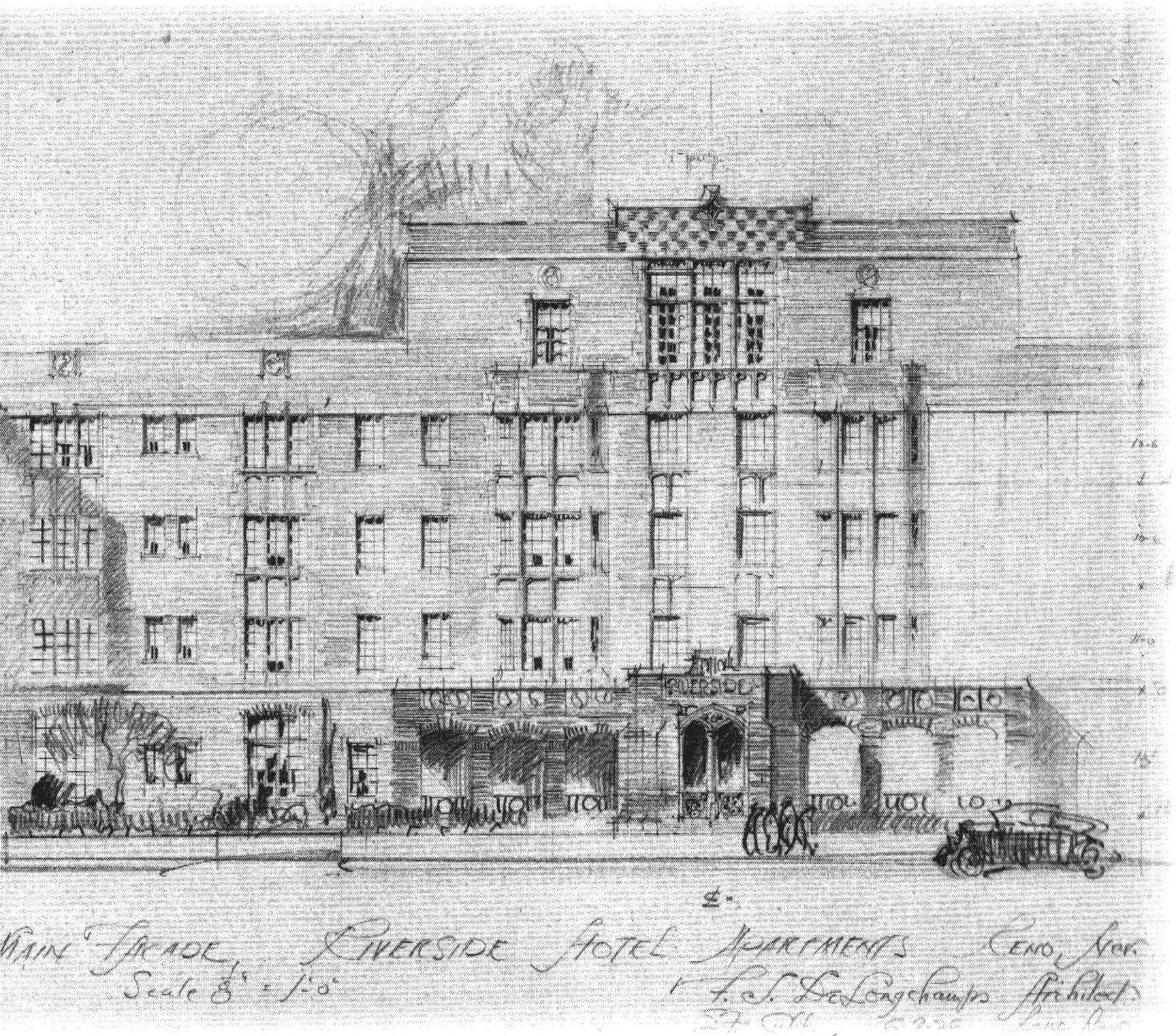
Nevada

Historical Society Quarterly



FALL 2006

Nevada Historical Society Quarterly

The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* solicits contributions of scholarly or popular interest dealing with the following subjects: the general (e.g., the political, social, economic, constitutional) or the natural history of Nevada and the Great Basin; the literature, languages, anthropology, and archaeology of these areas; reprints of historic documents; reviews and essays concerning the historical literature of Nevada, the Great Basin, and the West.

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Book Reviews

Front Cover: Frederic DeLongchamps submitted this initial sketch of the Riverside Hotel in Reno to George Wingfield in 1926. When it was completed in May 1927, the final version was taller and narrower, but the design elements remained. (*Nevada Historical Society*)

Frederic J. DeLongchamps

RONALD M. JAMES

The 1904 issue of the *Artemisia*, the yearbook of the University of Nevada, attributes to that year's graduate Frederic DeLongchamps the oft-cited bit of wisdom, "Men of few words are the best men."[1] The quality of being understated was a characteristic that would dominate DeLongchamps's life. Ten years later, the *Las Vegas Age* reported that DeLongchamps declined to make a public comment at the dedication ceremony for his newly constructed Clark County Courthouse. According to the newspaper, "he said that oratory is not in his line and that he preferred to let the building he had designed speak for him."[2]

Because of his designs—and not his words—Frederic DeLongchamps was known for having an unparalleled effect on Nevada's twentieth-century architecture. At the same time, those who knew him consistently confirmed that he was soft spoken and preferred to speak through the pen in his hand.[3] An unpublished autobiography written in 1938 and revised in 1963 provides a clue to at least this one aspect of an enigmatic but influential native son. DeLongchamps notes that his parents, immigrants from Canada, spoke no English, relying instead on their native French. Because young Frederic initially spoke no English, he maintains that he developed a lifelong habit of speaking little because he was unsure of himself when he started school and was learning English as a second language.[4]

This insight sheds some light onto the character of Frederic DeLongchamps, one of Nevada's most prolific architects. Because he was slow to speak, however, other parts of his life are less easily understood. A few biographical cor-

Ronald M. James, historian and folklorist, is the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer, having administered the agency since 1983. He is the author or co-author of five books, including *The Roar and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode* and *Comstock Women: The Making of a Mining Community.* James's articles have appeared in publications in Europe and North America. He serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Nevada, Reno.

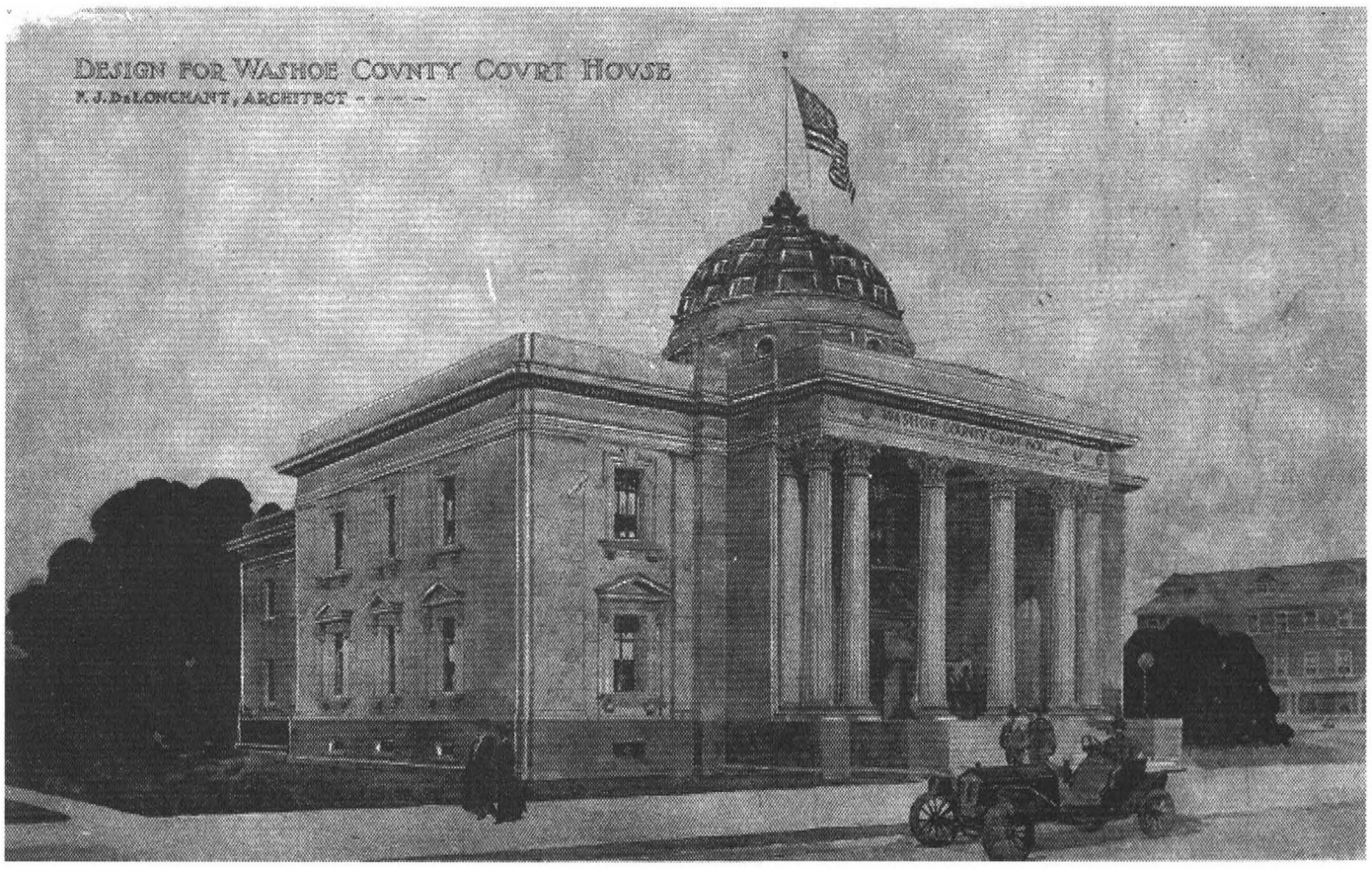
The essay draws heavily on an article due to appear in the Online Nevada Encyclopedia at http://www.nevadahumanities.org/encyclopedia/.

Frederic DeLongchamps as a young boy. Although he was born in Reno, DeLongchamps spoke no English. His parents were from Montreal and the family spoke only French at home.
(Nevada Historical Society)

nerstones of the architect's life can be neatly placed. Born in Reno in 1882, he learned the building trades from his father, Philease Delonchant, a carpenter. Eventually, young Frederic studied mining at the University of Nevada. After his 1904 graduation, he worked for a while in mining, but then, according to tradition, his doctor warned him not to go underground because of weak lungs. He subsequently returned to Reno, where he took a job as a draftsman for the United States Surveyor. He quickly began designing buildings, using experience gained growing up in a carpenter's household, augmented by the study of engineering, and an excellent intuitive understanding of design.[5]

During this time DeLongchamps's life took on a new direction. On June 17, 1907, he married Elizabeth "Bessie" Shay of Virginia City. Eight months later, on February 16, 1908, Bessie gave birth to a baby, Frederic Vincente. It was a time of astonishing professional growth for the young architect as well. He was quickly developing a reputation for fine design work, and in the midst of a growth boom in Reno, there was no shortage of work.[6]

After two years spent on small projects, DeLongchamps entered the competition to design a new Washoe County Courthouse, in 1909. The county selected the young man's plans, giving him a notable achievement at the beginning of his career. His courthouse was to become Nevada's largest, most sophisticated county building constructed up to that time. It remains an exquisite testimony to a young architect's mastery of his craft.



DeLongchamps's career was launched when he won the design competition for the Washoe County Courthouse in 1909.
(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)

The Supreme County Building in Carson City was funded by the Public Works Administration. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

DeLongchamps then traveled to San Francisco to join the army of people engaged in rebuilding after the 1906 earthquake. According to his autobiography, DeLongchamps worked with an architect there "to gain further experience." He subsequently returned to Nevada, where he began an extensive career designing a wide variety of buildings.

Ultimately providing plans for nine county courthouses, including two in California, DeLongchamps worked on major additions to the Nevada State Capitol, mansions for the Mapes family and George Whittell, and more than five hundred other buildings. He won awards for his buildings at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Expositions in San Francisco and San Diego. His Riverside Hotel and downtown United States Post Office, both neighbors of his Washoe County Courthouse, form much of the core of Reno's historic downtown. With the trio of the Heroes Memorial, Supreme Court, and Ormsby County Courthouse facing his work on the state capitol, DeLongchamps also dominates the downtown of Carson City. In addition, the architect's designs make up much of the older part of the University of Nevada, Reno, campus. Most of his work was in northern Nevada, but other DeLongchamps buildings appear in the southern part of the state as well as in California and Florida, where he held licenses. In 1919, he became the official Nevada State Architect, the only person to hold that title.

Tragedy struck in 1924 when his wife died of "dropsy." Two years later, he lost his father and brother. Philease Delonchant died at age seventy-five after a long productive life as a builder and lumber merchant. Philip DeLongchamps, Frederic's younger brother, had established his own career as an architect after

serving in the United States Navy during World War I. For a time, the two brothers worked together, but eventually Philip settled in Sacramento where he continued his business. He died of pneumonia in 1926 at age thirty-seven.[7]

In the midst of these painful transitions, Frederic DeLongchamps married Rosemary Galsgie in 1926. She brought Galen, her nine-year-old son from a previous marriage, to the union. DeLongchamps gave the boy his last name and maintained a close relationship with him for the rest of his life, even though his marriage to Rosemary lasted only six years, ending in divorce in 1932.[8]

In spite of the turmoil in his life, DeLongchamps produced an astounding number of buildings during the 1920s and 1930s. His popularity clearly stemmed from his artistry, but it was equally due to his reputation for giving his clients exactly what they wanted. Architecture is often defined by the avant-garde, but the resulting structures may be impractical or undesirable from the patron's point of view. DeLongchamps was a remarkable artist; but his designs remained considerate of those who would have to use his buildings.

One of his more exotic buildings nevertheless suited his client perfectly. The round Pershing County Courthouse in Lovelock, opened in 1921, was a response to the community's desire to have a public building that was distinct from that of Winnemucca, seat of Humboldt County. Lovelock had recently broken away from its northern neighbor to form its own county government. DeLongchamps had just designed one of his more monumental courthouses

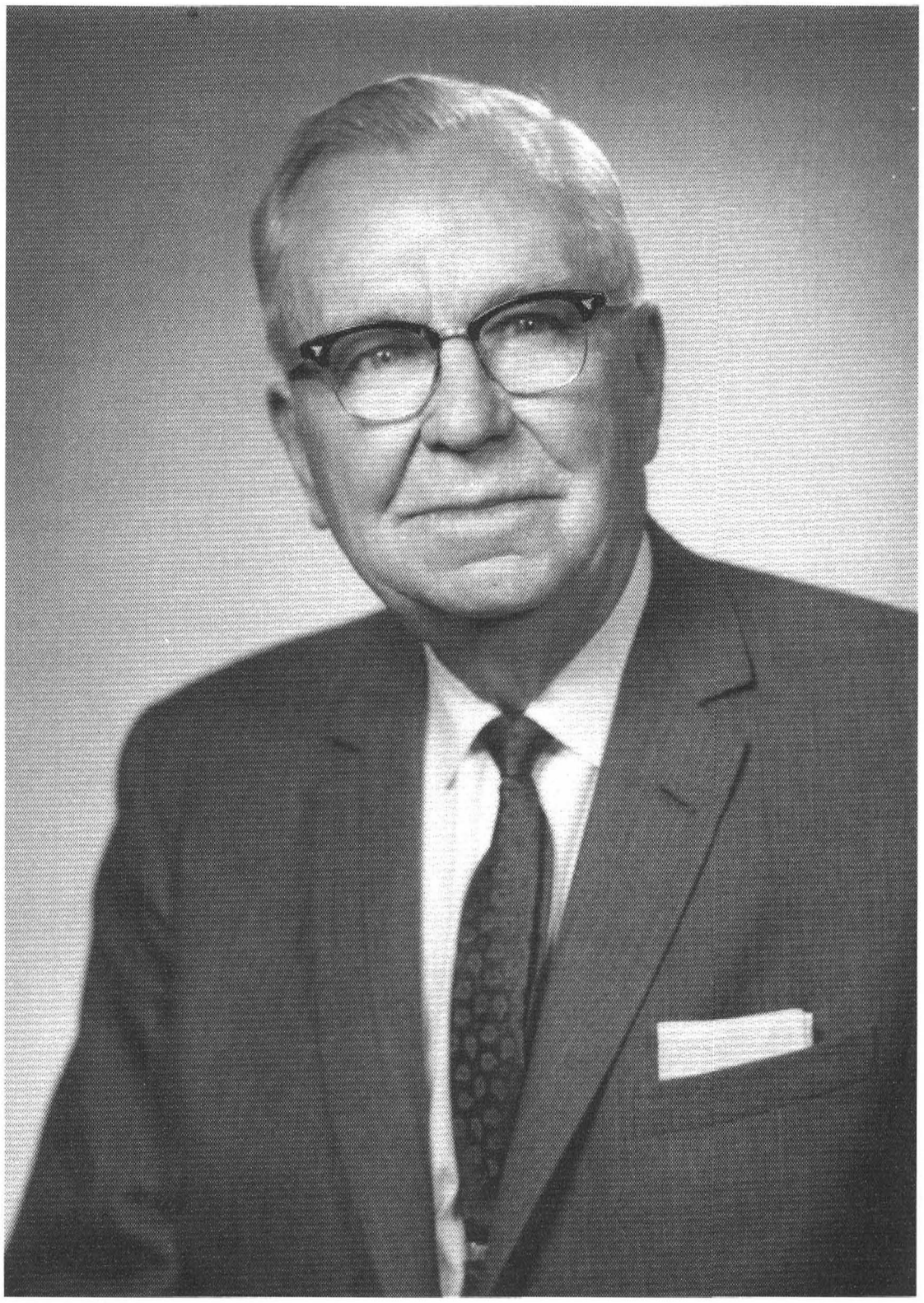
The Pershing County Courthouse, in Lovelock, Nevada, in 1921, the year it was completed. The round plan was DeLongchamps's response to the community's desire for a distinctive court building. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

for the affluent Humboldt County, and the Pershing County commissioners wanted something distinctive but affordable. Understanding that the county could not win a rivalry with funding, DeLongchamps designed what can now be regarded as the nation's only round historic courthouse. The unusual building takes its inspiration from Thomas Jefferson's library at the University of Virginia, a design that two decades later would inspire the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. DeLongchamps had proven himself to be imaginative, but despite its unusual shape, the courthouse remains a practical structure, the true signature of a master architect.[9]

DeLongchamps eventually served as president of the Reno chapter of the American Institute of Architects and helped develop standards for the profession in Nevada. Notwithstanding his long career in architecture, DeLongchamps never lost his love of mining and continued to invest in the industry. During the Great Depression, the architect's preoccupation with the mining industry threatened the economic survival of his design firm. He was known to use the profits of his firm to subsidize failing excavations throughout northern Nevada. In 1939, he formed a partnership with George O'Brien, who apparently balanced DeLongchamps's artistic genius with a pragmatic business sense.

In 1953, DeLongchamps lost his son, who worked as a seaman based in California. Succumbing to the effects of alcoholism, Frederic Vincente represented yet another tragic aspect of the architect's life. DeLongchamps stayed close to Galen, his stepson, working with him on mining projects in Nevada. Those who knew him well recalled that he was known to spend early-morning hours contemplatively writing poetry or personal essays.[10]

Because DeLongchamps practiced architecture for nearly sixty years, his work spanned the Neoclassical, Art Deco, and International styles. He also employed the styles of Gothic, Tudor, Mediterranean, and English Cottage Revival. He and O'Brien agreed on a joint retirement in 1965. DeLongchamps died four years later, in 1969, having left a legacy of hundreds of buildings. He was buried with his fellow Freemasons in the Masonic Memorial Gardens in Reno.



Frederic DeLongchamps's remarkable career spanned nearly sixty years.
(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)

NOTES

[1]1904 *Artemisia*, 36, available at the University of Nevada Archives. The university at that time had only the Reno campus, and so it was known simply as the University of Nevada. The future architect's name appears as "Fred Joseph DeLonchant" in that document. The spelling of his name varies over time, but for the sake of consistency this article employs "Frederic Joseph DeLongchamps."

[2]*Las Vegas Age*, 12 December 1914.

[3]Author's 1980s interviews of people who knew DeLongchamps yielded a great deal of insight. See Ronald M. James, *Temples of Justice: County Courthouses of Nevada* (Reno, University of Nevada Press, 1994).

[4]"History, Studies, Speeches, Architecture, Philosophy and Mining Engineering by Frederic J. DeLongchamps Reno, Nevada," unpublished manuscript, Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library.

[5]There are a variety of sources and published overviews of DeLongchamps and his works. These include Ellis A. Davis, *Davis's Commercial Encyclopedia of the Pacific Southwest* (Oakland: Davis, 1915); Boyd Moore, *Nevadans and Nevada* (Boyd Moore: San Francisco, 1950); Robert A. Nylen, "Reno's Premier Architect," *Heritage Herald: Washoe Heritage Council Newsletter*, 3:5 (May/June 1983), 4-5; Corry L. A. Geier, "Frederick J. DeLongchamps: Reno's Architect," unpublished paper, Nevada State Historic Preservation Office, 1 December 1981; Richard C. Datin, "The man who built Reno – and a lot else," *Apple Tree*, 17 June 1979, 11. See also Ronald M. James, "Nevada's Historic Architect," *Nevada Magazine*, July / August 1994; James, *Temples of Justice*; Ronald M. and Susan A. James, *Castle in the Sky: George Whittell, Jr. and the Thunderbird Lodge*, 2d. ed. (Lake Tahoe: Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society, 2005).

[6]*Nevada State Journal*, 15 June 1907, 6:4. See also the death certificate for Frederic Vincente DeLongchamps, Nevada Historical Society, Reno. The name Shay also appears as Shey.

[7]*Nevada State Journal*, 1 August 1924, 8:4; *Nevada State Journal*, 30 March 1926, 8; *Reno Evening Gazette*, 26 May 1926; See also the 1920 federal manuscript census. Philip's naval records are available at the Nevada Historical Society.

[8]*Nevada State Journal*, 24 August 1932, 8:3; *Nevada State Journal*, 16 March 1958, 8.

[9]James, *Temples of Justice*, 125-132.

[10]See the death certificate of Frederic Vincente DeLongchamps, Nevada Historical Society, Reno. See also James, "Nevada's Historic Architect."

The Extraordinary Career of Frederic J. DeLongchamps

MELLA ROTHWELL HARMON

INTRODUCTION

In 1924, Frederic DeLongchamps addressed the Reno Delphian Society and offered his philosophy of architecture.[1] "Architecture," he said, "was beautified construction, and its beauty, like personality, is the outward expression of inner excellence."[2] For more than fifty years, Frederic DeLongchamps practiced his personal philosophy. One cannot discuss Nevada's twentieth-century architectural history without invoking his name. Considered Nevada's pre-eminent architect, DeLongchamps was certainly one of the most prolific. His architectural career began in 1907 and lasted until his retirement in 1965. His collection of papers and architectural drawings housed at the Special Collections Department of the University of Nevada, Reno Library contains records of more than 550 projects ranging from conceptual sketches to complete sets of construction drawings for new buildings and remodels.[3] Although his role in our state's architectural history is apparent to modern researchers, DeLongchamps's importance was recognized the year following his retirement when the University of Nevada awarded him the coveted Distinguished Service Award in 1966 (known now as the Distinguished Nevadan Award). Fred DeLongchamps died in Reno in 1969 at the age of eighty-six.

