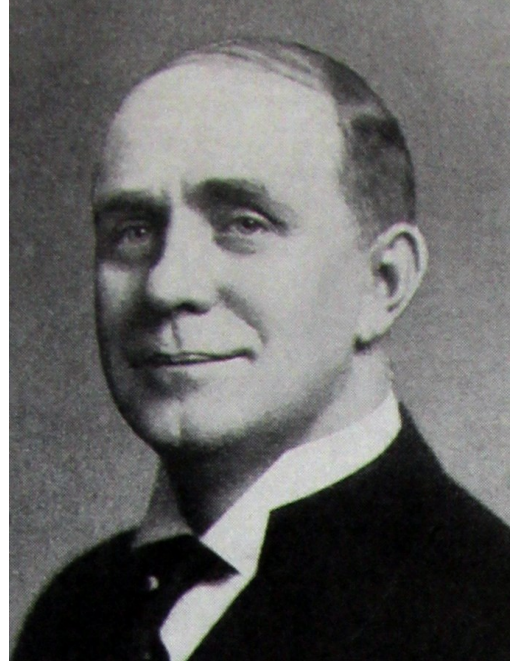


LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



3916 N. Tripp Avenue



John Nuveen, Sr. (1864-1948)

John Nuveen House 3916 N. Tripp Avenue



CITY OF CHICAGO
Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Maurice D. Cox, Commissioner

Cover Photo of John Nuveen, Credit: *The Prairie Bondman: A Corporate Biography of the John Nuveen Company on the Occasion of Its Centennial Celebration.*

