LIVING WITH AN EGO
by
Noverre Musson, Architect

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I thought I had perhaps an intriguing title when I chose this one last summer. But at the last meeting of Kit Kat, Jerry Folkman took all the steam out of it for me by saying off-handedly, "Can you imagine living without an ego?" As I used the word in the title, an ego signified to me an individual with a special attitude toward himself - an attitude which visualized the whole world as revolving about him, he being its center and the most important person in it. I did not mean offensive self-love, nor idle boastfulness, but a certain conviction about the self that made him see himself the norm for the world. That I felt this attitude was special - and perhaps somewhat discreditable - reveals something about me. What it reveals, of course, is that this may be the way I feel about myself, but my Puritan conscience forces me to keep this fact under cover - most of the time.

Since words and deeds reveal one's thoughts - or lack of them - I suppose that anything I say here is by way of being a confession. So I might as well start out by making the confession explicit. Such a gambit is designed not to win my audience's respect, but rather its sympathy. You all know that, according to the State of Ohio Licensing Board, I am an architect, having gained a degree from Novice Fawcett's plant some decades before he took over up there. Don Weaver has humored me by doing his bit to foster the notion that I can occasionally write something worth printing. But in addition, I have worked in a sugar-beet factory, sold shoes, worked on a farm, served as a Scout leader, sold Real Silk hosiery (which I hated), painted scenery (which I loved), worked as a stone mason, carpenter, painter, hod carrier, plasterer, sold furniture, taught the painting of pictures, worked in a rubber-tire factory, worked as a bookkeeper and at a number of other trades and professions to earn my bread, any one of which might have made a very good career if my heart had been in it.

My trouble was - and this is my confession - that I had an edifice complex.

Because I was rather pig-headed about this edifice complex, I worked at these other jobs just hard enough to draw my pay. I was marking time until I could get to building. Anyone graduating from an architectural school in 1932, as I did, had to have a commitment to architecture, not to get permanently drawn into some other line of work. The making of edifices, even as modest as a chicken coop, was a sometime thing in those days.

The purpose of this confession is to set the stage for the introduction of the ego I propose to talk about. I'm sure you all realized from Jay Crane's letter that the ego in question is not my own. My introduction to the ego came about in this way. I was living at home with my parents in the summer of 1935. At that time, I felt that I was really on the way to becoming an architect. I had set up a drafting board at home. Between other jobs, I had made several drawings for contractors. And I had had two bona-fide clients of my own. For one, I designed a complete house. What joy! What anguish! For the other, the addition of a porch to his house. Early one morning, my mother wakened me to hand me a telegram that had just arrived. I opened it and read: "We need a cook. I have told Mr. and Mrs. Wright that you can cook. Come at once." It was from my college roommate, Eugene Masselink, at the Taliesin Fellowship, the architectural school of Frank Lloyd Wright. For a year and a half he had been there acting as secretary to Mr. Wright. To me this was the equivalent of a personal invitation from St. Peter to join him in Paradise. In three days I was on my way, and thus began two years of life with the ego of my title, an ego of proportions I had never before encountered.

Let me say that today Frank Lloyd Wright is one of the penates of the house of architecture. He is considered by some to be old-fashioned, even quaint. But 29 years ago he was a truly controversial person, a rebel, and an outcast of the profession, partly because of certain details of his personal life, but more

so because he had the gall, the audacity, and the talent to challenge loudly and insufferably the very foundations of the architectural thought of the day. This was unforgivable. He even proclaimed that the entire structure of architectural thought in America from 1893 to then, 1935 - dealing as it did in the reproduction of various tidbits of architecture from past ages from various parts of the world - the latter day fabrication of Tudor manors, Gothic naves, Greek temples, Italian villas, Spanish cottages and French farm houses, plus a few New England and Southern Colonial mansions, was a counterfeiting operation, and came from a school of thought entirely lacking in basic integrity - a broken cistern that could hold no water. This annoyed the less thinging practitioners, rankled the leaders of the profession, and infuriated the professors - and they all wished that he would go away. Apprehensive that there might be some truth in what he said, they pointed to his personal life and asked what right he had to talk. I recall that when I applied to the Board of Examiners in 1939 for permission to stand for the Ohio Architectural license examination, I presented a letter from Wright as part of the evidence that I had enough experience to qualify. Ralph Kempton, for many years secretary of the Board, said, "As far as I am concerned, you can toss that out the window." It was open and he made a gesture as if to actually toss it. His office was on an upper floor of what is now the LeVeque-Lincoln Tower. I was so startled that I think if he had actually thrown my precious letter out, I would have gone out the window myself after it.

