

The
**Prairie
School**
Review

Volume X, Number 3

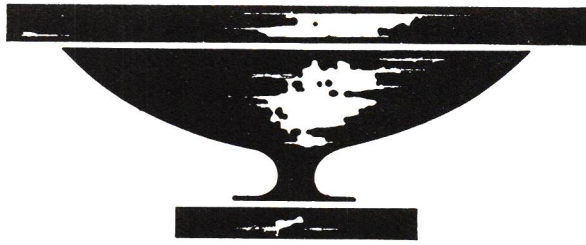
Third Quarter, 1973



ABOVE: This is an oil "sketch" of The National Farmer's Bank of Owatonna, Minnesota painted by French born Albert Francois Fleury (1848-1924). He later did a precise painting of the building which still hangs in the bank's board room. Fleury settled in Chicago in 1888 and taught at the Art Institute of Chicago. "Mr. Fleury is with us and has completed a very satisfactory painting of the bank building," wrote Carl Bennett to Purcell & Elmslie on July 24, 1914. Fleury was referred to Bennett by W.G. Purcell for whom the painter had done the murals at the Merchants National bank in Winona, Minnesota. The sketch painting shown here is now in the home of Mr. & Mrs. Sid Freeman at Northfield, Minnesota. Photo by Robert Warn.

COVER: The cartouche with the letter "B" designed by Louis Sullivan appears several places in The National Farmer's Bank of Owatonna, Minnesota. It is the initial of Sullivan's client, Carl K. Bennett. Fuerman photograph.

THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL REVIEW is published four times a year by The Prairie School Press, 12509 South 89th Avenue, Palos Park, Illinois 60464. W.R. Hasbrouck, FAIA, Editor and Publisher, Marilyn Whittlesey Hasbrouck, Assistant Editor. Manuscripts concerning the Prairie School of Architecture and related arts are solicited. Reasonable care will be used in handling manuscripts and such material will be returned if return postage is enclosed. Single copy price \$2.50, subscription \$10.00 per year in U.S. and Canada, \$12.00 elsewhere. Issues are mailed flat in envelopes. Address all change of address notices, subscription or back issue inquiries to the Editor at the above address. © Copyright 1973 by W.R. Hasbrouck.



The **Prairie School** *Review*

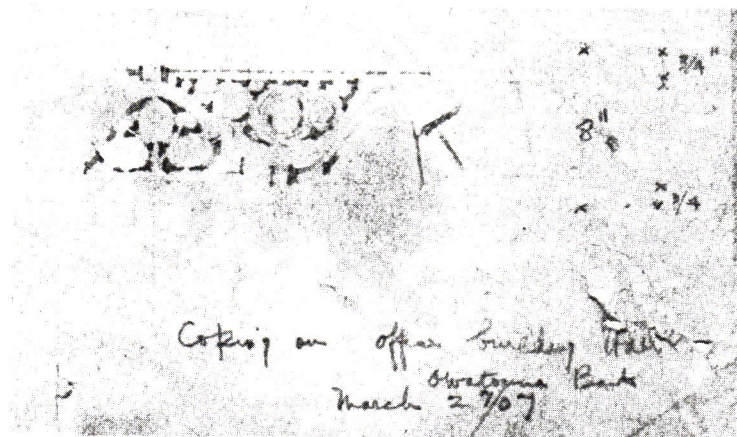
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A sketch from Sullivan's office of the plaster ornament from one of the copings in the Owatonna Bank Building. Photo courtesy of the Avery Library.



From the EDITORS

The hardest kind of history to write is contemporary history. Look around yourself and try to judge what you see as it will be judged when no man alive can tell you of the events of today. The important events, the crisis, the current shining stars may be only the footnotes of tomorrow. On the other hand, the seemingly commonplace, the steady evolvement of a technique, the quiet drudgery of lasting creativity may escape us completely while it happens. Only when a total body of work can be viewed as a whole can it be evaluated.

The assessment of the work of a man, a group, a nation or even an era of civilization can be made only if the historian examines the events of the period chosen for study with an objective and total view. The architectural historian of today who studies the period we publish, the modern movement around the turn of the century, is extremely fortunate. There exists a huge body of material, photographs, newspapers, drawings and archival material of architectural offices which can be found. It remains only for the student to examine the proper material. The architectural items are obvious and usually the easiest. The less obvious is the need to study the parallel and corresponding non-architectural events which contributed to the evolvement of the stylistic changes which became the prairie school of architecture.

Architecture answers a basic need of man. A building is an attempt to solve a problem. Its success, or lack of same, can be judged only after it has been subjected to a reasonable period of use. Has it been satisfactory, both functionally and aesthetically? If not, it will fade into obscurity and eventually disappear, but if it does meet these basic criteria and continues to meet them as society changes around it, the building will survive. By studying the why of building survival, the architectural historian contributes enormously to his contemporaries. He owes it to himself and to them to make known his findings.

There is an interesting paradox that faces the architectural historian of the modern movement. Most of the buildings he studies are still standing but he has little information readily available to him concerning the reasoning behind their construction. Methods of assembly are often hidden and rarely are photographs made, during the work, readily available. Even less available, are contemporary materials concerning the society which demanded the building. Yet, such materials often exist, sometimes in great numbers. We all have heard of the son or daughter who "just last year" destroyed the records of the old firm, "because they were of no value any more". Sometimes that same person, however, has carefully saved the family albums and clippings which can be extremely useful in putting our subject into proper perspective.

4 *We suggest that our readers begin a massive effort to gather and preserve the records of their architectural past and the social events that brought it about. Use your local historical society, the AIA, advertise, and collect the obscure news articles, photographs and drawings of your city, your buildings and your heritage. If it can be properly cataloged, wonderful, if not, save it until cataloging can be done. Finally, make it available to the right people.*

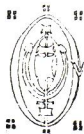
*The two part article beginning in this issue of **The Prairie School Review** is a result of the discovery of a few extraordinary important documents preserved by the descendent of a client of Louis Sullivan. They were sought out by a dedicated, determined and knowledgeable amateur historian. As a result, we know a little more about the work of a master architect. How many other caches like this exist today which may be burned tomorrow? Find them.*

THE NATIONAL FARMERS BANK OF OWATONNA

CAPITAL SURPLUS AND PROFITS \$100,000.00

DAVID H. SULLIVAN ARCHITECT CHICAGO

L.L. BENNETT PRESIDENT.
CARL K. BENNETT VICE PRESIDENT.
A.C. SEARL 2ND. VICE PRESIDENT.
JOY B. BENNETT CASHIER.
G. SCHAEFER ASST. CASHIER.
R.W. PARROTT ASST. CASHIER.



OWATONNA MINN.

Part I: Bennett & Sullivan, Client & Creator

by Robert R. Warn

My whole Spring is wrapped up just now in the study of color and out of doors for the sake of your bank decorations. . . I wish to make out of doors-in-doors if I can. I am not sure that I can, but I am going to try. . . I want a color symphony and I am pretty sure I am going to get it. -Louis Henry Sullivan to his client and friend Carl Kent Bennett. ¹



Carl Kent Bennett, (1868-1941)

In 1908 the National Farmers Bank on the public square in Owatonna, Minnesota was awaiting completion of its interior.² The bank had been designed by Louis H. Sullivan for Carl K. Bennett, the bank's vice president and principle operating officer. The analogy between color and music mixed with the exuberant confidence and self-doubt in Sullivan's letter were characteristic of the architect during the last two decades of his life. Seldom has a building so exemplified the relationship between an architect and his client.

