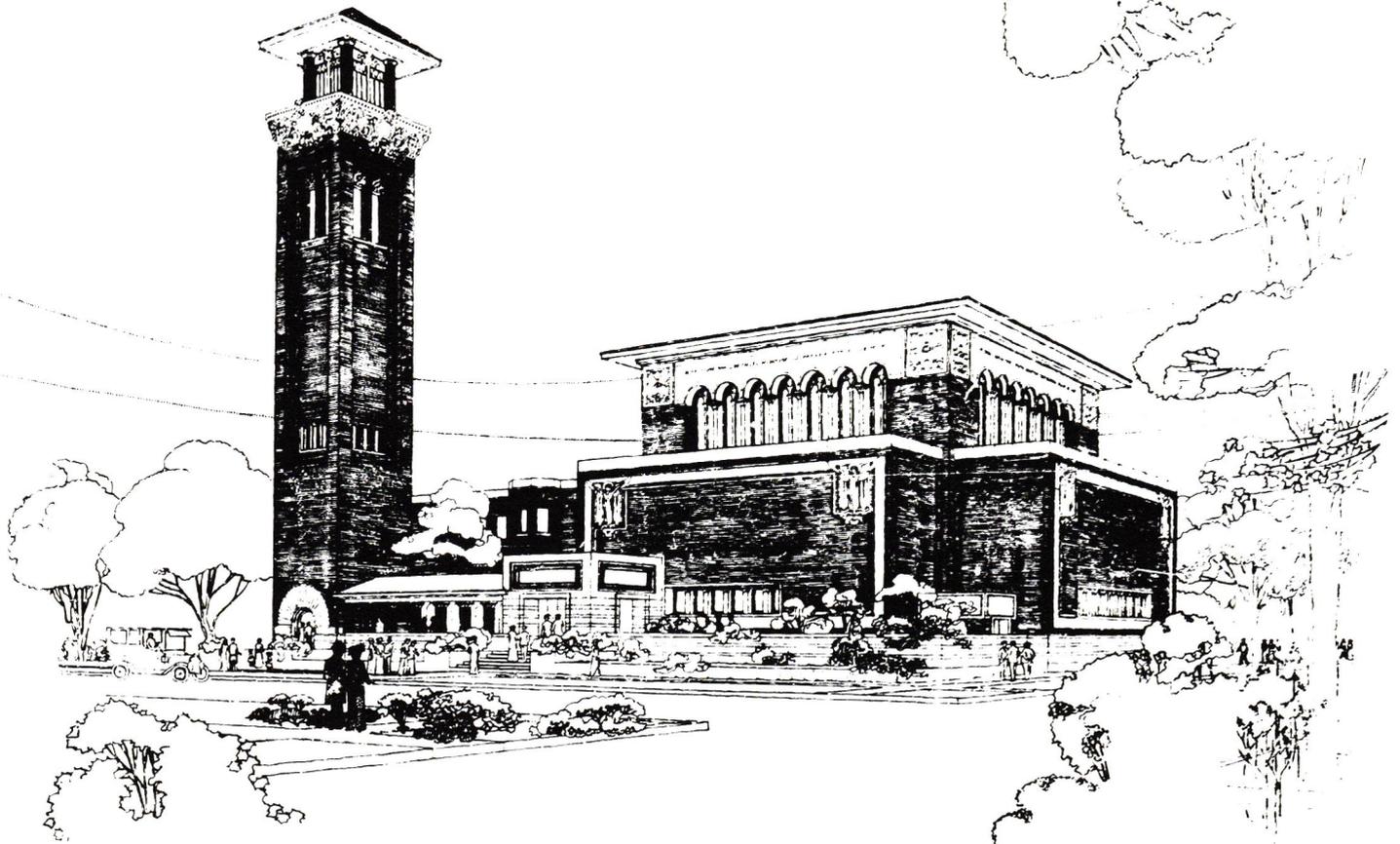


*The*  
**PRAIRIE  
SCHOOL**  
*Review*

Volume II, Number 1

First Quarter, 1965

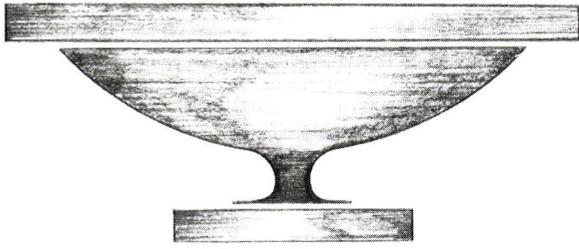
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*ABOVE: This presentation drawing is from the office of Purcell, Feick and Elmslie and is a fine example of the type of rendering employed by the firm. The building is St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church for Cedar Rapids, Iowa, designed in 1910. Unfortunately it remained only a project.*

*COVER: A detail of the inner court of the service buildings for the Babson Estate in Riverside, Illinois designed in 1915. These buildings have been remodeled into private homes and remain in excellent condition. P & E photo.*

THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL REVIEW is published four times a year by The Prairie School Press, 12509 South 89th Avenue, Palos Park, Illinois 60464. W. R. Hasbrouck, AIA, Editor and Publisher, Marilyn Whittlesey Hasbrouck, Assistant Editor. Manuscripts concerning the Prairie School of Architecture and related arts are solicited. Reasonable care will be used in handling manuscripts and such material will be returned if return postage is enclosed. Single copy price \$2.50, subscription \$10.00 per year in U.S. and Canada, \$12.00 elsewhere. Issues are mailed flat in envelopes. Address all change of address notices, subscription or back issue inquiries to the Editor at the above address. © Copyright 1972 by W. R. Hasbrouck.



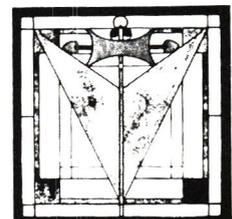
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## *From the EDITORS*

*We often hear the term "Second Chicago School" applied to the work of the "Prairie" architects. This is an unfortunate misnomer. It is true that the architects of the Prairie School were sometimes trained in the offices of the architectural giants who designed and built the great commercial buildings properly termed the "Chicago School of Architecture". Guenzel, Elmslie and Wright all worked with Sullivan; Drummond with Daniel Burnham; and Richard Schmidt spent some time in the office of H. H. Richardson.*

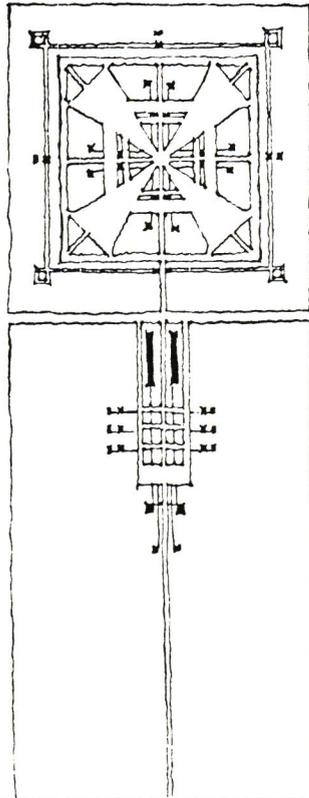
*When these young men left their early tutors, they sought and found a new architectural expression. It was the Prairie house that brought success to this group of avant-garde designers of the early 1900's. Few of their residential masterpieces were built in Chicago, though a great many are to be found in the older suburbs to the west and north. Chicago's creative atmosphere provided the inspiration, but the Prairie architects' works ranged throughout the midwest, and examples are to be found on both east and west coasts.*

*The work of Purcell and Elmslie demonstrates how widespread was the architecture of the Prairie School. Headquartered in Minneapolis, this firm designed and built for a nationwide clientele. They maintained an office in Chicago, but only one of their buildings, the Edison Shop on Wabash Avenue, is located there. The great majority of their buildings are found in the small towns of Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota.*

*Purcell and Elmslie were primarily residential architects, although some of their best buildings were the small banks and commercial structures which are usually found in superb condition today. Most of Purcell and Elmslie's existing work has fared well over the years. Some have remained in the hands of original owners for fifty years or more. These clients were not the wealthy suburbanites such as came to Frank Lloyd Wright. Rather, they were the successful small town businessmen who appreciated quality in all things and wanted a comfortable, well designed home. Construction was usually by local craftsmen and was closely supervised by the Firm, thus permitting these jewels to be seen today with the character and patina that only fifty years of living can give.*

*As this is being written, an exhibit of Purcell's cromographs and Purcell and Elmslie architecture is being shown at Illinois Institute of Technology while a duplicate exhibit is at Stockholm. This exhibit is to remain intact and will be shown at several other locations over the next few months.*

*The Prairie School in general and this Firm in particular have been too long neglected. The recent attention afforded them is certainly merited. The principles they followed a half century ago are as valid today as then. We hope that by presenting their work in these pages some of today's architects will profit from this architectural heritage.*



# Purcell and Elmslie

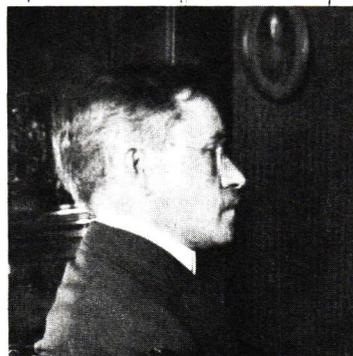
## Architects

by David Gebhard

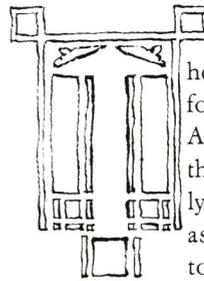
*David Gebhard is Director of the Art Gallery and is Associate Professor of Art, University of California, Santa Barbara. He received his doctorate from the University of Minnesota in Art History.*



William  
Gray  
Purcell



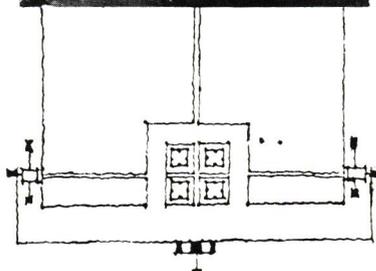
George  
Grant  
Elmslie



The year 1909 was an auspicious one for the Secessionist movements in American architecture.<sup>1</sup> In the Midwest the Prairie movement had only recently completed such major monuments as the National Farmer's Bank (Owatonna, Minnesota, 1907-08) by Louis Sullivan and his chief draftsman George Elmslie; and the famous Robie house (Chicago, 1909) by Frank Lloyd Wright. On the West Coast Irving Gill in San Diego, Charles and Henry Greene in Pasadena and Bernard Maybeck in the Bay area were actively producing some of their most fascinating work.

Although it could well be claimed that by 1909 the major monuments of American Secessionist architecture had been created, it is equally obvious that the years from 1909 until America's entrance into the First World War were the crucial years. For having stated their case, the American avant garde architects were then faced with the difficult task of broadening the movement and establishing its roots in a more permanent fashion. On the surface everything seemed to argue that while this task presented certain problems, it could none the less be accomplished. The Craftsman-Mission move-

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Note: The term Secessionist was first applied to an advanced group of architectural pioneers practicing in Vienna in 1898. They drew a great deal of inspiration from C. R. Mackintosh in Scotland and undoubtedly influenced Wright, Spencer and others in the Prairie movement.



ment and the rage for the California bungalow were disseminating the ideals of the Secessionists to an increasingly wider public. Then too, both in the Midwest and in the Far West, the Secessionists were drawing to their fold a number of gifted younger designers.

The immediate future of the second decade argued that the buildings of the new architecture instead of being only from the hands of a few "masters" would be from an ever wider group of designers. The American Secessionist architects enjoyed the support of a respectable group of writers; a number of professional and popular architectural magazines were their ardent champions; finally, their work was increasingly admired and even in some cases emulated by certain of their European counterparts.<sup>2</sup>

And yet by 1917-18 the whole of the Secessionist movement in American architecture had been dealt a blow from which it only recovered in the late 1930's. By the conclusion of the First World War the Midwestern Prairie School, the several West Coast movements, and the popular Craftsman-Mission movement had ceased to exist as a unified coherent force. Various of the architects associated with these movements continued to create significant work, but their work of the 1920's expressed in part a different set of values. As shown in the later work of the Greenes (to a certain extent from



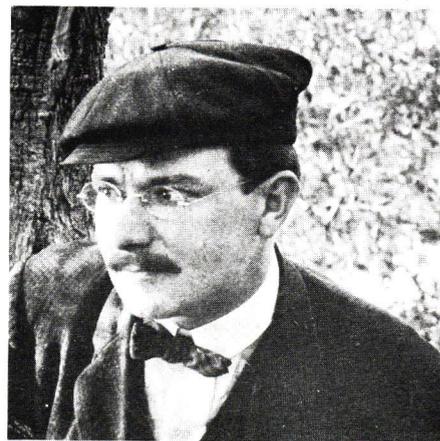
Secessionist House  
Vienna, 1898  
by J. M. Olbrich

1910 onward), of Gill, of Maybeck and of Frank Lloyd Wright and others, all sought out more concrete historical roots. Wright found such roots in the pre-Columbian architecture of Central America; others found it in the Mediterranean

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Note: Among those persons supporting the movement were C. R. Ashbee of Great Britain, H. P. Berlage in Amsterdam, and Wagner in Vienna. From 1912 on, *The Western Architect* was the leading periodical supporter of the movement in the U.S.A.

architecture of Spain and her American possessions, and so forth.

