





U. S. Treasury Building

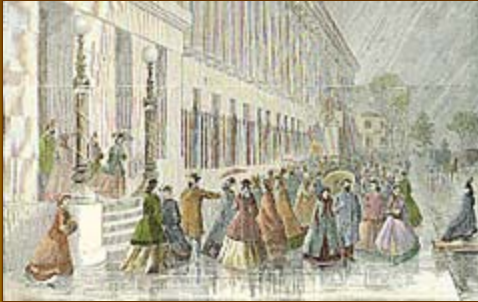


Achieving a Balance:

The Stewardship of a
Historical Landmark
and its Collection



History



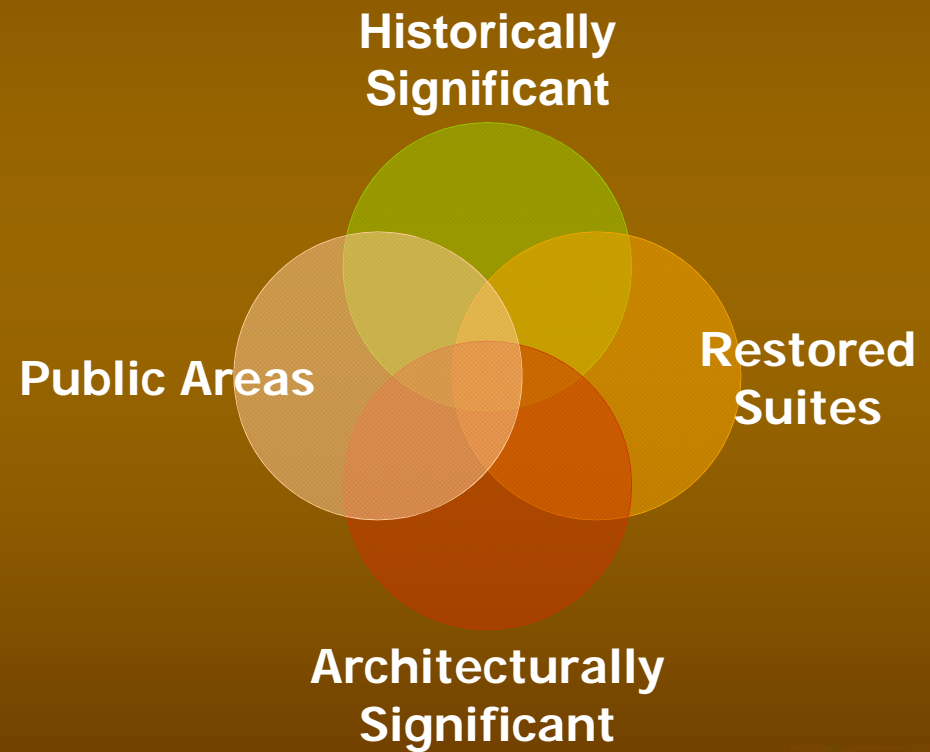
The first Treasury building, a Georgian style brick building used by the Department from 1800, was burnt to the ground by the British in 1814. The present building was constructed on the site of the original building between 1836-1869.

The earliest east and center wings were designed by Robert Mills, architect of the Washington Monument and the Patent Office building in Washington, DC. Later additions were designed by Thomas U. Walter, Ammi B. Young, Isaiah Rogers and Alfred B. Mullett.

The Treasury Building is the oldest departmental building in Washington and has had a great impact on the design of other government buildings.

