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The Fine Arts in Indianapolis, 1880-1890

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During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as the wealth of the middle class in the United States increased, the market for art works of all kinds expanded. Museums sprang up, centers of art instruction rose, and public buildings and monuments were constructed throughout the country, broadening the field for painters, sculptors, and architects. The Centennial Exposition of 1876 at Philadelphia had given the people of this country an opportunity to see the art of the world, and thereafter it was usual for anyone who could afford it to go to Europe at least once and bring home one or more copies of work of the old masters. In Indianapolis local painters were also patronized, and homes of means usually displayed one or more paintings by Jacob Cox or some other local artist.¹

People of Indianapolis were of the general opinion that Hoosiers were artistic, and those of the Capital City especially so. Yet homes of the period though indicating some artistic sense lacked any unified planning to make it effective. Each owner sought to build something that would be the handsomest thing of its kind in the city and at the same time be as nearly unique as possible. Certainly the result was the greatest possible degree of variety and originality. Some houses resembled castles or fortresses, others looked like martin boxes or pyramids. Some seemed all roof, others all gables, and still others appeared to be piles of assorted bay windows. Exterior decorations were glaring and unusual in

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¹ Interview with Anna Hasselman.

the extreme. One house was painted yellow with a red roof; a dark green one displayed darker green shutters; other houses were pink and brown, red and white, drab and green, and one literally showed all the colors of the rainbow. Cupolas, odd front doors, and roof towers were distributed without much forethought. In the interior it was fashionable to exhibit evidence of an artistic temperament. The young daughter of the household was encouraged to develop her talents, and quantities of her work were on display in the parlors of her home and those of her friends. Such examples were sure to include a magnificent oil painting on velvet, the current craze.² All felt that in this artistic atmosphere Indianapolis presented a unique "blend of a superior town joining forces spiritually with superior artist folk; forces so well knit that the changing ways of modern towns cannot defeat the persistence of spiritual influence." And those influences are said still to exist among teachers and some students active today.³

Jacob Cox, veteran portrait and landscape painter of Indianapolis, was still active in the eighties. After he came to the city in 1833, he was for nearly twenty-five years the only painter there. There were some who came for brief periods to drift on to other cities, but Cox stayed. His only absence was a short period in the forties when he maintained a studio with John Dunn in Cincinnati. His career in Indianapolis helped develop in the public mind an appreciation for art works and to some extent ability to produce them. His pupils were not numerous; probably the most distinguished among them were Mrs. Lottie Guffin, his daughter Julia (who later married Albert S. White of Lafayette), and Henry W. Waugh. Cox's last portrait dated accurately was that of John Coburn, painted in 1883; but his landscape painting continued for several years, and he was invited to send this work to local exhibitions. His painting of "The Old Swimmin' Hole" as idealized by James Whitcomb Riley was said to be one of his best.⁴ As younger and more vigorous men returned from the Paris and Munich studios, Cox's work became less popular. During the last years of

² *Indianapolis News*, April 29, 1882; interview with Anna Hasselman.

³ Mrs. Frederick Krull, "Brookville Idyls and Ideals," talk at John Herron Art Institute, May 13, 1951, p. 19; interview with Anna Hasselman.

⁴ *Indianapolis News*, March 22, 1884.

his life, he worked in a studio in the garden of his daughter, Mrs. Jerome G. Whitcomb, on North Pennsylvania Street. He died in 1892.⁵

Mrs. Lottie Guffin enjoyed considerable success during the 1880's. Her paintings were much admired by people in Indianapolis, and some of her pictures were sold abroad. She painted rapidly and conscientiously. Most of her work was sold while still on the easel, so she rarely had any finished ones to show in her studio. Her painting, "Lost," was sold to Mrs. Albert S. White (Julia Cox).⁶

The first art school of Indianapolis, the "Indiana School of Art," 1877-1879, had closed, probably as a result of hard times,⁷ although William Forsyth suggested other reasons: that pupils dropped out when they found art was really difficult; that the time was not ripe for the school; that Hoosier art students left for European studios; and that the school lacked solid financial backing.⁸ In any case it lacked both sufficient pupils and funds to operate and, therefore, closed. But its effect lingered on. A spirit had been awakened. For a time interested students continued to paint in John W. Love's studio under his guidance.⁹ His skill in drawing, the seriousness with which he regarded artistic endeavor, so inspired his pupils that his influence did not end with his death, June 24, 1880, but carried over from one generation of pupils to another. After his death the little group that had clung so faithfully to their palettes and brushes since the closing of the art school, formed a club which gave them a reason, a time, and place to carry on their work. They called it the Bohé Club, an accidental shortening of "Bohemian" when a painter was told to cut that word in half so he would have space to paint it on the door of their club room. The regular members of this little club were: Frederick A. Hetherington, Thomas E. Hibben, Charles Fiscus, Will Ebbert,

⁵ Mary Q. Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana* (New York, 1921), 172; Berry Sulgrove, *History of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana* (Philadelphia, 1884), 267-268; Kate M. Rabb and William Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County* (Dayton, Ohio, 1924), 85-89; John Herron Art Museum, *Paintings by Jacob Cox: A Retrospective Exhibition of Work by an Early Indianapolis Artist, November 8 to 30, 1941* (Indianapolis, 1941).

⁶ Indianapolis News, May 26, 1880, March 7, 1883.

⁷ Jacob P. Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis* (2 vols., Chicago, 1910), I, 484.

⁸ William Forsyth, *Art in Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1916), 10.

⁹ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 484.

Frank Scott, William Forsyth, and Charles Nickoli. Associate members were George Cottman, Clarence Forsyth, and Hartzell Stem. Since most of the arts were represented, activities were quite varied, and much real work was done. Finally as members left the city, married, or went into business of one kind or another, the club ceased to exist.¹⁰ Just when is not certain; William Forsyth, in his account, gave no date for its demise.¹¹ Nevertheless it served to nourish the artistic spirit which had been stirred by the Love-Gookins art school, and helped provide a basis for the work of the Art Association which was organized in 1883. It may be that some of the paintings done at the Bohé Club by its members proved of material assistance in early exhibitions sponsored by the 1883 Art Association.¹²

James F. Gookins, who had left the art school before its closing, went afterwards to Terre Haute, his home town, and opened a studio. In 1883 he served as assistant commissioner to the Vienna Exposition; later, in 1887, he actively promoted the erection of a soldiers' monument and was made secretary of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument Commission of Indiana.¹³

In January, 1880, Mrs. David Coffin and Miss Sue Ketcham canvassed the city to learn that public sentiment favored reviving the art school.¹⁴ William M. R. French, director of the Academy of Fine Arts of Chicago, then responded to an invitation to give a lecture. He told his audience that art would soon be a part of general education and recommended that a school be established. Free tuition would be unwise, he said, and the school should be supported by a stock company with a sinking fund.¹⁵ Not long after this lecture an exhibition of paintings, the best works of art from private collections in the city, was shown in the Vance Block. Genuine interest made it necessary to extend the period of the showing.¹⁶ In the fall, Mrs. J. Cooley Fletcher and her pupils displayed their work at Benjamin Harrison's

¹⁰ Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 12.

