



**DALLAS CITY HALL under construction** (author's photo)

# **CITY HALLS**

## **SELECTIVE EXAMPLES 1779-2012**

**WITH SOME NOTES ON  
ENGINEERING SERVICES**

**BRIAN ROBERTS**

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# LOS ANGELES CITY HALL 1928





# CHICAGO CITY HALL 1911



With Roof Garden having some 20,000 plants.

## **CONTENTS** by page numbers

### **COVERS AND INTRODUCTION**

Front: Boston, Inside Front: Cincinnati, Inside Back: Los Angeles, Back: Saint Paul,  
Dallas: 1, Los Angeles: 2, Chicago 3, Los Angeles: 4

### **ENGLAND, WALES, NORTHER IRELAND, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND** **Location of Halls in order of opening**

Dublin: 5, Manchester: 8, Belfast: 19, Cardiff: 20, London: 21, Bristol: 32

### **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** **Location of Halls in order of opening**

New York: 6, Cincinnati: 10, Milwaukee: 12, Philadelphia: 18, San Francisco: 22,  
Los Angeles: 24, Buffalo: 26, Saint Paul: 30, Palm Springs: 33,  
Boston: 35, Austin: 36, San Jose: 38, Las Vegas: 43

### **REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING 44**

## LOS ANGELES CITY HALL 1928



A terra-cotta and granite tower standing 454 ft high.

## INTRODUCTION

Due to the conditions imposed by the Covid Virus lockdown restrictions, the Heritage Group has had neither face-to-face meetings nor visits to view historical building or engineering services since 2019. However, with the collective information of the Group Archive, Website and experience of the members of the Group, built up since 1973, the opportunity has been taken to record and further research historical information on buildings and their engineering services. This has enabled the production and printing of a small number of private copies of a series of A4 size (44 page) booklets. Two copies of each are destined for our Archive at Cardiff University, leaving the small remainder to be distributed between Group members.

This booklet covers just twenty-one City or Town Halls spanning the years from 1779 to 2012. Fifteen of these are in the United States. Some are now over two hundred years old, while others have been built only in the last twenty years. Many of the illustrations included are deliberately not the usual architectural views (and which may encourage later research). The remaining six examples are from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and have been visited or researched by members of the Heritage Group. The earliest of these six buildings was opened in 1779. the most recent in 1956. Where engineering information is available on our website the details are not repeated here.



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## DUBLIN MANSION HOUSE 1769-79



Also called City Hall the Dublin Mansion House is the traditional residence of the Lord Mayor.

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## NEW YORK CITY HALL 1812



The building is known as "The Grande Dame" of American civic architecture.



# NEW YORK CITY HALL 1812

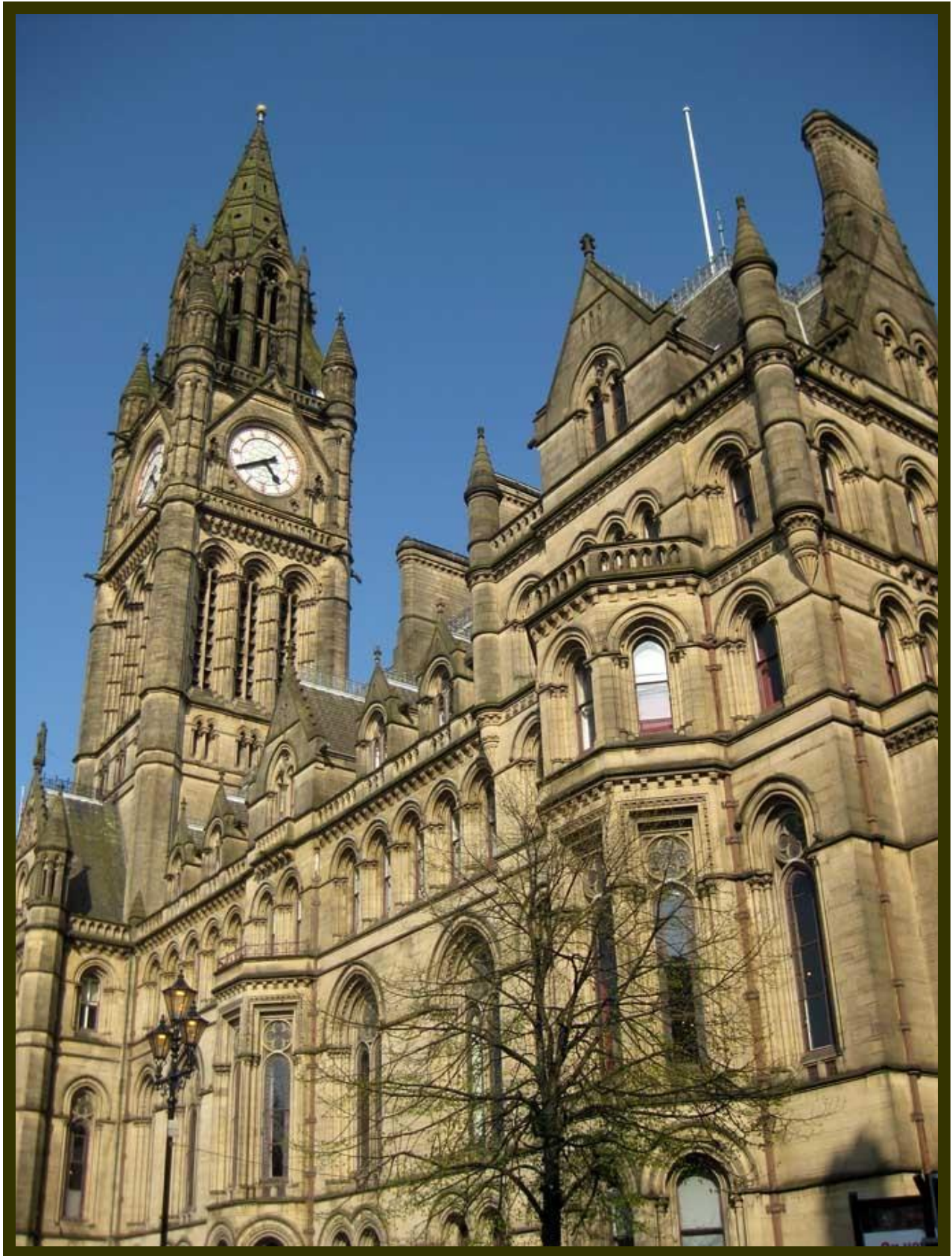


The Governor's Room with George Washington's desk and portrait.



