



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

700 Fifth Avenue • Suite 1700 • Seattle, Washington 98124 • (206) 684-022

### Landmark Nomination Application

**Name:** Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank

**Year Built:** 1950

**Historic Names:** Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank

**Street Address:** 1015 Second Avenue

**Assessor's File No.** 093900-0520

**Legal Description:** Lots 2-3 and 6-7 in Block 12 of Boren & Denny's Addition to Seattle

**Present Owner:** General Services Administration

**Address:** 1800 F Street NW  
Washington DC 20405

**Present Use:** Vacant

**Original Use:** Public (federal government) commercial/financial institution

**Original Owner:** Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch

**Architect:** Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson (William J. Bain, partner-in-charge), with George Runciman, structural engineer

**Contractor:** Kune Johnson Company

Administered by  
The Historic Preservation Program, Seattle Department of Neighborhood

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**Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank  
Landmark Nomination Report  
4 June 2013 [Revised 4 February 2014]**

“To Seattle’s array of imposing federal buildings is added the new Federal Reserve Bank at Second Avenue and Madison Street, and soon the new Veterans Hospital will be completed on Beacon Hill. By the late spring it should be in full operation.

The former is an impressive addition to Seattle’s financial district, the latter a new and distinctive feature of the metropolitan skyline. Uncle Sam has helped to furbish up the backdrop for Seattle’s 100th birthday celebration.”

--“Furbishing the Backdrop,” *Seattle Times*, 24 January 1951 (editorial).

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

This report presents architectural and historical information about the Seattle Branch Bank building of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, a four-story office/bank building in downtown Seattle. The property is situated on the east side of Second Avenue just north of the Henry M. Jackson Federal Building. The building was designed by the prominent local architectural firm Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson. It was designed in 1947-49 and constructed in 1949-50.

As with most older downtown office buildings, the interiors have been upgraded with most of the interior being renovated during the 1990s. Between 1984 and 1986, the glazing of almost all the windows was replaced with the current fenestration, but the new fenestration design closely matches the original, particularly the original mullion spacing. Even with these changes, the building remains the most intact exemplar of early post-World War II Modernism in downtown Seattle.

This nomination describes the architectural features of the Federal Reserve Branch Bank building. This nomination also places the building in the context of the early development of the important Seattle architectural firm, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, as well as the partner in charge of the project William J. Bain, the development this portion of Second Avenue in downtown Seattle, and the emergence of Modern architecture in Seattle in the early years after World War II. The nomination also provides information that indicates how the Seattle Branch Bank building fits within the sequence of Federal Reserve bank design and construction in the middle years of the twentieth century.

## 1.2 Research

The research method used in developing the information presented in this report was framed by the essay "Researching Seattle's Architectural Past," by David A. Rash, included as an appendix in the book *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, first published in 1994, and updated in 1998.

Information included in this report came primarily from the following sources:

- Microfiche copies of the construction drawings by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, and building permit documents held by the Seattle Department of Planning & Development.
- Photographs and property record card, Puget Sound Regional Branch, Washington State Archives.
- Review of the *Seattle Times* and *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce* newspapers for articles pertinent to the design/construction of the Seattle Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, the development of downtown Seattle during the immediate post-World War II period and the history of the firm Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson.
- Historical maps of Seattle and King County at the Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries.
- Architectural histories and guidebooks on post-World War II modernism in Seattle and elsewhere.

In addition, several secondary sources were consulted to cross-check factual information only. Interpretive information from these documents was not used. These included:

- Artifacts Consulting Inc., "National Register of Historic Places--Registration Form: Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch," July 2011.
- BOLA Architecture + Planning, "Landmark Nomination: The Federal Reserve Bank, Seattle," April 2008.
- "Draft Environmental Impact Statement—1015 Second Avenue, Seattle, Washington" (prepared for the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco), June 2011.
- Historical Research Associates, Inc., "Historical Resource Technical Report: Former Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch, 1015 Second Avenue, Seattle, Washington, 98104, prepared by Erica Kachmarsky, M.A., Senior Architectural Historian, April 2011."

## 2. PROPERTY DATA

Historic Name: Seattle Branch Bank, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco  
 Current Name: Seattle Branch Bank, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco  
 Address: 1015 Second Avenue, Seattle WA 98104  
 Location: The property is on the west side of Second Avenue in the Central Business District of Downtown Seattle.  
 Tax Parcel No.: 093900-0520  
 Legal Description: Lots 2, 3, 6 and 7, Block 12, Town of Seattle, as laid out on the claims of C. D. Boren and A. A. Denny (commonly known as Boren & Denny's Addition to the City of Seattle) according to plat thereof recorded in Volume 1 of Plats, page 27, records of King County, except the easterly 12 feet thereof condemned in District Court Case No. 7097 for Second Avenue, as provided by Ordinance No. 1107 of the City of Seattle  
 Design Date: 1947-49  
 Construction Date: 1949-50  
 Original Use: Bank/Federal Government Building  
 Current Use: Vacant  
 Design Team: Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson (William J. Bain, Sr., partner-in-charge); George Runciman of W. H. Witt Company, structural engineer  
 Contractor: Kuney Johnson Company  
 Property Size: 25,920 sq. ft. (0.60 acre/per King County Assessor)  
 Building Size: 91,091 gross square feet (per King County Assessor)  
 67,141 net square feet (per King County Assessor)  
 Original Owner: Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco  
 Present Owner: General Services Administration  
 Owner's Contact: General Services Administration - Office of the Chief Architect  
 1800 F Street NW, Rm 3341  
 Washington DC 20405  
 (202) 208-1936  
  
 U.S. General Services Administration  
 Northwest/Arctic Region  
 400 15th Street SW  
 Auburn, WA 98001  
 (253) 931-7912

### 3. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

#### 3.1 Location

The property of the Seattle Branch Bank building of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco is located at 1015 Second Avenue, on the west side of the street, facing away from the waterfront. The property is located in the Central Business District and was near the heart of the historical financial district of Seattle.

The property consists of a full half block measuring approximately 240 feet north to south along the west side of Second Avenue between Madison Street (to the south) and Spring Street (to the north), and 108 feet east to west between the mid-block alley and the property line on the west side of Second Avenue. Madison and Spring Streets slope dramatically from east to west, with the alley along the west side of the property approximately 20 feet lower than Second Avenue along Madison Street (south side of property) and approximately 18 feet lower along Spring Street (north side of property). The lower two stories of the bank building establish an essentially level plaza for the upper four stories of the building facing Second Avenue.

#### 3.2 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building Exterior Features

##### 3.2.a Plaza

The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building sits on a full half block measuring approximately 240 feet north to south along the west side of Second Avenue and 108 feet east to west between Madison Street to the south and Spring Street to the north, with sidewalks along each of the named streets.<sup>1</sup> The first-floor plaza is created by the building setbacks from the property lines at the sidewalks along the north, east and south sides of the site. At the south side of the site, the plaza wraps around to the west (alley) side, while on the north side the plaza stops short of the alley and a separate flat roof covers the remainder of the space to the alley. The plaza itself can be considered as having three pieces: a north terrace, a central entrance walkway, and a south terrace.

The central walkway is aligned with main entrance and is generally at the same level as the slightly sloped sidewalk along Second Avenue. Originally its width was symmetrically disposed along its axis with the entrance. The north terrace has since been modified and extended southward almost to the projecting side support of the entrance canopy. The south terrace retains its original placement as the south boundary of entrance walkway.

The north terrace originally wrapped around the northeast corner of the four-story block Federal Reserve Bank building and was outlined by a continuous granite-clad planter. Around 1991 plans for altering the north terrace were designed by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson,<sup>2</sup> which removed a portion of the planter along the sidewalk and

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<sup>1</sup>The city's street grid is tilted away from true north in this area, so directional indicators are nominal and agree with typical usage.

<sup>2</sup>Historical Research Associates, Inc. (HRA), "Historical Resource Technical Report: Former Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch, 1015 Second Avenue, Seattle, Washington, 98104," prepared by Erica Kachmarsky, M.A., Senior Architectural Historian, April 2011, p. 31, provides a list of

replaced it with a raised area of concrete pavers. Adjacent to the sidewalk a series of short flights of steps lead up the paved area. Between each set of steps are granite-clad plinths, which at one time supported free-standing art work. A fourth set of steps occurs between the raised paved area and the central walkway. Round metal pipe handrails line each of these sets of steps. A security fence with gate was also placed from the northeast corner of the office block running north to the north edge of the plaza. At the north end of the raised paved area, a new planter was constructed which connected the remaining portion of the planter adjacent to the sidewalk with the portion of the planter adjacent to the office block.

The south terrace wraps around the southeast and southwest corners of the four-story block of the Federal Reserve Bank building and is outlined by a continuous granite-clad planter like the north terrace. The distance between the office block and the south property line is wider for this terrace than the similar condition for the north terrace, which allowed for the inclusion of a series of square planters in which were placed trees originally, but are now empty. This terrace also has a security fence with gate running from the southeast corner of the office block to the south edge of the plaza.

### *3.2.b Building exterior*

The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building itself is a rectilinear mass measuring approximately 90 feet by 198 feet. The building stands four stories tall facing Second Avenue, but rises to six stories from the alley that is nearly 20 feet below Second Avenue. The building is set back approximately 18 feet from the Second Avenue property line, 26 feet from the Madison Street property line and 16 feet from the Spring Street property line. The service core projects out from the main building block along the alley side, a result of the design that "removed" the northwest and southwest corners of the rectilinear mass of the building and produced a form that from many angles appears setback from the alley as well. The flat roof is surrounded by the original parapet on all sides. An elevator penthouse rises near the center of the roof but is only partially visible from the street.

The primary visual character of the building, as seen from Second Avenue, is a simple and straightforward four-story rectangular mass. The building is clad in limestone and is without decorative detail. While the end elevations are completely flush, the east-facing Second Avenue elevation is marked by projecting columns at the second, third and fourth stories. The projecting character of the columns is achieved by recessing the surface of the vertical bays approximately 14 inches. There are twelve recessed bays, which results in a column directly on the centerline of the building, directly over the void of the front entry at the first floor. The recessed aspect of the east facade windows is accentuated by the windowless end bays and the horizontal band at the top of the fourth story which creates the primary plane of the facade. Windows at the ground floor align with the bays at the floors above, but are more square and are set off by thick granite surrounds. The decision to recess the bays and express the columns appears primarily to have been a way to achieve structural expression as indicated by the press release

describing the design: "The exterior is without ornamentation, depending upon the *vertical structural lines* and openings of windows and doors for its architectural style."<sup>3</sup>

The four-story office block is framed primarily by riveted structural steel members and is clad on the street sides with Indiana limestone veneer, applied in ashlar-cut square blocks set flush. With minimal flush mortar joints between the square stone blocks, an impression is achieved that the primary exterior plane of the facades are smooth and continuous. Along the alley facades, the limestone veneer returns for one bay at the north and south ends of main office block at which point buff-colored brick cladding begins on the upper stories of the office block. At the first story, ground story and basement, cast-in-place concrete is the exterior cladding and is scored in square panels of similar size and color as the limestone blocks. The exposed south and north walls of the ground story and basement are clad with polished Dakota Mahogany granite veneer, cut to the same size as the limestone blocks and laid with similar flush mortar joints.

There are limited door openings in the building's exterior. The most noticeable one is the main entrance on the east facade, which is comprised of four glazed doors and a projecting surround of Dakota Mahogany granite. This sheltered entryway is illuminated by five square light fixtures recessed into the overhead canopy. Single doors flank either side of the central set of double doors, with all doors having bronze frames, hardware and hinges. The northernmost single door has been retrofitted with an automatic opening mechanism to allow universal access. Above these doors is a large transom window divided into halves by a central vertical muntin. Each half of the transom windows contains the numerical address of the building in gold leaf paint. Bronze letter signage, reading "Seattle Branch Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco," has been removed from its original location over this entry.

At the north end of the west facade is a recessed service area serving as loading dock for the building and access point for the basement garage. Two vehicle service entrances and the loading dock have rolling steel doors. Between the loading dock and the vehicle service entrances are three windows and a security door that is also the exit point for the fire egress stairs. Ramps provide access to all doors except the elevated loading dock door. A security camera has been installed to overlook this area, and there are additional security cameras at each of the principal corners of the upper office block.

All four facades have window openings. Windows are all metal framed and square or rectangular in shape. Frames and glazing vary by location. The windows of the ground floor level (immediately below the plaza) on the west and south sides are glazed with the original glass block set within metal frames. On the north side of the ground floor level, the westernmost window is glazed with a single pane of glass with an internal metal security grill, while the remaining window has been boarded over. At the basement level, openings for mechanical ventilation are filled with metal louvers.

On the east side of the first story, nearly square windows have protruding surrounds of polished Dakota Mahogany granite that contrast with the original tan color of the limestone cladding. These windows are given further emphasis by being deeply recessed, while most other windows on the building are flush with the wall surface or a

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Polison, "Bids Called on Federal Bank Building Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 27, 1949, pp. 1, 3; emphasis added.

recessed wall panel. The first story windows on the east side retain their original fixed single pane, plate glass glazing and steel frames.

The upper three stories of the office block originally had steel framed, six-light plate glass windows. A central fixed square pane was flanked by rectangular casement panes, all above three small panes of similar width. The lower central pane was also operable. The windows of the first story on the north and south sides are taller than the upper-story windows and were provided with nine lights, with the central fixed square pane being flanked by rectangular casement panes and having three small panes of similar width both above and below with all the upper panes being fixed. These have all been replaced with three-part, anodized aluminum framed windows which echo the overall profile and spacing of the originals but are fixed glazed. Metal security grilles on the north and south first-story windows were shown in the original construction drawings and were in place by the time the King County Assessor photographed the building for its records on November 29, 1950.

### **3.3 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building Interior Features**

The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building has an area of 91,091 gross square feet and 67,141 net square feet according to King County Tax Records for Parcel Number 093900-0520.<sup>4</sup> The structure contains four upper stories (above the plaza) 43,018 gross square feet of occupied space. The ground floor (immediately under the plaza) 24,060 gross square feet of occupied space with 1,392 square feet of area of unoccupied space. The basement floor has 22,558 gross square feet of unoccupied space.

The interior floor plan and spatial arrangement are asymmetrical even though the four-story office block presents a symmetrical appearance with its north, east and south facades. The sub-basement plan of the permitted construction drawings (apparently not included in the Assessor's calculations of building space) shows minimal foundation work of poured concrete footings under structural columns and some mechanical space. The basement story contains an internal garage, the lower portion of the two-story vault, a smaller auxiliary vault, an elevator lobby with three associated passenger elevator shafts (only two to be used, the third for future expansion), a "coin lift" (an elevator dedicated to transporting currency), a separate general freight elevator, fire egress stairways, work space and multiple rooms dedicated to maintenance and building systems. The vault doors of finely machined stainless steel were manufactured by the Hamilton Company and Mosler Company and retain their original hardware. The elevator lobby, elevator shafts, coin lift and fire egress stairways also occur on the upper floors.

The ground floor (one level below the Second Avenue plaza) includes the upper portion of the two-story vault, the armored truck lobby, a "clearing house" room, restricted work spaces, gender specific locker and toilet rooms, a special guards' locker room and associated pistol range, and more mechanical spaces. A service lobby and guard station are situated adjacent to the entrance to the armored truck lobby at the northwest

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<sup>4</sup> The King County Assessor's office calculates gross and net area differently than a property developer would, as the gross areas listed by the assessor's office are the total areas of a given floor or group of floors that can be occupied while the net area is the gross area less any area deemed to be unoccupiable (i.e., used for garage purposes, or other storage uses). A property developer would consider net area to be the rentable area, which would be the gross occupied space less stairways, elevators, restrooms, common corridors, and building structure.

corner of the ground floor. The two-story vault is located near the center of the southernmost portion of the plan. Both stories have their own massive steel vault door and are interconnected by an internal spiral steel staircase. Together, the vaults total 5,000 square feet and are constructed of “steelcrete,” a newly developed (in the late 1940s) proprietary system of steel mesh gridwork infilled with poured concrete. This system was intended to make the vaults impenetrable to any natural or human threat, including, but not limited to, robbery, riot, fire, explosion, or earthquakes (and, potentially, even a nuclear war).

The first floor was the only portion of the building with public spaces. This included the Entrance (elevator) Lobby and the “Banking Lobby,” where members of the general public could at one time redeem U.S. Treasury bonds. These spaces have high quality interior finishes, such as marble floors, bronze teller cages and marble-clad walls. This floor was also provided with office space for bank personnel, and additional women’s lockers. The large Work Room at the north end of this floor was originally rented to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which may have resulted in some members of the public visiting this space.<sup>5</sup>

The second and third floors originally contained general office space and more men’s locker and toilet rooms. Initially, the third floor was also rented to the FBI, making this another space that might have had visits by the general public.<sup>6</sup> The fourth floor originally contained more work space, a cafeteria for workers in the building, kitchen, and gender specific lounges.

As noted later in this report (in Section 4.5—Subsequent Changes to the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building), most of the floors of the main building block have been renovated over the years so that very little of the original features remain beyond the elevator shafts, stairs and toilets; the elevator cabs themselves have been updated. The second through fourth floors were occupied by offices or spaces supporting the offices. The finishes in these areas were fairly typical for their time.

By contrast, the spaces on the first floor that would be seen, at least on occasion, by the general public had generally superior finishes. The entrance lobby retains its marble flooring, and marble cladding on the interior north, west and east walls. The elevator doors, including the opening for the never-used empty shaft, have an exterior finish of fluted bronze; the same material clads the east wall of the lobby. Fluted bronze also clads the security booth added at a later date to the lobby. The doors leading to entrance vestibule, Banking Lobby and north office space are fully glazed and framed in bronze.

The Banking Lobby on the south side of the Entrance Lobby features marble cladding around the windows along the east wall with stone clad pilasters; walnut veneer clads some portions of the walls. The windows themselves have interior security grilles of bronze. The teller stations on the west side of the Banking Lobby feature a variegated rose-colored marble wainscot with a continuous gray marble shelf supporting bronze screening elements. The ceiling featured recessed coffers aligned with the windows of the east wall and originally provided indirect lighting for the lobby.

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<sup>5</sup> “New Federal Reserve Bank Is Open,” *Seattle Times*, Jan. 3, 1951, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

## 4. HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY AND THE BUILDING

### 4.1 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Site Context

By the start of World War II, Second Avenue was the spine of Seattle's financial district. To the south, the Hoge Building (1909-11) by Bebb & Mendel was located at 705 Second Avenue, which housed the Union Trust & Savings Bank on its principal Second Avenue floor. Across the street at 710 Second Avenue was the Dexter Horton Building (1921-24) by John Graham, Sr., and the home of the Dexter Horton National Bank prior to its merger in 1929 with Seattle National Bank and First National Bank of Seattle in 1929, to form Seattle-First National Bank with its headquarters remaining here until the construction of a new headquarters building, today's Safeco Plaza (1966-69; plaza altered) by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson (with Pietro Belluschi consulting). Next door at 720 Second Avenue was the Seattle National Bank Building (1918-21) by Doyle & Merriam with Bebb & Gould, now housing the United Way. One block northward at 815 Second Avenue was the Bank of California building (1923-24) by John Graham, Sr., and now housing a branch of Key Bank.

The former Boston National Bank building (1902-03, 1906, 1922, 1929) by Boone & Corner is located on the west side of the block at 804 Second Avenue/208 Columbia Street. The building was initially completed in 1903, and then remodeled in late 1903 to accommodate the need for larger banking quarters due to its merger with Seattle National Bank in 1903.<sup>7</sup> The building was enlarged in 1906 to accommodate additional tenants.<sup>8</sup> In 1921-22 the building was remodeled by Doyle & Merriam after Seattle National Bank moved across Columbia Street to its new building, and First National Bank moved into the vacated building. The interior was apparently remodeled again in 1929 with John Graham, Sr., as architect, after the First National Bank merged with Seattle National Bank and Dexter Horton National Bank to form Seattle-First National Bank. In 1934, Seattle Trust & Savings Bank moved into the building as its headquarters. Seattle Trust purchased the building in 1940, retaining possession and expanding into adjacent buildings until its merger with Key Bank in 1987.<sup>9</sup>

To the immediate north of the FRBSF site was the Washington Mutual Savings Bank building (1899-1900, ca. 1905, 1920-21, 1938-39; destroyed) by Charles H. Bebb (1899-1900 original building), Bebb & Mendel (ca. 1905, two-story expansion), John Graham, Sr. (1920-21 alterations) and C. A. Merriam (1938-39 alterations), which was later replaced by a new headquarters building (1966-69) by Paul Thiry on the same site at 1101 Second Avenue.<sup>10</sup> Across the street was the Baillargeon Store (later National Bank of Commerce/Rainier National Bank, now part of Security Pacific Building) building (1907-08, 1919-20, 1940-41) by Saunders & Lawton (1907-08), Doyle & Merriam (1919-20 storefront alteration) and C. A. Merriam (1940-41 fifth-story expansion), which had

<sup>7</sup> "Seattle National and Boston National Banks Consolidate," *Seattle Times*, June 11, 1903, pp. 1, 2; "It Will Occupy New Quarters," *Seattle Times*, July 28, 1903, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> "Articles of Interest in Shipping Paper," *Seattle Times*, June 17, 1906, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> "Historical Sites—Seattle Trust & Savings Bank," (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated (but accompanying digital photograph carries a date tag of February 19, 2006). This inventory form incorrectly claims that the Boston National Bank consolidated with the Seattle National Bank after the building's assumed completion in 1906. Original construction was completed in 1903.

<sup>10</sup> "Bank Opens At New Location This Morning," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 20 June 1921, pp. 1, 5. Murray Morgan, *The Friend of the Family: 100 Years with Washington Mutual* (Seattle: Washington Mutual Financial Group, 1989), pp. 64-65, 101, and 126-127.

been occupied by Seattle Branch Bank of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco as a tenant in the upper stories prior to constructing its own building.<sup>11</sup> When the Seattle Branch Bank moved into the Baillargeon Building in 1921, the third story was remodeled specifically for the Seattle Branch Bank by Rounds-Clist Company as designed by Doyle & Merriam; the changes to the building included a separate entrance at 202 Spring Street (at the east corner of the Spring Street façade).<sup>12</sup>

Other significant financial, but non-banking institutions were nearby. The Exchange Building (1929-31) by John Graham, Sr., at 821 Second Avenue was built to house the city's produce, grain and market exchanges. The Northern Life Tower (1927-29, now Seattle Tower) by Albertson, Wilson & Richardson at 1224-1222 Third Avenue housed a major local insurance company. The Leary (later Insurance) Building (1906-07, 1908-10; destroyed) by Alfred Bodley (1906-07 foundation) and the Beezer Brothers (1908-10 completion), originally housed the National Bank of Commerce (prior to its purchase of and removal to the Baillargeon Building) and later several insurance companies.

Additionally, the site is located close to the three major federal buildings in downtown Seattle. The oldest of the three, the U.S. Post Office and Customs Building (1903-08; destroyed) by James Knox Taylor was located one block east on Third Avenue and three blocks north at 301 Union Street. The closest geographically, the (now Old) Federal Office Building (1931-33) by James A. Wetmore is located one block west on First Avenue and on the south side of Madison Street at 909 First Avenue. The most recent at the time of the FRBSF's purchase of the site, the U.S. (Nakamura) Federal Courthouse (1939-40) by Louis Simon with Gilbert Stanley Underwood is located three blocks to the east at 1010 Fifth Avenue. The former building has since been replaced with a newer structure housing only the Post Office, while the latter two remain and have since been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **4.2 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building Site Prior to 1945**

Form the 1890s to the late 1940s, the FRBSF site was occupied by the Rialto building (1893-94; destroyed), designed in 1893 by the architectural firm of Skillings & Corner for a venture headed by Boston investor Herman Chapin. The project was initially identified as the Arcade Building, but was renamed the Rialto before it opened, and was intended solely to house retail stores. The building stretched along the entire 240-foot frontage of its Second Avenue block and rose two stories along the avenue with three exposed

<sup>11</sup> "Historical Sites—J. A. Baillargeon Building," (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated (but accompanying digital photograph carries a date tag of May 18, 2006). The J.S. Graham Company store accompanied the Baillargeon Building at the time of the building's purchase in 1918 by the National Bank of Commerce. For details regarding the alterations for the National Bank of Commerce, see: "New Building To Be Built On Second Avenue," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, May 12, 1919, p. 1; "Work To Start On New 2nd Avenue Bank Home," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, April 10, 1920, p. 1; "Award Sub-contract on Bank Alterations," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, May 13, 1920, p. 1; "Plan New Bank," *Seattle Times*, April 11, 1920; "Building Permits Over \$1,000 Issued Yesterday," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, May 22, 1920, p. 4; "As The Exterior of New Home For National Bank of Commerce Will Look Upon Its Completion," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Sept. 16, 1920, p. 1. In 1937, the FRBSF-Seattle Branch Bank occupied the third floor, and the American-Hamburg Line was a tenant occupying the fourth floor (see Real Property Card photograph, King County Assessor records, Puget Sound Regional Archives).

<sup>12</sup> "Federal Bank Will Have New Banking Room," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, March 9, 1921, p. 1; "Building Permits Over \$1,000 Issued Yesterday," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, May 10, 1921, p. 4; "Federal Reserve Bank Quarters Ready Shortly," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, May 11, 1921, p. 1. Rounds-Clist Company was also the contractor for the National Bank of Commerce alterations.

stories along the alley. It also included a basement below alley level. The building cost \$325,000, including the site, and opened in March 1894.<sup>13</sup> At the time of its opening, it was called a “Palace of Trade” and advertised “Forty Stores Under One Roof.”<sup>14</sup> The building itself was of ordinary brick masonry construction covered with stucco facing and with a heavy-timber structure supporting the interior. The most conspicuous feature was the continuous cast-iron and plate-glass first floor for display windows along the Second Avenue sidewalk.

By 1897, the Rialto’s most famous tenant moved into the two center storefronts. Frederick & Nelson had originally opened a second-hand store on Front Street (now First Avenue) near Pike Street in 1890. By 1891, the business founded by D. E. Frederick, a native of Georgia, and Nels Nelson had prospered sufficiently that they dropped second-hand merchandise in favor of new merchandise and moved to 1213 Second Avenue, the former quarters of Queen City Furniture. By 1892, Frederick & Nelson had relocated to 206 Pike Street.<sup>15</sup> An increase in business from the initial flush of the Klondike Gold Rush, prompted a move to the Rialto to be closer to the center of downtown. Here, the store remained for two decades and continued to expand and become a much beloved department store. By 1906, it had expanded sufficiently to occupy the entire Rialto building, which it purchased.<sup>16</sup> A decade later, recognizing the continued growth of the city and downtown, Frederick & Nelson purchased a larger site at Fifth Avenue and Pike Street where it constructed a much larger, terra-cotta clad department store, later expanded after World War II. This building is now occupied by Nordstrom, Inc., as its flagship store.

After Frederick & Nelson, vacated the Rialto building in 1918, the Rialto was remodeled to accommodate a variety of tenants. On May 24, 1929, a significant fire swept through the building. Although damage to the interior was extensive, particularly water damage to interior furnishings and merchandise, the building itself remained usable after repairs. Local newspaper coverage of the fire, in cataloguing the damage, provided a rare indication of the variety of tenants that occupied the building roughly a decade after Frederick & Nelson had departed. The tenants in 1929 included Pig ’n Whistle restaurant; Turrell Shoe Company; Trick & Murray, stationers; Jordan Apparel Company; Arstein, Simon & Company, tailor suppliers; M. Blumenthal, tailor; Northwest Awning Company; Voight & Batz, leather goods manufacturer; Cherry’s, apparel firm; M. B. Robbins, neckwear dealer; H. M. Warner and Paul Denison, photographers; Lundquist & Stetson, tailors; Scenic Photographic Publishing Company; Voight Leather Company; and the Sweet Sixteen Shop. (The last-named enterprise had providentially moved out of the building prior to the fire and, as a result, did not suffer any losses.)

During World War II, a servicemen’s club occupied portions of the building. The Rialto building was purchased by the One Thousand and One Second Avenue Corporation in

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<sup>13</sup> Jeffrey Karl Ochsner and Dennis Alan Andersen, *Distant Corner: Seattle Architects and the Legacy of H. H. Richardson* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), p. 204.

<sup>14</sup> *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, March 6, 1894, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> “Frederick & Nelson,” in James R. Warren, *King County and Its Queen City: Seattle, An Illustrated History* (Woodland Hills, Calif.: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1981), p. 248. This brief history of the store, surprisingly, does not mention the store’s residency in the Rialto building, but its residency here was sufficiently significant that the Rialto was generally referred to as the Frederick & Nelson building, particularly after the store purchased the property.

<sup>16</sup> “32—The Grand Emporium,” in Paul Dorpat, *Seattle, Now and Then* (Seattle: Tartu Publications, 1986), Volume II, pp. 85-86.

