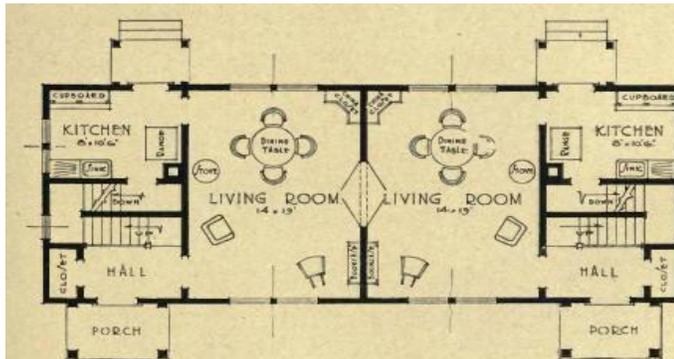


Housing Solutions

Found Architecture,
the Vernacular, and
the Bungalow for
Washington's
Teachers' Homes

Lynette Felber



HP 628: Independent Study

School Architecture

Professor Dale Allen Gyure

Julia Rogers Prize: Research Strategy

“Housing Solutions: Found Architecture, the Vernacular, and the Bungalow for Washington’s Teachers’ Homes” was a challenging project because it researched a debate about school architecture that circulated primarily between 1915 and 1916. Publications dating back to this period are nearly archival, and as a distance education student I needed many resources that were only available to me through interlibrary loan. The Goucher Library staff, particularly Distance Learning Librarian Yvonne Lev and Research Services Librarian Randy Smith, was instrumental in helping me access rare materials.

The idea for this paper began with my discovery of Josephine Corliss Preston, Washington Superintendent of Public Schools (1913-28). Preston was a national leader in promoting teacher cottages, or “teacherages,” to house rural teachers. I began my search on the Internet and found that Preston’s original 1915 pamphlet, *Teachers’ Cottages In Washington*, was available through Google Books. This publication offered a valuable primary source, including photographs and plans for the cottages.

The pamphlet led me to search the databases of the library. As I discovered more articles published on the subject circa 1915-16, I also used their bibliographies to add further sources to my list -- some of the publications were too obscure to be included in databases. Ultimately, my working bibliography included sources ranging from popular culture (*Ladies’ Home Journal*) to journals for educators, such as the *American School Board Journal*. The latter was only available on microfilm, but the staff procured an extended loan so that I could read several years of the issues on the microfilm reader at my public library.

The research process is cumulative and collaborative: each source leads to another source, each inquiry to further development. The final bibliography for my paper contained thirty-eight highly relevant sources retrieved with the aid of the Goucher Library staff and collections.

Housing Solutions:

Found Architecture, the Vernacular, and the Bungalow for Washington's Teachers' Homes

It was a challenge for early twentieth-century communities in the Pacific Northwest to provide housing for their school teachers. As today's small cities were first developing around logging camps and farms, little housing other than that built by the inhabitants for their own needs was available. Although housing rural teachers might seem the most difficult challenge, small towns also found themselves with this problem. Even where village hotels were available, they were deemed inappropriate for the "young, inexperienced" women who comprised the majority of the teachers and might be corrupted by seeing men playing cards in the lobby or visiting the barbershop.¹ One economical alternative that maintained propriety was to create teacher cottages, also called "teacherages" or teacher "manses." The Washington State teachers' cottages, built primarily during the second decade of the twentieth century, illustrate how housing problems were solved by using "found" structures, the vernacular, and popular forms such as the foursquare and the bungalow. The cottages nevertheless reflect trends associated with the architecture of this period including the Arts and Crafts ethos and the hygiene movement in school architecture.

In the early days of developing communities, teachers "boarded around," living with a different family each term. This solution was unwelcome both for the teachers, who lacked private space for their lives outside the classroom or for nightly class preparation, and for their hosts, particularly mothers who had plenty of children and chores to make demands on their time. The unsatisfactory nature of this arrangement is dramatized in one of Laura Ingalls Wilder's autobiographical novels of frontier life, *These Happy Golden Years* (1943). In this novel, fifteen-year-old Laura is hired to teach in a school held in an abandoned claim shanty. She lodges with the Brewster family in another shanty with an unfinished interior. Laura sleeps on a couch behind a brown calico curtain in an unheated bedroom shared with her hosts, a space partitioned off from the main living area of the dwelling. She tries to study and prepare lessons at the kitchen table in the evenings as long as her hosts will provide light. In the small living

¹ Mary B. Flemington, "The Teachers' Boarding Place," *American School Board Journal* 50, no. 2 (1915): 18.

space they share, Laura overhears Mrs. Brewster make rude comments about having to host the teacher, and one night she witnesses an episode of domestic violence as Mrs. Brewster threatens her husband with a butcher knife.² Although the incident may be partly or wholly fictionalized in the novel, the reluctance of her host family corresponds precisely to the unhappy situations described in articles arguing the need for teachers' housing early in the twentieth century.

The idea of providing housing for the teacher in the United States was drawn from European models in which the teacher's lodging was often located inside of the school building. In England, plans for cottages to accompany schools were drawn up by the Board of Education.³ In Denmark free housing and heating were available for all rural teachers; sometimes they lived in the second story of a school or in a wing with a separate entrance.⁴ The earliest American teacherage was built in Nebraska. A seven-room frame house with additions, it was built in 1894 for \$1,000 paid in gold.⁵ In the United States, teacherages were more common in the rural areas and the frontier states -- in the Midwest, the South and the West -- rather than on the East Coast.

