

TREASURY BUILDING.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A Report of the Architect of the Public Buildings, with a Plan of the Treasury Building now in process of erection, &c.

DECEMBER 21, 1837.

Referred to the Committee on Public Buildings.

WASHINGTON, December 21, 1837.

To the House of Representatives of the United States :

In compliance with a resolution of the House of Representatives of the last session, I transmit a report made to me by the architect of the public buildings, with the accompanying documents, exhibiting a plan of the Treasury building now in process of erection; showing its location in reference to the adjacent streets and public square on which it is located; its elevation; the number and size of the rooms it will afford suitable for office business; and the number and size of those suitable only for the deposit of records; with a statement of the sum expended on said building; and an estimate of the sum that will be requisite to complete the same. As the 5th section of the act of July 4, 1836, under the authority of which this building has been commenced, provides only for the erection of an edifice of such dimensions as may be required for the present and future accommodation of the Treasury Department, the size of the structure has been adapted to that purpose, and it is not contemplated to appropriate any part of the building to the use of any other department. As it is understood, however, that the plan of the edifice admits of its being completed either with or without wings; and that, if Congress should think proper, accommodation may be provided, by means of wings, consistently with the harmony of the original design, for the Department of State and the General Post Office; it is not thought that the public interest requires any change in the location or plan, although it is believed that the convenience of the public business would be promoted by including in the building the proposed accommodations for the two other Departments just mentioned. The report of the architect shows the supposed difference of the expense that would be incurred in the event of the construction of the

Thomas Allen, print.

building with wings, in taking down the building now occupied by the Department of State, or repairing it so as to render it fire-proof, and make its outside conform to the other parts of the new building.

I also transmit statements from the heads of the several Departments of the number and size of the rooms that are necessary for their respective Departments for office business and for the deposit of records.

M. VAN BUREN.

CITY OF WASHINGTON, *December 16, 1837.*

SIR: In conformity with the requisition from the House of Representatives of October 14, 1837, "that the President of the United States be requested to lay before the House at the next session of Congress, a plan of the Treasury building now being erected; showing its location in reference to the adjacent streets and public square on which it is located; its elevation; the number and size of the rooms it will afford suitable for office business, and the number and size of those suitable only for the deposit of records; with a statement of the sum then expended on said building, and an estimate of the further sum that will be required to complete the same; and to state whether it is contemplated, in the completion of said building, to take down the building of the Department of State, or so to repair it as to render it fire-proof, and to make its outside conform to the other part of the Treasury building, and what will be the difference of expense between these two modes of completing said building; and whether the public interest requires any change in the location or plan of said building; and also to state whether it is contemplated to appropriate any part of said Treasury building to the use of any other department," I have the honor, as directed, to report as follows:

Document No. 1 is a drawing* showing the "general plan of the building," as approved by the President of the United States. The appropriations for the public buildings made in 1836 having reference but to the construction of a new Treasury building, the President, in adopting my design, directed that the part allotted for the Treasury Department only should be put under construction, leaving for the future action of Congress to carry out the design, or finish the Treasury building within itself. The drawings exhibit the whole design; and the south wing, which was not required for the accommodation of the Treasury, was intended for another Department; this accounts for the explanation on the same.

Documents Nos. 2 and 3 are diagram drawings, showing the "location" of the Treasury (and other buildings named) "in reference to the adjacent streets and public square on which these buildings are located."

Document No. 4 is a perspective drawing, showing the elevation of the whole design, embracing all the buildings named. (The larger drawings will be exhibited in a proper place in the Hall of Representatives.) "The number and size of the rooms" in the Treasury building now under construction are as follows: Each floor contains 35 rooms, of an average area each, equal to 318 square feet, or about 18 feet square; those in the front building being 21 feet by 15 feet, and those in the rear building about 17 by 19 feet; making in all, including the basement floor, 140

* The Drawings referred to are omitted to be printed, under the order of the House of Representatives of September 11, 1837.

rooms of this description; to which must be added, two large rooms 54 feet long and 15 feet wide, and eight small rooms, 15 feet by 10 feet, besides a vaulted gallery, well lighted, under the colonnade, 340 feet long and 11 feet wide. Out of this number of rooms, 14 may be deducted, which are better suited for "the deposit of records," and for other purposes, than for "office business," leaving 136 rooms of the latter description.

