

Register of Old Buildings
Macon County Historical Coordinating Council

Address: 505 Powers Lane
Legal description - E. G. Stiver's Addition
E127 $\frac{1}{2}$ ft. of Lots 2, 3, 4 and Lot 5 blk 1

Date of original construction: 1912 - estimate, assessor's office.

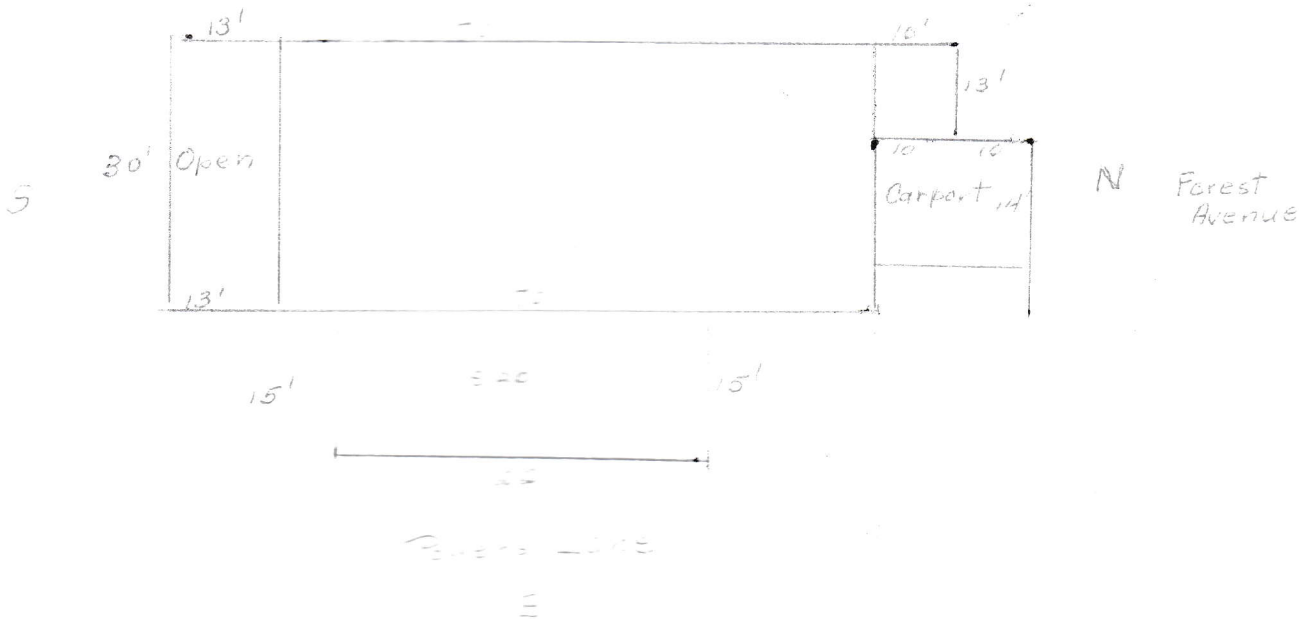
Name of original owner: Charles A. Ewing

History:

1. An incomplete chain of title follows. (Source: Office of Macon County recorder of deeds)
 - July 13, 1910 Myra Belle Ewing to Charles A. Ewing
Lots 3, 4, 5 (Ex W90')
 - Febr. 27, 1925 Myra Belle Ewing to Charles A. Ewing
E127 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' of Lot 2
 - April 23, 1938 Myra Belle Ewing to Charles A. Ewing
W90' of Lots 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Dec. 3, 1940 C. A. Ewing to Idelle K. Ewing to the Citizens
National Bank
E 127 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' of Lots 2, 3, 4, 5
2. Data from city directories regarding occupants of the house follows.
Note; Some city directories are not available.
(In 1911, C. A. Ewing lived at 450 Ewing Avenue)
1912-1932 Ewing C. A. res 505 Powers Lane.
1933-1935 Johns, Corwin H. and June E, res. 505 Powers Lane
Ewing, Mary G.
1936-1942 Ewing, C. A.
1943-1970 Ewing, Mrs. Idelle K. (wid. C. A.).
1971- Vacant.
3. The following data is from the office of the Macon County assessor.
Family dwelling
2 stories, 11 rooms, 4 bathrooms, no attic, full basement
Wood frame construction, stucco block or tile exterior
Gable roof, medium pitch of tile
2 open porches with tile floors
2 terraces of brick and sod, one 22x15, another 30x15
9 rooms with hardwood floors, 2 with pine
Tile floors and walls in bathrooms, tile walls in kitchen
Hot water head

Present owner's name: David L. Condon.

3. History Cont'd.



4. See copies of news articles regarding Charles Adlai Ewing's leadership in the field of agriculture, etc.
- management of his own extensive land holdings.
 - his being mentioned prominently as a possible Secretary of Agriculture in President Roosevelt's first cabinet in 1933.
 - his helping organize and serving as first president of the National Livestock Marketing Association in 1930.
 - his chairmanship of the American Institute of Cooperation.
 - leadership in outdoor sports and hunting
 - his serving as first president of Decatur's Izaak Walton League.
 - his canoe and hunting trips in Canada and Texas panhandle, New Mexico, islands off California.
 - for caribou.
 - for Lepidoptera with Dr. Will Barnes.
 - his local leadership as president of the Chamber of Commerce in 1915-1916 when plans for Lake Decatur and a sewage treatment plant were being inaugurated.
 - also locally as chairman of the Macon County exemption board in World War I.

Although an attorney, he worked at it only briefly, centering most of his attention on agriculture, cattle raising and hunting.

