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A Guide for Terra Cotta Building Owners



Terra Cotta



Downtown Lafayette-West Lafayette Architectural Terra Cotta by Eileen E. Booth



Handmade Tradition

White, glazed terra cotta clads several important downtown buildings in Lafayette, Indiana. They reflect the celebration of America's turn-of-the-century love affair with arts and crafts and handmade traditions. These buildings reflect Lafayette's prosperity at the turn of the twentieth century and the sensibilities of the modern city with its electric lights, electric streetcars, high-speed interurbans and many railroad connections. They boast the longevity of a material considered innovative over a century ago.

Architectural terra cotta in Lafayette arrived via railroad from the American Terra Cotta Company, Midland Terra Cotta Company, or the Indianapolis Terra Cotta Company.

Washable Characteristics of a Dinner Plate

Essentially, architectural terra cotta served the construction industry by providing the durable and washable characteristics of a dinner plate and the luster and ornate sculptural qualities of a decorative glazed clay vase. Manufactured by pressing clay into molds, this material provided an affordable and lightweight alternative to stone.

Proper Maintenance Required

Terra cotta requires proper maintenance of both the exterior and interior building components. All building components from window systems to doors to roofs compose the building envelope. The building envelope relies on each of the building subsystems for optimum functionality. Counter intuitively, if an internal system fails (like walls from moisture saturation), it contributes to the failure of an exterior system (like terra cotta cladding).

The diagnosis of terra cotta deterioration proves incredibly complex, thus requiring a professional's analysis. Surface inspection may yield the layman information on cracking and spalling (separation of glaze from clay), however many other issues remain unseen. Interior issues require testing with specialized tools and analysis. Lack of maintenance accounts for the majority of failures in Lafayette's terra cotta buildings.

Water Damage

Building failures occur when a force drives a source through a hole. This occurs when wind drives rain into the building envelope through a leaky roof, poorly sealed walls, windows, doors or basement. Holes require immediate intervention in protecting the building system from rain and wind.

No other masonry system behaves like terra cotta. In this complex system, one point of deterioration contributes to the breakdown of several other systems including: glazed units, mortar, metal anchors and masonry backfill.

Water infiltration contributes to a variety of failure issues in the terra cotta system. The roof system must function properly, including the gutters and water run-off systems. These systems must move water away from the walls and foundation of the building. Preventing further terra cotta failure requires routine maintenance of these systems.

Rusting of Metal Anchors and Life Safety Issues

Spalling (separation of glaze from clay) or surface flaking issues suggest a leaking roof, rising damp (foundation systems wick up water) or that inappropriate cleaning methods allowed excess water to penetrate the terra cotta. Spalling also indicates interior moisture issues that could indicate more serious internal issues like the rusting of metal anchors. In some cases material spalling occurs when water which has frozen, swells and pops off a piece of the masonry along with the glaze.

Material spalling exposes the internal webbing and the metal anchor system to harsh weathering and substantial water infiltration. When a damaged piece deteriorates beyond repair, it requires investment in replacement. If left to weather, the piece will continue deteriorating, causing surrounding pieces to follow in failure.

Once water has reached the metal anchor system, it rusts, weakens and deteriorates the structural pins. In addition, rusted metal expands many times its original size and can build up pressure in the wall that is forceful enough to cause a brick or piece of terra cotta to break apart. This deterioration means the terra cotta units loosen, creating both life safety issues for pedestrians and further damage to the building envelope.

Avoid Silicon and Latex Caulk

Silicon and latex caulks prevent water from escaping, forcing a release of the water through the surface of the bricks causing spalling or surface flaking so caulking of joints should be avoided.

Avoid De-Icing Salts

Water, the largest contributor to the deterioration of terra cotta worsens when combined with salt. Damage from de-icing salts may likely occur at the bases of Lafayette's terra cotta buildings. Porous masonry foundations wick-up water and its salty contents in an action called rising damp.