The question of why the American Secessionist movement lost its force by 1917-1918 has been asked again and again. None of the explanations which have been suggested seem to be really plausible. Some have said that as long as the movement was concentrated in the Mid and Far West, it had to remain as a minority point of view. As long as



George  
Feick

"taste", official control and education were vested in the hands of the conservative Eastern architects — the McKim, Mead and Whites or the Ralph Adams Cram — there was little hope for the American avant gardist. It is certainly true that only when the Eastern establishment became converted to "modern" (as it finally was by the later years of the 1930's) that the new architecture became dominant in this country. The Eastern establishment paved the way for the acceptance of "modern" architecture, not by producing great buildings or projects during the 1930's, but by propagandizing it through the professional and later the popular journals, by exhibition programs (such as those of the Museum of Modern Art), and by reorganizing the program of architectural education in the universities and colleges.

Perhaps a partial answer to the question of the demise of the early American Secessionist movements is to be found in the fact that only when modern architecture became established (and respectable) in Europe could it be reimported by the Europe-oriented Eastern Seaboard. The Eastern tastemakers could hardly be expected to respond affirmatively to an architectural force which emanated from the provincial hinterland. The Eastern rejection of the early Secessionist was of course only one of many elements which account for the death of the movement; unquestionably many factors which contributed to its loss of vitality existed within the movement itself. A full understanding of these factors will probably only

be possible when the architecture of the Secessionists has been fully studied, especially the work which it produced during the years of the second decade of the century.

It was upon this scene in late 1909 that a new architectural firm was established in Minneapolis. This was the firm of Purcell and Elmslie (Purcell, Feick and Elmslie from 1909 through 1913). Although the year 1909 marks the formal emergence of the partnership, a close design relationship had existed between the two men from as early as 1903 when William Gray Purcell had briefly worked under Elmslie in the Louis Sullivan office. Purcell, the younger of the two, had been born in the outskirts of Chicago in 1880. He was raised and educated by his Grandfather, William Cunningham Gray (1830-1901), who was the editor and publisher of the newspaper, the *Interior*. Purcell's grandparents lived in Oak Park during the winter months, while their summers were spent at Island Lake in a remote region of northern Wisconsin. Purcell was educated in both public and private

schools in Oak Park, and his academic architectural education was at Cornell University from which he graduated in 1899. Before establishing his own office (in partnership with his Cornell classmate George Feick<sup>3</sup>), he had worked in several architectural offices, including those of Louis Sullivan in Chicago and John Gallen Howard in Berkeley. Of great importance as far as his architectural education was concerned was the trip that he made to Europe in 1906 where he sought out many of the Secessionist architects of Germany, Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.<sup>4</sup>

By the time Elmslie entered the firm in 1909 the architectural office of Purcell and Feick had created several distinguished buildings, among which were the Catherine Gray house (Minneapolis, 1907), their unrealized project for the First National Bank (Winona, 1907), the J. D. R. Steven Cottage (Eau Claire, 1909), the H. P. Gallaher house (Lake Minnetonka, 1909), and the Stewart Memorial Church (Minneapolis, 1909).

As one would expect, Elmslie's joining the firm in 1909 added tremendously to its prestige, for Elmslie, ten years the senior of his partners, had long occupied an important position within the Prairie School. He was a long time associate of Louis Sullivan having entered the Adler and Sullivan office in 1889, and from 1894 on he was Sullivan's chief draftsman. In the late 1880's he had met and formed a friendship with Wright and George Maher, and through his close relationship with Sullivan and his occasional work in the Wright office, he was known to a good number of the younger Prairie architects. It was well known among his associates that many of the designs and ornaments which emanated from the Sullivan office, especially from the late 1890's on, were actually from his hand.

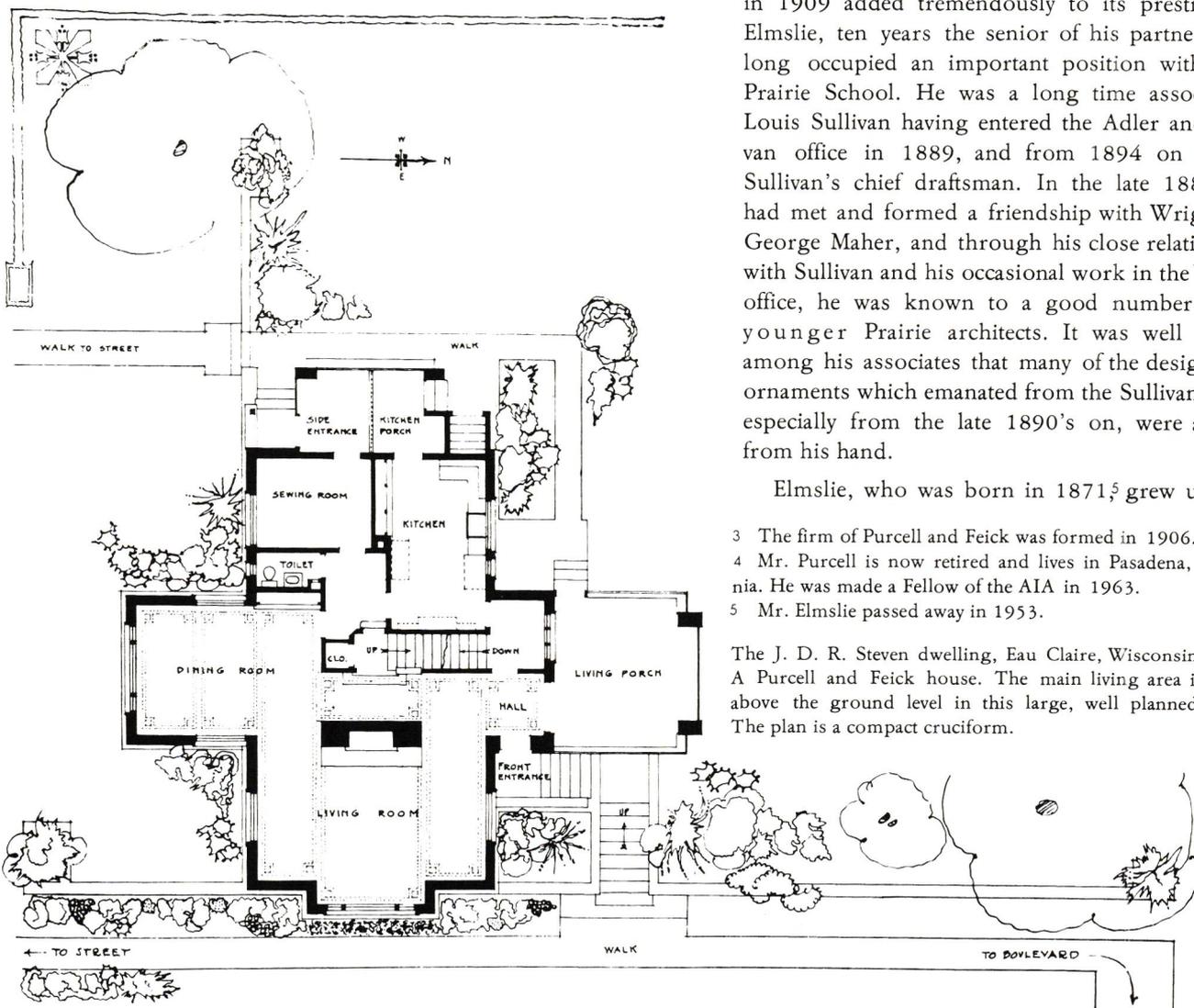
Elmslie, who was born in 1871,<sup>5</sup> grew up near

<sup>3</sup> The firm of Purcell and Feick was formed in 1906.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Purcell is now retired and lives in Pasadena, California. He was made a Fellow of the AIA in 1963.

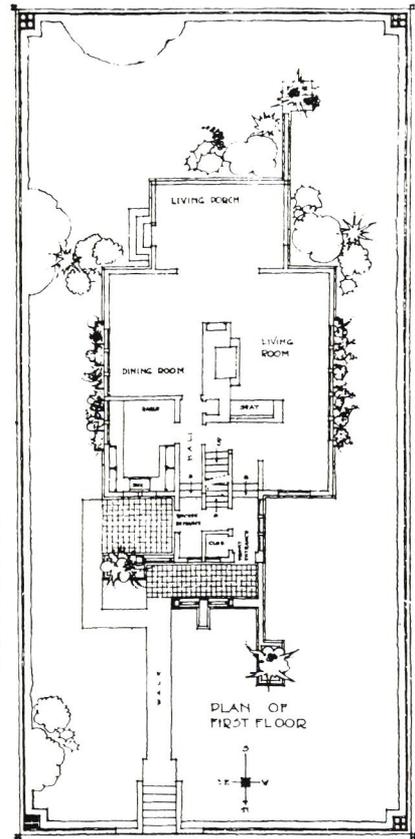
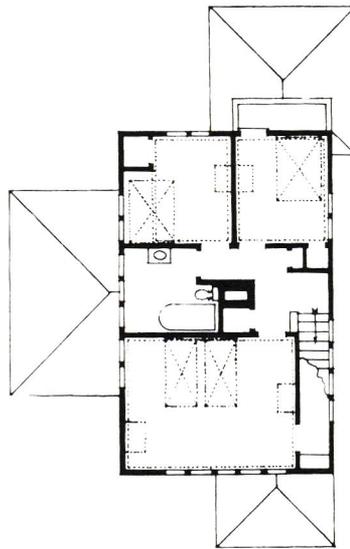
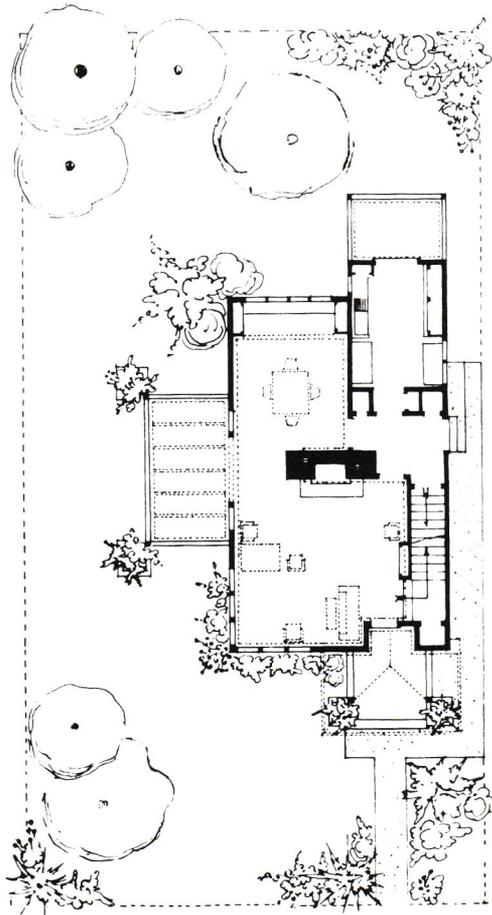
<sup>5</sup> Mr. Elmslie passed away in 1953.

The J. D. R. Steven dwelling, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 1909. A Purcell and Feick house. The main living area is raised above the ground level in this large, well planned house. The plan is a compact cruciform.





