Chapter Four

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

It was the largest construction project ever undertaken in the state of Wisconsin or under the auspices of the state government. Contractors employed to build the Wisconsin State Capitol, designed by George B. Post & Sons, broke ground on 18 October 1906 and construction finally drew to a close in the spring of 1917. For over a decade Madison residents watched a continuous process of excavation and the erection of steelwork and masonry as the granite wings and Dome took shape. Yet in many ways Post’s building was the culmination of a process that had begun in 1836 when Madison was designated the permanent territorial capital. In the same location, the four square blocks that became known as the Capitol Park, construction of Wisconsin’s third territorial capitol began in 1837 and continued on and off until 1848. A scant ten years later, the park again became a construction site as a new state capitol was built in stages around the old; the project continued until 1868 with a hiatus during which state officials and the architect disagreed over the design of the dome. Beginning in 1882, the state enlarged the building by extending the north and south wings, a project that lasted for over two years and that took a tragic turn when the unfinished south wing exterior collapsed and needed to be rebuilt. Twenty years later, the state was already in the process of planning to expand the building again when a fire badly damaged much of the structure. After a lengthy search for an architect to design a suitable replacement, a commission selected Post & Sons who offered a grand domed structure with four wings oriented to the corners of the square, consistent with the cardinal points of the compass. When construction finally ended in 1917, Capitol Square had been a construction site for thirty-six out of the seventy-nine years the site had been home to the statehouse.

The construction of the current Capitol was supervised by a commission appointed by the governor. Its secretary, Madison architect Lew F. Porter, shouldered much of the responsibility in overseeing both the day-to-day construction and the long-term planning. It was largely Porter’s presence through the commission’s shifting membership and changing political winds that kept the mammoth project on schedule with only a few significant delays. Porter worked diligently to satisfy the architect’s demands that only the highest quality materials be used and frequently made last-minute changes to achieve precisely the desired effect. Although Post & Sons was producing a building for a single client—the state—the architect and the commission had to contend with numerous client groups with obvious political clout, including the governor, the supreme court, the senate, the assembly and numerous state departments all of whom requested more space or some alterations to their quarters. Despite these challenges to Post’s artistic vision, the Capitol was completed with surprising speed. It remains one of the finest examples of American Beaux-Arts architecture and represents one of the last American state capitols completed in this stylistic idiom. The changing political and economic conditions after the First World War precluded again building anything quite so grand and elaborate.
Territorial Capitol

The Wisconsin territorial legislature selected Madison as the capital during its first session at Belmont late in 1836. After another meeting in Burlington (now in Iowa) in 1837, the government officially moved to Madison in the late autumn of 1838. Prior to the arrival of the legislature, a commission charged with erecting public buildings had completed very little work on the isthmus site between Lakes Mendota and Monona, which was still covered by prairie and oak openings. The commission, composed of James Duane Doty, Augustus Bird, and John F. O'Neill, found the construction of buildings in the wilderness far more complicated than anticipated, since the effort required the quarrying of local stone and sawing of native timber. Workers had to be brought in from Milwaukee and suitable accommodations provided. Few people were on hand to witness the laying of the cornerstone of the capitol on 4 July 1837 and progress was slow. A year and a half later in 1838, Madison consisted of a few log cabins, housing a small number of residents, and only three hotels were ready to receive the legislators and territorial officials. The capitol itself, a two-story stone building with a shallow, tin-covered dome and measuring only 104 by 54 feet, remained unfinished. The commission hastily installed floors of unseasoned oak boards, which quickly shrunk when stoves were lit, making for a cold and drafty environment; pigs were kept in the basement and regularly disrupted legislative sessions. The accommodations were so uncomfortable that in December the legislature adjourned for twenty days until the weather improved and some changes were made to make their new quarters more comfortable.

Despite this inauspicious start and repeated attempts to relocate the capital, Madison remained the seat of state government, and the capitol building—in its various forms—became an integral part of the city. Construction of the first Madison capitol continued until 1846, but the misuse of $40,000 in construction funds appropriated by congress continued as a political scandal; the territorial legislature pursued a lawsuit against the commissioners to recover the money, a suit that was not dropped until 1848. The problems with “Doty’s Washbowl,” as the shallow-domed capitol was sometimes called, continued even after the legislature resigned itself to not recovering the money. Between 1838 and 1848, funds to complete the structure were difficult to obtain, and contractors never were able to finish work on time. In addition, the dome (completed in 1842) leaked badly, leaving a stained and disintegrating interior. Even when finished, the building was unsatisfactory. The advertisement for bids to erect the capitol, dated 20 February 1838, describes an interior spatial arrangement that included a 24-foot-wide, east-west corridor that bisected both the first and second floors. The first floor had six rooms that were used by the territorial officers and the United States district court; the State Law Library was situated at the south end of this floor. The second floor housed, on its east side, meeting chambers for the territorial council (equivalent to the senate) on the south and the house of representatives (equivalent to the assembly) on the north. The four rooms on the west side of the second floor were used by legislative committees during session and territorial officers otherwise. According to a report of the panel of commissioners in 1839, the capitol’s interior was to have been finished in “the modern Grecian style.” The basement was finished and occupied after 1848, its rooms used for consultations by the supreme court and generally by the superintendent of public instruction. By the time construction began on the second Madison capitol in 1857, partitions had been removed between some of the rooms on the first and second floors and “some of the State Officers [had] secured places of business in the city.” The State Law Library was still on the south side of the first floor, and its reading room also served as a hearing room for the supreme court. The governor had two rooms on the first floor, where the secretary of state and treasurer also had offices. The senate and assembly halls remained on the second floor.

Within ten years of its completion, the building was considered too small. The legislature had expanded from thirty-nine to 127 members, making the chambers crowded and uncomfortable, and the supreme court continued to meet in the law library despite the fact that the justices made Madison their permanent home after 1853. Some state officials, including the attorney general and the superintendent of public instruction, rented quarters elsewhere. In the mid-
1850s Madison postmaster Elisha Keyes said of the building, "[I]t was, even for its time, a shoddy structure, and all the patching and repairing that was done, could not make it very substantial or convenient. Its appearance was a good deal ridiculed at the time, though the general impression was that it was a quite imposing structure. The cupola or dome, which was meant as an embellishment, really detracted from the general architectural effect." With the existing capitol in disrepair and overcrowded, state officials began making plans for a new building. In his 1857 message to the legislature, Governor Coles Bashford (1856-58) noted the danger that fire posed to state documents in the capitol and called for more secure storage. At this point, some legislators again began proposing relocation of the capitol to a different city. Faced with this prospective loss, the City of Madison offered to underwrite enlargement of the capitol by issuing $50,000 in municipal bonds, an offer that clinched the matter. Within six weeks, a bill to accept the offer and to sell ten sections of public land for an additional $30,000 had passed the legislature and awaited Bashford's signature. He signed the bill on 28 February 1857.5

Kutzbock and Donnel Capitol
The law authorizing enlargement of the capitol vested construction supervision in Governor Bashford and Secretary of State David W. Jones. In the spring of 1857, Bashford hired the Madison firm Kutzbock and Donnel to prepare plans and drawings for the undertaking. The principals of the firm were August Kutzbock and Samuel Hunter Donnel. Kutzbock had been born in Prussia in 1814 and immigrated to the United States some time in the early 1850s; he arrived in Madison about 1854. Donnel (sometimes spelled Donnell) was born in Pennsylvania, but he was reared in Williamsport, Ohio and became an architect there. He came to Madison in 1855 and soon formed a partnership with Kutzbock, who appears to have been the principal designer. The firm designed a number of significant early Madison buildings, including the first City Hall and the octagonal stone mansion of Leonard Farwell, a former governor. Located east of the capitol on Spaight Street, the mansion became a military hospital during the Civil War and an orphanage following it. Donnel died in 1861, early in the course of the construction of the new capitol, leaving Kutzbock to oversee the construction of the building.6

4.04 First Madison capitol design, circa 1838
The design of the first capitol in Madison disappointed legislators, who eventually began an investigation into its construction. The two-story, classically styled building with Doric detailing and a shallow dome was poorly constructed and too small to accommodate governmental needs by the time of statehood in 1848.

4.05 (right) Governor Coles Bashford, circa 1858
Governor Coles Bashford first proposed enlarging and then, later, rebuilding the first Madison capitol using the rationale that fire posed a danger to state documents. His efforts led to construction of the second Madison capitol. Soon after Bashford left the governor's office, choosing not to run again because of rumors of political corruption that were later proved correct.

4.06 (below) Kutzbock and Donnel design, circa 1857
Governor Bashford hired the Madison architectural firm of Kutzbock and Donnel to design an addition to the capitol, which turned out to be the first phase in the construction of an entirely new building. Kutzbock and Donnel's scheme included two large porticoed wings to house legislative chambers, octagonal towers at the corners and a small, cupola-like dome.
In keeping with the intention that the existing building be enlarged, Kutzbock and Donnel submitted a design for a large, semicircular wing on the east side of the capitol. The wing included a two-story, stone-columned portico and contained offices on the first floor, a legislative chamber on the second, galleries on the third, and unfinished attic space. After advertising for bids in May 1857, the state awarded the construction contract to Madison builder John Ryecraft, who had bid the work for $92,000. Construction was to be completed by November 1858. Ryecraft proceeded slowly; in February 1858 the architects warned that it was unlikely the capitol could be completed by the deadline unless the builder worked with almost dangerous haste. Additionally, the state had also assumed the cost of construction at an unfortunate time. A nationwide financial panic in 1857, spawning by widespread bank failures, the collapse of railroad companies and the bursting of the land-speculation bubble combined to drive down the value of the bonds that were to finance the capitol. In addition, Bashford was not re-elected, being tainted by rumors that were later verified that he had accepted bribes from the La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad Company in exchange for approving a large land grant to the company.

The failure of Ryecraft to work quickly, deteriorating financial conditions and political scandal together threatened to remove state government from Madison altogether. After learning of Ryecraft’s failures in procuring stone, lumber and workmen, Bashford’s successor, Governor Alexander Randall (1858-62), urged the legislature to take action. The senate investigated and discovered both the extent of Ryecraft’s malfeasance and also that the eastern extension was the first of several enlargements planned by the architect with the larger goal of eventually replacing the current building at a cost of almost $500,000. The senate disapproved of the expenditure and voted to relocate the government temporarily to Milwaukee; in the assembly, a similar measure was passed, then defeated on a motion to reconsider. With these objectives waylaid, plans for a new capitol proceed.

The east wing was completed in 1859 with an important modification made at Governor Randall’s suggestion: the replacement of stone for the columns in the portico with cast iron. In 1861, work began on the west wing, designed essentially as a larger version of the east wing and intended mostly for the assembly chamber. In March 1863, the legislature authorized demolition of the remaining portions of the Doty structure and the construction of a new central portion and north and south wings. As with the east wing, cost became an issue when the legislature limited the appropriation to $63,000; Kutzbock had estimated that $80,000 would be required to complete his design. Demolition began in late May 1863 and construction of the north and south wings proceeded smoothly until 1866, when a serious disagreement over the design of the cupola-like structure planned for the roof halted the work. Kutzbock’s plan originally called for the central portion to be topped by a lantern-like fenestrated structure composed of a cylindrical barrel with a small dome that was in scale with the rest of the building. State officials, however, lobbied for a grander cast iron dome modeled on that of the United States Capitol in Washington, completed earlier that year. Construction of the dome on the National Capitol had continued despite the Civil War; and its completion a year after the conflict ended came to symbolize the triumphant union. The dome was quickly adopted by many states as a preeminent symbol of republican government. The conflict over the proposed modification grew so heated that Kutzbock resigned as architect. In May, Governor Lucius Fairchild (1866-72), a Civil War hero, hired Stephen Vaughan Shipman to design a dome based on the National Capitol’s. Shipman’s dome was constructed similarly using cast iron plates and a similar interior structural system. C. S. Rankin of Cincinnati built the dome for $90,000, with the work completed in 1868.

The new building measured 228 feet north to south and 226 feet east to west; the tip of the flagpole was just over 225 feet high. Crenellated octagonal towers were positioned at the corners of the north and south wings, heightening the overall picturesque effect of the building. The exterior was faced with tan Prairie du Chien sandstone. The porticos of the east and west wings each had ten columns with a short monumental stair to ground level; the columns of the
4.08 (above) Second Madison capitol, circa 1866
After the east and west wings were built, the first Madison capitol was demolished and the lower levels of the central portion constructed, creating the connection between the two wings. A disagreement over the design of the dome halted construction and left the new building unfinished for about two years.

4.09 (right) Stephen Vaughan Shipman’s design for capitol dome, circa 1867
State officials questioned Kutzbock’s design of the dome, which they believed lacked suitable grandeur. Madison architect Stephen Vaughan Shipman proposed a dome based on the one recently constructed for the national capitol in Washington. Madison’s dome was set into place between 1867 and 1868.

4.10 Second Madison capitol with dome, circa 1870
When construction was completed in 1868, the capitol measured 228 feet north to south and 226 feet east to west. It set the precedent for the current Capitol with four roughly equal wings oriented to the corners of the Capitol Square and aligned with the cardinal points of the compass.
slightly larger west wing were spaced farther apart. Like the National Capitol’s, Shipman’s dome featured a colonnade that lifted the dome visually, behind which arched windows were built into the drum.

Internally, a long central corridor ran the north-south length of the building and intersected with a shorter east-west corridor at the rotunda beneath the dome; spiral staircases were tucked into the corners of the central portion and provided access to the upper floors. On the first floor, the east wing contained five rooms for the governor and the secretary of state; the west wing was laid out similarly and provided rooms to house the department of agriculture, the bank controller and the adjutant general. The south wing contained, including space in its octagonal towers, six rooms occupied by the attorney general, the superintendent of public instruction and the superintendent of public property. The north wing housed two large rooms for the state treasurer and the land office; a small vault was connected to each of these, and the treasurer had a small private office. The major chambers of the senate and the assembly were the principal spaces of the second floor. The two-story senate chamber was located in the east wing with small rooms in the northwest and southwest corners for the chief clerk, the sergeant at arms and the lieutenant governor. The west wing housed a similarly scaled two-story assembly chamber, its two lobbies, a document room and small rooms for the speaker and the chief clerk. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin was located in the south wing and the Wisconsin Supreme Court and State Law Library were crowded onto the second and third floors of the north wing. In the east and west wings, public galleries ringed each chamber and small committee rooms were located in the northeast and southeast corners. The fourth floor of each wing was used for storage. Although the “attic” left a great deal of potential work space, the available room in the new capitol was limited by the fact that almost all second floor rooms opened to the third floor.

Additions to Kutzbock and Donnel Capitol

Within twelve years after completion of the new building, the state found itself in the same position it had been in 1858. The capitol had become crowded and expansion was considered once again; in the spring of 1882, the legislature appropriated $200,000 to construct extensions to the north and south wings with the intent of providing more room for the historical society, the law library and the court. The every-growing collections of the historical society and the law library had filled their allotted spaces quickly, and the supreme court had been expanded to include five justices in 1878. In the fall of 1882, a commission composed of Governor Jeremiah Rusk (1882-89), Secretary of State Ernst G. Timme, Attorney General Leander F. Frishby, N. B. Van Slyke and John Winan (representing the interests of the supreme court) and Elisha W. Keyes, representing the State Historical Society, held a competition and selected Madison architect D. R. Jones. Jones’s design called for extensions to the north and south wings the same width and height of the existing capitol and built of the same type of stone; the design also included small domes on each of the octagonal towers and a double colonnade of cast iron columns on the new south and north façades.

Jones’s design may have fit the existing capitol well, but the cost turned out to be prohibitive. When bids were opened on 15 June 1882, the lowest was for $20,000 more than the appropriation allowed. After Jones revised his design, a second round of bids again resulted in no acceptable proposals, and the commission asked Jones to revise his design once more. Eventually the commission awarded the construction contract in the amount of $188,370 to John T. R. Bentley of Milwaukee and Oscar F. Nowlan of Janesville, who began work in the summer of 1882. Unlike previous capitol construction, work proceeded swiftly. By August 1883, the extension for north wing to house the supreme court and law library was complete, and the south wing was well underway. By November, the south wing, too, was almost complete.
At this point, events took a tragic turn. At approximately 1:40 in the afternoon of 8 November 1883, forty laborers were working on the south wing when a portion of the roof collapsed and brought much of the wing to the ground. Firemen and volunteers carried the wounded to makeshift treatment wards inside the capitol; five men died and twenty were seriously injured. In the weeks before the accident, reports had circulated about slipshod construction and cracked walls. On 9 November Governor Rusk launched an investigation and called on several architects and builders for assistance. A week later, these experts submitted an eight-page report that blamed the accident on the use of substandard materials, particularly the cast iron columns and masonry piers at the end of the wing. In the meantime, the Dane County coroner began an inquest with a jury that included builders and University of Wisconsin engineering professor Allan D. Conover. Robert M. La Follette, the future governor but then Dane County district attorney, represented the state. For ten days, witnesses testified about sagging girders, structurally unsound walls and crumbling bricks. Additionally, local newspapers had reported large cracks in the walls that were the result of shoddy construction. The jurors found the contractors guilty of the improper repair of a second-story pier, which had contributed directly to the accident, and they determined that architect Jones and the consulting architect, H. C. Koch of Milwaukee, were negligent in their design. A new architect was hired to revise the plans for the south wing and to implement similar changes in the north wing; the additional work on the two wings was not completed until November 1884.

The two new wings doubled the length of the capitol and provided much needed space to occupants. The governor moved into a spacious five-room suite on the first floor of the south wing, where the secretary of state assumed similar accommodations. Offices for the attorney general, the Board of Control, the bank examiner and the commissioner of insurance were in the north wing. On the second floor, the south wing had nine legislative committee rooms that also could be used as offices. A large, two-story supreme court hearing room, consultation room and private chambers for each justice were provided in the north wing. The law library had space on the second and third floors and the historical society moved into quarters on the third floor. With its new extensions, it appeared the capitol would fill the state’s needs for some time.

**First Capitol Competition, 1903-04**

The expanded capitol served from 1884 until 1903, by which time it again had become too small to house a growing state government effectively. The number of workers required by the various agencies increased dramatically between 1887 and 1909; the secretary of state’s staff expanded from fourteen to twenty-four; the attorney general’s, from three to eight; the Department of Public Instruction, from four to thirteen; the Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics, from four to fourteen; and the Railroad Commission from two to nineteen. During this period several new regulatory commissions were established, including the Banking Commission, the Dairy and Food Commission, the Tax Commission and the Civil Service Commission. A constitutional amendment that took effect in 1903 expanded the Wisconsin Supreme Court from five to seven justices, and the law library had overgrown its quarters. The state historical society moved from its rooms in the Capitol by 1901 to its new headquarters on the University of Wisconsin campus, and the space it vacated was filled quickly by the Wisconsin Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) as organizational headquarters and a museum. Although the north and south wings were in satisfactory condition and the entire building had been equipped with electricity and mechanical heat and ventilation, the original 1859-69 portion of the capitol remained a creaky relic of the mid-nineteenth century, and plans were underway once again to expand the building and modernize its oldest sections.
Capitol Improvement Commission

In response to requests from the supreme court justices, the 1903 legislature authorized the governor to appoint a commission that would develop a plan for increasing space for the court and the law library. The Capitol Improvement Commission met for the first time on 12 September 1903. Two of the commissioners appointed by Governor Robert M. La Follette, Sr., Rouget D. Marshall and John B. Winslow, were justices. The others were public-minded men of wealth with a background in either engineering or business. Orrin H. Ingram of Eau Claire owned interests in several lumber companies and mills in northwestern Wisconsin. Edwin Reynolds of Milwaukue was a mechanical engineer (he designed the main engine that powered the lighting at the 1893 Columbian Exposition) and was the head of the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company. John Archer (J. A.) Van Cleve of Marinette had been a civil engineer and surveyor who acquired his wealth in the real estate and banking businesses; he recently had been active in the state Republican party and was a member of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents. Herbert W. Chynoweth was probably the state's most prominent lawyer and recently had argued successfully the constitutionality of the new ad valorem taxation law before the Wisconsin Supreme Court; he was close to La Follette and he, also, was a member of the Board of Regents. Furthermore, both Chynoweth and Van Cleve had served on the board that oversaw planning and construction of the recently completed historical society building on the University of Wisconsin campus. As a body, the commissioners contributed a wealth of engineering and legal skills as well as first-hand knowledge of the existing building.9

At its initial meeting, the Capitol Improvement Commission appointed Chynoweth, Marshall and Reynolds to employ an architect to prepare a program for the expansion project. The commission had ample precedent from which to work; twelve other states had recently completed or were currently planning or constructing new capitol buildings.10 A few days later, Chynoweth wrote New York architect Cass Gilbert, then finishing work on the Minnesota capitol, requesting his services as "advisory architect" to the commission, a position requiring his study of the present building, preparation of a program and general advice. Cass Gilbert flatly refused the offer since it would prevent him from entering the competition himself; he suggested that the commission need not hold a competition at all and simply employ a qualified architect directly, obviously having himself in mind.11

Chynoweth sent an identical letter to Professor W. T. Laird of the University of Pennsylvania. Professor Laird wrote that he would accept the position for a fee of $2,000 plus $25 per diem for trips to Madison, in addition to his expenses. The commissioners balked at the fees: "We think Mr. Laird's figures are much higher than the Commission ought to go," Chynoweth wrote to Reynolds on 26 September, "and (we) do not understand how the work which the consulting architect will be called upon to do should cost so much."12 Instead of Gilbert or Laird, Chynoweth and Marshall made an arrangement with Allan D. Conover, a member of the University of Wisconsin engineering faculty and formerly a principal with Lew Porter in the Madison architecture firm Conover and Porter (circa 1885-1900). Chynoweth advocated for Conover, writing that "[he] is here on the ground and understands better western character and western wants. We can advise with him continuously and get his opinions on any matter that we desire to call on him for without correspondence and without the expense of a trip from the east. He is not only able, but a tireless worker." Moreover, as Conover was already employed by the state as a member of the Board of Control, it appeared that he would be able to perform this function for a mere $1,000. Before Conover signed his contract, however, the commission recognized that the law under which he advised the Board of Control prohibited him from taking another position with the state and the commission found no way around this obstacle. With some frustration, the commission gathered in Madison on 19 October to discuss hiring an advisor and developing plans.13

Despite Gilbert's suggestion that a competition was unnecessary, the commission remained adamant and insisted that Wisconsin firms be included among those invited to compete. Chynoweth wrote Reynolds that he thought "we have
two firms of architects in this state who are as well qualified to design improvements to the capitol building as anybody in the far east. But it was thought best...to give the other people a chance so that it might be said to those who think that a man must reside in the east to be "up to snuff" that we have not put up the bars on any one, and know of no such thing as state lines." Reynolds, more familiar with the workings of the architectural community than others on the commission, visited several firms on the East Coast to discuss the project. By mid-October 1903, the program began to take shape. The commission decided to invite three architectural firms to compete and offered prizes of $1,500, $1,000 and $500 (later increased to $2,000, $1,500 and $1,000 with $300 allowed to each for expenses). Invitations went to two Milwaukee firms, Ferry & Clas and H.C. Koch & Co. (presumably referred by Chynoweth), and Cass Gilbert of New York. By February 1904, the committee charged with developing the program had largely completed its task.15

Capitol Fire

In the early hours of 27 February 1904, a gas jet alight for the night watchmen set fire to the recently varnished ceiling of the assembly cloak room of the west wing of the capitol. Nat Crampton, a watchman, discovered the blaze and tried to extinguish it with several pails of water; when his efforts failed, he summoned the Madison Fire Department.

4.14 Capital fire, 1904

While the Capitol Improvement Commission was still discussing additions and renovations, the need for action became critical when a fire gutted much of the building on 27 February 1904. Most of the west and east wings were destroyed, as was much of the central portion and south wing. As a result of the fire, the commission recognized the need for a program that would replace the building.

