

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN NEW YORK CITY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1934.

The second meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1934, was held in the office of Mr. John Russell Pope, architect, 542 Fifth Avenue, on Monday, September 17, 1934. The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman,
Mr. Howells,
Mr. Clarke,
Mr. Lawrie,
Mr. Savage,
Mr. Coolidge,
also H. P. Caemmerer,

Executive Secretary and Administrative Officer. There were also present Mr. Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service, Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, landscape architect, and Mr. Daniel P. Higgins and Mr. Otto Eggers, representing Mr. Pope's office. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a. m., daylight saving time.

1. COLUMBIA ISLAND PLAZA: Major Clarke submitted a detailed drawing for Columbia Island drawn with the scale of 100 feet to the inch. This was based on a design for Columbia Island Plaza, which was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts at the meeting held, July 26, 1934. Details of the plan were called to the attention of the other members of the Commission and to Mr. Olmsted by Mr. Clarke. Mr. Olmsted expressed interest in the plan, particularly in relation to the development of Roosevelt Island, for which he is a consulting landscape architect. Mr. Olmsted suggested having parking space provided at the north end of Columbia Island near the site where a footbridge is to be built to connect Columbia Island with Roosevelt Island. The Commission felt this could be worked out satisfactorily with some change in the grading and that the parking space

can be planned so as to be hidden from those driving along the roads. The Commission approved the plan with this suggestion. A copy of the plan will be sent to the National Capital Park and Planning Commission by Major Clarke.

2. PEDIMENT GROUP FOR THE ARCHIVES BUILDING: Under date of September 5, 1934, the following letter was received from Mr. Louis Simon, Supervising Architect:

September 5, 1934.

Mr. Charles Moore, Chairman,
Commission of Fine Arts,
Navy Department Building,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

There is transmitted, herewith, for your consideration and comment, one set of the photographs of the model of the sculptural group in the pediment on the Pennsylvania Avenue facade of the Archives Building, this city.

It would be appreciated if consideration of these photographs could be expedited and the photographs returned to this office with such comments as may be deemed pertinent.

Respectfully,
(Signed) Louis A. Simon,
Supervising Architect.

The photographs were brought to the attention of Mr. Lawrie and they were thereupon inspected by the other members of the Commission. The Commission approved the models. (Exhibit A)

3. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK, ARKANSAS: Under date of September 8, 1934, the following letter was received from the National Park Service, submitting plans for the Administration Building of the Hot Springs National Park:

September 8, 1934.

The Fine Arts Commission,
Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

It is the wish of Director Arno B. Cammerer that the preliminary design for the proposed Administration Building of the Hot Springs National Park be submitted to you for your approval. Six sets of blue prints of our drawing HS-1011-C are therefore enclosed for your use.

This proposed building will face upon two streets in the center of the city of Hot Springs, Arkansas, as shown on the plot plan of sheet No. 3. On the Central Avenue side it will terminate several blocks of two-story bath houses. On the Reserve Avenue side it will face an open plot of land created by the plaza in front of the Kingsway Hotel and the wide intersection of Reserve and Central Avenues. The entrance feature is designed to more or less center upon and terminate the axis of Valley Street. For a year or two the east end of the proposed Administration Building will be partly obscured by the Imperial Bath House - a structure which is to be removed when its owner's lease expires. In place of the Imperial Bath House will be the termination of a formal promenade running between "Bath House Row" and the new Army and Navy Hospital. It will therefore be noted that the building will occupy a position among more or less sophisticated architecture in contrast to most National Park administration buildings.

It has been the aim and achievement of various planning agencies in Hot Springs to have a Spanish type of architecture used wherever possible - particularly in the public buildings. We believe that we have carried out the spirit of Spanish work and that the design as shown will fit in with the surroundings.

This design has been shown to certain private citizens at Hot Springs outside of the Park Service who have raised some questions regarding its architectural merit. Two points in question were the belt course running between the first and second floors and the wrought iron grill work.

We would appreciate very much anything you can do to expedite action in this particular case since the status of our Public Works Program makes it very desirable to get this building under contract as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Charles E. Peterson,
Deputy Chief Architect.

