

TIME AND PLACE:
THE EVOLUTION AND HISTORY OF RALEIGH'S CENTURY STATION FEDERAL
BUILDING AS A STUDY IN DECISION MAKING AND USE OF FEDERAL DOLLARS

BY

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I dedicate this research to my Mother. I love you, Mama!

To my friends and family, and especially to Anne-Leslie Owens, Dr. West, Dr. Sharp, and Dr. Myers-Shirk, thank you for your continuing support, patience, impatience and much-needed pep talks.

ABSTRACT

This research project came about through a partnership between the Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) and The United States General Services Administration (GSA). GSA approached the CHP, a nonprofit research center, for the purpose of recommending historical treatments in the Century Station Federal Building and Courthouse in Raleigh, North Carolina. During the course of the research project, questions arose regarding what period of significance best defines a building that evolved over several important stages during distinctly different points in American history. Ultimately the answers to those questions came in the form of extant physical documentation such as architectural drawings and paint samples, historical documentation in the form of newspapers and photographs, and an understanding of the importance of each stage of the building's development in the greater context of American history.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The historic United States Post Office and Courthouse is one of the most important federal landmarks in Raleigh, North Carolina. The third Supervising Architect of the treasury, Alfred B. Mullett, designed the building as a post office, federal courthouse and office building. Begun in 1874 and completed in 1878 at the cost of \$400,000, his Second Empire-style building reflects a new type of federal architecture, one that Mullett perfected in the next years in his design of the Executive Office Building in Washington, D.C. Several twentieth-century renovations and expansions greatly increased the size of the building. The building, however, has maintained its integrity, historical and architectural significance, as well as its original use as a post office, courthouse and office building. Recent years show a trend toward closure of post offices throughout the country caused by a number of factors including cost cutting and a push toward online postage. The Century Station Post Office is still open but certainly at risk, which would, in effect, end the building's public accessibility. In 1971, Century Station received its National Register of Historic Places designation at which time the name was changed to the Raleigh Century Postal Station and Courthouse. Today, the building is known as the Raleigh Federal Building.

This thesis broadens understanding of the building's historical and architectural significance. Previously the significance of the Raleigh Federal Building was inextricably linked to the original architect A.B. Mullett. While

Mullett's influence is an important piece of the story, over one hundred additional years of history remains to be documented and assessed.

The methodology for this thesis combined field investigations with archival research. In 2005, I examined and cataloged working drawings and blueprints located in the basement of the building. Research in historic archives located in various Raleigh repositories contributed to a more complete picture of the building's history. A follow up trip in 2011 revealed a number of renovations to parts of the building as well as additional historical and contextual information from a judge who took a special interest in the building's history. Finally, information provided by General Services Administration (GSA) staff involved with the project revealed general information regarding various sources of federal dollars although specificity proved elusive.

I carried out additional secondary-source research in order to compile a contextual groundwork for the building within the city of Raleigh and the United States as a whole. Most of the early scholarship devoted to the Raleigh Federal Building focused on the impact that Mullett had on the building's appearance. Writings by scholar Lawrence Wodehouse, a 2002 report by GSA, and the National Register of Historic Places nomination, emphasize Mullett as the primary designer. Most of the building's renovations, however, are attributable to other architects, both federally and privately employed. Despite alterations over

the years, the Raleigh Federal Building maintains a high level of historical integrity from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹

Ultimately this thesis adds to the discussion of who decides what period of significance best defines a space and why. The study provides a focused architectural description and significance statement based on analysis of the building in its current configuration cross-referenced with historical drawings and descriptions of the building.

Historic newspapers, blueprints, photographs, and the Raleigh Federal Building itself all point to a dynamic structure that changed to meet the needs of a growing community and a changing nation. The specifics of the expansion, choice of design elements, and funding relate to themes of change within the Supervising Architect's office as affected by the politics of the larger government that supported it. A building created during a time when America was struggling to express her stability was expanded and simplified through the years and subject to the changes in the federal government's building program. The construction and evolution of the Raleigh Federal Building directly reflects the tastes and political whims of a growing nation.

By examining the relationship between federal politics and the Office of the Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury, the evolution of the

¹ General Services Administration Building Preservation Program Region 4, Building Appraisal, 300 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC (Atlanta: General Services Administration, 2002), 2; John B. Wells, National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Federal Building, Raleigh, North Carolina (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1971); and Lawrence Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullett's Court Room and Post Office at Raleigh, North Carolina," 304.

Raleigh Federal Building, and GSA's stewardship of the building including recent restoration activities, I hope to clarify how those in charge reached the decisions they regarding the building's recent restoration. Remaining true to a building that evolved and grew in stages – each significant to its own period in history – challenges the notion that a structure has a single period of significance.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY & STYLE

For institutional government buildings like the Raleigh Federal Building, designed to express a sense of permanence and reliability to the public they serve, growth and change are dreaded eventualities lest the building become obsolete. In *How Buildings Learn*, author Stewart Brand states that institutional buildings are “mortified by change,” and “do so with expensive reluctance and all possible delay.”² Weaving the history of the Office of the Supervising Architect (OSA), the work of Alfred B. Mullett, who headed the OSA during the 1870s and 1880s, and the OSA’s construction and expansion of the Raleigh Federal Building from 1874 to 1939 into the greater historical picture frames the building as a dynamic structure with fluid significance. The following chapter serves to present The Raleigh Federal Building as an architectural landmark that reflects major historical events of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Mullett and the Office of the Supervising Architect

The Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department was a position that meant both prestige and misery for its holders. Congress established the office in 1852 for the purpose of commissioning structures meant to glorify the United States and establish the nation’s presence in a tangible,

² Stewart Brand, *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They’re Built* (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 7.

grand manner. The position was the highest paid architect position in the federal government, but once they gained the position, the architects often found themselves targets of investigations into fraud, extravagance, and waste. The underpaid architects' main motivation for remaining in that office was status, but the humiliation of numerous investigations into their characters made them more notorious than famous. The best-known man to hold the office and the original designer of the Raleigh Federal Building, Alfred B. Mullett, committed suicide fifteen years after his resignation due in part to the stress he suffered during his tenure.³

The political nature of the Supervising Architect's office is a point of interest for scholars, but only one has undertaken the task of understanding Mullett as a product of his environment. In her 1996 doctoral dissertation, Jennifer Laurie Ossman discusses the design and construction of the State, War & Navy Building in Washington, D.C., in the context of the politics of the era and the Office of the Supervising Architect. Ossman, in fact, describes Mullett as "The Political Architect." Ossman also depicts the political and religious climate of Mullett's childhood home as one both passionate and idealistic. The child of outspoken and well-connected abolitionist parents, Mullett was well versed in politics by the time he left for Cincinnati Farmer's College in 1853. Ossman argues that his background made him a perfect fit for the highly political office of Supervising Architect.

³ Lois A. Craig, *The Federal Presence* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), 147.

Beginning in 1855, Mullett worked in the Cincinnati office of prominent architect Isaiah Rogers. Here he gained familiarity with the Greek Revival classicism so popular before the Civil War. His fascination with more picturesque styles became apparent during this time, as evidenced by drawings in his scrapbook. His diary suggests, however, that he still saw the picturesque styles as appropriate for certain uses, such as religious buildings, while the classical styles were the most appropriate choice for government buildings.⁴

According to Ossman, Mullett's politics and personality vaulted him to the top of the Office quickly, but controversy marked his term, a fact that haunted him for the rest of his life.⁵ One of his major problems was an overwhelming workload, which he refused to share with private firms. His stubborn hold on all federal projects drew fire from his contemporaries, who accused him of monopolizing some of the most desirable projects in the country. The architectural press also criticized his frequent use of the Second Empire style. Ignoring the desires of his fellow architects was a grave mistake for Mullett, who needed their support in the face of eventual accusations of wasteful spending and fraud.⁶

⁴ Jennifer Laurie Ossman, "Reconstructing a National Image" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1996), 69-75.

⁵ Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 73-74.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 79-100.

Like others before him, Mullett faced charges of accepting kickbacks from the companies that supplied his building materials. The most infamous charges involved a group of influential stone merchants known as the “Granite Ring,” one of which supplied the marble for Boston’s post office. The media harassed him constantly about the scandal, and Mullett resigned from the Office of Supervising Architect in November 1874, the year construction began on the Raleigh Federal Building.

In his resignation letter, Mullett cited his failing health and an inadequate salary as his reasons for leaving.⁷ According to National Park Services historian Antoinette J. Lee, who wrote the introduction to Mullett’s published letters and diaries, the press and members of the architectural profession criticized him heavily. They did not trust his exclusive control over federal building projects and badgered Congress to open those commissions to private architects as well. Lawmakers later gave in to their incessant pleas, as evidenced by policies created during the early twentieth century, as well as in the alterations to the Raleigh Federal Building that private firms completed.⁸

Government buildings stand as visual reminders of America’s political and financial position throughout history, and studying the evolution of those buildings is a good way to evaluate change over time. Lee recognized the importance of the Office of the Supervising Architect to the appearance of Washington D.C., as

⁷ Antoinette J. Lee, introduction to *A.B. Mullett Diaries &C*, ed . Daisy M. Smith (Washington, DC: Mullett-Smith Press, 1985), 107.

⁸ Lee, 1.

well as other towns across the country. In her book, *Architects to the Nation: the Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office* (2000), Lee stressed the legacy of this institution, wrote the first complete history of the Office, and focused on both its people and the buildings they produced. According to Lee, Mullett, who held the office from 1866 to 1874, was the most famous of all the men who served as Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department.

Second Empire Style

Mullett designed the Federal Building in Raleigh and a number of similar buildings throughout the United States in the Second Empire style. These buildings include the State, War, and Navy Building in Washington D.C., his most famous work; the Court House and Post Office in New York City, no longer extant; and a number of other federal courthouse/ post offices in major cities throughout the country.⁹ The reason for the prevalence of the Second Empire style in American Government architecture is a point of contention among scholars. The movement toward the contemporary Second Empire style was an anomaly since United States government buildings up to this time reflected the styles of past cultures whose ideals sparked the American sense of democracy, such as ancient Greece.¹⁰

⁹ Ibid., 90.

¹⁰ Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) 244.

Mullett's use of Second Empire styling was a result of his visit to the 1867 Paris Exposition at the request of engineer Baron Georges Eugene Haussmann, the man who planned the eighteenth-century redevelopment of Paris and who is credited with popularizing the French style.¹¹ According to his diary, Mullett's extended travel in places like France, Belgium, and Germany, with their soaring cathedrals and eclectic cities changed his aesthetic sensibilities.¹² In addition to travel, Mullett scholar Lawrence Wodehouse credits the English professional press with keeping American architects aware of popular European styles, including the Second Empire style.¹³ Mullett expressed boredom at the repetition so prevalent in previous United States government buildings of the past and wished to infuse newer structures with his fine taste and love of art.¹⁴ Mullett returned from Paris in 1867 to design the State, War, and Navy Building (Old Executive Office Building) in Washington D.C. This building served as a model for Federal buildings around the country, including Raleigh.¹⁵

¹¹ General Services Administration Building Preservation Program Region 4, Building Appraisal, 300 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC. (Atlanta: General Services Administration, 2002), 2.

