FROM A HOME IN THE SUBURBS TO A RETREAT IN THE WILDERNESS:

The Domestic Architecture of Frank T. Lent

by

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Abstract

The idea of home, the ownership of property, and the impact of the home on the moral character and identity of its inhabitants were important concepts in the late nineteenth century. These views were perpetuated by a wide range of supporters including writers, religious leaders, social reformers, politicians. Architects and developers became aware of these ideas and capitalized on the hopes and dreams of middle-class North America by designing, marketing and building the right kind of houses, but perhaps more importantly, by building them in the right location which most often meant the suburban areas around major cities. Architect and writer Franklin Townsend Lent (1855-1919) is but one of many architects practicing in North America who appreciated the contemporary consumers’ sensibilities, and their attachment to their homes. Not only did Lent understand the importance of the concept of home, he was able to develop a design vocabulary that drew on the contemporary fascination with the American colonial period. In addition, he appreciated the consumer’s desire for a beautiful home in the suburbs, and took advantage of this in his work in New Jersey notably on the development of a suburban neighbourhood called Roosevelt Manor. Lent contributed to the built environment by designing and building many suburban houses, island and seaside cottages, and other structures. He also wrote three books and several pamphlets that provide an understanding of his personal contribution to architecture in suburban American, and to the early development of resort architecture in the Thousand Island region of Upstate New York and Ontario, an area that has received very little scholarly attention. This paper will focus on the domestic architecture of Lent in an attempt to construct an understanding of this unique contribution in the context of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century society by examining his published architectural writings, his advertisements, and some representative houses that he designed and built in the United States and Canada.
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Preface: A Short Biography of Franklin Townsend Lent (1855-1919)

Figure 1 Frank T. Lent, portrait (Source: Phi Beta Kappa Key, March 1921)

Franklin Townsend Lent was born on March 3, 1855 in Poughkeepsie, New York to David B. Lent and Louisa M. Russell. He had one sibling, a brother Russell born October 3, 1859, who died in infancy.¹ Frank T. Lent’s father is listed in the 1870 United States Federal

Census as a builder although he later owned a real estate and insurance business in Cranford, New Jersey, following in the footsteps of his father David Barkins Lent who was involved in real estate and manufacturing. David B. Lent’s work as a builder may have influenced his son Frank’s future profession although it seems that artist rather than architect was his first choice of career. In 1883 he was a member of an Honorary Committee of Arts in the Catalogue of the Pedestal Fund Art Loan Exhibition and he attended art school in the Netherlands according to his grandson Peter van Lent. Frank T. Lent studied at the Poughkeepsie Military Institute and then attended Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, and graduated in 1878 with a master’s degree in science. Lent apprenticed to architect William A. Potter (1842-1909), a prominent New York architect who designed several imposing buildings at Princeton University including the Chancellor Green Library completed in 1873 and Alexander Hall completed in 1894. None of Potter’s numerous buildings at Princeton appear to overlap with Lent’s apprenticeship in the early 1880’s. From 1875 to 1881 Potter partnered with architect Robert H. Robertson and they were involved in the early development of the Shingle Style, a style that drew on early vernacular architecture especially the shingled houses and barns of New England. Potter and Robertson, in a previous partnership, designed many suburban and country houses at the time that Lent was apprenticing with Potter and this obviously had an influence on his own

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3 Frank T. Lent, Souvenir of Cranford (Cranford, NJ: Frank T. Lent, 1894), advertisement page.
7 “F.T Lent Dead at Sterling,” Worcester Telegram & Gazette, December 3, 1919.
practice. Lent acknowledges his debt to Potter in his book *Summer Homes and Camps* and he credits Potter with instilling in him the importance of the principles of beauty and utility in architecture.\(^{10}\)

Lent married Sara DeWitt (1858-1945), daughter of Reverend John DeWitt and Charlotte Lee, on January 5, 1881 in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Frank and Sara had five children all born in New Jersey\(^{11}\): John DeWitt, born November 3, 1881; Rose DeWitt, born July 18, 1883; Charlotte Elliot DeWitt, born February 6, 1886; Harriet DeWitt, born September 18, 1892 and Theodore DeWitt, born May 17, 1894.\(^{12}\) Lent began his architectural career in a sanatorium in the Adirondack Mountains followed by a move to Colorado Springs perhaps also for health reasons. (According to family accounts, Lent contracted tuberculosis while studying in the Netherlands.)\(^{13}\) He is listed as an architect in the 1886 and 1888 editions of the *Directory of Colorado Springs*,\(^{14}\) and he designed and built several houses in the city. There is also evidence that he trained and supervised apprentices including St. Louis Missouri architect Ernest John Russell.\(^{15}\) In Russell’s biography it states that he worked as an office boy for “prominent architect” Frank T. Lent in Colorado Springs.\(^{16}\) Lent returned east in about 1890 and set up practice in Boston. It was at this time that he won the competition to design the Cranford Opera House, completed in 1892 in the growing town of Cranford, New Jersey just outside of New York City. This commission may have reacquainted him with a part of the country that he had

\(^{10}\) Frank T. Lent, *Summer Homes and Camps* (Boston: Frank T. Lent, 1899), 12-13.


\(^{13}\) David B. McLay, in *Ah, Wilderness!* , 94.

\(^{14}\) *Directory of Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs and Colorado City* (Colorado Springs, CO: S.N. Francis, 1888), 104.


visited on sketching trips\textsuperscript{17} and must have opened his eyes to the opportunities that suburban towns within commuting distance of New York City had to offer. It was also at this time that Lent penned his first book titled *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture containing Hints, Suggestions, and Bits of Practical Information for the Building of Inexpensive Country Houses* that was self-published in 1893 followed by a second edition published by W.T. Comstock, New York in 1895. In an advertisement at the back of the 1895 edition and in other advertisements for his book, Lent mentions his office location as Cranford and signs the advertisement “Frank T. Lent, Suburban Architect, Cranford New Jersey,” however he must have maintained an office in Boston at this time because his second self-published work in 1894, *Sensible Suburban Residences containing Suggestion, Hints and Practical Ideas, Sketches, Plans, etc., for the Building of Country Homes*, lists his office location as the Tremont Building, Boston.

Frank T. Lent was very active in the mid-1890s and it is not difficult to accumulate information about his work. He was designing houses and other buildings in Cranford, New Jersey, in nearby towns such as Westfield, New Jersey and other areas around New York City and in Massachusetts. He also sent plans and specifications to clients in other parts of the United States such as Texas, Maine, Connecticut, California, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, perhaps due to the exposure he would have received from the publication of his two books. He also wrote a booklet titled *Souvenir of Cranford* in 1894 that not only highlighted the charms of the small town, but was likely intended to attract potential house buyers to this area that would require his services as an architect. The booklet is attractively illustrated with photographs and drawings by Lent including houses he had designed for such residents as

\textsuperscript{17} Lent, *Souvenir of Cranford*, 8.
Heinrich Imhort and Joseph Purcell.\textsuperscript{18} In the same year, Lent became involved in a project to develop a community in Cranford called Roosevelt Manor. His designs are included in a booklet titled \textit{Roosevelt Manor} produced in 1894 and it can be ascertained with some certainty that he authored this booklet. Proof that he lived in Cranford with his family during this time is provided by a photograph in \textit{Souvenir of Cranford} that is labelled “Frank T. Lent residence.” Correspondence between Frank T. Lent and his alma mater Rutgers University in 1896 lists the address of his office as 94 Liberty Street, New York\textsuperscript{19} and at this time he seemed to be focusing his attention on the New Jersey coast south of New York City near the town of Navesink. An advertisement in the newspaper The Red Bank Register on September 9, 1896 states that Lent is giving “special attention to Mammoth County work” and lists several houses in the area. His office in this advertisement is also listed as 94 Liberty Street, New York.\textsuperscript{20}

The late 1890s was a period of personal problems for Frank T. Lent. At some time between 1895 and 1900 he and his wife Sara DeWitt Lent separated. In the New Jersey State Census 1895, Lent is listed as living in Cranford, New Jersey with his wife and children.\textsuperscript{21} Prior to 1896 Frank T. Lent frequently appeared in news items and advertisements in the newspaper \textit{The Cranford Chronicle}. After this period he no longer appears in this newspaper suggesting that the marital breakdown may have taken place in 1896 or 1897 and that he relocated to Massachusetts sometime before 1899. Cranford was a small town and these personal problems may have impacted his career. Lent’s last book \textit{Summer Homes and Camps Containing


\textsuperscript{19} Frank T. Lent to Irving S. Upson, letter, April 2, 1896, Frank T. Lent file, Rutgers University Biographical Files: Alumni (Classes 1774-1922), Special Collections and Archives, Rutgers University.


Suggestions, Hints and Practical Ideas, Sketches, Plans, etc. for the Building of Summer Homes was self-published in 1899 and the title page lists the Tremont Building, Boston as Lent’s office. Lent does not appear in the United States Federal Census 1900, but he is listed in the Census of Canada, 1901 as a boarder in Gananoque, Ontario a small Ontario city along the St. Lawrence River in the Thousand Islands region. The Census lists his marital status as married although he did not marry his second wife Fannie Deane until April 1902. Perhaps his divorce had not been finalized at this time and he was still married to Sara DeWitt. The fact that he was a boarder suggests that he had not been living in Gananoque for a long period when this census data was collected.

Frank T. Lent did establish a practice in Gananoque in the early twentieth century and designed and built a house on St. Lawrence St. facing Market Street. Lent advertised in a booklet titled Souvenir of Gananoque published by Freeman Britton in 1901 and stated that he was “now devoting his entire time to St. Lawrence River work and proposes to continue his

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24 Gananoque Reporter, November 1, 1902.
business on the river as resident architect and inspector.”25 An article in the Gananoque Reporter in June 1902 repeated this information and provided a list of projects Lent had completed and others that were currently under construction.26 A recent donation of documents from the contracting firm Mitchell & Wilson of Gananoque offers more information about projects that Lent was involved in. He quickly built up a successful business designing and overseeing the construction of buildings in Gananoque and many vacation properties in the Thousand Islands for local residents such as businessmen Walter T. Sampson and Dr. Edward Atkinson.27 Lent was also commissioned by prosperous Americans such as F.D. Fairchild from Levenworth Kansas28 and C.V. Schuyler from New York29 to design and renovate cottages and outbuildings in the Thousand Islands. In addition, Lent was involved in commissions outside the Gananoque and Thousand Islands region including St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Elgin, Ontario30 and renovations to the Bermingham-Macklem House in Kingston, Ontario.31

Not only did Frank T. Lent design vacation properties for clients from near and far, but he also built his own cottage called Wee Rocks on a small island south of McDonald Island in the Admiralty Group near Gananoque. In 1901 The Department of Indian Affairs advertised the sale of a number of islands in the Thousand Islands in the Gananoque Reporter. Lent took advantage of this offer and purchased Islands 14C and 14D for thirty dollars each in September

25 Freeman Britton, Souvenir of Gananoque (Gananoque, [1901]), [45].
26 Gananoque Reporter, June 19, 1902.
27 Souvenir of Gananoque, [45].
28 Souvenir of Gananoque, [45].
29 Mitchell and Wilson and C.V. Schuyler, contract, January 1, 1902, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
31 Frank T. Lent collection, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON
Over the winter he constructed a cottage and a bridge connecting the two islands. On May 10, 1902 the *Gananoque Reporter* related that Frank T. Lent and Mrs. Lent had moved to their island cottage for the summer season. Mrs. Lent had only held that title for a little over a month. On April 2, 1902 Frank T. Lent married Fannie Charles Deane of Worcester, Massachusetts in Gananoque. According to family legend, Fannie Deane, who was nineteen years younger than Lent, had been his secretary. It is unknown whether they met before he became estranged from his wife, or later when he was working in Boston. On May 22, 1907 Frank T. Lent’s sixth child Deane Lent was born in Gananoque. Although Lent did return to the United States to visit family and friends it does not appear that the children from his first marriage came to visit him in Canada. A wedding announcement in the *New York Times* on June 1, 1915 for his youngest daughter Harriet, born in 1892, does not mention her father at all which suggests that he remained estranged from his first wife and children.

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32 O.V. Goulette to Department of Indian Affairs, application on behalf of F.T. Lent, September 10, 1901, Alnwick Agency – Sale of islands known as The Punts and several other small islands in the St. Lawrence River to Mrs. Fannie (Deane) Lent, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fond, Library and Archives Canada, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca (accessed February 22, 2011)
33 *Gananoque Reporter*, May 10, 1902.
37 *Gananoque Reporter*, February 7, 1903.
Frank T. Lent and Fannie Deane Lent lived with their young son in Gananoque until about 1909 when Lent purchased an historic house in Sterling, Massachusetts which he proceeded to add on to. Lent continued to work in the area around Sterling and had an office in Leominster, Massachusetts. The Leominster Directory 1912 suggests that Lent went into partnership with G. Houston Burr. He kept his cottage in the Thousand Islands and continued to summer there. Frank T. Lent died on December 3, 1919, in Sterling Massachusetts and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery. In the obituary in the *Worchester Telegram and Gazette* it is mentioned that he was a member of Delta phi and Phi betta kappa fraternities, a member of the American Institute of Architects and a fellow royal of the Canadian institute of architecture. His death was also reported in the *Gananoque Reporter* on December 13, 1919 stating that he had “designed and superintended some of the most pretentious [perhaps prestigious was the
intended word here] buildings in town and on various islands." In addition to his built oeuvre, Lent has left a considerable body of paintings, mostly landscapes, a number of which remain in the collection of his grandson Peter van Lent.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43} Gananoque Reporter, December 13, 1919.

\textsuperscript{44} Pierre du Prey, interview, Kingston, Ontario, March 15, 2011.
Chapter 1

A Perfect Home in the Suburbs: Creating a Sanctuary & Constructing an Identity

Home and happiness!

One cannot exist without the other. 45

The concept of home is a powerful one. The choice of plan, style, interior décor and location are often used by consumers to create a sanctuary, a comfortable escape from the outside world, and also to construct an identity, a place that reflects who they are. The significance of this notion, and the attachment that Western society has to the physical and emotional aspects of home, is well understood. This ideology has its roots in the nineteenth century when consumers began to construct their identity through the style and location of their homes. 46 Societal changes in the second half of the nineteenth century in the United States were the impetus for the growth of the ideology of home, and ideas such as home ownership, domesticity, and the American dream were disseminated through the print media of the era. 47 Writers, and publishers were promoting and profiting from the appeal of the home, and architects and developers were capitalizing on the hopes and dreams of middle-class America by designing, marketing and building the right kind of houses.

Architect Franklin Townsend Lent (1855-1919), or Frank T. Lent as he was commonly known, is but one of many architects practicing in the United States and later in Canada who appreciated the sensibilities of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century consumers. His ability to adopt a design vocabulary that appealed to popular demand, to understand the aspirations of the patron related to the home and its ideal location, and then to successfully market his practice through published works and advertising enabled him to shape his work in

45 Lent, Summer Homes and Camps, 9.
47 Chaison, 59.
the suburban town of Cranford, New Jersey. In his later work in Canada he took the idea of a home in the country a step away from the suburbs to the wilderness of the Thousand Islands.

The correspondence, accounts and the majority of the architectural drawings of the office of Frank T. Lent have not survived, or at least have not been discovered at this time, but the architectural historian benefits from Lent’s three books, a couple of pamphlets and several advertisements written by him that not only aid in piecing together his life and career, but also facilitate an understanding of his work and his practice in the context of late nineteenth century society in North America. Lent’s first book *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture containing Hints, Suggestions and Bits of Practical Information for the Building of Inexpensive Country Homes* was self-published in Cranford, New Jersey in 1893. It is a small book with dimensions that are referred to as octavo measuring nine and one-quarter inches high and six and one-half inches wide. It is plainly bound with a hard board cover, gold lettering and plain end papers. There is a simple swag embellishment on the cover that hints to Lent’s fascination with classical ornamentation. The book is illustrated with photographs and drawings that are presumably by the author. This book is a valuable resource because it contains examples of Lent’s designs, information about the methods and materials he employed, and offers insight into Lent’s ideas about style and architectural practice. Perhaps most importantly, in this first book Lent shares his impressions of the home, a theme that he carries throughout his work from the suburbs in New Jersey to the vacation retreats he designed in the Thousand Islands. The preface states that after twelve years designing and building some two hundred suburban residences in various parts of the United States, Lent has written this book to provide practical advice to those about to build
a country residence. He explicitly states that this book is intended to be for the use of the client implying that this was not a pattern book to be used by builders and carpenters.

In the first chapter titled *Suburban Architecture*, Lent begins by extolling the virtues of the home using familiar quotes such as “there is no place like home” taken from the song *Home Sweet Home* composed by John Howard Payne and Henry R. Bishop in 1823. Lent discusses the delight, comfort and security of home ownership, and expresses the belief that this is worth striving for above anything else in life. In the second paragraph he sentimentally refers to singer Jenny Lind as “the perfect picture of noblest womanhood” not only because of her success as a musician, but more because of her understanding of the significance of the meaning of the word home. He maintains that home has a deep meaning for all regardless of their place in society and then he writes that many seeking home ownership may be lacking in the knowledge required to attain the home of their dreams. His book, of course, has been written to remedy this situation.

Lent discusses the encyclopedist Eugène-Émmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879) and his notion that the first consideration in architecture is shelter from the weather. Lent continues by delving into the importance of shelter to the early American colonists, but stresses that now the homeowner should expect much more from his dwelling. Comfort in the house should be of utmost concern to the late nineteenth century consumer. Lent not only praises the spirit of the intrepid early colonists, but also their sense of style in architectural design. He states, “The term

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50 Lent, *Sound Sense*, 1.
51 Lent, *Sound Sense*, 2.
‘Colonial’ implies a structure that is substantial, picturesque to all Americans and historic in its associations.”53 He goes on to connect “our Colonial” to its classical origins and discuss how this solid history gives the style much more integrity than “new-fangled and short-lived novelties.”54 He continues with a seething attack on the eclectic styles of the late nineteenth century saying, “Of what earthly use and how unsatisfying are all these pretentious but ridiculous styles – as they are called – which are springing up in the majority of our suburban towns.”55 He continues by blaming the stupidity of the designers who have probably not had any formal training in architecture and are unaware of the principles of good design.

