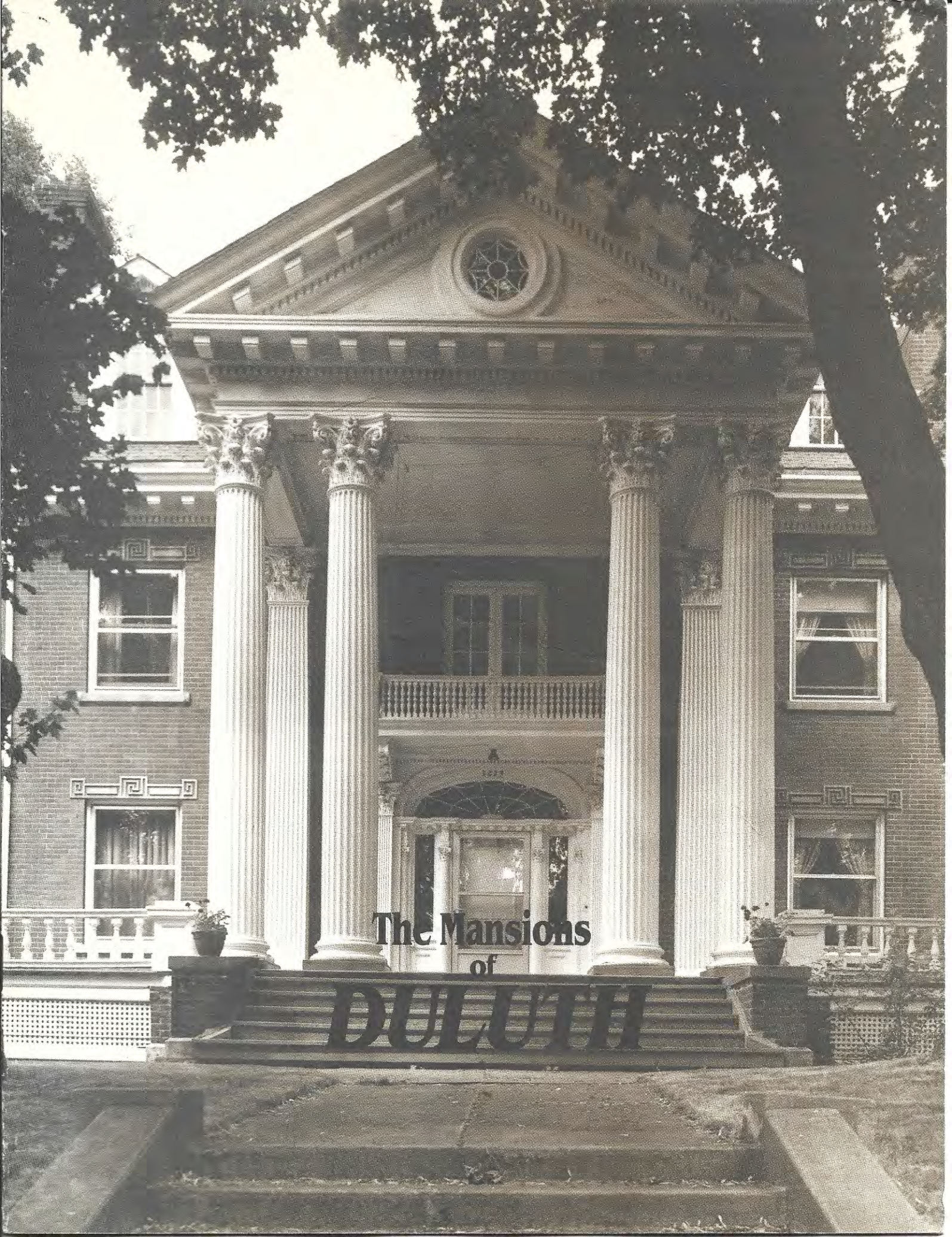


The Mansions of DULUTH



The Proud Mansions Of DULUTH

To drive through Duluth, Minnesota is to take a journey through time. Historic stately homes and mansions stand proudly on almost every street, making Duluth a truly fascinating community of architectural design. Yet their existence and the life and times of the people who built them, are not widely known outside of the Zenith City. To understand how this came to pass, it is important to know a little of the history of Duluth and its twin port of Superior, Wisconsin.

