

Arts and Crafts Architecture as Folk Art: The House at 1259 Park Street

Much has been written about vernacular architecture and its connection to the folk, and yet comparatively little has been written about the art of the folk level of architecture. This is perhaps because in an effort to tidy up our categories of art we have constructed an Elite—Popular—Folk continuum designed to address the varying levels of art and, frankly, architecture pokes out at irregular places. I began to question the separateness of Elite—Popular—Folk as soon as it was introduced to me. I could think of many examples of art that crossed the divides and could be considered, from a folkloristic viewpoint, two or even all three of the categories especially as the “success” of the artwork or tradition ebbed and flowed over time. The continuum (and conundrum) of Elite—Popular—Folk becomes even more confusing and difficult to discern when a matter as pervasive as architecture is concerned. We live in it, work in it, shop in it, visit our friends in it; it is literally all around us all the time. Loosely defined as non-pedigreed architecture, vernacular architecture or folk architecture is simultaneously the origin and result of elite architecture, with the common connector of popular architecture often acting as the swing-gate between the two. Dell Upton, in “Architecture in Everyday Life” states, “the idea of the everyday forces us to acknowledge that Architecture is part of architecture” (Upton 2002:711), indicating that he believes it is not feasible to accurately categorize architecture as all architecture is from the same matrix.

“In its most essential nature, folk art expresses the concerns of human activity and endeavor...” writes Stacey Hollander in her article “A Place for Us: Vernacular Architecture in American Folk Art” (Hollander 1996:33). This idea struck home with me

as my dual backgrounds in art and architecture have made me curious about the connection between architecture and art and have led me to see buildings as individual pieces of art in a landscape. In this paper I look to one such piece, the J.S. Dickey House at 1259 Park Street in Bowling Green, Kentucky, as an example of folk art that came into being as the result of a folk-cum-elite-cum-popular-cum-folk circular metamorphosis. In this effort, I will discuss the origins and philosophies of the Arts and Crafts folk movement that began the process of creation, the swing the movement took through the elite phase of art, the popular versions of this Craftsman Bungalow architectural style in a local context and the art in one individual piece of popularized architecture that brought it full circle to folk art.

Regardless of its individual beauty it would not be possible to discuss a piece of contextual art without some background on the makers and the times, and as such, I will include a discussion of the family for whom the house was built and the local events that encouraged its creation. In the interest of clarity, it's important to know where you hope to end before setting out on a journey. Our end, the house at 1259 Park Street, is a Craftsman style Bungalow. Bungalow refers to the "form" or shape of the house while Craftsman refers to the "style" of the house. In less architecturally specific language, this means that the house is of the then-new style of family home that featured large overhanging eaves, a low-slung profile, large rooms and a flowing floorplan while using the same basic construction techniques, i.e. balloon framing and masonry, that have been used for decades. The Craftsman designation means that it is built in such a way as to express the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States. For now, it is enough to say that this house, built circa 1920 in a small town in Kentucky, has origins

that extend well beyond the 20th century and even beyond the borders of our country. It began in mid 19th century England, as part of the Arts and Crafts movement.

The Arts and Crafts movement, which drew on the Gothic Revival principles of spiritual harmony, function and honesty, grew out of the British reaction to the Industrial Revolution and its perceived effects on quality of life, material goods and handicraft. John Ruskin, noted author and architectural critic of the mid-19th century, saw the connection between builder and building as similar to the relationship between any artist and art. Mark Gelernter, in *A History of American Architecture*, tells us that Ruskin felt that a “building form expresses the inner emotional state of its creator” (Gelernter 1999:145). Ruskin added his view on morality and art when he said “...and therefore good and beautiful architecture can only be created by emotionally stable and morally good people. Unfortunately, the social divisions and crass materialism of the mid-nineteenth century have created an immoral society out of which no good architecture can ever emerge” (Gelernter 1999:145). A return to moral and emotional health was called for—such was the start of the Arts and Crafts ideals of simplification of form and honest, frank expression of construction.

