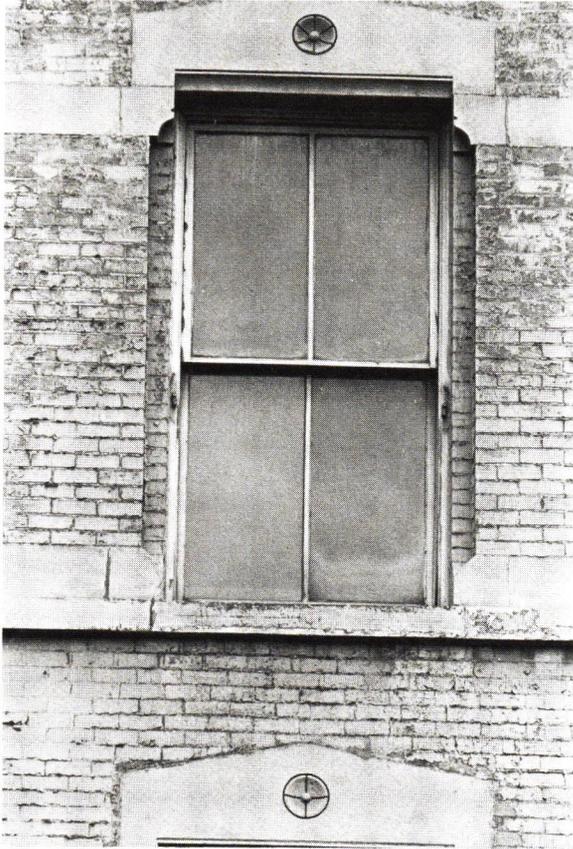


The
Prairie
School
Review

Volume XI, Number 3

Third Quarter, 1974

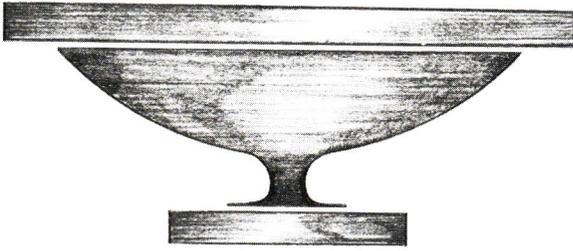
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ABOVE: The rosettes over the second and third floor windows of the western portion of the Scoville Building are very simple. Combined with the elegant reveal on each side of the window, they form a splendid composition.

COVER: The ornament over the fifth floor windows of Adler and Sullivan's Scoville Building on West Washington street is typical of Sullivan's work during the period 1883-85. Both photos by Paul E. Sprague.

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The wrecker's clamshell begins its work on Adler and Sullivan's Academy of Music at Kalamazoo, Michigan in 1967. Kalamazoo Gazette photo.

From the EDITORS

*Theoretically, this editorial should be written just after midyear in 1974. In fact, it is being written more than a year later. The editorial, always the last words prepared for each issue of **The Prairie School Review**, should concern itself with current issues. The question becomes whether to concern ourselves with an issue which conforms with the date on the cover or to address ourselves to a matter of immediate interest. We have elected to do neither. Rather, we offer an explanation.*

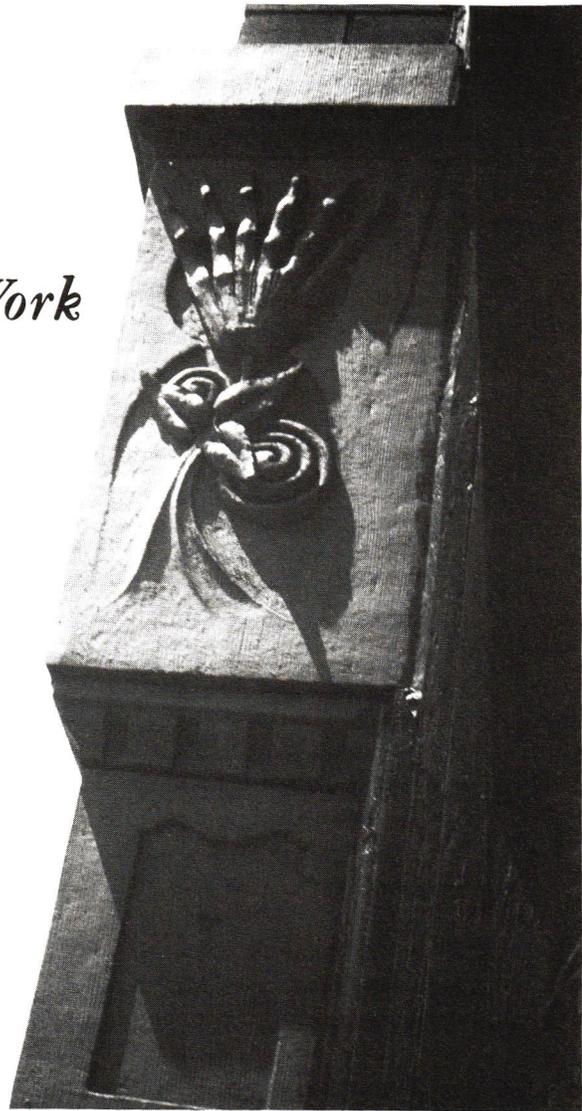
*This issue of **The Prairie School Review** is late because we were preoccupied with another matter. We have spent the past several months developing the **Prairie Avenue Bookshop** in Chicago. This shop, probably the only one of its kind in the United States, is devoted entirely to books on architecture and related subjects. The shop is an outgrowth of our interest of the past 15 years which originally prompted us to produce **The Prairie School Review**. All of our readers know that we have offered books by mail for many years. Now there is also a retail outlet for our own and other publishers' volumes. Located in Chicago's new **Prairie Avenue Heritage District**, the shop occupies the **Elbridge Keith** house, one of the great old mansions still standing on what was once Chicago's residential gold coast. Being only a block from **Richardson's** fine old granite **Glessner House**, the shop has become our home away from home and serves as a clearing house for the architectural bibliophile.*

*When the shop opened in mid-1974, there were about 40 new titles on the shelves. There were a few hundred out-of-print books to choose from and several artifacts of interest to **Chicago Arts and Crafts** collectors. Today the shop has well over 300 new titles and who knows how many (or how few) out-of-print books to choose from in a setting of mission and **Wright** furniture. The shop is not confined to the **Prairie School**. All phases of architecture are included—**Victorian**, the **Bauhaus**, ancient as well as modern work. The stock grows steadily and will continue to do so.*

*There it is. That is the reason we are late. The next few weeks will be hectic as we get out the remainder of **Volume XI** and all of **Volume XII** but we will have them to you soon complete with editorials on what we think are the current issues. In the meantime, stop at the **Prairie Avenue Bookshop** to browse or buy. If you should choose to buy, perhaps the printer can be paid a bit sooner.*

Early Adler & Sullivan Work in Kalamazoo

by Charles E. Gregerson



Dessenberg Building window ornament

Charles Gregerson is a practicing architect in Chicago. Mr. Gregerson graduated from Illinois Institute of Technology and now maintains his office in the Pullman community on Chicago's South side. He is currently at work on a book concerning the theaters of Dankmar Adler and a number of other research projects.

Two previously unpublished buildings by Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan are the Academy of Music and the Dessenberg Building, both in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The earlier of these, the Academy of Music, was discovered in *King's Handbook of the United States*¹ where a woodcut appears with the caption, "Kalamazoo Opera House-Adler & Sullivan, Architects." Subsequent research (in which the

1 King, Moses & Sweetser, M. F.: *King's Handbook of the United States*, The Matthews-Northrup Co., Buffalo, N. Y., 1896, p. 413. In this book illustrations of all buildings designed by Adler & Sullivan are so credited. The editors seem to have had direct access to Adler & Sullivan's files because many of these illustrations are derived from known office renderings. Similar credit is not given to the works of other architects, although Richardson's name does appear in the text. There is no indication as to why this was done. The writer can only assume that the publishers, who were located in Buffalo, N.Y., were somehow connected with the Guaranty Bldg. which had just been completed at the time of the book's publication.

late Richard Nickel was also involved) uncovered a wealth of written material and photographs, but unfortunately, as yet, none of the original drawings. This building was apparently the first auditorium to have been completely designed by both Adler & Sullivan.² Of the two auditoriums in which they were both previously involved, the Central Music Hall³ was for the most part Adler's work, and

2 The design of this building is credited only to Adler in contemporary writings. Sullivan is not mentioned in any of them. Contrary to what Sullivan said in his autobiography, the partnership D. Adler & Co. was not formed until the spring of 1882 and that of Adler & Sullivan was not formed until the spring of 1883, a year after the building opened. Paul Sprague has determined this through examination of old directories and supplied this information to the writer. The facade and interior decorations were, however, obviously Sullivan's work while the plan and shape of the auditorium were determined by Adler.

3 Central Music Hall, southeast corner of Randolph & State, Chicago. Opened December, 1879, demolished 1900.



Adler & Sullivan, Architects.

6

This woodcut of the "Opera House" by Adler and Sullivan led to the discovery of other data on the building. It was later named the Academy of Music. Drawing from King's Handbook of the United States.

the Grand Opera House⁴ was alteration within the framework of an existing building.

