II. ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Development of Tangier

The city of Tangier traces its origins back to the ancient Berbers and Phoenicians. The area was colonized by Carthaginians in the early fifth century B.C.E., and Roman rule began in the first century B.C.E. The city was conquered by the Vandals in the fifth century C.E. but returned to the Roman Empire from 534 to 682.

Seven centuries of Arab rule began in 702 under the Umayyad dynasty. After numerous previous attempts, the city was conquered by the Portuguese in 1471. Along with Portugal itself, Tangier was under the Spanish Habsburg monarchy from 1580 to 1640.

In 1661, Tangier was ceded by Portugal to England as part of the dowry for Catherine of Braganza, future wife of Charles II of England.

Figure II-1. Late seventeenth century view of the “City of Tanger.” The future site of the Legation is in a garden area at the top of this view of the walled city. Source: Collection of the Tangier American Legation Museum.

The period of English rule was brief, and in 1684, the English substantially destroyed the town and withdrew. Although the city was partially rebuilt by Sultan Moulay Ismail, it was no longer a substantial settlement. Morocco was by this time ruled by the Alaouite Dynasty, who had gained control of the kingdom in 1659 after the last Saadi sultan was overthrown.

On November 1, 1755, Lisbon, Portugal, was devastated by an earthquake with an epicenter in the Atlantic Ocean; Tangier and other cities in Morocco were also greatly affected by this quake as well as subsequent local aftershocks later in November. In 1786, Thomas Barclay described Tangiers as
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

containing approximately 800 houses, half of them constructed during the English period. By 1810, Tangier was a small port city with a population of less than 5,000 persons. However, as an easily accessible port, Tangier served as a primary diplomatic and foreign trade center between the European states and the Kingdom of Morocco.

In 1830, France invaded and conquered Algeria. A decade of conflict ensued as France attempted to extend its control over Morocco. As the French military extended European control, the Algerian Muslim resistance leader Abd al Qadir fled to Morocco in 1841. France demanded that Sultan Abd-er-Rahman of Morocco suppress Abd al Qadir and his supporters in Morocco; the sultan refused. Also, the border between French Algeria and the Kingdom of Morocco was disputed. These events led to the first Franco-Moroccan war, which began when a French naval force bombarded Tangier on August 6, 1844. After French forces defeated the Moroccan forces at the Battle of Isly, the war ended with Morocco agreeing in the Treaty of Tangier to arrest Abd al Qadir and to participate in a commission to demarcate the border (essentially the present-day border between Morocco and Algeria).

Figure II-2. View of Tangier looking south from the Constantine Hotel, showing the harbor defenses, November 20, 1894. The flagpole on the horizon at center (arrow) marks the location of the American Legation at the far end of the walled city. Source: Library of Congress.

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Increasing European trade in the Mediterranean led to the 1865 signing of the Cape Spartel Lighthouse Treaty in Tangier among the United States, Morocco, and nine other countries. In this treaty, the Sultan granted neutrality for the lighthouse at the Straits of Gibraltar under the condition that the other states would supervise and maintain the structure.

Morocco was not exempt from increasing European colonization of Africa in the late nineteenth century. In 1880, the International Sanitary Commission was established in Tangier, thus introducing European spheres of influence to the city.

Attempts by the French to extend control over Morocco led to disputes with other European powers, which were resolved at a conference in Algeciras, Spain, in 1906. This conference confirmed French control over most of Morocco, with northern areas, including Tangier, under Spanish control.
In 1911 rebellion broke out in Morocco, and the sultan was besieged in the French-controlled city of Fez. The conflict soon provoked a confrontation between France and Germany. In the Treaty of Fez that year, Germany accepted France’s colonization of Morocco. On March 30, 1912, France established a protectorate, ending Moroccan independence. The northernmost portion of the country, including the city of Tangier, became a Spanish protectorate.

Following World War I, the city of Tangier and its environs were made into an international zone under the joint control of France, Britain, and Spain. The decades of international control saw Tangier develop a cosmopolitan cultural and economic life. Many refugees from Spain settled in the city during the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s. It also became a major focus of diplomatic intrigue and espionage, particularly during World War II.

The Office of Strategic Services (O.S.S.) was established by presidential order in 1942 to provide intelligence to support military operations during World War II. The O.S.S. operated in Morocco from its inception, with operations divided between Special Operations (S.O.) and Secret Intelligence (S.I.). The S.I. division was only created subsequent to Operation Torch in November 1942, when American and British forces occupied French Morocco and Algeria, overcoming the Axis-allied Vichy French forces. A key role of the O.S.S. staff in Tangier was to provide intelligence in support of this operation. In Tangier, Lieutenant Colonel William A. Eddy was the head of S.I. The S.O. operations included the work of Gordon H. Brown, referred to as American Vice-Consul, and Captain Franklin Holcomb, Assistant Naval Attaché. In addition to Tangiers, the S.O. also operated from a house in Fez and was affiliated with the Fifth Army. During the early 1940s, it was clear that the State Department had little control over the O.S.S. and that the interaction between the diplomatic staff with the O.S.S. was limited. The diplomatic staff complained of limited knowledge of the O.S.S. activities.²

In 1956, when Morocco regained its independence from France, Tangier was also reincorporated into the kingdom. Diplomatic activity shifted to Rabat, which was selected to be the capital at the independence of the kingdom, and the economy of Tangier initially declined. In recent decades, new developments have greatly expanded the city, including a new freight port at Tanger-Med, 40 kilometers east of the city.

² National Archives, Record Group 84, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, 1788–circa 1991. Tangiers, Morocco, Consulate, Entry 2978, Box 1, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

II-4 Historic Structure Report
History of the Tangier American Legation

**Development of Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Morocco, 1778–1821**

The relationship between the United States and Morocco began soon after the independence of the United States. In 1778, Benjamin Franklin was authorized to negotiate a treaty with Morocco. Also in 1778, Sultan Sidi Mohamed allowed American vessels in Moroccan ports. Frustrated by the lack of progress on a treaty to formalize relations between Morocco and the United States, the sultan seized an American ship in 1783 to force the United States to complete a treaty. In 1785, Thomas Barclay was appointed to a mission in Morocco by Thomas Jefferson to negotiate a treaty with the Emperor of Morocco, Mohamed Ben Abdelkack. A signed treaty was returned to John Adams and Thomas Jefferson on October 2, 1786, and the treaty was ratified by the United States in 1787. The importance of the treaty was primarily to protect American shipping interests in the Mediterranean Sea. Following the treaty, Barclay appointed Girolamo Chiappi as the temporary agent for the United States. Chiappi was also Consul for Venice and Vice Consul of Genoa.

Thomas Barclay was appointed in 1791 to be Consul to Morocco. He was succeeded as Consul by Hans Heissel (1795). President Washington requested funds to establish a consulate in Tangiers in 1795, and James Simpson served as the U.S. representative from 1796 until his death on March 8, 1820. In 1799, Simpson reportedly requested permission to build a residence in Tangiers; however, permission was never granted by the President. The early American consuls reportedly lived in a residence, formerly the residence of the Danish Consul, approximately two miles from town, and at times also occupied a building in town formerly used by the Swedish government.

**Acquisition and Development of the Tangier American Legation, 1821–1921**

Based on the physical investigation and materials analysis, the extent of physical fabric remaining from this period is limited and likely localized to masonry core walls which have subsequently been replastered and restuccoed. Any evidence of this physical remnant remains concealed without removing the existing plaster. As a result, the history presented is based solely on historic documentary sources.