¹¹ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 484.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 121-122; Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 25.

¹⁴ *Indianapolis News*, January 10, 1880.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, January 24, 1880.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, May 28, June 7, 1880.

home and also at the State Fair.¹⁷ In 1881 and again in 1882, upon the invitation of Mrs. May Wright Sewall, Mrs. Nancy H. Adsit of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, delivered a series of illustrated lectures on art. At the close of one of these, in March, 1883, Mrs. Sewall asked all who were interested to meet at her home to discuss ways and means by which the art appreciation and enthusiasm aroused by the recent activities—exhibits and lectures—could be given direction, purpose, and a permanent form.¹⁸ As a result a committee was appointed to draw up a constitution which was adopted at a meeting held May 7, 1883, at the Denison Hotel.¹⁹ On October 11, 1883, the Art Association was incorporated with a membership of fifty-four.²⁰

The first officers were: president, Albert E. Fletcher; vice presidents, Mrs. Mary Sharpe Moore, Mrs. Laurel Locke Fletcher, and Mrs. Mary Sanders Judah; recording secretary, Mrs. May Wright Sewall; secretary, Miss Anna Dunlop; corresponding secretary, H. B. Palmer; and seven directors, including Sue M. Ketcham, Thomas E. Hibben, and Rev. Nathaniel A. Hyde. The membership was divided into groups of colorists, etchers, and students of the history and literature of art.²¹

An art loan exhibition was planned for November, with Sue Ketcham as manager.²² After several weeks diligent search throughout the East, Miss Ketcham succeeded in collecting nearly 500 pictures from 137 different artists, including works of two local artists, William M. Chase and Charles J. Fiscus. This collection was shown in the English Hotel through November, 1883, for an admission fee of twenty-five cents. Some of the paintings were owned locally, but many were borrowed from eastern artists and connoisseurs.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, September 27, 1880.

¹⁸ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 218; Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906* (Indianapolis, 1906), 5.

¹⁹ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 219; Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, pp. 5-6.

²⁰ Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, p. 6; Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 92.

²¹ Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, p. 6; Burnet, *Art and Artists of Indiana*, 219; Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 93; *Indianapolis News*, May 8, 1883.

²² *Indianapolis News*, September 18, 1883; Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 20.

At the close of the exhibition the officers of the Art Association planned to open a school.²³

On January 10, 1884, the second art school began with two instructors, Charles F. McDonald of the Chicago Art League, and Sue M. Ketcham of Indianapolis, and with the business management in the hands of Miss Anna Dunlop, Henry S. Fraser, and Mrs. May Wright Sewall.²⁴ The school (an activity of the Art Association and having no connection with those designated as "Indiana School of Art") moved from the Denison Hotel into a lecture room at Plymouth Church at the corner of Meridian and the Circle.²⁵ Soon more permanent quarters were found in Meridian Hall in the English Block. Twenty-nine students were reported enrolled.²⁶ To develop enthusiasm for art work and attract more pupils, sketch classes were taken out into the woods,²⁷ and during that first summer an excursion was made to Old Point Comfort.²⁸ These efforts availed little, for at the first annual meeting receipts for the year were reported to be \$3,390.16, with a cash balance on hand of only \$5.74.²⁹ Sufficient funds were not forthcoming, and in 1886 this school was forced to close.³⁰

After this time no art classes were maintained in Indianapolis until Theodore C. Steele returned from Munich to open a private school in 1888 in the old high school building, or Circle Hall, at Market and Circle streets, Henry Ward Beecher's old church. In 1889 William Forsyth also returned from Munich and joined Steele in his art instruction. Together they maintained the school but were about to abandon it as too much of a financial burden, when interested persons came forward with contributions for its support. In 1891 it took the name of "Indiana School of Art," reminiscent of the Love-

²³ *Indianapolis News*, November 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, 17, 1883; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 219; Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 92; Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 20.

²⁴ Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, p. 36; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 220.

²⁵ *Indianapolis News*, January 21, 1884; Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 485.

²⁶ *Indianapolis News*, February 2, 1884.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, May 28, 1884.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, July 21, 1884.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, April 10, 1884.

³⁰ Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, p. 36; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 220.

Gookins school of 1877. Classes continued in the old Beecher church until 1897 at which time that building was torn down to make way for the extension of the English Hotel. In 1895 the Art Association received the John Herron bequest, and the life of the fine arts in Indianapolis entered a new phase. But that is another story.³¹

Miss Sue M. Ketcham, after teaching a year or so, 1884-1886, left the Art Association school, but continued to do much to keep up enthusiasm for the arts. She organized and conducted annual summer tours to various places of interest in the East and to Europe. In 1890 she went to New York to live and joined the Art Students League, the only art school in America recognized abroad at that time. A prominent instructor there was William M. Chase of Indianapolis, who had achieved national and international recognition.³²

In 1885 at Plymouth Church, the second important exhibition of paintings was held. Under the direction of T. E. Hibben, it presented seventy-one pictures by "Ye Hoosier Colony in München." The catalog of the exhibit was illustrated with etchings from the originals by the Bohé Club. (Unfortunately, no copies of this catalog appear to be extant.) This Hoosier Colony was composed at first of T. C. Steele and William Forsyth, who were joined later by J. Ottis Adams, Samuel Richards, August Metzner, and Miss Carrie Wolff.³³ This occasion was a turning point in the affairs of art, for annual exhibits were held regularly thereafter, and interest was so stirred in local artists and their work that when the Hoosier Colony returned late in the eighties, sufficient patronage was available to insure the permanence of art classes and exhibits. (In the mid-nineties Hamlin Garland first used the term, "Hoosier Group," to designate certain Indiana artists who were exhibiting in Indianapolis and Chicago.)

The decade of the eighties, starting with the exodus from Indianapolis of a number of artists of talent, seemed to be the

³¹ Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, p. 36; Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 486; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 223, ff.; *Indianapolis News*, March 10, 1886; Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 21; Sister M. Dolorita Carper, "A History of the John Herron Art Institute" (M. A. thesis, Butler University, 1947), 22.

³² *Indianapolis News*, November 1, 1889, February 21, 1888, June 1, 1889; Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 485; interview with Anna Haselman.

³³ Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 14; Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Historical Sketch* (Indianapolis, 1898); Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 485.

beginning of a barren period. Yet, in many respects, it was rich with promise. Charles J. Fiscus went to Chicago, and Frank Scott left for New York and Paris. Henry McGinnis and Louis Mueller later joined the Hoosier Colony in Munich, and Otto Stark went to Paris to study. Cox was almost the only professional artist left. In 1881 Richard Gruelle came. Hibben and Hetherington of the Bohé Club were the first to execute etchings in Indianapolis, and, though amateur, their work was regarded as good.³⁴ Later, as the artists began to return from Munich, the promise of the decade showed signs of fulfillment.