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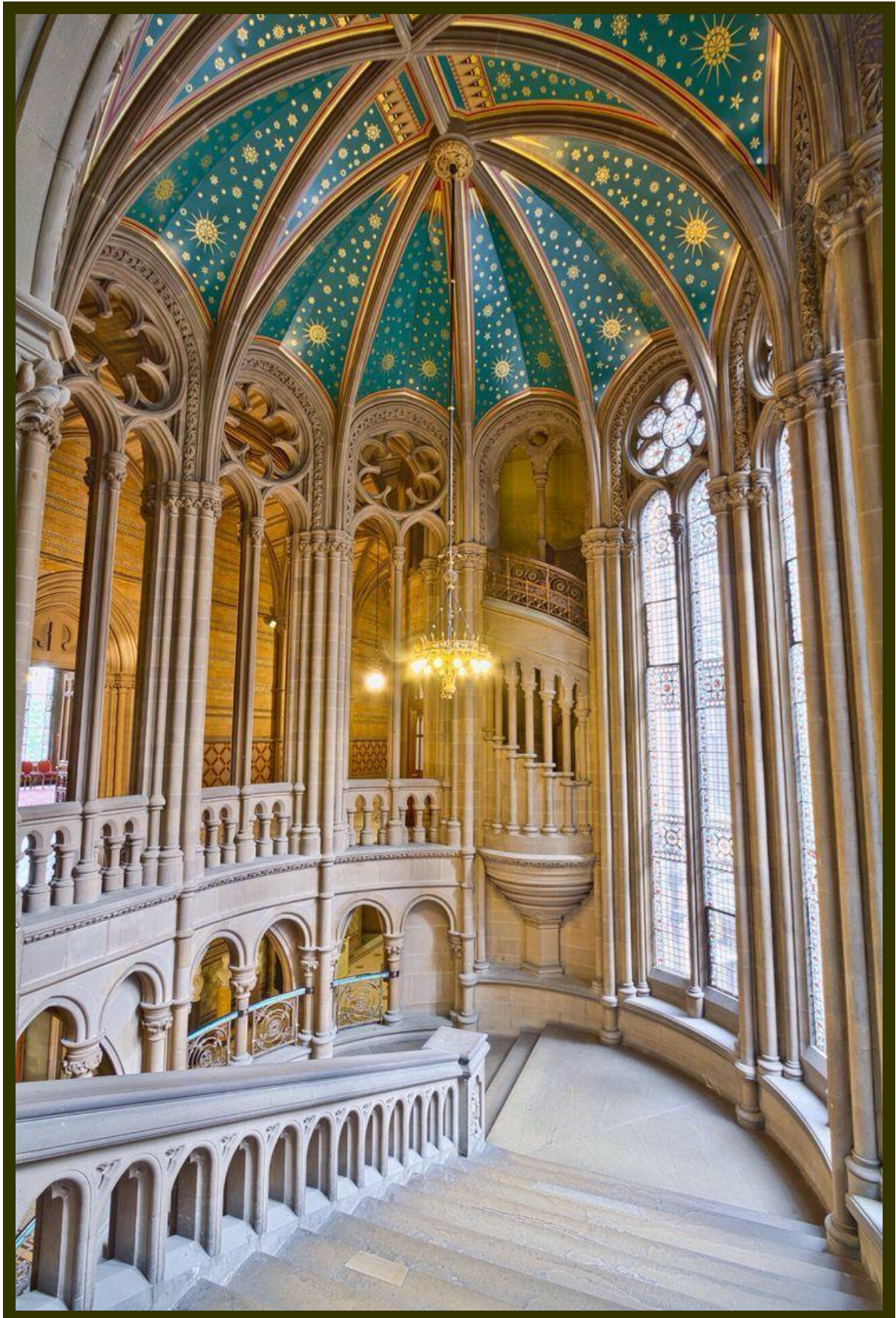
## MANCHESTER TOWN HALL 1868-77



The original hot water heating system and ventilating shafts by G. N. Haden & Sons.



# MANCHESTER TOWN HALL 1868-77



The internal features by the architect Alfred Waterhouse.



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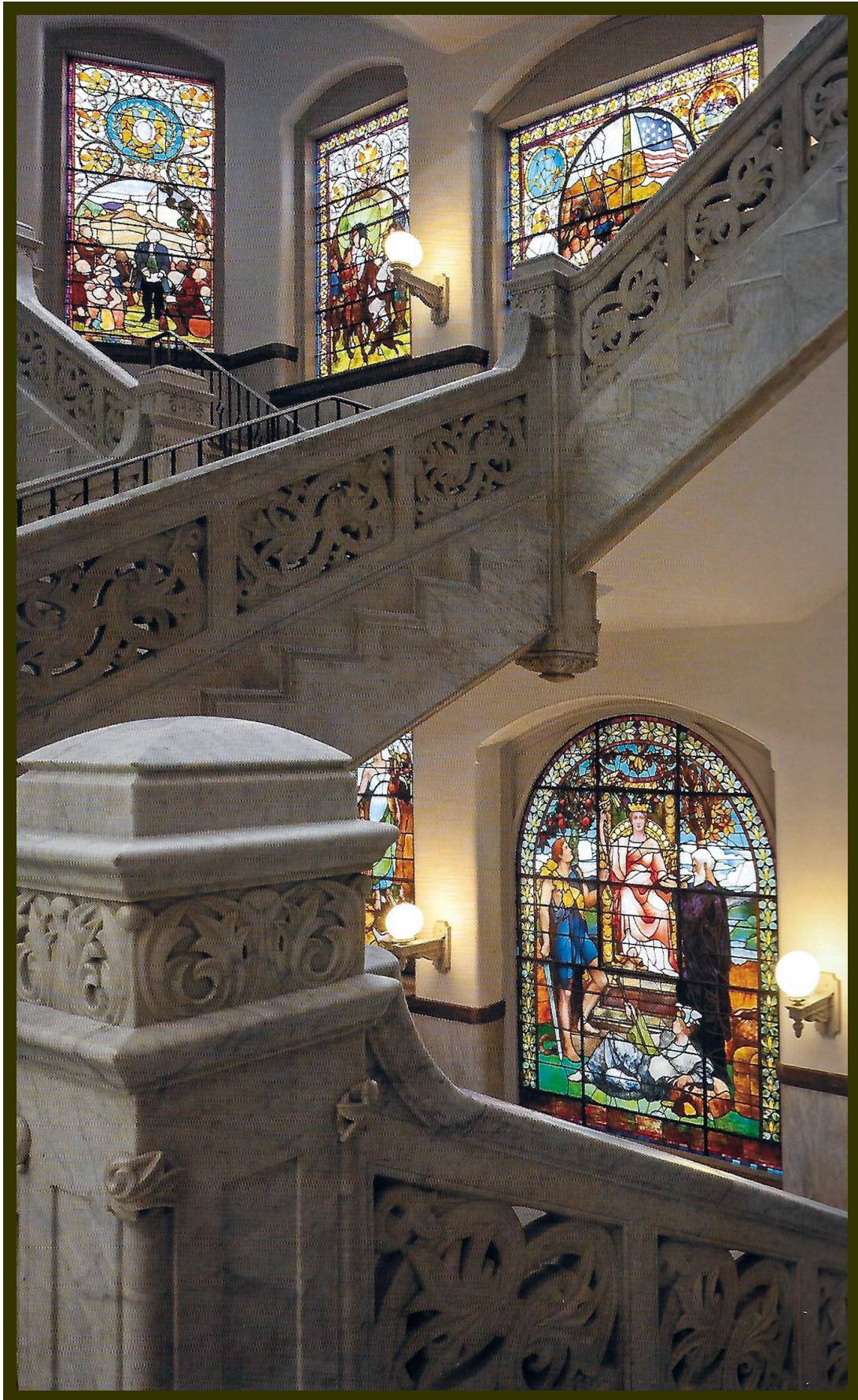
# CINCINNATI CITY HALL 1893



Once hailed as "The most magnificent City Hall in the Country."



# CINCINNATI CITY HALL 1893



With stained glass windows, once described as "more like a church."