¹² Lee, 74-75.

¹³ Lawrence Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullet and his French Style Government Buildings," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 31, no. 1 (1972): 22-26.

¹⁴ Lee, 77.

¹⁵ General Services Administration Building Preservation Program Region 4, Building Appraisal, 300 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC. (Atlanta: General Services Administration, 2002), 2.

To understand the appeal of the Second Empire style in government buildings of post-Civil War America, one must understand the elements that constitute the overall look as well as the political climate at the time of their design. Historian Robert Harmon explains the Second Empire style is characterized by the presence of a mansard roof, paired columns supported by entablatures, classical pediments, and a series of projecting and receding surfaces.¹⁶ Second Empire styling is closely related to that of Italianate designs, another picturesque style. Its lines are noticeably more vertical and narrow, and the towers end in “variants of mansard roofs.” The mansard roof is a style that designers during Louis Napoleon’s “Second Empire” revived to reflect the successful reign of Louis XIV in France, an era in which France dominated Europe.¹⁷

In *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Building*, Lois A. Craig examines United States government buildings and discusses the role of the Supervising Architect’s office. She notes the move away from classicism as the national style after 1876, noting that at this point, “The style was styles.” According to Craig, the nation was hopeful in the wake of the Civil War, people were ready to look ahead for inspiration, and the Office of the Supervising Architect designed to suit the people’s desires. The

¹⁶ Robert B. Harmon, *The Second Empire Style in American Architecture: A Brief Style Guide* (Monticello, IL: Vance Bibliographies, 1982), 6.

¹⁷ Alan Gowans, *Styles and Types of North American Architecture: Social Function and Cultural Expression*, (New York: HarperCollins, 1992) 192.

Raleigh Federal Building exemplifies this positive spirit.¹⁸ With design elements that extended far beyond any architectural need, these buildings served to express expensive, grandiose beauty with a monumental quality. From the perspective of the citizenry, this style conveyed a sense of modernity with its French origins and fanciful adornments, so fresh in comparison to the buttoned-down classical styles they were accustomed to seeing in institutional buildings.

Raleigh was one of many landlocked southern cities linked together by the growing railroad system that developed in the southern states after the Civil War. The heavily agrarian South showed signs of change as formerly wealthy land owners fell into poverty while the skilled labor force they once employed or enslaved, found opportunities in the factories and households of the city. While true equality remained a distant dream for African-Americans, scholar Jackson Lears points out that “opportunities of the city were uneven but genuine.”¹⁹

In spite of lingering animosity between blacks and whites, the infectious excitement of the possibilities that industrialization inspired the citizens of North Carolina to look ahead. The Freedmen’s Bureau put former slaves to work on building projects, and the North Carolina Exposition of 1884, held just outside of Raleigh, showcased how advances in industry could help the south rebuild quickly and efficiently. This magnificent show of progress and possibility

¹⁸ Craig, 156.

¹⁹ Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009) 144-147.

endowed the populace with renewed optimism, removing some of the lingering sting from the Confederate defeat.²⁰

This “New South,” as it was known, experienced an explosion of construction and commerce, and the architecture of the day showcased materials, techniques and styles new to the building industry.²¹ Historian Henry Russell Hitchcock notes that the Second Empire style held the American imagination for only a brief time because its “crass assurance” reflected “the special arrogance of the post-Civil War politicians in Washington.”²² Although Hitchcock sees the style as a reflection of arrogance, a 1984 publication by the Executive Office of the President declares the “picturesque” nature of the style. Historian Robert Harmon points out that he move away from classical styles marked “a period of capricious individuality in the American building tradition.”²³

Residential architecture also incorporated the Second Empire style. The Collier-Crichlow House (1880) in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, demonstrates how effectively local craftsmen co-opted the style to build impressive upper-income

²⁰ Catherine W. Bishir, Charlotte V. Brown, Carl R. Lounsbury, and Ernest H. Wood III. *Architects and Builders in North Carolina: a History of the Practice of Building* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 241-243.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 247

²² Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 243-244.

²³ Robert B. Harmon, *The Second Empire Style in American Architecture: A Brief Style Guide* (Monticello, IL: Vance Bibliographies, 1982), 6.

houses that sent the same messages of wealth, complexity, and power as did the community landmark buildings of the same style.



Figure 1: Collier-Crichlow House, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

The Federal Building at Raleigh, North Carolina, is a good example of a simplified Second Empire structure. Figures 2 and 3 show the differences between the more ornate State, War, & Navy Building in Washington D.C. and a pared-down version of the Second Empire style in Raleigh. Mullett designed the State War & Navy Building to serve the needs of the nation rather than one city. Because of its elevated status and location next to the White House, it exhibits more detail, including heavier use of projecting and receding surfaces, a greater number of grouped columns, and a higher number of entablatures and pediments.



Figure 2. State War & Navy Building
Washington D.C.

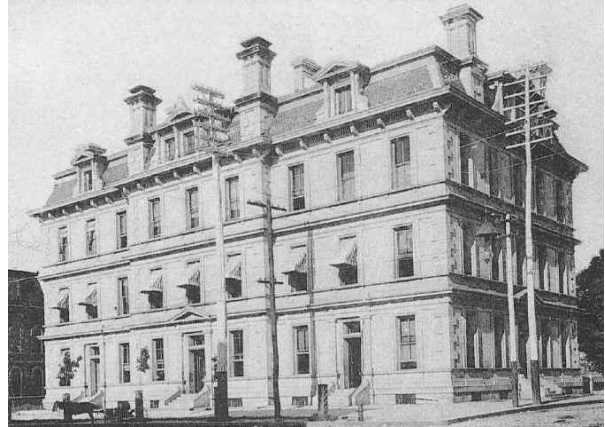


Figure 3. Federal Courthouse and Post
Office at Raleigh, North Carolina

Building History

Mullett designed the Raleigh Federal Building to house both a post office and courtroom in addition to offices for federal employees. The Federal Building in Raleigh exhibits American designers' tendencies to impose local materials on the Second Empire style, giving those buildings a distinctively regional flavor. One local newspaper announced a call for proposals to furnish and deliver cut stone for the proposed building in July of 1874, underscoring Lawrence Wodehouse's claim that "local feeling ran high concerning the type of stone to be used."²⁴ The granite for the original building and the expansions came from a quarry near Goldsboro, North Carolina, and a local stone contractor executed the work.²⁵

²⁴ Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullett's Court Room and Post Office at Raleigh, North Carolina," 304.

²⁵ *Daily Sentinel* (Raleigh, NC) 3 July 1874.

Congress appropriated \$50,000 in 1856 for a Federal building in Raleigh, North Carolina, and the site for the building was purchased from Annie Lawrence in 1860 at a cost of \$7,700. The onset and aftermath of the Civil War prompted a series of delays, the first of which was postponing completion of the plans until after the end of the War. After the War, a nearly devastated nation hardly had the means to fund a fancy new federal building, so the Supervising Architect shelved the designs until 1872. Financial difficulties also plagued the building's progress. Congress raised the first appropriation to \$100,000 in 1872, but Mullett still considered it too little. In 1873 Congress again increased the funding, this time to \$200,000, and construction began on July 4, 1874.²⁶

After Mullett's resignation in 1874, a lack of funding prevented the completion of many of his designs until well after his tenure. The *Raleigh News and Observer* claimed the final cost of the building to be \$400,000, meaning that the initial calculations for the building's four-year construction costs were gross underestimates.²⁷ Standard practice was for the Supervising Architect to remit money for construction costs to the on-site superintendent architect, who then paid all bills. According to Wodehouse, locals removed appointed building superintendent C.S. Harris in 1878 due to major delays and for exceeding the building's budget. Harris was found to be less than honest in his use of the money remitted from the Supervising Architect for the payment of construction

²⁶ Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullet's Court Room and Post Office at Raleigh, North Carolina," 302.

²⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), 19 January 1915.

bills. After Harris's firing, Postmaster General William W. Holden took over the responsibility of making all payments.²⁸

The Raleigh Federal Building, as built between 1874 and 1878, measured approximately 21,000 square feet of public space in addition to a basement and an attic. The post office occupied the entire first floor, and postal officials used the second floor as office space. Located on the third floor, the federal courtroom had a high ceiling that protruded into an attic, and "10 cast-iron Corinthianesque fluted columns supported the superstructure."²⁹ The front and rear facades were identical with three bays, the middle of which protruded slightly. Each bay had three windows on each floor for a total of twenty-seven on each facade. All four sides of the building had a centrally located pedimented entrance door on the first floor while the front and rear facades had simpler doors in the center of the secondary bays.³⁰

Between the building's construction and its first major renovation in the 1910s, a few changes took place. The judge who occupied the original courtroom found its configuration highly unfavorable. He complained that the furniture arrangement made for poor communication among the jurors, attorneys, and judge. The acoustics had to be improved around 1900, and an elevator was added in 1908 after a juror died while climbing the stairs to the third floor

²⁸ Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullet's Court Room and Post Office at Raleigh, North Carolina, 302.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 303.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 304

courtroom. Around this same period, minor alterations were made to the building, the most extensive of which was the addition of a recessed porch on the main façade, still extant (see figure 5).³¹

A population boom in Raleigh meant that by 1910, the formerly sleepy town boasted 25,000 people. Thus, the growing community necessitated a larger federal office building.³² The 1913-1915 expansion to the Raleigh Federal Building nearly doubled its size. This major renovation coincided with an intense period of expansion among federal buildings across the country that gained momentum leading up to America's involvement in World War I.³³ The population boom was not restricted to Raleigh; cities all over the country faced new demands from increasing numbers of citizens flooding in from the country side and from foreign lands in search of jobs. A period of unprecedented change, the beginning of the twentieth century was marked by rapid industrialization, population growth, increased community activism, and an expansion of government services. This period of political and social transformation became known as the Progressive Era. It is within this context that the Federal government funded the expansion of the Raleigh Federal Building.

³¹ Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullet's Court Room and Post Office at Raleigh, North Carolina, 305.

³² *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), 19 January 1915.

³³ Lee, 219.

The suburban model came to Raleigh during the 1910s by way of the Cameron-Parker Realty Company, the developer responsible for Raleigh's Cameron Park suburb. These neighborhoods conveyed a sense of permanence, and the taxes its mostly white, socially conservative residents paid helped fund schools and infrastructure. In contrast, poorer whites and African-Americans lived in rental type dwellings, often with extended family sharing one home. There were two distinct Main Streets, Black and White, even though both shared identical styles, building materials and building techniques.³⁴

From the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, the workload in the Supervising Architect's Office more than doubled and, according to Craig, standardization became the order of the day.³⁵ The turn of the century also signaled a return to classicism in United States government building because, as Antoinette J. Lee notes, the proliferation of picturesque buildings of the 1870s "had produced such a cacophony of towers, turrets, polychromatic images, and irregular massing that the urban streets looked untidy."³⁶ Supervising Architect James Knox Taylor was in charge, and he subscribed to a restrained and clean aesthetic.

