



Bungalows

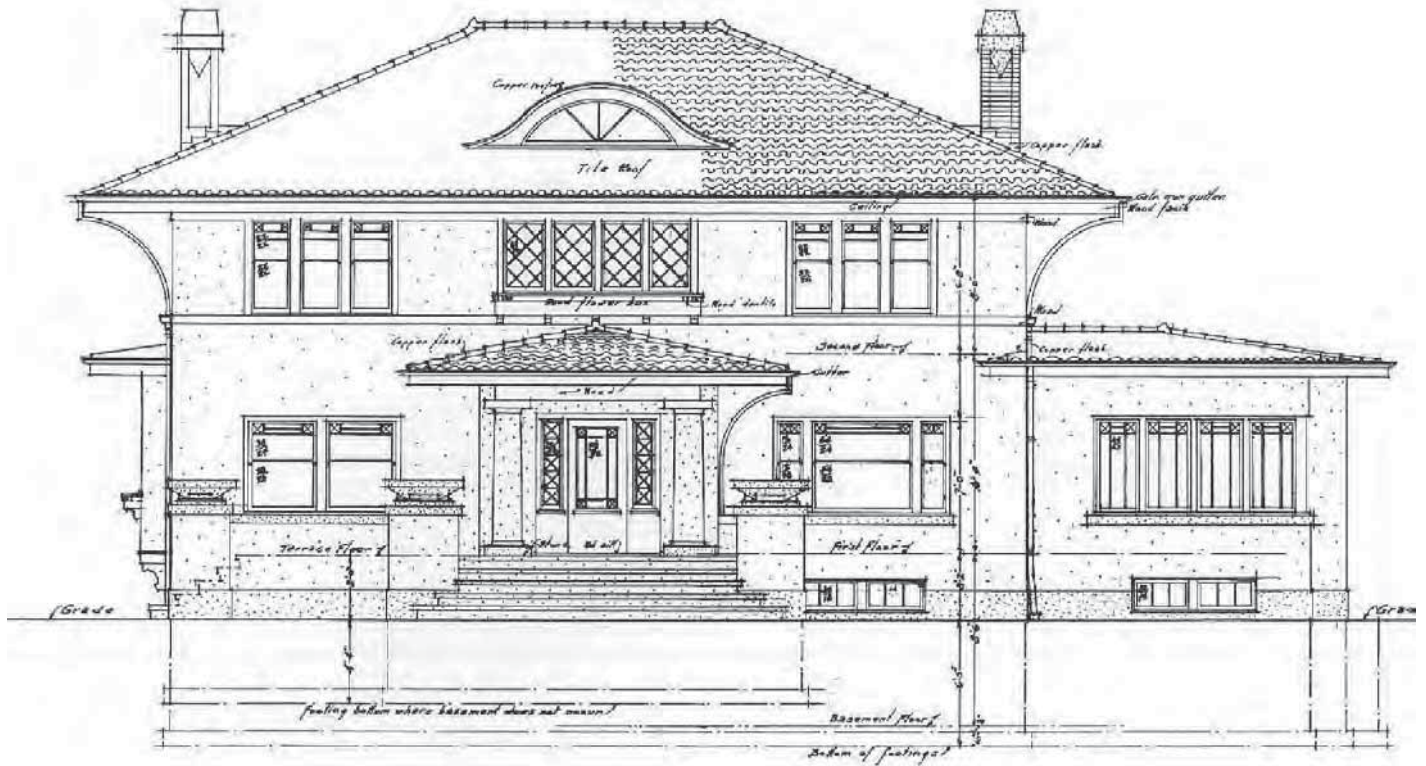
&

Foursquares

**Historical Documentation
of Two Notable
Waterloo, Iowa Residences**



ELEVATION.



Architect Howard B. Burr was fond of “eyebrow” roof dormers such as this one on a 1919 plan sheet for the Barney B. Blunt house.

Acknowledgments

Mr. Chris Western, Planner II/Brownfield Coordinator for the City of Waterloo, Iowa, provided photographs and patiently answered repeated questions about the on-going status of these houses and their ultimate fate. Ms. Mary Bennett, historian and special collections librarian and archivist at the State Historical Society of Iowa’s Iowa City facility, supported the research in the Howard B. Burr Collection with her unwavering dedication to preserving Iowa history and making it accessible to the public. Funding was provided by the Federal Highway Administration and the Iowa Department of Transportation in connection with Highway Improvement Project NHSX-063-6(69) – 3H-07.

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Photographs by Tallgrass Historians L.C. unless otherwise noted

2014

ON THE COVER: The architectural plan sheet by Howard B. Burr for the H. B. Boies Bungalow (1916) also was used for the O’Neil Bungalow (top photo). The bottom photo is of the Kurth Foursquare.

Bungalows & Foursquares

Historical Documentation of Two Notable Waterloo, Iowa Residences

by Jan Olive Full

Tallgrass Historians L.C. – Iowa City, Iowa



Part 1 Project Overview

This historical documentation of two early-twentieth century residences along Logan Avenue in Waterloo, Iowa's east side began in 2006. At that time an architectural study was undertaken to evaluate each and every building along a designated section of the urban route of U.S. 63 through the city (Fig. 1). This route followed a number of different streets including West 1st Street, Mullan Avenue, and Logan Avenue. The study corridor extended from South Avenue near U.S. 218 on the city's west side, across the Cedar River on Mullen Avenue and 1st Street, and terminated at the north end on Donald Street. This corridor was about two-and-a-quarter miles long and contained 316 buildings that served a variety of functions, from dwellings and commercial buildings, to a railroad bridge and several sets of tracks, to a soda pop bottling factory, and a hospital.

As a result of the study, in 2007 five historic properties were newly evaluated as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These five resources, which included a statue of an eagle along the west bank of the Cedar River and the Jack M. Logan Middle School, were added to an earlier list of 20 properties already found to be eligible for the National Register by other studies. Among these 25 historic resources were two dwellings that could not be avoided by the highway project and, therefore, needed to be removed from their lots. The two unlucky houses were a Japanese-influenced bungalow at 1302 Logan Avenue, designed by local architect Howard Bowman Burr and, right across the street, a tall Foursquare house with an eyebrow roof dormer at 1252 Logan. This second house cannot firmly be attributed to any architect, but if an architect was involved, the plan likely also came from Burr's drawing board or that of an even more locally prominent architect, Burr's contemporary, Mortimer Burnham Cleveland.



Figure 1 The study corridor along U.S. 63 through urban Waterloo is marked by the arrows; the small square indicates the approximate location of the two houses being documented. Source: Iowa Department of Transportation, 2014.

Because the Burr bungalow and the Foursquare needed to be removed from their lots along Logan Avenue and because they were eligible for the National Register, federal regulations required a negotiated agreement about how to handle the structures' fates. This "consultation" involved the Federal Highway Administration, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the City of Waterloo, and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office, as the principal entities responsible for monitoring federally-funded construction impacts to historic buildings in Iowa and Waterloo. This consultation process took place in 2008 and by the next year, 2009, the Iowa DOT was ready to initiate and manage the "mitigation plan" for the houses, a plan contained in the governing "Memorandum of Agreement" (MOA).

The plan required that the Iowa DOT try to have the houses moved intact off their lots to a new, suitable location, in a manner that preserved their National Register standing. Failing that, the agency was responsible for completing the historical documentation of the houses.

Timeline Considerations

Between 2010 and 2012, attempts to find new owners who would move the two houses off their sites met with mixed results. Initially, the buildings were lifted off their foundations and simply moved back a ways from Logan Avenue. This allowed the highway project to proceed, but left the houses sitting on temporary cribbing, relatively open to the weather and vandals. Eventually, after a public auction failed to produce a buyer, the houses were sold to an out-of-town developer for \$1.00 a piece. One house was moved a short distance to a new lot; the second was moved to a similar neighborhood a few blocks away. Historic tax preservation credits were sought to assist in one house's rehabilitation. As of December, 2013, those tax credits are still pending. The ultimate fate of each house is discussed in Part 4.

Can a Historic House Be Moved Successfully?

The answer to this question is often, but not always, yes. For architecturally important houses, in order to preserve the house's historic integrity, the relocation must be carefully planned and the new lot should closely match the original site. An urban dwelling for example would be out of place in an industrial district. Likewise, a big red farm barn would not be a good fit for a Craftsman bungalow neighborhood. If the house has historical significance rather than architectural importance, removing it from its original surroundings destroys the connections of this history to the building. Historically important houses generally will not remain eligible for the National Register if they are relocated. In the case of the two Waterloo Logan Avenue houses that needed new homes because of the U.S. 63 project, each had architectural rather than historical importance, making a move possible in order to save them from demolition. Successfully relocating them to a suitable new site would prove more difficult.