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## MILWAUKEE CITY HALL 1895

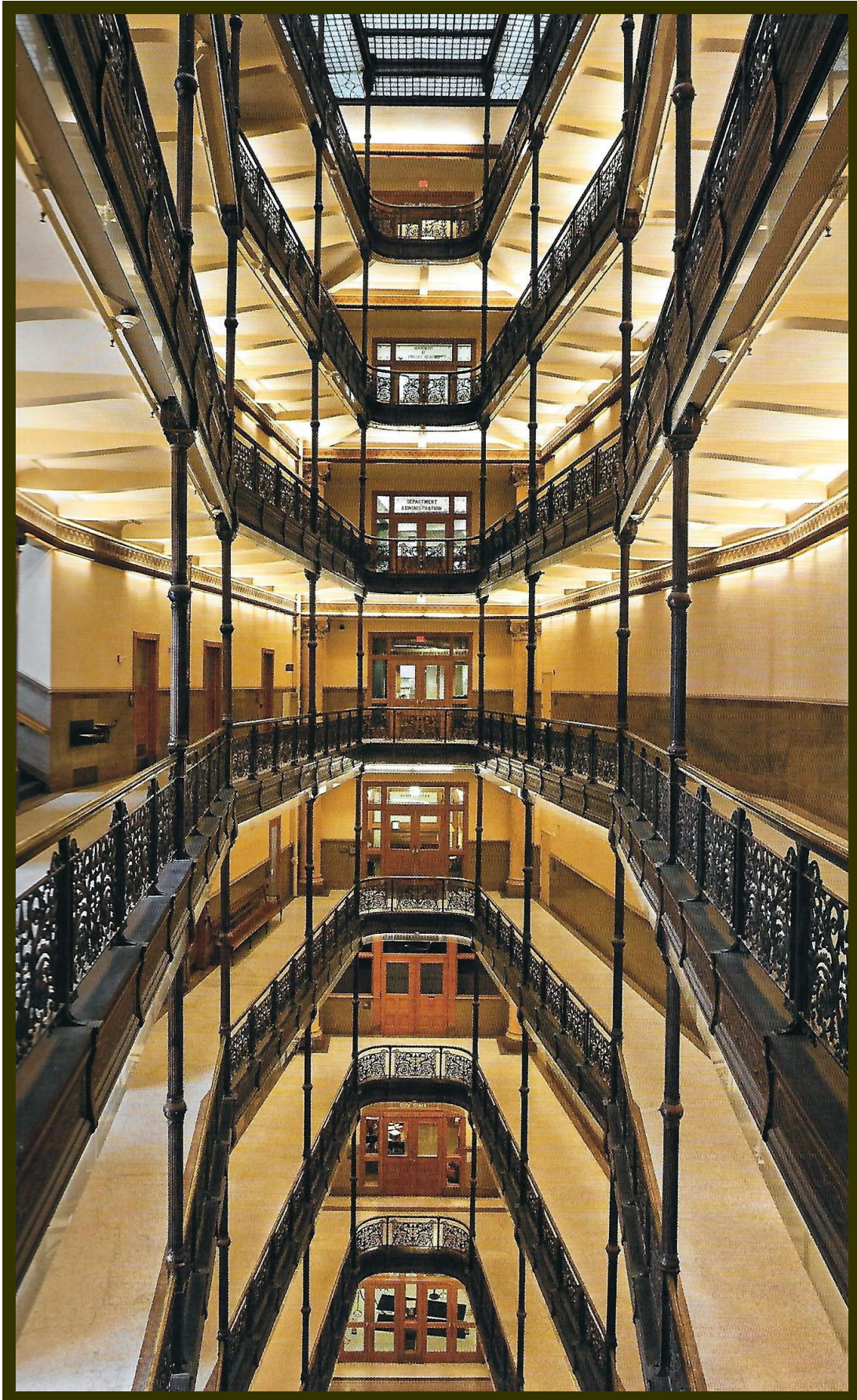


In a City of German immigrants, the Civic Hall had similarities to Hamburg's Rathaus. The 393 ft tower was originally the third tallest in the US and the tallest in the city until 1973.



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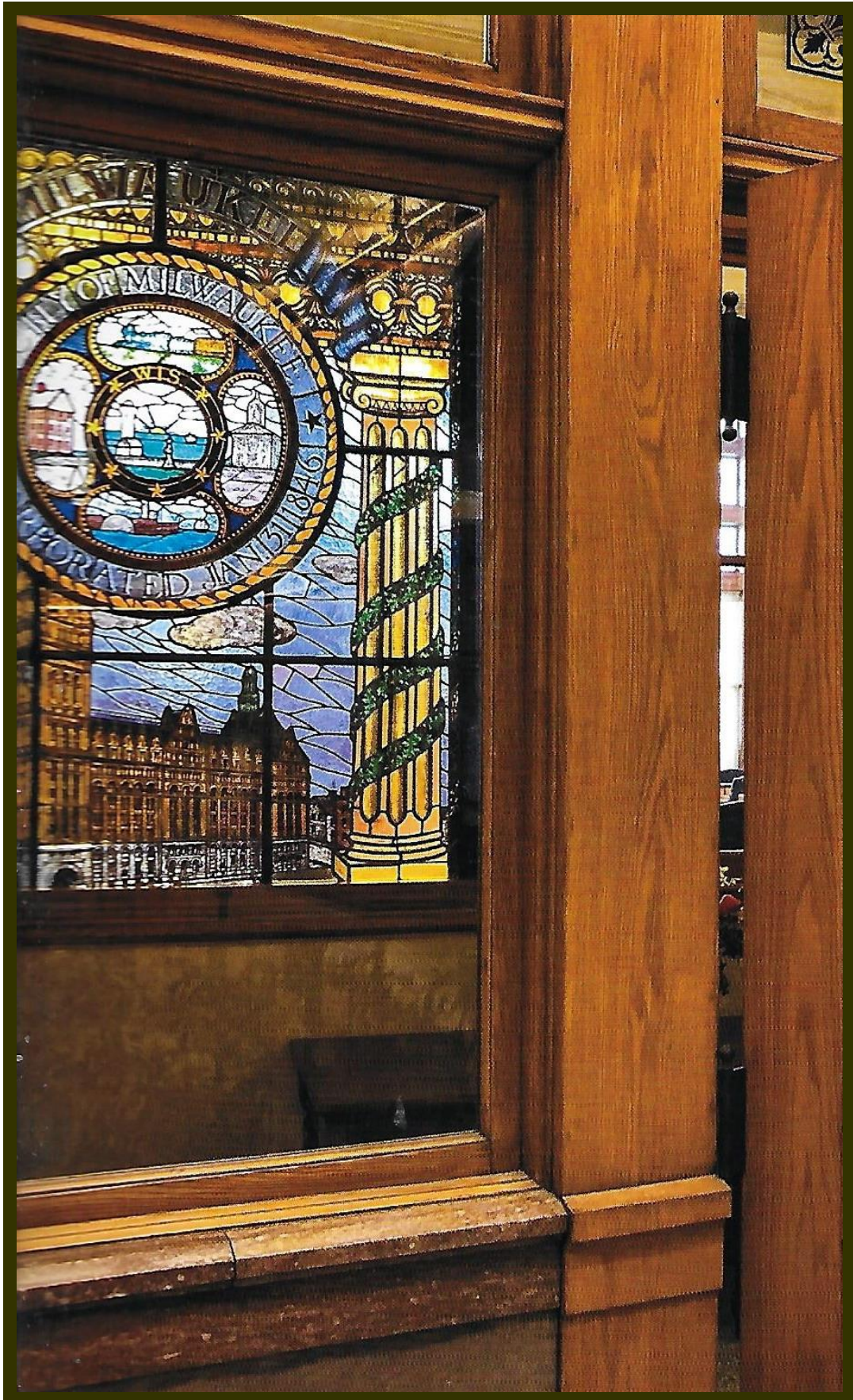
# MILWAUKEE CITY HALL 1895



One of the first US buildings to feature an extensive atrium.



# MILWAUKEE CITY HALL 1895



The City Council anteroom.



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# MILWAUKEE CITY HALL 1895



Tower stairs.



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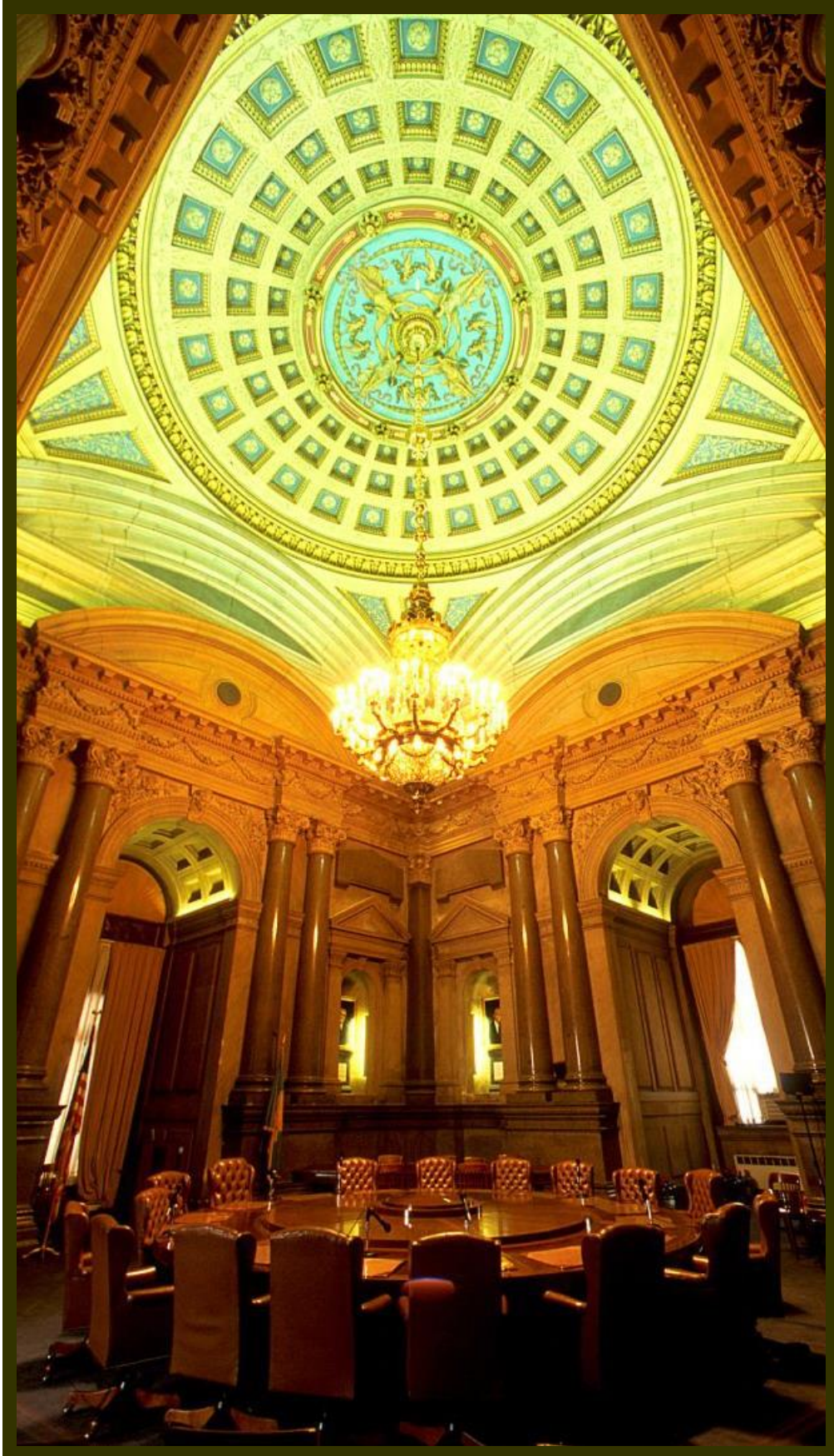
## PHILADELPHIA CITY HALL 1901