505 Powers Lane



Photo - Decatur Herald and Review
Nov. 19, 1911



Photo - Margaret M. Meyer, Dec., 1974

505 Powers Lane

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THE ARCHITECTURAL RECORD.
October, 1916

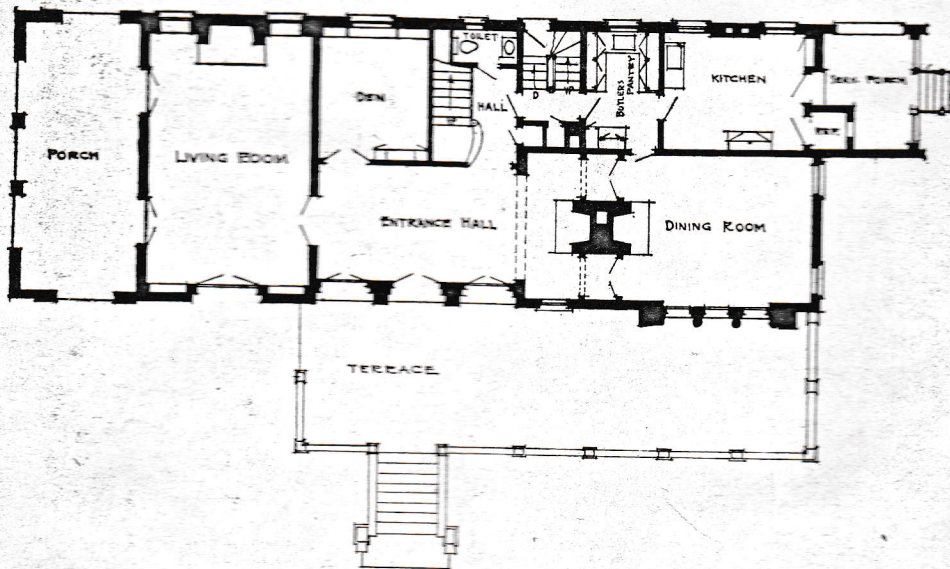
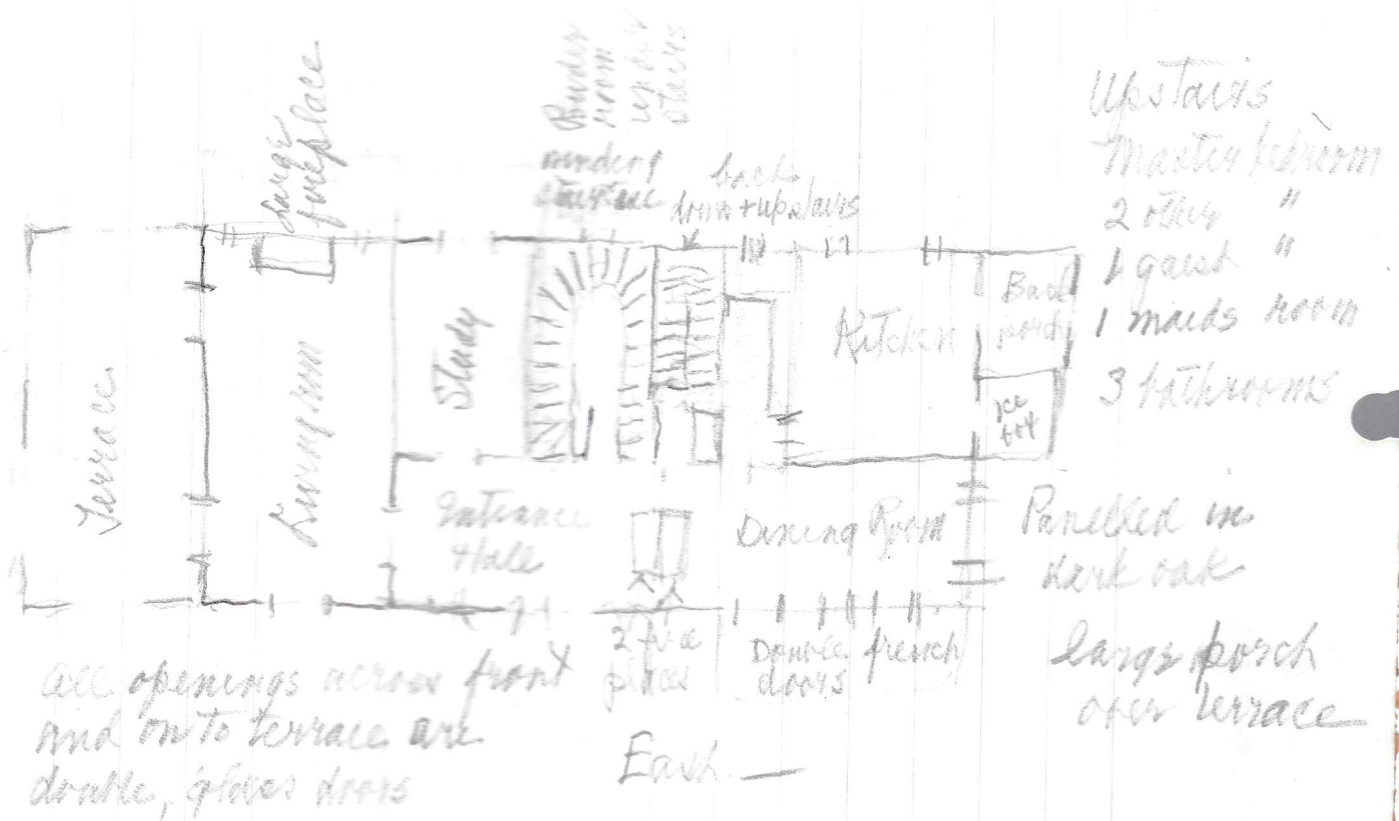


FIG. 7. VIEW AND FIRST FLOOR PLAN—HOUSE
OF CHARLES A. EWING, ESQ., DECATUR,
ILL. FREDERICK W. PERKINS, ARCHITECT.

Sketch of First Floor, Floor Plan, 505 Powers Lane

Sketched from memory by Mrs June Ewing Johns, sister of C. A. Ewing, first owner of the house. Mrs. Johns and her husband, Corwin Johns, lived in the house, 1933-1935. This sketch done by Mrs. Johns in March, 1976.



