

**THE TENNEY-LAPHAM  
NEIGHBORHOOD:  
*A WALKING TOUR***



**A Madison Heritage Publication**

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**Historical Development**

The Tenney-Lapham neighborhood is bounded by the Yahara River, Lake Mendota, North Livingston Street, and East Washington Avenue. It is named for Tenney Park (12) and Lapham School (26), both of which are contained within its boundaries. Also located within the boundaries of this larger area are several distinct smaller areas that contain many outstanding nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, including factories, the modest houses of those who worked in them, and the larger houses of those who owned them.

**The Beginning**

The entire Tenney-Lapham neighborhood is part of the original plat of the City of Madison, which was platted for Judge James D. Doty in 1836 by Green Bay surveyor J. V. Suydam. Suydam's 1836 map shows a wonderfully uniform grid of streets marching optimistically across the isthmus and the neighborhood. The reality, however, was somewhat different. Much of what looks like high ground on Suydam's map was actually low-lying marsh land that was under water for a good part of the year. The development of this marshy land was more than half a century in the future.

*Leonard Farwell's Madison Mills*



SHSW Whi(X22)4486

Indeed, both topography and geography played large roles in the development of the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood because of the limitations they placed on early builders. That portion of Doty's original plat that lies east of the Capitol Square hill consists of two low ridges that parallel the shores of Lake Monona and Lake Mendota (which were originally called the Third and Fourth Lakes). Between these higher ridges is a low-lying area which stretches from the base of Capitol Hill east all the way to the Yahara River; this area was known as the "Great Marsh" during most of the nineteenth century.

The eastern end of the Fourth Lake Ridge was the high ground of the Tenney-Lapham area during the nineteenth century. This ridge turns slightly inland beginning at Brearly Street and then gradually diminishes in height as it continues eastward along Gorham and Johnson Streets to its end point near the Yahara River.

South of this high ground was the Great Marsh, which effectively limited construction in this part of the Tenney-Lapham area. North of the high ground was yet another marsh that broadened gradually from Brearly Street to the Yahara River and extended inland from the Lake Mendota shoreline as far south as Elizabeth Street, covering all of what is today's Sherman Avenue and Tenney Park in the process. This meant that for most of the nineteenth century the only land that could be built upon in the Tenney-Lapham area was located along E. Gorham, Johnson, and Dayton Streets and down the length of N. Baldwin Street from Gorham Street to E. Washington Avenue.

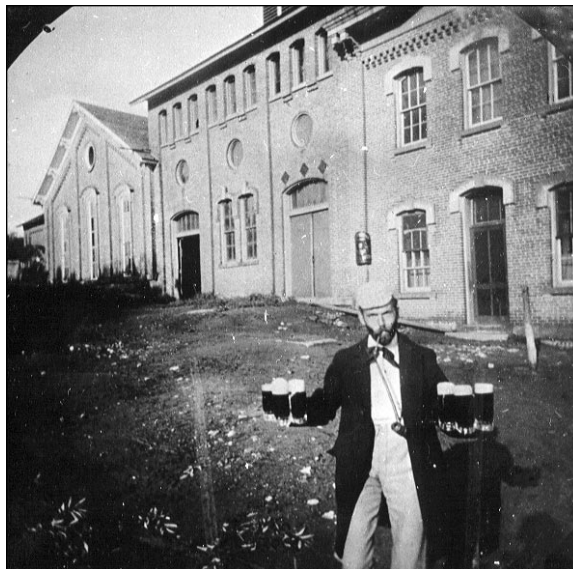
Geography was another factor in the development of the Tenney-Lapham area. Until electric streetcars made mass transit a reality in Madison most people walked to where they were going, which meant that early Madisonians and their buildings tended to congregate mostly around the Capitol Square. Only the hardiest soul in the 1850s would have considered living so far away from the city center as Brearly Street; a home on Baldwin Street would have been considered practically a country place.

## The Farwell Era and the Coming of the Railroad

The earliest buildings in the Tenney-Lapham area were constructed at its extreme ends. The first was a flouring and grist mill built by Leonard J. Farwell in 1850 on the east side of the Yahara River where the Tenney Park locks are now located. Farwell, who would be elected governor of Wisconsin in 1852, was a recently transplanted businessman from Milwaukee who owned nearly the whole of the Tenney-Lapham area at this time. A tireless booster of Madison's east side, Farwell initiated the first attempts to drain the Great Marsh. He also laid out East Washington Avenue and planted it with trees in 1852, thus defining the south boundary of the Tenney-Lapham area.

The construction of the five-story Madison Mills, as Farwell called it, was an important event for Madison because it made the city a destination point for area farmers bringing their produce in for processing. Its presence also encouraged the firm of White and Rodermund to build a brewery just across Sherman Avenue in 1851; the brewery building (later used by the Hausmann Brewery) survived until the late 1940s.

### *Hausmann's Brewery*



SHSW M85-57 Hanks Temp1

## The Rise of the Factories

Another significant event for Madison and for Tenney-Lapham was the arrival of the first railroad, the Milwaukee & Mississippi, in 1854. Just west of the Yahara River the tracks ran diagonally across part of the block bounded by North Thornton and East Washington and North Dickinson and East Mifflin, a block which, not coincidentally, later became the site of the area's first factory, the Garnhart Reaper Works, in 1871.