Use Care When Attaching Signage

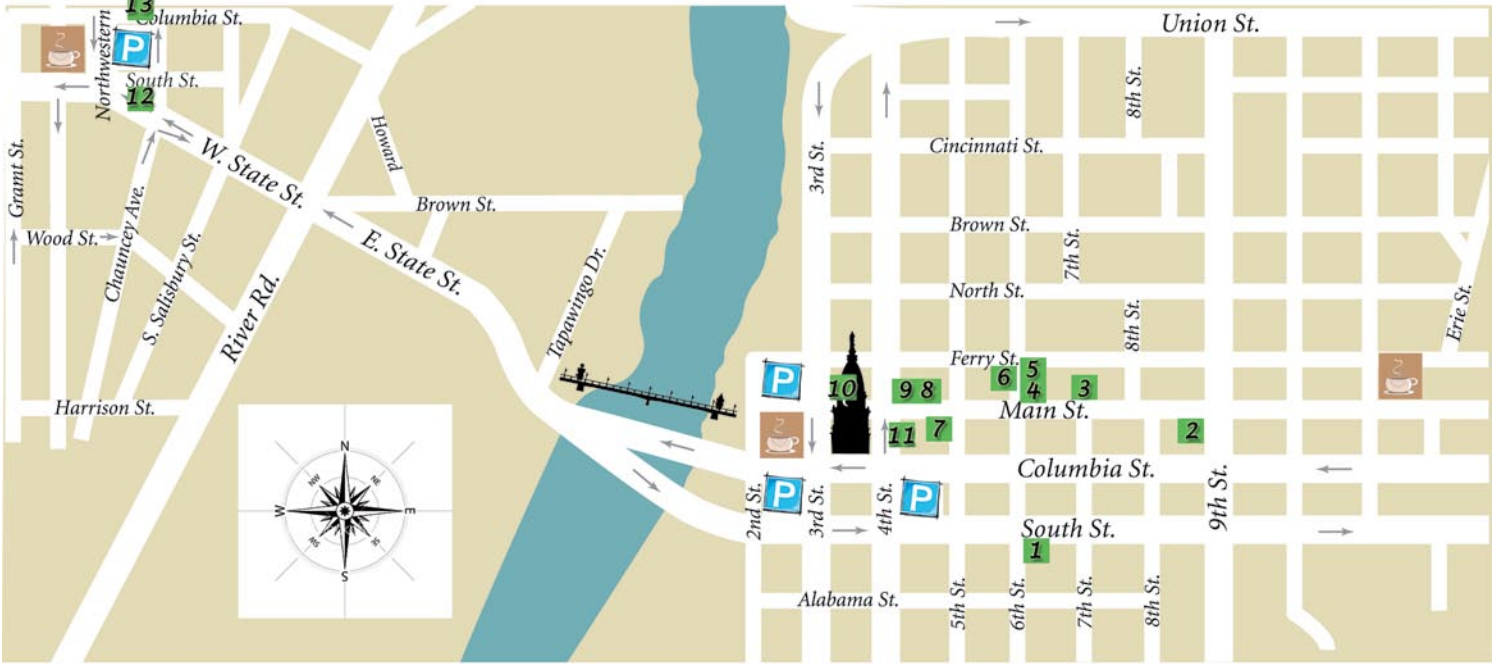
Building stewards should take great care in attaching signage, scaffolding and other exterior additions. These mechanisms may easily scratch or chip the terra cotta surface. Once the fireskin of the terra cotta tiles has been broken, water infiltration can rapidly occur and deteriorate the baked clay block.



No ordinary masonry mortar will suit terra cotta. The plastic nature of terra cotta units allows them to expand and contract, therefore the mortar installed in the surrounding joints must allow for this movement. Mortar must be softer than the terra cotta providing stability yet flexibility.



As owners of terra cotta buildings recognize the unique and complicated resource they own they will seek professional help for the restoration and maintenance of their buildings.



