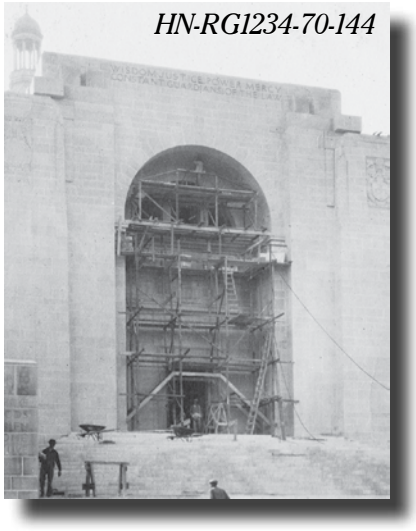
THE CAPITOL SOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | VOLUME SIXTEEN | NUMBER THREE | AUGUST 2024

First Phase Continues

As the first of the four phases of the ten year 1922 -1932 construction of the new Capitol continued in 1924, the Nebraska Capitol Commission was challenged by the sudden death of Capitol architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue on April 24, 1924. Construction of the Capitol was to be a collaborative process between the architect and the Commission. To move forward with the project, the Commission needed to build upon Goodhue's initial plans with a different architect. The Nebraska Capitol Commission, their advisor Thomas Rogers Kimball, FAIA, and Lydia Goodhue, Goodhue's widow, determined the best course was to meet with Goodhue's associates-- Francis L.S. Mayers, Hardie Phillip, and Oscar H Murray. In New York, the Commission and the reorganized firm, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue Associates, Architects, met and agreed the firm would complete the plans and supervise construction of the Capitol.

After returning to Lincoln with a new architectural contract, the Capitol Commissioners resumed their work to see the first phase of construction continued as scheduled. While the Goodhue Associates worked on the architectural components of the Capitol, Thematic Consultant Hartley Burr Alexander, PhD.-- worked with the design team, sculptor Lee Lawrie and muralist Hildreth Meiere-- to see that Goodhue's artistic vision for the decoration of the Nebraska State Capitol was completed.



HN-RG1234-70-144

By fall of 1924 , outer base construction was enclosing the old Capitol, below, and the north entrance facade was erected. In the photo above, sculptors carve Lee Lawrie's relief, which will decorate the exterior, using layered scaffolding to access the friezes and pioneer panel. On top, blocks of limestone await Wisdom, Justice, Power and Mercy.



HN-RG1234-70-139

Nebraska Capitol Commission Membership

Jim Pillen
Governor, Chairman

John Arch
Speaker of the Legislature
Vice-Chairman

Michael Heavican
Chief Justice
Supreme Court

Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg
Dean
College of Architecture, UNL

Cindy Drake
Interim Director & CEO
Nebraska State Historical Society

Doug Carey
Congressional District 1

Vacant
Congressional District 2

Katie Spohn
Congressional District 3

Brett Daugherty
Acting Capitol Administrator
Secretary



Enclosing the Space

As the first phase of construction of the new Nebraska Capitol moved into 1924, walls were quickly rising, the roof was being installed, and office space was being enclosed. The northeast section of the outer square was being prepared to house the Governor's Suite of rooms. Once these areas were water tight with windows installed, work could begin on the interior finishes in anticipation of an early 1925 occupation date. William Younkin, sent to Lincoln by the Goodhue Associates to oversee the on-site activity, took photos showing the progress and created a scrapbook now in the collection of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The Nebraska Capitol Commission in Lincoln, and the Associates in New York, would have used this documentation as they communicated about the project. These photos are a record of the construction and showcase the engineering and construction skills of the workers on site. Looking at these 100-year-old images, the viewer is taken back and can imagine the monumental project as seen by Nebraskans at the time.