*These are two examples of the basic two story open plan dwelling used so successfully by Purcell and Elmslie in several variations. The Hineline house (1910) is still standing while the Thomas house remained only a project. Both show a close resemblance to the Frank Lloyd Wright design published by The Ladies Home Journal in 1906.*

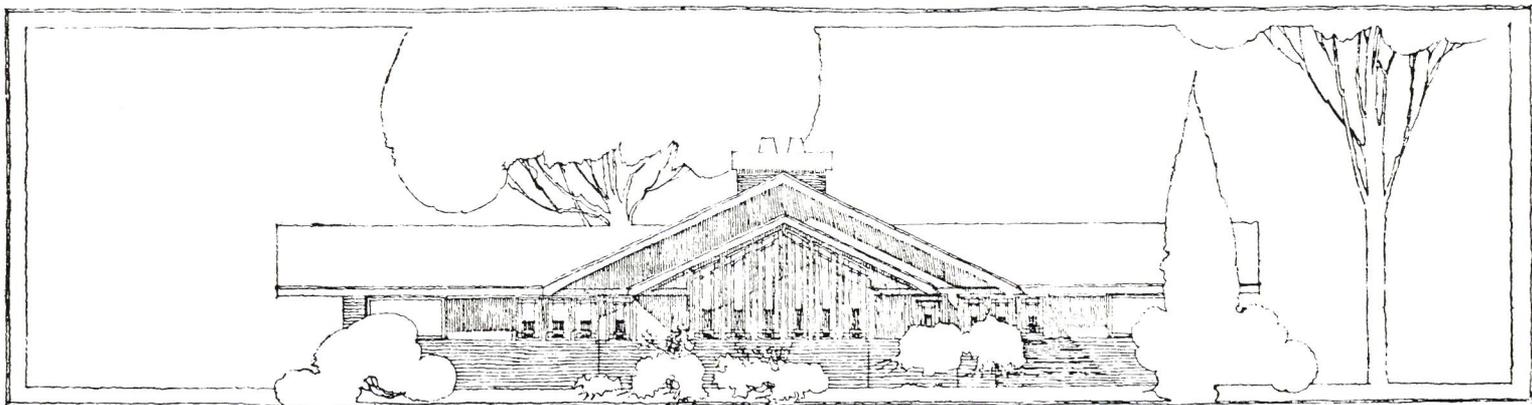
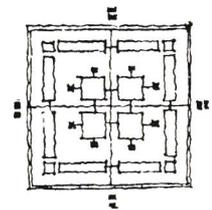


The Thomas house

The Hineline house

Project

FRANCIS BUZZELL HOUSE  
LAKE BLUFF, ILLINOIS ::



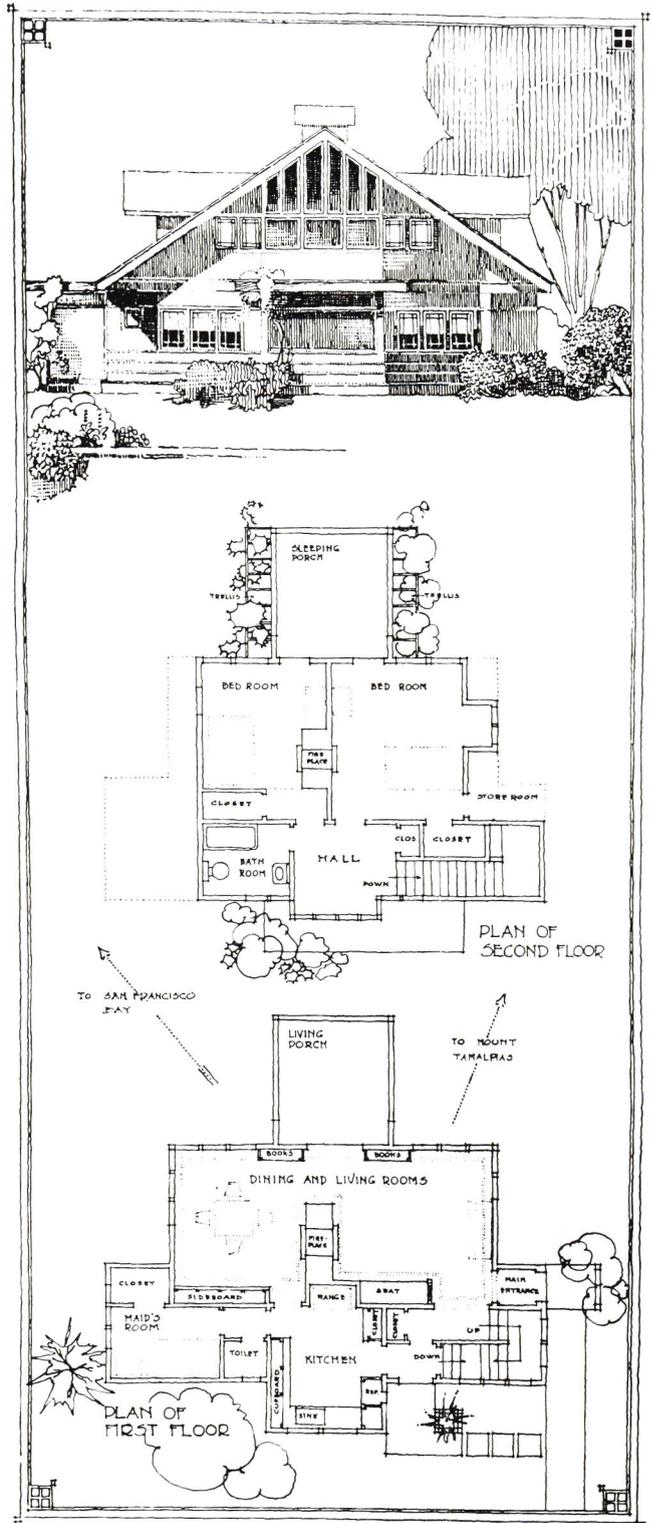
Huntley, Scotland. It was here that he received his only formal education at the rigorous Duke of Gordon School. In 1884 he and other members of his family came to Chicago where his father had previously obtained a position. In the late 1880's Elmslie started his architectural career, working first in the office of William LeBaron Jenny and then in the office of Joseph Silsbee.

When one thinks of the usual architectural firm composed of a designer and a businessman, the relationship which existed between Elmslie and Purcell was unusual. Throughout the partnership, which officially lasted until 1922, both men were involved with the actual design of the buildings. Of even more importance is the obvious fact that a rapport was established which stimulated each of them to produce their best work. It is unlikely that either of them could have arrived at the heights they did without the presence of the other. Each became absolutely indispensable to the other.

The most active period of the partnership were the years from 1910 through 1915. During these years Purcell and Elmslie designed houses, public buildings, offices, factories and stores throughout the Midwest, in California and even in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. While they had a more varied practice than many of their Secessionist colleagues, still most of their attention was devoted to residential architecture. How to design a house which would strongly assert its visual form, would honestly express its structure, materials and use, and would at the same time be of moderate cost were problems which they wrestled with throughout the career of the firm.

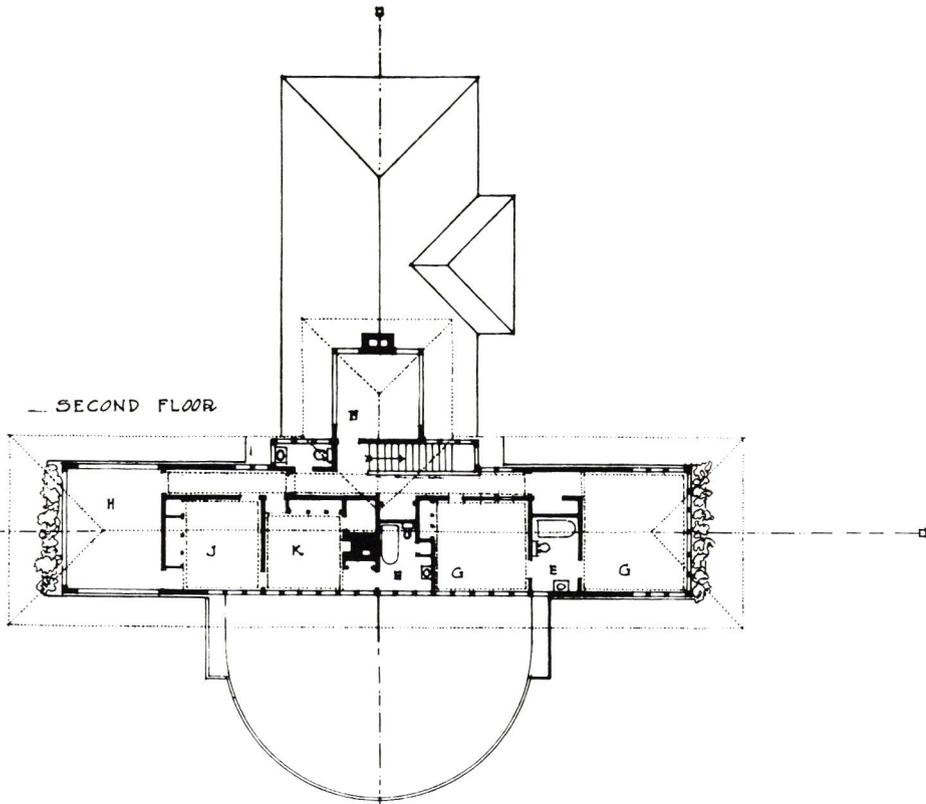
Their most satisfactory solution to these problems was a two story open plan dwelling developed out of Wright's Ladies Home Journal plan of 1906.<sup>6</sup> Among the Firm's houses which were designed in this way are the Hiline house (Minneapolis, 1910-11), the Owre house (Minneapolis, 1911-12), the Beebe house (St. Paul, 1912), and the Bachus house Minneapolis, 1915). Several of their best open plan houses remained as projects: the Palmer-Cantini house (St. Paul, 1913-14), the Thomas house (Minneapolis, 1913-14), and the Durant house (Lake Minnetonka, 1913). The basic form of these open plan houses was that of a volumetric rectangular box which was covered either by a low hipped roof, or a high gabled roof. Off this dominant form projected secondary elements — all of which were precisely placed to work with and enhance the basic statement of the building. All features of the building, including the windows and

<sup>6</sup> See Hitchcock, *In The Nature of Materials*, pl. 128, 129, New York, 1942.



ABOVE: Dwelling for Mrs. T. Lewis Waller (Margaret Little), Berkeley, California, 1914. This is a transitional plan separating the compact Hiline and Thomas plan types from the larger cruciform plans such as the Decker house.

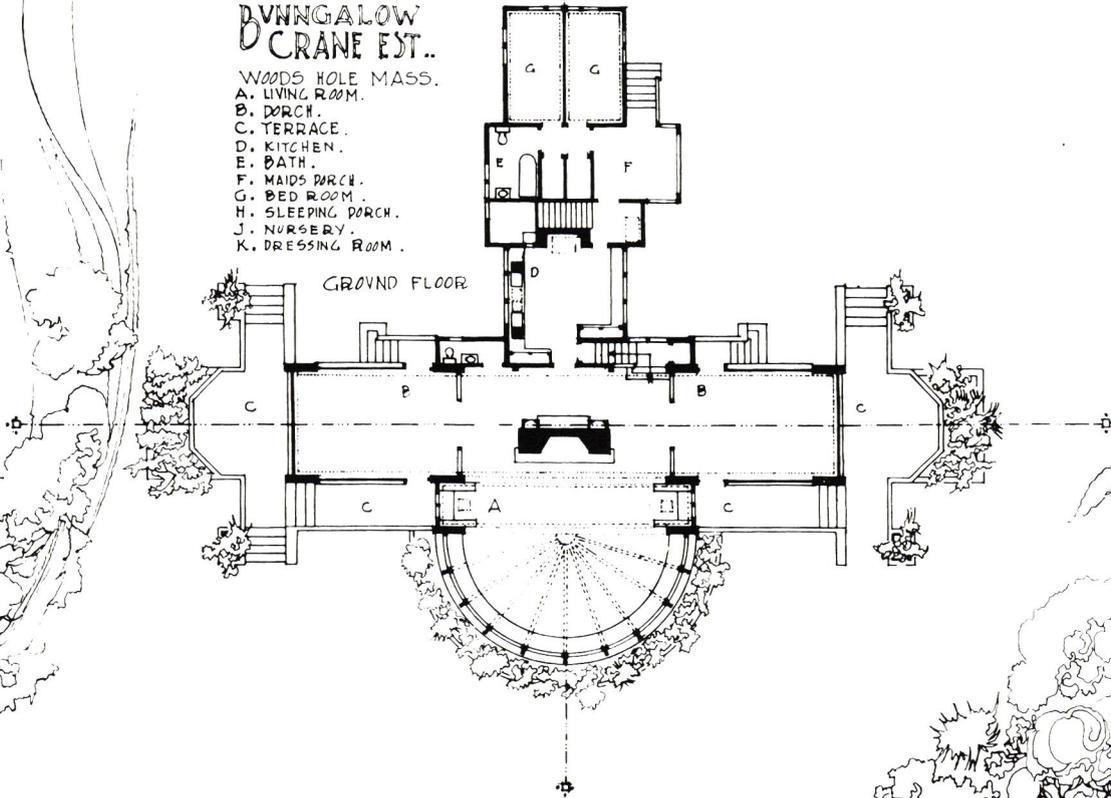
— SECOND FLOOR



**BUNGALOW  
CRANE EST..**

- WOODS HOLE MASS.  
A. LIVING ROOM.  
B. PORCH.  
C. TERRACE.  
D. KITCHEN.  
E. BATH.  
F. MAIDS PORCH.  
G. BED ROOM.  
H. SLEEPING PORCH.  
J. NURSERY.  
K. DRESSING ROOM.

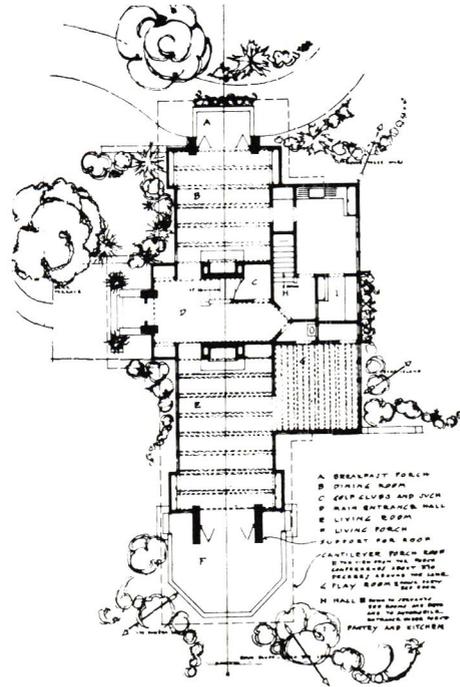
GROUND FLOOR



doors, were compositionally arranged so that each elevation formed a meaningful statement, and each of the facades in turn became a part of the whole. The interior space of the first floor of these houses was open and flowing – the living, dining and entrance areas were simply sections of a larger space. As objects in space these houses are far less sculptural (as a three dimensional mass) than either those of Wright or Griffin. The fact that their exterior form expressed the volumetric space within, through thin wall planes, indicates that Purcell and Elmslie's kinship lies as much with the European International Style architects of the 1920's as with the works of Wright's Prairie period. Another factor also separates their houses from those of Wright, or even for that matter from those of the Greenes in California: that is the way in which Purcell and Elmslie did in fact open up the interior space of their houses to the outside through large folding or sliding glass doors.

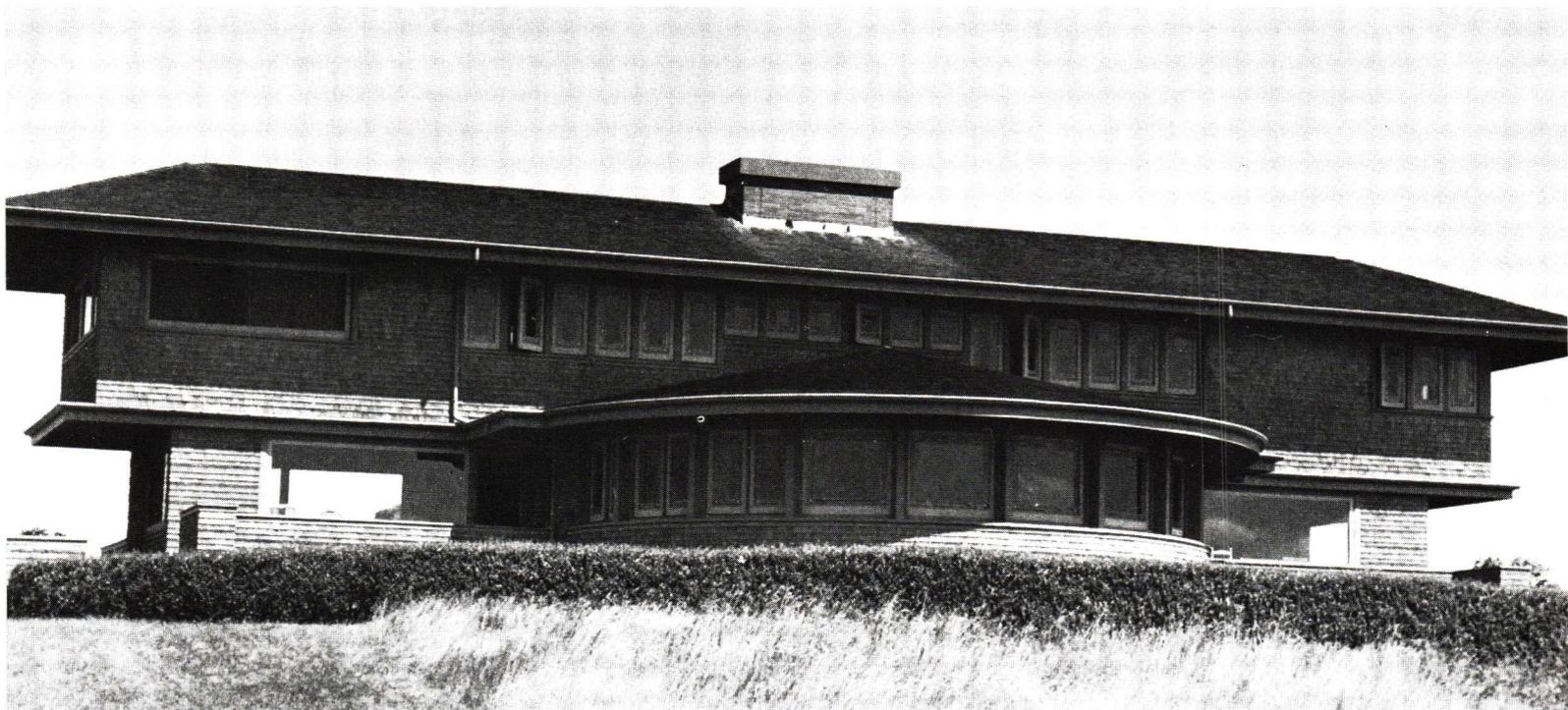
The Firm also explored several other forms for the house, distinct from but related to the open plan. Purcell and Elmslie's most widely known houses, the Bradley bungalow (Woods Hole, Massachusetts, 1911-12) and the Decker house (Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota, 1912-13) well indicate the quality of their individual and rather personal development of a cruciform plan.<sup>7</sup> The 1913 Hoyt

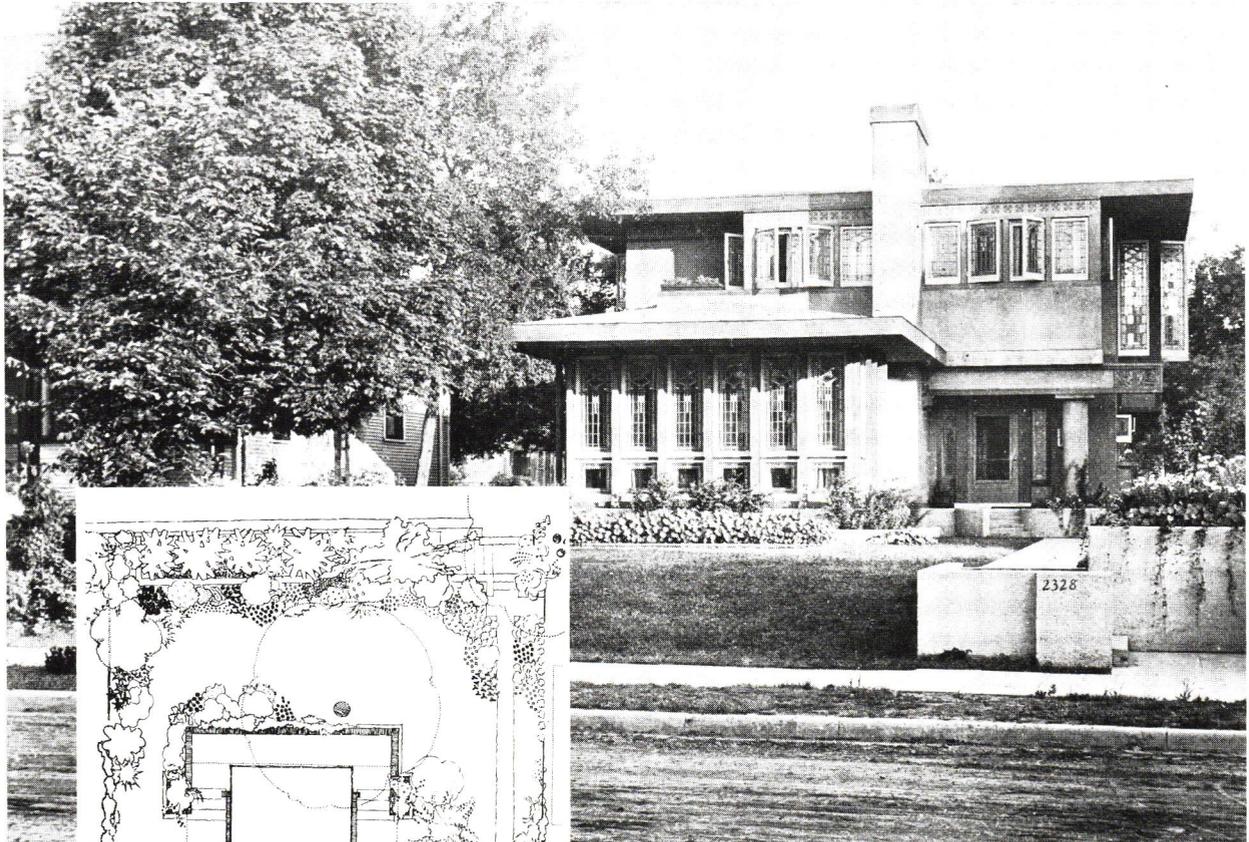
<sup>7</sup> Ed. Note: The cruciform plan takes the general form of a cross. F. L. Wright's W. W. Willetts house is generally considered the first of this type of Prairie house. Spencer, Griffin and others also employed this form but Purcell and Elmslie carried it to its logical conclusion in open planning.



ABOVE: The H. P. Gallaher house, Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota, 1909. This is an early form of the cruciform plan. Courtesy of The Western Architect.

BELOW and FACING PAGE: Crane Estate, Harold C. Bradley bungalow at Woodshole, Massachusetts. P & E photo; plans courtesy of The Western Architect.





ABOVE and LEFT: The William Gray Purcell house in Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1913. Considered to be the best of the Firm's residential work. P & E photo.

house at Red Wing, Minnesota presents a synthesis of the cruciform plan with its projecting bays and porches, together with elements of the open plan house — especially in the spatial continuity of the living and dining spaces. Purcell and Elmslie produced two later designs for cruciform houses which in quality equaled these earlier cruciform houses. These were the projected Wheelock house to have been built near Fargo, North Dakota (1913), and the extensive project for the Alexander house (Philadelphia, 1915-17). Regrettably neither of these were built.

While the open and the cruciform plans constituted a majority of their residential projects, they were not by any means solely restricted to one or another of these schemes. For example they built several two story houses whose exterior form was dominated by a high pitched gable roof. And like many of their contemporaries they built a variety of single floor or story-and-a-half bungalows and lake or summer cottages. In Purcell's own small house at Rose Valley, Pennsylvania (1917-18) the main room was ingeniously planned so as to serve the combined purpose of a living, dining and sleeping room, while to the rear a second room with two sliding glass walls was provided which was a second multi-purpose room.

Unquestionably the culmination of Purcell and Elmslie's residential work is to be found in the design and the site planning for Purcell's own

house in Minneapolis (1913). The main living area of this house contains three distinct levels which helped to designate and separate the various functions of the building, but at the same time the change of levels did not destroy the single unity of the space. This room was divided into an entry way and reception area placed midway in level between a sunken living room with a small study alcove, and a raised dining space which overlooked the entire area. The house was situated to the rear of the property which left room for an entrance garden and pool on the street side and brought an outdoor living-dining porch close to the rear property line so that it could enjoy a view of the lake to the rear.

While the design of individual houses occupied the major attention of Purcell and Elmslie, their non-domestic work was of equal if not of even greater architectural significance. Of these non-domestic commissions the largest number were a series of bank buildings (21 were designed); next in importance were designs for commercial and industrial buildings ranging in size from a small office for a landscape architect to a ten story office building. In addition the Firm planned several governmental buildings and a number of institutional and Church structures.

The best known of their bank buildings is the famous Merchants Bank of Winona (Winona, Minnesota, 1911-13). The form of the Winona bank was conceived as a simple cube of glass enclosed within a brick and terra cotta frame. The two sets of piers which are the main vertical supports on the two street facades, were declared as separate supporting elements by their capitals of terra cotta and by a narrow band of glass which separated them from the non-structural curtain corner walls of the building. The interior space, which was dominated by the two extensive glass walls and the large skylight, was treated as a single space and was broken up into different areas by low walls of brick and glass which did not project to the ceiling.

