

*The*  
**Prairie  
School**  
*Review*

Volume XII, Number 1

First Quarter, 1975

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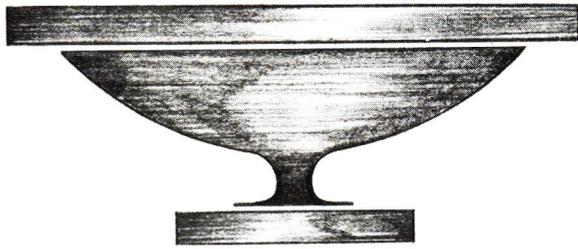
**ABOVE:**

*Eber F. Piers' trademark in jade green tiles appears on the corners of the Edmund O. Wattis residence and in wood on the interior.*

**COVER:**

*Street facade (east elevation) of the Liberty Stake First Ward Chapel by Pope and Burton.*

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*Cast figures atop brick piers framing the east entrance to the  
Technical High School by Mahonri M. Young, sculptor.*

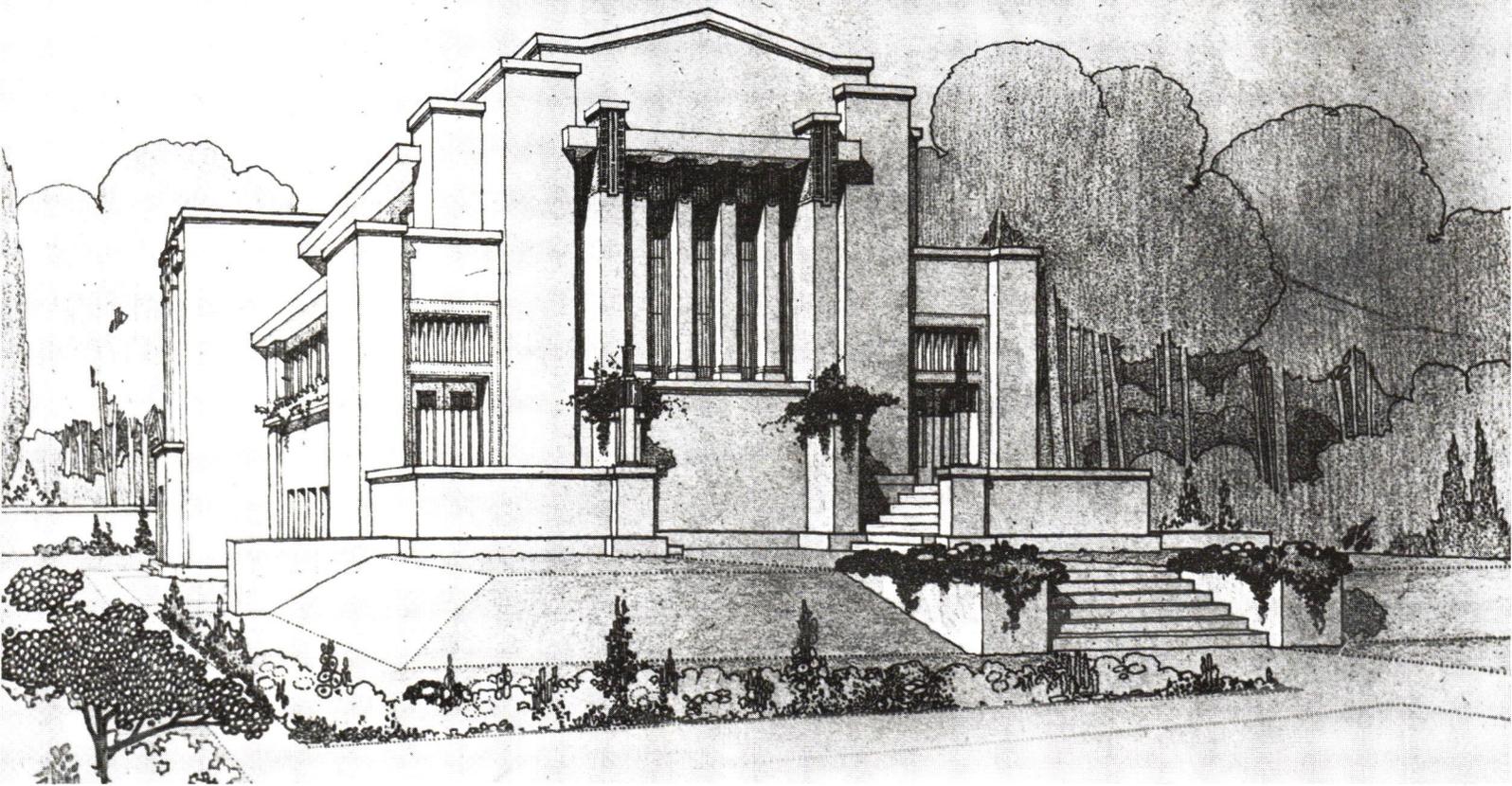
## From the EDITORS

*Many years ago we wrote an editorial about our concern for the documents and records of architects who have or are making history. We were then and still are concerned that the paper evidence of an architect's work is over-looked until it, like many of the buildings it documented, is destroyed. This is particularly true of some of the lesser known figures, men and women who either were on the fringe of the modern movement or, for reasons not quite clear, never really found their niche in history while producing fine innovative work in their lifetime.*

*There is now a movement to establish architectural archives throughout the United States. One of the first was at the University of Minnesota where the papers of Purcell & Elmslie are kept along with many of the records of the American Terra Cotta Company. There has also been a considerable amount of work done towards establishing a similar depository in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The papers of the Niedecken-Walbridge Company who built much of the Prairie School furniture were among the first to be saved there. More recently a non-profit corporation has been established in Illinois to begin the collection and protection of architectural drawings and records in the original prairie state. Better late than never, the need for this center became particularly visible during the past few years while the Illinois Historic Sites Survey was underway. With literally thousands of important although previously unrecognized buildings being uncovered, it became apparent that some organized archive was necessary. This Illinois archive has still to find a permanent home but indications are that it will not be in Chicago.*

*Chicago, of course, has the Burnham library at the Art Institute of Chicago. The Burnham has been the recipient of papers from Daniel Burnham, E. H. Bennett, many of Walter Burley Griffin's drawings and other smaller collections. The collecting of this material has been passive in that most of it has arrived as unsolicited gifts rather than being actively sought. The new Illinois Architectural Archives will take a different approach by seeking out and saving documents whenever feasible.*

*The major problems in collecting such material are space and cataloging. If the space problem can be solved, the cataloging can be done in time. In the interim there is no substitute for "total preservation" of architectural documents. The chaff must be saved along with the wheat until the day comes when it can be intelligently separated. Once gone, a document cannot be reconstituted and the idea it recorded is gone forever. We hope other states will follow the example of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois.*



## *The Prairie School Influence in Utah*

by Peter L. Goss

*Peter L. Goss, an Assistant Professor of Architecture at the Graduate School of Architecture, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, was raised and educated in the east. During the summer of 1974-75 he was the Project Historian for the Historic American Building Survey in Utah. Professor Goss is a member of the Governor's Historic and Cultural Sites Review Committee of the State of Utah and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Utah Heritage Foundation. His interest in the Prairie School influence in Utah evolved from his current research on Taylor Woolley.*

Numerous buildings in Utah are erroneously claimed to be the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. The only authentic Wright structure in Utah is the Don M. Stromquist residence, constructed in 1958.<sup>1</sup> Many buildings have been attributed to Wright because they possess features characteristic of the Prairie School of architecture. This article will demonstrate the notable influence of the Prairie School upon Utah's architecture by examining the backgrounds and certain works of selected architects.

Several reasons may be cited for the receptivity of the Intermountain West and particularly Utah to the influence of the Prairie School. Historically Chicago was the major metropolis between Salt Lake City and the East Coast. In the latter decades of the

nineteenth century and early decades of this century Utahns were naturally drawn to Chicago on their travels "back East." Their exposure to the city and its cultural attractions no doubt motivated some, including future architects, to seek their training and education in that city. Familiarity with the work of the Chicago School architects can be demonstrated by Louis Sullivan's commission for a six story office building, the Dooly Building (1892), and an adjoining hotel complex in Salt Lake City.<sup>2</sup> In 1893 many Utahns made pilgrimages to Chicago for the World's Columbian Exposition. These contacts with Chicago were largely responsible for Utah's initial interest in the Prairie School. Three factors enumerated by Brooks which aided the growth and development of the Prairie School in the Midwest also apply to Utah: the Arts and Crafts Movement, the

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<sup>1</sup> See William Allin Storrer, *The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright: A Complete Catalog*, The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 1974, p. 428.

<sup>2</sup> The hotel was never constructed and unfortunately the Dooly Building was demolished in 1961.

popularity of the bungalow,<sup>3</sup> and the publication of various homemaker magazines.<sup>4</sup>

Of the eleven architects discussed here, all but one received his training or education outside Utah. Five of these architects studied or apprenticed in the Midwest and two, Taylor Woolley and Clifford Evans, worked with Frank Lloyd Wright. The first to be examined are Woolley and Evans, who presumably were most directly influenced by Wright. They are followed by the major firms and individual architects whose earliest designs possessed features similar to those found in Prairie School architecture.

