

Alfred Hoyt Granger

In this month's installment of the Alphabet Stories we would like to tell you about Alfred Hoyt Granger. Alfred Hoyt Granger was born in 1867 in Ohio and educated at Kenyon College before heading to Massachusetts Institute of Technology. M.I.T. was, at that time, considered to be the leading architectural school in the country, introducing the methods of the Parisian Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Granger graduated from the institution in 1887 at the age of 20 and set sail for Paris to travel Europe and study at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

Alfred Granger came to Chicago to assist architect Charles Coolidge, who designed the Art Institute of Chicago for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Granger then briefly worked at an architectural firm in Chicago, Jenney and Mundie. In 1894, Granger left Chicago for Ohio to open his own private practice. Despite the success of his practice, Granger evidently longed for the excitement of the bustling Chicago. Four years later, he returned to Chicago to join with Charles Sumner Frost to establish the architectural firm of Frost and Granger. Frost and Granger both married sisters who were the daughters of Marvin Hughitt, President of the Chicago and North Western Railroad. It was Hughitt who influenced the partners in their careers. Together, they designed the Chicago and North Western terminal in Chicago (which was demolished in 1982 to make way for the Ogilvie Transportation Center). Their partnership was responsible for designing more than fifty buildings in Chicago, including the banks, hospitals, churches, and many of the distinctive railway stations along the North Shore, notably the Lake Bluff and Lake Forest depots.

The railroad provided the largest number of commissions in the partners' professional life. Frost and Granger built more than two hundred large and small buildings for the Chicago and North Western, Milwaukee Road, Great Northern, and Rock Island railroads. Most of the stations were generally consistent with the criteria set by the architects. There had to be a smoking room and a men's toilet as well as a retiring room and a women's toilet. The waiting room was always in the center of the building and commanded a view of the trains. A platform canopy protected those waiting outside from the weather.

Granger is also credited for influencing the Lake Forest "look" – half-timbered English architecture design prominently used in Howard Van Doren Shaw's Market Square. In addition to the train stations, Granger designed the Lake Forest City Hall and several buildings on the Lake Forest College campus. Granger designed, among other homes, his own house, "Woodleigh" which still stands today at 907 North Sheridan Road. Granger was involved with local politics and served as an alderman in the Lake Forest City Council.

In 1910, Granger left Chicago to move to Pennsylvania where, for the next fourteen years, he first joined a partnership with William D. Hewitt, and then struck off on his own, designing a number of buildings for colleges and universities. In 1924 he returned to Chicago first to establish the partnership of Granger, Lowe and Bollenbacher and then Granger and

Bollenbacher. Their partnership designed hospitals and additional buildings for the University of Illinois in Chicago, among other institutions.

Granger was an esteemed author, writing articles for the *Architectural Digest*. He produced a book, *Chicago Welcomes You*, a guide to the city and to worthy suburbs. He also penned a biography of his early mentor, Charles Follen McKim. In addition, Granger chaired the committee that juried the design competition for the Tribune Tower on Michigan Avenue.

Alfred Hoyt Granger died in 1939 and is buried at Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago.