

# The Architect



Albert C. Martin c. 1913  
Photo courtesy of A.C. Martin Partners

Albert C. Martin, now considered a legendary Los Angeles architect, was only 31 and in business for himself just two years when Ventura County selected him in 1910 as architect for its second courthouse. But he had deep ties to Ventura County, married to a local girl Carolyn Borchard, and eight years of experience building large reinforced structures since getting his Architectural Engineering degree from the University of Illinois at Champaign. He combined knowledge of structural steel from previous jobs at the Ketcham Iron Works of Indianapolis, Pennsylvania Railroad Co. and Cabria Steel (now U.S. Steel Corp. in PA) with “close application to detail and originality of design” working for several major Los Angeles architectural firms.

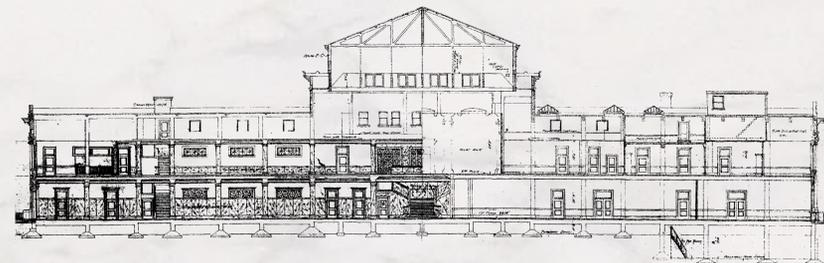
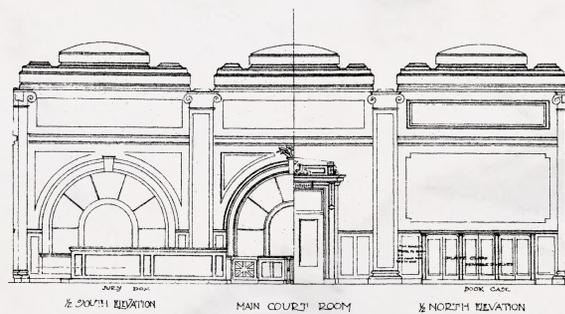
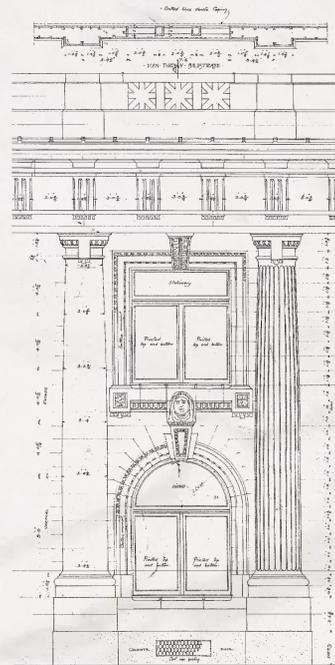
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“Combining as he does the qualities of engineer, architect and structural expert, Mr. Martin has taken a leading position in the ranks of his profession and is regarded as one of the most thorough men in his line in the country. He is sought in the planning and construction of large buildings in nearly every city in the West and at the present time has numerous large contracts in hand.”

— Notables of the West  
1913

## The Plan

Martin’s original architectural drawings illustrate the architect’s attention to detail and his grand neoclassical design for creating one of the most beautiful civic structures in California. This State of California Historical Landmark, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is noted for its gleaming terra cotta exterior and friars heads, copper sheathed dome, elegant Italian marble vestibule and foyer, coffered ceilings and paneled courtroom (now the Council Chambers).



Plans by Albert C. Martin courtesy of the City of Ventura Archives

## The Building

### Cornerstone

Martin worked with the Los Angeles Planing Mill Company as contractor, as he did with other building projects including the downtown Los Angeles landmark Higgins Building.



A rare construction photo c. 1912 shows the building’s reinforced concrete skeleton.  
Photo courtesy of Glenda Jackson and Jeff Maulhardt



A later photo shows first floor terra cotta tiles and some friars’ heads that will be the final “skin” of the building.  
Photo c. 1912 courtesy of the Museum of Ventura County

Display curated by Cynthia Thompson, Historian  
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