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JOHN NUVEEN HOUSE

3916 N. TRIPP AVE.

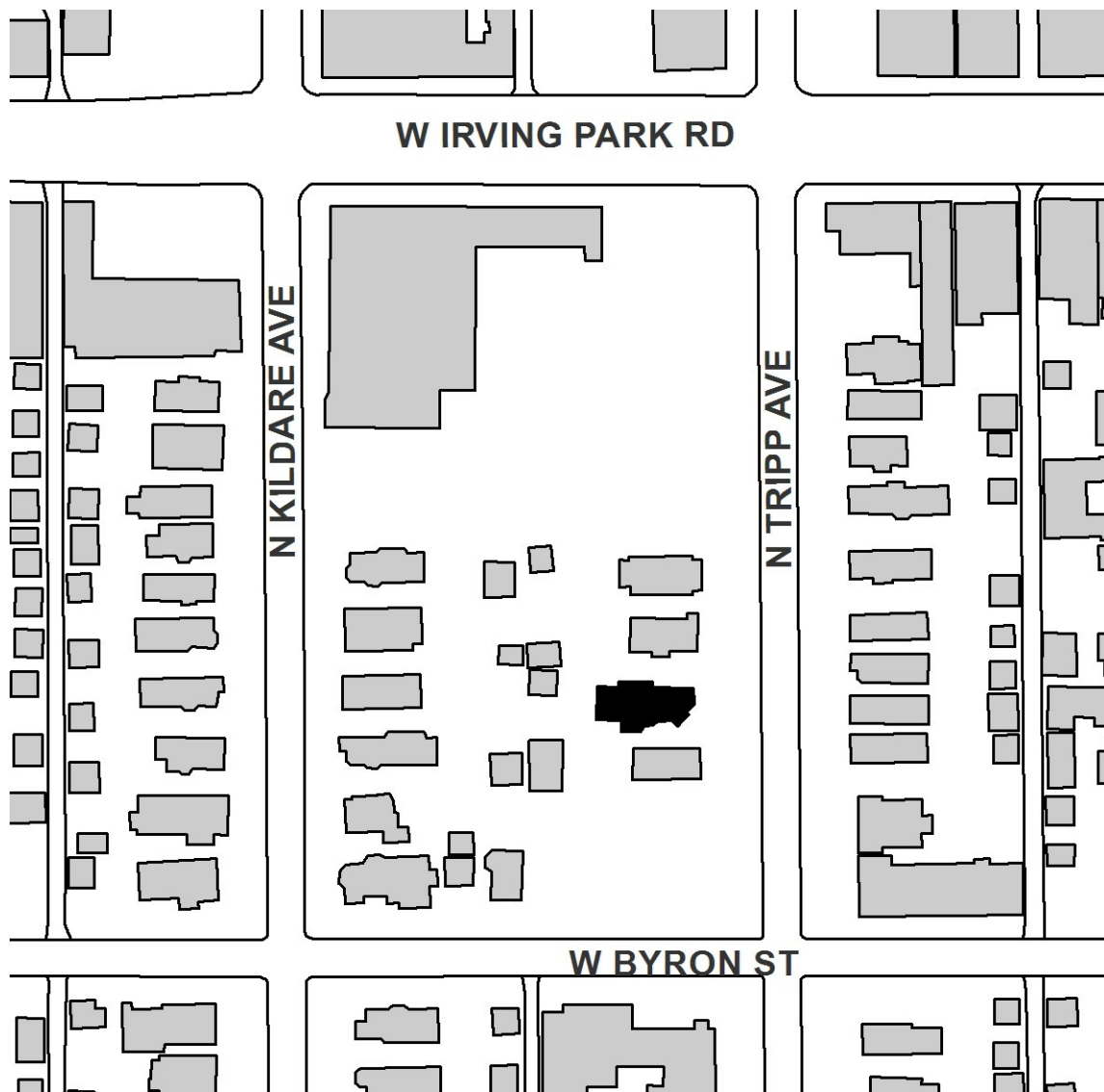
BUILT: 1892

ARCHITECT: POSSIBLY CLARENCE H. TABOR

Built in 1892, the John Nuveen House is a picturesque Queen Anne style house that reflects the historic development of the Irving Park neighborhood as a “railroad suburb” of substantial, single-family houses on oversized lots. In the late-19th century upper- and middle-class Chicago families were drawn to a series of new neighborhoods on the Northwest Side like Irving Park that developed around two rail lines that offered commuter rail service for white collar workers in the Loop. These communities grew as real estate developers promoted the neighborhood’s large lots, its distance from the city’s congestion and pollution, and its excellent transportation. After the Chicago Fire of 1871, Irving Park gained greater recognition for maintaining its “suburban-ness” as people rushed to replace property lost in the fire.

Architecturally, the John Nuveen House is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style of architecture. This picturesque late Victorian style, popular in the 1880s and 90s, is found in almost every city and town in the United States. Buildings in the Queen Anne style have asymmetrical shapes characterized by bays and prominent, varied rooflines. In Chicago, it was used for many houses and commercial buildings, with concentrations found in neighborhoods that originally developed as suburbs and which were later annexed to the City of Chicago. Character-defining features of the style displayed by the John Nuveen House include its irregular roofline, corner tower with pyramidal roof, large front porch and variety of ornament.

The house is also significant for its original owner, John Nuveen, who made a significant contribution to Chicago’s economic history. When he built the house in 1892, Nuveen was an ambitious 28-year-old salesman who in 1898 founded his own investment banking firm in Chicago, John Nuveen & Co., which became a nationally-significant investment bank in the mid-20th century.



Shown in black, the John Nuveen House is located at 3916 N. Tripp Ave. in the Irving Park Community Area. The building outlines show how the Nuveen House and its neighbors are sited with deep setbacks from the street on large lots, revealing the neighborhood's initial development as a residential suburb.

BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

The City of Chicago issued a building permit for the house to John Nuveen on May 28, 1892, with an estimated construction cost of \$5,000. (At the time the address was 2385 Selvin Avenue; in 1895 the street was renamed to 42nd Court before finally becoming Tripp Avenue in 1913.) Construction of the house was completed in three months. As was typical for permit records from this time, the architect was not identified, though the design of the house is attributed to architect Clarence H. Tabor.

The house is located in the Irving Park neighborhood on an oversized lot measuring 165' by 50' reflecting the neighborhood's historic development as a suburban-style neighborhood. Though the house is located less than one block from Irving Park Road, its setting is residential with nearby detached houses of a similar vintage set on similarly large lots with mature trees. The 2-1/2 story and raised basement house measures approximately 40' by 80'. The ground plan of the building is irregular with a corner tower, projecting bays and recessed wall surfaces. Similarly, the elevations are asymmetrical with projecting bays and gables, a corner tower and one-story front porch.