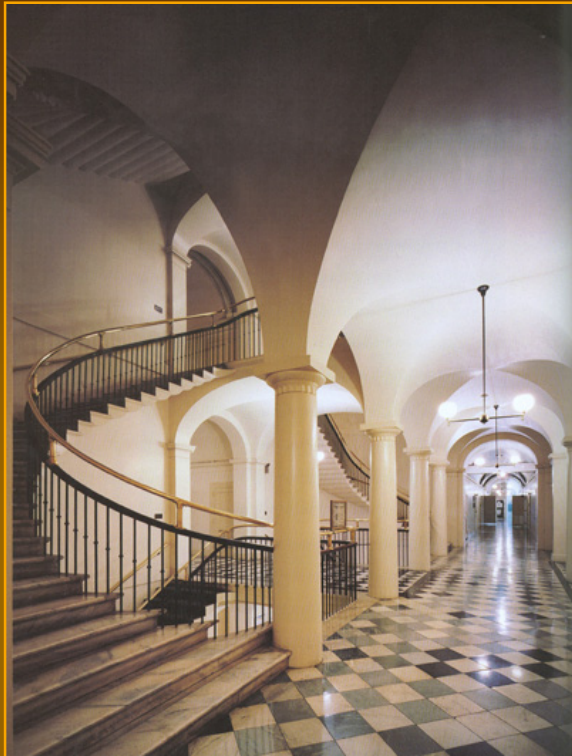


Treasury Historic Spaces



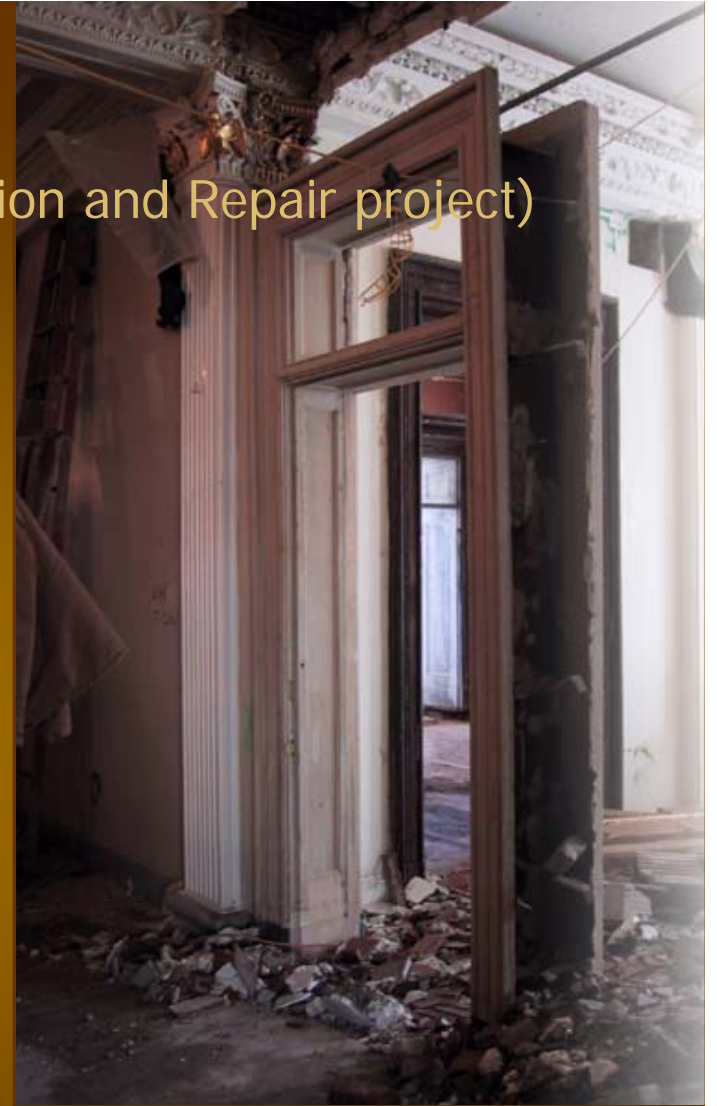
Adaptive Use

- Executive Offices
- Public Lobbies & Corridors
- Bureau Offices
- "Production" Spaces
- Additions and alterations



TBARR (Treasury & Annex Restoration and Repair project)

- Multi-year Project
- Congressional Authorization
- Comprehensive
- Utility Modernization
- Efficient use of space
- Improve work environment
- Restoration is a “companion” activity within the project



Collection

Architecture



TBARR (Treasury & Annex Restoration and Repair project)



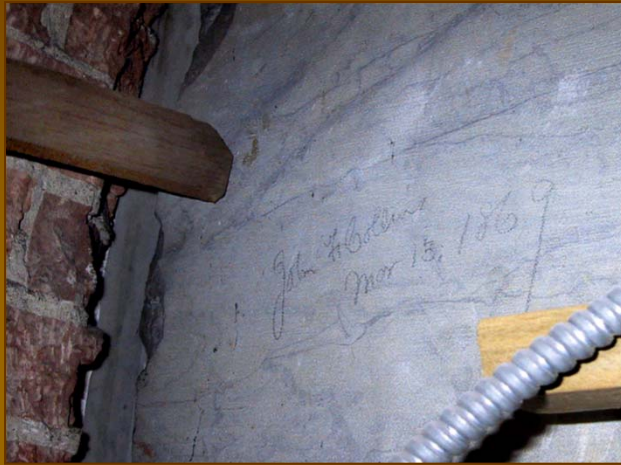
Which is more important, to preserve the maximum amount of historic materials from different periods with little context or to preserve the original intent, using restoration, even if it may require the loss of historic materials or the use of replacement materials?

