The relative positions of those in charge of the Capitol extension is worthy of attention. Jefferson Davis, as chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings, first adopted the plans which were prepared by Robert Mills, using such features as the committee thought desirable in the drawings secured by the competition of September, 1850 [Plates 141 to 148].[31] President Fillmore fortunately took advantage of the power vested in him by the act authorizing the Capitol extension, and appointed Thomas U. Walter Architect, and adopted the plans and elevations which Walter had prepared [Plates 151 to 166].

Judging from the repeated requests made by the Senate that the President should give them information as to the progress of the work, as well as requests for information as to the arrangements of the plan which he proposed, the Senate was not satisfied with the action of the President. When President Fillmore retired from office one of the first steps taken by the new Executive, Franklin Pierce, was to again place the extensions of the building in charge of Jefferson Davis, who was Secretary of War. Mr. Davis detailed Capt. M. C. Meigs to look after the work of superintendence and finance, with the title of Engineer in Charge. Mr. Walter and Captain Meigs at first worked together amicably in their different departments. Captain Meigs adopted designs for the heating and ventilating apparatus, and attended to all matters of business and supervision. He was also the prime mover in altering the general arrangement of the interior, as he advocated the placing of the Halls of Congress in the center of each wing. Walter approved of this change and made all the plans and designs necessary to adapt the interior of the building to the new plan. Jefferson Davis, as long as he was Secretary of War, upheld Captain Meigs whenever a conflict of authority occurred. When a new Administration (James Buchanan's) came into office and John B. Floyd was made Secretary of War, the conflict between the two in authority on the building became more bitter.[32] In January, 1858, the controversy reached such a stage that the question as to who should have charge of the drawings was submitted to the Secretary of War. On October 4, 1858, Meigs obtained an order from the Secretary directing Walter to give Captain Meigs "all drawings necessary to carry on the building under your [his] charge." In answer to this letter the Architect wrote to the Secretary saying: "I have reason to believe that the drawings you allude to in your order are such as are now required for the prosecution of the public work. . . . This I understand to be the intention of your order, and this I am not only willing but anxious to comply with. But you will observe that Captain Meigs does not limit his demands to these drawings. He calls upon me to deliver to his office, first, all the drawings connected with the Capitol extension that were made by me, and in my office, from the beginning of the work; second, all the original drawings of the post-office and Dome; third, all the drawings of all the public works made since he has been in charge of them. These three items cover every line made for the Capitol extension and Dome. . . . The Architect's office is unquestionably the place for all the drawings which are not actually in the hands of the workmen. . . . His allusion to my designs having been made under his directions plainly manifest the spirit that has given us all our trouble and hinders the prosecution of the public work . . . . I am exceedingly weary of the constant annoyances to which I am subjected by him and the difficulties he is constantly throwing in the way of the proper

[31] Senator Jefferson Davis was a member of the Committee on Public Buildings in 1850–51, but was not its chairman. He was an influential figure in the development of the Capitol because he chaired the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, which had oversight of the activities of army engineers.

[32] For a discussion of the Meigs-Walter controversy, see Allen, *History of the Dome of the United States Capitol,* 36–41; Russell F. Weigley, *Quartermaster General of the Union Army* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); and "Journals" (transcribed by William Mohr for the United States Bicentennial Commission), Montgomery C. Meigs Papers, Manuscript Division, LC.

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discharge of my duties. . . . If it is your desire that Captain Meigs shall control the architecture of the public works, of which I am Architect, and you will so inform me, I will retire from them without a moment's delay; but if you wish the control of the architecture to rest with the Architect, and will issue such orders as will prevent any further interference with my professional rights, I will cheerfully continue to give my individual time and attention to these works as I have been doing for the last seven years. . . . If Captain Meigs is to have the control of the architecture, I shall take pleasure in retiring." [33] The location of the Architect's office was changed from time to time as the work in the Capitol progressed. After Captain Meigs's appointment it was first located in a room adjoining the one occupied by him in the south wing, then moved to the floor above, then to the north wing. Each move carried the Architect and Engineer farther apart. Captain Meigs says: "Being so far removed, I saw less of him and the draftsmen, and he [Walter] began to feel more independent." Finally Captain Meigs rented a house on A street north, and moved his office, at the same time directing Mr. Walter to transfer his offices to the same building, but instead of following these orders Mr. Walter moved his office, together with the drawings, into the attic story of the center building. This occurred in January, 1858, and Captain Meigs, in a letter to the Secretary, accused Mr. Walter of having abstracted the drawings from his (Meigs's) office. In another letter, August 23, 1859, to Acting Secretary of War William R. Drinkard, Meigs says: "I used the word abstracted advisedly. A harsher one would have been just, but respect for the Department prevented its use." In this letter Captain Meigs gives a review of his connection with the work, quoting letters from Jefferson Davis, when Secretary of War, and one written by Davis at his request, January 23, 1858, to John B. Floyd. These letters state how Captain Meigs had been put in charge of the work, "with full authority to make all needful changes in the administration of the work; he was informed that upon him would rest the responsibility of a proper and economical execution of the buildings. . . . Upon the great scientific problems (ventilation and acoustics) involved in the principal objects of the extension it will be found that Captain Meigs was put in consultation with Professor Bache and Professor Henry." Mr. Davis says: "Even in matters of architectural style, a reference to the accompanying photographs will show how important will have been the modifications of the original design." He does not say that Captain Meigs made these important changes in architectural design, and the drawings made and approved before Meigs's appointment [Plates 151 to 168], when compared with those of the executed building [Plates 171 to 185], will show the changes. Captain Meigs says, in the letter above quoted: "When the drawings are restored and the disobedient and rebellious assistant dismissed, there will be no further difficulty." He continues to complain of the impossibility of doing the work without all of the original drawings.[34]

He calls attention to the fact that on September 16, 1858, he appealed to the President and was reproved by the Secretary for his act of official discourtesy. Captain Meigs says: "I am worn out with this distasteful work. . . . My subordinate has been allowed to set my authority at defiance and to interfere in all ways most mortifying and injurious to me." The above letter was answered by Mr. Walter in a communication to the Secretary of War August 30, 1859. In this letter Walter calls attention to the fact that his appointment as Architect approved by act of Congress September, 1850, had never been revoked, and that he performed the duties of an architect from that period, and "I have continued to be

[33] Brown's source for the quotations was "Papers Relating to the Heating and Apparatus of the Capitol Extension," in *Message of the President of the United States* (Washington: George Bowman, printer, 1860), 115–117; 160–180.

[34] Ibid., 162–180.

the Architect, and the only Architect, of the work to this day." He quotes many letters and reports from Captain Meigs in proof of his accepting the fact until about the time the open controversy arose. August 30, 1859, Captain Meigs again called the Department's attention to Mr. Walter's delinquencies and asked for an order to obtain possession of the drawings. In an answer to this letter, Acting Secretary W. R. Drinkard says: "In reference to the letter giving Captain Meigs authority to call upon the Architect for all drawings necessary to prosecute the work, it is proper for me, knowing the fact, to say that the Secretary did not intend by that letter of October, 1858, to give Captain Meigs authority permanently to remove from the possession of the Architect any of the drawings referred to, but simply to afford him every proper facility for consulting and using the drawings when rendered necessary by the work in hand. In other words, the Secretary deemed that the rooms in the Capitol occupied by the Architect were the proper depository for the drawings, and intended that they should remain there, and as the necessities of the work required, be seen and used, there or elsewhere, 'by Captain Meigs freely and without constraint.'" [35]

This letter was answered September 23, reiterating the charges against Walter and objecting to the Acting Secretary speaking for the Secretary, in the following manner: "I am as capable of understanding a written order of the Secretary as the chief clerk or Acting Secretary, and must act on my responsibility as an officer under orders as I understand them." Secretary of War John B. Floyd upon his return placed the following indorsement upon the letter of September 22 by Acting Secretary Drinkard: "The paper to which it is appended contains the opinions and views of the Secretary of War, which were then and are now deemed to be proper and correct. The conduct of Captain Meigs in thus interpolating the records in his possession with a paper manifesting such flagrant insubordination and containing language both disrespectful and insulting to his superiors is reprehensible in the highest degree." After this correspondence one would naturally expect Captain Meigs to be relieved of further duty. He wrote the following letter to President James Buchanan November 1, 1859:

"SIR: It is commonly reported that an order has been written, if not already issued, relieving me from certain works.

"In justice to myself I ask that my last letters to the War Department be read before you decide the case.

"I have endeavored simply to do my duty, to protect the interests of the United States in all things under my charge, and, while expressing plainly my views, even when differing from the War Department, to give the Department no just cause for offense.

"I am, with grateful acknowledgments for kindness and courtesy received from you, with highest respect,

"Your obedient servant,

"M. C. MEIGS,
"Captain of Engineers.[36]

"The PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES."

Captain Meigs was relieved from duty November 1, 1859, in connection with the public buildings, and Capt. W. B. Franklin, captain of Topographical Engineers, was detailed by the Secretary of War to fill his place, November 1, 1859.

Judging from the public documents, Captain Meigs's principal duty while in charge was to manage the business affairs of the work and superintend the constructive features, and special stress was laid upon his devising a scheme for heating and ventilating, and seeing that the Halls of Congress should have satisfactory acoustic properties. He

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

called upon Professor Bache and Professor Henry for scientific advice, and they made an elaborate report upon the subjects about which information was desired. The Congressional committee who were investigating the claims of Charles F. Anderson assert that the principles laid down by the scientists in reference to proper acoustic properties were not followed on the executed work. The first step taken in reference to heating and ventilating was a call made upon Joseph Nason, of Nason & Dodge, of New York, to prepare working plans and submit estimates for the work. Nason and Dodge delegated Robert Briggs, Jr., to take charge of the work. He made the plans for heating and ventilating, which were completed while Captain Meigs was sick and were afterwards modified by him in only a few slight details. Robert Briggs was for many years one of the prominent heating and ventilating engineers of the country, and should receive credit for designing the heating and ventilating apparatus. What is good or what has been found deficient in design of this apparatus should be attributed to him.

Captain Meigs was the prime mover in having the Halls of Congress changed from the ends of the wings to the center, but according to a committee report this was simply adopting a plan devised by Anderson in the first competition, after several conferences between Anderson and Meigs and using Anderson's plans in his interviews with the President, while Walter made all the actual plans, designs, and working drawings for this interior work. How far Captain Meigs assisted in the design of constructive features it is difficult to determine. All constructional drawings, except those for heating and ventilating, were made either by Walter himself or under his direct supervision, and as he was capable and skilled in such work there is no reason to think that he received assistance. Captain Meigs discharged duties in connection with superintendence of the work and the business details of letting contracts and disbursing funds. Work which progressed during Meigs's supervision commenced with the basement story, the wings were completed except porches, and the Dome was about half finished when he was relieved. Capt. W. B. Franklin continued to perform duties similar to those of his predecessor, without in any way antagonizing the Architect of the building.[37]

No appropriation having been made for the building, the work was suspended from December 1, 1859, to July 1, 1860. August 18, 1860, a contract was made with Rice & Heebner to furnish thirty-four monolithic columns 25 feet 2⅛ inches high, with diameter 3 feet above base and 2 feet 6⅛ inches at the neck, for the porticoes. These monolithic blocks were to be obtained from Conolly's quarry, Baltimore County, Md.[38] In his first report on the progress of the work, November 6, 1860, Captain Franklin states that the arcades and platforms of all the porticoes were complete, ready for setting the pedestals for the columns; the stairways and other interior work completed, with the exception of decoration; the foundations for all steps laid, and the steps on the north and south fronts set. Captain Franklin had levels (July, 1860) taken on the granite base course and found that on the south wing it was 4½ inches lower on the west than it was on the east, while on the north wing the west side was 2⅞ inches lower than the east end. The levels were again taken in October, 1860, and no change had taken place. The Dome was raised to a height of 30 feet above the colonnade,

[37] Brown's interpretation of Meigs was biased by his leadership role in the architectural profession. Professional architects and Army engineers competed in Washington throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to determine the federal government's policy toward architectural design and urban planning. Brown had no respect for Meigs's work as an architect and thought that his Pension Building (National Building Museum), built between 1882 and 1887, epitomized "the period of decline in Federal art." See Glenn Brown, "Art and the Federal Government," *Appleton's Magazine* 7 (February 1906): 240–247.

[38] Captain of Engineers in Charge of the U. S. Capitol Extension, "Letter from the Superintendent of the Capitol Extension, to the Chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, in Relation to the Dome and the Porticoes of the Capitol," S. misc. doc. 29 (36–1), Serial 1038.

and contracts were made for furnishing ironwork for the Dome at 7 cents per pound.[39] The Secretary of War, Joseph Holt, ordered Captain Meigs to resume charge of the Capitol February 27, 1861, but the latter was soon ordered to the Gulf of Mexico on service in connection with the civil war. The Secretary placed J. N. Macomb, Corps of Topographical Engineers, in charge of the work, but little work was done, and no appropriation was asked to carry it on for the ensuing year.[40] While the civil war caused the army officers to undertake duties more serious than the superintendence of buildings, it at the same time was the cause of giving the Capitol occupants which its designers had never contemplated. During the summer of 1861 the western portion of the old building was turned into a bakery for the soldiers, and the crypt was used as a storage room for flour. The following order was issued:

"SPECIAL ORDERS,

"No. 177. Headquarters Military District of Washington.

[Extract.]

"I. The following buildings and premises will be taken possession of forthwith for hospital purposes:

"The Capitol.

"By command of Brigadier-General Wadsworth:

JOHN P. SHERMAN,

"Assistant Adjutant-General."

Following this order 1,500 beds were placed in the building, occupying nearly all portions of it. The Commissioner of Public Buildings, who was in charge of the old building and the completed portions of the new building, protested against this occupation, and finally by the order of President Lincoln the army occupation ceased, on October 15, in time to repair the damage and clean the building before the meeting of Congress.[41]

April 16, 1862, the following act of Congress was passed:

"That the supervision of the Capitol extension and the erection of the new Dome be, and is hereby, transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior; and all money which may be hereafter appropriated for either of the improvements heretofore mentioned shall be expended under the direction and supervision of the Secretary of the Interior: *Provided,* That no money heretofore appropriated shall be expended upon the Capitol until authorized by Congress, except so much as is necessary to protect the building from injury by the elements and to complete the Dome."[42] Thomas U. Walter was again put in charge, both as Architect and superintendent. Under this resolution work was resumed April 30, 1862; the steps and cheek blocks on the eastern porticoes were set and more than half completed, and all the columns of the connecting corridors were in place by November 1, 1862. The principal framework of the Dome was also erected [Plates 196, 197, 198].[43]

During the year 1863 the work on the porticoes and Dome was still in progress. Mr. Walter, in his report of November 1, 1863, calls

[39] Captain of Engineers in Charge of the U. S. Capitol Extension, "Report on the Capitol Extension," in *Report of the Secretary of War,* S. ex. doc. 1 (36–2), Serial 1079.

[40] Meigs was responsible for the appointment of J. N. Macomb, his brother-in-law. See Allen, *The Dome of the United States Capitol,* 54.