The representative who replaced Simpson, John Mullowny, arrived in the Bay of Gibraltar on September 9, 1820, to take up his position as the new American representative in Morocco. Mullowny was from Pennsylvania and was appointed Second Lieutenant of the Navy in 1797. In 1800, he was Captain of the U.S. ship Ganges. He arrived in Tangier on May 17, 1821, and took possession of a small house that had been presented rent free by the sultan on the site of the present-day Legation. This order of the sultan placed the representative of the United States on an equal footing to the representatives of the European powers in Tangiers by having a residence for their diplomat. The first reference to the property refers to it as a house and is dated the eighth day of the month Rabah the first, 1237 (approximately December 4, 1822). A later property title clarifying the ownership of the property by the United States dates from 1891 and indicates that the United States had occupied the property over thirty

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4 Letter No. 39 from John Mullowny to Secretary of State Henry Clay, September 7, 1825, National Archives, Record Group 84, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, 1788–1921.
5 Letter from John Mullowny to John Quincy Adams dated September 9, 1820, RG84, Entry 2977, Volume 41.
6 *The Weekly Magazine*, Volume 1, Number 1, February 3, 1798, p.224.
8 There are several copies of the letter including RG84, Entry 2977, Box 104.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

The property was approached from the north during this period, as the gate in the city walls leading to present-day Rue du Portugal to the south of the legation had not yet been created.

Mullowny appears to have acquired several properties in Tangiers during his tenure, and it remains unclear which parcel or parcels was provided by the Sultan and which parcels Mullowny may have purchased. Regardless, in the 1820s it appears that Mullowny occupied two buildings on opposite sides of the street: a one-story building consisting of the rooms surrounding the west courtyard, and a small building at the location of present-day room 151. In addition, there was a yard to the south of the rooms surrounding the west courtyard, and a second yard surrounding present-day room 151, subsequently known as the Theatre Parcel.

Mullowny used one of these buildings as a residence and one of these buildings for storage. The residence had been repaired and improved during Mullowny’s tenure, while the storage building was in poor condition. It seems likely that Mullowny used the rooms surrounding the west courtyard as his residence with present-day room 151 as storage.

Mullowny had apparently acquired multiple properties in Tangier, leading to some confusion as to ownership of the Legation. Mullowny died in early 1831, and his heirs claimed a portion of the property he occupied. Eventually, Mullowny’s heirs gave up any right to the building and property and the buildings were occupied by Consul G. A. Porter. Porter describes the residence in a state of decay with two large open holes, windows without glass, deteriorated brick floor, and the plaster falling from the walls.

After several changes of personnel, the new consul, Thomas N. Carr, arrived in Tangier on September 2, 1838, and provided an inventory of the Tangier American Legation. Carr identified the rooms as saloon, hall, dining room, Consular office, ante room, pantry, and bedroom. Based on Carr’s description, the seven room building appeared to be a one story dwelling with rooms surrounding the west courtyard as shown in the 1838 plan. In addition, the property presumably included the open yard to the south of the courtyard building; the storage building at the site of present-day room 151; and the open yard of the Theatre Parcel. Based on the narrative description in the documentary sources, a plan of the building as it likely existed in 1838 has been prepared.

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10 Letter from the Solicitor of the Department of State to Mr. Turlington, March 25, 1922. RG 59, CDF 124.01 1910-1929.
11 Letter No. 39 from John Mollowny to Secretary of State Henry Clay, September 7, 1825, RG 84, Volume 41.
12 Letter to State Department from acting consul G. A. Porter, May 21, 1831, RG 84, Volume 41.
13 Letter from Thomas Carr, September 7, 1838, RG 84, Volume 39.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

FIRST FLOOR PLAN, 1939
CONCEPTUAL, NOT TO SCALE
In 1844, Carr sold the Theatre Parcel. In 1844, Tangier was bombarded by French naval forces. It is possible that the Tangier American Legation was damaged during the attack. The new consul, Thomas Hart Hyatt, who arrived in Tangier on July 14, 1848, describe the building as “almost in ruins” and estimates that repairing the house would cost between $1,000 to $1,500. Hyatt also indicates that both he and Consul Carr occupied an adjacent residence, due to the condition of the Legation.

Subsequently, in 1848, the Tangier American Legation was completely rebuilt with little of the original materials remaining.

It was found that nothing of value could be saved from the ruins, excepting the portion of the bare walls, and these scarcely a single story high; the repairs having so long been delayed that nearly all of the wood-work, the doors, windows, roof timbers, & c., had become so decayed and damaged as to make it necessary to replace them with new.

A second story was added, in part spanning across street and connecting the rooms surrounding the west courtyard with present-day room 151. As remodeled, the house consisted of six major rooms and adjacent closets arranged around an open courtyard (the west courtyard), and two stairwells. A lumber room was located across the street from the main portion of the residence. The newly built second story included five major rooms, including the large Drawing Room spanning across the street. One of the stairwells extended up to a third story, which had one room and access to rooftop terraces. Hart compared the rebuilt Legation to the British counterpart which cost $60,000 to build. Elevation drawings were prepared of the Legation. Based on the sketches of the completed project and his narrative description (reproduced in the appendix), the plan of the Legation as it existed by early 1849 has been prepared.

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14 Copy of translated deed, OBO Archives.
15 Letter No. 2 from T. Hart Hyatt to Honorable James Buchanan, Secretary of State, July 29, 1848, RG 84, Volume 43.
16 February 22, 1849, letter to James Buchanan from Consul T. Hart Hyatt, RG 84, Volume 43.
17 February 22, 1849, letter to James Buchanan from Consul T. Hart Hyatt, RG 84, Volume 43.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

FIRST FLOOR PLAN, 1849

NOT TO SCALE

Tangier American Legation II-9
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1849
NOT TO SCALE

THIRD FLOOR PLAN, 1849
NOT TO SCALE
The humid and damp climate of Tangier took its toll on the Legation, and by January 1862, Consul James DeLong was complaining, like his predecessors, to the Department of State in Washington regarding the condition of the building:

The house is in a state of considerable dilapidation and is evidently in want of a general repair. The roofs are all more or less leaky, and in consequence of this having been the case for some time, a general and unhealthy dampness pervades the entire building, and the drawing room (a noble apartment about 28 feet square, said to be the largest room in the Empire) is in a dangerous condition, the centre beam supporting the terraced roof being extensively decayed. Some of the walls are fissured. Nearly all the window blinds and shutters require repair. The locks and door handles of every room in the house are either wanting or broken and altogether, the house in its present state is unfit for a family to reside in.\(^\text{18}\)

On behalf of DeLong, a French engineer L. Jacquet estimated necessary repairs to be $1,100.\(^\text{19}\) His request for funds to repair the Legation was reiterated by Consul Jesse H. McMath when he arrived in Tangier later in 1862 to replace DeLong.\(^\text{20}\) Limited repairs commenced in the autumn of 1862.\(^\text{21}\) In an April 11, 1870, letter, Consul John J. Robison requested various articles to furnish the consulate, including an iron safe.\(^\text{22}\) Consul Reed Lewis had tried to sell the Legation in 1889, but without clear title was unable to sell the property.

