

## **Lamar Bathhouse**

The Lamar Bathhouse building opened on April 16, 1923, replacing a wooden Victorian structure named in honor of the former U. S. Supreme Court Justice Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Lamar who was Secretary of the Interior when the first bathhouse was built in 1888.

The present structure cost \$130,000 to build. Harry Schwebke's architectural design for the



**First Lamar Bathhouse, 1889**

Lamar can be described as representing “a transitional style often used in clean-lined commercial buildings of the time that were still not totally devoid of elements left over from various classical revivals.” The stone, brick, and stucco construction is moderately Spanish in flavor and coordinates well with the five bathhouses with Spanish motifs. The most distinctive exterior component is the sun porch with its windows of three sections and a wide center bay. The Lamar was unique in that it offered a range of tub lengths (5', 5'6", 5'9", 6', 6'6") for people of various heights. It also had a small coed gymnasium with another separate area for women adjacent to the gymnasium. The lobby, featuring a long counter of Tennessee marble, was the largest of the eight bathhouses on the Row. Murals and stenciling were added to the lobby and stairways sometime in the 1920s by Danish muralist W. L. Zelm for a European aura. In the mid-1940's, the interior halls and stairs were embellished with marble, ornamental iron balustrades, and silver glass interspersed with red panel wainscots. The Lamar closed November 30, 1985.