

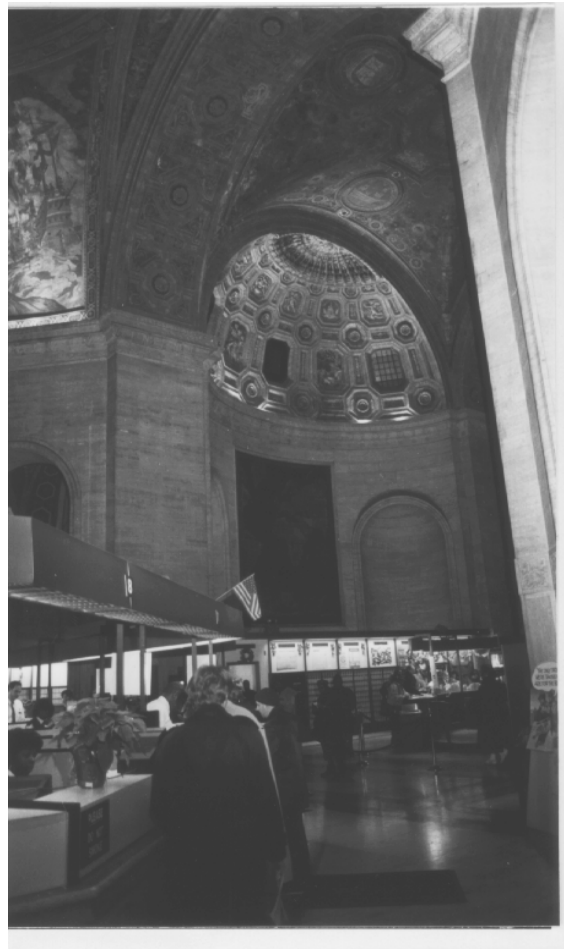
CUNARD BUILDING, FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR consisting of the entrance vestibules; the entrance lobby; the passageway from the entrance lobby to the Great Hall; the Great Hall up to and including the rotunda, ceiling vaults, and semi-domes; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to wall and ceiling surfaces, including murals, relief ornament, wall and ceiling decorations, and projecting cornices; floor surfaces, including inlaid medallions and marble mosaic; the fireplace at the south end of the entrance lobby; the projecting balcony over the east entrance to the Great Hall; the engaged columns at the north and south ends of the Great Hall; bronze entrance vestibule enclosures; doors; security gates and grilles; wrought-iron screens; chandeliers and hanging lamps; decorative metalwork; ventilation grilles; wrought-iron radiator grilles and covers; windows; wrought-iron window and transom grilles; the surviving portions of the original ticket counter; and attached furnishings and decorative elements; 25 Broadway (aka 13-27 Broadway, 13-39 Greenwich Street, and 1-9 Morris Street), Manhattan. Designed 1917-19 and built 1920-21; Benjamin Wistar Morris, architect, and Carrère & Hastings, consulting architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 13, Lot 27.

On May 16, 1995, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Cunard Building, FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR consisting of the spaces and elements listed above, and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Eleven witnesses spoke in favor of designation, including Councilwoman Kathryn Freed and representatives of State Senator Catherine Abate, the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Municipal Art Society, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Fine Arts Federation, and the Seaport Task Force of Community Board 1. No one spoke in opposition to designation. A representative of the owner attended the hearing but took no position regarding the proposed designation. The Commission has received several letters and other statements in support of designation including a resolution from Community Board 1.

Summary

Standing at the head of Bowling Green and incorporating a monumental series of interior public spaces within its first floor, the Cunard Building is among lower Manhattan's most architecturally and historically significant edifices. It was designed in 1917-19 by architect Benjamin Wistar Morris. In creating the principal interior spaces — the five-bay entrance lobby, narrow passageway, and vaulted Great Hall — Morris was assisted by a team of highly gifted artists and artisans, including painters Ezra Winter and Barry Faulkner, sculptors C. Paul Jennewein and John Gregory, and ironmaster Samuel Yellin. Together, they received much critical acclaim for the soaring spaces, modeled on ancient Roman and Renaissance Italian prototypes, and for their decorative program, which, through the media of polychrome stucco, painted murals, and metalwork, celebrated the lure of travel. Not only an aesthetic achievement, the interiors employed innovative construction techniques marked by rapid execution. The interior public spaces share with the exterior a neo-Renaissance character, and the central arcading of the first story exterior reflects the sequence of public spaces within. The extensive nautical iconographic program is an appropriate acknowledgment of the client of the building, the Cunard Steamship Line Ltd., which originally used the vaulted Great Hall for ticketing its transatlantic passengers. Founded in 1840 by Nova Scotia businessman Samuel Cunard, the Cunard company pioneered transatlantic shipping and travel. From mid-century on, Cunard maintained a presence on or near Bowling Green, as part of "Steamship Row," and eventually erected this building as its New York headquarters in 1920-21. A Cunard affiliate built the edifice and retained ownership until the 1960s, when operations were moved uptown. The principal interior spaces remain largely intact.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Development of the Site

Situated at the southernmost section of Broadway, where that thoroughfare widens into Bowling Green, the site of 25 Broadway has long been associated with maritime trade and travel.¹ As early as 1660, the location contained several Dutch colonial dwellings, one of which belonged to Lucas Andries, a skipper and part-owner of a trading yacht. In 1846, Swiss-born restaurateurs Joseph and Lorenzo Delmonico, who had been revolutionizing the eating habits of New Yorkers at other downtown locations since the 1820s, opened a restaurant and hotel on the site. Reopened as the Stevens House hotel in 1856, it was frequented by many whose fame derives from their association with shipping and other mercantile interests. The "Stevens House" name survived into the twentieth century, when, as "the executive office centre for shipping interests in this country,"² it applied to two five-story buildings at the northeast corner of the block, and counted among its occupants the Russian-American Line Steamship Company. Three other edifices on the site along Broadway accommodated restaurants, an art publisher, a haberdasher, and the offices of the Anchor Line Steamship Company. Facing Greenwich Street, along the western side of the site, stood a series of masonry buildings owned by the Manhattan Railway Company and used as a repository for property lost on subway and elevated trains of the IRT Company. Among the small structures which had stood facing Morris Street was the former home of Aaron Burr.

In February 1918 the long-established real estate firm of Irons & Todd acquired the individual lots for \$5 million and formed the construction concern of Todd, Irons & Robertson, Inc.³ in preparation for the erection of a large office building to be turned over after its completion to the Twenty-Five Broadway Corporation, led by Cunard official Thomas Ashley Sparks.⁴ Cunard's decision to build its own headquarters in New York — contemporaneous to the remodeling in 1919-21 of No. 1 Broadway for the headquarters of the International Mercantile Marine Company — signaled the city's growing supremacy as a world port. The assemblage of property was the largest single possession in the lower part of Manhattan at that time and the largest real estate transaction since the preparations for erecting the Equitable Building a few blocks further north on Broadway.

Cunard Lines Company⁵

A leading Nova Scotia businessman engaged in banking, lumbering, shipping, and shipbuilding

enterprises, Samuel Cunard (1787-1865) became a pioneer of regular transatlantic steam navigation. He was a co-owner of the first Canadian steamboat to cross the Atlantic, in 1833, from Canada to England, and six years later received the contract from the British government to carry the mails fortnightly to and from Liverpool, Halifax, and Boston. In association with others, he formed the British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, which with its four ships began the first regular steamship service between the continents in 1840, and was a turning point in the conquest of steam over sail. During that year "Cunard's Line of Mail Steam Ships"⁶ published its first advertisement in New York; customers could send mail overseas via Cunard's New York agent, William F. Harnden, whose one-year-old express service between New York and Boston was the first in the nation.