Figure 1.1 A Colonial House
(Source: Sensible Suburban Residences)

Lent begins his first book by promoting the Colonial Revival style and continues to do so throughout his writing and in his designs. He never, however, provides a description of the Colonial Revival style, except to refer to it in abstract terms using such words as forefathers and old-fashioned. Perhaps he assumes that his readers are familiar with the characteristics and require no description. He does refer to the classical origins of the style, but says little about its

53 Lent, Sound Sense, 2.
54 Lent, Sound Sense, 3.
55 Lent, Sound Sense, 3.
attributes. He discusses style in his first book and returns to it in his second book *Sensible Suburban Residences* where he delves further into the Colonial Revival style and features examples such as “A Colonial House” (Figure 1.1). He praises “the charming and quaint grace of our fine old colonial style of country houses which makes them so sought after by those interested in modern suburban residences.” He expresses his admiration of the early settlers for their ability “to build sensible, useful and picturesque houses – houses built to stay; fit to live in comfortably and fit to look at pleasurably.”\(^5\)\(^6\) He believes that these principles employed in earlier architectural design can be applied to the modern suburban home. He was not alone in his preoccupation with the architecture of the past; in fact it seemed that the entire country was caught up in a movement that looked back to America’s colonial period for inspiration in architecture and in other forms of cultural expressions such as music, art and landscape design.\(^5\)\(^7\)

![Kentucky Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago III, 1893](Source: Wilson, *Colonial Revival House*)

The revival of the architecture of the colonial past that Frank T. Lent promotes in his published works as a style suitable for a suburban home was a popular theme in the late

\(^{5}\) Lent, *Sensible Suburban Residences*, (Boston: Frank T. Lent, 1894), 21.

nineteenth century. Although scholars have noted evidence of this nostalgia for the architectural past in the earlier part of the nineteenth century,\textsuperscript{58} the Centennial International Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 is generally credited with stirring the interest of the nation in its colonial roots.\textsuperscript{59} Years later, the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892 picked up on the theme and furthered the nation’s interest in this bygone era (Figure 1.2). In addition to this exposure to the artifacts and the ideals of the past at these exhibitions, there were other factors that contributed to the trend to draw inspiration from the architecture of earlier times. Americans were losing important historic works of architecture such as the John Hancock House in Boston that had been recently demolished, and there was a feeling that industrialization was devastating family values and the traditional way of life. There was a perception that by returning to the beliefs of a simpler era people would be more able to cope with advancing technology and the fast-paced world.\textsuperscript{60} Also, the population was shifting as waves of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe changed the demographic composition of the country. This threatened the English-speaking Protestant majority.\textsuperscript{61} The feelings of patriotism and the yearning for the past were translated into the built environment by architects adapting elements of colonial architecture to suit the modern age making the style of the home an important contributor to the message put forth by the inhabitants.

In the initial years of the revival, it was an adaptation of elements from historic buildings rather than a rigid copying of them. Home buyers were interested in evoking the appearance of their ancestors’ architecture, but were not willing to give up on technological advancements such as central heating, or on the space and flexible floor plans that had become common place in late nineteenth century design. In part, due to the process of reinterpreting the colonial houses for modern use, an interest in classicism in architecture was developing in architects such as Charles McKim (1847-1909) and Robert Peabody (1845-1912), who had both been exposed to these classical ideas when training at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The William Edgar House in Newport, Rhode Island by McKim, Mead & White is an example of how the firm applied classical decoration to create an early Colonial Revival house complete with a Serliana window and chimney stacks that resemble those at Stratford Hall in Tidewater Virginia built between 1725 and 1730 (Figure 1.3). References to houses built during the American Colonial

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63 Massey, 181.
64 Wilson, *Colonial Revival House*, 71.
period such as Stratford Hall made important connections between modern architecture and the traditions of the past. Subdued decoration inspired by classical architecture became popular contrasting with the highly decorated styles such as Second Empire, Queen Anne or Stick Style that were previously in fashion in the second half of the nineteenth century. Charles McKim and members of the firm McKim, Mead & White furthered the interest in the architecture of the past after they embarked on a tour of New England to identify and document historic houses.\textsuperscript{66} This interest led to a style that also looked back to the colonial era, but drew on the vernacular architecture, particularly the shingled buildings of New England. Architectural journals such as \textit{The American Architect and Building News} also promoted the Colonial Revival in articles and features.\textsuperscript{67}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{images/figure1.4.jpg}
\caption{Dutch Revival, Spanish Revival and Colonial Revival examples}
\label{figure1.4}
\end{figure}

\textit{The Colonial Revival was not based on a single precedent, but looked to the various styles that characterized the early settlers in different regions of the United States. There was a revival of styles based on early houses in Florida, the Southwest and California known as Spanish Revival and the Dutch Colonial Revival took its inspiration from early houses along the Hudson River (Figure 1.4). The most popular revival style, however, was the English Colonial

\textsuperscript{66} Massey, 182.
\textsuperscript{67} Wilson, \textit{Colonial Revival House}, 39.
Revival with all its various interpretations. Architects looked back to early Classical Revival houses, and the simpler shingled houses in New England, especially Cape Cod, Massachusetts, for inspiration. They borrowed features from these models such as symmetrical facades, decorated doorways often with sidelights and fanlights, columned porches, dormers, double-hung sash windows and other traits both inside and out that linked the modern designs to the architectural traditions of the past. The obsession with this style continued after the turn of the century when champions of the past sought to promote a more literal interpretation of colonial architecture. And in the twenty-first century, architects and their clients still draw on the historical precedents of early American architecture when creating new dwellings.

Lent’s own Dutch colonial roots may have drawn him to the Colonial Revival style particularly the gambrel roof, a characteristic feature of the Dutch Colonial Revival. But, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not Frank T. Lent was simply caught up in the fervor of his era, or it was in the spirit of consumerism rather than nostalgic patriotism that his books were filled with praise for the style. There is some recognition that the Colonial Revival was a marketing tool and Lent may well have understood this notion and adopted it as a strategy to sell his wares.

Not only did Lent understand the popular appeal of the Colonial Revival style, but it is striking how perceptive Lent was regarding the sensibilities of the late nineteenth century home buyer and their attachment to the home. In addition to his discussion of style in Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture and elsewhere, he also addresses significant topics such as the importance

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69 Wilson, Colonial Revival, 221.
71 Wilson, Colonial Revival, 8.
of the idea of home, and with this the ideas of domesticity, comfort and home ownership. He also appears to comprehend how crucial the idea of home was to the creation of identity in the United States at this time. Although one could be skeptical about Lent’s intentions, and this volume could be criticized as being more of a self-serving tool than a self-help book, the ideas and the practical information within provide not only a look at building practice and architectural style during this period, but more importantly, the book provides a glimpse into the culture around the concept of home.

Why did Frank T. Lent use the concept of home as a way to introduce his book on architecture? Why does he discuss the concept of home instead of just writing about the physical aspects of the house? It is obvious that Lent understood the importance of the idea of home in the late nineteenth century. This idea of home had shifted over the course of the nineteenth century in relation to the notion that land ownership could not be restricted to the upper classes in a democratic country. The roots of these ideas can be traced back to Enlightenment principles that were deeply imbedded in the constitutional documents of the United States specifically the notions of identity and property ownership. The idea of the self-made man and his ability to exert his own individual character on his domestic, social and economic life translated into his ability to own a detached dwelling that reflected his individualism. The image of the home as a symbol of virtue and of patriotic life was becoming firmly entrenched in the thought of the era thanks in a large part to Andrew Jackson Downing.

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74 Archer, 176.
75 Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 12.
Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852) was a writer, horticulturist, landscape gardener and architect. His influence was widespread and his ideas were perpetuated by designers such as Calvert Vaux (1824-1895) and Frederick L. Olmsted (1822-1905). Downing’s influence can be detected in the writing of Frank T. Lent especially when Lent discusses utility and beauty in architecture. Downing not only connected the home to notions of republicanism, but also to the idea of the manifestation of the individual through his choice of dwelling. He writes, “The villa – the country house, should, above all things manifest individuality. It should say something of the character of the family within – as much as possible of their life and history, their tastes and associations, should mold and fashion themselves upon its walls.” Downing commonly refers to men in his writing, but women too played an important role in the symbolism of the home.

The ideology of female domesticity was equally important by the late nineteenth century. The sentiment that the home environment was responsible for molding its inhabitants’ character was commonly held at this time, and while the man of the household was responsible for this idea outside the home, the woman was responsible for developing the physical environment of the home as a way of ensuring the sound moral character of the occupants especially the children. By setting a positive example the mother of the family not only strengthened the family, but contributed to the improvement of society and the nation.

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77 Lent, *Sound Sense*, 7.
78 Archer, 178.
80 Chaison, 57.
82 Grier, 5.
Downing was one of many authors who discussed the importance of the physical environment on virtue and character. He authored an essay in 1848 titled *Moral Influence of Good Houses* where he wrote that, “we have firm faith in the moral effects of the fine arts. We believe in the bettering influence of beautiful cottages and country houses.”

Not only was the house important when considering one’s moral well-being, but the arrangement of interior space, furnishings and decoration, often the purview of the woman of the house, also played an important role in defining the character of the members of the household. This idea led to an explosion of print material, such as *The American Woman’s Home* by Catherine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, providing advice to the middle class female consumer on the household and on its appropriate decoration.

It is apparent from the first chapter of the book *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture* that Frank T. Lent is conversant in the contemporary thought regarding the home and its importance to all the members of the middle-class nineteenth century family. After the first chapter of this book, Lent turns his attention to practical matters, but he does return repeatedly to non-physical aspects of the house discussing the ideas of shelter and comfort, and the importance of combining utility and beauty in a thoughtful and meaningful way. As mentioned earlier, the influence of A.J. Downing and his contemporaries is apparent in Lent’s book. In one of Downing’s later books *The Architecture of Country Houses* published in 1850, he explains the idea of useful in architecture and highlights what he believes to be the most important aspect of utility, the idea of convenience. Regarding this topic, Downing emphasizes the importance of the plan of a house stating, “This practical part of architecture involves more particularly, what is called the plan of a building – providing apartments for the various wants of domestic and social

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83 Archer, 181.
84 Grier, 5.
life; adapting the size of such apartments to their respective uses, and all other points which the progress of modern civilization has made necessary to our comfort and enjoyment within-doors.”\(^{85}\) Not only should the plan of a house be designed to reveal the character and taste of the occupants, but it should also be designed to address their needs.\(^{86}\) Downing was not the only proponent of this idea. English authors such as J. J. Stevenson wrote on this topic in his book *House Architecture*, published in 1880, and Robert Kerr also discussed these issues a decade earlier in his book *The Gentleman’s House* published in 1871. American architects, often influenced by English sources, followed suit. Charles Francis Osborne’s *Notes on the Art of Home* published in 1888 was another popular work that advocated the planning of the interior divisions of the house to suit the needs of those inhabiting it.\(^{87}\) Lent, again obviously influenced by Downing and likely other authors, advises his reader on these principles of utility.

The influence of contemporary writers is evident when Frank T. Lent addresses the idea of convenience and the importance of the plan of the house to the daily lives of the occupants in the second section of *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture*. He goes through a floor plan room by room beginning with the hall, providing guidance on the placement of this room within a floor plan and design advice regarding built-in and non-built-in elements. He reminds the reader that the hall gives the first impression to a visitor to the house, so it is important to consider design elements carefully. The hall should not be given prime south-facing exposure on a floor plan, as Lent suggests, therefore colour should be chosen carefully with the intent to brighten the area. Lent advises on materials for flooring, furnishings, rugs, closets. He recommends the inclusion of stained glass windows. Lent considers other requirements for a suburban residence

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\(^{85}\) Downing, 6.


\(^{87}\) Handlin, 332-333.
including the butler’s pantry, the kitchen, the piazzas or porches, and the den stressing the importance of well-designed plan that is both useful and beautiful.

While the first use of a dwelling according to Downing, and echoed by Lent, is to provide shelter from the elements, the dwelling should also be “warm, comfortable and convenient.” Comfort was an important aspect of house design in the late nineteenth century. Advances in construction technology specifically in plumbing, heating and lighting allowed the architect to not only design houses that were beautiful and useful by their appearance and arrangement, but they were able to take the idea of convenience a step further through these technological advancements and provide a more comfortable home. Lent returns to the importance of comfort repeatedly in his written work whether he is discussing methods and materials of construction, or how the latest advances can be adapted to house construction. Lent devotes a substantial piece of this book to heating, plumbing and other utilitarian aspects of the house with the intent of informing the consumer about the importance of these details to the convenience and comfort of the inhabitants, and on the importance of having an architect who is familiar with the latest technology.

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88 Downing, 4.
89 Downing, 4.
Figure 1.5 De Witt House, Cranford, NJ
(Source: Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture)

Figure 1.6 J.C. Van Dyck House, New Brunswick, NJ
(Source: Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture)
After these sections addressing practical matters, Lent provides, in section five titled *Drawings*, examples of drawings – perspectives and floor plans – of houses that he has designed and built to the “satisfaction of the owners.” The houses featured are the residence of John W. Banker (Figure 1.20) and the De Witt house (Figure 1.5) both in Cranford, New Jersey and the residence of Dr. John C. Van Dyke in New Brunswick, New Jersey (Figure 1.6). It can be
presumed that the De Witt house was built for relatives of Sarah De Witt Lent, Lent’s wife. Lent states that he is offering these designs as examples of good design not as plans to be copied by prospective home owners. As he states in the first chapter of this book, each house should be a unique design based on the individual needs of the occupants. He provides brief descriptions of these houses, and also provides the reader with an idea of the cost of these dwellings. Perhaps more interestingly, Lent refers to two houses, the Pastorius House and the Otis House, that he designed in Colorado Springs, Colorado during the late 1880s (Figure 1.7 and 1.8). He provides a street name and drawings of these houses, both important clues that aid the biographer attempting to piece together his oeuvre.

Frank T. Lent devotes the remainder of *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture* to construction specifications. He states that specifications are as important as the designs, yet they receive little attention. He goes into detail providing examples of specifications beginning with a general specification that highlights the overall project to very specific examples for masonry, cesspool, foundation, brickwork, concrete, and so on, including specifications for the kitchen sink. Not only does he provide examples of how a specification would be written for each construction detail, but he offers examples of companies that provide construction materials. For example, under plastering, he states that King’s Windsor Cement is a superior product at a reasonable price and he articulates the benefit of a plaster wall to the health and convenience of the homeowner. In an advertisement at the back of the book, Lent offers “printed forms (with blanks) of Specifications for the full and complete construction of Suburban Houses (similar to the ones published in this book)” for sale by mail order.⁹¹

⁹¹ Lent, *Sound Sense*, [99].
Several pages of advertisements follow and interestingly, all of these companies featured in the advertisements are touted by Lent in his text including, for example, King’s Windsor Cement. An advertisement for the Dexter Brothers’ English Shingle Stain company in Boston includes a drawing that is a copy of Lent’s De Witt House (Figures 1.9 and 1.5). In the second edition of *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture*, published in 1895 by W.T. Comstock, there is an advertisement for Frank T. Lent, Suburban Architect in Cranford, New Jersey included in the back section of the book called “advertisements.”

At first glance this self-promotion may seem rather blatant, but more careful study of the text proves it to be valuable information that provides a few more hints for piecing together Lent’s body of work. He states that over the past twelve years he has focused his practice on suburban architecture. He advertises that he has prepared drawings and specifications for all parts of the country including Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Colorado, California, Louisiana, North Carolina. This disclosure provides clues to the locations of other dwellings not featured in his books. Lent also includes letters from satisfied clients that would suggest that he prepared drawings and specifications for clients, but did not oversee the construction of the
house - a sort of mail order architecture. This was not uncommon in this period. Mail order architecture had been a thriving business since the late 1870’s when carpenter George Palliser and his brother Charles began selling low cost designs through their popular pattern books.92 Others such as Texan George F. Barber, who also had not received any formal architectural training, followed suit publishing first a catalogue of cards and then a very successful pattern book titled The Cottage Souvenir No. 2.93 Whereas these pattern book authors were primarily interested in selling plans, it could be argued that Lent’s focus was to educate the public and share a design philosophy while promoting himself as an architect.94 A feature article in the Cranford Chronicle on January 31, 1894 confirms the assumption that Lent sent drawings to other parts of the country, but did not necessarily supervise the construction. The brief entry states, “Architect Frank T. Lent is designing a beautiful Colonial house for Albert Ladd Colby, Esq. of Bethlehem, Pa to be built on one of the finest sites in that city.” Another entry that same day announces that Mr. Frank T. Lent has been confined to his house for the past few days with “La Grippe.”95 This might suggest that Lent was an important figure in town, or that there was not much happening in Cranford in the last week of January 1894. A client in Texas is referred to in an article in the Cranford Chronicle on February 7, 1894.96

While Frank T. Lent was evidently in the business of mail order architecture, his primary business was designing and overseeing the construction of houses in the vicinity of his office. During the 1890s, after returning from several years in Colorado, he settled in the Cranford, New

92 Clark, 76.
93 Margaret Cuthbertson, Texas Houses Built by the Book: The Use of Published Designs, 1850-1925 (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1999), 31.
94 Clark, 77.
Jersey area and designed many buildings, primarily houses, in the town and surrounding area. An advertisement that ran frequently in 1894 in the *Cranford Chronicle* claimed he had built over one hundred buildings in four years. On the basis of advertisements such as the one in the *Cranford Chronicle* and in Lent’s written works, we can attribute a significant number of houses in this area to Lent (Appendix A). There may be other houses that could have been designed by Lent, but in most cases, without substantive evidence, the attribution becomes guesswork. The designs featured in Lent’s three books are obviously his own, but what about the designs in other works he published such as the *Souvenir of Cranford*, published in 1894? This publication written to promote Cranford as the ideal suburban location features many houses built or in the process of being built and perhaps all or many were Lent’s work.

The idea of the home, the ownership of property and the effect of the home on the moral character of its inhabitants were ideas that were perpetuated by a wide range of supporters in the nineteenth century including writers, religious leaders, social reformers, and architects such as Frank T. Lent, but it was not just the house and its style that were essential to the American ideal of home and family, the location of the middle class home was of the utmost concern. In the late nineteenth century the right location most often meant the country and this was commonly understood to denote the suburban areas, planned or organic, growing up around major cities such as New York, Chicago and Boston.

The virtues and benefits of living in a rural setting, in the area outside the polluted, noisy and crime-ridden urban areas, were ideas that were touted by the same exponents that believed the family home was key to the reformation of society. The population of the United States

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increased rapidly following the Civil War as a result of high birth rate and an increase in immigration, and most of this population growth was centered in the urban areas on the east coast of the country. The crowded, dirty and increasingly unfashionable city centers prompted the middle class American to seek refuge in the suburban areas outside the urban core. This refuge was not just a physical escape; life in the suburbs offered so much more. As architect Robert A.M. Stern has written, “Though clearly a planning type, the suburb is perhaps most importantly a state of mind based on imagery and symbolism. Suburbia’s curving roads and tended lawns, its houses with pitched roofs, shuttered windows and colonial or otherwise elaborated doorways all speak of communities which value the tradition of family, pride of ownership and rural life.” Architects in the second half of the nineteenth century recognized the opportunity to profit from the sensibilities of the consumer and the desperate need for housing. Frank T. Lent was such an architect, one who realized the appeal of suburban living and capitalized on this to build his practice particularly in Cranford, New Jersey. He even went so far as to call himself a “suburban architect.”