The house is oriented with the front elevation and primary façade facing east onto an ample front yard and N. Tripp Avenue, a lightly-traveled residential street. The house rests on a rusticated Joliet limestone foundation with small, punched window openings. Above the basement, the roof, wall and floor structures are balloon-frame built up with dimensional lumber. The exterior walls are clad with narrow-lap wood clapboard and areas of decorative wood shingles; the roof is covered in green asphalt shingles. The windows are primarily one-over-one double-hung wood sash with decorative wood casing and hood molding. High quality clear and colored leaded art-glass windows decorate some of the windows.

The house is topped with a steeply pitched, cross-gabled roof with lower pyramidal roofs topping the front facing corner tower and projecting window bay. There is a single brick chimney at the gable crossing.

The front façade is dominated by a square corner tower set at 90 degrees to the rest of the plan and rising the full height of the structure. The tower is topped with a band of small rectangular casement windows and a steeply pitched pyramidal roof with a decorative metal finial. A flared band of half-circle-and-diamond shingles wraps around the tower between the first and second floors. The first floor of the tower has large casement windows topped with art glass transoms.

Next to the tower, a raised one-story porch is approached by a flight of wood stairs leading to the main entrance to the house. The paneled entrance door is set into a projecting bay and is flanked on either side with double-hung windows glazed with leaded-glass. The entrance porch roof features a flat roof carried by decorated columns with spindled brackets. A wood balustrade with handrail wraps around the first floor porch deck and roof level.

Given the large lot upon which the house sits, the long north and south side elevations of the house are largely visible from the public way. The north elevation features a small oculus art-glass window and a large projecting gable decorated with alternating bands of decorative wood



The front elevation of the house features a large corner tower and a raised porch leading to the paneled entrance door set in a projecting bay. The balloon-frame structure is sheathed in narrow clapboard and shingles. Large double hung windows are glazed with clear glass and accented with art glass transoms.



Looking down the side yard along the south elevation with its projecting bay and the buildings Joliet limestone ashlar foundation walls



The side elevation facing north features an oculus window and a projecting bay topped with a pediment with bands of shingles.

shingles. A driveway along the north elevation leads to a frame garage set behind the house. The south elevation is marked by a three-sided projecting bay rising the full-height of the building and topped with a pyramidal roof. The west-facing rear elevation is not visible from the public way.

John Nuveen moved into the house in August 1892 and resided there for three years with his mother and sister. In 1895 John Nuveen moved out of the house when he married Ida Strawbridge and moved to the Grand Boulevard neighborhood. Nuveen's mother and sister remained in the house on Tripp until as late as 1914.

The Queen Anne Architectural Style

The Nuveen House exemplifies the Queen Anne style of architecture. The style was eclectic and highly popular for domestic architecture built between the late 1860s and 1890s in England and America. The style was originally conceived in England in the 1860s and 1870s and was based on late-Medieval architecture of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods of the late 16th and 17th centuries. As adapted by American architects, the Queen Anne style is a visually rich and diverse style.

Queen Anne-style buildings can range from elaborate multi-towered mansions and commercial buildings with a plethora of applied ornament, to simply-planned and detailed smaller houses and cottages. What unifies these diverse buildings are a dependence on asymmetrical composition and a wide array of decorative forms, materials and textures. Architectural features can include towers, turrets, tall chimneys, projecting pavilions, porches, bays and encircling verandahs. Ornament can be in wood, metal, terra cotta, or stone, and range from the simplest wooden spindle work to elaborate terra cotta and pressed-metal details.