Carl Kent Bennett was born on October 6, 1868 in Owatonna to Dr. Leonard Loomis Bennett, a physician and surgeon, and Arabella Brown Bennett. Dr. Bennett had founded the National Farmers Bank in 1873. His son Carl, after grade school,

¹ Letter: L. H. Sullivan to C. K. Bennett, April 1, 1908, quoted in full subsequently.

² *The Peoples Press*, Owatonna, Minnesota, July 17, 1908, reported that the Farmers National Bank moved into its new banking rooms on Tuesday, July 14. The first newspaper photograph appeared October 9, 1908 in *The Peoples Press*.

attended the Latin Scientific course of the local Pillsbury Academy until 1880. He then graduated with a special degree from Harvard University in 1890 where his main interest had been music both as a chorister and a conductor of music groups. In 1889-90 he led the famed Pierian Sodality — the Harvard Symphony Orchestra. Upon graduation he returned to his father's bank. In Owatonna not only did he serve the First Baptist Church as treasurer, trustee and financial secretary at various times from 1896 to 1921 (as befits a respected banker) but he was also chairman of the music committee (1905-14) and served often as church organist.³

Bennett and Sullivan's successful collaboration on the bank led to other important and relatively little known consequences in the lives of these gifted men. The bank has been extensively documented,⁴ but now, some sixty-five years after that lyrical declaration of intent by Sullivan, five previously unpublished letters by the architect to his client from 1908 to 1910 have been found.⁵ They enlarge and deepen our understanding by providing new references to people and events involved with the bank commission, and clarifying questions about Sullivan's later life and work.

How does one account for the bursts of creative vitality that shaped robust yet serene blocks of earthy tapestry brick, and quickened terra cotta into expressive life and fresh color during decades of physically evident accelerating decline? To explain this one must examine contemporary work by such men as William Grey Purcell, Gustav Stickley, Elbert Hubbard and Frank Lloyd Wright as well as Sullivan's personal relationships with men like his client Carl Bennett and his physician Dr. George Arndt.

Bennett amplified on Sullivan's use of color and form in his tribute to Sullivan and their bank in *The Craftsman* magazine for November, 1908. They believed, he said:

... a beautiful business house would be its own reward and that it would pay from the financial point of view in increased business. [The classical style was rejected] ... as being not necessarily expressive of a bank and also because it is

3 Biographical material courtesy of Mrs. Sid Freeman, nee Lydia Bennett, daughter of Carl K. Bennett and Lydia Norwood Bennett. Mrs. Freeman now resides in Northfield, Minnesota and has custody of the Bennett family records.

4 Ed. Note: See "The National Farmers Bank, Owatonna Minnesota," by Paul E. Sprague, *The Prairie School Review*, Volume IV, Number 2, Second Quarter, 1967, pp. 5-21.

5 Freeman, *op. cit.*, family records. Unless otherwise noted, the letters hereinafter quoted from Louis H. Sullivan to Carl K. Bennett are all in this collection and are quoted with permission.



The family of Carl Kent Bennett and Lydia Norwood Bennett, married in November 21, 1898, with daughters Beatrice, Sylvia and Arabella. They were photographed about the time Sullivan was designing a house for them in 1911-1912. A fourth daughter, Lydia Bennett Freeman, who inherited the Sullivan — Bennett letters, was born in 1913.

defective when it comes to any practical use. [From a search through art and architectural magazines] ... finally emerges the name of one who, though possibly not fully understood or appreciated at first, seemed to handle the earth-old materials in virile and astonishingly beautiful forms of expression. [The job was awarded only after] ... the work and personality of Mr. Louis H. Sullivan was ... carefully investigated. ... the owners of the building feel that they have a true and lasting work of art — a structure which, though 'built for business' will increase in value as the years go by and will be adequate for the use and as fresh and inspiring in its beauty one hundred years from now as it is today.

In later years Mrs. Carl Bennett recalled the many pleasant times the family had enjoyed in their Owatonna home with the architect as he worked on the project.⁶ She recalled having to begin at five o'clock in the morning to prepare the five-course suppers that would star Mr. Sullivan as guest of honor. The conversations would continue on into

6 Various conversations between the author and Mrs. Sid Freeman between 1967 and 1973.



The Bennett family house in Owatonna, recently razed, where Sullivan visited while designing their home on property nearby. The new home was never built. Photo by Warn.

the night and range over many subjects but always seemed to return to music, perhaps to the architect's special enthusiasm for the music of Richard Wagner.

Louis Sullivan wrote to Mr. Bennett from the Chicago Club on April 1, 1908, presumably just after a visit to Owatonna:

This is to let you know that I arrived right side up and ok; after a 5 o'clock adventure studying the color effects of the lovely grass, of very early skies, as seen along the valley of the Illinois River. My whole Spring is wrapped up just now in the study of color and out of doors for the sake of your bank decorations — which I wish to make out of doors-in-doors if I can. I am not sure that I can, but I am going to try. I am almost abnormally sensitive to color just now and every shade and nuance* produces upon me an effect that is orchestral and patently* sensitive to all the instruments. I know in my own mind what I am trying to achieve for you and I have in Millet⁷ the best chorus master that could be

*Conjectural word

⁷ Louis J. Millet was born in New York City. He was trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and in the architectural section of the Ecole des Arts Decoratifs, Paris. He was in partnership with George L. Healy from 1881 through 1899. They helped design and execute interiors for the following buildings by Adler and Sullivan: The Auditorium, the Pueblo Operahouse, McVicker's Theater, the Transportation Building, The Chicago Stock Exchange and the Schiller Building. Millet assisted Sullivan alone on the banks at Owatonna, Minnesota and Sidney, Ohio. See "Louis J. Millet and The Art Institute of Chicago" by David Hanks, *Bulletin of The Art Institute of Chicago*, March-April, 1973, Volume 67, Number 2. cf. *Industrial Chicago*, Volume II, Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891, pp. 707-708.



Carl K. Bennett at his desk in the pre-Sullivan National Farmer's Bank at about the time he first contacted Sullivan, c. 1906. Photo courtesy of Lydia Bennett Freeman.

found. I want a color symphony and I am pretty sure I am going to get it. I want something with many shades of the strings and the wood winds and the brass, and I am pretty sure I am going to get it. There never has been in my entire career such an opportunity for a color tone poem as your bank interior plainly puts before me. It is not half so much a matter as to whether Millet is equal to it as whether I am equal to giving him the sufficiently delicate initiatives. I don't think I can possibly impress upon you how deep a hold this color symphony has taken upon me. And what I have in mind to accomplish — if accomplish I can. Suffice it to say that Millet is the greatest of colorists extant, and suffice it further to say that I am wrapped up in your project to a degree that would be absurd in connection with anyone but yourself.