First floor plan of 505 Powers Lane.

THE ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

VOLUME XL



NUMBER IV

OCTOBER, 1916

~ COUNTRY HOUSE ARCHITECTURE ~ IN THE MIDDLE WEST ~

BY PETER B. WIGHT

IN the article on "Country House Architecture in the Middle West," which appeared in the October issue of this magazine a year ago, I took occasion to say, referring to the illustrations in general: "The indications in these examples of a conformity to certain principles of construction and design are prominent and are part of the evidence that in certain respects 'style' has grown from a common experience. For instance, the greater number of the houses are long rather than square, as was formerly the case. The square country house with a stairway in the middle is a thing of the past. The long side is now the entrance front. The main stairway receives its light from one of the 'fronts' and not from a skylight. It is a distinctive feature both of the interior and exterior design. Another prevailing feature is that the buildings are low, with deep projecting eaves, and with low ceilings, compared with those of former days, and low roofs."

In saying this I was unconsciously explaining what is now recognized as the "prairie spirit" in architecture—a con-

comitant of the prairie spirit in landscape treatment which has been recognized and advocated by one of the departments of the University of Illinois. The State of Illinois, it is true, neither dominates nor controls the study of landscape gardening throughout the Middle West, which is not all of prairie topography; but it speaks for its own domain, and in so doing has issued from its Department of Agriculture a most remarkable pamphlet.* In this it has demonstrated the analogy between the landscape treatment appropriate in a prairie State and the type of architecture which harmonizes with it.

To quote from the pamphlet by Professor Wilhelm Miller: "The Middle West is just beginning to evolve a new style of architecture, interior decoration and landscape gardening in an effort to create the perfect home amid the prairie States. This improvement is

*The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening: What the People of Illinois Have Done and Can Do Toward Designing and Planting Public and Private Grounds for Efficiency and Beauty. By Wilhelm Miller, Department of Horticulture, Division of Landscape Extension, University of Illinois, College of Agriculture, Urbana, 1915.

founded on the fact that one of the greatest assets which any country or natural part of it can have is a strong national or regional character, especially in the homes of the common people. Its Westernism grows out of the most striking peculiarity of Middle Western scenery, which is the prairie, i. e., flat or gently rolling land that was treeless when the white man came to Illinois."

Now this propoganda is just as much applicable to any prairie State in the Middle West as to Illinois, and can just as well be illustrated in parts of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Iowa and most of the other States up to the foothills of the Rockies. What the University of Illinois is doing for landscape art is equally valuable to the greater part of the territory between the Appalachian chain of mountains and the Rocky Mountains. But we are concerned now mainly with architecture, and it is gratifying to know that an educational movement is on foot to harmonize the landscape treatment of this great area with what the architects have been doing in recent years with our country and suburban residences.

The illustrations herewith given will, it is hoped, make this fact more evident and convincing. Professor Miller has shown a great interest in the work of Sullivan, Wright, Griffin and Drummond in harmonizing their buildings not only with rational land improvement, but with the natural forest trees whenever their buildings have been designed in connection with them; and several buildings by William Drummond, of Chicago, are illustrated by admirable half-tone engravings. One of these is Mr. Drummond's own residence, of which the owner said: "Because I love trees I bought this lot and smuggled my house among them, so that three big trees are growing through the front porch. I cut a hole in the eaves to make room for one." Of another house he said to Professor Miller: "I purposely repeated the prairie line in the roofs. The elder in the back yard echoes the same note."

A view and the ground plan of Mr. Drummond's own house, above referred to, are reproduced here in Figs. 3 and 4, and the vignette in Fig. 2 is from a

free-hand sketch of one of his houses, with its surroundings, somewhat idealized. Another of his houses will be found in Fig. 19. This is not altogether in the "prairie spirit." I have therefore placed it among illustrations of houses of a more picturesque character. It also shows how a small house may be made attractive with little outlay of money. It is a suburban house with many close neighbors, and is built entirely of wood carefully colored, the exterior of the second story being covered with stucco.

There are many other houses of reasonable cost among the illustrations. Some of them may be found in Figs. 5, 6 and 10, wood frame and stucco; 13 and 14, wood frame and partly stucco; 12, wood frame, shingle and stucco, and 21, all shingle. These demonstrate that good design does not depend on cost. In fact, an attempt to classify all of these examples in a graded list according to their artistic qualities, if such a thing were possible, might result in putting some of the most costly ones near the bottom. But I do not purpose to criticise their pretensions or their defects. They have all been obtained from architects who were invited to contribute to this symposium, and no conditions as to the cost, material or style of house to be represented were imposed, each architect being requested to make his own selection of representative work. It is important to note that no condition was imposed as to the "style" of architecture desired. In fact, it is rather the desire of this writer to ignore "styles," searching for more important qualities, such as fitness of the materials employed, adaptability to site and careful execution.

It has been gratifying to discover that in all those qualities comprehended under the conventional term "art," these illustrations show a decided advance over those adduced in October, 1915. It is strongly evident also that the prairie spirit in architecture, so earnestly sought for by Professor Miller, is realized in many of the examples, and that, consequently, this spirit is to be regarded as an evolution in architectural design which can now be recognized. The sym-



FIG. 2. THE "PRAIRIE SPIRIT" IN ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE TREATMENT.
From a Sketch by William Drummond.

pathy with nature which every architect should have has been tangibly expressed in numerous instances. The prairie spirit is generally reflected in the buildings designed for a prairie environment. Many of those which do not show it have been designed for places where the topography and natural environment are not of the prairie character. A special illustration will be seen in the picturesque and beautiful house designed by Carl E. Howell and J. W. Thomas, Jr., of Columbus, Ohio, for B. R. Deming (Fig. 30.) This is not a "prairie" house, according to the architect's description, from which I quote to show the measures taken to secure adaptability to location:

"In cutting through Fairmont Boulevard, a long, narrow strip of ground was left over. This strip is 600 feet long, twelve feet wide at the narrowest point, and less than fifty feet wide at the widest point. On one side is the busy boulevard and on the other are the remains of an old stone quarry, which has a brook running through it. This brook has several small water falls. The quarry has been laid out in a naturalistic way by the adjoining neighbors. In designing this house, our idea was to place all the living rooms on the ravine side, with the service and least used rooms next to the boulevard. The stone used in this house came out of the excavation."

