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NOT
FOR
LOAN



A PAGEANT OF OREGON



IN A NEW TECHNIQUE ••
• CARVED WOOD MURALS •
• PLUS MODERN LIGHTING •

And each would express in his own craft something of the delight
that his living in this Oregon land has built into his soul . . .



. . . this building should be typical of the Oregon country. I was immediately captivated by the majesty of the theme and the appropriateness of using our Oregon woods . . . I do appreciate excellence when I see it because I have had the opportunity in many parts of the world to see what artistic people have done along similar lines. I recall the famous LaPlata Museum in South America which has a series of great mural paintings depicting the life and background of the Pampas. I think we have something still finer . . . the Oregon scene depicted in carvings in Oregon woods . . . by Oregon craftsmen.

Warren D. Smith,
University of Oregon faculty

. . . Model and diagrams by Grey Gypsy Craftsmen of Eugene . . .
photography by Morton Ferebee of Kennel-Ellis studios and by Bob Otto

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Foreword

This brochure has been prepared to bring to the attention of architects participating in the Oregon State Capitol Competition:

- a new technique in modernly lighted carved wood murals made possible by the characteristics of certain Oregon woods;
- the suggestion of use of such wood murals in the decorative treatment of the capitol building—applicable in a central rotunda;
- the availability of Oregon woods for interior finishing, and suggestion of the propriety of a comprehensive demonstration of this in the capitol of the state containing the largest stand of timber of any state in the Union.

Although murals of this character are of late conception, they have already made a profound impression. They are in harmony with the simple lines and planes of present day art and architecture, are adaptable to the architectural style of a structure and, particularly, are adaptable to modern architectural lighting.

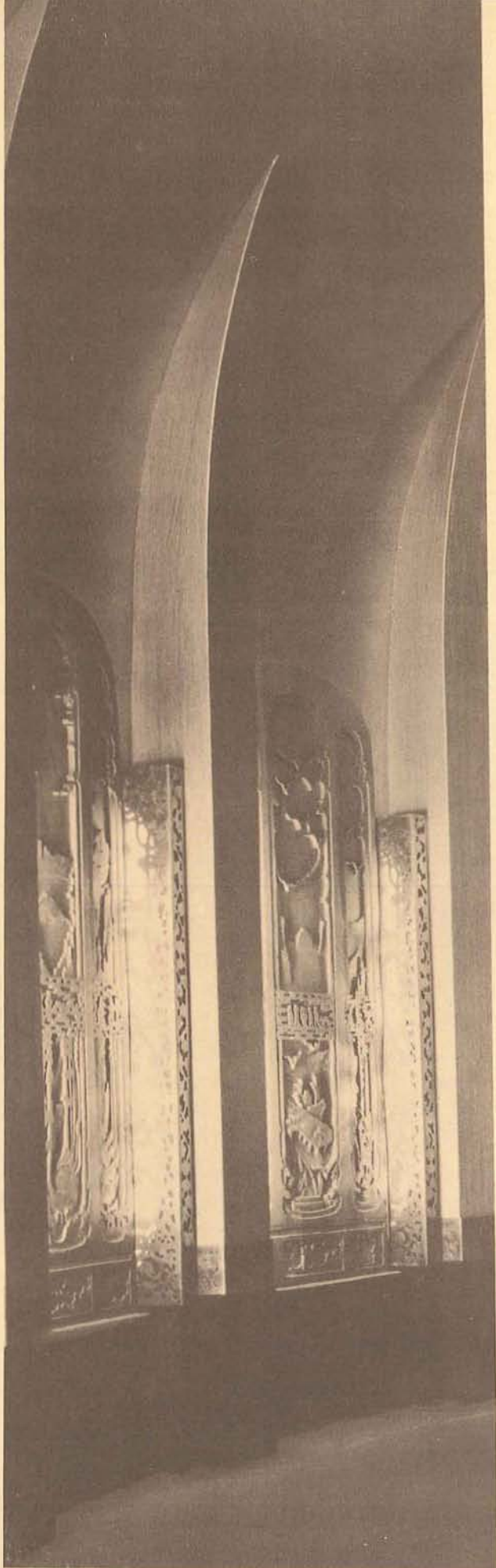
To no single individual, or group, belongs the Pageant of Oregon plan. Although conceived by a few in visioning an adequate Champoeg memorial and further stimulated by popular reaction to the Pendleton Roundup and the Trail-to-Rail pioneer pageantry of Eugene and through research by the D. A. R., men and women from all walks of life throughout Oregon have contributed materially to its development. It has received the enthusiastic approval of statewide organizations, including prominent social, historic, educational and business groups in addition to the press.