4.15 Capital fire, north and west wings, 1904

As crowds of residents and university students helped carry books, papers and furniture to safety, the fire continued to ravage the building. The conflagration began in the west wing and quickly spread through the timber-framed central portion and east wing and to the upper levels of the south wing. Only the north wing remained relatively undamaged.
While waiting for assistance, two watchmen attempted to light the rapidly spreading fire with a fire hose, but there was insufficient water pressure in the capitol's internal fire-suppression system. The Madison Fire Department responded within thirty minutes, and at first it appeared that the fire could be controlled. Two unfortunate circumstances, however, rendered efforts futile. The day before the fire, workers at the university had drained the water tank that supplied both the university and the capitol to clean and refill the university boilers, which was why there was insufficient pressure in the capitol's system. Also, for some unknown reason, the valve to switch the capitol to the municipal water supply was never turned. Hence, the blaze spread rapidly through the timber-framed, lath-and-plaster structure of the west wing and central portion. At 4:30 a.m., firemen woke Governor La Follette at the Executive Mansion a few blocks away; he and a group of university students and downtown residents entered the building repeatedly to retrieve items from the blaze. By 6:00 a.m., Justice Marshall was also on the scene, and with the governor directed citizens who carried to safety books, records and furniture as the Madison Fire Department telegraphed for aid from Milwaukee. Help arrived as requested via the railroad in record time and the extra firemen assisted in battling the blaze, but it was not extinguished completely until 10:00 p.m. the following night; by that time, the west and east wings were ruined and the south wing badly damaged. The loss to the state was catastrophic. Although many of the state's records were saved, the fire destroyed the Civil War memorabilia collection owned by the state Grand Army of the Republic, which was housed in the upper floors of the south wing. The relics included Old Abe, the stuffed remains of the celebrated bald eagle mascot of the Eighth Wisconsin Regiment. Most disheartening was the fact that the legislature had recently allowed the insurance policies on the building to lapse in anticipation of the implementation of a new state insurance fund. The state was unable to collect on $600,000 worth of policies.15

Within four days, state departments had resettled in new quarters in various buildings around Madison and cleanup work began at the capitol. The fire had profound implications for the Capitol Improvement Commission, set to meet again on 1 March. Governor La Follette decided against calling a special session of the legislature to deal with the crisis and instead relied on the commission to continue its work in planning alterations and repairs to the building.16 The commission met as scheduled in the room of Justice Winslow in the relatively undamaged north wing; the commissioners immediately adjourned to inspect the building and invited Madison architects Allan Conover and Lew F. Porter to accompany them. After the inspection tour, Conover and Porter estimated that it would cost no more than $250,000 to restore the building to "substantially as good shape as it was before." If the commission were to improve the structure and install a fireproof roof, costs were estimated at $275,000. Conover and Porter further suggested the possibility of removing all of the 1858 structure between the two newer extensions and constructing longer wings to the west and east (effectively changing the capitol's orientation from north-south to east-west). They further suggested that after construction, the north and south wings could be removed if not needed.17

Especially Conover and Porter were promoting construction of an entirely new capitol, moving beyond the commission's purview of providing additional room for the supreme court and law library. But in a meeting the next day the commission expressed unwillingness to take any action that would exceed its authority. The commission asserted that its responsibilities under the 1903 law consisted of obtaining plans for additions and changes to the north wing at a cost of not more than $10,000 and carrying out those additions for not more than $100,000. The program to do this work had been nearly completed. Now, the commissioners discussed whether proceeding with such plans was useful. In the end, they resolved to continue their work in adopting and executing plans for changes in the capitol but with the possibility in place that these changes could be the first phase of the construction of an entirely new building. The commission further resolved not to spend any of its $100,000 construction appropriation in order to allow time for the legislature to decide about a new capitol. Lew Porter was hired to assist in the final preparations of the program.18 In the meantime, La Follette began implementing plans to repair the structure using his authority as governor to repair public buildings
damaged by fire. Workers renovated the portions of the building least damaged by the fire, salvageable materials were sold and state agencies soon began moving back into the capitol. In April, the insurance commissioner fixed the loss sustained by the state at $185,046.90, a sum that would be made available to the superintendent of public property for rebuilding efforts. The initial effort was directed at the north and south wings, leaving the decision concerning the ruined west and east wings until later.20

The high cost of repairing the structure temporarily as well as the uncertainty of the Capitol Improvement Commission's authority stirred widespread speculation that state government would leave Madison. Milwaukee newspapers quickly began agitating for moving the capitol to that city, boasting superior railroad connections, hotels and other accommodations. Other, more centrally located cities, including Eau Claire, Oshkosh, Fond du Lac and Grand Rapids (later known as Wisconsin Rapids), quickly began to assert similar claims. Yet the state constitution required the presence of the state university "at or near the seat of government" and the history surrounding the Madison capitol were strong arguments for rebuilding in the same location. Public sentiment quickly swung behind the decision to retain the capitol on the same grounds.21 The committee developing the architectural program completed its work in April, and the Capitol Improvement Commission met on 27 April to approve the program "for the guidance of the architects and architectural firms chosen to compete for the prizes offered for plans for an improved or practically new capitol structure." On 10 May 1904, copies of the program were sent to Cass Gilbert, Ferry & Clas and H. C. Koch & Co.22

Competition Program

On 12 May 1904, the commission made public its competition program. It specified that the primary purpose of the project was "to furnish the needed accommodations for the state library and the supreme judicial department of the state," but actually gave the architects a great deal of latitude in designing what would be a new building, declaring:

The present building between the transverse wings may be changed to any extent reasonably necessary to produce harmony between the same and such wings in such conditions as they may be preserved if at all, the purpose of all changes being to produce, with new construction, that harmony of parts suggesting an original design of a modern, up-to-date Capitol that will meet the wants of the State in future years.

The directive to use as much of the present building as possible was "not absolutely binding," however, and the program emphasized the requirements for new construction. Further instructions specified that the present north and south wings remain undisturbed during construction and that the dome be retained if in proper scale to the proposed modifications. The program included three diagrams that illustrated potential footprints for the building. The first showed a simple block plan, measuring 270 feet by 320 feet, which would have filled the space between the north and south wings. The second proposed the construction of two large wings on the east and west sides with extensions to both the existing north and south wings. The final suggestion depicted four equal wings, each oriented to one of the four corners of Capitol Square. A minimum of 40,000 square feet was required on the principal floor, and the new building was to be five stories with the ground floor suitable for offices. The commission had surveyed the occupants and prepared a program for space use that responded to the needs of each department, floor by floor. The general configuration for a department was to include a lobby, a business room, a private office, a stenographer's room, a vault and a lavatory/cloak room. Six thousand square feet were to be designated to the assembly chamber and 4,500 square feet to the senate chamber; each was to be two stories. Proposals were due at noon on 1 November 1904, but the deadline was later extended to 1 December 1904.23

4.17 Cass Gilbert design for the Wisconsin Capitol, 1904
Cass Gilbert's bold design for the Capitol was similar to that of the Minnesota capitol, which had been completed recently. Critics claimed his design was far too large and expensive.
Cass Gilbert's Design

Crates containing the plans and drawings arrived in Madison on the appointed day. The commission met on 6 December and, with the aid of carpenters, opened the boxes and numbered the drawings. The firms' names were in sealed envelopes so that the commissioners did not know which firm had submitted which set of drawings. The public was not allowed to view the plans until after the commission reached a decision. Each set included a perspective drawing, two or more elevations, two or more sections, and floor plans; drawn on a scale of one-eighth inch to one foot, the plans were over seven feet long. The program committee employed noted architect William S. Eames of St. Louis as judge. He spent a week in Madison reviewing the plans and writing his report, which the commission read on 12 January 1905. Eames clearly approved of the commission's willingness to allow the competitors to develop an entirely new capitol and had little good to say about the existing structure:

The present building is askew with the entire city, a most confusing and unfortunate condition, inasmuch as it destroys the dignity of the building and distorts the important surroundings in such a manner as to present a most painful effect. All three of the competitors have realized this fact, and point out the importance of having the dome [coincide] with the center of the square and on the axis of the intersecting streets.

The present building, apart from its being unfortunately oriented, is scarcely worthy of perpetuation, although possessing many details of excellence in design.

Eames recommended the largest (over 16 million cubic feet as opposed to 8 and 9.5 for the other plans) and the most expensive ($5.4 million, twice the amount estimated for the second most costly plan) proposal to the commission. Not only would the design fulfill the immediate and future needs of the state, Eames wrote, but it would compare favorably with the best buildings of its type. He praised the use of natural light in the design and the internal arrangement of space, which used public and private corridors to separate various departments. The recommendation evidently disquieted the commission. Following several days of intermittent discussion, the commission remained wary of exceeding its authority and feared the legislature's reaction to an expensive new building. After Ingraham took the plans to Reynolds' sickbed to obtain his opinion, La Follette suggested the commission obtain further information from Eames, who then appeared before the commission on 27 January 1905. After further questioning, the commission voted unanimously to endorse the Eames report. The envelopes were opened, and the winning plan was revealed to be by Cass Gilbert.

Even before the commission could make its recommendation to the legislature, the press reported the estimated cost of the new building. The Madison Democrat predicted the Gilbert design would require between $6 and $10 million dollars to build and the paper forecast an acrimonious public debate, hinting that the $5 million capitol recently designed by Gilbert and constructed in Minnesota was unsatisfactory. Further, the article suggested that all three plans submitted were far too large for the Capitol Square and alluded to potential complications inherent in selecting a New York architect over two qualified Wisconsin firms, a choice that guaranteed questions would arise in the legislature. On 31 January, the commission formally delivered its report to the legislature and proposed the Cass Gilbert plan. Gilbert had designed a classically inspired building aligned axially with Washington Avenue and with its principal orientation being to Monona Avenue (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard). The central portion was topped with a dome, evocative of a Renaissance cathedral, and the wings on the northeast, southwest and northwest contained legislative chambers, the

supreme court and other offices. Enthusiastic supporters of Gilbert's work in Minnesota wrote La Follette to praise the finished building and urge legislative approval of the plan for Wisconsin.

Local reaction, however, was not as enthusiastic. The two Milwaukee firms publicly charged that Gilbert had disregarded the terms of the program and instead submitted plans that called for a much larger and more expensive building than indicated. At a public hearing before the legislature's Joint Committee on Capitol and Grounds, representatives of the firms gave vent to their grievances. A lawyer for Ferry & Clas pointed out that the Gilbert plan called for 76 percent more space than the program specified and that the building could not possibly be constructed for less than $6.6 million. He also raised several questions regarding Eames's accuracy in evaluating the plans. Koch complained that although the program insisted that the plans not be embellished in any way, Gilbert's firm submitted plans that were colored and elaborately decorated. Additionally, it was charged that the deadline had been extended at Gilbert's request. Chief among the critics of the Gilbert plan was Senator James J. McGillivray of Black River Falls. He chastised the commission's decision as impractical and wasteful, saying:

What do the people of the state of Wisconsin want of such an expensive and large capitol building? The assembly will not increase in twenty years. The senate will remain the same as it is now. The Supreme court will not need more judges. The bureaus of the state will not grow 10 per cent in any of the departments in twenty years. Then why such a capitol?

There is no call for it except from those who want to build a monument to their stupidity in burdening the people of the state with a high tax for years to come.

Justice Marshall defended the Gilbert plan vociferously and charged that the Milwaukee firms had deviated from the program on important points as well. But the conclusion was inescapable: Gilbert's capitol was simply too large and too expensive.

By early March, the battle lines were drawn between those who favored a suitably grand building for the state and those who favored economy. While legislators balked at the expense of an entirely new structure, the proponents for a new building argued that the present capitol had long been inadequate and that spending $500,000 to repair it was not an economy but rather a waste of money. The extensions to the north and south wings, wrote Madison doctor George Keenan to the Madison Democrat, "ruined the structure's exterior and added nothing more than ill planned, poorly lighted and badly ventilated rooms... Yet it is suggested that these specimens stand as two arms of a Maltese cross, with $1,000,000 blown into the other arms of presumably similar construction and effectually destroy the present dome... Certainly a huge pile of distorted errors costing the state more than $3,000,000. Even as opinion began to turn toward the eventual erection of an entirely new building, some members of the legislature suggested different plans, including a proposal to build a twelve-story steel skyscraper (capable of being enlarged to twenty stories) as a more economical and practical alternative to the "so-called Grecian capitol" that wasted much space in corridors and open areas.

By the end of March, Gilbert sent a lengthy letter to the legislature's Joint Committee on the Capitol and Grounds in which he defended his design and claimed to have followed the program's guidelines completely. He argued that his plan could be erected in sections and submitted five plans for a phased approach to construction. He provided detailed space and cost estimates to refute charges that his plan would require twice the allotted sum and would cost at least one dollar per cubic foot. Although cost remained the most contentious issue, in mid-April Senator McGillivray sought to demonstrate that the Gilbert design would fit the park badly and staked out the footprint of the proposed building. He announced that
it would come within twelve feet of the sidewalk at two points. A few days later, he introduced a bill to appoint a new commission with directives that only a Wisconsin architect be hired and that the capitol be constructed in stages. By the end of April, the Joint Committee on the Capitol and Grounds reported that the legislature had appropriated $600,000 for the immediate construction of a new wing and allocated $10,000 toward a new competition for the design of an entirely new capitol, stipulating that the first wing constructed be a part of the larger design. The cost to replace the east and west wings and to make the north and south habitable until such time as the state decided to build them new was limited to $2.4 million. Hearings on the bill, however, continued to produce hot feelings on both sides. Senator McGillivray continued to dominate the proceedings and proposed to rebuild the west and east wings for just over $700,000. He then went on to criticize harshly the work of the commission. “This commission has been bamboozling this legislature all the winter,” he said. “Think of lawyers taking the place of architects and contractors. They could not build a hen house to cover a hen and keep it dry.” After several proposed amendments calling for a referendum on removal of the capitol from Madison and restricting the competition to Wisconsin architects, the final bill provided an appropriation of $685,000 for construction of either one or two wings, a new commission and the adoption of a long-term plan for an entirely new building that would be completed at a future date and incorporate the wing or wings constructed in the interim.

The commissioners, still frustrated by the criticisms they had received over the past six months, found the new law vague in describing their task and did not want to risk taking any action that might be held against them. For example, the law limited the size of the building but did not specify whether the limits included steps and approaches; another provision prevented any alteration or amendments, even at the commission’s request, to any plan once it had been submitted. Angered at their treatment and at the new law that limited the membership of the commission to five members, Justices Marshall and Winslow resigned. Despite the precarious condition in which the partially ruined capitol now stood, the commission resolved to do nothing until its role and duties were further clarified by the next legislature. Fortunately, Governor La Follette called a special session to meet on 4 December 1905 to deal with these issues. Declaring that “the commission ought not to be left to grope in the dark,” he called the legislators’ attention to the provisions that needed clarification. Repeating that the commissioners’ work would be far too important to be open to future challenges, La Follette urged several modifications to the legislation as absolutely necessary. The legislature responded quickly and fixed the offending sections. It set a limit of 100,000 square feet on floor space and 6,000,000 cubic feet for the entire building. It did not change the cost limit of 40 cents per cubic foot and the limit of 20,000 square feet for the dome. The legislature also authorized the commission to employ a secretary to act as its administrative officer.

Second Capitol Competition, 1906

The commission regrouped as the Capitol Commission (distinct from the earlier Capitol Improvement Commission) and met in January 1906. Under the authority granted by the legislature, the commission hired Lew Porter to prepare a program for a new competition. He was to be paid $500 and the work was to be completed in three weeks. Some troubles lingered. Cass Gilbert protested this turn in events, demanding copies of the law authorizing the competition and requesting that the commission wait until he prepared a full statement outlining “what I believe to be my rights under the competition which was held last year.” The commission refused to consider such a delay, but privately Ingram wrote Gilbert that the members of the commission also felt “very much annoyed at what was done by the legislature.” Ingram urged Gilbert to revise his earlier design for submission in the new competition and, further, suggested he talk with former commissioners Marshall and Winslow. Meanwhile, Marshall was doing some lobbying of his own. At the commission’s 13 February 1906 meeting, Marshall described the advantages of stipulating that the capitol be in the form of a St. Andrew’s cross, with the wings extending from the central dome to the corners of the square. The commission concurred and instructed Porter to include a diagram in the program showing the proposed capitol in this configuration.

4.18 Lew Porter, circa 1900
The Capitol Commission turned to Madison architect Lew P. Porter for an estimate to repair the burned-out structure. Porter, here with his wife Carolyn and children Paul and Mary, later became secretary of the Capitol Commission and oversaw the construction from beginning to end.

4.19 Roujet Marshall in his office, circa 1900
Two supreme court justices served on the Capitol Improvement Commission from 1903 to 1905: John B. Winslow and Roujet Marshall. The invincible Marshall devoted much time to the commission and afterward continued to make emphatic suggestions concerning the court’s new quarters in the East Wing.
Porter rapidly got to work on developing the program, and at its 20 February meeting the commission made several other critical decisions. The competition was to be limited to five firms and each entrant would receive $1,200, with the winner’s compensation to be applied to the cost of the plans and drawings. The architect’s fee would be 5 percent of the total building cost exclusive of decorations and furnishings. The five firms invited to compete were those that had submitted plans in 1904 (Cass Gilbert, Ferry & Clas, H. C. Koch & Co.) McKim, Mead and White of New York and Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge of Boston. Four additional firms were selected, should any of the first five firms decline the invitation: Carrère & Hastings of New York; George B. Post & Sons of New York; Babb, Cook and Willard of New York; and Peabody and Stearns of Boston. In order to forestall some of the difficulties that had beset the earlier competition, each received a copy of the program along with a copy of the laws authorizing the competition. The program was distributed by the middle of March, at which time Porter visited the firms in New York, Boston, Chicago and Milwaukee to make sure the terms of the competition were understood. Cass Gilbert refused to participate, finally ending that controversy. Porter personally lobbied McKim, Mead and White and Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge to submit designs. Eventually the five competing firms were Koch & Co.; Ferry & Clas; Peabody and Stearns; Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge; and George B. Post & Sons. The requirements of the second building program differed significantly from the first. In the second, it was made clear that the damaged building would be replaced entirely. The program directed that “it will be necessary that the new building be so designed that in its construction... accommodations [for government departments] be not destroyed until new ones are provided.” The demolition of the existing building would take place in phases tied to new construction. The program indicated that the west wing of the old capitol was an unoccupied ruin, with the senate meeting on the first floor of the east wing and the assembly on the second floor. The north wing contained what remained of the Free Library Commission offices, the law library having been removed after the fire; other state agencies were crowded into offices on the first through fourth floors of the south wing. During the time of the competition, the commission was in the process of making additional rooms available on the fourth floor of the north wing.

The new structure was to be built in five phases. Each of the equally sized wings and the dome would be handled as discrete construction projects with work beginning in the West and East Wings. The program called for the new Capitol to consist of a full basement, a ground story to house work rooms and minor departments, a principal story to contain constitutional officers and the more important departments, second and third stories to contain the legislative chambers, their related rooms and the judicial department. The senate chamber was to be in the east wing, the assembly chamber in the west and the supreme court in the north. The program included a detailed breakdown of the space required by each department, as assigned by floor, with square footage allocations that could not vary by more than 10 percent. Undoubtedly aware of the controversy surrounding Cass Gilbert’s design, some of the participating architectural firms requested clarification. Peabody and Stearns asked about the placement of the principal and other entrances, the size of the assembly and senate and for a drawing of the current dome. Post & Sons asked for further explanation of the instructions for the perspective drawing and for the space restrictions for the central portion. Space allocation issues, for both exterior and interior features, seem to have concerned the architects more than any other.

Plans and drawings arrived by 15 June, and on 29 June the commission directed Porter to select an “expert architect” to examine the plans and prepare a report for the commission. Porter secured the services of famed Chicago architect Daniel Burnham. Burnham’s detailed report favored Post & Sons’ design on nearly every count. Burnham appreciated the broad terrace in the design as being a suitable base upon which the capitol would sit “with much dignity,” and while the other designs showed monumental stairs at the end of each wing, Post & Sons created four formal entrances in the corners of the wings, at the first story level, positioned beneath shallow domes and above a ground-level porte
cochère. Pedestrian entrances were located at the ends of each of the wings. Burnham also found Post's Dome more impressive and in almost perfect proportion to the rest of the building. Although he criticized Post's use of exterior sculpture and tourelles above the pavilions, Burnham found Post's design particularly pleasing:

The Post design... shows something more than mere scholarship; it has a quality that goes with its terrace, which, as I intimated above, is unusually good. This is due to the just treatment of the dome and platform through which the dome rises. This general mass is impressive and beautiful. In detail the ribs are too heavy, at least they so appear on the perspective, although Post's [sic] elevations indicate more delicacy.

Burnham complimented Post & Sons' interior for its two principal corridors running through the entire length of the building on the ground floor and for how the architect addressed the problem of dark, windowless interior spaces by creating storage vaults, leaving the spaces along the exterior walls free for offices. On the first floor, Burnham disliked Post & Sons’ single grand staircase that interrupted the view through the building, but Burnham noted that this was easily remedied by including twin staircases on either side of the corridor, as had been done between ground and first floors.47 Porter had been requested to give his opinion, and he, too, found the Post & Sons' design the most admirable, although he indicated concern about the grand stairs, an observation consistent with Burnham's.48 On 17 July, after much discussion, the commission voted to employ George B. Post & Sons as architect and Lew F. Porter as permanent secretary, beginning what developed into a cordial and highly productive working relationship.49

Capitol Construction, 1906-17

On 24 July 1906, James Otis Post (a son of George B. Post) met with the commission and discussed the plans for the Capitol in detail. The commission requested some amendments and authorized a survey to ensure the proper placement of the Capitol precisely in the center of the Square, thereby correcting an error that had existed since 1837. It asked that the Senate Chamber be relocated from the East to the South Wing and that the library be moved from the North to the East Wing. The next day, the commission authorized Porter to have the demolition begun on the ruined west wing of the extant building.50 The commission was required to make some important decisions in the early stages of design that would have a significant impact on features and materials throughout the building. One of the most important involved selection of exterior stone. The commission spent five months and traveled throughout the East to make an informed decision.

By 1906, the configuration of the commission had changed, but it remained a progressively minded body that was committed to excellence. Justices Marshall and Winslow had resigned from the predecessor group in 1904 and did not become members of the new Capitol Commission. When La Follette left the governorship to take a seat in the United States Senate in 1906, his successor, Governor James O. Davidson (1906-11), became an ex officio member. Davidson shared La Follette’s progressive political views and as a long-time state official (he had served in the assembly and as state treasurer and lieutenant governor) was keenly interested in the development of the new Capitol. Edwin Reynolds also resigned in 1906 and was replaced by George H. D. Johnson, a partner in the Milwaukee grain business with E. P. Bacon. Johnson was tireless in his devotion to the commission and was a regular correspondent of Porter’s. Upon the death of Herbert Chynoweth in 1906, Davidson appointed former United States Senator William Freeman Vilas, one of Wisconsin’s wealthiest men, who was well known for his sophisticated taste and appreciation of the arts. Vilas traveled frequently to New York to meet with Post and provide his opinions on some of the more highly finished areas of the Capitol and the artwork program.

4.21 James Otis Davidson, circa 1908
When Robert La Follette resigned to accept a seat in the United States Senate, "Jim" Davidson became governor. Like La Follette, Davidson was a progressive Republican and actively facilitated the construction of the new Capitol. Davidson oversaw much of the construction of the West and East Wings and appointed two influential commissioners, William F. Vilas and Magnus Swenson.
On 8 August 1906 the commission contracted with the Madison firm of Corona & Oliva to wreck what remained of the old west wing. Work began on 11 August 1906 and was completed by 15 September. A month later, Porter hired the same company to excavate the basement of the new West Wing. Work began on 18 October. Difficulties were encountered in January when workers discovered an abandoned well and subterranean storage vault that required additional digging and alterations to foundation plans. Further complicating the excavation was the steep slope to the west corner of Capitol Park. The corner of Mifflin and Carroll Streets, at the head of State Street, was at an elevation 24 feet below the center of the park. Also, because the new West Wing would extend 100 feet farther west than the previous building, additional excavation was required, as were very deep foundations. Once these were in place they remained exposed until soil from the East Wing excavation and other sources could be brought in to fill the slope and establish a base for the terrace. It had been nearly three years since the fire, and the commission, anxious to begin construction, awarded the contract for the concrete foundation walls to the Foster Construction Company of Milwaukee in early December, even though Post & Sons had not yet determined how the wings would join with the Central Portion and the foundation plans were incomplete when Foster Construction began pouring concrete.

Selection of an exterior stone for the Capitol presented a challenge for both aesthetic and political reasons. Using a light-colored stone was a foregone conclusion and thoroughly in keeping with classically inspired, monumental public buildings at the time. But there was another precedent to consider. Both of the previous Madison capitol had been constructed of Wisconsin stone, the 1837 structure with stone from a quarry north of Lake Mendota and the 1857-69 structure with Prairie du Chien sandstone. On 24 January 1907, Senator James A. Wright of Merrill and Assemblyman Edward W. Le Roy of Marinette introduced bills directing the commission to select a native Wisconsin stone for exterior construction. On 25 January the commission placed advertisements in national and state publications for granite, marble or limestone; a few days later the Capitol Commission advertised in state publications for cut red granite for the terrace and steps. Bids were due on 16 February.