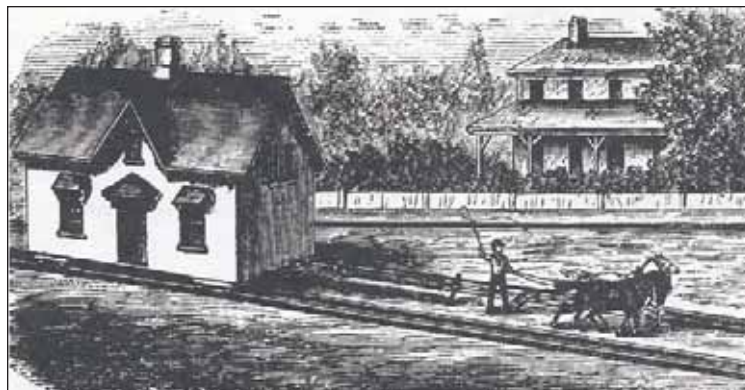


Figure 2 House moving as illustrated in an 1873 agricultural magazine. Reprinted in Curtis, *Moving Historic Buildings*, iv.

Removing buildings to new locations to save and reuse them is far from a new idea. Past generations appreciated the value of the construction materials and the inherent labor represented in a finished house or barn or bridge. Rather than tear them down, these frugal owners moved their buildings. It did not matter whether the structure was of wood, stone, or brick.

In Iowa, small and obsolete school buildings often were auctioned off to farmers who hauled them away and converted them to grain storage or other farm uses. Size was not an impediment to relocation either. In Iowa City in 1905, Science Hall – a large, three-story brick university building – was moved across the street in order to clear the site for new construction (Figs. 3 & 4). Movement of Science Hall each day was so minor that classes continued to be held in the building as it inched its way across the street.

In addition to meticulous physical preparation of a house to be moved, the building's new site must be chosen with care. One expert advises:

Selection of a new site for the relocated structure requires careful planning well in advance of the actual move. It is desirable to find a setting as much like the original as possible. Some earlier architects gave careful consideration to the relationship of the building to its setting. The sensitive preservationist should not compromise a structure's design integrity with a setting that is unsympathetic or incompatible with the original (Curtis, *Moving Historic Buildings*, 32).

2 - Bungalows & Foursquares

Federal regulations for the National Register contain more detailed advice regarding relocation of a historic building, specifying that “[w]hen a property is moved, every effort should be made to reestablish its historic orientation, immediate setting, and general environment” [36CFR60.14(b)(1)]. In other words, the house in its new location should face the same direction as before, its front door orientation should be preserved, and the original setting replicated as closely as possible. If, for example, the house was on a corner, it should be relocated to a corner lot rather than wedged between buildings where shadows may be cast on formerly sunny walls and interior rooms. Finding a suitable location that meets all these criteria can be difficult, but with each variance from the original location, the building’s historic integrity and continued eligibility for the National Register is diminished or perhaps even destroyed.



Figure 3 The three-story Science Hall (now Calvin Hall), built in 1885, was moved across the street in 1905 using horsepower and rolling logs. From John C. Gerber, *A Pictorial History of the University of Iowa* (1988).

Figure 4 Calvin Hall is still in use by the University of Iowa. Photo by Peter Sidwell, 2007.



Part 2 The Houses

Waterloo in the Early Twentieth Century

Founded in the middle of the nineteenth century, Waterloo grew to become the industrial powerhouse of the state by the early twentieth century thanks to dozens of manufacturing companies, many of which focused on supplying local, regional, and even national agricultural markets. In 1869, the town boasted 3,663 residents but this population would grow during a transformative decade from 1899 to 1909 as factories were established and farm workers flocked to the city to find jobs (Long, 1-15). Industries such as Waterloo Gasoline Company (forerunner of the John Deere tractor company), Cascaden Manufacturing, and Thomas Galloway's factory works brought heavy industry to the city. Food-production companies and processing plants like Iowa Dairy Separator and Rath Packing Company added hundreds and, eventually, thousands of jobs to the worker base. It was estimated there were over 160 manufacturing concerns in Waterloo employing 8,000 residents by the 1920s (Weston, 9). Overall population rose from 12,580 in 1900 to 26,693 in 1910; 46,230 in 1920; and 56,185 in 1930 (Long, 67; also see sidebar table with data taken from <http://data.iowadatacenter.org/datatables/PlacesAll/plpopulation18502000.pdf>, on 10/25/2013).

Town boosters began to call Waterloo the "Factory City of Iowa," crediting its Midwest location, excellent rail connections, and industrious residents for the community's success. "Waterloo," one resident boasted, "is located in the heart of that great part of the middle west – the Corn Belt, which is perhaps the richest agricultural section in the world" (Weston, 9). Between 1900 and 1920, the city also experienced its "golden period of [physical] development." Driven by the vigorous population growth, the city's boundaries rapidly expanded as new residential neighborhoods were carved out of rural fields (Long, 67). The two Logan Avenue houses – subjects of this historical documentation – were constructed in 1919 and 1925, around the height of this physical development and economic prosperity.

Waterloo Historical Populations		
Census	Pop.	%±
1870	4,337	—
1880	5,630	29.8%
1890	6,674	18.5%
1900	12,580	88.5%
1910	26,693	112.2%
1920	46,230	73.2%
1930	56,185	21.5%
1940	60,831	8.3%
1950	65,198	7.2%
1960	74,321	14.0%
1970	82,719	11.3%
1980	87,472	5.7%
1990	62,467	-28.6%
2000	68,747	10.1%
2010	68,406	-0.5%

Iowa Data Center

The Property Owners and the Neighborhood at the Time of Construction



Figure 5 Main entrance to the O'Neil Bungalow.

O'Neil Bungalow - 1302 Logan Avenue (Architect Howard B. Burr, 1919): William J. and Evelyn B. O'Neil were the original owners of this snug bungalow on the northeast corner of Logan Avenue and Arlington Street. A young couple in 1919, William was 30 and Evelyn 28, and the family included just one 9-year-old child. Evelyn was a housewife and William the circulation manager for a morning newspaper, likely the Waterloo Times-Tribune. William had but a grade school education according to the 1920 federal census. Unfortunately, the couple did not live in the house very long as they divorced in 1925 (*Waterloo Evening Courier*, 9/4/1925).

The O'Neils chose to build their new home in a middle-income east side neighborhood of workers employed in a variety of occupations. Their neighbors included white-collar employees – a retail store clerk, stenographer, file clerk, as well as an insurance agent and a bookkeeper – all of whom could catch the nearby interurban for a commute to downtown. The neighborhood also included residents working in grittier occupations – the boilermaker, for example, who might have worked at either the W.C.F.&N. or Illinois Central Rwy shops nearby, or the factory tool maker who probably worked for Chamberlain Manufacturing just three blocks to the north (U.S. Census, 1920; Sanborn fire insurance map, 1918-1962). The neighborhood would become even more attractive to young families with the construction in 1921 of Roosevelt Elementary School just a block to the east.

Kurth Foursquare - 1252 Logan Avenue (Architect Unknown, 1925):

John E. and Hortense E. Kurth had been married less than five years when they had their commodious Foursquare home built along Logan Avenue. Born of German immigrant parents, John was a dentist by 1919 but still single and living at home with his parents. His father was a machinist at an east side railroad, perhaps the large Illinois Central Rwy shops on East 4th. By 1925 Dr. Kurth was married and had started a family.

Hortense Kurth, a homemaker, was looking after their two young sons in 1925, ages four and one. They could see the brand new Roosevelt Elementary School (Fig. 7) from their backyard and this was surely considered an asset of their Logan Avenue location. By 1930 though, the Kurths had already moved to Waterloo's west side to a solidly white-collar neighborhood along Bertch Avenue with middle class homes occupied by salesmen, managers, clerks, and insurance and real estate agents (U.S. Census, 1930, 1940).



Figure 6 Main entrance to the Kurth Foursquare.



Figure 7 Neighbors Evelyn O'Neil and Hortense Kurth could watch their children walk to school from their respective Arlington Street side yards. Roosevelt was designed by Mortimer B. Cleveland and built in 1921. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004.