Although the east end of the Tenney-Lapham area was experiencing commercial growth in the 1850s, the west end received far less attention. Only a few homeowners, such as Robert Hastie, who built his house on Brearly Street in 1854 (1), were willing to live so far from the center of town. The next twenty years would see only a handful of additional houses built in the west end of the neighborhood. One of these, however, is worthy of note, the remarkable and highly eccentric stone Gothic Revival style "castle" that was built directly across Brearly Street from the Hastie house by Benjamin Walker, a transplanted Englishman, in 1861. The grounds of this house occupied the whole block from Gorham Street to Lake Mendota where the Christ Presbyterian Church and Castle Place are now located; it was one of Madison's best known sites until it was demolished in 1893.

*Walker's Castle, ca. 1890*



SHSW WHi(X22)4481

Much more important for the future of the area was the Garnhart Reaper Works, which was built on East Washington Avenue next to the railroad tracks in 1871. This was the first factory in the Tenney-Lapham area. Its establishment resulted in the construction of a cluster of homes on the high ground north of the factory site that was the earliest housing built in the east end of the neighborhood.

Real change on a large scale finally came to this part of the neighborhood in 1882 when the Garnhart Works were purchased by the Fuller & Johnson Manufacturing Company. This rapidly expanding factory needed a host of workers whose new houses transformed the area for good (4) (5) (7).

The opening of an electric streetcar line to serve the area in 1892 was another major contributing factor in the growth of the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood. This line ran north from the Capitol Square down N. Pinckney Street to E. Johnson Street, then ran eastward along Johnson Street to Baldwin Street. It then turned and continued south on Baldwin Street past the Gisholt Machine Company and across the isthmus to Williamson Street. The opening of this new route meant that lots all along its length that had previously been considered too distant for those who worked on the Capitol Square or in the factories on the east side of the city now had a reliable means of getting to work. The result was that new houses began to be built along the whole length of the high ground in the neighborhood (10).

Efforts to drain and fill the marshes also began in the 1890s. Much of the land that now borders both sides of Sherman Avenue west of the Yahara came into being when it was platted and filled by the Willow Park Land Co. between 1892 and 1895 (9). In 1900, the first work on Tenney Park also began. This was the first public park on the shore of Lake Mendota. It was also the first park to be created by the Madison Park & Pleasure Drive Association, which also straightened and parked the land bordering the Yahara River between 1903 and 1906 (12).

The draining of the marshes, the creation of the parks, and the growth of factories all brought new residents and new houses to the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood, which, by the turn of the century, had grown to the point where a school to educate area children was a necessity. This was the first Lapham School, which was built in 1900 at the end of East Dayton Street near the Yahara River.

With the completion of Tenney Park in 1916, the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood achieved maturity. Large new houses lined many of the lake lots along Sherman Avenue. The new inland lots created by the filling and draining of the marshes were being occupied by smaller homes belonging to the increasingly prosperous middle class of Madison and to the highly skilled and generally well paid workers at the nearby factories. By the time the new Lapham School (26) was built in 1940, the neighborhood was complete and was ready to embark on the modern phase of its history.

### The Walking Tour

The sites listed within this booklet are arranged in chronological order. Please note that the numbers within circles that appear at the top of the page for each site are also used in the text and are keyed to the map in the center of the booklet.

Please also be aware that all the residential buildings on the tour are private and are not open to the public. Your respect for the privacy of the residents is greatly appreciated.

### ROBERT & SARAH HASTIE HOUSE

403 North Brearly Street  
1854

1



This simple wood frame cottage is one of the oldest houses in the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood. The original portion was built for house painter Robert Hastie and his wife, Sarah, in 1854. At that time it was one of the few houses in Madison to be located so far away from the Capitol Square. The Hasties lived here until 1872, when the house was sold to Joseph Schubert (1826-1913), a native of Germany who had come to Madison from Philadelphia in 1869. A photographer by profession, Schubert established a successful studio on the Capitol Square that he operated with his son until 1912. During the elder Schubert's tenure, several additions were made to his house, including a summer kitchen on the north end.

Schubert's son, Joseph C. Schubert, grew up in the Brearly Street house. In 1905, J. C. Schubert and his wife, Frances, built a fine Craftsman style house of their own at 1118 Sherman Avenue. Schubert also built four other houses nearby as investments – 411 N. Brearly (1896), 1011 Sherman (1899), 407 N. Brearly (1913) and 1005 Sherman (1915). The younger Schubert served as the mayor of Madison for three terms (1900 to 1912), during which time he was a major supporter of the Madison Park & Pleasure Drive Association, the developer of Tenney Park (12).

## ABRAHAM MORTON HOUSE

124 North Baldwin Street  
1873

2



SHSW WHi(X3)11533

The Morton house, shown here in a 1948 photograph, is one of the smallest but also one of the finest examples of the Second Empire style in Madison. This style came to America from France, where it was closely associated with the Paris of the Second Napoleonic Empire Period (1852-1870). The hallmarks of Second Empire style houses in America are the use of towers and mansard roofs. On the Morton house mansards shelter both the main block and rear wing. The house is also graced by a short tower centered on the Dayton Street facade.

This house was built in 1873 by Abraham Morton. Morton first came to Madison in 1854. He operated a brick manufacturing business here until 1875, which probably explains why he chose to build with this material. In 1875, Morton sold his still practically new house to J. Patterson and retired to a farm in the nearby town of Blooming Grove. In 1883, Patterson sold the house to Jesse Longfield, a carpenter, who lived here with his family until 1892. The interior of the house is especially notable for the beautiful oak floors in the downstairs rooms, which have parquet borders and centered parquet medallions. Also notable are the early street signs that are still affixed to the Dayton Street/Baldwin Street corner of the house.