Washington State was a leader in creating housing for teachers largely because of the efforts of Josephine Corliss Preston, the state superintendent of schools from 1913-28. She published a tightly argued and persuasive 38-page booklet in 1915 which makes the case for building and providing the cottages. Although these cottages have probably now all disappeared, along with most of the rural schools they accompanied, Preston's pamphlet provides photographs, drawings, and plans, giving architectural historians a valuable primary sources to learn about these structures. Through her publications and public discourse advocating teachers' cottages, Preston placed herself in the tradition of Catherine Beecher and A.J. Downing, advocates for improving domestic architecture through efficient planning.

² Laura Ingalls Wilder, *These Happy Golden Years* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943).

³ A. A. Gray, "The Teacher's Home," *The Elementary School Journal* 17, no. 3 (November 1916): 203.

⁴ R.S. Kellogg, *Teachers' Cottages* (Chicago: The National Lumber Manufacturers Association, 1916), 9.

⁵ Gray, "The Teacher's Home," 202; Mrs. Mary I. Wood, "The School Manse in Reality," *Ladies' Home Journal* 32 (February 1915): 25.

Preston tells of a Tacoma teacher who spent two weeks sleeping in a wheat bin while a lean-to was constructed for her accommodation. This bin is perhaps the most minimal of the found “architecture” used for teacher housing. Preston recounts another story of a teacher who moved a cookhouse wagon adjacent to her school in Walla Walla. The teacher then shared the 20-foot wagon with her 12-year-old brother, perhaps as much for reasons of propriety as financial necessity (figure 1).⁶ This modest dwelling features a vertical-plank door in one end and a box used as a front step; its interior was partitioned into two rooms by a curtain and contained two couches that probably functioned as beds for the teacher and her brother. Unfortunately, the cookhouse was roofed with canvas, which leaked when it rained until the teacher covered it with a waterproof material.⁷ Found architecture was also the solution when abandoned schoolhouses were remodeled for teachers’ housing.⁸ This occurred not only in Washington State, but also was part of the Rosenwald school program. One of its “practice” schools in Tallahassee (c. 1923) became a teachers’ home when the new Lucy Moten Practice School was built in 1931-32.⁹ In a pamphlet highly indebted to Preston’s and published the year after hers (underwritten by National Lumber Manufacturers’ Association), R.S. Kellogg, includes floor plans for a five bedroom teachers’ cottage in Illinois remodeled from an old schoolhouse (figure 2).¹⁰

If Preston’s illustrations are representative, the majority of the teachers’ cottages in Washington State were extremely modest and constructed by the community in the local vernacular. These structures varied, nevertheless, in type. The most humble included the lean-to, the shack, the school attic apartment, the cedar-shake cottage, the one-room cottage, and the tent-house found on reservations. Preston’s examples include a “tent house” for a teacher on a reservation in the Omak district, and some were only one room, without water, and with only a lent bedsprings and stove for furnishings. As one might expect

⁶ Josephine Corliss Preston, *Teachers’ Cottages in Washington*, Bulletin no. 27 (Olympia, WA: State Department of Education, 1915), 7.

⁷ Preston, *Teachers’ Cottages*, 8.

⁸ A. A. Gray, “The Teacher’s Home”: 201; Preston, *Teachers’ Cottages*, 7.

⁹ Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 96, caption to fig. 15; Preston, *Teachers’ Cottages*, 7.

¹⁰ R.S. Kellogg, *Teachers’ Cottages* (Chicago: National Lumber Manufacturers’ Association, 1916).

of vernacular buildings in Washington, most of the cottages were constructed with wood, still widely available during this era of the state's history despite early resource exploitation of native timber. One of the most modest structures in Preston's pamphlet is a board-and-batten structure with a gable roof and a lean-to on one side (figure 3). One of the two stove pipes protrudes from the roof of the lean-to, suggesting it may have been used as a kitchen. The entry in the front gable is sheltered by a simple shed roof supported by two logs. The sole extravagance in this dwelling is its multi-pane sash windows: the photo shows one of these windows in the front of the lean-to and two on the side of the primary volume. The rough lumber used to construct this teacherage is part of the Washington frontier-era vernacular; this particular cottage might date from the days of the early lumber mills or might have been an abandoned school. A photograph of the first school constructed in Whatcom County, Washington in 1861, located the area that is now the city of Bellingham, shows a similar vertical-plank gabled construction (figure 4).¹¹

A common type of Washington teacherage, illustrated in Preston's pamphlet, seems to have been a one-story rectangular structure with a pitched gable roof. Sometimes the entry was located in the gable end, as in the cottage at Lamar (figure 5); in others the entry was located in the wider elevation of a gable-roofed rectangular structure, as illustrated by the cottage in Anacortes (figure 6). These cottages exemplify the qualities of the American vernacular that Fred Peterson associates with the Midwestern farmhouse: "Simplicity, absence of ornament, economy of production and cost, and flexibility in use and adaptation."¹² It is possible that these features proliferated in Washington architecture as Midwestern settlers moved westward. But both the farmhouses and the teachers' houses also reflect the frugal realities of life in the small cities and rural communities of the early twentieth century.

Despite the modest nature of their construction, the cottages almost always include a front porch, suggesting the influence of the bungalow, at the height of its popularity in Washington at this time. These porches might have been used as public space for the teacher to receive parents, students, and guests with

¹¹ Lelah Jackson Edson, *The Fourth Corner* (Bellingham, WA: Whatcom Museum of History and Art, 1986), 150.

