

408 North Kenilworth, Oak Park, Illinois

Alfred Louis Robbins House

Patton & Fisher Architects

1890

George Alfred Chapman House

Tallmadge & Watson Architects

Remodel 1910



Photo of Chapman remodel, courtesy of the Village of Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission files, dated 2006. There is no photo available, at this time, of the original Robbins house.

Landmark Research for 408 N. Kenilworth Oak Park, Illinois

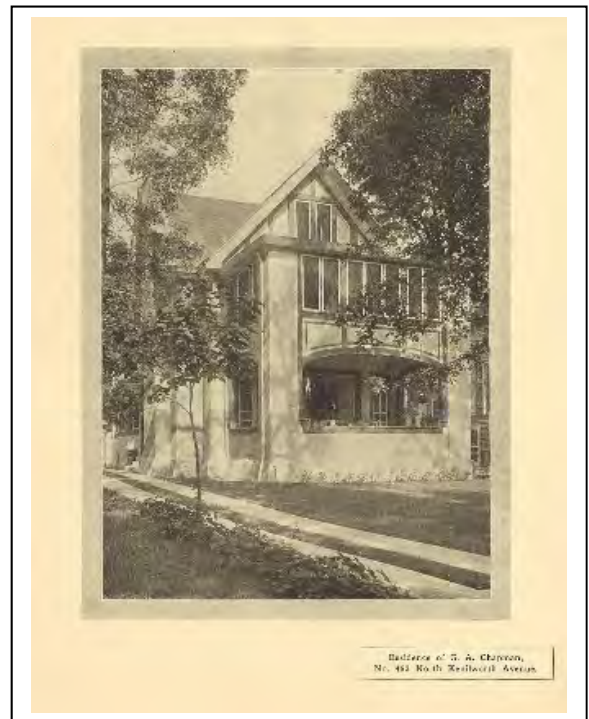
Original House

Alfred L. Robbins
Patton and Fisher 1890

Current House

George A. Chapman House ¹
Tallmadge and Watson Architect
Remodel 1910

The house at 408 North Kenilworth was originally an 1890 two-story frame house designed by architects Patton and Fisher. Twenty years later, 1910, a new owner George A. Chapman, hired the relatively young architectural firm of Tallmadge and Watson to remodel the original house. This they did to such an extent that the original house disappeared, but its bones are still there.



The Beginning

In 1890 a brief snippet in the *Oak Park Reporter* announced:

A. L. Robbins, of River Forest, has bought a lot on Willis Street which he will improve with a handsome residence. ²

A. L. (Alfred Louis) Robbins was born on February 3, 1856 in Rocky Hill, Hartford County, Connecticut to Edward Franklin Robbins (1816-1910) and Frances Goodrich (1822-1883). His father was a carriage and harness maker. He grew to adult hood in Rocky Hill and sometime in the 1870's, he relocated with his parents and his three sisters (Emma, Fanny and Addie) to Cicero, Illinois. His father continued his trade and Alfred worked as a clerk for a school furniture company.³

At the age of twenty-seven, Alfred married Clara M. Vanness (1860-1895) on April 18, 1883 in Ridgeland, Illinois.⁴ They resided in River Forest, Illinois and Alfred worked for the National School Furniture Company at 143 Wabash Avenue in Chicago.⁵ Alfred and Clara had five children two of which, Asenath (1884-1966) and Edward (1886-?), were born before they

¹ Photo: *Residence of G. A. Chapman, No. 452 North Kenilworth Avenue.*, *Glimpses of Oak Park*, p.73, Views by Eugene J. Hall, Published by Frank H June & Geo. R. Hemingway, 1912.

² *Real Estate and Building*, *Oak Park Reporter*, May 2, 1890, page 81. Note that *Willis Street* will become Kenilworth around the turn of the century.

³ 1870 & 1880 United States Federal Census Records, Ancestry.com.

⁴ Cook County, Illinois, Marriages Index 1871-1920, Ancestry.com.

⁵ *Oak Park Directory*, January 1, 1888, page 74.

moved to their new house on Kenilworth (nee Willis), after which John Talmadge (1891-1972), Ruth (1893-1954) and Frederick Goodrich (1893-1974) Robbins arrived.⁶

Alfred contracted with architects Patton and Fisher to design a house for the property he purchased from Mary A. Yorke and husband on March 18, 1890.⁷ There is no building permit for the home on record with the Village of Oak Park. The Village of Oak Park was incorporated in 1902 and the permit may have been recorded in the Cicero Township files. Those permits were destroyed in a fire; hence, very few permits for pre-1902 exist.

In 1894, the advertisement to the right for architects Patton and Fisher appeared in a local Oak Park newspaper.⁸ It lists projects they had completed for local residential and commercial clients. A. L. Robbins is listed, as are three other houses on the same Kenilworth block as the Robbins house – Wm. C. Douglas (317), D. J. Kennedy (309) and John Rankin (245).⁹

A. A. ADAIR,
 102 S. GROVE AVE.

Patton & Fisher,
ARCHITECTS.
 50—115 MONROE ST., CHICAGO. 225 N. GROVE AVE., OAK PARK.

Among the more important Oak Park buildings designed by us are the following:

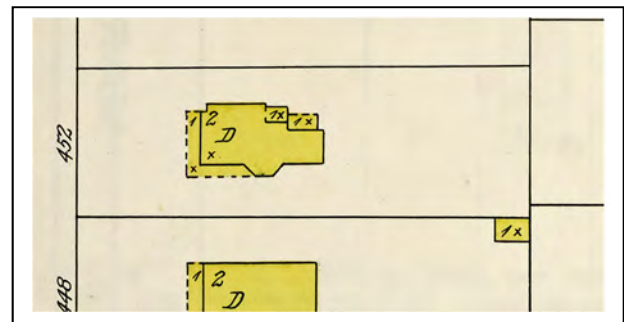
Scoville Institute,	Congregational Church, remodeling,	Rigdeland Church,
Water Works Office and Cicero Gas Co. Building.		

Residences for	D. J. Kennedy,	John Rankin,
Wm. C. Douglass,	Eugene J. Hall,	Theodore Bliss,
Theron Durham,	D. D. Garcelon,	W. D. Melvaine,
L. Muther,	W. T. Mills,	Edwin Osgood,
E. H. Pitkin,	C. T. Parry,	H. M. Robinson,
R. S. Thain,	Rev. S. J. Humphrey,	A. L. Robbins,
C. A. Richardson,	S. S. Rogers,	H. F. White,
	P. E. Wilson,	

THE NEW

There are no photos that can be found of the Patton & Fischer design, but much can be revealed about the house by reviewing various documents and Patton and Fisher's designs of the same period.

The first clue can be found in the Sanford Fire Insurance maps for 1895.¹⁰ The plat for the Robbins house (right) provides some information. First the address is 452 Kenilworth but will change to 408



Kenilworth about 1910 when the start of north-south address numbering changed from Railroad Avenue (or the C&NW railroad tracks) to Lake Street.

⁶ Zimmerman Family Tree, Ancestry.com

⁷ Cook County Recorder of Deeds, Tract Book 110, pages 76-80 & 398. Property description – The south 58 feet of the west 170.6 feet of lot 18 of the Kettlestrings Addition to Harlem a Sub Northern Part of NW ¼ of Section 7-39-13.

⁸ *Patton & Fisher*, advertisement, Oak Park Reporter, March 2, 1894, page 5.

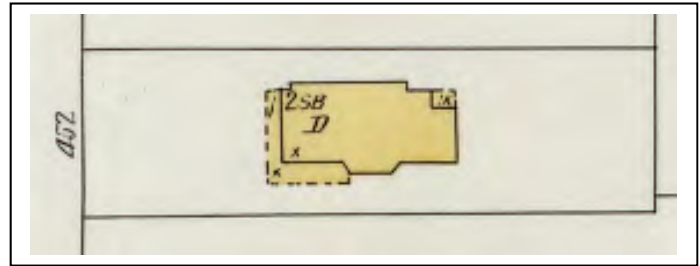
⁹ Numbers in () are the current addresses on Kenilworth.

¹⁰ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois, Sanborn Map Company, 1895, Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C. 20540-4650 USA, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g020591908>

The markings on the 1895 Sanford Insurance Map for Oak Park plan indicate it was a two-story (2) frame residence (D) with a shingle roof (x). There was a wrap-around one-story (1) porch with a shingle roof (x) around the front and south side of the building and a one-story (1) rear porch and addition, both with a shingle roof (x). It also had a bay window on the south side of the house. There was no other structure, barn or shed, on the property.

The 1908 Sanford Fire Insurance Map¹¹ plat (right) is not changed from the previous 1895 map, other than now indicating that the building is a two-story dwelling with a basement (2SB). The "B" basement indication

was a new designation for the 1908 map. Basements were not designated on the 1895 maps.¹²

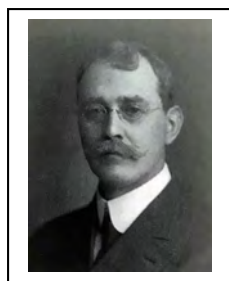


The William C. Douglas House¹³ (right) across the street on Kenilworth is by Patton & Fisher and dates from 1893.

It has the same 1895 Sanborn Map designations as 408 but without the porte-cochere on the right (north), a conservatory addition on the south rear, and a two-story octagonal bay on the south side of the building - all of which appear on the 1908 and 1947 maps. Strip away the later additions and it may very well have looked like the A. L. Robbins house at 408.



Patton & Fisher Architects



Normand Smith Patton was born July 10, 1852, in Hartford, Connecticut. After studying at Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts, Patton entered the Massachusetts Institute Technology (MIT) in Cambridge as a student of architecture. Following his graduation from MIT in 1874, he established an architectural firm in Chicago. Patton was involved in several partnerships throughout his career. In about 1885 he formed a partnership with Reynolds Fisher, which lasted until about 1899, at which time Grant C. Miller became a partner and the firm was renamed Patton, Fisher and Miller. In 1901, Fisher left architectural practice and moved to Seattle to work as vice president and treasurer of the Pontiac Brick and Tile Company. After Fisher's departure,

¹¹ IBID, 1908 Map

¹² See the EXHIBTS section of this report for full block copies of the Sanford Insurance Maps for the various years discussed.

¹³ The William C. Douglas House was designated an Oak Park Landmark in 2010.

Patton and Miller continued the firm. In addition to professional practice, Patton was an original member of the Western Association of Architects, was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects, and served on its Board of Directors from 1896 to 1898 and again from 1900 to 1902. Patton continued his professional practice until his death on May 12, 1915. Patton and Fisher designed numerous educational, institutional, commercial, and residential projects in Chicago and throughout the upper Midwest, primarily in the Romanesque Revival style.¹⁴

Alfred Robbins only owned the house until April of 1894, just four years. A short snippet in a March, 1894 Oak Park newspaper column citing local Oak Park happenings, wrote:

*A. L. Robbins and family left Tuesday for Los Angeles for permanent residence.*¹⁵

The reason for moving to California is not known, but it may have been that his wife Clara was ill and they moved to a more temperate climate. In any case, Clara died on August 11, 1895.¹⁶ The cause is not known. Alfred remarried on August 17, 1910 to Alice Glendon.¹⁷ They resided in California where Alfred passed on August 7, 1936 in Oakland, California.¹⁸

Before leaving Oak Park, Alfred sold the house to Edwin C. Glover, a Chicago book publisher, on April 4, 1894. Edwin and his wife Sadie had two children, Mildred and Hazel and a 24 year old Swedish maid, Annie Anderson.¹⁹ Edwin's family owned the house until 1908, but Edwin passed on January 30, 1904, he was forty-nine years old.

A quote from his obituary stated:

*...always been a man of slight physique and of delicate health and his last illness was brought on by overwork.*²⁰

The Glover family retained ownership of the house until October of 1908 when they sold it to Alvirus Nelson Hitchcock (1854-1944), a minister with a Doctorate in Divinity and the Secretary for the American Board of Commission for Foreign Missions.²¹ He was married to Janette "Nettie" Meigs in 1877 and they had six children, Ethel (1878-1884), Edith (1879-1883), Estelle (1880-?), Harold (1886-1979), Helen (1889-1963), and Frances (1892-1977).²² The Hitchcock family owned the home for about a year and a half, selling it to George A. Chapman in February of 1910.²³

¹⁴ Bio information from - Ryerson and Burnham Archives, Ryerson and Burnham Libraries The Art Institute of Chicago website.

