

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC MACKAY SCHOOL OF MINES BUILDING

AND/OR COMMON same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER University of Nevada, Reno campus

CITY, TOWN Reno VICINITY OF n/a  
STATE Nevada CODE 32 COUNTY Washoe CODE 031  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Nevada-at-large

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY  | OWNERSHIP                                  | STATUS  | PRESENT USE  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED          | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE           | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED                   | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE              | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH              | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE                   | <b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>                  | <b>ACCESSIBLE</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS        | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED              | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC         |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION                |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> NO                           | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:                          |

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Board of Regents, University of Nevada System

STREET & NUMBER 405 Marsh Ave.

CITY, TOWN Reno VICINITY OF STATE Nevada 89505

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Washoe County Recorder, Book 168, p. 374, June, 1887

STREET & NUMBER Washoe County Courthouse, P.O. Box 1791

CITY, TOWN Reno STATE Nevada 89505

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Board of Regents, University of Nevada

DATE June, 1887  
 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Washoe County Recorder, Washoe County Court House

CITY, TOWN Reno STATE Nevada

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION                                |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT       | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD            | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Mackay School of Mines building is an educational, research and museum facility located in a detached setting at the north end of the University of Nevada, Reno campus main quadrangle. The original configuration of the building (1906), as designed by William S. Richardson, of the New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White, was U-shaped: a 40x112 ft. two story Front Section with two 40x80 ft. one story wings at the rear, enclosing an open-ended atrium area. In 1926 the rear section was remodelled by Reno architect Frederick J. DeLongchamps, who added second storys to the rear wings and enclosed the atrium area, giving the building its present rectangular configuration. The present copper-sheathed hipped roof and skylights were added at that time.

1. Front Section. The Front Section of the building is 40x112 ft. two stories in height, with three window bays on either side of the front portico, and three window bays on each side facade. The Front Section has a rubble masonry foundation, sheathed on the exterior with Indiana limestone. The Front Section is in the Georgian Colonial style, of Flemish-bond brick construction, with walls approximately 17 inches thick. The front (south) facade has a two story portico with four monumental Tuscan Order columns of Indiana limestone and pediment of limestone. Limestone cornices also extend outward from the pediment along the front and side facades. Within the portico there are engaged two story rectangular limestone responds on either side of the main door. The portico ceiling is a "Gustavino Dome" of white mosaic tile. The double main doors are of five-panel oak construction decorated with concentric medallions. The doors are framed by limestone posts and lintels. Windows on the first floor are six over six lights, wooden sashes, surrounded by relieving arch (soldier course) brick work with protruding brick headers and limestone keystones - three windows on either side of the portico, two within the portico on either side of the doors, and three on each side facade (one window on the east side facade was converted to a metal and glass exterior door in 1959). Second story windows are three over three lights, wooden sashes with relieving arch work and headers, but no keystones - three windows on each side of the portico, three within the portico above the doors and three on each side facade. The interior ground floor has 12 ft. ceilings, a floor of 12 inch marble squares, plaster walls and oak baseboards and door trim. A staircase with an oak balustrade leads to the second floor. The second floor has 10 ft. ceilings, hardwood floors, plaster walls and oak baseboard and door trim. Light fixtures on both floors are metal and glass, added in 1959.

2. Rear Section. The Rear Section is 80x110 ft. Originally (1906), the Rear Section consisted of two one-story wings enclosing a central, open-ended atrium. In 1926 a second story was added, filling in the central atrium, except for a second story light-well immediately behind the Front Section. The Rear Section is of Flemish-bond brick construction with three brick pilasters on the east and west facades and four brick pilasters on the rear (north) facade. The foundation is rubble masonry with exterior limestone sheathing to match the Front Section. The Rear Section has a cornice of corbelled brick headers around all three facades. The east facade has five ground floor windows, each of 36 lights, metal sash construction; the second floor has five windows of 28 lights, metal sash construction. All windows are surrounded by relieving arch brick work with no keystones. The rear facade first floor has (from left to right) two four over

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD                                    | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC      | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499        | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599        | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION   | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799        | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899        | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY    | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

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SPECIFIC DATES      1906; 1926      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Northwestern Construction Co./  
Wm. Richardson, Frederick J.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE      DeLongchamps

The Mackay School of Mines Building is significant for the following reasons:  
1. It is named for, and associated with John Willaim Mackay, one of the "Kings" of the Comstock Lode in Virginia City, Nevada in the 19th Century, and later a major American industrialist and financier; 2. It is associated with Mackay's son, Clarence, who provided funds to build the structure in 1906 and its remodelling in 1926 and who also funded the Mackay Science Building and the Mackay Athletic Field on the University of Nevada, Reno campus, and who as himself a prominent American financier and patron of the arts; 3. The Mackay School of Mines is one of the major schools of mines in the United States.

