

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: 13000812

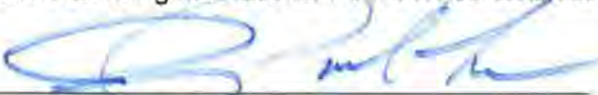
Date Listed: 1/7/2014

Property Name: Government House
(Florida's New Deal Resources MPS)

County: St. Johns

State: FL

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation


Signature of the Keeper

2/9/17
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination: The original "local" level of significance assigned to this property has been changed to "state" level of significance due to the fact that Government House is significant on a statewide basis for its role, beginning in 1959, as the headquarters and focus of the first of eight legislatively created municipal and county preservation boards in Florida. When six of these boards, including Saint Augustine's, were abolished in 1997, the State of Florida entrusted the state's flagship university, the University of Florida, with stewardship of its historic properties in St. Augustine. In recognition of this building's significance to the state of Florida and 450 years of history at this site, legislative appropriations totaling \$7.7 million have been provided to ensure the long-term preservation of this landmark WPA project.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



Resub

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Government House

other names/site number U.S. Post Office, U.S. Post Office and Custom House/SJ1027

2. Location

street & number 48 King Street n/a not for publication

city or town St. Augustine n/a vicinity

state Florida code FL county St. Johns code 109 zip code 32084

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Robert A. Bendus 11/26/13
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]

1-7-2014

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | 0 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 0 | total |

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Florida's New Deal Resources

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco

walls Stucco
Stone: Coquina

roof Terra Cotta: flat tile

other Metal: Cast Iron ornament
Cast Stucco ornament

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A, B, C, D, E, F, G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Checkboxes for documentation types: preliminary determination, previously listed, etc.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Conservation

Period of Significance

1935-1937

Significant Dates

1935-1937

Significant Person

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Greeley, Mellen Clark, Architect

Barnes, James I., Firm of, Contractor

Name of Repository

University of Florida, Gainesville

#

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | 1 7 | 4 6 9 7 6 8 | 3 3 0 6 9 1 0 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 3 | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 4 | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Antoinette J. Lee, Consulting Historian & Barbara E. Mattick, Deputy SHPO for Survey & Registration

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date August 2013

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name State of Florida, Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, c/o Division of State Lands

street & number Carr Building, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard telephone 850-245-2555

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-3000

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

Government House is located at 48 King Street in St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida. It was constructed 1935-1937 for post office, customs collection, and other Federal government functions. The building is three stories in height and has a gable roof covered by flat terra cotta tile. The east wing contains three old coquina walls; the other walls are constructed of coquina and stucco. Each street façade has a balcony. The east wing includes a walled patio. Main entrances are on the north and south facades and lead into the main post office lobby, now an exhibition lobby.¹ The building contains 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors, with an additional 2,415 square feet in the basement. The building was designed to use as much of the surviving historic fabric as possible and conform to its appearance as illustrated in a 1764 watercolor painting.

SETTING

The seat of government of St. Johns County, St. Augustine is located approximately 45 miles south of Jacksonville. The population of the city is 13,051 (2011). King Street serves as the main east-west corridor into the city, and U.S. Highway 1 is the primary thoroughfare along the western side of the city. The building is located on the block bounded by King Street, Cordova Street, Cathedral Place, and St. George Street and faces the original Spanish Plaza to the east. It forms an integral part of the complex of colonial, territorial, and late 19th century buildings that surround the plaza.

The Spanish Plaza is considered the center of historic St. Augustine, and includes the public market (also referred to as the slave market), the Spanish Constitution Monument, the Confederate War Memorial, a memorial listing servicemen from the city who served in the 20th century wars, four artillery pieces dating from the Mexican War and Civil War periods, the gazebo, and two colonial-era wells that have been excavated by archeologists.

To the west of Government House is the west garden area, which is historically connected to the building as part of the Federal government's property, but is not included in this nomination because it is not related to the significance of Government House in the New Deal era or its architectural significance. The west garden area contains an important granite obelisk monument, the William Wing Loring (1818-1886) Monument, and a brass plaque to the north of the monument that expands on Loring's role as an army officer who fought under three flags--the United States, the Confederacy, and Egypt. After his death in New York City, Loring was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery in Jacksonville, Florida. In 1920, the U.S. Treasury Department, which was responsible

¹ The Government House description is based on the material provided in *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31, 2012. Susan Tate, AIA, Preservation Architect, was responsible for the historical narrative in the Historic Structure Report.

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for the administration of the St. Augustine post office building and adjoining Federal government land, provided the site for the Loring monument to the Anna Dummett Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy. Loring's remains were removed from the Evergreen Cemetery and re-interred at the monument site. The State Museum, University of Florida, provided the brass plaque.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION
EXTERIOR**

The plan of Government House forms an irregular "L" on the eastern boundary of the property. The east, north, and south facades are the major public elevations, with the west elevation being used as a delivery area and service area. The building is constructed of masonry over a steel frame structure. The east façade makes the strongest physical statement of historical reference because it most closely resembles a 1764 watercolor painting of the building (Photo 35).

The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and the corners. Here the old coquina in an irregular course is exposed. The building's architect, Mellen Clark Greeley, retained three of the old walls: the north wall (1834), the east wall (1713, partly reconstructed in 1786), and most of the south wall (1713).

All of the openings in the walls date to the 1930s; the former openings having been filled with masonry as required. The openings consist of wood casement windows (Photo 12) and doors with stone sills. Solid wood batten doors with iron straps and exposed hammered bolt heads are used in the older section and plate glass doors are used in the new portion of the main lobby.

A Spanish-style wood balcony is located over the main entrance on the north wall and a similar balcony on the east wall and south wall. A four-foot wall of coquina encloses a small court on the north, and a similar wall encloses a large patio on the southeast corner.

East Façade: The east wall makes the strongest physical statement of historical reference, influenced by a 1764 watercolor drawing of the former government house. The east wing contains three old coquina walls. The east façade of the wing is dominated by the ceremonial balcony with heavy wood brackets, posts, and balustrade, features that recall but do not replicate the 18th century representation. The east balcony is reflected in the balconies above the north and the south entrances, although each is differentiated by details specific to each location (Photos 1 & 2).

The 1935 design of the east façade provides for exposed coquina at the vertical quoins of the former corner projections or "towers" and at the former window openings, but considerable infill of stucco on brick was incorporated between the projecting ends, in window openings, and to extend the gable peak. The south wall of

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the east section, punctuated by French doors on both levels, was built 58 feet, 9 inches to the Main Lobby at the point of intersection with the early cross wall.

Although the wing's south wall is composed primarily of five sets of French doors or casements on both levels, some early coquina masonry may have been incorporated (primarily at the east corner) and reconstructed between the ground level openings to the southeast courtyard.

North Façade: The north entrance is the central focal point of the north façade and is defined by a projection of the main roof over the upper balcony. The north façade extends 115 feet, 4 inches up to the recessed and lower height northwest ell, which continues to 145 feet, 2 inches in overall dimension. Up to the stepped back ell, the north façade is flat with a fenestration of varied heights and spacing and a dominant chimney to the northeast (Photos 3 & 4).

The 1935 casement windows remain preserved (Photo 12). The north façade features random exposed coquina, combined with stucco over brick infill over a steel frame. The north wall, dating from the ca. 1833 Mills/Wallen extension, was removed above the second floor line, and new openings were cut according to the 1935 plan so that fragments of the previous wall, alongside reconstructed coquina masonry, are exposed.

West Façade: Formerly the west façade served as the loading dock for the post office. This loading dock was later enclosed during the tenure of the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board (1966-1997) and the open gate on the south wall of the service court was walled between the driveway piers. A parking area is adjacent to the loading dock (Photos 5 & 6).

South Façade: The classical south entrance is headed by a flat parapet that adjoins the projecting south gable that encompasses an upper level balcony. The southwest ell is recessed from the south façade and terminates in the dominant chimney. The south entrance façade extends 58 feet, 11 inches westward to the recessed ell, which extends 29 feet, 10 inches to a total dimension of 88 feet, 9 inches from the east courtyard wall. The southwest ell and northwest ell enclose the service area and loading dock that served the post office (Photos 7, 8, & 9).

The south elevation is protected by the two-story gallery or porch. The gallery, along with large trees conserved during the project, provides shading from the south sun. The courtyard is defined by coquina masonry garden walls that intersect with the east and south elevations of the building.

Coquina is a native shellstone found in the coastal region of Florida and Cuba and is considered an important traditional building material in St. Augustine. It is stone formed from coquina shells in large deposits that become cemented by calcium carbonate over long periods of time (over 100,000 years). Over the different locations in which it is found, the stone varies in texture and hardness. The most prized variety is from the Anastasia formation found near St. Augustine. The American Indians in the St. Augustine area were familiar

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with the stone and it became known and used by the European settlers. In the late 17th century, coquina was used in the construction of the Castillo de San Marcos. It was easy to quarry and absorbed cannon shot damage well. Its use was largely discontinued after the colonial period as it was difficult and expensive to acquire, and is a very limited natural resource. Beyond St. Augustine, only a few Florida cities contain New Deal public buildings executed with coquina, including the Bunnell Civic Center, the Daytona Beach Bandshell, the Tarragona Tower and Arch, Holly Hill Municipal Building, and the New Smyrna Beach City Hall.

INTERIOR

The building analysis identifies a total of 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors: 11,127 square feet on the first floor and 10,728 square feet on the second floor. The basement provides an additional 2,415 square feet.

The main lobby forms the north-south spine of the building and was the hub of public activity for the post office. From the north entrance, the west wall gave access to the inquiry window and an obscure glass door leading to the Superintendent of Mails. The six bays, separated by pilasters and defined by floor and ceiling patterns, included spaces for mail drops, parcel post windows, stamp counters, and general delivery counters. On the west side of the mail lobby are bays for postal boxes, a C.O.D. window, and windows for money order, registry, and postal savings services (Photos 13, 14, & 15).

The main lobby walls are finished in marble wainscot with brass grilles for the heating system. Original openings for postal windows and boxes remain, but the glass grilles and boxes, as well as the four ornamental lobby tables, have been removed. Original lanterns and door hardware are extant.

The interior doorways at the north and south entrances emphasize the significance of the lobby space, with lunettes or tympanums over the doors, with a relief panel at the north, and spokes and glazing at the south. The entrance to the east section was also emphasized with a sculptural relief in the lunette over the doorway.

The east section was designed to incorporate offices for the Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster, which opened from the lobbies along the east and south. The offices were connected by a passage with closet and toilet facilities. The east section east and south lobby floor is terrazzo with metal strips and marble borders, in a modular pattern that conforms with ceiling modules of exposed decorative wood beams at the south and plaster vaults at the east. Marble wainscoting and antiqued heavy wood doors form entrances to the east lobby and to the postmaster's office. The two offices have smooth plaster ceilings with pendant translucent luminaries (Photos 18, 19, & 20).

To the west of the main lobby, behind the postal windows, is the two-story post office work space. Iron grille work with shield details along the lobby ceiling line offer an opportunity for ventilation. The work space is

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large and open to the second level. Immediately to the west of the north entrance was the office of the Superintendent of Mails, with access from the Main Lobby and from the workspace through a caged vestibule. The hardwood flooring, the observation platforms, and viewing slots to provide security for the mail operations extend around the upper level of the work space with steel access ladders that remain in place.

The main lobby provides access to the second floor by a monumental masonry stairway leading to an upper lobby and foyer corridor to the east suite of offices, originally designated for the customs collection functions (Photos 16 & 17). From the foyer, a corridor opens an *en suite* office space leading to a grand "Custom Office" at the end of the east section. The office features a platform with steps to reach the upper balcony looking east over the Plaza, a corner fireplace, windows to the north, and two sets of French doors opening to the south gallery (Photos 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27).

The remainder of the upper floor included four offices at the east and south, two toilets, and a custodial closet, accessed by a corridor from the main stair and short upper flight of stairs (Photos 28, 29, 30, & 31).

The 1930s decorative hardware remains throughout the building's exterior and interior. The features include polished bronze door levers on the courtyard wall of the main lobby, bronze thumb latches, bronze thresholds, radiator grilles, and bronze insect screens. The main stair case that connects the postal functions on the first floor with the customs collection functions on the second floor features a turned wooden newel post, decorative iron balusters, and marble trim (Photos 10 & 11).

The architect of the building, Mellen C. Greeley, described the decorative features in early 1936:

The door at the north entrance and the doors to the "Historical Room" are replicas of the door from the court yard to the Treasury in old Fort Marion, another historic building in the City. These doors are fitted with copies of the original hand wrought iron hardware. The ornamental stone doorway at the main entrance on King Street is an architectural adaptation of the doorway from the Court yard to the Chapel in Fort Marion with certain modifications, but with an attempt to reproduce the art of the period during which both of these original buildings were erected. The roof covering is of burned clay single tiles, in color ranging from black or purple to red, such as were used on similarly steep pitched roofs in northern Spain.²

² Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida, Being Erected by Procurement Division of the Treasury Department, of the United States of America, January 27, 1936," document attached to letter from Mellen C. Greeley to F. Larkin, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD, p. 6.

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Today, the building retains a high level of integrity dating to the 1935 design. The post office lobby, the most important interior room, retains much of the decorative details and feel of a post office lobby. The most important exterior walls—the north, east, and south—are unchanged from their mid-1930s appearance. The immediate surroundings are the same as they were when the 1930s work was completed.

According to the recently completed (2012) historic structure report on Government House, the following character-defining features of the building remain intact: (1) building form and site, (2) hardware and wood trim, (3) postal lobby and monumental stair, (4) customs office and supporting spaces, and (5) east section, ground level.³ All of these features are intact and in good condition.

ALTERATIONS

After the 1966 decommissioning of the post office functions, the original east section spaces and partition walls were demolished in 1969, retaining the encased steel columns and ceilings. The interior of the main floor east section thereafter consisted of a single space.

Currently, renovations are being undertaken to the existing restrooms, catering kitchen, storage, and museum gallery along with upgrades to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The majority of this work affects the west half of the first floor, an area that historically was non-public, including some areas that are not original to the 1930s era building. Some elements of the original building will be restored through this project, including exposing and repairing original teller windows with decorative metal grills. In July 2012, the historic preservation architect of the Florida Division of Historic Resources issued an approval of the Historic Structures Report and 100% Construction Documents for the rehabilitation work currently underway.

³ *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31st, 2012, p. 4-12.

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ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

Government House is nominated to the National Register for **local significance** under **Criterion A** in the areas of **Social History** and **Conservation**, and under **Criterion C** in the area of **Architecture**. The building is significant for its association with the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA), two of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal agencies. Combating unemployment and assisting communities with improving their public buildings and infrastructure, the New Deal programs represented the growing importance of government at the local, state, and Federal levels during the Great Depression. The building was designed for post office, customs collection, and other Federal government functions and was designed as a historic building "restoration," though it did not conform to restoration work as understood today, or to restoration work as it was being performed concurrently on two other New Deal projects in Florida, the Gregory House at Torreya State Park and Fort Clinch, which became state parks. The "restoration" of Government House in the 1935 design does not conform to today's standards for a "restoration" under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. It did, however, conform to the model of "restoration" used by Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Government House retains integrity as a postal facility.

Government House is nominated under "**Florida's New Deal Resources Multiple Property Submission,**" (MPS) under the **historic associated context** "**New Deal in Florida, 1933-1943,**" and the **F.1 property type,** "**Buildings.**"

In the Multiple Property Submission for Florida's New Deal Resources, in Section E, pages 43-44, the following paragraphs substantiate the historical and architectural significance of Government House:

Completed in 1935 [1937], St. Augustine's post office linked old with new and inspired the Ancient City's later preservation movement. The Federal project rebuilt and enlarged one of the city's prominent colonial buildings—the Governor's House at the west end of the Plaza. Built in 1706, the building had been renovated, enlarged, and rebuilt over time, including in 1833 when the Department of Treasury's architect Robert Mills had designed a post office and Federal building at the site. During the New Deal, Jacksonville architect Mellen Greeley prepared the architectural renderings for the rebuilding of the new structure, adapting a historic form for use as a post office, but significantly enlarging the original building. Still, the overall form, massing, style, and materials associated the new building with St. Augustine's colonial past and prolific use of coquina and stucco. Funding for the project came directly from the Treasury Department, PWA, and WPA.

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Inspired by the rebuilding of the Governor's House and preservation activities at Williamsburg, Virginia, St. Augustine's residents and politicians formed the city's nascent historic preservation movement. They included Mayor Walter B. Fraser of St. Augustine and members of the St. Augustine Historical Society. Developing an association with the Carnegie Institution, the City and Institution formed a National Committee for the Preservation and Restoration of Historic St. Augustine. Verne E. Chatelain, chief historian of NPS and a staff member of the Institution, made a series of recommendations that included restoration of the Oldest House, making it into a respectable museum, razing or moving modern buildings, and redirecting traffic patterns. Chatelain was appointed director of the restoration program, which was financed by the Carnegie Institution and local sources. World War II curtailed the nascent effort that had been spawned, in part, by the New Deal rebuilding of Government House.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

St. Augustine

St. Augustine was established in 1565 as a municipality and church headquarters. It served as a base for Catholic priests to set up a chain of missions that stretched from upper Georgia's coastal regions to present-day Tallahassee, Florida. The town plan for St. Augustine was laid out in 1598 according to the Laws of the Indies, in which Spain specified an urban template consisting of a rectangular plaza with lots for the "government palace" and other official functions.

Government House is located on the same site as the succession of Governor's "palaces" or houses that were used as residences and administrative offices. The third Governor's house was constructed in 1713 of coquina walls. In 1763, what is known today as Florida came under British control. Florida returned to Spanish control in 1783, where it remained until 1821, when it became a United States territory. In 1845, Florida became a state. From 1598 to 1821, Government House served as the administrative center of colonial Florida.

In 1821, the United States conducted an inventory of Federal properties in Florida and referred to this building as Government House. After 1821, the building was used for various U.S. government functions, including a military hospital and quarters for Federal troops during the Civil War and later a courthouse, custom house, and a post office. Renovations of the building during 1833-1834, designed by architect Robert Mills and carried out by Elias Wallen, and another renovation in 1873, designed by architect William M. Kimball, changed the building's massing, floor plan, and height. During the 19th century, the plaza was diminished in size because of the widening of the surrounding streets.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the building had evolved into a rectangular building, as indicated in the 1884 and 1910 Sanborn maps. As evidenced in a 1910 view (Photo 32) and 1922 view (Photo 33) of the

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building, the rectangular building was lined with two-story wooden porches along the north and south elevations. Although its appearance differed from that of the colonial and Civil War periods, at this time, it served as the center of the community, as a post office, meeting place, and source of pride in the city's Spanish heritage. The building was variously called the "former Spanish Governor's Palace," "Government House," "Custom House," and "Post Office."

Florida's New Deal Resources

The historic context for the nomination of Government House to the National Register of Historic Places is detailed in the document, "Florida's New Deal Resources" Multiple Property Submission cover form that the National Register program in Washington, DC, accepted in 2005. The document, "Florida's New Deal Resources," provides a detailed history of the development of New Deal programs to address the severe economic distress and widespread joblessness caused by the Great Depression. The "Florida's New Deal Resources" document focuses on the assistance provided by the New Deal programs to Florida that included schools, roads, airports, bridges, hospitals, playgrounds, public parks, and other infrastructure projects. The St. Augustine Civic Center was a product of the New Deal programs and was nominated to and listed in the National Register under the "Florida's New Deal Resources" cover form in 2005.

Post offices constituted a major building type supported through the New Deal programs of the Public Works Administration (PWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding sources. In Section E of the cover form, pages 41-42, the narrative states that:

... post offices were among the most celebrated federal projects in the state's towns and cities. Most of Florida's New Deal post offices and indeed almost all federal buildings of the era were built with the benefit of funding through the PWA. In most cases, resources were derived directly from appropriations through the Department of the Treasury supplemented with PWA funds. In a few cases, WPA laborers supplemented the labor supplied by private contractors. With few exceptions, plans for the buildings were drafted by the Department of the Treasury's Office of the Supervising Architect.

The "Florida's New Deal Resources" document summarizes the role of the Supervising Architect's Office in overseeing the design and construction of post offices funded through the New Deal programs. Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon and his staff prepared plans for numerous post offices in Florida, including those in Arcadia, Orlando, Panama City, Palm Beach, Sarasota, Winter Haven, and Pensacola. The cover form states: "The architectural styles for these post offices included Art Deco, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Mediterranean Revival. For some communities, a new post office represented one of the few if not the only PWA or New Deal building within their municipal boundaries or even within the county."

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In the discussion of significance of Florida's New Deal resources, the cover form states:

Possessing historical significance for their association with Florida's role in the New Deal, Florida's New Deal buildings represent the first national effort to link local, state, and national government agencies. The economic and social experiment increased employment and upgraded the built fabric of the nation. Part of an aggressive national public works program, the interrelated collection of facilities developed throughout America during the New Deal improved the lives of the nation's citizens. Consequently, Florida's New Deal buildings represent an important type of historic architecture that reflects the state's New Deal heritage.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN FLORIDA

Previous Historic Preservation Efforts in St. Augustine

Given its age, it is not surprising that St. Augustine was the site of early historic preservation efforts. In 1883, the St. Augustine Historical Society was founded and was dedicated to the preservation of the city's historic buildings, as well as artifacts, documents, and maps. In 1899, the Society acquired its first colonial house, known as the Vedder Museum, and its contents. This building was lost in a 1914 fire. The Society later managed the historic Fort Marion, renamed the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, for the War Department until 1933, when management of national monuments was transferred to the National Park Service. (In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge designated the property a national monument. In 1942, Congress formally changed the fort's name to the Castillo de San Marcos in honor of its Spanish heritage).

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Society acquired other colonial-era properties. In addition to the Society's activities, in 1906, a group of St. Augustine women successfully opposed municipal plans to demolish the pillars of the City Gate, an "early example of concern for preserving the historic city."⁴ The impressive coquina pillars of City Gate marked the eastern terminus of *El Camino Real*, or Royal Highway, that extended west to present-day Tallahassee and beyond. In 1928, architect F.A. Hollingsworth designed alterations for the old 1898 St. Augustine Waterworks Pumping Station for the conversion of the building into a community center. The alterations maintained many of the essential features and would today be considered a rehabilitation. It is a very early example of adaptive use in St. Augustine.

⁴ William R. Adams, *St. Augustine and St. Johns County: A Historical Guide*, Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, Inc., p. 19.

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Other Historic Preservation Efforts in Florida

Early 1900s

As with the federal government, some of the earliest historic preservation efforts in Florida were related to battlefields. In 1899, the Florida legislature authorized the erection of a monument at Olustee Battlefield, the site of Florida's largest engagement during the Civil War, and in 1909 the state bought three acres to build a memorial there. Olustee Battlefield became Florida's first historic site in 1912, and went on to become a state park in 1949. In 1921, the legislature appropriated funds to preserve the Dade Battlefield, site of the military engagement that triggered the Second Seminole War in 1835, as a memorial. That same year, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, under the authority of the Florida legislature, erected a monument at the site of the Civil War Battle of Natural Bridge.

1920s

The idea of historic preservation was greatly inspired across the nation by the work to preserve Williamsburg, Virginia, begun in 1926 with funding from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. An example of private efforts at the same time in Florida is the work done by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), who purchased the Gamble Mansion property in Manatee County in 1925 (NR 2011). A hurricane in 1921 had severely damaged the building, and the UDC wanted to restore the house to its "wartime condition" and to create the Judah P. Benjamin Memorial, in honor of Benjamin's service to the Confederate States of America as its Secretary of State. As the Confederacy collapsed in 1865, Benjamin escaped and made his way successfully to England by way of Florida. It is believed he spent some time at the Gamble Mansion along the way. The Florida legislature appropriated \$10,000 for restoration work and created a Gamble Mansion Commission to oversee the work, and provided an additional \$24,000 toward the effort. In return, the legislature required that the property be deeded over to the State. The mansion remained under UDC management until 1949, when the organization transferred the property to Florida State Parks. The Gamble Mansion is the only antebellum property in Florida that was preserved and rehabilitated to serve as a Confederate shrine and museum. The work done to the property would not be considered "restoration" by today's standards, but was important as a manifestation of the second wave of post-Civil War memorialization.

The 1920s also saw interest in archaeological sites in Florida. In 1926, Indian Mound Park was created in Pompano Beach as an archaeological park and given to the City of Pompano. In 1958, it was dedicated as a city park and bird sanctuary. It is the oldest example of historic preservation in Broward County. It is perhaps the third oldest surviving historic preservation effort in South Florida, following the 1925 creation of the El Portal Indian Mound Park, and the preservation through relocation of the 1844 masonry Fort Dallas Barracks into

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Lummas Park by the Daughters of the American Revolution, with funding assistance from the Miami Woman's Club⁵.

1930s: Civilian Conservation Corps Restoration Work and Creation of Florida State Parks

General public interest in statewide historic preservation expanded during the Depression as restorations became part of the mission of federal and state programs in the mid-1930s. The Florida Writer's Project and the Historic American Buildings Survey both pioneered the systematic statewide collection of local historical information. Early 1930s-era preservation programs were further augmented by the inclusion of historic sites within the newly created state park system, established in 1935, and with the growing importance of historic sites to Florida's fledgling tourist industry.

In 1935, the Neal Lumber Company saved the Gregory House, an antebellum house that was originally built at Ocheese Landing on the west side of the Apalachicola River, by donating it to the State of Florida. The house could be seen across the Apalachicola River from the high bluffs that were part of the site of Torreya State Park, one of the first units in the newly created Florida State Park Service. The thought was to move the Gregory House over to the park, where it could be used as a clubhouse for park visitors. The house was disassembled, floated downriver, and reassembled and restored by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). As described in the local newspaper,

They acquired the house, in a dilapidated condition, but with much of its timber as good as the day it had been built. . . .the job of reassembling the house was tedious and slow. At least 95 percent of the original lumber had been saved, and the missing pieces were replaced with new lumber, matching as nearly as possible the old. Most of the flooring was unsound, so the house was refloored throughout as it had been the original house, using wide and narrow boards alternately, placed down with pegs. . . . The front porch has the tall square white columns typical of its period. The original columns were preserved. . . . In the hallway there is a long staircase with a delicately carved mahogany banister which was imported from France a century ago. All except one section of the rail is original wood.

The work on the Gregory House and Torreya State Park was completed by 1940 (Figures 4 & 5).⁶

⁵ Michele Williams for the City of Pompano Beach. Pompano Beach Mound National Register nomination proposal, 2013.

⁶ "Torreya Park Nearly Ready," *Chattahoochee Tribune*, October 3, 1941. In Record Group 155, Series 1270, Box 1.

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Also in 1935, the CCC, with direction from the National Park Service, restored Fort Clinch, an antebellum fortification on Amelia Island, which opened as a state park in 1938 (Figures 6 & 7). C.L. Johnson, the Assistant Historian for the National Park Service, discussed the Fort Clinch project in his daily report for May 18, 1936. Referring to Fort Pulaski in Savannah, he had previously commented that one fort restoration was enough on the southeast coast, and that Fort Clinch was the better choice. There were differences of opinion, however, between Johnson and C.H. Schaeffer, the director of the Florida State Park Service, as to what approach to preservation should be applied. According to Johnson, Schaeffer considered Fort Clinch to be "an interesting old ruin and that repair should be held to the minimum necessary to prevent hazards to the visiting public and to prevent further deterioration. In other words, to hold the present condition with safety. Clean-up, grading, grassing to be restricted to small sample area." Schaeffer felt Fort Clinch should be preserved as a ruin. Johnson maintained, however, that too much restoration work had been done under his own direction already, and that to abandon the restoration at that point would leave Fort Clinch as an incomplete project. His description of the work already completed demonstrated that meticulous attention had been paid to truly restoring the fort's buildings and grounds. He suggested a compromise that would restore Fort Clinch to its 1867 appearance based on historic documentation and practice at other forts. Johnson's recommendations were followed and his already-completed restoration work remained in place. Today, Fort Clinch is a Florida State Park and presents the fort and life there as it was in 1867.⁷

1940s-1950s

Florida's explosive growth the 1940s and 1950s provided the catalyst for the development of coordinated statewide preservation action. This rapid change, though beneficial to many sections of the state's population and economy, threatened to destroy much of Florida's remaining historical resources. The statutory creation of the preservation board in St. Augustine in 1959 officially launched not only the major thrust to carry out preservation in St. Augustine as envisioned by the Carnegie Institution in the 1930s, but also ushered in a new era of statewide historic resources protection.

1960s

The 1960s saw increased state governmental involvement in preservation efforts in Florida. In 1961, both the Florida Board of Antiquities and the position of State Archaeologist were created. Even so, prior to the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 98-665), and the subsequent Florida Archives and History Act of 1967, Florida's statewide preservation programs developed in a sporadic and disjointed

⁷ C.L. Johnson, Asst. Historian, Region One, District E, [National Park Service] Atlanta, Georgia, to R.E. Appleman, Regional Officer, Region 1, National Park Service, Richmond, Virginia. Report on Fort Clinch Work Program, May 10, 1937. Record Group 510, Series 1951, Box 1, File Folder 58, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee.

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pattern. Although some early continuity had been provided by the Florida Historical Society, the Florida Anthropological Society, the Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects, Florida State Parks, and other professional and amateur groups, no coordinated statewide preservation movement actually existed. The passage of the Florida Archives and History Act (Chapter 267, Florida Statutes) in 1967 reorganized the old Board of Antiquities into the Florida Board of Archives and History. This action consolidated a wide variety of preservation functions from several state agencies into a single governmental entity.

Through state government reorganization in 1969, the Florida Board of Archives and History became the Division of Archives, History, and Records Management under the Florida Department of State. In 1986, Chapter 267 was amended as the Florida Historical Resources Act, and the Division of Archives, History, and Records Management was renamed the Division of Historical Resources (DHR), Florida's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Since that time, DHR has continued to provide leadership in instituting many state level preservation programs that now exist in Florida.⁸ A non-profit statewide organization, the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, was founded in 1978.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PROCESS

The United States government agency responsible for the design of the U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was the Supervising Architect's Office, which was located within the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Both the Treasury Department and the Customs Service were established in 1789. Custom duties constituted a large portion of the revenue for the early Federal government and were vital to the welfare of the new nation. The Treasury Department assumed responsibility for the construction of Federal government buildings because of its responsibility for the collection of customs duties and the need to house these functions. During the first half of the 19th century, the Secretary of the Treasury was directly involved in the design and construction of custom houses in the United States. By the early 1850s, the number of buildings increased to the point where the architectural and construction responsibilities were centralized within the Bureau of Construction headed by a member of the Corps of Engineers and a subordinate Supervising Architect. By the beginning of the Civil War, the Corps left the Bureau of Construction and the Supervising Architect position oversaw the design and construction of not only custom houses, but also Federal courthouses and post offices. Often, all three functions were contained in a single building.

The Supervising Architect's Office remained in the Treasury Department until 1939 and was headed by a succession of 15 men, most of them architects. Over its history, this office designed thousands of Federal government facilities that covered a wide range of Federal functions and locations throughout the nation. The most visible were post offices, custom houses, and courthouses. As the Federal government grew, this office

⁸ Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources. *More Than Orange Marmalade: A Statewide Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan for Florida*, 1995, p. 1.

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also oversaw the design and construction of large, multi-purpose Federal office buildings. In 1933, with the development of Federal government programs to address the effects of the Great Depression, the office was placed in the Procurement Division within the Treasury Department and incorporated into the Public Works Branch. Architect W. E. Reynolds was the assistant director of the Procurement Division and assigned to oversee the Public Works Branch. The Supervising Architect at this point was James A. Wetmore, who served as Acting Supervising Architect from 1915 to 1934. A lawyer by training, Wetmore elected not to assume the title on a permanent basis because he was not an architect. Under Wetmore, architect Louis E. Simon oversaw the architectural work of the office. When Wetmore retired in 1934, Simon, at the age of 66, succeeded him. Simon retired in 1941.

In 1939, with the winding down of Depression-era programs and the gearing up of wartime preparations, the Supervising Architect's Office was removed entirely from the Treasury Department and became part of the Public Buildings Administration of the independent Federal Works Agency. With this move, Reynolds became the commissioner of public buildings. In 1949, this function was moved into the new General Services Administration, where responsibility for Federal government buildings remains to this day. Reynolds retired in 1954.⁹

Over the years of its existence within the Treasury Department, the Supervising Architect's Office played an important role in bringing the presence of the Federal government to thousands of communities in the form of post offices, custom houses, Federal courthouses, and Federal office buildings. Because of the office's high visibility, the private architects, represented by the American Institute of Architects, devoted years to lobbying to remove control over design work from the government architects and instead to place this important work in the hands of the private sector. During brief periods during the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, most notably during the Tarsney Act period (1897-1912), private architects were involved in designing Federal government buildings on a competitive basis and later on a contractual basis. During the 1930s, the Federal government made an effort to address the economic distress in the architectural profession by hiring private architects, like Mellen Clark Greeley, to design Federal buildings. At other times during the 1930s, it was felt that obtaining designs from private architects took longer than from government architects, which delayed the initiation of construction and the badly needed construction jobs that ensued. After World War II and the formation of the General Services Administration, the Public Buildings Service exercised primarily administrative and contractual responsibilities over the design work carried out by private architects.

In its function within the Federal government, the Supervising Architect's Office was an "architectural firm" that employed architects to design Federal government buildings throughout the nation as well as to supervise their construction. The production of the Office during its history of nearly 90 years—from the early 1850s to

⁹ For a history of the Supervising Architect's Office, see Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

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1939—can be analyzed best as incorporating certain types of buildings. Large custom houses are found in major coastal cities like New York City and Boston. Smaller post offices are found throughout the nation in both suburban areas and smaller communities. The output also can be studied as evolving through definable historical periods, such as the antebellum Bureau of Construction period through the period of Alfred B. Mullett, the Gilded Age period, the Academic Classicism period, the 1920s period of affluence, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. An architectural operation of this scale, scope, and reach makes Federal buildings a significant building type, with individual buildings evaluated as representative of their respective periods of development and functions (large urban custom house, small post office, etc.).

Federal government buildings were more than buildings to house governmental functions. They played an important symbolic role in the period during which the Supervising Architect's Office produced designs for Federal buildings. In the pre-mass communication period, Federal government buildings were viewed as a means for the Federal government to communicate "democratic ideals, reflecting a growing sense of national identity." These buildings served as major architectural icons in the urban landscape and were often the largest buildings in the commercial center of towns and cities. They served as "unifying symbols that reflected authority and stability." During the Academic Classicism period, Federal buildings "bespoke the power, influence, and self-assurance of a nation on the brink of world leadership."¹⁰ Today, these messages are less evident in new federal architecture, given modern technologies that communicate the Federal government's functions and activities. The decline in the importance of post office services and customs collection also contributes to lessened architectural opportunities for the Federal government.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Mellen Clark Greeley, Architect

The architect of the St. Augustine Post Office was Jacksonville native Mellen Clark Greeley (1880-1981). He studied architecture under J. H. W. Hawkins from 1901 to 1908. (Hawkins was born in New York City, but moved to Jacksonville after its Great Fire of 1901. He designed many residences, commercial buildings, and churches in the city.) Greeley established his own practice in 1909. He was architect of many schools, apartment houses, residences, club houses, and churches throughout Jacksonville. Greeley became a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1921.

During the 1930s, formerly busy and prosperous architectural practices collapsed under the weight of the Great Depression. Despite the economic challenges, Greeley applied for and was accepted as a Fellow of the AIA in 1934. Greeley was active in architectural organizations, including a number based in Florida and served as an

¹⁰ The chapter, "Prelude," in Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, addresses the ways in which Federal government buildings communicated political, social, and economic messages to the public.

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appointed member of various local commissions and boards. In 1958, at the end of his career, Greeley was granted the status of Member Emeritus of the AIA. By that time, he was referred to as the "Dean of Florida Architects." He died in 1981 at the age of 101.¹¹

In 1969, Greeley produced an oral history of his life and career called "Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley, Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963." In the transcribed version of the history, he recalled how he came to be selected to design the St. Augustine Post Office. In 1931, he received an unexpected telephone call asking about his interest in the commission to design the St. Augustine post office. Because of the lack of work in his office, Greeley received this inquiry with considerable excitement and regarded the project as a "godsend." The only possible connection was his effort spent on being considered for the design work on one of two Federal buildings being considered in Jacksonville. The phone call directed him to contact someone in Washington, a step that "began one of the most pleasant architectural projects ever to come my way."¹² The St. Augustine post office project allowed him to keep his office open until the economy improved.

"RESTORATION" DESIGN

The new U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was constructed between 1935 and 1937 on the site previously occupied by the older post office. Its architect, Mellen Clark Greeley, designed the building in the Spanish colonial style to be compatible with the restoration aspirations of the city of St. Augustine. The historic coquina stone walls that dated from earlier construction and renovation periods were incorporated into the new building.

Because postal functions were located in the building on the historical site of the Governor's House, the creation of a new, modern postal facility with more space raised the question of either constructing a new building on a new site or a reuse of the extant building on the site. Public disagreement over the location of the new postal facility delayed commencement of the construction process.

However, as early as 1926-1927, plans had been prepared. The appearance of the building and the identity of the architect of these plans are unknown. Possibly, the Supervising Architect's Office staff architects designed the 1926-1927 plans. By this time, the Supervising Architect's Office had settled on design precedents set in the early 20th century under the management of James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect (1897-1912). "Nearly all the federal buildings designed under Taylor can be classified as classical or colonial revival. By the turn of the century, these styles were well entrenched in the architectural vocabulary throughout the country.... These

¹¹ For biographical information on Mellen Clark Greeley, see his membership file with the American Institute of Architects, Washington, DC.

¹² "Exerpts from 'Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963,'" May 19, 1969, University of Florida Collections, p. 16.

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buildings...were reflective of the predominant national taste in architecture."¹³ There was no stated policy of designing buildings to conform to a locality's architectural traditions. In fact, in the 1910s and 1920s, the trend was toward standardized designs for Federal government buildings.

In 1933, architect Greeley was contracted to produce a design for a new building. Greeley's 1933 design was made for "an entirely new building to harmonize with the architecture of old St. Augustine and to be located on Government owned land on Cordova Street between Cathedral and King Streets directly opposite the famed Ponce de Leon Hotel and near the Alcazar Hotel."¹⁴ The details of this earlier design are unknown because the drawings have not survived. However, the Supervising Architect's Office staff had already calculated that the needed square footage measured more than twice the size of the existing building—from 4,500 square feet to 11,000 square feet. In this staff report, it was stated: "When it was contemplated in 1926 and 1927 to remodel the building (plans having been made and bids received), there was so much agitation against the scheme that the project was deferred. The foundation of the adverse agitation by the citizens of St. Augustine was the historical value placed upon the old building."¹⁵ This agitation likely resulted because the community fondly regarded the current post office as a link to the city's old Spanish heritage and could not accept the idea that the old post office building might be remodeled into yet another configuration.

Most cities welcomed the arrival of new Federal government buildings because they were justified based on postal receipts and Federal government activities in the locality. A new government building was a reassuring sign of the city's economic viability and continuing importance to conducting Federal government functions. Few cities complained about the design of the Federal building intended for their locality or expressed dissatisfaction with the location or materials. St. Augustine was different. The city had a long tradition of citizen activism when matters concerned the city's dense concentration of historic buildings, the ability of these attractions to lure visitors, and the economic activities that visitors generated. The city's mayor, Walter B. Fraser, and the managing editor of its daily newspaper, *The St. Augustine Record*, Nina Hawkins, championed historic preservation as a key to the city's future. These circumstances made the St. Augustine post office project one of the most unusual in the history of the Supervising Architect's Office. By the late 1930s, the success of the Williamsburg restoration as a tourism magnet and the resulting economic benefits provided a vivid example of what could happen in St. Augustine.

¹³ *Architects to the Nation*, pp. 209-210, describes the designs under James Knox Taylor and efforts to standardize the design of smaller federal buildings during and after his administration.

¹⁴ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, January 27, 1936, p. 2.

¹⁵ Superintendent, AE Division to James A. Wetmore, January 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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As disagreement over the future of the city's post office dragged on, Congressman J. Mark Wilcox wrote to Acting Supervising Architect James A. Wetmore on December 18, 1933: "St. Augustine has a distinctive type of architecture, being as you know, the oldest city in America and having been founded by the Spanish in the early period of our history. The new building should harmonize with the general architectural scheme of the city. It is probable that the present building might be so remodeled so as to afford ample space and convenience for the public, and at the same time conform to the general architectural plan of the city."¹⁶

By the time that New Deal funds became available for public buildings projects, the city of St. Augustine organized a Post Office Committee to agitate for funds to support a new post office facility. Harry H. Saunders, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, wrote to Silliman Evans, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, asking about the long-sought building project. In early 1934, he wrote: "St. Augustine seems to be fast becoming the 'Forgotten City' in the matter of a new Federal building."¹⁷ The new location identified in 1933 was judged to be unacceptable because the remains of Confederate General William Wing Loring rested under the monument on the land immediately west of the existing post office upon which it was proposed to erect the new building. "Another reason was the desire that the splendid park at the west end of the Plaza be kept unobstructed; and a third reason was the desire of all to retain the old building under Government supervision so that it would not be allowed to fall into worse repair."¹⁸

Architect Greeley referred to a meeting in April 1933, where Reynolds met with St. Augustine leaders and civic groups and heard their requests and suggestions. After this meeting, "Mr. Reynolds instructed the Architect [Greeley] to make studies of the new scheme, the old building intact, or if that were impossible, to utilize as much of it as found feasible, and to restore the part so used to conform in appearance to the picture bearing date of 1764."¹⁹

Although earlier recommendations coming out of St. Augustine argued against remodeling the existing building on the site, the prospect of an extended delay in obtaining this key Federal government investment changed the community's views on the subject. By 1934, J. W. Hoffmann, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, assembled an impressive list of St. Augustine organizations that approved of the "proposed restoration and enlargement of the present Post Office structure." He also cited the "unanimous approval of the citizens

¹⁶ J. Mark Wilcox to James A. Wetmore, December 18, 1933, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁷ Harry H. Saunders to Silliman Evans, January 8, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁸ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 2.

¹⁹ Ibid.

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generally throughout the city of St. Augustine.”²⁰ Hoffman further described the prospect of the “exterior to be constructed along the lines of the Spanish Governor’s Mansion, and the interior, of course, to be a modern Post Office.”²¹ In subsequent correspondence to officials of the Treasury Department, Hoffman continued to use the terms “restoration” and “conform with the old Spanish Governor’s Mansion” in the desired approach to the post office project. Even with this agreement, individual protests against the plan caused Assistant Director of Procurement at the Treasury Department W. E. Reynolds to write: “It would be humanly impossible to always select a site satisfactory to everyone.”²²

In May 1934, the Treasury Department directed architect Greeley to study the feasibility of using the old building for a post office. As Greeley described his instructions, “I was instructed to accede if possible to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, that the old building be restored and preserved as a historic monument.” In Greeley’s opinion, the building was more English in appearance than Spanish. Responding to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, the Spanish tradition would be restored to the building. Greeley anticipated “using the shell of the old building only . . . [and] building a new floor structure inside the shell.” Even so, the old building’s size of 4,680 square feet would need to be enlarged to 6,360 square feet.²³ Because the current design was entirely different from the one that Greeley had produced in 1933, his old contract was terminated and a new one executed.

In the summer of 1934, W. E. Reynolds traveled to St. Augustine to meet with Congressman Wilcox and Postmaster J. Herman Mauncy to finalize the plans for the post office project. During that visit, Reynolds stated that he was in favor of “the plan of restoration,” even if it would entail additional expense over the cost of an entirely new building. Congressman Wilcox argued that the Federal government had already spent money on the restoration and preservation of “historic spots” and it was therefore justifiable that needed Federal government funds be spent on the restoration of the St. Augustine building.²⁴ In 1935, the appropriation of \$200,000 for the building was increased to \$217,935.²⁵

²⁰ J. W. Hoffman to J. Mark Wilcox, May 5, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²¹ J. W. Hoffman to W. J. Sears, May 7, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²² W. E. Reynolds to J. H. Hempsted, September 24, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²³ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, June 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁴ “Government Officials Impressed,” *The St. Augustine Record*, article attached to letter from J. E. Hempsted to Henry L. Morgantheau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁵ “Post Office Building Dedicated,” *The St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

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SIGNIFICANCE

By January 1935, Greeley received survey drawings of the old building. Because of the special requirements of the project, Greeley asked for more time than would be required for an average post office design. He cited the reasons for the delay: “. . . the old building must be given special consideration and its historic features must be given special attention.”²⁶ The Supervising Architect’s Office was concerned about these delays and dispatched several of its own staff architects to Jacksonville to assist Greeley with the completion of the drawings and specifications for much of the summer of 1935. By September 30, proposals were solicited for the building’s construction. On December 9, the firm of James I. Barnes of Springfield, Ohio, was selected as the contractor.

Within a few weeks of the awarding of the construction contract, the historic walls were threatened with collapse. Even before the construction began, the contractor expressed concern about the stability of the building’s coquina walls while steel piles were driven into the ground. The contractor suggested the removal and rebuilding of the walls.

On January 24, 1936, the second floor walls collapsed. The perceived threat to the “sacred walls” caused alarm on the part of St. Augustine citizens. Some of the wooden posts, beams, and lintels had been destroyed by termites, causing the stone work to loosen and leaving large cavities in the walls. A solution was worked out among the parties involved. The decision was made to remove and rebuild the second story walls. The first floor walls remained intact. Architect Greeley wrote: “it was suggested that as long as the old stones were used in the old wall in the exact location where they had always been, there could be no desecration of the old building.” The contractor agreed to hold in place as much as possible of the first story of the north and south walls of the old building. Where the cavities needed repair, the old stones from the second story would be used. Any new masonry would be confined to the second story.²⁷ The east wall was considered to be constructed of better masonry and was kept in its entirety.

Even with the agreement on the treatment of the walls, observers decried what appeared to be the Federal government’s destruction of large sections of the building and cited Williamsburg as the model of what ought to be happening. In response to these protests, Reynolds responded with:

The remodeling of the present building will preserve such portions of the walls of the old structure as are structurally sound, and, when completed, the new structure will be virtually a reproduction of the old building as it appeared before it was remodeled in 1834. It is believed that when the public understands fully that this reconstruction is much similar to the Rockefeller

²⁶ Mellen C. Greeley to Office of the Supervising Architect, July 30, 1935, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁷ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
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reconstruction at Williamsburg to which you refer, the present objections to the proposed rebuilding will disappear.²⁸

The treatment of the exterior stucco and coquina stone exemplified an effort to protect the remaining walls and rebuild the rest so that both parts could be seen as a "whole." Architect Greeley asked that the face of the brick work be set slightly back from the face of the stone so that the stucco could "feather-edge" or taper off against the stone, with an irregular line (not a straight-line). "The effect desired is that of an old building which has been patched and rebuilt and on which the stucco has fallen off in some places."²⁹ Supervising Architect Louis E. Simon approved Greeley's plan for the stucco on the building (Photo 34).

In a summary of the building's design, Architect Greeley wrote:

The exterior of the building has been designed to correspond as far as possible with the original picture bearing date of 1764, which was adopted as the key-note of the restoration. The high pitched roof with gables has been copied from the picture, also the balcony on the east façade. The roof over the new wings and the balconies on the north and south fronts are designed to conform to the original as shown in the [1764] picture. The original high wall which inclosed (sic) the garden of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been replaced with a low wall which forms the two boundaries of the garden . . .³⁰

The building was dedicated on February 22, 1937. Mayor Walter B. Fraser arranged for the dedication to be scheduled on George Washington's Birthday, a national holiday, so that the school children would be free to attend the ceremony. Mayor Fraser also asked business owners to let their employees take off time from work to attend the ceremony. The city of St. Augustine and the Federal agencies represented in the building cooperated on a dignified dedication ceremony. J. Austin Latimer, who represented Postmaster General James A. Farley, gave a presentation that praised the building as the oldest public building in the United States.³¹ Mayor Fraser thanked the Federal government for deviating from the usual plan for public buildings in allowing for the

²⁸ W. E. Reynolds to Mr. and Mrs. John T. Findley, February 17, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD. Reynolds made reference to Williamsburg because the restoration of the colonial city in Virginia, involving reconstructions of formerly extant buildings and restorations of standing structures, set the standard for the 1920s and 1930s for other cities.

²⁹ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

³⁰ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 5.

³¹ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *The St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

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Spanish style building in keeping with its surroundings. Benedictions were given. Afterwards, a band concert entertained the crowd. Dignitaries from the State and locality were seated on the east balcony, including Verne E. Chatelain, who represented the Carnegie Institution of Washington.³² Between 1936 and 1940, the Carnegie Institution worked with the City of St. Augustine and other organizations in the historic, archeological, and photographic documentation of the city that would guide restoration projects.

The special attention paid to the St. Augustine post office building by U.S. Treasury officials was unlike other Federal government building projects, especially in the 1930s, when many post offices and other Federal government buildings were under design and construction throughout the nation to assist with the New Deal recovery efforts. The St. Augustine post office project involved providing a new facility for post office and other Federal government functions in a unique historical setting with deep historical roots. The community was already involved in private sector historic preservation activities. Investment in a historic building on the part of the Federal government or an outside organization or individual could only boost this direction and the city's fortunes.

Other factors in the handling of the St. Augustine building included the fact that W. E. Reynolds, assistant director of the Procurement Division of the U.S. Treasury Department, was from Jacksonville, Florida. His brother, John F. Reynolds, was a member of the Jacksonville firm of builders and contractors, Hillyer and Reynolds.³³ Before he assumed his position with the Procurement Division, W. E. Reynolds worked for the firm of Hillyer and Reynolds. As an architect, W. E. Reynolds was likely familiar with St. Augustine and its historic buildings and may have known the city's leaders. In addition, the example of the Williamsburg restoration demonstrated the desirability of restoring older buildings. The Federal government was in the process of implementing the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and its role in managing, restoring, and interpreting historic buildings could only grow larger over time. Although there is no specific documentation about why the St. Augustine building project was handled differently, the above factors likely were instrumental.

During the building's role as a Post Office, it housed not only postal functions, but also offices for the U.S. Customs Service, Department of Agriculture county agents, the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Park Service, and U.S. Justice Department Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents. As such, the site of Government House maintained its role as the seat of government functions for nearly 370 years, from 1598 to 1966.

³² Ibid., p. 3.

³³ "Government Officials Impressed, Treasury Representative Says He Approves," newspaper clipping attached to letter, J. E. Hempsted to Henry Morgenthau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Government House is one of the very few, if not the only, "restorations" of a historic property for Federal government functions that the Supervising Architect's Office undertook during any time in its evolution from the 1850s to the late 1930s. The usual approach was to produce or commission a new design for a new building that housed post office, Federal courthouse, custom house, and other Federal government functions.

Because of significant investment by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Colonial Williamsburg became the pioneer in restoration research and restoration standards. The National Park Service assumed major responsibilities for the management of historic properties with the issuance of the Presidential Executive Order 6166 of 1933 that consolidated Federal historic sites and national parks under the National Park Service. One of the National Park Service's first restorations of a historic building occurred in 1934 with the Moore House in Yorktown, Virginia, which Rockefeller purchased and then sold to the National Park Service as part of the development of Colonial Parkway.

During the design and construction of the St. Augustine post office building, both the Supervising Architect's Office and architect Mellen Greeley spoke of the building's unique character within the highly regulated Federal architecture program. In requesting treatment of the stucco to resemble patching and rebuilding over the centuries, Greeley stated:

I realize that I am asking for something which has probably never been done before in a building for the Treasury Department, but the whole project is unusual. Also, the use of the old historical building in the schedule is unique and the work can be made outstanding by going a little more away from the usual without detriment to the utility of the building. In St. Augustine there are a number of beautiful examples of stone work such as I am asking for, where the stucco has come off in places and is intact in others. The Old Fort, the City Gates, etc., are examples.³⁴

When a request was made to include mention of the "restoration" in the official cornerstone, architect Greeley stated, "The fact that the building is probably the *only restoration* [emphasis added] of an historical building for use by Government Departments was perhaps not brought to the attention of the Supervising Architect, and, if that had been done perhaps the standard lettering might have been changed on the stone."³⁵ Supervising Architect Simon responded to Greeley by stating that no further inscriptions should be placed on the cornerstone, but a tablet could be placed in the interior that would include interesting historical data.

³⁴ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

³⁵ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 7, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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In a 1936 explanation of the building's design, Greeley had earlier underscored the uniqueness of this building in the Federal government's architecture program. "What is unusual . . . is that the Government is now erecting a building in the City of St. Augustine, Florida, to house the Post Office and Custom House of that City, which is probably the most unique of all which the Government has ever built, and which is likely to be the only one of its kind ever to be built."³⁶

RETURN TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE

In 1966, a new post office was built in a different location in St. Augustine. The 1930s post office building was turned over to the General Services Administration, which deeded it to the State of Florida, in accordance with Public Law 616, enacted in 1949, which, authorized, when appropriate, the transfer of Federal property to states, for its use as the headquarters for historic preservation activities in the city. It then reassumed its 1821 name: Government House. Today, Government House is a contributing building within the St. Augustine Historic District and has retained a high degree of integrity reflecting the building's appearance from the 1935-1937 "restoration."

For St. Augustine, the city's role in the development of historic communities is secured through its pioneering work in historic preservation that dates back to the late 19th century. Like the rest of the nation, St. Augustine's leading citizens were greatly impressed with the success of the Williamsburg restoration and aimed to apply the lessons of Williamsburg's restoration to the Spanish colonial town on Florida's east coast. These strong sentiments shaped the "restoration" design for the St. Augustine post office, where a postal facility and offices for Federal government functions were housed in a historic encasement.

St. Augustine was unable to establish a historic open air museum as is found in Williamsburg, but, in the final analysis, that is its saving grace. St. Augustine remains a town for the living—where businesses, government agencies, residents, and visitors continue to use the town's historic buildings for everyday purposes. As Verne E. Chatelain of the Carnegie Institution of Washington stated:

. . . the City of St. Augustine is not merely a grave yard (sic) of past memories, but still exists as a changing and developing community. Therefore it was felt that the [St. Augustine History] program should promote legitimate community interests, for if such were the case then the

³⁶ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida," January 27, 1936, p. 1.

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citizens could cooperate in practical fashion in the protection of their historical resources, recognizing in them an important factor in their own future prosperity.³⁷

In 2007, the University of Florida assumed responsibility for managing Government House and other state-owned historic properties in St. Augustine. Government House continues its role as the headquarters of the Florida state government's continuing stewardship of St. Augustine's historic properties and the ongoing vitality of this unique place in American history.

CONCLUSION

Government House did not employ true restoration techniques, such as the ones that were being applied at the same time by the CCC in the 1930s at two state parks, Torreya State Park and Fort Clinch. This is not surprising since the work of the Supervising Architect's Office was to build new Federal facilities, not to restore historic ones. Government House, therefore, is significant in the area of Conservation, not as a restoration, but as a demonstration of the importance historic preservation held in St. Augustine, an importance that was enough to persuade the Office of the Supervising Architect to pursue a course it had never before undertaken in building a new Federal facility, one that the agency did not repeat. The result of their work, however, was a new, yet distinctive building that evoked a sense of St. Augustine's history, with its mix of features that recalled both its Spanish and British heritage. The building is also significant for its architecture as an impressive display of craftsmanship and use of fine materials, including coquina and stucco, marble, terrazzo, wood, and bronze, and as the work of a master architect, Mellen Clarke Greeley.

³⁷ Verne E. Chatelain, "The St. Augustine Historical Program: A Statement of Its Organization, Purposes and Accomplishments," Verne E. Chatelain Collection, MC-41, Box 8, Folder 2, St. Augustine Historical Society, n.d., pp. 3-4.

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

Government House is located on the eastern half of Parcel #196195-0000, as recorded by the St. Johns County Property Appraiser. The city's legal description is: (5) City of St Aug, Old Post Office (AKA Govt. House) & Park, OR 96/158 (Q/C). The boundary excludes the Park and any property not owned by the State of Florida.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the area of the parcel that is historically associated with the enlargement of the St. Augustine post office building by the Federal government during 1935-1937 as part of the nation's New Deal program.

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTOGRAPHS (two per 8 ½ x 11 sheet)

- 1 1) Government House, 48 King Street
 2) St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida
 3) William A. Triay, Photographer
 4) May and June, 2013, date of photographs
 5) 48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL, location of digital files
 6) East elevation, camera facing west
 7) 1 of 38

All information is the same for the remaining photographs, unless otherwise noted.

- 2 6) East elevation (left), north elevation (right), camera facing southwest
 7) 2 of 38
- 3 6) North elevation, camera facing south
 7) 3 of 38
- 4 6) North elevation (left) west elevation (right), camera facing southeast
 7) 4 of 38
- 5 6) West elevation, camera facing east
 7) 5 of 38
- 6 6) West elevation (left), south elevation (right), camera facing northeast
 7) 6 of 38
- 7 6) South elevation, camera facing north
 7) 7 of 38
- 8 6) South elevation (left), courtyard (right), camera facing northwest
 7) 8 of 38
- 9 6) South courtyard façade, camera facing north
 7) 9 of 38
- 10 6) Exterior door, north entrance, camera facing south
 7) 10 of 38

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 11 6) Exterior door, east façade, camera facing west
 7) 11 of 38

- 12 6) Casement window, north façade, camera facing south
 7) 12 of 38

- 13 6) Main lobby, north entrance, camera facing north
 7) 13 of 38

- 14 6) Main lobby, south entrance, camera facing south
 7) 14 of 38

- 15 6) South lobby, camera facing south
 7) 15 of 38

- 16 6) Monumental stair, camera facing north
 7) 16 of 38

- 17 6) Monumental stair banister, camera facing northeast
 7) 17 of 38

- 18 6) East wing, first floor, main entrance, camera facing east
 7) 18 of 38

- 19 6) East wing, first floor, gallery, camera facing west
 7) 19 of 38

- 20 6) East wing, first floor, gallery, camera facing north
 7) 20 of 38

- 21 6) East wing, second floor, main entrance, camera facing east
 7) 21 of 38

- 22 6) East wing, second floor, entry to Room 201E, camera facing south
 7) 22 of 38

- 23 6) East wing, second floor, entry to Room 201A, camera facing west
 7) 23 of 38

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Section number _____ Photos _____ Page 3 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 24 6) East wing, second floor, Room 201A, camera facing south
7) 24 of 38
- 25 6) East wing, second floor, Customs House Room, camera facing south
7) 25 of 38
- 26 6) East wing, second floor, Customs House Room, staircase leading to balcony, camera facing southeast
7) 26 of 38
- 27 6) East wing, second floor, Customs House Room, fireplace, camera facing northwest
7) 27 of 38
- 28 6) Second floor, Customs House Room, entry door, camera facing west
7) 28 of 38
- 29 6) Second floor, main hallway, restroom area, camera facing south
7) 29 of 38
- 30 6) Second floor, Room 213, camera facing southwest
7) 30 of 38
- 31 6) Second floor, Room 214, camera facing northeast
7) 31 of 38
- 32 3) Unknown
4) 1910
6) View of the 1910 St. Augustine Post Office Building
7) 32 of 38
- 33 3) Unknown
4) 1922
6) View of the St. Augustine Post Office Building, 1922
7) 33 of 38
- 34 6) View of Stucco treatment on exterior, showing "feather-edge" or tapering off of stucco against the
coquina, camera facing west
7) 34 of 38

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 35 3) Unknown
- 4) November 1764
- 6) *View of the Governor's House at St. Augustine, in E. Florida, Nov. 1764*
- 7) 35 of 38

36 Figure 1. Site Plan, Government House, location on Main Plaza

37 Figure 2. Floor Plan, first floor

38 Figure 3. Floor Plan, second floor

Figure 4. Gregory House at its original location on the west side of the Apalachicola River, rear elevation, 1936

Figure 5. Gregory House after its relocation to Torreya State Park, during reassemblage by Civilian Conservation Corps, 1937 or 1938.

Figure 6. Fort Clinch during restoration by Civilian Conservation Corps, ca. 1940.

Figure 7. Fort Clinch Parade Ground during restoration by the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1937.



Figure 4. Gregory House, on original site on west side of the Apalachicola River, 1936.