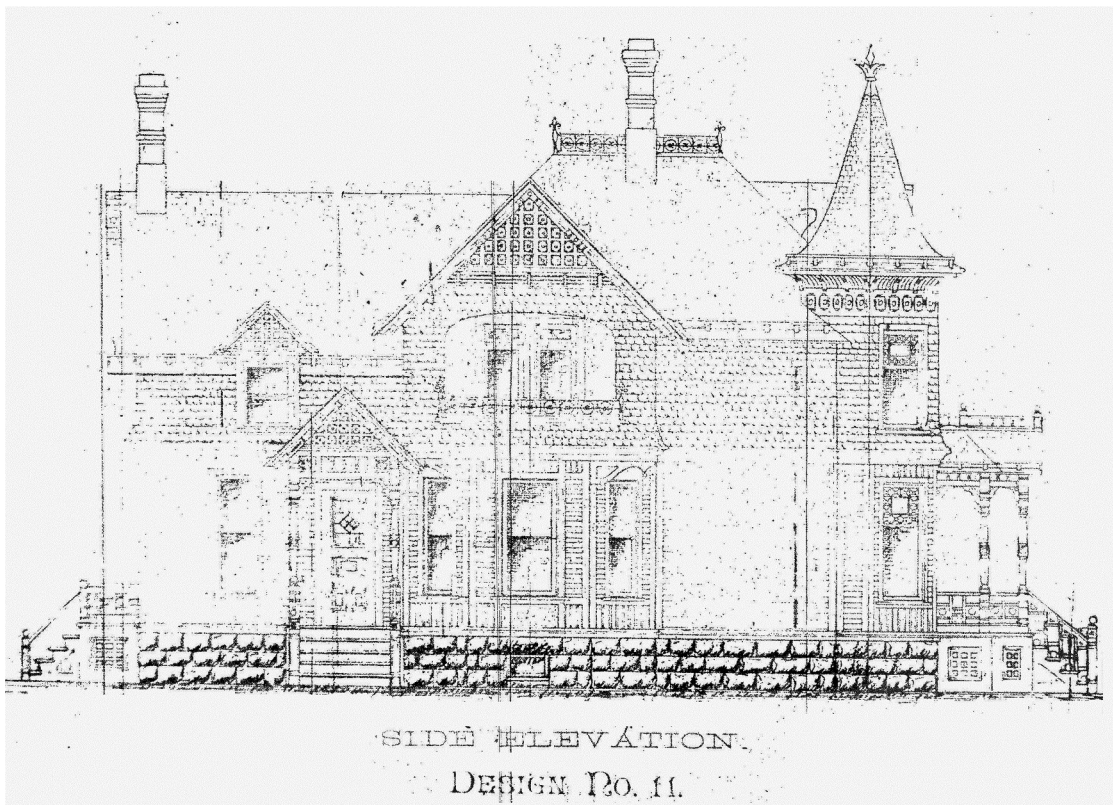
Architect Clarence H. Tabor

The architect for the Nuveen House is not documented, however it may be Clarence H. Tabor, an architect who designed several other Queen Anne style houses in the surrounding neighborhood, including the Charles N. Loucks House, a designated Chicago Landmark at 3926 N. Keeler Avenue from 1891. John Nuveen knew Loucks as he purchased the lot for his house him.

Additionally, Tabor published a catalog of 17 house designs in 1891 entitled *Tabor's Modern Homes: An Illustrated Semi-Annual of Practical and Modern Designs*. This architectural pattern book included "Design Number 11" which strongly resembles the overall design of the Nuveen House which was built a year after the catalog was published. Tabor also advertised in the Chicago *Tribune* in 1891 and his ad featured a rendering of the same design.

Little is known about Pennsylvania-born architect Clarence H. Tabor (c. 1857-?). In addition to his publication, Tabor maintained his architectural office in the Chicago Opera House Building (located at Clark and Washington streets, demolished). A few brief articles appeared in the mid-1890s which mention Tabor's contribution to the city's real-estate developments, such as 36 single-family homes near 72nd St. and Eggleston Ave. Whether these were ever built is unknown. Tabor remained in Chicago until after the turn of the century, then relocated to Brooklyn, New York, and formed the C. H. Tabor Land Improvement Company.

It is possible that the John Nuveen House was designed by architect Clarence H. Tabor who in 1891 published *Tabor's Modern Homes: An Illustrated Semi-Annual of Practical and Modern Designs*. Design number 11 in that publication, shown at left and below, bears a strong resemblance to the John Nuveen House.