4. The building was originally (1906) designed by William Symmes Richardson, principal assistant of Stanford White in the famed New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White; supervising architects were the San Francisco firm of Bliss and Faville, both of whom had earlier worked for McKim, Mead and White; by the fact that relatively few McKim, Mead and White buildings were constructed in the western United States; 5. The 1926 remodelling of the building was designed and supervised by Frederick J. DeLongchamps, a Reno, Nevada based architect responsible for many prominent public and private buildings in Nevada and California and a prominent figure in the history of western American architecture from ca. 1900 to the 1940's; 6. The associated statue of John W. Mackay was designed and cast by Gutzon Borglum, a prominent American sculptor who works include the bust of Abraham Lincoln in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol Building and the faces of the Presidents on Mount Rushmore, SD.; 7. The Geology Museum in the Mackay Mines Building is significant as an example of early 20th Century museum design and for its extensive minerals collections and artifacts which form a major resource for the history of mining in the American West.

1. The Mackay Family. The Mackay School of Mines Building is named after, and is a memorial to, John William Mackay, one of Nevada's and later, America's foremost 19th Century mining entrepreneurs and capitalists. Mackay was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1831; he emigrated to America in 1840, and in 1851 became a miner in California. In 1860 he moved to the Comstock Lode in Nevada, working initally as a timberman, miner and millhand. In 1865, with others, he bought the Hale and Norcross Mine. With the profits therefrom, Mackay and his partners bought other properties including the Consolidated Virginia Mine which produced over \$100,000,000 in gold and silver after 1873. Mackay and his partners also established an ore-processing mill, a lumber and fluming company and the Nevada Bank of San Francisco, to compete with the interests of William Sharon, another of the "Kings" of the Comstock.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baldwin, Charles

1971 Stanford White (1931) New York: DaCapo Press

Board of Regents, University of Nevada

1901-20 Minutes and President's Reports. University Archives, Getchell Library, University of Nevada, Reno

(continued)

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .1

UTM REFERENCES

A 

|      |   |   |   |         |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 1 | 2 | 5 | 8       | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4        | 3 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| ZONE |   |   |   | EASTING |   |   |   | NORTHING |   |   |   |   |   |   |

B 

|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|--|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ZONE |  |  |  | EASTING |  |  |  | NORTHING |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

North end of Main Quadrangle, University of Nevada, Reno campus; SE/4 Sec. 2, T19N, R19E. SE/4 Reno, NV 7.5' quad sheet. Note: quad sheet shows Mackay Mines Building as attached to building to N. Buildings are, in fact, separated.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | NA | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|----|------|--------|------|
| STATE |    | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

Don D. Fowler, Professor; Carol Blumstrom, Phillip I.

NAME/TITLE Earl, Kenneth J. Evans, Valerie R. Firby, Alisa A. Garner, Susan Horton, Robert B. Mann, Pamela Y. Reed.

ORGANIZATION Historic Preservation Program

DATE December 27, 1979

STREET & NUMBER University of Nevada

TELEPHONE (702) 784-6851

CITY OR TOWN Reno

STATE Nevada 89557

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Charles D. Feist*

TITLE Alternate, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 8/20/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*William H. Brannan*  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 4.1.82

ATTEST *Kathleen Andrews*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 4/1/82

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four wooden sash windows; a double wooden door, each with a single light, above which is a four over four lights transom and a wooden pediment; and, three three over three lights wooden sash windows. The second floor has a 20 lights metal sash window; a single-paned metal fire escape door, above which is a three over three lights transom; and, two six over six lights wooden sash windows. All openings are surrounded by relieving arch brick work. Four second story windows and three first story windows on the left (northeast) side of the rear facade are now bricked in. A metal fire escape descends from the second floor to the ground. There are no windows in the west Rear Section facade.

The hipped roof over both Front and Rear sections is of copper sheathing, with two metal sash skylights over the Geology Museum portion of the Rear Section. The original roof of the Front Section and rear wings was of terneplate.