Frederic DeLongchamps was not an academically trained architect; rather, he earned his college degree in mining engineering from the University of Nevada in 1904. The subject of his senior thesis was *Some Geological Data about the Comstock.* His mining experience is evident in the structural designs of his buildings (miners tend to want to prevent entire mountains from falling in on them), but his architectural design acumen came straight from his innate artistic ability. He also learned a great deal about construction from his father Philease (also Felix) Delonchant,[4] a builder of note in northern Nevada. Although his first job after

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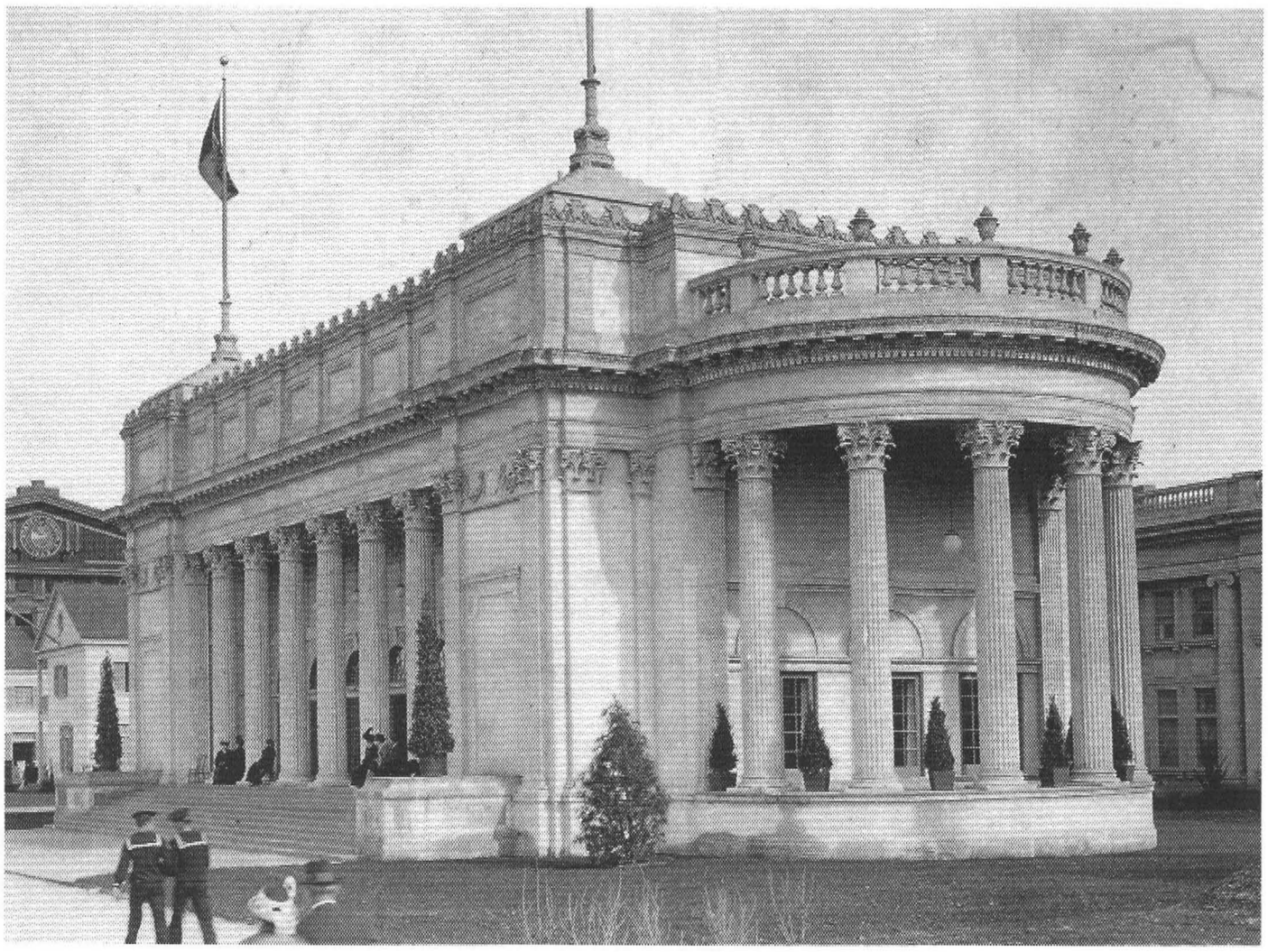
college graduation was as an assistant mining superintendent at a mine east of Lone Pine, in California's Owens Valley, a lung ailment ultimately forced him to give up a full-time mining career. He directed his energies toward architecture, but remained active in the mining business, serving on occasion as a consulting mining engineer. From 1935 to 1936, he was in charge of clearing the Golden Fleece tunnel in the Peavine Mining District north of Reno, and from 1948 to 1952, he was the consulting engineer for the Dayton Consolidated Mines Company at the south end of the Comstock Lode. DeLongchamps owned and operated several mines of his own, including the Majuba Hill Mine in Pershing County, which produced copper, tin, uranium, silver, and gold, and the Talapoosa Mine, located about twenty-five miles northeast of Virginia City, which he operated in later years with his stepson, Galen.[5]

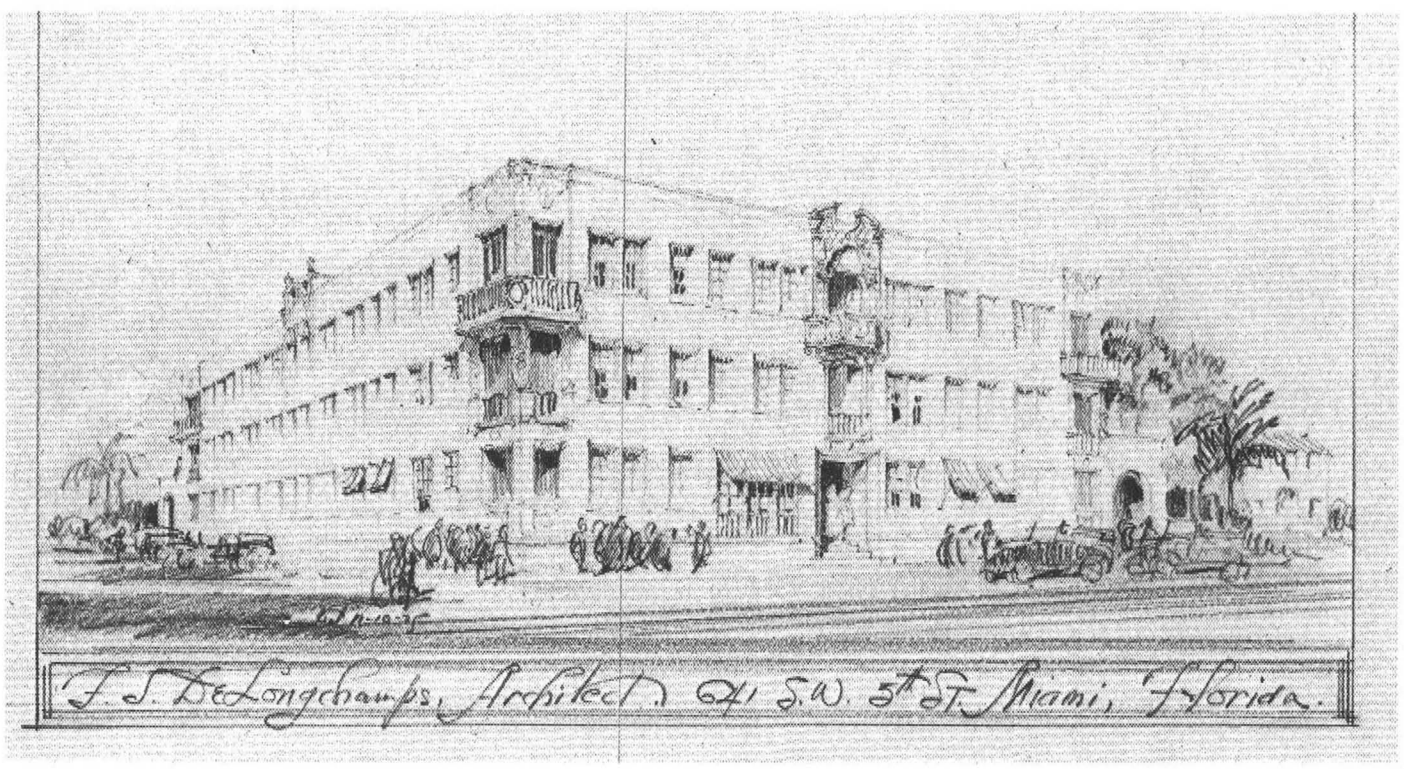
When DeLongchamps's mining job in California ended, he sought work with local architects and had a brief career as a draftsman with the United States Surveyor's Office in Reno. With his native creativity, working knowledge of building construction, and the drafting skills he learned in engineering school, DeLongchamps was well prepared to enter the world of architecture when the opportunity to do so presented itself in 1907. At that time, DeLongchamps established a partnership with Ira W. Tesch, a colleague at the surveyor's office. The firm existed for only two years because Tesch was called home to Denver to deal with family health problems. During the partnership's brief existence, DeLongchamps and Tesch won commissions for thirty buildings.[6] In 1909, DeLongchamps opened his own firm and associated himself with the builder George Holesworth. His first solo commission was the Washoe County Courthouse (1910), which he won as the result of a design competition. When the project was finished, DeLongchamps left his practice in Holesworth's care and went to San Francisco to gain further experience. Little is known about DeLongchamps's time in San Francisco, although clearly he was exposed to the formality of the École des Beaux Arts, the famous school of art and architecture in Paris.[7] DeLongchamps passed the California architect's licensing examination in March 1911 and was awarded license number 159.[8] Soon after receiving his license, DeLongchamps opened an office in San Francisco's Monadnock Building, which he kept for many years.[9] He also maintained offices in Los Angeles and in Miami, Florida.[10] In 1912, he became a member of the American Institute of Architects.[11]

During the ten years following the Washoe County Courthouse commission, DeLongchamps designed 103 buildings, including the Nevada buildings at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco and the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915. In keeping with the goals of the expositions' designers, DeLongchamps employed the Classical Revival style for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and the Spanish Colonial Revival style at the Panama-California Exposition.

Both as an independent architect and later with the assistance of partners, DeLongchamps's firm designed public and private buildings, mostly in Nevada and California. In his collection, however, are two sketches for apartment buildings in Miami, Florida, dated 1925.[12] The two designs were in similar Spanish Colonial Revival styles, but one building was larger than the other, filling an entire



The architectural theme of the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco was Classical Revival, which had come into vogue with the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. DeLongchamps submitted Nevada's entry, the Agriculture and Mining Building, for which he won a silver medal. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*



In 1925, DeLongchamps executed three designs for buildings in Miami. This is one of two designs for apartment buildings. The other Miami building was a garage with an inventive automobile storage system. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

block. Honoring Florida's Spanish heritage, the drawings clearly demonstrate DeLongchamps's artistic abilities and sense of context. In 1926, DeLongchamps was working on a garage and hotel project in Miami. The garage was advanced for its day, with a capacity of 1,008 automobiles and a "double-deck spiral ramp system invented by Mr. DeLongchamps."[13]

By 1917, Frederic DeLongchamps's solo architectural firm had become a going concern. In that year alone, DeLongchamps completed plans for twenty-three buildings. These commissions ranged from residences, schools, churches, government buildings, and commercial buildings to a mausoleum.[14] His style palette drew from a variety of period revival styles, and included Classical Revivals, bungalows, and a single American Foursquare.[15] Two school buildings he designed that year followed Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival models, which DeLongchamps knew well from his recent experience at the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego.

In 1919, the state of Nevada recognized DeLongchamps's skill when state engineer James G. Scrugham appointed him Nevada's first state architect.[16] The position was abolished after two years, but was reinstated in 1923 after Scrugham became governor, with DeLongchamps winning reappointment. He held the position until 1926, when the position was abolished again. During this time, DeLongchamps designed a number of state buildings, including the Nevada Industrial School in Elko (1919), the Nevada State Hospital in Sparks (1920), the Heroes Memorial Building in Carson City (1920), and the Nevada State Building in Reno (1926).[17]

DeLongchamps also employed draftsmen to help him with his volume of work. In 1916, a young architect from San Francisco joined the DeLongchamps firm. George L. F. O'Brien, who maintained an office in Oakland, had attended the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art and the San Francisco Atelier Beaux Arts Society. O'Brien came to Nevada in possession of sufficient architectural credentials, and DeLongchamps quickly engaged him—if, in fact, his appointment was not pre-arranged. In the first years of their association, O'Brien helped DeLongchamps with his work load and returned to Oakland when business in Reno slowed.[18] Over the years, the two men developed a satisfactory working relationship, and in 1939, O'Brien became a full partner in the firm of DeLongchamps and O'Brien. In 1962, the firm took a third partner, Hewitt C. Wells, and until DeLongchamps and O'Brien retired in 1965, the firm was known as DeLongchamps, O'Brien, and Wells. Although a competent architect himself, O'Brien served the business end of the partnership, which was needed to keep the firm on a steady course. DeLongchamps had a reputation as a "nice guy" and a "fine man," traits that did not necessarily ensure a profitable business.

In Reno today, discovering a DeLongchamps building is like finding a rare coin among your pocket change. It is not that extant DeLongchamps buildings are especially rare, but the cachet attached to the architect's name immediately identifies the structure as a treasure. But beware the erroneous DeLongchamps attribution. They are as common as that fake Tiffany vase the *Antiques Roadshow* has taught us to watch out for.

Nevada Architects and Architecture in the Early Twentieth Century

What was the state of architecture and the architectural profession in Reno when Fred DeLongchamps entered the scene in 1907? By the dawn of the twentieth century, Nevada had been a state for only thirty-six years and had achieved a population of 42,335. Reno, with 9,141 people, was the largest town. The first decade of the new century brought sizable growth. The 1910 census reported a state population of 81,875 and Reno had grown to a booming 17,434. The growth can be attributed to a number of factors, including the mining boom in Tonopah and Goldfield, and the development of the Reno divorce colony, which by 1909 had achieved the status of "The Nation's New Divorce Headquarters."[19] Whereas, in the previous four decades, the state's architecture befitted its sparsely populated frontier circumstances, and was represented by simple vernacular forms and a variety of Victorian styles ranging from Gothic to Queen Anne,[20] the twentieth century promised greater things, requiring architecture that would reflect Nevada's elevated status.

In September 1903, while DeLongchamps was still a university undergraduate, the cornerstone was laid at Reno's Carnegie Library. Andrew Carnegie had pledged $15,000, following a drawn-out application process. The building, limited in size by budget and population, was not limited in architectural design.[21] Six architects had responded to the call for plans: Green and Orr of Reno, Fred Schadler of Reno, Mr. Woodard of Reno, E.M. Hoen of Sacramento, William Wythe of San Francisco, and William H. Willcox of San Francisco. Willcox, who was fresh from a Carnegie Library project in Alameda, California, won the commission. Willcox selected for his design a modest version of the Second Renaissance Revival style. Modest though it was, it possessed all the style-defining characteristics, including a rusticated stone base, belt courses suggesting layers, a grand arched entrance with a bracketed pediment, and tall arched windows with keystones.

The intersection of the Truckee River and Virginia Street was important as the town's birthplace. Charles Fuller had built a toll bridge and primitive hotel there in 1859, just as the boom on the Comstock Lode was getting under way and the north-south route that would become Virginia Street was gaining importance. Myron Lake, who is credited with founding Reno, bought out Fuller in 1861 and upgraded the hotel and the bridge. By 1877, Lake's bridge needed to be replaced, and the city built an iron bowstring truss bridge in its place. In 1905, two years after Reno's incorporation, city officials decided that they needed a better bridge for the town's most important section. Young bridge engineer John B. Leonard of San Francisco designed a bridge that used new concrete technology he had invented, and he included architectural details that gave the bridge extra panache.[22]

Another new building opened in Reno in 1906. When Harry Gosse purchased the Riverside Hotel, located next door to the county courthouse, in 1896,

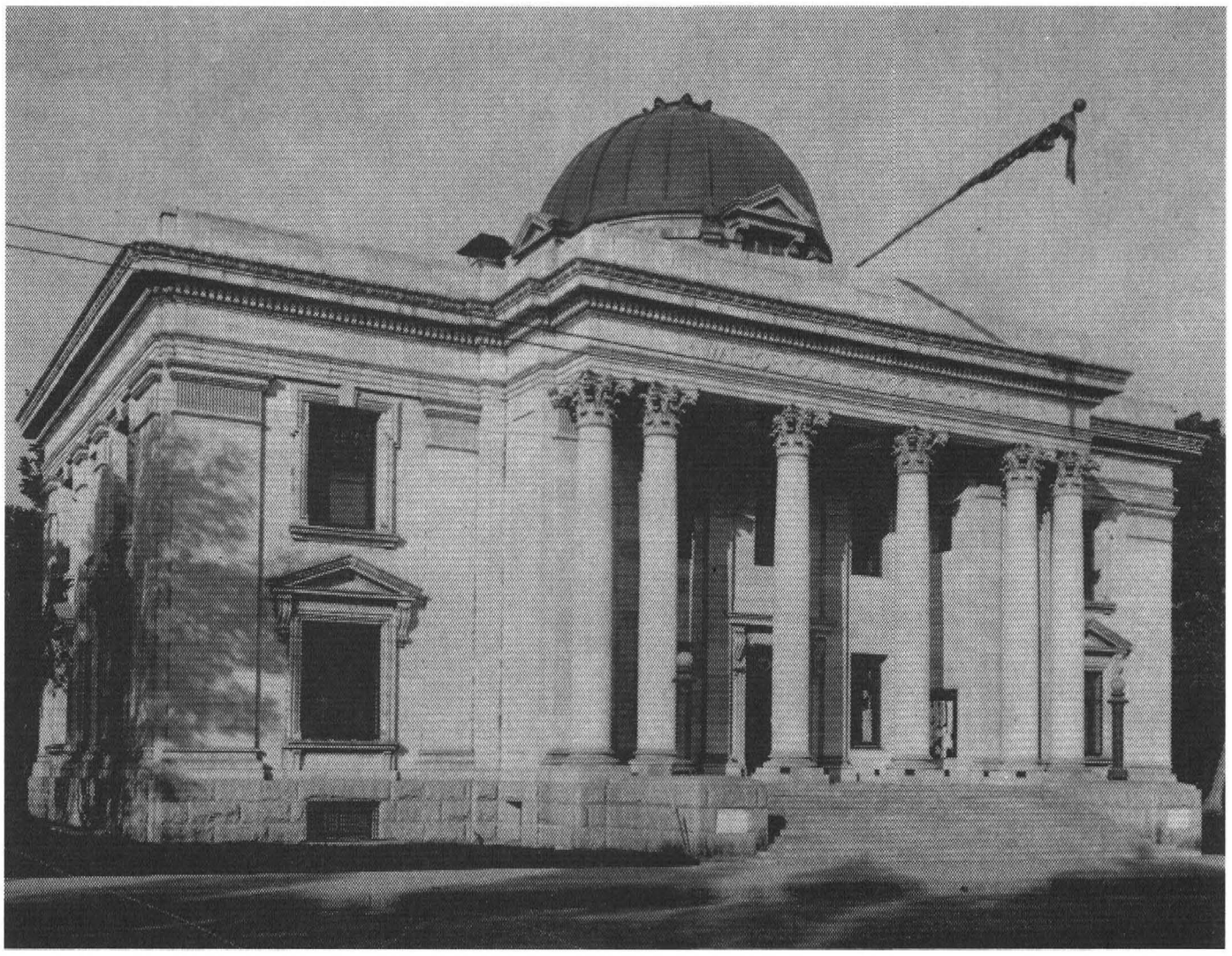
he quickly learned that the town did not offer adequate accommodations to travelers. He planned a lavish brick affair in place of the old wooden structure. Gosse completed his Chateauesque version of the Riverside Hotel just in time for Reno's entrée into the national migratory divorce trade.[23] The hotel was H-shaped, with north and south wings running from east to west. The south wing comprised three stories and the north wing four. Centered on the north wing, facing the Truckee River, was an enclosed porch with an open-air patio above. At the northeast and southeast corners were turrets with circular rooms. The name RIVERSIDE, outlined on the roof of the north wing, could be seen from a great distance.

During the first few years of the twentieth century, the University of Nevada was undergoing expansion through the beneficence of Clarence Mackay, the son of Comstock king John Mackay. In 1906, the Mackay family hired the acclaimed New York architecture firm McKim, Mead, and White to design the mining school building. A friend of Clarence Mackay, Sanford White was one of the premier architects in the United States in the late nineteenth century.[24] He assigned his principal assistant, the architect William Symmes Richardson, to design the mining building. Richardson's modern yet academically classical Georgian Revival design included the style-defining features of perfect symmetry, balance of scale, and massing with the use of classical details.[25] The Mackay Mining School building set the University of Nevada on a building spree that created a campus modeled after Thomas Jefferson's University of Virginia.[26]

In 1910, the federal government contributed to the sophistication of Reno's architectural landscape. Recognizing the town's remarkable growth during the first decade of the twentieth century, Reno acquired its first federal post office. The two-story Neoclassical building stood across the Truckee River from the Carnegie Library, on the site where the Mapes Hotel would be built thirty-seven years later.[27] The building's design came from the Treasury Department's standard plans for federal post offices in communities the size of Reno. Within twenty years, however, the elegant post office building became too small for the growing town, and DeLongchamps's Art Deco federal building replaced it in the 1930s.[28]

This burst of architectural beautification throughout Reno, plus the economic boom from the southern mining districts, spawned the 1909 contest to select a design for a new county courthouse to replace the nearly forty-year-old building. Local architect Septimus F. Hoole had won the commission for Reno's first courthouse in 1871, soon after the young town had wrested county-seat status from Washoe City. Hoole's Italianate-style courthouse was built on land offered by Myron Lake, who sweetened the deal with an additional $1,500 in cash to beautify the new building.[29]

By 1909, the Washoe County Commission was considering a replacement for the courthouse. Having just won the title of Nevada's Divorce Headquarters and Reno's given role as the state's economic, banking, and transportation center, the



The Washoe County Courthouse was the first of nine courthouses commissions for DeLongchamps, seven in Nevada, and two in California. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

city wanted a building that would project an image of prosperity and modernity. Toward that end, the county commission announced a design competition for a new courthouse. Twenty-seven-year-old Fred DeLongchamps's plans won the contest, setting his prolific and productive career in motion.

DeLongchamps's plans, which contained the shell of the first building, were for a Neoclassical building with Beaux Arts features, a style soundly set in the twentieth century.[30] The ornate front façade sported a centrally placed two-story portico, the signature element of the Neoclassical style. The plans demonstrated DeLongchamps's innate architectural sensibilities, reflecting the perfect balance of scale, massing, and symmetry pioneered by early Greek and Roman architects. The use of classical elements exhibited DeLongchamps's artistic sense. Elegantly foliated capitals topped the Corinthian columns supporting the portico. The window surrounds were capped with pediments and keystones. A massive ribbed copper dome covered a shallow leaded stained-glass dome over the second-story hallway. The historian Ronald James, author of *Temples of Justice: The County Courthouses of Nevada*, noted that the Washoe County Courthouse was "one of the most *avant-garde* courthouses

ever built in Nevada" and as DeLongchamps's first courthouse, it was also his most ornate. The lavishly decorated courthouse was an apt representation of Reno's importance. Between 1909 and 1921, DeLongchamps designed seven county courthouses in Nevada and two in California.[31] The Washoe County Courthouse was influential in directing the course of Nevada's architectural history and demonstrating DeLongchamps's maxim of architecture as beautified construction.

Throughout the nineteenth century, few architects who practiced in Nevada called the state their home. Most of the major architect-designed buildings were the work of men from out of state, usually from California, and especially from the San Francisco Bay Area. The fact that Nevada did not have a licensing board for architects until 1949 contributed to the ease with which out-of-town designers could gain commissions in the state. By the twentieth century, bolstered by the success of DeLongchamps and others, local architects gained a foothold, although the connection between Reno and San Francisco architects continues to this day.[32] Despite this competition, several architects practiced in Reno early in the twentieth century. Among the ten Reno architects listed in the 1910 census, Frederic DeLongchamps was the youngest by far.[33]

An overview of the architects listed in the 1910 census captures something of the situation in the state at the time. The elder statesman of Nevada architecture in 1910, at age sixty-two, was Morrill J. Curtis. M. J. Curtis had apprenticed in architecture for five years with the Saint Louis firm of Mitchell and Brady. His arrival in San Francisco in 1874 started his productive career in California and Nevada. Although his first Nevada commission seems to have been the State Mental Health Institute in Reno (1882), he is probably best known for designing the building coincidentally named Morrill Hall, in 1888, the first University of Nevada building constructed after the university was moved from its original location in Elko in 1885. Curtis's other buildings were the Overland and Golden hotels in Reno, the first Reno City Hall, the White Pine County Courthouse in Ely, several state buildings in Carson City, the Mizpah Hotel in Tonopah, and the Goldfield Hotel in Goldfield.[34] When Curtis died on January 25, 1921, his obituary in the *Nevada State Journal* referred to him as one of Reno's founding fathers.[35]

George E. Holesworth often collaborated with Curtis on building designs. Holesworth, originally from Nova Scotia, Canada, took up the building trade as soon as he arrived in Nevada as a young man. Although not a trained architect, Holesworth developed design skills as his building career progressed. The Tonopah and Goldfield mining booms provided him with ample opportunity to ply his trade. Among others, Holesworth is credited with the design and construction of the John S. Cook Building at Rhyolite. The State Bank and Trust Building in Tonopah is an example of one of Holesworth's collaborations with M. J. Curtis. In Reno, Holesworth designed and built the Majestic Theater and the Jewish synagogue, Temple Emanu-el, on West Street. When DeLongchamps

went to San Francisco for further architectural experience in 1911, he left his practice in Holesworth's able hands.[36] Holesworth's final commission was the Platt-Sinai Building on Sierra Street in 1925.[37] He died in January 1926 at the age of seventy-one.[38]

Frederick Schadler was forty-four in 1910. Originally from Gluckstadt, Holstein, Germany, he obtained his architectural training in San Francisco and apparently came to Reno in the 1890s. Schadler was responsible for a number of important buildings in the area, including the Mapes Building (not the hotel and casino, which came later), the Elks Club, the Masonic Temple in Sparks, the Twentieth Century Club, and the Cheney and Herz buildings. His residential commissions included the Bishop house, the Howell house, the Steinmiller house, and the Frank R. Humphrey house, an exquisite example of Mission Revival residential architecture. He also designed his own home, which was built between 1896 and 1897 at 445 South Virginia Street.