George Post was present when the commission opened stonework bids on 26 February 1907 and spent several hours examining them. None of the fifteen firms seeking the larger contract offered a Wisconsin stone, although Post found a local red granite sample adequate for the steps and terrace. The architect had indicated his preference for a white stone that would be suitable for delicate carving without cracking; his first choice was white marble, his second, North Jay white granite. Because all of the bids exceeded the cost limit imposed by the legislature, the commission called for new bids due on 18 March. In an attempt to forestall legislative disapproval, the commission invited some legislators to join a group on a trip to inspect public buildings in the East in order to gather information on potential exterior stones. On 25 March, Governor Davidson, Commissioner William F. Vilas, Senators John M. Whitehead of Janesville and Edward E. Burns of Platteville, Assemblymen Allen S. Baker of Evansville and Levi H. Bancroft of Richland Center, and Commission Secretary Porter met in Chicago and departed for Georgia, Washington, D.C., New York City and Vermont. The delegation both visited several quarries and inspected buildings in Washington and New York. After the commission rejected the second round of bids on 10 April, Vilas tried to expedite matters and it was apparently he who negotiated more favorable prices with the Woodbury Granite Co. of Hardwick, Vermont. After conferring with Post, the commission selected White Bethel granite from Vermont and extended a contract to Woodbury. The Wisconsin firm retracted its offer to supply red granite for the steps and terrace, and the commission included this work in Woodbury Granite’s contract. On 14 May 1907, Woodbury Granite signed a nearly two-million-dollar contract to supply and set the stone for the entire building, including the exterior stairs and balustraded terrace.

Concurrently, work proceeded on the West Wing foundation. Post & Sons provided the plans for the foundation wall at the east end of the wing where it joins the Central Portion and in May 1907, the commission extended Foster Con-
struction’s contract (without the usual competitive bidding) to complete the work. The foundations were completed in July 1907, and with the selection of the facing stone, exterior construction could get underway. Additional grillage in the basement floor was added later. The commission awarded the general construction contract to Madison builder Timothy C. McCarthy, who had worked with Porter on a number of other structures; the contract included masonry, structural steel, roofing and window framing in the amount of $128,668 with a completion date of 10 January 1908. The steel was supplied by the Worden-Allen Co. of Milwaukee, and problems with quality and shipping of the steel delayed the construction of the wing. Delays plagued the granite work as well. Post & Sons insisted on high quality stone free of black spots for the lower courses, and the delay in steel construction prohibited the erection of derricks needed for setting granite. Exterior construction was completed in March 1908, although the granite columns and pediment remained unfinished until dirt could be brought in to build up the terrace.

In February 1908, the commission let several contracts for the interior. The contract for masonry went to McNulty Bros. Company of Chicago and the carpentry contract to A. D. and J. V. Frederickson of Madison. The commission hired the firm of Heintzke & Bowen of New York to provide the circular, leaded-glass ceiling above the Assembly Chamber. Most of this work was completed by the end of 1908, with a few carpentry details lingering until early February 1909. The commission’s desire was to have the West Wing finished by January 1909 to accommodate the legislative schedule, and the goal was essentially met. The assembly did meet in its new chamber, and the senate temporarily convened in the first floor business office of the state treasurer. Completing the wing according to schedule was important as the commission wanted to impress the legislature and gain a continuing appropriation.

Installing interior metal and stone proved to be troublesome, and delays threatened the target completion date. The stone and marble work was carried out by Fred Andres & Co. of Milwaukee under a $107,500 contract. Post & Sons’ insistence on its approving all stone samples caused Andres to lose time, but Andres also had difficulty employing a large enough crew. The work in the Assembly Chamber was the most complicated; Post & Sons undertook repeated design changes, including the stone for the walls. Initially, they were to be sheathed with White Eschallion marble, but this was modified to South Dover. The architect also made design modifications to appease Commissioner Vilas, who objected to using Tennessee Grey marble in the lobby since the same stone was also being used in the toilet rooms. When it became clear that the chamber’s stone floors would not be installed by January, the commission had temporary concrete floors laid. As late as 1911, Andres was still replacing defective marble in the Assembly Chamber and Parlor.

The decorative interior metalwork proved problematic as well. Vulcan Iron & Steel Works of Milwaukee received the contract for $32,500 and missed its deadline, causing delays in the masonry and carpentry and leaving major portions of the iron work unfinished, including elevator fronts and assembly gallery railings. In both instances, temporary fixtures were installed and in place when the legislature convened in January. Mechanical systems also caused difficulty. Post & Sons had designed the heating and ventilating systems meticulously, and in 1908 the commission awarded the contract to Charles Wilkins & Co. of Minneapolis for $27,891. Almost immediately Wilkins & Co. began proposing changes, which infuriated George Post. Eventually the systems were installed on time and as specified. Most of the plumbing work was completed by January as well, installed by H. Kelly & Co. of Minneapolis under a $14,141 contract, but the drinking fountains remained unfinished until April 1909. Electrical and elevator work was also completed by the January deadline.

Although decorative stone and metal elements were central to Post & Sons’ interior design, the architect also planned to feature artwork prominently in important public spaces. In most instances, George Post personally recommended artists, many of whom had worked with him on previous projects or were generally known to the eastern architectural
establishment. Some of the artists who provided works for the Capitol belonged to the Century Association, a New York
men’s club in which Post held membership. The mural in the Assembly Chamber was the first major piece of artwork
installed in the Capitol. In 1907, Post arranged for New York artist Edwin Howland Blashfield to develop sketches for
a historical/allegorical painting for the wall behind the speaker’s desk. Post and Blashfield had collaborated previously
when Blashfield created a mural for Post’s Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition.
The commission viewed Blashfield’s sketches in February 1908 and immediately authorized Post to negotiate a contract.
A week later, Blashfield signed a $15,000 agreement with a deadline of 31 December 1908. The mural was to depict
the resources of Wisconsin’s past, present and future. Vilas worked closely with Blashfield on the thematic content
details of the mural. When Blashfield, known for his attention to historical detail, inquired about the clothing that
might have been worn by French explorers, Jesuit priests, farmers, miners, lumberjacks and soldiers, Vilas obtained
copies of photographs and drawings from the superintendent of the State Historical Society, Reuben Gold Thwaites.
While in New York in July, Vilas viewed the work in progress and was impressed with the results. Photographs of the
completed work arrived in Madison in December 1908, and a few days later the painting, consisting of eight canvases,
arrived; they were mounted behind the speaker’s desk on 23 December 1908. Blashfield delivered a lecture that night
to explain the long-anticipated mural to the public.94

Post recommended another colleague for designing and installing decorative finish in the Assembly Chamber and its
related rooms. He was Elmer Garsey, who, like Blashfield, had worked on buildings at the Columbian Exposition.
He also had decorated the Library of Congress building in Washington, D. C. and the capitols of Minnesota and Iowa.
The commission directed Post to negotiate a decorating contract not to exceed $10,000, and Garsey at first refused
to do the work for such a small sum. At this point Post urged the commission not to neglect what he considered
a critical element of the building: “[T]here is no expenditure connected with a building which has as much effect with
the public in stamping the character of the whole work . . . as well conceived and executed and properly restrained
decorative painting.” Eventually a compromise was reached, and Garsey agreed to decorate the Assembly Chamber,
the Assembly Parlor, the Assembly Lobby and the row of rooms for the speaker, the chief clerk and the sergeant at
arms on the north side of the second floor for $15,500.95

Garsey’s work was in keeping with the decorative elements already in place; he painted the plastered portions of
the chamber and loggia a “stone color” with details of “dull blue, gray green, old red and other colors” in the soffits and
ceiling coffers. He placed four round canvases depicting bald eagles in the pendentives of the Chamber, and on either
end of the loggia he painted inscriptions from Abraham Lincoln and historical writer Josiah Gilbert Holland. He used
gold-leaf highlights in many areas. Garsey carefully integrated the images and colors with the marble and woodwork,
and he recommended crimson carpets and draperies throughout the assembly area. For the Assembly Parlor, Garsey
chose a restrained color and decorative scheme to maintain consistency with the chamber. The ceiling was gray-blue
with a decorative border of garlands and ribbons; the walls were painted crimson with a gilded damask pattern; and
the raised portions of the carved walnut paneling were gilded. The offices on the north side of the second floor were
finished in varied but harmonious colors with stenciled borders. The speaker’s office was the most elaborately decorated
with a buff-colored pattern over dark red paint.96 In January of 1909, members of the assembly arrived to find a new
chamber, elaborately decorated with colorful marbles, was the centerpiece of a new wing that included five floors of
offices, committee rooms and storage vaults. Despite its adherence to an ambitious construction schedule, the com-
mission was badgered by assemblymen who wanted a larger chamber and by supreme court justices who demanded
alterations to the program, a pattern of demands that would continue through 1910.

While construction of the West Wing proceeded, the Capitol Commission turned its attention toward later phases of
construction, and Post & Sons began developing drawings and specifications for the East Wing, the second phase of the project. The initial appropriation allowed for construction of two wings simultaneously, and the commission was anxious to keep work moving forward in order to secure a steady stream of funds. On 18 December 1907, it called for proposals for wrecking the old east wing. Less than a week later, the commission awarded a contract to J. W. Mitchell of Madison; the contract included not only the demolition of the wing but also the construction of the tunnel that would connect the new off-site power plant with the basement of the East Wing. By late February 1908, the old east wing had been razed and in early March 1908 the commission awarded a $51,932 contract to the Modern Steel Structural Co. of Waukesha for manufacturing and erecting East Wing steelwork. On 3 March 1908, William Keyses of Madison received the contract to excavate the basement and make trenches for the basement walls, and on 6 March, J. W. Mitchell was awarded the concrete foundation contract. Excavation began on 7 March, and foundation work began in early April. The masonry and carpentry contract went to A. D. and J. V. Frederickson of Madison, and the work included exterior brick walls, carpentry, roofing, clay tile floors and interior walls. Although Mitchell did not finish the concrete foundation walls until late May or early June, the Frederickson firm began laying brick atop the completed foundation walls as early as mid-April. Masons from Woodbury Granite began attaching exterior granite facing on 9 June. Bricklaying was completed by the end of September, but the roof was not put into place for several months.

Although the brick masonry was finished in the fall of 1908, the granite facing was not completed until the summer of 1909. In early January 1909 a strike at the Vermont quarry halted deliveries and slowed granite placement on the East Wing façades. The delay vexed Porter who complained to the company that there were too few masons on the job and that the cut stones arrived in such a disorganized manner that the workers could not set them efficiently. In March 1909 Porter visited Vermont to investigate the delays. There he discovered that the firm was having difficulty manufacturing the solid granite drums that would form the columns of the East and West Wings. By April 1909, Woodbury Granite had erected a trestle and derricks to set the stone on the portico of the East Wing. On 2 July 1909, all the stone was in place. The next day, workers moved the derricks from the east façade to the West Wing to begin setting stone on the west portico.

The stones for both the East and West Wing pediments were set in place before they were carved into sculptures. These groups were designed by Karl Bitter of Weehawken, New Jersey. The commission had authorized George Post to negotiate with Bitter, who was his long-time colleague, for the design of a pediment group in the East Wing in the summer of 1908. Bitter agreed to design the group and oversee the carving for $16,500 and began work on it in September 1908. Bitter completed his model, entitled "Liberty Supported by the Law," by early February 1909. The long delays in setting the East Wing granite frustrated the sculptor, as his carvers could not begin work until the stones were in place. This did not occur until the end of June 1909. While carvers worked on the East Wing pediment, setters for Woodbury Granite began placing stone for the sculptural group intended for the West Wing. Woodbury Granite foreman Daniel Logan, anxious to complete the work quickly, engaged the setting crew on Sunday, 24 October 1909. At about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, as Logan and another setter were placing a four-ton stone, one of the stones that had already been set cracked and fell eighty feet, taking with it most of other stones in the pediment. Logan was killed in the accident and six other workers escaped unharmed; the financial loss was estimated at between $20,000 and $25,000. It was unclear what caused the accident, because apparently no stones had been set improperly. Porter came to the conclusion that the cornice stone fell because it was "overbalanced" by the large stones that were to be carved, and he confidentially blamed Woodbury Granite and its employees.

When the Maryland Casualty Company began investigating the accident, things became difficult. Post & Sons suggested that Porter had been rushing the work; Commissioner Ingram thought that the men simply had been careless.
Woodbury Granite manager George Bickford blamed Bitter for failing to rough-cut the stones before putting them in place. Maryland Casualty sought a settlement of $10,000, the statutory limit. Woodbury Granite balked at paying such a sum and suggested that the fault lay with Logan himself. As for completing the sculpture, after much discussion among the commissioners, Bitter, Post and Bickford, a shed went up on the northwest side of the park for the cutters. By late March 1910, the new stones began to arrive, and the entire work was completed and installed by the end of the year. In response to the accident, the sculptures in the West, South and North Wing pediments were rough-carved in a shed and later hoisted into place for finishing, thereby reducing the weight of the stones being set.

As construction of the exterior moved forward, Post & Sons turned careful attention to designing the interior of the East Wing since it was to house the offices of both the governor and the Wisconsin Supreme Court. By the fall of 1908, the commission awarded contracts for the East Wing interior. J. H. Findorff of Madison received a $36,500 contract for interior finish carpentry and Duffin Iron Works of Chicago was hired to provide the ornamental iron work for $24,900. McNulty Bros. of Chicago secured the masonry and plasterwork contract for $58,500, and H. Kelly & Co. of Minneapolis received the plumbing contract for $20,700. Elevators were installed by the Kaestner & Hecht Company of Chicago for $15,174, and the Downey & Kruse Co. of Milwaukee provided heating and ventilating systems for $29,150; the electrical contract went to Paul E. Harloff of Madison for $14,560. The largest contract, that for stone and marble, went to the Grant Marble Co. of Milwaukee for $134,219. The contract for the leaded-glass ceiling in the Supreme Court Hearing Room went to James Dougherty of New York.

As work on the exterior of both the East and West Wings was being completed in 1909, interior construction got underway in the East Wing. Installation of galvanized iron ductwork and other heating and ventilating apparatus began in late November 1908; temporary heat was turned on in March. By April 1909, the clay tile floors were being covered in concrete, and Grant Marble began setting stone in early June. James Dougherty had the glass ceiling in the Supreme Court Hearing Room in place by August, despite several changes in the glass and the need to construct a customized iron framework. By mid-summer 1909, however, progress began to fall behind. A strike delayed the setting of marble and decorative stone, and Duffin Iron also fell far behind schedule. By the end of the year, the interior masonry and plastering were complete, but the iron and marble work continued to lag, causing delays to the finish-carpentry schedule.

Progress on the wing was further delayed by demands from the justices of the supreme court. Although they had resigned from the commission, Justices Marshall and Winslow involved themselves fully in the design of their quarters and expected to be consulted on most matters. Their involvement led to several changes. For instance, the justices insisted on a pneumatic tube system to connect their chambers with the law library on the third and fourth floors; the contract for this system was signed in November 1909. Installation led to a delay in pouring the concrete floors since openings for the tubes had to be included. The design of the law library also required modifications when it became clear that the vast collection would not fit on the third floor. To make additional stacks on the fourth floor more readily accessible, the architects added an internal stair.

The most complex room in the East Wing, the Executive Chamber, was finished on the first floor between late 1908 and early 1909. Plans had been in the works for months. On 5 May 1908, Post wrote William Vilas, "we are just starting to make designs for the Governor's Room" and he sought Vilas' opinion on using a room in the Doge's Palace in Venice as a prototype. Vilas evidently approved, and Post moved forward with the design of the Executive Chamber modeled after the Hall of the College designed by Andrea Palladio in 1575. The Wisconsin Capitol Executive Chamber was finished with cherrywood walls and an elaborate molded and gilded plaster ceiling that richly framed
paintings. Paintings were also inset on the walls. J. H. Findorff of Madison installed the woodwork as part of its carpentry contract. The wood wall panels and elements were originally to be white pine but were changed to cherry; pilasters and moldings were carved, although some of the high-relief elements were constructed of wood composition, and the three-dimensional ceiling was plaster. The parquet floor was installed by E. R. Newcomb, a subcontractor for Findorff. Newcomb attempted to use ¼-inch wood veneer rather than solid wood, but Post & Sons rejected the veneer. Constructed as designed, the floor was composed of a tile field with strips of quarter-sawn white oak and light and dark mahogany. In the early summer of 1909, the commission instructed Post to begin negotiations with artists for murals in the Executive Chamber and the Supreme Court Hearing Room. In late July, Post reported that he had secured Francis D. Millet to paint the hearing room murals, and Millet appeared before the commission and showed sketches depicting the evolution of law.

By mid-October 1908, Post & Sons had finished drawings for the steelwork for the South Wing and Central Portion. The commission decided that the firm that received the contract should plan to deliver the steel by 1 August 1909. Drawings for excavation and foundations for the South Wing and Central Portion were completed by late June 1909. In planning the construction of the Central Portion, the commission hit a roadblock in dismantling the old dome. Although Lew Porter had placed advertisements for removing it, no firms offered proposals, so on 25 June, in order to keep work moving at a steady pace, the commission engaged a “competent foreman” and a crew of laborers to undertake the demolition. The first piece of the cast iron dome was removed on 31 August 1909, and by 15 September approximately one-quarter of the structure had been removed and delivered to the university campus, where its installation on Main Hall was being planned. By December the entire dome had been moved at a cost of $6,000, and the commission hired the Madison firm of Doran and McDonald to remove the “foundation work under the old dome,” for $1,000. In early January 1910 the contractors had taken down the walls of the old central portion to the level of the first floor ceiling. At this point work had to stop temporarily until the Capitol Heat and Power Plant could provide heat to the still-occupied north wing of the previous capitol because steam pipes and electrical conduit ran to the north wing from the old south wing beneath the basement ceiling under the Rotunda. Continuing demolition would have cut off utilities to the old north wing.

Before demolition of the south wing could begin, the dome had to be completely removed. On 8 August 1910, the commission employed J. W. Mitchell to demolish the wing for $3,500 and the salvaged material. South wing occupants moved out by the first week of September and demolition began about a week later. Woodbury Granite finished cutting stone for the South Wing and adjoining pavilions by early 1911. By April 111, the South Wing foundations were completed and structural steel was in place to the second floor; the ends of the beams near exterior walls were temporarily shored with timbers until placement of exterior masonry occurred. Also by April, the foundations for the Southwest Pavilion had been completed, although the excavation for the Southeast Pavilion was still underway. Throughout the summer, exterior construction went quickly and by mid-September, the steel, brickwork and granite cladding were complete on the wing and the two pavilions up to the cornice level.

Post & Sons’ structural specifications for the Central Portion called for cut limestone in the large piers that would support the weight of the Dome. Porter objected to the expense of limestone and suggested reinforced concrete instead. He consulted Professor Frederick E. Turneau, the dean of the engineering department at the University of Wisconsin, on the advisability of using reinforced concrete. Turneau calculated the maximum stress at 260 pounds per square inch (psi) for dead load, making concrete an acceptable alternative to the more expensive limestone. He also noted that “engineers are universally employing concrete and reinforced concrete in preference to stone masonry.” In February, Post & Sons delivered revised plans for the concrete piers, which added 900 tons of steel, an amendment that Porter

4.27 (top) Executive Chamber, 1917
Post designed the most elaborate room in the Capitol for use as the governor’s reception room. Modeled on a room in the Doge’s Palace in Venice, the Executive Chamber contained spaces on the walls and ceiling for murals depicting the state’s history and attributes. The room was finished in 1911 and the murals were installed by January 1913.

4.28 (right) Central Portion demolition, 1909
Dismantling of the old dome began in August 1909 with the removal of the 33-foot flagpole. The dome was taken apart carefully and stored behind Main (later Bucum) Hall at the University of Wisconsin; it was to replace the smaller dome on that building, but was eventually sold for scrap.
found "most disquieting and disturbing." Porter delivered the revised plans to Modern Steel, and the president of the firm estimated that he could have the steel on site by 15 June 1910. The commission's executive committee directed the firm to do so.96

In August drawings for the South Wing and Central Portion (excluding those for the Dome itself) reached the commission, which began advertising for bids for some of the work. On 21 September the commission awarded the contract for the foundations of both the South Wing and the Central Portion to T. C. McCarthy under the condition that he alter his proposal to provide the reinforced concrete piers rather than the stone piers described in the earlier specifications. Work on the Central Portion foundations began by early September 1910, and later that month, the commission signed a $97,000 contract with Modern Steel for the Central Portion structural steel. The Pittsburgh Testing Laboratory was later retained to test the steel. Work progressed rapidly. Much of the steel for the drum had been fabricated early and stored on the Capitol grounds awaiting installation. In May, the commission awarded T. C. McCarthy the contract for Central Portion masonry after he agreed to reduce the cost of his proposal by using scaffolding already on site. By mid-September, the steel trusses of the Dome were entirely in place, although riveting continued for the next three weeks; the concrete of the supporting towers had been poured to a level of nearly seventy feet. With the placement of the radial trusses forming the shape of the inner and outer domes, the general outline of the new Capitol appeared and the public got its first glimpse of what the completed building would look like.97

While the Central Portion and South Wing got underway, completion of the East Wing interior moved slowly forward. The supreme court justices involved themselves fully in the design process leading to the interior decoration of their spaces, a situation that often frustrated both George Post and Lew Porter. The biggest issue concerned the mural paintings in the hearing room. Despite the fact that the commission had hired New York artist Francis Millet to produce four murals, in November 1909 the justices informed the commission that they would prefer the established custom of hanging portraits of former justices behind the bench. Although the justices' request challenged Post's artistic vision for the room, he nonetheless produced a scheme for incorporating the portraits; Porter decided to postpone the final decision as long as possible, hoping to convince the justices to move ahead with the mural.98 Throughout 1910 the justices remained adamant. Their spokesman was former commissioner Justice Marshall, who wrote Porter of "the great mistake of displacing portraits of the Justices from the court room walls." Post suggested a number of alternatives for the portraits, including hanging them in a "Legal Hall of Fame" at the entrance to the State Law Library. In April, Post himself wrote a lengthy appeal to Justice Marshall indicating that the room had been designed and largely constructed before it was known the justices desired placing the portraits in the room. He also reminded Marshall that the space should "be interesting, imposing and highly architectural, and that from this point of view a better result can be obtained with proper decorative paintings than with a display of portraits of the Judges." Moreover, Post argued the portraits would be hung quite high and would be hard to see; a crowd of onlookers craning their necks to peer up at the distant faces would only distract them from seeing the monumental dignity of the room. The justices refused to accept Post's arguments, and the architect continued to work on developing a way to hang the portraits as unobtrusively as possible.99

The justices also asked Post to redesign their bench in a way that interfered with his larger scheme for the hearing room. In Post's original scheme, the justices were to sit behind a bench that sat on a 10-inch-high podium with their chairs positioned to correspond to the spaces between the eight polished French Benou marble columns on the wall behind them. After the bench was redesigned to be another foot taller, they then complained that it was not long enough. In the end, Porter and Post gave into these demands; the finished bench was 28 feet long and placed on a platform 22 inches high.100
Once this issue was settled, the justices indicated they wanted their consultation room to function also as a reference library with ample shelving. Disappointed, Post wrote, “In other State Capitols we find this room to be attractively designed and furnished as a meeting place for consultation among the Judges, in which the portraits of the Judges are hung.” After Post pointed out that the approximately three-thousand books the justices wished to have in the room would require floor-to-ceiling bookcases and ladders, Marshall sent a chilly letter insisting that books should take precedence over decorations. By this time, Post had already altered the design to include 7-foot bookcases around the perimeter of the room. The commission also approved the justices’ request for a wooden passageway connecting the old north wing with the new East Wing so that the justices could move more easily between their old and new quarters."

In the meantime, Post began to make progress on his program for the Supreme Court Hearing Room murals. During the summer of 1911, he met with Chief Justice Winslow to discuss hanging the portraits in the lobby. In late December,

4.31 Supreme court hearing room, second Madison capitol, circa 1893
The need to create new spaces for the supreme court and the State Law Library provided the impetus for establishing the Capitol Improvement Commission in 1903. The justices were compelled later to involve themselves in practically every detail of the design of their new quarters. They initially preferred the old custom of using the courtroom to display portraits of former justices, but Post and Porter eventually persuaded them to accept mural paintings.