Many American painters returning from foreign study settled permanently in the East, but the Hoosier artists returned to Indiana. In Munich, exhibits of the various countries had been shown in special galleries and this national expression of art appealed to the Hoosiers. Why not, they thought, an art of the United States, or of Indiana? With this common idea, and close association to strengthen it, they worked toward this end. The experience they gained in landscape painting during vacation periods in the towns and villages of southern Germany prepared the Hoosier artists for what was to be their prominent characteristic. They found themselves enthusiastic about returning to Indiana and thought of going no further for material, for they felt that a distinctive school of painting might be developed there.³⁵ What made this thought so revolutionary was the fact that at that time European scenes, whether well or poorly done, were extremely popular in Indianapolis.³⁶ Hoosier artists had a common background, for all but Metzner had been pupils of Ludwig von Löffitz, a prominent teacher of painting in Germany at that time. Local landscape work was not new, for John Love had held sketch classes out of doors³⁷ and Sue Ketcham had organized tours for similar work during the summers since 1884. These returning artists were to have far-reaching influence on the home community, for they had "gained culture in other ways than study at the academy. The galleries, the international exhibitions, the theatre, the opera, concerts, lectures, occasional travels, and many

³⁴ Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 12.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

³⁶ Interview with Anna Hasselman.

³⁷ Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 12.

excursions into the surrounding country and into the mountains, all added not only pleasure but to their knowledge and experience in their outlook on life. Besides these things, and not the least influence in their development, was their association and sometimes friendship with other students from every country in Europe in the academy and in the Anglo-American Artists' Club—the latter a common meeting ground for all students, English and American, who lived in Munich or happened to be passing through."³⁸

Theodore C. Steele, first to return from Munich in 1885, was born in Owen County, Indiana, in 1847. He was early self-taught, spending some time in Battle Creek, Michigan, before settling in Indianapolis. In 1880 an opportunity to study in Europe came to him, and the next five years were spent at Munich. During this time Herman Lieber rendered important assistance to young artists in many ways. As Steele sent paintings back to Lieber, the latter would exhibit them in his gallery, and as a result the painter had acquired a considerable reputation by the time he returned to Indianapolis.³⁹ In September, 1885, T. C. Steele and Sue Ketcham opened an art school and according to reports the prospects seemed very good.⁴⁰ The next year Steele added to his residence at Talbott Place a studio, probably the first room built expressly and exclusively for such a purpose in Indianapolis.⁴¹

Steele's pictures continued to grow in popularity, and the city took pride in his achievements. Exhibitions of his work were well attended and some of his paintings received very favorable comment.⁴² One of these, "The Boatman," had taken a prize in the gallery at Munich and the German government wished to buy it, but Steele refused the offer and brought it back to Indianapolis.⁴³ His portrait of Herman Lieber was much admired by friends who saw it at Lieber's gallery. His "On the Muscatatuck" was purchased by the Boston Art Club for \$500.00. This was an important compliment, for Boston had not formerly sent to the Middle West for

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁹ *Indianapolis News*, May 29, 1883, March 10, 1884.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, September 8, 24, 1885.

⁴¹ *Art Association of Indianapolis, A Record: 1883-1906*, p. 23n.; *Indianapolis News*, April 23, 1886.

⁴² *Indianapolis News*, May 13, 1886.

⁴³ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 485; *Indianapolis Sentinel*, November 10, 1886.

pictures.⁴⁴ Thus the East had for a second time taken notice of Steele, for during the year of his return from Munich, two of his pictures were accepted for an exhibition of the New York Academy of Art.⁴⁵ The Indianapolis Literary Club likewise complimented him by purchasing for \$200.00 his "Village of Cavendish," a Vermont scene.⁴⁶ Paintings shown at exhibitions in April and October, 1888, displayed scenes from Vermont: "A June Idyll," "Gladness of Spring," and "The Village of Cavendish"; local scenes from Fall Creek, "A November Day," and "A Late Summer Afternoon"; a scene from southern Indiana, "The Oaks of Vernon"; and some landscapes from Montgomery County near Crawfordsville. The latter paintings showed distance with particular atmospheric conditions which much interested him. In commenting on his own work, he stated, "Indiana has beauties which are just as worthy of study as landscapes elsewhere. Hereafter I shall confine myself more to my own state than in the past."⁴⁷

William Forsyth, 1854-1935, another of the Hoosier Colony, was born near Cincinnati. Upon coming to Indianapolis, he began studying with Barton S. Hays, but with little success. After visiting the New York galleries, he returned to Indianapolis to continue working alone. The Love-Gookins Art School opened then, most opportunely, giving him the background he needed. Work with the Bohé Club followed, and in 1882 he was admitted to the art school in Munich, where he remained until 1888. Study under Gyula Julius de Benczur, Nikolaus Gysis, and von Löffitz perfected his technique, enabling him to achieve honors in every Munich exhibit in which his pictures were shown, including a medal in 1885. Upon his return to Indiana he was first associated with J. Ottis Adams in Muncie and Fort Wayne. In 1889 he came to Indianapolis to join T. C. Steele, whose art school in Circle Hall, the old Beecher church, was then in progress. He was successful as a painter, achieving national and international awards, and exhibiting frequently in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, as well as in his home town, Indianapolis. His work as a teacher was very highly

⁴⁴ *Indianapolis Journal*, January 19, 1887.

⁴⁵ *Indianapolis News*, February 3, 1885.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, May 30, 1888.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, April 21, October 18, 1888.

regarded, and he later joined the John Herron art faculty. His paintings were in both water color and oil and were largely Indiana landscapes, with a few portraits.⁴⁸

John Ottis Adams, 1851-1927, an important member of the Hoosier Colony in Munich, was born in Jackson County, Indiana. Upon his return from Munich, he painted for a brief period in Indianapolis, then removed to Brookville. He is well remembered for his association with Steele, Forsyth, and Otto Stark at the Hermitage near Brookville, but more particularly with Steele. Adams continued at the Hermitage after the others had left. His wife, Winifred, was also an accomplished artist.⁴⁹

Otto Stark, 1859-1926, native of Indianapolis, is mentioned here because he was a contemporary of the above artists and was associated with them as one of the Hoosier Group, though not specifically of the Hoosier Colony, for he went to Paris in 1884 to study under Gustave Boulanger. He returned to the United States in 1887, first settling in Philadelphia. After the death of his wife, he returned to Indianapolis with his four children to take the position of art supervisor at Manual Training High School in 1899. His work in Paris was exhibited twice at the Salon, and showed a peculiarly American quality.⁵⁰ The inspiration to paint landscapes of local color was no doubt a result of association with the Barbizon painters, who were prominent in France at that time, and prepared him to take his place later with other Hoosier painters who were being similarly inspired in Munich.

