

PETITION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION TO THE HISTORICAL LANDMARK COMMISSION, PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, AND CITY COUNCIL OF DENTON, TEXAS:

I/We, the undersigned, owner(s) of, or party(s) with financial interest in, all property herein described, do hereby file this, my/our petition, asking that the said property be designated as a historic landmark under the provisions of Ordinance #80-30 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Denton, Texas. The said property is located at 723 West Oak, Denton, Denton County, Texas, 76201 and is more particularly described as follows:

Pt Lot 7, McKinnon Addition, Wm. Neill Survey 971

I/We herewith tender the filing fee of <sup>25.00</sup> One Hundred and Fifty Dollars (~~\$150~~).

I authorize the City of Denton to place a sign or sign(s) on the above property for public notification of the proposed historic designation

*joint application* { Buyers  $\rightarrow$  Paul D. Carpenter, Paula C. Carpenter  
Seller  $\rightarrow$  NAME Elijah L. Lomax  
ADDRESS 723 West Oak Street  
CITY Denton STATE Texas  
PHONE 817-387-8138

Submitted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1980.

Criteria to be used in Historical Landmark Designation

The petitioner will be responsible for furnishing data to the Planning and Community Development Department for submittal to the Landmark Commission substantiating that the property meets at least one or more of the following 13 criteria for Historic Landmark designation:

1. Character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Denton, State of Texas, or the United States.
2. Recognition as a recorded Texas historic landmark, a national landmark, or entered into the National Register of Historic Places.
3. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.
4. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city.
5. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation.
6. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif.
7. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an area of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.
8. Archaeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest.
9. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of the City, State or United States.
10. Location as the site of a significant historic event.
11. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City, State or United States.  
*27 years in the Eng. Dept at TTU*
12. A building or structure that because of its location has become of value to a neighborhood, community area, or the city.
13. Value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride.

HISTORIC LANDMARK ZONING PETITION: LOMAX HOUSE 723 W. Oak, Denton, Tx.

Criteria to be used in Historical Landmark designation

1. CHARACTER, INTEREST OR VALUE AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT, HERITAGE OR CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CITY OF DENTON, STATE OF TEXAS, OR THE UNITED STATES.

This Byzantine-Gothic Victorian house was one of the earliest of the houses built in the Silk-Stocking Row area of Oak Street as it was Revived in the late 1890's and early 1900's.

3. EMBODIMENT OF DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ARCHITECTURAL TYPE OR SPECIMEN

A very fine example of Victorian architecture of dominantly Byzantine and Gothic styles. No two Victorian Houses are a like. This is a very fine house.

5. EMBODIMENT OF ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN, DETAIL, MATERIALS OR CRAFTSMANSHIP WHICH REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL INNOVATION.

Byzantine Gothic High Victorian 2½ story house. East side and left front half is Byzantine style with modified key-hole arches in porch entablature of upper and lower porch and convex dome trim. Window hood brackets on east gable are Byzantine as well as the dome with finial and two rows of brackets supporting the double roof overhang and a spiral volute carved into the entablature between the double roof lines of the dome's supporting tower. Bead and spindle design is used in the balusters of both upper and lower porches and in the porch posts. East and west roof lines have small gables ornamented with gougework in the ancient peacock fan design. Gothic influence is found in the three large gables on the North, West and South sides. Two of the gables are ornamented with cut shingles, applied carved ornament, short roof support brackets and horizontal siding. 8 of the 10 original leaded stained glass windows are intact. A small Greek pediment with garland adorns the entrance porch area and three entrance doors are tall narrow carved and ornamented Gothic style with single lite. The lower porch encloses three sides of the house and its roof line is curved on the Byzantine front and east side.

The interior of the house is in its original plan with a geometric wood designed dining room ceiling, gold leaf molding, bead and spindle cornices above windows, a lovely stairway with unusual newel posts, five intact fireplaces, built-in china cabinet in dining room. The Kitchen has its original rolltop cabinet and corner sink. The entrance hall is in geometric panelling with a bead and spindle screened alcove and stained glass window. The floors are the original 4" pine. The house is post foundationed and has a very high 'A' roofline.

