GLENSHEEN

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO DULUTH'S HISTORIC CONGDON ESTATE

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Zenith City Press
Duluth, Minnesota
www.zenithcity.com
218-310-6541

Glensheen: the official guide to
Duluth's historic Congdon estate

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A complete list of image credits appears on page 149

Updated Edition, 2019
19 20 21 22 23 • 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014958344
Soft Cover ISBN: 978-1-887317-40-5
Hard Cover ISBN: 978-1-887317-41-2

Printed in South Korea

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CONGDON FAMILY HISTORY

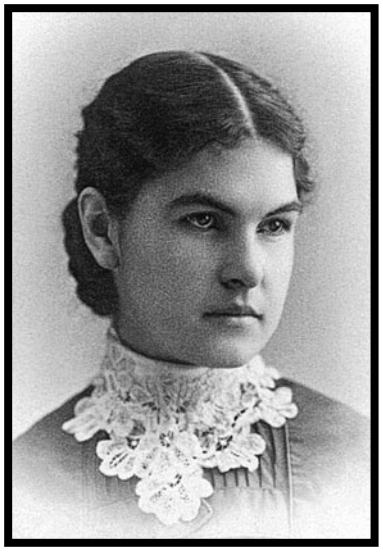
CONGDON FAMILY HISTORY

The lives of Chester Adgate Congdon and Clara Hesperia Bannister converged in 1871 at New York's Syracuse University, where each had enrolled as freshmen in the college's first four-year class. Both excellent students—and both the children of Methodist ministers—Chester and Clara graduated Phi Beta Kappa, and Clara was among the first seven women to graduate from the school. They also found time for romance and had become a couple by the time their course work ended. They postponed marriage until Chester established himself professionally.

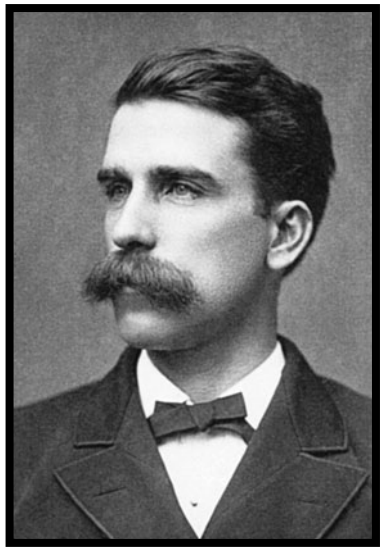
FROM SYRACUSE TO ST. PAUL

Born in 1853 in Rochester, New York, and raised in Corning, Congdon found himself the patriarch of his family at just fourteen years of age after one tragic month in 1868 saw three siblings die of scarlet fever and his father taken by pneumonia. Chester assumed responsibility for looking after his mother, brother Albert, and sister Laura. The young Methodist was not afraid of hard work—he had English Quaker roots and his family had been seventeenth-century settlers of Rhode Island. He remained in Corning, taking a job in a local lumber yard and rooming with the Heermans family, friends of his parents who had a son, Harry, about Chester's age. The two would become lifelong friends. Meanwhile, Chester's mother moved with his younger siblings to a small farm she purchased in nearby Ovid.

When Chester turned eighteen he chose Syracuse specifically to remain close to his mother and siblings, and whenever possible he sent money to help pay off the family farm. He fretted over not being able to send more money for Christmas gifts while trying to pay his $200 annual tuition, but he promised his mother they would "all revel in luxury some day…. We will be infinitely better off than the large majority…I want to be better off than everybody else."



Clara Bannister, circa 1869.



Chester Congdon, circa 1871.

Clara didn't have such worries. A native of San Francisco, California—and one year younger than Chester—she grew up the daughter of Edward Bannister. Edward and his wife were both born in upstate New York of colonial stock and English heritage, and by 1844 he was the minister of a Methodist church in Syracuse. (Clara may well have chosen Syracuse, then a Methodist institution, in part because of her family's connection with the community.) Edward moved his family to California a few years later, and in 1851 he became one of three Methodist ministers who founded California Wesleyan College at Santa Clara, California, the state's oldest chartered university (the college has since evolved into the University of the Pacific). At the time, the Methodist church considered education a necessity to help people live meaningful lives, a philosophy both Clara and her future husband maintained throughout their own lives.

Clara, who graduated with a degree in art, found work in Canada, teaching art and modern languages at a small women's college in Belleville, Ontario, on Lake Ontario's north shore. Meanwhile, Chester remained in Syracuse, taking care of his family while studying law at a local firm. In 1877 he was admitted to the New York bar, but rather than take up a legal career, he traveled west to Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, to accept a poorly paid job as principal of the local high school. He gave it a year, but soon grew tired of living in poverty. In 1879 he struck out for St. Paul, Minnesota, and was admitted to the Minnesota bar the following year. Despite landing a job with a local law firm, Chester still didn't realize the income he had expected. He doubted his value as an attorney—and prospective husband: five years after Syracuse he still struggled to support himself and his mother back home. At one point he wrote Clara that his net worth consisted of "$9.67 in cash, $5 receivable from his firm, $8 in prepaid rent, a $5.75 meal ticket, two pounds of crackers, two pounds of canned meat, and a half pound of coffee." An 1880 letter from Chester to Clara further illustrates his frustration:

> No one realizes better than I that there is no reason why anyone should wish to share my life; & so when I think of how poor my own prospects are; & that there may be some doubts in your own mind, I very naturally think of the wilderness. For I should never have come here had it not been for you—& I would not stay here a week were it not for you. Not that I would go & kill myself; as that would occasion unpleasant notoriety—nor deliberately throw myself away. But I have become something of a gambler in feeling. I would risk everything on a small chance—go into the territories after money and in all human probability fail. Here is a slower & safer course.... I have seen a good many poor lawyers make money, so I may make some someday.

