



The Smithsonian: America's Treasure House

Webster Prentiss True

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Although the Smithsonian Institution has grown to be over a hundred years old, no full length account of its various collections and fascinating activities had ever been written before Mr. True put them down here in 1950.

Founded through a generous bequest by a lonely Englishman who had never visited this country, The Smithsonian, often identified with its headquarters in the quaint Norman castle on the Mall in Washington D.C., also includes the United States National Museum—now called the National Museum of Natural History—with its collection of natural history and American historical treasures, the National Gallery of Art, with its outstanding collection of paintings, prints and sculpture, the Freer Gallery of Art, the National Air Museum—now called the National Air and Space Museum.

Mr. True sets forth a biography that covers the treasures of the Smithsonian in the Fifties, while also illuminating the organization of the Smithsonian museums in the Fifties; some things have remained remarkably unchanged over the intervening years, while others are drastically different. Mr. True holds up the Smithsonian Institute as the national treasure it is, one whose value is incalculable.

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