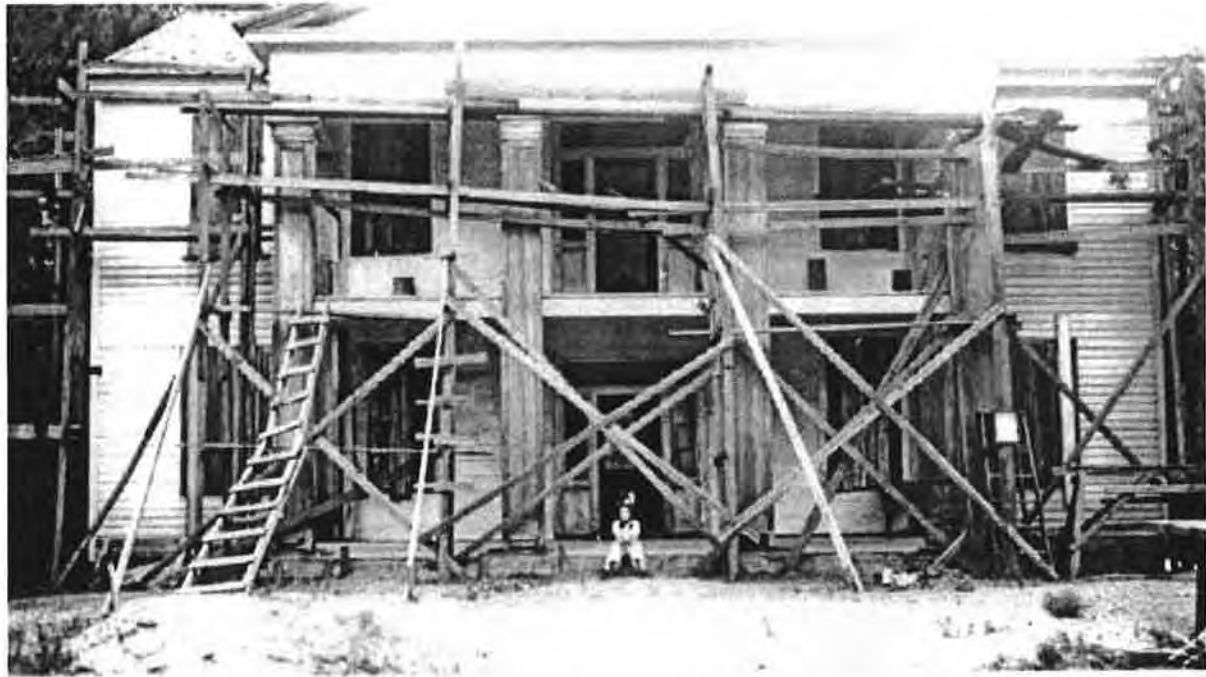


Figure 5. Gregory House after move to Torreya State Park, 1937 or 1938



Figure 6. Fort Clinch during restoration, ca. 1937

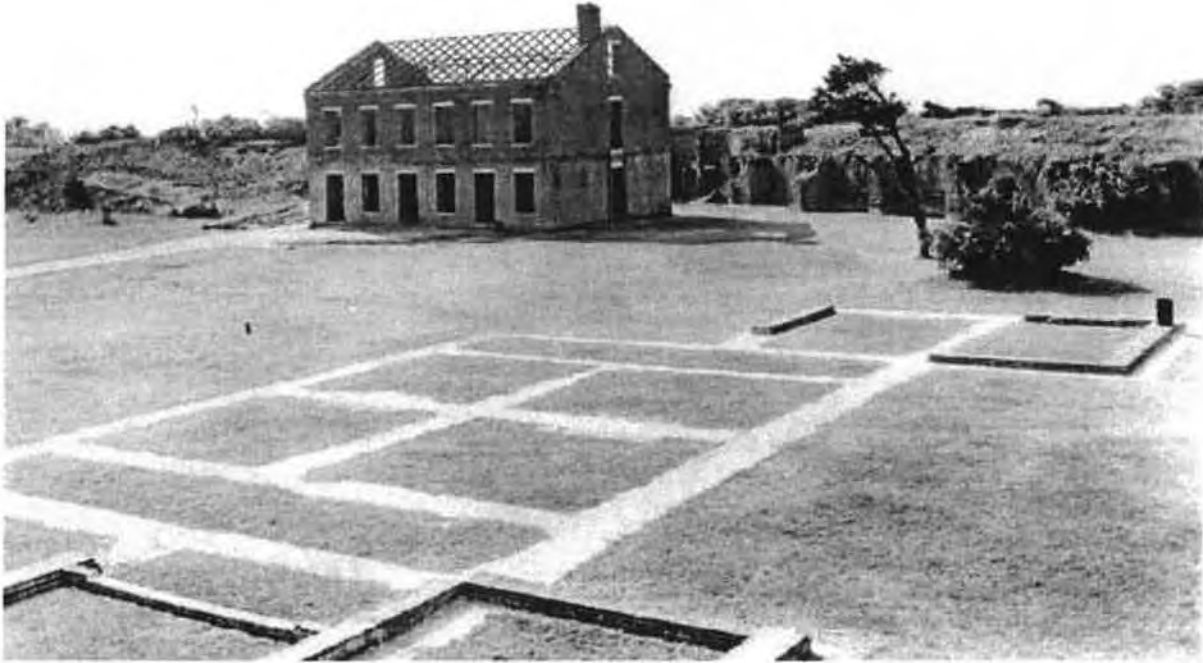
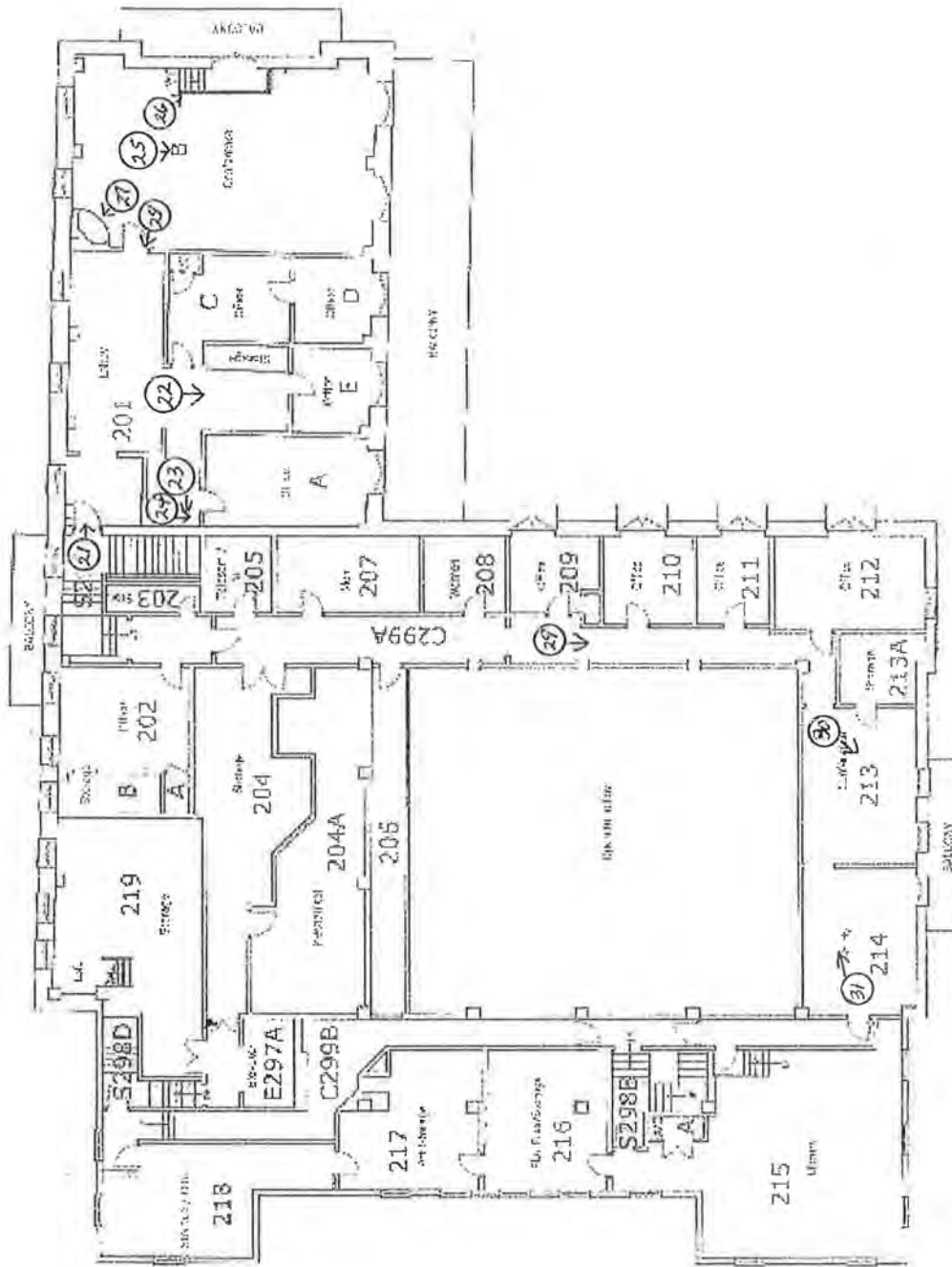
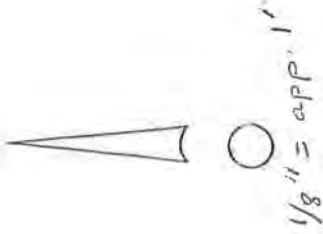


Figure 7. Fort Clinch Parade Ground during restoration, 1937.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL

Photographic Key to camera location and direction

N

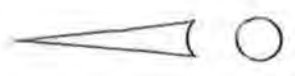


SECOND FLOOR 3900

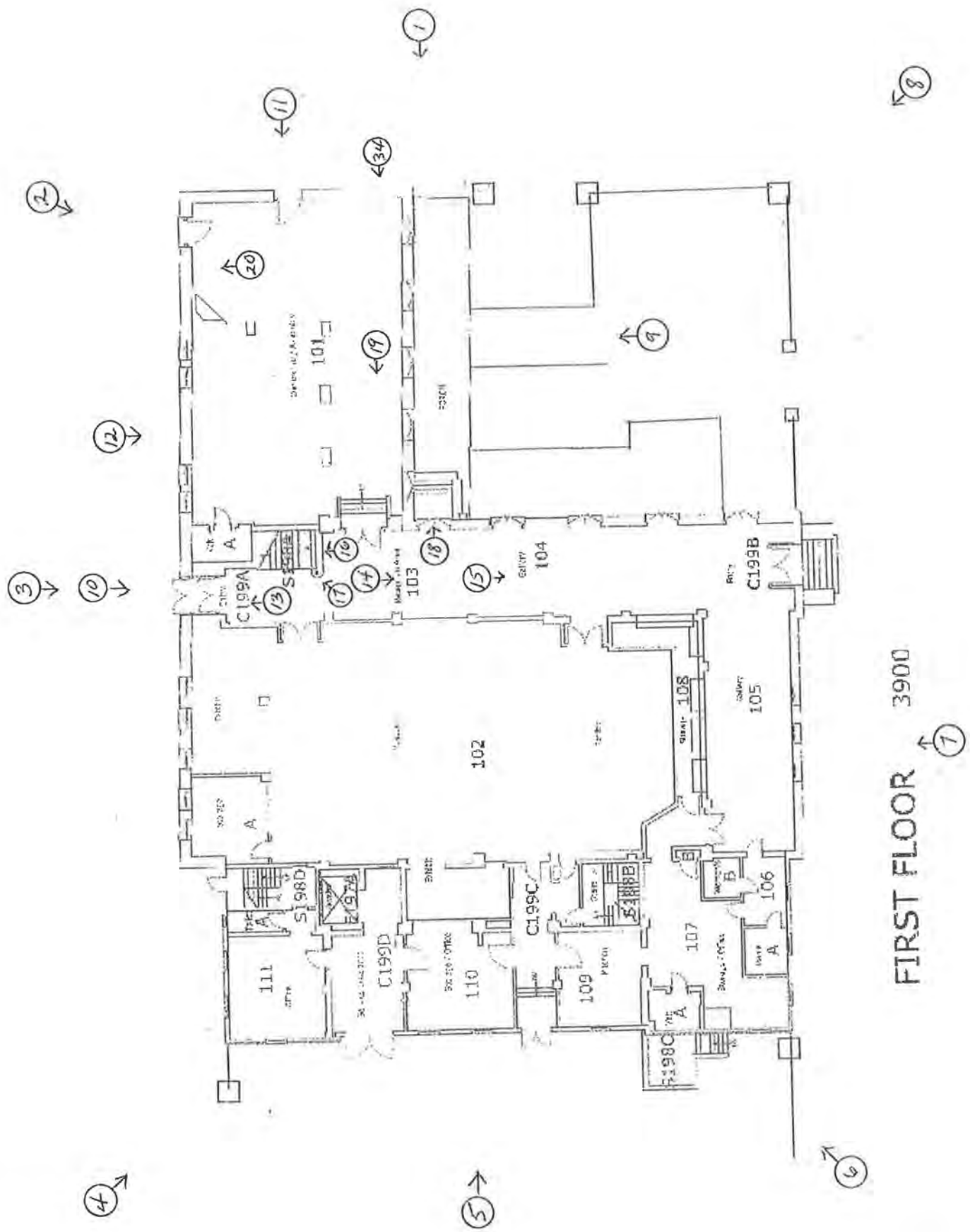
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL

Photographic Key to camera location and direction

N



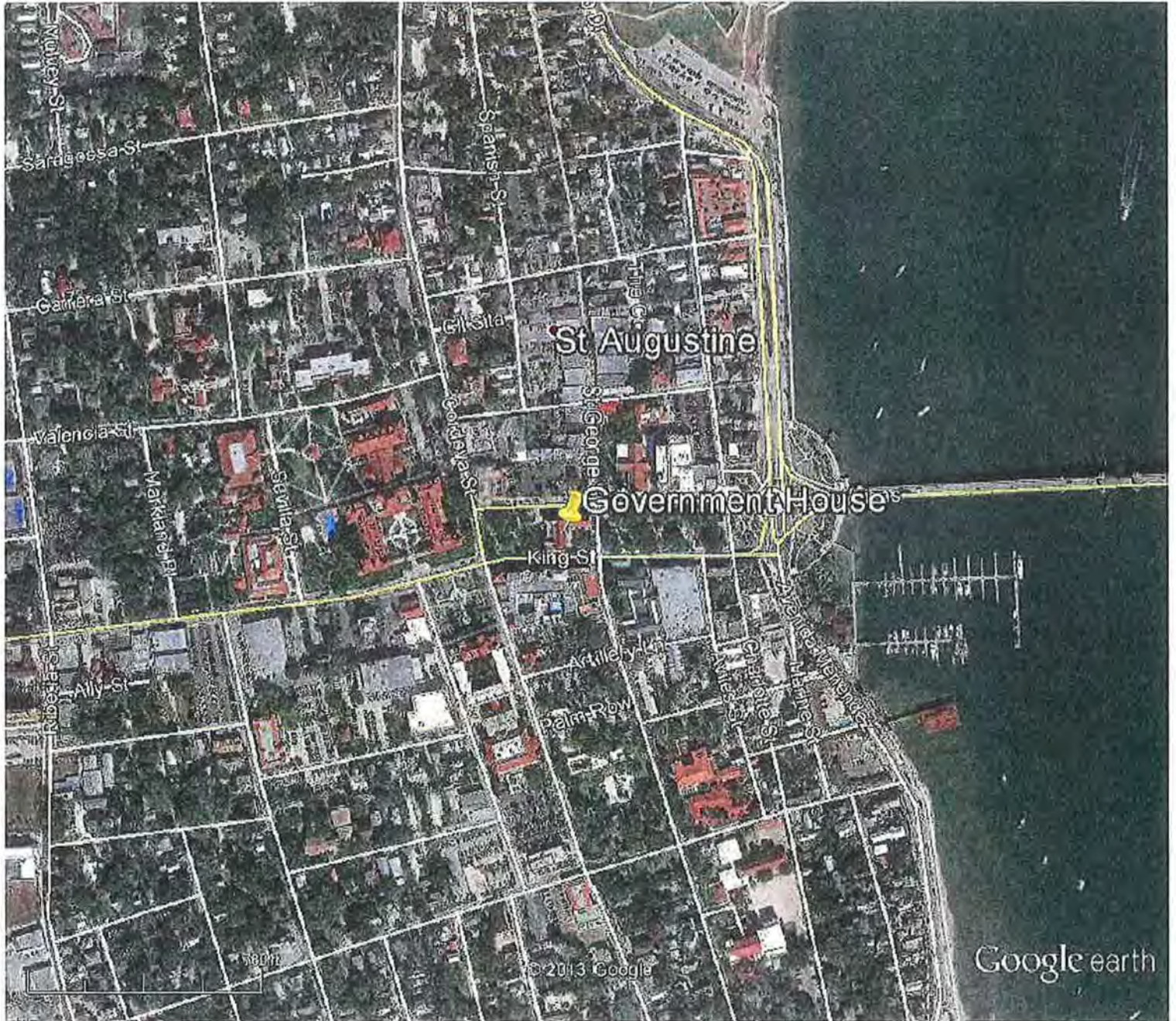
1/8" = app. 1'



FIRST FLOOR 3900

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL



Google earth



Zone: 17 Easting: 469768 Northing: 3306910



CATHEDRAL PLACE

80'

WALL LEGEND:

OLD COUNTY WALLS RESTORED BY 1932
 GREELEY ORIGINAL PLAN (1932)



4055 NW 43RD STREET, STE 28
 GAINESVILLE, FL 32606
 P. 352 - 672 - 6448
 F. 352 - 672 - 6668
 WWW.WALKERARCH.COM
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 JOSEPH B. WALKER, AIA
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CONSULTANT:

GOVERNMENT HOUSE HISTORIC STRUCTURE
 ASSESSMENT
 UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
 48 King Street, St. Augustine, Florida
 EXISTING CONDITIONS

WA PROJECT NO.:
 11031

DRAWN BY:
 KTW

ISSUE DATE:
 31 MAY 2012

REVISION SCHEDULE
 REVISION NO. | REVISION DATE

SHEET TITLE:
 ARCHITECTURAL
 FLOOR PLAN -
 LEVEL 1 -
 GREELEY

SHEET NO.:
 A101

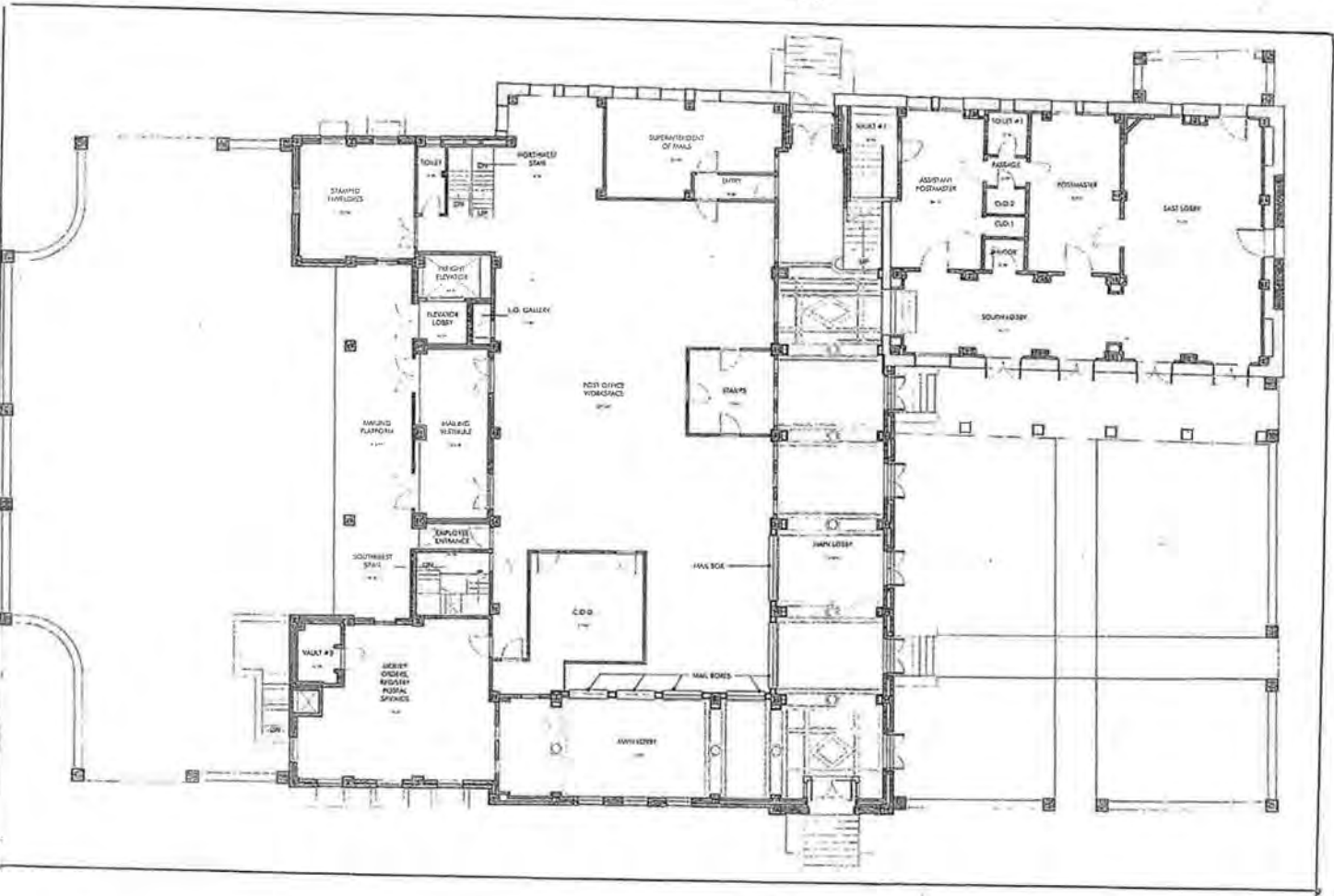
ST. GEORGE STREET

WEST END OF PLAZA

POB

KING STREET

1. LEVEL 01 - GREELEY ORIGINAL PLAN (1932)
 BY: KTW









P
PAY
TO
PARK
3 HOUR



A large, multi-story building with a red-tiled roof and a mix of stone and stucco walls. The building features a balcony on the left side and several windows. A tall palm tree stands in front of the building.

ONE WAY
→

Parking Lot 1
TOW AWAY ZONE
NO PARKING IN THIS ZONE
EXCEPT FOR THE PURPOSES OF
REPAIRS OR MAINTENANCE

Chen & Blanton
Law Firm, P.A.





PAY TO PARK

700

Blue street sign



PAY TO PARK
3 HOUR

FDC

















Augustine
Historic St. Augustine

Augustine is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the United States. It was founded in 1565 by Spanish explorer Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. The city is known for its historic architecture, including the Castillo de San Marcos, and its role in the Spanish colonial era.

Augustine is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognized for its well-preserved Spanish colonial architecture and its role in the history of the United States. The city is a popular destination for tourists interested in history and architecture.







Sala de Montiano







GOVERNMENT HOUSE MUSEUM REHABILITATION

First Colony
PERMANENT EXHIBITION

The Government House Rehabilitation and First Colony: Our Greatest Origin exhibit project has been honored to partner with Historic Preservation Grants assistance provided by the Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State, awarded by the Florida Department of Transportation.




Annual Spring



UF
If You
Have
Appointments
Please
904-82





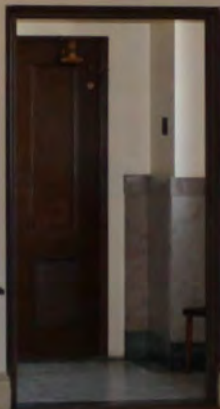
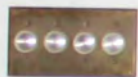


















206 E





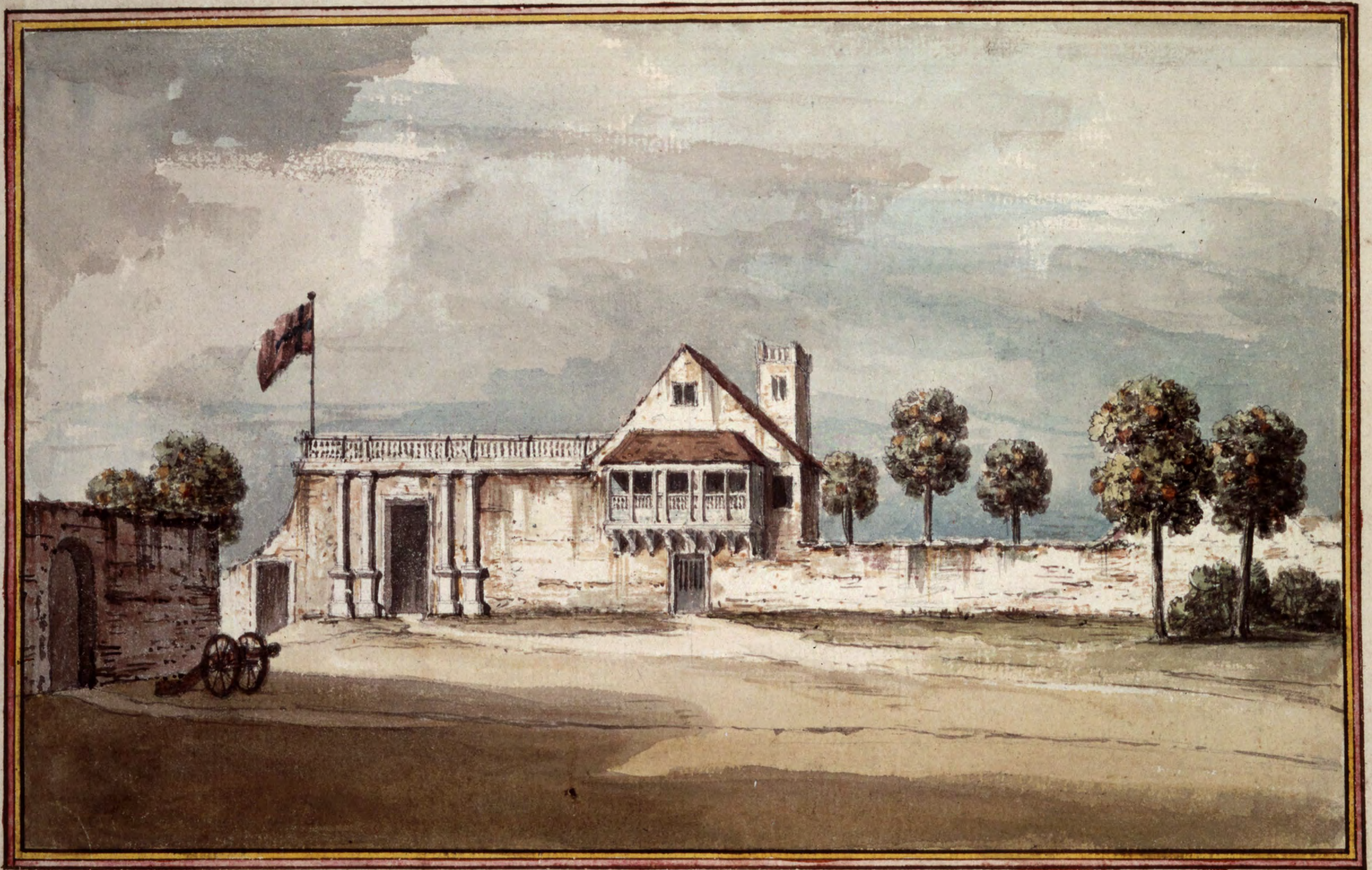
CHARLES F. HOPKINS, Postmaster
St. Augustine, Florida

*On order delivered and through whose energy
the Government has become a reality
April 5, 1922*





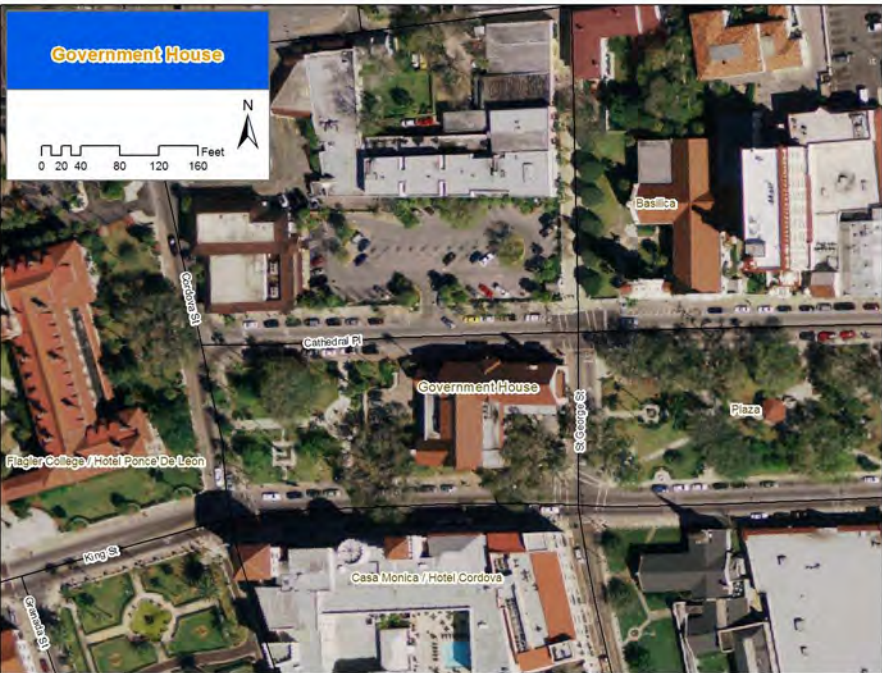
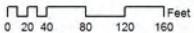
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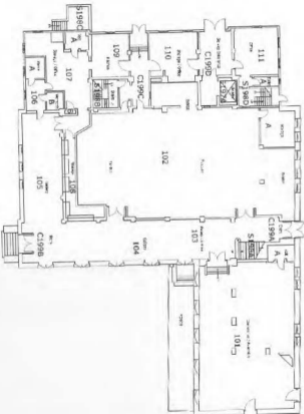


VIEW of the GOVERNORS house at ST AUGUSTINE in E. FLORIDA. Nov: 1764

107

Government House





FIRST FLOOR 3900



SECOND FLOOR 3900

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY Government House
NAME:

MULTIPLE Florida's New Deal Resources MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: FLORIDA, St. Johns

DATE RECEIVED: 12/06/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/22/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000812

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1-7-2014 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Nomination addressed deficiencies noted in
Return Comments*

*Locally significant Representation of Preservation
efforts of New Deal agency*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A & C

REVIEWER J. Crockett DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N 0



City of St. Augustine



St. Augustine, Florida
Nation's Oldest City

Planning/Building

1565 - 2015
450 years

June 21, 2013

Barbara E. Mattick
Deputy SHPO Survey & Registration
Florida Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
2013 JUN 25 A 9:49

Dear Barbara,

I received your inquiry letter dated June 4, 2013 with the National Register nomination proposal for Government House at 48 King Street in St. Augustine. In response to the request for the Certified Local Government review of the proposal, this item was presented to the regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Architectural Review Board yesterday.

Following a discussion on the merits of the proposal with Roy Hunt representing, the Board unanimously supported the nomination proposal as presented. Please accept this letter as documentation that HARB strongly supports the nomination of Government House to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you should need anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jenny Wolfe
Historic Preservation and
Special Projects Planner
City of St. Augustine Planning
and Building Department



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

2013 OCT 31 P 12:17
NATIONAL ARCHIVES
STENOGRAPHY
RECORDS SECTION

Property Name: Government House (Florida's New Deal Resources MPS)
St. Johns County, FL

Reference Number: 13000812

Reason for Return

This nomination is being returned for substantive revision

The nomination for the Government House is under the umbrella of the Florida's New Deal Resources Multiple Property Submission, citing Criteria A and C at the local and national levels of significance. While we believe that this property, which is a contributing resource in the St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District, has individual importance and meets the registration requirements of the MPS, we do not believe that the property warrants listing at the national level of significance as presented in the nomination.

The claim of national significance lies in the fact that the work on the Government House was "the first," or "the only," or was a "unique" example of the Federal government "restoring" a building for Federal government purposes, and that the experience of this particular project had an influence in the later development of the Federal preservation program, laws, and policies.

As you are aware, claims of being the "first," and especially "only" example of something does not, in and of itself, equate with significance. In fact, being a "unique example" or "the only example" of something can be the basis for an argument *against* significance. And that is the case here. The nomination takes great pains to point out that this was the first time the Treasury Department restored (in the terminology of the day) a historic building for use as a Federal building, and that for many years it was the only such example.

Government House

The restoration of this building was not a result of, nor did it result in, a change of official Federal policy. It was a reaction to the strong feedback provided by local constituents. Its singularity is an interesting footnote to an aggressive Federal construction campaign. Federal buildings were considered plums to local communities, and the fact that the local community of St. Augustine was able to exert enough pressure on the Federal agency charged with constructing a new facility to veer away from its standardized plans speaks to the importance of this project on a local level, not a national level.

The nomination attempts to tie the construction of this building with events far down the road, including the passage of the national Historic Preservation Act and the creation of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. The connection is tenuous at best. There is no direct evidence that the Treasury Department's experience with the Government House helped influence later decisions (the reference to activities in St. Augustine made in the nomination could apply to nearly anything, but more likely the general preservation efforts {page 8-19, footnote 40}).

The use of Criterion C with Conservation as the area of significance is unclear. That use would entail a discussion of the "methods of construction" as it applies to the conservation of the building. There is little discussion of the actual methods used, other than stabilization of the outer walls, and the "feathering" of stucco to tie the new construction to the existing cochina. There is no discussion of how or why this is significant on any level. If, however, the point is to look at the importance of this restoration in national building conservation efforts, then Criterion A would be the appropriate choice. And, in that case, there must be a *direct* association between the ideas and practice of conservation in this building and future policies and practices. The nomination does not make this direct association.

The nomination presents an interesting and well-written overview of the Treasury Department's building program, and the birth of Federal preservation policy. It does not, however, demonstrate that the restoration of this building had a significant impact on either program. It does demonstrate that it was, at the time the work was done, an outlier in Federal construction. It does demonstrate that the reconstruction of the Government House was a reaction to local pressure, and that when so pressured, Federal agencies may accede to context-sensitive design. But it does not demonstrate that a change in Federal policy or practice can be traced to decisions and practices made for this building.

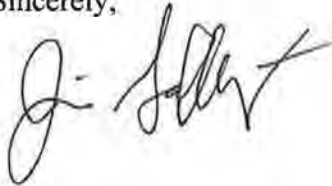
We believe that this is an individually eligible building in Social History at the local and perhaps state level. It meets the requirements of the Florida's New Deal Resources MPS at the local or state level. It has local significance under Criterion A in the area of Conservation as it relates to the City's efforts to maintain, preserve, and perpetuate its colonial past.

Government House

If you wish to resubmit the nomination with significance in Conservation at the local level, please remove the references to national importance and provide additional information on the preservation activities in St. Augustine in the 1930s. If you wish to nominate it at the state level, please provide additional information on preservation/conservation activities in Florida during the same period.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at <James_Gabbert@nps.gov>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Gabbert", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Gabbert, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
September 30, 2013

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Government House
NAME:

MULTIPLE Florida's New Deal Resources MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: FLORIDA, St Johns

DATE RECEIVED: 08/23/2013 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 09/19/2013
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 10/04/2013 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/07/2013

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000812

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9/27/2013 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS: *Nat'l Sig not met*
see comments

RECOM./CRITERIA Return

REVIEWER [Signature]

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

2013 OCT 31 P 12:17
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RICK SCOTT
Governor

KEN DETZNER
Secretary of State



November 27, 2013

Ms. Carol Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
Department of Interior
1201 Eye Street, N.W., 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is the resubmission of the nomination and additional materials (nomination form, continuation sheets, site plan, GIS data, digital images and disk) for

Government House, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida

This resubmission reflects James Gabbert's recommendations to revise the nomination, primarily to delete the claim of national significance, and to focus on local, and statewide significance, if appropriate. After researching the statewide context of historic preservation in Florida in the 1920s and 1930s, I concluded that, although Government House has extremely important local significance, it does not have statewide significance because of other true restoration projects that were going in Florida at the same time Government House was being built.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Barbara E. Mattick, Ph.D.
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
for Survey & Registration

Enclosures



DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES
R. A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250
Telephone: 850.245.6300 • Facsimile: 850.245.6436 • www.flheritage.com
Commemorating 500 years of Florida history www.vivaflorida.org



Recommendation: SLR Return Action: SLR Return None

Documentation Issues-Discussion Sheet

State Name: FL County Name St Johns Resource Name Gov't House

Reference No. 812 Multiple Name FLA's New Deal Resources

Solution:

Problem: Because Patty Henry said so

Resolution:
SLR: Yes No
Database Change:



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT of STATE



RICK SCOTT
Governor

August 20, 2013

Ms. Carol Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
Department of Interior
1201 Eye Street, N.W., 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is a submission of the nomination and additional materials (nomination form, continuation sheets, site plan, GIS data, color digital images and disk) for

Government House, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida

This property is already listed as a contributing building in the St. Augustine Historic District. This individual nomination, however, adds considerable information to the documentation provided for this resource in the district nomination and addresses its particular historic significance beyond its contribution to the district. It is being nominated under the already-established Multiple Property Submission cover for Florida's New Deal Resources.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara E. Mattick".

Barbara E. Mattick, Ph.D.
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
for Survey & Registration

Enclosures

DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

R. A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250
Telephone: 850.245.6300 • Facsimile: 850.245.6436 • www.flheritage.com
Commemorating 500 years of Florida history www.vivaflorida.org





City of St. Augustine



St. Augustine, Florida
Nation's Oldest City

Planning/Building

1565 - 2015
450 years

June 21, 2013

Barbara E. Mattick
Deputy SHPO Survey & Registration
Florida Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
2013 JUN 25 A 9:49

Dear Barbara,

I received your inquiry letter dated June 4, 2013 with the National Register nomination proposal for Government House at 48 King Street in St. Augustine. In response to the request for the Certified Local Government review of the proposal, this item was presented to the regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Architectural Review Board yesterday.

Following a discussion on the merits of the proposal with Roy Hunt representing, the Board unanimously supported the nomination proposal as presented. Please accept this letter as documentation that HARB strongly supports the nomination of Government House to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you should need anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jenny Wolfe
Historic Preservation and
Special Projects Planner
City of St. Augustine Planning
and Building Department

J. Gabbert
11/7/2013

NOV 12 2013

H32(2280)

Mr. Jay I. Kislak
Chairman
St. Augustine 450th Commemoration Commission
7900 Miami Lakes Drive West
Miami, FL 33016-5897

Dear Mr. Kislak:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell supporting the nomination of St. Augustine's Government House to the National Register of Historic Places. We commend your interest in acknowledging and preserving the Government House as a significant aspect of your community's history. We will afford every consideration to the review of the nomination when received.

We appreciate your interest in the preservation of the Government House and of St. Augustine in commemoration of its 450th anniversary.

Sincerely,

Alexandra M. Lord

J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
and National Historic Landmarks Program

cc: Florida/SHPO

bcc: 2280 Loether
Basic File Retained In 2280

FNP:JGabbert:OP:11-7-2013:S:\nr\Gabbert\Kislak Letter

DCN # 144A9
Sig Level Approved Action

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
TASKING PROFILE

Due Date?

ACCN #: ESO-00051092 Status: Closed Fiscal Year: 2014
Document Date: 10/21/2013 Received Date: 10/29/2013 Action Office: NPS Signature Level: AA Doc Source: NPO

To (Recipient): Jewell, Sally
From (Author): Kislak, Jay I.

Chairman
St. Augustine 450th Commemoration Commission
7900 Miami Lakes Drive West
Miami, FL 33016-5897

Subject Text: Supports the nomination of St. Augustine's Government House to the National Register of Historic Places.

Req. Surnames:

Mail Carrier:

Mail Track #:

Cross Ref:

Copies To: SIO-OES

Status Tracking:

Correspondence Specialist and Phone: SIO-OES Tim Feeney/202-208-6701

Closed
Comments:

Signed:



St. Augustine 450th Commemoration Commission

638 17

RECEIVED
2013 OCT 29 AM 10:40

October 21, 2013

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell:

We are writing in strong support of the nomination of St. Augustine's Government house to the National Register of Historic Places.

While the building presently occupying the site is itself nationally significant for its role as the first known effort by the U.S. Supervising Architect's Office to restore a historic building while providing accommodations for contemporary federal functions, the historical roots of this site make it a national treasure, unique in its ability to illustrate the entire panoply of our country's history since the first European settlement. In effect, the remarkable integrity of this site has been protected for 441 years because it has continued to serve important governmental functions ever since a first wooden structure was erected here in 1572 in accordance with the Law of the Indies for New World town plans.

Over almost 450 years a succession of buildings on this same site has perpetuated centuries of continuity in the face of constant change. Since Sir Francis Drake burned the Spanish Governor's House on this site in 1586, these succeeding structures have witnessed and served as administrative for over 250 years of Spanish rule, interrupted by two decades of British rule. When Spain ceded Florida to the United States in 1821, the Spanish Governor's House became a courthouse and served for a period as Florida's Territorial capitol.

October 21, 2013

Page 2

The Honorable Sally Jewell

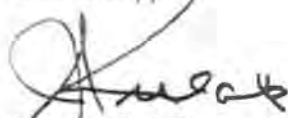
In 1836, Robert Mills, architect of the Washington Monument, redesigned the existing building as a federal building with a post office and it is this redesign which strongly influenced the 1935-1937 restoration standing on the site today. Importantly, restoration was federally funded as a result of the New Deal programs addressing the severe economic distress and widespread joblessness caused by the Great Depression.

That building redesigned by Mills in 1836 earlier illustrated yet another watershed chapter in our nation's evolution. Subsequent to Florida's 1861 secession and joining of the Confederate States of America, St. Augustine was Union-held and the building was occupied by Union troops from 1862 until the war's end in 1865.

Although Government House was transferred by the federal government to the State of Florida in 1966, this transfer came with a mandate that it be used as "an historic monument" in recognition of its national significance. This is a mandate conscientiously recognized by the Florida legislature, as evidenced by special appropriations for its rehabilitation in accordance with Secretary of the Interior Standards and Guidelines. 2.8 million dollars have been provided in fiscal years 2011-2014. An additional 1.7 million dollars was appropriated over fiscal year 2011-2013 for the state-of-the-art exhibit opening in Government House in October 2013. This exhibit, titled "First Colony," will permit visitors to experience 450 years of our nation's history at its very epicenter.

For these reasons we urge approval of this National Register nomination, precedent to National Historic Landmark nomination and designation.

Sincerely,



Jay L. Kislak

Chairman

On behalf of

450th St. Augustine Commemoration Commission

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Government House
NAME:

MULTIPLE Florida's New Deal Resources MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: FLORIDA, St Johns

DATE RECEIVED: 08/23/2013 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 09/19/2013
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 10/04/2013 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/07/2013

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000812

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9/27/2013 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS: *Nat'l Sig not met*
see comments

RECOM./CRITERIA *Return*

REVIEWER *[Signature]*

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Government House (Florida's New Deal Resources MPS)
St. Johns County, FL

Reference Number: 13000812

Reason for Return

This nomination is being returned for substantive revision

The nomination for the Government House is under the umbrella of the Florida's New Deal Resources Multiple Property Submission, citing Criteria A and C at the local and national levels of significance. While we believe that this property, which is a contributing resource in the St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District, has individual importance and meets the registration requirements of the MPS, we do not believe that the property warrants listing at the national level of significance as presented in the nomination.

The claim of national significance lies in the fact that the work on the Government House was "the first," or "the only," or was a "unique" example of the Federal government "restoring" a building for Federal government purposes, and that the experience of this particular project had an influence in the later development of the Federal preservation program, laws, and policies.

As you are aware, claims of being the "first," and especially "only" example of something does not, in and of itself, equate with significance. In fact, being a "unique example" or "the only example" of something can be the basis for an argument *against* significance. And that is the case here. The nomination takes great pains to point out that this was the first time the Treasury Department restored (in the terminology of the day) a historic building for use as a Federal building, and that for many years it was the only such example.

Government House

The restoration of this building was not a result of, nor did it result in, a change of official Federal policy. It was a reaction to the strong feedback provided by local constituents. Its singularity is an interesting footnote to an aggressive Federal construction campaign. Federal buildings were considered plums to local communities, and the fact that the local community of St. Augustine was able to exert enough pressure on the Federal agency charged with constructing a new facility to veer away from its standardized plans speaks to the importance of this project on a local level, not a national level.

The nomination attempts to tie the construction of this building with events far down the road, including the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act and the creation of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. The connection is tenuous at best. There is no direct evidence that the Treasury Department's experience with the Government House helped influence later decisions (the reference to activities in St. Augustine made in the nomination could apply to nearly anything, but more likely the general preservation efforts {page 8-19, footnote 40}).

The use of Criterion C with Conservation as the area of significance is unclear. That use would entail a discussion of the "methods of construction" as it applies to the conservation of the building. There is little discussion of the actual methods used, other than stabilization of the outer walls, and the "feathering" of stucco to tie the new construction to the existing cochina. There is no discussion of how or why this is significant on any level. If, however, the point is to look at the importance of this restoration in national building conservation efforts, then Criterion A would be the appropriate choice. And, in that case, there must be a *direct* association between the ideas and practice of conservation in this building and future policies and practices. The nomination does not make this direct association.

The nomination presents an interesting and well-written overview of the Treasury Department's building program, and the birth of Federal preservation policy. It does not, however, demonstrate that the restoration of this building had a significant impact on either program. It does demonstrate that it was, at the time the work was done, an outlier in Federal construction. It does demonstrate that the reconstruction of the Government House was a reaction to local pressure, and that when so pressured, Federal agencies may accede to context-sensitive design. But it does not demonstrate that a change in Federal policy or practice can be traced to decisions and practices made for this building.

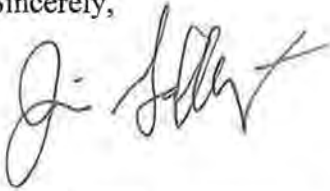
We believe that this is an individually eligible building in Social History at the local and perhaps state level. It meets the requirements of the Florida's New Deal Resources MPS at the local or state level. It has local significance under Criterion A in the area of Conservation as it relates to the City's efforts to maintain, preserve, and perpetuate its colonial past.

Government House

If you wish to resubmit the nomination with significance in Conservation at the local level, please remove the references to national importance and provide additional information on the preservation activities in St. Augustine in the 1930s. If you wish to nominate it at the state level, please provide additional information on preservation/conservation activities in Florida during the same period.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at <James_Gabbert@nps.gov>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Gabbert", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Gabbert, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
September 30, 2013

Correspondence between Toni Lee (consultant) and the WASO NPS NR/NHL Program regarding the proposed Government House, St Augustine, FL, National Historic Landmark designation proposal.

H34(2280)

JAN 20 2015

Ms. Antoinette J. Lee, Ph.D.
4141 N. Henderson Road 210
Arlington, VA 22203

Re: Government House, St. Augustine, FL

Dear Dr. Lee:

Thank you for your detailed response regarding the Government House in St. Augustine, Florida, and its potential for designation as a National Historic Landmark. The material that was prepared presents an interesting and well-written overview of the Treasury Department's building program and the birth of Federal preservation policy in the context of the early history of historic preservation in the country.

It is our view that the documentation provided to date for a proposed nomination does not, however, demonstrate that the restoration of this building had a significant impact on the history of Federal preservation policy. It demonstrates that it was, at the time the work was done, an outlier in Federal construction, authorized in response to local pressure to develop a context-sensitive design for historic St. Augustine. Although an interesting and a very important story in the preservation history of St. Augustine at the state and local levels, we do not find that the material provided demonstrates that a change in Federal policy or practice can be traced to decisions made for this building, or that it is otherwise nationally significant.

I realize that this is not the decision you were seeking. You may be assured, nevertheless, that your request was given the most attentive consideration, but the facts in the matter would warrant no other conclusion. If you have any questions about this decision, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Sincerely,

J. Paul Loether

J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks,
and Deputy Keeper of the National Register

cc: Mary Frances Repko, Senior Policy Advisor, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer

bcc: 2280 Loether
MIB S.Toothman, E.Gifford
Basic File Retained In 2280

FNP:RGReed:OP:01/19/2016:S://nhl/RGReed/correspondence: St. Augustine response

Antoinette J. Lee
4141 N. Henderson Road #210
Arlington, VA 22203

July 31, 2013

Dr. Alexandra Lord
National Historic Landmarks Program
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Lexi:

Your letter of May 3, 2013, regarding the National Historic Landmark eligibility of the post office, also called Government House, in St. Augustine, Florida, contains a number of points that I wish to address for the record. Each of my responses is directed at statements in your letter that I have underlined and placed in quotation marks.

1. "... decisions made about the design of Government House seem to be better categorized as something more of a fanciful contextualization."

The letter questions the validity of the 1935-1937 work on Government House as a "restoration." The term "restoration" was used in the correspondence associated with the 1935-1937 construction of the St. Augustine post office project (later Government House), which is now housed at the National Archives facility at College Park, Maryland. "Restoration" was also the term that Colonial Williamsburg used in the restoration of the colonial city, a process that began in 1926, continued through its first phase in 1934, and continues to today. "Restoration" was applied not only to the treatment of a historic building, but also to an entire community, e.g., the restoration at Colonial Williamsburg, the restoration of St. Augustine, etc. Within Williamsburg itself, the actual treatment of individual buildings ranged from total reconstructions (when buildings were entirely lost except for surviving foundations such as Governor's Palace and the Capitol) to restorations (when some above-ground fabric remained such as the Wren Building). Still, the public and the architectural profession regarded what was occurring at Williamsburg and St. Augustine as a "restoration." In the absence of compelling guidance from other organizations or government agencies, the word "restoration" was used in ways that the historic preservation field would not today.

Because of the success of Williamsburg's restoration in demonstrating the viability of restoring a historic town, attracting visitors from near and far, and revitalizing the area's economy, other historic cities looked to Williamsburg as a model for their own futures. St. Augustine was one of those communities that sought advice from Colonial Williamsburg and eagerly cultivated support from outside organizations and individuals. President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, John Merriam, was impressed with the historic resources of St. Augustine and the interest of the St. Augustine community and in 1936 committed his organization to a multi-year research effort to guide future restorations and reconstructions. (It might be noted that Merriam's actions occurred while the St. Augustine post

office's "restoration" was underway.) Merriam also directed the Carnegie Institution to assist with the purchase and preservation of the Llambias House. Unfortunately, Merriam retired in early 1939; his successor terminated the organization's involvement in historical and archeological projects to focus its attention solely on the hard sciences, which continues to be the organization's mission today.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. invested an estimated \$55,000,000 in ensuring the success of the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg. No other community enjoyed a similar investment in comparable funds for research, reconstruction, restoration, and visitor management. As Charles Hosmer wrote, "With the notable exceptions of Colonial Williamsburg, the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation, and a few state governments, no organization had the time or the money to devote to real research in preparation for restoration work."¹ Williamsburg remains a unique example in the history of historic preservation because of the level of funding devoted to it. Colonial Williamsburg also was a pioneer in developing approaches to restoration and interpretation because of the absence of precedents. Even with this high level of investment, as will be discussed below, the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg presented its own problems with professional taste versus documented evidence. Williamsburg's reconstructed and restored buildings were used for museum functions, rather than for commercial or governmental use, but that was the assumption behind most historic preservation projects prior to 1950. As Charles Hosmer wrote, "Very few preservationists had begun to talk about adaptive uses for restorations that could never be museums; that development came in the 1950s."²

The early restorations illustrated by Colonial Williamsburg and the St. Augustine post office represented important stepping stones toward national standards for the treatment of historic properties. After passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the National Park Service anticipated that it might administer a grant program for state and local governments to assist with carrying out the provisions of the act. A grant program would require accompanying standards for these projects. No grant funds for historic preservation became available until years later, after passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, when preservation grants were made available to the states. The establishment of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949 was prompted, in part, by the desire to establish a clearinghouse on preservation and restoration, to which the National Park Service could contribute materials on treatment practices. During the 1960s, Colonial Williamsburg and the National Trust sponsored two conferences to develop the report, "Principles and Guidelines for Historic Preservation in the United States." Coordinated by NPS chief historian Ronald F. Lee, this Principles and Guidelines report included a section on "restoration principles," which recommended the rule of "better to preserve than repair, better to repair than restore, better to restore than reconstruct."³

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects were issued in the 1970s and again in the 1980s to guide the treatment of projects funded through the Historic Preservation Fund. Another set of standards, the Standards for Rehabilitation, were issued in 1986 and tied to the standards for owners of historic properties seeking certification for Federal tax benefits. The standards

¹ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*, Vol. II, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981, p. 1040.

² Ibid.

³ The papers from the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration, as well as the Report on Principles and Guidelines for Historic Preservation in the United States, were published as *Historic Preservation Today: Essays Presented to the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration*, Williamsburg, Virginia, September 8-11, 1963, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966. Papers from the subsequent 1967 meeting were included in *Historic Preservation Tomorrow, Revised Principles and Guidelines*, Second Workshop, Williamsburg, Virginia, National Trust for Historic Preservation and Colonial Williamsburg, 1967.

were revised in 1992 so that they were applicable to a wide range of historic resource types, which resulted in the current Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

It is interesting to note that the current Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties cover the four major treatments—preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. All four treatments, including restoration and reconstruction, are still valid approaches in today's historic preservation field depending on the circumstances. The current definition of a restoration is as follows:

Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Following the definition, the current restoration standards underscore the difference between the Government House restoration of 1935-1937 and current standards. Today's restoration standards call for the "replacement of missing features from the restoration period [that] will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or combining features that never existed together historically."

While the 1930s St. Augustine post office did not conform to current restoration standards, it was a "restoration" as it was understood in the 1930s. It followed the standards set by the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s and early 1930s and was one of the few "restorations" of that era intended for non-museum purposes. Historians Carl Lounsbury⁴ and Charles Hosmer⁵ have documented how Colonial Williamsburg's own architects selected treatments that superimposed their own taste over what was revealed through archeological and historical evidence. Thus, Colonial Williamsburg's own restorations and reconstructions would not meet today's standards. Will the National Historic Landmarks program accept only those restoration projects that conform to today's

⁴ Carl R. Lounsbury, "Beaux-Arts Ideals and Colonial Reality: The Reconstruction of Williamsburg's Capitol, 1928-1934," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Dec. 1990), pp. 373-389. In this article, Lounsbury, a Colonial Williamsburg architectural historian, writes: "the desire to have a symmetrical façade unwittingly forced them [the architects] to compromise the colonial plan. Consonant with their Beaux-Arts design principles, the restoration architects worked hard to make the plan fit the constraints of a symmetrical façade. (p. 384) In addition, Lounsbury writes: "Along with the abstract formality that permeated their design rationale, the restoration architects had a tendency to embellish many of the ornamental details far beyond what the APVA committee felt was appropriate They freely adopted ornamental details from many of the grander buildings in England." (p. 385) Architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable seized upon Lounsbury's article and wrote, "It has been a short distance down the yellow brick road from Williamsburg to Disneyland. Both are quintessentially American inventions. Both deal in doctored reality." See Ada Louise Huxtable, "Inventing American Reality," *The New York Review of Books*, December 3, 1992, www.nybooks.com/article/archives/1992/dec/03/inventing-american-reality, accessed May 6, 2013.

⁵ Charles Hosmer in *Preservation Comes of Age*, Vol. II, refers to the critiques by observers of some restorations of the 1930s as "misguided restorations," "excrescences in restorative treatment," "urge to gild the lily," and "prettifications." See pp. 1005-1013.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties? Will the NHL program also require that the nomination documentation of early restorations address: "a difficultly researched and deeply nuanced analysis of the concept of 'seeing' relative to historic buildings . . . [the] kind of mental gymnastics [that] were in play . . . the boundaries for something understood to be a restoration versus a new design" as suggested in your May 3, 2013 letter? If so, then restoration projects of the pre-1960 era will be required to mount an impossibly high threshold and these important properties will be missing from the roster of National Historic Landmarks. This would present a significant gap in the important field of the history of historic preservation.

2. "The degree to which the, at best, use of three walls in an otherwise modern building could be considered adaptive use is questionable, as is the importance of a one-off project, an anomaly within the Office of Supervising Architect of the Treasury."

The St. Augustine post office was the only known "restoration" undertaken by the Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department during its history from the early 1850s to 1939. During this 90-year period, the Office was responsible for the design and construction of thousands of civilian Federal government buildings throughout the nation, including post offices, custom houses, Federal courthouses, and Federal government buildings that combined multiple functions. By the 1930s, the Office had settled on design precedents established in the early 20th century under the management of James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect (1897-1912). "Nearly all the federal buildings designed under Taylor can be classified as classical or colonial revival. By the turn of the century, these styles were well entrenched in the architectural vocabulary throughout the country."⁶ Until the 1930s, there was no stated policy of designing buildings to conform to a locality's architectural traditions. In fact, during the 1910s and 1920s, the trend was toward standardized designs for smaller Federal government buildings. When Henry Morgenthau, Jr. became Secretary of the Treasury in 1934, he encouraged the Office to design buildings that reflected the locality's traditional styles and materials. This was not a uniformly applied directive because many of the 1930s buildings were designed in the Moderne or Deco styles.

This brief history of the Office underscores the unusual nature of the design of the St. Augustine post office. It is surprising that this building's uniqueness is regarded as a reason why this property is not eligible as a National Historic Landmark. It should be noted that the recent National Historic Landmark nomination and designation of the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse (James R. Browning U.S. Court of Appeals) in San Francisco, California, which was constructed between 1897 and 1905, represents the recognition of an "exception to the rule." While an entirely different type and scale of building from the St. Augustine post office, its claim to national significance lies in the fact that it was designed by the Office of the Supervising Architect staff during a period in the history of Federal government architecture when the prevailing rule was reflected in the following statement:

The result of Taylor's administration of the office was a select number of federal buildings, usually those located in large cities, designed under the Tarsney Act provisions, and a larger number of modest government buildings, usually post offices, located in small communities, which were designed by the Office staff.⁷

⁶ Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 209.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

The Tarsney Act period (1897 to 1912) represents the years when the American Institute of Architects successfully broke the monopoly of the Office over Federal government building designs. During these years, private firms received commissions for the design of major Federal buildings in large cities through competitions that the Supervising Architect administered. The NHL nomination for the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in San Francisco argues that its design, produced by the Office's staff and not by a private firm, was "at least equal to a handful of the most important building designed by private firms for the government under the [Tarsney] act."

Does the fact that the San Francisco building is a successful Beaux-Arts Renaissance Revival public building *alone* make it NHL-eligible and therefore all other similar Beaux-Arts Renaissance Revival public buildings are also NHL-eligible? On the contrary, the nomination argues that the Office of the Supervising Architect demonstrated its ability to produce a building "on par with buildings designed by the most respected and prolific private firms," which made it unusual and undermined the claim that only private architects and firms could produce such successful public buildings. Within the historic context of the Tarsney Act era, the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in San Francisco was an exception to the rule and thus it is an "anomaly." Why is the San Francisco anomaly acceptable and the St. Augustine anomaly not acceptable?

3. "The formal and stylistic choices made by Mellen Greeley in conjunction with the Supervising Architect's Office do not seem dissimilar to the deliberation that would have occurred each time the office planned a post office or some other government building in a historic town or neighborhood."

The location, design, and construction of the St. Augustine post office were highly unusual in the annals of Federal government architecture, mainly because of the unique circumstances that the historic city presented. St. Augustine's Spanish colonial heritage cast a powerful spell on visitors and resident alike and in the antebellum period, the city's historic and quaint buildings and streets attracted a steady flow of visitors. "Most visitors to St. Augustine were impressed by elements from the past, its old-world charm, its Spanish heritage and its fort. In countless diaries, journals, magazines and books these visitors recorded their impressions of the ancient city. . . ."⁸ Businessmen and businesswomen took advantage of this interest and provided hotels and boarding houses to accommodate visitors.

After the Civil War, northerners resumed their travels to St. Augustine for the December to March season, attracted by the city's quaint setting and narrow streets. Standard Oil magnate Henry M. Flagler invested in the city's potential as the American Riviera with the construction of the luxurious Ponce de León and the Alcazar hotels in the late 1880s. Other large luxury hotels followed. In the mid-1890s, Flagler, facing competition from locales further south, turned his attention to and built a new resort community at Palm Beach. By this time, the dream of St. Augustine as the Newport for the leisured class ended. In the first three decades of the 20th century, St. Augustine provided accommodations for an older, less affluent clientele as well as a permanent year-round retirement community, complete with beach accessibility and golf courses. The city also attracted artists, authors, and other creative people who were attracted to the city's Spanish heritage and aging building stock.

Official historical organizations developed in this period. The St. Augustine Historical Society was founded in 1883 and dedicated to the preservation of the city's historic buildings, as well as artifacts,

⁸ George E. Buker, "The Americanization of St. Augustine 1821-1865," in *The Oldest City: St. Augustine Saga of Survival*, ed. Jean Parker Waterbury, St. Augustine: The St. Augustine Historical Society, p. 174.

documents, and maps. In 1899, the Society acquired its first colonial house, known as the Vedder Museum, and its contents. The building was lost in the 1914 fire. The Society later managed the historic Fort Marion, now called the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, for the War Department until 1933, when management of national monuments was transferred to the National Park Service. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Society acquired other colonial-era properties. In addition to the Society's activities, in 1906, a group of St. Augustine women successfully opposed municipal plans to demolish the pillars of the City Gate, an "early example of concern for preserving the historic city."⁹ The impressive coquina pillars of City Gate marked the eastern terminus of *El Camino Real*, or Royal Highway, that extended west to present-day Tallahassee and beyond. Thus, St. Augustine possessed an active historic preservation community of long-standing and had long served as a tourist mecca.

Most communities welcomed the arrival of new Federal government buildings because they were a reassuring sign of the city's economic viability and importance. Few cities complained about the design of a new building or expressed dissatisfaction with the location or materials. St. Augustine was different because it had a long tradition of citizen activism when matters concerned the city's historic buildings. During the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, the city's mayor, Walter B. Fraser, and the managing editor of *The St. Augustine Record*, Nina Hawkins, championed historic preservation as the key to the city's future. These circumstances made the St. Augustine post office project one of the most unusual in the history of the Supervising Architect's Office. When the city was in need of a new post office, as early as 1926-1927, the Supervising Architect's Office prepared these plans. As reported by the Supervising Architect's Office, "When it was contemplated in 1926 and 1927 to remodel the building (plans having been made and bids received), there was so much agitation against the scheme that the project was deferred. The foundation of the adverse agitation by the citizens of St. Augustine was the historical value placed upon the old building."¹⁰

Jacksonville architect Mellen C. Greeley produced a design for the new building in 1933. However, W. E. Reynolds, Assistant Director of the Procurement Division and the supervisor over the Public Works Branch and the Supervising Architect's Office functions, met with St. Augustine leaders and civic groups in 1933 and 1934. After these visits, Reynolds instructed Greeley to study the feasibility of using the old building for a post office and to restore as much of the old building as possible to conform to the building's appearance in the 1764 picture. Reynolds also instructed Greeley to "accede if possible to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine" in restoring the building as a "historic monument." Because Greeley's work would now be completely different from his 1933 design, his old contract with the Supervising Architect's Office was cancelled and a new contract for the "restoration" of the historic building was executed.

Greeley's "restoration" design involved additional costs, more time for the design work, and the dispatching of staff architects from the Supervising Architect's Office to assist Greeley with preparing the drawings and specifications during much of the summer of 1935. Given the dozens of other post office buildings being designed and constructed in state of Florida alone during the New Deal, not to mention the hundreds more underway throughout the United States at the same time, it is impossible to imagine that the St. Augustine post office project was typical or similar to the standard Federal

⁹ William R. Adams, *St. Augustine and St. Johns County: A Historical Guide*, Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, Inc., p. 19.

¹⁰ Superintendent, AE Division to James A. Wetmore, January 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

government building project of the era. During the New Deal, all Federal government agencies were working feverishly to implement public works projects that would generate construction activity and the badly needed jobs that ensued. The Supervising Architect's Office did not extend the highly personalized attention paid to St. Augustine to other localities, whether considered historic or not. Thus, deliberations over the design and construction of the St. Augustine building demonstrates the flexibility of the Supervising Architect's Office in investing time and resources to ensure the success of the St. Augustine post office project—time and resources that were not readily or typically available to other communities, including historic ones.

4. "St. Augustine's larger role in the historic preservation movement is an important one and remains much understudied."

I agree that the history of historic preservation in the United States and in individual communities is not as studied and understood as it should be. It is ironic that the historic preservation field, which prides itself on understanding history in all of its physical manifestations, has done little to document, evaluate, and recognize the material remains of its own history. The historic preservation field has a rich and largely untapped history that is still visible in cities, towns, neighborhoods, and rural areas.

I hope that this history can be appreciated for what preservationists before us wanted to preserve and the ways in which they went about it. Judgments about whether or not the correct decisions were made or whether or not the results meet current standards should not cloud our appreciation of these past efforts. This history can be used as a starting point for understanding what from historic preservation's own past is worthy of recognition by the Federal government's official historic preservation programs.

The St. Augustine post office (Government House) represents a significant effort that is worthy of recognition for its place in the history of historic preservation in the United States.

Sincerely,



Antoinette J. Lee

cc: James Jacobs
Turkiya Lowe
Erika Seibert
Patty Henry
Cynthia Walton
Barbara Mattick
Roy Hunt



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

H34(2280)

MAY - 3 2013

Antoinette J. Lee, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 3407
Arlington, VA 22203-3407

Dear Toni:

Thank you for your inquiry about the potential of Government House in St. Augustine, Florida, to be considered for National Historic Landmark (NHL) status. The Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury hired Jacksonville architect Mellen C. Greeley to design the building, which was completed in 1937. Buildings on this site have served government functions since the colonial period and Greeley incorporated materials from surviving coquina walls into his design for a modern post office facility. We have considered the property's significance under Criterion 1 and Criterion 4 as an early work of restoration as conducted by the Federal government and within the development of the historic preservation movement in the United States. After careful examination and evaluation, we have determined that the property does not meet the requirements for NHL consideration and we cannot encourage the preparation of a nomination.

Although it is difficult to view Government House as an example of a "restoration," this term was applied to the project at the time of conception and realization, and the evolution of "bricks-and-mortar" preservation is an important theme in the history of historic preservation. The building does not appear to be a restoration, but rather is a modern design that selectively includes some (the gabled end wall and balcony), but not all (the tall courtyard walls, tower, and classical portal) of the features visible in a 1764 view capturing the east elevation of the building. The design may have used existing coquina walls, or reused wall materials on the first floor of what became one wing of the new building. The footprint of the building existing on the site at the outset of design and construction was fully absorbed into the new one. This contrasts with the wholesale reconstruction of the Governor's Palace and Capitol in Williamsburg between 1928 and 1934. These buildings are also twentieth-century interpretations of the colonial past; however, the purpose of the project was distinct, the level of investigation highly intensive, and the outcomes very different. Unlike Government House, the major buildings at Williamsburg were recreated as museum pieces. Towards this end, the architects at Williamsburg conducted in-depth research, and on-site archeology of below-ground resources, and architectural fieldwork in an attempt to reconstruct, as accurately as possible for the time, the Governor's Palace and Capitol as depicted on the Bodleian Plate (ca. 1740). With the new post office in St. Augustine, knowledge of Spanish colonial architecture—including an eighteenth-century view of a predecessor building

on the site—was used as inspiration, as the launching point for the design of a modern building that would be compatible with the “living” historic city in which it was located.

The documentation acknowledges that the term “restoration” was used differently in the 1930s than today, but does not elaborate on this key topic. Overall, the project seems to be more related to contemporary design processes involved in devising new buildings that reference local architectural precedents than a restoration or reconstruction of a specific building. Furthermore, the assertion that Government House can be considered a restoration does not include an in-depth consideration of how people in the 1930s defined and utilized this term. Such an approach would require a difficultly researched and deeply nuanced analysis of the concept of “seeing” relative to historic buildings.

If contemporaries truly viewed Government House as a restoration, or even an inventive reconstruction, in the manner that terms are defined today, what kind of mental gymnastics were in play? What were the boundaries for something understood to be a restoration versus a new design that might broadly be categorized as (Spanish) Colonial Revival? How did they reconcile the dramatic differences between the building of 1935-37; its immediate predecessor—an amalgam of different periods of construction and alteration; and the historic watercolor (1764) that “was adopted the key-note of the restoration”? Did they see, for example, differences between the work done in recreating Williamsburg’s Governor’s Palace and Capitol and the project that created Government House?

As it stands, it is hard to know from the submitted documentation what parts of the building, exactly, survived into the early 1930s, when these parts were originally built or significantly altered, and what fabric was ultimately incorporated into the new post office building. There is no clear account of the building’s construction and evolution over time. The documentation seems to suggest that perhaps more than restoration Government House was the first example of a federally-funded adaptive reuse project. The degree to which the, at best, use of three walls in an otherwise modern building could be considered adaptive reuse is questionable, as is the importance of a one-off project, an anomaly within the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury.

The Supervising Architect’s Office was, in effect, one of the most important architecture “firms” operating in the country during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. As you have demonstrated in your own publication, the office was incontestably engaged in nationally-significant work whether considering the office’s historical role or the architectural significance of some of its designs. The Supervising Architect’s Office was responsible for the design and construction of new buildings for federal functions in historic towns and urban neighborhoods across the country and Government House fits well within that context. The office’s reuse of wall remnants in the construction of a new post office in St. Augustine in 1935-37 does not reposition it as a “type specimen valuable for the study of early restoration architecture by the Federal government in the United States.”

While clearly situated within the popular and professional dialogue in the 1930s about historic buildings and sites, decisions made about the design of Government House seem to be better categorized as something more of a fanciful contextualization. The formal and stylistic choices

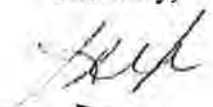
made by Mellen Greeley in conjunction with the Supervising Architect's Office do not seem dissimilar to the deliberation that would have occurred each time the office planned a post office or some other government building in a historic town and or neighborhood.

The design process for Government House was also not unique to the Supervising Architect's Office. At the same time that work was proceeding with Government House, the National Park Service (NPS) was undertaking a project with a similar goal. Typical of NPS practice at the time, the design of the headquarters building at Fort Matanzas (1935-36) purposefully mimicked local architecture with its use of coquina and wood-framing. Considering the emphasis that the nomination places on the role of the Federal government in the restoration project, it would have been helpful to place the property within context of the development of the Federal government's role in preservation—particularly the Antiquities Act (1906) and the effort to preserve Native American ruins (Casa Grande and Mesa Verde); formation of the NPS and early historical parks (Colonial); the creation of HABS (1933); and passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935.

St. Augustine's larger role in the historic preservation movement is an important one and remains much understudied. The nomination understandably focuses much attention on Williamsburg, but does not provide a clear structure for the movement's history, particularly events related to the Federal government's role in preservation as well as the efforts of other "living cities," such as Charleston, New Orleans, Savannah, San Antonio, and Alexandria. Moreover, the argument in the submitted documentation focuses more on the importance of St. Augustine to historic preservation as a district. We feel that a district nomination—or an expansion to the present one currently being revised—could more fully and satisfyingly demonstrate St. Augustine's national significance than a single property built in 1935-37. A district nomination would take into account the complex narrative of historic preservation in all its facets, including: archeology, public history, architecture—reconstructed and restored as well as new designs like the post office, and the ever-important element of commerce and historical tourism in a city that by the 1930s had long been established as a resort community.

Thank you for your patience while we reviewed the relative merits of the property as well as the information contained in the draft you submitted. Please keep in mind that the NHL Program does not recommend the preparation of documentation prior to us making an official response about the potential of a property to be considered for NHL status. The steps of the process exist to avoid misdirecting resources and energies by both the property owner and the preparer, which we are particularly sensitive to at a time when the national economy remains fragile. If you would like to discuss this review further, please contact James Jacobs by phone (202-354-2184) or email (james_jacobs@nps.gov). We look forward to working with you on other projects in the future.

Sincerely,



Alexandra Lord, Ph.D.
Branch Chief
National Historic Landmarks Program

cc: Florida SHPO, attn: Barbara Mattick, Ph.D.

bcc: SERO-Turkiya Lowe, Cynthia Walton
2280 Lord, Loether, Gabbert
Basic File Retained In 2280

FNP:JJacobs:OP:05/02/2013:S://nr-nhl/Jacobs/Government House

Antoinette J. Lee
4141 N. Henderson Road #210
Arlington, VA 22203

July 31, 2013

Dr. Alexandra Lord
National Historic Landmarks Program
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Lexi:

Your letter of May 3, 2013, regarding the National Historic Landmark eligibility of the post office, also called Government House, in St. Augustine, Florida, contains a number of points that I wish to address for the record. Each of my responses is directed at statements in your letter that I have underlined and placed in quotation marks.

1. "... decisions made about the design of Government House seem to be better categorized as something more of a fanciful contextualization."

The letter questions the validity of the 1935-1937 work on Government House as a "restoration." The term "restoration" was used in the correspondence associated with the 1935-1937 construction of the St. Augustine post office project (later Government House), which is now housed at the National Archives facility at College Park, Maryland. "Restoration" was also the term that Colonial Williamsburg used in the restoration of the colonial city, a process that began in 1926, continued through its first phase in 1934, and continues to today. "Restoration" was applied not only to the treatment of a historic building, but also to an entire community, e.g., the restoration at Colonial Williamsburg, the restoration of St. Augustine, etc. Within Williamsburg itself, the actual treatment of individual buildings ranged from total reconstructions (when buildings were entirely lost except for surviving foundations such as Governor's Palace and the Capitol) to restorations (when some above-ground fabric remained such as the Wren Building). Still, the public and the architectural profession regarded what was occurring at Williamsburg and St. Augustine as a "restoration." In the absence of compelling guidance from other organizations or government agencies, the word "restoration" was used in ways that the historic preservation field would not today.

Because of the success of Williamsburg's restoration in demonstrating the viability of restoring a historic town, attracting visitors from near and far, and revitalizing the area's economy, other historic cities looked to Williamsburg as a model for their own futures. St. Augustine was one of those communities that sought advice from Colonial Williamsburg and eagerly cultivated support from outside organizations and individuals. President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, John Merriam, was impressed with the historic resources of St. Augustine and the interest of the St. Augustine community and in 1936 committed his organization to a multi-year research effort to guide future restorations and reconstructions. (It might be noted that Merriam's actions occurred while the St. Augustine post

office's "restoration" was underway.) Merriam also directed the Carnegie Institution to assist with the purchase and preservation of the Llambias House. Unfortunately, Merriam retired in early 1939; his successor terminated the organization's involvement in historical and archeological projects to focus its attention solely on the hard sciences, which continues to be the organization's mission today.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. invested an estimated \$55,000,000 in ensuring the success of the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg. No other community enjoyed a similar investment in comparable funds for research, reconstruction, restoration, and visitor management. As Charles Hosmer wrote, "With the notable exceptions of Colonial Williamsburg, the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation, and a few state governments, no organization had the time or the money to devote to real research in preparation for restoration work."¹ Williamsburg remains a unique example in the history of historic preservation because of the level of funding devoted to it. Colonial Williamsburg also was a pioneer in developing approaches to restoration and interpretation because of the absence of precedents. Even with this high level of investment, as will be discussed below, the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg presented its own problems with professional taste versus documented evidence. Williamsburg's reconstructed and restored buildings were used for museum functions, rather than for commercial or governmental use, but that was the assumption behind most historic preservation projects prior to 1950. As Charles Hosmer wrote, "Very few preservationists had begun to talk about adaptive uses for restorations that could never be museums; that development came in the 1950s."²

The early restorations illustrated by Colonial Williamsburg and the St. Augustine post office represented important stepping stones toward national standards for the treatment of historic properties. After passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the National Park Service anticipated that it might administer a grant program for state and local governments to assist with carrying out the provisions of the act. A grant program would require accompanying standards for these projects. No grant funds for historic preservation became available until years later, after passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, when preservation grants were made available to the states. The establishment of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949 was prompted, in part, by the desire to establish a clearinghouse on preservation and restoration, to which the National Park Service could contribute materials on treatment practices. During the 1960s, Colonial Williamsburg and the National Trust sponsored two conferences to develop the report, "Principles and Guidelines for Historic Preservation in the United States." Coordinated by NPS chief historian Ronald F. Lee, this Principles and Guidelines report included a section on "restoration principles," which recommended the rule of "better to preserve than repair, better to repair than restore, better to restore than reconstruct."³

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects were issued in the 1970s and again in the 1980s to guide the treatment of projects funded through the Historic Preservation Fund. Another set of standards, the Standards for Rehabilitation, were issued in 1986 and tied to the standards for owners of historic properties seeking certification for Federal tax benefits. The standards

¹ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*, Vol. II, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981, p. 1040.

² *Ibid.*

³ The papers from the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration, as well as the Report on Principles and Guidelines for Historic Preservation in the United States, were published as *Historic Preservation Today: Essays Presented to the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration*, Williamsburg, Virginia, September 8-11, 1963, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966. Papers from the subsequent 1967 meeting were included in *Historic Preservation Tomorrow, Revised Principles and Guidelines*, Second Workshop, Williamsburg, Virginia, National Trust for Historic Preservation and Colonial Williamsburg, 1967.

were revised in 1992 so that they were applicable to a wide range of historic resource types, which resulted in the current Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

It is interesting to note that the current Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties cover the four major treatments—preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. All four treatments, including restoration and reconstruction, are still valid approaches in today's historic preservation field depending on the circumstances. The current definition of a restoration is as follows:

Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Following the definition, the current restoration standards underscore the difference between the Government House restoration of 1935-1937 and current standards. Today's restoration standards call for the "replacement of missing features from the restoration period [that] will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or combining features that never existed together historically."

While the 1930s St. Augustine post office did not conform to current restoration standards, it was a "restoration" as it was understood in the 1930s. It followed the standards set by the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s and early 1930s and was one of the few "restorations" of that era intended for non-museum purposes. Historians Carl Lounsbury⁴ and Charles Hosmer⁵ have documented how Colonial Williamsburg's own architects selected treatments that superimposed their own taste over what was revealed through archeological and historical evidence. Thus, Colonial Williamsburg's own restorations and reconstructions would not meet today's standards. Will the National Historic Landmarks program accept only those restoration projects that conform to today's

⁴ Carl R. Lounsbury, "Beaux-Arts Ideals and Colonial Reality: The Reconstruction of Williamsburg's Capitol, 1928-1934," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Dec. 1990), pp. 373-389. In this article, Lounsbury, a Colonial Williamsburg architectural historian, writes: "the desire to have a symmetrical façade unwittingly forced them [the architects] to compromise the colonial plan. Consonant with their Beaux-Arts design principles, the restoration architects worked hard to make the plan fit the constraints of a symmetrical façade. (p. 384) In addition, Lounsbury writes: "Along with the abstract formality that permeated their design rationale, the restoration architects had a tendency to embellish many of the ornamental details far beyond what the APVA committee felt was appropriate . . . They freely adopted ornamental details from many of the grander buildings in England." (p. 385) Architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable seized upon Lounsbury's article and wrote, "It has been a short distance down the yellow brick road from Williamsburg to Disneyland. Both are quintessentially American inventions. Both deal in doctored reality." See Ada Louise Huxtable, "Inventing American Reality," *The New York Review of Books*, December 3, 1992, www.nybooks.com/article/archives/1992/dec/03/inventing-american-reality, accessed May 6, 2013.

⁵ Charles Hosmer in *Preservation Comes of Age*, Vol. II, refers to the critiques by observers of some restorations of the 1930s as "misguided restorations," "excrescences in restorative treatment," "urge to gild the lily," and "prettifications." See pp. 1005-1013.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties? Will the NHL program also require that the nomination documentation of early restorations address: "a difficultly researched and deeply nuanced analysis of the concept of 'seeing' relative to historic buildings . . . [the] kind of mental gymnastics [that] were in play . . . the boundaries for something understood to be a restoration versus a new design" as suggested in your May 3, 2013 letter? If so, then restoration projects of the pre-1960 era will be required to mount an impossibly high threshold and these important properties will be missing from the roster of National Historic Landmarks. This would present a significant gap in the important field of the history of historic preservation.

2. "The degree to which the, at best, use of three walls in an otherwise modern building could be considered adaptive use is questionable, as is the importance of a one-off project, an anomaly within the Office of Supervising Architect of the Treasury."

The St. Augustine post office was the only known "restoration" undertaken by the Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department during its history from the early 1850s to 1939. During this 90-year period, the Office was responsible for the design and construction of thousands of civilian Federal government buildings throughout the nation, including post offices, custom houses, Federal courthouses, and Federal government buildings that combined multiple functions. By the 1930s, the Office had settled on design precedents established in the early 20th century under the management of James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect (1897-1912). "Nearly all the federal buildings designed under Taylor can be classified as classical or colonial revival. By the turn of the century, these styles were well entrenched in the architectural vocabulary throughout the country."⁶ Until the 1930s, there was no stated policy of designing buildings to conform to a locality's architectural traditions. In fact, during the 1910s and 1920s, the trend was toward standardized designs for smaller Federal government buildings. When Henry Morgenthau, Jr. became Secretary of the Treasury in 1934, he encouraged the Office to design buildings that reflected the locality's traditional styles and materials. This was not a uniformly applied directive because many of the 1930s buildings were designed in the Moderne or Deco styles.

This brief history of the Office underscores the unusual nature of the design of the St. Augustine post office. It is surprising that this building's uniqueness is regarded as a reason why this property is not eligible as a National Historic Landmark. It should be noted that the recent National Historic Landmark nomination and designation of the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse (James R. Browning U.S. Court of Appeals) in San Francisco, California, which was constructed between 1897 and 1905, represents the recognition of an "exception to the rule." While an entirely different type and scale of building from the St. Augustine post office, its claim to national significance lies in the fact that it was designed by the Office of the Supervising Architect staff during a period in the history of Federal government architecture when the prevailing rule was reflected in the following statement:

The result of Taylor's administration of the office was a select number of federal buildings, usually those located in large cities, designed under the Tarsney Act provisions, and a larger number of modest government buildings, usually post offices, located in small communities, which were designed by the Office staff.⁷

⁶ Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 209.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

The Tarsney Act period (1897 to 1912) represents the years when the American Institute of Architects successfully broke the monopoly of the Office over Federal government building designs. During these years, private firms received commissions for the design of major Federal buildings in large cities through competitions that the Supervising Architect administered. The NHL nomination for the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in San Francisco argues that its design, produced by the Office's staff and not by a private firm, was "at least equal to a handful of the most important building designed by private firms for the government under the [Tarsney] act."

Does the fact that the San Francisco building is a successful Beaux-Arts Renaissance Revival public building *alone* make it NHL-eligible and therefore all other similar Beaux-Arts Renaissance Revival public buildings are also NHL-eligible? On the contrary, the nomination argues that the Office of the Supervising Architect demonstrated its ability to produce a building "on par with buildings designed by the most respected and prolific private firms," which made it unusual and undermined the claim that only private architects and firms could produce such successful public buildings. Within the historic context of the Tarsney Act era, the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in San Francisco was an exception to the rule and thus it is an "anomaly." Why is the San Francisco anomaly acceptable and the St. Augustine anomaly not acceptable?

3. "The formal and stylistic choices made by Mellen Greeley in conjunction with the Supervising Architect's Office do not seem dissimilar to the deliberation that would have occurred each time the office planned a post office or some other government building in a historic town or neighborhood."

The location, design, and construction of the St. Augustine post office were highly unusual in the annals of Federal government architecture, mainly because of the unique circumstances that the historic city presented. St. Augustine's Spanish colonial heritage cast a powerful spell on visitors and resident alike and in the antebellum period, the city's historic and quaint buildings and streets attracted a steady flow of visitors. "Most visitors to St. Augustine were impressed by elements from the past, its old-world charm, its Spanish heritage and its fort. In countless diaries, journals, magazines and books these visitors recorded their impressions of the ancient city. . . ."⁸ Businessmen and businesswomen took advantage of this interest and provided hotels and boarding houses to accommodate visitors.

After the Civil War, northerners resumed their travels to St. Augustine for the December to March season, attracted by the city's quaint setting and narrow streets. Standard Oil magnate Henry M. Flagler invested in the city's potential as the American Riviera with the construction of the luxurious Ponce de León and the Alcazar hotels in the late 1880s. Other large luxury hotels followed. In the mid-1890s, Flagler, facing competition from locales further south, turned his attention to and built a new resort community at Palm Beach. By this time, the dream of St. Augustine as the Newport for the leisured class ended. In the first three decades of the 20th century, St. Augustine provided accommodations for an older, less affluent clientele as well as a permanent year-round retirement community, complete with beach accessibility and golf courses. The city also attracted artists, authors, and other creative people who were attracted to the city's Spanish heritage and aging building stock.

Official historical organizations developed in this period. The St. Augustine Historical Society was founded in 1883 and dedicated to the preservation of the city's historic buildings, as well as artifacts,

⁸ George E. Buker, "The Americanization of St. Augustine 1821-1865," in *The Oldest City: St. Augustine Saga of Survival*, ed. Jean Parker Waterbury, St. Augustine: The St. Augustine Historical Society, p. 174.

documents, and maps. In 1899, the Society acquired its first colonial house, known as the Vedder Museum, and its contents. The building was lost in the 1914 fire. The Society later managed the historic Fort Marion, now called the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, for the War Department until 1933, when management of national monuments was transferred to the National Park Service. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Society acquired other colonial-era properties. In addition to the Society's activities, in 1906, a group of St. Augustine women successfully opposed municipal plans to demolish the pillars of the City Gate, an "early example of concern for preserving the historic city."⁹ The impressive coquina pillars of City Gate marked the eastern terminus of *El Camino Real*, or Royal Highway, that extended west to present-day Tallahassee and beyond. Thus, St. Augustine possessed an active historic preservation community of long-standing and had long served as a tourist mecca.

Most communities welcomed the arrival of new Federal government buildings because they were a reassuring sign of the city's economic viability and importance. Few cities complained about the design of a new building or expressed dissatisfaction with the location or materials. St. Augustine was different because it had a long tradition of citizen activism when matters concerned the city's historic buildings. During the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, the city's mayor, Walter B. Fraser, and the managing editor of *The St. Augustine Record*, Nina Hawkins, championed historic preservation as the key to the city's future. These circumstances made the St. Augustine post office project one of the most unusual in the history of the Supervising Architect's Office. When the city was in need of a new post office, as early as 1926-1927, the Supervising Architect's Office prepared these plans. As reported by the Supervising Architect's Office, "When it was contemplated in 1926 and 1927 to remodel the building (plans having been made and bids received), there was so much agitation against the scheme that the project was deferred. The foundation of the adverse agitation by the citizens of St. Augustine was the historical value placed upon the old building."¹⁰

Jacksonville architect Mellen C. Greeley produced a design for the new building in 1933. However, W. E. Reynolds, Assistant Director of the Procurement Division and the supervisor over the Public Works Branch and the Supervising Architect's Office functions, met with St. Augustine leaders and civic groups in 1933 and 1934. After these visits, Reynolds instructed Greeley to study the feasibility of using the old building for a post office and to restore as much of the old building as possible to conform to the building's appearance in the 1764 picture. Reynolds also instructed Greeley to "accede if possible to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine" in restoring the building as a "historic monument." Because Greeley's work would now be completely different from his 1933 design, his old contract with the Supervising Architect's Office was cancelled and a new contract for the "restoration" of the historic building was executed.

Greeley's "restoration" design involved additional costs, more time for the design work, and the dispatching of staff architects from the Supervising Architect's Office to assist Greeley with preparing the drawings and specifications during much of the summer of 1935. Given the dozens of other post office buildings being designed and constructed in state of Florida alone during the New Deal, not to mention the hundreds more underway throughout the United States at the same time, it is impossible to imagine that the St. Augustine post office project was typical or similar to the standard Federal

⁹ William R. Adams, *St. Augustine and St. Johns County: A Historical Guide*, Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, Inc., p. 19.

¹⁰ Superintendent, AE Division to James A. Wetmore, January 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

government building project of the era. During the New Deal, all Federal government agencies were working feverishly to implement public works projects that would generate construction activity and the badly needed jobs that ensued. The Supervising Architect's Office did not extend the highly personalized attention paid to St. Augustine to other localities, whether considered historic or not. Thus, deliberations over the design and construction of the St. Augustine building demonstrates the flexibility of the Supervising Architect's Office in investing time and resources to ensure the success of the St. Augustine post office project—time and resources that were not readily or typically available to other communities, including historic ones.

4. "St. Augustine's larger role in the historic preservation movement is an important one and remains much understudied."

I agree that the history of historic preservation in the United States and in individual communities is not as studied and understood as it should be. It is ironic that the historic preservation field, which prides itself on understanding history in all of its physical manifestations, has done little to document, evaluate, and recognize the material remains of its own history. The historic preservation field has a rich and largely untapped history that is still visible in cities, towns, neighborhoods, and rural areas.

I hope that this history can be appreciated for what preservationists before us wanted to preserve and the ways in which they went about it. Judgments about whether or not the correct decisions were made or whether or not the results meet current standards should not cloud our appreciation of these past efforts. This history can be used as a starting point for understanding what from historic preservation's own past is worthy of recognition by the Federal government's official historic preservation programs.

The St. Augustine post office (Government House) represents a significant effort that is worthy of recognition for its place in the history of historic preservation in the United States.

Sincerely,



Antoinette J. Lee

cc: ✓ James Jacobs
Turkiya Lowe
Erika Seibert
Patty Henry
Cynthia Walton
Barbara Mattick
Roy Hunt



City of St. Augustine



St. Augustine, Florida
Nation's Oldest City

Planning/Building

1565 - 2015
450 years

June 21, 2013

Barbara E. Mattick
Deputy SHPO Survey & Registration
Florida Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
2013 JUN 25 1 A 9:49

Dear Barbara,

I received your inquiry letter dated June 4, 2013 with the National Register nomination proposal for Government House at 48 King Street in St. Augustine. In response to the request for the Certified Local Government review of the proposal, this item was presented to the regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Architectural Review Board yesterday.

Following a discussion on the merits of the proposal with Roy Hunt representing, the Board unanimously supported the nomination proposal as presented. Please accept this letter as documentation that HARB strongly supports the nomination of Government House to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you should need anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jenny Wolfe
Historic Preservation and
Special Projects Planner
City of St. Augustine Planning
and Building Department

Draft NHL Nomination for Government House, St. Augustine, FL
Submitted to NPA by Dr. Toni Lee in February 2013 (with
annotations by WASO NHL staff)

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Government House is nationally significant in the evolution of Federal government architecture and the development of the historic preservation movement in the United States. Government House is one of the very few, if not the only, restorations of a historic property for Federal government functions that the Supervising Architect's Office undertook during any time in its evolution from the 1850s to 1939. Government House is an architectural type specimen valuable for the study of early restoration architecture by the Federal government in the United States. The emergence of St. Augustine as a "restored community" during the 1930s took much of its inspiration from Colonial Williamsburg's restoration that was initiated in 1926. The "restoration" of Government House in 1935-37 was a key investment by the Federal government in the evolution of St. Augustine as a restored community and thus outstandingly illustrates the history and evolution of historic preservation in the United States.

Government House represents the 1935-1937 "restoration" of a building on the site on which the Spanish Governor's Palace was once located. The mid-1930s restoration was undertaken to provide St. Augustine with a post office facility as well as rooms for customs collection and other Federal government functions. The building on the site was referred to as the U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine between its construction during 1935-1937 and 1966, when it was transferred to the State of Florida. After the transfer, it reverted to being called Government House, which was its name in 1821 when the United States assumed control over Florida, including St. Augustine and this building.

SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION

interior story

Summary

Government House is located at 48 King Street on the block bounded by King, Cordova, Cathedral, and St. George Streets. It faces the original Spanish Plaza to the east, and forms an integral part of the complex of colonial, territorial, and late nineteenth century buildings that surround the plaza. The building is three stories in height, steel-framed, and has a gable roof covered by flat tile. The east wing contains three old coquina walls (see description of coquina stone in next paragraph); the other walls are constructed of coquina and stucco. Each street façade has a balcony. The east wing includes a walled patio. Main entrances are on the north and south façades and lead into the main post office lobby, now an exhibition lobby.¹

¹ The Government House description is based on the material provided in *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31,

Coquina is a native shellstone found in the coastal region of Florida and Cuba. It is stone formed from coquina shells in large deposits that become cemented by calcium carbonate over long periods of time (over 100,000 years). Over the different locations in which it is found, the stone varies in texture and hardness. The most prized variety is from the Anastasia formation found near St. Augustine. The American Indians in the St. Augustine area were familiar with the stone and it became known and used by the European settlers. In the late seventeenth century, coquina was used in the construction of the Castillo de San Marcos. It was easy to quarry and absorbed cannon shot damage well.

Exterior

The building is framed with fireproof steel columns and beams, concrete floor slabs, and a steel trussed roof. The steel frame has been inserted within the shell of the older existing coquina walls. The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and the corners. Here the old coquina in an irregular course is exposed. The north, east, and south façades are the major public façades, with the west façade used as a delivery area and service area.

All of the openings in the walls date to the 1930s, the former openings having been filled with masonry as required. The openings consist of wood casement windows and doors with stone sills. Solid wood batten doors with iron straps and exposed hammered bolt heads are used in the older section and plate glass doors are used in the new portion of the main lobby.

A Spanish-style wood balcony is located over the main entrance on the north wall and a similar balcony on the east wall and south wall. A four-foot wall of coquina encloses a small court on the north and a similar wall encloses a large patio on the southeast corner.

North Façade: The north entrance is the central focal point of the north façade and is defined by a projection of the main roof over the upper balcony. The north façade extends 115 feet, 4 inches up to the recessed and lower height northwest ell, which continues to 145 feet, 2 inches in overall dimension. Up to the stepped back ell, the north façade is flat with a fenestration of varied heights and spacing and a dominant chimney to the northeast.

The casement windows remain preserved. The north façade features random exposed coquina, combined with stucco over brick infill over a steel frame. The north wall, dating from the ca. 1833 Mills/Wallen extension, was removed above the second floor line and new openings were cut according to the 1935 plan so that

2012. Susan Tate, AIA, Preservation Architect, was responsible for the historical narrative in the Historic Structure Report.

fragments of the previous wall, alongside reconstructed coquina masonry, are exposed.

East Façade: The east wall makes the strongest statement of historical reference, influenced by the 1764 watercolor drawing of a former government house. The east façade of the wing is dominated by the ceremonial balcony with heavy wood brackets, posts, and balustrade, features that recall but do not replicate the eighteenth century representation. The east balcony is reflected in the balconies above the north and the south entrances, although each is differentiated by details specific to each location.

The 1935 design of the east façade exposed coquina at the vertical quoins of the former corner projections or "towers" and at the former window openings, but considerable infill of stucco on brick was incorporated between the projecting ends, in window openings, and to extend the gable peak. The south wall of the east section, punctuated by French doors on both levels, was built 58 feet, 9 inches to the Main Lobby at the point of intersection with the early cross wall.

The east section south wall facing the courtyard follows the line of the previous building for 58 feet, 9 inches up to the foundation of the early cross wall located at the west end of the east section. Although the wing south wall is composed primarily of five sets of French doors or casements on both levels, some early coquina masonry may have been incorporated (primarily at the east corner) and reconstructed between the ground level openings to the southeast courtyard.

South Façade: The classical south entrance is headed by a flat parapet that adjoins the projecting south gable that encompasses an upper level balcony. The southwest ell is recessed from the south façade and terminates in the dominant chimney. The south entrance façade extends 58 feet, 11 inches westward to the recessed ell which extends 29 feet, 10 inches to a total dimension of 88 feet, 9 inches from the east courtyard wall. The southwest ell and northwest ell enclose the service area and loading dock that served the post office.

The south elevation is protected by the two-story gallery or porch, a feature also of the previous building. The gallery, along with large trees conserved during the project, provides shading from the south sun. The courtyard is defined by coquina masonry garden walls that intersect with the east and south elevations of the building.

West Façade: Formerly, the west façade served as the loading dock for the post office. This loading dock was later enclosed and the open gate on the south wall of the service court was walled between the driveway piers. A parking area was adjacent to the loading dock.

Interior

The building analysis identified a total of 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors: 11,127 square feet on the first floor and 10,728 square feet on the second floor. The basement provided an additional 2,415 square feet.

The main lobby forms the north-south spine of the building and was the hub of public activity for the post office. From the north entrance, the west wall gave access to the inquiry window and an obscure glass door leading to the Superintendent of Mails. The six bays, separated by pilasters and defined by floor and ceiling patterns, included spaces for mail drops, parcel post windows, stamps counters, and general delivery counters. On the west side of the mail lobby are bays for postal boxes, a C.O.D. window, and windows for money order, registry, and postal savings services.

The main lobby walls are finished in marble wainscot with brass grilles for the heating system. Original openings for postal windows and boxes remain, but the glass grilles and boxes, as well as the four ornamental lobby tables, have been removed. Original lanterns and door hardware are extant.

The interior doorways at the north and south entrances emphasize the significance of the lobby space with lunettes or tympanums over the doors with a relief panel at the north and spokes and glazing at the south. The entrance to the east section was also emphasized with a sculptural relief in the lunette over the doorway.

The east section was designed to incorporate offices for the Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster, which opened from the lobbies along the east and south, with the offices connected by a passage with closet and toilet facilities. The east section east and south lobby floor is terrazzo with metal strips and marble borders, in a modular pattern that conforms with ceiling modules of exposed decorative wood beams at the south and plaster vaults at the east. Marble wainscotting and antiqued heavy wood doors form entrances to the east lobby and to the postmaster's office. The two offices have smooth plaster ceilings with pendant translucent luminaires.

To the west of the main lobby, behind the postal windows, is the two-story post office work space. Iron grille work with shield details along the lobby ceiling line offer an opportunity for ventilation. The work space is large and open to the second level. Immediately to the west of the north entrance was the office of the Superintendent of Mails, with access from the Main Lobby and from the workspace through a caged vestibule. The hardwood flooring, the observation platforms, and viewing slots to provide security for the mail operations extend around the upper level of the work space with steel access ladders that remain in place.

The main lobby provides access to the second floor by a monumental masonry stair leading to an upper lobby and foyer corridor to the east suite of offices, originally designated for the customs collection functions. From the foyer corridor opens an *en suite* office space leading to a grand "Custom Office" at the end of the east section. The office features a platform with steps to reach the upper balcony looking east

over the Plaza, a corner fireplace above the fireplace in the lower level east lobby, windows to the north, and two sets of French doors opening to the south gallery.

The remainder of the upper floor included four offices at the east and south, two toilets, and a custodial closet, accessed by a corridor from the main stair and short upper flight of stairs.

Decorative Features

The 1930s decorative hardware remains throughout the building's exterior and interior. The features include polished bronze door levers on the courtyard wall of the main lobby, bronze thumb latches, bronze thresholds, radiator grilles, and bronze insect screens. The main stair case that connects the postal functions on the first floor with the customs collection functions on the second floor features a turned wooden newel post, decorative iron balusters, and marble trim.

The architect of the building, Mellen C. Greeley, described the decorative features in early 1936:

The door at the north entrance and the doors to the "Historical Room" are replicas of the door from the court yard to the Treasury in old Fort Marion, another historic building in the City. These doors are fitted with copies of the original hand wrought iron hardware. The ornamental stone doorway at the main entrance on King Street is an architectural adaptation of the doorway from the Court yard to the Chapel in Fort Marion with certain modifications, but with an attempt to reproduce the art of the period during which both of these original buildings were erected. The roof covering is of burned clay single tiles, in color ranging from black or purple to red, such as were used on similarly steep pitched roofs in northern Spain.²

Post-1966 Changes to the Building

After the 1966 decommissioning of the post office functions, the original east section spaces and partition walls were demolished in 1969, retaining the encased steel columns and ceilings. The interior of the main floor east section thereafter consisted of a single space, unfinished until adapted by the *Sala de Montiano*. In 1988, St. Ignacio Hernando de Larramendi y Montiano provided funding through the Montiano Foundation and the space assumed a new role as the *Sala de Montiano*, designed by architect Howard Davis.

² Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida, Being Erected by Procurement Division of the Treasury Department, of the United States of America, January 27, 1936," document attached to letter from Mellen C. Greeley to F. Larkin, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD, p. 6.

Today, the building retains a high level of integrity dating to the 1935 design. The post office lobby, the most important interior room, retains much of the decorative details and feel of a post office lobby. The most important exterior walls—the north, east, and south—are unchanged from their mid-1930s appearance. The immediate surroundings are the same as they were when the 1930s restoration was completed.

Currently, renovations are being undertaken to the existing restrooms, catering kitchen, storage, and museum gallery along with upgrades to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The majority of this work affects the west half of the first floor, including some areas that are not original to the 1930s era building. Some elements of the original building will be restored through this project, including exposing and repairing original teller windows with decorative metal grills. In July 2012, the historic preservation architect of the Florida Division of Historic Resources issued an approval of the Historic Structures Report and 100% Construction Documents for the rehabilitation work currently underway.

SECTION 8: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The building known as Government House today is nationally significant for its role as the first known effort by the Federal government to restore a historic building while providing accommodations for governmental functions. During the history of the Supervising Architect's Office, which spans the years between the early 1850s to 1939, the vast majority of buildings designed and constructed were new. The Supervising Architect's Office also supervised alterations and additions to existing buildings. However, previous to the St. Augustine Post Office project, no changes to Federal buildings were made that were called a "restoration." The restoration of the existing building with important historical associations represented the first project of its type for the Federal government. *But is this important?*

In addition, Government House is nationally significant in the evolution of historic preservation in the United States, an important grassroots effort to preserve the nation's heritage. Historic preservation offered opportunities for citizens to shape their built environments, using historic properties as anchors. This movement is arguably as old as the nation. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, individual properties across the nation were preserved for public visitation.

The modern historic preservation movement began in the 1920s with major restoration efforts at Williamsburg, Virginia, where an entire historic community was preserved. Williamsburg's restoration to the colonial and Revolutionary period brought about large gains in tourism and economic revitalization, encouraging other communities to pursue their own restoration efforts in the succeeding decades. In the 1930s, St. Augustine, Florida, was poised to take inspiration from Williamsburg and chart its own course through historic preservation. Government House was one of St. Augustine's earliest historic preservation efforts.

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Government House in the Evolution of St. Augustine, Florida

St. Augustine was established in 1565 as a municipality and church headquarters. It served as a base for Catholic priests to set up missions along the Gulf Coast and South Atlantic Coast. The town plan for St. Augustine was laid out according to the Laws of the Indies, in which Spain specified an urban template consisting of a rectangular plaza with lots for the "government palace" and other official functions.

Government House is located on the same site as the succession of Governor's "palaces" or houses that were used as residences and administrative offices. The third Governor's house was constructed in 1713 of coquina walls. In 1763, what is known today as Florida came under British control. Florida returned to Spanish control in 1783, where it remained until 1821, when it became a United States territory. In 1845, Florida became a state. From 1598 to 1821, Government House served as the administrative center of colonial Florida.

In 1821, the United States conducted an inventory of federal properties in Florida and referred to this building as Government House. After 1821, the building was used for various U.S. government functions, including a military hospital and quarters for Federal troops during the Civil War and later a courthouse, custom house, and a post office. Renovations of the building during 1833-34 designed by architect Robert Mills and carried out by Elias Wallen and another renovation in 1873 designed by architect William M. Kimball changed the building's massing, floor plan, and height. During the nineteenth century, the plaza was diminished in size because of the widening of the surrounding streets and a new street was cut through on the north in 1890.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the building was variously called the "former Spanish Governor's Palace," "Government House," "Custom House," and "Post Office."

The Supervising Architect's Office

The United States government agency responsible for the design of the U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was the Supervising Architect's Office, which was located within the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Both the Treasury Department and the Customs Service were established in 1789. Custom duties constituted a large portion of the revenue for the early Federal government and were vital to the welfare of the new nation. The Treasury Department assumed responsibility for the construction of Federal government buildings because of its responsibility for the collection of customs duties. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Secretary of the Treasury was directly involved in the design and construction of custom houses in the United States. By the early 1850s, the number of buildings increased to the point where the architectural and construction responsibilities were centralized within the Bureau of Construction headed by a member of the Corps of Engineers and a subordinate Supervising Architect. By the beginning of the

Civil War, the Corps left the Bureau of Construction and the Supervising Architect position oversaw the design and construction of not only custom houses, but also Federal courthouses and post offices. Often, all three functions were contained in a single building.

The Supervising Architect's Office remained in the Treasury Department until 1939 and was headed by a succession of 15 men, most of them architects. Over its history, this office designed thousands of Federal government facilities that covered a wide range of Federal functions and located throughout the nation. The most visible were post offices, custom houses, and courthouses. As the Federal government grew, this office also oversaw the design and construction of large, multi-purpose Federal office buildings. In 1933, with the development of Federal government programs to address the effects of the Great Depression, the office was placed in the Procurement Division within the Treasury Department and incorporated into the Public Works Branch. Architect W. E. Reynolds was the assistant director of the Procurement Division and assigned to oversee the Public Works Branch. The Supervising Architect at this point was James A. Wetmore, who served as Acting Supervising Architect from 1915 to 1934. A lawyer by training, Wetmore elected not to assume the title on a permanent basis because he was not an architect. Under Wetmore, architect Louis E. Simon oversaw the architectural work of the office. When Wetmore retired in 1934, Simon, at the age of 66, succeeded him. Simon retired in 1941.

In 1939, with the winding down of Depression-era programs and the gearing up of wartime preparations, the Supervising Architect's Office was removed entirely from the Treasury Department and became part of the Public Buildings Administration of the independent Federal Works Agency. With this move, Reynolds became the commissioner of public buildings. In 1949, this function was moved into the new General Services Administration, where responsibility for Federal government buildings remains to this day. Reynolds retired in 1954.³

Over the years of its existence within the Treasury Department, the Supervising Architect's Office played an important role in bringing the presence of the Federal government to thousands of communities in the form of post offices, custom houses, Federal courthouses, and Federal office buildings. Because of the office's high visibility, the private architects, represented by the American Institute of Architects, devoted years to lobbying to remove control over design work from the government architects and instead to place this important work in the hands of the private sector. During brief periods in the first half of the twentieth century, private architects were involved in designing Federal government buildings on a competitive basis and later on a contractual basis. During the 1930s, the Federal government made an effort to address the economic distress in the architectural profession by hiring private architects, like Mellen Greeley, to design Federal

³ For a history of the Supervising Architect's Office, see Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

buildings. At other times during the 1930s, it was felt that obtaining designs from private architects took longer than from government architects, which delayed the initiation of construction and the badly needed construction jobs that ensued. After World War II and the formation of the General Services Administration, the Public Buildings Service exercised primarily administrative and contractual responsibilities over the design work carried out by private architects.

In its function within the Federal government, the Supervising Architect's Office was an "architectural firm" that employed architects to design Federal government buildings throughout the nation as well as supervise their construction. The production of the Office during its history of nearly 90 years—from the early 1850s to 1939—can be analyzed best as incorporating certain types of buildings, such as large custom houses, like those found in major coastal cities such as New York City and Boston, and smaller post offices found throughout the nation in both suburban areas and smaller communities. The output also can be studied as evolving through definable historical periods, such as the antebellum Bureau of Construction period through the period of Alfred B. Mullett, the Gilded Age period, the Academic Classicism period, the 1920s period of affluence, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. An architectural operation of this scale, scope, and reach makes Federal buildings a significant building type, with individual buildings evaluated as representative of their respective periods of development and functions (large urban custom house, small post office, etc.).

Federal government buildings were more than buildings to house governmental functions. They played an important symbolic role in the period during which the Supervising Architect's Office produced designs for Federal buildings. In the pre-mass communication period, Federal government buildings were viewed as a means for the Federal government to communicate "democratic ideals, reflecting a growing sense of national identity." These buildings served as major architectural icons in the urban landscape and were often the largest buildings in the commercial center of towns and cities. They served as "unifying symbols that reflected authority and stability." During the Academic Classicism period, Federal buildings "bespoke the power, influence, and self-assurance of a nation on the brink of world leadership."⁴ Today, these messages are less evident in new Federal architecture, given the mass communication technologies that communicate the Federal government's functions and activities. The decline in the importance of post office services and customs collection also contributes to lessened architectural opportunities for the Federal government.

Mellen Clark Greeley, Architect of St. Augustine Post Office

The architect of the St. Augustine Post Office was Jacksonville native Mellen Clark Greeley (1880-1981). He studied architecture under J. H. W. Hawkins from 1901 to

⁴ The chapter, "Prelude," in Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, addresses the ways in which Federal government buildings communicated political, social, and economic messages to the public.

1908. (Hawkins was born in New York City, but moved to Jacksonville after the Great Fire of 1901. He designed many residences, commercial buildings, and churches in the city.) Greeley established his own practice in 1909. He was architect of many schools, apartment houses, residences, club houses, and churches throughout Jacksonville. Greeley became a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1921.

Like many architects during the 1930s, formerly busy and prosperous practices collapsed under the weight of the Great Depression. Despite the economic challenges, Greeley applied for and was accepted as a Fellow of the AIA in 1934. Greeley was active in architectural organizations, including a number based in Florida and served as an appointed member of various local commissions and boards. In 1958, at the end of his career, Greeley was granted the status of Member Emeritus of the AIA. By that time, he was referred to as the "Dean of Florida Architects." He died in 1981 at the age of 101.⁵

In 1969, Greeley produced an oral history of his life and career called "Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley, Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963." In the transcribed version of the history, he recalled how he came to be selected to design the St. Augustine Post Office. In 1931, he received an unexpected phone call asking about his interest in the commission to design the St. Augustine Post Office. Because of the lack of work in his office, Greeley received this inquiry with considerable excitement and regarded the project as a "godsend." The only possible connection was his effort spent on being considered for the design work on one of two federal buildings being considered in Jacksonville. The phone call directed him to contact someone in Washington, a step that "began one of the most pleasant architectural projects ever to come my way."⁶ The St. Augustine Post Office project allowed him to keep his office open until the economy improved.

The Design of Government House's Restoration

The new U.S. Post Office was constructed between 1935 and 1937 on the site previously occupied by the older post office. Its architect, Mellen Greeley, designed the building in the Spanish style to be compatible with the restoration aspirations of the city of St. Augustine. The historic coquina stone walls that dated from earlier construction and renovation periods were incorporated into the new building.

Because postal functions were located in the building on the historical site of the Governor's House, the creation of a new, modern postal facility with more space raised the question of either constructing a new building on a new site or a reuse of

⁵ For biographical information on Mellen Clark Greeley, see his membership file with the American Institute of Architects, Washington, DC.

⁶ "Exerpts from 'Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963,' May 19, 1969, University of Florida Collections, p. 16.

the existing building on the existing site. Public disagreement over the location of the new postal facility delayed commencement of the construction process.

However, as early as 1926-1927, plans were prepared and in 1933, architect Greeley had been contracted to produce a design for a new building. Greeley's 1933 design was made for "an entirely new building to harmonize with the architecture of old St. Augustine and to be located on Government owned land on Cordova Street between Cathedral and King Streets directly opposite the famed Ponce de Leon Hotel and near the Alcazar Hotel."⁷ The details of these earlier designs are unknown because the drawings have not survived. However, the Supervising Architect's Office staff had already calculated that the needed square footage measured more than twice the size of the existing building—from 4,500 square feet to 11,000 square feet. In this staff report, it was stated: "When it was contemplated in 1926 and 1927 to remodel the building (plans having been made and bids received), there was so much agitation against the scheme that the project was deferred. The foundation of the adverse agitation by the citizens of St. Augustine was the historical value placed upon the old building."⁸

As Congressman J. Mark Wilcox wrote to Acting Supervising Architect James A. Wetmore on December 18, 1933: "St. Augustine has a distinctive type of architecture, being as you know, the oldest city in America and having been founded by the Spanish in the early period of our history. The new building should harmonize with the general architectural scheme of the city. It is probable that the present building might be so remodeled so as to afford ample space and convenience for the public, and at the same time conform to the general architectural plan of the city."⁹

By the time that New Deal funds, in this case Works Progress Administration (WPA) monies, became available for public buildings projects, the city of St. Augustine organized a Post Office Committee to agitate for funds to support a new post office facility. Harry H. Saunders, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, wrote to Silliman Evans, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, asking about the long-sought building project. In early 1934, he wrote: "St. Augustine seems to be fast becoming the 'Forgotten City' in the matter of a few Federal building."¹⁰ The new location identified in 1933 was judged to be unacceptable because the remains of

⁷ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, January 27, 1936, p. 2.

⁸ Superintendent, AE Division to James A. Wetmore, January 4, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁹ J. Mark Wilcox to James A. Wetmore, December 18, 1933, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁰ Harry H. Saunders to Silliman Evans, January 8, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Confederate General William Wing Loring rested under the monument on the land immediately west of the existing post office upon which it was proposed to erect the new building. "Another reason was the desire that the splendid park at the west end of the Plaza be kept unobstructed; and a third reason was the desire of all to retain the old building under Government supervision so that it would not be allowed to fall into worse repair."¹¹

Architect Greeley referred to a meeting in April 1933, where Reynolds met with St. Augustine leaders and civic groups and heard their requests and suggestions. After this meeting, "Mr. Reynolds instructed the Architect [Greeley] to make studies of the new scheme, the old building intact, or if that were impossible, to utilize as much of it as found feasible, and to restore the part so used to conform in appearance to the picture bearing date of 1764."¹²

Although earlier recommendations coming out of St. Augustine argued against remodeling the existing building on the site, the prospect of an extended delay in obtaining this key Federal government investment changed the community's views on the subject. By 1934, J. W. Hoffmann, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, assembled an impressive list of St. Augustine organizations that approved of the "proposed restoration and enlargement of the present Post Office structure." He also cited the "unanimous approval of the citizens generally throughout the city of St. Augustine."¹³ Hoffman further described the prospect of the "exterior to be constructed along the lines of the Spanish Governor's Mansion, and the interior, of course, to be a modern Post Office."¹⁴ In subsequent correspondence to officials of the Treasury Department, Hoffman continued to use the terms "restoration" and "conform with the old Spanish Governor's Mansion" in the desired approach to the post office project. Even with this agreement, individual protests against the plan caused Assistant Director of Procurement at the Treasury Department W. E. Reynolds to write: "It would be humanly impossible to always select a site satisfactory to everyone."¹⁵

In May 1934, the Treasury Department directed architect Greeley to study the feasibility of using the old building for a post office. As Greeley described his instructions, "I was instructed to accede if possible to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, that the old building be restored and preserved as a historic monument." In Greeley's opinion, the building was more English in appearance than Spanish.

¹¹ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 2.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ J. W. Hoffman to J. Mark Wilcox, May 5, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁴ J. W. Hoffman to W. J. Sears, May 7, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁵ W. E. Reynolds to J. H. Hempsted, September 24, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Responding to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, the Spanish tradition would be restored to the building. Greeley anticipated "using the shell of the old building only ... [and] building a new floor structure inside the shell." Even so, the old building's size of 4,680 square feet would need to be enlarged to 6,360 square feet.¹⁶ Because the current design was entirely different from the one that Greeley had produced in 1933, his old contract was terminated and a new one executed.

In the summer of 1934, W. E. Reynolds traveled to St. Augustine to meet with Congressman Wilcox and Postmaster J. Herman Mauncy to finalize the plans for the post office project. During that visit, Reynolds stated that he was in favor of "the plan of restoration," even if it would entail additional expense over the cost of an entirely new building. Congressman Wilcox argued that the Federal government had already spent money on the restoration and preservation of "historic spots" and it was therefore justifiable that needed Federal government funds be spent on the restoration of the St. Augustine building.¹⁷ In 1935, the appropriation of \$200,000 for the building was increased to \$217,935.¹⁸

By January 1935, Greeley received survey drawings of the old building. Because of the special requirements of the project, Greeley asked for more time than would be required for an average post office design. Greeley cited the reasons for the delay: "... the old building must be given special consideration and its historic features must be given special attention."¹⁹ The Supervising Architect's Office was concerned about these delays and dispatched several of its own staff architects to Jacksonville to assist Greeley with the completion of the drawings and specifications for much of the summer of 1935. By September 30, proposals were solicited for the building's construction. On December 9, the firm of James I. Barnes of Springfield, Ohio, was selected as the contractor.

Within a few weeks of the awarding of the construction contract, the historic walls were threatened with collapse. Even before the construction began, the contractor expressed concern about the stability of the building's coquina walls while steel piles were driven into the ground. The contractor suggested the removal and rebuilding of the walls.

On January 24, 1936, the second floor walls collapsed. The perceived threat to the "sacred walls" caused alarm on the part of St. Augustine citizens. Some of the

¹⁶ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, June 4, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁷ "Government Officials Impressed," *St. Augustine Record*, article attached to letter from J. E. Hempsted to Henry L. Morganthau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁸ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

¹⁹ Mellen C. Greeley to Office of the Supervising Architect, July 30, 1935, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

wooden posts, beams, and lintels had been destroyed by termites causing the stone work to loosen, leaving large cavities in the walls. A resolution was worked out among the parties involved. The decision was made to remove and rebuild the second story walls. The first floor walls remained intact. Architect Greeley wrote: "it was suggested that as long as the old stones were used in the old wall in the exact location where they had always been, there could be no desecration of the old building." The contractor agreed to hold in place as much as possible of the first story of the north and south walls of the old building. Where the cavities needed repair, the old stones from the second story would be used. Any new masonry would be confined to the second story.²⁰ The east wall was considered to be constructed of better masonry and was kept in its entirety.

Even with the agreement on the treatment of the walls, observers decried what appeared to be the Federal government's destruction of large sections of the building and cited Williamsburg as the model of what ought to be happening. In response to these protests, Reynolds responded with:

The remodeling of the present building will preserve such portions of the walls of the old structure as are structurally sound, and, when completed, the new structure will be virtually a reproduction of the old building as it appeared before it was remodeled in 1834. It is believed that when the public understands fully that this reconstruction is much similar to the Rockefeller reconstruction at Williamsburg to which you refer, the present objections to the proposed rebuilding will disappear.²¹

The treatment of the exterior stucco and coquina stone exemplified an effort to protect the remaining walls and rebuild the rest so that both parts could be seen as a "whole." Architect Greeley asked that the face of the brick work be set slightly back from the face of the stone so that the stucco could "feather-edge" or taper off against the stone, with an irregular line (not a straight-line). "The effect desired is that of an old building which has been patched and rebuilt and on which the stucco has fallen off in some places."²² Supervising Architect Louis E. Simon approved Greeley's plan for the stucco on the building.

In a summary of the building's design, Architect Greeley wrote:

²⁰ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²¹ W. E. Reynolds to Mr. and Mrs. John T. Findley, February 17, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²² Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

The exterior of the building has been designed to correspond as far as possible with the original picture bearing date of 1764, which was adopted as the key-note of the restoration. The high pitched roof with gables has been copied from the picture, also the balcony on the east façade. The roof over the new wings and the balconies on the north and south fronts are designed to conform to the original as shown in the picture. The original high wall which inclosed (sic) the garden of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been replaced with a low wall which forms the two boundaries of the garden . . .²³

The building was dedicated on February 22, 1937. Mayor Walter B. Fraser arranged for the dedication to be scheduled on George Washington's Birthday, a national holiday, so that the school children would be free to attend the ceremony. Mayor Fraser also asked business owners to let their employees take the time to attend the ceremony. The city of St. Augustine and the Federal agencies represented in the building cooperated on a dignified dedication ceremony. J. Austin Latimer, who represented Postmaster General James A. Farley, gave a presentation that praised the building as the oldest public building in the United States.²⁴ Mayor Fraser thanked the Federal government for deviating from the usual plan for public buildings in allowing for the Spanish style building in keeping with its surroundings. Benedictions were given. Afterwards, a band concert entertained the crowd. Dignitaries from the State and locality were seated on the east balcony, which included Verne E. Chatelain, who represented the Carnegie Institution of Washington.²⁵ (See discussion of Carnegie Institution's involvement in St. Augustine, an effort headed by Chatelain, later in this document.)

Many years later, in the 1960s, Greeley recalled his efforts to include casement windows in the building, a design feature that required intervention by Reynolds to secure. Greeley's desire to retain the exposed coquina stone in the northeast corner also required the support of Reynolds, even though this material had not previously been used in a federal building.

During the building's role as a Post Office, it housed not only postal functions, but also offices for the U.S. Customs Service, Department of Agriculture county agents, the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Park Service, and U.S. Justice Department Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents.

Government House As A Unique Project in the Evolution of Federal Architecture Program

²³ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 5.

²⁴ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Did we get into restoration then?

The first justification for national significance is that Government House is one of the very few, if not the only, restorations of a historic property for Federal government functions that the Supervising Architect's Office undertook during any time in its evolution from the 1850s to the late 1930s. The usual approach was to produce or commission a new design for a new building that housed post office, Federal courthouse, custom house, and other Federal government functions. With Government House, the Federal government ventured into the still new field of historic restoration at a time when there were few Federal government policies or standards to guide such work.

Because of significant investment by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Colonial Williamsburg became the pioneer in restoration research and reconstruction standards. The National Park Service assumed major responsibilities for the management of historic properties with the issuance of the Presidential Executive Order 6166 of 1933 that consolidated Federal historic sites and national parks under the National Park Service. One of the National Park Service's first restorations of a historic building occurred in 1934 with the Moore House in Yorktown, Virginia, which Rockefeller purchased and then sold to the National Park Service as part of the development of Colonial Parkway. In the absence of consistent or coherent policy from the Federal government, the Supervising Architect's Office undertook the restoration of Government House for post office functions in concert with the evolving restoration program for the city of St. Augustine. Thus, Government House is an architectural type specimen valuable for the study of early restoration architecture by the Federal government in the United States.

During the design and construction of the post office building, both the Supervising Architect's Office and architect Mellen Greeley spoke of the building's unique character within the highly regulated Federal architecture program. In requesting treatment of the stucco to resemble patching and rebuilding over the centuries, Greeley stated:

I realize that I am asking for something which has probably never been done before in a building for the Treasury Department, but the whole project is unusual. Also, the use of the old historical building in the schedule is unique and the work can be made outstanding by going a little more away from the usual without detriment to the utility of the building. In St. Augustine there are a number of beautiful examples of stone work such as I am asking for, where the stucco has come off in places and is intact in others. The Old Fort, the City Gates, etc., are examples."²⁶

When a request was made to include mention of the "restoration" in the official cornerstone, architect Greeley stated, "The fact that the building is probably the only restoration of an historical building for use by Government Departments was

²⁶ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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perhaps not brought to the attention of the Supervising Architect, and, if that had been done perhaps the standard lettering might have been changed on the stone."²⁷ Supervising Architect Simon responded to Greeley by stating that no further inscriptions should be placed on the cornerstone, but a tablet could be placed in the interior that would include interesting historical data.

In a 1936 explanation of the building's design, Greeley underscored the uniqueness of this building in the Federal government's architecture program. "What is unusual . . . is that the Government is now erecting a building in the City of St. Augustine, Florida, to house the Post Office and Custom House of that City, which is probably the most unique of all which the Government has ever built, and which is likely to be the only one of its kind ever to be built."²⁸ It would not be until the 1970s when the effects of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act became clear that historic rehabilitation and restoration became options. The successor agency to the Supervising Architect's Office, the Public Building Service of the General Services Administration, undertook the historic rehabilitation and restoration of Federal government buildings, including the Old Post Office on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, during this decade.

No. The comparable buildings to the St. Augustine Post Office are the many other smaller Federal government buildings, mostly post offices, that were constructed throughout the country during the Depression Era. These buildings reflected the policies of the Board of Consulting Architects, an inhouse group made up of staff of the Supervising Architect's Office and consulting architects, that was set up at the suggestion of LeRoy Barton, an assistant to Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., to improve the design of post offices. The Board recommended that federal buildings should be "of simple government character in consonance with the region in which they are located and the surroundings of the specific sites." This regional character included architectural traditions as well as natural or manufactured products of the vicinity.²⁹

While the designs of smaller post office projects of the period were grounded in a region's architectural traditions, they also included classically inspired designs similar to those of the early 20th century as well as Moderne and Art Deco designs. The design for the St. Augustine Post Office building can be viewed as an exception to the prevailing design policies of the Federal government's architectural program because it was not entirely new. While it illustrated regional architectural traditions, the design incorporated historic building fabric—the walls—to produce what was understood to be a "restoration." This makes the St. Augustine Post Office a property that embodies "the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type

²⁷ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 7, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁸ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida," January 27, 1936, p. 1.

²⁹ For a discussion of design policies of the Supervising Architect's Office during the 1930s, see Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, pp. 261-268.

specimen (a post office) exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style, or method of construction." (NHL Criterion 4)

Government House in the Evolution of Historic Preservation in the United States

While Government House can be evaluated within the context of the Federal architecture program, it also can be studied against the backdrop of the national historic preservation activities that were evolving dramatically in the 1920s and 1930s. Nineteenth century historic preservation was largely concerned with individual properties, such as Mount Vernon and Monticello, and in the last part of that century, with buildings of the colonial era. In the twentieth century, historic preservation became increasingly concerned with the preservation of not only single properties, but also with whole communities.

The preservation of Colonial Williamsburg set the standard for many other communities that wished to emulate the success of Virginia's colonial capital city. After its key role in the nation's revolutionary history, Williamsburg became a town that time passed by. In 1903, Dr. William Archer Rutherford Goodwin assumed the rectorship of Bruton Parish Church. Imbued with the historical significance of the building, he took on the rectorship job on the condition that the building's interior be returned to its colonial form. Although he departed for Rochester, New York, to assume a position in that city, he returned to Williamsburg in 1923 to assume a position with the College of William and Mary.

Goodwin's vision for Williamsburg extended far beyond individual buildings. Charles Hosmer wrote of Goodwin: "No major preservation leader in the United States before Goodwin had expressed a desire to save an entire community."³⁰ In fact, Goodwin envisioned Williamsburg as the center of a group of preserved Revolutionary Era communities in the lower peninsula of Virginia.³¹ Such an enterprise required major financial support. After appealing to a number of prominent families for their support of his dream of the restoration of Williamsburg, Goodwin persuaded a corporation of Bruton Parish Church to acquire the Wythe House.

In 1924, while giving a lecture before the New York City chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, Goodwin met John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and invited him to visit Williamsburg. Because Rockefeller and his wife were patrons of the nearby Hampton Institute, it was convenient for them to include Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown in their next visit. The visit to Williamsburg impressed Rockefeller of the opportunity to "restore an entire colonial community and keep it free from incongruous

³⁰ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*, Vol. I, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981, p. 11.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

surroundings ... [that] was irresistible.”³² Rockefeller gave his approval to the purchase of the Ludwell-Paradise House in 1926, which marked the beginning of Williamsburg’s resurrection. The rebirth was concerned not only with the preservation of buildings and gardens, but also its value in teaching patriotism, high purpose, devotion, and sacrifice for the common good.³³

The restoration of Williamsburg proceeded through the completion of the first phase in 1934. This important benchmark was celebrated with a visit from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who praised the progress made: 61 colonial buildings restored, 94 colonial buildings rebuilt, the gardens reconstructed. Roosevelt added, it was a joy to see the transformation, “the renaissance of these physical landmarks, the atmosphere of the whole glorious chapter in our history . . .”³⁴ The publicity generated by the town’s restoration brought Williamsburg’s story to communities nationwide. In addition, the experience gained by the architects and landscape architects on this project “developed a standard for preservation research while also initiating the field of restoration architect.”³⁵

Historic preservation in St. Augustine was fortunate to have several key supporters. One of these was its mayor, Walter B. Fraser, who already owned the “Fountain of Youth” property. The other was the local newspaper, the *St. Augustine Record*, and its editor, Nina Hawkins. Both were concerned about demolitions of historic buildings and sought ways to preserve historic buildings as part of maintaining, if not increasing, the economic vitality of the city. Like many older communities, St. Augustine, Florida, took much of its inspiration from Colonial Williamsburg’s restoration. St. Augustine was a natural successor to Colonial Williamsburg as a restored community because St. Augustine is considered to be the oldest continuously occupied European settlement in the United States. During the 1920s and 1930s, older communities like St. Augustine, Savannah, Charleston, and the Vieux Carré in New Orleans evolved into important restored communities and served as national models for communities in succeeding decades.

During this period, an increasing number of Americans traveled by automobile to historic destinations, a leisure activity that generated economic development and revitalization. This type of tourism added further encouragement to older communities to look to Colonial Williamsburg and other restored communities, like St. Augustine, for guidance on funding, approach, and methodology. As historian Charles Hosmer wrote:

Would-be preservationists around the United States became aware of the magnitude of the Williamsburg Restoration in the mid-1930s as they viewed

³² George Humphrey Yetter, *Williamsburg Before and After: The Rebirth of Virginia’s Colonial Capital*, Williamsburg, VA: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1988, p. 53.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p 62.

it through magazines and newspapers. The work was a success by every standard: It was scholarly, it attracted a great many visitors, and it proved that large amounts of money could be put into preservation projects.³⁶

In addition, the President of Colonial Williamsburg, Kenneth Chorley, became actively involved in bringing the message of Williamsburg's restoration experience to other communities. "Between 1935 and 1950 Chorley visited, advised, and inspired any number of preservation groups from St. Augustine, Fla., to Deerfield, Mass. He always would talk to people who were sincerely interested in understanding the many ramifications of his work."³⁷

The restoration of the St. Augustine post office can be viewed as the first step in the larger restoration effort that involved the entire historic community. In some respects, St. Augustine's preservation dates back at least to 1924, when President Calvin Coolidge established Fort Marion (now Castillo de San Marcos) as a national monument. With this designation, the National Park Service assumed management of the fort. The first superintendent was historian Herbert E. Kahler. Earlier the War Department managed the fort in cooperation with the St. Augustine Historical Society. The Society also administered what was referred to as the "oldest house" in St. Augustine. In addition, archeological investigations on the "Fountain of Youth" grounds, which was owned by Mayor Fraser, were carried out by the Smithsonian Institution, the Carnegie Institution, and later the University of Florida. This work focused on the site of the American Indian village and the first campsite and settlement of Admiral Pedro Menendez de Aviles of Spain from 1565-1566.

While visiting St. Augustine in 1936, John C. Merriam, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and his brother, Charles, met with Herbert Kahler and toured the town with him. Merriam was impressed with the town's role as the "sole surviving bastion of Spanish culture on the East Coast,"³⁸ Through Kahler, John Merriam met Mayor Fraser. Both men agreed to work toward the preservation of St. Augustine; however, each had their own vision for how this should proceed.

Mayor Fraser wanted a Williamsburg-style wholesale restoration of Spanish St. Augustine. This was the model that was admired around the country and demonstrated historic preservation's effectiveness in generating economic revitalization and serving as an educational powerhouse. He assumed that the Carnegie organization and the wealth that it represented would be able to ensure the success of the effort. As a distinguished paleontologist John Merriam favored an indepth research effort into the Spanish colonial period and selective restoration based on this research to be carried out by others.

³⁶ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age*, p. 67.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

Founded in 1902, the Carnegie Institution is best known today for its role in science. However, at its founding and up to the opening of World War II, it also was an important force in the historical field. Its Director of Historical Research, J. Franklin Jameson, conducted the earliest inventory of Federal government records and published the first comprehensive listing in 1904. In collaboration with his associate Waldo Gifford Leland, Jameson paved the way for the establishment of the National Archives in 1934. The organization also was heavily involved in archeological studies throughout the Western hemisphere. With the outbreak of World War II, the organization terminated its historical work and never returned to it. Today, the organization is better known as the Carnegie Institution for Science or simply, the Carnegie Institution. It is one of 20 different and unaffiliated Carnegie organizations that Andrew Carnegie founded, including the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC.

Soon after meeting Merriam, Mayor Fraser invited the prestigious Carnegie Institution of Washington into the town and organized a national committee that would involve not only the Carnegie Institution, but also the National Park Service because of the possibility that the bureau might expand its responsibilities beyond the fort. In addition, the Carnegie Corporation in New York provided funding support to this effort through grants to the Carnegie Institution. The Carnegie Corporation also provided funding through the Carnegie Institution to support Frances Benjamin Johnston's photographic documentation of St. Augustine's historic buildings, which was part of Johnston's larger documentation work on historic buildings throughout the South (also supported by the Carnegie Corporation).

In January 1937, John Merriam visited St. Augustine again, this time as the representative of the Carnegie Institution that was initiating an important step in the preservation of St. Augustine. This time, he was welcomed with greater fanfare that included pageants and parades as well as a public lecture opportunity.³⁹ This was Mayor Fraser's way of demonstrating community support for the Carnegie Institution's new role.

From 1936 to 1940, the Carnegie Institution made a significant investment in the historic, archeological, and photographic documentation of St. Augustine that would guide any restoration projects. Merriam made good on his promise that the Carnegie-sponsored work would be conducted according to the highest research standards by hiring former National Park Service Chief Historian Verne E. Chatelain to become an employee of the Carnegie Institution and oversee the St. Augustine work. Hired as Chief Historian for the National Park Service in 1931, Chatelain had played a key role in the implementation of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Executive Order 6166 that transferred War Department historic sites to the National Park Service as well as the Historic Sites Act of 1935 at the National Park Service. Because of Merriam's membership on the National Park System Advisory Board, he came to know and trust Chatelain. Chatelain began his employment with

³⁹ "Thousands See Restoration Pageant," *St. Augustine Record*, January 12, 1937, p. 1.

the Carnegie Institution in November 1936 and arrived in St. Augustine the following month.

Justification for this investment was based on the Carnegie Institution's work in the archeology of the Southwest, Mexico, and Central America, to which the St. Augustine work was highly compatible. "A further reason for the St. Augustine Program is to be found in the growing interest and concern in developing the most effective methods of preserving and using outstanding American historic sites, buildings, and remains."⁴⁰ This statement reflected Merriman's experience as a member of the National Park System Advisory Board and its role in implementing the Historic Sites Act of 1935. St. Augustine offered a strong case study for this goal because of the large number of "outstanding sites, buildings, and remains to be found in this ancient capital of Florida, but the city at present time is anxious to embark upon a program for their effective perpetuation, and use by the large visiting public which annually flocks to this famous resort region."⁴¹

With funding from both the Carnegie Institution and the city of St. Augustine, Chatelain assembled a strong historical and archeological staff and began investigations. However, it became clear that more than the funded six months of work would be needed. In addition, both Merriam and Chatelain did not think the Williamsburg model would work for St. Augustine because the latter was a living city and had no single period of significance. The city's historical development spanned four centuries. Merriam cited the large number of historic resources that needed to be preserved, protected, and interpreted to the public: "from pre-Columbian occupation by aboriginal Americans up through occupation by Spanish, French, and English, and on into history of the old South and up to the present . . ."⁴² In order to show tangible results from the research-oriented project, Merriam agreed to help with the purchase of the Llambias House and have the St. Augustine Historical Society manage its restoration and interpretation. The research work on St. Augustine continued but funded on a half-year basis at a time.

Merriam's retirement in 1939 for health reasons spelled the beginning of the end of the Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine. Merriam's successor as president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, Vannevar Bush, an electrical engineer and inventor, terminated the Carnegie Institution's historical and archeological programs in order to focus solely on the hard sciences. The Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine came to a close. In 1941, the Carnegie Institution published Chatelain's work, *The Defenses of Spanish Florida, 1565 to 1763*. This publication covered far more than the defenses and it was an important model in the

⁴⁰ Verne E. Chatelain, "St. Augustine Historical Program," in Carnegie Institution of Washington Year Book No. 36, July 1, 1936-June 30, 1937, p. 372.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 373.

⁴² *Report of the President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington for the Year Ending October 31, 1937*, p. 55.

development of historical documentation for a historic community that could be used for restoration and educational purposes.

During World War II, Chatelain became an administrative officer and liaison officer in the Executive Offices of the White House, a position he held until 1945.⁴³ After then, Chatelain became a professor of history at the University of Maryland, where he remained until his retirement. He served as an oral history subject for Charles Hosmer's books on the history of historic preservation, and his family ensured that his work in St. Augustine would be documented through the donation of his St. Augustine papers to the St. Augustine Historical Society.

After the conclusion of World War II, Walter Fraser resumed his historic preservation efforts. During the late 1940s, Fraser, now a member of the Florida State Senate, invited Kenneth Chorley of Colonial Williamsburg, along with Williamsburg staff members, to visit St. Augustine's preservation and provide advice. In February 1947, Chorley visited the community and provided his evaluation of historic preservation work as well as the public interpretation programs.⁴⁴ In the 1950s, historic preservation in St. Augustine found new life in the form of support from the state of Florida and the passage of the historic preservation zoning ordinance.

Occurring at the same time as the initiation of the Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine, the "restoration" of Government House in 1935-37 was a key investment by the Federal government in the evolution of St. Augustine as a restored community and thus outstandingly represents the history and evolution of historic preservation in the United States. It is interesting that Chatelain's first report in the Carnegie Institution's 1936-1937 Year Book on the St. Augustine project included a discussion of the uses of architectural research in restoration and contextual design:

In several cases, architectural studies have been undertaken in order to guide the repair of general construction of historic houses, as in the work with the Sanchez House, an eighteenth-century building, and the Catholic rectory, a nineteenth-century building. This guidance has been given too in the case of the development of several new businesses in the 'old section,' where an attempt is being made to simulate the St. Augustine architectural type in the interest of general harmony.⁴⁵

It is noteworthy that Chatelain and his staff were already providing design advice to the community at large, much in the same way that after World War II local governments provided design guidelines for historic buildings and buildings within

⁴³ Deposition of Verne E. Chatelain, Walter B. Fraser vs. Curtis Publishing Company, United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida—Jacksonville Division, October 8, 1951, p. 4, Fraser Family Archives.

⁴⁴ "Williamsburg Head Visits Here, Confers with Local Citizens," unidentified newspaper article, February 28, 1947, Archives & Records, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

historic districts. Certainly Chatelain's embrace of the "St. Augustine architectural type" was applicable to the St. Augustine post office design.

Evaluation of Historic Preservation Methods

The St. Augustine post office project occurred at a time when there was no organized national movement or program that provided models, guidance, or technical assistance. During the 1920s and 1930s, the field was very new and riding the wave of innovation. Preservation terminology, such as use of the word "restoration" was still inconsistently used from one location to another. The reconstruction of demolished buildings was readily embraced by preservationists, especially if it was based on architectural and archeological research. Since the pivotal pre-World War II period, the field has become larger, better organized, and consistent as well as based on a larger legislative and administrative framework. However, based on past experience, what is today accepted as good preservation practices may in future years be changed according to new discoveries and new technologies. Thus, it is important to evaluate the St. Augustine post office project by the standards, such as they were, in the 1930s, not by the standards of the early twenty-first century.

The collapse of the building's second story walls in January 1936 and the ensuing public outcry underscored the major omission in the project—the lack of historical research and documentation prior to undertaking construction. On February 27, 1936, F. P. Trott, Assistant Executive Officer for the Supervising Architect's Office prepared a report for W. E. Reynolds on the building's evolution during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The report indicated that "this old building was virtually rebuilt in 1834 Repairs and alterations to the building were also made in 1873, 1886, and 1923." While the north and west walls were substantially rebuilt in the 1830s, additional changes to the building when under U.S. control made it difficult to verify if the south and east walls "are those reputed to have been built in 1587-1603."⁴⁶

In early 1937, when the post office building was nearly completed, several representatives from the city of St. Augustine and the St. Augustine Historical Society and Institute of Science asked J. Herman Manucy, postmaster, if the official cornerstone inscription could include mention that the present building is a "restoration of the former old Spanish Governors' Mansion."⁴⁷ The Supervising Architect's Office rejected this request. Discussions over the bronze plaques that were originally placed on the walls of the old post office building raised additional questions about the research basis for the 1935-1937 restoration.

⁴⁶ F. P. Trott to W. E. Reynolds, February 27, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁴⁷ C. S. Smith and David R. Dunham to J. Herman Manucy, January 4, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

After the building was dedicated on February 22, 1937, Supervising Architect Simon communicated with William Adams Slade of the Library of Congress on the matter of the text included in the old bronze plaques. Simon questioned the statement made during the dedication ceremonies that the older part of the building was the oldest public structure in America. In Simon's opinion, "the remodeled building never was part of the Governor's Palace, but was built in 1834 by the United States Government as a Court House." He asked that Slade look into this matter.⁴⁸ Slade responded with an opinion from the Library's Chief, Division of Fine Arts, that "it would require considerable research through historical documents of various sorts to determine definitely the antiquity and original use of the various parts of the building" and that the search might lead to public documents in St. Augustine.⁴⁹

The paucity of historical documentation for the St. Augustine post office restoration was similar to the situation that faced the restoration of colonial Williamsburg. Although the architectural and archeological research had been of a high order, Reverend Goodwin was concerned that the judgments regarding the restoration of the Wren Building and the reconstructed Capitol in Williamsburg required that a higher priority given to historical research. Fortunately, Goodwin's cousin, Mary Goodwin, who was already involved in research on the Governor's Palace, the Wren Building, and the Capitol was able to travel to England and especially to Oxford where she examined an engraved copper plate of a "village in Virginia" listed in the Bodleian collection. The "Bodleian Plate" provided images of important public buildings in Williamsburg. Like the rest of the colonial Williamsburg restoration, the issues of research, interpretation, visitor management, and public relations needed to be developed by the Williamsburg personnel without models to which to refer. In turn, what Williamsburg did served as models for the rest of the nation.