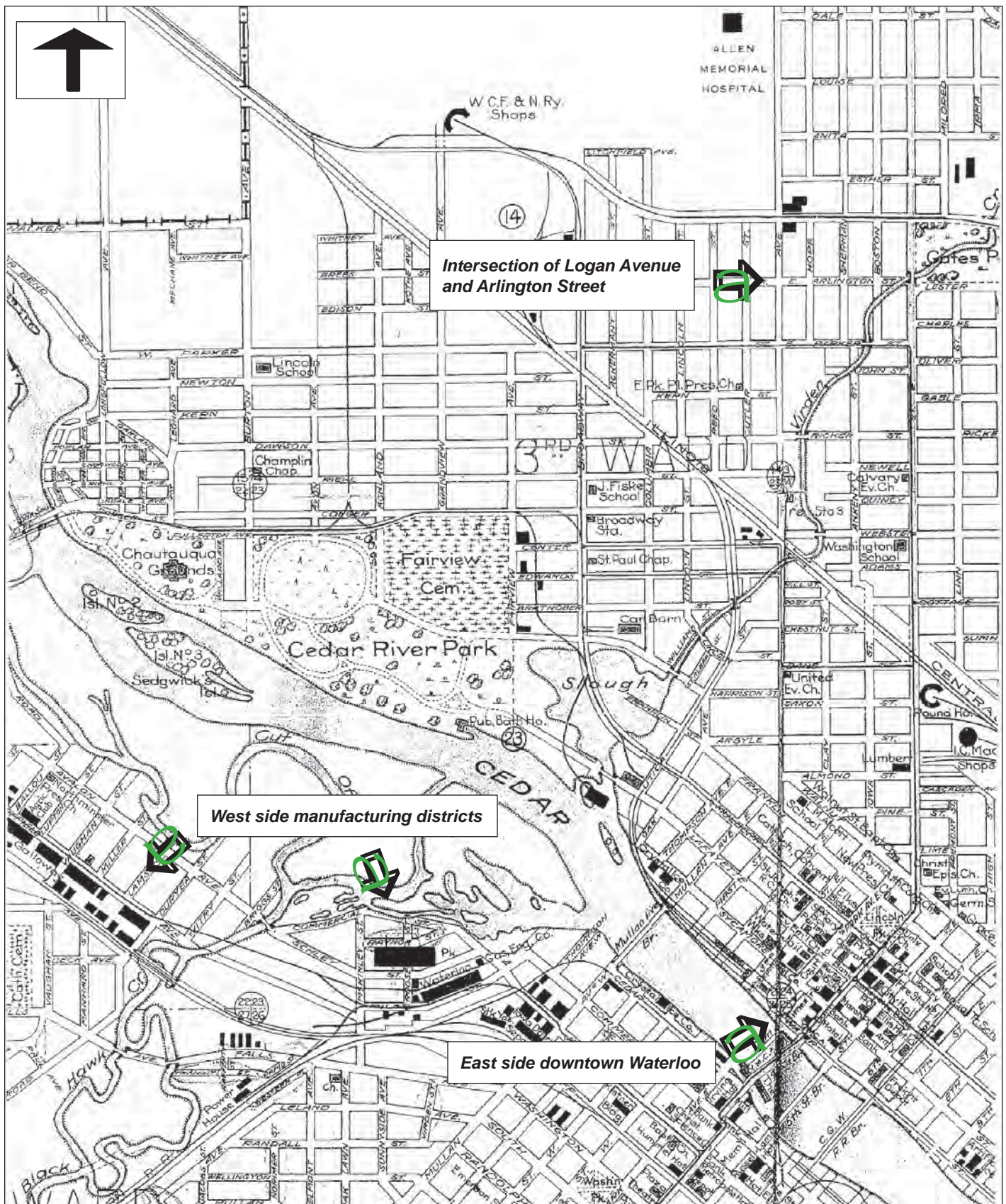


Figure 8 The Logan Avenue/East Arlington Street neighborhood in 1921 was near the north edge of town. Though platted into blocks and streets, there would have been many construction lots available at this time. The long narrow blocks may have saved money for developers by reducing the number of side streets. Alleys running through the center of these long blocks reflect the rise of the automobile at the time, and the practice of putting small detached garages along the alleys behind the houses, a holdover from the traditional placement of stables and carriage barns in earlier times. From Huebinger, Map of Waterloo (1921).



Figure 9 The intersection today shows the impact of the U.S. 63 highway construction, which required the removal of houses along the east side of Logan Avenue. The white squares indicate the former locations of the O'Neil Bungalow (rectangle) and the Kurth Foursquare (square). Taken from <https://maps.google.com/maps> on 12/20/2013.

Physical Description

O'Neil Bungalow (1302 Logan Avenue): Originally occupying the northeast corner of the intersection of Logan Avenue (U.S. 63) and East Arlington Street, the O'Neil Bungalow (Figs. 10 & 11) is a reverse plan of a house the architect designed three years earlier for Judge Herbert B. Boies, the son of former Iowa Governor Horace Boies. Judge Boies' house is still standing on Waterloo's near west side and now is used as a commercial office.

The Logan Avenue bungalow, like the Boies plan, is oriented with its narrow end overlooking the principal street and its long side elevation extending deep into the lot along the secondary street. The main entrance to the bungalow is along the side of the house, near the Logan Avenue intersection, and is marked by a small but elaborately composed entrance porch (refer back to Fig. 5). The Boies bungalow is located in the middle of its block, but its main entrance is sheltered by a similar elaborate porch located on the side wall, also near the front of the house and the street. This side entrance location was necessary to keep the important front sitting porch more private and less accessible from the front sidewalk.

At the front of the bungalow is the prominent sitting porch that fully spans the narrow endwall (Figs. 11 & 14). The porch is supported by oversized, battered (angled) posts covered with stucco as is the half wall between the corner supports. Overhead, above the porch windows, is a small peaked attic window divided into seven panes that reduce in size from the center outward. The wall here is clad in vinyl siding (as is much of the house



Figure 10 This long side of the O'Neil Bungalow overlooks Arlington Street. The front door is located within the small entrance porch at the left (below right on the original plans). Logan Avenue is to the far left. The garage (nonextant), executed in the same Japanese-influenced style as the house, was to the rear of the house along the alley. This view is looking to the northwest.

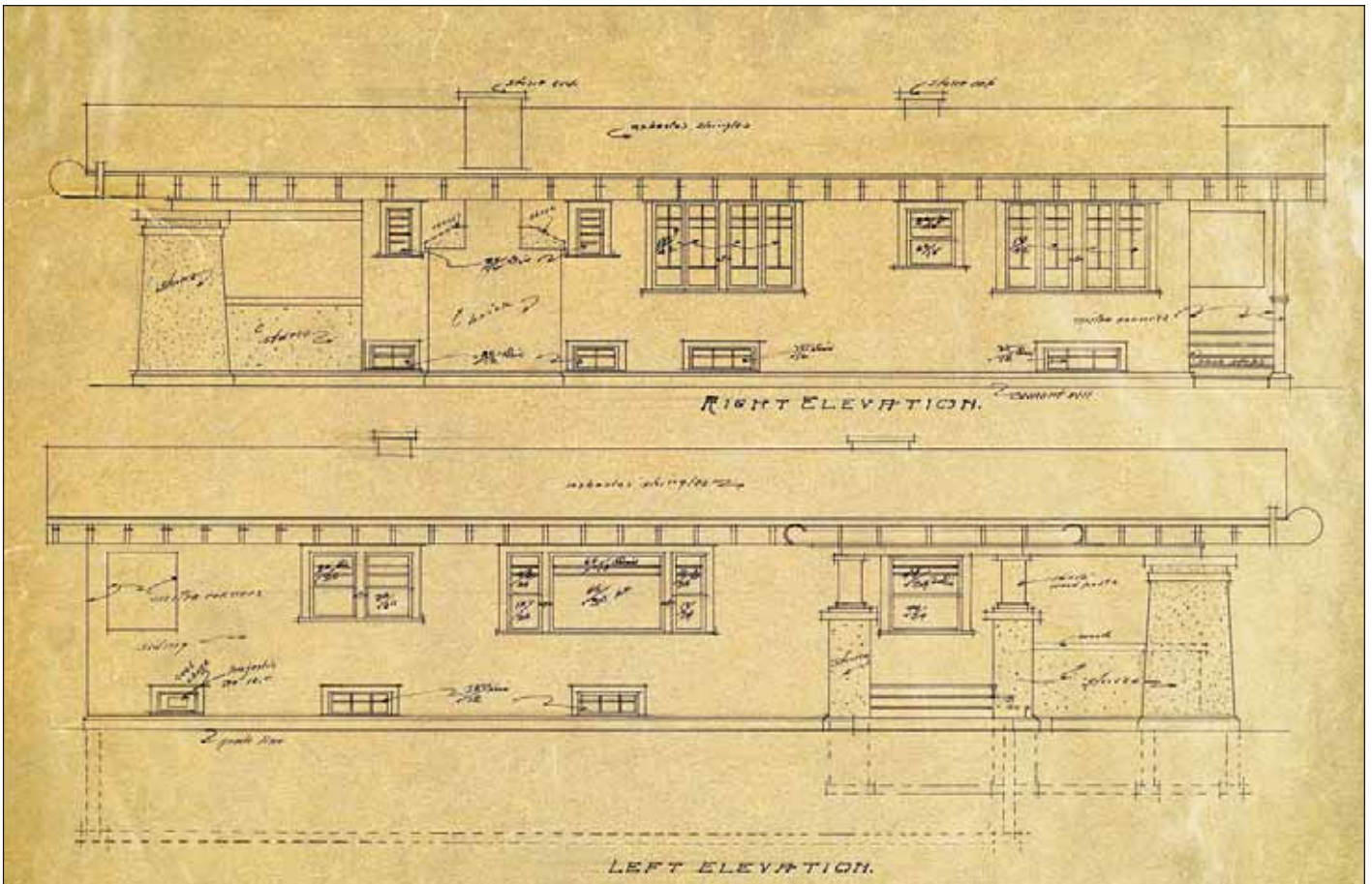


Figure 11 Howard Burr's 1916 plan sheet for the Boies bungalow. From the Burr Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City office); plan photographed by the University of Iowa Photo Service.

behind the front porch) that obscures an important decorative detail drawn by the architect and still visible in the Boies bungalow. Originally, the attic window was outlined by wood trim boards that terminated with a circular-shaped wooden end piece. This circle detail also is seen on the end of the roof's exposed rafters (Figs. 12 & 13).