Downtown Lafayette

Standard Oil Station

605 South Street
Standard Oil Company
1927-1928

Owned by the Tippecanoe County Public Library, used as the Red Crown Mini Museum, this is most likely a product of the American Terra Cotta Company who made terra cotta for two other Standard Oil Stations in Lafayette in 1939 (neither still stand today).

The gas station was built by the Standard Oil Company of Indiana with an attached one garage bay. It features glazed brick walls and a red tile roof. In 1935-36 a second garage bay was added. Standard Oil designed filling stations like this one to celebrate a modern design aesthetic using clean surfaces and streamlined curves. The company used these stations to establish corporate identity wherever the driver traveled. They became popular symbols of youth, vitality and mobility.

This station operated until 1979. In 1985, the library purchased the property with the intent of leveling it for a parking lot. In 1991, Don Stein, a local business man and auto collector offered to restore the gas station which he did that same year.



Eileen E. Booth



Eileen E. Booth

Sept. 11, 1934. C. A. URBANEK Des. 93,308
SERVICE STATION BUILDING OR THE LIKE
Filed May 23, 1934 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

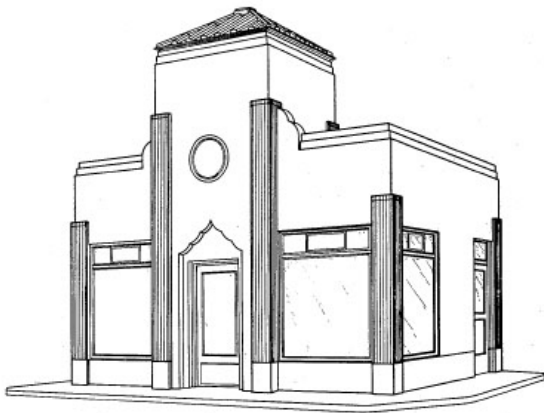


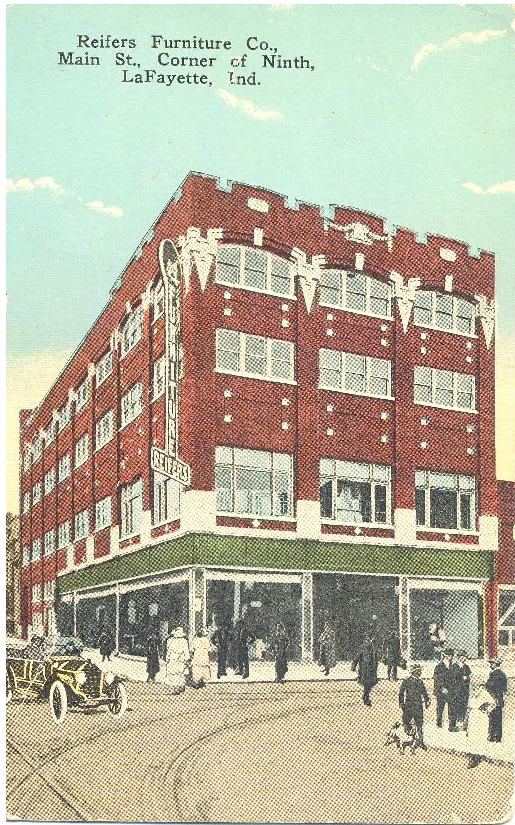
FIG. 3

INVENTOR
Charles A. Urbaneck
BY *Benedict K. Pinner*
ATTORNEY

www.jitterbuzz.com



Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education



Tippecanoe County Historical Asso-

Downtown Lafayette

Reifers Furniture

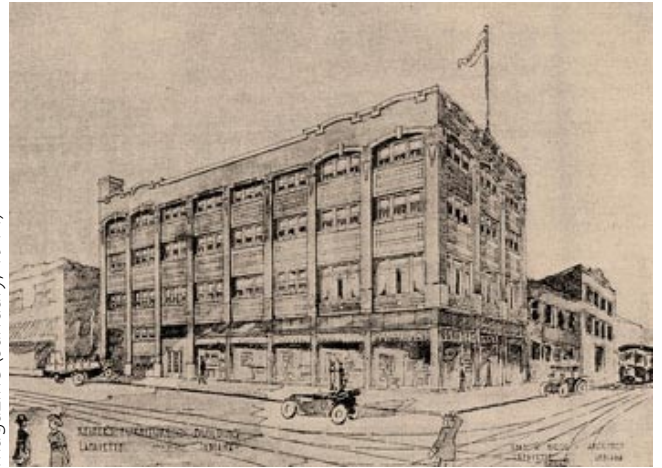
839 Main Street

Charles W. Nicol

Built 1894, facades remodeled 1914

American Terra Cotta Company

This red brick and white glazed terra cotta building is owned and occupied by Bison Financial. John S. Reifers established his home outfitters store here in 1914. In a 1927 City Directory, Reifers Furniture advertised it had everything for the home including furniture, carpets, rugs, linoleums, office furniture, New Edison phonographs and records.



The Ohio Architect, Engineer and Builder Magazine (January, 1914)



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Downtown Lafayette

672 Main Street

Ca. 1913