Now, what made this man, Frank Lloyd Wright, behave this way? And so aggressively? And for so long? And, as history will show, I think, be so justified in doing it. His actions were the result of one of those rare conjunctions in human thought when a whole sector of public consciousness comes to the threshold of a great new vista and then shrinking from taking the forward step, turns back. But at that juncture a single man of energy, vision, conviction and genius appears who has the courage to push ahead alone. This forward thrust, natural, obvious and easy as it was to him, set him apart and fostered a sense of rightness in him - and wrongness in the rest of the world - that blossomed in a surface egotism of heroic dimensions.

Frank Lloyd Wright was born in 1868 into a family of Welsh farmers and Unitarian preachers whose various members among them owned a sizable chunk of Richland County, Wisconsin. Reared by a mother who marked him for architecture before he was born, he was taught to work long, hard hours by farmer uncles, and to love music by a preacher, organist father for whom he pumped the organ bellows hour on end - adding as he said, "tired to tired." He grew up in an atmosphere of free thought that included love of nature and love of the exalted in philosophy, religion, and the arts. One of the important ingredients was a burning conviction about the mission of America in the world, a concept which was much closer to Thomas Jefferson - dead just 44 years.- than to the depressed, timid, apprehensive United States I knew in 1935 when I entered into my contract to add "tired to tired" for him.

As a young man, Frank Lloyd Wright was self-reliant, self-respecting and gifted. He spent three and a half years studying engineering at the University of Wisconsin. While there, he witnessed the collapse of the five-story Wisconsin Capitol building during its construction, due to faulty foundations. Many workmen were killed, buried under the debris. Others staggered out to fall dead in the yard or expire in the hospital soon after. He helped dig the body of one man out of the rubble and watched another drained of life blood, hanging head down from the Roman cornice where he had been pinioned by tumbling scaffolding, crying out in agony as he died. Amost irreverently, the accident focused in his mind the idea that in that modern-day of 1888, it was dead wrong to build a building with trimmings borrowed from two thousand years ago.

He went to Chicago. He found a job with James Lyman Silsbee, an architect who designed romantic, but non-stylistic houses, in a style all his own. In Chicago at this time, out of the talented, pragmatic vision of architects like Burnham, Root and others was coming into flower what has since been called "The Chicago School" of architecture. It was fresh, new-worldly, and full of promise. Wright soon became aware on the Chicago scene of Louis Sullivan, only twelve years his senior, now recognizecd as the true genius of the time in Chicago and American architecture. He sensed Sullivan was the leading spirit and was drawn to him. He faced

the lion in his den and asked for a job. He got it. Within three years at only 23, he was head of the Adler and Sullivan drafting room and the highest paid draftsman in Chicago. He was the master's right hand, and almost his alter-ego. He came to call him, "Der Lieber Meister." Sullivan was bringing into being the greatest of the architectural works which consituted the Chicago School, and pointed thought in the direction of a truly new, truly American architecture. Wright has said he was the pencil in Sullivan's hand. This was his role while Sullivan created the first real skyscraper designed as a skyscraper, and created out of himself a personal system of ornament that became an organic part of the architecture.

Then came the 1893 Columbian Exposition. Daniel Burnham conceived the grand plan. Architects from the East Coast set the architectural pattern, a flamboyant confection out of the copy books of 2nd Century Rome. Sullivan's beautiful transportation building - a golden, original work - was the only one in the entire complex that didn't conform to the Roman style, and the only one to be presented the gold medal of the Paris Societe des Beaux Arts. The Fair was a dazzling city of a thousand white plaster Ionic and Corinthian columns. It was the first and greatest architectural complex the New World has seen of building forms organized into a grand plan. It gave America the vision of the city beautiful. And to Sullivan and Wright it was as phony as its hollow plaster columns, made to look like stone.

But America of 1893 was entranced by the effect, sham as it was, and fashion promptly deserted the fledgling American school of architecture for a fifty-year plunge into one wave after another of bogus attempts to resuscitate the dead body of long-gone architectural style.

"The picture," Wright has said, "triumphed over architecture," and "The ambitious ignoramus in the profession throughout America was captivated."

Of the Chicago School, architect Dan Burnham, who gave Columbus one distinguished example of his best work in the old Wyandotte Building, capitulated and went classical. Root died from the scene. Walter Burley Griffon won a world-wide competition for the design of the new capital city for Australia, Canberra, and left America for good. Louis Sullivan refused to capitulate, continued to do fewer and fewer buildings and died a broken man. Among his late works Ohio has two beautiful bank building - one in Sidney, now handsomely restored, and one in Newark, recently butchered probably beyond recovery.

