

THE DECORATION OF THE DINING ROOM.

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## References.

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2. Style in Furniture ----- R. Davis Benn.
3. A Book about the Table ----- Jefferson.
4. The House Beautiful.
5. The Mission of Color ----- Josephine C. Locke.
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The Dining Room in many homes is the most important room in the house. Here the entire family gather, perhaps three times a day and for that reason the room should be as pleasant as possible and represent something of comfort and happiness. There should be no airy triflings either in color or fabrics and no fussy fancywork

Two of the most important things in a Dining Room are, an abundance of light and proper ventilation.

A western exposure is not preferable for a dining room. It makes the room a rather cheerless one on a winter's morning, and in the summer, by the time the family gather for the evening meal, the rays of the setting sun are likely to interfere with their comfort. A natural lighting consisting of a southerly or easterly aspect is much to be preferred.

In artificial lighting use and appropriateness must be the first consideration. The primary object is to light the room in the right place without allowing the glare of light to strike the eye unpleasantly. Electric lights can be dropped from the ceiling, or if the light is on the table one should have the shade so it can be adjusted. Light should always be softened before it comes into the eyes. In the Dining Room the purpose is to light the table. This may be done in two ways; by hanging the light from the ceiling, or by having a lamp or candles on the table. A candle stick must have: first,- something to hold the candle; second,- something to catch the drip; third,- something to hold candle by. The lamp in this room should not be elaborate. A round lamp and a round globe give monotony. It is better to have different shapes that give variety. Highly decorated lamps should be avoided and in their place the dull hues might be used. The bowl of lamp must not be



so large as to shade the table around it. In lighting by electricity the chandelier should hang directly over the table and the light be softened by ground glass shades.

The quantity and quality of light which enters the room will prove a potent factor in selecting its color schemes. A room with a southern or western exposure is likely to be well supplied with brightness and sunshine and needs to have its brightness modified by cool blues or greens, so a west dining room in red is apt to seem too warm most of the year, while a sunless north room needs the yellow and gold to be brought to it in the colors of its walls and draperies. Golden brown and rich reds have their places in such rooms.

In choosing colors for walls and ceilings it is most necessary to consider the special laws which govern its application to house interiors. The tint of any particular room should be chosen first of all, according to the quality and quantity of light which pervades it. A north room will require warm and bright treatment, warm reds and golden browns, or pure gold colors. Gold color used in sash curtains will give an effect of perfect sunshine in a dark and shadowy room, but the same treatment in a room fronting the south would produce an almost insupportable brightness. Interiors with a south-eastern exposure should be treated with cool, light colors, blues in various shades, water greens, and silvery tones which will contrast with the positive yellow of sunlight. The pigments used must be substantial ones which hold their own and present no appearance of having faded from the original hue. The aims in using color for decorating are first to attract, then give pleasure, then stimulate thought. In our home, the location and use of each room should govern the choice of color. If the room be



on the north side of house let the scheme be warm, if on the south the more delicate tints may be used to suggest coolness. If the rooms have a great deal of light, the darker colors may be used, but if little light reaches the room, light colors are best to brighten the room. Every thing in the room should not be of the same color for that becomes monotonous. A room all in red or blue produces the feeling of too much warmth or coldness to the person who occupies it. A general tone should be decided upon and all the colors of the room be harmonized with that tone, not all cold or all warm. The members of one family seldom have the same likes and dislikes. Red pleases one and offends another; yellow appeals strongly to a third; while blue is the chosen color of the fourth. These are not mere whims. There are reasons why one color produces pleasure and another the reverse. To the majority of people green is restful, red stimulates, and blue depresses, while red, if placed in a dark room, will, so absorb the light as to make a room positively gloomy. Green holds its own, but is warm or cold according to the proportion of blue or yellow with which it is composed. Pure yellow is the most sunshiny color in existence and is far more satisfactory in a north room than red. Color has the power to alter apparently the proportions of a room. Red contracts; blue and yellow expand; green, unless very dark, has little effect upon the room, keeping the walls, as decorators say, well in place. Tan, gray, and pink have the effect of adding space, while brown, unless very light, has much the same quality as green.