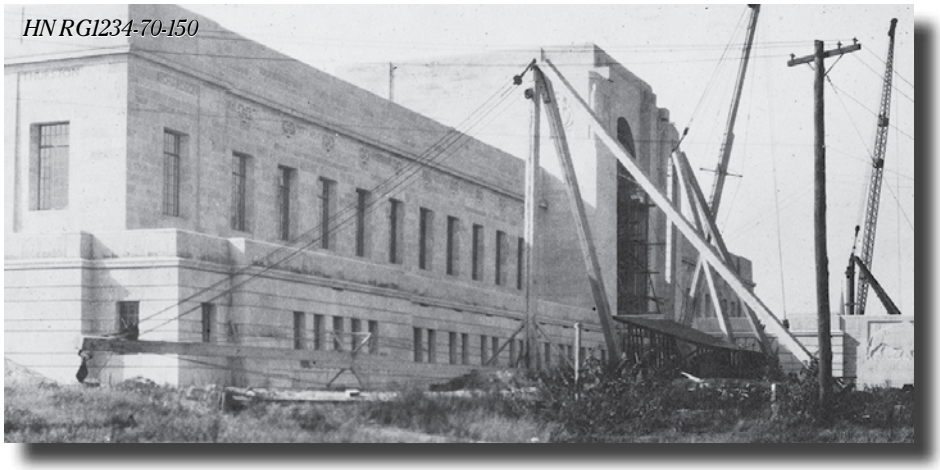


HN RG1234-70-133

Left, in a photo taken on March 1, 1924, the north entrance is under construction. The frame for the north entrance arch is in place. The crane in the center of the photo carries a vestibule column toward and into the north door opening. Right, in this photo taken from the interior of construction, a crane sits in front of the old Capitol. Once the 15-ton columns were in the Vestibule this crane lifted them in place and the dome and roof on the north vestibule were completed.



HN RG1234-70-124

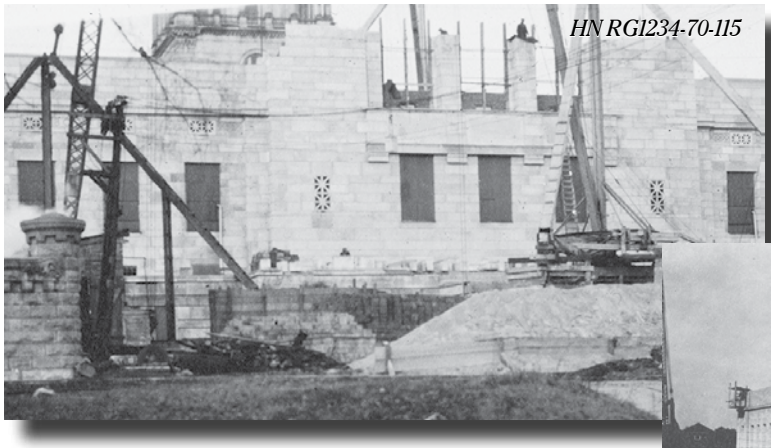


HN RG1234-70-150

Above, in this October 15, 1924, photo, the north facade nears completion. Windows have been installed to enclose the interior and allow finish work to begin in the Governor's Suite.

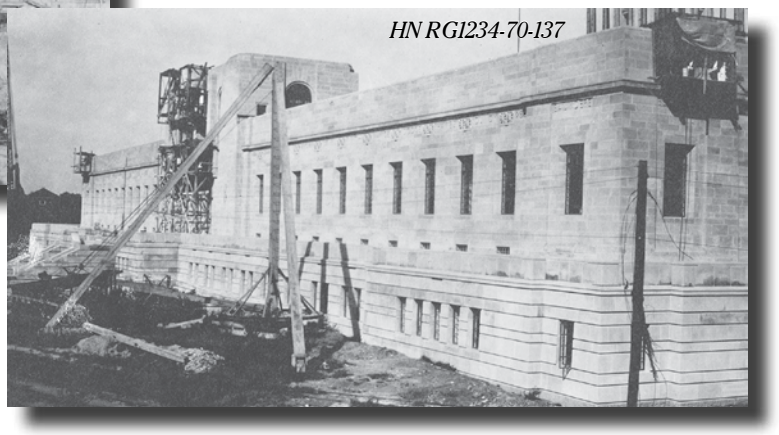
South Facade Completed

During the very busy 1924 construction year, the first and second floors of the outer square base went up quickly with contractors working on the north and south facades simultaneously. Building the south pavilion, like the north entrance pavilion, was more complicated than outer wall sections and took longer to complete. Entrance pavilions feature arched windows, special cornices, architectural details and extensive sculpture. The south pavilion also houses the Supreme Court Chamber and the State Law Library. Construction of these spaces and the adjoining offices required the installation of a steel frame in addition to the masonry construction.