The tallest building in the city until 1987, The tower walls are 22 ft thick at the base.  
(As an air conditioning engineer, I happened to be in Philadelphia on that day in 1976  
when Legionnaires Disease first broke out and was so named: BMR).



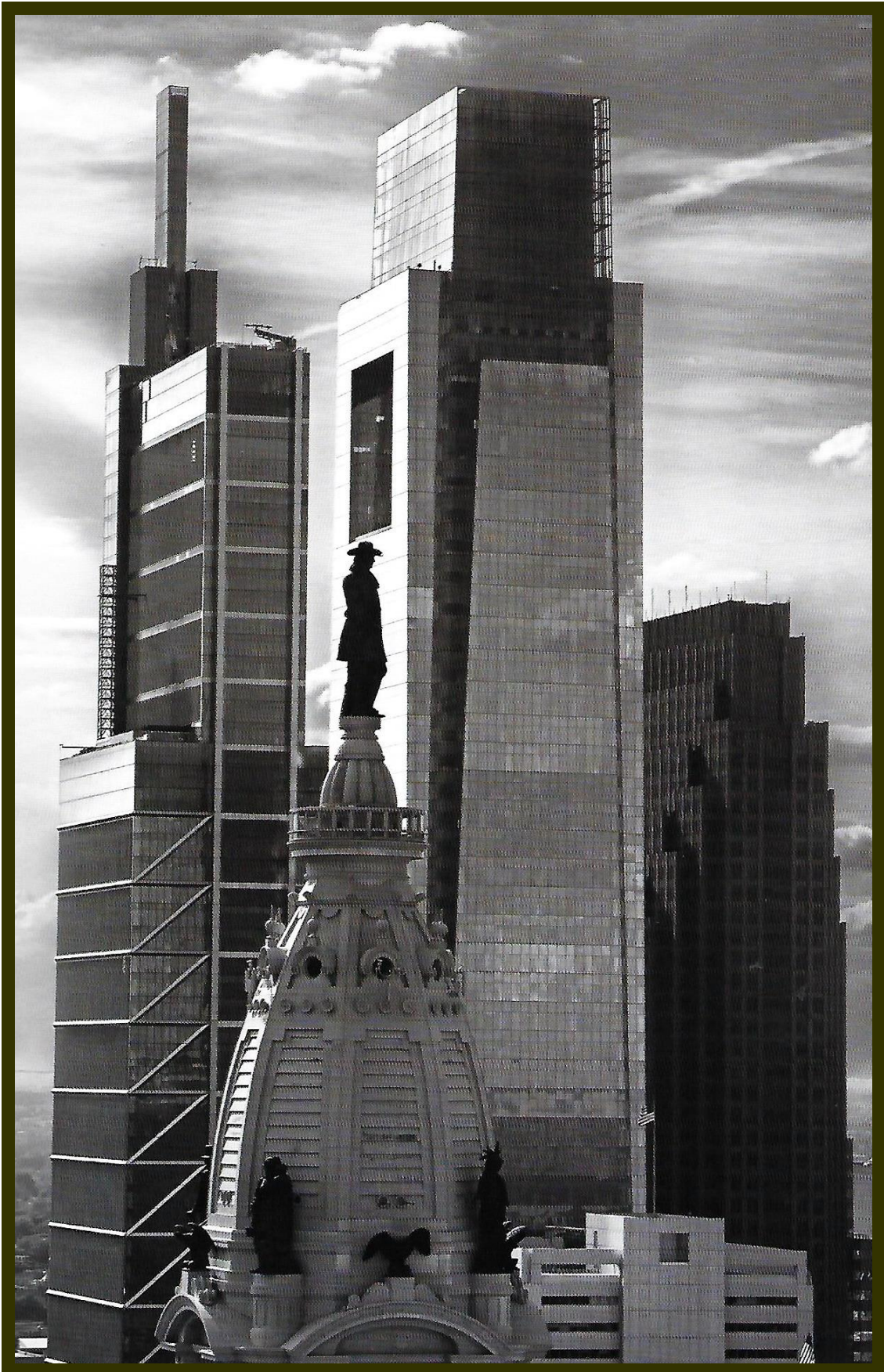
# PHILADELPHIA CITY HALL 1901



The magnificent Council Chamber.



# PHILADELPHIA CITY HALL 1901



City Hall, its tower once the tallest point in the city, topped with a 37 ft tall statue of William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania.



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## **BELFAST TOWN HALL 1898-2006**



Features Queen Victoria statue and four corner towers with green copper dome at centre.



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## CARDIFF TOWN HALL 1906



Atmospheric (Nuconomiser) steam heating and fresh air mechanical ventilation.  
Contractor Ashwell & Nesbit,



# LONDON COUNTY HALL 1911-22



Heating and Ventilation by J. Jeffreys leading a consortium of Crittall, Haden, Norris & Dutton.  
Council Chamber air conditioning by Buffalo Forge and Carrier.