Due to this widespread interest, Resolutions and Memorials suggesting the use of Oregon woods and other materials, and the appropriateness of the proposed murals were widely supported in a recent session of the State Legislature, and final action was prevented only because of a crowded calendar in the closing session.

The Pageant of Oregon plan, carried out as presented, or by other adaptation, and representation of Oregon woods in the finishing of various rooms, would reflect the consciousness of the people of the state and stand as an impressive symbol of its outstanding natural characteristic—a heavy mantle of forest, the background of the state's leading industry.

Architects planning a capitol particularly appropriate to this great forest state may find the suggested use of Oregon woods and the Pageant of Oregon plan of stimulating interest.

DEC 10 '38 Ore. Budget Dept.



Carved murals of wood,
great verticals
in heroic tri-panels
to interpret graphically
the epic of
the Oregon scene . . .

A New Technique

IN CARVED WOOD MURALS

A group of Oregon craftsmen-designers, working with native western woods, after ten years of study and creative woodcarving, have evolved a new and dramatic mural technique. They discovered that certain native woods, aided by the versatility of modern lighting, produced murals not only striking and unusual, but flexible and of unlimited rich architectural possibilities.

● AN INTEGRAL ENRICHMENT IN TRUE SCALE

It is believed that architectural designers may find in such carved wood murals not only a new and expressive enrichment, but one which, when used to its full richness, may affect, indirectly but significantly, several elements of even general structural design and composition—particularly those related to fenestration, room plan, ceiling height, and acoustics.

Moreover, carved murals may be sufficiently striking as to size-scale, theme-scope and as media for a logical and richly integral use of "color music," as to readily and effectively keynote an entire interior scheme. They lend themselves to historic and modern pageantry of events, and to sweeping pictorials—with not only an effective feeling of scale and an illusion of perspective but with these elements subordinated to composition, and to the dominating emotional theme.

To a greater extent than in any other medium, carved wood murals permit intimate foreground detail at eye level, together with a largeness of scale or conception as a whole.

● MODERN LIGHTING MADE RICHLY EXPRESSIVE

Not only may the general color of a carved mural be determined by the lighting but its mood and even its technique of expression may be changed. The natural buff tan and pale rose cedar woods under amber lights become live sepia with rich, brown shadows. With white lights placed close to the plane of carved surface, and blue lights slightly forward, the mural takes on the soft beauty of moonlight. Under subdued lights, and permitting the wood texture to predominate, the feeling of the mural may be almost rustic. Or it may be made a pastel harmony or, in contrast, may be of rugged Gothic character. With strong highlights and deep shadows, the carving becomes highly sophisticated; add to this sharply contrasting color lights, and it may be as ultra-modern as tomorrow.

Used as screens to reflect the play of changing light, these carved panels offer design elements of great flexibility.

● WIDE ADAPTABILITY TO ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

Of special significance to architects is the fact that a given mural, by varying the character, color and intensity of lighting, can be made to harmonize with various types of architectural setting.

In rooms in which these carved wood murals may be used advantageously, material saving can be demonstrated as possible in space-cubage and cost, contributed to by

- interior structural simplicity and honesty;
- freedom from incidental lavish wall and ceiling ornamentation;
- lower ceilings, without loss of feeling of height;
- reduction of floor area toward the strictly functional, through attained illusions of room depth and space quality.



. . . Carved murals between tall, sheer, simple, structural pilasters that rise and seem to blend into a distant ceiling . . . murals richly lighted through tall side grills . . . carved vistas illuminated to suggest in slowly changing light and shadow the moods of Oregon from dawn to dusk.

The extraordinary size of wide plank available in Oregon woods, and the applicability of their color, quality and graining in wood carving, are both a surprise and a delight to designers and craftsmen in wood.