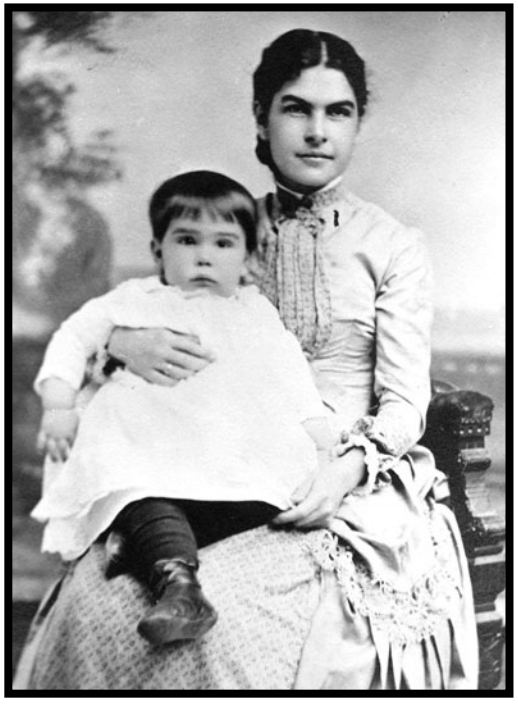
So he took a steady-paying job with the firm of Pierce, Stephenson, and Mainzer, but that did little to improve his melancholy. In another letter to his fiancée, Chester berated himself as "nothing more than a second rate lawyer." He told Clara, "Certainly I should have the good sense to be a cowboy on the plains."

Chester Congdon's prospects changed dramatically after he met William Billson, the U.S. District Attorney for the State of Minnesota. The two hit it off immediately, and when the position opened, Chester went to work as Billson's assistant, receiving a small pay raise along the way. Billson left for Duluth, but Congdon stayed on for three years. After borrowing several hundred dollars from Harry Heermans, Chester wrote to Clara, asking her to start planning a wedding. On September 29, 1881—ten years after they met—Clara and Chester were wed in a small ceremony at Syracuse. The Congdons honeymooned at Niagara Falls.

THE CONGDONS IN ST. PAUL

Chester and Clara settled in St. Paul—at first in modest boarding house rooms and then at 65 Wilkin Street in Irvine Park—and immediately began raising a family. Walter Bannister Congdon, the first of seven children, was born in St. Paul in November 1882. The following May the Congdons took up residence in the lower half of a duplex at 325 South Franklin Avenue, where their second son, Edward Chester, was born in May 1885 and their first daughter, Marjorie, came into the world in January 1887. The family moved again the following year, to 546 Selby

William Billson, circa 1890.



Left:
Clara and Walter Congdon, 1883.

Below:
Edward and Walter Congdon in St. Paul, c. 1889.

Avenue on a bluff overlooking the city, and in February 1889 Chester and Clara added Helen Clara to their brood. Another child, John Robert, was born in May 1891.

Life in St. Paul for the Congdons was punctuated by frequent visits from Chester's mother and brother as well as Clara's family, particularly her sister Mary, and Chester's old friend Harry Heermans. Reverend Charles W. Bennet, who had officiated over the Congdons' wedding ceremony, traveled from Syracuse to baptize Edward, Marjorie, and Helen. Bennet's brother Bill, another close friend, actually lived with the Congdons for almost two years. Clara's diary is filled with the notations of a mother, such as each child's first words (one of Walter's was "kitty") and every mother's worry: childhood diseases. Edward brought home measles to his siblings, Walter passed on his chicken pox to all, and Helen spread whooping cough through the house.

Chester maintained his job as Assistant U.S. District Attorney until 1884 when he quit to start his own firm. For the next six years, Congdon's client list expanded rapidly. As his family and wealth grew, Congdon found opportunities for travel and became interested in western mining stock; he even visited Butte, Montana, where he invested in the Gold Flint copper mine. He also traveled to the Pacific Northwest in 1887. Congdon and Harry Heermans purchased land along the Puget Sound to develop as Grays Harbor. Congdon also acquired land in Yakima Valley he hoped to develop for agriculture.

His work travels also brought him frequently to Duluth, then a booming metropolis. There he visited his old friend William Billson, who had moved to the "Zenith City of the Unsalted Seas" in the mid-1880s and had established a very successful private practice of his own. Billson spoke excitedly about the city's future and suggested that Congdon move to Duluth and partner in his legal practice. Congdon accepted, and in 1892 the Congdon family moved to Duluth.

EXTERIOR VIEWS

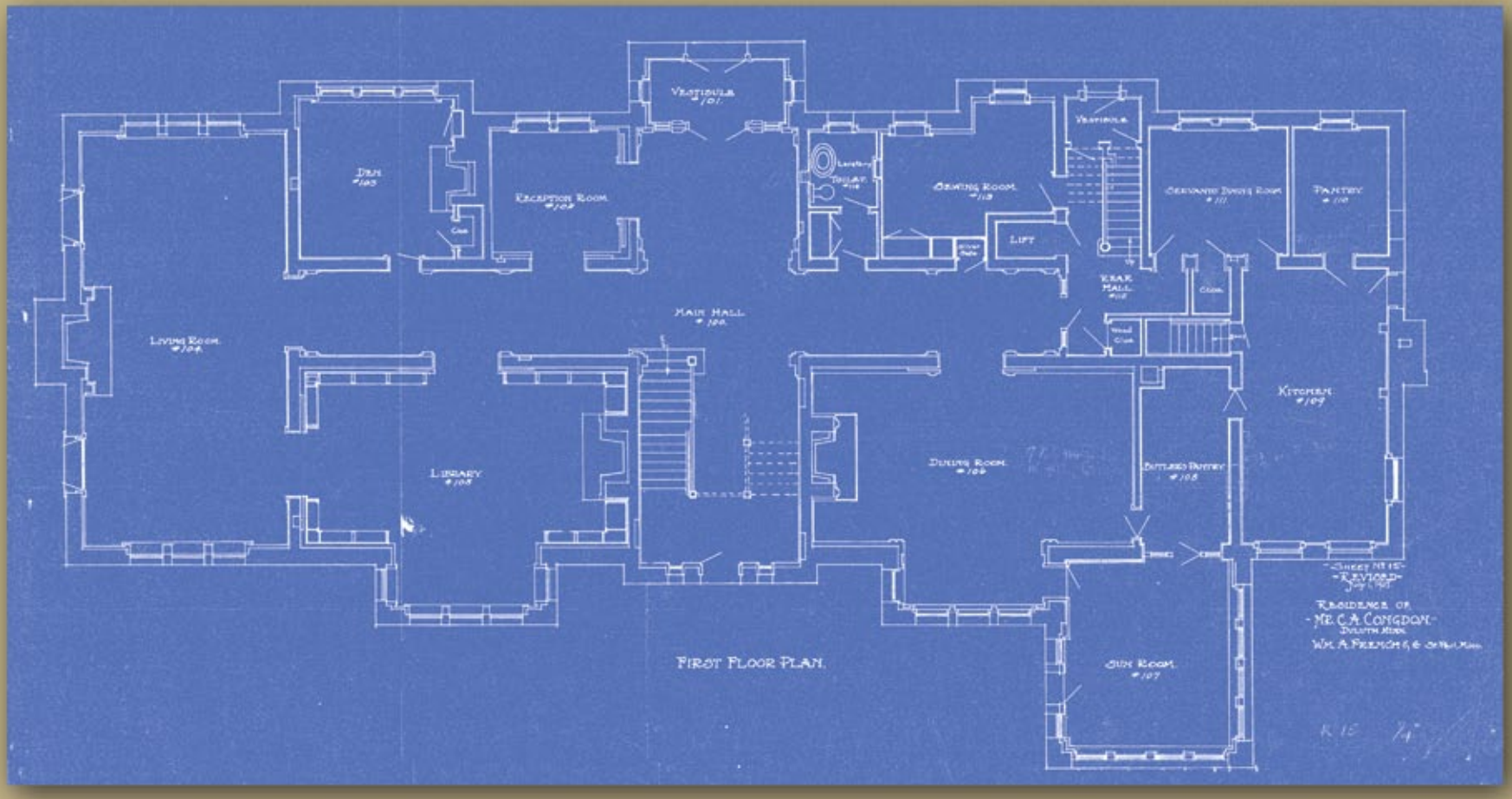
Blueprints of Glensheen's north elevation by architect Clarence Johnston, dated May 27, 1905.