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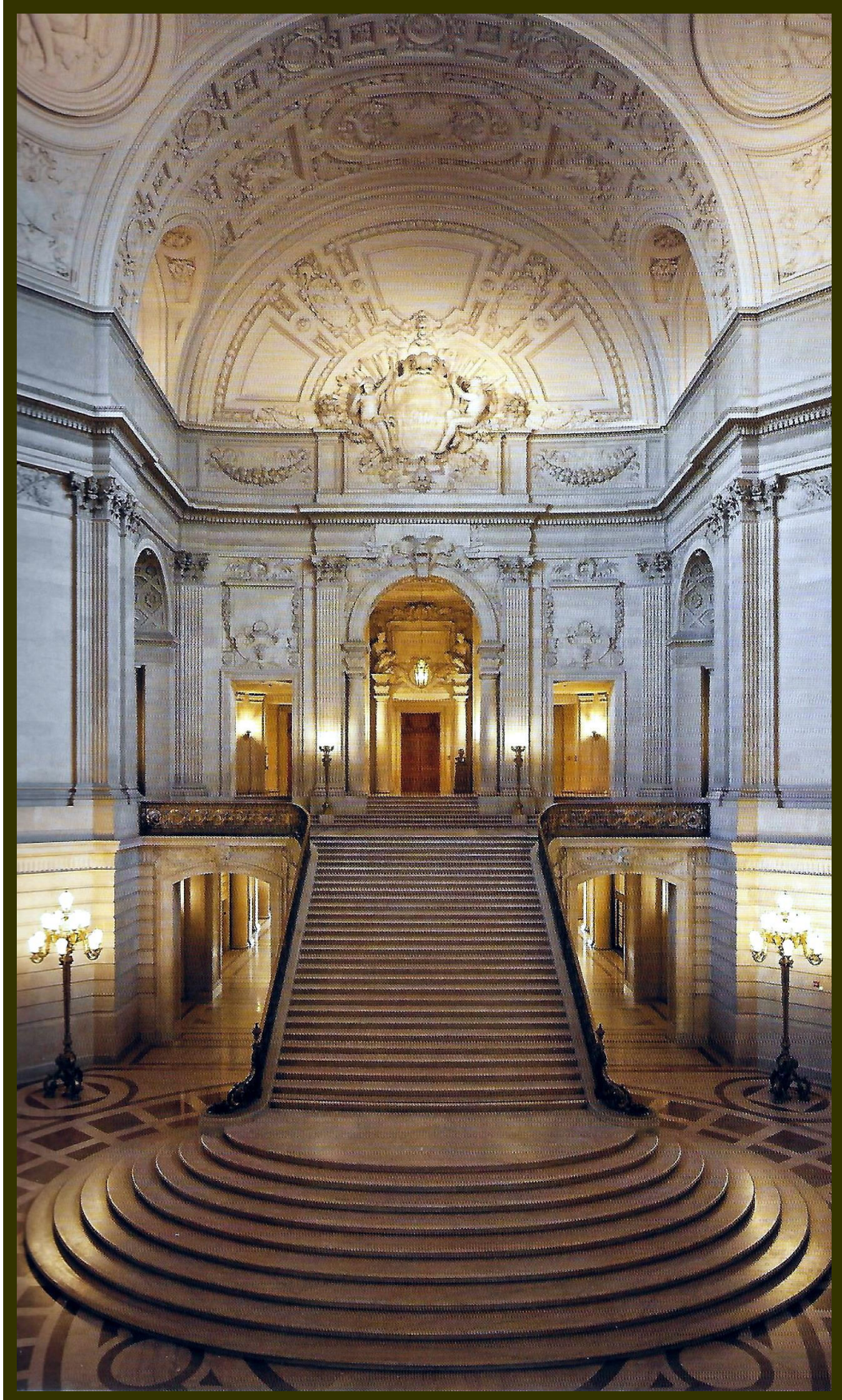
## **SAN FRANCISCO CITY HALL 1915**



This "Peoples Palace" replaced the first City Hall, destroyed in the Great Earthquake of 1906.



## SAN FRANCISCO CITY HALL 1915



The Grand Staircase sits below the huge dome, at 307 ft the tallest in the United States.



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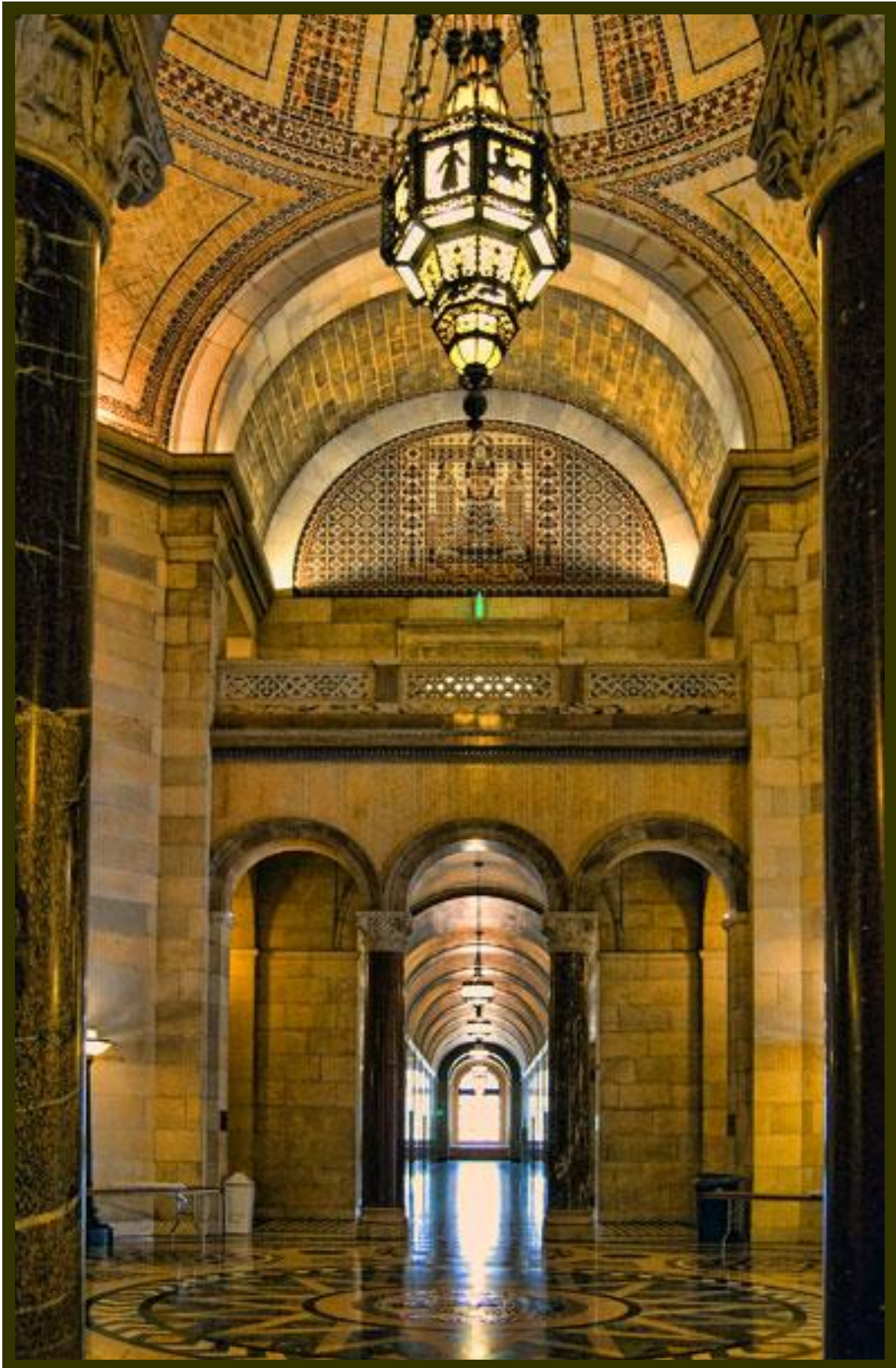
## LOS ANGELES CITY HALL 1928



A well-known sight in many films of the great Hollywood era.



# LOS ANGELES CITY HALL 1928



The Byzantine interior.



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## BUFFALO CITY HALL 1932



Built for a City that was an "American Powerhouse."



# BUFFALO CITY HALL 1932



The murals celebrate local industries.