Within the sphere of commercial architecture Purcell and Elmslie's Edison Shop of Chicago (1912) and their total project for the International Leather and Belting Corporation Factories (the first units of which were built at Chicago and at New Haven in 1917-18) provide what could be thought of as a link or transition between the commercial skeletal designs of the later Chicago School and the glass curtain-wall buildings of the International style. Equally significant within the total picture of

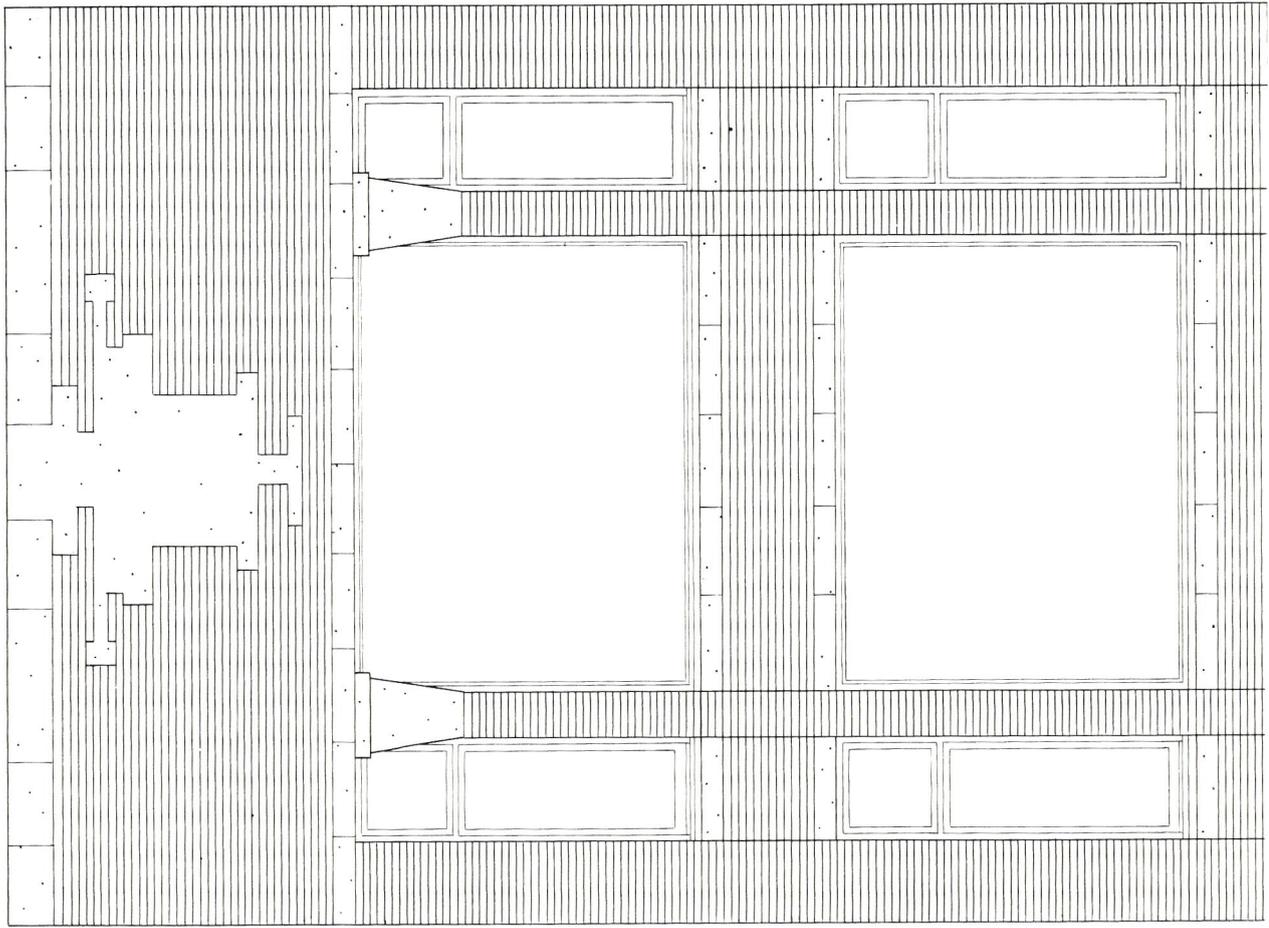
European and American Secessionist architecture of the early 20th century was their design for the projected Australian Parliament House (1913-14) and their plans for the Woodbury County Courthouse designed with William Steele (Sioux City, Iowa, 1915-17).<sup>8</sup> In these two buildings one can discern how the vocabulary of the Prairie School could be successfully applied to the utilitarian and symbolic problem of a governmental structure.

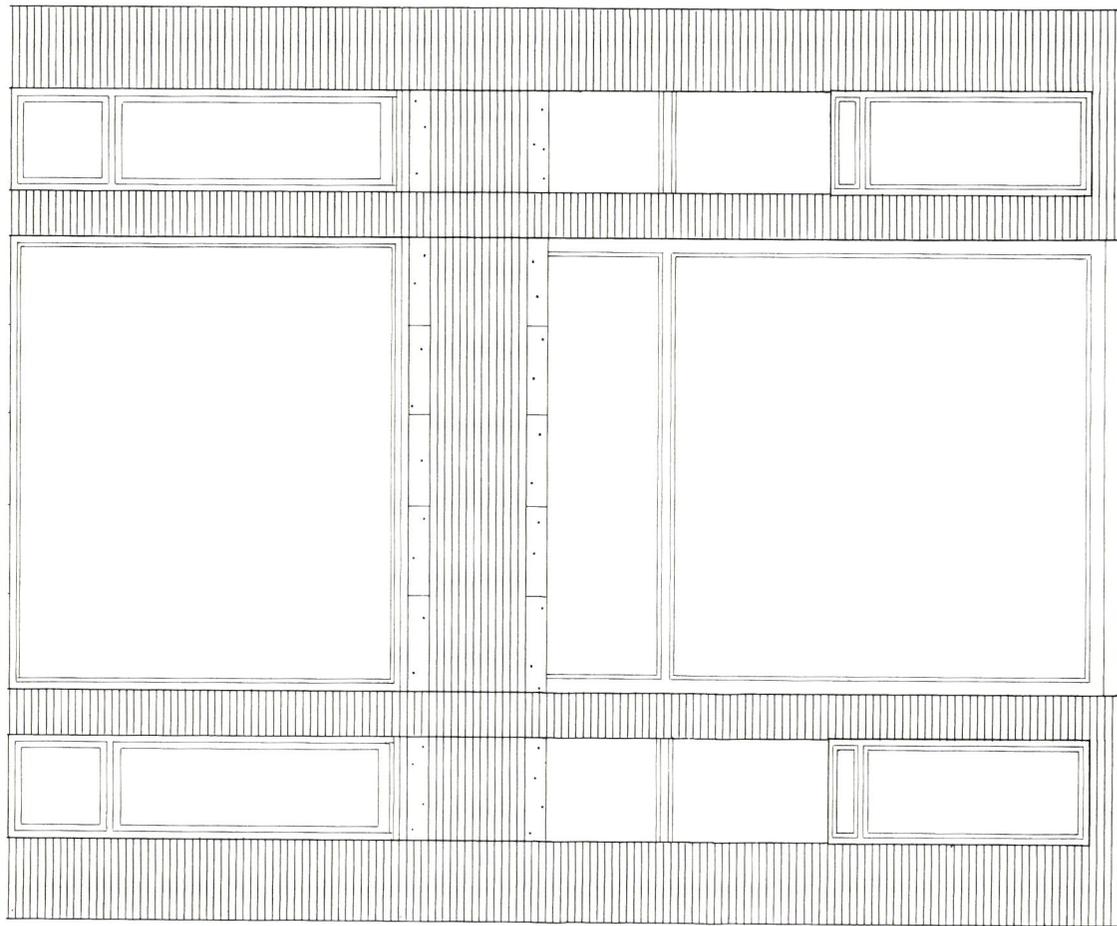
Like many of their contemporaries Purcell and Elmslie involved themselves in the broad area of design ranging from furniture, landscape architecture and fabrics to automobiles and the design and layout of books and magazines. Certainly though, the one facet which clearly differentiated their work from other Mid and Far Western designers and which closely allied them to Sullivan was the importance which they placed on ornament. Because Elmslie had produced so much of the ornament which emanated from the Sullivan office, his post 1909 designs may be thought of as Sullivanesque only in the sense that he continued to adhere to Sullivan's belief in the inherent logic and significant place which ornament occupies within the total design of a building. But while the ornament of Purcell and Elmslie will always occupy an important place within the history of American architecture, it was their exploration of the open plan and the meaningful way in which they united exterior and interior space which signifies their major contribution to the world of 20th century architecture.

<sup>8</sup> Ed. Note: William Steele was the architect of the Woodbury County Courthouse. He called upon Purcell and Elmslie to act as associate architects. Mr. Steele spent several years in Sullivan's Chicago office along with George Elmslie just before the turn of the century.



RIGHT: Merchants Bank of Winona, Winona, Minnesota, 1911. P & E photo.





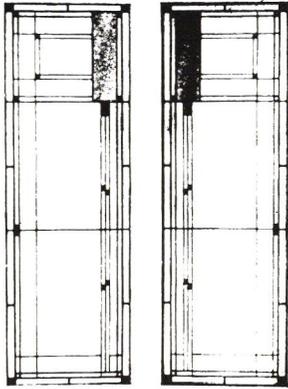
THE EDISON SHOP  
BABSON BROTHERS  
229 WABASH AVENUE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

PURCELL AND ELMSLIE ARCHITECTS

DRAWING BY JOHN FLEMING JR.

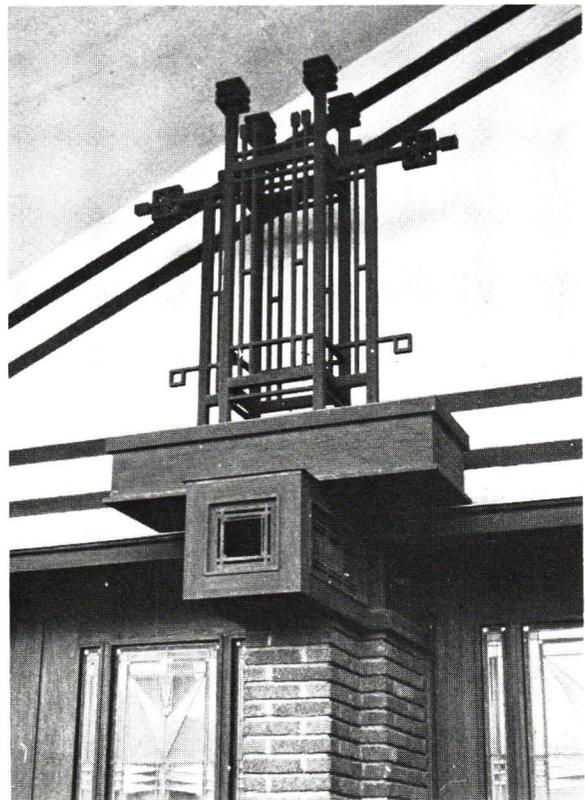
# A Guide to the Architecture of Purcell & Elmslie

by David Gebhard



*This listing of existing buildings was prepared by Doctor Gebhard in 1960. 200 copies were issued by the Roswell Museum and Art Center, Roswell, New Mexico, copyright 1960 by David Gebhard. All of the buildings contained in this listing are still in use and the listing of a house or other building does not mean that it is open to the public. Permission to visit particular buildings must be obtained from their present owners.*

- ADAIR, Dr. John M.D. — dwelling, 1913.  
322 East Vine Street, Owatonna, Minnesota. In excellent condition, both exterior and interior.
- ATKINSON, T. R. — dwelling, 1910.  
402 Avenue B. West, Bismarck, North Dakota. Exterior recently covered with asbestos shingles and entirely painted white; some modifications, interior.
- BABSON, Fred — farm house, 1916.  
"Four Pines Farm", Hinsdale, Illinois. DuPage-Cook County Line Road, 1/2 mile west of U.S. Highway 66. Construction of this house was unsupervised. Sun porch added later as well as entrance pergola. This house is a variation of the earlier Bachus house.
- BABSON, Henry — service buildings around a drive-in court, 1915-16. 283 Gatesby Road, Riverside, Illinois. Converted into residences in the 1930's. Retains much of original character. Dovecote missing from northwest unit.
- BACHUS, C. T. — dwelling, 1915.  
212 West 36th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota. An outstanding example of the Firm's small open plan houses. This house remains as originally built. Built for less than \$3,000.
- BAKER, W. E. — dwelling, 1910.  
1805 Fremont Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Basic form remains unchanged; exterior



Wood ornamental detail on one of the Babson service buildings in Riverside, Illinois. This and other wooden ornament on these structures was executed by Alfonso Ianelli. PSP photo.

has been partially recovered with shingles; several modifications in interior. This is an interesting example of the Firm's early open plan houses.



