

Early Swedish Home Built of Hewn Logs



A picturesque house of ten rooms, which might accurately be called a "dream house" has been built in Highland Park and the story of its construction provides an interesting chapter for the building industry. Harry Bengsten of Winnetka, who is a contractor and builder is the man who built the house, which has, among many other features, three baths and a two car garage.

To understand just what Mr. Bengsten has accomplished in this home it is necessary to state that it was built without plans. The Winnetka man has built many other homes without any finished blue prints to guide him, and the results demonstrate that artistry is one of his strong points.

Built in Swedish Style

This latest achievement of Mr. Bengsten which is pictured in another column. The motif is Swedish, in fact the builder found in the older Swedish homes his inspiration.

This builder, oddly enough, plans as he builds which is most unique. Creating one room without plans he goes to the next and builds as he goes along. The new house reflects to a high degree the spirit of his native land. It has the simple ruggedness of the peasant home in Sweden, it provides all the comforts and conveniences of the modern suburban home.

The foundation is of field stone. The first story is of hard hewn logs which are imbedded in concrete. Mr. Bengsten had difficulty in finding these logs, but finally discovered them in an old log cabin at Mundelein which he tore down in order to get what he wanted. The cabin had been built years before Mr. Bengsten was born.

The upper story is of rough plaster and has a thatched roof of cedar

shingles. A feature of the living room is a big stone chimney which extends from the ground level to above the roof for this is a two story living room. The fireplace is so large that six foot logs may be burned in it. The chimney and fireplace are constructed of granite boulders set in concrete. The entire room is finished in paneled cypress, which is so worked that the hard grain is brought out.

The central lighting fixture is an old wooden wagon wheel which has been charred by fire. On the rim of the wheel are candle light fixtures and all trimmings are hammered Swedish iron.

There is another fireplace in the reception hall, which is small and quaint.

The dining room walls are uniquely decorated with Swedish floral patterns in blended colors. The floor is finished to harmonize with the walls.

Old Fashioned Stairway

Leading to the second story is an old fashioned stairway with a hand-made balustrade.

The bedrooms show a departure from the usual designs. There are slants and angles in the ceiling which give an inviting atmosphere. No two are finished alike, each room having an individuality not only in construction, but color.

Mr. Bengsten considers this new home the best example of his artistry.

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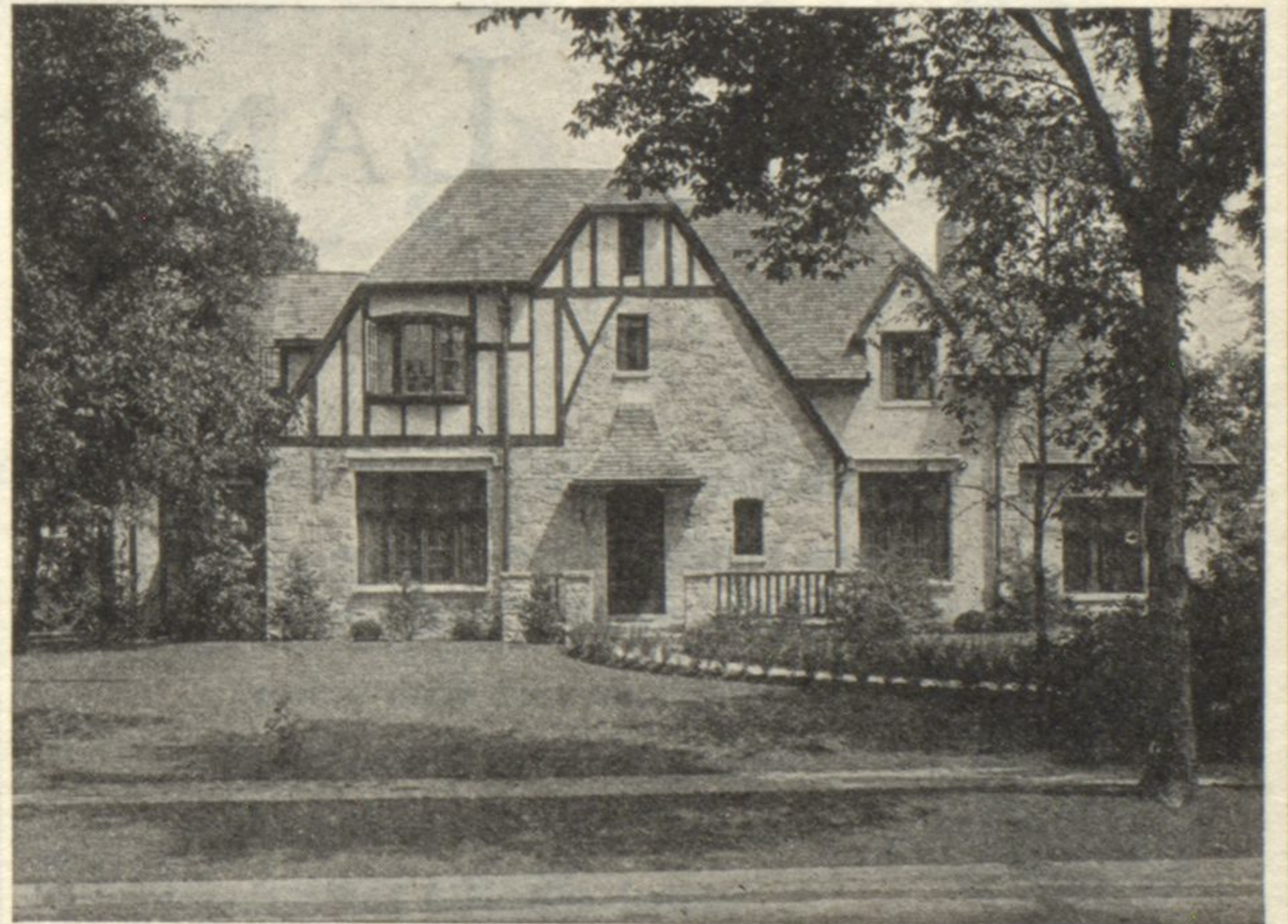
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