



Robert Mills: Building a Republic

Created by Kathleen Kerber and the South Carolina Historical Society

Grade/Subject: 8th Grade Social Studies

Time Allotment 1-2 class periods

South Carolina Social Studies Standards

8-3.1, 8-4.1, 8-5.5

Materials and Preparation

- Projector or Smartboard for introductory presentation
- Copies of primary sources and analysis sheet (included in this lesson plan)

Primary Resources

Robert Mills Papers, 1803-1856, South Carolina Historical Society manuscript collection.

<http://www.southcarolinahistoricalsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Mills-Robert-papers-1135.01.pdf>

Objective

- Students will learn about, discuss, and present on Robert Mills' designs and their influences on 19th century civic life.
- Students will analyze primary sources from the collection of the South Carolina Historical Society.

Assessment

Students will present to the classroom on a particular topic relating to Robert Mills' architecture and engineering projects.

Important Vocabulary, People, and Places

Classical architecture; differences between a primary and secondary source; infrastructure; South Carolina economy and society during the Antebellum period; transcontinental railroad; canals; local, state, and federal government.

Introduction, Anticipatory Set

- Brief presentation on Robert Mills featuring biographical information and historical images:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1XnsUZ2w4nz_urrXC4mRKA9kPzMBzLUPs3MIDzKL6Qol/edit?usp=sharing

Procedure

- Explain to students that they will be analyzing primary sources relating to architect Robert Mills. Review the differences between a primary and secondary source.
- Divide students into five groups. Each group will receive a packet of primary sources featuring a different project by Mills.
- Groups will examine their sources and fill out an analysis worksheet for each source.
- Each group will then present to the class their subject and what they could infer from the sources.

Group Topics and Primary Sources

Group 1 *Creating a fireproof building in Antebellum Charleston.*

- Robert Mills' drawing of the Fireproof building (building completed in 1827)
- Letter to the city of Charleston proposing Washington Park by Robert Mills (1822)

Group 2 *Renovating the Hall of Representatives in our nation's capitol building.*

- Letter to the chairman of the Committee of Public Buildings by Robert Mills (1830)
- H.R 407 Bill

Group 3 *Moving goods across the United States via Transcontinental Railroad.*

- A letter and proposal to the Honorable Solon Borland by Robert Mills (1852)

Group 4 *Moving goods across South Carolina via canals.*

- Estimate for the Edisto Canal by Robert Mills
- Plan for a canal between the Santee and Cooper Rivers (1800)

Group 5 *Commemorating President George Washington with monuments in Baltimore and Washington, D.C.*

- Letter regarding Washington Monument in Baltimore by Robert Mills (1816)
- Signed flyer of the Washington National Monument

Independent Practice

- Encourage students to find a Robert Mills building close to where they live. Teachers can also schedule a classroom visit to the Fireproof Building (available until March 1, 2016).

All images are courtesy of the South Carolina Historical Society.

For more information, additional education resources, and to schedule a field trip, please contact Ashley Darland, Events and Educational Coordinator, at ashley.darland@schsonline.org or 843-723-3225 x111.

Students will fill out one worksheet per primary source in their group packet.

Type of document (circle one):

Photograph

Map

Advertisement

Letter

Drawing

Bill/Receipt

Congressional Record

Other: _____

Unique features (circle those that apply):