Four cedars are particularly suitable for carved murals. In Western Red Cedar and Port Orford Cedar, widths up to 48 inches are readily available. Incense Cedar and Yellow Cedar are smaller in size but widths to 36 inches can be had by search.

Several pines also are suitable for wood carving purposes. Widths up to 48 inches are obtainable in Sugar Pine while White Pine can be supplied in sizes ranging from 24 to 36 inches.

● SEASON READILY AND AGE BEAUTIFULLY

These woods season much more readily than most woods, are freer from shrinkage, and do not warp or check appreciably when properly handled. The ease and speed with which such seasoning can be accomplished makes production of special-cut material a matter of a few weeks. This seasoning is in marked contrast to the slow air-drying of not so long ago, and even more so to the two and three-year-long methods of the wood carvers of olden days, who, in order to obtain their relatively moderate sized blocks of oak or walnut, had first to sink logs in swamps or streams and then dry them over long periods of time.

The description following is not intended to be exhaustive but, rather, suggestive. While illustrated by the cedars, other suitable Oregon woods will be incorporated in the final plan.

The several cedars have similar desirable qualities and textures. They have a pleasing and harmonious range of color which runs from silver white, through cream and brown tans to rich, light rose; and in ageing, from ivory with a cast of silver to deep tans and light sepias. One cedar, in the shadows, has a range from cream yellow to a soft, rich sulphur yellow. They are effective for the play of light not only through their color and the particular carving technique evolved, but also by a distinct peculiarity of texture, a soft vibrant sheen, and a certain quality akin to translucence.

● HAVE EXCEPTIONAL ACOUSTIC VALUES

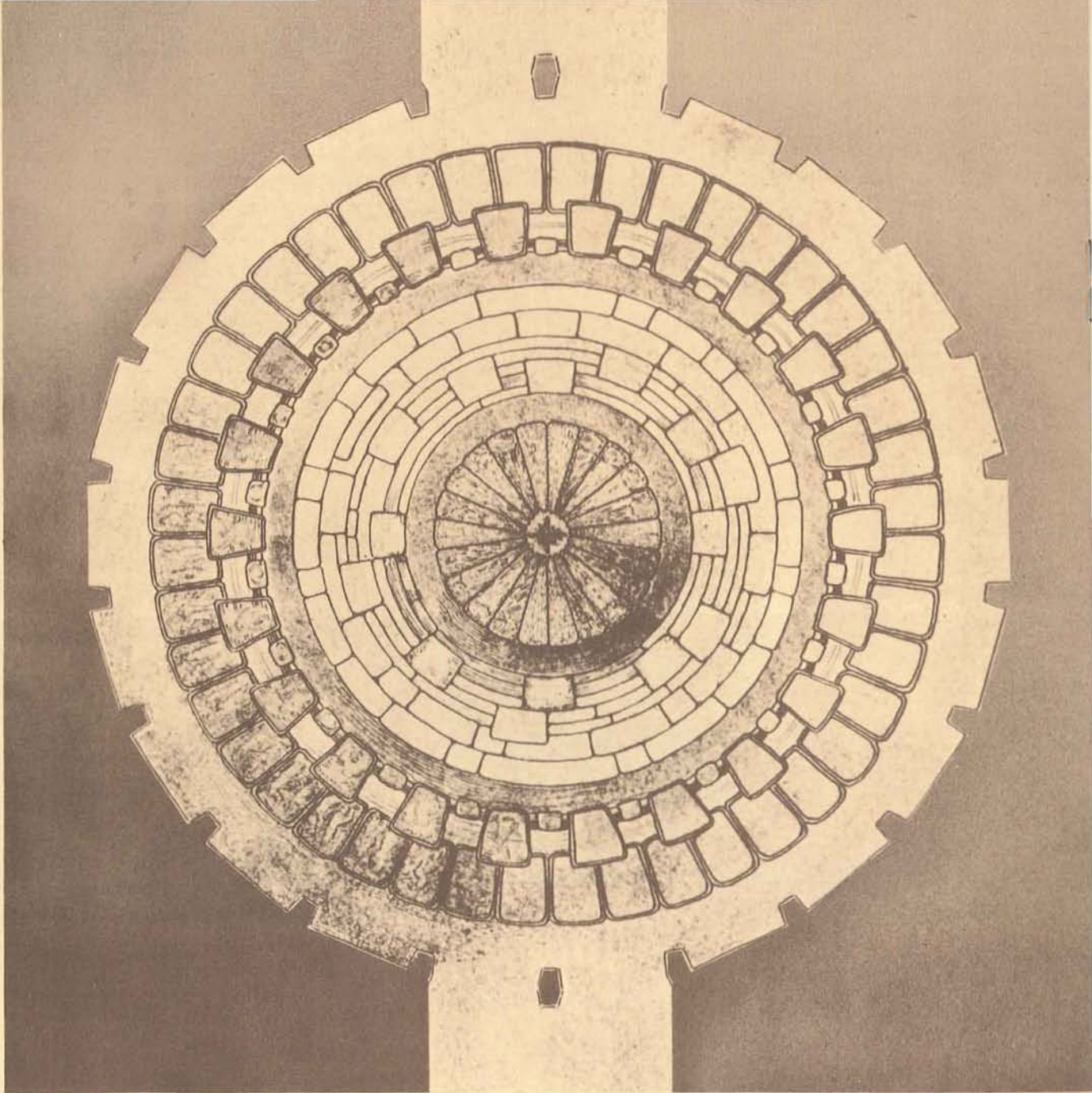
The exceptionally high acoustic value of carved cedar murals is indicated by the porous texture of the species; the natural unsealed finish; the nature of the surface planes, which are intricately obliqued and broken, multiplying surface area and reflection; and an exceptionally high comparative absorption efficiency in the lower pitch ranges, making for acoustic excellence without "overdeadening."