When in 1847 a New York-based competitor arranged to run a federally-subsidized steam-packet line directly between New York and Europe, Cunard responded by establishing direct service on a weekly basis between New York (via the Hudson River piers in Jersey City) and Liverpool; eventually service was extended to Glasgow and other European ports. By the 1850s Samuel's son, Edward, was listed in city directories as the representative of his father's company, which maintained its address at 4 Bowling Green for many years. That site and its neighbors, collectively known as "Steamship Row" after all the ticket-booking agents there, were replaced in 1899-1907 by the United States Custom House. Subsequently, Cunard moved its offices to 29 Broadway and 21-24 State Street among other downtown sites, before building its new headquarters at 25 Broadway.

Cunard fared well in the competitive market of transporting passengers and packages across the Atlantic. To attract well-to-do customers, the ships soon introduced steam heating and spacious, well-illuminated public rooms. By the late nineteenth century, Cunard was closely associated with luxurious travel, far outstripping its rivals in that regard and thus emerging as the premier British passenger line. Furthermore, beginning in the 1860s, ships transported many emigrants to North America in steerage, thus profiting from travel by low-income passengers as well. Such dominance required constant innovation to increase speed, safety, and (for some) comfort: as the decades passed, technological advances replaced the 200-foot-long wood paddle ships of the 1840s with the 600-foot-long quadruple-screw turbine liners of the 1910s. Cunard continued to prosper, purchasing the

competitor Anchor Line in 1912 and Canadian Northern Steamship Company (Royal Line) in 1916, while remaining independent of the acquisition-driven International Mercantile Marine Company.

After contributing substantially to the war effort, Cunard emerged from World War I in a far healthier position than many shipping companies. Recognizing the decreasing numbers of emigrants to North America, the company intensified its efforts to attract luxury travelers and sought to capture the nascent tourist trade. Its ships connected New York to Liverpool, Bristol, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, Southampton, and Cherbourg, while other routes serviced Philadelphia; Boston; and Portland, Maine. The intensive post-war rebuilding program added thirteen new ships, one rebuilt vessel, and impressive new headquarter buildings in Liverpool⁷ and New York.

Not long after the completion of the new buildings, Cunard suffered enormous losses in the Great Depression of the 1930s. Yet the Cunard and White Star Lines merged in 1934, and together carried over one-quarter of North Atlantic passengers, almost doubling its nearest rival; again, the company assisted the Allied effort in World War II. After peaking in 1957, sea traffic began to decline due to competition from air travel. In response, Cunard initiated cargo service to ports on the Great Lakes and Gulf coast; withdrew passenger service between New York and Liverpool in 1966-67; and sold its grand buildings in several cities, including the New York headquarters on Broadway. The company relocated to No. 555 Fifth Avenue, a more advantageous location for booking passengers on ships which had become "floating resorts," not just a means of transport. Despite those changes, Cunard maintained a reputation pre-eminent for its enviable peacetime safety record and for the long periods during which it held the fastest crossing times in North Atlantic steamship travel.

Design and Construction⁸

As early as August 1917, even before the acquisition of the site, architect Benjamin Wistar Morris was producing preliminary schemes for the Cunard Building, which were characterized by a stately Broadway facade, fronting a central, grandly proportioned, and skylit ticketing lobby — inspired by ancient Roman baths — and a parallel, more modest lobby along the southern edge of the building for the tenanted offices of the upper stories. During the next fifteen months he would compose many refinements to the plans and exterior articulation, but the exterior orientation toward Broadway, the grand ticketing lobby, and secondary office lobby survived as the distinctive features of the final design. After two years of study, the final plans were made public

in July 1919. In August plans were filed with the Department of Buildings, which proffered approval in January 1920. Construction began immediately and concluded in May of the following year. The Cunard company, and its allied and subsidiary lines, occupied the lowest four floors and the top floor of the building, while the remaining levels were leased to tenants.

Contemporary publications⁹ heralded Morris's design, particularly as an architectural response to the new zoning law of 1916, which aimed at providing adequate natural light and ventilation to the increasingly darkened streetscapes of Manhattan. For the large, irregularly-shaped site, the architect utilized a dumbbell (or "H"; see fig. 1) plan above the building's base; that arrangement of two open light courts — in combination with the unusually wide spaces flanking the building to the east and to the northwest — addressed the concerns of the law. The light courts furthermore allowed light into the enormous Great Hall of the first floor. The grandly scaled base made effective use of five tall first-story arches: the southern arch giving access to the office lobby (not included in this designation), the three central arches corresponding to the Great Hall beyond them, and the northern arch associated with the banking space at that corner of the first floor (not included in this designation).

Situated at the head of Bowling Green, with its historic links to the steamship industry, the building and its principal interior spaces were conceived and executed to display Cunard's business success and its good taste (fig. 2). The July 1921 edition of *Architectural Forum* featured the Cunard Building in no less than six separate articles. In one of them, respected critic Royal Cortissoz applauded the building and its designers, writing "This is indeed organic architecture" to explain that the well-arranged plan was expressed on the exterior, which avoided all "empty gestures," and that the "genuine architectural inspiration [sprang] straight from the personality of the designer." He concludes, "Mr. Morris imaginatively grasped the idea of the Cunard Building from the start, and he has bodied it forth, in a great work of architecture, alive and beautiful."¹⁰ Architectural critic C.H. Blackall described the Cunard Building as having "a magnificent counting room for the Steamship Company carried out with a domed ceiling [...] with individuality and a most charmingly successful decorative effect."¹¹ Other writers chronicled the success with which the architects and their engineering consultants¹² managed to erect a very large building above the tortuous, curving, and steeply sloped subway tunnel which bisected the site.

In stylistic terms, Morris used a Renaissance architectural vocabulary to unify and decorate both

exterior and interior. The entrance lobby and passageway lead to the cavernous Great Hall, which was the largest ticket office in the country, and probably in the world, devoted to steamship traffic, on par with waiting rooms of railway stations and not with steamship ticket offices as they then existed.¹³ Inspired by the vast vaulted interiors of ancient Roman baths, and reflecting the painted decorative treatment used by Giulio Romano at the Loggia of the Villa Madama (begun in 1518 by Raphael),¹⁴ the Great Hall (fig. 10) is among New York's most impressive interiors. The room's decorative program — which appropriately portrays the romance of the sea and the lure of travel — displays a judicious balance of sculptural relief, modeled ornament, and painted surfaces. The ceiling, directed entirely by Winter, was painted according to a method called *fresco a secco*, in which the plaster was allowed to dry and then soaked with lime water before the painting was begun, and was then given a sand finish to prevent shine. The major elements of the ceiling are framed by highly ornate background surfaces of painted coffers, rosettes, and arabesques. The finishing of the public spaces was an achievement for its beauty, for its swiftness of completion (only four months were given for work *in situ*), and for its use of a special scaffolding which allowed artists to work on the ceilings while construction continued beneath them.¹⁵ The architectural elements of the lobby, passageway, and Great Hall survive largely intact.¹⁶

The Architects

*Benjamin Wistar Morris*¹⁷

Among the most talented architects active in New York during the early twentieth century, Benjamin Wistar Morris III (1870-1944), son of a socially prominent family, was educated at Trinity College in Hartford, Columbia University, and the École des Beaux-Arts. As an apprentice for Carrère & Hastings, he helped prepare the winning drawings for the New York Public Library competition (1897). During the first decade of the new century, he practiced alone and between 1910 and 1915 as a partner of Christopher Grant LaFarge, during which time that firm produced the Architects' Building at 101 Park Avenue (1912, demolished) among other works. Morris's career blossomed in the 1920s, beginning with his highly-regarded neo-Renaissance Cunard Building (1917-21). Each of his designs is intelligently adapted to its particular site and client's needs, and often reflects each institution's history. In addition to the Cunard Building, Morris's other notable designs include two prominent Wall Street skyscrapers — the neo-Romanesque Seamen's Bank for Savings (1926-27, now occupied by AIG) at 74 Wall Street and the neo-Georgian Bank of New York & Trust Company Building (1927-28) at 48 Wall

Street — and several uptown projects, including the Pierpont Morgan Library Annex (1927-28, a designated Landmark) at East 36th Street and the American Women's Association Clubhouse (1929) at West 57th Street. Morris also produced interesting but unexecuted projects for the Metropolitan Opera House and Metropolitan Square. As the senior partner of Morris & O'Connor, beginning in 1930, he was responsible for the neo-Georgian Union League Clubhouse (1931) at Park Avenue and East 37th Street. Outside New York City, Morris completed a substantial number of buildings, including dormitories at Princeton University, several significant buildings in Hartford, and the Westchester County Courthouse in White Plains, N.Y. Prominent in many professional organizations, he was associated with the Art Commission, the Beaux-Arts Society of Architects and Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, the American Institute of Architects, the National Commission of Fine Arts, and the Architectural League of New York.

