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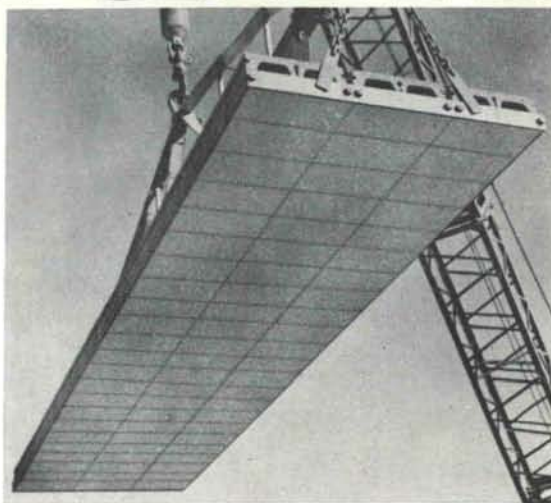
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nma

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(Cover—*The Charles Ilfeld Building, Las Vegas, N. M.*
Photographer—*Louise Harris Ivers*)

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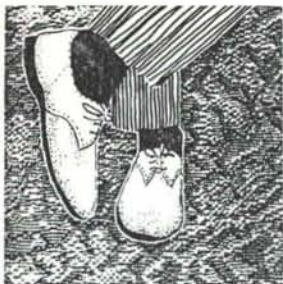
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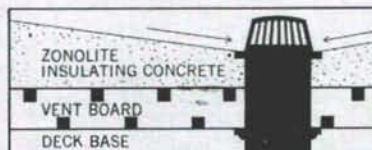
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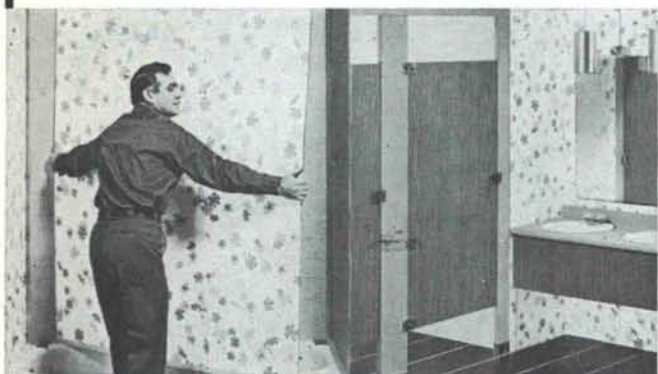
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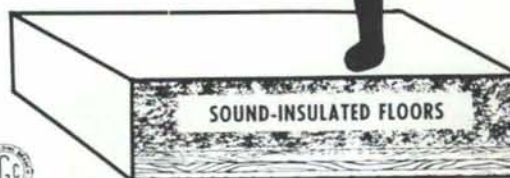
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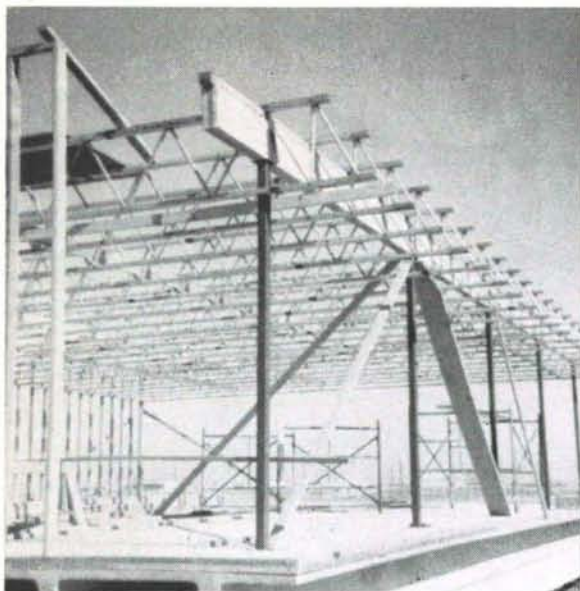