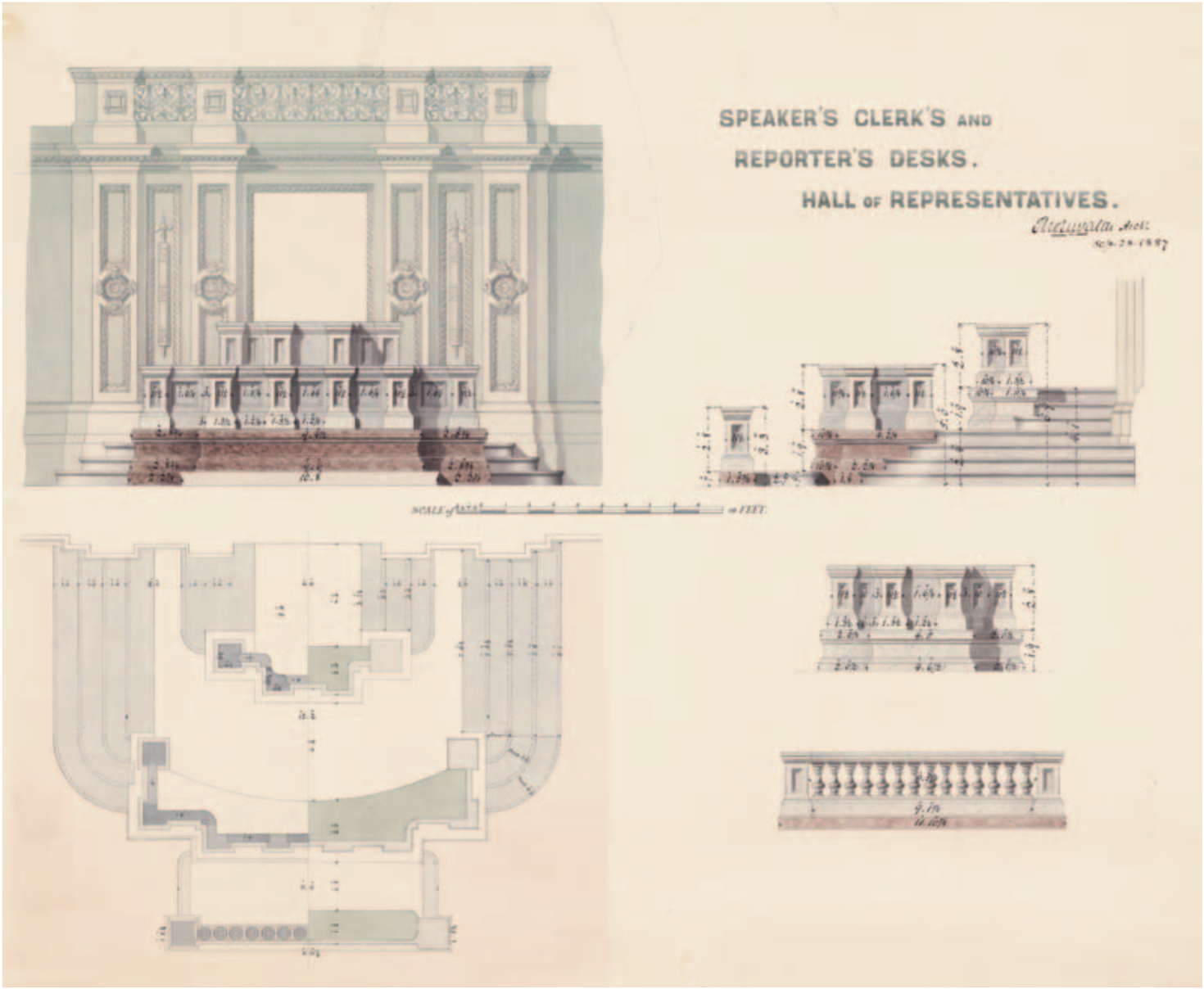
[41] Benjamin B. French, the Commissioner of Public Buildings, summarized the Capitol's role as a Civil War garrison, bakery, and infirmary in his 1862 report. See "Report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings," in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1862), 596–603. For information on the use of Capitol spaces for a bakery and hospital, see also RG 40, Subject Files, Curator's Office, AOC.

[42] "A Resolution Transferring the Supervision of the Capitol Extension and the Erection of the new Dome from the War Department to the Interior Department," in *United States Statutes at Large,* vol. 12, 617.

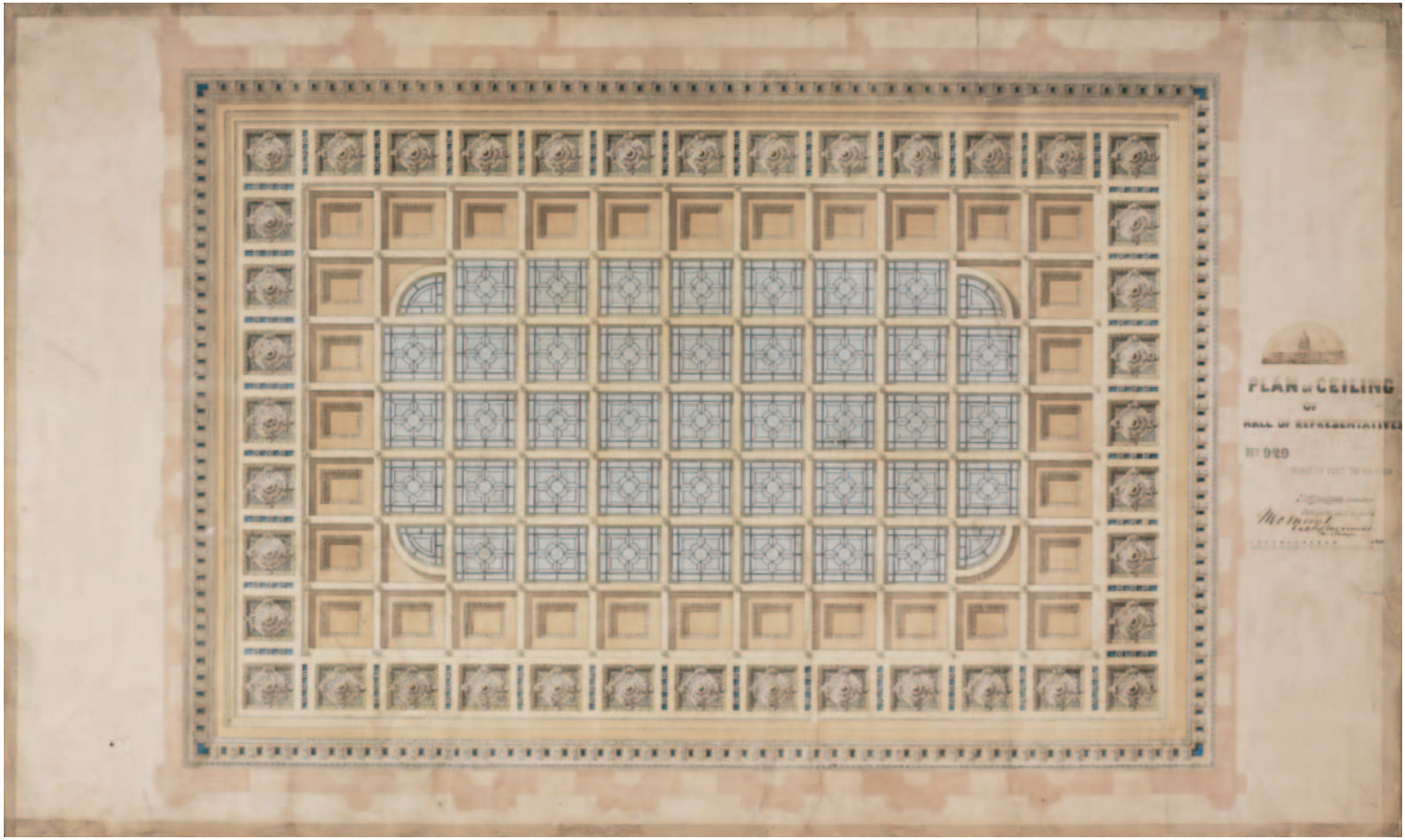
[43] Construction of the ironwork for the dome was continued during the year the contract was suspended (May 1861–May 1862), and the structure was finally completed in 1865. See Allen, *The Dome of the United States Capitol,* 50–65.

ENLARGED SECTION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—WALTER ARCHITECT.

The term "enlarged" referred to a drawing that detailed elements in a room's design. March 29, 1854.

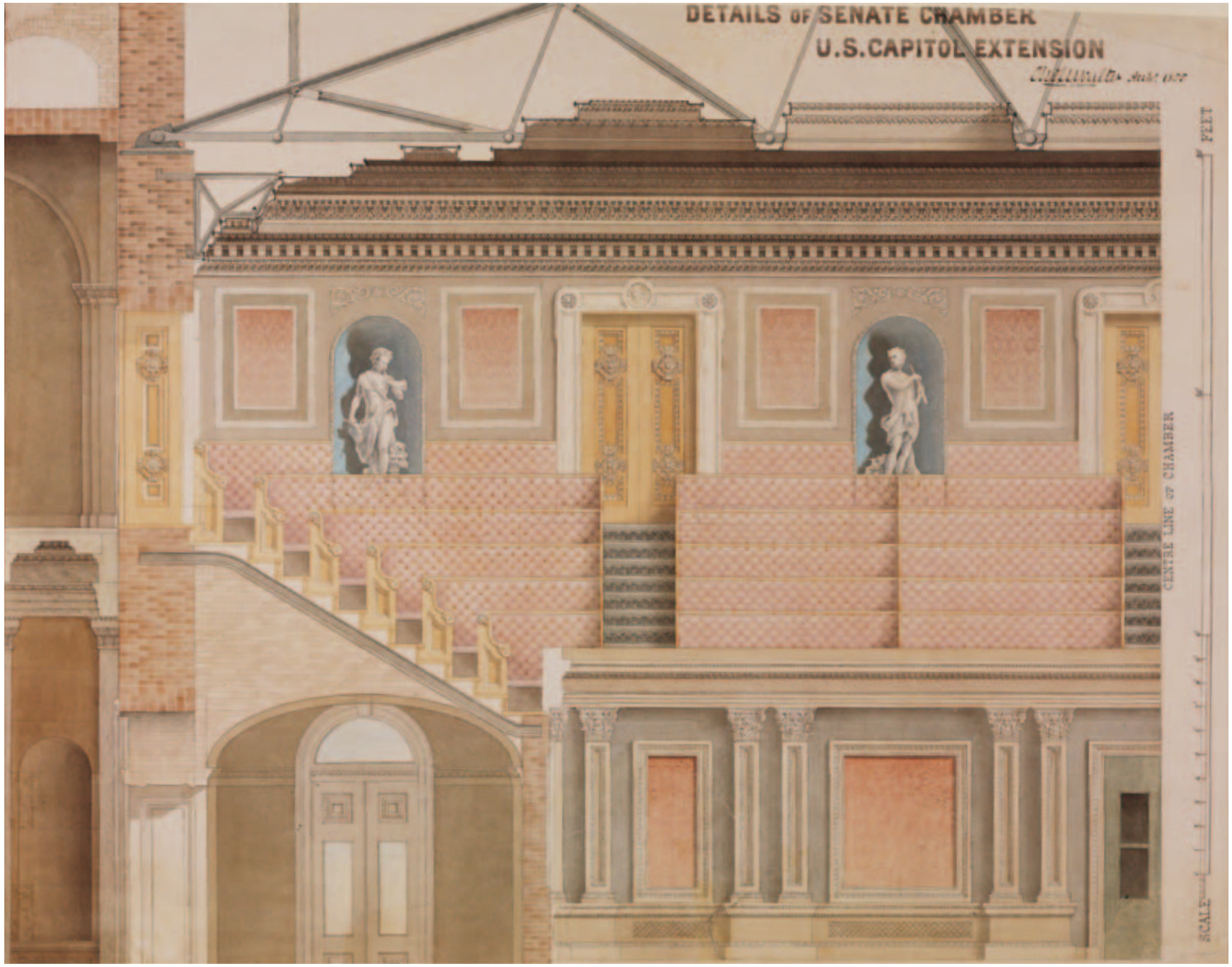


SPEAKER'S DESK, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—WALTER ARCHITECT.



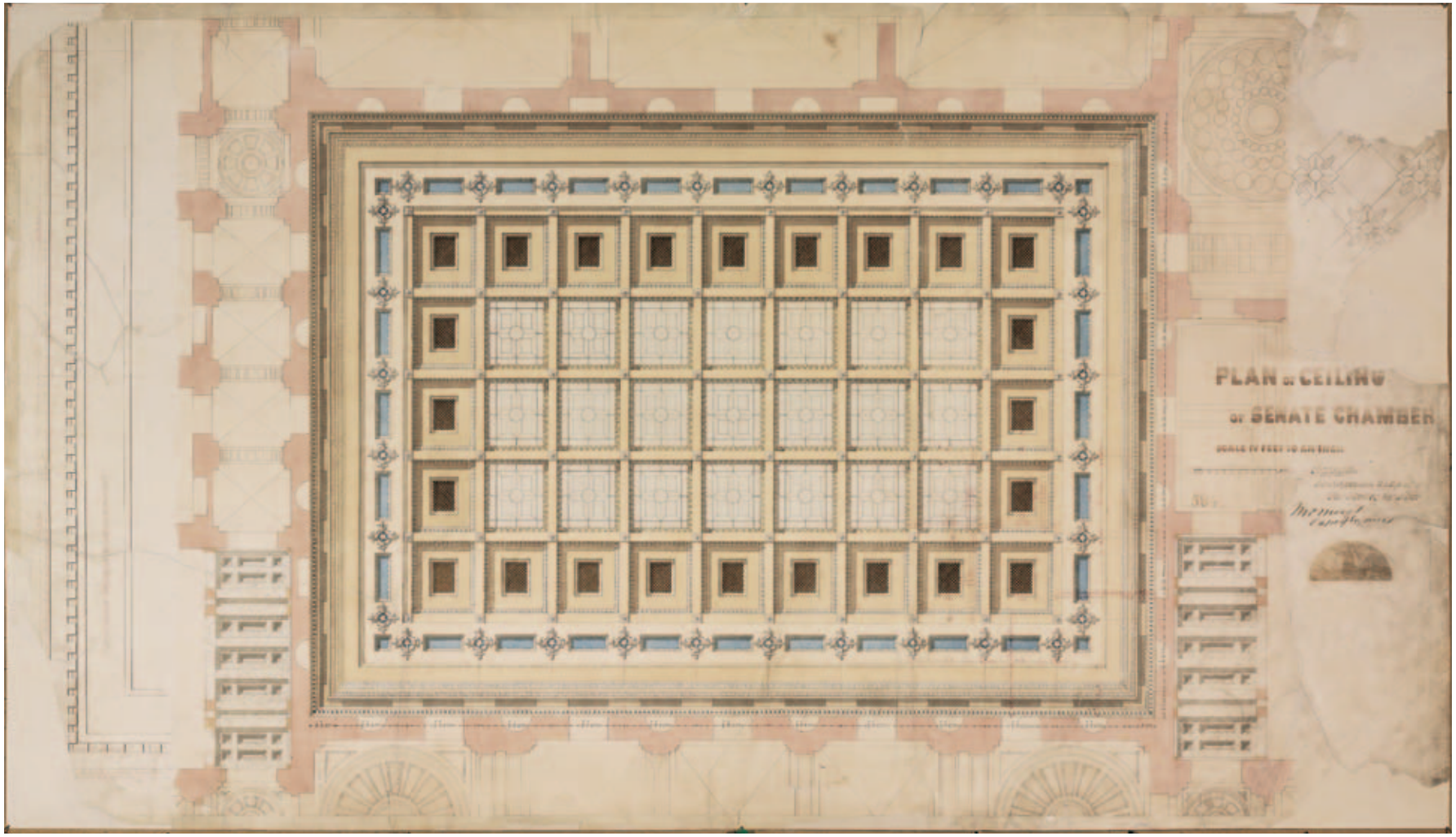
CEILING OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

The original ceiling and skylight were removed in 1949 as part of a renovation of the House of Representatives. Drawing dated March 28, 1856.