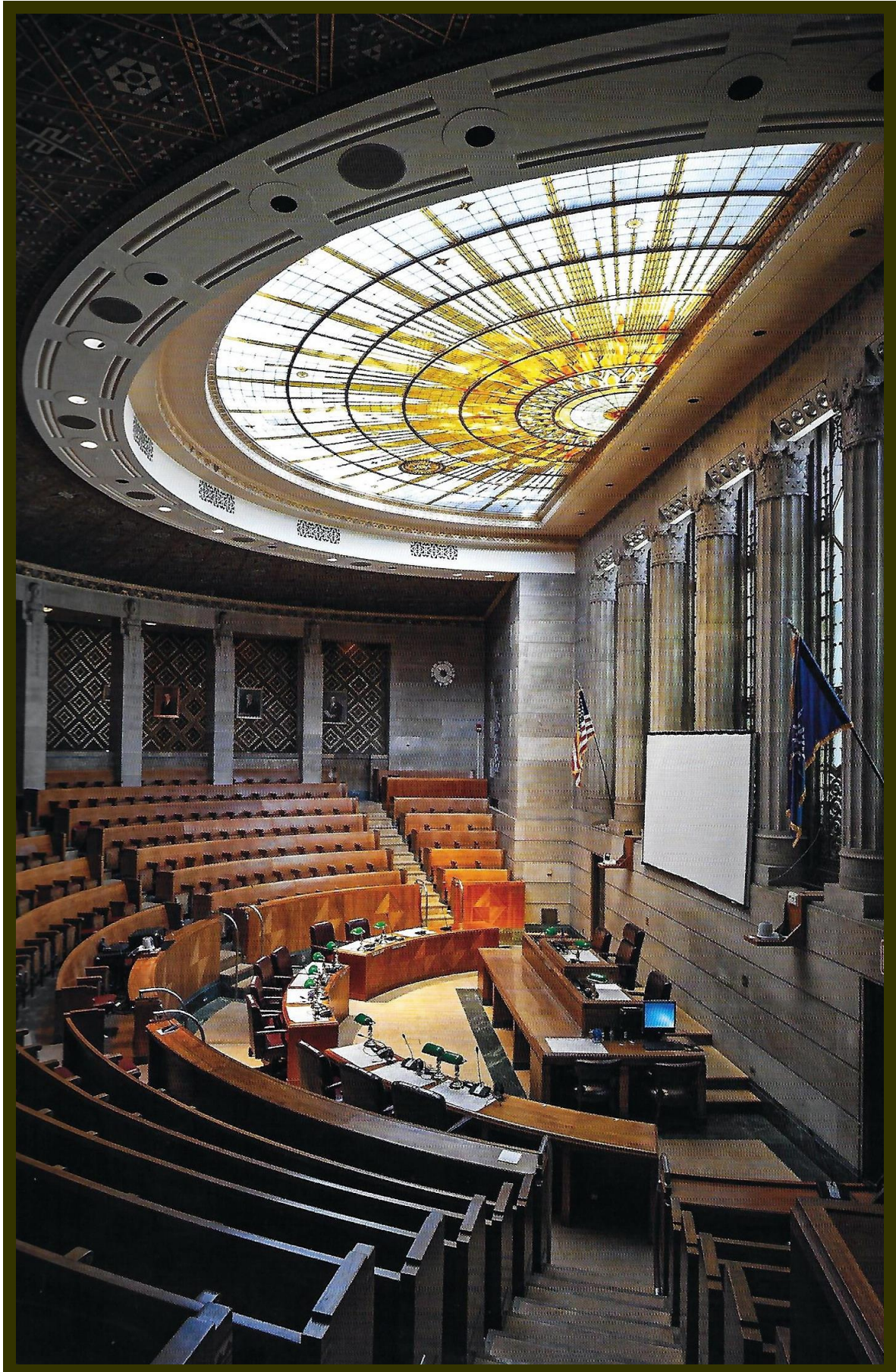
## BUFFALO CITY HALL 1932



Decorative elevator doors.



## BUFFALO CITY HALL 1932



The Council Chamber stained glass skylight, said to symbolize "transparency in government."



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# SAINT PAUL CITY HALL 1932



Designed to convey the image of a modern city.



## SAINT PAUL CITY HALL 1932



The 36 ft tall, 60-ton statue "Vision of Peace" honours St. Paul war veterans.



# BRISTOL COUNCIL HOUSE 1938-56



Construction started but delayed by WWII.  
Electrical off-peak LPHW heating with Sulzer electrode boilers.  
Consulting Engineer J. Roger Preston & Partners. Contractor Arthur Scull & Son.



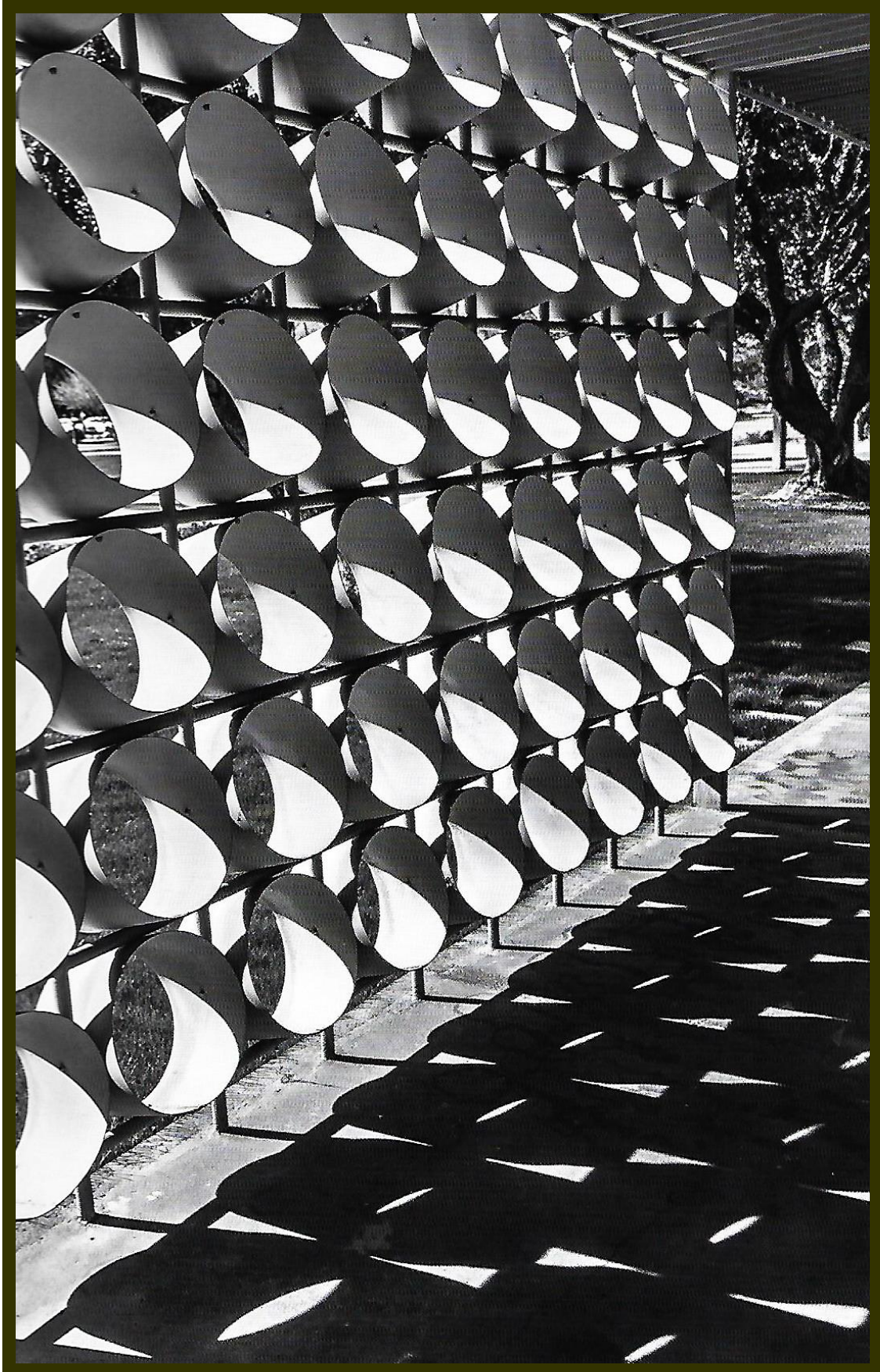
# PALM SPRINGS CITY HALL 1957



Described as "Something new under the sun after WWII."