The buildings that give evidence of the prairie spirit have been grouped together for convenience of reference from Fig. 2 to Fig. 18, inclusive. It will be observed that they are all in the State of Illinois. This is merely a coincidence sustaining what has been said above and was not discovered until after all the illustrations had been engraved and grouped.

Of the first ten which follow, and which may be regarded as houses with picturesque treatment, only three are in Illinois, one is in Ohio, a hill State, four are in Michigan, also a hill State, one is in Iowa and one in Missouri, rolling prairie States.

Nos. 29 and 31 have dominating horizontal lines, and are suggestive of Colonial influence. Both are in Michigan, in a locality where the natural ground is level; still they are largely in the prairie spirit. No. 13 has an individual character and stands alone as an example of purely local influence, a rational adaptation to the site and the materials that were found upon it.

Illustrations of what has begun to be called the "Chicago school of architecture" may be seen in Figs. 8 and 9, by Von Holst and Fyfe, assisted by Mrs. Marion M. Griffin, and in Fig. 11, by H. V. Von Holst, assisted by Mrs. Griffin. Mrs. Griffin is well known

←
Cyring
House
Fig. 7

←

among the Chicago progressives as the wife of Walter Burley Griffin, who is now building the new capitol of Australia. This so-called school is also represented in the house by Charles E. White, Jr., in Fig. 11. Fig. 18, by Horatio R. Wilson, is an old-fashioned frame house designed by him years ago, with a new addition shown on the left side of the picture.

The amount of country house building within the last two years has been much less than formerly. Still, what there is has shown progressive tendencies and a more careful study of design in houses of moderate cost, combined with a more rational treatment of ground plans. The "parlor" has disappeared entirely, and the living room has assumed greater size and importance. Doors are disappearing on ground floors when the sleeping chambers are on the second story. The intimate relations of the family are thus more fully expressed in the houses built for them. The first floors are closer to the ground. Systems for heating all parts of a house uniformly are doing away with many fireplaces, leaving only that about which the whole family gathers. Housework is more general in families who live in the country or suburbs, hence provision for hired help is less necessary. Very little more importance is given to any one room over others, and such decoration as may be used is generally applied to all rooms.

Elaboration in "grand" houses seems to go to the opposite extreme, but those are not the theme of this discourse. Americanism is expressing itself in houses of the Middle West perhaps more than in other localities, and love of the country is being revealed through sympathy with the environment which nature has freely bestowed upon us.

It is hoped that the reader will not assume from what has been said that the manifestation of a prairie spirit in the country house architecture of the Middle West is a cult or that its discovery is a finality; nor is the original suggestion that of the writer. Due credit has been given to Professor Wilhelm Miller, and with him it is one of the natural results of his study of land-

scape art, horticulture, and arboriculture. He perceived the influence of the prairie on the design of many buildings, the erection of which had come under his observation, and he bore witness to it, though it was, to an extent, outside of the purpose of his publication.

In all probability, Mr. Drummond is the only architect represented in my present article who has intentionally allowed his design to be influenced by the prairie spirit. The others have done so unconsciously, and that is the best evidence of its extensive influence.

Plenty of evidence can probably be found to controvert what I have said, and I may be wrong after all. The true province of the critic I conceive to be to ascertain facts, and to deduce from them the underlying principles that have been the cause of their manifestation. Such a procedure generally leads to the best results. It does not establish a rule, but rather a precedent that is worth respecting.

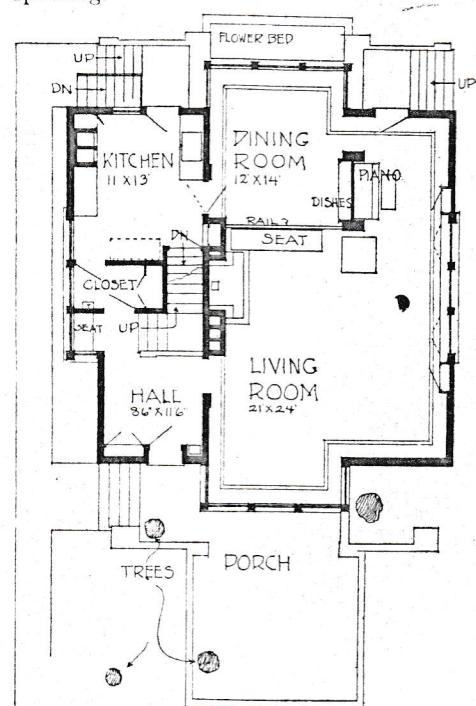


FIG. 3. FIRST FLOOR PLAN—OWN HOUSE AT RIVER FOREST, ILL.
William Drummond, Architect.

Nov. 19, 1911.

THE DECATUR REVIEW



Two Views of C. A. Ewing's Home.

505 Power Lane

Nov. 19, 1911

Charles A. Ewing---An Estimate by John Byrne

John M. Byrne, former city editor of The Review and later, secretary of the Association of Commerce, was intimately acquainted with C. A. Ewing's civic and public activities.

June 7, 1942

New York

Jerry Donahue, editor of The Review for almost 40 years from 1888, used to say that Charles A. Ewing, Thord Ewing's father, was humanly the finest specimen of man ever to his day produced by Macon county. Like father like son--with all due credit to other fine men of Macon county.