July 1944. The Corporation mortgaged the property through the Seattle Trust & Savings Bank for \$125,000. The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco subsequently purchased the property from the One Thousand and One Second Avenue Corporation for \$250,000 in early March 1945, for the intended site of a new Seattle Branch Bank Building.<sup>17</sup> As late as 1949 there was at least one retail tenant in the Rialto building as Filson's Outdoor Clothes held an "eviction" sale March 14-15, 1949.<sup>18</sup> Although the new Federal Reserve Bank building required demolition of the Rialto building, a small portion of the 1893-94 building survives as part of the east wall of the current building's Pistol Range in the easement under the Second Avenue sidewalk.<sup>19</sup>

### 4.3 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building Design

Correspondence between the Seattle Branch and the San Francisco headquarters indicates that discussion of architects took place over the year after the site was acquired (late 1945 to early 1947). Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was not initially the frontrunner.<sup>20</sup> However, William J. Bain had prior experience designing a house in 1927 for Clarence Shaw who, by the late 1940s, was manager of the Seattle Branch of the FRBSF.<sup>21</sup> Further, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was rising to prominence in 1947--the partnership was just over three years old in mid-1947, but the partners brought considerable prior experience in design. Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was one of very few firms in Seattle that could claim experience in design and construction of large-scale public buildings, as they had been selected as lead architects for Seattle's new Public Safety Building in September 1945 and they had been selected as lead architects for the new University of Washington Health Sciences complex in April 1946 (see below). Several partners also brought additional experience in working with governmental bodies, notably Naramore and Brady had extensive experience with public school projects of all sizes. Finally, with a staff of about twenty-five (making them one of the largest architectural firms in Seattle in those years), Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was able to handle complex projects like a Federal Reserve Bank.

The FRBSF selected Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson by mid-March 1947 and the contract for providing the preliminary design documents was approved by the Board of

<sup>17</sup> "Site Bought by Federal Bank," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, March 3, 1945, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>18</sup> "Filson's Forced to Vacate," *Seattle Times*, March 14, 1949, p. 4 (paid advertisement).

<sup>19</sup> "Draft Environmental Impact Statement—1015 Second Avenue, Seattle, Washington" (prepared for the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco), June 2011, p. 108.

<sup>20</sup> The other architects and/or firms under consideration were John Graham, Bebb & Jones, Young & Richardson, George Wellington Stoddard & Associates, McClelland & Jones, and Thomas, Grainger & Thomas; see C. R. Shaw letter to FRBSF/Head Office, dated November 10, 1945, in HRA, "Historical Resource Technical Report," April 2011, Sample of Original Correspondence section (not paginated).

<sup>21</sup> *Building Together: A Memoir of Our Lives in Seattle*, by William J. Bain and Mildred C. Bain, dates the Clarence Shaw house to 1929; this is incorrect. The Clarence R. Shaw residence at 1656 Interlaken Place, Seattle, was permitted June 2, 1927 (Seattle permit #267957); see *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, June 3, 1927, p. 3.

*Building Together* is not a reliable source for historical information. The book is a memoir that presents personal recollections of architect William Bain and his wife Mildred Bain, but does not appear to have been based on historical research or archival sources. As a result it contains numerous inaccuracies. William Bain and Mildred Bain individually authored many of the chapters, giving their own independent points-of-view. William Bain died in 1985; the book was published six years later, and therefore, the published text was edited by Mildred Bain. See: William J. Bain and Mildred C. Bain, *Building Together: A Memoir of Our Lives In Seattle* (Seattle: Beckett Publishing Company, 1991). Because of its many inaccuracies, *Building Together* can not be considered a reliable source for preparation of a Landmark nomination--factual information found in *Building Together* should be verified in other sources.

Directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco on March 26, 1947.<sup>22</sup> The selection of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was announced in early April 1947; an article about the selection also appeared in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* on April 5.<sup>23</sup> From the first, Bain was the partner in charge of the project and all correspondence with the FRBSF for the firm was signed by Bain. He also regularly met with the client; other partners in Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson also participated in some of these meetings.

By July 31, 1947, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson had provided initial preliminary design drawings.<sup>24</sup> Correspondence concerning the design followed through December 1947, and refinements (often driven by cost) continued to be made through the first eight months of 1948.<sup>25</sup> During this time, to help evaluate various construction options, the FRBSF asked a series of questions of Bain, as architect of the Seattle Branch Bank Building, and Pietro Belluschi, as architect of the Portland Branch Bank Building, but there is little or no indication of Belluschi's further involvement with the Seattle building or Bain's involvement with the concurrent Portland building.<sup>26</sup> A second design contract between the FRBSF and Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was executed on March 30, 1948, which covered the provision of design services through the remainder of the design and construction phases. This contract listed both William J. Bain and Clifton Brady as general partners as executors for the architectural firm.<sup>27</sup>

Agreement on the overall design had been reached by early September 1948 because the Bank allowed the release of a perspective rendering of the design early that month. This perspective appeared in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* on Saturday, September 4, 1948<sup>28</sup> and in the *Seattle Times* on September 5, 1948.<sup>29</sup> This perspective presents the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building essentially as it was constructed in 1949 and 1950. The *Times* stated, "The new building will be six stories tall, of steel frame construction, with four floors and an entrance on Second Avenue and a ground floor and basement below that level," and noted that Shaw said, "The building will be set back from the street." The *Times* described the exterior as sandstone; the Bank subsequently required limestone. The *Times* emphasized the modern features throughout the article, referring to the "modern lighting and ventilating equipment and up-to-date improvements in office equipment," as well as "modern vaults." The *Times* quoted Shaw's description of the building, "It will be a distinct and outstanding addition to the financial section and a

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<sup>22</sup> FRBSF/Seattle letter to NBBJ, dated March 29, 1947, in HRA, "Historical Resource Technical Report," April 2011, Sample of Original Correspondence section (not paginated). A copy of the actual contract is not included in HRA's selection of correspondence.

<sup>23</sup> "Federal Reserve Bank Building Architects Are Announced Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, April 5, 1947, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> C. E. Earhart, president/FRBSF, letter to FRBSF/Seattle, dated July 31, 1947, in HRA, "Historical Resource Technical Report," April 2011, Sample of Original Correspondence section (not paginated).

<sup>25</sup> "Draft Environmental Impact Statement," June 2011, pp. 111-113.

<sup>26</sup> "Architects' Answers to Questionnaire," undated, in HRA, "Historical Resource Technical Report," April 2011, Sample of Original Correspondence section (not paginated).

<sup>27</sup> "Brief of Contract," dated March 30, 1948, in HRA, "Historical Resource Technical Report," April 2011, Sample of Original Correspondence section (not paginated). This contract is notable because it belies speculation that Bain was somehow responsible for the FRBSF project independent of the other partners in the firm.

<sup>28</sup> Bob Polison, "Federal Reserve Bank Construction Here Is Calendared for Bids in Spring of 1949—Plans Given Approval," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Sept. 4, 1948, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>29</sup> "Reserve Bank to Have Building," *Seattle Times*, Sept. 5, 1948, p. 14.

building of which Seattle and the Northwest, which the bank serves, should well be proud.<sup>30</sup>

Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson completed the construction documents by mid-January 1949.<sup>31</sup> The bid period began on January 27. The Bank sent a press release to the *Daily Journal of Commerce* prior to that date because the newspaper ran an article about the project on its front page on January 27. The text of the article was largely drawn from the press release. Most of the article provided descriptions of the facilities and materials as this was the kind of information that would be most useful to potential bidders who would read about the project. A single sentence describes the exterior architectural character: "The exterior is without ornamentation, depending upon the vertical structural lines and openings of windows and doors for its architectural style."<sup>32</sup> The press release and the article also described the interior of the banking room on the first floor--a key space in the building: "Here quiet dignity is to be achieved by the modest use of marble, bronze, and walnut. Extraneous decorations and non-essentials have been eliminated, and dependence placed on the utility of the materials to provide real beauty..."<sup>33</sup> The press release indicated that the exterior facing would be "either stone or ceramic veneer," while the article gave "stone or terra cotta" as the cladding options, both indicative that the final decision about the exterior would likely be based on cost.

#### 4.4 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building Construction

Construction bids were received on February 23, 1949. William J. Bain, Floyd A. Naramore and project architect E. C. Rising attended the bid opening. This event was recorded by a photograph published in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* the next day.<sup>34</sup> The low bidder was the Kuney Johnson Company of Seattle. The bids were approved on March 4, and the FRBSF signed a contract with Kuney Johnson on March 11, 1949.<sup>35</sup> The *Daily Journal of Commerce* had already announced that the demolition of the Rialto Building was to begin.<sup>36</sup> An article about the Bank subsequently appeared in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* on April 4, 1949, which announced the completion of demolition of the Rialto.<sup>37</sup> On May 23, 1949 the *Daily Journal of Commerce* permit listings indicate the issuance of the building permit for the project.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> The architectural drawings were dated Jan. 15, 1949. Later revision drawings were dated May 23, 1949 (R-1), Oct. 18, 1949 (R-4), and Oct. 28, 1949 (RX-1); drawing R-3 was not dated. These revisions were minor in nature—adding a roof canopy over the truck entrance at the alley or various structural clarifications.

<sup>32</sup> Robert Polison, "Bids Called on Federal Bank Building Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 27, 1949, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 1, 3.

<sup>34</sup> "Reserve Bank Contract Bids Close," and "Officials Attend Bid Opening" (captioned photograph), *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Feb. 24, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> "Reserve Bank Figures Approved—Award Seen," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, March 5, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> "Razing Rialto Building Scheduled to Begin Next Monday," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, March 10, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> "Old Makes Way for the New As Rialto Building Passes," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, April 4, 1949, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>38</sup> The building permit listing Federal Reserve Branch Bank appeared in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* listing on May 24. Permit # 394011 was issued for a "Bank and Office Building" at 1015 Second Avenue; contractor: Kuney Johnson; architect: Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson; owner: Federal

The *Seattle Times* took more than passing interest in the bank project after describing the finalized design on Sept. 5, 1948. Announcement of the three lowest bidders was made in late February,<sup>39</sup> followed by announcement of awarding the general construction contract in early March.<sup>40</sup> Site demolition merited a captioned photograph when interesting relics from the Rialto Building were uncovered.<sup>41</sup> Progress on excavation and construction resulted in an additional five captioned photographs as well as numerous mentions in articles describing construction work in Seattle.<sup>42</sup>

Materials and techniques used in the bank's construction, beyond the typical description of exterior finishes, received attention in the *Daily Journal of Commerce*, the *Times* and the *Post-Intelligencer*.<sup>43</sup> The *Post-Intelligencer* made an interesting comparison in the construction systems being used at the bank building and the concurrent Grosvenor House apartments building as the former utilized a steel frame structure while the latter utilized a reinforced concrete structure. The *Post-Intelligencer* considered the riveted connections of steel-frame construction to be "old-fashioned" as it resulted in a noisier construction site than a building of reinforced concrete.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, the riveted steel-frame of the Seattle Branch Bank building was actually state-of-the-art steel construction at that time. The bank was also included in four editorials published by the *Times*, one in 1947, two in 1949, and one in 1951.<sup>45</sup>

During construction, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco decided to have a formal cornerstone-laying ceremony—an event invariably reserved for a building of public significance. Presiding at the ceremony was C. E. Earhart, President of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco; speakers included David Levine, acting Mayor; Thomas F. Gleed, President of Washington Bankers Association; E. E. Adams, President of the Seattle Clearing House Association; and others.<sup>46</sup> At this event, Earhart declared that the new building stood as "testimony to the [Federal Reserve] system's belief in the future of the Pacific Northwest."<sup>47</sup> Acting Mayor Levine was even more emphatic by describing the new structure as "the lifeblood of the community."<sup>48</sup>

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Reserve Bank of San Francisco; cost: \$2,200,000. "Seattle Building Permits Over \$1,000 in Value—Monday, May 23," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 24 May 1949, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> "Bids Opened For Seattle Bank," *Seattle Times*, Feb. 23, 1949, p. 11.

<sup>40</sup> "Federal Bank Contract Let," *Seattle Times*, March 4, 1949, p. 14.

<sup>41</sup> "Landmark Wrecked," *Seattle Times*, March 20, 1949, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup> "Future Bank," *Seattle Times*, May 30, 1949, p. 22; "Bank Going Up," *Seattle Times*, July 6, 1949, p. 20; "Try Cracking This One," *Seattle Times*, July 10, 1949, p. 32; *Seattle Sunday Times Rotogravure Magazine*, Sept. 25, 1949, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> "Bids Called on Federal Bank Building Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 27, 1949, pp. 1, 3; "Special Plaster Cuts Weight Of New Buildings," *Seattle Times*, Feb. 5, 1949, p. 11; "Try Cracking This One," *Seattle Times*, July 10, 1949, p. 32.

<sup>44</sup> "Contrast: One Job Noisy, Other Quiet," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Oct. 20, 1949, p. 16.

<sup>45</sup> "For Their New Home," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 20, 1947, p. 6; "Seattle Vs. Portland," *Seattle Times*, June 6, 1949, p. 6; "Ever More Abundant Are Our Blessings," *Seattle Times*, Nov. 23, 1949, p. 6; "Furbishing the Backdrop," *Seattle Times*, Jan. 24, 1951, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup> "Reserve Bank Officials to Lay Cornerstone," *Seattle Times*, 19 April 1950, p. 13; "Cornerstone of Bank to Be Laid Today," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 20 April 1950, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>47</sup> "New Building Is Dedicated," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 21 April 1950, p. 11.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

Construction was completed in late 1950. The FRBSF Seattle Branch completed its move into the building on January 2, 1951.<sup>49</sup> No official dedication of the building was held, even though there had been a formal laying of a cornerstone, as noted above. The public was, however, invited to view the building, including the vaults, as part of an open-house on January 13, 1951.<sup>50</sup>

Shortly after its completion, the Federal Reserve Bank building was described in the *Seattle Times* as “luxurious,” “handsome,” and “impressive.”<sup>51</sup>

#### 4.5 Subsequent Changes to the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building

Since its completion, the Seattle Branch Bank Building has stood in downtown Seattle, with minimal exterior change, for more than sixty years. This assessment is also shared by the recent Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which concluded, “An intensive level survey of the property finds the former FRBSF-Seattle Branch building to be largely intact and retaining most of its historic and architectural integrity.”<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, some changes have occurred to the building over time. Although a comprehensive list of changes is attempted here, it should be kept in mind that the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, as a federal agency, did not always obtain building permits for of its construction even though it did obtain building permits from the City of Seattle on four occasions.<sup>53</sup> However, the recently completed Draft Environmental Impact Statement includes a compilation of subsequent changes to the building that appears to be comprehensive.<sup>54</sup>

In 1958, the Sahara Waterproofing Company offered a proposal to clean and waterproof the exterior of the building at a cost of \$9,919, which Bain, on behalf of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, recommended be accepted. This work was intended to address the continuing issue of the mottled appearance of the Indiana limestone cladding that had become evident even before construction was completed. This issue had arisen due to the propensity of the limestone cladding to absorb moisture. Curiously, during the early design stage for the building when decisions were being made regarding the cladding, Bain had recommended the use of Wilkeson sandstone partially because of its local availability, but also “on account of [its] low absorption of moisture.”<sup>55</sup> The decision to use Indiana limestone was due to its lower cost, with an anticipated savings of

<sup>49</sup> “New Federal Bank Is Open,” *Seattle Times*, Jan. 3, 1951, p. 21.

<sup>50</sup> “Bank Holds Open House,” *Seattle Times*, Jan. 14, 1951, p. 14.

<sup>51</sup> For “luxurious,” see: “Bank Holds Open House,” *Seattle Times*, Jan. 14, 1951, p. 14. For “handsome,” see: “To the Directors and Officers,” *Seattle Times*, Jan. 15, 1951, p. 1 (congratulatory paid advertisement/National Bank of Commerce). For “impressive,” see “Furbishing the Backdrop,” *Seattle Times*, Jan. 24, 1951, p. 6.

<sup>52</sup> “Draft Environmental Impact Statement,” June 2011, page 65.

<sup>53</sup> The issuance date for the four occasions were: Permit #394011 on May 18, 1949, for the original construction of the building; Permit #508375 on July 28, 1964, for a new air-conditioning system; Permit #564747 on July 20, 1976, for remodeling the “Banking Lobby;” Permit #627513 for installing a halogen fire detection system, which had issuance dates of Dec. 8, 1986, and Oct. 13, 1987. A fifth permit was applied for in 1966 for construction of smoke-proof enclosure and stairs, which was canceled prior to issuance.

<sup>54</sup> “Draft Environmental Impact Statement,” June 2011, pp. 119-121.

<sup>55</sup> Shaw correspondence to FRBSF/Head Office, dated Feb. 9, 1948, in HRA, “Historical Resource Technical Report,” April 2011, Sample of Original Correspondence section (not paginated). Shaw incorrectly termed the sandstone as “Wilkinson” sandstone.

\$25,000.<sup>56</sup> The 1958 cleaning and waterproofing may have been the last time that the exterior of the building was cleaned and waterproofed, resulting in the present discoloration of the limestone cladding. Historical photographs of the building taken around the time of construction completion revealed a much more uniform coloration of the limestone cladding despite some early water absorption.

In 1964 a building permit was issued for the installation of a new air-conditioning system for the building. The design work for this alteration, which would have affected primarily roof-top mechanical equipment and some interior mechanical spaces, was handled by Bouillon, Christofferson & Schairer, Inc. (BCS), the successor firm to the Bouillon Company, the original mechanical engineer. Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson served as architectural consultant to BCS for the minor changes to the interiors.<sup>57</sup>

In 1976 a building permit was issued for remodeling the "Banking Lobby" to its present configuration. The design work for this alteration was handled by Business Space Design (BSD), which represented a continuing involvement by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson with the FRBSF since BSD was the firm's interior design subsidiary.

In 1984, the roof was apparently replaced for the first time and a program for replacing some of the windows was begun. The windows replaced at this time were on the west and south facades, which coincidentally were the windows receiving the most solar radiation. The architecture and engineering firm HNTB provided design services for this work, for which no building permit was obtained.

In 1986, the remainder of the window replacement program was completed. As could be expected, these windows were located on the east and north facades. The architectural firm of HNTB again provided design services for this work, and no building permit was obtained.

In 1986-87 a new halogen fire detection system was designed and installed by Wormald Fire Systems of Tacoma, Washington. This project was the last alteration work performed under a building permit obtained from the City of Seattle.

In 1988 cladding anchor tests were performed by Pacific Testing Laboratories. This work resulted in some small holes in the limestone cladding where the anchor tests were performed and there has been some subsequent spalling of the limestone.<sup>58</sup>

In 1989 the Seattle Branch Bank acquired an assembled metal sculpture group by artist Ted Jonsson, entitled "Stabil, Check and Balance." This sculpture group was temporarily installed in the north terrace. In 1991-92, NBBJ (official name of the successor firm for Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson) provided the design services for reconfiguring the north terrace to accommodate the Jonsson sculpture group, as well as

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<sup>56</sup> Mangels correspondence to FRBSF/Seattle, dated Feb. 13, 1948, in HRA, "Historical Resource Technical Report," April 2011, Sample of Original Correspondence section (not paginated). The cost of granite and sandstone for cladding the exterior was estimated to be \$152,000; the cost of granite and limestone was estimated to be \$127,000.

<sup>57</sup> "Project Under Way at Federal Reserve Bldg.," *Seattle Times*, Oct. 11, 1964, p. 39.

<sup>58</sup> See photograph in HRA, "Historical Resource Technical Report," April 2011, p. 21.

to provide bullet-proof cages inside the building. The sidewalk in front of the building was also replaced at this time.<sup>59</sup>

In 1992-93, Bouillon, Christofferson & Schairer, Inc., again provided design services for a chiller replacement project. Portions of the electrical system inside the building were also upgraded at this time.

In 1993, an asbestos survey was performed by Environmental Control Services, which was apparently preparatory to a decade-long renovation of the building interior designed by NBBJ. The initial floor to be renovated was the ground floor, which occurred in 1993. Concurrent with these renovations, Simplex was responsible in 1994 for upgrading the fire alarm system. In 1995, portions of the basement floor were renovated. In 1996, the third floor was renovated, and a seismic retrofit, which had apparently been begun in 1991, was completed as well. Also in 1996, a new currency disposal system was installed under the direction of Miles. In 1997-98, the fourth floor was renovated to enlarge the cafeteria and provide a new state-of-the-art conference room, as well as new executive offices. Also in 1998, the security system was upgraded by Andersen/Mohr. By 2000, NBBJ had prepared plans for renovating the first and second floors; however, these were put on hold and ultimately abandoned.

On the exterior of the building, the roofing system was replaced in 1998 under the supervision of Roofing Technical Services, LLC, of Mill Creek, Washington. In 2001-02, the irrigation system for the planters was renovated under the guidance of Brumbaugh & Associates, landscape architects. Also in 2002, Architectural Wall Services provided an exterior waterproofing submittal, but it is unclear as to whether any work by Architectural Wall Services was actually performed.

On February 28, 2001, the 6.8 magnitude Nisqually Earthquake shook greater Seattle area. According to a post-earthquake assessment report by Anderson Bjornstad Kane Jacobs, the building sustained minor damages.

#### **4.6 Recent Developments**

In February 2008, the FRBSF vacated the building, although maintenance staff apparently returns to the building on occasion for minor cleaning and to review the building for possible condition issues that might arise in an unoccupied structure.

The Washington State Advisory Council on Historic Preservation voted unanimously to list the property on the Washington Heritage Register on 3 November 2011.

On 16 April 2012 the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco transferred ownership of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building to the General Services Administration.

The property was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper on 4 February 2013, as indicated in the National Park Service's "Weekly List of Actions for the week of 2/4/13 through 2/8/13."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> It is unclear from readily available information how extensive the sidewalk replacement was; however, it is possible that only the sidewalk from the public right-of-way to the building entrance was replaced.

<sup>60</sup> See: <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/listings/20130215.htm>

## 5. HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

### 5.1 Downtown Seattle in the 1940s

Due to the combination of Great Depression during the 1930s and the onset of World War II in the 1940s, there were only a few buildings or additions to buildings constructed in the downtown area in the early 1940s.<sup>61</sup> After the end of the war, the transition to a peacetime economy proceeded cautiously and there were occasional bans on non-critical construction while building material allocations were sorted out. In addition, there had been a significant over-built condition for office space downtown during the 1920s, which retarded significant post-1945 office building construction until the late 1950s. After the early 1930s, only three significant construction projects took place downtown: the Woolworth's store (1939-40); the U.S. Federal (Nakamura) Courthouse (1939-40); and National Bank of Commerce building fifth-story expansion (1940-41).

The F. W. Woolworth & Company store at 301 Pike Street was one of the last new commercial buildings to be built in the downtown area prior to World War II. Although reputedly the largest Woolworth store on the West Coast, it was based upon a standard company design by Harold B. Hamhill of San Francisco. The building is a three-story structure that culminates in a slightly taller tower at the corner of Third Avenue and Pike Street. There are six vertically oriented bays running along Pike Street and ten on Third Avenue, each of which contain setbacks that recede inward to the windows and create a crenelated aspect at the parapet. The corner tower also has a series of setbacks at its top. The building is probably the last in Seattle to be fully clad in terra cotta and incorporates simplified Art Deco ornamentation.<sup>62</sup>

The U.S. Federal (Nakamura) Courthouse at 1010 Fifth Avenue was the last significant building, public or private, to be constructed in the downtown area prior to World War II. It was designed by Louis A. Simon, the Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury, in association with Gilbert Stanley Underwood, architect of federal buildings in

<sup>61</sup> Most typical downtown construction projects during the 1930s and 1940s were interior remodels and/or storefront alterations. While the latter changed the appearance of the building, these projects did not materially affect the amount of useable space downtown. A few projects included the demolition of upper stories of a building, like the 1938-39 alteration of the building housing the Washington Mutual Savings Bank where the upper three stories were removed (for structural reasons) and the remaining structure was reclad in granite and terra cotta under the direction of C. A. Merriam; see Fred Niendorff, "Bank Building Will Undergo Alterations," *Post-Intelligencer*, March 19, 1939, p. 18; Morgan, *Friend of the Family*, pp. 79, 101. Another similar project was the demolition of the seven-story Plaza Hotel (1906; destroyed) in 1935, to be replaced by a two-story Bartells Drug Store (1935-36; destroyed) by Robert C. Reamer for Mrs. E. B. Stimson. The Bartells Drug Store was later demolished for Westlake Park. For Bartells Drug Store, see "Building Permits Over \$1,000 Issued Yesterday," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, July 31, 1935, p. 4 (demolition permit); "Building—To Ask Building Bids," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Aug. 22, 1935, p. 1; "Selected Bidders To Figure Building," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Aug. 27, 1935, p. 1; "Seattle Building Permits Over \$1,000," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Aug. 31, 1935, p. 4; "\$40,000 Building Contract Placed," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Sept. 25, 1935, p. 1; "Building—Quist Lets Subcontracts," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 4, 1935, p. 1. For the Westlake Park site, see "56-Westlake," Dorpat, *Seattle, Now & Then*, Vol. II, pp. 156-159; Dorpat claims that the first story of the hotel was retained; however, *Daily Journal of Commerce* citations indicate a new two-story plus basement structure was constructed.

<sup>62</sup> Caroline Tobin with Mary Randlett, *Downtown Seattle Walking Tours* (Seattle: Department of Community Development, 1985), p. 55; Ellen Miller-Wolfe, "Art Deco and Terra-Cotta: F. W. Woolworth Building," in Lydia S. Aldredge, ed., *Impressions of Imagination: Terra-Cotta Seattle* (Seattle: Allied Arts of Seattle, Inc., 1986), pp. 41-43.

the western United States.<sup>63</sup> This building has been described as “a good example of the stripped-down Federal Classicism of the time.”<sup>64</sup> As well as “The color scheme of rust red and gray was fashionable. The building’s Classical lineage is revealed in its symmetry, central massing, and vertical strip windows defining voids between blank walls that suggest piers; it presides with dignity over a formally landscaped open space with ceremonial stairs.”<sup>65</sup> For some, the formally landscaped open space at the front and sides of the building is the building’s most favorable aspect: “its spacious tree-lined grounds provided one of the first green oases in the Downtown.”<sup>66</sup>

As noted previously, a fifth story, designed by C. A. Merriam, was constructed atop the former J. A. Baillargeon dry-goods store building in 1940-41, then occupied by the National Bank of Commerce as its headquarters, and by FRBSF Seattle as a tenant. This was almost the last significant pre-war downtown construction project. The design modernized the exterior of the building by removing the projecting cornice, allowing the facades to terminate at a simple, barely projecting, coping. The only ornament at the new fifth-story is a continuation of the original ornament along the sides of the structural piers, which is continued to the top of, and then across, the window bays. The same terra-cotta ornamentation is used as a cornice for the roof-top penthouse. Otherwise the addition is quite spare in its design.

In early 1941, the C.D. Stimson Company decided to redevelop its property at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Union Street by demolishing the six-story Cray Building (1907-08; destroyed) and replacing it with a new two-story building for which the Metropolitan Business College was to be the primary tenant. The Metropolitan Building Company, of which members of the Stimson family were major shareholders, served as property manager, and William H. Fey, staff architect for the MBC, and Paul Thiry were associated as architects for the new structure (1941-42; altered). The reinforced concrete structure was clad in light gray glazed terra cotta at the upper story and Cold Spring Carnelian granite at the first story columns. Street-level storefronts featured plate glass windows with white metal frames and continuous steel sash windows with high glass block transoms at the second story that turned the street corner in a continuous curve.<sup>67</sup> The overall effect was a blending of the new International Style and Art Moderne.

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<sup>63</sup> See Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 237-285, for a brief discussion of the operation of the Supervising Architect's Office during the 1930s and 1940s including Underwood's association with it from the mid-1930s. Underwood later served as Supervising Architect from 1943 to 1949.

<sup>64</sup> Maureen R. Elenga, *Seattle Architecture: A Walking Guide to Downtown* (Seattle: Seattle Architectural Foundation, 2007), p. 77.

<sup>65</sup> Sally B. Woodbridge and Roger Montgomery, *A Guide to Architecture in Washington State: An Environmental Perspective* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980), p. 128.

<sup>66</sup> Earl D. Layman, with Bob Peterson, *The Sights of Seattle—Downtown* (Seattle: Madrona Publishers, 1981), p. 89. Layman misspells Underwood's middle name.

<sup>67</sup> "Cray Building To Be Replaced," *Seattle Times*, March 2, 1941, p. 30; "Cray Building To Be Replaced," *Seattle Times*, May 25, 1941, (Classified Section) p. 18; "Local Business School Expands," *Seattle Times*, Jan. 4, 1942, p. 11. The Cray Building had been designed by the leading Spokane architects Cutter & Malmgren. Although Cutter & Malmgren had designed both C. D. Stimson mansions in Seattle and The Highlands, the Cray Building was originally a project of C. J. Smith of the Washington Securities Company, for whom Cutter also designed a mansion on Capitol Hill; see: Henry C. Matthews, *Kirtland Cutter: Architect in the Land of Promise* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), pp. 196, 198.

