Campbell House Architect Discovered

Recent research of mechanics liens in the archive collection of the St. Louis Circuit Court Records has revealed the names of the architects of the Campbell House.

In the spring of 1851, John Hall purchased two lots on the newly developed Lucas Place. He built two houses on these lots that same year, including the house that is today the Campbell House. Both houses resemble a typical row house, with a three-story with service facilities in the rear.

The Campbell House mechanics' lien, dated 14 July 1851, reads (pictured right): Messrs. Donaldson & Hall – to Edgar & Walsh – 1851 July 14 – To sketch of ground plans & front elevation for two houses proposed to be erected in Lucas Place ($5.00) – To drawings for two houses designed to be erected in Bremin (sic) & viewing grounds of same ($15.00) – To plans & full specifications for two three-story houses with finished basements, stables, etc. complete for Lucas Place including detail or [backing?] drawings ($25.00) – To alterations in same substituting plane for ornamental (sic), fronts, and making same three-story without basement finish ($5.00) (Total = $50.00) Rec'd payments

“Edgar & Walsh” are Joseph C. Edgar and Thomas Warying Walsh, who co-partnered from early 1850 until February 1853. Joseph Crowell Edgar was born in New Jersey in 1810. After moving to Ohio in 1830, he re-settled in St. Louis around 1835, and established himself in “the business of building.” His buildings were advertised as “owned and occupied as first-class residences and business houses.”

Thomas Warying Walsh was born in Ireland in 1826 and educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He arrived in St. Louis in 1849, to establish himself with the rebuilding of St. Louis following the Great Fire.

Edgar & Walsh collaborated on at least five public buildings, including the Christian Church (1850) built for the Disciples of Christ on Fifth Street, and the rebuilding St. Vincent de Paul Church (1853) in Cape Girardeau, Missouri after a tornado destroyed it in November 1850. In July 1851, Edgar & Walsh submitted an entry for the new Mercantile Library and in 1852 they designed the Kirkwood Hotel, which had been sited along the Pacific Railroad

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route. Further down the line, the architects designed the Allenton Hotel 1853.

Besides the two houses on Lucas Place, the duo designed two additional houses in Bremen (North St. Louis). In May 1852, John Hall purchased yet another lot on Lucas Place next door to his two original houses. This property (1516 Lucas Place) was sold to William T. Gay in February 1854. These three houses (1508, 1512, & 1516 Locust) were similar in design, but it is unknown if William Gay built on his property or if John Hall completed a third house similar to his other two.

Edgar & Walsh dissolved their partnership in February 1853. Joseph Edgar went into the architectural business by himself at their previous location at Green & Fourth St. and Thomas Walsh partnered with his brother Patrick in 1856.

In 1856, Joseph Edgar moved to Wisconsin, but returned to St. Louis by 1860. He continued as an architect and was involved in the preservation of St. Louis history. In 1866 he helped to found the Missouri Historical Society; in 1870 the St. Louis Institute of Architects; and in 1888 the Veteran Volunteer Firemen Historical Society. He died in Wisconsin in September 1893, age 82.

Thomas W. Walsh later partnered with James Smith (1860-1873) and then Edmund Jungefeld (1870-1874). He is best known for his public and church buildings. He died in March 1890, and his notable designs included the Four Courts, the Boaten's Bank building, the Normal School in Carbondale, Illinois, and the old Lindell Hotel. He also designed St. John the Apostle and Evangelist church (1860), located one block south of the Campbell House, and in 1867 modified the original plans for St. Alphonsus (the “Rock” Church) (1872) on North Grand Ave. In 1879 he drew the initial plans for St. Francis Xavier church at St. Louis University (1884), and also designed the Parish House (1885) and Dubourg Hall (1888). As for residential work, Walsh designed the John How residence (built 1859) at 1515 Lucas Place, later purchased by James Lucas, and ironically located directly across the street from the original Edgar & Walsh houses.