## WILLIAM AND ADELIA LYON/RUDOLPH AND CLARA TRACY HOUSE

1142 East Gorham Street  
1876/1904

3



A number of the oldest buildings in the Tenney-Lapham area actually began their existence in other parts of the city, but were moved to lots in this area when new buildings were built on their original sites. One of the most important of these is this fine Italianate style house, which was originally built in 1876 as the home of William Penn Lyon, then an associate justice and later the chief justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

The Lyon house originally stood on the northeast corner of Langdon and N. Carroll Streets, where it remained until his death in 1903. It was then acquired by Frank G. Brown, a wealthy Madison businessman who wanted the large lake front lot that went with the Lyon house as the site for a much larger new house of his own. In order to clear the lot, Brown sold the Lyon house to Rudolph Tracy, who had it cut in half and moved to its new site on East Gorham Street. Once there, the house was reassembled. It was afterwards occupied by the Tracy family until the beginning of World War II.

The house that Brown built on the old Lyon lot is now occupied by the Alpha Phi sorority (28 Langdon St.).

## SETH BARTLETT/WALTER & JESSIE NOE HOUSE

221 North Few Street  
1882

④



In 1871, J. H. Garnhart built a factory for the manufacture of grain reapers on the block bounded by E. Washington Avenue, N. Dickinson Street, and the Yahara River. In 1882, this factory was purchased by a new firm, the Fuller & Johnson Manufacturing Company ⑥, which was headed by Morris E. Fuller and John A. Johnson.

The new company was successful from the start, creating many new jobs and a need for housing near the factory. One of the first of these new houses was this late Italianate residence, which was built in 1882 for Walter E. Noe and his wife, Jessie. Noe had previously had a financial interest in the Garnhart Reaper Works and in the later firm of Firmin & Billings, which Fuller & Johnson acquired in 1882. Noe transferred his interest to the new firm and became its corporate secretary, a position he retained until his death in 1914.

The Noe house has been changed relatively little over the years save for the addition of the large porch that now spans its Few Street facade. This porch was added by the Noes in 1910 and was designed by local architect Robert Wright, who in the previous year had designed the Prairie School City Market, just west of the neighborhood at 101 N. Blount Street.

## FULLER & JOHNSON WORKERS' HOUSING/ FRANCES KAUPERT HOUSES

1120-1122 and 1124-1126 Curtis Court  
1883/1915

⑤



Good management and the rapidly developing farmlands to the west of Wisconsin resulted in explosive growth for Fuller & Johnson. This growth was reflected in the construction of many new houses in the area surrounding the factory for people who worked there. One of these, the Walter E. Noe house ④, has already been discussed. At the opposite end of the economic scale are these two duplexes, which were built by Fuller & Johnson in 1883 as company-owned rental housing.

These two duplexes are now located next to each other on Curtis Court, one of the neighborhood's least known streets. Originally, they were located on the 1400 block of E. Dayton Street adjacent to the factory ⑥, but both were moved to this new site around 1913 when the plant was expanded. The early occupants of these duplexes were unusually lucky because company-owned rental housing for factory workers was very rare in Madison. Indeed, the only firm that provided it was the Fuller & Johnson Company, thanks primarily to the enlightened views of the firm's founder, John A. Johnson. Besides housing, Johnson also implemented one of the nation's first employee profit-sharing plans in 1895, when, for the first time, Fuller & Johnson's supervisors were also included in the profits of the firm.

## FULLER & JOHNSON MANUFACTURING CO. OFFICE BUILDING

1344 East Washington Avenue  
1885/1899 with later remodelings

6



The only intact surviving portion of the sprawling complex of buildings once associated with the Fuller & Johnson Manufacturing Co. is the firm's two-story office building, whose earliest (east) portion was built in 1885, just three years after the company was founded. By 1885, Fuller & Johnson was already the largest industry in Madison and was on its way to becoming a major regional manufacturer of plows and other agricultural implements. By 1899, the company had grown to the point where an addition to its original office building was necessary. It is this two-story (west) portion, built in 1899, that makes up most of today's building.

The firm took a new direction in 1900 when it began to manufacture small gasoline-powered engines. By 1902, the company employed 400, had annual sales of over \$1,000,000, and had a 400,000 square foot factory. After selling off its agricultural implements division in 1910, the manufacture of small engines became the company's main business and it remained so until this plant was finally vacated in the early 1950s.

## CHARLES & ANNA ALLYN HOUSE

1105 East Johnson Street  
1887

7



Another Tenney-Lapham neighborhood house that can be said to owe its existence to the early success of the Fuller & Johnson Co. is this fine, highly intact Queen Anne style house, which was built in 1887 for Charles and Anna Allyn.

Charles Allyn was the sales manager of the Fuller & Johnson Co. from its formation in 1882 until at least 1909; he was responsible for establishing and maintaining the company's far-flung and highly successful dealer network. Allyn also served the neighborhood as its alderman in the City Council in 1896 and 1897.

Allyn and his wife shared their house with their three children and a live-in maid. Today, having live-in help is a privilege usually reserved just for the rich, but in the nineteenth century it was a normal part of daily life for many Madison households. Typically, a domestic would have been a young woman from a farm near the city or perhaps a member of a newly arrived immigrant family. Most domestics did a bit of everything including cooking, looking after the children, and cleaning. Such work was not glamorous, perhaps, but for many it served as a welcome introduction to city life and an escape from rural drudgery.