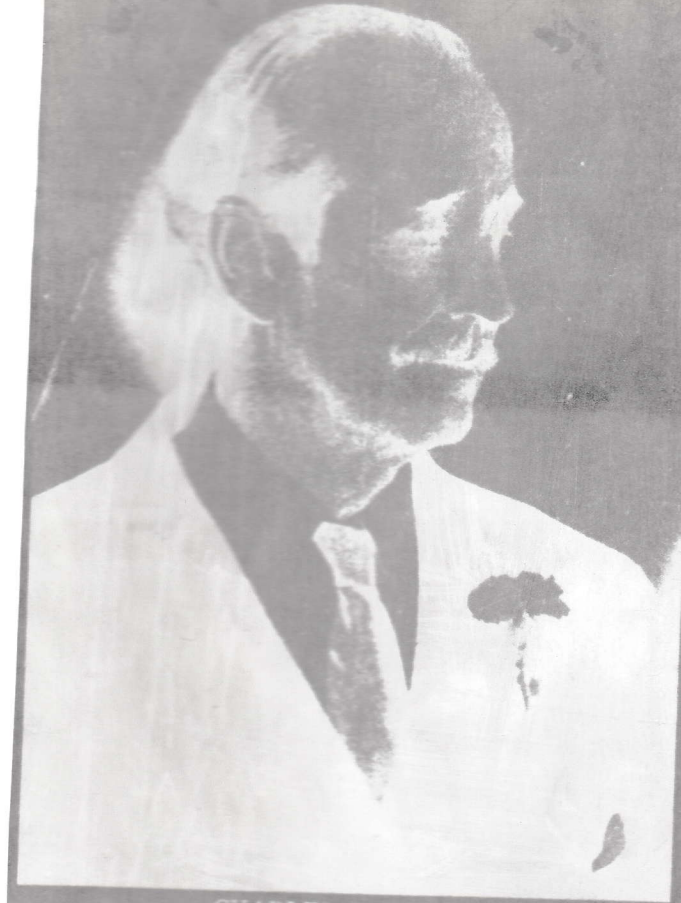
Thord Ewing represented two strains of tradition, general and specific. The general tradition was that of civic and political--as distinguished from social--aristocracy, whose duty and function are public service and which expects no reward beyond that provided by improvement in public welfare. The other was that of the extraordinary aggregation and succession of able enterprising and progressive men--Millikin, Shellabarger, Berling, Haworth, the Muellers, Linn, Scruggs, and many others--who gave impetus, competence and magnetism to a small Illinois city with no natural advantages above those of a dozen others of its type. Decatur, it should be remembered, is in its present trend of development almost exclusively man-made, and Thord Ewing and his father before him were among those who contributed effectively to its making.

Thord grew up in the after-wash of the Civil war, when civics was still a compelling topic and the principle of representative government, and patriotism in general, were part of every youngster's education. This period pinched out by 1910 and was followed by the decades of liberalism and personal irresponsibility which seem to have come to their end in Pearl Harbor. Thord was a patriot. His rearing gave him the feeling of responsibility not only to his country but also to his community. Furthermore, his association from his boyhood to his maturity with the elite of industrial and commercial enterprises in Decatur focused his feeling of responsibility in Decatur as his home community.

A lawyer for a while after he left college, associated with that fine and able gentleman, W. C. Outten, in course of time he became a farmer because of family interests. When he took to the land, he thought of it as Mother Earth, which he fostered and cherished. He was an early advocate and practitioner of the gospel of land renewal, which is now generally accepted by farmers but which before 1910 was fought bitterly by people like Byron F. Staymates of Clinton. Staymates was elected to the Illinois Legislature on the proposition that fertilizing Central Illinois corn land was a damnable heresy. That land, he asserted, could produce corn at maximum yields from then on till kingdom come without the artificial restoration of phosphorus. Thord was one of the pioneers in challenging laissez faire farming. What is now a highly developed science was in his day moot experiment, and often he paid in farmers' opinion the price of depending on experimentation.

PROMINENT FARM LEADER DIES

Jan. 6, 1942



CHARLES A. EWING

Charles A. Ewing, National Farm Figure and Prominent Leader in Civic Affairs, Dies

Jan. 6, 1942

Death Sudden After Heart Attack at 63

Charles Adlai Ewing, a member of one of Decatur's oldest and most prominent families, died about midnight last night in Decatur and Macon County hospital following a stroke suffered late in the afternoon. He was 63.

The former attorney and extensive land owner was stricken during a brief visit with his aunt, Miss Belle Ewing, and his sister, Mrs. Corwin Johns, at the old Ewing family home at the top of Ewing avenue. It was in the same house in which he was born on April 18, 1878.

Since retirement a few years ago from active management of his own and his family's land holdings in Macon and McLean counties, it had been Mr. Ewing's daily practice to walk over to the old family home from his own residence at the corner of Powers lane and Forest avenue.

Was Civic Leader

Mr. Ewing was for many years prominent in civic and social affairs in Decatur. For a considerable period he wielded strong influence in affairs of the Democratic party in both his own state and the nation. He was mentioned prominently for the post of secretary of agriculture in President Roosevelt's first cabinet in 1932 and several times refused to become his party's candidate for Congress in the 19th district. Efforts to induce him to run for that office continued from back in 1910 to only a few years ago.

When the National Livestock Marketing association was organized in Chicago in 1930, Mr. Ewing, who had taken a prominent part in its founding, was named its first president. He was re-elected six times, serving as head of the organization through 1936. During those years he and his family lived much of the time in Chicago.

In 1934 Mr. Ewing was named chairman of the American Institute of Cooperation, which was formed in Madison, Wis., in that year. This was during the worst of the last industrial depression, and at that time was bending his energies to alleviation of the bad plight of the American farmers. It was in that period that he became a strong advocate of the "commodity dollar," whose adoption, he believed, would restore a parity between the value of goods and money and relieve much of the financial distress of the farmers and the debtor groups in general.

Headed Wagon League

When an Irons Wagon League chapter was organized in the summer of 1926, Mr. Ewing was made its first president. Since then, he had been actively interested in outdoor sports and hunting, both in early morning and during the busiest part of his career. Mr. Ewing made occasional hunting and camping trips into Canada and the mountain states of the western United States.