Collection

Architecture



“Historic Fabric”



- 1869 signature on the inside of a marble panel.
- Original 19th century escutcheon hardware
- Sympathetic granite corner “Dutchman” repair

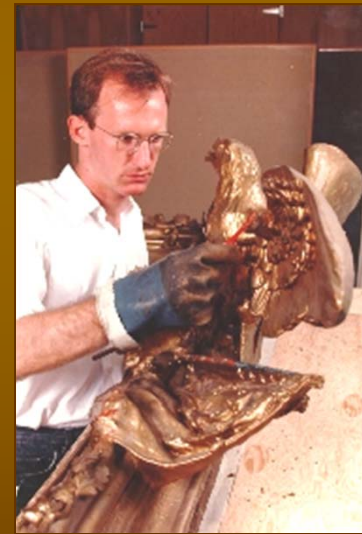
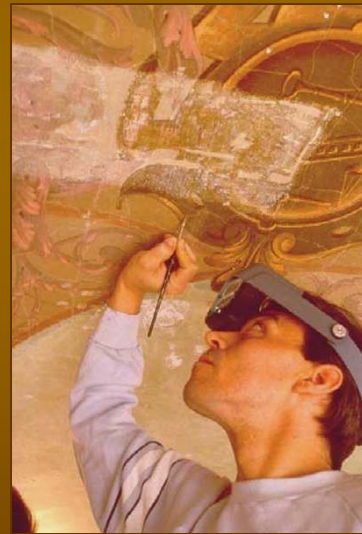
Collection

Architecture



“Historic Fabric”

There is a significant amount of original materials and finishes that remain in the Treasury building, often covered over with subsequent finishes and alterations.



Although there are often conflicts in presenting a cabinet level, landmark building to official visitors and the public, there is a strong commitment to retaining and documenting original, 19th century features and finishes.



Authenticity vs. Period Restoration



- Public spaces retain a significant amount of original materials with restored, period finishes.
- Significant offices have been restored to a particular period, and furnished with original or comparable period pieces.
- Select conference and reception rooms are recreated period rooms. They are not restorations of specific historic spaces.
- Multiple architects, and architectural periods create an interpretive challenge that often is at odds with current use and expectations.



The current restoration and modernization project is the first time that a single architectural team has worked on the entire Treasury Building comprehensively.



Restored Offices



Historic offices that were restored less than 15 years ago will be within the larger TBARR project. While items from the Collection can be removed, interior finishes will be extensively protected and monitored while work is being performed.



the COLLECTION

The Treasury Collection is one of the oldest and most intact collections of fine and decorative arts in the Executive branch of the United States government.

Many of the objects in the Collection continue to be used for their intended purpose and are exhibited in restored historic suites, reception and conference rooms as well as in offices.

- Paintings
- Decorative Art Objects
- Furniture
- Historical Artifacts
- Architecture

Over 65% of the paintings, objects, and furniture from the collection are in use at any given time.