The Academy of Music came into being as the result of a long felt need on the part of many citizens

⁴ Grand Opera House, 119 North Clark Street, Chicago. Opened Sept. 6, 1880. Interior completely altered in 1920's, demolished in 1959.

of Kalamazoo for a theatre for the fine arts. On March 26, 1881 a public meeting was held to devise a way and find the means of building one with a committee appointed to develop a plan of action. They reported on April 2nd that prices had been obtained on ten possible sites and recommended the formation of a stock company to carry out the project. Shortly thereafter the site on the east side of Rose Street, south of Main and opposite the Court House square, was selected. At a meeting on April 19th a committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions to a "Citizens Fund" of \$10,000 to be given to



The completed Academy of Music building is remarkably similar to the woodcut on the previous page.

a proposed corporation on the condition that it build an "Opera House" with a seating capacity of at least 1000 persons and that the cost of the building and lot should be not less than \$30,000. In June a corporation called "The Kalamazoo Opera House Co." was formed to accept this offer. Its articles of incorporation were filed on August 1 with capital stock of \$40,000. On June 3 Frederick Bush

and L. B. Kendall, stockholders of the corporation, "visited Chicago to consult with the leading architects of that city regarding plans and specifications for the proposed building and soon thereafter an arrangement was made with Mr. D. Adler to prepare and submit the same."⁵ On June 20 the deed to the property was acquired and ground breaking took place on July 5. By February 3, 1882 the walls were up and the roof was on. The Grand Opening took place on May 8, 1882. When the building was

⁵ *Kalamazoo Weekly Telegraph*, May 10, 1882, p. 4.

completed, the general contractors who built it, Frederick Bush and Thomas Patterson, acquired title to the property by buying out the other stockholders.⁶

From the beginning and throughout most of its history the building was under the management of Benjamin A. Bush, the son of Frederick A. Bush, who at some point acquired full ownership of the property. Until its destruction by arson on June 10, 1930 the auditorium served as a legitimate theater except for a brief period when it was named "The Regent" and served as a movie house under the management of W. S. Butterfield. Although the fire completely destroyed the auditorium, the three story office portion on Rose Street remained standing until 1967 when it was demolished to make way for the Industrial State Bank which now occupies the site. An officer of the bank told the writer that at the time of demolition, the upper two floors had long been abandoned and that the previous owner had attempted to save the four remaining pieces of ornament but they were destroyed as the walls fell. The property remained in the hands of the estate of Benjamin A. Bush until 1945 when it was acquired by the Kalamazoo Michigan Theater Corporation which sold it to the Butterfield Theater Corp. during the early 1960's. It was from this last corporation that the bank acquired ownership of the property.

6 The list of contractors and cost of the building is as follows:

- J. M. Wood, Chicago, stage and auditorum contractor and general superintendent.
- Bush & Patterson, Kalamazoo, builders.
- Graham & Moses, Chicago, scenic artists.
- A. Weidling & Bro., Chicago, fresco artists.
- Thomas Dorgan, Kalamazoo, gas fitting and plumbing.
- C. H. Dickinson, Kalamazoo, roofing and tin ware.
- Frank M. Clark, Kalamazoo, carpets, drapery and upholstering.
- Henry Dibble, Chicago, brass work and vestibule tiling.
- Schiver & Witherlee, Grand Rapids, galvanized iron work.
- Hay & Prentice, Chicago, steam heating.
- R. Southworth, Kalamazoo, paper hanging.
- R. Smith & Son, Kalamazoo, painting.
- Bird & Clarage, Kalamazoo, iron work.
- A. H. Andrews & Co., Chicago, seats.
- Spoor Mackey, Chicago, paper decorations.
- Charles H. Hinds, New York, electrician.
- J. L. Phillips, Kalamazoo, stair builder.

Ground	\$ 8,100
Building	36,300
Heating	2,600
Lighting and Plumbing	3,800
Decorations	3,000
Upholstering and drapery	3,300
Seating	4,400
Stage scenery and fittings	4,500
Total	\$66,000

The following is a description of the building from the *Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph*:

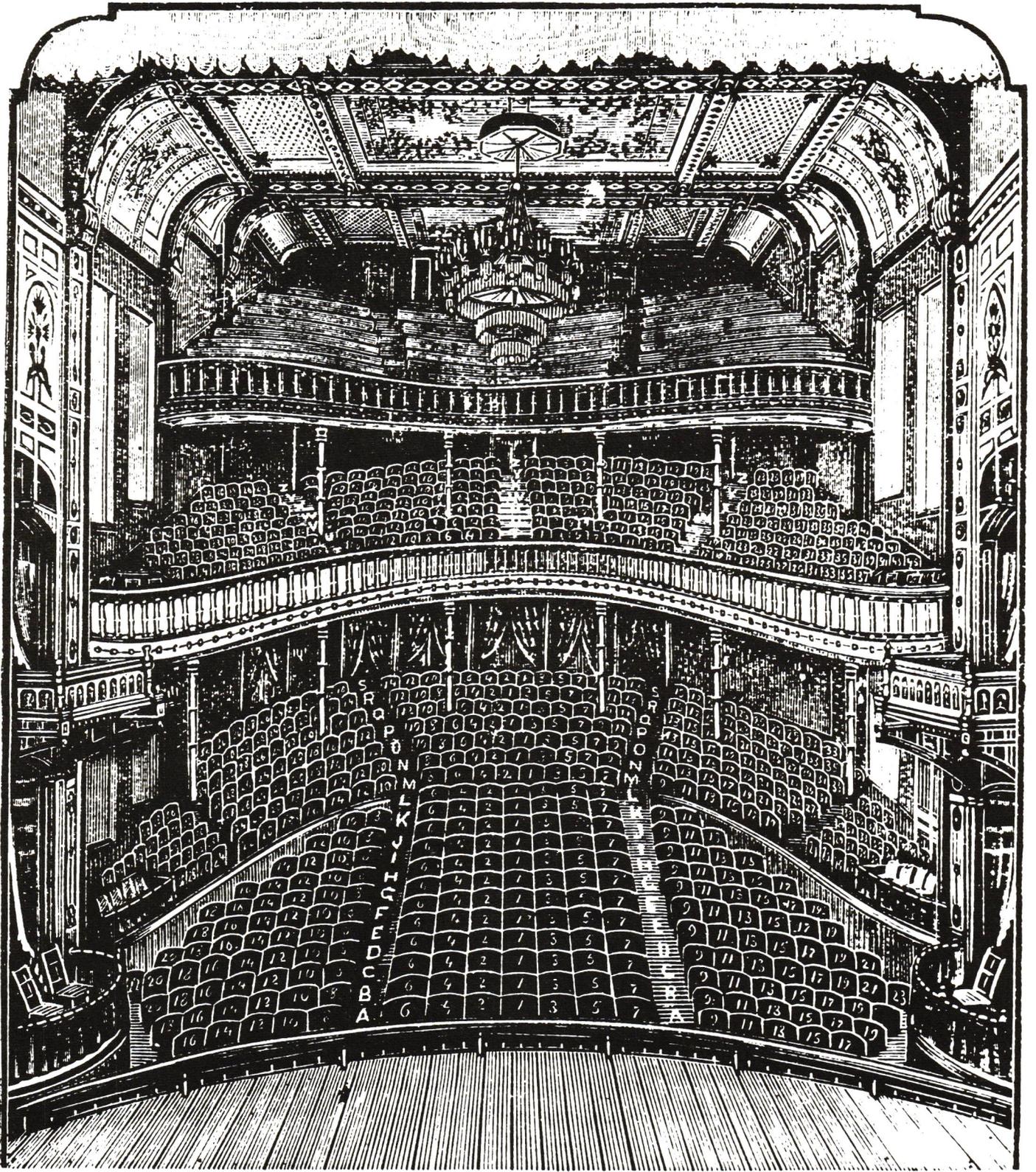
The building is 67 feet in width and 158 feet deep, extending from Rose street to the public alley in the rear. The work on the foundations was commenced in July, 1881. The walls are laid 11 feet below the street level and are 5 feet thick at the base and 3 feet wide at the top. In addition to this massive foundation, two cross walls extend through the building, one forming the support for the rear of the galleries, the other for the wall dividing the stage from the auditorium. In the basement directly beneath the iron columns supporting the front of the galleries are huge brick columns, settled on solid stone foundations, and also made secure by bond stones 6 inches in thickness.

Commencing at the stone foundations the brick walls of the building are 3 feet thick and they raise to a height of 58 feet over the stage and auditorium. The view of the Academy shown in the engraving does not convey a very adequate idea of its entire magnitude. The front is finished with Philadelphia pressed brick and handsomely trimmed with stone, and the sidewalk, which is 16 feet in width, is made of Portland cement.

The entrance. The main entrance or lobby is 18 feet wide and 40 feet in length. The outer doors are 9 feet from the front, and from this point the stairway ascends to the upper gallery. The floor is laid in tile of a neat and attractive design and the walls are nicely frescoed. Here is located the ticket office where the reserved seats, and tickets will be sold. Passing on through the inner doors you enter the foyer.

This is an apartment 25 feet long by 15 feet in width. On the left is the grand stair-case leading to the Balcony, and to the right is the Ladies' Retiring Room, about 15 feet square, handsomely furnished, with toilet room adjoining. The floor is covered with a beautiful crimson body Brussels carpet with which the building is furnished throughout. From the Foyer and Ladies' Retiring Room are six openings from 5 to 8 feet in width richly draped with Turkoman curtains opening into the auditorium.

It is on entering here that one first obtains a view of the magnificent interior. The floor recedes with a gradual incline from this point to the Orchestra circle, giving the audience an unobstructed view of the stage. The house is seated with the latest patent folding chair



INTERIOR VIEW AND DIAGRAM OF ACADEMY OF MUSIC,
B. A. BUSH, Manager, KALAMAZOO, MICH.

upholstered in crimson plush. Beneath each seat is a convenient hat rack. The walls are decorated with rich gold paper embossed in elegant velvet designs. The wood work throughout is of polished cherry showing much elaborate carving, fine panel work and ornamental designs.

The Boxes on each side of the stage are exquisite specimens of modern art, and are richly draped and upholstered. Adjoining these are open boxes, divided from the regular sittings by a curtained rail. They are seated with moveable chairs, and will accommodate 6 or 8 persons.

The Balcony, which is reached by the broad and easy stairway from the foyer, is seated with the same upholstered chair. The rise between each tier of seats in this section is two feet and gives a magnificent view of the house and stage.

At the rear of the balcony is a broad doorway, which can be opened to afford exit, through the gallery stairway, and from this landing lead two separate stairways to the gallery. This is a large, roomy, well ventilated and well lighted portion of the house, and is in every way comfortable and conveniently arranged.

The ceiling is finished in the latest designs and presents a most artistic effect. The groundwork is light blue, each panel being finished in different designs, the whole makes an attractive and pleasing contrast to the brighter colors of the house beneath. Over the proscenium arch above the stage is painted in rich colors Guido's Aurora, the figures being life size.

The stage is 40 feet deep by 66 feet in width, and is 58 feet high. The proscenium or opening, is 32 feet high and 30 feet in width. A beautiful drop curtain fills this space, which rises without rolling. The scenery is very elaborate, painted in the most artistic manner, and of such a great variety that it will meet the wants of all classes of plays, and give to them the additional attraction of fine scenic effects. On each side of the stage are water pipes leading to the top, to which are attached five different lines of hose, which in connection with the Holly system of water works is always ready for instant use. From the stage are ample exits, and on each side of the auditorium are large double doors through which, in case of a fire, the audience could pass out in a minute's time. In an addition on the north side and opening on the stage are located the dressing rooms, ten in number, in addition to these are two large ones beneath the stage, where is also located the orchestra room. In the

basement of the wing just mentioned is situated the steam heating apparatus.