3. Interior The Front Section of the building contains faculty offices and classrooms. The Rear Section contains a two story Geology Museum (see below), laboratories, storage and work rooms, additional offices, and (formerly) the School of Mines Library. Additional interior remodelling of the Rear Section was undertaken in 1956, 1959 and since 1976, adding walls to create additional offices and laboratories and an exterior door in the east facade.

4. Geology Museum The Geology Museum was originally housed in the west one story rear wing, with ca. 2,800 sq. ft. of floor space. The 1926 remodelling expanded the Museum, adding a second, mezzanine floor. The interior of the Museum was patterned after the Minerals Museum at Columbia University in New York City. It contains oak display and mineral-specimen display cases. Similar display cases were added to the mezzanine floor in 1926. There is an additional display area in a partial basement beneath the Museum first floor, added during the 1926 remodelling. In addition to the extensive minerals and fossil collections, the Museum also contains early mining and assaying machinery from the Comstock and later Nevada mining booms, glass models of historic mines and numerous historic photographs.

5. The Mackay Statue In front of the main portico of the building is a larger-than-life-size bronze cast statue of John William Mackay, standing on a marble base. The statue depicts Mackay wearing miner's boots and work clothes, with one hand resting on a miner's axe, and holding a piece of gold-bearing quartz ore in the other hand. The statue faces the Comstock Mining District, located in the Virginia Mountains to the southeast. The statue is the work of Gutzon Borglum.

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Mackay, a shy person who eschewed politics and ostentatious public displays, invested his fortune in San Francisco real estate, became a Director of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Canadian Pacific Railroad and, in 1883, founded the Commercial Cable Company which absorbed the Postal Telegraph Company in 1885. Through this enterprise Mackay was instrumental in laying the first Trans-oceanic telegraph cable between Europe and North America. Mackay also had mining interests in California, Idaho and Alaska, owned a sugar refinery in Yonkers, New York and an elevator manufacturing firm in New York City. Mackay's wife, Louise, used his fortune to attempt to break into European society and built magnificent homes in London and Paris; the latter serves today as the Belgian Embassy.

At the time of his death, in 1902, Mackay's fortune was estimated at \$30,000, 000. Clarence Hungerford Mackay, John's son, was born in San Francisco in 1874. He accompanied his mother to Europe and was educated in England. An older brother, John William Mackay, Jr. had been groomed to succeed the father, but his death in 1894 threw the burden onto Clarence. Clarence oversaw the completion of the first Trans-Pacific cable to the Far East in 1904, the first cable connection between the United States and Cuba in 1907, and additional cables to southern Europe, via the Azore Islands, and to northern Europe via Ireland. In the 1920's he acquired the Federal Radio Company of New York which merged in 1928 with the International Telephone and Telegraph Company, whereupon Mackay became a member of the Board of Directors. Mackay was also a Director of the Guarantee Trust Company of New York, one of America's largest financial institutions. Clarence Mackay's cultural activities included a Trusteeship of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Directorships of the Metropolitan Opera Company and the Philharmonic Society, all of New York, directorship of the Chicago General Opera Company, and Treasurer of the Lincoln Farm Association, formed to preserve Abraham Lincoln's log cabin in Kentucky. He was also a noted breeder of racehorses and an excellent sportsman. In addition to funding the Mackay School of Mines Building, he also funded the Mackay Field in 1910 and the Mackay Hall of Science in the 1920's, both on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. Clarence Mackay died in 1938, recognized as a leading financier, industrialist and patron of the arts.

3. The Geology Museum. The Geology Museum was formally established in the west wing of the original building in 1906. However, collections of mineral specimens were donated to the university as early as 1887. Ultimately over 2,000 individuals donated materials to the collection which now contains over 30,000 specimens, many rare and irreplaceable from mines no longer functioning or accessible. In 1926 when the building was remodelled, a mezzanine floor was added --devoted to Virginia City (Comstock Lode) ores and early mining machinery. The addition was also a gift of Clarence Mackay. The museum was patterned after the Minerals Museum of Columbia University, with oak and glass display cabinets.

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No major changes have been made in the museum since 1940 and it remains as a classic example of early 1900's museology practices. The collections are extremely valuable to the history of mining in Nevada and the American West; they are in constant use for teaching, research and mining history. The museum is visited by hundreds of tourists, school children and university students annually.