<http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm/ref/collection/findingaids/id/14908>

¹⁵ *Oak Park*, The Oak Park Reporter, Friday, March 2, 1894, p.4.

¹⁶ Zimmerman Family Tree, Ancestry.com

¹⁷ Ancestry.com. Cook County, Illinois, Marriages Index, 1871-1920 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

¹⁸ *Alfred L. Robbins Dies in Oakland*, Berkley Daily Gazette, August 8, 1936, p.8.

¹⁹ 1900 United States Federal Census Records, Ancestry.com.

²⁰ *Death of E C Glover*, Oak Park Oak Leaves, February 5, 1904, p.10.

²¹ 1910 United States Federal Census Records, Ancestry.com. Also Who's Who, Knox College List, 1923, p.160.

²² 1900, 1910 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com.

²³ Cook County Recorder of Deeds, Tract Book 110, pages 76-80 & 398.

The transaction was noted in a local newspaper shown at right.²⁴

George Alfred Chapman was born in Akron, Ohio on May 25, 1871 to Hezekiah S. Chapman (1829-1893) and Martha Toles Peckham (1831-1903). He grew up in Akron, Ohio, attended the University of Wisconsin and on June 6, 1899 married Minnie Florence Taggart (1872-1964). They moved to Chicago, lived in an apartment in Hyde Park with his mother, Martha, and by 1910 they had moved to Oak Park, renting a house at 405 Grove Avenue with their two children – Theron (1902-1964) and Virginia (1906-1993).²⁵

George was an early manager for the Quaker Oats Company, specifically the company's livestock feed division in 1905. He was with the company for thirty-five years.²⁶ George Chapman purchased the house with the intent, as noted in the newspaper clipping above, to:

...make alternations and additions to the house when he secures possession next fall.

With that in mind, he secured a building permit for an alteration to the original Robbins house. The permit, right, was number 2657, dated September 14, 1910, made out to the owner – Geo A. Chapman, the contractor was Guy & McClintoch for a \$5000 two-story stucco alteration to the existing house.²⁷

Also in May of 1911, Chapman secured a building permit, number 2922, right, for a one-story, fourteen by twenty foot frame garage. Later, in 1928, he secured a permit, number 19154, for a one-story stucco three-car garage.²⁸

Early Season Realty Deals
Dr. A. N. Hitchcock has sold his home at 452 North Kenilworth avenue to George A. Chapman of the Quaker Oats company, who intends to make alterations and additions to the house when he secures possession next fall. The sale was negotiated by William R. Lloyd. Last Mountain with the Western Star.

No. 2657
SEP 14 1910
Date
Geo A. Chapman Owner
Guy & McClintoch Contractor
L 58 1/2 - 18 Block 1
Kelluming Addn. Sec. 18
405 No. 52 N. Kenilworth Street
Cost 5000
Stories high 2 Stucco Alterations
Size 58 x 32 Ceilings 9-9
160

121 No. 2922
Date MAY 4 1911
To G. A. Chapman Owner
Kelluming Bros. Contractor
L 58 1/2 - 18 Block 1
Kelluming Addn. Sec. 7
No. 452 N. Kenilworth Street
Cost 350
Stories high 1 Frame Garage
Size 14 x 20 Ceilings 10
200

²⁴ *Early Season Realty Deals*, Oak Park Oak Leaves, February 26, 1910, p. 2.

²⁵ 1900, 1910 United States Federal Census, Ancestry.com.

²⁶ *Brands, Trademarks and Good Will – The Story of The Quaker Oats Company*, Arthur F. Marquette, McGraw-Hill Book Company, January 1, 1967. And *G. A. Chapman Dies in Country*, Oak Park Oak Leaves, November 11, 1943, p. 49.

²⁷ Village of Oak Park Building Permit Files, Oak Park Village Hall, 123 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois.

²⁸ Ibid.

The architect for the remodeling was the newly formed (1905) partnership of Thomas Tallmadge and Vernon Watson.²⁹

The Architects –

Tallmadge and Watson Architects

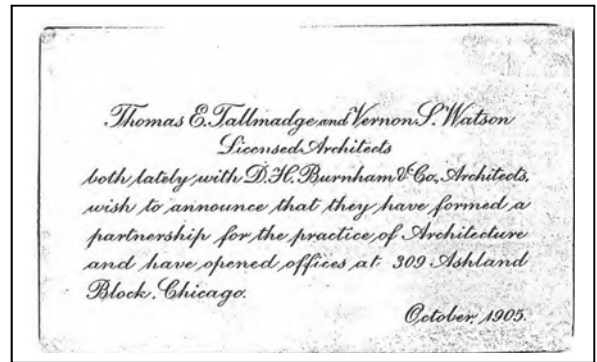
Thomas Eddy Tallmadge and Vernon Spencer Watson met while they were working in the Chicago office of Daniel H. Burnham. In 1905 they formed the architectural firm bearing

their names. Vernon Watson was the chief designer but Tallmadge was more widely known because of his activities as an architectural historian and teacher.

They opened their office in the Ashland Block building at the northeast corner of Clark and Randolph Streets in Chicago, Illinois and later moved their practice to the Security Building at 189 West Madison Street, where they continued their partnership for 31 years.

The firm soon developed a reputation for designing modest suburban prairie style residences primarily in Evanston and Oak Park, Illinois. But by the second decade of the 20th Century, the popularity of the Prairie Style had started to decline and after 1914, the designs of Tallmadge and Watson grew more medieval in flavor and, by the 1920s, there was an even stronger influence of revival styles and also a move into ecclesiastical architecture – Gothic being a favorite of Tallmadge. Their first church commission of importance came in 1909 with the design of the First Methodist Church in Evanston, Illinois. This was the first of over thirty churches that would be designed by the partnership which by 1914 was known more for their ecclesiastical rather than their residential architecture.

Their residential projects in the Chicago area numbered in the hundreds. In Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture Historic District alone there are over thirty projects designed by Tallmadge and Watson.



Thomas Eddy Tallmadge was born in Washington, D.C. on April 24, 1876 to Lewis Cass Tallmadge (1842-1902), an attorney, and Mary Elizabeth Eddy Tallmadge (1851-1921). His family moved to the Chicago suburb of Evanston, Illinois in 1880 where he was raised and graduated from Evanston High School in 1894. He then attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture in 1898. His thesis project for a private chapel in the Gothic style displays his early interest in ecclesiastical design. He returned to Chicago and obtained employment as a draftsman in the office of Daniel H. Burnham and Company. Tallmadge was with Burnham for seven years when he won the Falkenau Traveling Scholarship presented by the Chicago Architectural Club in 1904 for his entry "A Crèche in a Manufacturing District". He then spent the summer sketching architectural scenes across Europe.³⁰

²⁹ Tallmadge and Watson partnership announcement, courtesy of The Chicago History Museum Archives

³⁰ *The Prairie School-Frank Lloyd Wright and his Mid-west Contemporaries*, H. Allen Brooks, University of Toronto Press, 1972.

In 1906 Tallmadge became an instructor of architectural design and history at the Armour Institute (now known as the Illinois Institute of Technology), a position he held for twenty years. In 1908 he coined the term "The Chicago School" in an article of the same name written for the magazine *Architectural Review*. The term was used to describe Frank Lloyd Wright and his contemporaries who designed primarily Prairie style residences after the turn of the century. Tallmadge wrote three books on the subject of architectural history, "The Story of Architecture in America", "The Story of England's Architecture" and "Architecture in Old Chicago".³¹

After Vernon Watson retired in 1936, Tallmadge practiced alone in his studio at 19 East Pearson Street in Chicago with the exception of a men's dormitory commission at Ripon College which he designed with a 1930 Armour Institute graduate named William Alderman. Tallmadge was also known for designing a street light in the 1920's that is still in use today in Evanston and Oak Park. On January 1, 1940 Thomas Eddy Tallmadge was killed in a train accident near Arcola, Illinois. He was buried in Graceland Cemetery in Chicago, Illinois.³²



Vernon Spencer Watson was born in Chicago, Illinois on January 22, 1878 to Charles and Clara Watson. He studied architecture at the Armour Institute of Technology (now the Illinois Institute of Technology). After graduation he traveled through Europe before going to work in the office of Daniel H. Burnham. It was at the offices of D.H. Burnham that he met his future partner, Thomas Eddy Tallmadge. Tallmadge spent the summer of 1904 traveling through Europe and after his return he and Watson decided to leave Burnham. One of the first commissions that

Watson was involved in was the execution of the Charles H. Reeves Jr.³³ house for architect Lawrence Buck in the summer of 1905. Shortly thereafter in October of 1905 Tallmadge & Watson formed their own partnership.

Watson's Prairie ideology was well-defined before the partnership began, as could be seen in the execution of the house he built in 1904 for his wife, the former Emma Bassett, and himself located at 643 North Fair Oaks Avenue in Oak Park, Illinois.

Initially Tallmadge and Watson were well known for their design of modestly priced Prairie residences. As the Prairie movement began to wane by the early 1920's their commissions turned from Prairie residential to historical ecclesiastical architecture. They were successful in designing churches for many different religions and there are over 25 churches attributed to them in Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Nebraska.

One of the last projects that Watson worked on was the design of the Julia C. Lathrop Homes, a public housing project in Chicago at Diversey and Damen Avenues. It was a mix of two and three story apartments and row houses designed in collaboration with Thomas Tallmadge, Hugh Garden, E.E. Roberts and others. The partnership between Watson and Tallmadge was dissolved in 1936 when he retired to Berrien Springs, Michigan. He later returned to Oak Park where he died on September 28, 1950 at West Suburban Hospital. He is

³¹ *The Chicago School of Architecture*, Carl W. Conduit, University of Chicago Press, 1964.

³² "RAIL WRECK; 1 DEAD, 54 HURT", *Chicago Tribune*, January 2, 1900, page 1.

"T. E. TALLMADGE, ARCHITECT, DIES IN TRAIN WRECK", *Chicago Tribune*, January 2, 1900, page 4.

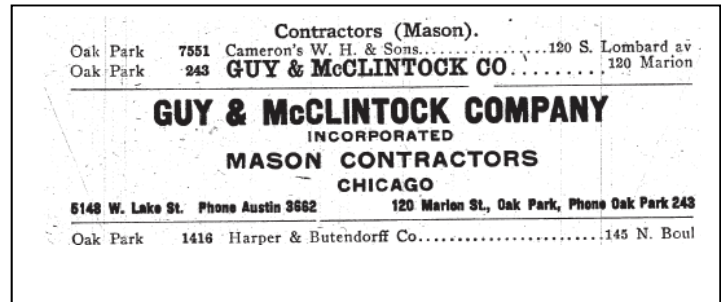
³³ The Reeves House is located at 454 West Iowa Street, Oak Park, Illinois. It dates from 1905

buried in Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago, Illinois.³⁴

The Chapman Remodel

George Chapman apparently commissioned Tallmadge and Watson prior to obtaining the building permit, probably late 1909 or early 1910 and may have been influenced by the one other T&W design on the Kenilworth block – the Charles E. Matthews House³⁵ at 432 N. Kenilworth, just several houses to the north of the Chapman House, dated as 1909, just before the Chapman remodel. It too is a cement stucco residence.