*Carrère & Hastings*¹⁸

In designing the Cunard Building, Morris was assisted by his former employer, Thomas Hastings (1860-1929) of the firm of Carrère & Hastings. Both Hastings and John Mervin Carrère (1858-1911) were educated at the École des Beaux-Arts and worked in the office of McKim, Mead & White, before establishing a partnership in 1885 in New York City. Carrère & Hastings earned national acclaim for its winning design (1897) for the New York Public Library (1898-1911, a designated New York City Landmark). Subsequently, the highly prolific firm enjoyed a wide-ranging practice and produced many other memorable designs, primarily in the French Renaissance and Beaux-Arts styles, which survive as designated Landmarks.¹⁹ Hastings was an early exponent of the curtain wall system of construction and experimented with it in the Blair Building (1902) at Broad Street and Exchange Place. Following the death of Carrère in 1911, Hastings continued to work under the firm's name, collaborating on designs for large office buildings such as the Cunard Building and the Standard Oil Building (1921-28, with Shreve, Lamb & Blake) at 26 Broadway. He was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and a founder and a president of the Architectural League of New York.

The Artists²⁰

Ezra Winter

Painter and illustrator Ezra [Augustus] Winter (1886-1949) studied at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts and the American Academy in Rome (1911-14); he was active in the National Academy of Design and in architectural circles. In addition to his mural paintings in the Cunard Building, for which the

Architectural League of New York awarded him a Medal of Honor in Painting, his oeuvre included decorations for the Kilburn Hall of the Eastman Theatre in Rochester, N.Y., and the Trading Room of the Cotton Exchange in New York City; ceiling decorations at the National Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D.C.; the Grand Foyer mural at Radio City Music Hall at Rockefeller Center, New York; and works at other sites around the country.

Barry Faulkner

Barry Faulkner (1881-1966), a painter and educator, studied at Harvard and the American Academy in Rome (c. 1907), where he was professor of fine arts and later a trustee. He spent much time on study tours in Italy. Faulkner's best-known murals were executed for the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y.; Washington Irving High School and Radio City Music Hall in New York City; the Archives Building in Washington, D.C.; the State House in Concord, N.H.; and the State Capitol in Salem, Ore. At the Cunard Building, he painted the maps which decorate the elliptical niches.

C. Paul Jennewein

Sculptor and painter C. Paul Jennewein (1890-1978), after coming to the United States from Stuttgart in 1907, studied at the New York Art Students League and the American Academy in Rome (1916-19). After extensive travel in Europe and Egypt, he returned to New York in 1920 and was soon occupied with the commission to assist in the decoration of the Cunard Building, providing for the entrance lobby the four ceiling models of children with animals, two square wall panels of fighting sea monsters, and four spandrels of male and female tritons. Jennewein's other major commissions include the bronze Darlington Memorial Fountain (1920-23) at Judiciary Park in Washington, D.C.; the granite Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument (1921-24) in Barre, Vt.; mythological statues in polychrome terra cotta within one of the pediments at the Philadelphia Museum of Art; an ensemble of bronze figures, called "Industries of the British Empire" (1932-33), at the entrance to the British Empire Building (now British Building) at Rockefeller Center; all sculptural decorations for the Department of Justice Building (1932-34), Washington, D.C.; the sculpted pylons (1938-39) flanking the main door at the Brooklyn Public Library; the plaster relief of Ceres and Orpheus (1954) at the White House, Washington, D.C.; and several works located at Brookgreen Gardens at Brookgreen, S.C. Jennewein received the Architectural Medal of Honor at the Architecture and Allied Arts Exposition (1927) in New York, the

Concord Art Association Medal of Honor (1926), the Medal of Honor (1939) from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Saltus Medal (1942) at the National Academy of Design.

John Gregory

British-born sculptor and lecturer John Gregory (1879-1958) arrived in the United States in about 1891 and enrolled in the Art Students League of New York; he also studied at the American Academy in Rome (1912-15) and the École des Beaux-Arts. Famous for his many garden sculptures, Gregory's work can be seen in the Folger Shakespeare Library and Corcoran Gallery of Art, in Washington, D.C.; and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. His awards include medals from the Architectural League, Art Institute of Chicago, Concord Art Association, and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Gregory was a member of several organizations, among them the National Academy of Design, the Architectural League, and the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Samuel Yellin

Polish-born and Philadelphia-based Samuel Yellin (1885-1940)²¹ was one of the most distinguished metal craftsmen of the twentieth century. After studying the finest medieval metalwork in Europe, he immigrated in 1906 to the United States and in 1909 established his own studio, which at its busiest employed 200 craftsmen. Yellin's work was the subject of an exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1911. His commissions included the ornamental ironwork for the Federal Reserve Bank in New York; Grace Cathedral, San Francisco; the Clark Library, Los Angeles; Federal Reserve Board Building, Chamber of Commerce Building, and the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.; United States Courthouse, Sarasota, Florida; Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia; buildings for Bowdoin College, Harvard, Northwestern, Pittsburgh, Princeton, and Yale Universities, and the University of Pennsylvania; and numerous private residences. He was acknowledged as a leading authority on the history and technique of decorative ironwork. His craftsmanship won him many awards, including the American Institute of Architects medal in 1920. Yellin's careful study of the medieval and Renaissance masters enabled him to craft ornamental ironwork which perfectly complemented the academically refined architecture of structures such as the Cunard Building.

Later history of the Building²²

In 1968, several years after Ashforth, Todd & Company purchased No. 25 Broadway, Cunard

moved its offices to 555 Fifth Avenue. Though the upper floors remained rented, the Great Hall was vacated in 1971, and in 1972 the property was bought

by the Cementation Company of America, an international heavy construction concern and a subsidiary of the new parent company of Cunard, the Trafalgar House Investment Group of Companies. In 1974 the U.S. Postal Service leased the vacant Great Hall and other spaces in the building, which it continues to occupy.

Description

Entrance vestibules and entrance lobby. The three central entrances facing Broadway have small bronze vestibules (fig. 3), which retain their historic fabric of bronze-framed doors and windows with glazed panels, decorated grilles, and fluted colonnettes supporting anthemion-crowned entablatures. They are located within the entrance lobby (fig. 4), its five groin-vaulted bays running parallel to the facade. The relatively restrained travertine floors, trimmed in marble, exhibit two bronze medallions with seascapes (fig. 5), reiterating the nautical theme introduced on the facade. Bas-relief panels sculpted by Jennewein decorate the end bays. Capped by a restrained carved cornice, the travertine walls are surmounted by a ceiling sculpted by Jennewein and painted by Winter.²³ It is elaborately encrusted with plaster figures of children with sea creatures (figs. 6-7) and smaller images of isolated animals such as turtles and crabs. Arches defining the bays and the spandrels above them are filled with coffers and other carved ornament. Other surviving historic fabric includes bronze hanging lamps and radiator grilles, and arched openings with bronze-framed multi-paned windows. Changes to the original configuration of the space include alterations to the south end, where an historic iron gate was installed between two bays and the south wall (which originally terminated in a balustraded window) received a carved stone fireplace surrounded by an elaborate wood cabinet and surmounted by a mural. At the north end, an iron screen with rolling gates guards a pair of wood and glass doors.