This is of the latest improved make, self-governing and with which the entire building is thoroughly and evenly heated, and also greatly lessening the danger from fire. From the boiler extends a large steam pipe making a circuit of the basement beneath the auditorium, from this a network of pipes extend under every portion of the seating. The fresh air is introduced from without, passes underneath and up through this network of piping, and the hot air is received into the house through openings directly in front of each row of seats — thus securing a continuous and even flow of pure warm air.

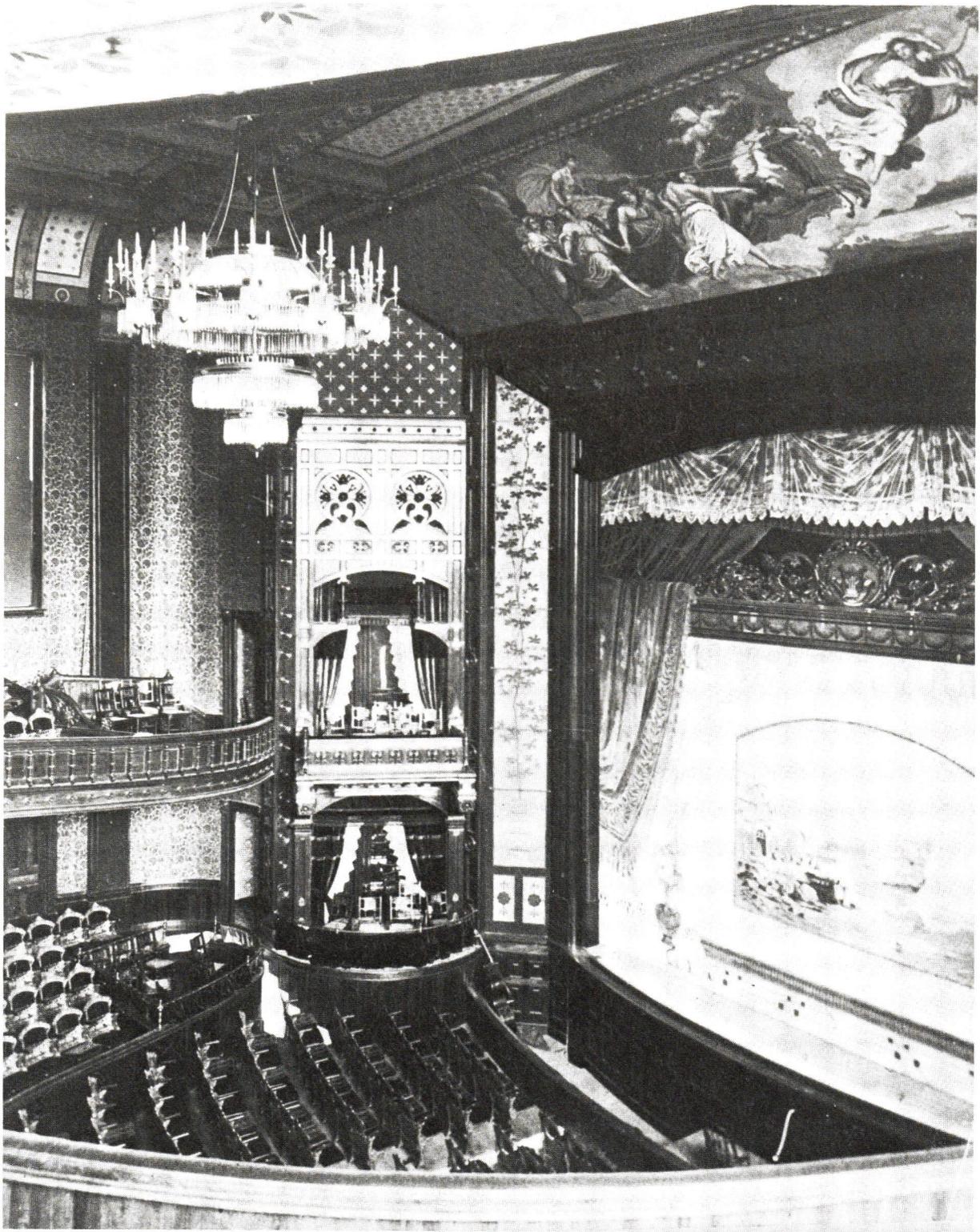
The lighting. The house is brilliantly lighted by 400 gas jets, and the fixtures are of polished brass, elegant in design and manufactured by Messrs. Mitchel, Vance & Co., of New York. The central chandelier is eleven feet in height, has a spread of nine feet, and has one hundred burners. To diffuse the light over the auditorium, there is an opal glass reflector with 40 burners beneath, and above it to light the ceilings and upper part of the house there are a large number of imitation candle clusters. The whole is beautifully ornamented with glass prisms and makes one of the most attractive features of the house. The sides of the auditorium have beautiful brackets, each one containing two candle clusters of four burners each. The foyers, ladies retiring room and vestibule have elegant chandeliers with the latest styles of etched crown globes, and the grand stairs newel post is crowned with a rich standard and four-light cluster. The chandeliers, border and footlights are all lighted from the stage by means of the electric spark, and by this means, in an instant, the house can be transformed from total darkness to a flood of light, and all done with perfect safety.

The capacity of the house is about 1,250 which can be increased to over 1,400 by chair seatings in the roomy surroundings in the rear of the present seating.⁷

It seems to have been the original intention of the promoters to name their building "Opera House" for such was the name of their company.⁸ That this was the case may also be inferred from the woodcut in King's Handbook which shows the words "Opera House" in the place that the name

7 Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph, May 7, 1882.

8 The writer has not been able to determine when and for what reason the name "Academy of Music" was adopted.



The interior of the Academy of Music as it appeared shortly after construction. The ornament over the boxes is typical of this period of Sullivan's work. Much of the other surface treatment was probably executed by others.

"Academy of Music" which would later appear in the completed building. Like many of the other illustrations of Adler and Sullivan buildings in this book, this one seems to have been derived from an early study for the building. It differs from the

executed design primarily in the treatment of the top floor windows and in the presence of a marquee which was omitted in the final design. Eventually a marquee was added, but it had no resemblance to this. The lunettes above the paired windows in the preliminary design were apparently to be heavily ornamented like those in the top floor of the Bordon Block designed in Adler's office with ornament probably by Sullivan⁹ which they closely resemble. They were probably omitted as an economy measure. At any rate, they were poorly related to the three windows at the center of the facade and the treatment of the top floor in the executed building was certainly more harmonious.

The Academy of Music, both in its preliminary and completed stages seems to owe much to Solon S. Beman's Arcade Building in Pullman and to its theater which was the work of Hughson Hawley, designer of the then highly renowned Madison Square Theater in New York¹⁰ which opened in February 1880.

Unlike the ornament in other Adler & Sullivan Theaters which was executed for the most part in painted plaster, wood and iron, the ornament in the Academy of Music and the Arcade and Madison Square theaters was done in varnished wood. Although the Arcade Theater did not open until February 1883, nine months after the opening of the Kalamazoo building, its design probably dates from 1880 when the drawings for the Arcade Building were done. In any event, the space which it occupied within the Arcade Building had been roofed over as early as the summer of 1881. As the varnished wood and "frescoed" plaster proscenium arches, varnished wood balcony parapets and wood beamed ceilings of both the Academy of Music and the Arcade Theater are quite similar and in some places almost identical, it seems reasonable to assume that Sullivan had seen the working drawings for the Arcade Theater which were prepared by his colleague, Irving Pond (then Beman's Chief Assistant) who was also well known to Sullivan's mentor John Edelmann.¹¹ It is highly improbable that Hawley, a theater designer with a national reputation, would have derived the design for his theater

in Pullman from the work of an obscure Chicago architect, which Sullivan was at that time. That Sullivan derived inspiration from the work of Hawley, is alluded to in an unidentified clipping from 1886 (in the writer's possession) which says that "The general arrangement is like the Madison Square Theater in New York."¹²

Adler does not seem to have been as impressed as Sullivan was with Hawley's designs. Hawley's theaters were basically large rectilinear rooms with the proscenium set like a window in one wall and balconies placed where necessary without any particular regard to the main lines of the room. On the other hand Adler's design was conceived as a series of volumes expanding outward from the proscenium with the lines of the balconies tied in fully with those of the rest of the house. The Grand Opera House and Academy of Music clearly indicate that Adler had by the beginning of the 1880's determined the basic rules upon which all his later auditoriums would be designed. Contrary to Adler's avowed preference for a wide and low proscenium opening,¹³ the proscenium of the Academy of Music like all his other theaters, with the exception of the Chicago Auditorium, was higher than it was wide.

The resemblance between the identical south and north facades of Beman's Arcade Building and the Rose Street facade of the Academy is even more striking than that between their interiors. Both were constructed of the same materials: red brick, stone, slate roofing and sheet metal and are composed in basically the same way. Each has a high center tower capped by a slate covered mansard roof pierced by port hole like dormers and with high pinnacles at the corners.¹⁴

In both cases the principle entrance is through a large, basically rectilinear opening capped by elaborate stone work at the base of the tower. The facades are both divided horizontally at each floor by large almost identical stone cornices. There is a generally consistent use of flat or segmentally headed openings in the lower floors of both buildings while the

12 The Arcade theater was a much reduced version of its New York predecessor. Although Sullivan undoubtedly knew of the Madison Square Theater (interior views had been published in the national press at the time of its opening) he seems to have found Hawley's Arcade Theater design a more workable source probably because it was much closer in size to his own commission.

13 Adler, Dankmar: *The Theater, Prairie School Review*, Vol. II. No. 2, Second Quarter, 1965, p. 27. This paper was written toward the end of Adler's life and may therefore indicate that he held other opinions earlier.

14 Throughout Pullman, Beman used a chimney motif for a pinnacle. In some cases this was functional but in most places it was ornamental.

9 Bordon Block. Northwest corner of Randolph and Dearborn Streets. Permit issued 1880, demolished 1910.

10 The design of this theater was emulated throughout the country. A typical example was the Tabor Grand Opera House in Denver begun in 1880 by Edbrooke & Burnham of Chicago.

