

Chapter 2

ARCHITECTURAL DERIVATIONS OF PANAMA-CALIFORNIA EXPOSITION BUILDINGS

Though most architects do not like to admit they borrow details from other buildings, they frequently do. This practice was even more prevalent in the early part of the 20th century when many architects visited and studied in Europe. It was inevitable that exposition architecture would reflect a vast amount of accumulated knowledge, for architects did not have the time nor inclination to design original and innovative buildings for temporary purposes.

In newspaper and magazine accounts, Director of Works Frank P. Allen, Jr. boasted he was responsible for the ground plan and design of buildings for the Panama-California Exposition, except for the Organ Pavilion and the California Quadrangle. This claim infuriated consulting architect Bertram Goodhue, as shown by his correspondence on file in the Avery Library of Columbia University. The determination of responsibility was important because on it hinged the assignment of future commissions. Carleton M. Winslow, Goodhue's assistant, maintained that Goodhue designed the permanent California Quadrangle, and that he (Winslow) designed some of the temporary buildings, Allen the others.

The following attributions are offered to appease the curiosity of readers who may be interested in such matters.

Carleton M. Winslow designed the Mission-style Administration, Indian Arts, and Kansas Buildings; the Spanish-Renaissance style Science and Education Building; the Spanish-Plateresque style Home Economy Building; the hybrid Persian-functional style Botanical Building; the Mexican-Churrigueresque style Varied Industries and Food Products Building; the Baroque-style corner entrances to arcades; and the Neo-Classical-style Seal of the City of San Diego on the crown of the arch of the West Gate.(1)



The Southern California Counties Building, a massive structure at the northeast end of the Prado axis, was a collaborative effort of Bertram G. Goodhue, Carleton M. Winslow and C. L. Wilson, from the Southern California Counties Commission. Goodhue's involvement emerged from a casual sketch during an infrequent visit to the Exposition site. Due to this sketch the building possessed an undulating entablature, dual towers topped by domes in starburst designs, and a forecourt from whose north side baroque ornament blossomed from second story windows. Laying aside his dislike of the bombast on other temporary buildings, Professor of Decorative Design Eugen Neuhaus praised the Southern California Counties Building, unaware that details he admired stemmed from the monastery cloister of *San Agustin* (Municipal Palace) in Queretaro.(2)

For reasons known only to him, Allen neglected to say that the John Simpson Construction Company built the Southern California Counties Building.(3) Similarly, the William Wurster Construction Company built the Spreckels Organ Pavilion and California Quadrangle buildings. As firms outside Panama-California Exposition (and Frank P. Allen) control built these projects, Palethorpe, McBride and Probert did not include them in their Pre-Exposition [Auditing] Report.(4)

Winslow was a talented decorator who worked best when his designs came from his imagination rather than from copybooks. The allegorical tableau on the east side of the Varied Industries Building, the tablet in honor of Father Serra on the apse end of the Food Products Building, and the geometric shapes on the patio tower of the Science and Education Building displayed his abilities.

Henry L. Schmohl supervised a crew of twenty six who modeled the ornament after Winslow's drawings before they cast it in glue molds, using a medium of plaster and hemp fiber.(5) Bruce Kamerling asserted that Henry Schmohl's better-known brother Fred C. Schmohl, who listed his occupation as "modeler," was on the grounds.(6) If so, he must have played a significant role in the choice of ornament.

Frank P. Allen, Jr. designed the Roman-aqueduct style Cabrillo Bridge, the Neo-Classical style pergolas in the Montezuma and Botanical Gardens, the Romanesque colonnade between the Foreign Arts Building and the Commerce and Industries Building, the Italian-Renaissance Sacramento Valley Building, the Mexican-Churrigueresque San Joaquin Valley Building, and the Mission-style Montana Building.