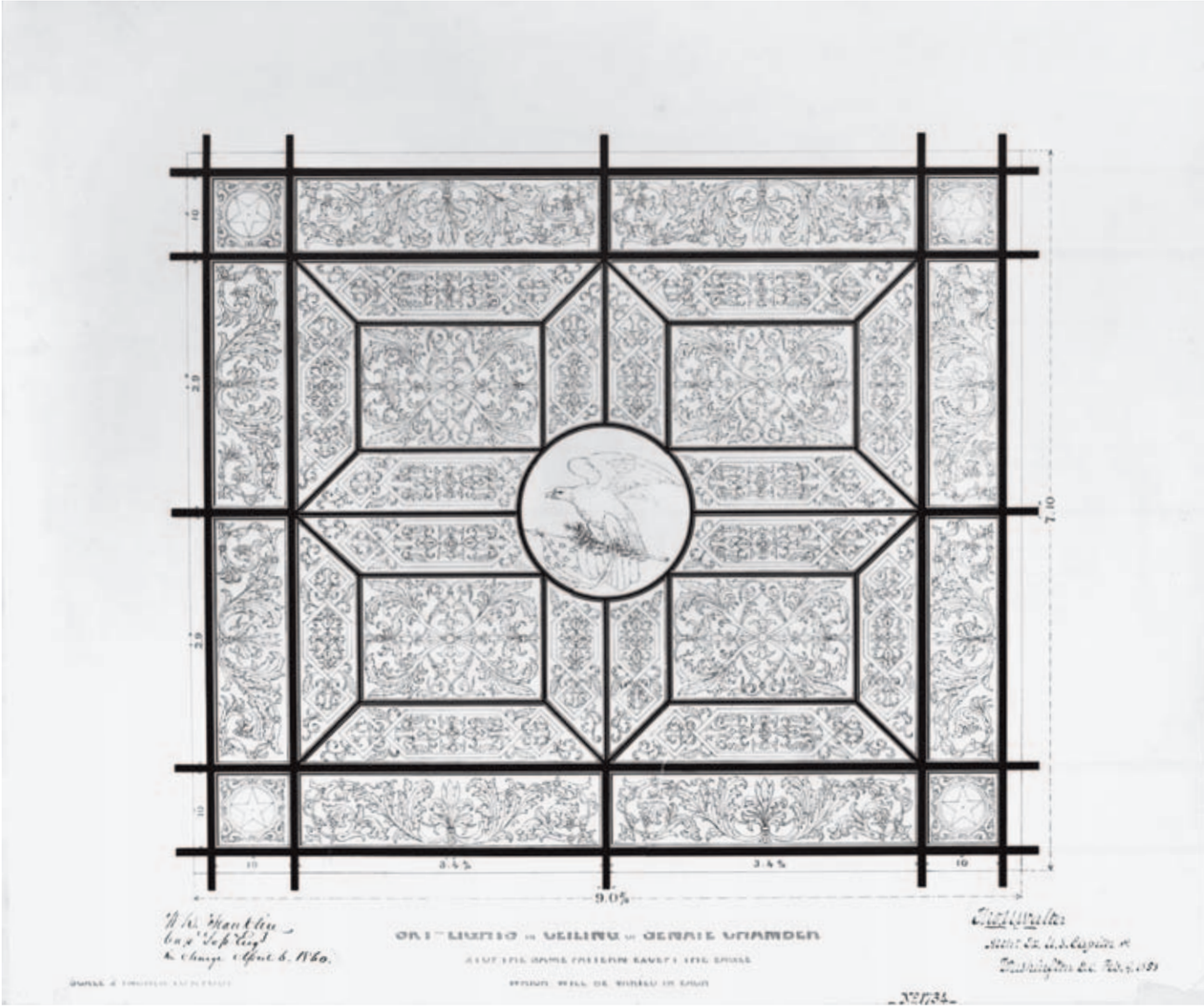
ENLARGED SECTION OF SENATE CHAMBER,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.

The term "enlarged" referred to a drawing that detailed elements in a room's design.



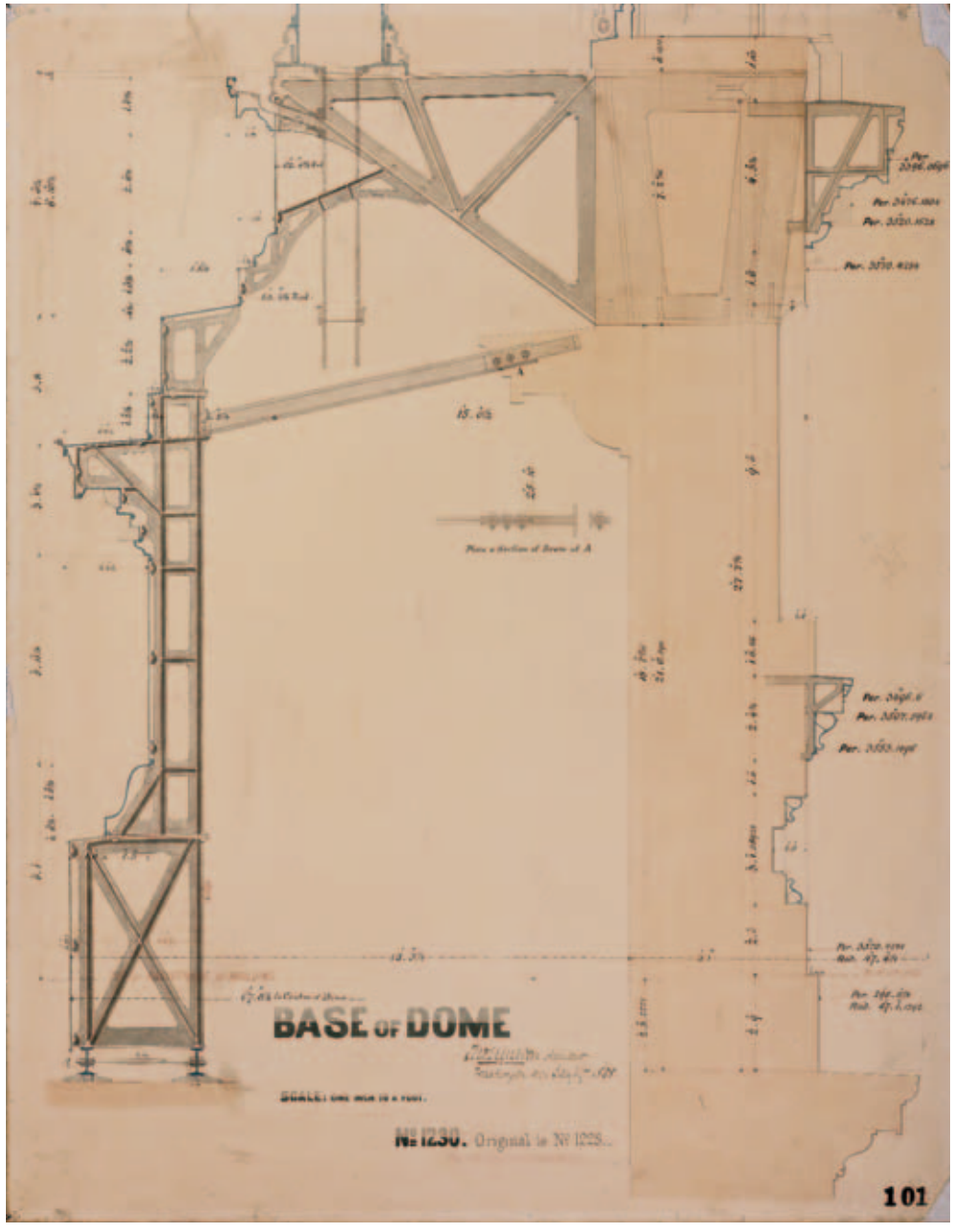
CEILING OF SENATE CHAMBER—WALTER ARCHITECT.

The original ceiling and skylight were removed in 1949 as part of a renovation of the Senate Chamber.



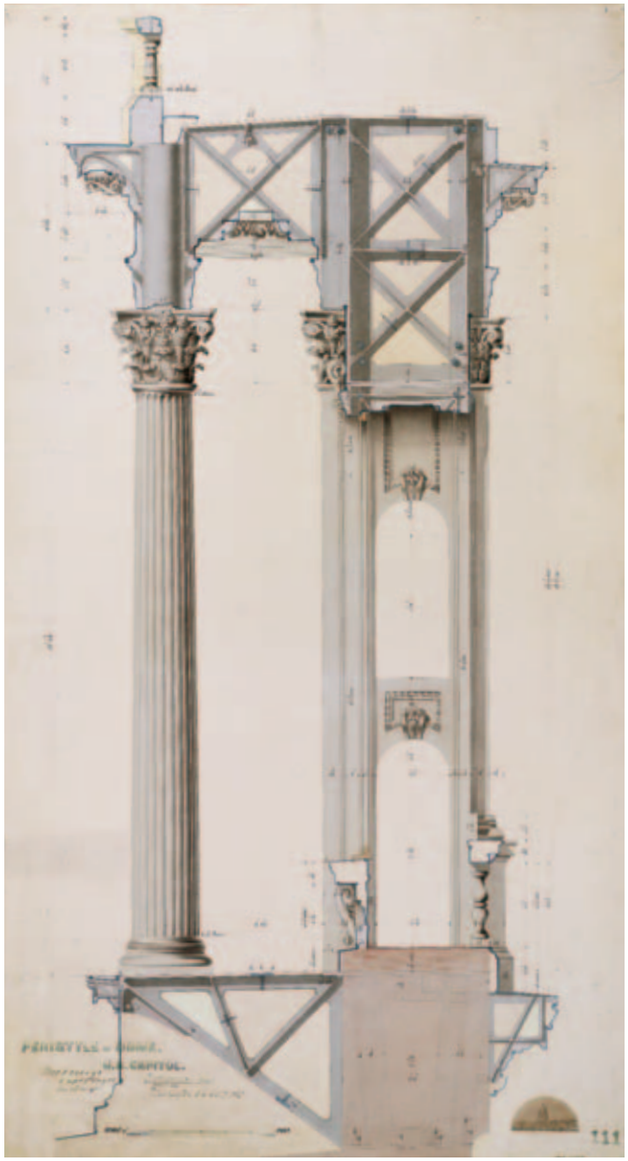
PANEL, CEILING OF SENATE CHAMBER—WALTER ARCHITECT.

The skylights are no longer extant.



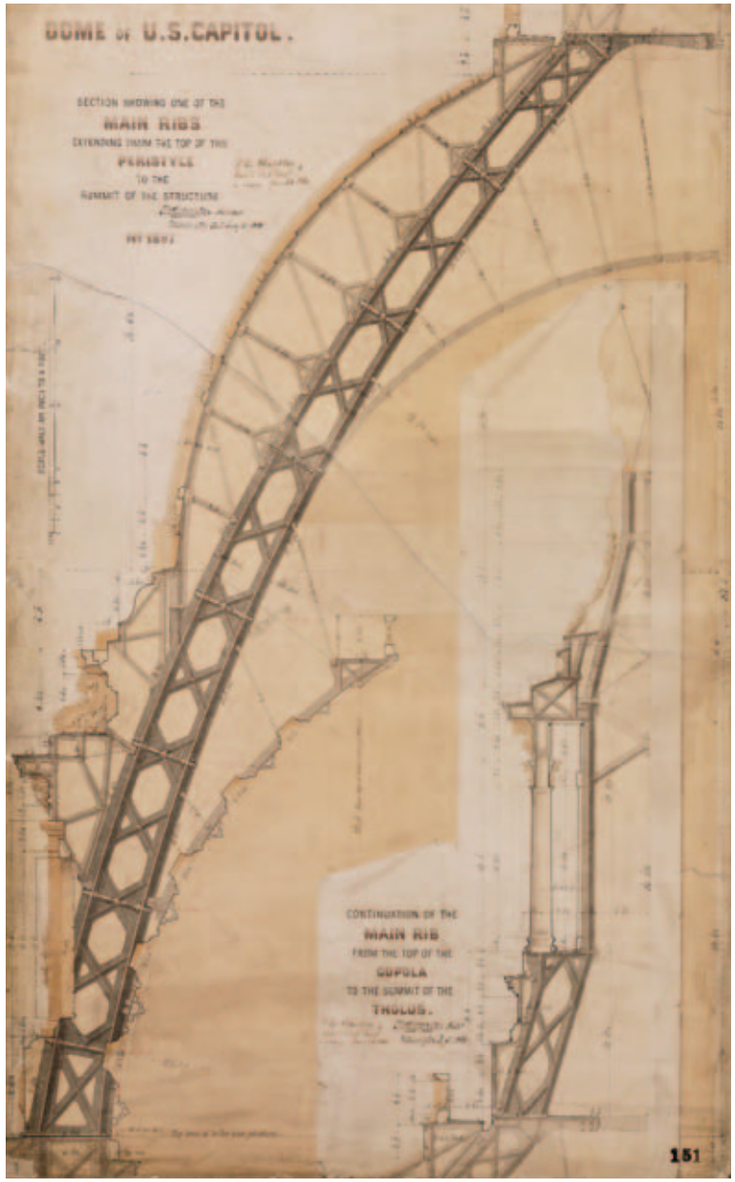
DETAILED BASE OF DOME,—WALTER ARCHITECT.

PLATE 197



PERISTYLE OF DOME—WALTER ARCHITECT.

The drawing detailed how the peristyle columns would be cantilevered beyond the old rotunda walls to provide a greater diameter for the new dome.



DETAILED SECTION OF TOP PORTION DOME,—WALTER ARCHITECT.

PLATE 199

STATUE OF FREEDOM, CRAWFORD SCULPTOR.

Thomas Crawford's photograph of his model for the third design for the statue of *Freedom,* 1856.

attention to the great difficulty in obtaining the marble promptly, because of the war. He also mentions the fact that the copper covering for the roof and the cast-iron gutters were not satisfactory, as the expansion and contraction in the metals opened the joints, with result of leakage. He caused the up-and-down joints to be riveted, and depended upon the corrugations of the metal providing for the expansion and contraction which would result from the difference in the temperature. The lapped and calked joints of the cast-iron gutters were covered with pitch. During this year arrangements were made for lighting the gas by Gardner's electro-magnetic gas-lighting apparatus.[44]

On December 2, 1863, the Statue of Freedom, by Crawford [Plate 199], was raised to its resting place on the top of the tholus which surmounted the Dome. This statue is 19 feet 6 inches high, and is made of bronze in five sections, bolted in place. On this occasion the following order was issued by the War Department:

"SPECIAL ORDERS,
"No. 248.

"HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF WASHINGTON,
"TWENTY-SECOND ARMY CORPS,
"*December 1, 1863.*

"3. At 12 m. on the 2d instant the Statue of Freedom, which crowns the Dome of the National Capitol, will be inaugurated. In commemoration of this event, and as an expression due from the Department of respect for this material symbol of the principle on which our Government is based, it is ordered—

"First. At the moment at which a flag is displayed from the statue a national salute of thirty-five guns will be fired from a field battery on Capitol Hill.

"Second. The last gun from the salute will be answered by a similar salute from Fort Stanton, which will be followed in succession from right to left by salutes from Forts Davis, Mahan, Lincoln, Bunker Hill, Totten, De Russy, Reno, Cameron, Corcoran, Albany, and Scott.

"Fourth. Brig. Gen. W. F. Barry will make the necessary arrangements for and superintend the firing from Capitol Hill, Brigadier-General De Russy from the works south, and Lieut. Col. J. A. Haskin from those north of the Potomac.

"By command of Major-General Augur:

"CARROLL H. POTTER,
"Assistant Adjutant-General."

The head of the statue, being hoisted by the steam derrick, was started from the ground at 12 m., and in twenty minutes it was in place, the flag unfurled, and the salute fired.[45]

Mr. Walter in his report for November 1, 1864, states that the eastern portico of the north wing, together with steps and stairways, was completed with the exception of the caps for the cheek blocks. In this portico the column shafts are monoliths. Each base and pedestal is worked out of a single stone. The capitals are sculptured from the solid blocks, being two courses in height. The architraves over each intercolumniation and the panels of the ceiling are each made from a monolithic block, the latter being deeply paneled and richly carved. Work was stopped on all porticoes except the eastern portico on the south wing. Each year a limited amount of painting was done on the interior wall surfaces.[46]

[44] Architect of the United States Capitol Extension, "Report of the Architect of the Capitol Extension," in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior,* H. ex. doc. 1 (38–1), Serial 1182.

[45] Brown reprinted documents and orders first published in Walter's "Report of the Architect of the Capitol Extension," which contained an account of the ceremonies placing the statue of Freedom atop the dome. For a contemporary news account of the event, see "The Statue on the Capitol Dome," *Daily National Intelligencer,* December 3, 1863, 3. See also Robert L. Gale, *Thomas Crawford: American Sculptor* (Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), 190.

[46] Architect of the United States Capitol Extension, "Report of the Architect of the Capitol Extension," in *"Report of the Secretary of the Interior,"* 38th Congress., 2d sess., H. ex. doc. 1 689–696. [Serial 1220]

Although work continued on the Capitol throughout the war, it was delayed by the increased prices in freight, and the difficulty of obtaining vessels at any price was so great that the delay caused dissatisfaction in Congress.

In February, 1863, the freight rate on stone was $1.75 per ton; before the end of the year it was $6 per ton. Vessels were in great demand as carriers of army supplies, and everything gave way to the demands and needs of the Army. But while work progressed slowly it progressed steadily. In the year 1865 Thomas U. Walter sent in the following resignation, which was accepted by the President, Andrew Johnson, and Edward Clark was appointed Architect of the Capitol.

"ARCHITECT'S OFFICE, U.S. CAPITOL,
"Washington, D.C., May 26, 1865.

"Hon. JAMES HARLAN,
"Secretary of the Interior.

"SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday inclosing a copy of a communication addressed by you to the contractor for the enlargement of the Library of Congress, in which you state that the contract entered into between myself, on the part of the Government, and Mr. Charles Fowler, the aforesaid contractor, 'is void,' and that 'no accounts or claims for service performed or materials furnished under it will be allowed.' You also state that 'the Commissioner of Public Buildings will be instructed to take the necessary action to prevent the further progress of said work under said supposed contract, and also to preserve the public buildings until the work can be legally resumed, after advertisement for bids.' This, of course, removes all jurisdiction of the work from me, which, it is proper for me to say, I do not at all regret.

"I may, however, be permitted to remark that I consider the stoppage of the work at this time as particularly unfortunate. The season has so far advanced that it is scarcely possible, under the most favorable circumstances, to bring it to such a state of forwardness before the assembling of Congress as will prevent it from interfering with the convenience of the members. It is also of the highest importance that accommodations should be obtained for the books at the earliest possible moment. In view of these facts, any delay in the prosecution of the work is greatly to be deplored.

"It occurs to me further to say, in this connection, that I regret that so important a movement as the abrogation of a contract, in which I stand as the representative of the Government by authority vested in me by one of its executive departments, should have been effected without any consultation whatever with me, and without the slightest intimation having been given me of the intention of the Department on the subject. And more particularly do I regret this action as I was the Architect of the work in question, acting under direct orders from the Secretary of the Interior.

"I have likewise received a letter from the Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds, inclosing a copy of a communication received by him from the Department of the Interior, under date of the 23d instant, in which you direct him to take immediate 'charge of all work on public buildings in the District of Columbia in course of construction, extension, or repair, and now in progress, that are legally subject to the control of the Secretary of the Interior.' This, of course, places me in a position subordinate to the aforesaid Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds.

"These changes, particularly the stoppage of the enlargement of the Library of Congress, suggest the present as the proper time for me to retire altogether from the charge of the public works. I therefore respectfully request you to accept this as my resignation as Architect of the United States Capitol Extension, the new Dome, the continuation of the Patent Office Building, the enlargement of the Library of

Congress, and the extension of the Government Printing Office. In order that time may be afforded for the proper arrangement of the drawings and papers in my office, I respectfully suggest that this resignation shall take effect on the 31st instant.

"In taking this step I am moved by considerations of self-respect as well as by the fact that the public buildings heretofore under my charge have so far approached completion as to render the services of an architect no longer absolutely necessary.

"I have completed all the designs and drawings for these works, and I have the satisfaction to say that the contractors and foremen who have thus far executed them understand all that relates to what remains to be done. They have proved themselves by years of trial to be skillful and faithful; I have therefore no hesitation in intrusting my reputation as the architect of these structures in their hands.

"I received my appointment as Architect of the Capitol Extension directly from the President on the 11th day of June, 1851, and I have thus far brought this work to completion. Nothing remains now to be done except a few stones on the eastern portico of the south wing, the caps of the cheek blocks, and the colonnades on the north, south, and west fronts, a large portion of the materials for which are already wrought.

"My design for the Dome on the Capitol was approved by Congress, and an appropriation made for commencing work, on the 3d of March, 1855. I have prosecuted this improvement ever since with all proper diligence, and I have now to say that the entire exterior is completed, and that nothing remains to be done to finish the interior except a portion of the stairways which are now in progress of construction, and the great fresco painting of Brumidi, which I trust will be finished before the assembling of Congress.

"The enlargement of the Library is part of my original design for that improvement which was adopted by Congress March 19, 1852. The center portion was immediately thereafter executed, and I believe that I am correct in saying that it is the first room ever constructed with a complete iron ceiling. The enlargement is simply the carrying out of my original design, with some modifications to increase the room for books.

"The remaining works which have heretofore been under my charge have been so placed from time to time by the Department of the Interior, and it is proper for me to say that I have received no compensation for any professional service I have ever performed upon them, or upon any other of the Government works, beyond my salary as Architect of the Capitol Extension.

"I shall turn the drawings, with all the records and Government property in my office, over to the Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds, in conformity with your order, which places all these works in his charge, and I have no doubt that he will be able to bring them to a proper conclusion without any further professional aid.

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

"THO. U. WALTER,
"Architect." [47]

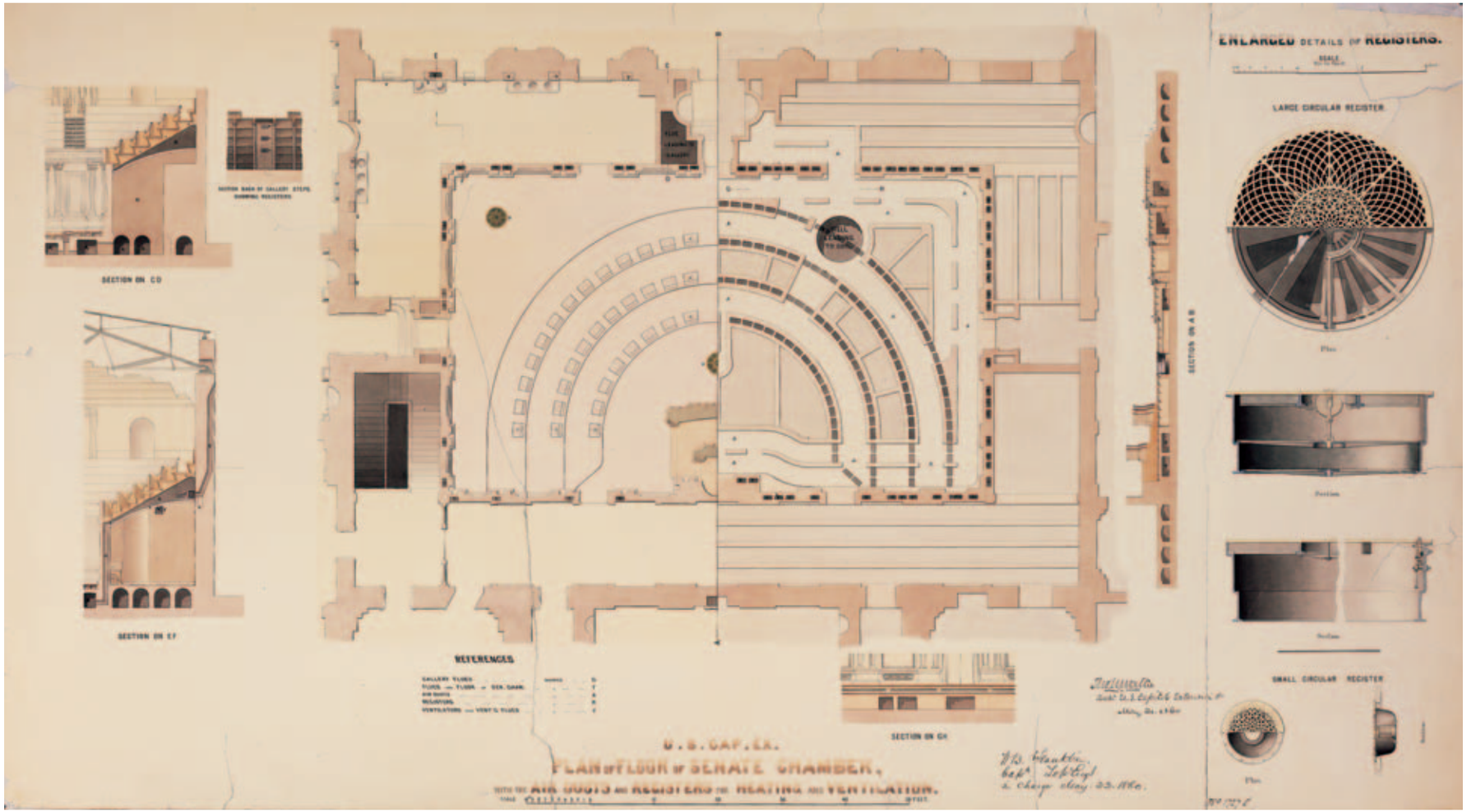
Mr. Walter was the architect of the north and south wings and the Dome and the interior of the old Congressional Library, having been connected with the work in that capacity from the beginning of the Capitol extension in 1851 until its practical completion in 1865. From the years 1853 to 1861, while the public buildings were in charge of the War Department, he was nominally subordinate to a Captain of Engineers,

[47] Thomas U. Walter to Secretary of the Interior James Harlan, May 26, 1865, RG 42, NARA. Walter did not submit the drawings to the Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds as he promised in his letter. The government purchased many of Walter's drawings of the Capitol from his daughters Olivia and Ida Walter in 1917. Architectural historian William Allen interprets Walter's resignation as a bluff since Walter was genuinely surprised when it was accepted. He kept the drawings so that he might be considered indispensable.

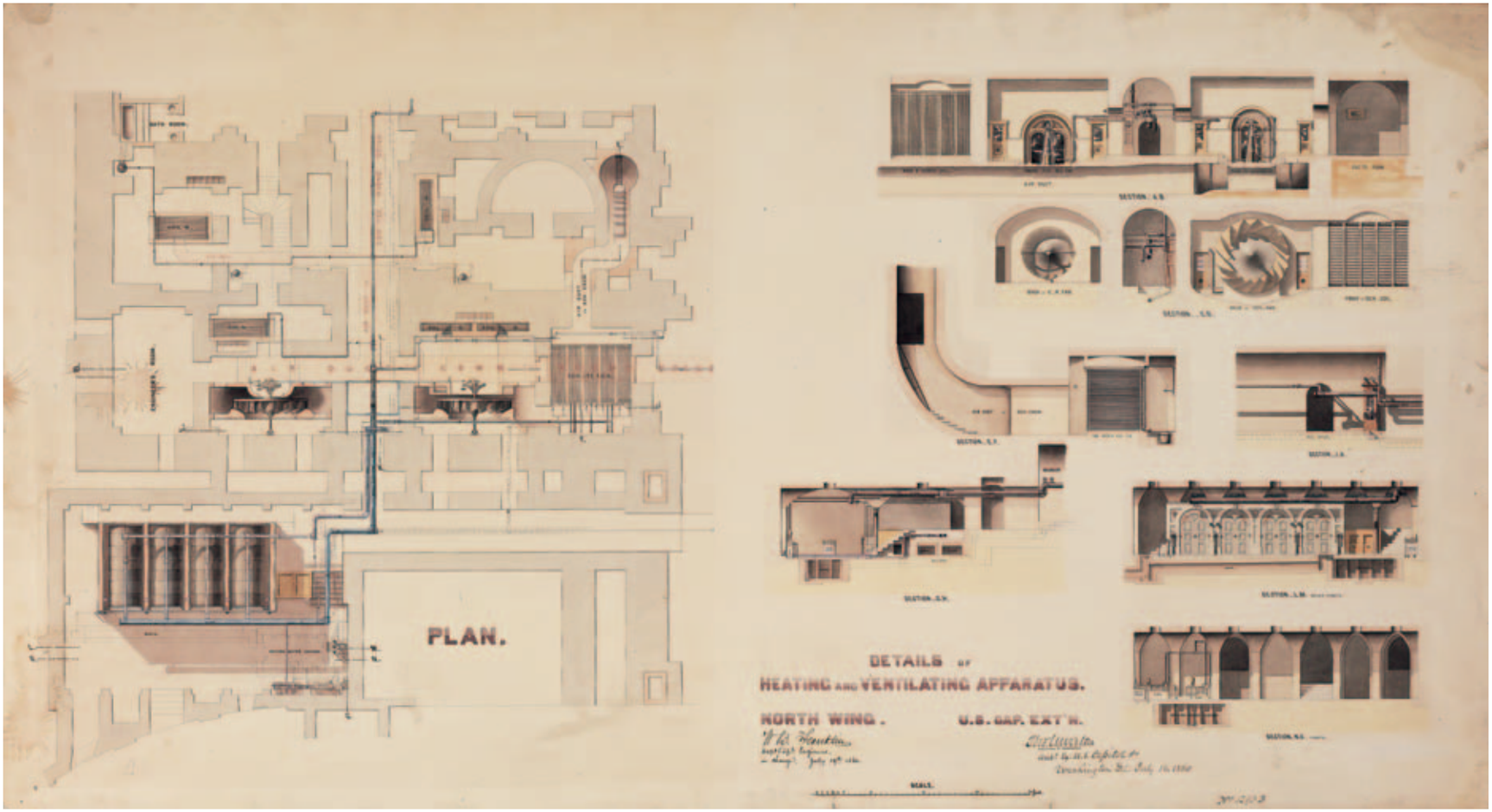
who the reports show devoted the greater part of his time to the business management and discussions on heating, ventilation, and acoustics.