In the 1860s and 1870s one of the predecessors of the movement, William Morris, began, like Ruskin, to see a direct relationship between the “ailing society” and the “artificial architectural forms that grew out of it” (Gelernter 1999:208). Morris rejected mass-produced goods and the dehumanizing effect on factory workers and saw handcrafted goods and the connecting process of creating them as the answers to the issues at hand. The Arts and Crafts movement began in earnest in the 1880s and 1890s when a group of British craftspeople and architects gathered together in an effort to

combat the ills of the day by utilizing the principles of the movement. The movement extended well beyond architecture. Decorative art works, home furnishings and buildings were all touched by the movement's desire for simplicity and quality. Traditional folk arts and techniques were an integral part of the movement. Items were to be honest and simple in design and construction, constructed as much as possible from natural, local materials, integrated with the setting and showcasing as many of the arts or construction trades as feasible while avoiding superfluous adornments. W.R. Lethaby tells us in his article from 1892 in *Architecture, a Profession or an Art* that "in every work there is a balance of motive and method, of subject and style: more properly, it is the *method* or the *style* that is art—work rightly done, fitly framed together [emphasis in original]. The art of architecture is thus the co-ordination of the several crafts in the achievement of right or beautiful building; and this is not only in the outer form and adornment, but in the very structure and anatomy. Architecture is the easy and expressive handling of materials in masterly experimental building—it is the craftsmen's Drama" (Greensted 2005:33).

The Arts and Crafts movement in Britain affected a building revival from the 1890s to the First World War. The movement reached American shores in the 1890s and fit well with the American social reform movement known as Progressivism. Progressivism stood against the conspicuous consumption of the upper class, the excess of big business and the resulting growing breach between the rich and poor. Theodore Roosevelt's presidency from 1901 to 1909 helped to advance Progressivism by creating regulatory powers to help create what he called a "square deal" for all Americans (Gelernter 1999:211). The American preference for a simple, rural lifestyle and setting

led people to the suburbs instead of the city centers and to create simple domestic dwellings instead of large homes that displayed wealth and status.

The beginnings of the elite period of American Arts and Crafts architecture as well as the beating heart of the Arts and Crafts movement were to be found in Chicago, one of the foremost industrial centers in the United States situated in the heartland of America's leading agricultural area and nearby to Wisconsin, the leading reform center in America. This juxtaposition caused Teddy Roosevelt to refer to the area as a "laboratory of democracy" (Gelernter 1999:211). It was just this crossroads that helped to give rise to the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States. The desire for simplification of design and ornament meshed well with Chicago's need for large, open floorplans that would allow for maximum retail and industrial space within a given structure. Chicago-based architects Burnham and Root's Monadnock Building [photo 1] was one of the first ornamentally stripped and open floorplan structures created in the United States.

Architect Louis Sullivan took the idea a step further in his design of tall buildings for a new phase of democracy, where risk-taking and hard work could bring about the success of the individual and help to fulfill one's inner potential. His ideas that "appropriate architectural design should grow naturally out of the conditions at hand" and that "nature is the ultimate source of all beauty" fitted well with the Arts and Crafts movement in America (Gelernter 1999:212).

One of Sullivan's foremost students and Arts and Crafts-based architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, was born in the Wisconsin hotbed of social reform and worked for the firm of Sullivan and Adler in Chicago from 1888 to 1893. Wright had a love of nature, democracy and family life that could be seen as a result of his time in the Wisconsin

countryside; his innovative compositions, especially the Prairie Style for which he became famous [photo 2], can be attributed to those same loves. The American Arts and Crafts movement was furthered still by Bernard Maybeck, a California architect who was trained in the Beaux Arts and worked in the Classical and Academic Eclectic styles for large buildings. His work on smaller buildings afforded him the opportunity to filter his training with the Arts and Crafts ideals, producing such iconic pieces as the Boke House [photo 3] in Berkley. The California based, Chicago trained architectural firm of Greene and Greene is perhaps the most notable of the firms working in the Craftsman style.

Their works such as the Gamble House [photo 4] in Pasadena are among the most well known Craftsman style buildings. As the elite period of the movement, these buildings represent the high-end of the Craftsman style and often adhere to the Arts and Crafts movement “more in spirit than in the material reality” (Gelernter 1999:224). This is due to the fact that, while they do exhibit good craftsmanship and the basic physical structures and plans of the Arts and Crafts ideals, the appearance of handcraftsmanship was often a façade, such as wooden pegs used to cover the real structural connectors.