For more detail the the attached information.

HISTORIC LANDMARK ZONING PETITION: LOMAX HOUSE 723 W. Oak Street, Denton

CRITERIA TO BE USED IN HISTORICAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION

- 6) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DISTINCTIVE BUILDINGS, SITES OR AREAS WHICH ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PRESERVATION ACCORDING TO A PLAN BASED ON ARCHITECTURAL, HISTORIC OR CULTURAL MOTIF.

Address. 723 West Oak Street, Silk Stocking Row, Denton. Part of the historic revival of Oak Street of the late 1890's and early 1900's still existing in the city. The house is 82 years old.

- 11) IDENTIFICATION WITH A PERSON OR PERSONS WHO SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY, STATE OR UNITED STATES.

The house was built by Mr. A. E. Graham for his son Otis, was lived in by B.H. Davenport (banking business) and by J.F. Bell (grocery business) and purchased by Mr. and Mrs. R.P. Lomax 1911. Each of these families were outstanding citizens of Denton contributing to its cultural, economic and social development. Miss Elizabeth Lomax continued to live in the house until the current date during which time she taught English at North Texas State University and opened her home to students, faculty and city affairs. She has been active in the efforts for historic preservation of Denton's heritage for many years. Sale of the house is in progress to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Carpenter. Mr. Carpenter is pharmacist for Flow Hospital and both of them have a great interest in the historic preservation and designation of if the property.

Other information concerning the house is enclosed.



HISTORY OF THE IOMAX HOUSE

723 West Oak

Denton, Texas

Text and Photographs

by

Dorothy W. Bertine

## PREFACE

The text of this paper was researched in connection with the preparation of information for her thesis for her Master of Arts Degree, May, 1975 from Texas Woman's University. The Title of the thesis is Design Elements Used in High Victorian Houses. Photographs included herein were taken by the author and are part of the illustrations pertaining to the Lomax house included in the main work.

Since a great deal of incorrect information about the Lomax House has been published over the years in newspapers and other public documents and since the house is of great historical interest to Denton both architecturally and artistically it was decided to make the complete research concerning the history of the house a matter of public record in the files of the libraries at Emily Fowler Library, Denton, and Texas Woman's University, Denton.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I Ownership . . . . .	1
Chapter II Identity of the owners . . . . .	3
References . . . . .	6
List of Illustrations	
Eclectic front . . . . .	5
West Gothic gable . . . . .	7
Byzantine view . . . . .	8
Newel post ornamentation . . . . .	9
Newel post, stairway and east hall wall panneling . . . . .	10
A. Asymmetrical entrance . . . . .	11
B. Keyhole arches and curved windows. . . . .	11
C. Hall Fireplace . . . . .	11
D. Dining room ceiling. . . . .	11
E. Round stained glass window . . . . .	11
F. Hall nook ornamentation and stained glass window . . . . .	11

## CHAPTER I Ownership

The Lomax house at 723 west Oak Street Denton, Texas, 76201 is identified by the following legal description:

"The north 1/2 of Lot 7 of Mrs. McKinnon's (McKennon's) addition to the City of Denton. The tract begins at the northwest corner of the E. J. Carter Lot 6, thence west 40 7/10 varas to the northeast corner of lot 8, thence south 68 varas to the center of an alley 20 feet wide, thence east 40 7/10 varas to Carter lot, thence north to the place of beginning. The alley is not included in the property." (1)

This land is part of the William Neill survey # 9324 covering 640 acres of land which he received as bounty land for his service to the Republic of Texas. Only 100 plus acres of this land was in Denton County. Mrs. R. W. Woodruff subdivided the land in 1858 after the death of her husband and lot 7 was sold to a Mr. Smoot who sold it to P. J. Carter. (2) (3)

In 1891 the north 1/2 of Lot 7 which fronted on West Oak Street was owned by Mr. J. Q. Dealey and his wife, Clara Dealey, of Dallas and they sold it to Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Rathbone (Myrtle), from Collin County, Texas under date of August 18, 1891. (4). The Rathbones lived later at 619 West Oak Street, Denton, Texas. They were listed among the wedding guests at the marriage of William Williams and Effie Wright who were the parents of Alex Williams, Sr. (5).