In the selection of Thomas U. Walter to design and supervise the United States Capitol extension, Millard Fillmore showed his appreciation of capacity already displayed in executed work. After a survey of the buildings of the period there can be no doubt that Walter was the man best fitted for this important and delicate addition. His love of refined and classical proportions and details, his good taste, and his rare restraint in reproducing the features of the old work and harmonizing the new with it, instead of endeavoring to destroy the old building for self-aggrandizement, showed a man of rare capacity. The working drawings which he made, a large proportion of them with his own hands, are evidence of his capacity in the practical execution of the work.[48] Plans, sections, and elevations were all carefully drawn, figured, and colored. The details for construction and ornamentation were all worked out with the minutest care. In the execution of the exterior the stories, orders, belts, and details of the old building as designed by Thornton were extended through the new work [Plates 202 and 203], while the detailing of the doorways, where it would not conflict, was more elaborate than the entrances on the old work [Plate 204]. The drawings of the corridor extending through the south wing [Plate 205], the Senate retiring room in the north wing [Plate 206], and the main vestibule in the south wing [Plate 207] show the care with which the general scheme was evolved on paper. The details in most instances are refined and classical in their tendencies, as are shown in the columns and antae of the Senate retiring room and columns and pilasters of the vestibule [Plate 208]. The capitals shown in Plate 209 are reductions of full-size drawings. The ceiling and ironwork in the rooms devoted to the Congressional Library was more freely treated than the other portions of the building [Plate 210]. Plates 211 to 213 show detail drawings made for the principal stairways. Plates 190, 193, and 214 are reductions from detail drawings of the House and Senate chambers. The care and accuracy with which his constructional details are worked out is shown in the drawings of vaulting for the antechamber, north wing [Plate 215], and the arching of the vestibule in the south wing [Plate 216]. The designs of Walter for chimney pieces, one of which is given [Plate 217], furniture [Plate 218], and lamp-posts [Plate 219] are not as satisfactory as the work on the actual structure, being deficient in classical feeling and evidently being influenced by the fashion of the period in such designs, although they are drawn with the same minuteness of detail shown in other portions of his work.

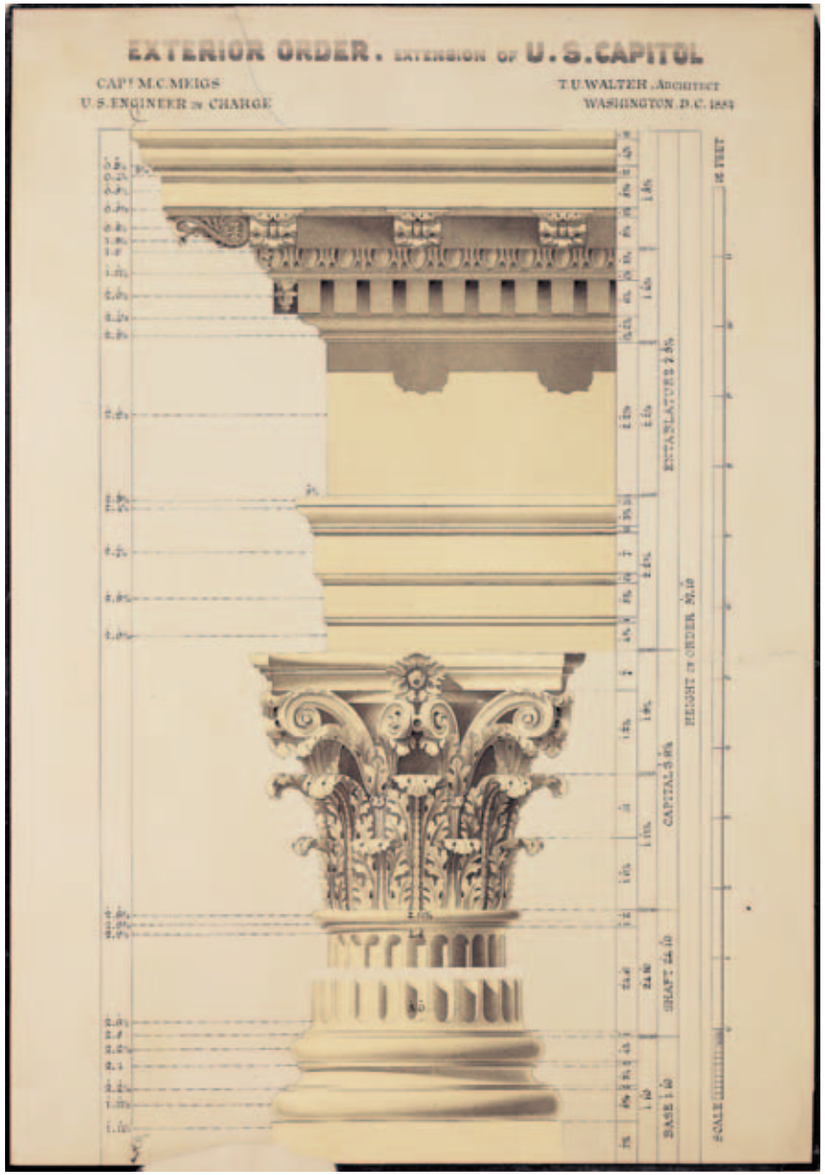
[48] Draftsman August G. Schoenborn (1827–1902) assisted Walter in this work. See Allen, *The Dome of the United States Capitol,* 76. Walter's extensive drawings of the Capitol are located in the collections of the Architect of the Capitol, the Prints and Photographs Division at the Library of Congress, and the Athenaeum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



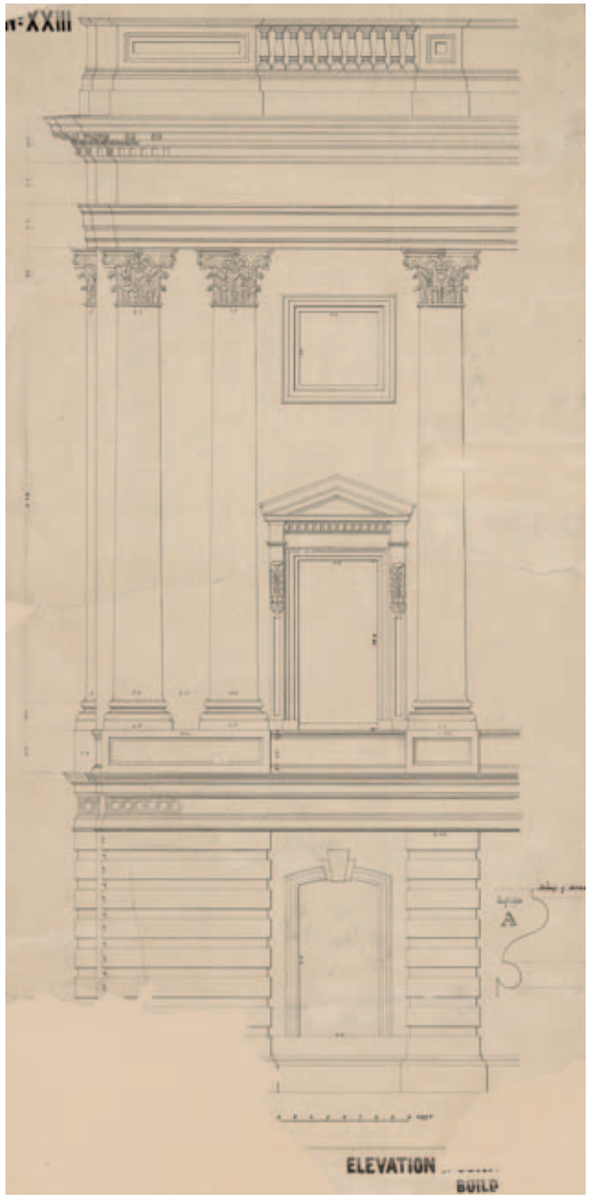
PLAN FOR HEATING AND VENTILATING.



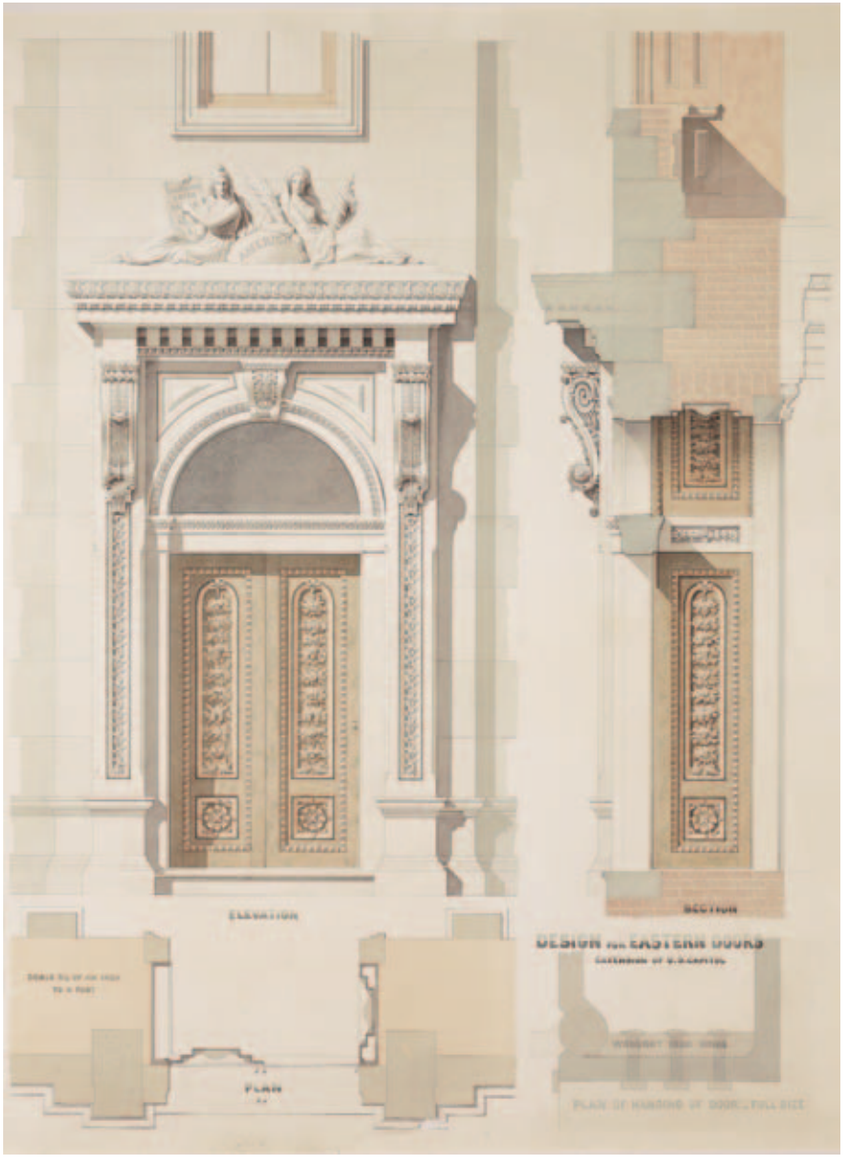
DETAILS OF HEATING AND VENTILATING.



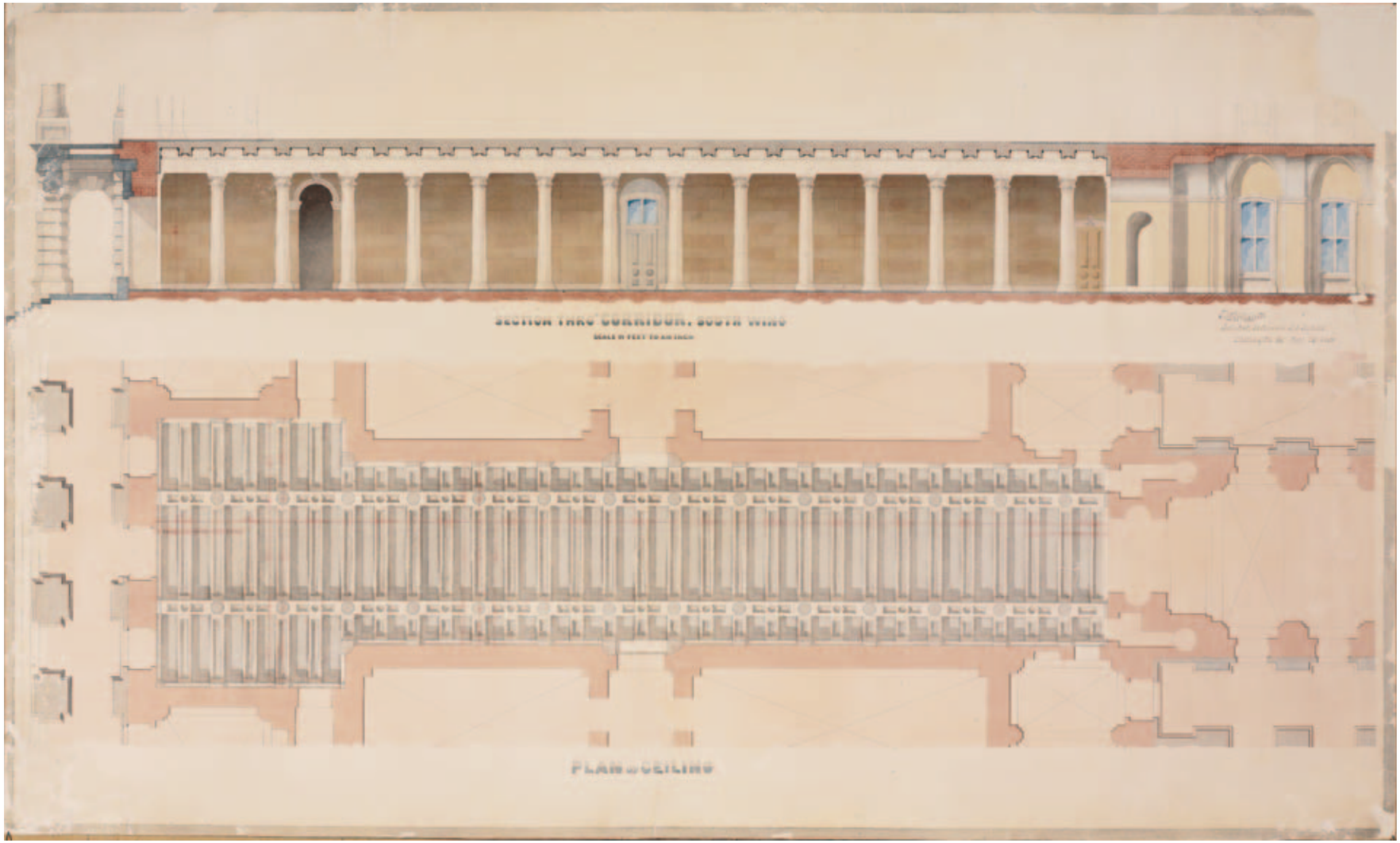
EXTERIOR ORDER OF THE CAPITOL EXTENSION—WALTER ARCHITECT.