One more principle is of universal application in the consideration of color effects. It is known as the principle of gradation. According to it the strongest tones of color belong at the base. In a room the floor serves as the base in any scheme



of decoration. The floor covering therefore should carry the strongest tones, the walls should represent the next lighter tone and the ceiling the last step in the gradation. This does not imply any fixed line of demarcation for the varying tones. It is rather the statement of a general relation that is to be maintained among the various parts. The floors, walls and ceiling should sustain a certain relation to each other, while they are the setting for the furnishings. The application of this principle forbids the use of light gray paint for the floor with deep blue walls and ceiling, though blue and gray in some combination might be desirable.

Next to the walls the treatment of the wood work is perhaps the most important factor in the room. The color of the woodwork and floor should be of the same general tone, or the floor may be slightly darker. For the woodwork, oak in its natural color but highly polished is considered in good taste for the dining room. The cheaper woods might be used, such as the soft pines; stained in such a manner as to look like the more expensive woods. Oak is probably the best for the floors while white maple and hard pines perhaps come next.

The walls of the dining room should show rich colors and care must be taken in the selection of the paper, that, while rich, it may be elegant. Paneling, leather dadoes, burlaps, tapestry and papers that are conventional in design are tasteful for this room. Paneled walls, as also leather dadoes and tapestry are very beautiful, but are quite inaccessible for common use. Wall paper must continue to be the chief means of wall-covering on account of its cheapness. The design in paper should be a good one and only a few shades darker than the background. Friezes of decorative paper just under the ceiling may tone down from the light or white



ceiling to the shades of the chosen atmosphere of the room. Gilt may sometimes be used in the paper to good advantage and adds to the richness as it points out contrasts and gives aid to the room in the form of light. No satin faced, glaring papers, covered with stripes or bunched about with boquets are suitable. A dado of the rich maroon with a gilt figure is one of the richest papers for the dining room.

Where portierres are used between two rooms the floor covering should be plain, or patterned with some small geometrical figure in a darker shade of the foundation color; and green, dark blue, or dull red will be found most easy to combine with the different color-schemes of the rooms. Pale tints should be avoided in the selection of carpets. A painted, stained, or hard wood floor, with a rug or drugget to deaden the noise of moving chairs and restless feet, is the ideal and hygienic floor covering for dining room. The disadvantage of having the carpet extend all over the floor, is that it cannot be easily taken up and dirt collects around the edges. Where the walls of room are plain, a rug with harmonious colors is preferable, a crimson rug with mahogany tones, and its winy stains, gives a sense of warmth and luxury that is very desirable but it is not so suitable in most cases as it shows every spot on it.

There should be no heavy hangings in the dining room for they always suggest germs, no matter how often they are shaken out. The window curtains should not be heavy but light and airy and of material that can be easily washed. The window shades should be light or dark in color matching the wall tints, and the curtains should be either white or pale tinted and of some thin material, that the room may have plenty of light. The portierres should not be of such material that they cannot be cleaned. If the walls are



plain the portierres may have some design in them harmonizing or contrasting with wall tint.

There are two general rules for curtaining a room that is well lighted; one makes for harmony, the other for variety; and the owner of the room is the one to decide between them. The first calls for a curtain matching the walls in effect, a plain material if the walls are figured. The other reverses the scheme and calls for figured curtains if the walls are figured. Sometimes better results are gained by one method and sometimes by another. If the walls are green, golden brown, deep red, or old blue, and the curtains match them exactly, there is a certain dignity about the entire room that is not obtained with the use of figured material.

The furniture in the room may be of the same kind of wood as the woodwork. Quarter-sawed oak is good for this and is beautiful if a light effect is wanted, but mahogany is used when a darker effect is preferred and in that case the woodwork is stained to harmonize with the furniture. The furniture should be simple, durable, sanitary and artistic. If any room in the house demands heavy, massive furniture it will be the Dining Room. It should express strength and dignity. Good taste in tables means first sound construction, plain surfaces, good workmanship. There should not be any heavy carvings on the furniture as it is hard to keep clean. A dining room to be comfortable absolutely needs a table, a china closet or side board, and six or eight chairs. The woodwork of all should be similar to the woodwork of the room. It tends to the simplification of life to have the rooms as bare as possible of furniture, and it tends to harmony and beauty as well.