Mr. and Mrs. Rathbone sold the property to Otis T. Graham, February 10, 1896 for a price of \$1,150.00. This is the same price Mr. Rathbone paid for the lot. (6) Mr. Graham held the property until 1902 when it was transferred to W. L. Wilson, G. W. Wilson and R. J. Wilson as of



March 29, 1902 for an amount stated to be \$4,750.00. (7) The property was then transferred back to Mr. Graham and his wife Hattie Foreman as of July 9, 1902 for the same price. (8) The house must have been built on the land during the ownership of Otis T. Graham for there to have been such a big difference between the purchase price of the lot and the transfer and recovery in 1902. Also, the lot went on the tax rolls of the City of Denton as improved property with an estimated construction date of 1898. Mr. Alex Williams' aunt had an estimated date of 1896-1898 written on the back of a photograph of the house. The price of \$4,750.00 would have been much too large a price in those days for an unimproved lot. (9)

Under date of August 1, 1903, Mr. and Mrs. Graham transferred the property to Berry H. Deavenport and his wife Mary E. Bell Deavenport (10) for a price of \$4,250.00. The following year the Deavenports sold the house to Mr. J. F. Bell and his wife Mattie Arnold Bell for a price of \$5,500.00 as of November 9, 1904. (11) (12)

The J. F. Bell family lived in the house until March 15, 1901 when they sold it to R. I. Lomax and his wife Lizzie S. Lomax. The price was \$7,500.00. The Lomax family have owned and occupied the house continually since that time. (13)

It is thought that Mr. Frank Craft who also was the builder of several of the other fine houses in the Denton area of that date was the contractor for the house.

## CHAPTER II IDENTITY OF THE OWNERS

Otis T. Graham was the son of A. E. and Sarah J. Herrod Graham.

This identity is from the obituary record of Mrs. Graham who died from an attack of pneumonia March 12, 1908. (14) Mr. Graham was a prominent drygoods merchant in Denton and Texas and his sons were in the business with him. Mrs. Lula Evers Tripp and Mr. Alex Williams both identified Otis T. Graham as the Son of A. E. Graham. So did Col. Lloyd Garrison. The wife of Otis Graham was Mattie Foreman Graham. The other children of A. E. Graham and Mrs. Sarah J. Herrod Graham were Wallace R. Graham, Olin the youngest son, Mrs. J. W. Madden of Denison, Texas and Noyle Graham Millican who died in childbirth shortly before her mother passed away. (15) In some places Mrs. A. T. Graham's name is listed as Follie.

Berry H. Deavenport was active in the banking and milling business in Denton and was city treasurer for 26 years. His wife was Mary E. Bell, daughter of Joseph Bell and she was born at Bellville, Illinois. Her father was born in Carlisle, England. She had a brother named Joseph but he died at Carrollton, Missouri before the family came to Texas in 1878. Her father died in Texas in 1882 having been for many years associated with her husband's father in business. She was the sole survivor of seven children and the only one to come to Texas with her father. (16) The Deavenports acquired the property at 819 West Oak Street sometime after they sold the house at 723 West Oak Street.

Mr. J. F. Bell who owned the Lonax house from 1904 until 1911 was in the grocery business in Denton. His only wife was Miss Mattie Arnold and after they sold the house at 723 West Oak Street they moved to Dallas where he, his wife and two other family members are buried.