Chronologically the works discussed belong to the second decade of the century when these eleven architects produced designs for a variety of building types<sup>5</sup> which exhibited varying degrees of familiarity with the work of the Midwestern School. This decade coincides with an intense period of building activity in Utah, particularly in church and residential design. By the early twenties most of the architects had abandoned the Prairie School in favor of eclecticism and various historical styles and many continued to practice until the 1940's and 50's. No attempt has been made to examine the subsequent development of these architects. This article concerns only those architects and their designs which reflect the Prairie School influence in Utah.

Taylor Woolley (1884-1965), a Mormon from Salt Lake City, worked as one of Frank Lloyd Wright's assistants at the Oak Park Studio. His earliest experience was gained in the Salt Lake City offices of Ware and Treganza prior to his departure for Chicago and the firm's production of Prairie School designs. From 1908-09 Woolley worked in the Studio and attended classes at the Chicago Art Institute.<sup>6</sup> The next year was spent in Italy with Lloyd Wright and his father tracing and redrawing the office drawings to fit the format for the Wasmuth publication *Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright* (Berlin, 1910). Upon completion of this task Wright financed an extended tour of

Europe for Woolley, freely offering advice on what to visit in the various European capitals.<sup>7</sup> Woolley returned in late 1910, or early the following year, and in 1911 was licensed to practice architecture in the state of Utah. During the following six years he practiced intermittently in Utah and worked for various Chicago firms as well as for Frank Lloyd Wright. He was busy supervising construction on the Ford estate for von Holst and Fyfe between 1912 and 13 and later worked for Howard Shaw and Grovsnor Atterbury.<sup>8</sup> Between 1915 and 16 he assisted Francis Barry Byrne in the office of Walter Burley Griffin and Francis Barry Byrne, Architects, while Griffin was in Australia, and here apparently Woolley developed his interest in landscape architecture.<sup>9</sup> The following year, due to his wife's ill health, he returned to Salt Lake City and opened an office in partnership with Miles Miller and Clifford Evans, his brother-in-law.<sup>10</sup>

The only design in Utah illustrating Woolley's work experience with Wright and other Prairie School architects is a small residence designed for his sister and her husband in 1911. The residence for Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Jackson on Windsor Street in the Forest Dale section of Salt Lake City was completed c. 1912. The simple, nearly flat-roofed, wood frame and stucco house is based on a square plan and built on a narrow suburban lot surrounded by earlier bungalows and some later speculative housing. The plan contains four main spaces: a living room opening onto a den in the front half of the house, and a kitchen and bedroom in the rear. A fireplace, usually an essential element of Wright's design, was omitted from the plan. Heating was accomplished by a potbelly stove in the living room and a cook stove in the kitchen. Simply decorated on the interior, the ceiling of the living room and den contained two dark-stained, narrow bands of wood which, indented two feet from the outer wall surfaces and set one foot apart, followed the contour of the rooms. The innermost band, unlike the outer, did not stop at its point of origin but instead led to the center of the living room and terminated in a simple light fixture. Window trim, baseboards, door

3 The earliest of the Utah bungalows are of the California type.

4 H. Allen Brooks, *The Prairie School; Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwest Contemporaries*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1972, p. 14.

5 The numerous building types achieved by the Prairie School are discussed by Brooks, *ibid.*, p. 8. He also mentions that the early years of the second decade are the most significant for the Prairie School, *ibid.*, p. 200.

6 A Taylor Woolley (sic) is listed in *The Art Institute of Chicago Circular of Instruction of the School of Drawing, Painting, Modeling, Decorative Design, Normal Instruction, Illustration and Architecture for 1909* (Burnham Library, Chicago Art Institute).

7 Correspondence in the Taylor Woolley Archive, Western Americana Collection, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, hereafter referred to as the Woolley Archive, and an interview with Lloyd Wright, Los Angeles, California, March 1, 1975.

8 MSS in Woolley Archive.

9 Preston Woolley Parkinson, *The Utah Woolley Family*, Salt Lake City, 1967, p. 447.

10 Correspondence in the Woolley Archive. The firm of Miller, Woolley and Evans was dissolved in 1922 and Woolley reopened an office in partnership with Clifford Evans.

frames and casings were also stained and contrasted strongly against the cream-colored, sand plaster finish of the walls. The ceiling height was approximately eight feet and the unstained, vertical grained fir flooring was covered with Navaho rugs. Curtains of soft brown burlap hung from simple rods to just below the window apron. The main entrance, opening onto the living room, was on the south side of the house. Shortly after its completion Mrs. Jackson had an additional entrance with French doors placed in the first window (on the left) of the front facade. The rear of the house was enlarged by Woolley for the growing Jackson family in 1918 and again in 1922.<sup>11</sup>

Why this small house with its flat roof, wide overhanging eaves, and simple decor remains the only example of Woolley's early midwestern training is presently unknown.<sup>12</sup> Even today the Jackson residence, wedged between overgrown shrubbery and set back slightly further than its neighbors,

11 Interview with Richard Jackson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Jackson, Salt Lake City, October 7, 1975.

12 The author is presently engaged in research on Woolley's role in the Wasmuth publication and his participation in the offices of Prairie School architects.

*Residence for Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Jackson (1911), Windsor Street, Salt Lake City designed by Taylor Woolley shortly after his return from Europe where he assisted Frank Lloyd Wright in tracing drawings for the Wasmuth Portfolio.*

belies its sixty odd years. Woolley's later architectural designs reflect a wide range of styles, none related to his early background. Despite this he is fondly remembered by clients and friends as a sensitive designer primarily of residences and small buildings in which he placed an emphasis upon landscape architecture.

The only other architect in Utah to study with Wright was Woolley's partner and brother-in-law Clifford Evans (1889-1973). A native of Salt Lake City and five years Woolley's junior, Evans attended Columbia University where he studied architecture but did not complete his degree. Later he worked briefly for Frank Lloyd Wright, probably in the teens before his 1917 partnership with Woolley and Miller. The exact date and duration of this apprenticeship is unknown although Evans maintained a scrapbook on architecture containing photographs of himself and others engaged in construction at Taliesin East. Since portions of Taliesin are visible in the background, it is conceivable that Evans may have been involved in the rebuilding after the disastrous fire of 1914.<sup>13</sup> There are no extant designs exhibiting Evans' exposure to the work of Wright and it may be assumed that after entering into partnership with Woolley and Miller his design work was assimilated into that of the firm.

13 Clifford Evans Scrapbook, Western Americana Collection, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.





The Salt Lake City firm of Pope and Burton was established in 1910 and was most active in ecclesiastical design, primarily for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, more commonly referred to as the L.D.S. Church or the Mormons. Hyrum C. Pope (1881-1939), a German immigrant, studied architecture at the Chicago Art Institute prior to 1910<sup>14</sup> and worked in the offices of Jenney and Mundy and Daniel H. Burnham in Chicago.<sup>15</sup> Harold W. Burton (1888-1969), seven years younger than Pope, became his junior partner in 1910. Later that same year they began designing their first ward building for the Latter Day Saints Church. Renderings of this building and the detailing and massing of the finished structure exhibit their familiarity with the work of the Prairie School. This commission was rapidly followed by a series of other Church buildings including additional ward chapels and L.D.S. Mission homes and by the winning of the Church-wide competition for the design of the Alberta Temple.<sup>16</sup>

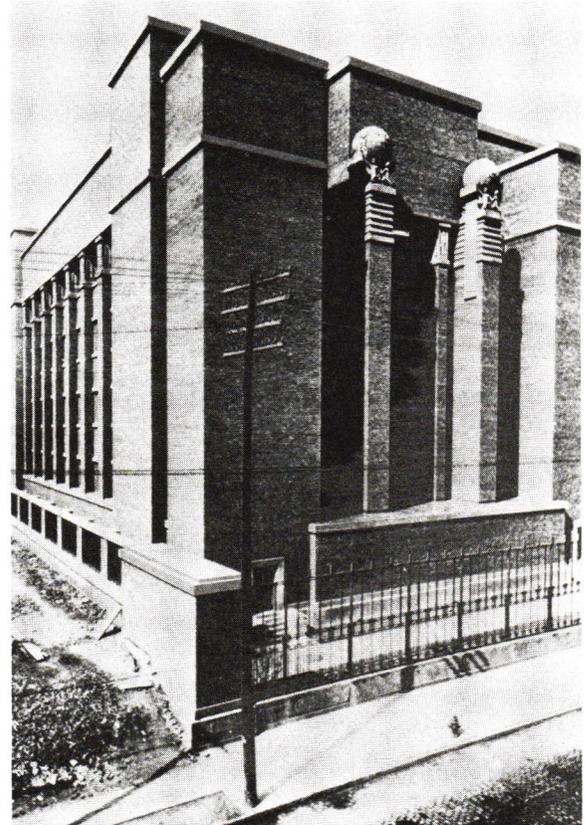
The Liberty Stake First Ward, under construction

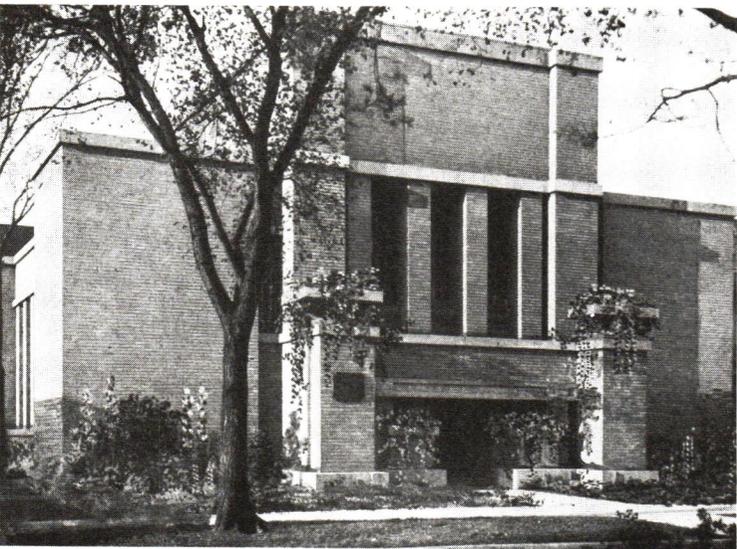
14 A Flyrum (sic) Pope was listed in the same 1909 Art Institute of Chicago Circular as Taylor Woolley, see note 6.