The year of the Fair, Frank Lloyd Wright set up shop on his own. He had caught the fire of vision from Sullivan and could never think of turning back. By force of personality and a fortuitous combination of circumstances, he began to attract a following that enabled him to push on where others fell by the wayside. He found his main work in the residential field. And in this field, he established concepts of how Americans should live that have really only come fully into their own in our own day. In his thirties, he was a handsome man with a magnetic

personality. He would have had worldly success even if he hadn't been gifted with genius. Because of his upbringing, which gave him a strong sense of integrity, and a reverence for principle, he made every chance to build the opportunity for research into the new world of architecture.

Wright had been reared to think for himself and to see for himself. His mother had discovered the Froebel Kindergarten method at the 1876 Philadlephia Exposition, a system of building blocks, folded paper, strings and beads called "Gifts" for constructing all sorts of basic forms. In his mother's hands this system became a tool for teaching her eight-year old son systematic research in abstract form. Its importance can never be overestimated. Its effects can be seen on his work throughout his life. It set him on a path of research, parallel to Cezenne, which led Wright to all the fundamentals of French Cubism a decade before Picasso and Braque made their first experiments, and two decades before Piet Mondriaan perfected on canvas his black, white, and red ceremonial geometry. Professor Hoyte Sherman, whose epochal work at Ohio State University in visual perception was noted this month by a cash award from the University, says that in his paintings Cezanne discovered and made use of all the basic principles of visual perception, and that Wright, independently, encompassed them and applied them to architecture.

Picasso and Braque might have seen the early publications of Wright's work and responded to it, but their work stems from Cezanne. Mondriaan, however, springs out of a generation of European architects, industrial designers and painters who took their inspiration directly from these piblications of Wright's works.

When he was 20, Frank Lloyd Wright had married Catherine, a 17-year old high-school girl. Twenty years and six children later, he found she was emotionally and mentally still 17, while he had grown and matured in every conceivable dimension. At last, feeling harnessed to an impossible personal situation, he asked for a divorce. This was a natural step within the heretical, free-thinking, Unitarian preacher tradition he came from, but one patently scandalous to the America of 1908. He was refused; but was promised a divorce if at the end of a year of probation he still wanted one. At the end of the year, he still wanted it but was again refused. They separated. Then there came into his life a woman, whom even his own sister told me years later was culturally, intellectually, emotionally, and in every way, the ideal mater for him. To compound the problem, she too was already married - Mrs. Cheney was the wife of a recent client. She too was refused a divorce.

Wright worked out in his own mind the principle (to him) that institutions, including marriage, were made for man and not man for institutions. This deep-seated sense of the rights of the individual and his freedom-loving Welsh heritage told him that no form of bondage was justified. So these two broke with convention and together they sailed for Europe in 1909. They stayed two years. While there, the German publishing firm, Wasmuth, with his help published in two magnificent books all his major works of the decade before. One was an excellent collection of photographs and plans; the other a reproduction in color on out-size plates of his own perspective drawings of most of the same projects. This was signal

acclaim for an American architect. Ten years earlier, the "Architectural Review" had devoted an entire issue to a dozen of his first works.

The couple returned in 1911 and Wright built a house on his mother's land near Spring Green, Wisconsin for his second family. This was Taliesin, complete with studio and quarters for a small staff. Back again on the land he became a gentleman farmer-architect in the Jefferson tradition. Then in July 1914, while he was in Chicago where he maintained a second office, a crazed servant set fire to Taliesin and with an axe, murdered seven people in it, including his beloved and their two babies. This tragedy which occurred the day World WarI was declared in Europe, worse than Jason's, worse than Oedipus', left him in a state of shock for many months.

Two years later in 1916, a Japanese Government Commission was making a worldwide search for an architect to build a hotel for the Royal Family in Tokyo. After combing Europe and the East Coast of America, they came to Taliesin - and looked no further. They had found their man.

Wright spent the better part of the next five years in and out of Japan. At this time, there came to him another woman to replace, in a degree, the mate lost in the tragedy at Taliesin. But still Catherine refused a divorce. Miriam Noel went with him to Japan and shared his life there during those years. The designing of the Imperial Hotel was an engineering feat and an architect's dream. And when the hotel withstood the 1923 earthquake, contrary to his critics, the soundness of his engineering was demonstrated to the world. When the hotel was finished, they returned to America. Catherine finally gave him the divorce and he and Miriam were married.

But gradually her mind began to show signs of slipping. At last they could no longer live together; so they lived separately. He was trapped again in an impossible domestic situation. She grew steadily worse. After three trying years, it happened a third time - he met Olgivanna; his fourth mate; his third wife. Miriam had slipped further and was in no state to discuss a divorce; so once more he lived illegitimately - but justified in his own mind. When Miriam finally died in an institution, Frank and Olgivanna were legally married and spent thirty-three years together in the kind of happy union he had experienced before only brief years at a time.