His oldest daughter, Kathleen Idris Bell, married Carroll Y. Garrison, June 22, 1910 in the house. This was the year Col. Lloyd Garrison, U.S. Army Retired, graduated from highschool and he attended the wedding and the reception following with his parents and sister, Branch Elizabeth Garrison (also called Blanch). Mr. J. F. Bell had one son, J. C. Bell who died in 1955. (17) (18)

Mr. J. O. Bell from Illinois was in the outdoor sign business in Denton in the early 1900's. His wife was the daughter of Daniel E. Jones, Bolivar Street, Denton who died March 16, 1901. Mr. Jones parents were from Wales. Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Bell built the curved front white house at 927 North Locust and lived there until his death. They had one son whose name was Cron D. Bell who married Branch Elizabeth Garrison, sister to Col. Lloyd Garrison. Mrs. J. O. Bell was Alma Jones before her marriage and had one brother named Oscar and two sisters. After her husband's death she bought the house at 711 West Oak Street from Professor Banks of the T. W. U. faculty who became Denton Postmaster after he retired from the College. After Mrs. Bell's death the house was sold to W. D. Buttrill who lives there now, (1975). (19) (20)

J. O. Bell, J. F. Bell and Mary E. Bell Deavenport were not related according to the records of Col. Garrison and Capt. B. B. Padlock. Neither of these people were related to Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Graham.

R. I. Lomax and his wife Lizzie Lomax came to Denton from Milford, Ellis County, Texas and purchased the house at 723 West Oak Street the same year. Their children, Miss Elizabeth and her brother R. H. grew up in the house but were born in Milford. Mr. Lomax was in the real estate business and the loan business in Denton. The Lomax Family have lived

## REFERENCES

- (1) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 67, p. 108
- (2) Abstract of Title to 722 West Oak Street, Christal-Favors House.
- (3) This Mr. Smoot was probably John Henry Smoot or one of his two sons, William Henry and H. Smoot. H. Smoot is the more likely of the two sons. They had extensive farm holdings in Collin and Denton Counties before the Civil War. William H. was killed in the Civil War in Mississippi. (Paddock, p. 675)
- (4) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 67, p.108. Dealey to Hathbone.
- (5) Alex Williams, 2706 Wilsonwood, Denton, Texas. Address, 1975.  
Denton County and Record Newspaper, October 28, 1897, p. 1, col. 7.
- (6) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 57, p. 613, Hathbone to Graham.
- (7) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 83, p. 366, Graham to Wilson.
- (8) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 83, page 410. Wilson to Graham.
- (9) Conversation with Alex Williams, May 23, 1975.
- (10) Mary E. Bell was the daughter of Joseph Bell from Carlisle, England. He came to Illinois and later to Missouri on his way to Texas.
- (11) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 88, p. 17, Graham to Deavenport.
- (12) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 90, p. 174, Deavenport to Bell.
- (13) Deed Records of Denton County, Book 105, p. 296, Bell to Lomax.
- (14) Otis Graham son of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Graham, Denton County News, Obituary records, March 19, 1908, N.T.S.U. Micro-film library.  
Otis T. Graham, b. 2/21/1875, d. 2/18/1943. I.O.O.F. Cemetery.  
Formal announcement of the death of Mrs. Graham, Scrapbook # 3, page 48, History of Denton's Emily Fowler Library, Denton, Texas.  
Grave marker at I.O.O.F. Cemetery. Denton gives her name as 'Gallie J.'
- (15) Conversation with Alex Williams, May 23, 1975.  
Conversation with Mrs. Lula Tripp re: Otis Graham, May 21, 1975.
- (16) Capt. B. B. Paddock, History of Fort Worth and Northwest Texas, Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Co., 1922, Book 4, pp 77-679.
- (17) Letter from Colonel Lloyd Garrison, Retired U.S. Army, 1319 North Elm, Denton, Texas, to the writer, May 1, 1975.

in the house continually since 1911. Miss Lomax before her retirement was assistant professor of English at N.T.S.U. from 1947 until 1974. Her brother R. H. is now a retired railroad executive and mayor of Muskogee, Oklahoma. (21)



Byzantine convex dome, Gothic gable, Greek pediment combine with keyhole arches and Romanesque tower and applied ornament to make up this eclectic front.