## PALM SPRINGS CITY HALL 1957

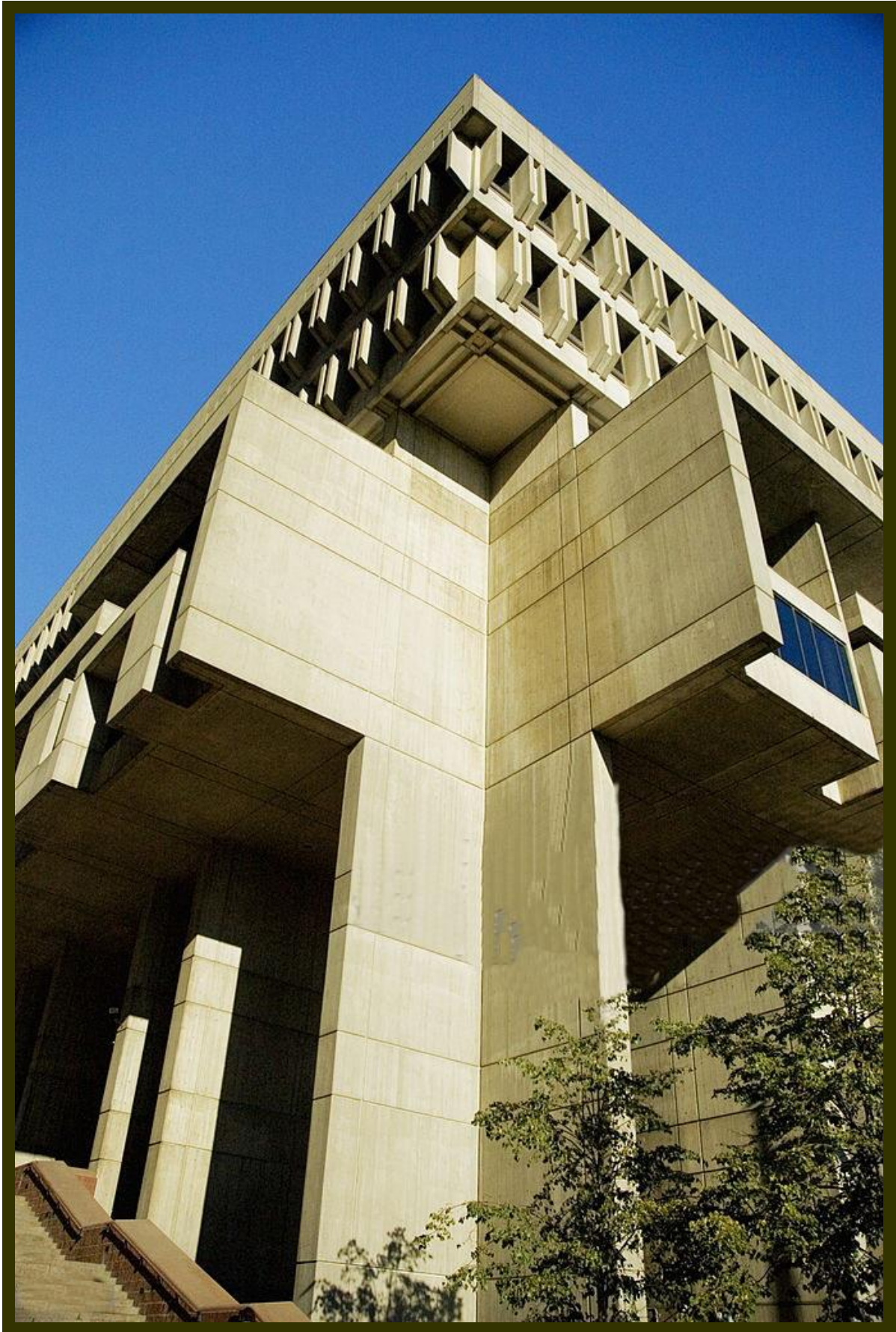


Aluminium circular discs arranged to create a sunshade screen (brise-soleil).



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## **BOSTON CITY HALL 1968**



The brutal architecture of a building with an early VAV (variable air volume) air conditioning system, visited by two members of the Heritage Group not long after its opening.



# AUSTIN CITY HALL 2004



An interior that's "a three-dimensional trapezoid linked by bridges with no right angles."



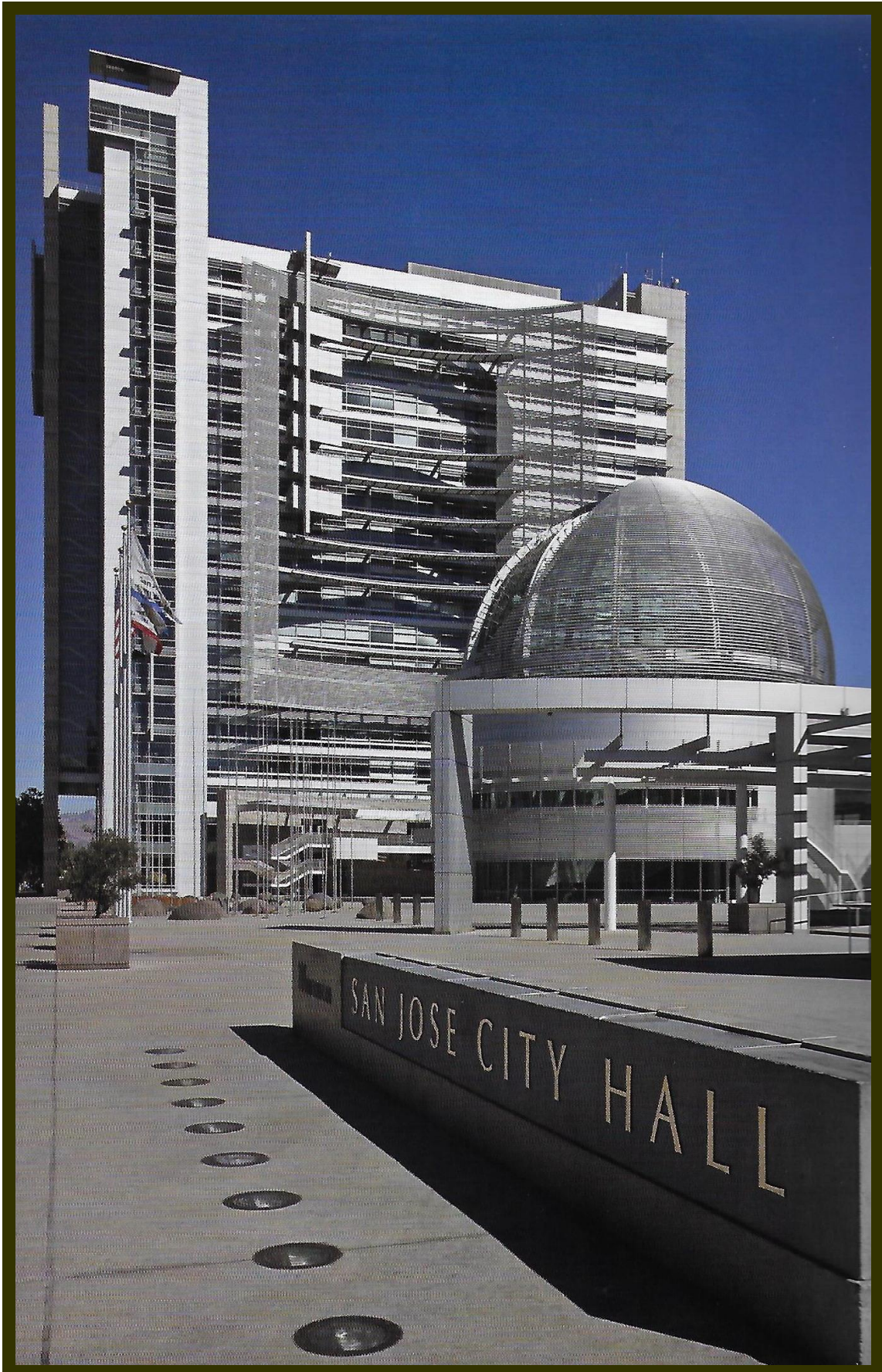
# AUSTIN CITY HALL 2004



A photovoltaic glass trellis provides 10% of the Hall's power.