For nearly a decade after the end of World War II, there was little new construction in the downtown area. The absence of new construction reflected the over-built condition of office space in downtown, and the focus on suburban locations for much of the new construction in and around the city. As with the period just prior to the war, the limited amount of new downtown construction was a mix of new buildings and alterations to existing structures.

The first building to be constructed in the downtown area was the Veterans Center/American Legion Memorial Building, which was designed by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson in 1945-46 and constructed by Nettleton Baldwin, Inc., at 620 University Street for the American Legion Foundation, Inc. This was a distinctly Modern building and featured a two-story, tri-partite entrance infilled with large areas of plate glass. On either side of the entry were symmetrically disposed horizontally oriented windows at the first story with the planar front facade being blank above at the second story. In addition to the expected recreational and social spaces, the building included an auditorium and meeting rooms that were rented to outside organizations.<sup>68</sup>

The second post-war building constructed in the downtown area was the Public Safety Building (1945-50; destroyed), a major public commission intended as part of a larger civic center complex. Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was selected in late 1945 to be the lead design firm in a joint venture that included Young & Richardson and B. Marcus Priteca.<sup>69</sup> Due to the complex nature of the building program, there was an extended design period for this project, which ultimately required a public vote to increase the city's bonded indebtedness as the construction budget more than doubled.<sup>70</sup> This reinforced concrete structure was clad with granite and sandstone in a Modern idiom similar to the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building. The building housed the public health service in its southern 15-story block and the city police department, including the municipal courts, in its western 7-story block. In addition, a War Memorial Plaza was incorporated into the design at the east end of the public health service block. The plaza included "Gold Star Mother," a monumental sculpture by Dudley Pratt, and the inscribed names of all Seattle residents who died defending the United States during World War II--this list was subsequently expanded to include the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.<sup>71</sup> Although the remainder of the intended civic center complex was never constructed, the plaza did function as a public square during the early years of the building.<sup>72</sup>

When the Medical & Dental Building was originally designed and constructed in 1924-25 (at Fifth Avenue and Olive Way), expansion of the building was anticipated with the construction of a two-story base building to the immediate northeast of the original building. Roughly a quarter-century later, the expansion, called the Annex, was

<sup>68</sup> "American Legion Building Work Drawings Begun," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 6 September 1945, pp. 1, 3; "Sketch of Veterans Center," *Seattle Times*, 9 September 1945, p. 7; "Seattle Building Permits Over \$1,000—Tuesday, April 16," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 17 April 1946, p. 3. "Meeting for Engineers," *Seattle Times*, June 7, 1951, p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> "Safety Building Designer Picked," *Seattle Times*, Sept. 6, 1945, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> "Officials Plan to Study Eastern Cities for Safety Building Plans," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 30, 1945, p. 1, 3; Robert Polison, "Public Safety Building Bids Studied," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 16 July 1948, pp. 1, 3; "Civic Building Funds Sought," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, July 22, 1948, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>71</sup> "These Honored Dead," *Seattle Sunday Times Pictorial Magazine*, Sept. 4, 1949, pp. 4-5.

<sup>72</sup> Victor Steinbrueck, *A Guide to Seattle Architecture, 1850-1953* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1953), p. 19.

designed by William H. Fey, staff architect for the Metropolitan Building Company, and constructed on the base structure.<sup>73</sup> The Annex is roughly the same height as the original building and is also clad in terra-cotta masonry; however, the annex lacks the Gothic Revival detailing found on the 1924-25 structure by John A. Creutzer with A. H. Albertson (consulting).<sup>74</sup>

Even before World War II had ended, Frederick & Nelson announced plans to expand its downtown store vertically in order to accommodate anticipated growth in business.<sup>75</sup> By this time Frederick & Nelson was owned by Marshall Field & Company of Chicago, so the design team was an association of John Graham, Jr. (son of the original architect) and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of Chicago. The expansion was intended to allow Frederick & Nelson to retain its position as the leading department store in Seattle. Like Medical & Dental Building Annex and the National Bank of Commerce building expansion, the detailing of the new upper stories of Frederick & Nelson was compatible with the original building, but simplified; in the expansion, the original projecting cornice was removed and a clean, planar parapet topped the taller building. The completion of the expansion project was a major event locally.<sup>76</sup>

Given the extraordinarily limited number of major construction projects locally during the 1940s, the design and construction of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building was a very significant contribution to the development of downtown Seattle in the immediate post-World War II years.

## 5.2 The Federal Reserve Bank system and its buildings

The individual banks of the Federal Reserve system are sometimes called “banker’s banks”; the system itself is the nation’s bank since its role in the Federal government is to safeguard the nation’s money, both in regards to its physical safety, as well as its value. However, there have been times in the system’s history when Federal Reserve Bank buildings have provided limited services to the general public; for example, Federal Reserve Bank buildings were centers of sales of war bonds during World War II.

At the time of the construction of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building, the role of the Federal Reserve was described succinctly:

"The purposes of the federal reserve system, of which the Seattle branch is a part, are to aid in the achievement of economic stability and the maintenance of full employment by aiding the financing of agricultural, industrial, and commercial as well as financial undertakings, it is explained. The bank also provides a fast and economical method for the

<sup>73</sup> "16-Story Medical-Dental Bldg. Annex to Go Up Soon," *Seattle Times*, June 24, 1949, pp. 1, 5; "Work Started On 14-Story Building Wing," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 31 Aug. 1949, pp. 1, 3; and "Building Permits Climb High In 50 Years," *Seattle Times*, Jan. 8, 1950, p. 2.

<sup>74</sup> *Shaping*, pp. 164; Elenga, *Seattle Architecture*, pp. 101-102.

<sup>75</sup> "F. & N. Plans \$5,000,000 Expansion," *Seattle Times*, 17 Feb. 1946, pp. 1, 4; "\$5,000,000 Expansion is Frederick, Nelson Plan," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Feb. 17, 1946, pp. 1, 10; "Frederick & Nelson Expansion Work Expected To Cost \$5,500,000," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 18 Feb. 1946, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>76</sup> "\$10,000,000 Expansion Program Is Complete at Frederick & Nelson Store," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 3, 1952, p. 26; "Service to Customer Is Main Ideal of Frederick & Nelson," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 3, 1952, p. 27; "Streamlined Grouping Marks Huge Expansion At Frederick & Nelson," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 3, 1952, p. 28.

clearing of checks, maintenance of circulating money in good condition, and in handling the issue and redemption of U. S. government bonds. Through the services it renders through the banking system, it indirectly serves all segments of the public, officers point out."<sup>77</sup>

The Federal Reserve's dual role has invariably played a role in the functional needs and the physical appearance of the various buildings erected for the use of the various divisions and branches of the Federal Reserve system. As yet, there has not been a comprehensive study of the Federal Reserve Banks as a building type (nor will one be attempted here).<sup>78</sup> Nonetheless, discussion of a number of previous Federal Reserve Bank buildings helps to place the design of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building within the context of the Federal Reserve system buildings. All of the buildings described below originally had similar functions but exhibit different styles and design elements. When compared to these various Federal Reserve properties, the Seattle Branch is consistent with the composition and materials typical of all Federal Reserve properties but features a rare application of early post-war Modernism.

When the Federal Reserve Bank system was established in 1913, it was uniquely neither wholly private nor wholly public, which has to a degree shaped the architectural character of its facilities. At the time of its establishment, it was not uncommon for public buildings, particularly those erected by the Federal government, to be the most highly embellished buildings in a community. It was also not uncommon for the local banks to be housed in highly embellished buildings. The Federal Reserve Board early on took the position that extravagance was to be avoided, however, as related by Federal architect A. B. Trowbridge in 1921: "I have no wish to appear over particular and if it were a private bank, I wouldn't spend a minute questioning it, but the Federal Reserve Board is becoming anxious over big amounts being spent and they would be sure to look with favor on any move to not only actually save money, but to act as to avoid the appearance of extravagance."<sup>79</sup> As a consequence, the architectural appearance of many of the Federal Reserve system buildings was subdued, at least in comparison to their contemporary architectural counterparts.

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<sup>77</sup> "Cornerstone of Bank to Be Laid Today," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 20 April 1950, pp. 1, 8,

<sup>78</sup> A complete history of all the building projects undertaken by the all 12 districts of the Federal Reserve Bank is not necessary to understand the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building's significance; however, as the Federal Reserve system was a unique banking system within the United States, a selection of its projects can provide a basis for comparison to frame how the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco approached design and construction of the Seattle Branch Bank Building. The Federal Reserve has apparently never established guidelines regarding how or why a branch bank should be established within a given district, nor when a branch should be provided with its own building. A number of districts have no branches other than the city in which the district is headquartered (Boston and Philadelphia) while other districts have multiple branches—Atlanta, for instance, currently has branches in five cities in addition to the headquarters city. For the various branch cities, some received their own buildings almost immediately after becoming a branch city, like Oklahoma City, while others had to wait decades before receiving their own buildings, like Seattle and Portland, Oregon. It might also be noted that the information available for different districts and/or branches varies widely.

<sup>79</sup> As quoted in Sally A. Kitt Chappell, *Architecture and Planning of Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, 1912-1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 132. A. B. Trowbridge made this comment on July 31, 1921, less than five months prior to charges being made of extravagance in the construction of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York building, as well as salaries being paid to officers; see "Makes New Attack On Reserve Bank," *New York Times*, 17 December 1921.

One of the earliest buildings erected for the use of the Federal Reserve system, which is still used for its original purpose, is the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (1919-24, 1934-35) by York & Sawyer at 33 Liberty Street.<sup>80</sup> Architecturally, this building is sufficiently noteworthy that it is invariably included not merely in architectural guide books,<sup>81</sup> but also general guide books to the city of New York.<sup>82</sup> The building has been described as “a great neo-Renaissance building of rusticated Indiana limestone, Ohio sandstone, and elegant ironwork.”<sup>83</sup> As many of the exterior elements of the building were modeled after Florentine palazzos, the design was reflective of the Beaux-Arts design methodology of its time. It is also one of the few Federal Reserve Bank that functions very directly as the nation’s bank, since there are vaults in the building’s many sub-basements providing storage for the gold of many nations, allowing the gold to be “moved” as needed to balance trade payments without leaving the building. This aspect of the building has also made the bank one of the few with “routine” public access, as tours of the building are available to the general public with at least one week’s prior request for security screening. Although the building was designed to be larger than the current needs of the Federal Reserve Bank when it was constructed, no specific provisions for outside tenants were provided.<sup>84</sup> When the cornerstone for the building was laid in 1923, the Directors of the FRBNY had assumed the 5,000 employees for which the building was designed would not be exceeded,<sup>85</sup> but within ten years, while the United States was still reeling from the effects of the Great Depression, the FRBNY acquired the remainder of its Liberty Street block and built the eastern portion of the building as a seamless continuation of the original building with completion occurring in 1935.<sup>86</sup> This building is a designated New York City Landmark.

On the West Coast, the first Federal Reserve Bank building to be completed (at nearly the same time as the Federal Reserve Bank of New York) was the San Francisco District headquarters building (1918-22, ca. 1922-24) by George Kelham at 400 Ransome Street. At its original four stories and high basement, it was among the smaller buildings erected as a head office bank of a Federal Reserve Bank District; however, the initially constructed building was designed to accommodate an additional ten stories.<sup>87</sup> The original building was basically a “banking temple” with colossal Doric

<sup>80</sup> Norval White and Elliot Willensky, *AIA Guide to New York City: The Classic Guide to New York’s Architecture, Fourth Edition* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000), p. 40. York & Sawyer were responsible for both the original building and its 1935 addition.

<sup>81</sup> Henry Hope Reed, *Beaux-Arts Architecture in New York: A Photographic Guide* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988), p. 5 (which mentions the Pitti Palace in Florence as the source for the rustication; Francis Morrone, *The Architectural Guidebook to New York City* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith Publishers, 1994), p. 27.

<sup>82</sup> Richard Saul Wurman, *Access—New York* (New York: Access Press, 2002), p. 26.

<sup>83</sup> Norval White and Elliot Willensky, *AIA Guide to New York City, Revised [Second] Edition* (New York: MacMillan Publishing, Inc., 1978), pp. 22-23.

<sup>84</sup> “File Bank Plans,” *New York Times*, 8 July 1921, 27.

<sup>85</sup> “Cornerstone Laid For Reserve Bank,” *New York Times*, 1 June 1922, 32. At the time of the cornerstone laying ceremony, the FRBNY had 2,595 employees.

<sup>86</sup> “Executives in New Wing In Federal Reserve Bank,” *New York Times*, 3 Dec. 1935, 37. When the bank acquired property at Liberty and Nassau Streets, it initially only acquired a street frontage of 265 along Liberty Street; see “Reserve Bank Buys Site For A Home,” *New York Times*, 30 May 1918, 13. It was in a position to build during the depths of the Great Depression as it was one of two Federal Reserve Districts that did not operate at a loss in 1933; see “10 Reserve Banks Had 1933 Deficits,” *New York Times*, 6 Jan. 1934.

<sup>87</sup> “New Federal Reserve Bank, San Francisco,” *The Architect and Engineer*, 63/2 (November 1920), 71-72; this article also describes the banking room as being distinct from a private commercial banking room as the banking room here would be subordinate to the lobby. Unfortunately, only a side elevation accompanied the article so it is not clear as to what was meant by this description; however, most

pilasters on the side elevations supporting a classically detailed entablature on which rested the fourth-story attic. At the front was a portico of eight Ionic columns crowned by American eagles and reached by a grand staircase as wide as the portico. The building may not have been fully occupied before the space needs of the bank required vertical expansion of the building--the decision to expand vertically was made within one year of the completion of the initial San Francisco building.

If the full fourteen stories that the foundation and steel framing was capable of supporting had been built in the second construction campaign, the building might have come to resemble Federal Reserve Bank buildings in Chicago or Kansas City with a slightly lower height; however, the Directors of the Twelfth District chose to add only four additional stories. The design *parti* for the addition is essentially a Corinthian “banking temple” set atop the original Doric “banking temple” resulting in an appearance similar to the placement of a four-story building with Corinthian columns atop the pre-existing Merchants’ Exchange/Custom House building with its Ionic columns for the National City Bank of New York City (1904-10) by McKim, Mead & White.<sup>88</sup> However, the use of pilasters rather than free-standing columns at the exterior walls of the San Francisco building gives the addition a more planar, or modern aspect, despite the abundant low-relief ornament that embellishes the building. The four-story addition may well be the earliest use of stripped or Modernized Classicism within the Federal Reserve system. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a designated San Francisco City Landmark. After the FRBSF vacated the building, it was renovated for private offices under the design direction of Studios Architecture/Kaplan, McLaughlin, Diaz and is currently known as the Bently Reserve; the former banking room is available for special event rental.<sup>89</sup>

A few years later, the original building for the FRBSF Los Angeles Branch Bank (1929-30; altered) by John & Donald B. Parkinson was erected at 409 West Olympic Boulevard. The building received an expansion (1953-54) designed by Woodford & Bernard, a successor firm to Parkinson & Parkinson, which added two bays along Olympic Boulevard and a one-story addition in the rear along Grand Avenue, both of which replicated the detailing of the original building. This building has a primary five-story block with a rear one-story wing, apparently for receiving armored vehicles in a secure area. The design shows a continued trend to treating the exterior walls as a

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descriptions of the building suggest that the building lobby was, and remains, more highly embellished than the banking room, although there is no current indication that the building had outside rental tenants. Completion of the first portion of the building in 1922 was referred to briefly in “Checks Building By Reserve Banks,” *New York Times*, 6 January 1922, 14. Peter Booth Wiley, *National Trust Guide—San Francisco* (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, with New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2000), 173, incorrectly represents this building as having been built originally as the eight-story structure that it eventually became.

<sup>88</sup> A *Monograph of the Works of McKim, Mead & White, 1879-1915* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1973 [reissue of 1915 edition in one volume]), plates 295-299; Leland M. Roth, *McKim, Mead & White, Architects* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1983), 304-305. The pre-existing building had been designed by Isaiah Rogers for the Merchants’ Exchange (1836-41) and was later remodeled (1863) by William A. Potter to serve as the U.S. Custom House. The building is a designated New York City Landmark and was rehabilitated as the Regent Wall Street Hotel after CityBank vacated it; see White and Willensky, *AIA Guide to New York, Fourth Ed.*, 17

<sup>89</sup> Sally B. Woodbridge, John M. Woodbridge, and Chuck Byrne, *San Francisco Architecture* (Berkeley, Calif.: Ten Speed Press, 2005), p. 30, also present the historic building as having originally been an eight-story structure rather than a building constructed in two phases. At the time of this guidebook, the building was known as the Embarcadero West, but it has since undergone a change of ownership and a change of name..

planar surface with flat pilasters between window bays, the base and capitals of the pilasters being reduced to incised Classically inspired details. The main entrance is articulated by slightly projecting piers supporting an entablature with bas-relief sculpture by Edgar Walter. The first story at street level has exterior metal grilles at each window, reflecting the securities concerns inherent with any Federal Reserve Bank. This building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, and the FRBSF Los Angeles Branch Bank vacated the building in 1987. The building was rehabilitated as The Reserve Lofts in 2005.<sup>90</sup>

The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia (1931-35, 1940 east wing) by Paul Cret at 921-929 Chestnut Street is of interest since it was designed by the architecture professor under whom William Bain studied while at the University of Pennsylvania. This steel-framed structure with stone cladding has a row of plain square piers with minimally detailed Doric capitals supporting an entablature with projecting cornice embellished with mutules along Chestnut Street. Above the entablature are three additional stories expressed in a more planar manner with a slightly projecting sill connecting the windows of the nine center bays breaking the face of the exterior wall below a simple slightly projecting coping at the parapet. The top of the building was given the impression of an entablature above the upper windows through a narrow belt course of abstracted incised ornament. The main entrance is articulated by panels of bas-relief sculptures in the flanking spaces between the Doric piers immediately adjacent to the entrance. The upper windows, excepting either end bay, have dark spandrels between adjacent vertical windows, giving the stone cladding between the window bays the appearance of plain pilasters. The lower windows between the Doric piers have decorative security grilles. Cret's "superior understanding of proportion in both basic form and detail" allowed him to avoid in his creation of monumental buildings within the Modernized Classical idiom the "bulky works" often produced by his contemporaries.<sup>91</sup> The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. After the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia vacated the building it was rehabilitated for use by Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

Another significant building by Paul Cret from this period is the Federal Reserve Board Building (1935-37) in Washington, D.C., on Constitution Avenue between Twentieth and Twenty-first Streets N.W. Given that the limited design competition for this building occurred during the same year as the initial completion of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, it is not surprising that this building shares considerable detailing with the earlier Philadelphia building. The more expansive site available in the nation's capital allowed the building to be set back from Constitution Avenue with formal landscaping including fountains. The expansive site also allowed the building to be more articulated in its parts. A central entrance pavilion has a projecting portico with four square piers with Doric capitals supporting an entablature ornamented merely with a cornice embellished with dentils and an American eagle sculpture atop the portico at its center. The side wings have windows detailed similar to the upper windows of the Philadelphia building with an attic story having punched windows over the simple projecting cornice. The building reveals the basic tenets of Modernized Classicism that was specifically intended by Adolph C. Miller, Reserve Board representative, and Charles Moore, Fine

<sup>90</sup> For a brief history of the Los Angeles Branch Bank Building, see <http://www.reservelofts.com/history>, accessed on November 2, 2011. John Parkinson had begun his architectural career in Seattle in 1889 before relocating to Los Angeles in 1893.

<sup>91</sup> Quotes from Edward Teitelman and Richard W. Longstreth, *Architecture in Philadelphia: A Guide* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1971), p. 73.

Arts Commission Chair, who agreed that the new building should rely on “conception, proportion, scale and purity of line” rather than “purely decorative or monumental features.”<sup>92</sup> The building is now known as the Eccles Building and is still occupied by the Federal Reserve Board.

In 1935, a series of earthquakes occurred in the Helena area, seriously damaging the first branch bank building, so concurrent with the Federal Reserve Board Building in Washington, DC, a new branch bank was designed and constructed in Helena, Montana, at 400 North Park Avenue. Montana architect George Shanley received the commission to design the replacement Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Helena Branch Bank Building (1935-38; altered); his design was intended to complement that of the concurrent Masonic Library (1936-37) across the street at 425 Park Avenue. In 1945-46, a second story was constructed on top of the still relatively new building.<sup>93</sup> The original one-story building took the general lack of ornament of Modernized Classicism almost to an extreme with virtually the only ornament being plain projecting panels above and below the windows and the vertical fluting on the walls converging to the central main entrance. With the building set back from the street and entrance stairs set between unadorned plinths, the building could easily have passed for any one of the many U.S. Post Office buildings built in the 1930s for smaller cities and towns, except for the vertically oriented metal security grilles at the windows. The second-story addition was stylistically compatible with the original building, while reducing even further the amount of decorative detail. After the FRBM Helena Branch Bank vacated the building for larger quarters, the building was converted to offices and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Helena Historic District.

By the end of World War II, many of the various branches of the Federal Reserve System had experienced significant growth that had been accommodated through the rental of temporary offices. With the end of war, some of the landlords began pressuring their Federal Reserve tenants to vacate their premises. A significant problem facing the Federal Reserve was a provision in the then current Federal Reserve Act that limited construction of branch facilities to \$250,000. During hearings to get the construction limit raised, Marriner S. Eccles, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, specifically mentioned the branches in Portland (Oregon), San Francisco, Los Angeles and Seattle, as needing new or expanded buildings. On July 30, 1947, President Truman signed the legislation that raised the limit to \$10,000,000.<sup>94</sup> Thus the Seattle and Portland buildings were the first new buildings in the Federal Reserve system to be

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<sup>92</sup> Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 210.

<sup>93</sup> For histories of the Helena Branch Bank building, including photographs of the interior and exterior, see <http://www.minneapolisfed.org/about/role/history/helhistory.cfm>, accessed on Oct. 28, 2011, and [http://www.helenahistory.org/financial\\_institutions.htm](http://www.helenahistory.org/financial_institutions.htm), accessed on Nov. 2, 2011. A building plaque for the building identifies the original architect and its inclusion in Helena Historic District.

<sup>94</sup> “Bank’s Building Limit Is Raised,” *Seattle Times*, 30 July 1947, p. 21. Some branches of the Federal Reserve have elected to accommodate growth primarily through rented office space. Once its building at 33 Liberty Street was fully occupied by its own officers and employees, the Federal Reserve Bank has increasingly rented office space in surrounding buildings, no doubt due its desire to avoid a public battle over the high cost of construction in the Borough of Manhattan; see “2 Floors Leased By Reserve Bank,” *New York Times*, 4 September 1941, “Reserve Bank Leases More Space To Care for Expanding Activities,” *New York Times*, 19 September 1942, David W. Dunlap, “Reserve Bank to Make Building Fit Its Name,” *New York Times*, 27 August 1997. It has also on occasion apparently purchased existing buildings as well; see “Federal Reserve To Add 5 Floors,” *New York Times*, 23 August 1944.

constructed after World War II and the first two completely new buildings to adopt a Modern vocabulary.

The FRBSF Portland Branch Bank Building (1947-50) was designed by Pietro Belluschi and located at 915 SW Stark Street. This building has a dark granite cladding at its first story with creamy white marble above on the upper three stories. The site's southerly corner, where the main entrance is located, is acute rather than square and the cladding of the upper stories is continuous along both street frontages with a curved bend at the corner. The upper-story windows are metal-framed, squarish and regularly spaced. (The basic composition of the street facades is very similar to those that Belluschi provided for the Pacific Telephone Company headquarters building (1946-47) nearby at SW Oak Street and Ninth Avenue. At the telephone company headquarters, Belluschi designed only the street facades with the building structure having been designed by the telephone company's staff architects. The telephone building is taller with a narrower frontage on Ninth Avenue, giving this elevation for the upper stories a nearly square appearance, which may have prompted the regularized grid of square, metal-framed windows for the building. Like the FRBSF Portland Branch Bank Building, the stone cladding is dark polished granite at the first story and white Georgia marble on the upper stories.)

The rounded corner of the FRBSF Portland Branch Bank Building is perhaps the building's most distinctive feature. In *Pietro Belluschi: Modern American Architect* Meredith Clausen suggested its source may be the Schlesinger & Mayer (later Carson, Pirie Scott) Store (1899, 1902-03) in Chicago by Louis Sullivan or the Pennsylvania Savings Fund Society (PSFS) Building (1929-32) in Philadelphia by Howe & Lescaze; however, the curved corner of the Chicago building protrudes from the adjacent facades like an attached cylinder. While the curved corner of the PSFS Building of its base structure is perhaps a more cogent precedent, there was an even closer precedent, both in time and geography. This was a remodeled building for the Equitable Savings & Loan Association (1931-32; destroyed) designed by Belluschi as principal architect of A. E. Doyle & Associate.<sup>95</sup> This remodeled building was located at SW Sixth Avenue and Washington Street and featured smooth white Indiana limestone cladding with black granite forming a base for the walls, as well as terminating the parapet and lining the window bays, which gave the building an Art Moderne flair.<sup>96</sup> At the corner was a diagonal entrance with carved swath of limestone connecting the two street facades. The low height of the FRBSF Portland building tends to reinforce the design's association with the former Equitable Savings & Loan Art Moderne remodeling; however, the flush detailing of the FRBSF Portland Branch Bank Building windows gives it a somewhat more Modern appearance. This building was sold to private investors in 2006 who have added a new roof-top penthouse that is relatively unobtrusive, as part of an

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<sup>95</sup> Meredith L. Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi: Modern American Architect* (Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 1994), p. 40.

<sup>96</sup> Richard E. Ritz, *An Architect Looks at Downtown Portland* (Portland, Oregon: The Greenhills Press, 1991), pp. 9-13. Another building with a curved corner that may well have been known to Belluschi was the replacement Crary Building (1941-42; altered) in Seattle, by William H. Fey and Paul Thiry, described earlier in this Landmark nomination. In the early 1940s, Belluschi was involved in several Seattle projects, such as the Harry W. Myers residence (1940-41), and the Church of the People (1945) project so would likely have seen new downtown Seattle buildings; see: Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi*, pp. 108, 141-43.

overall rehabilitation by Hennebery Eddy Architects. The building is now known as the Reserve Building.<sup>97</sup>

This brief review of selected examples of Federal Reserve Bank buildings built prior to or contemporaneously with the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building generally indicates that the design of buildings for the Federal Reserve tended to fall within the mainstream of American architectural design. The buildings invariably included high quality materials and up-to-date building systems, occasionally verging on the sumptuous. While the designs were not *avant garde* or cutting edge, they were also not *retardataire*, unless compared only with the then current most *avant garde* design. Similarly, the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building would be neither *avant garde* nor *retardataire*.

### 5.3 William J. Bain before Naramore, Brady, Bain and Johanson

William James Bain (1896-1985) was born March 27, 1896, in New Westminster, British Columbia.<sup>98</sup> His family moved to Seattle when William was eight. His father was a contractor, so Bain grew up familiar with the practical sides of design and construction. While in high school, he found a position with the Seattle architectural firm Willcox & Sayward, an office doing primarily residential projects. Senior partner W.R.B. Willcox took an interest in young Bain and taught him the basics of drafting and other elements of practice. After military service in World War I, Bain enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating with an architecture degree in 1921. The University's Beaux-Arts curriculum, led by Paul Cret, reinforced design concepts familiar to Bain through his earlier apprenticeships. After a European tour, Bain returned to Seattle where he worked for Willcox again, and then for architect Arthur Loveless, before joining the Los Angeles office of Johnson, Kaufman & Coate. In 1924, he returned to Seattle to open his own architectural practice.

Although the residential architecture field in Seattle was competitive, Bain began to attract clients and he developed a reputation for quality and service, and especially for custom residential design. His homes and apartment buildings in Seattle reflected the variety of architectural idioms popular in the 1920s, as architects drew upon the best examples of the past to address problems in the present. In 1927, Bain received professional accolades: his Joseph Carman Jr. house and his Shoremont Apartments each received a Washington State Chapter AIA Award that year.<sup>99</sup> Over time Bain's

<sup>97</sup> Regarding the recent rehabilitation, see <http://www.chattebox.typepad.com/portlandarchitecture/pietrobelluschi/>, accessed on 4 November 2011

<sup>98</sup> A short summary of the architectural career of William J. Bain, is presented in: Duane A. Dietz, "William J. Bain, Sr.," in *Shaping*, pp. 216-221; however, this account is based on the limited historical and biographical information that was available in the early 1990s and contains some minor errors discovered since *Shaping* was published. An updated version of this essay will appear in the second edition of *Shaping Seattle Architecture* to be published in 2014. A summary of Bain's early career, including his partnerships with Lionel Pries in 1928-31 and 1941, is found in Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator: From Arts & Crafts to Modern Architecture* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2007), pp. 70-93, 129-133.

