style became a transitional alternative for many architects unwilling to completely take one foot out of the past or to jump so

suddenly into the future. Cret's philosophy of architectural evolution, as opposed to revolution, appealed to many architects, not the least of those who were designing for the Federal Government during the Depression Decade.

The term modernized classical is used in this thesis to refer specifically to the style Cret developed in his own work and generally to the wide spread use of that style by others, largely in government buildings. Modernized is defined as the contemporary use of an old form; classical is defined as Greek rather than Roman derived forms. When references are made to that particular avant garde movement in twentieth century architecture, the accepted terms modernist and modernism are used.

A 1930 editorial in the Federal Architect once stated that an architect "...who attempts to revolutionize architectural principals is either ignorant or insincere."¹ Paul Cret was neither. In fact, his extreme self-confidence as an architect came from his strong educational background, which had as its base, traditional architectural principles. Cret's Ecole des Beaux-Arts discipline is apparent in most of his work. The mechanical method of "attacking a problem" and quickly producing a good plan, circulation and connecting spaces, left valuable design time for the treatment of an overall expression and minute details. The Modernist movement was not ignored by Cret in this aspect of expression; he did not believe in architecture as purely functional or that it could somehow dramatically change a society, but he did take note of the Modernists' use of

volumetric form and the strong impact it could have in composition. Cret took some of these ideas into consideration and gradually evolved masses and volumes with a more restrained decorative treatment. One architectural historian has even observed that refinement had become a characteristic of American architecture, a "sine qua non" since the Colonial period.² There is no doubt that Cret became thoroughly American in his work, expressing through it the society and culture in which he and his clients lived.

Places can be just as expressive of a time period as architecture, especially in the way they are ordered: "In the plazas, squares, boulevards and promenades, in palaces and temples is displayed the calligraphy of each people's culture, clearly spelling out what they most devoutly serve, sacred or profane."³ The city in which Cret produced some of his best modernized classical designs was, from its inception, intensely concerned with the physical presence it conveyed. Washington, D.C. and Paul Cret were almost destined to become associated. Washington had revived its master plan concept of a grandiose capital city just about the time Cret had come to America. The evolution of Cret's modernized classical forms included monuments and memorials along with buildings--what better place for his mature work than Washington, a city which would be called monumental? Every place also carries an emotional tone, as Gerson and Gerson have noted, some stronger than others: "It is the character of places as ceremonial, memorial, monumental

and symbolic sites that the intrinsically social nature of any place perspective is most clear."⁴ The men who took control of the planning of Washington at the turn of the century, and their successors, were as deeply motivated in their emotional responses by the future of the Washington they beheld as by what they could see of it at any one moment. By the late 1920s the climate and setting were just right for Cret to demonstrate a new alternative for Washington's traditional forms.

Three of Cret's designs in Washington are important to discuss in detail as examples of his maturing modernized classical style: the Folger Shakespeare Library, 1929-32; the Federal Reserve Board Building, 1935-37; and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, 1938-41. Chronologically, each is larger, more restrained, more monumental, and more public in nature. The Folger Library, a philanthropic gift to the nation, was extremely crucial to Cret's career in Washington, and from the moment of its completion, crucial to his enduring professional fame. The artistic collaboration on this library made it unique and well worthy of the praise it received. The Folger Library quickly became a role model, followed shortly by another, the Federal Reserve Board Building.

The Federal Reserve Board Building is important not only as part of the sequence of Cret's changing forms but also as a case history in the design control power of the Commission of Fine Arts. The competition program for such an important administrative banking body during such an economic depression was meant

to convey something other than just a government office building--Cret did not fail in that duty. In dedicating the building, President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke of it as an ideal related to the well-being of America.⁵ This optimistic ideal took the form of a government building program during Roosevelt's terms of office, using to a very large extent the modernized classical style.

The President was impressed enough by the Federal Reserve Board Building that he provided Cret with another government building in the Washington area: the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. The hospital tower, one of Cret's few "skyscraper" forms, became the ultimate design in his evolution of modernized classicism, a design whose beauty relied almost solely in the massing of undecorated composed forms. Again, it is not only the form of the Medical Center which is of importance, but the fact that it symbolized Cret's patronage by the President.

It is thus as an architect with a strong background in traditional education that Cret personally developed an architectural form, one offering a middleground alternative in an era of contradictions and confusing contemporary currents, and one which has become associated widely with a governmental image in the 1930s.

Chapter One

Paul Philippe Cret: Background, Theory and Early Work

Paul Cret's decision to move to America in 1903 signified a victory. The University of Pennsylvania had succeeded in luring a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris to teach its eager architectural students. The young educator, who came to Philadelphia at the age of 27 as a prophet of an ordered architectural teaching method, was destined to become associated with Washington, D.C., a city intensely concerned with its urban order. But during the early part of the century, while Washington fortified its urban landscape and emotional tone, Cret's work and theories slowly evolved in other places, so that when he did offer Washington a succession of designs in the 1930s, they were his most mature endeavors.

Although he had had little practical building experience, Cret was as well trained in academic architectural design as anyone could be in 1903. Cret seemed pointed toward a career in architecture almost from birth in 1876. The city of his childhood, Lyons, France, was the location of one of the preparatory Ecole des Beaux-Arts schools, similar to the well established national school of fine arts in Paris. While still a student at the Lycée du Bourg in Lyons, Cret worked during the summers for his uncle Johannes Bernard, an architect in the same city. It is no surprise then that he entered the

Ecole des Beaux-Arts of Lyons in January 1893. Cret was well prepared and developed an early self-confidence in competitive situations: in the almost four years he attended the school he won first prizes in decorative arts, archeology, art and industry, and in architectural design (fig. 1). This versatility was prophetic considering the types of commissions Cret's office would later receive in America. Again, it is not surprising that Cret won the top prize in 1897, the Prix de Paris, which provided a scholarship for the national Ecole des Beaux-Arts he had long set his sights on.

Cret's academic achievements in Lyons were no exception to his later academic record; he began the courses of instruction in Paris as the highest ranked member of his class based on the entrance exam. Once accepted into the school, Cret chose the atelier Pascal and began studying architecture under the Ecole system of design, which was "...to impart to each student a method of attacking and studying any problem in architectural design which may be presented."⁶ This method was primarily one of mental discipline. The students became well versed in the basic Ecole design techniques: the analytique, a study of the elements, proportions and composition of architecture; the parti, a way of conceiving the essence of the problem; and the esquisse, a quick, rough sketch of the solution of the parti--how to express the solution in a composed design (fig. 2).⁷ All of these exercises taught the architect to be efficient with his creative ability, or as John Harbeson, a teaching

colleague and partner of Cret's said, "One of the chief objects of the Beaux-Arts method is to teach a man to confine his efforts to a well-defined channel. In actual practice architectural problems are circumscribed by definite conditions, limitations of cost, peculiarities of site or of the client, etc. The esquisse takes the place of these limitations in the classroom."⁸ ✓

Cret excelled in the competitive nature of the Ecole from July 1897 until he received his diploma in June 1903 (fig. 3, 4). In addition to the distinction of his diploma, he had captured the Rougevin Prize in 1901, the Grand Medal of Emulation in the same year, and in 1903, the Second Prize in the Chenavard Competition and the Gold Medal of the Salon des Champs Elysees (Fig. 5). Much later in life Cret remarked that students were always in danger of developing the defects of the nature of competitions: "...[students] tend to put emphasis on what is most likely to please the judges...they are apt to encourage not the best possible work, but the work most likely to win. Hence, undue importance is given to the presentation of drawings."⁹ It can be assumed from the number of prizes Cret won that he did know how to please the judges. There are indications though that he was an extraordinary student, which might explain his great popularity among the younger American students and their choice of him as an instructor for the University of Pennsylvania. Due to the early training associated with his uncle, he had an unusual depth of feeling for design and was interested in form of more than two dimensions. His

criticism of the Ecole in a short history he wrote later is very self-reflective:

After five or six years of constant competition, the average student acquires a skill in abstract design, and a resourcefulness in discovering a number of solutions for a given problem, and then selecting the best one. Here he risks falling a prey to misconception in the study of plans. The Ecole believed that the plan, more than all the other features of a design, should show the fitness of a building to its uses. This opinion is undoubtedly correct if we adopt the modernist's view that a house, for instance, is a "machine a habiter." From this, in spite of the Professor's protests, it was only too easy for immature minds to conclude that elevations and sections were relatively unimportant. Thus, the Ecole, hypnotized by the search for the "parti" (that is, what characterizes a building), soon began to lavish every effort on the plans. By the end of the nineteenth century, the students went even further, and almost lost interest in all questions of architectural forms; the main elevation still received a modicum of attention. As to proportions, obvious faults were covered by judiciously placed cartouches. The plan had become a decorative composition, usually over-complicated, and a "beau plan" was a pleasing picture in itself, instead of a necessary diagram for achieving a good organic arrangement of rooms, with opportunity for well-designed

facades and good interior treatment. The "cleverness" of the planners from 1880 to the World War was both astonishing and alarming; alarming because the graduate of the Ecole had acquired much more planning than he needed but was too often sadly deficient in good taste, in the knowledge of how to combine materials, and in that simplicity which is the highest quality of art. The Ecole had reached the opposite pole from those who think that architecture consists in making pleasing elevations and then letting the interiors accommodate themselves as best they may. Truth is usually found in a more temperate zone.¹⁰

Cret's commitment to something other than a 'beau plan' would become very evident in his American work. In fact, his reference to "the planners from 1880 to the World War" might very well be an indictment of the American Renaissance Beaux-Arts architects and planners. The statement about simplicity and truth no doubt referred to his own later simple forms. Cret's educational background in the time-tested Ecole method, tempered by what he saw as its weaknesses, was transformed into an American educational system when the University of Pennsylvania offered him a position as assistant professor in 1903 (fig. 6).

To be sure, the United States did not lack for Beaux-Arts trained architects at the turn of the century. Paul Cret was afforded special attention because he was French and because of his high academic record. Not without the correct social

graces valued by the bastions of Philadelphia culture, Cret had no trouble being accepted in his new city. He was probably even more socially acceptable after he returned from France in August 1905 with a bride, Margaret LaHalle, every bit her husband's social and cultural complement.

Cret lost no time in becoming acquainted with the Philadelphia architectural community. The same year of his arrival he joined the T-Square Club, an architectural club formed for social and professional reasons. The Twentieth Annual Yearbook of the Architectural Exhibition in Philadelphia (the club's exhibition) for the year 1903-04, listed seven of Cret's student drawings from the Ecole in Paris. The next year's Yearbook not only listed Cret as a member of the jury of selection for the exhibition and a member of the hanging committee, but more importantly, as the Patron of the T-Square Club Atelier. This latter distinction leaves no doubt as to Cret's professional standing. By the time of his death in 1945, Cret could add to the list of his Philadelphia associations membership in the American Philosophical Society; Presidency of the Art Jury of Philadelphia; Honorary Presidency of the T-Square Club; he was also a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects; Trustee of the Philadelphia Museum of Art; President of the French Benevolent Society of Philadelphia; and Director of the Philadelphia Art Alliance.

Cret first began to practice architecture from an office in his Italianate house on Woodland Terrace near the University of Pennsylvania. Eventually he took into practice a teaching

associate and three former students, John F. Harbeson, William J. H. Hough, William H. Livingston, and Roy F. Larson, respectively, all of whom would become full partners. In 1920, the year after he had returned from five years of fighting in France during the war, Cret set up an office on Chestnut Street and then a year later at the Otis Building.¹¹ In 1929 a committee of architects, including John Harbeson, designed the Architect's Building at 17th and Sansom Streets in Philadelphia, where Cret's office would remain.¹²

Cret's official association with the University of Pennsylvania was that of Assistant Professor of Design 1903-08; Professor of Design 1908-1916, 1918-24, 1929-37; Associate Trustee and Member of the Board of Fine Arts 1937-41; and Advisory Architect 1930 until his death in 1945. Among the honors bestowed on him by the University was an honorary degree of Doctor of Sciences in 1913 (he also received an honorary degree of Doctor of Arts from Harvard in 1940). Cret, in turn, rewarded his beloved university in his will, which stated that the remainder of his estate (over half a million dollars at his death) would go to the University of Pennsylvania after the death of his widow. Marguerite LaHalle Cret died twenty years after her husband. The following year, 1966, the Paul Philippe Cret Professorship of Architecture was established and awarded to one of his former students, Louis I. Kahn.¹³

Cret persisted in teaching the Ecole method until his retirement from academic duties in 1937. It became apparent to

him before then that the modernistic theories and work of Neutra, Schindler, Le Corbusier, Mies Van Der Rohe, Howe, et. al. were not only competition in the field but also in the classroom. An excellent insight to this is related in Joseph Esherick's recollection of his student days at the University of Pennsylvania. Esherick's "personal view" is valuable for a description of the design system at Penn, as largely established by Cret, and for one student's questioning of that total system in the years 1932-37. Esherick entered in 1932 what he described as a "firmly committed Beaux-Arts architectural school."¹⁴ He felt that there were many good points to the method but in general that there was not enough relevance to modern needs: "...there was a belief that architecture was a fine art, and the faculty was uneasy about any other connections."¹⁵ Cret was, at times, sympathetic to Esherick's modernistic tendency and did not fail to win his respect:

The last year was spent trying to learn how to design in a commonsense, rational, and purposeful way. Cret's criticism, working with Jim House (a sculptor) as an apprentice, and listening to Oscar Batson talk about anatomy and George Howe talk about architecture stand out as being of the greatest importance. But the debates and differences with the Beaux-Arts faculty were important too. The faculty was demanding and we were made to work hard; and when they argued they argued from a clear, well-defined point of view with no vagueness or

mushiness about it. What now seems to me most central was that design was at the heart, that one learned design by designing, and that one had to start early.¹⁶

Cret felt the criticism enough that he was compelled the year after he stopped teaching to write a defense entitled "Are We Teaching Architecture?". In this article he held that the effectiveness of his teaching method was primarily one of discipline and that the whole question was nothing more than a 'recent aspect of an old conflict.'¹⁷ However, the changes pressuring an older generation of teachers and aired by a new generation of students were more than a generation gap, they reflected basic changes to society in the twentieth century.

Paul Cret expressed the complexity of his age by designing a variety of structures in a variety of styles. His work ranged from monumental civic buildings and campus plans to dams and bookplates. He was proficient in Classical, Gothic, Tudor, Art Deco, or any of a number of styles. In this diversity Cret embraced modern technology but he used it discriminately. He was caught in the middle ground of the moralistic issues concerning architecture and modern technology. To him, technology was an adjunct, a vital necessity in construction. His principal duty in the role as an architect was the expression of beauty. With certain types of structures, for example his designs for bridges and locomotives, technology was prominent and more closely allied with beauty, but most often it was repressed. Ultimately though, it is the continuity in an architect's

career which is of interest historically. Cret's designs which exhibit a slow, modernization of traditional classical forms are what warrant study.

Cret's work before World War I was noticeably different from that afterward. His first major design in the United States was appropriately in Washington, D.C. In winning the competition in 1907 for the Bureau of American Republics, Paul Cret contributed to Washington's expanding repertoire of neo-classical architecture.¹⁸ The Pan American Union, as it came to be called later, was typically Beaux-Arts in conception and execution, with the functions determining the plan and expression (fig. 7). This design by Cret was early in his career and does not deviate from the language of classical forms used at that time. Cret's early work conformed closely to what he had been taught at the Ecole in Paris. The evidence of this can be seen in the resemblance of his plan esquisse (fig. 2) and his design for the Labarre Prize (fig. 4) to the Pan American Union plan and facade. Loosely based on the Villa Pisani at Bagnolo by Palladio, the facade is rich in decorative trim: sculptured panels, cartouches, balustrades, quoins, modillions, etc.¹⁹ Cret set the offices, meeting rooms and library spaces around an interior courtyard designed to resemble the South American environment, recalling the origin of the collection of material housed within. Central to the design was a clear, processional circulation pattern through hallways of lavish Mayan and classical details. But even for its exceptional

quality, the Pan American Union fell right in step with the robust neo-classical buildings by Beaux-Arts trained architects. Most of Cret's work before the war reflected this traditional use of classical forms. Other examples include a number of buildings for the Philadelphia Parkway (1907), the Robert Fulton Memorial Competition (New York, 1909), and the Washington Memorial Arch (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 1912) (fig. 8). One building designed before the war which points to Cret's later modernized classical work is the Indianapolis Public Library, 1914 (fig. 9). The volumetric massing of the library, the very shallow sculptural relief, the engaged columns on the facade, and the square interior piers all indicate the more ascetic, severe treatment Cret would practice after the war.

In the 1920s Cret began developing a modern classical idiom which had endless variations, each as an expression of beauty and each involved as an evolutionary sequence of forms. He continued to use traditional forms during this decade but an evolving form emerged which became his later mature style. The Frankford War Memorial, Philadelphia, 1922, was seminal in this sequence and exhibits the six basic characteristics of Cret's modernized classical style: 1) symmetrical, inter-connecting, sharp-edged masses; 2) a pilastrade of flat piers forming the window/wall surface composed in one plane between heavier "pylon" end masses (this is based on an order with the hint of a capital, an entablature and usually an attic story space above); 3) windows recessed from the wall plane and

joined vertically by spandrels (frequently there are decorative grilles over the windows); 4) smoothly finished volumetric planar surfaces; 5) subsidiary decoration very shallow or incised, frequently Greek in origin but adapted by Cret; and 6) single or paired pieces of descriptive figurative sculpture serving to announce the structure's function (fig. 10). These characteristics produced a strong, quiet, monumental tone of articulate simplicity, which was not surprising considering that monuments and memorials were included in the evolutionary sequence. Comprising the sequence of designs which are important precursors to Cret's mature work in Washington are: the Frankford War Memorial, Philadelphia, 1922; the Integrity Trust Company, Philadelphia, 1923; the Pennsylvania State Battle Monument, Varennes, France, 1924; the Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, 1925; the Warren G. Harding Mausoleum, Marion, Ohio, 1925; the Hartford County Building, Hartford, Connecticut, 1926; the Chateau Thierry Memorial, Chateau Thierry, France, 1928; and the New Haven City Hall Building, New Haven, Connecticut, 1928 (figs. 10-17).²⁰

Cret's strong educational background proved very valuable. His Ecole training insured that a very logical method would be employed in determining the parti of a design. The expressive form Cret gave any work embodied the pleasing proportions of an ordered architecture, for although he had translated the classical vocabulary into a more modern form, the age-old rules of proportion still held. This quality and care was

extended to the site plan as well. Cret paid special attention to landscaping, whether it was a memorial or a building. Many times a natural and man-made plinth provided a subtle but forceful visual effect.

Sculpture also played an important role in Cret's work. His belief in figurative descriptive sculpture as integral rather than as adornment, never wavered. Allegorical use of sculpture seemed as essential as a structure's sound foundation. In fact, the Chenavard Prize Problem at the Ecole (fig. 5) had been won by Cret for his study of sculptural monuments in a commemorative pantheon. Cret retained this traditional practice in all of his forms, becoming a contributor to what was a local tradition:

...the presence of figurative sculpture is an indication of an attitude toward architecture common to many of the architects of this city [Philadelphia], past and present, an attitude which held that a building's facade ought to take an active role in the creation of the urban milieu, communicating use and function, and even describing the client to the passerby. It is an urban, and one might add, urbane, concept, implicit in many nineteenth century buildings....²¹

The sculptors Cret collaborated with, such as John Gregory and Alfred Boittau, shared his modern fine arts philosophy. Examples appear in diverse works ranging from buildings and memorials

to bridges and powerplants. Even such an International Style result that Cret produced for the Chemistry Building at the University of Pennsylvania in 1940 had as its sole decorative indulgence a figure of an alchemist over the entrance. Cret's indissoluble belief in architecture as a fine art and as a collaborative effort did not weaken as his taste turned more ascetic.

It is not surprising that Cret's taste and work underwent a change in the 1920s. American architects as a profession became somewhat confused as to their role and direction. American architectural periodicals only served to heighten this confusion by presenting images of European modernism mixed-in among traditional American work, usually without accompanying theoretical explanation.²² Although the diversity in Cret's work mirrored to some extent that pictured in the periodicals, his direction seemed sure-footed and concerned with the formal questions of architecture rather than the moral ones. In many of his essays Cret documented his philosophy of architecture as a slow process, an evolution as opposed to a revolution (such as the "Art Deco experiments" and the International Style currents). He felt that an architect with "artistic morality" could not help but be a modern, contributing to the whole of architectural history: "Architectural forms, which are like the words of our language, are transformed very slowly and without much regard for the rules which we would like to establish. But what remains in our power is to use these

forms in giving expression to our ideas and not those of our fathers."²³

In 1925 Cret delivered a paper entitled "The Trend in Modern Architecture." In his "weather forecast of the gathering storm," he commented on the revolutionary forms which had come on the heels of the Arts Decoratifs Exposition in Paris, 1925. Cret did not reject this trend outright; in fact, he hinted at the possible advantages of an extreme modernistic approach:

The excess of a crisis is often the direct cause of a favorable reaction. The necessity for simplifying the craftsmanship of our buildings, the disgust aroused by these loud appeals to the passerby, the feeling of having exhausted the repertory of the decoration of the past, may combine to bring about a return to a greater simplicity of forms. We may, after casting aside a good many of genuine antiques that we are incorporating in our buildings--columns and cartouches, buttresses and ogives, battlements and gargoyles--discover in our system of structural construction more possibilities than we have seen in it so far.... It will still take a little time before this elementary truth has sunk more deeply into our consciousness; but when it does, a new classicism, achieving beauty through good proportions, rather than through the picturesque, will be born.²⁴

Cret reevaluated his forecast in a 1933 address, "Ten Years of Modernism." The "retrospective appraisal," which featured the Folger Library as its frontis photograph, was an "I told you so." He praised some of the modernists' developments but felt that the "new classicism" had not been achieved. It was just this achievement for which Cret was striving. He concluded the later address by evaluating the modernist attributes he found useful and which had begun serving his "new classicism:"

On the whole, the modernist trend (shall I say revolution?) has been useful. It has helped all of us. It has forcefully focused our attention on some principals of composition, not new to be sure, but somewhat neglected during the past hundred years, such as the value of restraint, the value of designing volumes instead of merely decorating surfaces, [and] the value of empty surfaces as an element of composition.²⁵

These values of composition can be seen in the sequence of designs produced in the 1920s, but it is really in the next decade that they become evident in Cret's mature work (Appendix A).