As the elite forms of Arts and Crafts architecture became more numerous, the movement entered a phase of extreme popularity. This popular period was marked by floorplans for houses and drawings for furniture becoming available to everyone via catalogs. The craftsman most associated with the American Arts and Crafts movement was New York’s Gustav Stickley, whose furniture design company espoused the ideals of the movement. Stickley produced furniture in the Craftsman style and in 1901 founded *The Craftsman* magazine, first to advertise his own wares, but later to spread the principles of the Arts and Crafts movement. In 1903, he began publishing designs for

“Craftsman Homes,” melding “British Arts and Crafts ideas with a variety of American traditions including the California Mission style, log cabins and New England Farm houses” (Gelernter 1999:223). Stickley broke with the British Arts and Crafts ideals in his acceptance of the machine as a labor and cost saving device. His designs were “democratic,” Stickley asserted, due to their flexibility of plan and location that allowed for individuality within the structures (Gelernter 1999:223). These printed plans set in motion the speedy acceptance of the style and the consequential rise, literally, of Craftsman structures nearly nationwide. Eventually, entire kits for Craftsman homes were available by mail order catalogs such as Stickley’s *The Craftsman*, Sears and Roebuck and Montgomery Ward.

The Bungalow form was the most widely used carrier of the Arts and Crafts or Craftsman style. The Bungalow was brought to the United States via Britain, which had been exposed to the form in its colonization of India. The open plan and wide eaves provided good shade and ventilation in the heat of the Indian sun and blurred the lines between inside and out, creating an extension of the home. American adaptations allowed the form to become a popular vacation home initially and later, a permanent home. Although the footprint of the house is essentially rectangular or square, the floorplan is primarily circular, allowing families to move about freely in an efficient fashion. The heart of the Bungalow home is the living room, which has ample room for the necessary furniture (often built-in) without being disposed to over-decoration. The front door in a Bungalow typically leads directly into this room, which usually has a large fireplace where the family could gather and relax, “for the hearthstone is always the center of true home life” (Stickley 1979:196).

The most recognizable features of the Craftsman style Bungalow include many of the features found in Wright's, Maybeck's, Greene and Greene's elite and Stickley's popular designs: low-slung profiles with wide projecting eaves; exposed and elaborated rafter ends exhibiting honesty in the construction; tapered piers and columns to provide a strong visual connection to the earth; use of natural and local materials; massive fireplace for family gatherings; great numbers of windows to let in natural light and a family-centered rationalization of floorplans that encourages ease of movement and family unity. All of these features are present in the J.S. Dickey House, which I propose is a return to the folk art roots of the Arts and Crafts movement. They are also easily found in the contemporaries of the Dickey House, the numerous popular Arts and Crafts style Bungalows in Bowling Green.

During the first forty years of the 20th century, when the Craftsman style was in its American hey-day, Bowling Green was a city experiencing rapid growth led by the limestone industry, the steady increase in railroad traffic that precipitated building a bigger depot, a short-lived oil boom and a dramatic increase in enrollment at Western Kentucky Normal School, now Western Kentucky University. As with most architectural styles, the Craftsman style was built in greatest numbers in areas that were being developed during the time in which the style was in favor and often came late to towns that were already established as a style's popularity increased.

The period saw, in Bowling Green, a popularization of Craftsman style architecture on the bungalow form. This increase in popularity can be seen primarily in the urban growth exemplified by early subdivisions such as the Magnolia Street Historic District, which is comprised primarily of Craftsman/Bungalow style houses built in the

years between 1920 and 1925. The houses on Magnolia Street are, visually, carriers of the Arts and Crafts movement [photos 5-8]. Like the most elite versions of the architectural style, however, they are examples “more in spirit than in the material reality” (Gelernter 1999:224). In this instance, I mean that they follow the form and rational layout espoused by the movement and exhibit the details that are recognized as Arts and Crafts markers, but are made primarily of mass-produced machined materials, making the homes much more affordable for the masses. In fact, at least one of the homes on Magnolia Street is, according to a car-window conversation with its current owner, a kit house from Sears and Roebuck [photo 9]. Apart from the mass-production, the houses meet the idea held by the Arts and Crafts movement that every family should have a simple, comfortable place to call home.

If the Elite—Popular—Folk (in this case Folk—Elite—Popular) categories were strung along a simple continuum, we would end our story here. Art, however, is an unwieldy and wiggly thing that defies strict categorical placement. The Dickey House pushes us along the circle back to the folk art that was a critical part of the initial Arts and Crafts movement. It does this not by form, which is the same as the other Bungalows, nor by style, which is similar to its contemporaries, but by the application of an artist’s hand in the masonry of the house. But, to understand how these Arts and Crafts ideals came to manifest themselves in the house at 1259 Park Street, we must look not only at the city in general but more specifically at the neighborhood in which it was built and the family for whom it was designed.