One of Taylor's responsibilities was the administration of the 1893 Tarnsey Act, under which many government-building commissions were won in

³⁴ Bishir, 304-306.

³⁵ Craig, 213.

³⁶ Lee, 164.

design competitions open to private architects and firms.³⁷ Congress repealed The Tarnsey Act in 1913, and the Supervising Architect's Office again handled most of the work, under the direction of Oscar Wenderoth.³⁸ Nonetheless, Wenderoth believed in hiring private architects to work out design problems on federal buildings in smaller cities. This resulted in a continuation of the political maneuvering that characterized federal building projects throughout the history of the United States.

A 1912 shop drawing bearing the stamp of Supervising Architect Oscar Wenderoth shows the intended plan for expansion of the Raleigh Federal Building. A dashed outline of the original rear of the building is visible. The solid lines that express its new shape include four additional bays at the back for a total depth of nine bays.³⁹ The original building and the intended additions also appear on a set of shop drawings for the stonework on the 1913-1915 addition. These drawings bear the name Boyle-Robertson Construction Company.⁴⁰ One of the most remarkable elements added to the building was a set of revolving

³⁷ Ibid., 197-202.

³⁸ Ibid., 224.

³⁹ Balch and Litzau, "U.S.P.O & CT. H. Extension, First Floor and Approach Plan," Supervising Architect, Treasury Department, 1912, Basement of Raleigh Federal Building, Raleigh, NC.

⁴⁰ Boyle-Robertson Construction Company, "Shop Drawings for Stonework U.S.P.O. & CT. HO., Raleigh, NC," Boyle-Robertson Construction Company, undated, C. 1912, Basement of Raleigh Federal Building, Raleigh, NC.

doors, no longer extant, at either end of the entry porch of the front facade.

Several working drawings of these doors remain in the basement of the building.

Figure 4, a picture taken around 1900, and figure 5, taken after the 1915 additions, show the changes to the façade. The plans called for the removal of the chimneys that once contributed to the Raleigh Federal Building's distinctive Second Empire character. The building took on a more simplified classical look. Other changes included the replacement of entry doors on the secondary wings of the main façade with windows and the construction of a recessed porch with classical Doric columns on the main entry of the first floor.⁴¹ The 1915 addition increased the overall size of the Raleigh Federal Building from 21,000 to 37,800 square feet, nearly double. The cost of the addition was \$235,000, bringing the total cost of the building to \$635,000 in 1915.⁴²

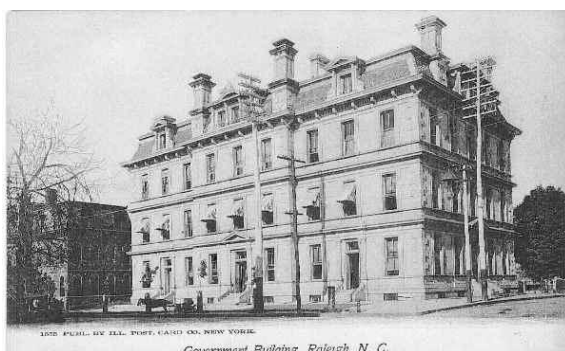


Figure 4. Circa 1900



Figure 5. Circa 1920

⁴¹ "Government Building, Raleigh, N.C." Post Card photograph. New York: Illinois Post Card Company: C.1900. "U.S. Post Office, Raleigh N.C. – 7" Post card photograph. Milwaukee: E.C. Kropp Company: C.1920.

⁴² *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), 19 January 1915.

The 1913-1915 renovation also changed the interior spaces. A 1915 article in the *Raleigh News and Observer* describes the interior of the postal lobby as having pure white walls, marble wainscoting, mahogany finishes, and terrazzo floors. The article also notes that the Federal courtroom occupied the second floor after this renovation, meaning that designers created a completely new space for the Federal courtroom since the building's original courtroom had been on the third floor.⁴³ In the 1910s addition, the much larger courtroom, with its twenty-foot ceilings also occupied part of the third floor. The current size, orientation, and ornamented ceiling in the courtroom date to this early twentieth-century renovation.

The 1929 stock market crash and economic depression of the 1930s led to widespread unemployment. To address the need for jobs, the federal government, under the leadership of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, implemented a building program of unparalleled proportions. It was also at this time that the Office of the Supervising Architect began a decline in status as a result of the federal government's reorganization of its building programs. In 1933, President Roosevelt moved the Supervising Architect's Office under the procurement branch run by the assistant secretary and renamed it the Public Works Branch. Now the Office had to compete with the postal department and the National Park Service for funding, as opposed to it being a separate budget category. Meanwhile, private architects continued to clamor for participation in

⁴³ Ibid.

the New Deal public building projects. Although private firms designed many of the local and state buildings funded by these 1930s federal programs, the Supervising Architect's Office continued to limit the involvement of private firms in federal buildings because it was generally cheaper for them to handle projects internally.⁴⁴ The Raleigh Federal Building was an exception.

In 1931, the Post Office and Treasury Departments allotted \$360,000 for the expansion on the Raleigh Federal Building as part of a five-year plan. Congress appropriated funding at their next session. The money was for the enlargement of the first floor at the rear of the building and the addition of a fourth floor. The building was overcrowded, and a growing city meant an increased need to house other types of federal agencies like the Weather Bureau and a Recruiting Station.⁴⁵ A written report from a topographical survey conducted in 1930 of the area around the existing Raleigh Federal Building by the Office of the Supervising Architect (OSA) indicates that they anticipated the expansion before requesting funding. The study sought to determine if the ground could support the extra weight of the proposed additions.⁴⁶

The Treasury Department hired Raleigh architect William Henley Deitrick to design this final addition. A graduate of the Columbia architecture program,

⁴⁴ Lee, 248-260.

⁴⁵ *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC) 28 February 1931.

⁴⁶ Treasury Department, Office of the Supervising Architect, "Specification of Topographical Survey of Site for Federal Building" (Washington DC: Office of the Supervising Architect, 30 September 1930).

Deitrick was a prominent local architect. In 1932, the department called Deitrick to Washington to consult on a fifty percent addition to the Raleigh Post Office and Federal Building on Fayetteville Street.⁴⁷ According to Elizabeth C. Waugh, who wrote a history of Deitrick's one-man architecture firm, the Treasury Department in Washington rarely assigned full commissions to one-architect firms, and they asked Deitrick to collaborate with Philadelphia firm Thomas, Martin, and Kirkpatrick. Deitrick offered the firm ten percent of the profits from the project. At the completion of the project, Thomas, Martin, and Kirkpatrick refused their share of the fee as they could not justify accepting the fee since Deitrick did the work.⁴⁸

In 1937, the long-planned renovations began on the federal courthouse under the control of the Supervising Architect and likely with labor provided by the federal government's New Deal agencies.⁴⁹ A special session of Congress held in 1938 allocated funds for a vast building program in Raleigh for work on some of its state and local projects, such as an expansion of the North Carolina State University dormitories, construction of city water works, and additions to the Wake County schools facilities. The Public Works Administration provided almost half of the cost and the state and local government came up with the

⁴⁷ Elizabeth C. Waugh, "Firm in an Ivoried Tower," (Deitrick Collection P.C.1487.1, North Carolina State Archives: n.d.), 7-8.

⁴⁹ Wodehouse, "Alfred B. Mullet's Court Room and Post Office at Raleigh, North Carolina," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 26, no. 4 (1967): 305.

rest.⁵⁰ The fact that the Raleigh Post Office and Federal Building was a federal construction project, combined with a New Deal era date, makes the presence of labor provided by the federal Public Works Administration highly likely. However, no documentation has been found to support this supposition.

A set of floor plans dated 1938 show the final layout of the building as it remains today. The drawings bear the name, Treasury Department Procurement Division, giving testament to the Office's demoted status as a result of the government reorganization. The plans also show where each federal agency resided within the building. The armed services recruiting divisions were in the basement, postal activities took place on the first floor as they always had, and the courtroom and related offices continued to be on the second floor with the high ceiling of the courtroom extending to the third floor. More offices surrounded the upper area of the centrally located courtroom on the third floor, and the newly added fourth floor lay empty in anticipation of future growth.⁵¹

This final expansion also included four additional bays on the rear, making the building a total of thirteen-bays deep and four-stories high. With the completion of this project, the building totaled 90,000 square feet. This construction phase saw a complete renovation of the building's interior with the exception of the courtroom ceiling and some of the doors from the 1913

⁵⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC) 5 October 1939.

⁵¹ Kennelly, "Floor Plans, Federal Building Century Postal Station Raleigh, N.C." (Washington DC: Treasury Department Procurement Division, 17 January 1938) 1-6.

additions. Little to nothing of the building's original interior remains intact; most of the interior finishes date to the first half of the twentieth century.⁵²

According to a General Services Administration specification booklet dated 1953, the building's interior received an overhaul including new paint, new tile work in the bathrooms, new lighting in the corridors of the upper floors and bathrooms, roof repairs, and updates to the building's structural and mechanical systems.⁵³ In 1972, contractor George Jensen performed updates, such as wall-to-wall carpeting and new paint in the courtroom.⁵⁴

In recognition of its historic and architectural significance, the building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.⁵⁵ In 1972, the official title of the building changed to Century Postal Station Federal Building to commemorate its centennial. According to a 2002 report by GSA, the federal agency that now owns and manages the Raleigh Federal Building, the fourth floor was finished out in the 1970s for use as office space.⁵⁶

⁵² General Services Administration Building Preservation Program Region 4, Building Appraisal, 300 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC. (Atlanta: General Services Administration, 2002), 1-3.

⁵³ General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service, Specifications: Alterations to U.S. Post Office and Court House, Raleigh, North Carolina, (Atlanta: Office of the Division Engineer, Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration, 1953).

⁵⁴ *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), 4 July 1974.

⁵⁵ John B. Wells, National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Federal Building, Raleigh, North Carolina (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1971).

The historic newspapers, blueprints, photographs, and the Raleigh Federal Building itself all point to a dynamic structure that changed to meet the needs of a growing community and a changing nation. The specifics of the expansion, choice of design elements, and funding relate to themes of change within the Supervising Architect's office as affected by the politics of the larger government that supported it. A building created during a time when America was struggling to express her stability was expanded and simplified through the years and subject to the changes in the federal government's building program. The government that created the building is willing to recognize its significance and oversee its care showing yet another shift in the public's attitude toward its national treasures. The construction and evolution of the Raleigh Federal Building directly reflects the tastes and political whims of a growing nation.

In 1949, further reorganizations within the federal government placed the federal building program under the General Services Administration (GSA).⁵⁶ The move from an independent federal agency to part of the Federal Works Administration demonstrates the slide of the Office of the Supervising Architect from its former renown. The federal architecture program, once an idealistic and artful place where visionary architects practiced their craft, became a practical and routinized arm of the federal government.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 3.

⁵⁷ Lee, 238.

