
Joseph Worcester Collection 1920-01

Joanne Miller

University of California, Berkeley. College of Environmental Design. Environmental Design Archives

March 1999

230 Wurster Hall #1820

Berkeley, CA 94720-1820

designarchives@berkeley.edu

URL: <http://archives.ced.berkeley.edu>

Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: University of California, Berkeley. College of Environmental Design. Environmental Design Archives

Title: Joseph Worcester Collection

creator: Worcester, Joseph, 1836-1913

Identifier/Call Number: 1920-01

Physical Description: 5 Cubic Feet -5 flat boxes

Date (inclusive): 1899-1906

Abstract: The Joseph Worcester collection consists of 14 bound volumes of scrapbooks containing purchased photographs, clippings from the Architectural Review, and other magazines. Some volumes contain photographs of Italian artwork, including one volume of Venice. Two of the volumes are architectural monographs of the Ames Memorial Buildings in North Easton, Massachusetts, and Trinity Church in Boston.

Access Statement

Collection is open for research. Many of the Environmental Design Archives collections are stored offsite and advance notice is required for use.

Publication Rights

All requests for permission to publish, reproduce, or quote from materials in the collection should be discussed with the Curator.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of Item], Joseph Worcester Collection, (1920-01), Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley.

Funding

Arrangement and description of this collection was funded by a grant from the Getty Foundation.

Biographical Note

Joseph Worcester (1836-1913)

The Reverend Joseph Worcester was a Swedenborgian minister who arrived in San Francisco from Boston in 1869. He had considered becoming an architect, and maintained a strong interest in architecture for the rest of his life. Worcester believed in an architectural style that incorporated a harmonious relationship between nature and design. His ideas included the expression of raw materials in simple, hand-crafted design. After the 1890s, he became spiritual leader to many young artists and professionals. He was a strong influence on architects of the late 19th century, including Earnest Coxhead, Willis Polk, A. Page Brown, Bernard Maybeck, and Albert Schweinfurth.

Worcester designed his own house (1876) in Piedmont, California with strong rustic qualities that embodied his architectural ideas. He influenced the design of houses on San Francisco's Russian Hill by encouraging a member of his congregation to build a house that enhanced the natural environment of the hill. Worcester is also credited for initiating the use of unstained redwood in interior paneling, although architects Coxhead and Polk were already utilizing abundant and inexpensive redwood for interiors before they came to San Francisco.

While his design skills were strictly amateur, the ideas behind the designs influenced prominent architects of the day. Worcester relied on architects for assistance with his designs, and commissioned A. Page Brown to design the Church of the New Jerusalem at 2102 Lyon Street in San Francisco (1894-1895). Worcester was called "a catalyst who offered a conceptual promise" for rustic simplicity. He was committed to the correspondence between nature and extremely simple expression, and his ideas influenced the evolution of architectural design in Northern California.

Sources: Longstreth, Richard, *On the Edge of the World*. New York: The Architectural History Foundation, 1989.

Scope and Contents

The Joseph Worcester collection consists of 14 bound volumes of scrapbooks that contain purchased photographs, clippings, the Architectural Review, and other magazines. Three volumes consist of 1901-1906 issues of the Architectural Review Boston, while one small volume is an 1899 special supplement to the Architectural Review from London. Other volumes contain photographs of Italian artwork, including one volume from Venice alone. Two of the volumes are architectural monographs of the Ames Memorial Buildings in North Easton, Massachusetts and Trinity Church in Boston.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Architects -- California.

Architects -- California -- San Francisco Bay Area.

Worcester, Joseph, 1836-1913