## WARNER BICYCLE FACTORY/TRACHTE BROTHERS FACTORY

102 North Dickinson Street  
1895/1914-1926 with additions

8



The earliest portions of this factory complex were built in 1895 to house the bicycle factory of D. D. Warner, which in 1895 employed 60 men and manufactured 5,000 bicycles. By 1897, however, the buildings housed a foundry. This usage continued until 1914, when George and Arthur Trachte bought it to house their tinsmithing and furnace repair shop.

By 1919, the Trachte brother's Dickinson Street factory was being used to fabricate the first of the simple steel buildings for which they are now best known. These buildings varied greatly in size, but all of them were formed of ribbed steel panels that were bolted to an inner steel framework. They were low in cost, fireproof, easily expandable, and easily taken apart.

By the 1930s, Trachte Bros. Company had become a well-known name in the prefabricated building business, a position it still holds today in its present location in Sun Prairie. Examples of older Trachte Company buildings can still be found throughout Madison, including several arched-roofed, metal paneled garages in Tenney-Lapham. The finest and largest concentration of Trachte buildings, though, is this factory complex, which extends along E. Mifflin Street on both sides of Dickinson Street.

## JOHN & BERTHA ERDALL HOUSE

1228 Sherman Avenue  
1895

9



The first house constructed on Sherman Avenue was this fine Queen Anne style house, which was built in 1895 for John L. Erdall, a prominent local attorney. Prior to that time, building along the Lake Mendota shore between Brearly Street and the Yahara River would have been an impossibility due to the marshy condition of the low-lying land that bordered both sides of this willow-lined pleasure drive. In 1892, however, this land was purchased by the Willow Park Land Company, which began a program of dredging and filling that, by 1895, had made the land suitable for building.

John Erdall was the corporate secretary of the Willow Park Land Company when his new house was being constructed. The designer of this house is not known but a good guess would be the Madison architectural firm of Conover & Porter, which was designing similar Queen Anne style houses at this time. Like many other Queen Anne style houses of this period, each story of the Erdall house is clad in a different siding material, in this case, narrow clapboards below and wood shingles above and in the gable ends. Other typical Queen Anne features of the house include its steeply pitched combination hip and gable roof and the placement of an octagonal tower on its asymmetrical main facade.

## MICHAEL & THERESA FOLEY TWO-UNIT RESIDENCE

953 East Johnson Street  
1898

10



Queen Anne style houses situated on corner lots frequently exhibit multi-story towers placed on the corner that faces the intersection. Most of these towers are either round or polygonal in plan. Madison is unusual in that so many of its examples have distinctive angled rectilinear towers like the one shown above.

This building was designed as a two-unit residence and was built for Theresa and Michael Foley, a machinist whose parents had owned and occupied the much smaller house next door at 949 E. Johnson Street since 1866.

The architect of the Foleys' new building was Ferdinand Kronenberg (1877-1944), who came to this country from Germany with his family at the age of eight. Kronenberg's name first appears in the Madison city directories in 1898, when he was listed as an architect living at 1520 Williamson Street, which would make the Foley residence one of his first Madison commissions. Foley and his wife lived in this building until 1904, but they continued to own it for some years afterwards. Like Foley, many of the building's later occupants also worked at one of the large factories that were located nearby such as Fuller & Johnson, Gisholt, and the Northern Electric Co.