In 1894 Lent’s second book titled Sensible Suburban Residences containing Suggestions, Hints and Practical Ideas, Sketches, Plans, etc., for the Building of Country Homes addresses the importance of the setting of a family home and the benefits of the suburbs. This book was also self-published and is identical in size and binding to his first book. Although an advertisement in the Cranford Chronicle on August 15, 1894 states that his “entire attention [is] given to suburban

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98 Clark, 72.
100 Lent, Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture, 2nd ed. (New York: W.T. Comstock, 1895),[108]
work in this vicinity,”\textsuperscript{101} the place of publication is listed as the Tremont Building, Boston\textsuperscript{102} suggesting that he maintained an office in that city. In the preface of \textit{Sensible Suburban Residences}, Lent writes that this volume continues to provide advice for those intending to build new residences, but it uses larger homes as examples. This may suggest that Lent’s marketing techniques were successful, his practice was prospering, and he was obtaining commissions from more affluent clients in Cranford and the surrounding area.

The introduction of Frank T. Lent’s \textit{Sensible Suburban Residences} is both a promotion of the services of an architect and a summary of contemporary thought on suburban living. Lent praises a home in the country for its “substance” and “solidity,”\textsuperscript{103} and for the fresh air and space that country living can provide. This lifestyle is in contrast to the unpleasant and expensive life of the city dweller. He remarks that it is no surprise that the suburban areas of the country are growing rapidly. Lent, in keeping with popular thought of the day, is promoting the idea of the physical and psychological well-being associated with the location of the family home in the suburbs.

By the late nineteenth century, the suburb had become a popular choice for middle class homeowners. The roots of this movement can be traced to the early nineteenth century in the United States to the city of Brooklyn, the first example of suburban development outside Manhattan made possible by a ferry service.\textsuperscript{104} Not long after, ferries were transporting businessmen to villages up the Hudson River, to Staten Island, and across the river to New Jersey. It was actually developments in rail service, however, that truly allowed suburban

\textsuperscript{102} Frank T. Lent, \textit{Sensible Suburban Residences} (Boston: Frank T. Lent, 1894), title page.
\textsuperscript{103} Lent, \textit{Sensible Suburban Residences}, 1.
growth to flourish in the nineteenth century. The primary factor in the growth of suburban America, but there were other circumstances that contributed to the exodus of the middle class family out of the city. There was the availability of land outside the city centre, the pressures of commercial growth on the cost and availability of land for residential development in the city, and there were businessmen who recognized the opportunity to profit from developments in areas within reach of the commercial core of the city. The success of these developments rested on the willingness of families to leave the city centre. Fortunately for the developers, the benefit of this lifestyle whereby a family could combine the advantages of the city and the peace and domesticity offered by a country home was already instilled in the ideology of the middle class family by 1870 in part due to influential religious leaders such as Horace Bushnell who lectured about the moral dangers of city life and its effect on the family. These families “were not simply leaving the city for the country but rather creating a new way of life that contained elements of both.”

Llewellyn Park in New Jersey is often referred to as the first true suburb in the United States, but as previously discussed, there was other suburban growth around cities such as Brooklyn, New York. Llewellyn Park was, however, the first planned suburb in the United States and it marks the beginning of the practice of planned suburbs that shaped much of residential America. Llewellyn Park was developed as a commuter suburb on a scenic site in the

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105 Teaford, 2.
107 Teaford, 8.
108 Stern, 5.
109 Rybczynski, 117.
110 Stern, 10.
hills of West Orange, New Jersey by Llewellyn Haskell, a wealthy pharmaceutical mogul.\textsuperscript{111} Haskell hired Alexander Jackson Davis, a well-known architect and collaborator of Andrew Jackson Downing, to design the entire community.\textsuperscript{112} The park took advantage of the natural hilly terrain and pleasant vistas. In contrast to the grid-like planning that characterized urban areas, the planners of Llewellyn Park offered large irregular lots, curving streets and natural landscaping.\textsuperscript{113} Another feature of Llewellyn Park that set it apart from the urban areas was the lack of commercial, industrial or retail enterprises.\textsuperscript{114} Llewellyn Park was the first development to be advertised as a commuter suburb. An advertisement in the \textit{Orange Journal} stated that the community was accessible to New York City by the Morris & Essex Railroad and would be of great appeal to men working in the city but desiring a country residence.\textsuperscript{115}

Not all suburbs emerging in the second half of the nineteenth century were planned. Many towns and villages within close proximity of a major city were destined to become commuter suburbs. Improved rail service, such as the recent improvements to the Central Railroad of New Jersey,\textsuperscript{116} made small communities like Cranford, New Jersey accessible to New York City and opened up opportunities for architects like Frank T. Lent to build successful businesses designing suburban residential architecture. In Lent’s case, this also gave him the opportunity to put his written ideas about suburban living into practice. He did go into

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{113} Teaford, 6.
\bibitem{114} Rybczynski, 119.
\end{thebibliography}
collaboration around 1893 or 1894 with publisher and developer James Rodgers and was involved in a development within the commuter town of Cranford called Roosevelt Manor. The exact relationship of these two men is unknown, but Lent most certainly had some role in the developing and marketing of Roosevelt Manor, and indeed this involvement may have been the reason for his move to the town.

The marketing of services, developments, and even the promotion of towns such as Cranford would have been crucial to attract the right kind of professional men and their families. Advertising in New York City newspapers such as the New York Times, New York Tribune and other periodicals would have been important instruments in the dissemination of information about these towns during this time. Articles such as “Over The Hudson River” that appeared in the New York Times on May 5, 1895 that promoted suburban living in New Jersey were not only informative, but were clearly used as a means to attract prospective buyers. The subtitle in this article supports this idea. The unnamed author writes, “Beautiful villages lie in the state of New Jersey…attractive to New York people now that Manhattan Island is overcrowded. There is great demand for homes where fine villas are inexpensive.”117 The article discusses the positive attributes of New Jersey, the availability of affordable homes in an open and pleasant setting away from the crowded city, the superior transportation system, the services available to the community both practical and social, and the fine character of the people already inhabiting these areas. The author praises the cities along the Central Railroad of New Jersey including Scotch Plains, Plainfield and Cranford. About Cranford the author writes, “Cranford is one of the villages that must be considered by anybody seeking a home because it ranks first among pretty

Development in Roosevelt Manor is mentioned and the reader is assured that restrictions are in place to safeguard that only the “best kind of houses shall be built” ensuring that Cranford will continue to receive the high praise of the prettiest of New Jersey villages.119

Another article in the New York Times a few years later on May 9, 1897 titled In Country Resorts discusses suburban transit facilities to “cities and villages on the outskirts of the metropolis.”120 In a section titled “Rural Beauty Spots”, the route of the Central Railroad of New Jersey and the scenery and towns along the way are considered. Again Cranford is praised as “a town which holds its head high in the social category of suburban places.” The article states that the town had doubled its population since 1890, and it makes note of the superior natural advantages and municipal services that Cranford possesses.121 The themes of convenience, and the benefits of country living are repeated in these articles reinforcing the convictions of writers and architects such as Frank T. Lent.

Developers and architects also used booklets and pamphlets to convey information about suburban towns and developments. These materials offered information for those considering relocation to the suburbs, and the producers of these publications must have benefited from them as marketing tools. James Rodgers, the developer of Roosevelt Manor in Cranford, New Jersey produced a booklet called Roosevelt Manor that discusses the attractions of Cranford, his proposal for the new neighbourhood, and contact information for those wishing to obtain

121 New York Times, May 9, 1897, 24.
information about the pricing of lots and buildings. The date of publication and the author are not provided, however a photograph of the Cranford Opera House on page three confirms the date of the publication is after 1892, but probably before 1895 when Roosevelt Manor is advertised in the *New York Tribune*. An 1894 publication date is supported by The Cranford Historic Preservation Advisory Board website that lists the brochure as circa 1894 and a map dated 1894 of the proposed development executed by surveyor C. Vreeland of Bayonne, New Jersey. There are clues in the text to suggest that Frank T. Lent was the author. The booklet begins by stating that the writer first heard about Cranford from an artist friend who considered it to be so “picturesque” that he traveled there to sketch. This passage is included in a booklet that Lent wrote in 1894 called *Souvenir of Cranford*. Lent was a landscape painter and attended university in nearby New Brunswick, New Jersey and so he may have travelled up to Cranford to sketch while he was a student at Rutgers. Other passages in the *Roosevelt Manor* booklet bear a striking similarity to the text in *Souvenir of Cranford* such as a passage about the geography of Cranford, and a paragraph about the benefits of a home in the country. Examples of Lent’s completed residences in Cranford and designs provided by Lent for prospective buyers confirm his involvement in Cranford’s suburban development.

The development of Roosevelt Manor must have been a significant event in the history of Cranford. Residential expansion on this scale would have increased the population and the status of the small town of Cranford. To attract buyers to Roosevelt Manor the developer James Rodgers would have to convince people that Cranford surpassed all the possible suburban

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122 *Roosevelt Manor* (Cranford, NJ: James Rodgers, ca 1894), 5.
125 *Roosevelt Manor*, map.
locations around New York City, and he would have had to highlight the superlative features of the town to assure them that they were making the best choice. Features important to a suburb in the late nineteenth century included a pleasing natural environment, houses that would portray the right message about the residents, city services and a sense of community. Not only did this sense of community include services for the social and recreational enjoyment of the residents, but prospective buyers wanted to be sure that the town was made up of the right kind of people. The brochure produced to promote Roosevelt Manor confirms that these features can be found in Cranford, New Jersey.

In the introduction, the physical attributes of Roosevelt Manor are highlighted. The area slated for development was surrounded by superior residences that were occupied year around implying that people of good character and means lived in this town. The idea of the quality of the architecture and caliber of the residents is reinforced later in the passage when the writer assures the buyer that “no cheap houses or obnoxious buildings will be allowed on the property and no land will be sold to anyone except with such restrictions as will assure the quality and character of the future neighbourhood.” There is no elaboration on how the quality and character of prospective clients would be judged. The introduction also briefly describes the municipal services in place such as water and gas mains, and electric lights to guarantee the comfort and safety of the residents. The nearness of the neighbourhood to the train station and the proximity to New York City further confirm the convenience offered to those savvy enough to recognize the benefits of building a home in Roosevelt Manor. The writer continues the book by elaborating on the natural environment, suitable architecture, city services, and the sense of community that can all be found in this location.

127 Chaison, 56.
128 Roosevelt Manor, 5.
The writer then promotes the idea of a suburban residence by stating “a country home is perhaps the most satisfactory residence one can possibly acquire.”129 This seems to be a reoccurring sentiment in the writings of Frank T. Lent, and indeed this exact phrase is used as the opening line of his book Sensible Suburban Residences published in 1894130 providing further evidence of Lent’s possible authorship. The author of Roosevelt Manor discusses the benefits and comforts of suburban life over the discomfort and unpleasantness of urban living highlighting the advantages of clean air, more space and light, and the lower cost associated with living outside the city. The travel time is mentioned, but dismissed as inconsequential. The paragraph concludes with a sentence reiterating its lure stating, “Roosevelt Manor with its natural charms, its healthfulness, its nearness to New York, and its many improvements, will be one of the first to attract attention and secure its share of the many sensible people who are seeking a first-class village in which to locate.”131

![Figure 1.10 Cranford Opera House Block](Source: Roosevelt Manor)

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129 Roosevelt Manor, 8.
130 Lent, Sensible Suburban Residences, 1.
131 Roosevelt Manor, 10.
After a brief discussion of the first-rate municipal services and the responsible local government, much of the rest of the book is devoted to painting a picture of the community and life in Cranford. Recently completed buildings, notably Lent’s Opera House, are mentioned as marking a new era in the social life in Cranford (Figure 1.10). It also states that the Opera House Block was built by the owners of Roosevelt Manor confirming the connection between Lent and James Rodgers. The activities provided by the Cranford Country Club, also designed by Lent, the boating association and various other social organizations all contribute to the charm of Cranford. The reader is assured that good churches and schools are present, and there is excellent express, telephone and telegraph service, a well-managed building and loan association, and good livery and boarding stables. The booklet specifically mentions the Wednesday Morning Club for ladies perhaps attempting to reassure women that there are services in this community that will combat the feeling of isolation that might come with a move to the suburbs.

Figure 1.11 Rahway River, New Jersey
(Source: Moore Postcard Collection, Rahway Public Library)
The text of Roosevelt Manor is accompanied by photographs and illustrations to further convince the potential client. Pictures of the Rahway River, similar to the one in this period.
postcard, are featured to reinforce the idea of the natural beauty of this scenic community (Figure 1.11). Photographs of houses including the residence of James Rodgers, Esq. on Claremont Place near Roosevelt Manor, designed by Frank T. Lent,\textsuperscript{132} are highlighted in an attempt to confirm the statement that the land destined to be Roosevelt Manor is surrounded by elegant residences (Figure 1.12). Several streetscapes, much like the one in this period postcard of Claremont Place, showing wide tree-lined streets with large houses are included (Figure 1.13). The book is supplemented with a timetable of the train schedule to New York and information on fares including the price of a commuter pass.\textsuperscript{133} A detailed map is included in the book showing the streets, the lots with their lot numbers, the existing residences and the train station.\textsuperscript{134}

*Roosevelt Manor* is also accompanied by nine house designs, including several attributable to Frank T. Lent, to provide examples of houses that could be built in this attractive suburban setting. An advertisement in the *Cranford Directory 1904*\textsuperscript{135} indicates that development in Roosevelt Manor carried on after Frank T. Lent left Cranford, and the development company continued doing business until 1939 when the owners declared bankruptcy.\textsuperscript{136}

The publication titled *Roosevelt Manor* is just one way the developers of this community highlighted its features in the attempt to attract prospective buyers. Roosevelt Manor was also advertised in newspapers and other publications in much the same way that suburban towns were highlighted in newspapers. For example, Roosevelt Manor was mentioned in newspaper articles such as a piece titled “Over the Hudson River” in the *New York Times* on May 5, 1895 that

\textsuperscript{132} *Cranford Chronicle*, February 7, 1894.
\textsuperscript{133} *Roosevelt Manor*, 23.
\textsuperscript{134} *Roosevelt Manor*, map.
discusses desirable suburban towns across the river from New York City. The following advertisement was featured in the *New York Tribune* on April 14, 1895 in the “Country Real Estate for Sale” section of the classified advertisements:

“Roosevelt Manor located at Picturesque Cranford

In a beautiful section of land within the town limits, four blocks from the depot, 45 minutes via N.J. Central R.R. from New York; 60 trains daily; commutation 10c. each way. High ground, large lots bordering the beautiful Rahway River and amply restricted.

The Company will submit plans to desirable purchasers. Build residences costing not less than $4000 if desired; terms to suit; monthly payments; 3 years if desired; 60 percent of amount long time 1st mortgage.

Cranford is the healthiest town (State report) in N.J. Has beautiful residences, churches, schools, library, opera house, clubs, electric & gas light, telephone, water, artesian sewers, stores &c. For plans, photographs and further particulars, apply to: Hibson & Van Brunt 29 Park Roy, N.Y.”

The year 1894 must have been exceedingly busy for Frank T. Lent. Not only was he involved in the development of Roosevelt Manor, and very likely the production of the booklet to advertise it to prospective clients, he also published a booklet called *Souvenir of Cranford*. In addition to his writing, he was designing and overseeing the construction of numerous residences in the town of Cranford and the surrounding area, and he published his second book *Sensible Suburban Residences*. As previously noted, the introduction to *Sensible Suburban Residences* discusses the advantages of adopting the country lifestyle, a concept that Lent supported in practice through his involvement in Roosevelt Manor. The book also provides further insight into his design ideas and his choice of the Colonial Revival style that he continued to promote. The information in this volume helps connect his theory and written work to his practice in suburban areas such as Roosevelt Manor in Cranford. The text and the examples give us a picture of his vision of the perfect house in the suburbs.

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In addition to endorsing the suburban lifestyle in his books, Frank T. Lent promotes the Colonial Revival style and he frequently applied this style in practice. On occasion he explored other styles and the house built at 105 Holly Street in Cranford is an example of Lent’s departure into the Shingle Style. The Shingle Style was a style related to the Colonial Revival in that it too looked back to America’s past yet it drew inspiration from the vernacular architecture of New England rather than drawing on the high-style architecture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that lent its classical vocabulary to the mainstream Colonial Revival.\(^\text{139}\)

The Shingle Style first appeared in New England vacation areas such as Newport, Rhode Island and Cape Cod, Massachusetts in the early 1880s and these were often spacious summer homes built by architects for wealthy clients. The style was popularized by well-known architectural firms such as McKim, Mead & White and Peabody & Stearns, and was therefore featured and promoted regularly in architectural publications.\(^\text{140}\) The style is generally characterized by an asymmetrical façade, steeply pitched roof line and intersecting gables based on the study of colonial examples.\(^\text{141}\) Early colonial construction also influenced the exterior details such as windows that were simple and close to the wall surface rather than deep-set. Interiors typically featured a living hall that included a fireplace and acted as the entrance to the house and the connection to living quarters and the second story.\(^\text{142}\) While these characteristics are often present, the look can vary and it is often only the existence of the continuous shingle cladding that typifies a building as Shingle Style.\(^\text{143}\) Frank T. Lent would have been exposed to this style

\(^{140}\) McAlester, 290.
\(^{142}\) Scully, *Shingle Style Today,* 7.
\(^{143}\) Scully, *Shingle Style Today,* 7.
in printed media and appears to have been influenced by it when designing the house at 105 Holly Street for Mr. George W. Nix.

Figure 1.14 The Nix House, Cranford NJ
(Source: Souvenir of Cranford)

Figure 1.15 Low House, Bristol RI, 1887 McKim, Mead &White
(Source: ArtStor)

Figure 1.16 William Kent House, Tuxedo Park NY, 1885, Bruce Price
(Source: Scully, Shingle Style)
Case Study: The Nix House, Cranford, New Jersey

George W. Nix, a produce merchant from Brooklyn, New York, was one of many New Yorkers attracted to suburban towns in New Jersey in the late nineteenth century. A photograph of the completed Nix residence appears in the publication *Souvenir of Cranford* written by Frank T. Lent in 1894, therefore, as previously noted on page 20, it could be presumed that Nix commissioned Lent to design the house in 1892 or 1893 (Figure 1.14). This would have been one of the early houses that Lent designed in Cranford. When designing this house Lent would have been obviously influenced by Shingle Style houses such as the William Kent House in Tuxedo Park, New York designed by Bruce Price in 1885, or the Low House designed by McKim, Mead & White in Bristol, Rhode Island in 1887 (Figure 1.15 and 1.16). The three buildings all have a wide gable forming the principle façade. The William Kent House has stonework on the porch, and the Low House and the design attributed to Lent feature windows and doors that lacked the decorative detail that was so popular on other late nineteenth century styles. In addition, the houses are, of course, completely covered in wood shingles. While there are similar elements, the overall effect is quite different. The Low House with its wide sweeping eaves appears solid and anchored to the landscape while the Nix house seems somewhat top heavy with its large roof gable and rather stubby porch columns. This imbalance is emphasized by the fact that one side of the roof hints at a gambrel roofline and the other side slopes in a straight line. The William Kent House has a similar gable, but it appears to be more in proportion to the porch and the overall design. Although the massing may be slightly askew in

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146 Scully, plate 108.
147 Scully, plate 153.
the Nix house, it is still an attractive building and with its rustic field stone porch and simple window treatments it is a pleasant contrast to other more traditional Colonial Revival designs presented by Lent in his books.