Above: The western porch overlooking Tischer Creek. Facing page: West elevation.

Above: Main entrance, south elevation. Facing page: South elevation.

Service entrance/servants' courtyard, east elevation.

GLENSHEEN'S FIRST FLOOR



Blueprints of Glensheen's first floor, adapted from architect Clarence Johnston's plans in 1907 by interior designers William A. French Co. The den is also known as the "first-floor smoking room" or "Chester's office." The Congdons called the sun room the "breakfast room."

Left and Facing Page: Views of the first-floor hallway. Those visiting Glensheen today see the home very much as it looked shortly after the family moved in in 1908. Nearly all of the original furniture remains in the house, with most of the pieces in their original locations—extremely rare for a historic dwelling. The house also contains several items added while the family lived at the estate, but none of the furnishings on display today were added after Glensheen became a museum.

Below: Brass lions lurk throughout Glensheen (see page 56).

GLENSHEEN'S FIRST FLOOR

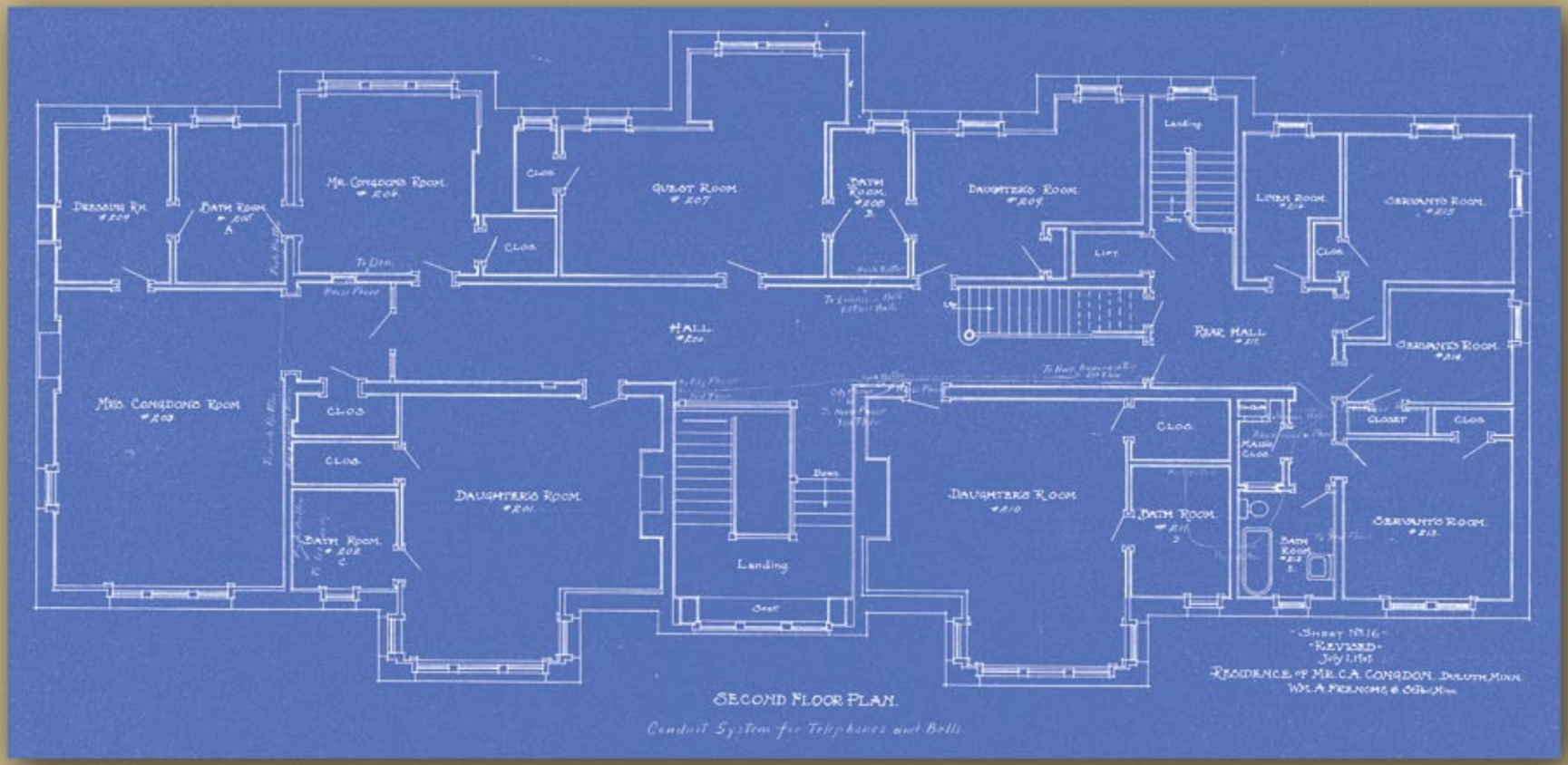
The first floor primarily served as a public space for entertaining and provided utility spaces in which to prepare and serve meals. Its public rooms include a reception room, library, living room, dining room, and the sun room. A kitchen, pantry, butler's pantry, sewing room, and small dining room for the staff, all positioned on the east end of the house, make up the service rooms. A den that also served as Chester's office is located between the reception and living rooms.