CHAPTER III

GSA & THE RALEIGH FEDERAL BUILDING

The General Services Administration (GSA) is committed to the stewardship of historic architecture under their control with the intention of presenting those spaces as national treasures. GSA employs professionally-trained historic preservationists to help oversee and maintain the historic buildings they manage. However; at the end of the twentieth century and out of a concern for financial accountability, GSA sought to decrease their inventory of older buildings in favor of newer structures. The Raleigh Federal Building was one of their buildings they wanted to surplus. The aim of this chapter is to gain an understanding of GSA's inception, development and history as means to frame the development of the Raleigh Federal Building.

GSA

GSA currently administers the care of the Raleigh Federal Building as well as other historic buildings owned by the Federal government. In her discussion of Alfred B. Mullett's State, War and Navy Building in Washington D.C., Lois A. Craig credits an unnamed agency, set up to maintain that structure, as being the ancestor of GSA. Scholar Michael James Luciano delved deeper into the history of GSA in his 1968 dissertation "A Study of the Origin and Development of the General Services Administration as Related to its Present Operational Role, Direction, and Influence." Luciano found that before 1883 all federal building

construction and management fell to the Department of the Treasury or other individual agencies. During that year, the United States established a commission in charge of the State, War and Navy Department structures. For the next forty-two years, this commission worked with the Treasury Department and oversaw the Office of the Supervising Architect.⁵⁸

In 1925 congress abolished the commission in charge of the State, War and Navy buildings in favor of a consolidated agency that also covered national parks. The establishment of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capitol coincided with the Public Buildings Act of 1925, and suddenly the Bureau of the Budget gained the ability to set a budget and systematically distribute appropriations for public buildings and their care. Soon thereafter an executive order shifted this new agency to the care of the National Parks Service where it remained until the creation of the Federal Works Agency in 1939.⁵⁹ Finally in 1949, President Harry S. Truman established the General Services Administration

In 1997, word that GSA planned to sell the Raleigh Federal Building surfaced. By 1998, the *Raleigh News and Observer* reported that those plans were on hold.⁶⁰ Their plans changed again, however, and in 2002, the

⁵⁸ Michael James Luciano. "A Study of the Origin and Development of the General Services Administration as Related to its Present Operational Role, Direction, and Influence" (PhD diss., New York University, 1968), 49.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 51

⁶⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), 7 February 1998.

newspaper published an article titled “Century Postal Station for Sale.” This article highlighted the high cost of repairs the building needed and emphasized the fact that the building did not generate enough revenue from tenants to justify its maintenance.⁶¹ The article also mentioned that GSA did not yet have an estimate of the building’s worth. At the time it was written, GSA was in the process of compiling their July 2002 report which estimated the value of the building at \$18,000,000.⁶² By September of that year, GSA undertook some general repairs on the building. These repairs and the current ongoing renovation mark an overall philosophy shift toward a stronger commitment to their older inventory.⁶³

Evolution & Symbolism

Federal buildings, as community landmark buildings, symbolize the authority, stability, and unity of the nation. Designed and built by one generation, they address the specific requirements of a particular period. However, as time passes the nature and range of services that a community requires changes. The buildings must in turn be adapted or they become obsolete. The Raleigh Federal Building is an excellent example of a government building that has

⁶¹ News and Observer (Raleigh, NC), 19 April 2002.

⁶² General Services Administration Building Preservation Program, Region 4, Building Appraisal, 300 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC, (Atlanta: General Services Administration, 2002), 1. General Services Administration, *Extending the Legacy*, (Washington D.C.: General Services Administration, 2004).

⁶³ News and Observer (Raleigh, NC), 25 September 2002.

evolved throughout its history to meet the changing needs of its ever-expanding and ever-changing citizenship. The following analysis aims to expand the period of significance for the building by analyzing primary and secondary written documentation combined with the physical structure. Given the history of the Raleigh Federal Building, defining a narrow period of significance is a limiting practice that denies its true evolutionary nature, which, in turn, reflects the developmental history of Raleigh in particular and the United States in general.

Through an architectural description, this section identifies existing character-defining features within the building and relates them to the many phases of the building's history. This section will focus on the postal lobby and courtroom. Despite alterations over the years, the Raleigh Federal Building maintains a high level of historical integrity from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As discussed in Chapter One the building underwent a series of extensive renovations and additions before it reached its current size and configuration. The 90,000 square foot Raleigh Federal Building is a four-story, granite block-faced brick building with a concave-profile mansard roof. On its front façade there are nine bays. The central projection contains three of these bays and is framed by stone quoins which are replicated on the corners of the main building block (see figure 6). The current depth of the building is thirteen bays, dating from the 1937-1938 expansion.



Figure 6: View of front or east elevation, 2005

The 1910s and 1930s additions seamlessly meld with the earlier granite work. Evidence of the new section is visible in a 1938 photograph that shows the building just after the 1930s additions were made but before the building was cleaned (see figure 7). The new section of the building and the newly added north side entry appear to gleam in comparison with the dingy older sections. A report dated 1937 suggested that the building's exterior undergo cleaning at "some later date" after the newly added granite had time to weather.⁶⁴ In 1939, a second report recommended cleaning the building during the early summer of that year, and the cleaning likely occurred soon after this letter was written.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ John England Jr., Letter to Mr. Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer, Procurement Division, Public Buildings Branch, Treasury Department, 9 September 1937.

⁶⁵ S.W. Purdue, Letter to Director, Procurement Division, Public Buildings Branch, Treasury Department, 10 April 1939.

Presently, the transitions between the new and old sections of the buildings appear seamless on the exterior.



Figure 7: View of northeast elevation, circa 1938

Wrapping around the building is a stone water table at the foundation level and a projecting stone beltcourse between each story. Each window has a classically inspired stone surround and continuous stone sill running below the windows and around the building. At the base of the mansard roof is an entablature that features a band of dentils punctuated by stylized consoles beneath the cornice. Simple dormer windows interrupt the face of the mansard roof at intervals which correspond with the windows on the lower floors; this area comprises the fourth floor.⁶⁶ These dormers date to the 1937-1938 renovation.

⁶⁶ John B.Wells, National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Federal

The earlier dormers were much more elaborate as fitting with the Second Empire style.

The cornerstone located at the northeast corner of the building is incised with "July 4, 1874." According to a 1974 newspaper article, the cornerstone contains a "postal route map; a set of U.S. coins of that year; proof specimens of stamps and stamped envelopes; a copy of the laws and regulations of the Post Office Department; and photographs of President Ulysses Grant, the postmaster general, secretary of the treasury, and the architect of the building, Alfred B. Mullett.⁶⁷ Dating from the 1910s, two cast-iron light standards rest on granite pedestals on either side of the staircase leading to the front entryway. Each of these standards contains claw feet, an ornamented base with acanthus leaves, a fluted shaft, and an ornamental collar topped by a single spherical globe.

The thirteen-bay southern façade is symmetrical and the simplest of the four elevations. The rear, or west, façade is part of the 1937-1938 addition and has a projecting five-bay central portion and flanking two-bay sections. The first level of this rear façade contains the loading area for the post office. The northwest corner of the building contains the roof penthouse and the elevator shafts. The northern elevation contains thirteen bays with the north entrance in the twelfth bay. This entrance is pedimented and flanked by fluted pilasters. On

Building, Raleigh, North Carolina, (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1971), 2-3.

⁶⁷ Ernie Wood, "The Century State Also Has a Birthday," *Raleigh News and Observer* (4 July 1974): 56.

either side of the pilasters is a cast bronze torchiere. These 1930s sconces have a pointed, fluted shafts, collar, and spherical globe.

The front façade of the building features the main entrance leading into the postal lobby. Four *in antis* Tuscan columns, added to the building in 1915, form a loggia across the first floor of the main entry. The loggia remains intact, and while it adds a more classical look to the façade, that change reflected a trend toward a more standardized look among federal buildings built or altered during the early twentieth century. Changes like this, rather than detracting from the building's integrity, actually contribute to its significance as an evolutionary building that was important enough for the federal government to continue investing in its modernization.

During the 1930s renovation, plans called for the removal of the 1910s revolving doors and a re-configuration the main entry into the building. The current configuration with its entry vestibules on the south and north ends of the loggia date to the 1930s. In the center of the loggia, where the revolving doors had been, are now two steel casement windows with steel security grilles. These windows are referred to as the loggia windows. Within the entry vestibules there are steel and glass doors that lead into the postal lobby from either side of the loggia. The floor of the loggia is pink terrazzo.

The first floor Post Office, original to 1878 building, retains its original purpose and general configuration of a rectangular mail sorting room and an L-shaped postal lobby. However, the postal area was enlarged in both the 1910s and 1930s renovations. The L-shape of the postal lobby is composed of the

entrance lobby and sales area along the front or east side of the building and the mailbox area along the north side of the building (see figure 8). A majority, if not all, of the extant and historic interior finishes in the lobby date to the extensive 1938 alterations to and expansion of the building.

Within the postal lobby, the central portion of the floor is coral pink marble terrazzo with white Portland cement matrix. The borders around the edges of the floor are of French Pink Tennessee marble. The wainscoting is Appalachian Golden vein marble and extends 3'6" up the wall. The walls, ceilings, and decorative moldings are of plaster. In 2005 the painted plaster walls were covered with vinyl probably added during the 1970s or 1980s. Historic photographs, floor plans, architectural specifications, and documents confirm that, historically, the walls were painted.



Figure 8: View of Entrance Lobby and Sales Area of Postal Lobby, 2005

Looking at the 1937 and 1938 photographs of the renovation work and analyzing floor plan changes, it appears that a majority, if not all, of the plaster walls were replaced at that time. However, it is not clear whether all of the ornamental moldings and ceilings in the lobby were completely replaced. As evidenced by analyzing a 1915 newspaper photograph showing the postal lobby, it is possible that either some of the molding was retained or that the elaborate profile of the earlier molding was duplicated in the 1930s. It is certain that the nature of the classically-styled formal public space was maintained. The extant elaborate ceiling molding and sequence of alternating pilasters and windows along the front wall of the lobby appear to be similar to the 1915 lobby. Detailing the plans for the 1937-1938 renovation work, a September 1937 inspection report for the “existing lobby” reads, “plas[ter] b[ea]ms & cornice to match existing” and “new finish of Public Lobby except ceiling.” These notations provide evidence that even if not retained, the 1930s cornice would have at least matched the earlier work and that at least a portion of the ceiling was kept.

Throughout the postal lobby there is decorative plaster molding at the juncture of the ceiling and walls and on the ceiling beams that span the lobby. The most elaborate of the plasterwork is found around the main entrance and sales portion of the lobby in keeping with this area being the main entrance to the building. Within this area the molding can be divided into three distinct sections. From ceiling to wall, the sections are referred to as cove molding, cornice, and frieze (see figure 9).

