

Architects of the Payne Estate

[Carrère](#) [Hastings](#) [Carrère & Hastings](#) [Burroughs](#)
[Ahlers](#) [Walker & Gillette](#) [Jallarde](#) [Knofo & Lloyd](#) [Stanford](#)
[White](#)
[Wiltwyck renovations](#) [employee cottages](#) [New York Public](#)
[Library](#)
[Payne property in Esopus](#) [Beaux-Arts principles](#)
[Guastavino](#)

The architects of record were John Merven Carrère and Thomas Hastings of the firm Carrère & Hastings, New York City. Elizabeth Burroughs in her memoirs indicates that her father, Julian Burroughs was the architect for all the bluestone buildings, especially the English Village. This discrepancy may be cleared up if somebody is able to view Thomas Hastings' drawings, some located at the New York Public Library, but more probably at the Avery Architecture Library at Columbia University. A possibility is that Hastings drew up the sketches, and the working drawings and construction was performed by Burroughs.

John Merven Carrère (b. 9 November 1858; d. 1 March 1911) was born in Rio de Janeiro, the son of a prosperous American coffee trader whose ancestry reached back to a French family that had come to America during the French Revolution and had settled in Baltimore. After attending public secondary school in Lausanne, Switzerland and the Institute of Briedenstein, John gained admission to the preeminent design academy of the era, the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, in 1878. In 1881 Carrère sought out American Thomas Hastings as a partner in a student design project. (later, Hastings noted that John both looked and spoke like a Frenchman, despite his U. S. citizenship) Carrère left the École des Beaux-Arts in 1882. He moved to New York City, and by October 1883, he was a draftsman for the prestigious firm of McKim, Mead and White. Here Carrère continued to learn from Charles Follen McKim (1847 - 1909), who also had studied at the École des Beaux Arts. While at this firm, he again encountered Thomas Hastings. They worked together on a project in Baltimore, liked each other, and decided to break away from McKim, Mead and White in 1885. Carrère married Marion Dell in 1886; they had two daughters.

Carrère's personality was not naturally endowed with diplomatic skills. According to family tradition his difficult personality and his entrance into the dubious profession of architecture separated the man from his relatives. One descendant termed him "temperamental and impulsive by nature," and extremely sincere and forthright. "He did not pose." Hastings noted his "seriousness and absolute fearlessness in speaking the truth under all conditions and at all times." Carrère's lack of charm and humor was softened by what Walter Cook called "that buoyant manner, that enthusiasm and that sincere and friendly smile" It is a little surprising that Carrère had such

success in dealing with headstrong robber barons, opinionated trustees and officials, inefficient bureaucracies, and laggard contractors.

Carrère sought recognition for his efforts, particularly the ribbon of the Legion of Honor, and complained in a letter to Elliott Woods, Architect of the Capitol, bitterly that others, Whitney Warren and S.B.P. Trowbridge in particular, had received that recognition. In the end, Carrère failed in his quest. Some writers indicate that Carrère hoped to be named ambassador to France -- highly unlikely in view of his apolitical activity.

In the 1906-1908 period, Carrère designed his own residence in White Plains, NY "Red Oak". As country homes go, this was very modest, especially in comparison to Thomas Hastings' country home in Long Island. The geographical separation indicated that Carrère and Hastings did not socialize frequently outside of their business milieu.

Carrère labored tirelessly for the advancement of his profession. He was an active member of the American Institute of Architects, a founding member of the Beaux-Arts Society of Architects. He also worked in less conspicuous ways to help others. According to Hastings, he was "generous to a fault," and always willing to aid students and struggling artists. "if a young man in the office wanted to go to Paris to study, Carrère would arrange to give him extra work to help him save up for it, and after getting him there, he would employ him at generous terms to make a measured drawing of some monument or give him some commission to help support him there"

On his death in a taxicab accident in New York City, the trustees of the New York Public Library permitted his body to lie in state in the building so closely associated with his name.

Thomas Hastings (b. 11 March 1860; d. 22 October 1929) was born in New York City, the son of Thomas Samuel Hastings, a prominent clergyman, and Fanny de Groot, whose ancestors were of Dutch and Huguenot descent. Thomas was the sixth male descendent to bear this name, the first having arrived at the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1634. His father was pastor of the West Presbyterian Church and the president of the Union Theological Seminary. His paternal grandfather, also named Thomas Hastings, was a distinguished composer of sacred music, his most famous song being "Rock of Ages." His maternal grandfather, Henry de Groot, was a merchant and writer on law. The family academic background may have helped his academic approach to the discipline and practice of architecture, but Hastings was compelled neither to "accepts the tenets of his father's faith nor join any church."