Consul Felix A. Matthews continue to describe the deteriorated state of the Legation in 1870.\(^\text{23}\) Under Matthews leadership, the Moroccan government certified the United States title to the property on May 24, 1891. The 1891 title describes the building and yard in the Haoumat Béni-Ider district which is surrounded “by the houses of the heirs of the late Moorish Merchant Mohamed El Khattib, and is bounded by the side of the yard by the house formerly of the Jew Garzon, and by the property formerly of the heirs of the late Hammon Endowar, and of the other side by the building of the Jew Pariente used as a theatre. The gate to the property is under the arch fronting one of the houses of El Vinhattib, and which house is separated from the Consular Building by the public Street.”\(^\text{24}\)

Matthews hired an architect Charles Cross to assess the Legation.\(^\text{25}\) Cross referred to drawings in his report, although the drawings were not attached to the letter in the archives. During this time the conservatory rooms were added on the third floor. A copy of block plans prepared by Thomson and Company Architects dated May 1891 were provided from the OBO archives in Washington D.C. Based on this 1870 narrative description, and the block plan of the Legation from 1891, the following plans of the likely appearance of the building between 1870 and 1891 were prepared. In 1891, Matthews wrote a letter to William F. Wharton, the Assistant Secretary of State, offering to trade his more modern residence built in 1886 for the Legation.

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18 Letter from James DeLong to Honorable William Seward, Secretary of State, January 20, 1862, RG 84, Volume 44.
19 Letter from James DeLong to Honorable William Seward, Secretary of State, January 20, 1862, RG 84, Volume 44.
20 Letter from McMath to Hon. William H. Seward, Secretary of State, July 18, 1862, RG 84, Volume 44.
21 Letter No. 6 from McMath to Hon. William H. Seward, Secretary of State, November 19, 1862, RG 84, Volume 84.
22 It appears a safe was acquired in 1870, as a safe of this vintage remains in the north wall of room 103.
24 Letter from the Solicitor of the Department of State to Mr. Turlington, March 25, 1922. RG 59, CDF 124.01 1910-1929. Note the 1891 deed is reproduced in many archival documents.
25 Letter from Felix A. Matthews, December 28, 1870, RG 84, Volume 45.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1870-1891
NOT TO SCALE

THIRD FLOOR PLAN, 1870-1891
NOT TO SCALE
Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century, there were repeated requests for funding to deal with the “ruinous” condition of the consulate. A 1911 publication indicates the legation did not reflect favorably on the United States and recommended a new legation to improve foreign trade in Morocco (Figure II-3).

In 1911, a law was passed by Congress which allocated $500,000 for the purchase of buildings abroad for offices and residences for the State Department. Fred W. Carpenter expressed his desire to relocate the Legation. He could not identify any appropriate existing building in Tangier and recommended purchasing vacant land for a new Legation. He recommended a site of at least two acres and a masonry wall to separate the site. He suggested a budget of $55,000 and estimated the value of the existing legation of between $10,000 and $12,000. However, beyond reported roof and window repairs in 1912, no significant alterations were made.

Maxwell Blake and the Renovation of the Tangier American Legation, 1921–1931

The condition of the Legation reportedly continued to deteriorate after the repairs in the 1860s. Maxwell Blake was initially posted to Tangier in 1912 with the title Chargé d’Affaires; in 1917 he was designated Consul.

Maxwell Blake was born in Kansas City, Missouri on November 15, 1877. He attended public schools and went to college at St. John Military Academy, Scarritt College in Neosho, Missouri, and Missouri State University. His business interests included ranching and real estate prior to his service in the diplomatic corps. He first served in Funchal, Portugal in 1906, followed by service in Scotland in 1907 and Columbia in 1910 prior to his service in Morocco. Blake was a career officer for the State Department and served in Morocco for almost three decades. He had a salary of $7,500 as Consul General.

In a letter to the Secretary of State dated March 27, 1921, Consul Maxwell Blake refers to the existing gateway through the city walls leading to the Rue du Portugal, which was constructed circa 1909–1910.

As a result of the easy accessibility to a main thoroughfare afforded to the quarter of the town in which the American Agency stands, by the opening of a gate in the city walls at this point, a wealthy Moor and a prosperous British merchant have acquired the old buildings situated between the Agency premises and the new city gate, and are converting them into handsome modern dwelling houses.

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26 Letter No. 35, July 21, 1871 and February 14, 1872, RG 84, Volume 35.
28 61st Congress, 3rd session, H.R. 30888.
29 Letter to the Secretary of State dated July 8, 1911, RG84, CDF 1910-29, 124.01
31 Letter from Consul Maxwell Blake to the Secretary of State March 27, 1921, RG 84, Volume 168.
35 Letter No. 259 from Maxwell Blake to Secretary of State, November 25, 1921, RG 84, Volume 168.

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**Figure II-8.** View of Legation circa 1911 from American Embassies Legations and Consulates Mean Better Foreign Business: An Argument in Pictures and Paragraphs. This view is looking south in the Rue d’Amérique at the north wall of the building, present-day room 201.
Blake’s reference to the buildings between the Legation and the new city gate, may include the residential building that later became the Research Library portion of the Legation.

The current configuration and materials of the Legation are to a large extent the result of the persistent lobbying and efforts of Maxwell Blake. While Blake promoted a comprehensive repair and alteration project for the Legation, he implemented the repairs through a series of architectural studies as well as phased repairs and modifications to the Legation. Further, the new gate in the city walls meant that visitors in the twentieth century arrived to the Legation primarily from the south, rather than the north as they would have done previously.

Blake submitted his initial plans as an enclosure with his despatch No. 210 on March 27, 1921. The plans also included the “Report of Jona Benasuli, Architect of Tangier, Morocco.” 36 This plan describes a repair approach for the Legation, consisting of thorough repair of all roofs and terraces, as well as suggested modifications and additions. As described by Blake, the ground floor of the addition would include a kitchen and a pantry with a passage leading to the back courtyard. The existing kitchen and pantry would be converted into offices. The small staircase would be replaced by a new staircase. The other staircase would also be removed and replaced with another leading from the present archive room, which would be converted into an entrance hall. The second floor of the addition would include a dining room, connecting with the reception room. The area of the existing bathroom would be added to the reception room. Over the dining room, a bedroom and bathroom would be built, with a corridor over the existing bathroom. A second bedroom would be built over the reception room. Two sheds in the courtyard would be demolished.

Blake summarized his plans:

Upon the completion of the improvements proposed, the Agency and Consulate-General would consist of five rooms for offices, and, as residence, contain large reception and dining rooms, kitchen and scullery, three bed-rooms, a bath-room, and two laboratories. . . . The style and character of the work would be of the simplest in design, interior decoration in simple pure colors, and the whole scheme carried out with particular care to avoid pretentiousness or over-ornamentation. 37

Bensauli estimated the costs would be approximately $5,000 for essential repairs and approximately $14,000 for additions.

**The 1921–1922 Project**

Based on Blake’s request, the State Department authorized $5,265 for the essential repairs. Blake explained that he determined that “radical treatment would be required, tantamount to re-building.” 38 The repair work began in September 1921 and finished in early 1922. 39 Blake hired local builder Abdeslam Bokkori 40 as the supervisor at a fee of 5 percent of the construction costs. 41

A voucher from the builder-contractor Abdeslam Bekkeri, for the 1921–1922 work, for the sum of $5,262.00 (38,748.10 Spanish Pesetas), dated February 28, 1922, further describes the work:

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36 No information about Johan Benasuli was identified.
37 Letter from Consul Maxwell Blake to the Secretary of State March 27, 1921, RG 84, Volume 168.
38 Maxwell Blake, letter of February 1, 1922, RG 84, Volume 171.
40 No information about Maalem Bukkori was identified.
41 Maxwell Blake, letter of February 1, 1922, RG 84, Volume 171.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

In apartment on top floor of west wing of building [room 301]: entirely new roof laid on stout seasoned wooden beams, with concrete and tile surface. Entirely new ceiling. Two new windows will all woodwork, frames, shutters, fixtures complete, including protective iron cage burglar proof grating. One entirely new wooden floor laid on wooden beams. Removal of decayed supporting walls, replaced by two stout heavy iron beams. Construction of wooden built-in storage closets, with five doors with mirror fronts, with divisions, drawers and floor, and two new circular windows for light and ventilation, complete with iron gratings. Complete removal of all plastering and replacing with new plaster of Paris surfaces. Electric light and bell wires installed in insulating tubing sunk into walls, and five electric fixtures and all connections. Painting all wood work with five coats best English oil paint and staining floors.