The first trading post was built at the head of the Great Lakes in 1853. A surveyor called George Stuntz is considered to have started the settlement, building a cabin and trading post. However it was not until the first railroad reached the Lakehead in 1870, that the settlement began to grow. In the first six months after the railroad opened, the population reached 3,500. In the 1880s and 1890s Duluth would blossom into one of the largest and busiest cities in the U.S. mid-west.

It was during this period that the Great Plains were being settled. The settlers needed lumber to build homes and towns on the prairies, and Duluth was located in the midst of some of the finest forests of white pine on the continent. As lumber went west from the city, grain from the new western settlements came east through Duluth, where it was loaded onto ships for passage east on the Great Lakes.

The city began to grow: during the 1880s and 1890s Duluth became not only one of the world's largest sawmilling centres, but also one of the world's busiest grain shipping terminals. By 1886 Duluth had the

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capacity to hold more than 11,000,000 bushels of grain in its elevators. The city experienced rapid growth during this period, reaching a population of 50,000 by 1892.

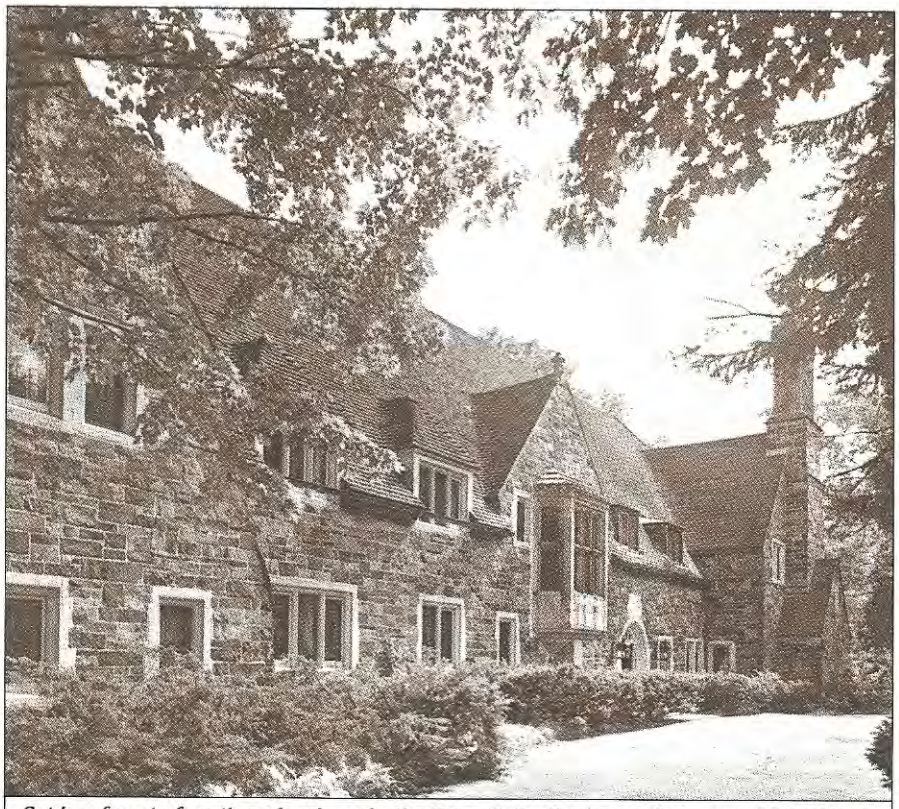
In the 1890s, another natural resource was found, one that would serve as the catalyst for growth of the Twin Ports. Soon after George Stuntz arrived in the area he began prospecting in the hills north of Duluth. What he found was extensive beds of iron ore.

Stuntz was not alone in his search for metals. Others followed and discovered vast iron ore deposits. When the railway system was completed in the 1890s, mining would come to be the driving force behind the growth of Duluth. In 1892 the Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway made its first deliveries of iron to the docks of Duluth. The mining boom was on and fortunes were made and lost in a single day, as mining stock floated from one extreme to the other. In the early 1890s almost 300 companies were operating in the Vermilion and Missabe Ranges.

With money flowing into Duluth, professionals soon followed: lawyers, accountants, doctors, engineers and brokers. From 1890 to 1920, Duluth was a bustling community. United States Steel Corporation moved in and built a large steel mill. The largest hardware supplier in the world — the Marshall Wells Company — was located in the city. During World War I, Duluth and Superior also became an important shipbuilding port.

The great houses were built mainly between 1890 and 1920 — material expressions of the wealth that was being generated through mining, shipping and lumber. But by 1920, the momentum which had carried Duluth through such rapid growth began to wane. Its population had reached over 90,000, the figure at which it remains today.