Other sources include Bain's entries in *American Architects Directory*, George S. Koyl, editor (New York: R.R. Bowker Company for American Institute of Architects, 1956, p. 22; 1962, pp. 28-29. Also see: "Work of William J. Bain, *Architect and Engineer* 146 (Aug. 1941): 16-37; and "William Bain: A Half Century of Seattle Architecture," *DJC*, Dec. 3, 1980, p. 7. Bain's obituary appeared in *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 23 Jan. 1985, p. D2, and *Seattle Times*, Jan. 23, 1985, p. F3.

<sup>99</sup> Originally there was only one chapter of the American Institute of Architects in Washington State; it was called the Washington Chapter. Over time architects in various sections of the state created

engaging manner, good design, and attention to all aspects of each project proved successful and he began to win larger commissions, including retail, commercial and even industrial buildings such as the City Ice & Cold Storage warehouse (1926-27; altered; now Ballard Hardware).<sup>100</sup>

In 1928, Bain entered a partnership with Lionel H. Pries (1897-1968), whom he had met at Penn. This partnership endured until 1931, but could not survive the cessation of construction during the Depression. In late 1931, after more than a year with almost no work, the partnership dissolved.<sup>101</sup>

Thereafter, Bain practiced as a sole proprietor, gradually rebuilding his firm and emerging as a leader in Seattle architecture by the late 1930s. In this period, Bain's work began to develop in a more modern direction. Bain's willingness to embrace new idioms was evident as early as 1930, in projects such as the Bel-Roy Apartments (1930-31) in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood.<sup>102</sup> Because this building was designed and built for a Bain family partnership, William Bain no doubt took a lead role, yet Lionel Pries must also have contributed. The detailing of brick and concrete is fairly simple reflecting the impact of the Depression, but quality is achieved in the excellent planning with through ventilation in almost all units and large steel windows. Exterior detailing is basic, with motifs drawn from the Art Deco.<sup>103</sup>

Bain's interest in finding ways to make housing more affordable for purchasers is also apparent in his project for the "Prudence Penny Budget House," a demonstration project in Normandy Park (1930). Although a project of the Bain & Pries firm, its design was credited specifically to Bain when *Pacific Builder and Engineer* reported on the project in June 1930.<sup>104</sup>

Bain's willingness to experiment with new approaches continued in the later 1930s as his practice recovered. In June 1936, the *Daily Journal of Commerce* described his Dorsey/Loughray residence (1936-37; altered), in the Washington Park neighborhood of Seattle, as "a new type of residence" and identified the materials as concrete block,

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independent chapters. Finally, in 1961, the name of the Washington Chapter was changed to the Seattle Chapter to reflect its actual geographic reach. Today this chapter is called AIA Seattle.

The essay on William J. Bain in *Shaping* credits part of the Shoremont Apartment complex to Bain & Pries; this attribution is incorrect as the Shoremont was a Bain design completed before the Bain & Pries partnership was formed in 1928.

<sup>100</sup> "Building Permits over \$1000 Issued Yesterday," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Sept. 10, 1926, p. 4 (permit list includes City Ice and Cold Storage Co. warehouse designed by William Bain).

<sup>101</sup> For Bain & Pries, see: Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries*, 2007-, pp. 70-93, 129-133.

<sup>102</sup> The Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board voted to designate the Bel-Roy Apartments as a Seattle Landmark on Oct. 6, 2010. The Board found that the Bel-Roy met three of the criteria in the Landmarks ordinance:

- d) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or a method of construction;
- e) It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder;
- f) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.

<sup>103</sup> For the Bel-Roy Apartments, see: Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries*, pp. 82-83; also see: Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, "The Future of the Bel-Roy," *Arcade* 29/2 (Winter 2010): 13.

<sup>104</sup> "A Home of *Western Woods* for Normandy Park, Seattle," *Pacific Builder and Engineer* 36 (21 June 1930): 15.

concrete floors and reinforced concrete joists.<sup>105</sup> Photos of the house show a design reflecting the streamline idiom of the Art Deco mode, an unusual choice for a Seattle residence in the period.<sup>106</sup> In October 1938, the *Daily Journal of Commerce* described his Ralph Stewart residence, on West 125th Street, as a “California ranch house.”<sup>107</sup> The house was a single-story structure with a shallow sloped roof, spreading over the site. The modernity of the design was reflected in the metal pipe columns supporting the roof overhang (although the house also included shutters, a link to tradition). Overall, Bain’s work in this period gradually became modern—historical details disappeared and the houses become more simply detailed. As always, Bain paid close attention to client needs and his houses are always comfortable and functional. Bain was not radically modern, but he was never *retardataire*. He embraced architectural modernity as it developed, always seeking what was best for his clients.

The success of Bain’s approach and the widespread respect for his abilities as an architect, were reflected in his selection as a participant in the joint venture, headed by J. Lister Holmes, to design Seattle’s first public housing project. After the federal government passed legislation to support public housing as part of the New Deal, no single Seattle architectural firm was large enough to take on the first public housing project, Yesler Terrace (1939-43; altered; substantial portions to be demolished). Thus, J. Lister Holmes brought together Bain, William Aitken, George Willington Stoddard, and John T. Jacobsen to design the project and produce the construction documents. Each architect maintained his independent practice, but together they also created a joint venture office. Yesler Terrace moved forward from October 1939 to construction beginning in 1941. Articles describing the project regularly appeared in the local press.<sup>108</sup>

The full story of Yesler Terrace is beyond this report, but the project is particularly interesting for the modernity of its design. Yesler Terrace proved significant enough that it was covered by the national architectural journal *Pencil Points* (predecessor to *Progressive Architecture*) in November 1941.<sup>109</sup> The project was notable for its emphasis on horizontality, the relatively flush siding, the clustered windows with narrow trim, the cantilevered flat roofs and cantilevered overhangs above the entry doors. These design features suggest an awareness of the Modern idiom that had been developed by William Wurster in California in the 1930s and that was being applied by Wurster to low cost housing projects in the Bay Area.<sup>110</sup> Yesler Terrace was planned to

<sup>105</sup> “New Type Residence Planned by Architect,” *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, June 4, 1936, p. 1. “Seattle Building Permits Over \$1,000—Wednesday, July 22,” *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, July 23, 1936, p. 4; “Concrete Floor Plan Gaining In Popularity,” *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, April 9, 1937, p. 4. The initial building intelligence for this house listed Mrs. Elias E. Dorsey, wife of a lawyer, as the owner/client, as did the building permit; however, while the house was under construction, the article of April 9, 1937, identified the owner of the house as Jack B. Loughray, assistant sales manager for Superior Portland Cement, who actually occupied the house with his wife, Thyra S. Loughray.

<sup>106</sup> Sadly later alterations have concealed the original character of this design.

<sup>107</sup> “Contract Let for Residence,” *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 22, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>108</sup> *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 3 Oct 1939, p. 1; 5 Dec 1939; 3 Oct. 1940 [site clearing]; 18 Oct. 1940 [“Yesler Terrace” name chosen]; 8 Nov. 1940 [bidding]; 3 Dec. 1940 project enlarged]; 14 Jan. 1941 [re-bid]; 30 Jan. 1941 [bid award recommended]; 1 Mar. 1941 [permits], 5 May 1941 [additional units]; 3 Oct. 41 [Community Building]; 29 Nov. 41 [enlargement]; 25 Nov. 1941 [community building permit]; 12 Feb. 1942 [demolition]; 18 Feb. 1942 [apartments]; 18 Mar. 1942 [more apartments and laundries]; 11 Jun. 1942 [bonds]; 8 Jun. 1943 [Child Service Center].

<sup>109</sup> J. Lister Holmes, “Yesler Terrace Housing,” *Pencil Points* 22/11 (Nov. 1941), 684-689.

<sup>110</sup> See *An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster*, edited by Marc Trieb (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1995).

serve as low cost public housing, but by the time it was completed in 1943, it served to provide housing for defense workers.

Bain's rise to leadership among Seattle architects is reflected in his selection as Washington State AIA Chapter President from 1941 to 1943, and his election as a Fellow of the AIA in 1947.<sup>111</sup> His local stature was also recognized when he was named Camouflage Director for the State of Washington in early 1942. One of his well-known projects in this role took place at the Boeing Assembly Plant in Seattle, where the roof was camouflaged to look like a residential neighborhood from the air.<sup>112</sup>

During World War II, Seattle became a major manufacturing center for war industries. The growth in production led to an extraordinary influx of workers, which, in turn, produced a need for housing. While all construction not related to the war effort effectively ceased, the demand for housing (and related facilities like schools) kept local architects extremely busy. Since no single Seattle architectural firm could handle the demand, the joint venture process that produced Yesler Terrace became the model for Seattle architectural practice during the war years. From 1941 to 1945, Seattle architects entered into a bewildering array of joint ventures. While most such joint ventures were short-lived, one of these joint ventures gave rise to the long-term architectural practice, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson.

#### **5.4 Naramore, Bain, Brady and Johanson, 1943-50**

Formed in 1943, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson (later: The NBBJ Group; today: NBBJ) quickly became one of the city's leading design firms after the end of World War II. They rapidly became one of the dominant architectural practices in Seattle, as evidenced by their participation in four large public commissions and numerous smaller projects in that period. This firm has continued to hold a leading position since that time. The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building is one of the key works in their rise and it is one of the earliest surviving works by the then new firm of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson. Today, the successor firm has offices around the world and is ranked as one of the largest architectural firms globally.

Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was initially formed as a World War II joint-venture practice. During the War, Seattle architects routinely formed joint ventures to take on projects for military installations, factories, and housing for war workers and their families.

Even before World War II began, the model of architectural joint ventures for large housing projects, first tested at Yesler Terrace, was adopted by other Seattle architects. The *Daily Journal of Commerce* lists an extraordinary number of such partnerships in the years from 1940 through early 1945. Selected examples include (this is only a partial list): housing in Bremerton by Naramore, & Brady, Thomas, Grainger & Thomas, and

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<sup>111</sup> For Bain's Fellowship in the AIA, see: *American Institute of Architects College of Fellows: A History and Directory of the College* (Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects Press, 1996), pp. 57 (alphabetical listing), 180 (chronological listing). In addition, Washington Governor Arthur Langlie named Bain to the State Board of Architectural Examiners in July 1953. By 1956, Bain held the position of chairman of this board. See: Anthony Dodoye-Alali, "William Bain: A Half Century of Seattle Architecture," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 3 December 1980, p. 7.

<sup>112</sup> For Bain's involvement in camouflage, see: Dietz, "William J. Bain, Sr.," *Shaping*, pp. 219, 220; Ochsner, *Lionel H. Pries*, pp. 175, 177.

Smith, Carroll & Johanson;<sup>113</sup> housing at Sand Point by Graham & Painter and B. Marcus Priteca;<sup>114</sup> housing on Beacon Hill (later named Rainier Vista) by B. Marcus Priteca and A. M. Young;<sup>115</sup> housing in West Seattle by J. Lister Holmes and John Paul Jones;<sup>116</sup> housing on Empire Way (later named Holly Park; destroyed) by John Paul Jones, Frederick Ahlson, and Paul Thiry;<sup>117</sup> Stewart Heights housing in Kirkland by Earl W. Morrison and John T. Jacobsen;<sup>118</sup> Port Orchard housing by Jones, Bouillon, Thiry and Sylliasen;<sup>119</sup> more West Seattle (later named High Point) housing by Stuart, Kirk, & Durham;<sup>120</sup> housing in Georgetown by Jones, Thiry, and Shay;<sup>121</sup> dormitory housing in Bremerton by Grainger, Bain, Brady & Johanson;<sup>122</sup> apartment housing on Empire Way, Yesler Way and 32nd Avenue S. by Bain and Griffin;<sup>123</sup> housing in Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska, by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson;<sup>124</sup> and housing on the East Magnolia Bluff by Jones, Bouillon, Thiry and Sylliasen.<sup>125</sup>

Joint ventures were also used for other projects such as schools and hospitals: Rainier Vista School by Holmes and Bain;<sup>126</sup> High Point School by Stuart, Kirk, and Durham;<sup>127</sup> Duwamish Road School by Jones, Bouillon, Thiry and Shay;<sup>128</sup> and Kennewick Hospital by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson.<sup>129</sup>

Simultaneously, however, the architects often kept their individual firm identities as well. Thus, for example, Naramore & Brady, who had been in partnership since 1941 (see below) were responsible for the Bremerton Junior High School and for the Bremerton Hospital.<sup>130</sup>

By late 1944, war-related construction began to wind down. On Oct. 12, 1944, the *Daily Journal of Commerce* reported that few "War Priorities" were left for housing in

<sup>113</sup> "Seattle Architects Retained on Two Housing Developments," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Aug. 15, 1940, p.1; "Seattle Concern Figures Low for Bremerton Housing Units," Nov. 14, 1940, p. 1, 3.

<sup>114</sup> "Seattle Architects Retained on Two Housing Developments," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Aug. 15, 1940; "Bids Due today for Sand Point Housing Units," Nov. 1, 1940, pp. 1, 3; "Work to Begin on Sand Point Housing Units," Nov. 25, 1940, p. 1, 8.

<sup>115</sup> "Bids to be Asked Next Month for \$1,500,000 Housing Project," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, July 5, 1941, p. 1; "\$1,704,000 Low for Rainier Vista Homes," Aug. 19, 1941, p. 1; "First Contract Placed for Rainier Vista Homes," Sept. 25, 1941, p.1.

<sup>116</sup> "West Seattle Housing Figures Asked," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 9, 1941, p. 1, 3.

<sup>117</sup> "\$3,095,865 Low for Housing," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Feb. 21, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>118</sup> "Builders Given Kirkland Housing Plans," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Nov. 10, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>119</sup> "\$8,000,000 Housing Contract Negotiated," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Nov. 19, 1942, p. 1; "Port Orchard Housing Plans Well Under Way," Apr. 21, 1943, p. 1.

<sup>120</sup> "Seattle Housing Bids will be Called," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 12, 1943, p. 1, 3.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> "Figures Asked for Housing Developments," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 27, 1943, p. 1.

<sup>123</sup> "Seattle Building Permits over \$1000," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, July 14, 1943, p. 3 [permits list].

<sup>124</sup> "Anchorage-Fairbanks Projects Draw Widely Varied Proposals," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, March 11, 1944, pp 1, 3; "Housing Jobs in Alaska Go to Two Firms," March 21, 1944, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>125</sup> "\$384,900 Bid Offered on FHPA East Magnolia 130-unit Work," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Nov. 16, 1944, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>126</sup> "Architects Named for Five School Building Projects," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Aug. 26, 1943, p. 1.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> "New Kennewick Hospital Recommended," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Feb. 21, 1944, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>130</sup> "Bremerton Considers Bids for Junior High School, Calls Figures for Two Other Buildings," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 17, 1942, pp. 1, 3; "Fund Increased for Hospital at Bremerton," Nov. 21, 1942. p. 1.

Washington--in other words, the available units were finally catching up to demand.<sup>131</sup> Many of the new housing project announcements renovations rather than new construction.

That Floyd Naramore, William J. Bain, Clifton Brady and Perry Johanson formed a successful joint venture during the war was not unusual. However, few wartime joint ventures survived; thus, the continuation of the Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson partnership was quite unusual.

The partners who formed Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, would later speak to their compatible personalities as a basis for staying together once the war ended. However, it is also true that the partners brought complementary backgrounds and together they could win commissions that none of them were likely to be able to secure individually.

Floyd Naramore (1879-1970) was the oldest of the four partners.<sup>132</sup> He began his career studying engineering at the University of Wisconsin and subsequently received his architecture degree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1907. In 1912 he accepted appointment to the position of Architect and Superintendent of properties for the Portland School system. He accepted appointment as the architect for the Seattle School District in 1919, a time when the district was facing significant enrollment increases and needed many new buildings. During the next twelve years he was responsible for design and supervision of the construction of about twenty schools. After his position with the district ended, Naramore partnered with Arrigo M. Young in Naramore & Young. Their notable projects included the Bellingham High School (completed 1938) and the Seattle Armory (completed 1939; altered, now Center House, Seattle Center), both using reinforced concrete construction. When Young left, Naramore took Clifton Brady into partnership forming Naramore & Brady.

The third partner, Clifton Brady (1894-1963), received his architectural degree from Iowa State College in 1917.<sup>133</sup> He arrived in Seattle in 1927 and went to work for Floyd Naramore. From 1933 to 1938, during the depth of the Depression, he served as Washington State Examiner in charge of architectural licensing. In 1939 he rejoined Naramore in the firm Naramore & Young. In 1941, the firm became Naramore & Brady after Young entered into new partnership with Stephen Richardson forming Young & Richardson.

The fourth partner, Perry B. Johanson (1910-1981), was also the youngest.<sup>134</sup> Johanson was born in Colorado, but studied architecture at the University of Washington receiving his degree in 1934; he also won the AIA Medal, given to the top student in each year's graduating class. Johanson joined the partnership Smith & Carroll in 1934 and was advanced to partnership in 1936 when the firm was renamed Smith, Carroll & Johanson.

<sup>131</sup> "Few War Housing Priorities Left," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 12, 1944., pp. 1, 3.

<sup>132</sup> For information about Floyd Naramore, see: Duane Dietz, "Floyd A. Naramore," *Shaping*, 198-203. An updated version of this essay will appear in the second edition of *Shaping Seattle Architecture* to be published in 2014. Also see: Naramore's entries in *American Architects Directory*, 1956, p. 400; 1962, p. 508. Obituaries are found in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Oct. 31, 1970, and the *Seattle Times*, Oct. 30, 1970.

<sup>133</sup> For brief information about Clifton Brady, see "Brady, Clifton," *Shaping*, p. 339; and Brady's entries in *American Architects Directory*, 1956, p. 59; 1962, p. 74.

<sup>134</sup> For brief information about Perry Johanson, see "Johanson, Perry Bertil," *Shaping*, p. 346; and Johanson's entries in *American Architects Directory*, 1956, p. 276; 1962, p. 350.

The work of this firm has not been researched, but it appears to have been primarily residential and small institutional buildings. During World War II, Smith Carroll & Johanson suspended operations, but resumed in October 1945.<sup>135</sup>

To the Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson partnership Floyd Naramore and Clifton Brady both brought extensive experience in school construction and had managerial experience handling multiple school projects simultaneously, including out-of-Seattle projects. William Bain and Perry Johanson had strong educational background in design. Bain had won design awards, and had developed a reputation for his engaging manner and the quality of his service to clients. Bain's pre-war practice had received commissions from members of the emerging upper middle class who would move into positions of leadership in Seattle after 1945. Clarence Shaw, manager of the Seattle Branch of the FRBSF in the late 1940s,<sup>136</sup> is just one example of a Bain pre-war client who moved into a position of leadership in the 1940s and/or 1950s. Johanson brought a younger perspective. As a partner in Smith, Carroll & Johanson, he developed an interest in hospital design, and in the later 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, he frequently served as the lead partner on many of the medical projects of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson.<sup>137</sup>

The regard in which the partners of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, were held by their professional colleagues is reflected in their successive service as president of the Washington State Chapter of the AIA (which became the Seattle Chapter in 1961): Naramore served as president in 1939-40; Bain in 1941-43; Brady in 1947-48; and Johanson in 1950-51.<sup>138</sup> In addition, three of the partners were elected Fellows in the AIA: Naramore in 1935; Bain in 1947; and Johanson in 1960.<sup>139</sup>

Another reason Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson likely survived is the early success the firm had in winning commissions. Histories of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson list 1943 as the year in which the firm was founded. Research in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* shows the partners actually worked in various combinations with each other before late 1943, but in late 1943 the four must have decided to combine forces because the *Daily Journal of Commerce* first lists a commission to Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson on January 20, 1944.<sup>140</sup> Examples of projects published in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* between January 1944 and August 1945--the end of the war--include the following projects by the partnership:

<sup>135</sup> For the reopening of Smith, Carroll & Johanson, see: "Architectural Firm Reopens Offices Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 18 Oct. 1945, p. 1.

<sup>136</sup> Shaw's tenure as manager ended by death on March 20, 1950; see "Federal Reserve Bank Here Gets New Manager," *Seattle Times*, June 1, 1950, p. 10.

<sup>137</sup> One example of Smith, Carroll & Johanson medical work in which Perry Johanson was deeply involved was an addition to Swedish Hospital; see: "\$60,000 Wing To Be Added To Hospital," *Seattle Times*, March 4, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> For the service of each partner as local AIA president, see: *American Architects Directory*, 1962, pp. 28-29 (Bain), 74 (Brady), 350 (Johanson), 508 (Naramore).

<sup>139</sup> For the AIA Fellowship of Naramore, Bain and Johanson, see: *American Institute of Architects College of Fellows: A History and Directory of the College* (1996): alphabetical: 57 (Bain), 104 (Johanson), 125 (Naramore); chronological: 178 (Naramore), 180 (Bain); 185 (Johanson).

<sup>140</sup> "Plans Advance For 210 More Housing Units," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 20, 1944, pp. 1, 3.

**1944**

Jan. 20	Housing at Prosser, 60 units
Feb. 21	USO building reconstruction in Olympia Kennewick Hospital
Mar. 11	Housing in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Alaska
Mar. 17	Demountable housing, Bremerton, renovation, 300 units
May 25	WAVES barracks, Naval Air Station, Seattle
Oct. 12	Housing at Pasco, 115 units
Oct. 25	Nurses home at Swedish Hospital, Seattle
Dec. 2	White Center Assembly of God Church, Seattle Loyal Heights School Annex, Seattle

**1945**

Jan. 23	Bremerton dormitories, 576 units
Feb. 27	AM Castle Steel distribution warehouse on Marginal Way, Seattle
Mar. 1	Bremerton schools, additions Hospital, Oak Harbor
Mar. 22	King County Central Blood Bank, Seattle
Apr. 6	Office building at Anchorage, Alaska

Note: This list indicates the first date a project was listed in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* connected to Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson. A more complete list of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson projects mentioned in the *Daily Journal of Commerce*, with a more complete list of citations for each project, is available from the authors of this report.

After the war ended, Naramore Bain Brady & Johanson continued. The partnership agreement allowed the partners to resume their previous individual practices as well. Smith, Carroll & Johanson reopened in mid-October 1945.<sup>141</sup> That firm would survive until the early 1950s. Bain also maintained his separate practice, which, by 1945, was called William J. Bain & Associates., The thrust of this practice was primarily residential. Restrictions on construction of single-family housing had begun to be lifted in October 1944, although complete relaxation of wartime controls on materials did take place until 1946.<sup>142</sup> Custom single-family residential projects by William J. Bain (& Associates) reappeared in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* in May 1945.<sup>143</sup> Bain & Associates also soon received a few non-residential projects such as the Ballard Hudson dealership (1945-46; altered) and the Fentron Steel Works (1945-46; destroyed), also located in Ballard.<sup>144</sup> By January 1946, Bain had restructured his practice as the new partnership, Bain, Overturf & Turner as a means of promoting two employees and recognizing their contributions to the firm.<sup>145</sup> Bain would be a partner in both firms (Naramore, Bain,

<sup>141</sup> For the resumption of practice by Smith, Carroll & Johanson, see: "Architectural Firm Reopens Offices Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Oct. 18, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>142</sup> "Restrictions Lifted on Homebuilding," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 18 Oct. 1944, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>143</sup> For the first residences by William J. Bain & Associates in the postwar era, see: "Building Briefs--Residence Planned Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, May 23, 1945, p. 3 (3315 W. 80th Street); "Building Briefs--Residence Planned," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, July 31, 1945, p. 3 (3434 Laurelhurst Drive).

<sup>144</sup> For the Ballard-Hudson dealership, see "Seattle Building Permits Over \$1,000--Tuesday, January 29," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 30, 1946, p. 2. For the Fentron Steel works plant, see "Steel Plant Subcontract Bid Call Set," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 24, 1946, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>145</sup> "New Architectural Organization Formed," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 16, 1946, pp. 1, 2. Bain, Overturf, Turner & Associates will replace William J. Bain & Associates. For the first buildings by

Brady & Johanson and Bain, Overturf & Turner) for the next decade. However, Floyd Naramore and Clifton Brady chose to give up their separate partnership; in December 1945, once the continuation of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was assured, the *Daily Journal of Commerce* announced that Naramore & Brady had merged with Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson.<sup>146</sup>

The success of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson is evident in the string of architectural commissions they secured over the five years and five months from the end of World War II (August 1945) through the end of 1950. Examples of new projects by Naramore Bain, Brady & Johanson listed in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* include:

#### 1945

- Sep. 6 American Legion Foundation, University Street, Seattle
- Sep. 6, Oct. 5 Public Safety Building, Seattle [Young & Richardson and B. Marcus Priteca, associate architects]
- Oct. 6 Doctors' clinic, Boylston Street, Seattle

#### 1946

- Jan. 24 Greenlake Church of United Brethren in Christ, Seattle
- Apr. 19 Broadway Medical Center, Seattle
- Apr. 27 University of Washington Medical Center, Health Science complex, Seattle [McClelland & Jones, associate architects; Bebb & Jones, supervising architects]
- June 8 Veterans Hospital, Beacon Hill, Seattle
- Dec. 10 J. R. Hechman Co. motion picture theater, Ketchikan, Alaska

#### 1947

- Jan. 7 Gymnasiums at four Seattle High Schools
- Mar. 19 East Wing expansion, Swedish Hospital, Seattle
- Apr. 5 **Federal Reserve Branch Bank, Seattle**
- July 24 Blessed Sacrament residence addition, Seattle
- Nov. 1 S. L. Savage Auto Sales, Seattle
- Holy Rosary parish faculty residence, Seattle

#### 1948

- Feb. 12 Washington Mutual Bank, remodel for West Seattle branch
- July 23 Boeing Shopping Center, Aurora Avenue N., 155th to 160th

#### 1949

- Aug. 31 Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson office building, Seattle
- Nov. 21 Mercer Island School, Mercer Island
- Nov. 26 Friends Church, 15th Avenue NE, Seattle

#### 1950

- Feb. 24 Wenatchee School, Wenatchee
- July 19 Greystone Concrete Products building addition, Seattle

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Bain, Overturf & Turner, see: "Architects Plan Alaska construction," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Feb. 5, 1946, p. 1.

<sup>146</sup> For merger of Naramore & Brady with Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, see: "Architectural Firms will Combine Offices," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Dec. 15, 1945, p. 1.

Note: This list indicates the first time a project was listed in the *Daily Journal of Commerce* connected to Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson. A more complete list of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson projects mentioned in the *Daily Journal of Commerce*, with a more complete list of citations for each project, is available from the authors of this report.

Although just a few years old, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson emerged as one of the dominant architectural practices in Seattle in the years after 1945. Information found in NBBJ firm records indicates that Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson maintained a staff (including the partners) of twenty-five from 1945 to 1949; in 1950, the staff size increased to 30. Although by today's standards a firm of this size is not unusual, in the period 1945-50, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was one of the largest architectural practices in Seattle.<sup>147</sup>

The pre-eminence of the firm is shown by their securing four large public commissions, the Public Safety Building, the Federal Reserve Branch Bank, the Veterans Hospital, and the University of Washington Health Sciences Complex and Medical Center. The Public Safety Building and the Federal Reserve Branch Bank were the only large new free-standing downtown buildings constructed in these years. The University of Washington underwent a major expansion and commissioned numerous buildings between 1944 and 1950; the Health Sciences Complex, and later the adjacent Medical Center, was the largest and most complex of the new university buildings. Further, in an era when most architecture practices were small, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson was a firm of about 25 throughout the late 1940s.

Three new downtown buildings by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson were particularly important because of their visibility. As discussed previously (in Section 5.1 above) there had been little substantial free-standing construction in downtown Seattle since the completion of the Federal Office Building, by James A. Wetmore, in 1933, with the exception of the Federal Courthouse, by Louis A. Simon (with Gilbert Stanley Underwood), completed in 1940.<sup>148</sup> The last substantial downtown building by a Seattle-based architect was the Exchange Building, by John Graham, completed in 1931. Thus, the Veterans Center/American Legion Memorial Building, Public Safety Building and the Federal Reserve Branch Bank were the only three substantial entirely new buildings constructed in downtown between 1940 and the early 1950s, and the only sizable completely new downtown buildings by a Seattle-based firm in over fifteen years. The only other large projects in these years were the previously discussed vertical expansion of the Frederick & Nelson Department Store, by John Graham [Jr.] (with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill), begun in 1944 and completed by 1953, and the eastern addition of the Medical & Dental Building (1949-50) by William H. Fey, staff architect of the Metropolitan Building Company.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Information provided by NBBJ, February 2012. The only other Seattle architectural firm likely of comparable size in the early postwar years was the office headed by John Graham, Jr.

<sup>148</sup> *Shaping*, 357 (Federal Office Building, 1933; Federal Courthouse, 1940).