4.32 Postcard, Supreme Court Hearing Room (detail), circa 1915
By 1912, the justices of the Wisconsin Supreme Court moved to their ornate new chamber decorated with bookmatched marble panels and a leaded-glass ceiling. The spaces intended for the murals remained empty until Albert Hertler installed his paintings depicting the practice of law in four historic periods. The murals were placed in the

4.33 Post & Sons, Concept drawing for the Supreme Court Hearing Room, 1908
The original design of the justices' bench had them sitting close together on chairs aligned with the niches created by a series of small columns of French Benou marble in the wall behind. The justices objected and insisted on a "more commodious" arrangement with seating that was higher from the floor and more desk space for each justice.
Post followed up by sending Winslow sketches of how the portraits might be presented. On 20 January 1912, Winslow wrote Post that hanging the portraits in the lobby was "entirely satisfactory." Post and Porter gave in to the justices on several smaller issues but were successful in the most important aspect of the room, securing the murals. The Executive Chamber, too, lagged. In August 1911, after some prodding by Governor Francis McGovern (1911-15) the commission awarded a contract to Elmer Garmsey for decorating the Executive Chamber and its antechamber. As early as 1909, Garmsey had begun to develop a decorative scheme based on Post’s Venetian theme; he proposed a gilded ceiling and cornice with the walls and pilasters to be painted a reddish-brown and given an antique finish with gold-leaf ornament. Although he had not yet signed a contract, Garmsey remained attentive to developments and in 1910 warned against putting a white primer coat on the walls. Work began late in September 1911; Garmsey arrived in mid-October to supervise. Late in the summer of 1911, the commission selected Hugo Ballin of Saugatuck, Connecticut to provide the oil paintings for the room. George Post’s first choice appears to have been Howard Pyle, but after this artist’s death in 1911 Post recommended Ballin, who signed his contract on 3 January 1912; in it, he agreed to furnish twenty-seven oil paintings of varying sizes for $25,000. Although Garmsey completed his work quickly, he was unable to receive final payment until the murals were installed. Garmsey returned to Madison in October 1912 after the ceiling murals were in place, and he promised to return after the wall murals also were installed. He was ill in the fall of 1913 when the wall murals were finally affixed; it is unknown whether Garmsey returned to Madison.

George Post was committed to a comprehensive decorative finish scheme for the building, but as the time approached for occupancy of the East and West Wings, it was clear that a temporary solution was needed. Elmer Garmsey had already completed the finishes for the Assembly Chamber and related spaces in the West Wing and was slated to implement the scheme planned for the Executive Chamber. The executive committee instructed Porter to secure a general plan for interim decorations for the first floor of the East Wing, excluding the Executive Chamber. It was also decided that the first floor of the East Wing, excluding the Executive Chamber, would be completed and furnished at once. As early as 1910, Conrad Schmitt of Milwaukee presented his proposal to the committee, promising to do the painting and decorative finish work in three weeks for $2,650. The committee agreed, and Schmitt’s crew began work a few days later. On 23 July, Porter asked Schmitt to develop a proposal for decorating the Supreme Court Hearing Room and Lobby on the second floor of the East Wing; although Schmitt did so, the commission arranged for him to paint the rooms and not apply decoration. Schmitt completed the work that fall, at which point he received contracts to paint the third and fourth floors of the East Wing and first floor of the West Wing. This work evidently took longer to accomplish than anticipated. The secretary of state complained about the “lack of rapidity,” and Porter summoned Schmitt to Madison to discuss progress. Work on both the East and West Wings was completed in early January 1911.

Work on the South Wing exterior was moving forward and by January 1910, Woodbury Granite had cut approximately half the exterior stone and the commission was reviewing plans for the interior. Earlier, in September 1909, the commission had signed a $16,500 contract with sculptor Adolph A. Weinman of New York to complete the South Wing pediment group. By February 1910, Weinman had prepared his model, and Post sent a photograph of it to Madison and urged the commission to approve the design immediately so Woodbury Granite could begin cutting the stone; the commission approved the group the following month. The model arrived in Madison in June 1911, and carvers rough-carved the figures in a shed near the rail yards before the partially carved blocks were transported to the Capitol to be installed and finished. The work went slowly due to a lack of carvers. In July Porter wrote Weinman that there were only four on site (there had been nine on the west pediment) and Porter was anxious to complete the work as quickly as possible. Weinman came to Madison to inspect the group in November, just after the stones were sufficiently carved to be set into place and finishing was about to occur. By June 1912, the work was complete and the scaffolding removed. By this time, construction had progressed to the point where the new Capitol dominated the site, with almost
three wings completed and the outline of the Dome in place. The old north wing still stood, clearly a relic of a quickly vanishing nineteenth-century past.  

While Dome construction moved forward, the commission turned to a discussion of the exterior sculptural program. In December 1910, at the recommendation of George Post, Helen Farnsworth Mears, a Wisconsin native residing in New York, sent the commissioners a photograph of her model for a statue on the top of the Dome. The design showed a female figure crowned in wheat with both arms raised in blessing. The commission did not receive the work enthusiastically, and even Post expressed concern that the statue’s detail would be lost when viewed from the ground. Mears responded to the criticism with a revised model that she presented personally in January 1911. She offered to complete the figure, now modified to have one hand resting on a shield and a helmet adorned with a badge, and ship it to Madison for $16,500. Although additional changes were requested, Mears left Madison believing the commission was hers despite the lack of a formal contract. By May, Post learned that his first choice, Daniel Chester French, would be available for the work, and the architect changed his mind as to Mears’s suitability. He told the commission that she could not possibly have an acceptable design ready in time, but he urged the commission to compensate her for the time she had spent working on the models. Although Mears developed yet a third model, the commission never saw it. In August, the commission decided to hire Daniel Chester French to design and oversee the casting of a gilded bronze statue for the top of the Dome and paid Mears $1,500 for her preliminary work.  

At nearly the same time, Karl Bitter was working to develop his models for the four statuary groups that would stand at the base of the Dome. In the spring of 1909, Bitter had supplied Post with drawings for the four groups, each to include one standing and two seated figures, and the architect included these on drawings for cut-stone work, issued in March 1909. Over a year later, in December 1910, Woodbury Granite requested that Bitter supply jointing plans so that it could cut and deliver the stones for on-site carving. In February 1911, Bitter provided Porter with a letter that described the symbolic intent of the four groups, each of which represented a quality necessary for good government. Strength was represented by physical power and the idea that “the State has taken part in the past in the great struggles of our country and has lent its powerful arm to fight in its battles.” Complementing Strength was Wisdom, embodied by three contemplative men perusing scrolls and books. Female figures symbolized Faith, intended to represent the importance of religious beliefs and Prosperity and Abundance demonstrating the wealth and fecundity of the state.” Woodbury Granite delivered appropriately sized stones to Madison by 1911, and a crew of artisans carved them in a shed at the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway station on the west side of Madison. Although Bitter himself was an accomplished stone carver, most of the work was carried out by a crew of stonemasons under directed by John Grignola, a longtime associate of Bitter’s. The work was completed in 1912.

By late 1911, the commission also began planning for the monument building intended for the Rotunda. George Post had called for murals in the pendents and a mural for the oculus, the circular opening at the top of the inner Dome. On 23 August 1911, the commission directed him to begin negotiations with painter Henry Siddons Mowbray for the murals in the four pendents; Mowbray was extended an offer of $16,000 but he declined. Post then arranged for Ohio artist Kenyon Cox to create glass mosaics for the pendents; his contract with the commission was signed on 23 January 1912. In Cox, the commission employed yet another nationally renowned artist who brought with him a wealth of experience. He had recently completed a number of murals in public buildings including the Minnesota and Iowa capitol. Cox was also a scholar with published writings on art history and theory, in which he upheld the tenets of classical architecture and ridiculed the trend toward abstraction. Cox threw himself into his Wisconsin work and by November 1912 had completed sketches for all four mosaics and full-sized cartoons for two. In the spring of 1913, Post & Sons decided to enlarge the pendents, a decision that required Cox to modify his designs. The

4.35 Carvers at work on Karl Bitter’s figural groups, circa 1912
Between 1911 and 1913, a group of stone carvers arrived in Madison to work on the four figural groups by Karl Bitter. They carved them in a shed near the Milwaukee Road depot; when completed they were transported to the building and hoisted into place. Carvers were photographed working on (left to right) Faith, Abundance and three elements from Strength.
changes necessitated changing the borders and adding 25 square feet of glass tesserae to each panel. The mosaics were assembled in New York by the Decorative Stained Glass Co. with Cox supervising the work. The first panel was completed and shipped to Madison in June 1913; the others followed in the summer and fall. Unfortunately, Cox outpaced the contractors working on the interior of the Central Portion. Because the Rotunda was not ready for the mosaics, they remained in storage over the winter and awaited installation until the following year.

In October 1911, Post recommended Edwin Blashfield as the muralist for the oculus in the Rotunda. In 1908 Blashfield had completed the well-received Assembly Chamber mural. Pleased with that work, the commission agreed to contract with the artist for the even more prominent circular mural. A fee of $8,000 was established and Blashfield signed his contract in January 1912. Post approved Blashfield’s sketches in August, and he began work immediately on painting the irregularly shaped sections of canvas that would be assembled in Madison. The work was carried out in a rented studio in the Vanderbilt Gallery of the Fine Arts Building on 5th Street in New York. Throughout the summer, Blashfield worked with two assistants, A. E. Foringer and Vincent Adrante, both of whom signed the canvas. Although his contract stipulated that the painting was to be installed by 31 December 1913, the same delays that prevented the Cox mosaics from being installed prevented Blashfield’s mural from being mounted until the fall of 1914.

Meanwhile, Daniel Chester French continued to work on the statue that eventually would be placed on top of the Dome. After some disagreement, French agreed to take responsibility for delivery and placement of the statue and signed a $20,000 contract in August 1912. French’s willingness to place the statue may have arisen from the rapidity of his progress. By that August, he had prepared a half-sized model and believed the statue would be ready for shipment in early 1913. In late August 1912, Post and his son William Stone Post inspected the work at French’s studios near Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Upon seeing the model, Post enthusiastically wrote that it “more than meets our expectations,” and recommended paying French half his fee immediately. The Roman Bronze Works of Greenpoint, New York pointed up French’s 8-foot statue to the 16-foot final size by late March 1913, and the bronze casting was completed by the following May. French, however, was apparently not pleased with the finish and immediately began looking into having the bronze statue gilded. He obtained an estimate of $325 from L. Marcotte and Company of New York and wrote Post about his concerns. Post agreed with French and urged the commission to approve the expense. Perhaps concerned that a bright gold figure would look out of place, Post assured Porter that “after the gold is applied to the bronze it is toned down by glazing and varnish until its excessive brilliancy is destroyed—or at least reduced to a tone which the gilding would assume after quite a number of years[,] exposure to the action of the elements.” In August, Porter approved the extra cost and directed French to proceed.

The selection of artwork for the Capitol took up much of the commission’s time between 1912 and 1913. During these years, the controversy over the supreme court finally reached resolution, the paintings in the Executive Chamber were speedily completed but caused a controversy of their own, and contracts for the sculpture and art for the Central Portion and the Senate Chamber in the South Wing were let. At this point in the Capitol project, issues problematic in the early years, including decisions regarding occupancy, style and materials, had been resolved. By 1912, Porter had learned how to work effectively with multiple occupant groups and coordinate overlapping phases of construction. Increasingly, the problems Porter and the commission encountered were due to scarcity or expense of materials and labor conflicts on the various companies’ work crews. The Woodbury Granite Co. began to delay construction through slow production of granite for the Dome, the most difficult portion of the stonework, after simultaneous construction began on the North Wing. Labor troubles also arose and would cause Porter difficulties for the balance of construction; he wanted the work done quickly but also by the most experienced workers, and some firms tried to replace striking union workers with less qualified ones. Faced with these new challenges, the commission pushed forward.
Although the West and East Wing spaces had been completed two years prior, the artwork program for the East Wing did not truly get underway until early 1912 when Hugo Ballin signed his contract for the paintings in the Executive Chamber. The chamber’s ceiling was to receive allegorical paintings symbolizing the accomplishments and virtues of the state. The walls were to depict historical figures and incidents from Wisconsin history. The commission specified some of the subject matter, including the landing of Jean Nicolet near Green Bay in 1634, the surrender of the Ho-Chunk chief Red Bird in 1827 and Wisconsin’s participation in the Civil War. Ballin enthusiastically researched his subjects and even contacted the daughter of Increase Allen Lapham, a nineteenth-century Wisconsin natural scientist who was to be depicted in one of the panels. Also by 1912, the supreme court justices had agreed to murals but insisted on having some say in the subject matter. Millet already had formulated ideas for the room and wanted his murals to have broad thematic significance that extended beyond the borders of the state; he envisioned a series of paintings depicting centuries of legal development. In late February 1912, Millet proposed three panels representing law in Roman, European and American periods. He sought advice on the content of the fourth panel, which was to represent some aspect of Wisconsin legal history. The court appreciated the scheme but disliked Millet’s examples. While the content of the murals continued to be debated, Millet departed for Europe and had the misfortune to book his return passage on the Titanic. He lost his life when the vessel sank on 15 April 1912.197

The commission, with George Post and the assistance of Edwin Blashfield, immediately began searching for a new artist. Post recommended Barry Faulkner, but the executive committee rejected his $32,000 fee on 17 May 1912. This hasty decision disappointed Post, and the committee accordingly reconsidered on 14 June, when it determined to offer Faulkner $28,000. In the interim, Faulkner indicated he would complete the work for $28,000 and on 10 July the committee set his fee at that amount. The following December, Faulkner, concerned the schedule was too tight, withdrew his offer. Perhaps with a premonition that the deal might fall through, Post already had negotiated a $28,000 fee and a completion date of 31 May 1915 with muralist Albert Herter of East Hampton, New York. Presented with an acceptable artist, fee and deadline, the commission acted quickly to secure a contract and bond by the end of January 1913. The content of the four murals also was set: the lineage of the court through scenes from Roman law, English law, American law and Wisconsin law. The specifics were left to the artist.198

With work on the supreme court murals stalled, the Executive Chamber paintings were completed and in place by early January 1913, a full year ahead of schedule. In the span of a year, Ballin had painted twenty-nine canvases. The nine-foot circular panel at the center of the ceiling depicted Wisconsin Surrounded by her Attributes. Rectangular panels north and south of the circular panel represented The Seeker of Knowledge at the Shrine of Wisdom and Labor, Attended by the Spirits of Rain and Sunshine. Four T-shaped panels between the circular and rectangular panels symbolized Pioneering, Charity, Invention and Justice. Two L-shaped panels on the south side of the ceiling depicted religious tolerance and the arts. War and Peace were represented in two semi-lunettes above the entrance near the clock; they flanked a text panel that reads “TEMPUS EDAS REVER,” or “Time the devourer of all things.” Two panels with text inscriptions also appeared on the ceiling between the T-shaped panels: “THE PROGRESS OF A STATE IS BORN IN TEMPERANCE JUSTICE AND PRUDENCE” and “THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE IS THE LAW OF THE LAND.” Smaller panels on either side of the fireplace contained the state motto: “FORWARD.” The paintings on the walls depicted events and people from Wisconsin’s past. Themes included, as requested by the commission, Wisconsin’s role in the Civil War, the 1827 surrender of Chief Red Bird after the so-called Winnebago War and the 1634 arrival of Jean Nicolet on the shores of Green Bay. In the four narrow panels fitted into the curved walls on either side of the entrance, the four seasons and the signs of the zodiac were depicted. On either side of the fireplace Ballin painted female figures to represent Lake Mendota, on one side, and Lake Monona, on the other. In these paintings, the artist drew inspiration from The Four Lakes of Madison, a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Between the windows on the east wall Ballin portrayed distinguished citizens.
of Wisconsin including Increase Lapham and Civil War Colonel Joseph Bailey. Also shown on the east wall were two former state capitols, the first capitol at Belmont and Madison's second capitol that burned in 1904.\textsuperscript{108}

The executive committee reviewed the murals a few days after they were installed, made "certain criticism" and requested alterations that would lead to significant reworking of the canvases.\textsuperscript{109} In June 1913, the commission decided to withhold final payment to Ballin as the paintings remained "not entirely satisfactory." Using Post as an intermediary, the commission requested that Ballin and Garsney return to Madison to finish the room together to ensure that Ballin's color palette harmonized with Garsney's decoration; Ballin tried to schedule a trip in July but Garsney's ill health prevented him from traveling. Unwilling to wait for Garsney, Ballin came to Madison in November 1913 and made several changes in response to the commission's criticisms. He reworked the Red Bird painting and made changes to several figures in the Civil War panel. He also made alterations to both representations of the previous capitols. Further, Ballin made adjustments to the figure of "Forward" in the Bailey portrait, changed the background of the Lapham painting and reworked the "Mendota" painting. Although he altered the drapery of Nicolet's costume and other parts of that panel, he refused to budge on his interpretation of Nicolet's landing.\textsuperscript{110} In fact, Ballin wrote Governor McGovern defending his presentation of historical events. Porter was apparently satisfied with the alterations or at least was anxious to have the room finished, and on 19 December 1913 he asked the commission to authorize Ballin's final payment of $1,800. The commission refused and instead asked James Otis Post to have Ballin make more alterations to the Nicolet painting. The commission's refusal to pay may have forced Ballin's hand. After the meeting he wrote McGovern a conciliatory note promising to make whatever changes were desired in the Nicolet painting, although this work was not to occur in the immediate future.\textsuperscript{111}

As early as April 1910, the commission began awarding contracts for interior work in the South Wing and the Southeast and Southwest Pavilions. It signed a contract for plumbing with Charles Wilkins & Co., the Vulcan Iron & Steel Works received the contract for interior decorative metal work, the carpentry contract went to J. H. Findorff of Madison and the masonry contract to McNulty Bros. Company. In May 1911 the commission directed the Russell-Erwin Manufacturing Co. of New Britain, Connecticut and the Kiefer-Haessler Hardware Co. of Milwaukee to begin supplying hardware for the wing. On 3 June, the commission contracted the M. T. Lamb Company to supply the stained glass ceiling for the Senate Chamber, and that November, it awarded the heating and ventilating contract to the Mueller Company of Milwaukee. At its 23 August 1911 meeting, the commission directed Post to negotiate with John Alexander to furnish the murals for the Senate Chamber but not to offer a fee of more than $12,000. Alexander was a New York painter and president of the National Academy of Design; he had completed mural paintings for the Carnegie Institute and the Library of Congress. No subject matter was discussed, and the negotiations would drag on for almost three years before Alexander declined the contract.\textsuperscript{112}

In early 1912, the interior construction of the South Wing was moving ahead rapidly. On 15 and 16 January, the commission secured contracts for such finish elements as ornamental iron work with the Hecla Iron Works of Brooklyn, New York and lighting fixtures with the Mitchell Vance Company of New York. The electrical contract went to the Harloff-Pence Company of Madison for $14,000. On 18 July, the contract was awarded to the Wollaeger Mfg. Co. of Milwaukee for general office furniture, the same firm that had received the furniture contract for the other wings. A few days later, the commission extended a separate contract to the A. H. Andrews Co. of Chicago for the desks in the Senate Chamber; Andrews refused because of the tight schedule, and the commission then offered the contract to the Matthew Brothers Mfg. Co. of Milwaukee. Another furniture contract was executed with Wollaeger Mfg. for the revolving bookcases that were placed behind each senator's desk in the chamber. Carpets and window shades were ordered from Gimbel Brothers of Milwaukee, and bronze cuspids were purchased from Kiefer-Haessler for $14.40 each.\textsuperscript{113}
Interior construction had advanced to the point that in January 1913 the senate met in its new chamber but without the decorative stone and mural paintings in place. In lieu of murals, a large American flag hung over the president's desk. By May 1913, most of the interior metal work had been completed, but as with the other wings, placing the finish stone and marble took longer than anticipated. Work was ongoing until October, when a labor dispute sent marble setters working for Andres Stone & Marble on strike. Andres then sent bricklayers instead of stonemasons to the Capitol. Porter permitted the work to move forward for a time but eventually acceded to the Milwaukee Labor Council's demands that the unqualified laborers be prevented from working. The decision forced Andres to reach an agreement with its workers.193 The commission seems to have been less concerned about getting the South Wing completed than it had the West Wing, and the artwork for the chamber was not expected to be installed until after the senate had occupied the wing. Kenyon Cox, already under contract for the mosaics in the Rotunda, learned John Alexander declined the commission in October 1913, and Cox expressed his interest in executing the murals. They offered, Cox wrote Porter, "an opportunity for an especially sober and serious piece of work." Cox received the contract for the senate murals in 1914.194

By 1913 work on the Dome began to slow, partly due to delays in cutting and shipping the granite from Vermont. In 1912, to avoid holdups in the work resulting from the slow shipment of granite as had been experienced with the West and East Wings, the commission directed Woodbury Granite to begin shipping stone for the North Wing as soon as possible. Although work on setting North Wing stone would be at least another year off, Woodbury Granite was pleased to comply as it would allow the company to make efficient use of its quarries. This plan, however, caused a number of complications. First, the sheer volume of cut granite arriving in Madison overwhelmed the on-site supervisors; this situation was further complicated by the fact that much of the stone was kept in storage in Madison or Chicago. Granite continued to arrive irregularly, and in November 1912 Commissioner George Johnson suggested that it might be better to concentrate on the construction of the North Wing and leave the Dome unfinished. Post & Sons expressed its annoyance with the situation and chastised the commission for interfering with its direction:

> Once or twice we urged the Woodbury Granite Company to concentrate its efforts on the South Wing and Central Portion for the reason that they were apparently wasting a great deal of time in cutting work for the North Wing, when the stones quarried were of such dimensions as to be used to advantage in this way. As an example of this, we particularly referred to the column drums of the North Wing, which they were turning when they should have been working on the column drums at the base of the Dome of the Central Portion...195

Notwithstanding these complaints and suggestions, a lack of ready granite appropriate to the task at hand continued to slow completion of the Dome for the rest of the year. Although granite on the Dome remained unfinished, Bitter's groups were finally hoisted into place in July 1913, much to the concern of the sculptor who feared the ongoing placement of granite could damage his work.196

With the construction of the masonry exterior moving forward reluctantly, the commission had begun issuing contracts for interior construction at its 23 April 1913 meeting. McNulty Bros. of Chicago received the contract for interior masonry, while those for carpentry and metalwork were issued to J. H. Findorff of Madison and the Hecla Iron Works of Brooklyn, New York, respectively. The Mueller Co. of Milwaukee secured the contract for heating and ventilation and George F. Rohn, the contract for electrical work. The Northwestern Marble and Tile Co. of Minneapolis bid successfully for the nearly quarter-million-dollar contract to provide and set the colorful and varied marbles and decorative stone used in the Rotunda. On 29 April 1913, the commission awarded a contract for plumbing work to H. Kelly & Co. of Minneapolis.197

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4.39 (right) South Wing, West Wing and Dome, 1910
Between 1910 and 1912 construction of the South Wing (left) went smoothly, although the Southwest Pavilion, built at the same time, lagged somewhat behind. The gateposts and statuary installed in 1872 appear in the foreground.

