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The Architecture of John Henry Klutho: The Prairie School in Jacksonville by Robert C. Broward

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In examining the reasons for the sudden demise of the state party in 1877, the author places considerable stress on a surfeit of factional disputes. He also feels that the authority of Florida Republicans was undermined by the carelessness of Washington in dispensing patronage. Nobody can dispute either point. Intraparty feuding was endemic, and President Grant cared little about which pigeons fitted which holes in the back end of his dovecote. Preoccupied with high level apathy and the suicidal impulses of Florida Republicans, Klingman pays less attention to the machinations of the Democrats than they deserve.

After 1876 the Florida G.O.P. is such a shadowy organization until the 1960s that there is little to tell. The author is visibly tired when he reaches the modern era and does a perfunctory job, but he can build on his existing foundation and expand his treatment as more material becomes available.

George H. Mayer

The Architecture of John Henry Klutho: The Prairie School in Jacksonville. By Robert C. Broward. Gainesville, Florida. 1984. University Presses of Florida. Illustrations, Appendices, Bibliography, Index. Pp. xviii, 361. Cloth. \$45.00

John Henry Klutho (1873-1964) came to Jacksonville after the great fire of 1901 in order to use the opportunity to build an architectural practice. He not only succeeded in doing so, but was Jacksonville's foremost architect in the early decades of this century. His best years came between 1907 and 1917, when he graced the city with many buildings in a style derived from Louis H. Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright. He was thereby the first to bring modern architecture to the South. Robert Broward has written an excellent book about Klutho's work and its context, abundantly illustrated and documented, and beautifully brought out by the University of North Florida Press. As its subtitle indicates, the book focuses on the buildings which show the influence of Sullivan and particularly Wright, but it follows chronologically the whole Klutho's often eclectic practice.

The author is well-suited for the task. A native of Jacksonville and practicing architect there since the 1950s, he served an apprenticeship under Frank Lloyd Wright and enjoyed Klutho's friendship during the fifteen years prior to the latter's death. The book is a pleasure to read. Broward writes with a clarity that makes it accessible to the non-specialist. His research and thorough knowledge of the buildings provide the architectural historian with a valuable record of Klutho's work and the Prairie School's manifestation in Jacksonville. The social and cultural context in which he places Klutho's career gives the reader an idea of the forces that went into the making of the material city. From an early time, Klutho was aware of the necessity of city planning, but the same cannot be said of the leaders in business and politics. His plans for a Civic Center (1913) and the Northside Waterfront Development (1944) were rejected, but his Hogan's Creek Development (1929) was put in place, only to be left to deteriorate in later years. In the 1910s several film studios settled in Jacksonville, and for a while the city had the opportunity to become America's motion picture capital. Klutho worked tirelessly toward that goal. He designed and invested in a studio and twice drew up plans for a "Fine Arts City." In the '20s the



Jacksonville's St. James Building, as it appeared in 1914, housed Cohen Brothers, known as "The Big Store."

Photograph from *The Architecture of John Henry Klutho*.

city short-sightedly decided against this possibility. In an "Urban Postlude" Broward sums up Klutho's and his own case for urban design in Jacksonville.

Mention should be made of the book's fine graphics. There are nearly 40 illustrations. Aside from the photographs, Broward provides numerous crisply drawn plans based on working drawings and measurements on site. He made four lively double-page pen drawings of the Jacksonville skyline and inked sixty drawings (first made in pencil by R.B. Porter, Jr.) of Klutho's ornamental designs for his buildings. In another appendix, there are photographs and descriptions of other Prairie School buildings in Jacksonville.

Of Klutho's finest buildings, the Florida Life Tower (1911) still stands essentially unaltered. Two other outstanding works, the St. James Building (1908) and the Klutho residence (1908), have been detrimentally altered. All in all, we have here a first-rate book on an important and instructive period of architecture in Jacksonville and on a man who at his best gave the best architecture has to offer.

Sape Zylstra