Also on Nevada's architectural scene in the first decade of the twentieth century was George Ferris, who was fifty years old at the time of the 1910 census. Ferris, originally from Philadelphia, brought his family to Nevada from San Jose, California, in 1906, after the April earthquake in San Francisco. He had attended Southmore College and spent two years at the Edgemore Iron Works studying structural steel construction, which had come into vogue with the development of the early skyscrapers of the late nineteenth century. Ferris's first high-profile commission in Nevada was the governor's mansion in Carson City in 1909. In Reno the same year, he designed the first of his four schools in the Mission Revival style. Ferris's Spanish Quartet, as the schools became known, included the McKinley Park, Mount Rose, Orvis Ring, and Mary S. Doten schools. Of the four, McKinley and Mount Rose are still standing.[39]

In 1908, George Ferris's son Lehman, known as Monk, entered the practice while the elder Ferris recovered from an illness. Monk was studying electrical engineering at the University of Nevada, but left school to assist his father. Monk's first architectural projects were executed in 1914, while he worked as an electrical engineer at the McGill Copper Smelting Plant in White Pine County. After World War I, Monk went to work for his father and DeLongchamps, writing specifications.[40] It will seem that during the first decades of the twentieth century, DeLongchamps touched every Reno architect in one way or another, either as an employee of his firm or through collaborations between firms.

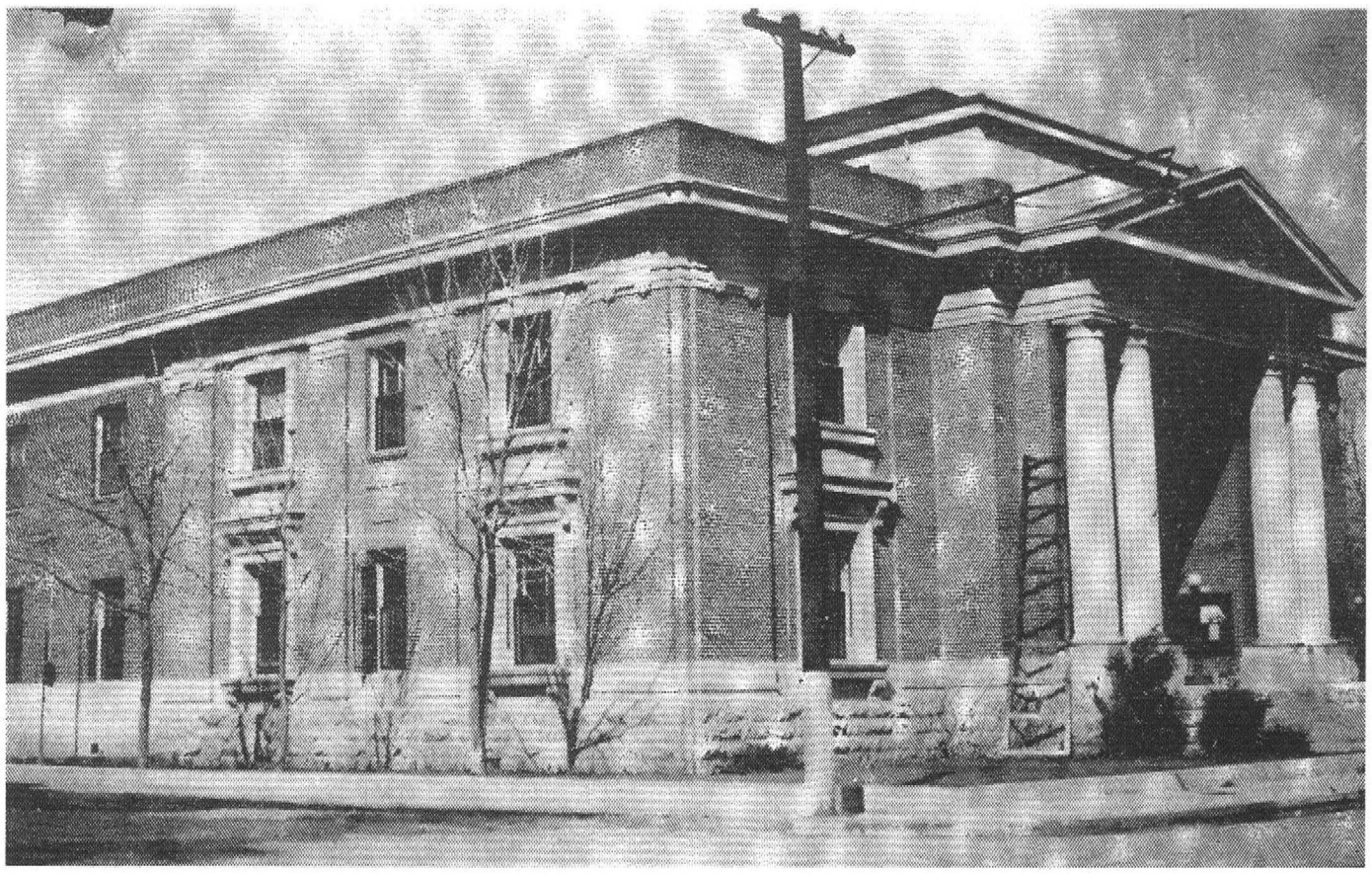
The firm of George Ferris and Son was responsible for a number of buildings in Nevada including the Reno Odd Fellows Building (1929), the exquisitely ornamented Las Vegas High School (1928), high schools in Austin and Eureka, several school buildings in Wells, and an office building in Reno.[41] On his own, Monk Ferris is credited with Reno High School (with Graham Erskine), Proctor Hug and Wooster high schools, the Harolds Club Casino Tower, the original student union and education buildings at the University of Nevada, Reno, the Civic Auditorium and Nevada State Legislature buildings in Carson City, First

National Bank buildings statewide, and National Guard armories in several cities. He also drew the plans for the University of Nevada's first fraternity-built house, which he designed for his own fraternity, Alpha Tau Omega.[42]

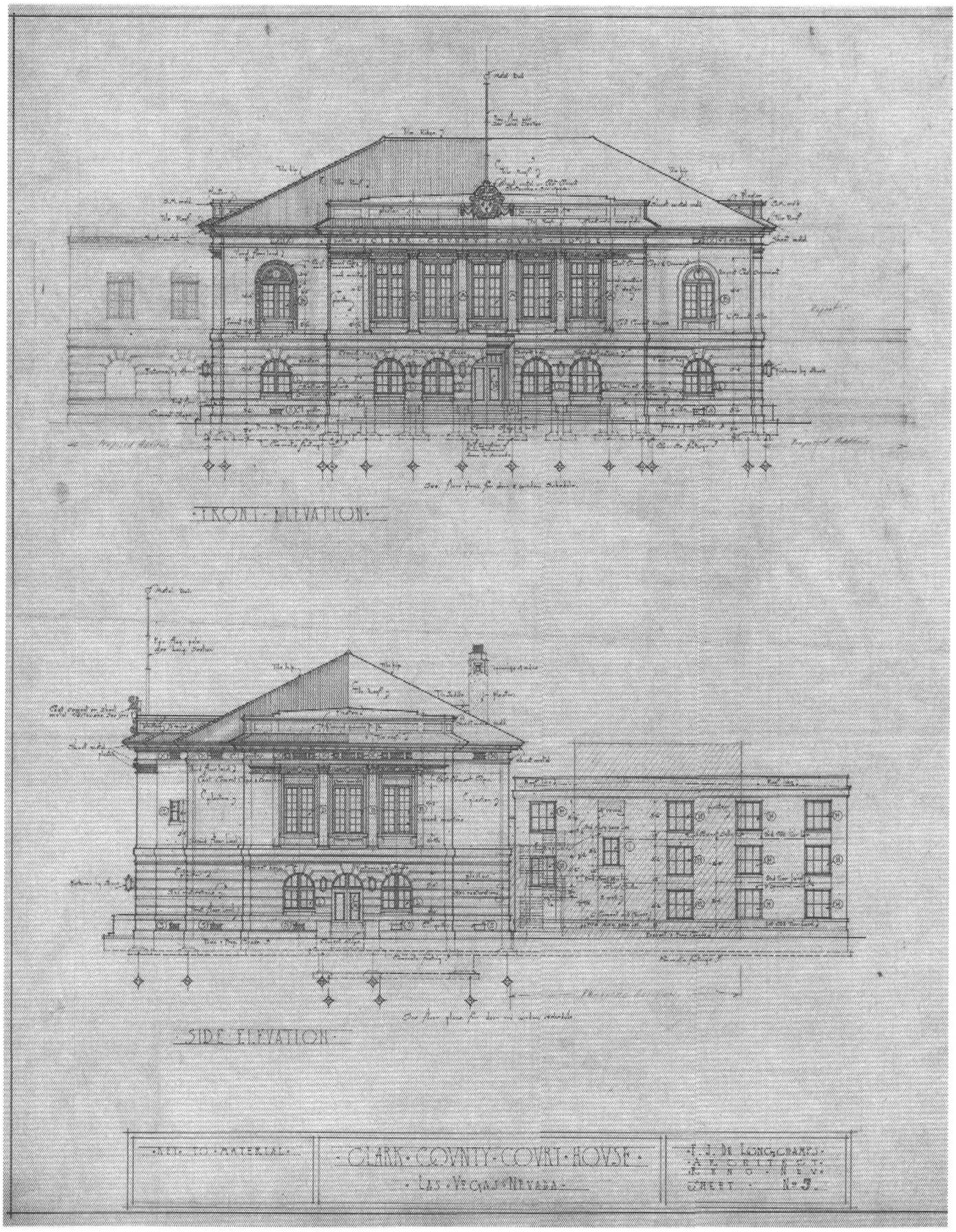
Among these eminent colleagues and within the context of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century architectural styles, DeLongchamps rose to prominence with his courthouse commission. When he returned from San Francisco, having gained practical experience in formal architectural design, his pre-eminent role in Nevada's architectural history was all but ensured.

Another courthouse commission quickly followed for DeLongchamps. The Board of Lyon County Commissioners accepted his design on April 12, 1911. Neoclassical with Beaux Arts details, the building was reminiscent of the Washoe County Courthouse, but with sufficiently distinctive features to make it unique and a source of pride for Yerington, the county seat. Upon the building's opening in April 1912, the *Yerington Times* gushed: "Lyon County has the largest, best built, best furnished and best looking courthouse in the state for the money. Every taxpayer in the county should feel proud of such a building."[43]

In 1913, DeLongchamps drafted plans for a courthouse for Clark County, which had only been in existence for four years.[44] His design was a departure from his two previous courthouses, both Neoclassical structures. Las Vegas is the only county seat in Nevada with a Spanish name, which likely inspired DeLongchamps's decision to create a building that anticipated Spanish Colonial



The 1912 Lyon County Courthouse in Yerington is Neoclassical with Beaux Arts details. *(Nevada Historical Society)*



DeLongchamps's design for the Clark County Courthouse was a departure from his two previous Neoclassical courthouses. Las Vegas is the only county seat in Nevada with a Spanish name, which likely inspired DeLongchamps's decision to create a building in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

Revival architecture, a style that would not formally debut until 1915. The *Las Vegas Age* commented on DeLongchamps's stylistic motivation in 1913: "The design is founded on the Spanish renaissance which is especially appropriate to this county both by reason of its historical associations, the Vegas Valley having been first explored by the Spaniards, as well as on account of the semi-tropical character of its climate."[45] Of this courthouse, Ronald James writes: "With this plan, the architect demonstrated his flexibility and his genius for drawing upon local tastes. . . . The Clark County Courthouse represented a synthesis that created a symbol of stability, grace, and authority. At the same time, it pioneered a new regional architecture."[46]

Spanish Colonial Revival architecture officially debuted at the Panama-California Exposition held in San Diego, California, in 1915. As designer, architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, who had written previously on Spanish Colonial architecture, selected the mode as the theme for the exposition.[47] In 1914, DeLongchamps submitted plans for the Nevada State Building at the San Diego exposition. The plans depict a two-story stucco Spanish Colonial Revival building with a red tile roof. Round arches supported by piers with impost molding formed a one-story arcade across the front of the building.

Concurrent with the Panama-California Exposition in southern California, San Francisco hosted the Panama-Pacific Exposition. This exposition's architectural theme was Classical Revival, which had come into vogue with the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. The Classical Revival style drew on early Greek and Roman exemplars, especially featuring columns, arches, and pediments. The late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century revival manifested itself in monumental two-story porticos, which characterize the Neoclassical variant. Again, DeLongchamps submitted Nevada's entry, the Agriculture and Mining Building. For his efforts, DeLongchamps received a silver medal from the exposition's Board of Consulting Architects for "having planned a structure that far surpasses those of many states."[48] His award-winning design was for a two-story building having two semi circular porticos with Corinthian columns, arched openings with keystones, a projecting cornice, and enriched entablature topped by a pilastered parapet with cresting and statuary.

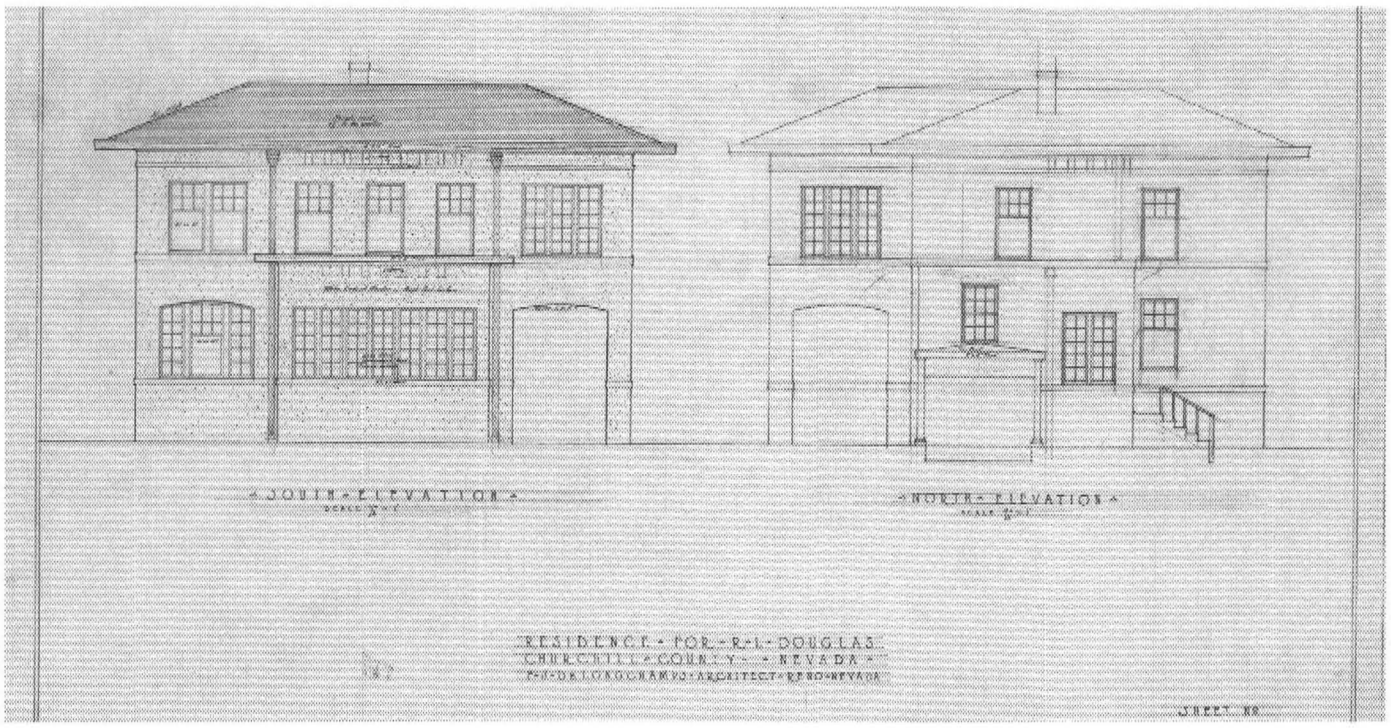
Following his success at the two expositions, DeLongchamps's next few commissions for public and commercial buildings were in the Classical Revival and Neoclassical styles. The year 1915 saw another courthouse commission—Douglas County—and buildings for two prominent men. His work on the Douglas County Courthouse brought DeLongchamps into contact with Frederick and Clarence O. Dangberg, who had established the town of Minden, the terminus of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad line, in 1905. Over the next few years, the Dangbergs provided DeLongchamps with a number of commissions, including the Minden Inn, the Minden Butter Company, the Minden Firehouse, the Minden Wool Warehouse, and several buildings on the Dangberg home ranch. Also in 1915, DeLongchamps designed the Neoclassical-style Reno National

Between 1915 and 1917, DeLongchamps completed a number of commissions in Douglas County. The Minden Inn was completed in 1916 and currently houses several county offices. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Bank building for powerful businessman George Wingfield. He also designed a remodel of Wingfield's home on Court Street.[49]

For the balance of the decade, DeLongchamps and the other Nevada architects largely stayed with the popular styles of the period: Classical Revival, Neoclassical, and Spanish Eclectic (a variant of Spanish Colonial Revival) for public, commercial buildings, and many residential buildings, with a handful of American Foursquare homes for good measure.

Nationally, one of America's few indigenous styles was experiencing a degree of popularity. A group of Chicago architects that became known as the Prairie School developed the style. Frank Lloyd Wright's earliest works are in this style, and he is the acknowledged master. In Nevada, however, only two examples of Prairie-style buildings are known. The earliest was a residence that Fred Schadler designed in 1911 for John Dangberg. The second was a ranch house that DeLongchamps designed in 1919 for R. L. Douglas, a prominent Fallon businessman, automobile enthusiast, and lover of high-style architecture. His previous Fallon home, apparently designed by Reno architect Ben Leon in 1906, was an elaborate Queen Anne, an anachronistic expression of a late Victorian style. DeLongchamps's Prairie-style residence was a complete departure: low, angular, horizontal lines versus the vertical roundness of the Queen Anne.



DeLongchamps designed a ranch house for R. L. Douglas in 1919. Its most prominent feature is the broad *pôrte-cochere* that would have accommodated Douglas's love of automobiles. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

The ranch house's most prominent feature is the broad *porte-cochère* that would have accommodated Douglas's love of automobiles. Although it is the only example of Prairie-style architecture in DeLongchamps extensive collection, it nevertheless confirms his versatility and his ability to focus on his clients' needs and tastes.[50]

DeLongchamps ended the second decade of the twentieth century with yet another courthouse commission, this one for Humboldt County. Again employing the Neoclassical style with Beaux Arts influences, the Winnemucca building boasts an exquisite interior that features a sweeping marble staircase, a two-story atrium with Ionic columns, and a leaded-glass ceiling. DeLongchamps had to revise his plans a number of times to keep to his client's budget of $150,000, but despite the limitations, the courtroom in the Humboldt County Courthouse is considered one of Nevada's grandest.[51]

NEVADA'S ARCHITECTURAL SCENE DURING THE 1920S AND 1930S

The 1920s were especially prosperous for Reno. The population grew steadily with the ever-increasing influx of divorce seekers, who, until 1927, had to live in the state for six months to avail themselves of Nevada's quick divorce laws. The divorce trade and the growth of automobile travel spurred a virtual building frenzy. In 1925 alone, construction permits were issued exceeding $1,430,457. The growth peaked in 1929 when building permits totaled more than $2 million.[52] Based on the number of projects represented in the DeLongchamps papers housed at the University of Nevada, Reno, it appears

that the 1920s were the firm's busiest years. George O'Brien, not yet a partner, assisted with the volume of work.

For DeLongchamps, the decade began with two new Nevada courthouse commissions and the commission from George Wingfield for a large hotel in Winnemucca. DeLongchamps's plans for the Ormsby County Courthouse in Carson City were identical to the Neoclassical Heroes Memorial Building he had recently designed in his role as state architect. The twin buildings are located directly across Carson Street from the State Capitol at either end of the block, and, while their exteriors are identical, their interiors are not.[53]

DeLongchamps's last Nevada courthouse commission was for Pershing County, which had become Nevada's seventeenth county when it split from Humboldt County in 1919 in a dispute over the cost of the Winnemucca courthouse. George Ferris had submitted plans for the Pershing County courthouse, but for unknown reasons they were not used. Instead, the county commissioners asked DeLongchamps to draft a courthouse design. Rumor has it that the commissioners of the young, upstart county asked DeLongchamps to design something that would be different from his previous works. What he submitted, although sporting familiar Neoclassical design elements, was highly imaginative, a circle-over-hexagon plan mimicking the Roman Pantheon. With the nation's only round historic courthouse, Pershing County succeeded in its desire to be unique.[54]

The five-story Humboldt Hotel in Winnemucca, opened to guests on May 9, 1923. The marble for the building came from the American Carrara Marble Company in the town of Carrara, twenty miles from Beatty in southern Nevada. *(North Central Nevada Historical Society, Humboldt County Museum)*

The 1920s introduced several trends in art and architecture that responded to the waning of the Victorian era. One was the Arts and Crafts Movement, which, in addition to reacting to Victorian fussiness with a sense of order and purpose, also sought to reject the dehumanizing effects of the machine age. The signature architectural style of this movement was the homey Craftsman bungalow, which became a ubiquitous symbol of western back-to-nature living. Reno embraced the bungalow with its own red-brick version that was replicated in every neighborhood during the first four decades of the twentieth century.