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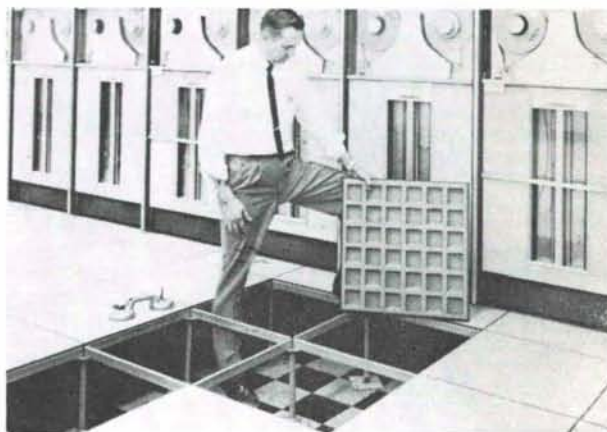
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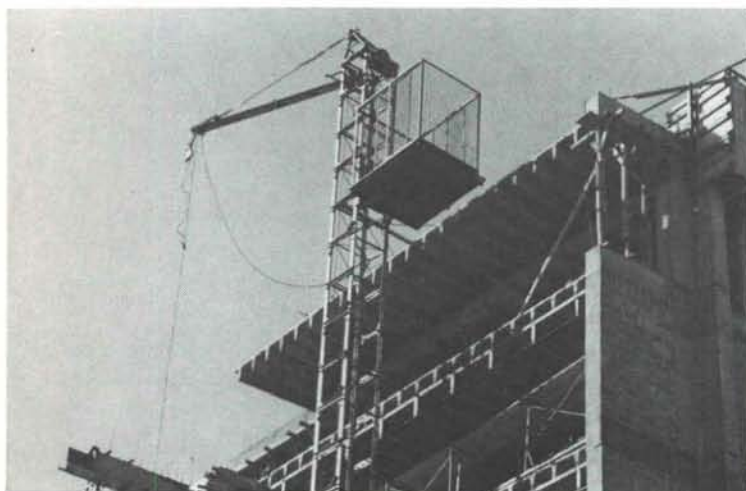
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The New Mexico Society of Architects Announces Two Award Programs ○ ○ ○ ○

1 HONOR AWARDS FOR COMPLETED ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSIONS

In order to recognize distinguished accomplishments in the architecture produced by its members, the New Mexico Society of Architects announces its first Honor Awards Program.

This first year, awards will be given for commissions or projects which have been completed between January 1, 1965 and July 1, 1970. Eligible "commissions" or "projects" include three areas of architectural interest:

- 1) *New buildings or structures, and the remodeling of existing buildings or structures;*
- 2) *Historic Preservation or Restoration;*
- 3) *Environmental Planning Projects*

The latter category includes all planning projects which were undertaken by architectural offices and which were actually completed upon the submittal of a bound report and/or drawings.

No rules or restrictions are placed upon the method of entry presentation. It is completed architectural projects which are solicited, not expensive and elaborate brochures or exhibition panels. Full-view binders are encouraged but large panels which have been prepared for other chapter or exhibition purposes are acceptable.

Color slides of completed structures are urged. Slides or photographs must show the complete structure and its relation to the environment. Slides or photographs of the interior should be included, along with site, floor plan and section as needed to explain the solution.

Remodeling and Historic Preservation entries must be accompanied by full "before" and "after" documentation.

Planning project entries must in-

clude one copy of the final bound report and any additional information to better explain the "planning" proposals.

NOTE: the designer will have to SELL the jury.

The jury cannot be called upon to guess the intentions of the architects. Further, it must be stressed that no project is to be judged in competition with other entries. Rather, the jury is to evaluate each entry on its own merit.

It must be understood that the New Mexico Society of Architects, the Awards Committee, nor the jury can be responsible for loss or damage to any entry. Therefore, each entrant is encouraged to insure his own entry material.

The judges will be instructed to make one level of award only — Honor Award.

While no limit is to be placed upon the number of Honor Awards to be given, it is outstanding and significant architecture, historic preservation, or planning concepts which is to be so honored. Further, the judges have the duty to make no award when, in their opinion, no project is worthy of this high honor.

Through this Honor Awards Program, the Society wishes to bring public attention to the vast scope or work, and the rich variety of results that are produced by the architectural profession of New Mexico.

Entry is open to all members of the New Mexico Society of Architects. While the completed structure or planning project need not be located in New Mexico, the execution of the commission must have been undertaken in New Mexico architectural offices, and all entries must so stipulate.

An entry fee of \$10.00 must accompany each entry.

All architectural and consultant credits must be placed in a sealed envelope and securely attached to each entry.

Deadline for receipt of entry submittals is August 1, 1970.

Send to:

John P. Conron
207 Lincoln Avenue
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

or:

Office of the Chairman
Department of Architecture,
University of New Mexico
2414 Central Avenue, S.E.
Albuquerque, N. M. 87106

2 AWARDS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR ENVIRONMENT BY ANY INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION

Additional awards have been authorized by the New Mexico Society of Architects, and nominations for these awards are hereby solicited from all our readers.