In 1925, when he was 57, the Dutch press, Wendingan, published a handsome folio volume of all important Wright works up to that date. It included articles about him by several important European architects, articles by Wright, and a touching, nearly deathbed tribute by Louis Sullivan which dwells on the Imperial Hotel survival of the earthquake and its engineering significance, as well as an accolade on his contribution to the theory, science and art of architecture. A lecture tour of Europe, marked everywhere by large eager audiences, came at the same time, plus publications of books in German, French, Japanese and other languages, plus honorary memberships in the Flemish Academie Royale D' Anvers and the German Royal Academy. All this gave him a sense of being a world figure, but one who met only silence and rebuff at home in America, except for those exceptional clients who fell under the spell of his personal magnetism,

or were genuinely persuaded by his doctrine, or especially, as happened time and time again, by the vastly satisfying emotional appeal of his buildings themselves. In 1931 a major retrospective exhibition of his work filled a Berlin museum with evidence of the power of his creativity and the grandeur of his conceptions.

In 1932 he published his reminiscences in a book he called "An Autobiography" which became an instant best seller for a mixture of reasons, one of which was that it is an absorbing book vividly written.

Well, now, here you have the ingredients for cultivation of an ego: an upbringing which taught freedom of thought and dedication to principle; a taste of the glory of a new vision revealed by the genius Sullivan to an eager, capacious young mind; a resolute dedication to the vision which unfolded new meaning and new capacity with each new experiment; enough non-conformist clients to give him opportunities to grow; vindication of the power of his engineering genius to outwit the forces of nature; world recognition and acclaim, balanced against opposition in his own country; an eager battling with the conformist spirit of his own profession at home; bitter battling against social conventions which he felt were tyrannical, and by his own definition, unprincipled; the confronting and survival of a tragedy that would have killed a lesser spirit; and forced by it all to forge his own vision into an output of enough jewels of architecture to make several men famous.

This was the man I approached to serve with eagerness and trepidation in September, 1935.

He was then 67, a virily handsome man with a lion's mane of white hair and the complexion and bearing of one much younger. I had met him twice before. Once at the Neil House in the spring of 1933 when he was the speaker at a Tau Sigma Delta banquet. The University would not permit the affair to be held on campus because of the speaker's reputation for immoral conduct. I recall that Professor Charles St. John Chubb, dean of the School of Architecture, refused to lend sanction to the affair by attending. He spoke of the arrogant egotism of the man, as well as his morals. You will recall that I mentioned earlier the academic fury caused by Wright's questioning the validity of the architectural education of the time.

I understood little of his 1933 speech because he spoke of architecture in terms of democracy, integrity, humanity, nature, and the land - terms which seemed to me impossibly general and abstract for the subject; this, in itself, I now see was a mild indictment of Chubb's pedagogy.

Gene Masselink, as president that year of Tau Sigma Delta, had arranged Wright's appearance. Wright was impressed with Gene's painting and with his buoyant, intense personality. Mr. and Mrs. Wright had started the Taliesin Fellowship in 1931 to be a school of architecture, which attempted to integrate into the learing as a whole, a comprehension of music, philosophy and other arts, to teach their oneness and the oneness of life, and break down the separateness these elements were dealt with in the academies. He invited Gene to visit and perhaps join the Fellowship when he was graduated in June that year. This Gene did. And he stayed 28 years until he died in 1961, three years after Wright's own death.

That summer, 1933, I read "An Autobiograpny." I began to get a glimmer of how Wright thought, and I began to generate a large head of steam in enthusiasm for even what I didn't understand. His book made me feel that understanding him was the most important thing in the world.

I met him a second time in September, 1934, when Gene invited me to visit Taliesin for three overwhelming, bewildering and ecstatic days. I had a sample of a group of 30 people living with great enthusiasm and conviction a kind of life that was, in every possible detail, different, individual, and to them logical. I found a community spirit that was integrated - and as morally Puritan as anyone could wish. The rituals of group work, individual chores, individual and group recreation, and certain ceremonial social occasions where strange to me and even stranger was the dedication of all to an ideal which gave deep meaning to every activity.

Wright was treated with a deference that almost amounted to worship. But so convinced was I, that I was ready to join the congregation. I took part in the afternoon tea; I helped in the gardens; I helped gather branches and flowers to decorate the little theater for the Saturday Night supper and evening of foreign films. Being a prairie boy, I loved the Sunday picnic to the top of the biggest hill in the valley. And I was mystified by the conventions and formality of the Sunday evening supper when everyone dressed to the teeth and all who could, made music or performed otherwise. The high point came when Mr. Wright spun an intricate web of discourse on architecture. I had a brief interview with the Master that trip. I said I dreamed of joining the Fellowship but had no money. His devestating reply was, "Borrow some."

So then I waited another year until, in answer to Gene's telegram, I arrived at Taliesin to become cook for the Great Man - I who had never cooked more than pancakes on the range at home or nameless concoctions over a campfire.