On the front or eastern wall of northern section of the sales area, the frieze portion of the molding exists only above the pilasters, which are between the front windows. Here, there is additional plasterwork that serves as a capital for the pilaster. The cove molding in the postal lobby features an anthemion and palmette motif on top of a repeating egg-and-dart pattern. The cornice is denticulated and rests on a broad, paneled frieze that features an egg-and-dart motif. The plasterwork in the mailbox area of the postal lobby contains much simplified cove and cornice molding. The plasterwork on the ceiling beams throughout the lobby feature a leaf-and-tongue motif. As a part of the material investigations into the postal lobby, Anne-Leslie Owens conducted a historic paint analysis for the variety of plaster work in the lobby.



Figure 9: Detail of lobby plaster work, 2005

The paint analysis was conducted as part of an agreement between the Middle Tennessee State University's Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) and the GSA. According to the agreement, Anne-Leslie Owens and Dr. Leslie Sharp, and I went to Raleigh to take samples in rooms designated by the GSA. The CHP agreed to conduct microscopic analysis of selected samples to establish a historic paint stratigraphy and to determine color matches using the Munsell color notation system. This work, performed in the CHP's Murfreesboro office, was completed by Anne-Leslie Owens, Sarah Jane Murray, and Liene Rozentale who created drawings of the postal lobby floor plan, molding, and walls that identify the location of samples. A written report authored by Anne-Leslie Owens documents the findings of the paint analysis.

We, as researchers, took samples from the wall in inconspicuous locations in order to analyze layers of paint that were applied to the walls in various areas of the building over the years. The concept of paint stratigraphy is much like techniques used by geologists to understand layers in sediment or rock. Moving from the substrate layer (the oldest) to the currently visible layer (the newest), analysts view samples under a microscope and describe the colors and thicknesses using common-sense terminology.⁶⁸

Many similar postal lobbies throughout the United States featured murals and/or decorative painting. The purpose of the paint analysis was to uncover the

⁶⁸ Anne-Leslie Owens, *Historic Paint Analysis of the U.S Post Office and Courthouse, Raleigh, North Carolina*. Prepared for General Services Administration, Atlanta, Georgia (Murfreesboro, TN: Center for Historic Preservation, 2005) 58-59.

original paint colors used in the lobby, but we also wondered if there would be evidence of decorative painting as well. After thorough analysis, the stratigraphic analysis only uncovered one section of gold leaf. The rest of the paint fell into the white, tan and taupe color families.⁶⁹ Notable is the fact that all plaster walls were removed and replaced in 1937-38 as mentioned previously which precludes any ability to analyze paint layers extant before that date.

The author of a 1956 publication entitled GSA Specifications for “Exterior and Interior Painting and Miscellaneous Repairs, Etc.” recommends that, “all plastered surfaces, including ornamental ceiling in Public Lobby and excepting interior of vaults, lookouts and elevator shaft” on the first floor be cleaned, repaired, and painted. This same publication also mentions “faded decorative painting” and that the “ceiling, including stencils” be covered with white paint.⁷⁰ There remains the exciting possibility that the postal lobby once contained a mural or decorative painting and that in time photographs or other documentation might surface, offering a chance to know what the postal lobby really looked like prior to the 1950s.

Within the postal lobby, all of the door surrounds are wood with the exception of the modern doors on the south side of the lobby. The wood paneled

⁶⁹ Ibid., 67.

⁷⁰ General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service, “Specifications: Exterior and Interior Painting and Miscellaneous Repairs, Etc., U.S. Post Office and Court House, Raleigh, North Carolina” (Atlanta: Office of the Deputy Regional Director, Public Building Service, General Services Administration, 1956).

doors leading to the mail room and to the janitor's closet underneath the stairs date to the 1930s. The main entrance doors are metal and glass and are topped by a transom. These doors and their configuration date to the 1930s. All of the windows in the lobby have wood frames with the exception the aforementioned loggia windows which are steel framed. According to the 1953 specifications for alterations to the Federal Building, all wood work should have a natural finish to show the graining in the wood. This corresponds to the current appearance of the wood work.

The windows open up the west wall of the entrance lobby to the mail sorting area. Below the opening of the sales windows is marble wainscoting. The sales window openings are framed with wide wood trim and have a wood counter. Above the openings are wrought-iron grilles that were detailed in plans found in the basement and dated January 27, 1913 by a federally employed draftsman named Palcho. The grilles contain vertical bars and a Greek key-patterned fretwork with linear eight-pointed stars set within a square forming a corner motif. A similar pattern is found in the grilles and transoms within the west wall of the courtroom. However, it is not known whether the lobby grilles were actually crafted in the 1910s or the 1930s. Historic architect John Meyers stated in his 2002 report that this pattern "would have matched the ceiling in 1913."

In addition to the changes in floor plans and finishes, the 1930s renovations called for new furnishings. The extant furnishings from this period include the cast-bronze postal tables and message boards, some lighting

fixtures, radiators, and cast-bronze postal boxes.⁷¹ The 1930s mail boxes line the south wall of the mail area of the postal lobby. These sets of bronze boxes are topped with wide wood trim and wrought-iron grilles identical to that found above the sales windows. Also from the 1930s, a steel staircase lies at the northeast corner of the lobby. Its risers are cast iron, its treads are coral pink terrazzo in a white Portland cement matrix, and its handrail is wood.

The lighting in the lobby is a mixture of historic and non-historic fixtures. The decorative, torchiere-type wall sconces with tulip-shaped globes on the east wall between the entry doors date to the 1930s, as does the simple torchiere sconce in the janitor's closet (see figure 10). The ceiling mounted box fluorescent lights are modern.



Figure 10: Sconce on east wall of lobby, 2005

⁷¹ The inspection report dated September 1937 specified that the contractors should use existing steam radiators where “practicable.” Since the radiators in the lobby are not identical, it is probable that some could pre-date the 1937-1938 renovation.

During the 1938 four-bay addition to the west end, the north entry was moved to the twelfth bay of the northern façade. Thus, the mail area of the postal lobby was lengthened. The elevator lobby just off the far west end of the mail box area also dates to the 1930s expansion. This public elevator lobby is still in use and contains the 1930s elevator, a second 1970s elevator, and a manned security check point for access to the upper floors and basement.

On the southern side of the first floor is tenant-occupied office space that was added sometime in the last thirty years, most likely during the 1974 renovations. A small portion of the postal lobby was lost for the creation of this office space. The rectangular mail sorting area is located in the center of the first floor. This area still functions today as originally intended in the 1870s (see figure 11). Its wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, posts with beaded-board wainscoting, and paneled wood doors (some with single-light windows) date to the 1937-1938 renovations. In addition to the change in finishes, the plans for the renovation increased the size of the postal sorting area four bays to the rear.



Figure 11: Mail Sorting Area, 2005

Located on the second floor and extending up through the third floor, the current courtroom space of the Raleigh Federal Building dates to the 1913-1915 renovation. Many of its original features remain, including the floors, plaster walls, decorative plaster ceilings, plaster moldings, wood doors, some furnishings, the windows along the western wall, the ceiling height, and general configuration of the space (see figure 12).

Over the course of the building's history, the courtroom has not escaped modernizations. The original plaster wall panels were replaced with acoustical tiles in 1938. In that same year, rubber tile flooring was added and covered with carpeting in order to muffle sounds. Both of these acoustical treatments were considered improvements over the original 1910s cork carpeting. Within the last

thirty years, additional panels were added to further improve the acoustics of the courtroom.

According to correspondence dating to 1939, the courtroom was repainted after the 1937-1938 renovations were completed. The ceiling was painted in a polychromatic scheme which is thought to mimic the original design. However, a full paint analysis is recommended to determine whether the current paint scheme reflects the original colors. It is interesting to note that the 1915 newspaper account following the major renovation describes the courtroom as white. It further notes that the interior painting had not been finished in time for the opening and that tinting for the walls was planned.

The rectangular cast-iron grilles found throughout the courtroom date to the 1910s renovation. H.N. Keene, Jr.'s 1913 drawings for the design of these grilles are located in the basement of the building. However, not all of the grilles are in their original location, but rather, some are attached to the walls as ornament.



Figure 12: View of Courtroom, 2005

The decorative plaster ceiling features recessed acoustical flat panels. Leaf-and-tongue, egg-and-dart, and dentil moldings frame the recessed panels. The crossing members are accentuated with gold-painted rosettes. At each junction of the crossing members, there is a square panel painted lapis blue with gold borders. The cornice contains almost-exaggerated denticulation with leaf-and-tongue and egg-and-dart motifs along the edges of the dentils (see figure 13). The outer flat surface of the outlining dentils is painted robin's egg blue. Below the cornice is an expanse of undecorated wall surface under which is more decorated plaster work running around the courtroom and above the panels on the walls. Parts of the ceiling and walls were sprayed with a textured material in the 1970s. This textured material has attracted dust and grime over the years

and thus appears to be discolored. This material may also obscure further decorative painting.



Figure 13: Corner detail of courtroom ceiling, 2005

Located on the north wall of the courtroom, the original three sets of wooden entry doors are covered with pantosote and topped by fixed, four-light transoms. These doors have classically influenced wood surrounds with a wood cornice and architrave. Similar wood panel doors exist on the south wall that lead to the Judge's chambers and to a storage area.

There are three large, original nine-light wooden windows with heavy wood surrounds on the west wall of the courtroom. Prior to the 1938-1939 expansion, these windows would have opened to the rear of the building. Since the last major renovation, the windows open to a light court. Above the windows are three-light transom windows, which have been partially blocked by ductwork.

On the eastern wall of the courtroom, the matching window configuration has been covered by acoustical panels and the windows blocked. Evidence of these windows can be seen from the eastern corridor windows on the third floor.

These alterations occurred in the 1970s.

Additional original courtroom features include the judge's bench, a wood-framed chalkboard that matches the door surrounds, and the bar or balustrade that separates the seating area from the front of the courtroom. No original light fixtures remain in the courtroom. All historic lighting was removed in the 1970s and replaced with historically inappropriate hanging box fluorescent lights. The 1937 inspection report and correspondence with the lighting contractor provides evidence that the historic fixtures in the courtroom would have been original to the 1913-1915 courtroom.

The second and third floors contain a mixture of historic and non-historic building fabric. Most of the light fixtures are modern hanging box fluorescent lights. A few light fixtures, such as ceiling lights and wall sconces from the 1930s remain on these floors. These fixtures are cast bronze with alabaster shades. Most of the doors, doorframes, and windows date to the 1937-1938 renovations. Within some of the office spaces are historic wood and wood-and-glass partitions. There are also original vaults on the first, second, and third floors. The bathrooms of the second and third floors contain some of the most intact remaining features in the public spaces on these levels (see figure 14). The ceramic tile, wood bathroom doors, wood stall doors and stall frames, fixtures, stall hardware, flooring, and some wood frame mirrors are all original to the

1937-1938 renovation of the building. A photograph found in the HABS/ HAER on-line collection shows a bathroom in a Texas courthouse nearly identical to those in the Raleigh Federal Building.



Figure 14: Example of second and third floor bathroom

The fourth floor, added in the 1930s, remained incomplete until the 1970s. The telltale sign is the difference between the width of doorframes and moldings between the older and newer sections. The newer areas have narrower doorframes and more shallow moldings.