These new awards are designed to recognize *significant contributions to our environment which have been made by any individual, club or organization.* While members of the AIA are eligible to receive an *Environmental* award, it is also involvement and contributions by other than architects that is to be sought for recognition by the New Mexico Society of Architects.

The awards committee asks the help of all our readers in determining the recipients of these awards. Please contact a member of the committee with your nominations.

John P. Conron, Chairman
207 Lincoln Avenue
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

or George C. Pearl
115 Amherst Drive, S.E.
Albuquerque 87108

or George S. Wright
2018 Coal Avenue, S.E.
Albuquerque 87106

MAX FLATOW, FAIA NOMINATED

Max Flatow, partner in the Albuquerque - Phoenix architectural firm of Flatow, Moore, Bryan and Fairburn, has been nominated for the Board of Directors of the American Institute of Architects. Max was nominated in a closely contested election at the recent Western Mountain Regional Conference held in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Nomination is tantamount to actual election, which will be held during the annual meeting of the AIA next June in Boston. Max will represent the Western Mountain

Region, AIA, which consists of the states of New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and Nevada.

Flatow has served his profession on the local, state, and national levels for the past fifteen years. He received recognition for his service when he was elevated to Fellowship in the AIA in 1967. His architectural firm has received both regional and national awards for the outstanding design of many of its buildings.

ELEVEN NEW ARCHITECTS

At its official and regular meet-

ing on February 6, 1970, held in Albuquerque, the New Mexico Board of Examiners for Architects approved and authorized the following for registration in the state of New Mexico to practice architecture: Bernabe Romero Jr. of Santa Fe, Eugene L. Hunt of Albuquerque, James A. Hackler of Santa Fe, Ray D. Heister of Dallas, Wayne George Andrews of Albuquerque, William E. Burk III of Albuquerque, James W. Miller of Albuquerque, Donald A. Mitchell of Albuquerque, Donald L. West of Albuquerque, Alexander D. Dority of Santa Fe and John L. Lawler of Denver.

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WHEN THE TENANT MOVES IN -- THE FUN BEGINS

The Property Manager phoned to say
There are some things that, without delay
Must be corrected and made to function
Including the Parking Lot power junction.
He then reads a list, somewhat like this
Of all the things that have gone amiss
And caused the Tenants most displeasure
Which they've expressed in insolent measure.
There is no heat in the Conference Suite
And water is dripping on the front row seat,
The Fan Coil Unit in the Director's room
Is making a noise like a sonic boom.
The lights in the Lobby flicker and joggle
Cause someone broke the switchboard toggle,
The Drinking Fountain water runs hot
But the water in Lavatory basins does not.
The wooden floor in the Hallway squeaks
and the Women's Rest Room toilet leaks,
The shelves in Storage fell off the wall
and there is no threshold in the Entry Hall.
There's no power outlet at—or near
The Printing Press in the Basement rear
And there's a report from the Filing Clerk
That the plug to his copier will not work.
The pretty gal Secretary in room two-o-nine
Thinks that her Bosses carpet's devine—
But why in tarnation did we ever choose
To carpet her room in those awful Blues?
There are several more items on the P. M.'s list
But you know of others that he's somehow missed,
So, what can the poor Architect do but grin
and drown all his troubles in vermouth and gin.

—Bradley P. Kidder, FAIA

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

This house is not yet a house
though measurements are made,
squared and known
now it is uprights, beams, joists,
post and lintel, I-beam
the barest ribs.
I walk around the disheveled earth
thrust aside for this planned encounter
of wood, stone, steel, and dirt,
calcareous rocks.
Clay has been formed, burned
piled here in a long fort of red;
I balance one brick in my hand,
this is my tie to the past
to antiquity.
Walking into this framework
its openness like crystal
I see thick green trees
arched blue sky
in the interstices of the roof;
here where a window will be
a bird flies down to rest.

—Marcia Muth Miller

A I A--1970--A I A

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THE PRIDE OF LAS VEGAS NEW MEXICO

by:

Louise Harris Ivers

When the Charles Ilfeld Company Building was constructed in 1890-1891, it was the "Pride of Las Vegas."¹ Located along the northwest side of the plaza of West Las Vegas, the Ilfeld Building even today is an imposing structure. In 1891, this edifice contained all of the latest "modern improvements," such as an elevator, large plate-glass display windows, and a separate and sturdy safe room. Although the changing times have taken their toll, it still functions, little changed, as a hardware store.