Richard Gruelle, 1851-1904, a self-taught artist born in Cynthiana, Kentucky, began his career as a house painter in Illinois, and worked for a time at surveying to help his family. From materials given him by a friend he worked and studied portrait painting, later opening a studio in Decatur, Illinois. He did some work for a Cincinnati firm, and in 1882 came to

⁴⁸ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 485; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 170-183; Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 87; Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 17, 27; *Indianapolis News*, June 19, 1882, August 12, 1885, September 9, 1887, January 30, 1889.

⁴⁹ Krull, "Brookville Idyls and Ideals," 10; Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 485; Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 87.

⁵⁰ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 485; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 197-199; Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 87-88.

Indianapolis. A visit in 1883 to the William T. Walters Collection at Baltimore proved an important step in his career. His description of the collection which, through Lieber's assistance, was published in *Modern Art*, gained for him the commission to write the descriptive catalog for the Walters Collection. The result was *Notes: Critical and Biographical* (1895), now a rare and valuable publication. During most of the years the Hoosier Colony was studying in Munich, Gruelle was painting landscapes and portraits in Indianapolis. By the time the colony returned from Munich, he was established and his works were naturally included with theirs in exhibitions, so that he has always been considered as one of the Hoosier Group. Probably his greatest picture was "The Drama of the Elements," which was purchased by Arthur A. McKain and placed in the Indianapolis Public Library. He was a popular painter and Forsyth suggested that perhaps more of Gruelle's pictures were owned in Indianapolis than those of any other artist.⁵¹ In 1887, the *News*, commenting on two of his pictures being shown in an exhibition, stated that these "should not escape attention. Their merit is so decided and their promise so great that Indianapolis cannot afford to pass them by. In these days of reaching for better things in art, his work should have substantial recognition."⁵²

This little group of painters, so widely known after 1894 as the Hoosier Group, was the first in the Middle West to recognize and express purely local conditions in their motifs and coloring. One writer commented: "They never fail to delineate the native charm, devoting their time to the problems of light, color, and atmosphere, which has a peculiar fascination in early spring and late autumn. These men never condescend to the general demand on the part of the public for work of a popular nature; they are never accused of debauching public taste."⁵³ The standards they set and the reputation they achieved have echoed down the years to blend with those of the Brown County group which gradually rose to replace them. Steele took up residence in Brown County in the early 1900's and others soon gathered there to form an artists' colony.

⁵¹ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 183-192; Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 88-89; Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 27.

⁵² *Indianapolis News*, April 28, 1887.

⁵³ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 158.

The Art Association held regular annual exhibits from 1883 to 1897, except in 1884. During those years over one thousand paintings were shown, including a few masterpieces by American and foreign artists. Minor exhibits of etchings, engravings, laces, fabrics, pottery, and casts were shown every year, each exhibit lasting from three days to a week. By 1897, twenty-eight such exhibits had been given, together with six courses of lectures and twenty-four separate talks.⁵⁴ The annual exhibits were full-dress occasions with musical programs and refreshments. Single admissions were usually twenty-five cents, and for the exhibit in 1887, season punch tickets were sold, twenty admissions for four dollars.⁵⁵ Although a large annual exhibit was not shown in 1884, as noted above, specimens of the work of some of the pupils were shown and enjoyed.⁵⁶ In 1885 paintings, etchings, and engravings by Thomas B. Glessing, which were owned by his widow, were featured at the annual exhibit. Included with these were paintings by the actor, Joseph Jefferson.⁵⁷ It was hoped many pictures could be sold, for only in that way could the annual exhibits be maintained.

A group of paintings brought from the gallery of the New Orleans exposition proved an interesting feature of the showing of 1886. Again it was hoped that some of the pictures would be purchased and remain permanently in Indianapolis, for it was felt that the continual presence of good works of art was the best way to foster this culture. To set an example, the Art Association purchased one of the paintings, executed by Gustave Wertheimer of Paris, titled "The Kiss of the Siren."⁵⁸ This marine picture depicted a beautiful feminine nude amidst the waves luring a boatman to his destruction. The luscious flesh tones of the nude combined with the sea green of the waves to create what current observers felt to be a most entrancing effect. Lengthy descriptions appeared in the newspapers, but the Art Association presently regretted its choice. Sometime after the initial enthusiasm for the painting had diminished, the picture was quietly removed from its place in the gallery and disappeared; where,

⁵⁴ Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, pp. 9-10.

⁵⁵ *Indianapolis News*, April 20, 1887.

⁵⁶ *The Evening Minute*, December 24, 1884.

⁵⁷ *Indianapolis News*, October 27, November 18, 1885.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, February 26, April 26, 1886, May 11, 1887.

no one inquired, and gradually it was all but forgotten. Later reports indicate that it was finally disposed of by the Art Association, probably sold. The present owner (1952) is a hotel at Wawasee, Indiana.⁵⁹

The 1887 exhibit included paintings by foreign masters, but the work of home artists compared well with them. James B. Gookins, director of the first art school, gave some of the art talks during this showing.⁶⁰

All the principal exhibitions held during the eighties used the Masonic Hall, except in 1888 when 33 South Meridian was the scene of the display. The Propylaeum, built on North Street in 1891, then became the main exhibition gallery of the Art Association until its own quarters were established in 1895 at the old Tinker homestead at Talbott Place, Sixteenth and Pennsylvania streets, former residence of T. C. Steele. By 1906 the buildings of the John Herron Art Institute had been constructed on these grounds.⁶¹

The Art Association began with fifty-four members in 1883, and by 1895 had 217 members, including thirteen life members. By that time about 200 pictures had been purchased by private persons in the city through the Art Association, which had bought as a nucleus of its own collection seventeen pictures by William M. Chase, Harry Chase, Gustave Wertheimer, Walter Shirlaw, and others.⁶²

William Merritt Chase, born in 1849 in Nineveh, Indiana, actually spent little of his time in Indianapolis, but his early art training was received there with Barton S. Hays and Jacob Cox, so the city claims him. He spent several years studying in Munich, then returned to the Hoosier capital to open a studio for a brief period.⁶³ In the late eighties he removed to New York where he taught at the Art Students League. Sue Ketcham, writing of this school in an article in the *News* in 1888, paid high praise to Chase, stating that he was an ideal artist and gentleman, and that his success as a teacher was largely due to his sincerity and directness. Students felt it an honor to be admitted to his classes and a

⁵⁹ Interviews with Anna Hasselman and Marian Greene.

⁶⁰ *Indianapolis News*, April 19, 1887.

⁶¹ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 486-489; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 222-224.

⁶² Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, pp. 9-10.

⁶³ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 480.

real achievement to be allowed to remain.⁶⁴ His paintings, especially his portraits, were considered by eastern critics to be of higher quality than those of any other Hoosier artist of that time.