Cabrillo Bridge does not resemble the narrow and soaring bridge that spans the *Tajo* (ravine) at Ronda, Spain,(7) as has been alleged. It does, however, echo the plain, functional massing of any number of surviving Roman aqueducts in Europe. Architect Allen supplied the design for the bridge and Thomas B Hunter the engineering. Hunter also played a prominent role in the creation of the skeleton of the Botanical Building with Winslow as designer. Director of Works Allen offered suggestions, but he was not the principal agent. The open-iron frame of the Umbracle in Barcelona, built 1883-1884, has been mentioned as an inspiration for the Botanical Building, both buildings being conservatories with wood laths or louvers in their interstices. Since documentation does not exist to back up this claim, it is more likely that Winslow and Hunter knew of open-work, iron-frame buildings closer to home, such as the Bird Cage erected in 1904 by the Smithsonian Institution for the Louisiana-Purchase Exposition, today the oldest structure in the Saint Louis Zoo.(8)

Harrison Albright, architect for John D. Spreckels, designed the Neo-Classical style Organ Pavilion with a great arch in the center and curving arcades at the sides. He covered the exterior with rosettes, stars, satyr heads,

floral sprays, and musical motifs. The arcade served as a vantage from which to view the San Diego shoreline and harbor and distant islands and ocean.(9) The hemi-spherical shape of the Pavilion was conventional and its ornament academic.

Quayle Brothers and Cressey, San Diego architects, designed a sedate Neo-Classical style Salt Lake and Union Pacific Building to the east of the Organ Pavilion.(10) Its austere style was incompatible with the playful Spanish-Mexican character of the rest of the Exposition.

The introduction of many Neo-Classical buildings and features by Allen, Albright, and the Quayle Brothers shows that Bertram Goodhue's power to impose a uniform architectural style had been eclipsed. His instruction to Winslow to stop cooperating with Allen was the most dramatic expression of his disillusionment.(11)

A. F. Heide designed the Mission-style Washington State Building,(12) John Fetzer the Spanish-Renaissance style Utah Building,(13) and Fred de Longchamp the Italian-Renaissance style Nevada Building.(14) All three buildings display a carefree spirit. Isaac Hamilton Rapp used the plan and elevation of the Mission compound of San Estevan at Acoma and open balconies, banisters, doors, windows and projecting rafters (vigas) from the Mission compound of San Buenaventura at Cochiti as sources for the autochthonous New Mexico Building, the most innovative of the state buildings.(15)

Winslow gave Allen credit for designing buildings not attributed to other architects. Winslow and Allen admitted they took details from other buildings, Winslow more openly and Allen more reticently.



Winslow attributed a tower on the Indian Arts Building to towers in Puebla and the east facade of the same building to the *Sanctuary of Guadalupe* in Guadalajara, both in Mexico; a tower on the Science and Education Building to Moorish sources and its east facade to the *Church of San Francisco* in Puebla; the west entrance of the Home Economy Building to the *Palace of the Counts of Heras* in Mexico City; and the southwest corner tower to the *Palace of the Count of Monterey* in Salamanca, Spain; the west facade of the Foreign Arts Building to the *Hospital of Santa Cruz* in Toledo, Spain; the upper balcony of the south side of the Varied Industries Building to sources in Queretaro, Mexico; and the double arcade on the north side of the patio in the Southern California Counties Building to the *Convent of San Agustin* in Queretaro.(15) (A copy of the façade of the *Hospital of Santa Cruz* 6.was also replicated at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco in 1915.)



Science & Education Building

Photographs of buildings in Mexico were obtainable in Sylvester Baxter's ten-volume study of the Spanish-Colonial architecture of Mexico. (Indeed, a selection of these photographs was on exhibit in the lower level of the Fine Arts Gallery.) Photographs and drawings of buildings in Spain were obtainable in contemporary books and magazines as well as from photographs taken in Spain by tourists.(17)

San Diego historian Richard Pourade gave the source of the tower on the Indian Arts Building as a tower on the Church of Santa Catarina in Puebla.(18) Pourade did not reveal his sources; however, he found many of them—but not all—in Baxter's book.