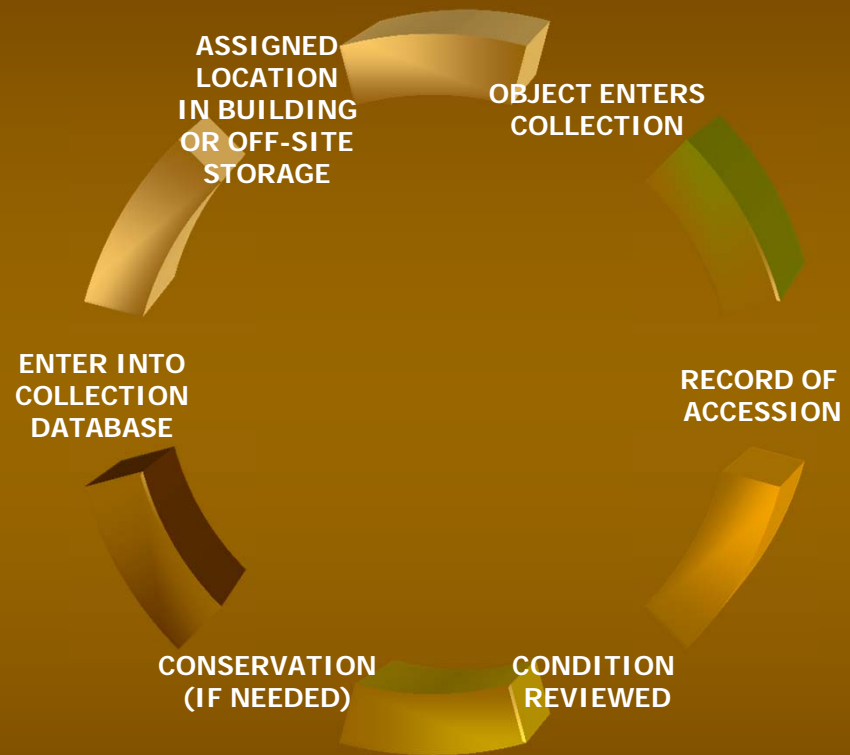
Collection Data



Accessioned Objects	3,525
Temporary Accessions	50
Loans	92
Other	188

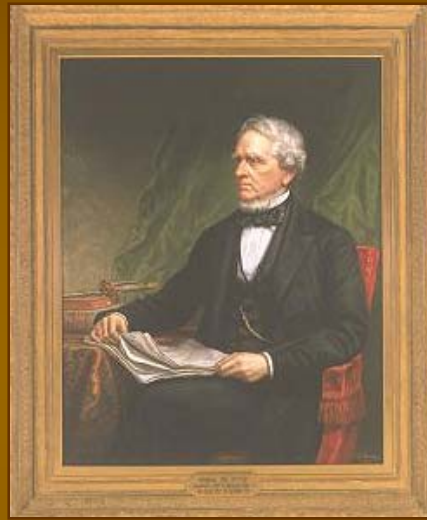
- Moves and inventories are correlated to administration changes.
- Temporary accessions have increased dramatically due to the building restoration and modernization project = increased off-site storage requirements.

Object Tracking



Once a part of the Collection, tracking the object is primarily a function of annual inventory reports, moves, and a repair/conservation history.

The Secretary's Portraits



- Every Secretary of the Treasury has a portrait.
- Portraits are only hung within the Treasury Building

After a roof fire in 1996, every portrait and frame on display was cleaned and conserved. The fire forced a reconsideration of emergency response requirements for the Collection.



Balancing care and use of the Collection



The Collection is used in the offices of Senior Treasury officials and selected conference and reception rooms.



Office of the Secretary of the Treasury



The Office of the Secretary of the Treasury is a combination of selected items from the Collection infused with furnishings distinct to the requests of each Secretary. Artwork is often selected and loaned from Washington, DC museums in addition to pieces from the Collection.





Office of the Secretary of the Treasury 1974



Office of the Secretary of the Treasury 1992



Office of the Secretary of the Treasury 1974

Interpretation of an Object



1970



(1974)

1989



2002

This chair was a part of the rediscovered Mint collection in 1969, and made its way to Washington, DC c.1970. The chair was covered in period practice upholstery. In the late 1980's with additional research, a lithograph of an interior office in Treasury of a similar chair was the basis for the upholstery and refinishing of the chair. In 2002, once the full set of chairs was acquired, historic documents relating to their original use at the S.F. Mint were able to guide a more appropriate upholstery and refinishing of the chairs.



Furniture from the S.F. Mint



Recently conserved chairs from the S.F. Mint



Additional objects being transferred from the Mint to the main Treasury Building.

The San Francisco Mint building was completed in 1874 by architect Alfred B. Mullett, 5 years after completing the north wing of the Treasury Building. Mullett designed many of the furniture pieces for the executive offices, and Mint records trace much of the furniture production back to J.B. Luchsinger, a furniture manufacturer in San Francisco.

Much of the furniture was in disrepair and out of use until 1969 when Mary Brooks the Miint Director found them in storage and had them restored. In 1994, the Mint building and the on-site museum suffered damage in an earthquake. Furniture was transferred to Washington, DC and in 1996 the Curator's Office at Treasury began accessioning excess pieces into the Collection. This process is continuing, and recent additions have completed the restoration of the original holdings of the Superintendents Office at the San Francisco Mint.



The CASH ROOM



The Cash Room was completed in 1869 as part of the north wing construction. Until 1976 it was open to the public as a banking room where government currencies and checks could be cashed or exchanged. During the early 1980's the space was restored and has been used as a ceremonial space since that time.