The Craftsman style became prevalent in Bowling Green after the downtown neighborhoods were developed in the late 19th and early 20th century, and yet the house at

1259 Park Street sits on the periphery of the College Hill neighborhood as one of the last houses built on the block, a testament to the love of the style. The land now occupied by the J.S. Dickey House was the last lot to be sold in one of the first subdivisions of land for residential structures within the city limits of Bowling Green. The land was formerly known as Smallhouse Lawn and had been divided as early as the 1890s. The lot at 1259 Park was sold as an unimproved lot in 1909. Deed searches show that the property upon which the house stands was still unimproved as of a transfer of ownership occurring in 1919 in which J.S. Dickey and his wife Myra H. Dickey assumed the deed from E.S. Fowler and wife. The next transfer is from the widowed Myra Dickey to Gerard Daly and his wife Sadie in June of 1921, six months after the death of Myra's husband. Though no specific records of building dates were found, there is evidence that Joseph Stone Dickey had the house at 1259 Park Street built shortly before his death on January 16, 1921. The house is absent from the 1914 Sanborn Insurance Map for the area, but the footprint visible on the 1925 Sanborn map is the same as currently occupied by the house. One memorial article written by Dickey's business partner and successor, J.L. Harman, in the Teacher's College Heights in 1934, years after Dickey's death, mentioned that Dickey had been "sitting in his new home" when he died.

Dickey was known as one of the finest educators in the South and was thought of very highly in his field and by his students. In fact, at the occasion of his death, the students created an instant memorial at his home and gathered funds for and had made a permanent grave marker. In his eulogy, he was said to be kind and considerate, a man above reproach. Vacation photos of his business partners, J.L. Harman and H.H. Cherry and families do not include the Dickey family; one is left to speculate as to the reason. It

is known, however, that his son, also named Joseph S. Dickey, became an attorney in Texas, where the family had lived for a period. After the senior Dickey's death, the young J.S. Dickey became his mother's advocate in financial matters involving the other partners in his school, including Misters Harman, Ashby, Fuqua and even the senior Dickey's brother, L.T. Dickey. Family must have been an important matter to the father for it to have been passed so clearly to the son. Before the move to 1259 Park, the family lived just two blocks away at 1017 Park Street; after his passing, Mrs. Dickey moved to 1142 College Street, just four blocks from the home at 1259 Park. So, not only was immediate family important, but so was extended family, perhaps even extended to neighbors. These are the values espoused by the Arts and Crafts movement and for which the family-centered Bungalow was designed.

Other houses of the Bungalow/Craftsman style are present on the edges of the College Hill neighborhood, many of which are to be found one block west of the J.S. Dickey House on 14th Street [photos 10-13] and one of which is on the same block as the Dickey House, built a decade later as a replacement for a demolished home [photo 14]. A home similar in both form and masonry construction method can be found just two blocks northwest of the J. S. Dickey House, at 416 E. 12th Ave [photos 15-18]. This house uses a local variety of rough red stone, Chert, in a similar manner to the J.S. Dickey House and is a fine, National Register listed, example of the Craftsman style in Bowling Green. The main difference in the houses, other than the type of stone, is the use of wooden battered piers atop stone pillars in the house on 12th Avenue while the Dickey House uses exclusively stone in the piers and foundation. There are, of course,

other variations in details, but none so important as to warrant mentioning as variation within the traditional style was common.

While it is impossible to say definitively how the design of the house at 1259 Park Street came into being, one possibility is that the owner was familiar with the Craftsman aesthetics from his life experiences. J.S. Dickey was part owner in, and President of, the Bowling Green Business University, an offshoot of the Western Kentucky Teacher's College, which is now Western Kentucky University. Though Dickey lived and worked in the South throughout his life, as an educator he was afforded the opportunity to travel the U.S. widely. For example, an extended period of his life was spent in Asheville, North Carolina, an area well known for its exuberant Arts and Crafts architecture. The style was sweeping the nation, so it is reasonable to assume that a man with Dickey's status would have been inside one of these Bungalows by the time his home was being built.