¹² Fred W. Peterson, "Vernacular Building and Victorian Architecture: Midwestern American Farm Homes, in *Common Places*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 444.

propriety. The Anacortes cottage features a gabled pediment porch supported by double posts and enclosed with a knee-wall; the Lamar cottages bears a closer resemblance to a bungalow because its entry is located within its expansive open front porch, topped with a shed roof. These cottages embody the simplest manifestation of the vernacular bungalow form. A slightly more complex design is evident in a cottage clad in wood siding, located near Brewster, Washington. This small cottage features two steeply pitched intersecting gables. A hipped-roof open porch extends the width of the gable end of the primary volume, sheltering the entrance and one front window (figure 7). Since this building is photographed from the side, it unclear if there was a balancing cross gable on the other side. The caption explains that this cottage was used to shelter a teacher and another “woman” (probably another teacher) from an “adjacent district.”

The movement for teachers’ cottages arrived about the same time as the vogue of the bungalow in Washington which, as was typical of the Arts and Crafts movement in the Pacific Northwest, “lingered longer and [had] longevity.”¹³ As examples of the vernacular, the Washington teachers’ cottages suggest the emphasis on simple domestic values that are part of both the bungalow and cottage traditions. Clay Lancaster comments, “Though it grew out of the American cottage tradition, the bungalow vogue made new and definite contributions to the evolution of home planning in the direction of informality and unpretentiousness, use of common materials, integration of house and landscaping setting, simplification of design that became closely allied to practical requirements, and concentration on livability.”¹⁴ The vernacular teachers’ cottages were an economical way to meet such requirements with the available skills and materials as well as to integrate staff housing into the school’s landscape.

The influence of the bungalow form and the Arts and Crafts ethos predominant during this period, as well as the emphasis on hygiene and ventilation in school architecture, are evident in the thoughtful floor plans Preston presents. Her plan for a small cottage (figure 8) includes not only a front porch but

¹³ Lawrence Kriesman and Glenn Mason, *The Arts and Crafts Movement in the Pacific Northwest* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 2007), 351-52.

¹⁴ Clay Lancaster, “The American Bungalow,” in *Common Places*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 103.

also an ingenious plan for the single bedroom to function as a sleeping porch in warm weather. The bed is placed in an alcove with a window and folding glass doors that were intended to be closed to create a well-ventilated sleeping area within the bedroom. Using a minimum of rooms and an open plan for the combination living and dining room, this modest structure also reflects the Arts and Crafts ideal advocated by Gustav Stickley, of “free space unencumbered by unnecessary partitions.”¹⁵ In this respect Preston’s plans reflect the new twentieth-century domestic planners, in contrast to her nineteenth-century predecessors such as Beecher, who still viewed the parlor as essential living space. Lancaster notes, “The living room was to become a conspicuous feature of the bungalow and replaced the more formal parlor.”¹⁶ Preston’s cottage also incorporates some of the built-ins so popular with the bungalow, including a corner china closet.

Vernacular teachers’ cottages may have satisfied teachers and school districts, but some architects, educators, and domestic planners had more ambitious ideas about these auxiliary buildings. Fletcher Dressler, professor of school architecture at Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, thought communities should hire an architect and design the teachers’ homes to “harmonize with the general architectural treatment of the school building.”¹⁷ A house for four teachers in Delaware, shown in an education journal from 1920, is attributed to architects E. F. Gullbert and James Betelle. Containing four bedrooms and a formal dining room, it features a complex design with multiple rooflines, and its ornamentation with shutters and a large elaborate chimney.¹⁸ Among the more ambitious of such designed homes was one connected with the Rosenwald school program in the South. One of their plans provided a house of nine rooms with Colonial Revival elements, reflecting architecture of the South, including a front porch with columns and gable dormers.¹⁹

¹⁵ Gustav Stickley, *Craftsman Homes* (New York: The Craftsman Publishing Company, 1909), 196.

¹⁶ Lancaster, “The American Bungalow,” 83.

¹⁷ Fletcher B. Dressler, “Rural Schoolhouses and Grounds,” *United States Bureau of Education Bulletin*, no. 12, whole no. 585 (1914): 124.

¹⁸ Illustration and plan in James Betelle, “Cottages Designed for Delaware Teachers,” *School Life* 5, no. 9 (November 1, 1920): 1-2.

¹⁹ Hoffschwelle, *Rosenwald Schools*, 153.

The usefulness of Preston's practical published plans may have contributed to her role as a leader in the teachers' cottage movement. Available for sale, her plans were also widely reproduced in articles that advocated for teacherages. For example, two of her plans were reproduced in Kellogg's booklet, which also incorporates plans and photographs of teachers' cottages in regions other than Washington State. Kellogg also included plans drawn by the Radford Architectural Company in Chicago. Some of these plans are slightly more elaborate than Preston's and include "upscale" features such as a separate dining room.²⁰ Although Preston's *Teachers' Cottages* contains only two model plans, an article published in the influential *American School Board Journal* in May 1916 claims that Preston had prepared plans for eight kinds of cottages, suggesting that perhaps some of her original plans have yet to be discovered.²¹

If Preston's photographs accurately reflect the teacherages built in Washington, apparently only a few districts could afford a double house (or duplex) of ten or twelve rooms to house the entire staff of larger country schools, one of the few structures designed specifically to accommodate residents. The most architecturally distinguished teacherage in Preston's bulletin is the plan for a double cottage which she estimates to cost \$2,300 when built of "simple stock material."²² This model features a gambrel roof at either end (figure 9) and is drawn to include several multi-pane windows and window boxes for flowers. The façade reveals that this is a duplex since it incorporates two projecting pediment-roofed porches, one at either end of the façade. The plans suggest that the two units were designed with privacy in mind by using the configuration that we call a "townhouse" today: it has two side-by-side two-story units rather than placing one tenant above the other (figure 10). The tenants in the planned duplex may have had some problems with privacy, nevertheless. The double cottage was designed to function not only for housing, but also for a community center: the two living rooms could be connected with double folding doors that could be opened to create one large public room. Preston helpfully suggests that when not in use by the community, the room can be soundproofed for the residents by placing a quilt

²⁰ R.S. Kellogg, *Teachers' Cottages*, 18.