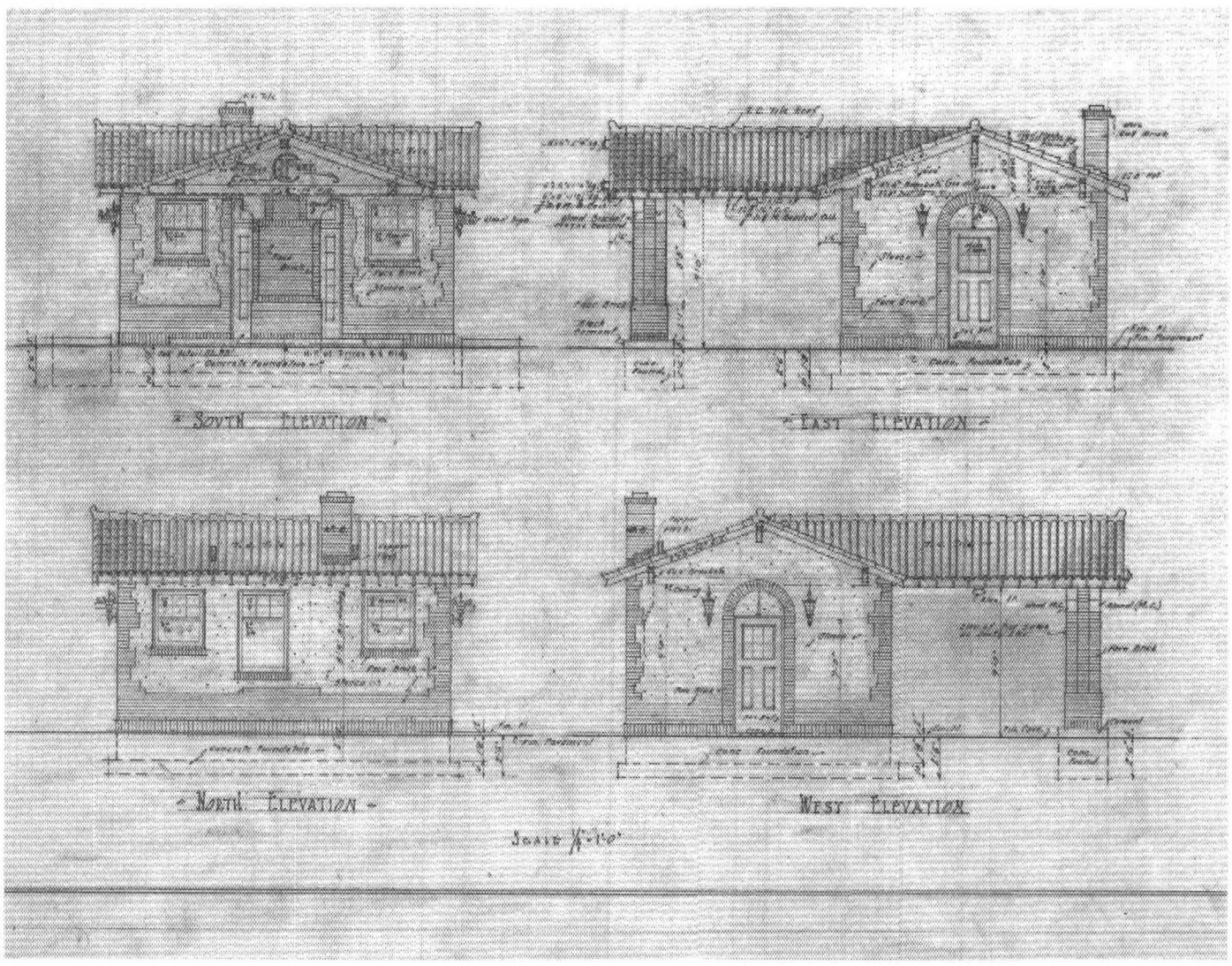
The new superintendent at the Stewart Indian School in Carson City introduced another distinctive variant of Craftsman architecture. In 1923, Frederick Snyder authorized the construction of a new dining hall made of sandstone blocks scavenged from a building in Carson City.[55] Following the completion of the dining hall, Snyder instituted a building program using colored native stone. His inspiration apparently was a chapel he had seen and admired in Arizona. To heighten the effect of the multi-color stonework, a tuck-pointing mixture of mortar and lampblack was used to outline each rock. Snyder's plans combined the building program for the campus with the school's educational policies by providing hands-on experience in the building trades for the students. Snyder's apprenticeship program integrated an architectural style sensitive to the school's western environment, the principles of the Arts and Crafts movement, and the students' own culture. The mark of Snyder's Native American stonemasons can be seen in a number of buildings off campus, particularly at Lake Tahoe. Snyder's apprentices built his cottage at Zephyr Cove, as well as the large and lavish Whittell estate, which Frederic DeLongchamps designed in 1938.[56]

The other notable architectural response to Victorian styles was the Academic Reaction led by the influential New York firm of McKim, Mead, and White. The approach was marked by "a return to formal, disciplined order and the literal, archaeological adaptation of historical styles that had gone out with the Greek Revival [ca. 1860]."[57] This brought about renewed interest in historical European designs and a new interest in America's colonial past. The early twentieth century brought a resurgence of a variety of period styles that were "safe and conservative designs." These reflected historical ancestors like the half-timbered manor houses of Tudor England and the country estates of Normandy and Spain. The wealthy were the first to embrace these styles, and they kept prestigious American architectural firms busy. Over the course of several decades, however, these popular revival styles spread to more modest neighborhoods. Regional expressions developed as well, with Dutch Colonial in the East and Spanish Colonial in the West, until the 1920s, when the geographical constraints were broken.[58]

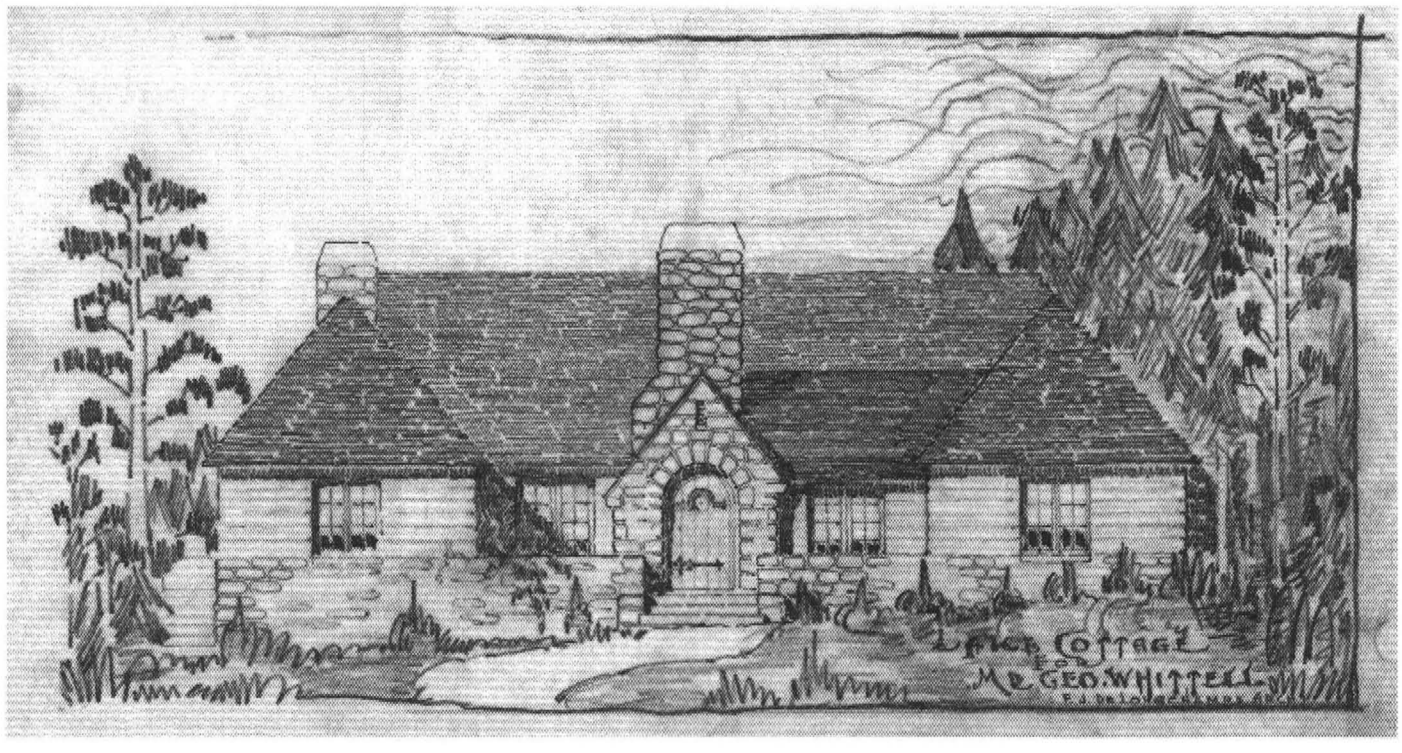
Architectural historians do not universally employ the term period revival when discussing the architecture of this era. John Milnes Baker includes the following as an example of desirable characteristics: "A good common sense livable house should be simple and dignified, but full of charm," and "a wise

use of simple materials and simple forms is another sign of good taste which is rapidly coming into favor. The exterior is so quiet and so simple as to have the charm that goes with all restrained work."[59]

DeLongchamps was especially proficient and prolific in the period revival styles. Ranging from small Resort Rustic cabins at Lake Tahoe to the immense Whittell estate, and the Riverside Hotel, various styles of period revival predominate in DeLongchamps's catalog of the 1920s and 1930s.[60] Other examples from the 1920s are the Mediterranean-style C. W. West house in Reno (1923), the Renaissance Revival Knights of Pythias hall in Elko (1926-1927), the Bell Telephone building in Reno (1928), and the Mediterranean-style Harrington Petroleum Service Station (1927). The service station was DeLongchamps's second and was located at the corner of Fourth and Lake streets along the Lincoln Highway route through Reno. The 1924 Jenkins Service Station, in the Classical Revival style, was located at 977 South Virginia Street. Both buildings have been demolished.



In addition to this Mediterranean Revival-style gas station, DeLongchamps designed the Jenkins Service Station with Classical Revival influences. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*



Wealthy and eccentric, George Whittell, Jr. no doubt tested DeLongchamps's easy-going manner. A number of designs for Whittell's Thunderbird Lodge were prepared before client and architect reached agreement. This is an early conceptual drawing, reflecting a far different design that the final version. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

DeLongchamps's signature period revival building is the Riverside Hotel in Reno. Although architects from several cities around the country sent letters of interest in the project, the commission went to DeLongchamps. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

DeLongchamps's signature period revival building is the Riverside Hotel. In 1922, Gosse's Chateauesque Riverside burned down, and the land stood vacant for several years until George Wingfield, who owned several important hotels in Reno and elsewhere, purchased it.[61] Wingfield was politically powerful and foresaw the change in the divorce law that would increase the trade.[62] When word of Wingfield's plans to build a new Riverside Hotel got out, architects from several cities sent letters of interest, as did DeLongchamps. Apparently, unbeknownst to DeLongchamps, Wingfield had decided to go with a local architect. When San Francisco trade journals identified DeLongchamps as the architect on the Reno project, he wrote to assure Wingfield that he was not the source of the story. He wrote on April 16, 1925,

> The sketches and estimates were made entirely at my expense and you are not obligated in any way. If you decide to go ahead with this building, it would give me great pleasure to do the architecture work. I am equipped better than I have ever been before to turn out your work in the best possible manner. I am very anxious to be of service to you, knowing that you will be pleased with the results.[63]

Construction on the Riverside Hotel began in 1926. Photographs taken during the course of construction show the structural stability of the building. When construction was completed in May 1927—in time to take advantage of Nevada's liberalized divorce law—it was clear that George Wingfield had chosen the right architect. The red brick building with vaguely Gothic terra-cotta details was an elegant addition to Reno's most significant part of town—where Virginia Street crossed the Truckee River. The three structures on the west side of Virginia Street—the bridge, the Riverside Hotel, and the Courthouse—would become icons of Reno's divorce trade and the subjects of novels, Hollywood films, and scores of postcards.[64]

The 1930s introduced a new modern style and three important young members of Nevada's architectural profession. The Art Deco style and its later derivation, Art Moderne, had a national run of popularity generally from 1925 to 1940. The name refers to the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, which took place in Paris in 1925. Art Deco represented a desire on the part of architects and designers to seek out new forms or modifications of old forms, to express the continually changing character and accelerated tempo of a new age. As modern and radical as the style seemed, it traced its roots to the Beaux Arts tradition, and many architects trained in this school turned their sights to a new language of design after 1925.[65]

Willis Church was the son of the noted University of Nevada classics professor (and father of the Nevada snow survey) James E. Church. A 1923 graduate of the university, Willis enrolled in the prestigious architecture school at the University of Pennsylvania, where he counted among his fellow students Louis

Kahn, who became a well-known Philadelphia architect. In the 1920s, Penn's architecture school followed the Beaux Arts tradition, but by the early 1930s, when Church and his colleagues had moved on to graduate school, the young architects found themselves influenced by the Paris exposition and were inclined to challenge previous styles and architects. Also influenced by the economic exigencies of the Great Depression that had begun in 1929, Willis explained his new thinking in a January 12, 1932, letter to his father:

> There are a number of us here [University of Pennsylvania], both designers and engineers, who feel that architecture today is of necessity becoming more and more unified and standardized and that it will continue to do so. We feel certain that the old time Beaux Art plan & the pseudo-classic elevation such as the Reno Court House, Reno National Bank, and the University buildings will go—that such things having a so called true style will go. The old line architects and their non-thinking students are on the wrong track.[66]

RENO NATIONAL BANK
RENO NEVADA

DeLongchamps designed the Reno National Bank for George Wingfield, one of Nevada's most powerful men. The bank displays DeLongchamps's artistic abilities through his use of allegorical figures and classical details. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

Willis Church earned his master of architecture degree in February 1934 and returned home to Reno. His first design was for the Nevada Art Gallery in Reno, planned for a hillside site on University Terrace. His second was the Sixth Street School in Hawthorne. A fine minimalist Art Moderne structure, the school was Church's only known completed commission in Nevada.[67]

Russell Mills came to Reno in 1927 from the San Francisco Bay Area. From 1913 to 1915, he had been enrolled at the University of California in Berkeley, where he undoubtedly had been exposed to the architects of the First Bay Tradition who were practicing and teaching in the Berkeley area when Mills was a student. From 1927 until about 1935, Mills was the chief draftsman for DeLongchamps's firm. Apparently, DeLongchamps held him in high esteem, since Mills served as vice-president of the firm during 1932-1933. Mills opened his own architecture and engineering firm in 1936, which he operated until his death in 1959.

Mills brought to Reno a whimsical approach to architectural design. Two of his premier designs are a Swiss Chalet house on the Jobs Peak Ranch above Genoa (1936-1937) and the Hart House, an Oriental Revival structure in Reno (1938). Both of these are storybook enchanting and unique in the region. Mills was also adept at Art Deco and Art Moderne, with 1940s examples such as the Sparks City Hall and Firehouse (1940), the Vocational-Agricultural Building in Lovelock (1941), and the Veterans Memorial School in Reno (1949).[68]

Edward Shier Parsons moved to Reno with his aunt and guardian in 1922. While he was a student at Reno High School, Dr. Effie Mona Mack noted his mechanical drawing skills and suggested that he consider a career in architecture. After high school graduation in 1924, Parsons enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania's architecture school, where he was influenced by Beaux Arts, the modern styles that so intrigued Willis Church, as well as by the architecture of Pennsylvania. Upon graduating in 1931, he was unable to find a job in Philadelphia because of the Depression. He returned to Reno and went to work for Frederic DeLongchamps, for whom he had worked during the summers, helping to complete the plans for the federal post office. By the end of the decade, Parsons had opened his own office, doing all of his own drafting, and went on to a long and prolific career. The Special Collections Library at the University of Nevada, Reno houses his collection of 605 architectural drawings.[68]

Held up as an example of old-line architects, DeLongchamps nevertheless demonstrated his ability to keep pace with the new crop of young practitioners. In 1933, at the age of fifty-one, DeLongchamps produced several designs in the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles.[70] What is likely Nevada's most beautiful and interesting historic building is the downtown post office in Reno, located across Virginia Street from two of DeLongchamps's landmarks, the Washoe County Courthouse and the 1927 Riverside Hotel. The Reno downtown station is Nevada's only example of Art Deco / Art Moderne styling in a federally-constructed post office. Rigidly formal in its symmetry and massing, solid in its

The Reno Downtown Station is Nevada's only example of Art Deco / Art Moderne styling in federally constructed post offices. At first, the federal government had difficulty accepting DeLongchamps's radical design. Although they felt the design was too plain and modern, DeLongchamps convinced the government representatives that his design was appropriate. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

bulk and material, and monumental in its demeanor, the building conveys the dignity and permanence of the federal government. Although this building, compared with DeLongchamps's earlier designs, is constrained and unfettered by architectural ornamentation, the subtle use of Classical elements and symbolic embellishments straight from the mode of Depression era art demonstrate DeLongchamps's mastery of art in architecture.[71]

At first, however, the federal government had difficulty accepting DeLongchamps's radical design. Although they felt the design was too plain and modern, DeLongchamps convinced the government representatives that his design was appropriate. After his retirement, DeLongchamps reported that following the conference, "They accepted the design without change. It still has a fitting appearance today. There are a lot of things to consider in best design."[72] Indeed, in DeLongchamps's long career, he demonstrated his thoughtful consideration of best design in all of his plans.

In 1935, DeLongchamps undertook another government project. The Nevada Supreme Court and State Library Building in Carson City was a project of the Public Works Administration, one of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal agencies.[73]

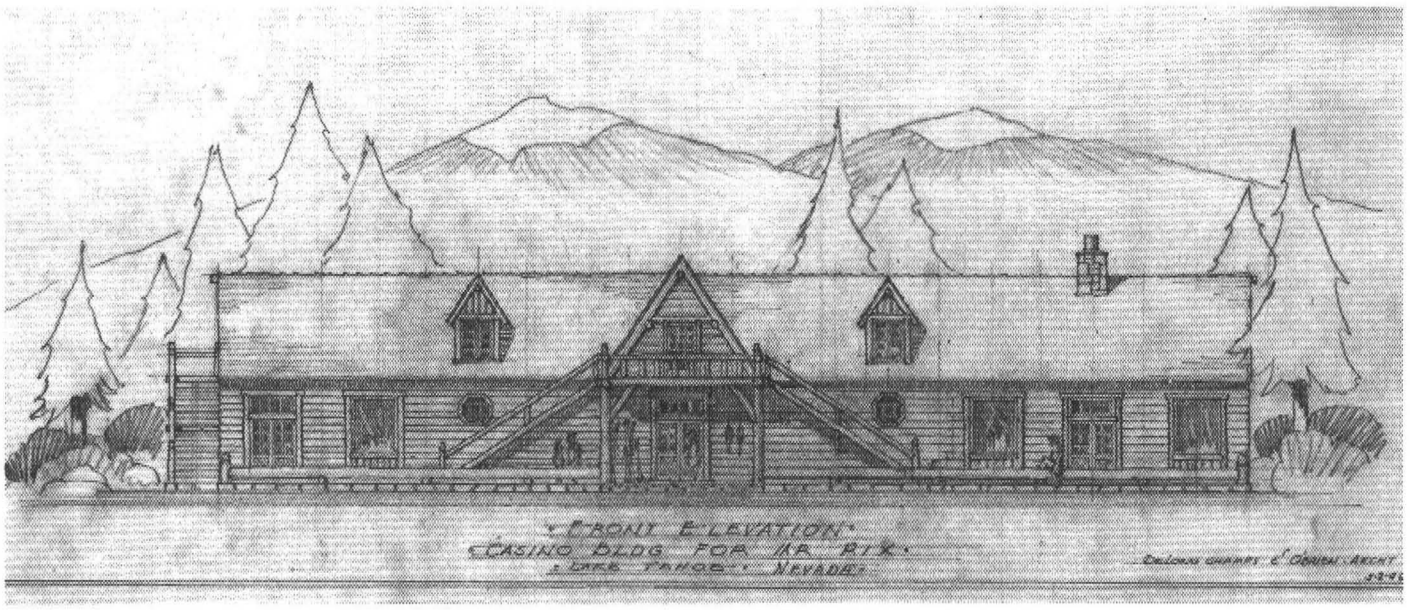
For the Supreme Court building, DeLongchamps employed materials and Classical design elements similar to those used for the post office, with the over-all appearance reflecting Art Deco sensibilities. The Supreme Court building stands between DeLongchamps's 1920s Heroes Memorial Building and the Ormsby County Courthouse. This block, located across the street from the State Capitol, demonstrates DeLongchamps's grasp of academic architectural principles by working ancient classical elements in old and new ways with equal aplomb.

Reno architecture of the 1930s cannot be discussed without mentioning the work of the Los Angeles architect Paul Revere Williams. Williams, an African American who had earned the title "architect to the stars" by the 1930s, had worked hard to overcome racism in a profession dominated by whites, both practitioners and clients. How and exactly when Williams came to Reno remains a mystery. A newcomer to the city (of whom there were many in Reno at the time) most likely brought him to town. Mrs. Luella Garvey and Dr. Raphael Herman are possible candidates. E. L. Cord, for whom Williams had designed a home in Los Angeles, has been suspected of being Williams's Reno sponsor, but Cord did not come to Reno until the late 1930s. At any rate, either Dr. Herman's house at Rancho San Rafael or Mrs. Garvey's house on California Avenue was Williams's first Reno commission, in 1933.[74]

During the time Williams worked in Reno, the town did not welcome racial minorities, and Williams experienced discrimination and often had difficulty getting paid for his work. Despite these unfavorable conditions, Williams made a significant contribution to Nevada's architectural history through at least fifteen commissions throughout the state. In Reno, his best known buildings are the Garvey house, the Loomis Apartments (1939), the First Church of Christ, Scientist (1939), and the El Reno Housing Project (1939). In southern Nevada, he designed E. L. Cord's ranch in Silver Peak (1940); Carver Park, the black housing project associated with Basic Magnesium, Inc., in Henderson (1942); and the La Concha Motel in Las Vegas (1950s), the subject of a recent successful preservation effort.[75]

The 1940s to Retirement

From 1940 until the end of World War II, little in the way of construction went on in northern Nevada. Materials and construction workers were scarce, both resources being taken up by the war effort. When the war ended in 1945, however, commissions came flooding into the architectural firms. In 1931, the Nevada legislature had re-legalized gambling, but it was not until after the war that gambling began to attract the average American, creating Nevada's unique tourism industry. This change was spurred in part by the innovative Harolds Club or Bust advertising campaign of the Smith family (owners of Harolds Club) and Tom Wilson's advertising agency, as well as by the influx of casino

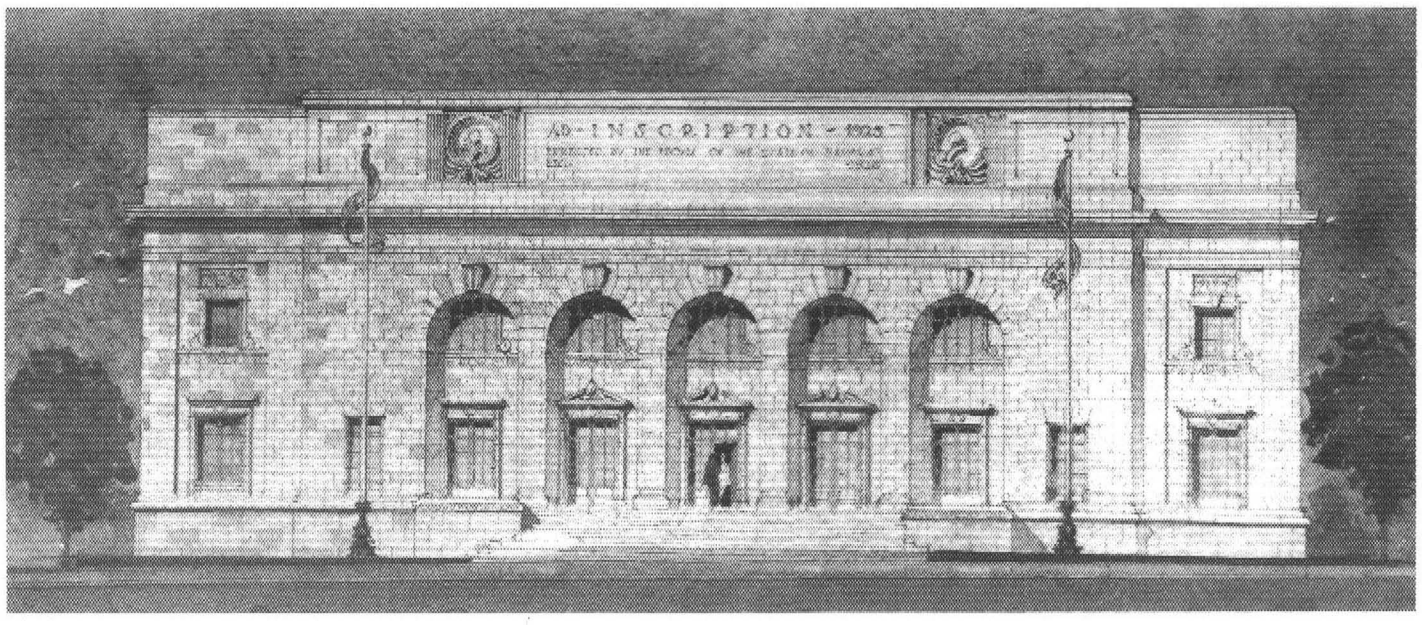


Mr. Rix casino was never built, but DeLongchamps's Resort Rustic design sought to complement the natural alpine setting of Lake Tahoe. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

operators into Las Vegas. As a result, gambling houses changed from smoke-filled rooms to lavish hotel/casino resorts. In 1945 and 1946, DeLongchamps's firm was commissioned to prepare drawings for two gaming properties at Lake Tahoe. The first was Mr. Rix Casino, in the familiar Resort Rustic style of the 1930s. The other, dated 1946, was the Tudor Revival plan for the Normandy Village Hotel and Casino. Both designs were suitable for the alpine landscape of Lake Tahoe. Reno's first foray into modern gaming property was the 1947 Mapes Hotel, an Art Deco structure built on the site of the old post office, with plans prepared by F. H. Slocombe of Oakland before the war.