The local newspaper, then called the *Daily Times Journal*, ran a column by William A. Radford, of the Chicago-based Radford Architectural Company, during the years 1919 and 1920, perhaps longer [photos 53-56]. The articles offered an elevation drawing and floorplan for Bungalows at least twice during the 1919-1920 period of significance. The articles hark back to Stickley's plans in *The Craftsman* by extolling the virtues of the Bungalow design and its flexibility of floorplan and setting. In his article, Radford offers to "answer questions and give advice FREE OF CHARGE on all subjects pertaining to the subject of building." Further investigation uncovered the fact that the Radford Architectural Company designed a special group of house plans and kits to be ordered through his own company and Sears and Roebuck (Reiff 2000:370). The fact

that space in the local newspaper was dedicated to the subject of building in general and Bungalows specifically is a testament to Bowling Green's interest in construction and in Bungalows. This may be where Dickey firmed up the idea for using the Craftsman Bungalow style.

There was at least one local architect, Creedmore Fleenor, designing in the Bungalow/Craftsman style in the city during this period. Fleenor was a "proponent of utilitarian and Arts and Crafts style architecture" (Landmark Association 1984:369). Fleenor designed many important structures in Bowling Green and statewide, including being Associate Architect and Superintendent of Construction for the Kentucky State Capitol. Locally, he is most noted for his residential work. Many documented examples of his work in this style are found in the city of Bowling Green, at least two of which are in the College Hill neighborhood and two in the Upper East Main neighborhood. Both neighborhoods are listed as National Register Historic Districts to which his work is noted as being contributing. The houses designed by Fleenor in the College Hill neighborhood were designed for his sisters, Birdie Reed Ellis and Mrs. J.E. Tyler, as neighboring homes at 1349 and 1353 State Street [photos 19-20]. Both houses show a deep understanding of the Arts and Crafts aesthetics, using shingle, brick and stone to create outstanding homes. The Birdie Reed Ellis Home is characterized by its "yellow brick exterior and curvilinear Mission style pediment" (Landmark Association 1984:315-16) and its dark oak-trimmed interior, while the Tyler home is a great example of craftsmanship and Arts and Crafts style with its limestone window sills and hoods, gambrel roof, shingle siding, deep porch and brick exterior. The houses Fleenor designed in the Upper East Main neighborhood are equally beautiful. The Carrie Taylor House

[photo 21] uses cut limestone pillars and exposed rafter ends, while softening the look by curving one outside wall. The Herdman House [photo 22] sits at the corner of Park Street and East Main and is labeled, on the hand-rendered plan [photos 57-59] , a Bungalow Cottage. It is a truly excellent example of a Craftsman Bungalow.

The J.S. Dickey House [photos 23-24] is a one and a half story end-gabled Bungalow using limestone as foundation and piers with the remainder being frame covered in wood shingles. The traditional aspects of the Arts and Crafts Bungalow style are intact and readily apparent: low-slung profile, exposed and elaborated rafter ends, banks of double hung multi-lite-over-one windows, use of natural materials, wide eaves, second-story dormers, a slight bay window, prominent fireplace and chimney and a large front porch [photos 25-27]. Additionally, the interior space is designed in traditional bungalow fashion with the front door leading into the main living area with a prominent stone fireplace. Few hallways separate the rooms which are arranged in a primarily circular fashion allowing for ease and efficiency of movement through the house, an indicator of the period's trend toward conscientious order of the household design. The walls are plaster (now covered in paneling) the mouldings are a simple dark wood [photo 28]. Numerous built-ins are intact in the home, including two bookshelves upstairs and at least one nook downstairs [photos 29-31]. The house's position on a hillside allowed for a full basement, another common feature of Bungalows. There are three chimneys, with two of those ending in open fireplaces, one exhibiting the same smooth stone used elsewhere in the house and one with a classic period mantel [photos 32-33]. The other chimney was presumably built as a venting route for heating and cooking appliances. Windows are a combination of fifteen-over-one, twelve-over-one,

nine-over-one, eight-over one, six-over-one and four-over-one depending on size and location, with foundation windows being single multi-lite sashes. During the period of construction there was, within the same city block, a lumber mill and, within three city blocks, a stone shop. Given the proximity to the house, it is likely that both companies were suppliers for at least part of the materials used in the house.