This white glazed terra cotta building is owned by Thomas Reed and used for accounting firm, Reed and Company. A contemporary tile entry was added to the entry in 1999.

This building housed Case Leroy Cigars and Tobacco in the late twenties.



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Eileen E. Booth



Herman Berry Collection (1972)



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Downtown Lafayette

Lafayette Theater

600 Main Street

Architects: Marr & Holman, Louisville, Kentucky

Contractor: Karl H. Kettlehut and

A.E. Kemmer (steel)

1938

This glazed terra cotta tile building is owned by Madame NY, LLC who restored the theater with the Wabash Valley Trust for Historic Preservation.

Formerly, the Family Theatre, operated on this site from 1906-1938. The Loeb Realty Company built this theater in 1938 and leased it to the Fourth Avenue Amusement Company of Louisville, Kentucky. The Lafayette Theater opened on September 1, 1938 showing "Four's a Crowd." When the art deco building open it seated 1,251 and astonished patrons with it's modern air conditioning and advanced sound system.



Ben L. Ross



Ben L. Ross



Tippecanoe County Historical Association (October, 1938)

Downtown Lafayette

Painters & Decorators Building

217 North 6th Street

Architect: Nicol, Scholer & Hoffman

Contractor: A.E. Kemmer

1923

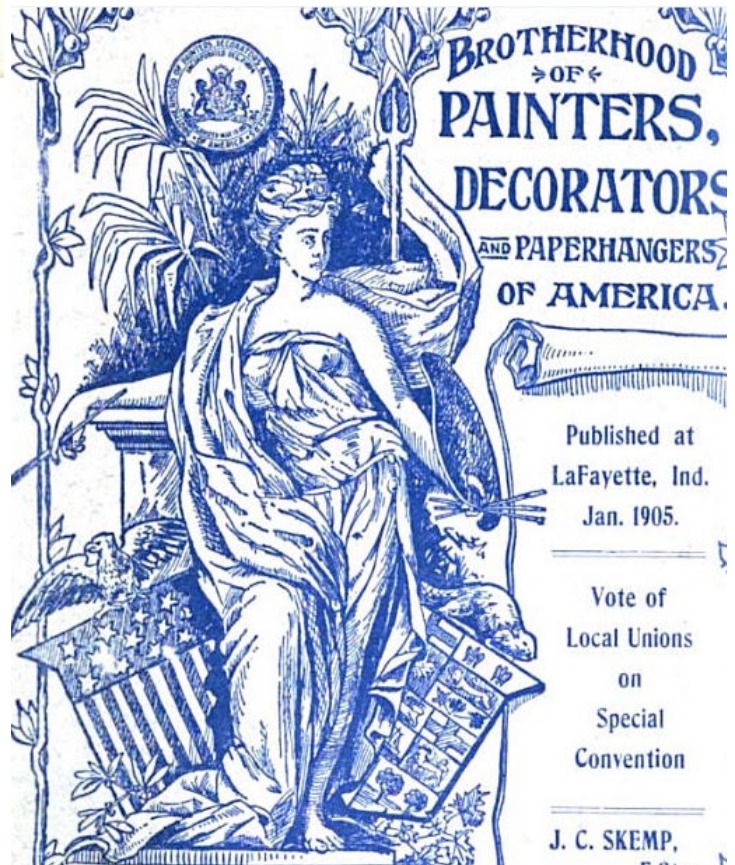
This glazed and marbled terra cotta building is owned and occupied by the Journal and Courier, a Gannett media company, who purchased the building around 1970 and moved here from an adjacent 1920 building. Originally, this building was used as the National Headquarters of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators & Paperhangers of America. They published monthly newsletter, The Painter and Decorator, "The Official Monthly Magazine Devoted to the interests of house, sign, pictorial, coach, car, carriage, machinery, ship and railroad equipment, painters, decorators, paperhangers, hard wood finishers, grainers, glaziers, varnishers, enamellers and guilders." This facade features beautiful iconographic details showing the tools of decorating trades including wallpapering equipment, paint, brushes, a ladder and an artist's palette.

