

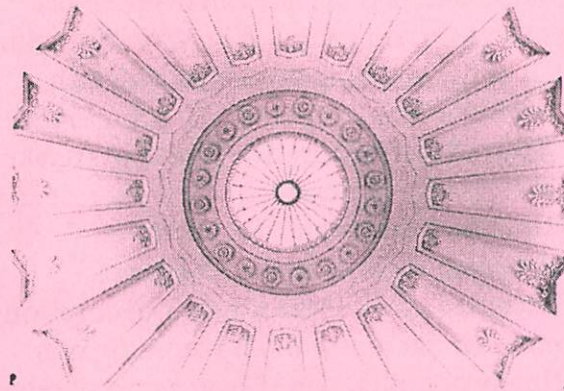
The marble for the floor of the 60-foot diameter rotunda comes from Stockbridge, Massachusetts. As you walk around, you will notice an indentation in the floor. This is where the circular customs desk was located; the iron pieces in floor next to the groove are the remains of the railing around the desk and the disks are skylights which admit light to the basement.

Another interesting feature is the roof itself. It also is constructed completely of marble with the pieces overlapping and fitting snugly together so that there is no leakage. To cover the exposed ends of the roof joints, an anthemia (honeysuckle) design was added. At each of the four corners a lion's head peers down on the street below.

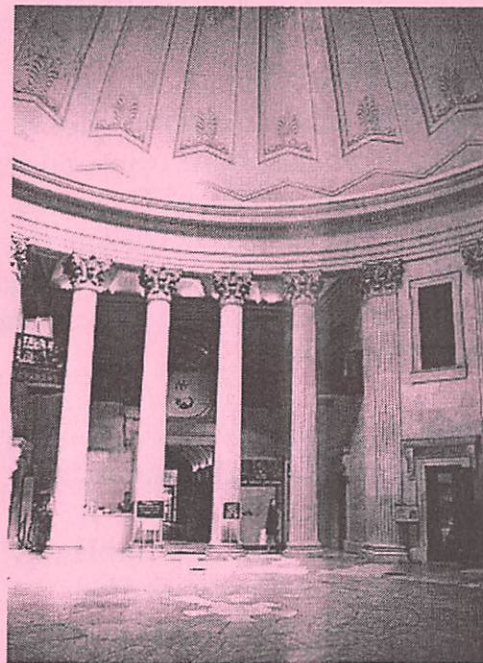
The interior granite staircases are self-supporting and are constructed so that the weight of the steps locks them in place one on top of the other. In 1874, the staircase on the Nassau Street side of the building was removed to permit installation of an elevator.

Other changes to the structure include three-foot extensions on the east and west second floor balconies added in 1856 and the two Wall Street windows installed in 1898.

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*Looking up at the interior of the dome and skylight*



*Corinthian columns surround the rotunda, supporting the weight of the dome*

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Manhattan Sites  
Federal Hall National Memorial

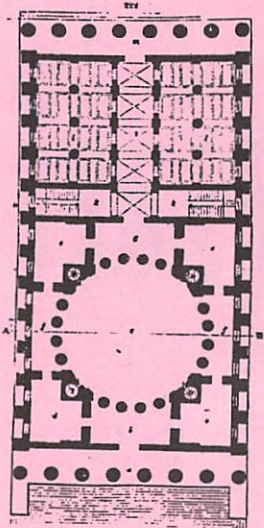


## Architecture of 26 Wall Street



*Federal Hall National Memorial, formerly the Customhouse*

26 Wall Street is one of the most significant Greek Revival buildings in America. This beautiful building was constructed as a customhouse, where import duties were collected. It was constructed to replace an older, smaller structure that could not handle the volume of trade coming through the port of New York. Built between 1834 and 1842, it was designed by the architectural firm of Ithiel Town and Alexander Jackson Davis. Samuel Thomson was designated as the superintendent of construction and he made working drawings from the Town and Davis designs. Substantial changes were made to the original layout to increase the amount of office space.



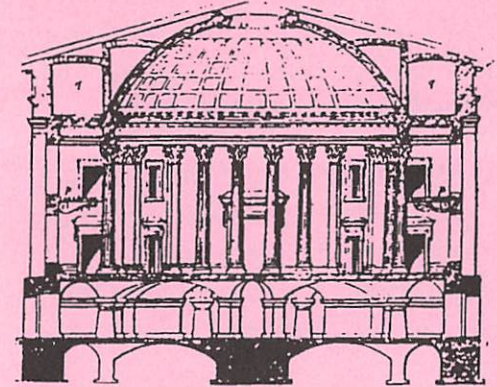
*Original 1832 plan for main floor*

Thomson had disagreements with his superiors and resigned in May 1835, taking all of the working drawings with him, which halted construction. John Frazee (1790-1852) was hired in July 1835, to take over as superintendent of the project and construction resumed when new drawings were completed. Frazee designed most of the interior decorations and ornamentation. The building was finally completed in 1842 at a cost of over one million dollars, the most expensive structure built by the federal government up to that time.

As you approach the Customhouse, you are greeted by an impressive exterior based on the Parthenon in Athens, Greece. The 16 Doric columns, fluted with simple capitals, at the front and rear porticos are constructed of Tuckahoe marble quarried in nearby Westchester County, New York. Each column is made from five separate pieces, each weighing ten to twelve tons.

As you walk in the front doors, you travel from Greece to Rome. The rotunda is based on the Roman Pantheon. Its 16 columns are done in the Corinthian style - a slender, fluted column with a bell shaped capital decorated with acanthus (thistle) leaves. The marble is the same as the exterior columns, but each 27 foot high shaft is cut from a single block of stone.

Capitals are carved from imported Italian marble. In order to retain the appearance of the Parthenon, the 50-foot high iron and brick rotunda dome was hidden behind a peaked roof.



*Cross-section of structure as built, showing dome and peaked roof*

In the basement are 16 more Doric columns. These differ from the ones outside, being short and squat. They were designed this way to support the weight of the rotunda above. Only two of the basement columns are in areas open to the public, the others being hidden inside various rooms and storage areas. Below this level is a sub-basement of massive brick arches.