Sabine found the sound absorption coefficient of dense pine to be six times that of tile, four times that of concrete, and approximately two and one-half times that of glass, plaster or brick. Since sound absorption is inversely proportional to density, the low-density woods under consideration are even more effective. Tests and calculations have also indicated that these wood surfaces, typically carved, have a much higher sound absorption value than uncarved surfaces.

The high absorption of the lower frequency tones by carved murals may prove extremely significant, by offering architects a valuable aid in solving acoustic problems. Wentz cites evidence indicating the importance of absorbing these tones, which, though unimportant for proper interpretation of speech, are delivered by the human voice in large volume. These tones may disastrously "mask-out" the important high frequency tones. Wentz suggests the probable advantage of "covering of the walls with some kind of wood panels" these being "... selectively absorbent of the high energy, low frequency tones" that might mask-out "advantageous carrying tones."

● TALL VERTICAL UNITS ADVANTAGEOUS

Carved murals lend themselves particularly to portions of a building having wall spaces that logically or structurally may readily and conveniently be divided into tall, vertical units. In creating the vertical compositions, the use of tri-panels has been found most effective—tri-panels of wide planks set together without attempting to conceal the joints.



. . . The rotunda as conceived—

Four carved murals to each compass quarter, interpreting the specific regions of that portion of the state . . . the back-ground of each to portray outstanding physical features, the foreground to present its resources and activities . . . extending across the murals, a pictorial band of historic incidents, as if emerging from the mist of memory, illustrating the epic march of Oregon's pioneers.

A mosaic floor of tile, relating past to present, with compass point and medallion map of the state at center . . . encircling this, a patterned band unrolling the powerful panorama of Oregon geologic ages . . . beyond, a second band, interpreting the achievements of the race which preceded ours in the endless fight with nature.

The quarters of a rotunda, the breast of a wide stair landing, the end of a hall—wherever there may be a vista, or an "approach"—is a setting for carved murals. A room partially or entirely lighted artificially is best. Carved murals may be successfully lighted even in a sunlit room if they are between pilasters, but on the walls most removed from natural light interference.

● MODERN TECHNIQUE FOR MODERN MATERIALS

The character of the woods used permits efficient use of modern speed tools for roughing in, with hand tools liberated for detail and creative interpretation. The technique as evolved, to take full advantage of lighting, is based upon the thought of creating in the wood the flat surfaces and shadow lines of a series of superimposed silhouettes, planes of varying depth and obliqueness. Modeling is confined to figures and essentials, intimate or foreground detail. The modeling is in effect sketching—sketching with sheer concaves and torsional planes such that when lighted their junctures form sheer white-line-against-shadow interpretations of the essential movement or emotional purpose of a given figure or detail.