While the boom has passed, its legacy remains in the buildings and homes which still stand today. Fortunately, much of the city's late nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural legacy has survived relatively intact — more so than in many other American cities that experienced rapid post World War II growth. Local historians, such as Director of the St. Louis County Historical Society Lawrence Sommer, consider this legacy to be one of Duluth's most important cultural assets.



Set in a forest of northern hardwoods, the Harry C. Dudley house features a 50-foot long gallery supported by Bedfordstone columns.

THE DUDLEY HOUSE
3600 London Road

by Howard Shaw Associates

Harry C. Dudley was a native of Connecticut and a 1902 graduate of the Harvard Engineering School. Throughout his long life he was active internationally as a mining engineer. On the Missabe Range he built the town of Marble, and in Mexico and South America was responsible for discovering and operating several lead and iron ore properties. During the 1950's and 1960's he carried on oil and gas drilling operations in the southwestern United States.

[redacted]

Architects at the Howard Shaw firm of Chicago, widely known for their Elizabethan or Tudor designs during the 1920's, proved worthy of their reputation with their plan for the Dudley house. The house is similar to but smaller than the Adam Thompson house designed by Shaw in 1924.

Built of light-colored rubble stone and half timbers, with steep red slate roofs, towering chimneys and beautiful leaded glass windows, this twenty-four-room building is noteworthy for its medieval qualities as well as for a feeling of warmth and comfort found in few Duluth homes.

The setting is superb. Extending for almost a block along the rocky shore of Lake Superior itself, the house is set among a forest of northern hardwoods, pine and cedars. An imposing entry opens into a fifty-foot-long gallery supported by Bedfordstone columns and oak beams, floored with teak and furnished with family heirlooms and other treasures.

Off the western end of the gallery are the living room, library and summer room. Mr. Dudley's superb collection of books is housed in an oak-lined library of incredible warmth and comfort. A focal point is the large stone fireplace.

Swedish pine paneling sent to England for carving was selected for the living room walls. As in the library, the floors are pegged oak. One entire wall was meant to house an organ which was never completed, although the pipe cabinets are in place. Large brass chandeliers grace the ceiling. The summer room offers views through Gothic stone arches toward either the lake or a small garden.

Perhaps not as opulent as the neighboring Chester Congdon house, built by Mrs. Dudley's father, this home is nevertheless one of the very finest.

THE COTTON RESIDENCE
2309 East First Street

by Kees and Colburn

Mining and railroad attorney Joseph B. Cotton completed his new house in 1906. It was located in the heart of one of the most fashionable districts of Duluth. A specialist in corporate law, Cotton's cases included the famous Merritt vs. Rockefeller litigation in which he acted as defense counsel. The Merritt case involved a dispute over mining property claims at about the time of the Panic and Depression of 1893.

Cotton's house, a large, square structure with four chimneys at the corners, was built of yellow brick and buff-colored sandstone. It is three stories high and is capped by a green tile roof. A solid square framed entry porch greets the visitor after a climb up several steps, past carved stone ornamental flower pots.

Because of its unusual mass and elevated site, the Cotton house is a very imposing structure of more than average significance. While some deterioration has occurred, it is not too late to restore and protect this beautiful home.



Located in one of the most fashionable districts of Duluth, corporate lawyer Joseph B. Cotton's imposing structure was completed in 1906.



The skilled craftsmanship in stone found in mining promoter George H. Crosby's house is without parallel in the city.

THE CROSBY HOUSE
2029 East Superior Street

by D. Hill

The finest brownstone ever to be built in Duluth was constructed in 1902 by pioneer mining promoter George H. Crosby. A native of Hastings, Minnesota, Crosby became interested in iron mining development during the 1880's. His first major ore discoveries were on the western Missabe Range at a property that became the Hawkins Mine in 1904. In 1907 Crosby founded and built the Cuyuna Range town named after him. By 1937 more than fifty million tons of ore had been shipped from his Cuyuna properties. Later his mineralogical work branched out into Montana, Arizona, Utah and New Mexico.

Few houses in Duluth are as substantial as the two-story brownstone structure Crosby built at the corner of Twenty-first Avenue East and Superior Street. It is constructed of matched Sandstone from the Wisconsin shore of Lake Superior. Beautiful carved detail can be found on the massive entry piece, which reportedly weights five tons. It is truly one of Duluth's landmark structures.