Handwritten

Typed

Signature

Letterhead

Color

Stamp/Seal

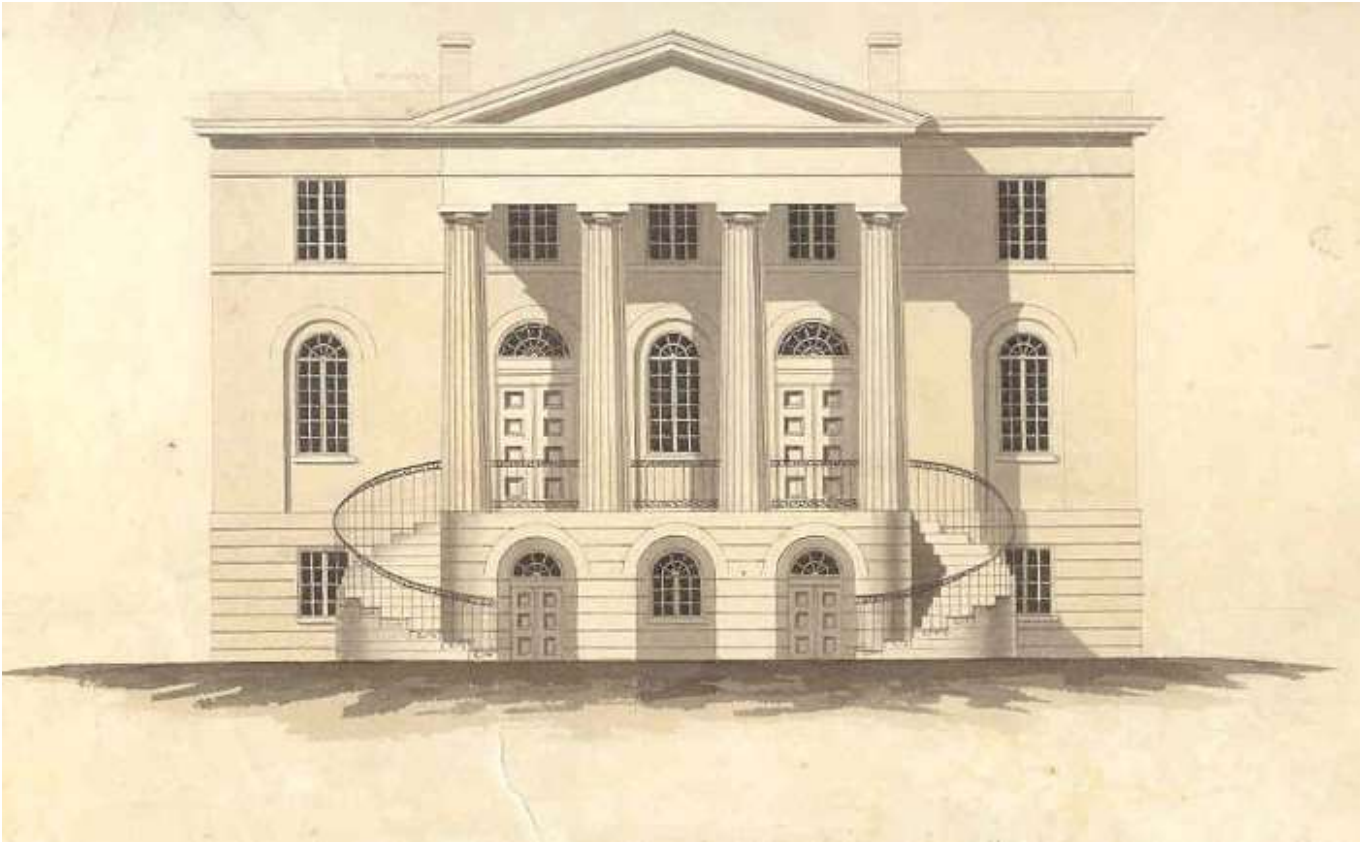
Date

Other: _____

Author/Creator:**Date created:****Briefly describe the primary source:****Why do you think it was created?****What does this document tell you about life in the United States during the Antebellum period?****Write a question to the author/creator of this work:**

Group #1

Topic: Creating a fireproof building in Antebellum Charleston.



The honorable the Intendant &
Council of the City of Charleston
Gentlemen

On a further view of the subject
relating to the general arrangement and improve-
ment of the City square, I am induced to lay
~~open~~ before you a plan which will enable the
City to realize all the improvements contem-
plated without, comparatively, expending any
capital - This plan may be founded upon
the following principles.

1st To rent out the lots fronting upon the
new street, proposed to be opened thro' the
center of the square, restricting those who
build upon these lots to erect the buildings
agreeably to some regular plan previously
fixed on, - or at least according to a regular
facade or front elevation -

2^d As a lot or lots will be required for
the erection of a fine proof office for the State
records, and also for the accommodation of
the Federal Court & its officers, these lots may
be leased or sold for both of these purposes also.

By this arrangement of plan, the City
would secure to itself an annual revenue
which would in time extinguish the City
debt, and avoid the necessity of expending
more capital on the improvement of this square

except what might be required for laying out
the square embellishing it with trees &c &
enclosing.