In 1947, Jeanne Wier, director of the Nevada Historical Society, asked DeLongchamps to prepare plans for a new building to be located at Evans Park, across Ninth Street from the University of Nevada campus on land that the City of Reno had donated to the society. DeLongchamps's designs incorporated space-planning considerations to meet the specific needs of the institution. Working directly with Wier, DeLongchamps created space that would provide the best balance of exhibits, research and library, staff offices, and storage—something the society had never had (and apparently never would). The plans for the 2,736-square-foot building show a minimalist Art Deco design with a parapet wall on the front façade, which served a dual purpose as the ceremonial entrance and as a screen for the mechanical equipment on the roof. The building's exterior bears a remarkable resemblance to DeLongchamps's 1933 downtown post office on Mill Street in Reno, and his 1935 Nevada Supreme Court and State Library building in Carson City. Since the Nevada Historical Society suffered from decades of inadequate funding, it is not surprising that DeLongchamps chose to recycle earlier designs for this project that was guaranteed to have a limited budget. In fact, the legislature never approved funding for the building and by 1950 the society was desperately trying to find space to rent. Staff made a plea for permission to lease space in a new wing that DeLongchamps

was designing for the Washoe County Courthouse, but the County Commission denied the request. The society had to resort to remodeling its area in the basement of the Nevada State Building that DeLongchamps had designed for the 1927 Lincoln Highway Exposition. Not until the 1960s was there another opportunity to acquire a new building.[76]

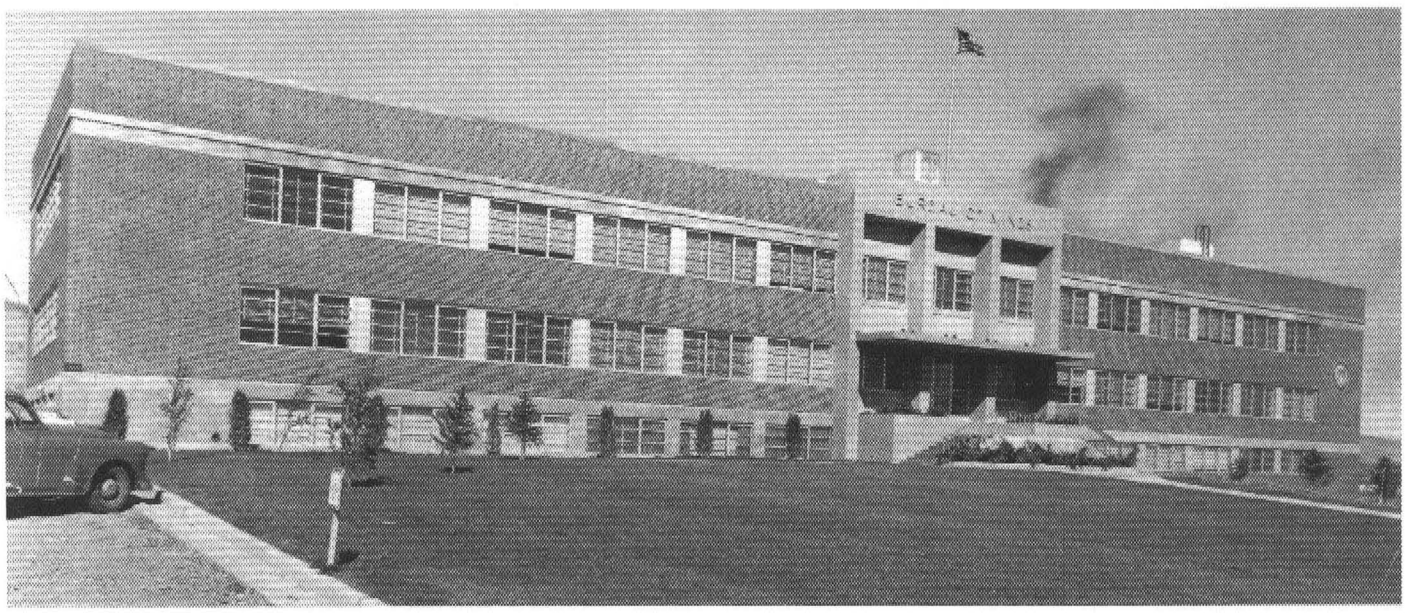


The Nevada State Building was constructed in 1925 for the Transcontinental Highway Exposition, held at Reno's Idlewild Park in 1927. The design was a collaboration between DeLongchamps and the Reno firm of George Ferris and Son. The State Building housed the Nevada Historical Society and exhibits relating to the exposition. The building was demolished to make way for the Pioneer Theater, which was completed in 1968. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Reno's world-renowned divorce trade brought a new architect to town in 1946. Graham Erskine, who trained in architecture at Columbia University, came from New York to get a divorce and while serving his six-week residency requirement he took a job with Lehman Ferris. Ferris put Erskine to work on the plans for Reno High School, which he completed before returning to New York with his divorce decree in hand. Ferris was impressed with the work and asked Erskine to return and go into practice with him. Besides being instrumental in establishing the Nevada chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1946, Erskine designed or assisted in the design of numerous buildings in Nevada. Among his best-known works are Hug and Wooster high schools in Reno, the Nevada State Legislature building in Carson City, and Harolds Club Casino.

The end of World War II brought about a change in architecture as American culture embraced the automobile with renewed vigor, and a baby boom stimulated the growth of housing tracts and schools. Influenced by the modernist architects who first made their mark before the war with the International style, the housing tract and the concomitant Ranch-style house gave residential housing and land use a new spin.[77] In Reno, where the population had topped fifty thousand in 1950, the tourist trade increased, and with it came a proliferation

of motels and roadside eateries, gambling establishments, and architectural styles that differed markedly from those of the pre-war phase. The transitional post-war form was the Minimal Traditional style, which the Ranch-style home supplanted in the early 1950s. Similarly, commercial and municipal architecture reflected the International style's trend toward minimal ornamentation on angular buildings.[78]



The United States Bureau of Mines was founded in 1910, initially to deal with mine disasters. The Bureau's mission was soon expanded to include research and development of new and emerging science and technology in the minerals field. The construction of a USBM building on the University of Nevada campus was testimony to the important role the state and the university played in international minerals research. A DeLongchamps design, the building was constructed in 1952. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

The DeLongchamps catalog of the late 1940s contains entries describing plans for "astylistic," or contemporary buildings. Astylistic presumably means that there are no overt style-defining characteristics by which to categorize the design. In residential buildings, the term contemporary suggests a style that reflected the trend for long, low buildings, with prominent garages (denoting the growing status of the family automobile) and low-pitched roofs with wide eaves. In the nonresidential category, an excellent example of DeLongchamps's ability to excel at new forms is the United States Bureau of Mines building on the University of Nevada campus. The building is low and long, with a flat roof behind a low parapet and horizontal bands of multi-pane casement windows, which add to the building's overall horizontality. The only relief in the flat façade is the shallow projecting entrance bay, covered by a canopy.

As the 1950s progressed, two architects arrived in Reno who would contribute to the local trend toward modernism. Frank Green came to Reno in about 1950 with extensive experience in hotel and motel architecture. Born in Missouri in 1940, Green was a graduate of the University of Southern California architecture school, and an apprentice to H. C. Nickerson. Green opened his own office in Los Angeles in 1931.[79] In 1945, Green undertook a remodel

of the Hotel El Rancho Sacramento. Like its older cousin, the 1941 El Rancho Vegas (the first resort property on the Las Vegas Strip), the Sacramento property consisted of a series of guest bungalows and a trademark windmill. The El Rancho developer, Thomas Hull, planned, but never built, a Hotel El Rancho Reno, and that project presumably brought Green to Nevada. Until his death in 1976, Green designed, in Nevada and elsewhere, a number of residences and commercial buildings, and a vast array of hotel properties, including Harrah's, the Sparks Nugget, the modernistic Holiday, the Primadonna, a remodel to the Mapes, and a 1950s addition to the Riverside Hotel.[80]

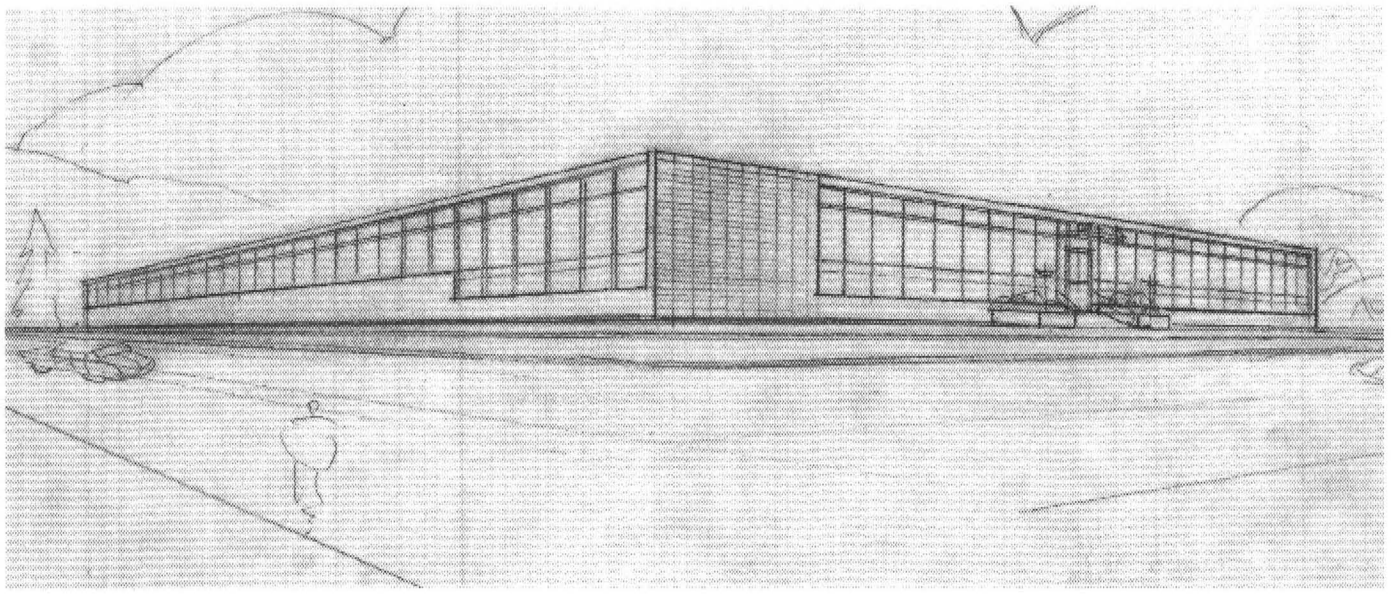
Raymond Hellmann came to Reno in 1951, with a fresh architecture degree from Yale University. Although Hellmann was adept at a wide variety of architectural styles and building types, perhaps his foremost achievement was the 1963 Fleischmann Atmospherium-Planetarium on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. The planetarium's showpiece is its butterfly-shaped roof—a 180-ton concrete-shelled hyperbolic parabaloid supported at only two points. This futuristic style is often called Populuxe, and is characterized by space-age designs that depict motion.[81]

In 1968, Hellmann designed a new building for the Nevada Historical Society. The building's exterior design was in the Populuxe mode; made of pre-cast concrete panels, it featured a row of vertically-elongated diamond shapes excised into the concrete, every other one containing glazing. The society's Board of Directors, however, restricted Hellmann to a reproduction of the layout of the space that the society was occupying in the basement of DeLongchamps's State Building, which was being demolished to make way for the Pioneer Theater. To compensate for the limitations placed on the new building, Hellmann's spare industrial design freed up a maximum of interior space.

Hellmann represented a new breed of architect, who urged graceful and tasteful commercial designs. Ray Hellmann died in 1997, leaving as his legacy scores of buildings, including residences, schools, libraries, banks, and casinos.[82]

In the meantime, Frederic DeLongchamps was keeping pace with the young modernists coming to town. His 1952 Bureau of Mines Building was as competent and current as any other building of its day. Another excellent example of DeLongchamps's versatility is the 1958-1959 Washoe County Health and Welfare Building (now the county coroner's office). The one-story building is long and low, sheathed in brick and porcelain tile. The band of casement windows adds to the building's horizontality. The canopy over the entry is the only projection.

What is most likely DeLongchamps's premier modernist building was demolished in 2002, having been largely unappreciated by the Reno populace. Built in 1959 for the Union Federal Savings and Loan Company on the corner of Sierra and Court streets (directly behind the Washoe County Courthouse), the building's most notable detail was the use of brise soleil, a popular modern architectural element. Examples of the brise soleil in modern architecture began



The Washoe County Health and Welfare Building epitomizes DeLongchamps's interpretation of the International style of architecture that stressed functionalism, emphasized the horizontal aspects of a building, and rejected all non-essential decoration. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

with Le Corbusier and the Maison locative Ponsik (1933) in Algiers. Brise soleil systems consist of exterior vertical panels that move with the sun and provide heat or shade to a building's interior. Besides being functional, brise soleil were used in modern architecture as spatial layering related to the modernist concept of the wall as public spectacle.[83]

Architectural historians have compared the Union Federal Savings and Loan Building in Reno to the United States Embassy building in Pakistan designed by Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander in 1958. Demonstrating that his skill could more than adequately make dramatic shifts in architectural philosophy, with the Union Federal building DeLongchamps proved his relevance as he neared the end of his remarkable career.[84]

With DeLongchamps in the mix, architects experimented in modernism in Reno in the late 1950s and 1960s. Modernism grew out of the Bauhaus School earlier in the twentieth century. Such notable European transplants as Neutra and R. M. Schindler plied their trade in unadorned elemental architecture in southern California beginning in the 1930s, competing with American experimentalists such as Frank Lloyd Wright.

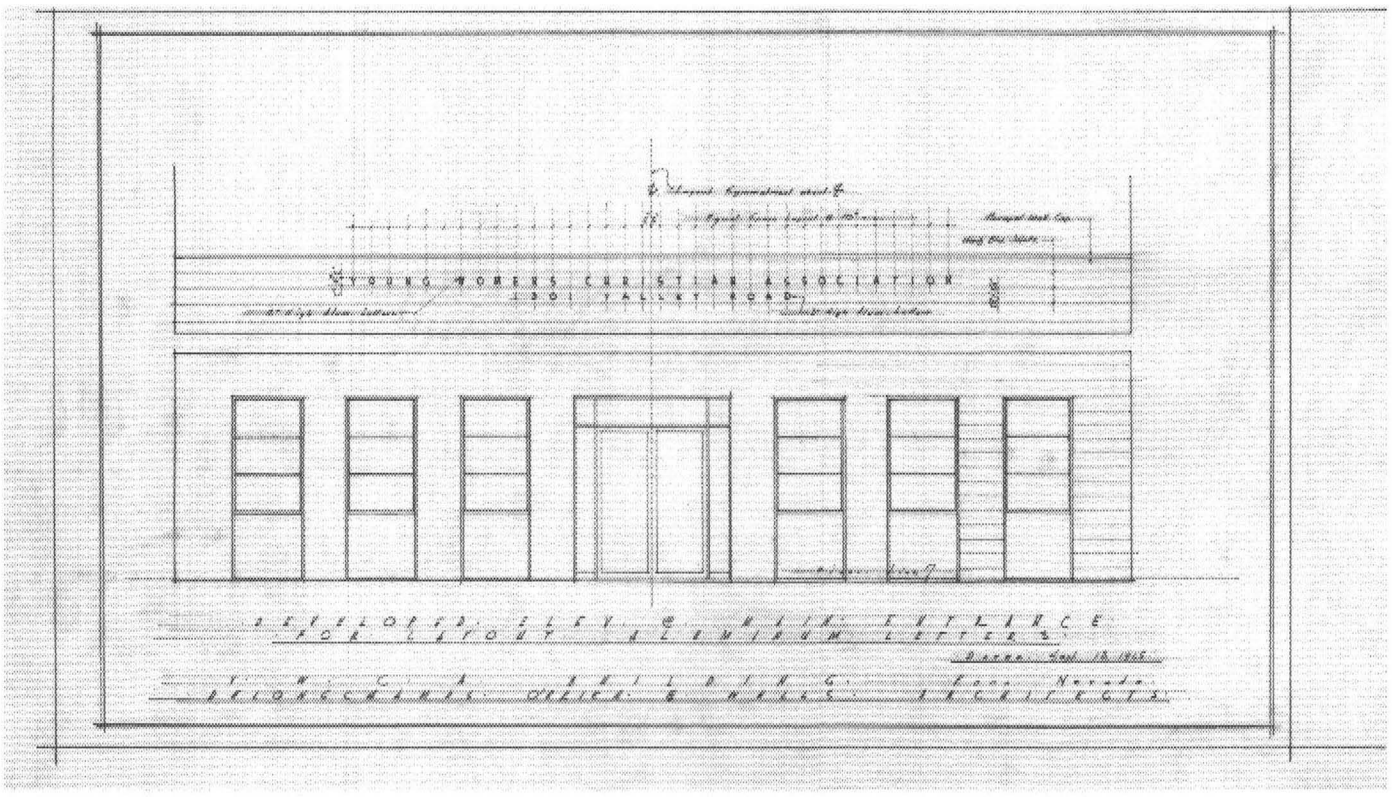
In addition to the works of Green and Hellmann, several modernist architects with international reputations executed commissions in Reno. For example, Neutra contributed to the designs of the Church Fine Arts building on the University of Nevada, Reno, campus and the Centennial Coliseum (now the Reno-Sparks Convention Center), although few of his original building design features are discernible today.[85] In 1962, Neutra's former partner, Alexander, teamed with local architect David Vhay (and with the assistance of Richard Neutra's son Dion) on the design of the Noble H. Getchell library on the university's campus. Alexander was an architect and city planner, and a graduate of the architecture school at Cornell University. His records and papers, which include

some relating to the Getchell library project, are housed at the Cornell University Library. David Vhay was the son-in-law of the Mount Rushmore sculptor, Gutzon Borglum.[86] He was also responsible for the National Judicial College building on the Reno campus. The Getchell Library, along with the Fleischmann Planetarium, falls into the general Populuxe category. The library's primary space-age feature is the zigzag roofline, created by folded concrete plates.

Although best known for his work in Las Vegas, Martin Stern, Jr., also contributed to the architectural scene in Reno. Stern, who had moved to Los Angeles in 1930, made a name for himself in the late 1950s designing coffee shops for Emmett Shipman in an architectural style later dubbed Googie by architecture critic and writer Alan Hess.[87] In Las Vegas, Stern designed the Sahara's first skyscraper, in 1959. In Reno and Lake Tahoe, he designed Harrah's and the MGM Grand. Stern donated his more than six hundred sets of plans and drawings to the library at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.[88]

In 1962, DeLongchamps, then age eighty, and George O'Brien, at seventy-five, took another partner. Hewitt Wells had graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University with a degree in architecture in 1938. His first job was with Albert Kahn in Detroit, where he was a supervising architect working on war preparedness. After the war, Wells went to San Francisco, where he worked with Masten and Hurd Architects. Wells's most notable building in Reno was begun not long before DeLongchamps and O'Brien retired. He planned the Washoe County Library around a roofed and enclosed garden court. Reading areas and the multi-tier book stacks looked out on the interior garden, which included large trees and a pool. The library's front façade was a large copper and glass screen that reflected the curvilinear plan of the interior court. The library opened on May 13, 1966, and in 1968 Wells received the Industrial Landscape Award from the American Association of Nurserymen for his interior use of hundreds of plants, shrubs, and trees. Wells's other commissions in Nevada include the United States Federal Office Building and Post Office, and the west addition to the Nevada State Museum in Carson City. In Reno, his designs include the Reno City Hall, Clayton Junior High School, an addition to the Washoe County Courthouse, the Ryland Medical Center, and a small office building on First Street.[89]

During the last five years of his career, DeLongchamps completed a handful of plans for remodels and new construction. His new designs were in contemporary styles and included a fraternity house, a firehouse, two residences, and a housing project for the Reno Housing Authority. In 1961, he designed the David Campbell house, a solid example of the Ranch style house that had gained popularity after World War II. What appears to be his last commission was the Reno YWCA building (1964-1965). The plan is for a simple concrete-block building with a flat roof, casement windows, and a central entrance, an unremarkable design during a time of unremarkable and expedient designs.



The YWCA building in Reno was one of DeLongchamps's last commissions before his retirement in 1965. Like most of his later works, it lacked ornamentation and stressed the horizontal aspect of the building. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

THE END OF AN ERA

When Frederic DeLongchamps and George O'Brien retired in 1965, Hewitt Wells continued with the business. In a December 1965 article on the two founders, DeLongchamps acknowledged that staying home was difficult. Despite "getting along in years," he wanted to have something to do. O'Brien said he would spend his time in personal activities and he looked forward to traveling.[90]

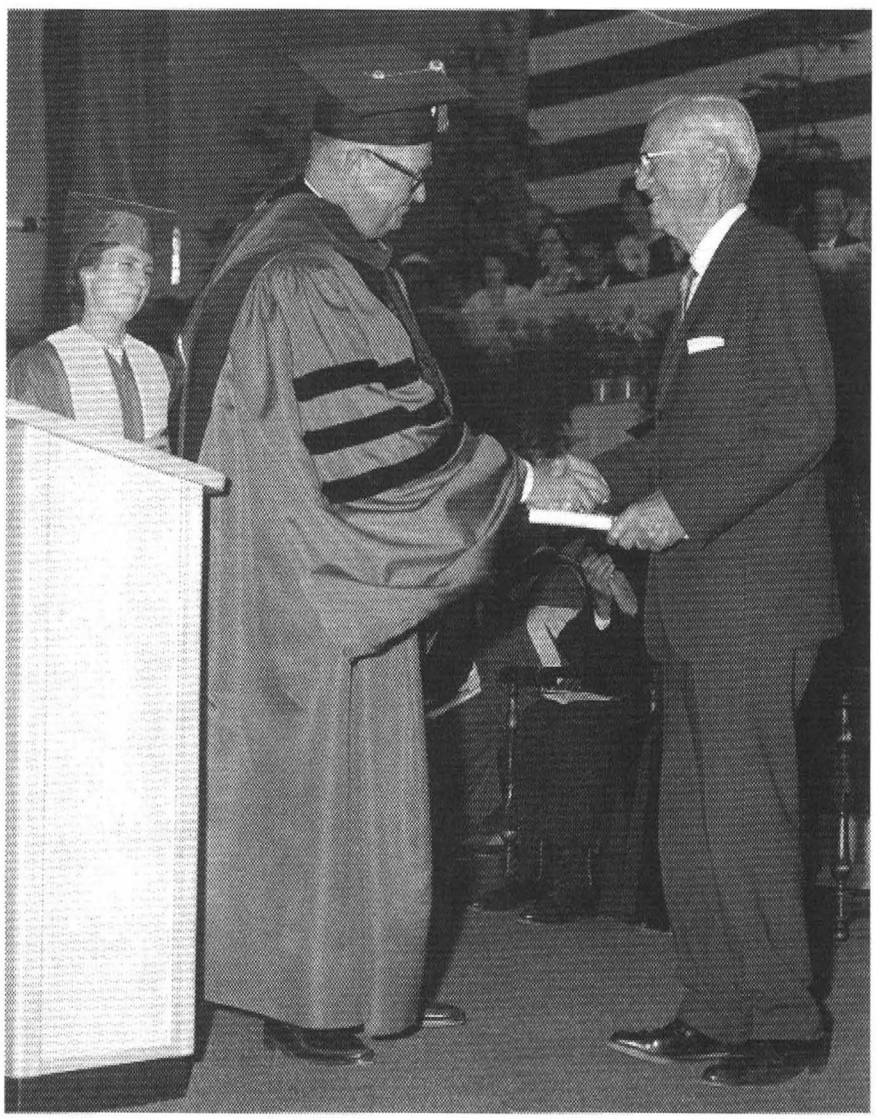
DeLongchamps's architectural career spanned nearly six decades. He prepared innumerable drawings and plans and no doubt consulted on countless other projects. He participated in the establishment of the Nevada State Association of Architects in 1939, and later, the Nevada State Board of Architects. Most of the architects who were entering the field in Nevada during the first half of the twentieth century worked as draftsmen in DeLongchamps's firm, and most of the competing firms collaborated with DeLongchamps and O'Brien at some point.

Frederic DeLongchamps contributed much to Nevada architecture. From his courthouses and commercial buildings to his estates and common homes, DeLongchamps earned the title "Nevada's pre-eminent architect." His competence and aptitude in a wide range of architectural styles were rare and remarkable. There was not an era, trend, or style he could not execute with skill.