The future architect sprang from a well born, unostentatious, comfortably set New York Protestant family, the type that chose Oceanic, New Jersey rather than Newport, Lenox or Saratoga for a summer vacation. Hastings was endowed with a respectable social position and a familiarity with the city that Carrère lacked.

Considered to be a sensitive and nervous child, Thomas was home schooled by his father. Later he attended private school in preparation for college; but at age 17 he abandoned it to enter the offices of Herter Brothers, New York cabinetmakers and decorators, and worked under the chief designer Charles Atwood. At 19, while continuing his job, he began to prepare for the

Beaux-Arts by taking instruction for half a day in mathematics, history and French. his successes in the first class concours occurred in January and February 1883. Back in New York he continued to live at the family home on West 46th Street until he married in 1900.

Charles McKim, whom he asked to be best man at his wedding, was the architect he admired most. Hastings' choice of McKim rather than of White, with whom he was equally friendly, is significant. In character McKim and Hastings both possessed ironclad integrity, serious purpose, exacting thoroughness, and a measure of personal dullness. Hastings seems to have enjoyed life, his practice, and his fame much more than did McKim.

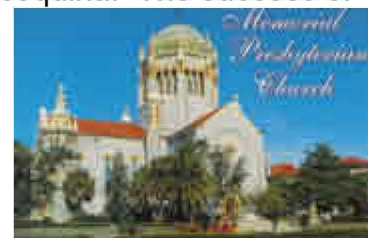
Among his friends and clients, Hastings numbered powerful, self-made bankers, industrialists and railroad moguls who usually avoided the more spectacularly publicized events of the decade. Like these men, he preferred the steady office routine and the respectable domesticity of New Jersey and Long Island residential communities. Helen B. Benedict of Greenwich, Connecticut, a handsome daughter of E. C. Benedict, sprang from this milieu. She was the only woman in his life. They married in 1900 after a friendship of ten years, but never had children. Helen erected a stable home life around him, providing warmth, encouragement and practical necessities. Hastings built "Bagatelle" in Westbury, LI, in 1908. Like Carrère he wanted simplicity; but living on Long Island where the principal interest of the residents was horses, he placed a low stable with four box stalls at one end of the entrance court.

After Carrère's death, Hastings joined with a number of collaborators. He died at the Nassau Hospital, Mineola, Long Island following an operation for appendicitis. An articulate writer, Hastings advanced the cause of Beaux-Arts architecture in America.

The firm, Carrere & Hastings. When Carrère and Hastings found they worked well together on the Baltimore project, they decided to branch out on their own and left McKim, Mead and White. Their first major project was the result of connections: Henry Flagler was a parishioner of the West Presbyterian Church and a friend of pastor Hastings, but his business interests had moved on from Standard Oil to railroads, and he believed that the railroad



would open up Florida to development. He asked Hastings to sketch plans for a hotel for St. Augustine, Florida, intending to use local Florida architects to develop the working drawings and supervise the construction. However, the architects made a case for developing the entire project: design, working drawings, and supervision of construction, and Flagler agreed. The progressive construction methods for the Ponce de Leon Hotel (1885 - 1888) employed concrete with an aggregate of a local shell and coral stone called coquina. The success of the hotel prompted Flagler to commission other buildings in St. Augustine: the Alcazar Hotel (1887-1888), Grace Methodist Church (1887) and the Flagler Presbyterian Church (1889-1900).



Hastings' social contacts quickly attracted many clients for private and business projects. Often a single client would commission a town house, a country home, and

also a business building -- not always in that sequence. The era 1890-1917 is often termed Edwardian, in deference to the mentality of the men who had made their wealth during and after the Civil War. They looked to the British pattern of respectability, and copied the notion of townhouse and country estate. Since trustees of public agencies and government officials were tightly intertwined with the baronial set, the firm was able to receive several public building commissions -- often via competition. Carrère himself had suggested the ground rules for competition juries, which were accepted almost universally.

The two men worked well together. Hastings usually did the design work, with Carrère developing the working drawings, dealing with the patrons and also the contractors. Both Hastings and Carrère exhibited great sensitivity to placement of buildings within a larger landscaping design. In some cases, Carrère alone handled some major park designs, including Hamilton Fish Park on E. Houston Street in New York City.

Guiding Beaux-Arts principles. While McKim, Mead and White designed projects from the outside in, Hastings insisted on designing the projects from the inside out. Hastings also felt that the last great advances in architectural design were at the time of the Renaissance, which is why he designed in the Italian, French and Spanish Renaissance styles. Hastings considered later architectural embellishments to be perversions, and generally insisted on returning to the earlier Renaissance models.

However, Hastings preached that architects ought to make use of modern engineering achievements, notably in steel, reinforced concrete, but also including electricity and other conveniences, all integrated into a Renaissance design. They often used local materials, such as the on-site quarry in the Esopus property for bluestone, and the use of coquina in St. Augustine.