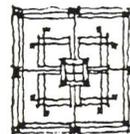
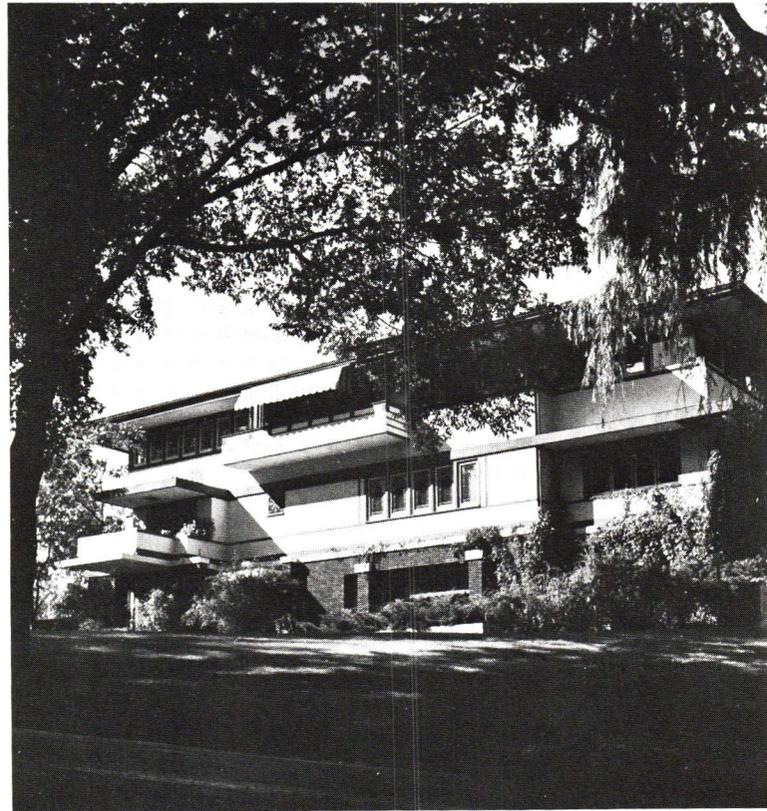
Ward Beebe house, 1912

BEEBE, Dr. Ward M.D. — dwelling, 1912. 2022 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota. In original condition, both exterior and interior; present exterior color not original.

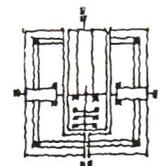
BRADLEY, Harold C. — sea-shore dwelling, 1912. Juniper Point, Woods Hole, Massachusetts. In excellent original condition, both interior and exterior. This house represents an interesting construction of steel and wood.

BRADLEY, Harold C. — dwelling, 1914-15. 2914 Oxford Road, Shorewood Hills, Madison, Wisconsin. Basically well preserved; service wing and garage to rear added later, not designed by the Firm. One of the earliest uses of a formal garage entrance on front of house which led directly into a reception room.

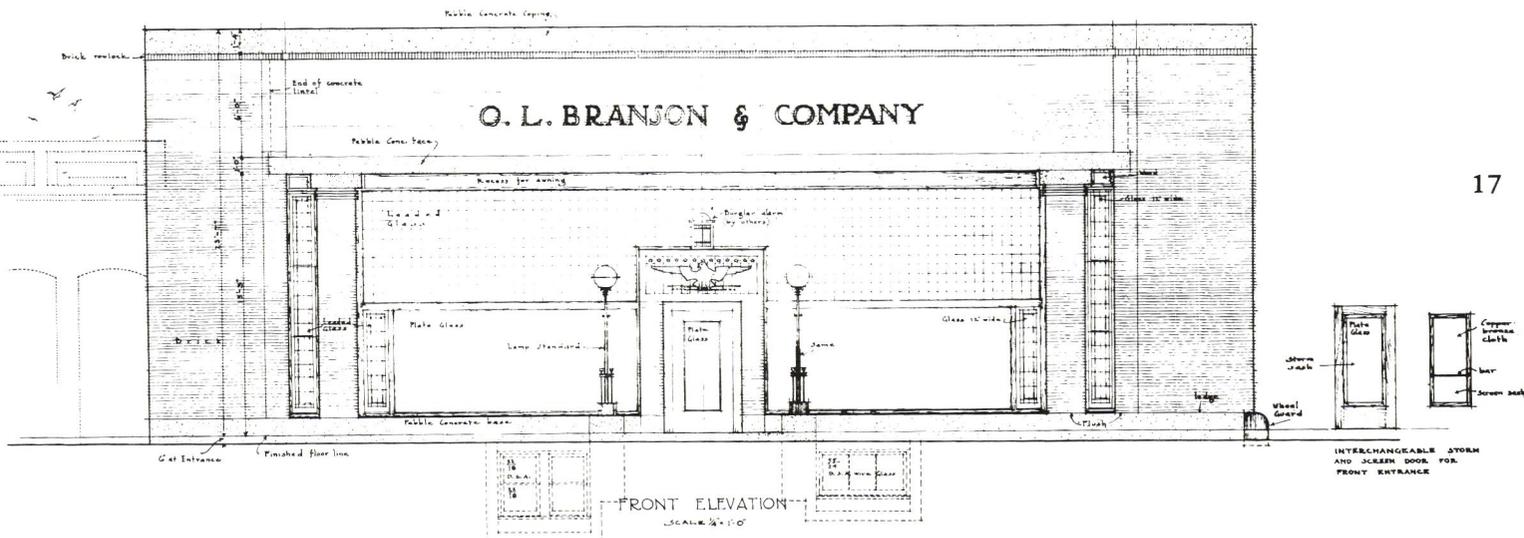
BRANSON, G. L. & Company, Bankers — bank building, 1916. 200 North Main, Mitchell, South Dakota. Exterior largely unchanged, present exterior sign not original; lamps on each side of entrance no longer in place. A very fine example of the Firm's terra cotta designs above entrance.



The H. C. Bradley house, 1914  
Madison, Wisconsin. P & E photo.



Below is the front elevation working drawing of the G. L. Branson & Company bank building, 1916, Mitchell, South Dakota.





BUXTON, C. I. — bungalow, 1912.

424 East Main Street, Owatonna, Minnesota. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior; garage not designed by Firm. Two level plan with bedrooms on ground floor, living area opening to rear garden.

BYRNE, P. E. — dwelling, 1909.

120 Avenue A West, Bismarck, North Dakota. In excellent condition both interior and exterior; present light colored exterior plaster, not original.

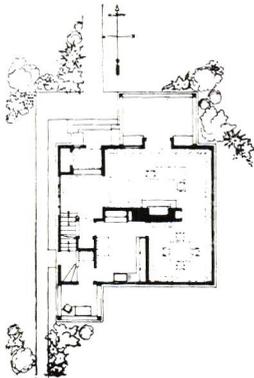
CARLSON, Fritz C. — dwelling, 1917.

3612 17th Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. One of the Firm's small open plan houses; built by construction foreman on many and varied Purcell and Elmslie operations.

CRANE ESTATE, Charles R. — gardener's cottage, 1911. Juniper Point, Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Some interior remodeling, otherwise good condition. Other buildings, some of which are still standing, were designed by the firm for the Crane Estate, including a Greenhouse-Service building (1913), Ice house and Tool house (1912) and a Pier Boathouse with a library and private office above (1913). The old main house was extensively remodeled by the Firm.

DECKER, Edward W. — dwelling, 1912-13.

State Route 101 at Holdridge, Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota. House no longer standing, but the garage and service buildings including apartment for chauffeur are still in existence. Original house of concrete and steel in the form of large cross.

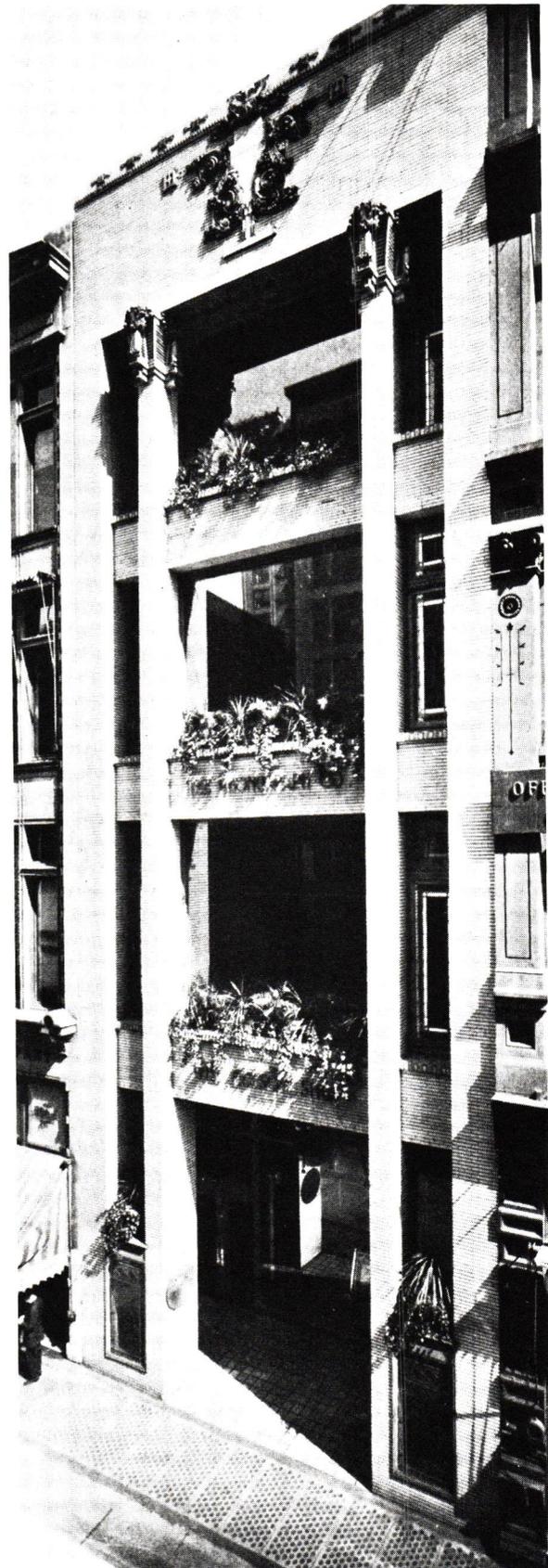


A. B. C. Dodd house, 1910

DODD, A. B. C. — dwelling, 1910.

310 Third Avenue, Charles City, Iowa. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior; an example of the Firm's compact open plan houses.

EDISON SHOP—sales and executive offices, 1912. 229 Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Second to fifth floors all that remains of original design. Interior completely destroyed. Good example of terra cotta design on upper part of facade.

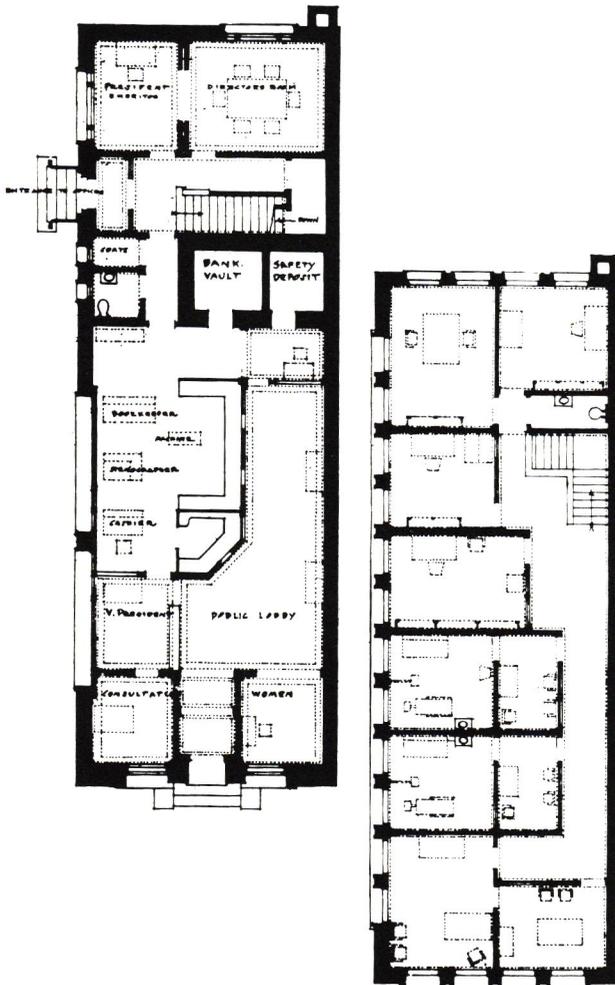


The Edison Shop, 1912. This building is now included as one of Chicago's official Architectural Landmarks. P & E photo.

EINFELDT, Henry – dwelling, 1914.