The amount of revenue which the City
would derive from the above plan would be
as following, namely,

315 feet front of building lots on the City
avenue at 10^{cts} per foot per annum \$3150.-

Rent of lots for Fire proof office, &

Several lots per annum ——— 1150

Total revenue per annum \$ 3600

The above rates for the lots must be considered
reasonable when we reflect upon the location
of these front lots opposite the City square. If the
City chose to sell these lots in fee, I should
judge they would bring from 45 to 50,000%.

I have added herewith four more
arrangements for the square, having par-
ticular reference to the economical plan
above stated. What is written upon the
drawings will explain the position &
uses of the several buildings.

I have the honor to subscribe you

Gentlemen with respect

Robt. Mills.

July 18/1832

Group #2

Topic: Renovating the Hall of Representatives in our nation's Capitol building.

The Honourable

1830

G. Vespilank Chairman
of the Committee on Public Buildings

From the Estimates of Cost made
of the proposed Improvements in the Hall
of Representatives I find that they can all
be brought within ~~seven~~ ^{seven} thousand dollars—

These improvements consist of.

- 1st The erection of the partition walls in the
gallery behind the Columns. & finishing the
same to correspond with the rest of the Hall
- 2^d Raising the floor of the Hall and making
the requisite finish about the same.
- 3^d Constructing a gallery behind the Speakers
Chair. opening the South Wall windows to light
the same. & making an entrance to gallery &c.
- 4th Altering the Speaker's Chair agreeably to design
on the East & West ends of the
- 5th Opening Windows East & West ends of the
Hall communicating with those in the
Library of the House & document rooms.
- 6th Making 2 additional doors of Entrance into the
Hall from the Lobby of the House—

Very respectfully

Dear Sir

yours

Robt Mills

APRIL 5, 1830.

Read twice, and committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. VERPLANCK, from the Committee on the Public Buildings, reported the following bill:

A BILL

Making appropriations for the Public Buildings, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That*
3 the following sums be, and the same are hereby, respectively
4 appropriated, to be paid out of any money in the Treasury,
5 not otherwise appropriated, for the following purposes, that is
6 to say:

7 For completing the painting of the Capitol, three thou-
8 sand seven hundred and sixty dollars.

9 For planting and improving the ground within the enclo-
10 sure of the Capitol square, including the gardener's salary, two
11 thousand dollars.

12 For conveying water to the Capitol, and public buildings,
13 and the purchase of springs, or water rights, and ground for
14 that purpose, forty thousand dollars.

15 To make good the deficiency in the estimates of last
16 year for finishing gates and fences, five thousand nine hundred
17 and eighty-four dollars.

18 For lighting lamps in and round the square, and erecting
19 twenty-four new lamps, one thousand five hundred dollars.

20 For alterations and repairs, five hundred dollars.

21 For new stoves for the warming and ventilating the hall
22 of the House of Representatives, eight hundred dollars.

23 For altering the hall of the House of Representatives,
24 according to the plan of Robert Mills, seven thousand dollars.

25 For purchasing Seneca stone flagging for the terrace and
26 walks adjoining the Capitol, three thousand dollars.

27 For employing Traze to execute a bust of John
28 Jay, for the Supreme Court room, six hundred dollars.

29 For painting the President's house, inside and out, three
30 thousand four hundred and eighty-two dollars.

31 For planting and improving the grounds about the Pre-
32 sident's house, including the gardener's salary, three thousand
33 four hundred and fifty dollars.

34 For improving square number two hundred and forty-nine,
35 and conveying the water to the President's house, and the Ex-
36 ecutive offices, five thousand dollars.

37 For alterations and repairs of the President's house, five
38 hundred dollars.

39 For furniture, and repairs of furniture, six thousand
40 dollars.

3
41 For compensation to Charles Bullfinch, late Architect of
42 the Capitol, for his extra services in planning and superintend-
43 ing the building of the Penitentiary at Washington, the Jail
44 in Alexandria, the additional buildings for the Post Office and
45 Patent Office, and for allowance for returning with his family
46 to Boston, eleven hundred dollars.

3.