<sup>149</sup> For the addition to Frederick & Nelson, see: "F. & N. Plans \$5,000,000 Expansion," *Seattle Times*, 17 Feb. 1946, pages 1, 4; "Frederick & Nelson Expansion Work Expected To Cost \$5,500,000," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Feb. 18, 1946, p. 1, 3; "\$3,000,000 Store Permit Issued Here," *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Sept. 1946, p. 1; "\$10,000,000 Expansion Program Is Complete at Frederick & Nelson Store," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 3, 1952, p. 26.

When each of the four original principals of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson provided biographical information for the *American Architects Directory*, edited by George S. Koyl, published in 1956 (but compiled in 1955), each included the Federal Reserve Bank project in Seattle as an example of his work.<sup>150</sup> When the *American Architects Directory* was updated in 1962, Naramore, Brady, and Johanson again included the Federal Reserve Bank in Seattle among their representative projects, while Bain listed no projects before 1954.<sup>151</sup> These listings are important for several reasons. There were many projects that were available to each partner of the firm in both 1955 and even more in 1962, yet each of the partners thought this building was one of their outstanding buildings even more than a decade after its completion. Further, each of the four partners listed the building in 1955, and only Bain failed to include the building in 1962 when he listed no buildings before 1954. Thus, all four of the partners took credit for the building. Evidence shows that Bain was the primary partner in charge, but the *American Architects Directory* listing indicates clearly that every one of the four partners thought he played a significant enough role in the development of the project to include it in his own individual listing.

As the Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson firm enjoyed increasing success in the years after 1945, they took on additional partners, assuring the continuation of the firm once the founding partners retired. Relative to the Seattle Branch Bank building of the FRBSF, a fifth architect at Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, Eric C. Rising, must be included. He worked on many of the important early buildings of the firm including both the Public Safety Building, Seattle (1945-51; destroyed) and the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, for which he served as project architect.<sup>152</sup>

Rising's initials appear on more of the working drawings for the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building than any other person at Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson including Bain, although Bain's architectural stamp occurs on most, if not all, of the working drawings.<sup>153</sup> Rising became a partner in the firm in 1960. He included the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building on his list of projects in the 1962 *American Architects Directory*.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>150</sup> *American Architects Directory*, George S. Koyl, editor (New York: R.R. Bowker Company for American Institute of Architects, 1956), pp. 22 (Bain), 59 (Brady), 276 (Johanson), 400 (Naramore).

<sup>151</sup> *American Architects Directory*, George S. Koyl, editor (New York: R.R. Bowker Company for American Institute of Architects, 1962), pp. 28-29 (Bain), 74 (Brady), 350 (Johanson), 508 (Naramore).

<sup>152</sup> *American Architects Directory*, George S. Koyl, editor (New York: R.R. Bowker Company for American Institute of Architects, 1962), 589. Later projects on which Rising worked include I. Magnin & Company store, Seattle (1952-54, with Welton Becket & Associates; altered), Boeing Preflight Facility, Moses Lake (1954-55), and the Washington Building (now Puget Sound Plaza), Seattle (1957-60; altered).

<sup>153</sup> A check of the permit drawings at the Department of Planning & Development (DPD) of the City of Seattle indicates that Rising's initials are on most of the architectural drawings indicating that he checked the drawings. Bain's initials are on some of the drawings, but not as many as Rising. As the drawings were not microfiched in a consistent sequence, a check of every single drawing was not feasible.

<sup>154</sup> *American Architects Directory*, 1962, p. 589 (Rising). Eric C. (9/1892-11/18/1987) was born in Stockholm, Sweden. He studied at the Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York, 1915, and the John Huntington Polytechnical Institute, Cleveland, Ohio, 1920. He was in private practice in 1929-34, and later was employed by the Progress Works Administration (1934-40). Rising joined Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson in 1944 and was made a partner in 1960. At NBBJ, he was involved with the Public Safety Building, Seattle (1945-51), Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch, Seattle (1949-52), I. Magnin & Company Store, Seattle (1952-54), Boeing Preflight Facility, Moses Lake, Washington (1954-55), Washington Building (now Puget Sound Plaza)/U.S. Post Office, Seattle (1957-60), Pacific War Memorial, Corregidor, Philippines (1957-68), International Air Terminal, Agana, Guam (1968). He retired in 1979.

The inclusion of the Federal Reserve Bank by each original partner, and by E. C. Rising, is a reminder of the collaborative character of architectural practice. Although the lay public routinely credits the design of buildings to single individuals, anyone familiar with architectural practice, and with the complexities of realizing large buildings, understands that buildings are produced by teamwork with many participants. This kind of teamwork was no doubt true of the projects in the Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson office, especially in the early years of the firm when the success of each project was crucial to building the firm's reputation and demonstrating its ability to realize large projects for multiple clients.

The FRBSF Seattle Branch building likely benefited from having Bain serve as partner in charge at Naramore Bain, Brady & Johanson. Bain's prior contacts with Shaw likely aided in the firm's securing the project initially, and Bain took responsibility for all client coordination and communication. But Bain was not only a partner in Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson; in 1945 he resumed accepting residential clients under his own name and after February 1946, he was the lead partner in his residential practice, Bain, Overturf, & Turner. Bain was the Bain, Overturf & Turner partner who had the reputation as a residential designer as well as over twenty years of practice in residential architecture. Bain was likely responsible for securing most of that firm's residential projects, at least initially, and he likely served as the primary contact for many of that firm's residential clients. Given Bain's deep involvement in two firms, it should not be a surprise that he depended on his partners and staff to carry out many of the tasks necessary to realize all the buildings for which he served as partner-in-charge. Further, the likelihood that all NBBJ partners played a role in developing the Federal Reserve Seattle Branch Bank building design is reflected in the December 20, 1948, FRBSF memorandum "Conference with Architects at Seattle," which summarizes discussions that took place over December 13, 14 and 15, 1948, with Bain, Naramore and Brady all in attendance.<sup>155</sup> As mentioned previously, Bain and Naramore attended the bid opening, as did project architect Rising.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>155</sup> "Memorandum: Conference with Architects at Seattle," Dec. 20, 1948, summarizes discussions that took place over December 13, 14 and 15, 1948, with William Bain, Floyd Naramore and Clifton Brady in attendance; FRBSF archives.

<sup>156</sup> A check of the FRB Seattle Branch Bank drawings at the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) of the City of Seattle indicates that Eric C. Rising's initials are on most of the architectural drawings indicating that he checked the drawings. Eric C. Rising joined NBBJ in 1944 and was made a partner in 1960. His listing in 1962 in the *American Architects Directory* included the FRB Seattle Branch Bank as one of his projects, as well as the Public Safety Building.

Bain's initials are on some of the FRB drawings, but not as many as Rising. A.E.H. and F.J.G. also checked the architectural drawings. A.E.H. was Albert Ernest Hennessy, who (according to the city directories) was an employee of Smith, Carroll & Johanson during the design of the FRB, but in his 1962 *American Architects Directory* listing he indicated that he joined NBBJ in 1947. F.J.G. remains unidentified.

Bain's architectural stamp appears to be on all the architectural drawings (drawings were not microfiched in consistent sequence so a check of every single drawing was not made).

All of the architectural drawings appear to be dated Jan. 15, 1949. There were four identifiable revisions to the building design after it was permitted. Revision 1 (R-1; dated May 23, 1949) consisted of structural revisions to upgrade the seismic resistance of the building. R-3 (date unreadable) was a clarification of the placement of concrete reinforcement for the internal stairs. R-4 (dated Oct. 18, 1949) and was a structural drawing for the ground-floor framing of the truck entrance. RX-1 (dated Oct. 28, 1949) was a canopy roof for the truck entrance, which was stamped by George Runciman (structural engineer) only. This was the only revision that would have affected the exterior appearance of the building, but it is on the alley side and it is doubtful that many people ever notice it.

It takes nothing away from the stature of William Bain, or indeed from any of the partners of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, to see them as a group of interacting individuals who together, along with their staff, contributed to the work credited to the firm. This understanding of architectural practice is more realistic and much more in keeping with the collaborative character of large firm architectural firm operations in the mid-twentieth century.

In September 1950, *Progressive Architecture* devoted one of its occasional "case study" features (subtitled "The Architect and His Community") to Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, describing the practice in general terms and providing a detailed discussion of several projects over about a dozen pages.<sup>157</sup> How or why the firm received this recognition cannot be determined, but no doubt the success of the firm in producing a variety of large Modern buildings made it stand out. The profile emphasized the collaborative character of the practice, describing the firm as undepartmentalized, but also noting that the partners did bring varied experience and skills—Naramore in schools, Bain in general design, Brady in contracts and other paperwork, and Johanson in hospitals. In that article the partners described the firm's philosophy as one of designing buildings that were "straightforward, functional, economical [and] imaginative," but added, "the philosophy of any architect can only be expressed in his building. . . . The success of a building is probably as great as the need of explanation is small." Many years later, towards the end of his life, Bain would reflect on his career and on Seattle architecture in particular, which he characterized as solid and permanent. "*We design our buildings to last for a long time,*" Bain told a reporter a few years before his death in 1985.<sup>158</sup>

Although *Progressive Architecture* reported no statement by the partners about the visual character of their buildings, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson clearly embraced the new vocabulary of Modernism and explored its application to a variety of building types and a wide range of building scales.

## 5.5 Modern Architecture in Transition, 1940-50

The years of the late 1940s were a period of rapid transition for architectural design. The war had ended unexpectedly, so architectural firms, and the construction industry generally, needed time to reorient to peacetime practices. The Modern Movement in architecture had been growing in influence throughout the 1930s, but the influence of older modes remained before 1940. Historically derivative architecture faded during the Depression years, but in the 1930s, many architects sought to find a way to fuse older and new architectural traditions. Architectural historian Kenneth Frampton described this development in his *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (1980) noting various versions of a modernized but still historicist stylistic approach to architecture.<sup>159</sup> Within this framework, Frampton identifies two tendencies in the United States, a "stripped Classical style" and the Art Deco, Modernistic or Moderne style popular for commercial architecture in the 1920s and 1930s. Frampton gives the date for the end of these tendencies as 1943.

<sup>157</sup> P/A Case Study, *Progressive Architecture*, Vol. 31 (September 1950), 51-71.

<sup>158</sup> Anthony Dodoye-Alali, "William Bain: A Half Century of Seattle Architecture," *Daily Journal of Commerce*, 3 December 1980, p. 7.

<sup>159</sup> Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1980; rev. ed. 1985), pp. 210-223.

Thus, scholars agree that World War II ended the influence of the historically derived modes of design, including the "modernized traditional" modes of the 1930s. During the war, American architectural journals emphasized new technologies, and the new directions that design would take once the war ended. *Architectural Forum*, in particular, ran a series of articles addressing postwar design with a focus on the year "194X" because the exact end date of the war was unknown. The May 1943 theme issue, titled "New Buildings for 194X" discussed the new buildings that would be needed once the war ended.<sup>160</sup> The designs were all represented in a Modern idiom--the historically derived modes (including those that attempted to combine historical and modern approaches) were completely absent. The emphasis throughout was on technology and new directions in design. Other journals similarly emphasized the new technologies emerging from the war and the opportunity that would soon arrive to apply these technologies to peacetime construction.<sup>161</sup>

At the end of the war, there were few built examples of Modern architecture applied to larger urban buildings. As explained by architectural historian William Jordy, "Around 1950, four American skyscrapers prominently realized the ideal of the crystal tower."<sup>162</sup> Jordy's four key buildings are: (1) the Equitable Building, Portland, Oregon, by Pietro Belluschi; (2) the United Nations Secretariat, New York, by Wallace Harrison and others, influenced by Le Corbusier; (3) 860 Lake Shore Drive Apartments, Chicago, by Mes van der Rohe; and (4) Lever House, New York, by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (Gordon Bunshaft, principal designer). The date of 1950 is particularly important, because it indicates that architects of the late 1940s did not have these buildings as examples or precedents. The Equitable Building was the earliest to be completed and published. *Architectural Forum* presented the Equitable Building as a "work in progress" in April 1947, but photographs of the completed structure were not published until September 1948.<sup>163</sup> The others were not completed until 1950 or after.

The absence of models for Modern curtainwall buildings when the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building was in design is evident when one notes the dates when illustrations of each of the canonical buildings (identified by Jordy) were published in the professional architectural press:

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<sup>160</sup> "New Buildings for 194X," *Architectural Forum* 73/5 (May 1943); also see: Andrew M. Shanken, *194X: Architecture, Planning, and Consumer Culture on the American Home Front* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

<sup>161</sup> During World War II architectural journals routinely emphasized new technology and functional design, and advertising followed suit. For example, in the November 1942 *Architectural Forum*, General Electric ran an ad titled "What do Gun Turrets and 'Garbage Grinders' have in common?" The text explained that the gun turret was the "operating equipment" of an airplane, then stated, "In tomorrow's homes, the 'garbage disposal,' and other 'operating equipment,' which in large measure determine how a house *functions*, will assume new importance." [emphasis in original] The ad focused on the need for the "right kind of operating equipment" in airplanes and in "After Victory homes." The ad cleverly combined ideas of General Electric's contributions to the war effort, its production of consumer products, and modernist ideas of design driven by function. See: *Architectural Forum* 77 (Nov. 1942), p. 16.

<sup>162</sup> William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects* [vol. 4]: *The Impact of European Modernism in the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Garden City NY: Anchor/Doubleday, 1976), p. 233.

<sup>163</sup> "Work in Progress: Office Building initiates prefabricated aluminum facing over reinforced concrete frame," *Architectural Forum* 86/4 (April 1947), pp. 98-99; "Equitable Building a Leader," *Architectural Forum* 89/3 (Sept. 1948) pp. 97-106; see also: Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi*, p. 433.

Equitable Building	<i>Architectural Forum</i> , Sept. 1948
Lever House	<i>Architectural Forum</i> , June 1950 <i>Architectural Forum</i> , June 1952, July 1952
860 Lake Shore Drive	<i>Architectural Record</i> , July 1952 <i>Architectural Forum</i> , November 1952
U.N. Secretariat	<i>Architectural Record</i> , June 1956 [model photos published earlier]

The evidence shows that architects who sought examples of Modern architecture that might offer precedents for design of larger urban buildings in the years from 1945 to 1950 had limited precedents on which to draw. The situation changed rapidly once buildings like the Equitable Building, Lever House, 860 Lake Shore Drive, and the United Nations Secretariat were completed and published. Thus, the mid 1950s provided a completely different context for architectural designers than the late 1940s.

The publication of the rendering of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building in early September 1948 in both the *Times* and the *Daily Journal of Commerce* (as noted previously) shows that the design of the bank building was settled by that date. Thus, the design of the Seattle Branch Bank building took place too early to be influenced by any of the buildings that would serve as precedents for the glass and metal curtainwall buildings that would follow in the mid-1950s and after.

For architects in the late 1940s who were looking for examples of urban buildings that were truly Modern there was still one example that might be considered. The Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building (PSFS Building), by Howe & Lescaze, in Philadelphia, was unabashedly Modern. The PSFS Building, designed and constructed from 1929 to 1932 was the one large urban example in the United States of a building “fully committed to European modernism.”<sup>164</sup> It was published in *Architectural Forum* (December 1932), *Architectural Review* (March 1933), and in *Fortune* (December 1932).<sup>165</sup> The PSFS Building was also included in the 1932 Museum of Modern Art exhibition on International Style Modern architecture.<sup>166</sup> William Bain had studied architecture in Philadelphia from 1919 to 1921 and thereafter he had maintained personal contacts with his teacher Paul Cret, and likely with other Philadelphia architects as well. Bain had, no doubt, seen the PSFS Building, and his partners and the firm’s staff would have known it from publication if they had not seen it first-hand.

<sup>164</sup> Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects: The Impact of European Modernism*, p. 87.

<sup>165</sup> “A New Shelter for Savings: The Philadelphia Saving Fund Society,” *Architectural Forum* 57/6 (Dec. 1932), pp. 483-498; “Philadelphia Saving Fund Society Building,” *Architectural Review* 73/3 (March 1933), pp. 101-106; “Philadelphia’s Fancy,” *Fortune* 6 (Dec. 1932), pp. 68-69. George Howe also commented on the building in his article about Modern architecture: George Howe, “Functional Aesthetics and the Social Ideal,” *Pencil Points* 13/4 (April 1932), p. 217.

<sup>166</sup> Alfred Barr, Philip Johnson, Henry Russell Hitchcock, et. al., *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition, February 10 to March 23, 1932* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1932), pp. 143-155 (Howe & Lescaze), 153 (PSFS Building).

When the architects at Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson sought examples of larger urban buildings exhibiting Modern design in the years from 1945 to 1950, they may well have turned to the PSFS Building in Philadelphia. A very conspicuous feature of the PSFS design is the narrow projecting vertical columns in the outside walls of the office tower. Considering PSFS as a source may help to explain why the Public Safety Building, the Federal Reserve Branch Bank, and the UW Medical Center hospital, all designed by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson in the years from 1945 to the early 1950s share the motif of relatively narrow projecting vertical columns. The details of the projecting columns vary somewhat on these three buildings, but narrow projecting vertical columns are a primary design element of all three exteriors.

Overall, the years 1945-50 must be understood as transitional in the history of architecture as post-war architects learned to design Modern buildings. In the early post-war years Seattle architects, including Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson embraced Modern architecture. However, the dominant form of American modern architecture that emerged by the mid-1950s did not really become apparent until at least 1950 and perhaps 1952 when photographs of Lever House and 860 Lake Shore Drive appeared in publications. American architects in the late 1940s designed buildings that were Modern, but we should not expect the buildings of the years *before 1950* to have the crystalline exteriors often found on urban commercial buildings after the mid-1950s.

## 5.6 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank and Modern Architecture

The Federal Reserve Seattle Branch Bank building sits on a full half block measuring approximately 240 feet north to south along the west side of Second Avenue and 108 feet east to west between Madison Street to the south and Spring Street to the north.<sup>167</sup> The building itself is a rectilinear mass measuring approximately 90 feet by 198 feet. The building stands four stories tall facing Second Avenue, but rises six stories on the alley that is nearly 20 feet below Second Avenue. The building is set back approximately 18 feet from the Second Avenue property line, 26 feet from the Madison Street property line and 16 feet from the Spring Street property line. By removing the northwest and southwest corners of the rectilinear mass of the building, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson produced a form that from many angles also appears setback from the alley.

Setting the building back from the streets would have been uncommon for a commercial building at this date (the late 1940s), but follows a familiar typology for government buildings. Throughout American history government buildings have often been setback from the property lines. This formal strategy has often provided a sense of presence and enhanced monumentality. The decision by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson to set the Bank back from the property line facing the three streets is a reminder that the Federal Reserve Branch Bank building was/is not just a bank building, it also was/is a federal government building.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>167</sup> The north-south dimension of 294 feet found in the DEIS is incorrect; "Draft Environmental Impact Statement," June 2011, p. 86.

<sup>168</sup> In her book on the architecture of Paul Cret, Elizabeth Grossman notes that the program for the Federal Reserve Board Building in Washington DC emphasized that the Federal Reserve was "not a 'banking institution' but a 'government body' that 'dictates an architectural concept of dignity and permanence'." This important distinction likely applied to all Federal Reserve buildings. Elizabeth Greenwell Grossman, *The Civic Architecture of Paul Cret* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 185.

Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson would have realized that the Federal Reserve Bank building, at only four stories tall, was likely to be surrounded by larger buildings in the future. At the time they designed the building, there were already taller buildings within a few blocks, including the Burke Building (1889-91; destroyed), the Exchange Building (1929-31), the Lumber Exchange (1902-3; destroyed), the American Savings Bank/Empire Building (1904-6; destroyed), the Leary Building (1906-10; destroyed), and others.<sup>169</sup> Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson knew that their building could never compete in height; setting the building back would make it distinct from the commercial buildings that were all built right to the property lines.

The primary visual character of the building, as seen from Second Avenue, is a simple and straightforward four-story rectangular mass. The building is clad in limestone and is without decorative detail. While the end elevations are completely flush, the east-facing Second Avenue elevation is marked by projecting columns at the second, third and fourth floors. The projecting character of the columns is achieved by recessing the surface of the vertical bays approximately 14 inches. There are twelve recessed bays, which results in a column directly on the centerline of the building, directly over the void of the front entry at the first floor. Windows at the ground floor align with the bays at the floors above, but are more square and are set off by thick granite surrounds. The decision to recess the bays and express the columns appears primarily to have been a way to achieve structural expression as indicated by the press release describing the design: “The exterior is without ornamentation, depending upon the *vertical structural lines* and openings of windows and doors for its architectural style.”<sup>170</sup> [emphasis added]

The east elevation of the Federal Reserve Bank appears similar to the east elevation of the north wing of the Public Safety Building also by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson. That wing was four stories tall above the War Memorial Plaza and had a distinct first floor with squarish windows cut into the wall, while the upper three stories had narrow projecting columns. While the two were not identical, they were very clearly related.

When Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson released presentation drawings of the Public Safety Building in 1946, they included a description of the facilities and materials and a very brief description of the goals of the design: “To achieve a plain, dignified structure, depending on materials and massing to gain a pleasing effect. To avoid ostentation.”<sup>171</sup> The description provided for the Federal Reserve Branch Bank sounds similar: “The exterior is without ornamentation, depending upon the vertical structural lines and openings of windows and doors for its architectural style,” and “Extraneous decorations and non-essentials have been eliminated, and dependence placed on the utility of the materials to provide real beauty...”<sup>172</sup>

<sup>169</sup> See *Shaping* for photos of Burke Building (1889-91) on page 25, the Exchange Building (1929-31) on page 95, the Lumber Exchange (1902-3) on page 38, the American Savings Bank/Empire Building (1904-6) on pages xxv and 110, and the Leary Building (1906-10) on page xxv.

<sup>170</sup> “Draft Environmental Impact Statement,” June 2011, p. 115; “Bids Called on Federal Bank Building Here,” *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 27, 1949, p. 1, 3.

<sup>171</sup> “Proposed Public Safety Building, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson,” 1946, n.p. The copy of this document at Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries, is date stamped “Jan. 8, 1945.” However, this date cannot be correct since Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson were not commissioned to undertake this project until September 1945. Most like the person who date-stamped the volume had failed to advance the year to 1946.

<sup>172</sup> “Draft Environmental Impact Statement,” June 2011, p. 115; “Bids Called on Federal Bank Building Here,” *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, Jan. 27, 1949, p. 1, 3.

The point is not that the FRBF Seattle Branch Bank building has all the stylistic elements that are found on the PSFS Building; rather it is the fact that architects in this period saw expression of structure as a key element of the new Modernist vocabulary. Although the most direct antecedent to the expression of the vertical columns other than other Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson projects was, as noted previously, the PSFS Building in Philadelphia, there is actually a much longer history of buildings designed with recessed spandrels above the first or second floor to emphasize vertical lines--the origin of this approach was the Wainwright Building, in St Louis, dating from 1890-91 designed by the Chicago architects Adler & Sullivan. The work of Adler & Sullivan had been "rediscovered" in the early 1930s and was heralded by the Museum of Modern Art in the 1933 exhibit, "Early Modern Architecture, Chicago, 1870-1910."<sup>173</sup> The Museum argued that the real origins of Modern architecture could be found in the designs of these architects. The Museum published a catalog by the same title in 1933 and reissued it in a revised edition in 1940.<sup>174</sup> When *Architectural Forum* published the Equitable Building in September 1948, it referred to the work of Louis Sullivan without giving specific details.<sup>175</sup> *Forum* simply assumed their audience (primarily practicing architects) would be familiar with Louis Sullivan and his buildings.

As architects in the late 1940s explored ways to design Modern buildings, one approach that was used was the expression of vertical structure. The lineage of this approach dates back to the early twentieth century work of Chicago architects, notably Adler & Sullivan, includes the PSFS Building of the 1930s, and extends to the American work of Mies van der Rohe--the earliest example of Mies's design for a tall urban building was the Promontory Apartments, Chicago (1949) with its projecting vertical columns.

In 1951, architect Matthew Nowicki's posthumously published article, "Origins and Trends in Modern Architecture," summarized the developments that Nowicki perceived in the architecture of the postwar period.<sup>176</sup> Nowicki, who was emerging as a key figure in postwar international architecture, had been killed in a plane crash in September 1950. In his overview of the state of architecture, completed before his death, Nowicki wrote of modern architecture becoming "mature" and he argued, "we now rely in our expression on the potentialities of materials and structures..." and added, "the symbolic meaning of a support has been rediscovered...."

In a close reading of the front elevation of the Seattle Branch Bank building, the following points are evident. First, the number of recessed bays is twelve, an even number. This produces an elevation where the center is a column, not a bay. (In contrast, classical buildings, and those of classical inspiration, typically have an even number of columns and an odd number of bays so the center is a space, typically through which a visitor finds the entry. The presence of a central column makes the reading decidedly not

<sup>173</sup> "Early Modern Architecture: Chicago 1870-1910," Museum of Modern Art Exhibit #23, Jan. 18-Feb. 23, 1933; see: [www.moma.org/learn/resources/archives\\_exhibition\\_history\\_list](http://www.moma.org/learn/resources/archives_exhibition_history_list).

<sup>174</sup> *Early Modern Architecture, Chicago: 1870-1910* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1933; rev. ed. 1940).

<sup>175</sup> "Poetic license has, for a long time now, permitted us to refer to skyscrapers as 'crystal and metal towers.' The concept has of course been implicit in skeletal construction since the days of Louis Sullivan, but no such skyscraper has really warranted such a description until the appearance of the Equitable." "Equitable Building a Leader," *Architectural Forum* 89/3 (Sept. 1948), p. 98.

<sup>176</sup> Matthew Nowicki, "Origins and Trends in Modern Architecture," *Magazine of Art* 44 (1951), 273-279. Nowicki's essay was included as one of key documents of the period in the anthology edited by Joan Ockman, *Architecture Culture: 1943-1968* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993).

classical.) Second, the placement of a column directly on the centerline means that the entry is located directly under a structural column which is also a non-classical solution. Third, construction photographs show that each expressed column contains a structural steel column at the second, third and fourth stories, again indicating that the expressed columns are expressive of the building's structure. Fourth, in the Federal Reserve Bank buildings of the 1930s (discussed above) the pilasters between the windows are wide, and can be read as abstracted classical columns. However, at the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, the expressed columns are narrow, lacking the width to be read as classical columns. Instead, as the press release indicated, the expressed verticals in Seattle should be understood as "vertical structural lines." Fifth, the front faces of the expressed columns at the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building are flush with the surface of the front elevation with no demarcation at top or bottom. The Seattle Branch Bank building east elevation lacks a defined base or entablature/frieze/cornice; the absence of these classical features would probably be a bit more evident if the stone cladding was cleaned to return the stone to something approaching its original color. Even if one wanted to argue that the non-recessed first story and the tall parapet above the fourth story create a base and entablature respectively, the proportions would be very wrong. Sixth, at the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, the spandrels at the second through fourth stories are limestone identical to the limestone elsewhere on the front elevation, resulting in a clear reading of each story, again a non-classical approach. Thus, the exterior expression of the building was intended to be Modern.

Even if one were to find vestiges of classical design in the symmetry and central entrance of the front elevation of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, these would not preclude it being a Modern building. Many of the leading Modern architects were fascinated by Classicism and classical themes are sometimes found in their work. Le Corbusier's *Vers Une Architecture* (translated into English in 1937 as *Toward a New Architecture*) was one of the most widely read books on Modern architecture from the late 1940s until the 1970s.<sup>177</sup> This book is suffused with Classical themes, and Le Corbusier compares the refinements of twentieth century engineering with the refinements of Greek architecture culminating in the Parthenon.<sup>178</sup> Historians have found latent classical compositional strategies in the elevations of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye and in the bay spacing of his Maison Stein at Garches.<sup>179</sup> Most of Mies van der Rohe's major buildings of the mid 1950s, notably Crown Hall at Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, and the Seagram Building, New York, were symmetrical, with centrally placed entrances. These buildings are considered canonical Modern masterpieces.<sup>180</sup> This statement does not argue that the Federal Reserve Branch Bank

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<sup>177</sup> Le Corbusier's *Vers Une Architecture* (translated into English in 1937 as *Toward a New Architecture*) rapidly became one of the most read books describing the new architecture. It makes comparisons of the evolution of classical architecture to the evolution of automobiles and argues that architecture needs to undergo a similar evolution.

<sup>178</sup> On Le Corbusier's fascination with classical architecture, especially the Parthenon, see, for example: William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*, 3rd ed. (Saddle River NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1996), p. 165.

<sup>179</sup> Colin Rowe, *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays* (Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 1976), pp. 1-27 ("The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa"); in the same volume also see: "Neo-'Classicism' and Modern Architecture," pp. 119-158.

<sup>180</sup> Don Winkelman, the partner at NBBJ who was primarily responsible for the design of the Seattle First National Bank Headquarters (now Safeco Plaza), wrote about the significance of classicism for designers, including its influence on modern architects such as Le Corbusier and Mies, and presumably on himself. See: Don Winkelman, "The Classical Connection," *Arcade* 7/1 (April/May 1987), pp. 12-13.

was a harbinger of these later designs; rather it indicates that the symmetry and central entrance location at the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building should not be read as elements of a non-Modern design.