His firm continued to design homes for real estate developments in the New York area well into the 1950s.

“RAILROAD SUBURBS” AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF IRVING PARK

The Nuveen House reflects the historic development of the Irving Park neighborhood as a “railroad suburb” in the late-19th century. Though slightly archaic, the term “railroad suburb” historically referred to a residential community that developed and prospered during the late-19th century based on access to commuter rail service to urban centers. During the last four decades of the 19th century, rail service had a strong influence on the patterns of urban settlement, as real estate speculators began to plan outlying communities around commuter railroads. Developers sold large lots for the construction of single-family houses, and often sold land at discounts to civic and religious institutions that would build in the area and help attract middle- and upper-class families to these new railroad suburbs.

The present-day Irving Park neighborhood grew from a consolidation of three early suburban settlements within Jefferson Township: Irving Park, Grayland and Montrose (later called Mayfair). Comprised of a total of 15 small settlements, the township was officially formed in 1850, despite the fact that most of its 700 citizens had settled in the area in the 1830s. Jefferson’s town hall was built in 1857 on land donated by John Gray, a farmer and businessman who was elected Cook County Sheriff shortly after the town hall was completed.

In 1869, New York businessman Charles T. Race purchased 160 acres from Major Noble, whose father bought land in the area in 1833. Race’s intent was to become a gentleman farmer, but decided it would be more profitable to develop a settlement on the land. That same year his son, Richard T. Race, purchased an adjacent parcel of 80 acres from John Gray, assisting his father in this new business venture. Charles Race also took on additional family members and investors, each bringing with them additional acreage. The new settlement was to have been called “Irvington” in honor of the New York author, Washington Irving, but it was already in use by another Illinois town. “Irving Park” was eventually decided upon, and with their combined land resources, they organized the Irving Park Land and Building Company.

Early on, the company marketed to those who desired to escape the noise and grime of a burgeoning population in Chicago. Initially, the Chicago & North Western Railroad, whose tracks were in close proximity to the land, didn’t stop there; however, Charles Race persuaded the railroad to make stops in Irving Park in exchange for Race paying to have the depot built. The railroad agreed, and soon houses sprang up around the depot, establishing the first railroad suburb in Jefferson Township. Shortly thereafter, the desperate need of new homes in the aftermath of the Chicago Fire of 1871 spurred rapid growth to the area. Subsequently the Irving Park Land and Building Company routinely mentioned the railroad’s frequency to the area, and printed train timetables in their advertisements.

Annexation to the City of Chicago, as a part of the whole Jefferson Township in 1889, brought some necessary infrastructure improvements to Irving Park such as paved streets, adequate sew-



An 1874 map indicating the Irving Park, Grayland and Montrose railroad suburbs in Jefferson Township. New York developer Charles Race, Irving Park's founder, persuaded the Chicago & North Western Railroad to make regular stops in exchange for providing payment for the train depot.
 Credit: Chamberlin, *Chicago and its Suburbs*.



Credit: Old Irving Park Historical Society

Top: A historic photo of the Irving Park settlement in what was then Jefferson Township. This early-1880s view looks south along Irving Park Blvd. The Chicago & North Western Railroad tracks are in the foreground.

Right: An advertisement for the Irving Park Land and Building Company, 1874. Charles T. Race founded the Irving Park settlement in 1869, and after the depot was built, advertised train timetables or mentioned the frequency of trains to the area.

THE ORIGINAL.

IRVING PARK

Land and Building Company.

HOUSES for Sale on Long Time and Built to Order on Terms to Suit.

MONEY TO LOAN FOR BUILDING PURPOSES.

AT IRVING PARK.

A DESIRABLE RESIDENCE PLACE.

With Water Works in complete working order, and connected with every Dwelling Sold by us.

SHADY STREETS, FINE SCHOOLS, CHURCHES
AND STORES.

Only Six Miles from center of Chicago, reached by Railroad in twenty minutes,
commutation fare seven cents.

TRAINS TO AND FROM CHICAGO NEARLY EVERY HOUR IN THE DAY.