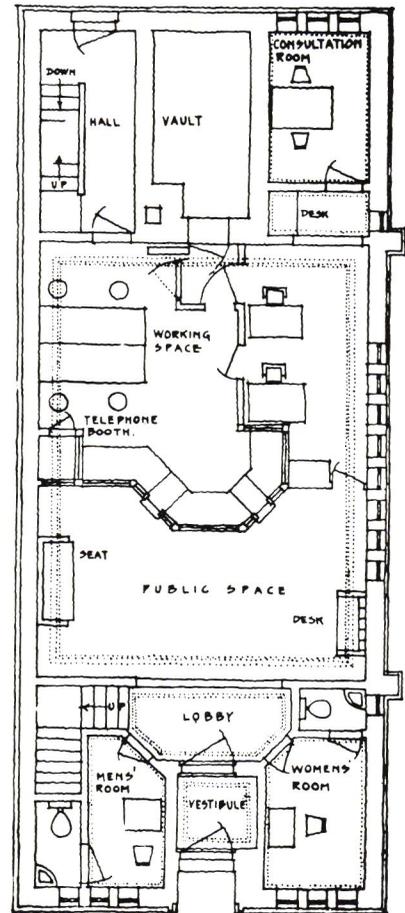
1010 Forest Avenue, River Forest, Illinois. Generally in original condition; some modifications inside; exterior in original condition with the exception of the side porch which was originally screened, but has now been enclosed with stock carpenter windows.

EXCHANGE STATE BANK and Office building, 1910. Northwest corner Main Street and Railroad Avenue, Grand Meadow, Minnesota. The first of the Firm's small bank buildings; follows basic concept of earlier Purcell and Feick Atkinson Bank. Exterior in good condition, some changes in large side window; interior quite modified from original design.



Exchange State Bank, 1910  
Grand Meadow, Minnesota

FARMERS AND MERCHANTS STATE BANK, printing plant and office building, 1916. Main Street, Hector, Minnesota. Interior in original condition; although remodeling is planned to south (1960); exterior condition good; light standards to each side of entrance no longer in place; bank



First National Bank, 1914  
LeRoy, Minnesota

sign and clock in terra cotta panel above door not original. Terra cotta panel above entrance represents outstanding example of the Firm's work in design.

1917 "What concerns Purcell and Elmslie is not what a building will appear like, but what it is going to be, out in the rain and sun, among people, attending to its business effectively and being interesting to everyone every business hour of the day."

FIRST CONGREGATION CHURCH – community house, 1913-14. Corner Broadway and Third Street, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The community house was designed to be in sympathy with the older church building. In excellent original condition; both interior and exterior.

FIRST CONGREGATION CHURCH – minister's dwelling, 1914. 403 Third Street, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Some modifications in interior; exterior well preserved; Open screened porch now enclosed. This house is a development of the gardener's cottage at Woods Hole, Massachusetts, see Crane Estate.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK, 1917-1920.

Main Street, Adams, Minnesota. Building now used as municipal liquor store; central leaded glass window replaced with glass brick; sign no longer on entrance; interior in original condition with the exception of minor alterations.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK – store and office building, 1910-1911. 8 West Davenport Street, Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Some minor alterations in interior; exterior still as originally designed with the obvious exception of the many signs. The Architects placed the banking rooms to the rear of the building and provided two stores and large lobby to the front.

FIRST STATE BANK, 1914.

Main Street, LeRoy, Minnesota. One of the smallest and most successful of the Firm's bank buildings. Exterior as originally designed except for the lack of original bank sign; interior unfortunately remodeled.

1917 *"American architecture must be written in the form language of our times, a language which we already have and which is sparkling with living words and phrases. Our architectural form language is that which speaks with terms of railroads and bridges, with words from the use of steel and concrete, with ideas from the familiarity with far-flung telephone lines, and long journeys in great ships and splendid trains."*

GALLAGER, J. W. S. – dwelling, 1913.

457 Broadway, Winona, Minnesota. In excellent condition; both interior and exterior; planting box by front entrance not original, nor present color of stucco.

GALLAHER, H. P. – dwelling, 1909-10.

Route 1, Zumbra Heights, Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota. The exterior still preserves its original forceful design. The interior has been extensively remodeled.

GOETZENBERGER, Edward – dwelling, 1910. 2621 Emerson Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. A number of later remodelings have somewhat changed the interior and exterior design of this house. Nevertheless it is a good example of the Firm's small inexpensive open plan houses.

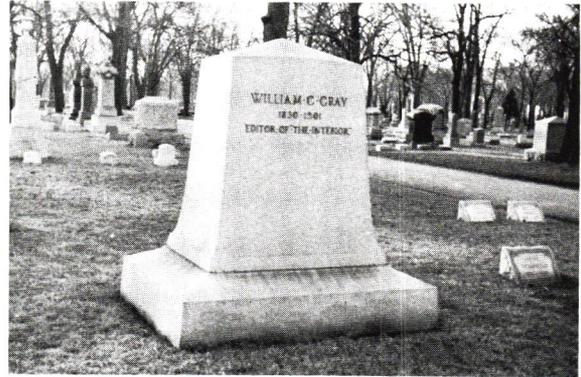
GOODNOW, M. S. – dwelling, 1913.

446 Main Street, Hutchinson, Minnesota. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior.

GRAY, Mrs. Catherine – dwelling, 1907.

2409 East Lake of the Isles Boulevard, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Very little of the original house now remains after continuous remodelings over four

decades. Only original section is the street facade, side entrance and stair bay. The house is a Purcell-Feick Project. Although Elmslie produced its plan, Purcell did the facades. Thus it is one of the first Purcell and Elmslie houses.



GRAY, Dr. William Cunningham, Phd. Lld. – grave memorial, 1902. Forest Home Cemetery, Forest Park, Illinois. Location is directly in front of and about a hundred yards from principle entrance gates at the point where the intramural drive first divides. This grave marker was designed by W. G. P. in his Junior year, Cornell College of Architecture.

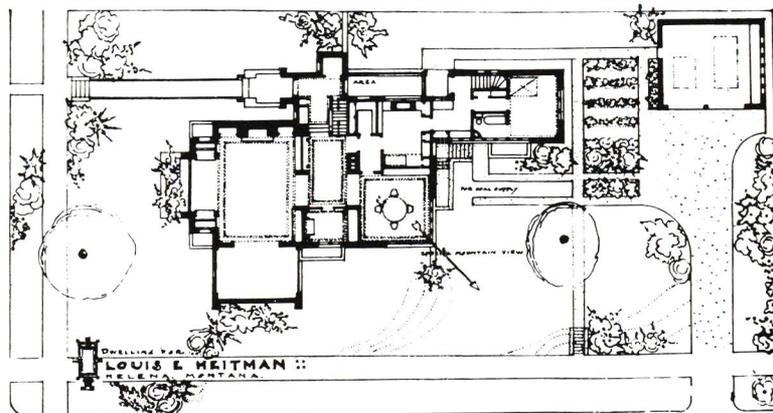
HEGG, E. N. – store and office building, 1915. 2930 Nicollet Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Store on street level modified on exterior and interior. This section of the building was the first part of a projected three story building which was to have extended north to the corner.

HEITMAN, Louis – dwelling, 1916.

712 Dearborn Avenue, Helena, Montana. In excellent condition both interior and exterior. This is one of the best preserved of the Firm's larger houses.

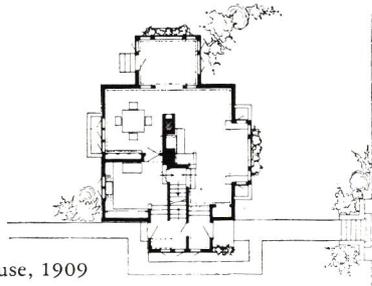
HINELINE, Harold E. – dwelling, 1910.

4920 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In good condition with some interior changes; side and rear screened porches recently enclosed.



HOYT, E. S. — dwelling, 1913.

300 Hill Street, Red Wing, Minnesota. In excellent condition both interior and exterior. This is in excellent state of preservation. Red color of exterior plaster is original and gives an accurate indication of how colored plaster was used by the Firm. The covered walk and garage were added in 1915 by the Firm entailing a unique parking and entrance solution for the garage.



T. W. McCosker house, 1909

HUNTER, Amy Hamilton — dwelling, 1916-17. 1441 Braeburn Road, Flossmoor, Illinois. Exterior intact as built. Cantilevered dining balcony originally open with single car garage below. Some modifications on the interior. The rear wing added and first and second floor porches enclosed later (not by Firm).

JUMP RIVER TOWN HALL, 1915.

Jump River, Wisconsin. Off State Highway 73, one block to west. In original condition, interior and exterior. A logical outgrowth of the simple needs, the availability of labor and material of a small northern lumber village.

LAND OFFICE BUILDING, 1916.

Second Street and Broadway, Stanley, Wisconsin. Original condition. Numerous interior alterations since building was originally designed. First floor now used as post office.

LITTLE (WALLER), Margaret — dwelling, 1914. 382 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California. This house has been extensively modified and little remains of original design. House doubled in size by adding to rear; service entrance on street front changed; interior greatly altered. The main entrance still retains the character and personality of the original design.

LOGAN STORE BUILDING, 1916.

Mitchell, South Dakota. Remodeled store and office building adjoining the G. L. Branson and Company Bank. In poor condition.

MADISON STATE BANK, 1913.

218 6th Street, Madison, Minnesota. Exterior in original condition with the exception of bank sign, now replaced, absence of light standards to each side of entrance, and unfortunate removal of wide

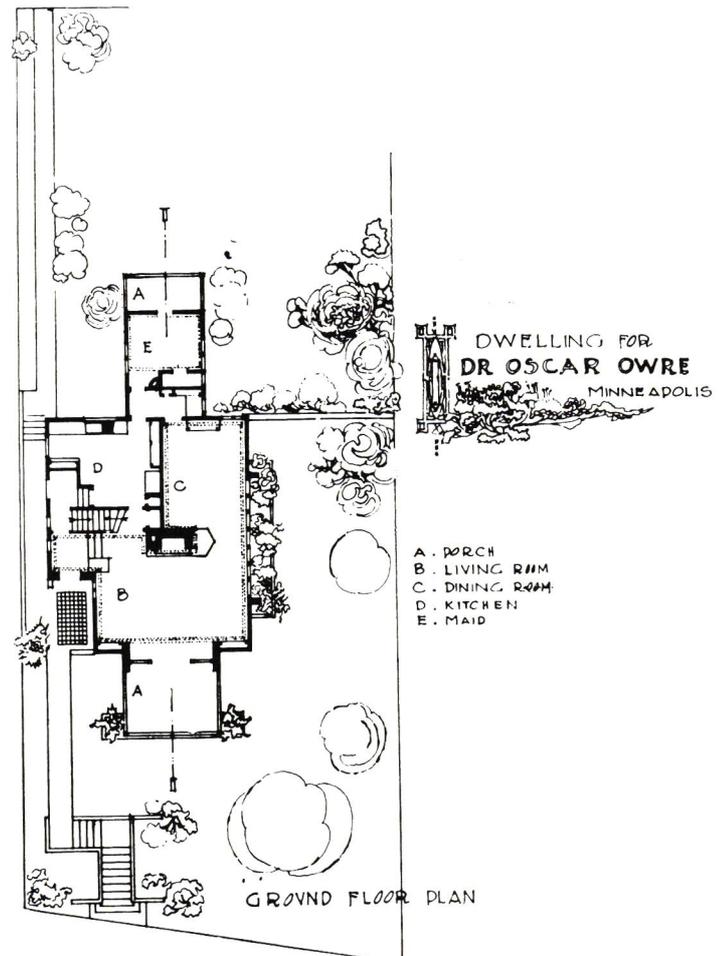
entrance steps. Extensive interior changes in counters; leaded glass in main skylight removed.

McCOSKER, Terry W. — dwelling, 1909. (Purcell and Feick) 4615 East Lake Harriet Boulevard, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Major remodeling on exterior and interior since originally built; lower surface of exterior originally covered with shingles. Present horizontal mullioned glass windows are original. Garage added by the Firm in 1915.

MERCHANTS BANK OF WINONA, 1911-12. Corner of Third Street and Lafayette, Winona, Minnesota. Exterior in good condition; brick lamp posts which were in front of building at curb no longer in existence. Interior has been remodeled, but not extensively for it still retains its original character. Rear wing of building not designed by Firm, nor of course, the new wing to the right of the main facade. This building represents the largest bank structure designed by the Firm.

MEYERS, Harvey J. — dwelling, 1908 (Purcell and Feick) 2513 Garfield Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Some interior and exterior alterations.

MUELLER, Paul — Studio and Office, 1910-11. 4845 Bryant Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Although a number of changes have been made in this small building it still retains its



original Purcell and Elmslie quality. The basement garage in front was added at a later date. This dwelling originally stood in a grove of tall white pines.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING – city hall, Masonic Lodge, fire engine house and public library, 1917. Corner West Main Street and Second Avenue, Kasson, Minnesota. Some remodeling on interior; whole building in very poor state of repair.

OWRE, Dr. Oscar D. D. – dwelling, 1911-12. 2625 Newton Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior. Fence and garage added by the Firm in 1918. This is one of the Firm's first examples of the open plan house.

PARKER, Charles J. – dwelling, 1912-13. 4829 Colfax Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior; upper attic dormers not a part of the original design nor is the present garage.