²¹ "Teacherage in Washington," *American School Board Journal* 52, no. 5 (May 1916): 39.

²² Preston, *Teachers' Cottages*, 32.

or blanket between the double doors. No example of this particular model cottage is photographed, but Preston includes testimony from a teacher as to the merits of the double doors used to create a large public room, so it is clear that at least one double cottage was built and used in this fashion.

Early twentieth-century forms such as the foursquare and bungalow, indistinguishable from other housing built in Washington State during this time period, are also represented in Preston's bulletin. For example, her illustrated cover depicts a building in Fir, Washington that housed a male teacher, his family, and a "primary teacher." The two-story dwelling is an example of the hipped-roof foursquare house, or classic "box," popular all over Washington (and elsewhere in the United States) during the first two decades (figure 11). It features wall dormers and an open porch enclosed with railings and reached by a small flight of stairs. Another photograph shows what is described as a double cottage built in Eureka, Washington for the principal, his family, and "young women assistants" (figure 12). This exterior does not resemble the model duplex pictured in Preston's published plans, however. The exterior shows a one and one-half story bungalow with one centered shed-roof dormer over an open porch that extends the width of the building. A lean-to or other addition is partly visible to the rear of the house. Perhaps community members simply built the kinds of homes they would construct for themselves.

Some of the magazines that contained articles on the teachers' cottages also contained features on women's suffrage.²³ It seems significant that the argument for teacherages were being made concurrently with the final push for women's suffrage in the United States. The two debates coalesce when the authors raise the feminist issue of women teachers' authenticity to argue that the teacher "must have an opportunity to develop her own individuality; to let her own tastes have an outlet."²⁴ With her own "home" the teacher can be "a real, natural, happy, and independent person," suggested A.A. Gray. But Gray, though a chief advocate of the teacherages, tied him- or herself into ideological knots trying to make the argument that it was a major advantage of the cottages that teachers could do their own housework. Even though they are tired after work, this advocate suggests that they will enjoy such

²³ See, for example, *Ladies' Home Journal*, September 1914.

²⁴ Wood, "The School Manse in Reality," 25.

activity because, for a teacher, housekeeping is actually “domestic science” in action.²⁵ Nevertheless, by insisting on the teacher’s self-reliance (and obviously a lack of servants), Gray reflects the influence of American Romantics such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and followers such as Gustav Stickley.

Gender issues of the early decades of the twentieth century are evident not only in the arguments for teachers’ cottages but also in the way the houses were used. Building teachers’ cottages was one solution to retain good women teachers and also to attract highly sought after married male teachers, considered by some administrators to be essential for not only quality education but for rural community leadership. Preston gained a national reputation for advocating and building teacherages to accommodate primarily female teachers. Other advocates, however, proposed that teacher accommodations could not only be used for housing and community centers but also for recruiting men to run experimental farms on school property. Dresslar was the major proponent of the plan to attract male teachers as community leaders. Instead of hiring “young and inexperienced” teachers, he proposed that schools could place “a virile man in charge” who could provide “educational leadership [for] the community.” Such men could even “make the farm pay half of his salary” and if their talents were broad, could also “develop some sort of neighborhood orchestra.” On-site teachers would be available to get the fire going early in the school house, before the children arrived and male teachers could maintain the building, which could also be used as a community center.²⁶ Since Dresslar’s preference for a “virile man,” as presumably compared to a “young and inexperienced” female teacher, reflects the gendered double standard of the time it is not surprising to find that the male teachers and their families were generally ensconced in the downstairs portion of the larger teacherages while the female teachers had sleeping rooms on the second floor.

A list of “rules for teachers” from 1878, although it predates the teacherage movement, clarifies the different expectations districts had for teachers of each sex. The norms were not only implied, but codified. They specify that “a teacher [evidently female] will not marry, or keep company with men during the term of her employment.” Male teachers, however, were allowed “one evening each week for

²⁵ Gray, “The Teacher’s Home,” 206-07.

²⁶ Dresslar, “Rural Schoolhouses and Grounds,” 125, 15, 20.

courting purposes or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.” While the male teacher was encouraged to court a wife, a female teacher who married was to be dismissed.²⁷ The moral impropriety of women living alone, particularly in isolated areas, was the major argument that proponents of teacherages felt they had to deflect. The concern was that the women teachers would “violate proprieties,” and advocates suggested that to maintain their reputations, women teachers could live collectively or bring in a relative or older girl student who lived far away.²⁸ The emphasis on propriety in the debate surrounding teacherages in 1915-16 demonstrates that even though this debate ran concurrently with the late suffrage movement, female teachers were still subject to strict moral scrutiny and different expectations than their male counterparts.

Because the male teachers, or the principal, were allowed to have families, some of the more elaborate teacherages were designed for their use. One photograph in Preston’s bulletin depicts a cottage which is identified in the caption as occupied by J. Frank Hall and his family. More stylistically ornate than the other single dwellings in her pamphlet, this cottage features a hipped roof, a bay window, and an inset porch surrounded by a decorative railing (figure 13). In contrast, the accompanying school house pictured in the same photograph is a simple rectangular structure with a gable roof and a bank of side windows. It is, however, adorned with a belfry, suggesting perhaps earlier construction, in the nineteenth rather than the twentieth century. Preston proudly notes that the cottage built for J. Frank Hall in 1913 was still occupied by him in 1915, proof that this housing retained quality teachers.

