

New Face Is Applied To Central Building

Sutter's Fort Restoration Project Revives Era Of 1840

By Albert S. Hunter
The new look is the old look at Sutter's Fort.

The faces and clothing are different, and time has changed the setting, but to all appearances the era of 1840 is being recreated within the walls of the state historical monument at 27th and L Streets.

Work is well under way on the central building to restore it as closely as possible to its original appearance when first constructed by Captain John A. Sutter and his Indian laborers.

The \$50,000 project is the first step in a long range restoration program. Eventually many of the rooms will be reproduced authentically and further archaeological work will be done to uncover all the original foundations.

Present Work
The present work consists of removing the stucco coating from the central building and applying an adobe surface. The original adobe bricks laid by Sutter are being remortared and some will be replaced. Many of the hand hewn oak beams supporting the floor will be removed and new ones will take their place. Most of the floor also will be removed and new planking of random width will be laid.

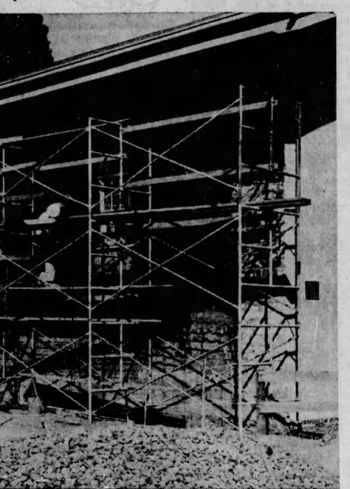
The basement section will be closed until work there is completed. Then the workmen will shift to the first floor, to continue the project,

which is being done by the state division of architecture in cooperation with the state division of beaches and parks. "We are trying to accommodate the public as much as possible," said Carroll D. Hall,



Restoration of the central building at Sutter's Fort is well under way. Workman at left behind scaffold

monument supervisor. "Visitors will be able to enter the upper portion while the basement is closed. When we close the main floor, the basement will be open." More than 250,000 persons visited the fort last year, he said, and the number is expected to top 300,000 in 1959. Orvel Johnson of the state division of architecture said the fort will be examined inch by inch to ensure as near



remortars original adobe bricks while the others apply adobe coat on a section of the wall. Bee Photo

perfect restoration as possible. "Unfortunately," he said, "we don't really know what the interior of the fort looked like in Sutter's day. It was only a shell when the state acquired it in 1891. But we are

studying diaries, old records, maps and other sources of information. "The central building, when restored, will be good for more years than it has already stood."

No target date has been set for completion of the current project but Johnson said he hopes it will be finished late this year.

The adobe soil for the surfacing and the new bricks is being dug from the fort site itself. "We're doing this for sentimental, as well as practical reasons," Johnson stated. "We are trying as much as possible to follow in Sutter's footsteps."

He picked up an adze and demonstrated the process used to hew new oak beams so that they closely resemble those which have held up the building since Sutter's day.

Hall said the museum type display cabinets will not be replaced in the restored basement section.

"Sutter apparently used it as a warehouse," he said, "and we plan in some way to carry out that original purpose. Besides, many of the museum pieces we now have bear little relationship to Ft. Sutter."

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