The eclectic design of the first floor is primarily a combination of Beaux Arts and Arts and Crafts styles. The public rooms where guests were entertained—the library, dining room and living room—employ Beaux Arts elements while the den and sun room are quintessential Arts and Crafts spaces. The modestly appointed service rooms also follow a very basic Arts and Crafts look. Only the kitchen and the servants' dining room have been altered, partially updated in the 1950s.

THE LIVING ROOM

One of the largest and most formal spaces in the home, the living room was used primarily for guests and special occasions. Two of Chester and Clara's daughters—Marjorie and Helen—were married here. Elisabeth and Robert (and, later, Elisabeth's daughters) also spent plenty of time in the living room learning to play the mahogany Steinway piano (page 45). The legs of the piano, cabinets, and table were designed to match the room's woodwork. The fireplace is faced with rare red Numidian marble from an Algerian quarry.

GLENSHEEN'S SECOND FLOOR



Blueprints of Glensheen's second floor, adapted from architect Clarence Johnston's plans in 1907 by interior designers William A. French Co. Marjorie's bedroom is the daughter's room left of the main staircase; Helen's is right of the main staircase. Elisabeth's bedroom, the daughter's room on the north side of the house, shared a bathroom with the guest room, which was intended to be used exclusively by female guests.

GLENSHEEN'S SECOND FLOOR

Except for Chester's bedroom, Glensheen's second floor was designed for women to inhabit. Clara, the couple's daughters, and the female staff all had bedrooms on this level, which also houses a guest room that was used exclusively by women.

The landing of Glensheen's central staircase is graced by a large window with a Tudor rose motif made of Linden Art Glass (full view facing page, detail at right). Once the combined symbol of the English houses of York (white) and Lancester (red), the modern Tudor rose is the plant badge of England (Scotland uses the thistle, Ireland the shamrock, and Wales the leek).

THE MASTER BEDROOM

Clara Hesperia Congdon, a devout Methodist, was a loving mother, but not demonstrative. She often looks stern in later portraits, but it is thought she is actually straining to listen: she suffered profound hearing loss as she grew older. She told one grandchild, "In the old days, we didn't believe it was proper to fill our children with love and affection. We had to be stoic and teach them to be good sports and overcome all obstacles." Author Gail Feichtinger explains that "Chester and Clara instilled in their children a sense of *noblesse oblige*. For the Congdon children this meant that because they had more money than most, they had a duty to give to others." Subsequently her children were generous with both their time and their money; her daughters in particular volunteered for many organizations. A month before Clara died in July 1950, Syracuse University, her alma mater, conferred upon her the George Arents Pioneer Medal for "excellence in humane and cultural pursuits." In 1991 Gallaudet University established the Clara Bannister Congdon Memorial Scholarship fund.

ABOVE AND RIGHT: A pomegranate motif runs through the master bedroom's drapes, pillows, and fireplace tiles and was at one time stenciled along the room's borders. The fruit was often considered symbolic of marital happiness and fertility, appropriate enough for a married couple, although Clara had her last child, Robert, in 1898—ten years before the family moved into Glensheen. She was then forty-four years old.

ELISABETH'S BEDROOM

Elisabeth Mannering Congdon was just fourteen years old when the Congdons moved in, and she would live at Glensheen longer than any other Congdon. (She also had a home in Tucson and a cabin on the Brule River in northwestern Wisconsin.) Elisabeth attended prep school at Dana Hall in Wellesley, Massachusetts, before attending college at Vassar. She dropped out of college after her father's death, feeling it was her duty to take care of her mother. She became an active volunteer, working with charitable and civic organizations and serving on the boards at Syracuse University and Dana Hall. She was the first president of Duluth's Junior League, served on the board of St. Luke's Hospital's Guild, organized Duluth's American Red Cross Nurse's Aid Committee during World War II, and established a woman's clinic with her friend Dr. Elizabeth Bagley. Elisabeth Congdon never married, although she received at least one proposal from Fred Wolvin, the son of a prominent industrialist. In the 1930s she adopted two daughters, Marjorie Mannering (named for her sister) and Jennifer Susan. Elisabeth died in 1977 at age eighty-three.

HOUSEHOLD STAFF

While Chester Congdon was alive, Glensheen bustled with a staff of about thirty, but not all of them lived on the estate. In 1910 the household staff included butler William Atherton, cook Beda Boya, and maids Essie Larson and Anna Erickson. After Chester's death until the end of World War I, Glensheen maintained a staff of nine: a gardener, a coachman/chauffeur, a houseman, a butler, a laundress, a cook, a housekeeper, an upstairs maid, and a downstairs maid.

Archivists continue to develop a complete list of every person who worked at Glensheen. Meanwhile, we do have a clear picture of their life at Glensheen in the early 1920s thanks to *Footnote to History*, a chapbook by Virginia Soetebier that interprets the diary of her mother-in-law, Else Wilke, a German immigrant who worked as Glensheen's upstairs maid for several years.

When Else worked at Glensheen, Mark Roper served as houseman and his brother James as butler (James would later become the Congdon's chauffeur). Grunhilde and Martina (surnames unknown) worked as downstairs maids (that's Martina pictured). The men resided in the carriage house, and the gardener and his family in the gardener's cottage.