Tippecanoe County Historical Association



BROTHERHOOD OF PAINTERS, DECORATORS AND PAPERHANGERS OF AMERICA, LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

Susan Tunick, Friends of Terra Cotta



Property of The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, view online: Google Books

Downtown Lafayette

Murdock Building

226 North 6th Street

Attributed to Charles W. Nicol

1913

This white glazed terra cotta building is owned and occupied by the Lafayette Ballet Company. The Murdock Building is a remodel of the former Pottlizer Block, built to house the Pottlizers' Lafayette Cracker & Confectionery Co. (the largest competitor to the National Biscuit Co., NaBisCo- in the 1890s). The adjacent Pottlizer-Masonic Hall Building (1884) housed the Pottlizers' wholesale fruit store. The Pottlizer Block was extensively remodeled in 1913, at which time the third floor was designed specifically for the Allen School of Dancing, with the spectacular Allen Ballroom. There were originally projecting terra cotta balconies at the third floor level which were removed sometime before 1970. The building contains a central light well (now roofed over) with a huge skylight on the first floor level. Charles A. Murdock established his businesses, Murdock Farms Company and Murdock Realty Company in this beaux arts building. He leased offices to several dentists, an insurance company, a grain dealer, a lawyer and piano salesperson. Charles Nicol moved his office into the building in 1914, occupying one of the second floor offices.

Don't miss the fantastic polychromatic glazed terra cotta tile advertising the "Steam Bakery" on the north facade of the Pottlizer Block building.



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Tippecanoe County Historical Association



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Downtown Lafayette

Hirsh Bros. Building

427 Main Street

Nicol, Scholer & Hoffman

Contractor: A.E. Kemmer

1920-1921

American Terra Cotta Company

This marbled terra cotta building is occupied by Coldwell Banker Shook Realty. Benjamin and Samuel Hirsh moved their popular store, The Hub Clothing House, from the west side of the square to this large modern building in 1921. The Hub was previously located in one of the buildings that was for many years part of "Maize, an American Grill" on the west side of the square. This building still features rows of electric lights characteristic of these modern commercial buildings from the 1910s-1920s.



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Painting, Coldwell Banker Shook Realty