The architect's plans call for an open front porch, however, both the Boies and O'Neil Bungalow porches are enclosed making them, in effect, three season porches. The O'Neil porch has interior wood flooring suggesting it was enclosed from the beginning.

The overall roofline of the O'Neil Bungalow is shallow but pitches upward at the ridgeline to form a stiff



Figure 13 Exposed rafter ends were meticulously fitted with rounded pieces to suggest a flared eave. Here, the north side of the house has lost some of these pieces to the elements over time.



Figure 12 The Arlington Street entrance porch contains both the peaked roof and the circular "ball" rafter end that Burr used to suggest a Japanese influence.

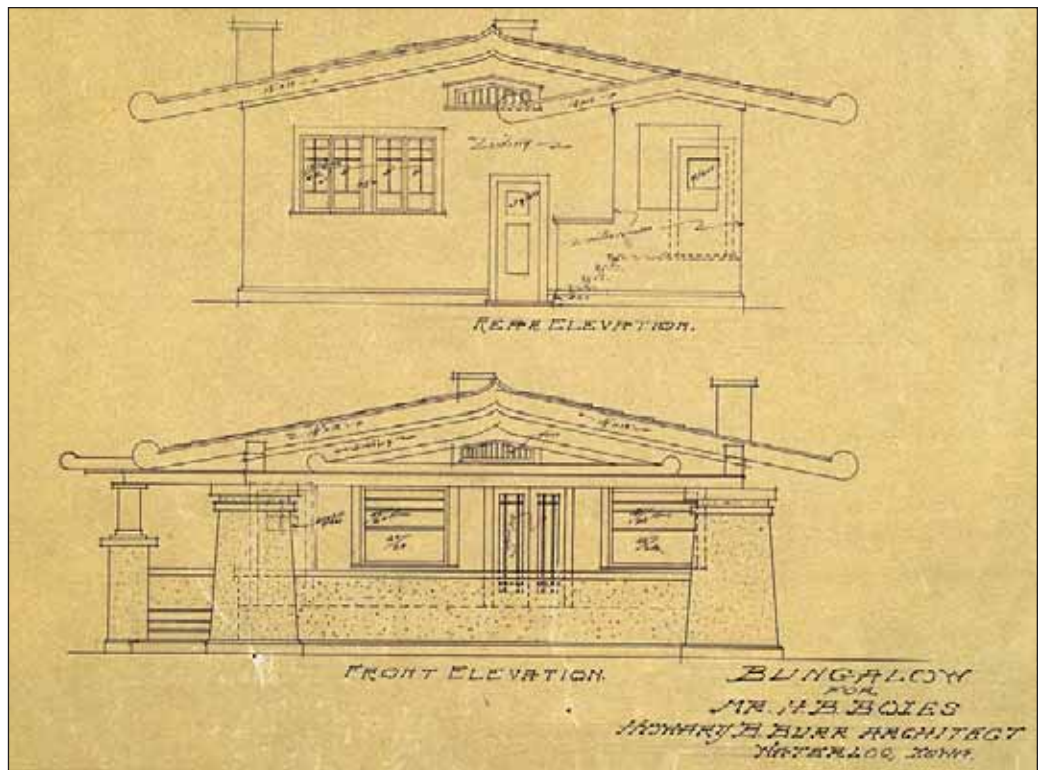
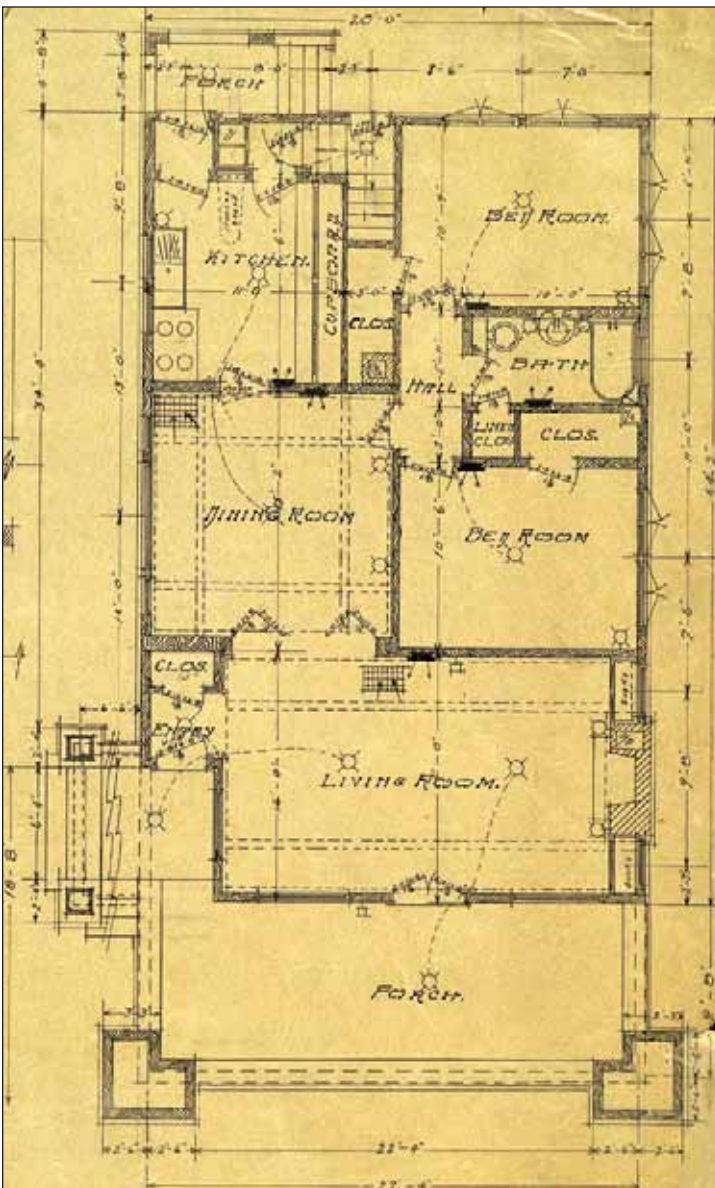


Figure 14 Rear and Front Elevations on the 1916 plan sheet for the Boies bungalow. From the Burr Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City office); plan photographed by the University of Iowa Photo Service.



Figure 15 Rectilinear window muntins suggest the Prairie School style.



Inside the O'Neil Bungalow, the Japanese influence gives way to a more Craftsman style. Woodwork is largely dark-stained pine with a gloss finish. Windows are divided into multiple smaller lights. The dining room's glazing pattern is especially notable with rectilinear or crossed muntins suggesting the Prairie School style. This pattern is complemented by a chair rail and vertical decorative molding along the walls (Fig. 15). Dining room woodwork has a lighter "whitewashed" finish rather than the dark stain seen elsewhere.

The long narrow living room, located immediately behind the Logan Avenue front porch, has built in cabinets on either side of a wood-burning brick fireplace. The bricks have a textured surface and are multi-colored, red to brown to green to beige.

Behind the front rooms – the sitting porch, living room, and dining room – the rest of the floor plan (Fig. 16) is occupied by two small bedrooms separated by a bathroom, and a small kitchen in a rear corner that is bumped out to accommodate a built-in breakfast nook. This is one area of the O'Neil floorplan that deviates from the earlier Boies plan, which has a simple back entrance porch off the kitchen and lacks the nook bump-out. The full unfinished basement is reached by stairs down from the kitchen area.

Figure 16 Floor plan sheet for the Boies bungalow. The O'Neils reversed the plan for their home, perhaps because of the lot they owned. From the Burr Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City office); plan photographed by the University of Iowa Photo Service.