In the end, architect Greeley placed the building in the context of centuries of change:

And so once again in its long and eventful career this fine old building is to undergo a change. Who can say what further changes the future may bring to it, before its final passing? Will they be, as this is, merely changes and rearrangements to suit current needs, or will they bring complete destruction? In this present reincarnation the spirit of the old building has been kept alive by the continued use of the masonry walls, and by the restoration of the eastern façade to its former beauty. It is hoped that the requirements of twentieth century civilization have not entirely obliterated the artistic endeavors of the seventeenth century.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Louis A. Simon to William Adams Slade, April 28, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁴⁹ William A. Slade to Louis A. Simon, May 5, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁵⁰ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 1.

What St. Augustine accomplished in preserving its historic resources attracted national attention, including articles in the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, and the *Washington Post*. Tourism was and remains a heavily covered topic for newspapers. St. Augustine's role as the first permanent European settlement in the nation held the attention of travel writers. The fact that it was founded more than 50 years before the Mayflower was a major focus of tourism writing and promotion. For example, in 1934, the *Washington Post* reported that Fredericksburg, Williamsburg, Charleston, and St. Augustine were cooperating on a joint marketing campaign to promote travel to the "four most historic cities of America." Both Fredericksburg and Charleston vied for the title as being the nation's most historic city. "Civic authorities feel that a combination with Williamsburg, restored by the Rockefeller millions, and St. Augustine, oldest settlement in the United States, would be of mutual benefit by uniting their resources and ending these disputes."⁵¹

The initiation of the Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine also brought the city's historic resources to a national audience. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* carried a story about the inauguration of the Historical Survey of St. Augustine, an event important because the city was the first permanent white settlement in the nation. The article reported on the "elaborate luncheon" provided for Carnegie Institution President Merriam, which included W. J. Winter of Chicago, archeologist for the project.⁵² An extensive article in the *New York Times* reported on the Carnegie Institution's work appeared in March 1937. The article emphasized the American Indian sites, including the large shell mound that would shed light on the Timucuan Indians, and cited the work of Andrew E. Douglass's study of shell and sand mounds along Florida's east coast. The article stated:

Under the direction of Dr. Verne E. Chatelain obscure evidence will be unearthed, dusted off, and given permanency. No effort will be made to reconstruct the city as it was at a certain period, but ancient buildings will be restored, and legislation will be sought to prevent their destruction . . . St. Augustine, because of its interest-compelling antiquity, is today a leisurely Winter and Summer retreat. Its mingled traditions have been peculiarly shaped by history."⁵³

The *Washington Post* followed several weeks later with its own article on the Carnegie Institution's work. The Post cited the leadership of Mayor Fraser and the city commission that endorsed the "possibilities of the restoration idea." The vision that dominated the effort "would make St. Augustine a great museum for the study of early American history. But the ancient houses, when reconstructed, would be

⁵¹ "Four Historic Cities Plan Joint Campaign to Attract Tourists," *Washington Post*, April 21, 1934, p. 6.

⁵² "St. Augustine is Impressive for Inauguration Fete," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 17, 1937.

⁵³ "Oldest City is Restored," *New York Times*, March 7, 1937, p. 178.

lived in. There would be nothing to mar the progress of St. Augustine but rather much to stimulate its attractions as a resort."⁵⁴

During the 1930s and particularly in mid-decade when the Carnegie Institution began its St. Augustine Historical Program, the city was a national model for restoration as well as a prime example of how to preserve an entire community as a living community, rather than an outdoor museum as Williamsburg symbolized. The high priority devoted to historical research on the city also served as a national model for the kind of documentation required in undertaking this kind of effort. Government House stands as an important early restoration that marked the initiation of the city's important place in the national historic preservation movement that continues to today.

Return to Government House

In 1966, a new post office was built in a different location in St. Augustine. The 1930s post office building was turned over to the General Services Administration, where was deeded to the State of Florida for its use as the headquarters for historic preservation activities in the city. It then reassumed its ~~1821~~ name: Government House. Today, Government House is a contributing building within the St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District National Historic Landmark and has retained a high degree of integrity reflecting the building's appearance from the 1935-37 restoration.

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why?

The key place of Government House in the development of the Federal architecture program and in the national historic preservation program justifies its designation as a National Historic Landmark. It was the only "restoration" carried out by the Office of the Supervising Architect's Office during its nearly century-long existence. Later, after passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 and the full development of Section 106 of that legislation, the General Services Administration restored more historic Federal government buildings using the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines provided by the National Park Service. When historic post offices and other Federal government buildings are transferred to other public or private ownership, these buildings are rehabilitated according to the same standards and guidelines. When viewed against this progression of how the Federal government addresses its own historic government buildings, Government House is placed at the very earliest point in the trajectory.

where
is
the
link?

For St. Augustine, its own role in the development of restored communities is secured through its pioneering work in historic preservation that dates back to the 1920s, if not earlier. Like the rest of the nation, St. Augustine's leading citizens were impressed with the success of the Williamsburg restoration and aimed to apply the Revolutionary Era town's lessons to the Spanish colonial town along Florida's east coast. St. Augustine was unable to establish a historic open air museum as is found

⁵⁴ "Historic Town in Florida Proves Mecca for Artists," *Washington Post*, March 21, 1937, p. F5.

in Williamsburg, but, in the final analysis, that is its saving grace. St. Augustine remains a town for the living—where businesses, government agencies, residents, and visitors continue to use the town’s historic buildings for everyday purposes. As Verne Chatelain stated:

... the City of St. Augustine is not merely a grave yard of past memories, but still exists as a changing and developing community. Therefore it was felt that the [St. Augustine History] program should promote legitimate community interests, for if such were the case then the citizens could cooperate in practical fashion in the protection of their historical resources, recognizing in them an important factor in their own future prosperity.⁵⁵

Government House continues its role as the headquarters of the Florida state government’s continuing stewardship of St. Augustine’s historic properties and the ongoing vitality of this unique place in American history. In that role, Government House will continue to provide instruction on the evolution of Federal government architecture and historic preservation—both at the national level of significance.

⁵⁵ Verne E. Chatelain, “The St. Augustine Historical Program: A Statement of Its Organization, Purposes and Accomplishments,” Verne E. Chatelain Collection, St. Augustine Historical Society, pp. 3-4.



Jacobie James <jacobie.james@nps.gov>

Draft NHL Nomination for Government House, St. Augustine, Florida

1 message

leetoni@comcast.net <leetoni@comcast.net>

Mon, Mar 4, 2013 at 9:47 AM

To: alexandra_lord@nps.gov, james_jacobs@nps.gov, patty_henry@nps.gov, erika_seibert@nps.gov, turkiya_lowe@nps.gov, cynthia_walton@nps.gov

Dear Lexi, Jamie, Patty, Erika, Turkiya, and Cynthia:

Thank you for your comments last week on the letter of inquiry regarding the NHL nomination of Government House in St. Augustine, Florida. Following up on last week's telephone call, I am sending you the current draft of the nomination text. You will note that I have not placed the material in the official form, but have kept the material as a Word text file.

I would appreciate your review of and comments on this draft. In the preparation of this nomination text, I unearthed a great deal of material on the design and construction for this building as well as on the evolution of historic preservation in the 1930s.

Let me know if you need anything else.

With best regards,

Toni

Antoinette J. Lee

Historian

P. O. Box 3407

Arlington, VA 22203-3407

Ph: 703-525-0943

Cell: 703-298-4091



DraftNHLNominationMarch4.docx

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Copy of the Government House NHL proposal internal review summary (3/19/2013) provided to NPS WASO by the NPS Southeast Regional Office staff (with annotations by WASO NHL Program staff)

General Comments

The information contained within this draft does not provide a compelling argument for national significance. The argument for Criterion 4 (architectural specimen type valuable for the study of early restoration architecture) is not well developed and lacks supporting evidence. The argument Criterion 1 (historic preservation) addresses the importance of St. Augustine as a district, particularly the contributions of the Carnegie Institute, but fails to argue that the Government House is individually significant in the field of Historic Preservation or that it was a pivotal project in the larger preservation efforts centered in St. Augustine. It is possible that further research would provide addition support for the statements of significance, but as presented in this nomination there is not a strong case for national significance.

Section 7

The evolution of the building is not clearly described in the narrative. From the text provided it is difficult for the reader to understand how the building looked before the restoration and how it was altered during the restoration. It is critical to have a clear chronology of development and use as the nomination argues that the property's significance is derived from its restoration. As it is, the reader must reach Section 8 (page 7) to learn that the third Governor's house was constructed at the site in 1713; even then it is not clear if the third Governor's house is the structure that was restored in 1935-37.

Section 8

Criterion 4

The narrative states that "the building known as Government House today is nationally significant for its role as the first known effort by the Federal government to restore a historic building while providing accommodations for governmental functions". From the nomination, I interpret this to mean that the author believes Government House to be the first example of a Federal agency undertaking, what we would today call, an adaptive reuse project. This argument is problematic for a number of reasons.

(1.) The nomination does not provide an account of the building's evolution. It is therefore impossible for the reader to understand the nature of the 1935-37 project. Although the author acknowledges that the term restoration was used differently in the past, this project appears to have little in common with a restoration as defined by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, as only some exterior walls were incorporated into the new building. It appears to have more in common with a reconstruction or the practice of constructing buildings that reference local architectural precedents. A practice which was not unique to the Supervising Architects Office. In fact at the same time as this restoration/reconstruction/new building, 15 miles to the South, NPS was undertaking a similar project. NPS architects designed the Headquarters building at Fort Matanzas (1935-36) to mimic local architecture. As was the NPS practice at the time, the

Headquarters building exhibits many of the characteristics of what is now known as a “St. Augustine Plan” residential building; it is a combination coquina and wood-frame building similar in profile and plan to many buildings in and around the Colonial Spanish settlement.

(2.) It is unclear as to if the nomination is arguing that this was the first Federal restoration or if this was the first restoration by the Supervising Architect’s Office. Also unclear is whether the significance lies in the fact that the building was used for government functions after restoration. In any case the argument for the project’s importance within a larger context is missing. Did this lead to similar Federal projects or influence policy? Although the Supervising Architect’s Office was dismantled shortly after the restoration project, the office’s work was ostensibly carried on by the General Services Administration and therefore the significance of the Government House project should be examined within the contexts of both agencies’ histories.

Criterion 1

The nomination focuses much attention on Williamsburg, but fails to explore other important trends in the Historic Preservation Movement, particularly events related to the Federal government’s role in preservation and efforts of other “living cities,” like Charleston, SC; New Orleans, LA; Savannah, GA; San Antonio, TX; and Alexandria, VA.

Considering the emphasis that the nomination places on the role of the Federal government in the restoration project, it would be helpful to place the property within context of the development of the Federal government’s role in preservation—particularly the Antiquities Act and the effort to preserve American Indian ruins (Casa Grande and Mesa Verde); formation of NPS and early historic parks (Colonial); the establishment of HABS (1934); and the Historic Sites Act of 1935.

Bibliography

The bibliography should incorporate more recent scholarship.

| Page | Line | Comment | Reviewer |
|-------------|-------------|--|-----------------|
| 1 | 24 | Reference to the building’s “construction” in 1935 is confusing as the nomination’s argument revolves around a 1930s restoration | Walton |
| 1 | 31-42 | Summary would benefit from a general characterization of the building’s style— Spanish colonial? | Walton |
| 2 | 2-10 | paragraph on coquina is out of place in the summary. | Walton |
| 6 | 7-15 | This paragraph needs clarification. “Renovation” is not an appropriate treatment for an historic structure. The ultimate treatment recommended | Walton |

Did not see present
 forward in St. Augustine

| | | project? | |
|----|-------|---|--------|
| 19 | 27-30 | Why are the movements in Charleston, New Orleans, and Savannah not explored in greater detail? They seem to have more in common with St. Augustine than Williamsburg does | Walton |
| 20 | 15-16 | NPS did not assume management of CASA and FOMA until 1933. Before that they were managed by the War Department. | Walton |
| 23 | 26-36 | how does Chatelain's report support the statement that the Government House project was "a key investment by the Federal government in the evolution of St. Augustine as a restored community"? It doesn't seem as if much architectural research was undertaken prior to the Government house restoration. | Walton |
| 27 | 25-37 | The nomination does not adequately address the efforts of the Federal government to restore properties, which makes it difficult to accept the statement that the Government House holds a key place in the development of the Federal architecture program. | Walton |
| | | | |
| | | | |

SAT.

1935-37

Post office gone

log

Living Cities

- image of Spain - long history
 "restoration"

SCALE ✓

NOT A RESTORATION.

↑ for tourism
 not purely
 Abt. resource

WAS 1960s-70s - reconstruction + restoration.

AN issue 28 study study pre-1821

business oriented

for viability lots of colonial bldgs lost
 from 1920s-40s onward

1959 - restoration by SHU

| | | | |
|----|-------|---|--------|
| | | <p>by the approved Historic Structures Report would need to be one of the Secretary of Interior's Standards: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, or Reconstruction. What was the period of significance selected? The text indicates that the teller windows will be restored and identifies them as part of the "original building." Are these not part of the 1930s restoration. This statement contributes to the sense that the building was <i>constructed</i> in 1935. Furthermore, the reference to areas not original to the 1930s building is confusing, which areas are these and why were they not mentioned in the section on Post-1966 changes to the building.</p> | |
| 6 | 25 | <p>The 1939 book, "Public Buildings: Architecture Under the PWA" lists six restorations between 1933 and 1939. The nature of the "restorations" varies, but it calls into question the author's statement that "previous to the St. Augustine Post Office project, no changes to Federal buildings were made that were called a restoration."</p> | Walton |
| 7 | 34-35 | <p>Once again, here and elsewhere, the nature of the restoration is confusing. Here the nomination states that the Supervising Architect's Office was responsible for the design of the building, this implies new construction.</p> | Walton |
| 15 | 29-31 | <p>"Greeley's desire to retain the exposed coquina stone in the northeast corner also required the support of Reynolds, even though this material had not previously been used in a federal building." This sentence makes no sense to me. Also need to define, "federal building" because in the 1930s the federal government owned Castillo, Fort Matanzas, and the Fort Matanzas Headquarters building, which are all built of coquina.</p> | Walton |
| 15 | 38-39 | <p>"Federal Architecture Program" needs to be defined. The following text seems to indicate that it only encompasses the building program of the Supervising Architect's Office.</p> | Walton |
| 16 | 1-5 | <p>Just because it is unique does that make it significant? What were the impacts of the</p> | Walton |

Copy of the final Government House, St Augustine, FL,
NR Nomination as approved by the Keeper's Office and
listed in the NR on January 7, 2014, at the local
(emphasis added) level of significance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



Resub

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Government House

other names/site number U.S. Post Office, U.S. Post Office and Custom House/SJ1027

2. Location

street & number 48 King Street n/a not for publication

city or town St. Augustine n/a vicinity

state Florida code FL county St. Johns code 109 zip code 32084

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Robert F. Bendure 11/26/13
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) _____

Jay Johnson
Signature of the Keeper

1-7-2014
Date of Action

Government House
Name of Property

St. Johns Co., FL
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | 0 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 0 | total |

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Florida's New Deal Resources

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco
walls Stucco
Stone: Coquina
roof Terra Cotta: flat tile
other Metal: Cast Iron ornament
Cast Stucco ornament

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Conservation

Period of Significance

1935-1937

Significant Dates

1935-1937

Significant Person

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Greeley, Mellen Clark, Architect

Barnes, James I., Firm of, Contractor

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

University of Florida, Gainesville

Government House
Name of Property

St. Johns Co., FL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| Zone | Easting | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | Easting | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Antoinette J. Lee, Consulting Historian & Barbara E. Mattick, Deputy SHPO for Survey & Registration

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date August 2013

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name State of Florida, Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, c/o Division of State Lands

street & number Carr Building, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard telephone 850-245-2555

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-3000

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

Government House is located at 48 King Street in St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida. It was constructed 1935-1937 for post office, customs collection, and other Federal government functions. The building is three stories in height and has a gable roof covered by flat terra cotta tile. The east wing contains three old coquina walls; the other walls are constructed of coquina and stucco. Each street façade has a balcony. The east wing includes a walled patio. Main entrances are on the north and south facades and lead into the main post office lobby, now an exhibition lobby.¹ The building contains 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors, with an additional 2,415 square feet in the basement. The building was designed to use as much of the surviving historic fabric as possible and conform to its appearance as illustrated in a 1764 watercolor painting.

SETTING

The seat of government of St. Johns County, St. Augustine is located approximately 45 miles south of Jacksonville. The population of the city is 13,051 (2011). King Street serves as the main east-west corridor into the city, and U.S. Highway 1 is the primary thoroughfare along the western side of the city. The building is located on the block bounded by King Street, Cordova Street, Cathedral Place, and St. George Street and faces the original Spanish Plaza to the east. It forms an integral part of the complex of colonial, territorial, and late 19th century buildings that surround the plaza.

The Spanish Plaza is considered the center of historic St. Augustine, and includes the public market (also referred to as the slave market), the Spanish Constitution Monument, the Confederate War Memorial, a memorial listing servicemen from the city who served in the 20th century wars, four artillery pieces dating from the Mexican War and Civil War periods, the gazebo, and two colonial-era wells that have been excavated by archeologists.

To the west of Government House is the west garden area, which is historically connected to the building as part of the Federal government's property, but is not included in this nomination because it is not related to the significance of Government House in the New Deal era or its architectural significance. The west garden area contains an important granite obelisk monument, the William Wing Loring (1818-1886) Monument, and a brass plaque to the north of the monument that expands on Loring's role as an army officer who fought under three flags--the United States, the Confederacy, and Egypt. After his death in New York City, Loring was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery in Jacksonville, Florida. In 1920, the U.S. Treasury Department, which was responsible

¹ The Government House description is based on the material provided in *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31, 2012. Susan Tate, AIA, Preservation Architect, was responsible for the historical narrative in the Historic Structure Report.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

for the administration of the St. Augustine post office building and adjoining Federal government land, provided the site for the Loring monument to the Anna Dummett Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy. Loring's remains were removed from the Evergreen Cemetery and re-interred at the monument site. The State Museum, University of Florida, provided the brass plaque.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION
EXTERIOR**

The plan of Government House forms an irregular "L" on the eastern boundary of the property. The east, north, and south facades are the major public elevations, with the west elevation being used as a delivery area and service area. The building is constructed of masonry over a steel frame structure. The east façade makes the strongest physical statement of historical reference because it most closely resembles a 1764 watercolor painting of the building (Photo 35).

The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and the corners. Here the old coquina in an irregular course is exposed. The building's architect, Mellen Clark Greeley, retained three of the old walls: the north wall (1834), the east wall (1713, partly reconstructed in 1786), and most of the south wall (1713).

All of the openings in the walls date to the 1930s; the former openings having been filled with masonry as required. The openings consist of wood casement windows (Photo 12) and doors with stone sills. Solid wood batten doors with iron straps and exposed hammered bolt heads are used in the older section and plate glass doors are used in the new portion of the main lobby.

A Spanish-style wood balcony is located over the main entrance on the north wall and a similar balcony on the east wall and south wall. A four-foot wall of coquina encloses a small court on the north, and a similar wall encloses a large patio on the southeast corner.

East Façade: The east wall makes the strongest physical statement of historical reference, influenced by a 1764 watercolor drawing of the former government house. The east wing contains three old coquina walls. The east façade of the wing is dominated by the ceremonial balcony with heavy wood brackets, posts, and balustrade, features that recall but do not replicate the 18th century representation. The east balcony is reflected in the balconies above the north and the south entrances, although each is differentiated by details specific to each location (Photos 1 & 2).

The 1935 design of the east façade provides for exposed coquina at the vertical quoins of the former corner projections or "towers" and at the former window openings, but considerable infill of stucco on brick was incorporated between the projecting ends, in window openings, and to extend the gable peak. The south wall of

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

the east section, punctuated by French doors on both levels, was built 58 feet, 9 inches to the Main Lobby at the point of intersection with the early cross wall.

Although the wing's south wall is composed primarily of five sets of French doors or casements on both levels, some early coquina masonry may have been incorporated (primarily at the east corner) and reconstructed between the ground level openings to the southeast courtyard.

North Façade: The north entrance is the central focal point of the north façade and is defined by a projection of the main roof over the upper balcony. The north façade extends 115 feet, 4 inches up to the recessed and lower height northwest ell, which continues to 145 feet, 2 inches in overall dimension. Up to the stepped back ell, the north façade is flat with a fenestration of varied heights and spacing and a dominant chimney to the northeast (Photos 3 & 4).

The 1935 casement windows remain preserved (Photo 12). The north façade features random exposed coquina, combined with stucco over brick infill over a steel frame. The north wall, dating from the ca. 1833 Mills/Wallen extension, was removed above the second floor line, and new openings were cut according to the 1935 plan so that fragments of the previous wall, alongside reconstructed coquina masonry, are exposed.

West Façade: Formerly the west façade served as the loading dock for the post office. This loading dock was later enclosed during the tenure of the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board (1966-1997) and the open gate on the south wall of the service court was walled between the driveway piers. A parking area is adjacent to the loading dock (Photos 5 & 6).

South Façade: The classical south entrance is headed by a flat parapet that adjoins the projecting south gable that encompasses an upper level balcony. The southwest ell is recessed from the south façade and terminates in the dominant chimney. The south entrance façade extends 58 feet, 11 inches westward to the recessed ell, which extends 29 feet, 10 inches to a total dimension of 88 feet, 9 inches from the east courtyard wall. The southwest ell and northwest ell enclose the service area and loading dock that served the post office (Photos 7, 8, & 9).

The south elevation is protected by the two-story gallery or porch. The gallery, along with large trees conserved during the project, provides shading from the south sun. The courtyard is defined by coquina masonry garden walls that intersect with the east and south elevations of the building.

Coquina is a native shellstone found in the coastal region of Florida and Cuba and is considered an important traditional building material in St. Augustine. It is stone formed from coquina shells in large deposits that become cemented by calcium carbonate over long periods of time (over 100,000 years). Over the different locations in which it is found, the stone varies in texture and hardness. The most prized variety is from the Anastasia formation found near St. Augustine. The American Indians in the St. Augustine area were familiar

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
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with the stone and it became known and used by the European settlers. In the late 17th century, coquina was used in the construction of the Castillo de San Marcos. It was easy to quarry and absorbed cannon shot damage well. Its use was largely discontinued after the colonial period as it was difficult and expensive to acquire, and is a very limited natural resource. Beyond St. Augustine, only a few Florida cities contain New Deal public buildings executed with coquina, including the Bunnell Civic Center, the Daytona Beach Bandshell, the Tarragona Tower and Arch, Holly Hill Municipal Building, and the New Smyrna Beach City Hall.

INTERIOR

The building analysis identifies a total of 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors: 11,127 square feet on the first floor and 10,728 square feet on the second floor. The basement provides an additional 2,415 square feet.

The main lobby forms the north-south spine of the building and was the hub of public activity for the post office. From the north entrance, the west wall gave access to the inquiry window and an obscure glass door leading to the Superintendent of Mails. The six bays, separated by pilasters and defined by floor and ceiling patterns, included spaces for mail drops, parcel post windows, stamp counters, and general delivery counters. On the west side of the mail lobby are bays for postal boxes, a C.O.D. window, and windows for money order, registry, and postal savings services (Photos 13, 14, & 15).

The main lobby walls are finished in marble wainscot with brass grilles for the heating system. Original openings for postal windows and boxes remain, but the glass grilles and boxes, as well as the four ornamental lobby tables, have been removed. Original lanterns and door hardware are extant.

The interior doorways at the north and south entrances emphasize the significance of the lobby space, with lunettes or tympanums over the doors, with a relief panel at the north, and spokes and glazing at the south. The entrance to the east section was also emphasized with a sculptural relief in the lunette over the doorway.

The east section was designed to incorporate offices for the Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster, which opened from the lobbies along the east and south. The offices were connected by a passage with closet and toilet facilities. The east section east and south lobby floor is terrazzo with metal strips and marble borders, in a modular pattern that conforms with ceiling modules of exposed decorative wood beams at the south and plaster vaults at the east. Marble wainscoting and antiqued heavy wood doors form entrances to the east lobby and to the postmaster's office. The two offices have smooth plaster ceilings with pendant translucent luminaries (Photos 18, 19, & 20).

To the west of the main lobby, behind the postal windows, is the two-story post office work space. Iron grille work with shield details along the lobby ceiling line offer an opportunity for ventilation. The work space is

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Section number 7 Page 5 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

large and open to the second level. Immediately to the west of the north entrance was the office of the Superintendent of Mails, with access from the Main Lobby and from the workspace through a caged vestibule. The hardwood flooring, the observation platforms, and viewing slots to provide security for the mail operations extend around the upper level of the work space with steel access ladders that remain in place.

The main lobby provides access to the second floor by a monumental masonry stairway leading to an upper lobby and foyer corridor to the east suite of offices, originally designated for the customs collection functions (Photos 16 & 17). From the foyer, a corridor opens an *en suite* office space leading to a grand "Custom Office" at the end of the east section. The office features a platform with steps to reach the upper balcony looking east over the Plaza, a corner fireplace, windows to the north, and two sets of French doors opening to the south gallery (Photos 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27).

The remainder of the upper floor included four offices at the east and south, two toilets, and a custodial closet, accessed by a corridor from the main stair and short upper flight of stairs (Photos 28, 29, 30, & 31).

The 1930s decorative hardware remains throughout the building's exterior and interior. The features include polished bronze door levers on the courtyard wall of the main lobby, bronze thumb latches, bronze thresholds, radiator grilles, and bronze insect screens. The main stair case that connects the postal functions on the first floor with the customs collection functions on the second floor features a turned wooden newel post, decorative iron balusters, and marble trim (Photos 10 & 11).

The architect of the building, Mellen C. Greeley, described the decorative features in early 1936:

The door at the north entrance and the doors to the "Historical Room" are replicas of the door from the court yard to the Treasury in old Fort Marion, another historic building in the City. These doors are fitted with copies of the original hand wrought iron hardware. The ornamental stone doorway at the main entrance on King Street is an architectural adaptation of the doorway from the Court yard to the Chapel in Fort Marion with certain modifications, but with an attempt to reproduce the art of the period during which both of these original buildings were erected. The roof covering is of burned clay single tiles, in color ranging from black or purple to red, such as were used on similarly steep pitched roofs in northern Spain.²

² Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida, Being Erected by Procurement Division of the Treasury Department, of the United States of America, January 27, 1936," document attached to letter from Mellen C. Greeley to F. Larkin, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD, p. 6.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 6 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

Today, the building retains a high level of integrity dating to the 1935 design. The post office lobby, the most important interior room, retains much of the decorative details and feel of a post office lobby. The most important exterior walls—the north, east, and south—are unchanged from their mid-1930s appearance. The immediate surroundings are the same as they were when the 1930s work was completed.

According to the recently completed (2012) historic structure report on Government House, the following character-defining features of the building remain intact: (1) building form and site, (2) hardware and wood trim, (3) postal lobby and monumental stair, (4) customs office and supporting spaces, and (5) east section, ground level.³ All of these features are intact and in good condition.

ALTERATIONS

After the 1966 decommissioning of the post office functions, the original east section spaces and partition walls were demolished in 1969, retaining the encased steel columns and ceilings. The interior of the main floor east section thereafter consisted of a single space.

Currently, renovations are being undertaken to the existing restrooms, catering kitchen, storage, and museum gallery along with upgrades to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The majority of this work affects the west half of the first floor, an area that historically was non-public, including some areas that are not original to the 1930s era building. Some elements of the original building will be restored through this project, including exposing and repairing original teller windows with decorative metal grills. In July 2012, the historic preservation architect of the Florida Division of Historic Resources issued an approval of the Historic Structures Report and 100% Construction Documents for the rehabilitation work currently underway.

³ *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31st, 2012, p. 4-12.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 1

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

Government House is nominated to the National Register for **local significance** under **Criterion A** in the areas of **Social History** and **Conservation**, and under **Criterion C** in the area of **Architecture**. The building is significant for its association with the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA), two of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal agencies. Combating unemployment and assisting communities with improving their public buildings and infrastructure, the New Deal programs represented the growing importance of government at the local, state, and Federal levels during the Great Depression. The building was designed for post office, customs collection, and other Federal government functions and was designed as a historic building "restoration," though it did not conform to restoration work as understood today, or to restoration work as it was being performed concurrently on two other New Deal projects in Florida, the Gregory House at Torreya State Park and Fort Clinch, which became state parks. The "restoration" of Government House in the 1935 design does not conform to today's standards for a "restoration" under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. It did, however, conform to the model of "restoration" used by Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Government House retains integrity as a postal facility.

Government House is nominated under "**Florida's New Deal Resources Multiple Property Submission**," (MPS) under the **historic associated context** "**New Deal in Florida, 1933-1943**," and the **F.1 property type**, "**Buildings**."

In the Multiple Property Submission for Florida's New Deal Resources, in Section E, pages 43-44, the following paragraphs substantiate the historical and architectural significance of Government House:

Completed in 1935 [1937], St. Augustine's post office linked old with new and inspired the Ancient City's later preservation movement. The Federal project rebuilt and enlarged one of the city's prominent colonial buildings—the Governor's House at the west end of the Plaza. Built in 1706, the building had been renovated, enlarged, and rebuilt over time, including in 1833 when the Department of Treasury's architect Robert Mills had designed a post office and Federal building at the site. During the New Deal, Jacksonville architect Mellen Greeley prepared the architectural renderings for the rebuilding of the new structure, adapting a historic form for use as a post office, but significantly enlarging the original building. Still, the overall form, massing, style, and materials associated the new building with St. Augustine's colonial past and prolific use of coquina and stucco. Funding for the project came directly from the Treasury Department, PWA, and WPA.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 2 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

Inspired by the rebuilding of the Governor's House and preservation activities at Williamsburg, Virginia, St. Augustine's residents and politicians formed the city's nascent historic preservation movement. They included Mayor Walter B. Fraser of St. Augustine and members of the St. Augustine Historical Society. Developing an association with the Carnegie Institution, the City and Institution formed a National Committee for the Preservation and Restoration of Historic St. Augustine. Verne E. Chatelain, chief historian of NPS and a staff member of the Institution, made a series of recommendations that included restoration of the Oldest House, making it into a respectable museum, razing or moving modern buildings, and redirecting traffic patterns. Chatelain was appointed director of the restoration program, which was financed by the Carnegie Institution and local sources. World War II curtailed the nascent effort that had been spawned, in part, by the New Deal rebuilding of Government House.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

St. Augustine

St. Augustine was established in 1565 as a municipality and church headquarters. It served as a base for Catholic priests to set up a chain of missions that stretched from upper Georgia's coastal regions to present-day Tallahassee, Florida. The town plan for St. Augustine was laid out in 1598 according to the Laws of the Indies, in which Spain specified an urban template consisting of a rectangular plaza with lots for the "government palace" and other official functions.

Government House is located on the same site as the succession of Governor's "palaces" or houses that were used as residences and administrative offices. The third Governor's house was constructed in 1713 of coquina walls. In 1763, what is known today as Florida came under British control. Florida returned to Spanish control in 1783, where it remained until 1821, when it became a United States territory. In 1845, Florida became a state. From 1598 to 1821, Government House served as the administrative center of colonial Florida.

In 1821, the United States conducted an inventory of Federal properties in Florida and referred to this building as Government House. After 1821, the building was used for various U.S. government functions, including a military hospital and quarters for Federal troops during the Civil War and later a courthouse, custom house, and a post office. Renovations of the building during 1833-1834, designed by architect Robert Mills and carried out by Elias Wallen, and another renovation in 1873, designed by architect William M. Kimball, changed the building's massing, floor plan, and height. During the 19th century, the plaza was diminished in size because of the widening of the surrounding streets.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the building had evolved into a rectangular building, as indicated in the 1884 and 1910 Sanborn maps. As evidenced in a 1910 view (Photo 32) and 1922 view (Photo 33) of the

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building, the rectangular building was lined with two-story wooden porches along the north and south elevations. Although its appearance differed from that of the colonial and Civil War periods, at this time, it served as the center of the community, as a post office, meeting place, and source of pride in the city's Spanish heritage. The building was variously called the "former Spanish Governor's Palace," "Government House," "Custom House," and "Post Office."

Florida's New Deal Resources

The historic context for the nomination of Government House to the National Register of Historic Places is detailed in the document, "Florida's New Deal Resources" Multiple Property Submission cover form that the National Register program in Washington, DC, accepted in 2005. The document, "Florida's New Deal Resources," provides a detailed history of the development of New Deal programs to address the severe economic distress and widespread joblessness caused by the Great Depression. The "Florida's New Deal Resources" document focuses on the assistance provided by the New Deal programs to Florida that included schools, roads, airports, bridges, hospitals, playgrounds, public parks, and other infrastructure projects. The St. Augustine Civic Center was a product of the New Deal programs and was nominated to and listed in the National Register under the "Florida's New Deal Resources" cover form in 2005.

Post offices constituted a major building type supported through the New Deal programs of the Public Works Administration (PWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding sources. In Section E of the cover form, pages 41-42, the narrative states that:

... post offices were among the most celebrated federal projects in the state's towns and cities. Most of Florida's New Deal post offices and indeed almost all federal buildings of the era were built with the benefit of funding through the PWA. In most cases, resources were derived directly from appropriations through the Department of the Treasury supplemented with PWA funds. In a few cases, WPA laborers supplemented the labor supplied by private contractors. With few exceptions, plans for the buildings were drafted by the Department of the Treasury's Office of the Supervising Architect.

The "Florida's New Deal Resources" document summarizes the role of the Supervising Architect's Office in overseeing the design and construction of post offices funded through the New Deal programs. Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon and his staff prepared plans for numerous post offices in Florida, including those in Arcadia, Orlando, Panama City, Palm Beach, Sarasota, Winter Haven, and Pensacola. The cover form states: "The architectural styles for these post offices included Art Deco, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Mediterranean Revival. For some communities, a new post office represented one of the few if not the only PWA or New Deal building within their municipal boundaries or even within the county."

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In the discussion of significance of Florida's New Deal resources, the cover form states:

Possessing historical significance for their association with Florida's role in the New Deal, Florida's New Deal buildings represent the first national effort to link local, state, and national government agencies. The economic and social experiment increased employment and upgraded the built fabric of the nation. Part of an aggressive national public works program, the interrelated collection of facilities developed throughout America during the New Deal improved the lives of the nation's citizens. Consequently, Florida's New Deal buildings represent an important type of historic architecture that reflects the state's New Deal heritage.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN FLORIDA

Previous Historic Preservation Efforts in St. Augustine

Given its age, it is not surprising that St. Augustine was the site of early historic preservation efforts. In 1883, the St. Augustine Historical Society was founded and was dedicated to the preservation of the city's historic buildings, as well as artifacts, documents, and maps. In 1899, the Society acquired its first colonial house, known as the Vedder Museum, and its contents. This building was lost in a 1914 fire. The Society later managed the historic Fort Marion, renamed the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, for the War Department until 1933, when management of national monuments was transferred to the National Park Service. (In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge designated the property a national monument. In 1942, Congress formally changed the fort's name to the Castillo de San Marcos in honor of its Spanish heritage).

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Society acquired other colonial-era properties. In addition to the Society's activities, in 1906, a group of St. Augustine women successfully opposed municipal plans to demolish the pillars of the City Gate, an "early example of concern for preserving the historic city."⁴ The impressive coquina pillars of City Gate marked the eastern terminus of *El Camino Real*, or Royal Highway, that extended west to present-day Tallahassee and beyond. In 1928, architect F.A. Hollingsworth designed alterations for the old 1898 St. Augustine Waterworks Pumping Station for the conversion of the building into a community center. The alterations maintained many of the essential features and would today be considered a rehabilitation. It is a very early example of adaptive use in St. Augustine.

⁴ William R. Adams, *St. Augustine and St. Johns County: A Historical Guide*, Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, Inc., p. 19.

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Other Historic Preservation Efforts in Florida

Early 1900s

As with the federal government, some of the earliest historic preservation efforts in Florida were related to battlefields. In 1899, the Florida legislature authorized the erection of a monument at Olustee Battlefield, the site of Florida's largest engagement during the Civil War, and in 1909 the state bought three acres to build a memorial there. Olustee Battlefield became Florida's first historic site in 1912, and went on to become a state park in 1949. In 1921, the legislature appropriated funds to preserve the Dade Battlefield, site of the military engagement that triggered the Second Seminole War in 1835, as a memorial. That same year, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, under the authority of the Florida legislature, erected a monument at the site of the Civil War Battle of Natural Bridge.

1920s

The idea of historic preservation was greatly inspired across the nation by the work to preserve Williamsburg, Virginia, begun in 1926 with funding from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. An example of private efforts at the same time in Florida is the work done by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), who purchased the Gamble Mansion property in Manatee County in 1925 (NR 2011). A hurricane in 1921 had severely damaged the building, and the UDC wanted to restore the house to its "wartime condition" and to create the Judah P. Benjamin Memorial, in honor of Benjamin's service to the Confederate States of America as its Secretary of State. As the Confederacy collapsed in 1865, Benjamin escaped and made his way successfully to England by way of Florida. It is believed he spent some time at the Gamble Mansion along the way. The Florida legislature appropriated \$10,000 for restoration work and created a Gamble Mansion Commission to oversee the work, and provided an additional \$24,000 toward the effort. In return, the legislature required that the property be deeded over to the State. The mansion remained under UDC management until 1949, when the organization transferred the property to Florida State Parks. The Gamble Mansion is the only antebellum property in Florida that was preserved and rehabilitated to serve as a Confederate shrine and museum. The work done to the property would not be considered "restoration" by today's standards, but was important as a manifestation of the second wave of post-Civil War memorialization.

The 1920s also saw interest in archaeological sites in Florida. In 1926, Indian Mound Park was created in Pompano Beach as an archaeological park and given to the City of Pompano. In 1958, it was dedicated as a city park and bird sanctuary. It is the oldest example of historic preservation in Broward County. It is perhaps the third oldest surviving historic preservation effort in South Florida, following the 1925 creation of the El Portal Indian Mound Park, and the preservation through relocation of the 1844 masonry Fort Dallas Barracks into

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Lummus Park by the Daughters of the American Revolution, with funding assistance from the Miami Woman's Club⁵.

1930s: Civilian Conservation Corps Restoration Work and Creation of Florida State Parks

General public interest in statewide historic preservation expanded during the Depression as restorations became part of the mission of federal and state programs in the mid-1930s. The Florida Writer's Project and the Historic American Buildings Survey both pioneered the systematic statewide collection of local historical information. Early 1930s-era preservation programs were further augmented by the inclusion of historic sites within the newly created state park system, established in 1935, and with the growing importance of historic sites to Florida's fledgling tourist industry.

In 1935, the Neal Lumber Company saved the Gregory House, an antebellum house that was originally built at Ocheese Landing on the west side of the Apalachicola River, by donating it to the State of Florida. The house could be seen across the Apalachicola River from the high bluffs that were part of the site of Torreya State Park, one of the first units in the newly created Florida State Park Service. The thought was to move the Gregory House over to the park, where it could be used as a clubhouse for park visitors. The house was disassembled, floated downriver, and reassembled and restored by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). As described in the local newspaper,

They acquired the house, in a dilapidated condition, but with much of its timber as good as the day it had been built. . . .the job of reassembling the house was tedious and slow. At least 95 percent of the original lumber had been saved, and the missing pieces were replaced with new lumber, matching as nearly as possible the old. Most of the flooring was unsound, so the house was refloored throughout as it had been the original house, using wide and narrow boards alternately, placed down with pegs. . . The front porch has the tall square white columns typical of its period. The original columns were preserved. . . . In the hallway there is a long staircase with a delicately carved mahogany banister which was imported from France a century ago. All except one section of the rail is original wood.

The work on the Gregory House and Torreya State Park was completed by 1940 (Figures 4 & 5).⁶

⁵ Michele Williams for the City of Pompano Beach. Pompano Beach Mound National Register nomination proposal, 2013.

⁶ "Torreya Park Nearly Ready," *Chattahoochee Tribune*, October 3, 1941. In Record Group 155, Series 1270, Box 1.

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Also in 1935, the CCC, with direction from the National Park Service, restored Fort Clinch, an antebellum fortification on Amelia Island, which opened as a state park in 1938 (Figures 6 & 7). C.L. Johnson, the Assistant Historian for the National Park Service, discussed the Fort Clinch project in his daily report for May 18, 1936. Referring to Fort Pulaski in Savannah, he had previously commented that one fort restoration was enough on the southeast coast, and that Fort Clinch was the better choice. There were differences of opinion, however, between Johnson and C.H. Schaeffer, the director of the Florida State Park Service, as to what approach to preservation should be applied. According to Johnson, Schaeffer considered Fort Clinch to be "an interesting old ruin and that repair should be held to the minimum necessary to prevent hazards to the visiting public and to prevent further deterioration. In other words, to hold the present condition with safety. Clean-up, grading, grassing to be restricted to small sample area." Schaeffer felt Fort Clinch should be preserved as a ruin. Johnson maintained, however, that too much restoration work had been done under his own direction already, and that to abandon the restoration at that point would leave Fort Clinch as an incomplete project. His description of the work already completed demonstrated that meticulous attention had been paid to truly restoring the fort's buildings and grounds. He suggested a compromise that would restore Fort Clinch to its 1867 appearance based on historic documentation and practice at other forts. Johnson's recommendations were followed and his already-completed restoration work remained in place. Today, Fort Clinch is a Florida State Park and presents the fort and life there as it was in 1867.⁷

1940s-1950s

Florida's explosive growth the 1940s and 1950s provided the catalyst for the development of coordinated statewide preservation action. This rapid change, though beneficial to many sections of the state's population and economy, threatened to destroy much of Florida's remaining historical resources. The statutory creation of the preservation board in St. Augustine in 1959 officially launched not only the major thrust to carry out preservation in St. Augustine as envisioned by the Carnegie Institution in the 1930s, but also ushered in a new era of statewide historic resources protection.

1960s

The 1960s saw increased state governmental involvement in preservation efforts in Florida. In 1961, both the Florida Board of Antiquities and the position of State Archaeologist were created. Even so, prior to the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 98-665), and the subsequent Florida Archives and History Act of 1967, Florida's statewide preservation programs developed in a sporadic and disjointed

⁷ C.L. Johnson, Asst. Historian, Region One, District E, [National Park Service] Atlanta, Georgia, to R.E. Appleman, Regional Officer, Region 1, National Park Service, Richmond, Virginia. Report on Fort Clinch Work Program, May 10, 1937. Record Group 510, Series 1951, Box 1, File Folder 58, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee.

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pattern. Although some early continuity had been provided by the Florida Historical Society, the Florida Anthropological Society, the Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects, Florida State Parks, and other professional and amateur groups, no coordinated statewide preservation movement actually existed. The passage of the Florida Archives and History Act (Chapter 267, Florida Statutes) in 1967 reorganized the old Board of Antiquities into the Florida Board of Archives and History. This action consolidated a wide variety of preservation functions from several state agencies into a single governmental entity.

Through state government reorganization in 1969, the Florida Board of Archives and History became the Division of Archives, History, and Records Management under the Florida Department of State. In 1986, Chapter 267 was amended as the Florida Historical Resources Act, and the Division of Archives, History, and Records Management was renamed the Division of Historical Resources (DHR), Florida's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Since that time, DHR has continued to provide leadership in instituting many state level preservation programs that now exist in Florida.⁸ A non-profit statewide organization, the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, was founded in 1978.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PROCESS

The United States government agency responsible for the design of the U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was the Supervising Architect's Office, which was located within the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Both the Treasury Department and the Customs Service were established in 1789. Custom duties constituted a large portion of the revenue for the early Federal government and were vital to the welfare of the new nation. The Treasury Department assumed responsibility for the construction of Federal government buildings because of its responsibility for the collection of customs duties and the need to house these functions. During the first half of the 19th century, the Secretary of the Treasury was directly involved in the design and construction of custom houses in the United States. By the early 1850s, the number of buildings increased to the point where the architectural and construction responsibilities were centralized within the Bureau of Construction headed by a member of the Corps of Engineers and a subordinate Supervising Architect. By the beginning of the Civil War, the Corps left the Bureau of Construction and the Supervising Architect position oversaw the design and construction of not only custom houses, but also Federal courthouses and post offices. Often, all three functions were contained in a single building.

The Supervising Architect's Office remained in the Treasury Department until 1939 and was headed by a succession of 15 men, most of them architects. Over its history, this office designed thousands of Federal government facilities that covered a wide range of Federal functions and locations throughout the nation. The most visible were post offices, custom houses, and courthouses. As the Federal government grew, this office

⁸ Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources. *More Than Orange Marmalade: A Statewide Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan for Florida*, 1995, p. 1.

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also oversaw the design and construction of large, multi-purpose Federal office buildings. In 1933, with the development of Federal government programs to address the effects of the Great Depression, the office was placed in the Procurement Division within the Treasury Department and incorporated into the Public Works Branch. Architect W. E. Reynolds was the assistant director of the Procurement Division and assigned to oversee the Public Works Branch. The Supervising Architect at this point was James A. Wetmore, who served as Acting Supervising Architect from 1915 to 1934. A lawyer by training, Wetmore elected not to assume the title on a permanent basis because he was not an architect. Under Wetmore, architect Louis E. Simon oversaw the architectural work of the office. When Wetmore retired in 1934, Simon, at the age of 66, succeeded him. Simon retired in 1941.

In 1939, with the winding down of Depression-era programs and the gearing up of wartime preparations, the Supervising Architect's Office was removed entirely from the Treasury Department and became part of the Public Buildings Administration of the independent Federal Works Agency. With this move, Reynolds became the commissioner of public buildings. In 1949, this function was moved into the new General Services Administration, where responsibility for Federal government buildings remains to this day. Reynolds retired in 1954.⁹

Over the years of its existence within the Treasury Department, the Supervising Architect's Office played an important role in bringing the presence of the Federal government to thousands of communities in the form of post offices, custom houses, Federal courthouses, and Federal office buildings. Because of the office's high visibility, the private architects, represented by the American Institute of Architects, devoted years to lobbying to remove control over design work from the government architects and instead to place this important work in the hands of the private sector. During brief periods during the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, most notably during the Tarsney Act period (1897-1912), private architects were involved in designing Federal government buildings on a competitive basis and later on a contractual basis. During the 1930s, the Federal government made an effort to address the economic distress in the architectural profession by hiring private architects, like Mellen Clark Greeley, to design Federal buildings. At other times during the 1930s, it was felt that obtaining designs from private architects took longer than from government architects, which delayed the initiation of construction and the badly needed construction jobs that ensued. After World War II and the formation of the General Services Administration, the Public Buildings Service exercised primarily administrative and contractual responsibilities over the design work carried out by private architects.

In its function within the Federal government, the Supervising Architect's Office was an "architectural firm" that employed architects to design Federal government buildings throughout the nation as well as to supervise their construction. The production of the Office during its history of nearly 90 years—from the early 1850s to

⁹ For a history of the Supervising Architect's Office, see Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

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1939—can be analyzed best as incorporating certain types of buildings. Large custom houses are found in major coastal cities like New York City and Boston. Smaller post offices are found throughout the nation in both suburban areas and smaller communities. The output also can be studied as evolving through definable historical periods, such as the antebellum Bureau of Construction period through the period of Alfred B. Mullett, the Gilded Age period, the Academic Classicism period, the 1920s period of affluence, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. An architectural operation of this scale, scope, and reach makes Federal buildings a significant building type, with individual buildings evaluated as representative of their respective periods of development and functions (large urban custom house, small post office, etc.).

Federal government buildings were more than buildings to house governmental functions. They played an important symbolic role in the period during which the Supervising Architect's Office produced designs for Federal buildings. In the pre-mass communication period, Federal government buildings were viewed as a means for the Federal government to communicate "democratic ideals, reflecting a growing sense of national identity." These buildings served as major architectural icons in the urban landscape and were often the largest buildings in the commercial center of towns and cities. They served as "unifying symbols that reflected authority and stability." During the Academic Classicism period, Federal buildings "bespoke the power, influence, and self-assurance of a nation on the brink of world leadership."¹⁰ Today, these messages are less evident in new federal architecture, given modern technologies that communicate the Federal government's functions and activities. The decline in the importance of post office services and customs collection also contributes to lessened architectural opportunities for the Federal government.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Mellen Clark Greeley, Architect

The architect of the St. Augustine Post Office was Jacksonville native Mellen Clark Greeley (1880-1981). He studied architecture under J. H. W. Hawkins from 1901 to 1908. (Hawkins was born in New York City, but moved to Jacksonville after its Great Fire of 1901. He designed many residences, commercial buildings, and churches in the city.) Greeley established his own practice in 1909. He was architect of many schools, apartment houses, residences, club houses, and churches throughout Jacksonville. Greeley became a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1921.

During the 1930s, formerly busy and prosperous architectural practices collapsed under the weight of the Great Depression. Despite the economic challenges, Greeley applied for and was accepted as a Fellow of the AIA in 1934. Greeley was active in architectural organizations, including a number based in Florida and served as an

¹⁰ The chapter, "Prelude," in Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, addresses the ways in which Federal government buildings communicated political, social, and economic messages to the public.

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appointed member of various local commissions and boards. In 1958, at the end of his career, Greeley was granted the status of Member Emeritus of the AIA. By that time, he was referred to as the "Dean of Florida Architects." He died in 1981 at the age of 101.¹¹

In 1969, Greeley produced an oral history of his life and career called "Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley, Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963." In the transcribed version of the history, he recalled how he came to be selected to design the St. Augustine Post Office. In 1931, he received an unexpected telephone call asking about his interest in the commission to design the St. Augustine post office. Because of the lack of work in his office, Greeley received this inquiry with considerable excitement and regarded the project as a "godsend." The only possible connection was his effort spent on being considered for the design work on one of two Federal buildings being considered in Jacksonville. The phone call directed him to contact someone in Washington, a step that "began one of the most pleasant architectural projects ever to come my way."¹² The St. Augustine post office project allowed him to keep his office open until the economy improved.

"RESTORATION" DESIGN

The new U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was constructed between 1935 and 1937 on the site previously occupied by the older post office. Its architect, Mellen Clark Greeley, designed the building in the Spanish colonial style to be compatible with the restoration aspirations of the city of St. Augustine. The historic coquina stone walls that dated from earlier construction and renovation periods were incorporated into the new building.

Because postal functions were located in the building on the historical site of the Governor's House, the creation of a new, modern postal facility with more space raised the question of either constructing a new building on a new site or a reuse of the extant building on the site. Public disagreement over the location of the new postal facility delayed commencement of the construction process.

However, as early as 1926-1927, plans had been prepared. The appearance of the building and the identity of the architect of these plans are unknown. Possibly, the Supervising Architect's Office staff architects designed the 1926-1927 plans. By this time, the Supervising Architect's Office had settled on design precedents set in the early 20th century under the management of James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect (1897-1912). "Nearly all the federal buildings designed under Taylor can be classified as classical or colonial revival. By the turn of the century, these styles were well entrenched in the architectural vocabulary throughout the country.... These

¹¹ For biographical information on Mellen Clark Greeley, see his membership file with the American Institute of Architects, Washington, DC.

¹² "Exerpts from 'Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963,'" May 19, 1969, University of Florida Collections, p. 16.

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buildings...were reflective of the predominant national taste in architecture."¹³ There was no stated policy of designing buildings to conform to a locality's architectural traditions. In fact, in the 1910s and 1920s, the trend was toward standardized designs for Federal government buildings.

In 1933, architect Greeley was contracted to produce a design for a new building. Greeley's 1933 design was made for "an entirely new building to harmonize with the architecture of old St. Augustine and to be located on Government owned land on Cordova Street between Cathedral and King Streets directly opposite the famed Ponce de Leon Hotel and near the Alcazar Hotel."¹⁴ The details of this earlier design are unknown because the drawings have not survived. However, the Supervising Architect's Office staff had already calculated that the needed square footage measured more than twice the size of the existing building—from 4,500 square feet to 11,000 square feet. In this staff report, it was stated: "When it was contemplated in 1926 and 1927 to remodel the building (plans having been made and bids received), there was so much agitation against the scheme that the project was deferred. The foundation of the adverse agitation by the citizens of St. Augustine was the historical value placed upon the old building."¹⁵ This agitation likely resulted because the community fondly regarded the current post office as a link to the city's old Spanish heritage and could not accept the idea that the old post office building might be remodeled into yet another configuration.

Most cities welcomed the arrival of new Federal government buildings because they were justified based on postal receipts and Federal government activities in the locality. A new government building was a reassuring sign of the city's economic viability and continuing importance to conducting Federal government functions. Few cities complained about the design of the Federal building intended for their locality or expressed dissatisfaction with the location or materials. St. Augustine was different. The city had a long tradition of citizen activism when matters concerned the city's dense concentration of historic buildings, the ability of these attractions to lure visitors, and the economic activities that visitors generated. The city's mayor, Walter B. Fraser, and the managing editor of its daily newspaper, *The St. Augustine Record*, Nina Hawkins, championed historic preservation as a key to the city's future. These circumstances made the St. Augustine post office project one of the most unusual in the history of the Supervising Architect's Office. By the late 1930s, the success of the Williamsburg restoration as a tourism magnet and the resulting economic benefits provided a vivid example of what could happen in St. Augustine.

¹³ *Architects to the Nation*, pp. 209-210, describes the designs under James Knox Taylor and efforts to standardize the design of smaller federal buildings during and after his administration.

¹⁴ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, January 27, 1936, p. 2.

¹⁵ Superintendent, AE Division to James A. Wetmore, January 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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As disagreement over the future of the city's post office dragged on, Congressman J. Mark Wilcox wrote to Acting Supervising Architect James A. Wetmore on December 18, 1933: "St. Augustine has a distinctive type of architecture, being as you know, the oldest city in America and having been founded by the Spanish in the early period of our history. The new building should harmonize with the general architectural scheme of the city. It is probable that the present building might be so remodeled so as to afford ample space and convenience for the public, and at the same time conform to the general architectural plan of the city."¹⁶

By the time that New Deal funds became available for public buildings projects, the city of St. Augustine organized a Post Office Committee to agitate for funds to support a new post office facility. Harry H. Saunders, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, wrote to Silliman Evans, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, asking about the long-sought building project. In early 1934, he wrote: "St. Augustine seems to be fast becoming the 'Forgotten City' in the matter of a new Federal building."¹⁷ The new location identified in 1933 was judged to be unacceptable because the remains of Confederate General William Wing Loring rested under the monument on the land immediately west of the existing post office upon which it was proposed to erect the new building. "Another reason was the desire that the splendid park at the west end of the Plaza be kept unobstructed; and a third reason was the desire of all to retain the old building under Government supervision so that it would not be allowed to fall into worse repair."¹⁸

Architect Greeley referred to a meeting in April 1933, where Reynolds met with St. Augustine leaders and civic groups and heard their requests and suggestions. After this meeting, "Mr. Reynolds instructed the Architect [Greeley] to make studies of the new scheme, the old building intact, or if that were impossible, to utilize as much of it as found feasible, and to restore the part so used to conform in appearance to the picture bearing date of 1764."¹⁹

Although earlier recommendations coming out of St. Augustine argued against remodeling the existing building on the site, the prospect of an extended delay in obtaining this key Federal government investment changed the community's views on the subject. By 1934, J. W. Hoffmann, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, assembled an impressive list of St. Augustine organizations that approved of the "proposed restoration and enlargement of the present Post Office structure." He also cited the "unanimous approval of the citizens

¹⁶ J. Mark Wilcox to James A. Wetmore, December 18, 1933, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁷ Harry H. Saunders to Silliman Evans, January 8, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁸ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 2.

¹⁹ Ibid.

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generally throughout the city of St. Augustine.”²⁰ Hoffman further described the prospect of the “exterior to be constructed along the lines of the Spanish Governor’s Mansion, and the interior, of course, to be a modern Post Office.”²¹ In subsequent correspondence to officials of the Treasury Department, Hoffman continued to use the terms “restoration” and “conform with the old Spanish Governor’s Mansion” in the desired approach to the post office project. Even with this agreement, individual protests against the plan caused Assistant Director of Procurement at the Treasury Department W. E. Reynolds to write: “It would be humanly impossible to always select a site satisfactory to everyone.”²²

In May 1934, the Treasury Department directed architect Greeley to study the feasibility of using the old building for a post office. As Greeley described his instructions, “I was instructed to accede if possible to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, that the old building be restored and preserved as a historic monument.” In Greeley’s opinion, the building was more English in appearance than Spanish. Responding to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, the Spanish tradition would be restored to the building. Greeley anticipated “using the shell of the old building only . . . [and] building a new floor structure inside the shell.” Even so, the old building’s size of 4,680 square feet would need to be enlarged to 6,360 square feet.²³ Because the current design was entirely different from the one that Greeley had produced in 1933, his old contract was terminated and a new one executed.

In the summer of 1934, W. E. Reynolds traveled to St. Augustine to meet with Congressman Wilcox and Postmaster J. Herman Mauncy to finalize the plans for the post office project. During that visit, Reynolds stated that he was in favor of “the plan of restoration,” even if it would entail additional expense over the cost of an entirely new building. Congressman Wilcox argued that the Federal government had already spent money on the restoration and preservation of “historic spots” and it was therefore justifiable that needed Federal government funds be spent on the restoration of the St. Augustine building.²⁴ In 1935, the appropriation of \$200,000 for the building was increased to \$217,935.²⁵

²⁰ J. W. Hoffman to J. Mark Wilcox, May 5, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²¹ J. W. Hoffman to W. J. Sears, May 7, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²² W. E. Reynolds to J. H. Hempsted, September 24, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²³ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, June 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁴ “Government Officials Impressed,” *The St. Augustine Record*, article attached to letter from J. E. Hempsted to Henry L. Morganthau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁵ “Post Office Building Dedicated,” *The St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

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By January 1935, Greeley received survey drawings of the old building. Because of the special requirements of the project, Greeley asked for more time than would be required for an average post office design. He cited the reasons for the delay: “. . . the old building must be given special consideration and its historic features must be given special attention.”²⁶ The Supervising Architect’s Office was concerned about these delays and dispatched several of its own staff architects to Jacksonville to assist Greeley with the completion of the drawings and specifications for much of the summer of 1935. By September 30, proposals were solicited for the building’s construction. On December 9, the firm of James I. Barnes of Springfield, Ohio, was selected as the contractor.

Within a few weeks of the awarding of the construction contract, the historic walls were threatened with collapse. Even before the construction began, the contractor expressed concern about the stability of the building’s coquina walls while steel piles were driven into the ground. The contractor suggested the removal and rebuilding of the walls.

On January 24, 1936, the second floor walls collapsed. The perceived threat to the “sacred walls” caused alarm on the part of St. Augustine citizens. Some of the wooden posts, beams, and lintels had been destroyed by termites, causing the stone work to loosen and leaving large cavities in the walls. A solution was worked out among the parties involved. The decision was made to remove and rebuild the second story walls. The first floor walls remained intact. Architect Greeley wrote: “it was suggested that as long as the old stones were used in the old wall in the exact location where they had always been, there could be no desecration of the old building.” The contractor agreed to hold in place as much as possible of the first story of the north and south walls of the old building. Where the cavities needed repair, the old stones from the second story would be used. Any new masonry would be confined to the second story.²⁷ The east wall was considered to be constructed of better masonry and was kept in its entirety.

Even with the agreement on the treatment of the walls, observers decried what appeared to be the Federal government’s destruction of large sections of the building and cited Williamsburg as the model of what ought to be happening. In response to these protests, Reynolds responded with:

The remodeling of the present building will preserve such portions of the walls of the old structure as are structurally sound, and, when completed, the new structure will be virtually a reproduction of the old building as it appeared before it was remodeled in 1834. It is believed that when the public understands fully that this reconstruction is much similar to the Rockefeller

²⁶ Mellen C. Greeley to Office of the Supervising Architect, July 30, 1935, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁷ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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reconstruction at Williamsburg to which you refer, the present objections to the proposed rebuilding will disappear.²⁸

The treatment of the exterior stucco and coquina stone exemplified an effort to protect the remaining walls and rebuild the rest so that both parts could be seen as a "whole." Architect Greeley asked that the face of the brick work be set slightly back from the face of the stone so that the stucco could "feather-edge" or taper off against the stone, with an irregular line (not a straight-line). "The effect desired is that of an old building which has been patched and rebuilt and on which the stucco has fallen off in some places."²⁹ Supervising Architect Louis E. Simon approved Greeley's plan for the stucco on the building (Photo 34).

In a summary of the building's design, Architect Greeley wrote:

The exterior of the building has been designed to correspond as far as possible with the original picture bearing date of 1764, which was adopted as the key-note of the restoration. The high pitched roof with gables has been copied from the picture, also the balcony on the east façade. The roof over the new wings and the balconies on the north and south fronts are designed to conform to the original as shown in the [1764] picture. The original high wall which inclosed (sic) the garden of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been replaced with a low wall which forms the two boundaries of the garden . . .³⁰

The building was dedicated on February 22, 1937. Mayor Walter B. Fraser arranged for the dedication to be scheduled on George Washington's Birthday, a national holiday, so that the school children would be free to attend the ceremony. Mayor Fraser also asked business owners to let their employees take off time from work to attend the ceremony. The city of St. Augustine and the Federal agencies represented in the building cooperated on a dignified dedication ceremony. J. Austin Latimer, who represented Postmaster General James A. Farley, gave a presentation that praised the building as the oldest public building in the United States.³¹ Mayor Fraser thanked the Federal government for deviating from the usual plan for public buildings in allowing for the

²⁸ W. E. Reynolds to Mr. and Mrs. John T. Findley, February 17, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD. Reynolds made reference to Williamsburg because the restoration of the colonial city in Virginia, involving reconstructions of formerly extant buildings and restorations of standing structures, set the standard for the 1920s and 1930s for other cities.

²⁹ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

³⁰ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 5.

³¹ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *The St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

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Spanish style building in keeping with its surroundings. Benedictions were given. Afterwards, a band concert entertained the crowd. Dignitaries from the State and locality were seated on the east balcony, including Verne E. Chatelain, who represented the Carnegie Institution of Washington.³² Between 1936 and 1940, the Carnegie Institution worked with the City of St. Augustine and other organizations in the historic, archeological, and photographic documentation of the city that would guide restoration projects.

The special attention paid to the St. Augustine post office building by U.S. Treasury officials was unlike other Federal government building projects, especially in the 1930s, when many post offices and other Federal government buildings were under design and construction throughout the nation to assist with the New Deal recovery efforts. The St. Augustine post office project involved providing a new facility for post office and other Federal government functions in a unique historical setting with deep historical roots. The community was already involved in private sector historic preservation activities. Investment in a historic building on the part of the Federal government or an outside organization or individual could only boost this direction and the city's fortunes.

Other factors in the handling of the St. Augustine building included the fact that W. E. Reynolds, assistant director of the Procurement Division of the U.S. Treasury Department, was from Jacksonville, Florida. His brother, John F. Reynolds, was a member of the Jacksonville firm of builders and contractors, Hillyer and Reynolds.³³ Before he assumed his position with the Procurement Division, W. E. Reynolds worked for the firm of Hillyer and Reynolds. As an architect, W. E. Reynolds was likely familiar with St. Augustine and its historic buildings and may have known the city's leaders. In addition, the example of the Williamsburg restoration demonstrated the desirability of restoring older buildings. The Federal government was in the process of implementing the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and its role in managing, restoring, and interpreting historic buildings could only grow larger over time. Although there is no specific documentation about why the St. Augustine building project was handled differently, the above factors likely were instrumental.

During the building's role as a Post Office, it housed not only postal functions, but also offices for the U.S. Customs Service, Department of Agriculture county agents, the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Park Service, and U.S. Justice Department Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents. As such, the site of Government House maintained its role as the seat of government functions for nearly 370 years, from 1598 to 1966.

³² Ibid., p. 3.

³³ "Government Officials Impressed, Treasury Representative Says He Approves," newspaper clipping attached to letter, J. E. Hempsted to Henry Morgenthau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Government House is one of the very few, if not the only, "restorations" of a historic property for Federal government functions that the Supervising Architect's Office undertook during any time in its evolution from the 1850s to the late 1930s. The usual approach was to produce or commission a new design for a new building that housed post office, Federal courthouse, custom house, and other Federal government functions.

Because of significant investment by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Colonial Williamsburg became the pioneer in restoration research and restoration standards. The National Park Service assumed major responsibilities for the management of historic properties with the issuance of the Presidential Executive Order 6166 of 1933 that consolidated Federal historic sites and national parks under the National Park Service. One of the National Park Service's first restorations of a historic building occurred in 1934 with the Moore House in Yorktown, Virginia, which Rockefeller purchased and then sold to the National Park Service as part of the development of Colonial Parkway.

During the design and construction of the St. Augustine post office building, both the Supervising Architect's Office and architect Mellen Greeley spoke of the building's unique character within the highly regulated Federal architecture program. In requesting treatment of the stucco to resemble patching and rebuilding over the centuries, Greeley stated:

I realize that I am asking for something which has probably never been done before in a building for the Treasury Department, but the whole project is unusual. Also, the use of the old historical building in the schedule is unique and the work can be made outstanding by going a little more away from the usual without detriment to the utility of the building. In St. Augustine there are a number of beautiful examples of stone work such as I am asking for, where the stucco has come off in places and is intact in others. The Old Fort, the City Gates, etc., are examples.³⁴

When a request was made to include mention of the "restoration" in the official cornerstone, architect Greeley stated, "The fact that the building is probably the *only restoration* [emphasis added] of an historical building for use by Government Departments was perhaps not brought to the attention of the Supervising Architect, and, if that had been done perhaps the standard lettering might have been changed on the stone."³⁵ Supervising Architect Simon responded to Greeley by stating that no further inscriptions should be placed on the cornerstone, but a tablet could be placed in the interior that would include interesting historical data.

³⁴ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

³⁵ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 7, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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In a 1936 explanation of the building's design, Greeley had earlier underscored the uniqueness of this building in the Federal government's architecture program. "What is unusual . . . is that the Government is now erecting a building in the City of St. Augustine, Florida, to house the Post Office and Custom House of that City, which is probably the most unique of all which the Government has ever built, and which is likely to be the only one of its kind ever to be built."³⁶

RETURN TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE

In 1966, a new post office was built in a different location in St. Augustine. The 1930s post office building was turned over to the General Services Administration, which deeded it to the State of Florida, in accordance with Public Law 616, enacted in 1949, which, authorized, when appropriate, the transfer of Federal property to states, for its use as the headquarters for historic preservation activities in the city. It then reassumed its 1821 name: Government House. Today, Government House is a contributing building within the St. Augustine Historic District and has retained a high degree of integrity reflecting the building's appearance from the 1935-1937 "restoration."

For St. Augustine, the city's role in the development of historic communities is secured through its pioneering work in historic preservation that dates back to the late 19th century. Like the rest of the nation, St. Augustine's leading citizens were greatly impressed with the success of the Williamsburg restoration and aimed to apply the lessons of Williamsburg's restoration to the Spanish colonial town on Florida's east coast. These strong sentiments shaped the "restoration" design for the St. Augustine post office, where a postal facility and offices for Federal government functions were housed in a historic encasement.

St. Augustine was unable to establish a historic open air museum as is found in Williamsburg, but, in the final analysis, that is its saving grace. St. Augustine remains a town for the living—where businesses, government agencies, residents, and visitors continue to use the town's historic buildings for everyday purposes. As Verne E. Chatelain of the Carnegie Institution of Washington stated:

. . . the City of St. Augustine is not merely a grave yard (sic) of past memories, but still exists as a changing and developing community. Therefore it was felt that the [St. Augustine History] program should promote legitimate community interests, for if such were the case then the

³⁶ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida," January 27, 1936, p. 1.