Sets of blue prints had been sent to each of the architect members of the Commission for consideration prior to the meeting. A set of the blue prints was inspected by Mr. Howells and Mr. Coolidge. The building was designed in the Spanish type of architecture. It is to be 75 feet long, 44 feet wide and two stories in height. Both Mr. Howells and Mr. Coolidge thought the building well designed and upon their recommendation the Commission approved the plans. The Director of the National Park Service, Mr. Caemmerer, explained that the Government buildings at Hot Springs are being designed in the Spanish type of architecture to emphasize the early Spanish history of the country-- the explorations of de Soto and other Spaniards in Arkansas. A museum is in the park where Spanish relics are being placed as also Indian relics.

As to the question raised in the letter concerning a belt-course and wrought iron grills, Mr. Howells and Mr. Coolidge said the belt-course should appear simply as a delicate line. The wrought iron grill work the Commission considered appropriate for the building.

The Commission suggested that the building be built preferably of stone or else of stucco aggregate or of wood and stucco. A letter of approval was sent to the National Park Service. (Exhibit B)

4. ARKANSAS CENTENNIAL COIN: The Secretary stated that during the past week Senator Caraway of Arkansas and the Arkansas Memorial Committee had urged that Mr. Edward E. Burr be retained as the artist to design the Arkansas Centennial Coin and that Mr. Burr had sent the following telegram setting forth his qualifications:

Chicago, Illinois,
September 14, 1934.

H. P. Caemmerer,
Secretary, Fine Arts Commission,
Navy Building, Washington, D. C.

members

of the div

Centennial Secretary Parke of Little Rock requests wiring you my qualifications briefly. President Trees of Medallie Art Company likes my work and reproduce my Daily News Lindbergh Medal which won place in Chicago Art Institute Exhibition. Crowe Company produced metal miniatures of my last years World's Fair Poster model.

E. E. Burr

The Arkansas Memorial Commission proposed to have Miss Emily Bates of Arkansas make the models in the studio of Mr. Lorado Taft and this was confirmed by telegram from Mr. Taft to the Secretary, as follows:

Chicago, Illinois,
September 14, 1934.

H. P. Caemmerer,
Commission of Fine Arts,
Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Emily Bates has permission to model relief in my studio.

Lorado Taft.

The matter was brought to the particular attention of Mr. Lawrie, who said that if Mr. Taft would give the Arkansas Centennial Coin models supervision the arrangement proposed would be satisfactory to him. However, Mr. Burr should be required to submit a new design to the Commission. Mr. Lawrie suggested that the obverse should show only one head and that a new eagle should be designed for the reverse, or preferably something of interest in Arkansas history. The Commission concurred in these suggestions. A letter was sent to Senator Caraway accordingly. (Exhibit C)

5. SCULPTURAL FIGURES FOR THE ARCHIVES BUILDING: Under date of September 6, 1934, Mr. Louis A. Simon submitted the following letter to the Commission of Fine Arts:

September 6, 1934.

Mr. Charles Moore, Chairman,
Commission of Fine Arts,
Navy Department Building,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

There are transmitted, herewith, for your consideration and comment, two sets of photographs in triplicate of the model of the sculptural figures to be placed on the cheek blocks on the Constitution Avenue side of the Archives Building, this city.

It would be appreciated if consideration of these photographs could be expedited and the photographs returned to this office with such comments as may be deemed pertinent.

Respectfully,
(Signed) Louis A. Simon,
Supervising Architect.

The photographs were brought to the attention of Mr. Lawrie and they were thereupon inspected by the other members of the Commission. The Commission approved the models. (Exhibit D)

6. PEDESTAL FOR STATUE OF FRANCESCO VIGO: Mr. John Angel submitted a revised design for the pedestal of the statue of Francesco Vigo, with letter as follows:

To the Commission of Fine Arts, Washington, meeting in the office of John Russell Pope, 542 Fifth Avenue, September 17, 1934.

Dear Sirs:

The enclosed blue prints represent my endeavour to comply with the suggestions made by you regarding my design of the base of the Francis Vigo Statue.

(1) I have omitted the filet at the top of the base (which you thought too thin for safety) as a separate slab, and I have reduced that member in height and (2) incorporated it with the base below, thus eliminating that danger, and at the same time creating a greater variety of widths in the members as seen in the elevation.

(3) I have created a greater slope to the top of the base as suggested.

