

## **Historical Information About the Pennsylvania Avenue Entrance of the Treasury Department**

### **Physical Space:**

- The North Lobby & Entrance were first opened in 1869 after the designs of the Treasury Supervising Architect Alfred Mullett. Mullett designed the Cash Room, the most opulent space in the Treasury Building, and decorated the North Lobby in an equally sumptuous manner with gold gilding and wall and ceiling decorations.
- The Cash Room entrance was completely renovated in 1927 when the present bronze doors were added. The doors remained after the teller cages were removed.
- The Cash Room and Lobby closed in 1976. At this time the entrance was moved to 15<sup>th</sup> Street.
- The Restoration of both the North Lobby and the Cash commenced in 1985 and was completed in 1987. In 2001, the Treasury Historical Association funded the re-gilding of the Cash Room ceiling.

### **Vaults under North Lobby:**

- For over 100 years 15 Treasury vaults lay under this very entrance. They measured from 10 feet by 16 feet to 50 feet by 90 feet. Among the documents stored in these vaults was the checkbook used in the 1870s by the Comptroller of the Currency to pay the depositors of the failed Freedman's Savings and Trust Bank, whose main office was just opposite this entrance on the current site of the Treasury Annex.
- In the 1970s these vaults were turned into the main command center for Treasury's computers.
- Below these vaults are the catacombs, the special vaults that shore up the Cash Room. These vaults are so cool that Woodrow Wilson's administration stored flour in them during World War I.

### **Grant's Inaugural Ball Entrance - March 1869**

- The Treasury Department's North wing was the site of Ulysses S. Grant's inaugural ball in March of 1869 with the Cash Room serving as the main ballroom.
- Architect Alfred Mullett was instructed to make the North Wing the "most elegant building in Washington." The Cash Room is among the features that enabled the wing to be so designated.
- One ticket to the ball admitted "One Gentleman and Two Ladies"
- Large gas jets spelling "Peace" illuminated the North Entrance
- A fountain worked in the north courtyard between 1869 and 1949
- A crowd of 6,000 people attended the Grant inaugural ball.

### **Dedication of the Albert Gallatin Statue - 1949**

- James Earl Fraser, a famed American sculpture designed the Gallatin statue, which was dedicated in 1949. Fraser, is best remembered as the designer of the Buffalo nickel.
- Secretary of the Treasury John Snyder officiated at the dedication of the statue. This dedication was one of the first Treasury events to appear on television news.
- The statue replaces a fountain, originally installed in 1869.