Hastings' designs for country houses incorporated several new features. His main halls were general placed perpendicular to the entrance axis, staircases were banned from prominent positions, and hallways were designed to lead to all the functions of the building.

The New York Public Library. This is the firm's most famous project, and was won through a competition, to the surprise of many other architects. Samuel J. Tilden, a governor of New York State, had left \$3.5 million in his will for support of libraries. At the time there were two major libraries in New York City, both losing money: the Astor and the Lenox. Someone suggested that the three groups merge their efforts -- a proposal that made sense. The site chosen was then a reservoir for the Croton water supply system, along Fifth Avenue between 40th and 42nd street.

John S. Billings was appointed Director of the New York Public Library on January 15, 1896, and this appointment determined to a very large extent the character of the eventual building. One library authority, Charles Soule in 1902 wrote "Plan always from the inside outward. Do not consider any feature of the exterior or of construction until the problems of administration and growth for Libraries generally, and the particular library in hand, have been thoroughly examined and understood." This accorded completely with Hastings approach to projects.

Eighty-eight proposals were submitted in the first competition, but the Executive Committee of the library feared that the large number of proposals had led major firms to prescind from entering the competition. So the Committee polled itself as to who were the major firms, and selected the top six, including McKim, Mead and White and Carrère & Hastings. From his vacation spot, McKim cabled the committee protesting the circular's insistence that the Billings plan be followed; his prestige led the committee to soften its insistence.

The competition closed November 1, 1897. On the following day, the jury deliberated at the Astor Library. Carrère & Hastings received four votes, its nearest competitor three, and McKim, Mead and White placed third, probably because it had changed the interior arrangements to adjust to their exterior design. On November 10, 1897, the Trustees approved the jury recommendation, and Carrère & Hastings were commissioned the architects. The jury affirmed that "the Carrère and Hastings entry presents a consistent, skillful and artistic solution of practical and structural problem" They considered it "direct and dignified in treatment" and predicted it would give the City of New York a "beautiful, noble and monumental building."

The design and construction took twelve years, but the result is magnificent. It exemplifies some of Hastings ideas. The staircases are almost hidden from view, at the extreme left and right of the entrance hall. (Note that busts of Carrère and Hastings are in alcoves on the staircase; Oliver Hazard Payne is listed in the main entry hall as a contributor.)

The Lenox library was located at Fifth Avenue and 70th street. Later this became the site of the Frick mansion, designed by Carrère & Hastings (probably after Carrère's death). The library and the Frick mansion construction sandwiched that of the Payne mansion, and the similarities of exterior treatment with limestone and flat surfaces are extraordinary.

The most prominent period of the firm was between 1890 and 1917. The list at the end of this section shows some of the 600 known projects. I tried to concentrate on the period just before the Payne commission and shortly thereafter.

The country houses were a part of their practice in which Carrère and Hastings attained a dominant position, achieving great success and influence, primarily in their insistence on integrating the house into the natural surroundings and creating a multi-faceted country existence for their wealthy clients.

The Payne property in Esopus. Oliver Hazard Payne put together his 486+ acre estate in 1908 and 1909 through the intermediary of William S. Fuller, probably a lawyer in Payne's attorneys' firm, who purchased the properties to cloak the identity of the actual purchaser. Curtis Channing Blake indicates that Carrère & Hastings did prior work for Payne, location unknown, but probably a town house in New York City. There is also work for William H Payne, grain merchant, on 40th Street as early as 1895. This Payne was not a brother, but may have been a relative from either Cleveland or Hamilton, NY. However, there is substantial work for Henry Flagler who was a close partner of Payne from 1872 through 1884, and who continued to involve Payne in investments after the latter year. In 1899 there is work in Aiken, South Carolina for William Clifford Whitney, Payne's brother-in-law. Oliver built

and donated a New York city house for William Whitney and Flora Payne, and occupied quarters on the second floor for many years. Since Oliver contributed heavily to Grover Cleveland's campaign for the presidency, it would not be beyond belief that Oliver contributed or commissioned Cleveland's headstone in 1909. However, Cleveland's best friend was E. C. Benedict, Hastings' father-in-law, and William C Whitney was a close associate of Cleveland. Apart from family or business connections, Payne would move in the circle of industrialists who favored Carrère & Hastings. Note also that the firm had done substantial work in design of country homes in the first decade of the 20th century.

The Esopus mansion exhibits many of Hastings' favorite concepts. The main entrance is from the east, and leads into a hall perpendicular to the entrance axis. The stairway, though elegant, is hidden from first view, and does not contribute to the visitor's initial impression. The major portion of the mansion is U-shaped, with the hallways facing the patio and leading to all the important rooms on the first floor. One variation in the Hastings design was closing off the U-shape to make the building rectangular, with servant quarters and utility rooms in the fourth wing.