15 Paul Anderson, "Harold William Burton, Architect," typescript, January 10, 1974, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

16 L.D.S. Temples are the largest and most significant of Church structures.

*View of the Liberty Stake First Ward Chapel from the southeast. Note the massing is similar to that of Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Building (1904), Buffalo, New York.*





*First Congregational Church (1908), Austin, Illinois by William E. Drummond. Photo from the Western Architect.*

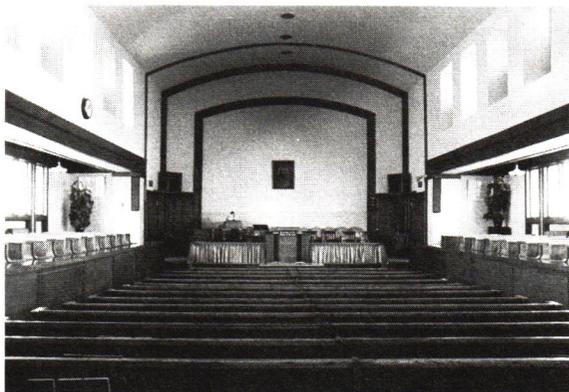
in 1911 but not completed due to financial matters until 1914, immediately won apt praise in a Salt Lake newspaper: "Its position is commanding and the unique style causes it to stand out from other edifices devoted to a similar purpose."<sup>17</sup> Although the design suits the functional needs of a typical ward program of the era (containing such elements as a chapel, amusement or social hall and smaller rooms convenient to the main assembly for Sunday School and meetings of the Mutual Improvement Association and the various Orders of the Priesthood), the building is reminiscent of two of Wright's earlier twentieth century structures. The chapel's massing recalls the 1904 Larkin Building in Buffalo, New York, while some of the decorative features bear a striking similarity to those of the 1906 Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois. In plan and in the interior arrangement of the nave it also resembles the First Congregational Church of Austin, Illinois (1908), an early commission of William E. Drummond. Pope and Burton were undoubtedly familiar with Wright's work, but how they became acquainted with Drummond's work is unclear. Pope may have seen plans for the church while working in Chicago and perhaps even paid a visit to the building site. Possibly they may have seen the building illustrated in a professional journal; however, the first major feature of Drummond's work, including the Congregational Church, is found in the *Western Architect* of February 1915.

The chapel, located on the upper floor, is the dominant element in the building mass. The commanding appearance of this light, cream-colored

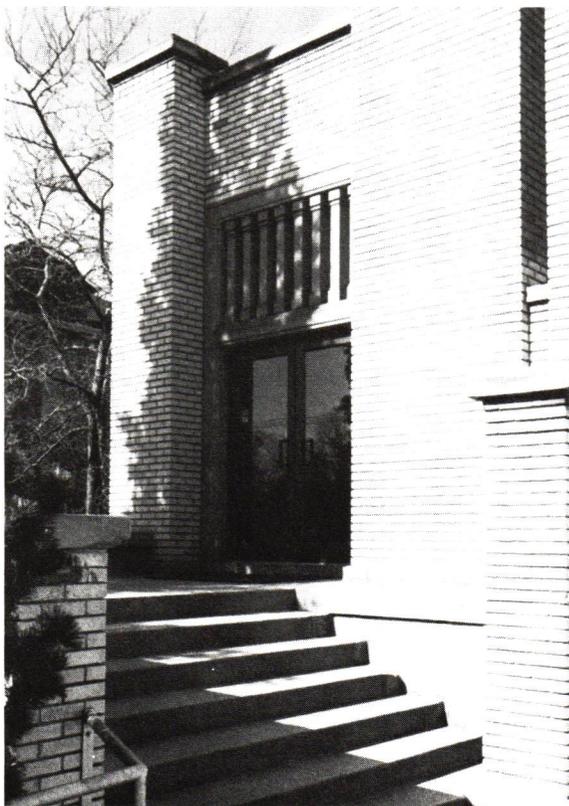
<sup>17</sup> "To Dedicate New Chapel Tomorrow Night," *Deseret Evening News*, February 21, 1914, p. 10.



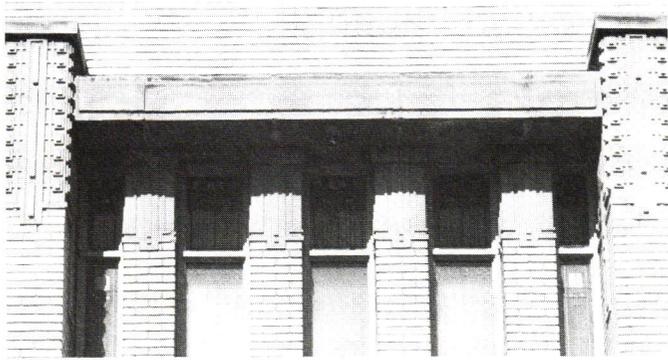
*Interior of Drummond's First Congregational Church, Austin, Illinois. Photo from the Western Architect.*



*Chapel interior of the Liberty Stake First Ward Chapel.*



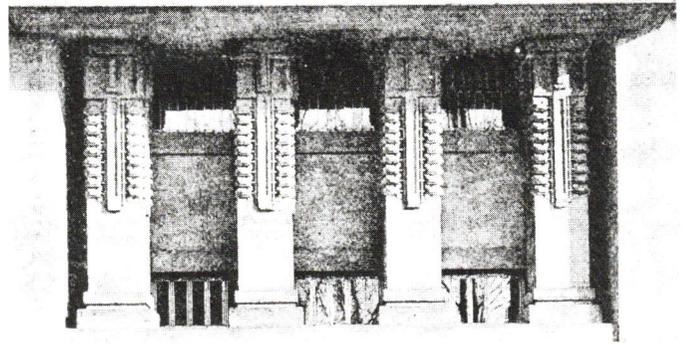
*One of the main entrances to the Liberty Stake First Ward Chapel.*



*Carved stone capitals atop the mullions on the street facade of the Liberty Stake First Ward Chapel.*

brick structure is reinforced by the carefully terraced landscape which minimizes the visibility of the raised basement level (containing the amusement hall) from the street level. The entrances to the chapel on either side of the tall mullioned windows in the east facade are partially screened from the sidewalk by brick walls which help define the forecourt at the base of the facade. Directly below this forecourt on the north and south facades of the building are entrances into the lower level which are partially screened from the street by brick walls. The chapel entrances open at right angles, through small vestibules, onto a slightly raised narthex-like space at the rear of the chapel which is partially separated from the nave by a chest-high partition and screen on either side. These partitions conceal the two-step rise leading to the elevated seating behind the side aisles which runs the full length of the nave. Seating for 500 people is found in the nave, which slopes slightly towards the speaker's stand, and in the raised side areas in which the pews are canted toward the speaker's stand. During the day the space receives well balanced natural illumination from the tall windows in the east facade, the windows along the raised side areas, and a clear-story above the nave and under the slightly arched nave ceiling.

The carved stone capitals of the tall brick mullions enframing leaded glass windows in the east facade are almost identical in their simple geometric configuration to the mullion elements in Wright's Unity Temple. Referred to as the "mission style" in local newspaper accounts,<sup>18</sup> the ward chapel interior is somewhat more simple than Wright's and consists of painted canvas over plaster with stained oak trim and grill work. This decorative motif is also apparent on the stair balustrades leading to both the amusement hall and classrooms. Although well maintained, the building is now considered obsolete



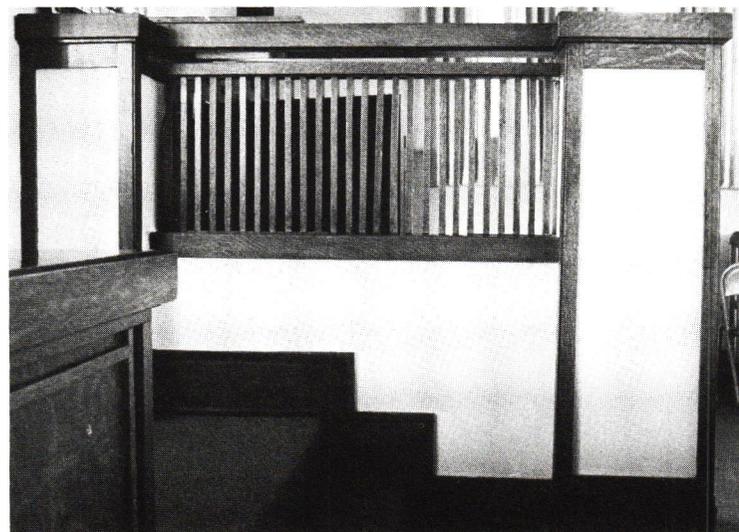
*Mullion decoration on Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple (1906), Oak Park, Illinois. Photo from Frank Lloyd Wright: The Early Work.*

and may, unfortunately, be demolished and replaced by a new ward building.