Barton S. Hays, born 1826, came to Indianapolis in 1858, and remained there until 1882. He painted animals, panoramas, and, as he traveled over the countryside, often made and sold paintings on the spot. He should be remembered as the instructor of John W. Love and William M. Chase.⁶⁵

Frank Edwin Scott, pupil of John W. Love and member of the Bohé Club, left Indianapolis to take up permanent residence elsewhere. Trial drawings made in the Bohé Club admitted him to the Art Students League in New York. Later he went to live in France in the house where Millet was born, and achieved some reputation as a painter of Paris.⁶⁶

Charles Fiscus died at the early age of twenty-three, but his work had already attracted much attention. He received instruction at the Love-Gookins school but was otherwise self-taught. A true Hoosier artist, he loved nature and left a portfolio of sketches of Hoosier scenery. It was thought he would take a position as instructor in the new Art School of 1884, but this was prevented by his untimely death.⁶⁷

Professional women artists of this period were not numerous, nor did many of them achieve wide recognition. Women furnished the majority of the art students, and were always among the brightest and most capable. Though few of them advanced out of the amateur or semi-professional category, they have been the mainstay of the Art Association.⁶⁸ In addition to Sue Ketcham, other women artists of the period included Emma B. King, Ada Cummingore, Julia Sharpe, Mary Yandes Robinson, Bessie Hendricks, Tempe Tice, Estelle P. Izor, Margaret Rudisill, Elizabeth Stevenson, and Mrs. William Forsyth.⁶⁹

Another art was growing in the eighties which was in later years to have important influence on the technique of painting, and vice versa. After the development of the dry-

⁶⁴ *Indianapolis News*, February 21, 1888, November 1, 1889.

⁶⁵ Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 25; Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 478-480.

⁶⁶ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 124-131.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 124; *Indianapolis News*, February 6, 1884.

⁶⁸ Art Association of Indianapolis, *A Record: 1883-1906*, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁹ Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 32-34; interview with Anna Hasselman.

plate process in 1897, societies in amateur photography grew rapidly. The perfection of the new celluloid film, then in process, and improvements in finishing aided greatly in making photography cheaper and more convenient so that it soon became a popular hobby.⁷⁰ The effect of photography on the style, composition, and technique of painting has been tremendous. Photography was becoming an art in Indianapolis as well as elsewhere, and there were indications that photographers of the Hoosier capital ranked high among those of the nation. In 1882 the city entertained the third annual convention of the Photographers' Association of America. At that time Indianapolis could boast of thirty-two photographers and twenty-two galleries.⁷¹

Berry Sulgrove wrote in the early eighties that in the field of sculpture Indianapolis had done little and promised little.⁷² A review of this decade must confirm his conclusion if progress in sculpture be compared with that in the other arts. By 1890, in public sculptured works, Indianapolis possessed only four statues in addition to the partly finished Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Circle Park. In 1880 there had been one statue, that of Benjamin Franklin, standing above the main doorway of the Franklin Insurance Building on the southeast corner of Market and Circle streets. John Mahoney, its sculptor, born in Wales in 1855, had been inspired by the Rogers statuette at the 1873 Indiana Exposition, and the Franklin statue resulted. In 1878 after some time spent in work with marble, he found an opportunity for European study. Upon his return he executed several other statues for Philadelphia, Springfield, Illinois, and Cincinnati. In 1889 he returned to Indianapolis and opened a studio in a stable on Elm Street, relying on small commercial work and occasional commissions for a livelihood. But for a personality conflict with the architect, Mahoney would have been awarded the contract for the "War" and "Peace" groups of the Soldiers' Monument. His statues of George Rogers Clark, William Henry Harrison, and James Whitcomb, made during 1893-1898 and situated around the Monument in the Circle, are regarded by some as the best sculptural work in Indianapolis.⁷³

⁷⁰ Indianapolis News, April 13, 1889.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, April 27, 1882.

⁷² Sulgrove, *History of Indianapolis*, 268.

⁷³ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 483; Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 327-329.

The design for the statue of Oliver P. Morton, Indiana's Civil War governor, was chosen in September, 1880, and the contract awarded to Franklin Simmons. The sculptor was an American from Maine, a renowned artist, and at the time his model was chosen for the Morton statue he had to his credit many fine statues of prominent Americans, as well as other works of art. Soon after Morton's death Simmons made a model of the Governor, and later, at the time he received the commission to do the work, made another model. The statue, cast in bronze and executed in Rome, took two years to make and cost the city a total of \$12,500. It stands eight feet, four inches high, weighs 2,100 pounds, and shows Morton in the pose of debate, an aspect most familiar to his friends and acquaintances. It was placed on a seventeen-foot granite pedestal in the Circle and unveiled January 15, 1884, with the Hon. Richard W. Thompson giving the principal address as a part of an appropriate program.⁷⁴

In 1887 the city acquired the statue of Schuyler Colfax, executed by Lorado Taft and placed in University Square; in 1890 the statue of Thomas A. Hendricks by Richard Henry Parks of Florence, Italy, was placed on the Capitol grounds.⁷⁵

The statuary for the State House was not to be an exhibition of "high art," but was expected to be more of an architectural order, to be commemorative, to set off the building, and fill a vacancy or complete an outline.⁷⁶ Eight solid Carrara marble statues of heroic size, executed by Alexander Doyle of New York City, were placed inside the dome in 1886. These figures represented law, oratory, agriculture, commerce, justice, liberty, history, and art.⁷⁷ But the dome was purposely designed as a memorial to be dedicated to the great men of Indiana, and the State House Commissioners hoped this thought would be carried into effect in the future.⁷⁸

From the standpoint of the artistic plan of the city as a whole, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument was perhaps the crowning achievement of this golden age of Indianapolis

⁷⁴ *Indianapolis News*, September 2, 1880, May 23, November 22, 1883, January 1, 15, 1884.

⁷⁵ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 489; *Souvenir: Unveiling the Hendricks Monument, July 1, 1890* (Indianapolis, 1890), 8-9.

⁷⁶ *Indianapolis News*, July 14, 1885.

⁷⁷ Indiana Board of State House Commissioners, *Final Report*, No. 46 (Indianapolis, 1888), 25.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

culture. Standing in the center of the city, it has constituted a cynosure for all who have dwelt or travelled there. At a focal point in the plan of the city from which main arteries of midwestern transportation radiate, the Monument was regarded by those who designed it as the heart of the nation.