Kurth Foursquare (1252 Logan): The Kurth Foursquare sat on the southeast corner of the intersection, facing west. While its basic shape was square, the house was enlarged by a sitting porch wing to the south side and a very early two-story addition to the rear (Figs. 17 & 18). The original house contained three rooms downstairs (a large living room, dining room, and kitchen) wrapped around a central bank of stairs the went both up from the living room to the second floor (and, ultimately, the attic) and down to the basement from the kitchen. The kitchen sported a small bump-out for a breakfast nook. Upstairs there were three bedrooms and a bath. The rear wing added a master bedroom suite over a storage/mud room below. The wing had no basement under it and, thus, its floors were stepped down slightly from the floors of the original house, which sat on a raised foundation. A modern two-stall garage was located out back some distance from the house.

Black Hawk county assessor photographs of Kurth house from about 2006 show the Foursquare had exposed roof rafters on the side porch and main pyramidal roof, which also had an eyebrow attic window with a narrow slit of window glass on the front roof. Both the rafter tails and the eyebrow window pane were removed a few years later when the building was reroofed. The eyebrow dormer remains, though it now contains a louvered attic vent instead of glazing.

The original house and side porch sit on a raised concrete foundation that is obscured by wood clapboards. Windows with crown molding hold "Colonial" style sashes of eight-over-one glazing and are balanced vertically, between upper and lower levels. Overhead, the roof has extended eaves once enhanced by the exposed rafter tails. In addition to the front eyebrow dormer, the north side roof originally had a larger gabled dormer but it too was recently removed. The rear wing lacks the full-extended eaves of the original house; they are still longer than on most modern houses. The wood clapboard siding is very narrow and butted into tall vertical boards at each corner except for the front porch siding where it is mitered.

Figures 17 & 18 Kurth Foursquare floor plans.
First floor (left); second floor (right).

Sketch floor plans by Tallgrass Historians L.C.
 No Scale



The front porch is notable on this house and together with the eyebrow dormer and roof rafters provide the architectural styling for an otherwise common if wildly popular house form of this time period. They also suggest a designer's hand at work. The porch is centered on the west façade and covered by a very wide hipped roof with long eaves that extend over a portion of the windows on either side. The front door is a three-part arrangement of a central door with large windows flanked by tall glazed sidelights. This entrance is reached by a wide set of wood stairs framed by two sets of clapboard-covered short piers. The upper piers support truncated fluted columns and an entablature cross piece. The lower piers were postless. The front entrance is pushed out a bit from the front wall of the house itself in order to provide for a narrow interior vestibule.



Figure 19 The Kurths' dining room with light oak doors.

Inside, the woodwork appears to be light golden oak and stained yellow pine. There are French doors between the living room and sitting porch on one side, and again between the living room and the dining room on the other side. The dining room also has a low, oak chair rail and a relatively ornate glass chandelier with hurricane chimney glasses (Fig. 19). In the living room, a large fireplace with a painted brick surround and oak mantle is located on the east wall. Built-in bookcases flank the fireplace and over each is a single window. The window on the north side of the fireplace actually looks out into the storage room of the rear addition rather than directly to the outdoors.

The stairway to the second floor is accessed from both the living room and the kitchen. Both rooms have doorways and a short flight of steps to a central landing, from which the tall staircase leads east and up to another landing outside the door to the master bedroom. A 180-degree turn leads to another French door and a main hallway with doors opening into the bedrooms and the bathroom. While most surfaces in this house were modernized, the bathroom retained its original white hexagon-tile flooring, and, likely from the 1950s, bright pink and black walls tiles. One of the doors in the hallway opened to a walk-up attic that was unfinished. The basement below the house was unfinished also.



Figure 20 Built-ins of yellow pine in the master bedroom.

The House Styles

The O'Neil Bungalow and Kurth Foursquare each in its own right represented extremely popular American house types of the early twentieth century. Both are essentially a physical house form to which various stylistic details could be applied to make the dwelling more unique and desirable for different homeowners with different tastes and pocketbooks. Contractor/builders might apply fewer details to the basic form, while architects could draw heavily on various popular architectural genres – Craftsman, Prairie, Revivals, Japanese, or Stick Style – to design a higher style but more expensive house.



Bungalows have been called the “achievable American dream” of the first decades in the twentieth century (Foley, 220). The word has Indian origins – the nineteenth-century colonial British used it to refer to a low building ringed with porches in order to catch a breeze – but in the United States, the bungalow was first popularized in California. Initially small and cozy buildings, fitted with porches and pergolas for outdoor living in the warm climate, the bungalow form was widely promoted and soon saw larger, more opulent versions being designed by professionals.

Architects and brothers, Charles and Henry Greene, are most widely associated with California bungalows because of their 1908 Gamble House (Figs. 21 & 22) in Pasadena, the “ultimate” bungalow set in a neighborhood of large and small bungalows. Gamble House was an instance where the basic bungalow form was enlarged and made much more elaborate by skilled architects and fine craftsmen working for very wealthy clients. Some historians refer to Gamble House as a “Japanesque” style because of its “broad latticed eaves, open porches, and expressive uses of wood” (Foley, 231).

Gamble House’s dark, cool interior is dominated by wood paneling and exposed beams with Japanese-inspired joinery. Inglenooks, wood screens, and double doors that open onto broad and welcoming porches are also found in abundance. The house influenced designers and builders elsewhere, but could hardly be the model for an average family.

Craftsman promoter, Gustav Stickley, applauded the basic bungalow form (Fig. 23) in a 1909 plan book, suggesting that its single story and simple lines reflected a house “reduced to its simplest form,” a form that harmonizes with nature, uses naturally available materials, and can be built cheaply with local workers (Poppeliers, et al., 76). The bungalow, of course, grew well beyond that simple prescription, both in size and breath of its distribution across the country. The form became so popular during the first three decades of the last century that “pre-cut” bungalows became available from a number of companies like Gordon-Van Tine (an Iowa company); Sears, Roebuck & Co; and Aladdin Company (Fig. 24).

If Craftsman details like exposed roof rafters and interior joinery, cobblestone piers, or hammered-metal light fixtures did not appeal to the homeowners, there was an array of details from the other styles to select. Extra wide eaves and windows sashes with rectilinear patterns suggested



Figure 21 Gamble House is located at the crest of a hill surrounded by a large neighborhood of hillside Pasadena bungalows.




Figure 22 Japanese details at Gamble House include the long rafter tails and the landscaping. These elements are also identified as Arts & Crafts and Craftsman details.

the Prairie School. Six- or eight-over-one window sashes, classical columns, round attic windows, prominent keystones, and decorative garlands lent a stately Colonial Revival feeling. Many designers, in concert with their clients, simply mixed a few of their favorite details together for a more eclectic house. This was the case in the O'Neil Bungalow, where architect Howard Burr applied labor-intensive Japanese-inspired details to Craftsman rafters and selected Prairiesque sashes for some of the windows. Since the O'Neils were copying a home already constructed for a prominent local client, Judge Boies, they may have simply liked the appearance of the finished product across town or the public approval that one had garnered.



Figure 23 Note the battered columns, open porches, and exposed rafters in this pattern book bungalow. Aladdin "Built in a Day" House catalog, 1917, 29.

Figure 24 From Aladdin "Built in a Day" House catalog, 1917, 29.

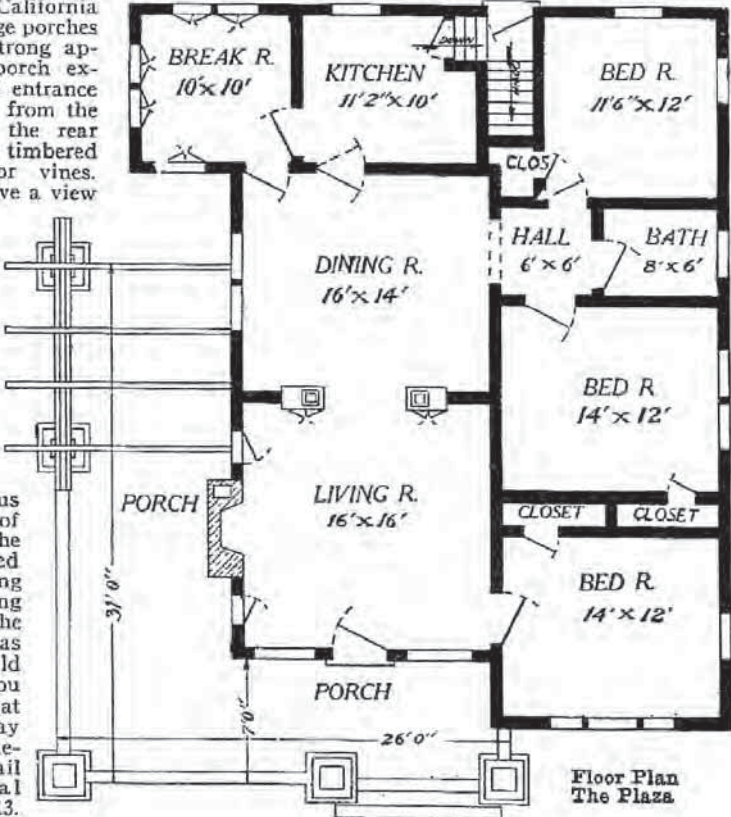


interesting effect is secured by the highly typical of the true California bungalow. To the lover of large porches the Plaza has an especially strong appeal. The front section of porch extends twenty-six feet from the entrance to the left, and thirty-one feet from the front along the side. Over the rear section of the side porch a timbered pergola gives opportunity for vines. Entering the front door you have a view through the living room and dining room for thirty feet. Just off the dining room, and with direct entrance to the kitchen, is a dainty breakfast room. This room can, of course, be used as a den or sewing room, at the owner's discretion. Grade cellar entrance from the kitchen, three fine bedrooms, bath and closets complete this splendid floor plan arrangement. A true craftsman front door, and our famous Arch A-1 illustrated in back of catalog are included in the price. This arch may be used as bookcases, facing the living room, or china closets facing the dining room. Owners of the Plaza are delighted with it, as you cannot fail to be should you select it. It will save you from \$400 to \$900 under what could be built by the old way of building, with inferior materials. Send for complete detail specifications. See General Specifications, page 12 and 13.