Members of the Fellowship were called apprentices. I had a week's apprenticeship with Billy Bernudi, a departing apprentice, who now is a successful architect in St. Louis. Billy had held the post of cook for a year or more, with what appeared to me to be great assurance and talent. I was appalled to discover that in addition to learning how to roast 20-pound pieces of meat, I would be expected to bake pies, cakes, and three kinds of bread. I have never learned so frantically in my life. Fortunately the job was shared on alternate weeks with another apprentice. I spent the next week as second cook. Then I was on my own. Terror, excitement and pleasure were combined moment by moment as I mastered one technique after another - enough at least to escape criticism and gradually to earn the pleasure of an occasional compliment from one or another of the thirty some apprentices. It was only later that I reaped praise from Olgivanna, and at long, delicious last, sincere commendation from the man himself.

The working of the Fellowhip became clear to me in the first few days. All members took a hand with any and all work they could handle. All, with a few exceptions, periodically served a week in the kitchen as cook's help.

Mrs. Wright directed the functioning of the household including the kitchen gardens. Mr. Wright directed work on the 200-acre farm, on the buildings, and in the drafting room. The day began with

a hearty breakfast at 7:00. Lunch was a working-man's meal at 12:00. At 4:00 came the tea hour - a time to cease all work (except in the kitchen) for refreshment, chats, and if he felt like it, a discourse by Mr. Wright. Then at 6:00 dinner. Evenings were free for reading, study, socializing in small groups, music, or a clandestine trip to Spring Green for a beer. The life was regulated but free. It was also very strongly selfdirected, on a volunteer basis, by what the individual thought Mr. and Mrs. Wright expected of him. This lead to piano practice, personal design projects, and unrequired evening hours working on Mr. Wright's drawings in the drafting room.

The cook's life was intensive - a 16-hour a/day job with little respite. In spite of two helpers I had each week, some of whom were adept at kitchen work, for a couple grim months it was an emotionally draining job for me when I was barely on top of the meal in progress, let alone the next one. And, except for the alternate weeks out of the kitchen, when I could choose what tasks I wanted, to recoup, I would not have made the grade.

My biggest and only real failure came when Herbert Johnson gave Mr. Wright a carload of coke. Mr. Wright was then designing the Johnson Wax Company Office Building in Racine for him. We had been burning wood in the cook stoves and, as fall came on, in the many fireplaces as well as the steam boilers. Coke was no good for the fireplaces, but it was fantastic in the boilers - far better than wood. For the first time every radiator in the entire rambling complex was hissing steam without the round-the-clock boiler stoking wood has required. It saved an endless amount of hauling wood from the countryside. I was the first to try cooking with coke. Breakfast

went famously - being all cooked on top of the stove which glowed with this new heat. The lunch I had planned was an on-the-top-of-the-stove meal too. All went well except that the old iron range with eight holes and two ovens got almost too hot. I played a tricky game of dampering it down only to find I had to open it up again to keep the fire going. It was a Monday. I had a full afternoon. Before lunch I had mixed up three kinds of bread and set the batches to rise I had to kneed it down, let it rise again, form it into loaves, and bake it, plus an octette of apple pies to fabricate and bake. I started a beautiful big roast in one oven and finished the bread off in the other. But the bread behaved strangely. First it swelled so fast it nearly ran over the pans. Then as I dampered the fire, it refused to brown. Fighting the bread against the fire, I didn't realize the roast was suffering. Finally I got the bread out, but it had sagged abnormally as it baked. The pies browned very fast until I cut the fire; then they went into a coma and the apples in them didn't seem to cook at all. When they were done, I put several flat pans of whole onions into the oven. Mr. Wright was extremely fond of baked onions. By 5:30 I suddenly discovered the onions were not baking and an examination of the roast showed a dark brown exterior and a raw inside. I played the fire up and down, fearful I'd melt the cherry red fire box, but when it was dampered, the ovens suffered. At six, apprentices began to drift in wondering when supper would be ready. At 6:30 I was frantic, but neither I nor the kitchen help dared serve the meat and onions. At 7:00, although we had not rung the dinner bell, Mr. and Mrs. Wright appeared in their little dining room adjacent to the Fellowship dining room. There was nothing for it but to carve and serve.

The meal was a nightmare. Some who didn't like near-raw beef or half-baked onions resorted to bread and milk to fill up on or chili sauce to make the food edible. From the little dining room came only silence.