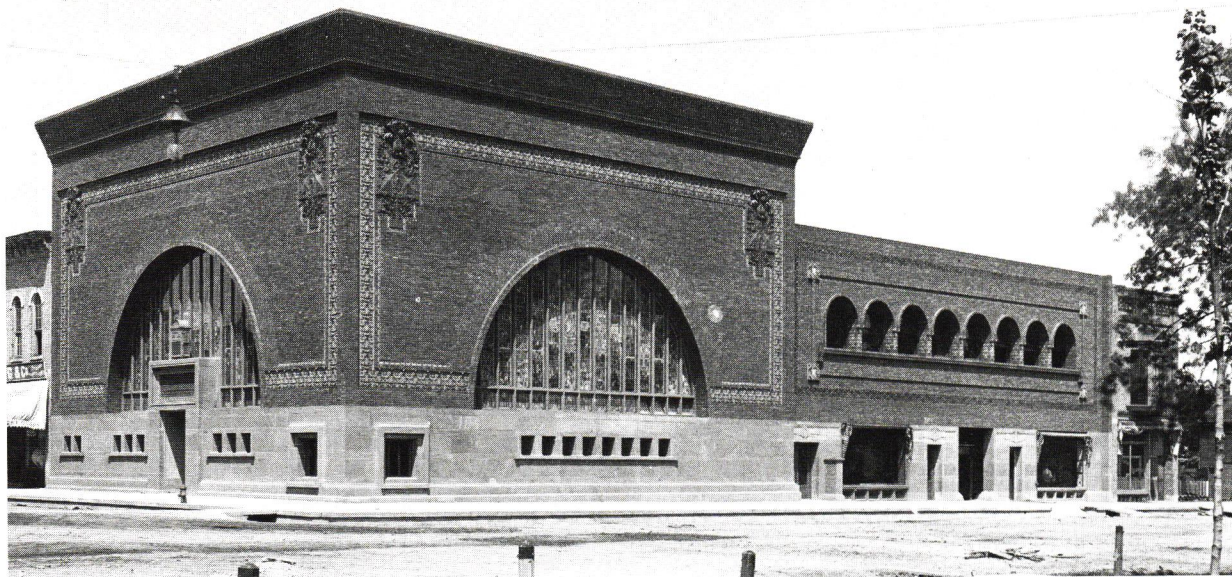
Pardon the scrawl, I am in a big hurry and merely want you to get a hint of my idea.

Sincerely,

Louis H. Sullivan

Earlier, William Grey Purcell had written of the nearly completed bank in 1907:

The impact of this great mass glowing with color was really terrific even for one who had been exposed to both Sullivan and Wright for sixteen impressionable years. . . . I made a special trip by train from Minneapolis for the first-possible look at this building, the plans for which were on the boards under George Elmslie's hand when I got back to Chicago at Christmas time 1906 from the study year in Europe. [Purcell cites colors as a key to the quality of his time:] It was the 1870's and 80's



(after the depression of September 1874) that were gay and color-filled. The 1890's after the bust of 1892 were pessimistic and dull . . . the arrival of brown can be pretty closely dated by Elbert Hubbard's *Philistine*, Volume No. 1, (1895), the beginning of the Roycroft, Craftsman era [which] took the public mind [with over] 200,000 subscribers. Purcell and Elmslie began to fight back against the brown decades about 1911 . . . D. Gates and his American Terra Cotta Company of Teco, Illinois, was a big help to us, with fresh ceramic color.⁸

In the same letter, color also dominated Purcell's memory of Sullivan's temporary but memorable Transportation Building at the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago:

. . . Like zinneas in a golden bowl. . . It was all lush, robust, saturation, sunshine. . . Crimson is the right term for the principle color area and the key for the Transportation building's color. . . Those female figures with wings show several kinds of white and I believe silver against ultra marine panels. . . The Fair was not white because 'they' wanted it that way, but because the rest of the architects ran out of money: Sullivan, the good businessman, budgeted his building and correctly forecast the costs of its painted decorations.⁹

Color had always been a source of concern and success to Sullivan. In a letter of August 1944 to W. G. Purcell, George Grant Elmslie quotes an offer by Sullivan in 1892: "Wright, I'll give you a house and lot if you'll solve the interior of the Transportation

The National Farmer's Bank of Owatonna as it appeared upon completion in 1908. The exterior is essentially the same today although the name is now Northwestern National Bank of Owatonna. The interior has been remodeled three times, the last in 1973 by Architect Harwell Hamilton Harris. The current appearance is very sensitive to the original although photographs are not yet available.

Building." Was this statement made because of Sullivan's preoccupation with the exterior? The Transportation Building was the only building built before the Owatonna bank which was highly colored on the exterior. We have little information as to what colors might have been used on the interior, since the few photos we have are, of course, in black and white and no written description exists. Sullivan did use color extensively on the interior of his earlier buildings, almost always with the advice and assistance of his friend and colleague, Louis Millet.

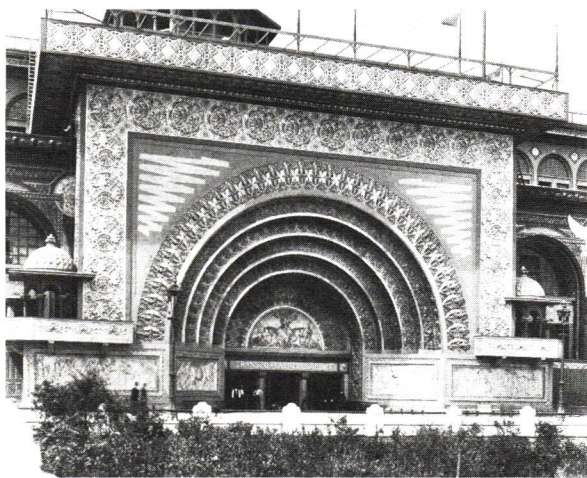
It is interesting also to compare the cube of the entrance portal block of Sullivan's Transportation Building with the basic cubic form of the Owatonna bank, particularly in view of the claims sometimes made that Elmslie was responsible for the form of the bank.

William Grey Purcell's comments on Sullivan's use of color and his further remarks about how "Purcell and Elmslie began to fight back against the brown decades" are understandable. He was an avid admirer of Sullivan and long time partner of George Elmslie. He seems, however, to overlook some rather basic points.

Despite Purcell's attack on Elbert Hubbard and his ideas of color as well as on his *Philistine* magazine, there were affinities between Sullivan, Wright, their contemporaries, and the arts and crafts movement. H. Allen Brooks notes that in 1905 Louis Sullivan sought out Gustav Stickley (1858-1942) who had founded *The Craftsman* magazine in 1901 to spread his views and to help market his handcrafted

8 Letter: W. G. Purcell to John Szarkowski, Feb. 21, 1956, P & E Archive as rewritten Nov. 1961 in "Letter to a photographer," pp. 1-4.

9 *Ibid.* For a reproduction of the Transportation Building in full color, see the oil painting by Frank Russel Green (1859-1940) in Jesse Heckman Hirschl: "The Great White City," *American Heritage*, October 1960, pp. 20-21.



The entrance block of Sullivan's Transportation building of 1893 bears a strong resemblance in form to the Owatonna Bank structure of fifteen years later. Photograph by W.H. Jackson.

furniture.¹⁰ Sullivan wrote "I like the spirit you are infusing into *The Craftsman*." Stickley responded by requesting the article entitled "What is Architecture?" cited above which when read by Carl Bennett in 1906 led to their bank cooperation in Owatonna.¹¹

Another connection, less well known than Sullivan's correspondence with Stickley, is his relation with Elbert Hubbard (1856-1915). Hubbard, after meeting William Morris at his Kelmscott Press in England in 1892, returned to East Aurora (near Buffalo), New York where he founded the Roycrofters handicraft shop and press and began publishing the *Philistine* and *The Fra* magazines.¹² Hubbard, beginning about 1880, had been a salesman for, and later general manager of the Larkin Company in Buffalo. In 1893 he sold his half interest in the company.¹³ Frank Lloyd Wright designed the Larkin Company Administration building much later in 1904, but he too knew Hubbard. Just how the acquaintance came about is not known, but John Lloyd Wright (1893-1972) remembered "Fra" Hubbard's visits with Frank Lloyd Wright. "Elbert

10 H. Allen Brooks, *The Prairie School*, The University of Toronto Press, 1972, p. 22. Paul E. Sprague, review in *The Prairie School Review*, Volume VIII, Number 4, Fourth Quarter, 1971, p. 17: "...nor does the interest shown by Wright and others in the Arts and Crafts Movement mean... that the Prairie School was a part of, or came out of that movement."

