



Illinois State Capitol—North Wing Mural

SPRINGFIELD, IL

General Grant Taking Command at Cairo in 1861 is one of the large historical mural panels decorating the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield, located in the North Wing on the first floor. It was painted by William L. Clouse and dedicated in 1903. The painting commemorates Ulysses S. Grant's assumption of command at the state's most strategically important Civil War outpost, setting in motion the campaigns that would help secure Union victory.

An evaluation by EverGreene in April 2025 identified significant conservation concerns, including pronounced cupping and planar distortion of the paint and ground layers resulting from moisture-induced shrinkage of the canvas support. Differential movement between the canvas substrate and the brittle paint layers had created widespread lifting, tenting, and cleavage, placing the mural at risk of continued paint loss and structural instability.

EverGreene's conservators determined that removing the mural for off-site treatment was the most effective long-term solution compared to *in situ* stabilization. Removal allows conservators to treat both sides of the canvas, relax and flatten the paint, and reline it onto a stable, non-hygroscopic support to prevent future shrinkage.

The project follows the standards of the American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) and is divided into three main phases:

1. Mural Removal (On-Site)

Thorough written and photographic documentation was completed before testing was undertaken to determine the most appropriate paint removal method...

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/north-wing-mural/>

SERVICES PERFORMED

Art Handling & Salvage
Condition Assessments & Surveys
Conservation Treatments
Mural Conservation
Plasterwork

PROJECT DETAILS

Client

Architect of the Capitol