Hastings incorporated new technology into the building. It was wired for electricity, and there was a central vacuum system servicing all the main rooms on the first and second floors. Naturally he used steel and reinforced concrete. The exterior surface was imported limestone, while the gatehouse and greenhouse buildings are of Indiana limestone. For the New York Public Library the firm considered limestone from Dover, New York and Vermont, opting for Vermont when Dover was unable to produce enough similar quality limestone. The use of imported limestone may have been ordered by Colonel Payne himself. Legend has it that Payne noticed a building on the Italian coast during one of his summer trips to the Mediterranean, and told the architects he wanted a similar building. When they pointed out that the lifetime of the imported limestone might not be longer than 20 years, he answered that he himself wouldn't last 20 years, so import the limestone!

Another of Hastings' contributions to architecture was to separate the exterior surface of a building from the basic construction. It was Hastings who coined the term "curtain wall"; the building would stand on its own, with the curtain wall, be it brick or limestone, not part of the structural entity.

In their design of country houses, Carrère and Hastings took great pains to make the buildings blend in with the landscaping. In the Esopus project, they added the wall on the eastern view to mute the stark elevation of the building and fold it more gently into the hill.

Hastings disliked the trend toward skyscrapers, and argued that buildings constructed for business profits ought to be restricted in height, so as to maintain a certain look to the entire city. His arguments were modified to demand setbacks of tall buildings, but he thought this a perversion. In this, he was a throwback to Beaux-Arts thought. Even today, Paris has only a single skyscraper (Eiffel Tower excepted), built shortly after World War II, and the city fathers immediately realized it was a mistake. Now all tall buildings are exiled to la Défense, across the Seine. This certainly gives a beautiful look and feel to Paris, even if the casual observer doesn't identify why.

L'Envoi Carrère & Hastings were a firm entirely consistent with the Edwardian era or the Gilded Age, which came to an end by 1929. The next generation of the rich did not feel the need to imitate the British model, and began to choose younger architects with fresher vision than either McKim, Mead and White or Carrère and Hastings.. When the personal income tax legislation was enacted, it became difficult to justify country estates which required six persons minimum inside and six persons minimum outside. (In its heyday, Payne's estate employed over 60 people.). The final blow was the depression of 1929, when the number of fortunes shrank precipitously because so much of the wealth was in the form of stock.

Newer concepts came into vogue. The Beaux-Arts period faded quickly, and had its critics especially after 1900. One, J. Steward Barney, a proponent of Gothic style architecture expressed annoyance at the development of highly rewarded drafting skills at the expense of real architecture. In 1909 he wrote

" When I get the money, I intend to have a silk rug made, on which I intend to use the beautiful pattern manufactured by Messers. Carrère and Hastings, and entered by them as the plan for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. I am going to give that rug to Tom as a prayer rug, upon which to pray for forgiveness for the things he has done"

"it is clear that the leaders of modern architecture, Sullivan, Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies, and Gropius did not define their architectural vision with such narrow social and economic limits as Carrère and Hastings. ... The more progressive individuals of this century had eyes that moved over the whole human landscape, minds that embraced large social problems, and consciences that were founded upon more democratic ideals. Their sensibilities were attuned not to a nostalgic re-evocation of historic images and periods, but to the realities of the years in which they lived. For their patronage they relied not upon a delicate financial and social structure that collapsed resoundingly in 1929, but upon the rising level of social consciousness that preceded and then accelerated that important date. In the most general terms, the moderns negotiated, and in some cases stimulated the large shift in architectural activity from the private to the public domain. They anticipated and made history. What can be said about Carrère and Hastings and their output is that they stayed exactly even with and brilliantly reflected their times. They seem as remote to us as the builders of the Pantheon; but by the same token, as enjoyable in their great works." Curtis Channing Blake, The Architecture of Carrère and Hastings, 1976, pp. 374-275.

Many Carrère & Hastings plans were destroyed when the firm split into two units around 1920, so to this date no plans for the mansion, gatehouse or greenhouse area have been found. Some plans were donated from one section of the split to the Avery Library of Architecture at Columbia University. We also searched the documents and plans given to the library by the *Guastavino Fireproof Construction Company*, which probably was a subcontractor on the Esopus project for the main staircase and the vaulting over the larger rooms.