Then I trotted out the pies and the day was saved, as far as the Fellowship was concerned. The week before the other cook, Gwen Baker, had made apple pies without cinnamon on Mrs. Wright's orders, following a complaint by Mr. Wright. None of the Fellowship liked them. So I had made mine with cinnamon - except one, which was reserved for Mr. and Mrs. Wright. I told Hulda Brierly, my helper who was serving the little dining room, which pies were which. Amost as distracted as I was over the fiasco the meal had become, she served Mr. and Mrs. Wright apple pie, said, "This is the pie without cinnamon," and retreated to the kitchen. At once the bell rang. "Would I come to the little dining room?" I did. "What is this about pie with cinnamon and without cinnamon?" Mr. Wright fixed me with a cold stare. After a pause, he began a lecture such as I have necer before or since experienced - all on the Nature of Materials. Apples have a natural flavor which doesn't need cinnamon to doctor it up. Only jaded taste could be insensitive to this obvious truth. How could anyone be taught the principles of architecture who was so numb to facts as simple as this. Mr. Wright was just beginning to rise to heights of eloquence about the great facts of nature flaunted by my act of disobedience when within me my annoyance with the bread, my perturbance with the pies, my distraction over the roast and onions, my harassment by the Fellowship, and my dismay over the cinnamon situation rose in tension till it

suddenly burst like the breaking of a dam and I fled from the room, from the house and up the hill into the orchard in a fit of hysteria such as I have never experienced before or since.

The next day I learned to burn wood with the coke and make the range behave. Oddly enough, from that day on I was in command of the kitchen work and felt equal to any recipe anyone could drag in or to any Serbian or Montenegrin dish Mrs. Wright could translate out of her mother's well-thumbed cookbooks.

All this may serve to illustrate how every facet of life to Wright, as revealed at Taliesin, was related to his concept of the principles of architecture. "Architecture is a way of life," he would say - frequently. He was convinced thatthose who observed its principles would live the righteous life, on the land, in true democracy with their fellowmen.

First of these principles is Nature. The study of nature reveals all things, hè says. Creation is growth in accord with the laws of nature. Organic. The true understanding of the science and art of structure comes from this study.

A second is the nature of materials. No construction can be architecture that is not informed by an understanding of the nature of the materials used - of brick as brick, stone as stone, wood as wood - each to be used so as to express its own nature and individuality most clearly. He used this concept broadly to include the purpose of the building and the nature of the client as materials for the building. Even human nature itself.

A third is the ground. An organic architecture should be at home in its surroundings, geography, climate, landscape. It should appear to grow out of it, belong to it. The familiar, characteristic features of his buildings- taking the outside in and the inside out by vistas, penetrations, and interchanges of materials, grow out of this principle - as do the far-flung terraces, retaining walls, and exterior screens which knit his building into their sites.

A fourth is space. The purpose of the building determines the nature of its interior space, and this space, expressed on the exterior, determines its form - interior space becoming exterior architecture. Dramatizing this concept, walls are eliminated, space is defined by disposing utilitarian features around it and by screens which interrupt but do not contain it. Vital space is the life of the building. To my knowledge, no one bfore or since has handled, manipulated, played with, mastered, space so expressively as he. Not the Romans, or the masters of the Baroque. Only in the mausoleum of the Third Shogun at Nikko and in the Alhambra at Granada have I seen space realized so well as a design objective.

Fifth is integrity. Wright used integrity to mean honesty to ideals, honesty to the human spirit, honesty in use of materials, honesty of a building to its purpose, to its environment, to its own expression of itself, and honesty to its basic structure. He also used it to imply integralness, oneness - all parts belonging to and growing out of the whole. Perfect correlation.

And there are more but they are as you see complexly interrelated.

Let me read you some of his aphorisms selected at random which illustrate these principle concepts.

"Repose is the highest quality in the art of architecture - next to integrity - a reward for integrity."

"Integrity would imply natural - imply nature in a profound sense."

"Organic architecture will be natural growth in accord with natural feelings and industrial means, to serve - with art - actual needs."

"Perfect coorelation is the first principle of growth."

"It is all a nature study - the building of a building. And you have to have an eye on what your client wants to live for, too."

"Attempts to use forms borrowed from other cultures, other times, and conditions other than one's own, must end as the Renaissance ended - with total loss of inherent relation of architecture to the soul life of the people."

"Principle is a safe precedent. The working of a principle is the only safe tradition."

"Intellect is only the tool of imagination. It creates nothing."

"Specific purpose is the qualifying aim of all creation."

"Individuality is sacred. Individuality realized is the supreme entertainment of the human soul."

"The future of architecture is the future of the human race. The two are one. If humanity has a future, it is architecture as a basic element of its culture. And if humanity has no future - no architecture."

"Culture and education are two very different things as we practice them. Culture is the developing of the thing by way of itself, and education is informing, teaching, telling -pushing around - the individual. It is only by natural growth that you can attain culture, but you can come back from a school all stuffed with ideas - what we call conditioned - instead of enlightened - as Sullivan would say 'educated far byond capacity'."

These will suffice to delineate the unity and comprehensiveness of his philosophy and practice of creating of architecture. And since these are original, conscious perceptions never overtly stated before, it is revealing to observe their origin. The perceptions were his own - sparked and stimulated by Sullivan, but nurtured by a generation of American thought that preceded him.

On the walls at Taliesin, I read: "These are the great sources - Jesus, Thomas Jefferson, Beethoven, Thoreau, Whitman, Loatse, Sullivan. And not forgetting Bach, Edward Bellamy, Emerson, Henry George, Hokusai, Ruskin."

Wright grew from the ground he was nurtured in and his architecture was suddenly American and complete in a way no other architecture has been native and complete without passing through generations of hands. It rose in a wave from one consciousness, where other architectureshave been felt and finally expressed, element by element, out of the stream of a collective consciousness.

In the summer of 1935, Edgar Kaufman had asked Mr. Wright to design him a house in the mountain forest south of Pittsburgh. When I arrived at Taliesin, he had already visited the land and picked a site. A typographical survey was delivered. He looked at it and did nothing. Although he had little work at the time, he seemed loathe to start the design. In the drafting room, Gene would say, "Mr. Wright, we have a letter from Mr. Kaufman asking about the progress of the house." No comment. We would pull out the survey and put it on his desk, or on his favorite bench by the big studio fireplace. He would look at it and push it aside.

One day I was giving my kitchen help orders about cleaning up after lunch and peeling potatoes for a supper, when word came from the studio that Mr. Wright was working on the Kaufman house. I deserted my help at once and hurried down. The bulk of the Fellowship had gathered around a drafting table where he sat drawing and talking. The building foundations, digging their roots into the rock bank of the creek, were already set down on paper. He was drawing on the main floor plan. The sinews of the foundations were visible rising through the floor. As he drew and talked, he explained the relation of the rooms to the rock wall of the mountain behind and above; the strength they drew from their stance over the creek; and their orientation to the waterfall and the vistas beyond. He talked of the purpose of the spaces, and the pleasure to be had in using them. He peopled the floor with family and servants.

He spread a cantilevered terrace out over the waterfall itself. Another sheet of paper went down. The bedroom floor began to appear - smaller, but formed by the same muscular structure. It had its own leaping cantilever terrace. He gave loving attention to the fenestration of the guest room. "There is where I will sleep when I visit," he said. Rising walls, thrusting up from the creek bed, became fireplaces and chimneys. Finally, a third floor was blocked out - smaller yet - a web of windows between chimneys - "a retreat for Edgar Jr." he commented. Then another sheet went down and the masterful main facade took form. As the ceiling heights and window heights were established, he talked about the subtle diminution of these dimensions he envisioned and delineated from one floor to the next. Finally, he revealed the solution of details in turning a corner or starting and stopping a row of windows by asking himself, "What is the organic way to do it here?"

Tea was forgotten that day. And before I reluctantly departed to start supper for the master and his apprentices, the basic and, in most respects, final design had appeared before our astonished eyes - walls were flung out bracing against the rock cliff behind, stretching the entire space in all directions even to a bridge across the water upstream, and the house stood, strong like a mountain climber, securely pinioned to the mountain face but balanced on piers like an exultant mountain climber leaning far out to take the view.

My years in college and on construction work were needed to make this day deeply comprehensible, but years of college had never taught me so much as this one afternoon.

He relished the performance as much as any of us. He knew he was ready for it when he started - although I'm sure he hadn't particularly planned such a demonstration. It was the kind of thing he could make happen when the stream of events was running right.

Perhaps the most beguiling and infectious thing about him was the way he relished everything he did. His "Work Song" for the Fellowship - a Longfellowish poem - begins, "Joy in work is man's desiring." Our trip to Arizona for the winter, when we loaded 30 some people and belongings into cars and trucks, and drove off south and west to escape the bitter Wisconsin winter, was full of trials, but full of joy and excitement. He surmounted difficulties and made discoveries better than any of us, his children.

He could turn a casual afternoon Fellowship tea into a hilarious party as he told amusing jokes on himself out of his past, or more cruel ones on others. He could make it a transcendant and awesome experience as he told about the second fire at Taliesin in 1925 when the main house burned to the ground and just as he and all hands in exhaustion gave up hope of saving the studio with its precious drawings and priceless collection of Japanese art, the wind changed, a shower came and the heart of Taliesin was saved. He could make it into a torture-chamber experience for one or two or three of us if he chose, as he did for me, after the apple pie episode, when he used my transgression as an example of blindness to the principles so important to architecture. And when the mood struck him, he could make such a half hour a sublime experience when he might reconstruct, as much for himself as for us, the steps of discovery which lead him

to the realization of some new principle of the art, recounting in detail his mood, surroundings, the color of the day when it happened. Such a one was his account of riding his horse out to a quiet spot to read Laotse for the philosophical and poetic pleasure the ancient Japanese sage gave him - and the lightning flash of revelation when he read the statement: "The Reality of the vase is the emptiness inside." With an overwhelming wave of excitement he realized that here was a great truth about a building, too. Vicariously, we felt the tingle - and hope we understood the truth revealed.