It would be implausible to argue that Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson may have looked back to the Moderne/Art Deco and/or classical buildings of the 1930s as a source for their design for the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building when all of their other work in the years from 1944 to 1950 was distinctly Modern in character. In this regard, the Public Safety Building is especially instructive. Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson were responsible for the architectural vocabulary of the Public Safety Building, but not its basic plan. The plan was dictated by the design of a rectangular open space in the center of the proposed group of public buildings at the intersection of 4th Avenue and Cherry Street. The central public open space was to be framed by four different L-shaped buildings. The L-shaped plan of the Public Safety Building was, thus, dictated to Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson by the masterplan for a new civic square at the center of the proposed civic center.<sup>181</sup> Perspective drawings showing the masterplan, prepared during World War II, present the four L-shaped buildings framing the square in an abstracted Art Deco/Moderne vocabulary.<sup>182</sup> However, when Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson received the commission for the Public Safety Building, they rejected the Art Deco/Moderne and chose a Modern vocabulary for the exterior treatment. Other important early Modern examples by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson include the Veterans Hospital (1946-50), the NBBJ office building, and the King County Central Blood Bank—the first two of these were included in Victor Steinbrueck's *A Guide to Seattle Architecture, 1850-1953*.<sup>183</sup> The commitment of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson to Modernism for their buildings between 1944 and the early 1950s helps to understand the Modern character they chose for the very highly visible Federal Reserve Bank Seattle Branch Bank building.

By the postwar years, American architectural journals were attuned to Modernism and were routinely publishing Modern designs. In December 1949, *Architectural Record* published a brief article on the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building and included the rendering, noting that construction was under way but not yet complete.<sup>184</sup>

Finally, it appears that the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building may have provided an architectural precedent for at least two, if not more, later buildings. The first was the FRBSF Salt Lake City Branch Building, completed in 1958. The architects for this building, Ashton, Evans & Brazier, were likely aware of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building, as well as the FRBSF Portland Branch Bank Building.<sup>185</sup> Like the Seattle

<sup>181</sup> The history of this masterplan proposal has not been researched.

<sup>182</sup> Images of drawings of the Victory Square civic center proposal are found in the Visual Resources Collection (VRC) of the College of Built Environments, University of Washington; see VRC image file nos. 00512w02, 01072w90.

<sup>183</sup> Victor Steinbrueck, *A Guide to Seattle Architecture, 1850-1953* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1953), includes several projects by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson: Public Safety Building, p. 19; Eklind Hall Swedish Hospital Nurses Home, p. 20; Architectural Office, p. 20; U of W Health Science Building, p. 43; Clyde High school, p. 48; Veterans Hospital, p. 53.

<sup>184</sup> "Seattle Branch, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, Naramore, Brady, Bain & Johanson Architects and Engineers," *Architectural Record*, Vol. 106 (December 1949), western sec., 32-12. In the decades after World War II, *Architectural Record* routinely published a western edition that typically included 25-40 additional pages focusing on design and construction in the western U.S.

<sup>185</sup> Lisa Rosetta, "Architect Influenced City Planning Issues, Designed Local Works: Frederick Montmorcency (1929-2006)," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 October 2006. According to this obituary, Frederick Montmorcency

building, the Salt Lake City building is located on the west side of the street on which it fronts; however, the Salt Lake City building has a smaller corner site, with streets on only the east and north sides of the site and an alley on the south side. The Salt Lake City building is also sited closer to, if not actually on, the east and north property lines with an on-grade parking lot behind the building on the west and an access ramp to the basement on the south. The first story is clad with a dark red granite; a lighter pinkish stone is used at the upper second and third stories. The main entrance is centered on the projecting portion east elevation with a cantilevered canopy. Ten window bays at the upper stories are recessed behind the plane of the facade, and there is a slight stepback in the facade at its south end about the same width as the windowless end bays of the projecting portion. The windows at the first story are squarish and have similar angularly protruding surrounds. The spandrels in the recessed window bays are of a darker color than the upper story cladding stone. Considering that the various branch banks within a given region of the Federal Reserve system were expected to work cooperatively within the region and, thus, would have been aware of what the other branches were doing, the similarities in the design strategies of the later Salt Lake City building with the Seattle building seem more than coincidental.

Another building which shares design similarities with the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building is much closer geographically—indeed, it is a mere half block to the north on the east side of Second Avenue. This is the National Bank of Commerce annex (1957-58) designed by George Wellington Stoddard & Associates and built to the National Bank of Commerce headquarters in the former Baillargeon dry goods store building, which the bank had occupied since 1918. In 1957-58, the bank constructed the annex and remodeled the Baillargeon Building to create a unified building, at least on the interior. On the exterior, the original building and annex still read as separate buildings, even though both are clad in white glazed terra-cotta masonry, although the annex has a dark-colored stone cladding at the first-story—a visual demarcation similar to the FRBSF Seattle and FRBSF Salt Lake City. The National Bank of Commerce annex also has an even number of recessed vertical bays containing multi-light windows with metal louvers at the bottom of each bay for venting the second-story garage, although there are no windowless end bays. Even though the pilasters between the recessed bays are wider than the FRBSF Seattle, they lack any demarcation at top or bottom, which allows them to read as a more integral part of the wall plane. Like the FRBSF Salt Lake City building, the spandrels were originally slightly darker in color than the wall cladding, giving the recessed bays a vertical emphasis; however, the spandrels have since been painted a lighter shade of white than the terra-cotta cladding.<sup>186</sup> Considering that the National Bank of Commerce had been the primary landlord for the FRBSF Seattle prior to the completion of the Seattle Branch Bank Building and had even published a congratulatory advertisement after the formal open-house following the FRBSF's occupation of the building, it is perhaps not surprising that the first building constructed by the National Bank of Commerce in downtown after World War II derived a number of its visual cues from a building that they had described as “Your handsome building” and claiming that it would “be a source of pride to all Seattle.”<sup>187</sup>

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was chief draftsman at the firm and was responsible for the FRBSF Salt Lake Branch building design. Montmorency would eventually rise to the position of president in this firm, renamed Montmorency, Hayes & Talbot.

<sup>186</sup> “Historical Sites—National Bank of Commerce/Security Pacific Building,” (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated.

<sup>187</sup> “To the Directors and Officers of the Seattle Branch, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco,” *Seattle Times*, Jan. 15, 1951, p. 1 (paid advertisement).

## 5.7 FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank and "Cold War Modernism"

In recent years scholars have begun to reconsider the architecture of the post-World War II era and have begun to discuss the influence of the Cold War on architectural practice. Publications and exhibitions have begun to address the period.<sup>188</sup> However, only a few books have yet attempted a theoretical interpretation of the entire period. In the introduction to her anthology, *Architecture Culture 1943-68*, Joan Ockman argued that the period after the war could be understood as an "interregnum" or break between two more theoretically inclined periods--early modernism and postmodernism. Ockman argued that the destruction of World War II produced a "crisis of rational thought," particularly resulting from the Holocaust and the atomic bomb.<sup>189</sup> Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault offer a differing interpretation in the introduction to their edited collection, *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, arguing that architectural Modernism incorporated a self-critical position and therefore there was no break. Goldhagen and Legault describe the post-World War II period as one of great anxiety broadly across all cultural fields, and specifically among architects.<sup>190</sup> They suggest that architects embraced Modernism, but lacked certainty in making design decisions. Like Ockman, they emphasize the widespread philosophical impact of the Holocaust and the atomic bomb, resulting in the first questioning of the power and place of technology. The response, according to both Ockman and Goldhagen and Legault was that architects explored new directions within the language of Modern architecture expanding its range of expression beyond what was considered acceptable in the years before 1940.

The sense that the International Style Modernism of the pre-war period might not be adequate to post-World War II conditions had been voiced during the War by leading theorists of the period such as Sigfried Giedion. In 1943, José Luis Sert, Ferdinand Léger, and Giedion had prepared an essay, "Nine Points on Monumentality," in which they argued that the misuse of monumentality by totalitarian countries had led to Modernists' rejection of monumentality, but that the next phase of Modern design would need to recover the possibility of buildings that expressed monumentality.<sup>191</sup> (Although this essay circulated among the circle of their colleagues, it was not published until years later.) Giedion and Léger each subsequently published more developed articles. Giedion's article, "The Need for a New Monumentality," appeared in the 1944 book *New Architecture and City Planning*, and argued for the "re-conquest of monumental expression" for buildings that represent "social, ceremonial and community life."<sup>192</sup>

<sup>188</sup> Examples include: Annabel Jane Wharton, *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001); David Crowley and Jane Pavitt, eds., *Cold War Modern: Design 1945-1970* (London: V & A Publications, 2008); and Greg Castillo, *The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

<sup>189</sup> Joan Ockman, ed., *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), p. 13.

<sup>190</sup> Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault, *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture* (Montreal and Cambridge, Mass.: Canadian Centre for Architecture/MIT Press, 2000), pp. 11-12.

<sup>191</sup> José Luis Sert, Ferdinand Léger, and Sigfried Giedion, "Nine Points on Monumentality," 1943; this essay was not published at the time, but later appeared in several anthologies, most recently in Ockman, *Architecture Culture, 1943-1968*, pp. 27-30.

<sup>192</sup> Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," in Paul Zucker, ed., *New Architecture and City Planning: A Symposium* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944), 549-568. The contrast with the pre-war situation is evident when one considers that Lewis Mumford had written in his 1938 book, *The*

Discussions of monumentality continued, reaching an early culmination in the September 1948 issue of the English journal *Architectural Review*.<sup>193</sup>

Architectural historian William J. R. Curtis, in his widely used text on Modern architecture, has best summarized the problem of monumentality in the postwar period. Curtis explains, "Monumentality in architecture is a quality which does not necessarily have to do with size, but with intensity of expression," and he goes on to argue that with the broad acceptance of Modernism, the post-1945 problem "was to handle public buildings with the appropriate degree of presence and accessibility: to establish the terms of a democratic monumentality."<sup>194</sup>

Obviously it is impossible to know which architectural publications architects at Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson read in the postwar period. Nonetheless, in designing the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building, it is evident that Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, not only sought to apply the Modern language of architecture, but also confronted the emerging problem of monumentality within Modernism. Lacking the rhetorical devices associated with historical styles, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson used means such as setbacks (from three streets), bi-lateral symmetry, expressed vertical structure, and overall simplicity of form as devices appropriate to giving a stronger, more formal (and therefore, appropriately monumental) character to the Federal Reserve Branch Bank Building. After all, the Federal Reserve was (and is) understood as one of the stabilizing institutions of American social-political culture and deserved appropriate expression.

The emphasis on the stabilizing role of the Federal Reserve was not just symbolic; it was also addressed by the physical construction of the building. As noted in Tom Vanderbilt's 2001 book, *Survival City: Adventures among the Ruins of Atomic America*, the destruction from World War II was unprecedented, and was quickly followed by the beginning of the Cold War.<sup>195</sup> As Vanderbilt explains, one early response, as Americans became increasingly aware of the destruction of European cities and the vulnerability of urban centers everywhere, was to propose the dispersal of cities.<sup>196</sup> Although low-density suburban development did take place over the following decades, the urban centers did not disappear. In response, the federal agencies looked for means to protect their facilities in the event of a future conflict that might bring similar destruction to American cities.

Thus, in the emerging Cold War context of the late 1940s, it is no surprise that several discussions of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building emphasized the construction of the bank's vault, which was said to be designed to be impervious to attack. The *Seattle Times* published a photograph of the vault construction on July 10, 1949, with the caption titled "Try Cracking This One," and emphasizing the use of "steelcrete" in

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*Culture of Cities*, that the usefulness of Modern architecture in meeting social needs contrasted with the symbolic expression of past architectural forms which Mumford argued had been superseded.

<sup>193</sup> *Architectural Review* 104/621 (September 1948), includes essays on the question of monumentality by Gregor Paulsson, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, William Holford, Walter Gropius, Lucio Costa, Alfred Roth, and Sigfried Giedion.

<sup>194</sup> William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 3rd Edition (Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), pp. 513-514.

<sup>195</sup> Tom Vanderbilt, *Survival City: Adventures Among the Ruins of Atomic America* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002).

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48-67.

constructing the thick walls of the bank vaults.<sup>197</sup> Even the article that appeared in *Architectural Record* included a description of the vault construction: "The vault will be two stories high with 30 inch heavily reinforced floor, walls and ceiling. When finished it will be, according to report, the largest vault on the Pacific Coast."<sup>198</sup>

## 5.8 Current Status of Downtown Seattle Buildings constructed 1940-54

Due to the limitations placed on construction by the Great Depression and World War II, there are only a handful of buildings or additions to buildings that were constructed in the downtown area between 1940 and 1955. These include the F. W. Woolworth store (1939-40), the U.S. Federal (Nakamura) Courthouse (1939-40), National Bank of Commerce building fifth-story expansion (1940-41), two-story replacement Crary Building (1941-42; altered), Veterans Center/American Legion Memorial Building (1945-46; destroyed), Public Safety Building (1945-49; destroyed), FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building (1947-50), Medical Arts Building annex (1949-50), Frederick & Nelson (now Nordstrom) Department Store expansion (1944-52), Bon Marché (now Macy's) department store expansion (1953-56), and the Washington Education Association Building (1955-56).

As discussed previously, the F. W. Woolworth & Company store was the last free-standing commercial building to be built in the downtown area prior to World War II. After Woolworth & Company went into bankruptcy and vacated the building, it was occupied by discount retailer Ross with relatively little change on the exterior beyond signage.

As also previously discussed, the U.S. Federal (Nakamura) Courthouse was the last significant building, public or private, to be constructed in the downtown area prior to World War II. The U.S. Federal Courts vacated the building in 2004 for a larger facility designed by NBBJ near the retail core. The building was subsequently rehabilitated under the guidance of Weinstein A|U to house the Ninth District Court of Appeals and named in honor of William Nakamura, a Japanese-American soldier who was killed during World War II. The open space surrounding the building remains mostly intact. The property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>199</sup>

When, in 1957-58, the National Bank of Commerce had an annex constructed (designed by George Wellington Stoddard & Associates) to its earlier J. A. Baillargeon building, the former Baillargeon building was renovated to assure that the two buildings were interconnected on the interior. At this time, the ornamented coping along the top edge of the fifth-story parapet was replaced with a plainer, lower profile coping. In 1981, the alley side of the building, including the fifth-story, received an untitled mural by noted urban artist Richard Haas as part of the Seattle Walls Project jointly funded by the City

<sup>197</sup> "Try Cracking This One," *Times*, July 10, 1949, p. 32.

<sup>198</sup> "Seattle Branch Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco[,] Seattle, Washington[,] Naramore, Brady, Bain & Johanson Architects and Engineers," *Architectural Record* 106/6 (December 1949), Western Section 32-12. It has been suggested that the vault was designed to hold a large amount of cash that, in the event of destruction in a new war, could be used to replenish the money supply and help keep the economy going. The Federal Reserve's concern regarding continuity in the event of a new war would peak in the late 1960s with the construction of its Communications and Records Center in Culpepper, Virginia, a radiation hardened facility with computers designed to manage the economy in the event of a new war.

<sup>199</sup> Elenga, *Seattle Architecture*, p. 77.

and private sources.<sup>200</sup> The mural mimics the historic terra-cotta ornament of the building and includes an arched window “reflecting” an image of Mount Rainier and the Seattle waterfront. At some point, the windows were replaced with fixed glazing and simpler mullion pattern that mimics the historical pattern. The building itself continues to house offices.

The replacement Crary Building was extensively remodeled in 1977-78 as the Seattle headquarters for the Lincoln Mutual Savings Bank (later Washington Mutual Savings Bank branch, now JPMorgan-Chase Bank Branch). The alterations were designed by Vassos M. Demetrious of John Anderson & Associates (architects) of Bellevue, with Harvey R. Dodd of Seattle (structural engineer). The general contractor was Vern Johnson & Son, Inc., of Spokane.<sup>201</sup>

The Veterans Center/American Legion Memorial Building was sold in 1970 to the National Bank of Commerce.<sup>202</sup> The building was later demolished for construction of One Union Square (1979-82) designed by TRA.

The Public Safety Building was not well maintained over the years, although the “Nine Squares, Nine Trees” by Robert Irwin was installed in the War Memorial Plaza in 1983 in conjunction with a partial recladding of the exterior.<sup>203</sup> The building was demolished as part of the development of a new Seattle Civic Center; however, the site is currently vacant. The “Nine Squares, Nine Trees” installation has been relocated in an altered form to the University of Washington campus between the Henry Art Gallery and the Odegaard Undergraduate Library.

As mentioned previously, the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building is currently vacant.

The Medical & Dental Building annex continues to be occupied by medical and dental offices. The Medical & Dental Building complex has been designated a Seattle City Landmark.

After the bankruptcy of Frederick & Nelson, the building was eventually remodeled in 1997-99 to accommodate the Nordstrom specialty retailer as its Seattle flagship store, with Callison Architecture having design responsibility for the renovation.<sup>204</sup> The building is a designated Seattle City Landmark.

The Frederick & Nelson department store expansion (1953-56) prompted the Bon Marché to expand its downtown store, which was designed by John Graham & Company. At the time of the expansion, the Bon Marché had become part of Allied Stores, Inc., which also owned the Macy’s department store, among other retailing companies. The building was renovated in 1990-91 under the supervision of the NBBJ

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<sup>200</sup> James M. Rupp, *Art in Seattle’s Public Places: An Illustrated Guide* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), p. 48.

<sup>201</sup> “Bank is looking for new look downtown,” *Seattle Times*, July 17, 1977, p. D8. The altered exterior bears a remarkable resemblance to the former Washington Mutual Savings Bank headquarters (1966-69) by Paul Thiry, but is clad with white marble veneer.

<sup>202</sup> “Downtown Property Leads Real-Estate Sales in County,” *Seattle Times*, Feb. 22, 1970, p. E2.

<sup>203</sup> Daphne Enslow Bell, “One Percent for Art,” *Arts + Architecture*, 4/1 (May 1985), pp. 61-63; Rupp, *Art in Seattle’s Public Places*, p. 56.

<sup>204</sup> Elenga, *Seattle Architecture*, p. 101; Lawrence Kreisman, *Made to Last: Historic Preservation in Seattle and King County* (Seattle: Historic Seattle Preservation Foundation, 1999), pp. 28-29.

Group and the exterior was cleaned in 1998.<sup>205</sup> The Bon Marché was later rebranded as Macy's, which still occupies the building. The building is a designated Seattle City Landmark.

### 5.8 Downtown Seattle Buildings constructed from 1955 to the 1960s

In 1955, the Washington Education Association (WEA) acquired a site at 910 Fifth Avenue and commissioned Jones & Bindon to design a three-story reinforced-concrete building to house the association, which was completed in 1956. This was the first free-standing building to be constructed by a non-public client in the downtown area since 1940. The building is three stories tall with a partial basement and has a irregular off-set T-shape footprint. The reinforced-concrete structure is exposed at the exterior walls with the vertical supports reading as square pilasters with the aluminum-framed windows and cement-stucco spandrels are recessed behind the face of the pilasters. After the WEA vacated the building in 1979, a variety of commercial tenants occupied the building,<sup>206</sup> however, the building is currently vacant and the site is scheduled for redevelopment.

Surprisingly, this architecturally modest building heralded a small boom in downtown construction since a series of other buildings, both public and private, followed shortly thereafter: the Norton Building (1956-59) by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of San Francisco with Bindon & Wright,<sup>207</sup> the Central Branch of the Seattle Public Library (1956-60; destroyed) by Bindon & Wright with Decker, Christiansen & Kitchin,<sup>208</sup> the National Bank of Commerce annex (1957-58) by George Wellington Stoddard & Associates, the Logan Building (1957-59) by Mandeville & Berge with Emery Roth & Sons (consulting),<sup>209</sup> U.S. Post Office (1957-59) by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson,<sup>210</sup> Washington Building (1957-60; altered; now Puget Sound Plaza) by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, the Circular Ramp Garage/Bon Marché Parking Garage (1959-60; altered) by George A. Applegarth of San Francisco,<sup>211</sup> and the Seattle Municipal Building (1959-61; destroyed) by J. N. McCammon & Associates of Dallas with Damm, Daum & Associates.<sup>212</sup>

The modest construction boom beginning in 1955 was a distinct episode quite different from the decade immediately after World War II (1945-54). The decade from 1945 to 1954 was obviously significant in its own right. Both periods, from 1945 to the early 1950s and from 1955 to the 1960s, must be represented in any comprehensive narrative of architectural development in postwar Seattle.

<sup>205</sup> Kreisman, *Made to Last: Historic Preservation*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>206</sup> "Historical Sites—Washington Education Association Building," (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated.

<sup>207</sup> "Historical Sites—Norton Building," (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated.

<sup>208</sup> *Shaping*, p. 338; John Douglas Marshall, *Place of Learning, Place of Dreams—A History of the Seattle Public Library* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), pp. 95-105.

<sup>209</sup> "Historical Sites—Logan Building," (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated.

<sup>210</sup> "Historical Sites—United States Post Office," (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated.

<sup>211</sup> "Historical Sites—Circular Ramp Garage," (City of Seattle building inventory form), not dated.

<sup>212</sup> *Shaping*, p. 356.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The Federal Reserve Bank system plays a unique role, supporting the continued existence of commercial banks as well as the regular functioning of the U.S. economy. Located in the heart of the city's financial district, the Seattle Branch Bank building of the FRBSF contributed to the broad patterns of history as it represents the first permanent, function-designed home of that institution in Seattle, as necessitated by the growth of branch operations between 1917 and the late 1940s.

The design of Federal Reserve banks over time demonstrates a continuation of certain values alongside the evolution of popular architectural trends. As financial institutions with ties to the federal government, these buildings portray strength, frugality and reliability through their building materials and composition. As the backbone of the national banking industry, they are repositories for enormous amounts of cash. The Seattle Branch of the FRBSF is an excellent and highly intact example of a Federal Reserve Branch Bank building, as well as a rare example of early post-war Modernism as applied to this conservative property type.

The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building is an important work of architecture by the important architectural firm Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson. It was designed and built in the first seven years of the firm's existence and helped to launch Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson on the trajectory that made them one of the leading firms in Seattle by the early 1950s, a position they have continued to hold since that time.

The importance of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building to the original partners in Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson is indicated by each choosing to list this building in his individual entry in the *American Architects Directory* in 1955. In the 1962 revised edition, three of the partners still listed the Federal Reserve Bank building (while the fourth listed no buildings at all before 1954).

The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building was one of only five new downtown building projects in the decade from 1941 to 1950. The only other major free-standing downtown buildings in those years were the replacement Crary Building, Public Safety Building and the Veterans Center/American Legion Memorial Building, which have either been destroyed or altered beyond recognition. The two other major projects were additions, not new buildings--the expansion of Frederick & Nelson and the expansion of the Medical-Dental Building.) Thus, the Seattle Branch Bank building was a notable project that restarted downtown construction after years of depression and war. As a downtown building, it was highly visible to the full Seattle community. It is one of the few representative projects of that era that stand today.

The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building represents the evolutionary state of architectural design in the late 1940s as architects sought to apply the vocabulary of the Modern Movement in the years of the late 1940s, before the canonical examples of Modern buildings were completed, published and available to serve as precedents.

In the years from 1945 to 1965, four major downtown public buildings were designed and constructed: the Public Safety Building (1945-50; destroyed), the Federal Reserve Branch Bank building (1947-1950), the downtown branch of the Seattle Public Library (1956-59; destroyed), and the Seattle Municipal Building (1959-61; destroyed). Of these

buildings only the Federal Reserve Branch Bank survives. It is the sole surviving building representing investment in public/governmental buildings in that era.

Given this background it should be no surprise that the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building appears in the most authoritative guide to downtown Seattle architecture that has appeared to date, *Seattle Architecture: A Walking Guide to Downtown*, by Maureen R. Elenga, published in 2007 by the Seattle Architecture Foundation. The Seattle Architecture Foundation convened a committee that reviewed every building considered for inclusion; the author, Maureen Elenga drew on some of the new research on Seattle architecture and did detailed research in permit files and other public records to produce a book that is a model for this kind of guide. The FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building is included and illustrated in this guide, on page 126.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Maureen R. Elenga, *Seattle Architecture: A Walking Guide to Downtown* (Seattle: Seattle Architecture Foundation [distribution by University of Washington Press], 2007), 126.

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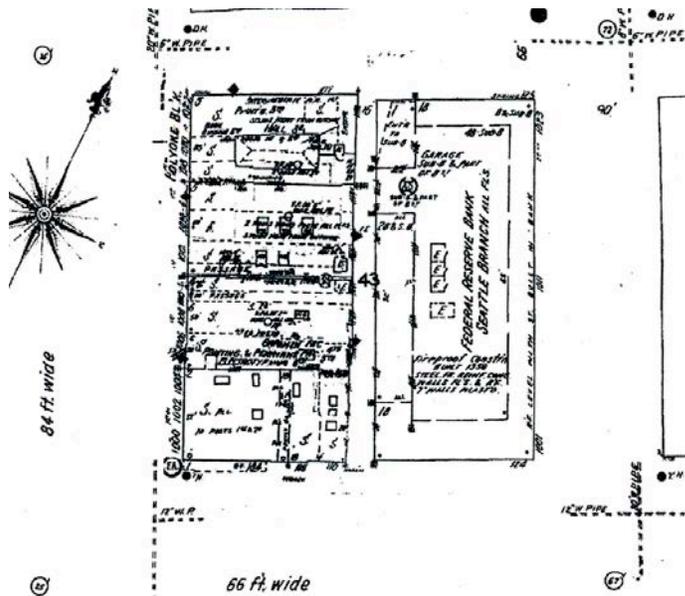
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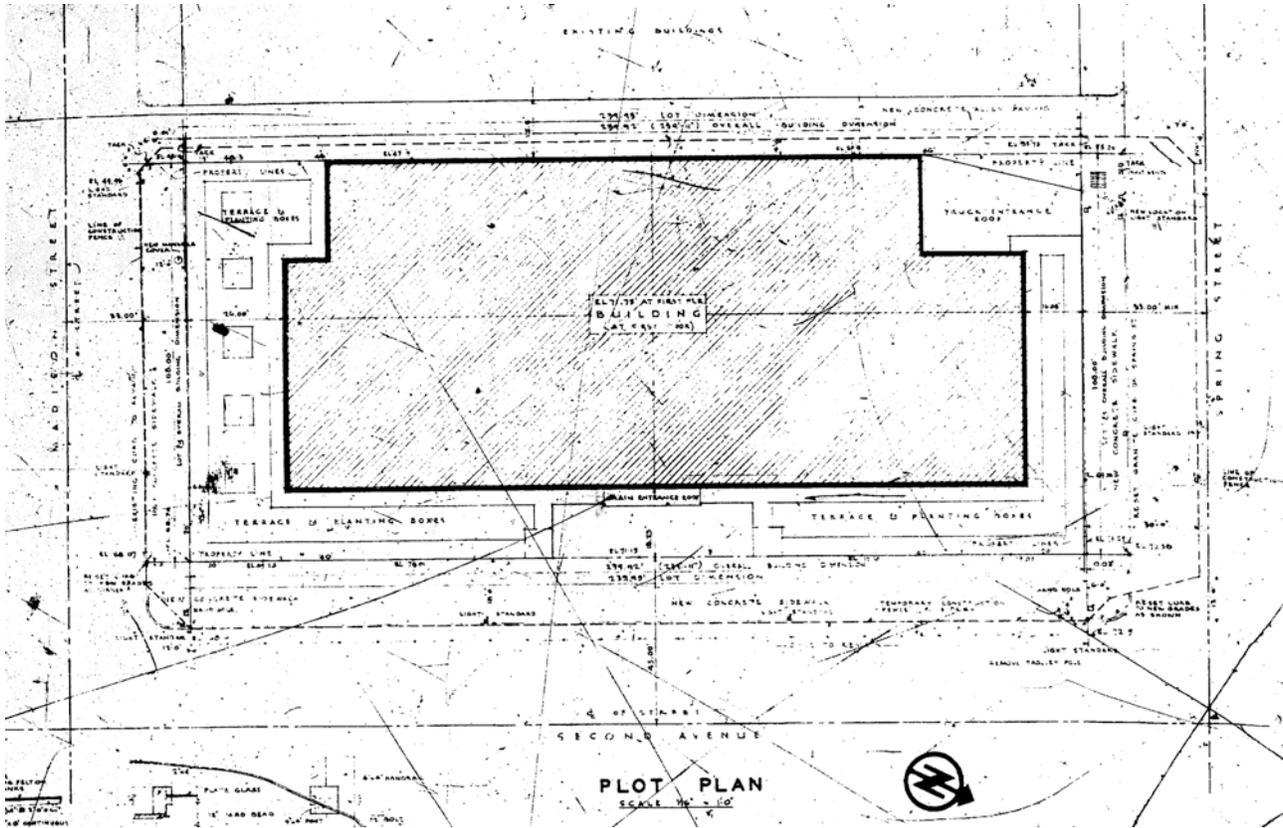
## 8. ILLUSTRATIONS



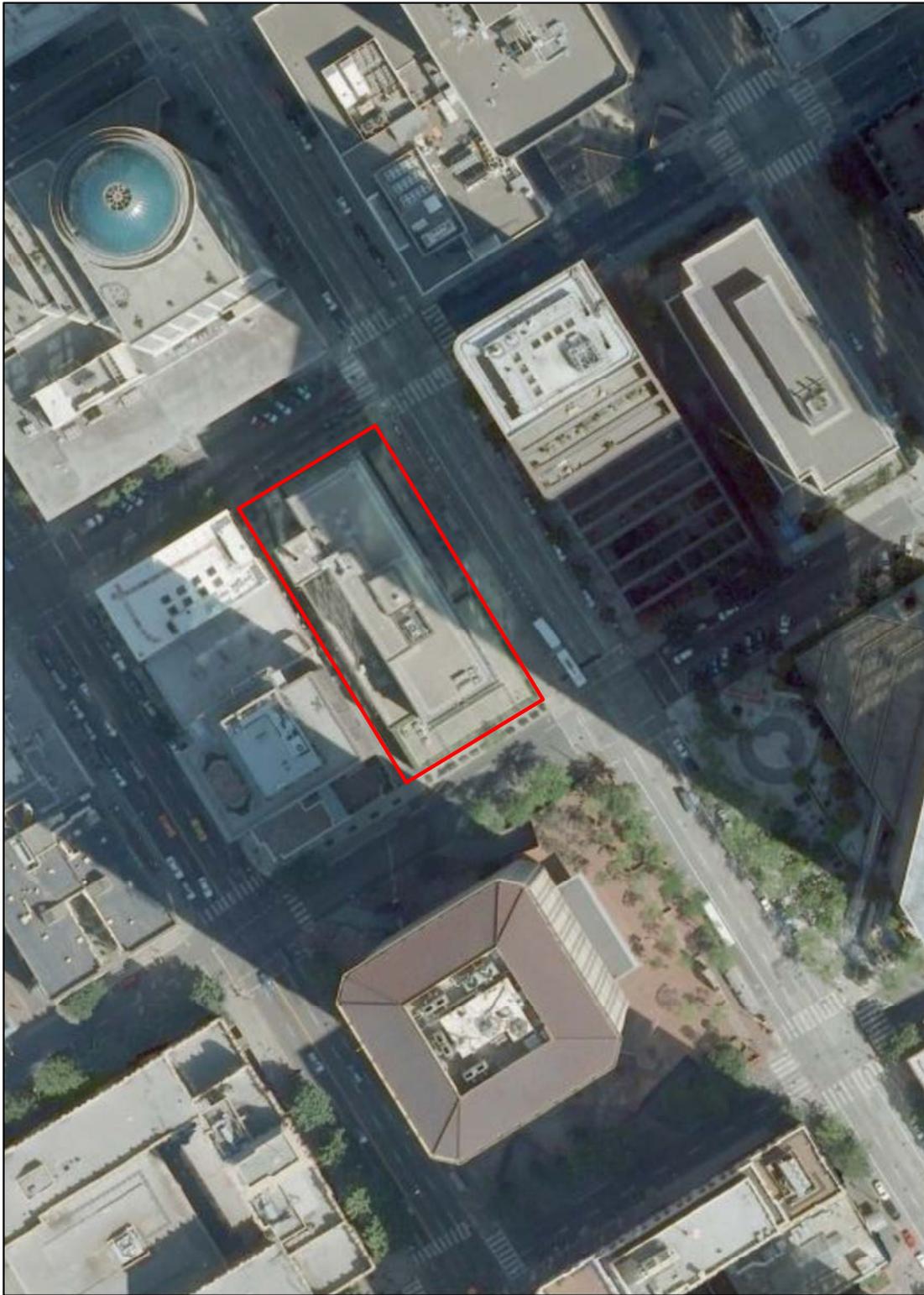
Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank building; Sanborn Map, 1950, Vol. 1, two pages knitted together for one image; site indicated in red.