Rafael Guastavino (1842-1908) was an architect and a builder. Born in Valencia, he studied architecture in Barcelona and built his first house in 1866. For the next 14 years, he established his reputation for fireproof construction and built factories, warehouses, and apartment

houses in the Barcelona area. In 1881, he emigrated to the US with his son, Rafael Jr (1872 - 1950). They settled in New York City, and gained success as contractor and builder with their patented vaulting system. The Guastavinos held 24 patents on their vaulting processes. At the time of his father's death in 1903, Rafael assumed control of the Company. At the height of its expansion, the firm maintained offices in New York, Boston, Providence, Chicago and Milwaukee. The company's last project was in 1962. During its existence, their unique vaulting system was used in more than 1,000 buildings. The list of architects who hired Guastavino include McKim, Mead & White; John Russell Pope; Carrère & Hastings; Warren & Wetmore; Cass Gilbert; and Heins and Lafarge. The drawings in the Avery Library include plans, elevations, sections and details of 700 projects and technical records. One of the projects is the staircase for [Payne Whitney's house at 972 Fifth Avenue](#). Other projects of note are St. Paul Chapel on the Columbia University campus, the shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC, [Church of St. Jean Baptiste](#) at 76th St & Lexington Ave in New York City, and the Church of St. Vincent Ferrer at 68th St and Lexington Ave in New York City.

The job log book from Carrère & Hastings office between 1910 and its close 1929 which I viewed at the Avery Library contains the following entries relating to Oliver Payne, together with sequential job numbers which, while undated, give some idea of the sequence of the work.		
job number	log description	editor's comments
112	O H Payne (Estate at Esopus NY)	probably included mansion and grounds utilities design
222	O H Payne Greenhouses	
232	O H Payne Gate Lodge	
233	O H Payne Stable	the English Village
241	O H Payne terraces	landscaping in front of mansion to frame the yacht Aphrodite
242	O H Payne Ice Houses	once thought to be by Julian Burroughs
296	O H Payne six cottages	employee cottages along Black Creek road
328	O H Payne Boat house and temple	may never have been implemented. Julian Burroughs tells of his plans following directives

		of the captain of the lot.
530	Col O H Payne, Esopus NY (elevator)	one or both elevators in the mansion

=► for a fuller description of the mansion, see [Brother Francis Xavier's two part essay.](#)

<p>Representative sample of 600 works by Carrère & Hastings during the period 1890 - 1917 as listed in Curtis Channing Blake's "The Architecture of Carrère and Hastings" The sample concentrates on the period 1901 - 1912 during which time the architects worked on Oliver Payne's Esopus property.</p>		
date	sponsor	location
1885	Ponce de Leon Hotel	St Augustine, Florida
1887	Alcazar Hotel	St Augustine, Florida
1887	Borden stable	Oceanic, N J
1889	Flagler Presbyterian Church	St Augustine, Florida
1891	Flagler, H M - Kirkwood	St Augustine, Florida
1892	C N Bliss - house & stable	Oceanic, NJ
1893 & 1901	Flagler, H M - Whitehall	Palm Beach, Florida
1890	Laurel-in-the-Pines C. H. Kimball, President	Lakewood, N J
1892	Miller, Wm Starr - country home	Rhinebeck, NY
1895	Payne, William H - grain merchant	40th Street, NYC
1895 - 1896	Benedict, E C - country house & stables n.b. Hastings married Benedict's daughter	Greenwich, Ct
1896 - 1898 1904 1911	Giraud Foster - country house alterations stables & outbuildings	Lenox, Mass
1899	William C Whitney - country house Oliver Payne's brother-in-law	Aiken, South Carolina
1901	Carrère, J M - his own town house	Park Ave & 65th St
1901	Metropolitan Museum of Art - alterations	New York City
1901	Bicentennial Building, Yale University	New Haven, CT

1901	Guggenheim, Daniel - country house	Elberon, NJ
1902 - 1911	New York Public Library	New York City
1902	Blair Building n.b. other architects considered this C & H's best business building	24 Broad Street
1902	Cornell University Campus Plan	Ithaca, New York
1903 - 1907	Metropolitan Opera House	New York City
1903	Hamilton Fish Park	E. Houston Street, NYC
1903	Metropolitan Museum - Jade Room	New York City
1903	F A Bell - stable	Madison, NJ
1903	Empire Theatre (now demolished)	Broadway & 40th St, NYC
1903 - 1905	12 Carnegie libraries	various cities
1904 - 1912	Manhattan Bridge Roadway	Manhattan
1904	Staten Island Ferry terminal	St George, S I
1904	W K Vanderbilt - poultry cottage	Great Neck, LI
1904	U S Capitol East Facade Project	Washington, DC
1905	E R Squibb	78 Beekman St, NYC
1905 - 1908	House Office Building	Washington, DC
1905 - 1909	Senate Office Building	Washington, DC
1905	Carrere, J M - country house	White Plains, NY
	James Stillman, banker founder of National City Bank	7, 9, 15, and 17 East 72nd Street
1906	Flagler Mausoleum at Flagler Memorial Presbyterian Church	St Augustine, Florida
1906 - 1909	New Theatre	8th Ave & 62nd St, NYC
1906	Royal Bank of Canada	Toronto, Canada
1907	Carnegie Institute	Washington DC