In 1921 he went with a party from Bloomington up into the Canadian Rockies in British Columbia, where they secured some fine specimens of caribou and mountain goats. Much of this was later exhibited the following year in the Canadian building at the World's Columbian exposition in Chicago.

A few years later Mr. Ewing took a canoe trip through the Adirondacks, and not long afterward he spent a year on a ranch in the Texas Panhandle, where antelope and other game were plentiful. He went with Dr. William Byrd and others down into Southern Arizona to hunt for butterflies.

Some years ago Mr. Ewing went with Herman Filer, son of the late Governor Filer, on a trip through Yellowstone park and down into Jackson's Hole.

"We secured a team and wagon," he wrote of the trip later. "This was the first year that a wagon road was opened into the Jackson Hole country, and you wouldn't have recognized it as such if someone had not told you."

Besides these longer expeditions, which included one to some islands off the California coast, Mr. Ewing made numerous local hunting trips for ducks and quail for many years.

Mr. Ewing's college training was obtained at Princeton university and at Illinois Wesleyan university in Bloomington, from which he was graduated in 1903. Admitted to the bar in the same year, he entered law practice in the offices of a cousin, James S. Ewing of Bloomington.

Mr. Ewing practised law until 1906. He had been spending a part of his time in supervisory management of the family's farms, and in 1907 he took a trip abroad during which he investigated the agricultural practices and conditions in continental Europe and the British Isles. After his return he gave up law and devoted his time to farm management.

For a number of years Mr. Ewing was a director of the Decatur Association of Commerce, and in 1917 and 1918 he served as the association's president. It was during those years that plans for the building of Lake Decatur and the sewage treatment plant were inaugurated. He was a member of the Decatur Water Supply Co., which organization financed the building of the lake and eventual paying off of the debt through water revenues.

Headed Exemption Board

When the United States entered World war No. 1 in 1917, Mr. Ewing was made chairman of the Decatur exemption board.

The farm manager helped to organize the National Livestock Producers association and in 1921 and 1922 he was a member of its first board of directors. Afterwards he was made a member of the board of directors of the Chicago Producers Commission association, a subsidiary of the national association.

Mr. Ewing served at various times on advisory committees for the University of Illinois College of Agriculture. He was interested in the college for a quarter of a century and during that time assisted in many ways in its activities. He wrote, back in 1930:

"I have always considered the University of Illinois as the most important and valuable institution we have in this state." He was referring in particular to its college of agriculture.

His interests in agriculture resulted in Mr. Ewing being called to Washington in 1936 to sit as a member of President Roosevelt's committee of 13 to draft a permanent plan for agriculture. It was in June of that year he was made chairman of the American Institute of Cooperation, an organization which sought to develop a means for the cooperative marketing of farm commodities.

Born in Decatur

Charles Adlai Ewing was born in Decatur, a son of Charles Adlai Ewing and Mary Giselle Palmer Ewing. He was educated in the Decatur public schools, and at Lake Forest academy before entering Princeton university as a special student. His father and grandfather had studied there.

On April 14, 1904 he married Idelle Kerrick in Bloomington. He leaves, besides his wife, two daughters, Mrs. Sally Kerrick Ronstadt of Tucson, Arizona, and Miss Mary Idelle Ewing of Decatur. He also leaves two sisters, Mrs. Ralph DeMange, Bloomington, and Mrs. Corwin Johns, Decatur; a nephew, Ewing DeMange, Bloomington, and three nieces, Mary Louise DeMange, Bloomington; Jean Johns of Decatur, and Mrs. C. M. Lamason of Tenafly, N. J. There is one grandchild, Eliza Ewing Ronstadt of Tucson, Arizona, and Mr. Ewing's aunt, Miss Belle Ewing of Decatur. A sister, Mrs. Marian Ewing Winchester, died last July and was buried here.

Mr. Ewing was a member of the third generation of the Ewing family in Decatur. His grandfather,

Fielding N. Ewing, being the first of the family here. He was a Presbyterian minister, and married Sarah Ann Powers, a member of another prominent Decatur pioneer family.

Known To Most As "Thor"

Of genial personality, Mr. Ewing had many friends, and was always deeply devoted to his family. He was popularly known to his many friends here as "Thor" Ewing, a nickname he had carried since childhood.

In keeping with the family tradition, Mr. Ewing was a Presbyterian, being a member of the First church here. He also belonged to the Decatur Club and the Decatur Country club, where he held some golf championships in his early years.

For some years he had been carrying on experiments in his garden in corn and sorghum plants, in an effort to develop some improved strains of these crops. He also was carrying on research in phosphates and in ways in which cutover lands in Tennessee could be profitably used.

Possibly Mr. Ewing's most recent hobby was collecting geological specimens. He had one room at his home filled with rocks from Illinois, Tennessee, Arizona, and other western states.

Most of Mr. Ewing's recent winters had been spent in Arizona, where both his daughters attended college and where his elder daughter, Mrs. Ronstadt, lives.

Funeral services for Mr. Ewing will be held at 2 p. m. Thursday in the Dawson & Wikoff chapel, with burial in the family lot at Greenwood cemetery. Friends may call at the funeral home after 2 p. m.

Miss Belle Ewing, Civic And Social Leader, Dies

Jan. 8, 1943.

Miss M. Belle Ewing, who had a prominent place in social and civic affairs of Decatur for three generations, died of a heart attack early today.

Death came unexpectedly in the old family mansion at 509 Ewing avenue where she had made her home since coming to Decatur as a girl of seven. Just two weeks ago she had entertained a large group of friends there, in observance of her 75th Christmas spent at the old home.

The last member of her generation of the Ewing family, Miss Ewing well known and deeply loved by the many persons who had associated with her in civic and social organization work. She was unusually charming and gracious, and made her home a delightful place for her friends, both old and young.

