



Alfred S. Eichberg: Brunswick's Civic Architect

Born in New York in 1859, Alfred S. Eichberg grew up in Atlanta, before studying architecture in Heidelberg, Germany. While many people think of Eichberg as a leading Victorian era architect in Savannah, he was also active in Brunswick. Eichberg even maintained an office on Newcastle Street for his commissions in the City-by-the-Sea.

One of Eichberg's most iconic Brunswick buildings is now known as Old City Hall. Located on the southwest corner of Newcastle and Mansfield Streets, the structure is a classic example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, which is characterized by masonry walls with stone accents

and a variety of arches. This red brick building is accented with terracotta and stone, including elaborate gargoyles on the exterior. Construction began in 1886 and was completed in 1893 at a cost of \$33,000.

While Old City Hall still stands and has new uses, not all of Eichberg's Brunswick buildings remain. Eichberg also designed the National Bank of Brunswick, which stood on the southwestern corner of Machen Square. Completed in 1894, this building demonstrated Brunswick's growing prosperity in the late 1800s. Like Old City Hall, the National Bank was a beautiful example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style and featured a variety of

arches. The Kress Corporation purchased the building in 1958, tearing it down shortly after the purchase. Despite its demolition, fragments of the building still exist. The Alex and Carol Snyder family discovered stonework pieces from the building's arcaded front on their property in Brunswick and donated them to Signature Squares. In 2011, Signature Squares used these pieces to construct the fountain in Machen Square East.

While it is common for historic buildings to be repurposed or demolished, it is less common for large public buildings to continue to serve their original purposes. Eichberg's Glynn Academy Annex still serves students today, as it

has for 130 years. Built in 1889, the Annex was celebrated not only for its architectural style, but also its innovative "fireproof" design. The building shares many features with Eichberg's other Brunswick designs, including the beautiful red brick construction and stone details.

Despite his renown, Eichberg struggled to find commissions on Georgia's coast after the financial Panic of 1893. By 1900, he had moved back to Atlanta to join the family manufacturing business and no longer actively practiced architecture.

All images shown are from the Coastal Georgia Historical Society archives.