Lent features a smaller yet similar design with a gambrel roof in his second book *Sensible Suburban Residences* under the title “A Village Home”\(^\text{148}\) (Figure 1.17). He describes the house as a “comfortable and substantial home for a small family,”\(^\text{149}\) and provides advice on how this house could be finished to create a “pleasing and lasting effect.”\(^\text{150}\) He suggests local field stone for the foundation and porch, and unstained shingles for the cladding, and the use of ivory white for all exterior trim. The floor plan is also provided\(^\text{151}\) and it expresses, on a smaller scale, many of the design features that Lent promotes in his writing and designs (Figure 1.18). The entrance to the central floor plan comes off the deep porch into a small hall. The two principal rooms are on either side of the hall and the parlor features a large bay window and fireplace. A butler’s

\(^{149}\) Lent, *Sensible*, 9.
pantry, an attribute recommended by Lent even in a small house, connects the dining room and the spacious kitchen. Did Lent use this floor plan for the Nix house? The bay window in the photograph and the window in the front gable suggest that the finished house may resemble the floor plan featured in the book *Sensible Suburban Residences*. Lent also offers advice for the interior decoration. He discusses the entrance hall and its details, and the colours that should be used on the interior. He recommends that the walls be “rough-cast” or “sand-float” and then painted with oil paint. He suggests that the hall be painted in light terracotta and decorated with an ornamental frieze, and the woodwork be finished with a dark stain.

George and Addie Nix and their five children lived in this house until sometime between September 1898\(^{152}\) and May 1899 when they had moved back to New York.\(^{153}\) The appeal of

\(^{152}\) *Cranford Citizen*, September 3, 1898

\(^{153}\) *Cranford Chronicle*, May 20, 1899,
the design of the house at 105 Holly Street, however, lasted long after the Nix family and Frank T. Lent left Cranford (Figure 1.19). A photograph of the house appears in the April 1909 issue of *The Suburbanite* a magazine published in New York City “devoted to the promotion of suburban life – and the interests of suburbanites.” The article titled “Bungalows Their Vogue – A Type for Suburbs, Shore and Country” discusses the bungalow as a housing type and features examples from suburbs in New Jersey. Lent’s house is labeled “a modified type in Cranford, N.J.”\(^{154}\) The house is also featured in a self-guided walking tour created by the Historic Preservation Advisory Board of Cranford in 2009. The tour calls 105 Holly Street the “finest example of Shingle Style architecture in our area,” but neglects to credit Lent with the design.\(^{155}\)

![Figure 1.20 J.W. Banker House, Cranford, NJ](Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture)

**Case Study: The J. W. Banker House, Cranford, New Jersey**

Another house in Cranford that is certainly by Frank T. Lent is the house designed for John W. Banker. Mr. Banker was a businessman working in New York City as an agent for a


company that dealt in paper and twine, \(^{156}\) who seized the opportunity for a better life for his family in the suburbs. And unlike the Nix family, he and his family remained in their house until the late 1930s \(^{157}\) embracing the suburban lifestyle and all it had to offer. Banker commissioned the large home for his wife and two sons at 16 Madison Avenue in Cranford. \(^{158}\) The commission was likely underway when Frank T. Lent’s first book was published in 1894. A perspective drawing of the house from the southwest corner is featured in the opening chapter of Lent’s first book where he discusses the pleasures of home and the appeal of the Colonial Revival style (Figure 1.20). \(^{159}\)

**Figure 1.21** J.W. Banker House, 1st and 2nd floor plan

(Source: *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture*)


\(^{158}\) Directory of Cranford, (Cranford: Cranford Chronicle, 1901), 14.

\(^{159}\) Lent, *Sound Sense*, 1.
Lent provides more detail about the Banker house in “The Drawings” section of *Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture*. He describes the house as “old-fashioned” and being shingled from top to bottom. The shingles were stained in a brownish-gray for the exterior walls and moss green for the roof. The cornice and exterior trim were painted ivory and what he calls the “Roman columns” of Georgia pine were finished with a natural stain. The stone used is described as “roughest random rubble” that was covered with moss and lichen. Lent is blending high-style classical elements such as the cornice, columned porch and third story balcony with rustic elements such as the field stone fireplace, shingles and the gambrel roof in a way that is characteristic of many of his designs.

Lent describes the floor plans of the house as “quite perfect” and says the rooms are arranged to “produce very pleasing pictures and vistas.” Unlike the Nix house, Lent describes a house that has been built and it can be assumed that the floor plans of the house are as they are.

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shown in the book (Figure 1.21). The plans show a very large house with a central hall plan.\textsuperscript{161} The hall is substantial and has a fireplace, a feature Lent recommends for its usefulness and aesthetic qualities. He also recommends the inclusion of stained glass windows for lighting and also to enhance the beauty of the room. The idea of the “living hall” was important in the second half of the nineteenth century\textsuperscript{162} and Lent used this feature frequently in his designs. The main floor has a library, a drawing room and a dining room that is connected to the kitchen by a butler’s pantry. The second story has five bedrooms, and the attic has two more bedrooms, a billiard room and what is labeled as trunk room. This house must have provided ample space for Mr. and Mrs. Banker and their sons Leslie and Howard.\textsuperscript{163} The house appears in a booklet produced about Cranford in 1913\textsuperscript{164} and still exists today although the exterior finishes are quite different that those described by Lent (Figure 1.22).

\textsuperscript{161} Lent, \textit{Sound Sense}, 32.
\textsuperscript{162} Du Prey, \textit{Ah, Wilderness!}, 69.
\textsuperscript{164} Cranford New Jersey (Cranford, NJ: Cranford Board of Trade, 1913), 116.
Figure 1.23 A Country House: side view (Frank T. Lent House, Cranford, NJ)
(Source: Sensible Suburban Residences)

Figure 1.24 A Country House: view of front (Frank T. Lent House, Cranford, NJ)
(Source: Sensible Suburban Residences)
Case study: The Frank T. Lent House, Cranford, New Jersey

The perfect house in the suburbs was perhaps best expressed by Frank T. Lent’s own home in Cranford labeled “A Country House,” in *Sensible Suburban Residences* (Figures 1.23 and 1.24). The pamphlet *Souvenir of Cranford*, however, identifies this same house as the “Residence [of] Frank T. Lent” on Cranford Avenue. ¹⁶⁵ Not only did this large structure provide shelter for the growing Lent family but, more importantly, it says something about the architect’s taste. With the design of his own suburban home, Lent seems to be drawing inspiration from the work of Bruce Price or Peabody & Stearns, and indeed we see more similarities between the

Lent residence and the Nix house than the high-style Colonial Revival that Lent promotes in this written work (Figure 1.1). Does this choice reveal something about Lent’s own preference? Did he see the work now labeled Shingle Style as modern and as even the most fashionable in taste? At the same time, however, he promoted the stream of the Colonial Revival style that drew on classical motifs perhaps knowing that this would have more popular appeal.

Two photographs provide exterior views of Lent’s sizeable many-gabled home and residence clad entirely with shingles. A variety of projecting features including various bay windows on the first and second floor, a one story tower-like projection off the main parlour, and a large gable-topped projection that cantilevers out from a bedroom, break up the wall surfaces. Multiple verandas, the intersecting rooflines and the use of awnings on the sash windows add to the asymmetrical quality of the structure. While this house is quite different from Shingle Style houses such as the William Kent House (Figure 1.16) or the Low House (Figure 1.15), parallels can be drawn to the work of Peabody & Stearns and their 1882 design “Krag syde” at Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts (Figure 1.26) or the Charles A. Potter House in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania (Figure 1.27) built ca. 1881-82. The similarities include the use of continuous shingle siding, projections, bays and gables, intersecting roof lines and multiple verandas. Although there are similarities, Lent’s design lacks the cohesiveness that is apparent in the other
designs. For example the bays in “Kragsyde” appear to be part of a continuous skin of shingle cladding and seem to grow out of the surface creating a sense of harmony whereas Lent’s projections appear to be arbitrarily applied to the wall surface. The similar sized windows used by Wilson Eyre on “Anglecot,” as the Potter House was known, provide a sense of unity that is lacking in Lent’s design in part because he has used windows of various sizes.

The text in Sensible Suburban Residences provides a description of the materials used in this house. He describes the stone foundation as being built of mossy field stone of all colours and pointed with black mortar. He states that this, “gives a permanent durable appearance to that part of the house which joins the ground.”166 This connection to the earth was an important feature of the Shingle Style.

The cedar-shingles were stained in “several shades of Indian and claret reds.”168 The first and second floor plans of this six bedroom house are provided revealing how Lent used his favoured design features for his own house including a large entrance hall with a fireplace, and a butler’s pantry connecting the kitchen and the dining room (Figure 1.25). Also seen on the plan is a spacious porch on the front that wraps around the side of the house and connects to a porte-cochère. These features all combine with a properly designed floor-plan and all the latest modern conveniences including a steam heating system to create a dwelling that is both attractive and comfortable, the perfect combination of Lent’s idea of useful and beautiful in a desired country location.

Lent’s house in Cranford was probably built in about 1893. The view of the house in the 1894 Souvenir of Cranford reveals that the “plant house” is still under construction confirming

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166 Lent, Sensible, 5.
168 Lent, Sensible, 5
that the house was likely just recently completed. In *Sensible Suburban Residences* published in 1895 Lent states that, “this is not a recent house”\(^xviii\) when describing this house. At this time, Frank and Sarah Lent had four young children and their last child Theodore was born shortly after in 1894. Based on an article in the *Cranford Chronicle* on September 18, 1895 it appears that the Lent family did not live in this house for very long. The newspaper reports on a court case between Lent and Lawrence F. Cahill who was occupying Lent’s home on Cranford Avenue. No records have been uncovered to indicate when Lent sold the house. Unfortunately, like many of Lent’s houses, this one no longer exists.

These case studies in Cranford New, Jersey provide but three examples of the houses that Frank T. Lent designed as family homes in a commuter suburb outside New York City. They demonstrate Lent’s recognition that the home in the late nineteenth century was much more than just shelter from the elements for middle class consumers. They wanted a place to call their own, a place that satisfied the physical and emotional needs of their family, and a place that offered comfort, reflected their character and ultimately created an identity or vision of self. The style of the home also contributed to this creation of identity and Lent most often employed the popular Colonial Revival style as a way of satisfying the stylistic aspirations of his patrons.

Suburban growth was flourishing in the 1890s and Lent obviously recognized the opportunity in the commuter suburb of Cranford outside New York City and relocated here in the early 1890s to build a practice designing houses, and to participate in the suburban development of Roosevelt Manor within Cranford. He understood society’s desire to seek a refuge outside the city and he promoted the idea of the suburbs as the ideal location for a family home in his writings. He used this knowledge about the ideology of home to build what appears to be quite a successful...

\(^{169}\) Lent, *Sensible*, 5.
practice in Cranford judging from the size of his own home. Domestic problems around 1895 resulted in a change in Lent’s personal situation. He no longer focused his attention on Cranford and he spent the next five years working in New York City and Boston continuing to design suburban dwellings. Increasingly, he was receiving commissions for vacation homes, in areas such as the coast of Maine and the Atlantic Highlands on the New Jersey seashore where he even opened an office in 1894,\textsuperscript{170} which led to a third book and ultimately to a new life far from the suburbs of New York City.

Chapter 2 Retreat to the Wilderness: A Home in the Thousand Islands

“A cottage may not have the sumptuous accommodations of a mansion or hotel…but it will hold as much happiness as a palace and will strengthen family love in the proportion that hotel life often weakens it.”\footnote{Lent, \textit{Summer Homes and Camps}, 9.}

Frank T. Lent continues his near obsession with the theme of the home and its importance as a psychological and a physical space for the family in his third and final book \textit{Summer Homes and Camps containing Suggestions, Hints and Practical Ideas Sketches Plans, etc., for the Building of Summer Homes} (Boston, 1899). This time, however, he turns his attention to the vacation home viewing it as an extension of the principal residence. While pattern books and books about building houses were prevalent in the late nineteenth century, there appears to be very little published before 1900 with plans and advice for those seeking to build a vacation house, making Lent somewhat of a pioneer in the field. William S. Wicks published a book called \textit{Log Cabins How to Build and Furnish Them} in 1889 and A.J. Bickell published a book in 1878 that devoted a short section to seaside and campground cottages, but these are rare examples. After the turn of the twentieth century more books such as \textit{Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Homes} by William Phillips Comstock and Clarence Eaton Schermerhorn, that includes designs by Lent, were published on the subject. In the preface to \textit{Summer Homes and Camps} Lent applies his principles “to a class of buildings which is becoming more popular every year, and for which good ideas and good designs are in demand.”\footnote{Lent, \textit{Summer Homes and Camps}, [8].} In the tradition of his previous two books, Lent offers photographs, drawings and floor plans of buildings he has designed as examples of vacation residences. He discusses style, returning of course to his favoured Colonial Revival, and also offers practical information about construction methods and materials, and decoration.
In the introductory chapter titled “Summer Homes” Lent discusses how important a summer residence or cottage can be to the well-being of a family. He believes there is “magic” in the word home and “it is a mystic circle that surrounds virtues and comforts never known beyond its hallowed limits.” He incorporates a famous quote from John Howard Payne, “Mid pleasures and palaces through we may roam, Be it ever so humble there is no place like home,” and he includes an exterior and interior sketch of Payne’s humble country dwelling at East Hampton on Long Island to bolster the effect. Lent extends to the summer home the notion that the home is the shaper of moral character and identity, an idea he has promoted in his earlier works. He says, “Everyone wants some little place – some corner in this big world which can be called his own, and which in plan, design and color shall show his tastes and define his character.” For those fortunate enough, they could have a suitable dwelling in the suburbs as well as a summer home, a place where they can further take advantage of the pleasures of country life. And, according to Lent, more and more people were purchasing summer properties to bring together families that during most of the year were too busy to enjoy each other’s company. Lent stresses that it is important to design the vacation home with as much thought as one would devote to the design of a suburban residence.

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175 Lent, *Summer Homes*, 10.
In the second section Lent returns to the topic of beauty and utility in architecture that he had discussed in earlier publications, and he once again discusses the merits of the Colonial Revival style. He believes that the “old Colonial style” can be adapted to even the most modest structure. He stresses that the architect must consider the needs of the modern family and combine the beauty of the colonial style with utility in house design. The example he provides in the introductory section is especially interesting to the biographer trying to piece together Lent’s life. The photograph of the exterior of the house along with its floor plans are labelled “A Canadian House” with little else said about it (Figure 2.1). The house is a curious choice because it appears to be in a town or village setting and therefore is hardly a vacation home. It was thought by those researching Lent’s work that this might be Gananoque where Lent lived in the latter part of his life, but his book was published in 1899, and Lent did not settle in the area until sometime after the publication of this book, likely in 1900. Later in the book Summer Homes, Lent confirms that this Canadian home was an example of mail order architecture. He
writes, “It is a fact that client and architect in this case have not yet seen each other.”\textsuperscript{176} This house has recently been discovered in Picton, Ontario (see Appendix B). Lent offers other valuable biographical details in this section. He praises his “able instructor” William A. Potter, confirming his apprenticeship in the offices of architect William A. Potter (1842-1909), and he mentions a winter in the Adirondacks referring to time spent in a sanatorium convalescing, and a year or two on a ranch in Colorado. Lent offers very little personal information in his writings, therefore these details are useful when attempting to write an account of his life.

A reader expecting to find out about vacation properties would discover that a substantial portion of this book is devoted to houses designed for a suburban setting. Lent does state in the book that as much thought and consideration should go into the design and construction process of the vacation property, and he may have thought that the design principles, and construction methods and materials of the suburban residence were transferrable to a vacation property. Lent weaves into the book important considerations such as the ideal location, the shape and construction of the roof, fireproofing, style, and colour and decoration providing examples of suburban residences, such as a “Arlington Heights Home” built in a suburb outside Boston, as well as vacation properties that he had designed. This chapter will focus on the advice that Lent offers about the construction and design of the vacation property, and the examples of various vacation homes that he provides to understand how he translated his ideas from suburbia to the design of summer residences in the Thousand Islands.