As Selwyn Image wrote in his article, “Of Design and the Study of Nature” in *Plain Handicrafts* during the height of the movement, “...design implies two things: it implies, first of all, that we are acquainted with the essential characteristics of the natural object upon which we found our design; and, secondly, that we have imaginative cunning enough to employ these essential characteristics in an arrangement of masses and lines, which fill the space satisfactorily” (Greensted 2005:36). It is clear that the mason on the project had imaginative cunning and a clear understanding of the essentials of the stone with which he worked. The foundation, chimneys, porch knee-walls and piers of the house at 1259 Park Street are all of a local stone left in its natural state, uncut [photos 34-36]. The more common variety of stone for this use in the region was quarried cut or rough/rubble stone [photos 37-38]. The use of the smooth stone indicates a desire to connect the house to its hillside setting as well as a desire to create the look of a house that grew up from its lot. The conscientious use of curved stones to create drainage holes in the porch knee-wall [photos 39-40], along with the careful planning of the layout of the stone in all sections of the house exemplify the Arts and Crafts ideal of honesty and artistry in the use of materials. Along window openings in the foundation, stone was placed so that it juts out in front of the window jamb slightly; additionally, large convex stones form the sill, allowing for a continuation of the natural forms in the house while

encouraging water removal [photos 41-43]. The fact that the stone is used structurally not only in the foundation but as grade-to-roof or grade-to-sill tapered piers, as opposed to being a simple veneer or being capped with wooden columns, speaks to the desire of the designer/builder/mason to showcase both skill and material. The piers themselves exhibit a high level of artistry in the placement of the stone. Stones are turned in ways that allow for water drainage, but are exposed at deep edges, creating a texture that would be otherwise unattainable [photos 35-36, 44-46]. Though it has not been possible to locate the name of the mason on this project, one can glimpse his thoughts through the transcribed voice of Jim Eicher, one of the chief stonemasons on Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater project. When asked how he decided which stone to use where, Eicher responded:

"I've often wondered that, because once you start laying up stone, it all comes to you...which [stone], you know to make it look right...I usually try to get the bigger stone on the bottom, so it looks like that's, you know, heavier stone is carrying the stone...I used to have them all laid out on the ground so you could see what size they were. And then you could go and pick out what you thought you would want to lay next, to make a nice looking job" (Gregory 2000:66)

Just a little imagination will allow you to see the stone for the house at 1259 Park scattered about, waiting to be chosen by a mason who cares deeply about the finished product.

Dr. Fred Siewers, Professor of Geology at Western Kentucky University, through visual examination and chemical testing, determined that three varieties of local limestone were used in the house: bioclastic, micritic, and intraclastic. All three are readily available locally and even in the same formation, specifically the Girkin formation. Part of the Girkin formation is the famous local White Stone Quarry, which provided stone for First Baptist Church, the "Warren County Courthouse; the St. Thomas

Episcopal Cathedral and Pulitzer Fountain in New York City; the Sacred Heart Church and Trinity College Chapel in Washington, D.C.; the Church of Immaculate Conception in Waterbury, Connecticut; the Hartford Masonic Temple in Hartford, Ohio; the Chateau Crillon in Philadelphia; the Governor's Mansion in Frankfort; the Seelbach Hotel, the Old Presbyterian Theological Seminary, the Speed Memorial Art Museum, the First Church of Christ Scientist, and the First Christian Church in Louisville; and the columns for Western Kentucky University's Van Meter Hall and Kentucky Building” (Spurlock 1984:6-15).

John C. Underwood, Civil Engineer and Architect in 1870s Bowling Green, tells us in the *Description of the White Stone Quarry* printed in 1872 that the stone was valuable for its purity and its “softness for a short period after quarrying” allowing for extensive carving and ornamental work (White Stone Quarry Co. 1872:6). After exposure to the elements for a period, the stone hardened and became “remarkable for strength and durability, bearing the greatest relief in carving...enduring the exposure necessary in architectural works of all kinds” (White Stone Quarry Co. 1872:6). These qualities were the result of a high oil content in the stone that allowed for easy manipulation initially and hardness as the oil evaporated over time; likewise, the evaporation of oil has the effect of the stone becoming whiter as it is exposed to the atmosphere, improving its beauty over time (Spurlock, 1984:6).