11 cf. Louis Sullivan, "Is Our Art a Betrayal Rather Than An Expression of American Life," *The Craftsman*, January, 1909.

12 The *Philistine* magazine was published by Hubbard from June 1895 through July 1915. The *Fra* was published from April 1908 through August of 1917.

13 Robert I. Beisner, "'Commune' in East Aurora," *American Heritage*, February, 1971, pp. 72-77.

Hubbard was almost as picturesque as was Father — they talked arts, crafts and philosophy by the hour."¹⁴ Thus Sullivan and Wright were both apparently influenced by the Fra.

In a recent letter to the author Mrs. Norris Rahming (Mary Arndt) says:

In your note you mention some letters of Louis Sullivan written in 1910 in which he mentions my father, Dr. George Arndt. He and my father both belonged to Elbert Hubbard's Society of Philistines,¹⁵ whose members met regularly at East Aurora, New York, and through that association they became good friends. Mr. Sullivan visited our home in Mount Vernon [Ohio] frequently until his death, and I remember him well. His last visit was when I was sixteen years old (I am now sixty-six, so it was a good many years ago)¹⁶ — I think that was about

14 John Lloyd Wright, *My Father Who Is On Earth*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1946, p. 32.

15 Letter: Elbert Hubbard's granddaughter, Nancy Hubbard Brady (The House of Hubbard, 44 Elmwood Ave., East Aurora, N. Y.) to author, February 22, 1973. "If you know that these two gentlemen were at Roycroft any time between 1900 and 1910 it is a safe bet to assume that they were members of the Society of Philistines. Everyone who subscribed to the *Philistine* was a member. . . . Many of the files and records of the Roycroft Institution were sold for scrap paper by the owner who bought it from my father in 1938. The new owner lasted until 1942 when the Roycroft Institution closed its doors permanently. . . ."

16 Assuming Mrs. Rahming's memory is correct insofar as her age at the time of his death is concerned, Sullivan's last visit to Dr. Arndt was then either in late 1922 or early 1923. Sullivan died on April 14, 1924, so her recollection may be a year in error.



George Dute Arndt, M.D., Sullivan's physician from 1909 to 1924, as photographed at about the time the two met at East Aurora, New York. Photo from Williams: Past & Present of Knox County.

a month before his death.¹⁷ I *do* know that he said my parents' home was the one place in the world where he found peace in his later years.

He and my father had excellent tenor voices, and many evenings were spent around our piano, with my sister Louise as accompaniest singing for hours the songs of Schubert, Schumann, Hugo Wolff — and *The Persian Garden Suite* by Lawrence Hope (Amy Woodford Finden) — a musical version of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. I can still hear them belting out those songs. The evenings that were not devoted to music were spent in long talks about art, life, architecture, history, philosophy, politics, human nature.

After his first visit to my father in Mount Vernon for a physical examination, Louis Sullivan became a regular visitor, both as a patient and as a friend. I well remember the hours he spent helping me with my high school French (his mother was French, I think, and he spoke the language fluently and knew it well).

He often spoke glowingly of Frank Lloyd Wright, who had been his pupil, and of whom he was very proud. He was especially pleased with the fact that Wright's Imperial Hotel in Tokyo remained standing after a severe earthquake — this because Wright had designed it to withstand such things.

Mr. Sullivan left with my father a copy of a manuscript he has written, *Democracy, the Man State*,¹⁸ which he has submitted to Harper Brothers, publishers. They told him it was interesting, but written fifty years too soon. My father left the copy with me, and I showed it to two acquaintances in the publishing business, but they said that, interesting as it was, it was not publishable now — it was too late. Also, since it was a carbon copy, there would have been legal

difficulties as nobody knew where the original was, or if it still existed.¹⁹

Dr. George Dute Arndt occupied an important but rarely reported place in the later life of Architect Louis Sullivan. A visit to Mount Vernon, Ohio in April 1973 and further correspondence with members and friends of the Arndt family and other research has helped provide a biography of this little known confidant.²⁰

Dr. Arndt was born in Amherst, Ohio on March 5, 1865 of German born parents, both of whom became physicians connected with the Cleveland Homeopathic College. George Arndt graduated from the University of Michigan Medical School at Ann Arbor in 1888 as a homeopathic physician.²¹ He married Ada M. Pearl in 1890 and they had three daughters, Louise, Loma and Mary. In about 1891 Dr. Arndt practiced as a surgeon at San Diego, California. He returned to Ohio in 1894 where he began practice at Mount Vernon as a physician and surgeon, and helped found the Knox County Medical Society. He moved to California about 1940 after his wife's death, living in La Mesa and Berkeley where he did cancer research. He died at El Cerrito, California on June 25, 1947.²²

For the year 1909 in which Sullivan first reported to Carl Bennett on his friendship and client-patient relationship with George Arndt, there are three letters written from the Auditorium Tower in Chi-

19 Letter: January 2, 1973, quoted with permission.

20 Letter: David Gibson to Hugh Morrison. January 23, 1936 (Morrison Papers): "There is also George D. Arndt, M.D., Vine and Gay Streets, Mount Vernon, Ohio. Sullivan spent a good deal of time there in the last fifteen years of his life."

21 Homeopathic medicine is defined in the Random House dictionary as "the method of treating disease by drugs, given in minute doses, which would produce in a healthy person symptoms similar to those of the disease." With the advent of modern medical practice it has become less and less accepted and few practitioners still exist although it is still a recognized medical technique.

22 Letter: Mrs. Norris Rahming (Mary Arndt) to author, February 17, 1973: "None of my father's medical records were saved and I don't know how many times L.H.S. came to him for medical help. . . I do remember. . . Later he turned to preventative medicine and also was interested in emotional difficulties of people." *Mount Vernon Republican*, July 11, 1894, p. 3: "Attention is directed to the professional card of Dr. G. D. Arndt in today's *Republican*. Dr. Arndt succeeds Dr. Darby and comes highly recommended as a skillful practitioner." Letter: Edwina Fitzgerald (Mt. Vernon Public Library) to author, May 14, 1973, quotes local Mound View cemetery clerk: Dr. Arndt "died at El Cerrito, California," and "The Medical Center Annual Giving Program" at Ann Arbor, Michigan, reports, in a letter of May 15, 1973: "Our records show that Dr. George Dute Arndt died June 25, 1947 in Berkeley, California" (adjacent to El Cerrito).

17 Willard Connelly, *Louis Sullivan, As He Lived*, Horizon Press, New York, 1960, p. 296, notes a Dr. Curtis as attending physician at Sullivan's death in 1924 at the Warner Hotel, 33rd and Cottage Grove, Chicago (razed). Letter: Paul Sprague to author, November 16, 1972. A Dr. W. Pingree Curtis (1880-1947) is "listed in the Lakeside Directory for 1917-1918, at 3265 Cottage Grove." This would have made Dr. Curtis available to Sullivan in Chicago and during Arndt's absences in Ohio, if this is the Dr. Curtis involved.