4.40 (below) Construction workers, 1910
Construction required a coordinated effort involving hundreds of workers, and photographers regularly captured them setting stones or climbing scaffolding. They occasionally sat for group photos. Here, workers pause in front of the partly finished Central Portion with the new East Wing visible in the background.
The demolition of the old north wing could not begin until the granite cladding of the Dome was complete and Woodbury Granite removed the derricks that had been used for that task. While the other wings were under construction, the north wing of the previous capitol remained occupied and, in fact, a fourth floor had been added to increase its usefulness. Many of the inhabitants of the old north wing were slated for either temporary or permanent quarters in the South Wing of the new building, so demolition could not occur until the South Wing was ready for occupancy. Although the commission had awarded the demolition contract to John F. Icke of Madison in June 1913, it did not specify a start date with the understanding that demolition would begin when the commission notified him to proceed. Even after the South Wing was finished and most of the occupants moved, the intransigence of some building operators delayed work further. The bank examiner was slated to have temporary quarters in the South Wing until he could be relocated to a permanent space in the new North Wing, but he refused to move until he was guaranteed an office with a storage vault. Porter tried to persuade the examiner to accept temporary quarters. After negotiations failed, Porter called the bank examiner’s bluff and ordered demolition to begin. By 16 August 1913, the examiner remained unmoved. Porter eventually had the corridor and staircase above his offices demolished, at which point the move was arranged. By 2 December 1913, the final portion of the 1883 structure had been razed.\footnote{While Porter supervised the occupants’ relocation and the wing’s removal, the architect and commission finalized plans for the new North Wing.}

Consistent with the large, ceremonially scaled public rooms on the second floors of each wing, a 1907 drawing shows the large room on the second floor of the North Wing labeled “Legislative Library.” This use of the space dictated its decorative features, which would include marble walls with murals tucked within the ceiling coverts. This intent for the space was still in place in 1912, when Porter told Post & Sons that “the large interior space which corresponds with the Senate and Supreme Court and must be lit by sky light, can be used for the Legislative Library. . . .” Later, however, the demand for offices in the wing raised the possibility that the entire second floor would be given over to that use; the matter was decided in April 1913. The architects submitted a sketch showing the room as a large public space. Considering “it important that this room should be finished in keeping with the other large interior rooms of the other wings,” Post & Sons referred to this space only as “the large interior room of the North Wing,” which suggests that its purpose remained unclear.\footnote{By late 1913, however, it was established that the “North Hearing Room” would be a public room under the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission and used for conferences and hearings between state regulatory agencies, the public, and the owners of private corporations and utilities. This change from library to hearing room might have been influenced by Governor McGovern, whose administration strengthened the regulatory arm of state government with the creation of the Industrial Commission and the Board of Public Affairs. These measures depended on the cooperation of business, labor, and government and the North Hearing Room was intended to provide the place for these agencies to solicit information and hear appeals.}

By early 1914, despite the elaborate finishes that had been installed in some of the important public spaces, most interior rooms of the Capitol had not yet received decorative paint. Elmer Garsney had decorated the second floor of the West Wing and the Executive Chamber of the East Wing, and Conrad Schmitt had painted the first and third floors of the West Wing and the second, third and fourth floors of the East Wing. Both Garsney and Schmitt expressed interest in developing a comprehensive decorative scheme for the Capitol, but by May 1914, Post & Sons had selected the firm of Mack, Jenney and Tyler of New York City. On 20 May, a representative of the firm showed the commission sketches of its work in other public buildings, and on 8 June sent Post & Sons a proposal. Mindful of Post & Sons’ implied architectural hierarchy of interior spaces, Mack, Jenney and Tyler proposed to apply five classes of finish treatment. Class I finishes were suggested for the most important public spaces and included the use of as many colors of paint and as much gold leaf as appropriate. Class II finishes were defined as several colors of paint, stencils and some gold leaf; this level was specified for the rooms of important persons. Class III finishes provided no more than four colors

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4.41 Granite-setting on the Dome, circa 1913
By the summer of 1913, the colonnade at the base of the Dome had been completed and Karl Bitter’s sculptural groups were in place. The South Wing had been finished sufficiently to allow the Wisconsin Senate to meet in its new chamber, and stone-setters began the arduous task of putting the carefully cut granite on the Dome.

4.42 East Wing and old north wing, 1912
By 1912, the old north wing was the only remaining portion of the second Madison capitol. The north wing had survived the 1904 fire relatively undamaged and was renovated and enlarged to house a changing parade of state officers as they awaited permanent quarters in the new building. By the close of 1913, the wing had been demolished to make way for new construction.
and simple ornament. Class IV finishes consisted of three colors and simple stencils. Class V called for plain paint and was installed in closets, mechanical rooms, janitors' closets and toilet rooms. Mack, Jenny and Tyler proposed to apply decorative paint throughout the entire building, except for those spaces already finished by Elmer Garnsey, for $172,300.12 Lacking an adequate legislative appropriation, the commission approved a partial contract in the amount of $10,000 for the upper part of the Dome on 29 September 1914; this work was completed by mid-December 1914. Porter was confident that the funds would become available and instructed the firm to begin decorating the Supreme Court Hearing Room in May 1915, after the Herter murals had been installed. By late June 1915, Mack, Jenny and Tyler had done considerable work in the Capitol without a contract, having provided approximately $25,000 of services by their account. The funds became available after the legislature adjourned in 1915, and the commission finally awarded a comprehensive contract to Mack, Jenny and Tyler in the amount of $174,642. Work was ongoing through the summer of 1916, with the last of it completed in the North Wing as those spaces were being finished.123

Following George Post's death on 28 November 1913, the construction of the Capitol was overseen largely by his son, James Otis Post. Although most of the design work had been completed, with Post's death the project lost its most persuasive spokesman. This event occurred just before a significant political shift took place in Wisconsin state government. Progressive Republicans had controlled Wisconsin politics since 1901, and the Capitol physically embodied their faith in democratic government. In November 1914, Stalwart Republican Emanual Philipp was elected governor (1915-21), and the Stalwarts also gained power in the legislature. Financially conservative and generally unsympathetic to the project, Philipp seldom attended executive committee meetings and urged containment of construction costs. The project also was compromised by the war in Europe, which threatened to cut off supplies needed for construction and dramatically affected the cost of certain materials. The combination of Post's death, a conservative attitude toward state financing and the war in Europe required that Commission Secretary Lew Porter work hard to reconcile artistic vision with economic realities. 

In early 1914, the thematic content for the mural paintings of the Supreme Court Hearing Room still remained unresolved and the justices were growing impatient. On 20 May 1914, Albert Herter, the muralist, presented his sketches to the Capitol Commission with the justices present. After much discussion, particularly concerning the sketch of the trial of Chief Oshkosh, the justices decided to caucus among themselves before approving the design. The commission itself disapproved of the depiction of English law and instructed the artist to change the subject from the trial of Charles I to the signing of the Magna Carta, which Justice William Timlin had suggested two years earlier. This change caused some delay. The justices commented freely on the sketch, suggesting that Stephen Langton appeared too deferential to King John as he presented the petition on behalf of the barons, and Justice Marshall suggested that the artist make it more obvious that the papal legate protested rather than supported John's signing the document. Herter adopted the suggestions and completed the murals accordingly; they were installed between May and June 1915. With the long saga of the supreme court murals finally over, most apparently were pleased with the result. "Every one," Porter wrote Herter, "with whom I have talked, including several members of the Supreme Court, and some of the Capitol Commission, have expressed themselves as being delighted in your work. It certainly adds greatly to the room and I feel sure they will be universally appreciated."1725

The paintings in the Executive Chamber remained a source of conflict. More than two years after they were installed, the commission remained unsatisfied, and artist Hugo Ballin vacillated on whether or not he would return to make alterations. After initially refusing to return, he wrote in early 1914 that he would do so but took no action until March 1915. At that time he wrote James Otis Post and promised to repaint the Nicolet panel and remove the allegorical "flying figure" from behind Joseph Bailey. In a letter to Porter, however, Ballin expressed his frustration that the additional
work was expected to be done without payment. Repainting the Nicolet painting, he said, would take three months and "as my picture was approved, accepted and paid for, I cannot see under what code you make this demand of me." He went on to defend his interpretation of the event although he acknowledged that the commission's expectation of "Nicolet jumping out of a canoe, firing his two guns" was as possible as his own. Caught between a disgruntled artist and a stubborn commission, Porter tried to assure Ballin that the majority of his work was admired. The ceiling, he wrote, was "unexcelled." The paintings of Mendota and Monona were "most beautiful." The pictures of Red Bird and Lapham were "all they should be." The rest, Porter, told Ballin bluntly, were "regarded as unfortunate." He assured the artist that criticism of the work pains him as much as Ballin because "of the fact that I am with it every day and because of my intense desire to have the Capitol all that it should be in every line." The commission did not respond to Ballin's frustrations, and the issue dragged on for another year. Ballin wrote another letter of protest in February 1916 arguing his case and at the same time promising to make changes, but with the Capitol nearing completion the commission let the matter drop. Ballin eventually received his final payment of $1,800, but apparently never returned to make the alterations requested by the commission.  

By 1914 the work in the South Wing had been completed and this area of the building was fully occupied; the mural painting in the Senate Chamber remained the only unresolved element. That May, James Otis Post reported to the commission that John Alexander would not accept a contract despite years of attempting to negotiate one. After he was hired as Alexander's successor, Kenyon Cox proposed a subject that was timely but wholly unrelated to Wisconsin: the opening of the Panama Canal, which was expected to be completed in 1915. The commission accepted his proposal, and he began work at once, developing sketches throughout the summer and finishing them by August. The outbreak of war in Europe added another layer of meaning to his work. "Present European news," he wrote Porter that month, "gives an ironic aspect to my subject. But the canal will be there when the wars are over." The canal project had begun at the height of European-American confidence, a sense of optimism now shaken by the war. In the right panel, a figure representing peace greeted Britain, France and Germany standing side-by-side; in the left panel, a figure representing commerce faced four Asian figures. The war made the figure of peace seem strangely out of place, and made the representation of Germany, France and Britain inconsistent with the reality of war. Further, the three panels were intended to represent the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans with an allegorical marriage of the two presided over a figure representing the United States. Cox submitted the sketches and the commission approved them on 29 September.  

By the summer of 1914, the exterior construction of the Dome was completed at last. At the end of May, the granite was in place and ready to be cleaned. Daniel Chester French's statue Wisconsin was hoisted to the top of the lantern on 20 July 1914. The statue had been shipped from New York in February, and in March the Woodbury Granite crew used its derricks to lift the statue, still in its crate, to the roof of one of the wings until it could be placed on the Dome. Because the Capitol is without an obvious front entrance, Porter solicited French's opinion on the correct orientation of the statue. French recommended either west, which would have Wisconsin facing the university, or east toward the
main railroad depots "and consequently . . . the main approach to the city from the outside world." Porter queried Post & Sons as well and the firm wired Porter on 23 June, "We strongly advise facing the statue to the southeast according to father's desire." James Otis Post expressed his father's intention more completely in a letter written the same day:

Father recommended the facing of the statue to the southeast. . . . [H]e and I discussed this matter several times in Madison and he always felt that the principal front of the building was towards the Lake to the southeast, and referred to the parkway leading to the Lake as being in front of the Capitol.

There is no question in our minds but that the statue should face the southeast. . . ."33

On 20 July thousands of spectators watched as the three-ton statue was carefully hoisted into place, facing southeast. Some minor repair was needed to the gilding, and the four anchor bolts had to be replaced with longer ones. Shortly after the repairs were completed, Porter wrote to French that "the statue looks very well and I think the majority of people are very well pleased with it."33

4.46 Senate Chamber, 1913
Although the senate met in its new chamber in January 1913, much of the marble work on the walls remained unfinished, and the murals by Kenyon Cox were not installed until 1915. Senators had insisted on larger desks than Post & Sons intended, and to make up for their lack of storage space in the desks, revolving bookcases were placed behind each.

4.47 "Wisconsin" hoisted into place, 1914
Hundreds of spectators watched on 20 July 1914 as Daniel Chester French's gilded bronze statue "Wisconsin" was positioned atop the lantern. Although work continued for another three years, this was literally the crowning moment in the construction of the new Capitol.
Construction of final details in the Rotunda continued late into 1915. At its 20 May 1914 meeting, the commission told the Mitchell Vaneo Company, the lighting contractor, to begin supplying ceiling fixtures, wall sconces and standards. Light fixtures for the Rotunda Basement, to contain a restaurant, were ordered from E. F. Caldwell & Co. of New York in December. Caldwell also supplied the decorative bronze light standards for the niches in the Rotunda at the ground floor level; these were ordered in August 1915. By the middle of September the interior plaster work was nearly completed, and William S. Post met with the executive committee and recommended that the twenty-four columns at the base of the inner Dome be made of scagliola in imitation of Siena marble rather than using the actual stone. The masonry contractor, McNulty Bros., agreed to do the work for an extra $2,675. In addition to its original contract, McNulty Bros. finished the upper surface of the inner Dome with a coat of plaster for $3,200. While plastering was being completed in the Central Portion, the commission set in motion the application of decorative paint and on 29 September, Mack, Jenny and Tyler began work in the upper portion of the Dome, including the cofferings. Charles Mack presented the firm’s sketches on 15 December and reported on progress. Evidently progress was swift; the scaffolding was removed from the Rotunda on 5 January 1915.131

During much of 1915, decorative stone was installed throughout the Rotunda and some modifications to the original design were made. On 24 November 1915, James Otis Post recommended changing the decorative stone pattern on the ground floor to incorporate Siena marble for the center circle, a swath that cost $898. Supplementary efforts were required to complete the stonework at the perimeter of the Central Portion, especially at the juncture of the wings and Andrea Stone & Marble did the work for an additional $794.70. The most significant change involved the massive ground floor piers sheathed in Berlin Rhylolite in the center of the Rotunda. Shortly after the stone was installed, it began to discolor noticeably and the search for a suitable replacement stone proved difficult. Fortunately one of the commissioners, Magnus Swenson, was able to arrange for sufficient quantities of Norwegian Labradorite, a form of feldspar. It was shipped from Norway to Minneapolis where Northwestern Marble & Tile cut it. The stone cost 17,550 kroner, or approximately $4,400. Northwestern agreed to take down the existing piers, rebuild them, and pay the commission $4,500 in exchange for the defective Rhylolite.132

While the scaffolding was still in place in the spring of 1914, Rotunda work had progressed to the point that the Cox mosaics could be put in place. Work began on 14 May 1914, carried out by the Decorative Stained Glass Co. of New York under Cox’s supervision. The installation was both technically and economically problematic for Cox. The Decorative Stained Glass was barely solvent and required Cox’s immediate payment to sustain its workers in Madison. Cox, short of cash himself, paid the company out of his own pocket before receiving compensation from the commission. Technically, installation difficulties were compounded by the fact that the glue had dried too much during storage, but once everything was complete Porter wrote Cox that he thought the mosaics were “head and shoulders above everything we have in the Capitol, or will have, and everyone is much pleased with them.”133 Each of the four mosaics consisted of a seated colonial figure (two male, two female) within a circular frame of fiesces bordered by oak foliage. The figures represented “legislation,” “justice,” “government” and “liberty,” each dressed in flowing classical robes and provided with appropriate iconographic attributes. Legislation is as an elderly man with a flowing beard writing on stone tablets. Government, also a male figure, is young and powerful and holds a sword in one hand. Liberty is symbolized as a woman wearing a red Phrygian cap, the traditional symbol of liberated slaves dating to the Roman Empire, and holding a ballot box. Justice, a female figure, is not blindfolded as is typical but stares straight ahead impassively as she holds a scale.

By February 1915, the gold background in the mosaics began to deteriorate, and Porter’s initial elation was tempered as he contemplated how to make repairs. In order to get the desired gold color, Cox had placed aluminum foil on the
back of amber glass; when the aluminum came into contact with the plaster, it began to darken. Porter wrote James Otis Post of the problem, and Post recommended not taking any action for the time being. In the early months of 1915, Cox was absorbed in his work on the senate murals, and Post did not want to distract him. "We are firmly of the opinion," Post wrote,

that if Mr. Cox should learn of this serious condition at this time it would probably lead to a physical breakdown, for he is as you know of an extremely nervous and high strung temperament, and at present is devoting all his time, thought and energy to the production of the three paintings for the Senate Chamber which he thinks and which other artists consider, the best work he has ever done. When an artist is at work upon a masterpiece, he cannot be interrupted without detriment to his work at hand.

The commission agreed with Post and did not take immediate action. Porter finally explained the situation to Cox on 15 October 1915, after the murals for the Senate Chamber had been completed. By this time, the commission had even begun considering having the mosaics dismantled and reinstalled. Cox investigated the conditions when he was in Madison in late October to install the Senate Chamber murals.124

Edwin Blashfield's *The Resources of Wisconsin* was fixed to its inverted-bowl-like support above the oculus in the fall of 1914. In August, Porter wrote the artist urging him to install the canvases as soon as possible because he wanted to have the scaffolding in the Rotunda removed. Shortly after this was accomplished in September, Porter complained to Post & Sons that "white streaks" had appeared along the joints of the canvases; according to Blashfield, this condition had developed because the canvases shrank slightly while in storage. After a flurry of correspondence, Blashfield and his assistant traveled to Madison in December to retouch the canvases and complete minor repairs. His invoice for an extra $122 was quickly paid by the commission.125 Blashfield's circular composition was oriented toward the southeast, reinforcing the Southeast Pavilion as the principal entrance to the building. *The Resources of Wisconsin* depicts an enthroned woman holding a sheaf of wheat and a shield bearing the state arms; she is encircled by other female figures draped in the folds of an American flag. These figures offer the natural resources of the state, including lead, tobacco, copper and fruit.

North Wing construction began in early 1914. George Nelson of Madison had been awarded the contracts for excavation and foundation work on 22 December 1913, and his crew began their efforts in February 1914. The contract specified completion by May, and in April Porter reported that the foundation was "practically all in." Pouring the foundations of the Northeast and Northwest Pavilions was delayed until the summer of 1914, when Woodbury Granite removed its derricks following the hoisting of *Wisconsin* to the lantern. As the foundations were finished in April, work on steel began. The Worden-Allen Co. of Milwaukee provided and erected the steel under a $66,762 contract signed 28 September 1913. The commission again retained the Pittsburgh Testing Laboratory to inspect the steel. Although steelwork got off to a quick start, a labor dispute slowed progress during the summer of 1914. In early September, Worden-Allen replaced the striking workers with non-union laborers. This solved the problem for the firm but not for the commission; within a week of implementing this resolution, laborers employed by other contractors refused to work with the nonunion steelworkers and went on strike. Porter dealt with the situation by staggering the work so that union and nonunion workers were not on-site at the same time. In October 1914 he released the steelworkers and brought back carpenters and masons to continue exterior work. In March 1915, Worden-Allen employees returned and finished the steelwork by early April.126
With much of the stone already on hand, the placement of exterior granite proceeded very soon after steelwork began in the spring of 1914. Throughout construction of the North Wing, the commission placed the highest priority on erecting the wing and pavilions simultaneously, and Porter urged Woodbury Granite to work on both “so that the stone work should be actually level during construction.” This proved nearly impossible and by November 1914, the granite was up to the cornice of the wing but far lower on the pavilions. Granite setting on the pavilions caught up by December when the columns in the Northeast Pavilion were set. Setting the columns in the cold weather caused several of the drums to chip, so Porter waited until the spring of 1915 to have the columns of the Northwest Pavilion put into place. Granite setting continued through the spring and summer of 1915, when the stone was in place for most of the wing and pavilions including the pediment, portico and balustrade. At this point, the exterior of the Capitol stood substantially completed.

Upon the recommendation of George Post, the commission signed a $16,500 contract in January 1912 with New York sculptor Atilio Piccirilli for the North Wing pediment’s sculptural group. Piccirilli was enthusiastic and engaged immediately in preparing a model, which he completed in April 1912; at nearly the same time, the commission accepted his design and the explanation he provided of the work. In the summer of 1914, a group of workmen directed by F. A. Purdy of Detroit began carving the group in a shed at the Milwaukee Road yards on West Washington Avenue, about eight blocks from the Capitol. By then, however, the thematic content of Piccirilli’s design had become no longer suitable because of the modified use of the wing’s principal second floor space as a home to various commissions and bureaus. Having been told that the principal room would serve as the reading room for the Legislative Reference Library, Piccirilli designed his sculpture to symbolize “the learning of the world.” A central female figure held a tablet inscribed sapientia (Latin for “wisdom”), with figural groups on either side representing agriculture, science and art. Piccirilli’s description of the group identified it as appropriate to a library; Porter wrote the artist in October 1914 asking that he stop distributing the explanation as it “does not at all agree with the uses of the wing.” Piccirilli responded indignantly that he had been told that the wing would indeed house a library and that the Capitol Commission had approved the design. Although Piccirilli’s composition was thematically inconsistent with the objectives of the predominant occupant of the wing, the figures were hoisted to the pediment in the summer of 1915. After final carving was completed in place, the scaffolding was removed in September 1915.

In 1915, the commission began letting contracts for North Wing interior work. McNulty Bros. of Chicago again received the interior masonry contract. The interior carpentry contract went to Riesen & Riesen of Milwaukee, a firm that had not worked previously on the Capitol. The firm subcontracted with the Cream City Sash and Door Co. of Milwaukee. W. H. Halsey of Madison secured the plumbing contract, the Mueller Co. of Milwaukee received the heating and ventilating contract and the Harloff-Pence Company of Madison again won the electrical contract. The metalwork contract went to L. Schreiber & Sons Co. of Cincinnati and included both interior and exterior metal. The Northwestern Marble and Tile Co. of Minneapolis received the contract for interior marble and stone. The prices of decorative stone and imported marble had increased during the war and supplies were becoming scarce. In March 1915 Porter urged the commission to procure European marbles for the wing quickly, although the commission, lacking an appropriation to finish the Capitol, took no action. Commissioner Alfred Claes, an architect, assisted privately and consulted some of his business contacts; in April the commission directed Northwestern Marble & Tile to locate and acquire immediately the imported marbles. Northwestern had the C. D. Jackson Company in Chicago begin to assemble the order.

Interior construction of the wing got underway in December 1915 and proceeded smoothly through May 1916. At this point, McNulty Bros. discharged a portion of its workforce. By mid-May, according to Porter’s estimate, the firm had completed 50 percent of the job as calculated in cost, the most expensive portions of the work having been left until early summer. Carpentry proceeded with greater difficulty. Riesen & Riesen was to have completed its contracts by 1 July 1916, but the firm was still at work at the end of the year. In January 1917, when occupants began moving into the wing, despite such inconveniences as missing lights from office doors, Porter complained and Riesen & Riesen officials in turn blamed the subcontractor, Cream City Sash and Door. Porter threatened to have local contractors finish the installation at Riesen & Riesen’s expense, but the work was finally completed in the early spring.

Additional problems occurred with marble and stone. Northwestern Marble & Tile was reluctant to pursue some specimens that had been installed in other portions of the Capitol because of increased costs. In June 1916, the firm claimed it was unable to acquire Pike River Granite from quarries in Marinette County; this was the granite used for the pilasters flanking the grand stairs in all the wings. Porter quickly discovered, however, that the stone had been quarried. ‘The trouble seems to be,’ wrote Commissioner John Van Cleve, ‘that the Pike River Company is asking more for the work than heretofore, but everybody knows the cost of furnishing material is much greater than a year or two ago.’ Porter expedited the matter by purchasing the granite directly from the quarry and deducting the cost from Northwestern’s contract. The procurement of the marble for the North Hearing Room was even more complicated. In its design for the room, Post & Sons specified panels of Monte Rente Siena marble; in 1915, the commission had requested that Northwestern obtain it as quickly as possible. Now, however, Northwestern stated that it was unable to get any; Post & Sons refused to change the specification, which it claimed would require substitutions for the other marbles, which in turn would ruin the carefully orchestrated color scheme that included the room’s murals. A shipment of the stone finally arrived in New York, Post & Sons rejected it over protests from Northwestern. When Post & Sons approved another block a few weeks later, Northwestern refused to purchase such a large quantity and attempted to sidestep Post & Sons and have Porter approve a different sample. Porter, caught between the architect and contractor, again expedited matters by arranging for another New York firm, Batterson & Eisele, to purchase and cut the block and ship the required panels to Northwestern. Once the correct marble was obtained, the room was finished as designed by the fall of 1916.

The North Hearing Room was completed with the installation of its artwork and viewed by the public for the first time in December 1916. In late 1913 the commission had authorized James Ots Post to negotiate with Charles Yardley Turner to prepare murals for the ceiling covers of the room. On 6 January 1914, the commission executed a contract with the artist; he agreed to paint four murals depicting the evolution of transportation for $20,000 with the work to be completed by 1 July 1915. In February 1914, Turner had completed his sketches and submitted thematic descriptions for the commission’s approval. Turner’s four sketches depicted a group of Indians on horseback, a French trading post with canoes, a covered wagon drawn by oxen and a colonial-era stagecoach drawing up to an inn. The commission approved three of the panels but proposed a different theme to replace the mural depicting the covered wagon. Governor McGovern suggested that Turner portray modern transportation and include in the scene “a harbor, with railroad terminal, docks, railroad trains, motor trucks, automobiles, etc.” Thus the governor from Milwaukee ensured that the final painting completed for the Capitol would reflect the character of the largest and most industrial city in the state. The rest of the art in the Capitol was either historical or allegorical; Turner’s depiction of a contemporary Great Lakes port was the only modern scene installed in the building. Turner submitted new sketches in June and July 1914 and by February 1916 delivered the completed murals to Madison, where they awaited installation until the marble was set in the autumn.

Throughout the early months of 1917, the decorators and hardware contractors finished interior work in the wing. The Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall, a space assigned to the state Grand Army of the Republic to use as its
headquarters and museum, was decorated between February and March and included the names of Civil War battles in which Wisconsin soldiers fought and other martial themes.