## ALFRED ROGERS HOUSE

1343 East Johnson Street  
1912

11

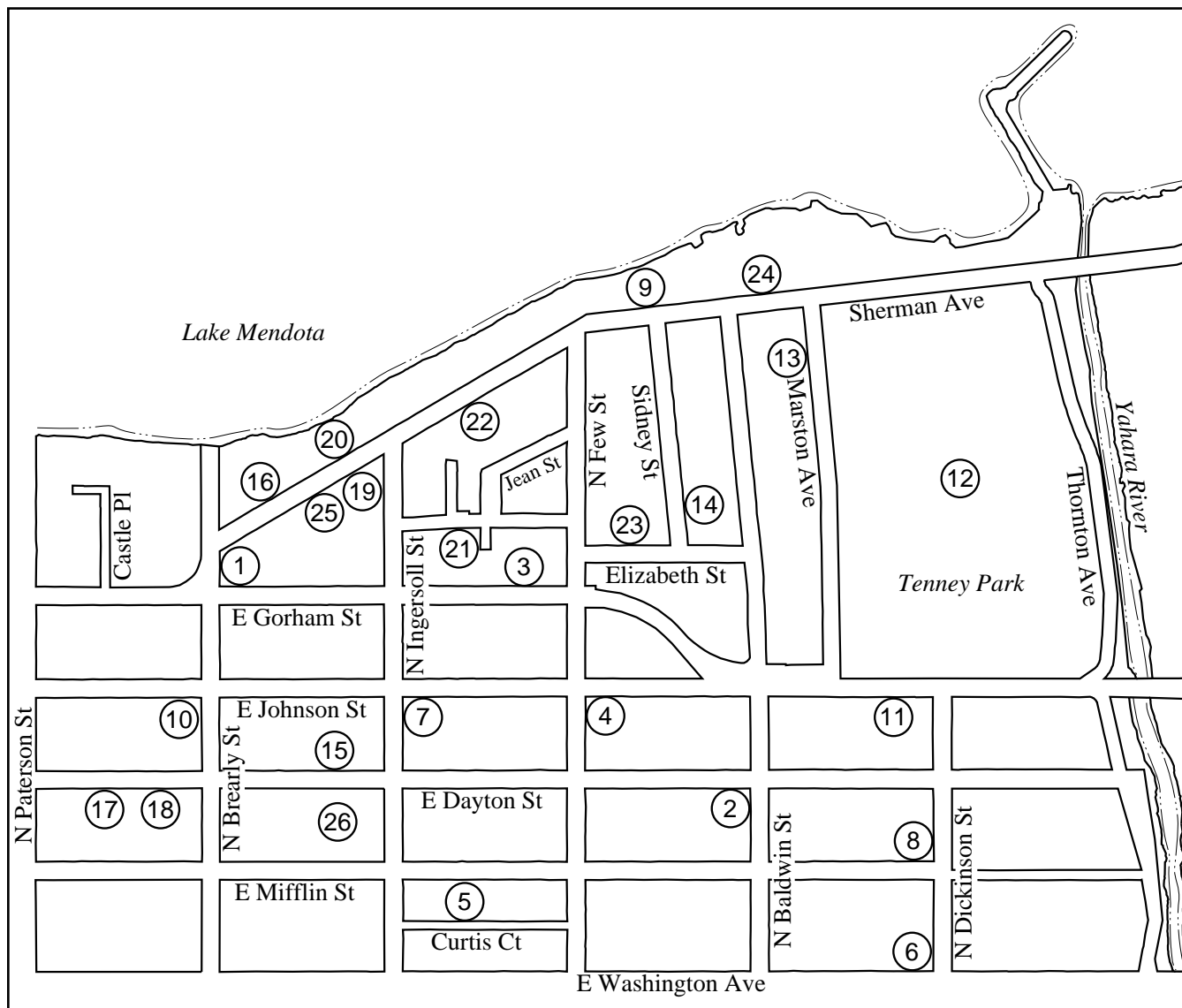


The construction of Tenney Park greatly increased the value of the land surrounding the park, much of which was developed into valuable building lots. Some of the finest of these lots cover a low hill just south of the park that overlooks E. Johnson Street. Several houses on these lots are notable for their fine design and enjoy views that look out over the park towards Lake Mendota.

One of the finest of these houses is the excellent stuccoed Craftsman style house at 1353 E. Johnson Street, built by prominent Madison attorney Alfred Rogers in 1912 for his parents, John and Martha Rogers. Alfred T. Rogers graduated from the University of Wisconsin law school in 1895. By 1906 he was a law partner of Sen. Robert M. La Follette. Besides being a prominent member of the Republican party, Rogers was also active in Madison real estate circles, being the corporate secretary of the West Lawn Company (1903) and of the Madison Realty Company (1913), both of which developed suburbs on the west side of Madison in the first decades of this century.

Notable features of the beautifully restored Rogers house include the leaded-glass casement windows on the sun porch overlooking the park, and the delicate half-timber trim that ornaments the main facade.

**THE TENNEY-LAPHAM  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
WALKING TOUR**



Numbers within circles correspond to the site numbers, which are arranged chronologically.

## TENNEY PARK AND THE YAHARA RIVER PARKWAY

1400 East Johnson Street  
1900-1916

12



Tenney Locks in 1899, SHSW WHi(X3)31220

Today, the stretch of the Yahara River that forms the eastern border of the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood is one of Madison's beauty spots. It wasn't always like this, though. In the nineteenth century, the stretch of the Yahara that runs between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona was a narrow winding stream bordered by marshes that was a notorious dumping ground for all kinds of trash, including deceased pets and horses. What is now Tenney Park was a low-lying and unsightly marsh.

In 1899, this began to change. In that year, several property owners who controlled 14 acres of land along the Yahara where it meets Lake Mendota offered it to the City as a park for a cost of \$1,500. This offer prompted the directors of the Madison Park & Pleasure Drive Association to pass a resolution urging the City to accept. Before the City could take action, however, local attorney Daniel K. Tenney made a counter offer to buy the land and donate \$2,500 for its development if the Association would develop and maintain the park, hold it in trust for the City, and raise an additional \$2,500 for its development. Part of Tenney's motivation was his concern that workers in the area's new factories had no place to recreate, a concern that was also shared by attorney John M. Olin, the president of the

Association. Tenney's offer was accepted by the Association, which hired Ossian C. Simonds, a Chicago-based landscape designer who is now generally acknowledged to be the "father" of the Prairie School of landscape architecture, to design the new park. It also hired prominent Milwaukee architect, George B. Ferry, to design a bathhouse, restroom (extant), and other features. John Nolen significantly revised Simonds' designs before the park was finally completed in 1915. By that time it had grown to 44.2 acres and could boast of over 700 feet of shoreline on Lake Mendota.

Emboldened by the Association's success in getting its first park underway, Olin's next goal was to straighten the Yahara River between the two lakes and park the land bordering it. Work on the new Simonds-designed parkway began in 1903, with funds donated by over 482 citizens of the city. By 1906, it too had become a reality.

## SAMUEL WOLDENBERG HOUSE

456 Marston Avenue  
1912

13



In 1905, the Madison Park & Pleasure Drive Association purchased the third portion of Tenney Park, a 21-acre parcel known as the Thornton Marsh, with the help of a \$5,000 donation from Daniel K. Tenney. To finance the remaining \$3,500 of the cost and to help pay for its development, the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association earmarked 15 acres of the parcel for park and platted the other six acres as the Parkside Subdivision. This act created Marston Avenue along the west side of the park.