There should not be very many pictures in the dining room, and certainly not of anything to suggest eating. Pictures affect different people differently, and a picture liked by one member of



the family may be an appetite destroyer to others. The china closet, side board, and fireplace are of sufficient decoration. If a few pictures are used the frames should not be so elaborate as to detract from the picture itself. Strings should be invisible or pictures hung by two strings.

The following illustrations suggest my ideas concerning the arrangement, color, and decoration for a dining room. The heating of the house is to be by the hot water system. The dining room radiator is under the east window.

The dining room is lightened naturally by having three windows on the south and one on the east. These windows, together with the fireplace in the opposite part of room afford ventilation. The house is lighted artificially by electricity, and in the dining room the chandelier hangs directly over the table and the glare of the light is softened by ground glass shades.

The floor is of hard pine stained a dark brown, and on it is a square rug of dark green with a reddish design for border.

The walls are papered with a plain dark green paper below frieze. The paper on frieze has a background several shades lighter than the lower paper, and has a stensil design in darker tones. Green is chosen for the walls because it is neither too cold or too warm, and the room is otherwise very light. The ceiling is a very pale green.

The furniture of this room is plain and simple. The chairs are of the craftsmen's type, and are rather heavy but not too much so for the furniture in a dining room should be heavy rather than light. The table is a square extension table. All the furniture is of quartered sawed oak and corresponds to the woodwork and floor in color.



At the windows, which encompass the room on two sides, are simple white curtains of crossbarred muslin, the bars being two inches apart both ways. The window shades are green to match the wall tint.

The sides and mantel of fireplace are of marble, the face and hearth in dull red tiling. The back of fireplace is in brick. The andirons, shovels, tongs, fender and coal scuttles are all in bronze. A few vases are on the mantel.

There is only one picture in the room and that hangs above the mantel. The picture is "The Shepherdess," by Lerolle. Many pictures are not used because the frieze is a decoration in itself for wall.