Despite the success of the movement, the term “teacherage” was a loaded one. By analogy with “parsonage,” it implied a major role for the teacher in the community. Some of the articles make the analogy to argue that the teacher has the same needs as a minister.²⁹ As the proponents struggled to garner national support, analogous needs developed into analogous responsibilities. In their zeal to persuade, advocates proposed that the teacher’s cottage could be used as a community structure or a

²⁷ Mary Jane Honegger, *Washington State Historic Schools: Status 2002* (Olympia, WA: Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, 2002), 52.

²⁸ Mary Wood, “The School Manse in Reality,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* 5 (February 1915): 25+, and Gray, “The Teacher’s Home,” 207 and 206.

²⁹ Mrs. Percy V. Pennybacker, “Need of Teachers’ Homes,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* 32 (February 1915): 25.

domestic science laboratory; it would be available for the students' noon meal and for the boys' workshop.³⁰ The teacher could also share her home with the visiting nurse, another itinerant woman's job. Thus, the original proposal to provide the teacher a quiet "room of her own" where she could relax and prepare her lessons metamorphosed into arguments for community centers and community leadership as the proposals were debated nationally.

The size and style of teacherages that were built nationally varied considerably from district to district and region to region. *Ladies' Home Journal* published a photo display in 1916 entitled, "The New Teacherage That Should be Everywhere: Has Your Community One?"³¹ The fifteen photographs, drawn from throughout the country, depict a variety of buildings -- from small cottages similar to those described in Preston's pamphlet to a large two and one-half story stone house for five teachers in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. This large building appears to have a continental influence, with curvilinear Flemish gables, a large bay window, an expansive side porch, three front dormers on the uppermost floor, and at least three tall stacked chimneys with caps. In some parts of the country, and for more highly ranked educators, the houses were considerably larger than in Washington State. Kellogg's booklet presents a photograph of a high style "residence" provided for a superintendent of schools in South Carolina; it suggests the value they placed on that particular employee by housing him in an expansive Queen Anne house with a large bay window and several porches and verandas (figure 14). Since this house represents an earlier architectural style (by 1916), this district might have used existing housing stock rather than building to suit.

Except for the model duplexes presented in Preston's bulletin, the teacherages were generally not structurally adapted for the needs of particular staff. In Franklin, New Jersey, for example, a district built four bungalows of one and one-half stories each.³² The married male teacher or supervisor simply lived downstairs with his family, and the unmarried women teachers occupied the bedrooms on the second

³⁰ The teachers' houses in the Rosenwald program were designed with entrances to the kitchens to facilitate their use for home economics instruction, see Hoffschwelle, *Rosenwald Schools*, 118.

³¹ "The New Teacherage That Should be Everywhere: Has Your Community One?" [photo display], *Ladies' Home Journal* (August 1916), 4.

³² "Teacher's Houses," *School and Society* (April 27, 1918): 495.

floor. One exception is a large building for housing teachers in Minnesota that reflects the move toward school consolidation during this period. The unnamed author of “The School Manse” describes living arrangements in this three-story structure in Alberta, Minnesota. The principal and his family lived on the first floor, in a complete and self-sufficient unit with entrance, living and dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms and a bath. A separate entrance was created for the teachers on the second floor: they lived collectively, sharing a living-dining room, a kitchen, four double bedrooms, and a bath. In addition to housing eight female teachers in this unit, the attic provided space for three additional teachers to sleep. There was also a domestic science laboratory in the basement. Thus, one building housed a portion of the school’s instruction space and potentially twelve employees and one employee’s family.³³ This alternative, a kind of faculty house, was viewed as not only useful for the staff, but as one that would produce income for the school district. The author of “The School Manse” suggests that a district with this large building, housing the entire school’s staff, could charge the principal \$240 a year for the first floor quarters and \$7 per month for each teacher living upstairs in an apartment with a separate entrance. Preston proposed that teachers pay rent for the housing and for the furniture (at \$1 per week).³⁴

As the national debate evolved beyond the needs of the teachers, secondary arguments addressed the cost to taxpayers. Cost was certainly the major factor that tamped down expectations for the architecture of most teacherages. Taxation for school buildings was unpopular, and any additional funds required to house teachers would have been a hard sell, as the highly charged rhetoric and far-reaching arguments of the articles advocating the construction of teachers’ housing demonstrate. That the inexpensive vernacular was used for most of the Washington teachers’ cottages is not surprising when one considers the kinds of structures used for the accompanying rural school buildings of this era.

In Washington State, teachers’ housing was paid for by local levy or folded into the cost of building the new schoolhouse; sometimes the money was raised by subscription or fundraising events. Proponents generally argued that the cottages could be built inexpensively of donated labor. Writing

³³ “School Manse,” *School and Society* (June 29, 1918): 772-73.

³⁴ Preston, *Teachers’ Cottages*, 33; “School Manse,” *School and Society* (June 29, 1918): 772-73.

from Berkeley, California, A.A. Gray places the cost within a wide range, from \$50 for a lean-to up to \$6,000 for a “modern residence” while Preston proposes a more modest upper estimate of \$3,200.³⁵ The \$3,000-6,000 estimates for the more expensive buildings in Washington and California seem rather high when compared to those in the Rosenwald Fund school building program of the South. This fund provided a grant of \$1,000 in 1920 (later reduced to \$900) for a teachers’ home to accompany schools sized for one to three teachers. Of course this was only the 50% portion provided by the Fund, intended to be supplemented by the local contributions of cash, labor, and materials.