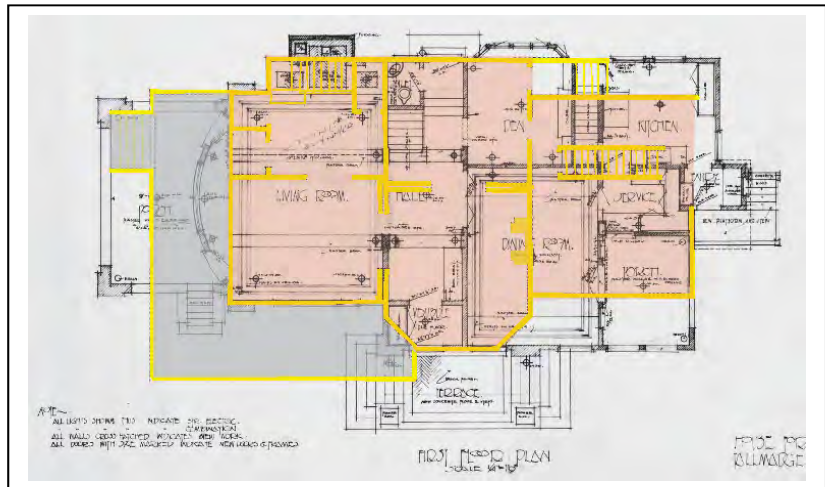
The contractor for the remodel, Guy & McClintock, were apparently a favorite contractor of Tallmadge & Watson, as they were responsible for at least half of the thirty-one T&W projects in the Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture Historic District. They advertised in local newspapers and periodicals as mason contractors, see right.³⁶



Tallmadge & Watson's drawings for the remodel were available from the Ryerson and Burnham Archives of the Art Institute of Chicago. Copies of the drawings are attached to this document in the "Exhibits" section. The drawings explain the complete remodeling of the house, using the "bones" of the Patton & Fisher house to completely engulf the house with the new Tallmadge & Watson design. This is something Frank Lloyd Wright did to three of his commissions just a block away on Forest Avenue.³⁷ The drawings also elicit additional information about the layout of the 1890 Robbins House. Below is the T&W first floor plan

which designates where existing walls were to be removed or to remain. I've highlighted those in the plan at right-

According to T&W's drawings the remodeling of the Robbins House consisted of reusing the existing foundation (original sections are



³⁴ "Noted Architect, Church Designer, Dies Here at 72", *Oak Park Oak Leaves*, October 05, 1950, p 57.

³⁵ The Matthews House was designated an Oak Park Landmark in 2011.

³⁶ The "Guy & McClintock" listing is from the "Classified Directory" of the "Oak Park Telephone Directory", March 1, 1910, p. 95.

³⁷ Wrights Hills House (1906) at 313, the Beachy House (1906) at 238 and the Copeland House (1909) at 400 Forest Avenue. Wright's exterior design for the Copeland was never carried out because of his escapade to Europe in late 1909.

visible in the current basement) plus new supports for the new two story front porch addition, a south entry and a buildout of the northeast corner of the house.

The first floor added two-story porch to the front of the house, removing the original wrap-around porch, reconfigured the front part of the plan with a large living room and new fireplace, a new main entry on the south side that opens to a new entry hall that bisects the floor plan from south to north. The east end of the plan consisted of the Kitchen and service area (butler pantry) with an enclosed porch off the dining room in the southeast corner of the plan.

The second floor reconfigured the bedroom layout with a master bedroom suite that included a master bath and dressing room, a walk out front porch, and a new tile faced gas-log fireplace with a galvanized vent in the exterior wall in lieu of a chimney. The balance of the floor plan included three bedrooms, a full bath a linen room and a main and rear service staircase.

The third floor attic space has a bedroom with connecting bath (probably a servant's room) and the balance was labeled for storage.

The changes to the exterior were very extensive, although the original shingle roof shapes remained with a few slight extensions to the edges and about an eight foot section in the rear, according to the drawings they were not to change. The façade of the building was covered entirely with stucco plaster and new wood trim. Many of the existing windows were reset and new ones added. The added two-story front porch second floor openings were to be "NEW FRAMES RABETED FOR SASH", probably for the installation of storm or screened sash. The lower porch was to be open to the weather, but subsequent owners have installed custom screens.

The Village of Oak Park data base for the Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District describes the architectural style of the T&W remodel as "Tudor Revival" or in another instance as "Tudor/Prairie Influences". I would prefer Prairie/Tudor Influences.



Photo by Jack Lesniak

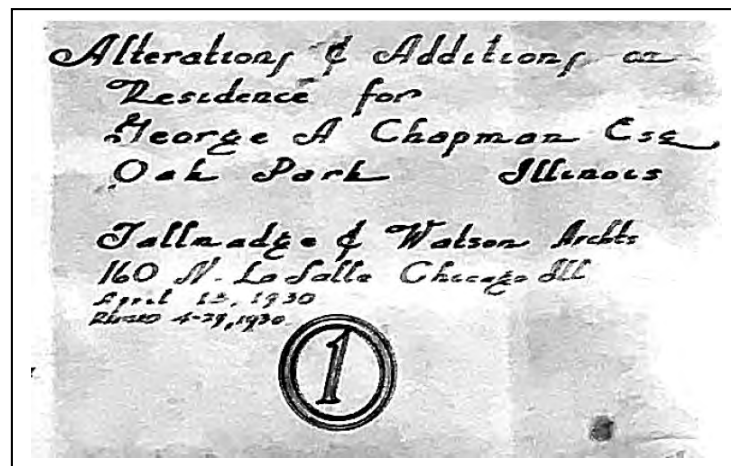
This design viewed from the street is more Tallmadge & Watson Prairie with its rough plaster surfaces and their usual two-story pier elements at the buildings corners. The front first floor porch has a curved bridge element that sets this house apart from many of the architects' work of this period but places it more in their Prairie vernacular than the mentioned Tudor Revival. The Tudor scheme is more evident on the north and south elevations where the vertical span includes the roof gable and three-stories of wall surface.

The main entrance and the interior vestibule doors have original art glass insets. The drawings call for art glass windows on the main stair landing. The current windows are made of leaded comes in a 4 x 6 inch grid with clear glass. The owner believes these are original. This is the only original art glass in the building.³⁸

The interior design, according to the architect's drawings, had some prairie detailing – a brick faced fireplace and hearth; running wood trim on the ceilings and walls; a main stair with a built-up newel post, a veneered handrail with balusters made up of 7/8" x 1 1/8" verticals interspersed with a 7/8" x 8" boards. The dining room had veneered paneled walls and bi-fold art glass entry doors. All of these details have been removed except for the stairs and the entrance vestibule which has the original 1910 wood trim.³⁹

CHANGES

Recently, it was found that the current owners, the Mason's, have a roll of blue-print



drawings⁴⁰ by Tallmadge and Watson, dated 1930, and titled:

I photographed them and reversed the drawings to black on white to make them easier to read.

The drawings are dated "Revised 4-29-1930" and were produced by Tallmadge & Watson Architects, the same firm that did the 1910 remodel of the Robbins house for the same owner, George Chapman.

The work involved an alteration to the living room and the second floor dressing room. The original living room had a brick fireplace and hearth and there were strips of wood trim defining the perimeter of the ceiling along with two plaster beams running east and west that divided the ceiling into three sections.

This was a Prairie interior design in 1910. By 1930, Prairie had lost its popularity and it appears the Chapman's were installing a more popular style of the day. All of the ceiling wood trim was removed including the two plaster beams. A new plaster cornice was installed

³⁸ See the 'EXHIBITS' section of this document for photos.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ I photographed and reversed the drawings to black on white to make them easier to read. See "EXHIBITS".

and the brick fireplace was removed, patched with plaster and a new marble hearth and stone mantle installed

The dressing room had new cabinetry installed and new fixtures, lavatory and shower. The ceilings were vaulted as were the passage from the dressing room to the bath area.

There was very little done to the exterior, except for a new canopy over the south entry door. It appears that the only real drawing is the top sheet labeled as drawing number "1". The other drawings are not numbered and appear to be bound into the set to describe the existing conditions.⁴¹ There is no building permit on file with the Village of Oak Park for this work. As the scope is predominantly interior to the building, it may be that George Chapman skipped that part of the process.

Yaryan Heating System

The Chapman house utilized the Oak Park Yaryan heating system. This was a franchised service that provided heat to individual houses in Oak Park. The system was conceived in the later 1890's when electric generating stations were operated by steam engines. Waste steam from the engines heated the water, which was piped into radiators in nearby homes. During the summer of 1901, a large brick building, the Yaryan Light and Heating plant, to supply power was erected at Euclid Avenue and North Boulevard by architect E. E. Roberts and a well to supply water for the system was constructed. Early in 1902 the plant started supplying hot water to houses in an area bounded by Harlem, Chicago, East Avenues and Madison Street.⁴² Insulated hot water mains, varying in size from three to eight inches, radiated out from the plant down individual streets with 1 ¼ inch supply pipes branching off to subscriber's houses.⁴³ The system became outmoded and too expensive to continue service and it was closed in 1959, at which time several thousand subscribers needed to install their own heating systems.

The original radiator distribution piping still exists in the basement of the house and the owner said that there were radiators in the garage when they first purchased the house. These eventually failed over the years and were removed.

George Chapman died on November 6, 1943 at the age of seventy-two. At the time of his death he was the president of the Riverdale Products Company, an animal feed and agricultural supply company. He also owned and operated a farm near Elburn, Illinois. His wife, Minnie, died on April 2, 1964 and the house was sold by her daughter, Virginia, to Paul R. Gerst on October 14, 1964.

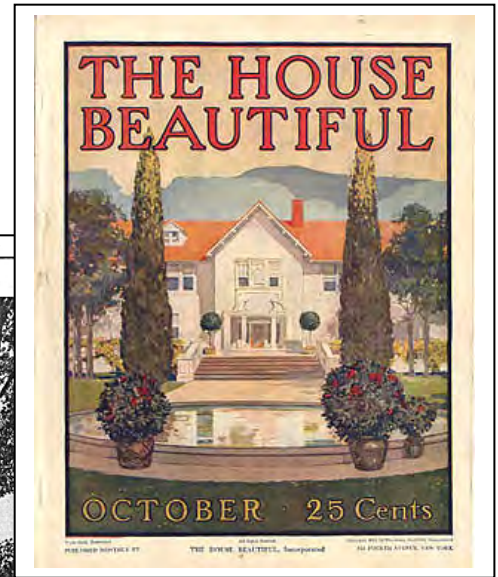
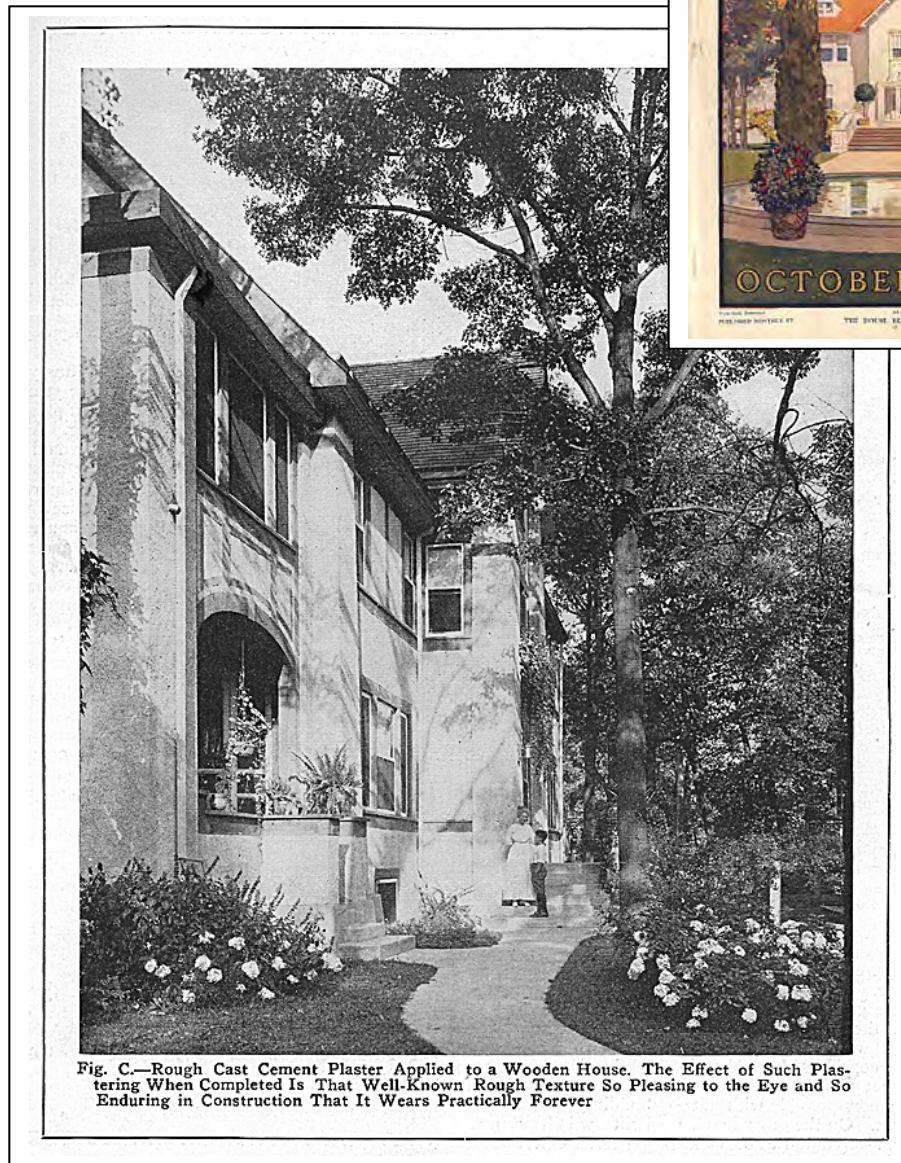
In the next five years the property moved to Robert Follrath, Robert Mitchell, and finally, in July of 1969, the current owners, Myrtle & George Mason. They have owned the house for fifty years.