Helped Form D. A. R. Chapter

Miss Ewing was a charter member of the Decatur Art Class, organized here more than 60 years ago by the late Mrs. James Millikin. She was a charter and life member of the Y. W. C. A. here, and had served on its board of directors since 1912.

She also was one of the leading spirits in the organization of the Stephen Decatur chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, in 1896. She served as first regent of the group, 1896-1898, and was regent again from 1909 to 1911.

Since coming to Decatur 75 years ago, Miss Ewing had been a member of the First Presbyterian church, and always took an active interest in its activities. Her father was a Presbyterian minister, and Ewing hall, at Union Theological seminary in Chicago, was named for him in recognition of his work in raising funds for the institution.

Greatly interested in books and travel, Miss Ewing was abroad many times, traveling most extensively in Europe. Her first such trip was made in 1890, with Mrs. William Barnes, Sr., and Miss Jessie Gillette.

Had Collection of Bells

Partly in her travels, Miss Ewing had gathered a large collection of bells. Some of them were brought to her from all parts of the world, by friends. On many occasions, she had made talks on the bells and displayed the col-



MISS M. BELLE EWING

lection before school and church groups, and clubs.

Miss Ewing had made an extensive study of bells which she used to explain in her talks, dated back as far as 2000 B. C. in China. The oldest bell in her collection is dated 1569.

During her long residence in the large home at the head of Ewing avenue, Miss Ewing had entertained many visiting celebrities and the social leaders of Decatur and vicinity.

Among those Miss Ewing had entertained were her cousin, Adlai Stevenson, vice president of the United States under President Grover Cleveland.

Her D. A. R. activities included attendance at numerous national meetings and close association with national leaders of the organization. She served as toastmaster at a state D. A. R. convention in Decatur a number of years ago.

Born in Chicago

Born in Chicago in 1860, Miss Ewing was a daughter of the late Rev. Fielding N. and Sarah Powers Ewing Two of her brothers,

Charles A. and Edgar Fielding Ewing, long were well known business and civic leaders here.

Miss Ewing leaves two nieces, Mrs. Ralph DeMange, Bloomington, and Mrs. Corwin Johns, Decatur. Another niece, Mrs. Lucien Winchester, of Columbus, Ohio, died in 1941. Her nephew, Charles A. Ewing died just a year ago.

There are six great-nieces and nephews, Mrs. C. M. Lameson, Elizabeth, N. J.; Mrs. William Ronstadt, Tucson, Ariz.; Miss Mary Idelle Ewing, Chicago; Ewing DeMange and Mary Louise DeMange, Bloomington, and Jean Johns, Decatur.

The old Ewing home was built in 1867 by her father, on a large heavily wooded lot that at the time was on the southwest extremity of Decatur, then a small city of about 4,000 population. Except for an addition that was built on the west side of the house in 1887, the home has been changed but little during Miss Ewing's lifetime.

Funeral arrangements, in charge of Dawson & Wikoff, are incomplete.

MARRIED IN POWERS HOME.

Sarah Powers Became Wife of Rev. Fielding N. Ewing in 1845 and They Built Home That Has Housed Five Generations.

That hospitable home of George Powers, northeast of Decatur, now Locust street, was the place where Sarah Powers and Rev. Fielding N. Ewing of Kentucky first met. The Presbyterian minister had been visiting in Bloomington. He and his mother were returning to Kentucky on horseback when he stopped for a night at the George Powers home—as did everybody of prominence that came to Decatur. When he met Miss Powers he knew that he would return to Illinois, and he did. They were married Oct. 28, 1845 in the Powers home—

stead and drove back to Kentucky for a wedding trip, their trunk strapped on behind the equipage.

This young minister was born in Statesville, North Carolina, Sept. 23, 1811, of Scotch-Irish forebears, all of whom were Presbyterians. The family moved to Kentucky when he was a small boy and his father died there.

JACKSON'S CANE

Fielding N. Ewing graduated from the University of Nashville in 1838. When he went out to The Hermitage to get the signature of Andrew Jackson to his recently acquired diploma, "Old Hickory" cut him a cane—of hickory, and presented it to him with his good wishes. Later, Judge Ewing of Chicago had a silver head made for this cane, on which the signature of Andrew Jackson was engraved, and on the death of Mr. Ewing, Judge Ewing in Chicago asked to be allowed to have this cane. It has recently been returned to Rev. Mr. Ewing's grandson, the present Charles A. Ewing of Decatur.

After his graduation in Tennessee, Mr. Ewing took his theological degree at Princeton. Then he preached in Kentucky for several years and in Bloomington for ten years, but he gave up preaching and went to Chicago in 1859, thinking that the lake air would help a serious throat affection which was troubling him.

BUILDING NAMED FOR HIM

During the Civil war, Rev. Mr. Ewing was made a special agent to secure money to build a building on land that had been donated for a theological seminary in Chicago. He was successful and the first building of McCormick Institute was named "Ewing Hall" in his honor.

In 1864, the Ewings removed from Chicago to Decatur, living first in a house on the north side of North street, opposite The Review building, which was the property of the late Mrs. Lamira Wilkinson, who was Mrs. Ewing's sister, and which she gave as a manse to the First Presbyterian church of Decatur. Silas Packard and family were then living directly opposite the present Review building, at the northwest corner of North Main and West North streets.

BEAUTIFUL HOME.

The Ewings built the Ewing home, at the head of Ewing avenue, in 1867, a beautiful, picturesque brick

house built in this part of town, the two that had preceded it being the Orlando Powers house and the Samuel Powers home. The Ewing house is beautifully located and has always been a social center for Decatur's best people. It has been in the possession of the Ewings for more than half a century and its roof-tree is notable for having sheltered five generations of the family.

Many noted people have visited at this delightful home, among them being Madame Modjeska, the famous actress; James Whitcomb Riley; former Vice President Adlai Stevenson, a cousin of the Ewings, and Judge David Davis.

LAND VALUES INCREASED.