In apartment adjoining above [room 302]: New floor laid in cement on iron beams, with glazed tile surface. Glazed tile wainscoting. One new window with all woodwork frames and shutters, and new fixtures and glazing complete. Tiled weather drip above window. Replacing of wooden stairway in marble and iron. Installation of hand basin, water-closet bath-tub, etc., including pipes and connections and new steel supply tank. One glass mirror over hand base. One door complete with jamb, hardware fixtures and containing one large mirror. Stripping and replastering walls and painting all wood work with five coats best English oil paint. Installation of four electric lights and one bell with all wiring and connections in insulated tubing sunk into walls, and four fixtures for lights. Old stone canals in walls replaced by iron sewage and down pipes.

In room to left of entrance stairway in same wing of building [room 216]: Entire new roof and new wooden beam ceiling, exterior surface in concrete and tiles. Replacing wooden stairway in marble with iron balustrade. Entirely new floor laid on iron beams and reinforced concrete with glass fan lights and iron bars, floor in black and white tiles. One entirely new window with all woodwork frames and shutters, fixtures and glazing complete. One porcelain hand basin with plumbing connections complete. One bell and eleven electric lights with all connections and wiring in insulated tubing sunk into walls. Stripping and replastering walls. One new door complete with hardware fixtures and containing one large mirror. All woodwork painted in five coats best English oil paint.

Roof over stairway leading to terrace [now altered, area of room 304]: Entirely renewed with iron beams and cement and laid in tiles, and four slabs of thick roof glass, iron steps in wall to roof. Renewal of ceiling. Protective iron grating beneath glass. New air and light window in wall shaft, with iron grating.

In vestibule at top of stairway [room 204]: New floor laid in marble and cement, including small stairway. Enlarging window with all new materials throughout. Small balcony in marble with iron balustrade.

Over apartment at right of stairway [roof over room 203]: Entire new roof laid on iron beams in concrete and tiles. All retaining walls surround this room reinforced with concrete work and keys. Two heavy iron girders inserted for support of section of the roof. Woodwork for one new window.

Over large office of Agent and Consul-General and small adjoining office of Vice-Consul [room 200 and possibly room 206]: Entirely new roof in best quality galvanized corrugated iron, bolted on thick wooden beams to old corrugated iron roof beneath. New guttering. Roof painted with three coats of special heat resisting paint. One new pump and new piping throughout leading to cisterns and tanks.42

Expansion of the Legation Site

In early 1921, Blake had discussed the purchase of an adjoining property by Mr. David S. Bergel of Tangier at a “price much in excess of its real value” to prevent the construction of a new building from “obscuring the windows of the principal offices” of the Tangier American Legation. This property was the Theatre Parcel, the present-day main courtyard and adjacent rooms. The State Department authorized Blake to issue to Mr. Bergel “a certificate as American Protégé for Signal Services” in recognition for purchasing the adjacent property to protect the daylight and ventilation of the Legation.43

42 Voucher from Abdeslam Bekkeri dated February 28, 1922, RG 84, Volume 171. A further description is also provided by Maxwell Blake, letter of February 1, 1922, RG 84, Volume 171.
43 Letter from Maxwell Blake, November 5, 1921, RG 84, Volume 168.
In his attempt to advocate for additional funds for the repair of the Legation, Blake indicated that “a wealthy native and a prosperous British merchant have acquired old native properties, contiguous to the American Diplomatic Agency.”  

Shortly after the completion of the 1921–1922 work, Blake left Tangier and was replaced as consul by Joseph M. Denning. Based on the Blake’s description, the 1922 plan was developed.

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44 Maxwell Blake, letter of February 1, 1922, RG 84, Volume 171.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1922
NOT TO SCALE

THIRD FLOOR PLAN, 1922
NOT TO SCALE
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

In the 1922–1923 fiscal years, Congress appropriated $14,435 for the additions to the building that Blake had suggested.\(^{45}\) In 1923, Denning proceeded to locate supplies of building materials; except for sand, stone, and cement, all materials needed to be purchased in Casablanca or Barcelona and shipped to Tangier.\(^{46}\) On October 27, 1923, the State Department sent a telegram suspending the use of the appropriation and putting the proposed project on hold.\(^{47}\) No explanation for the delay was provided in the documentary sources.

**Renovation and Expansion, 1926–1931**

In 1925, Blake returned to Tangier and found the Legation building much as he had left it after the repair work of 1921–1922. In 1926, Blake reported that the whole building was used as offices for the consulate and that residences were being rented in separate buildings.\(^{48}\)

The State Department delay was lifted and over the next five years, Blake implemented the additions he had proposed in 1921 as well as a large expansion of the building and grounds on the east side of the road. A February 23, 1923, memorandum makes it clear that the previous building on Theatre Parcel was a one-story building with a rooftop terrace, similar to the existing classroom space, and that the main reception room already had window openings overlooking this terrace before the property was acquired. Bergel’s purchase of the Theatre Parcel protected the view from the main reception room from a new building being constructed. As a result of financial trouble later experienced by Mr. Bergel, Abd-El-Kader and Abdelselam (sons of a naturalized American citizen Hadj Nassar) purchase the Theatre Parcel from Bergel and donated it to the United States Government on August 18, 1927.\(^{49}\) Blake recommended that “in recognition of their services to the Government in the above direction” that Blake be authorized to issue the brothers “certificated as American Protégés for Signal Services Rendered.”\(^{50}\)

The donated building on the Theatre Parcel was renovated to create the main courtyard, ground floor offices, roof terraces, and the alcove.\(^{51}\) Based on the Blake’s description, the 1928 plan was developed.

