



**Henry and Clara Sprick House**  
**2320 York • designed 1922, built 1923 • George Behrensmeyer, architect**  
**Eclectic Craftsman Style**

Society architect George Behrensmeyer gave the Spricks a design in the grand eclectic style that English country houses had been sporting since the turn of the century. Like them, it is filled with borrowings from England's years of glory: a Jacobean parapet on the dormer gable, Renaissance columns fronting the dining room bay, and a vaguely neoclassical entry marquee. Fused to these are several upscale elements of the American Craftsman idiom, such as conspicuous show rafters, multiple insets of blank stone, a recessed entry bay elaborated with Prairie School piers and windows, and a plan separating living and dining rooms with a central hall. Other important Craftsman features of mixed heritage are the overscaled neoclassical scroll worked into the main balustrade and the hearth and fireplace picking up on the masonry materials of the exterior.

From a purely artistic standpoint, perhaps the finest feature of the house is the remarkable group of art-glass windows on the west wall of the dining room. These depict a cluster of ivy leaves supported by twining vines and a trellis, all done with a Prairie School fondness for pure geometrical form. The walls of the dining room are covered with a scenic mural of quite a different style. This mural, of open countryside, is complemented by a woodland scene painted directly onto a plastered triptych above the fireplace. Other murals depicting water scenes (sailboats and waterfowl) line the second story bathroom walls and ceilings.

Dozens of original light fixtures survive in their original locations, all of them appearing to be of the same line and by the same as yet unidentified manufacturer. The fixtures are the most visible component of the architect's close attention to the house's mechanical systems. Other components, all found in the basement, are a state-of-the-art (in 1922) clothes dryer, a sitzbath, and a fireproof enclosure presumably associated with Sprick's work as a banker. In the period immediately preceding the building of his house, Henry Sprick had risen through the ranks to become president of State Street Bank and Trust.

Current owners: Robert and Barbara Ireland

*BEHIND CLOSED DOORS*  
*OCTOBER 17, 1992*