C. T. RACE, Irving Park,
R. T. RACE, " " } Proprietors.
S. A. RACE, New York. }

R. T. RACE & CO.,

REAL ESTATE, LOAN AND NOTE
BROKERS,

167 Madison Street, Room 1, CHICAGO, ILL.

Credit: Posada, "Suburb into Neighborhood: The Transformation of Urban Identity on Chicago's Periphery"

ers, and more electric and telephone lines. But while now nominally Chicagoans, the citizens still thought of themselves as "from Irving Park," not Chicago. The strong bonds forged by local church, school, social, and charitable activities were already firmly established.

Irving Park experienced a boom between 1900 and 1920. Indicative of this is the Villa neighborhood, a Chicago Landmark District of brick and stucco bungalows located in the triangular area defined by Addison, Pulaski, and Avondale. Between 1907 and 1925, Prairie- and Craftsman-style houses were constructed in the Villa, with overhanging porches and slightly sloping gable roofs.

The Prairie School had a strong effect on Irving Park architecture. Walter Burley Griffin designed the handsome, stucco-clad house at 4731 N. Knox in 1906. Three years later, Dwight Perkins was the architect for Grover Cleveland Public School at 3832 N. Albany, followed by Carl Schurz High School (a designated Chicago Landmark) at 3601 N. Milwaukee in 1910.

By the 1920s, Irving Park was largely built up, although the area east of Kedzie—known as California Park—remained sparsely settled. Retail streets, such as Irving Park and Milwaukee, filled with new buildings, including the Art Deco-style store and flats at 4025 N. Pulaski. Meanwhile, modern apartment buildings, such as 4128 N. Keystone began to fill the residential streets.

After World War II, a manufacturing area grew up along Addison, from the Chicago & North Western railroad tracks east to Kedzie. The construction of the Kennedy Expressway and the O'Hare rapid transit (Blue) line in the 1950s and 1960s destroyed some of the area's oldest buildings, but also brought additional transportation options to the community's residents.

JOHN NUVEEN (1864-1948)

3916 N. Tripp Avenue is significant for its association with John Nuveen who built it as a residence for himself, his mother and sister in 1892. Six years later, he established John Nuveen & Co. which helped states and local governments, primarily in the Midwest and West, borrow money for schools and infrastructure by selling municipal bonds to investors. By the mid-20th Century, Nuveen's company became a primary source of capital for cities, counties and states that were all undertaking major infrastructure improvements.



John Nuveen was born in Germany and immigrated to Chicago with his parents John and Margaret

John Nuveen in 1894, two years after he built his house at 3916 N. Tripp Avenue.

Credit: The Prairie Bondman: A Corporate Biography of the John Nuveen Company on the Occasion of Its Centennial Celebration.

Nuveen and three siblings when he was two. His father owned a dry goods store on Milwaukee Avenue and after graduating from West Division High School at age 18 Nuveen began working in his father's store and started taking law and accounting courses at a small business college. He studied for one term at the University of Chicago but never earned a degree.