Charles Ilfeld arrived in West Las Vegas in May, 1867 with his employer, Adolf Letcher. They proceeded to set up business in a one-story adobe building that had previously been occupied by the merchant, Frank Kihlberg.² On September 14, 1874, however, Ilfeld bought Letcher's interest in their mercantile firm and went into business for himself.³ By 1882, Ilfeld's business was so prosperous that he decided to construct a new building to house his department store. This structure still stands, three bays wide, as the left section of the Ilfeld Building. A contemporary account of the 1882 building describes it as "An Ornament to the Town and a Credit to the Territory."⁴

Among the new buildings just completed is that of Charles Ilfeld, on the north side of the plaza and adjoining the Plaza hotel. This is without doubt the best business house in the

Territory of New Mexico. It is a substantial structure, built of stone, three stories high above the basement and finished off in a manner which gives it an imposing and elegant appearance. It is thirty-two feet wide by one hundred and thirty-two feet long. The basement is the full length of the building and is a most excellent one. The front of the first story above the basement is constructed of brownstone with enormous show windows of French plate glass. The front of the second and third story is constructed of white granite, and is certainly very handsome. The building is covered with a metallic roof, laid by the most skillful workmen. The contractors who were instrumental in erecting this structure were Messrs. Claiburn and Pierce, who did the stone work, and Messrs. Taylor & Fowler who did the carpenter work, and Messrs. Finane & Elston who did the painting and glazing. The workmanship throughout is of the best, and reflects credit upon the contractors. The first floor is provided with a large and commodious office, built of imitation walnut, and ground glass amply supplied with large fireproof safes and convenient desks. The office would do credit to a banking establishment. An Osgood elevator affords easy means of carrying goods from the basement to the third floor. This building is



provided with water on all floors, with fireplugs throughout. The cost of construction of this splendid building will reach in the neighborhood of \$40,000.⁵

In September, 1890, Charles Ilfeld commissioned H. W. Kirchner, an architect from Denver, to enlarge the 1882 building to its present dimensions.⁶ This new structure encompassed the earlier section of three bays and added five more bays, somewhat shorter in length than the existing ones, to form the plaza facade of seventy-five feet. The entire facade was probably refaced in 1890-1891, because a contemporary newspaper account of the building describes it as

composed of massive pillars of native red sandstone, of peculiar hardness and especially pure color, above which rise the upper stories, in cream-white sandstone of finest texture.

The beautiful, red stone of the front, as well as the great blocks in the foundations, many of them nearly six feet square and two feet in thickness, and also the very handsome cream-white stone of the upper stories, was quarried two miles west of the city, by William Wells, who also executed the stone-cutting and masonry of the whole building.⁷

Not only was the facade of the 1882 building made of brownstone and white granite, but the architec-

tural decoration of the entire plaza frontage is identical in detail. The first story columns all have the same profile, the window enframements, stone facing, and cornice separating the first from the second stories are the same, and the rustication at the corners and separation of old from new portions is uniform. Thus, one can assume that, while the core of the 1882 building remains, evidenced easily from the back or Valencia Street side, the plaza facade is a product of the 1890-1891 effort.

A discrepancy in the size and detailing of the first story display windows, however, undoubtedly means that the 1882 windows remain on the left side of the Ilfeld Building. The 1890-1891 windows are of "polished plate glass . . . which are each fourteen feet in width, and reach to the floor level."⁸ The basement level of the right section of the building is also slightly lower than that of the left, for the windows are larger. Too, the detailing of the basement fenestration differs from one portion to the other. From Valencia Street another difference in construction method is evidenced. "The rear elevation (1890-1891), from basement floor to second story, is composed entirely of iron columns, filled in with glass, and the upper stories are stone piers and glass."⁹ Apparently, stone rather than iron columns were used exclusively in the 1882 structure.

That the 1890-1891 Ilfeld Building was a marvel of modern construction in its day can be discerned

from the following part of the newspaper description.

Artificial light is supplied by seventy-five incandescent lamps of the Las Vegas electric company, while the entire four great floors are thoroughly heated by a fourteen-foot locomotive boiler, placed in a vault under the rear street, entirely apart from the store building...