The whole expenditures upon the Treasury building, up to the 1st of December instant, amounts to	-	-	-	\$200,065 79
Required to complete the same	-	-	-	299,934 21
Balance of the appropriation on hand	-	-	-	156,934 21

With reference to the inquiry "whether it is contemplated, in the completion of said building, to take down the building of the Department of State, or so to repair it as to render it fire-proof, and to make its outside conform to the other part of the Treasury building, and what will be the difference of expense between these two modes of completing said building," I would state that, if the present building is made to undergo the changes necessary "to render it fire-proof, and to make its outside conform to the other part of the Treasury building," the whole of the interior walls will have to be removed, the building elongated west, the exterior walls cased with cut stone, and another story added, which changes would leave little of the original building, except the exterior walls, standing; therefore, the difference of expense between thus altering the building and erecting a new structure, would have reference principally to the value of the materials taken out of the old and used in the new building, which may be estimated at \$10,000. It would be possible, by a change in the general design, at its extremes, to preserve the present arrangement of the rooms, (except in one part,) which would reduce the expense considerably, at least \$20,000, should a departure from the original design be thought expedient to accomplish this object.

Upon the next point of inquiry, "whether the public interest requires any change in the location or plan of said building," I would remark that it was always my opinion that all the executive offices should have been placed contiguous to each other, if not under the same roof; and this opinion, I believe, was also that of your predecessor, and of the heads of the different Departments, at the period when the first designs were projected for these offices, upon the public square north of the President's house.

Soon after the burning of the Treasury building in 1833, I prepared some designs, [see document No. 5,] for the construction of fire-proof buildings for the public offices, projected upon a plan to bring all the Departments contiguous to each other, or under the same roof. This design was laid before the President, who, at the succeeding session of Congress, referred the drawings to the Committee on Public Buildings. The committee at that time had no view to a change in the location of the offices, and I was directed to make plans for the extension simply of the existing buildings, but no action was had at that session. The following session I submitted other designs, suited to a location south of the President's square, cornering on Fifteenth and Seventeenth streets, and fronting north and south. Some of the Committee on Public Buildings were in favor of this plan, but a majority were in favor of continuing the offices upon the old site, and this opinion continued to the period when the appropriations were made for commencing the buildings. These facts lead to the infer-

ence that the President, in his selection of the old site, was influenced by this expression of opinion on the part of the committee. All the plans projected for this location contemplated an extent of building reaching from the State Department nearly or quite to the Pennsylvania avenue.

It is admitted that "the public interests" would be best subserved were all the executive offices brought under the same roof; and under this impression I should certainly say that the other executive buildings, when ordered to be erected, should have a different location, where the object of contiguity to each other could be obtained, and the buildings seen to the best advantage. Such change of site would necessarily cause a change in the plan to suit such location.

Should the Executive favor this view of the subject, and would recommend to Congress a change in the site of the future edifices, (four Departments out of the five having to be provided for with buildings,) the present structure might be finished for one of the Departments; and, until the others could be provided, both the Treasury and General Post Office may be accommodated in the new building, under certain provisions; so that the two Departments occupying the most vulnerable buildings by fire, would, in the course of one year, if not less, be secured from the possibility of destruction from such a cause.

All which is respectfully submitted.

ROBT. MILLS,
Architect Public Buildings.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE U. S.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

December 15, 1837.

The Secretary of State, to whom was referred, by the President, a resolution of the House of Representatives, passed at the last session, with directions to state the number and size of the rooms that are necessary for this Department for office business and for the deposit of records, has the honor to report, that for those purposes twenty-four rooms are required; the dimensions of twenty thereof to be twenty by seventeen feet, and of the other four, sixty by seventeen feet.

Respectfully submitted.

JOHN FORSYTH.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE U. S.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,

December 20, 1837.

SIR: In compliance with your note of the 18th October last, I have the honor to state that forty-one rooms are required for the accommodation of the officers, clerks, books, and papers of the Post Office Department, which should not materially vary from the following dimensions, viz:

3	rooms	24	feet	by	18.
21	"	20	"		18.
17	"	18	"		16.

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41

The Auditor for the Post Office Department reports to me that the convenient despatch of business in his office requires thirty-three rooms, viz :

1	room	24	feet	by	18.
2	"	18	"		18.
28	"	18	"		16.
2	"	18	"		14.