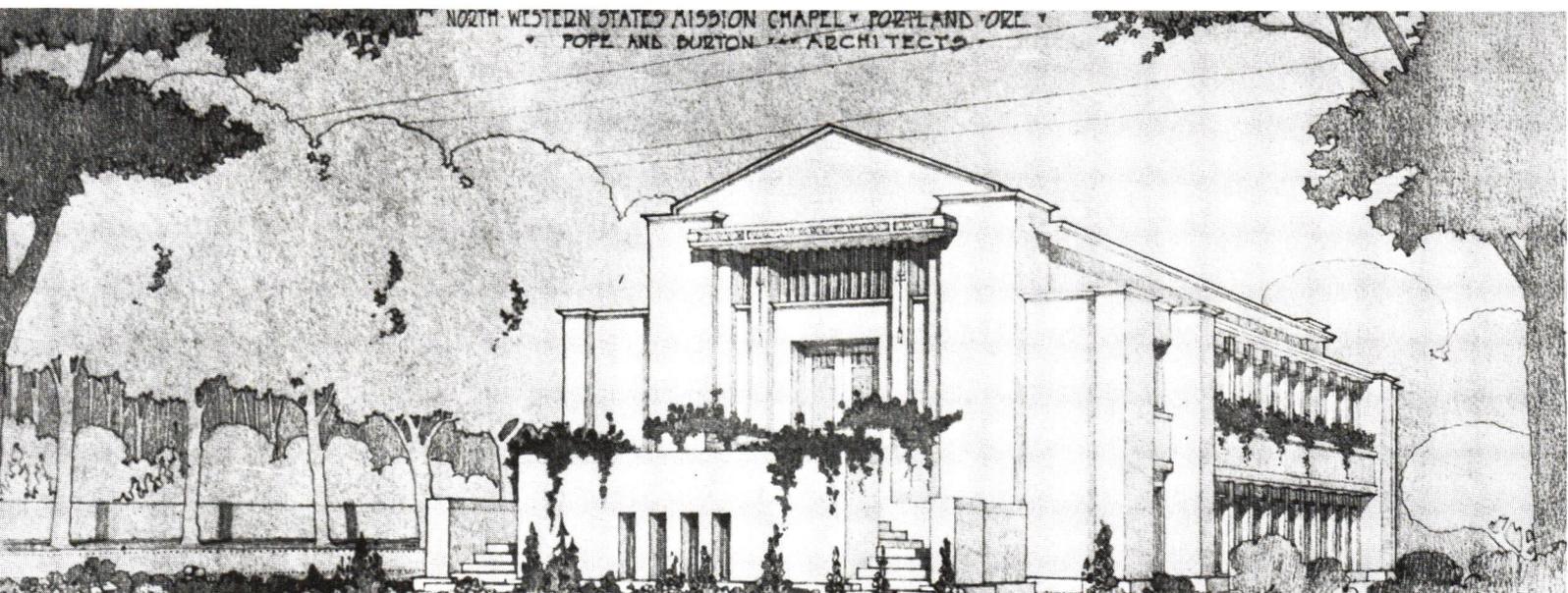
The design of the Liberty Stake First Ward was only the first of a number of other church buildings by Pope and Burton reflecting the Prairie School influence. The next work and certainly one of the firm's most significant accomplishments was the winning design for the L.D.S. Temple in Alberta, Canada. Chosen from among seven schemes submitted for a site that had yet to be decided, the winning design was announced New Year's Day, 1913. The newspaper account containing three proposed elevation renderings explained that the design could not be identified historically since the architects were not attempting to imitate a style but were affected by the unusual requirements of a Mormon temple.<sup>19</sup> The stone edifice was under construction in 1914, but was not finished until the early 1920's, perhaps due to the shortness of the building season in Canada.

<sup>19</sup> "Approved Design for Temple in Alberta," *Deseret Evening News*, January 1, 1913, p. 9.

*Partition and screen between the narthex and nave of Pope and Burton's Liberty Stake First Ward Chapel.*



<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*



*Rendering of Pope and Burton's Northwestern Mission Chapel, Portland, Oregon, constructed in 1914. Church Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.*

Two early Church designs significant for their Prairie School influence include the 1913 Salt Lake City 22nd Ward (demolished in 1962), resembling Wright's Unity Temple in plan and massing, and the 1914 Northwestern States Mission Chapel, Portland, Oregon, similar to the Liberty Stake First Ward. The Mission Chapel design was reportedly a "... strictly 'Mormon style' of architecture."<sup>20</sup> Two later ecclesiastical designs, both constructed between 1918-19, are the Denver, Colorado First Ward, again similar in features to Drummond's First Congregational Church, and the Eastern States Mission House, Brooklyn, New York. Additional work by Pope and Burton for the Church in Utah, Idaho and other western states between 1910 and 1920 is currently being researched.<sup>21</sup>

Pope and Burton, perhaps more than any other Utah firm, evince the greatest familiarity with the Prairie School and in particular the work of Wright. Despite their numerous Church commissions, the firm worked independently of the Church until their partnership was dissolved with the death of Hyrum Pope in 1939. Harold Burton, neighbor to fellow architects Taylor Woolley and Clifford Evans in Salt Lake City, practiced independently until his appointment as Church architect in 1955. He served in this capacity for a decade, retiring from the position four years before his death in 1969.

20 "New 10,000 Dollar Mission House," *Deseret Evening News*, December 19, 1914, p. 22.

21 Paul Anderson is presently involved in research on the firm of Pope and Burton for the L.D.S. Church.

The firm of Cannon and Fetzer established in 1909, a year before Pope and Burton, were prolific designers of school and college buildings, commercial buildings and L.D.S. Wards primarily in Utah and Idaho.<sup>22</sup> The majority of their designs were executed in either Neo-Gothic, neo-classical or occasionally in Spanish Baroque styles. Witnessing the popularity of Pope and Burton's work, they occasionally attempted contemporary designs imitative of the Prairie School.

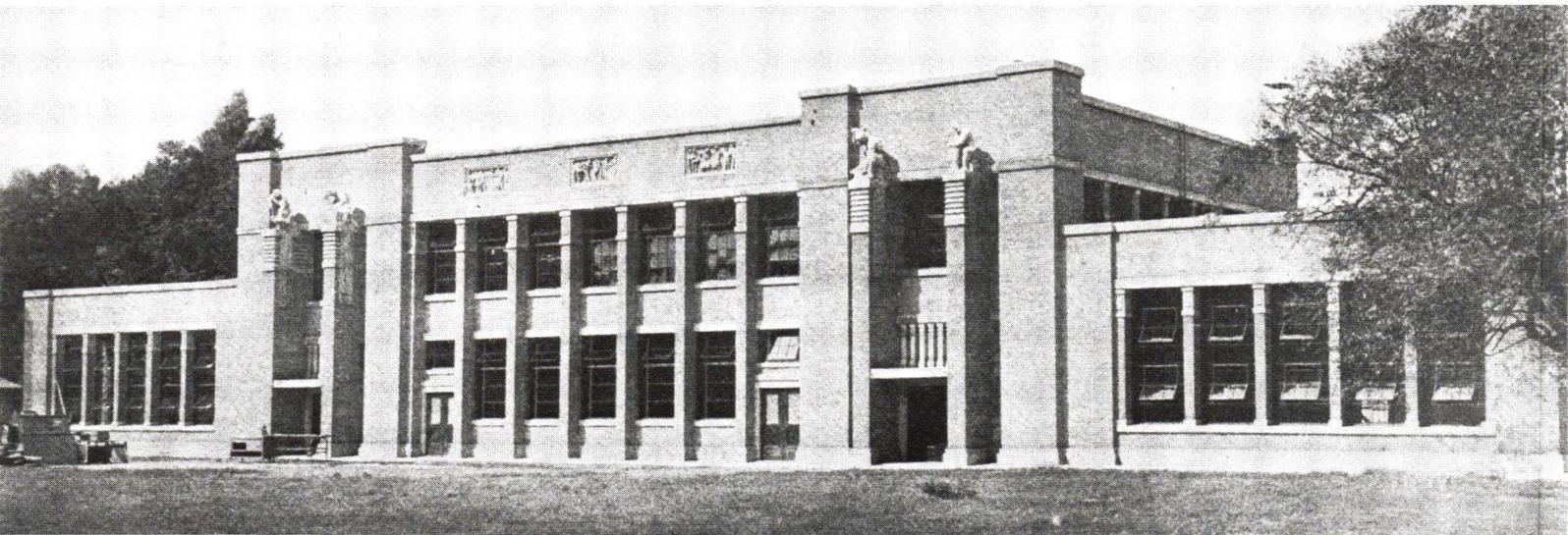
Lewis Telle Cannon (1872-1946) was born in Salt Lake City and studied architecture at M.I.T., graduating in 1896 with his Bachelor of Science in Architecture. His earliest practice was between 1905 and 1909 in Salt Lake City. In 1909 he entered into a partnership with John Fetzer (1882-1965).<sup>23</sup> Fetzer, a Bavarian, attended a five-year course in architecture in Nuremberg, graduating in 1903. Arriving in Salt Lake City in 1905, he first worked for the well known Utah architect Richard K. A. Kletting, another German immigrant, and then for the firm of Ware and Treganza before joining Cannon.<sup>24</sup> Their partnership lasted until 1937 when both formed partnerships with their sons.

The Technical High School in Salt Lake City, designed in 1911 and completed the following year, clearly owes a debt to the work of Wright's Larkin

22 Cannon and Fetzer also designed the Utah pavilions for the 1915 Pacific International Exposition in San Diego and the 1915 Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

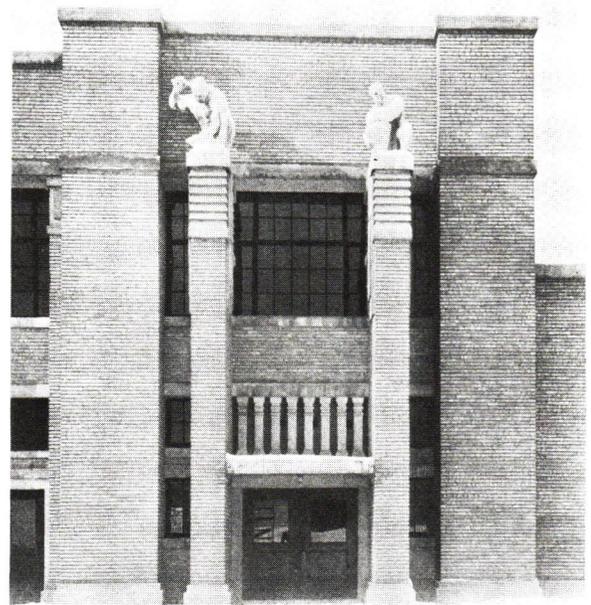
23 Noble Warrum, ed., *Utah Since Statehood; Historical and Biographical*, S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., Chicago and Salt Lake City, 1909, vol. II, pp. 1178-1182, and Henry F. and Elsie R. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased*, New Age Publishing Co., Los Angeles, 1956, pp. 106-107.

24 Warrum, *op. cit.*, pp. 936-939.



Building. The design is solely the product of Cannon and Fetzer, not of Taylor Woolley as Brooks once believed.<sup>25</sup> Built of reinforced concrete construction at a cost of \$90,000, the walls are veneered with a buff-colored brick (now unfortunately painted a salmon color). Cast sculpture and base-reliefs by sculptor Mahonri M. Young, a grandson of Brigham Young,<sup>26</sup> highlight the exterior. Photographs of the front or east elevation and floor plans were published five years after the building's completion in the *Western Architect*, February, 1917 and *Architectural Forum*, April, 1917.<sup>27</sup> The Wrightian influence is most apparent in the identical east and west elevations of the central pavilion. Views of the east (front) elevation are now blocked by permanent stadium seating erected for the adjacent West High School. The sculpted figures and their bases atop the brick piers framing the main entrances, as Brooks mentions,<sup>28</sup> recall Wright's early sculpture designs for the Larkin Building and not Richard Bock's work on the completed structure. The figures of workers in the representational sculpture on the Technical High School building show a favorite subject of Mahonri M. Young. Another similarity to Wright's design is a series of stone mullions above both entrances to the school building (like those above the entrances to Pope and Burton's First Ward) which resembles the motif above the entrance of the Larkin Building. With the exception of the simple geometric pattern found in the balustrade of the two main stairways, none of the interior detailing reveals the Wright influence.

*The Technical High School (1911), Salt Lake City by the firm of Cannon and Fetzer. The cast figures and base-relief panels are by Utah sculptor Mahonri M. Young. Photos from the Western Architect.*



In 1922 Cannon and Fetzer designed the adjacent West High School in a Neo-Gothic style and added two extensions, sympathetic to their original design, to the one story wings flanking the central pavilion of the Technical building. The new high school eventually incorporated the Technical High School, which continued to provide shop and classroom space for the industrial arts.

Besides the early design of the Technical High School, the firm designed three other buildings, all L.D.S. Ward buildings, none of which truly displays an understanding of Prairie School design. Unlike their closest competitors in church designs, Pope

25 Brooks, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-179.

26 A Carl Nielsen, "Cannon and Fetzer, Architects," type-script, March 1975, p. 2.

27 In Brooks, *Prairie School* figure 112 is mislabeled *Brick-builder*, 1917.

28 Brooks, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

and Burton, the firm of Cannon and Fetzer more comfortably relied on such styles as neo-classicism and Neo-Gothicism, never developing a position independent of historicism.

The earliest organized firm to be mentioned here is that of Ware and Treganza who established a partnership in 1901 that lasted a quarter of a century. They were responsible for the early training of numerous Utah architects including three discussed above: Taylor Woolley, Clifford Evans and John Fetzer. Walter E. Ware (1861-1951) was born in Massachusetts and gained much of his early architectural experience working for the Union Pacific Railroad in Omaha, Nebraska and Laramie, Wyoming. In the 1880's he began practicing architecture in Denver and about 1889 moved to Salt Lake City. He practiced in Salt Lake for more than a decade before Treganza joined him in 1901.<sup>29</sup> Fifteen years Ware's junior, Alberto O. Treganza (1876-1944) was born in Denver and studied architecture at Cornell University. He apprenticed with the firm of W. S. Hebbard and Irving Gill in San Diego and arrived in Salt Lake City about 1901.<sup>30</sup> With the commencement of their partnership, Ware, earlier noted for his numerous works in Salt Lake, assumed the business responsibilities of the firm including the writing of specifications, while Treganza worked on design. Treganza achieved recognition for his fine design ability but often tended to be a volatile and dogmatic person in the office. Despite their different roles and personalities, the firm was well known for maintaining high ethical standards and careful attention to construction supervision.<sup>31</sup> Their commissions ranged from large club buildings and warehouses to numerous schools and large residences. Treganza experimented with a wide range of styles during his tenure with Ware but was particularly affected by the work of the Prairie School. He eventually separated from Ware and left Salt Lake City in 1926, ultimately returning to Southern California.

The firm's residential architecture has only recently come under investigation by historians. Their earliest houses are believed to have been influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement,<sup>32</sup> and one of the earliest documented designs incorporating this influence with that of the Prairie School is the M.A. Cheesman house located in Holladay, an exclusive

suburb of Salt Lake City. This beautifully sited residence is presently being well cared for by its third owner. The house was designed and placed out for bid in 1912<sup>33</sup> and constructed about a year later. It is a two story stucco over wood frame house symmetrically balanced by side wings of one story, all of which is covered by hipped roofs with broad overhanging eaves. In plan a generous amount of space has been allotted to the main hall and adjacent living room which span the full twenty four foot width of the house. The Arts and Crafts character of the well lighted living room derives from the use of redwood banding,<sup>34</sup> a beamed ceiling, and large fireplace decorated with Rookwood tiles and framed by alcove seating. Several other incongruities, including the decorative Eastlake oak paneling and stairway in the hall from an old Salt Lake City hotel, might suggest that Treganza was overly swayed by his client. The residence leaves some doubt as to Treganza's familiarity with the Prairie School. However, another design of that same year skillfully



*The living room of the M.A. Cheesman residence (1912), Salt Lake City by Ware and Treganza illustrating the redwood beamed ceiling and fireplace with alcove seating.*

incorporates many Prairie School features.

In November of 1912 the firm won the commission (over four other entries) for the long established Ladies Literary Club building on fashionable South Temple Street in Salt Lake City. This building, the group's second clubhouse, is a large red

<sup>33</sup> The original specifications are in the possession of the present owner.

<sup>34</sup> Treganza's experience with redwood may have been the result of his association with the office of Hebbard and Gill, see Esther McCoy, *Five California Architects*, Reinhold, New York, 1960, p. 63.

<sup>29</sup> Obituary, *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 22, 1951, p. 12.

<sup>30</sup> Warrum, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 277-278 and obituary, *Deseret Evening News*, July 19, 1944, p. 12.

<sup>31</sup> Georgius Y. Cannon, "Ware and Treganza," *Utah Architecture*, Winter, 1962, pp. 7-9.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Georgius Y. Cannon, architect, Salt Lake City, August 26, 1975.