Following the introductory paragraph Lent discusses the importance of selecting the right location for a property although he does use the example of a suburban house. He considers topics such as drainage and sanitation, and their importance for the health and well-being of the

\textsuperscript{176} Lent, \textit{Summer Homes}, 93.
inhabitant, or “inmates” as he calls them. A location that allows them to benefit from sunshine and proper ventilation in both summer and winter is also an important consideration for the potential home owner. He continues by considering the shape and construction of the roof. He discusses the importance of ensuring that the roof is impervious to the weather and then discusses the merits of different roof types. He suggests the hip roof is superior for its strength and its ability to withstand adverse weather conditions. He offers the example of the gambrel roof and states that it is the “quaintest and prettiest of all the different varieties,” but he cautions the reader that it is very difficult to build this type of roof without losing some of the space in the upper story rooms. This roofline appears frequently in Lent’s designs, for example the John W. Banker House in Cranford, New Jersey, and he returns to it when designing summer homes in the Thousand Islands. He also warns that the gambrel roof is the most expensive roof to construct. He continues on by writing about an “A” roof which presumably means a gable roof, and notes that this roof is often preferred if heavy snowfall is a concern. He briefly reviews construction methods and how practices change in different regions. He praises cedar shingles over slate or metal because they are pleasant to look at, can be stained for different results, and are cost effective. Lent uses the example of York Cliffs Cottage, a large shingle-clad, seven bedroom house on the coast of Maine (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 York Cliffs Cottage
(Source: Summer Homes and Camps)
Colour and decoration are the topic of Lent’s next chapter. He believes that knowledge about colour is lacking in architects and clients alike and bemoans that fact that more attention is not given to this topic in schools of architecture. He suggests that students of architecture study with a landscape painter, as he perhaps did in his early career, as a way to gain an understanding of the proper use of colour. And heaven forbid that a prospective homeowner consult a house painter or paint manufacturer about colour. Lent states that, “it is true that this assistance is largely resorted to and it is no wonder that our country is spotted up with howling, raw and ugly blotches of pigment!”177 As a landscape painter himself colour must have been very important to Lent and he felt strongly that expert advice should be sought on the matter. If expert advice was not available, he suggests covering the dwelling with cedar shingles and allowing them to weather naturally. Only “low, quiet tones” should be chosen for the trim. If stain is chosen for the shingles, the client is advised to avoid “all violent and noisy hues.” Colours should be selected to blend with rather than contrast with nature. Lent was also concerned about the interior decoration of the house and offered advice in this area. He advises restraint in colour choices and reminds the homeowner that “the color used in or on a house proclaims to the public the good or bad taste of its owner.” 178

177 Lent, Summer Homes, 36.
178 Lent, Summer Homes, 37.
A summer home on the Maine Coast is the subject of the next chapter (Figure 2.3). Lent begins by saying that although most people seeking a summer property are satisfied with small, inexpensive dwellings many now are seeking summer homes that are as complete and comfortable as their permanent residence. This could be seen as a marketing device as Lent would profit more from second home buyers who were interested in purchasing a large house such as this summer home in Maine. Lent used local field stone for the foundation and the exterior finish of the first storey and he praises its rustic appearance. Following his own advice, he stained the shingles that cover the rest of the house in a colour that harmonizes with the stone and by extension to the Maine landscape. The floor plans of the house are featured, and he relies on the central hall pattern of “many old Colonial plans” to organize the principal rooms and create the transition to the upper stories. The house contains the elements that Lent has described as necessary to the health and comfort of the family whether at home in the suburbs or on vacation on the coast of Maine. Lent has given attention to the site and has designed the house in a way that enables the inhabitants to take advantage of the view from inside or outside. He has used a hip roof as he recommended earlier in this work for its strength and ability to withstand the severe weather of the New England coast.
Lent provides two more examples of summer homes that are essentially in the same Colonial Revival style as his suburban dwellings but transported to a vacation property. “Bonnie Doon,” a summer home on the Jersey shore, is a large square centre hall plan with porches and balconies that would allow the residents to enjoy the ocean breezes (Figure 2.4). Lent calls this house “very interesting” but, with the exception of a widow’s walk on top of the house to give it a nautical air, the design does not vary from earlier work in the town of Cranford. The other sizeable house that Lent calls “A Jersey Cottage” looks even more like a suburban house (Figure 2.4).

In section sixteen Lent offers the example of “The Cliff Cottage” built on the coast of Maine (Figure 2.5). In the sketch for “The Cliff Cottage,” and indeed in many of Lent’s
illustrations, his talent as a landscape painter is apparent. He used his artistic skills to enhance his designs creating scenes in which the client could envision himself. For example, “The Cliff Cottage” is set in a rocky seaside setting with sail boats dotting the horizon in the distance. This scene complements the text in which he explains that the plan and design are well suited to a coastal location and the colouring harmonizes with the surroundings making it a “pleasant summer home.” Lent uses the gambrel roof he discusses earlier in the book, and features a gambrel gable on the Atlantic Ocean side of the property that opens up onto a balcony offering an opportunity to enjoy the view. He used a similar design for “A Cape Ann Cottage” (Figure 2.5). With this example somewhere near Gloucester, Massachusetts, he cautions the potential homeowner that unlike a suburban dwelling, the approach to a vacation property is often to the back of the house and care should be taken when choosing a design to ensure that this façade is attractive. In the Thousand Islands, Lent would have been presented with the challenge of creating designs that would be viewed from all sides. The photograph of the completed cottage shows some of the typical features that Lent includes in many of his designs such as the Serliana window and the Tuscan-columned porch. While this cottage with its shingled exterior and gambrel roof is attractive, it appears rather unbalanced, at least in the photograph, and the floor plan indicates that Lent has added a kitchen wing under a lower roof on to the side of the building. This feature is likely the influence of the New Jersey kitchen, a local building tradition that saw the kitchen built in a smaller wing off the side of the house.\footnote{Cranford TV35, “A Cruise through Cranford’s Architecture,” Google Video http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5292553084381678750# (accessed October 28, 2011)} He also adds an “eyebrow” or “whale eye ventilator”\footnote{Pierre du Prey, Mississauga, Rabbit Island, Ontario,” in Ah, Wilderness!, 84.} window on the roof to light and ventilate the attic, and multi-paned windows on the ground level giving the house an intentionally quaint appearance.
The final example, before Lent turns his attention to “camps,” is “An Ogunquit Cottage” also built on the coast of Maine (Figure 2.5). He describes this house as smaller, and simpler than his previous designs, but he stresses that it is not lacking in any of the conveniences of the larger vacation homes. Lent emphasizes the importance in all three examples of designing the house to take advantage of the setting and he accomplishes this by including porches and windows to highlight the magnificent views. He also advises his clients to refrain from over-designing the landscaping and allow what has been “excellently done by nature.” This advice is valuable in a setting such as the coast of Maine and would be equally sage in the remote Thousand Islands region.

Figure 2.6 Top Notch Camp and first floor plan; Colorado Camp
(Source: Summer Homes and Camps)

Figure 2.7 Forest Camp; Ausable Camp
(Source: Summer Homes and Camps)
In the last section of *Summer Homes and Camps*, Lent features four “camps.” The first camp, “Top Notch Camp,” was built in Keene Valley in the Adirondacks presumably early in Lent’s career (Figure 2.6). Lent has taken a square design and turned it forty-five degrees, and added a kitchen wing on the rear of the building. A porch provides the entrance into a great room that is highlighted by a rustic stone fireplace. Four bedrooms run off the great room, and there are three more bedrooms on the second story. The entire building was constructed of local spruce and the exterior was faced in unstained shingles. Lent provides advice on construction methods suitable to the setting and on how to make the construction as economical as possible.

The next example is a “Colorado Camp” built at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains (Figure 2.6). He includes the statement, “People in the East do not realize that ranch people sometimes have very good ideas in regard to architecture.” He does not explain what is meant by this statement, and the gambrel-roofed design featured is very much like his designs for houses in the East. The use of material is different, however. California redwood was used to construct this house and pine “from the Gulf” was used as flooring. The materials used may have given it a unique appearance when compared to houses built in Cranford, for example, but this is difficult to glean from the sketch. Lent devotes a page to economy in the design and construction of camps. He suggests that it is important to create designs and specifications that local contractors and suppliers can manage. It is also practical to design with local materials. He remarks that it would be unwise to use pine from Georgia for flooring in a camp on the St. Lawrence River. The example he uses is interesting because it suggest that in 1899 when this book was published he had already turned his attention to the Thousand Islands region. His final two examples are a “Forest Camp” and “Ausable Camp” (Figure 2.7). The “Ausable Camp” must have been located in the Adirondacks where the Ausable River and Ausable Lake are located.

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181 Lent, *Summer Homes*, 86.
In his last book, Lent offers advice regarding design considerations for vacation homes in the country. Based on the examples in the book, he had been designing vacation properties for some time, and in a number of varied settings including the New Jersey coast, in the Adironacks and on the coast of Maine. He translated the same principles and characteristic features of the Colonial Revival that he used in his suburban homes, including the shingled exterior, the Tuscan columns, and the sweeping porches, to his plans for vacation homes whether grand or modest in size. Around 1900, shortly after publishing *Summer Homes and Camps*, Lent relocated to Gananoque, Ontario, referred to locally as the Gateway to the Thousand Islands. In a sense he was starting over again with a new wife and a new practice. His commissions while practicing in Gananoque were varied, but much of his work was focused on vacation architecture allowing him to translate his ideas and his own style to the scenic Thousand Islands region that was developing into a thriving vacation destination.

For well over a century the Thousand Islands, a picturesque stretch of islands along the St. Lawrence River, has provided a recreational paradise for vacationers seeking to escape the confines of the city and rigors of everyday life. In the 1870s, as the area became more accessible by boat and rail, parcels of land including island properties were offered up for sale.  


Residents of cities such as Boston, Pittsburgh and New York City fled the congestion and pollution of urban life for a chance to enjoy the fresh air and tranquility of this scenic and undeveloped area. 183 Over the next few decades structures ranging from modest cabins to grand summer retreats, resort hotels and even pseudo-castles were built in a variety of late Victorian styles. Architectural commissions were plentiful and, although there were a few exceptions such

as William Newlands (1853-1926) of Kingston who designed Cedar Cliff on Wolfe Island,\(^{184}\) most of the architects identified thus far who were commissioned to design vacation and resort architecture were from American cities and were not permanent residents of the area. Frank T. Lent was an exception to this trend. A publication titled *Souvenir of Gananoque and the Thousand Islands* published by Freeman Britton in 1901 highlights a few of Lent’s completed works. In this publication Lent states his intent to settle in the Gananoque area and devote himself to work in the St. Lawrence River area.\(^ {185}\) Lent’s reasons for relocating to Gananoque are unclear, although it has been suggested that personal problems could have been a factor.\(^ {186}\) He may have been influenced by articles such as the one featured in the *Gananoque Reporter* in 1901 that stated, “The building boom which set in among the Thousand Islands a year or more ago continues to thrive and it promises to assume greater proportions during the coming winter.”\(^ {187}\) Lent may have recognized an opportunity to profit especially with this building boom taking place in the Thousand Islands. It could be argued on the basis of his work in Cranford, New Jersey that he excelled at recognizing and capitalizing on an opportunity, and he saw such an opportunity in the Thousand Islands.

The development of the Thousand Islands region was well underway by the time Lent arrived in Gananoque around the turn of the century. Many islands on the American side of the St. Lawrence River had been sold earlier in the century,\(^ {188}\) but it was not until after the Civil War ended in 1865 that the area really began to thrive. The growth of the burgeoning Thousand Islands vacation culture can be attributed to three factors. The first factor that contributed to the

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\(^{185}\) *Souvenir of Gananoque,* [45].

\(^{186}\) Pierre du Prey, interview, Kingston, ON, December 8, 2011.

\(^{187}\) *Gananoque Reporter,* November 9, 1901.

\(^{188}\) Smith, *First Summer People,* 81.
growth in the popularity of the area was the exposure it received after President Ulysses S. Grant visited George M. Pullman at his island retreat in 1872. The second factor was the increase in leisure time that was afforded to the middle class in the later part of the nineteenth century. And thirdly, improvements to transportation and the building of a new rail line by the New York Central and the Hudson River Railroad Company allowed vacationers to more easily spend their leisure time in remote areas such as the Thousand Islands.

On the Canadian side of the border development was a bit slower and it took almost forty years from the time the Alnwick Band, the aboriginal owners of the land, surrendered the islands to the Department of the Interior in 1856, before the first islands were sold. The Government

Figure 2.8 Poster advertising sale in the Thousand Islands

Source: First Summer People

189 Smith, First Summer People, 82.
encountered resistance from farmers who had settled on the islands and claimed the property for
their own, and residents along the shores of the St. Lawrence River who felt the islands opposite
the mainland were common property. After three surveys and much negotiation with interested
parties, the first islands were sold in 1894. The list of islands for sale was published in a book by
Walter Beatty of Delta, Ontario, the last surveyor to work for the Government. Posters to
advertise the region were created, and advertisements were also taken out in newspapers in
Montreal and Toronto and in American cities such as New York and Boston (Figure 2.8). This
proved successful, and in one year over one hundred and seventy islands were sold.  

192 Smith, First Summer People, 91.
Dear Sir:

On or about Oct 10 and through Mr. Goulette (Guardian of Islands) of this time, application was made by Fannie E. Deane for Island 73.13 and a 25% payment made thereon. And on Nov 5 (about) said Mrs. Deane applied for 34 B, 34 B. Lent for the Pumps and 34 C, and F. B. Deane applied for 34 E and 34 F. And on these a 25% payment was made.

I am requesting by these people to write and ascertain if they are not entitled to receipt for their payments from your department - or some acknowledgment or statement of same?

Mr. George Carter of Storl ih, Mass. would like to apply for 34 I. If same is unused will you put me on this as well as the other matter above.

Yours sincerely, Frank T. Lent
Another group of islands was put up for sale in 1901 and this is when Frank T. Lent, by now relocated to Gananoque, took advantage of the offer and purchased Islands 14C and 14D in the Admiralty Group not far from Gananoque.\(^{193}\) The correspondence related to this sale and many others has been preserved and digitized by Library and Archives Canada (Figure 2.9). Included in these files are other purchases made by Lent, his wife Fannie Deane Lent, his father David B. Lent and F.B. Deane, Mrs. Lent’s father and a lawyer from Boston. Fannie Deane Lent bought Island 73B and Island 34B for $175 in 1904. Island 34B is described as one-third of an acre and it forms two islands at high water. The small size may not have permitted a dwelling to be constructed nor would islands 34E and 34C, measuring 1/60 of an acre and 1/40 of an acre respectively, that David B. Lent purchased at the same time.\(^{194}\) These islands are off the east side of an island known as The Punts, some distance to the south of Gananoque, and it would be advantageous for the owner of The Punts to own these smaller surrounding islands or, in this case, have them owned by family members. F.B. Deane applied to purchase The Punts along with Island 34D in 1901, and although it appears he took possession of the property, it is unclear whether he built on it. In *The First Summer People*, Susan Smith reports that The Punts were sold to F. B Bourne in 1904,\(^{195}\) but evidence from the Library and Archives files listed above confirms that F. B. Deane did purchase these islands. Mr. J.D.W. Darling of Lansdowne, Ontario wrote to the Government claiming he was the owner of the island\(^{196}\) and there was more

\(^{193}\) Frank T. Lent to Department of Indian Affairs, application, September 10, 1901, Alnwick Agency – application of Frank T. Lent to purchase Islands 14C and 14D 24A in the St. Lawrence River, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds, Library and Archives Canada, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca (accessed February 23, 2011)

\(^{194}\) Frank T. Lent to Department of Indian Affairs, application, December 1, 1901, Alnwick Agency – Sale of islands known as The Punts and several other small islands in the St. Lawrence River to Mrs. Fannie (Deane) Lent, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds, Library and Archives Canada, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca (accessed February 23, 2011)

\(^{195}\) Smith, *First Summer People*, 130.

\(^{196}\) J.D.W. Darling to Department of Indian Affairs, letter, April 3, 1903, Alnwick Agency – Sale of islands known as The Punts..., www.collectionscanada.gc.ca (accessed February 23, 2011)
controversy later in 1916 when real estate agent Sidney Adams of Gananoque, representing a client Mr. Charles Zaring of New York City, contacted the Government about a structure that had been erected on The Punts. The letter also states that Mr. Zaring had plans for a cottage and other structures that he was intending to build suggesting the F.B. Deane had never built on the island.  

Frank T. Lent built a cottage called “Wee Rocks” over the winter of 1902 on islands 14C and 14D that he bought in 1901 (Figure 2.10). These islands were called La Vignette.

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197 Sidney Adams to Department of Indian Affairs, letter, September 13, 1916, Alnwick Agency – Sale of islands known as The Punts... (accessed February 23, 2011)
198 Gananoque Reporter, May 10, 1902.
Islands, although they are also referred to as The Sisters\textsuperscript{199}, and were located off the south west coast of Macdonald Island near Gananoque. The larger island was one-fifth of an acre and described as a “rocky islet; evergreen scrub; with reef lying up stream and between it and Hog (Macdonald) Island.”\textsuperscript{200} Lent built a modest structure, but still included some of his characteristic motifs such as the simple Tuscan columns on the porch, and diamond-paned windows (Figure 2.11). A period postcard shows a small white structure with a pale green hip roof on what appears to be a fairly large island. Closer inspection reveals that the large island is actually a separate island behind Lent’s cottage. His islands are indeed small. There is also a boat house on the main island and a bridge connects the two. A guest house occupies the second island. While living in Gananoque, Lent would reside on the island for the summer using this as a home base to conduct his business and oversee projects being constructed on other islands.\textsuperscript{201}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{figure2.11.jpg}
\caption{Wee Rocks, Porch}
\end{figure}

(Photograph: Pierre du Prey, Source: Ah, Wilderness! website)

\textsuperscript{199} “Revised Main Table, Pollack’s Gazetteer of the Thousand Islands,: Thousand Islands Life http://www.thousandislandslife.com/Portals/Properties/TI-Main-Table-May-7-2009final.htm (accessed May 9, 2012)

\textsuperscript{200} Smith, \textit{First Summer People}, 120.

\textsuperscript{201} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, July 18, 1903.
Lent’s obituary in the *Gananoque Reporter* on December 13, 1919 reported that he returned to “Wee Rocks” every summer after he moved back to Massachusetts,\(^{202}\) but documentation in Library and Archives Canada dated 1908 suggests that he no longer owned the property. In a letter from Lent to the Department of Indian Affairs he writes, “I wish to apply for Island 29E also island 34F. I bought two islands from you 6 years ago (14C & 14D) improved same to extent of $2500 and then sold same so that at this date I do not own any islands. Such being the case, can I buy the two above mentioned in my own name or not.”\(^{203}\) Was Lent only renting “Wee Rocks” for his summer holidays? An entry in the Ontario Land Registry Offices books for Leeds County reveals that Lent did sell the property in 1902 about the same time he completed the cottage, but the purchaser was in fact his wife-to-be Fannie C. Deane. The property did remain in the family and the Lents summered there after they left Gananoque. Mrs. Lent kept the property long after the death of her husband and it was eventually sold in 1940 to Marcelle E. Raisbeck.\(^{204}\)

\(^{202}\) *Gananoque Reporter*, December 13, 1919.

\(^{203}\) Frank T. Lent to Department of Indian Affairs, letter, February 26, 1908, Alnwick Agency – Application of Frank T. Lent to purchase Islands 27E and 34F in the St. Lawrence River, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds, Library and Archives Canada, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca (accessed February 28, 2011)

\(^{204}\) Island 14D, Land Registry Leeds Landsdowne (MF 1596), Ontario Land Registry Offices collection, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
While Lent’s own vacation property was of modest proportions, he designed many properties on islands that were much grander. Compiling a list of the homes he designed in the Thousand Island region is a work in progress just as it is for properties in Cranford, New Jersey and other areas of the United States. Information has been uncovered in primary source material that allows for the attribution of properties for which Frank T. Lent’s involvement was not previously known (see Appendix C). Unlike his practice in Cranford where he specialized primarily in suburban homes, Lent, who appears to be the only practicing architect in Gananoque
at the time, was involved in other building projects and worked for prominent members of the community. For example, the *Gananoque Reporter* reported that Charles Macdonald commissioned Lent to design a wall along the St. Lawrence River waterfront in Gananoque in November 1902. The same article states that Lent recently purchased a nearby lot on the St. Lawrence River and was building a “commodious” boat house and had laid the foundation for a residence that would face Market Street. Mr. Macdonald must have been pleased with Lent’s work because he later commissioned him to design the Clock Tower, a gift to the city in memory of his father William Stone Macdonald (Figure 2.12). The contract for this large eighty-five foot high tower was awarded to local contractors Mitchell & Wilson with whom Lent worked on many projects. During the design process, Lent consulted local Kingston architect Joseph Power of the firm Power & Son of Kingston. In 1902 Lent also designed and oversaw alterations and additions to the Macdonald home known as Blinkbonny which still survives.