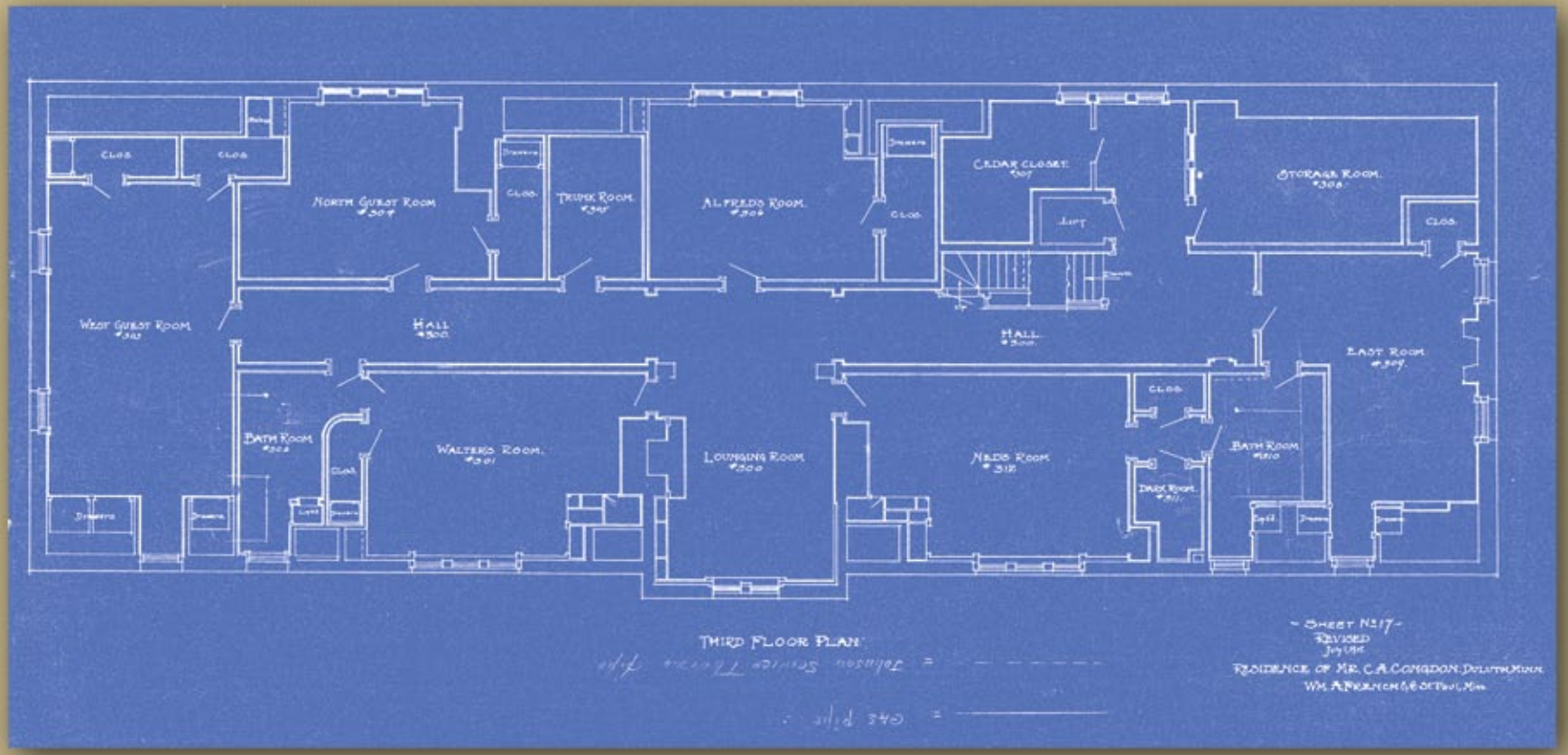
The women were housed in modest rooms on the second floor, above the kitchen and pantry, and shared a bathroom. Whoever had the most seniority was given her choice of rooms, and since there were only three bedrooms for the female staff, they either had to share or some of them lived off the estate.

The staff ate breakfast at seven A.M. and afterward served the same meal to the Congdons in the sun room. At breakfast Mrs. Spencer, the housekeeper, would assign specific work for each maid. She also arranged the flowers throughout the house.

The upstairs maid took care of the second and third floors, which meant cleaning fifteen bedrooms and seven bathrooms. During the dinner hour, the upstairs maid turned down all the beds. The downstairs maid helped the housekeeper with the main floor and lower level. The staff referred to Clara Congdon as "Mrs. Congdon;" they called Elisabeth "Miss Elisabeth."

As the years went on and the family spread across the country, life at Glensheen simplified, and daily activity required fewer staff members. Clara passed away in 1950, and by 1955 Elisabeth's daughters Jennifer and Marjorie had both married, further reducing the need for staff. After Elisabeth suffered a stroke that left her partially paralyzed in 1968, the staff included a gardener, chauffeur, housekeeper, and cook. Several nurses working in shifts tended to Elisabeth's care and rehabilitation, and a personal secretary helped her carry on the business of the estate.

GLENSHEEN'S THIRD FLOOR



Blueprints of Glensheen's third floor, adapted from architect Clarence Johnston's plans in 1907 by interior designers William A. French Co. The north guest room became Robert's bedroom, the west guest room was outfitted for married couples, and the east room doubled as the house's infirmary when a family member fell ill. In a 1909 article about the house that appeared in *The Western Architect* magazine, the lounging room was referred to as a "smoking room."

THE LOUNGING ROOM

Architect Clarence Johnston is said to have included this room because the third floor is the farthest from the mansion's first floor communal spaces—the library, living room, and dining room—and the lounge provided a relaxing space for the men without having to walk down two flights of stairs. It provided the same advantage for those staying in the married guests room. *The Western Architect* magazine referred to this space as the third floor's "smoking room," and it may well have been used to enjoy some tobacco: Walter, Edward, and cousin Alfred were all "college men" by the time the family moved in, so they likely shared a cigar or two here.

ABOVE: Chester and Clara's three sons all attended Yale University; Clara made the Yale throw pillows.

FACING PAGE AND LEFT: The mounted goat heads that hang on either side of the third-floor lounging room's window are original to the home.

WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter Congdon, Chester and Clara's eldest child, was twenty-six when the family took up residence at Glensheen. Like his brothers he was educated at Hill School and Yale and later extended his education studying mining at the University of Minnesota. He found work as a surveyor with the Oliver Mining Company before becoming purchasing agent for the Calumet & Arizona Copper Company in Tucson, Arizona. He was working for Oliver while still attending Yale when a mining car crushed his leg. The limb had to be removed, and he wore a prosthetic limb the rest of his life. In 1914 Walter married Jessie Hartley, the eldest daughter of Duluthians Guilford and Caroline Hartley (Guilford was also one of Chester's many business partners). Walter and Jessie named their first son Chester Adgate Congdon II. After Chester died in 1916, Walter became the president of the Congdon Office Corporation and oversaw family business in Arizona and Washington. After a brief time living on the Iron Range, Walter and Jessie settled in Duluth. They spent a lot of time at Westhome, the 1916 family estate in Yakima; from there Walter ran the Congdon Orchards. He also served as director of Duluth's Marshall-Wells Hardware, once the largest hardware company in the United States. Walter was a very active Mason, serving at one time as the grand master of the Masons of Minnesota. He also worked with St. Luke's Hospital Association and was an executive member of the Boy Scouts of America's North Star Council. Walter died of a heart attack in 1949.