The Plaza \$1,499.10

THIS magnificent bungalow secures inspiration from one of the best known bungalows in Pasadena, California. An treatment of gables composing the roof. This is

Price, \$1,578.00	Cash discount, 5%
Net price, \$1,499.10	



**Floor Plan
The Plaza**



The **American Foursquare**, like the bungalow, was a versatile and commodious house form, wildly popular between about 1900 and 1930, and built by the thousands from coast to coast. If bungalows represented the “achievable American dream” then the blocky Foursquare gets the award as the “most popular new house type” of the early twentieth century (Massey and Maxwell, 29). The same stylistic details available to the bungalow could be applied to personalize the appearance of the Foursquare. And while some architects may have avoided the Foursquare, finding it too limiting for their creative sensibilities, practical local designers could hardly turn away a commission or refuse an insistent client. The Foursquare still defines the most common streetscape of the early twentieth century neighborhood and few towns across the country cannot count at least a few Foursquares among their building inventories.

Foursquares are typically blocky square buildings, just as the name implies. Two stories high, Foursquares are capped by a pyramid roof with one or more dormers. Often each side of the roof sported a dormer, of various shapes or sizes, in order to provide extra daylight for the spacious attics within. The Foursquare might have four roughly equal rooms on each floor, however, this interior arrangement was never a hard and fast rule to be followed by homeowners who needed more bedrooms, or wanted a larger living room, or a smaller kitchen.

Foursquares were so popular that Gustav Stickley even advocated Foursquares – though he didn’t call them that – for single women who wanted their own home. After the “initial cost of the lot in some suburb not too far from the place of employment,” Stickley wrote, this type of house could be built “by women of limited means, – women who either work at home or possibly in an office or shop and who need all the home comfort they can get, instead of dragging out an existence in a boarding house...” He envisioned them as cost sharing, group living for “congenial” family members or other single women (Stickley, 72).

Sears, Roebuck carried Foursquares in its catalogs of prefabricated buildings, issued from about 1916 to 1933. The 1926 “Cornell” model featured Craftsman rafters and Colonial Revival window sashes. With three rooms down, and four bedrooms and a tiny bathroom upstairs, the home was “precut” and cost less than \$2,000. Described as a “roomy house at a very low cost, the [Cornell] is planned on square lines, permitting every square inch of space to be used to the best advantage” (*Sears, Roebuck Catalog of Homes*, 37). The “Gladstone” model (Fig. 25) featured a prominent front roof dormer and coupled square porch columns, all sitting on a raised foundation of concrete blocks cast to look like stone.

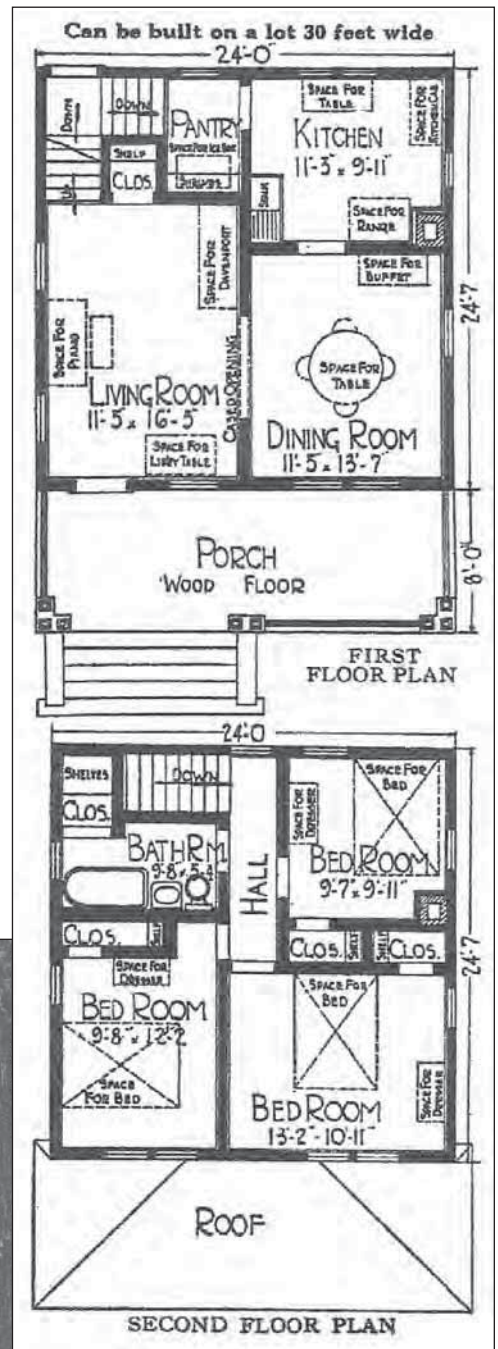


Figure 25 Sears, Roebuck’s façade and floor plans for the “Gladstone.”

Foursquares and bungalows alike were encouraged by architects and trend setters who are less well remembered than the Greene brothers or Gustav Stickley. Architect Henry Atterbury Smith headed a New York organization called the Home Owner Service Institute, which published books containing plans for moderately priced homes. Bungalows with prominent exposed rafters and oversize knee braces, and Foursquares with lower rooflines and extended eaves, all designed by different architects, were available through Smith's 1923 *The Books of a Thousand Homes* (reprinted 1990).

Newspapers, including the Waterloo dailies, ran weekly articles that featured house plans by a variety of enterprising architects. In 1907, for example – about the time a young architect named Mortimer Cleveland opened his architectural office in Waterloo, the *Daily Courier* featured a Foursquare plan in a syndicated column by architect Glenn L. Saxton. This particular Foursquare did, indeed, have four rooms up and four rooms down, but it also featured a large bay window in one of the front bedrooms. A similar Foursquare would become one of Waterloo's most ubiquitous house types (*Waterloo Daily Courier*, 9/14/1907).



Part 3 The Architects



The architect for the O'Neil Bungalow is well documented. Howard Bowman Burr's plans for the house are located in the Iowa City office of the State Historical Society of Iowa, along with many other plans for commissions in Waterloo, eastern Iowa, and even one in South Dakota. His "drawing list" of plans and clients is also available in the Society's Iowa City office. And newspaper accounts from 1919 firmly tie Burr to O'Neil and the lot on Logan Avenue.

The designer of the Kurth Foursquare is more obscure; whether it was an architect or contractor/builder, or inspired by a plan book or newspaper series is unknown.

The eyebrow roof dormer is unusual for a Foursquare however and generally not found in pattern book houses or other popular sources since it requires skill to construct and extra care to roof around. Its presence suggests an architect's involvement in the design and perhaps a familiarity with Chicago area architecture of the early twentieth century, especially that of George W. Maher.

Considered part of the Prairie School, Maher was a well-known architect with commissions primarily in Chicago, the North Shore communities, and the East Coast. He was fond of using shallow arches, sometimes flanged on each end, in various locations on his buildings. Often they formed the porch roof over the front door, sometimes they relieved the broad expanse of a hipped roof, and occasionally they defined the entire façade as in Northwestern University's Gymnasium in Evanston, Illinois (Fig. 26, nonextant). Maher's domestic commissions (Fig. 27) grace many of Chicago's near north suburban communities, places like Kenilworth, Evanston, and Winnetka. Kenilworth, in fact, may have the largest extant collection of Maher houses in one place. He lived in the town from 1893 until 1926 and planned nearly 40 residences in Kenilworth (Nash, 445).



Figure 26 George Maher's Northwestern University Gym.
From <http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/architecture/gallery.php?bid=17>.