(4) In addition I have moved the statue farther back on the base, in order to bring the seat block of the statue into a

position of better central balance on profile with the architecture of the base below.

In order that you may see how the base sits in its position I have drawn the surrounding exedra which was designed by Messrs. Bennett Parsons and Frost, and which has already been built in site. The height of the head of the statue from the ground outside will, according to these measurements be 11'10".

I shall be glad to show the model to any or all of the committee, at my studio and more fully explain any point not clear in the drawings.

I am, sirs,

Very sincerely yours,
John Angel,
149 East 119th Street,
New York.

The design was brought to the particular attention of Mr. Coolidge. The Commission noted the changes Mr. Angel had made in his model and considered the revised design an improvement over the former one submitted, but the Commission took note of the fact that due to the new setting of the pedestal, the pedestal was not altogether symmetrically located with reference to the exedra that has been built at the site. The Commission did not favor taking out any stone from the exedra so as to straighten out the joints.

A sample of West Chelmsford, Massachusetts, granite was submitted by Mr. Angel to be used for the statue, and this was inspected by the Commission. Mr. Angel telephoned that he favored this granite to the Mt. Airy granite, which is being considered by Bennett, Parsons and Frost. The Massachusetts granite he said is better for carving.

Mr. Coolidge said that his experience with West Chelmsford granite is that it is very hard and not at all desirable for carving. A letter was sent to Mr. Angel accordingly. (Exhibit E)

7. UNION SQUARE: Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, consulting landscape architect for the Union Square development, submitted revised sketches for the consideration of the Commission. Mr. Olmsted stated that in these studies he had endeavored to carry out the recommendations of the Commission of Fine Arts to use the 1901 Plan for Union Square, which emphasized the plaza treatment as a basis.

As to the stylobate or retaining wall at the west side of the Capitol Grounds shown in the 1901 Plan, Mr. Olmsted said it would be very inadvisable to construct this according to the plan as it would result in a wall 15 feet high, thus separating the Capitol Grounds from the Mall development. The retaining wall was proposed for a 15-foot height to correspond to the old gatehouses. Mr. Olmsted said the plan for Union Square was made in 1901 simply as a plan and without sufficient consideration to prevailing conditions. It proposed to cut down the large trees in this locality so as to create a large open vista adjacent to Union Square. The Union Square Plaza was to be 500 by 1,000 feet in size. There were to be three large statues in the center of the plaza at the intersection of Second Street, whereas by 1908 the site for the Grant Monument, 250 feet in length, was fixed at the extreme east end of Union Square. In this connection Mr. Olmsted mentioned the fact that the first sketch for the Washington Monument Grounds of the Plan of 1901 was made by Mr. McKim and himself while the Park Commission of 1901 was abroad and they were traveling on the train from Budapest to Paris. The plans and maps of the 1901 Plan were made by different persons and he said that due to this fact he had discovered some variations in the different

plans although of minor nature. It was not intended he said that various designs of the 1901 Plan should be depended upon for details as it could not be anticipated at the time when the 1901 Plan would be carried out.

Speaking of the Capitol Grounds, area, Mr. Olmsted said that historically and as early maps indicate, the Capitol Grounds in the early days of the Republic were cut back from Second Street to First Street. This is shown in the Latrobe Plan. This is further emphasized by the fact that it was the tendency of Congress at the time to sell excess land east and west of the Capitol. However, the 1901 Plan restored the area of the Capitol Grounds to the limits contemplated by Thomas U. Walter when he enlarged the Capitol during the years 1850 to 1860. The plan of the Mall was designed to provide for eight rows of trees with a central open panel extending to the Washington Monument. So far as the large plaza for Union Square is concerned, Mr. Olmsted said that not only is such a large plaza, 500 by 1,000 feet, objectionable but it would be undesirable because of the climatic conditions in Washington during the summer.

Mr. Moore said the north side of the Capitol Grounds was cut down by Boss Shepherd about 1875. Continuing, Mr. Olmsted said that in these sketches he regarded the question of plan to take in the area around the Capitol one for future consideration. Thereupon Mr. Olmsted showed Plan No. 523 and pointed out features of it. He showed that there is to be no high terrace wall but there will be a slight rise in the ground by constructing a curb immediately east of the Grant Monument leading to the Capitol Grounds. Instead of a large plaza his plan showed a comparatively small island with Pennsylvania and Maryland Avenues converging toward the Capitol and the Mall vista in the center.

