



*Richmond Memories*



The Taverns and Hotels  
of Nonsuch

James Michael Paschall Coleman III



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**James Michael Paschall Coleman III**

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**This Book is Dedicated to the Great Hoteliers of Richmond,  
Especially  
Lee Paschall (1878 – 1958) of Richmond Hotels, Inc.**



*Lee Paschall*

**And His Descendants**



*Russell G. And Charlotte Bell  
Of Richmond, Virginia*



## **Review Comments of Related Publications By The Author**

**Robert P. Winthrop, Architect**  
**Farmville, Virginia**  
**July 2, 2014**

Family genealogical histories can range from fanciful collections of myth and supposition to detailed works of historic research. James M Coleman's book, *The Coleman Family of Warren County, North Carolina*, is clearly in the latter category.

Coleman uncovered detailed information on the life of Lee Paschall, whose sister married a Coleman.

Paschall, a native of North Carolina, became the most important building contractor and hotel developer in Richmond in the first half of the twentieth Century. He was the contractor for some of the largest buildings in Richmond of the period, including the 4,000 seat Moorish style ACCA Temple, best known as the Mosque, and now called the Altria Theater, as well as the Art Deco masterpiece, the John Marshall Hotel.

It is easy to forget that corporate history is often family history. Paschall, his brothers, cousins and nephews were deeply involved in the creation and management of the Wise Contracting Company and Richmond Hotels, Inc. Starting with the Wise Granite and Construction Company, the firm grew until it played a major role in the building of the Pentagon in 1941-43. The Pentagon was among the most impressive construction projects of the twentieth century in America.

Paschall's business partner in Wise Granite and Construction, Thomas Gresham, owned lumberyards in Richmond before he joined the Wise firm. He had been involved in running railroad restaurants as a young man. In the 1920s, Gresham and Paschall became the developers and owners of the William Byrd and John Marshall hotels in Richmond and the monumental Chamberlin Hotel in Hampton. Paschall did not just create hotels; he built landmarks.

Wise Contracting Company survived from 1903 to 1980. This is remarkable, considering the financial instability of most contracting firms. Its reliance on family relationships played an important role in the firm's longevity.

Author's Note:

Robert P. Winthrop is partner at Winthrop, Jenkins, and Associates, a Virginia based architecture firm specializing in historic renovation.

Historic buildings have also been his focus in numerous writings and lectures.

His books and articles include *The Architecture of Jackson Ward, Cast and Wrought: The Architectural Metalwork of Downtown Richmond, Virginia*, and *Architecture in Downtown Richmond*.

Ten articles, written for the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, were published as *Richmond's Architecture*.

He has given major lecture series for the Monument Avenue Foundation and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

He is the coauthor, with Sarah Driggs and Richard Guy Wilson of *Richmond's Monument Avenue*, published in 2001.

The author thanks Bob Winthrop for his comments on the first Coleman related book and on his thoughts concerning the contribution of Wise Construction Company to the history of Richmond, Virginia, in the first half of the twentieth Century.



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