While some Washington districts were satisfied to provide teachers with tents, shacks, and lean-tos attached to the school building, the Rosenwald fund established certain minimum standards for their buildings. For example, sanitary toilets were a requirement for buildings in the Rosenwald program, and many of the Rosenwald teachers’ houses were “comfortable middle-class homes” with porches and up-to-date bathrooms. A photo of a Rosenwald teachers’ home in Tennessee (1921-22) depicts a modest one-story house with a clipped gable roof; it would appear to be capable of housing three unmarried teachers (figure 15).³⁶ Although Preston’s plans show a full bathroom and kitchen with minimal appointments for each cottage, she notes in her discussion of the single model that \$250 of the total \$900 cost can be deducted if the bathroom and plumbing (except for a sink) are omitted. Cellars are also optional in her plans. Preston’s list of the “most expensive” Washington cottages shows only five of twenty to cost more than \$1,000; her list of “least expensive” range from \$75 to \$600, with most listed under \$500.³⁷ Perhaps the high end of Washington estimates reflects the plans for homes that were to house all of a school’s teachers and administration, a trend that reflects the school movement towards consolidation. Preston’s bulletin, however, shows nothing larger than the double cottage

The arguments for teacherages are concentrated around 1915-16, a period in Washington State that corresponds to an era of growth, immigration, and westward movement. The same arguments that

³⁵ Gray, “The Teacher’s Home,” 204; Preston, *Teachers’ Cottage*, 16.

³⁶ Hoffschwelle notes that Rosenwald at first did not fully endorse the idea of teacher housing, proposed to him as early as 1916. In 1920, however, he proposed that a plan for a teachers’ home should be designed, and this was subsequently part of the Fund’s grant program, *Rosenwald Schools*, 116-19, 87.

³⁷ Preston, *Teachers’ Cottages*, 26-27.

circulated in Washington, however, were promoted in the *Ladies' Home Journal* and in *The American School Board Journal* to a national audience. In addition to school administrators such as Josephine Preston, women's clubs and mothers -- who would be otherwise asked to board teachers -- also advocated construction of teacherages. Kellogg places the issue of building teachers' houses alongside consolidation of rural schools as "the next big educational development in the United States."³⁸ Nationally, by 1916 over 600 teachers' cottages had been built or converted from other use.³⁹ Kellogg, working with reports conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Education, summarized surveys from school officials in all states about their teacherages. Although almost every respondent praised the proposal or mentioned the need for teachers' housing, administrators in many East Coast states (Florida, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and Vermont) reported no teacherages had been built.⁴⁰ Washington's teacherage movement, marshaled by Preston, led the campaign for teacherages and may have constructed the greatest number of them, although the published numbers vary from year to year and are in no way definitive.⁴¹

Washington State may have led the campaign for the teacherages, but ironically it also seems to have built or adapted some of the most modest structures, housing teachers in cook wagons, tents, and lean-tos, or houses without indoor plumbing. Perhaps because Washington came late to statehood in 1889, it lagged behind eastern and Midwestern states in available housing. Sanborn insurance maps show neighborhoods in smaller cities with cabins and outhouses well into the twentieth century. Moreover, Washington has always had an assertively anti-taxation stance, and even today has no state income tax, so fewer funds may have been available than in other states. But it also seems likely that Preston used the quaint examples of cook wagons, lean-tos, and tents rhetorically, for effect, to argue the extremity of the

³⁸ Kellogg, *Teachers' Cottages*, 23.

³⁹ Gray, "The Teacher's Home," 203.

⁴⁰ Kellogg, *Teachers' Cottages*, 23-57.

⁴¹ Preston claims that Washington State had 108 cottages by 1915; King County (today's Seattle) was among the highest with 12, see Preston, *Teachers' Cottages*, 5 and 26. In 1916 she reports that the state number had swelled to 112, see Preston, "Teachers' Cottages and Rural School Economics," *Journal of Home Economics* 8, no. 3 (March 1916): 111.

need. Many of the teacherage advocates who follow in her wake reprint the cook wagon photo and retell Preston's story of the plucky, enterprising, and dedicated teacher who made her home in a wagon.

In the decade preceding the teacherage movement, an article from the *Craftsman* connects architecture and décor with the expression of character and moral virtue: "Luxurious surroundings . . . suggest and idleness On the other hand, chasteness and restraint in form, simple, but artistic materials are equally expressive of the character of the people who use them."⁴² The teachers' cottages represent the propriety and industriousness the community wanted to see exhibited by their children's teachers. As is typical with the vernacular, construction was not designed uniquely for an individual but arose from "what [was] communally sanctioned."⁴³ In the Washington districts where the most modest teacherages were built, most of the students' families would have themselves lived in vernacular houses. It would seem that local citizens built the kind of housing for teachers that they themselves were comfortable with and that they knew how to build. Teachers, especially young women teachers, might have come from outside the district but they were not considered as elites within the community (as their low wages and humble living arrangements demonstrate).⁴⁴ The modest dwellings, and the arguments for their multiple uses and functions, correspond to an American rural and small town ethos of hard work and frugality. This vernacular architecture embodies the values of the families and the community that built them.

⁴² "A Child's Bedroom," *Craftsman* 4, no. 4 (July 1903): 285.

⁴³ "Introduction," to *Common Places*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986), xvi.

⁴⁴ For a poignant first-person account of the teacher's alienation and her status as an outsider in the community, see Charlotte Coney, "Social Isolation of the Teacher," *School and Home Education* (September 1920): 14-17.