Passageway. Extending along the west side of the entrance lobby, and separated from it by piers flanked by ornamental wrought-iron screens and lunette grilles (fig. 8) by Samuel Yellin, is a narrow passageway (fig. 9) which continues in a simplified way the materials of the lobby, and serves as a buffer between the lobby and the Great Hall. The passageway terminates at the south end in paired iron and glass doors. The passageway remains intact except for the installation of modern telephone stations within the two tall niches and the infill of three glazed doors and fixed transoms in a metal armature at the opening to the Great Hall.

Great Hall. Entered and organized along the main central axis, the Great Hall (fig. 10) consists of

a central, domed octagonal space bracketed by two square, ribbed-vaulted spaces which are extended toward the north and south by elliptical niches with groined arch ceilings. The cross axis of the octagon passes through screens of Ionic columns surmounted by enormous arched windows, organized by attenuated colonnettes and subdivided into many panes (fig. 11). The diagonal axes pass through tall arched openings and terminate in "light wells" or what Morris dubbed "luminary squares"²⁴ (fig. 12), which also open onto the elliptical niches. The upper portions of the east and west walls contain large arched openings; above the entrance from the lobby, the opening is outfitted with an elaborate iron grille and balconette designed by Yellin (fig. 13), while the opening in the opposite wall is a window.

The most stunning feature of the space is its highly decorated ceiling. At the shallow dome (fig. 14), there is a four-armed cross of bas-relief panels, the flared ends of which terminate in maritime figures, and four roundels with painted nautical scenes — (1) Mermaid and Centaur Dash through the Sea, (2) Merman Drives His Pair of Sea Horses, (3) Triton Blows His Horn, and (4) Sirens Typify the Lure of the Sea. Framing the central gilded rosette is the Latin inscription "EXISTIMAT ENIM OVI MARE TENEAT EVM NECESSE RERVVM POTIRI." Winter's pendentive murals depict the ships of four great explorers — Leif Ericsson, Christopher Columbus (fig. 15), Sebastian Cabot, and Sir Francis Drake. All seascapes include dolphins, turtles, flying-fish, birds, and imaginary creatures. The ribbed vaults over the square eastern and western sections of the Great Hall feature motifs derived from seals of English shipping towns; the adjacent semi-domes, punctured by windows, are coffered and reveal more stuccowork (fig. 17). Each of the four "luminary squares" along the diagonal axes of the rotunda has a dome painted with circular medallions separated by bands of nautical and astronomical symbols that converge on a central gilded rosette (fig. 16).

The decorative program and high craftsmanship of the ceiling is continued onto the other surfaces of the Great Hall. Crowned by a restrained carved cornice and bearing a frieze of carved dolphins and scallop shells, the otherwise austere travertine walls feature large murals painted by Barry Faulkner — maps showing the routes of Cunard's ships (fig. 18).

On the floor under the dome is a marble compass with bronze circular frieze, a work of artist John Gregory. An allegory of the sea, it comprises sixteen nautical figures²⁵ illustrating the voyage of Aeneas from Troy to Italy (among the first of the great westward migrations by sea from old lands to new) and is surrounded by a Latin inscription from Horace's farewell to Virgil on the occasion of the latter's taking ship for Greece. The remainder of the

floor is travertine, trimmed in bands of marble and marble mosaic.

The historic spatial character, surfaces, and details of the Great Hall survive, except for the following alterations: to accommodate the current tenant, the original travertine ticketing counter was reconfigured; new service stations installed,

including a space frame structure for lighting fixtures; and walls erected to partition the space.

*Report researched by Victoria Young, student intern,
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Report written by David M. Breiner*

NOTES

1. See: New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Block Indices, and Mortgages, block 13; William Perris, *Maps of the City of New York* (New York: William Perris, 1852), pl. 3; *Atlas of the City of New York and Part of the Bronx* (New York: E. Robinson, 1885), pls. 1, 2; *Atlas of the City of New York, Borough of Manhattan*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1899-1909), pls. 1, 2; "Cunard Line to Build Big Skyscraper Here," *New York Evening Post*, Feb. 19, 1918, p.1; "Cunard to Have Big Building Here," *New York Times* (hereafter, *NYT*), Feb. 20, 1918, p. 13; *Atlas of the City of New York, Borough of Manhattan*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1931-1961), pls. 1, 2; R.M. DeLeeuw, *Both Sides of Broadway* (New York: DeLeeuw Riehl Publishing Co., 1910), 42; I.N. Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909* (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915-28), vol. II, 218-220; vol. III, 977-981; vol. V, 1858, 1864.

"Monumental Broadway Building for Cunard Steamship Company," *NYT*, July 20, 1919, IX, p. 16, lists the following Stevens House clients: George Steers, builder of the famous yacht "America"; John Ericsson, inventor of the "Monitor"; Joseph Francis, inventor of a lifeboat bearing his name; Commodore Vanderbilt; John Morgan, head of the Morgan Steamship Line; as well as Civil War figures Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and J.E.B. Stewart.

2. "Cunard Line to Build Big Skyscraper Here," p. 1.
3. Attorneys John Reynard Todd (1867-1945) and Henry Clay Irons (dates undetermined) came into the building field inadvertently, but their initial success encouraged them to remain in the business, through which they erected and sold at large profits numerous hotels, apartment buildings, and commercial structures. Following the dissolution of that firm in about 1920, John R. Todd joined the partnership of Dr. James M. Todd (c. 1870-1939) and Hugh S. Robertson (1880-1951), creating Todd, Robertson & Todd. Their greatest achievement was as the builders and managers of the twelve buildings of Rockefeller Center. See John Reynard Todd obituary, *Architectural Forum* 83 (Aug. 1945), 86, 90, and LPC, *Rockefeller Center Designation Report*, LP-1446, report prepared by Janet Adams (New York: City of New York, 1985), 13-15.

The firm of Todd, Irons & Robertson, which the building prospectus lists as the builder of the Cunard structure, must have been a short-lived organization, functioning as a transitional firm between Irons & Todd, which was dissolving, and the newly-expanded Todd, Robertson & Todd. This conjecture is based on a review of city directories, 1920-25.

4. Among the incorporators of the Twenty-Five Broadway Corporation, Thomas Ashley Sparks (1877-1963), a native of London, served as the company's U.S. resident director beginning in 1917; from 1920 until his retirement in 1950 he simultaneously was the president of the Twenty-Five Broadway Corporation.
5. New York City Directories, 1873-1920; I.N. Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909*, III, 646-648; V, 1765, 1799, 1801, 1803, 1807-1808; VI, 567. "Cunard, Sir Samuel," *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., eds. William Bridgwater and Elizabeth J. Sherwood (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950, 1959), 491; T.W.E. Roche, *Samuel Cunard and the North Atlantic* (London: Macdonald, 1971), 163, 170; N.R.P. Bonsor, *North Atlantic Seaway*, vol. 1, rev. ed. (Newton Abbot, U.K.: David & Charles, 1975), 72-140; Howard Johnson, *The Cunard Story* (London: Whittet, 1987), passim; René De La Pedraja, *The Rise & Decline of U.S. Merchant Shipping in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Twayne, 1992), 4-10, 125, 192.
6. Though popularly called by that name, it was only following the 1878 merger of Cunard's North Atlantic and Mediterranean routes that the company became known officially as the Cunard Steam Ship Company, Ltd.
7. For the Liverpool building, see Cunard Steamship Company, Ltd., *The New Cunard Building* (Liverpool: Taylor, Garnett, Evans & Co., Ltd., 1917), passim.
8. Cunard Steamship Company, Ltd., *Preliminary Studies of a Building for The Cunard Steamship Company, Limited*. Sir Alfred Booth, Chairman. the Twenty-five Broadway Corporation, Owner. T. Ashley Sparks, President (New York: The Company, 1918), passim; "To Start Work at Once on New Cunard Office Building," *Real Estate Record & Builder's Guide* (hereafter *RER&G*) 104, (July 19, 1919), 71; "Unusual Features Mark Plans of New Cunard Building," *RER&G* 104, (August 2, 1919), 141; NYC, Department of Buildings, Manhattan. Plans, Permits and Dockets, Block 13, Lot 27. NB 222-1919; "The Cunard Building in New York," *American Architecture* 116 (September 9, 1919), 336; "The Cunard Building New York," *Architectural Review* 26 (October 1919), 113-114; B. W. Morris, "The Cunard Building, New York," *Architectural Forum* 33 (July 1920), 1-6; John Taylor Boyd, Jr., "The New York Zoning Resolution and its Influence upon Design," *Architectural Record* 48 (Sept. 1920), 192-217; William P. Comstock, "The Cunard Building," *Architecture and Building* 52, no. 10 (October, 1920), 88-92. The following citations are all from *Architectural Forum* 35 (July 1921): Royal Cortissoz, "The Cunard Building," 1-11; S.O. Miller, "Structural Features of the Cunard Building, New York," 17-20; Carlton S. Proctor, "Special Problems in Foundations of the Cunard Building," 21-22; Henry C. Meyer, Jr., "Electrical, Heating and Ventilating

Equipment of the Cunard Building," 22-23; Clyde R. Place, "Plumbing in the Cunard Building," 24. "The Cunard Building, New York" *Architecture and Building* 53 (August 1921), 61-64; Robert A.M. Stern et al., *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 528-529.

9. For example, John Taylor Boyd, Jr., "The New York Zoning Resolution and its Influence upon Design," John Taylor Boyd, Jr. used the Cunard Building to illustrate a "splendid" response to the new restrictions.
10. Royal Cortissoz, "The Cunard Building," 4, 5, 8.
11. C.H. Blackall, "American Architecture Since the War," *American Architect* 83 (Jan. 5, 1928), 11.
12. According to Twentyfive Broadway Corp., *Cunard Building. Twentyfive Broadway. New York City. The Twenty Five Broadway Corporation, Owner* (New York: the Corp., 1919), collaborators included Samuel O. Miller, structural steel and foundations; Henry W. Hodge, consulting engineer for structural steel; and Daniel E. Moran, consultant for foundations.
13. "Unusual Features Mark Plans of New Cunard Building," *RER&G* 104, (August 2, 1919), 141.
14. The resemblance to Giulio Romano's work is particularly strong in the treatment of the dome. See, for example, Corrado Ricci, *L'architecture italienne au seizième siècle* (Paris: Hachette, n.d.), 21.
15. Ezra Winter, "Mural Decorations of the Cunard Building," 9-16.
16. Originally, travertine-clad ticketing counters extended the length of the Great Hall, in two parallel lines through the square spaces and conforming to an octagonal shape under the dome. The dark cork top of the counter had thirty special lamps with silvered reflectors to illuminate the ceiling and wall decoration. Special cove lighting supplemented the upward illumination. This interior lighting arrangement of the Great Hall was innovative and very successful, but has since been unsympathetically altered. See Augustus D. Curtis and J.L. Stair, 555-558, and especially figures 6-8.
17. "Morris, Benjamin Wistar (III)," *Who's Who in New York (City and State) 1924*, 8th ed., ed. Frank R. Holmes (New York: Who's Who Publications, 1924), 906; Benjamin W. Morris obituary, *NYT*, Dec. 5, 1944, p. 23; "Morris, Benjamin Wistar (III)," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. II (Chicago: A.N. Marquis Co., 1950), 383; Henry F. Withey and Elsie R. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970), 427-428; Dennis Steadman Francis, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), 56; James Ward, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 55; Robert A.M. Stern, *New York 1930* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), *passim*.
18. "The Works of Messrs. Carrère & Hastings," *Architectural Record* 27 (Jan., 1910), 1-120; John Merven Carrère obituary, *NYT*, Mar. 2, 1911, p. 9; "John Merven Carrère," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. I (Chicago: A.N. Marquis, 1967), 197; "Thomas Hastings," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. I, 533; Withey and Withey, 109, 269; Francis, 20; Channing Blake, "Carrère and Hastings," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, ed. Adolf K. Placzek (New York: Free Press, 1982), vol. 1, 387-388. Regarding individual commissions by the firm, see: LPC, *First Church of Christ, Scientist of New York City Designation Report*, LP-0833 (New York: City of New York, 1974); *John Henry Hammond House Designation Report*, LP-0677 (New York: City of New York, 1974); *Henry T. Sloane Residence Designation Report*, LP-0937 (New York: City of New York, 1977); "Architects' Appendix," *Upper East Side Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1051 (New York: City of New York, 1981); "Architects' Appendix," *Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1647 (New York: City of New York, 1990); "Architects' Appendix," *Expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1834 (New York: City of New York, 1993).
19. Their designs which have been designated New York City Landmarks include the First Church of Christ, Scientist (1899-1903) at the northwest corner of Central Park West and West 96th Street, the approaches and arch of the Manhattan Bridge (1905), and Richmond Borough Hall (1903-07) in Staten Island. Carrère & Hastings was very active in the design of urban residences and suburban estates, as well as Woolsey and Memorial Halls (1906) at Yale University and the House and Senate Office Buildings (1906) in Washington, D.C.
20. For information on Winter, see: *Who Was Who in American Art*, ed. Peter Hastings Falk (Madison, Conn.: Sound View Press, 1985), 688, and Mantle Fielding, *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors & Engravers*, ed. Glenn B. Opitz, 2nd rev. ed. (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.: Apollo, 1986), 1047. On Faulkner, see: Barry Faulkner, *Sketches from an Artist's Life* (Dublin, N.H.: William L. Bauhan, 1973), 65, 107, 112; Regina Soria, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century American Artists in Italy, 1760-1914* (East Brunswick, N.J.: Associated University Presses / Fairleigh Dickenson University, 1982), 135; *Who Was Who in American Art*, 196. Regarding Jennewein, see: Shirley Reiff Howarth, *C. Paul Jennewein Sculptor* (Tampa: The Tampa Museum, 1980), *passim*; Beatrice Gilman Proske, *Brookgreen Gardens* (Brookgreen, S.C.: the Trustees, 1943), and *Who Was Who in American Art*, 313-314. On Gregory, see: *Who Was Who in American Art*, 246, and Fielding, 347.

Others contributing to the building were: H.A. Cousins, Inc., art travertine work; William Bradley & Son, interior marble work; C.D. Jackson & Co., Inc., supplier of travertine blocks and Cunard pink marble blocks; T.A. O'Rourke, Inc., plastering work; Cassidy Co., Inc., lighting fixtures; Campbell Metal Window Corp., metal windows. See "The Cunard Building, New York," 64.

21. The information on Yellin is adapted from LPC, *Central Savings Bank Interior Designation Report*, LP-1804, report prepared by Charles Savage (New York: City of New York, 1993), based upon the following: Jack Andrews, "Samuel Yellin, Metalworker," *Anvil's Ring*, Summer 1982; Myra Tolmach Davis, "Samuel Yellin's Sketches in Iron," *Historic Preservation*, Dec. 1971, pp. 4-13; Ty Harrington, "The Wizardry of Samuel Yellin, Artist in Metals," *Smithsonian*, March 1982, pp. 66-74;

and information collected by Evelyn Costa, student intern, in LPC, Research Dept.files.