One of the first houses to be constructed on these new lots was this fine bungalow, built in 1912 for Samuel A. Woldenberg, the owner of a ladies dress shop on the Capitol Square that is still in business on the west side. Woldenberg's house exhibits many of the characteristics that are typically associated with the Bungalow style: an overall horizontal emphasis; wide, overhanging eaves; a substantial chimney; and a large front porch. The porch on this house is especially notable because it is a fine example of the influence that Japanese architecture had on Bungalow designs in America. Such design elements as the grouped posts at the corners and the stepped and paired beams that support the roof are simplified versions of elements that have their origin in traditional Japanese architecture.

## MADISON HOME BUILDING CO. BUNGALOW

405 Sidney Street  
1912

14



This fine Prairie School bungalow was built in 1912 as a speculative venture by the Madison Home Building Company to a design by Madison architect Robert L. Wright. Wright was a native of Wisconsin who, beginning in 1896, worked for a series of architectural firms in the Midwest before coming to Madison in 1904. Wright's first position here was as a draftsman in the firm of J. O. Gordon & Son, but by 1909 he had opened his own practice, which he maintained until 1917, when he moved to Milwaukee. His finest work in Madison is probably his Prairie School City Market at 101 N. Blount Street, but nearly all of his known work exhibits the influence of the several Progressive styles that were in vogue during this period.

Wright's house for the Madison Home Building Company is a case in point. Its one-and-one-half-story height, side-gabled form, and full-width front porch are all standard Bungalow elements, but its stucco surface and decorative banding are hallmarks of the Prairie School. Its construction is also noteworthy, being concrete overlaid with stucco. This house (and its mirror-image twin across the street at 406) are just two of a number of early concrete houses and apartments in the neighborhood that have walls made using movable wood or metal forms.

## FRANK & MARY LOSHEK HOUSE

1038 East Dayton Street  
1912

15



In 1889, seven years after he formed the Fuller & Johnson Manufacturing Co., John A. Johnson started a second company directly across E. Washington Avenue. This was the Gisholt Machine Tool Co., which became even more successful than Johnson's original company – the factory eventually spanned the length of E. Washington Avenue from Ingersoll Street to Dickinson Street. Not surprisingly, many of Gisholt's employees chose to live in the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood just across from the factory. Among them was Frank J. Loshek, a shop foreman who in 1912 had this fine American Foursquare style house built for his family. Loshek's daughter, Estella, a school teacher, lived in this house until at least the mid-1970s.

Loshek's designer was August Schwenn, a Madison builder and contractor who sometimes acted as his own architect. The American Foursquare was a popular residential style of that period whose typical features included: box-like massing; two-story height; hipped or, less often, side-gabled roofs; wide overhanging eaves; a centrally placed front-facing dormer; and a full-width one-story front porch. All of these features are present on the Loshek house and on other examples throughout the neighborhood, including the house next door at 1040 E. Dayton Street.

## LOUIS & MARIE HIRSIG HOUSE

1010 Sherman Avenue  
1913

16



Louis Hirsig was a partner in the highly successful and still extant Madison hardware firm of Wolff, Kubly, & Hirsig when his family's new house took shape on the lake side of Sherman Avenue in 1913. His architect was Alvan Small (1869-1932), whose design for Hirsig is one of his best works and one of Madison's finest Prairie School houses.

Small was born in Sun Prairie and educated in Madison. He first worked in the Madison offices of Conover & Porter, staying there until 1897. Following a brief stint in the offices of Louis Sullivan in Chicago, Small returned to Madison and formed a partnership with Lew Porter that lasted until 1907, when Small took over the practice. Small's subsequent Prairie School houses were mostly variations on a theme – a rectilinear gable-roofed main block having at least partially stuccoed walls, very wide overhanging eaves, grouped windows, and simple wood trim. What distinguishes these houses are their fine proportions and the skillful way that Small wove a relatively small number of elements together to produce harmonious yet modern designs.

Sherman Avenue can also boast of two other fine houses designed by Small: the Hart house at 1220 and the Magann house at 1224, both built in 1915.

## JOHN BLAKE BUNGALOWS

917, 919, 921, 923 & 925 East Dayton Street (17)  
1915-1916



Madison has very little of the kind of low-cost tract housing that was often found in residential areas near factories in larger cities prior to World War I. These areas typically contained block after block of small, nearly identical houses built by developers whose aim was to provide factory workers with cheap housing. Since cost was so important it is hardly surprising that such houses usually came up short in terms of architectural amenities.

The group of eight modest frame houses that were built ca. 1910 on the west side of the 100 block of N. Brearly Street is a typical example. A more impressive ensemble, though, is this group of five stuccoed bungalows located just around the corner on E. Dayton Street. These houses were all built by carpenter-contractor John Blake in 1915 and 1916. They are all the same size, have a side-gable design, a full-width front porch that is sheltered by the downward slope of the main roof, and a front-facing dormer centered on this slope. Blake took pains to make sure that none of these houses was exactly alike. Each utilizes different porch and dormer designs and most have some type of siding that is slightly different from the house next door. Together, these houses constitute one of Madison's few bungalow groups.