Cret could not, by any means, swallow the modernist trend whole. He firmly believed that he was an artist, that architecture was a fine art:

The architect, by establishing a relationship of forms, gives us a sense of order which one feels to

be in accord with the order of the universe, and which we perceive as beauty. Architecture is an art, serving an intense and ineradicable human craving which art alone can satisfy.²⁶

The end in architecture was art, not science. In another article Cret invoked a quotation from Le Corbusier to emphasize the point: 'art begins where the calculation ends.'²⁷ Practical accomplishments were the ground work of any structure; "on these foundations the architect may rear a masterpiece should he happen to be an artist."²⁸

Chapter Two

Washington, D.C.: Local and National Milieu

It is important to consider the milieu and setting in which Cret produced his most significant work before examining that work in detail. The immediate setting of Washington, D.C. is very important. Washington's architectural tradition has proved extremely crucial to all architects associated with the creation of its public image. Most pertinent to Cret's modernized classicism in Washington was the intensified political concern for a federal image in the 1930s. Overall though, it is the national creation, recognition and reception of the modernized classical style which has to be understood in order to adequately analyze Paul Cret's contribution.

The period in the United States from 1902 to 1939 has been labelled by the historian Samuel Morison "The Great Change."²⁹ In this period were great social, cultural and technological changes, many associated with the names of twentieth century pioneers: Henry Ford, Glenn Curtiss, Susan Anthony, Sigmund Freud, Eugene O'Neill, Aaron Copland, Marcel Duchamp, Admiral Byrd, and many others. But at the same time there were enclaves of tradition where older values became entrenched. Washington, D.C. was one such place, reaffirming an older cultural tradition as other aspects of modern life raced by.

At the turn of the century the nation's capital city could show little evidence of the urban promise presented by the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. The renaissance of American urban form, promoted largely by Daniel Burnham and Charles McKim, had begun privately in Washington with such ventures as William Corcoran's Art Gallery by Ernest Flagg, completed in 1897, and the Willard Hotel by Henry Hardenbergh, completed in 1901. The stimulus for a concerted urban order for Washington was the culmination of a citizens committee of 1898, a joint congressional committee of 1900, a convention of architects in 1900, and a Senate commission formed in 1901. The ultimate stimulus for these groups of the civic minded had been the Centennial celebration in 1900 of Washington as the nation's capital; the final outcome was the Park Improvement Commission of the District of Columbia (later called the Senate Park Commission or McMillan Commission), consisting of Senator James McMillan; Charles Moore, McMillan's secretary; Daniel Burnham; Charles McKim; Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.; and Augustus Sain-Gaudens. As a result of the famous McMillan Commission Grand Tour of Europe in 1901 came the McMillan Plan, Washington's new blueprint for an "'official' architecture as well as a plan (fig. 18)."³⁰ What then emerged as the 'official' architecture came as no surprise considering the impact of the Chicago Exposition. L'Enfant had set a precedent for French models and the McMillan Commission would make no exceptions:

To the architects, and particularly the elite represented by the American Institute of Architects, there could be but one urban design model--Paris. It was in the city of light that the most articulate and influential members had won their professional spurs in the competitions of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. When they spoke of the "classic" they meant the academicism of the Ecole. Theirs was the white architectural style of the "City Beautiful" and of future Washington, just emerging from gray Romanesque and utilitarian red brick models.³¹

Thus, it was appropriate that Paul Cret, a Frenchman and a graduate of the Ecole in Paris, would begin his first important American work in Washington.

Within the first decade of the new century it became apparent that Washington's urban form was taking shape. The Pan American Union had not been the first Beaux-Arts library in Washington. The Central Public Library by Ackerman and Ross, completed in 1902, was another harbinger of the coming flood of "academic classicism." Soon, many other examples of civic architecture followed: Union Station by Daniel Burnham, 1908; the Department of Agriculture Building by Rankin, Kellog and Crane, 1905; the Army War College by McKim, Mead and White, 1908; the House and Senate Office Buildings by Carrere and Hastings, 1908; the District Building by Cope and Stewardson, 1910; and the Museum of Natural History by Hornblower and Marshall, 1910. At the end of that decade Congress established

a guardian of the McMillan Plan to insure that the good work already carried out would be joined by work of similar quality in accordance with the 'official architecture.' The Commission of Fine Arts, established in 1910, included as its first members: Daniel Burnham (Chairman); Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.; Thomas Hastings; Daniel Chester French; Francis Davis Millet; and Cass Gilbert. Charles Moore, Senator McMillan's former secretary, was especially influential as the Commission's Chairman from 1915 to 1937. The power of the Commission was great, "architectural styles of successive public buildings were molded to conform with the Beaux-Arts sympathies of the commission's members."³²

In the twenty-two years between the Pan American Union and Cret's next building in Washington, the Folger Shakespeare Library, 1929, Washington would greatly add to its core of monumental public buildings from the first ten years, including the City Post Office by Daniel Burnham, 1914; the Treasury Annex by Cass Gilbert, 1919; the Lincoln Memorial by Henry Bacon, 1922; the Freer Gallery by Charles Platt, 1923; and the Chamber of Commerce by Cass Gilbert, 1925. The Commission of Fine Arts would approve and discuss each of the 'official' buildings which would appear in the city, much of the time their own work. As these 'official' buildings were rising in Washington, similar government buildings were constructed elsewhere, also in the 'official' style of traditional classical forms.

The role of the Federal Government as an architectural client prior to the 1930s differed greatly from that afterwards. The ever-increasing size of the bureaucracy around the turn of the century necessitated additional office space with consequent political ramifications. The demand for new public buildings throughout the country as in Washington, such as post offices, custom houses, courthouses, etc., could hardly be met fast enough due to the traditional congressional method of passing separate authorization bills for each project. In 1902 an omnibus public buildings law was adopted which authorized 150 new projects at the same time, with an increased limit cost per project. This legislative move to facilitate efficiency established instead what would later be termed and attacked as "pork barrel" building. The Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department was thereafter criticized for extravagant government buildings which were not in proportion to the size of their respective towns.³³

Despite the 1913 Public Buildings Commission, which it had been hoped would review the need for each new federal building, Congressmen still justified civic gifts to their districts. Frank Clark, Chairman of the House Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, stated his feelings on the matter of extravagance in the Congressional Record of 17 January 1916:

[The country boy] sees very little of the blessings of government beyond the post office and rural carrier, and if I had the power I would erect for every presidential

post office through the broad domain of the Republic a Government building representative of the sovereignty and the glory of this great country.... Suppose here and there it should be a little more expensive in dollars and cents to own a building than it is to rent. Is it worth nothing to inspire patriotism and love of country in the hearts and minds of the youth of the country? No youth or citizen ever looked upon a Federal building in which the business of his country was being conducted but that he became a better American.³⁴

Clark's statement is a good indication of the cultural philosophy behind the architectural styles of Federal buildings up to World War I. Modelled after Italian piazzos or French opera houses, the academic styles went hand-in-hand with the lingering cultural philanthropy and City Beautiful progressivism of the American Renaissance era.

The accelerated expansion of the Federal Government during World War I, due to war-related industries and functions, did not greatly diminish afterwards. The commitments to highway construction, subsidies to the airline industry (because of U.S. Mail contracts), dam construction, etc., had increased the size of the administration and the scale of its programs. But there had been no new authorizations by Congress in the 1920s for new public buildings, resulting in an office rent bill of enormous proportions. In 1926 the Treasury Department was mandated by the Public Buildings Act to correct this

rental problem. Two years later, the Hoover Administration authorized federal building funds but the real push came under Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, when building funds were increased to over 700 million dollars in order to put into effect the Public Works Administration (PWA).³⁵ An inherited authorization for funds, plus the chance to give unemployed architects and builders jobs, created a likely political vehicle for the new administration.

One of the most compelling reasons for studying modernized classicism is its sheer quantity and pervasiveness. The second most compelling reason is that the vast majority of it was the result of the New Deal Administration. Never before in the history of the United States had there been such a massive building program under one authority. This could not have been possible except at precisely the correct moment in time.

The circumstances which set the stage for the Depression Decade were, of course, the social, political, cultural, and economic climate of the 1920s. Prosperity and Progressivism were dealt that fatal blow in October 1929. By the presidential election of 1932, the "warring breath of popular faction" was indeed not very strong: "Despite well-publicized hunger marches and demonstrations of the unemployed, the years between 1930 and 1932 bred not anger but apathy, not militance but hopelessness. not determination but confusion and panic."³⁶ The dark hours only seemed to turn into darker days as the whole country was affected:

Economically the winter of 1932-33 was the worst in American history. After three years of depression the nation's industry, agriculture, and banking system lay mortally wounded. Funds for relief of the poor and the hungry had been completely exhausted on the city and state levels. No longer did anyone dare to predict the return of prosperity. The Republicans were a defeated party, but their successors offered little evidence that they would deal with the country's problems more capably. On the eve of a new President's inauguration the political leadership of the United States seemed as bankrupt as its economy.³⁷

So it was in the despair of the aftermath of such a devastating hand that Franklin Delano Roosevelt called for a New Deal. Many were pessimistic of the new administration's ability to turn things around; the magic called for was strong:

The speechwriters, lawyers, and economists who came to Washington with Roosevelt were by no means innocent of ideology; on the contrary, they had a relatively coherent and sophisticated sense of what needed to be done.

The great difficulty in designing social machinery is that it must be so fashioned as to operate in two worlds: it must utilize the habits and beliefs of our old individualistic pioneer world; simultaneously it must operate in a new world where powerful economic forces

have made mincemeat of many established habits and beliefs.³⁸

This balance of a "social machinery" operating in two worlds was also in correlation to modernized classicism, seemingly traditional and modern at the same time.

Washington's first major undertaking to provide departmental headquarters was the Federal Triangle Group, which included the Departments of Commerce, Labor, Post Office, Internal Revenue, Justice, the National Archives, and the Federal Trade Commission. These particular buildings were not designed in a modernized classical style but many others constructed in Washington thereafter under the federal building programs were (Appendix B). The majority of projects were distributed throughout the country as the Federal Government assumed many heretofore state or local responsibilities and expanded pre-existing ones. The government's expanded role, combined with relief agencies, meant that the physical presence of the government would manifest itself in the form of new buildings. Of the 1,200 Public Works Administration buildings recorded in one survey just between the years 1933 and 1937, over 1,000 were in towns which had never previously hosted a federal building.³⁹ This enormous undertaking was carried out by the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department, created in 1933 to control all federal building. The man behind much of the accomplishments in this division was Louis A. Simon, the

Supervising Architect. Simon had entered the Architectural Division of the Treasury in 1905--a strong background in federal images resulted: "When he himself became the sole responsible official, the character of the work changed very materially, became freer, bolder, with a sort of wisely conservative experimental quality; (...) and under his administration, the government architecture has ceased to follow, and has taken its rightful place of leadership in the forward movement of this greatest of the American Arts."⁴⁰ The philosophy of economic recovery which Roosevelt's advisory "Brain Trust" recommended included this great public building record established by Simon. In fact, the President's reelection campaign strongly stressed the "built record" and the relief of the architectural profession.⁴¹ Fortunately for the President, his creation of a symbolic building program equated jobs and votes.

In the late 1920s The Association of Federal Architects was formed, its first President was appropriately Louis Simon. This organization, and its mouthpiece, The Federal Architect magazine, became the champions of federally sponsored architecture, and in effect, modernized classicism. The Federal Architect's editor, Edwin B. Morris, of the Treasury's Supervising Architect's Office, flew his colors in the first editorial of the first issue in 1930: "We venture to predict that the good architecture of the future will be done by Traditionalists practicing Moderne, or by Modernists practicing Traditionelle."⁴²

Morris also happened to be a former student of Cret's. With a conviction to match his mentor's, Morris waged a crusade in print for what he believed was the right path. In a 1934 article entitled "Our New Public Buildings: Indications of a Distinct Change in Architectural Character," Morris presented a thesis that this "Modernistic" style (as he called modernized classicism) had been around about ten years and was therefore old enough to withstand the test of time:

The opportunity to sit back and look judicially is accepted not only by the architect but by the man on the street, for the reason that the modernistic style has now spread to public buildings which he feels he owns.⁴³

Morris believed that the stripped or refined style of the "Modernistic" resulted from the horizontality of the classical column/entablature form adapting to the verticality of the indigenous American skyscraper. The vertical emphasis of continuous piers between windows, found in most modernized classical designs, was, in fact, an element of the early Chicago School skyscrapers. This uniform pier could be vertically extended to any height without the visual problem of an attenuated round column stretched beyond belief. Morris' other point about the adaptation was the abstraction of ornament, which is not as useful in taller buildings. Morris underestimated the acceptance of the style when he concluded that the "Modernistic" failed when it was used for low, horizontal buildings. This

is hardly likely because it was this lower, horizontal classical form from which the modernized classical developed. Morris was correct however in observing that the taller versions leaned more toward the modern than the traditional (for example the Naval Center discussed in Chapter Five) but it was the lower form of the style, two-four stories, which became more identifiable as a Federal image. The logic of his arguments came directly from the influence of Cret:

...you can change architectural forms, but you cannot change architectural principles without confusing the message. There is an old axiom that a good design, following established principles, should be transferable from one style to another and still be a good design. (...) In other words, it might be well to design low buildings in the classic style and work them over into modernistic. The syntax would then be right. The architectural principals of mass and proportion which we have impressed upon the pliable public as the canons of good taste would thus be certain to be followed. (...)

' This thought is brought out in the Folger Library-- an example of the use of a new architectural vocabulary expressed along established rules of syntax. Here, original and inspired forms are presented with due regard to the delicacies of proportion and mass established through centuries of architectural study.⁴⁴

The message, extensively put forth in the article, was a manifesto of sorts--it authorized and prescribed the style by logic and weight of examples.

In a less rhetorical and more candid contemporary article, "Some Recent Buildings of the United States Government," 1937, Louis Simon presented a number of Post Office designs from across the country. An introductory statement the previous month in the American Architect and Architecture described the designs Simon would present as "sensible efforts instead of letting loose screaming eagles on Main Street."⁴⁵ Simon implicitly indicated the use of modernized classicism as an image:

When all is said and done, architecture creates an environment, and it does so by expressing some dominant idea--it may be of force and strength, of light playfulness, of restrained and scholarly dignity or florid exuberance of spirit. Obviously, in our social system with all its ramifications, we are in the midst of stupendous changes that are difficult to measure. That the United States Government is rising to its opportunities in many fields, calls for no argument. We have moved into a consciousness of new relationships to our countrymen, and that the mass of our countrymen are ready for change has been unhesitatingly shown.⁴⁶

Simon illustrated his article with thirteen examples of recent

government buildings.⁴⁷ Seven of the designs can be labeled modernized classical by their morphology: symmetrical and volumetric massing, spandrelled window treatment, and abstracted classical details. Five can be considered Colonial or Regional Revival (such as Spanish Colonial or Georgian), and the last can be called Art Deco (a more totally abstracted modern style). This was an accurate representation of government work in that decade--the styles used for Federal projects were either modernized classical, Colonial or Regional Revival, or in a small percentage of cases, an Art Deco, Art Moderne or a more traditional classical style. Simon knew that there were other currents in architecture but he, of course, felt that his admired style had divine grace: "And if, as a whole, the designs of a Government's public buildings are shaped by the composite efforts of that country's architectural ability, be the result what it may, it is at least a logical expression of the time; and to that extent it possesses the spark of enduring life."⁴⁸ A variety of styles were accepted and used concurrently by the Federal Government during the decade of depression and relief but the de facto governmental image remained modernized classical.

Without a doubt, the best contemporary document in the form of a book was a magnum opus published by the government in 1939: C. W. Short and R. Stanley-Brown, Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and Other Governmental Bodies Between the Years 1933 and 1939

With the Assistance of the Public Works Administration. The authors' brief introduction to the large volume gave another indication that the modernized classical style was transitional and considered appropriate by the government:

This desire for change, however, is offset and balanced to a great extent by an equally human desire to preserve tradition. Today architecture in the U.S. is passing through a period of transition from eclectic design to something new and different....

Today,...changes in the character and style of architectural design occur slowly and constitute an evolution rather than a revolution.⁴⁹

The book was divided into types of projects, such as local government buildings, libraries, schools, hospitals, warehouses, dams, bridges, housing projects, etc., with representative structures chosen from over 1,700 projects. Statistics abounded in the book, representing 17,250 buildings erected by the PWA during the six years covered in the survey. The estimated expenditure by the government for all the projects totaled approximately 4.5 billion dollars. With such an outlay, it is not surprising that the Federal Government succeeded in establishing its identity.

A sampling of any of the represented buildings in this book serves to illustrate the schism within even Federally directed programs (Appendix C). Viewing the Government projects,

one sees traditional currents, transitional currents, modern currents and mutations of each. The two predominant currents, the traditional--largely evidenced by Colonial Revival, and the modern--represented by modernized classicism, mirror the dichotomous reaction in times of national crises. While some dig-in and turn towards the past for traditions and values with which to combat change, others fully embrace the future with optimistic hope for solutions. Connotations of a traditional or modern style were more appropriate for some uses, as the statistical sampling in Appendix C denotes.

The Government relief programs served to catalyze a larger schism which had already developed between Traditionalists and Modernists. These two camps were found in just about every facet of American culture and society: art, literature, politics, religion, economics, and architecture. While the Government's modern image could be called timid, there were definitely much more aggressive currents of the modern movement in architecture to be seen in the United States. The influence of the Bauhaus and European Modernism was increased in the 1930s, due in part to Hitchcock and Johnson's The International Style and to the images featured in periodicals in the 1920s. Lingering versions of the Art Deco style, whose nucleus was the Art Decortifs Exposition in Paris, 1925, was also a contender. A more indigenous American modern style was the Art Moderne or Streamline, closely related to American marketing ideas.⁵⁰ These currents and others repeatedly classed with those

architects who believed in more of an evolutionary change than revolutionary. The debate between the two camps was aired in virtually every issue of every architectural periodical of the 1930s. Occasionally face-to-face confrontations occurred, as in 1939 when the Smithsonian Gallery of Art was pitted against the National Gallery of Art on the Mall in Washington.⁵¹ The most traditional of all the Smithsonian Gallery's final competition designs was by Paul Cret, not surprisingly the one most favored by the Commission of Fine Arts.

Through the 1920s, Washington's urban and monumental ensemble grew with structures not that different in style from Cret's Pan American Union. During this time Cret broke away from an academic use of classical forms (discussed in Chapter One), slowly modernizing his work so that its references became more abstract. When he again returned to the Federal City to design the Folger Library in 1929, he produced something which offered a new direction and a modern expression while still adhering to the classical tradition of Washington. The Folger Library was not the first stylistic form of its kind in Washington but its excellence in design made it the best. Its style became an alternate role model for Washington and soon after, for the country, as politics merged with architecture.

The following three chapters will deal in detail with three of Cret's buildings in Washington. The intention is to relate the subject matter of Chapters One and Two. Cret's work continued to evolve towards expressing beauty through

compositional masses of undecorated space. Concurrently, the Federal Government put its blessing on the modernized classical style and sponsored its images from coast to coast. In Washington, center of federal image-making, Paul Cret's forms attracted considerable attention, to the extent that he was patronized by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, increasing his influential stature and that of his work.

Chapter Three

The Folger Shakespeare Library: New, Strange and Right

Henry Clay Folger was the catalyst who brought into association William Shakespeare, Washington, D.C., and Paul Philippe Cret. From that association came the Folger Shakespeare Library, a building receiving continuous praise equal to that of Shakespeare's. As with many men of genius, Shakespeare was accused of being a borrower. One of the best statements of defense to this charge was issued by Ralph Waldo Emerson when he said of the bard: 'He breathed upon dead bodies and brought them to life.'⁵² Very pertinent to the Folger Library was a statement by Cret, remarkably similar in feeling to Emerson's, reflecting his own view of borrowing: "We must recognize that what we are borrowing from the past is always a form void of spirit and that it is our task to give it new life."⁵³ With the addition in 1931 of the Folger Library to Washington's expanding monumental ensemble, a new spirit was offered as a way of completing the McMillan blueprint.