I have seen him almost beside himself with self-satisfaction. He was so when design for the delicately poised, extravagantly expanding columns of the Johnson Wax office building in Racine was being tested. The city building engineers would not approve the design because they claimed these columns would never carry the three tons of roof load they wer intended to support. So a test column was cast, cured, and held vertical by four props. A number of us drove to Racine to watch the column loaded with pig iron and sand to test it. Each bucket full was weighted as the crane put it on top. The load grew to three tons, six tons, twelve tons - by noon. We ate an excited lunch. More sand and iron went up. Twenty-four tons! Finally quitting time came for the crane operator and the column carried a load of thirty tons. It was just beginning to show stress.

On an order from Mr. Wright, the operator hooked his bucket under one of the four heavy props and pulled it out. The column, sand, pig iron, and all came down into a heap, and dust rose high above the site and drifted away on the late afternoon air. The building inspector was nowhere to be seen. And we drove back to Taliesin, convinced that we were angels on the side of the Lord.

Many people have said many things about Wright. Some were true and some not. Many of them had to do with his arrogance and egotism. He accepted the charge, and called it "an honest arrogance." Many of the things said about him, in his later years, only helped to solidify his conviction that in his long fight with conventional architectural thought he was right and others were wrong. His response often was like Jesus saying to John's inquiring disciples, "Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see..." Alexander Woollcott wrote, "If I were allowed the use of the term genius for only one American, that American would be Frank Lloyd Wright."

Sigfried Gideon told that when he made his first trip to the United States, Le Corbusier asked him whom he would see. He named several and then said, "And I am going to Wisconsin to see Frank Lloyd Wright," and Corbusier said, "Oh, yes. His buildings are very photogenic." And when he got to Taliesin, Wright said, "Well, what of architecture in Europe?" Gideon said, "Well, there is Corbusier." And Wright said, "That charlatan."

William Wilson Wuerster he called "The master of the lean-to garage." To Eliel Saarinen, when that architect's church in Columbus, Indiana, was published, he said, "I have seen the pictures of your church, and it makes me realize how great an architect I am." Of Gropius he said, "The triumph of sterility."

Once on a Sunday evening, because I could only trot out Debussy's "Claire de Lune" or Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" he said, "Noverre, play us something sentimental." He often used "sentimental" as a dirty word. And then he softened the blow by saying, "I'm a sentimentalist myself" and laughed his rich, hearty, slightly enigmatical laugh.

On another occasion in 1954, I drove to Detroit with some other architects - Todd here was along - to hear him lecture. I was just back from a trip to Spain and Don had run several of my stories about the trip in his Sunday magazine. My secretary had been sending them to several people including Mr. and Mrs. Wright. At the close of his lecture I hurried backstage to greet him. The applause was prolonged. When he finally bowed off the stage, he came face to face with me. Instantly he said, "Oh, hello, Noverre. We've been enjoying your pieces on Spain." I doubt if I'd be that quick with a name and a response after a triumphlike the one he'd just had.

Some years after I left Taliesin, I returned for a visit, as I often have. I took along a boyhood friend who was unschooled in architecture but had a spontaneous response to it. Coming home from the traditional Fellowship picnic, which Mr. Wright lead each Sunday during the summer to different scenic spots around the valley, my friend and I and another visitor ended up with Mr. Wright beside the living-room door. He usually took a nap at this hour. But this time he seemed to feel like talking. He said, "Come on in," and we followed him into the great main living room with its soaring, vaulted ceiling - reserved most of the time for Mr. and Mrs. Wright and for special Fellowship occasions. We talked a while.

The other visitor made some general statement to the effect that Mr. Wright had done a tremendous thing for American architecture in the creation of his work. Instead of turning the remark aside with some humorous or caustic comment, as he often did, Mr. Wright grew serious. He then made a remarkable statement. Like an echo from the Bible, he paraphrased the words of a man who was noted for his humbleness of spirit - and in the paraphrase I discovered that when it came to an assessment of the wellspring of his inspiration, all the legendary arrogance vanished and in its stead there appeared a great humbleness he seldom dared reveal. He said, "Well, it is no great credit to me that I have been able to do the things I've done. I merely perceived the Principle. And having perceived the Principle, I could do the works. And any of these boys here, who grasp the Principle, will be able to do works such as I have done, and greater."

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