When his wife's brother was prospecting for gold in California, the Ewings were residing in Bloomington, and Mr. Ewing wrote a letter to Samuel Powers at Sacramento, which is dated June 30, 1851. In this letter he remarks on his disap-

pointment, felt by all Mr. Powers' connections, that he had not returned to Decatur in the spring of 1851, and expressed the hope that he will be with them in the fall.

In another part of the letter, he read:

"William was here last week and spent a few days with us. He has been helping Chauncey to plant corn and make fence this spring, since he came up from the south.

"Chauncey left today at noon with one of Flagg & Ewing's harvesters. (The Ewing of this firm of implement manufacturers was John Ewing, brother of Fielding Ewing, a Bloomington resident). He has about eighty acres of wheat to cut. The wheat crop is pretty good though somewhat injured by the constant rains. This has been a very wet season, much like 1844. Chauncey is fencing-in five or six hundred acres of prairie for his cattle. He makes it by driving pickets into the ground and nailing a piece along on top.

"Unbroken prairie is worth five or six dollars near town. The surveyors on the Central railroad have run the line from this town some distance south of Decatur. I think the line runs through Renshaw's lane. Property is rising along the line of the road so fast you had better come home and see to your farm before it gets up out of sight.

"Orlando has got his flouring mill to running and it does a fine business. He will get as much as he can do."

Mr. Ewing died in his home at the end of Ewing avenue, Nov. 18, 1880. His wife survived him, living until Jan. 29, 1902. But one child survives, Miss Myra Belle Ewing of 309 Ewing avenue. Three sons died in infancy, Charles Adlai Ewing died Nov. 6, 1896, and Edgar Farris Ewing died Aug. 26, 1894.

(To Be Continued.)

REV. FIELDING N. EWING, WIFE AND SON



Mrs. Ewing was Miss Sarah Powers, and their son in this old picture was the father of Charles A. Ewing of 505 Powers Lane.

Morning, July 8, 1934

Decatur, Review, Founded 1878



a, Calif., is visiting D. Segar. She came delegate to Phi Chi will be a senior next California and is a Altadena, Calif.
C. E. Willis Photo.

Mrs. Mary G. P. Ewing celebrated her 86th birthday anniversary on June 23, but because of the extreme heat she passed the day quietly in her home. Her son, C. A. Ewing, and daughter, Mrs. L. W. Winchester, came down from Chicago to be with her for the

Sunday, Herald and Review
May 25, 1975

Local Artists Relate, Share in 'Doit 10'

By Ruth Heckathorn

"Without the group I feel inept, like an old lady painting alone in my attic with my kids saying 'Gee, that's so bright red.'"

Decatur mother and artist Ann Condon — she isn't a little old lady — wanted more than that.

She found professional self-esteem as a member of Doit 10 (pronounced do it) 10.

The group of local artists was formed in the spring of 1974 for the purpose of elevating each other's feelings about themselves as artists.

"So we would have a spiritual, communal feeling, a positive exchange of energies. I rather than feeling we're just living alone in the dark" as Ms. Condon, 505 Powers Lane, expresses it.

At first monthly get-togethers at the home of Joann Caldwell centered on discussion of members' art.

"Preston Jackson really reprimanded us because our framing was not looking very professional," Ms. Condon remembers. "A schlocky-looking frame makes a work look tacky."

Besides advice on technical details there was plenty of praise, too.

"Terrific! I love the way you apply paint."

"What delicacy you've shown with pencil."

Ms. Condon says she found the variety of art media represented by her colleagues enriched her understanding of art in general.

"It's nice to sit and listen to what's neat about pottery if you're a painter . . . It's a whole other dimension," she says.

The current 14 artists — new ones are brought in by invitation — come from many backgrounds.

Six are on university art department staffs, but there's also a farmer, a health spa employe, a drywall hanger and students, too.

They work in sculpture, ceramics, photography, lithography, weaving and intaglio, painting and drawing.

Improving creative self-worth was Doit 10's first function.

After members had confidence that their work was definitely above the horsehead sloshed on velvet level, displaying their work seemed a natural second step.

But no high profile show areas were readily apparent.

To begin Doit 10 held an invitational art exhibit in Central Park last summer. Another is planned June 21 and 22.

During the year members collectively have taken their work for exhibit in Peoria and Quincy and have been asked to show in Chicago and Champaign.

Most recently they presented a display at the Decatur Public Library during April.

"We've been recognized as worthwhile to other communities," Ms. Condon says. "Yet until the library show it was difficult to be recognized as a going concern here in Decatur."

That's no longer true, she hopes. Local enthusiasm for fine arts was proven by movement education a dance com-



Ann Condon

pany brought to elementary schools earlier this year, she says.

Additional community support — a \$500 grant to defray exhibition expenses — came to Doit 10 from the Decatur Area Arts Council.

"I have WPA day flashbacks," Ms. Condon says, referring to depression era government art support. She feels similar backing and enjoyment of art can occur again.

"Maybe people are seeing that consumerism, the result of the technological revolution, doesn't make sense but the arts do."

She concedes art appreciation must be nurtured. And even so, art remains a matter of taste and individual tastes vary.

"We don't expect people to lurch out of Rambo's Drug Store and go into ecstasy over our work," she says.

To help Central Illinoisans relate to art, though, Doit 10 artists will portray their interpretation of a well-known local landmark at their park show in June.

"We had fistfights about whether it would be the Transfer House or the Staley stacks," she says. The former won out.

The group is considering giving a visual art appreciation talk to stimulate community interest in art.

And if local organizations such as schools request Doit 10 members to explain their crafts, Ms. Condon feels they have progressed to the point where they can help. She adds they have a social responsibility to do so.

One year ago she was a student with minimal experience at exhibiting her paintings at art fairs.

This year she's been chosen one of 30 residents of the state to participate in the annual professional artists invitational show.

She credits Doit 10 colleagues who helped her feel good about her creative abilities for her progress.

Professional growth has made all the difference for her.

"To be accepted for one's individual merit in a show . . . This is better than being remembered as the class of '58."