Ralph Waldo Emerson had been the agent acting upon Henry Clay Folger. After hearing Emerson lecture at Amherst College in 1879, Folger was inspired to read some of his writings, including one on Shakespeare, which led to a lifelong quest for Shakespeariana.⁵⁴ Folger's collection did not occupy all of his time, indeed, it was only a hobby. He had risen from modest

beginnings to become the Chairman of Standard Oil of New York. Along the way, he and his wife, Emily Jordan Folger, had managed to amass a small fortune, which only too happily went into antiquarian books, in particular, works of Shakespeare. Quite serious about his hobby, Folger even interrupted meetings of the Executive Committee of Standard Oil to speak to his book-buying agents.⁵⁵

The turn of the century was an age when great collections were formed; the competition for books as well as for other old world relics was sharp. Despite the free flow of dollars to eager European antique dealers, most of the cultural philanthropists were serious and frugal, hence their self-made fortunes. Henry Folger was no exception; Louis B. Wright later recalled: 'Undramatic and sober as was Folger's life, his accomplishments illustrated so clearly the opportunities in the United States for a young man to rise in the world by his own diligence and integrity that I was asked on a number of occasions to describe his career on the Voice of America.'⁵⁶ Eventually, Folger insured that his hobby and fortune would come to rest in a permanent place, which, again, was in conformity with the cultural philanthropist's ideals of civic inspiration through architecture.

The Folgers had considered Stratford-upon-Avon, New York City, and Chicago as sites for their library but it was Emily Folger's fond recollections of childhood in Washington that made them look upon it as a potential cultural center. The

chosen site proved difficult to acquire, in contrast to the alternate locations such as the University of Chicago, which had even offered to provide a special building. A group of fourteen houses between Second and Third Streets along East Capital Street on Capitol Hill in Washington formed the chosen site for the library. This block of houses, adjacent to the Library of Congress, was historically known as "Grant Row" or Grant's Folly," after Captain Albert Grant, who failed to take advantage of the speculative row houses built in 1871 (Fig. 19). The Folgers quietly started acquiring the property in 1920 or 1921 but had to make their intention public in 1928 due to a Congressional Bill introduced into Congress by Mr. Luce on January 16, 1928. Luce's bill called for the acquisition of the Grant Row site as part of the land needed for the proposed addition to the Library of Congress. Three days later, Folger wrote to Dr. Herbert Putnam, Librarian of Congress, to declare his philanthropic intention. Putnam was sympathetic to bibliophilia and one whose word carried a great deal of weight on the subject of his library's addition.⁵⁷ Folger's collection had remained relatively secret to this point, considered among those who knew of it as a private collection. On January 25, 1928 Putnam answered Folger's letter, indicating that he realized the value of what Folger was offering to the American people and that he would gladly serve as an ally in Folger's dream.⁵⁸ Henry Folger had been shaken-up by the thought that his dream, inching toward fruition for eight long

years, could suddenly be destroyed by the eminent domain of the Architect of the Capitol. Without a great deal of soul-searching as to where, at that time in his life his priorities lay, Folger announced his resignation as Chairman of the Board of Standard Oil of New York on March 22, 1928.⁵⁹ His lobbying proved successful because the Library of Congress acquiesced in its acquisition of the property.⁶⁰ In going public to fight for his land, Folger had also opened himself up to the endless bombardment of solicitations, not only from book sellers but also from architects eager to offer their services.⁶¹

It is not known just how Henry Folger decided upon Alexander Buel Trowbridge as his consulting architect, but there is a good indication of why: Trowbridge offered a unique service. Alexander Trowbridge had left behind a career as an educator and as a practicing architect to become a professional consulting architect who, "...acts as confidential agent of the owner; helps in selection of the property; studies requirements; [and] helps [the] client choose an architect."⁶² Folger had in his possession one of Trowbridge's promotional booklets, which would have appealed to anyone not familiar with a design process:

This booklet tells those intending to build how they may save time and money and avoid trouble by having problems analyzed and complete programs developed, before being committed to an Executive Architect or to a Building Contractor.... This new form of Architectural

service is a sign of the times, an expression of the complex conditions under which we are living.... Mr. Trowbridge does not prepare working drawings and specifications, his practice being confined to an advisory or associative service. Architects collaborating with him soon learn that they are not working with a competitor, but rather with one who cooperates for the advancement of good architecture.⁶³

On page fourteen of his booklet Trowbridge listed his "Professional Equipment," which would have also appealed to a client. He had begun his architectural education at Cornell University, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Architecture in 1890. From Cornell he had pursued an expected path to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he remained from 1893 to 1895, studying in the Atelier Lambert. The next credential he listed was his five year appointment as Director and Dean of the College of Architecture at Cornell (1897-1902). He then returned to Paris for two years as a student in a private atelier; it is probably at this time that Trowbridge became familiar with Cret's student work at the Ecole. After he returned from Paris Trowbridge formed a partnership with another Cornell graduate, Frederick L. Ackerman, lasting from 1906 to 1921.⁶⁴

Trowbridge played a large part in the outcome of his client's library. He thoroughly gained the trust and confidence of Folger and exerted considerable power in the early decisions.

For example, Trowbridge claimed credit for the idea of an exterior design to suit its surroundings when Folger had considered an Elizabethan expression for the whole structure:

Knowing the Washington tradition already well established for the use of buildings of classic appearance, I explained to Mr. Folger the desirability of securing a building which would harmonize with the neighborhood in which it was going to be placed. He readily acquiesced in the idea of choosing an architecture that would fit properly into the Washington picture, and was greatly pleased when he was told that it might be possible to treat the interior of the building in the early Renaissance and Tudor periods of English architecture.⁶⁵

Trowbridge then recalled his early consultation with Folger which resulted in the suggestion of a modernized classical structure, the use of sculpture as a key feature of the facade, and the use of Shakespeare as a source for the sculpture:

In the mean time, while discussing these points with Mr. Folger [ie. the exterior/interior points], I told him of the work which was being done in America. I felt that we were standing still, in a sense, if we accepted the idea that we could not design a classic building without imitating one of the well-known examples of ancient architecture, with its columns, its entablature and all of

the decorative details which may have had a meaning at the time they were originally created, but which have no relation whatever to the life of today. Mr. Folger very properly asked, 'If you are going to omit those features which have always been considered the hallmarks of classic architecture, how are you ^{going} to preserve the classic spirit to which you have frequently referred?' And I replied, 'By the use of sculpture.' I reminded him of the bas relief friezes in the highest expression of Greek architecture and how the world had generally accepted them not only as superb architectural features, but also as examples of sculpture of the finest quality. And I added, 'Where could we find a more wonderful source for sculptural subjects than from the drawings of Shakespeare?' And as it was agreed to ask our architect, who had not yet been selected, to avoid the usual approach to classic architecture and to endeavor to produce something having individuality. Above all he was to be told to consider sculpture in relief as an important feature of the exterior.⁶⁶

Trowbridge gave four reasons for recommending Cret as the "Executive Architect:" Cret had shown a "penchant" for low relief sculptured panels while he was at the Ecole; he had shown a "predilection" for a classical architecture different from other students at the Ecole; the Pan American Union exhibited a "freedom from imitation;" and for Cret's "ingenuity

and fine taste in developing the interior" of the Detroit Institute of Arts.⁶⁷

With Trowbridge's Beaux-Arts background and "impatience" with imitative American architecture, he could not have been unaware of the modernized classical idiom Cret had been developing. Surely, Cret's winning design for the Hartford County Building, 1926, and any of a number of commemorative memorials would have appealed to Trowbridge. Therefore, with reasons to recommend him, Trowbridge brought Cret to one of the most important works of his lifetime.

Throughout the entire design stage, Folger relied heavily on Trowbridge's judgment in helping to make decisions based on Cret's presentations. By the fall of 1928, Cret had given Folger six different designs for the East Capitol Street facade. In these studies, Cret had used the Beaux-Arts "method of attacking a problem." The six designs arrived at were clearly from Cret's esquisse, his most satisfactory study for the parti. In reaching the stage where the esquisse was further studied and refined into the six different treatments, Cret had gone through a very methodical, even mechanical mental process. A good outline of this process was captured by John Harbeson when Cret lectured on 'Parti' at the T-Square Club in Philadelphia in 1921.⁶⁸ First, the architect must begin with a list of the program requirements; in the case of the Folger: "(1) a world-famous library, (2) collections of painting, sculpture, and curios, constituting a small museum,

and (3) a small theater to be used for the presentation of Shakespeare's plays in their original staging, and for lectures or concerts."⁶⁹ Next, the size of the lot and the size of the various required spaces are drawn to scale as separate entities, as so many blocks in plan; in the case of the Folger the property is 364' x 186', with the total building measuring 226' x 111' (fig. 20). With the given or chosen size of all the major spaces of the structure, diagrammatic studies can be made of different arrangements of the spaces in plan (fig. 21). From these different solutions, the best are chosen and studied further with sections and elevations coming into play (fig. 22). The most successful parti is selected and committed by its esquisse, which is then the subject of still further study and refinement in detail, hence the six facade studies Cret sent to Folger, obviously all of the same parti (fig. 23).⁷⁰

The first aspect of design which had been considered was that of a disharmony in the treatment of the exterior and the interior. Cret had been given this unusual situation as a requirement from the beginning, an open-minded approach he eagerly embraced.⁷¹ Putting aside the question of exterior expression, he first worked on the parti of the plan, as indicated in the process described above. The program broke-down into three divisions: a library, a museum, and a theater. Cret's own description is as follows:

The library, with a main reading room surrounded by open shelves and vaults for the most precious books and

manuscripts; individual study rooms; stack rooms with allowance for future growth; a catalogue room; offices for the Director, Supervisor of Research, Superintendent, clerical staff and cataloguers; a receiving room; and a photographic laboratory.

The exhibition gallery, open to all visitors, and to be used for the display of paintings, sculpture, books and manuscripts, musical instruments, costumes, etc., with an entrance lobby and coat room; and reserve galleries for prints, paintings, etc.

The theater, a reconstruction of a Shakespearian playhouse, with dressing rooms, property rooms, a lounge for the public, and a separate entrance vestibule.⁷²

Cret's parti was to design the library reading room and stacks as a rectangular center piece, with work and administrative spaces on the west, forming a "T" in plan for the overall library space (figs. 24-26). He then balanced the east end with the theater, thus forming an "H" in plan when combined with the library spaces. The museum or exhibition gallery was placed on the north side, between the projecting entrance halls of the library and theater, closing off the "H" plan on the north, leaving two projecting wings on the south side. The library therefore became protected from street noise, buffered on the north by the exhibition gallery, on the east by the theater, on the west by the offices, and on the south by the

projecting parts of the theater and administrative spaces. The administrative offices, of three floors and a basement, were placed on the west so that the more important offices had a view of the Capitol. Being public by nature, the exhibition gallery was placed along the most public side, East Capitol Street. Not only were the three main functioning spaces of the structure placed in their most advantageous positions, but they were all knit together with a simple circulation flow, essential to the whole parti, with the reading room and stacks placed at "the heart" of the esquisse (figs. 27, 28).⁷³

Folger was never negligent in keeping the importance of the Reading Room before the architects; even as late as May 1929 he was still cautioning Trowbridge: "We must try to keep in mind that our enterprise is, first of all, a Library, and while there are other features which we hope will be interesting to the public, that of the 'Library' is all important."⁷⁴ To leave no doubt in the public's mind, Folger wrote to Cret in June 1929 and changed the name of the building from "Folger Shakespeare Foundation" to "Folger Shakespeare Library."⁷⁵

With the esquisse and parti firmly established, Cret worked on the expression of the principal facade along East Capitol Street. The esquisse, chosen by Cret and presented to Folger in six different schemes, had as its basic design a low, horizontal form with nine tall windows between pilasters, which in turn were contained between flanking entrance doors (figs. 29, 30). In two schemes, there was the suggestion of secondary

entrances on East Capitol Street while the principal entrances were on Second and Third Streets. The basic difference in the designs, other than different arrangements of ornament and sculpture, was the inclusion of a central attic floor and a ground level balustrade in three designs, obviously to indicate the reading room space.⁷⁶

As Trowbridge had suggested, sculpture played an important descriptive role in the Folger Library as it did in all of Cret's work. Cret took the sculptural frieze idea literally and designed four of the studies with sculptured scenes in the position of a frieze, while the other two designs had the square sculptured panels between the windows, one with them at the top and one at the bottom. The latter position, with the sculpture at eyelevel, was chosen for the final design.

The final scheme combined bits and pieces from all of the preliminary schemes (figs. 31, 32). With thoughts and decisions from Folger and Trowbridge to guide him, Cret refined the design to everyone's approval. From one of the meetings with the client and the consulting architect, Cret had taken notes on Folger's preferences: entrances on the East Capitol Street; very flat pilasters; sculpture over the entrance; identical windows; square sculpture below the windows; a panel of sculpture over the windows; and a flat roof line.⁷⁷ Despite one letter to Trowbridge, in which Folger voiced his wife's opinion of the principal facade as being "a little too somber," the final design was more severe, and consequently,

more powerful than all the original designs.⁷⁸

The strong image derived its power from two basic effects, a proportioned harmonic balance and a sculptured solidity. Three elements dominated the facade, reflecting in elevation the three functions of the building. The east and west entrances respectively represent the theater and the library with the exhibition gallery reflected by the range of nine windows between the entrances. The differentiation between entrances is achieved through the east and west elevations, one of which would have to be seen in approaching the building. On the east, the theater side, a theater door with the sculptured masks of Tragedy and Comedy provide the only relief to the otherwise blank wall (figs. 33,34). The west side is composed of windows, announcing the administrative wing (figs. 35,36).

The visual quality of the Folger Library resulted from Cret's strong foundation in the rules of proportions and in the use of classical orders. As his work evolved, Cret's use of the orders became more subtle, the Folger Library being a good example of this. The facade of the library abstractly referred to a classical order (fig. 37). Obviously resembling a colonnade, the pilastrade rests on a plinth of horizontally-laid marble slabs. Above the cap-less pilasters is an entablature, identified through its decoration: an incised guilloche-type band representing the architrave; incised quotations representing the frieze; and a band of dentils representing the cornice. The manner in which the stone was laid also

defined these parts of the entablature: horizontal for the architrave, vertical for the frieze, and horizontal for the cornice.

Cret's modernized classical idiom is very apparent in his design for the Folger Library. The whole effect is of a heavy, solid piece of white marble, delicately carved out and carved on, producing a very monumental tone. The shallow relief of the figures of Pegasus carved on either side of the flanking entrance blocks, a decorative band in the position of the architrave, and the incised lettering of three quotations, all seem to emphasize solidity by their lack of depth (fig. 38). An important characteristic of Cret's evolving style was the treatment of the wall surface. The dark window areas with the pilasters between them produce what Royal Cortissoz referred to as a "reasoned verticality," suggestive of columns with free space between and behind. But perhaps more important to Cret's later work is his increasing realization of the modernists' 'value of empty surfaces as an element of composition,' evidenced by the areas of undecorated space on the Folger Library's three principal facades. And indicative of the evolutionary adaptive selection practiced by Cret is the Folger Library's role as a continuity. The esquisse studies of the library with sculptured panels in the frieze owe their form to the Hartford County Building's original design scheme, 1926. In turn, the Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank, 1932, took part of its form from the Folger Library by the placement of

sculptured panels below the windows (fig. 39).

Cret always showed a great interest in the base and surroundings for his designs and the Folger Library was no exception. The plinth of the Folger Library was conceived of as a series of alternating colors and materials, using grass, concrete, marble, and shrubbery. When seen in plan, the landscaping design of the plinth echoes and balances the configuration of the building plan, extending out to the north the distance the south wings extend from the reading room on the opposite side (fig. 24).

The interior spaces come as a shock due to the deceptive scale of the facade, which allowed no idea as to the size of the rooms inside or even how many floors. Upon entering either entrance door into the vestibules, the Exhibition Gallery is at once apparent (fig. 40). The hall (22' x 130' x 30'6"), Elizabethan in style with fully paneled oak walls and a strap-work ceiling, is a public space, therefore it is very accessible. The idea of a public space, as well as fulfilling specific functions, was frequently employed by Beaux-Arts trained architects as part of a hierarchical circulation pattern. Cret designed similar spaces in the Pan American Union, the Indianapolis Public Library, and the Hartford County Building. Around the border of the Exhibition Hall floor are Enfield tiles with the titles of the most famous works by Shakespeare, described as bringing in "the leitmotif of the building."⁷⁹ Above the doors at each end of the Gallery are

carved the coats-of-arms of the United States and England on the west and east, respectively. Not only are these symbolic arms placed in their respective positions geographically but they also appropriately refer to the spaces reached through each doorway: an Elizabethan theater on the east and the modern administrative offices on the west--the one a reminder of the collection's origins, and the other the present and future purpose of that collection. While in the Gallery the visitor is also allowed to see, but not enter, the raison d'etre of the building, the library reading room; this could be seen through two leaded glass doors on the south side of the room.

The Theater was not designed as such but as a lecture room (fig. 41). While the thought had first been to design a reproduction of a period theater such as the Globe, the Swan, or the Fortune, Cret then decided that a lack of historical documentation on those theaters necessitated that the theater be Elizabethan in atmosphere, not accuracy.⁸⁰

Cret's description of the Reading Room was that of a "typical English hall, with a high trussed roof, and lighted by three bay windows (fig. 42)."⁸¹ The Reading Room, nestled in the "heart" of the building, is reached through the west wing off of the corridor on axis with the west entrance. The enormous size of the room (38' x 131' x 32' high) made it the dominating space of the building: it corresponds to three floors of the administration wing. It was here that the "principal function" of the Library, "to facilitate study by

Shakespearian scholars," was to take place in the atmosphere characteristic of a private library. The only thing producing the character of a private library was the fact that it was a private library; the size of the space, the richly paneled and decorated walls and windows all indicated, in fact, a grand public space. The references to the collection, besides the two stories of open stacks themselves, were a reproduction of the apse window of Trinity Church at Stratford-upon-Avon on the west, and a reproduction of the Shakespeare Memorial in the same church on the east. The window only reproduced the tracery of the original; the stained glass subject was a conception of the "Seven Ages of Man" from As You Like It. The memorial on the east end was adapted to include flanking portraits of the donors and eventually, a repository for their ashes; this was appropriately placed in the time-honored east end, displacing the apse window to the west. Cret ingeniously placed the west window so that it could benefit from a light-well between the Reading Room and the administration wing. The light-well also serves to light the Catalogue Room below by means of a skylight and as well as providing light for the east side of the administration wing (fig. 27).

The "Grant Row" site was cleared in November 1929 with construction beginning the following June.⁸² William Clemmer, superintendent of construction, gave his impression of the project after its completion:

'All great buildings are created cooperatively. The

Folger Shakespeare Library was constructed by men who know how to work together toward a single goal. They were like the old craftsmen of the Middle Ages. They loved their work, they were proud to do their best and they were proud of the result.'⁸³

The degree and integration of craftsmanship seemed to be the factor which made the difference. Flaunting the significance as one of the earliest decorative uses of aluminum on a building, Alcoa featured the Folger Library as an advertisement in the Federal Architect which began with a quotation from John Ruskin: 'Fine art is that in which the hand, the head and the heart go together.'⁸⁴ Ruskin would have approved of the craftsmanship of the Folger even if abhorred by machine-made aluminum parts.⁸⁵ With perhaps the exception of the use of aluminum, technology in the Folger Library took on a secondary, supportive role, out of sight behind the well-crafted details.

The spirit of the craftsmen and the collaborating artists confirmed Cret's attitude of his work as fine art. Cret and William H. Livingston, his partner working on the Folger Library, worked closely with Folger's ideas of incorporated motifs and with the respective artists: John Gregory, who sculpted the exterior panels and a bust of Folger; Brenda Putnam, who executed the statue of Puck and the fountain to the west of the building; the Piccirilli brothers who were the stonecutters; Nicola D'Ascenzo, responsible for the stained glass; J. Monroe Hewlett, designer of the theater fabrics; Westing, Evans and

Egmore and Austin Purves, general decorators; and Erik Jansson, woodcarver (fig. 43). Folger had first tried to approach Frederick MacMonnies as sculptor for the facade panels but could not reach him and consequently settled on John Gregory.⁸⁶ Folger had visited Gregory in his New York studio just two months before his death and was emotionally struck by the latent success he beheld in the half-finished sculptured panel of King Lear (fig. 44).⁸⁷ Cret was just as pleased and remarked that Gregory had "obtained an intimate union of sculpture with architecture, a thing seldom achieved."⁸⁸ Cret and Gregory worked well together because of the similar artistic attitudes and directions of each. Frederick Hard's analysis of the sculptor could easily stand for the architect:

Admirers of Gregory's work have found his style especially appealing for its restrained classicism, which is more apparent in the total conception than in any derivative details. Within a classic discipline Gregory has achieved a high degree of inventiveness without searching for newer and stranger forms. His work has most frequently been praised for its striking clarity of design, its sureness of execution, and its harmonious rhythm.⁸⁹

The philanthropic origins, the collaborative effort, and the ideals of beauty which Folger allowed Cret to uphold, combined to produce a work which was evidence that the American Renaissance had not crawled into the grave entirely. However,

what Cret designed as the repository for one couple's life-long collection of Shakespeariana, was not emulative of a past golden age, it was modern--in its creator's definition of using a new form of an old language to express contemporary times.