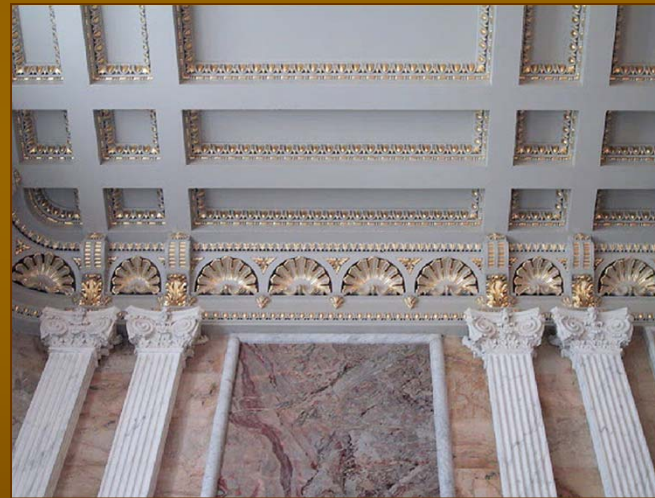
The CASH ROOM



The breadth of the previous restoration did not include the cleaning and repair of the ornamental brass balustrade, and the decorative brass screens at the doors. Additionally, the marble walls were inspected and minor repairs were made, and the plaster ceiling repairs, repaint and gilding were completed



The CASH ROOM



Paint analysis revealed a gray ceiling color that more appropriately coordinated with known historic events, and a signature behind a marble panel dated after the "initial" completion of the room for the Inaugural Ball for President Grant.



EXHIBITIONS



Exhibitions at the Treasury building display departmental and bureau artwork. In addition, topical presentations relating to historical figures, history, and artifacts of the building are displayed within the building for a 6-9 month period.



Education



Education is a process that takes place among the building users, new management executive, peers in the federal government, and with the general public.



Exhibitions on the Internet

HOME

Office of the Curator

HOME

Home

- Building Tours
- Virtual Tour
- Current Exhibit
- Treasury Collection
- Historic Structure Reports
- Current Restoration Project
- 1881 Drafting Studio
- Secretaries of the Treasury
- Treasury Historical Association


Welcome to the Office of the Curator






The mission of the Office of the Curator is to preserve the cultural resources of the Treasury Building and Treasury Annex for the enjoyment of the public, Treasury employees, and future generations. To that end, the Office provides:

- Preservation and technical guidance for the restoration and preservation of the Treasury Building and the Annex (National Historic Landmarks) in accordance with the

Portraits
WPA Art
Sculpture
Furniture
Graphics
Photographs
Architecture
HOME




Click on an image to view at a larger size with a description.
Sofa, 1875

Conference Table Desk Detail Table, 1870

Scroll down to continue reading next.



Overmantel Mirror

The first effort to "organize" a historic collection at the Treasury Department occurred between 1924-1927 when Assistant Secretary Charles Dewey surveyed the Treasury Building for antiques and artwork to exhibit in executive offices. The initial collection expanded as Treasury's bureaus outgrew and modernized their respective buildings and contributed their "antiques" to the older Treasury collection. Custom houses and U.S. Mint buildings were an especially rich source for antiques, providing furniture and obsolete office equipment from throughout the United States.

The Treasury Building, America's first modern office building, now preserves one of the finest and most extensively documented collection of 19th and early 20th-century office furniture in the United States. This richly diverse collection contains desks, bookcases, conference and utility tables, chairs, clocks, overmantel mirrors and office equipment. Many

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY OFFICE OF THE CURATOR

A MONUMENTAL BUILDING IN A "CITY OF MAGNIFICENT INTENTIONS"

Introduction

In 1842, the year it was completed, the grandeur of Treasury's East wing set the standard for the monumental architecture of government buildings in Washington, DC. Today, 160 years later, the current Treasury Building and Annex Repair and Restoration project (TBARR) represents the latest chapter in the legacy of the Treasury Building. The TBARR project remains committed to the preservation of the historic structure while preparing the structure to serve future generations.

In conjunction with TBARR's effort, this online exhibition examines the architectural significance of the Treasury building, the vision of its architect, Robert Mills, the modernity of his interiors, and the early stages of the Secretary of the Treasury and the office he worked in.

To enter the exhibit, please select a topic below:

- INTRODUCTION
- ROBERT MILLS
- MILLS IN WASHINGTON
- SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
- THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
- BREEK REVIVAL
- A SYMBOL OF POWER
- FIREPROOF CONSTRUCTION
- REACTION AND OPINION
- PLANNING'S INTERIOR SPACE

Introduction
The Treasury building was built in a time when America was burgeoning with economic growth, a nation seeking its place at the world.

DEPARTMENT OF THE Treasury

Room 4134, North Wing of Main Treasury, Nov 2008

1800-1820 From the Past
1823-1897 Four Buildings
1898-1999 Change & Adapt
1999-2004 TBARR Today

TREASURY BUILDING & ANNEX RESTORATION & RENOVATION

BUILDING TREASURY