DESIGN SHOWING CORNER OF CAPITOL—WALTER ARCHITECT.
Dated 1851.

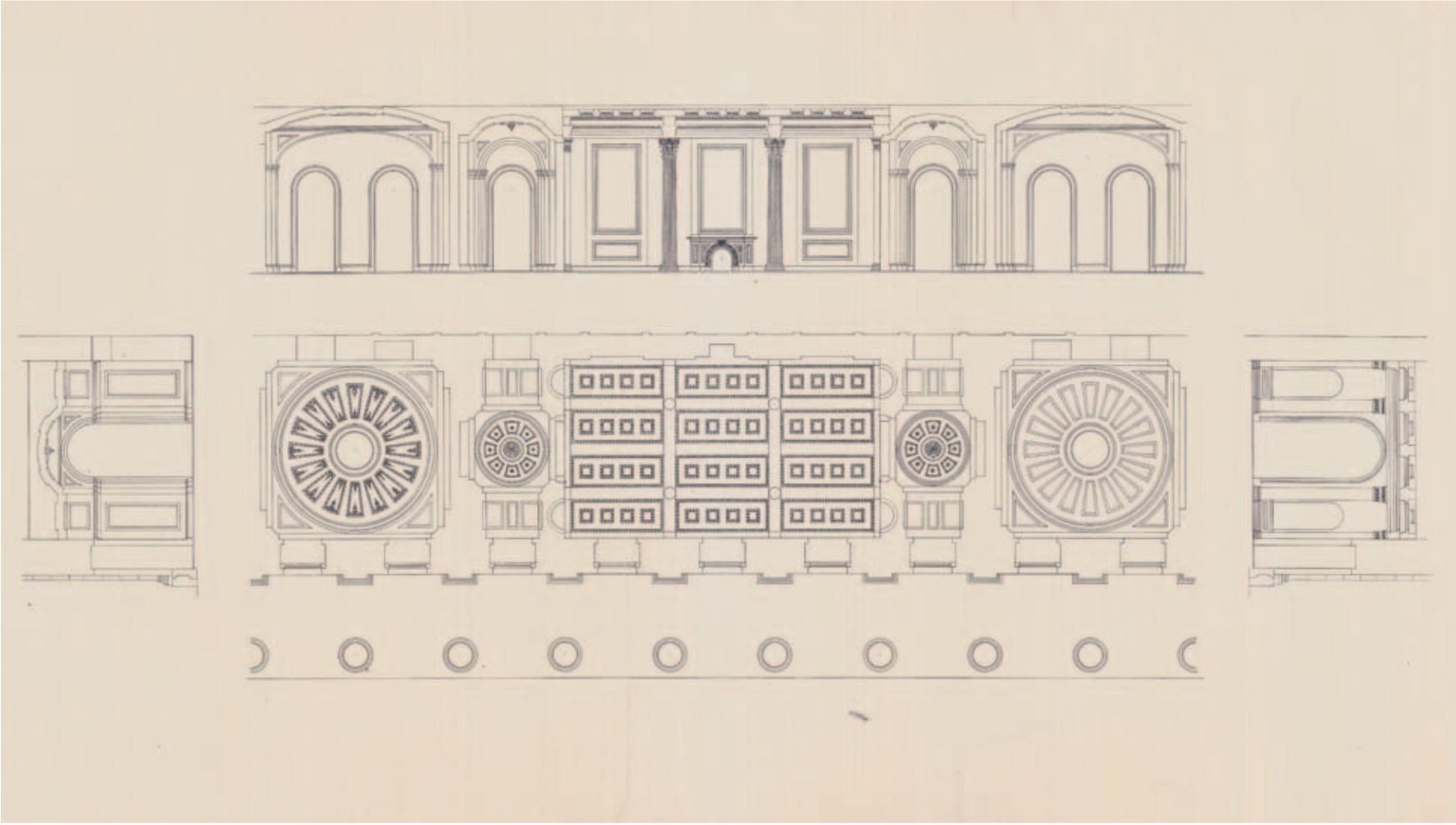


DETAILS OF EASTERN DOORWAYS,—WALTER ARCHITECT.



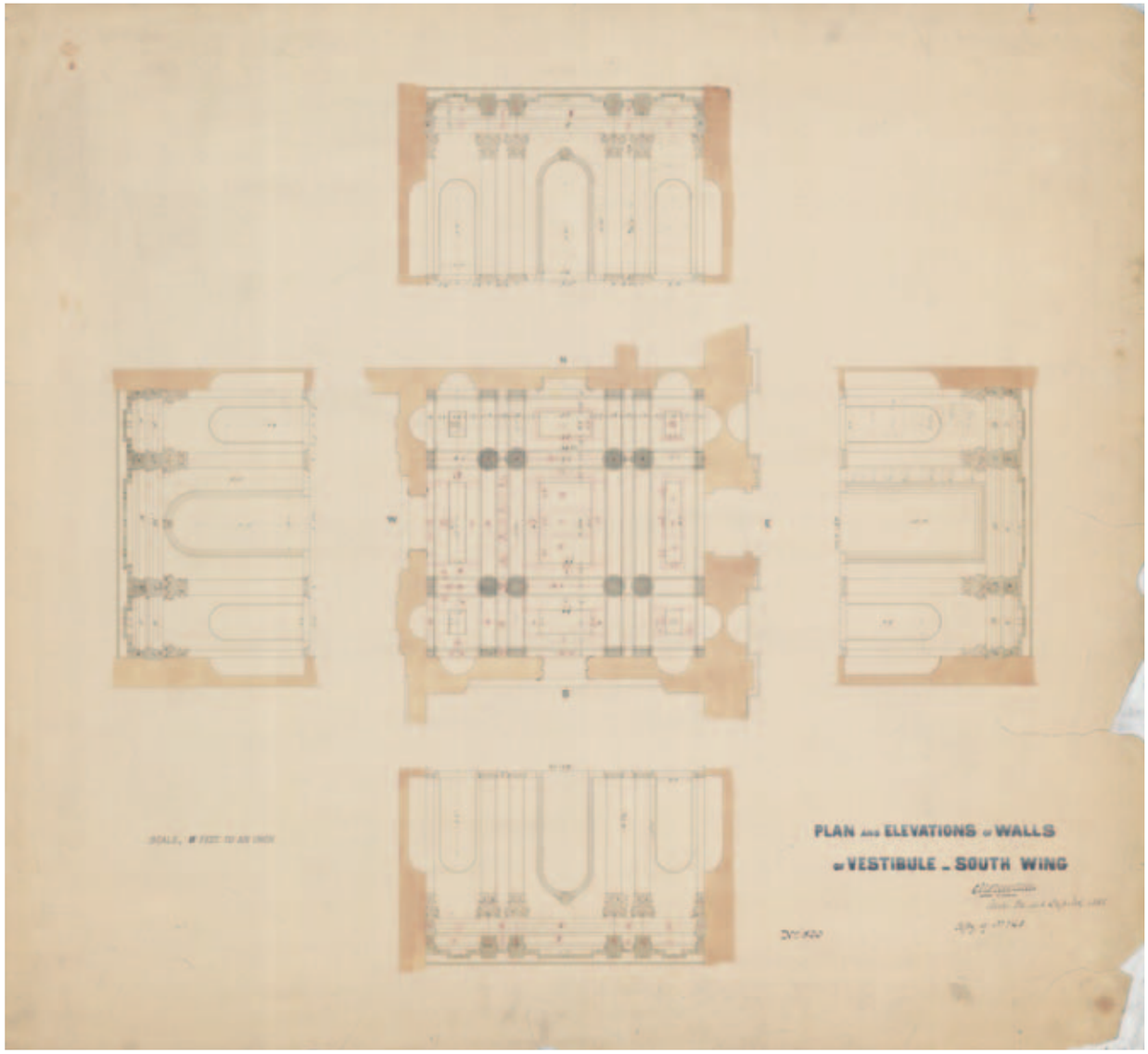
CORRIDOR THROUGH BASEMENT SOUTH WING.—WALTER ARCHITECT.

This corridor is known today as the Hall of Columns (related drawing, plate 241).



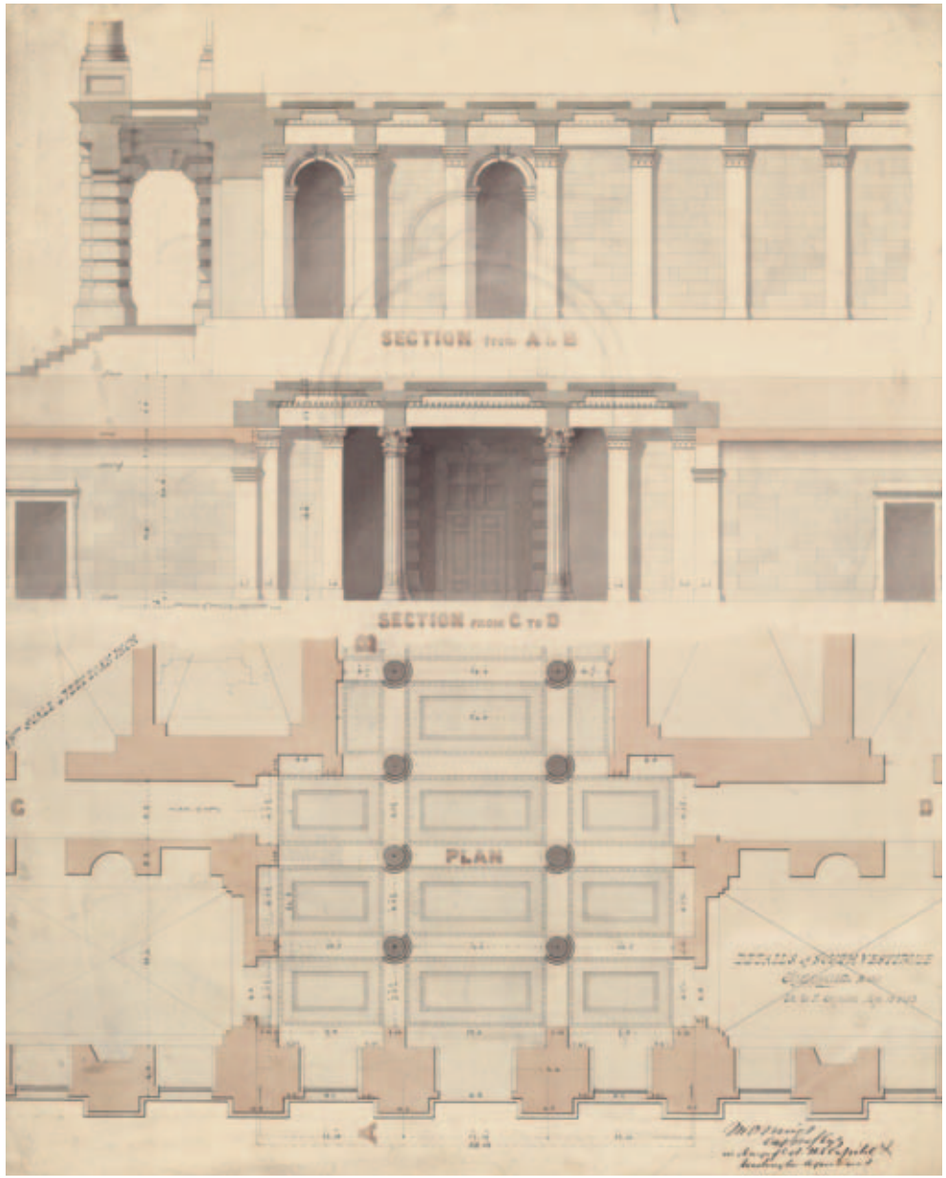
SECTIONS AND PLAN OF SENATE RETIRING ROOM—WALTER ARCHITECT.

Today the space is known as the Marble Room. This drawing also shows the Vice President's Room and the President's Room at the left and right, respectively. Ca. 1856.

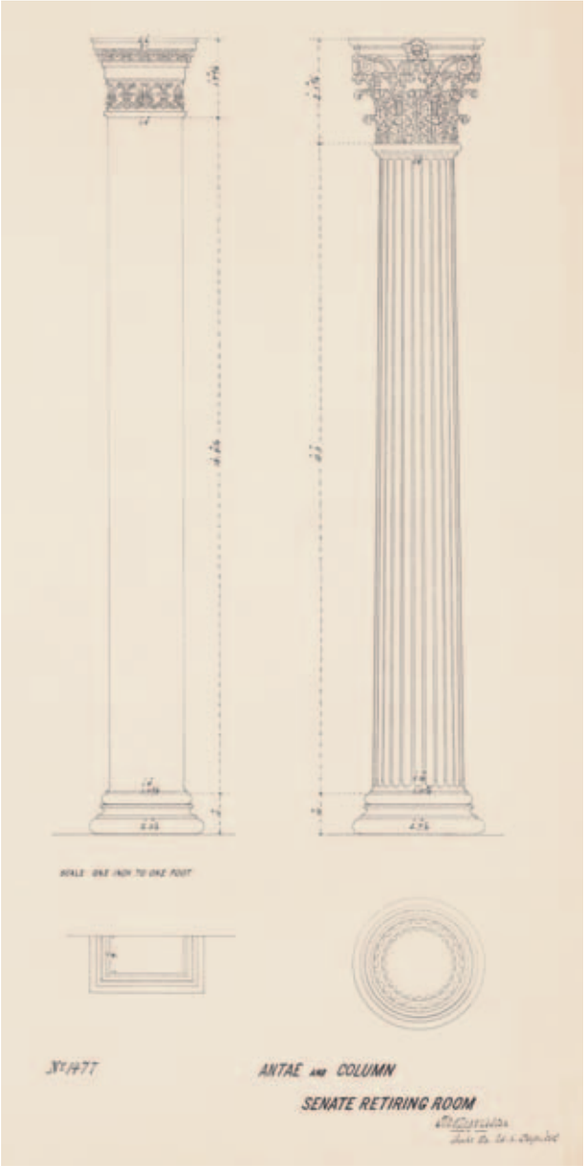


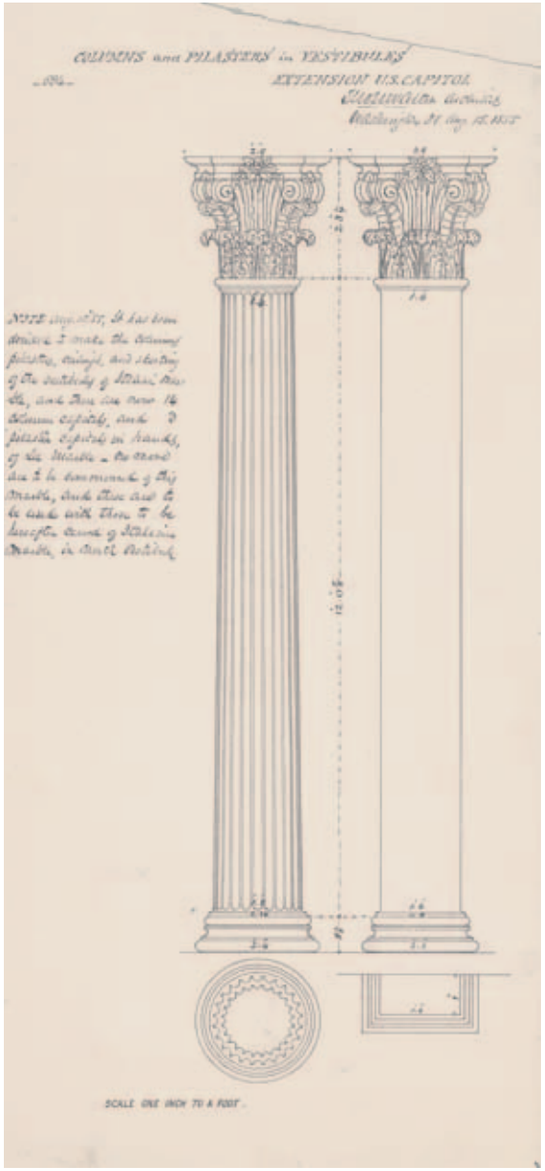
PLAN AND ELEVATION OF WALLS, BASEMENT VESTIBULE, SOUTH WING,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.