The reception of the Folger Shakespeare Library was one of acceptance; this was particularly relevant to the 'official' neo-classical tradition of Washington. The stalwart defenders of Washington's architectural blueprint, the Commission of Fine Arts, although "highly pleased" with the initial design when it was presented, somehow allowed their preconceived ideals to underestimate the Folger's significance; in their recorded Minutes they matter-of-factly stated for perpetuity: "The building was designed in the classical order--with a colonnade on East Capitol Street...."⁹⁰ Other critics, with more of an acute national perspective, were more discriminate. Royal Cortissoz characterized it as "...new, strange and right, a true work of individualized architectural art."⁹¹ The Federal Architect, concerned for the standards of the profession, indicated the early use of the Folger as a role model:

Another slant on the question [re. lack of respect by the public for the architectural profession] is that modernistic architecture had made design appear too easy. We think of the memorable phrase: "Pardon this long letter--I did not have time to write a short one." In the same vein of thought there have been

efforts to copy the simplicity of such buildings as the Lincoln Memorial and the Folger Library, with the notion that such simplicity was the first step in design rather than the last.⁹²

One of the most indicative references was made by the Architect's Advisory Council of the District of Columbia when they designated the Folger Library as "Class 1, Distinguished, Outstanding Among Buildings of its type." The fact that this designation came before the completion of the building says something about Cret's fresh approach.⁹³

The frequency of a lapidary analogy in the more plebian reviews is striking: "a pearl," a "gem of architecture," "a gem in the crown of beauty," "likened to a fine gem," and having a "setting worthy of the jewel."⁹⁴ The analogy was correct for the architect if not for the work if the definition is examined: definition lapidary, one "who cuts, polishes, and engraves precious stones."⁹⁵ In "cutting" his stone, Cret's "quarry" had been the Beaux-Arts method of study: parti and esquisse. The only flaw was that the Reading Room space came as such a surprise. In "polishing" his esquisse, Cret worked closely with the ever forthcoming suggestions from Folger and Trowbridge. Folger's ideas and quotations, scribbled on stationary from The Homestead or from his New York address, were the cherished associations of a lifetime awaiting three-dimensional form.⁹⁶ In "engraving" his work, Cret collaborated with the artists and craftsmen who provided the decorative

details. The spirit of the effort must have been special, as Cret himself recorded in a letter to Mrs. Folger: 'Every collaborator who came then or later in contact with Mr. Folger, was won by his faith in the enduring value of beauty. I never found a more harmonious group than that assembled for this undertaking--artists, administrators, builders.'⁹⁷ There is no doubt that this was one of Cret's favorite projects, and after his death, the favorite of Mrs. Cret to visit.

President Herbert Hoover pleasantly diverted himself from more serious business by attending the dedication of the Folger Shakespeare Library on April 23, 1932, the three hundred and sixty-eighth birthday of Shakespeare. With the completion of Henry Folger's memorial library, Paul Cret had favorably sealed his reputation with an enduring favorite among Washington's landmarks, but more importantly, the high visibility given the Folger Library through publicity made it a new model as a transitional style at a time when new images were needed.

Chapter Four

The Federal Reserve Board Building:

Promise of the Best Results

In 1935 Paul Cret surpassed eight distinguished contemporaries by winning the closed competition for the Federal Reserve Board Building in Washington, D.C. This was a significant government building in a prominent location. The competition program specifically called for a certain image, similar to the forms Cret had been developing and could master. The importance of this building and its competition is threefold. Primarily, Cret's design is important as one of the key examples in his evolving sequence of classical forms. Secondly, the competition offers an insight into the behind-the-scene politics involved in the creation of Washington's "official" architecture. And finally, the impact of Cret's modernized classical image as a political vehicle became very apparent with this project.

The setting for the Federal Reserve Board Building was crucial to its design character. When he designed the Pan American Union in 1907, Cret could not foresee the importance of that building's participation in two later compositional ensembles. It became the second, after the Corcoran Gallery, in the western line of buildings composing the White Lot Group around the Ellipse.⁹⁸ The Daughters of the American Revolution Building and the group of Red Cross buildings

filled the space between the Corcoran and the Pan American Union, completing an architectural row framing the Ellipse.⁹⁹ This frame was a participant in the McMillan Plan, acting as the western-most containment of government buildings. But by 1935, there was also a compositional group of buildings west of the White Lot Group--not part of the McMillan Plan. This new group, the Northwest Rectangle, had come about by accident with the location of the Department of the Interior Building in 1917, producing a shift in the siting for key governmental buildings. This shift worried the Commission of Fine Arts because the emphasized location of government buildings was to be the area bounded by the White House and the Capitol, and between Constitution Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue--in time called the Federal Triangle. To take control of the newly developing area, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts agreed that a group of War and Navy buildings should go west of the Ellipse and north of Constitution Avenue; consequently the Northwest Rectangle was officially designated on a 1928 plan. Passage of the Shipstead-Luce Act in 1930 gave the Commission of Fine Arts even more power to control the development of this area; in an Annual Report of 1931 they stated: "...all the permanent buildings existing and proposed in the northwest building area should be regarded as part of a single related group insofar as the varied character of the existing buildings to be related will permit."¹⁰⁰ By 1934 there was a more definite plan for

developing the "Proposed Northwest Rectangle Public Buildings Group" (fig. 45). The grouping had already been partially formed by that date with the Department of Interior Building (which was to become the General Services Administration Building), the National Academy of Sciences Building (Bertram Goodhue 1924), the Public Health Services Building (J. H. deSibour 1931), and the American Institute of Pharmacy (John Russell Pope 1934). The latter three not only formed the southern side of the Rectangle but also acted as an enframement along Constitution Avenue for the Lincoln Memorial. It was as a centerpiece for this group that the Federal Reserve joined such a distinguished ensemble (fig. 46). (This group would later include the Pan American Union Annex as a fifth piece. It was also designed by Cret's Office.) The Pan American Union had then become a cornerstone linking two impressive rows of administrative buildings, which collectively provided between them a full range of the expressions of classical forms.

The competition for the Federal Reserve Board Building illustrates the incestuous relationship between the Commission of Fine Arts and the profession it stood in judgment of. This particular case is an excellent demonstration of how competitions were formed and won during the period when Washington's architectural taste-makers were at the height of their power and influence.

In June 1934 an act was passed authorizing the Federal Reserve Board to acquire a site for its new headquarters on

Constitution Avenue between Twentieth and Twenty-first Street. The following month Paul Cret wrote to the Governor of the Federal Reserve Board to offer his services as architect for the proposed new building. As references Cret listed what he considered some of his better work: the Pan American Union, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Hartford County Building, and the Indianapolis Public Library. Daniel Paul Higgins of the John Russell Pope Office knew the de facto power structure even better--he wrote to the Secretary of the Commission of Fine Arts to solicit the same job. Times were hard; architects could not wait to be sought-out because the competition for non-relief jobs was fierce. In a letter to the Commission of Fine Arts, Higgins stated that he had heard Voorhees, Gmelin and Walker mentioned as the architects for the Federal Reserve Board Building and offered his judgment that they were not "qualified for monumental work."¹⁰¹ In still another letter, Higgins apologized for the embarrassing state that even his firm had been brought to: "We have been a great nuisance to you and I hope natural times will return someday so that we will not have to bother anyone in the interest of our bread and butter."¹⁰² In all, thirty-four architectural firms wrote letters of solicitation after hearing of the proposed new building. To this number were added fourteen other firms who had been included among the twenty-three "official" names on a list of architects "who have done, or are considered capable of doing important governmental buildings in Washington

and elsewhere (Appendix D)"¹⁰³ The list had been sent to Adolph Miller, a member of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, by John Nagle, of the Department of the Interior. Included among those scrambling to be considered as architect for such an important commission was Alexander B. Trowbridge, Cret's consulting partner on the Folger Library. Trowbridge apparently had forsaken his role as a consultant and had put on his architect's hat again. Trowbridge cited as reasons for his consideration his consulting work for the Federal Reserve System, his dissatisfaction with a good deal of the new architecture of Washington, the "courage and initiative to take an opposite stand," credit for the exterior character of the Folger Library, and the selection of Cret as architect for the Folger.¹⁰⁴ In closing, Trowbridge wrote: "Your new home, it seems to me, should possess the spirit or essence of the best in ancient architecture but should at the same time be free of the usual details that architects have copied over a long period of years."¹⁰⁵ Once again, as with the Folger Library, Trowbridge correctly assessed the appropriate character for the proposed building, but he was not fortunate enough to execute that character.

Adolph C. Miller, a member of the Board of Governors, oversaw the competition. Miller participated in all of the decisions from the very beginning and took a lively interest in planning a first-rate competition. Not being familiar with the business of competitions, Miller relied on others for

advice and direction. For an idea of the necessary administrative spaces needed in the Federal Reserve's building, he took a tour of various departmental buildings in the Federal Triangle. For an idea of a good competition program, he borrowed two programs from Holabird and Root, the addition to the Art Institute of Chicago and the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Milwaukee. For an example of a design and construction contract, he asked the Interior Department for a copy of their contract with architect Waddy Wood, who at that time was designing a second Interior Building to the south of the first one, a modernized classical contemporary of the Federal Reserve. And for suggestions as to details, jury members, advisors, competitors, etc., Miller talked to friends who knew about such things: Charles Moore, John Holabird, Arthur Brown, and William A. Delano. Delano recommended John Mead Howells, Henry R. Shepley, H. Van Buren Magonigle, and Everett V. Meeks as Professional Advisors with the qualification that "all of these men are in sympathy, I think, with your idea of a type of architecture not too definitely classic and yet not lacking in tradition."¹⁰⁶ Delano further recommended 1) a limited competition rather than an open one; 2) getting the approval of the Committee on Competitions of the American Institute of Architects for the program; 3) simple, small scale presentation drawings in India ink without color; and 4) that the names of the jury members should be published in the competition program. Howells did not want the job offered by Miller but recommended

instead Everett Meeks, "a man of classic and Beaux-Arts training, of excellent judgment and taste, and quite open minded enough to appreciate your thoughts of 'not too many columns and pediments.'" ¹⁰⁷ Miller succeeded in securing Meeks, Dean of the Yale School of Fine Arts, as Professional Advisor, along with E. F. Abell as Technical Advisor. Miller then acquired the sought-for aesthetic characteristics of the proposed building from Charles Moore and the Commission of Fine Arts, the puppeteers of the whole show. ¹⁰⁸ In fact, the Commission's members discussed among themselves as much as with the Reserve Board such aspects as design character, jurors, and advisors. Charles Moore was in close correspondence with some of the architect members of the Commission regarding possible jurors, exceptions to building restrictions, and the intended character. Egerton Swartwout responded to one such letter:

I am glad to hear that the Federal Reserve people are keen about the suitability of the design to Washington, because I had a horrible fear of some Modernistic stuff creeping in. Cret's Folger Library is fine but that is because of the detail, in my opinion. ¹⁰⁹

Swartwout also sent Moore a list of nineteen architects considered as professional jurors, with his personal evaluations on each; of the nineteen, two were chosen by Moore (William Emerson and John Cross). ¹¹⁰ In turn, Moore gave Meeks the list of possible jurors, broken down into the "Preferred List" and the "Not in

Sympathy with Washington work" list. After receiving suggestions from Charles Moore, Miller wrote his Professional Advisor in late December 1934 about the character of the building:

The proposed building should be designed with regard primarily to the commodious and suitable housing of the activities of the Federal Reserve Board and its staffs. Those activities are of an administrative nature. While they are concerned with the supervision of banking functions, the Federal Reserve Board is not itself a bank nor is it engaged in banking activities of any character. The character of the building should be suggested by the government quality of the Board's activities and its consideration should be a controlling factor both as to interior and exterior design.

In describing the character of the building as governmental, is not however, intended to suggest that its monumental character should be emphasized. It is thought desirable that its aesthetic appeal should be made through dignity of conception, proportion, scale and purity of line rather than through stressing of purely decorative or monumental features. For this reason it is suggested that the use of columns, pediments and other such forms may be altogether omitted and should be restricted to the minimum consistent with the character of the building as above described. The proximity

of the building to the Lincoln Memorial and other nearby prominent structures on Constitution Avenue also suggests that both in exterior design and material the Federal Reserve Board should not be out of harmony with its environment.¹¹¹

In reference to an admired character, the Secretary of the Commission of Fine Arts had written Cret for photographs of the Federal Reserve Bank in Philadelphia. Trying not to over-extend his anxiousness regarding the competition, and knowing that long solicitous letters had been written by others, Cret answered with a short story to indicate his ardent wish.¹¹²

With aesthetics well under control, all parties concerned could then get down to other details. By the middle of January 1935, it had been decided that the competition would be a limited one; the competitors would each receive \$1000; the executing architect would receive 4 1/2 percent of the total estimate (\$2,400,000); the jury of five would be composed of two architects and three laymen; and that the clearance of the temporary building on the site could begin as soon as June 1935.¹¹³ The most important decision was still to be made, that of the competitors and the jury. On January 18, 1935, Adolph Miller wrote Charles Moore regarding this decision:

I am writing to ask, on behalf of the Board, your cooperation as successful as possible by giving us your judgment as to the architects who should be invited to

participate in the competition, and likewise your judgment as to the members of the architectural profession in your opinion best qualified to judge the plans and designs submitted.¹¹⁴

This letter was transmitted to Charles Moore by Meeks when he paid a visit to the Commission the following day. In the presence of Meeks, Moore wrote down the names of twelve architects (or firms) next to numbers on the back of a sheet of stationary. The same day Meeks returned to the Reserve Board with the list; the first ten names were subsequently approved as competitors. Three recommendations by Moore for professional jurors were also chosen. Later that day the final program of competition was typed and approved.¹¹⁵ The competitors were: Delano and Aldrich, New York; Egerton Swartwout, New York; John Russell Pope, New York; Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott, Boston; Paul Philippe Cret, Philadelphia; Arthur Brown, San Francisco; Holabird and Root, Chicago; Eliel Saarinen, Detroit; James Gamble Rogers, New York; and York and Sawyer, New York. The five jurors were William Emerson, Boston; John W. Cross, New York; John M. Howells, New York; Frederick A. Delano, Washington; and Adolph C. Miller, Washington. Of the competitors, five were present or past members of the Commission of Fine Arts: Swartwout, Pope, Delano, Ayres (York and Sawyer), and Collidge; of the jury, Cross was a past member and Howells was a present member.

Soon after the competitors were notified, Eliel Saarinen

informed the Board that he was not a citizen of the United States. Despite Saarinen's suggestion to associate with another firm and despite a Richmond firm's willingness to associate with him, Charles Moore decided the question with the pronouncement that "it is contrary to the policy of the Fine Arts Commission to include alien architects in competitions."¹¹⁶ The competition then became one of nine competitors. Shortly thereafter good news came from the American Institute of Architect's Committee on Competitions. Egerton Swartwout, the Chairman, sent the following letter to the Federal Reserve:

The Committee on Competitions takes this opportunity to express directly its appreciation of the fairness of this program, its completeness, its clarity and good arrangement. The Committee feels it is the best program submitted to it in many years, and the architectural profession owes a great debt of gratitude to the Federal Reserve Board and to the Professional Advisor.¹¹⁷

The unofficial use of advice had paid off. By allowing the Commission of Fine Arts to participate in the formation of the competition, including the Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission (Frederick Delano) on the jury, and by having as a competitor the Chairman of the American Institute of Architect's Committee on Competitions (Egerton Swartwout), the Federal Reserve Board could pride itself on a smoothly formed competition.

From late January 1935 to May fifteenth of the same year, the nine competitors worked on their designs. On May sixteenth the jury met to judge the drawings, issuing their report the following day. They unanimously chose design number seven by Cret for its "promise of the best results."¹¹⁸ The twenty-six page "Program for the Competition" had thoroughly set forth every conceivable design consideration which the competing architects needed. Appropriately beginning the design regulation section of the program was the statement on character. It was this aspect of design, one concerning an artistic ability, which enabled Cret to stand apart from his fellow competitors. The pertinent section was almost a verbatim transcription of the memorandum (fn. 111) Charles Moore had written for Adolph Miller, who had then passed it along to Everett Meeks. The character, to be "suggested by the governmental quality of the Federal Reserve Board's activities," was basically meant to convey dignity and permanence. The Lincoln Memorial exhibited a dignity but the program indicated that it had become somewhat outmoded, not to be imitated. The intention to produce a building "at home in the city" was sympathetic to Cret's modernized classicism, enabling him to produce a design which pleased the jury. Along with the exterior treatment and the interior arrangement, the landscape design proved essential to the building and to the total composition along Constitution Avenue.

The Office of John Russell Pope placed second in the

competition. In response to Cret's winning design, Daniel Paul Higgins of the Pope Office wrote to the Federal Reserve:

"To be honest, we would rather have Paul Cret wear our shoes for us than anyone else."¹¹⁹ When the competition drawings were published in The Architectural Forum in July, the opinion of Higgins was not doubt shared by all of the competitors. The unanimous jury vote indicated unequivocally that Cret's design best suited the program requirements (fig. 47). Cret produced a facade which clearly spoke of dignity. The central feature of the Constitution Avenue facade stood apart as the most authoritative, innovative and impressive of all the entries, obviously just the correct piece for the central composition of five buildings. In addition, Cret's interior arrangement possessed Beaux-Arts logic. Furthermore, his landscape plan, by its congenality made the others look like second thoughts.

Pope's entry was admired by the jury for its strong central section, a boldness characteristic of his work (fig. 48). Yet for its strength, the entrance below huge Doric columns in-antis seemed weak. Its central section literally referred to the Lincoln Memorial with undistinguished, undignified flanking wall masses. An internal exterior court denied the clarity of the plan and the landscape scheme invited ruin with the depiction of large trees hiding the facade.

James Gamble Rogers' design placed third (fig. 48). Rogers designed in a stripped classical vein, referring perhaps

too closely to its neighbors by Goodhue and deSibour. Its basic faults were the lack of a strong central vertical element, essential to the centerpiece position, and a landscape treatment out of sync with the already established grounds of the Constitution Avenue setting.

Again, a low, weak central section and an ill-conceived landscape plan proved the downfall of Delano and Aldrich's entry (fig. 49). The restrained classical character seemed right but it lacked the dignity and confidence of Cret's conception.

Two entries failed to heed the desired character statement of the program. Arthur Brown's design looked like an office building shoved inside a Lincoln Memorial with a pedimented Doric portico attached as a central element (fig. 50). Brown's plan was also much too monumental, taking as its principal feature a great central circular stair. The other entry clinging to traditionalism was by Egerton Swartwout, who should have known better (fig. 50). Swartwout imitated an Italian plazzo, not exactly in sympathy with the intended character. His landscape plan almost denied design.

The designs of Holabird and Root and York and Sawyer were both of a stripped classical character but without the sculptured preponderance which graced Cret's design (fig. 51). Holabird and Root's might have been a design for a Post Office--it was a governmental, but not of an executive level. York and Sawyer designed a good plan, in fact, not too dissimilar

to Cret's, but the facade lacked the bravado of the winning entry. The other entry, by Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott, was so monumental in imitation of the Lincoln Memorial that it would have competed with the very monument it was to frame (fig. 49).

Using the "Program for Competition," Cret had studied the requirements of the building to arrive at his parti. This method was the same he had used in designing the Folger Library. With the size of the site, the total building area, and the particular rooms/spaces, Cret worked through many arrangements of the volumetric blocks of space in plan to arrive at one which most satisfied the requirements in a clear, logical manner. Program design factors which influenced the parti were: a facade facing Constitution Avenue, with a formal, ceremonial entrance; a business entrance facing C Street; a "fine, central monumental staircase;" a large Board Room of suitable dignity; two areas of different office functions per floor; thirty per cent additional usable space per floor for future expansion; an area for future expansion on the site; a possible plan for future expansion across C Street; and a clear pattern of circulation and communication which could accommodate any of the above mentioned additional spaces. Cret organized the crucial determining spaces by their public and private nature, as he had done with the Folger Library.

The plan shape was that of an "H," with the open ends oriented east and west (Twentieth and Twenty-first Streets)

(fig. 52-54). The building sat back on the lot so that the public or general business entrance on C Street had only a sidewalk separating it from the street. This enabled the Constitution Avenue facade on the south to have a 200 foot landscaped terrace, creating the monumental side. Through the middle of the "H" Cret formed the main axis, a sequence of hierarchical spaces from north to south: a public entrance lobby, the central monumental staircase, an elliptical ante-room, and the Board of Governor's Room. The Constitution Avenue entrance lobby was purely ceremonial, being in essence a shrine to Woodrow Wilson, the founder of the Federal Reserve System. After entering either entrance, the lobbies are separated off by a cross-axis corridor, creating four wings. These north and south wings are the office spaces for different areas of activities within the Reserve Board. The north wing activities were more public than the ones in the south wing, hence their location on the more accessible side of the building. On either side of the grand staircase leading to the second floor were offices relating to the twelve Federal Reserve regions. The fourth floor contained dining rooms while the ground floor housed the garage and mechanical functions. This plan parti accommodated functions with a good system of circulation. Cret's transverse section showed the dominance of the central staircase with the regional offices and the Board Room as the heart of the building (fig. 55).