11 The following is from Irving Pond's review of Sullivan's autobiography which appeared in the *Western Architect*, June 1924, p. 68, "Away back in 1880, John Edelmann often sketched for me, of an evening in my little room . . ."



The Arcade Building by Solon Spencer Beman was probably designed in 1880. It bears a number of similarities to the Kalamazoo Academy of Music.

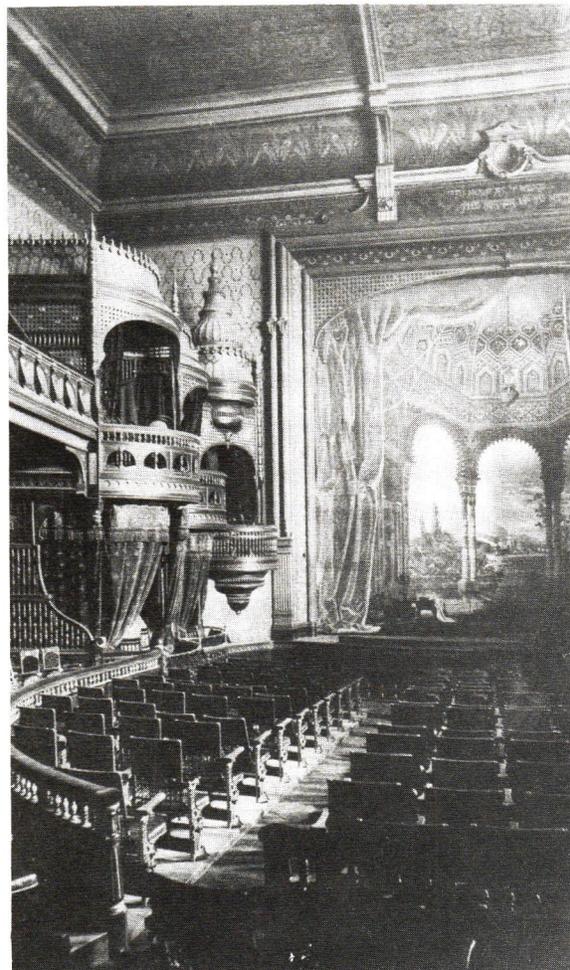
The interior of the Arcade Theater is also strikingly similar to the Academy of Music interior.

windows in the top floors of each terminate in full arches. The lamps on either end of the balcony above the entrance of the Academy of Music have their immediate counterparts in those which flanked the entrance to the Florence Hotel which still stands adjacent to the site of the Arcade Building.

Sullivan obviously knew of the Arcade Building as he would have passed it every time he went to the Lotus Club on the Calumet River just two miles further to the south. It may have been the similarity of sites (both buildings faced a park) that suggested the use of the Arcade as a model. The differences between these buildings seems due primarily to the functions which they served, the size of the sites and Sullivan's preference for his unique ornamental style.

The Hammond Library,¹⁵ which immediately

¹⁵ Hammond Library. 44 South Ashland, Chicago. Demolished in 1963.



follows the Academy of Music in the chronology of Adler and Sullivan's work and which it most closely resembles, also seems to indicate an interest on the part of Sullivan in Beman's Pullman buildings. The stone base of this building was identical to that of the Florence Hotel and the composition of its facade particularly at the top was similar to that of the Corliss Engine Building.

Eight years before his death, Sullivan expressed his admiration for Beman and particularly his work at Pullman in the following words: "It [Pullman] was a huge undertaking for so young a man and I think few of us realize what a task he had been called upon to undertake. He was well chosen and he performed well. I doubt if any architect in the country at that time could produce work superior to that of Mr. Beman, when you consider the nature of the work."¹⁶

The Dessenberg Building (which the writer first came upon in the list of buildings which accompanies an unpublished thesis by Rochelle Elstein on Dankmar Adler's architectural style) has a far less complicated history than the Academy of Music.

The following entry of *Realestate and Building Journal* is about all that seems to ever have been written about it: "Bush and Patterson have the contract for a brick block for Dessenberg & Co. It will be three stories with basement and is 58 x 90 feet, Adler and Sullivan of Chicago, architects. It is now occupied as a wholesale grocery. The foundation is now being laid."¹⁷

Examination of Kalamazoo directories reveals that "B. Dessenberg & Co. wholesale grocers" moved their business from 108 East Main Street to 227, 229, and 231 East Main Street sometime between 1885 and 1887. The address has since been changed to 251 East Michigan Avenue. B. Dessenberg & Co. remained in business at this location until World War I when the company was bought out and the property passed into other hands. At present it is owned and occupied by the Schau-Powell Sports Center.

On the basis of an old and rather poor photograph in the Kalamazoo Public Museum, it is apparent that only insignificant changes have been made since the time of its construction. A continuous cresting of what seems to have been keystone shaped objects have been removed from the top of the cornice. A large and somewhat incongruous placard originally stood above the cornice at the

16 "Address by Mr. Louis H. Sullivan, June 8, 1915" delivered at a meeting of the Illinois Chapter of the A. I. A. — a eulogy to S. S. Beman (Chicago Historical Society, document collection).

17 *Realestate and Building Journal*, August 21, 1886, p. 479.

center of the facade. Unfortunately the photograph does not clearly reveal its features, but it appears to have been more the work of the owner than that of the architects. Although the facade at the first floor has been completely altered, it originally was a rather plain cast iron store front devoid of ornament or noteworthy features. The alterations do not therefore damage the essential elements of the facade. On the whole the building is quite well preserved.

The facade above the first floor is made up of orange brick with matching terra cotta, gray limestone sills and spandrels and is capped with a cornice and pinnacles of black painted sheet metal. The building is of heavy timber mill construction with cast-iron columns in the basement and on the first and second floors; the roof is supported by round wood columns on the third floor. With the possible exception of the capitals of the cast iron columns which are now covered by new ceiling construction, and are therefore not visible, the interior seems never to have been ornamented. The rear wall is of common brick in the upper two floors which rests upon iron beams supported by pierced I-shaped columns at the first floor. Adler¹⁸ apparently adopted this unusual column section as a means of gaining the maximum amount of light at the alley level. He later used similar columns for the same purpose in the rear walls of the Wirt Dexter and Meyer Buildings in Chicago, although in these he extended them up from the ground level through the top story.

The Dessenberg Building belongs to an important but little known period in the development of Sullivan's architecture and ornament. This is the period which follows his earliest works which were done in a style derived from the Queen Anne and Victorian Gothic which Morrison called "Egyptoid"¹⁹ and precedes the design and construction of the Chicago Auditorium, the first major work of Adler and Sullivan. As such it comes from the most critical period in Sullivan's career, the beginning of the period of development which culminated in the formation of his mature architectural and ornamental style during the early 1890's.

The design of the Dessenberg Building, the last large ornamented building designed by Sullivan

18 In their partnership, Adler seems to have been responsible for doing the engineering work and preparing the preliminaries which gave a building its basic form. Sullivan would then do the ornamental and architectural design work on the basis of these preliminaries. Therefore, it may be assumed that engineering details are Adler's work and ornamental details are Sullivan's.

19 Morrison, Hugh: *Louis Sullivan, Prophet of Modern Architecture*, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, New York., 1935, p. 59.



before the Auditorium, clearly indicates that he was far less sure of himself than he had been earlier. Unlike his earlier design for the Academy of Music which was rather freely adapted from one of Beman's works, the Dessenberg was for the most part derived directly from the top floors of Burnham and Root's Rookery Building, construction of which had begun a year earlier. The cornice (particularly with its original cresting), the pinnacles and the general shape of the decorative bands between the third floor windows are quite similar to their counterparts on the Rookery. However in the details where Sullivan departed from Root's example, the effect is not very successful. The use of limestone spandrels and sills presents a rather jarring contrast to the uniformly dark color of the rest of the facade. The massiveness of the sills seems particularly out of place in relation to the relatively delicate terra-cotta adjoining them. The use of stone for spandrels and sills was a common feature of many of Sullivan's buildings. Its use here was probably the result of habit rather than innovation. The most bizarre and least successful feature of the facade is the combination of three bulbous domes which serve as pinnacles at the upper ends of the facade. The shape of each dome is similar to the pinnacles of the Rookery, but this combined pinnacle seems to be derived from medieval Russian architecture where it often appears on religious furniture rather than a free interpretation of Root's detail. While this feature may have worked well on furniture, it appears



ABOVE: The ornament below the window of the Dessenberg Building resembles that of the Auditorium of Chicago, Sullivan's next major commission.

LEFT: The upper facade of the Dessenberg Building is intact. Hopefully no further "modernization" will be undertaken.

completely out of scale at the top of a three story building.

In contrast to the Dessenberg Building's rather eclectic overall form, its ornament is quite unique. On the basis of this ornament and that of several lesser contemporary Adler & Sullivan buildings²⁰ it can now definitely be said that the ornament which preceded that of the Auditorium featured a prominent spiral motif occasionally mixed with leaf ornament that is far less stylized than that in his earlier work. Remnants of his earlier style can still be seen, as for example, the S-shaped leaves in the terra-cotta bands at the third floor level, but this ornament is more free flowing and therefore more directly related to that of the Auditorium. Although Sullivan's architectonic sense seems to have been less sure at that time, the development of his ornamental style was following a very deliberate course.

Kalamazoo long ago lost the Academy of Music. The Dessenberg Building still remains. However, the owner recently has been approached by some typically unenlightened "planners" who suggested that an "up-to-date" refacing of his building would be desirable. Fortunately for those who know and appreciate the achievements of America's past, the owner has resisted their propositions.

20 Samuel Stern Residence, 2963 S. Prairie, Chicago, 1885, demolished; Residences for Mrs. Abraham Kohn, Dankmar Adler & Eli B. Felsenthal, 3541, 43 & 45 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, 1885-86, demolished; Joseph Deimal Residence, 3141 South Calumet, still standing, 1886-87.



Sullivan's Scoville Building, A Chronology

by Paul E. Sprague

The author of this article has appeared several times in The Prairie School Review. Dr. Sprague has done extensive research on the architecture of Adler and Sullivan and is currently at work on a guide to Prairie Architecture in Oak Park, Illinois.