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205 *Gananoque Reporter*, November 1, 1902.
206 *Gananoque Reporter*, July 18, 1903.
210 Mitchell and Wilson and Charles Macdonald, contract, September 2, 1902, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, Ont.
During his years in Gananoque, Frank T. Lent was involved in several other projects for commercial buildings in Gananoque and the surrounding area. In 1904 he was commissioned to design the club house for the Gananoque Yacht Club on the St. Lawrence River and again the contractors Mitchell & Wilson were awarded the contract. Not only did Lent design and oversee the construction of the Gananoque Yacht Club, but he was an active member after it opened. He served on the committee that drew up the constitution and by-laws and was elected vice-commodore in the Club’s first year of operation. The Club opened in the summer of 1904 and, although the design pictured in a period postcard appears to be unremarkable, Lent’s work was praised by the Club members (Figure 2.13). The *Gananoque Reporter* featured an article after the first dance was held at the Club and wrote, “The club house is a credit to the

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211 *Gananoque Reporter*, April 2, 1904.
212 *Gananoque Reporter*, March 26, 1904.
213 *Gananoque Reporter*, April 23, 1904.
town and particularly to Mr. Frank T. Lent the architect and the Club is under a debt of gratitude to Mr. Lent for his advice and assistance in many matters which were entirely outside his duties as architect.\textsuperscript{214} Lent was an avid yachtsman and won several races in the Thousand Islands.\textsuperscript{215}

Through his involvement in boating and the Gananoque Yacht Club Lent would have met many potential clients. One such client is Walter T. Sampson, an accountant from England\textsuperscript{216} who worked at the Ontario Steel Products, a manufacturing company in Gananoque. The \textit{Gananoque Reporter} often reported on trips that Walter T. Sampson and his wife Pauline were taking including a trip to British Columbia and California in February 1903\textsuperscript{217} and a six week trip to Florida and Bahamas in Spring 1904.\textsuperscript{218} This would suggest that the Sampsons were prosperous members of the community. Walter T. Sampson was also on the executive committee of the Gananoque Yacht Club.\textsuperscript{219} In 1905 Walter T. Sampson proposed the idea that a bolt factory be constructed in Gananoque, the town council approved, and Sampson turned to architect Lent to design the building.\textsuperscript{220}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{image}
\caption{St. Paul's Anglican Church, Elgin Ontario (photo: author)}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{214} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, July 23, 1904.
\textsuperscript{215} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, September 10, 1904.
\textsuperscript{216} Census of Canada, 1901 \texttt{Ancestry.ca}  http://www.ancestry.ca (Accessed December 6, 2011)
\textsuperscript{217} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, February 28, 1903.
\textsuperscript{218} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, March 26, 1904.
\textsuperscript{219} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, April 23, 1904.
\textsuperscript{220} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, June 10, 1905.
Another project that Frank T. Lent was involved in was the design of St. Paul’s Anglican Church in the small village of Elgin north of Gananoque. Elgin resident and store owner John R. Dargavel commissioned Lent to design a church in 1904 on land that Dargavel had donated to the village. Lent designed a small church, his only known commission for a church, with a square bell tower (Figure 2.14). The church was completed in December 1905 and the first service celebrated was on Christmas Eve.\textsuperscript{221} Lent was also involved in another ecclesiastical commission when he initially arrived in Gananoque. The first mention of Frank T. Lent in the \textit{Gananoque Reporter} occurred on Saturday June 1, 1901 when it reported that the cornerstone was being laid for a new parish house for Christ Church. The architect was Frank T. Lent and the contractor was Mitchell & Wilson.\textsuperscript{222} Based on existing evidence, it appears that most of Lent’s work during this period was on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence River. He was, however, commissioned by the town of Clayton, a small town on the St. Lawrence River in New York State, to design an opera house reported in the \textit{Clayton Eagle} on July 25, 1903 as a convention hall. It described the building as three stories high and built of brick. The first two stories contained stores and an opera house, and the third floor was a Masonic hall.\textsuperscript{223} The hall was constructed on Water Street by builder George Kenyon\textsuperscript{224} and is still operating today as a performing arts hall. Lent may have designed other buildings on the mainland on the American side of the border, but no documentation has been found to confirm other commissions. Lent

\textsuperscript{222} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, June 1, 1901.
\textsuperscript{223} \textit{Clayton Eagle}, June 25, 1903.
also engaged in some surveying work for Mr. James Dempster who was dividing his property on the St. Lawrence River into building lots.\textsuperscript{225}

\textbf{Figure 2.15} Sleepy Hollow Bed & Breakfast

(photo: author)

\textbf{Figure 2.16} Postcard: F.J. Skinner and J. B. Turner residence

(Source: Douglas Rombough postcard collection Queen’s University Archives)
In addition to these commercial and ecclesiastic endeavours, Frank T. Lent was also involved in several residential commissions on the main land. Perhaps the most colourful example of his residential work in Gananoque is the Skinner House, now the Sleepy Hollow Bed & Breakfast on King Street West. In May 1903 Frederick J. Skinner, a factory owner and politician purchased the house at the corner of King and Church Streets from Mr. W. H. Britton with the intention of removing the existing house and building a new residence, designed by Frank T. Lent, on the property. Today the house at the corner of King and Church Streets is a noticeable building in the architectural landscape of Gananoque with its imposing tower, wrap around veranda and its strikingly painted exterior (Figure 2.15).

On first glance it is difficult to believe that this house could be attributed to Frank T. Lent who wrote about the use of color on the exterior and interior of house in all of his books emphasizing the notion of harmony with the surroundings. In Sensible Suburban Residences he recommended “as to color treatment, simplicity and quiet tones should be the rule.” In the book Summer Homes and Camps Lent devotes a chapter to colour and decoration. He writes, “Do not use more than one color” and “the use of several colors produces an effect generally jarring to the eye.” He goes on to write, “Do not forget you are trying to fit an object in with natural color and beauty, and that the proposition is one of the most difficult that man has to contend with.” The current exterior of this house contrasts Lent’s ideas about the use of colour. Based on his written work he would not have chosen such strong colours. A period postcard reveals that the exterior finishes were in keeping with Lent’s opinion on colour when the property was built in the early twentieth century (Figure 2.16). The clapboard siding was stained a pale grey shade, the trim was white and the roof was a shade of reddish brown. These finishes are typical of

Lent’s work as are other features of the house on King Street including the tower that he had previously used on many designs including the “Modified Colonial” in *Sensible Suburban Residences*. The Sleepy Hollow Bed and Breakfast provide excellent examples of some of the interior features that are characteristic of Lent’s work including a large wood panelled entrance hall and a number of lovely stained glass windows. Another commission of note is the Bermingham-Macklem House on Barrie Street in Kingston that currently houses the offices of the Queen’s University Faculty of Health Sciences. Lent was commissioned to add the porch and renovate the interior of the house which is a well-preserved example of his interior design (see Appendix B).

![Postcard: Admiralty Group](Source: Douglas Rombough postcard collection, Queen's University Archives)

**Figure 2.17** Postcard: Admiralty Group

It could be argued that Frank T. Lent’s greatest contribution to architecture in the Thousand Islands region is his domestic work on various islands mostly within close proximity to Gananoque in the Admiralty Group of islands (Figure 2.17). Various sources including the *Gananoque Reporter*, a recent donation of Mitchell & Wilson documents to Queen’s University...
Archives and published works provide clues that help piece together Lent’s involvement. Lent’s earlier published works are very useful in identifying Lent’s buildings, but unfortunately Lent did not publish anything after *Summer Homes and Camps* in 1899, shortly before he relocated to Gananoque. The architectural historian must rely on primary sources and attempt to connect short entries in the *Gananoque Reporter*, for example, to cottages on islands on the St. Lawrence River. This can be challenging, for example, an entry may read, “Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Sampson took possession of their island residence on Wednesday”\(^{227}\) but the name of the island is not provided. Another entry in the *Gananoque Reporter* in April 1903 reports that “Architect Lent has prepared plans for a handsome cottage which Dr. Mabee will have erected on Tremont Island.”\(^{228}\) Dr. Mabee was a local dentist, but this is the only reference so far discovered regarding the commission of a cottage making its identification difficult. And, occasionally, primary sources can be deceiving, for example a 1901 publication titled *Souvenir of Gananoque* implies that Lent was responsible for the Benson’s summer home Mississagua on Rabbit Island,\(^{229}\) however Robert Findlay of Montreal was the architect who designed the spacious summer home. The home was completed in July 1900, but a tragic fire destroyed much of the house before the family had a chance to enjoy it. A drawing in the possession of the current owners of the property includes a note “REVISED BY F.T. L.”\(^{230}\) confirming that Lent had a role in the rebuilding of the house, and this explains why he included it in the list of projects in his advertisement in the *Souvenir of Gananoque*.

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\(^{227}\) *Gananoque Reporter*, May 9, 1903.

\(^{228}\) *Gananoque Reporter*, April 4, 1903.

\(^{229}\) *Souvenir of Gananoque*, [45].

\(^{230}\) Chelsea Armstrong, Mississagua, Rabbit Island, Ontario,” in *Ah, Wilderness!*, guest curated by Pierre de la Ruffinère du Prey (Kingston, ON: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 2004), 82.
Figure 2.18 Dr. E. L. Atkinson’s summer cottage

(Source: Souvenir of Gananoque)

Figure 2.19 Dr. E.L. Atkinson’ summer cottage: first story plan,

(Source: Ah, Wilderness!)
Another summer residence designed by Frank T. Lent included in the publication

*Souvenir of Gananoque* is the home of Edward L. Atkinson on Big White Calf Island in the Admiralty Group near Gananoque.231 Although most of the drawings and correspondence of Frank T. Lent’s office are thought to have been destroyed, drawings for the Atkinson residence were discovered in a private collection. These drawings, from one of two nearly identical sets, were on display in an exhibition at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen’s University in 2004 in Kingston Ontario that was guest curated by Professor Pierre du Prey of the Department of Art at Queen’s University. This exhibition was held in part as the result of research that was conducted by students taking a seminar class taught by Professor du Prey. The accompanying exhibition catalogue includes a well-researched entry on the cottage on Big White Calf Island by David B. McLay, student in Professor du Prey’s seminar class and Professor Emeritus in the Department of Physics at Queen’s University. Professor McLay holds a Master of Arts degree in Art History from Queen’s University. Not only does Dr. McLay provide a thorough analysis of the building, but he provides valuable information about the architect from a conversation he had with Peter van Lent, grandson of Frank T. Lent.

Dr. Atkinson was a physician who sold his practice in 1879 and became a businessman. He co-owned the St. Lawrence Wire & Steel Co. on Mill Street in Gananoque. His wife Clara had purchased Big White Calf Island on August 3, 1898. The Atkinsons hired Frank T. Lent to design their summer home in about 1900 probably shortly after Lent arrived in Gananoque (Figure 2.18).232 This would have been one of Lent’s earliest commissions in the Thousand Islands. The design is similar to examples in his recently published book *Summer Homes and

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231 *Souvenir of Gananoque*, [25].
Camps such as the “Cape Ann Cottage” with its gable end and kitchen wing jutting out from the side of the house although Lent changed the roof line and the dormers on the Atkinson house (Figure 2.5). The dormers on the Atkinson residence are reminiscent of the De Witt house in Cranford New Jersey (Figure 1.5). Other design elements characteristic to Lent include the Tuscan columns on the porches that surround most of the cottage providing views of the water and surrounding islands, the shingled exterior and the white trim. The floor plan reproduced in *Ah, Wilderness!* reveals similarities to the “Cape Ann Cottage” with its spacious great room comprised of a dining room and hall with a large fireplace (Figure 2.19). In both of these examples Lent has scaled down his typical floor plan so that the hall, considered the entry point in his large colonial houses in the suburbs, has become the principal living area. The staircase is much simpler than those he designed in town. The floor plan of the Atkinson house verifies that the wing on the side of the house is the kitchen echoing the plan of the “Cape Ann Cottage.” Not only is this trait a nod to traditional architecture of New Jersey, but it would have been practical to have a separate cooking wing to prevent the main cottage from heating up.

Although Lent certainly brought to his work in the Thousand Islands the Colonial Revival style he used in the suburbs of New Jersey, he was not the first person to introduce the style to the region. There are certainly examples that predate Lent’s arrival such as Neh Mahbin by architects Van Campen & Taylor built in 1893.\(^{233}\) Other examples such as the cottage on Sunnyside Island designed for Samuel E. Brown by architect Henry Janeway Hardenburgh (1847-1918) were being built at the same time that Lent was starting to build in the area confirming the typical nature of Lent’s designs (Figure 2.20). Blueprints for the Samuel E.

\(^{233}\) du Prey, *Ah, Wilderness!* 19.
Brown house\textsuperscript{234} echo the colonial influence used by Lent on the Atkinson cottage, for example the use of a columned porch and a gambrel roof.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{brown_house.png}
\caption{Samuel A. Brown cottage Sunnyside Island}
\end{figure}

(Photograph: Pierre du Prey, Source: Ah, Wilderness! website)

In an advertisement that Frank T. Lent’s placed in the booklet \textit{A Souvenir of Gananoque}, and in another he took out in the \textit{Gananoque Reporter} in 1902,\textsuperscript{235} he refers to two projects near Rockport, a small community on the St. Lawrence River east of Gananoque. The first project is for Dr. Egbert Le Fevre a physician from New York City and dean of the New York University and Bellevue Hospital Medical College.\textsuperscript{236} Dr. Le Fevre owned property on Manhattan Island near Alexandria Bay on the American side of the St. Lawrence River.\textsuperscript{237} A souvenir publication from 1895 titled \textit{The Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence River from Kingston and Cape Vincent to Morristown and Brockville} lists Dr. Le Fevre as a member of the Thousand Island

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{gananoque1902} \textit{Gananoque Reporter}, June 19, 1902.
\end{thebibliography}
Club and living on Manhattan Island.238 This is about five years before Lent relocated to the region suggesting that Lent did not design the Le Fevre summer home, but may have done renovations or additions.

D.F. Fairchild is another patron listed in the Souvenir of Gananoque. Mr. Fairchild was an industrialist from Leavenworth, Kansas. He owned a substantial property on Hill Island, a large island east of Gananoque. It has been suggested that Lent was hired by Fairchild to design the summer home and the construction company Mitchell & Wilson were responsible for building the home.239 An 1895 publication The Routes Pursued by the Excursion Steamers upon the St. Lawrence River contains the following passage, “at the foot of “Hill” Island, the charming villa with its tasteful surroundings of D. F. Fairchild of Leavenworth Kansas classically named Fairjoline.” 240 This book was also written about five years before Lent started building in the area again suggesting that he may have been involved in renovations or additions, or the construction of outbuildings. The property was sold to Sara E. Batterman of Brooklyn, New York in 1901.241 Sara E. Batterman was the wife of merchant Henry Batterman.242 The property became known as Batterman’s Point and it has also been called Battlyn Island.243 The house was demolished by Parks Canada in the 1980s.244 Among the Mitchell & Wilson documents in the Queen’s University Archive is a telegram dated December 16, 1901 from

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238 The Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence River from Kingston and Cape Vincent to Morristown and Brockville (Watertown, N.Y.: Jno. A. Haddock, 1895), 243.
239 Smith, First Summer People, 168.
240 The Routes Pursued by the Excursion Steamers upon the St. Lawrence River (Clayton, NY: Jno. A. Haddock and J. H. Durham, 1895), 39.
242 The Tourists’ Guide of the Wonderful St. Lawrence with the Scenic Gems (Beaver Fall, NY: Albert H. Smith, 1909), 20.
243 Smith, Thousand Island Life.
244 Smith, Thousand Island Life.
Henry Batterman to Frank T. Lent with the message, “build ice house” and an inscription “keep this FTL.”²⁴⁵ There is also a letter from Mitchell & Wilson to Henry Batterman stating that they will remodel the house at Fairjoline to the plans and specification drawn up by architect Lent for seventy-two hundred dollars.²⁴⁶ This was a considerable amount of money in 1901 suggesting the remodeling was extensive. Lent’s advertisement in 1902 in the Gananoque Reporter also makes reference to the work he did for Henry Batterman. It reads, “He is now engaged on the residence, keeper’s house, power house water works, etc. for Mr. Henry Batterman in the Canadian channel above Rockport.” It would be easy to infer from this passage that Lent was the original architect of the Batterman residence.

In addition to well-publicized and grand projects such as the Gananoque Clock Tower and the Gananoque Yacht Club, Frank T. Lent was involved in more utilitarian projects such as the secondary residences, outbuildings and renovations for clients such as the Battermans. The Mitchell & Wilson files include documents that refer to several smaller projects for property owners in the Thousand Islands. A contract between Mitchell & Wilson and Ludlow Ogden of New York City lists Lent as the architect for alterations and additions to his cottage on Island 3 also known as Oakden Island.²⁴⁷ Two years later Lent designed a boat house for Mr. Ogden.²⁴⁸ Another project that Lent was involved in was the construction of a farm house on Hickory Island for Mr. John Walter Wood II in 1906.²⁴⁹ The Woods owned a large property on Hickory

²⁴⁵ Henry Batterman to Frank T. Lent, telegram, December 16, 1901, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, Ont.
²⁴⁶ Mitchell and Wilson and Mr. H. Batterman, letter, November 4, 1901, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
²⁴⁷ Mitchell and Wilson and Ludlow Ogden, contract, October 18, 1905, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
²⁴⁸ Mitchell and Wilson and Ludlow Ogden, contract, February 19, 1907, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
²⁴⁹ Mitchell and Wilson and J. Walter Wood, contract, October 1, 1906, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
Island and their principal residence was designed by the firm Warren, Whetmore & Morgan of New York City. Another building on their property was a bunkhouse, “Aux Trois Freres,” designed by their son and aspiring architect John Walter Wood III (1900-1953) who designed an expansive summer home on nearby Niagara Island for Sherman Pratt about twenty-five years later. It is interesting to speculate that Frank T. Lent and John Walter Wood III may have crossed paths at this time. Possibly the architect had an influence on the young Wood’s choice of future career.

Figure 2.21 Postcard: Camp 1812, F.A. Reed
(Source: Douglas Rombough postcard collection Queen’s University Archives)

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252 Thomson, Ah, Wilderness!, 106.
Lent continued to take on projects in the Thousand Islands after he moved back to the United States in 1909 perhaps overseeing these during his annual summer retreat in Canada. For example, a contract between Mitchell & Wilson and Dr. Newbolt Jones of Toronto dated September 1, 1915 for a boat house at his cottage on Howe Island, a large island west of Gananoque, named Frank T. Lent as the architect.\(^{253}\) Boat houses were important in the Thousand Islands from a functional and aesthetic perspective. Boats were the means of transportation for island dwellers and a well-built boat house was a necessity. As a visible part of the property, the appearance of the boat house would have been of concern to the cottage owner, and these boat houses often became important features of the architectural landscape.