The bioclastic variety of limestone is characterized by the inclusion of large fossils; the mason was very careful to showcase these fossils by placing them carefully so as not to break the exposed fossil away from the stone [photos 47-50]. The caps of the knee-walls on the porch are of cut micritic limestone [photo 51], the variety with the

smoothest composition and the one favored for fine building material and monuments. The porch floor is rough sawn limestone flagstones set in a cementitious material [photo 52]. Such details as these become important when seen against the backdrop of the Arts and Crafts ideals, wherein a building should reflect the area upon which it stands. The use of these natural-form stones create the appearance that the house rises out of the hillside upon which it is placed, positioning the house solidly within the Arts and Crafts ideals of harmony with the location and environment of the home while the artistic application of handcraft skills distinguish this home from others in the area.

As with any booming industry, the stone industry in Bowling Green became a draw for both skilled and unskilled workers during the years leading up to the house at 1259 Park. There was what amounted to a separate town for the industry, with its own churches, schools and housing. The workers formed a Stonecutter's union and held workers to high standards of excellence. Just as the abundance of stone for building was bound to have created an environment rich in masonry abilities, it is likely that the abundance of talent would have spilled over into the city of Bowling Green proper as the quarries were failing in the second decade of the 1900s. Perhaps the mason for this project had been an employee at the quarry, or had been waiting for an opportunity to do something creative with his skill.

When built, this house may have appeared out of place on its block in the College Hill neighborhood, which was nearing complete development many years before the Dickey house was constructed. The house next door is a Colonial Revival built in 1908; directly across the street is an 1895 Victorian, a 1905 and two 1895 Folk Victorians and other houses of similar time and style (College Hill Walking Tour Brochure 19-20.). It

must have been an exciting time for the neighborhood to have such an up-to-date house style being built in the area. Nearly ninety years later, the exterior of the house remains in a primarily unaltered condition. The siding, windows and stonework all appear to be original. The front door, according to photographic evidence, was originally a multi-lite door; it has been replaced with another door style that was common to the Craftsman era. The elaborated exposed rafter ends, single curved ends on the true rafter sides and double-stacked curved ends on the gable sides, are all in excellent condition. The rear door appears to be original, but has sustained recent damage to the glass and is now boarded up. The house, while having been vacant for many years, is in excellent condition. The limestone enclosed stair railings leading to the porch were until very recently undamaged; one of the two has now seen some movement due to water intrusion. The integrity of the exterior of the house is, however, intact overall.

The interior of the house has seen a few changes since its construction, but most alterations have been of the “quick” variety, meaning that original moldings, doors, etc. were left in place and simply covered over with drywall. The massive limestone fireplace and mantel remain untouched. Hardwood floors have been carpeted, but appear to be intact under the covering. The front door opens into the living room with the fireplace. Straight ahead, a hallway connects this room to the rear of the house and the bathroom and kitchen, both at the back of the house. The kitchen is housed in a section of the house that overhangs the recessed opening to the basement. It is defined by a bank of windows that runs the entire length of the room. Through the kitchen, in typical circular bungalow pattern, is another room with a second fireplace; through that room is one more that at one point was connected to the living room via a large jambed entrance

(now covered with drywall). The stairs leading to the other levels of the house are plain in nature, yet exhibit good craftsmanship. The house has been unoccupied for many years, and work begun recently stopped in mid-stream, leaving kitchen and bath renovations incomplete. The home shows remarkable integrity given its more recent history as a multi-family dwelling. Finally, the hardwood floors, massive fireplace, ribbons of multi-lite windows, the use of natural materials and un-machined local stone in both foundation and pillars, the low slope of the roof, exposed elaborated rafter ends and the layout of the floorplan all contribute to natural beauty and honesty in the construction of the J.S. Dickey home.

The circle is now complete, from the folk traditions espoused by the Arts and Crafts movement to the elite artistic representations of the movement to the popular kit house and back again. In true unwieldy and wiggly art fashion, though, the circle has made another one-third revolution—houses are being designed in the elite-period Craftsman style again. Perhaps the most interesting twist in this tale is that, as the Bungalows in India and the first in the United States, these nouveau (riche) Craftsman, extremely expensive, houses are being used as vacation homes for the incredibly rich. This new generation of the style often showcases elaborate handcraftsmanship as an ostentatious display of wealth. In some perverse way, this new phase of Craftsman style is continuing to simultaneously propagate and refute the ideals of the movement from which it was born. And the circle rolls on...

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Photos, with the exception of the Boke, Gamble, Monadnock, and Robie photos, are by the author. Noted exceptions were obtained from internet sources.