After working out the plan parti, Cret turned to the

esquisse studies for the exterior expression. Five studies were arrived at, all basically similar in the treatment of a higher, dominating center mass with lower flanking wings, expressing the importance of the Board Room. Cret then concentrated on different expressions of the central portico and the ends of the wings. In two studies, the portico was wide, one having eight square piers and one with six round columns, both with a four pier treatment of the ends of the wings. The treatment of a narrower portico with a wider fourth floor rising in the background seemed to appeal to Cret more, for he made three studies in this manner. The use of a pediment as a dominating element in one study must have seemed too old hat because he worked-out two studies with the symbolic use of a sculptured eagle resting against a blank wall above the portico. The window treatment was consistent in all the studies--slightly recessed first and second floor windows below a cornice line connected by spandrels, with single third floor windows above, in what could be called an attic floor position. For his esquisse, Cret finally settled on a narrow, more vertical central mass with a squared pier portico treatment which included the use of a sculptured eagle (fig. 56).

Shortly after the jury had chosen the winning design, the Commission of Fine Arts met and gave their approval of Cret's design. The following statement was recorded in the Minutes: "The building is designed in the classical order, suggesting the Early Federal type of architecture. There is a central

portico with engaged columns."¹²⁰ As a member reviewing the Minutes, and perhaps as a sour-grapes loser who had submitted a more traditional design, Egerton Swartwout wrote to the Secretary of the Commission in reference to the entry: "I think this description might be misleading to anyone consulting the minutes in the future. The design selected is distinctly modernistic and has nothing whatever to do with the Early Federal type, and, as I recall it, there are no engaged columns at the entrance, but a series of piers."¹²¹ Swartwout's observation and objection was very pertinent for several reasons. To begin with, the idea associating Cret's design with the "Early Federal/Early Republic" style of architecture, particularly Robert Mills' work in the Capital, gained credit early on and seemed to proliferate. In a memorandum from Howells, dated shortly after the jury deliberations, in which he sought to record some of the thoughts behind the selection of the jury, he stated:

The members of the jury were attracted to the facade of the building of #7 partly by their impression that its architectural treatment was reminiscent of the architecture of Robert Mills, who has left to the Capital the Washington Monument, the Treasury Building, but particularly the Old Patent Office Building, which both the Board and the jury admire.... The jury greatly admired the simplicity and dignity of

the Constitution Avenue front and while they appreciate also its modern thought, the Board would not be displeased to have the character turn, if anything, slightly more towards the sentiment of the Robert Mills work rather than from it.¹²²

This comparison, during the meeting of the jury, of Mills with Cret, was picked-up and perpetuated by Adolph Miller, who thereafter acted in the role of a professional advisor in the many recommendations and changes which followed. In recommending one of the studies Cret had given him for the interior design of the Board Room, Miller remarked that it "follows very closely the style of the 1820 period of architecture."¹²³ Cret was willing to be associated with Mills because it seemed harmless enough--it legitimized through a Washington tradition what he had been developing on his own. He was probably amused and slightly concerned, as Swartwout had been, that so direct a reference could be made. The view of Cret's design through the tradition-colored glasses of Washington's vestal virgins was a slight he may have felt would be corrected with time and greater perspective. With hindsight, however, the comparison seems apropos and will be discussed in the conclusion.

To try to avoid the new enthusiastic fervor with which Miller then forced on him, Cret had to hold his ground on some interior details: "I am anxious to have a few interesting motives to relieve the danger of stiffness which might crop up through an unjudicious use of the 1820 architecture."¹²⁴

Cret did give more of a Mills flavor to certain areas, such as the Doric peristyle monumental staircase, described in his description of the building as having a character of "the simple classic architecture of a century ago--the early Federal period."¹²⁵ The prejudice of many in still perceiving Cret's refined classicism as "modernistic," a word used by Swartwout to connote something distasteful, might have been the stimulus for verbally hiding behind a Robert Mills skirt.

With the end of the competition, the professional layer of advisors and jurors had been dispensed with. The changes and aesthetic matters then became a dialogue between the architect, the client, and the Commission of Fine Arts. This was the most difficult period of design for Cret. The untrained eye and mind of the Reserve Board's Building Committee Chairman, Adolph Miller, and the Board itself, tested the patience of the architect. Many of their suggestions had already been considered in the esquisse studies and then discarded before the final esquisse had been chosen. Cret, or his partner in charge of this project, William Livingston, came to Washington on the average of once every three weeks. Livingston kept detailed notes of every question and answer and even provided memorandums of such for all parties concerned. Some of the suggestions Cret considered or tactfully rejected during the period of design, through the fall of 1935, were: a redesign of the windows so that they looked more like a bank's windows; making the central portico piers fluted and free-standing; putting

flat pilasters between the windows; use of a pediment as a central motif; design of a semi-circular roadway on the Constitution Avenue side; removing the balustraded wall in front of the building; putting some playfulness in the fountains; and the use of caryatids in the form of Presidents Wilson and Roosevelt. Most of these suggestions were rejected by Cret but some did find their way into realization, such as the use of Travertine for the walls of the monumental stair space so that the question of painted murals by relief artists could not even be considered.

In April 1936 Cret was still being hampered to such an extent that the Commission of Fine Arts almost acquiesced to just about any changes.¹²⁶ Cret's competition drawing of the Constitution Avenue facade included a balustraded wall with pylons flanking the central approach to the building. This feature was placed between the landscaping of the lower sidewalk area and the more formal treatment of the lawn. In effect, the wall defined an "intermediate plane" between the street and the building. With criticism from the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, Cret scrapped the wall but tried to keep the pylons, finally concluding that without the attached balustrades the pylons were "left 'en l'air,' as a piece of furniture on a sidewalk at moving time."¹²⁷ Cret made his frustration known and received support from Howells and Charles Moore to retain the balustrades and pylons but decided to leave them out, expressing concern that the terrace would

then look inadequate relying solely on planting for effect.¹²⁸

The impressively crisp, detailed drawing Cret submitted in the spring of 1935 looked pale when compared to the actual building dedicated by President Roosevelt in the fall of 1937. The dignity called for in the Program, and praised by the jury upon selection, became very apparent when the white marble centerpiece rose to shame its flanking neighbors. There was no doubt that the Federal Reserve was the commanding compositional piece in the Northwest Rectangle's enframement of the Lincoln Memorial. Nor was there any doubt as to the level of governmental power housed within. When Cret gave up the terrace pylons on Constitution Avenue with their sculptured panels, the lone eagle above the portico remained as the only icon, standing as an unmistakable image of the government it symbolized (fig. 57). The eagle, sculpted by Sydney Waugh, rested on the flat roof of the portico and was framed by a blank wall behind. The hierarchical massing of this center portico was extremely effective and appropriate. The center mass had the temple-like strength of simplicity not to mention the modernist's value of blank space (fig. 58). Two seemingly solid interconnecting blocks of blank white marble came forward from the principal plane of the facade, above which was visible even another narrow blank block, that of the fourth floor. From the center of these blocks the portico projected with the barest of details: simple square piers and capitals, on almost blank architrave, and a simple cornice with guttae. The reference

to a classical order in the portico was not as abstract as that of the window wall pilastrade.¹²⁹ Between the tall, slender portico piers were grilled windows, representing the grand Board Room space, the raison d'etre of the building. A central aediculed entrance doorway squeezed between the two middle piers, providing an historical reference to the banking tradition in America; its pediment harked to the banking monuments in Philadelphia as well as to the temple-like status of banks in every community during that depressed era (fig. 59). The portico rested on a three-tiered plinth and in turn the whole building rose above a simple marble and verdant plinth, very true to Cret's attention to the base of a building. Cret's masterful composition of the projecting center mass not only announced the imposing Board Room space but also commanded well the five building composition.

The first and second floor windows were vertically grouped by being recessed from the wall plane and by the use of gray granite spandrels (fig. 60). Although a secondary cornice with a Greek fret design capped the roof line, the main cornice just above the second floor maintained a consistent line among the five building composition. The third floor fenestration was treated as an attic floor with square, isolated openings. Connecting the windows by dark spandrels and recessing them from the wall produced a dark rectangular vertical void, acting in the visual role of a post and lintel construction, in other words, the abstracted classical colonnade characteristic

of Cret's modernized classicism. Also characteristic was the very planar wall surface and the block-like nature of the central section producing a sculptured quality with the effect of solidity and permanence. The facade as a whole achieved a well proportioned visual harmony by the balance of horizontal and vertical: the verticality of the fenestration balanced the strong horizontal lines of the two cornices, just as the verticality of the portico balanced the horizontality of the flanking office space.

The C Street side was the functional entrance to the building. Pushed right up to the street, this elevation was similar to the facade in its cornice detail and recess fenestration (fig. 61). The four door entrance and a large two story grilled window above became the central point of focus (fig. 62). Capped by a break from the main cornice, pilasters acted as pedestals for two sculptured figures by John Gregory representing Columbia and the Federal Reserve. In the competition drawings Cret had shown two eagles above these pilasters but when forced to give up Constitution Avenue pylons, he transferred the figurative sculpture to the C Street side.¹³⁰

To make the Twentieth and Twenty-first Street sides of the building interesting, Cret treated each of the projecting wings with four pilasters, similar to the ones on C Street in that their capitals were formed by a break in the primary cornice (fig. 63).¹³¹ Below the cornice and between each

pilaster was a Greek fret design, but most striking was a first floor bronze balcony which reproduced an early Nineteenth Century Philadelphia design. This attempt to directly associate an Early Republic detail was in keeping with the wishes of the Reserve Board who retained illusions of imitating the Robert Mills period.

The Constitution Avenue lobby contained a bas relief of Woodrow Wilson, a plaster beam ceiling featuring a Greek fret design and Greek coin "rosettes" (fig. 64). In contrast, the C Street entrance lobby was much less decorative (fig. 65). Upon entering from C Street one is immediately confronted with the cross-axial corridor and the main, central axis. The latter processionally opens up in the center of the building with the monumental staircase, ascending bilaterally toward the south, with the corridor continuing underneath through to the ceremonial entrance. After passing through the dark corridor space containing the elevators, the stair space is a burst of light and openness. The stairhall resembles a peristyle courtyard with fluted Doric columns in-antis (fig. 66).¹³² The walls, stairs and columns are of Travertine, highlighted well by natural light from a skylight with a traceried coat-of-arms of the United States. The simplicity of the soft, but stark, stairhall is richly accented by a bronze balustrade designed by Samuel Yellin. The corridors on either side of the stair court contain the public representatives of the twelve regional Federal Reserve Districts, each identified

respectively by an emblem in the ceiling coffer before each doorway.

The stair landing leads to an elliptical anteroom (originally square) which serves to separate-off the section which houses the Board of Governors and their staffs. Directly after the anteroom is the Board Room (fig. 67). This large room (56' x 36' x 25') is the most decorative space in the building (fig. 68). The west wall contains a large marble fireplace with a bronze relief of the coat-of-arms of the United States. A mural painting of the Federal Reserve Map of the United States by Ezra Winter occupies the opposite wall. The high cove ceiling is adorned with a decorated plaster cornice in an early nineteenth century style.¹³³ Cret harmonized the furnishings, fixtures, plaster work, stone details, and woodwork by the use of texture, color and motifs (Greek frets, acanthus leaves, acroteria, stars, etc.). The obvious references to historical detail served to associate the important activities of the Board with the dignity of the Early Republican or Greek Revival style.

Future expansion was an important consideration of the Reserve Board's. Cret not only proposed on-site expansion by closing the ends of the "H," he also represented a future Federal Reserve annex building across C Street, conceived additions to Goodhue's and de Sibour's buildings, depicted the completion of the Northwest Rectangle to the north, and he designed a landscaped plaza on the Mall south of the Reserve

Board Building (fig. 69). The latter design evidently meant to suggest the importance of the Federal Reserve as the central compositional piece and indicated Cret's willingness and ability to be a team player in plans for monumental Washington, an attribute carrying as much weight as any other.

What Cret succeeded in building was an artistic masterpiece, a collaborative effort not less than that of the Folger Library. The exquisite materials, such as thirty-five different marbles and stones, and the use of sparingly yet appropriately placed details, gave the building and its occupants a quality to praise. A reliance on traditional classical forms and elements had again given way in Cret's evolving work to his reliance on the proportioned compositional massing of exterior form. The esquisse studies indicated that Cret's mind still turned over traditional forms, but they did not seem to compare to his new ever-growing need to improve his past accomplishments. This modernization was primarily evident in the exterior treatment of the Federal Reserve. Interiors seemed more the domain of the client, reflecting his needs, ideas or functions. In the case of the Federal Reserve Board, Cret acquiesced in providing details reminiscent of Robert Mills for the public and official spaces while utilizing modern office design for the remainder of the building.

The Federal Reserve Board Building was the culmination of Cret's modernized classical style to that point. It embodied all the characteristics of his style discussed in Chapter One:

symmetrical, interconnecting, sharp-edged masses; recessed, spandrelled windows; a pilastrade; planar surfaces; shallow subsidiary decoration; and figurative descriptive sculpture. The Beaux-Arts method had been employed in its design and careful attention had been paid to the base and landscaping plan. And typical of this type of structure, technology was obscured by fine art. A section of part of the portico confirms this last point (fig. 70). The eagle on the portico, whose specific prototype had been the eagle over the entrance to the Federal Reserve Bank in Philadelphia, proudly commanded a marble veneer hiding steel beams. Excluding the general characteristics, the Federal Reserve's form had not been adapted from any of Cret's earlier work; however, its form evolved into the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, 1939, and the Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1941.

The Federal Reserve Board Building Competition had been well orchestrated by the molders of Washington's architectural image and was consequently well received when completed. The serious role of the Reserve Board's activities guaranteed wide publicity for the building, and consequently, for the architect, the city, and the presidential administration. For Cret, the competition became an important one of high distinction. His pride was amplified and justified when the Fifth Pan-American Congress of Architects met in Uruguay in 1940 and voted the Reserve Board Building one of the four Prize of Honor recipients in the United States.¹³⁴ For the Commission

of Fine Arts, this building was a triumph of controlling planned monumental settings; few other buildings in Washington have been as influenced by the Commission. The acceptance of Cret's design by the Commission of Fine Arts was further evidence that the "official" architecture was slowly changing. For the Federal Government under Roosevelt, the progressive, strong, and dignified characteristics conveyed by Cret's design were the type of tonic adopted and used as a governmental image in that decade. The President's dedication of the Reserve Board indicated the optimism behind mere mortar and marble:

You have come here this afternoon for something more than a mere formality. This structure is worthy to rank among the foremost of the Capital's architectural achievements, and you and I have gathered here to pay tribute to the beauty and dignity of line and form wrought by those who conceived and executed this building.

But we are conscious of a larger meaning in this brief ceremony--of the role that the Federal Reserve plays in the broad purpose which this Government must serve. That purpose is to gain for all our people the greatest attainable measure of economic security and stability.¹³⁵

The admiration for this particular link in the evolving classicism of Paul Cret insured the opportunity for him to

leave yet another demonstration of his modernized work in the Monumental City. The next work in Washington by Cret would logically incorporate all that had gone before, reflecting still further modernization.

Chapter Five

The National Naval Medical Center and Presidential Patronage

One of Cret's few designs for a "skyscraper" was the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Although very different in many respects from the Folger Library and the Federal Reserve Board Building, both in near-by Washington, the Medical Center became a logical conclusion to the evolving classicism in which the aforementioned buildings played a part. As in the case of the prototypes, the circumstances of Washington, D.C. as a setting played no little part in the design outcome of the Medical Center.

The architect/client relationship of this project was unusual. Cret received his commission to design the complex not through the competitive system but by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's personal patronage. Recalling the praise the President had lavished on the Federal Reserve Board Building at its dedication, it is not surprising that he considered Cret as the architect capable of producing strong governmental images in the most Federal of cities. Roosevelt's active design involvement in the Medical Center maintained his avid interest in the images projected by architecture, particularly regional historical styles. In fact, the President had designed and had influenced the design of a number of Post Offices in his native New York State.¹³⁶ He then transferred this interest

throughout the New Deal era by government-sponsored architectural projects, which furthered "an adventure in national rediscovery which represented one of the most far-reaching developments of the Depression decade."¹³⁷ New "foundations for national confidence" were expressed in two basic manners in regard to federally-sponsored architectural projects. The Colonial Revival or regional historical styles became one manner, evoking the heroism of previous stages in the life of the country. The other, now synonymous with the Federal Government of the 1930s, was a modernized classicism, such as Cret had been developing. This latter style was seen as something between the rich Beaux-Arts classical forms from the past and the more severe modern trend of the future. It was just this safely reminiscent yet progressively oriented style that Roosevelt wanted for his Medical Center. More specifically, he wanted the image of a public building as a skyscraper.

Commissions of fine arts experts and architects did not plague Cret with this project as they had with the Federal Reserve. He was also spared the problem, pleasant as it might have been, of incorporating a life-long collection of ideas and memorabilia into a structure, as with the Folger Library commission. Cret did have to submit to the iron will of an amateur architecture President. In December 1937 Roosevelt drew for Cret on White House stationary what would be the single most design criterion for the Medical Center complex. The President sketched tall tower flanked by low wings.

Along with his initials and the date he wrote: "New Naval Hosp./Center 15 stories/Additions 2 stories" (fig. 71).¹³⁸

The reverse side of the sheet contained the plan: an "H" form intersected by the "T" form of the tower and wings (fig. 72). The State Capitol of Nebraska had unmistakably influenced him to "design" such a clear concept of the Medical Center. While journeying cross-country, he had been struck by Bertram Goodhue's capitol rising out of the plains in Lincoln, Nebraska (fig. 73). The President was reported to have said 'I will build a government building like that.'¹³⁹ If Goodhue's model had been Scandinavian modern, as has been suggested, his own version thereafter became an American model. The Louisiana State Capitol by Weiss, Dreyfous and Seiferth, 1931-32, was certainly one state capitol to follow in Nebraska's footsteps.¹⁴⁰

Other modernized classical government buildings had also taken a cue from the civic skyscraper image, such as the St. Paul City Hall and County Courthouse by Holabird and Root, 1935. There had been many opportunities for Roosevelt to follow the trend of high-rise government office buildings but the coincidental occurrence of his dedication of the Federal Reserve Board Building in October 1937 and the discussion at about the same time of the need for a large, new Naval medical center in the Washington area produced the spark which kindled his latent architectural ambition.¹⁴¹ The image created by Cret in the Federal Reserve had captured the President's imagination, just as Goodhue's image had increased the

possibilities for others to break away from traditional molds.

The President's involvement did not end with the design conception. After Congress appropriated funds in 1938 for the acquisition of land, he personally visited several sites before choosing one in Bethesda. The site was described as "a cabbage patch on a run-down farm" but the President saw its potential:

President Roosevelt was particularly interested in a small pond, fed by natural springs, located approximately halfway between Wisconsin Avenue and the top of the Bluff. The pond reminded him of the biblical Pool of Bethesda, which is a place of healing. The pond was eventually made into a small lake, and christened Lake Eleanor, in honor of Mrs. Roosevelt.¹⁴²

With the rough design form and the chosen site, Cret proceeded to work-out the details with the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, the future occupants of the building, and the Bureau of Yards and Docks, the builders.

Frederick W. Southwick was the Navy's architect in charge of the project. Cret and Southwick designed the Medical Center as an ever-expanding, on-going complex of 247 acres.¹⁴³

Immediate needs and functions were used for the initial construction phase, with foreseeable additions suggested. The nucleus of the Center was the main hospital building, which also housed the Medical and Dental schools. To express these three functions, Cret's parti called for an "E" plan; the

entrance and hospital tower of twenty stories occupied the center while the two schools each occupied a projecting wing of three stories (figs. 74,75). Extending back behind the tower was more hospital space with two ward wings to the north and south and scattered throughout the grounds were ancillary structures ranging from power plants to officer's houses. The hospital formed the western-most edge of the Medical Center complex, facing west and offering to view from Wisconsin Avenue an impressive towering mass with an idyllic rolling lawn and Lake Eleanor in the foreground.

Ground-breaking ceremonies took place the summer following President Roosevelt's drive out into the Bethesda countryside, with yet another ceremony the following year as the President laid the cornerstone on Armistice Day 1940. What then rose from that cornerstone was an edifice unlike any other in the Washington area. Only an elementary comparison could be made with Goodhue's State Capitol in Lincoln. The similarity consisted solely in the assemblage of a low sprawling mass from which surged a tall, narrow tower.¹⁴⁴ There the comparison ended. Considered free style classicism, the Nebraska Capitol still relied on conventional decoration as much as overall composition and massing for effect, being Gothic in feeling as well as classical. Cret's design was a consummation of the modernized work demonstrated throughout his career, especially as seen in the Folger Library and the Federal Reserve. Although not without decoration, Cret's Medical Center

had reached the tensile point of classical abstraction.