Second Street is to be kept closed and Third Street is to be widened to 76 feet. The Commission felt that this was the best of the several sketches Mr. Olmsted had presented and study of it resulted in a number of suggestions for changes, as follows:

1. End the outer Mall roads at Third Street.
2. Extend the vista drives of the Mall into Union Square.
3. Square up the parcels of land adjacent to the central panel.
4. Plant a row of trees on the Union Square side of Third Street.

A general discussion followed as to relocating the Naval Monument and the Garfield Monument and redesigning the circles at these locations in connection with the question of realignment of First Street. It was stated that the street car tracks should be removed from First Street at the earliest date possible and be diverted from Pennsylvania Avenue southward along Third Street.

The Commission thereupon approved this plan for Union Square, No. 523, and Mr. Olmsted said he would make a complete drawing of it embodying the suggestions of the Commission. (Exhibit F)

8. LAMP STANDARDS FOR THE MALL: Mr. J. W. Gosling of the General Electric Company, Schenectady, New York, presented sketches for the lamp posts proposed for the Mall. The Commission inspected these with interest. They consisted of double light standards with drop lights and vertical lights; also single lamp standards.

Mr. Gosling said the double light standards would call for a 400 Watt light and give sufficient light, whereas the single lamp standard would have 600 Watts, although reflection and refraction could be controlled by a single light.

Mr. Gosling presented several designs for the single light standard: one like the street lights of Washington; another with a rectangular globe and a third suggesting a rectangular globe with the edges slightly rounded. This had an artistic touch that commended itself to the Commission.

Mr. Moore asked Mr. C. Marshall Finnan, Superintendent of the National Capital Parks, who was present, whether a single lamp standard would give enough light for the Mall, and he replied that it would. The Commission thereupon recommended the use of the single lamp standard and requested Mr. Gosling to make a revised drawing of the sketch favored by the Commission. Mr. Gosling said he would do this. The Commission decided that this type of light should be used on all of the Mall drives and on all cross roads between Independence and Constitution Avenues.

9. MURAL PAINTINGS FOR THE ARCHIVES BUILDING: Mr. Barry Faulkner, mural painter, submitted revised sketches of his proposed paintings for the entrance hall or rotunda of the Archives Building. They are to flank a case which is to contain the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. The mural painting on the left is to portray the signers of the Declaration of Independence and that on the right the signers of the Constitution. Also there will be shown a few other leading Americans of the Republic to the year 1830.

Each of the paintings is to be 34 feet long and 14 feet high. The figures are to be 8 feet high.

The Commission inspected the sketches, which were about 3 feet by $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and felt they were an improvement over the sketches submitted at the meeting of the Commission on July 26. Mr. Faulkner showed the old sketches for comparison. Mr. Savage said the problem resolves itself into one of whether the paintings will be historical representations of the times or allegorical.

The Commission felt that Mr. Faulkner's revised sketches were an improvement over those submitted at the meeting on July 26. In the opinion of the Commission, however, there was a considerable sameness in Mr. Faulkner's sketches in that they simply portray a row of men who were prominent in Revolutionary times and the early years of the Republic. Mr. Howells thought there was nothing inspiring in the sketches. Mr. Moore suggested that the men be arranged chronologically. The Commission felt that the subject of the United States archives should be portrayed in a more comprehensive way. Mr. Moore offered the suggestion that one of the panels be dedicated to the founders of the Republic and the other to Abraham Lincoln and his time. The Commission heartily concurred in this suggestion.

The Secretary raised the question whether there is authority of law to remove the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States from the Library of Congress to the Archives Building and informed Mr. Higgins that he ought to look into this before money is spent for the case proposed for these documents.

The Commission decided to take up the matter further with Mr. Pope and the Supervising Architect before Mr. Faulkner should proceed with further work on his sketches. (Exhibit G)

10. SCULPTURE FOR THE ARCHIVES BUILDING: The Commission visited the studio of Mr. Robert Aitken, 227 West 13th Street on Monday afternoon and inspected his models of medallions for the Archives Building. These models had been considered by Mr. Lawrie, Mr. Swartwout and Mr. Savage some weeks ago during an inspection of designs at Mr. Pope's office. At that time objection was raised to model No. 10, which represented the United States Seal but with the

seal in greatly altered form. Mr. Swartwout strongly recommended at that time that if the seal is to be shown, it should be quite an exact rendering of the seal and in this Mr. Lawrie and Mr. Savage concurred.