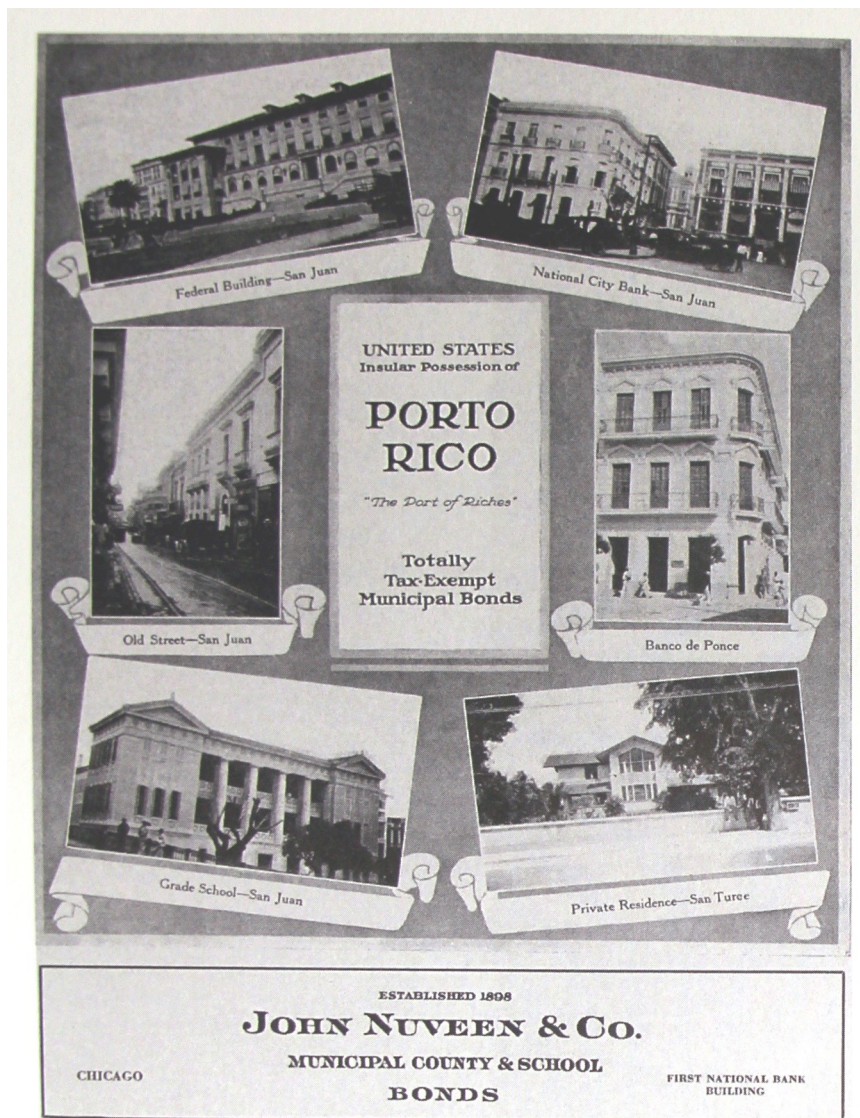
In his twenties, Nuveen began working in sales for a wholesale grocery business that required extensive travel to towns and cities throughout the Midwest. As a young salesman Nuveen must have been successful such that by age 28 he was able to build the house at 3916 N. Tripp Avenue where he lived with his mother and sister following the death of his father. In 1895 Nuveen married Ida E. Strawbridge and moved from the house on Tripp Avenue, though his mother and sister would continue to live in the house until 1914.

Though he had no experience in investment banking, in 1898 Nuveen quit the wholesale grocery business and established in Chicago John Nuveen & Co. In his work as a traveling salesman Nuveen saw great economic potential and a need for capital in smaller cities and towns of the Midwest as well as less developed areas like Arizona, Oklahoma, Florida and California. Because Chicago was a railroad nexus, it was easy for Nuveen and his associates to reach these communities. Nuveen's earliest customers were small towns seeking \$5,000 to \$10,000, relatively small sums that failed to attract the attention of more established firms. Nuveen issued its first municipal bond for Bemidji, Minnesota for a \$7,000 water system.

By 1915 John Nuveen & Co. had issued 900 municipal across 24 states. In Chicago, in 1919, John Nuveen and Co. began issuing yearly bond issues for the construction of Wacker Drive, a key feature of the Burnham's *Plan of Chicago*. In the 1920s, the company managed \$5.5 million of the \$8.5 million in bonds issued by the South Park Commission for Grant Park. In the same decade Nuveen pioneered the underwriting of bonds to parts of the country that were not yet states, including the then-territories of Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico and Alaska. In New Mexico, Nuveen innovated revenue bonds that allowed the highway system to be financed by tolls paid by users of the highway instead of a general tax.

During and after the Great Depression, John Nuveen & Co. specialized in financial instruments for the growing number of utilities and mass transit that were being transformed from private to public entities, as well as providing financing for municipal transit system and state highways and electrical utilities. In the 1940s the company began underwriting hospital revenue bonds that helped expand the health care industry in the postwar era. In the mid-twentieth century, John Nuveen and Co. financed mass transit improvements in a number of U.S. cities, including \$90 million for equipment upgrades for the Chicago Transit Authority. The rise of the automobile in the mid-twentieth century led to a demand for municipal parking garages that John Nuveen and Co. helped cities finance, including the underground parking garage beneath Chicago's Grant Park.