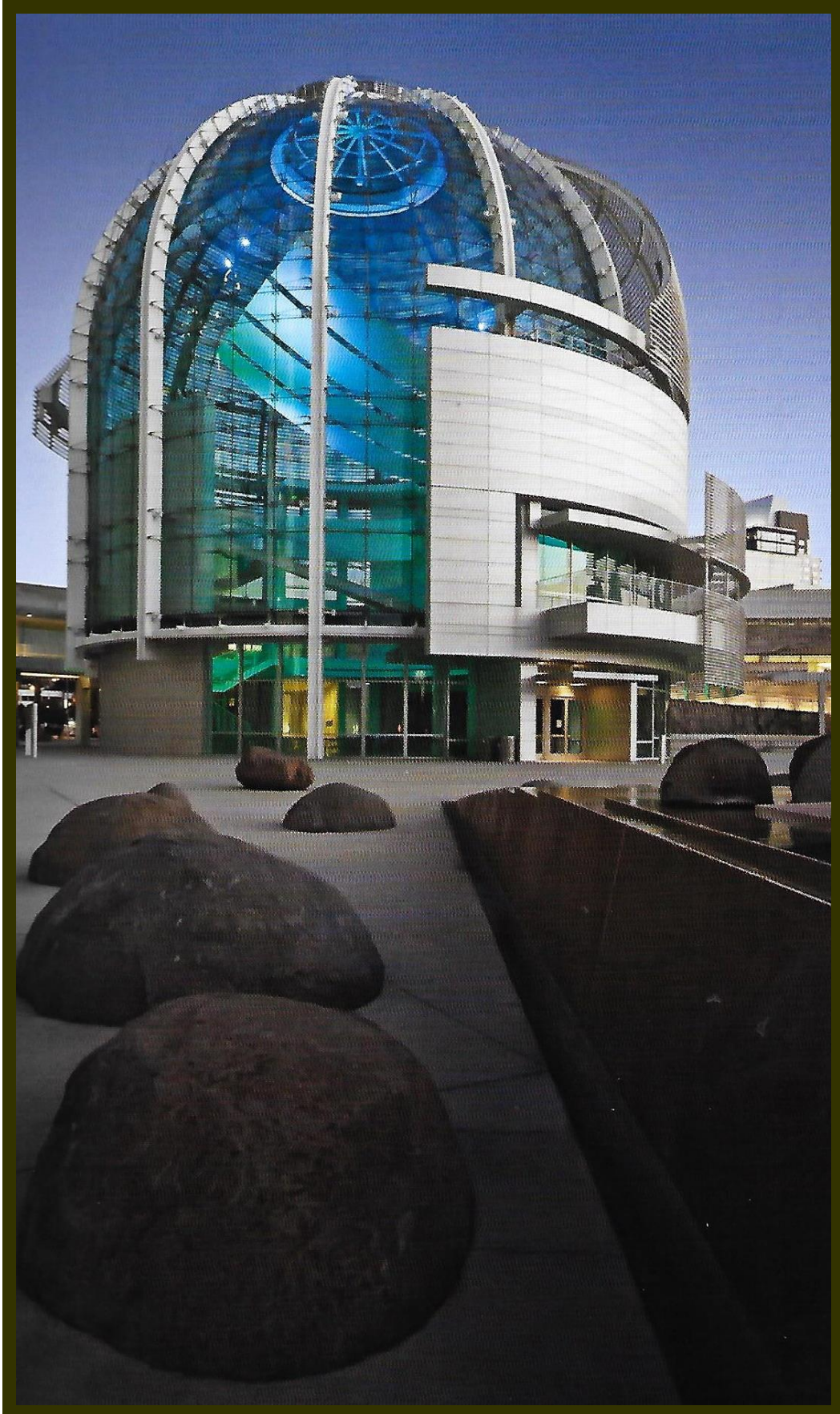
# SAN JOSE CITY HALL 2005



The new Capital of Silicon Valley in California.



# SAN JOSE CITY HALL 2005



The foreground boulders are part of a modern "art installation."



# SAN JOSE CITY HALL 2005



The Atrium Hall in a City now the 10th largest in the United States.



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# SAN JOSE CITY HALL 2005

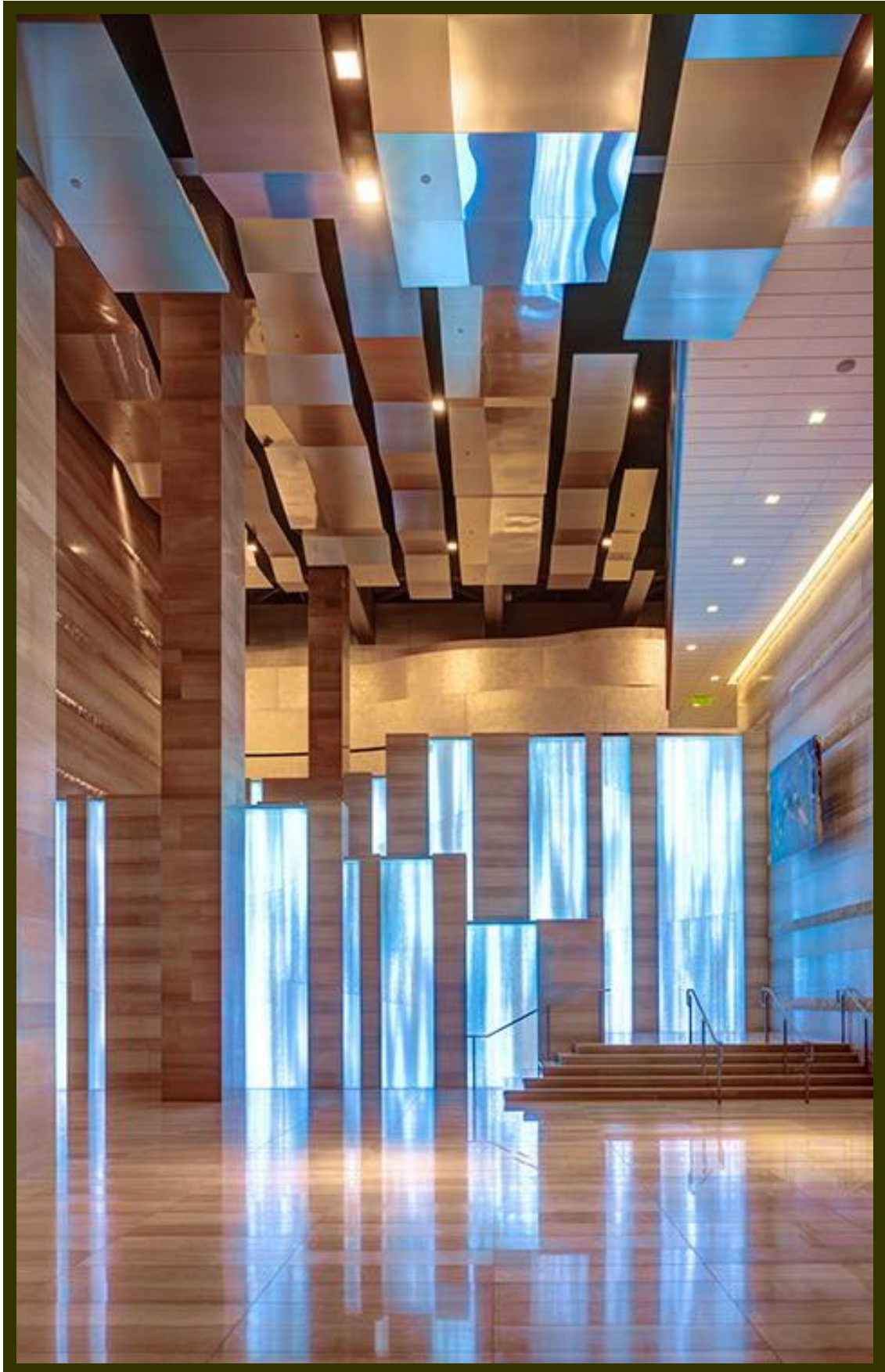


The brise-soleil shielding the 18-storey office tower and improving energy-efficiency.



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## LAS VEGAS CITY HALL 2012



The glass sculpture "Reflections of Energy" representing water cascading down the tower of the nearby Hoover Dam which provides Las Vegas with much of its power.



# LAS VEGAS CITY HALL 2012



The forest of photovoltaic "trees" collecting solar energy.



## SAINT PAUL CITY HALL 1932



Wooden cabinet in the Mayor's Office: right panel the old City Hall, left the new Hall.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- 1878 An Architectural and General Description of the Town Hall, Manchester: A Report on the Inaugural Proceedings, September, 1877, Wm E.A. Axon (Ed), Abel Heywood, (Reproduced 1977 by the City of Manchester)
- 2010 Manchester Landmark Buildings, Newsletter No.23, December, CIBSE Heritage Group.
- 2015 Landmark Buildings in Historic Dublin, Newsletter No.33, December, CIBSE Heritage Group.
- 2020 City Hall, Arthur Drooker, Schifler Publishing Ltd, Atglen, Pennsylvania.

**Illustrations & information has also been taken from Heritage Group Archive & Website. The following may be found on our website under Opening Page: Group Activities:**

### **Buildings with Historical Equipment**

Heating: Other Buildings, Bristol Council House.

Ventilation: City Hall, Cardiff, Wales.

**Newsletters.**