DeLongchamps died on February 11, 1969 of a cerebral thrombosis. He was eighty-six years old. Underscoring his importance in Nevada architectural histo-

ry is a June 1915 newspaper article on the expositions going on in San Diego and San Francisco. The *Nevada State Journal* eloquently predicted DeLongchamps's exceptional abilities and importance early in his career:

> The architectural advancement in Reno in recent years has been remarkable and due credit should be given such men as Fred J. DeLongchamps, who have by their faithful efforts advanced the standard of building practice and to this quality Mr. DeLongchamps owes his success. He has planned the business blocks and public and private buildings, not only in Reno, but throughout the state. The Washoe County Court House, Lyons [sic] County Court House, Clark County Court House, Modoc County (Calif.) Court House, the Y.M.C.A and the N.C.O.R.R. depot, the Nixon Building at Reno, are examples of his work, and each structure of the group compels attention as the production of an expert who realizes the need of progress and who crystallizes his art and science in a way that arouses admiration.[91]



Frederic DeLongchamps was honored with the University of Nevada's Distinguished Nevadan award in 1966. The award was established in 1958 to recognize prominent individuals for their significant achievements contributing to the cultural, economic, scientific, or social advancement of Nevada. *(Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

THE DELONGCHAMPS LEGACY

The list below is contained in a document handwritten by DeLongchamps. The commissions listed are but a part of his enormous body of work.

THE FOLLOWING LIST IS A SELECTED PART OF THE ITEMS THAT HAVE BEEN COMPLETED DURING THE ACTIVE TIME [92]

NO.	NAME	LOCATION	DATE
1	Washoe County Courthouse	Reno, Nevada	1910
2	Wells High School	Wells, Nevada	1914
3	Reno National Bank	Reno, Nevada	1915
4	Douglas County Court House	Minden, Nevada	1915
5	Nevada Exhibit (Agricultural) PPIE	San Francisco, California	1915
6	Library Building U. of N.	Reno, Nevada	1915
7	Minden Fire House	Minden, Nevada	1915
8	Manzanita Hall Lattice U. of N.	Reno, Nevada	1915
9	Minden Hotel Dangberg	Minden, Nevada	1916
10	Dangberg & Res.	Minden, Nevada	1916
11	Humboldt County Court House	Winnemucca, Nevada	1916
12	Mineral County Hospital	Hawthorne, Nevada	1916
13	Mineral County High School	Hawthorne, Nevada	1917
14	Primary School [Mary Lee Nichols]	Sparks, Nevada	1917
15	Mina Grade School	Mina, Nevada	1917
16	Agricultural Building U. of N.	Reno, Nevada	1917
17	Nevada State Penitentiary	Carson, Nevada	1917
18	Ormsby County Court House	Carson, Nevada	1917
19	Ormsby County Jail	Carson, Nevada	1917
20	Lander County Jail	Battle Mountain [Nevada]	1917
21	Baptist Church	Reno, Nevada	1917
22	Orphans Home	Carson City, Nevada	1918
23	Dairy Building U of N	Reno, Nevada	1918
24	Churchill County Bank	Fallon, Nevada	1919
25	Lutheran Church	Reno, Nevada	1919
26	Nevada State Industrial School	Elko, Nevada	1919
27	Grammar School	Lovelock, Nevada	1919
28	Oats Park School	Fallon, Nevada	1920
29	Nevada State Penitentiary	Carson City, Nevada	1920
30	Tonopah High School	Tonopah, Nevada	1922
31	Susanville City Hall	Susanville, Cal.	1923
32	School	Sparks, Nevada	1924
33	Susanville Hotel	Susanville, Cal.	1925
34	Majestic Theater	Reno, Nevada	1925
35	Fraternal Hall	Fallon, Nevada	1926

36	Hunter Theater	Elko, Nevada	1926
37	State Hospital Buildings	Reno, Nevada	1927
38	Lawton Springs	Lawton, Nevada	1927
39	Gardnerville	Gardnerville, Nevada	1928
40	Winnemucca Baptist Church	Winnemucca, Nevada	1929
41	Sparks Library, Washoe County Lib.	Sparks, Nevada	1931
42	Sparks Catholic Church	Sparks, Nevada	1932
43	Riverside Hotel	Reno, Nevada	1926
44	Wadsworth School	Wadsworth, Nevada	1935
45	United States Post Office	Reno, Nevada	1933
46	Supreme Court and Library	Carson City, Nevada	1947*
47	Churchill County Court House	Fallon, Nevada	1947
48	Churchill Public Hospital	Fallon, Nevada	1948
49	Virginia City School	Virginia City, Nevada	1947
50	Hawthorne Schools	Hawthorne, Nevada	1947-48
51	U. S. Bureau of Mines	Reno, Nevada	1953
52	Nevada Industrial Commission	Carson City, Nevada	1958
53	Union Federal Building [UFSL]	Reno, Nevada	1959
54	Washoe County Jail	Reno, Nevada	1959
55	Archie W. Clayton Jr. Hi School	Reno, Nevada	1963
56	Washoe County Library	Reno, Nevada	1962**
57	Engineering Building U of N	Reno, Nevada	1962
58	Nevada State Women's Prison	Carson City, Nevada	1963
59	City Hall	Reno, Nevada	1963**
60	Sparks High School	Sparks, Nevada	1915-'63

* DeLongchamps designed the Supreme Court and Library between 1935 and 1937. The building was built and funded by the federal Public Works Administration.

** Although the courthouse and city hall plans were from the firm, Hewitt Wells is responsible for the design of these two buildings.

NOTES

[1]Frederic DeLongchamps's first name often appears as Frederick. In hand-written material at the Special Collections Library at the University of Nevada, Reno, DeLongchamps spells his name Frederic. I chose to follow his lead.

[2]NAA1, Frederic J. DeLongchamps Collection, Special Collections Library, University of Nevada, Reno (cited hereafter as the DeLongchamps Collection).

[3]The DeLongchamps Collection is a rich and remarkable resource. It not only provides information on architectural history and DeLongchamps's accomplishments; it reveals the tastes and economic status of communities, businessmen, and homeowners who sought the architect's services and provides a building-by-building look at how towns and cities grow.

[4]The name was spelled Delonchant until 1912, when Exilda and Felix encountered relatives from Montreal who told them the correct spelling of the family name was DeLongchamps. Fred's younger brother, Philip, was also an architect; he married and moved to Sacramento, where he worked for an unknown architectural firm. Philip died of pneumonia in March 1926 at the age of thirty-seven. After being discharged from the Navy after World War I, he served as a draftsman for the state of Nevada and the state of California. Little is known of his architectural commissions.

[5]NC1215/1, DeLongchamps Collection.

[6]To date, the thirty buildings that resulted from the DeLongchamps-Tesch partnership remain unidentified. In fact, DeLongchamps does not mention the partnership at all in his handwritten biography, BC1215/1, DeLongchamps collection.

[7]The term Beaux Arts refers generally to a period of roughly 1885 to 1930, when eclectic styles advocated by Americans who studied at France's École des Beaux-Arts, the era's premier school of architecture, were popular. It specifically refers to classical precedents elaborated by lavish decorative detailing.

[8]"Passed Examinations," *Reno Evening Gazette*, 1 April 1911. Environmental Design Archives, College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley, e-mail communication, Waverly Lowell, Archivist, 27 June 2006. DeLongchamps also received license # C175 in 1935. The reason for this is as yet unknown. California's architecture licensing records are housed at the California State Archives in Sacramento.

[9]The 1911 issue of *Davis' Commercial Encyclopedia of the Pacific Southwest* lists Frederic DeLongchamps as practicing architecture in San Francisco at the time of publication, coming there after having had success in Nevada. His office was at 454 Monadnock Building. Of the young architect, *Davis'* asserts, "Since coming to San Francisco Mr. DeLongchamps has been actively engaged in preparing plans for numerous buildings, and his rapid progress predicts a distinguished future in architecture." The Beaux Arts style Monadnock Building, located at 685 Market Street in San Francisco, was designed by Frederick H. Meyer. The building was under construction when the big earthquake hit in 1906. The structure was so solid the United States Army couldn't destroy it with dynamite when they tried to create a firebreak intended to save the original Palace Hotel. Meyer was responsible for a number of buildings constructed after the earthquake.

[10]Little is known of DeLongchamps's California commissions beyond what is included in his architectural collection housed at the Special Collections Library at the University of Nevada, Reno. These include plans for a number of public buildings (schools, courthouses, jails, and hospitals) and a variety of commercial and residential buildings throughout the state.

[11]Boyd Moore, *Nevadans and Nevada* (San Francisco: H. S. Crocker Company, Inc., 1950), 56.

[12]Whether the Florida apartment house was ever built is unknown. According to Dawn Creamer, assistant supervisor for the Florida Master Site File maintained by the Florida State Historic Preservation Office, a hospital was built at the location in 1962. If the apartment house was built, it was then demolished to make way for the hospital. One also wonders how DeLongchamps came to submit concept drawings for a project in Florida. Although the answer to that question is unknown, one of DeLongchamps's sisters had married and moved to Florida, and was presumably in a position to suggest opportunities to her brother.

[13]"Reno Architect Given Big Job," *Reno Evening Gazette*, 23 March 1926, 6.

[14]DeLongchamps's design for the Nixon mausoleum was a Greek temple, with two porticos supported by Doric columns, a full entablature, and low pitch pediment. The frieze consists of triglyphs and metopes with garlands draping the side walls.

[15]American Foursquare was an architectural style popularized by pattern books between 1905 and 1925. This building type had four rooms, one in each corner, on one or two floors.

[16]The State Architect's office employed a staff of architects, engineers, draftsmen, specification writers, and inspectors. Familiar names appear on the staff list, including George O'Brien, Lehman Ferris, M. J. Curtis, and Fred DeLongchamps's brother Philip. State of Nevada, *Biennial Report of the State Architect*, 1919-1920, Nevada Historical Society, Reno.

[17]Mella Rothwell Harmon, "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 47:1 (Spring 2004), 15-36.

[18]"Two Men Who Built Reno Enter Retirement," *Nevada State Journal*, 12 December 1965, 2.

[19]*Munsey's Magazine*, October 1909.

[20]The term vernacular generally refers to buildings constructed without the services of an architect. Vernacular also refers to the common building styles and types of a particular place, imbued with particular local or regional cultural attributes. In contrast, architect-designed buildings are often called high style, following the tendency of certain academic schools that see anything associated with the "folk" as low and common. I have asserted many times that Reno lagged a good ten years behind other towns in its choice of architectural styles. Recent research has revealed that Reno has been unfairly accused of architectural pedestrianism. By 1875, at least well-to-do property owners were engaging architects to design fashionable homes in the most modern styles.

[21]A community had to have a minimum population and the economic where-with-all to maintain a library building in order for Carnegie to finance one. Reno had some difficulty convincing Carnegie that it met the minimum threshold. See Harmon, "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage," 19-20.

[22]Sally Still Abbe, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Virginia Street Bridge," December 1980. State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[23]The Chateauesque style, which combines Gothic and Renaissance detailing, was in vogue from about 1880 to 1910. It was popularized in America by the architect Richard Morris Hunt, the first American architect to study at France's École des Beaux-Arts. The pinnacle of the Chateauesque style was Hunt's 1895 "Biltmore," George Vanderbilt's North Carolina country house. Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred Knopf and Sons, 1990), 373.

[24]Sanford White is known as much for his sensational death as for his architecture career. Murdered by his mistress' jealous husband, the crime was dramatized in Charles Samuels's 1955 book *The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing*, the E. L. Doctorow book *Ragtime*, and the film of the same name.

[25]The statue of John Mackay in front of the Mackay School of Mines building was sculpted by Gutzon Borglum of Mount Rushmore fame. Don Fowler, Carol Blumstrom, Phillip I. Earl, Kenneth J. Evans, Valerie R. Firby, Alisa A. Garner, Susan Horton, Robert B. Mann, and Pamela Y. Reed, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Mackay School of Mines Building," August 1980, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[26]The McKim, Mead, and White architectural firm also designed the landscape plan for the campus. Two architects by the names of Bliss and Farville, who had worked for the New York firm but had recently started their own firm in San Francisco, worked on the landscape design and were supervising architects for the construction of the Mackay School of Mines building. Richard G. White, editor, Bio-Index appendix to the *State Comprehensive Preservation Plan* Revised 1991, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City. Frederic DeLongchamps made his own contribution to the campus plan with the 1926 renovation of the Mackay School of Mines Building and the design of the Mackay Science Building on the southeast corner of the tree-lined quadrangle.

[27]Following McAlester and McAlester, Neoclassical is distinguished from Classical Revival by the use of full-height porches or porticos supported by classical columns. Neoclassical had a run of popularity in America from 1895 to 1950.

[28]H. J. Kolva and Steve Franks, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Reno Main Post Office," included in the Thematic Nomination, Post Offices of Nevada, February 1989, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City. The original post office building was not demolished until 1945. The Mapes Hotel replaced it two years later.

[29]Italianate, as rendered in Nevada, is a late-Victorian style characterized by low-pitched, often hipped, roofs, wide overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets; tall, narrow windows; and a square cupola or tower.

[30]Richard Morris Hunt introduced the Beaux Arts style at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. McAlester and McAlester, *Field Guide*, 380.

[31]DeLongchamps's two California courthouses were the Modoc County Courthouse in Alturas and the Alpine County Courthouse in Markleeville. Ronald M. James, *Temples of Justice: County Courthouses of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994).

[32]Richard D. Adkins, *Coming into Its Own: Nevada and the Emergence of its Architectural Profession*, manuscript, Nevada Historical Society, Reno.

[33]The 1910 United States Census lists ten Reno men under the professional categories of "architect" and "architecture." In addition, buildings in Nevada (and elsewhere) were also being designed and constructed by a variety of people including builders in a number of trades (carpenters, masons, etc.), engineers, and property owners. Beginning in the mid 1800s and continuing into the early twentieth century, house plans could be selected from a myriad offered in plan books. Also contributing to the architectural landscape were the popular catalog houses shipped to the purchaser in parts on the railroad. Among the popular house catalogs were Sears, Roebuck and Co., Montgomery Ward, and Aladdin.

[34]The Goldfield Hotel and the Mizpah Hotel are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

[35]Richard G. White, Bio-Index, A20-A21.

[36]"DeLonchant Has Office on Coast," *Nevada State Journal*, 23 May 1911, 8:4 and "DeLongchamps-Holesworth Architects," 4 December 1911.

[37]John S. Sinai was George Holesworth's son-in-law. *Reno Evening Gazette*, 8 January 1926.

[38]White, Bio-Index, A41.

[39]Harmon, "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage," 26-27. In contrast to DeLongchamps, George Ferris discarded his architectural drawings upon the completion of each building he designed.

[40]White, Bio-Index, A-7.

[41]The Las Vegas High School was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 24, 1986. The Lander County High School in Austin was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 20, 2000. While conducting a historic walking tour of the small and verdant nineteenth-century community of Paradise Valley in Humboldt County, the author was pleasantly surprised to happen on a modest Art Deco grade school building (still functioning as a school) dating to the 1930s. The cornerstone attributed the school's design to the architect George Ferris and its construction to a Depression-era federal work program.

[42]The ATO House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. Mella Rothwell Harmon, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity House," April 2004, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[43]James, *Temples of Justice*, 110-112. The cost of constructing county courthouse buildings had long been an issue in Nevada. Several, especially the Esmeralda County courthouse in Hawthorne and the Lincoln County Courthouse in Pioche, had experienced severe cost overruns and charges of misconduct against the architects and builders.

[44]Clark County was created from Lincoln County on July 1, 1909.

[45]James, *Temples of Justice*, 45.

[46]*Ibid.*, 45-46.

[47]McAlester and McAlester, *Field Guide*, 418. The McAlesters prefer the term Spanish Eclectic to Spanish Colonial Revival, since the style draws on broader precedents.

[48]*Nevada State Journal*, 20 June 1915, Supplement, 16.

[49]Reno National Bank was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in August 1986. George Wingfield's residence burned down in 2001.

[50]McAlester and McAlester, *Field Guide*, 440. Julie Nicoletta, *Buildings of Nevada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 119.

[51]James. *Temples of Justice*, 90-91. Lehman Ferris served as construction superintendent on the Humboldt County courthouse project.

[52]Mella Rothwell Harmon, *Divorce and Economic Opportunity in Reno, Nevada, during the Great Depression*, M.S. thesis, University of Nevada, Reno, 1998.

[53]James, *Temples of Justice*, 32-35.

[54]*Ibid.*, 126-131.

[55]Sandstone blocks are a ubiquitous building material in Carson City and can be seen on many public buildings. The stones are from the quarry on the State Prison grounds.

[56]Mella Rothwell Harmon, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, The Field Matron's Cottage, Reno," March 2003, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[57]Rachel Carley, *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 176. Archaeological in this context refers to the reproduction of classical styles based on original Greek and Roman models, and therefore historically accurate.

[58]Mella Rothwell Harmon, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Greystone Castle, Reno," August 2002. State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[59]John Milnes Baker, *American House Styles* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1994), 118.

[60]The term Resort Rustic refers to a regional style executed at Lake Tahoe and surrounding areas beginning in the early twentieth century. As the automobile opened up the area to visitors and vacationers, summer cabins proliferated. The style incorporates rough-hewn natural materials, especially wood and stone.

[61]In addition to others, George Wingfield owned and operated the Golden and Overland hotels in Reno and the Humboldt Hotel in Winnemucca.

[62]In 1927, the Nevada Legislature shortened the divorce residency requirement to three months.

[63]NC1, The George Wingfield Papers, Nevada Historical Society, Reno.

[64]The Riverside Hotel was slated for demolition in 1999 to make way for a downtown redevelopment plan. Literally at the eleventh hour, thanks to a white knight in the form of ArtSpace Inc., of Minneapolis, Minnesota, a scheme to save the landmark hotel came together that was accepted by the Reno City Council and the Redevelopment Agency. Through a complex arrangement of grants and loans, the Riverside Hotel was renovated and converted to the Riverside Artists Lofts, providing low-rent housing and studio space for artists in what has developed into Reno's arts and culture district.

[65]Mella Rothwell Harmon, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, The Sixth Street School, Hawthorne, Nevada," August 1999, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[66]*Ibid.*

[67]*Ibid.* Willis Church apparently left Reno in the 1930s to live and work in another state, possibly in the San Francisco Bay Area. Although he was described as bright and intense, alcoholism and problems necessitating a stint in the Napa State Hospital prevented him from fulfilling his potential.

[68]Mella Rothwell Harmon, "City of Reno Register of Historic Places Nomination, The Hart House," City of Reno Community Development Department.

[69]Edward S. Parsons, "Charette!: The Life of an Architect" (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1983).

[70]In 1933, DeLongchamps prepared drawings for the federal post office in Reno (Art Deco), a remodel for the Armanko-Heidtmann Building in Reno (Art Deco), Carson City High School (Art Moderne), and Smith Valley High School (Art Moderne).

[71]H. J. Kolva and Steve Franks, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Reno Main Post Office," State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[72]"Two Men Who Built Reno Enter Retirement," *Nevada State Journal*, 12 December 1965, 2.

[73]The Supreme Court moved into its new quarters from the State Capitol in 1937.

[74]Mella Rothwell Harmon, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, The Luella Garvey House, Reno," January 2004, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

[75]*Ibid.*

[76]Harmon, "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage," 28-30.

[77]Reno did not wait long after the end of the war to adopt the new trend. Reno's first housing tract was Westfield Village, near Reno High School, in 1946.

[78]McAlester and McAlester, *Field Guide*, 477.

[79]Russell Holmes Fletcher, *Who's Who in California: A Biographical Reference Work of Notable Living Men and Women of California* (Los Angeles: Who's Who Publications Company, 1942-1943), 355.

[80]Frank W. Green Collection, Nevada Historical Society, Reno. The 1955 addition to the Riverside Hotel was demolished in 2000. Longtime Nevada hotel owner Newt Crumley of Elko built the Holiday in 1950. The Holiday was one of the popular hotels in Reno that attracted high-level entertainment to its showroom. It was partially demolished to make way for the Siena Hotel/Casino.

[81]Populuxe reflects the optimism, affluence, and mobility of American society during the two decades following the end of World War II. The term was coined by Thomas Hine in his book *Populuxe* (New York: MJF Books, 1999). Nicoletta, *Buildings of Nevada*, 69. Harold Housley, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, The Fleischmann Atmospherium-Planetarium, Reno," September 1994, State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City. The Fleischmann Planetarium was elevated to National Landmark status in 2006 for its architectural significance.

[82]Rollan Melton, "Award-winning Reno Architect Hellmann Dies," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 13 August 1997, 5C.

[83]Hilary Sample, Princeton University, personal communication, December 2001.

[84]*Ibid.*

[85]Harmon, "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage," 15-36.

[86]Borglum also sculpted the statue of John Mackay that stands in front of the Mackay School of Mines building on the Reno campus.

[87]Googie is related to Populuxe, although if possible, is even more outlandish. Googies was a southern California coffee shop. The architecture of the Bob's Big Boy and the Denny's chain were in the same vein as Googies. Alan Hess, *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2004).

[88]Myrna Oliver, "Architect Martin Stern, Jr., 84, Dies." *Reno-Gazette-Journal*, 1 August 2001, 3B.

[89]Harmon, "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage," 31-32

[90]"Two Men Who Built Reno Enter Retirement," *Nevada State Journal*, 12 December 1965.

[91]*Nevada State Journal*, Supplement, 20 June 1915, 16.

[92]This list is from a handwritten document entitled "History, Studies, Speeches, Architecture Philosophy and Mining Engineering, By Frederic J. DeLongchamps, Reno, Nevada." The document is presumed to be in DeLongchamps's own hand and is in his manuscript collection (NC1215/1) at the Special Collections Library at the University of Nevada, Reno. The sixty commissions he lists as "a selected part" are but a tenth of the projects represented in his architectural collection (NAA1) at the Special Collections Library. The projects range from concept drawings and plans that never resulted in commissions to a vast number of completed designs.

The Frederic Joseph DeLongchamps Collection

ROBERT BLESSE

In the fall of 1978, Kenneth Carpenter, the Special Collections librarian at the University of Nevada, Reno, Library, received a letter from the Reno architect Hewitt Wells. Mr. Wells, a former partner of the late Frederic DeLongchamps, had in storage a substantial collection of drawings from DeLongchamps's long career as an architect. He offered to give the drawings to Special Collections for the cost he had incurred storing the drawings for many years, a total of $5,000. Carpenter was familiar with the work of DeLongchamps, long considered to be Nevada's finest architect, and knew, after examining the collection, that it would contain many architectural treasures. The collection the library received consisted of approximately 250 cardboard tubes containing thousands of drawings dating from 1899 to 1962, along with numerous other documents relating to the drawings. In all, the collection contained drawings for 561 jobs, including major buildings such as the Washoe County Courthouse as well as smaller buildings and numerous residences throughout Nevada and in other western states.

Initially, the drawings were kept in their cardboard tubes, and access depended on the index originally done by DeLongchamps. In 1983, however, Special Collections received a grant from the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office to process, arrange, and catalog the collection. Work began in March 1984, and consisted of unrolling and flattening the drawings and placing them into flat storage in archival folders. Each job was assigned an internal number and its information (building name, location, date, description, etc.) was entered into a searchable online database called CHIPS. In the mid 1990s, the CHIPS database was disbanded, and for several years Special Collections was forced to use printed guides to access the collection. In 2001, however, the information from the original database was entered into a Microsoft Access

Bob Blesse was head of the Special Collections Department at the University of Nevada, Reno from 1981-2006. He is currently Director of the Black Rock Press, a book arts and publishing program in the university's Department of Art. A native of Oakland, California, he holds master's degrees from UCLA and California State University, Chico.

database and is now available to be searched on the department's website—www.library.unr.edu/specoll/architecture.html.

Since cataloging of the Frederic Joseph DeLongchamps Collection was completed in August, 1984, the collection has received continuous and substantial use by architects, engineers, building owners, and architectural historians. As part of the library's digital projects initiative, the Special Collections Department is now in the process of digitizing the drawings in the collection so that digital images can be accessed on the department's website. This work will make these historically important materials available to a wide range of individuals and institutions.

The Importance of Virginia City's Boston Saloon

KESIENA ONOSIGHO

Reflecting on the history of Nevada, it is apparent that the significant roles of African Americans are often overlooked. Thanks to recent excavations of the Boston Saloon in Virginia City, the truth is brought to light. In 1866, a prosperous business entrepreneur founded the Boston Saloon. This gentleman was a free-born African American from Massachusetts by the name of William A. G. Brown. Virginia City was a setting in which the dominant pro-union attitude eased the discriminatory conditions of that time. Many African Americans on the Comstock were catered to at this local saloon. Unfortunately, the great fire of 1875 burned down the building along with many other sites. Consequently, questions remained: Were the guests of this bar affluent or working class? Did it offer a menu of food and drinks that were similar to those of other nearby saloons? Was it successful or did many problems occur? For the longest time, the answers lay buried under the parking lot of the Bucket of Blood Saloon.

In 2000, the archaeological excavation of the Boston Saloon took place, and many questions were answered and great artifacts were found. The business served the crème de la crème to its clientele. Traces of ornate liqueur glasses, crystal-stemmed goblets, newly patented gas lamps, and the finest cuts of meat were among some of the items excavated. It was amazing how archaeologists were able to recover those artifacts. It is hard to imagine African Americans of that era dining on legs of lamb, instead of chomping on scraps left over from a slaughtered pig.