Immediately west of Chicago's sparkling new Miesian and pseudo-Miesian Loop lies a vast area of dingy warehouses and factory buildings. Before 1870 the district was a pleasant residential neighborhood; after the Chicago fire of 1871, which spared this part of the city, its character began to change from residential to industrial and commercial.¹ Numerous Chicago architects, including the now famous and respectable firm of Adler & Sullivan, received commissions during the 1880's that contributed to the demise of this near west-side residential district. In 1884 Adler & Sullivan was commissioned to design a five-story factory on the southeast corner of Washington and Desplaines streets. Its owner James Scoville, who lived in Oak Park, presumably had little sympathy for those persons still residing in the vicinity of his new factory. Naturally those who could afford to move, like John Jacob Glessner, got out. His flight in

1887 from a house six blocks west of Scoville's building had its salutary side. The new house on Prairie avenue, designed for him by the famous H. H. Richardson, has become one of that architect's best-known works and is today the only monument to the genius of Richardson still standing in the city.²

Adler & Sullivan's factory of 1885 for James Scoville was also not without its virtues. Certainly as factories of that day went, it was a credit to its type. In fact, as a strong and monumental design with ornamental overtones, it remained without peers among the other early industrial designs by Adler & Sullivan. Furthermore, given the changing character of its west side surroundings, the building served as an elegant yet forceful visual accent to enliven and enrich the street. With its polychromed walls, ornamental top floor, formal facades and simplified rectilinear massing, it assuredly equalled or exceeded in aesthetic quality all or at least most of its industrial and commercial neighbors.

² Glessner lived on the northeast corner of Washington and Morgan streets before moving to Prairie avenue, for which see my article, "Glessner House," *Outdoor Illinois*, XII, May, 1973, pp. 8-23.

¹ For the type and distribution of buildings in the City of Chicago in 1869, see the *D. A. Sandborn Insurance Map of Chicago* for 1868-1869 at the Chicago Historical Society. For changes in the physical character of the city during the next seventeen years, see *Robinson's Atlas of Chicago*, 1886, at the Municipal Reference Library.

LEFT: This photograph of the Scoville Building was taken prior to the defacement of the ground floor. Hugh Morrison photo.

RIGHT: Just before demolition the Scoville Building looked like this. It was still in use. This view is looking southeast with the Sears Tower rising in the background. Author's photo.

Its exterior walls of contrasting red brick and light stone, now obscured by many coats of gray paint, must originally have given the building a colorful appearance. The slender cast-iron columns, ornamental metal frame and plate-glass shop-windows of its now remodeled ground floor presumably also enlivened the newly finished building by giving it a more delicate and less ponderous appearance.³ Above this first floor the brick and stone walls bear continuously on all four fronts

³ The modern front is not carried around the north-east corner of the building with the result that a vertical section of the original masonry of stone and brick is exposed at that point. With this and other similar ground floor treatments of the period by Adler & Sullivan as a guide, it would be possible to reconstruct a generalized elevation of the ground floor as it originally existed. The positions of the first-floor columns, now encased in modern work, and of the shop windows and entrances are indicated on a schematic plan prepared for the purpose of showing floor-load limits, and presently posted in the building.



The upper north facade of the Scoville. Note the different types of windows and the absence of ornament in the central bay on the left. Author's photo.



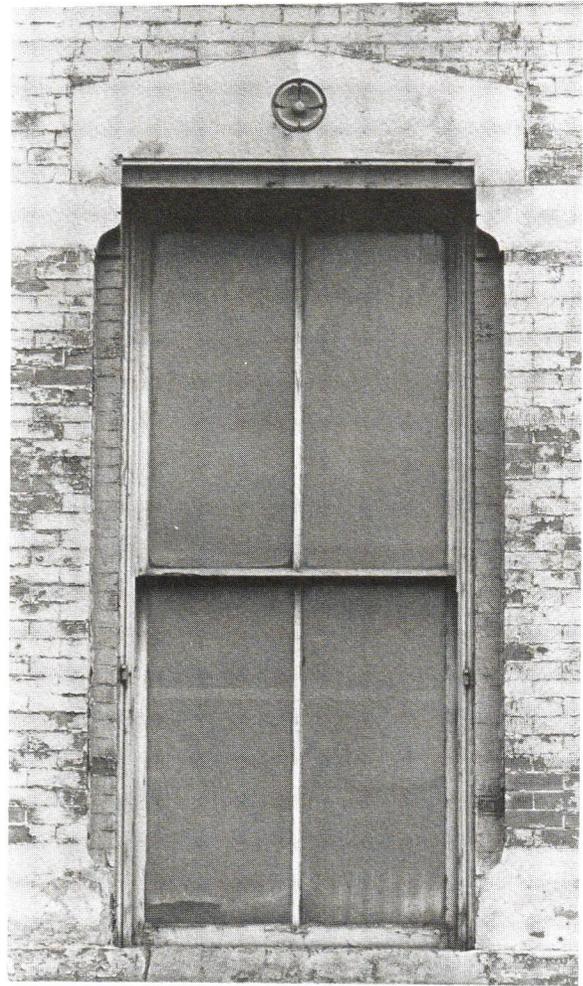
except in the central section on Washington street. In that section three narrow masonry piers rise without interruption to the coping of the roof. Between them there are tripartite window units consisting of metal uprights framing sash windows and carrying at each floor a metal lintel supporting a brick spandrel. The top floor is differentiated by containing as a part of its design fifty-two terra cotta panels having distributed among them three different ornamental decorations by Sullivan.⁴

The building is mill construction inside. On its lower floors there are cast-iron columns supporting wooden columns above them in the upper floors. Each column carries substantial wooden beams let into metal saddles, the whole framework being solidly bolted together. Although at present the original plan cannot be made out, it is likely the interiors were conceived as being entirely open on each floor so that tenants could subdivide the space with non-bearing partitions to suit their individual needs.

Given the aesthetic character and overall visual integrity of the Scoville Building, it may come as a surprise to all but the most meticulous of observers that the building is actually a clever and sympathetic remodeling and addition to an older structure. Only when the building is examined in the greatest detail does its appearance of being an entirely unified design gradually begin to evaporate. As regards the exterior there are, first of all, those substantial-looking corner sections on Washington street that stand slightly forward of the central section. The former are conceived as walls pierced by windows; the latter as windows separated by a skeletal wall.

4 The decorations in the large lunettes over the windows at the ends of the building are handsome examples of Sullivan's third ornamental period, 1883-85. They may most profitably be compared with the exquisite ornamental details of Adler & Sullivan's Troesch Building of 1884, still standing on Wacker drive. There, in the panels on either side of its lunettes, are ornaments with similar scallop-edged spiral leaves; fan-like leaves and spirals having smooth surfaces; and languid leaves that undulate across scalloped spirals.

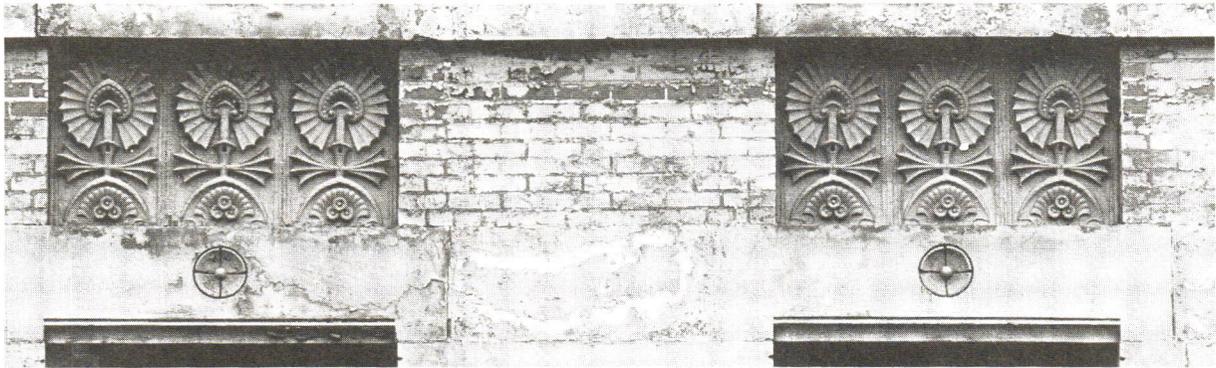
The other two designs belong to Sullivan's earlier ornamental style of the years 1880-1883. Useful comparisons may be made with the ornament of Adler's Rothschild and Rosenfeld Buildings, both of 1881. What is specially characteristic of these earlier ornaments is the frontality of each design, the rigid stylization of every floral form, and the careful separation of each motif from its neighbors. The motifs themselves: the fan-like leaves; the rounded leaves and the rosettes, with both plain and scalloped edges; and the highly stylized floral types serve to connect the ornaments of both periods. Why the Scoville Building of 1885 should contain these earlier ornaments must remain, at least for the moment, an unanswered question. Sullivan's ornamental periods are described in my unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "Louis Sullivan's Architectural Ornament," Princeton University, 1969.



This second floor window is very similar to those above it. Only the rosette over the window is different. Author's photo.

Then there are the simplified stone window-heads of the corner sections whose gables disappear on the fourth floor. There they are replaced by horizontal lintels surmounted by a rectangular panel of Sullivan's ornamentation. His ornament, as noted, is restricted to the fifth floor. Finally there are the rosettes carved into each window-head. Those of the western section at the corner of Washington and Desplaines streets are carved in very low relief and contain four petals on the second and fourth floors and six on the third. By contrast the rosettes of the eastern unit on Washington street have a fairly plastic profile and are consistently subdivided into four petals.