Winslow probably got his ideas from Goodhue except for his plans for the High-Renaissance apse and Early-Renaissance arcade on the west side of the Food Products Building. These much-praised features undoubtedly came from Winslow's recollections of his sojourn in Italy.(19) They were not reproduced when the building was rebuilt as the Casa del Prado in 1970-1971. Samuel Hamill, consulting architect for this project, told this writer he was sick at the time; otherwise, he would have fought for their inclusion.

Finding Allen's sources is not easy. His most explicit account of the Exposition summarized the history of architecture in Spain and its colonies

from the time of the Moors, but said little about buildings in Balboa Park.(20) Winslow drew the curtains back slightly when he attributed the Sacramento Valley Building to municipal buildings in Verona; the cornice of the Commerce and Industries Building to the Town Hall in Palma, Mallorca; and the San Joaquin Valley Building to civic buildings in Mexico City.

Pourade thought the model for the Sacramento Valley Building was the *Loggia del Consiglio* in Verona.(21) Both buildings have deep porches and upper and lower levels; otherwise, they are different.



Eugen Neuhaus thought the Sacramento Valley Building "in its general features" resembled the Government Palace at Oaxaca, Mexico.(22) The lower level arcades of the lateral wings of the palace at Oaxaca relate to their entablatures and finials in a manner similar to that of the Sacramento Valley Building. However, decorations and proportions are different. Most likely Allen derived the building from a generic idea of what a High-Renaissance civic building looked like without being able to trace the building to a specific source.

Allen may have derived the filigree covering the pillars and entablatures on the Sacramento Valley Building from the stucco relief on the

grand staircase of the National Conservatory of Music in Mexico City, a picture of which is reproduced in Baxter's book. On the hand, artistic plasterer H. L. Schmohl, who oversaw ornamental work on the buildings, may have talked him into it.(23)

The Sacramento Valley Building's symmetrical appearance, its location at the head of the Plaza de Panama, its wedding cake ornament, and its stepped platform gave it a commanding presence. The loss of this festive building and of the Science and Education Building and the Home Economy Building that flanked it to right and left have disrupted the harmonious architectural and light-hearted character that in 1915 pervaded the Plaza de Panama.



Home Economy Building

Allen used Baxter's book as the source for his copy of the facade on the *Casa de Don Tomas Lopez de Ecala* in Queretaro on the two north pavilions of the Commerce and Industries Building. As an act of courtesy, Winslow did not divulge Allen's tracing of detail. The building in Queretaro has a rococo grace. Connoisseurs of Mexican architecture have praised its wrought-iron balconies.(24) In Balboa Park robust kneeling amazons, who hold up the eaves, overshadow details "borrowed" from the *Casa de Ecala*.

Allen transferred panels on the eaves and cornices of the Town Hall in Palma, Mallorca to the Commerce and Industries Building, another case of slavish copying. Blue, red, green and gold accents highlighted details. The

idea probably came from *Renaissance Architecture and Ornament in Spain*, by Andrew Noble Prentice, published in 1893.(25)

Artisans working under Henry L. Schmohl modeled the nubile amazons on the Commerce and Industries Building. These buxom nudes were reminiscent of generously endowed—but fully clothed—matrons who do similar work on the Town Hall in Palma. Neuhaus was offended by these "over naturalistic" women. He thought the treatment of the cornice would have been more effective if they were not there.(26)

Allen may have derived his two-story San Joaquin Valley Building from photograph in Baxter's book of the one-story *Casa de los Mascarones* in Mexico City. Unlike the *Casa de los Mascarones*, the Balboa Park building used *estipites*, or inverted columns, in place of the grotesque figures (*mascarones*) that give the Mexico City building its distinction.(27) The wide use of *estipites* on the facades and altars of churches in Mexico is one of the hallmarks of the Churrigueresque style.(28) In the best examples, the combination of deep-set carving and imaginative detail is spellbinding. Examples on "temporary" buildings along El Prado are clumsy imitations.