Upon entering the main store-room, one is first impressed with its lofty ceiling, supported by a row of graceful iron columns with foliated capitals.¹⁰

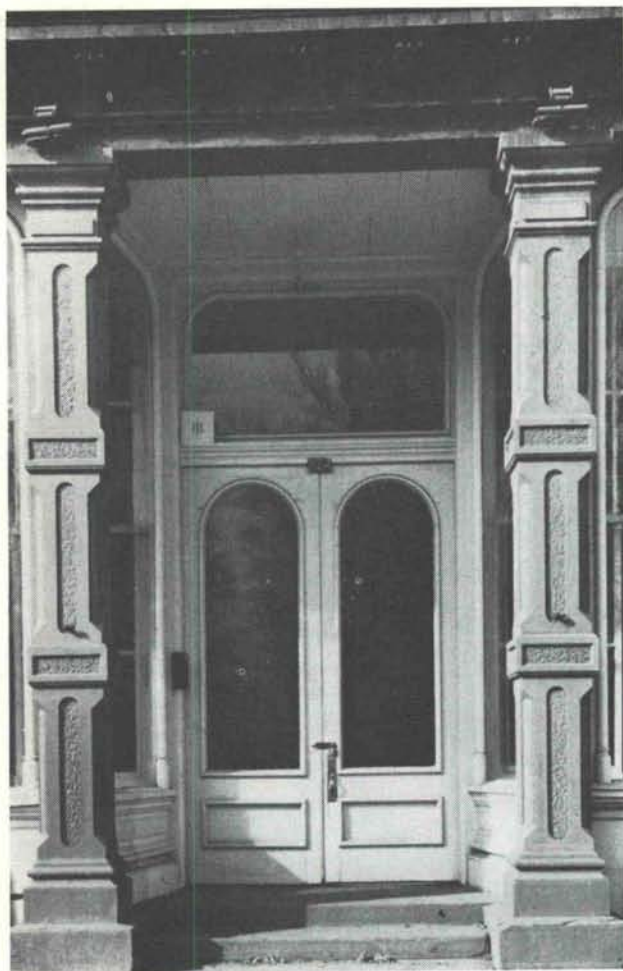
Ifeld also ordered some steel girders from Chicago¹¹ for his new building to assure its permanence and stability.

The Ifeld Building can be labelled stylistically as Italian Renaissance Revival, for it bears a definite resemblance to a Florentine *palazzo*. The Italian Renaissance style was popularized in the East by the New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White during the decade of 1880. Eastern seaboard works of this type, however, were generally more "correct" than the Ifeld Building. In his book, *Images of American Living*, Alan Gowans describes three phases of Victorian architecture, the second of which applies most directly to the Ifeld store. This second phase, which took place roughly from 1850 to 1880, was a period in which various stylistic details were mixed together on the same building. Gowans' third

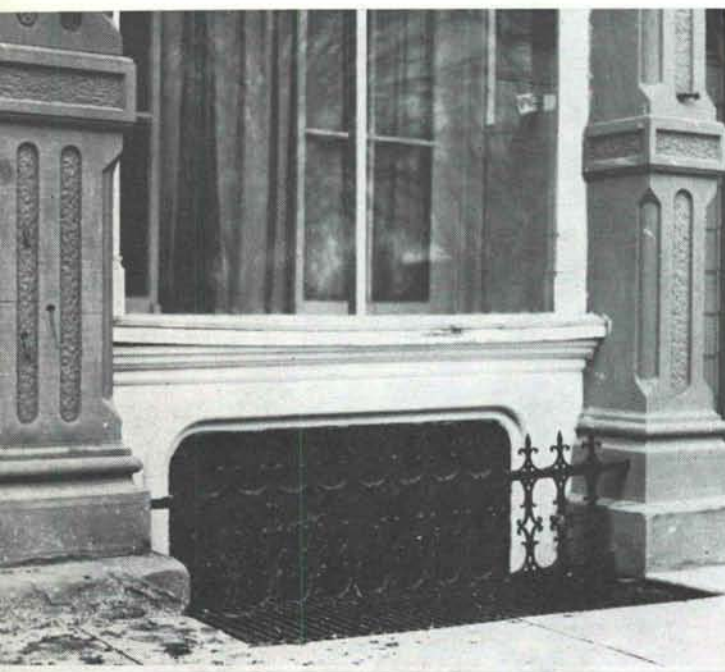


phase, beginning in the 1880's and lasting well into the twentieth century is represented by buildings of particular styles reproduced "with scientific accuracy."¹² Thus, the Ifeld Building, with its segmented piers and large expanses of plate-glass windows on the first story, its keystone drip mouldings and double

arched windows of the upper two stories, and its Italianate rustication, ashlar masonry, and bracketed, overhanging cornices would surely fall into the second phase of Victorian architecture. Its construction date of 1890-1891 makes it a slightly *retardataire* version of an Eastern building, but this stylistic time lag of



*The cast-iron basement grating
at the 1882 structure.*



about ten years is to be expected in the Southwest. In fact, the usual architectural time lag in the Southwest is far more than ten years, for the Territorial style did not reach New Mexico until after the Civil War, while the Greek Revival took place in the East in the 1820's.