The Circle had always been something of a problem. Early and somewhat unfortunately the site of the Governor's Mansion, it was later suggested as a location for a combined public library and memorial building. For a brief period, 1884-1888, Morton's statue alone graced the Circle. In 1887, Professor H. J. Schonacker in a public address in Indianapolis made a plea for a monument to commend the loyalty and services of the soldiers and sailors of Indiana, one that would be a real work of art, for as such it would be an important means of education. As an illustration he reminded his audience that the work of Thomas Nast, cartoonist, had been influential in putting Boss Tweed behind bars. He complained that the statue of Governor Morton did not really do him justice, for the pedestal was too low. Efforts were already in progress to influence the legislature to appropriate \$200,000 for a soldiers' monument.⁷⁹ Shortly a bill was introduced in the legislature specifying that a monument be erected in Circle Park, but not restricting the type of memorial it should be. A writer in the *Journal* felt some apprehension as to what might then become of Morton's statue and suggested that if it must be removed from the Circle, it might be located in University Park.⁸⁰ Eventually it was decided to incorporate the statue into the monument in the Circle, so it was moved to the southeast corner to represent one of the four periods of Indiana's history, while John Mahoney was commissioned to execute statues of George Rogers Clark, William Henry Harrison,⁸¹ and James Whitcomb, to be arranged in the other three corners to commemorate their respective periods of the state's history.

The monument commission approved the design submitted by Bruno Schmitz, who was brought from Germany to serve as architect for the memorial. Since the sculptural

⁷⁹ *Indianapolis Journal*, February 9, 1887.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, February 22, 1887.

⁸¹ A columnist in the *Indianapolis Times* related that Mahoney's first model of the Harrison statue was not accepted unanimously; but when he draped a cloak around it, all the Monument commissioners approved. *Indianapolis Times*, April 18, 1939.

detail was expected to be somewhat more artistic than might be within the capabilities of Schmitz, the commission sought the services of Frederick William MacMonnies, the most outstanding sculptor in America at that time. Criticism of the designs he offered caused him to give up his contract; then some persons desired that John Mahoney be given the work, but the latter could not get along with one of the architects, so the work was left for Bruno Schmitz, whose forte was architecture, not sculpture. Apparently, then, Schmitz sought out Rudolph Schwartz, his former pupil in Germany, and brought him to Indianapolis to execute the sculptural detail of the Monument.⁸² William Forsyth agreed with this general statement and further pointed out that Schwartz made the soldier figures which stand at the entrances to the Monument.⁸³ Mary Q. Burnet specifically stated that Schwartz was commissioned, after winning in sharp competition, to do "The Return Home" and "The Dying Soldier" figures just above the cascades, as well as the single soldiers and sailors at the entrances. She also stated that the "War" and "Peace" groups were designed by Herman N. Matzen, and carved by Rudolph Schwartz.⁸⁴ Anton Scherrer, architect and son of Adolf Scherrer, the State House architect, relates that Herman N. Matzen did the high reliefs of the "Peace" and "War" groups.⁸⁵ The card describing the Monument and issued by its board of control says simply that Rudolph Schwartz was sculptor of the stone work and George T. Brewster of the bronze work. Thus it is not clear just how much of the designing or execution of sculptural detail was done by Schwartz.

Preliminary construction was begun on the Monument in 1888, and its thirty-foot-deep foundation was completed by October.⁸⁶ In the spring the superstructure was started, the scaffolding surrounding the Circle rising ever higher, from 75 feet to 105 feet.⁸⁷ By summer it was ready for the cornerstone laying, and an elaborate ceremony was held August 22, 1889.⁸⁸ The work continued for another decade and longer,

⁸² Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 483-489.

⁸³ Forsyth, *Art in Indiana*, 22.

⁸⁴ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 322, 326.

⁸⁵ *Indianapolis Times*, April 18, 1939.

⁸⁶ *Indianapolis News*, October 9, 1888.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, May 18, 1889.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, August 22, 1889.

and at last the completed structure was dedicated May 15, 1902.⁸⁹

Although it has been much criticized both in artistic detail and in general aspect, it is noteworthy that Thomas E. Tallmadge, an authority on architectural design and author of well-known works on the architecture of England and America, admired the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument and once commented that its design created an atmosphere in the city which seemed quite European in effect.⁹⁰

It has been further suggested that even though Indiana and midwestern soldiers' monuments might be poorly conceived and badly executed, still they compare well with such monuments in New York state and in New England; further, that some effort was made to utilize local talent in these projects; and that in any case the materializing of the desire to honor our soldier dead is a part of our national growth. Even if too little time and money were given for the best thought and production, it is but part of the development of our new and recent civilization.⁹¹

A modern architect writing of this period declares that in the eighties "our architectural styles were a riot of unrest."⁹² But such form and pattern as there was may be said to display the Romanesque style which was revived in America after the Centennial Exposition of 1876. The hero of this revival was Henry Hobson Richardson, whose designs were widely imitated throughout the country. The best material for this style was stone, but stucco and terra cotta were both used as substitutes, as well as shingles cut into various patterns. Special features of the Romanesque were rounded arches, rounded towers, and, especially in wooden houses, corner towers and porte cochères. Churches in this style exhibited towers with dome-like cupolas instead of spires. The buildings were square, with the pulpit, organ, and choir tucked into a corner, the floor bowl-shaped, and pews curved. It was the "age of cat-a-corner." Homes often had golden oak floors, woodwork, and furniture, with highly polished varnished finish. Walls

⁸⁹ Julia S. Conklin, *Official Souvenir of Indiana State Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument* (Indianapolis, 1902).

⁹⁰ Interview with Anna Hasselman. Thomas E. Tallmadge was her cousin.

⁹¹ Burnet, *Art and Artists in Indiana*, 324.

⁹² Lee Burns, "Early Architects and Builders of Indiana," *Indiana Historical Society Publications* (Indianapolis, 1895-), XI (1937), 202.

were frequently wainscoted, ceilings often beamed and panelled, and much lathe work instead of jig-saw work was in evidence in the form of turned spindles and similar features.⁹³

In domestic architecture of Indianapolis, the *News* declared that the city had changed utterly in appearance from its somewhat primitive aspect of forty years before. Instead of the former plain brick and frame or log houses with no ornamentation, "the cheapest houses will have projecting eaves and ornamental brackets; (perhaps) carved scallop-work at the corners or along the porch. . . . Softer colors, tints of yellow and brown and orange have crept in here and there in twenty years or so, and doors and windows and their casings, . . . porch posts and ornaments are colored differently from the outside walls. . . . Frame cottages with light yellow or grayish walls and chocolate brown 'trimmings' . . . are a late and very tasteful change from the old style."⁹⁴

A writer in the *Sentinel* stated that more attention was being paid to art in buildings in the West, and Indianapolis was far in advance of most cities its size. Homes in Queen Anne style were in high favor, but Gothic and classic or French Renaissance were also used. Terra cotta was much in vogue, and was often combined with brick. Stained and beveled glass was also popular.⁹⁵

Indianapolis was regarded as a "city of homes" with its quiet streets and comfortable houses surrounded by shrubbery and spacious lawns. No apartment houses had yet been constructed, and the number of boarding houses was small. More people owned their homes in the Hoosier capital than in the other cities of the state. By the end of the decade more were being built and a similar increase was noted in the construction of business buildings, while real estate values were advancing.⁹⁶

Homes of a more pretentious nature were built during the seventies, but fewer of this type during the eighties. Homes of prominent citizens typified the domestic architecture considered to be in good taste from 1880 to 1890. The home of James O. Woodruff in Woodruff Place was built prob-

⁹³ Thomas E. Tallmadge, *The Story of Architecture in America* (New York, 1927), Chapter 7.