Inside the building there are several other inconsistencies. In the corner section the cast-iron columns appear in the basement and on the first and second floors, but elsewhere in the building they are carried one floor higher. The corner section is further differentiated by being separated from the rest of the building by a very substantial bearing



TOP: The Scoville ornament at the top floor, center section on Washington Street. It belongs stylistically to Sullivan's designs of 1880-83. ABOVE: The ornament above the window lintels of the fourth floor, corner sections is of the same period. BELOW: The Rothschild Building was heavily ornamented with designs very similar to that of the Scoville Building. Photos by Sprague.



wall. The wall, running on a north-south axis, diminishes in size with each floor and disappears completely at the fifth-floor level.⁵

A search for explanations of the design anomalies in the Scoville Building leads, as one might suspect, to the owner himself, born James Wilmarth Scoville on 14 October 1825 at Pompey, New York. After reaching Chicago in 1856 and settling at Oak Park, he worked in finance and real estate. In 1869 he joined the Prairie State Loan & Trust Co., of which institution he became president in 1871. By 1885 he was, according to Andreas' *History of Chicago*, "ranked among the leading bankers of the west."⁶ His enterprise had by then enabled him in 1883 to provide the Village of Oak Park with a gift of \$100,000.00 for the construction of a library named the Scoville Institute in his honor.⁷ Because of failing health Scoville moved to California in 1888 where he died 2 November 1893.⁸

In 1872 Scoville supervised the erection of a new building for his Prairie State Bank.⁹ Its location on the southwest corner of Washington and Desplaines streets was directly across the street from the future site of his 1885 factory building designed by Adler & Sullivan.¹⁰ That Scoville should have selected this firm of architects for his factory was no coincidence for it was Dankmar Adler and Edward Burling who designed his Prairie State Bank in 1872.¹¹ Scoville again used their services when in 1874 he and Seth Wadhams constructed a five-story and basement building on Madison street.¹²

It was in 1875 that Scoville decided to erect a four-story factory building on the southeast corner of Washington and Desplaines streets opposite the Prairie State Bank. His property extended 74 feet south on Desplaines from the corner to an alley, and 40 feet east along Washington to a 20 foot lot having the same 74 feet depth owned by George

5 The thickness of the wall on each floor is as follows: 1st floor, 20"; 2nd and 3rd floors, 16"; 4th floor, 12".

6 A.T. Andreas, *The History of Chicago* 3 vols. Chicago, II, 627.

7 Designed by Patton & Fisher and built in 1885, *Inland Architect*, V, Feb. 1885, 3, 5.

8 Biographical data is from Andreas, *History of Chicago*, II, 627; *A Brief History of the Organization, Building and Dedication of the Scoville Institute, Oak Park*. Chicago, 1888, p. 7; and *In Memoriam, James Wilmarth Scoville*, Oak Park, Jan. 1896, pp. 8, 11-12, 14-16, 18-20, 31.

9 Andreas, *History of Chicago*, II, 627.

10 *Robinson's Atlas of Chicago*, 1886.

11 Dankmar Adler, "Autobiography," ms., n.d., the original formerly in the possession of Mrs. Sara Adler Weil.

12 *Landowner*, VII, June 1874, p. 86, "Burling & Adler have underway on Madison street 80 feet east of Franklin a store 40 X 170' for Mr. J.W. Scoville and Seth Wadhams."

Clydesdale, a local real estate broker. Apparently Clydesdale was amenable to Scoville's proposed factory for on 16 September 1875 he and Scoville entered into a party-wall agreement.¹³ It called for a four-story wall to be built on the property line with dimensions, as specified by architect Edward Burling, exactly matching those of the north-south bearing wall in the present Scoville Building. The agreement also stated that "Scoville is about to commence the construction of a building on this lot."

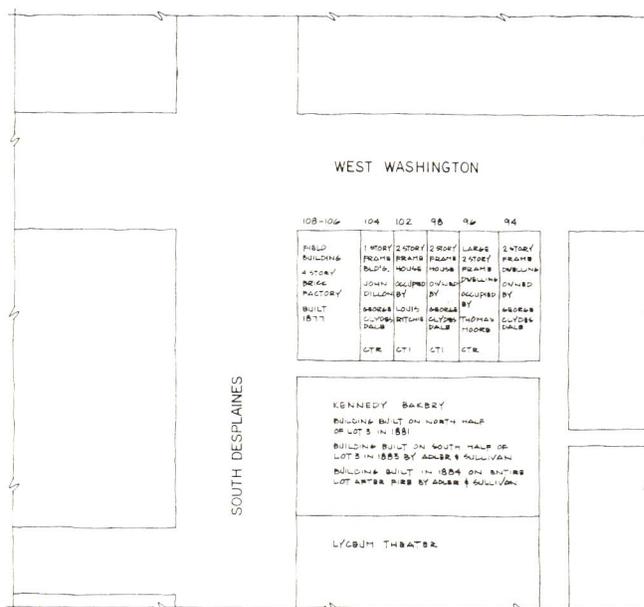
That the construction was not quite as imminent as the agreement suggested is indicated by the day, nearly a year later, when it was recorded: 7 August 1876. In fact Scoville did not actually begin construction until nearly two years after making the party-wall agreement. His building permit for a four-story and basement brick factory was not taken out until 9 July 1877.¹⁴ And it was not until 29 August 1877 that Scoville negotiated a five year mortgage for \$15,000.00 on the property.¹⁵

Given the generally depressed business conditions of the mid-1870's, it is possible that no suitable tenants could be found until 1877. In that year Frank Field & Co. was organized as a wholesale

13 Cook County Recorder's Office, Document No. 97612, executed 16 September 1875, and recorded 7 August 1876. At that time Scoville actually owned 150 feet along Washington street except for the 20 feet owned by Clydesdale. All of this land is legally described as Sub-lots 1 to 5 of Lot 2 of Block 48 of the Original Town of Chicago. Clydesdale owned the east 20 feet of Sub-lot 2. Cook County Recorder's Office, Document Nos. 5268, 13276, 13277, 13278, 13279, 26757, 26758, 26759.

14 Chicago Building Department, 9 July 1877, No. 1192. The Index to building permits at the Building Department lists another permit of 1875 at Nos. 627-29 West Washington Street; that is, for a part of the numbers running from Nos 619-31 that are assigned to the present Scoville Building. That permit, No. 1, issued to John Olinger on 20 July 1875, was for a five-story brick building, 40 X 55 feet, facing Washington street and located on Lot 4 of Block 58. Olinger, a principal in the real estate firm of Olinger & Ballard, was located, according to city directories, at 76 Washington street in 1874 and 1875. In 1876 his address, on Washington street between Dearborn and State streets, corresponded to Sub-lot 4 of Lot 2 of Block 58 (not block 48 on which the Scoville is sited) of the Original Town of Chicago, which according to *Robinson's Atlas of Chicago*, 1886, had a frontage of 40 feet on Washington and a depth of 55 feet. These facts make it virtually certain that Permit No. 1 of 20 July 1875, refers to Olinger's property on West Washington street between State and Dearborn and not to Scoville's property on West Washington street between Jefferson and Desplaines. The error is presumably the result of mis-reading Block 48 for Block 58 when the Index was prepared.

15 Cook County Recorder's Office; Document No. 148397, dated 29 August 1877. The mortgage was for \$15,000.00 to run for five years. It was repaid 6 October 1881, Document No. 351886.



At right above is the site of the Scoville Building in 1884 and at left is the same area in 1886. Maps redrawn by Jon Pohl.

bakery¹⁶ and, one surmises, their need for a building and Scoville's desire to construct one, coincided at the propitious moment. Chattel mortgages involving baking machinery for the building were negotiated in September 1877,¹⁷ and the firm was at work in the building by May or June 1878, when the city directory for that year was compiled.

Apparently the Field concern vacated the structure in 1879 or 1880 because of a fire that damaged but did not destroy the building.¹⁸ According to the *Chicago Times*, covering a fire on 6 January 1884 that leveled the building occupied by the Kennedy Bakery immediately south of the former Field Building, Scoville's factory was then occupied by the

Chicago Chair Company.¹⁹ The *Times* and other Chicago newspapers also reported that the buildings directly east of Scoville's building were then one- and two-story frame buildings, mostly residences.²⁰

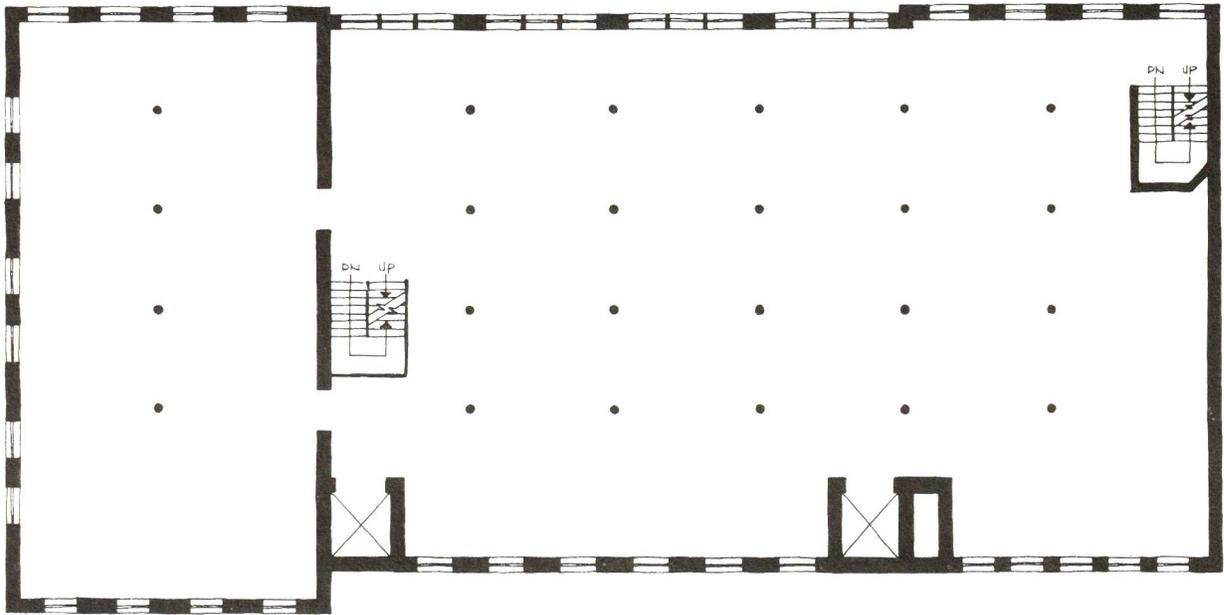
16 According to entries in the *Lakeside Directory of the City of Chicago*. As the firm did not appear in the Directory until 1878, it was probably organized during the Directory year of June 1877 to May 1878.

17 Cook County Recorders Office, Document Nos. 149442 and 150635, dated 3 September 1877, and 1 September 1877, respectively.