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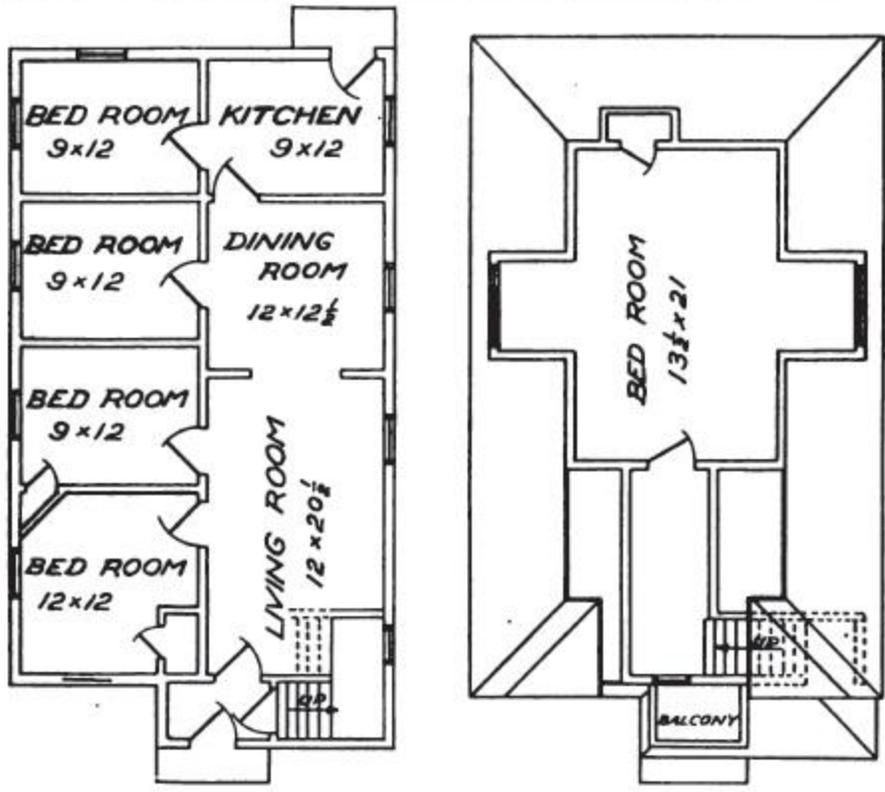
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Illustrations



Figure 1: Teacher's Cook Wagon: Walla Walla, Washington



First Floor Plan

Second Floor Plan

Floor Plans of Teacher's Cottage, Consolidated School, Putnam County, Illinois
Remodeled from Old Schoolhouse

Figure 2: R.S. Kellogg's Plan for Adaptive Reuse – Five Bedroom Cottage



Figure 3: Board-and-Batten Cottage at Oak Point, Washington

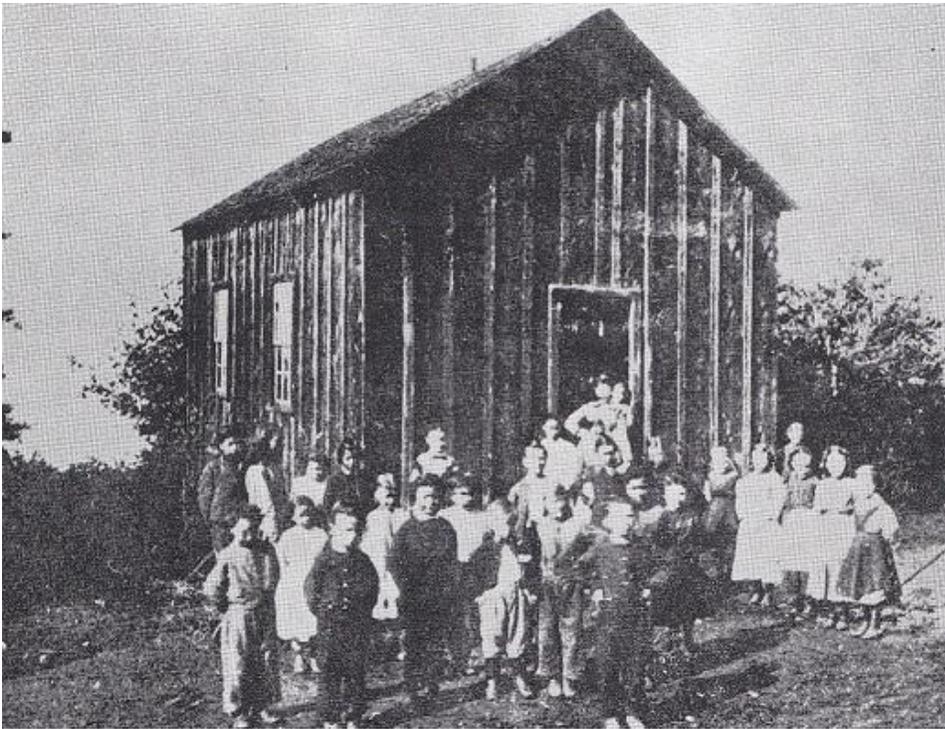


Figure 4: Sehome School, Whatcom County, Washington (1861)