⁹⁴ *Indianapolis News*, July 28, 1882.

⁹⁵ *Indianapolis Sentinel*, October 17, 1886; *Indianapolis News*, May 26, 1887.

⁹⁶ *Indianapolis News*, May 26, 1887, April 20, December 26, 1889.

ably during the late seventies, and while it was not the sort of home commonly found in Indianapolis at that time, it embodied ideals that other citizens tried to emulate. Booth Tarkington, in his *The Magnificent Ambersons*, described the Woodruff home in detail, calling it the home of Major Amberson. Although the author did not claim it to be an accurate description, it is true to the spirit of the times.

"This house was the pride of the town. Faced with stone as far back as the dining-room windows, it was a house of arches and turrets and girdling stone porches: it had the first porte-cochère seen in that town. There was a central 'front hall' with a great black walnut stairway, and open to a green glass skylight called the 'dome,' three stories above the ground floor. A ballroom occupied most of the third story; and at one end of it was a carved walnut gallery for the musicians. Citizens told strangers that the cost of all this black walnut and wood-carving was sixty thousand dollars. 'Sixty thousand dollars for the wood-work *alone!* Yes, sir, and hardwood floors all over the house! Turkish rugs and no carpets at all, except a Brussels carpet in the front parlour—I hear they call it the "reception-room." Hot and cold water upstairs and down, and stationary washstands in every last bedroom in the place! Their sideboard's built right into the house and goes all the way across one end of the dining room. It isn't walnut, it's solid mahogany! Not veneering—solid mahogany!"⁹⁷ Although some of the houses had bathrooms, these were not common. Some rooms were especially designed for servants' quarters. Always at the rear could be found the stable which was usually large enough to house the family carriage, victoria, coupé, run-a-bout, or other vehicles. The Major's was of brick, with four rooms upstairs for the hired men and their families. The Major also had a greenhouse, but this was probably unusual.⁹⁸

Among the public buildings erected during the eighties were English's Opera House and the Denison Hotel, opened in 1880; the English Hotel in 1884; Tomlinson Hall, 1885; Young Men's Christian Association in 1886; new Union Station and State House completed in 1888; German Evangelical Reformed Church on East Merrill Street, 1889; and the Propylaeum, 1889-1890.

⁹⁷ Booth Tarkington, *The Magnificent Ambersons* (Garden City, New York, 1918), 17-18.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

The English building was begun in 1880 in the northwest segment of the Circle, with the Opera House the first portion to be completed. William H. English contemplated a later extension of the building, part of which might possibly serve as a public library.⁹⁹ He went on a tour of buildings in the East to decide on the style and arrangement, and at that time announced that his son, William E. English, would manage the theater, with J. L. Saphere from the East as his assistant. Construction of the theater was planned to begin in April,¹⁰⁰ and the building was expected to be ready for use by September 1.¹⁰¹ The elder English decided to follow the design of the Grand Opera House in New York, but to build his theater larger. Then, as he contemplated his project, the idea grew and he decided to build up the entire front of that segment of the Circle, making it into an elegant hotel, superior to anything then in Indianapolis. He also considered locating a wholesale drug firm there.¹⁰²

Many difficulties arose in the course of construction, and W. H. English sometimes dealt with his contractors in a high-handed manner to secure prompt action in completing the work. He insisted on the newest and best available type of equipment in such matters as the hydraulic elevator. Later, Manager William E. English reported with satisfaction that stars performing in the theater pronounced it the best one in the West.¹⁰³

The Denison Hotel opened in 1880 under the management of H. B. Sherman.¹⁰⁴ Its rich decoration, mirrors and chandeliers, in fact, all its detail, were considered to be in exquisite taste.¹⁰⁵ In 1881 the Bates House was enlarged and remodeled with the addition of a new entrance for ladies, a passenger elevator, a new dining room and ordinary, and new ground-floor offices. The new management, W. G. Sherman, modestly declared it to be the finest hotel in the West.¹⁰⁶ The

⁹⁹ *Indianapolis News*, February 12, 1880.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, February 12, 16, 1880.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, March 1, April 16, 1880.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, April 27, July 23, 1880.

¹⁰³ English Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis.

¹⁰⁴ Sulgrove, *History of Indianapolis*, 271; Max R. Hyman, *Hyman's Handbook of Indianapolis: An Outline History and Description of the Capital of Indiana* (Indianapolis 1897), 124.

¹⁰⁵ *Indianapolis News*, March 11, 1880.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, January 26, February 15, 1881.

English Hotel, a first class hotel opened in 1884, together with the Opera House covered over half that quadrant of the Circle.¹⁰⁷

Tomlinson Hall, erected in 1885, was made possible by the estate of Stephen D. Tomlinson. He had bequeathed the sum of \$150,000 in trust to the city for the construction of an assembly hall to belong to Indianapolis. After his death it was proposed, in 1881, to convert this fund into cash and build a combination city hall and market house.¹⁰⁸ This was completed in 1885. The upper story with its fifty-foot ceiling was designed as a public assembly hall which would seat 5,000. Its stage seated 500. This proved a boon to the city, creating a place where political conventions could gather, and making possible the large May Festivals of the eighties and nineties.¹⁰⁹ The lower floor, used as a market house, developed into an institution which became a unique part of Indianapolis community life. The building was designed and erected under the supervision of D. A. Bohlen, an architect who had worked in Francis Costigan's office, and who also built St. John's Cathedral and the Roberts Park Church.¹¹⁰

In 1886 an important event occurred in the architectural history of Indianapolis. A chapter of the Western Association of Architects was organized in the city, and an exhibition of designs was planned for January, 1887, in an effort to interest citizens of Indianapolis. Plans were also made to ask the legislature to pass a law establishing the status of architects. Guests were taken on a tour of the city, and it was reported they were pleased with the architectural styles they saw. It may be pointed out that the tour ended with a drive through Crown Hill Cemetery, then considered indispensable as part of any general program of entertainment.¹¹¹ In 1886 a new Young Men's Christian Association building was under construction, supervised by architect Louis Gibson.¹¹²

A curious building was proposed and erected in the city in 1888. Because of the large volume of business caused by

¹⁰⁷ Sulgrove, *History of Indianapolis*, 272.

¹⁰⁸ Hyman, *Handbook of Indianapolis*, 123; *Indianapolis News*, June 12, 1881.

¹⁰⁹ Hyman, *Handbook of Indianapolis*, 128; *Indianapolis News*, July 28, 1885.

¹¹⁰ Burns, "Early Architects and Builders of Indiana," *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, XI, 200.