To compare the Medical Center with another Cret design one must logically turn to the Federal Reserve. Cret had achieved success with the Federal Reserve design by the use of a well-proportioned mass defined by sharp blocks of space. Classical detail was used sparingly, enhancing the effect of the composed whole at the expense of the parts. This was also accomplished with the Medical Center but to a greater degree. Cret conceived the Medical Center tower as he had the central portico mass of the Federal Reserve. The tower seemed to be two tall rectangular blocks interconnected so that they formed a cross, with a third, narrower block rising from the top (fig. 76). On top of the high rise wings on either side of the tower Cret placed a type of bay window bank which, being of metal and glass, contrasted with the white marble around it and appeared as a dowel holding the tower blocks together (fig. 77). Cret produced the visual effect of a colonnade at the Medical Center by the use of recessed windows and dark spandrels, characteristic of his style (fig. 78). Pilasters defined the wall space between the windows with the hint of capitals forming the top of the wall. There was no suggestion of an entablature of any sort. However, there was a fourth story wing extending from the tower, set back from the three-story wing wall plane, which contained single windows resembling an attic story when viewed from a distance. Centered on the top of the tall, rectangular tower was a visually solid, more modeled rectangular

mass. Here, at the top, where vision was drawn by vertical movement, Cret placed one extravagance of ornament (fig. 79). A sculptured anchor beneath a half-circle of stars provided the figurative descriptive sculpture Cret found so necessary in all his work. This was comparable to the eagle on the portico of the Federal Reserve or to the Shakespeare panels on the Folger Library.

Parts of the Medical Center were adaptations from Cret's Washington work. Owing allegiance to both the Folger Library and to the Federal Reserve were the entrances to the Medical Center. Cret modelled the main entrance on that of the Folger Library: a depressed wall surface punctured by a window/door with a canopy above (fig. 80). The Dental and Medical School entrances resembled the ends of the Federal Reserve in a flat, square portico treatment (fig. 81). This latter similarity is especially convincing when viewing the rendering of the Medical Center which appears as two Federal Reserve Buildings connected by hypens to the tower, a view almost Palladian in composition.

Typically, functionalism controlled the interior design of the five hundred bed hospital, which contained little decorative work beyond the circular entrance lobby. The hospital has subsequently undergone renovation producing an even more sterile glimpse of a period interior.

Just how different, in Cret's work at least, was the "mamouth" hospital and medical center which the President

dedicated on Armistice Day 1940? During the dedication Roosevelt gave his opinion: 'It combines...a practical usefulness for the facilities which will inhabit it and at the same time, the harmony of its lines give expression to the thought that art is not dead in our nation.'¹⁴⁵ Without a doubt, a "practical usefulness" was a characteristic of the Medical Center, as it would be for almost any building designed by Paul Cret. Cret never abandoned the Beaux-Arts method of parti, which guaranteed a thoughtful arrangement of spaces. The equation of "harmony of lines" with art was also apropos as a characteristic. The President's aesthetic taste had evidently grown to the point that he could enjoy architecture in a less decorated state. Unquestionably, Cret's own taste had changed; he viewed the Medical Center as fine art as much as any previous design of his. Technology had again been suppressed by a marble veneer. A greater challenge for him had become the creation of beautiful forms in a pure fashion, that is, without the helpful assistance of decorative ornament--as sometimes an allusion is more enchanting than a direct reference. The list of collaborating artists was conspicuously absent on this project but for that loss Cret recouped by demonstrating an ability to transfer his masterful use of harmonious composition to a larger scale.¹⁴⁶

The Medical Center then was no aberration in Cret's work but very true to his increasingly modern style. For Cret, change was a constant. The Medical Center was accepted as

an appropriate image but without the traditional trappings. It spoke of modernity and beauty, of aspiration and inspiration. President's Roosevelt's patronage of Cret did not cease with the Medical Center, attesting to the President's satisfaction with Cret's forms for government buildings. This association with President Roosevelt established Cret's influential stature as a leader as much as any peer-bestowed honors.¹⁴⁷

If history had been slightly altered, Paul Cret's reputation in Washington might be that of architect of the Northwest Rectangle. While the Medical Center was under construction in Bethesda, Cret designed a complex of government buildings which, if executed, would have been the only architectural composition in Washington coming close in size to the Federal Rectangle. This scheme would have completed the Northwest Rectangle to the west in a grandiose manner and, in effect, would have been an architectural monument to President Roosevelt before his death.

The escalation of the military bureaucracy during World War II necessitated larger offices for the Departments of War and Navy, to that point housed in the Second Empire building by Alfred Mullet west of the White House. Having incurred the President's favor, Cret was asked in 1940 to work up some drawings for a huge complex of structures to house these departments. The site was a large one, bounded by Constitution Avenue and F Street on the north and south, and by 21st Street and the Potomac River on the east and west--roughly four by seven blocks (fig. 82). This hill on the Potomac's bank was

ironically the site of the Naval Hospital which was being replaced by Cret's Medical Center in Bethesda.

At the heart of the complex, on axis with 24th Street, was a colossal statue at the apex of the hill facing south, apparently the figure of Peace, as the whole complex was labelled the Peace Memorial (fig. 83). To the east of the statue was an Army and Navy Club and further east, between C and E Streets, was the War Department Building, designed in a modernized classical style.¹⁴⁸ Connecting the War Department with the corresponding Navy Department Building to the west of the memorial was a square pier "colonnade" two blocks in length (fig. 84). Where the "colonnade" crossed 23rd Street, Cret designed a bridge spanning the street with figurative descriptive sculpture on each pylon, symbolizing the two respective departments joined by the "colonnade." The Navy Department Building, also a modernized classical design, had a facade on axis with 25th Street which was approximately the width of the War Department's facade but stretched north to F Street for three blocks.

To the west of the Navy Building Cret placed a Naval Museum, a very important piece of the design considering the President's love of ships, boats and nautical subjects. The conventional museum was not enough though because Cret designed an enclosed harbor off of the Potomac in which four large ships were to be displayed, including the Constellation, the Olympia, a destroyer, and one not identified.¹⁴⁹

The other large building on the plan was an unidentified one on axis with the Peace Memorial and between E and F Streets.¹⁵⁰

By its sheer size the Peace Memorial would have dominated the Northwest Rectangle, fitting neatly between the Lincoln Memorial enframement and Rawlins Park. Had this project been executed, it would have been Cret's third design in the immediate area, after the Pan American Union and the Federal Reserve Board Building.¹⁵¹ But these three designs were not Cret's only involvement in the Northwest Rectangle. In 1929 Cret had been asked by the Pan American Union to design an administration building in the triangle of land at 19th Street and Virginia and Constitution Avenues. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes objected to a building which would stand in front of the Department of the Interior and suggested instead a Pan American Plaza. Cret designed several schemes for a plaza and a building in order to judge the merit of each (figs. 85,86). The Commission of Fine Arts disagreed with Ickes and felt that a building was needed in that location to form part of the Lincoln Memorial enframement. The Commission finally had their way after Ickes died in 1946 but unfortunately Paul Cret had died the year previous while surveying the site for another Naval hospital complex, this one in South Carolina. Cret's successors completed the Pan American Union Administration Building but with changes to Cret's original design (fig. 87).¹⁵²

Cret had then designed five different pieces for the

Northwest Rectangle, three of them completed. The impact of his completed work was impressive but the potential impact, through the patronage of President Roosevelt, would have been tremendous. The number of projects and their association with the President was not without benefit to Cret's reputation, and consequently, his influence on others.¹⁵³

There were others designing in a modernized classical style in the 1930s but none who matched the honors, publicity and presidential patronage that Cret received. The hypothesis follows that Cret's work, if not emulated, was at the very least a cut above the rest. The style was, to be sure, used outside the Government, but not to the extent of its Federal usage. It began before the 1930s and it lasted beyond the decade, but there is no doubt that a watershed occurred after Roosevelt established his prolific building program. There were perceivable changes which can be partly attributed to an architectural image:

Whatever the imperfections of its political and economic programs, the Roosevelt Administration had succeeded in reducing the tension and fear which plagued the country in the early years of the depression. Through an expert use of mass media, through the reliance on a rhetoric that was very traditional even as it introduced unprecedented reforms, through the insistence on national unity and cooperation in a time of extreme emergency, through an emphasis on order and security rather than

social upheaval, the New Deal gave people the sense that their problems were at last being recognized if not solved.¹⁵⁴

Paul Cret had personally developed his own modernized classical forms from the day he had left the Ecole in Paris. His work offered "an order and security rather than social upheaval" and was thus appropriate in its milieu. The expanded role of the Federal Government, the stimulus of economic bureaucratic planning, and the need for a new Federal image produced an easily definable and recognizable architectural style. It was, and is, a good cultural, social and intellectual Zeitgeist.

Conclusion

It was once explained that a real test of architecture was to see "to what extent buildings have actually woven themselves into the fabric of enduring architecture and which are mere lint and threads on its surface."¹⁵⁵ Paul Cret, in that case, was a master weaver. When asked the difference between a good designer and a poor one, Cret answered that a good designer had the patience to study a problem longer. This was Cret's professional edge; his discipline and convictions enabled him to study the problem of architectural form throughout his lifetime, producing a significant contribution.

Cret's educational background was examined because it formed the foundation on which all of his work rested. The Ecole des Beaux-Arts "method of attacking a problem" was basic enough that Cret never failed to use it in his own work or perpetuate it through his teaching. By studying the parti for each project, Cret guaranteed that each design would be individualistic. Different functions called for different arrangements of spaces, hence the unique plans for the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Federal Reserve Board Building, and the National Naval Medical Center. The esquisse, or expression of each of these designs was more closely related. Although each expression was unique in Cret's work, he also believed that architectural form could not be invented with each new job. The

study of this evolving form, and its use beyond its architect's intentions, are what have provided the intellectual stimulation for this thesis.

Paul Cret was a very open-minded architect and teacher. He could frankly discuss the modernistic trend in architecture with a logic seemingly infallible. With the advantage of hindsight, Cret's assessment seems pretty much on target:

It (the left wing of the modernists) claims the discovery, or rediscovery of functionalism. I unfortunately lack the strong faith of the modernists in the "functionality" of their architecture. Looking at it with a critical eye, I cannot see in it anything but the age-old method which consists in being logical, truthful and functional in design as long as it is convenient, and being decidedly less so when certain aesthetic results are wanted.¹⁵⁶

In 1929 an interesting article, similar in feeling, appeared in the Architectural Record, written by Michel Roux-Spitz and Jean Porcher. These two French architects had been asked to "write of the modernist tendencies in France." Paul Cret wrote the introduction to the article, obviously subscribing to its contents. The authors, and Cret, praised much of the avant garde work in France but dispelled the socialistic dogmatic theories such as house-types representing 'machines to dwell in':

Le Corbusier's architecture belongs to a system. As in the case of the architecture of tradition, it leads to the pursuit of arbitrary form and a formula. It is the contrary of, and no more realist than, academicism. Whether he wishes to or not, he is impelled to design facades or ornaments to correspond with his ideal of "modern" form.

For each day we realize more fully that the future of our architecture is neither in superficial academicism nor in the naive and all-theoretical cult of the "modern."¹⁵⁷

Cret was influenced by the left-wing modernists, as discussed in Chapter One; the useful attributes he forged into his own forms, as perhaps the necessary adaptations for the survival of his "species." To reiterate, Cret found useful "the value of restraint, the value of designing volumes instead of merely decorating surfaces, and the value of empty surfaces as an element of composition."¹⁵⁸ These values were then employed by Cret to give modern expression to ancient forms.

When Cret evaluated the useful values of the modernists in his 1933 article, he stated that the values were not new but had just been neglected for a hundred years. As a literal reference, the earlier period would have to be that of the Greek Revival, roughly 1820 to the Civil War. The political climate in the United States in the 1820s had much to do with that style's acceptance. But it was also accepted because

its simple forms were easy to produce.¹⁵⁹ When the Greek Revival caught hold in the United States, it became a more traditional style but one which was less decorated than the Federal Style which had preceded it. In the United States Robert Mills became one of the first proponents of the Greek Revival style. This then is the basis for the interesting comparison of Cret with Mills by those connected with the Federal Reserve Board Building competition.¹⁶⁰ Mills, a student of Latrobe's, preferred Greek over Roman forms not only for the simplicity it offered but also because of the democratic ideals it recalled. These ideals were quickly finding form in Washington, D.C. in the 1830s when Mills designed the Treasury Department, the Patent Office and the Post Office. One hundred years later Cret was designing in Washington with similar stylistic characteristics based on Greek forms and for a government again intensely concerned about democratic principles.¹⁶¹ Even more coincidental is the similarity of Mills' theory with Cret's. Mills was striving 'to produce as much harmony and beauty of arrangement as practicable. The principal assumed and acted upon was that beauty is founded upon order and that convenience and utility were constituent parts.'¹⁶² Furthermore, Mills believed in the use of ancient proportions of the orders which could then be adapted to new habits and customs. This Mills period was probably to what Cret referred in his article. In loosely analogous terms then, Paul Cret's modernized classical style was part of a new Greek Revival, as widespread in

government buildings as the first Greek Revival in the United States.

Just as the Greek Revival appeared in different countries simultaneously in the nineteenth century, modernized classicism could be found in different countries in the twentieth century. The most evident examples were in Germany and Italy in the 1930s. This is further proof that the modernization of traditional classical forms was a last phase in a revival style's transformation, a modern statement using old forms as a relief from academically used forms.

The discussion of Washington, D.C.'s development throughout this work has been important for the simple reason that no architecture can be seriously examined divorced from its milieu. This factor is crucial in the association of Cret's work with the "Federal City." Washington has also been called the "Monumental City," in reference to the Twentieth Century pre-occupation with creating a beautiful city, one with a core of white marble monuments and monumental buildings. This has, and will be, the emotional tone of that city as a place. Cret's modernized classicism developed in part from his designs of monuments and memorials--perhaps it was this quiet, yet evocative quality in his buildings which made them welcome in Washington. The significance of the association between Cret and Washington is that he developed a transitional style of architecture which helped transform an architecturally conservative city, later enabling more modern examples of

architecture to find a foothold. The psychology of not only the genius loci but also of American society as a whole played a major role in helping to shape architectural forms at this time as well as accepting them.¹⁶³

The fact that Cret's forms served as political rhetoric was not the motivating factor behind their creation but it did serve to further integrate them into their place in time. As any artist, Cret wanted others to take notice of his creations. He did not want to change the world, or the country, or a person dramatically with his work. In fact, he believed that even if one wanted to, architecture could not be used to revolutionize society:

Personally I believe we must attempt to better conditions with what we have rather than to hope the social order will have to be radically changed before anything is done. Changes in the life of people have always been made step-by-step rather than by decree. Progress does not make people happier. The things that make people happy are primitive, simple, essential things.¹⁶⁴

It was a simple, essential thing which drove Cret as an architect and as an artist. His basic motivation was the creation of beauty.

In seeking to create an artistic beauty, Cret was fulfilling a need as old as man himself. Man has always needed beauty, sought it out, praised it, and surrounded himself with it. This conviction of Cret's was an intangible truth whose

quest was without end. He came about as close as he could to defining it in one statement: "The architect, by establishing a relationship of forms, gives us a sense of order which one feels to be in accord with the order of the universe, and which we perceive as beauty. Architecture is an art, serving an intense and ineradicable human craving which art alone can satisfy."¹⁶⁵ In attempting to create a harmonious truth out of the constant confusion of life, Cret left a knowledge as his legacy--and in so doing, he embodied the truth which he could never know.¹⁶⁶

History is memories from past experiences. The memory bank is the source of all creativity, making equations of matching pairs of ideas or memories. A problem creates an unequal stress or anxiety which is then made neutral by a matching pair of ideas. This is analogous to an architectural program or problem which creates an anxiety or disorder for the architect. The architect searches through his memory bank and creates order by combining ideas for a solution. In this process, step-by-step, architecture is created. A building therefore is greater than the sum of its parts. A building is a wealth of facts, figures and decisions--in other words, a building is a type of knowledge. Through that knowledge we may learn from a previous man's experience in creating it. Thus, by understanding Cret's method of attacking a problem, by studying the requirements of a program or the wishes of a client, by learning of any limitations or restrictions, by

knowing the evolution of Cret's forms, and by knowing of his quest for beauty, we may become intimately familiar with his architecture. This process of thought is only enhanced when we also consider that Cret's work was an evolution, a contribution from his age to something much older.

To say that Cret took his work with a religious seriousness is not unreasonable. John Harbeson, Cret's partner who knew him well, gave his own summary: "For he believed that beauty is the clearest expression of God, that art is akin to religion, and the best evidence of immortality (fig. 88).¹⁶⁷

All passes.

Art alone enduring stays to us;

The bust outlasts the throne,

the coin Tiberius;

Even the gods must go;

Only the lofty rhyme

Not countless years o'erthrow,

Not long array of time.

Paint, chisel, then, or write;

But, that the work surpass,

With the hard fashion fight,

With the resisting mass.¹⁶⁸

Theophile Dautier

(Read at Cret's funeral)

Appendix A

List of Modernized Classical Designs by Paul Cret (Incomplete)

Frankford War Memorial, Philadelphia, 1922.

Pennsylvania Battle Monument, Varennes, France, with Thomas
Atherton, 1924.

Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, with Marcellus Wright and
Berthold Nebel, 1925.

Mausoleum for Warren G. Harding, Marion, Ohio, 1925.

Hartford County Building, Hartford, Connecticut, with Smith
and Bassette, 1926.

Chateau Thierry Memorial, Chateau Thierry, France, 1928.

New Haven City Hall, New Haven, Connecticut, 1928.

Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chicago, 1929.

Integrity Trust Company, Philadelphia, 1929.

George Rogers Clark Memorial, 1930.

Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., with Alexander
Trowbridge, 1929.

Post Office, Knoxville, Tennessee, with Bauman and Bauman, 1931

U.S. Courthouse, Fort Worth, Texas, with Wiley Clarkson, 1931.

Central Heating Plant, Washington, D.C., 1932.

Federal Reserve Bank, Philadelphia, 1932.

Federal Reserve Board Building, Washington, D.C., 1935.

National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, 1939.

Peace Memorial, Washington, D.C., 1940.

Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1941.

Appendix B

List of Modernized Classical Buildings in Washington, D.C.
(Select)

General Services Administration Building (formerly Department of the Interior) Supervisory Architect of the Treasury, 1917.

National Academy of Sciences, Bertram Goodhue, 1924.

U.S. Public Health Service, J. H. deSibour, ca. 1931.

Central Heating Plant, Paul Cret, 1934.

Department of the Interior Building, Waddy Wood, 1935. (This was the first project of the Progress Works Administration.)

Bureau of Printing and Engraving Annex, 1938.

Library of Congress Jefferson Building, Pierson and Wilson with Alexander Trowbridge, 1939.

East Administration Building (Municipal Center), N.C. Wyeth, 1941.

Pentagon, George Bergstrom, 1943.

U. S. Courthouse, 1952.

Old Health, Education and Welfare Building (formerly Social Security Administration Building), n.d.

United States Public Health Service Dispensary, n.d.

Red Cross Building (E Street), n.d.

Public Library Administration Building, n.d.

Bureau of Employment Security Building, n.d.

Note: Many of these dates are approximate.

Appendix C

"A list of Architects containing names of firms who have done, or are considered capable of doing important Governmental buildings in Washington and elsewhere."

1. McKim, Mead and White, New York
2. John Russell Pope, New York
3. Benjamin Morris, New York
4. Delano and Aldrich, New York
5. York and Sawyer, New York
6. Trowbridge and Livingston, New York
7. Edgerton Swartwout, New York
8. Cass Gilbert, Jr., New York
9. Platt Brothers, New York
10. John Mead Howells, New York
11. Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott, Boston
12. Harvey W. Corbett, Boston
13. Zantzinger, Borie and Medary, Philadelphia
14. Paul Cret, Philadelphia
15. Pierson and Wilson, Washington, D.C.
16. Allied Architects, Washington, D.C.
17. J. H. de Sibour, Washington, D.C.
18. Abram Garfield, Cleveland
19. Bennett, Parsons and Frost, Chicago
20. Dan Burnam, Chicago
21. Moran, Russell and Crowell, St. Louis

22. Batewell and Brown, San Francisco

23. Arthur Brown, San Francisco

John L. Nagle, Letter to Adolph C. Miller, 22 August 1934,
Federal Reserve Files, 228.1 Architect (1934 - Jan. 15, 1935),
Washington, D.C.

Appendix D

A random selection of the represented types of buildings from Public Buildings.

TYPES	STYLES			
	Modernized Classical	Colonial or Regional Revival	Traditional Modern	Art Deco Art Moderne
Local Government Buildings	37	30	9	5
Libraries	5	24	3	3
Auditoriums	11	4	3	3
Schools	23	93	25	23

C. W. Short and R. Stanley-Brown, Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and Other Governmental Bodies Between the Years 1933 and 1939 with the Assistance of the Public Works Administration. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1939).

Notes

Introduction

¹The Federal Architect, 1, No. 2 (Oct. 1930), 6-9.

²G. H. Edgell, The American Architecture of Today (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 33.

³Nathaniel A. Owings, The American Aesthetic (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 16.

⁴E. M. and M. S. Gerson "The Social Framework of Place Perspectives," in Environmental Knowing: Theories, Research and Methods, ed. G. T. Moore and R. G. Golledge (Stroudsburg, PA: Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross, 1976), pp. 196-205.