The contrast between a smooth plank of cream tan and rose buff cedar and the dark block of the medieval artist is perhaps no greater than that between the lighting then prevalent and that now available. Few may have given thought, that the flickering highlights and mysteriously religious, ever-changing shadows were part and parcel of the message of the olden wood carvers. They carved by candlelight, for no wood carver ever found daylight hours long enough. And so to him the shadows spoke—perhaps, at first accidentally, but afterwards purposefully, enriching the expression of his theme.

● ACCESSORY COLORING

Where lighting possibilities in the ultimate setting are somewhat limited, or it is desirable to dispense with full lighting part of the time, color effects may be attained to a certain extent with chemicals, used to accent shadows. Chemicals have been found to be highly suitable agents in applying color to the wood, to retain the rich wood quality and its high value as a responsive light screen. However, color in light must be restrained, stimulating the imagination.

An exquisite silver gray tone with powder blue shadows is most effective; particularly effective, also, are certain tan-brown and sepia shadow accents. In some cases, where a decided emphasis of the wood quality is desired, sand-etching can be used. Where delicate pastel color effects under light are desired, the sand texturing plus the silver gray and blue toning give a mural screen highly responsive to light gradations and changes. Where an extremely antiqued and softened effect is wanted, the carving may be given an adaptation of the sugi process, but this limits one to the use of white or amber lighting.

● ARE SURPRISINGLY INEXPENSIVE

Carved murals, as created by the Oregon artist-craftsmen, cost no more than murals of other types. Their use eliminates the necessity for accessory wall enrichments and intricately ornate ceilings. Due to the natural sheen and light color of the cedar and pine woods used, proper illumination of these murals has been found to be surprisingly inexpensive. In estimating costs, the acoustic value of these murals and the relation of this factor to room design should also be considered, as well as the possibility of lower ceilings, and more simple structural walls.

This new architectural enrichment offers a distinctly American medium in a material closely and richly associated with American life from colonial times—a material possessing a warm and living quality, and expressing vitally something of our times and our own manner of living.

In Explanation

OF THE DIAGRAMMATIC PLAN

In the Pageant of Oregon plan, carved wood murals are suggested to present sixteen specific regions of the state. Each would portray a typical activity or industry of the locality against a scenic background of the region, with incidents of local history illustrated in a lower cross band. The general sweep of Oregon's history would be interpreted in a patterned band of fog mist and memory continuing through tri-panel after tri-panel around the rotunda's circumference.

The rotunda as conceived is with four relatively high openings—two main entrances, opposite each other, uniform in width and height; and two smaller openings giving to legislative chambers at right and left; each having a balcony affording a vantage view of the rotunda.

FOUR MURALS IN EACH QUARTER

In each quarter, between the openings, would be four murals so arranged that were one to stand at the compass-point center, each would be, from the observer, in the direction of the portion of the state represented.

Each tri-panel could be set between simple, sheer, structural pilasters with tall light grills so placed between pilasters and murals that each carving would be a screen for slowly changing, smartly concealed lights.

As an integral part of the rotunda conception, a tile mosaic floor theme is suggested as with compass point at center, within a sixteen-and-four segmented semi-pictorial medallion map of the state. The four segments could lead toward openings interpreting the ways to the north, south, east and west. Encircling this map could be a patterned band interpreting the geologic ages of Oregon. There might be also a second patterned band interpreting the pageantry and labors of Indian life in the Oregon country from earliest times to recent past.

Thus there would be a floor having a design motif in the geology and archaeology of the past, as the wall murals have theirs in the industries and resources of the present.

APPLICATION IS ARCHITECTURALLY ELASTIC

While a central rotunda has been suggested as an outstanding way of utilizing the beauty of carved murals as regards the capitol building, their application is elastic and can be adapted to the architectural arrangement of any structure, or moulded to its architectural style.