1907	Chubb Building	5 S William Street, NYC
1908	Percy Chubb	New York City
1909 - 1909	Percy Chubb	Glen Cove, LI
1908	James Todd - country house & stable	Louisville, Ky
1908	S H Valentine	5 East 67th St, NYC
1908	Arthur Scribner	Mt Kisco, NY
1908	Dr. William Baltzell	Wellesley, Mass
1908	Blair, James A - country house	Oyster Bay, Long Island
1908	Bailey, Dr Pierce - country house	Katonah, NY
1908	Thomas Hastings - country house	Old Westbury, NY
	Oliver Hazard Payne, city home	New York City
1909	President Cleveland headstone n.b. Cleveland's best friend was E.C.Benedict, Hastings' father-in law. O.H.Payne had financed his presidential campaign, and William Clifford Whitney was his secretary of the Navy.	
1909	Globe Theater	Broadway & 46th Street
1909	Alfred I duPont	Wilmington, Delaware
1909	Edwin Gould	936 Fifth Avenue
1910	Thomas Fortune Ryan	858 Fifth Avenue
1910	Stanley Walker - country house	Great Barrington, Mass
1910	E H Harriman - country house	Arden, NY
1910	Mrs. Robert Winthrop	27 East 37th Street, NYC
1910	Norman Peck - house & stable	Hartsdale, NY
1910	John Jacob Astor	842 Fifth Avenue
1910	Bryant Park	behind NY Public Library

1910-1912	W. B Thompson, Greenhouse, house, stables and outbuildings	Greystone, NY
1910 - 1912	U S Rubber Building	Broadway & 58th St, NYC
1911	Oliver Hazard Payne six cottages !!! ???	Esopus, New York
1911	G L Winthrop - country house, poultry, garage	Lenox, Mass
1911	R S Lovett stable and outbuildings	Matinecock, L. I.
1911	Transportation Building	Montreal, Canada
1911	Knoedler Building	14 East 57 St, NYC
1911	Bank of Toronto	Toronto, Canada
1911	Manhattan Bridge approaches	Manhattan
1911	Exposition Building	Rome, Italy
1912	St Ambrose Chapel Whiting Chapel	Cathedral of St John the Divine
1912 - 1914	H. C. Frick - city home	Fifth Ave & 70th Street
1913	Webb-Horton Presbyterian Church	Middletown, NY
1914	Bedford Country Club	Mt Kisco, NY
1915 - 1920	Amphitheater behind tomb of the unknown soldier	Alexandria, Virginia
1915	Greenwich Hospital	Greenwich, CT
1918	Bronx Parkway bridges	Bronx & Westchester, NY
1920	U S Capital - alteration	Washington, DC
1921-1924	Standard Oil Building	26 Broadway, NYC
1924	Gimbel - Saks bridge	New York City

Stanford White was murdered in 1906, so had no direct influence on the Esopus project. However, he was a favorite of Oliver Payne. The records of White's correspondence in the Avery Library contain several hundred short notes to Payne. White joined the partnership of McKim, Mead & White in 1880, and the firm became the most prominent firm in the USA, catering to the leaders of the Gilded Age until well after 1910.



It is not clear who did the renovation designs for the Stevens mansion at 57th and Fifth Avenue which Payne gave to William and Flora Whitney. We know that Payne moved into his own townhouse at 852 Fifth Avenue in 1903. While Curtis Channing Blake indicates Carrère & Hastings did work for Payne in New York City, we have no other record of this work. Stanford White specialized in the interior design of projects, while McKim concentrated on externals. It is known that White designed the staterooms and Payne's private rooms on the yacht Aphrodite built in 1898. Payne gave White great freedom of design and also of decoration. My best guess is that McKim, Mead & White designed Payne's townhouse at 852 Fifth Avenue, and White worked closely with Payne on the interior design and decoration. By 1902 McKim, Mead & White were awarded the design of the house Oliver Payne wanted to give [Payne and Helen Whitney](#) as a wedding gift. The construction began in 1904 and lasted five or six years. I don't know why Payne turned away from McKim, Mead & White and employed Carrère & Hastings for the Esopus estate; perhaps he did not have the same confidence in McKim and Mead; perhaps Carrère & Hastings' reputation had grown substantially by 1909.

Among important works attributed to Stanford White is the Washington Arch at the bottom of Fifth Avenue, the second Madison Square Garden, and the Boston Public Library.