\(^{45}\) Maxwell Blake Letter dated September 9, 1922, RG 84 Volume 171.
\(^{46}\) Letter October 5, 1923, RG 84, Volume 174.
\(^{47}\) Telegram to Blake, RG 84, Volume 174.
\(^{49}\) Deed in OBO Archives, Washington, D.C.
\(^{50}\) Letter from Maxwell Blake, November 5, 1921, RG 84, Volume 168.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
By January 17, 1930, the southward and upward additions to the original Legation had been largely completed, and correspondence indicates that Blake was residing in the consulate.\textsuperscript{52}

The last portion of the building to be constructed by Blake was the Pavillon Arabe. On August 5, 1930, Blake approved Contract No. S35 fa-7 with local builder Maalem Abdeslam Bokkori for the renovation of the former “Sarsar House” to create the present-day Pavillon Arabe, for $8,500. The project had been proposed by Blake in July 1929 and approved by the U.S. Department of State in July 1930.\textsuperscript{53}

The work progressed rapidly in the fall of 1930, and by November Blake was able to report:

\ldots a few weeks delay \ldots for the completion of the works \ldots [due to difficulties obtaining] \ldots the native tiles employed for porch covers and window shelters. \ldots The work is however proceeding satisfactorily in all other respects, and the deficiency above referred to is in no way impeding the execution of the interior work of joiners, plumbers and electricians. Moreover, the building is now completely covered and protected from the eventual rainfall.\textsuperscript{54}

The Tangier American Legation, as completed by early 1931, was described and illustrated in an article by Honor M. Bigelow in the \textit{American Foreign Service Journal} in October 1932. Ms. Bigelow described the building and the recent renovations:

> From an architectural standpoint the American Legation in Morocco is unquestionably one of the most noteworthy of the group of buildings erected in recent years under the Government’s program for the construction of offices and residence for its representatives in foreign countries. \ldots With a sum of twenty-two thousand dollars which Congress appropriated in 1926 the original building was completely transformed and new offices and an attractive entrance corridor of Moorish design and a formal open patio were added. In 1927, an adjoining piece of property was acquired and an archives room, a reading room and a balustraded terrace, connected with the second floor reception room of the Legation, were built. Still another plot was acquired in the following year and, in place of an old Moorish house in a state of ruin and decay, a second patio and additional terraces and guest-suite were added. The whole group of buildings forms a very compact unit lying on both sides of, and over, a narrow street not more than six or seven feet wide. The part built over the street is carried on a series of picturesque Moorish arches extending above the thoroughfare for a distance of about 45 feet. \ldots

> [The work] has made excellent use of local building materials and native workmen skilled in executing the traditional features of Moorish architecture. Clad in long white ‘djellaba,’ yellow slippers and red fezzes, they made a fascinating picture laying tiles with meticulous precision, painting intricate designs on doors and window shutters, and cutting geometric patterns on fragrant cedarwood from the Riff mountains.

> The pleasant impression which the visitor gains on his approach to the Legation through the narrow street is enhanced many fold as he enters the patio from the main entrance, and he glimpses the graceful fountain from Fez, the beautiful Spanish grills in wrought-iron which bar the windows and the brilliant blue and yellow borders of the casements, here and there a touch of vermilion harmonizing with the red leaves of the ‘hojas de colores,’ potted about the base of the fountain.

> Leaving the patio and the comfortable and business-like offices on the ground floor one can mount to the second floor, which is used entirely for residential purposes, by one of two flights of steps tiled in lustrious brown-glazed bricks from Seville, Spain. Eighteenth-century Moorish lanterns illuminate the passage by night and shed a quiet light on a bewitching madonna in her shadowed niche.

> The furnishings of the reception rooms represent years of experienced effort in accumulating treasures from Spain and England and the result is an achievement in architectural design and unity. The soft green walls and yellow damask curtains of the main reception room make a harmonious background for the antique

\textsuperscript{52} Letter from Maxwell Blake to Secretary of State, January 17, 1930, RG84, Volume 207.
\textsuperscript{53} Letter from Maxwell Blake to General Accounting Office, August 19, 1930, RG84, Volume 207.
\textsuperscript{54} Letter from Maxwell Blake, November 26, 1930, RG84, Volume 207.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

Spanish chairs and divans upholstered in red and green brocades dimmed into a mellowness of tone that only age can affect.

Wide-arched doors lead from the living room to a balcony overlooking a second patio and the additional quarters, which have just been completed. While the south patio has a formal dignity in keeping with its use as a sober but decorative entrance to the chancery of the Legation, the larger, more open, north patio has a delightful air of informality. Softly bathed in light and sun, and roofed by sky it gives one an impression of being an out-of-doors living room, with its colored canvas chairs and umbrellaed tables suggesting pleasant hours with books and congenial company. Potted orange trees and hibiscus, geraniums and bougainvillaea vie in clearness of color with the multicolored Moorish doors and shutters which screen the entrance into the guest suite overlooking the patio.

The whole is a charming example of the blending of the Moorish and Spanish traditions of architecture in a setting which has done much to inspire the selection of characteristic elements from each.55

Based on the description, the 1931 plan was developed.

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55 Honor M. Bigelow, “American Legation at Tangier, Morocco” American Foreign Service Journal IX, no. 10 (October 1932), 376–379.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

FIRST FLOOR PLAN, 1931-1936
NOT TO SCALE

SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1931-1936
NOT TO SCALE
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

During the 1930s, the Legation in Tangier gained prominence as center to monitor events during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). During this period, the number of employees from the State Department and Navy and Army increased dramatically. The Legation was under the responsibility of the Diplomatic Agency in Tangiers as well as the Consul General. During this period, only maintenance was performed and the footprint of the Legation was not altered.

In 1936, Captain H. M. Underwood, conducted an assessment of the Legation. His report included sketch plans of the building. He observed water damage as a result of roof leaks and leaks from adjacent buildings. Damage included cracking and dampness to the plaster and stucco from the use of chloride contaminated sea sand. He identifies the use of lime wash as a typical coating for the stucco and interior plaster, but he suggests that the required annual maintenance and reapplication has not occurred. The walls in the living quarters had been painted with an oil-based paint. The west facing parapets and walls and portions of the roof and terraces had been coated with tar. The exterior wood work was treated with wax or solignum which require reapplication. The roof over the reception room was corrugated metal.

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56 The United States Legation Building Tangier, Morocco May 1936 by J. M. Underwood. RG 84 Entry 2977, Box 1, 1936.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

Underwood also observed that electrical wiring embedded within the masonry walls had failed due to the moisture in the walls; therefore, he recommended that electrical conduits remain surface mounted. He noted that the reception and living rooms both had concealed conduit. He noted that the plumbing fixtures were antiquated and that the city provided water. He identified a cistern beneath the kitchen. There was no central heating but rather coal fireplaces in the bedrooms and offices.

He also indicates many of the decorative elements, some of which remain today, including antique Spanish tiles, antique Spanish doors, antique wrought iron grills, curved marble mantels, sculptured stone and marble fountains, wrought iron light fixtures, and crystal chandeliers; many of these items were provided as gifts by Blake.

Underwood recommended purchasing the adjacent house to the south (the present-day Research Library) for expansion of the Legation. Based on Underwood’s observations, recommendations, and the current conditions, maintenance and repairs completed during the 1930s appear to have included repairs to the roofs, construction of the fireplace in present-day room 315, and repainting and plaster repairs.

Based on Underwood’s report the 1941 Plans were developed.

*Figure II-11, left: View from the dining room across the street terrace to the Pavillon Arabe, 1932. The first floor porch is open to the courtyard. Figure II-12, right: View of the Pavillon Arabe, 1932. The terrace is paved, there are planter sconces to either side of the door, and the shield is painted monochromatically. Source: Honor M. Bigelow, “American Legation at Tangier, Morocco” American Foreign Service Journal IX, no. 10 (October 1932), 376–379.*
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

Figure II-13. View of the reception room, 1932. There are sconces at either side of the fireplace. The bottom edge of the chandelier is also visible at the top of the photograph. The plaster walls are painted a slightly darker color than the wood trim, which is painted white. Source: Honor M. Bigelow, “American Legation at Tangier, Morocco” American Foreign Service Journal IX, no. 10 (October 1932), 376–379.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1941
NOT TO SCALE
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

FOURTH FLOOR PLAN, 1941
NOT TO SCALE
Tangier American Legation, 1941–1961

In 1940, Cordell Hull, Secretary of State (1933-1944), approved the purchase of the adjacent house (now the Research Library). The house was purchased in early 1941 for $2,877. Blake intended a remodeling project which would have relocated the kitchen to the second floor of the Research Library and established connections on each level between the Research Library and the Blake Addition to the Legation. Blake estimated the cost for the modifications at $8,000 to $12,000. By the time of the purchase, available funds were limited, and the Legation had become overcrowded with offices. A total of $3,500 was authorized for minor alterations to convert the house into offices. Architect J. Bensauli prepared the design and the contract was awarded to Mahalem Bakouri, and construction was intended to last three weeks.

