Robert Mills, America's First Architect
Born in Charleston in 1781, Robert Mills trained with White House architect, James Hoban. In 1820, Mills returned to South Carolina and designed courthouses, jails, and the Lunatic Asylum in Columbia.

Between 1804 and 1833, Robert Mills designed and built at least six structures in the Charleston area.

Mills experimented with fireproof designs and construction methods, and used these ideas when designing a “fireproof” facility to safely store county records in a city that had seen plenty of fire.

Fireproof Building
Robert Mills

With streets lining two sides of the building, Mills incorporated a park, called Washington Square Park, on the other two sides to create an effective firebreak. The South Carolina Historical Society calls this building home.

The fireproof building is a fireproof facility to safely store county records in a city that had seen plenty of fire. Mills experimented with fireproof designs and construction methods, and used these ideas when designing a “fireproof” facility to safely store county records in a city that had seen plenty of fire.

Mother Nature knows that the forest needs fire to grow.

Lightning strikes can set the forest on fire, releasing seeds and clearing out dead brush. These wildfires are dangerous and not easily contained or controlled by firefighters.

Forest rangers study the forest and carefully set fires one section at a time to prevent wildfires from threatening our state.

During the Fire of 1861, 540 acres of Charleston burned, including 575 buildings between East Bay and Gibbes Streets. No one died.

Moisture builds up inside trees and causes them to explode during fires when the water becomes steam.

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The oldest working fire station in the country sits at the corner of Meeting St. and Wentworth St. in Charleston.

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Three ways to put out a fire:
1. Remove the fuel source
2. Smother to remove oxygen
3. Pour water to remove heat

Really Hot! Not naturally occurring; usually seen in welding.

The flame’s color reveals the temperature of the fire:
- 900°F - 1,100°F
- 1,100°F - 1,650°F
- 1,650°F - 2,100°F
- 2,100°F - 2,500°F
- 2,500°F - 2,900°F

Oxygen
Fuel
Heat
Candles burn between 1,400°F - 2,500°F.

Nature creates life with fire.

Underbrush and overgrowth on the forest floor keep sunlight from reaching the ground and allowing new trees to grow. Pine trees need the extreme heat from fire to open pinecones and release the seeds.

Moisture inside trees can cause them to explode during fires when the water becomes steam.

Fire keeps me warm, gives me light, and helps me cook my food.

Fire can also be dangerous.

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