WEST GUEST ROOM

Glensheen's Colonial Revival–style west guest room is more commonly referred to as the "married guests' bedroom," as it was intended for just that, right down to the his-and-her closets that flank the double bed. All effort was made for the guests' comfort and contentment: the spacious room includes a fireplace and comfortable wicker furniture, and the west windows overlook flowing Tischer Creek—so the room served as not only a place to sleep, but as an escape from the other activities on the estate. The only amenity that's missing is a private bathroom; guests staying in this room most likely used the facilities adjacent to Walter's bedroom, as he did not live in the house after he married Jessie Hartley in 1914, just five years after the Congdons moved in.

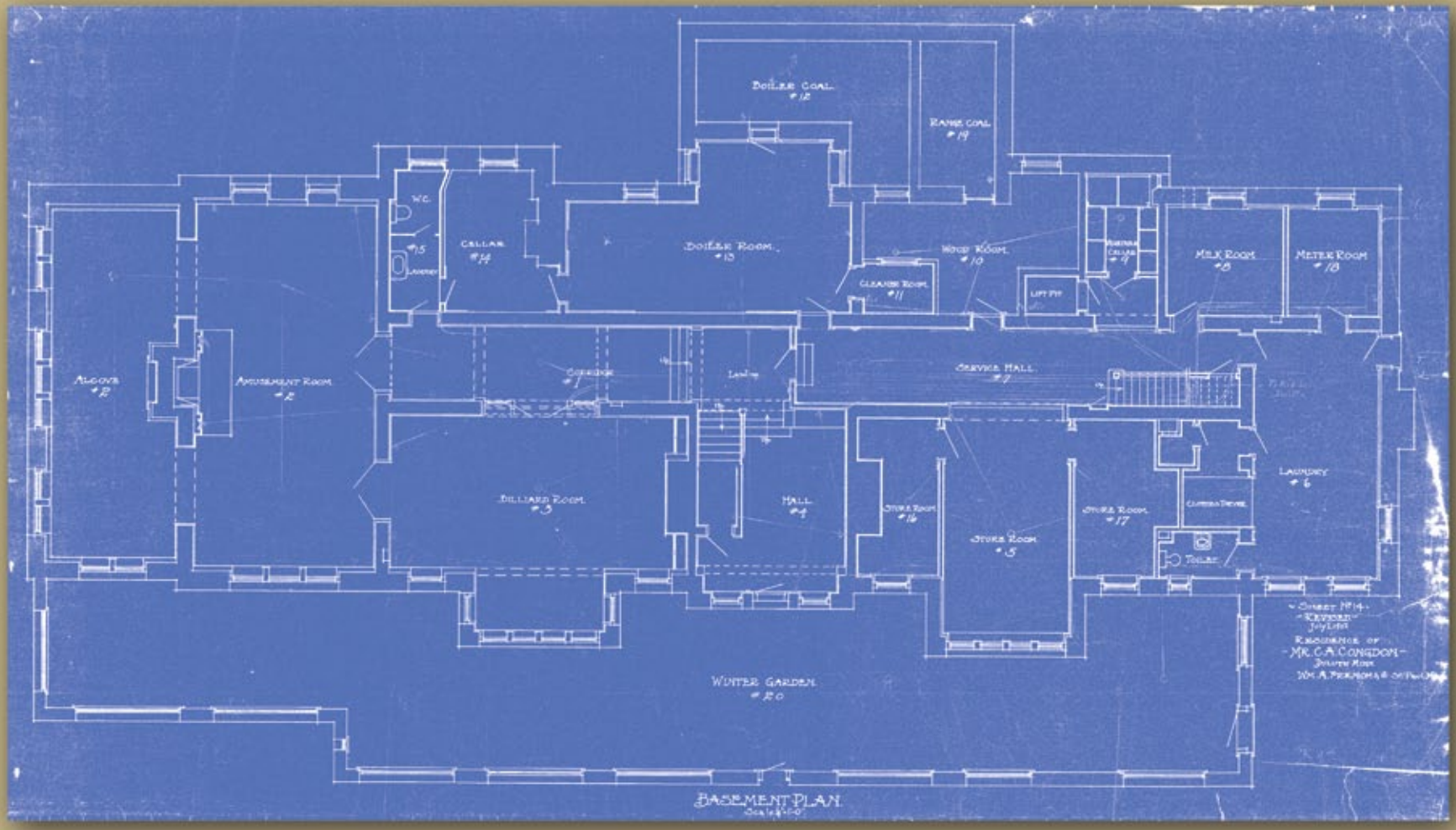
Above: Majolica tile—decorated with brightly colored lead glazes in naturalistic and whimsical styles—adorns the west guest room's fireplace in a pattern that coordinated with the original fabric pattern used in the bedspread and the chair cushions.

One interesting feature of this room is the bookshelf, which looks like a built-in wall fixture. But the shelf itself is set on wheels and pulls away from the wall so it can be placed between the beds, making reading material readily available for those restricted to bed rest.

THE EAST ROOM (AKA THE INFIRMARY)

Built during a time when physicians were beginning to understand how disease was spread, the infirmary provided the Congdons with something few Duluthians enjoyed at the time: a place to separate the sick from the healthy. When a family member fell ill, he or she recovered in this room; the isolation helped stop viral illnesses from spreading. The Congdons would then have their physician make a house call, as hospitals were considered "pest houses" at the time. Typically, staff members recovered in their own rooms or were sent to hospital, but when longtime gardener Bob Wyness (see pages 118–119) was just eight years old he was put in Ned's room while recovering from scarlet fever; the infirmary was already occupied by one of Clara's grandchildren, who was suffering from the same affliction. The room also served as a guest room.

GLENSHEEN'S LOWER LEVEL



Blueprints of Glensheen's lower level, adapted from architect Clarence Johnston's plans in 1907 by interior designers William A. French Co. The Congdons referred to the winter garden as the "subway" and called the west wing of the amusement room, labeled *alcove* above, the "little museum." Storage rooms—labeled #5 and #17 above—now serve as public rest rooms.