18 Louis Sullivan, *Democracy, A Man Search*, Introduction by Elaine Hedges, Wayne State University, Detroit, 1961. Ms. Hedges "A Note on the Text, pp. xxv-xxx" refers to various manuscript versions but apparently these did not include the carbon copy now owned by Mrs. Rahming's daughter, Mrs. Patricia R. Bishop. (Letter, Mrs. Rahming to author, August 6, 1973.) It was written in "terrible rage and despair in 1906-07 and completed at 1:42 A.M. April 18, 1908 in the Chicago Club," says H. D. Duncan in *Culture and Democracy*, Bedminster Press, Totowa, N. J., 1965, p. 414.

cago. The first, of June 9th, reads:

I can't begin to tell you what profound satisfaction yours of the 6th gives to me.

Emotional expression is almost impossible to me nowadays: otherwise I would talk to you as frankly as you talk to me.

Rest assured in any event, that I cherish your friendship beyond the power of any words to express, and believe me, with kindest regards to all,

Sincerely,
Louis Sullivan.

P.S. It is impossible to discuss my troubles: they seem to be too deep seated.

On August 1st, Sullivan mentions his few current building projects:

Dear Mr. Carl K. Bennett:

In running over the files today, I came across your really beautiful letter of June 6th. I remember that I gave it only a casual and hasty, answer, expecting to be more explicit in a day or so. But I got into the treadmill of specification writing and have been busy at it ever since.

I am now wondering if I sufficiently expressed to you my appreciation of your wonderful kindness and sense of comradeship. If I did not I wish to do so now. I have often said to Millet, there is only one Carl Bennett. Perhaps you don't realize how true this is.

As to business, I simply don't dare to take a vacation, I have to figure earnings and expenses so close.

The Babson House at Riverside is under roof. The Bradley House at Madison is just begun. The drawings and specifications for the Peoples Savings Bank at Cedar Rapids, Iowa are on the verge of completion. This is all the business, nothing new, and this amount of business does not pay expenses.

I trust everything is going well with you. Remember me to all the good people, and especially give my kindest regards to Mrs. Bennett and Beatrice. I hope the second little daughter is doing well.

Drop me a line now and then when the spirit moves.

Sincerely,
Louis Sullivan.

In a third letter of 1909, on October 23rd (a month after Frank Lloyd Wright turned over his architectural practice to Herman Von Holst on

September 22²³ and fled to Europe), Sullivan wrote to Bennett concerning his desperate decision to dispose of his art and literary collection:

I have not answered yours of October 11 for the simple reason that I have been too much occupied with closer affairs to give its main suggestion, namely, the Booklet*, any consideration.

In addition to my routine work I am engaged now upon a program of selling out at auction all my household effects: books, pictures, bric-a-brac, rugs, furniture, everything, in the last desperate endeavor to raise money.

I have arranged with expert auctioneers here, and the matter will be handled in the best fashion: special catalogues and all that sort of thing.

The sale will take place Nov. 30 and Dec. 1. It will be a 'special' and rather 'swell' affair. I have about 15 exceptionally fine antique rugs; and extremely good pictures; about 12 pieces of exceptionally fine bric-a-brac.

I have been spending my recent evenings going over my architectural library. The works are so sumptuous and valuable that I don't dare put them up at auction. I must try to arrange for a private sale. For instance I have a monograph of the Paris Opera House²⁴ in 2 huge volumes filled with the finest copper plate engravings and colored plates. I am discovering magnificent books that I had completely forgotten that I owned. They have been lying idle for years in the shelves. The beauty of some of these huge works is almost beyond description; and yet I can't remember when or why I bought them. I haven't seen the inside of one of them in 15 years; and yet they must represent an original expenditure of about \$3000.00.

I found for instance a set of superb photographs of Spanish Architecture²⁵ in 8 volumes. I found *The Ancient Mansions of England*²⁶ in 5 [sic] volumes. I found a most beautiful

23 "Contract between Herman von Holst and Frank Lloyd Wright, September 22, 1909, with Statement of Work in office of Frank Lloyd Wright as turned over to Herman von Holst," P & E Archive.

*conjectural word

24 Auction Catalog: "Louis Sullivan," November 29, December 1, 1909, Williams, Barker & Severn, auctioneers. Item "256", *Le Nouvel Opera de Paris Par Char.* Garnier, Large Folio. Paris, 1880, 2 vols.

25 *Ibid.*, "255", *Die Baukunst Spaniens*, Max Jauhaudel. Folio, Dresden, 8 Vols.

26 *Ibid.*, "197", *Mansions of England in the Olden Time*, by Jos. Nash. Folio, London, 1869, 4 vols.

LOUIS H. SULLIVAN
ARCHITECT
1600 AUDITORIUM TOWER
CHICAGO

June 9-09

My dear Mr Bennett: I can't begin to tell you what profound satisfaction yours of the 6th gives to me.

Emotional expression is almost unobtainable to me nowadays: otherwise I would talk to you as frankly as you talk to me.

Rest assured in any case, that I cherish your friendships beyond the power of any words to express, and believe me, with kindest regards to all,
Sincerely
Louis Sullivan.

P.S. It is impossible to discuss my troubles: They seem to be too deep seated.

This is one of the several letters written by Louis H. Sullivan to his client and friend, Carl Kent Bennett, now in the collection of Lydia Bennett Freeman. This and the other letters, combined with other data we know of Sullivan's later life, give some insight into the agony of Louis Sullivan's last years. Courtesy of Lydia Bennett Freeman.

volume of photographs of Venice.²⁷ I found monograph upon monograph, and work upon work, all of which had completely passed out of my memory.

I suggest that you arrange to come down and attend this sale. You might be able to pick up a few things at satisfactory prices. Although I fancy that for the finer rugs there will be pretty lively bidding as a few of them are of a kind and quality that have not been seen on the general market for 20 years.

I presume this letter will surprise you a bit. But I made up my mind there was no use trying to dispose of my effects piecemeal and that the only way was to make a clean sweep and place the affair in the hands of the experts, and take my chances on the outcome. I feel a certain sense of relief that I have my arrangements finally made.

With kindest regards to all,

Cordially,
Louis H. Sullivan

The Purcell and Elmslie archive includes a letter from George Grant Elmslie to William Grey Purcell dated October 8, 1944 stating that "at Sullivan auction sale Henry Babson bought many rugs and a lot of pottery". Therefore Carl Bennett and Henry Babson were both — and probably others — invited by Sullivan to attend this auction.

The auction was held on Wabash Avenue as scheduled. The treasures collected over a period of at least 25 years by a man of exceptional taste and,

27 *Ibid.*, "199", *Calli E. Canali in Venecia*, by Ferd Organia. Folio, Half Morrocco, Venecia, 1890-1891, vol. 1. Note: The auction catalog has been partially studied in Sherman Paul, *Louis Sullivan — An Architect in American Thought*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1962. It has also been referred to by Elaine Hedges in her Introduction to *Democracy, A Man Search* (See footnote 18) pp. vii-xxiv. Not only are there books by or about H. H. Richardson, Viollet-le-Duc, Montgomery Schuyler, Bruce Price, and the expected studies of music, Japanese art, biology, socialism, Walt Whitman, Nietzsche and Thorstein Veblen, but also Hudsons' *Law of Psychic Phenomena*, *New Knowledge* by Duncan, ten books on mythology, *Chevreu on Color*, London, 1872, *Degeneration* by Max Nordau, and *Isis Unveiled* by Helene Blavatsky (Madame Blavatsky, 1831-1891, born in Russia, who organized the Theosophical Society in 1875). W. G. Purcell's reading interests were also wide-ranging: see Purcell's remark in "Sullivan's Personality", dated October, 1952, (P & E Archive): "This view of descriptive geometry is fully developed in Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum*, translated by Claude Bragdon." (third edition, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1945.) Peter Demianovich Ouspensky (1878-1947) and Olga Iovanovna Lazovich (Mrs. Frank Lloyd Wright) both studied with George Ivanovich Gurdjieff (1865-1949); an account by Mrs. Wright is in "The Last Days of Katherine Mansfield" by "Olgivanna", *The Bookman*, Volume LXXIII, #1, March 1931.



The painting by Albert F. Fleury of the Auditorium Building, designed by Sullivan, is a view from Wabash Avenue not far from the location of the auction where Sullivan sold his personal effects in 1909.

during much of the time affluent enough to afford whatever he wished, were put up for sale. Included were some items selected for Sullivan by Frank Lloyd Wright while the young man was a draughtsman in the Auditorium Tower.

Sullivan had personal financial problems but it appears that other considerations also entered into his choosing to raise what he thought would be a large sum of money at this time.

Sullivan had been married on July 1, 1899 to Margaret Davies Hattabough (born in California in 1872) when she was 27 and he was 42. As Sullivan grew more irascible due to his failing career, their marriage faltered. They separated in 1909 and were finally divorced on January 29, 1917.²⁸ Mrs. Sullivan kept that name after she went to New York where she wrote a novel *Goddess of the Dawn* published in 1914.²⁹ She married Davis Edward Marshall (1869-1933)³⁰ immediately after her divorce from Sullivan in London, England where her American husband was head of the Edward Marshall

28 Hugh Morrison, *Louis Sullivan, Prophet of Modern Architecture*, The Museum of Modern Art and W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1935, p. 224.

29 Margaret Davies Sullivan, *The Goddess of the Dawn*, G. W. Dillingham Co., N. Y., 1914, illustrated by George Bridgeman.

30 *Who's Who in America*, 1922-23, A. N. Marquis, Chicago. Davis Edward Marshall was born at Enfield Center, Tioga County, N.Y. Margaret was his second wife. They were married in London "in 1916". (Morrison, *op cit.* gives January 29, 1917 for the divorce date.)

Newspaper Syndicate, Inc. In 1923 Mr. Marshall joined Lee De Forest's Phonofilm Corporation as a director in the same year that De Forest pioneered sound films in America.

Sullivan's separation from his wife was apparently without extreme animosity in view of the concern he expressed for her in a letter to Bennett on January 4, 1910 written from the increasing isolation of the Auditorium Tower:

I have your characteristically kind favor for the 2nd. You are entitled to an answer. It is hard for me to write and will be painful to you to receive.

The auction was a slaughter. I fully expected to realize from \$2000 to \$2500. I netted \$1100. One thousand of this I devoted to my wife. After paying life ins. premium, transportation, etc. I have* her N. Y. exchange for the balance. She is now in New York with the view of attempting a literary career for which she has much native talent, as yet untrained and undisciplined. She has in New York a very warm friend of hers and mine, a professional writer and former journalist who has the inside run of things. He is the salt of the earth, never tired of doing for others. He will assist her in her work and give her the entree to publishers and others.³¹ I made the sacrifice because I believe in the genuineness of her talent, and hope that the seriousness of the situation will arouse in her the necessary persistence and industry. It is her one chance. If she is careful of her money she is safe for 5 months to come. And inasmuch as she has many friends in N.Y. she won't be lonely. Furthermore life ins. premiums on policies protecting her, are paid up to June 20. So I won't have to worry about her for some time, and I am glad to be left alone to work out my own destiny and start life all over again if I can.

Insomnia, nervous dyspepsia, poverty, worry and the auction got me in their deadly work. Also I had to let Elmslie go. You can imagine what the reaction meant when it speedily came. I was driven before it as a whirlwind drives in to the very verge of insanity or suicide, or nervous collapse. At that very moment who should appear but my dear friend Dr. Geo. Arndt of Mount Vernon, Ohio, on his return from a month's tour of Mexico. He induced me to go home with him, which I did. Upon our arrival in Mount Vernon I was practically all in. After 3

*Conjectural word.

31 The G. W. Dillingham Co., N. Y. published many of the dozen works (novels, short stories, a play) by Marshall, and his wife's novel. Thus, it may be assumed that Marshall was the "warm friend of hers and mine" to whom Sullivan makes reference without naming.



Louis and Margaret Sullivan in their Mississippi rose garden shortly after their marriage in 1899. Photo by Fuerman.

days of intense suffering, mental, moral and physical, I began to mend and my progress was wonderfully rapid. At the end of 2½ weeks I was practically normal, my courage, strength of nerve body and brain had returned, and I came back here after a pleasant stay of a day with my friends in Cleveland.³²

My stay in Mount Vernon will long remain a bright spot in my memory. The atmosphere of love and affection, and mutual congeniality, doubtless had much to do with my rapid recovery. While there Dr. Arndt (who is a physician of the very first rank) put me through a most thorough and searching physical examination. He reported me absolutely sound, not a sign of organic lesion or degeneration. That my trouble was intestinal putrefaction, developing toxins which were disturbing every function in my body. That all that was necessary was to eliminate these toxins, which he proceeded to do in his own simply scientific and artistic way.

32 Letters: David Gibson to Hugh Morrison, January 23, 1936 (Morrison Papers) "I knew Sullivan rather well. He and an older brother of mine were youthful companions in the Institute of Technology, Boston, and he visited our home a few times in my boyhood. When I came to Cleveland in 1904, Sullivan was my frequent guest up to about 1914," and on February 4, 1936: "There is a family now living in Florida with whom Sullivan used to visit here", [not named]. (Morrison Papers.)

Well I arrived here Friday last, and here I am practically flat broke and the future, at present, an impenetrable blank. I am living hand to mouth, on the bounty of a few warm friends who can ill afford the small advances they have made. But their devotion and self sacrifice warm my heart.

I saved out of the wreck an old master which I am trying to sell to the art institute for \$1000.00. But I fancy a decision in the matter will drag for quite a while. I also bid in a number of fine architectural works; but it will be slow work disposing of them. I have in addition a Jurgensen watch for which I gave \$325.00 and a ruby-spinel worth to buy in a retail store \$200.00 (I could probably get a song for each of these). There are in substance my assets, and against them I am in a quicksand of petty indebtedness, represented by unpaid bills, rent, etc. My larger indebtedness does not cause me immediate concern. I will not be pressed.

Strange as it may seem to you I feel a powerful sense of relief, now that I have survived the crisis. I am prepared to wipe out the past and face reconstruction in whatever it may take, provided only it furnish an outlet for my long pent-up aggressiveness and productivity. Today I find myself possessed of what many a man would envy me, namely a wonderfully tough and elastic constitution, steady nerves, physical soundness, mental strength and alertness and plenty of courage. My morbidity has entirely disappeared; and the only thing I fear is a possible return of it in the form of mental depression. But I intend to fight this off for all that is in me.

As to program, I have as yet only a vague one. I have a feeling that I want to get out of this town ("Jerusalem, Jerusalem: thou that stonest the prophets") and locate in some other city. My Cleveland friends are anxious that I should speedily return there and devote 2 or 3 weeks to a canvas for business which they say is promising — that there is a lot of new work coming up. They further believe it would be a good idea to do the same thing with other cities, such as Indianapolis, etc. They urge above all that I escape from what they call the 'pessimism' of Chicago which they declare is poison to me. They believe however that I should for some time yet retain any Chicago office as a foothold. I myself believe that 3 or 4 months devoted to such canvassing would yield important results. But of course the first problem that comes up is the financing of such an adventure. And that's just where I am up against it.