Although considerably altered inside to serve the needs of a large family, the elegance of Ward Ames' house is still evident.

WARD AMES HOUSE
1618 Vermilion Road

by F.G. German

When the Ward Ames estate was sold shortly after his death in 1942, an article in the *Duluth News Tribune* described the property as follows: "Feature of the property is its beautiful landscaping, an unusual fine blending of native trees and shrub growth with the more formal arrangements resulting from development of ideas of the owner, assisted by landscape engineers. The site covers four acres.

"The dwelling with its outlying lodge and garage at the entrance gate has an unusual architectural appeal, both as to the English style of the exterior and the fine arrangement and interior treatment. It is considered one of the finest examples of residential properties in Duluth."

The house was constructed in 1912 for Mr. John Millen, who later sold it to Ward Ames. Ames was the son of a pioneer Duluth grain dealer and was one of the founders of the McDougal-Duluth shipyards, home of the famous whaleback steamers. He was also a founder of Northland Country Club.

CAVOUR HARTLEY HOUSE
3800 East Superior Street

by Bertram Goodhue

The oldest son of pioneer northern Minnesota businessman and entrepreneur Guilford G. Hartley, Cavour Hartley was a young mining engineer only a few years out of Yale when he commissioned Goodhue to design a home for him. The building, Goodhue's last in Duluth, was completed in 1915 and has been Mr. Hartley's home to the present time.

The same materials are used in the Hartley house as in Goodhue's other Duluth buildings — red brick, graduated slate roof, and brass casement windows with tiny panes and limestone mullions. As with the Kitchi Gammi Club, each major room has a fireplace and in the case of the living room, the beautiful tile fireplace is of walk-in proportions. Floors are of random-width oak from five to seven inches wide.

Carefully set back and below the level of Superior Street, this magnificent English Gothic structure fits unusually well into its superb setting of tall pine and evergreens. The site affords a panoramic view of Lake Superior.



Perhaps the most significant feature of the Cavour Hartley residence is the low interior ceiling heights, not typical of this age.

WILLIAM OLCOTT HOUSE
2316 East First Street

by W.T. Bray

Mining executive William J. Olcott was reported to have spent over $140,000 to construct a new home on Duluth's east hillside in 1904. Olcott's career was on the upswing having been elected President of the Oliver Iron Mining Company in 1900. Until his death in 1928 Olcott was associated with the Oliver interests and with the Duluth, Missabe and Northern Railway Company.

Architect Bray's design for Olcott's house resulted in perhaps the most unusual Georgian house ever to be built in the city. Its most striking feature is the dramatic two-story portico at the front. In fact, author Roger Kennedy in his book *Minnesota Houses, an Architectural and Historical View,* described the Olcott house as: "carrying what surely must be the most overwhelming gambrel roof in the region, below which a two-story portico, more than thirty feet high, seems to be slightly apprehensive."

Outside of the entry, the house is a fine example of Georgian architecture.



Reputed to have cost over $140,000 in 1904, the Olcott house is perhaps the most unusual Georgian design to be built in the city.



The relatively modest home of Alexander McDougal hardly reflected the national and worldwide prominence of its inventive owner.

THE McDOUGAL HOUSE
2201 East First Street

by Bray and Nystrom

This very plain yellow brick house with its notable lack of architectural ornament was built in 1910 by master shipbuilder, inventor and industrialist Alexander McDougal.

McDougal achieved national prominence for his remarkable seaworthy whaleback steamers or "pig boats" as they were commonly known, and it is interesting to point out that it has only been recently, for the first time since the 1880's, that none of McDougal's ships will call at the port from which they were originally launched. As far as is known, the last of them, the *Meteor,* was retired from service in 1970.

Along with the clipper ship, the river steamboats and the Great Lakes steamers (which evolved from the whaleback design), McDougal's barges and steamers are among the few truly American designs for large watercraft. His all-steel whaleback barges and steamers were years ahead of their time in marine architecture and design.

McDougal's interest in marine affairs occupied most of his life.

THE SELLWOOD HOUSE
1931 East Second Street

by Kees and Colburn

The outstanding features of the yellow brick house that industrialist and financier Richard M. Sellwood occupied at the corner of Twentieth Avenue East and Second Street, are its sweeping porch and tall classical columns. The house was built in 1903, and it is believed that a Mr. John Panton was the original owner.