LAUNDRY ROOM

Likely the busiest room in the house outside of the kitchen—particularly in Glensheen's first few decades—the laundry room retains a great deal of its original equipment. This includes a large gas plate once used to heat the clothes boiler, in which the clothes were literally boiled clean, as well as a 1906 gas clothes dryer—the large system of pull-out metal racks shown at right. The laundress (in the 1920s, a quiet young woman named Victoria) hung damp laundry over the bars with metal clothes pins and pushed the racks back into the dryer. Large linens were pressed using a gas mangle (foreground). While the laundress washed everyone's clothes, the maids were expected to iron their own uniforms.

The laundry room includes a bathroom. The space to the west of the laundry room, now a public rest room, was used for storage.

THE MILK ROOM

During its first few decades, Glensheen was also home to several cows that produced the milk, cream, and butter used on the estate (the device on the table is a cream separator). Milk was carried from the stable to this room to be prepared for consumption, so sanitation was a must: the tiled floor slopes to a drain for easy cleaning, and floor-to-ceiling tile helped keep the room sanitary. This room also displays containers for produce raised on the Congdon Orchards in Yakima, Washington. Chester Congdon financed the construction of an irrigation canal known as "Congdon Ditch" which opened the Yakima Valley to agricultural development.

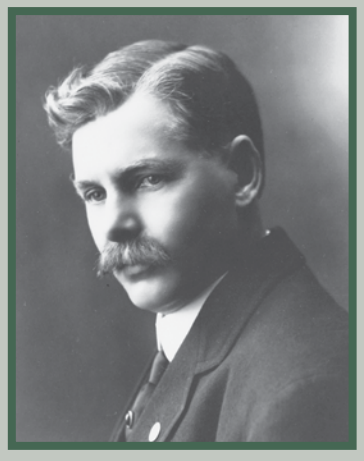
Above: The fireplace is the central feature of the amusement room, but the space is primarily heated by radiators hidden behind the brass grates shown above the cabinet pictured at left and flanking the windows on the facing page.

Left: The Congdons traveled a great deal and filled the alcove west of the amusement room, which they called the "little museum," with curio cabinets used to display the various smaller items they picked up on their journeys. Besides visiting family in California, New York, Washington, and Arizona, the Congdons traveled all over the world. The family made several trips to Europe by ocean liner. In 1911 Chester, Clara, Marjorie, and Helen spent over four months touring England, Wales, Scotland, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Italy. They brought along their own chauffeur and one of their automobiles.

THE ESTATE GROUNDS

Charles W. Leavitt's 1908 plans for Glensheen's estate grounds, colorized by Arden Weaver.

GLENSHEEN'S THRANA FOUNTAIN



The fountain at Glensheen isn't the first to grace the formal garden's pool—two others preceded it. At first, four jets acted as a fountain, shooting water from each side of the pool (top left). Rust quickly forced the Congdons to invest in another design. A centrally located fountain (bottom left) replaced the water jets and the gardener introduced koi and lily pads, thought to be one of Chester's favorite plants. But the Congdons still weren't satisfied, and in 1913 they hired O. George Thrana to create an elegant Italian marble fountain carved with figures of fish of a medieval design.

Thrana came to Duluth from Norway in 1889; he was seventeen years old and he didn't know a single other person in town, but he had a skill. Before leaving his homeland he had completed an apprenticeship in stone carving. For the next forty years, if anyone in Duluth wanted something carved in stone for their building or house, they hired Thrana. His work can still be seen on Duluth's 1892 Central High School, the 1902 Duluth Public Library, Denfeld High School, the Board of Trade Building, the Kitchi Gammi Club; many churches (including Sacred Heart Cathedral, St. Paul's Episcopal, First Presbyterian, Pilgrim Congregational, and Trinity Lutheran) as well as St. Scholastica's Stanbrook Hall and Chapel of Our Lady Queen of Peace. It also appears on fireplaces in several Duluth homes and St. Paul's Minnesota State Capitol building.

THE GARDENER'S COTTAGE

The estate's gardener's cottage was built at the same time Glensheen was under construction and in the same style: Jacobean Revival (see below). Besides a dining room, kitchen, pantry, and living room, the first floor also contained a potting room. The cottage connected to the greenhouses in two ways: a door from the potting room opened to the first greenhouse, and two pipes led from the furnace in the cottage's basement, provided heat for all four greenhouses. In 1927 gardener George Wyness, his wife, and their three sons had outgrown the house. So Clara hired Duluth architects Harold Starin and A. Reinhold Melander to redesign the cottage in an English Tudor style. The east half of the roof was raised to provide more bedroom space, and on the first floor the potting room space was used to expand the kitchen and pantry.

RIGHT: The cottage as it looked prior to its 1927 renovation. The man in the lower left of the photo is likely one of Glensheen's early gardeners, perhaps first gardener John Kenney or the third, Aston Plague. If the photo was made after 1921, it is George Wyness.

THE GREENHOUSES

Glensheen once boasted four greenhouses, each named for the various types of plants grown within. The palm house, the largest of the four, contained exotic plants, orchids, and palm trees, including a banana palm (right). The carnation and rose houses supplied Glensheen with their namesake flowers throughout the year, and the rose house was also used to grow Easter lilies in the spring and poinsettias at Christmas. The gardeners used the general growing house to nurture seedlings and bedding plants and to start tomato plants during winter to ensure ripe tomatoes were available all spring and summer. The plant house held 110 flatbeds, each holding about 60 plants. The wide selection of seedlings included petunias, zinnias, verbena, pansies, violas, cosmos, marigolds, and begonias. The general growing house also held the cutting benches (filled with sand kept warm by the heating pipes which ran underneath) where each fall 250 geraniums were started for the next summer. More than 6,000 seedlings were grown each year. By 1970, most of the family had moved from Duluth, and Glensheen no longer needed to raise its own flowers and vegetables. Rising heat costs led to the decision to dismantle the greenhouses in 1971.

THE FLOWER GARDEN

Landscape architect Charles W. Leavitt called this space the "flower garden" on his original plans, but over the years it has been called the "annual garden" because it mostly contained annual flowers. Today Glensheen's staff and volunteers refer to it as the "sundial garden" after the stone ram's-head fixture placed at the garden's center; as its name implies, it once held a sundial, which is currently missing.

Each spring the gardener transplanted annuals, started as seedlings inside the greenhouse, to the flower garden, a portion of which was planted exclusively with roses—a tradition that has been revived at Glensheen in recent years. While Clara and Elisabeth ran the estate, they donated most of the flowers grown at Glensheen to Duluth's St. Luke's Hospital and First Methodist Church.