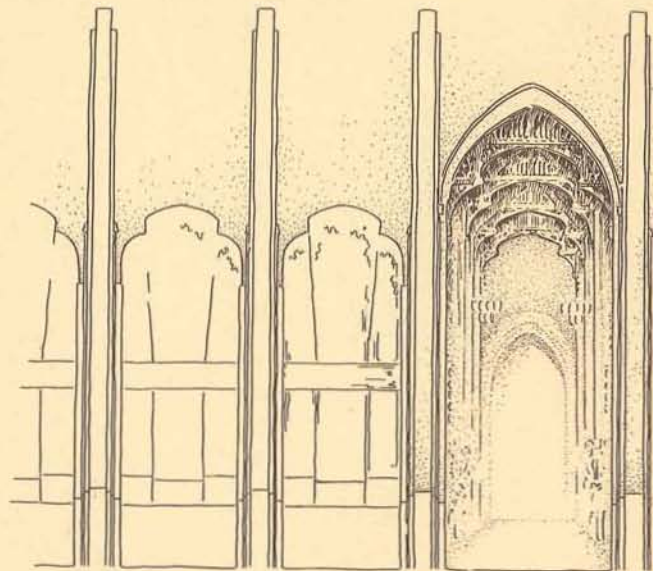
If the corridors leading from the rotunda were ceiled with vaulted Gothic arches as in the illustration on the following page, the form of the murals could be modeled in keeping with the design.

Enlarging on the suggestion that there be a comprehensive representation of Oregon woods for finishing and that various rooms be finished in certain species, there follows a brief description of the important native woods.



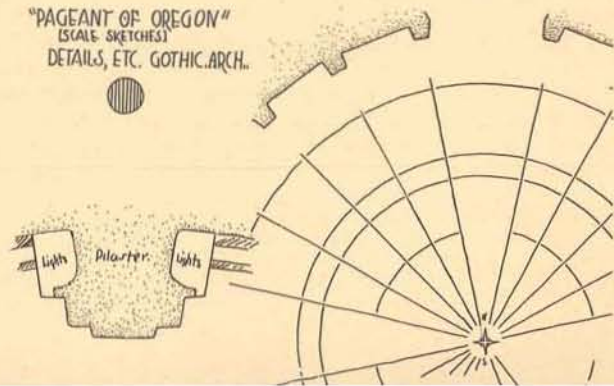
Frohman, Robb and Little . . . Architects

Trinity College Chapel, Hartford, Connecticut.
 Ceiled with seasoned Douglas Fir Timbers
 6 inches by 6 inches to 10 inches by 14 inches
 and Douglas Fir planks
 3 inches and 4 inches thick
 and 25 inches to 38 inches wide.



"PAGEANT OF OREGON"
 (SCALE SKETCHES)
 DETAILS, ETC. GOTHIC ARCH.

The carved murals, while retaining full richness of lighting possibilities, may be greatly varied to suit architectural styles or necessities.



Oregon Woods

Nature endowed Oregon with a bountiful variety of excellent woods, whose collective qualities cover a wide range of desirable attributes for different uses.

West of Cascade Mountains:

DOUGLAS FIR

The principal species west of the Cascade Mountains, in amount of standing timber, volume of production and variety of uses, is Douglas fir. It goes to more markets and probably is used for more purposes than any other wood. It is strong, resilient, durable, medium hard but easy to work with edged tools, and is light for its strength. It takes stain and paint well, and by staining, richly beautiful surfaces can be created. Douglas fir is available in many sizes, patterns and grades, from small mouldings to planks 3 and 4 inches thick and 30 to 40 inches wide, or timbers up to 30x30 inches square and 120 feet long. The color of the heartwood is light red to yellow; of the sapwood, a lighter yellow.

WEST COAST HEMLOCK

West Coast hemlock is light, fairly soft, strong, straight-grained, of uniform texture, and is free from pitch or resin. In lumber for general building purposes it may be used interchangeably with Douglas fir. Its hardness and uniformity of texture make it excellent for flooring and interior finish. It does not split easily, and is excellent for boards and shelving. It is light yellow in color, is easy to stain and paint, and makes good siding.

WESTERN RED CEDAR

Western red cedar is the principal cedar of Oregon. The qualities and color that make it such an excellent wood for carving, as brought out in preceding pages, have gained it wide favor also for many other uses. Its soft, smooth texture, evenness of grain, low shrinkage ratio, and ability to take and hold paint, have made it a favorite wood for siding. It is extensively used for exterior and interior trim, for knotty finish and paneling, and for exposed uses such as garden furniture, where its natural durability enables it to give unexcelled performance.