Kees and Colburn were well-known architects during the early years of the twentieth century and were responsible for several important homes in St. Paul and Minneapolis as well as for the Joseph B. Cotton house at 2309 East First Street in Duluth.

The Sellwood house, completed three years before the Cotton house, appears to reveal a period of experimentation on the part of the architects. In the use of brick as a basic construction material and device for ornament, the architect's ideas are firmly established and well-executed, but the overwhelming porch and entry indicates an unsettled state of mind insofar as what should be done with a facade.



The yellow brick residence built in 1903 by financier Richard M. Sellwood is today used as a dormitory for St. Scholastica College.



Duluth architect Oliver G. Traphagen designed his Victoria residence in the early 1890's. It is now an apartment house.

TRAPHAGEN HOUSE
1511 East Superior Street

by Oliver G. Traphagen

Prominent Duluth architect Oliver G. Traphagen designed this Victorian residence for himself early in the 1890's, while his partnership with Francis Fitzpatrick was at its peak. As might be expected, characteristics found in their other designs are prevalent.

Particularly interesting is the somewhat ornate carved stone facade with its towers, conical roofs, unusual dormers, stone window dressing and ornamental wrought iron. The remainder of the building is ordinary red brick construction, currently in very bad repair.

The problems associated with absentee landlordship and adjacent commercial intrusion into what was once a quiet and substantial residential neighborhood, are painfully evident in the case of this fine old house. Today it is used as an apartment house known as the "Redstone." One can only imagine the way in which the interior was altered in order to create the maximum number of apartment units in use today.

The Kitchi Gammi Club

"It's Quite A Restaurant"



Described as one of America's finest Jacobean Revival buildings, the entrance of the Kitchi Gammi Club hardly prepares for what awaits inside.

by Bob Paddon

It was a cold and windy, winter's night in Duluth, Minnesota. It was snowing and the wind was blowing off of Lake Superior. The chill seemed to sink to the bone. I was met at the motel in Superior, Wisconsin, Duluth's twin city, by Lakehead Pipe Line Company President Wes Cochrane. This evening I was going to meet several of the Lakehead staff for dinner at the Kitchi Gammi Club. My only knowledge of the place was that it was "quite a restaurant."

We made the short drive into Duluth and once downtown followed several detours to avoid the road construction project that was underway in the city center. Unfortunately, I failed to notice the Kitchi Gammi Club until we pulled into the parking lot. And even then I took little notice of the outside of the building as we stepped out of the car, pulled up the collars of our overcoats and dashed for the door. I was little prepared for what awaited me inside.

I had entered what has been described as one of the finest Jacobethan Revival Style buildings ever built in the United States. Jacobethan style recalls the English architecture of the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I.

According to Lawrence Sommer, Director of the St. Louis County Historical Society, the characteristics of the style include multi-light, rectangular windows, bay windows, triangular gables that rise above the roof line, steeply pitched roofs, tall chimneys with separate stacks for each flue, round-arched doorways, and the use of brick and stone as the predominant construction materials.

"Brick was most often used for the walls, with limestone for window frames, parapets, quoins and other ornaments," explained Mr. Sommer, later. All of this I missed as we went inside. Once in the door, however, I was all eyes.

Before dinner, Mr. Cochrane was able to give me a tour of this amazing building. The building contains banquet and private dining rooms, exercise room and sauna,

"The library, for example, features Italian tapestry walls, a Tiffany tile fireplace and a white tooled leather ceiling. Underneath a sterling silver chandelier in the dining room is a Georgian table capable of comfortably seating thirty people."

library, card room, reception parlours, a ballroom, 13 guest rooms and apartments for the permanent residents.

All of the major rooms and several guest rooms have fireplaces which are the outstanding decorative feature of the room. The tiled fireplaces have symbolic pictures in diamond-shaped tiles, produced by the Mercer Tile Company of Doylestown, Pennsylvania. In the ballroom, large trusses hold up the steeply-pitched roof. The room is paneled in chestnut and measures 30 feet wide, 54 feet long and is higher than it is wide.

What is most striking about the building is the attention to quality in all of its details. For example, Mr. Sommer explained to me that the windows throughout the building were made in England because at that time there were no American firms making metal sash that was acceptable to the architect Bertram Goodhue.

The English firm sent a workman to Duluth to measure each window opening, as a check against the measurements shown on the architectural drawings. Each window was then custom made and when completed they were accompanied by a factory representative to supervise the installation.