The work to adapt the Research Library for office use included painting the kitchen and patio; applying lime wash to the exterior walls, pantry walls, and the walls of the offices; painting all iron pipes and balconies; coating the western walls with tar; applying oil to the wood work; painting the interior corridor walls with green oil paint and the ceilings white; removing masonry walls; enlarging window openings and installing new window sashes; installing new doors connecting the building with the Legation; restoring cement tile flooring; renovating the roof terrace; replacing the balustrade at the upper floor with a partial-height masonry wall; repairing wood work; installing new hardware for doors and windows; installing new entrance doors; and installing new electrical systems.

With the involvement of the United States in World War II, starting around 1941 the Legation also housed military intelligence personnel of what would become the Office of Strategic Services (O.S.S.), in addition to the diplomatic staff. In 1942, an inspection by Mr. Dunn, described as an electrician, seemed principally concerned with security, possible phone taps, and other electronic listening devices indicating the importance of the Legation to the O.S.S. and Allied military operations in North Africa. He recommended purchasing additional property so that the Legation reached the edge of the city walls to ensure secrecy, in addition to twice daily inspection for wires and listening devices. He provided the following plan to indicate his recommended expansion plans.

![Figure II-14. Sketch plan of the Legation and environs, 1942. Source: Report on Legation by Mr. Dunn, RG84, Entry 2977, CDF 124.1, 1942, Box 48. National Archives, College Park, Maryland.](image)

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57 Letter from Cordell Hull, RG 84, Entry 2977, Box 41.
58 Ibid.
59 Report on Legation by Mr. Dunn, RG84, Entry 2977, Box 48.
Hull authorized leasing rooms in adjacent buildings on October 1, 1942, likely in the building identified as A on the 1942 plan and adjacent to Mr. Child’s office, to provide protection against listening devices. To create additional office space, two additional rooms, present-day rooms 386 and 387, were designed by J. Benauuli and constructed by Maslem Abdeslan Bukoru for $611 on the third floor roof terrace of the Research Library portion of the Legation.\(^6\)

Based on this evidence the 1945 plans were developed.

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\(^6\) Drawings and contract, circa 1941. RG 84 Entry 2977, Box 48.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1945
NOT TO SCALE
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

By 1946, the Legation remained overcrowded and the United States was looking for new property. Additional property was rented for storage between 1943 and 1947. In 1947, there were reportedly thirty people working within the Legation. In addition to being cramped, there was concern about the neighborhood, sanitation, and security within the current building. By 1948, an inspector for the State Department, James B. Moose, recommended relocating the diplomatic mission to Rabat. Repairs and alterations circa 1948 included plaster repairs and repainting, converting the covered roof terrace of the Pavillon Arabe to additional offices (the location of present-day guest suite rooms 362 through 364), and repairing a collapsed ceiling in the residence.

In 1953, a new building was approved for the Tangier Legation, although no site had been selected. In 1956 with Moroccan independence, the United States established an embassy in Rabat. While the United States maintained a presence in Tangiers as a consulate, this decision marked the declining importance of Tangiers for diplomacy in Morocco. A new office building and residence on one and half acres was constructed in Tangiers between 1958 and 1961 at a cost of $593,000. After completion, the diplomatic staff moved to the new building.

Based on this evidence the 1950s plan was developed.

Figure II-17. Plot map of location of new building circa 1958.
Source: National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

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61 In a letter to Colonel Allen W. Jacobs, Director for Europe of Foreign Building Office Paris dated September 24, 1947 Edwin A. Plitt, RG 59, Entry 2977, Box 104.
62 Ibid.
63 Correspondence, 1953, RG 59, Central Decimal File 1950-54.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1950s
NOT TO SCALE
Tangier American Legation Museum

From 1961 to 1973, the building was occupied by the State Department and Peace Corps as a language school. Some renovation work was apparently implemented during this period, most notably renovations to create additional bathrooms in the building.

By November 1975, Charles Peterson reported that the building was empty. It was at this time that former State Department personnel began to take an interest in the old building as a museum, and in 1976, the U.S. Department of State leased the building to the Tangier American Legation Museum Society (TALMS). TALMS is a non-governmental non-profit organization organized circa 1976 that has leased the Legation to engage in educational and research activities related to United States Moroccan relationships, as well as maintaining a museum at the Legation to exhibit documents and artifacts related to the long standing relationship of Morocco and the United States. TALMS has recently been renamed the Tangier American Legation Institute for Moroccan Studies (TALIM).

Through the winter of 1975–1976, general repair work including plastering and painting was implemented at the building. In 1976, the building was opened to the public as a museum.

In 1980, the consulate in Tangiers (then housed in the 1961 building) was proposed for closure, but the decision was reversed, possibly because Voice of America occupied a portion of the office building. The historical significance of the Tangier American Legation building was recognized when the property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on January 8, 1981, and designated a National Historic Landmark on December 17, 1982. The decision to so designate a property located abroad was controversial, but it was determined that National Register listing was valid, since the legation building remains the sovereign property of the United States. Ultimately, the State Department closed its consulate in Tangiers in 1988.

In August 1991, Thor Kuniholm became the new resident director of the museum. Based on interviews with Mr. Kuniholm and photo albums available at the Legation, a variety repairs and modifications were implemented between 1991 and 2010. It is not clear from the documentation from what source funding was obtained or to what degree the State Department Bureau of Overseas Building Operations had input on the design and implementation for any particular project. Aside from the construction of the Minzah Room in 1999, this work is not documented by drawings or specifications.

A new clay tile roof was installed over room 200 and new waterproofing and paving tiles were installed at roof terraces 381, 405, and 415 in 1992. The roof replacement work was paid for, at least in part, by the U.S. Department of State. Related to this work, three large rafters beneath the roof of the reception room (room 200) were repaired and the plaster ceiling in room 200 was replaced in 1993.

The fourth floor apartment, formerly the servants’ quarters and now a guest suite, was renovated in 1993; this included rooms 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, and 411. In 1994, a leaking drain pipe from the toilet in the conservatory (room 302) was replaced, and plaster at masonry walls below this drain pipe (the north wall of entrance hall 116) was removed and replaced. Also in 1994, new waterproofing and new paving tiles were installed at roof terrace 361 of the Pavillon Arabe.

Extensive repair work was implemented in 1996, including repair and replacement of windows throughout the building, installation of new roofing over the guest apartment (the area of present-day room 500 and terrace 501), and replacing or repairing water-damaged plaster in rooms 112, 303, 406, 408

67 Lease agreement, OBO Archives, Washington, D.C.
or 409, 411, and 414. At ground level, new tile paving was installed in service courtyard 111 and on the roof of rooms 109, 110, 113. New water pipes were installed in the main courtyard 160. The next year (1997), the fountain in the main courtyard 160 was repaired.