During the inspection by the Commission, Mr. Aitken exhibited a model of the United States Seal, in which he had followed the design of the actual seal of the United States. This was inspected by the Commission but it was regarded unsatisfactory and the Commission, therefore, advised elimination of this medallion.

As to model No. 8 (Labor), Mr. Lawrie recommended a modification of the shoulders of the figure, since the shoulders and neck were not properly connected. As to model No. 13 (Justice), Mr. Lawrie advised putting drapery over the legs of the man so as to give the figure dignity. The Commission concurred in these recommendations.

Mr. Aitken then exhibited large models of sculptural panels (showing Roman soldiers) for the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance of the Archives Building. Mr. Lawrie thought the panels well designed and in general approved them. Mr. Lawrie believed that instead of relating them to the doorways, he would consider them rather as part of the base of the column above, which rather determine the scale of the figures. As to the figures themselves, he considered them simply an ornament of the Roman type. The suggestion was made to move the panels slightly from the door so as to bring them into better relation with the columns above.

Models of two statues to flank the entrance to the Archives Building on the Pennsylvania Avenue side were then shown by Mr. Aitken. These represented

History of the Past (with book closed) and History of the Future (with book open). The figures are to be 11 feet high. The models were not complete and are to be inspected again when finished. (Exhibit G)

The Commission adjourned at 4:30 p. m.

C O P Y

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
Washington, D. C.

September 17, 1934.

Dear Mr. Simon:

Your letter of September 5th, submitting photographs of the model of the sculptural group in the pediment on the Pennsylvania Avenue facade of the Archives Building, by Mr. A. A. Weinman, sculptor, received the attention of the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting today. The Commission approve the model.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Mr. Louis Simon,
Supervising Architect,
Treasury Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT A

DRAFT OF LETTER

September 18, 1934.

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

At the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts held on September 17, 1934, the Commission approved the design submitted by your office for the proposed administration building of the Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas.

Regarding the questions raised by Mr. Peterson as to the belt-course running between the first and second floors and the wrought iron grill work, the Commission advise that the belt-course appear simply as a delicate line. The wrought iron grill work the Commission regard satisfactory for the building. The Commission suggest that the building be built preferably of stone or stucco aggregate or of wood.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

Chairman.

Hon. Arno B. Cammerer, Director,
National Park Service,
Interior Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT B

C O P Y

September 18, 1934.

My dear Senator Caraway:

I was much pleased to receive your telegram at the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts in New York City yesterday, regarding the Arkansas Centennial Coin. The Commission gave the matter full consideration, and agreed to retaining Mr. Burr as the artist to design the coin.

However, the Commission request that Mr. Burr submit a new design, both for the obverse and the reverse. The Commission suggest that the obverse show only one head. For the reverse a new design of an eagle should be made, more simplified than shown in the sketch submitted; or something of interest might be shown that would be of real interest to Arkansas historically. It might help matters if the artist would submit several alternate sketches (not necessarily drawn out in detail) for the consideration of the Commission.

After the designs are approved by the Commission of Fine Arts, it is understood that the models will be made by Miss Emily Bates in the studio of Mr. Lorado Taft, sculptor, of Chicago, Illinois.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,
Secretary.

Hon. Hattie W. Caraway,
United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

C O P Y

September 17, 1934.

Dear Mr. Simon:

Your letter of September 6th, submitting photographs of the model of the sculptural figures to be placed on the cheek blocks on the Constitution Avenue side of the Archives Building, by Mr. James E. Fraser, sculptor, received the attention of the Commission of Fine Arts today. The Commission approve the models.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Mr. Louis A. Simon,
Supervising Architect,
Treasury Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT D

DRAFT OF LETTER

September 18, 1934.

Dear Mr. Angel:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City on September 17, 1934, considered your revised design for the pedestal of the statue of Francesco Vigo.

The Commission noted the problems that have arisen in connection with the setting of the pedestal in relation to the exedra designed and built by Messrs. Bennett, Parsons and Frost. However, the Commission did not favor resetting any of the stone of the exedra.