From the Director
By Andy Hahn
The entire Campbell House Museum family (staff, board member and volunteers) is proud of our exceptional visitor experiences. Here is an excerpt from a recent letter we received:

“I find your museum a historic jewel in the crown of St. Louis. Thank you for what I believe was the BEST tour of an historic home that either of us has ever had. As an antiques dealer and history buff I have been to more historic homes in the U.S. and Europe than you could mention...and our tour of the Campbell House was the most informative and enjoyable that I’ve ever had.”

When we weren’t busy giving visitors memorable tours there have been many projects and improvements and Campbell House so far this year including:

- A garden clean-up day with students from Webster Groves High School (top left)
- Exterior painting and restoration (middle left) of the Museum buildings, thanks to a generous grant from the Robert J. Trulakse, Jr. Family Foundation. This work was last completed in 2002.
- And don’t forget Christmas! I know it’s still 100 degrees, outside but plan on visiting this holiday season, whether it is to soak up the Victorian holiday atmosphere (bottom left), get a start on your holiday shopping or to enjoy one of our superlative docent-led tours.

I promise a visit to the Campbell House is an experience you won’t soon forget.

Read more at http://campbellhousemuseum.wordpress.com

CAMPBELL HOUSE MUSEUM
Since opening on February 6, 1943, the Campbell House Museum has served the greater St. Louis area as one of the region’s premier historic property museums. The Museum not only preserves the Campbell's house, but also their collection of original furniture, fixtures, paintings, objects and thousands of pages of family documents. In 2005 the Museum completed a meticulous five-year restoration that returned the building to its opulent 1880s appearance, when the house was one of the centers of St. Louis society.
Twelve Sterling Goblets Come Home After 70 Years

Earlier this year Campbell House board member Tim Rohan found 12 magnificent sterling silver goblets that were sold from the Campbell estate at the Selkirk auction in 1941.

What was the Selkirk auction? After Hazlett—the last surviving Campbell—died in 1938, the Campbell estate went through a protracted probate case. It was one of the largest in Missouri history, and it took ten years to complete. As part of the settlement—and why Campbell House has so many original artifacts—all the Campbell furnishings were sold at auction in 1941 by Ben J. Selkirk and Sons (now Ivey-Selkirk Auctioneers). Stix, Baer & Fuller, meanwhile, purchased the house from Yale University (who had inherited it), and they in turn donated it back to the newly formed Campbell House Foundation. The Campbell House formerly opened to the public on February 6, 1943.

Since the Campbells’ furnishings were auctioned at a public sale and the foundation only had a purchasing budget of $9,500, dozens of original items were purchased by St. Louis families. Fortunately, many generous individuals have donated some these items to the Campbell House so the can be seen again in their historic setting for many generations to come.

Rohan learned a local family had inherited this set of goblets (one is pictured at right). The family had originally purchased the entire set of 12 goblets at the Selkirk auction for $27. Rohan later negotiated the family’s generous donation of the set to the Museum.

The goblets were made by the Durgin Company of New Hampshire in about 1885. The Campbells purchased them at the old St. Louis jewelry store Mermod and Jaccard at about the same time.

See the newest additions to the Campbell collection on display in the pantry silver cabinet.
From the Archives

This spring the Campbell's square grand piano was restored by JoAnn Kaplan of Kapstan Piano Services. While the heavily carved rosewood case of the piano is in near-original condition (top right), the mechanism deteriorated significantly over its 150-year history. Kaplan expertly restored the action for each of the 85 keys (below left).

Robert and Virginia Campbell purchased this piano in 1855 from the manufacturer Schomacker and Co. in Philadelphia. Robert Campbell's receipt book records a payment of $475 to Schomacker on November 28, 1855 (bottom center). Schomacker made a piano nearly identical to the Campbell's model for the Lincoln White House. That piano is in the Chicago Historical Society today.