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citizens could cooperate in practical fashion in the protection of their historical resources, recognizing in them an important factor in their own future prosperity.³⁷

In 2007, the University of Florida assumed responsibility for managing Government House and other state-owned historic properties in St. Augustine. Government House continues its role as the headquarters of the Florida state government's continuing stewardship of St. Augustine's historic properties and the ongoing vitality of this unique place in American history.

CONCLUSION

Government House did not employ true restoration techniques, such as the ones that were being applied at the same time by the CCC in the 1930s at two state parks, Torreya State Park and Fort Clinch. This is not surprising since the work of the Supervising Architect's Office was to build new Federal facilities, not to restore historic ones. Government House, therefore, is significant in the area of Conservation, not as a restoration, but as a demonstration of the importance historic preservation held in St. Augustine, an importance that was enough to persuade the Office of the Supervising Architect to pursue a course it had never before undertaken in building a new Federal facility, one that the agency did not repeat. The result of their work, however, was a new, yet distinctive building that evoked a sense of St. Augustine's history, with its mix of features that recalled both its Spanish and British heritage. The building is also significant for its architecture as an impressive display of craftsmanship and use of fine materials, including coquina and stucco, marble, terrazzo, wood, and bronze, and as the work of a master architect, Mellen Clarke Greeley.

³⁷ Verne E. Chatelain, "The St. Augustine Historical Program: A Statement of Its Organization, Purposes and Accomplishments," Verne E. Chatelain Collection, MC-41, Box 8, Folder 2, St. Augustine Historical Society, n.d., pp. 3-4.

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

Government House is located on the eastern half of Parcel #196195-0000, as recorded by the St. Johns County Property Appraiser. The city's legal description is: (5) City of St Aug, Old Post Office (AKA Govt. House) & Park, OR 96/158 (Q/C). The boundary excludes the Park and any property not owned by the State of Florida.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the area of the parcel that is historically associated with the enlargement of the St. Augustine post office building by the Federal government during 1935-1937 as part of the nation's New Deal program.

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ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTOGRAPHS (two per 8 ½ x 11 sheet)

- 1 1) Government House, 48 King Street
 2) St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida
 3) William A. Triay, Photographer
 4) May and June, 2013, date of photographs
 5) 48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL, location of digital files
 6) East elevation, camera facing west
 7) 1 of 38

All information is the same for the remaining photographs, unless otherwise noted.

- 2 6) East elevation (left), north elevation (right), camera facing southwest
 7) 2 of 38
- 3 6) North elevation, camera facing south
 7) 3 of 38
- 4 6) North elevation (left) west elevation (right), camera facing southeast
 7) 4 of 38
- 5 6) West elevation, camera facing east
 7) 5 of 38
- 6 6) West elevation (left), south elevation (right), camera facing northeast
 7) 6 of 38
- 7 6) South elevation, camera facing north
 7) 7 of 38
- 8 6) South elevation (left), courtyard (right), camera facing northwest
 7) 8 of 38
- 9 6) South courtyard façade, camera facing north
 7) 9 of 38
- 10 6) Exterior door, north entrance, camera facing south
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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 11 6) Exterior door, east façade, camera facing west
 7) 11 of 38
- 12 6) Casement window, north façade, camera facing south
 7) 12 of 38
- 13 6) Main lobby, north entrance, camera facing north
 7) 13 of 38
- 14 6) Main lobby, south entrance, camera facing south
 7) 14 of 38
- 15 6) South lobby, camera facing south
 7) 15 of 38
- 16 6) Monumental stair, camera facing north
 7) 16 of 38
- 17 6) Monumental stair banister, camera facing northeast
 7) 17 of 38
- 18 6) East wing, first floor, main entrance, camera facing east
 7) 18 of 38
- 19 6) East wing, first floor, gallery, camera facing west
 7) 19 of 38
- 20 6) East wing, first floor, gallery, camera facing north
 7) 20 of 38
- 21 6) East wing, second floor, main entrance, camera facing east
 7) 21 of 38
- 22 6) East wing, second floor, entry to Room 201E, camera facing south
 7) 22 of 38
- 23 6) East wing, second floor, entry to Room 201A, camera facing west
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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 24 6) East wing, second floor, Room 201A, camera facing south
 7) 24 of 38

- 25 6) East wing, second floor, Customs House Room, camera facing south
 7) 25 of 38

- 26 6) East wing, second floor, Customs House Room, staircase leading to balcony, camera facing southeast
 7) 26 of 38

- 27 6) East wing, second floor, Customs House Room, fireplace, camera facing northwest
 7) 27 of 38

- 28 6) Second floor, Customs House Room, entry door, camera facing west
 7) 28 of 38

- 29 6) Second floor, main hallway, restroom area, camera facing south
 7) 29 of 38

- 30 6) Second floor, Room 213, camera facing southwest
 7) 30 of 38

- 31 6) Second floor, Room 214, camera facing northeast
 7) 31 of 38

- 32 3) Unknown
 4) 1910
 6) View of the 1910 St. Augustine Post Office Building
 7) 32 of 38

- 33 3) Unknown
 4) 1922
 6) View of the St. Augustine Post Office Building, 1922
 7) 33 of 38

- 34 6) View of Stucco treatment on exterior, showing "feather-edge" or tapering off of stucco against the
 coquina, camera facing west
 7) 34 of 38

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Section number Photos Page 4 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 35 3) Unknown
 4) November 1764
 6) *View of the Governor's House at St. Augustine, in E. Florida, Nov. 1764*
 7) 35 of 38

36 Figure 1. Site Plan, Government House, location on Main Plaza

37 Figure 2. Floor Plan, first floor

38 Figure 3. Floor Plan, second floor

Figure 4. Gregory House at its original location on the west side of the Apalachicola River, rear elevation, 1936

Figure 5. Gregory House after its relocation to Torreya State Park, during reassemblage by Civilian Conservation Corps, 1937 or 1938.

Figure 6. Fort Clinch during restoration by Civilian Conservation Corps, ca. 1940.

Figure 7. Fort Clinch Parade Ground during restoration by the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1937.



Figure 4. Gregory House, on original site on west side of the Apalachicola River, 1936.

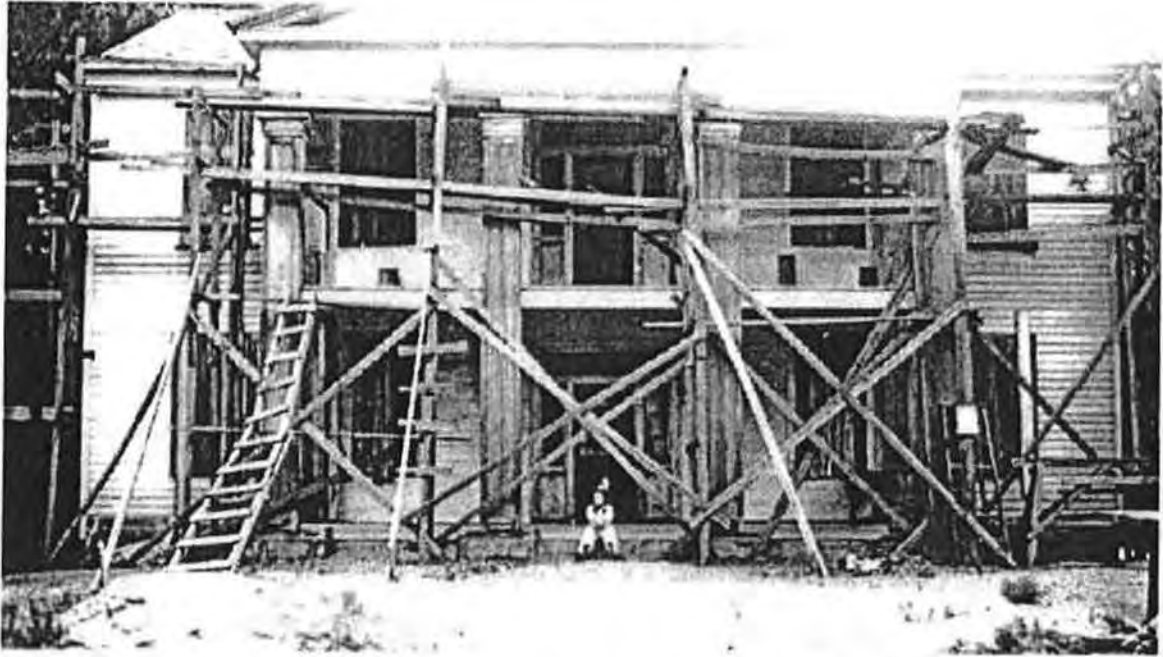


Figure 5. Gregory House after move to Torreya State Park, 1937 or 1938

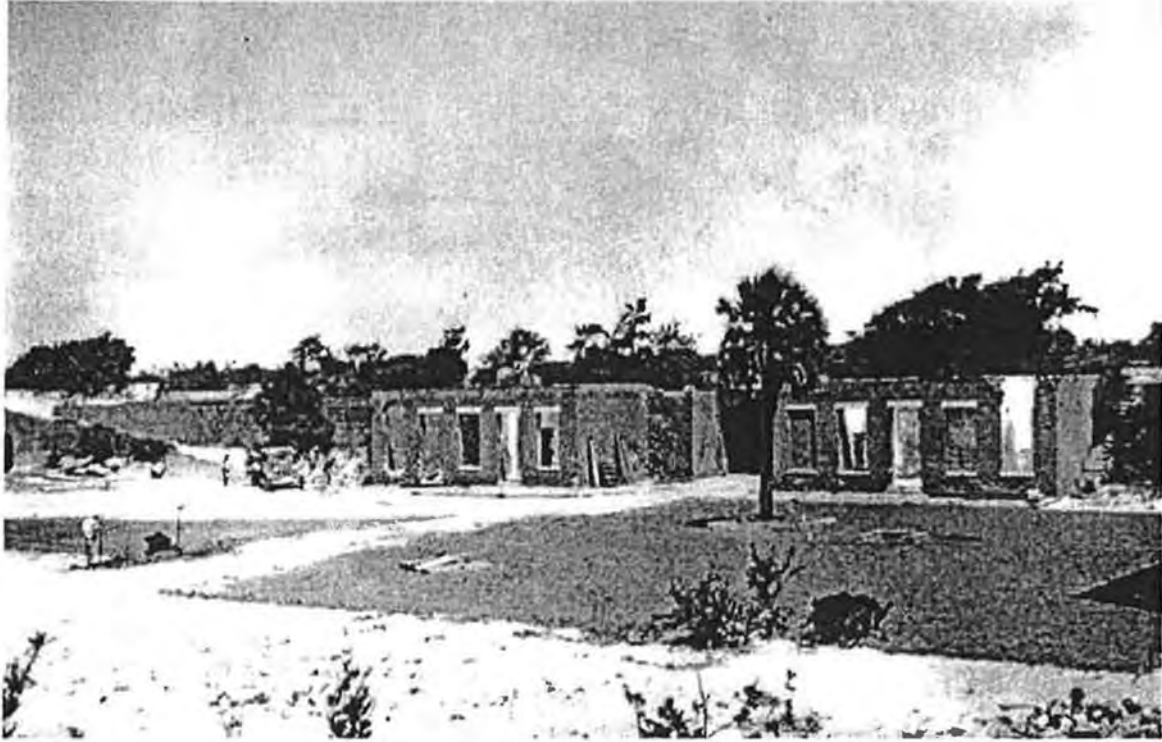


Figure 6. Fort Clinch during restoration, ca. 1937

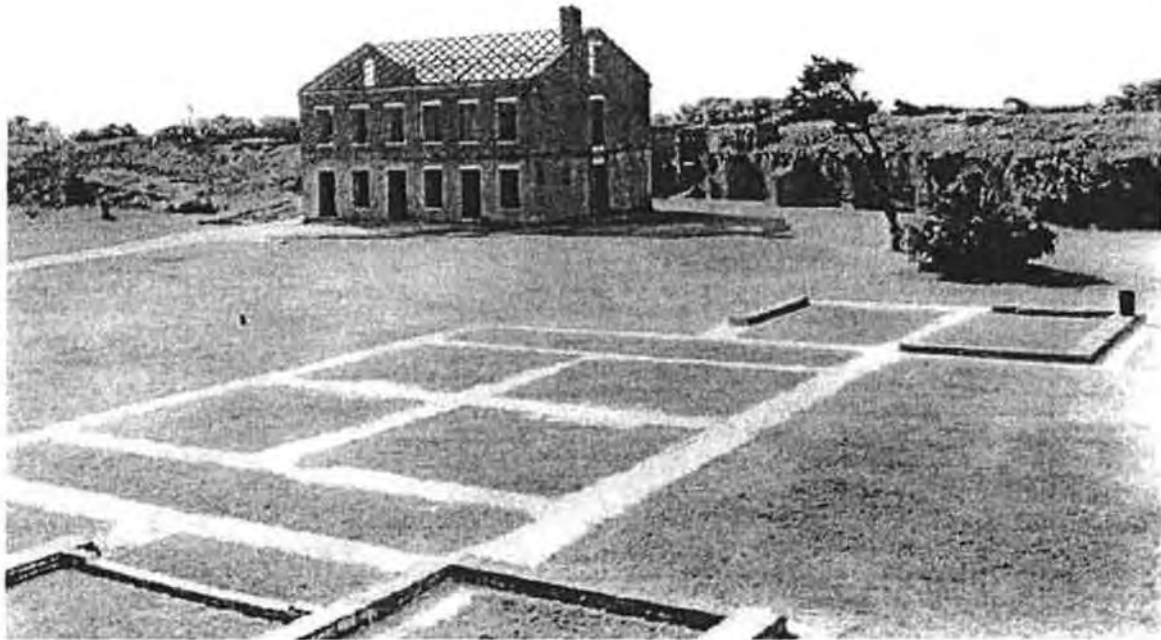
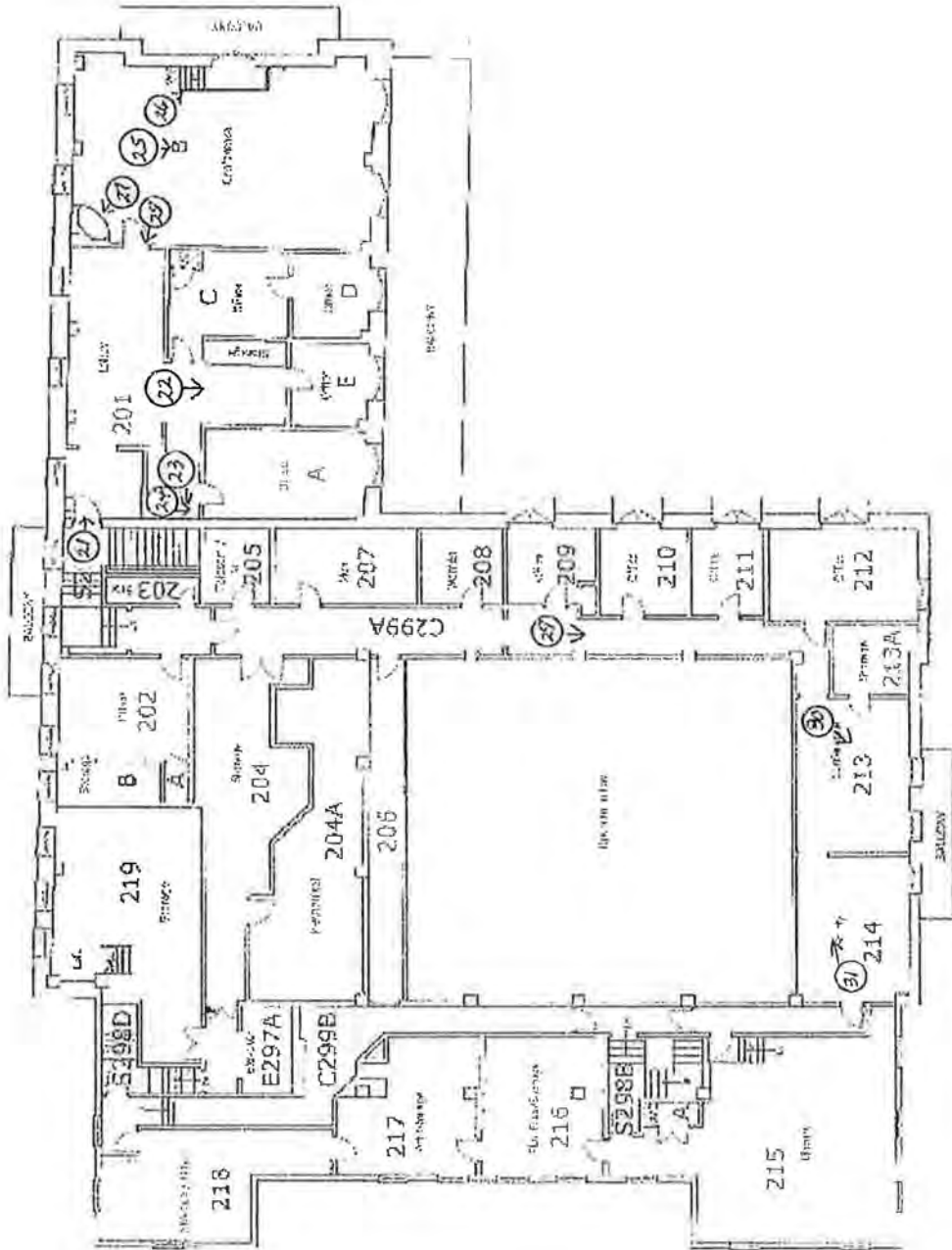
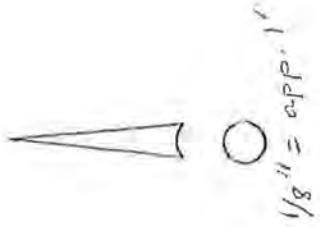


Figure 7. Fort Clinch Parade Ground during restoration, 1937.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL

Photographic Key to camera location and direction

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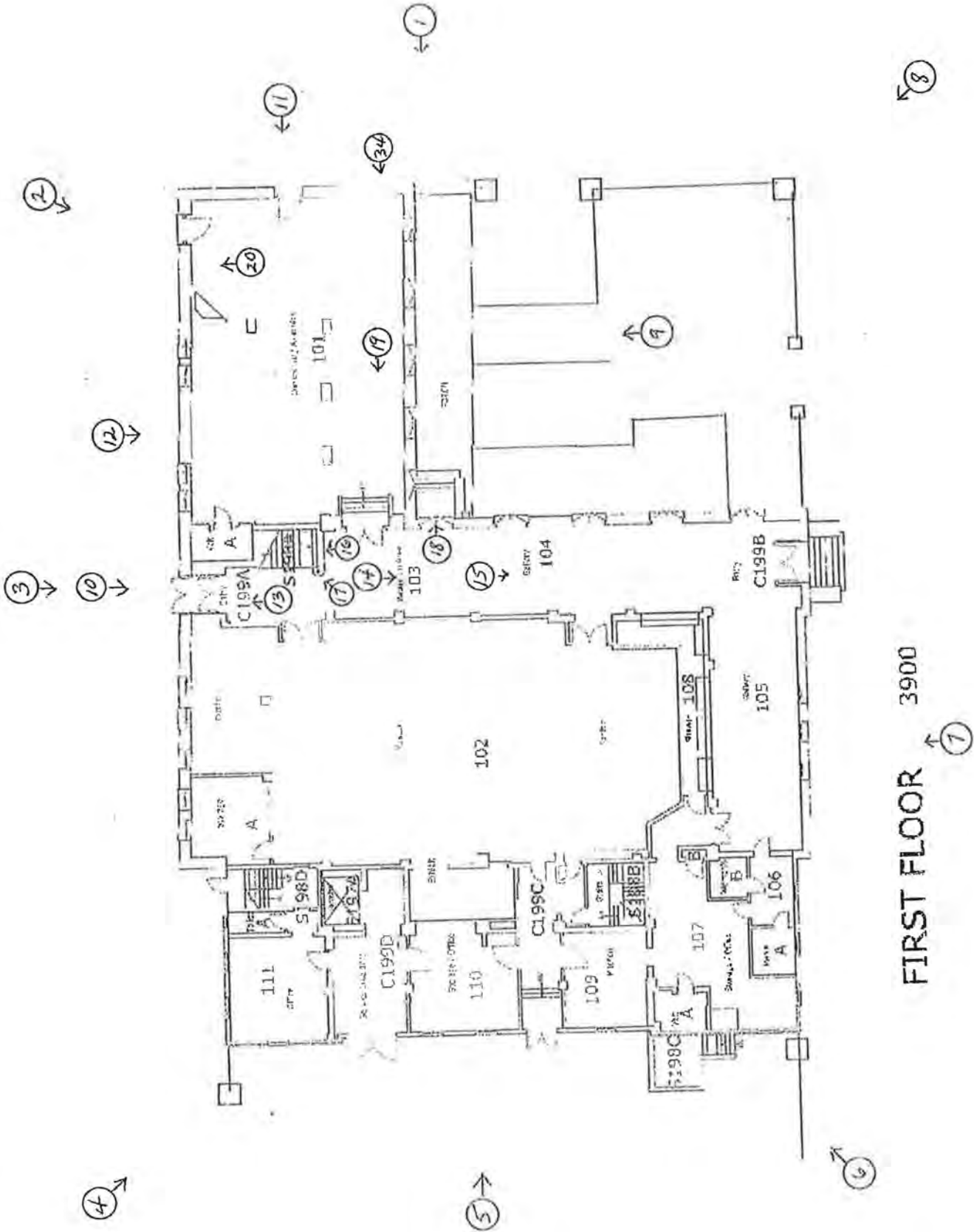
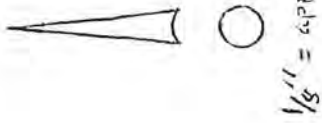


SECOND FLOOR 3900

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL

Photographic Key to camera location and direction

N



FIRST FLOOR 3900

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL




Google earth



Zone: 17 Easting: 469768 Northing: 3306910

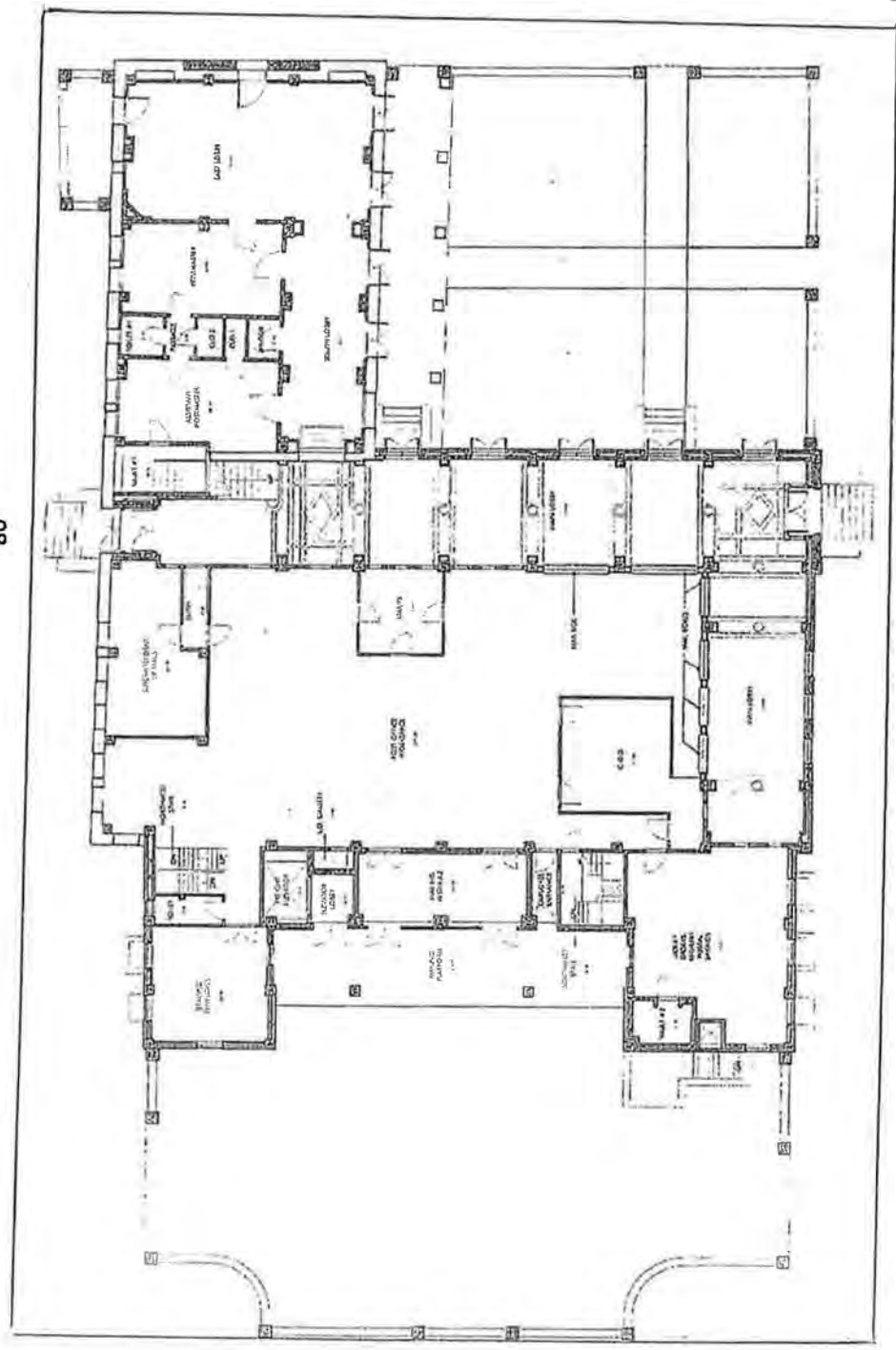


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|  WALKER 425 RIVINGTON STREET, STE 100 ANN ARBOR, MI 48106 P: 313.767.8448 F: 313.772.8448 WWW.WALKERARCH.COM ARCHITECT | CONSULTANT UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA 48 King Street, St. Augustine, Florida | PROJECT NO. 11031 | DRAWN BY KTW | DATE 31 MAY 2012 | REVISION SCHEDULE REVISION NO. DESCRIPTION | SHEET TITLE ARCHITECTURAL FLOOR PLAN - LEVEL 1 - GREELEY | SHEET NO. A101 |
| | | GOVERNMENT HOUSE HISTORIC STRUCTURE ASSESSMENT | EXISTING CONDITIONS | EAST END OF PLAZA | WEST END OF PLAZA | ST. GEORGE STREET | KING STREET |

WALL LEGEND:
 000 CONCRETE WALL (AS SHOWN)
 001 CONCRETE WALL (AS SHOWN) WITH FINISH
 002 CONCRETE WALL (AS SHOWN) WITH FINISH AND PARTITION

CATHEDRAL PLACE

80'

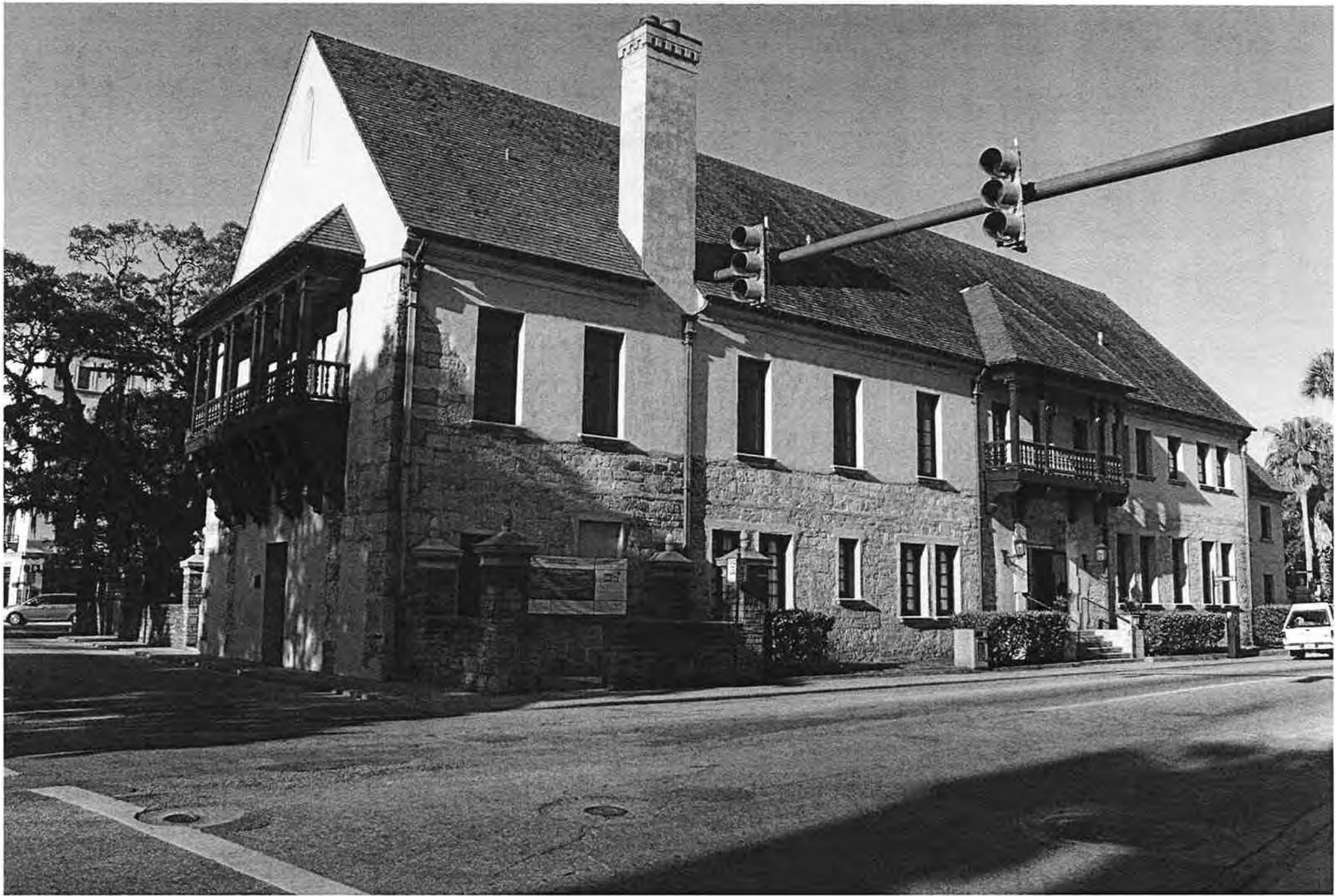


POB

KING STREET

1. SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0" (SEE OVERSIGHT DRAWING)











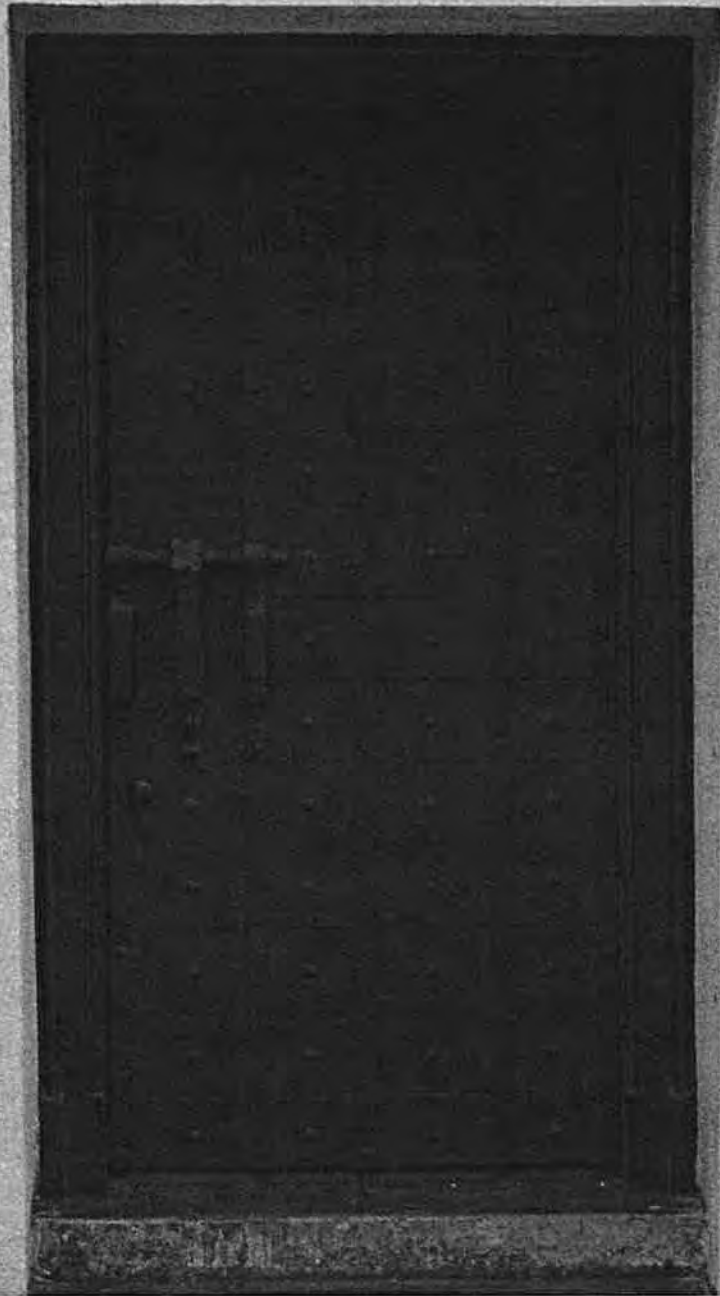
























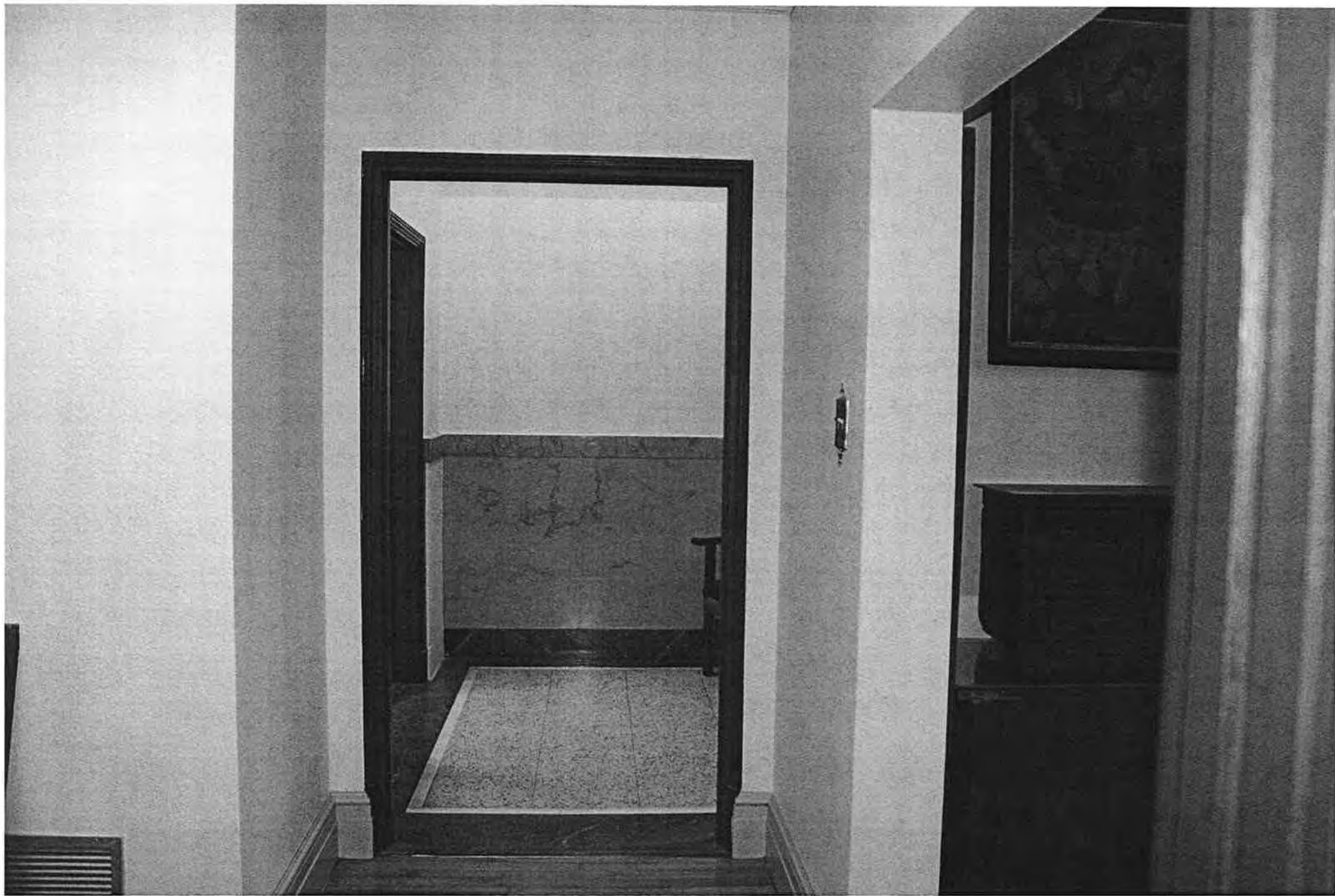














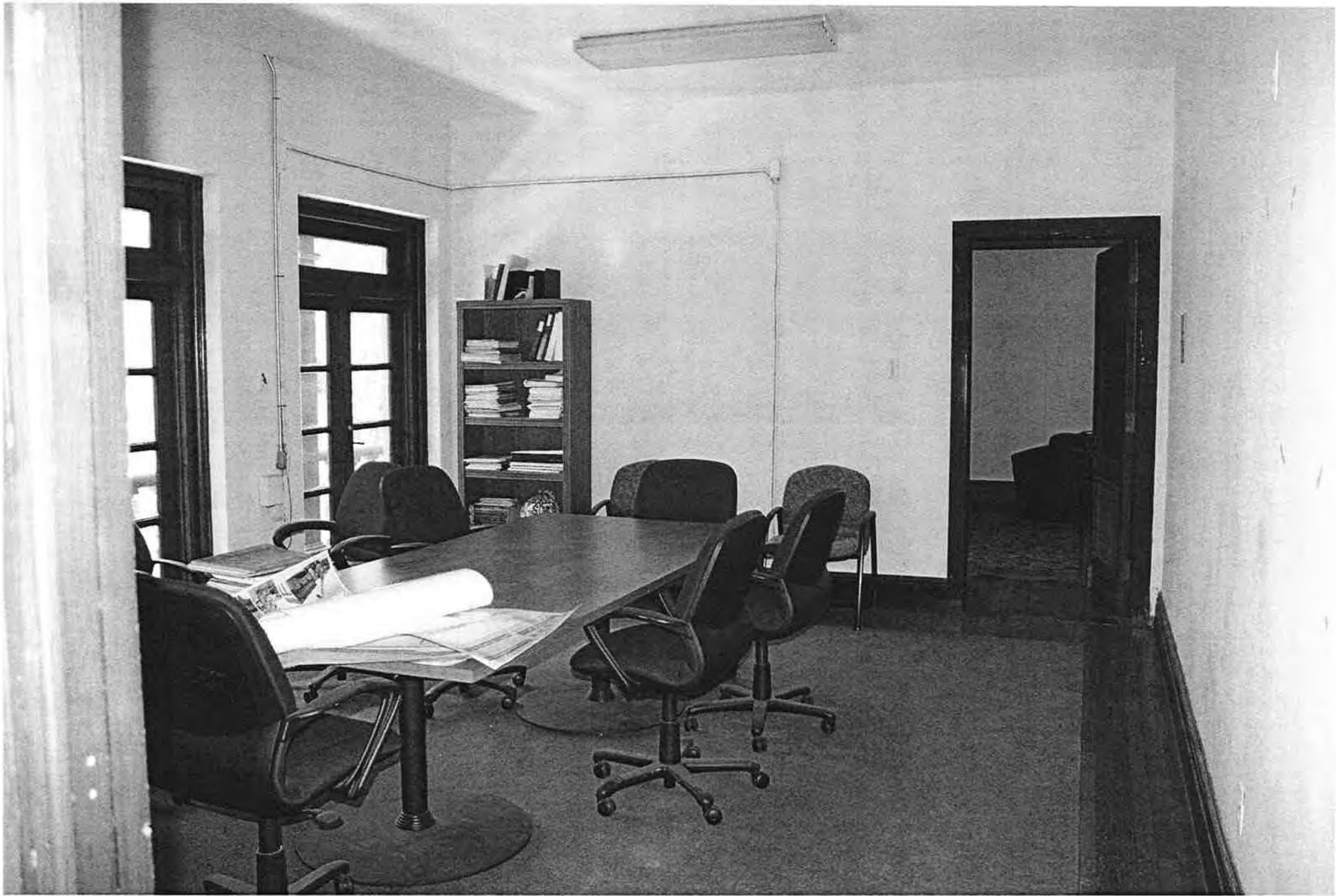


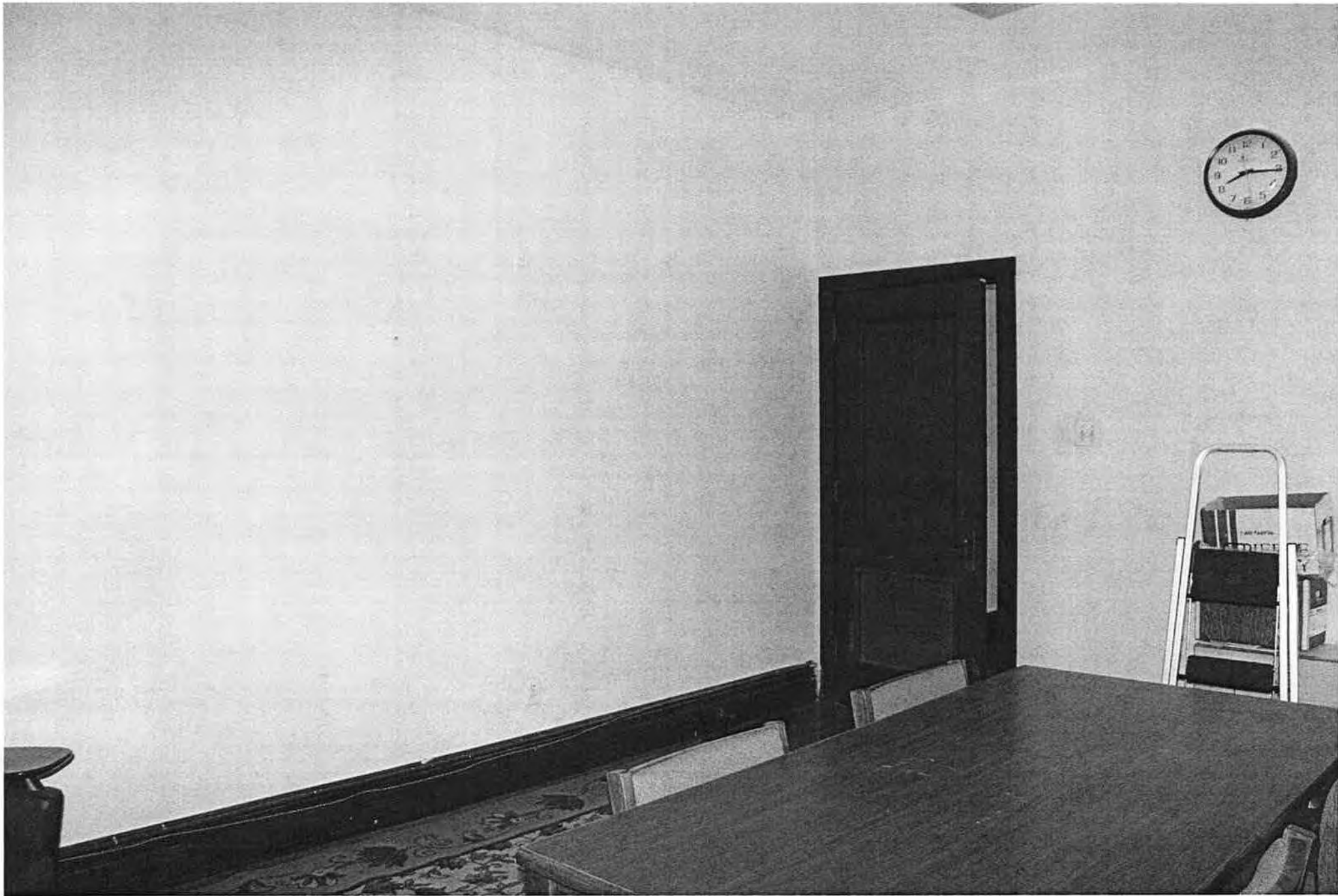










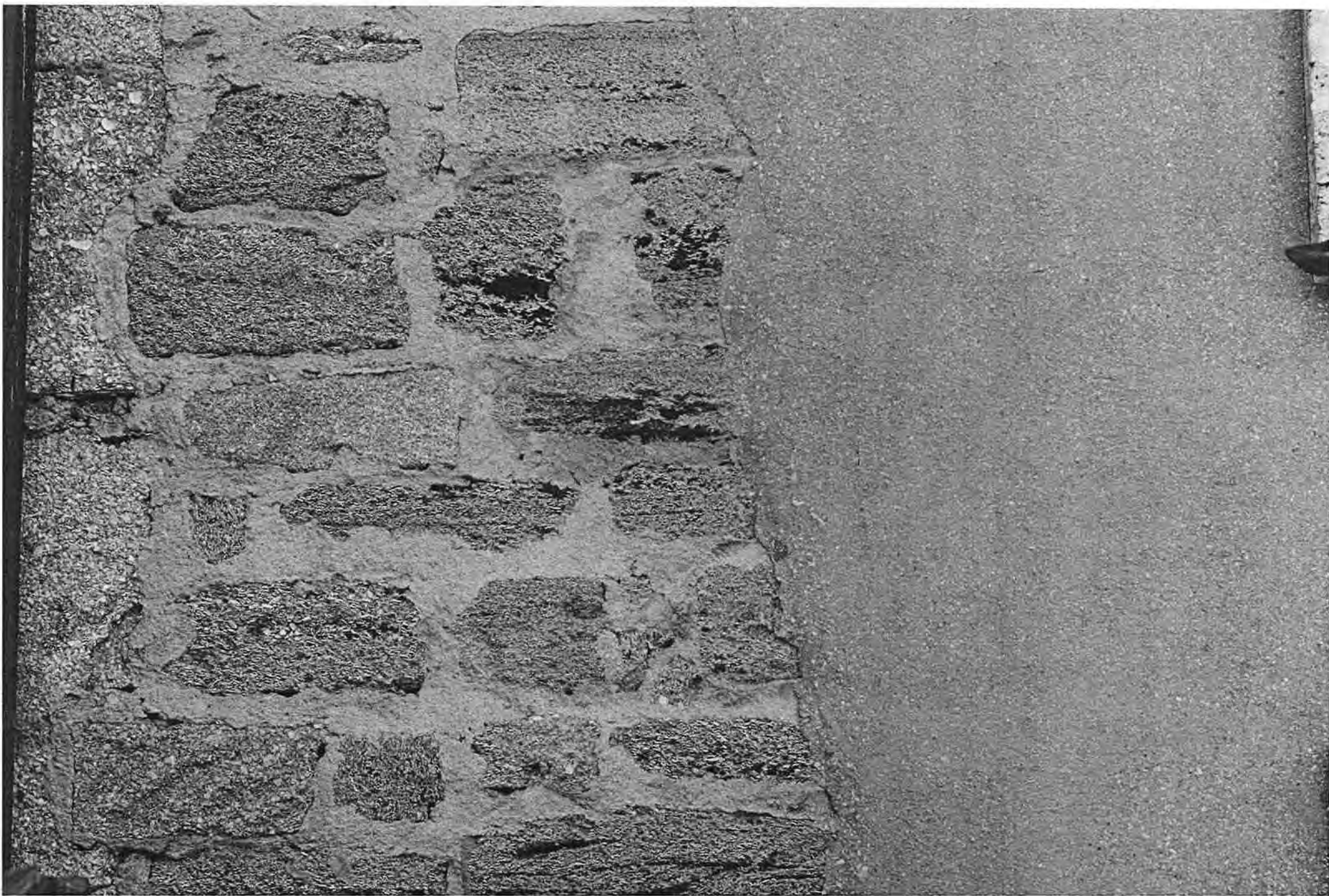




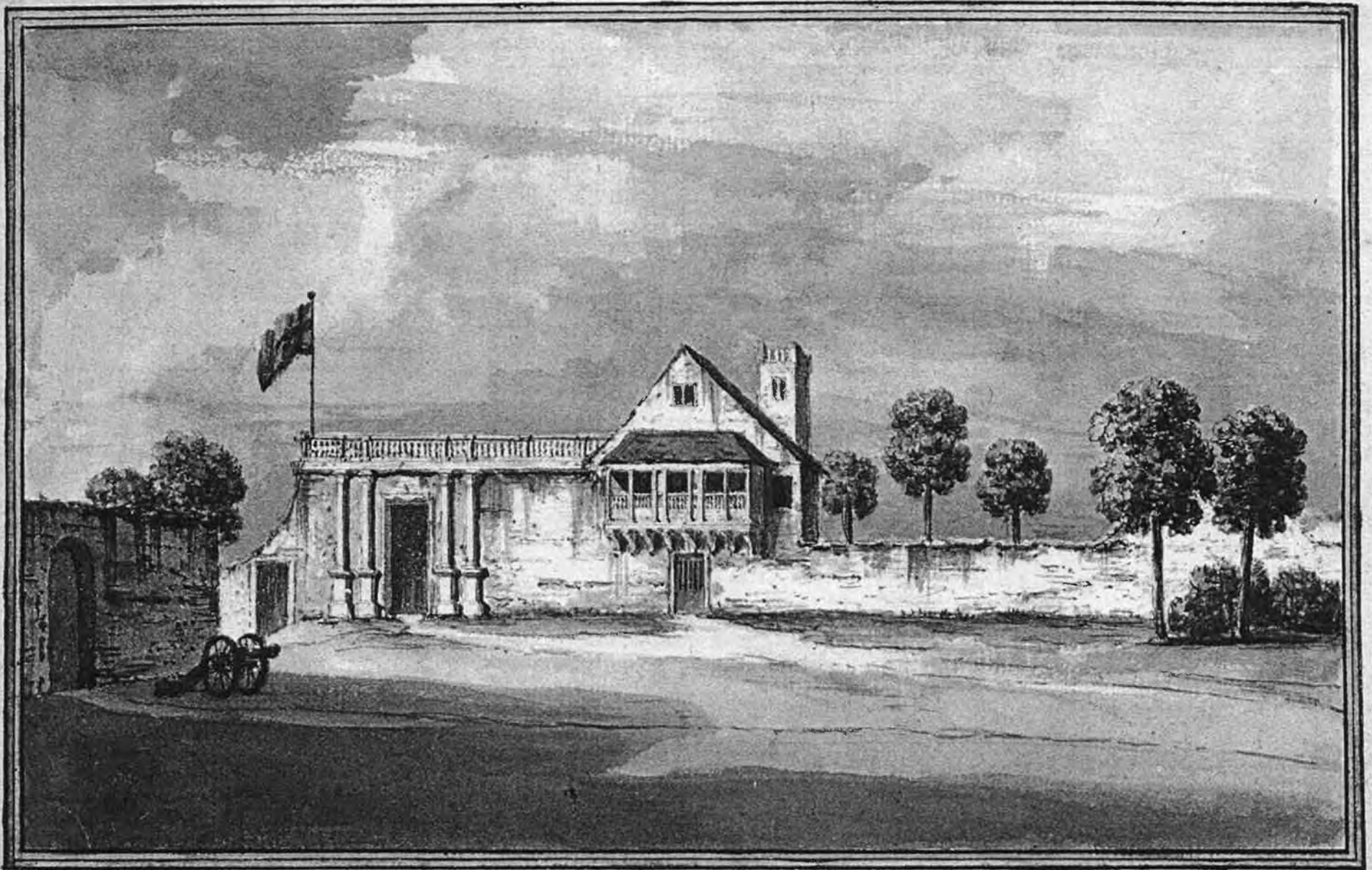
CHARLES F. HOPKINS, Postmaster
St. Augustine, Florida

*On whose initiative and through whose energy
this historical tablet became a reality
April 6-1922*





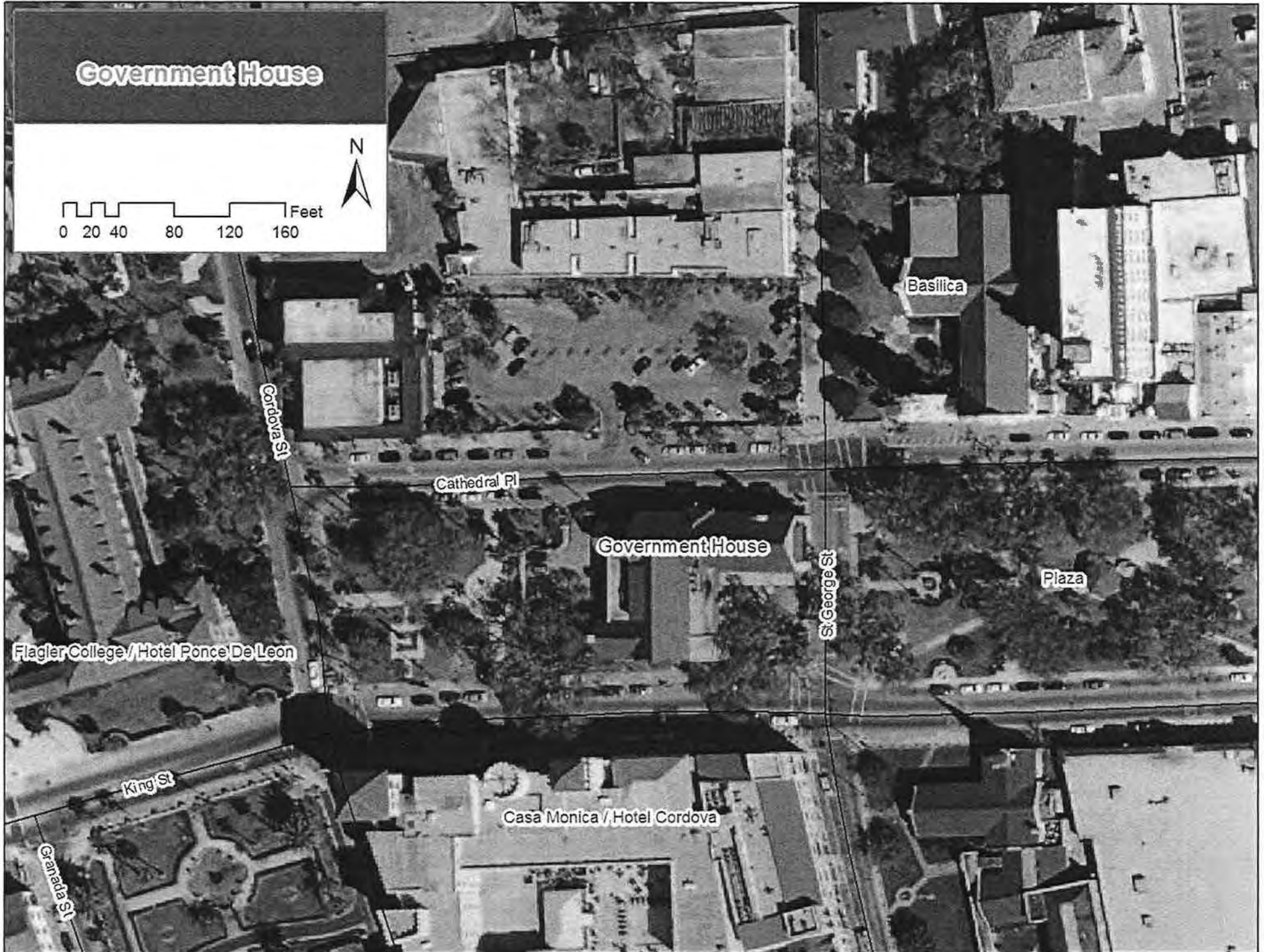
CXXII-86-2-a



VIEW of the GOVERNORS house at ST AUGUSTINE in E. FLORIDA. Nov^r 1764

Government House

0 20 40 80 120 160 Feet



Basilica

Cathedral Pl

Government House

Plaza

Flagler College / Hotel Ponce De Leon

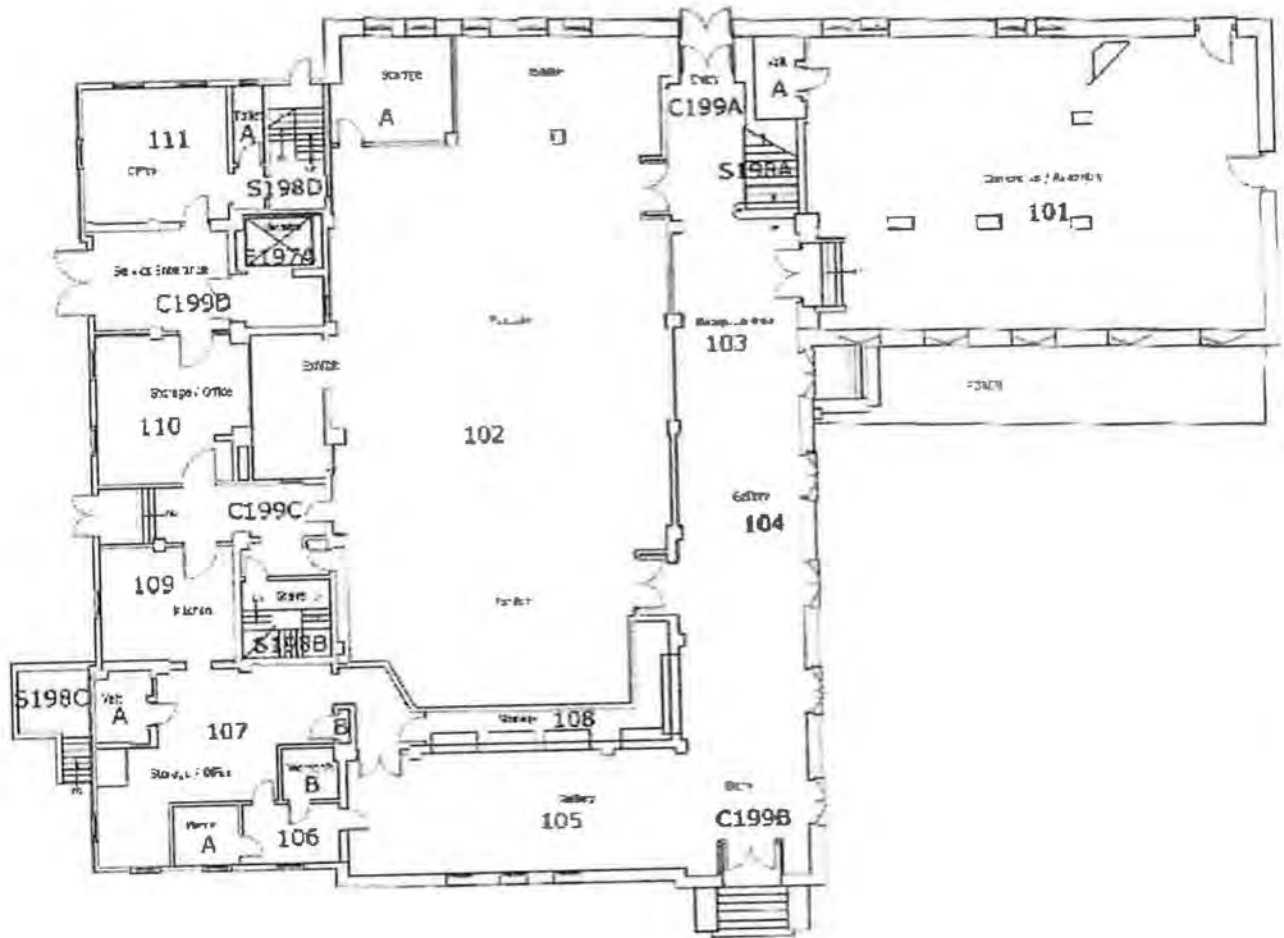
St George St

King St

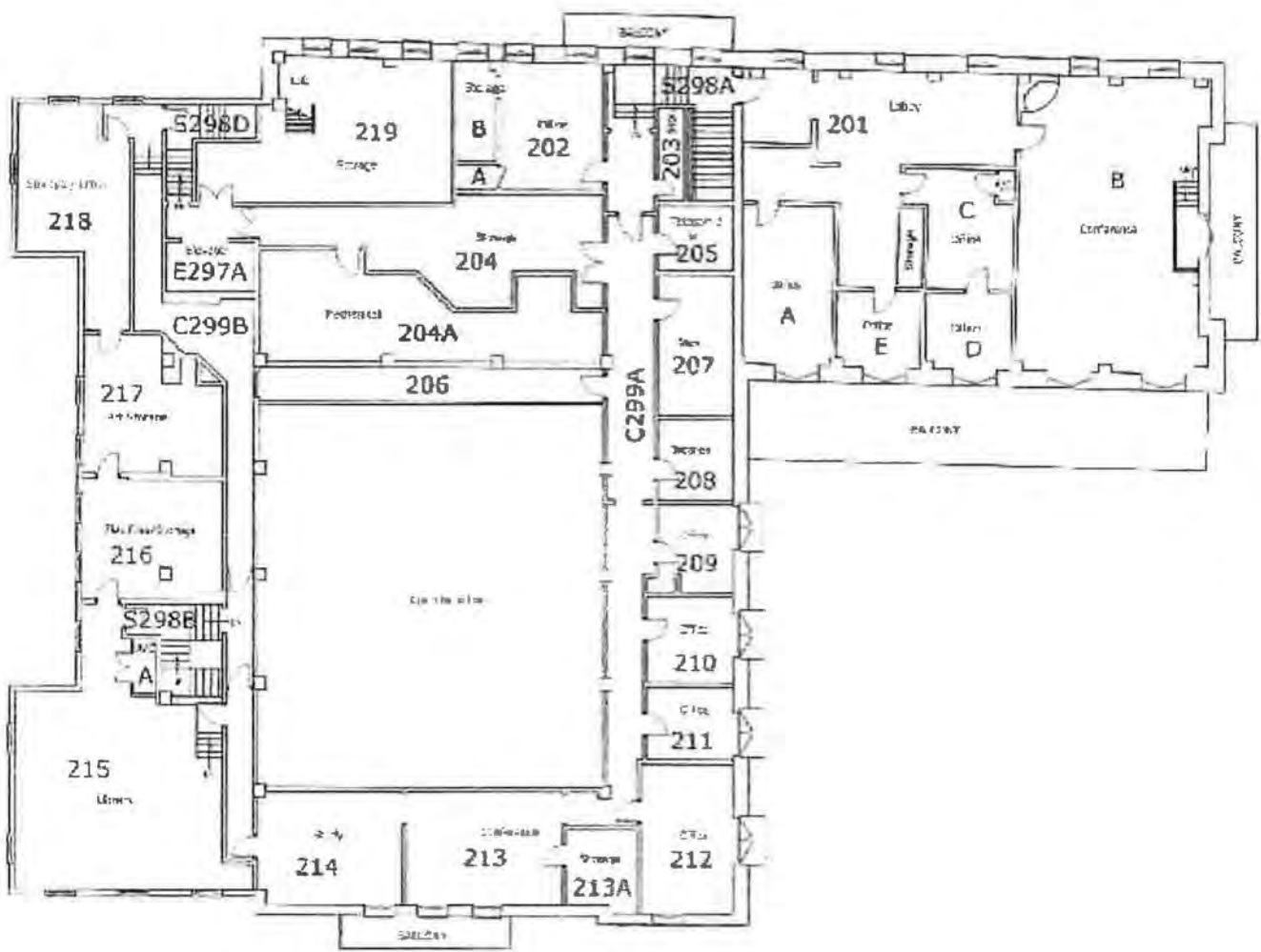
Casa Monica / Hotel Cordova

Granada St

Cordova St



FIRST FLOOR 3900



SECOND FLOOR 3900

Return comments by James Gabbert and James Jacobs of the WASO NR/NHL staff regarding the NR Nomination for Government House as originally received from the FL SHPO by MPS on August 23, 2013 and returned to the FL SHPO for correction/modification



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Government House (Florida's New Deal Resources MPS)
St. Johns County, FL

Reference Number: 13000812

Reason for Return

This nomination is being returned for substantive revision

The nomination for the Government House is under the umbrella of the Florida's New Deal Resources Multiple Property Submission, citing Criteria A and C at the local and national levels of significance. While we believe that this property, which is a contributing resource in the St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District, has individual importance and meets the registration requirements of the MPS, we do not believe that the property warrants listing at the national level of significance as presented in the nomination.

The claim of national significance lies in the fact that the work on the Government House was "the first," or "the only," or was a "unique" example of the Federal government "restoring" a building for Federal government purposes, and that the experience of this particular project had an influence in the later development of the Federal preservation program, laws, and policies.

As you are aware, claims of being the "first," and especially "only" example of something does not, in and of itself, equate with significance. In fact, being a "unique example" or "the only example" of something can be the basis for an argument *against* significance. And that is the case here. The nomination takes great pains to point out that this was the first time the Treasury Department restored (in the terminology of the day) a historic building for use as a Federal building, and that for many years it was the only such example.

Government House

The restoration of this building was not a result of, nor did it result in, a change of official Federal policy. It was a reaction to the strong feedback provided by local constituents. Its singularity is an interesting footnote to and aggressive Federal construction campaign. Federal buildings were considered plums to local communities, and the fact that the local community of St. Augustine was able to exert enough pressure on the Federal agency charged with constructing a new facility to veer away from its standardized plans speaks to the importance of this project on a local level, not a national level.

The nomination attempts to tie the construction of this building with events far down the road, including the passage of the national Historic Preservation Act and the creation of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. The connection is tenuous at best. There is no direct evidence that the Treasury Department's experience with the Government House helped influence later decisions (the reference to activities in St. Augustine made in the nomination could apply to nearly anything, but more likely the general preservation efforts {page 8-19, footnote 40}).

The use of Criterion C with Conservation as the area of significance is unclear. That use would entail a discussion of the "methods of construction" as it applies to the conservation of the building. There is little discussion of the actual methods used, other than stabilization of the outer walls, and the "feathering" of stucco to tie the new construction to the existing cochina. There is no discussion of how or why this is significant on any level. If, however, the point is to look at the importance of this restoration in national building conservation efforts, then Criterion A would be the appropriate choice. And, in that case, there must be a *direct* association between the ideas and practice of conservation in this building and future policies and practices. The nomination does not make this direct association.

The nomination presents an interesting and well-written overview of the Treasury Department's building program, and the birth of Federal preservation policy. It does not, however, demonstrate that the restoration of this building had a significant impact on either program. It does demonstrate that it was, at the time the work was done, an outlier in Federal construction. It does demonstrate that the reconstruction of the Government House was a reaction to local pressure, and that when so pressured, Federal agencies may accede to context-sensitive design. But it does not demonstrate that a change in Federal policy or practice can be traced to decisions and practices made for this building.

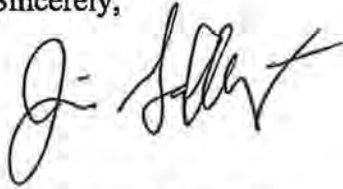
We believe that this is an individually eligible building in Social History at the local and perhaps state level. It meets the requirements of the Florida's New Deal Resources MPS at the local or state level. It has local significance under Criterion A in the area of Conservation as it relates to the City's efforts to maintain, preserve, and perpetuate its colonial past.