⁴¹ See the 'EXHIBITS' section of this document a copy of the drawing.

⁴² Historical Survey of Oak Park, Illinois. By Gertrude Fos Hoagland, 1937, p.91, 92. Oak Park and River Forest Historical Society.

⁴³ See EXHIBITS for a partial plan of the Yaryan Heating Piping map, Courtesy of the Historical Society of Oak Park & River Forest.

EXHIBITS



The above photo of the George Chapman house was published in the *House Beautiful*, of October 1913 or a year or so after it was completed. The woman and the young boy standing on the entry stair could be Mrs. Chapman (Minnie) and her son Theron. The house is not identified in the magazine article, but used as an illustration of a pleasing example of a "Rough Cast Plaster Applied to a Wooden House." The article "*The Best Way to Use Cement*" was authored by architect Charles E. White Jr., an architect that was employed for several years with Frank Lloyd Wright and who went on to open his own practice in Oak Park.

Property Records for 408 North Kenilworth, Oak Park Illinois

Cook County Recorder of Deeds

Tract Book 110, pages 76, 77, 78, 79, 80 & 398.

Property Discription: Kettlestrings Addition to Harlem a Sub Northern Part of NW 1/4 of Section 7-39-13.

Specifically - the South 58 feet of the West 170.6 feet of Lot 18

Document #	Grantor	Grantee	Inst	Date of Inst	Date of Filing	Description
1240299	Mary A. Yorke & Hus	Clara V. Robbins	WD	March 18, 1890	March 26, 1890	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
2032833	Clara V. Robbins & Hus	Edwin C Glover	WD	April 4, 1894	April 28, 1894	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
3055149	Edwin C Glover & wf	Geo W Woodbury	WD	January 15, 1901	January 17, 1901	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
3484082	Sadie A Glover & hus	Mildred B Glover	WD	December 28, 1903	December 29, 1903	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
4277246	Hazel C Glover	Alvirus N. Hitchcock	WD	October 9, 1908	October 20, 1908	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
4510472	Alvirus N. Hitchcock & wf	Geo A Chapman	WD	February 15, 1910	February 16, 1910	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
19296317	Virginia C Hibben	Paul Gerst & wf	WD	October 14, 1964	November 6, 1964	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
20407089	Paul Gerst & wf	Harris Trust	D	February 14, 1968	February 16, 1968	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
20504561	Harris Trust	Robt T Follrath & wf	D	May 10, 1968	May 29, 1968	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18
20922459	L Mitchell et al	G Mason & wf	WD	July 8, 1969	August 6, 1969	S 58ft of W 170.6ft lot 18

for the Retail Grocers and Merchants' Association and the Northern California Retail Druggists' Association.

Alfred L. Robbins Dies in Oakland

Alfred Louis Robbins, Oakland insurance man, passed away yesterday at the family home, 1831 Lawton Avenue, following a brief illness. Mr. Robbins was born in Connecticut and had lived in Oakland for the last 15 years. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Aline Robbins, and by three sons and two daughters. They are Edward A. Robbins of Oakland, John T. Robbins of Oakland, Frederick G. Robbins of Philadelphia, Mrs. William P. Neale of Long Beach and Mrs. E. C. Smeltzer of Van Nuys. He is also survived by one sister, Miss Frances May Robbins of Oakland.

Private funeral services will be held.

BERKELEY WOMAN FACES EXAMINATION

By United Press
REDWOOD CITY, Aug. 8.—Mrs. Alecia Brezee McDonald, of Berkeley,

Births

Followed grade and place to 1 Tuolumne Vochens turing th camp and ding abn two were the stnge with a lo by Miss of the oc The en cotized by Dorot Arthur Canney. Toomay. "The On Mrs. Red Scene" b thur the poetry w the surpi by all it New g cluded M Mr. and

Alfred L. Robbins Dies in Oakland, Berkley Daily Gazette, August 8, 1936, p8.

to persons breaking this law.

Real Estate and Building.

The Fair Oaks Association—A New Syndicate—Mr. Patton's Large Purchases.

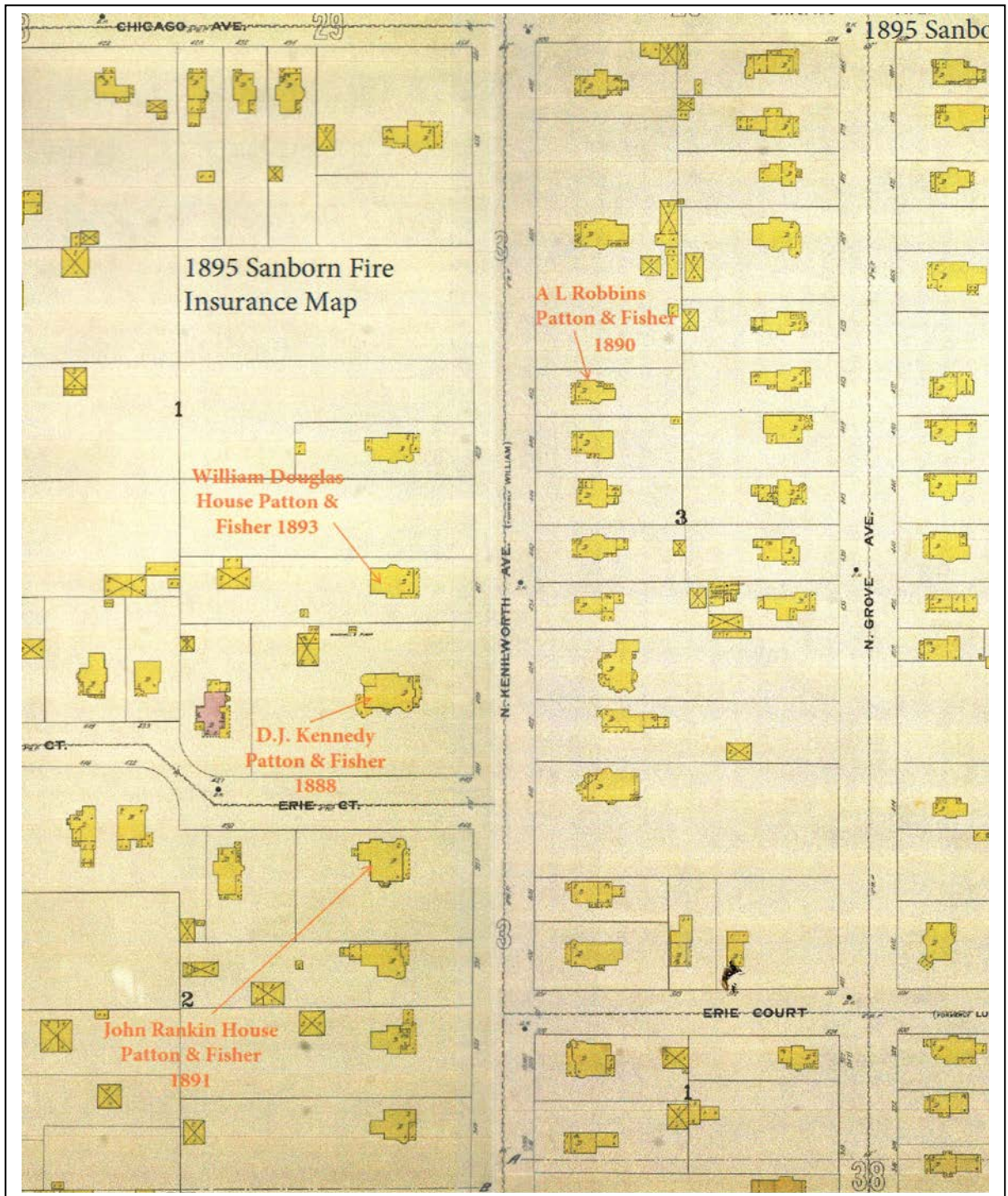
Mr. N. S. Patton, the well-known architect, is making some large investments in Oak Park and Ridgeland. He has just purchased of Messrs. J. G. and R. W. Goodwillie the entire frontage on the east side of Oak Park avenue from Washington Boulevard to the Chicago & Great Western, some twenty lots, upon which he will build houses for sale. The price paid was \$30 per foot. Mr. Patton has also bought twenty lots on Ogden avenue, Ridgeland, at \$20 per foot, which he will build on for sale. A. T. Hemingway negotiated both sales.

A. L. Robbins, of River Forrest, has bought a lot on Willis street which he will improve with a handsome residence.

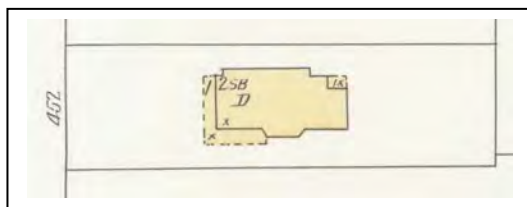
W. R. Owen will build a handsome

ne pr an in ha be ac ju di lo su Cl re Pr no At E No A

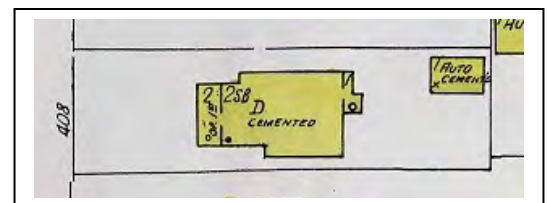
Oak Park Reporter, May 5, 1890, p1
"A. L. Robbins, of River Forest, has bought a lot on Willis Street which he will improve with a handsome residence



1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – The Robbins house is upper right and other designs by Patton & Fisher on the block are noted.



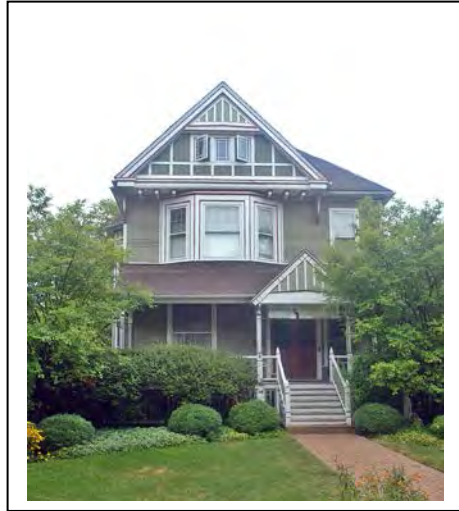
The footprint of the Robbins House in 1908.
From the 1908 Sanborn Insurance Map



The footprint of the Robbins House after the
Chapman remodel of 1910.

From the 1947 Sanborn Insurance Map. The address
changed from 452 to 408 about 1910 or 1911.

PATTON AND FISHER OAK PARK PROJECTS



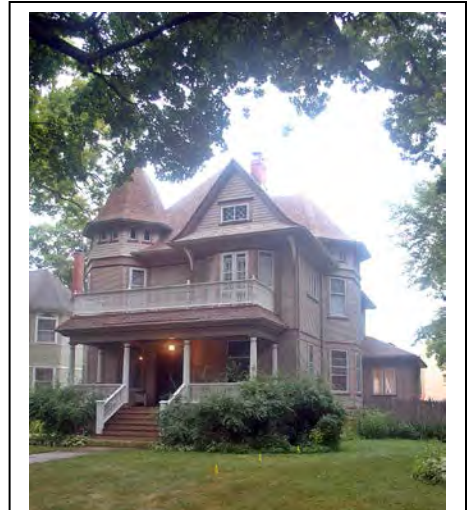
Edward Osgood House
205 N. Euclid, O.P. 1888



D. J. Kennedy House
309 Kenilworth. O.P. 1888



Major H. M. Robinson
3 Elizabeth Court, O.P. 1889



Laurence Muther House
222 Forest Avenue 1890



John Rankin House
245 N. Kenilworth O.P. 1891



Peter E. Wilson House
320 N. Euclid O.P. 1891



William A. Douglas House
317 N. Kenilworth, O.P. 1893



Walter Thomas Mills House
601 N. Kenilworth, O.P. 1893

Patton & Fisher
Architects
Advertisement

Oak Park Directory
January 1, 1897, p 26

E. W. LYMAN. *CHAS. L. BLISS.*

E. W. LYMAN & Co.

Insurance Agents,

152 LA SALLE STREET

TELEPHONE 763. CHICAGO.