As another asset however, I have a new outlook upon life — I have at last burst the bonds of the prison of self. This is due to my friend Arndt, who, in our heart to heart talks in Mt. Vernon diagnosed me mentally and morally with the same simplicity and precision that he had shown in his physical examination. My crisis, has, with varying fortunes been steadily approaching during the past 17 years.³³ I have all along intuitively felt that the cause lay in a flaw in my own character which I, alone, could not discover. So I had to pay the price. Now comes Arndt and puts his finger deftly on the spot. He says that the simple fundamental trouble that has caused all my unhappiness, bitterness, misery and final break, is none other than my persistent lack of kindly feeling toward my fellow men. He is right — and I intend to change! This is about all I can say at present and I hope you will not have found its perusal altogether disconcerting. By all signs I should have 20 to 30 years of hard work in me yet.

Your own kindness to me I shall never forget. Sorry you were so sensitive on the subject of the auction sale. I deeply appreciate your delicacy, but just as sincerely wish you might have secured some of the fine things. Write me whenever the spirit moves. Your letters are always welcome. Kindest regards to Mrs. Bennett, love for the children, and Happy New Year to you all.

Sincerely,
Louis H. Sullivan

Bennett wrote to Purcell on April 14, 1910 "I am deeply grieved at Mr. Sullivan's personal conduct and wish that something might be done to prevent it."

The banker had good reason for concern. Sullivan was at what was probably the lowest ebb tide of his life. His work was virtually at a standstill, his economic situation impossible, and his trusted friend and physician, Dr. Arndt, had advised him that his problems were fundamentally due to a flaw in his character. For one who had only fifteen years earlier been the living symbol of the modern movement in architecture, the future must have been almost too much to face.

33 *i.e.* 1910 minus 17 years = 1893.

A portion of this article, in somewhat different form, appeared in *The Northwest Architect*, March-April, 1972. In addition to references in the article, the author wishes to mention Mrs. Sid Freeman, William and Marguerite Brodersen, Mrs. Norris Rahming, Louise Adams, Joan de Ris Allen, David Gebhard, Carolyn Hurt, Alan Lathrop, Rex Raab, John Hovey Raup, Mrs. Homer Sailor, H. Grant Sailor and Paul E. Sprague.



Multiple house for Hampstead Garden Suburb by Baillie Scott, 1908.

Book Reviews

M. H. BAILLIE SCOTT AND THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT, by James D. Kornwolf. The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore and London, 1972, xxxii plus 588 pp. including 268 photos and plates, index and list of works, cloth, \$27.50.

Perhaps nothing so well illustrates that the history of taste is cyclical as the current interest in the international Arts and Crafts Movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In this ambitious work, Dr. Kornwolf chronicles the career of one of the "unsung heroes" of the movement, M. H. Baillie Scott (1865-1945).

As an architect and interior designer, the work of Scott has been largely ignored in favor of his better-known contemporaries, C.F.A. Voysey, Edwin Lutyens and C. R. Mackintosh, or attention has been given to his Continental counterparts, Peter Behrens, Josef Hoffmann and Adolph Loos. Dr. Kornwolf successfully argues in this first biography of Scott that his *oeuvre* was of analogous quality to that of his heretofore more celebrated colleagues and that he profoundly influenced such a recognized master as Frank Lloyd Wright. Scott was well-known in America and on the Continent by his widely published designs in the art journals of the day; he had developed an open, if complex, interior planning by 1900 which had much in common with that of Wright. By 1902 (his career effectively beginning in 1889), avant-garde German, Austrian, and American architects and designers were interested in his work precisely because of Scott's independence from the entwined intricacies of the prevailing Continental Art Nouveau style, which recent scholarship has all too frequently confused with the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Like his contemporaries in the late 1880's, Scott was the product of the reform influences instigated as early as A.W.N. Pugin in the Gothic Revival period and certainly by the 1860's "Aesthetic Move-

ment" of William Morris, Philip Webb, and John Ruskin. As such, he became a social reformer through both his architecture and interiors and prolific writings. As the early Aesthetic Movement reformers had set out to end shoddy commercialism in architecture and the decorative arts, the Arts and Crafts Movement sought to pursue this concept by emphasizing what was strongest, most indigenous and primeval about English architecture. In the process, the Movement brought the home and its contents back to the tenet of being designed from a single point of view. This viewpoint led quite naturally to an interest in the Modern or "artistic" house.

In spite of a recurrent tendency to a somewhat archaeological medievalism, by the 1890's Scott had developed a tough, disciplined and economical planning in his designs, specializing in the creation of smaller country houses and their furnishings. According to the author, one of the architect's greatest achievements was "a radical integration of form" (p. 118); this integration was accompanied by a pronounced interest in built-in furniture to aid these spaces and a deep interest in coordinating and relating the entire interior, as exemplified by the poppy-decorated bedroom of Crown Princess Marie of Romania in her exotic treehouse, "Le Nid." In his early work, Scott sought to free design from historical precedent and preached that "construction became decorative and decoration became constructive" (p. 169). It is ironic that in some of his later designs, he became overly interested in the accentuation of his materials, and by 1913 had been influenced by the modish Georgian revival style. Scott remains of crucial interest for the present-day architectural historian because of his early "high Arts and Crafts manner" and for a subsequent influential role in the development of Garden City planning.

Although the book is precisely arranged into four chronological portions of Scott's career, he remains a distant personality; the reader has glimpses of his

character as in his somewhat truculent 1895-1896 articles in *The Studio* on interior design and in his quandary regarding his realization that many of his designs and their accompanying reform ethics were inapplicable as time passed. Beyond these occasional glimpses, however, one is not able to grasp a firm image of Scott as a personality. In fairness, it should be added that Scott is a particularly elusive figure simply because his personal documents have been destroyed as well as the contents of his Bedford and London offices. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that to date no definitive volume has been produced on the influence of pre-1900 American architecture in Europe. A disappointment, not unique to this volume, is the author's unwillingness to define — and make a firm distinction between — the Aesthetic Movement, as put forward by Morris and his followers, and the later Arts and Crafts Movement, which, of course, was an allied but not identical phenomenon.

In spite of these salient difficulties with his subject, Kornwolf has drawn extensively and selectively on contemporary references, articles and books; the volume is meticulously footnoted, and the footnotes conveniently appear on the page with their related text. The book is also profusely illustrated with both exterior drawings, plans and furniture designs. The work of Scott is further placed in the context of his time as well as being reviewed in the light of more recent criticism by authorities such as Sir N. Pevsner, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and H. Allen Brooks. The analysis by the author of the complicated and frequently conflicting tenets of the Arts and Crafts Movement is concise and sensitive. This careful arrangement of his material makes it possible for the author to dispel several misconceptions about the work of Scott; the oft-quoted remark that his work slavishly imitated that of his better-known contemporary, C.F.A. Voysey, is conclusively disproved. Further, the importance of Scott as a furniture designer is firmly established, as is the influence of these designs abroad. Dr. Kornwolf correctly points out that, as an adventuresome interior colorist and designer, Scott is regarded by many as a more important designer of decorative arts than architect.