Figure 5: "Honeymoon" Teacher Cottage at Lamar, Washington



Figure 6: Cottage at Anacortes, Washington



Figure 7: Teachers' Cottage at Brewster, Washington

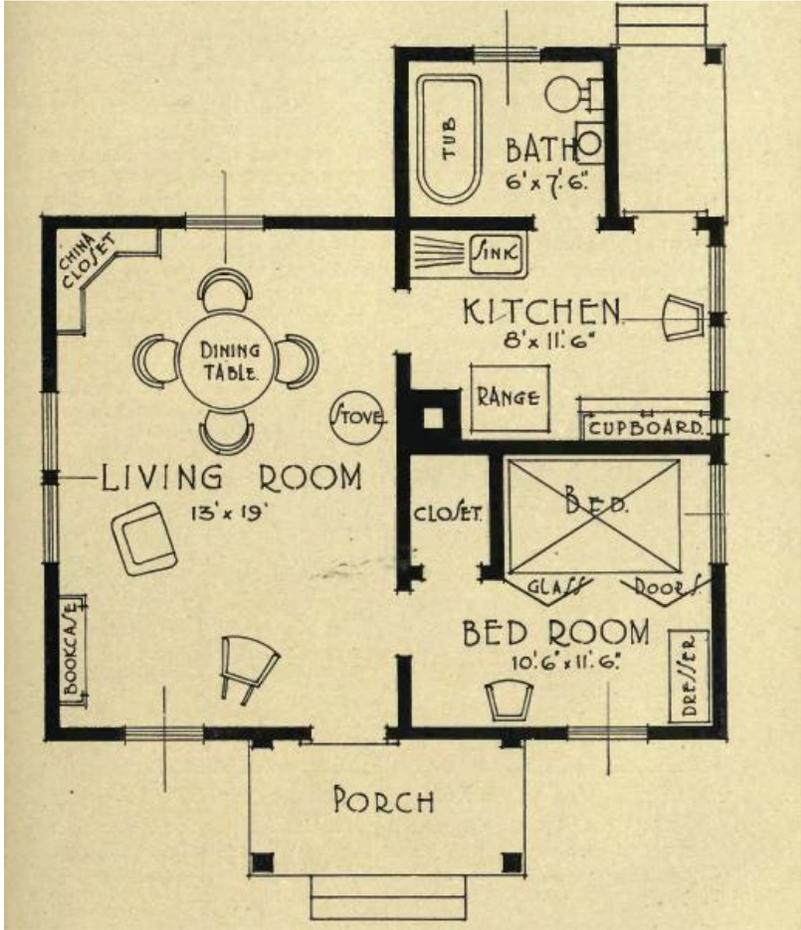


Figure 8: Plan for Small Model (Preston)

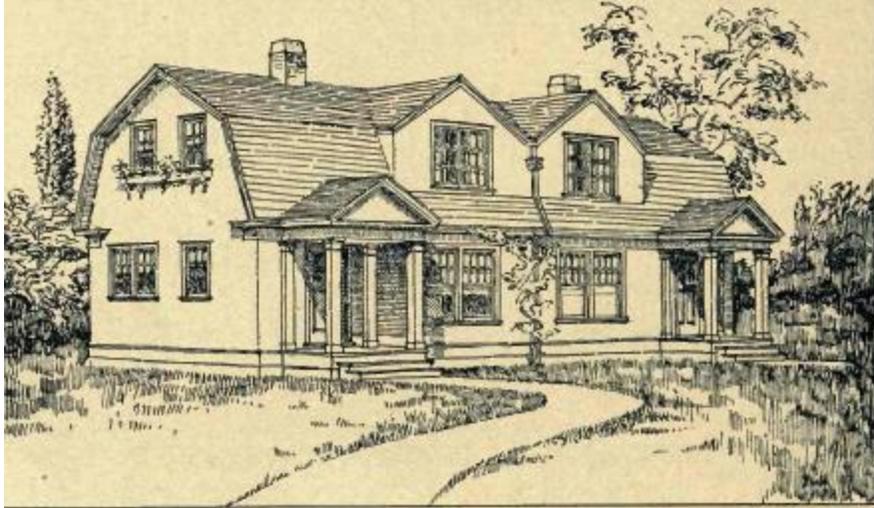


Figure 9: Model for Double Cottage (Preston)

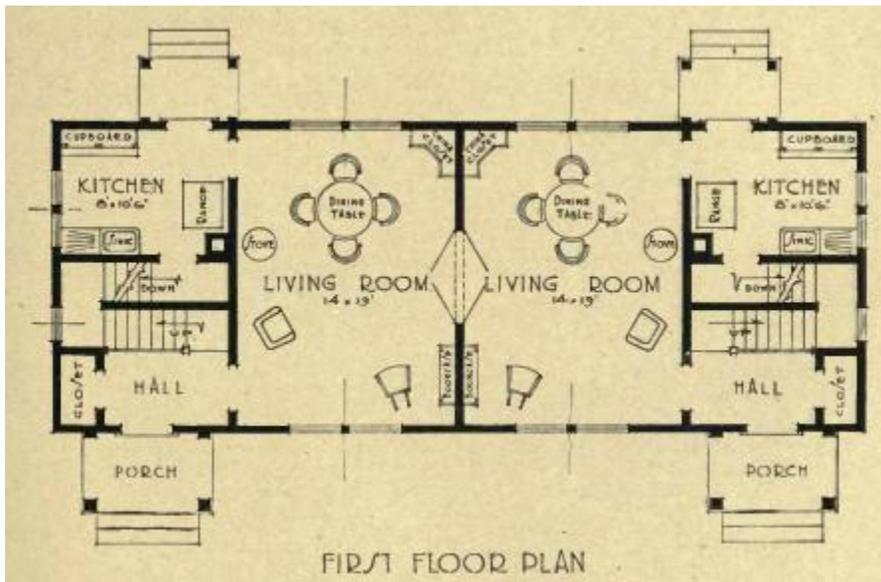


Figure 10: Plan for Double Cottage (Preston)



Figure 11: Foursquare at Fir, Washington



Figure 12: Double Cottage at Eureka, Washington



Figure 13: Cottage near Edwall, Washington



Figure 14: Residence of School Superintendent, South Carolina (Kellogg)



Figure 15: Rosenwald Teachers' Cottage in Tennessee (1921-22)