Aside from his successful career in the municipal bond market, John Nuveen was active in the Baptist religious community and in a number of social and civic organizations including the Cook County Social Service Association, the YMCA and Pacific Garden Mission. With Ida (Strawbridge) Nuveen he had one son, John Nuveen, Jr. (1896-1968) who followed his father's footsteps in investment banking and the Baptist religion. After World War II, the younger



A brochure published by John Nuveen & Co. in 1924 to market municipal bonds in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Nuveen specialized in new markets like this as well as small towns in the Midwest and West that were overlooked by larger banks

Credit: *The Prairie Bondman: A Corporate Biography of the John Nuveen Company on the Occasion of Its Centennial Celebration.*

Nuveen also served as a diplomat in the Marshall Plan's Economic Cooperation Administration, an organization created to rebuild Europe after the war.

John Nuveen, Sr. died in 1948 though the company he founded continued to grow under the leadership of his son. As the country grew in the postwar era, John Nuveen & Co. played an important role in public infrastructure and utility expansion. After a decline in the bond market, Nuveen was purchased by the Minneapolis-based St. Paul Companies company in 1974. As a Chicago-based division of St. Paul, Nuveen began to specialize in asset management. At the end of the 20th century, Nuveen employed over 400 people in the Chicago area and had annual revenues close to \$350 million.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Section 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object within the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated “criteria for designation,” as well as possess sufficient historic design integrity to convey its significance. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Nuveen House be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City’s History

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois or the United States.

- With its wide lot, large size, and picturesque Queen Anne style of architecture, the John Nuveen House represents the Irving Park neighborhood’s early stage of development as one of Chicago’s “railroad suburbs” in the 19th century.
- The construction of this large, Queen Anne style house by young entrepreneur John Nuveen reflects both the architectural and social character of suburban-style neighborhoods that developed around Chicago in the late-nineteenth century.

Criterion 3: Significant Person

Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The John Nuveen House is significant for its original owner, John Nuveen, who was an important figure in Chicago’s economic history. In 1898 Nuveen founded his own investment banking firm in Chicago, John Nuveen & Co., which became a nationally-significant investment bank by the mid-20th century.
- John Nuveen & Co., company became a national leader in the municipal bond market which helped cities, counties and states across the nation fund infrastructure improvements.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The John Nuveen House is an excellent example of residential architecture in the Queen Anne style, an architectural style of great significance in the history of Chicago and the United States. It possesses numerous features characteristic to the style, including a prominent corner tower, projecting bays, a large porch and an irregular roofline.
- The John Nuveen House possesses a high quality of design, building materials and excellent craftsmanship in traditional materials including millwork and art glass.

Integrity Criteria

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

The John Nuveen House possesses good physical integrity, displayed through its siting, scale, overall design, and historic relationship to the surrounding area. It retains its historic overall exterior form and a majority of all exterior materials, features and detailing.

Changes to John Nuveen House are minor and include the replacement of the original roof cladding with asphalt shingles and replacement of the porch balustrades and railings. These changes are reversible and do not sufficiently detract from the house’s ability to convey its historic and architectural value.



Credit: Old Irving Park Historical Society

A current photograph (left) of the John Nuveen House compared with a circa 1920s photograph (right) shows that the house retains good integrity.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its evaluation of the John Nuveen House, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building.



A decorative metal finial tops the pyramidal roof of the corner tower at the John Nuveen House.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special thanks to Cathey Curley and Preservation Chicago for research assistance for this report.

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual building, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, Planning, Design & Historic Preservation Division, City Hall, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 1006, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-9140) fax, web site: www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

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Ernest C. Wong, Vice Chair

Maurice D. Cox, Secretary

Gabriel Ignacio Dziekiewicz

Paola Aguirre

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Printed March 2019, re-printed November 2019.