4. The Mackay Statue. The statue of John William Mackay which stands in front of the Mines Building was unveiled on June 10, 1903 at the dedication of the building. The statue was the idea of Samuel Post Davis, editor of the Carson City, Nevada Appeal and State Controller. The statue was originally to have stood on the Capitol grounds in Carson City. This was rejected by the Nevada Legislature and the statue was subsequently and appropriately placed in front of the Mackay Mines Building. The statue was sculpted and cast by Gutzon Borglum, who also did the bust of Abraham Lincoln in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol Building and the faces of the presidents on Mount Rushmore, South Dakota. The principal model for the statue was Phillip Mighels, Davis's stepson, who Borglum felt typified the posture of a "western man." Mackay is depicted in miner's clothing, with a pickaxe in one hand and a piece of gold-bearing quartz in the other. The statue faces the Comstock Lode in Virginia City, the scene of Mackay's rise to wealth and fame (Glass 1973).

5. The Architects. The Mackay School of Mines Building was designed by William Symmes Richardson, the principal assistant of Stanford White in the famed New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White (Roth 1978: 103 and pl. 559). The building was constructed in association with the architectural firm of Bliss and Faville of San Francisco (Board of Regents 1901-20: 17). William B. Faville and Walter D. Bliss both worked in the McKim, Mead and White firm, leaving in 1898 to establish their own firm in San Francisco (Withey and Withey 1956: 204-05). The Firm was responsible for many public buildings in San Francisco and Oakland, including some of the buildings at the Pan-Pacific Exposition of 1913. Drawings of the Mackay Mines Building are on deposit in the New York Historical Society, and in the Special Collections Department, Getchell Library, University of Nevada, Reno.

The 1926 remodelling of the building was designed and supervised by Frederick J. DeLongchamps, a self-taught, Reno, Nevada based architect who designed (early 1900's-1940's) many public and private buildings in Nevada and California, including the Nevada Building at the Pan-Pacific Exposition, the Washoe County Courthouse and Riverside Hotel in Reno, Nevada, the (now demolished) Clark County Courthouse in Las Vegas, Nevada and the Modoc County Courthouse in Alturas, California. DeLongchamps' drawings of the Mackay Building remodelling are on deposit in the Special Collections Department, Getchell Library, University of Nevada, Reno.

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6. Education/Engineering. Academically the Mackay School of Mines is significant as one of the sixteen principal mining schools in the United States, and is rated as one of the better in this group. Currently it is poised for greatness. A \$23 million dollar rejuvenation is in progress with \$8.5 million in hand and another \$2.3 in discussion stages. The reputation of the Mackay School of Mines has consistently exceeded that of the University as a whole. Graduates are located in every part of the world.

Historically, the School of Mines is specified in the Constitution of the State of Nevada (1864), although not commencing operation until 1888. It is one of the earlier mining schools in the country following Columbia University's (the oldest) and Colorado School of Mines.

The most unique aspect of the Mackay School of Mines is its location in the Basin and Range Province. This vast geological region is one of the wealthiest with a wide variety of mining activities. Currently Nevada mining is booming with Nevada first in production of gold, turquoise, and barite.

Much of this activity has occurred because of the talent and ability of MSM alumni. Although not unique, pyrometallurgy is still a requirement for our metallurgical engineers, something of a rarity these days.

As the Mackay School of Mines has grown from a post-WWII student body of 65 to its present enrollment of 430 students, so have its offerings increased. Currently it offers bachelors degrees in the following engineering curricula: chemical, geological, metallurgical, and mining, plus the non-engineering fields of earth science, geology, and geophysics. Masters degrees are offered in the same areas except earth sciences. A MS in Geology with concentration in geochemistry is available and it administers the interdisciplinary graduate programs in hydrology and hydrogeology. The Doctoral degree is available in geology and related sciences. The first earned PhD degree conferred by the University went to a geologist. The faculty currently numbers 22 full-time and 8 part-time professors.



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1906 "The Mining Building; \$50,000 from Mackay." Reno Evening Gazette, May 31, 1906, p. 10

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1956 Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: New Age Pub. Co., pp. 204-05 (W. Faville); p. 511 (W.S. Richardson).

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1976 Stanford White and the Mackays: a Case Study in Architect-Client Relationships. Winterthur Portfolio 1: 213-33.

Univ. of Nevada, Reno  
Campus



Mackey Mines Bldg.