Another letter in the Mitchell & Wilson file dated August 23, 1909 is an agreement between the firm and Fred A. Reed owner of a property called Camp 1812 in the Thousand Islands (Figure 2.21).\(^{254}\) The agreement states that Mitchell and Wilson will build additions and make alterations according to the plans and specifications of Frank T. Lent. These commissions would have been valuable additions to the property of island owners and would have also been important to Lent’s business, and in some cases would have led to a more lucrative commission for a summer home on an island in the Thousand Islands as was the case with the commission for Nokomis Lodge.

Over the course of his years in Gananoque, Lent was commissioned by William H. Nichols of New York City to improve his property Nokomis Lodge on Howe Island. Documents that survive in the Mitchell and Wilson fonds at Queen’s University Archive reveal that Lent was

\(^{253}\) Mitchell and Wilson and Dr. Newbolt Jones, contract, September 1, 1915, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.

\(^{254}\) Mitchell and Wilson and Fred A. Reed, written agreement, August 23, 1909, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
hired to make additions and alterations to Nokomis Lodge in January 1903,\textsuperscript{255} and later that year he was commissioned to design a greenhouse and horse block.\textsuperscript{256} In 1904 Lent designed a barn to be built on Mr. Nichols’ property.\textsuperscript{257} Tragically, Nokomis Lodge was destroyed by fire in 1914. Nichols turned to architect Lent, who was then living in Sterling, Massachusetts, to design a replacement for the original structure.\textsuperscript{258} He designed a large ten thousand square foot, fourteen bedroom house that was one of his most substantial domestic building projects. In plan it was butterfly-shaped marking a significant departure in design from other known buildings by Lent. It also differed stylistically in that it lacked the colonial detailing that was so prevalent in Lent’s other work in the Thousand Islands. Tragedy struck once again in 2003 and the house was burned beyond salvage.\textsuperscript{259} The smaller of two boat houses is still standing and like its larger mate shows features that Lent typically employed such as the stained shingles, white trim and dormer windows (Figure 2.22). This commission was not the only time that Lent was hired to design a summer home after he left the area. He was commissioned to design a cottage and boat house on Huckleberry Island for Mr. Frank T. Becker in 1915.\textsuperscript{260} The next year he designed a vacation retreat at Mohawk Head, Hay Island for Frederick Lewis of Norfolk, Virginia.\textsuperscript{261} Unfortunately, other documentation has not been found about these cottages. Earlier, while still

\textsuperscript{255} Mitchell and Wilson and William H. Nichols, contract, January 18, 1903, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
\textsuperscript{256} Mitchell and Wilson and William H. Nichols, contract, September 26, 1903, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
\textsuperscript{257} Mitchell and Wilson and William H. Nichols, contract, September 6, 1904, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
\textsuperscript{258} Summer Harris, “Nokomis Lodge, Howe Island, Ontario,” in \textit{Ah, Wilderness!}, guest curated by Pierre de la Ruffinère du Prey (Kingston, ON: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 2004), 88.
\textsuperscript{260} Mitchell and Wilson and Frank T. Becker, contract, October 15, 1915, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
\textsuperscript{261} Mitchell and Wilson and Frederick Lewis, contract, October 30, 1916, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.

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living in the area, he designed several cottages for which sufficient information is available to allow case studies of the buildings.

Figure 2.22 Nokomis Lodge large boat house, Howe Island
(Photograph: Pierre du Prey, Source: Ah, Wilderness! website)

Figure 2.23 Postcard: Summer Home W.T. Sampson
(Source: Douglas Rombough postcard collection Queen’s University Archives)
Case Study: Walter T. Sampson Cottage

One of Lent’s earliest commissions in the area was a summer home for businessman W.T. Sampson. As previously noted Walter T. Sampson and his wife Pauline were prominent members of the community, and the fact that their frequent travels abroad and parties were reported in the *Gananoque Reporter* would suggest that they were well off financially. A contract between Walter T. Sampson and Mitchell & Wilson dated August 27, 1900 lists Frank T. Lent as the architect. This could imply that Lent was already in Gananoque and a notation on the contract may confirm this hypothesis. On the contract Lent’s Boston address has been crossed out and Gananoque has been penciled in. This is a clue that would suggest that Lent had relocated to Gananoque by August 1900.

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262 Frank T. Lent and Walter T. Sampson, written agreement, August 27, 1900, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
With the evidence from the archival documents of Mitchell & Wilson and the existing photographs of the W.T. Sampson House featured in the publication *Souvenir of Gananoque* published in 1901,\(^{263}\) it is certain that Lent was the architect and the house was built between August 1900 and sometime in 1901 (Figure 2.24). Island cottages were often constructed over the winter months when materials could be more easily transported to the island over the frozen river. Unfortunately, there is no mention of the name of the island in any of the documentation related to the Sampson residence. The photograph in the *Souvenir of Gananoque* calls the house “The West” and a period postcard of the property is labeled “The Willows,” but does not give the island name (Figure 2.23). An entry in the land registry copy books for Leeds, however, shows that Sampson purchased Island E from Julie E. Cowan on July 18, 1900.\(^{264}\) Island E was the original name given to a half acre island in the Admiralty Group by surveyor Charles Unwin in 1873. The island was later renamed Heritage Island\(^ {265}\) and is sometimes referred to as Sampson Island.\(^ {266}\)

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\(^{263}\) *Souvenir of Gananoque*, [25].

\(^{264}\) Island E, Land Registry Leeds LandsdowneTwp (MF 1596), Ontario Land Registry Offices collection, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.

\(^{265}\) Smith, *First Summer People*, 118.

\(^{266}\) “Revised Main Table, Pollack’s Gazetteer of the Thousand Islands,” *Thousand Island Life* http://www.thousandislandslife.com/Portals/Properties/TI-Main-Table-May-7-2009final.htm (accessed October 8, 2011).
Like the Atkinson residence on Big Calf Island built about the same time, the Sampson summer home resembles Lent’s earlier work in Cranford and some of the designs he presented in the book *Summer Homes and Camps*. Lent returns to his formula of combining the rustic with the classical using a design vocabulary that had been tested in the suburbs and he was now reinterpreting for the wilderness setting. The Sampson house has the gambrel roof, shingle-clad exterior, Tuscan-columned porches and dormer windows that represent this blending of high-style and vernacular favoured by Lent and shared by other architects working in the Thousand Islands such as Henry Janeway Hardenberg (1847-1918) on Sunnyside Island. Lent has moved the wing that he created on the side of the Atkinson house to the back of the Sampson house creating a more symmetrical façade that leans more to the classical and away from the vernacular plan used on Big White Calf Island (Figure 2.18). This design echoes the “Moorland Cottage” featured in *Summer Homes and Camps* and would probably have a similar floor plan with kitchen in the wing on the back of the house (Figure 2.25). The cottage on Sampson Island still exists today.
Edward Leamington Nichols was a renowned physicist and head of the Department of Physics at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. He moved to Ithaca in 1887 with his wife and two children after teaching in Kentucky and Kansas. In addition to his teaching and
administrative post at Cornell University, Nichols was the founding editor of the journal *The Physical Review*. Early in 1901 Nichols made an application to the Department of Indian Affairs to purchase Island 25 also known as Ynyscrag Island in the Admiralty Group just west of Gananoque. Ynyscrag or Ynys-craig means house on a rock in Welsh. Later that year he also purchased Island 25a that in his letter of application he states is adjoining Island 25. The correspondence between Nichols and the government has been preserved and digitized by Library and Archives Canada (Figure 2.26). Included in the Nichols file are handwritten letters on *The Physical Review* letterhead. Also included in this correspondence are references to other islands and their owners. Nichols mentions his friend and Cornell colleague Dr. Eugene Haanel who purchased Towers Island in 1883 and later built a summer home called The Towers on the island with the help of his students. In a letter dated October 1, 1902 Nichols inquires about Islands 14a and 14b noting that a friend at the university was interested in purchasing these islands and “he would make a very desirable addition to the community of summer residents in that neighborhood.” It appears that the quality of the neighbours at a vacation home were as important as the quality of the men in a suburban neighbourhood. Nichols also makes reference to a Dr. Frances Beall from Syracuse asking if he had purchased these islands. Unfortunately for

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269 Smith, *First Summer People*, 123.
270 Ian Coristine, The Very Best of Ian Coristine’s 1000 Islands, (Mallorytown, ON: 1000 Islands Photo Art Inc., 2010), 55.
271 Edward L. Nichols to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, letter, September 2, 1901.
Nichols’ friend, Beall had bought the islands in 1901. These islands are very close to the islands Frank T. Lent purchased in 1901.

The island that Professor E. L. Nichols purchased was surveyed by Charles Unwin in 1873 and described as 0.2 acre with “low level rock” and “a few trees on it.” The adjoining island that Nichols purchased later that year was described by surveyor Walter Beatty in 1894 as 1/5 acre and “Level; low; covered with scrub; good locality.” Nichols commissioned Frank T. Lent to design a summer home on these small scenic islands (Figure 2.27). A contract between the construction company Mitchell and Wilson and E. L. Nichols dated June 29, 1903 exists but does not list Lent as the architect. There is however, other documentation that confirms Lent was the architect of the E.L. Nichols summer residence in the Thousand Islands. A 1915

Figure 2.27 Postcard: YnysCraig
(Source: Douglas Rombough postcard collection Queen's University Archives)

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272 Edward L. Nichols to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, letter, October 1, 1902.
273 Smith, First Summer People, 123.
274 Smith, First Summer People, 123.
275 Mitchell and Wilson and E.L Nichols, contract, June 29, 1903, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
publication titled *Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses* by William Philipps Comstock and Clarence Eaton Schermerhorn features two photographs and a floor plan labeled “A Bungalow, Thousand Islands, N.Y.” and Frank T. Lent is credited as the architect although there is no mention of E.L. Nichols (Figures 2.29, 2.31, 2.32). A period postcard from the early 1900’s labeled “Prof. Nichols’ Cottage, Admiralty Group near Gananoque, Ont.” shows the same cottage confirming that Lent was the architect of the Nichols’ cottage (Figure 2.30). Another postcard has Nichols’ name crossed out and “YNYS CRAIG” written in (Figure 2.28).

![Image](image.png)

*Figure 2.28* Postcard: YNYS Craig (Professor Nichols Cottage)

(Source: Douglas Rombough postcard collection Queen’s University Archives)

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277 Prof. Nichols’ Cottage, postcard, 190-, Douglas Rombough postcard collection, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
Figure 2.29 A Bungalow, Thousand Islands [view 1]
(Source: Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses)

Figure 2.30 Postcard: Prof. Nichols’ Cottage
(Source: Douglas Rombough post card collection Queen’s University Archives)
With this design, Lent has moved away from the Colonial Revival that he so favoured and was still using for cottage designs in the area. The Nichols’ summer cottage is different in some ways from Lent’s other known designs. The low sprawling building with its pyramidal roof line, dormer windows and massive stone pillars and chimney stacks acknowledges the
popular Arts & Crafts style with its horizontality and the use of local materials, yet the influence of the Shingle Style is still evident in the choice of cladding. Lent has abandoned the gambrel roof, white trim and other Colonial Revival detailing to create a more rustic design. He uses a granite foundation and fireplace, common in his vocabulary, but this time they connect the building to the granite islands rather than tempering a Colonial Revival design. The description in *Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses* suggests that Lent had not completely abandoned the style he had been developing in his suburban designs, but unlike many of the designs he presented in *Summer Homes and Camps*, he has adapted it to suit the topography rather than imposing the same Colonial Revival design in a different setting. Lent appears to be taking the modest summer homes he featured at the end of *Summer Homes and Camps* such as the “Ausable Camp” and expanding them into spacious summer homes (Figure 2.7).

The passage in *Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses* describes the exterior of the Nichols’ cottage as being covered in copper stained shingles, and the roof shingles and exterior trim were stained green. The chimney was built of red Thousand Island granite and it can be assumed that the exterior stone work was the same material. The passage in *Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses* also describes how Lent has cleverly used the topography by cantilevering the main floor over the water passage between the two islands and then inserting the boat house below. The floor plan shows a large three bedroom cottage with ample living space and a large porch that surrounds the cottage on two sides allowing the owners and guests to admire the view out over the water. The porch is described as “wide and roomy and flower boxes have been used effectively on the railings.”

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278 Lent, *Summer Homes*, 91.
279 Comstock, 28.
wooden columns that appear to be plain and not the Tuscan or “Roman columns”\textsuperscript{280} that Lent often used. Gone is the large entrance hall that Lent typically used in his designs in favour of a great room, but other characteristic features such as the butler’s pantry are still employed in the plan. Although not shown on the floor plan, the cottage has an additional three bedrooms on the second story. This large attractive structure would have made an exceptional summer residence for the Nichols family and their guests. Set in a prominent location, the house is still viewed and admired by many boaters. In the early twentieth century its location would have provided an excellent advertisement for the services of architect Frank T. Lent.

\textbf{Figure 2.33} Postcard: Zavikon Island, Estate Alex Robb

(Source: author’s postcard)

\textsuperscript{280} Lent, \textit{Sensible Suburban Residences}, 31.
Figure 2.34 Contract Mitchell & Wilson and Alex Robb

(Source: Queen’s University Archives)
Case Study: Alexander Robb Cottage, Zavikon Island

One of the most famous and most photographed islands in the Thousand Islands region is Zavikon Island (Figure 2.33). There are actually two islands connected by a bridge and the passing tour boats often tell the passengers that the large island is in Canadian waters and the small island is in American waters making the bridge the shortest international bridge in the world. Both islands are in fact in Canadian waters, but the tour boat story is much more interesting for the passengers. The tour boats do not mention the architect who built the large house on Zavikon Island and the famous bridge. The recent discovery of documents from the construction company Mitchell & Wilson of Gananoque Ontario has revealed that in fact Frank T. Lent was the architect. In these documents now housed at Queen’s University Archives is a contract dated February 20, 1902 between Mitchell & Wilson and Alexander Robb of Brooklyn, New York for a cottage on Aspasia Island, St. Lawrence River. The contract is for a cottage, boat house, ice house, power house and water tank (Figure 2.34).\textsuperscript{281}

\textsuperscript{281} Mitchell and Wilson and Alex Robb, contract, February 20, 1902, Mitchell and Wilson Limited fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.
Aspasia Island is the historic name of Island 103A in the Wellington Group in Canadian waters opposite the town of Rockport, Ontario. It is now known as Zavikon Island. In 1894 Island 103A was purchased from the government by C. Berkley Powell. In October 1901 the law firm of Bruce Burton and Bruce purchased Island 103B, the small island adjacent to Zavikon Island, on behalf of Emilie D. Robb, wife of Brooklyn, New York insurance broker Alexander Smith, *First Summer People*, 173-74.
Robb from the Canadian government for thirty dollars (Figure 2.35). Island 103B was not surveyed by Charles Unwin, but was included in the Beatty survey of 1894 and described as “bare rock, four feet above water with shoal between it and Aspasia Island.” The large island was described by Charles Unwin in 1873 as 1.4 acres and “low at West end, rough at East, poorly wooded.” Later when the Thousands Islands were again surveyed by Walter Beatty, the description read 1 2/5 acres and “nice shade trees; adjacent to improved islands in United States waters.” The surveyors’ descriptions do not do justice to this wind swept, rocky island dotted with pine trees. The Robbs must have also purchased the larger island at this time and then commissioned Frank T. Lent to build the cottage.

With the cottage on Zavikon Island, Lent returns to his characteristic blending of classical and rustic. Lent designed a large 14 bedroom home with white trim against pale gray shingles and a steeply sloping green shingled roof creating a spacious and comfortable summer home for the Robbs. Although the massive sloping roof makes this cottage look quite different than Lent’s other designs, closer inspection reveals that is really very much like the quaint “Ogunquit Cottage” on the coast of Maine, for example, but on a grander scale (Figure 2.5). The gambrel roof of the “Ogunquit Cottage” has been changed to a gable roof and enlarged, and the dormer has been split into four smaller dormers that break up the roofline and provide light and ventilation to the bedrooms. He draws on his characteristic design vocabulary using a shingled exterior stained in a “quite tone,” white trim, and a large porch that wraps around two sides of the house and terminates on one side in a gazebo-like sitting area. The columns on the porch are

284 Bruce Barton Bruce to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, letter, October 1, 1901, Alnwick Agency – sale of Island 103B in the St. Lawrence River to Emilie Delphine Robb of New York, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds, Library and Archives Canada, www.collectionscanada.gc.ca (accessed December 1, 2011).
285 Smith, First Summer People, 173-4.
the Tuscan style that Lent wrote about in his books and used on many of his house designs. Just as Lent has done in the past, he uses a rustic fieldstone for the foundation and the twin chimneys to contrast with the Colonial Revival details and the symmetrical design. Another characteristic that emerges in Lent’s Thousand Island work is the use of a decorative bridge to connect of islands suggesting a new found sensitivity to island siting.

The commission as noted on the Mitchell & Wilson contract included various outbuildings all necessary to create a summer residence that is both comfortable and convenient. Lent stresses the importance of comfort and convenience in house design and in his book *Summer Homes and Camps* he states that these principles are now being applied to the vacation property as more and more people aspire to the same quality of life in both their suburban and vacation residences.\(^{286}\) Presumably the Robbs would have found this island house with its amenities comfortable, as convenient as island living could be and also aesthetically pleasing allowing them to enjoy all that the Thousand Islands in the summer had to offer. Mr. Robb was active in the Thousand Island Yacht Club and participated in races as did Frank T. Lent.