22. "Tenant Hunted for Cunard Building's 'Great Hall,'" *NYT*, Oct. 1, 1972, VIII, p. 1; "Anaconda Plans to Leave Cunard Building," *NYT*, Sept. 22, 1974, VIII, p. 8; Alan S. Oser, "Gradual Changes for the Old Cunard Building," *NYT*, Dec. 7, 1977, p. D-13; New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Block Indices, and Mortgages, block 13.
23. In reference to the ceiling of the Great Hall, "The Cunard Building, New York," *Architecture and Building* 53 (Aug. 1921), 63, notes that detail drawings were done by Messrs. Winter and Vegezzi, executed in plaster, then decorated in color by Mr. Winter. That article also credits John Donnelly with the ornamental modeling.
24. B.W. Morris, "The Cunard Building, New York," *Architectural Forum* 33 (July, 1920), 1.
25. A Siren, Neptune, Amphitrite, Triton, Oceanus, Boreas, Typhoon, Zephyrus, Scylla, Aeneas, a Harpy, Charybdis, Terpsichore, Venus, Erato, and Arethusa.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this Interior, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Cunard Building Interior has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City, and the Interior is one which is customarily open and accessible to the public, and to which the public is customarily invited.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Cunard Building Interior, consisting of the five-bay entrance lobby, narrow passageway, and vaulted Great Hall, is among New York's most monumental public spaces; that the building, designed in 1917-19 by Benjamin Wistar Morris, a prominent New York architect, assisted by the firm of Carrère & Hastings, is distinguished by its interior modeled on ancient Roman and Renaissance Italian prototypes; that its decoration was designed and executed by an outstanding team of artists and artisans, including painters Ezra Winter and Barry Faulkner, sculptors C. Paul Jennewein and John Gregory, and ironmaster Samuel Yellin; that the decorative program — executed in polychrome stucco, painted murals, and metalwork — expresses the adventure of travel over the open sea through the depiction of mythical and historical figures associated with the sea, as well as imaginary and real sea creatures; that the exterior of the building and its public interior spaces share a neo-Renaissance character and that the central arcading of the first story exterior reflects the sequence of public spaces within; that the extensive nautical iconographic scheme was especially appropriate to the client of the building, the Cunard Steamship Line Ltd., which originally used the Great Hall for ticketing its transatlantic passengers; that the Cunard company, founded in 1840 by Nova Scotia businessman Samuel Cunard, pioneered transatlantic shipping and travel, providing the first regular scheduled steamship service between Europe and North America, with direct service to New York by 1848; that, from that time on, Cunard maintained a presence on or near Bowling Green, as part of "Steamship Row"; that, in 1920-21, as part of a significant expansion campaign, on a site long-associated with maritime trade and travel, Cunard erected its own New York headquarters; that it was one of the first two large international steamship lines to do so and signaled the city's growing supremacy as a world port; that the building was built through Cunard's affiliate, the Twenty-five Broadway Corporation, an organization which retained ownership until the 1960s, when operations were moved uptown; and that, despite the alterations of the first-floor interior by the United States Postal Service, the principal spaces remain largely intact.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Interior Landmark the Cunard Building, First Floor Interior, consisting of the entrance vestibules; the entrance lobby; the passageway from the entrance lobby to the Great Hall; the Great Hall up to and including the rotunda, ceiling vaults, and semi-domes; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall and ceiling surfaces, including murals, relief ornament, wall and ceiling decorations, and projecting cornices; floor surfaces, including inlaid medallions and marble mosaic; the fireplace at the south end of the entrance lobby; the projecting balcony over the east entrance to the Great Hall; the engaged columns at the north and south ends of the Great Hall; bronze entrance vestibule enclosures; doors; security gates and grilles; wrought-iron screens; chandeliers and hanging lamps; decorative metalwork; ventilation grilles; wrought-iron radiator grilles and covers; windows; wrought-iron window and transom grilles; the surviving portions of the original ticket counter; and attached furnishings and decorative elements; 25 Broadway (aka 13-27 Broadway, 13-39 Greenwich Street, and 1-9 Morris Street), Borough of Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 13, Lot 27, as its Landmark Site.

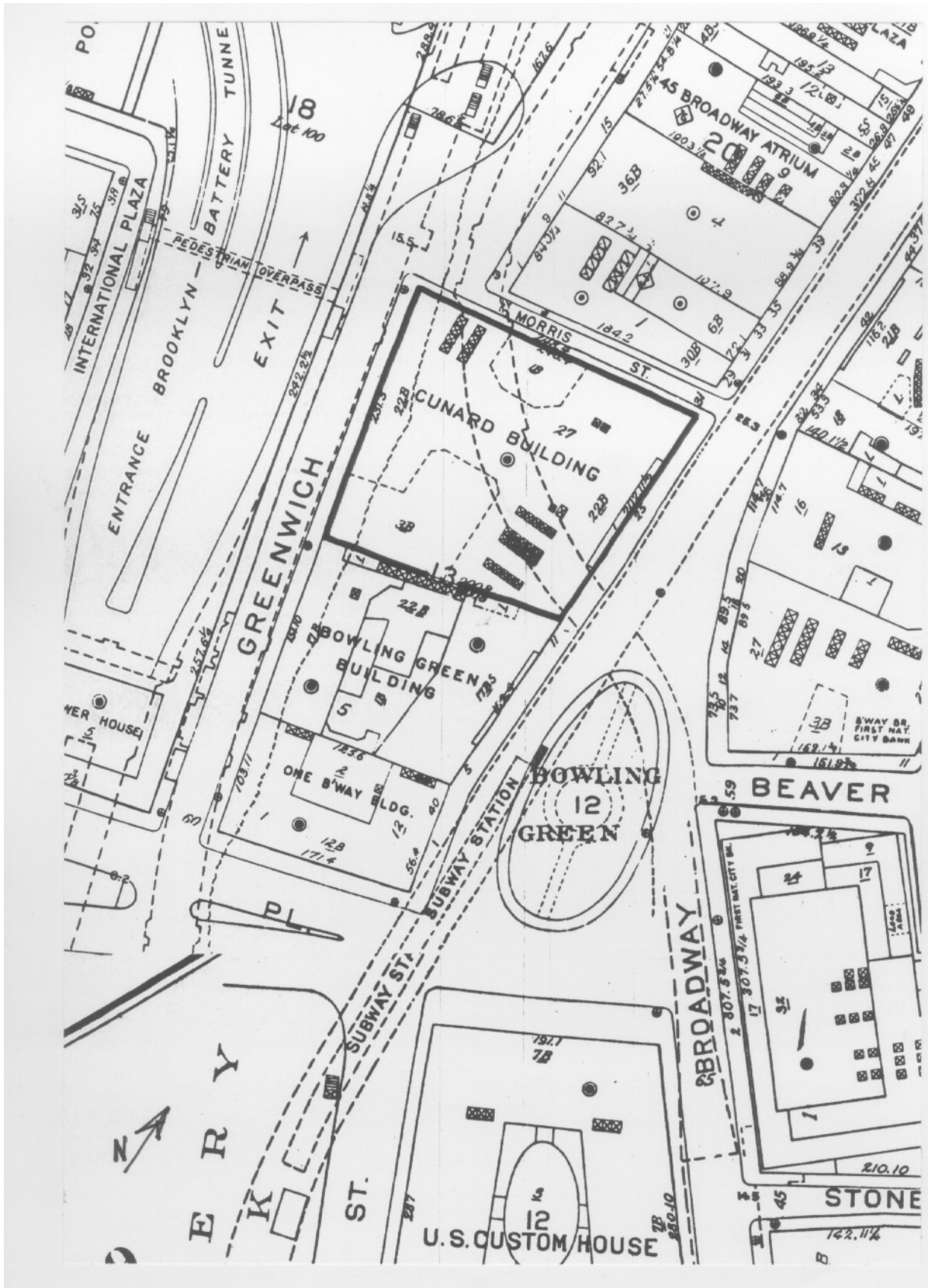


Fig. 1 Cunard Building, 25 Broadway
Graphic Source: Sanborn, *Manhattan Land Book* (1994-95), pls. 1-2.