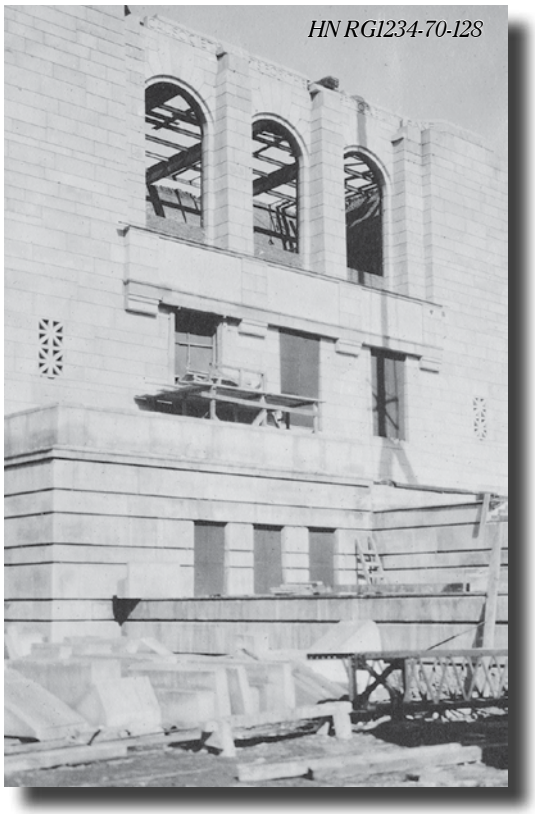
HN RG1234-70-115

As January of 1924 began, workers were laying the brick and limestone walls of the south pavilion, left. Windows had not been installed, openings were filled with large wooden panels. Notice the rough stone wall and turret of the old steam plant in the lower left of the image. Below, by September of the south facade was complete, windows were installed, and relief sculpture was being carved. The on-site sculptors worked from baskets hanging off the building's facade.



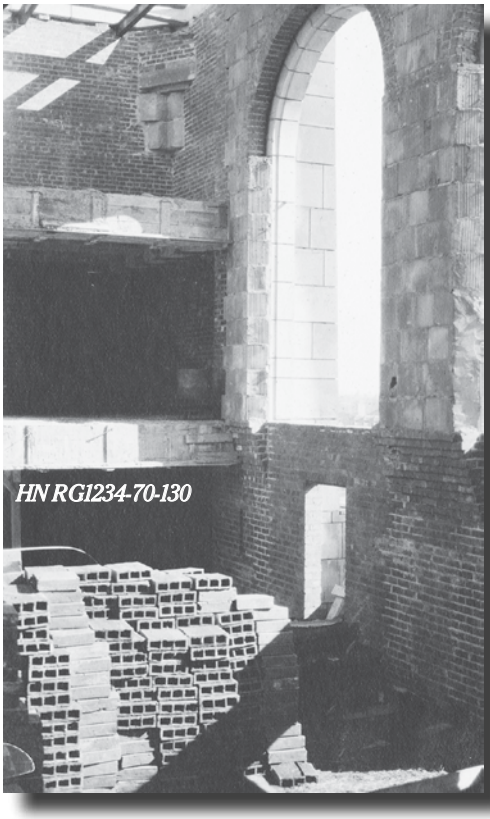
HN RG1234-70-137

The black and white images in this newsletter are cropped from period photographs taken by William Younkin, Bertram Goodhue's on-site architect. The scrapbooks containing these photographs are in the archives of History Nebraska. (HN-1234 Group 70 & 71 Younkin Album).



HN RG1234-70-128

Looking into the Law Library's large arched windows from the exterior in March of 1924, left, observers could see the steel beams installed to stabilize the large open Reading Room. Below these windows, the solid Juliet balcony walls await the carvers who will transfer Lee Lawrie's designs onto the building. Above the arches, pilasters await the carving of great lawgivers onto the facade. Right, in this photo taken the same day in March of 1924, the interior view shows much work left to be done. Light fills the space from the open windows and unfinished roof. The clay tile in piles on the floor will be used to fill in walls between the structural beams which support the outer offices. .



