

## INTRODUCTION



Wright was born on June 8, 1867, and died April 9, 1959, placing him squarely on the stage of the incredibly dynamic century bracketed by the Civil War and the space age, a century of tremendous technological advances and momentous political and social change. He grew up, and spent most of his life, in the rural Wisconsin valley settled by his maternal grandfather, Richard Lloyd Jones. A commanding preacher, Jones zeal found him accused of heresy in Wales and precipitated the migration of his family to the New

World, where they finally settled near the town of Spring Green, 36 miles west of Madison.

Ministers, teachers, and farmers, the numerous aunts and uncles of the Lloyd Jones clan, would loom large in Frank Lloyd Wright's life. Much of his early childhood was spent in their company, and his social, political, and architectural views would be indelibly marked by their beliefs. He was brought up on the writings and teachings of the 19th-century transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, and

Opposite: The Wrights and the Lloyd Joneses posed on the steps of the Home (from left to right): Jenkin Lloyd-Jones, Jenkin's wife Jane Wright, Catherine Tobin Wright,

Lloyd Wright (in Catherine's arms), Anna Lloyd Wright, Maginel Wright Barney, Frank Lloyd Wright, Jenkin's daughter, c. 1890

Below: Wright at 28, c. 1895

Henry David Thoreau, and he would respect the spiritual and romantic values they inspired even as he embraced the scientific advances of the 20th century. The many summers spent on his uncles' farms, though filled with long hours and hard work, reinforced the poetic relationship of man and nature and instilled in him a lifelong love for the agrarian way of life.

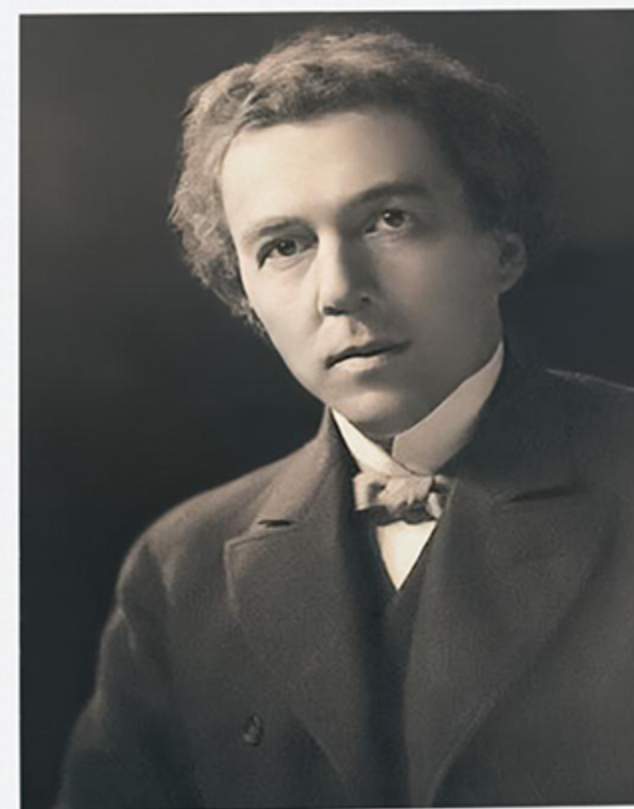
It was his mother, however, who most directly influenced his development. Architecture had long been a consuming interest of hers, and she determined that her son would grow up to build beautiful buildings. She introduced her son to the Froebel Kindergarten system, which was one of the few influences Wright would acknowledge throughout his career. Wright's father's influence was less pervasive, but nonetheless important. From this musician, composer, and preacher—who would leave the family when Frank was a teenager—he gained a deep love and appreciation for music, especially for that of Bach and Beethoven. Music and rhythm would always be necessary components of the Wrightian architectural environment.

In 1886, Wright briefly attended the University of Wisconsin, in Madison, as a "special student" in the school of engineering, and architecture quickly became a focus for him. Seeing no future in the city of Madison and having no means of attending architecture school, in 1887 he left home and headed for Chicago in search of work and training. He initially found work with the architect Joseph Lyman Silsbee, who was doing work for his uncle, Jenkin Lloyd

Jones, as well as for the Lloyd Jones family in Spring Green.<sup>1</sup>

Wright made a point of acquainting himself with Chicago architecture and soon came upon the work of Adler and Sullivan, which immediately appealed to him. He applied for and received a job working directly under Louis Sullivan on the Chicago Auditorium Building, which was still in the design stages at that time, 1887–1888. Sullivan immediately recognized his talent for drawing, and soon he was promoted to the position of "Chief of Design."

In 1889, Wright married Catherine Lee Tobin and began to design and build his own home







Below: November, "Saguaro  
Forms and Cactus Flowers"  
Opposite:  
December, "The Gifts"