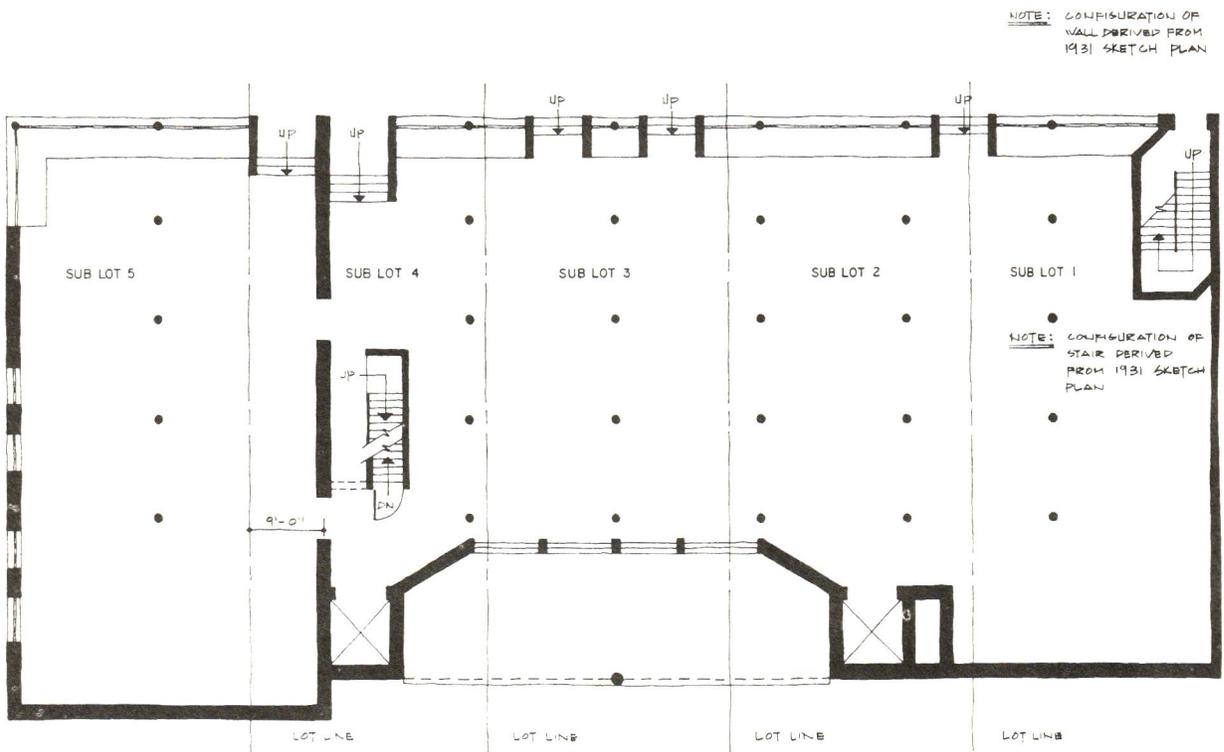
18 The firm was listed at the corner of Washington and Desplaines only in the directories of 1878 and 1879. In 1880 and 1881, Frank Field & Co. was at 203 Van Buren, and in 1882 and 1883, the firm was not listed at all. The fire of 1879 that presumably caused the Field Bakery to leave Scoville's building, was mentioned by a reporter who, in covering a fire in 1884 at the nearby Kennedy Bakery, recalled that "a few years ago, when the Field Building, on the southeast corner of Washington and Desplaines streets, adjoining the Kennedy Bakery, was partially destroyed, the firemen found difficulty with a network of telephone wires . . ." *Chicago Herald*, 6 January 1884, p. 1.

19 *Chicago Times*, 6 January 1884, p. 3, "At one time the cry was raised that the Chicago Chair Company building on the corner of Desplaines and Washington streets, adjoining the burning building and the Lyceum Theater which adjoined it on the south, were on fire, but this proved to be false. The building occupied by the Chicago Chair Company is owned by Joseph (*sic*) W. Scoville, of Oakwood (should read "Oak Park") and is four stories in height."

20 "Before the floors of the burning building fell in, the flames had spread to a row of two-story frame dwelling-houses on Washington street, between Desplaines and Jefferson, but owing to the good work of the fire department only the rear portion of one of them was wrecked. . . . The flames communicated to the frame building at No. 102 Washington street, and destroyed the rear portion or kitchen. . . . The building, No. 104 . . . is occupied by John Dillon as a saloon. . . . The dwelling houses at Nos. . . . 94 and 98 (both on Lot 2 of Block 48, the site of Scoville's building of 1885) are owned by George Clydesdale," *Chicago Times*, 6 January 1884, p. 3. "A large two-story and frame house, 96 West Washington street (also on Lot 2 of Block 48), occupied by Thomas S. Moore, a truckman, and two other families, which was separated from the building (the Kennedy Bakery on the south) by a narrow alley, took fire. . . . The building at 104 West Washington street is a one-story frame, occupied by George L. Clydesdale, a real estate agent, and a saloon," *Chicago Herald*, 6 January 1884, p. 1. The above persons and numbers have been verified in the city directories of 1883-85.



Scoville Building— Second Floor Plan.



Scoville Building— First Floor Plan. Plans prepared by Jon Pohl.

Scoville began to think about enlarging his factory when in 1884 the Kennedy Bakery was rebuilt from plans drawn by the newly established architectural firm of Adler & Sullivan.²¹ It was not,

82 X 150 feet, to be built by F.A. Kennedy & Co. In May, 1884 that company took out a permit for a six-story bakery at 44-50 S. Desplaines street. Adler & Sullivan were listed as architects, *American Architect*, XV, 3 May 1884, 216. Andreas' *History of Chicago*, 1885, III, 328, reported that the building was in operation by July 1884.

²¹ In March 1884, the *Inland Architect*, III, 23, reported that Adler & Sullivan had plans for a \$40,000.00 six-story bakery,

however, until December, 1884 that Scoville gave his commission to the same architects and began to move in earnest on the project. It called for a five-story factory building, 72 X 150 feet, of pressed brick and mill construction, to cost \$50,000.00.²² The new building was ready for plastering by the end of July 1885 and presumably was occupied by that autumn.²³

Given these facts it is virtually certain that Scoville's commission to Adler & Sullivan called for remodeling and adding to his four-story Field Building of 1877. That building was thus the very same structure that presently stands on the southeast corner of Washington and Desplaines streets as a part of the 1885 Scoville Building.²⁴ To return the Field Building to its original form one need only remove the top floor mentally, add a suitable cornice, and restore the iron, glass and stone store fronts of the ground floor. Its east wall cannot have been much different than the present south wall.

The architects' solution to the problem set by Scoville was little short of amazing. In order to achieve monumentality through symmetrical design, Adler & Sullivan built on the eastern forty feet of Scoville's property a front duplicating that of Scoville's Field Building. For the center of the new building, they provided four bays incorporating the latest techniques for admitting maximum light and air while still making the wall reasonably fire resistant. That is, following William Jenney's design of 1879 for the First Leiter Building, they combined masonry piers of minimal dimensions with exposed iron supports that doubled as window spacers. The new sections and the older Field Building were then made into one structure by adding an ornamental fifth story. To do so they had to remove the cornice of the Field Building as well as the apex of the fourth floor window hoods.

22 According to the *Inland Architect*, IV, Dec. 1884, p. 70, Adler & Sullivan were then at work on plans for a factory building at Washington and Desplaines streets for J.W. Scoville, 72 X 150 feet, five stories, pressed brick and mill construction, to cost \$50,000.00.

23 "Architects Adler & Sullivan report. . . (a) . . . building at the corner of Desplaines and Washington streets for J.W. Scoville, 69 X 109 feet (the approximate size without the corner unit), 5 stories and basement, front of pressed brick, stone and terra cotta; heavy solid timber floors for manufacturing purposes, ready for plastering, cost, \$50,000.00," *Real Estate and Building Journal*, XXVII, 25 July 1885, 363. A building permit was reported earlier by the *American Architect*, XVIII, July 1885, 11.

24 That I have not been able to find a photograph of the building or an insurance map showing it, is not unexpected as the building stood without alteration for no longer than seven years.

The result was a large five-story and basement building, 74 X 150 feet,²⁵ costing \$44,444.00,²⁶ and having a visual integrity on the street fronts sufficient to convince most persons that the entire building had been conceived and built in a single campaign. Their solution respected the older work while still enabling the architects to introduce their latest structural techniques and architectural and ornamental style.²⁷ Thus did Adler & Sullivan design for James W. Scoville a factory building with a strong and monumental visual character that responded completely to the client's demand for incorporating an earlier structure into a well-articulated and handsomely proportioned building to serve both as an ordinary factory and as a visual adornment to the streets on which it faced.

25 The sections added in 1885 to Scoville's Field Building of 1877 are only 69 feet deep as opposed to the 74 foot depth of the Field Building. The difference resulted from Scoville having sold the south four feet of Sub-lots 1 to 3 to the Kennedy Bakery in 1881 so that they could enlarge the alley on the north side of their building, Cook County Recorders Office, Document No. 338128, dated July 16, 1881.

26 The cost is from an office chart kept by Adler & Sullivan and now at the Burnham Architectural Library of the Art Institute of Chicago. The amount is approximately what one would expect if the building had been designed to incorporate the 1877 Field Building. If the latter, with approximately 12,500 square feet, had cost \$15,000.00 five years earlier, then in 1885 the Scoville Building, with about 41,500 square feet not counting the 1877 part, should have cost \$50,000.00 which is the amount carried in the building reports.

27 The only other known similarly sensitive remodeling by the firm of so large a building, and one that is still standing, is the Kranz-Springer Building of 1886-87 at the southwest corner of State and Randolph streets. The original building was an ornate structure constructed in 1873 from designs by Carter, Drake & Wight. In 1886 Adler & Sullivan were asked to unify two buildings on State street, the Springer on the corner, and the Kranz adjoining it on the south. They were also commissioned to add two stories to the combined buildings. The new floors were handled with the greatest restraint: a stone facing to match the original was added and the windows were let into the walls as simple rectangles without moldings of any kind. In that way the firm avoided re-creating stylistically-earlier window frames, which in any case they could not easily have done because the Springer Building had different window moldings on each floor. Adler & Sullivan also resisted the temptation to cast the remodeling in their current architectural style of 1886-1887 which would have clashed with the details of the floors below. They also added two large window bays running from the third through sixth floors, probably asked for by the owner, but which also, as used by the architects, served to tie together vertically the new and the old work. Those bays and the cornice are of a simplified non-descript rectilinear design that also blends with, and does not disturb, the older work. For documentation, see *Building Budget*, I, Dec. 1885, 100; III, 28 February 1887; 31 March 1887; 30 June 1887; and *Real Estate and Building Journal*, XXIX, 28 May 1887, 297.