Julian Burroughs was the son of John Burroughs, the famous naturalist who lived in West Park. Julian attended Harvard University for his bachelor's degree, and had artistic talent. When Andrew Mason, Payne's first superintendent died in December 1912, Julian was picked to become the new superintendent. He moved his family into the Pratt Mansion. Besides supervising the general operation, he was responsible for many of the buildings on the estate, notably the boathouse and dock, the ice house (although Carrère & Hastings list the ice house as a project on their job log), the bridge over Black Creek along Black Creek Road, the peacock trellis in the boathouse, the iron gates at the front entrance. It is debatable whether he was involved in the design of the English Village. In 1952 I spoke with Joseph Ahlers as we toured the Village; he marveled at the consistent and coherent design of the buildings. It is more likely that the design was by Carrère and Hastings.

Julian also did the original design for the dairy barn and horse barn west of route 9-W. Colonel Payne died as these buildings were under construction, and the new owner, Colonel Harry Payne Bingham dismissed Julian and engaged *Walker & Gillette* of 125 East 37th Street, NYC to complete the structures. Some of the Walker & Gillette blueprints dated 10-5-1917 still exist and are stored in the Marist Brothers' files. Evidently the horse barn was intended to be used for the breeding of horses. The northern part of the L structure shows a design for six birthing stalls; the eastern section shows stalls for horses. The upper floors are marked for storage and carriages. It is unknown if this ever happened.

John Allan Ahlers (1895 - 1983) was born in Oberhausen Germany on 3 Nov 1895. His family moved to Baltimore in 1904. John came to St.

Anne's Hermitage, Poughkeepsie NY in 1910, probably via the advice of the Redemptorist Fathers who staffed his Baltimore parish. The Redemptorist Fathers and Marist Brothers had communicated earlier when the Brothers considered the purchase of the vacant Esopus properties. John became a Marist Brother in 1913, and spent the next few years in Marist Brother houses, including a two year stint as a teacher at Ecole St. Hyacinth, in Manitoba, Canada. The school serviced the French speaking section of Winnipeg. John spoke fluent English, French and German, and was proficient in Latin. In 1917 John was stationed at St. Ann's Academy in New York City and registered for the World War I draft. He spent several years at Saint Ann's, as the scholasticate was located there, and he may have taught there 1916 - 1918. Brother Francis Xavier studied, lived and taught there in the same years. John left the Brothers in July 1918 and returned to live with his widowed mother, brother and sister in Baltimore. He is listed in the 1920 census as a clerk in a contractor's office. The 1930 census classifies him as an architect with his own practice. John qualified via the apprentice route rather than formal architectural school.

Within the Brothers, John was a year behind Brother Francis Xavier Benoit and the two maintained a close friendship. While teaching at Marian College in Poughkeepsie, Brother Francis acted as project manager and general contractor for a small gymnasium with wings providing additional space for carpenter shop, print shop, laundry and garage. Brother Francis used professional labor for the skilled trades, especially masons, plumbers, and electricians, but the remaining work was done by Marist Brother teachers on summer vacations and by student Brothers during the remainder of the year. This was a continuation of a tradition dating back to the 1830s. Father, now Saint, Champagnat built the main headquarters at Notre Dame de l'Hermitage near Lyons in the same manner.

In 1949 Brother Francis was commissioned to manage the construction of the 1950-1953 additions to the English Village and the new garages near the Holy Rosary cottages. He chose Ahlers as architect because Ahlers understood the training system for the Brothers and was comfortable with the practice of do-it-yourself which John had experienced during his stay in Poughkeepsie.. In the two previous decades, Ahlers did substantial work for churches and schools in Baltimore MD.

Despite learning his trade sans formal architectural learning, John had a good grasp of architectural styles. He correctly identified the design of what we call the English Village as French Renaissance, and told me how each of the buildings designed by Carrère & Hastings was from a different period of French or Italian Renaissance. Finances prohibited carrying out the additions entirely in field stone. The new construction was in red brick, located just north of the original English Village but hidden from view as the observer entered the Village, save for the top of the gymnasium. To renovate the original English Village itself, John used dark wood and stucco to close the two open archways leading to the north and west as well as several bays. The only deviations were his use of glass brick to close the entrance to the carriage house—a 1950s favorite—and the sheds outside the original garage bays were roofed with shingle rather than the slate called for in Ahler's original design, a concession to limited finances. He also designed an alcove in honor of Blessed Champagnat

which jutted out from the large opening in what had been the electric generating shop.

When John designed the chapel, he showed his love of and expertise in ecclesiastical architecture. The finishes were of light wood. At one side was a small alcove honoring Blessed Champagnat, the only place where John splurged on cut stone. The alcove was built out from the large opening in what had been the main door to the electric generating shop.