Agents for the following Companies:

<p>ORGANIZED</p> <p>1893 FIREMAN'S FUND INSURANCE CO.</p> <p>1851 PACIFIC FIRE INSURANCE CO.</p> <p>1837 NEW YORK BOWERY FIRE INSURANCE CO.</p> <p>1850 FIREMEN'S INSURANCE CO.</p> <p>1853 RUTGERS FIRE INSURANCE CO.</p> <p>1850 MERCHANTS' INSURANCE CO.</p> <p>1852 MERCANTILE FIRE INSURANCE CO.</p> <p>1836 NORTHERN ASSURANCE CO.</p>	<p>CALIFORNIA.</p> <p>NEW YORK.</p> <p>NEW YORK.</p> <p>DAYTON.</p> <p>NEW YORK.</p> <p>NEW YORK.</p> <p>NEW YORK.</p> <p>LONDON.</p>
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Total **ASSETS** Represented, over **ELEVEN** Million Dollars
Losses Adjusted and Paid from this Office.

Winsor & Newton Colors,
BRUSHES, CANVAS, CRAYONS,
&c.
DRAWING PAPERS,
Tracing Cloth,
T Squares, Triangles,
Pencils, Inks, &c.
MATHEMATICAL INSTRUMENTS.

Novelties for Decoration, Plaques, Panels,
Vases, Pottery, &c.
MATERIALS FOR REPOUSSE,
LUSTRA, TAPESTRY AND
FANCY DECORATIONS.

NORMAN B. PATTON. REYNOLDS FISHER.

PATTON & FISHER,

Architects,

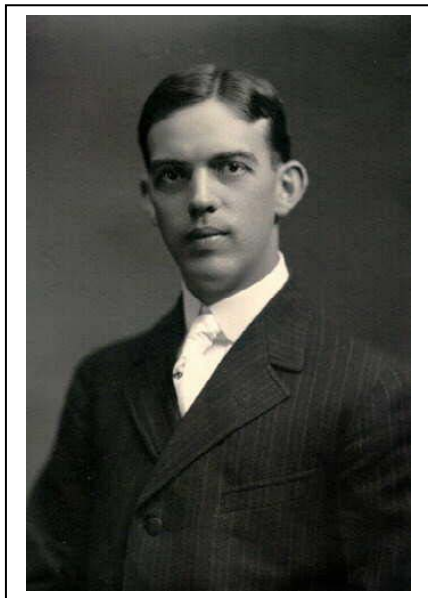
115 Monroe St., Room 44,

CHICAGO.

Will Design and Superintend con-
struction of Residences of all
classes in Oak Park.

Architects of the **SCOVILLE INSTITUTE.**

26



George Alfred Chapman
Ca. 1906
Photo Ancestry.com, Family Trees



Minnie Florence Taggart Chapman
Ca. 1890
Photo Ancestry.com, Family Trees

Thurs., Nov. 11, 1943 Page 49

G. A. Chapman Dies in Country

George Alfred Chapman of 408 North Kenilworth died on Saturday, November 6, at Community hospital, Geneva. He was president of the Riverdale Products company in Chicago, coming to Chicago at the time the Quaker Oats company was founded and was associated with that firm for thirty-two years. He operated a farm near Elburn in Kane county.

Mr. Chapman was born in Akron, Ohio, in 1871. Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Minnie Chapman and two children, Mrs. Virginia Hibben and Lt. Theron T. Chapman.

Services on Monday afternoon were conducted at Postlewait's chapel and interment took place at Elburn.

Amling's
OPEN EYES. *flowers*

Oak Park Oak Leaves,
November 11, 1943, p.49.

Early Season Realty Deals

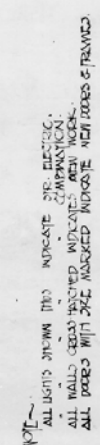
Dr. A. N. Hitchcock has sold his home at 452 North Kenilworth avenue to George A. Chapman of the Quaker Oats company, who intends to make alterations and additions to the house when he secures possession next fall. The sale was negotiated by William R. Lloyd.

Leo Montamat, with the Western Electric Co. has purchased a lot on Franklin

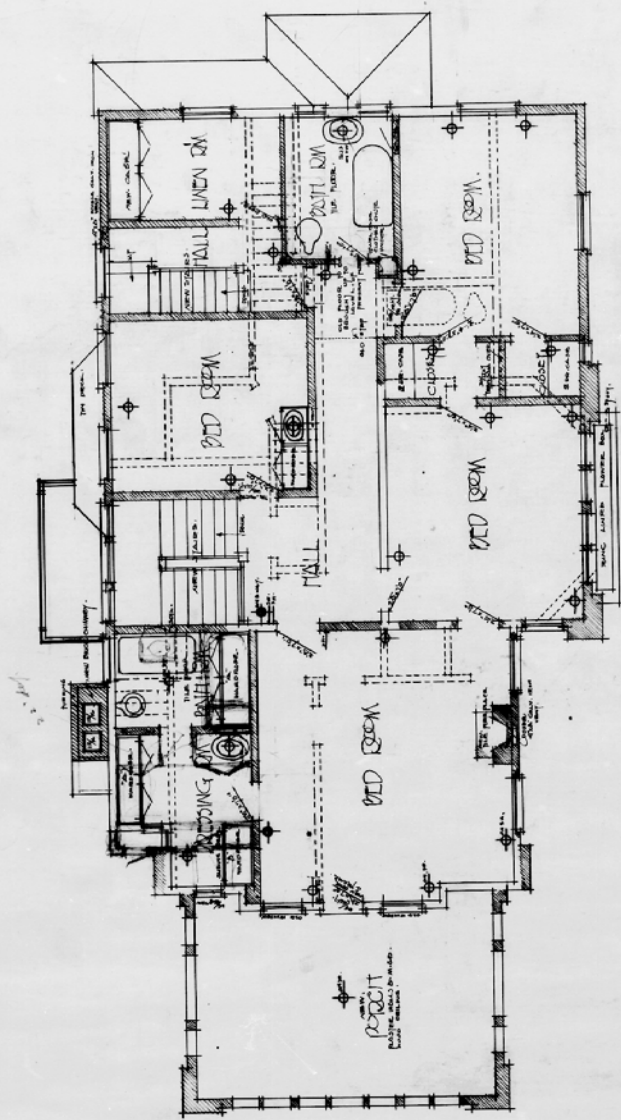
Oak Park Oak Leaves, February 26, 1910, p.2

*Documents on file at the Ryerson
& Burnham Library Archives at
the Art Institute of Chicago*





DRAWING # 2 – FIRST FLOOR PLAN



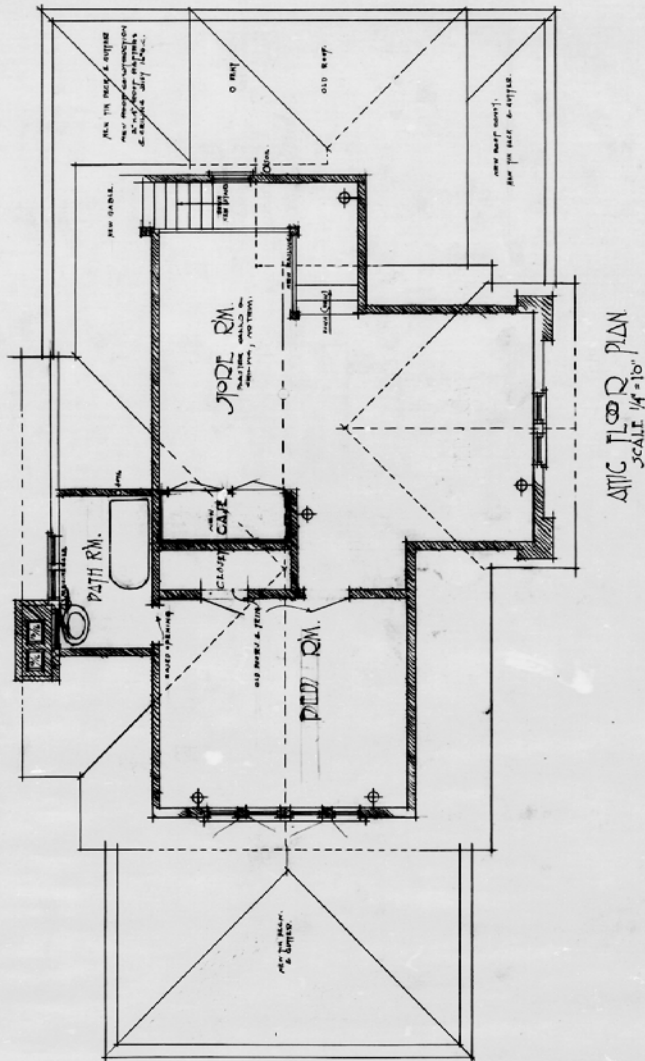
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/4" = 10'

NOTE FOR G.E.A. CHAPMAN 1939
ALUMINUM & IRON, ARCHT'S

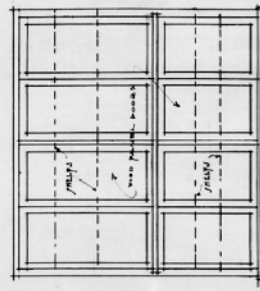
3

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DRAWING # 3 - SECOND FLOOR PLAN



ATTIC FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/4"=10"



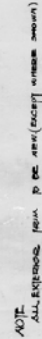
CASE IN STORL RM.

HOUSE FOR GEO. A. CHADMAN ESQ.
FALLMERE & WATSON, ARCHTS.