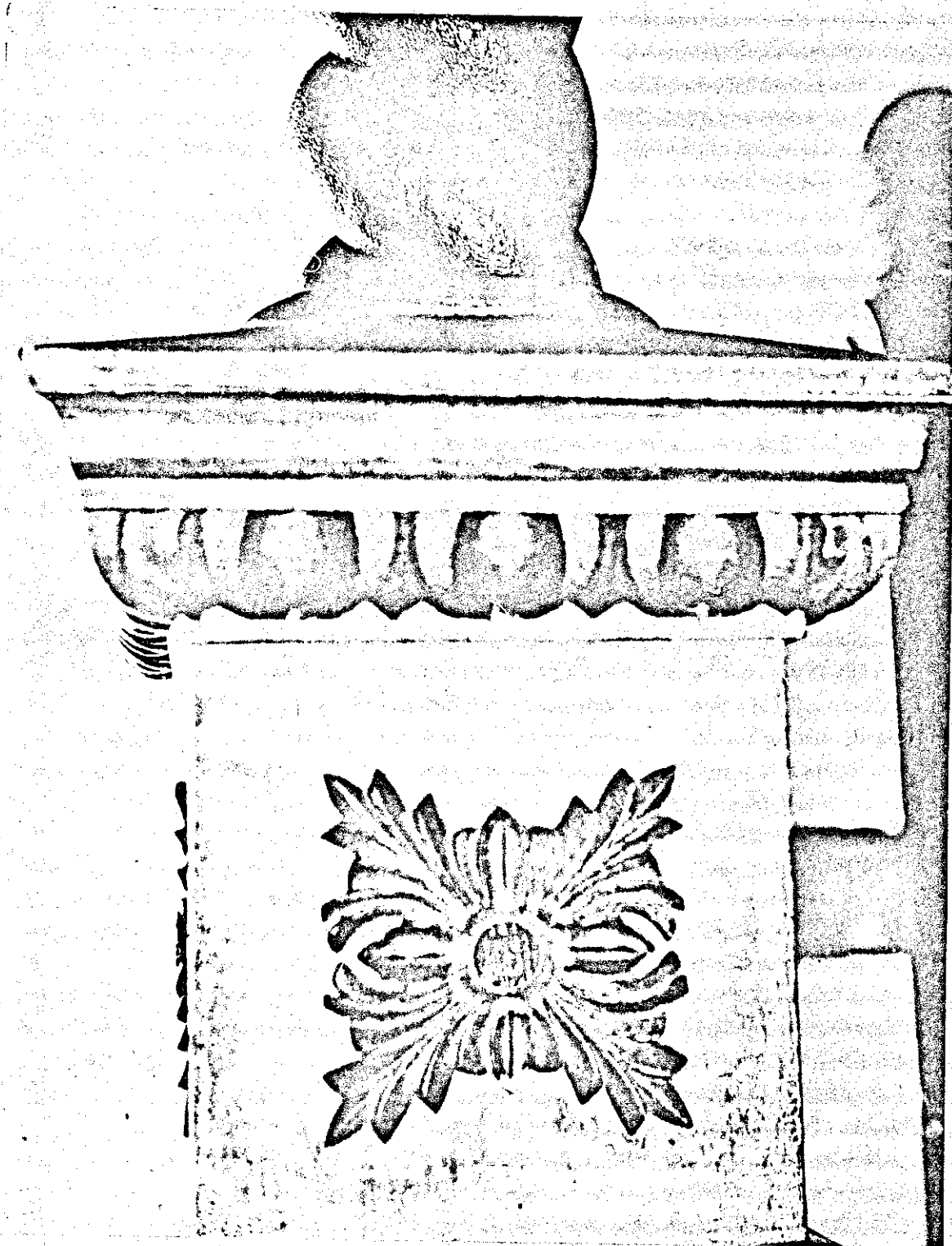
- (18) J. P. Bell grocery advertisements are to be found in the Denton Record and Chronicle of the early 1900's. Williams Collection of early newspapers, Emily Fowler Library, Denton, Texas.
- (19) Letter from Colonel Harrison to the writer, May 1, 1975. Conversation with Col. Harrison May 4, and May 30, 1975.
- (20) Daniel E. Jones obituary article, Denton County Record Newspaper, March 21, 1901, Williams Collection, Emily Fowler Library, Denton. Alma Jones Bell listed as his daughter.
- (21) Interviews with Miss Elizabeth Lomax fall of 1974 and spring of 1975.