Wiltwyck renovations. Sometime around 1932 Colonel Harry Payne Bingham decided to donate the entire property to the Protestant Episcopal Mission Society of New York City. The estate took the name *Wiltwyck*, the original name of the city of Kingston. The section between route 9-W and the river was planned as a sanitarium, and the section across 9-W was planned as a school for troubled black youngsters. Architects developed a series of grandiose plans. Given the precarious funding of the entire project and the depression era, none of these plans were carried out, but they show the direction Wiltwyck wished to take.

Knofo & Lloyd, 34 West 13 Street NYC, developed plans for a free-standing of Mid Hudson Children's Respite Center.

There are sketches of hospital quarters in the mansion located in the servants rooms on the west section of the quadrilateral, by Starrett & VanVleek, 267 Fifth Ave, NYC. . The servants' rooms were to be patients' rooms. The doctor's room and office was to be in the southwest corner of the non-servant area (curiously enough, this was the room of Brother Joseph Cadroes, teacher and infirmarian, in 1942-1945; the next room down was an infirmary for four students. I never got to stay there.) The nurse's quarters were in the northwest corner of the non-servant area (where Brother Victor Eugene's sewing rooms were located in 1942-1945). When the mansion was converted for use as Marist Preparatory, the servants' rooms were demolished and three classrooms were formed in the space, with folding doors so that the three rooms could be supervised by a single teacher during study periods. (Prior to completion of these classrooms, the three classes were held in two bedrooms at the northeast section of the east wing and another classroom in the south wing. The biology and physics labs were also located in the south wing.)

In 1932, *Louis E Jallarde*, 597 Fifth Ave, NYC, submitted a design for two free standing buildings to be sited between the Pratt House (Holy Rosary) and the English Village; one would be a dining room, the other classrooms. Lack of funds forced an alternate solution. The Pratt House had an addition at the eastern side, and the porte-cochere was filled in. The eastern addition became the dining room. The Juniors used this kitchen and dining room facility for several months in 1942 until the facilities in the mansion were completed.

Starrett & VanVleek, 267 Fifth Avenue, NYC, submitted a comprehensive design for a complete school to be located between the Black Creek and the railroad right of way. This was too expensive, and Wiltwyck decided to use existing buildings. A dormitory for counselors was added to the chicken farm, and parts of the dairy and horse barns were converted for classroom use.

Employee cottages. Curtis Channing Blake lists 'employee cottages' among the Carrère & Hastings projects, and they appear in the job log of the firm now held at the Avery Library. These were originally contiguous to the Hudson River part of the estate, as route 9-W followed the Black Creek Road until land was taken from Payne by eminent domain in 1915. When Wiltwyck gave up hope for the Starrett & VanVleek proposal, it opened up the upper floors with dormers as sleeping quarters, and added a brick building at the east as a kitchen and dining room. The dining room was also used for boxing, considered a manly sport in those days. Floyd Patterson began his boxing career in that room. In 1968, the area around the cottages was separated and sold in hopes of making it a separate school, which failed. Finally in 1972, it was purchased by contractors and converted into rental apartments. When Fred Lafko sold the area to JAF partners, John McClelland added a wing to the brick kitchen, built a wood frame building at the western ledge, and drilled artesian wells to create an independent water supply.

References:

Curtis Channing Blake, The Architecture of Carrère and Hastings, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Columbia University, 1976, 547 pp, contains best listing of at least 600 projects undertaken by Carrère and Hastings from 1883 through 1929. (Available at Avery Library of Columbia University).

Biographies of Thomas Hastings and John Mervyn Carrère in Dictionary of American Biography and American National Biography. (Chappaqua library)

Several internet biographies of Hastings, Carrère, McKim, Mead and White.

Jean-Pierre Isbouts, Carrere and Hastings, architects to an era, Doctoral Dissertation, Leiden, Netherlands, 1980. (Available in New York Public Library)

Thomas Hastings, Thomas Hastings, architect; collected writings, with a short biography by David Gray. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933, 254 pp. (Available in New York Public Library).

Thomas Hastings, Scrapbooks of Architecture. (Available in New York Public Library)

Avery Drawings and Archives, Columbia University Libraries. most recent contact was with Janet Parks, curator at jspl@columbia.edu and her assistant curator, Lou DiGennaro (15 Jan 2004). We looked at plans attributed to Carrère & Hastings; materials relating to Guastavino Fireproof Constructions Company; correspondence between Stanford White and Oliver Payne; and the office job log of Carrère & Hastings office from 1910 to its close in 1929.

Private communication from John McClelland

Various blueprints and sketches in possession of the Marist Brothers. Current location is a trunk stored in the former choir loft of the English Village chapel. contact is Brother Donald Nugent.

Recent communications (March 2006) from Dean Wagner and Stefan Goodwin who are working on the biography of John Allan Ahlers.

most recent revision 15 April 2006

return to [top of page](#) [home page](#)