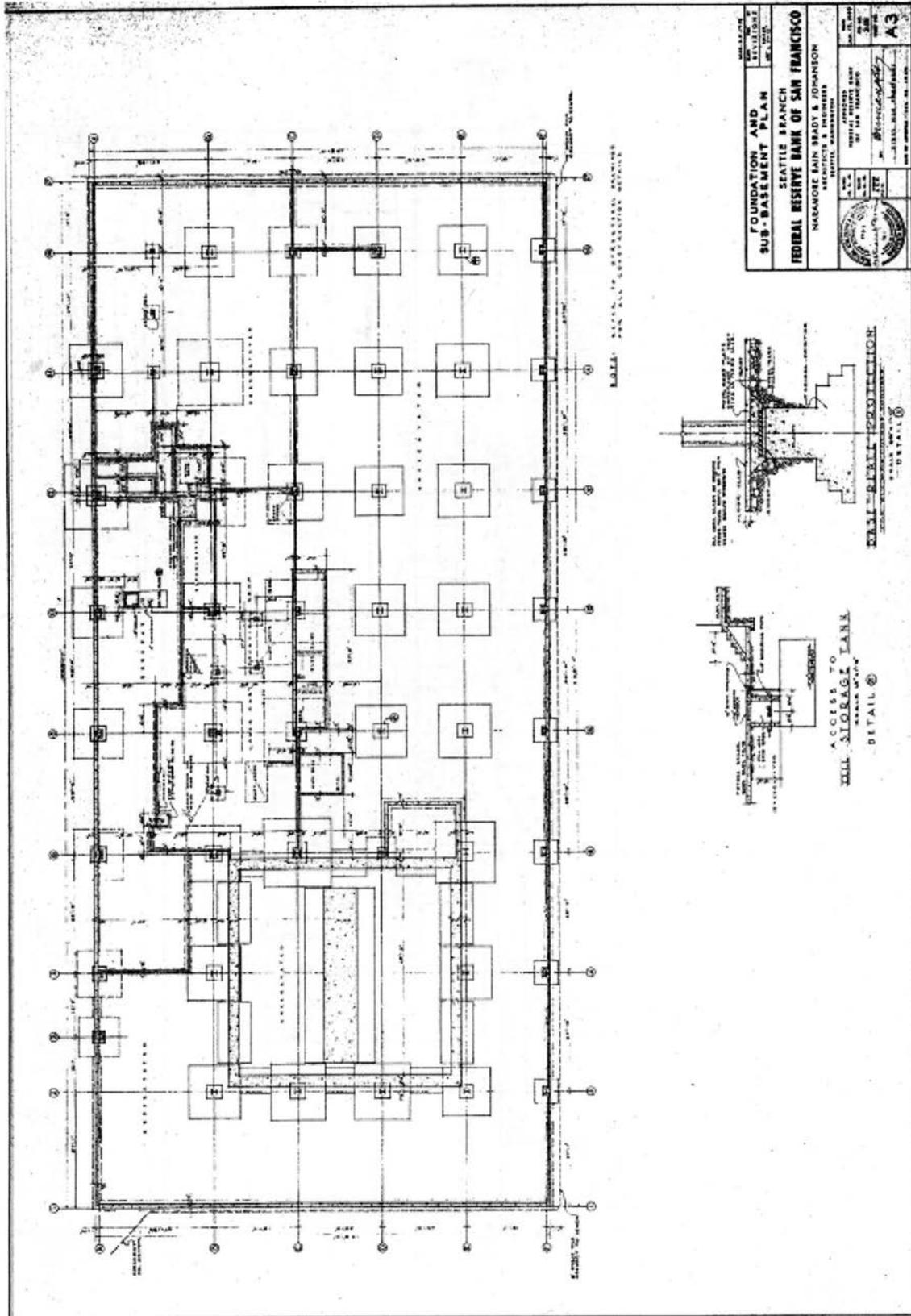
Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank building; Sanborn Map, 1951, Vol. 2, detail of block bounded by Second, Spring, First and Madison.



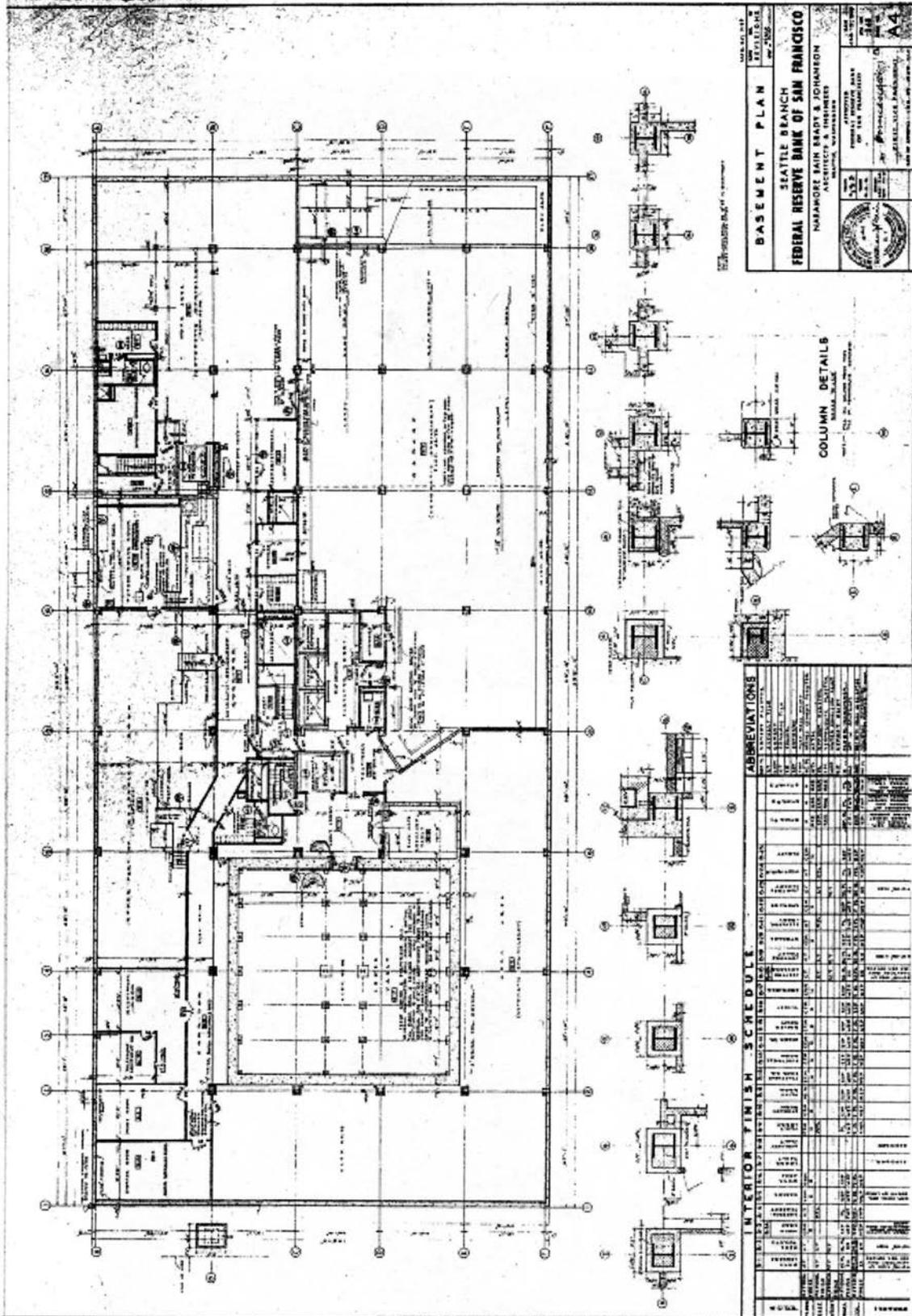
FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, plot plan, Narnore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1949.



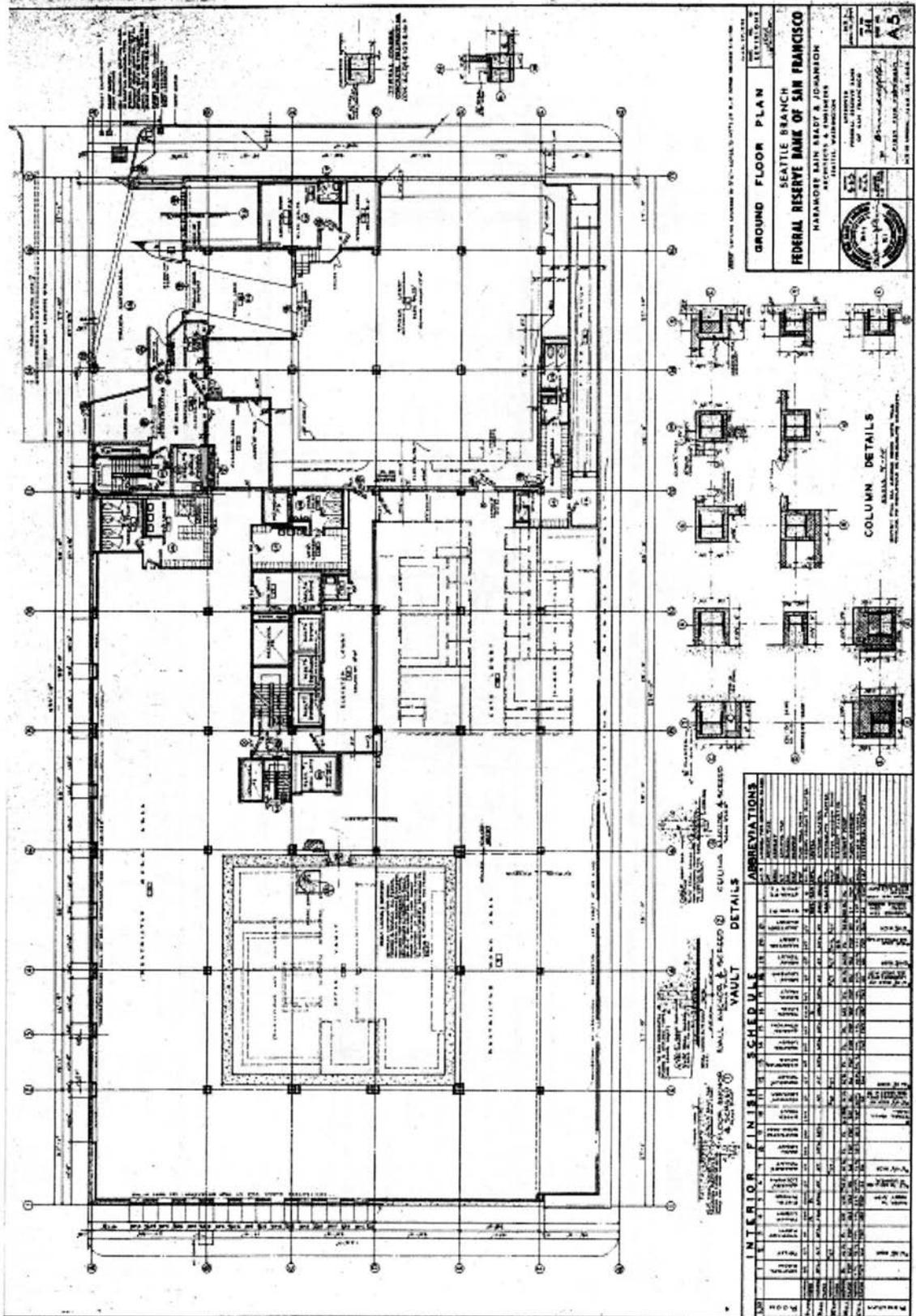
Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank building, aerial photo with site Property boundary indicated in red, 2012; Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



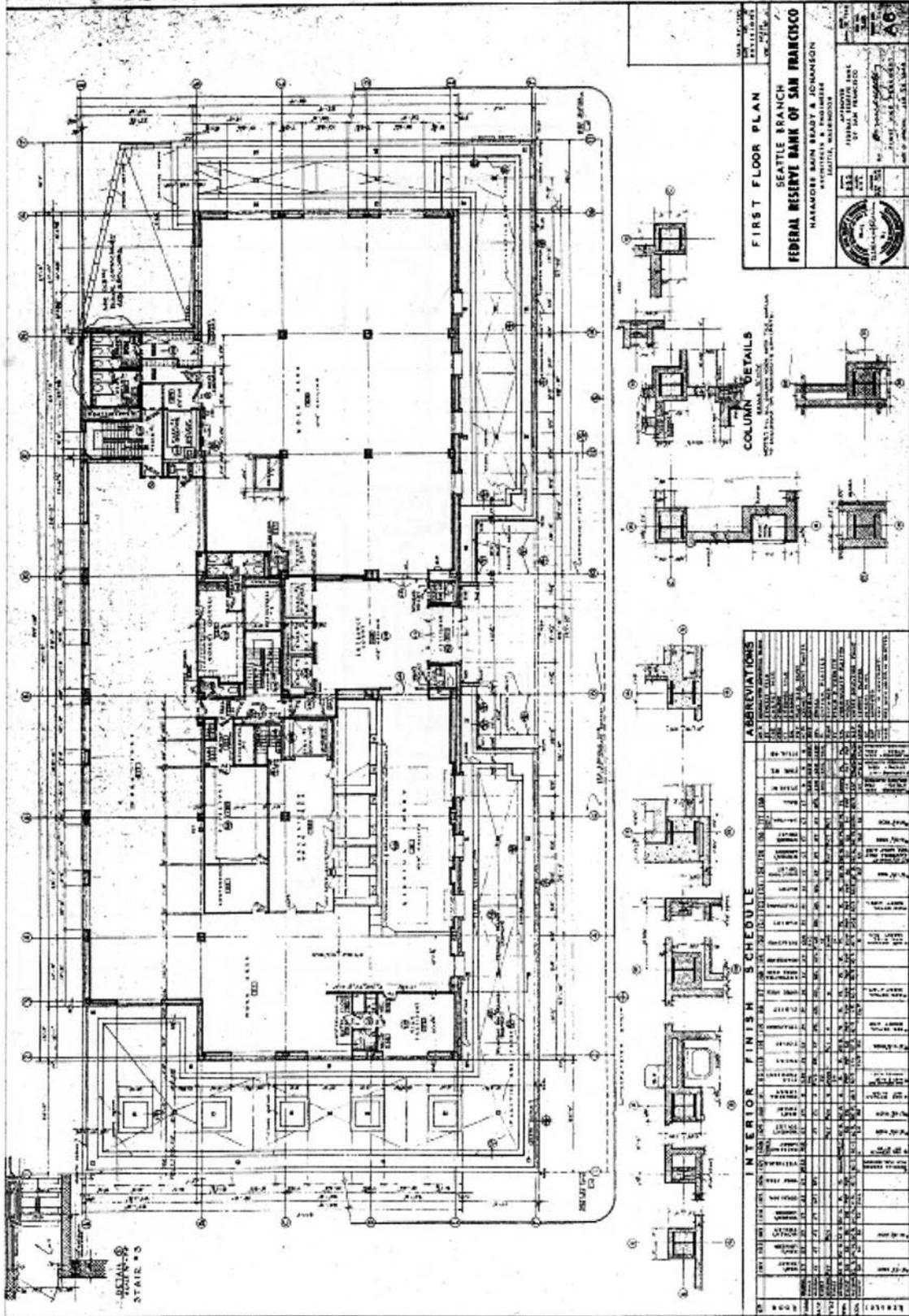
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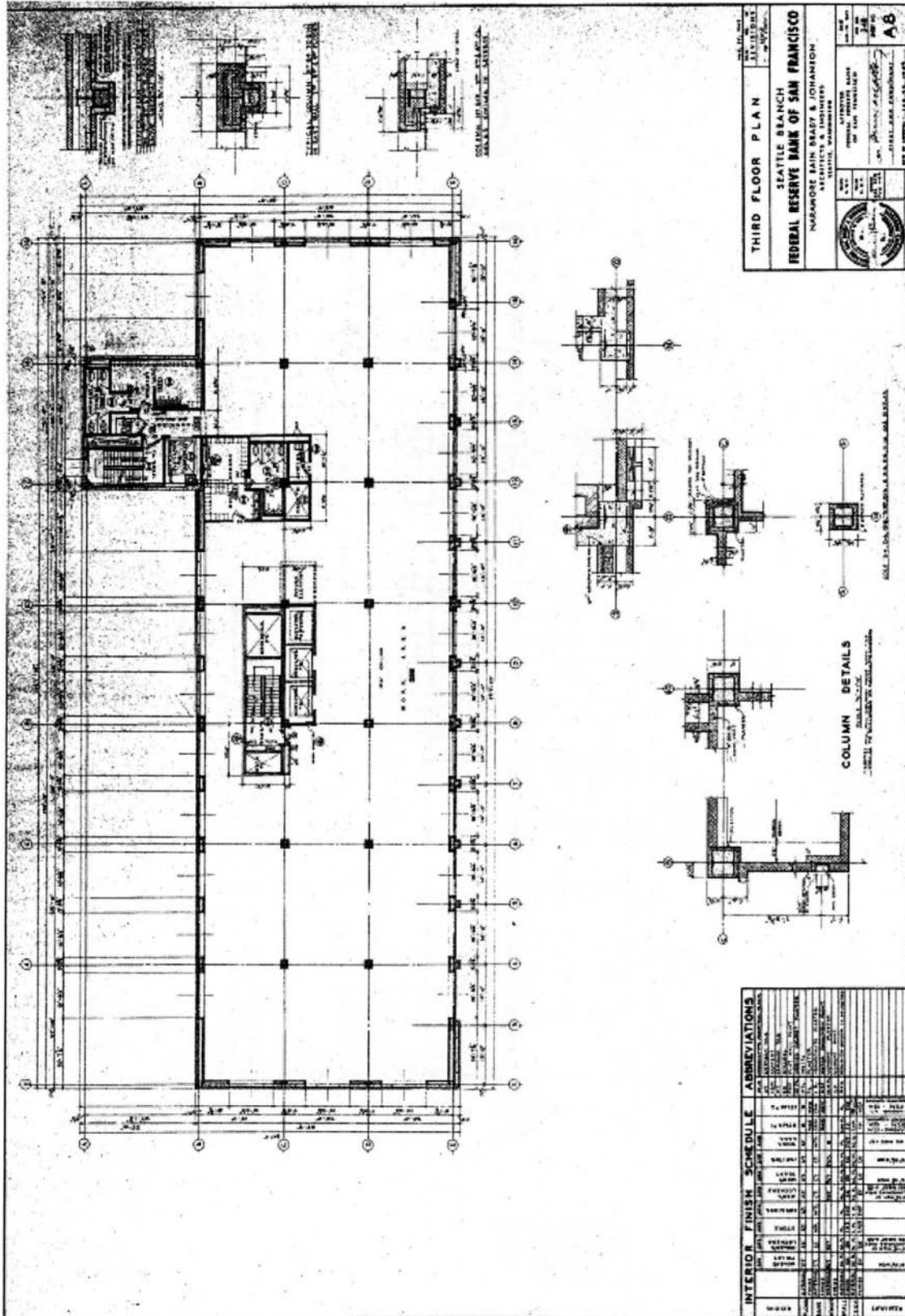


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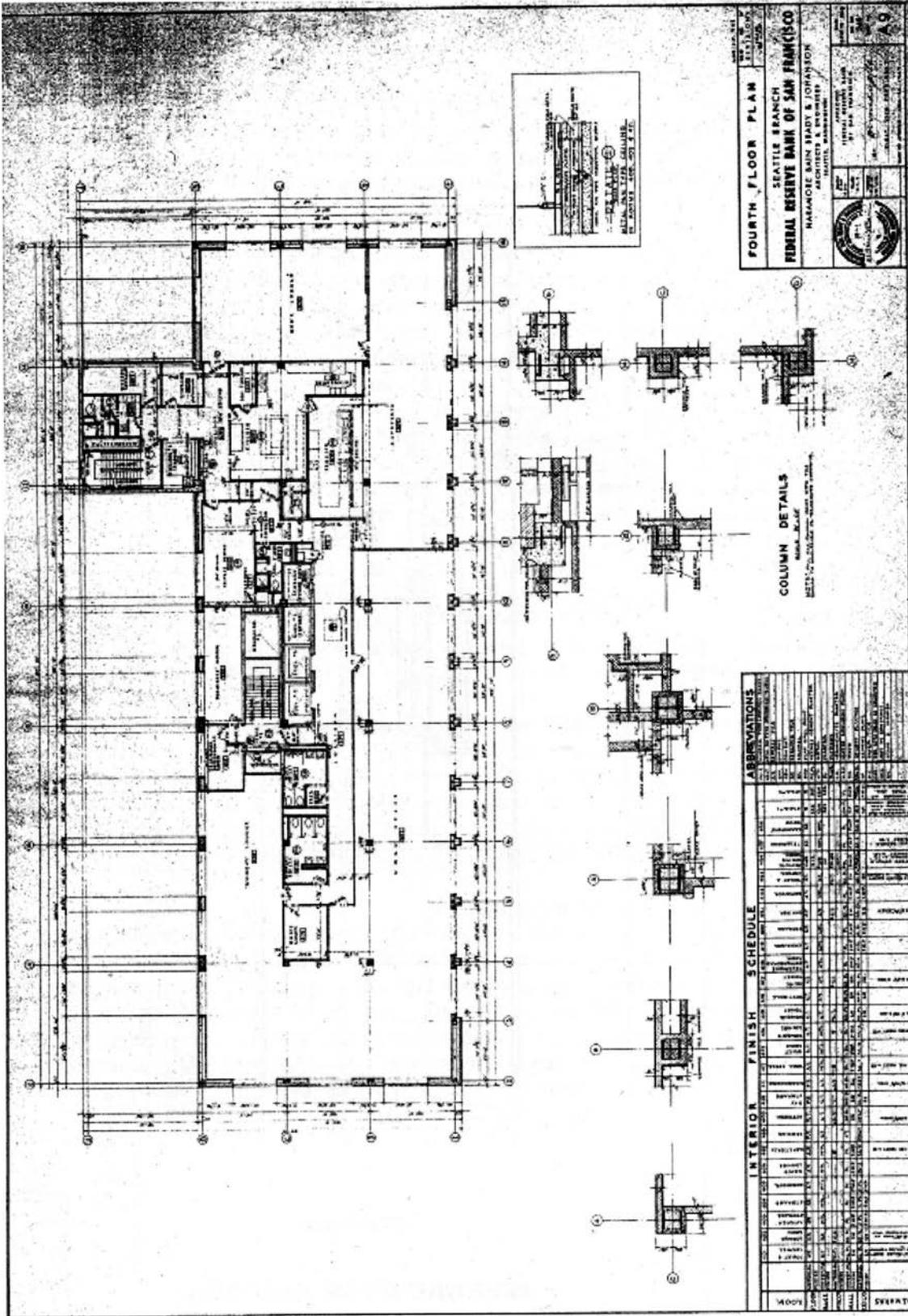


FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, first floor plan, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1949.