In 1915, before the Capitol was completed, the legislature directed the Capitol Commission to install an automated voting device in the Assembly Chamber. The idea was to speed up the lengthy roll-call votes in the assembly. The designer of the machine, Bornett L. Bobroff of the Universal Indicator Co. of Milwaukee, used the state’s interest to promote his invention, predicting that it would pay for itself in the course of a few years. He went so far as to suggest that the device would cut one-sixth of the time off a legislative session, thus saving the state several thousand dollars each biennium. Post & Sons found it challenging to incorporate such a complex system into the chamber since it required a large display board on the wall and buttons on each member’s desk. The architect was reluctant to compromise the integrity of the room and proposed mounting the display discretely in the southeast corner, virtually out of sight, where it could be swung out during roll-call votes, but the Universal Indicator Co. wanted its invention displayed prominently and its installation accompanied by much publicity. Lew Porter eventually worked out a way to make the display board a distinctive feature of the room but without significantly disturbing the architecture or decorative finish. He had the board mounted on the raking of the east gallery and finished to match the existing metalwork. Post & Sons noted that the equipment would take up much of the space in the gallery and also would obstruct the view of some visitors. The matter was further delayed by a legal question. The legislature had set a limit of $12,000 on the device. The sum was to come out of the funds set aside for general construction and was not to require a new appropriation, and it was unclear whether the $12,000 covered alterations to the room and whether the commission was even authorized to make these alterations. At a commission meeting on 29 February 1916, the attorney general advised the commission to undertake the changes in the Assembly Chamber and provide a frame for the board.

The electrical connections to the legislators’ desks also required consideration. The 1 March 1916 contract with the Universal Indicator Co. called for a push-button box at each member’s desk, a display board, a small display board on the chief clerk’s desk, electrical connections and a “photographic apparatus” to make a permanent record of the vote. Work was to be completed by 1 December 1916 (later changed to 1 January 1917) for $11,600. In April, Porter arranged for the ornamental and steel framing of the display board to be done by Schreiber & Sons for $746. Schreiber & Sons experienced delays in shipping the material for framing, resulting in the one-month extension for Universal. Technological requirements and architectural sensibilities clashed again once the installation of the machine began. Porter thought the finish on some parts of the device “common, cheap and ordinary” and that the boxes did not fit with the high level of finish elsewhere in the chamber. The control boxes for each member’s desk raised particular concern because they were made of poorly finished birch, and the metal face plates were made of stamped steel with a black finish. The woodwork in the assembly was quarter-sawn white oak and the metal finishes were bronze. Universal agreed to remake the face plates in bronze, and Porter had the boxes veneered in an effort both to finish the project quickly and make it harmonize with the overall decoration. The installation was completed on 27 December 1916, and the machinery worked perfectly from the start.

4.51 North Hearing Room, 1917

Intended for the Railroad Commission, the North Hearing Room functioned as a place for all the state’s regulatory agencies to conduct hearings. In keeping with its purpose, the murals in the ceiling painted the evolution of transportation and included a bustling industrial port city scene evocative of Milwaukee.
Conclusion

The Capitol was finally completed in 1917, thirteen years after the fire and eleven years after construction began. The State of Wisconsin had constructed a flagship building that, through both architectural and iconographic content, expressed the aspirations of its citizens just after the turn of the century. These aspirations were largely defined by the progressive ideology forward by Wisconsin Governor and U.S. Senator Robert M. La Follette. As governor, La Follette had been responsible for establishing the make-up and directive of the commission that oversaw the construction of the Capitol. Following his departure to Washington, D.C., La Follette’s successors, other progressively minded governors, appointed individuals to the Capitol Commission. Throughout its lengthy existence, this body demonstrated a commitment to architectural excellence and a dedication to the expression of the accessibility of government. These objectives were backed with the financial support of the legislature until 1914, when the political make-up of state government changed and resources dwindled with the election of Governor Emanuel Philipp. By the end of 1916, the progressive movement, with its faith in democratic government and optimistic view of human advancement, ground to a halt as the state and nation were transfixed by the growing tragedy in Europe, events which would draw the United States into the war. The triumph that the commission and citizens felt in the completion of the last grand American Beaux Arts building was tempered by world events. Although completed, the building was not dedicated, and no celebration marked the construction of the new building nor the culmination of a long saga that began in 1836 when the Territory of Wisconsin first constructed a capitol.

The design excellence achieved in the Wisconsin State Capitol and the effort required to execute it did not occur without a price. On 28 November 1913, just as the last section of the previous capitol was being demolished to make way for the new North Wing, George Post died. Lew Porter was among the first to be notified; Porter’s subsequent expression of sympathy elicited James Otis Post’s response, “Father’s life & death are envied by most of us. His life so full of action & accomplishment & his death so peaceful & painless.” Post had lived to the age of seventy-six; his persistent involvement in the design and construction of the Wisconsin State Capitol provides evidence that he regarded the building a crowning achievement in an already prestigious career. Post extended keen attention to detail and participated actively in the selection of artists who he knew would be effective at working within his larger design scheme. Post lived long enough to see that everything was in place for the successful completion of his masterwork and then left it to his sons to finish. Another individual responsible to a very high degree for the success of the project was Lew Porter, who passed away at the age of fifty-six in 1918. Porter had barely lived to see the Capitol completed when Bright’s disease led to his early death. The intensity with which Porter honored his commitment to the Capitol Commission for the dozen years prior was likely a contributing factor. Porter had supervised the most complicated construction effort that had ever taken place in the state, coordinating the directives of one of the nation’s premier architects. The process left him exhausted, affected his health adversely and ultimately contributed to his death.

By 1918, twenty-five years after the Columbian Exposition, Beaux-Arts adaptation of form fell out of use. The tenets of modernism came to dominate art and architectural discourse in both the United States and Europe. Modernists considered the use of historicized form and its archaic—seeking embellishments irrelevant to the functional requirements of modern life. Two very early leading proponents of this ideology were Midwestern architects Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright; from even before the turn of the century, both had spoken against the implementation of Beaux—Arts form as being antithetical to the development of an “American Architecture,” which they advocated be responsive to the unique requirements of place and intended use. By the 1930s, although a Beaux—Arts curriculum continued to be advanced by the leading academic institutions, the younger generation of architects desired to implement new materials and a modern approach to design. With the exception of Cass Gilbert’s much smaller and less grand capitol in West Virginia, Wisconsin’s was the last American Beaux—Arts state capitol constructed in the country, and its completion represented the end of an era. Renowned historians Henry—Russell Hitchcock and William Seale in their 1976 publication, Temples of Democracy, used an anecdote provided by a former Madison citizen regarding the placement Wisconsin to mark a significant milestone. As William Van Deusen recalled, “My father sat in front of our store watching what was going on—and when the statue was in its proper place at [the] tip [of] the top—he hurriedly came in the store and went into the back room of our shop—got a big lead pencil and wrote on the wall above the shop door—the date and exact time [and] hour and minute when that statue rested in its place.” Concerning this event, which occurred in 1914, Hitchcock and Seale noted that, “An ordinary citizen had recorded the end of the American Renaissance.”

Although the completion of the Wisconsin State Capitol closed a chapter in American architectural history it also established an important connection between the earliest days of Wisconsin territorial history and the state in the twenty-first century. The year 1917 marked an end not only to the construction of the Capitol but also to a long story that had begun in 1836. After a series of temporary or inadequate buildings, the state at last had erected a building that would serve as both a grand public monument and function effectively as a statehouse. At first the Capitol housed most of state government, but by the late 1920s, the familiar overcrowding and moves to temporary quarters had begun again. Every other January when the legislature convened, state officials and clerks packed up their files and equipment and abandoned the committee rooms that also served as their offices. Typists and proofreaders took up quarters in entrance lobbies and abandoned bathrooms. In 1930, just thirteen years after the Capitol had been completed, the state embarked on another major building project to construct a State Office Building to handle the overflow. Unlike previous construction to relieve crowded workspaces, no one dreamed of adding a new wing to the Capitol, much less razing it for a larger structure. As space needs increased during the 1950s, 60s and 70s, additional office complexes were constructed near the Capitol and elsewhere in Madison. By the early 1990s, the state dedicated substantial resources to the restoration and rehabilitation of the building even though its occupancy had been limited to the legislature, the Wisconsin Supreme Court and two of six constitutional officers. The Capitol would remain in place as it was, the symbolic heart of government, even if it could not physically contain it all.
Biographical Information
Wisconsin Capitol Commission

The legislature first authorized a commission to plan a new capitol in 1903; members were appointed by Governor Robert M. La Follette and included himself, two justices of the supreme court, and four others. The Capitol Improvement Commission, as it then was called, first met on 12 September 1903 and decided to hold a competition for additions and improvements to the current building. After the dust had settled from this 1904 competition and the controversial decision to employ Cass Gilbert, the legislature renamed it the Capitol Commission, reduced its size from seven to five members and specified that only the governor and no one else would sit on the committee as an ex-officio member. In January 1906, the commission employed Madison architect (and past consultant to the commission) Lew F. Porter as its secretary, a sort of administrative post that involved his supervising much of the on-site construction. The membership of the commission changed between 1903 and 1917 as commissioners stepped down or died. The election of new governors, too, brought change to the commission. Only two commissioners sat on it throughout the entire project: John A. Van Cleve and Orrin H. Ingram.

Robert M. La Follette (1855-1925; commissioner, 1903-06)
Governor La Follette left office before the capitol was begun and never occupied the governor’s office in the building. Even so he was responsible for appointing the commission that guided the initial planning and competitions in 1904 and 1906. Already well known when he took office in 1901, La Follette quickly developed a reputation as a reformer by pursuing several significant changes in state government. Under his administration, the legislature enacted the nation’s first statewide primary election law, a statute regulating railroad service and a civil service act. La Follette was reelected in 1902 and 1904; in 1905, the legislature elected him to the United States Senate, an office he held until his death in 1925. He delayed taking his Senate seat until January 1906, at which point he relinquished his seat on the Capitol Commission. La Follette supervised the initial planning of what was to be a much larger capitol that would serve not only as the seat of government but also as a monument to democracy and the progressives’ beliefs in good government. Although never an occupant of the new building, he used it frequently to deliver major addresses, including one in the Assembly Chamber in 1921 that reasserted his popularity in the face of his controversial opposition to U. S. participation in World War I. He died in 1925, worn out by an unsuccessful 1924 bid for the presidency on a formal Progressive ticket.

Herbert W. Chynoweth (1848-1906; commissioner, 1903-06)
Governor La Follette selected Herbert W. Chynoweth, who was among his closest political supporters, as one of his initial appointments in 1903. Chynoweth, a very prominent lawyer in the state, had recently argued successfully the constitutionality of the new ad valorem taxation law before the state supreme court. Chynoweth was a native of New York and moved to Madison in 1855 to practice law; he served as an assistant attorney general for several years. During his later career, he became one of the nation’s foremost specialists in insurance law. As a member of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents, he took special interest in the construction of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin building, which also housed the university library; the commission drew on his experience with that project. Seldom in good health during the last few years of his life, Chynoweth died after a long illness in 1906.

Orrin H. Ingram (1830-1918; commissioner, 1903-18)
Orrin Ingram, a self-made lumber baron, was the second of La Follette’s initial appointments to the Capitol Commission and one of two commissioners who remained until the capitol was completed. Ingram was born in Massachusetts, although his family moved to upstate New York when he was a child. When he was seventeen, he went to work for a New York lumber firm. After working in different capacities for several companies, he eventually gained a reputa-
tion as a practical and innovative mill operator. In partnership with Donald Kennedy, Ingram established a lumber company in Eau Claire, bringing the first iron planer and iron lathe into the Chippewa River Valley. At the time La Follette appointed him to the commission, Ingram was an officer of several profitable lumber companies and recently had constructed a large office building in Eau Claire. He died in October 1918 after a brief illness.\[^{152}\]

**John A. Van Cleve** (1846-1920; commissioner, 1903-18)

John Archer Van Cleve was the second La Follette appointee to the Capitol Improvement Commission, and the other commissioner to serve for the commission’s entire duration. Van Cleve was born in Michigan in 1846 and was trained as a civil engineer after completing a course of study at the University of Michigan. He surveyed and platted several villages in northern Wisconsin, then settled in Marinette County and served as Marinette’s first mayor from 1887 to 1892. Governor Edward Scofield appointed Van Cleve to the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents in 1897, and Van Cleve was among those who supervised construction of the State Historical Society building. At the time of his appointment to the commission, he was engaged principally in real estate business in northeastern Wisconsin. He died in 1920 following a two-month illness.\[^{153}\]

**Edwin Reynolds** (1815-1909; commissioner, 1903-06)

Edwin Reynolds was one of the foremost mechanical engineers in the country and head of the Edward P. Allis Company (later Allis-Chalmers Corporation) of Milwaukee. Born in Connecticut in 1815, he worked as a machinist for several firms before becoming general superintendent of the Corliss Steam Engine Company of Providence in 1871. In 1877, Edward Allis induced him to move to Wisconsin and take charge of the Milwaukee company. While at the Allis Company, Reynolds designed a 12,000-horsepower engine for the Metropolitan Railway in New York. In 1893, he designed and oversaw the building of the main engine used in the electrical building at the Columbian Exposition. When La Follette appointed him to the Capitol Improvement Commission, he was nearly ninety but had recently completed the design and construction of the large new Allis Company plant in West Allis. Reynolds’s work on the commission was cut short by ill health. He resigned in 1906 and spent the next three years confined to his home, where he died in 1909.\[^{154}\]

**Roulet De Lisle Marshall** (1847-1922; commissioner, 1903-05)

Roulet Marshall was one of two supreme court justices who sat on the commission from 1903 to 1905. Marshall was a native of New Hampshire, but his family moved to Wisconsin when he was a child. He studied law in Baraboo and later served as a judge in Chippewa County and as a judge on the eleventh Judicial Circuit. Governor William Upham appointed Marshall to the supreme court in 1895, and he was elected to ten-year terms in 1897 and 1907. Marshall took an active role on the Capitol Improvement Commission, and as an adviser he suggested the shape of a St. Andrew’s cross for the new building. After stepping down from the commission, he continued to involve himself in decisions regarding the quarters of the supreme court. He died in 1922 after being hospitalized for several months.\[^{155}\]

**John B. Winslow** (1851-1920; commissioner, 1903-05)

Chief Justice John B. Winslow served on the Capitol Improvement Commission from 1903 until 1905. Winslow was born in New York, and after his family moved to Racine, he attended Racine College and the University of Wisconsin Law School. Prior to his election to the supreme court, he served as a circuit judge for eight years. Winslow also wrote a history of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, completed in 1912. After he stepped down from the commission, he continued to influence the design of the Capitol, particularly the supreme court chamber, and pushed the commission to alter plans to suit the court. After an illness of several months, Winslow died in 1920.\[^{156}\]
James O. Davidson (1854-1922; commissioner, 1906-11)
James O. Davidson was elected lieutenant governor in 1904 and so took over the governor’s office after La Follette’s resignation in January 1906. Like his predecessor, Davidson left an impressive record as governor and furthered progressive reforms, particularly in the area of business regulation, signing into law a public utilities regulatory act and a corrupt practices act. Davidson was an enthusiastic supporter of the Capitol Commission and brought to it years of experience as a public servant and elected official. Having served in a number of state offices, including assemblyman, treasurer and lieutenant governor, Davidson was familiar with the workings of state government and well-suited to overseeing initial construction of the Capitol. He was reelected in 1906 and 1908. He was the first governor to have an office in the new building, and he retired to Madison in 1911. Governor Philipp appointed Davidson to the Board of Control in 1915. He died on 16 December 1922 after a long bout of pneumonia.107

George H. D. Johnson (1851-1914; commissioner, 1906-14)
In 1906, James O. Davidson appointed George H. D. Johnson to the Capitol Commission to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Edwin Reynolds. Johnson was a native of Milwaukee and amassed a fortune in the grain business. He served as president of the Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce and championed the Milwaukee firms that bid on Capitol work. He served on both the executive and finance committees and followed closely every detail of Capitol planning and construction. In 1913, over the protests of his colleagues, he resigned after his health began to fail. He died at his home in Milwaukee in 1914.108

William F. Vilas (1840-1908; commissioner, 1906-08)
As a former United States senator and cabinet member in the Cleveland administration, William F. Vilas was one of Madison’s leading figures when Governor Davidson appointed him to the commission. Vilas was born in Vermont, his parents moving to Madison in 1851. After earning a bachelor’s degree at the University of Wisconsin and a law degree from the Albany Law School, he opened a law practice in Madison, but chose to join the army in 1862. He was commissioned a captain and eventually rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel and was instrumental in the fall of Vicksburg in 1864. He served as a professor of law at the University of Wisconsin until 1885, when he was appointed postmaster general by President Grover Cleveland, under whom he also served as secretary of the interior. In 1891, the legislature elected him to the United States Senate, where he served one term. Returning to Madison, he sat on the building commission in charge of the State Historical Society and University Library building and on the University Board of Regents. Davidson appointed him to the Capitol Commission not only because of his experience with the library building but also because of his reputation as a man of good taste and aesthetic sensibility. Vilas brought a profound sense of grace to the design of the Capitol and worked closely with George Post on many of the interior details of the West and East Wings. Vilas died in 1908 after suffering a stroke.109

Magnus Swenson (1854-1936; commissioner, 1908-18)
Magnus Swenson was born in Norway and immigrated to Wisconsin when he was fourteen, settling near Janesville. After being trained as a blacksmith, Swenson enrolled at the University of Wisconsin, completing a scientific study of Madison’s well water for his thesis. After teaching chemistry for three years at the University, Swenson was employed to supervise a large sugar factory in Texas. He eventually established his own plant for the production of machinery for agricultural and chemical industries. Swenson returned to Madison in 1900 and financed and built two large hydroelectric plants on the Wisconsin River at Kilbourn (now Wisconsin Dells) and Prairie du Sac and organized a steamship line that would run between the United States and Norway. Fellow Norwegian émigré Davidson appointed Swenson to the Capitol Commission in 1908. After chairing the commission until its dissolution, Swenson served as the head of the Wisconsin Council of National Defense and as the federal food administrator for Wisconsin. He died in 1936 after a brief illness.110
Francis E. McGovern (1866-1946; commissioner, 1911-15)

Francis McGovern served two terms as governor, leading progressive reform to its highest point in Wisconsin. During his tenure and in cooperation with University of Wisconsin faculty, labor leaders and social workers, the legislature passed the nation’s first workers’ compensation law, adopted the first constitutionally acceptable state income tax law, established the vocational school program and began a large-scale program of road building. McGovern came from Milwaukee, where he had served as a reform-minded district attorney. He represented a new, urban-based form of progressivism and promoted reforms that benefited urban workers. McGovern was instrumental in planning the Capitol’s North Wing, which contained the North Hearing Room used by the Railroad Commission, the principal regulatory agency of the state. McGovern ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate in 1914 and never again held public office. He died in 1946 after a stroke.

Alfred C. Clas (1859-1942; commissioner, 1914-18)

Alfred Clas was the only architect to serve on the Capitol Commission, and his firm, Ferry & Clas, had actually submitted plans for both the 1904 and 1906 competitions. Clas was born to German émigrés living in Sauk County. After serving as an apprentice to architects in Milwaukee and California, he established a partnership with James Douglas of Milwaukee in 1881. Clas eventually formed a partnership with George B. Ferry, and Ferry & Clas designed the Milwaukee Public Library and State Historical Society and University of Wisconsin library building as well as buildings for the World’s Columbian and St. Louis Expositions. Governor Emanuel Philipp appointed Clas to the Capitol Commission in 1914. Clas retired in 1932 and died in 1942 from injuries sustained in a fall.

Emanuel L. Philipp (1861-1925; commissioner, 1915-18)

The election of Emanuel Philipp as governor in 1914 marked a turning point not only for the state but also for the Capitol Commission. Prior to his entrance into politics, Philipp had made a fortune in manufacturing refrigerated railroad cars; he was the first conservative governor elected since 1898, and he pushed a policy of fiscal restraint. Unlike his predecessors, he was disinterested in the construction of the Capitol, seldom attended commission meetings and pushed for economy. By the time he took his place on the commission, most of the planning had been completed for the final stages, and his emphasis on budget did not hamper final construction, although it did worry Commission Secretary Lew Porter. He retired to Milwaukee where he looked after his business interests. He died in 1925 after a brief illness.

Lew F. Porter (1862-1918)

Lew F. Porter was born in Peru, Illinois in 1862. He attended Beloit College and the University of Wisconsin where he studied engineering under Allan D. Conover, who hired him as one of the draftsmen for the university’s Science Hall, a project that Conover was supervising. By 1887, the two formed a partnership, Conover and Porter, and in 1891 designed another university landmark, the Armory and Gymnasium. Conover and Porter had an extensive practice in Ashland as well as in Madison. The firm dissolved around 1900, and Porter formed a new partnership with Alvan Small. The Capitol Improvement Commission engaged Porter as a consultant in 1904, and the successor Capitol Commission hired him as secretary in 1906. In this capacity, Porter supervised all aspects of construction, dealing with the architects, artists, commissioners and elected officials. He also designed and supervised construction of the Capitol Heat and Power Plant. These tasks wore him out, and he died in 1918, less than a year after the Capitol was completed.

Architects and Engineers

George B. Post & Sons

George Brownell Post was born in New York City in 1837, the son of a wealthy merchant family. Possessing unusual artistic talent, he was trained as a civil engineer and architect at New York University, and in 1858 began a long aso-
ciation with Richard Morris Hunt as an apprentice. Hunt had been trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and passed on to Post a devotion to classical order and proportion. From 1860 to 1867, Post worked in partnership with Charles D. Gambrill. In 1867, Post founded his own architecture firm and went on to construct a number of significant buildings, including the Equitable Building (1868) in New York City, the first office building with elevators, the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition and the New York Stock Exchange (1903). Unlike his chief rival, McKim, Mead and White, Post willingly entered architectural competitions and developed designs for monumental buildings such as the Connecticut State Capitol and the Department of Justice Building. In 1901, his sons joined the firm, which was renamed George B. Post & Sons. James Otis Post (1874-1951) and William Stone Post (1866-1940) continued the firm after Post's death in 1913. James Otis Post supervised the Capitol project to its completion.\textsuperscript{164}

Daniel H. Burnham (1846-1912)

Daniel H. Burnham was one of the most successful architects of the nineteenth century. He was born in New York, but in 1854 his family moved to Chicago, where Burnham had his major architectural impact. He worked for a series of architectural firms before forming a partnership with John Wellborn Root. The firm designed a number of residences and small businesses in Queen Anne and Romanesque styles but was best known for Burnham's favored large buildings. After designing several skyscrapers in Chicago (including the Rookery Building in 1885 and Monadnock Building in 1889), he was the principal architect of the 1893 Columbian Exposition, the "White City," that launched a wave of classically inspired Beaux-Arts buildings throughout the nation. In his later career, Burnham focused on city design, and his plan for Chicago is regarded as the first example of comprehensive urban planning. As the judge of the 1906 Capitol competition, Burnham recommended his old colleague George Post who had designed the largest building at the Columbian Exposition, and whose Capitol design presented features superior to the others' submissions. Burnham died in 1912.\textsuperscript{165}

William S. Eames (1857-1912)

William S. Eames was born in Michigan in 1857, and his family moved to St. Louis when he was six. After working as a draftsman for several St. Louis firms and traveling Europe with William R. Hodges, Eames was appointed deputy commissioner of St. Louis public buildings in 1882. In partnership with Thomas Crane Young, Eames designed residences and public buildings. His design for the Palace of Education at the 1904 St. Louis Fair brought him national recognition and was probably a contributing factor to his selection by Lew Porter as the judge of the 1904 Capitol competition. Also in 1904 he was elected president of the American Institute of Architects. He died in 1915.\textsuperscript{166}

John Nolen (1869-1937)

John Nolen came late to the field of landscape architecture. He earned a bachelor's degree from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and worked from 1893 to 1903 for the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching from 1893 to 1903. He then enrolled in Harvard's School of Landscape Architecture and started a private practice before receiving a master's degree in 1905. Nolen combined his dedication to formal landscape design with the progressive ideals of civic betterment then in vogue and pursued a career as a city planner in which he sought to improve urban life through civic planning. He quickly became the leading landscape architect in the nation and worked for the National Park Service, the Department of the Interior, many cities, and several New Deal agencies, including the Resettlement Administration and the United States House Corporation. He died in 1937.\textsuperscript{167}

Storm Bull (1856-1907)

Born in Bergen, Norway, Storm Bull attended the Technical School at Zurich, Switzerland before immigrating to the United States in 1879. Bull settled in Madison because his uncle, world-renowned violinist Ole Bull, was a resident.\textsuperscript{168}
He quickly became associated with the University of Wisconsin, first as an instructor in the engineering department and later as professor of mechanical engineering; in 1891, he was appointed professor of steam engineering. In his capacity as a university professor, Bull became involved in the design of power, heating and lighting plants for various state institutions, including the one for the university in 1906. In 1907 the Capitol Commission hired Bull to complete plans, drawings and specifications for machinery for the Capitol Heat and Power Plant. In 1907, Bull died after nearly completing the plans.