⁵"Text of President's Speech," Evening Star, 20 October 1937.

Chapter One

⁶John Harbeson, The Study of Architectural Design (New York: Pencil Points Press, 1927), p. 1.

⁷Harbeson, Architectural Design, p. 8. "The value of the esquisse from the point of view of mental discipline is very great. The discipline of working on a problem on which one is tied down to an esquisse is as strong and persistent a corrective as there can be against vague and loose thinking."

⁸Harbeson, Architectural Design, p. 8.

⁹Paul P. Cret, "The Ecole Des Beaux-Arts and Architectural Education," Journal Society of Architectural Historians,

(1941) 1, No. 2, p. 12.

¹⁰Cret, "The Ecole Des Beaux-Arts," pp. 12-13.

¹¹Cret went abroad to study in the summer of 1912, at which time he probably realized the seriousness of the impending war. Two years later in August 1914 he was called to service in the 4th. Battalion of Chasseurs of the French Army. After a transfer to the 51st. Battalion he fought in the battles of Somme and Aisne. Cret served as a regular soldier in the trenches for these battles as well as a reconnaissance artist drawing the next day's battle terrain. In September 1917 he became an interpreter for the 1st Division of the American Expeditionary Forces and then with the General Staff of the American Forces. Twice he was gassed in the trenches, once being the only one to survive the attack. In 1914 "Penn's Fighting Professor" was mistakenly reported dead, to the great sorrow of Philadelphia, his friends and family. In January 1919 before coming home he was awarded the Croix de Guerre.

¹²The successor firm to Cret-Harberson, Hough, Livingston and Larson (H²L²), still occupies an office in the Architect's Building. The twenty-four story brick building was described as being "in consonance with the latest development of the set-back principles of design," and was owned by a number of architectural firms who occupied part of the building, including Cret's. The remainder of the building, besides being the home of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA, "became the headquarters of the building industry in Philadelphia, as within its walls

[were] housed members of the profession, association firms and individuals allied with building, engineering and construction." (1929 Yearbook, 32nd Annual Architectural Exhibition, Philadelphia.)

¹³Kahn worked in Cret's office during 1929-30.

¹⁴Joseph Esherick, "Architectural Education in the Thirties and Seventies: A Personal View," in The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession, ed. Spirio Kostof (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977). Esherick leaves no doubt as to the method at the school: "Penn in the mid-thirties was a firmly committed Beaux-Arts architectural school and had been for many years. Its connection with the Ecole des Beaux-Arts was deliberate and of long standing; the school's first head, Warren Powers Laird, had been at work in a Paris Atelier when he was asked to take over in 1890. Professor Laird in turn was responsible for bringing Paul Philippe Cret to the school in 1903. In the mid-thirties the majority of the Professors of Design had studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; in the academic year 1934-35 all of the full professors of Design--Cret, Bickley, Sternfeld, and Dengler--were either architects diplômé par le gouvernement or, in the case of Sternfeld, Paris Prize winners. In addition Professor Koyl, the dean, was the Rome Prize winner for 1911 and Professor Gay, the Professor of Architectural Construction, had been at the Ecole in Cret's old Atelier Pascal. It is not unreasonable then, to conclude that the Beaux-Arts scheme at Penn was authentic."

¹⁵Esherick, "Architectural Education," p. 239.

¹⁶Esherick, "Architectural Education," pp. 273-74.

Esherick claimed to have learned more about the interrelationships of structure and function and form from dissecting cadavers than from studying architecture.

¹⁷Paul Philippe Cret, "Are We Teaching Architecture?" Architectural Forum, 69 (1938), condensed from "A Recent Aspect of an Old Conflict," The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle (July 1938).

¹⁸This structure was in effect a Carnegie library. Andrew Carnegie donated the money for the competition and construction of the building which would house a great collection of material relating to the history of the Latin American countries.

¹⁹The similarity of the facade to the Villa Pisani was pointed out by Frederick D. Nichols in Palladio in America (Milan, Italy: Electra Editrice, 1976), p. 118.

²⁰All of these were executed except the Virginia War Memorial, the Harding Mausoleum and the New Haven City Hall.

²¹George Thomas, "Art Deco Architecture and Sculpture," in Fairmount Park Art Association, Sculpture of a City: Philadelphia's Treasures in Bronze and Stone, p. 240.

²²For an extensive discussion of the influence of European Modernist images as seen in Architecture, Architectural Forum, Architectural Record and Pencil Points, see Betty K. Bird, "Images of European Modernism: The Treatment of European Architecture in American Architectural Periodicals Between

1920 and 1930," Masters Thesis, University of Virginia, 1978.

²³Paul P. Cret, "Styles--Archaeology," in Theo B. White, Paul Philippe Cret: Architect and Teacher (Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press, 1973), p. 50.

²⁴Paul P. Cret, "Ten Years of Modernism," The Federal Architect, 4, No. 1 (1933), pp. 7-12.

²⁵Cret, "Ten Years," pp. 7-12.

²⁶Paul P. Cret in John F. Harbeson, "Paul Philippe Cret," Journal American Institute of Architects (December 1945), p. 288.

²⁷Paul P. Cret, "Design and Construction," in White Paul P. Cret, p. 69.

²⁸Cret, "Ten Years," p. 10.

Chapter Two

²⁹Samuel E. Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965) Ch. 53: "The Great Change." pp. 888-917.

³⁰National Capital Planning Commission and Frederick Gutheim, Worthy of the Nation: The History of Planning for the Nation's Capital (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977), p. 125.

³¹National Capital Planning Commission, Worthy, p. 117.

³²National Capital Planning Commission, Worthy, p. 153.

³³Representative James A. Garner of Texas, Speech Reported in Metropolitan Magazine (February 1916), Reprinted in Lois

Craig, The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Building, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978), p. 242.

'There are a half dozen places in my district where Federal buildings are being erected or have recently been constructed at a cost to the Government far in excess of the actual needs of the communities where they are located. Take Uvalde, my home town, for instance. We are putting up a post office down there at a cost of \$60,000, when a \$5,000 building would be entirely adequate for our needs. This is mighty bad business for Uncle Sam, I'll admit it; but the other fellows in Congress have been doing it for a long time and I can't make them quit. Now we Democrats are in charge of the House and I'll tell you right now, every time one of these Yankees gets a ham, I'm going to get a hog.'

³⁴Craig, p. 242.

³⁵Craig, p. 281.

³⁶Richard H. Pells, Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 76.

³⁷Pells, p. 78.

³⁸Pells, pp. 78, 79-80.

³⁹"Architecture and Government," American Architect and Architecture, 150, No. 2653 (1937), pp. 22-28.

⁴⁰Aymar Embury II, "Louis A. Simon: A Great Public Servant," The Federal Architect, 9, No. 3 (1939), p. 19.

⁴¹FDR stressed the record of building through 1936: PWA programs of \$2,379,000,000--of which 840 million was for buildings; 3,637 educational buildings; 63 Municipal Auditoriums and Armories; 301 Courthouses; 420 Hospitals and Institutions; 96 Penal Institutions; 45 Social and Recreational Buildings; 42 Offices; and 50 Warehouses, Labs and Shops. The schools made up 70% of those constructed in the country and the hospitals 64%. Low cost housing accounted for 130 million dollars and was constructed in 35 cities. Private architects employed numbered about 250 and had received 3.5 million in fees. The Federal clients included: the Treasury Department; the War Department; the Public Works Administration; the Federal Housing Administration; the Home Owners Loan Corporation; the Resettlement Administration; the Bureau of Reclamation; the Tennessee Valley Authority; the Civilian Conservation Corps; the National Park Service; and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

⁴²The Federal Architect, 1, No. 1 (1930), p. 3.

⁴³Edwin B. Morris, "Our New Public Buildings: Indications of a Distinct Change in Architectural Character," Architecture, 69, No. 6 (1934), p. 313.

⁴⁴Morris, pp. 320-321.

⁴⁵American Architect and Architecture, 151 (July 1937), p. 29.

⁴⁶Louis A. Simon, "Some Recent Buildings of the United States Government," American Architect and Architecture, 151 (July 1937) p. 51.

⁴⁷Of the total number, seven were by the Procurement

Division (indicating that they were regional competitions-- a move to employ more private architects), five were by the Supervising Architect's Office, and two were private commissions.

⁴⁸Simon, p. 51. Simon had some justification for making such general statements about the "composite efforts of [the] country's architectural ability;" the Committee on Public Works had initiated a series of regional competitions open to all qualified architects with the result that "none of the designs was as good as could have been executed by the Treasury Department itself ("First Regional Competition," Pencil Points, 20, No. 9 (1939) p. 586.). It might be argued that those architects not predisposed to design in a modernized classical style refrained from entering the competition because of a belief that there was only one acceptable style.

⁴⁹C. W. Short and R. Stanley-Brown, Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and Other Governmental Bodies Between the Years 1933 and 1939 With the Assistance of the Public Works Administration. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1939), p. I.

⁵⁰These more popularly studied styles of the 1920s and 30s can be reviewed in Martin Greif, Depression Modern; Cervin Robinson and Rosemarie H. Bletter, Skyscraper Style; David Gebhard and Harriett Von Breton, LA in the Thirties; and Donald J. Bush, The Streamlined Decade.

⁵¹The competition to design a Smithsonian Gallery of Art for "living artists" was a national one. Ten architects were

chosen as finalists, among whom was Cret. The program called for a modern structure along International Style lines, which was the result of the final designs, Cret's being the most conservative one. The winning design by the Saarinen and Swanson caused an uproar due to the extremely modern design and its sensitive location on the Mall in Washington. The site directly opposite the SG was where John Russell Pope's National Gallery of Art was being constructed. Pope's design was the refinement and conclusion of his development of a classical pantheonic form--the last great American Renaissance Beaux-Arts structure (completed in 1941). The fact that the NG was praised by the same defenders of Washington's classical heritage while the SG was condemned created an interesting juxtaposition. For more on this subject see Travis McDonald, "The Smithsonian Gallery of Art," Modulus (1979).

Chapter Three

⁵²"Folger-Shakespeare Memorial Library Supplement," The Washington Post, 23 April 1932, p. 4, Col. 3.

⁵³Cret, "Styles--Archaeology," p. 50.

⁵⁴Betty Ann Kane, The Widening Circle: The Story of the Folger Shakespeare Library and Its Collections, (Washington, D.C.: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1976). The Emerson article was "On the Tercentenary of Shakespeare's Birth," delivered in 1864.

⁵⁵For more on Folger's book-buying see Kane, The Widening Circle, pp. 4-9.

⁵⁶Louis B. Wright, Of Books and Men, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1976), p. 120.

⁵⁷Henry Clay Folger, Letter to Herbert Putnam, 19 January 1928, Folger Archives, 57.

⁵⁸Herbert Putnam, Letter to Henry Clay Folger, 25 January 1928, Folger Archives, 57.

⁵⁹Newspaper article, unidentified, 22 March 1928, Folger Archives, 57.

⁶⁰Congressional Record, 30 April 1928, pp. 7738-39.

⁶¹Among the architects who solicited interviews and consideration were Shreve and Lamb; Pierson and Wilson; V. L. S. Hofner; William Douden; and J. H. de Sibour.

⁶²Alexander B. Trowbridge, Alexander B. Trowbridge: Consulting Architect, Folger Archives, 57.

⁶³Trowbridge, Trowbridge.

⁶⁴Trowbridge, Trowbridge.

Trowbridge was Consulting Architect to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York from 1918-1924, Consulting Architect to the Federal Reserve Board, and President of the Architectural League of New York from 1925-27. He noted in his book that he had consulted on 26 Federal Reserve Banks. At the time of his consulting business his office was at 1028 Connecticut Avenue in Washington.

⁶⁵"Folger Shakespeare Supplement," p. 4, col. 3.

⁶⁶"Folger'Shakespeare Supplement," p. 4, col. 3.

⁶⁷"Folger-Shakespeare Supplement," p. 4. col. 3.

The Detroit Institute of Arts was also a case where the interior was not in harmony with the exterior style of the building due to the collection housed within. It is also interesting to note that Albert Kahn had first been chosen to design the Detroit Institute of Arts but recommended Cret instead. Kahn also knew Trowbridge from a 1892 architectural association. Cret associated with Zantzinger, Bory and Medary in 1920 to design this museum. It was awarded the Gold Medal of the Architectural League of New York.

⁶⁸Harbeson, Architectural Design, pp. 75-79.

⁶⁹Paul P. Cret, "The Building" in The Folger Shakespeare Library, The Trustees of Amherst College, 1933.

⁷⁰John Harbeson, Architectural Design, p. 75.

Harbeson related Cret's lecture on "Parti" in which he quoted Cret's definition of it: 'Parti means a party, just as in politics there is a Republican, a Democratic Party; one has to be selected by the voter, who does not know which one is going to win, so selecting a parti for a problem is to take an attitude toward a solution in the hope that a building developed on the lines indicated by it will give, the best solution of the problem.'

⁷¹Cret, "The Building," pp. 31-36.

In giving his "bald description" of the Folger, Cret explained one of the principal requirements: "One feature should

be explained at the outset, since it has proved troublesome to those who, holding with good reason that the interior and exterior treatment of a building must possess unity, have wondered why the architecture of the facades is at such variance with the somewhat archaeological character of the rooms. The reason is quite simple. Mr. and Mrs. Folger desired to see specimens of their collections displayed in a gallery recalling the period rooms of our museums, and further they thought that the scholars who were to work in the Library would feel most at home in surroundings reminiscent of the England of the XVIth or XVIIth centuries. On the other hand, the architect and the consulting architect could readily see that the site selected, facing a wide and straight avenue of one of the most classical of cities, surrounded by classical buildings and lying in the very shadow of the classical dome of the Capitol itself, would be inappropriate for an Elizabethan building. The early renaissance architecture of England which harmonizes so well with the winding streets of Oxford, or the picturesque landscape of country-seats, would be quite out of place in Washington, and the Library, if renaissance in type, would clash with its immediate neighbors, the Library of Congress and the Supreme Court building. It was therefore agreed that the architect should have full freedom in designing the exterior to harmonize with its surroundings, while making the interiors derive their inspiration from Shakespeare's England."

⁷²Cret, "The Building," pp. 31-36.

⁷³Paul Cret in Harbeson, Architectural Design, pp. 76-77.

"Sort out the requirements of the program: select those which are important, and put the others in groups: those used by the public, those used by the staff of the building, etc. This grouping will aid the student in arranging the elements of his plan so that the chosen parti will 'work,' that the important rooms will satisfy the needs of the public in the building, that the lesser rooms will work with each other and the principal rooms and that they can be reached easily without causing the circulation used by the staff to interfere with that used by the public. This question of circulation is very important, as it is the circulations--the entrance halls, corridors and passages--that tie together the different parts of a plan. It goes without saying that the principal element--the heart of the program--should be in a position of importance." (Related from Cret's talk on "Parti.")

⁷⁴Wright, Of Books and Man, p. 140.

⁷⁵Wright, Of Books and Man, pp. 140-41.

⁷⁶In terms of being able to read the interior spaces from the facade, the attic floor should have been kept. As it was described, one has no idea of the unusually spacious reading room until being shocked by it.

⁷⁷Paul P. Cret, Personal Notes, 1928, Van Pelt Library, University of Pennsylvania. Henry Clay Folger, Letter to Alexander B. Trowbridge, 5 March 1929, Folger Archives, 57.

⁷⁸Henry Clay Folger, Letter to Alexander B. Trowbridge

17 December 1928, Folger Archives, 57. "Mrs. Folger is inclined to consider the front of the building, (along East Capitol Street) perhaps a little too somber, and fears Mr. Cret has been influenced by the title we gave to the project, trying to make the general effect a memorial in the technical sense of that word. Of course we mean the memorial to be a testimonial, rather than something serious."

⁷⁹Cret, "The Building," p. 34.

⁸⁰Folger had first considered a reproduction of the Fortune Playhouse but wrote to Trowbridge in April of 1929 (letter 29 April 1929, Folger Archives, 57) and suggested the Globe Playhouse instead. The main difference was that the Globe was circular. The Folger does have two plans of a circular theater by Cret which accommodated this suggestion.

The following month Folger again changed his mind and wrote to Trowbridge (Wright, Of Books and Men, p. 140): "I have read again all the literature I have about the theater construction, and am inclined to think any effort to reproduce permanently any one of the theatres known by name will involve too much risk of criticism, based on what is now known about such [a] theatre, or may later be discovered about it. Had we not, therefore, better try to construct a theatre which will suggest the several Elizabethan theatres, in a several way, rather than try to copy simply one of them?--that is, better be indefinite, and design something which will incorporate features from several of the theatres and can be described simply as a theatre

such as was used during the Shakespeare period. I am sorry to reach this conclusion, but of course lack of knowledge may lead us to offer something which may later be found incorrect." Cret, "The Building," p. 35:

In Cret's description of the theater he said the inspiration was "the old inn courtyards with superimposed balconies leading to great rooms, evidently one of the sources of theater architecture in England." The theater was later converted into a real theater.

⁸¹Cret, "The Building," p. 35.

⁸²The James Baird Company cleared the site, recommended by Trowbridge as "wreckers of old buildings." (Alexander B. Trowbridge, Letter to Henry Clay Folger, 9 September 1929, Folger Archives, 57). In announcing the site clearing, a Washington Star article began the tide of public approval which would there after become common: ". . . one of the most interesting and magnificent landmarks in the National Capitol and one that will have international significance" (Washington Star 23 November 1929, Real Estate Section.)

⁸³Washington Post, "Folger-Shakespeare Supplement," p. 3, col. 1.

⁸⁴The Federal Architect, 2, No. 1 (1931), p. 21.

⁸⁵The Federal Architect, 2, No. 1.

"It [aluminum] has been used for the entrance doors and frames, French casement windows, double hung windows, spandrel ornaments, large exterior grilles, exterior balcony railings and exterior lighting fixtures."

⁸⁶John Gregory had been a student of George G. Barnard and Antonin Mercie and had studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and at the American Academy in Rome. "By 1921 Gregory had won a substantial reputation as a classicist in outdoor sculpture, devoting himself chiefly to garden figures and architectural forms. In that year he received the medal of honor of the Architectural League for his "Philomela," now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This recognition was followed, in 1926, by the award of the Concord Art Association; in 1933, the Widener Memorial Award of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; and by the National Sculpture Society Award in 1956." Frederick Hard, The Sculptured Scenes from Shakespeare: A Description of John Gregory's Marble Reliefs (Washington, D.C.: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1959).

⁸⁷Hard, The Sculptured Scenes, p. 4.

⁸⁸Cret, "The Building."

⁸⁹Hard, The Sculptured Scenes, p. 2.

⁹⁰Commission of Fine Arts, Minutes. The members of the CFA in 1929 were Charles Moore, Benjamin W. Morris, John W. Cross, Abram Garfield, Fenuccio Vitale, Lorando Taft and Ezra Winter.

⁹¹Royal Cortissoz, "Recent Architecture and Some Other Things," New York Herald Tribune, 26 February 1933. "If antique precedent has counted with him at all I figure it as something atmospheric, something indefinable, leaving his essential originality untouched. Invention rather than precedent has aided him. The thing as it now stands is new and

strange and right, a true work of individualized architectural art. What a gulf there is between the reasoned verticality of this distinguished building and the mechanical verticality of the skyscraper which rises into crass monotony."

⁹²The Federal Architect, 2, No. 4 (April 1932), p. 4.

⁹³Commission of Fine Arts, Minutes, 28 May 1929, pp. 17-18.

Henry Clay Folger, Letter to Paul P. Cret, 28 January 1930, Folger Archives, 57.

⁹⁴The Washington Post, "Folger-Shakespeare Supplement."

⁹⁵Websters New World Dictionary of the American Language, College Edition (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1954).

⁹⁶John Harbeson later remarked about Folger that he was an "ideal client--completely idealistic as to his thoughts about his building. . . ." Harbeson also indicated how influential Folger had been: "If you look at the progress of ideas in the early sketches on the Folger Library you realize just how much Mr. Folger's quiet words had to do with that progress." (John F. Harbeson, Letter to O. B. Hardison, 25 April 1972, Folger Archives, 57.) One review of the Folger started: "Word jewels of a master poet now repose in a casket, the excellence of which he may have dreamed but his day never saw." This is ironic because the Folger Library is Henry and Emily Folger's casket--their ashes are enshrined in the Reading Room. Also ironic is the first line of a Ben Jonson quotation carved on the facade: "Thou art a monument without a tomb," which the Library was before it became the Folger's resting place.

⁹⁷Cret, "The Building."

Chapter Four

⁹⁸National Capitol Planning Commission, Worthy of the Nation: The History of Planning for the National Capitol. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977), p. 151.

"According to tradition, the White Lot was so named because of a white-washed wooden fence that surrounded it. This area, roughly equivalent to the present ellipse, is bounded by Constitution Avenue, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Streets, and the White House grounds. One of the major problems that had confronted the Quartermaster Corps in Washington during the Civil War was the storage of supplies, particularly livestock, for the Army's use. The creating of this White Lot as a holding area for cattle awaiting slaughter was a typical solution to supply problems, though the area's name persisted in common usage long after the problems and the war were over." (This work is hereafter referred to as NCPC.)