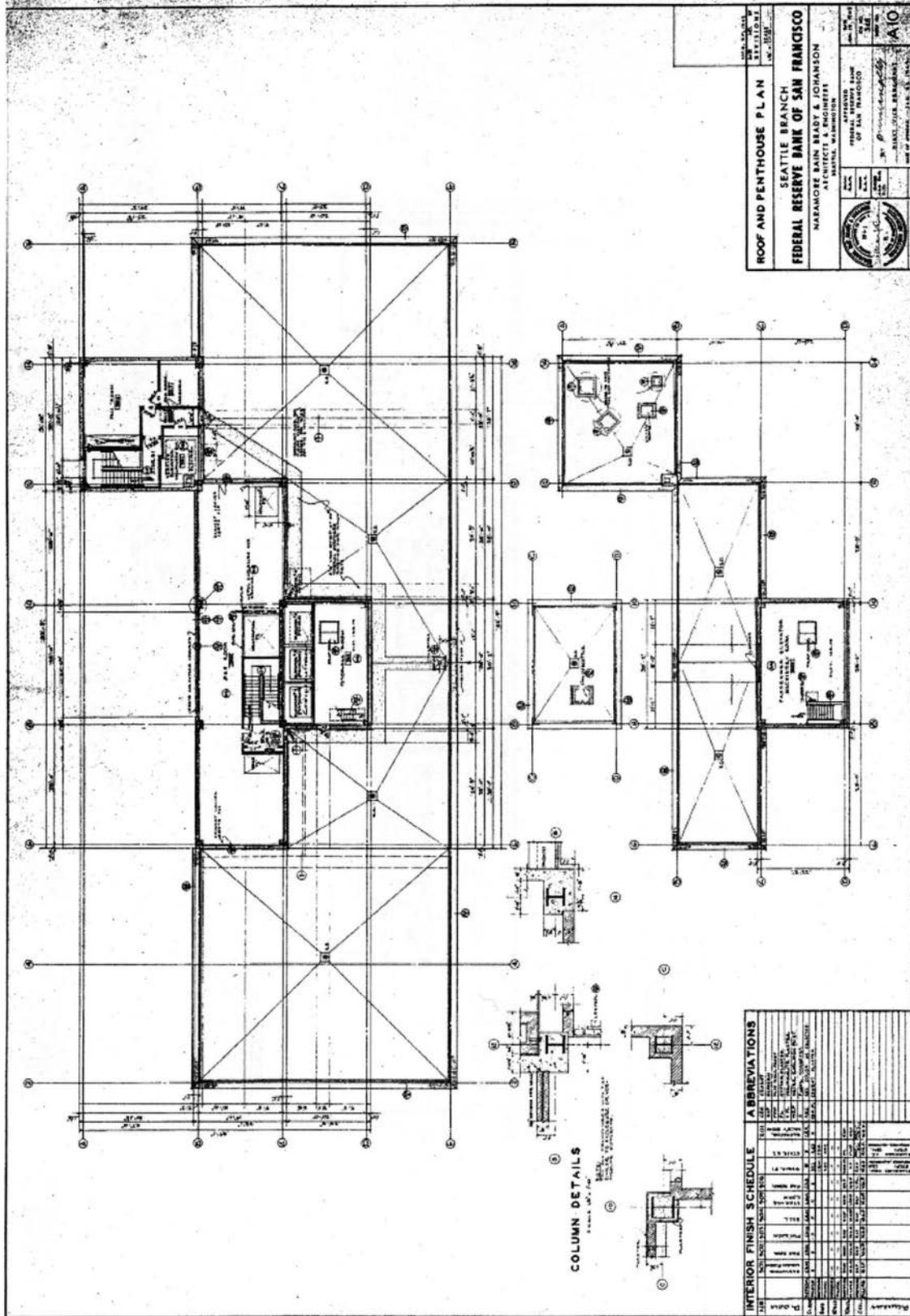




FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, third floor plan, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1949.



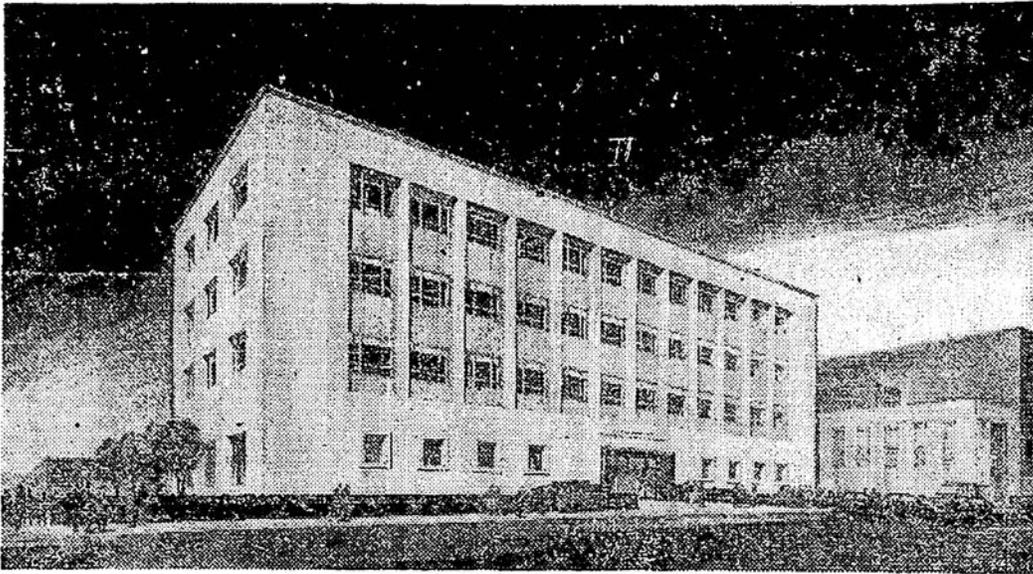
FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, fourth floor plan, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1949.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, roof plan, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1949.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1948.

## Reserve Bank to Have Building



SKETCH OF NEW BUILDING FOR BRANCH OF FEDERAL RESERVE BANK

The edifice will occupy a block in Second Avenue

Razing of the Rialto Building to make way for a new structure to house the Seattle, branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco will begin about March 1, C. R. Shaw, manager of the Seattle branch and vice president of the San Francisco organization, announced yesterday.

The site is the west side of Second Avenue, from Spring to Madison Streets. Plans have been approved by the bank's boards in Seattle and San Francisco.

Cost of the new building was not announced, Shaw said, because preliminary plans have not included

calling of bids. When the bank acquired the site in March, 1945, cost of the property was announced at \$250,000.

The new building will be six stories tall, of steel frame construction, with four floors and a main entrance on Second Avenue and a ground floor and basement below that level. The building will be set back from the street, Shaw said.

The exterior will be sandstone. Modern lighting and ventilating equipment and up-to-date improvements in office equipment will be included.

Movement of money and securi-

ties will be through the rear of the building, where armored cars will enter with every possible protection. Modern vaults are being designed.

"A Federal Reserve bank building long has been needed in Seattle to house its important operation, which for many years have been conducted in rented headquarters," Shaw said. "It will be a distinct and outstanding addition to the financial section and a building of which Seattle and the Northwest, which the bank serves, should well be proud."

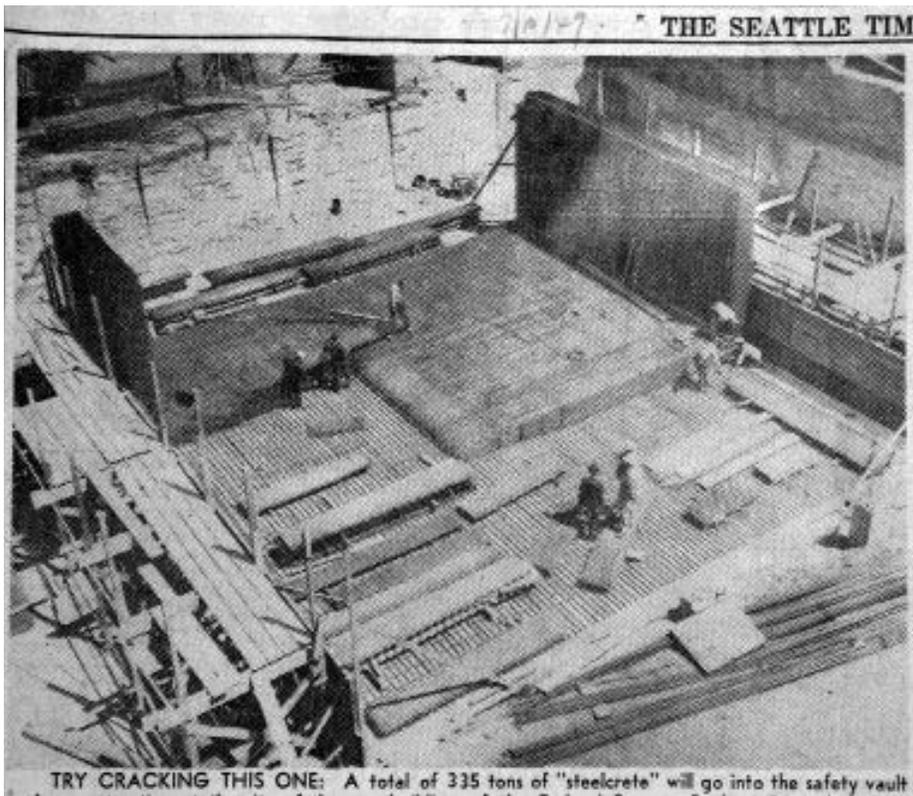
Architects are Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson.

Publication of rendering of design of Seattle Branch Bank building. The final design was essentially resolved by the beginning of September 1948.

"Reserve Bank to Have Building," *Seattle Sunday Times*, Sept. 5, 1948, p. 14.



The Rialto (later Frederick & Nelson building), Skillings & Corner, 1893-94; demolished 1949, for construction of Federal Reserve Branch Bank.

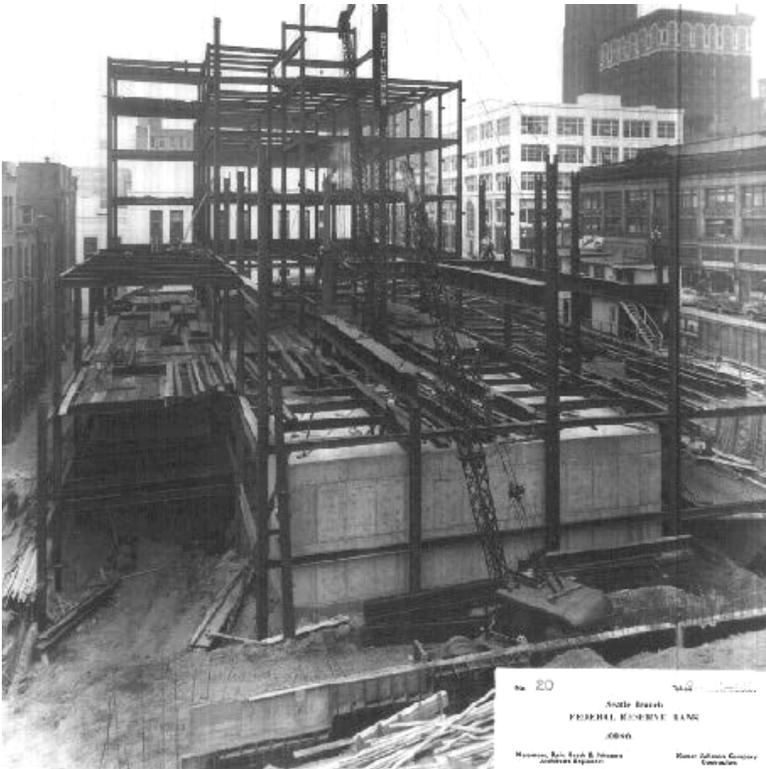


FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, vault construction in progress, July 1949.

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FRBSF Seattle Bank building, upper vault construction, 1949; Federal Reserve Bank Archives



FRBSF Seattle Bank building, steel frame construction, 1949; concrete vault In foreground; Second Avenue to right; Federal Reserve Bank Archives



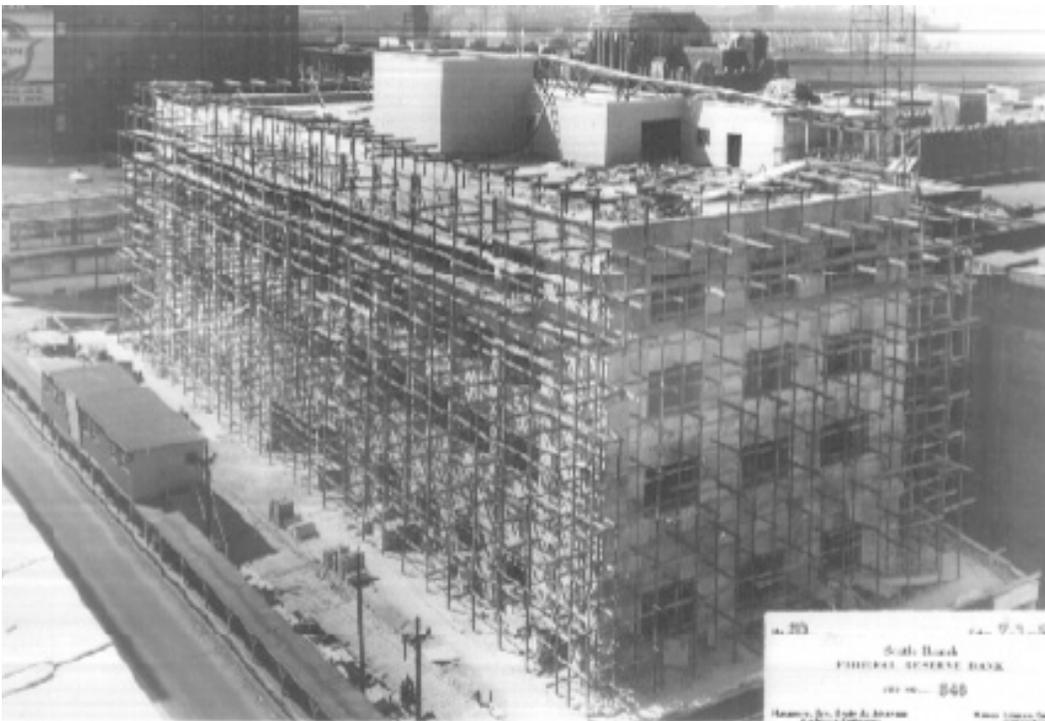
FRBSF Seattle Bank building, concrete construction, 1950; Second Avenue to right; Federal Reserve Bank Archives



FRBSF Seattle Bank building, looking south across second floor roof, 1950; alley to right; Federal Reserve Bank Archives



FRBSF Seattle Bank building, limestone cladding installation, 1950; Second Avenue to right; Federal Reserve Bank Archives



FRBSF Seattle Bank building, construction scaffolding surrounds building, 1950; view to southwest, alley to right; Federal Reserve Bank Archives



FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, late 1950; view to southwest, alley to right; Federal Reserve Bank Archives



FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, Nov. 29, 1950; view to northwest, across Second Avenue; Puget Sound Regional Archives (perspective corrected)



FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, 2011; south and east elevations; Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, 2011; east and north elevations; Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, 2011; north and west elevations; Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank building, 2011; northwest loading dock and truck bay; alley to right; Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, southwest corner; Artifacts consulting, Inc.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, original glass block windows in south elevation of podium; Artifacts consulting, Inc.



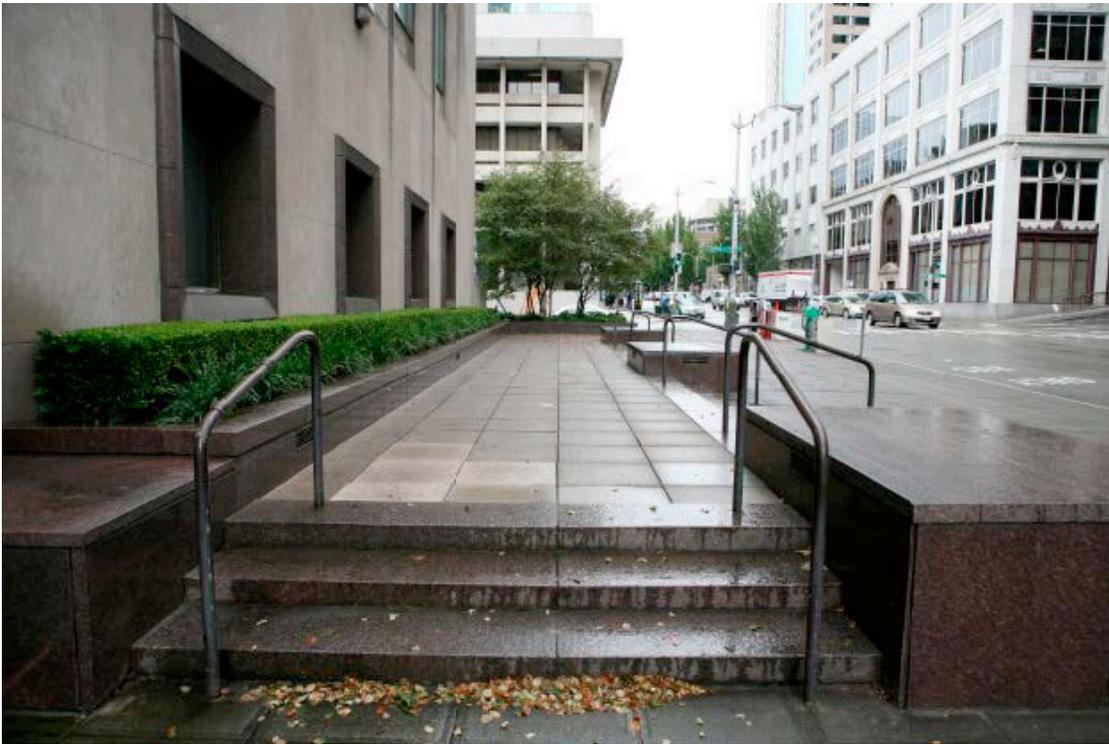
FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, original glass block window in west elevation;  
Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, original first floor window in east elevation (facing Second Avenue);  
Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, main entry, facing east toward Second Avenue;  
Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, looking north parallel to east elevation (Second Avenue to right);  
Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, first floor elevator lobby; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, first floor teller lobby; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, first floor bronze grille work; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, typical upper floor interior; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, ground floor truck entrance, interior; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, lower (right) and auxiliary (left) vault doors; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, lower vault, interior; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.



FRBSF, Seattle Branch Bank, upper vault door; photo by Art Skolnick, 2008.

**SELECTED CONTEXT, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK, 1940-58**



National Bank of Commerce/Baillargeon Building, 1907-08 (Saunders & Lawton), 1919-20, 1921, (Doyle & Merriam); Puget Sound Regional Archives, King County Real Property Records, Parcel No. 094200-0070, 1937). Located across Second Avenue from the FRBSF-Seattle site this was the home of the FRBSF (on the third floor) prior to 1949-50.



National Bank of Commerce/Baillargeon Building, with fifth story expansion, 1940-41 (C. A. Merriam); Puget Sound Regional Archives, King County Real Property Records, Parcel No. 094200-0070, 1942). The FRBSF occupied the third floor and part of the added upper floor before moving to its own building in 1949-50.



National Bank of Commerce annex, 1957-58 (later altered), George Wellington Stoddard & Associates (foreground), and National Bank of Commerce/Baillargeon Building (adjacent); Puget Sound Regional Archives, King County Real Property Records, Parcel No. 094200-0045, 1964).



Washington Mutual Savings Bank Building, 1899-1900 (C. H. Bebb), ca. 1905 (Bebb & Mendel), 1920-21 (John Graham, Sr.), 1938-39 (C. A. Merriam) (later destroyed); Puget Sound Regional Archives, King County Assessor Real Property Records, Parcel No. 094200-0035, ca. 1939). This building was located directly north of the FRBSF-Seattle Branch Bank building in 1949-50.

**OTHER FEDERAL RESERVE BANK BUILDINGS PRIOR TO 1960**



Federal Reserve Bank of New York building, New York, New York, 1919-24, 1935 (York & Sawyer); Wikimedia Commons, 6 July 2007.



Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco building San Francisco, California, 1924 (George Kelham); Wikimedia Commons, 2 March 2008).



Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Los Angeles Branch Bank, Los Angeles, California, 1929-30 (John & Donald B. Parkinson), 1953-54 (Woodford & Barnard); Wikimedia Commons, May 2008.



Eccles Building, Federal Reserve Board, Washington, D.C., 1935-37 (Paul Cret); Wikimedia Commons, 13 August 2008.



Ashton, Evans & Brazier, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Salt Lake City Branch Bank, Salt Lake City, Utah, completed 1958; Research Center of the Utah State Archives & Utah State History, Salt Lake City, Photo No. 25143.

The composition of the front elevation of this building suggests it might show some influence from the design of the FRBSF Seattle Branch Bank Building.

## SOME OTHER BUILDINGS BY NARAMORE, BAIN, BRADY &amp; JOHANSON, CA. 1945-50



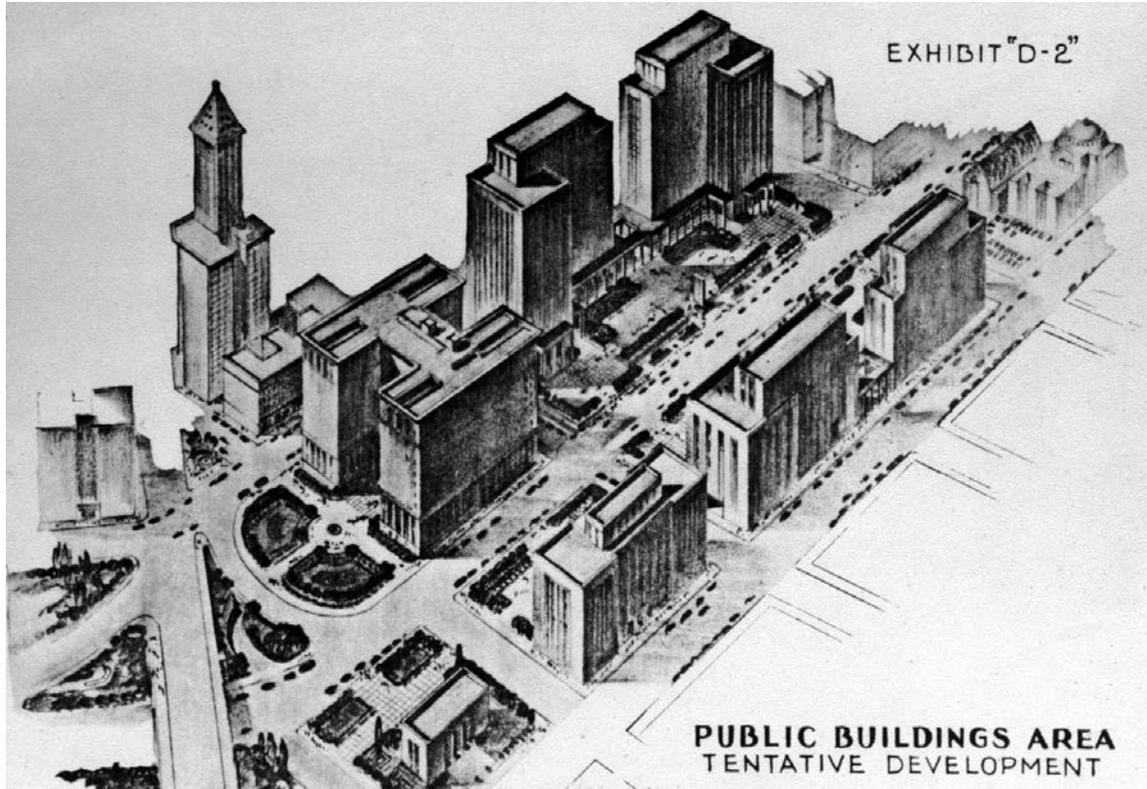
Rendering of design of Public Safety Building (looking south-southwest from Fourth Avenue and Cherry Street). Note the compositional strategy of the north wing--a solid base with punched windows and three stories of expressed vertical structure lines. Also note the solid treatment of the north end of the wing. While details will vary, the overall compositional approach of the Federal Reserve Bank, was similar to the Public Safety Building as shown here.

"Proposed Public Safety Building, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, Young & Richardson, B. Marcus Priteca," January 1946, n.p. Copy at Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries.



Rendering of design of Public Safety Building (looking north-northeast from Third Avenue and James Street). Note the compositional strategy of the west wing along Third--a solid base with punched windows for two floors and five stories of expressed vertical structure lines. Also note the solid treatment of the south end of the wing. While details will vary, the overall compositional approach of the Federal Reserve Bank, will be similar to the Public Safety Building as shown here.

"Proposed Public Safety Building, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, Young & Richardson, B. Marcus Priteca," January 1946, n.p. Copy at Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries.

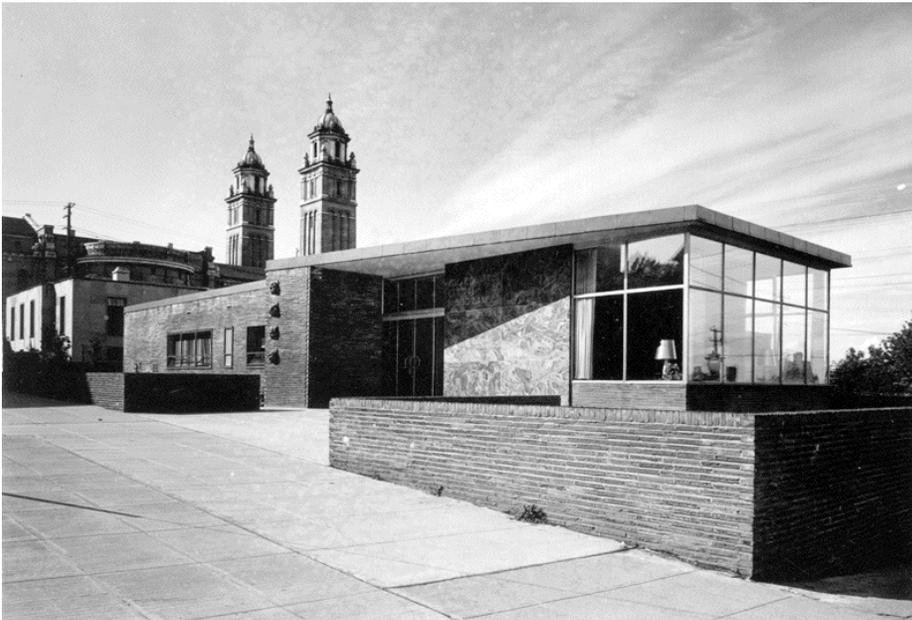


Proposed Masterplan of "Public Buildings Area" (1945), with four new public buildings surrounding public square at 4th Avenue and Cherry Street. The architectural language of the buildings appears vaguely Art Deco. When Naramore, Brady, Bain and Johanson proceeded with the Public Safety Building they followed the L-shaped plan from this masterplan, but adopted a modern architectural vocabulary rejecting the pre-war Art Deco.

Image from Visual Resources Collection, College of Built Environments, University of Washington.



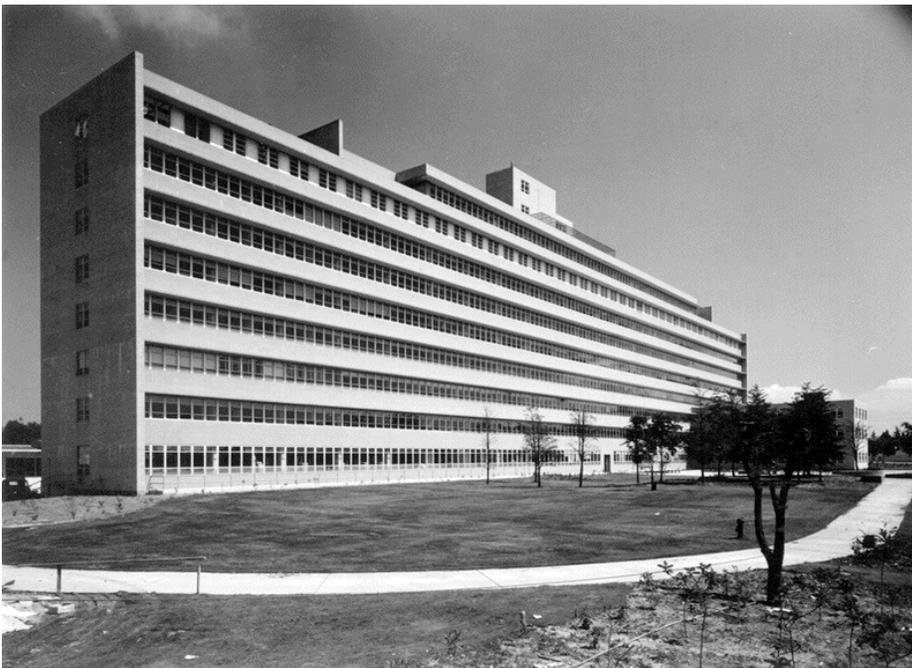
Veterans Center/American Legion Memorial Building, 620 University Street, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1945-46; Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries, Dearborn Massar Collection, DM 3303 (May 1950).



King County Central Blood Bank, Terry Avenue and Madison Street, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1945-46 (expanded 1950-51; later destroyed); Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries, Dearborn Massar Collection, DM 3303 (May 1950).



S. L. Savidge Plymouth-Dodge dealership Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, (1947-48; altered; now Washington Talking Book & Braille Library); Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries, Dearborn Massar Collection, DM 3456 (1950).



Veterans Hospital, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, 1946-49; exterior from rear; Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries, Dearborn Massar Collection, DM 3460 (1951).



Health Sciences Center, Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, with McClelland & Jones and Bebb & Jones, 1946-50 (later expanded). Note expressed vertical structure on exterior of University Hospital. Visual Resources Collection, College of Built Environments, University of Washington.



Health Sciences Center, with later additions and expansions; photo ca. 1980. Note expressed vertical structure on University Hospital. Visual Resources Collection, College of Built Environments, University of Washington.

**PRECEDENTS FOR EXPRESSED STRUCTURE AT THE FRBSF SEATTLE BANK BUILDING**

Adler & Sullivan, Wainwright Building, St. Louis, 1891-92. One of the buildings celebrated in the 1933 Museum of Modern Art exhibition "Early Modern Architecture: Chicago 1870-1910." Note the compositional strategy of recessed spandrels and expressed vertical structure. Also note the punched windows at the first two floors and the solid treatment of the corners. While the Federal Reserve Bank differs from this building in many aspects, the design concepts of expressed vertical structure, a base with punched windows, and solid corners are present in both buildings.



Howe & Lescaze, PSFS Building, Philadelphia, 1929-32; a widely recognized Modern building likely known by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson. Note the expressed vertical structure.