Guide to the Leonard F. Starks Collection, 1916-1923

California State Library
Sacramento, California

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Leonard F. Starks Collection,
Date (inclusive): 1916-1923
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Contents
Blueprints, correspondence and notes, plans
Biography

Leonard F. Starks, a native of Humboldt County, grew up in San Francisco and helped design the buildings for the Pan Pacific Exposition of 1915 in the early years of his architectural career.

Moving to New York, he joined the architectural firm of Thomas Lamb, famed designer of theaters in the East. Mr. Starks contributed to the surge of theater construction in the United States and became a nationally recognized expert on planning and design.

He moved to Sacramento in 1921 to set up an office for completion of drawing for the Fox Senator Theater at Ninth and L Street. The beautiful, stately theater was demolished in 1978.

Mr. Starks also designed the Alhambra Theater at what was then 31st and K Streets. He laid out the details of the theater's elegant interior and later supervised the construction. The Alhambra, Moorish in design, was opened to a gala crowd in 1927 with a 60-piece orchestra and the first talking picture on the West Coast. Mr. Starks employed an acoustical engineer to help in design of the theater—a new idea at the time. The theater later was demolished to make way for a supermarket on the Alhambra Boulevard site despite an effort to save it.

His towering, then-modern design of the Elks Temple at 11th and J Streets included the use of terra cotta on the building's exterior. He also designed Sacramento's C.J. McClatchy High School.

Mr. Starks retired in 1965.

He organized the Rocky Rollers Art Group, a group of five men over the age of 70 who painted in water color and oil. He continued painting until 1982 when his eyes began to fail. He died at age 94, April 13, 1986.

Brown, Arthur, Jr.
Hays, William C.
Reid, John, Sr.

Title: [The Sketchbook of Leonard F. Starks], 1962-1963.
Identifier/Call Number: (c*F 866.2 S72 1962).