*The street facade of the Ladies Literary Club (1912) on South Temple Street in Salt Lake City.*

brick, two story structure under a hipped roof. Narrow end to the street, it runs deep on the narrow site and is well suited to the residential scale of neighboring structures. A porch runs the width of the front elevation and is protected by a roof over the main entry forming a porte-cochere at the right front corner of the building. The structure contains a reception hall, drawing room, auditorium and stage on the main floor. On the second floor above the hall and drawing room is the library with an entry onto a small balcony at the rear of the auditorium. The basement contains dressing and rest rooms, a kitchen and a caretaker's apartment. The floors and woodwork originally were of stained hardwood and the walls were tinted a dark cream.<sup>35</sup> The arched auditorium ceiling displays a series of geometric-patterned grilles and wood banding (now painted) set between the ceiling ribs. A contrasting arabesque-like plaster decoration found nowhere else in the design frames the arch of the proscenium stage. Other notable details include the use of wooden banding on the soffit of the front porch and upper wall surfaces below the eave and the extensive geometric patterns of leaded, stained glass in the

windows. The building still functions as the Ladies Literary Club headquarters and has changed little with the exception of some interior repainting and redecorating.

The next year Ware and Treganza received the commission for the Carnegie Library in the rural town of Mount Pleasant, Utah, some one hundred miles south of Salt Lake City. Set back more than fifty feet on the site, the small building remains one of the most attractive and noteworthy structures of residential scale on the town's main thoroughfare. Entrance into the reddish-brown brick building is possible on either side of the central pavilion which contains a stairhall with a half flight of stairs leading up into the central reading room and another leading down into a meeting hall and office space. A minimum of remodeling includes the repainting which conceals some of the original wood banding. The hipped roof, broad eaves and high string course of cast stone counteract the verticality accentuated by the brick mullions framing the windows on all sides of the building. The tile inset below the string course is purely decorative. The building remains in continuous use as the town's public library.

One of Treganza's finest designs is the Gustav L. Becker house built c. 1918 on the bench just above the center of Ogden, Utah's second largest city, located thirty-five miles north of Salt Lake City. This commission resulted from the friendship between

<sup>35</sup> Katherine Barette Parsons, *History of Fifty Years: Ladies Literary Club, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1877-1927*, Arrow Press, Inc., Salt Lake City, 1927, pp. 104-110.



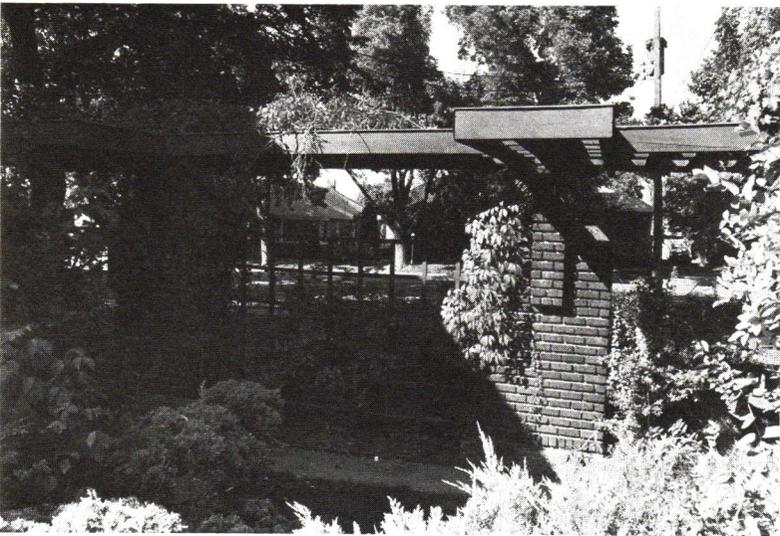
his partner's wife and Mrs. Thelka Becker, wife of the client. Becker, a second generation beer brewer and an avid Ogden City booster and sportsman, selected a corner site on Van Buren Street only a block above the prestigious Eccles Circle Subdivision housing some of Utah's wealthiest families.<sup>36</sup> The design, based on a square plan, apparently was adapted from Wright's "A Fireproof House for \$5,000" published in *Ladies Home Journal*, April, 1907. The main floor plan is essentially a flipped

*Set back from the other structures along Main Street, this Carnegie Library in Mount Pleasant, Utah designed in 1913 by Ware and Treganza continues to serve this rural community.*

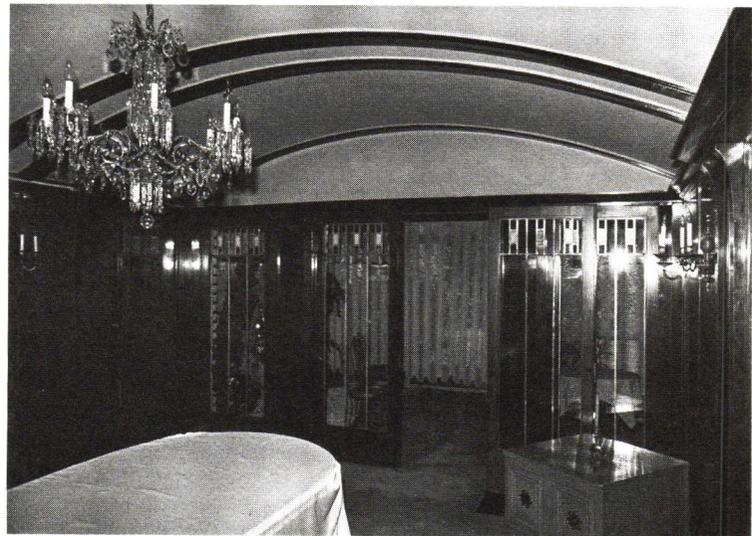
<sup>36</sup> Janice Fingerle, "The Gustav L. Becker House," typescript, May 1975, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

*Designed c. 1918 by Ware and Treganza the Gustav L. Becker residence in Ogden, Utah is a variation of Frank Lloyd Wright's "Fireproof House."*





*A section of the trellis leading to garage of the Gustav L. Becker residence.*



*The dining room of the Gustav L. Becker residence with walnut banding on the ceiling and leaded glass doors which originally led to a screened porch.*

*The walnut balustrade leading to the second floor of the Becker residence repeats the design of the leaded glass windows on the main floor.*



version of the plan of Wright's William B. Greene residence (1912) in Aurora, Illinois.<sup>37</sup> Treganza's design, slightly rectangular in plan, utilizes brick masonry rather than concrete and contains expensive detailing such as leaded glass windows and fine woodwork negating the supposed economic advantages of Wright's cube or square houses such as the Hoyt residence (1906), Geneva, Illinois, the Hunt residence (1907), La Grange, Illinois,<sup>38</sup> and particularly the Stockman residence (1908), Mason City, Iowa.<sup>39</sup>

The main entrance under a brick arch faces directly onto the street and is protected by a portecochere and trellis cantilevered over the front walk. A secondary entrance behind the brick wall to the left of the main entrance like that of the "Fireproof House" provides access via a small hall to the kitchen and to the basement stairs. Diverging from the Wright design, a bay projects from the north facade off the kitchen containing a storage room and a back entrance to the kitchen. The rather incongruous red clay pantile roof, insisted upon by Mrs. Becker,<sup>40</sup> contrasts strongly with the burnt-plum brick of the walls which were laid with a

37 A plan of this residence is found in Leonard K. Eaton's *Two Chicago Architects and Their Clients: Frank Lloyd Wright and Howard Van Doren Shaw*, The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 1969, pp. 104-105.

38 Grant C. Manson, *Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910*, Reinhold, 1958, p. 173.

39 John Piers, son of Eber F. Piers, claims his father produced the original design for the Becker residence but lost the commission and that Treganza merely copied it. Interview with John Piers, Ogden, Utah, October 22, 1975.

40 Fingerle, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

deeply indented off-white mortar and with the concrete string course, lintel and caps. The broad eaves are pierced at the corners repeating the trellis pattern seen in the porte-cochere. This motif reappears in the free standing trellises, one connecting the northeast corner of the house with the garage and the other located off the south facade.

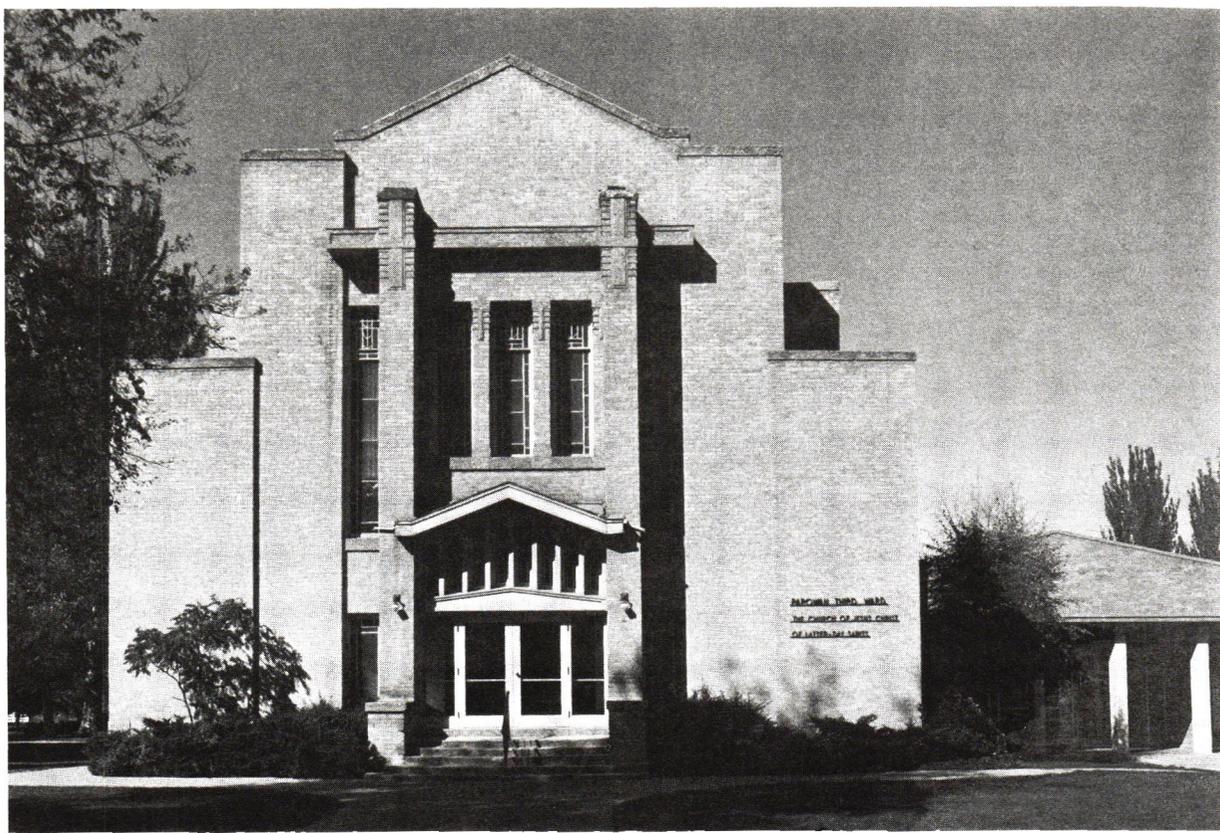
In plan the residence differs from Wright's published design only in the larger amount of space, central fireplace, and decor. The spatial arrangement of the main floor is almost identical: to the left of the entrance is the kitchen and behind it the dining room which opens onto the living room. Opposite the entrance and running the full depth of the plan is the living room. The freestanding fireplace (now removed) near the front wall of the living room partitioned off a corner of the room which functioned as the library and is identical in location to Wright's William B. Greene residence. The dining room with its slightly arched ceiling is the highlight of the interior decorative features. The leaded glass doors repeat the design in the first floor windows. The walls and the wooden bands following the curve of the ceiling are of stained and varnished walnut like the rest of the interior woodwork. The window design also appears in the wooden radiator grills and the wide balustrade of the main stairway. Three simple flat, horizontal bands of walnut decorate the cream-colored walls at the floor, chair rail and just below the ceiling. The

*The street elevation of the Parowan Third Ward Chapel (1914) Parowan, Utah by Miles Miller shows obvious similarities to the Pope and Burton Liberty Stake First Ward.*

second floor plan contains as many bedrooms as the "Fireproof House" with the addition of another bath and more storage area. The hallway is perpendicular to the stairway and more closely resembles the second floor plan of the Thomas Gale House (1909), Oak Park, Illinois. Since 1959, after the death of Mrs. Becker, the residence was purchased and operated as a wedding reception center with the only unfortunate alteration being the removal of the living room fireplace.

Miles Miller (1886-1956), a Utahn, began his apprenticeship in Salt Lake City in 1908 after spending two years at the University of Utah. Before his partnership in 1917 with Taylor Woolley and Clifford Evans, his work consisted of schools and church buildings in Utah and Idaho.<sup>41</sup> Very few of these designs suggest the Prairie School influence and those that do seem more indebted to the work of Pope and Burton, particularly the Liberty Stake First Ward. Based on the same ward program, Miller's 1914 design for the Parowan Third Ward in the small rural town of Parowan, Utah, clearly displays this debt. Both buildings are approximately the same size but Miller seems to have lacked the confidence of his predecessors Pope and Burton. This is visually evident in the poorer quality of the brick and cast ornament. The massing of the two buildings are similar, as are their decorated mullions on the front elevation. Miller's design differs in placing the main entrance in the center of the facade below a cantilevered roof, and in the side elevations which contain two story window mullions with decorated capitals. The main floor space is one

<sup>41</sup> Warrum, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 92-95.



large enclosure open a full two stories, unlike the Liberty Stake Ward. Interior similarities include the floor sloping in the direction of the speaker's stand and the use of a dark stained wood banding contrasting with the cream-colored walls. Geometric-patterned, stained glass windows are found throughout the building but an economy of means dictated the use of wood muntins in place of lead.

In the early 1920's, possibly after his partnership with Woolley and Evans dissolved, he designed another slightly smaller ward building in Salt Lake City which has since been modernized and altered. Perhaps more interested in politics than architecture, Miller later served as President of the Utah Chapter of the A.I.A. and spent two terms (1927-28, 1932-33) in the Utah State Legislature.<sup>42</sup>

Another Utah native, Leslie Hodgson (1879-1947) attended the University of Utah, apprenticed to the two Salt Lake City architects S. C. Dallas and Richard K. A. Kletting, and then sought additional experience as a draftsman in the firm of Hebbard and Gill.<sup>43</sup> It is a matter of conjecture whether Hodgson was acquainted with Alberto O. Treganza while in this San Diego office. In 1905, after moving to Ogden, he began his own practice and within five years became the official architect for the Ogden School Board.<sup>44</sup> Besides numerous school buildings he also designed commercial structures and a few church buildings which are indebted to the Prairie School, such as the L.D.S. Branch for the Deaf (1916) in Ogden.

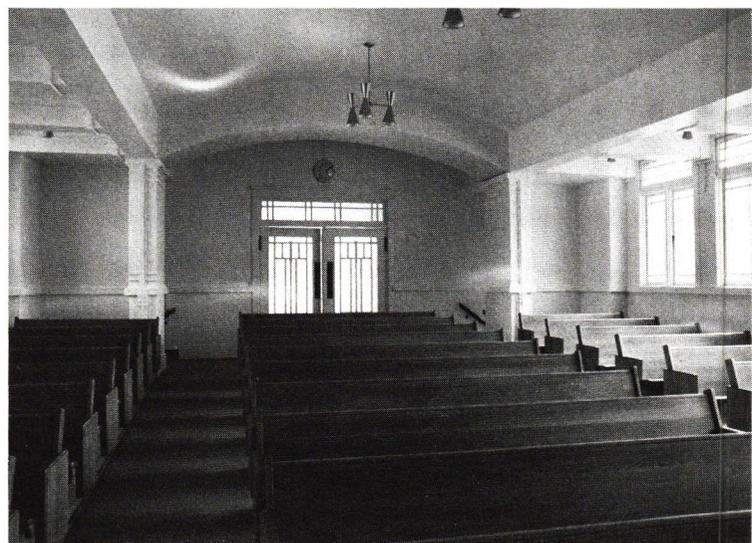
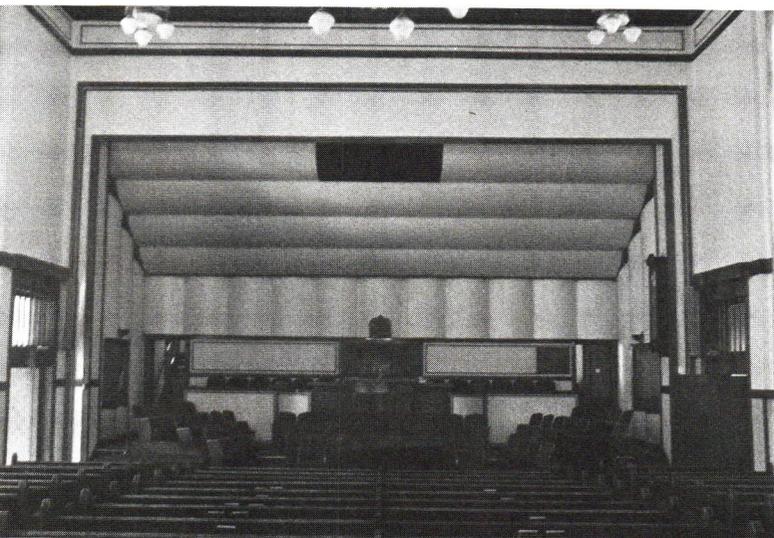
The exterior features of this small, red brick

42 Obituary, *Deseret Evening News*, March 30, 1956, p. B7.

43 Warrum, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 380-381.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 381.