In 1999, the fifth floor room (Minzah Room) was constructed on the roof of the building, including a new exterior staircase up from roof terrace 415. Other repairs implemented at uncertain dates between 1991 and 2010 and documented only by written notes provided by Mr. Kuniholm and/or by photo albums at the Legation include: repair and application of a stucco sealer to all exterior surfaces; renovation of the kitchen in the Director’s apartment (room 312); renovation of the main kitchen (room 115); renovation of nine bathrooms (rooms 158, 264, 380, 208, 201A, 308, 304, 364, and 411); replacement of the ceiling in the Joseph Verner Reed Library (room 186); replacement of the staircase in the Research Library from the ground floor up to second floor; construction of two aboveground water reservoirs in the service courtyard, room 111; renovation of the guest apartment over the Pavillon Arabe (rooms 362, 363, 364); construction of a new storage room at the third floor roof terrace of the Research Library (room 385); replacement of the skylight in the Research Library (roof terrace 381); re-tiling of the outdoor terrace and stairway (terraces and alcove 255, 256, 258); plaster repair to the walls in courtyard 102, service courtyard (room 111), room 303 (west wall), room 307 (north wall), and terrace 403; installation of a new electrical fuse box panels and some electrical wiring; refinishing of the dining room floor; repair of the east party wall at the Pavillon Arabe; and plumbing repairs in room 263.

The private reports and notes were provided to the team while on site in Tangiers at the legation by Thor H. Kuniholm. They are in possession of the Tangier American Legation Museum Society.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

Figure II-21, left. Window replacement in 1996. Figure II-22, right. Renovation to fourth floor guest apartment showing plaster replacement and new plumbing in 1993. Source: Collection of Tangier American Legation Museum Society, Tangier, Morocco.

Figure II-23, left. Kitchen prior to renovation in 1996. Figure II-24, right. Kitchen during 1996 renovation. Source: Collection of Tangier American Legation Museum Society, Tangier, Morocco.

Figure II-25, left. Replacement of broken pipe revealing previously bricked in window and rubble masonry wall at the north wall Room 116 in 1994. Figure II-26, right. Replacement of exterior stucco circa 1990s. Source: Collection of Tangier American Legation Museum Society, Tangier, Morocco.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

Architectural Context

The Legation is located in the quarter known as Haoumat Béni-Ider of the old walled city of Tangier, the medina. This quarter is situated in the part of the medina south of the Rue des Siaghines (Silversmith’s Street) and is predominantly composed of buildings that are at least 60 years old. Much of the quarter developed only as the foreign population of Tangier increased. It is the last of the quarters in the medina to be built up. 70

Compared to other portions of the medina, the streets of Béni-Ider are slightly wider (although still far narrower than the streets of the contemporary city). In this quarter, buildings tend to be taller and based on design precedents imported from Europe. The western portion of Béni-Ider was formerly the mellah, the Jewish quarter. The native Jewish population has emigrated in recent decades, to be replaced by Moroccan Muslims. Former synagogues still exist in the quarter, along with mosques and Christian churches. The main commercial street within the quarter is the Rue Touahine, which includes goldsmiths, hotels and lodging houses, restaurants, and artisanal shops. 71 The quarter had a density of about 670 inhabitants per hectare as of 1994 (equivalent to approximately 270 inhabitants per acre, or more than twice the average density of Manhattan), about the same as the average for the medina as a whole. The population of the medina, just over 17,000 in 1994, is a small fraction of the more 500,000 inhabitants of

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71 Ibid., 8.
II. Architectural and Historical Context and Significance

The bare walls are composed of rubble masonry and clay tile masonry walls. Figure II-29, left. Replacement of exterior stucco in Service courtyard 111 circa 1996. The bare walls are composed of rubble masonry and clay tile masonry walls. Figure II-30, right. New shutters circa 1990s. Source: Collection of Tangier American Legation Museum Society, Tangier, Morocco.

contemporary Tangier. This compares to an estimated population of 5,000 for Tangier at the start of the twentieth century.\(^{72}\)

Within the Béni-Ider quarter, the Spanish influence is apparent in the larger proportion of three or four story buildings. In many cases, these buildings were created by the renovation of older structures.\(^{73}\)

The private buildings of the Tangier medina are generally built on parcels of only 20 to 100 square meters. Historically, larger parcels were common, but traditional customs of inheritance led to the subdivision of parcels into smaller fragments.\(^{74}\)

The irregular and interconnected forms of many of the buildings are explained by repeated modifications to the structures over time. Even so, many buildings have only one or two levels above the ground floor. The southern portions of the medina, where artisanal and commercial activities were concentrated, have newer, higher buildings, with three or even four levels (above the ground floor) common. There is a long tradition of building maintenance in the medinas of Moroccan cities, which has preserved their unique character over time. However, at the present time, a certain amount of neglect is apparent in the Tangier medina. This is due in part to a change in the population, as owner-occupants are replaced by new arrivals, former rural dwellers, who rent the buildings. It is estimated that by the year 2000, more than 70

\(^{72}\) Ibid., 14.
\(^{73}\) Ibid., 12.
\(^{74}\) Ibid., 8.
percent of the households in the medina did not own their residence. The lack of maintenance is most obvious at exterior walls and party walls, where ownership is sometimes unclear.\textsuperscript{75}

A variety of traditional house-types have been identified in the medina, distinguished by their internal arrangement as well as their height. In all traditional house types, the use of roof surfaces as paved terraces is common. Type I houses generally have only the ground floor, or a ground floor plus a partial first floor, with narrow, rectangular rooms organized around a central courtyard. Type II houses have at least two full levels. Again, rooms are commonly arranged as narrow, rectangular spaces around a central courtyard or atrium. The stairwell is usually adjacent to or incorporated into the courtyard or atrium space. For these first two types, the houses typically have few or no windows overlooking the street or public spaces; rather, window openings face into internal courtyards or adjacent spaces with skylights. Type III houses have a different arrangement, with windows overlooking at least one street front; rooms at each level are accessed from an internal stair hall.\textsuperscript{76} These different types may reflect social or religious differences, with more enclosed house types associated with traditional Muslim architecture and the more open Type III houses associated with the Jewish residents of the city.

Using this terminology, it is clear that the house granted to Mullowny in 1821 by the sultan would be classified as Type I, since it consisted of only the ground floor, with rooms arranged around an open courtyard. Like many of the buildings in the quarter, the Legation was extensively renovated in the twentieth century. The former house adjacent to the Legation, the present-day research library, provides an example of the Type II house, with multiple levels of rooms arranged around an internal atrium covered by a skylight and with an accessible roof terrace.

The chief physical problems noted in buildings throughout the medina relate to moisture from the damp climate, chlorides, the use of modern inappropriate building materials, and building practices. Moisture problems relate to three different issues. Moisture can come from above, that is, infiltration of rain water through defective roof coverings, rooftop terrace paving, and other architectural details; or moisture can come from below, that is, rising damp, a capillary transfer of ground water upward within masonry walls. Secondly, at the start of the twentieth century, private wells existed within many houses; today, many of these wells have been abandoned without being drained, resulting in increased moisture within the walls. Lastly, in spaces without adequate ventilation, the walls do not have the opportunity to breathe, and the moisture is retained within the walls.\textsuperscript{77} Tangiers is a coastal environment and sea sand is used for many building applications such as stucco and mortar. The chloride contaminated sand is hygroscopic which contributes to the dampness of the building materials. Also, the cyclic drying of salt-saturated materials creates cyclic salt crystallization damage. The use of modern materials such as film forming paints and dense portland cement based stuccos also trap water within the masonry walls. These issues are apparent in the Legation. Moisture infiltration from roof terraces, flashings, and walls is apparent, as well as rising damp at ground floor walls. An abandoned below-grade cistern under the service corridor and kitchen is partially filled with water. The configuration of the building and the density of the urban environment means that many areas do not receive adequate ventilation and have high indoor humidity. The masonry materials are exposed to chlorides which create limited durability of repairs and materials. The use of modern materials adjacent to traditional materials creates an incompatibility that contributes to the observed deterioration.