Government House

If you wish to resubmit the nomination with significance in Conservation at the local level, please remove the references to national importance and provide additional information on the preservation activities in St. Augustine in the 1930s. If you wish to nominate it at the state level, please provide additional information on preservation/conservation activities in Florida during the same period.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at <James_Gabbert@nps.gov>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Gabbert", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Gabbert, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
September 30, 2013



Jacobs, James <james_jacobs@nps.gov>

Thanks!

1 message

Jacobs, James <james_jacobs@nps.gov>

Fri, Nov 1, 2013 at 7:54 AM

To: "Mattick, Barbara" <Barbara.Mattick@dos.myflorida.com>

Hi Barbara,

It was great to have a chance to speak with you and your colleagues yesterday about St. Augustine and the NHL Program - I feel that we've embarked on a dialogue that will have positive outcomes. I (and we) appreciate your continued support with the NR and NHL decisions about the individual significance of Government House and we'll keep you informed of any developments and make sure you have copies of our responses to letters originating in congressional offices. If someone would provide us a copy (either hard copy or a scan) of that 1966 report, it would be much appreciated as it is mentioned in the first letter we received and we would like to respond accordingly.

It's hard to believe it's November already, but here we are! Have a nice weekend!

Cheers,
Jamie

—
James A. Jacobs, Ph.D.
Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
National Historic Landmarks Program
202 354 2184
202 371 6473 (fax)
James_Jacobs@nps.gov

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Government House

other names/site number U.S. Post Office, U.S. Post Office and Custom House/SJ1027

2. Location

street & number 48 King Street n/a not for publication

city or town St. Augustine n/a vicinity

state Florida code FL county St. Johns code 109 zip code 32084

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Barbara C. Mattick/DSHPO 8/21/2013
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

| I hereby certify that the property is: | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register. | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain) _____ | _____ | _____ |

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | 0 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 0 | total |

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Florida's New Deal Resources

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco
walls Stucco
Stone: Coquina
roof Terra Cotta: flat tile
other Metal: Cast Iron ornament
Cast Stucco ornament

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture _____

Conservation _____

Period of Significance

1935-1937 _____

Significant Dates

1935-1937 _____

Significant Person

n/a _____

Cultural Affiliation

n/a _____

Architect/Builder

Greeley, Mellen Clark, Architect _____

Barnes, James I., Firm of, Contractor _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

University of Florida, Gainesville _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | 1 7 | 4 6 9 7 6 8 | 3 3 0 6 9 1 0 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 3 | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 4 | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Antoinette J. Lee, Consulting Historian & Barbara E. Mattick, Deputy SHPO for Survey & Registration

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date August 2013

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name State of Florida, Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, c/o Division of State Lands

street & number Carr Building, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard telephone 850-245-2555

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-3000

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

Government House is located at 48 King Street in St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida. Constructed 1935-1937 for post office, customs collection, and other Federal government functions, the building is an early example of a building "restoration" in the mid-1930s when there were few models, examples, or guidance on how to restore a historic building. The building is three stories in height and has a gable roof covered by flat terra cotta tile. The east wing contains three old coquina walls; the other walls are constructed of coquina and stucco. Each street façade has a balcony. The east wing includes a walled patio. Main entrances are on the north and south facades and lead into the main post office lobby, now an exhibition lobby.¹ The building contains 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors, with an additional 2,415 square feet in the basement. The building was designed to use as much of the surviving historic fabric as possible and conform to its appearance as illustrated in a 1764 watercolor painting.

SETTING

The seat of government of St. Johns County, St. Augustine is located approximately 45 miles south of Jacksonville. The population of the city is 13,051 (2011). King Street serves as the main east-west corridor into the city, and U.S. Highway 1 is the primary thoroughfare along the western side of the city. The building is located on the block bounded by King Street, Cordova Street, Cathedral Place, and St. George Street and faces the original Spanish Plaza to the east. It forms an integral part of the complex of colonial, territorial, and late 19th century buildings that surround the plaza.

The Spanish Plaza is considered the center of historic St. Augustine and includes the public market (also referred to as the slave market), the Spanish Constitution Monument, the Confederate War Memorial, a memorial listing servicemen from the city who served in the 20th century wars, four artillery pieces dating from the Mexican War and Civil War periods, the gazebo, and two colonial-era wells that have been excavated by archeologists.

To the west of Government House is the west garden area, which is historically connected to the building as part of the Federal government's property, but is not included in this nomination because it is not related to the significance of Government House in the New Deal era or its architectural significance. The west garden area contains an important granite obelisk monument, the William Wing Loring (1818-1886) Monument, and a brass plaque to the north of the monument that expands on Loring's role as an army officer who fought under three

¹ The Government House description is based on the material provided in *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31, 2012. Susan Tate, AIA, Preservation Architect, was responsible for the historical narrative in the Historic Structure Report.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

flags--the United States, the Confederacy, and Egypt. After his death in New York City, Loring was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery in Jacksonville, Florida. In 1920, the U.S. Treasury Department, which was responsible for the administration of the St. Augustine post office building and adjoining Federal government land, provided the site for the Loring monument to the Anna Dummett Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy. Loring's remains were removed from the Evergreen Cemetery and re-interred at the monument site. The State Museum, University of Florida, provided the brass plaque.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION
EXTERIOR**

The plan of Government House forms an irregular "L" on the eastern boundary of the property. The east, north, and south façades are the major public façades, with the west façade used as a delivery area and service area. The building is constructed of masonry over a steel frame structure. The east façade makes the strongest physical statement of historical reference because it most closely resembles a 1764 water color painting of the building (Photo 35).

The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and the corners. Here the old coquina in an irregular course is exposed. The building's architect, Mellen Clark Greeley, retained three of the old walls: the north wall (1834), the east wall (1713, partly reconstructed in 1786), and most of the south wall (1713).

All of the openings in the walls date to the 1930s; the former openings having been filled with masonry as required. The openings consist of wood casement windows (Photo 12) and doors with stone sills. Solid wood batten doors with iron straps and exposed hammered bolt heads are used in the older section and plate glass doors are used in the new portion of the main lobby.

A Spanish-style wood balcony is located over the main entrance on the north wall and a similar balcony on the east wall and south wall. A four-foot wall of coquina encloses a small court on the north and a similar wall encloses a large patio on the southeast corner.

East Façade: The east wall makes the strongest physical statement of historical reference, influenced by a 1764 watercolor drawing of the former government house. The east wing contains three old coquina walls. The east façade of the wing is dominated by the ceremonial balcony with heavy wood brackets, posts, and balustrade, features that recall but do not replicate the 18th century representation. The east balcony is reflected in the balconies above the north and the south entrances, although each is differentiated by details specific to each location (Photos 1 & 2).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

The 1935 design of the east façade provides for exposed coquina at the vertical quoins of the former corner projections or "towers" and at the former window openings, but considerable infill of stucco on brick was incorporated between the projecting ends, in window openings, and to extend the gable peak. The south wall of the east section, punctuated by French doors on both levels, was built 58 feet, 9 inches to the Main Lobby at the point of intersection with the early cross wall.

Although the wing south wall is composed primarily of five sets of French doors or casements on both levels, some early coquina masonry may have been incorporated (primarily at the east corner) and reconstructed between the ground level openings to the southeast courtyard.

North Façade: The north entrance is the central focal point of the north façade and is defined by a projection of the main roof over the upper balcony. The north façade extends 115 feet, 4 inches up to the recessed and lower height northwest ell, which continues to 145 feet, 2 inches in overall dimension. Up to the stepped back ell, the north façade is flat with a fenestration of varied heights and spacing and a dominant chimney to the northeast (Photos 3 & 4).

The 1935 casement windows remain preserved (Photo 12). The north façade features random exposed coquina, combined with stucco over brick infill over a steel frame. The north wall, dating from the ca. 1833 Mills/Wallen extension, was removed above the second floor line and new openings were cut according to the 1935 plan so that fragments of the previous wall, alongside reconstructed coquina masonry, are exposed.

West Façade: Formerly the west façade served as the loading dock for the post office. This loading dock was later enclosed during the tenure of the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board (1966-1997) and the open gate on the south wall of the service court was walled between the driveway piers. A parking area is adjacent to the loading dock (Photos 5 & 6).

South Façade: The classical south entrance is headed by a flat parapet that adjoins the projecting south gable that encompasses an upper level balcony. The southwest ell is recessed from the south façade and terminates in the dominant chimney. The south entrance façade extends 58 feet, 11 inches westward to the recessed ell which extends 29 feet, 10 inches to a total dimension of 88 feet, 9 inches from the east courtyard wall. The southwest ell and northwest ell enclose the service area and loading dock that served the post office (Photos 7, 8, & 9).

The south elevation is protected by the two-story gallery or porch. The gallery, along with large trees conserved during the project, provides shading from the south sun. The courtyard is defined by coquina masonry garden walls that intersect with the east and south elevations of the building.

Coquina is a native shellstone found in the coastal region of Florida and Cuba and is considered an important traditional building material in St. Augustine. It is stone formed from coquina shells in large deposits that

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 4 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

become cemented by calcium carbonate over long periods of time (over 100,000 years). Over the different locations in which it is found, the stone varies in texture and hardness. The most prized variety is from the Anastasia formation found near St. Augustine. The American Indians in the St. Augustine area were familiar with the stone and it became known and used by the European settlers. In the late 17th century, coquina was used in the construction of the Castillo de San Marcos. It was easy to quarry and absorbed cannon shot damage well. Its use was largely discontinued after the colonial period as it was difficult and expensive to acquire, and is a very limited natural resource. Beyond St. Augustine, only a few Florida cities contain New Deal public buildings executed with coquina, including the Bunnell Civic Center, the Daytona Beach Bandshell, the Tarragona Tower and Arch, Holly Hill Municipal Building, and the New Smyrna Beach City Hall.

INTERIOR

The building analysis identifies a total of 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors: 11,127 square feet on the first floor and 10,728 square feet on the second floor. The basement provides an additional 2,415 square feet.

The main lobby forms the north-south spine of the building and was the hub of public activity for the post office. From the north entrance, the west wall gave access to the inquiry window and an obscure glass door leading to the Superintendent of Mails. The six bays, separated by pilasters and defined by floor and ceiling patterns, included spaces for mail drops, parcel post windows, stamp counters, and general delivery counters. On the west side of the mail lobby are bays for postal boxes, a C.O.D. window, and windows for money order, registry, and postal savings services (Photos 13, 14, & 15).

The main lobby walls are finished in marble wainscot with brass grilles for the heating system. Original openings for postal windows and boxes remain, but the glass grilles and boxes, as well as the four ornamental lobby tables, have been removed. Original lanterns and door hardware are extant.

The interior doorways at the north and south entrances emphasize the significance of the lobby space with lunettes or tympanums over the doors, with a relief panel at the north, and spokes and glazing at the south. The entrance to the east section was also emphasized with a sculptural relief in the lunette over the doorway.

The east section was designed to incorporate offices for the Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster, which opened from the lobbies along the east and south. The offices were connected by a passage with closet and toilet facilities. The east section east and south lobby floor is terrazzo with metal strips and marble borders, in a modular pattern that conforms with ceiling modules of exposed decorative wood beams at the south and plaster vaults at the east. Marble wainscoting and antiqued heavy wood doors form entrances to the east lobby and to the postmaster's office. The two offices have smooth plaster ceilings with pendant translucent luminaries (Photos 18, 19, & 20).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 5 GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

To the west of the main lobby, behind the postal windows, is the two-story post office work space. Iron grille work with shield details along the lobby ceiling line offer an opportunity for ventilation. The work space is large and open to the second level. Immediately to the west of the north entrance was the office of the Superintendent of Mails, with access from the Main Lobby and from the workspace through a caged vestibule. The hardwood flooring, the observation platforms, and viewing slots to provide security for the mail operations extend around the upper level of the work space with steel access ladders that remain in place.

The main lobby provides access to the second floor by a monumental masonry stairway leading to an upper lobby and foyer corridor to the east suite of offices, originally designated for the customs collection functions (Photos 16 & 17). From the foyer, a corridor opens an *en suite* office space leading to a grand "Custom Office" at the end of the east section. The office features a platform with steps to reach the upper balcony looking east over the Plaza, a corner fireplace, windows to the north, and two sets of French doors opening to the south gallery (Photos 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27).

The remainder of the upper floor included four offices at the east and south, two toilets, and a custodial closet, accessed by a corridor from the main stair and short upper flight of stairs (Photos 28, 29, 30, & 31).

The 1930s decorative hardware remains throughout the building's exterior and interior. The features include polished bronze door levers on the courtyard wall of the main lobby, bronze thumb latches, bronze thresholds, radiator grilles, and bronze insect screens. The main stair case that connects the postal functions on the first floor with the customs collection functions on the second floor features a turned wooden newel post, decorative iron balusters, and marble trim (Photos 10 & 11).

The architect of the building, Mellen C. Greeley, described the decorative features in early 1936:

The door at the north entrance and the doors to the "Historical Room" are replicas of the door from the court yard to the Treasury in old Fort Marion, another historic building in the City. These doors are fitted with copies of the original hand wrought iron hardware. The ornamental stone doorway at the main entrance on King Street is an architectural adaptation of the doorway from the Court yard to the Chapel in Fort Marion with certain modifications, but with an attempt to reproduce the art of the period during which both of these original buildings were erected. The roof covering is of burned clay single tiles, in color ranging from black or purple to red, such as were used on similarly steep pitched roofs in northern Spain.²

² Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida, Being Erected by Procurement Division of the Treasury Department, of the United States of America, January 27, 1936," document attached to letter from Mellen C. Greeley to F. Larkin, January 28,

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DESCRIPTION

Today, the building retains a high level of integrity dating to the 1935 design. The post office lobby, the most important interior room, retains much of the decorative details and feel of a post office lobby. The most important exterior walls—the north, east, and south—are unchanged from their mid-1930s appearance. The immediate surroundings are the same as they were when the 1930s work was completed.

According to the recently completed (2012) historic structure report on Government House, the following character-defining features of the building remain intact: (1) building form and site, (2) hardware and wood trim, (3) postal lobby and monumental stair, (4) customs office and supporting spaces, and (5) east section, ground level.³ All of these features are intact and in good condition.

ALTERATIONS

After the 1966 decommissioning of the post office functions, the original east section spaces and partition walls were demolished in 1969, retaining the encased steel columns and ceilings. The interior of the main floor east section thereafter consisted of a single space.

Currently, renovations are being undertaken to the existing restrooms, catering kitchen, storage, and museum gallery along with upgrades to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The majority of this work affects the west half of the first floor, an area that was historically as non-public, including some areas that are not original to the 1930s era building. Some elements of the original building will be restored through this project, including exposing and repairing original teller windows with decorative metal grills. In July 2012, the historic preservation architect of the Florida Division of Historic Resources issued an approval of the Historic Structures Report and 100% Construction Documents for the rehabilitation work currently underway.

1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD, p. 6.

³ *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31st, 2012, p. 4-12.

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
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SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

Government House is nominated to the National Register for **local significance** under **Criterion A** in the area of **Social History**, and for **national significance** under **Criterion A** and **Criterion C** in the areas of **Conservation** and **Architecture**. The building is significant for its association with the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA), two of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal agencies. Combating unemployment and assisting communities with improving their public buildings and infrastructure, the New Deal programs represented the growing importance of government at the local, state, and Federal levels during the Great Depression. The building was designed for post office, customs collection, and other Federal government functions and was designed as a historic building "restoration." The building is nationally significant for its role as the first known effort to restore a historic building while providing accommodations for governmental functions by the Supervising Architect's Office within the U.S. Department of the Treasury, which supervised the design and construction of thousands of Federal government buildings from the early 1850s to 1939. The "restoration" of Government House in the 1935 design does not conform to today's standards for a "restoration" under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. However, it conformed to the model set by the "restoration" of Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s and early 1930s and constitutes an important stepping stone toward the eventual development of national standards for the treatment of historic buildings. Government House retains integrity as a postal facility.

Government House is nominated under "Florida's New Deal Resources Multiple Property Submission," (MPS) under the historic associated context "New Deal in Florida, 1933-1943," and the F.1 property type, "Buildings."

In the Multiple Property Submission for Florida's New Deal Resources, in Section E, pages 43-44, the following paragraphs substantiate the historical and architectural significance of Government House:

Completed in 1935 [1937], St. Augustine's post office linked old with new and inspired the Ancient City's later preservation movement. The Federal project rebuilt and enlarged one of the city's prominent colonial buildings—the Governor's House at the west end of the Plaza. Built in 1706, the building had been renovated, enlarged, and rebuilt over time, including in 1833 when the Department of Treasury's architect Robert Mills had designed a post office and Federal building at the site. During the New Deal, Jacksonville architect Mellen Greeley prepared the architectural renderings for the rebuilding of the new structure, adapting a historic form for use as a post office, but significantly enlarging the original building. Still, the overall form, massing, style, and materials associated the new building with St. Augustine's colonial past and prolific use of coquina and stucco. Funding for the project came directly from the Treasury Department, PWA, and WPA.

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Inspired by the rebuilding of the Governor's House and preservation activities at Williamsburg, Virginia, St. Augustine's residents and politicians formed the city's nascent historic preservation movement. They included Mayor Walter B. Fraser of St. Augustine and members of the St. Augustine Historical Society. Developing an association with the Carnegie Institution, the City and Institution formed a National Committee for the Preservation and Restoration of Historic St. Augustine. Verne E. Chatelain, chief historian of NPS and a staff member of the Institution, made a series of recommendations that included restoration of the Oldest House, making it into a respectable museum, razing or moving modern buildings, and redirecting traffic patterns. Chatelain was appointed director of the restoration program, which was financed by the Carnegie Institution and local sources. World War II curtailed the nascent effort that had been spawned, in part, by the New Deal rebuilding of Government House.

HISTORICAL ROOTS

St. Augustine was established in 1565 as a municipality and church headquarters. It served as a base for Catholic priests to set up a chain of missions that stretched from present-day Tallahassee, Florida, to upper Georgia's coastal regions. The town plan for St. Augustine was laid out according to the Laws of the Indies, in which Spain specified an urban template consisting of a rectangular plaza with lots for the "government palace" and other official functions.

Government House is located on the same site as the succession of Governor's "palaces" or houses that were used as residences and administrative offices. The third Governor's house was constructed in 1713 of coquina walls. In 1763, what is known today as Florida came under British control. Florida returned to Spanish control in 1783, where it remained until 1821, when it became a United States territory. In 1845, Florida became a state. From 1598 to 1821, Government House served as the administrative center of colonial Florida.

In 1821, the United States conducted an inventory of Federal properties in Florida and referred to this building as Government House. After 1821, the building was used for various U.S. government functions, including a military hospital and quarters for Federal troops during the Civil War and later a courthouse, custom house, and a post office. Renovations of the building during 1833-1834 designed by architect Robert Mills and carried out by Elias Wallen, and another renovation in 1873 designed by architect William M. Kimball changed the building's massing, floor plan, and height. During the 19th century, the plaza was diminished in size because of the widening of the surrounding streets.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, the building was variously called the "former Spanish Governor's Palace," "Government House," "Custom House," and "Post Office."

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During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the building had evolved into a rectangular building, as indicated in the 1884 and 1910 Sanborn maps. As evidenced in a 1910 view (Photo 32) and 1922 view (Photo 33) of the building, the rectangular building was lined with two-story wooden porches along the north and south elevations. Although its appearance differed from that of the colonial and Civil War periods, by this time, it served as the center of the community, as a post office, meeting place, and source of pride in the city's Spanish heritage.

Given its age, it is not surprising that St. Augustine was the site of early historic preservation efforts. In 1883, the St. Augustine Historical Society was founded and was dedicated to the preservation of the city's historic buildings, as well as artifacts, documents, and maps. In 1899, the Society acquired its first colonial house, known as the Vedder Museum, and its contents. This building was lost in a 1914 fire. The Society later managed the historic Fort Marion, renamed the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, for the War Department until 1933, when management of national monuments was transferred to the National Park Service. (In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge designated the property a national monument. In 1942, Congress formally changed the fort's name to the Castillo de San Marcos in honor of its Spanish heritage). Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Society acquired other colonial-era properties. In addition to the Society's activities, in 1906, a group of St. Augustine women successfully opposed municipal plans to demolish the pillars of the City Gate, an "early example of concern for preserving the historic city."⁴ The impressive coquina pillars of City Gate marked the eastern terminus of *El Camino Real*, or Royal Highway, that extended west to present-day Tallahassee and beyond.

FLORIDA'S NEW DEAL RESOURCES

The historic context for the nomination of Government House to the National Register of Historic Places is detailed in the document, "Florida's New Deal Resources" Multiple Property Submission cover form that the National Register program in Washington, DC, accepted in 2005. The document, "Florida's New Deal Resources," provides a detailed history of the development of New Deal programs to address the severe economic distress and widespread joblessness caused by the Great Depression. The "Florida's New Deal Resources" document focuses on the assistance provided by the New Deal programs to Florida that included schools, roads, airports, bridges, hospitals, playgrounds, public parks, and other infrastructure projects. The St. Augustine Civic Center was a product of the New Deal programs and was nominated to and listed in the National Register under the "Florida's New Deal Resources" cover form in 2005.

⁴ William R. Adams, *St. Augustine and St. Johns County: A Historical Guide*, Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, Inc., p. 19.

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Post offices constituted a major building type supported through the New Deal programs of the Public Works Administration (PWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding sources. In Section E of the cover form, pages 41-42, the narrative states that:

... post offices were among the most celebrated federal projects in the state's towns and cities. Most of Florida's New Deal post offices and indeed almost all federal buildings of the era were built with the benefit of funding through the PWA. In most cases, resources were derived directly from appropriations through the Department of the Treasury supplemented with PWA funds. In a few cases, WPA laborers supplemented the labor supplied by private contractors. With few exceptions, plans for the buildings were drafted by the Department of the Treasury's Office of the Supervising Architect.

The "Florida's New Deal Resources" document summarizes the role of the Supervising Architect's Office in overseeing the design and construction of post offices funded through the New Deal programs. Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon and his staff prepared plans for numerous post offices in Florida, including those in Arcadia, Orlando, Panama City, Palm Beach, Sarasota, Winter Haven, and Pensacola. The cover form states: "The architectural styles for these post offices included Art Deco, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Mediterranean Revival. For some communities, a new post office represented one of the few if not the only PWA or New Deal building within their municipal boundaries or even within the county."

In the discussion of significance of Florida's New Deal resources, the cover form states:

Possessing historical significance for their association with Florida's role in the New Deal, Florida's New Deal buildings represent the first national effort to link local, state, and national government agencies. The economic and social experiment increased employment and upgraded the built fabric of the nation. Part of an aggressive national public works program, the interrelated collection of facilities developed throughout America during the New Deal improved the lives of the nation's citizens. Consequently, Florida's New Deal buildings represent an important type of historic architecture that reflects the state's New Deal heritage.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PROCESS

The United States government agency responsible for the design of the U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was the Supervising Architect's Office, which was located within the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Both the Treasury Department and the Customs Service were established in 1789. Custom duties constituted a large portion of the revenue for the early Federal government and were vital to the welfare of the new nation. The Treasury Department assumed responsibility for the construction of Federal government buildings because of its responsibility for the collection of customs duties and the need to house these functions. During the first half

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of the 19th century, the Secretary of the Treasury was directly involved in the design and construction of custom houses in the United States. By the early 1850s, the number of buildings increased to the point where the architectural and construction responsibilities were centralized within the Bureau of Construction headed by a member of the Corps of Engineers and a subordinate Supervising Architect. By the beginning of the Civil War, the Corps left the Bureau of Construction and the Supervising Architect position oversaw the design and construction of not only custom houses, but also Federal courthouses and post offices. Often, all three functions were contained in a single building.

The Supervising Architect's Office remained in the Treasury Department until 1939 and was headed by a succession of 15 men, most of them architects. Over its history, this office designed thousands of Federal government facilities that covered a wide range of Federal functions and locations throughout the nation. The most visible were post offices, custom houses, and courthouses. As the Federal government grew, this office also oversaw the design and construction of large, multi-purpose Federal office buildings. In 1933, with the development of Federal government programs to address the effects of the Great Depression, the office was placed in the Procurement Division within the Treasury Department and incorporated into the Public Works Branch. Architect W. E. Reynolds was the assistant director of the Procurement Division and assigned to oversee the Public Works Branch. The Supervising Architect at this point was James A. Wetmore, who served as Acting Supervising Architect from 1915 to 1934. A lawyer by training, Wetmore elected not to assume the title on a permanent basis because he was not an architect. Under Wetmore, architect Louis E. Simon oversaw the architectural work of the office. When Wetmore retired in 1934, Simon, at the age of 66, succeeded him. Simon retired in 1941.

In 1939, with the winding down of Depression-era programs and the gearing up of wartime preparations, the Supervising Architect's Office was removed entirely from the Treasury Department and became part of the Public Buildings Administration of the independent Federal Works Agency. With this move, Reynolds became the commissioner of public buildings. In 1949, this function was moved into the new General Services Administration, where responsibility for Federal government buildings remains to this day. Reynolds retired in 1954.⁵

Over the years of its existence within the Treasury Department, the Supervising Architect's Office played an important role in bringing the presence of the Federal government to thousands of communities in the form of post offices, custom houses, Federal courthouses, and Federal office buildings. Because of the office's high visibility, the private architects, represented by the American Institute of Architects, devoted years to lobbying to remove control over design work from the government architects and instead to place this important work in the hands of the private sector. During brief periods during the end of the 19th century and the first half of the

⁵ For a history of the Supervising Architect's Office, see Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

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20th century, most notably during the Tarsney Act period (1897-1912), private architects were involved in designing Federal government buildings on a competitive basis and later on a contractual basis. During the 1930s, the Federal government made an effort to address the economic distress in the architectural profession by hiring private architects, like Mellen Clark Greeley, to design Federal buildings. At other times during the 1930s, it was felt that obtaining designs from private architects took longer than from government architects, which delayed the initiation of construction and the badly needed construction jobs that ensued. After World War II and the formation of the General Services Administration, the Public Buildings Service exercised primarily administrative and contractual responsibilities over the design work carried out by private architects.

In its function within the Federal government, the Supervising Architect's Office was an "architectural firm" that employed architects to design Federal government buildings throughout the nation as well as to supervise their construction. The production of the Office during its history of nearly 90 years—from the early 1850s to 1939—can be analyzed best as incorporating certain types of buildings. Large custom houses are found in major coastal cities like New York City and Boston. Smaller post offices are found throughout the nation in both suburban areas and smaller communities. The output also can be studied as evolving through definable historical periods, such as the antebellum Bureau of Construction period through the period of Alfred B. Mullett, the Gilded Age period, the Academic Classicism period, the 1920s period of affluence, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. An architectural operation of this scale, scope, and reach makes Federal buildings a significant building type, with individual buildings evaluated as representative of their respective periods of development and functions (large urban custom house, small post office, etc.).

Federal government buildings were more than buildings to house governmental functions. They played an important symbolic role in the period during which the Supervising Architect's Office produced designs for Federal buildings. In the pre-mass communication period, Federal government buildings were viewed as a means for the Federal government to communicate "democratic ideals, reflecting a growing sense of national identity." These buildings served as major architectural icons in the urban landscape and were often the largest buildings in the commercial center of towns and cities. They served as "unifying symbols that reflected authority and stability." During the Academic Classicism period, Federal buildings "bespoke the power, influence, and self-assurance of a nation on the brink of world leadership."⁶ Today, these messages are less evident in new federal architecture, given modern technologies that communicate the Federal government's functions and activities. The decline in the importance of post office services and customs collection also contributes to lessened architectural opportunities for the Federal government.

⁶ The chapter, "Prelude," in Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, addresses the ways in which Federal government buildings communicated political, social, and economic messages to the public.

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ARCHITECT

The architect of the St. Augustine Post Office was Jacksonville native Mellen Clark Greeley (1880-1981). He studied architecture under J. H. W. Hawkins from 1901 to 1908. (Hawkins was born in New York City, but moved to Jacksonville after its Great Fire of 1901. He designed many residences, commercial buildings, and churches in the city.) Greeley established his own practice in 1909. He was architect of many schools, apartment houses, residences, club houses, and churches throughout Jacksonville. Greeley became a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1921.

During the 1930s, formerly busy and prosperous architectural practices collapsed under the weight of the Great Depression. Despite the economic challenges, Greeley applied for and was accepted as a Fellow of the AIA in 1934. Greeley was active in architectural organizations, including a number based in Florida and served as an appointed member of various local commissions and boards. In 1958, at the end of his career, Greeley was granted the status of Member Emeritus of the AIA. By that time, he was referred to as the "Dean of Florida Architects." He died in 1981 at the age of 101.⁷

In 1969, Greeley produced an oral history of his life and career called "Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley, Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963." In the transcribed version of the history, he recalled how he came to be selected to design the St. Augustine Post Office. In 1931, he received an unexpected telephone call asking about his interest in the commission to design the St. Augustine post office. Because of the lack of work in his office, Greeley received this inquiry with considerable excitement and regarded the project as a "godsend." The only possible connection was his effort spent on being considered for the design work on one of two Federal buildings being considered in Jacksonville. The phone call directed him to contact someone in Washington, a step that "began one of the most pleasant architectural projects ever to come my way."⁸ The St. Augustine post office project allowed him to keep his office open until the economy improved.

"RESTORATION" DESIGN

The new U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was constructed between 1935 and 1937 on the site previously occupied by the older post office. Its architect, Mellen Clark Greeley, designed the building in the Spanish colonial style to be compatible with the restoration aspirations of the city of St. Augustine. The historic coquina stone walls that dated from earlier construction and renovation periods were incorporated into the new building.

⁷ For biographical information on Mellen Clark Greeley, see his membership file with the American Institute of Architects, Washington, DC.

⁸ "Exerpts from 'Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963,'" May 19, 1969; University of Florida Collections, p. 16.

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Because postal functions were located in the building on the historical site of the Governor's House, the creation of a new, modern postal facility with more space raised the question of either constructing a new building on a new site or a reuse of the extant building on the site. Public disagreement over the location of the new postal facility delayed commencement of the construction process.

However, as early as 1926-1927, plans had been prepared. The appearance of the building and the identity of the architect of these plans are unknown. Possibly, the Supervising Architect's Office staff architects designed the 1926-1927 plans. By this time, the Supervising Architect's Office had settled on design precedents set in the early 20th century under the management of James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect (1897-1912). "Nearly all the federal buildings designed under Taylor can be classified as classical or colonial revival. By the turn of the century, these styles were well entrenched in the architectural vocabulary throughout the country.... These buildings...were reflective of the predominant national taste in architecture."⁹ There was no stated policy of designing buildings to conform to a locality's architectural traditions. In fact, in the 1910s and 1920s, the trend was toward standardized designs for Federal government buildings.

In 1933, architect Greeley was contracted to produce a design for a new building. Greeley's 1933 design was made for "an entirely new building to harmonize with the architecture of old St. Augustine and to be located on Government owned land on Cordova Street between Cathedral and King Streets directly opposite the famed Ponce de Leon Hotel and near the Alcazar Hotel."¹⁰ The details of this earlier design are unknown because the drawings have not survived. However, the Supervising Architect's Office staff had already calculated that the needed square footage measured more than twice the size of the existing building—from 4,500 square feet to 11,000 square feet. In this staff report, it was stated: "When it was contemplated in 1926 and 1927 to remodel the building (plans having been made and bids received), there was so much agitation against the scheme that the project was deferred. The foundation of the adverse agitation by the citizens of St. Augustine was the historical value placed upon the old building."¹¹ This agitation likely resulted because the community fondly regarded the current post office as a link to the city's old Spanish heritage and could not accept the idea that the old post office building might be remodeled into yet another configuration.

Most cities welcomed the arrival of new Federal government buildings because they were justified based on postal receipts and Federal government activities in the locality. A new government building was a reassuring

⁹ *Architects to the Nation*, pp. 209-210, describes the designs under James Knox Taylor and efforts to standardize the design of smaller federal buildings during and after his administration.

¹⁰ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, January 27, 1936, p. 2.

¹¹ Superintendent, AE Division to James A. Wetmore, January 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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sign of the city's economic viability and continuing importance to conducting Federal government functions. Few cities complained about the design of the Federal building intended for their locality or expressed dissatisfaction with the location or materials. St. Augustine was different. The city had a long tradition of citizen activism when matters concerned the city's dense concentration of historic buildings, the ability of these attractions to lure visitors, and the economic activities that visitors generated. The city's mayor, Walter B. Fraser, and the managing editor of its daily newspaper, *The St. Augustine Record*, Nina Hawkins, championed historic preservation as a key to the city's future. These circumstances made the St. Augustine post office project one of the most unusual in the history of the Supervising Architect's Office. By the late 1930s, the success of the Williamsburg restoration as a tourism magnet and the resulting economic benefits provided a vivid example of what could happen in St. Augustine.

As disagreement over the future of the city's post office dragged on, Congressman J. Mark Wilcox wrote to Acting Supervising Architect James A. Wetmore on December 18, 1933: "St. Augustine has a distinctive type of architecture, being as you know, the oldest city in America and having been founded by the Spanish in the early period of our history. The new building should harmonize with the general architectural scheme of the city. It is probable that the present building might be so remodeled so as to afford ample space and convenience for the public, and at the same time conform to the general architectural plan of the city."¹²

By the time that New Deal funds became available for public buildings projects, the city of St. Augustine organized a Post Office Committee to agitate for funds to support a new post office facility. Harry H. Saunders, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, wrote to Silliman Evans, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, asking about the long-sought building project. In early 1934, he wrote: "St. Augustine seems to be fast becoming the 'Forgotten City' in the matter of a new Federal building."¹³ The new location identified in 1933 was judged to be unacceptable because the remains of Confederate General William Wing Loring rested under the monument on the land immediately west of the existing post office upon which it was proposed to erect the new building. "Another reason was the desire that the splendid park at the west end of the Plaza be kept unobstructed; and a third reason was the desire of all to retain the old building under Government supervision so that it would not be allowed to fall into worse repair."¹⁴

Architect Greeley referred to a meeting in April 1933, where Reynolds met with St. Augustine leaders and civic groups and heard their requests and suggestions. After this meeting, "Mr. Reynolds instructed the Architect

¹² J. Mark Wilcox to James A. Wetmore, December 18, 1933, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹³ Harry H. Saunders to Silliman Evans, January 8, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁴ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 2.

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[Greeley] to make studies of the new scheme, the old building intact, or if that were impossible, to utilize as much of it as found feasible, and to restore the part so used to conform in appearance to the picture bearing date of 1764.”¹⁵

Although earlier recommendations coming out of St. Augustine argued against remodeling the existing building on the site, the prospect of an extended delay in obtaining this key Federal government investment changed the community’s views on the subject. By 1934, J. W. Hoffmann, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, assembled an impressive list of St. Augustine organizations that approved of the “proposed restoration and enlargement of the present Post Office structure.” He also cited the “unanimous approval of the citizens generally throughout the city of St. Augustine.”¹⁶ Hoffman further described the prospect of the “exterior to be constructed along the lines of the Spanish Governor’s Mansion, and the interior, of course, to be a modern Post Office.”¹⁷ In subsequent correspondence to officials of the Treasury Department, Hoffman continued to use the terms “restoration” and “conform with the old Spanish Governor’s Mansion” in the desired approach to the post office project. Even with this agreement, individual protests against the plan caused Assistant Director of Procurement at the Treasury Department W. E. Reynolds to write: “It would be humanly impossible to always select a site satisfactory to everyone.”¹⁸

In May 1934, the Treasury Department directed architect Greeley to study the feasibility of using the old building for a post office. As Greeley described his instructions, “I was instructed to accede if possible to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, that the old building be restored and preserved as a historic monument.” In Greeley’s opinion, the building was more English in appearance than Spanish. Responding to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, the Spanish tradition would be restored to the building. Greeley anticipated “using the shell of the old building only . . . [and] building a new floor structure inside the shell.” Even so, the old building’s size of 4,680 square feet would need to be enlarged to 6,360 square feet.¹⁹ Because the current design was entirely different from the one that Greeley had produced in 1933, his old contract was terminated and a new one executed.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ J. W. Hoffman to J. Mark Wilcox, May 5, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁷ J. W. Hoffman to W. J. Sears, May 7, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁸ W. E. Reynolds to J. H. Hempsted, September 24, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁹ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, June 4, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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In the summer of 1934, W. E. Reynolds traveled to St. Augustine to meet with Congressman Wilcox and Postmaster J. Herman Mauncy to finalize the plans for the post office project. During that visit, Reynolds stated that he was in favor of "the plan of restoration," even if it would entail additional expense over the cost of an entirely new building. Congressman Wilcox argued that the Federal government had already spent money on the restoration and preservation of "historic spots" and it was therefore justifiable that needed Federal government funds be spent on the restoration of the St. Augustine building.²⁰ In 1935, the appropriation of \$200,000 for the building was increased to \$217,935.²¹

By January 1935, Greeley received survey drawings of the old building. Because of the special requirements of the project, Greeley asked for more time than would be required for an average post office design. Greeley cited the reasons for the delay: ". . . the old building must be given special consideration and its historic features must be given special attention."²² The Supervising Architect's Office was concerned about these delays and dispatched several of its own staff architects to Jacksonville to assist Greeley with the completion of the drawings and specifications for much of the summer of 1935. By September 30, proposals were solicited for the building's construction. On December 9, the firm of James I. Barnes of Springfield, Ohio, was selected as the contractor.

Within a few weeks of the awarding of the construction contract, the historic walls were threatened with collapse. Even before the construction began, the contractor expressed concern about the stability of the building's coquina walls while steel piles were driven into the ground. The contractor suggested the removal and rebuilding of the walls.

On January 24, 1936, the second floor walls collapsed. The perceived threat to the "sacred walls" caused alarm on the part of St. Augustine citizens. Some of the wooden posts, beams, and lintels had been destroyed by termites, causing the stone work to loosen and leaving large cavities in the walls. A solution was worked out among the parties involved. The decision was made to remove and rebuild the second story walls. The first floor walls remained intact. Architect Greeley wrote: "it was suggested that as long as the old stones were used in the old wall in the exact location where they had always been, there could be no desecration of the old building." The contractor agreed to hold in place as much as possible of the first story of the north and south walls of the old building. Where the cavities needed repair, the old stones from the second story would be used.

²⁰ "Government Officials Impressed," *The St. Augustine Record*, article attached to letter from J. E. Hempsted to Henry L. Morganthau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²¹ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *The St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

²² Mellen C. Greeley to Office of the Supervising Architect, July 30, 1935, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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Any new masonry would be confined to the second story.²³ The east wall was considered to be constructed of better masonry and was kept in its entirety.

Even with the agreement on the treatment of the walls, observers decried what appeared to be the Federal government's destruction of large sections of the building and cited Williamsburg as the model of what ought to be happening. In response to these protests, Reynolds responded with:

The remodeling of the present building will preserve such portions of the walls of the old structure as are structurally sound, and, when completed, the new structure will be virtually a reproduction of the old building as it appeared before it was remodeled in 1834. It is believed that when the public understands fully that this reconstruction is much similar to the Rockefeller reconstruction at Williamsburg to which you refer, the present objections to the proposed rebuilding will disappear.²⁴

The treatment of the exterior stucco and coquina stone exemplified an effort to protect the remaining walls and rebuild the rest so that both parts could be seen as a "whole." Architect Greeley asked that the face of the brick work be set slightly back from the face of the stone so that the stucco could "feather-edge" or taper off against the stone, with an irregular line (not a straight-line). "The effect desired is that of an old building which has been patched and rebuilt and on which the stucco has fallen off in some places."²⁵ Supervising Architect Louis E. Simon approved Greeley's plan for the stucco on the building (Photo 34).

In a summary of the building's design, Architect Greeley wrote:

The exterior of the building has been designed to correspond as far as possible with the original picture bearing date of 1764, which was adopted as the key-note of the restoration. The high pitched roof with gables has been copied from the picture, also the balcony on the east façade. The roof over the new wings and the balconies on the north and south fronts are designed to conform to the original as shown in the [1764] picture. The original high wall which inclosed

²³ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁴ W. E. Reynolds to Mr. and Mrs. John T. Findley, February 17, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD. Reynolds made reference to Williamsburg because the restoration of the colonial city in Virginia, involving reconstructions of formerly extant buildings and restorations of standing structures, set the standard for the 1920s and 1930s for other cities.

²⁵ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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(sic) the garden of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been replaced with a low wall which forms the two boundaries of the garden . . .²⁶

The building was dedicated on February 22, 1937. Mayor Walter B. Fraser arranged for the dedication to be scheduled on George Washington's Birthday, a national holiday, so that the school children would be free to attend the ceremony. Mayor Fraser also asked business owners to let their employees take off time from work to attend the ceremony. The city of St. Augustine and the Federal agencies represented in the building cooperated on a dignified dedication ceremony. J. Austin Latimer, who represented Postmaster General James A. Farley, gave a presentation that praised the building as the oldest public building in the United States.²⁷ Mayor Fraser thanked the Federal government for deviating from the usual plan for public buildings in allowing for the Spanish style building in keeping with its surroundings. Benedictions were given. Afterwards, a band concert entertained the crowd. Dignitaries from the State and locality were seated on the east balcony, including Verne E. Chatelain, who represented the Carnegie Institution of Washington.²⁸ Between 1936 and 1940, the Carnegie Institution worked with the City of St. Augustine and other organizations in the historic, archeological, and photographic documentation of the city that would guide restoration projects.

The special attention paid to the St. Augustine post office building by U.S. Treasury officials was unlike other Federal government building projects, especially in the 1930s, when many post offices and other Federal government buildings were under design and construction throughout the nation to assist with the New Deal recovery efforts. The St. Augustine post office project involved providing a new facility for post office and other Federal government functions in a unique historical setting with deep historical roots. The community was already involved in private sector historic preservation activities. Investment in a historic building on the part of the Federal government or an outside organization or individual could only boost this direction and the city's fortunes.

Other factors in the handling of the St. Augustine building included the fact that W. E. Reynolds, assistant director of the Procurement Division of the U.S. Treasury Department, was from Jacksonville, Florida. His brother, John F. Reynolds, was a member of the Jacksonville firm of builders and contractors, Hillyer and Reynolds.²⁹ Before he assumed his position with the Procurement Division, W. E. Reynolds worked for the firm of Hillyer and Reynolds. As an architect, W. E. Reynolds was likely familiar with St. Augustine and its

²⁶ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 5.

²⁷ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *The St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁹ "Government Officials Impressed, Treasury Representative Says He Approves," newspaper clipping attached to letter, J. E. Hempsted to Henry Morgenthau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

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historic buildings and may have known the city's leaders. In addition, the example of the Williamsburg restoration demonstrated the desirability of restoring older buildings. The Federal government was in the process of implementing the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and its role in managing, restoring, and interpreting historic buildings could only grow larger over time. Although there is no specific documentation about why the St. Augustine building project was handled differently, the above factors likely were instrumental.

During the building's role as a Post Office, it housed not only postal functions, but also offices for the U.S. Customs Service, Department of Agriculture county agents, the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Park Service, and U.S. Justice Department Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents. As such, the site of Government House maintained its role as the seat of government functions for nearly 370 years, from 1598 to 1966.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Government House is one of the very few, if not the only, "restorations" of a historic property for Federal government functions that the Supervising Architect's Office undertook during any time in its evolution from the 1850s to the late 1930s. The usual approach was to produce or commission a new design for a new building that housed post office, Federal courthouse, custom house, and other Federal government functions. With Government House, the Federal government ventured into the still new field of historic restoration at a time when there were few Federal government policies, standards, or guidelines to guide such work.

Because of significant investment by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Colonial Williamsburg became the pioneer in restoration research and restoration standards. The National Park Service assumed major responsibilities for the management of historic properties with the issuance of the Presidential Executive Order 6166 of 1933 that consolidated Federal historic sites and national parks under the National Park Service. One of the National Park Service's first restorations of a historic building occurred in 1934 with the Moore House in Yorktown, Virginia, which Rockefeller purchased and then sold to the National Park Service as part of the development of Colonial Parkway. The Supervising Architect's Office undertook the restoration of Government House for post office functions in the absence of clear and publicized policy, standards, and guidelines, something that developed over the next 40 years. What was occurring in Colonial Williamsburg served as the standard of the day.

During the design and construction of the St. Augustine post office building, both the Supervising Architect's Office and architect Mellen Greeley spoke of the building's unique character within the highly regulated Federal architecture program. In requesting treatment of the stucco to resemble patching and rebuilding over the centuries, Greeley stated:

I realize that I am asking for something which has probably never been done before in a building for the Treasury Department, but the whole project is unusual. Also, the use of the old historical building in the schedule is unique and the work can be made outstanding by going a little more

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away from the usual without detriment to the utility of the building. In St. Augustine there are a number of beautiful examples of stone work such as I am asking for, where the stucco has come off in places and is intact in others. The Old Fort, the City Gates, etc., are examples.³⁰

When a request was made to include mention of the "restoration" in the official cornerstone, architect Greeley stated, "The fact that the building is probably the *only restoration* [emphasis added] of an historical building for use by Government Departments was perhaps not brought to the attention of the Supervising Architect, and, if that had been done perhaps the standard lettering might have been changed on the stone."³¹ Supervising Architect Simon responded to Greeley by stating that no further inscriptions should be placed on the cornerstone, but a tablet could be placed in the interior that would include interesting historical data.

In a 1936 explanation of the building's design, Greeley had earlier underscored the uniqueness of this building in the Federal government's architecture program. "What is unusual . . . is that the Government is now erecting a building in the City of St. Augustine, Florida, to house the Post Office and Custom House of that City, which is probably the most unique of all which the Government has ever built, and which is likely to be the only one of its kind ever to be built."³²

TOWARD NATIONAL STANDARDS

It would not be until the 1970s when the effects of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act established that the treatment of historic buildings owned by the Federal government or affected by Federal government activities needed to follow national standards and guidelines. Starting in the early 1970s, the successor agency to the Supervising Architect's Office, the Public Building Service of the General Services Administration, undertook the historic rehabilitation of Federal government buildings, including the Old Post Office on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC.

The road to national standards for the treatment of historic buildings began with the many historic restorations, reconstructions, and rehabilitations of the first four decades of the 20th century. These experiments served as stepping stones to the national standards as they eventually developed in the 1960s and 1970s.

³⁰ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

³¹ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 7, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

³² Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida," January 27, 1936, p. 1.

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Although many city leaders and members of the public admired the “restoration” of Colonial Williamsburg, other observers were concerned about the apparent dominance of decisions guided by beauty and artistic preferences over those guided by authenticity and serious scholarly research. By the 1930s, the discussion among historians, architects, and archeologists engaged on historic preservation projects focused on two major concepts. The first was the example set by French architect Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879), whose “restorations” in France represented a combination of historical facts based on extensive research with creative modifications based on personal judgment. Modifications included adding towers, roofs, and other details that were not supported by the historical record. Viollet-le-Duc defended the notion that restorations resulted in buildings and structures that may never have existed in the past. He believed that his additions were appealing to the public. The online *Dictionary of Art Historians* describes Viollet-le-Duc as responsible for “the ‘over-restoration’ of many Gothic churches in France.”³³

The other end of the spectrum was represented by John Ruskin (1819-1900), an influential English artist, philosopher, and art critic. Ruskin viewed most “restorations” as destructive and false. Ruskin was a proponent of keeping the accretions that most buildings acquire over time. Ruskin believed that “society has no right to improve or even attempt to restore the craftsmanship of another era.” He felt that restorations “wiped clean the character of a structure.” In this view, buildings should be left untouched.³⁴

During the 1930s, historians within the National Park Service, as well as scholars like Fiske Kimball of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, viewed the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg as leaning too far toward the Viollet-le-Duc end of the spectrum and wanted the National Park Service and other organizations involved in historic preservation work to take a more conservative approach. The first phase of Colonial Williamsburg’s restoration, from 1926 to 1934, was viewed as being based too heavily on artistic preferences and too little on scholarly research. This was the period during which the major buildings, the Governors Palace and the Capitol, were reconstructed and the Wren Building was restored. In the effort to present a complete picture of the 18th century, the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg resulted in the demolition of many fine buildings that post-dated the early 19th century. Responding to these criticisms, the Colonial Williamsburg effort in the later 1930s relied to a greater extent on scholarly research and coordination and discussion between the various disciplines involved in the work.

The National Park Service staff realized that the 1930s was a period of experimentation, but wanted to develop standards that would guide the work that would result from the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The Act directed the

³³ “Viollet-le-Duc, Eugène Emmanuel,” *Dictionary of Art Historians: A Biographical Dictionary of Historic Scholars, Museum Professionals, and Academic Historians of Art*,

<http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/violletleduce.htm>, accessed May 25, 2013.

³⁴ Lesa Lorusso, “To Restore or Not to Restore,” in *Florida Preservationist*, May 15, 2012, <http://preservation.myfloridahistory.org/to-restore-or-not-to-restore/>, accessed May 25, 2013.

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Secretary of the Interior, among other things, to “make a survey of historic and archaeologic sites, buildings, and objects for the purpose of determining which possess exceptional value as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States.” The Act’s provisions raised the prospect that the Federal government might administer grant funds to state and local governments at some future date. If this happened, then standards would need to accompany these grant funds. Although some historians and architects recoiled at some of the restorations of the 1920s and 1930s, most treatments lay somewhere along the spectrum between “restoration” and “total preservation,” where the remains were simply stabilized. What was generally agreed upon by all preservationists was that scholarly research must guide the selected treatment of a historic property. This was the approach that former National Park Service chief historian Verne E. Chatelain brought with him to the Carnegie Institution of Washington’s St. Augustine Historical Survey project in 1936.

The “restoration” of St. Augustine’s post office reflected the reality Charles Hosmer noted in his chapter “New Restoration Techniques” in *Preservation Comes of Age*—“With the notable exceptions of Colonial Williamsburg, the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation, and a few state governments, no organization had the time or the money to devote to real research in preparation for restoration work.”³⁵ Architect Mellen Greeley devoted some time to historical research on St. Augustine’s architectural evolution, but his effort was not commensurate with that of Colonial Williamsburg because there was no comparable funding from a source as wealthy as John D. Rockefeller, Jr. for research that would guide a “restoration” design. The Carnegie Institution’s work in St. Augustine would not commence until late 1936, after construction on the new post office was already underway. In addition, there were few, if any, restorations of properties except for museum purposes to which Greeley could refer. “Very few preservationists had begun to talk about adaptive uses for restorations that could never be museums; that development came in the 1950s.”³⁶

Grant funds were never appropriated under the 1935 Historic Sites Act. (It was not until more than 30 years later, with the implementation of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, that historic preservation grants were appropriated and made available to State Historic Preservation Offices.) Thus, the National Park Service could only require standards for projects being undertaken within the bureau. It was even difficult to disseminate information on NPS standards to owners of historic properties because there was no ready way to do this. Throughout the late 1940s, National Park Service chief historian Ronald F. Lee worked feverishly to establish the National Trust for Historic Preservation to serve as a national clearinghouse on preservation and restoration; to which the National Park Service could contribute materials. In 1949, the U.S. Congress established the National Trust for Historic Preservation “in order to further the policy enunciated in...the Historic Sites Act, as amended” and to “facilitate public participation in the preservation of sites, buildings, and objects.”

³⁵ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*, Vol. II, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981, p. 1040.

³⁶ Ibid.

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By the early 1960s, preservationists had observed more than a decade of destruction of many historic buildings and neighborhoods nationwide caused by postwar housing, transportation, urban renewal, and water reclamation projects. In September 1963, Colonial Williamsburg and the National Trust for Historic Preservation convened a meeting of 160 preservationists to review the history of American preservation and discuss ways to shape its future. Held in Williamsburg, the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration included a review of Viollet-le-Duc's restorations, Ruskin's "anti-scrape" philosophy, the reconstruction of the old town centers in Poland after World War II, outdoor museums, and urban rehabilitation. A committee of seminar participants, coordinated by Ronald F. Lee, presented its report, "Principles and Guidelines for Historic Preservation in the United States" at the National Trust's annual meeting in October 1964. This report included a section on "Restoration Principles," that recommended the rule of "better to preserve than repair, better to repair than restore, better to restore than reconstruct." In addition, this section called for retaining old work of several periods, rather than to "restore" the whole to a single period.³⁷ After passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, another conference was held in March 1967 to review the 1964 Principles and Guidelines and offer revisions where needed.³⁸

The initial Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects were issued in the 1970s and again in the 1980s. Another set of standards, The Standards for Rehabilitation, were issued in 1986 and tied to the standards for owners of historic properties seeking certification for Federal tax benefits. The standards were revised in 1992 so that they were applicable to a wide range of historic resource types. The current Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings cover the four major treatments—preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. The rehabilitation standards are the most widely used because they tied to the Federal historic preservation tax credit projects. The Secretary of the Interior's standards have been incorporated into the design guidelines of Federal, state, and local governments that relate to historic properties.

The 1930s "restoration" of the St. Augustine post office building can be evaluated against the wording of the current definition of a restoration:

³⁷ The papers from the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration, as well as the Report on Principles and Guidelines for Historic Preservation in the United States, were published as *Historic Preservation Today. Essays Presented to the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration*, Williamsburg, Virginia, September 8-11, 1963, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966.

³⁸ The papers from the 1967 meeting were included in *Historic Preservation Tomorrow, Revised Principles and Guidelines*, Second Workshop, Williamsburg, Virginia. National Trust for Historic Preservation and Colonial Williamsburg, 1967.

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Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.³⁹

It is in the wording of the current standards for restoration that the St. Augustine post office design differs. Today the standards call for "replacement of missing features from the restoration period [that] will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or combining features that never existed together historically." While the 1930s St. Augustine post office did not conform to modern standards for restoration, it was a "restoration" as it was understood in the 1930s. It followed the general standards set by the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s and early 1930s and was one of the few "restorations" of that era intended for non-museum purposes.

While no direct connections can be identified between the St. Augustine post office project of the 1930s and the development of today's standards for the treatment of historic properties, it is intriguing to note that wording of minutes of the Informal Conference Preliminary to the Organization of a National Council on Historic Sites and Buildings in February 1947 (preliminary to establishment of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949): "Experience of the past 20 years at Colonial Williamsburg, St. Augustine, in the National Park Service and elsewhere has thrown some light on the techniques of preservation, stabilization and restoration."⁴⁰

The use of the word "restoration" in the 1930s also extended to an entire community that was involved in preservation activities. For example, in an article, "Restoration of St. Augustine," that appeared in the *Florida Municipal Record* in March 1937, written by Eleanor Beeson-Carroll, the periodical's editor noted, "the historical restoration of St. Augustine" that was initiated by the Carnegie Institution and the city of St. Augustine was a matter of general nationwide interest and of particular interest to public officials in Florida and elsewhere. "To the student of government, the project will be of particular interest as a city planning experiment without parallel in this country."⁴¹ The article contrasted the restoration of Williamsburg as it was "at one stage in its history," whereas, in St. Augustine, "there will be no attempt to 'freeze' the city at any

³⁹ Kay D. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1995, p. 117.

⁴⁰ Minutes of informal conference preliminary to organization of National Council on Historic Sites and Buildings, February 5, 1947, as quoted in Hosmer, p. 1041.

⁴¹ Eleanor Beeson-Carroll, "Restoration of St. Augustine," *Florida Municipal Record*, March 1937, p. 9.

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period in its history. Instead, it will be respected as a living, growing entity. The scope of the plan reaches back six hundred years, building from there a complete story that will include the present day."⁴²

RETURN TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE

In 1966, a new post office was built in a different location in St. Augustine. The 1930s post office building was turned over to the General Services Administration, which deeded it to the State of Florida for its use as the headquarters for historic preservation activities in the city. It then reassumed its 1821 name: Government House. Today, Government House is a contributing building within the St. Augustine Historic District and has retained a high degree of integrity reflecting the building's appearance from the 1935-1937 "restoration."

Government House is a key benchmark in the development of the Federal architecture program. It was the only "restoration" carried out by the Office of the Supervising Architect's Office during the agency's nearly century-long existence. Later, after passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 and the full development of Section 106 of that legislation, the General Services Administration restored more historic Federal government buildings using the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines for the treatment of historic properties provided by the National Park Service. When historic post offices and other Federal government buildings are transferred to other public or private ownership, these buildings are rehabilitated according to the same standards and guidelines. When viewed against this progression of how the Federal government addresses its own historic government buildings, Government House is placed at the very earliest point in the trajectory.

For St. Augustine, the city's role in the development of historic communities is secured through its pioneering work in historic preservation that dates back to the late 19th century. Like the rest of the nation, St. Augustine's leading citizens were greatly impressed with the success of the Williamsburg restoration and aimed to apply the lessons of Williamsburg's restoration to the Spanish colonial town on Florida's east coast. These strong sentiments shaped the "restoration" design for the St. Augustine post office, where a postal facility and offices for Federal government functions were housed in a historic encasement.

St. Augustine was unable to establish a historic open air museum as is found in Williamsburg, but, in the final analysis, that is its saving grace. St. Augustine remains a town for the living—where businesses, government agencies, residents, and visitors continue to use the town's historic buildings for everyday purposes. As Verne E. Chatelain of the Carnegie Institution of Washington stated:

... the City of St. Augustine is not merely a grave yard (sic) of past memories, but still exists as a changing and developing community. Therefore it was felt that the [St. Augustine History]

⁴² Ibid.

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program should promote legitimate community interests, for if such were the case then the citizens could cooperate in practical fashion in the protection of their historical resources, recognizing in them an important factor in their own future prosperity.⁴³

In 2007, the University of Florida assumed responsibility for managing Government House and other state-owned historic properties in St. Augustine. Government House continues its role as the headquarters of the Florida state government's continuing stewardship of St. Augustine's historic properties and the ongoing vitality of this unique place in American history. Government House will continue to provide instruction on the impact of the New Deal on Florida's built environment, the evolution of Federal government architecture, and the development of historic preservation practices in the nation.

⁴³ Verne E. Chatelain, "The St. Augustine Historical Program: A Statement of Its Organization, Purposes and Accomplishments," Verne E. Chatelain Collection, MC-41, Box 8, Folder 2, St. Augustine Historical Society, n.d., pp. 3-4.

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ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

Government House is located on the eastern half of Parcel #196195-0000, as recorded by the St. Johns County Property Appraiser. The city's legal description is: (5) City of St Aug, Old Post Office (AKA Govt. House) & Park, OR 96/158 (Q/C). The boundary excludes the Park and any property not owned by the State of Florida.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the area of the parcel that is historically associated with the "restoration" and enlargement of the St. Augustine post office building by the Federal government during 1935-1937 as part of the nation's New Deal program.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTOGRAPHS (two per 8 ½ x 11 sheet)

- 1 1) Government House, 48 King Street
2) St. Augustine, St. Johns County, Florida
3) William A. Triay, Photographer
4) May and June, 2013, date of photographs
5) 48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL, location of digital files
6) East elevation, camera facing west
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All information is the same for the remaining photographs, unless otherwise noted.

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- 3 6) North elevation, camera facing south
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- 4 6) North elevation (left) west elevation (right), camera facing southeast
7) 4 of 38
- 5 6) West elevation, camera facing east
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- 6 6) West elevation (left), south elevation (right), camera facing northeast
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- 7 6) South elevation, camera facing north
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- 8 6) South elevation (left), courtyard (right), camera facing northwest
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- 9 6) South courtyard façade, camera facing north
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- 10 6) Exterior door, north entrance, camera facing south
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- 21 6) East wing, second floor, main entrance, camera facing east
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- 29 6) Second floor, main hallway, restroom area, camera facing south
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- 30 6) Second floor, Room 213, camera facing southwest
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- 32 3) Unknown
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- 34 6) View of Stucco treatment on exterior, showing "feather-edge" or tapering off of stucco against the
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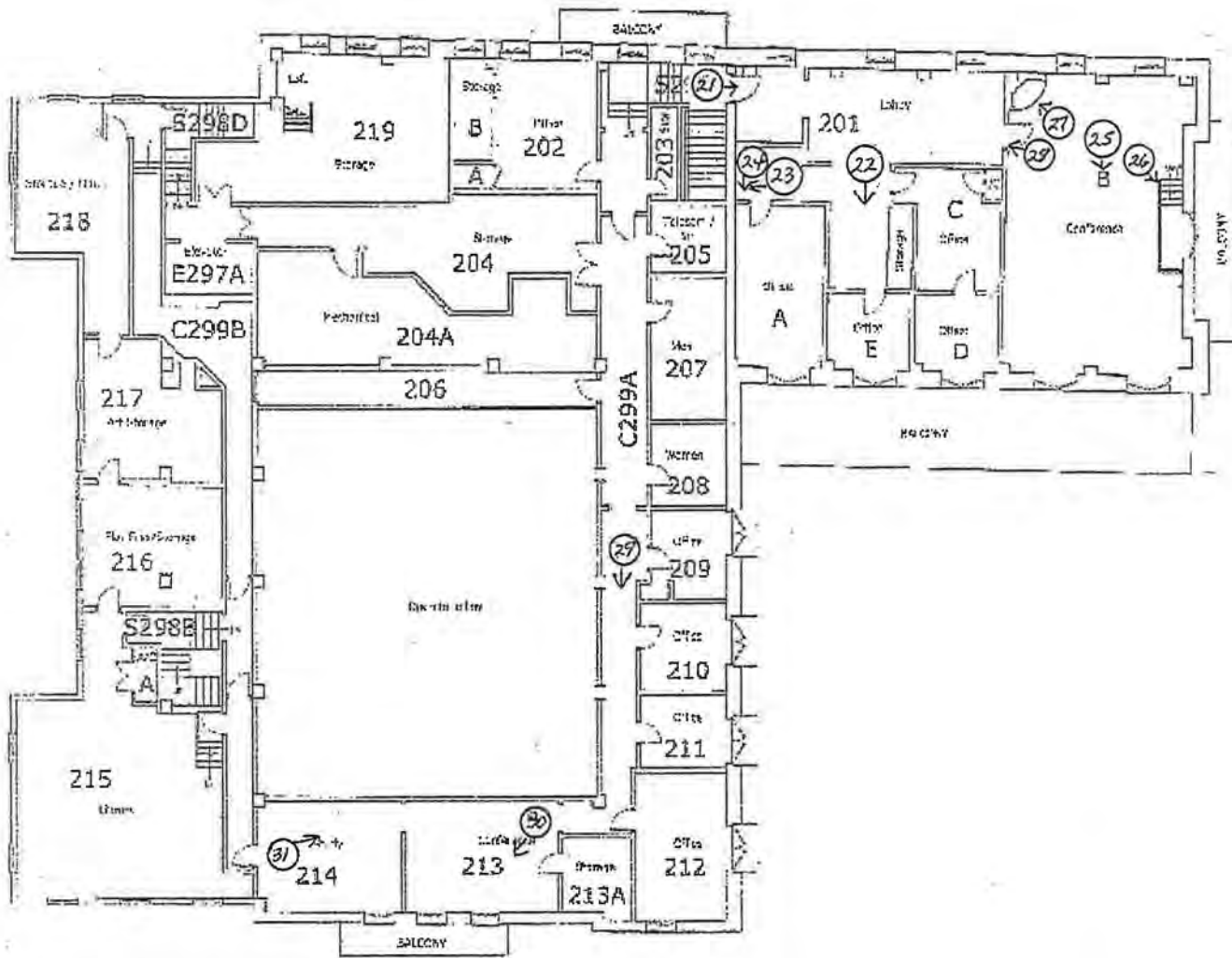
United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

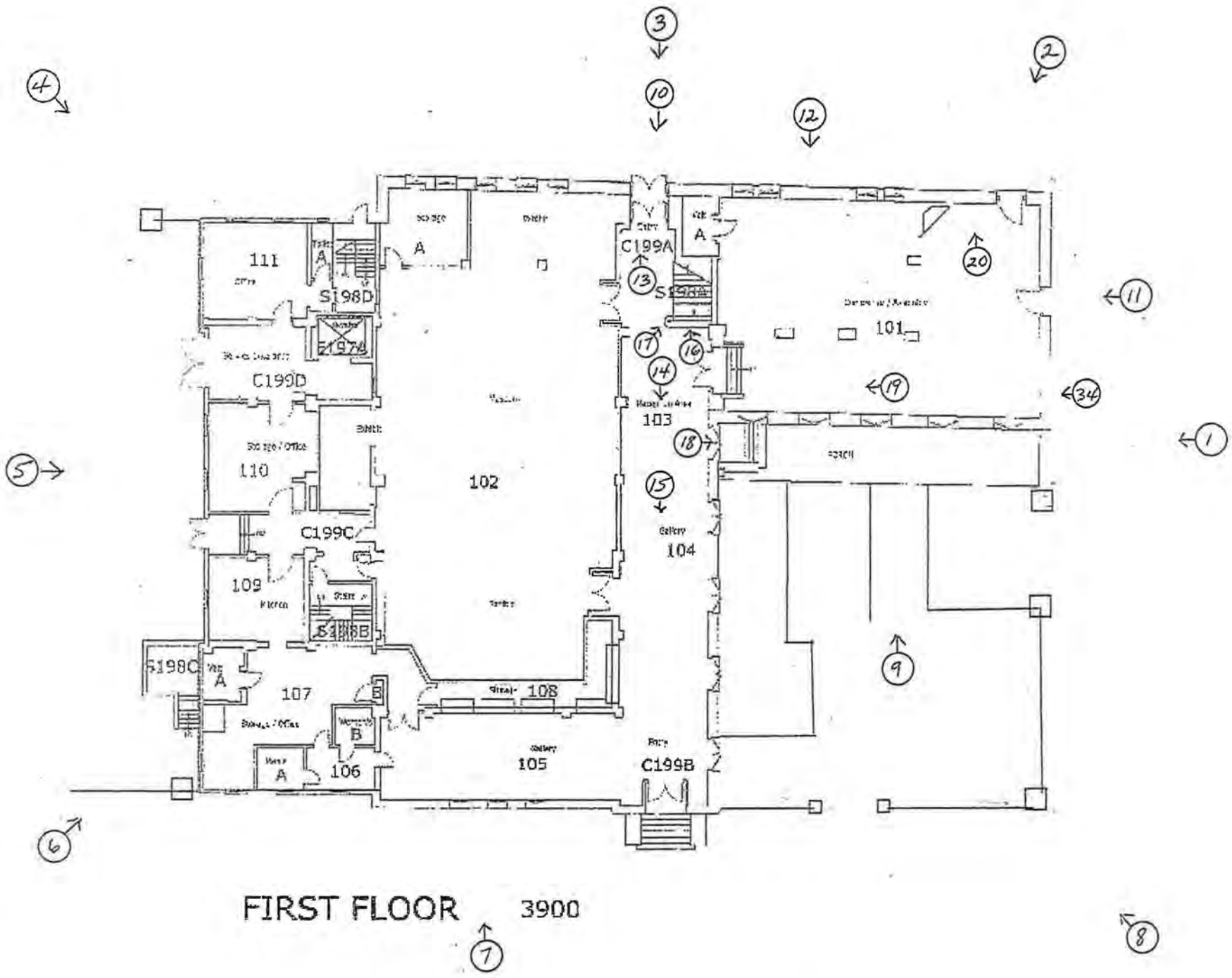
- 35 3) Unknown
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- 37 Figure 2. Floor Plan, first floor
- 38 Figure 3. Floor Plan, second floor



SECOND FLOOR 3900



GOVERNMENT HOUSE, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL
 Photographic Key to camera location and direction



GOVERNMENT HOUSE, St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL
 Photographic Key to camera location and direction

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

St. Augustine, St. Johns County, FL



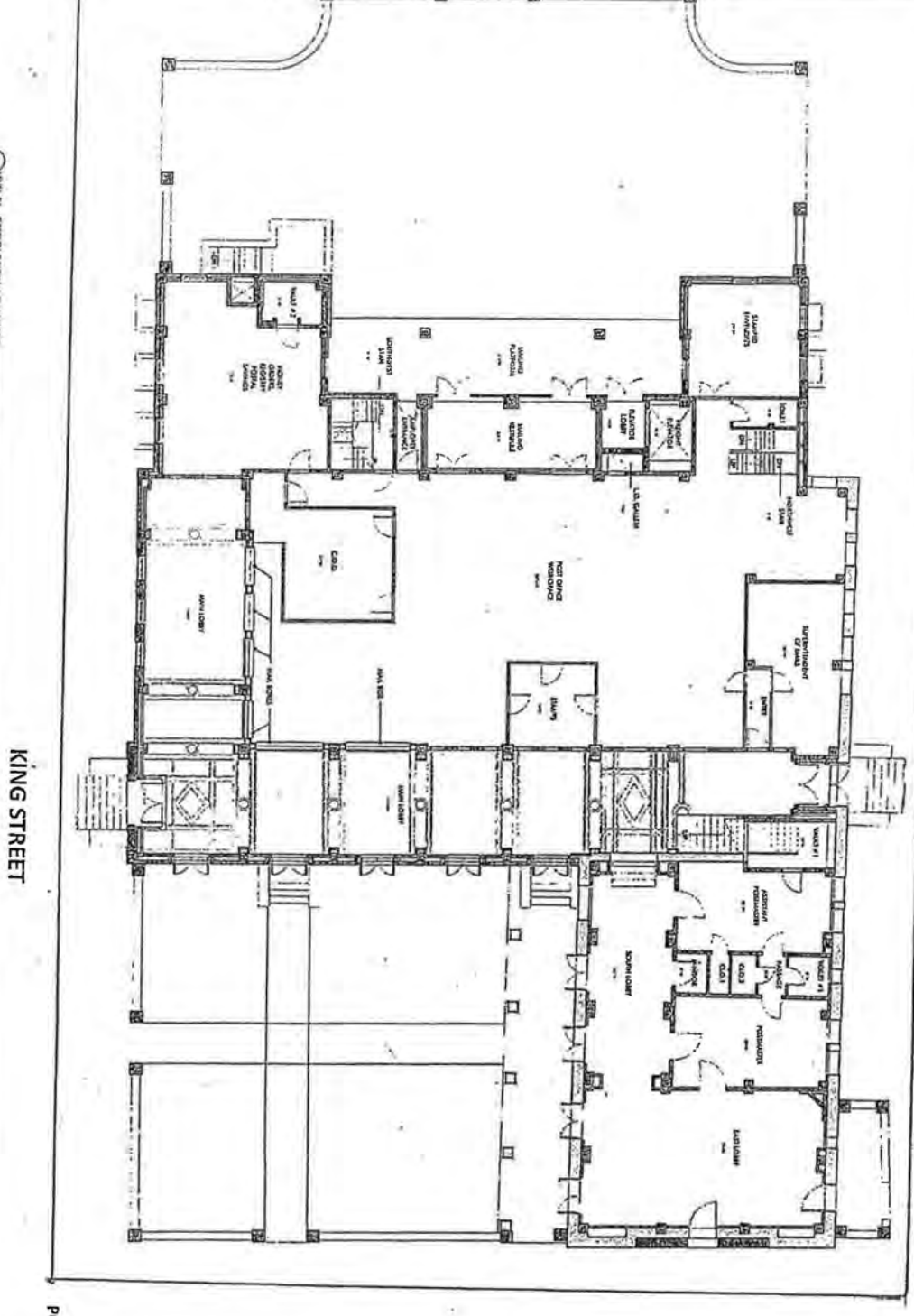
Google earth



Zone: 17 Easting: 469768 Northing: 3306910



1. ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS



CATHEDRAL PLACE

80'

KING STREET

ST. GEORGE STREET

WEST END OF PLAZA

WALL LEGEND:

OUT-CORNER WALL FRAMED IN 1931
 ORIGINAL WALL FRAMED IN 1931
 ORIGINAL WALL FRAMED IN 1931

POB



**GOVERNMENT HOUSE HISTORIC STRUCTURE
 ASSESSMENT**

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
 48 King Street, St. Augustine, Florida

EXISTING CONDITIONS



405 NW 43RD STREET, SUITE 10
 DUNEDIN, FL 32128
 352-492-4444
 WWW.WALKERARCH.COM
 4448600200
 JOSEPH B. WALKER, AIA
 LICENSE NO. A80012772

CONSULTANT

VA PROJECT NO.:
 11031

DRAWING BY:
 KTW

ISSUE DATE:
 31 MAY 2012

REVISIONS:
 NO. DESCRIPTION DATE

SHEET TITLE:
 ARCHITECTURAL
 FLOOR PLAN -
 LEVEL 1 -
 GREENEY

SHEET NO.:
 A101

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Government House is nationally significant in the evolution of Federal government architecture and the development of the historic preservation movement in the United States. Government House is one of the very few, if not the only, restorations of a historic property for Federal government functions that the Supervising Architect's Office undertook during any time in its evolution from the 1850s to 1939. Government House is an architectural type specimen valuable for the study of early restoration architecture by the Federal government in the United States. The emergence of St. Augustine as a "restored community" during the 1930s took much of its inspiration from Colonial Williamsburg's restoration that was initiated in 1926. The "restoration" of Government House in 1935-37 was a key investment by the Federal government in the evolution of St. Augustine as a restored community and thus outstandingly illustrates the history and evolution of historic preservation in the United States.