*Interior view looking towards the speaker's stand of the Parowan Third Ward, Parowan, Utah.*



*Interior view of the L.D.S. Branch for the Deaf chapel looking towards the main entrance. The spatial arrangement is like that of Pope and Burton's Liberty Stake First Ward Chapel but considerably smaller in scale.*

chapel illustrate Hodgson's familiarity with the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, while the interior resembles the work of Pope and Burton's Liberty Stake First Ward. In both works the main floor sits atop a raised basement, but in Hodgson's design the basement contains small offices and meeting rooms. This arrangement is clearly articulated in the side elevation of the Deaf Branch. The main entry is enframed by a set of brick columns on either side with cast stone capitals, a simplified version of those on Wright's Unity Temple. The low brick wall projecting from below the main entrance conceals

*Front and side views of Leslie Hodgson's L.D.S. Branch for the Deaf (1916), Ogden, Utah. The upper indented cornice and the decorated mullion capitals are reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple.*





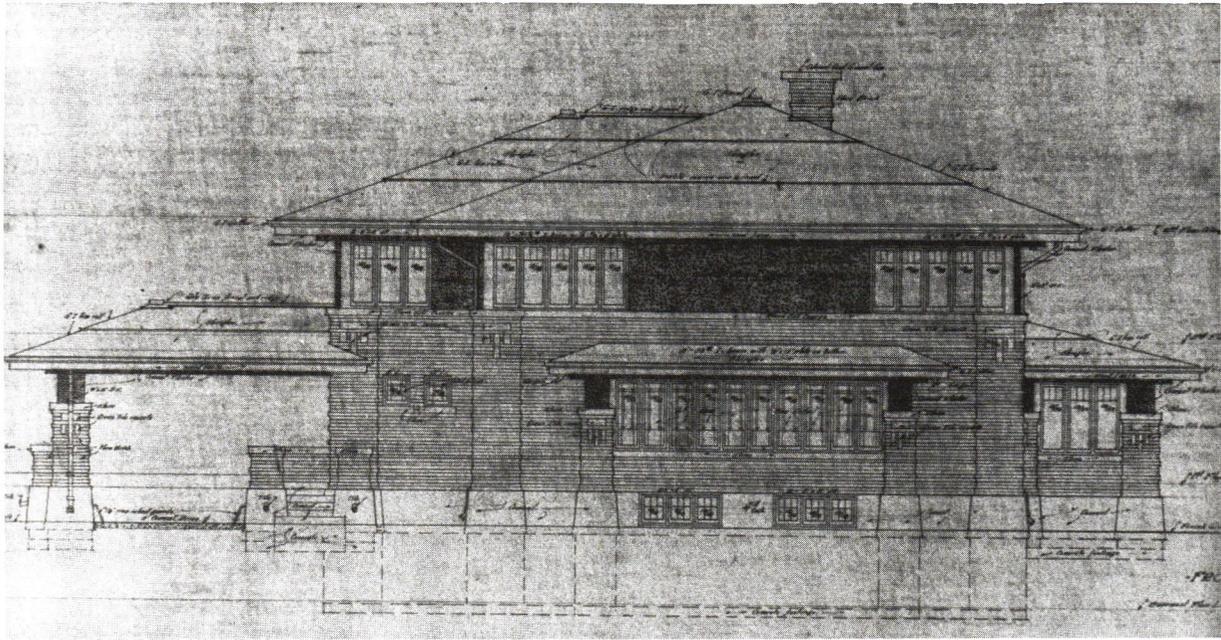
*Detail of the decorated mullions of Leslie Hodgson's L.D.S. Branch for the Deaf.*

the stairs and landing. The roof contains two cornices. The upper cornice, deliberately set back from the lower, projecting cornice, conceals the curved ceiling of the chapel and is again reminiscent of Wright's Unity Temple. Mullions, with capitals similar to those on the front elevation, frame the windows on the east and west facades. An amusement hall and office were added to the rear of the chapel in 1950.

As in the Liberty Stake First Ward, the ceiling is curved over the nave but not over the side aisles and the floor slopes slightly toward the speaker's stand. Despite recent redecoration, some of the original banding remains on the side walls and on the columns at the rear of the chapel. The chapel still functions as a deaf branch for the L.D.S. Church and remains one of the few examples of Hodgson's interest in the Prairie School. Hodgson continued as a successful school architect and later, in partnership with another architect, designed two rare examples in Utah of the Art Deco style: Ogden High School (1936) and the Ogden City and Weber County Municipal Building (1938).

Colorado born Eber Piers (1889-1961), an architect and inventor of independent nature, began his apprenticeship upon graduation from high school with Ernst P. Varian, a noted Denver architect. In 1908, dissatisfied with a year of Beaux-Arts oriented architectural education at the University of Colorado, he moved to Salt Lake City and worked as a draftsman for Walter E. Ware. Shortly thereafter he moved to Ogden and worked for Leslie Hodgson. Two years later he left that employment to





open his own office and began receiving residential commissions from some of Ogden's old established families. This early architectural work did not monopolize Piers, who was constantly inventing improvements for the automobile, such as a disc brake system, and perfecting steam valves for boilers. By 1916 he had completed over fifty inventions, many of which were patented. Hoping to eventually produce these inventions himself, he resisted the efforts of industry to purchase the production rights. In 1917 during World War I, he enlisted in the Air Corps and was sent to study aeronautical engineering at M.I.T. As a result of this experience he later began experimenting on developing a helicopter. At the time of his death in 1961 Piers was credited with over 150 inventions.<sup>45</sup> Piers returned from the service and resumed his small practice, which by then included commercial and civic work as well as residential designs. He continued practicing until his son took over in the 1950's.

A number of Piers' early residences were located above the city center in the bench area of Ogden. Three of these early works were built on Eccles Circle on either side of an oval park unique to the gridiron pattern of the surrounding neighborhood. Of the three<sup>46</sup> the Edmund O. Wattis residence testifies to Piers' familiarity with the Prairie School. His client Wattis proved to be an interesting fellow for he and his brother William H. Wattis founded the Utah Construction Company about the turn of the century to construct new rail lines from Utah to California, and by the 1920's had substantially extended the scope of their operations. In the 1930's the company formed a consortium with five other firms winning the bid for the construction of

*The west and south elevations of the Edmund O. Wattis residence (1914) on Eccles Circle, Ogden, Utah by Eber F. Piers.*

the Hoover (Boulder) Dam in Nevada. Both brothers were presidents of the consortium during the construction period, but neither lived to see the project completed.<sup>47</sup>

The Wattis residence is a two-story brick masonry based on a slightly rectangular plan. The main two-story mass is de-emphasized by a strong feeling of horizontality in the hipped roof with four foot overhanging eaves and the broken line of the cornice of the porte-cochere, front window bay and the enclosed sun porch. The main entrance and porte-cochere on the side elevation common to the work of Wright and other Prairie School architects is rare in Utah residences. Dark orange-brown brick walls with every fourth course projecting are capped by a stone sill and the upper fourth of the elevations are slightly indented and faced with pebble stucco including a portion of the soffit. All of the corners on the building are emphasized in a pier-like manner, and along with the columns of the porte-cochere, contain the architect's trademark in jade green tiles. Surprisingly the building shows little relationship in plan to Prairie School designs. The ground floor is divided nearly in half with the main staircase just left of the main entrance and a reception hall opening into a long living room (16' x 38') which spans the length of the front elevation and opens onto the sun porch. The kitchen and dining room are behind the living room. Much of the original decoration still remains including the three squares of wood moulding on the ceiling of the

<sup>47</sup> Presently the firm known as Utah International is involved with world-wide mining interests. It is now under the leadership of a grandson of Edmund O. Wattis. See Robert H. Woody, "Diversified Utah International Finds Success in a Variety of Operations," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 5, 1975, p. G1.

<sup>45</sup> John Piers, "A Biographical Sketch of Eber F. Piers," typescript, and a conversation with John Piers, October 22, 1975.

<sup>46</sup> The remaining two include the Eccles residence and the Browning residence (of the Browning Arms family).



The achievement of the firm of Pope and Burton illustrates the most substantial and creative response to the Prairie School influence. Their experimentation with various forms incorporating a knowledge of the work of Prairie School architects evolved a series of different solutions to the Church program. The culmination of this knowledge and experimentation, the Alberta Temple, is a suitable topic for future discussion.

Pope and Burton were not the sole architects for the Church building campaign. Other architects of ecclesiastical buildings included Cannon and Fetzer, Miles Miller and Leslie Hodgson, who only occasionally ventured into designs imitative of Prairie School architecture. In these they seem to have relied on the initiative of Pope and Burton whose Liberty Stake First Ward was a pioneer design in Utah.

The original design of Taylor Woolley's Jackson residence is the product of a man who worked with Frank Lloyd Wright and other Prairie School architects. Since the house does not contain the more obvious physical features seen in the residential designs of such architects as Alberto O. Treganza and Eber F. Piers, it should be considered independently. Unfortunately this most original design is the only example to distinguish Woolley's early career.

Although they never directly copied other Prairie School designs, Treganza and in some instances Piers emphasized such details as material textures, patterned, leaded glass, fine interior woodwork and built-in conveniences. These details were combined with the common features of the hipped roof, overhanging eaves and horizontal feeling. Their residential work along with that of unidentified architects are basically variants of Wright's square plan. Strangely the architects did not progress beyond this basic form into perhaps a cruciform plan or some other configuration. Certainly the financial ability of some clients would allow for such flexibility. Also absent from their work was furniture appropriate to the interiors. Perhaps this reflects, as Brooks mentions, the increasingly critical role played by the housewife in dealing with the architect.<sup>49</sup> An example of this is evident in Treganza's Becker residence where the roof was covered with pantiles at the request of the client's wife.

This article is the first attempt to analyze the influence of the Prairie School upon Utah architects. Future investigation of this influence will identify other works and architects and will extend into the surrounding western states.

49 Brooks, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

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## Preview

Volume XII, Number 2 of *The Prairie School Review* will consider Landscape Architecture. This interesting and seldom mentioned facet of the modern movement in architecture is covered in a major article prepared by Mara Glebloom who did the major portion of her research for the article at the University of Chicago under Dr. Paul E. Sprague.

*Decorative banding on an interior column of Leslie Hodgson's L.D.S. Branch for the Deaf, unfortunately painted over in the recent remodeling of the chapel.*