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Downtown Lafayette

Ruger-DeWenter Building

416 Main Street

Mann

Built 1859-1861, facade remodeled 1913

American Terra Cotta Company

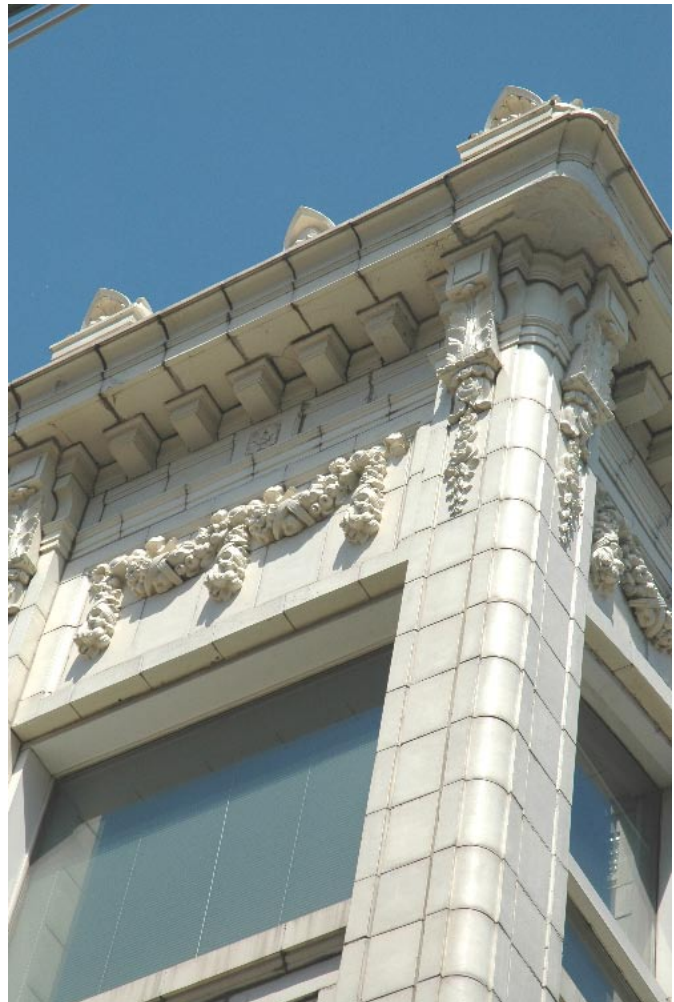
This white glazed terra cotta building is owned and occupied by Indiana Design Consortium. This building originally had an identical facade as its neighbor. It was used in 1861 as Ruger's Store and Steam Bakery. William A. DeWenter founded a Hatters and Men's Furnishings Clothing store at this location in 1913 and added the terra cotta facade.



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Eileen E. Booth



Eileen E. Booth

Downtown Lafayette

Oppenheimer Building (Baltimore Store)

400 Main Street

Charles W. Nicol

Built 1865, façades remodeled 1914

American Terra Cotta Company

This white glazed terra cotta building is owned and occupied by Salin Bank. Nicol built the J.L. Reynolds & Co. Bank here in 1865. The building was remodeled several times, gaining some larger windows on the Main Street facade and a storefront with huge plate glass windows around 1890. The façades were replaced in 1914 in time for the 25th anniversary of the Baltimore Clothing House, founded by Levi Oppenheimer. The roof line was originally outlined in electric lights, with lampposts on top of the raised parts of the parapet.



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Eileen E. Booth



Main Street, from the Court House, La Fayette, Ind.

Downtown Lafayette

Ross Building

312 Main Street, Nicol & Dietz
1918
Midland Terra Cotta Company

This white glazed terra cotta building is owned by R. Gregg Sutter and used as La Scala Restaurant. Purdue graduate and engineer, David E. Ross had his primary business office here. He had a very important influence on Lafayette's history intellectually, civically and financially. In 1905, he developed a new type of steering gear and founded Ross Gear and Tooling Company. Later, business partner George Kummings amicably founded spin-off company Fairfield Manufacturing Company.

Ross served on Lafayette City Council for eight years and leveraged major capital for both the Purdue Memorial Union and Ross-Ade Stadium.

Ross founded the Rostone Company in 1927, producing a synthetic stone made from slate, shales and clay. This decorative building material was used on several local homes and on the original Lafayette Theater (600 Main Street) facade. For a listing of Rostone buildings www.rostone.com.