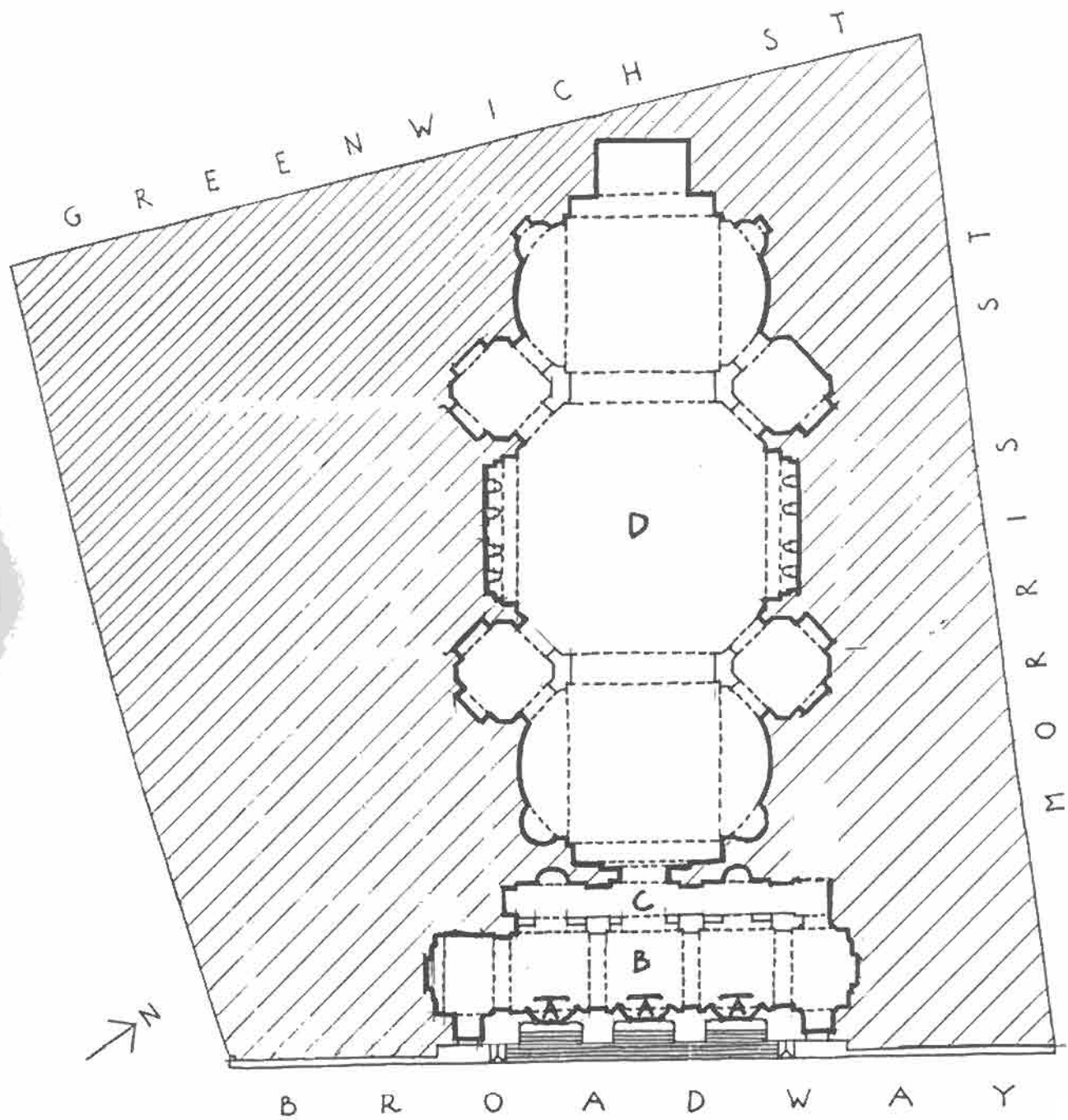


Fig. 2

THE CUNARD BUILDING, First Floor Interior

25 Broadway

A = Entrance vestibules B = Entrance lobby C = Passageway D = Great Hall

 = Not under consideration for Interior Landmark designation



Fig. 3 Cunard Building Interior, Entrance vestibules

Photo: Carl Forster



Fig 4. Cunard Building Interior, Entrance lobby

Photo: Carl Forster



Fig. 5 Cunard Building Interior, Bronze medallion in lobby
Photos: Carl Forster

Fig. 6 Cunard Building Interior, Detail of ceiling in lobby





Fig. 7 Cunard Building Interior, Detail of ceiling in lobby

Photo: Carl Forster

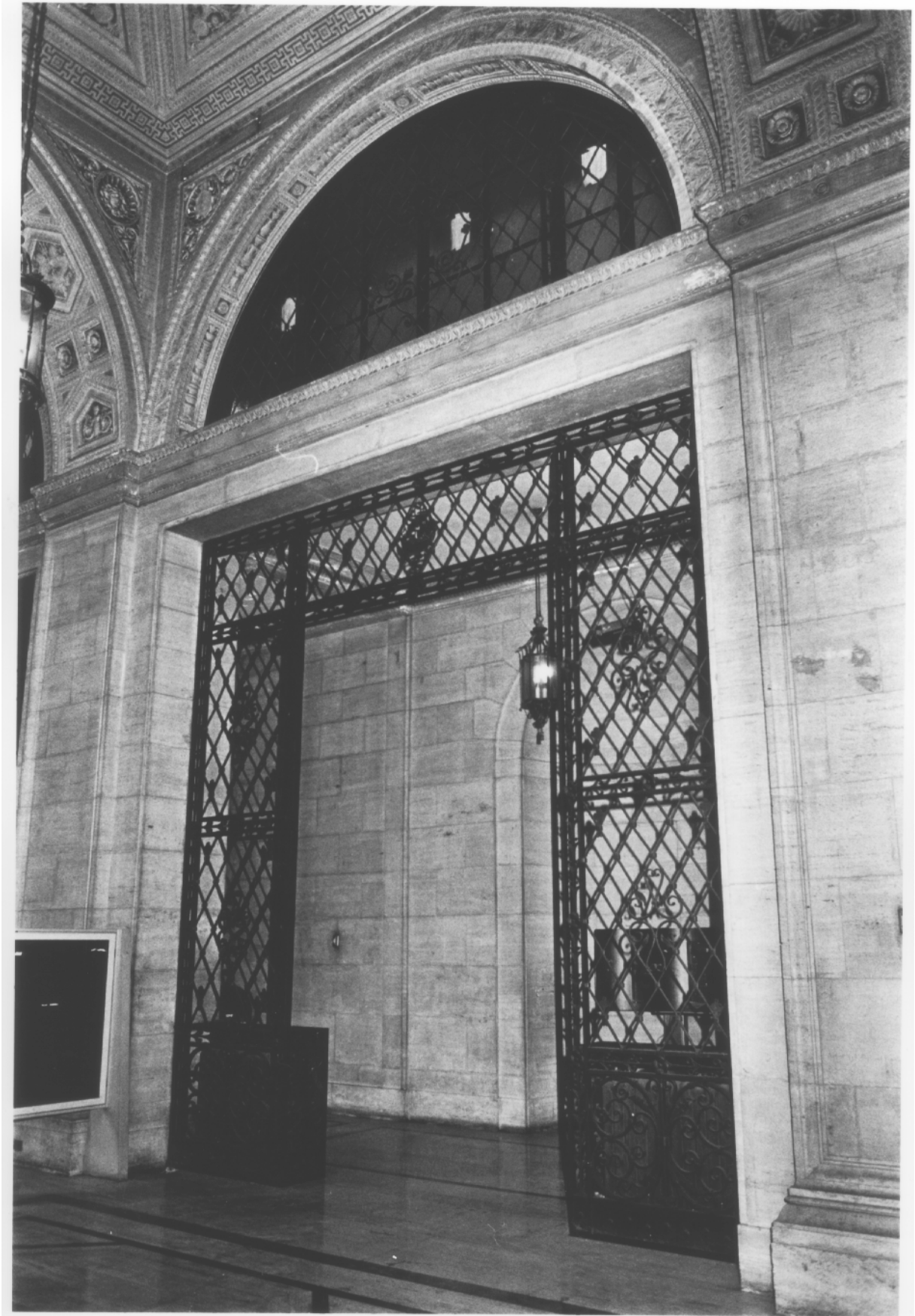


Fig. 8 Cunard Building Interior, Ironwork between lobby and passageway

Photo: Carl Forster



Fig. 9 Cunard Building Interior, Passageway

Photo: Carl Forster



Fig. 10 Cunard Building Interior, Great Hall

Photo: Carl Forster



Fig. 11 Great Hall, detail of south elevation