New Channels of commerce have been opened within the last 30 years, and they have proved their value, and now, one only remains to be opened, which, by comparison, is the Ocean channel in this system, and as the commerce of the Pacific will pass thro' it the perfecting of this channel is legitimately a Public work. But I must return to the subject of the expenses of surveying the Route of this Road. - I would here enter into some details, founded on the Report of the head of the Topographical Bureau, (Col. Albert), of the force necessary to effect this work. The Col. says, that a party consists of

1. Principal Engineer & assistant engineer (Officers)	
1. 2 ^d assistant, (civil), per month. ---	\$100.00.
2. Rodmen \$60 per month each, ---	120.00.
2. Chain men, \$45. per month each. ---	90.00.
2. Axe men \$45. " " " ---	90.00.
1. Man to take charge of property in camp. ---	45.00.
2. Hunters @ \$60 each. ---	120.00.
1. Blacksmith. ---	60.00.
1. Mechanic for repair of implements. ---	60.00.
1. Guide or Interpreter. ---	60.00.
Commutation of fuel @ quarters for three officers at \$1.50 each. ---	\$35.00.
Cost of one party per month. ---	<u>\$880.00.</u>

Amt. Bro't over. ————— \$ 880,00

Cost of 4 parties, one month ————— \$ 3520,00

And, for six months required to make ^{the} survey 21120,00

In addition to this, Col. Albert gives for certain contingences, as follows. —

A guard detached from the army —
Instruments &c. each party. — \$ 400, 00.

2. W. agons. 200, 00.

10. Horses. 600, 00.

Contingences 10 per cent. 120, 00.

Presents to Indians. 1000, 00.

Total. \$ 2320, 00

Outfit for 4 parties. \$ 9280, 00. — \$ 9280, 00

Add 33 per cent for loss of time getting
to and from the work. ————— \$ 7040, 00

Total amt. of expense of survey. \$ 37,440,00

Thus, with a sum less than 40,000. Dollars, we may make the necessary surveys of this route, within one season, and if an early appropriation is made a Report on the subject might be rendered at the next Session of Congress.

California has been admitted as one of the Federal States of the Union, and its position becomes of great interest to the commercial prosperity of every one of its sister States. It is of more importance —

- to the Atlantic States, to open a commercial high-way with that Pacific State, than to the latter state, because the former are dependant on the carrying trade to Europe for their commercial prosperity, and if they fail in opening a direct communication with the Pacific, they will lose all this valuable trade, which will have taken another direction to and from Europe, and the Government, the duties on such shipments; and in view of this last item, the loss of a trade worth \$250,000,000. is a serious item in the estimate of loss to the Government in the way of revenue from this commerce; this fact should weigh heavily in the scale of Commercial interests, when the subject comes before Congress.

But I will not intrude further, and ask your indulgence for occupying so much of your time.

Respectfully Submitted

Robt. Mills.

Engineer & Architect.

The Hon. Solon Barland,
U. S. Senator.

Topic: Moving goods across South Carolina via canals.

www.SChistory.org

Group #5

Topic: Commemorating President George Washington with monuments in Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Gentlemen Baltimore July 8th 1816

Being sensible that I can be useful to you in my professional capacity, I would take the liberty of offering my services in carrying your building into execution. I will undertake to form all your contracts and see them executed, and regulate the description of work to be done in such a manner as to realize your wishes in economizing in the cost of the whole. The experience I have had in these structures lead me to hope that I will be able to distinguish between what is really necessary to the strength and durability of the building without resorting to the useless expense which is often lavished upon buildings of this nature either from a want of this experience or a want of a knowledge of design. As from the nature of my profession it is my duty to submit the work to be done to the appropriation made I can only have your interests in view to give to you as much as is possible for the sum appropriated. -

For these services my charge will be five per cent upon the estimated cost.

With sentiments of respect
Gentlemen I subscribe your
Robt Mills.



R.B. WILLS, ARCHT.

LITH BY A. REED & CO. BALTO.

THE WASHINGTON NATIONAL MONUMENT IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON.

Base of the Pedestal, 734 feet Diameter. Height 100 feet. Width of Obelisk, 200 feet.

The loftiest monument on earth in a nation's greatest benefactor. The tribute of a GRATEFUL PEOPLE to "THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY."

Eagerly recommended to the patronage of our Countrymen

Franklin Pierce John Quincy Adams J. Taylor

James C. Calhoun

Albert Gallatin

Millard Fillmore

G. M. Dallas

H. Clay

Daniel Webster

has
\$100 Dollar in the erection of this Monument.

contributed.

Agent.

John Morgan