While not a complete detailed description of every space within the Raleigh Federal Building and Post Office, understanding the historic character-defining features of the main public spaces—the postal lobby and courtroom—

and the approximate date of these features provides a basis for understanding why this structure has more than one period of significance.

The exterior of the building provides the best glimpse of Mullett's original Second Empire design. The Raleigh Federal Building's architectural and historical significance extends beyond the original design of nineteenth century to include the twentieth-century evolution of the structure.

Although subsequent architects, engineers, and contractors simplified the detailing, altered entrances, and greatly expanded the 1874 building, their work continued to pay homage to the monumentality of the nineteenth-century building. The postal lobby contains mostly 1930s finishes; however, the formality and decoration mimic the earlier renovations. The strongest evidence of the 1913-1915 building phase appears in the courtroom. While a desire for better acoustics and lighting led to some questionable treatments, the overall appearance of the courtroom continues to reflect an early twentieth-century room. The mail sorting area of the first floor remains virtually unchanged from its 1930s complete remodeling and the upper floors contain a mix of 1910s, 1930s, and modern alterations. No space represents a single moment in time, rather the transition of these spaces with the development and growth of the City of Raleigh and the United States. As underscored in this architectural description, the significance of the structure lies in its evolution over time and its ability to meet the changing needs of the city and the federal government.

CHAPTER IV

ART & AUTHORITY

This final chapter will tie together the history, and evolution of the building resulting in a greater understanding of how decisions regarding its restoration were made, who made those decision, and their motivations. Different areas of the building received different types of funding depending on the administrator of that entity. For this reason, certain areas of the interior received treatments far removed from others.

Funding

After the Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) submitted their recommendations for treatment in the Raleigh Federal Building, GSA went about the business of implementing some of those changes. In an email from Jeffrey Jensen of GSA, dated February 6, 2013, he explained that their part project was completed “using funds that come from outleasing buildings to private tenants, an authority granted under Section 111 of the NHPA.”⁷²

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Section 111 states that “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any Federal agency after consultation with the Council, shall, to the extent practicable, establish and implement alternatives for historic properties, including adaptive use, that are not

⁷² Jeffrey Jensen to Sarah Jane Murray, February 6, 2013, email communication in author's possession.

needed for current or projected agency purposes, and may lease an historic property owned by the agency to any person or organization, or exchange any property owned by the agency with comparable historic property, if the agency head determines that the lease or exchange will adequately insure the preservation of the historic property.”⁷³

Thomas King, head of GSA in Raleigh, which is housed on the fourth floor of the Raleigh Federal Building, revealed in a phone conversation on February 12, 2013, that a recent move resulted in the loss of specific documentation regarding the use of federal dollars for this project. Mr. King referred me to GSA in Atlanta for further information. During a phone conversation with the Regional Historic Preservation & Fine Arts Officer at GSA in Atlanta, Audrey Entorf, on February 16, 2013, she advised that GSA evaluated the building in 2002 at which time the \$2.5 million allocation that prompted the partnership between GSA and CHP. Entorf also advised that GSA administered \$20,000 of Budget Activity 64 (BA-64) dollars toward restoring the lobby. The 2008 update of GSA’s publication *Extending the Legacy: GSA Historic Building Stewardship*, originally published in 2004, explains BA-64 as an outlease revenue fund administered by GSA that “gives preference to regions and buildings earning outleasing revenue.”⁷⁴

⁷³ United States and United States. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, As Amended*. Washington, D.C.: The Council, 1981.

⁷⁴ General Services Administration. *Extending the Legacy: GSA Historic Building Stewardship* (Washington D.C.: General Services Administration, 2008) 43.

Basically, GSA uses monies earned from their outleased properties, pools those funds and places them in an improvement fund for the property itself as well as other GSA Legacy buildings.

The 2008 edition of *Extending the Legacy* highlights the Raleigh Federal Building, explaining that “an investment of \$2.3 million at the 1878 Century Postal Station in Raleigh, North Carolina, funded roof repairs to halt infiltration, courtroom lighting restoration, creation of a badly needed additional courtroom, and exterior conservation to retain GSA’s court tenants in a troubled Legacy building that was becoming untenable.” The feature goes on to explain that this overhaul generated enthusiasm in the press, concluding that “modest federal investment of outlease proceeds can make a big difference and a big impression.”⁷⁵

A rash of post office closings in the United States nearly threatened the Raleigh Federal Building. In 2011, local citizens such John Morris who writes a popular and influential blog entitled “Goodnight Raleigh” discussed the closure of post offices nationwide, describing them as “gathering places for town residents,” and advised readers to contact their state and local representatives, even giving contact information for those people.⁷⁶ The efforts of the public and press worked, and the post office remains open at this time as the most high-profile tenant of the Raleigh Federal Building.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 45

⁷⁶ John Morris, “Goodnight Raleigh: Save the Century Postal Station,” May 16, 2011 (<http://goodnightraleigh.com/2011/05/save-the-century-postal-station>).

Recommendations

Recommendations made by myself and CHP Staff in our 2005 report *Investigation of Significant Architectural Elements and Recommendations for Treatment in the Century Station Federal Building and Post Office, Raleigh, North Carolina* made specific lighting recommendations for the postal lobby and courtroom as well as more general suggestions for enhancing and preserving the historic character of the building. The recommended treatments complied with the National Park Service's Standards for Rehabilitation and meant to help the building retain its architectural and historical integrity.

Judging from a series of letters and memos between those in charge of the building's maintenance and the companies with whom they contracted, many of the fixtures in the Raleigh Federal Building were originally combination gas and then combination gas and electric fixtures. In *Lighting for Historic Buildings*, Roger W. Moss states that of the thousands of buildings built between the 1880s and World War I, many are in the process of restoration, causing high demand for reproduction combination fixtures. He recommends that buildings constructed after 1910 be restored with electric-only fixtures unless research proves otherwise.⁷⁷ Although the postal lobby was built in 1878, it was completely renovated in the 1913-1915 and again in 1937-1938.

Per a 1910 Treasury Department letter, the assistant inspector of the electric light plants recommended that gas only be used for heating water and

⁷⁷ Roger W. Moss, *Lighting for Historic Buildings*, (Washington D.C.: Preservation Press, 1988), 127.

when the electricity fails. By 1911, subcontractors had begun the wiring of the building and the replacing of the fixtures. Thus, the fixtures during the majority of the historic period would have been wired for electricity. A September 1937 inspectors reports outlines the extensive nature of the changes to the interior finishes; however, sixty or more of the earlier lighting fixtures were to be refurbished and re-used on the second and third floors. From this same report, we learn that the building was partially re-wired, the postal lobby fixtures were all new, and that the courtroom fixtures were to be reused.

In the course of the research phase of the recommendations report, I contacted Gary Behm, president of St. Louis Antique Lighting and he provided a set of drawings signed by Supervising Architect J.A. Wetmore that show a number of fixtures used in federal buildings during the twentieth century. This evidence along with the various correspondence, specifications, historic photographs, and plans provide guidance for what the postal lobby and courtroom fixtures looked like during the mid-twentieth century. Unfortunately, many of these lighting fixtures were removed.

The GSA website explains their philosophy regarding replacement or refurbishing of fixtures in its historic structures (see appendix A). This section lays out the recommendations we gave GSA regarding the identification and treatment of existing historic fixtures, shows the recommendations we made for replacements of the non-historic fixtures, and reveals the changes that GSA implemented during their 2008 renovation using pictures taken in 2011 .

Postal Lobby

In 2005, the lighting in the postal lobby currently consisted of non-historic, mounted, rectangular box, fluorescent fixtures on the ceiling, two c.1938 brass sconces on the east wall, and one c.1938 sconce in the janitor's closet. The c.1938 wall sconces were on the east wall of the postal lobby between the two main entrance doors (see figure 10). A simpler sconce remained in the janitor closet underneath the stairs in the northeast corner of the lobby.

We recommended cleaning and retrofitting the historic sconces and removing the non-historic fluorescent fixtures in the postal to be replaced with historically appropriate reproductions. The 1930s dropped pendant fixtures that hung throughout the postal lobby were replaced by mounted box fluorescent lights sometime after the 1950s. It is known from 1937 correspondence between the Mechanical Engineering Section and the lighting contractors Tri-State Electric Company that the postal lobby fixtures were #579 fixtures and ordered to be 6'0" long [the assumption is that this would have been the distance between the ceiling and the of the fixture] (see figures 15 and 16).⁷⁸ Another letter written two months later gives us more details about where fixture #579 would have hung.⁷⁹

The first letter reads:

Your proposal for changing the length of certain fixtures on account of changes in ceiling heights is returned for revision, as the

⁷⁸ Correspondence from N.S. Thompson, Mechanical Engineering Section to Tri-State Electric Company, dated 20 October 1937.

⁷⁹ These fixtures are mentioned in a letter from the Construction Engineer Hubert P. Illman for the 1937-1938 project to the lighting contractor Tri-State Electric Company, dated 15 December 1937.

furnishing of new fixtures, as stated in your proposal is not necessary. You advise that the fixtures are boxed and ready for shipment. This being the case, the changes can be made at the building. Seven #579 fixtures will have to be shortened and one made 8'6" longer.⁸⁰

This letter provided us with enough information to make some educated assumptions. The first is that at least eight #579 fixtures were ordered. Seven of these were going to be shortened. Given the placement of the non-historic fixtures in 2005 and the shorter ceiling height of the mailbox area (13' 10" mailbox area, 14'9" entrance/sales area), it is almost certain that these seven lit the mailbox area of the postal lobby. They would have been hung in a line down the center of the lobby space between the staircase and the northwest entrance in the same location as the current fluorescent fixtures. As far as the one that needed lengthening 8'6", the only place in the building that could accommodate a 14'6" (6' plus the additional 8'6") long fixture is the stairwell in the northeast corner of the lobby. Thus, it is assumed that the eighth fixture referenced in the letter would have been for the stairwell of the lobby stairs.

⁸⁰ Correspondence from N.S. Thompson, Mechanical Engineering Section to Tri-State Electric Company, dated 20 October 1937.