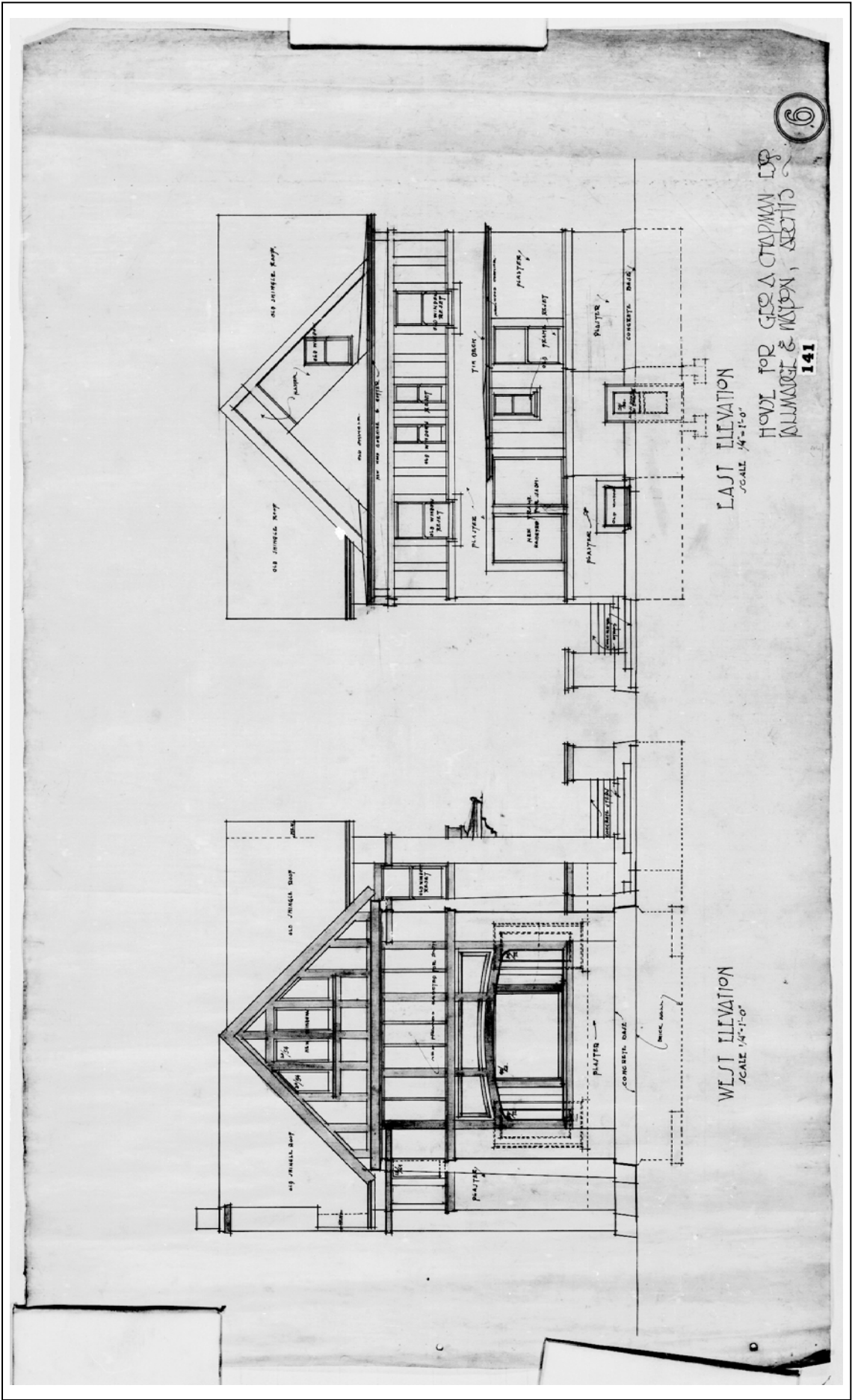
4

139

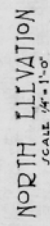
DRAWING # 4 - ATTIC FLOOR PLAN



DRAWING # 5 – SOUTH ELEVATION



DRAWING # 6 - WEST & EAST ELEVATIONS

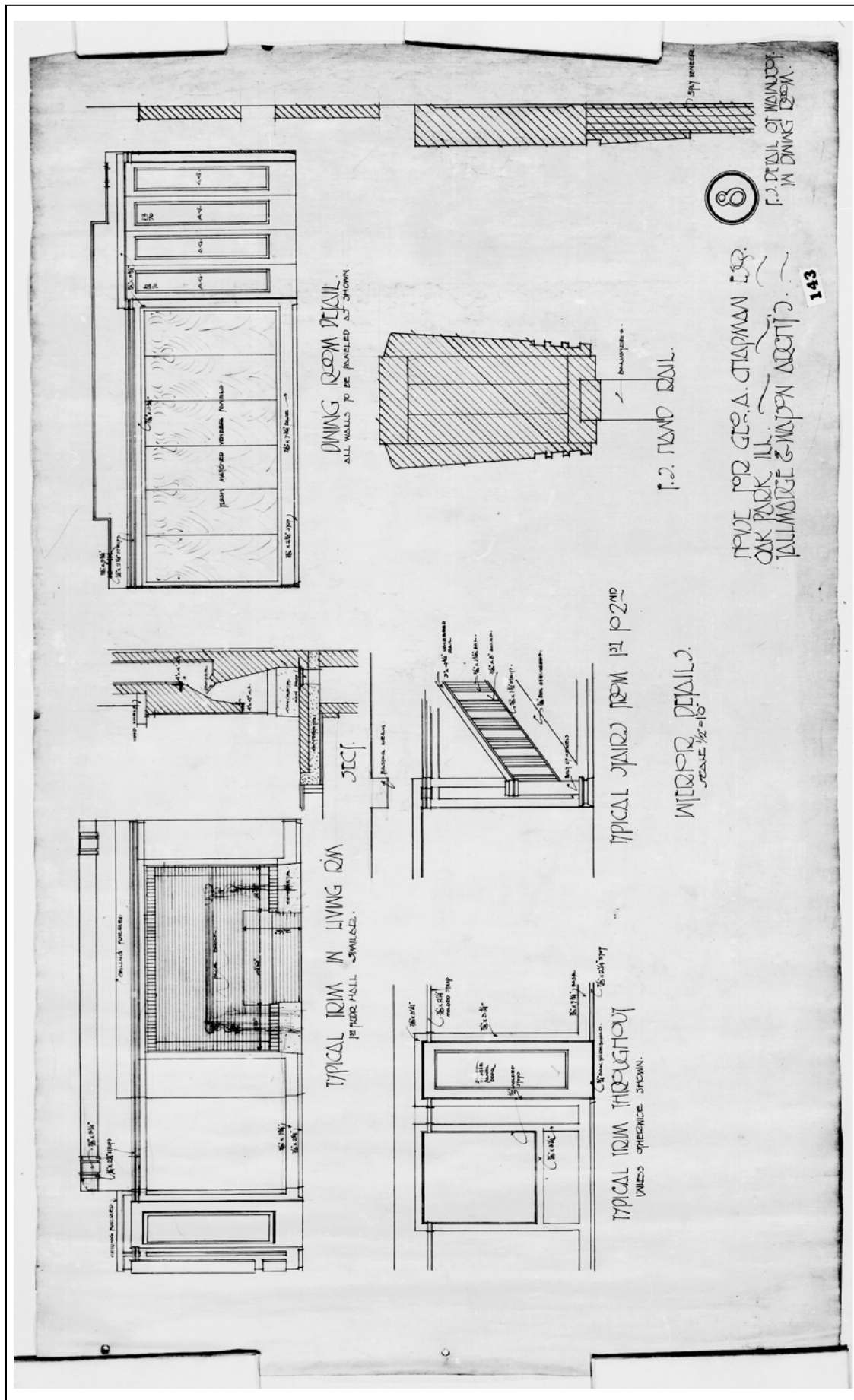


HOWE FOR GLA. CHAPMAN LOR
TALLMADGE & WATSON ARCHTS —

142

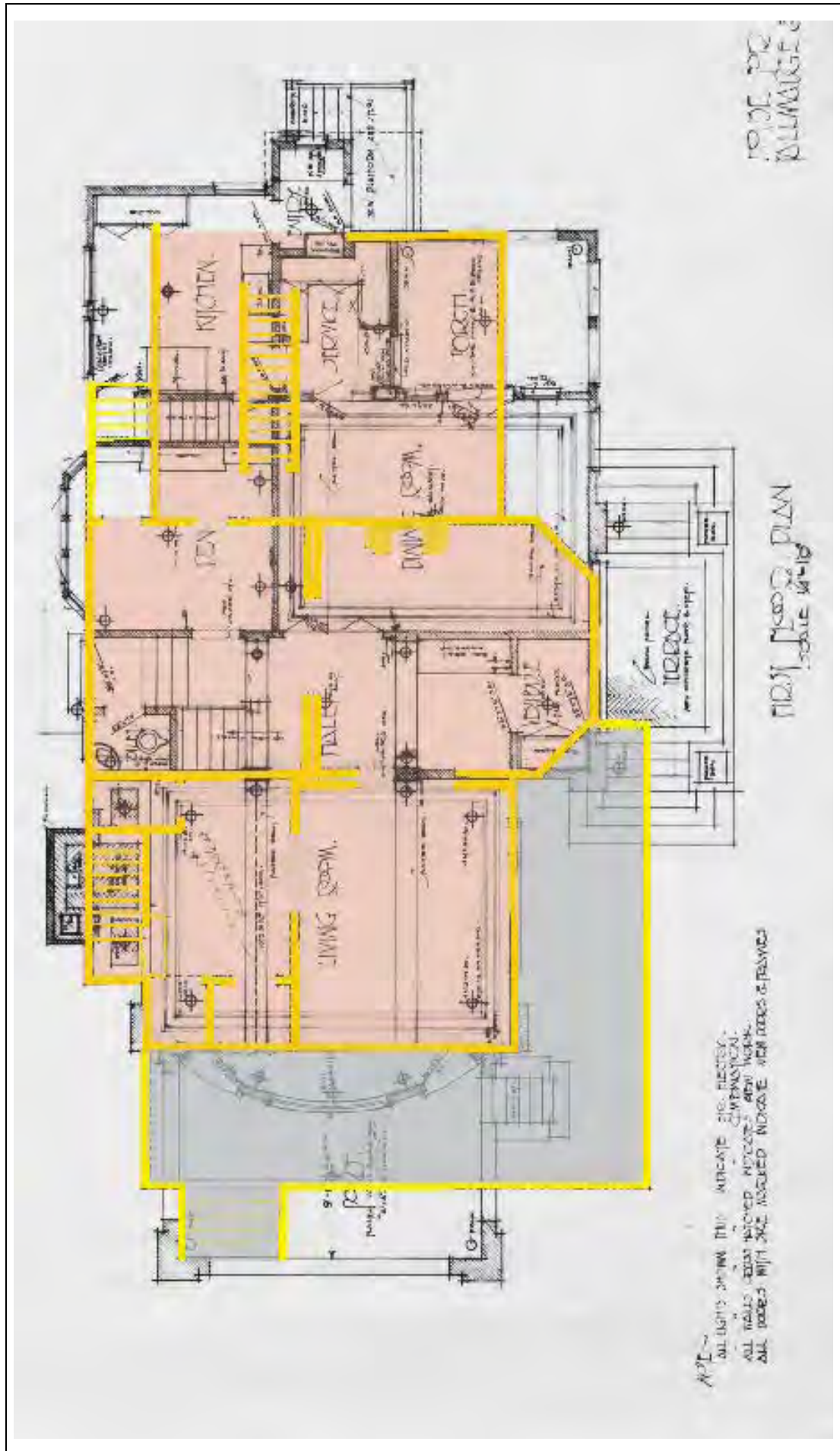


DRAWING # 7 – NORTH ELEVATION



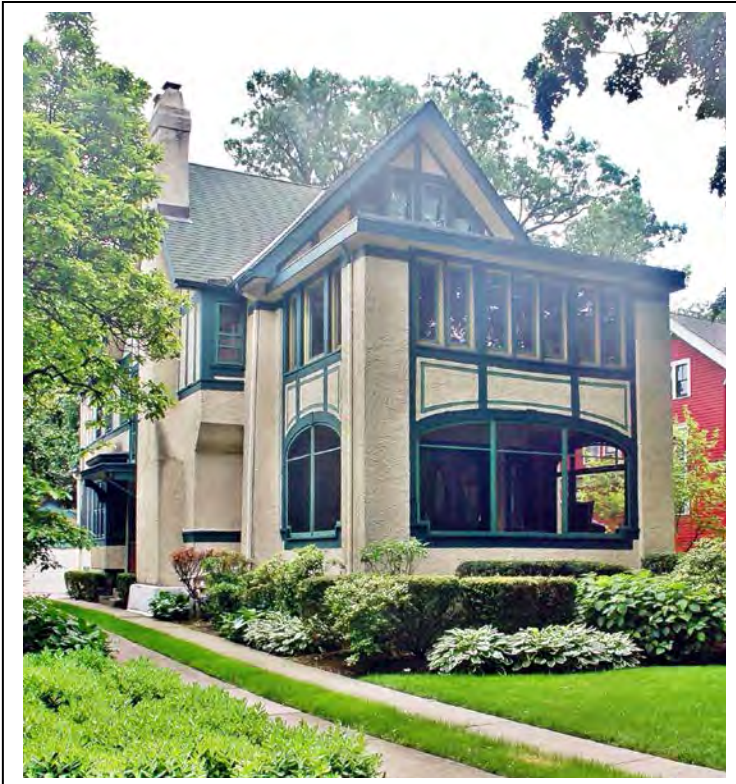
DRAWING # 8 - INTERIOR DETAILS





FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Original partitions of the Patton & Fisher Robbins House are highlighted in yellow. Gray area is the silhouette of the original wrap-around porch and the pink area is the configuration of the original house.



EXTERIOR PHOTOS OF 408 North Kenilworth

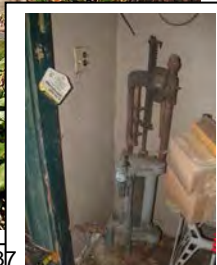
Top Left: Front & North Elevation

Top Right: Original Art Glass Entry Door

Middle: Front & South Elevation with main entrance.

Bottom: South Side Main Entrance

All photos by Jack Lesniak



EXTERIOR PHOTOS

Top: Rear Elevation

Middle Left: Lead camed triple window over North entry.

Middle Right: South side main entry stoop.

Bottom: Existing Garage

Bottom Inset: Original antique gasoline pump in the northwest corner of garage.

All photos by Jack Lesniak

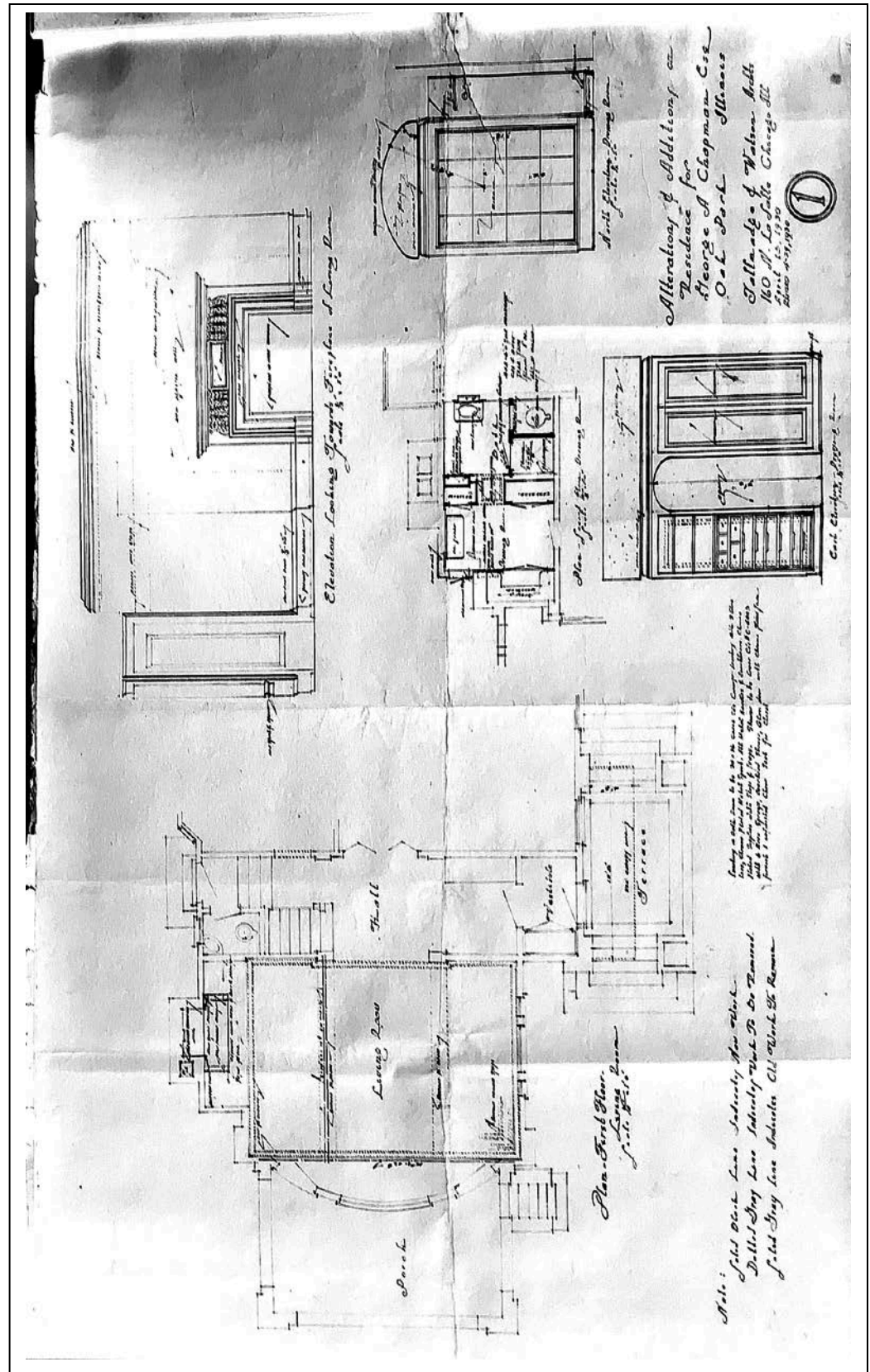
Tallmadge & Watson Architects Drawing for the

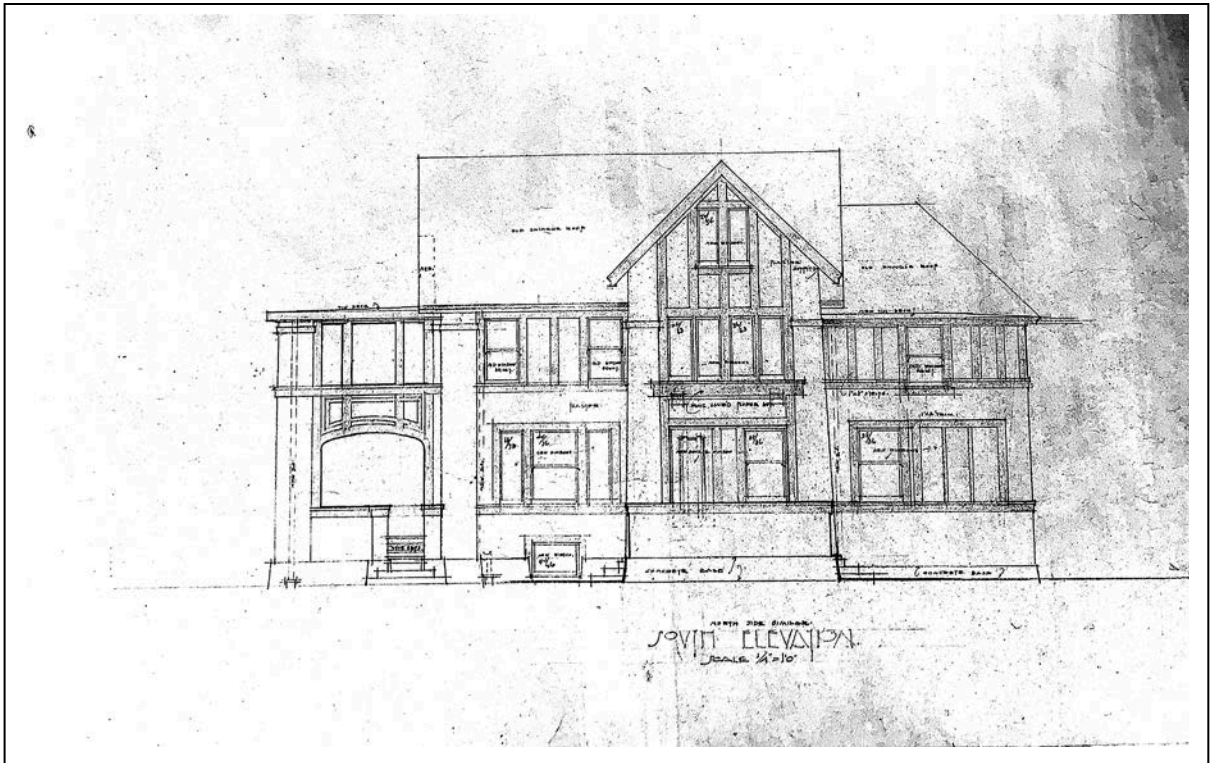
Alterations & Additions - Residence for

George A Chapman Esq - Oak Park Illinois

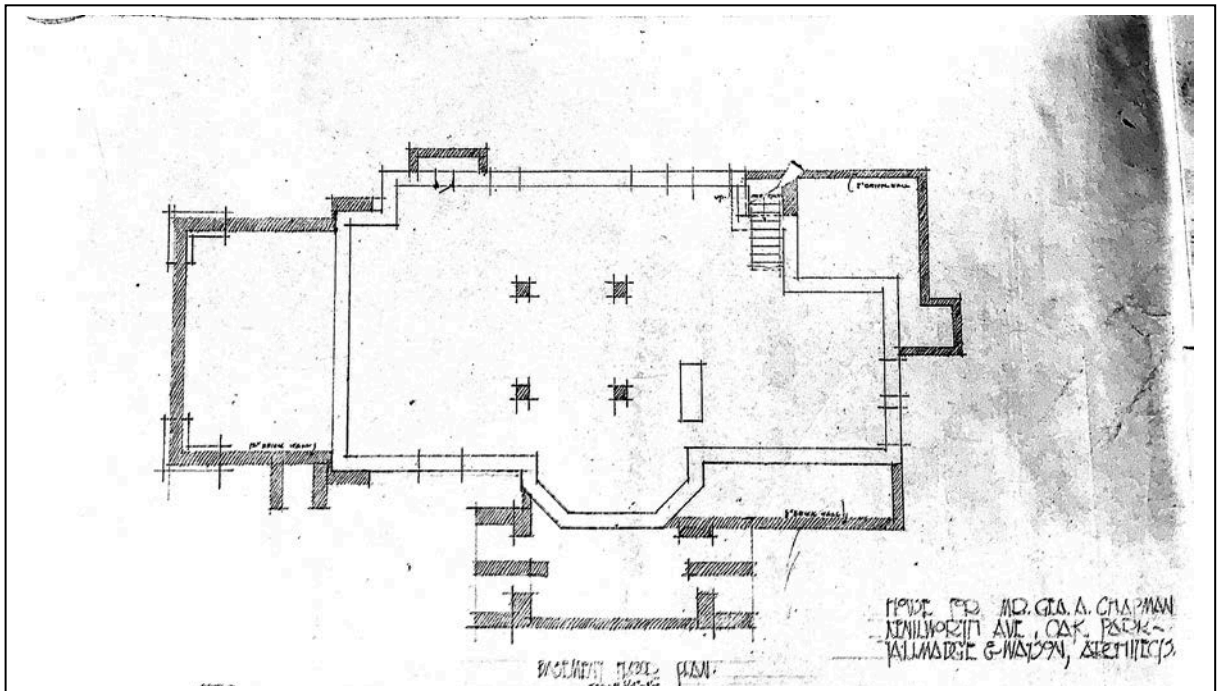
Dated April 18, 1930 - Revised April 29, 1930

(Drawings are property of the current owners, blueprints have been reversed to black on white for readability and the stapled set has five additional drawings, un-numbered and appear to represent existing conditions.)