Book Reviews

CARE OF OLD BUILDINGS TODAY A PRACTICAL GUIDE, by Donald Insall. Architectural Press, London, 1972. 197 pp., illus., cloth, \$9.00.

Preservation architecture is a practice very different from the "normal" architectural practice. The practitioner has a much larger set of constraints placed upon him that are unique to the restoration of old buildings. The Client may be composed of several committees, and legal and financial complexities are often critical. He must have the ability to deal compatibly with an older structure always remembering that he is the "second architect," and he must learn to apply modern technology to old buildings. Until recently a novice preservationist has had no authoritative publications to which he could turn with only his conscience for a guide. As a result, self-righteousness among those involved in the profession has become rampant. Books such as *The Care of Old Buildings Today* are long overdue for those involved in this work must learn ways of compatibly dealing with older structures. This book is perhaps the most significant contribution to preservation literature since Orin M. Bullock Jr's. already classic book, *The Restoration Manual*.

Donald Insall is a well-known English architect and planner with a large repertoire of significant commissions. He has received numerous awards from England's Civic Trust which acknowledges good design in new buildings as well as restoration efforts. He is actively involved in the Conference on Training Architects in Conservation and has prepared studies on the subject for the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and the International Union of Architects. This book was commissioned by *The Architect's Journal* in 1957 to commemorate the 80th birthday of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. Mr. Insall's broad range of experiences in preservation has resulted in an extremely informative and authoritative publication.

The book is divided basically into three parts: Administration, Techniques of Conservation and Case-Histories in Conservation. The first part begins with the author's introduction to the subject which includes a discussion of the legal background and the monies involved in preservation work. The fact that every building undergoing restoration needs its own "preservation plan" is emphasized early in the chapter. This 'plan' takes into account the urgency of the repairs needed, the money available and the best use of the craftsmen's time. The plan deals with buildings of considerable architectural and historic significance and would be applicable to a comparatively small percentage of restorations performed in the United States. It must

be kept in mind throughout the book that the average ages of the buildings Mr. Insall has dealt with is older than the oldest buildings in this country and that he has worked within a much larger timespan than an American preservationist will ever confront.

Britain's preservation legislation is a powerful tool. The Town and Country Planning Act of 1944 is not unlike the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 passed by the U.S. Congress which initiated the National Register of Historic Places. The function of both acts is to create a list of significant existing buildings, but the similarity ends there. Britain's legislation imposes severe penalties upon unauthorized demolition of any listed building. Consent must be granted for even minor alterations to a structure and measures can be taken against an owner who has neglected his listed building. In addition, protection can be arranged for threatened buildings that are not listed but are of special interest. Also included in this first part is a list of nearly two dozen organizations that can assist a preservation effort in terms of research and funding. The legal and funding information in the book is very readable and instructive, but of little value to the American reader other than for purposes of comparison.

Two excellent chapters entitled: "Job Organization" and "The Diagnosis" complete the first section. A method of survey and report is outlined for the architect which describes an organized method of building inspection. Several building ailments are photographically and verbally described. This is a particularly instructive section to the novice preservationist, its only fault being that it is too brief. Useful tips for job execution include the selection of a contractor, the writing of specifications and job execution. "The Diagnosis" describes a general method of analysis of an old building's faults and techniques for correcting them. Well-chosen photographs that clearly illustrate problems are again used. It is conceivable that the two aforementioned chapters could fill a volume by themselves for this type of photographic instruction is invaluable to those unfamiliar with what to look for.

Even though the second part of the book (Techniques of Conservation) is given a large sub-title called "The repair of the old roof coverings," sample specifications and photographic descriptions for remedying decaying stonework, eradicating timber pests, metalwork repair and other topics are described. While some of the roof types described are not commonly found in the United States (such as thatch and lead roofing) the description of their repair is fascinating. Perhaps Insall chose to concen-

trate on roof repair for purposes of illustration because many persons feel that the roof is of primary importance on any building's list of priorities. Selected examples of modern ways of dealing with repairs needed on old details are described in photographic and sketch form. Even though the technology depicted in the text differs from American technology, this author feels quite strongly that this is the best way to instruct practitioners in the technology of restoration, second only to on-site experience. To this author's knowledge, there is no American counterpart to technical literature of this kind with the possible exception of the *Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology* (APT).

Part three on Case-Histories in Conservation describes thirteen projects done by the office of Donald Insall that meet different program requirements. "Economising in repairs by using modern materials and techniques, Taking full advantage of architectural, Archaeological and decorative discoveries, Phased repair programmes within an available budget" are just a few of the several topics that the case-histories describe. Some of the greatest assets to this chapter are the dramatic "before and after" photographs. The commissions shown would turn any American preservationist green with envy.

The book does not contain an index, but rather a detailed table of contents with an unusual system of numbering each topic. A topical bibliography is included in the back of the book whose usefulness to the American reader is questionable, as most of the publications are of British origin and may not be readily obtained. Another difficulty to some readers may be the use of words that take on a slightly different meaning in Britain than they do here as well as different spellings. These disturbances are insignificant, however, when compared to the excellent instructive nature of the book that employs a clear text accompanied by descriptive photographs.

To paraphrase one historian, "Preservationists are an irrational lot. They are trying to halt one of the most natural processes in the world: decay." *The Care of Old Buildings Today* is an interesting counterpoint to this statement. Nowhere in the text does Mr. Insall present the case for preservation: he speaks to the reader in a tone that assumes a mutual concern for existing buildings. Mr. Insall is not as concerned with "halting decay" as he is with saving our most important visual links with the past: buildings. This publication should be required reading for architects and laymen alike, or for anyone interested in the preservation of old buildings.

Barbara Ann Roches
Historic Resources, Chicago

TOWN OF PULLMAN, by Mrs. Duane Doty, rev. ed. from 1893 original. Pullman Civic Organization, Chicago, 1974. 208 pp., 47 pp. appendix, cloth, \$12.50, paper, \$5.00.

The experiment of Pullman, Illinois, was one of the most intriguing attempts to build the perfect American urban environment. Begun in 1880, the town was the subject of numerous essays about joint efforts of labor and management, the benefits of a controlled environment, and the uplifting of spirits provided by carefully planned brick dwellings, wide streets, ample parks, and "modern" sewerage and drainage. By the summer of 1894 the dream was a shambles. Many of the buildings of Pullman, Illinois, still stand, but the town never really recovered after the depression of 1893 and the catastrophic Pullman strike of 1894.

A primary document concerning George M. Pullman's community has recently been made available by the Pullman Civic Organization. Basically a reprint of the 1893 volume by Mrs. Duane Doty, *The Town of Pullman* is of most interest for its factual descriptions of the life, the products, and the buildings at a time when Pullman, Illinois, seemed highly prosperous and economically and morally successful. The book is also valuable as an example of historical propaganda written and published in Pullman (undoubtedly with the approval of the Pullman family), and the 1893 preface admits the purpose of the volume was a "response to frequent requests on the part of visitors here for such information." The reader, therefore, is told the dates of openings, dimensions, and uses of many of the public and manufacturing buildings of Pullman, but little is said about the quality or origin of the architectural and landscaping ideas. One can read in great detail about the various woods used in making railroad passenger cars or the fascinating process of constructing Allen Paper Car Wheels that absorbed the vibrations of the rails, or one can even read the impressive statistics of the sewerage system.

Accompanying the pages of descriptions and statistics, additional period photographs of the town have been used in this edition, along with short biographies of the landscape architect Nathan Franklin Barrett and the designing architect Solon Spencer Beman. The book retains the format used by the original author, an alphabetical listing of topics and buildings, which works well when the reader knows the name of his subject of inquiry. If he does not, there is great confusion.

As a historical research tool and an addition to the literature of urban planning, *The Town of Pullman* is valuable documentation. As reading, it is similar

to the architecture of the town: interesting at times but also tedious in its entirety.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the volume is a number of naive claims: "Chicago seems destined to be the largest center of urban population in the world. . ." is one that is made when preaching the attributes of Chicago, or when referring to George M. Pullman, "By nature a leader of men, he is always clear, capable, and self reliant, and handles vast interests with ease." The irony is that within one year of the printing of the original edition of this book, Pullman's empire had begun to collapse and along with it his "perfect" town. There is hardly a hint of the impending demise.

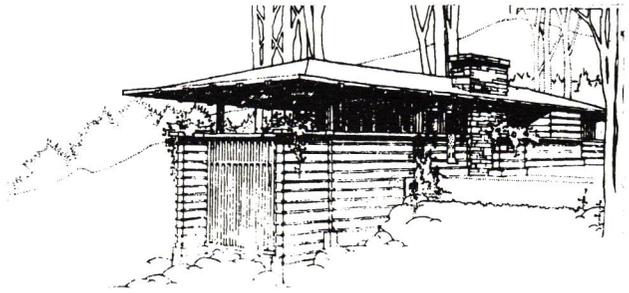
Reviewed by

Donald P. Hallmark, Assistant Professor of Art and Fine Arts and Curator and Director of the Richard W. Bock Sculpture Collection, Greenville College.



Margaret Sullivan.

Ed. note: Last quarter's Letter to the Editor had a note from Paul E. Sprague advising us that on page 14 of Third Quarter, 1973 the "photograph reputedly showing Louis Sullivan and his wife Margaret gives . . . doubt the persons are Sullivan and his wife". Dr. Sprague has since supplied us with the photograph of Margaret Sullivan illustrated here.



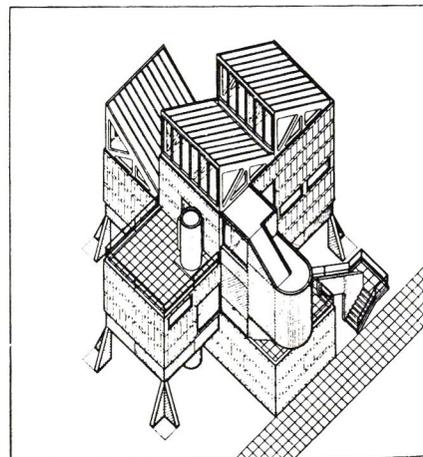
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Preview

The fourth issue of Volume XI of *The Prairie School Review* will trace the English and French sources of Louis Sullivan's ornament. This major article, researched and written by Professor Theodore Turak, presents a somewhat controversial but certainly a legitimate thesis. Dr. Turak has been a regular contributor to the *Review*, having appeared in our journal twice before. In view of the length of the article, there will be no book reviews in this final issue of 1974.