Figure 27 Rudolph House, Highland Park, IL. From <http://www.arts-rafts.com/archive/acarchs/mahergeorge.shtml> on 12/30/2013.

Howard Bowman Burr (1885-1964)

Born in Waverly, Iowa, into a prominent banking family, Burr studied mechanical engineering at Iowa State University but left before obtaining his degree. He moved to Waterloo in 1907 and soon was employed by Waterloo's newest architect, Clinton P. Shockley (*Waterloo Daily Courier*, 4/11, 10/7/1907). The next year, Burr was on his own, doing any type of drafting work he could find including the occasional patent design for a local attorney.

Initially Burr placed ads in the local newspapers advertising diverse drawing services aimed at a broader audience than just potential home builders, though he soon focused his marketing efforts in that area (Fig. 28).

By late 1909, Burr was calling himself an architect rather than a draftsman and, in 1910, the 25-year-old architect married Hazel Banton, a 20-year-old Waterloo native and society reporter for the *Waterloo Daily Reporter*. Following an extended honeymoon trip to Chicago and points east, Burr settled into married life with a woman who rubbed shoulders with the town's elite as a part of her career. That happy circumstance, combined with the building boom then underway in Waterloo, assured the ambitious Mr. Burr ample opportunity to ply his chosen craft.



Figure 28 Burr's newspaper ad.
Placed in the *Waterloo Daily Courier*,
7/7/1908.

Over the next few years, Burr obtained commissions for a growing list of clients who selected him to design their new residences. Coverage of his professional activities by the local press picked up in 1913 when insurance salesman George Nolte hired Burr to design a bungalow in Prospect Hills, one of the city's new and growing developments (*Waterloo Evening Courier*, 11/8/1913). That same year, Waterloo newspapers also noted Burr commissions for the Plymouth Congregational Church on Waterloo's east side; a house for A. R. Stillwagon on the city's west side; a dwelling for M.E. Hutson on Reber Avenue in a neighborhood dominated by Foursquares; and a streetcar station in Chautauqua Park.

Japanese Influence on Burr's Work

The next year, 1914, was an important one for Burr because the city awarded him the very public commission for a new well house in its large city park – Cedar River Park. Burr's design for a Japanese pagoda style well house was prominently featured by the press both in 1914

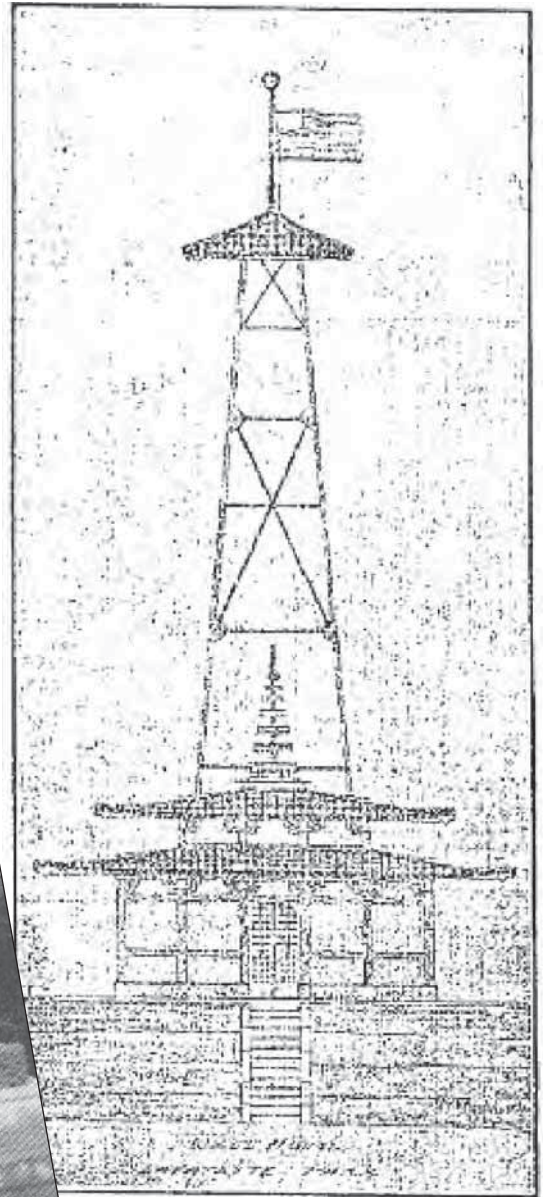
and a year later when it was finally completed (Figs. 30 & 31). The *Waterloo Evening Courier* and *Reporter* ran a large picture of Burr's drawing of the well house at both times. Throughout the rest of 1914 and 1915, Burr designed at least seven new residences, another church, and a school building. Clearly he was being successful, even as he competed with his former boss, Clinton P. Shockley and another rising local architect, Mortimer B. Cleveland.

If the local press is to be believed, the city's Japanese pagoda style well house garnered a great deal of publicity, both locally and nationwide. It surely suggests a connection with Judge Boies' 1916 decision on a Japanese influence for his bungalow residence. Apparently the influence of Burr's Japanese well house lingered on for a while because about 1924, Burr was hired to remodel an existing house into a pagoda-style house by adding extended upswept eaves to the main and porch roofs (*Waterloo Sunday Courier*, 7/24/1924). These have since been removed.



Figure 29 Architect Howard B. Burr.
From Nash, 36.

Figures 30 & 31 According to the Waterloo Evening Courier, "the artistic pump house, of the pagoda type of architecture,...received more outside attention, publicity and comment than any other one subject of interest in the city during the past twelve months." The superintendent of the city's water works department took photos of the structure to a "national convention of waterworks men" in Cincinnati. These photos were then reproduced in trade journals, civic improvement publications such as American Contractor, Popular Mechanics, and the Minneapolis Journal. "Thousands of Kodak pictures were taken during the summer season by tourists and by people living in neighboring cities. The pump house is located in the public park used as a bathing beach and thousands visit the place every day in the warm months." Waterloo Evening Courier, 1/1/1916. The photo is from Corwin & Hoy, 127; the drawing from the Waterloo Evening Courier.



Burr's Bungalows

Piecing together all of Howard Burr's commissions during his active years, from 1908 until the early 1930s, is probably impossible, but good primary records reveal much about his practice. He worked in most of the popular styles of the day and probably followed his client's wishes on overall style and size. Budget would also be an important design factor when Burr sat down to the drawing board. Between 1909 and 1928 Burr designed over 20 known bungalows of greater or lesser distinction in Waterloo alone. One single-story bungalow from 1912 on Alta Vista Avenue has a hipped roof with broad overhanging eaves and exposed roof rafters. The front hip of the roof sports a prominent eyebrow window very similar to the Kurths' Foursquare and many known Burr designs (Figs. 32 & 33). Another bungalow on West 4th Street from 1921 is similar in form but has no eyebrow window. It has wide boxed eaves and lines that suggest the Prairie School.

Figure 32 (right) Detail of eyebrow dormer from 1918 L.A. Smith house in Osage, Iowa.

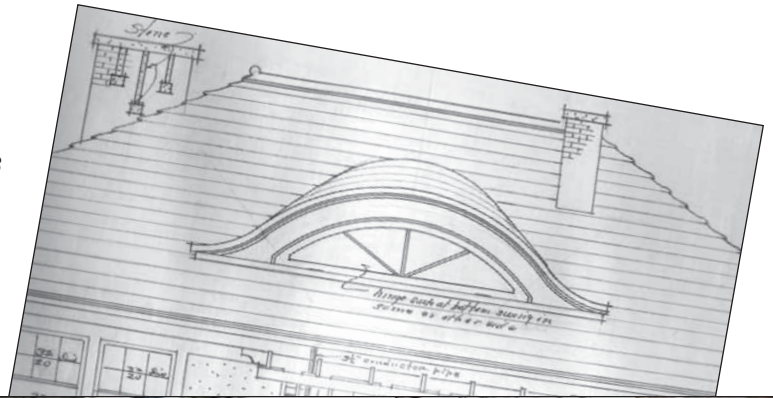


Figure 33 (below) The eyebrow window on the roof of this Alta Vista Avenue bungalow is difficult to see because of the spruce tree. Black Hawk County Assessor photograph.



Husting House – Osage



Figure 34 The Husting residence, an elongated Foursquare type house in Osage, Iowa, some 40 miles northwest of Waterloo, was planned in 1916 with a flanged-arch front entrance porch roof, supported by two battered columns. A hint of an eyebrow dormer on the roof above – erased on the plans and discarded by Burr and his client – is still visible in this image. Taken from Nash, "Howard Burr: Master of the Prairie School" (1991).