After a tour of the club, there is little doubt why the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. It is a magnificent building. How it came to be built on the shores of Lake Superior is also a fascinating story.

The Kitchi Gammi Club, which commissioned the construction of the building in 1912, was formed in Duluth on September 26, 1883. Its membership comprised "individualistic men of prominence, respect and leadership in the community"; or more simply put: "Wheel your own wheelbarrow men." The club was named after the Ojibway Indian name for Lake Superior.

The Club's first home was the fourth floor of Duluth's Grand Opera House. In 1889, after the Grand Opera House was destroyed by fire, the club renovated a house at 203 West Second Street and took up residence there until a three-storey brick and brownstone structure was completed at the corner of Third Avenue West and First Street, in 1891.

After the turn of the century, as Duluth was in the midst of the iron-ore mining boom, the club found itself losing members. In order to reverse this trend, the club decided to construct for itself a building of such size and sophistication as to be without equal in the region. The building committee was headed up by Guilford G. Hartley, and also included Frederic Paine and Edward C. Congdon.

This group knew what they wanted. Edward Congdon came from a wealthy family. His father, Chester Congdon, was a self-made millionaire who in 1908 moved into one of the most beautiful mansions ever built in the state. "Glensheen," is a 39-room Jacobean-style manor house, situated on a seven and a half acre estate. The grounds include a coach house, bowling green, boat house, tennis court, formal gardens and gardener's cottage.

Designed by the Clarence H. Johnston Company of St. Paul, Minnesota, it took three years to build at a cost of just under $1 million. Glensheen, at 3300 London Road, is now owned by the University of Minnesota and is kept in its original condition. To tour it is to appreciate the life of grandeur of the Captains of Industry of that era.

The library, for example, features Italian tapestry walls, a Tiffany tile fireplace and a white tooled leather ceiling. The dining room has a molded plaster ceiling which was made in Portugal and shipped in sections to be installed by the craftsmen who designed it. Underneath a sterling chandelier is a Georgian table capable of comfortably seating thirty people.

With men of such taste at the helm of the building committee, the construction of a first-class building was ensured. The committee began by purchasing a lake-front lot at Superior Street and London Road in 1910 for $42,000. Next a $250,000 thirty-year, five percent bond issue was authorized.

By 1911, with sale of the bonds secure, the committee engaged Bertram G. Goodhue of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson of New York to design the new building. This was the same firm which had designed many of the buildings at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

After completing the Kitchi Gammi Club, Mr. Goodhue formed his own firm and designed St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City, the Los Angeles Public Library, the Nebraska State Capitol and the National Academy of Science at Washington, D.C.

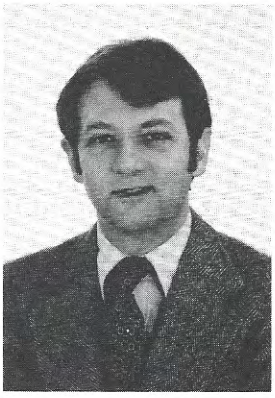
While the committee did insist on quality work throughout, they did have to make one concession. In keeping with the English-style, white-oak should have been used for the paneling. However, at that time a blight had devastated the chestnut stands in the Eastern United States. The building committee was able to purchase the chestnut at a reduced cost, and so chestnut was substituted for the paneling. Nothing was lost in the substitution and it did save some money.

When the building was dedicated in 1913, the building committee chairman reported that, "we have bought the site, built and equipped your house at a cost substantially less than the amount you authorized us to spend." The final price tag was $304,000.

While the Kitchi Gammi Club continues to serve as a monument to the ambitious men who undertook to have it built, it has also served the community well, Historian Lawrence Sommer explains it this way: "Today the club's role as a community resource enhances Duluth's national reputation as a business center and as a place where tradition and quality of life remain important."

My dinner at the Kitchi Gammi club will be long remembered. After a superb meal and a refreshment by the fireplace, the cold of that winter's night was quickly forgotten; something that had probably happened to visitors to the "Kitch" since its doors were first opened.

After returning to Edmonton and having been asked what I thought of the place, I replied with smug satisfaction; "It's quite a restaurant!"



Lawrence Sommer, Director,
St. Louis County Historical Society.

Lakehead Pipe Line Company, Inc., the publisher of this special edition, would like to extend to Lawrence Sommer, Director of the St. Louis County Historical Society, a special thank you for his efforts in making this edition possible. The photographs and most of the content of this edition were provided to the publisher by the St. Louis County Historical Society.

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