Not only is the Italianate style of the East Coast evident in the Ilfeld Building, but the functionalism of the Chicago School of the 1880's is also witnessed in certain of its architectural elements. As mentioned above, steel girders were ordered from Chicago, and the cast iron columns of the first story, both exterior and interior, possibly came from the same source. The capping cornice, although carved and bracketed, also appears to be of the cast metal variety. Although the skeleton of the plaza facade is obscured by segmented stone piers with blocky capitals resembling piled horizontal slabs, the large expanses of plate glass with extremely thin wooden enframements convey a sense of functionalism not present in the Italianate buildings of McKim, Mead, and White. Too, the basement story of the right section of the Ilfeld Building represents pure functionalism, for it is constructed simply of unadorned posts and lintels which form the window enframements. The lacy iron gratings in front of the basement are evocative of Louis Sullivan's architectural ornament.

This structure designed by H. W. Kirchner, although visibly divided into two sections, made evident especially by the vertical rustication dividing the three bays of 1882 from the five of 1890-1891, presents a visually tenable whole. The white and reddish-brown colors of the Ilfeld Building afford a pleasing contrast complemented by the fine stone cutting technique evident in the piers and cornice of the first story and the keystone drip mouldings and horizontal bottom enframements of the upper stories. The interior of the structure is composed of large, airy, well-lit rooms that are atmospherically suited to what was once the largest and most prosperous department store of West Las Vegas. The five cast iron columns with their intricately foliated capitals supporting the large room at the right part of the first story contrast subtly with the monumental proportions of the room, and the oaken staircase at the front center of the building is constructed with a particularly handsome simple solidity. With the Plaza Hotel next door, the Ilfeld Building dominates the plaza of West Las Vegas. It remains an imposing and interesting structure today in spite of its being over seventy-five years old.

Historically, the Ilfeld Building represents an important period in the development of Las Vegas. The Santa Fe Railroad reached this town in 1879, causing a tremendous boom that was to last into the 1920's. Las Vegas, because of the railroad depot, in the late nineteenth century was the most important mercantile center of the Territory of New Mexico. It was the first link with the East, and supplied a large section of the Territory with commodities and luxury goods from the manufacturing centers beyond the

Staked Plains. Charles Ifeld conducted a good part of the mercantile operations that went on in Las Vegas in the latter decades of the 1800's. He not only had a large department store, the Ifeld Building, but he handled much native produce such as grain, hay, lumber, wool, and hides. Thus, the Ifeld Building is a product of Las Vegas' boom days, of the growth of an outpost on the Santa Fe Trail into the major railroad depot of the Southwest.

—Louise Harris Ivers

NOTES

¹*Las Vegas Daily Optic*, December 19, 1891.

²William J. Parish, *The Charles Ifeld Company* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 21.

³*Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴*Las Vegas Gazette*, January 24, 1883.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶Parish, p. 213.

⁷*Las Vegas Daily Optic*.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹Parish, p. 213.

¹²Alan Gowans, *Images of American Living* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1964), p. 288.

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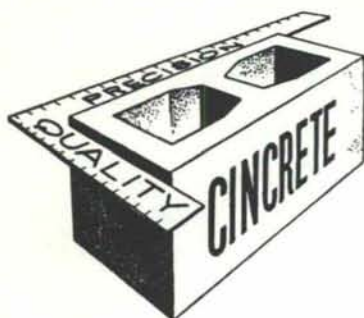
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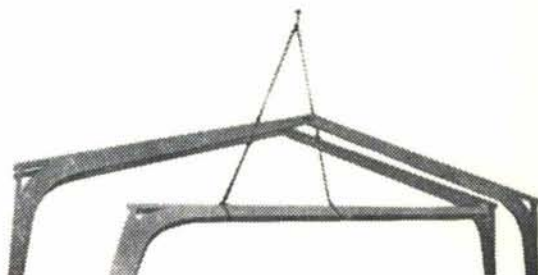
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