⁹⁹The DAR Building was designed by Edward Casey and completed in 1910. It was expanded to the west by John R. Pope's Constitution Hall in the late 1920s. The first of the three Red Cross buildings was designed by Trowbridge and Livingston and completed in 1917.

¹⁰⁰NCPC, p. 205. The Shipstead-Luce Act gave the CFA review authority for building adjacent to public property.

¹⁰¹Daniel P. Higgins, Letter to Charles Moore, 1 Oct. 1934, National Archives, Record Group 66, Box 56.

¹⁰²Daniel P. Higgins, Letter to Charles Moore, 31 Oct. 1934, National Archives, Record Group 66, Box 56. Higgins and Pope knew the "good ole boy" politics of conservatism in Washington and had no hesitation in hedging a bet. In one last letter regarding the above, dated 8 Nov. 1934, they await in hope: "The confidential information we assume leans toward a competition. If such is the case we hope we will be fortunate enough to be included on the selected list of architects invited to compete." They were.

¹⁰³John L. Nagle, Letter to Adolph C. Miller, 22 Aug. 1934, Federal Reserve Files, 228.1 Architect (1934-Jan. 15, 1935). Hereafter the Federal Reserve Files will be referred to as FRF.

¹⁰⁴Alexander B. Trowbridge, Letter to the Federal Reserve Board, 19 Jan. 1935, FRF.

¹⁰⁵Trowbridge, Letter, 19 Jan. 1935, FRF.

¹⁰⁶William A. Delano, Letter to Adolph C. Miller, 23 Oct. 1934, FRF.

¹⁰⁷John M. Howells, Letter to Adolph C. Miller, 21 Oct. 1934. FRF. Howell's second choice was Nathan Wyeth of Washington.

¹⁰⁸In a letter to Governor Eccles from Miller (10 Nov. 1934) in which he announced the appointment of Meeks and Abell, he also indicated the heavy land of the CFA: "Conditions under which the Federal Reserve Board is acquiring the property on Constitution Avenue require that the exterior design and material of the FRBB shall be subject to the approval of the

CFA. (. . .) It seems desirable that the exterior of the building should be of dignified character but not monumental in design, especially in view of its proximity of the Lincoln Memorial, which dominates that section of the mall, and restrained character of the buildings already erected on the squares to the east and west of the Federal Reserve Board site." In a letter from Egerton Swartwout (see FN 110) to Moore, this influence was remarked upon: "I am glad that Mr. Miller is heartily in accord with the architectural Washington tradition."

¹⁰⁹Egerton Swartwout, Letter to Charles Moore, 5 Nov. 1934, National Archives, Record Group 66, Box 56.

¹¹⁰Egerton Swartwout, Letter to Charles Moore, 28 Nov. 1934, FRF. Swartwout evaluated the following men: William Emerson; Hunt Bosworth; Bob Kahn; Harvey Corbett; Frederick C. Hirons; John Cross; Phil Sawyer; Eric Guzler; Joseph H. Freedlander; Arthur L. Harmon, William Mitchell Kendall; J. K. Smith; Ben Morris; Dan Woid; Paul Cret; Gamble Rogers; Edward B. Greene; Arthur Rice; and Clarence Zontzinger. Of Cret, Swartwout said: "If he is not invited he would make an excellent jurymen; one of the best. He has done a good deal of Modern work but his architectural training is very thorough. Just how much he is in sympathy with the straight Washington work I don't know. His deafness is not objectionable on a jury; I have served on juries with him and know him well."

¹¹¹Adolph C. Miller, Letter to Everert Meeks, 22 Dec. 1934, FRF.

¹¹²Paul P. Cret, Letter to Charles Moore, 3 Jan. 1935, National Archives, Record Group 66, Box 56. "There is an old story retold of Montaigne in his essays, of the Athenians having an assembly on the Agora to select an architect. One of the candidates spoke, telling how good, how talented he was, making the most glowing picture of what he would do--all of this in an eloquent if somewhat lengthy address. The second architect spoke--"Fellow citizens, what this man has just said, I shall do"--and he got the job."

¹¹³A photograph, ca. 1920, reproduced in Worthy of a Nation, p. 150, shows the temporary office building which occupied the FRBB site. The portico entrance facing Constitution Avenue looks remarkably similar to its replacement.

¹¹⁴Adolph C. Miller, Letter to Charles Moore, 18 Jan. 1935, FRF.

¹¹⁵Adolph C. Miller, Letter to Charles Moore, 18 Jan. 1935, FRF. Adolph C. Miller, Letter to Charles Moore, 21 Jan. 1935, FRF. "Competition Program," 19 Jan. 1935, FRF.

¹¹⁶Federal Reserve Board, memorandum, 25 Jan. 1935. FRF Meeting consisted of Vice Governor Thomas, Mr. Szymezak, Mr. Hamlin and Mr. Miller.

¹¹⁷Egerton Swartwout, Letter to Chester Morrill, 31 Jan. 1935, FRF.

¹¹⁸"Report of the Jury to the Federal Reserve Board," 17 May 1935, FRF.

¹¹⁹Daniel P. Higgins, Letter to Marriner Eccles, 22 May 1935, FRF.

¹²⁰Minutes, Commission of Fine Arts, 20 May 1935.

¹²¹Egerton Swartwout, Letter to H. P. Cremmerer, 13 June 1935, National Archives, Record Group 66, Box 56.

¹²²John Mead Howells, Memorandum to Federal Reserve Board, 20 May 1935, FRF.

¹²³Minutes, Board of Governor's Meeting, Federal Reserve Board, 18 Oct. 1935, FRF.

¹²⁴Paul P. Cret, Letter to Adolph Miller, 26 Oct. 1935, FRF.

¹²⁵Paul P. Cret, "Outline Specifications and Description of the Building for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System," 2 Jan. 1936, FRF.

¹²⁶Charles Moore, Letter to Adolph Miller, 22 April 1936, FRF. "I think the Commission of Fine Arts has made it manifest to you throughout all the proceedings that our desire was and is to aid the Federal Reserve Board in creating an attractive building with landscape setting second in interest and dignity to no other building in Washington. This Commission regarded the matter as a question of aesthetics, rather than one of uniformity. (. . .) You have an architect who is master of monumental buildings with appropriate and enhancing landscape setting. He has the French feeling, which L'Enfant caught from Le Notre and brought to his plan for Washington. This same feeling actuated the Commission in 1901 in re-establishing, extending and bringing down to date the L'Enfant plan after making a study in France of the Le Notre gardens. Let us try

to support Dr. Cret in carrying out his artistic conceptions. This letter is merely to show you our willingness to cooperate with you and your architect towards producing the finest possible."

¹²⁷Paul P. Cret, Letter to John M. Howells, 27 April 1936, FRF.

¹²⁸Cret, Letter 27 April 1936. "I feel it entirely inadvisable to reopen the question of the treatment of the Constitution Avenue [side] at this date, for the following reasons: 1) takes a long time with three parties to arrive at a solution; 2) the building is under contract already; and 3: changes involve readjustment in the contract figures. (. . .) The two gardens at the ends of the terrace may possibly look inadequate at first, as they rely on planting, and planting needs at least a decade to make a good showing. I am patient, however, and resigned to short-sighted criticism until my trees have grown up." After four decades of growth, the landscape planting of the FRBB is one of the finest in the city.

¹²⁹The competition drawings showed a slightly more elaborate treatment of the entablature with the hint of a frieze on each corner of the architrave.

¹³⁰Gregory had been given the liberty by Cret of submitting his own subject matter for these figures. He proposed figures of a man and woman on each side holding shields with the seal of the United States. Gregory had not intended to have the figures represent any particular subject but with objections from the Reserve Board, one figure became Columbia, holding the

United States seal and the other became Mercury, representing the Federal Reserve Board and holding its seal on a shield.

¹³¹The competition drawings show eagle sculptures on the 20th and 21st Street pilasters similar to the ones shown for C Street.

¹³²In fact, in section, the stair court looks like the impluvium of a Roman house. The columns were originally designed as square piers but were changed to reflect more of a Robert Mills feeling.

¹³³At one point the Reserve Board questioned the height of the Board Room because they thought the extra space could be used for offices or the third floor. Cret responded that the height was barely adequate and if he could, he would have used the whole space up to the fourth floor. In a letter to Chester Morrill (Aug. 1935) Cret discussed this matter: Any monumental building involves a certain amount of space sacrificed for the sake of giving to it that character which differentiates it from purely utilitarian structures. We are satisfied that we have reduced this sacrifice to a minimum."

¹³⁴The Prize of Honor was the most distinguished award, followed by a Gold Medal and then a Silver. The other Prize of Honor recipients were Perry, Shaw and Hepburn for the Restoration of Colonial Williamsburg; Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott for the Cornell Medical Center at the New York City Hospital; and Reinhard and Hofmeister, Corbet, Harrison and MacMurray, Hood and Fouilhoux for Rockefeller Center.

Cret also won a silver medal for Folger Library.

¹³⁵"Text of the President's Speech," The Evening Star, Washington, D.C.; 20 Oct. 1937.

Chapter Five

¹³⁶William B. Rhoads, "Franklin D. Roosevelt--'Architect' and Preservationist," Society of Architectural Historians Annual Meeting, Savannah, 6 April 1979.

¹³⁷Alfred Haworth Jones, "The Search for a Usable American Past in the New Deal Era," American Quarterly, 23, No. 5 (1971), p. 710.

¹³⁸This sketch is on display at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda.

¹³⁹A Brief History of the National Naval Medical Center," The National Naval Medical Center (Rockville, Maryland: The Publishing Group, 1979), p. 3.

¹⁴⁰For a discussion of state capitols in a modernized classical form see Henry-Russell Hitchcock and William Seale's Temples of Democracy: The State Capitols of the USA. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976). Chapter Seven.

¹⁴¹After a series of Washington Naval hospital locations, which began with one in 1812, a permanent one was established in 1906 at 23rd and E Streets. It was this hospital which became the National Naval Medical Center in 1935, already too small by that date, necessitating a new complex. If the same site had been considered for the new complex, Cret would have added

yet another structure to his accomplishments on the western end of Constitution Avenue.

¹⁴²"A Brief History of the NNMC," p. 2.

¹⁴³The NNMC is still expanding. At this writing a new hospital is nearing completion to the south of the original one. To construct the new building Wards 4 and 6 by Cret were demolished.

¹⁴⁴The NNMC tower of twenty stories is 249' from ground to the top. This is approxiamtely 100' less than the Nebraska Capitol tower. The length of the facade of the NNMC is 363'. Again, this is approxiamtely 100' less than the Nebraska Capitol facade. Other dimensions of the NNMC hospital are forty-five feet from the ground to the parapet of the three story wings; 159' as the depth of the main building; and the tower in plan is 106' deep and eighty-nine feet wide.

¹⁴⁵The Evening Star. 15 September 1945.

¹⁴⁶Cret had worked on a comparable scale before, as with the Administration Building for the University of Texas, but not with the use of such unadorned surfaces as composing elements. The Texas tower was basically the form of the Medical Center: a low mass from which rose a tower.

¹⁴⁷The Folger Library was one of the favorites in a poll taken among the architectural profession in 1932 but more importantly, in another poll taken in 1948, the Folger was number one. ("What Are the Outstanding Buildings?" The Federal Architect . 2, No. 4 (1932), p. 8. Edwin B. Morris, "What Buildings Give

You a Thrill?" Journal of the American Institute of Architects (Dec. 1948), pp. 272-277.)

¹⁴⁸This is the site of the present State Department Building, also designed in a Refined Classical style.

¹⁴⁹The site plan for the "Proposed Northwest Rectangle Public Buildings Group," 1934 actually showed a War and Navy Building as well as a Naval Museum but these were just schematic. The War Department plan was just a mirror image of the Interior Building plan.

¹⁵⁰On the plan mentioned in FN 23 is a structure on the same site as this unidentified building labeled Headquarters Barrack.

¹⁵¹The Pan American Union was actually part of the White Lot Group, discussed in Chapter One, but can be considered as part of the Northwest Rectangle Group as well.

¹⁵²Minutes, Commission of Fine Arts 23 February 1935, 31 January 1936, 8 July 1940. Washington, D.C.

¹⁵³If to Cret's three designs in the NW Rectangle are added two others in the Mall area, the Folger Library and the Central Heating Plant (1931), he would be the architect with a majority of structures in that area, a record matched by only one other architect: John Russell Pope.

Pope's designs are the DAR Constitution Hall (1930); the American Pharmacentral Association (1934); the National Archives (1935); the National Gallery of Art (1941); and the Jefferson Memorial (1943). Each of these participated in a

separate compositional piece making up the National Mall area: respectively the White Lot Group; the NW Rectangle's enframement of the Lincoln Memorial; the Federal Triangle; the Mall proper; and the Washington Common cross-axis of the Mall.

¹⁵⁴Pells, p. 86.

Conclusion

¹⁵⁵"What Are the Outstanding Buildings?" p. 8.

¹⁵⁶Cret, "Ten Years of Modernism," p. 9.

¹⁵⁷Michel Roux-Spitz and Jean Porcher, "Tendencies of the School of Modern French Architecture," Architectural Record, 65 (Jan.-June, 1929), pp. 336, 337.

¹⁵⁸Cret, "Ten Years of Modernism," p. 12.

¹⁵⁹William H. Pierson, Jr., American Buildings and Their Architects: The Colonial and Neo-Classical Styles (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970) p. 338.

¹⁶⁰It is very interesting that John M. Howells, who first mentioned the Mills connection in the report of the jury, wrote Charles Moore and gave evidence of another Greek Revival similarity with Cret's design. Howells told Moore to look in Great Georgian Houses of America for a photograph of the Samuel Russell House in Middletown, Connecticut. In referring to the garden elevation Howells said: "This house is by Hoadley, contemporary of Mills, and it is what I mean when I say that to me this type of work, though of course classic, has a modernistic simplicity of surface;

notice the square piers like Cret's elevations, which have no bases." (John M. Howells, Letter to Charles Moore, 24 May 1935, National Archives, Record Group 66, Box 56.)

¹⁶¹It has been suggested by George Thomas that Cret modelled the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia on the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus in Athens. This monument of about 320 B.C. was reconstructed in an illustration by J. M. Maunch in 1844. This is probably not correct because Cret's style evolved from his own work. The illustration does show that there was a prototype in antiquity which featured a baseless square pier order with a simple entablature. And in this fact, Cret's modernized Classicism can definitely be called Greek. (George Thomas, p. 245.)

¹⁶²Pierson, p. 374.

¹⁶³There exists a theory by Walter Abell equating disruptive social and political eras with calm, quiet classical forms of architecture. The thesis of this argument is that man will unconsciously create a more perfect "world" in which to retreat. This would certainly hold true for the Federal Government's use of the Refined Classical style, if nothing else.

¹⁶⁴"Paul Cret Diagnoses Philadelphia's Growing Pains," Philadelphia Record 19 December 1937.

¹⁶⁵John Harbeson, "Paul Philippe Cret," Journal of the American Institute of Architects, (Dec. 1945), p. 288.

¹⁶⁶William Shellman, "History as Experience" Lecture, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, 27 September 1979.

I am indebted to Professor Shellman of Princeton University for his stimulating lecture on the associated ideas of history, experience, memory, knowledge and architecture--from which the last part of this conclusion is based.

¹⁶⁷"Memorial Service to Paul Philippe Cret at his Home, September 11, 1945," The Federal Architect, Final Number (1946), p. 22. This final issue was devoted entirely to Cret. Edwin Morris explained that the magazine had run out of funds and that the A.I.A. had agreed to pay for this last issue being mailed to its members "in appreciation of the genius of Paul Cret."

¹⁶⁸National Archives, Record Group 66, Box 20.

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— J.M. —

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VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL COMPETITION

VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL COMPETITION

PAUL P. CRET, *Architect*, Philadelphia

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18 Detail of the Mall Design in the McMillan Commission Plan of Washington, 1901-02.

19 Folger Shakespeare Library. Site (lower left) on East Capitol Street.

20 P. 3

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

20 Parti Study for Arrangement of Plan.

21 Parti Study for Arrangement of Plan.

22 Esquisse Study of Parti.

PAUL PHILIP CHART
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 CONSULTING ARCHITECT

24 Folger Shakespeare Library. First Floor and Site Plan.

25 Folger Shakespeare Library. Second Floor Plan.

PAUL PHILIPPE CRÉT
ARCHITECT
ALEXANDER B. TROWBRIDGE
CONSULTING ARCHITECT

26 Folger Shakespeare Library. Ground Floor Plan.

27 Folger Shakespeare Library. Longitudinal Section Through Theater, Reading Room and Administrative Offices.

28 Folger Shakespeare Library. Transverse Section Through Exhibition Gallery and Reading Room.

29 Folger Shakespeare Library. Studies for the Facade.

30 Folger Shakespeare Library. Studies for the Facade.

31 Folger Shakespeare Library. Northwest View of Facade.

32 Folger Shakespeare Library. Facade.

FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY
EAST ELEVATION
1/4" = 1' - 0"

33 Folger Shakespeare Library. East Elevation.

34 Folger Shakespeare Library. East Elevation Detail.

35 Folger Shakespeare Library. West Elevation.

36 Folger Shakespeare Library. West Elevation.

38 Folger Shakespeare Library. West Entrance.

Plate 64 Federal Reserve Bank, Façade, Philadelphia, Pa.

Plate 65 Federal Reserve Bank, Entrance Detail

39 Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, 1932, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

40 Folger Shakespeare Library. Exhibition Gallery.

41 Folger Shakespeare Library. Theater.

42 Folger Shakespeare Library. Reading Room.

43 Folger Shakespeare Library. Fountain and Statue of Puck by Brenda Putnam.

46 View of the Northwest Rectangle (left of lower center) and the Constitution Avenue Enframement of the Lincoln Memorial.

COMPETITION FOR A BUILDING FOR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

SOUTH ELEVATION ON CONSTITUTION AVENUE

47 Federal Reserve Board Building. Winning Design.

OFFICE OF JOHN RUSSELL POPE
NEW YORK

JAMES GAMBLE ROGERS
NEW YORK

48 Federal Reserve Board Building. Second and Third Place Entries,
Office of John Russell Pope, New York (Second Place) and James
Gamble Rogers, New York (Third Place).

DELANO AND ALDRICH
NEW YORK

COOLIDGE, SHEPLEY, BULFINCH AND
ABBOTT BOSTON

49 Federal Reserve Board Building. Competition Entries, Delano and Aldrich, New York and Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott, Boston.

ARTHUR BROWN, JR.
SAN FRANCISCO

EGERTON SWARTWOUT
NEW YORK

50 Federal Reserve Board Building. Competition Entries, Arthur Brown, Jr., San Francisco and Egerton Swartwout, New York.

HOLABIRD AND ROOT
CHICAGO

YORK AND SAWYER
NEW YORK

51 Federal Reserve Board Building. Competition Entries, Holabird and Root, Chicago and York and Sawyer, New York.

COMPETITION FOR A BUILDING FOR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

52 Federal Reserve Board Building. First Floor and Site Plan.

COMPETITION FOR A BUILDING FOR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

COMPETITION FOR A BUILDING FOR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

THIRD FLOOR PLAN

COMPETITION FOR A BUILDING FOR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

SECTION

56 Federal Reserve Board Building. Constitution Avenue Facade.

Federal Reserve Board Building. Facade Portico with Sculpture by
Sydney Waugh.

58 Federal Reserve Board Building. Facade Portico.

59 Federal Reserve Board Building. Constitution Avenue Entrance.

60 Federal Reserve Board Building. Window Detail.

COMPETITION FOR A BUILDING FOR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

NORTH ELEVATION ON "C" STREET

62 Federal Reserve Board Building. C Street Entrance Detail with Sculpture by John Gregory.

63 Federal Reserve Board Building. Wing Ends.

64 Federal Reserve Board Building. Constitution Avenue Entrance Lobby.

65 Federal Reserve Board Building. C Street Entrance Lobby.

66 Federal Reserve Board Building. Stairhall with Iron Work by Samuel Yellin.

67 Federal Reserve Board Building. Entrance to Board Room.

68 Federal Reserve Board Building. Board Room.

COMPETITION FOR A BUILDING FOR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

GENERAL PLAN AND ELEVATION

71 National Naval Medical Center. Sketch by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

72 National Naval Medical Center. Sketch by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

73 Nebraska State Capitol, 1920, Lincoln, Nebraska. Bertram Goodhue.

74 National Naval Medical Center. Site Plan.

75 National Naval Medical Center.

76 National Naval Medical Center.

77 National Naval Medical Center.

78 National Naval Medical Center. Window Detail.

79 National Naval Medical Center. Tower Detail.

80 National Naval Medical Center. Entrance.

81 National Naval Medical Center. Medical School Entrance.

82 Peace Memorial. Site Plan.

83 Peace Memorial. Detail of Statue of Peace.

84 Peace Memorial. Elevation Along Constitution Avenue.

85 Pan American Union Plaza. Plan.

86 Pan American Union Plaza. Elevation with the Department of the Interior in the Background.

87 Northwest Rectangle and Constitution Avenue Enframement of the Lincoln Memorial.

88 Paul Philippe Cret Receiving the BOK Award.