Government House represents the 1935-1937 "restoration", of a building on the site on which the Spanish Governor's Palace was once located. The mid-1930s restoration was undertaken to provide St. Augustine with a post office facility as well as rooms for customs collection and other Federal government functions. The building on the site was referred to as the U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine between its construction during 1935-1937 and 1966, when it was transferred to the State of Florida. After the transfer, it reverted to being called Government House, which was its name in 1821 when the United States assumed control over Florida, including St. Augustine and this building.

SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION

Summary

Government House is located at 48 King Street on the block bounded by King, Cordova, Cathedral, and St. George Streets. It faces the original Spanish Plaza to the east, and forms an integral part of the complex of colonial, territorial, and late nineteenth century buildings that surround the plaza. The building is three stories in height, steel-framed, and has a gable roof covered by flat tile. The east wing contains three old coquina walls (see description of coquina stone in next paragraph); the other walls are constructed of coquina and stucco. Each street façade has a balcony. The east wing includes a walled patio. Main entrances are on the north and south façades and lead into the main post office lobby, now an exhibition lobby.¹

¹ The Government House description is based on the material provided in *Government House: The 1935 U.S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida*, Historic Structure Report, May 31,

Coquina is a native shellstone found in the coastal region of Florida and Cuba. It is stone formed from coquina shells in large deposits that become cemented by calcium carbonate over long periods of time (over 100,000 years). Over the different locations in which it is found, the stone varies in texture and hardness. The most prized variety is from the Anastasia formation found near St. Augustine. The American Indians in the St. Augustine area were familiar with the stone and it became known and used by the European settlers. In the late seventeenth century, coquina was used in the construction of the Castillo de San Marcos. It was easy to quarry and absorbed cannon shot damage well.

Exterior

The building is framed with fireproof steel columns and beams, concrete floor slabs, and a steel trussed roof. The steel frame has been inserted within the shell of the older existing coquina walls. The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and the corners. Here the old coquina in an irregular course is exposed. The north, east, and south façades are the major public facades, with the west façade used as a delivery area and service area.

All of the openings in the walls date to the 1930s, the former openings having been filled with masonry as required. The openings consist of wood casement windows and doors with stone sills. Solid wood batten doors with iron straps and exposed hammered bolt heads are used in the older section and plate glass doors are used in the new portion of the main lobby.

A Spanish-style wood balcony is located over the main entrance on the north wall and a similar balcony on the east wall and south wall. A four-foot wall of coquina encloses a small court on the north and a similar wall encloses a large patio on the southeast corner.

North Façade: The north entrance is the central focal point of the north façade and is defined by a projection of the main roof over the upper balcony. The north façade extends 115 feet, 4 inches up to the recessed and lower height northwest ell, which continues to 145 feet, 2 inches in overall dimension. Up to the stepped back ell, the north façade is flat with a fenestration of varied heights and spacing and a dominant chimney to the northeast.

The casement windows remain preserved. The north façade features random exposed coquina, combined with stucco over brick infill over a steel frame. The north wall, dating from the ca. 1833 Mills/Wallen extension, was removed above the second floor line and new openings were cut according to the 1935 plan so that

2012. Susan Tate, AIA, Preservation Architect, was responsible for the historical narrative in the Historic Structure Report.

fragments of the previous wall, alongside reconstructed coquina masonry, are exposed.

East Façade: The east wall makes the strongest statement of historical reference, influenced by the 1764 watercolor drawing of a former government house. The east façade of the wing is dominated by the ceremonial balcony with heavy wood brackets, posts, and balustrade, features that recall but do not replicate the eighteenth century representation. The east balcony is reflected in the balconies above the north and the south entrances, although each is differentiated by details specific to each location.

The 1935 design of the east façade exposed coquina at the vertical quoins of the former corner projections or “towers” and at the former window openings, but considerable infill of stucco on brick was incorporated between the projecting ends, in window openings, and to extend the gable peak. The south wall of the east section, punctuated by French doors on both levels, was built 58 feet, 9 inches to the Main Lobby at the point of intersection with the early cross wall.

The east section south wall facing the courtyard follows the line of the previous building for 58 feet, 9 inches up to the foundation of the early cross wall located at the west end of the east section. Although the wing south wall is composed primarily of five sets of French doors or casements on both levels, some early coquina masonry may have been incorporated (primarily at the east corner) and reconstructed between the ground level openings to the southeast courtyard.

South Façade: The classical south entrance is headed by a flat parapet that adjoins the projecting south gable that encompasses an upper level balcony. The southwest ell is recessed from the south façade and terminates in the dominant chimney. The south entrance façade extends 58 feet, 11 inches westward to the recessed ell which extends 29 feet, 10 inches to a total dimension of 88 feet, 9 inches from the east courtyard wall. The southwest ell and northwest ell enclose the service area and loading dock that served the post office.

The south elevation is protected by the two-story gallery or porch, a feature also of the previous building. The gallery, along with large trees conserved during the project, provides shading from the south sun. The courtyard is defined by coquina masonry garden walls that intersect with the east and south elevations of the building.

West Façade: Formerly, the west façade served as the loading dock for the post office. This loading dock was later enclosed and the open gate on the south wall of the service court was walled between the driveway piers. A parking area was adjacent to the loading dock.

Interior

The building analysis identified a total of 21,855 square feet on the first and second floors: 11,127 square feet on the first floor and 10,728 square feet on the second floor. The basement provided an additional 2,415 square feet.

The main lobby forms the north-south spine of the building and was the hub of public activity for the post office. From the north entrance, the west wall gave access to the inquiry window and an obscure glass door leading to the Superintendent of Mails. The six bays, separated by pilasters and defined by floor and ceiling patterns, included spaces for mail drops, parcel post windows, stamps counters, and general delivery counters. On the west side of the mail lobby are bays for postal boxes, a C.O.D. window, and windows for money order, registry, and postal savings services.

The main lobby walls are finished in marble wainscot with brass grilles for the heating system. Original openings for postal windows and boxes remain, but the glass grilles and boxes, as well as the four ornamental lobby tables, have been removed. Original lanterns and door hardware are extant.

The interior doorways at the north and south entrances emphasize the significance of the lobby space with lunettes or tympanums over the doors with a relief panel at the north and spokes and glazing at the south. The entrance to the east section was also emphasized with a sculptural relief in the lunette over the doorway.

The east section was designed to incorporate offices for the Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster, which opened from the lobbies along the east and south, with the offices connected by a passage with closet and toilet facilities. The east section east and south lobby floor is terrazzo with metal strips and marble borders, in a modular pattern that conforms with ceiling modules of exposed decorative wood beams at the south and plaster vaults at the east. Marble wainscotting and antiqued heavy wood doors form entrances to the east lobby and to the postmaster's office. The two offices have smooth plaster ceilings with pendant translucent luminaires.

To the west of the main lobby, behind the postal windows, is the two-story post office work space. Iron grille work with shield details along the lobby ceiling line offer an opportunity for ventilation. The work space is large and open to the second level. Immediately to the west of the north entrance was the office of the Superintendent of Mails, with access from the Main Lobby and from the workspace through a caged vestibule. The hardwood flooring, the observation platforms, and viewing slots to provide security for the mail operations extend around the upper level of the work space with steel access ladders that remain in place.

The main lobby provides access to the second floor by a monumental masonry stair leading to an upper lobby and foyer corridor to the east suite of offices, originally designated for the customs collection functions. From the foyer corridor opens an *en suite* office space leading to a grand "Custom Office" at the end of the east section. The office features a platform with steps to reach the upper balcony looking east

over the Plaza, a corner fireplace above the fireplace in the lower level east lobby, windows to the north, and two sets of French doors opening to the south gallery.

The remainder of the upper floor included four offices at the east and south, two toilets, and a custodial closet, accessed by a corridor from the main stair and short upper flight of stairs.

Decorative Features

The 1930s decorative hardware remains throughout the building's exterior and interior. The features include polished bronze door levers on the courtyard wall of the main lobby, bronze thumb latches, bronze thresholds, radiator grilles, and bronze insect screens. The main stair case that connects the postal functions on the first floor with the customs collection functions on the second floor features a turned wooden newel post, decorative iron balusters, and marble trim.

The architect of the building, Mellen C. Greeley, described the decorative features in early 1936:

The door at the north entrance and the doors to the "Historical Room" are replicas of the door from the court yard to the Treasury in old Fort Marion, another historic building in the City. These doors are fitted with copies of the original hand wrought iron hardware. The ornamental stone doorway at the main entrance on King Street is an architectural adaptation of the doorway from the Court yard to the Chapel in Fort Marion with certain modifications, but with an attempt to reproduce the art of the period during which both of these original buildings were erected. The roof covering is of burned clay single tiles, in color ranging from black or purple to red, such as were used on similarly steep pitched roofs in northern Spain.²

Post-1966 Changes to the Building

After the 1966 decommissioning of the post office functions, the original east section spaces and partition walls were demolished in 1969, retaining the encased steel columns and ceilings. The interior of the main floor east section thereafter consisted of a single space, unfinished until adapted by the *Sala de Montiano*. In 1988, St. Ignacio Hernando de Larramendi y Montiano provided funding through the Montiano Foundation and the space assumed a new role as the *Sala de Montiano*, designed by architect Howard Davis.

² Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida, Being Erected by Procurement Division of the Treasury Department, of the United States of America, January 27, 1936," document attached to letter from Mellen C. Greeley to F. Larkin, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD, p. 6.

Today, the building retains a high level of integrity dating to the 1935 design. The post office lobby, the most important interior room, retains much of the decorative details and feel of a post office lobby. The most important exterior walls—the north, east, and south—are unchanged from their mid-1930s appearance. The immediate surroundings are the same as they were when the 1930s restoration was completed.

Currently, renovations are being undertaken to the existing restrooms, catering kitchen, storage, and museum gallery along with upgrades to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The majority of this work affects the west half of the first floor, including some areas that are not original to the 1930s era building. Some elements of the original building will be restored through this project, including exposing and repairing original teller windows with decorative metal grills. In July 2012, the historic preservation architect of the Florida Division of Historic Resources issued an approval of the Historic Structures Report and 100% Construction Documents for the rehabilitation work currently underway.

SECTION 8: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The building known as Government House today is nationally significant for its role as the first known effort by the Federal government to restore a historic building while providing accommodations for governmental functions. During the history of the Supervising Architect's Office, which spans the years between the early 1850s to 1939, the vast majority of buildings designed and constructed were new. The Supervising Architect's Office also supervised alterations and additions to existing buildings. However, previous to the St. Augustine Post Office project, no changes to Federal buildings were made that were called a "restoration." The restoration of the existing building with important historical associations represented the first project of its type for the Federal government. *But is this important?*

In addition, Government House is nationally significant in the evolution of historic preservation in the United States, an important grassroots effort to preserve the nation's heritage. Historic preservation offered opportunities for citizens to shape their built environments, using historic properties as anchors. This movement is arguably as old as the nation. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, individual properties across the nation were preserved for public visitation.

The modern historic preservation movement began in the 1920s with major restoration efforts at Williamsburg, Virginia, where an entire historic community was preserved. Williamsburg's restoration to the colonial and Revolutionary period brought about large gains in tourism and economic revitalization, encouraging other communities to pursue their own restoration efforts in the succeeding decades. In the 1930s, St. Augustine, Florida, was poised to take inspiration from Williamsburg and chart its own course through historic preservation. Government House was one of St. Augustine's earliest historic preservation efforts.

?!

Why not a district?

Was the OSA important to this context?

Archeology!

Government House in the Evolution of St. Augustine, Florida

St. Augustine was established in 1565 as a municipality and church headquarters. It served as a base for Catholic priests to set up missions along the Gulf Coast and South Atlantic Coast. The town plan for St. Augustine was laid out according to the Laws of the Indies, in which Spain specified an urban template consisting of a rectangular plaza with lots for the "government palace" and other official functions.

Government House is located on the same site as the succession of Governor's "palaces" or houses that were used as residences and administrative offices. The third Governor's house was constructed in 1713 of coquina walls. In 1763, what is known today as Florida came under British control. Florida returned to Spanish control in 1783, where it remained until 1821, when it became a United States territory. In 1845, Florida became a state. From 1598 to 1821, Government House served as the administrative center of colonial Florida.

In 1821, the United States conducted an inventory of federal properties in Florida and referred to this building as Government House. After 1821, the building was used for various U.S. government functions, including a military hospital and quarters for Federal troops during the Civil War and later a courthouse, custom house, and a post office. Renovations of the building during 1833-34 designed by architect Robert Mills and carried out by Elias Wallen and another renovation in 1873 designed by architect William M. Kimball changed the building's massing, floor plan, and height. During the nineteenth century, the plaza was diminished in size because of the widening of the surrounding streets and a new street was cut through on the north in 1890.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the building was variously called the "former Spanish Governor's Palace," "Government House," "Custom House," and "Post Office."

The Supervising Architect's Office

The United States government agency responsible for the design of the U.S. Post Office in St. Augustine was the Supervising Architect's Office, which was located within the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Both the Treasury Department and the Customs Service were established in 1789. Custom duties constituted a large portion of the revenue for the early Federal government and were vital to the welfare of the new nation. The Treasury Department assumed responsibility for the construction of Federal government buildings because of its responsibility for the collection of customs duties. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Secretary of the Treasury was directly involved in the design and construction of custom houses in the United States. By the early 1850s, the number of buildings increased to the point where the architectural and construction responsibilities were centralized within the Bureau of Construction headed by a member of the Corps of Engineers and a subordinate Supervising Architect. By the beginning of the

Civil War, the Corps left the Bureau of Construction and the Supervising Architect position oversaw the design and construction of not only custom houses, but also Federal courthouses and post offices. Often, all three functions were contained in a single building.

The Supervising Architect's Office remained in the Treasury Department until 1939 and was headed by a succession of 15 men, most of them architects. Over its history, this office designed thousands of Federal government facilities that covered a wide range of Federal functions and located throughout the nation. The most visible were post offices, custom houses, and courthouses. As the Federal government grew, this office also oversaw the design and construction of large, multi-purpose Federal office buildings. In 1933, with the development of Federal government programs to address the effects of the Great Depression, the office was placed in the Procurement Division within the Treasury Department and incorporated into the Public Works Branch. Architect W. E. Reynolds was the assistant director of the Procurement Division and assigned to oversee the Public Works Branch. The Supervising Architect at this point was James A. Wetmore, who served as Acting Supervising Architect from 1915 to 1934. A lawyer by training, Wetmore elected not to assume the title on a permanent basis because he was not an architect. Under Wetmore, architect Louis E. Simon oversaw the architectural work of the office. When Wetmore retired in 1934, Simon, at the age of 66, succeeded him. Simon retired in 1941.

In 1939, with the winding down of Depression-era programs and the gearing up of wartime preparations, the Supervising Architect's Office was removed entirely from the Treasury Department and became part of the Public Buildings Administration of the independent Federal Works Agency. With this move, Reynolds became the commissioner of public buildings. In 1949, this function was moved into the new General Services Administration, where responsibility for Federal government buildings remains to this day. Reynolds retired in 1954.³

Over the years of its existence within the Treasury Department, the Supervising Architect's Office played an important role in bringing the presence of the Federal government to thousands of communities in the form of post offices, custom houses, Federal courthouses, and Federal office buildings. Because of the office's high visibility, the private architects, represented by the American Institute of Architects, devoted years to lobbying to remove control over design work from the government architects and instead to place this important work in the hands of the private sector. During brief periods in the first half of the twentieth century, private architects were involved in designing Federal government buildings on a competitive basis and later on a contractual basis. During the 1930s, the Federal government made an effort to address the economic distress in the architectural profession by hiring private architects, like Mellen Greeley, to design Federal

³ For a history of the Supervising Architect's Office, see Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

buildings. At other times during the 1930s, it was felt that obtaining designs from private architects took longer than from government architects, which delayed the initiation of construction and the badly needed construction jobs that ensued. After World War II and the formation of the General Services Administration, the Public Buildings Service exercised primarily administrative and contractual responsibilities over the design work carried out by private architects.

In its function within the Federal government, the Supervising Architect's Office was an "architectural firm" that employed architects to design Federal government buildings throughout the nation as well as supervise their construction. The production of the Office during its history of nearly 90 years—from the early 1850s to 1939—can be analyzed best as incorporating certain types of buildings, such as large custom houses, like those found in major coastal cities such as New York City and Boston, and smaller post offices found throughout the nation in both suburban areas and smaller communities. The output also can be studied as evolving through definable historical periods, such as the antebellum Bureau of Construction period through the period of Alfred B. Mullett, the Gilded Age period, the Academic Classicism period, the 1920s period of affluence, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. An architectural operation of this scale, scope, and reach makes Federal buildings a significant building type, with individual buildings evaluated as representative of their respective periods of development and functions (large urban custom house, small post office, etc.).

Federal government buildings were more than buildings to house governmental functions. They played an important symbolic role in the period during which the Supervising Architect's Office produced designs for Federal buildings. In the pre-mass communication period, Federal government buildings were viewed as a means for the Federal government to communicate "democratic ideals, reflecting a growing sense of national identity." These buildings served as major architectural icons in the urban landscape and were often the largest buildings in the commercial center of towns and cities. They served as "unifying symbols that reflected authority and stability." During the Academic Classicism period, Federal buildings "bespoke the power, influence, and self-assurance of a nation on the brink of world leadership."⁴ Today, these messages are less evident in new Federal architecture, given the mass communication technologies that communicate the Federal government's functions and activities. The decline in the importance of post office services and customs collection also contributes to lessened architectural opportunities for the Federal government.

Mellen Clark Greeley, Architect of St. Augustine Post Office

The architect of the St. Augustine Post Office was Jacksonville native Mellen Clark Greeley (1880-1981). He studied architecture under J. H. W. Hawkins from 1901 to

⁴ The chapter, "Prelude," in Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, addresses the ways in which Federal government buildings communicated political, social, and economic messages to the public.

1908. (Hawkins was born in New York City, but moved to Jacksonville after the Great Fire of 1901. He designed many residences, commercial buildings, and churches in the city.) Greeley established his own practice in 1909. He was architect of many schools, apartment houses, residences, club houses, and churches throughout Jacksonville. Greeley became a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1921.

Like many architects during the 1930s, formerly busy and prosperous practices collapsed under the weight of the Great Depression. Despite the economic challenges, Greeley applied for and was accepted as a Fellow of the AIA in 1934. Greeley was active in architectural organizations, including a number based in Florida and served as an appointed member of various local commissions and boards. In 1958, at the end of his career, Greeley was granted the status of Member Emeritus of the AIA. By that time, he was referred to as the "Dean of Florida Architects." He died in 1981 at the age of 101.⁵

In 1969, Greeley produced an oral history of his life and career called "Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley, Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963." In the transcribed version of the history, he recalled how he came to be selected to design the St. Augustine Post Office. In 1931, he received an unexpected phone call asking about his interest in the commission to design the St. Augustine Post Office. Because of the lack of work in his office, Greeley received this inquiry with considerable excitement and regarded the project as a "godsend." The only possible connection was his effort spent on being considered for the design work on one of two federal buildings being considered in Jacksonville. The phone call directed him to contact someone in Washington, a step that "began one of the most pleasant architectural projects ever to come my way."⁶ The St. Augustine Post Office project allowed him to keep his office open until the economy improved.

The Design of Government House's Restoration

The new U.S. Post Office was constructed between 1935 and 1937 on the site previously occupied by the older post office. Its architect, Mellen Greeley, designed the building in the Spanish style to be compatible with the restoration aspirations of the city of St. Augustine. The historic coquina stone walls that dated from earlier construction and renovation periods were incorporated into the new building.

Because postal functions were located in the building on the historical site of the Governor's House, the creation of a new, modern postal facility with more space raised the question of either constructing a new building on a new site or a reuse of

⁵ For biographical information on Mellen Clark Greeley, see his membership file with the American Institute of Architects, Washington, DC.

⁶ "Exerpts from 'Musings of Mellen Clark Greeley Written in His Anec-Dotage, 1880-1963,' May 19, 1969, University of Florida Collections, p. 16.

the existing building on the existing site. Public disagreement over the location of the new postal facility delayed commencement of the construction process.

However, as early as 1926-1927, plans were prepared and in 1933, architect Greeley had been contracted to produce a design for a new building. Greeley's 1933 design was made for "an entirely new building to harmonize with the architecture of old St. Augustine and to be located on Government owned land on Cordova Street between Cathedral and King Streets directly opposite the famed Ponce de Leon Hotel and near the Alcazar Hotel."⁷ The details of these earlier designs are unknown because the drawings have not survived. However, the Supervising Architect's Office staff had already calculated that the needed square footage measured more than twice the size of the existing building—from 4,500 square feet to 11,000 square feet. In this staff report, it was stated: "When it was contemplated in 1926 and 1927 to remodel the building (plans having been made and bids received), there was so much agitation against the scheme that the project was deferred. The foundation of the adverse agitation by the citizens of St. Augustine was the historical value placed upon the old building."⁸

As Congressman J. Mark Wilcox wrote to Acting Supervising Architect James A. Wetmore on December 18, 1933: "St. Augustine has a distinctive type of architecture, being as you know, the oldest city in America and having been founded by the Spanish in the early period of our history. The new building should harmonize with the general architectural scheme of the city. It is probable that the present building might be so remodeled so as to afford ample space and convenience for the public, and at the same time conform to the general architectural plan of the city."⁹

By the time that New Deal funds, in this case Works Progress Administration (WPA) monies, became available for public buildings projects, the city of St. Augustine organized a Post Office Committee to agitate for funds to support a new post office facility. Harry H. Saunders, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, wrote to Silliman Evans, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, asking about the long-sought building project. In early 1934, he wrote: "St. Augustine seems to be fast becoming the 'Forgotten City' in the matter of a few Federal building."¹⁰ The new location identified in 1933 was judged to be unacceptable because the remains of

⁷ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, January 27, 1936, p. 2.

⁸ Superintendent, AE Division to James A. Wetmore, January 4, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁹ J. Mark Wilcox to James A. Wetmore, December 18, 1933, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁰ Harry H. Saunders to Silliman Evans, January 8, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Confederate General William Wing Loring rested under the monument on the land immediately west of the existing post office upon which it was proposed to erect the new building. "Another reason was the desire that the splendid park at the west end of the Plaza be kept unobstructed; and a third reason was the desire of all to retain the old building under Government supervision so that it would not be allowed to fall into worse repair."¹¹

Architect Greeley referred to a meeting in April 1933, where Reynolds met with St. Augustine leaders and civic groups and heard their requests and suggestions. After this meeting, "Mr. Reynolds instructed the Architect [Greeley] to make studies of the new scheme, the old building intact, or if that were impossible, to utilize as much of it as found feasible, and to restore the part so used to conform in appearance to the picture bearing date of 1764."¹²

Although earlier recommendations coming out of St. Augustine argued against remodeling the existing building on the site, the prospect of an extended delay in obtaining this key Federal government investment changed the community's views on the subject. By 1934, J. W. Hoffmann, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, assembled an impressive list of St. Augustine organizations that approved of the "proposed restoration and enlargement of the present Post Office structure." He also cited the "unanimous approval of the citizens generally throughout the city of St. Augustine."¹³ Hoffman further described the prospect of the "exterior to be constructed along the lines of the Spanish Governor's Mansion, and the interior, of course, to be a modern Post Office."¹⁴ In subsequent correspondence to officials of the Treasury Department, Hoffman continued to use the terms "restoration" and "conform with the old Spanish Governor's Mansion" in the desired approach to the post office project. Even with this agreement, individual protests against the plan caused Assistant Director of Procurement at the Treasury Department W. E. Reynolds to write: "It would be humanly impossible to always select a site satisfactory to everyone."¹⁵

In May 1934, the Treasury Department directed architect Greeley to study the feasibility of using the old building for a post office. As Greeley described his instructions, "I was instructed to accede if possible to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, that the old building be restored and preserved as a historic monument." In Greeley's opinion, the building was more English in appearance than Spanish.

¹¹ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 2.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ J. W. Hoffman to J. Mark Wilcox, May 5, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁴ J. W. Hoffman to W. J. Sears, May 7, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁵ W. E. Reynolds to J. H. Hempsted, September 24, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

Responding to the wishes of the citizens of St. Augustine, the Spanish tradition would be restored to the building. Greeley anticipated "using the shell of the old building only . . . [and] building a new floor structure inside the shell." Even so, the old building's size of 4,680 square feet would need to be enlarged to 6,360 square feet.¹⁶ Because the current design was entirely different from the one that Greeley had produced in 1933, his old contract was terminated and a new one executed.

In the summer of 1934, W. E. Reynolds traveled to St. Augustine to meet with Congressman Wilcox and Postmaster J. Herman Mauncy to finalize the plans for the post office project. During that visit, Reynolds stated that he was in favor of "the plan of restoration," even if it would entail additional expense over the cost of an entirely new building. Congressman Wilcox argued that the Federal government had already spent money on the restoration and preservation of "historic spots" and it was therefore justifiable that needed Federal government funds be spent on the restoration of the St. Augustine building.¹⁷ In 1935, the appropriation of \$200,000 for the building was increased to \$217,935.¹⁸

By January 1935, Greeley received survey drawings of the old building. Because of the special requirements of the project, Greeley asked for more time than would be required for an average post office design. Greeley cited the reasons for the delay: "... the old building must be given special consideration and its historic features must be given special attention."¹⁹ The Supervising Architect's Office was concerned about these delays and dispatched several of its own staff architects to Jacksonville to assist Greeley with the completion of the drawings and specifications for much of the summer of 1935. By September 30, proposals were solicited for the building's construction. On December 9, the firm of James I. Barnes of Springfield, Ohio, was selected as the contractor.

Within a few weeks of the awarding of the construction contract, the historic walls were threatened with collapse. Even before the construction began, the contractor expressed concern about the stability of the building's coquina walls while steel piles were driven into the ground. The contractor suggested the removal and rebuilding of the walls.

On January 24, 1936, the second floor walls collapsed. The perceived threat to the "sacred walls" caused alarm on the part of St. Augustine citizens. Some of the

¹⁶ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, June 4, 1934, Records for St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁷ "Government Officials Impressed," *St. Augustine Record*, article attached to letter from J. E. Hempsted to Henry L. Morgantheau, August 3, 1934, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹⁸ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

¹⁹ Mellen C. Greeley to Office of the Supervising Architect, July 30, 1935, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

wooden posts, beams, and lintels had been destroyed by termites causing the stone work to loosen, leaving large cavities in the walls. A resolution was worked out among the parties involved. The decision was made to remove and rebuild the second story walls. The first floor walls remained intact. Architect Greeley wrote: "it was suggested that as long as the old stones were used in the old wall in the exact location where they had always been, there could be no desecration of the old building." The contractor agreed to hold in place as much as possible of the first story of the north and south walls of the old building. Where the cavities needed repair, the old stones from the second story would be used. Any new masonry would be confined to the second story.²⁰ The east wall was considered to be constructed of better masonry and was kept in its entirety.

Even with the agreement on the treatment of the walls, observers decried what appeared to be the Federal government's destruction of large sections of the building and cited Williamsburg as the model of what ought to be happening. In response to these protests, Reynolds responded with:

The remodeling of the present building will preserve such portions of the walls of the old structure as are structurally sound, and, when completed, the new structure will be virtually a reproduction of the old building as it appeared before it was remodeled in 1834. It is believed that when the public understands fully that this reconstruction is much similar to the Rockefeller reconstruction at Williamsburg to which you refer, the present objections to the proposed rebuilding will disappear.²¹

The treatment of the exterior stucco and coquina stone exemplified an effort to protect the remaining walls and rebuild the rest so that both parts could be seen as a "whole." Architect Greeley asked that the face of the brick work be set slightly back from the face of the stone so that the stucco could "feather-edge" or taper off against the stone, with an irregular line (not a straight-line). "The effect desired is that of an old building which has been patched and rebuilt and on which the stucco has fallen off in some places."²² Supervising Architect Louis E. Simon approved Greeley's plan for the stucco on the building.

In a summary of the building's design, Architect Greeley wrote:

²⁰ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 28, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²¹ W. E. Reynolds to Mr. and Mrs. John T. Findley, February 17, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²² Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

The exterior of the building has been designed to correspond as far as possible with the original picture bearing date of 1764, which was adopted as the key-note of the restoration. The high pitched roof with gables has been copied from the picture, also the balcony on the east façade. The roof over the new wings and the balconies on the north and south fronts are designed to conform to the original as shown in the picture. The original high wall which inclosed (sic) the garden of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been replaced with a low wall which forms the two boundaries of the garden . . .²³

The building was dedicated on February 22, 1937. Mayor Walter B. Fraser arranged for the dedication to be scheduled on George Washington's Birthday, a national holiday, so that the school children would be free to attend the ceremony. Mayor Fraser also asked business owners to let their employees take the time to attend the ceremony. The city of St. Augustine and the Federal agencies represented in the building cooperated on a dignified dedication ceremony. J. Austin Latimer, who represented Postmaster General James A. Farley, gave a presentation that praised the building as the oldest public building in the United States.²⁴ Mayor Fraser thanked the Federal government for deviating from the usual plan for public buildings in allowing for the Spanish style building in keeping with its surroundings. Benedictions were given. Afterwards, a band concert entertained the crowd. Dignitaries from the State and locality were seated on the east balcony, which included Verne E. Chatelain, who represented the Carnegie Institution of Washington.²⁵ (See discussion of Carnegie Institution's involvement in St. Augustine, an effort headed by Chatelain, later in this document.)

Many years later, in the 1960s, Greeley recalled his efforts to include casement windows in the building, a design feature that required intervention by Reynolds to secure. Greeley's desire to retain the exposed coquina stone in the northeast corner also required the support of Reynolds, even though this material had not previously been used in a federal building.

During the building's role as a Post Office, it housed not only postal functions, but also offices for the U.S. Customs Service, Department of Agriculture county agents, the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Park Service, and U.S. Justice Department Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents.

Government House As A Unique Project in the Evolution of Federal Architecture Program

²³ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 5.

²⁴ "Post Office Building Dedicated," *St. Augustine Record*, February 22, 1937, p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Did we get into restoration then?

The first justification for national significance is that Government House is one of the very few, if not the only, restorations of a historic property for Federal government functions that the Supervising Architect's Office undertook during any time in its evolution from the 1850s to the late 1930s. The usual approach was to produce or commission a new design for a new building that housed post office, Federal courthouse, custom house, and other Federal government functions. With Government House, the Federal government ventured into the still new field of historic restoration at a time when there were few Federal government policies or standards to guide such work.

Because of significant investment by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Colonial Williamsburg became the pioneer in restoration research and reconstruction standards. The National Park Service assumed major responsibilities for the management of historic properties with the issuance of the Presidential Executive Order 6166 of 1933 that consolidated Federal historic sites and national parks under the National Park Service. One of the National Park Service's first restorations of a historic building occurred in 1934 with the Moore House in Yorktown, Virginia, which Rockefeller purchased and then sold to the National Park Service as part of the development of Colonial Parkway. In the absence of consistent or coherent policy from the Federal government, the Supervising Architect's Office undertook the restoration of Government House for post office functions in concert with the evolving restoration program for the city of St. Augustine. Thus, Government House is an architectural type specimen valuable for the study of early restoration architecture by the Federal government in the United States.

in flower policy

During the design and construction of the post office building, both the Supervising Architect's Office and architect Mellen Greeley spoke of the building's unique character within the highly regulated Federal architecture program. In requesting treatment of the stucco to resemble patching and rebuilding over the centuries, Greeley stated:


I realize that I am asking for something which has probably never been done before in a building for the Treasury Department, but the whole project is unusual. Also, the use of the old historical building in the schedule is unique and the work can be made outstanding by going a little more away from the usual without detriment to the utility of the building. In St. Augustine there are a number of beautiful examples of stone work such as I am asking for, where the stucco has come off in places and is intact in others. The Old Fort, the City Gates, etc., are examples."²⁶

When a request was made to include mention of the "restoration" in the official cornerstone, architect Greeley stated, "The fact that the building is probably the only restoration of an historical building for use by Government Departments was

²⁶ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, November 7, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

perhaps not brought to the attention of the Supervising Architect, and, if that had been done perhaps the standard lettering might have been changed on the stone."²⁷ Supervising Architect Simon responded to Greeley by stating that no further inscriptions should be placed on the cornerstone, but a tablet could be placed in the interior that would include interesting historical data.

In a 1936 explanation of the building's design, Greeley underscored the uniqueness of this building in the Federal government's architecture program. "What is unusual . . . is that the Government is now erecting a building in the City of St. Augustine, Florida, to house the Post Office and Custom House of that City, which is probably the most unique of all which the Government has ever built, and which is likely to be the only one of its kind ever to be built."²⁸ It would not be until the 1970s when the effects of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act became clear that historic rehabilitation and restoration became options. The successor agency to the Supervising Architect's Office, the Public Building Service of the General Services Administration, undertook the historic rehabilitation and restoration of Federal government buildings, including the Old Post Office on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, during this decade.

No.  The comparable buildings to the St. Augustine Post Office are the many other smaller Federal government buildings, mostly post offices, that were constructed throughout the country during the Depression Era. These buildings reflected the policies of the Board of Consulting Architects, an inhouse group made up of staff of the Supervising Architect's Office and consulting architects, that was set up at the suggestion of LeRoy Barton, an assistant to Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., to improve the design of post offices. The Board recommended that federal buildings should be "of simple government character in consonance with the region in which they are located and the surroundings of the specific sites." This regional character included architectural traditions as well as natural or manufactured products of the vicinity.²⁹

While the designs of smaller post office projects of the period were grounded in a region's architectural traditions, they also included classically inspired designs similar to those of the early 20th century as well as Moderne and Art Deco designs. The design for the St. Augustine Post Office building can be viewed as an exception to the prevailing design policies of the Federal government's architectural program because it was not entirely new. While it illustrated regional architectural traditions, the design incorporated historic building fabric—the walls—to produce what was understood to be a "restoration." This makes the St. Augustine Post Office a property that embodies "the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type

²⁷ Mellen C. Greeley to W. E. Reynolds, January 7, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁸ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House, at St. Augustine, Florida," January 27, 1936, p. 1.

²⁹ For a discussion of design policies of the Supervising Architect's Office during the 1930s, see Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, pp. 261-268.

specimen (a post office) exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style, or method of construction." (NHL Criterion 4)

Government House in the Evolution of Historic Preservation in the United States

While Government House can be evaluated within the context of the Federal architecture program, it also can be studied against the backdrop of the national historic preservation activities that were evolving dramatically in the 1920s and 1930s. Nineteenth century historic preservation was largely concerned with individual properties, such as Mount Vernon and Monticello, and in the last part of that century, with buildings of the colonial era. In the twentieth century, historic preservation became increasingly concerned with the preservation of not only single properties, but also with whole communities.

The preservation of Colonial Williamsburg set the standard for many other communities that wished to emulate the success of Virginia's colonial capital city. After its key role in the nation's revolutionary history, Williamsburg became a town that time passed by. In 1903, Dr. William Archer Rutherford Goodwin assumed the rectorship of Bruton Parish Church. Imbued with the historical significance of the building, he took on the rectorship job on the condition that the building's interior be returned to its colonial form. Although he departed for Rochester, New York, to assume a position in that city, he returned to Williamsburg in 1923 to assume a position with the College of William and Mary.

Goodwin's vision for Williamsburg extended far beyond individual buildings. Charles Hosmer wrote of Goodwin: "No major preservation leader in the United States before Goodwin had expressed a desire to save an entire community."³⁰ In fact, Goodwin envisioned Williamsburg as the center of a group of preserved Revolutionary Era communities in the lower peninsula of Virginia.³¹ Such an enterprise required major financial support. After appealing to a number of prominent families for their support of his dream of the restoration of Williamsburg, Goodwin persuaded a corporation of Bruton Parish Church to acquire the Wythe House.

In 1924, while giving a lecture before the New York City chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, Goodwin met John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and invited him to visit Williamsburg. Because Rockefeller and his wife were patrons of the nearby Hampton Institute, it was convenient for them to include Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown in their next visit. The visit to Williamsburg impressed Rockefeller of the opportunity to "restore an entire colonial community and keep it free from incongruous

³⁰ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*, Vol. I, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981, p. 11.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

surroundings ... [that] was irresistible.”³² Rockefeller gave his approval to the purchase of the Ludwell-Paradise House in 1926, which marked the beginning of Williamsburg’s resurrection. The rebirth was concerned not only with the preservation of buildings and gardens, but also its value in teaching patriotism, high purpose, devotion, and sacrifice for the common good.³³

The restoration of Williamsburg proceeded through the completion of the first phase in 1934. This important benchmark was celebrated with a visit from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who praised the progress made: 61 colonial buildings restored, 94 colonial buildings rebuilt, the gardens reconstructed. Roosevelt added, it was a joy to see the transformation, “the renaissance of these physical landmarks, the atmosphere of the whole glorious chapter in our history . . .”³⁴ The publicity generated by the town’s restoration brought Williamsburg’s story to communities nationwide. In addition, the experience gained by the architects and landscape architects on this project “developed a standard for preservation research while also initiating the field of restoration architect.”³⁵

Historic preservation in St. Augustine was fortunate to have several key supporters. One of these was its mayor, Walter B. Fraser, who already owned the “Fountain of Youth” property. The other was the local newspaper, the *St. Augustine Record*, and its editor, Nina Hawkins. Both were concerned about demolitions of historic buildings and sought ways to preserve historic buildings as part of maintaining, if not increasing, the economic vitality of the city. Like many older communities, St. Augustine, Florida, took much of its inspiration from Colonial Williamsburg’s restoration. St. Augustine was a natural successor to Colonial Williamsburg as a restored community because St. Augustine is considered to be the oldest continuously occupied European settlement in the United States. During the 1920s and 1930s, older communities like St. Augustine, Savannah, Charleston, and the Vieux Carré in New Orleans evolved into important restored communities and served as national models for communities in succeeding decades.

During this period, an increasing number of Americans traveled by automobile to historic destinations, a leisure activity that generated economic development and revitalization. This type of tourism added further encouragement to older communities to look to Colonial Williamsburg and other restored communities, like St. Augustine, for guidance on funding, approach, and methodology. As historian Charles Hosmer wrote:

Would-be preservationists around the United States became aware of the magnitude of the Williamsburg Restoration in the mid-1930s as they viewed

³² George Humphrey Yetter, *Williamsburg Before and After: The Rebirth of Virginia's Colonial Capital*, Williamsburg, VA: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1988, p. 53.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p 62.

it through magazines and newspapers. The work was a success by every standard: It was scholarly, it attracted a great many visitors, and it proved that large amounts of money could be put into preservation projects.³⁶

In addition, the President of Colonial Williamsburg, Kenneth Chorley, became actively involved in bringing the message of Williamsburg's restoration experience to other communities. "Between 1935 and 1950 Chorley visited, advised, and inspired any number of preservation groups from St. Augustine, Fla., to Deerfield, Mass. He always would talk to people who were sincerely interested in understanding the many ramifications of his work."³⁷

The restoration of the St. Augustine post office can be viewed as the first step in the larger restoration effort that involved the entire historic community. In some respects, St. Augustine's preservation dates back at least to 1924, when President Calvin Coolidge established Fort Marion (now Castillo de San Marcos) as a national monument. With this designation, the National Park Service assumed management of the fort. The first superintendent was historian Herbert E. Kahler. Earlier the War Department managed the fort in cooperation with the St. Augustine Historical Society. The Society also administered what was referred to as the "oldest house" in St. Augustine. In addition, archeological investigations on the "Fountain of Youth" grounds, which was owned by Mayor Fraser, were carried out by the Smithsonian Institution, the Carnegie Institution, and later the University of Florida. This work focused on the site of the American Indian village and the first campsite and settlement of Admiral Pedro Menendez de Aviles of Spain from 1565-1566.

While visiting St. Augustine in 1936, John C. Merriam, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and his brother, Charles, met with Herbert Kahler and toured the town with him. Merriam was impressed with the town's role as the "sole surviving bastion of Spanish culture on the East Coast,"³⁸ Through Kahler, John Merriam met Mayor Fraser. Both men agreed to work toward the preservation of St. Augustine; however, each had their own vision for how this should proceed.

Mayor Fraser wanted a Williamsburg-style wholesale restoration of Spanish St. Augustine. This was the model that was admired around the country and demonstrated historic preservation's effectiveness in generating economic revitalization and serving as an educational powerhouse. He assumed that the Carnegie organization and the wealth that it represented would be able to ensure the success of the effort. As a distinguished paleontologist John Merriam favored an indepth research effort into the Spanish colonial period and selective restoration based on this research to be carried out by others.

³⁶ Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age*, p. 67.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 314.

Founded in 1902, the Carnegie Institution is best known today for its role in science. However, at its founding and up to the opening of World War II, it also was an important force in the historical field. Its Director of Historical Research, J. Franklin Jameson, conducted the earliest inventory of Federal government records and published the first comprehensive listing in 1904. In collaboration with his associate Waldo Gifford Leland, Jameson paved the way for the establishment of the National Archives in 1934. The organization also was heavily involved in archeological studies throughout the Western hemisphere. With the outbreak of World War II, the organization terminated its historical work and never returned to it. Today, the organization is better known as the Carnegie Institution for Science or simply, the Carnegie Institution. It is one of 20 different and unaffiliated Carnegie organizations that Andrew Carnegie founded, including the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC.

Soon after meeting Merriam, Mayor Fraser invited the prestigious Carnegie Institution of Washington into the town and organized a national committee that would involve not only the Carnegie Institution, but also the National Park Service because of the possibility that the bureau might expand its responsibilities beyond the fort. In addition, the Carnegie Corporation in New York provided funding support to this effort through grants to the Carnegie Institution. The Carnegie Corporation also provided funding through the Carnegie Institution to support Frances Benjamin Johnston's photographic documentation of St. Augustine's historic buildings, which was part of Johnston's larger documentation work on historic buildings throughout the South (also supported by the Carnegie Corporation).

In January 1937, John Merriam visited St. Augustine again, this time as the representative of the Carnegie Institution that was initiating an important step in the preservation of St. Augustine. This time, he was welcomed with greater fanfare that included pageants and parades as well as a public lecture opportunity.³⁹ This was Mayor Fraser's way of demonstrating community support for the Carnegie Institution's new role.

From 1936 to 1940, the Carnegie Institution made a significant investment in the historic, archeological, and photographic documentation of St. Augustine that would guide any restoration projects. Merriam made good on his promise that the Carnegie-sponsored work would be conducted according to the highest research standards by hiring former National Park Service Chief Historian Verne E. Chatelain to become an employee of the Carnegie Institution and oversee the St. Augustine work. Hired as Chief Historian for the National Park Service in 1931, Chatelain had played a key role in the implementation of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Executive Order 6166 that transferred War Department historic sites to the National Park Service as well as the Historic Sites Act of 1935 at the National Park Service. Because of Merriam's membership on the National Park System Advisory Board, he came to know and trust Chatelain. Chatelain began his employment with

³⁹ "Thousands See Restoration Pageant," *St. Augustine Record*, January 12, 1937, p. 1.

the Carnegie Institution in November 1936 and arrived in St. Augustine the following month.

Justification for this investment was based on the Carnegie Institution's work in the archeology of the Southwest, Mexico, and Central America, to which the St. Augustine work was highly compatible. "A further reason for the St. Augustine Program is to be found in the growing interest and concern in developing the most effective methods of preserving and using outstanding American historic sites, buildings, and remains."⁴⁰ This statement reflected Merriam's experience as a member of the National Park System Advisory Board and its role in implementing the Historic Sites Act of 1935. St. Augustine offered a strong case study for this goal because of the large number of "outstanding sites, buildings, and remains to be found in this ancient capital of Florida, but the city at present time is anxious to embark upon a program for their effective perpetuation, and use by the large visiting public which annually flocks to this famous resort region."⁴¹

With funding from both the Carnegie Institution and the city of St. Augustine, Chatelain assembled a strong historical and archeological staff and began investigations. However, it became clear that more than the funded six months of work would be needed. In addition, both Merriam and Chatelain did not think the Williamsburg model would work for St. Augustine because the latter was a living city and had no single period of significance. The city's historical development spanned four centuries. Merriam cited the large number of historic resources that needed to be preserved, protected, and interpreted to the public: "from pre-Columbian occupation by aboriginal Americans up through occupation by Spanish, French, and English, and on into history of the old South and up to the present . . ."⁴² In order to show tangible results from the research-oriented project, Merriam agreed to help with the purchase of the Llambias House and have the St. Augustine Historical Society manage its restoration and interpretation. The research work on St. Augustine continued but funded on a half-year basis at a time.

Merriam's retirement in 1939 for health reasons spelled the beginning of the end of the Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine. Merriam's successor as president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, Vannevar Bush, an electrical engineer and inventor, terminated the Carnegie Institution's historical and archeological programs in order to focus solely on the hard sciences. The Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine came to a close. In 1941, the Carnegie Institution published Chatelain's work, *The Defenses of Spanish Florida, 1565 to 1763*. This publication covered far more than the defenses and it was an important model in the

⁴⁰ Verne E. Chatelain, "St. Augustine Historical Program," in Carnegie Institution of Washington Year Book No. 36, July 1, 1936-June 30, 1937, p. 372.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 373.

⁴² *Report of the President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington for the Year Ending October 31, 1937*, p. 55.

development of historical documentation for a historic community that could be used for restoration and educational purposes.

During World War II, Chatelain became an administrative officer and liaison officer in the Executive Offices of the White House, a position he held until 1945.⁴³ After then, Chatelain became a professor of history at the University of Maryland, where he remained until his retirement. He served as an oral history subject for Charles Hosmer's books on the history of historic preservation, and his family ensured that his work in St. Augustine would be documented through the donation of his St. Augustine papers to the St. Augustine Historical Society.

After the conclusion of World War II, Walter Fraser resumed his historic preservation efforts. During the late 1940s, Fraser, now a member of the Florida State Senate, invited Kenneth Chorley of Colonial Williamsburg, along with Williamsburg staff members, to visit St. Augustine's preservation and provide advice. In February 1947, Chorley visited the community and provided his evaluation of historic preservation work as well as the public interpretation programs.⁴⁴ In the 1950s, historic preservation in St. Augustine found new life in the form of support from the state of Florida and the passage of the historic preservation zoning ordinance.

Occurring at the same time as the initiation of the Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine, the "restoration" of Government House in 1935-37 was a key investment by the Federal government in the evolution of St. Augustine as a restored community and thus outstandingly represents the history and evolution of historic preservation in the United States. It is interesting that Chatelain's first report in the Carnegie Institution's 1936-1937 Year Book on the St. Augustine project included a discussion of the uses of architectural research in restoration and contextual design:

In several cases, architectural studies have been undertaken in order to guide the repair of general construction of historic houses, as in the work with the Sanchez House, an eighteenth-century building, and the Catholic rectory, a nineteenth-century building. This guidance has been given too in the case of the development of several new businesses in the 'old section,' where an attempt is being made to simulate the St. Augustine architectural type in the interest of general harmony.⁴⁵

It is noteworthy that Chatelain and his staff were already providing design advice to the community at large, much in the same way that after World War II local governments provided design guidelines for historic buildings and buildings within

⁴³ Deposition of Verne E. Chatelain, Walter B. Fraser vs. Curtis Publishing Company, United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida—Jacksonville Division, October 8, 1951, p. 4, Fraser Family Archives.

⁴⁴ "Williamsburg Head Visits Here, Confers with Local Citizens," unidentified newspaper article, February 28, 1947, Archives & Records, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 377.

historic districts. Certainly Chatelain's embrace of the "St. Augustine architectural type" was applicable to the St. Augustine post office design.

Evaluation of Historic Preservation Methods

The St. Augustine post office project occurred at a time when there was no organized national movement or program that provided models, guidance, or technical assistance. During the 1920s and 1930s, the field was very new and riding the wave of innovation. Preservation terminology, such as use of the word "restoration" was still inconsistently used from one location to another. The reconstruction of demolished buildings was readily embraced by preservationists, especially if it was based on architectural and archeological research. Since the pivotal pre-World War II period, the field has become larger, better organized, and consistent as well as based on a larger legislative and administrative framework. However, based on past experience, what is today accepted as good preservation practices may in future years be changed according to new discoveries and new technologies. Thus, it is important to evaluate the St. Augustine post office project by the standards, such as they were, in the 1930s, not by the standards of the early twenty-first century.

The collapse of the building's second story walls in January 1936 and the ensuing public outcry underscored the major omission in the project—the lack of historical research and documentation prior to undertaking construction. On February 27, 1936, F. P. Trott, Assistant Executive Officer for the Supervising Architect's Office prepared a report for W. E. Reynolds on the building's evolution during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The report indicated that "this old building was virtually rebuilt in 1834 Repairs and alterations to the building were also made in 1873, 1886, and 1923." While the north and west walls were substantially rebuilt in the 1830s, additional changes to the building when under U.S. control made it difficult to verify if the south and east walls "are those reputed to have been built in 1587-1603."⁴⁶

In early 1937, when the post office building was nearly completed, several representatives from the city of St. Augustine and the St. Augustine Historical Society and Institute of Science asked J. Herman Manucy, postmaster, if the official cornerstone inscription could include mention that the present building is a "restoration of the former old Spanish Governors' Mansion."⁴⁷ The Supervising Architect's Office rejected this request. Discussions over the bronze plaques that were originally placed on the walls of the old post office building raised additional questions about the research basis for the 1935-1937 restoration.

⁴⁶ F. P. Trott to W. E. Reynolds, February 27, 1936, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, 1933-1939, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁴⁷ C. S. Smith and David R. Dunham to J. Herman Manucy, January 4, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

After the building was dedicated on February 22, 1937, Supervising Architect Simon communicated with William Adams Slade of the Library of Congress on the matter of the text included in the old bronze plaques. Simon questioned the statement made during the dedication ceremonies that the older part of the building was the oldest public structure in America. In Simon's opinion, "the remodeled building never was part of the Governor's Palace, but was built in 1834 by the United States Government as a Court House." He asked that Slade look into this matter.⁴⁸ Slade responded with an opinion from the Library's Chief, Division of Fine Arts, that "it would require considerable research through historical documents of various sorts to determine definitely the antiquity and original use of the various parts of the building" and that the search might lead to public documents in St. Augustine.⁴⁹

The paucity of historical documentation for the St. Augustine post office restoration was similar to the situation that faced the restoration of colonial Williamsburg. Although the architectural and archeological research had been of a high order, Reverend Goodwin was concerned that the judgments regarding the restoration of the Wren Building and the reconstructed Capitol in Williamsburg required that a higher priority given to historical research. Fortunately, Goodwin's cousin, Mary Goodwin, who was already involved in research on the Governor's Palace, the Wren Building, and the Capitol was able to travel to England and especially to Oxford where she examined an engraved copper plate of a "village in Virginia" listed in the Bodleian collection. The "Bodleian Plate" provided images of important public buildings in Williamsburg. Like the rest of the colonial Williamsburg restoration, the issues of research, interpretation, visitor management, and public relations needed to be developed by the Williamsburg personnel without models to which to refer. In turn, what Williamsburg did served as models for the rest of the nation.

In the end, architect Greeley placed the building in the context of centuries of change:

And so once again in its long and eventful career this fine old building is to undergo a change. Who can say what further changes the future may bring to it, before its final passing? Will they be, as this is, merely changes and rearrangements to suit current needs, or will they bring complete destruction? In this present reincarnation the spirit of the old building has been kept alive by the continued use of the masonry walls, and by the restoration of the eastern façade to its former beauty. It is hoped that the requirements of twentieth century civilization have not entirely obliterated the artistic endeavors of the seventeenth century.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Louis A. Simon to William Adams Slade, April 28, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁴⁹ William A. Slade to Louis A. Simon, May 5, 1937, Records for the St. Augustine Post Office, Record Group 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁵⁰ Mellen C. Greeley, "A Description of the Proposed New Federal Post Office and Custom House," January 27, 1936, p. 1.

What St. Augustine accomplished in preserving its historic resources attracted national attention, including articles in the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, and the *Washington Post*. Tourism was and remains a heavily covered topic for newspapers. St. Augustine's role as the first permanent European settlement in the nation held the attention of travel writers. The fact that it was founded more than 50 years before the Mayflower was a major focus of tourism writing and promotion. For example, in 1934, the *Washington Post* reported that Fredericksburg, Williamsburg, Charleston, and St. Augustine were cooperating on a joint marketing campaign to promote travel to the "four most historic cities of America." Both Fredericksburg and Charleston vied for the title as being the nation's most historic city. "Civic authorities feel that a combination with Williamsburg, restored by the Rockefeller millions, and St. Augustine, oldest settlement in the United States, would be of mutual benefit by uniting their resources and ending these disputes."⁵¹

The initiation of the Carnegie Institution's work in St. Augustine also brought the city's historic resources to a national audience. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* carried a story about the inauguration of the Historical Survey of St. Augustine, an event important because the city was the first permanent white settlement in the nation. The article reported on the "elaborate luncheon" provided for Carnegie Institution President Merriam, which included W. J. Winter of Chicago, archeologist for the project.⁵² An extensive article in the *New York Times* reported on the Carnegie Institution's work appeared in March 1937. The article emphasized the American Indian sites, including the large shell mound that would shed light on the Timucuan Indians, and cited the work of Andrew E. Douglass's study of shell and sand mounds along Florida's east coast. The article stated:

Under the direction of Dr. Verne E. Chatelain obscure evidence will be unearthed, dusted off, and given permanency. No effort will be made to reconstruct the city as it was at a certain period, but ancient buildings will be restored, and legislation will be sought to prevent their destruction . . . St. Augustine, because of its interest-compelling antiquity, is today a leisurely Winter and Summer retreat. Its mingled traditions have been peculiarly shaped by history.⁵³

The *Washington Post* followed several weeks later with its own article on the Carnegie Institution's work. The Post cited the leadership of Mayor Fraser and the city commission that endorsed the "possibilities of the restoration idea." The vision that dominated the effort "would make St. Augustine a great museum for the study of early American history. But the ancient houses, when reconstructed, would be

⁵¹ "Four Historic Cities Plan Joint Campaign to Attract Tourists," *Washington Post*, April 21, 1934, p. 6.

⁵² "St. Augustine is Impressive for Inauguration Fete," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 17, 1937.

⁵³ "Oldest City is Restored," *New York Times*, March 7, 1937, p. 178.

lived in. There would be nothing to mar the progress of St. Augustine but rather much to stimulate its attractions as a resort."⁵⁴

During the 1930s and particularly in mid-decade when the Carnegie Institution began its St. Augustine Historical Program, the city was a national model for restoration as well as a prime example of how to preserve an entire community as a living community, rather than an outdoor museum as Williamsburg symbolized. The high priority devoted to historical research on the city also served as a national model for the kind of documentation required in undertaking this kind of effort. Government House stands as an important early restoration that marked the initiation of the city's important place in the national historic preservation movement that continues to today.

Return to Government House

In 1966, a new post office was built in a different location in St. Augustine. The 1930s post office building was turned over to the General Services Administration, where was deeded to the State of Florida for its use as the headquarters for historic preservation activities in the city. It then reassumed its 1821 name: Government House. Today, Government House is a contributing building within the St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District National Historic Landmark and has retained a high degree of integrity reflecting the building's appearance from the 1935-37 restoration.

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- why!

The key place of Government House in the development of the Federal architecture program and in the national historic preservation program justifies its designation as a National Historic Landmark. It was the only "restoration" carried out by the Office of the Supervising Architect's Office during its nearly century-long existence. Later, after passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 and the full development of Section 106 of that legislation, the General Services Administration restored more historic Federal government buildings using the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines provided by the National Park Service. When historic post offices and other Federal government buildings are transferred to other public or private ownership, these buildings are rehabilitated according to the same standards and guidelines. When viewed against this progression of how the Federal government addresses its own historic government buildings, Government House is placed at the very earliest point in the trajectory.

where
is
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link?

For St. Augustine, its own role in the development of restored communities is secured through its pioneering work in historic preservation that dates back to the 1920s, if not earlier. Like the rest of the nation, St. Augustine's leading citizens were impressed with the success of the Williamsburg restoration and aimed to apply the Revolutionary Era town's lessons to the Spanish colonial town along Florida's east coast. St. Augustine was unable to establish a historic open air museum as is found

⁵⁴ "Historic Town in Florida Proves Mecca for Artists," *Washington Post*, March 21, 1937, p. F5.

in Williamsburg, but, in the final analysis, that is its saving grace. St. Augustine remains a town for the living—where businesses, government agencies, residents, and visitors continue to use the town's historic buildings for everyday purposes. As Verne Chatelain stated:

... the City of St. Augustine is not merely a grave yard of past memories, but still exists as a changing and developing community. Therefore it was felt that the [St. Augustine History] program should promote legitimate community interests, for if such were the case then the citizens could cooperate in practical fashion in the protection of their historical resources, recognizing in them an important factor in their own future prosperity.⁵⁵

Government House continues its role as the headquarters of the Florida state government's continuing stewardship of St. Augustine's historic properties and the ongoing vitality of this unique place in American history. In that role, Government House will continue to provide instruction on the evolution of Federal government architecture and historic preservation—both at the national level of significance.

⁵⁵ Verne E. Chatelain, "The St. Augustine Historical Program: A Statement of Its Organization, Purposes and Accomplishments," Verne E. Chatelain Collection, St. Augustine Historical Society, pp. 3-4.



Draft NHL Nomination for Government House, St. Augustine, Florida

↑ MESSAGE

leetoni@comcast.net <leetoni@comcast.net>

Mon, Mar 4, 2013 at 9:47 AM

To: alexandra_lord@nps.gov, james_jacobs@nps.gov, patty_henry@nps.gov, erika_seibert@nps.gov, turkiya_lowe@nps.gov, cynthia_walton@nps.gov

Dear Lexi, Jamie, Patty, Erika, Turkiya, and Cynthia:

Thank you for your comments last week on the letter of inquiry regarding the NHL nomination of Government House in St. Augustine, Florida. Following up on last week's telephone call, I am sending you the current draft of the nomination text. You will note that I have not placed the material in the official form, but have kept the material as a Word text file.

I would appreciate your review of and comments on this draft. In the preparation of this nomination text, I unearthed a great deal of material on the design and construction for this building as well as on the evolution of historic preservation in the 1930s.

Let me know if you need anything else.

With best regards,

Toni

Antoinette J. Lee

Historian

P. O. Box 3407

Arlington, VA 22203-3407

Ph: 703-525-0943

Cell: 703-298-4091



DraftNHLNominationMarch4.docx

73K

Copy of the FL State Historic Preservation Office Historic
Properties Inventory Form for Government House, St.
Augustine, FL (undated)

FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE
 HISTORIC ST. AUGUSTINE PRESERVATION BOARD
 HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

I. LOCATION & LEGAL DESCRIPTION

FDAHRM _____ 802== Site No. 85J 1027 1009==
 Site Name: Government House 830== Survey Date: 7809 820==
 Address: 48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084 905==
 Instructions for Locating: _____
 _____ 813== County: St. Johns 808==
 Location: City Of St. Augustine Plaza 868==
 (subdivision) (block) (lot)
 _____ 868==
 Owner of Site: Name: Trustees of Internal Improvement Fund, Inc. ;
 Address: Elliot Building
 Tallahassee, FL 32304 902==
 Occupant or Manager: Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board (occupant) 904==
 Type of Ownership: State 848== Zoning: HP-2
 NR Classification Category: Building 916== Recording Date: _____ 832==
 UTM: 17 469740 3306700 890== Location: T07S R30E S18 812==
 (zone) (easting) (northing) (T) (R) (S)
 Map Reference: USGS St. Augustine 7.5 MIN 1956 (PR 1970) 809==
 Recorder: Name & Title: Scardaville, Dr. Michael C. (Historian) ;
 Address: H.S.A.P.B 818==

II. SITE DESCRIPTION

| | |
|--|--|
| Condition of Site: | Threats to Site: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Excellent</u> 863== | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Zoning</u> 878== |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Good</u> 863== | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Development</u> 878== |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Fair</u> 863== | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Deterioration</u> 878== |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Deteriorated</u> 863== | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Borrowing</u> 878== |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Transportation</u> 878== |
| Integrity of Site: | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Fill</u> 878== |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Altered</u> 858== | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Dredge</u> 878== |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unaltered</u> 858== | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Other</u> 878== |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Original Site</u> 858== | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Restored - Date:</u> 858== | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Moved - Date:</u> 358== | |



SEE SITE FILE STAFF FOR ORIGINAL PHOTO(S) OR MAP(S)

 IV. SIGNIFICANCE

 Areas of Significance: Architecture, Politics/Government, Military,
Archaeology: Historic

920==

Statement of Significance: (911==)

ARCHITECTURE

Government House, situated on the site of the first Spanish Governor's residence, faces the original Spanish Plaza to the east and forms an integral part of the complex of colonial, territorial and monumental late 19th century structures that encircle the plaza. The plan of this Spanish Colonial Revival structure forms an irregular "L" on the eastern boundary of the property. Structures on the site have evolved in successive periods from the irregular complex of the Governor's residence, circa 1713, to an "L" plan, circa 1833, to a simple rectangular plan of 1873, then back to the present irregular form according to the drawings of Architect Mellon C. Greeley in 1936. The building is currently three stories in height, steel-framed, and has a gable roof covered by flat tile. The east wing contains three old coquina walls, although the south wing was constructed in 1936. Each street facade has a balcony, and the south facade of the east wing, which overlooks a walled patio, has a two-story porch. Main entrances are in the north and south street facades and lead into the exhibition lobby. Details of the building are formal, massive, Spanish in style, and generally oversized in scale.