## MICHAEL OLBRICH HOUSES

939 and 941 East Dayton Street (18)  
1915



While groups of houses built in small tracts by the same builder are rare in Madison, pairs of houses erected side-by-side by the same builder are more common. Such houses were usually built as a speculative venture or as an investment. Examples can be found throughout the south part of the neighborhood. Two of the finest and earliest are the pair of small Queen Anne houses located at 1229 and 1229½ E. Dayton Street, but there are many other later examples, including those on E. Mifflin Street at 938 and 940, 1135 and 1137, 1154 and 1156, 1221 and 1225, 1233 and 1235, and 1315 and 1317. One of the finest pairs in the neighborhood is located on E. Dayton Street almost next door to the John Blake tract (17). These two largely intact bungalows were constructed in 1915. They were built, and probably designed, by George Cnare & Son, a prominent firm of eastside contractors.

Cnare's client was local attorney Michael B. Olbrich (1881-1929) who built these houses as a speculative venture. Olbrich put the money from this and other such ventures to good use; he was at that time almost single-handedly embarking on an effort to acquire land at the east end of Lake Monona as park land for the city. Today's splendid Olbrich Park and Botanical Gardens is the result.

## EMIL & IRMA HOKANSON HOUSE

1047 Sherman Avenue  
1916

19



By 1916, the length of Sherman Avenue was lined with houses, among which was an outstanding group of Prairie School residences designed by Madison's finest practitioners in this style. The largest, most elaborate, and most expensive of these houses is this one, built at a cost of \$18,000 in 1916 for Irma and Emil Hokanson. Hokanson was a native of Sweden who emigrated to America in 1902, became an auto mechanic two years later, and by 1916 was in partnership with his brother, Rudolph, in one of the largest automobile distributorships in the state.

For their architect, the Hokansons chose the Madison firm of Claude & Starck, which at that time was one of the most active in the city. Louis W. Claude (1868-1951) and Edward F. Starck (1868-1947) had formed a partnership in 1896, three years after Claude had returned from Chicago and a position in the office of Louis Sullivan. Their firm lasted until 1929, during which time it produced many of Madison's most outstanding Prairie School designs. Several other houses by this firm are also located along Sherman Avenue. These include: the Genske House (1004 Sherman Ave.) and the similar but slightly smaller Griswold house (1158), built in 1913 and 1915; the Allyn house (1106) built in 1914; and the Schubert house (1118) built in 1905.

## HARRY & JESSIE BUTLER HOUSE

1040 Sherman Avenue  
1916

20



The "Progressive" styles had a virtual monopoly on residential design in Madison during the years between 1900 and 1919. By 1916, however, a few Period Revival buildings based on historic styles were also beginning to appear on city streets.

One of the best of these early examples is this excellent Georgian Revival house designed by Madison architect Frank M. Riley for prominent Madison attorney and UW Regent Harry L. Butler (1866-1936) and his wife, Jessie. Butler was the law partner of John M. Olin, who was the driving force behind the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association. Prior to building their new house, the Butlers lived next door at 1032 in a house built for them in 1897.

The architect the Butlers chose, Frank Morris Riley (1875-1949), was arguably the finest Period Revival architect ever to practice in Madison. Riley completed the Butler house just one year after returning to Madison to practice on his own. It is an excellent example of his work in the Georgian Revival style, for which he had a special affinity. Two other fine red brick examples of Riley's work in this style are also located on Sherman Avenue: the first Warner house (1244), built in 1922; and the Sheldon house (1154), built in 1921.



## ANDREW & ANNIE MRDUTT THREE-FLAT

1123 Elizabeth Street  
1916

21



Multi-unit residential buildings are not plentiful in the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood and none of them are large, but they do come in an array of shapes and sizes. One of the best is this fine, highly intact Craftsman style three-flat built in 1917 as an income property for Andrew and Annie Mrdutt, who lived next door at 1121 Elizabeth Street. Their architect was Harry C. Alford, who first came to Madison as a student in 1902 and afterwards worked for various engineering and architectural firms in the city until 1915, when he opened his own office. He only practiced here until 1918, however, and most of his known works are commercial buildings.

For the Mrdutts, Alford created a three-story building with features similar to many single-family Craftsman houses of the same period. These include the use of different widths of clapboard on the lower and upper stories, wide overhanging eaves supported by brackets, and screened-in sleeping porches.

Other historic multi-unit residential buildings in the neighborhood include three simple two-story duplexes located at 1111-1111½, 1113, and 1119-1121 E. Mifflin St. and, more notably, the two fine and quite similar four-unit Craftsman style buildings at 1101-1107 E. Mifflin Street and 1105 E. Gorham Street.

## JOSEPH H. BOYD INVESTMENT HOUSE

1127 Sherman Avenue  
1916

22



One of the most striking of the smaller houses located on the south side of Sherman Avenue is this very fine Prairie School house built in 1916 as an investment property for Joseph H. Boyd, a prominent Madison banker and securities dealer. Often mistaken for a work of Frank Lloyd Wright, this compact stucco-clad, two-story house is actually the only identified product of the short-lived partnership of two young Madison architects – Robert A. Phillips (1890-1968) and Philip M. Homer (1893-ca.1980), whose firm, Phillips & Homer, was in existence from 1915-1917.

This house makes for an interesting comparison with the Prairie School speculative house designed by Robert Wright at 405 Sidney Street (14). Both are narrow and deep rather than wide, both have stucco-covered walls, both have full or nearly full-width front porches, and neither has a design that contains any historic references. The Wright design, though, is essentially an abstraction of a typical side-gabled bungalow. The cubistic mass of the Boyd house, on the other hand, with its inset entrance porch on the west-facing side elevation, its grouped windows, and its almost total absence of trim, is truly modern in its conception and owes more than a little to some of the Oak Park, Illinois houses of Frank Lloyd Wright.