Burr and the American Foursquare

Foursquares were, by popular demand, surely among Howard Burr's frequent commissions. He designed at least 10 and probably quite a few more in Waterloo between 1908 and 1924. Notable among these is a 1913 Prairie School style dwelling on Prospect Avenue with a very shallow roof. Flanged arches, *ala* Chicago's George Maher, are used as the front porch roof and the framework for a small window above it. A year later, Burr built a similar Foursquare on Sheridan Road with very wide eaves and decorative wood molding suggestive of Frank Lloyd Wright's Stockman House in Mason City, Iowa. Still in 1914, Home Park Boulevard saw construction of another Burr Foursquare with wide eaves, a shallow roof, and Prairie window sashes similar to those in the O'Neil Bungalow dining room. Burr's Prairiesque eaves continued to appear on more common looking Foursquares through 1919, when another detailed Prairie School-styled Foursquare by Burr was constructed on Kingsley Avenue (Fig. 35). This one also had an eyebrow window on the front roof.

Howard Bowman Burr Architectural Drawing Collection

Plans for Burr Foursquares held in the State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City office) are largely unidentified as to location other than the town. The collection includes a 1919 plan for W. C. Shepard in Allison that is very similar to the Kurth Foursquare except it lacks an eyebrow window (Fig. 36).

The D.W. Armstrong plans (Fig. 37) from 1919 for a house in Dyersville likewise lack an eyebrow window, but do call for a flanged porch roof over the front entrance. As constructed however, large and robust eyebrow windows were added to three sides of the pyramidal roof (Fig. 38). David W. Armstrong, a former mayor of Dyersville, was a prominent "lumberman," vice president of and heir to the James Armstrong Lumber Company. He was also affiliated with his brother's company in Waterloo, Armstrong Manufacturing.

Drawings for the M.J. Cleveland Foursquare (1920) in Webster City and the Jean B. Carden Foursquare (1919) in Osage also have prominent eyebrow dormers on their front roofs, as did the L.A. Smith Foursquare (1918; see Fig. 32), also in Osage. Apparently suggested by Burr, but rejected by the client, the Husting house plans (see Fig. 34) show evidence



Figure 35 This basic Foursquare has been rendered a stylish Prairie School residence by the addition of its very wide eaves on the shallow roof of both the house and the porch. Black Hawk County Assessor photograph.



Figure 36 Burr's plan for the Shepard house (1919).



Figures 37 (left) & 38 (below) Eyebrow dormers were added to three sides of the roof of the D.W. Armstrong house after Burr drew up the plan. Burr also drew plans for David's father, James Armstrong a year later.



of an eyebrow dormer that was erased. Like George Maher, Howard Burr clearly appreciated the flanged arch and its echo, the eyebrow dormer. Burr was not the only Waterloo architect to adopt this form, but he may have used it the most extensively.

Mortimer Burnham Cleveland (1882-1979)

While no architect has been identified as the designer of the Kurth Foursquare, Mortimer Cleveland was a contemporary of Howard Burr and a prolific designer of early twentieth century residences in Waterloo, some of them Foursquare types with eyebrow windows. Therefore, information is included about this prominent local architect as another possible designer of that house in addition to Burr.

Mortimer Cleveland has been called one of the earliest Prairie School architects in Iowa (Shank, 43 quoting James Lynch) though he designed many residences in other popular styles of the early twentieth century. Born in Osage, Iowa, Cleveland was raised in Waterloo and graduated from East Waterloo High School. He attended the University of Illinois where he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in 1908 and later returned to obtain a Master's in architecture in 1915. As an undergraduate he took "the architectural course" and also spent time in Chicago where he had family members (*Waterloo Daily Courier*, 12/24/1960). In 1907, student Cleveland was able to assist university professors in the design of a new campus building, getting a jump start on his professional career (*Waterloo Daily Courier*, 7/27/1907).



Figure 39 Architect Mortimer B. Cleveland. From *Waterloo Sunday Courier*, 4/3/1960.

Upon his graduation in 1908, Cleveland traveled a bit and late in the year opened an office in Waterloo, which was experiencing vigorous growth. Though it did not last long, Cleveland initially partnered with an older architect, John Walker Hanifen, who had been out of school for eight years and working in Chicago (*Waterloo Daily Courier*, 11/8, 12/4, 12/18/1908). By the end of the year, 1908, Cleveland was advertising his services in the local papers next to ads placed by other architects, John G. Ralston, [John T.] Burkett & [William T.] Pedicord, and Clinton Shockley (*Waterloo Daily Courier*, 12/29/1908). Howard Burr was not yet advertising himself as an architect and so does not have an ad in the professional column.

Within two years, Cleveland's architectural practice was well established. During 1910, he designed a new church in Jessup, Iowa; the formal entrance to Waterloo's Fairview Cemetery; and a three-story commercial building – a combination store front and apartment building – on Waterloo's east side. In 1911, in what was certainly a pivotal moment in his professional career, Cleveland was designated the "official architect" of the developing Highland neighborhood. This posh neighborhood would be the beneficiary of a great number of Cleveland designs and is now a National Register Historic District. He also designed the Highland entrance gates and the Highland interurban waiting station (*Waterloo Evening Reporter*, 12/30/1911). Cleveland, in fact, became so strongly associated with the Highland neighborhood that at least one important house appears to have been erroneously attributed to him rather

than Howard Burr. Plans by Burr for the boxy, Prairie School styled house at 131 Prospect Avenue, are located in the collection of the local museum and the original client, L[ouis] A. Kliebenstein, appears in Burr's list of commissions at the State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City). In other cases, clients may have had both busy architects design houses for them at different times, as in the case of J.D. Liffing, who hired Cleveland to design his new "cottage" bungalow in 1921 in the Highland district, and then had Burr design a larger, two-story Tudor Revival-inspired house in 1930 (plans at the State Historical Society of Iowa; unknown if constructed).

Cleveland's Highland houses display a wide array of popular architectural styles, from Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, and Tudor Revival, to simple bungalows. Highland also has a number of large Foursquares by Cleveland built early in Highland's development, including several from 1910 that are quite simple. Later Cleveland Foursquares in and beyond Highland are more stylish. Some have eyebrow dormers (Figs. 40 & 41). Others are elongated into rectangles and perhaps no longer properly called Foursquares.



Whether or not the Kurth Foursquare on Logan Avenue was designed by Cleveland or Burr or perhaps another architect, or even a contractor, may never be known. What is clear though is that the busy hands of early-twentieth century Waterloo architects, attracted to the city by family connections or simply by the building boom and the opportunities it presented, are still apparent all around the city. Until quite recently, their work was also to be found along Logan Avenue at its intersection with Arlington Street.

Figure 40 A Mortimer Cleveland Foursquare with an eyebrow window in the Highland Historic District. Black Hawk County Assessor photograph.



Figure 41 This Cleveland house on Waterloo's West Fourth Street sports an eyebrow roof dormer but its floor plan has been widened from a square to a rectangle. Black Hawk County Assessor photograph.



Part 4 Project Outcome

Ultimately, the rehabilitation costs for the Kurth Foursquare proved too great and it was demolished (Fig. 42).



Figure 42 Kurth Foursquare on the move in 2010. Waterloo Courier photograph.

by the end of 2013 (Figs. 44-45). In August, 2014, a serious fire occurred in the house. By that time, the bungalow had been vacant and looking abandoned for many months, though a new electrical service and heating system were installed. Damage was confined to the roof's chimney, which was toppled over, and a couple of rooms where the fire started. Windows remained intact except in the damaged rooms. According to the Waterloo Fire & Rescue report, the fire was "suspicious" and was referred to the fire investigator and police department. By the end of 2014, the City was taking the steps necessary to re-acquire the bungalow. Its ultimate fate remains uncertain.

The O'Neil Bungalow was successfully moved to a new location; however the building's eligibility for the National Register was seriously jeopardized. The bungalow was relocated to a corner lot at the intersection of two streets several blocks south of its original location (Fig. 43). The new residential neighborhood contains homes of a similar vintage and there is even a 1909 Mortimer B. Cleveland-designed house just a block farther south. However, the new neighborhood is also mixed use and has been in a transition from residential to commercial for decades. There are numerous empty lots where derelict houses have been removed. Also, there is a large parking lot to the east of the O'Neil Bungalow's lot and a modern commercial building nearby to the northeast.

Currently, the O'Neil Bungalow sits on a new foundation, but no exterior renovation work had been undertaken



Figure 43 The shaded area denotes the new O'Neil Bungalow lot with the house on it. Black Hawk County Assessor image, 1/2/2014.



Figure 44 The front porch is on the left and now overlooks empty lots. The back door is on the right and overlooks a city street. The house has not been renovated on the new site. Photo supplied by Chris Western, City of Waterloo, December 2013.



Figure 45 This is the rear kitchen bump-out and back door; view taken from the city street it now faces. Photo supplied by Chris Western, City of Waterloo, December 2013.



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Additional Photographs: Kurth Foursquare in its original location





Additional Photographs: O'Neil Bungalow and Garage in their original location