PORT ORFORD CEDAR

Port Orford cedar, available in less quantity than red cedar, shares all its qualities and is harder and stronger.

SITKA SPRUCE

Sitka spruce is soft and light but very tough and strong for its weight. It is even grained, long-fibred, odorless, flexible and easily worked. It is well suited for many structural and industrial uses. Its special qualities are illustrated best by its use

in pianos, violins and other musical instruments because of its resonance and uniformity of texture, and its recognition as the standard of woods for airplane construction because of its tough flexibility and resilience. It is uniformly light in color.

East of Cascade Mountains:

PONDEROSA PINE

Ponderosa pine is the principal species in the portion of Oregon lying east of the Cascade Mountains. It is distinctly a soft textured wood with a typically straight, close, uniform grain. These qualities account for its excellent smoothness and the ease with which it is worked by both hand and machine tools, and, in part, for its extensive manufacture into mouldings and intricately designed woodwork. The typical knot is red and sound. The decorative qualities of the knots and slight grain of this wood are often utilized in paneled woodwork. Proportional to its weight, it ranks well in strength properties. It takes and holds stain and paint well. The wood is light in color, varying from creamy white to straw.

SUGAR PINE

Sugar pine, a true white pine found in Southern Oregon, is a beautiful, soft-toned creamy white, which darkens to a pale brown sometimes tinged with pink as it ages. When stained or finished naturally, it produces a most pleasing effect. It is moderately light in weight, of moderate strength, and usually straight grained. The soft, uniform texture of the virgin growth has won for it extensive use in building and millwork. It is the largest of the species of the white pine group, and the bulk of the exceptionally wide, thick stock of soft pine lumber is cut from this species.

LARCH

Larch, which is found mostly east of the Cascade Mountains, in stands with Douglas fir, is a good wood for many purposes. It ranks high in strength values, is remarkably straight-grained and is the second hardest of the American softwoods. It machines well to a glossy, smooth surface. It is suited for general construction purposes, including exterior and interior finish and flooring. Larch is easy to stain and paint. The wood has a waxy sheen and yields a beautifully figured flat-grain face. Larch lumber is largely heartwood, which in color is a dark russet or reddish brown.

OTHER SPECIES

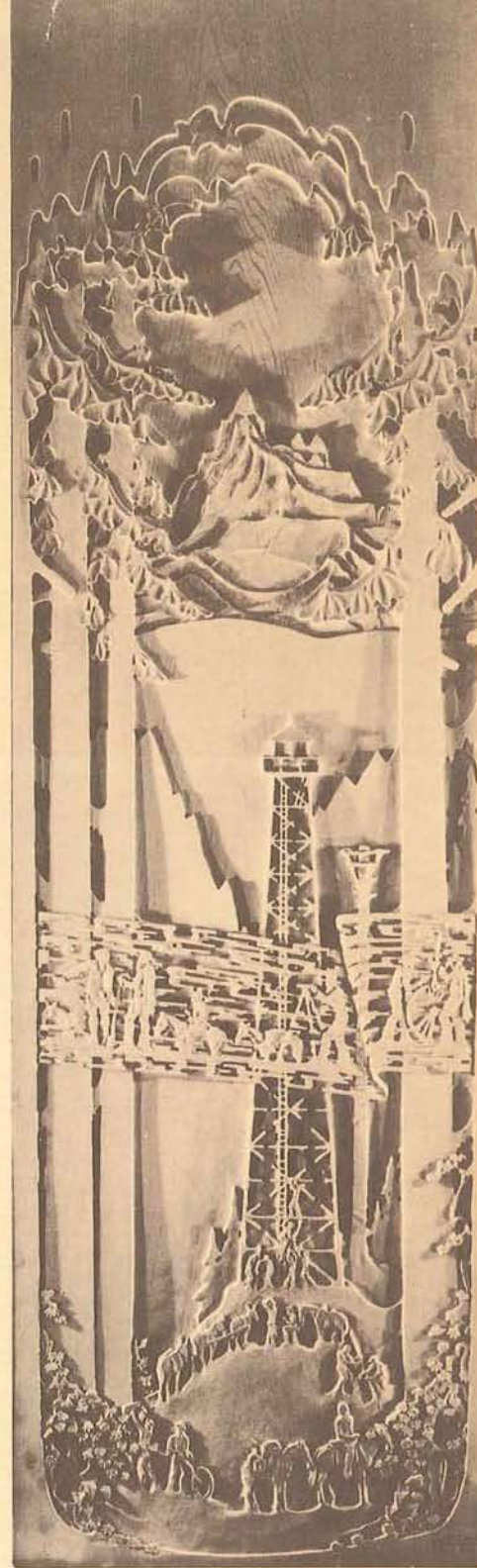
While not so commercially available as other species, recognition in a representation of Oregon woods should be given to other cedars, white pine and the firs, and to such native hardwoods as maple, oak, alder and myrtle.