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Eileen E. Booth



La Scala Restaurant

Downtown Lafayette

125 North 4th Street

Built 1850s, facade remodeled 1930s

Parts of this building date back to the 1850s, when it was part of a larger building known as the Spencer Block. The Spencer Block housed Spencer Hall, used as a public meeting place and may have been the largest assembly place other than Lafayette churches in the 1850s. After a severe fire, the second and third floors were used as meeting halls (1907) and for King, The Clothier from at least 1908-1915. Sometime around 1920, the building was extensively rebuilt to house the Tippecanoe Loan & Trust Co. with a new neoclassical limestone facade. After multiple renovations and several facade replacements, the present streamlined extruded terra cotta facade was added in the 1930s.



Eileen E. Booth



Tippecanoe County Historical Association (1871-72)



Tippecanoe County Historical Association (1923)



Tippecanoe County Historical Association (ca. 1915)

Downtown West Lafayette

Purdue State Bank

210 West Lafayette Street

Louis Sullivan

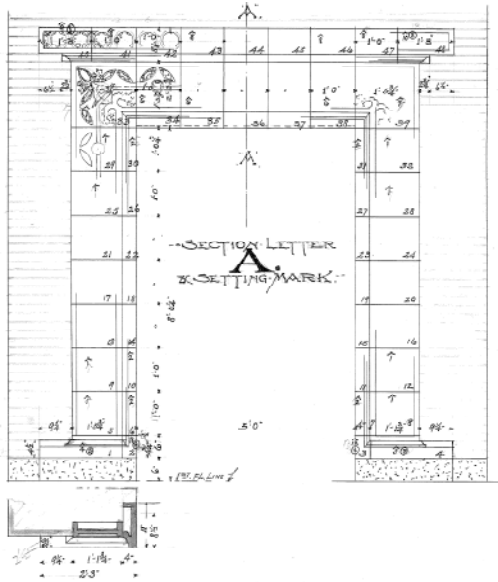
1914

American Terra Cotta Company

This important Sullivan Bank is owned and occupied by Chase Bank. At the turn of the century, banks across the Midwest worked to reinvent themselves as progressive and community-oriented entities. They commissioned new bank buildings to reflect these philosophies. At a time when most new banks were being built in classical styles with limestone facades, Sullivan introduced very progressive architectural designs indeed. Sullivan completed eight banks during the last twenty years of his life making this an extremely important building.

The Purdue State Bank was established in 1910 during a rapid growth period for Purdue University. The successful bank operated out of a storefront for four years before it strategically purchased the triangular lot on the main street connecting campus with Lafayette. A design competition in 1913 drew submissions from both Sullivan and Nicol. Purdue president W.E. Stone served on the bank board and probably had a hand in steering the board towards commissioning Sullivan. Critic Montgomery Schuyler declared in 1912 that a new work by Louis Sullivan "is the most interesting event which can happen in the American architectural world today." This commission was built for \$14,600.

The rear addition was most likely added between 1950-1960. At that time the original entrance was filled in, replaced with a window and later an ATM. The building also suffered unsympathetic alterations when it was repointed. Originally it had color-matched mortar with deep raked joints so that the brick read as a textured mass rather than individual bricks.



Friends of Terra Cotta



Eileen E. Booth



Eileen E. Booth



Eileen E. Booth

Downtown West Lafayette

West Lafayette Public Library

208 West Columbia Street

K.R. McGomery Associates Architecture

2004

Boston Valley Terra Cotta, Hamburg, NY

Completed in 2004, this handsome glass and masonry building has panels of glazed green terra cotta foliage on the exterior columns. These seem to pay homage to the ornament on Sullivan's near-by bank. In addition, there are glazed terra cotta squares with individual leaves inset into the brick pillars throughout the interior of the library. These leaves are from 16 local tree species including: Beech, Black Locust, Red Bud, Sassafras, Tulip Tree and White Ash.



Susan Tunick, Friends of Terra Cotta



KfM Architecture+



Susan Tunick, Friends of Terra Cotta



KfM Architecture+

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Dedicated to future preservationists
Colette Eileen Booth and Declan Emison Booth