## GEORGE SCHWARTZ HOUSE

1216 Elizabeth Street  
1929

(23)



One of the most unusual houses in the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood is the house built for George Schwartz in 1929. Schwartz was a grocer whose store was located at 817 E. Johnson Street. The name of the designer of the house is not known. The only information found on the building permit is the phrase “Private Plans.” This was the standard way of indicating that the owner had presented ready-made plans that had either come from an outside source or from the builder. Whatever the source, though, the house that Schwartz built is unique in Madison.

Several elements of this house’s design – the arched opening of the entrance door and of the small windows that flank it, the steep pitch of the two front-facing gables, the use of grouped windows, and the use of brick for the exterior walls – all suggest that the Tudor Revival style was an influence on its designer. All of these elements can also be seen in the much more accurate Tudor Revival design Frank Riley produced in the same year for H. M. Warner at 1250 Sherman Avenue (24). The use of triangular-arched windows in the gable ends, however, and the use of art glass to enframe the upper sash of all the windows are individualistic touches that place this house outside the usual stylistic categories.

## HARRY WARNER HOUSE

1250 Sherman Avenue  
1929

(24)



Like most architects who specialized in Period Revival styles, Frank Riley could move easily between them. One of the best illustrations of this can be seen in the two adjacent houses that Riley designed for Madison stockbroker Harry M. Warner at 1244 and 1250 Sherman Avenue. Warner’s first house at 1244 was built in 1922 and it is one of Riley’s best interpretations of the Georgian Revival style. Here, Riley used many of the usual elements of the style, such as red brick walls, a symmetrical five-bay facade, and denticulated cornices, while adding such elegant details as the small fanlights on the dormer windows and an elaborate wood fence that imitates originals found in Massachusetts, which Riley probably saw when he was a student at MIT.

Warner’s second house, built next door in 1929, with its Tudor-arched entrance vestibule, walls clad in rough cut stone and brick panels in a herringbone pattern, half-timber work, grouped casement windows with diamond-patterned leaded comes, copper downspouts, and massive brick multi-stack chimney, is an equally impressive exercise in Tudor Revival design. What sets this example and most of Riley’s other work apart from that of his Madison contemporaries is Riley’s sense of proportion and his mastery of the various historic styles.

## MILFORD & MARGARET VILES HOUSE

1031 Sherman Avenue  
1938

25



One of the last houses built on Sherman Avenue before World War II and the most modern in appearance is this fine Wrightian style house built for Milford and Margaret Viles in 1938. Milford Viles was the president and treasurer of Fyr-Fiter Sales Co., a fire extinguisher dealership. The architect was William Kaeser, who was then at the beginning of a long career that saw him become one of Madison's most distinguished modern architects.

William V. Kaeser (1906-1995) was born on a farm in Greenville, Illinois. While attending the University of Illinois he took summer jobs in Frank Riley's office in Madison. After graduating from MIT in 1932, Kaeser again worked for Riley for a year, then went to work with Eliel Saarinen at the Cranbrook Academy in Michigan, returning to Madison in 1935 as a city planner for the City. In 1938, Kaeser formed his own practice, which he continued until shortly before his death in 1995.

During the course of his long career, Kaeser's residential designs were especially notable. Many of these houses owed a considerable debt to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, whom Kaeser held in great esteem. Kaeser also designed the shelter house in Tenney Park in 1957.

## LAPHAM SCHOOL

1045 E. Dayton Street  
1939-1940

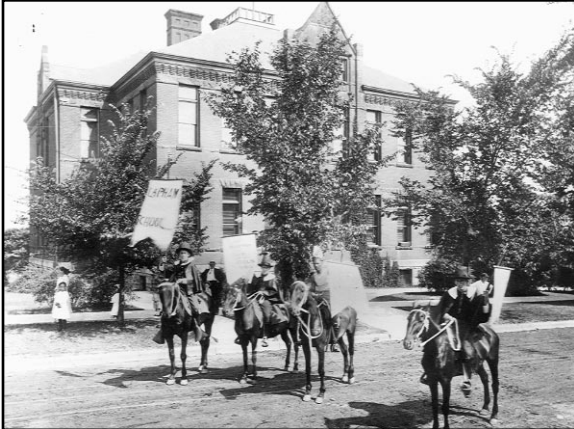
26



The first school built to serve the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood was the original Seventh Ward school, built in 1900 at the intersection of E. Dayton and N. Thornton Streets. This school, shown on page 36, served the community until 1940, by which time the number of students in the area had increased to the point where a new school was necessary. The new school, which was named after pioneer Wisconsin educator Increase A. Lapham, was one of three built in the city in 1939, the others being Washington School and Marquette School. All three were constructed on the unit plan with a classroom section, a gym section (which included a kitchen and recreation room designed for community use), an auditorium and office section, and a special section which, in the case of the Lapham school, served the needs of the city's deaf children.

The fine new Lapham School building was designed in the Collegiate Gothic style by the Madison firm of Starck, Sheldon, and Schneider, the senior partner of whom was Edward F. Starck, the former principal in the firm of Claude & Starck. When Starck parted from Claude in 1929 he formed a new firm with Hubert Schneider – Starck & Schneider. In 1935 Karl Sheldon became the third partner.

*Seventh Ward School in 1912*



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