

FROM: THE MONROVIA PLANET February 4, 1888 Vol.11 No.13 p.3
"IDLEWILD" The Elegant Home of General W.A. Pile.
One of the Finest Edifices in this part of the State.

On Thursday afternoon a PLANET reporter had the pleasure of being shown through the elegant residence of Gen. W.A. Pile, now nearing completion, at the southwest corner of Mayflower and Banana avenues.

Gen. Pile was one of the earliest residents of Monrovia. For some time previous to coming here he and his wife had traveled extensively over this coast in search of a spot for a home, and nowhere did he find a location that suited his fancy so well as this spot. He secured ten acres of land here and immediately commenced its improvement. The larger portion of it is now set to young orange trees of the best qualities.

Securing the services of J.C. Newsom, of Los Angeles, as architect, the plans were prepared and the residence commenced several months ago. A very substantial foundation was built of cut granite, course ashler, 18 inches thick. The building is two stories high and 42 x 67 feet in size. The ceiling of the first floor is 12.2 feet. and the second 11 feet. Upon entering the well-kept grounds a person is at once struck with the architecture of the building, which reflects credit upon the architect. The building was not let by contract, but was constructed under the direct supervision of General Pile, ably assisted by his wife. It is very tastefully painted. The body color of the first story is a light chocolate brown, trimmed with a dark color of the same. The upper story is in cream trimmings, yellowish brown, lined with English vermillion red. All the colors blend very nicely. There are five verandahs, from one of which a sun bath can be obtained at any time of day. The building faces the east. Upon entering the front door you are ushered into a hallway, or reception room, 13 x 20 feet, leading upward from which is the stairway. This room is wainscotted four feet high with curly redwood, finished up in the best possible manner, and presenting a beautiful appearance. No paint is used, but the wood finished up in its natural state, and it produces a beautiful effect. The paper on the walls is a plain tint of gray ingrain, velour velvet frieze, with irredescent stiling and velour border. The hall window looking on the front porch is very artistic. It was selected by the General and manufactured for him by Rafael & Slessinger, of Los Angeles. The figures are geometric and the whole window contains over one thousand pieces of glass, the colors of which are very rich. It also contains fifty cut jewels. The General has for years had a kind of hobby in this direction, and when in England he admired nothing more than the windows of the cathedrals and other buildings, therefore he kind of "let himself out" in the selection of this window. It is indeed something to be proud of. It should produce a magnificent effect at night, when the gas is lighted.

On the south side of the building are situated the parlors and dining room. the front and back parlors are divided by a spindle-work arch, a splendid piece of workmanship. There are two octagon windows, looking east and south, the glass in which is heavy French plate. The rooms are 25 x 35 feet. There is a 7 foot verandah on the south side, overlooking the orange orchard and commanding a good view of the valley. The walls of the parlors are light buff ingrain paper with picture moulding and a deep fieze, ceiling stile, border and

corner pieces, gilt and irredescent frescoed center pieces. The front parlor mantle is made of California onyx, mined from----- county, and made in San Francisco. It is an exceedingly artistic piece of workmanship, and considered by the General to be the finest thing in the house. There are at least twelve different shades of color in the mantle, and it is certainly magnificent. It is to be ornamented by a center bronze piece statue of Giotto. The back parlor mantle is of solid mahogany, with a French plate glass mirror. Sliding doors divide the reception room from the parlors, and if so desired the three can be converted into one room.

The dining room is 15 x 25 feet, wainscotted five feet with very choice curly redwood. The walls are a plain tint ingrain paper; deep frieze, with extension stile and border on ceiling, and frescoed center piece. The mantle is also of curly redwood, made in San Francisco, and by a happy coincidence exactly matches the wainscoting. The tiles of the mantle are Minton, made at Stoke-on-Trent, England. The windows look south and west.

There is a handsome newel post which will contain a newel light. This stairway was made by the Los Angeles Planing Mill Co.

There is a cross hall leading to the north verandah. It contains clothes-presses and a marble wash basin. It is a very convenient and necessary room..

One of the best rooms is the kitchen. It is 12 x 14 feet, furnished with a modern range and every convenience, A pantry is attached.

Upper hall is 13 x 24 feet, with decorations exactly the same as the lower one. In the front of the hall and separated by a sliding plate glass door, is a "Juliet" balcony, into which there is also a sliding glass door leading from the front chamber. From this balcony may be had a magnificent view of the town. A window also looks north from the hallway.

Mrs. Pile's chamber is 15 x 20 feet. It has a curly redwood mantle, with Minton tiles. The paper is beautifully figured, with frieze and ornamental decorations of stile, border and corner pieces, and frescoed center. Exquisite taste is here displayed.

Adjoining this is W.E. Pile's chamber, and is called the "Blue" room. It is 12 x 18 feet in size. You can enter through sliding plate-glass windows into a cute little balcony, from which a grand view of the valley, the hills, and the ocean beyond may be had. It contains a mantle of Mexican Primavera wood, the tiling of which was made at Cleveland, Ohio. The paper is blue figured, with frieze, stile border and corner pieces and frescoed center.

A guest chamber is 15 x 20 feet, with double-thick glass windows looking south and west. A redwood mantle with plate glass mirror and similar decorations to the other chambers.

A spare chamber is located at the northwest corner, 12 x 14 feet in size, also tastefully decorated.

A bath room is situated on the north side, 8 x 9 feet, containing a large 6-foot French bath tub, with its various appurtenances, an English oval basin, hand painted, and having Fuller's double compression faucet trimming, and marble-top wash stand 26 x 42 inches. Closets for towels, etc., are on either side of the room. Nott Iron Works built the closet and it is the best made. It is arranged with a tank and ball valve and is very complete.

Adjoining the bath room is a linen closet.

Under the house and entered by a stairway from the back porch, is a cellar 16 x 23 feet. It will have a cement floor and plastered walls.

Most of the mill work was done by Thomas Stovell, of Los Angeles.

Hot and cold water is conducted to all rooms requiring it, and gas pipes placed in all the rooms.

No trouble is experienced from the drainage. It is carried to a piece of sandy ground a hundred yards distant from the house.

At the northeast corner of the grounds there has been built a cement reservoir, which will hold 30,000 gallons of water, from which the whole place is irrigated.

"Idlewild" is the name of the place. It was called after the residence of N.P. Willis, on the Hudson River.

All the paper decorations were done by Rafael & Slessinger, of Los Angeles, who have done excellent work throughout.

General Pile may well be proud of his elegant home, which is a credit to Monrovia.

T.M. Hotchkiss