The existing structure is framed with fireproof steel columns and beams, concrete floor slabs and steel trussed roof. Except for the new south wing and the extension to the west, this steel frame has been inserted within the shell of an older existing wall of native shellstone (coquina). This existing wall was underpinned and shored at the time of new construction. The overall existing north dimension is 144'-10", incorporating 115'-4" of the older wall. At this point, the wall breaks back to enclose and demark the original older west wall of a distance of 7'6". The east wall, consisting of the entire older wall, measures 39'4". The older south wall continues from this point for 58'9" where it intersects the new wing added to the south. This intersection occurs at an old cross wall in the former interior, part of which is incorporated in the new interior.

All of the openings in the existing walls are new, the former openings having been filled with masonry as required. The former recessed portion of the east wall has also been filled in on the first floor only. The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and the corners. Here the old coquina in irregular course

(over)

 V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. The following historical report is based on the study of Albert Manucy and Luis R. Ana, "Historical Significance of Federal Building: Federal Post Office and Customhouse", unpublished manuscript (St. Augustine, 1965).

2. St. Augustine City Directory, 1885-1924; Historic Properties Inventory Research File.

3. For additional information on Government House see two reports in the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board Block and Lot File, including Doris Wiles, "U. S. Post Office", unpublished manuscript (St. Augustine,

for its purchase as an official residence.

The House of 1690. The Canzo house evidently served until the 1680's, when it was replaced by a new two-story building with balconied masonry walls. The construction required 200 days in 1689-1690, and was supervised by a British expatriate named John Collins. This was the "governor's house" where the shipwrecked Quaker Jonathan Dickinson found hospitality in 1696. "We were got up a pair of stairs," wrote he, "at the head whereof stood the governor, who ordered my wife to be conducted to his wife's apartment. I and John Smith went into a room where the governor asked us a few questions; but seeing how extreme cold we were, he gave us a cup of Spanish wine and sent us into his kitchen to warm ourselves at the fire." The 1690 building was burned in 1702 by British troops departing after their unsuccessful siege of the Castillo. Stone from the ruined walls was salvaged for a guardhouse on the plaza.

The House of 1713. Government House was rebuilt sometime after 1706 and before 1713, at which time the record mentions a fiesta, during which the governor and his lady provided sweets and drinks in the patio and tossed coins from the balcony to the crowds below. To this Spanish capitol of Florida came English emissaries from Carolina and Georgia, urging de facto recognition of their settlements, and gathering intelligence to guide tactics against Spanish Florida. Here too were received Indian leaders and their retinues who bespoke allegiance to Spain--or sometimes the opposite.

The Renovation of 1759. A major renovation of the house is mentioned in the records of 1759, and soon thereafter a sketch and an appraisal provided detailed information for the first time. The main structure was two stories high, with a shingled gable roof. Bearing walls were 22 inches thick, others 11. Official entrance was on the east, through a Doric portal in the masonry fence bounding the lot. The east facade was further distinguished with a street balcony. The appraisal lists 16 masonry pillars and capitals. These are indication of a porch or gallery, perhaps on the south face of the main building. There were 32 doors and windows, and a main stairway of masonry. The second story had a wooden floor and a dining room, with its own service stairway. There was also a single-story kitchen-and-dining room. It was flat-roofed and was probably a semi-detached wing on the south. Other structures included ovens, chimneys, watchtower, guardhouse, stable, and four privies. The western part of the lot had a grape arbor and an orchard with citrus, peach, pomegranate, fig, quince, and cherry trees. Another significant construction was the erection in 1761 of El Rosario, a masonry lunette on the western boundary of the lot. It replaced an earthwork redoubt in the western defense wall of the city.

English Renovation: 1763-1784. By the Treaty of 1763, Florida passed into British ownership. The 21-year English occupation wrought only minor changes in what Governor James Grant called "realy a Very bad Spanish House without a Chimney, or even a Window except such as were made of boards (i.e., shutter)." Grant's renovations included the installation of glazed double-hung sash in 1765, and a new stable and coach house in 1766.

wing was removed, and the main building and porch extended westward some 27 feet. The roof plate was raised another 3 feet; a cornice replaced the parapet. A north porch was added in 1889. After the 1873 remodelling, Post Office and Customs were the only Federal tenants. Other tenants from time to time included the County Court, Public Library, Peabody School, an artist, and a bank. Prominent late 19th and early 20th century Postmasters included W. W. Dewhurst, mayor of St. Augustine in 1888-1889 and author of the 1881 publication The History of St. Augustine; and Charles F. Hopkins, Jr., grandson of Gad Humphreys, Indian agent in Territorial Florida.(2) While Government House expanded in size, the lot was constricted. The widening of King's Road (Street) in 1839 had pushed back the south boundary; widening Tolomato (Cordova) Street in 1871 sliced away the western boundary and destroyed Rosario lunette; and on the north, a new street (Cathedral Place) was cut through in 1890.

The Reconstruction of 1936. Postal needs led to construction of an enlarged facility in 1936 (dedicated February 22, 1937). In recognition of historicity, Architect Mellen C. Greeley designed a facade reminiscent of the 1764 sketch. He retained three of the old walls. His plan shows these were the north wall (1834), the east wall (1713, partly reconstructed in 1786), and most of the south wall (1713). Fenestration in these walls was changed, however, and the structure was again raised in height. A new wing was built over the site of the old south wing, and there was utilitarian expansion toward the west. The new "U. S. Post Office and Customs House" also quartered other Federal agencies, including Agriculture (county agents), Coast Guard (Captain of the Port during World War II), Interior (National Park Service), and Justice (FBI agents). Postal need for the structure ended in 1965 with completion of a new Post Office at the corner of King Street and Central Avenue.

Government House was transferred as surplus property on February 14, 1966 from the U. S. General Services Administration to the State of Florida as a public monument to be administered by the St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission, now know as the Historical St. Augustine Preservation Board.(3)

ca. 1965). The plans for the 1936 reconstruction are also on file at the Preservation Board.

Spanish Government Funded Buildings and Structures in St. Augustine

1. **Government House (8SJ1027) - 48 King Street - c. 1713; renovations 1759, 1783, 1834, 1873, and 1936.** Government House, originally known as the Governor's House, is located at 48 King Street, and occupies a prominent spot on the west end of the sixteenth century *Plaza de Armas*. The present building resides on the site of a succession of earlier Governor's Houses, the first of which was a wood frame residence built by the Spanish colonial Governor Gonzalo Mendez de Canzo, in 1598. The wood frame dwelling was replaced in 1690 by a two-story *coquina* masonry building, which was burned in the attack by South Carolina Governor James Moore in 1702. A third Governor's House, also constructed of *coquina* was erected on the site in 1713. In 1759, 1783, 1834, and in 1873, a number of changes were made to the building, now called Government House, which altered the building's massing, floor plan, and height. Jacksonville architect Mellen C. Greeley designed the most recent renovation in 1936. Working from an historic sketch of Government House (1764), Greeley attempted to restore the building's original floor plan.

The current configuration (1936) of Government House is three-stories in height with a gable-front-and-wing, L-shaped plan. The primary, or north facade, abuts Cathedral Place and the gable end faces the *Plaza de Armas* on the east. The building has an symmetrical, Neo-Classical style that reflects both British Georgian and Spanish colonial influences. It employs modern steel-frame construction throughout, fireproof steel columns and beams, concrete floor slabs, and a steel truss roof. Except for the south wing and small western extension which were built in 1936, portions of the historic Spanish colonial *coquina* walls have been underpinned, reinforced with steel framing and retained on the north, west, and east facades. The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and corners of the east and west facades, where the old *coquina* is exposed in irregular course heights.

The overall length of the current north facade is 144 feet 10 inches, which incorporates 115 feet 4 inches of the old *coquina* masonry. From the northern corner of the northern corner of the west wall, about 7 feet 6 inches of the facade is part of the old *coquina* masonry. The east wall consists entirely of historic *coquina* and measures 39 feet 4 inches in length. Historic *coquina* masonry on the south wall connects with the east facade and continues 58 feet 9 inches to the west, where it intersects with the new south wing addition. This intersection occurs at an old cross wall in the former interior of the building, a portion of which is retained in the new interior.

The roof of Government House is steeply pitched and cross-gabled with an east-west orientation along the primary mass of the building. The north-south wing perpendicularly intersects at the western side of the south elevation. Red tiles cover the roof and there is no overhang. A large, interior stucco chimney is located on the northern slope near the east gable end. Drawings of the building indicate that an older chimney, possibly from the British Period (1763-1783), was used up to a point in that location just

above the new cornice line. Another modern chimney is found on the west wall of the new south wing addition (1936).

Shallow, hip roofed, cantilevered balconies project over the new (1936) main entrance on the north facade and above the entrances on the east and south facades. The roofs of each are covered with tile similar to that found on the main roof. The porches have chamfered wooden posts and turned wood balustrades and cornices with dentils. Curved wood brackets provide support below the porches.

A modern (1936) two-story, partial inset gallery porch occupies the southern wall of the main building overlooking the enclosed patio located on the southeast corner of Government House. The lower portion has a concrete floor, squared Greek Revival supporting columns and concrete roof. The upper portion has squared wood columns, a turned balustrade, and exposed wood ceiling and a shed roof covering.

All of the present window and door openings in the historic masonry wall are new stone surrounds (1936). All of the former openings have been filled in with concrete masonry. The rectangular modern window casements have five lights. Two wood board-and-batten doors with iron straps and exposed hammered bolt heads are found at the historic east and north entrances. Contemporary plate glass doors (1936) are used at the visitors lobby in the south gable end of the modern wing addition.

A four inch thick *coquina* wall encloses a small courtyard at the northwest corner of the property. A similar wall also encloses the larger southeast patio, which is accessed through an open gate from St. George Street. A modern 7 foot 6 inch (1936) high concrete wall surrounds a service area on the west, or back side, of the building.

None of the interior walls and partitions in Government House are historic except for a small wall segment of the former cross wall where a new stone staircase was built. Floors on the first story are terrazzo and patterned with inlays of white and black marble. The walls are plastered above a black marble base. Exposed wooden beams with plaster infill are found in the south lobby and exposed wood joists are located in the main lobby, which date from 1936. Modern ornamental lanterns are suspended from the ceilings in both areas. This structure was identified as a contributing property in the St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District when it was designated a National Historic Landmark on April 15, 1970.

HISTORY OF PAST WORK AT THE SITE

Since the end of the sixteenth century, the Government House (then known as the Governor's House) building and site, located at 48 King Street, has been the leading civil administrative center during the colonial and American Territorial periods of governance in St. Augustine and Florida. From 1598 to the present, it has alternatively been the residence of Spanish and British colonial governors and has housed a number of federal,

state, and local government offices after American control was established in 1821. In 1823, the Florida Legislative council was held there and the Government House temporarily served as the Florida Territorial capitol. Throughout the rest of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Federal Courthouse, Customs House, and Post Office of St. Augustine were all located in this building. Since 1966, Government House has been the headquarters of the St. Augustine Preservation Board and was used by a variety of local purposes, including county court offices, public library, school, and bank.

Following his completion of the laying out of the *Plaza de Armas*, in 1598, Spanish Governor Gonzalo Mendez de Canzo moved his residence from the edge of the harbor to the present site of Government House at the west end of the plaza.¹ The placement of the Governor's House at this location was a variance of the royal decrees encapsulated in the Law of the Indies of 1573, which dictated the layout and development of Spanish colonial towns in the New World. Generally, the Laws stipulated that the main church of the town was to be sited on the most prominent part of the plaza; however, since St. Augustine was primarily a military settlement, the Governor's House took precedence over the location of the main religious structure.²

In the movement of the Governor's House from the edge of the harbor to the west side of the plaza Canzo appears to have rented or lease a large wooden house already located on this property. It was not until 1604 that Canzo's successor arranged for the purchase of this wooden frame building for the use by the Spanish Governors as their official residence. The building served in this capacity until the late 1680s, when it was replaced by a two-story *coquina* masonry building with a second story balcony overlooking the plaza. Under the supervision of British expatriate architect John Collins, construction of the new Governor's House began in 1689 and was completed the next year. It was in this Governor's House that the shipwrecked Quaker, Jonathan Dickinson, found hospitality in 1696.

We were got up a pair of stairs, he wrote, at the head of which stood the governor, who ordered my wife to be conducted to his wife's apartment. I and John Smith went into a room where the governor asked us a few questions; but seeing how extremely cold we were, he gave us a cup of Spanish wine and sent us into his kitchen to warm ourselves at the fire.

The Governor's House was burned eight years later in 1702, by British militia troops under the command of Governor James Moore of South Carolina, as they departed St. Augustine following an unsuccessful siege of the Castillo de San Marcos. *Coquina* stone from the ruins of the Governor's House was salvaged for a guardhouse constructed on the

¹ Gordon K. Elsbeth, *Florida's Colonial Architectural Heritage* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), p. 63.

² *Ibid.* p. 87.

east end of the plaza.

Construction of a new Governor's House began sometime after 1706 and was completed by 1713 under Governor Don Francisco de Corcoles.³ It was at this time that historical records note a fiesta in St. Augustine, during which the governor and his lady provided sweets and drinks in the patio and tossed coins from the second-story balcony of the Governor's House into the crowd of townspeople below. This brief note indicates the governor resided in a two-story masonry building with a balcony, probably located on the northeast corner of the lot, with an enclosed patio or courtyard, on the south side. From this time to the end of the First Spanish colonial period (1763), governors hosted English emissaries from the British colonies of South Carolina and Georgia and leaders of native tribes from the province of *La Florida*.

A major renovation of the 1713 Governor's House is noted in historical records dating from 1759, a sketch made of the property in 1764, shortly after the British assumed control of Florida, and a contemporary appraisal provide the first detailed information on the Governor's House. The two-story *coquina* masonry residence was described as having an asymmetrical plan and a shingled gable roof.⁴ Load bearing exterior *coquina* walls were noted as 22 inches thick, with interior walls having a thickness of 11 inches.

The main entrance was located on the east side of the building, fronting on the plaza, through a portal flanked by paired Tuscan Doric columns. The entrance was on the southern half of the main facade and opened into an enclosed courtyard. On the northern half of the main facade was the east side of the main residential part of the Governor's House. A small door provided direct access to the building, under a projecting second-story street side balcony, which the appraisal lists as having sixteen masonry pillars and capitols. It is possible there was a second story porch or gallery, on the north facade of this part of the Governor's House. The building was noted as having thirty-two wooden doors and a main masonry stairway leading to the second floor.

The second story had a wooden floor and main dining room, with its own service stairway. A single-story, flat roofed semi-detached wing at the south end of the main building housed a kitchen and another smaller dining room. Other notable features found on the Governor's House included a watch tower, guardhouse, stable, and four privies. A formal Rococo style garden occupied the western half of the house lot, which was enclosed by a wooden fence on all but the east side, which was enclosed by the east *coquina* masonry facade of the Governor's House. Three gates provided access to the

³ Albert Manucy, *The Houses of St. Augustine, 1565-1821* (St. Augustine: The St. Augustine Historical Society, 1962), p. 27.

⁴ James D. Kornwolf, *Architecture and Town Planning in Colonial North America, Volume 1* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002), p. 87.

garden and within the grounds were a grape arbor and an orchard with 118 citrus trees, as well as a variety of peach, pomegranate, fig, quince, and cherry trees.⁵

Through the Treaty of Paris of 1763, ending the French and Indian War, Spanish Florida passed into British control. Over the next twenty years of English occupation, only minor changes were made to the property. British Governor of East Florida, James Grant, found the design of the building to be wanting and called the Governor's House, "a very bad Spanish House without a chimney, or even a window except such as were made of boards (i.e. shutters)." Renovations during this period included the installation of glazed double hung sash windows in 1765 and a new stable and coach house in 1766.

Upon the return of the Spanish to Florida, in 1783, the Governor's House underwent drastic renovations. Military engineer Mariano de la Rocque discovered structural failures in the east wall facing the plaza. He rebuilt and strengthened this wall, along with portions of the adjacent walls. The walls were raised by 16 inches and new wood framing was built for the main roof and porches. The street side balcony overlooking the plaza was rebuilt. Changes were also made in the fenestration. Parts of the north and south porches were enclosed, glazed windows were installed and the wooden floors in these areas were replaced. The entire building was whitewashed and the woodwork painted a light ochre color. The renovated structure was described as three units in length on each of the two stories. Each room measured 7 x 23 *varas* (1 *vara* = 33 inches). The wood shingled gabled roof was retained. A covered walk connected to the kitchen and pantry to the house and a watch tower adjoined the main building's west side. The Governor's House continued to be the administrative and social center of the Spanish colonial province until 1811. By then, it was considered to be in such poor condition that the governor refused to reside in the building.

Following the cession of Florida to the United States in 1821, the Governor's House hereafter referred to as Government House, was rehabilitated for use as an officer's quarters, but was soon turned over to civil functions. In 1823, prior to Tallahassee's designation as the new capitol of Territorial Florida, Government House served as a temporary capital for the Legislative Council. Using Congressional funding, Elias Watson began renovation of Government House in 1833, under the direction Robert Mills, the architect who would later gain recognition for his designs of the U.S. Treasury Building and the Washington Monument in Washington, DC. The basic aspect of the renovation called for a number of alterations, including: 1) razing the west, or rear, wall in order to extend the main building westward by 16 feet 9 inches, 2) razing the north wall, in order to widen the building northward 14 feet 6 inches (this part of the work was,

⁵ Ibid, p. 88. NOTE: East of the Governor's House garden was earth and log Rosario Defensive Line (1716), built to defend the west side of the city, and which at this point had a *coquina* masonry lunette. By the 1820s, the Rosario Line had been abandoned and filled in to create Tolomato (later Cordova) Street. In 1871, with the expansion of Cordova Street, the old masonry lunette was removed.

however, not executed), 3) raising the main walls about 6 inches to a total height of 24 feet, and 4) adding a second story to the south wing.

This work was completed in 1834. While this new building incorporated the old *coquina* masonry east, north, and south walls, the west wall was new, save for whatever stone had been salvaged and reused. The south porch was rebuilt and extended along the east side of the building. All parts of the building were raised in height and the main building was crowned with a parapet roof. Government House was expanded to sixteen rooms in total. During this period, the building was also referred to as the Courthouse, since most of the building was occupied for use as courtrooms or for other federal government functions, and as the Post Office and Customs House.

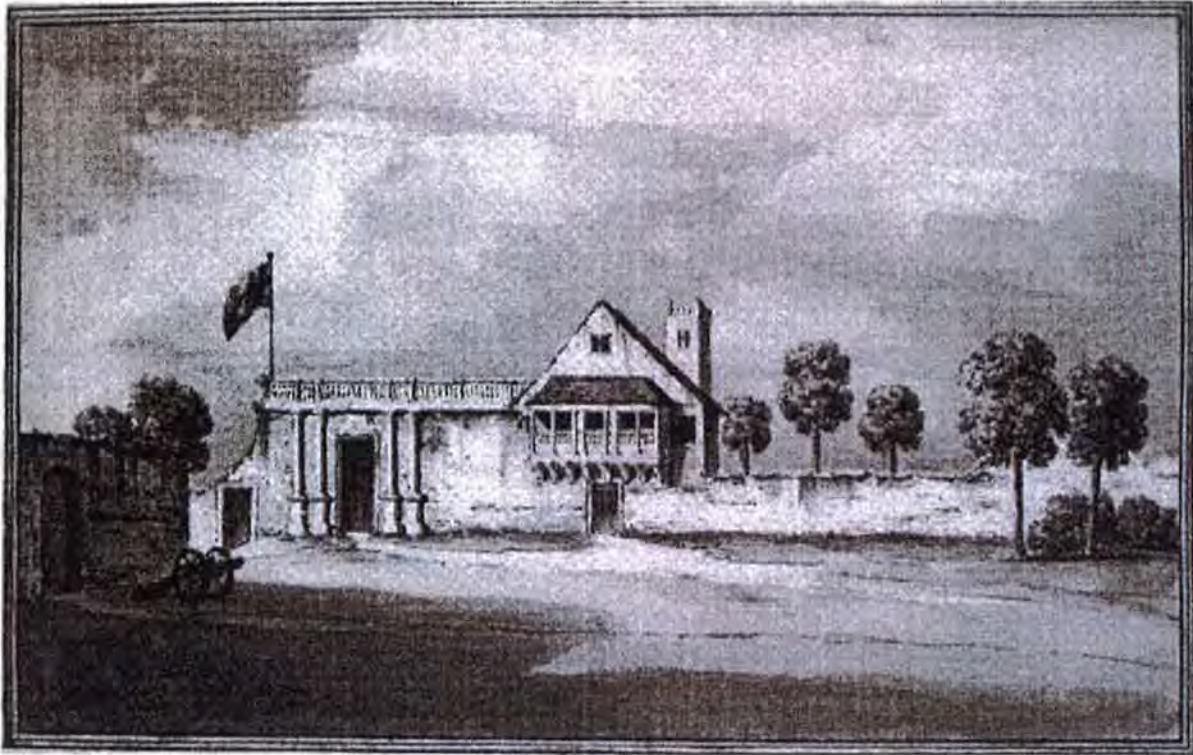
During the Civil War, Federal troops were quartered in Government House after the surrender of St. Augustine in March 1862. By 1866, the building was again described as being deteriorated. Interim repairs were made in 1868, and in 1873 the building was remodeled for the third time. Under the direction of William M. Kimball, the south wing was removed and the main building and porch were extended further westward by twenty-seven feet. The roof plate was raised and three feet and a cornice replaced the parapet. A porch was added on the buildings' north facade in 1889.

Following the 1873 remodeling, the Post Office and Customs House were the only Federal tenants. The St. Johns County Court, St. Augustine Public Library, the Peabody School, and bank were also housed here. Prominent late nineteenth and early twentieth century St. Augustine Postmasters who worked in the building included W.W. Dewhurst, the mayor of St. Augustine from 1888-1889 and author of the 1881 publication "The History of St. Augustine" and Charles F. Hopkins, Jr., the grandson of Gad Humphreys, who was once the Indian agent of Territorial Florida.

Increase in mail volume led to the renovation of Government House into an enlarged postal facility in 1936, and was formally dedicated on February 22, 1937. In recognition of the historic character of Government House, architect Mellen C. Greeley designed a new facade reminiscent of the 1764 sketch of the property. Greeley's plan retained three of the buildings' old *coquina* masonry walls - the north wall (1834), the east wall (1713, partially rebuilt in 1786), and most of the south wall (1713). Fenestration in these walls was changed, and the building was again raised in height. A new wing was built over the site of the old south wing and a modern addition was added to the west side.

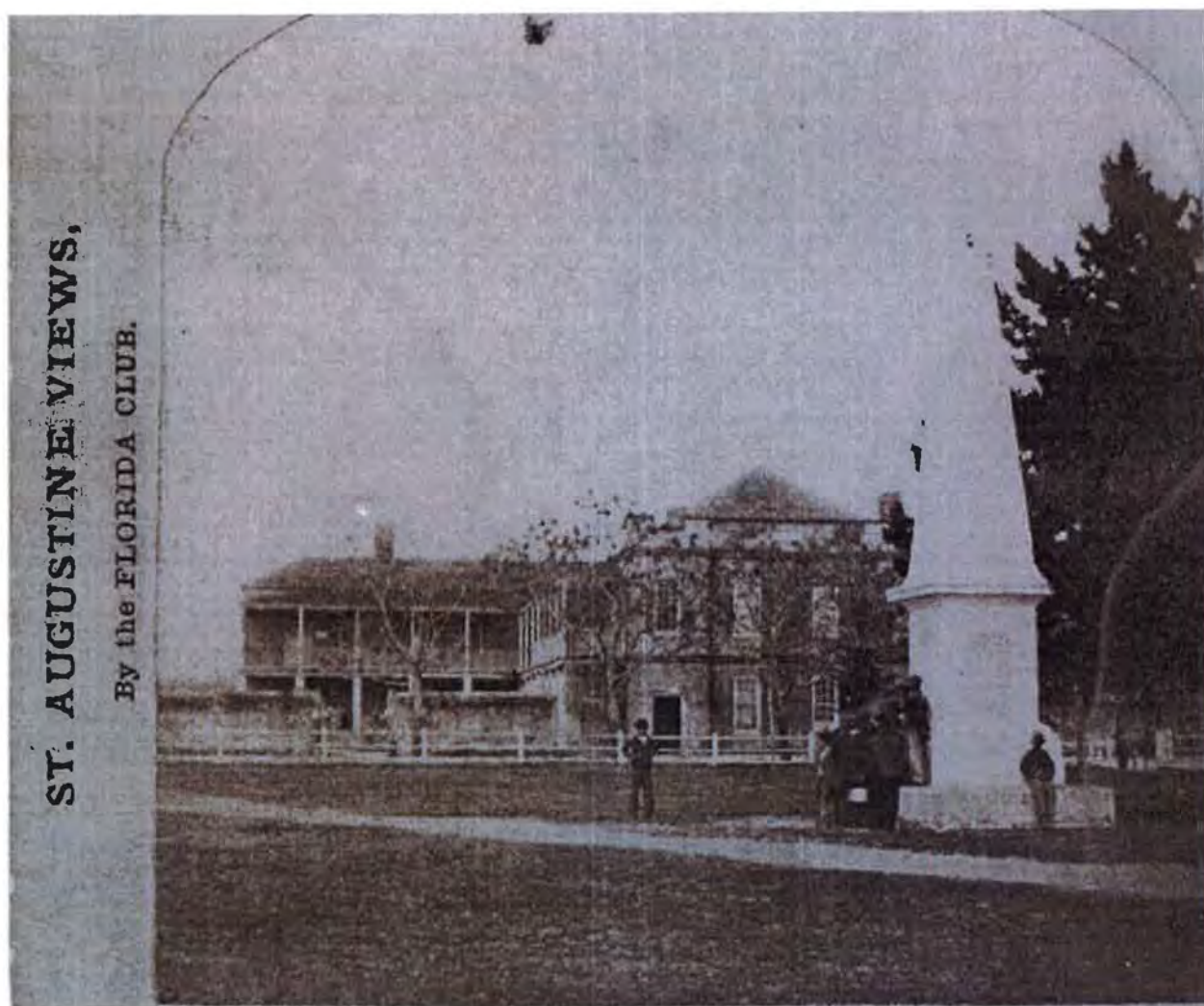
In addition to housing the U.S. Post Office and Customs House, Government House also quartered other Federal agencies, such as the county agents for the Department of Agriculture, the Coast Guard Captain's office during World War II, the National Park Service, and FBI agents from the Justice Department. With the completion of a new post office at the corner of King and Central Avenue, in 1965, Government House was considered surplus property. On February 14, 1966, the building was transferred from General Services Administration to the State of Florida as a public monument to be

administered by the St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission, later known as the St. Augustine Preservation Board. Currently, Government House is used as a museum of St. Augustine history and a visitor's information center.

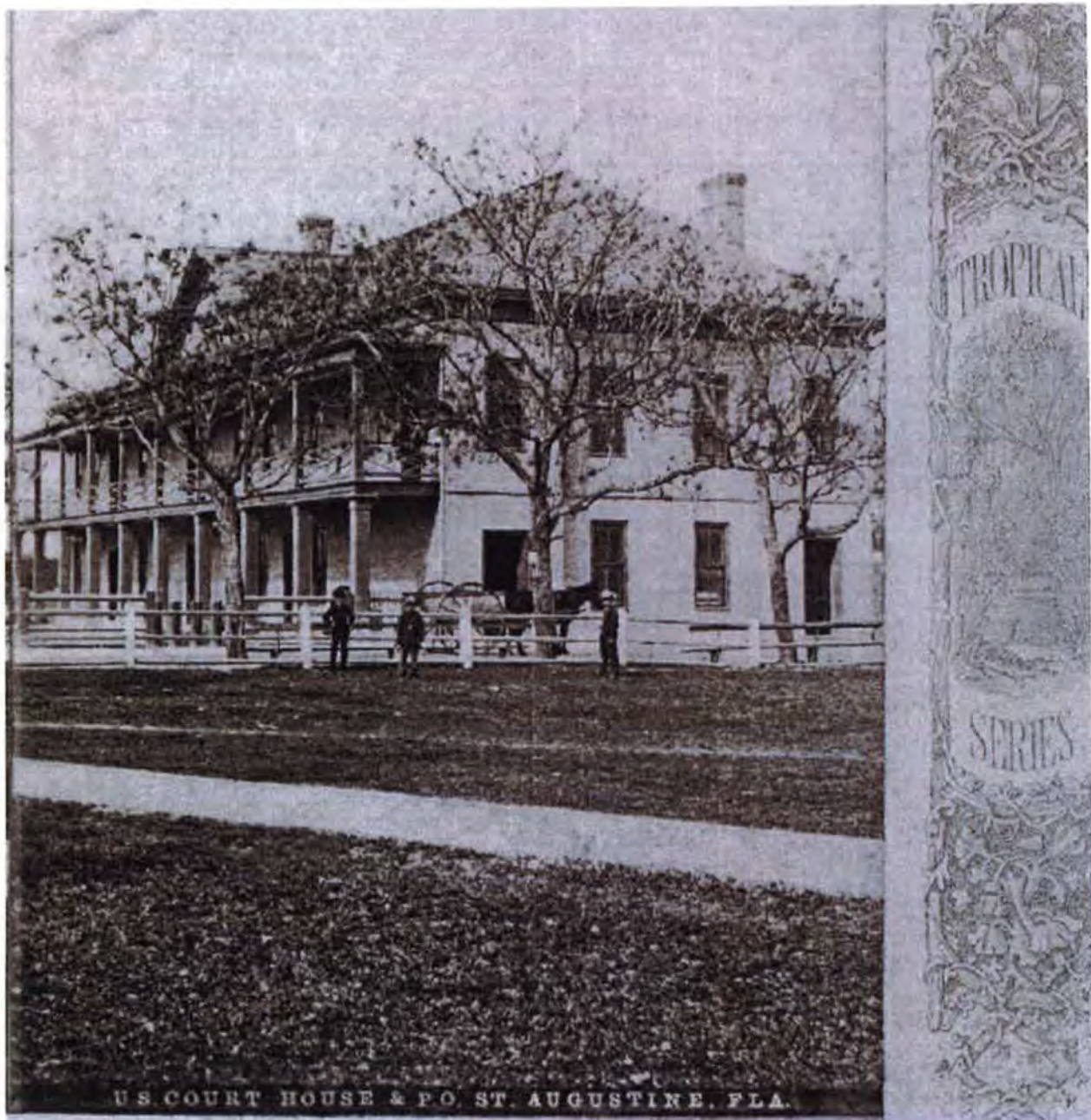


13. *View of the Governor's House at St. Augustine, in E. Florida, Nov. 1764*, anonymous. The Governor's House has been on the same site since 1595. Behind the wall and Doric portal was a very large *palacio* with many outholdings, courtyards, a five-story tower and an exquisite Moorish-inspired balcony. (Courtesy of British Library, Maps K. 'Top. 122.86-2-a)

The Governor's House, or Government House (8SJ1027), located at the east end of the town plaza (48 King Street). Anonymous drawing dates from November 1764 as the British were beginning their occupation of St. Augustine. View is to the west and shows the east (front) facade of the building. Image is from Elsbeth K. Gordon's *Florida's Colonial Architectural Heritage* (2002).



Government House (8SJ1027), located at 48 King Street. Images dates from the late 1860s and shows the building after the 1834 Robert Mills renovation, which added a second floor to the south wing (left side). The main building on the right side is largely the original *coquina* masonry Spanish Governor's House. In the foreground is the town plaza and the 1813 Constitution Obelisk. View is looking at the east (front) facade of the building. Image is from the preparer's personal collection.



Government House (8SJ1027), located at 48 King Street. View is to the west and shows the east (front) and side (south) facades. View shows Government house after its 1873 renovation, in which the south wing was removed. Image is from an historic stereoview image (c. 1870s) from the preparer's personal collection.



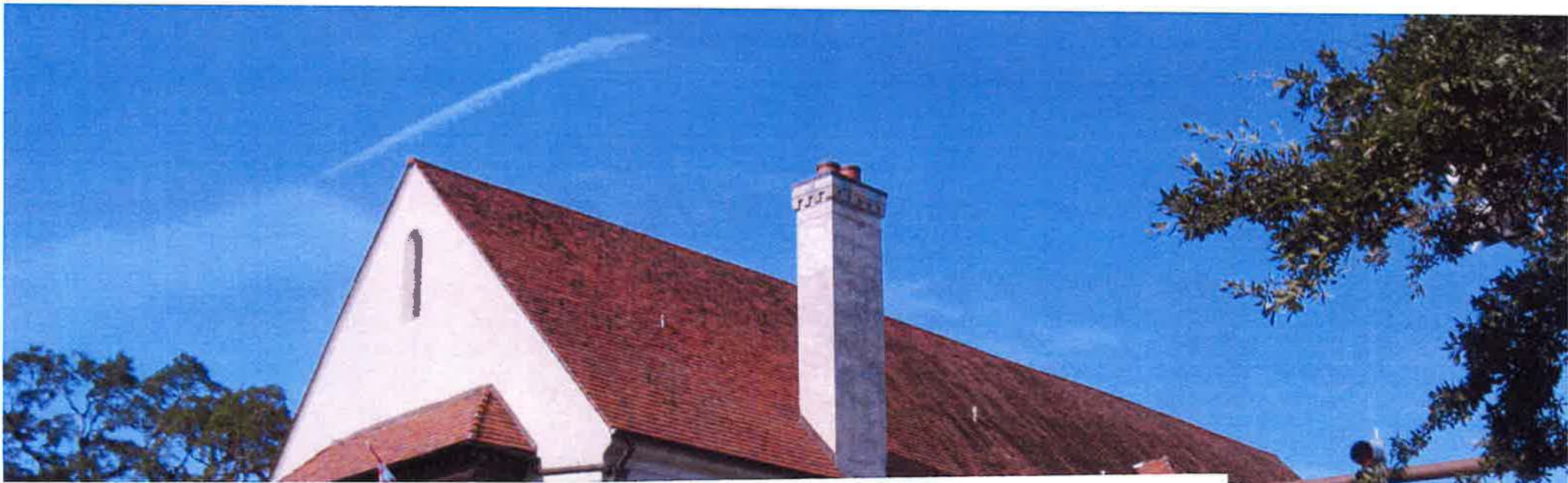
Government House (8SJ1027), located at 48 King Street. View is to the southeast and shows the north (Cathedral Place) and east (front) facades. Shows the oldest part of Government House following the 1936 renovation. The 1936 renovation incorporated elements of the 1713 building on its east and north facades. Photograph by Mark R. Barnes, National Park Service (2000).



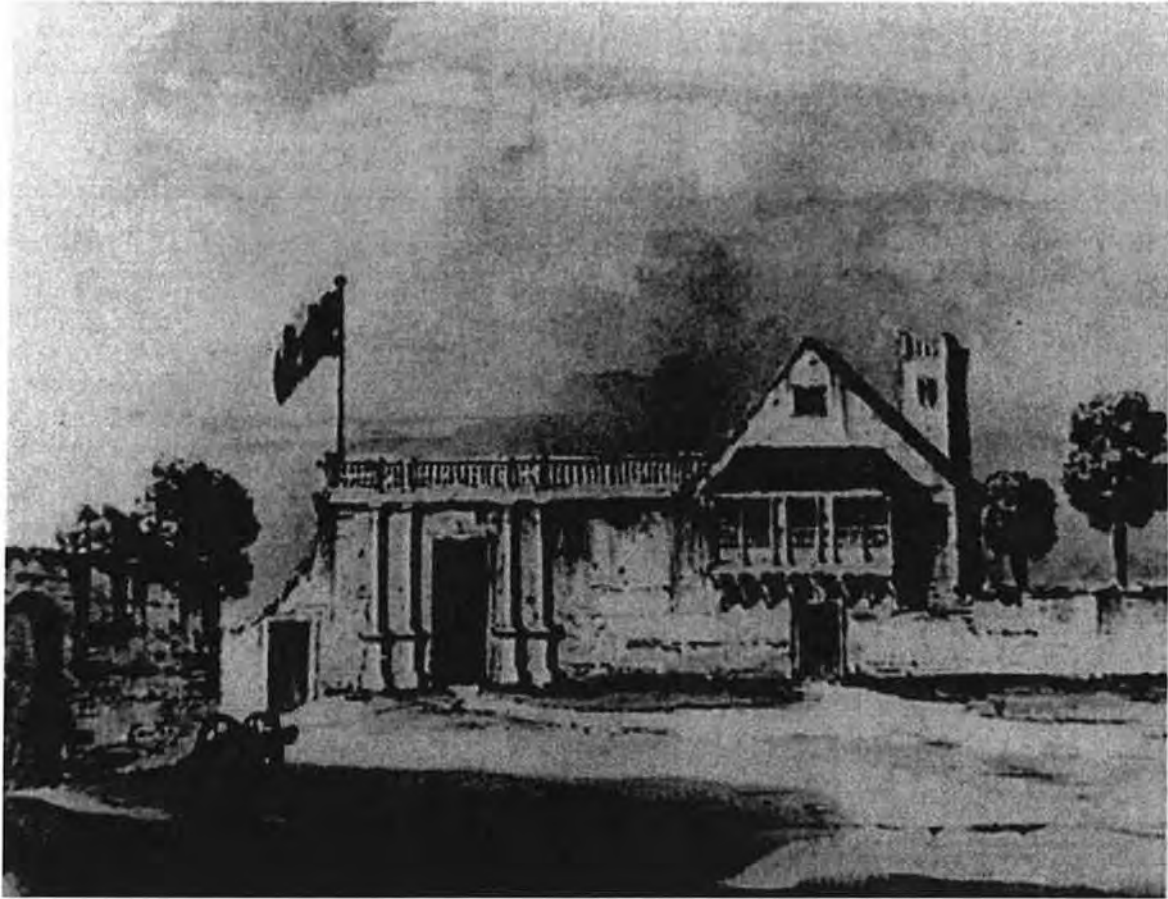
Government House (8SJ1027), located at 48 King Street. View is to the northwest and shows the new west wing constructed in 1936. Photograph by Mark R. Barnes, National Park Service (2000).







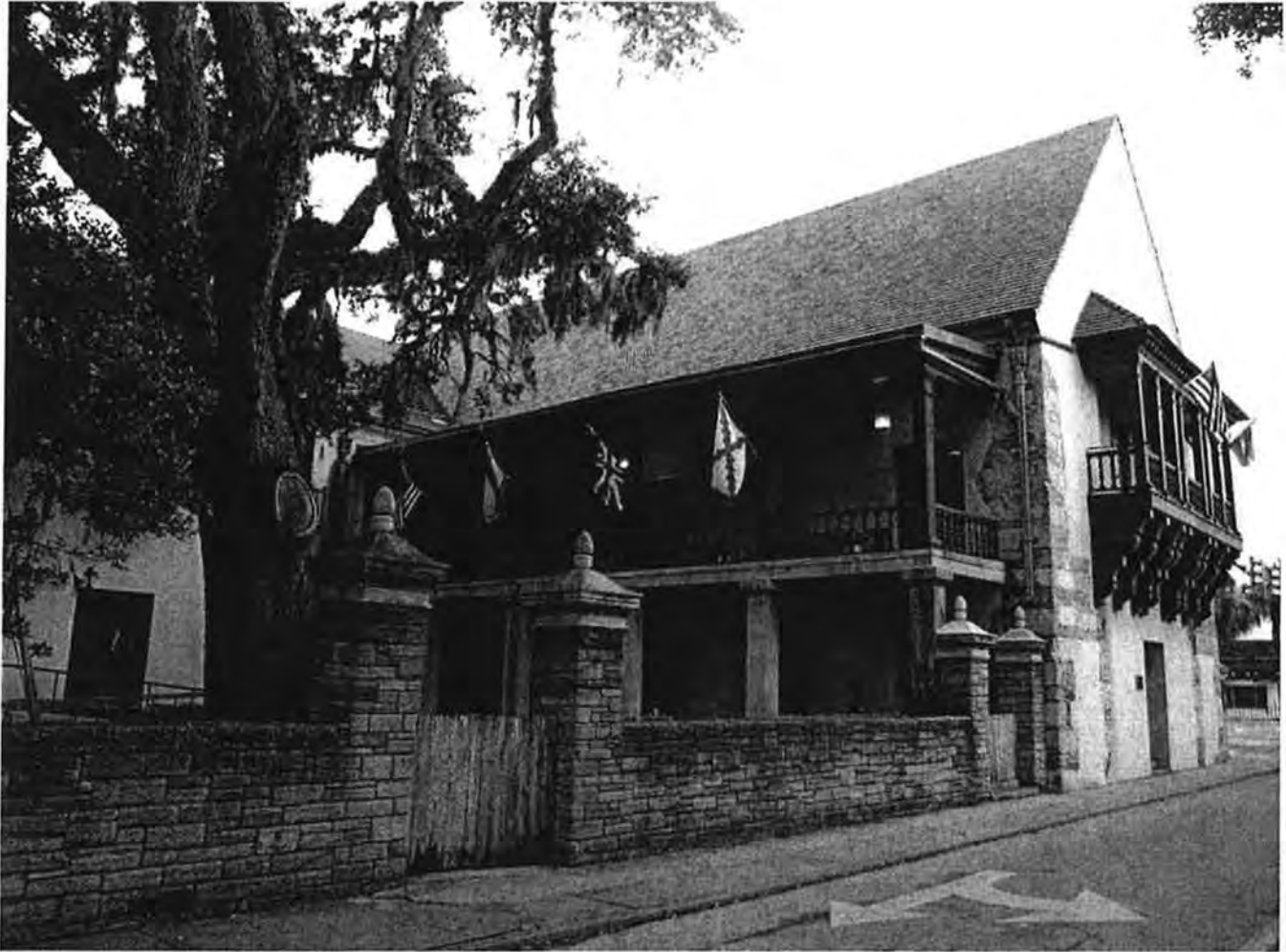
















Report on the application of the State of Florida for the transfer for historic monument purposes of the Old Post Office Building and Site [aka "Government House"] issued in May 1966

REPORT ON APPLICATION OF STATE OF FLORIDA

FOR

TRANSFER FOR HISTORIC MONUMENT PURPOSES

OF

OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING AND SITE

St. Augustine, Florida

Prepared by

National Park Service, Southeast Region
Richmond, Virginia

for

Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Southeast Region
Atlanta, Georgia

May 1966

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U. S. POST OFFICE AND CUSTOMHOUSE
St. Augustine, Florida

REPORT ON APPLICATION OF STATE OF FLORIDA

for

TRANSFER OF SURPLUS PROPERTY
FOR HISTORIC MONUMENT PURPOSES

FOREWORD

The Application

The State of Florida, acting by and through the St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission, submitted an application dated February 14, 1966 to the General Services Administration to acquire from the United States of America for historic monument purposes the following described surplus property:

A plot and building known as the Old Post Office and Customs House in St. Augustine bounded by Cathedral, St. George, King and Cordova Streets, measuring 367.72' on the north (Cathedral), 132.91' on the east (St. George), 342.33' on the south (King) and 141.52' on the west (Cordova).
GSA Loc. Code 092690109.

One building constituting the Old Spanish Governor's House on the east portion, and a modern west wing built in 1936 for Post Office purposes. All modern electrical, plumbing and heating and air conditioning improvements. Construction: coquina masonry and reinforced concrete.

The Investigation and Report

In July 1965, the National Park Service made a study of the property to determine its suitability and feasibility as a National Historic Site.

Messrs. Albert Manucy and Luis R. Arana, Historians, Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, St. Augustine, Florida, reported on the historical significance of the property and an architectural evaluation was made by Mr. Woodrow W. Wilkins, Architect, Society of Architectural Historians, National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Pensacola Heritage Foundation. This report is based on information obtained during that study and is prepared pursuant to the request made by the Regional Director, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Southeast Region, in his memorandum of March 8, 1966 to the Regional Director, National Park Service, Southeast Region, subject: "Application for Historic Monument - Old Post Office Building and Site, St. Augustine, Florida."

RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Recommended Determination

The requested surplus property at St. George, King and Cathedral Streets, St. Augustine, Florida, consisting of the U. S. Post Office and Customhouse, has been found to be suitable, desirable and adaptable for state historic monument purposes in accordance with the provisions of Public Law 616, 80th Congress. It is, therefore, recommended that the said requested surplus property be transferred to the State of Florida for historic monument purposes without monetary consideration.

Resume of Historical Justification

From 1598 to 1821, Government House was the administrative center of Colonial Florida. At Government House was held the deliberations of royal officials and conferences with frontier agents, emissaries from English colonies, and the Indian nations. In a larger sense, the structure is thus related to the colonization of North America.

Physically, also, Government House is an integral part of a larger governmental complex. St. Augustine's public life centered on the town square, which was established in 1598. The public market, governor's residence, custom house, and other substantial buildings soon followed. The successors to these edifices exist today: the market (1824), Cathedral (1797), and Government House (Post Office), together with the monument to Spain's Constitution of 1812, and the

Episcopal Church (1825), adjacent to the Government House are the monumental hotels of the late 1800's, towered and castellated to suggest traditional Spanish architecture. Relationships of the various historic structures to the Plaza are basically unchanged, and most of the adjacent structures blend more or less harmoniously with this group.

The architectural integrity of Government House has been impaired. The present reconstruction retains portions of three of the early walls. Its design is reminiscent of the 18th Century, but the scale and detail of the original have been modified. An architectural study and evaluation by a well-qualified non-government architectural historian concludes, however, that "...its historic value, the present appearance notwithstanding, seems to demand that it continue to exist in some capacity in the city. Every effort should be made to preserve these portions of it which seem conclusively to date to 1833, if not earlier." He concludes further that retention of the present structure seems to be the only method of preserving its historic portions since it appears to be impractical to demolish, restore and reconstruct the Post Office to one of its earlier periods.

Summary of Findings

Because of the importance of the former Government House to the City's historic Central Plaza and the value of its historic architectural remains, it is concluded that the transfer of the St. Augustine Post Office to the State of Florida for historic monument purposes is justified.

SUPPORTING DATA

Identification and Location of Property

The Post Office and Customs House in St. Augustine is in the center of the colonial area of St. Augustine, adjacent to the historic plaza. The lot is bounded by St. George, King, Cordova, and Cathedral streets.

The structure is built on the east half of the lot. It is an L-shaped, split-level plan, a high two stories in height, steel-framed, with a gable roof covered by flat tile. The east leg contains old walls of shellstone; the south wing is recent construction (1936). Each street facade has a balcony, and the south facade of the east leg, which overlooks a walled patio, has a two-story porch. Main entrances are in the north and south street facades, and lead into the postal lobby. Details of the building are formal, massive, psuedo-Spanish and generally at oversize scale.

Historical Significance of the Property

Synopsis. Recorded occupancy of the site began in 1598 or soon thereafter and consisted of a wooden residence built by the Spanish governor. It was purchased in 1604 by the Crown as official quarters for the Florida governors. All structures on the site were razed during the siege of 1702.

Between 1706-1713 a new Government House was constructed in stone. It served until 1811 as residence and office of the Florida governors

(Spanish, and later English), who were concerned with all phases of colonial administration: Exploration, colonization (both foreign and national), defense, trade and agriculture, frontier diplomacy with Indians and foreign neighbors, and the Catholic missionary effort as well as mundane social matters. Their sphere of influence was initially a vast area of the Southeast, including the coastal waters traversed by the treasure fleet; but eventually it was constricted to only the peninsula.

In 1811, the Government House was temporarily abandoned due to its structural condition, but upon the cession of Florida to the United States it was repaired and used variously as quarters and courthouse. A major reconstruction in 1833, designed by the noted architect Robert Mills, enlarged it for use as courthouse and post office. Federal troops were quartered here in the Civil War. In 1873 an important alteration extended the length of the building, but removed its south wing. Basic functions were now post office and customs.

The need for expanded postal facilities led to another major reconstruction in 1936. It was redesigned for principal use as a post office, with upstairs offices for other Federal agencies. At this time the historicity of the building was recognized by basing part of the exterior design upon a sketch of the 1764 structure, and retaining portions of the old masonry in the new work. The old

masonry is in the eastern leg, and includes the south wall (1713), the east wall (1713, rebuilt 1786), and north wall (1833). Fenestration in these walls is new.

Narrative.

The House of 1598. The first known structure on the Government House site was a residence built by Governor Gonzalo Mendez de Canzo about 1598. Undoubtedly the location of this early building was influenced by a contemporary event of such significance--² the establishment of the plaza, or town square. This act of 1598 conformed to a royal decree which stipulated that all Spanish towns must have a central plaza large enough for gatherings and processions. Principal buildings, such as the church, government house, market,³ and so on, were to face the plaza.

Canzo's house stood at the west end of the St. Augustine plaza. His⁴ successor in 1604 arranged for its purchase as an official residence.

The House of 1690. The Canzo house evidently served until the 1680's, when it was replaced by a new two-story building with balconied masonry walls. Interestingly enough, the construction required 200 days in 1689-1690, and was supervised by a British⁵ expatriate named John Collins.

This was the "governor's house" where the shipwrecked Quaker Jonathan Dickinson found hospitality in 1696. "We were got up a pair of stairs,"

wrote he, "at the head whereof stood the governor, who ordered my wife to be conducted to his wife's apartment. I and John Smith went into a room where the governor asked us a few questions; but seeing how extreme cold we were, he gave us a cup of Spanish wine and sent us into his kitchen to warm ourselves at the fire."⁶

The 1690 building was burned in 1702 by British troops departing after their unsuccessful siege of the Castillo. Stone from the ruined walls was salvaged for a guardhouse on the plaza.⁷

The House of 1713. Government House was reestablished sometime after 1706 and before 1713, at which time the record mentions a fiesta, during which the governor and his lady provided sweets and drinks in the patio and tossed coins from the balcony to the crowds below.⁸⁹

To this Spanish capitol of Florida came English emissaries from Carolina and Georgia, urging de facto recognition of their settlements, and gathering intelligence to guide tactics against Spanish Florida. Here too were received Indian leaders and their retinues who bespoke allegiance to Spain--or sometimes the opposite.¹⁰¹¹

The Renovation of 1759. A major renovation of the house is mentioned in the records of 1759, and soon thereafter a sketch and an appraisal provided detailed information for the first time.¹²¹³ The main structure was two stories high, with a shingled gable roof. Bearing walls were 22 inches thick, others 11. Official entrance

was on the east, through a Doric portal in the masonry fence bounding the lot. The east facade was further distinguished with a street balcony. The appraisal lists 16 masonry pillars and capitals. These are indication of a porch or gallery, perhaps on the south face of the main building. There were 32 doors and windows, and a main stairway of masonry. The second story had a wooden floor and a dining room, with its own service stairway.¹⁴

There was also a single-story kitchen-and-dining room. It was flat-roofed and was probably a semi-detached wing on the south. Other structures included ovens, chimneys, watchtower, guardhouse, stable, and four privies. The western part of the lot had a grape arbor and an orchard with citr's, peach, pomegranate, fig, quince, and cherry trees.¹⁵

Another significant construction was the erection in 1761 of El Rosario, a masonry lunette on the western boundary of the lot. It replaced an earthwork redoubt in the western defense wall of the city.¹⁶

English Renovation - 1763-1783. By the Treaty of 1763, Florida passed into British ownership. The 20-year English occupation wrought only minor changes in what Governor James Grant called "realy a Very bad Spanish House without a Chimney, or even a Window except such as were made of boards [i.e., shutters]"¹⁷ Grant's renovations included the installation of glazed double-hung sash in 1765, and a new stable and coach house in 1766.¹⁸

The Spanish Renovation of 1785-1787. Upon return of the Spanish, the "Casa de Gobierno" underwent drastic rehabilitation. Engineer Mariano de la Rocque discovered structural failures in the east wall. He reconstructed and strengthened this wall, along with portions of the adjacent walls. Walling was raised 16 inches higher and new framing was built for the main roof and porches. The street balcony was rebuilt. Changes were also made in fenestration. Parts of the north and south porches were enclosed and glazed. Floors were replaced. The entire building was whitewashed, and the woodwork
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painted light ochre.

The renovated structure was described as three rooms in a row, 7 X 23 varas each, upstairs and down. It had a shingled gable roof. Porches extended along both north and south walls, and a balcony was on the east. A covered walk connected the kitchen-and-pantry to the
20
house. The tower adjoined the house on the west.

Government House continued to be the administrative and social center of the province until 1811. By then it was in such poor condition
21
that the Governor refused to live in it.

The Reconstruction of 1833-1834. With the cession of Florida to the United States in 1821, Government House was patched up for officers' quarters, but soon surrendered for civil functions. Federal Judge Smith renovated part of the building as a courtroom. Here in 1823 (before Tallahassee became the new capital) the Legislative Council met. Once

again for a few weeks, Government House was the capitol of Florida.

With Congressional funds, Elias Wallen undertook in 1833 to reconstruct Government House in line with the plans of Robert Mills, the talented architect, then at the threshold of his career.

Basin provisions of the contract called for:

- (1) razing the west wall, in order to extend the main building westward by 16' 9";
- (2) razing the north wall, in order to widen the main building northward by 14' 6";
- (3) raising the main walls about 6' to a height of 24';
- (4) adding a second story to the south wing.

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Work was completed in 1834. While the new structure incorporated the old east and south walls, the north and west walls were new except for whatever stone had been salvaged from the old walling. The south porch was rebuilt and extended along the east side of the wing. All parts of the structure had gained in height, and the main building was crowned with a parapet. There were now 16 rooms. One of these was the Post Office. Since most of the others were for courthouse or other Federal functions, the building was generally called "the Courthouse."

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The Remodelling of 1873. During the Civil War, Federal troops were quartered in Government House. By 1866 it was again in bad condition. Interim repairs were made in 1868; then in 1873 the structure

was remodelled a third time, using the plan of William M. Kimball. This time the south wing was removed, and the main building and porch extended westward some 27 feet. The roof plate was raised another 3 feet; a cornice replaced the parapet. A north porch²⁵ was added in 1889.

After the 1873 remodelling, Post Office and Customs were the only Federal tenants. Other tenants from time to time included the county court, Public Library, Peabody School, an artist, and a²⁶ bank.

While Government House expanded in size, the lot was constricted. The widening of King's Road in 1839 had pushed back the south²⁷ boundary; widening Tolomato Street in 1871 sliced away the western boundary and destroyed Rosario lunette; and on the north,²⁸ a new street was cut through in 1890.

The Reconstruction of 1936. Postal needs led to construction of an enlarged facility in 1936 (dedicated February 22, 1937). In recognition of historicity, Architect Mellen C. Greeley designed a facade reminiscent of the 1764 sketch. He retained three of the old walls. His plan shows these were the north wall (1834), the east wall (1713, partly reconstructed in 1786), and most of the south wall (1713). Fenestration in these walls was changed, however, and the structure was again raised in height.

A new wing was built over the site of the old south wing, and there
29
was utilitarian expansion toward the west.

The new "U. S. Post Office and Customs House" also quartered other
Federal agencies, including Agriculture (county agents), Coast
Guard (Captain of the Port during World War II), Interior (National
Park Service), and Justice (FBI agents). Postal need for the
structure ended in 1965 with completion of a new Post Office in
another location.

Suitability of Property for Historic Monument Purposes

Surviving Historical Remains. The existing U. S. Post Office,
situated on the site of the first Spanish Governor's residence
faces the original Spanish Plaza to the east. The existing site,
now smaller than the original site, occupies the entire square
bounded by Cathedral Place on the north, St. George Street on
the east, King Street on the south, and Cordova Street on the west.
The plan of the structure forms an irregular "L" on the eastern
boundary of the property. Structures on the site have evolved in
successive periods from the irregular complex of the Governor's
residence, circa 1713, to an "L" plan, circa 1833, to a simple
rectangular plan of 1873, then back to the present irregular form
according to the drawings of Mr. Mellon C. Greeley in 1937.

Inspection of these drawings and of the existing structure discloses
no major deviations as of this date. The existing structure is

framed with fireproof steel columns and beams, concrete floor slabs and steel trussed roof. Except for the new south wing and the extension to the west, this steel frame has been inserted within the shell of an older existing wall of native shellstone (coquina). According to the drawings, this existing wall was underpinned and shored at the time of new construction. The overall existing north dimension is 144'-10", incorporating 115'-4" of the older wall. At this point, the wall breaks back to enclose and demark the original older west wall of a distance of 7'6". The east wall, consisting of the entire older wall, measures 39'4". The older south wall continues from this point for 58'9" where it intersects the new wing added to the south. This intersection occurs at an old cross wall in the former interior, part of which is incorporated in the new interior.

The drawings also indicate that the corner angles of the older wall are not square. They vary from $88^{\circ}37'30''$ on the southeast corner to $91^{\circ}16'30''$ on the northeast corner.

The top and bottom of the old wall are indicated but not dimensioned. The old wall scales, from bottom below grade to top, at 27'0" \pm on the north elevation. This old wall terminates just a few inches below the new struck stucco cornice.

All of the openings in the existing walls are new, the former openings having been filled with masonry as required. The former recessed

portion of the east wall has also been filled in on the first floor only. The exterior finish is entirely new stucco except on the lower surface of the old north wall and the corners. Here the old coquina in irregular course heights is exposed. The modern red tiled roof is gabled.

Although no former openings exist, the 1937 drawings indicate their locations on both plans and elevation. Although former ceiling heights are not shown, they may be approximated by scaling. On the north elevation, the distance between the heads of the former first floor windows and the former second floor doorway is 2'6"⁺; and the distance between the heads of former second floor window openings and the top of the old masonry wall is 4'3"⁺ in the rooms on the east.

The modern openings consist generally of wood casement windows and doors with stone sills. Two solid wood batten doors with iron straps and exposed hammered bolt heads are also used in the older section, and plate glass doors are used in the new portion of the main lobby.

The existing building has a large stucco chimney on the north wall. Drawings indicate that an older chimney was used up to a point just above the new cornice line. There is another chimney on the west wall of the new addition.

There is a modern wood balcony over the new main entrance on the north wall and a similar one on the east wall. The south wall of the new wing also has a wood balcony. Along the south wall of the old wing is a new two storied gallery. The lower portion is of concrete floor, columns and ceiling. The upper gallery has wood columns and railings and exposed wood beams and ceiling.

There are several enclosing walls on the property. A 4'0" wall of coquina encloses a small court on the north and a similar wall enclosed the larger patio on the southeast corner. Gate posts in these walls are 10'6". A service area on the west is enclosed with a 7'6" high concrete wall.

None of the interior walls and partitions are original except for the small segment of the former cross wall, along which the new stone stair case is built. The plans do indicate, however, segments of former north-south walls, including former corner fireplaces. It is noted that these latter do not coincide with the existing fireplaces.

The existing interior finishes vary according to the functions. All of the public spaces on the first floor make use of typically expected materials. Floors are terrazzo, patterned with inlays of white and black marble. Walls are plastered above a black marble base. The postal lobby screen wall is marble with metal grill above. False ceilings in these rooms vary. In the east lobby there is vaulted

plaster between closely spaced beams. Exposed antiqued wood beams with plaster in-fill are used in the south lobby and exposed wood joists and wood ceiling occur in the main postal lobby. Modern ornamental lanterns are suspended from these ceilings. The chief decoration consists of ornamental plaster brackets at the pilasters and the plaster corner fireplaces in the east lobby and above on the second floor. There is also a rich fret work door on the west wall in the east lobby.

In all other spaces used as offices and work space, the finish floors are oak, and the walls are painted plaster above the wood base. Incandescent light fixtures are suspended from the plaster ceilings. There is no face trim surrounding the doors and windows, which are set, generally, within the plaster reveals of walls and partitions. Interior doors are wood paneled.

The building is air-conditioned with outlets either in the ceiling or in the walls. Structural surfaces in the mechanical equipment rooms on the second floor and in the basement are bare and untreated.

In the attic, catwalks are installed down the centers of both wings. A layer of glass wool, approximately 6" thick is spread over the entire attic floor surface.

Other Physical Characteristics. The structural components as well as the major interior and exterior finishes appear to be very

good. However, the roof is reported to leak, especially at the intersection of the new gallery and the old south wall and around the chimney area. With proper maintenance of finishes, including the application of stucco on exposed coquina (which in traditional practice was never exposed to weather), the existing structure can be expected to continue a long serviceable life for many years to come.

Accessibility. Being in the center of the colonial area of St. Augustine, adjacent to the historic plaza, and one block away from a main artery of the city (Route A-1-A), the accessibility of the site is considered excellent.

Adaptability. The condition of the surviving historical remains, the character of developments in the immediate vicinity, and the location of the site are such as to make the Old Post Office Building adaptable to effective treatment and development as a historic site for public use and enjoyment as a restored mansion, museum and library.

No costs of restoration and museum developments or subsequent maintenance costs are included in the application.

Boundaries. The proposed boundaries include the entire block bounded by Cathedral, St. George, King and Cordova Streets, and are adequate to insure proper preservation of the historic features

involved and interpretation of the historical significance of the building and site.

Place in State or Regional Plan. From 1598 to 1821 Government House was the administrative center of Colonial Florida. The deliberations of royal officials, and conferences with frontier agents, emissaries from English colonies and Indian nations were held here.

The applicant states in the application: "...the preservation and restoration of this site and structure is the key element in the state-sponsored program for the restoration of the entire colonial city. State, city, county, private, and church expenditures toward this end have already passed the \$5,000,000 mark, and will probably exceed \$20,000,000."

Proposed Use Program. The program of utilization submitted by the applicant includes the restoration and exhibition of the oldest portions of Government House, and the newest portions would be utilized for related historical purposes.

Responsibility of Requesting Agency

Legal Authority. The applicant is the St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission of the State of Florida.

The Commission was created by Act of the Florida State Legislature, House Bill No. 774, Chapter 59-521, approved by the Governor on June 19, 1959.

The purpose of the commission is to acquire, restore, preserve, maintain, reconstruct, reproduce and operate for the use, benefit, education, recreation, enjoyment and general welfare of the people of the State of Florida and nation, certain ancient or historic landmarks, sites, cemeteries, graves, military works, monuments, locations, remains, buildings and other objects of historical or antiquarian interest of the city of St. Augustine, Florida, and surrounding territory.

Adequacy of Financing. Financing will be dependent upon public appropriations and private donations which it is assumed will be adequate. The applicant states "...this state agency which has as its current appropriation \$300,000 from the state, \$100,000 from the city and county, and \$200,000 from private funds for its restoration program. Over five million dollars have been expended to date from public, private and church funds toward this end."

Experience in Historical Work. The St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission was established by an act of legislature of the State of Florida in 1959 "to acquire, restore, preserve,...historic landmarks..., buildings and other objects of historical interest...."

Since that time and primarily as a part of the observance of the 400th anniversary of the City of St. Augustine, the Commission has taken

the lead in a restoration program being carried on with public, private and church funds.

The Commission is authorized to employ consulting engineers, architects, etc. to carry on work involving historical restoration, and has completed a number of undertakings involving restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings in old St. Augustine.

Adequacy of Staff. Although the permanent staff is small, the authority to employ consultants provided in the enabling Act provides assurance that adequate professional staff can be obtained to carry out the work of the Commission.

NOTES

1. "Architectural Evaluation, U. S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida," prepared by Woodrow Wilkins (Society of Architectural Historians, National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Pensacola Heritage Foundation) July 5, 1965 ms. in files of Southeast Regional Office, Richmond, Virginia.
2. Gov. Gonzalo Mendez de Canzo of Florida to the crown, St. Augustine, February 23, 1598, Archivo General de Indias 54-5-9, in Woodbury Lowery, "Florida Manuscript," vol. 4.
3. Verne E. Chatelain, The Defenses of Spanish Florida 1565-1763 (Washington, D. C., 1941), p. 129, note 4.
4. Gov. Pedro de Ibarra to the crown, January 8, 1604, AGI 54-5-9/47; id. to id., April 12, 1604, AGI 54-5-9/49, both in Stetson Collection, University of Florida. The purchase was approved in crown to the governor of Florida, San Lorenzo, October 10, 1604, AGI 86-5-19 (SD 2528), SC.
5. Gov. Diego de Quiroga to the crown, June 8, 1690, AGI 54-5-12/102, SC; royal officials of Florida to the crown, April 20, 1696, AGI 54-5-15, SC.
6. Jonathan Dickinson's Journal or God's Protecting Providence (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 80.
7. Gov. Francisco de Corcoles to the crown, August 13, 1709, AGI 58-1-28/66, SC.
8. Residencia de Don Jose de Zuniga y Cerda, St. Augustine, 1707, AGI 58-2-8, SC: Cuaderno 4, pp. 142-150, 315-318; Demanda, pp. 350v-363v.
9. Corcoles to the crown, August 25, 1713, AGI 58-1-28/109, SC.
10. Gov. Manuel de Montiano to Gov. Juan Francisco de Guemes of Havana, April 3, 1739, East Florida Papers, Series 37, Letter no. 135, Library of Congress.
11. Gov. Juan de Ayala to the crown, April 18, 1717, AGI 58-1-30/64 SC.
12. Parish priest Juan Jose Solana to Don Julian de Arriaga, April 9, 1760, AGI 86-7-21/41, SC.
13. John Bartram, "Diary of a Journey through the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. . ." in Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. XXXIII, part 1 (Philadelphia, 1942), plate XVIII.

14. Charles W. Arnade, "The Architecture of Spanish St. Augustine," The Americas, XVIII, no. 2 (October 1961), 181-183.
15. Ibid.
16. Gov. Lucas de Palacio to Don Julian de Arriaga, July 15, 1761, AGI 86-6-6/25, SC.
17. Gov. James Grant to Board of Trade, March 1, 1765, British Public Record Office, Colonial Office, class V, vol. 540.
18. Id. to id., July 16, 1765, CO 5/540; statement of materials and labor, October 4, 1766, CO 5/541.
19. Mariano de la Rocque, Relacion de los reparos ejecutados en las obras del Rey, December 31, 1785, EFP, series 170, no. 297; id., December 31, 1786, EFP series 170, no. 245; id., December 31 1787, EFP, series 170, pp. 170-889.
20. Mariano de la Rocque, "Plano Particular de la Diudad de San Agustin de la Florida . . .," April 25, 1788.
21. Capt. J. C. Post to Lt. Col. Q. A. Gillmore, Charleston, October 11, 1880.
22. General Services Administration, "Government House, St. Augustine, Florida; A Historical Study" (Washington, D. C.: 1965), pp. 3,5, 12, 18, 21-23.
23. Ibid., 25, 30, 31.
24. Ibid., 35,36.
25. Ibid., 41, 45, 54-56, 59,65.
26. Ibid., 47, 49, 50, 62, 64.
27. Gov. Enrique White died in Government House on April 13, 1811 (EFP, Series 301-318; Testamentary Proceedings, Box 44 or Reel 11). In 1813-1815, proceedings re the estate of Dona Maria del Carmen Hill show that Juan Jose Estrada, Sebastian Kindelan, and Jose Coppinger were paying rent to the deceased lady. Kindelan specifically inhabited a house of her property, fronting on San Carlos (Charlotte) street (ibid.). These gentlemen were the successors of Gov. White.
28. "Government House . . .," 37, 38,65.

29. Mellen C. Greeley, Plan of United States Post Office & Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida, 1935; W. W. Wilkins, "Architectural Evaluation, U. S. Post Office and Customs House, St. Augustine, Florida, " report to the National Park Service, St. Augustine, July 1965.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

| <i>Submission Type</i> | <i>Property Type</i> | <i>Problem Type</i> |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |

Accept Return Reject Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Discipline

Telephone Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.