

PHOTOGRAPHS

OF THE

ST. PAUL CITY HALL -
RAMSEY COUNTY
COURTHOUSE

(1932)

Historic American Buildings Survey
Library of Congress

The photographs of the St. Paul City Hall-Ramsey County Courthouse that make up this album are from the Historic American Buildings Survey. Most were taken after the building opened in 1932 (the street scenes and models of cars in photos on pages 5, 6, 7 and 8 suggest they were taken in the 1970-1980s). Some have been cropped to eliminate black borders.

The photographs from the early 1930s were taken by the Wright Studio (its seal can be found in the lower right corner of many). Architectural photography is difficult, and good interior shots notoriously hard to take. It is obvious that Wright photographers appreciated the significance and magnificence of this building. We owe a great deal to them.

The Historic American Building Survey has the following note about the architectural style of the building:

The Saint Paul City Hall and Ramsey County Courthouse is a stunning example of innovative public architecture from the American Depression Era. Commissioned in 1930, and completed in 1931 by Holabird and Root of Chicago and Ellerbe and Company of Saint Paul, the City Hall design uses two Art Deco styles known as "American Perpendicular" and "Zigzag Moderne." The use of Art Deco styles and incorporation of technologically advanced functional features in the new City Hall building make it a distinctively "modern" structure in the context of 1930's architecture. Art works which symbolically depict the progressive ideals of a modern industrial society add to the futuristic image of the architecture. Because it was constructed of the highest quality materials and is an excellent representative of a past style in the contemporary built environment, the City Hall is still considered an architectural masterpiece and a landmark in the city of Saint Paul.



**Photocopy of drawing by Ellerbe & Company,
one of the architectural firms.
(ca. 1930)**



**Photocopy of drawing, delineator not identified,
but probably Ellerbe & Company.
(ca. 1931)**



**Fourth Street entrance.
Photographer unknown.
(ca. 1970-1980s).**



**Photographer unknown.
(ca. 1970-1980s).**

HABS No. MN-32-4



**View from West Kellogg Boulevard and Wabasha Street.
Photographer unknown.
(ca. 1970-1980s).**



**View from West Kellogg Boulevard.
Photographer unknown.
(ca. 1970-1980s).**



**Detail of relief by sculptor Lee Lawrie,
Fourth Street entrance.
(ca. 1932)**



**Detail of relief by sculptor Lee Lawrie,
West Kellogg Boulevard entrance.
(ca. 1932)**



**Detail of relief by sculptor Lee Lawrie,
West Kellogg Boulevard entrance.
(ca. 1932)**



West Kellogg Boulevard entrance.



West Kellogg Boulevard entrance.



Revolving door entrance to Memorial Hall.



**View from Memorial Hall
to entrance on West Kellogg Boulevard.**



**Memorial Hall leading to Indian God of Peace
by sculptor Carl Milles.**



**Indian God of Peace,
by Swedish sculptor Carl Milles,
at end of Memorial Hall.**



Memorial Hall gallery.



Lobby, first floor.



Lobby, first floor.



**Elevators, first floor.
Reliefs on doors by Albert Stewart.
Relief on top depicts farmer; below, a construction worker.**



Elevators on upper level lobby.



**Elevators on upper level lobby,
with circular ceiling light in foreground.**



Offices of County Treasurer.



Department of Finance.



Offices of the Clerk of Municipal Court.



Courtroom.



Chambers of the St. Paul City Council.



City Council Chambers.



**Mural depicting a surveyor
by John Norton, a Chicago artist.
City Council Chambers.**



**Mural of woodsman by John Norton,
City Council Chambers.**



**Mural of industrial worker by John Norton,
City Council Chambers.**



**Mural of river boatman by John Norton,
City Council Chambers.**



Exterior
Photograph taken September 1939.
Photographer: John Vachon (1914-1975)
Source: Library of Congress

Related Articles

The St Paul City Hall-Ramsey County Courthouse was dedicated in November and December 1932. Those ceremonies are described at length and detail in this article:

“Dedication of the St. Paul City Hall-Ramsey County Courthouse (MLHP, 2013) (published first, 1932).

The St. Paul City Hall-Ramsey County Courthouse replaced the courthouse that was dedicated in 1889. Those dedication ceremonies were described in the *St. Paul Daily Globe* on May 7, 1889, and can be found in the following article:

“Dedication of the Ramsey County Court House” (MLHP, 2015) (published first, 1889).

Years later, the *Globe* carried an article on the building of that courthouse:

“Ramsey County Court House and the Men Who Inhabit It.” (MLHP, 2014) (published first, 1903). ■