The work of M. H. Baillie Scott is likely to remain controversial since he lived beyond the impetus of the original movement but continued to write on the subject and work in the outmoded style, but this first biography is a significant addition to the library of any student of the complex and increasingly important history of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Reviewed by John W. Keefe
Art Institute of Chicago

REPORT ON A PLAN FOR SAN FRANCISCO, by Daniel H. Burnham, assisted by Edward H. Bennett. (San Francisco: Sunset Press, 1905). Facsimile reprint, Urban Books, Berkeley, 1971, 221 pp. plus index, drawings, maps and photographs, cloth, \$25.00.

Burnham's work as an urban planner was concentrated in an astonishingly short period and was carried on at precisely the time that his architectural office was flooded with commissions for the largest commercial and public buildings. He began his planning career in 1896 with a proposal for lake-shore parks along the South Side of Chicago; then, in quick succession following the turn of the century, he was appointed to the District of Columbia Park Commission in 1901 to draw up the plans for the federal area in Washington, accepted an invitation to prepare a plan for San Francisco in 1902, executed the plan for the Cleveland Civic Center in 1903, completed the San Francisco project in 1904-05, prepared the plan for Manila and Baguio in the Philippine Islands in 1905, and launched into the Chicago Plan in the following year. The San Francisco program constitutes in many respects a preliminary essay to the Chicago achievement, although it falls far short of the latter both in grandeur of vision and multiplicity of details, and it contains weaknesses of such seriousness as to suggest an attempt to accomplish too much in too short a time.

While the major part of the San Francisco document is devoted to the street and boulevard system, which is given in considerable detail in terms of the individual arteries, with their locations, and functions, the remaining sections indicate that Burnham was able to grasp the city in the totality of its natural setting and its working fabric. He begins with the functioning elements of the city — residential, financial, manufacturing, educational, and circulatory — and predicates his roughly concentric, radial, and multi-focal plan on these separate but interrelated parts. The primary problem, as he conceives it, is to draw these elements into a harmoniously working whole through a balanced arterial system, a public transit based on subway lines, and connected open spaces. The most conspicuous feature of San Francisco being the city's hills, Burnham pays special attention to the problem of relating streets to the city's topography: he thinks of the hills as a vertical series of planes of diminishing area and accordingly recommends a circuit drive at the base of the more prominent elevations and interconnected contour drives above, rather than the gridiron that was irrationally imposed upon them.

With respect to parks, he recommends small neighborhood units and playgrounds complete with recreational equipment, but his extravagant propos-

als for the big scenic woodland with gardens, botanical exhibits, and meadows, betray his love for this kind of urban adornment. He attaches great importance to the magnificent scenic vistas of forested hills, native flowers, parks, and open water that were potentially available from the tops of Twin Peaks, the highest points of the city, and he was prepared to reserve vast areas of the peninsula to the end of achieving this goal. In order to insure that the working and residential city would harmonize with these natural beauties he proposes a host of regulations — the establishment of an art commission; restrictions on the movement of heavy traffic, on signs, and on the indiscriminate cutting and grading of hills; the location of factories on the leeward side of prevailing winds; he proposes the best locations for hospitals and cemeteries; the construction of a union railroad station; and the use of water-supply reservoirs as aesthetic elements. In a text of little more than a hundred pages none of these proposals is spelled out in detail, but under more leisurely conditions, as in the case of Chicago, Burnham and Bennett were fully prepared to do so.

The defects of the San Francisco Plan, however, make us realize that it is a transitional piece in the evolution of planning theory and that it was not based on anything comparable to Burnham's day-by-day and year-after-year familiarity with Chicago. The San Francisco document, as the urban historian John W. Reps has suggested, is more an exercise in abstract design than a workable program for ordered expansion and improvement. The arterial system, with its diagonals and circuits, has little to recommend it beyond its geometric balance. The proposal for a union station was meaningless, since the city proper, at the end of its narrow, hilly peninsula, has been accessible only to the Southern Pacific line from Los Angeles. The area that Burnham proposed for new public parks was seven times the existing area in 1905, and if the city had undertaken this expansion most of the southwestern quarter would have been removed from residential uses. As a matter of fact, the realization of the plan in general lay far beyond the city's economic, physical, and design resources at the time. The events that followed its publication demonstrated this fact in a doubly ironic way. The plan was officially accepted in 1906, shortly before the city was devastated by earthquake and fire, but since few people knew the Burnham proposals and fewer still grasped their full implication, the opportunity to rebuild along rational lines was thrown away in the desperate need to restore the ruined city to working order. Much of San Francisco's visual charm is thus a consequence of rebuilding in the styles and the scale of nineteenth century urban

forms. Yet Burnham's fundamental recommendations pointed in the right direction: unless we adopt appropriate forms of urban planning and institute the necessary land-use controls, the humane and aesthetically satisfying city will continue to recede from our grasp.

Carl W. Condit
Northwestern University

Preview

Mr. Warn will conclude his study of the work of Louis Sullivan for Carl K. Bennett in the final issue of Volume X of *The Prairie School Review*.

Several recently published books will be reviewed, including:

The Chicago School of Architecture

Hugh C. Miller

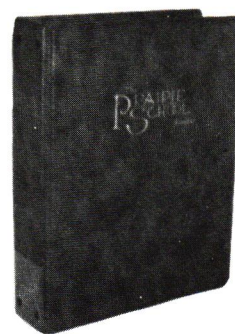
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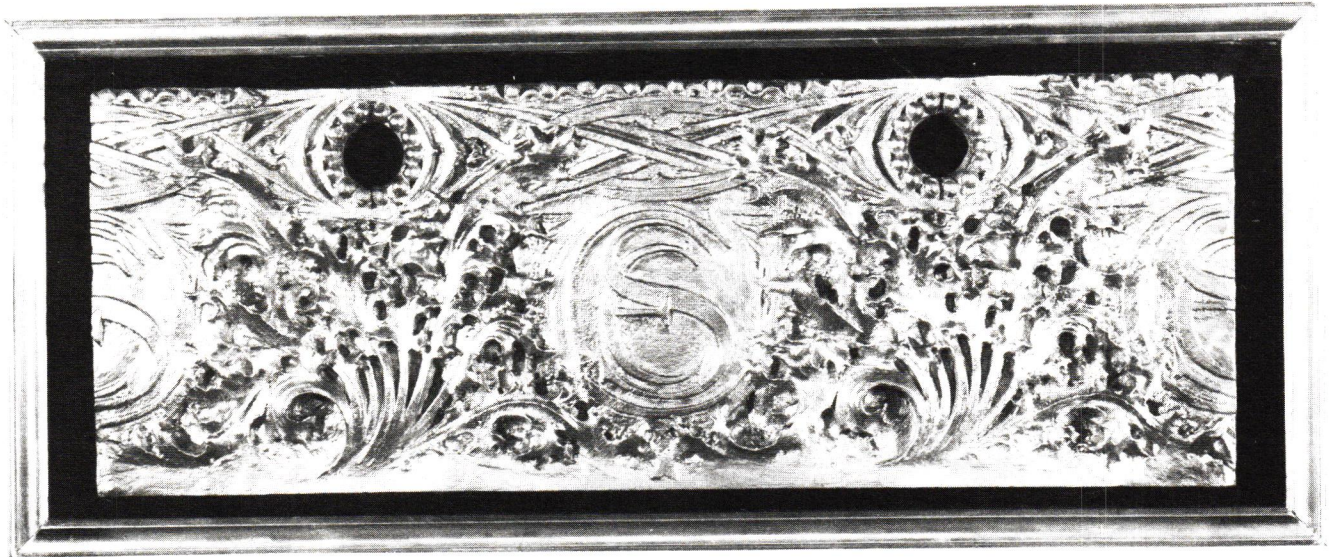
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