Clarence Stein, Bertram Goodhue's assistant in 1915-1916 who later became a well-known planner of "garden cities," stressed the magical effect of narrow streets that lead to great plazas and squares in Venice and Rome.(29) Critic Alfred Morton Guthens repeated the same thought.(30) The expanding effect they claimed to find in Balboa Park, was not, however, due to "narrow streets," but to the arcades that lined El Prado. These arcades, on north and south sides, supplied a sense of comforting rhythm and helped to unify the composition. At the same time, they provided people with an experience of progression and discovery as they emerged from shadowed spaces into the sunlight of open plazas. Not to be under-estimated were lateral glimpses of gardens and patios . Today contrasts of openness and closure and of sun and shade can be found only on the south side of El Prado as the linking arcades on the north side have been disrupted by additions that lack inviting arcades within and between buildings. The Committee of 100, an organization devoted to the restoration of the Spanish-Colonial features in Balboa Park, has done much to redress this imbalance by re-creating missing arcades adjoining the Plaza de Panama on the north side of El Prado.

The plan to use arcades to enhance continuity and dramatize progression appears to have been Goodhue's. He had projected this scheme in preliminary designs for the Exposition at an unevenly surfaced southern site. Here, to conform to changes in elevation, the arcades would have been stepped. El Prado being flat, arcades maintained an even level. Since the first style for the Exposition was to have been California Mission, it is easy to say arcade schemes came from Mission examples. This was only partially true at the finally-approved central mesa site. The piers and tile pavement of the Fine Arts Gallery corridor at the south side of the California Quadrangle, recall the long arcade at Mission San Fernando. More directly, buttresses on the south side of the Gallery copied those on Mission San Gabriel.

Without being specific, Winslow suggested Celaya, Mexico and Genoa, Italy as sources for arcades along El Prado.⁽³¹⁾ Arcades in Baxter's book are from cloisters and patios in Mexico. They do not come from the outsides of buildings. While these existed in Mexico, Baxter may not have been impressed by them. Photographs of arcades in the *Plaza de Armas* in Celaya show arches that spring from narrow impostes that top tall thin pillars. Arcades in the *Piazza De Ferrari*, the most famous square in Genoa, are another matter as they exist in a multitude of elaborate forms. Their profusion is overwhelming. The only resemblance of these arcades to arcades in Balboa Park is that they are arcades. Based on Winslow's comment and on Baxter's omission, it is likely that the general design of arcades along El Prado came from Celaya, Mexico and Genoa or from other cities in Italy where they are outstanding features, subject to the constraint of forgetful memory. It is improbable that Winslow knew of the incredible variety of arcades in the cities and towns of Italy. Nor is there evidence he knew of the famous arcades surrounding the *Plaza Mayor* at Salamanca or the *Placa Reial* in Barcelona, both in Spain. This raises the question of how different would the designs along El Prado be if Winslow's knowledge was broader and the means were greater.

A discussion of the origins of the California Building and Fine Arts Building, designed by architect Goodhue as permanent additions to Balboa Park can be found in other chapters of this book. The exterior of the first derives from the churrigueresque facades of churches in Mexico, the tile dome of *Santa Prisca and San Sebastian* in Taxco, Mexico, the Greek-cross plan of *San Biagio in Montepulciano*, Italy, and the play of domes and half-domes of mosques in Istanbul. Sources for the exterior of the 1915 Fine Arts Gallery were given in the preceding paragraph.

Whether today's buildings should use ornament and be as sumptuous as the showpiece buildings Winslow and Allen created in Balboa Park is an open question. Attempts are sometimes made in this direction, in theme parks, in historic restoration of old buildings, and in Post-Modern architecture. Panama-California Exposition consulting architect Bertram Goodhue never relinquished his love of ornament, but, because of his greater love of structure, he gave up his flirtation with sprawling Spanish-Colonial ornament in favor of relief that appeared to “grow” from columns, pillars and beams. The State House in Lincoln, Nebraska and the Los Angeles Public Library are prime examples.(32) As the creative possibilities of people are unlimited, there is no reason Revival style buildings similar to those in Balboa Park, or Post-Modern adaptations of the same, cannot be created with a similar theatrical success.