HN RG1234-70-130

THE CAPITOL SOWER

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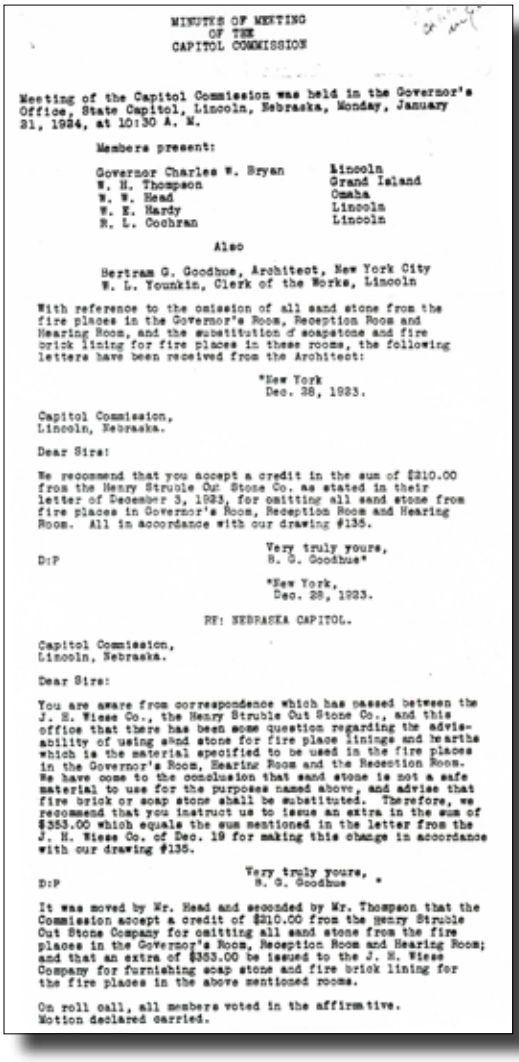
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Nebraska State Capitol
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68509-4696
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402.471.6691



Capitol Architect
Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, 1869-1924

Decisions Decisions Decisions

The Nebraska Capitol Commission hired Bertram Goodhue to design the new Capitol and upon his death hired his Associates to take over the design of the project, but the day-to-day decision making was the Commission's responsibility. The Commission met regularly to review bids, enter into contracts for materials, and pay bills. Often they relied upon the architect for expertise, but ultimately they made the decisions. As the exterior of the north and south sections of the base were being completed, decisions about interior finishes were being finalized. An example of the collaboration between Goodhue and the Commission is found in the minutes of the January 21, 1924 Commission meeting. Goodhue proposed to change the material lining the fireplaces in the Governor's Suite and the Commission agreed to the change from sandstone to fire brick and soapstone.



MINUTES OF MEETING
OF THE
CAPITOL COMMISSION

Meeting of the Capitol Commission was held in the Governor's Office, State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, Monday, January 21, 1924, at 10:30 A. M.

Members present:

Governor Charles W. Bryan	Lincoln
W. H. Thompson	Grand Island
W. W. Head	Omaha
W. E. Hardy	Lincoln
R. L. Cochran	Lincoln

Also

Bertram G. Goodhue, Architect, New York City
W. L. Younkin, Clerk of the Works, Lincoln

With reference to the omission of all sand stone from the fire places in the Governor's Room, Reception Room and Hearing Room, and the substitution of soapstone and fire brick lining for fire places in these rooms, the following letters have been received from the Architect:

"New York
Dec. 38, 1923.

Capitol Commission,
Lincoln, Nebraska.

Dear Sirs:

We recommend that you accept a credit in the sum of $310.00 from the Henry Struble Cut Stone Co. as stated in their letter of December 3, 1923, for omitting all sand stone from fire places in Governor's Room, Reception Room and Hearing Room. All in accordance with our drawing #135.

Very truly yours,
B. G. Goodhue"

D:P

"New York,
Dec. 28, 1923.

RE: NEBRASKA CAPITOL.

Capitol Commission,
Lincoln, Nebraska.

Dear Sirs:

You are aware from correspondence which has passed between the J. H. Wiese Co., the Henry Struble Cut Stone Co., and this office that there has been some question regarding the advisability of using sand stone for fire place linings and hearths which is the material specified to be used in the fire places in the Governor's Room, Hearing Room and the Reception Room. We have come to the conclusion that sand stone is not a safe material to use for the purposes named above, and advise that fire brick or soap stone shall be substituted. Therefore, we recommend that you instruct us to issue an extra in the sum of $353.00 which equals the sum mentioned in the letter from the J. H. Wiese Co. of Dec. 19 for making this change in accordance with our drawing #135.

Very truly yours,
B. G. Goodhue"

D:P

It was moved by Mr. Head and seconded by Mr. Thompson that the Commission accept a credit of $310.00 from the Henry Struble Cut Stone Company for omitting all sand stone from the fire places in the Governor's Room, Reception Room and Hearing Room; and that an extra of $353.00 be issued to the J. H. Wiese Company for furnishing soap stone and fire brick lining for the fire places in the above mentioned rooms.

On roll call, all members voted in the affirmative.
Motion declared carried.

Guided Tours are offered Monday-Friday hourly from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except at noon. Saturday and Holidays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except at noon and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Please call 402.471.0448 or visit www.capitol.nebraska.gov

The Capitol Sower, published by the Office of the Capitol Commission, is available online at www.capitol.org. Contact the Tourism Supervisor at <roxanne.smith@nebraska.gov> for more information.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments about the content.

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