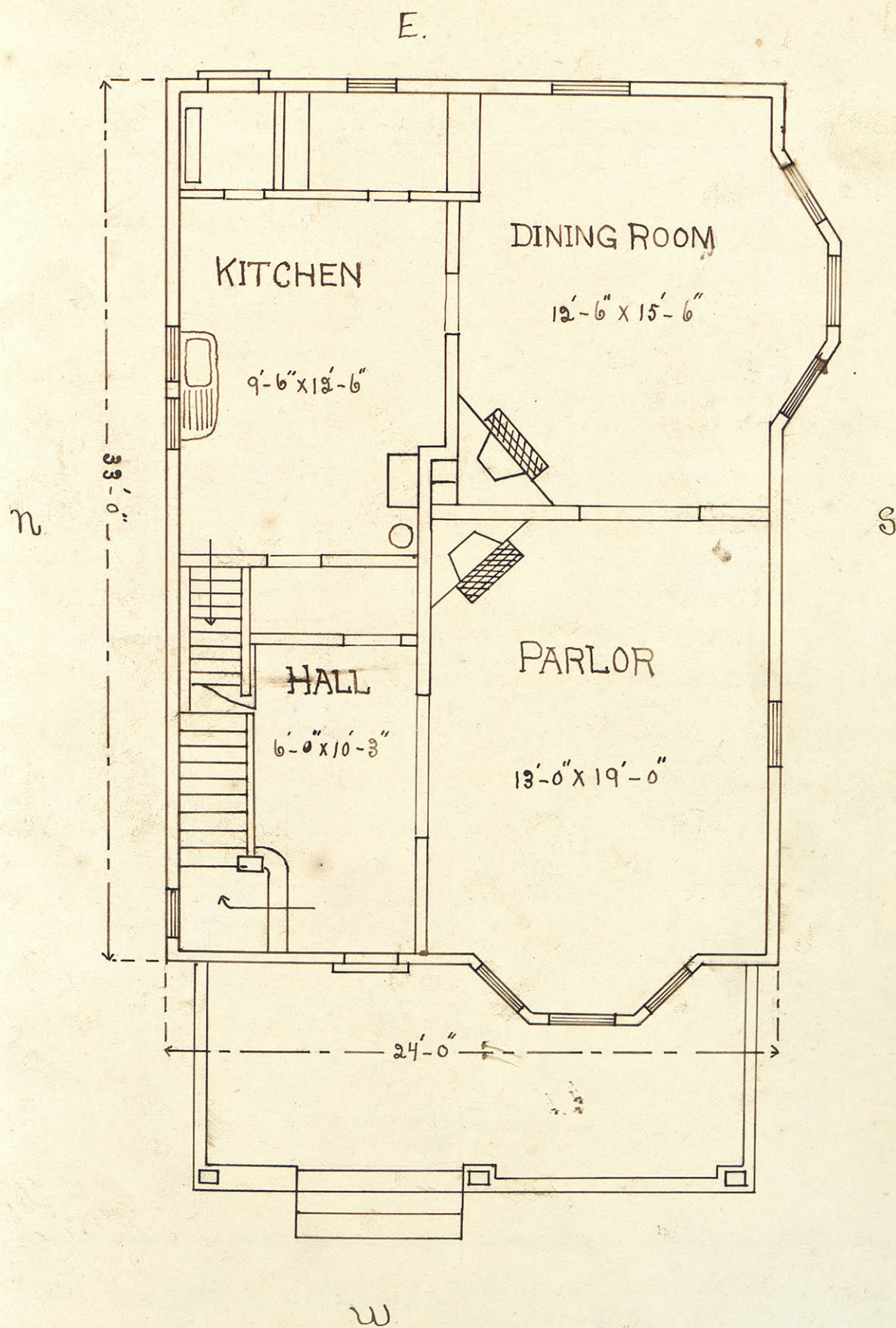
The sideboard is furnished with only those things which will be needed, a pretty dish, or a vase of flowers might be placed here. This would be an appropriate place for a cut glass water set. The cover for the sideboard is of fine white linen, embroidered around the edge.

The linen for the table is of fine Irish Damask. The table is spread with a white linen table cloth all the time because of the view from the sitting room into the dining room. There are the six tablecloths for the table in order to keep the table looking fresh and clean. The dishes are never left on the table from meal to meal. The napkins are of different sizes the largest being reserved for dinner. These are kept in a drawer of the sideboard.