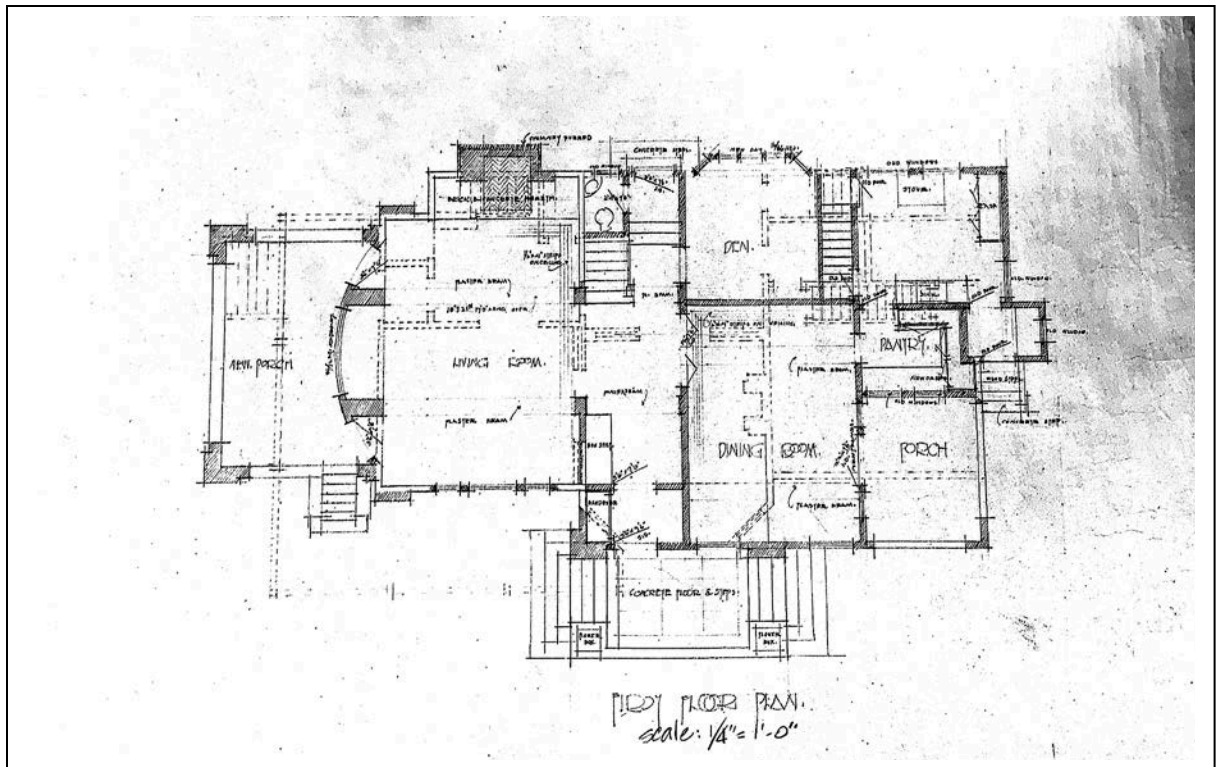




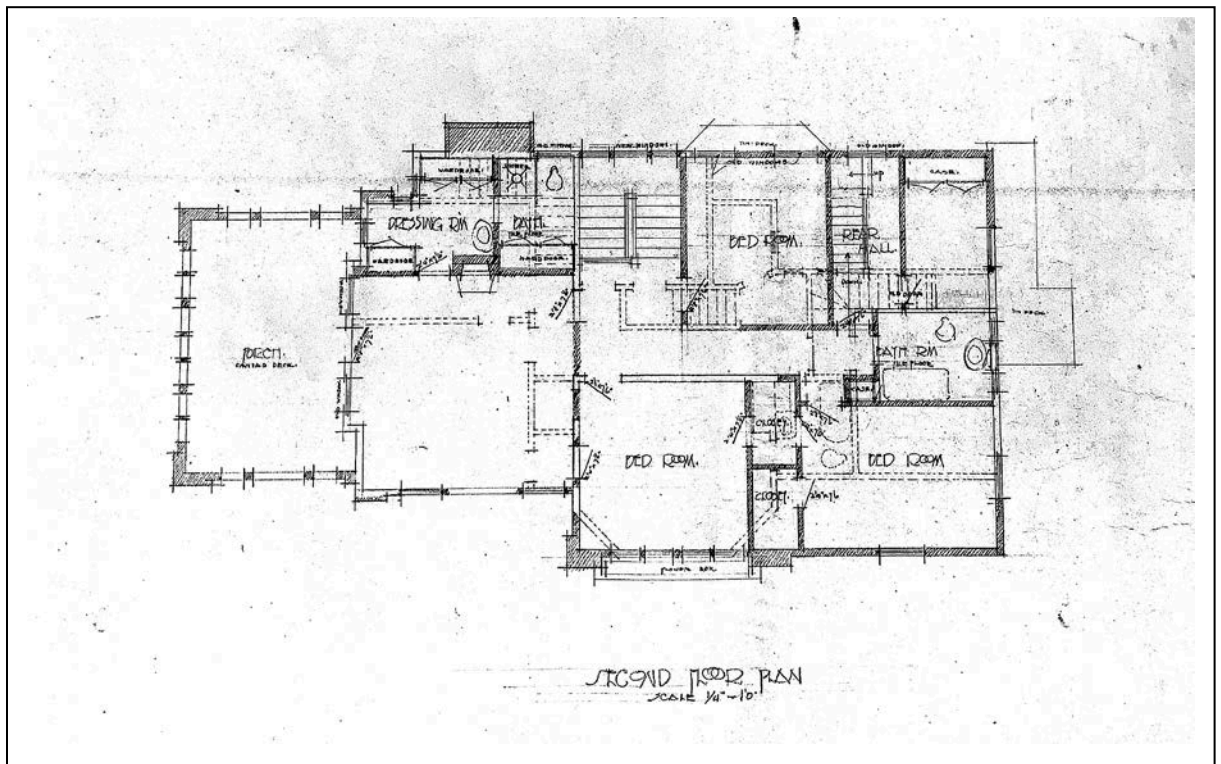
Sheet 2 of 1930 T&W Drawing Set – South Elevation



Sheet 3 of 1930 T&W Drawing Set – Basement Floor Plan



Sheet 4 of 1930 T&W Drawing Set – First Floor Plan



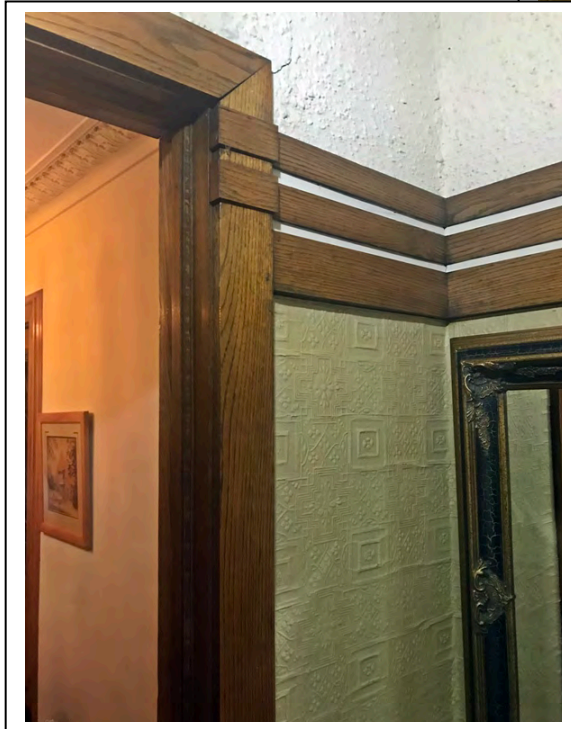
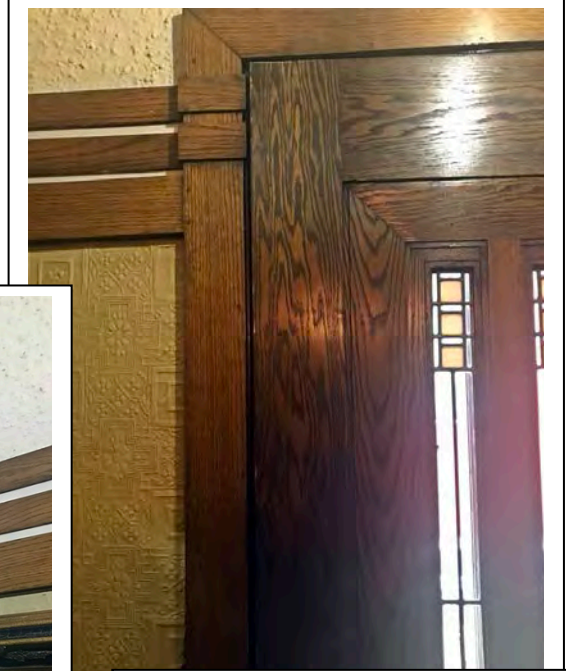
Sheet 5 of 1930 T&W Drawing Set – Second Floor Plan



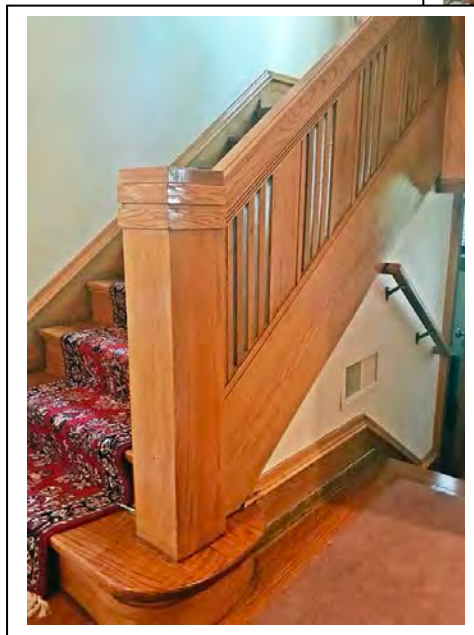
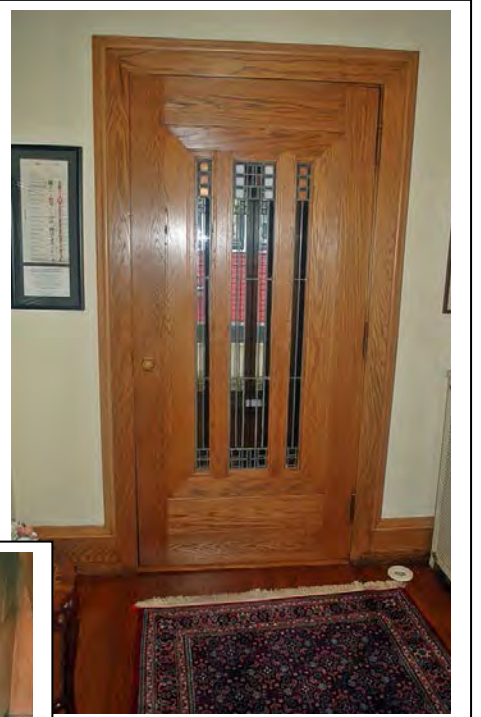
Sheet 6 of 1930 T&W Drawing Set – West & East Elevations

INTERIOR PHOTOS

Existing Trim and entry door in entry vestibule. Stain color and trim from 1910 T&W Remodel. Only untouched remnant of the 1910 interior. ↓→

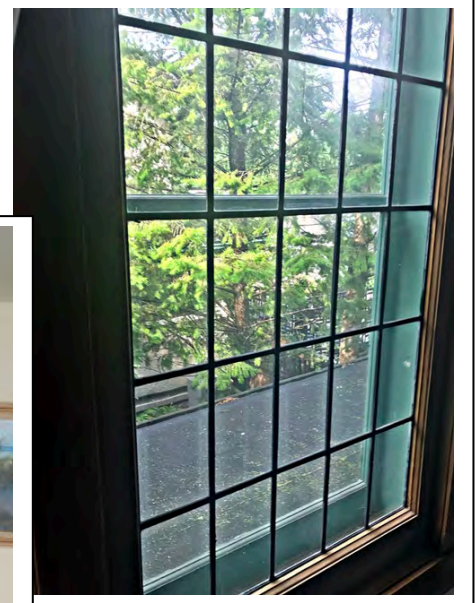


Interior Vestibule door. Original 1910 remodel except it has been refinished. Design same as exterior entry door. →



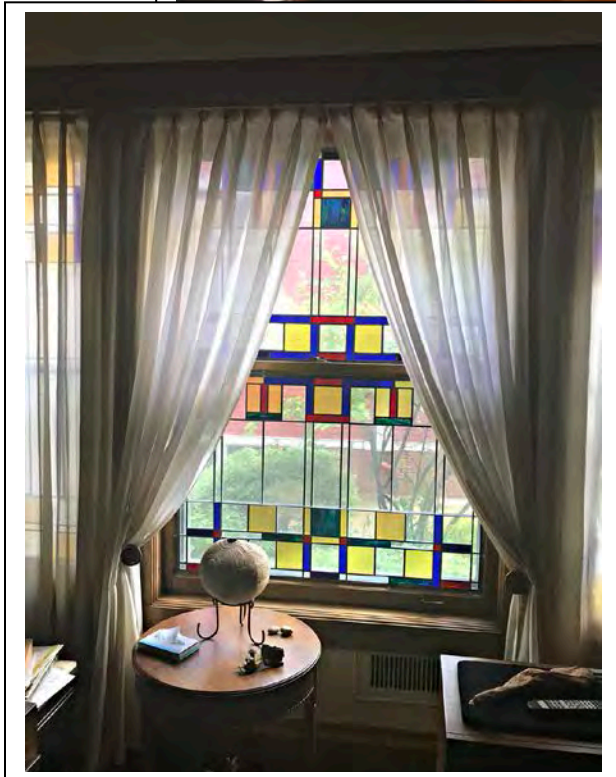
Original Main Stair newel and railing. It has been refinished to a lighter color. ←

One of three windows on the stair landing facing north that are thought to be original to the 1910 remodel. ➔



← Living Room fireplace and hearth, part of the 1930 interior remodel

1930 replacement cornice in Living & Dining Room. ↓



South living room window, one of three contiguous, not original. Installed by current owner many years ago. ←