The center bays of this space have been infilled with two elevators.
Brown's caption is mistaken: this vestibule is located on the second floor. September 11, 1855.



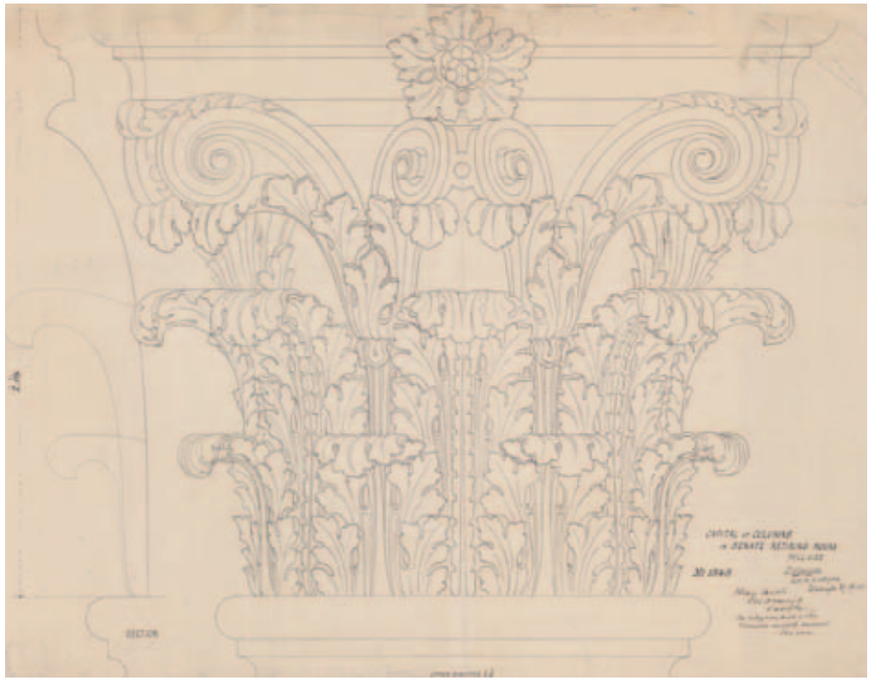
VESTIBULE, SOUTH WING,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.
This drawing depicts the south end of the Hall of Columns.





DETAILS OF COLUMNS,—WALTER, ARCHITECT.

Left: Marble Room columns, drawing dated July 14, 1857. Right: Walter's Corinthian capital with corn leaves, tobacco, and magnolias, drawing dated August 15, 1855.



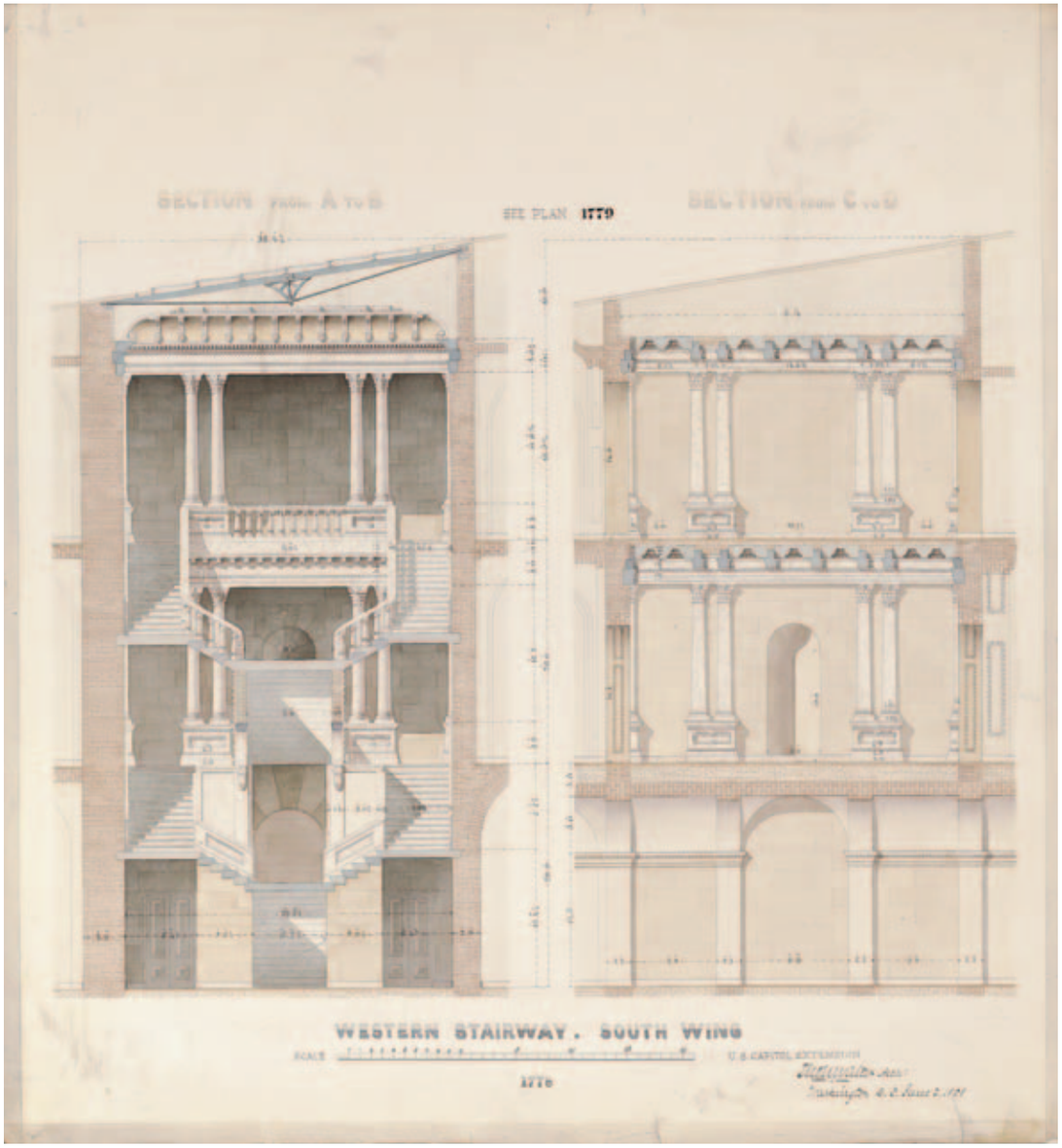
DETAILS OF CAPITALS, NORTH WING,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.

Left: Senate Retiring Room, April 17, 1857.

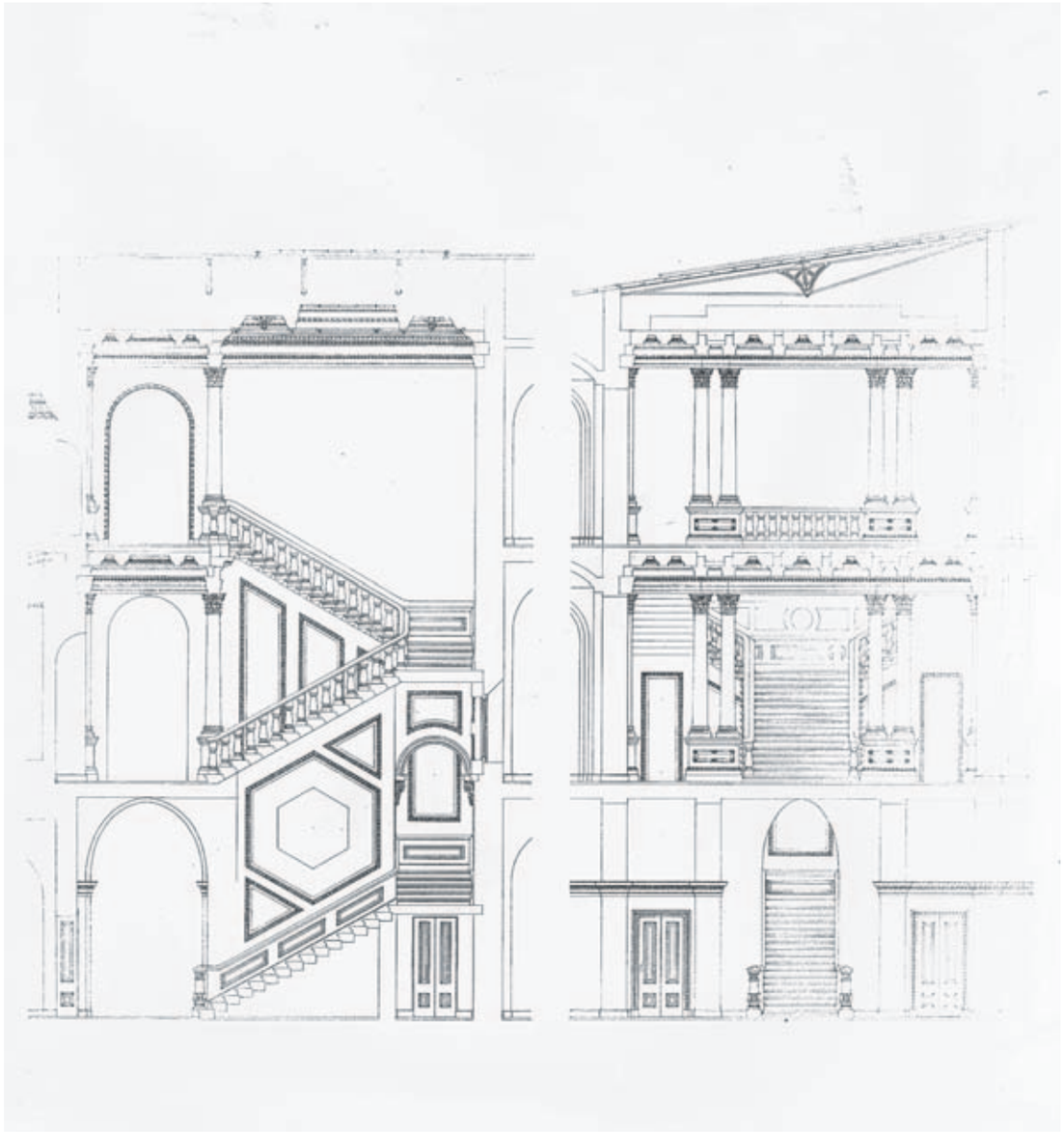
Right: Western Stairway, April 27, 1857.

DRAWING OF CONSOLE, OLD CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.

Related photograph, plate 253a.

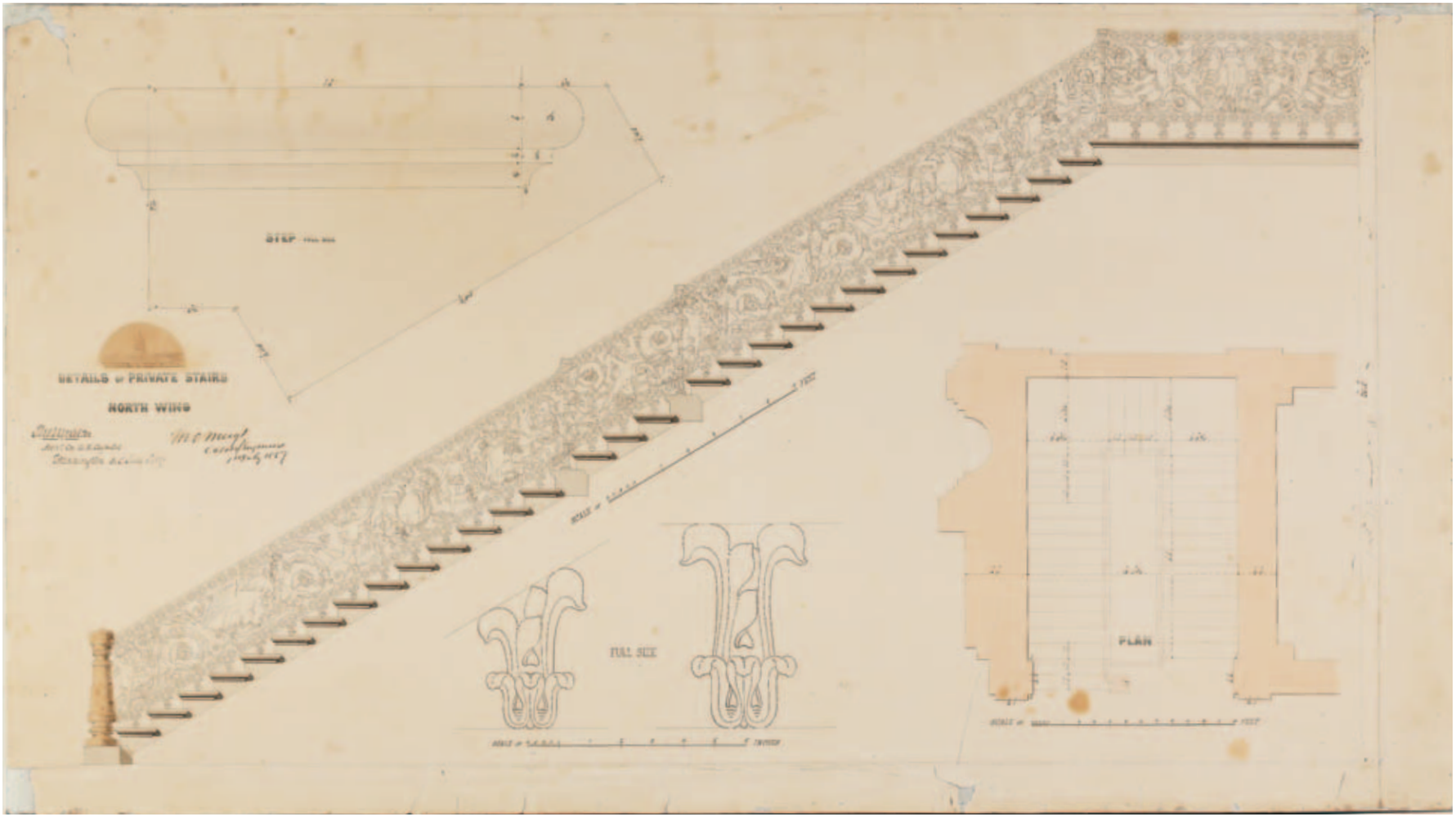


WESTERN STAIRWAY—WALTER ARCHITECT.



SECTION OF STAIRWAY.