1917 *"The outward Form of the needed parts must, however, be useful in more ways than as mere elements of support and enclosure. They must state the quality of the entire enterprise."*

POLSON, Mrs. Richard – dwelling, 1917. Rural Route 2, Northwest of town, Spooner, Wisconsin. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior. A fine example of the Firm's story and a half bungalows with asymmetrical roof slopes.

POWERS, E. L. – dwelling, 1910-11. 1635 26th Street West, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior; present exterior white plaster not original (originally plaster was a light red brick).

PURCELL, Charles A. – dwelling, 1909. 628 Bonnie Brae Avenue, River Forest, Illinois. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior. This is a pre-Purcell and Elmslie building. The leaded glass windows and the sawed wood work both in the interior and on the exterior were added by the Firm in 1914. The rear wing off the kitchen and the garage were added by Purcell in 1921.

PURCELL, William Gray – dwelling, 1913. 2328 Lake Place, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Considered to be the high point of the Firm's domestic work. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior. Still contains mural paintings by Charles Livingston Bull and Lawton Gray Parker.

PURCELL, William Gray – summer dwelling, 1918-19. Possum Hollow Road, Southwest of Philadelphia, Moylan-Rose Valley, Pennsylvania. Original house extensively altered; sympathetic new addition has been added to house almost doubling



Amy Hamilton Hunter house, 1916



Henry Einfeldt house, 1914



Charles A. Purcell house, 1909

its size. Contained early examples of two 15 foot sliding glass walls.

SNELLING, Thomas W. — dwelling, 1913.  
1114 North Sheridan Road, Waukegan, Illinois. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior. Interesting roof plan; roof slants toward center of house where a pipe drain runs through the house. Present fence not part of architects' original plans, nor is planter box by front entrance.

STEVEN, J. D. R. — cottage, 1909 (Purcell and Feick) 220 Hudson Avenue, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. In excellent condition both interior and exterior; some changes in interior.

1917 *"Beauty is an inherent quality; wherefore proportion, balance, line, color, rhythm cannot be applied to a work of Art; such qualities arise from it. Beauty is determined by the nature and value of the idea behind and within the form which holds it. So we believe that the true architect is not a 'Designer' imposing his aesthetic ideas upon the appearance of a building, but an Investigator, an Explorer, an Interpreter, and that the building is successful in proportion to his ability to see clearly and to square his work with what he sees."*

STEVEN, J. D. R. — dwelling, 1909 (Purcell and Feick) 216 Hudson Avenue, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Present ground level garage not part of original plan. In excellent condition, both exterior and interior.

STEWART MEMORIAL CHURCH, 1909 (Purcell and Feick) Corner 32nd Street and Stevens Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Exterior in good condition; interior somewhat modified; especially alter end of sanctuary. Sunday School not designed by Firm, although they had laid out general plans.

THOMPSON, E. C. — dwelling, 1909.  
1022 Fifth Street, Bismarck, North Dakota. Some changes and modifications in interior and on exterior. A good example of the Firm's small inexpensive open plan houses.

1917 *"We are now living in a machine age and the spirit of machinery enters into nearly everything we do."*

TILLOTSON, E. C. — dwelling, 1912.  
2316 Oliver Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In excellent condition on exterior with the exception of the light plaster color; some alterations on interior. An example of the Firm's larger open plan houses. Plan and design especially related to the narrow north facing lot with houses built close

on either side. Idea being to secure all possible sun from the front and rear garden.

WAKEFIELD, Lyman E. — dwelling, 1911.  
4700 Fremont Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In excellent condition; both interior and exterior. Garage not designed by Firm.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH — Sunday School rooms, 1910-11. Corner of 12th and Nicollet Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Firm's two Sunday School rooms were included within the new Sunday School wing added to the Church in 1937. Main floor room still retains fireplace and leaded glass windows.

WIETHOFF, Charles — dwelling, 1917.  
4609 Humboldt Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Some interior alterations, exterior in good condition. A good example of a late Purcell and Elmslie open plan house.

WOLF, Maurice I. — dwelling, 1912-13.  
4109 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Firm did not supervise construction and some changes were made in the original design. Later alterations have been made both interior and exterior. Garage not designed by Firm.

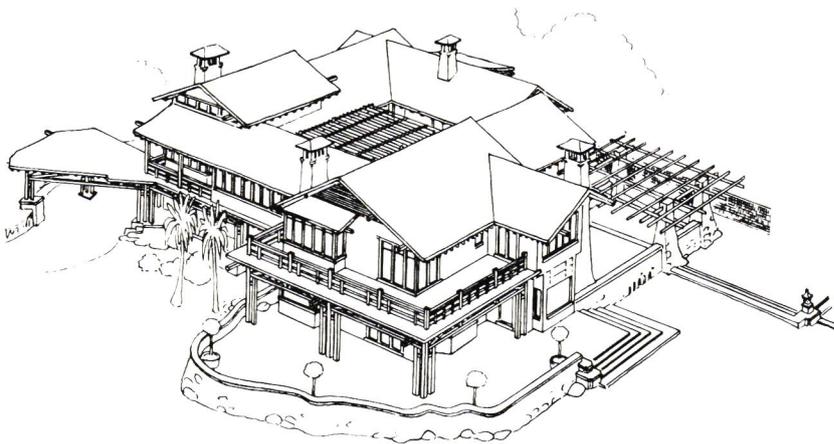
WOODBURY COUNTY COURTHOUSE,  
1915-17 (designed in association with William L. Steele). Corner 7th Street and Douglas Street, Sioux City, Iowa. In excellent condition, both interior and exterior. This building represents the Firm's largest realized commission and without question is one of the most significant works of the period in the United States.

*Note: All of the dated quotations appearing in this issue are from a series of advertising brochures for clients prepared by Purcell and Elmslie, and published during 1917 and 1918.*



RIGHT: Woodbury County Courthouse. Sioux City, Iowa, 1915. (Designed with William Steele, Architect.) P & E photo.

## Book Reviews



*THE JAPANESE INFLUENCE IN AMERICA*, by Clay Lancaster. Walton N. Rauls, New York, New York, 1963. 292 pp. illustrated, \$17.50, boxed.

Japanese culture developed with almost no foreign intervention, except for nearby China, until the latter part of the 19th century. The first real attempt to trade with the west came after Commodore Perry's visit to Japan in 1853.

Mr. Lancaster has given us a brief history of Japan before Perry and presents a well written discussion of the effects of the discovery of Japanese arts, crafts and traditions on the world of the late 19th century thru the present day. His primary vehicle is the discussion of a series of exhibitions and fairs starting with the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial. In an interesting progression he shows the development as well as the vulgarization of Japanese influence in America.

In a chapter concerning the Chicago (nee Prairie) School of Architecture the author attributes Frank Lloyd Wright's early Prairie houses and his concept of organic architecture to this Japanese influence. There is little doubt that Wright knew and admired things Japanese before his first visit to Japan in 1905, but this admiration did not lead Wright to build in a Japanese manner as one might infer from this book. Wright's Imperial Hotel in Tokyo is mentioned only briefly, but it is interesting to note that the Japanese do not consider this building native, though most uninitiated western visitors consider it completely Japanese in character. After it was built there were several years of imitative efforts on the part of Japanese architects who admired Wright. One might conclude that Mr. Wright influenced Japanese architecture at least as much as theirs did his.

The discussion of the Chicago School is not limited to Wright. Other men such as Guenzel and Drummond, Purcell and Elmslie, and George Maher are included. Again, the influence of Japan on these men is evident but not as pronounced as is implied. However, considering the purpose of the book, this objection is not particularly serious. One correction is in order: the "T-plan", used so often by the Chicago School architects is known as the "cruciform plan" and not as the "aeroplane" plan.

The chapters concerning the development of the bungalow in America are the most interesting from an architectural point of view. The California bungalow as designed by the Greene brothers and their contemporaries was frankly of Japanese origin. One of the Greene brothers stated shortly before his death that his inspiration for the bungalow style first came from a book on Japanese architecture purchased from an itinerate book peddler. These structures are often compared to the Chicago School work, but in comparing plans published in this book, the differences are more apparent than the similarities.

The author has presented his subject well and although some of his attributions are a bit ambitious, the Japanese influence in America certainly cannot be denied. The physical book is worthy of comment, being handsomely bound with colorful handprinted Japanese endpapers. The typography, printing and superb illustrations are of excellent quality throughout.

Reviewed by Lloyd Henri Hobson

*THE BEST IN 20TH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE*, Pictures and text from L'OEIL, edited by Georges and Rosamond Bernier. Reynal, New York, New York, 1964. 278 pp. illustrated, \$15.00.

This large (9" x 12") book is essentially a picture book of modern architecture. The only representative of the Prairie School is Wright, who gets several pages. The excellent photographs are in both color and black and white; however, the magazine type layout is unfortunate.

*FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, Architecture and Space*, by Peter Blake. Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland, 1964. 138 pp. illustrated, \$1.25, paper.

This is a reissue of a portion of Peter Blake's *The Master Builders*, first published in 1960. It is an excellent book for the interested layman, being particularly strong in regard to Wright's early or "Prairie" years. Wright's work from 1940 on, however, is less well done. A definitive work on Wright's later work remains to be written.

*INSPIRATION, An Essay, by Louis H. Sullivan, Architect. Ralph Fletcher Seymour, Chicago, Illinois, 1964. 36 pp. \$2.00, paper.*

Sullivan delivered this essay to the Western Architect's Association in 1886. Copies of the original printed version are virtually nonexistent. This edition has been published by the dean of Chicago's printers who counted most of the Prairie architects among his friends.

*GRADY GAMMAGE MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, edited by Dean Smith. Bureau of Publications, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, 1964. 32 pp. illustrated, \$1.00, paper.*

The Wright buffs will all want this brochure. Large (12" x 12") and well done, it has plans, photographs and a history of the building from conception thru construction.

*BETH SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE, A Description and Interpretation, by Rabbi Mortimer J. Cohen. Congregation Beth Sholom, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1959. 34 pp. illustrated, \$1.00, paper, \$3.00, cloth.*

Nicely produced, this small volume is primarily concerned with the religious aspects of Beth Sholom Synagogue. Several fine photographs are included along with comments by Mr. Wright.

## Preview

The next issue of THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL REVIEW, Volume II, will be a detailed study of the Garrick Theater, originally called the Schiller Building, designed by Adler and Sullivan.

Included will be a detailed history of the structure as well as a discussion of its design. Adler's contribution to the building will be covered. The text will be augmented by measured drawings prepared by HABS in 1964 and photographs by Richard Nickel.

To be reviewed . . . .

Landscape Artist in America

Leonard K. Eaton

You and Architecture

Alfred Browning Parker

Chicago's Famous Buildings

Arthur S. Siegel

Manuscripts, measured drawings, photographs, etc. are invited. Letters to the editor are welcome and will be published when of general interest.

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*Drawings of Purcell and Elmslie, microfilm. (Included in the collection of the Burnham Library of the Art Institute of Chicago.)*

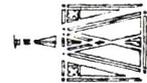
*Elmslie, George Grant. "Functionalism and the International Style," Architecture and Engineering, Vol. CXX (February 1935).*

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WM. GRAY PURCELL  
GEORGE G. ELSLIE

On the facing page is a reproduction of a rare holograph letter written by George Grant Elmslie. The original was supplied by Mr. Purcell who says in a note accompanying it -

. . . Full signature of George very scarce, it was always G G E.

Everything about our "letterhead" deferred to color and to area - This was not an ornament project!

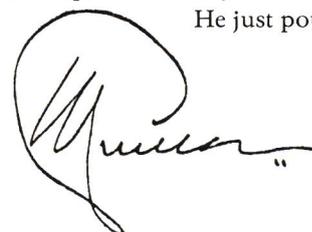
I always enjoyed his handwriting - each word is a complete ideograph - like Japanese writing. Look at the power of the S & M corner. I have a picture of George with arms folded - he was a braw Scot for a two handed sword

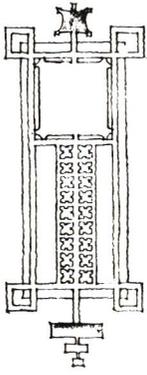
. a strong man

. a gentle man

He was Chopin - for the eye -

He just poured it out -





PURCELL AND ELMSLIE..  
ARCHITECTS..  
AUDITORIUM BUILDING MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA.  
CHICAGO OFFICE

WM GRAY PURCELL.  
GEORGE C ELMSLIE.

Feb 4/16

Dear Mr Jager.

I never said "thank you" for the  
charming print you sent me  
as a Christmas remembrance.

It is fastened on the wall where  
I daily look. It is such a  
deainty bit that I like to have  
it around and dream of  
Pleas and cherry blossoms in  
these days of snow and ice.

Remember me to Mrs Jager and  
Katherine

Sincerely yours  
Geo C Elmslie