TRAIL BUILDING



RECREATION



LOOKOUT TOWER

The carved wood murals, 30 inches wide by 8 feet tall, now being created for the new library at the University of Oregon by the Grey Gypsy Craftsmen of Eugene, are acclaimed by those who have viewed them as a unique and artistic portrayal of forest activities and the early days of Oregon.

THEY *Approve*
OF CARVED WOOD MURALS

We heartily approve the idea of providing these panels. . . . The variety of Oregon scenery and the diversity of its industry lends itself admirably to such a suggestion. . . . Editorial, Roseburg News-Review.

I would rather see a sum of money invested in the proposed wood murals than in a dome. . . . They would serve to acquaint visitors from other states with the industries and background of Oregon. . . . J. A. McKeivitt, Legislator.

It is the most fitting and right of anything yet suggested.

. . . Mrs. A. R. Quackenbush, D. A. R.

By all means the new statehouse should have carvings in Oregon wood by Oregon artists. . . . For picturing such events as the coming of the first wagon train, Champoeg, the heroic marches of the early explorers, trappers, the wood panels offer a medium of unusual richness and beauty. . . . They should not be an afterthought. They are an opportunity. . . . Editorial, Eugene Register-Guard.

Murals of wood showing the contemporary life of the state are a significant step in the appreciation of the rich beauty this state affords.

. . . L. S. Cressman, U. of O. faculty.

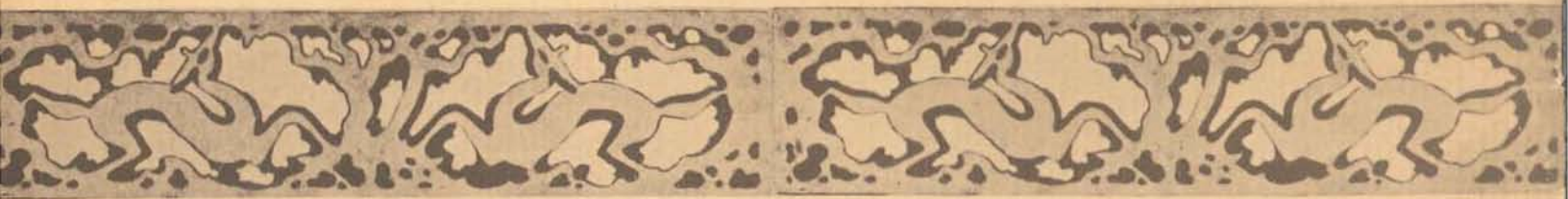
Whether or not the architecture of the new Oregon statehouse is truly American, an opportunity is offered to make the rotunda of the building distinctively Oregon. . . . We have no doubt such a rotunda would soon achieve national, and perhaps international, distinction. . . . Editorial, Eugene Morning News.

Governor Martin will ask the Capitol Building Commission to consider decorating the rotunda of the new statehouse with carved wood panels. . . . Salem Statesman.

Panels for the proposed University library exhibited in this city are not only unique but an artistic portrayal of Oregon's early historic days. . . . It will be a desirable reminder to Oregon youth of a great trek and of a splendid civilization reared here on the last frontier by a brave people. . . . Editorial, Portland Journal.

One of the outstanding exhibits at this year's fair were the wood carvings depicting the C. C. C. activities in Oregon. . . . Portland Oregonian.

. . . two unusual woodcarvers . . . understand and express nature's message . . . the motives and style of their work are distinctly their own . . . deserving of attention and appreciation. . . . From Manuscript, Richard W. Bock's forthcoming book of art appraisals, *Sculpture Technique*.



1914