Notes

1. *San Diego Union*, April 1, 1914, 3.
2. Eugen Neuhaus, *The San Diego Garden Fair* (San Francisco, 1916), 55; Weismann, Elizabeth, *Art and Time in Mexico: Architecture and Sculpture in Colonial Mexico* (New York, 1995, paperback edition), 218.
3. *San Diego Union*, March 15, 1913, 24:1; April 13, 1913, II, 17:2.
4. Palethorpe, McBride & Probert, Los Angeles, March 29, 1915, *Panama-California Exposition Report on Pre-Exposition Operations from November 1909 to December 31, 1914*. California Room, San Diego Public Library.
5. *San Diego Union*, June 14, 1913, 7; August 3, 1913, II, 1.
6. Bruce Kamerling, “Early Sculpture and Sculptors in San Diego,” *Journal of San Diego History*, V. 35, No. 3, Summer 1989.
7. Richard S. Requa, *Architectural Details, Spain and the Mediterranean* (Los Angeles, 1926), Section L, Plate 135.
8. Sylvester Baxter, *Spanish-Colonial Architecture in Mexico* (Boston, 1902), Vol. 8, Plate 104.
9. *San Diego Union*, January 1, 1915, Exposition Section, 4.
10. *San Diego Union*, July 7, 1914, 3; Winslow, Carleton M., *The Architecture and the Gardens of the San Diego Exposition* (San Francisco, 1916), 144.
11. *Letter*, Bertram Goodhue to Christian Brinton, August 17, 1915, Avery Library, Columbia University.
12. *San Diego Union*, January 23, 1914, 3.
13. *San Diego Union*, April 9, 1914, 3.
14. *San Diego Union*, November 9, 1913, II, 7; December 20, 1913, II, 1.
15. Winslow, *Architecture and Gardens*, 146.
16. Winslow attributions are in *The Architecture and the Gardens of the San Diego Exposition*.

17. Byne, Arthur & Stapley, Mildred, *Spanish Architecture in the Sixteenth Century, General View of the Plateresque and Herrera Styles* (New York, 1917); Whittlesey, Austin, *Minor Ecclesiastical, Domestic and Garden Architecture of Southern Spain*, introduction by Bertram Goodhue (New York, 1917).
18. Richard Pourade, *Gold in the Sun* (San Diego, 1963), 262.
19. Carleton M. Winslow, Jr., *The Architecture of the Panama-California Exposition*, thesis, University of San Diego, 1976, 24-25, in California Room, San Diego Public Library.
20. Frank P. Allen, Jr., "Development of Spanish-Colonial Architecture," *Fine Arts Journal*, March 1915, 116-126; "The Panama-California Exposition," *Pacific Coast Architecture*, June 1915, 213-237.
21. Pourade, *Gold in the Sun*, 254.
22. Neuhaus, 49
23. *San Diego Union*, August 3, 1913, II, 17; March 21, 1914, 5; September 15, 1914, 3.
24. Pal Kelemen, *Baroque and Rococo in Latin America* (New York, 1951), 99; Manuel Toussaint, *Colonial Art in Mexico* (Austin, 1967), 329-330; Elizabeth Wilder Weismann, *Art and Time in Mexico, Architecture and Sculpture in Colonial Mexico* (New York, 1985), 24-25. For some reason Toussaint and Weismann refer to the Casa de Ecala as the Casa de Marques de la Villa del Aguilar. Until an explanation is given, this writer maintains that the correct name of the building is as given in the text.
25. Andrew Noble Prentice, *Renaissance Architecture and Ornament in Spain* (New York, 1893).
26. Neuhaus, 54.
27. Baxter, Vol. 4, Plate 47.
28. Weismann, 49-51,
29. Winslow, *Architecture and Gardens*, 11.
30. Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), 111.
31. Winslow, *Architecture and Gardens*, 44.
32. Oliver, 204-211, 227-232.