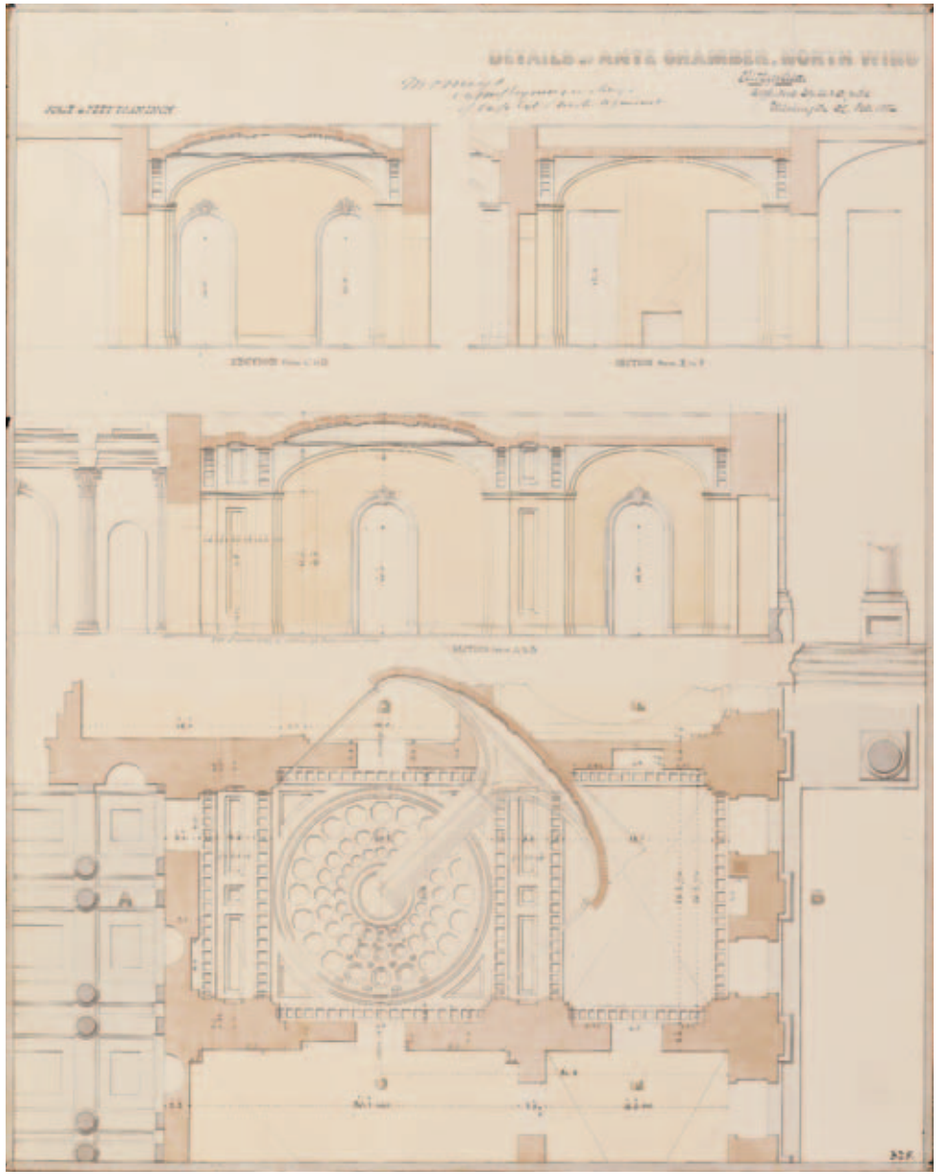
June 2, 1858.



DETAILS OF BRONZE STAIRWAY—WALTER ARCHITECT.

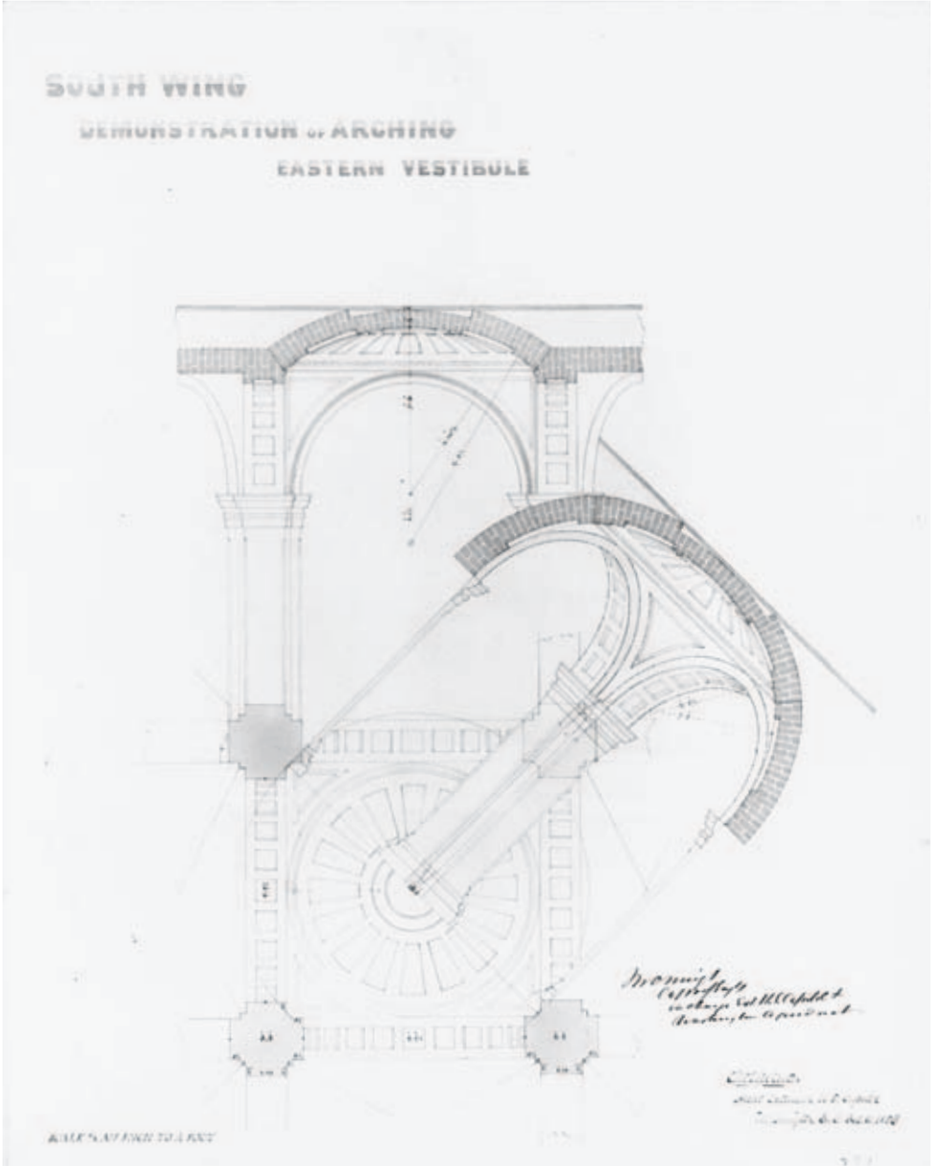
PERSPECTIVE OF SPEAKER'S DESK,—WALTER ARCHITECT.

Ca. 1857.



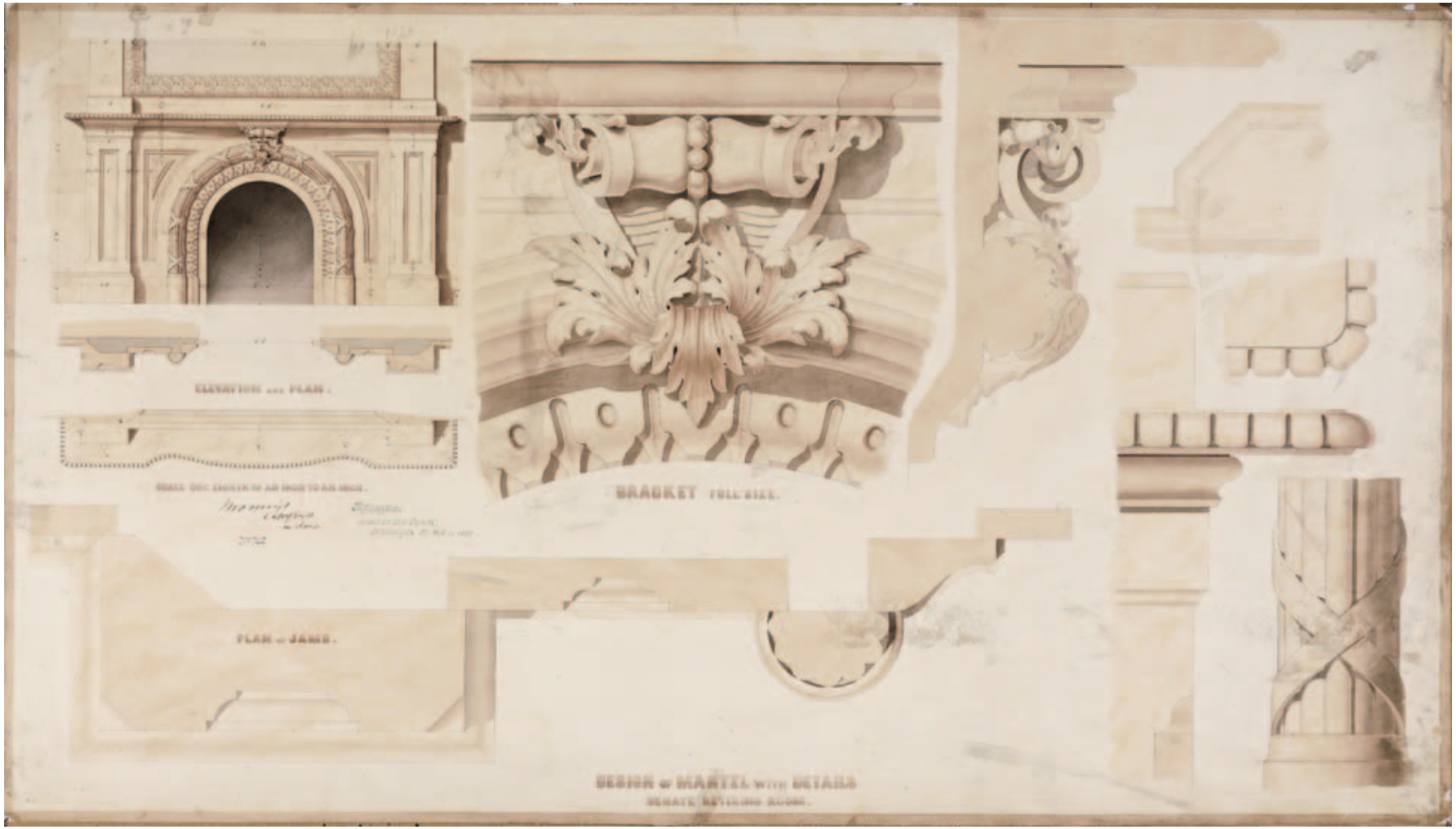
DETAILS OF VAULTING ANTE CHAMBER, NORTH WING,—T. U. WALTER ARCHITECT.

Senate Reception Room (related photograph, plate 231).



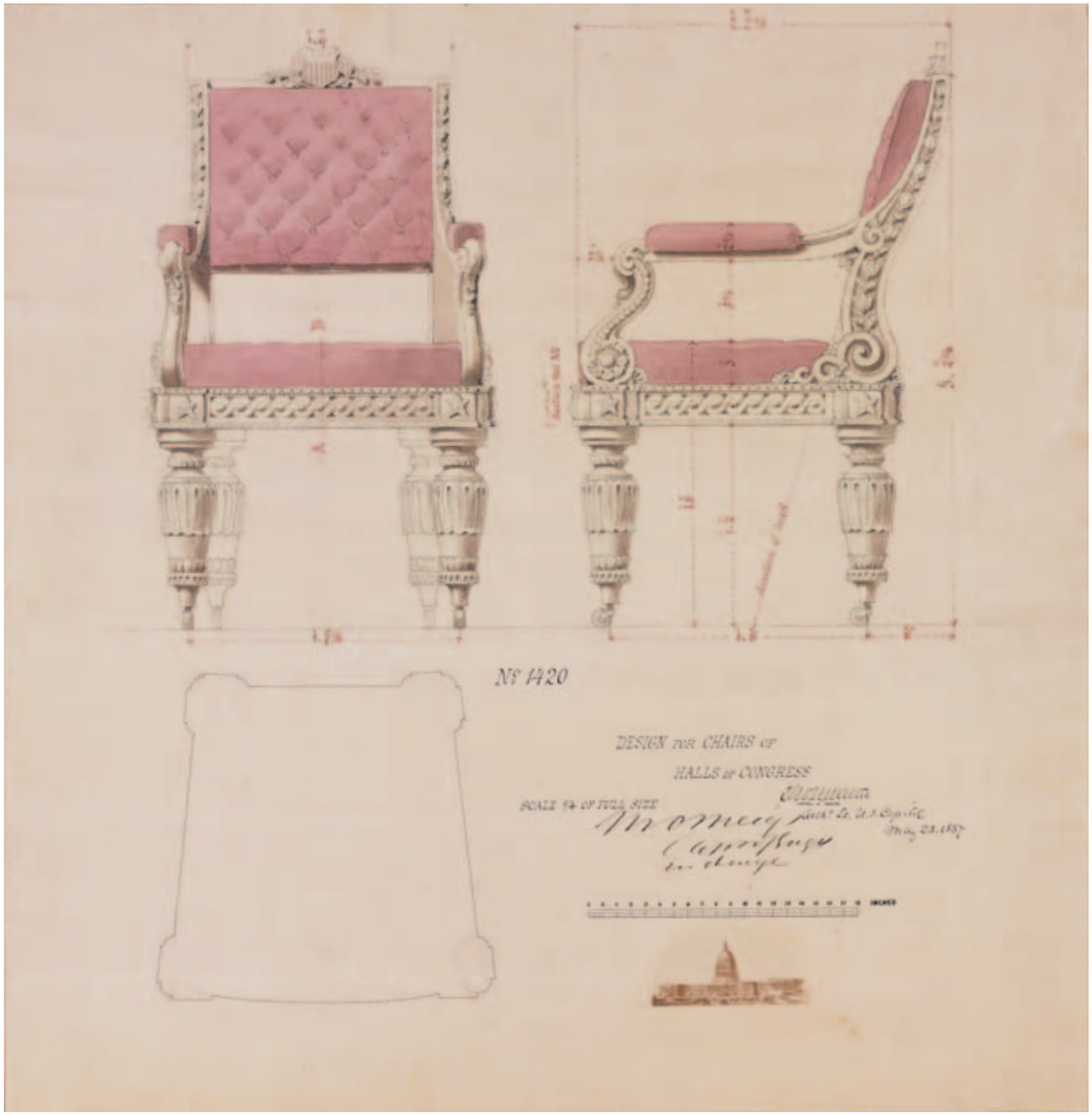
DETAIL OF CORRIDOR ARCHES,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.

This vestibule is located on the first floor of the House of Representatives' Wing.



DETAILS OF MANTEL,—WALTER ARCHITECT.

This mantel is located in the Marble Room.



DESIGN FOR CHAIRS OF HALLS OF CONGRESS,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.

DESIGN FOR LAMP POST ON EAST ENTRANCE,—T. U. WALTER, ARCHITECT.

Ca. 1863.