West Gothic Gable with Byzantine  
sun-ray pattern at gable apex.



Iomax House, 723 West Oak Street, Denton, Texas. Byzantine-Gothic combination which is called Queen Ann. Built 1898-1902.

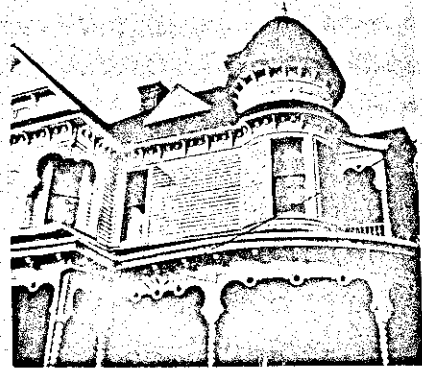


Newel post ornamentation using the Greek egg and dart and  
the applied ornament from Renaissance Bologna, Italy.



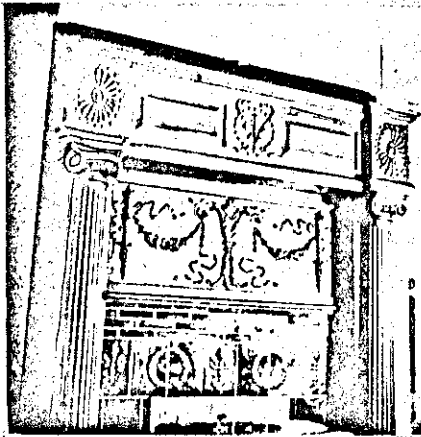


Asymmetrical entrance.

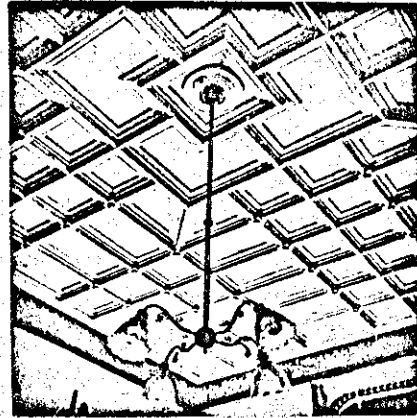


Keyhole arches and curved windows in turret.

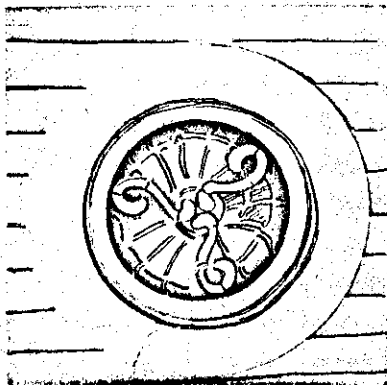
A. B.



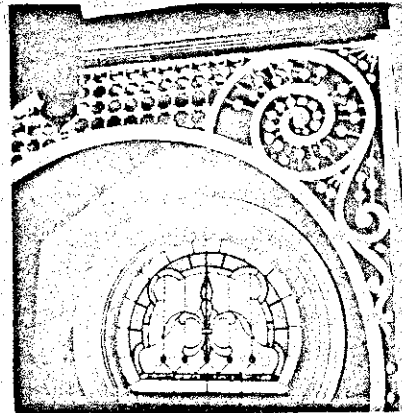
Hall Fireplace



C. D. Dining room ceiling



Round stained glass window



E. F. Hall nook ornamentation and stained glass window