33

To this must be added cellars or other provision for the security of about 200 cords of wood and 100 tons of coal.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

AMOS KENDALL.

Hon. JOHN FORSYTH, *Secretary of State.*

WAR DEPARTMENT,

December 18, 1837.

SIR: Herewith I have the honor to lay before you a report of the officer in charge of the Topographical bureau, which contains the information respecting the number and size of the rooms necessary for the business of this Department, required by a resolution of the House of Representatives.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE U. S.

TOPOGRAPHICAL BUREAU,

Washington, December 14, 1837.

SIR: In obedience to your orders, I have the honor of submitting to your consideration the facts collected in reference to the rooms occupied by the War Department, called for by a resolution of the House of Representatives of the last session.

The annexed tabular statement exhibits, in different columns—

1. The number of rooms now occupied for the transaction of business.
 2. The number now in use for the preservation of documents and records.
 3. The total number now in use.
 4. The number really required at the present time to meet the wants of business.
 5. The increase to meet the probable wants for the next ten years.
 6. Total number of rooms, on the supposition of erecting a new building.
- From this tabular statement it appears that the total number of rooms in use at present are 92, the total now required 109, and the total on the supposition of a new building 116.

It will also appear that, of the 92 rooms now in use, there are in the building denominated the War Department, no more than

In the building denominated the Navy Department	-	8
And of private property now under rent	-	34

There are, therefore, no less than forty-two rooms now occupied, not under the roof of the War Department, thirty-four of which are hired or rented rooms, and the remaining eight, in the Navy Department building, are occupied there of necessity, but to the serious prejudice of the business of that Department.

As a further illustration of the tabular statement, there is annexed to this report a plan of the present War Department building, exhibiting the present arrangement of its rooms.

The space required for a full and complete War Department, including the number of rooms in the last column of the tabular statement, supposing the average dimensions of each room to be 19.8 by 16.9, is 38,815 square feet, which would furnish a building containing 116 rooms, each capable of accommodating conveniently two persons.

The space now occupied in the War Department building is 12,154 square feet, but that occupied by all the War Department offices is about 30,395, and that required for the complete accommodation of the Department 38,815 square feet.

The present War Department building is actually deficient, in present occupied space, 18,240 square feet, the greater part of which is private property under rent to the Department, and its deficiency in real wants for the convenient transaction of the public business is about 26,665 square feet.

Having shown that a space in rooms of at least 38,815 square feet is necessary for the convenient execution of the duties of the Department, other considerations will have to be involved in calculating the space which would be actually furnished by the building, such as rooms for the War Department library, trophies of the Revolution and of the last war, space for halls, stair-ways, &c., and the character of architecture which may be adopted. These considerations would probably increase the building space required to about 44,000 square feet.

The arrangement of this space, however, in reference to stories, convenient distribution of rooms, in order to proper supplies of air and light, &c. must, of necessity, depend upon the locality of the building, and cannot, therefore, be stated in anticipation.

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

J. J. ABERT,
Lt. Col. Top. Engineers.

Hon. J. R. POINSETT,
Secretary of War.

Information required by the Secretary of War, in conformity with a resolution of Congress of the last session.

Department of War.	Number of rooms now occupied for the transaction of current business of the office.	Number of rooms now in use for the preservation of public documents, records, lumber-rooms, &c.	Total number of rooms now in use.	Number of rooms really required at the present time to meet the requirements of business.	Increase in number required to meet the probable contingencies for the next ten years.	Total number of rooms required, on the supposition of a new building.	Remarks.
War Department proper - - -	7	4	11	12	3	15	Secretary of War.
Bounty Land office - - -	2	1	3	3	-	3	Three rented rooms.
Pension office - - -	10	3	13	15	-	15	Seven rented rooms.
Indian department - - -	7	2	9	12	1	13	In War Department.
Engineer department - - -	6	-	6	7	-	7	Six rented rooms.
Quartermaster's department - - -	4	1	5	5	-	5	In War Department.
Ordnance department - - -	5	-	5	6	-	6	Three rented rooms.
Pay department - - -	3	-	3	4	-	4	Three rented rooms.
Topographical engr's department - - -	7	-	7	7	2	9	Seven rented rooms.
Subsistence department - - -	3	-	3	5	-	5	Three rented rooms.
Surgeon General's department - - -	2	-	2	4	-	4	Two rented rooms.
Adjutant General's department - - -	4	2	6	7	-	7	In War Department.
Second Auditor's office - - -	6	3	9	9	-	9	In War Department.
Third Auditor's office - - -	7	1	8	11	1	12	In Navy Department.
Headquarters - - -	2	-	2	2	-	2	In War Department.
	75	17	92	109	7	116	

NOTE.—The two rooms on the second floor in the southwest angle of the War Department are occupied by the Attorney General.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,

December 20, 1837.