THE CARRIAGE HOUSE

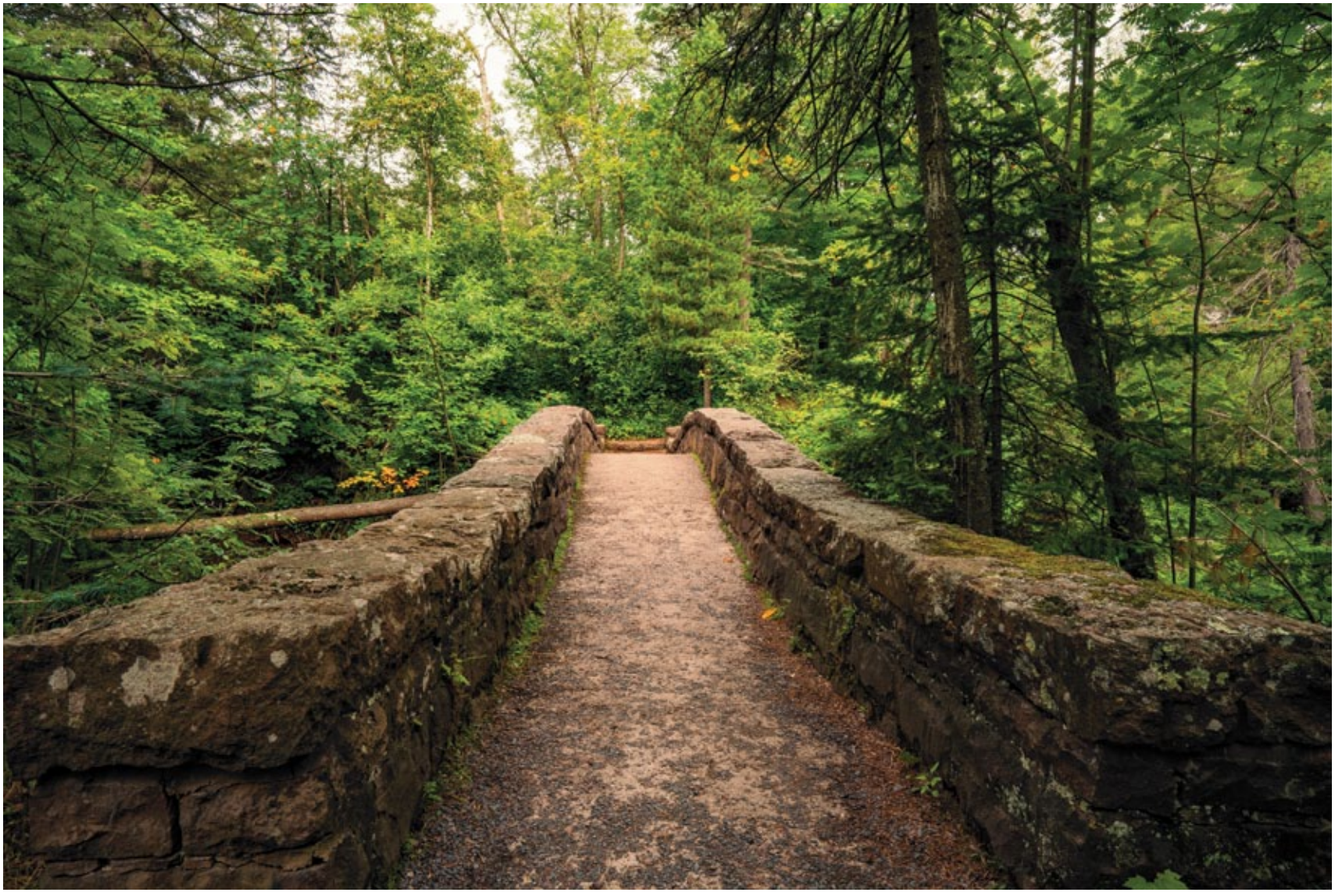
The Congdon estate's carriage house served many purposes. It housed cows and horses as well as the Congdons' sleighs, carriages, and automobiles. The main floor contained a full-service repair shop complete with its own refueling system (and access to the carriage house basement to work on a car's undercarriage). Its attic provided more space to store carriages and sleighs as well as Alfred Bannister's "laboratory," hay and grain for the cows and horses, and storage for storm windows and outdoor furniture. The northern portion of the carriage house also provided living space—living room, bedrooms, a bathroom, and a kitchen—for the estate's male employees, including the carriage house staff, the coachman/chauffeur, and the houseman.

Above and right: The carriage house's tack room. Textured tile covers the floors, which made it easier for the horses to walk on it. Note the initials CAC for "Chester Adgate Congdon" on the bridle at right.

Facing Page: The carriage house's attic contains a manual carriage lift. It was used to lift and store away the sleighs in summer and carriages in winter. It works on a counterweight principle and requires two people to operate it. When it is in the "up" position, the bottom of the lift becomes part of the ceiling.

THE BOATHOUSE AND PIER

When you build a grand estate on the Lake Superior shore—and expect some of your guests to arrive by yacht—a pier and boathouse are practically necessities. The pier was originally shaped like an L, as can be seen in the landscape design on page 107. It reached into the lake thirty feet farther than it does today, then turned west for another sixty-five feet. This provided vessels with relative safety from the lake's waves, but those same waves eventually eroded most of the pier. The boathouse is constructed of brownstone from Ingall's Quarry in Duluth's Fond du Lac neighborhood. The wall facing the lake, from which the boathouse could be accessed via boat, once had a wooden retractable door that worked much like the cover of a roll-top desk. Inside, there was a pump room and space to store sailboats and rowboats. The boathouse roof was designed as a patio and was originally covered in terra cotta tile. The Congdons used the rooftop for shuffleboard and social gatherings, such as the 1923 wedding reception for Robert Congdon and Dorothy Moore, when it was festooned with lights that surrounded an orchestra and dance floor. After the Congdon's yacht *Hesperia* burned in 1916, the boathouse fell into disuse and was no longer maintained. The estate hopes to someday restore the boathouse to its original condition.



ABOVE: The view approaching the stone-arch bridge west of the formal gardens and groomed lawn adjacent to the main house, which crosses to the portion of the rustic trail system that runs along the west side of Tischer Creek.