

The Gamble House
(Gamble, David B., House)
4 Westmorland Place
Pasadena
Los Angeles County
California

HABS No. CA-1981

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THE GAMBLE HOUSE (David B. Gamble House) HABS No. CA-1981

Location: 4 Westmoreland Place, Pasadena, Los Angeles County, California.

Present Owner and Occupant: City of Pasadena, in joint agreement with the University of Southern California, School of Architecture and Fine Arts.

Present Use: Architectural museum, and Greene and Greene Library of the American Craftsman Movement.

Significance: The Gamble House is the most complete and best preserved example of the work of Architects Greene and Greene. Built in 1908, during the architects most refined period, it embodies the highest level of the California Bungalow style, is one of the finest examples of the American Craftsman Movement.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: March 1908 to January 1909.
2. Architect: Greene and Greene (Charles Sumner Green, Henry Mather Greene).
3. Original and subsequent owners:

1908	David Berry Gamble	
1929	Miss Julia Huggins	
1945	James N. Gamble	Mary C. Ritchie
	David G. Gamble	Elizabeth Messler
	Edwin C. Gamble	Margaret G. Swift
1966	City of Pasadena (joint agreement with the University of Southern California)	

The description of property is as follows:

Lot 7, Lot 8, Lot 20 and the southernly 40 feet of each of Lots 9 and 19, as measured along the easternly line of said lots, of Scott and Skinner's Subdivision, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California as per map recorded in Book 26, page 81 of Miscellaneous Records in the office of the County Recorder of said county.

Except therefrom the southerly 50 feet of said Lot 7, as measured along the easternly line of said lot.

Subject to an easement for street widening purposes over the easternly 3 feet of said Lots 7, 8, and 9 as granted to the City of Pasadena by deed as recorded in Book 2217, page 128 of Deeds of said county.

4. Builder: Peter Hall.
5. Original plans and construction: The original contract for the house was \$50,400. Contract for the garage was \$3,500. The original drawings are at the Greene and Greene Library at the house. Also included in this material are specifications and photographs. The drawings are labelled:

Residence for Mr. D. B. Gamble at Pasadena, California
Greene and Greene, Architects, Boston Building, Pasadena
February 19, 1908.

6. Alterations and additions: Minor alteration of master bath: tub replaced by shower; original kitchen sink replaced by cabinetwork with built-in sink - approximate date 1950.

Plaster surface colors restored by University of Southern California in 1968 under direction of Randell L. Makinson, Curator.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Gamble House is the most complete and best preserved example of the work of Greene and Greene, and one of the most outstanding examples of the American Craftsman Movement.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Foundations: Brick and gunitite.
2. Wall construction, finish, and color: Wood frame construction. The wall surface is primarily of 36" cedar shakes dipped in Cabot's Creosote base stain before installation. The finish is a dark olive-green color.
3. Structural system, framing: Western frame, heavy timber post-and-beam with occasional use of wood truss.

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4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc: There are many terraces of handmade red mission tile.
 5. Chimneys: Three - brick with cast concrete caps with gunite finish.
 6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Wood construction - pegged and doweled, many with Tiffany leaded glass panels. Six-panel Tiffany glass entry doors.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Wood framed with pegs and dowels. Some Tiffany leaded windows.
 7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Overlapping gabled roof with integrally designed gutter, and rolled edge. Material - maltoid.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Long overhanging eaves with exposed rafter construction.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Floor plans: First - includes living room, dining room, den, kitchen, pantry, cold room, entry hall, and guest bedroom. Entry continuous through center of plan to rear terrace.

Second - central hall separates master bedroom and children's bedroom from family guest bedroom, maids' quarters, and maiden aunt's bedroom.

Third - designed as a billiard room, this space is now devoted to the Greene and Greene Library.

Full basement including laundry, coal room, storage, dark room, heating, etc.
 2. Stairways: Main stairway all of wood - pegged, splined, and doweled construction. Railing is solid teakwood. Back stairway - wood construction.
 3. Flooring: Oak hardwood.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Generally lath and plaster. Entry and living room panelled in dark Burma teakwood. Dining room panelled in San Domingo mahogany.
 5. Doorways and doors: All doors designed by architects. Woods - teak, mahogany, and Port Orford cedar.

6. Decorative features, trim and cabinet work: Entire interior designed by architects, including furniture, hardware, lighting fixtures, living room carpets, etc.
7. Notable hardware: Interior metal structural straps, light-switch plates, door hardware, fireplace fixtures and andirons all specially designed.
8. Mechanical equipment: Heating - gravity flow with lighted button controls. Originally coal burning furnaces zoned to house areas, located in basement. Now are converted to gas. Lighting - nearly all fixtures specially designed, many with Tiffany glass.

D. Site:

1. General setting: Site is a parallelogram approximately 240 feet by 240 feet. Private road on east side parallels Orange Grove Avenue. House faces generally east.
2. Historic landscape design: The rolling landscape was also designed by Greene and Greene.
3. Outbuildings: Garage - designed to accommodate two cars, a gardener's tool room, day room for chauffeur, and a bath.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Primary Sources:

Original drawings, specifications, photographs; Greene and Greene Library, the Gamble House.

Thesis: "The Gamble House, 1908," Stuart Wilder Bailey, 1954; Greene and Greene Library.

B. Secondary Sources:

Five California Architects; McCoy-Makinson; Reinhold Publishers, New York, 1960.

"The Prairie School Review;" Randell L. Makinson; Prairie School Press, Chicago; Vol. V, No. 4, Fourth Quarter, 1968.

"House Beautiful," January 1957, p. 54.

Prepared by: Randell L. Makinson
Curator, The Gamble House
November 18, 1970