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\(^{286}\) Lent, *Summer Homes*, 10.
It is difficult to know without written evidence why Frank T. Lent relocated to the Thousand Islands region in the beginning of the twentieth century. His third book *Summer Homes and Camps* indicates that he had an interest in vacation architecture. It may have provided a location where he had ample opportunity to put theory into practice. He may have read about this region in newspapers such as the *New York Times*, and recognized an opportunity in an area that was developing, just as he had in the commuter suburb of Cranford, New Jersey. Or personal problems may have forced him to seek refuge in a town far away. Although there is no way to verify his reason, it is clear that he built a flourishing practice and started a new life in Gananoque. He was able to draw on his experience in designing domestic architecture, and translate his ideas about style, the home, and its ideal location to his work on vacation homes on islands on the St. Lawrence River. In most cases, he continued to rely on the Colonial Revival style that he had used in his work in the suburbs, but occasionally, he experimented as evident in his design for the E.L. Nichols cottage. At first glance it often appears that Lent relies on the same Colonial Revival formula of combining classical details with rustic elements in a different setting, but closer inspection reveals that he did develop some degree of sensitivity to the unique landscape of the Thousand Islands. The Nicols cottage is probably the best example of how he connected the building to the landscape, but other commissions such as the W. T. Sampson cottage, the Alex Robb cottage and his own cottage Wee Rocks reveal how he was developing a new signature design feature, a bridge that connected islands. A number of homes in the region can be attributed to Lent on the basis of style and hopefully, as evidence is uncovered, more of his work will be discovered. Certainly the house near his home on Market Street in Gananoque bears a striking resemblance to other houses he designed (Figure 2.36). And there is a second rustic example in the book *Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses* showing a photograph of a
cottage on an island in the St. Lawrence River, that is attributed to Lent, but the island and its
owners have yet to be identified (Figure 2.37). There are enough known examples however such
as the Dr. E.L. Atkinson cottage on Big White Calf Island, and the Robb cottage on Zavikon
Island to allow a study of how Lent did translate his concepts to the Thousand Island region and
to appreciate the contribution he made to Canadian architecture.
Chapter 3 Conclusion

Frank T. Lent’s success as an architect was based on three factors. Firstly, he had the ability to appreciate the complex sensibilities of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century consumer. It is evident through his writing that he recognized the importance of the physical qualities of the home, but perhaps more importantly he also understood that the home was much more than a material space. It also had to satisfy the family emotionally and psychologically, and in doing so, it was said to mirror the moral character of the inhabitants. The home enabled the family to create a domestic space, a sanctuary, from the outside world and it was a means of constructing an identity through its style and location. Lent understood the appeal of the suburbs as the ideal location of the family home and promoted this in his writings and his practice. Secondly he developed a design vocabulary that appealed to popular demand for creating a home that reflected one’s identity. Lent advocated the Colonial Revival style in both theory and practice, and he developed a personal style that drew on the classical and vernacular origins of the movement. He used this formula in his work in the suburbs around New York City and then translated it across the border to a very different setting in the Thousand Islands. Lastly, Lent was able to successfully market his services through the three books he wrote and through advertisements he took out in various publications. Although Lent’s books can be criticized as being marketing tools, the ideas conveyed and the practical information provided not only offer a look into building practice and architectural style during this period, but more importantly, they provide a glimpse into the culture around the home and the development of suburban and resort architecture.

Based on these factors, Lent appears to have built and sustained an architectural practice in the United States and later in Canada. His career can be characterized as successful from a
commercial point of view, but the question about his position as an outstanding architect remains difficult to measure. One would be hard pressed to characterize Lent’s work as remarkable or innovative yet many of his buildings that exist today such as the Nix House in Cranford (Figure 1.14) and Ynyscrag Island in the Thousand Islands (Figure 2.28) are quite striking and admirable for their contribution to the architectural landscape. It is also difficult to trace an evolution of style in Lent’s work. Looking at his late work such as Nokomis Lodge, for example, it could hardly be said that it represents the pinnacle of his stylistic development even though we see experimentation in plan and simplified detailing. We do see experimentation in his own house in Cranford, for example, or later in his career with the Nichols cottage, but for the most part he relied on the Colonial Revival style perhaps because of its popular appeal. While he often applied the same architectural formula to the buildings he designed, he did display a sensitivity to the landscape perhaps influenced by his artistic background and his interest in landscape painting. This sensitivity is apparent in his architectural writing, his evocative drawings, and in his awareness of the importance of site when responding to the challenges especially in a coastal or island setting notably at Zavikon Island (Figure 2.25) and Wee Rocks (Figure 2.10). Although Lent could not be characterized as an architectural genius, an examination of his written works and his domestic architecture in the United States and in the Thousand Island region enables us to understand the unique contribution he did make to the built environment at the turn of the twentieth century.
Bibliography

Selected printed works and online resources


Britton, Freeman. *Souvenir of Gananoque and the Thousand Islands, with a Short Sketch of First Owners, Early Settlement and Other Historical Notes of the Town*. Gananoque, ON: 1901.


*Cranford New Jersey*. Cranford, NJ: Cranford Board of Trade, 1913.


**Archives and unpublished sources**

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON. www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Douglas Rombough postcard collection. Queen’s University Archives. Kingston, ON.

Land Registry Leeds and Landsdowne Twp. Ontario Land Registry Offices collection, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, ON.

Mitchell and Wilson fonds. Queen’s University Archive. Kingston ON.
Appendix A – List of buildings known to have been designed by Frank T. Lent (United States)

Publication abbreviations:

SS = Sound Sense in Suburban Architecture; SC = Souvenir of Cranford, SenS= Sensible Suburban Architecture; RM=Roosevelt Manor

CranC= Cranford Chronicle; CD=Cranford Directory; CNJ= Cranford, New Jersey (1913)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Images</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.A. Otis House</td>
<td>Colorado Springs, CO</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>SS p. 31</td>
<td>Drawing: SS p. 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera House Block</td>
<td>Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>J. W. Banker residence</td>
<td>16 Madison Av. Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1892 or 1893?</td>
<td>SS p. 1, CD 1901</td>
<td>Drawing: SS p. 1, 32, 33; SC pg. 6; Photograph: CNJ p. 16</td>
<td>Cranford Historical Advisory Board website lists date as 1892; may have been 1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.H. Plummer residence</td>
<td>16 Riverside Dr. Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>SS – frontispiece</td>
<td>Photograph: SC p. 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Witt House</td>
<td>Cranford Av., Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>SS p. 3, 28;</td>
<td>Drawing: SS p. 3, 36, 37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Colby Ladd House</td>
<td>Bethlehem (Fountain Hill), PA</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>CranC Jan. 31, 1894</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobles House</td>
<td>Atlantic Highlands, NJ</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>SS p. 6</td>
<td>Drawing: SS p. 6</td>
<td>May be extant on Delaware Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>George W. Nix House</td>
<td>105 Holly St., Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>SenS p. 9-14</td>
<td>Photograph: SC p. 2; Suburbanite (April 1909); Drawings &amp; plans: SenS p. 10, 12, 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hampton Hall (Mrs. Fannie Bates)</td>
<td>104 Hampton Street, Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>SS p. 30</td>
<td>Drawing: SS p. 30</td>
<td>demolished</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jahn Block</td>
<td>Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oscar Gessner House</td>
<td>Linden, NJ</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>SS – Lent advertisement</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Benjamin Benoit</td>
<td>Lowell, MA</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>SS – Lent advertisement</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. J. Warren Rice House</td>
<td>New Brunswick, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>SenS p. 15</td>
<td>Drawing &amp; plans: SenS p. 16, 18, 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Eliot House</td>
<td>Goshen, N.Y.</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>SenS p. 49-55</td>
<td>Drawings &amp; plans: SenS p. 48, 50-52, 54</td>
<td>Text suggests that this was built</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heinrich Imhorts House</td>
<td>Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td>Photograph: SC p. 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Images</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.E. Cochran House</td>
<td>Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td>Photograph: SC p. 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank T. Lent Residence</td>
<td>Cranford Av., Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>SC p. 11</td>
<td>Photograph: SC p. 10, 11; SS p. 3 photograph, plans</td>
<td>Possibly Lent’s son in the photograph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Denman Residence</td>
<td>Denman Av., Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Called Elmhaven (CranC May 16, 1894)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Dumont House</td>
<td>104 Cranford Av., Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>SC advertisement; CD 1901</td>
<td>Drawing: SC p. 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cranford Country Club</td>
<td>Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>SS p. 93; Sens p. 94</td>
<td>Drawings: SenS p. 93, 95-97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.P. Gordon Residence</td>
<td>Lawrenceville, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Cran C Jan. 17, 1894</td>
<td>none</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westfield Athletic Club</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>SS p. 86; SenS p. 89</td>
<td>Drawings, photographs: SenS. 86, 88, 90-92</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C. F. Oxley House</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C.N. Coddling</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F.A. Taggart</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>J.M.C. Marsh</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>CranC July 11, 1894</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.B. Cook</td>
<td>Brevant Park, Atlantic Highlands, NJ</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Red Bank Register Sept. 11, 1895</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Buckley Residence</td>
<td>16 Central Av., Cranford, NJ</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>CranC June 13, 1895</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Diedrich Krele, builder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B – List of buildings known to have been designed by Frank T. Lent (Canada)

Publication abbreviations:

SG: Souvenir of Gananoque; MW: Mitchell & Wilson fonds, Queen’s University Archives; DR: Douglas Rombough postcard collection, QUA: Queen’s University Archives; LAC: Library and Archives Canada; GR: Gananoque Reporter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Images</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James R. Brown</td>
<td>2 Johnson Street Picton, ON</td>
<td>ca. 1898</td>
<td><em>Summer Homes</em></td>
<td><em>Summer Homes</em></td>
<td>Extant; discovered by P. du Prey August 2012; printed flyer for Brown Manor Bed &amp; Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter T. Sampson cottage</td>
<td>Heritage Island (Sampson Island), Admiralty Group, Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>Photograph: SG; postcards: DR</td>
<td>Extant; cottage currently for rent (summer 2012); advertisement and interior photographs at <a href="http://www.keyesbrokers.com/reListing_25.html">http://www.keyesbrokers.com/reListing_25.html</a>; photographs show bridge to smaller island on property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. E. L. Atkinson cottage</td>
<td>Big White Calf Island, Admiralty Group, Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>SG; Ah! Wilderness; Architectural drawings (photographs): QUA</td>
<td>Photograph: SG; Architectural drawings: Ah! Wilderness</td>
<td>extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wee Rocks (Frank T. Lent cottage)</td>
<td>La Vignette Islands (The Sisters) Admiralty Group, Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>LAC; GR</td>
<td>Postcard: Thousand Island Life; Photographs: Ah! Wilderness website</td>
<td>extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. E. L. Nichols</td>
<td>Ynyscrag Island, Admiralty Group, Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Postcards: DR; <em>Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses</em>: LAC; MW</td>
<td>Postcards: DR; Images: <em>Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses</em></td>
<td>Extant; recent aerial photo on Ian Coristone’s website <a href="http://www.1000islandphotoart.com">www.1000islandphotoart.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Church – parish house</td>
<td>Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>GR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississauga (George F. Benson</td>
<td>Rabbit Island, Thousand Islands (US)</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>QUA: photographs of original blueprints; SG; postcard: DR</td>
<td>Postcard: DR; Photograph: <em>The Thousand Islands and the River Saint Lawrence</em></td>
<td>Lent involved in rebuilding after fire in 1900; demolished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egbert Le Fevre cottage</td>
<td>Manhattan Island, Thousand Islands (US)</td>
<td>. 1901</td>
<td>SG; GR</td>
<td></td>
<td>Renovations or additions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairjoline (D.F. Fairchild cottage)</td>
<td>Hill Island, (Wellington Islands) Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>SG</td>
<td></td>
<td>Renovations or additions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Images</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batterman cottage</td>
<td>Hill Island, (Wellington Islands) Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Contract: MW; GR</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Purchased Fairjoline; renovations and additions; demolished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Robb cottage</td>
<td>Zavikon Island (Aspasia), Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Contract: MW; LAC; postcard: DR</td>
<td>Postcards: DR</td>
<td>Cottage, boat house, ice house, power house, water tank; extant; many photographs available online and in books about the Thousand Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank T. Lent residence</td>
<td>120 Market St., Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>GR</td>
<td>Photograph: author</td>
<td>Extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.V. Schuyler cottage</td>
<td>Mudlunta Islands (Admiralty Group), Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Existence unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock Tower</td>
<td>Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>GR; Postcard: DR</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blinkbonny (Charles Macdonald residence)</td>
<td>Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Alterations and additions; extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skinner residence</td>
<td>King St., Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Postcard; DR; GR</td>
<td>Postcard: DR</td>
<td>Now Sleepy Hollow Bed &amp; Breakfast; extant</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.E. Oddie</td>
<td>Island 98J</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Additions &amp; alterations; existence unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberfoyle (Dr. Arthur Mabee cottage)</td>
<td>Tremont Island, (Admiralty Group) Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>GR</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Destroyed by fire ca. 2002; name of cottage obtained by Dr. P. du Prey (conversation with Dr. Mabee’s grandson Keith Mabee May 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nokomis Lodge (William H. Nichols cottage)</td>
<td>Howe Island, St. Lawrence River</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Additions and alterations including greenhouse and horse block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gananoque Yacht Club</td>
<td>Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>GR; Postcard: DR</td>
<td>Postcard: DR</td>
<td>demolished</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nokomis Lodge (William H. Nichols cottage)</td>
<td>Howe Island, St. Lawrence River</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Barn; extant?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludlow Odgen cottage</td>
<td>Oakley Island (Admiralty Group), Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Thousand Island Life April 13, 2009; MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Alterations &amp; additions; boathouse; extant</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Paul’s Anglican Church</td>
<td>Elgin, ON</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Township of Rideau Lakes website; GR</td>
<td>Photograph: author</td>
<td>Extant; now a private home</td>
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<td>Bermingham-Macklem House</td>
<td>Kingston, ON</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Architectural drawings: QUA</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Renovations to interior and new ionic portico; extant; Queen’s University Faculty of Health Sciences offices</td>
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<td>Gananoque Bolt Co.</td>
<td>Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>ca. 1905</td>
<td>Contract: MW; GR</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Main building and warehouse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colton residence</td>
<td>Corner of Stone St. and Garden St. Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Built for Agatha and Theresa Colton; demolished?</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Walter Wood II</td>
<td>Hickory Island (Admiralty Group) Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Farm house; extant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Images</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Bullock house</td>
<td>Gananoque, ON</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Alterations and additions; existence unknown (was at Pine &amp; Charles Streets)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camp 1812 (F.A. Reed)</td>
<td>Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>Postcard: DR</td>
<td>Additions &amp; alterations; existence unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nokomis Lodge (William H. Nichols cottage)</td>
<td>Howe Island, St. Lawrence River</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Designed cottage following destruction of original by fire; destroyed by fire 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becker cottage</td>
<td>Huckleberry Island (Admiralty Group), Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Cottage, boat house; known as Totem Lodge; existence unknown; Frank T. Becker of Kinderhook, NY; Becker &amp; Hyman, Counsellors at Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Newbolt Jones</td>
<td>Howe Island, St. Lawrence River</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Boathouse; existence unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis cottage</td>
<td>Mohawk Head, Hay Island, (Admiralty Group), Thousand Islands</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Contract: MW</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Master’s lodge, servant’s cabins, power house, boat house; existence unknown; Frederick Lewis of Norfolk, VA</td>
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<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tender to Mitchell &amp; Wilson from Geo B. Haynes</td>
<td>No date</td>
<td>For sheet metal work for proposed residence for Mr. J. A. Thomson</td>
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<td>Tender: Geo. B. Haynes to Mitchell &amp; Wilson</td>
<td>No date</td>
<td>For proposed boat house</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Profits War Tax Act 1915</td>
<td></td>
<td>For 1916</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Agreement between Frank T. Lent and Walter T. Sampson</td>
<td>Aug. 27, 1900</td>
<td>Building of new cottage on his island in the St. Lawrence River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telegram: H. Batterman to Frank T. Lent</td>
<td>Dec. 16, 1901</td>
<td>“build ice house”, note on telegram “keep this FTL” H. Batterman, Brooklyn, NY</td>
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<td>Accounts receivable/payable</td>
<td>Dec. 31, 1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Alex Robb</td>
<td>Feb. 20, 1902</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; for cottage, etc. at Aspasia Island, St. Lawrence River; cottage, boat house, ice house, power house and water tank</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Charles Macdonald</td>
<td>Sept. 2, 1902</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; alterations &amp; additions to Blinkbonny, Gananoque; also for water tower</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Gananoque Bolt Co.</td>
<td>June 24, 1905</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; for cottage, etc. at Aspasia Island, St. Lawrence River; cottage, boat house, ice house, power house and water tank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Misses Colton</td>
<td>July 25, 1906</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; for Agatha and Theresa Colton; 2 story family brick house to be built on lot corner of Stone and Garden Streets, Gananoque</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note on Mitchell &amp; Wilson letterhead</td>
<td>Mar. 7, 1907</td>
<td>“extras” Wm. Bulloch’s house, Pine &amp; Charles Streets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Daniel McCammon</td>
<td>Oct. 10, 1908</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; for carpentry and masonry work on Main St. residence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreement: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Fred A. Reed</td>
<td>Aug. 23, 1909</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; building additions and making alterations at Camp 1812 according to plans and specifications; on Mitchell &amp; Wilson letterhead</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memo of agreement: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Skinner Company Limited</td>
<td>June 15, 1911</td>
<td>For new building; signed Fred J. Skinner</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Summons for Primary Debtor &amp; Garnishee</td>
<td>Aug. 24, 1912</td>
<td>Primary debtor: Robert J. Deir; primary debtor: Lorne Beauford; garnishee: Mitchell &amp; Wilson</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreement: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Herbert DeWitta</td>
<td>Mar. 6, 1913</td>
<td>Architect B. Dillon, materials and labor for brick residence as per plans and specifications</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Dr. Newbolt Jones</td>
<td>Sept. 1, 1915</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; for boat house on Howe Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and [Milan Jones]?</td>
<td>Sept. 9, 1915</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent for boat house on Howe Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Frank T. Becker</td>
<td>Oct. 28, 1915</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; for cottage, boat house on Huckleberry Island, 1000 Islands; completion of cottage known as Totem Lodge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tender: Geo. B. Haynes to Mitchell &amp; Wilson</td>
<td>Apr. 20, 1916</td>
<td>Metal work on residence of Mr. J. R. Johnston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform contract: Mitchell &amp; Wilson and Frederick Lewis</td>
<td>Oct. 30, 1916</td>
<td>Architect Frank T. Lent; for boat house, master’s lodge, refectory and servants’ cabins including 10’ x 15’ power house; Frederick Lewis, Norfolk, VA for building at Mohawk Head, Hay Island, 1000 Islands.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank of Montreal balance sheet</td>
<td>Jan. 9, 1922</td>
<td>For Mitchell &amp; Wilson; real estate lots 546, 554, 553, 547, 550, Water &amp; St. Lawrence Streets and buildings there on</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Affidavit under the Bankruptcy Act</td>
<td>Mar. 1922</td>
<td>Re: Estate of Eastern Ontario Milk Products Company Limited; Coatsworth &amp; Richardson</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Letter: W. B. Mudie, Barrister to Mitchell &amp; Wilson</td>
<td>June 12, 1922</td>
<td>Re: Eastern Ontario Milk Products Company Limited; Mudie from firm Coatsworth &amp; Richardson</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter: John Richards Coatsworth to Mitchell &amp; Wilson</td>
<td>June 12, 1922</td>
<td>Re: Eastern Ontario Milk Products Company Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automobile insurance policy</td>
<td>Apr. 4, 1923</td>
<td>Policy with London &amp; Lancashire Guarantee &amp; Accident Co.; from Meggs Bros. Insurance, Gananoque Canada</td>
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