Kesiena Onosigho was the 2006 winner of the Nevada Historical Society Docent Council's scholarship. The scholarship is available to high school students, with the primary requirement being the submission of an essay on some aspect of Nevada history. Not only does the winning student receive $500, his or her essay is published in the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*. It is an honor for the *Quarterly* to publish Ms. Onosigho's winning essay, "The Importance of Virginia City's Boston Saloon."

Kesiena Onosigho is a 2006 graduate of Edward C. Reed High School in Sparks, Nevada, where she excelled academically. Ms. Onosigho has been active in the NAACP Youth Council, Teens Against Tobacco Use, and Sisters in Spirit Leadership Building. She is currently a freshman at Parsons, the New School for Design, in New York City, where she is studying fashion design.

The people are difficult to visualize since their appearance is not what would generally be expected. The customers were dressed in their best. Women often wore fancy beaded gowns. Amid the discovery of items that showed how the people were clothed was one of the first Tabasco bottles. This demonstrates how fresh and pioneering the saloon was. The locals could come to the Boston Saloon to drink the best liquor and eat the best meat in town. Who would have thought all of this would be available at an African-American-owned bar in the old Wild West?

Not only was the tavern an important center of commerce, recreation, and society for the African-American community of the time, but its discovery a century and a half later has affected our view of an ethnic group that had historically been plagued by prejudice and racism. It demonstrates that African Americans played a role in the expansion and development of the West. The idea of one saloon modifying an entire country's past is truly incredible. It is even more amazing to think it took place in Nevada.

It is wonderful to see such an enlightening reflection of this race, and the significant place that it holds in Nevada history.

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Book Reviews

Indian Reservations in the United States: Territory, Sovereignty, and Socioeconomic Change. By Klaus Frantz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999)

Indian reservations embody a series of profound paradoxes. Born as prisons that many Native Americans fought to avoid, they became homelands that later generations have struggled to preserve. Though plagued by poverty, unemployment, and other social ills, they remain bastions of tribal community, culture, and sovereignty. To the average non-Indian, they seem archaic and embarrassing, an uncomfortable reminder of past injustices or a glaring symbol of Indian people's "special rights." To the average Native American, they represent the promises made by the United States government and places where Indians still have some control over their own destinies. Klaus Frantz's book, *Indian Reservations in the United States*, surveys both the problems and possibilities faced by the tribes as they strive for a brighter future.

An Austrian by birth and a geographer by profession, Frantz became fascinated with Native Americans while studying and traveling in the United States during the 1970s. Unlike many Europeans, however, he does not romanticize Indian life and pays more attention to the present than to the past. The result is a clear-eyed, comprehensive overview of modern demographic and socioeconomic conditions on Indian reservations in the United States. Originally published in German for a general audience, the book has been translated and updated for the benefit of American readers. It draws heavily upon outdated census data and the author's fieldwork in the Southwest, which took place in the mid 1980s, but his cautious generalizations hold true for much of Indian Country today. Indeed, as Frantz points out in his conclusion, tribal gaming has not changed things as much as people might suspect.

He begins by noting that geographers, like historians, have been guilty of treating Native Americans "as if they had only a past, with no present and no future" (p. 2). The past has a powerful legacy, though, and the first portion of the book outlines the essential historical context. Chapter 2 summarizes the main phases of federal Indian policy, with particular emphasis on the erosion of the tribal land base, while chapter 3 explains the various procedures by which reservations have been established and the present permutations of land ownership. In chapter 4, Frantz presents a demographic portrait of modern Native America, noting the impossibility of precision due to flawed data and shifting definitions of "Indian." Chapter 5 examines the contemporary socioeconomic status of reservations and shows that, despite some improvements in recent

decades, Native Americans remain the most disadvantaged racial group in the United States. Scholars familiar with the current legal and historical literature on American Indians will find few surprises and several minor errors in these sections, but Frantz's numerous charts and tables make them quite useful for reference purposes.

The last half of the book explores the reasons for reservation underdevelopment and evaluates the present economic prospects in Indian Country. Chapter 6 analyzes the economic spirit of Indian peoples, meaning the value systems and other cultural factors that influence economic activities and attitudes. Based on the ideas of early German geographers such as Max Weber, who wrote of a "Protestant work ethic," Frantz's concept of an "economic spirit" hints of essentialism and deserves a more thorough, theoretically grounded discussion than it receives here. However, it may help to explain why some business enterprises have not fared well on reservations, and it certainly suggests that planners should consider a reservation's sociocultural environment before pursuing new economic ventures. Three of the four remaining chapters describe the successes and failures of the industries that have dominated most reservation economies; namely, mining, agriculture, forestry, and manufacturing. A separate chapter highlights the continuing battle over water rights in the arid West, while the epilogue briefly addresses the recent upsurge in Indian gaming. Although some tribes have leveraged their casino wealth into self-sufficiency, even prosperity, Frantz does not see gambling as a long-term solution to the economic problems confronting native people. Market saturation will ultimately deplete the "new buffalo," he predicts, and wise tribes will use gaming revenue to diversify their economies before that happens.

Frantz paints a sobering picture of continuing government paternalism, colonial exploitation, and economic hardship. There is more to modern Indian life, however, and he acknowledges that "social well-being and cultural vitality may in the end be less affected by economics than by communal will and cohesion" (p. 299). Unfortunately, readers obtain only the briefest glimpses of this communal will and cohesion amidst the litany of statistics. Aside from a few photographs included in the book, the social and cultural vitality of reservation life remains virtually invisible, but that is not surprising given the author's academic training and limited sojourns in the United States. While even social scientists may find the text slow going at times, it offers an informative introduction to a subject that both academics and the public have ignored for too long.

Andrew H. Fisher
Portland Community College

From Savages to Subjects: Missions in the History of the American Southwest. By Robert H. Jackson (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000)

In *From Savages to Subjects* Robert H. Jackson examines the history of the frontier mission complex—"a history of a well-designed system aimed at achieving very specific policy goals and the ways that native peoples responded to the mission program" (p. xi). This idea of focusing on the missions as part of Spanish policy is intriguing—unfortunately, Jackson does little with it.

As the subtitle suggests, Jackson looks at the mission system put in place by the Spanish in the region that is today's American Southwest. The book is a synthesis and very generally examines the development of the missions in northern Mexico, placing emphasis on the experience of the natives living in the missions. Jackson accomplishes this in five thematic chapters: the mission economy and its reliance on native labor; the social, cultural, and religious changes demanded by missionaries; resistance to the mission system by both mission and nonmission natives; reasons for the demographic collapse of the native population; and the end of the mission system (p. xi).

From Savages to Subjects begins with an outmoded premise—that all histories of the mission system are nostalgic and recount the acts of heroic friars. Jackson here is presumably referring to Herbert Bolton, who first brought attention to the field of borderlands history. This premise ignores much of the scholarship of the 1990s that deals with the interrelationship between the Spaniards and the natives, works by scholars Ramon Gutierrez and Lisbeth Haas, to name but two. This newer scholarship has moved light years beyond the Bolton credo of heroic Spaniards by focusing on the native perspective. It has been accepted and taught for more than a decade. Reference to this scholarship is also curiously missing from Jackson's bibliographic essay—the book contains no footnotes.

Nevertheless, *From Savages to Subjects* does a nice job of presenting an overview of mission history and of including the native perspective—albeit without referring to recent important works such as those named above. The chapter on social and cultural change is one of the most interesting. In it, Jackson documents the ways in which the Spaniards tried to convert the natives. As he notes, "the program of change developed in different ways in various frontier jurisdictions" (p. 57). For example, missionaries had success at drawing the Coahuiltecans into the Texas missions. As Jackson shows, however, the Coahuiltecans entered the missions on their own initiative, and not to be converted. This native group desired the security that the missions provided. They needed the stable food supply of the missions and the protection of the mission walls against their enemies. In California, on the other hand, the missionaries drew natives into their fold through the control of the water supply. Jackson thus demonstrates that natives were active agents of their destinies and entered missions in pursuit of their own interests.

The rate of cultural change among natives depended upon the size of the

tribe, as well as on the particular geographical location. According to Jackson, larger native groups experienced less Europeanization than smaller groups, who were more susceptible to the missionaries. Jackson devotes an entire chapter to modes of native resistance to the Spanish. He argues that natives resisted in order to retain their culture, which the Spanish systematically destroyed. The interesting part of this chapter is Jackson's discussion of differing types of resistance—active and passive, and primary and secondary. He defines primary resistance as the initial violent response of natives, and secondary resistance as occurring after indigenous groups had lived under mission rule for a long time. For example, in the Primeria Alta, resistance to the Spanish by mission Indians was manifested in flight, while at the same time, the Spanish had to defend themselves against raids on the mission by outside native groups. It is disappointing, however, that Jackson devotes a scant three paragraphs to perhaps the greatest display of active resistance on record—the Pueblo Revolt in New Mexico that drove the Spanish from the region for more than a decade. While *From Savages to Subjects* is a general overview, this omission is glaring.

Jackson's last chapter does a nice job of summing up the mission legacy. As he notes, the missions failed to create stable Indian communities, led to dramatically decreased native populations, and therefore failed to create loyal Catholic subjects. He does assert, however, that the missions did help the Spanish to colonize and control the frontier region and were important colonial institutions that helped to carry out colonial policy. Most important, Jackson effectively shows that the Indians were themselves active participants in mission history.

Although *From Savages to Subjects* offers no new interpretations or revelations regarding missions in the Southwest, it does provide a good overview of the native perspective of the mission system. The book is part of Sharpe's Latin American Realities Series aimed at an undergraduate audience, and would be a good choice for giving students a general idea of how the missions worked and their purpose from the Spanish perspective. Additionally, it provides ample opportunity to supplement the reading with more detailed lectures that would open up topics for class discussion.

Valerie Mendoza
Independent Scholar

Thomas Jefferson and the Rocky Mountains: Exploring the West from Monticello. By Donald Jackson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, Red River Books edition, 2002)

Before his death, more than a decade ago, Don Jackson was the dean of Lewis and Clark scholars, editor of *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, with Related Documents 1753-1854*, the collection of letters and documents that stimulated

a new generation of Lewis and Clark scholars to explore the natural history, geography, ethnography and ethnology, and other aspects of America's epic exploration. He was himself part of the revival of Lewis and Clark scholarship in ways other than his masterly documentary editing of *Letters*, and this current book—*Thomas Jefferson and the Rocky Mountains* (originally published in 1981)—represents one of his most important contributions. It was gratifying to see it released in a new paperback edition, in time for the national commemoration of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, and even more gratifying that the new publication included a foreword by James P. Ronda, one of the most prominent of contemporary Lewis and Clark scholars and one who recognizes Donald Jackson as his mentor.

Donald Jackson is more known for his documentary editorial work than for his independent authorship. This was his choice, as only a cursory reading of *Thomas Jefferson and the Rocky Mountains* will demonstrate, for he is a powerful and persuasive writer. The writing of this book—what he calls his "aspect book" related to Lewis and Clark—was a signal event in the study of geographical exploration and discovery. Answering a call voiced by the geographer John K. Wright nearly half a century earlier to learn more of the goals and objectives of explorers, Jackson subtitled his book "Exploring the West from Monticello," thereby placing Thomas Jefferson in his rightful place as the sponsor and intellectual architect of the expedition of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Ever the careful scholar with a discerning editor's eye, Don Jackson takes the documentary evidence from Jefferson's own correspondence and other sources to compile a perspective on Enlightenment exploration during the Age of Jefferson that is nearly as comprehensive as Jefferson's own. Perhaps because of his long career as an editor, there are places in *Thomas Jefferson and the Rocky Mountains* where, in the opinion of the reviewer, Jackson does not go far enough in identifying the ultimate sources of Jefferson's long fascination with the West and with an all-water route to the Pacific, and thence to Asia. For example, after laying out the many influences that Jefferson's father, his father's friends, and his schoolmaster had on the young Jefferson during his formative years in the Virginia Piedmont, Jackson concludes that these early influences, particularly those bearing on Jefferson's later image of a common-source area for western rivers, were unimportant. In my own "aspect book" on the expedition, I disagreed with Don on this point and still do. It is one of the few points of disagreement we had in a long and mutually productive friendship.

Beyond that mere quibble, there is little to argue about in Jackson's interpretation of Thomas Jefferson as the guiding spirit of American western exploration in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Particularly at the present, when Lewis and Clark have so firmly captured the nation's attention, it is often forgotten that Lewis and Clark were simply part of Jefferson's larger plan to explore western North America. While nearly half of Jackson's book deals with the preparation, planning, execution, and aftermath of the Lewis and Clark

journey, other Jefferson-era explorers such as William Dunbar and Thomas Freeman, Zebulon Montgomery Pike, Lisa's fur traders, and the Astorians also come into play, and their contributions to the filling-in of the blank spaces on the map of western North America are noted. Jefferson's exploratory goals and objectives were complex ones: He wished to locate a commercially feasible water route to the Pacific; he wished to consolidate the western Indian trade to move through the trading houses of Saint Louis and New York rather than those of Montreal or Santa Fe; he wished to extend American imperial control over the West beyond the bounds of the Louisiana Purchase. Saving the first of these goals, Jeffersonian exploration was largely successful—in no small measure as the consequence of Jefferson's view of the West from Monticello. For Lewis and Clark, for Dunbar, and Pike, and Lisa, and Wilson Price Hunt and Robert Stuart, exploration was an activity that took place "on the ground"—in the real world. For Jefferson, whose travels westward scarcely took him beyond the Shenandoah, the view of the West was a view of the imagination, a glimpse of the geography of hope. It is this view that Donald Jackson captures in this marvelous book.

John L. Allen
University of Wyoming

Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush: A Documentary History, 1849-1880. Edited by Ava F. Kahn (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002)

Jewish Life in the American West: Perspectives on Migration, Settlement, and Community. Edited by Ava F. Kahn (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2002)

The editor of both books under review is Ava Kahn, visiting scholar at the California Studies Center at the University of California, Berkeley. *Jewish Voices*, which includes 110 documents organized into twelve thematic chapters, is a model of scholarship and engaging narration. Kahn's opening chronology, along with an annotated introduction and historical overview provides a context for the sweep of primary sources documenting the experience of Jews in the California gold rush and during the subsequent establishment of social, cultural, and mercantile institutions. In addition, the volume includes three maps and fifty-three photographs, which—as with each of the written records—are carefully introduced and descriptively footnoted.

"Looking West" documents the movement of Jews out of central Europe through France and England to California. The voices of women, children, merchants, and rabbis reveal their thrills, uncertainties, hardships, and adventures. Sermons, diary entries, congregational minutes, newspaper articles,

advertisements, and even organizational constitutions are the sources used to demonstrate the institutional network of San Francisco, which came to be the largest Jewish city west of Cincinnati. Kahn makes no attempt to gloss over the divisions that plagued western Jewish life. San Francisco's Eureka Benevolent Society, for example, was in most respects a paradigm for similar organizations in the mining camps, but its exclusive use of the German language and its failure on at least two occasions to provide assistance to Jews of Polish origin were remnants of old European biases. A colorful voice of dissent was that of the caustic Isidor Choynski, who satirized his people's foibles and pilloried rabbis, mohels, and cantors for being too populous, under-skilled, and over-paid.

Most Jews earned their livings as merchants in the gold rush days, though a few tried their hand at mining, and nearly all accepted mining stock for its cash equivalent. An 1852 California statute permitting women to operate their own businesses emboldened Caroline Tannenwald of Placerville to publicize her "intention to carry on in my own name and on my own account the business of buying and selling and trading in Clothings dry goods and gold dust and of trading gennarlly. . . [*sic*]"(p. 259). A chapter on family life superbly links a set of first-hand accounts documenting courtship, marriage, birth, infant mortality, circumcision, childhood remembrances of work and play, and a remarkable account of Rebekah Kohut's life in a rabbinical household.

Life in mining towns of eastern California from Nevada City to Aurora included a commitment of most Jews to some level of religious observance under adverse physical conditions. Jews, however, were welcomed members and founding officers of Masonic and fraternal organizations, whose meeting halls were routinely used as temporary synagogues for worship. In the river supply towns of Stockton, Sacramento, and Marysville a more stable Jewish infrastructure facilitated the building of permanent synagogues. What was common to both mining and river towns was the immediate establishment of a benevolent society and a Jewish cemetery.

"The 'Mythical Jew' and the 'Jew Next Door'" opens with stereotypical accounts of thieving merchants and their "slop shops"—often penned by eastern outsiders bringing their own anti-Jewish biases to California. Local newspapers, like the Marysville *Daily Evening Record*, neutralized such attacks by routinely acknowledging Jews as law-abiding and hard-working citizens, with a reputation for assisting their less advantaged co-religionists. Rabbis Max Lilienthal and Isaac Meyer Wise were widely respected easterners commanding large national readerships. Their enthusiastic descriptions of Jewry's good health in California by the 1870s doubtless enticed even more Jews to migrate west. Their accounts make up the closing documents in this 550-page volume, to which Kahn has added a glossary of Jewish terms and an extensive bibliographical essay.

Jewish Life in the American West is a much slimmer, lavishly illustrated compendium of essays focusing on the ethnic interplay, enterprise, and unselfconscious

religious commitment to be found among western Jewish settlers. It includes descriptions and analysis of the Jewish experience from Washington to New Mexico and Colorado to the Pacific, during the period 1840 to 1920. James H. Nottage's foreword touchingly introduces the reader to Jewry in the West using children's letters penned to the *Sabbath Visitor*. Ava Kahn's introduction links the various essays and provides a summary of how western Jewry distinguished itself from its eastern and southern roots. She argues that California in particular proved to be a new Promised Land for Jews seeking both a national and new Jewish identity.

Hasia Diner's provocative essay, "American West, New York Jewish," is a historiographic piece exploring the bias of historians who have felt compelled to compare Jewry everywhere with life in New York City. Jewry in the West, Diner suggests, was not an extension of a Lower East Side experience, though she allows that Jews in the West behaved no differently from Jews in the East when it came to shaping institutions to maintain their Jewish identities. The common perception that New York represented the apotheosis of American Jewry also had its dark side. By the turn of the century, New York was considered a problem area because its heavily Jewish population and old European culture were catalysts for antisemitism. The removal of Jews from eastern cities, with financial support from Jacob Schiff, and channeling European Jews to Galveston away from eastern ports gave rise to a modern western diaspora.

Editor Kahn's own essay assumes the daunting task of reconstructing western Jewish history through the reminiscences of four Jewish women who, she contends, had a decidedly different experience from those who remained in crowded urban centers in the East. Those selected by Kahn to highlight the experience of Jewish women in the West were manor born, educated in Europe, and "well" married. They were extraordinary women and role models for Jewish women seeking a leadership role in society, but they were, regrettably, not representative of the work-a-day Jewish mother in most parts of the West.

William Toll's treatment of the Jewish merchant in the urban West is a masterpiece of analysis and descriptive anecdote. His characterization of Jews dominating the clothing, dry goods, tobacco and liquor businesses on the main street of Prescott, Arizona, applies as aptly to Virginia City or Reno in the early days. The mercantile Jewish presence in western towns was exemplified in Nevada.

> Arriving in Virginia City in 1880 at the railroad depot at D and Union Streets, a passenger would walk a block or two uphill along Union and past the Frederick House . . . to reach the commercial district that stretched two blocks north and south of Union along A, B, and C Streets. Here he would find Jews running saloons, barbershops, tailoring establishments, tobacco stores, and numerous clothing

> emporiums as well as Celia Goldman's lodging house at 102 North C Street (p. 99).

Toll's essay provides insightful commentary on such questions as, "How did these sons of Europe's pariahs manage to emerge as civic leaders in the new land?" (p. 85). One answer could be found in the network of familial connections from Europe to the American West Coast, which combined a line of supplies with the extension of liberal credit. Seven tables list the occupations, ages, genders, size of families, and places of birth of Jewish populations in Los Angeles, Portland, Albany (Oregon), Seattle, Virginia City, Carson City, and Reno in 1880. The comparisons are intriguing. Reno, the smallest of the selected towns, had the highest proportion of Jews, at 5.8 percent.

Ellen Eisenberg portrays the movement of eastern European Jews through a number of failed cooperative agricultural ventures and on to western urban centers. Many of these emigrants from Russia were ideologues in the Am Olam Movement who had the ultimate goal of socialist revolution. Some had the more modest purpose of demonstrating Jewish independence as farmers. The seventy-odd communities were not necessarily religious, but the extended family of Joseph Nudelman was observant. The Nudelman family's farming odyssey began in Odessa, Russia, in 1881 and led them to Canada, Colorado, North Dakota, California, and finally to Wellington, Nevada, in 1897. An extraordinary photograph accompanying Eisenberg's essay was taken about 1899 (not 1895). It depicts on horseback and gathered around their frame home thirty-eight members of the Nudelman, Shapiro, and Bloom families, who were among the capitalist remnants of the scuttled socialist venture in Nevada.

Moses Rischin, "the quintessential bicoastal American Jewish historian," closes with an afterword. He is particularly intrigued by Hasia Diner's analysis of the bipolar rhetoric according to which western Jews were allegedly more American and less Jewish than the New Yorkers. Noting recent museum mergers in the San Francisco Bay Area that promise to strengthen Jewish cultural consciousness, he wryly suggests that western Jews may make a claim to being more "Jewish" while New Yorkers may attempt to trump the West with its own brand of assimilation.

Jewish Life is a superbly edited collection of judiciously documented essays, which helps to offset the classical image of American Jews in the West as simply displaced eastern urbanites. There appear to have been lively dialogues among the authors about their respective theories and conclusions, resulting in an integration that makes these essays more than the sum of their parts.

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The Black Rock Desert. By William L. Fox and Mark Klett (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002)

This is a small book with large appeal. Although it contains a mere fifty-one pages of text and will take up no more than a quarter of an inch on your bookshelf, its subject, Nevada's Black Rock Desert, is a landscape of considerable proportion—more than four hundred square miles—that seems to attract people for a variety of reasons. In addition to the highly publicized Burning Man event, which now annually lures twenty-five thousand counterculture devotees for a week-long extravaganza, the Black Rock Desert captivates the attention of history buffs, rockhounds, archaeologists, golfers with a sense of whimsy, and even racecar drivers. It is also a place lived in and used by regular Nevada residents: ranchers, miners, Native Americans, and folks simply taking a shortcut from point A to point B.

The Black Rock Desert, named by explorer John C. Frémont in 1844, is a special place. Perhaps foremost among its qualities is an utterly flat terrain, the legacy of the Pleistocene Lake Lahontan. It is a classic playa, defined by geomorphologists as a dry lakebed in an interior drainage basin. As an ancient lake bottom whose accumulated sediments have been smoothed by water and wind, the Black Rock Desert can be a frightening experience to one venturing out on it; its seemingly lifeless expanse, described by Frémont as "forbidding." Later emigrant parties bound for California or Oregon called it "the death route." Contributing to this sense of vast landscape uniformity is the near absence of vegetation and humidity. The former accentuates the desert's billiard-table surface, while the latter influences optical perception. These are precisely the qualities that drew author William Fox and photographer Mark Klett to the Black Rock. According to Fox, this unique landscape imposes a "cognitive dissonance—the confounding of our perceptual expectations in an isotropic space, where features are uniformly distributed in all directions" (p. xiii).

Unlike Sessions Wheeler's popular *Nevada's Black Rock Desert* (1978), which is largely a cultural-historical treatment of the subject, Fox and Klett's approach is a study in environmental perception. It is, according to Fox, a "collection of collaborative meditations" (p. xiv). In that sense, the seventeen black-and-white photographs are integral to the text. Through the combined and complementary media of words and images, Fox and Klett explore their agenda: "the function of metaphor in space and time" (p. xiii). They employ the symbolic capability of metaphor because the Black Rock is a place that plays tricks with the senses, and is a landscape that seems to defy description.

The Black Rock Desert consists of eight short chapters, beginning and ending with essays entitled "Circumference" (with ellipses after and before indicating that the book has come full circle). In between the introduction and conclusion, each chapter—appropriately titled "Detritus," "Speed," "Panorama," "Surface," "Mirage," and "Sky"—takes up a particular thematic aspect of the Black Rock. The

introductory chapter provides essential physical and cultural description, but Fox writes that these facts "are only a circumference around the body of metaphors necessary for us to describe, or even function in, such an extreme environment" (p. 6). "Detritus," as the name suggests, describes the variety of material culture—World War II vintage shell casings, beer-bottle fragments from the 1930s, traces of wagon trains long past, and prehistoric artifacts many thousands of years old—still to be found in arrested decay in and around the playa. The third chapter explores "Speed"; the Black Rock Desert has been lethal to slow-moving ox-drawn wagons, as well as to bicyclists traveling at break-neck velocity. It is also the place where a jet-propelled car broke the sound barrier in 1997 (achieving 763 mph). In "Panorama," Fox and Klett grapple with the Herculean task of conveying a sense of space, and suggest that letters and lens can only approximate what is best captured by panoramic vista. Accordingly, they cite Friedrich von Egloffstein's 1854 railroad-survey drawing, which depicts more than eighty miles of landscape along an east-west transect. "Surface" describes the playa as a tabula rasa, while "Mirage" explains the physics and feelings of optical illusion. Klett's photographs of driving by a GPS navigational device and a distant truck floating above the horizon are images that effectively capture the expanse and visual conundrum of the Black Rock. The penultimate chapter, "Sky," describes the enormous vault overhead by day and night, as well as the sensation from the middle of the playa that you can actually see the curvature of the earth (a physical impossibility below the stratosphere). The book concludes by noting that "Great spaces open up time to us; the more uniform the landscape, the more we are forced by our nature to perceive time" (p. 72).

It is evident that Fox and Klett are captivated by the awe-inspiring landscape of the Black Rock Desert. In fact, Fox mentions a theoretical correlation between deserts and the origins of the world's great monotheistic religions, echoing the environmental determinism of geographer Ellen Churchill Semple. He states, "Isotropic spaces provide us with so little to process from the exterior environment that we focus on the interior, which may be one reason why the world's monotheisms are traditionally considered to have arisen in the desert" (p. 35). This is not a verbatim report of Semple's explanation, initially expressed in 1911, and certainly modern social scientists have offered alternatives (e.g., the patriarchal social structure of desert nomads), but it is clear that for Fox and Klett there is something spiritual about the Black Rock Desert. The only error that came to the attention of this reviewer is a picture caption that refers to a handful of prehistoric lithic flakes as "lithic sherds" (p. 17); in archaeological parlance, a sherd is a term reserved for a fragment of pottery. Nevertheless, *The Black Rock Desert* is a good meditation. Perhaps its most important message is that this "cognitive viewshed" (p. 51), which is largely public land regulated by the Bureau of Land Management, should be preserved for the enjoyment and inspiration of future generations.

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American Towns: An Interpretive History. By David J. Russo (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 2001)

David Russo has written an informative survey of American towns that stretches from the seventeenth century, when English colonists laid out our nation's first settlements, to the present. Of particular value are the first two chapters on town founding and siting, where the author distinguishes among different types of urban places, including the agricultural-service village, the administrative center, and the mill town. He explains that while some places were compact entities, others, especially in Puritan New England, were more extended communities with dispersed farm houses often a mile or more from the meeting-house and commons. As John Reps has noted, these Puritan villages resembled the layout of many Mormon communities in Utah two centuries later. *American Towns* supplies detailed maps of local structures to demonstrate how fledgling nuclei with just a few buildings in the 1600s grew into substantial places by the time of the American Revolution. Later chapters discuss education, prohibition, divorce, women's rights, and myriad other themes. Russo organizes them under the broad categories of political, economic, social, and cultural history, and uses towns from all over the United States as examples.

Although Russo is careful to place towns in their proper regional contexts, western readers will be somewhat disappointed by the coverage allotted to their section. Russo's emphasis is heavily eastern. To some extent, this is understandable, given the relatively late settlement of the West in American history and his own eastern background. However, while he cites the works of John Reps, Timothy Mahoney, Gilbert Hinojosa, and other significant scholars, there are too many important western town monographs and articles missing from his bibliography, and their absence is obvious in the text. For example, the author devotes a series of paragraphs to the tavern, but, lacking the insights of Thomas Noel's fine volume on the role of saloons in early Denver, Russo minimizes their political dimension and largely ignores how they functioned as social, cultural, ethnic institutions. Even if one might conclude that nineteenth-century Denver was more of a city than a town, Noel's findings are still valid for Austin, Eureka, and dozens of small railroad and mining towns on the western frontier. A key point that Russell Elliott makes in his early study of Tonopah, Goldfield, and Rhyolite is that saloons functioned as business centers where prospectors often met with prospective investors to close deals that sometimes resulted in major boosts for the local economy.

Part of the problem lies in the lack of space allocated for each subject. Mining, for instance, is relegated to less than three pages, with too little text devoted to the extractive West. Twentieth-century politics, no small subject itself, gets much the same treatment: barely six pages. Contributing to the problem is the author's overly ambitious attempt to cover every possible topic relating to American towns, with the experience of one town often monolithically representing them all. The

resulting product is an over-generalized, under-theorized, and occasionally vague manuscript in which the narrative often jerks quickly from one subject to the next. Despite its subtitle, the book is more of a survey than an interpretive study. Indeed, urban and social historians will discover little that is new in the book. Even though the author presents the findings of many scholars, he does not suggest new directions for research.

Still, Russo's volume makes a contribution. While incomplete, the bibliography is nevertheless extensive, and the narrative is well documented. In addition, the maps and graphics are instructive and highlight themes in the text. The book's clear prose and organization make it an informative work on American town development for students and the reading public.

Eugene P. Moehring
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A Liberal Conscience, The Oral History of Ralph Denton, Nevadan. By Ralph L. Denton and Michael S. Green (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 2001)

Ralph Denton was born in 1925 in Caliente, Nevada. Small town Nevada and Denton's family helped shape his values. Alluding to his upbringing, he notes in this oral autobiography, "The one thing I never lacked for was love in my family: love and the willingness to sacrifice for each other" (p. 31). Both parents were politically minded and staunch Democrats. Although the family was poor, Denton's memories of growing up in Caliente are almost idyllic. "I thought Caliente was the most wonderful place in the world, and I felt sorry for every kid who didn't live there" (p. 34).

During World War II, Denton saw stateside service in the army. After the war, he entered law school at American University. He soon came under the patronage of Nevada's powerful United States senator, Pat McCarran, who gave Denton the opportunity to complete law school; in turn, Denton gave the senator his full trust and loyalty. In some of this history's best chapters, Denton portrays McCarran as an admirable figure. "He was down to earth, decent, good" (p. 103). "He was a strong-willed man, an emotional man. I will always be grateful to him for everything he did for me" (p. 111). He admires the senator's independence, yet his observations are not entirely blinkered. Even while working for McCarran, Denton despised Senator Joseph McCarthy and his methods, and couldn't understand McCarran's support for him. But in the final analysis, Denton is grateful for the help and paternal interest that the senator gave him at this formative period of his life.

After passing the bar, Denton moved to Elko, serving as an assistant district

attorney. At the time, the district attorney was his good friend Grant Sawyer, who also had worked in McCarran's office. Denton enjoyed his stay in Elko, although, as a liberal Democrat, he felt rather at odds with that conservative community. Eventually he decided to leave Elko—for Las Vegas. Commenting on why he chose Las Vegas over Reno, Denton declares: "I loved Reno . . . just loved it; but Las Vegas is a young man's town. You're accepted at face value. You're not going to confront an established hierarchy. Opportunity is here for everybody. Not to say that isn't true in Elko or Reno but both of those towns have a core of old-time salt-of-the-earth people who have fairly tight control. Las Vegas still is open" (p. 146).

When Sawyer successfully campaigned for governor in 1958, Denton served as one of his closest advisers. During Sawyer's eight years in office, Denton remained his friend and confidante. In 1964 and 1966, Denton challenged incumbent congressman Walter Baring in the Democratic primary, and in both races narrowly lost. Denton does not obfuscate his beliefs that he was too liberal to be nominated, although, if he had won, he probably (unlike Baring) would have made a first-class representative for the state. The two defeats effectively ended Denton's political career and, although he continued to be politically involved, he focused on his legal practice in Las Vegas.

So, what kind of man was—and is—Ralph Denton, or at least what type of character emerges from this oral history? The author gives a hint when he describes what he thinks an ideal education should achieve. "I went to law school. That's not what I think of as a classical or liberal education. I see an educated man as able to think logically, make good choices in society—who he votes for, what causes he supports, what political and philosophical views he adopts, are based upon his power to think, his ethical standards, his education" (p. 7). His deep sense of integrity defines Denton. He believes in loyalty, as his admiration for McCarran demonstrates. He believes in honesty. "I've always believed if a man's word is no good, as my father used to say, nothing about him's any good" (p. 338). He believes that holding public office is a public trust. "I remember the phrase my father always used: when you're dealing with the public's money, you must be as clean as an angel's drawers" (p. 256). He is, as this oral history's title suggests, "a liberal conscience" and, for example, fought for civil rights when it was quite unfashionable to do so. He believes in the full extension of constitutional rights to all citizens, no matter how culpable the criminal may be. And he is very proud of his profession and intensely involved in his activities as a lawyer. Nor has he seemed inordinately ambitious, either for political power or for wealth. He is, in short, a very fine public citizen.

One of the most appealing things about Denton is his wonderful sense of humor and ability to laugh at himself. (He originally suggested that this book should be entitled *Memoirs of a Two-Time Loser.*) There is a happy feel to this memoir. Ralph Denton seems to know who he is and is comfortable with it.

This history is an amazingly rich source of material for anyone interested in the Nevada political scene and the legal profession. Denton seems to know everyone and is an excellent raconteur. Perhaps the personalities best covered include McCarran, Sawyer, and Hank Greenspun, and he gives new information and insights about these important players on the Nevada scene. He tends to be rather generous in his assessments of others, acknowledging the foibles of human nature, although there are a few exceptions to this generosity. He is rather unusual in being quite knowledgeable about and empathetic to both small-county Nevada *and* Las Vegas.

This oral autobiography is the outgrowth of a transcript of more than two thousand pages from fifty-seven hours of interviews by Michael S. Green. The transcript was edited down to the present published form. The Oral History Program has done its usual fine job of producing this important history. Green has contributed an illuminating, sensitive introduction, and the result is a highly readable, significant contribution to our knowledge of Nevada's political and legal history.

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Diné: A History of the Navajos. By Peter Iverson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002)

"For Our Navajo People": Diné Letters, Speeches, and Petitions, 1900-1960. By Peter Iverson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002)

With a population of approximately 290,000 people, the Navajos—Diné—form the largest Indian nation in the United States, and it is not surprising that they have been the subject of a number of scholarly publications. Peter Iverson's *Diné: A History of the Navajos* and its sister publication *"For Our Navajo People": Diné Letters, Speeches, and Petitions, 1900-1960* are the latest and arguably the best works to come out in recent years. The first is a textbook that provides a synthesis of Navajo history from ancient times to the present. The second volume is a collection of documents covering part of the material discussed in the textbook.

In *Diné: A History of the Navajos,* Iverson identifies four major themes in Navajo history: defense and survival, adaptation and incorporation, expansion and prosperity, identity, and continuation. He skillfully weaves these themes into the narrative. Despite arguments by scholars, the Diné claim that they have always lived in Diné Bikéyah, as they call their home in the Southwest. They also insist that they are the descendents of the Anasazi. Iverson sees these claims as examples of Navajo adaptation and incorporation of new cultural elements. This same process

occurred when the Diné came into contact with the Spanish, who introduced horses, sheep, cattle, and goats to the people. By the time the United States arrived in 1846, livestock, weaving, and silversmithing had become the central features of Navajo culture. The confrontation between the United States and the Diné culminated in the infamous Long Walk of the Navajos. According to Iverson, the trauma of their removal to the Bosque Redondo and the treaty of 1868, which allowed their return to Diné Bikéyah, were defining moments in Navajo history. Both created a strong sense of identity among the Navajos. Iverson contends that the 1868 treaty laid the foundation of modern Navajo society.

The decades following the return to Diné Bikéyah inaugurated an era of expansion and social and cultural revitalization. On several occasions the federal government enlarged the Navajo reservation. However, in 1882 the government also granted a large section of Navajo land to the Hopis, causing a bitter dispute between the two nations that was not settled until the mid 1980s. After the turn of the century, the Diné faced a number of problems. Overgrazing by livestock threatened to turn much of the land into desert. Although they successfully resisted allotment, the Diné soon faced pressures from oil companies that were eyeing the rich oil reserves on Navajo land. To protect their tribal interests the Diné organized the Navajo Tribal Council in 1923, which brought together a group of influential men from all parts of the Navajo country. According to Iverson, the creation of the Navajo Tribal Council was another important step toward tribal unity and self-determination.

John Collier's Indian New Deal and especially the traumatic effects of the Navajo livestock-reduction program receive ample attention. Ignoring the social and cultural importance of livestock ownership among the Diné, Collier's reduction program created great suspicion toward the federal government. As Iverson points out, the opposition to the stock reduction program "increased a sense of community solidarity by emphasizing a common grievance and promoting a kind of siege mentality" (p. 167). Not surprisingly, the Navajos rejected the Indian Reorganization Act in 1935.

World War II brought about a new awareness and a drive toward self-determination among the Navajos. Returning Navajo servicemen demanded their civil rights, including the right to vote. The decades after the war witnessed the steady development of Navajo society, including improved hospitals and educational facilities, economic growth, and political expansion. Navajo culture, fueled in part by tourism and the sale of Diné arts and crafts, flourished. But these developments also had unintended consequences. Perhaps the most serious of these was political corruption, epitomized by the rise and fall of Peter MacDonald as chairman of the Navajo Nation. Economic development also made the Navajos more vulnerable to global market forces, and some voices raise their concern about the increasing commodification of traditional arts and crafts as a result of tourism.

In his conclusion, Iverson points out that, despite concerns for the future, the Diné are proud of their achievements. They not only survived Spanish, Mexican, and American conquest, but they quickly adapted to new circumstances and were

able to expand their land base. Today, the Diné face new challenges with the confidence of a people who have endured and survived centuries of domination.

Iverson's *Diné: A History of the Navajos* echoes many of the themes the author addressed in his earlier work, *The Navajo Nation* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1981). There are, however, significant differences between these two books. Most conspicuous is Iverson's revision of Peter MacDonald's tenure as chairman of the Navajo Nation during 1970-1982 and 1986-1989, which ended with McDonald's removal from office for his involvement in a number of scandals. MacDonald eventually served seven years in prison for fraud. In light of the revelations of the MacDonald administrations, it is not surprising that Iverson strikes a different tone in this volume.

In *"For Our Navajo People": Diné Letters, Speeches, and Petitions, 1900-1960,* Iverson presents a number of documents that illuminate many of the issues addressed in *Diné: A History of the Navajos.* According to Iverson, the period between 1900 and 1960 was the time in which the foundation of the modern Navajo Nation was established. This seems to contradict his statement in the textbook in which he claims that it was the 1868 treaty that laid the foundation of modern Navajo society. Despite such minor oversights, this collection serves reasonably well as a companion to the textbook. It provides many interesting excursions into subjects such as land, community, "education," rights, government, and identity. Almost none of the documents has been published before. Unfortunately, the author chose not to include source material for the period after 1960, which would have made the collection more complete and up-to-date. As a result, in its current form the volume does not stand well on its own. Those unfamiliar with Navajo history are advised to read the textbook first.

Taken together, these books form a welcome addition to the literature on the Diné. They provide insights into some of the historical as well as contemporary issues facing the Navajo people. The textbook, in particular, serves as an excellent guide for readers interested in the history of the largest Indian nation in North America.

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The Politics of Fieldwork: Research in an American Concentration Camp. By Lane Ryo Hirabayashi (Tucson:University of Arizona Press, 2001)

Professor Hirabayashi has written a thought-provoking biographical reconstruction of a Japanese-American (Nisei) ethnographer, Tamie Tsuchiyama, who was assigned to the Colorado River Relocation Center at Poston, Arizona, from 1942 to 1944. Acknowledging the limitations of his data, Hirabayashi has done an excellent job in portraying Tsuchiyama's experience by reviewing and putting into context several field reports and a suite of unpublished letters between Tsuchiyama and Professor Dorothy Swain Thomas (University of California, Berkeley), her employer and the director of the privately funded Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study (JERS). Tsuchiyama was ABD—"all but dissertation"—while studying dislocated Japanese at Poston, one of several war relocation camps around the West included in the JERS study. Ahead of her time, Tsuchiyama went on to become the first Asian-American woman to earn a doctorate in anthropology at Berkeley. Written after Tsuchiyama's death, the book relies heavily on her sister and former colleagues in presenting insights into Tsuchiyama's character, motivations, and the factors that influenced her decision to leave her JERS position prematurely, and also to change her professional direction.

In recounting Tsuchiyama's story beneath a domestic wartime umbrella, Hirabayashi raises numerous ethical issues, including that involved in the use, by American scholars, of Japanese and Japanese-American research assistants to infiltrate and collect data on mundane, as well as political and sometimes subversive, activities at Poston. Despite her advanced training and fluency in Japanese, Tsuchiyama was ill prepared for the mission ahead. The internees were a non-homogenous group that included Japanese immigrants, *Issei*, often rural dwellers and sometimes Buddhists, and the American-born Japanese, *Nisei*, who were usually more urban and sometimes members of the Christian faith. Some were citizens, loyal to the United States, while others supported the Japanese cause. Citing a wartime mentality, and acknowledging the absence of models that could be drawn from, the author makes clear that the clandestine form of participant observation practiced by Tsuchiyama would be considered unethical by the professional standards that guide cultural anthropologists today. Tsuchiyama's letters do not hide her constant fear of being labeled as an *inu*, or spy for the United States government. She complicated her situation by briefly accepting a second position at Poston for the Bureau of Sociological Research (BSR), which took time away from her JERS research and required that much of her data be shared with her two employers. Working within an unstructured research framework, Tsuchiyama was directed to collect any and all information on "enforced mass migration." The constant political tensions and the non-stop workload resulted in her

growing sense of professional inadequacy.

In addition to precarious working conditions and the excessive summer heat, there were many other factors that complicated her mission. Noting a change in her attitude over time, Hirabayashi sensed Tsuchiyama's withdrawal, which he attributes to her fieldworker position, which lasted far longer than was optimal under the circumstances. Born in Hawaii and reared with American views, Tsuchiyama had difficulty gaining the trust of Poston's political figures, particularly the older Japanese Issei internees. Her impatience and the lack of common ground between them made it extremely difficult for her to get the inside information that she sought. In her desperation, she began to rely on an old family friend and "one of the two most political figures in camp," Richard Nishimoto, whom she refers to in her reports as X. Following a high-profile strike, Tsuchiyama worked vicariously through X to gain inside information on the political intrigue and dynamics that led up to the well-publicized event. Despite the ethical issues created by the roundabout methods that she used, Professor Thomas soon placed X on the JERS payroll as Tsuchiyama's assistant. In order to maintain his political clout, X concealed his JERS affiliation from his cohorts while at Poston. Perhaps somewhat downplayed by the author is the fact that Tsuchiyama and her married assistant became very close. Based on the limited personal information provided, it is hard to assess how serious the relationship became, although Hirabayashi hints that X's wife learned of the situation at some point. How this relationship may have affected Tsuchiyama's working relationship with X and the families in her circle at Poston may never be fully known.

As the job continued to take its toll on Tsuchiyama, her performance and the quality of her periodic reports to JERS apparently suffered. After granting Tsuchiyama leave to rest and catch up on her backlog of writing, Professor Thomas began to rely more on X, who filled in during his mentor's absence. Subsequent letters between Tsuchiyama and Thomas are less than congenial. When Thomas urged Tsuchiyama to rewrite a recent report, calling it inadequate and below her capabilities, she offers her resignation under protest. Although Tsuchiyama eventually finished her doctorate at Berkeley, neither she nor X ever published their data and Tsuchiyama never landed an academic position.

Hirabayashi concludes by questioning the reliability of the unpublished data because of the problematic methodology, and re-emphasizes the serious ethical issues created by senior Euroamerican scholars who, during the course of conducting "colonial science," used junior fieldworkers, particularly "natives," to gather data for their programs. He contends that the situation at Poston and other war relocation camps led to the changes in professional and ethical responsibilities, particularly related to disclosure and the voluntary and confidential basis for participation, embraced by ethnographers today.

This book is a must-read for anyone interested in this tragic, albeit fascinating, episode in domestic wartime history. It not only tells the story of a Japa-

nese-American woman, in an unprecedented situation, who failed to achieve her dreams, but also describes the shortcomings and lessons learned by a rather young and evolving discipline. The involvement of several "big names" during UC Berkeley's days in the anthropological forefront, including Robert Lowie (Tsuchiyama's primary advisor), Alfred Kroeber, and Paul Radin, add to the book's intrigue. Drawings of daily activities and situations at the camp made by a Japanese internee are wisely included to help to set the scene. The author provides more than ample information on various unpublished archival sources, an appendix with selected letters between Tsuchiyama and Thomas, and excerpts from some of Tsuchiyama's field reports for those of us who, by now, would like to know more.

Renee Corona Kolvet
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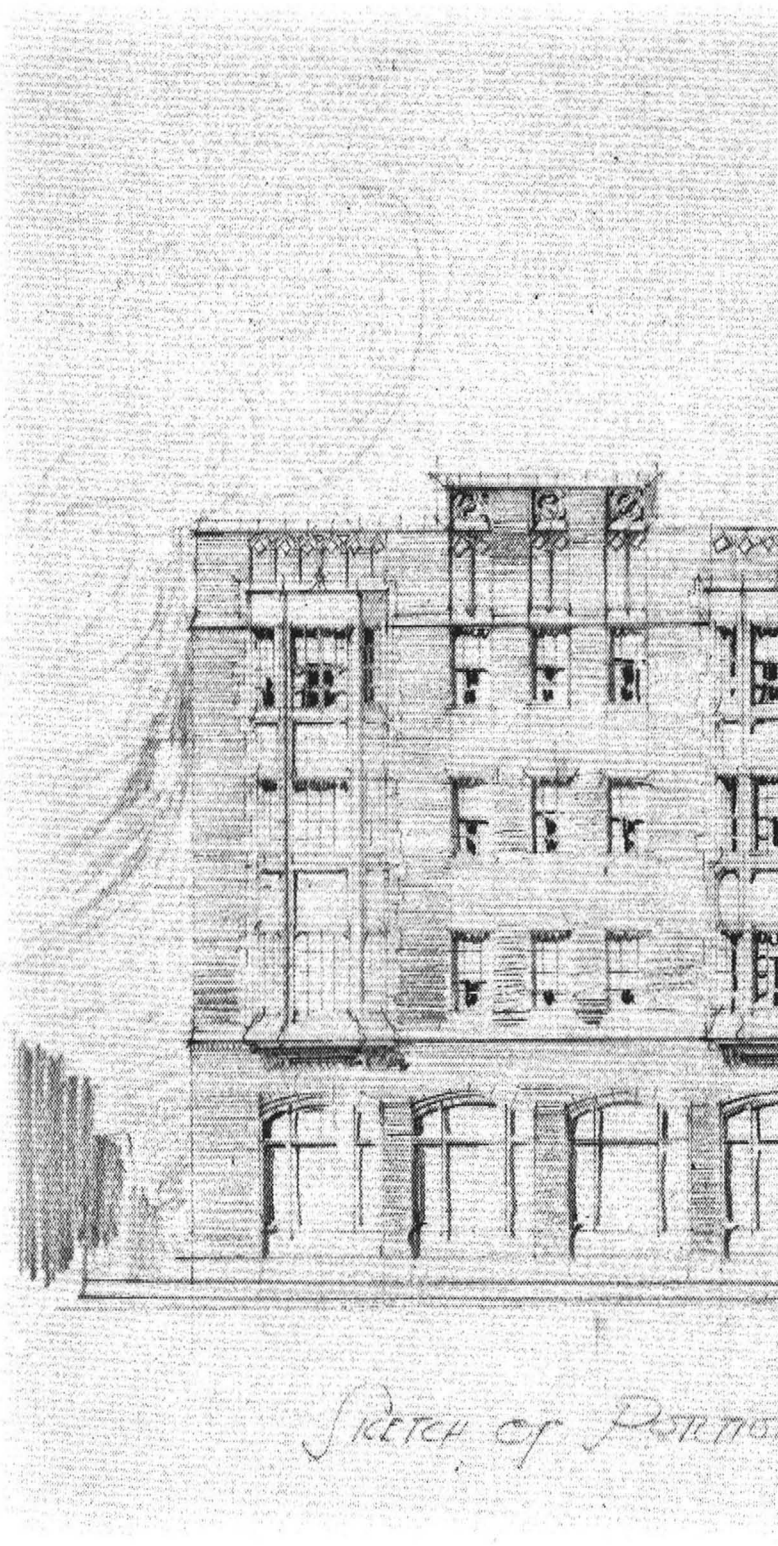
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