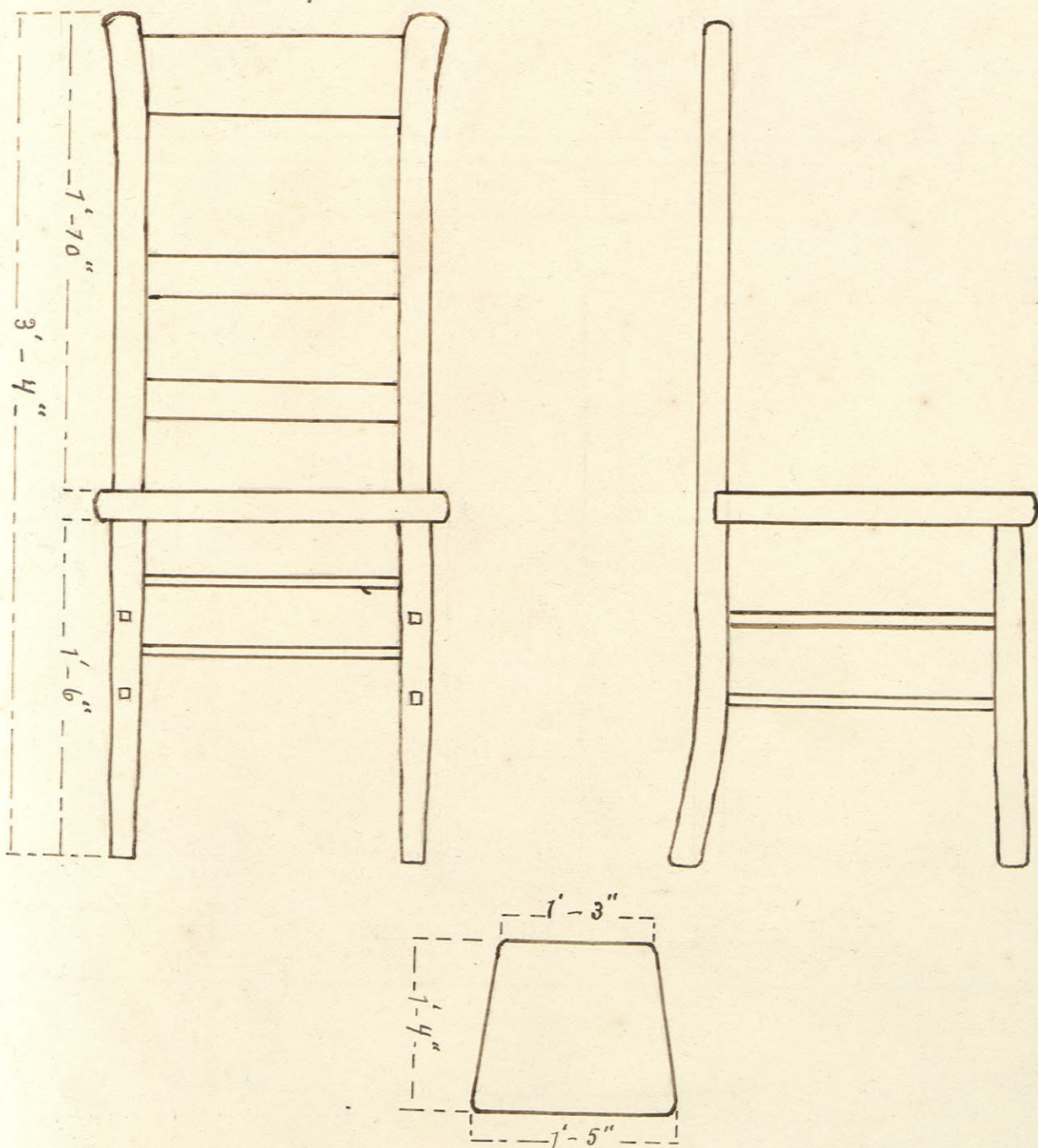
The china is all of the white Haviland ware. The tumblers, finger bowls etc.- of plain thin glass, rather than the highly ornamented cheap glass.

The small pieces of silver are kept in a drawer in the sideboard, but are never left on the sideboard as a decoration.