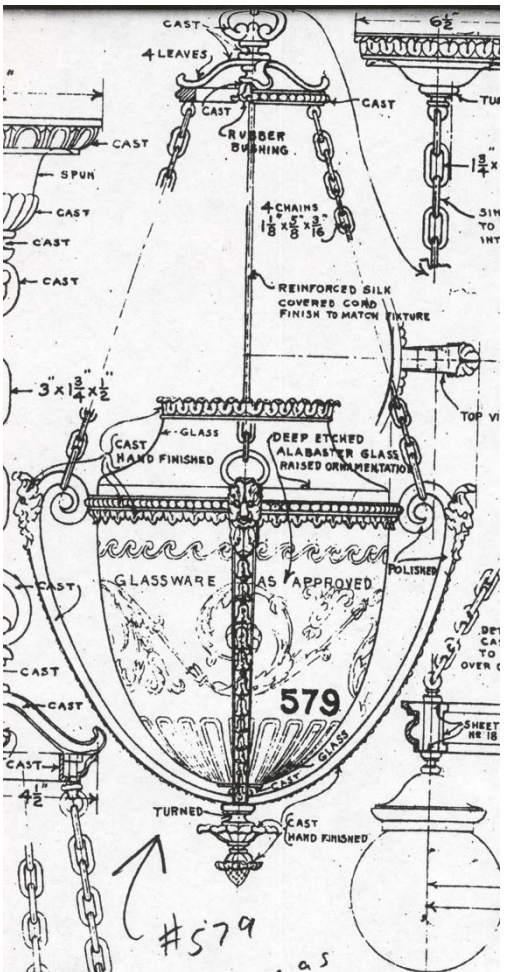


Figure 15: Fixture # 579

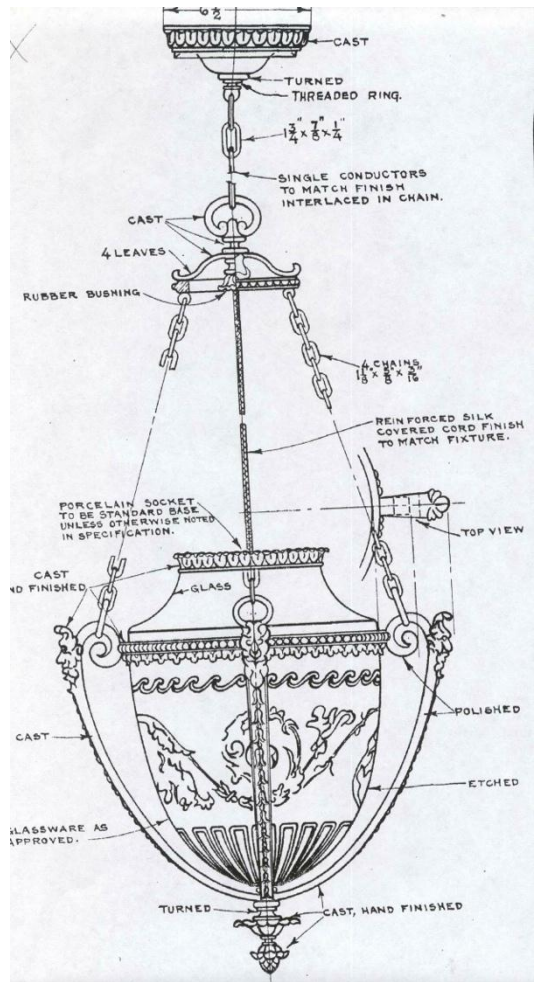


Figure 16: Fixture # 579

Another assumption that can be made based on the October 1937 and December 1937 letters, is that because the #579 fixtures were originally ordered to be 6'0" long for the postal lobby then that length would have been correct for at least some of the fixtures. Thus, these same fixtures also would have been used in the entrance and sales area part of the lobby. If hung in the same location as the current fluorescent fixtures, then there would have been three more #579 fixtures for a total of eleven."

Contact with the St. Louis Antique Lighting Company revealed that they made a fixture, style number CD-6365, equivalent to fixture # 579 (see figures 15 and 16). The fixture cost between \$2,200-\$3,300 dependent on finish and the amount of detail included in the final design. The \$3,300 price buys accuracy; this fixture is exact to within 1/32" of the original and includes a hand-stained antique finish, floret-etched glass, two 42 watt compact fluorescent lamps (equivalent to 300 watts), and an integral ballast. The \$2,300 end of the spectrum includes polished or satin brass with no etching and incandescent lamps.

We recommended that ten reproductions of fixture #579 be ordered and installed in the postal lobby to replace the fluorescent fixtures. The reproductions should be installed in the same location as the ten non-historic florescent lights. The three in the entrance/sales area should be longer than the seven in the mailbox area of the lobby. We also recommended that an eleventh #579 fixture be ordered and installed for the stairwell in the northeast corner of the lobby.



Figure 17: eleventh fixture, NW corner postal lobby



Figure 18: Fixture #579 glass detail

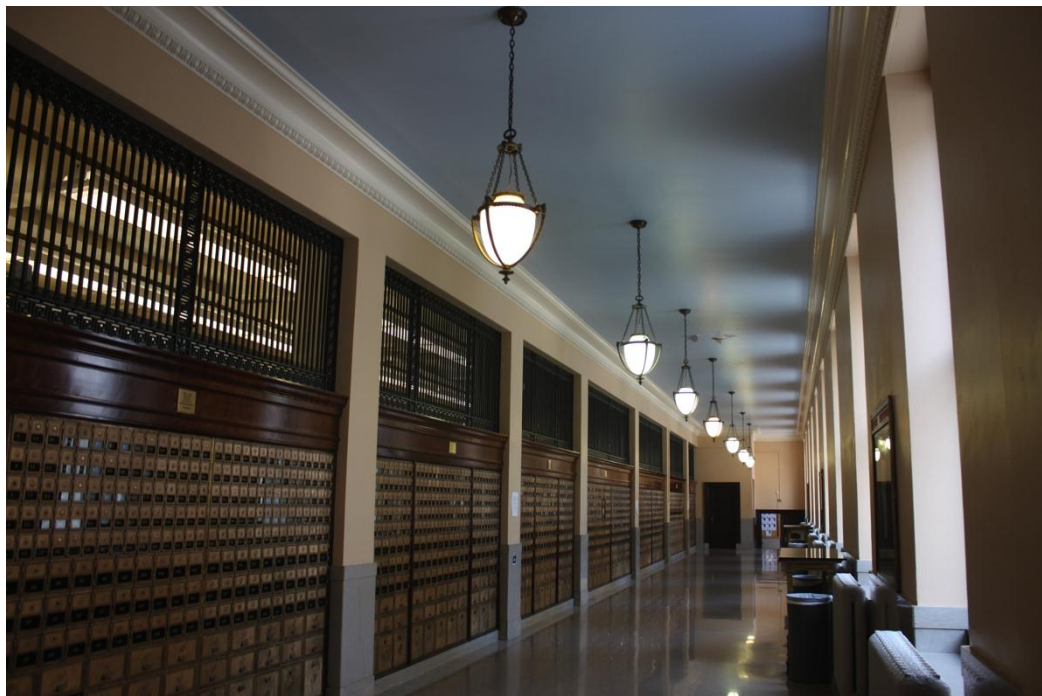


Figure 19: #579 fixtures in the postal lobby

The flooring in the postal lobby is of coral pink marble terrazzo floor with a white Portland cement matrix. The borders are French Pink Tennessee marble (see figures 20 and 21). The layout is original to the 1938 alterations. This flooring is historically appropriate and remains intact.



Figure 20: Postal Lobby Sales Area, 2005



Figure 21: Postal Lobby, 2005

1910s Courtroom

In 2005 all of the lighting in the bankruptcy courtroom was non-historic. The courtroom fixtures included 12 hanging box fluorescent fixtures. These fixtures were historically inappropriate and detracted from the stately nature of the courtroom. One consideration in making recommendations was that during the second half of the twentieth century, renovations to the building, the windows on the east wall that opened into the light well were filled-in and subsequently covered with acoustical panels resulting in a loss of natural light. The transoms on the east wall were also obscured by the addition of ductwork. Both of these alterations resulted in a need for greater artificial lighting.

In the courtroom, we recommended that all obscured and filled-in windows be uncovered to allow for more natural light and a return to more historically accurate lighting fixtures. An October 1937 letter calls for refinishing of the courtroom fixtures and makes mention of a number of fixtures from the Leviton Mfg. Company. Currently, the style and type of these fixtures is not known. However, based on oral history and extensive research into the different types of fixtures that would have been used in public buildings at the beginning of the twentieth century, we recommended historically appropriate hanging fixtures.

According to Judge Rich Leonard, the current bankruptcy judge who occupied the Raleigh federal courtroom in 2005, the Senior Bankruptcy Judge James Fox at the time stated that the fixtures in the Raleigh courtroom were similar to those in the courtroom of the Alton Lennon Federal Courthouse in Wilmington, North Carolina. Judge Fox worked in the Wilmington courtroom at

one time. Judge Leonard shared a copy of a photograph showing the Wilmington courtroom lighting fixtures. Based on further research and this evidence, we recommended for the courtroom fixture #575 and fixture #582. These fixtures were typical fixtures for large courtrooms during the 1910s (see figures 22 and 23). We recommended that one of several configurations be selected from the following depending on the needs of the bankruptcy court on a regular basis. Using GSA standards to specify how much candle power is necessary to light a room the size of the courtroom. These suggestions were based upon photographs of other federal courtrooms around the country.

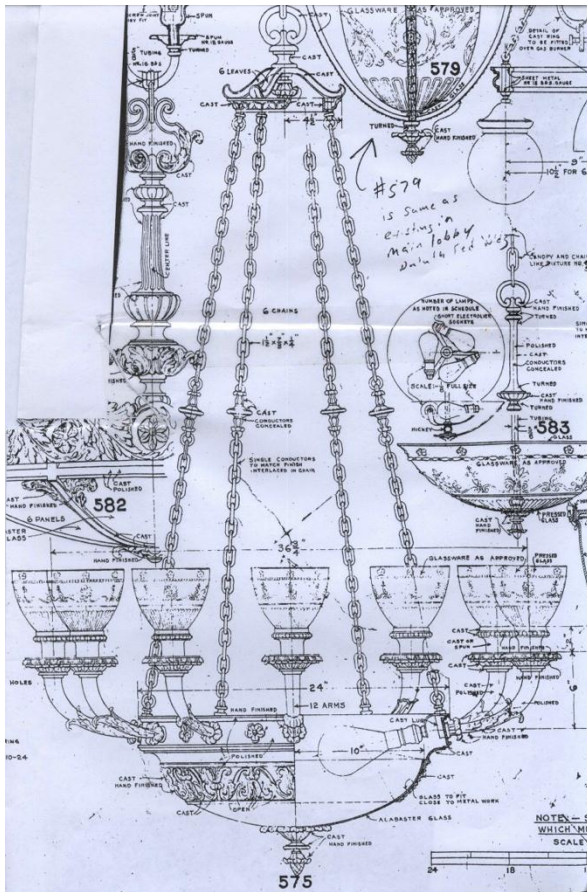


Figure 22: Fixture # 575

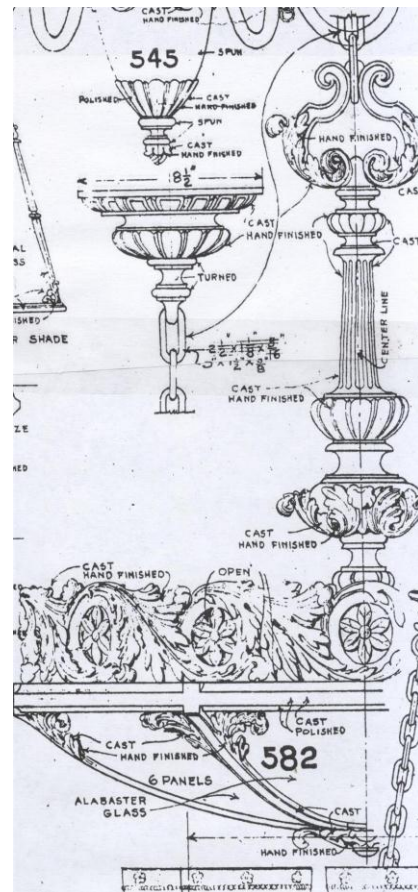


Figure 23: Fixture #582

Option 1: Place one of the larger #575 fixtures in the central ceiling division. This option can be supplemented by lamps and sconces as discussed below.