¹¹¹ *Indianapolis Sentinel*, October 22, 24, 1886.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, October 15, 1886.

the political campaign, the State Fair, legislative sessions, the Soldiers' Monument construction, and the excitement over the discovery of natural gas, it seemed only good business to provide some unique form of entertainment for the crowds. Several persons thought seriously of promoting a cyclorama, a circular building peculiarly adapted to an exhibition that would at once be artistic, dramatic, historical, and highly exciting. Some thought it might interfere with the business of the theaters, though no one was deeply concerned about that. Remarkably lifelike battle scenes were depicted in such arenas in other cities, and were highly successful. Accordingly, permission was secured and the building was erected on West Market Street. It was constructed of brick, 400 feet in circumference, 50 feet high at the edge, and 100 feet high at the center of the dome. At the grand opening in May, 1888, the "Battle of Atlanta" was shown to visitors for fifty and twenty-five cents admission. Natural scenery, trees and shrubs, were placed in front of painted scenery, blending with it in a manner which presented an illusion of distance, making the whole scene remarkably real. The details were authentic, and J. F. Gookins, T. C. Steele, and Rev. N. A. Hyde were much impressed with it.¹¹³ Those who afterwards recalled visiting the Cyclorama regarded it as an exciting experience, for it seemed that the actual event had been brought to a reality before their eyes.¹¹⁴ The building was later razed to make way for the Terminal Station.¹¹⁵

In 1888-1889 the Propylaeum was built on North Street opposite the Blind Asylum. It was constructed by architects Adolph Scherrer and W. Scott Moore, of Indiana limestone in the prevailing Romanesque style. Its assembly hall seated 600 people, and other rooms were used as parlors, committee rooms, offices, dining room, and kitchen. It continued to serve as a meeting place for clubs, as an art gallery, banquet and lecture hall, as well as provide a place for dramatic entertainments, concerts, and private social affairs, until 1924 when it was torn down to make way for the War Memorial.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ *Indianapolis News*, February 15, 25, March 9, May 29, 30, 1888.

¹¹⁴ Interviews with Anna Hasselman and William George Sullivan.

¹¹⁵ Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis*, I, 109.

¹¹⁶ Rabb and Herschell, *Indianapolis and Marion County*, 81-82; Carolyn Dunn, *Indianapolis Propylaeum, 1888-1938* (Indianapolis, 1938), *passim*.

The completion of the State House was probably the most notable architectural work of the decade. It proceeded under the watchful eye of Adolf Scherrer, who had become supervising architect after Edwin May's untimely death in February, 1880.¹¹⁷

Vexatious lawsuits plagued the builders. Notwithstanding the care taken by the commissioners to examine thoroughly every plan submitted to them, the disappointed architects instituted suits to restrain progress of the work on the State House. Though they also enlisted some newspapers in their cause, their efforts were in vain and work proceeded.¹¹⁸ The usual delays caused by cold weather and occasional failure of machinery held up operations at intervals.¹¹⁹ After some five years of work there was discussion concerning the mistakes in judgment of the original planners, and there seemed to be some possibility that the contractors might throw up the job. It was recognized to be impossible to complete the work according to the original estimate, due to the increased cost of labor.¹²⁰ In 1883 the commissioners decided to abandon the contract entirely and gave notice to the contractors. After considerable work making new plans with new specifications by the supervising architect and his assistants, work was resumed. This had, of course, involved a delay of several months and added expense for new plans, thus postponing the date of completion of the building. Work had been suspended so long that it was nearly the last of September when it was resumed, and cold weather arrived before much was accomplished that season.¹²¹ Thereafter work proceeded without serious interruption.

In 1887 part of the building was occupied, enabling the legislature to convene there for the first time.¹²² In 1888 the rest of the building was finished and occupied, and by October 2, the work was considered completed and accounts were closed.¹²³ The total expense as reported by the commissioners

¹¹⁷ Indianapolis News, February 28, March 1, 10, 1880.

¹¹⁸ Indiana Board of State House Commissioners, *Final Report*, 14-15.

¹¹⁹ Indianapolis News, April 29, 1880.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, March 12, 16, September 3, 19, 1883.

¹²¹ Indiana Board of State House Commissioners, *Final Report*, 21-22.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 24; Indianapolis Journal, January 5, 1887.

¹²³ Indiana Board of State House Commissioners, *Final Report*, 25.

was \$2,099,794.66, leaving an unexpended balance of \$10,160.90.¹²⁴ This fact has long been a source of pride to the state. As early as 1884 when it was anticipated under the changed plan of construction that the work could be completed within the sum allowed, an Indianapolis paper gratefully copied this comment from the *Boston Journal*: "They have a queer way of doing things out in Indiana. The sum of \$2,000,000 was appropriated for a new State House, which is now near completion, and the prospect is that the cost will be \$136,000 less than the appropriation! The architects and contractors have made a mistake somewhere. They should go to Albany or Washington and take a few lessons. Such honesty is phenomenal."¹²⁵

The entire work had taken more than ten years, from September, 1877, when instructions were issued to architects, to October, 1888, when the final report was made. It housed the various state departments, including the State Library; it was heated by steam, ventilated by four huge fans, and was lighted by artificial gas, though it was also wired for electricity.¹²⁶ The architecture combined the best forms of Greek and Roman classic styles. On the first floor columns were of Doric order, on the second, Ionic, and on the third, Corinthian, with marble corridors throughout.¹²⁷ The exterior lines show the influence of Romanesque style which was currently considered beautiful and practical.

The Inland City was in 1890 dominated by the new State House and the Soldiers' Monument still under construction, and it might be expected that future artistic developments would be strongly influenced thereby. Yet somewhat primitive characteristics continued in evidence; for example, the lamplighter still made his rounds each night with his ladder, lighting the old-fashioned oil lamps.¹²⁸ Lawns were still enclosed by picket fences, but these began to disappear after the political campaign of 1888 when so many souvenirs were taken from Benjamin Harrison's fence as almost to wreck it.¹²⁹ Doubtless some other sentiment was attached to these

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹²⁵ *The Evening Minute*, December 30, 1884.

¹²⁶ Indiana Board of State House Commissioners, *Final Report*, 45-51.

¹²⁷ *Indianapolis Journal*, January 5, 1887.

¹²⁸ *Indianapolis Times*, April 24, May 3, 13, 1937.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, February 24, 1939.

fences in certain quarters, particularly on the south side where more Germans lived; for it has been claimed that it was customary for a father to paint his gate a certain color to announce the marriageable status of his daughters—blue if any were single, and white if none remained unmarried.¹³⁰ But as the fences disappeared, so, to a great extent, did the old provincialism vanish. As other influences poured in during the nineties, the Inland City of the Golden Age began to fade, or to be subdued by an overlay of metropolitan superstructure, and a great midwestern manufacturing and transportation center came into focus.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*