Cunard Building Interior

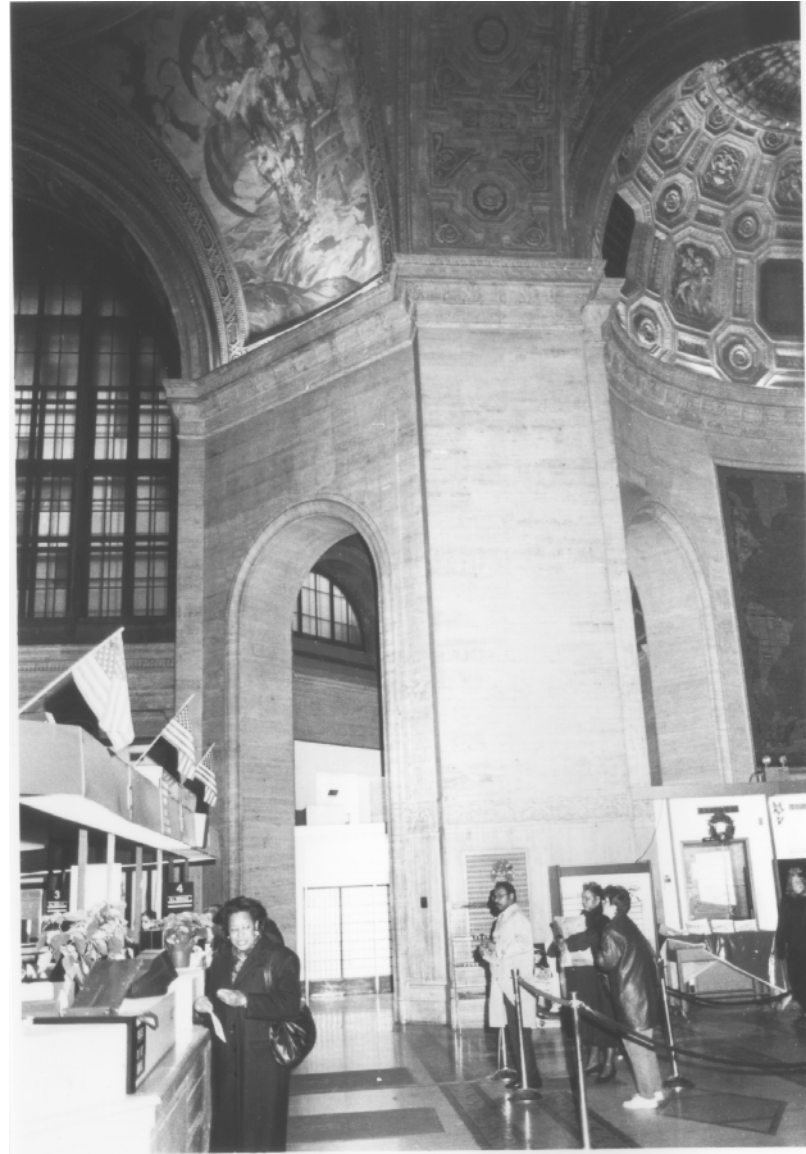


Fig. 12 Great Hall, southeast "luminary square"

Photos: Carl Forster



Fig. 13 Cunard Building Interior, Great Hall, Ironwork above east entrance

Photo: Carl Forster



Fig. 15 Great Hall, pendentive mural

Cunard Building Interior



Fig. 16 Great Hall, dome of a "luminary square"

Photos: Carl Forster



Fig. 14 Cunard Building Interior, Great Hall, dome

Photo: Carl Forster



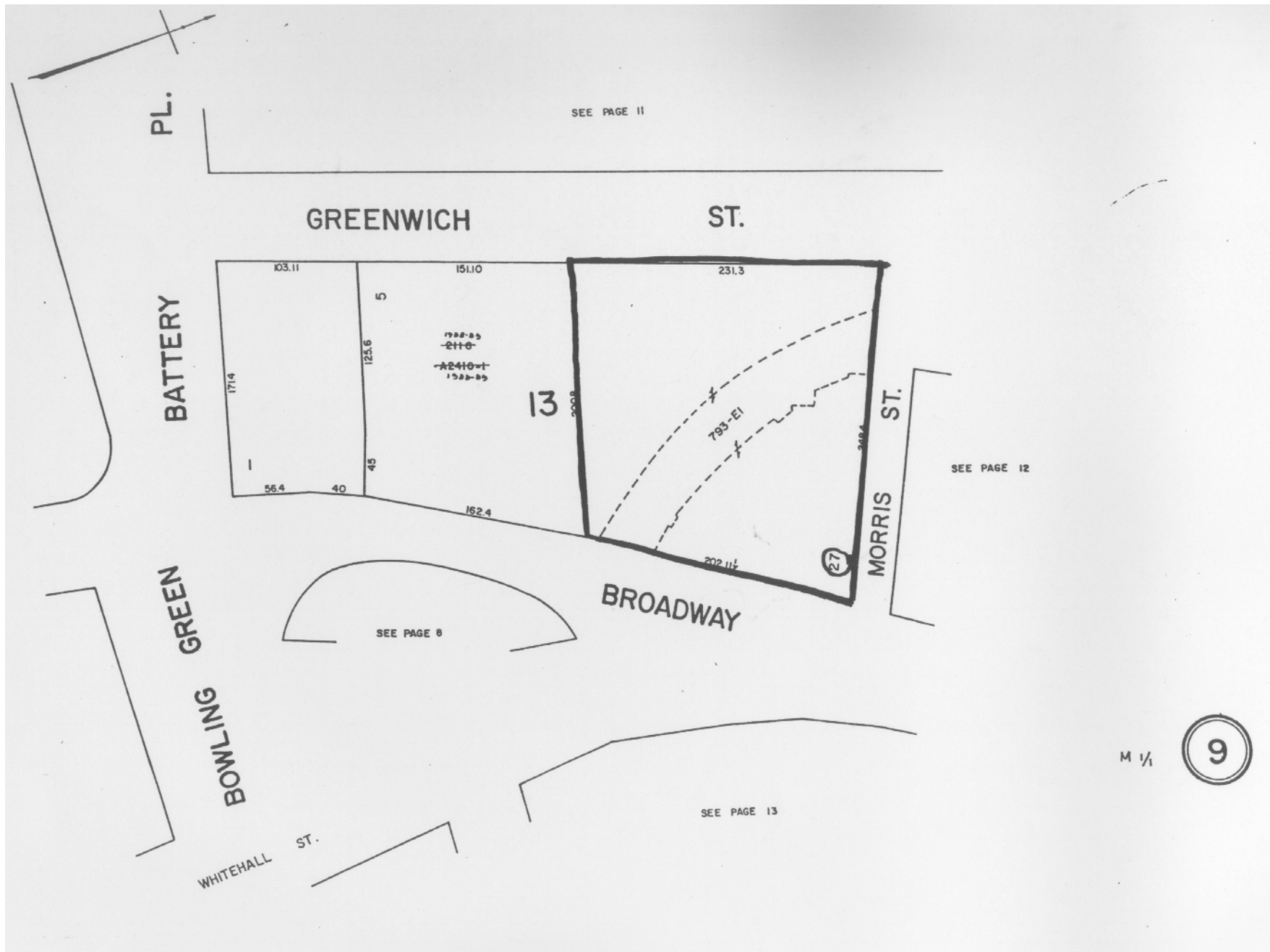
Fig. 17 Cunard Building Interior, Great Hall, semi-dome and vaulting

Photo: Carl Forster



Fig. 18 Cunard Building Interior, Great Hall, Wall mural of Cunard's routes

Photo: Carl Forster



Cunard Building, 25 Broadway (aka 13-27 Broadway, 13-39 Greenwich Street, and 1-9 Morris Street), Manhattan
 Landmark Site: Manhattan Tax Map Block 13, Lot 27
 Source: Dept. of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map