Daniel H. Mead (1862-1948)
Daniel H. Mead was born in Fulton, New York. In 1904, he came to Wisconsin at the invitation of University of Wisconsin President Charles Van Hise and School of Engineering Dean Frederick Turneause. He had already established a successful engineering consulting firm in Chicago, and he accepted the newly created position of professor of hydraulic and sanitary engineering on the condition that he be allowed to continue his consulting business. Mead had designed municipal water systems for several midwestern cities when in 1909, the Capitol Commission hired him to advise on the construction of the water works portion of the Capitol Heat and Power Plant. Mead later designed two other power plants in Madison, one for the city and one for the Madison Gas & Electric Company. His firm, now headquartered in Madison and eventually known as Mead & Hunt, became one of the foremost engineering firms in the nation and opened branch offices in several cities. Mead continued to consult on a variety of projects, including, in 1941, Frank Lloyd Wright’s proposed Monona Terrace in Madison. He died in 1948.

Artists
Artwork was to be an integral part of the overall Capitol design and a major feature of exterior and interior public spaces. George Post accordingly wanted only the best artists, those who had demonstrated their talents beyond question and could produce monumental and architectural works of art under the conditions imposed by himself and the Capitol Commission. The role of artwork was to be more than just decorative; it was to inspire, educate and uplift. Usually acting on Post’s advice, the commission selected artists who painted in a classical, historical-allegorical genre. The earliest paintings for the Capitol reflected local themes. Blashfield’s work for the Assembly Chamber and Rotunda both explored Wisconsin and its resources; Hugo Ballin’s paintings in the Executive Chamber, the state’s virtues and history; and Albert Herter’s in the Supreme Court Hearing Room, the evolution of law culminating in an incident in Wisconsin’s past. The later artworks in the South and North Wings, however, were national—and even international—in scope. Kenyon Cox’s three-part mural in the Senate Chamber depicted Europe and Asia united by the Panama Canal, and the four murals in the North Hearing Room represented the development of transportation in the United States. The sculptural groups in the pediments and around the Dome were all allegorical, designed to symbolize the responsibilities and requirements of democratic government. Topping the dome was the gilded bronze statue by Daniel Chester French Wisconsin (often erroneously called Forward) that in elegant, classical simplicity symbolized the Badger State.

All the artists were men of talent. Most of them were nationally known and had completed significant artwork in other public buildings. The international character of the relationships between the architectural and artistic establishments is evident in Post’s selection of artists, and the Capitol Commission usually deferred to his choices. Many were members of George Post’s club, the Century Association, in New York, and many had worked with Post at the Columbian Exposition or on previous buildings. In general the art was well-received by the commission and by the public at large, the Executive Chamber murals being the single exception.

Edwin Blashfield (1848-1936)
Edwin Blashfield was at the height of his career when the Capitol Commission selected him to paint a mural for the Assembly Chamber, the first piece of artwork installed in the building. Born in New York in 1848, Blashfield studied art in Boston and Paris under the tutelage of Leon Bonnat. His early works were largely historical genre paintings in which he demonstrated attention to period costume and detail. The Paris Salon, Royal Academy and National Academy of Design all exhibited his work. In 1893, he executed a mural of metalworkers for George Post’s Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building, a painting that brought him national attention. In later works, including murals for the Library of Congress and works in the Iowa and Minnesota state capitols, his technique of incorporating historical figures into allegorical settings became one of his most distinctive traits as an artist. His painting, Wisconsin in the Assembly Chamber depicted figures from Wisconsin’s past (including Jean Nicolet, Charles de Langlade and others) surrounding an allegorical figure of the state. Another of Blashfield’s conventions was to paint women with classical features draped in luxurious and colorful fabrics. This is evident in his circular painting for the Rotunda Oculus, “Resources of Wisconsin,” in which the central, Athena-like figure represented the state and was encircled by other women who displayed the natural resources of the state. Both of Blashfield’s compositions were enthusiastically received by the Capitol Commission. Blashfield also wrote several books, including most significantly Mural Painting in America (1913) that advocated the Renaissance Revival decoration of public buildings. He was a member of the National Society of Mural Painters and president of the National Academy of Design from 1920 to 1926. In 1934 the academy awarded him a special gold medal in recognition of his contributions and commitment to art. He died in 1936.144

Karl Bitter (1867-1915)
Vienna-born Karl Bitter moved to New York in 1889 and quickly established himself as one of the leading sculptors in the United States. At the age of fourteen he entered the School of Applied Arts at the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry in Vienna and later studied at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts. After being drafted into the army, Bitter deserted and found his way to New York where he was quickly hired by an architectural firm to model figures in clay. There he came to the attention of Richard Morris Hunt, who recognized his talent and hired him to create ornament for private residences. Bitter produced statuary groups for Hunt’s Administration Building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. There, Bitter met George Post, and the two collaborated on several buildings, including the St. Paul Building in New York (1895), the Cleveland Trust Company (1906) and the Wisconsin Capitol, for which Bitter produced two pediment and four free-standing sculptural groups. Bitter also became known for sculptures of famous Americans, including Thomas Jefferson and Carl Schurz, as well as bas-relief memorials and allegorical sculpture. Bitter’s career was cut short in 1915 when he was struck and killed by an automobile in New York City.100

Albert Herter (1871-1950)
Born in New York City, Albert Herter studied art at the Art Students League of New York and in Paris. Herter came from an artistic family (his father was a prominent interior and furniture designer) and Herter himself was not only an accomplished painter and muralist but also a talented designer who founded Herter Looms, a firm that manufactured fine tapestries and fabrics. After teaching at the Art Institute of Chicago for several years in the 1890s, he became a successful portrait artist, painting prominent figures of New York. He was also an accomplished muralist and completed murals for the supreme court room of the Connecticut capitol, the Massachusetts House of Representatives, the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco and the Los Angeles Public Library. His serene paintings reflected the American Pre-Raphaelite movement, and his Garden of the Hesperides is his most important work. Although this style is evident in his Wisconsin Supreme Court murals, the strictly historical subject matter was somewhat unusual for him. In 1909, he and his family moved to Santa Barbara, and Herter divided his time between southern California and New York. Much of his late career was spent doing portrait work in California. After his wife Adele’s death, he became a resident of the Algonquin Hotel in New York where he died in 1950.119
Hugo Ballin (1879-1956)
Hugo Ballin was the youngest of the Capitol artists, and one who possessed the most varied talents. Born in New York, Ballin studied at the Art Students League under Henry Siddons Mowbray and in Paris, Rome and Florence. He primarily had painted portraits when Post selected him to execute the complicated murals in the Executive Chamber in 1913, which also had Pre-Raphaelite aspects. A conflict over Ballin's Capitol murals had little damaging effect on his career. He went on to produce many significant works in Los Angeles, including murals in the Title Insurance and Trust Company (1928) and the Wilshire Boulevard Temple (1929), which depicted 3,000 years of Jewish history, the Los Angeles Times Building (1934) and the Griffith Park Observatory (1935). Ballin's creative energy found other outlets as well. He worked for MGM as an art director and stage designer, founded his own motion-picture production company in the 1920s and wrote several novels. Mural painting remained his first love, and he continued to paint until his death in 1956. His later works tended to embody sweeping themes and heroic figures, traits seen in his early work for the Wisconsin Capitol.171

Kenyon Cox (1856-1919)
By the time he began working on the pendentive mosaics for the Rotunda and the murals for the Senate Chamber, Kenyon Cox was already a respected American artist. Born in Warren, Ohio, Cox studied art at the McMicklen School of Design in Cincinnati and at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts before moving to Paris, where he lived for five years. There he studied at the École des Beaux-Arts and exhibited at the Paris Salon. Returning to the United States in 1882, Cox painted portraits and murals and created book illustrations. At the Columbian Exposition in 1893, Cox gained national exposure by completing murals for George Post's Manufacturers and Liberal Arts building. He went on to provide murals for the Library of Congress and the Capitols in Minnesota and Iowa. Cox was also a prolific author of art history and criticism; he denounced trends toward "modernism" and abstraction. He died in New York in 1919.172

Charles Yardley Turner (1850-1919)
Born in Baltimore, Charles Y. Turner studied at the National Academy of Design in New York and in Paris under Jean Paul Laurens and Leon Bonnat. He was known primarily as a watercolorist but became interested in mural painting in 1893 when he was assistant director of decorations at the Columbian Exposition. His acumen with color was demonstrated in the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901, where he designed the architectural color scheme that resulted in the exposition's being known as the "Rainbow City." Turner painted murals for the Baltimore courthouse and numerous public buildings in New York. The four murals for the North Hearing Room were among his last works. He died in 1919.173

Daniel Chester French (1850-1931)
French was at the pinnacle of his profession in the United States in the late nineteenth century. French was born in 1850 in New Hampshire and was a thorough New Englander, associated with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Louisa May Alcott. His sculptures departed from classical convention by depicting historic figures in historic costumes of the period. This trend was evident in his first major sculpture, Minuteman (1874) for the city of Concord, to his final major work, the colossal figure of Abraham Lincoln for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. In 1893, French produced the most prominent sculpture of the Columbian Exposition, The Republic. French spent the final years of his life as a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and was instrumental in accumulating the museum's collection of American sculpture. He died in 1931.174

Attilio Piccirilli (1866-1945)
Attilio Piccirilli was a member of a large Italian family of sculptors and carvers. Born in Massa, Italy, Piccirilli studied sculpture at the Academia San Luca in Rome. In 1888 his family, which included five brothers, all sculptors and carvers, moved to New York City where they established a successful business cutting large works from stone based on smaller models, such as Daniel Chester French's marble statue of Lincoln for Washington's Lincoln Memorial. Similarly, the firm worked on carvings for George Post's 1901 New York Stock Exchange building, including a massive pediment by Paul Wayland Bartlett and John Quincy Adams Ward. As a sculptor in his own right Piccirilli was known for the U.S. S. Maine memorial in New York City and for his North Wing pediment sculpture for the Wisconsin Capitol, for which he oversaw the carving. He died in New York in 1945.175

Adolph Weinman (1870-1952)
Born in Germany, Adolph Weinman immigrated to the United States when he was nineteen. He studied at the Art Students League in New York and later under Daniel Chester French. Prior to his commission for the South Wing pediment of the Wisconsin Capitol, Weinman created sculptures for the Kentucky and Missouri capitols. Weinman is best known for designing two coins for the U.S. mint: the mercury dime and the walking liberty half-dollar, both hailed as some of the most artistic ever produced. Weinman's later career also included a great deal of public work in Washington, including the frieze in the hearing room of the Supreme Court of the United States and pediments for the National Archives building and the U.S. Post Office building. He also had later connections to Madison. A copy of his statue of Lincoln sculpted for Lincoln's birthplace in Hodgenville, Kentucky stands in front of Bascom Hall on the University of Wisconsin campus. Weinman died in 1952.176

Paul Fjeld (1892-1987)
The first major addition to the artwork and sculpture at the Capitol was a bronze statue of Col. Hans Christian Heg by Paul Fjelde. Fjelde was born in Minneapolis in 1892; his father was a Norwegian immigrant and sculptor. Fjelde studied at the Minneapolis School of Art, the Art Students League in New York, the Royal Academy in Copenhagen and the Grande Chaumière in Paris. Returning to the United States, he exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago. His sculpture of Heg was one of his earliest commissions. His later work included numerous public sculptures throughout the Midwest, such as the Wendell Wilkie Memorial in Indianapolis and the Pioneers Memorial in Council Bluffs, Iowa. His most famous works were busts of Charles Lindbergh (now in the San Diego airport) and Orville Wright in the Hall of Fame in New York. In 1929 he became a professor of sculpture at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and was from 1951 to 1955 the editor of the National Sculpture Review. He died in New York in 1987.177

Jo Davidson (1883-1952)
Born to a Russian immigrant family on New York's Lower East Side, Jo Davidson exhibited an early talent for art and at the age of sixteen won a scholarship to the Art Students League. He studied sculpture under Hermann McNeill in New York and then attended the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he excelled in portrait modeling, working in a variety of materials including terra-cotta, marble and bronze. He sculpted a number of important figures, including Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Albert Einstein. His principal studio was in Paris. Davidson was an intimate friend of the La Follette family. After Robert La Follette's death in 1925, his family helped arrange the public commission for his likeness for Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol, the second of the state's choices there. A bust of La Follette by Davidson was placed in the first floor Rotunda of the Wisconsin State Capitol. Davidson died in 1952.178
Helen Farnsworth Mears (1871-1916)
Helen Farnsworth Mears was born in Oshkosh in 1871. At the age of nineteen she began study at the Art Institute of Chicago under Lorado Taft; while under Taft's tutelage she created The Genius of Wisconsin, which was exhibited at the 1893 Columbian Exposition. Moving to New York, Mears studied at the Art Students League and became a private student of Augustus Saint-Gaudens. She studied in Paris and Italy for several years and worked as an assistant to Saint-Gaudens in Paris. In 1898, she returned to Oshkosh where she set up a studio and took commissions and other projects. Between 1910 and 1911, Mears created three separate models for the Doree sculpture for the Wisconsin Capitol; although she believed the Capitol contract was hers, the commission later awarded the job to Daniel Chester French on the advice of George Post. Mears moved to New York in 1910 and continued to work until her death in 1916. An organization of women purchased Genius of Wisconsin after Mears's death and donated it to the state. It was placed on display in the Southwest Pavilion on the first floor.

Jean Pond Miner Coburn (1865-1967)
Born in Menasha, Jean Pond Miner grew up in Madison and attended Downer College in Milwaukee and the School of the Chicago Art Institute. She originally intended to become a portrait painter but turned to sculpture as a student of Lorado Taft. In 1893, as artist-in-residence of the Wisconsin Pavilion at the Columbian Exposition, she sculpted Forward. Shortly after the fair, a group of Wisconsin women raised $6,000 to have a copper repoussé copy made and installed in the Capitol Park. She married Alonso John Coburn in 1896. Later in life she turned to drawing and specialized in pastels. She died in 1967 at the age of 101.

Vinnie Ream Hoxie (1847-1914)
Madison native Vinnie Ream was born in 1847. Her family moved frequently, eventually settling in Washington, D.C. While employed as a postal clerk in 1863, she met sculptor Clark Mills, who was so impressed with her nascent talent that he took her on as an apprentice. She quickly became known as a talented and perceptive sculptor, and made busts of congressmen and senators. In 1864, some friends arranged for her to begin a bust of President Lincoln; Lincoln at first refused, but upon learning of Ream's poor background he relented and gave her regular half-hour sittings for five months. Her extraordinary likeness of Lincoln won her a $10,000 contract in 1866 to create a full-sized statue of Lincoln for the U.S. Capitol. She personally supervised the copying of her clay model into marble in Italy, and the composition was unveiled in 1871. Later commissions included Admiral David Farragut and Cherokee scholar Sequoyah. After her marriage to Lieutenant Richard Hoxie, she gave up accepting commissions, although she continued to sculpt and eventually resumed her professional life. In 1916, Hoxie donated her late wife's sculpture The West to the state. The West, now displayed on the first floor of the Southwest Pavilion, was carved in Rome between 1866 and 1868 and was exhibited at the Columbian Exposition in 1893. The Wisconsin Historical Society has a collection of Ream's sculpture and her remaining papers.

Capitol Decorators
Early in the building project, George Post stressed to the Capitol Commission the importance of proper decorative painting to finish the building. Over the course of construction, the commission employed three individuals or firms: Elmer Garnsey of New York, the Milwaukee firm of Conrad Schmitt, and the New York firm of Mack, Jenney and Tyler.

Elmer Garnsey (1862-1946)
Elmer Garnsey, a New Yorker, studied at the Art Students League and the Cooper Union in New York City. He became nationally known after he assisted Francis Millet in decorating buildings of the 1893 Columbian Exposition. In the later 1890s and early 1900s, Garnsey received commissions to decorate many significant public buildings. These included the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the Boston Public Library, Memorial Hall at Yale University, the state capitol of Minnesota and Iowa and George Post's New York Stock Exchange Building. In 1908, Post persuaded the commission to hire Garnsey to decorate portions of the West Wing, including the Assembly Chamber and Parlor; Garnsey later received a separate contract to decorate the Executive Chamber in the East Wing. Although he expressed interest in decorating the entire Capitol, he did not receive that contract.

Conrad Schmitt (1867-1940)
Born in Fussville in Waukesha County, Conrad Schmitt achieved a reputation as a decorator of churches and a designer of stained glass. After serving as an apprentice church decorator in Milwaukee, he established his own firm in 1889. Known predominately for ecclesiastical decoration, Schmitt and his firm decorated innumerable churches (including thirty cathedrals) in the United States and Canada. In the Capitol, he applied temporary paint and decorations in the East and West Wings, and only two rooms in the West Wing were not overpainted by Mack, Jenney and Tyler. He died in 1940, but his firm remains active as of 2003.

Mack, Jenney and Tyler
The New York decorating firm of Mack, Jenney and Tyler operated from 1906 until 1941. Its principals were Edgar Whitfield Jenney, Charles Edward Mack (1876-1945) and Ernest Franklin Tyler (1879-1951). Jenney was the best-known artist of the three; his watercolors of Nantucket Island were featured in a posthumous, solo exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1940. Tyler was a great-grandson of John J. Audubon and a prominent New York designer and member of the Century Association. Mack was a skilled draftsman and seems to have supervised the technical side of the firm's decorative work. Other important works of the firm include the center portion of the Canadian Parliament building, the Weidner House in Philadelphia, George Post's Equitable Life Insurance Building, the Standard Oil Building in New York, and the Hotel Roosevelt in New York. Jenney retired from the business in 1927 to devote his time to teaching and painting scenes of Nantucket. After that, the firm decorated, among other notable buildings, the United States Supreme Court building and the baptistry of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. The firm disbanded when Tyler decided to retire in 1941.

Original Construction Contractors
Wollaeger Manufacturing Company
The Wollaeger Manufacturing Company of Milwaukee was in business from 1894 until 1920. It began as the Brass & Wollaeger Mfg. Co., a millwork company that evolved into furniture manufacturing by 1888. In 1910, the firm's annual report described its work as offering bank, office, library and courthouse furniture and finely finished interiors. The company was featured in the 1913 Commercial Milwaukee Year Book of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association as providers of special furniture and fixtures for banks and public buildings. The Wollaeger Mfg. Co. benefited from Commissioner George H. D. Johnson's promotion of Milwaukee firms for Capitol contracts. Correspondence reveals that he visited the factory, was in contact with the company's vice-president, and at least once delivered plans and specifications for bidding. The Capitol Commission and the Wollaeger Mfg. Co. enjoyed a relationship that was for the most part cordial and productive. When the company asked Lew Porter for a letter of recommendation to use in bidding for the Idaho State Capitol furniture contract, Porter accommodated the request. The relationship was terminated when the Wollaeger Mfg. Co. plant suffered heavy fire damage in late November 1916. In December 1917, when bidding was underway for the Capitol's final furniture contract, Louis J. Wollaeger wrote to Porter, thanking him for courteous treatment throughout their transactions. He stated that since fire destroyed the Wollaeger factory the firm had withdrawn from active business competition.
Pottier & Stymus Co.
The firm that created the furniture for the Executive Chamber in the East Wing, Pottier & Stymus Co. was an important New York cabinetmaking and decorating firm from 1859 through 1919, and occupied the uppermost echelons of American interior design along with such firms as Herter Brothers. According to King’s Handbook of New York City (1893), Pottier & Stymus Co. enjoyed “a world wide reputation for superior grades of furniture and wood-work. . .as well as for their artistic conceptions in interior decoration.” The firm showed its wares at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of the mid-1870s and received lavish praise.172 The majority of the firm’s work was for imposing private residences, many of them the New York City residences of such clients as William Rockefeller, George Westinghouse, Jr., Fred T. Steinway, James L. Flood, Henry M. Flagler and Leland Stanford. The firm also decorated Flagler’s country house and a number of his projects and personal properties in Florida, including the Ponce de Leon Hotel in Saint Augustine, the Royal Poinciana Hotel in Palm Beach and Flagler’s impressive Palm Beach residence, begun in 1901. Stanford, president of the Central Pacific Railroad, built one of the country’s largest mansions on Nob Hill in San Francisco in 1875-76, one of the firm’s largest commissions. This commission may have been instrumental in Pottier & Stymus Co.’s emergence as a major force in the development of grand interiors in that era. The firm’s most prestigious commission may have been the Cabinet Room of the White House, furnished and decorated by Pottier & Stymus Co. in 1869.173 Among the firm’s best-documented work was that for Glenmont, an estate in Llewellyn Park in West Orange, New Jersey, built between 1882 and 1884 for Henry C. Pedder but sold shortly after its completion to Thomas A. Edison. Edison lived there for forty-five years, and Glenmont is preserved today by the National Park Service as part of the Edison National Historic Site.183

Gimbel Brothers
Gimbel Brothers, the leading Milwaukee department store in the early twentieth century, was an important furnishings contractor for the Capitol. The store provided carpets, rugs and window shades. Gimbel Brothers also sold the commission the equipment for the restaurant kitchen and some furniture after construction was completed. Gimbel Brothers existed by that name from 1842 to 1986. Adam Gimbel opened a store in Vincennes, Indiana in 1842; his sons started the Gimbel Brothers firm, which began doing business in Milwaukee in 1887. It later expanded to Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and New York, buying Saks Fifth Avenue and Saks Thirty-fourth Street stores in 1923. Gimbels merged with Schuster’s Department Stores in 1962, and Marshall Field’s bought the firm in 1986.184

Woodbury Granite Company
Founded in 1878, the Woodbury Granite Company of Hardwick, Vermont operated quarries around that state and provided monument-grade stone for public buildings around the country. In 1903 the company was reorganized to incorporate the firm of Bickford, More & Company, a finishing business that cut granite to specifications for shipment to builders. In 1903, Woodbury won the granite contract for the Pennsylvania State Capitol, an extraordinary feat for a small, inland firm. This first major contract assured financial success for the company, and it expanded by adding new facilities and acquiring new quarries. In 1903, the company purchased quarry property near Bethel, Vermont, which produced the whitest and hardest granite known. The quality of this Bethel stone convinced the Capitol Commission to build the Wisconsin Capitol in granite. The Woodbury Company provided stone for five state capitols and dozens of post offices, banks and city halls.
Endnotes

1 Alice E. Smith, History of Wisconsin: From Exploration to Statehood (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1973), 320-21. See also Moses M. Strong, History of the Territory of Wisconsin from 1836 to 1848 (Madison: 1885), 273-74; Alice E. Smith, James Duane Doty: Frontier Promoter (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1954), 207-08; and "Pigs In State Capitol Once Made Legislature Adjourn," Wisconsin State Journal, 13 August 1922. The seat of Wisconsin's government was first at Beloit in Lafayette County, at which time Madison was selected as the permanent location. During that same session, the legislature named Burlington, Des Moines County (now part of Iowa), as a temporary capital to serve from 1837 until 1839. The creation of Iowa Territory required the legislature to convene in Madison one year before it originally intended.


3 Wisconsin Territory, Commissioners of Public Buildings, Report, 2 December 1839, Appendix F, reporting the style of the interior; John Y. Smith, "History of Madison," 1866 Madison City Directory, 20-21; Atwood, "Building of State's First Capitol."


7 The 1871-72 Madison City Directory describes the location of state offices.


10 They were Rhode Island, Minnesota, New York, Arkansas, Arizona, Maryland, Montana, Mississippi, Kansas, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia.


12 Capitol Improvement Commission minutes for 12 September 1903, folder 5, box 2, Capitol Improvement and Supply Records, 1839-1917, Series 138, Archives Division, Wisconsin Historical Society, hereinafter cited as Capitol Improvement and Supply Records, ser. 138. Chynoweth to Gilbert, 17 September 1903; Chynoweth to W. T. Laird, 17 and 29 September 1903; Chynoweth to Edwin Reynolds, 25 September 1903; Chynoweth to Reynolds, 26 September 1903, all in folder 9, box 1; Laird to Chynoweth, 22 September 1903, folder 3, box 24; Reynolds to Chynoweth, 25 September 1903 and Ingram to Chynoweth, 25 September 1903, both in folder 3, box 26, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

13 Chynoweth to Reynolds, 29 September and 10 October 1903, folder 9, box 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

14 Chynoweth to Reynolds, 4 October 1903, folder 6, box 1, ibid.

15 Capitol Improvement Commission minutes for 19 October 1903 and 6 October 1904, folder 5, box 2, Capitol Improvement and Supply records, ser. 138.


18 Capitol Improvement Commission minutes for 1 March 1904, folder 5, box 2, Capitol Improvement and Supply records, ser. 138.