SIR: In compliance with the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 14th of October last, requesting the President of the United States to cause to be prepared, by the heads of each Department, statements of the number and size of the rooms that are necessary for their respective Departments, for office business and for the deposit of records, I have the honor to state to you, that for the office of the Secretary of the Navy there are required ten rooms 18 feet by 20 feet for office business, and one room, 18 feet by 20 feet in addition to the present small fire-proof room,

for the deposit of records. This calculation is adapted to the present condition and wants of the office. As the navy is enlarged and the business of the office is increased, greater accommodation will be necessary. The rooms above mentioned are exclusive of the two rooms in the attic story of the Navy Department building now occupied by two of the clerks of the Secretary's office, but which are altogether unfit for the uses and purposes to which they are appropriated.

For information as to the number and size of the rooms required for the offices of the Navy Commissioners, Second Comptroller of the Treasury, and Fourth Auditor, I respectfully refer you to the accompanying reports of those officers.

I have the honor to be, sir, most respectfully, your obedient,
M. DICKERSON.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

NAVY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE,

November 21, 1837.

SIR: In reply to your letter of the 3d instant, the Board of Navy Commissioners have the honor to state that they require, for the convenient transaction of their office business, and for the deposit of their records, as follows:

Seven rooms about 18 feet by 20 feet.

Eight rooms about 10 feet wide by 20, or the depth of the other rooms.

One fire-proof room, for letter-books and other papers, about 18 by 20 feet.

One large room, say 60 by 40 feet, for the arrangement and preservation of models, drawings, and plans; for which an attic room would be sufficient; and should a civil engineer be appointed, which seems to be indispensable, then there will be required, in addition to the foregoing,

Two rooms about 18 by 20 feet.

One room of about 10 by 20 feet, or the depth of the other rooms.

The smaller-sized rooms are proposed with a view to place most of the clerks in separate rooms, having one window in each.

If the arrangement of any proposed building will not admit of this, then each room of the larger size will accommodate two clerks, and the number can be reduced accordingly.

I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect, your obedient servant,
I. CHAUNCEY.

HON. MAHLON DICKERSON,
Secretary of the Navy.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

Second Comptroller's Office, Nov. 8, 1837.

SIR: In reply to yours of the 3d instant, requesting me to furnish you with a statement of the number and size of the rooms necessary for the transaction of the public business of this office, I have to state that, in my opinion, seven rooms of about 16 by 18 feet in size are *now* necessary for

the above purpose ; one to be occupied by the Comptroller, and five by the clerks, now ten in number. The remaining room to be used for the deposite of the records of the office. Whenever, in consequence of the increase of business, more clerks shall be necessary, additional rooms will be required for their accommodation, as it is neither convenient nor useful that more than two should occupy one room.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALBION K. PARRIS,

Comptroller.

Hon. M. DICKERSON,

Secretary of the Navy.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

Fourth Auditor's Office, Nov. 9, 1837.

SIR: In reply to your letter of the 3d instant, requesting to know the number and size of the rooms necessary for the transaction of the public business of the office of the Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, and of its records, I have the honor to state that, at present, ten rooms would be sufficient, allowing one for the Auditor, and seven for the clerks ; supposing each room to be occupied by no more than two, and, in my opinion, two in a room are enough, and two rooms for the records.

If, in providing rooms for the clerks and records, any regard should be paid to the probable increase of the business of this office, three or four might be added to the number now necessary ; and should a property account for the navy be kept in it, (and according to law it ought to be,) two more should be added, as, from two to four additional clerks would be required to keep it.

I will add that, at present, the want of room in this office subjects it to much inconvenience ; the clerks are too much crowded, and it is impossible to keep the papers and records in the order in which they should be kept for the prompt and satisfactory transaction of business.

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. C. PICKETT.

Hon. M. DICKERSON,

Secretary of the Navy.