Option 2: Place four #582 fixtures in each of the four major corner divisions. This option can be supplemented by lamps and sconces as discussed below.

Option 3: Combine option numbers one and two. Place one #575 fixture in the center and one #582 fixture in each of the four corners. This option can be supplemented by lamps and sconces as discussed below.

In the end, GSA chose a combination of options two and three, placing a large #575 in the center of the courtroom flanked by three #582 fixtures on each side for a total of six— one in each corner and an additional #582 between the corner fixtures to provide additional light (see figure 25).



Figure 24: View of courtroom front to back, 2011



Figure 25: View of courtroom side to side, 2011



Figure 26: #575 Fixture, 2011



Figure 27: #582 Fixture, 2011

St. Louis Antique Lighting provided estimates for antique brass fixtures that would replicate fixture numbers 575 and 582. They included etched alabaster acrylic shades and integrated ballasts. Gary Behm recommended full alabaster acrylic for purposes of safety and cost reduction. The use of glass would have necessitated the creation of new molds, a process that would contribute to the overall cost considerably since no molds currently exist for these fixtures. The 12-arm chandeliers that replicate number 575 cost approximately \$27,500 each. The bowl fixtures that replicate number 582 cost approximately \$17,500.

At some point, the judge's bench likely included two lamps like the one numbered 574 on the Lighting Fixtures drawings from the Supervising Architect's Office (see figures 25, 26, and 27). Other possibilities for lighting between the windows of the courtroom appear on these drawing numbered 576. While these sconces were not definitely in the Raleigh building, they were commonly used in courthouses of this size during the 1915 period. GSA decided to use a reproduction of #574 as seen in figures 28 and 30.



Figure 27: Judge's Bench, courtroom, 2005

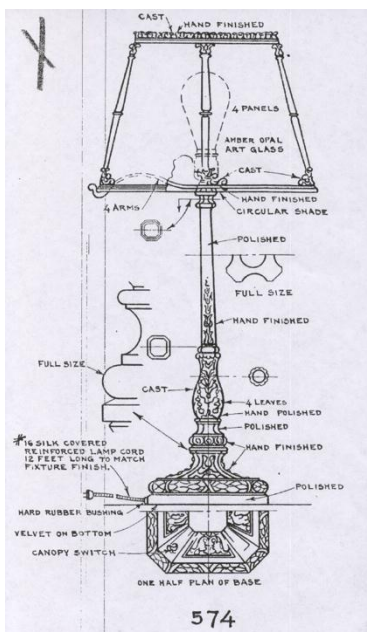


Figure 28: Fixture # 574

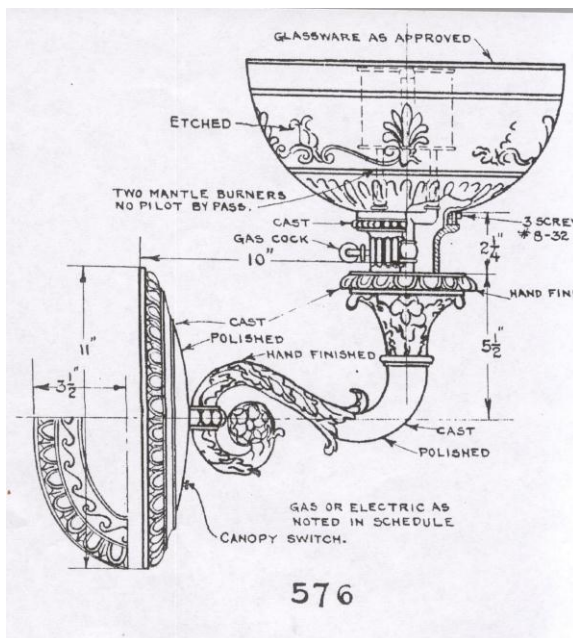


Figure 29: Fixture # 576



Figure 30: Fixture #574 with detail of shade, courtroom, 2011

New Courtroom

My visit to Raleigh in 2011 gave me an opportunity to meet the Honorable Judge Rich Leonard. Judge Leonard took an interest in the Raleigh Federal Building, its history, and architect Alfred Bult Mullett. Judge Leonard, on his own time and of his own volition, hosts tours of the building, helping to maintain a public interest in the building and its history. He researched tirelessly in order to build a courtroom and chambers in the style for which Mullett was famous.

Multiple trips to the Library of Congress allowed him to locate original furniture drawings as well as color photographs of well-restored rooms designed by Mullett. The courtroom and chambers occupied by Judge Leonard are an homage to the man who originally designed the Raleigh Federal Building, and the courtroom is a historically-accurate replica of similar courtrooms designed by Mullett. Leonard commissioned craftsmen to build the judge's chambers and seating area with great detail. Via email, Jensen explained that the work done for Judge Leonard's chambers and bankruptcy courtroom mainly used US Courts

money allocated by Congress to build out the second courtroom in the building for a second bankruptcy judge.



Figure 31: New Mullett-Inspired Courtroom, 2011



Figure 32: New Judges Chambers, 2011

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Since before its construction, the Raleigh Federal Building has been a central component of the federal presence in North Carolina. While designed prior to the Civil War, the plans were not executed until the late 1870s during an era of great social, technological, economic, and political change. The architect, Alfred B. Mullett, brought to Raleigh a distinguished building that symbolized the complexity, stability, and permanence of the nation's government. Although the Second Empire style quickly faded from America's drafting boards, its legacy remains visible in the Raleigh Federal Building.

Like the agency that created it, the Raleigh Federal Building has evolved over time to meet the various requirements of subsequent generations. However, government buildings do not renovate and expand themselves. Architects, contractors, craftsmen, occupants, bureaucrats, politicians, and citizens are involved throughout the process. Thus, the story of the building is also the story of the people who created and used it. Keeping this in mind, the connection between the existing structure and the different phases of its historical development is clearly visible and provides a logical guide for its current and future rehabilitation.

Although Mullett's predecessors simplified the original Second Empire styling, its general character continues to steer subsequent alterations and expansions to the exterior. Even as classical architecture became the style of

choice among government architects and standardization became the rule of practice, the Raleigh Federal Building retained its distinctiveness. The 1910s and 1930s brought noteworthy modifications to the building's interior and exterior. These changes have gained historical significance in their own right and should be respected during any future work.

Per the partnership agreement between the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University and the General Services Administration, the recommended treatments focus mainly on the postal lobby and courtroom. Based on the historical research, visual documentation, and identification of existing character-defining features within these areas, the thesis determined that the postal lobby's size, configuration, and majority of its finishes and furnishings date and should be interpreted to the 1937-1938 renovation, as should the mail sorting area.

The courtroom is the best place within the building to witness the results of the extensive 1913-1915 renovation. Prior to this period the courtroom had been on the third floor. The new plans moved the courtroom to the second floor and increased its ceiling height so that it extended through the third floor. The size, configuration, finishes, and majority of the furnishings date to its early twentieth-century beginnings. Modifications to improve its acoustics and lighting resulted in changes to the stately and rich character of the courtroom. This thesis makes suggestions for lighting, wall, and ceiling treatments that respects the intent of its original design while allowing for modernizations to address the needs of the bankruptcy court.

The Raleigh Century Station Federal Building and Post Office is an impressive and stately building with great architectural and historical significance as an excellent and intact example of a community landmark building that evolved over the course of the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The General Services Administration's ongoing rehabilitation work promises to restore the building to its former magnificence and, hopefully, result in full occupancy. This thesis has provided in-depth documentation of the building's history and evolution and laid out recommendations to help guide GSA's future endeavors regarding the Raleigh Federal Building. It is the wish of the author that by following these recommendations, the GSA will continue to administer an accurate and coherent historic building.

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APPENDIX A

TIMELINE

- 1856: \$50,000 appropriated by Congress for U.S. Post Office and Courtroom in Raleigh, NC
- 1860: Site purchased from Annie Lawrence; \$7,700 paid for lot 99 (7 August)
- 1865: Mullett became Supervising Architect of Department of Treasury
- 1872: Appropriation raised to \$100,000 (considered too little by Mullett)
- 1873: Congress added another \$100,000 to equal \$200,000
Former Governor William W. Holden appointed Postmaster by President Grant.⁸¹
- 1874: Designs prepared; foundation laid on July 4
- 1875: Mullett resigned from position as Supervising Architect
Site Superintendent Architect Hearne resigned from position on December 17; C.S. Harris appointed Site Superintendent Architect in December
- 1877: October 1, W.W. Holden moves office to the building; 1st occupant.
- 1878: Harris fired for delays and for exceeding budget in July,
- 1879: Building completed in this year at a final cost of \$341,496.87.⁸²
- 1880: Courtroom rearranged upon Judge Brooks's request.
- 1890: October 21, Alfred Bult Mullett's death by suicide.⁸³
- 1908: \$7,000 approved for addition of an elevator

⁸¹ NR notes.

⁸²W.H. Hills and J.A Sutherland, *A History of Public Buildings under the Control of the Treasury Department*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), 449.

⁸³ Lois A.Craig, *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Building*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), 156.

other alterations also made at this time, including the addition of a large recessed porch on the main façade.

1910: combination of gas and electric fixtures; call for switch to electricity only.

1912: Boyle-Robinson Construction of Washington had contract.⁸⁴

1913: Congress appropriated \$225,000 for enlargement –
Building depth extended from 5 to 9 bays, another triple dormer added,
chimneys removed, revolving doors added

1915: Building took 2 years to complete; reoccupied in January⁸⁵
Opening of Federal Courtroom⁸⁶

1931: \$360,000 allotted for expansion of Post Office by the postal and treasury
departments.⁸⁷

1937-38: Building depth extended again from 9 to 13 bays. Interior renovated

1953: Building received overhaul, including new paint on new and/ or exposed
surfaces

1971: Building listed on National Register of Historic Places

1972-1973: Contractor George Jensen hired to perform building updates

2002: July 12, building appraised for \$18,000,000, replacement cost.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ News & Observer, Jan. 19. 1915, 6.

⁸⁵ NR notes.

⁸⁶ Henry G. Connor, Remarks Upon the Opening of the Federal Court Room, Raleigh, North Carolina, January 18, 1915. Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton, 1915.

⁸⁷ News and Observer, Feb. 28, 1931, 1.

⁸⁸ General Services Administration Building Preservation Program, *Region 4, Building Appraisal, 300 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC* (Atlanta: General Services Administration, 2002), 1.