

## **Architectural Analysis of 226, Allensworth St.**

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The neighborhoods just north of downtown San Antonio are filled with beautiful Craftsman bungalows built in the 1920s and 30s, like this one at 226 Allensworth. One has to wonder how it came about that these modest, asymmetrical houses came to replace the stately Victorians of previous generations, found closer to the center of town. Victorians were boxy, colorful and depended for their identity on expensive architectural detail.

After World War I, the bungalow became the most popular form of middle class housing in the western U.S., partly due to its affordability and partly to their more “modern” plan for living. Bungalows required minimal ornamentation to define their style. They were relatively inexpensive to build, since plans could be chosen from a pattern book, and pre-cut boards and timbers could be ordered from catalogues, such as Sears and Roebuck. The bungalow also afforded a more casual lifestyle; the rooms in the bungalow opened their spaces to each other visually with large openings in between, breaking apart the traditional, enclosed spatial boxes and the formality of the Victorian.



226 Allensworth has been beautifully restored by its owner. A shaded porch recedes under the cross-gabled roof in shades of soft taupe, white and hints of a dark slate blue. The roof eaves are supported by brick piers, each with a wood, square column and chunky, wood eave bracket. Some of the structural members of the roof are still exposed, as they would have been in the original house. The addition of the battered skirt surrounding base of the house was a romantic feature alluding to the battered walls of old medieval fortifications, admired by Craftsman Style designers. The slope of these walls gives a greater visual weight and feeling of stability to the house. The long, horizontal lines of the wood siding further enhance the low profile.



Remarkably, the house still retains some of the original double-hung windows with the “bungalow sash”, an upper sash divided by its muntins into long vertical panes. On the interior a proto-typical fireplace design can be seen in the living room with flanking bookshelves, enclosed with cut-glass doors, and matching

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weight-and-pulley square windows to illuminate the space. The bookshelf doors, as well as other doors in



the house still retain the original bronze butterfly hinges, now painted over.

The Craftsman bungalow interior typically included a high wainscot to insulate the walls, whose lines were integrated with the door and



window frames. Although this detail is not present in the public spaces of this house, the owner has replicated a board and batten wainscot in the bathroom that is appropriate to its 1925 black and white hexagonal floor tile.



The back utility porch has the original exterior siding on the interior walls and a beadboard ceiling. The glass and wood cabinets over the kitchen sink appear to be original, however that super-mod turquoise enameled countertop and sink likely date to the 1950s, and are in near vintage-perfect condition.