The Commission inspected the sample of West Chelmsford granite which you propose to use for the statue. The Commission understand that you wish to use this stone because in your opinion it is better for carving than the Mt. Airy granite. Mr. Coolidge of the Commission has had considerable experience in the use of the West Chelmsford stone and has found it to be a very hard stone and one not so very suitable for sculpture. However, the Commission do not object to your using the West Chelmsford granite if you wish to do so.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very truly yours,

Chairman.

Mr. John Angel,
149 East 119th Street,
New York, N. Y.

EXHIBIT E

OLMSTED BROTHERS

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

BROOKLINE MASSACHUSETTS

FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED
JAMES FREDERICK DAWSON
EDWARD CLARK WHITING
HENRY VINCENT HUBBARD

RECEIVED
COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
WASHINGTON, D. C.
SEP 23 1934

NOTED

September 24, 1934

Mr. H. P. Caemmerer, Secretary,
The Commission of Fine Arts,
Navy Department Building,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Caemmerer:

Thanks for your letter of
September 19. The missing studies have turned up.

I expect to attend the
meeting of the Park and Planning Commission on
September 27th and will then submit my Union
Square plan 523, together with further studies
based on it and on the discussion of it at the
meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts on the 17th.
The latter studies will also be submitted for
consideration by the Commission of Fine Arts.

Yours very truly,

Frederick Law Olmsted

EXHIBIT F

DRAFT OF LETTER

September 25, 1934.

Dear Mr. Pope:

The Commission missed you greatly at the meeting held in your office on September 17. The members anticipated a full and free discussion with you in regard to certain details relating to the Archives Building. Also they wished your advice on some architectural features of Union Square, wherein your knowledge and taste would, they felt, be helpful, as it was found to be in the consultations in regard to the Water Gate, when, with yours and Mr. Gilbert's help, that matter was settled in what has proved to be a large and satisfactory manner.

The members of the Commission feel strongly that in the Archives Building you have designed a monumental structure of the highest class. They rejoice in your achievement. They also rejoice in the fact that you have at your disposal funds sufficient to carry the undertaking through to completion with appropriate enrichments necessary to attain the perfection you seek. They feel that the American people will take just pride and satisfaction in the result.

The members of the Commission, therefore, desired to have a friendly personal consultation with you over some features of decoration. Questions raised in the office of the Supervising Architect have seemed to the Commission well taken. Such matters are better settled by personal conferences than by correspondence.

However, subject to future consideration, it may be stated that the tentative sketches for the two murals in the rotunda do not seem to rise to those heights of artistic expression which the building itself requires and which the public interest in this particular feature demands. Pictorial character has been decided upon by you and the artist. Public attention will be concentrated on these decorations. Thus opportunity is offered, as never since the Rotunda of the Capitol was decorated, to express in mural work the significance of the place of the building itself in the history of the country. The members of the Commission feel that this opportunity has not yet been seized; that neither in fundamental conception nor yet in execution do the sketches promise to be adequate.

In particular the sketches seem to the members of the Commission to lack unity and to lack that focal character which are required.

EXHIBIT G

They believe that the artist is capable of producing mural paintings adequate to place and the opportunity; and that under your direction the desired results can be obtained.

The members of the Commission also felt that there were questions in regard to the sculpture panels on the north front of the building which they would like to discuss with you, notably the size of the panels in relation to the door. The Commission desired to know if you had considered this point. The design of the medallion of the Great Seal was discussed. In view of the artist's wide departure from the official design, Mr. Egger's suggestion that this medallion be omitted was concurred in as the best way out of a difficulty. This decision was reached the more readily in view of the even more fundamental question as to the propriety of using the Great Seal as a decoration. The anatomy of the figure representing labor was criticized and a change in this respect was advised.

The Commission regretted that the sculptural work had been carried so far before submission. They believed that other helpful suggestions might have been made for your consideration.

The Commission desire you fully to understand and appreciate their sympathy with you in this very extensive work of the Archives Building, and their desire to render to you by way of suggestion all possible help in carrying it to the most satisfactory conclusion.

The members of the Commission still hope for an opportunity personally to go over these matters with you, so that delays and misunderstandings and differences may be avoided.

For the Commission of Fine Arts: -

Most sincerely yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Mr. John Russell Pope,
542 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