Finally, traditional building practices, such as stucco coated by limewashes, require frequent maintenance but are indefinitely renewable, contrary to modern expectations and reliance on materials and systems that require little maintenance but have a finite life expectancy leading to replacement. The ongoing history of repair of the Tangier American Legation shows the frustration of American residents and expectation that large-scale interventions could “solve” the problems related to the humid climate of Tangier. For brief periods, such as during the residency of Maxwell Blake during the 1920s and 1930s, the use of

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 9.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 10–11.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 10–11.
traditional techniques such as limewash repeated on an annual basis appear to have kept the building in habitable condition. Due to the often transient nature of the diplomatic occupants of the building, the tendency is to prefer “solutions” that do not require annual maintenance, even when these more invasive approaches are detrimental to the building in the long term. Relying instead on traditional, maintenance-intensive but indefinitely repeatable approaches is more likely to sustain the building over time.

**Historical Significance and Integrity**

The historical significance of the building is summarized in the National Register nomination form prepared in 1980:

The American Legation building is a structure of architectural, diplomatic and military significance integrally associated with American-Moroccan relations for almost 160 years. The building is the first property ever acquired abroad by the U.S. Government and for 140 years housed the United States Consular offices in Tangier, the longest period any building abroad has ever been occupied as a diplomatic or consular post. Architecturally, the Legation building is significant for the harmonious blending of the Moorish and Spanish traditions of architecture in a setting which has done much to inspire the selection of each. The result, as described by Miss Honor M. Bigelow, has been "perhaps the most artistic and interesting structure in the city of Tangier.” Charles Peterson commented that, “The whole architectural effect was a witness to the contemporary American taste called the ‘Mediterranean Revival’ . . . . It reached twin zeniths at the Boca Raton of Addison Mizner (1892–1933) and the San Simeon of William Randolph Hearst.”

The Tangier American Legation is significant under National Register Criteria A and C. As the official residence and office of the United States representative to Morocco from the 1820s to the 1960s, the Legation was the setting of diplomatic activity for the longstanding and friendly relationship between the United States and Morocco. Its role in the O.S.S during and after World War II also shows its importance in international politics and the military campaigns in North Africa. Its architectural design, which dates to the renovations of 1921–1931 undertaken by Maxwell Blake and additions in 1941–1942, blends Moroccan and European styles to form a picturesque setting for diplomatic functions. Other foreign powers abandoned the medina in the early twentieth century and built European-style buildings in the newer portions of the city. The decision to retain the original Legation in the old walled city and to expand it to meet twentieth century needs resulted in a unique building. A distinctive aspect of the design is the concentration of Moroccan-themed elements at the more public interior and exterior spaces; private spaces, such as the third floor apartment, use typical early twentieth century European stylistic details and finishes. The Pavillon Arabe, added to the Legation in 1930–1931 and used as guest quarters, has the most elaborate interior and exterior decoration. The design is also significant for its incorporation of salvaged architectural elements, some from Spain and others from Morocco. These salvaged centuries-old fragments are combined with decorative elements newly fabricated by traditional craftsman in the early twentieth century.

**Period of Significance**

The National Register nomination defines the period of significance broadly, as relating to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Based on the research performed for this report, the period of historical significance for the building is defined as extending from 1821 to 1961, the period during which it was actively used by the U.S. Department of State for diplomatic purposes. Within this overall period of historical significance, the substantial architectural design and construction efforts that established the existing character of the building occurred during the years 1921–1922, 1926–1931, and 1941–1942. Therefore, the materials and finishes of the building as they existed in 1942 define the predominant preserved character of the building and should form the basis of future rehabilitation work.

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Assessment of Integrity

Assessment of integrity is based on an evaluation of the existence and condition of the physical features which date to a property’s period of significance, taking into consideration the degree to which the individual qualities of integrity are present. The seven aspects of integrity are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, as defined in the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.79

For designation as a National Historic Landmark, a property must possess these aspects to a high degree. The property must retain the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historical significance. The essential physical features are those features that define both why a property is significant and when it was significant.

The primary historical significance of the Tangier American Legation is related to its use as a diplomatic mission by the United States in the Kingdom of Morocco. The interior and exterior architectural character of the building as completed in 1942, following the renovations that ensured its continued use for diplomatic purposes into the middle of the twentieth century, comprise the physical features that convey this significance. The discussion below considers each of the seven aspects of integrity as they relate to the Tangier American Legation.

Integrity of Location

The Legation retains a high degree of integrity of location in relationship to its site. The building location is unchanged since 1942.

Integrity of Design

The Legation retains a high degree of integrity of design, considering the design as it was completed in 1942. Few substantive design alterations to the structure have been implemented since 1942. Where these changes have occurred, they have generally respected the spatial design and architectural character established by the 1920s and 1930s construction. The most significant design change since 1942 was the 1999 addition of the Minzah room to the top of the structure. This addition is slightly visible from the primary exterior spaces of the building around the main courtyard and detracts some degree from the integrity of design. Other smaller additions, such as the south storage room at the research library, are not visible from primary public interior or exterior spaces and therefore do not detract from the integrity of design of the building.

Integrity of Setting

The Legation retains a high degree of integrity of setting. The dense urban context of this quarter of the old city of Tangier is generally unchanged, although some adjacent buildings have been extended upward in recent decades. The access to the Legation site via the early twentieth century gate in the city walls facing Rue du Portugal is also essentially unchanged since 1942.

Integrity of Materials and Workmanship

The Legation retains a high degree of integrity of materials and workmanship. Key structural elements and architectural finishes dating to the period of significance are intact, such as masonry bearing walls; clay tile roofing; wood, steel, and masonry floor structures; some wood door and windows; decoratively carved wood elements; ceramic tile and cement tile finishes; wood flooring; decorative plaster elements; wrought iron grilles; and fireplace surrounds. Given the frequent maintenance cycles required by the Tangier climate, some elements, in particular roof and terrace surfaces as well as large areas of the wall finishes including the coatings, exterior stucco and plaster interior wall finishes, have been repeatedly replaced since the period of significance. However, this replacement does not detract significantly from

79 National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, 44–45.

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the integrity of materials and workmanship, as ongoing plaster replacement and roofing repair is an expected local construction practice. In some situations, however, the repairs have been made with unsympathetic modern materials. In some rooms of the building, such as kitchens and bathrooms, previous finishes and fixtures have been replaced to accommodate continuing present-day use of the building. Other elements, such as wood windows and wood shutters, have been replaced in kind with new replica elements to address deterioration of original materials.

**Integrity of Feeling**

The Legation retains a high degree of integrity of feeling. In spite of some changes to the interior and exterior of the building, the feeling of the building remains a blending of Western and Moroccan styles. Its character as a public and institutional yet enclosed and self-contained building in the dense city survives from the period of significance.

**Integrity of Association**

The Legation is significant primarily for its association with the diplomatic mission of the United States to Morocco. The U.S. Department of State retains ownership of the building. Its present-day use as a cultural center commemorating and preserving the history of United States-Moroccan relations provides for a high degree of integrity of association.