19 Capitol Improvement Commission minutes for 2 March 1904, ibid. Madison Democrat, 2, 3, 4 and 5 March 1904.

20 "Reclaiming the Burnt Capitol," 17 March 1904, p. 2; "Capitol Damage Only $185,046.90," 22 April 1904, p. 1, both in Madison Democrat. In March 1905, most of the west wing was torn down after it was discovered to be structurally unstable. See "Not Building New Capitol," 19 March 1905, p. 8, ibid.


23 Capitol Improvement Commission, Program for Architects' Competition for Wisconsin State Capitol (Madison: 1904). "Great New Capitol Determined in Commission's Program Plan," Madison Democrat, 13 May 1904, p. 1. The letters from the commission to state departments requesting their respective space requirements are in folder 3, box 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833. The heads of departments were generally satisfied with the quarters proposed for them ("I can suggest no improvement of the foregoing," wrote La Follette in response to the executive department plans) although a few requested larger rooms or larger vaults. The commission acceded to these requests some of the time. Capitol Improvement Commission minutes for 19 October 1904, folder 5, box 2, Capitol Improvement and Supply records, ser. 138.

24 Capitol Improvement Commission minutes for 6 December 1904 through 31 January 1905, folder 5, box 2, Capitol Improvement and Supply records, ser. 138; "Plans Received for New Capitol," Madison Democrat, 7 December 1904, p. 1. The letter from the commission to Eames and his report are in folder 6, box 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.


The correspondence is in folder 7, box 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.


“McGilivray to Open Air,” 19 April 1905, p. 4; “New Capitol Measure,” 20 April 1905, p. 2, both in Madison Democrat.


“Senate For New Capitol,” 2 June 1905, p. 1; “Asphalt Before The New Capitol,” 8 June 1905, p. 1; “Senate Approves Assembly’s Views,” 9 June 1905, p. 3; “Adjournment Not Till Next Week,” 14 June 1905, p. 1, all in Madison Democrat. The assembly amended the original senate bill specifying that no money could be used until the city of Madison paved the streets around the square; the pavement was not complete until December 1905.


Governor La Follette’s message to the legislature, special session 1905, in Messages and Papers of Governor La Follette.


48 On 29 December 1905, Governor La Follette appointed George H. D. Johnson of Milwaukee to the commission to replace Reynolds. The fifty-four-year-old Milwaukee native had been a partner with E. P. Bacon in the grain business and had been involved in establishing the Railroad Commission and in the legislation controlling railroad rates. See Milwaukee Journal, 22 August 1914.

49 Capitol Commission minutes for 19 January 1906, vol. 1; Gilbert to Ingram, 16 January 1906, and Ingram to Gilbert, 13 February 1906, both in folder 8, box 1, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.


Capitol Commission minutes for 20 February 1906, vol. 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Capitol Commission minutes for 20 February 1906, vol. 1; Jennie Nelson to George H. D. Johnson, 13 March 1906, folder 9, box 1; Ingram to Nelson, 12 March 1906, folder 8, box 1; Johnson to Nelson, 12 March 1906, folder 8, box 1; Carrère & Hastings to Robert M. La Follette, Sr., 20 March 1906, enclosed in Ingram to Nelson, 21 March 1906, folder 8, box 1, all ibid.

Wisconsin Capitol Commission, Program containing instructions to and information for architects submitting competitive plans preliminary to the election of an architect for the state capitol building (Madison: 1906).

Peabody and Starns to Porter, 11 April and 4 May 1906; Post & Sons to Porter, 23 April 1906; Porter to Peabody and Starns, 20 April, 7 May and 17 May 1906; Porter to Post & Sons, 27 April 1906, all in folder 8, box 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Capitol Commission minutes for 29 June, vol. 1, ibid. The quotation is from Daniel Burnham to Capitol Commission, 11 July 1906, p. 7, in folder 19, box 4, ibid. The report also appears in vol. 1, p. 16-20.

No images of the other firms’ plans have been found to exist, so it is impossible to compare them today.


Capitol Commission minutes for 25 and 25 June 1906, vol. 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833. The suggestion for the room switch probably came from H. C. Koch & Sons. In a letter to the commission dated 16 July 1906, the firm suggests that placing the assembly and senate in adjoining wings would be more convenient, as would placing the supreme court and law library in the north and east wings, respectively. See H. C. Koch & Son to Capitol Commission, 16 July 1906, folder 7, box 2, ibid. Capitalization of “Capitol” and the various elements of the building begins at this point because the building began to be actualized only after Post & Son’s selection.


Post & Sons to Porter, 15 October 1906, folder 16, box 30, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833; Post Drawing 518-0, “Survey,” no date, Capitol Archives.

Capitol Commission minutes for 1 May 1907, vol. 1; Johnson to Porter, 8 May 1907, folder 2, box 12, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Capitol Commission minutes for 26 and 27 February and 8, 15 and 21 March 1907, vol. 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Capitol Commission minutes for 25 and 30 April and 1 May 1907, vol. 1; Woodbury Granite Company contract ($1,945,750), folder 2, box 44, all ibid.

Capitol Commission minutes for 1 May 1907, vol. 1; Johnson to Porter, 8 May 1907, folder 2, box 12, both ibid.

Capitol Commission minutes for 5 June 1907 and 3 January 1908, vol. 1; T. C. McCarthy contract and bond, folder 2, box 43; E. W. Krueger to J. H. Gormley, 25 October 1909, folder 13, box 29; McCarthy application for payment, 12 March 1908, folder 5, box 44, all ibid.

Heinigke & Bowen contract and bond, folder 7, box 42; Porter to Heinigke & Bowen, 22 October 1908, folder 5, box 22; McNulty Bros. contract and bond, folder 2, box 43; “Application for Certificate of payment...,” 9 December 1908, folder 5, box 44; A. D. and J. V. Frederickson contract and bond, folder 5, box 42; “Application for Certificate of payment...,” 10 February 1909, folder 3, box 44, all ibid.

For changes in ornamental stone, see Post & Sons to Porter, 25 April 1908, folder 3, box 21; Porter to Post & Sons, 27 April 1908 (no folder or box number); Capitol Commission minutes for 27 April and 5 and 8 May 1908, vol. 1; Porter to Vilas, 13 May 1908, folder 3, box 21, all ibid.

See correspondence with Vulcan Iron & Steel in folder 4, box 25, and folder 5, box 36, all ibid.

Chas. Wilkins & Co. contract and bond, folder 2, box 4; “Application for Certificate of Payment,” 7 January 1909, folder 6, box 44; Post & Sons to Porter, 16 March 1908, folder 3, box 21, all ibid.

H. Kelly & Co. contract and bond, 5 February 1908, folder 1, box 43; Porter to Kelly & Co, 16 January 1909, folder 10, box 14, all ibid.

Capitol Commission minutes for 5 February 1908, vol. 1; Edwin Blashfield contract, folder 2, box 41, both ibid.

Blashfield to Vilas, 19 February 1908, and Rueben Gold Thwaites to Vilas, 25 February 1908, both in box 39, William F. Vilas Papers, Archives Division, Wisconsin Historical Society. Post to Vilas, 16 and 27 July 1908, folder 4, box 21; Porter to Blashfield, 27 November and 1 December 1908, folder 12, box 5, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Capitol Commission minutes for 5 February and 10 June 1908, vol. 1; the quotation is from Post to Vilas, 7 July 1908, folder 6, box 42, emphasis original; Post & Sons to Porter, 27 July 1908, folder 4, box 21; Elmer Garnsey contract and bond, folder 6, box 42, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Capitol Commission minutes for 13 July and 10 November 1908, vol. 1; Post & Sons to Porter, 27 July 1908, folder 4, box 21; Garnsey contract and bond, folder 6, box 42; Garnsey to Porter, 14 December 1908, folder 5, box 10; Garnsey to Post & Sons 18 November 1908, folder 5, box 10; Porter memoranda or reports for 11 September and 31 October 1908, box 1a, all ibid.

Capitol Commission minutes for 18 December 1907, vol. 1; and J. W. Mitchell contract, folder 3, box 43, both ibid.


A. D. and J. V. Frederickson Co. contract, folder 5, box 42; Capitol Commission minutes for 22 May, 1 July and 11 September 1908, vol. 1, both in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833. Wisconsin State Journal, 21 April, 17 May and 9 June 1908.

Porter memoranda or reports for 11 and 28 September 1908, 2, 3, 4 and 6 February 1909, and 10 and 19 March 1909, all in box 1a; Post & Sons to Woodbury Granite Co., 18 November 1908, folder 10, box 36; James Duncan to Porter, 16 April 1909 and Duncan to Woodbury Granite Co., 16 April 1909, both in folder 17, box 9, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Porter memoranda or reports for 30 April and 5 May 1909, box 1a; Porter to John Grignola, 1 July 1909, folder 5, box 10, both ibid; Wisconsin State Journal, 3, 16 and 19 July 1909.

Commission minutes for 10 June and 11 September 1908, vol. 1; financial records, vol. 3, p. 397; Bitter to Porter, 22 September 1908, folder 1, box 5, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.


W. S. Hopkins to Porter, 1 November 1909, folder 11, box 15; Ingram to Porter, 9 November 1909, folder 9, box 1; Bitter to Porter, 22 November 1909, folder 2, box 5; George H. Bickford to Porter, 20 November, folder 2, box 27, all Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

Bickford to Porter, 10 December 1909, folder 2, box 27, ibid.

Porter to Van Cleve, 2 January 1910, folder 2, box 26; Bickford to James Gormley, 22 March 1910, folder 1, box 30; Porter to Davidson, 23 December 1910, folder 25, box 7, all ibid.

Post to Porter, 4 November 1909, and “Memorandum” dated 1 November 1909, both in folder 6, box 21, ibid.

East Wing contracts are in box 42 (folders 5 and 7) and box 43 (folders 1 and 2), ibid.

Interior construction can be traced through the reports or memoranda of Lew Porter for late 1908 and 1909 in box 1a, ibid.

Porter to Johnson, 20 July 1909, folder 5, box 13; Capitol Commission minutes for 31 August, volume 1; Porter to Barr Cash & Package Carrier, 4 August 1909, folder 13, box 5; Porter memorandum or report, 31 August 1909, box 1a, ibid.

Gormley to Findorff, 5 January and 2 March 1909, and Post & Sons to Findorff, 13 May 1909, all in folder 10, box 34, ibid.

Capitol Commission minutes for 10 June and 21 July 1908, vol. 1, ibid.

Porter memorandum or report for 10 August 1909, box 1a, ibid.

Porter memorandum or report for 1 December 1909, box 1a, ibid. Main Hall was renamed Bascom Hall in 1920. The building was constructed between 1857 and 1859; a south wing was added in 1898 by Ferry & Clas, who also designed the dome, which the capitol dome was to replace. A fire in 1916 destroyed the existing dome, and the old capitol dome remained unused and was eventually scrapped. See Jim Feldman, The Buildings of the University of Wisconsin (Madison: The Author, 1997), 22-25.
86 Porter memorandum or report for 1 January 1910, box 1a, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

87 Capitol Commission minutes for 8 August 1910 and 25 January 1911, vol. 1; Porter memorandum or report for 6 September 1910, box 1a, all ibid.

88 Porter memorandum or report for 6 April and 20 September 1911, box 1a, ibid.

89 Porter memorandum or report for 14 October 1908, 24 June and 15 September 1909, and 15 March 1910, box 1a; Capitol Commission minutes for 1 March 1910, vol. 1, all ibid.

90 Capitol memoranda or reports for 10 August and 21 September 1909, 6 September and 14 October 1910, 6 April, 18 May and 20 September 1911, all in box 1a; Capitol Commission minutes for 20 September and 14 October 1910, vol. 1, all ibid.

91 Porter to Post, 15 and 17 November 1909, folder 16, box 19; Porter to Johnson, 17 November 1909, folder 5, box 13; Porter memorandum or report, 1 December 1909, box 1a, ibid.

92 Marshall to Porter, 28 January 1910, folder 17, box 23; Post to Marshall, 12 April 1910; and Post to Porter, 14 and 19 April and 9 June 1910, all in folder 1, box 22, all ibid.

93 Porter to Post, 15 and 17 November 1909, folder 16, box 19; Porter to Johnson, 27 November 1909, folder 5, box 13; Capitol Commission minutes for 16 November 1909, box 1a; specifications for the justices' benches, folder 9, box 37; Wollage Mfg. Co. to Porter, 21 November 1910, folder 3, box 27, all ibid.

94 Correspondence among the justices, Post and Porter is in folder 1, box 22, folder 17, box 23 and folder 10, box 34; Capitol Commission minutes for 14 December 1910, vol. 1, all ibid.

95 Post to Winslow, 28 December 1911; Winslow to Post & Sons, 20 January 1912, both in folder 5, box 34, ibid.

96 Ballin contract and bond, folder 2, box 2; Capitol Commission minutes for 12 August 1911, vol. 1; Post to Vilas, 16 July 1908 and Post & Sons to Porter, 27 July 1908, both in folder 4, box 21, all ibid.

97 Garney to Post & Sons, 4 January 1909, folder 1, box 22; Post & Sons to Porter, 9 June 1910, folder 1, box 22; contract account summary, vol. 3; Garney to Porter, 25 September 1911, folder 19, box 9; Porter to Johnson, 5 January 1912, folder 8, box 13; Porter to Garney, 12 October 1912, folder 8, box 10, all ibid.

98 Capitol Commission minutes for 9 May, 3 June, 12 October and 27 October, vol. 1; Conrad Schmitt to Porter, 23 and 29 July 1910, folder 17, box 23; Schmitt to commission, 26 October 1910, folder 1, box 44; Porter to Schmitt, 5 December 1910, folder 7, box 24, all ibid.

99 Porter memorandum or report for 1 January 1910, box 1a; Capitol Commission minutes for 1 March 1910; Adolph Weimann contract, folder 2, box 44; Weimann correspondence, boxes 27 and 29, all ibid.; "South Pediment Figures Done; Weimann Here," Wisconsin State Journal, 26 June 1912, p. 1.

100 Capitol Commission minutes for 25 January and 23 August 1911, vol. 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833. The Mears episode is spelled out most fully in Susan Porter Green, Helen Farnsworth Mears (Oshkosh, Wisconsin: Castle-Pierce Press, 1972), 76-82. French seems to have changed his mind about pursuing the commission after viewing Mears's model.


102 Kenyon Cox, contract and bond, folder 2, box 3; Cox to Porter, 16 November 1912 and 12 August 1913, box 6; George Post to Ingram, 22 May 1913 and Post & Sons to Porter, 10 October 1913, both box 22, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833. See also H. Wayne Morgan, Kenyon Cox, 1856-1919 (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1994), esp. 168.

103 Cox to Porter, 25 November 1912 and 28 May and 19 July 1913, box 6, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

104 Capitol Commission minutes for 23 August and 3 November 1911, vol. 1; Post to Porter, 28 October 1911, box 22; and Blashfield contract, folder 2, box 42, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

105 Post & Sons to Johnson, 22 August 1912, box 22, and Porter to Blashfield, 17 September 1914, box 5, both in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

106 Porter to Post & Sons, 16 May 1912, Post & Sons to Porter and Post & Sons to Johnson, both 22 August 1912 and Porter to Post, 4 August 1913, all box 22; French to Post & Sons, n. d., and French to Porter, 4 and 21 August 1913, all box 8, all ibid.

107 Capitol Commission minutes for 23 April 1912, vol. 1, ibid.; Francis D. Millet to Winslow, 15 and 23 February 1912, East Wing contractors' binder, Capitol Archives.

108 Capitol Commission minutes for 27 May, 14 June, 10 July and 10 December 1912, vol. 1; Albert Herter contract and bond, folder 7, box 42; the relative correspondence is in folder 7, box 42, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

109 Mural Paintings by Hugo Ballin in the Executive Chamber, State Capitol Building, Madison Wis., privately printed in New York by Ballin in 1913, provides photographs and descriptions of all the murals.

110 Capitol Commission minutes for 15 January and 29 April 1913, vol. 1; Porter to Johnson, 18 January 1913, folder 9, box 13, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

111 Porter to Ballin, 13 June 1913, folder 17, box 5; 1 July 1913, folder 1, box 34; 9 July 1913, folder 17, box 5; Ballin to Porter, 19 June, July (n.d.) and 20 November 1913, folder 6, box 5; Post & Sons to Ballin, 8 November 1913, folder 1, box 34, all ibid.

112 Capitol Commission minutes for 19 December 1913, vol. 2; Ballin to McGovern, n.d., folder 6, box 3; Ballin to Porter, 22 and 24 February 1914 (which mentions the second letter to McGovern), folder 7, box 5, all in Capitol Commission records.

113 Capitol Commission minutes for 7 April and 3 June 1910 and 9 May, 23 August and 3 November 1911, all in vol. 1, ibid.


115 Capitol Commission minutes for 29 April 1913, vol. 2; Porter memorandum or report for 3 October 1912, box 1a, both ibid.

116 Cox to Porter, 30 October 1913, folder 7, box 7; and Porter to Cox, 11 November 1913, folder 8, box 7, both ibid.

117 Post & Sons to Porter, 11 April 1913, folder 4, box 22, ibid.
118 Post & Sons to Porter, 5 June 1912 and 11 April 1913, folder 4, box 22; Bickford to Porter, 10 June and 30 November, folder 7, box 27; Johnson to Porter, 27 November 1912, folder 1, box 13; Porter to Bitter, 3 July 1913, box 5; Capitol Commission minutes for 29 April 1913, vol. 1, all ibid. The lack of granite was a topic of discussion at the commission meeting of 10 June 1913. See also "Heroic Figures Are Placed on Capitol," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 9 November 1913.

119 Capitol Commission minutes for 23 April 1912, vol. 1, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833. The electrical bids were later rejected because Rohn claimed a clerical error had rendered his bid $2,000 too low. Harloff-Pence received the second contract with a bid of $12,335.

120 John E. Icke contract and bond, folder 17, box 11; Porter to Johnson, 5, 13 and 26 August 1913 and Porter to Icke, 26 August 1913, folder 9, box 13; all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833, "Last Remnant of Old Capitol Is Now Gone," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 2 December 1913, no page number.


122 Capitol Commission minutes for 20 May 1914, vol. 2; Mack, Jenney and Tyler to Post & Sons, 8 June 1914, folder 2, box 43, both ibid.

123 Capitol Commission minutes for 20 May and 29 September 1914 and 24 August 1915, vol. 2; Porter to Mack, Jenney and Tyler, 14 May and 19 August 1915, folder 1, box 17; Mack, Jenney and Tyler to Porter, 18 May 1915, folder 5, box 16; Post & Sons to Porter, 25 June 1915, folder 1, box 36; Mack, Jenney and Tyler contract and bond, folder 2, box 43, all ibid.

124 Capitol Commission minutes for 20 May 1914, vol. 1; Porter to Herter, 8 June and 16 October 1914 and 9 June 1915, folder 6, box 11; Winslow to Porter, 17 October 1914 and Marshall to Porter, 17 October 1914, both in folder 7, box 29, all ibid.

125 Ballin to Porter, 18 March 1915, folder 8, box 5; Porter to Ballin, 2 April 1915, folder 19, box 5, both ibid.

126 Cox to Porter, 3 July and 2 August 1914, both in folder 9, box 7; Cox to James Otis Post, 31 July 1914, copy in folder 10, box 7; and Capitol Commission minutes for 20 May and 29 September 1914 and 29 September, vol. 1, all ibid. After the U. S. joined the Allies in the war, one senator proposed that the imperial eagle on the German figure be painted over.

127 Cox to Porter, 3, 8 and 18 December 1914, folder 9, box 7; Cox to Porter, 17 February, 24 May, and 10 October 1915, folder 10, box 6; Porter to Cox, 14 July 1915, folder 3, box 7, all ibid.

128 French to Porter, 2 February 1914, box 8; Porter to French, 28 March 1914, box 9; Post & Sons to Porter (telegram), 23 June 1914, box 22, all ibid.

129 James Otis Post to Porter, 23 June 1914 (letter), box 22, ibid.

130 Porter to French, 1 August 1914, box 9, ibid. "'Forward' Placed on Pedestal," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 20 July 1914. The newspaper mistakenly referred to the statue as *Forward*, thus beginning nearly a century of confusion as to its proper name.


133 Porter to Cox, 24 October 1914, box 9, ibid.

134 Post & Sons to Porter, 26 February 1915, folder 6, box 22; Van Cleve to Porter, 19 March, folder 11, box 25; Porter to Cox, 15 October 1915, folder 3, box 7; and Capitol Commission minutes for 17 March 1915, vol. 2, all ibid. There is no indication of the resolution of the problem in the Capitol Commission records.

135 Porter to Blashfield, 17 September 1914 and 23 January 1915, box 5; Post & Sons to Porter, 19 October 1914; Porter to Post & Sons, 27 October 1914, all in box 22, all ibid.

136 George Nelson contract and bond, folder 4, box 43; Warden-Allen contract and bond, folder 2, box 44; Porter to Pittsburgh Testing Laboratory, 7 October 1913, folder 4, box 20; Porter to Van Cleve, 25 April, 2 April, 10 and 19 September and 9 October 1914, folder 4, box 26; Porter to Warden-Allen, 10 March 1915, folder 6, box 28, all ibid.

137 Porter to Bickford, 2 April 1914, folder 7, box 29; Porter to W. C. Clifford, 25 April 1914, folder 2, box 7; Porter to Van Cleve, 3 December 1914, folder 4, box 26; Porter to Van Cleve, 27 April 1915, folder 6, box 25; Porter to Cias, 21 July 1915, folder 3, box 7; and Porter to Ingram, 10 August 1915, folder 17, box 11, all ibid.

138 Capitol Commission minutes for 23 August 1914 and 23 April 1912, vol. 1; Piccirilli contract and bond, folder 5, box 43; Piccirilli to Porter, 3 July and 3 November 1914, folder 11, box 19; Porter to Piccirilli, 26 October 1914, folder 5, box 43, all in Capitol Commission records, ser. 833.

139 McNulty Bros. contract and bond, folder 2, box 43; Riesen & Riesen contract and bond, folder 1, box 44; W. H. Halsey contract and bond, folder 7, box 28; Paul E. Mueller contract and bond, folder 3, box 43; Paul Harloff contract and bond, folder 7, box 42; Northwestern Marble and Tile Co. contract and bond, folder 4, box 43; Capitol Commission minutes for 17 March and 6 April 1915, vol. 2, all ibid.

140 Porter to L. C. Whittet, 16 May 1916, folder 8, box 29; Porter to Riesen & Riesen, 22 November 1916 and 4 January 1917, folder 12, box 23; Riesen & Riesen to Porter, 23 November 1916; and Cream City Sash and Door to Porter, 27 February 1917, folder 10, box 6, all ibid.

141 Porter to Alexander Martin, 5 June and 19 July 1916, folder 2, box 17; Van Cleve to Porter, 10 June 1916, folder 12, box 25, all ibid.

142 Post & Sons to Northwestern, 17 March 1916 and James Otis Post to Porter, 23 March 1916, both in folder 1, box 23; Pisani Brothers to Northwestern, Marble & Tile, 1 April 1910 and Northwestern to Post & Sons, copy in 4 April 1916, both in folder 10, box 18, all ibid.


144 Hosea Rood diary entries for 15 February, 17 and 28 March 1917, Hosea Rood Papers, Wisconsin Veterans’ Museum.


Porter to Universal Indicator Co., 29 November 1916 and Universal Indicator Co. to Porter, 5 and 23 December 1916, all in folder 3, box 25, ibid.


“First Mayor of Marinette Passes Away,” Marinette Star, 6 May 1920.


Susan Porter Green, Helen Farnsworth Mears (Oshkosh: Castle-Pierce Press, 1972).


183 “Famed Glass Craftsman Is Dead at 73,” Milwaukee News-Sentinel, 29 December 1940, p. 10-A.


185 The 1913 Commercial Milwaukee Year Book of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association was an annual directory published by the association, with the Wollaeger entry found on p. 94. Records of the Wollaeger Manufacturing Company can be found in Wollaeger Manufacturing Company, folder W2354, box 977, Incorporation Papers: Domes-
tic Corporations, 1848-1945, records of the Corporation Division, Wisconsin Secretary of State, series 356, Archives Division, Wisconsin Historical Society. Reference to Lew Porter’s letter of recommendation is in Wollaeger to Porter, 9 April 1912, folder 7, box 27, Capitol Commission records, ser. 833. Louis Wollaeger’s letter to Porter, 5 December 1917, withdrawing from consideration for the North Wing contract is in folder 8, box 28, ibid.


187 Hanks, “Pottier & Stymus Mfg.” See also, Diana Strazdins, “The Millionaire’s Palace: Leland Stanford’s Commis-


189 Worldcat database, OCLC No. 24558332, available in the Library of Metropolitan Milwaukee County, a result of a search for “Gimbels Brothers.”