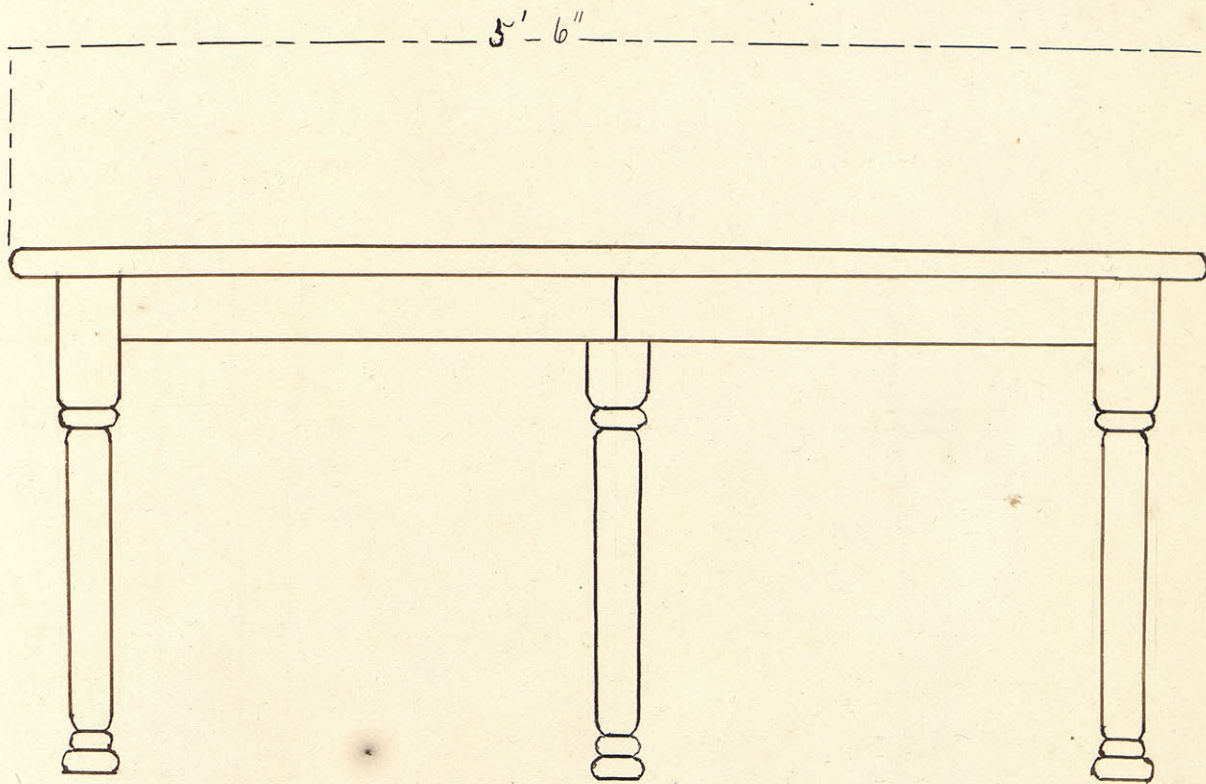






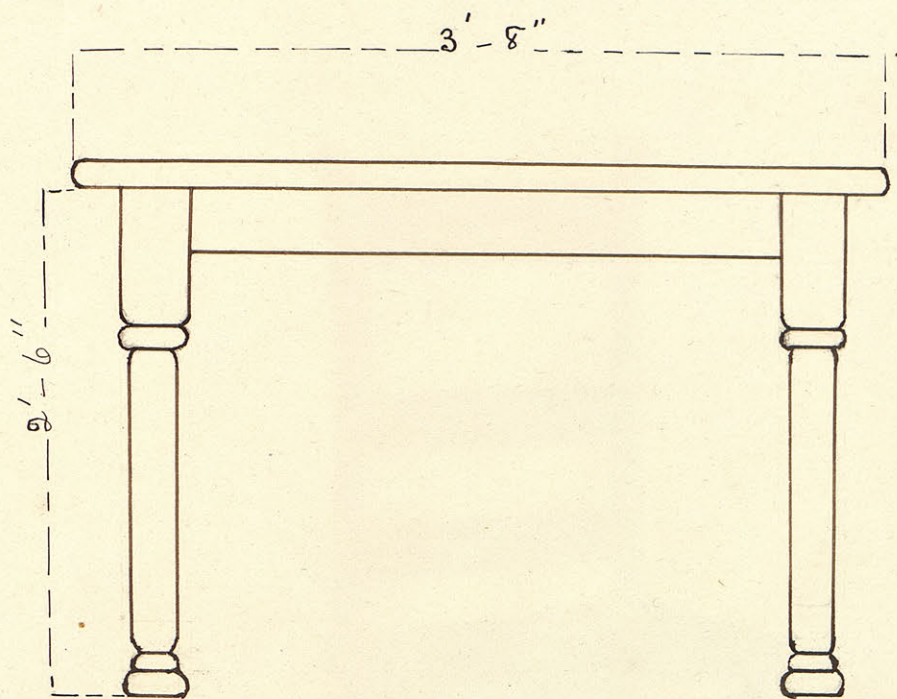
Working Drawings of Chair.





Working drawing of table.



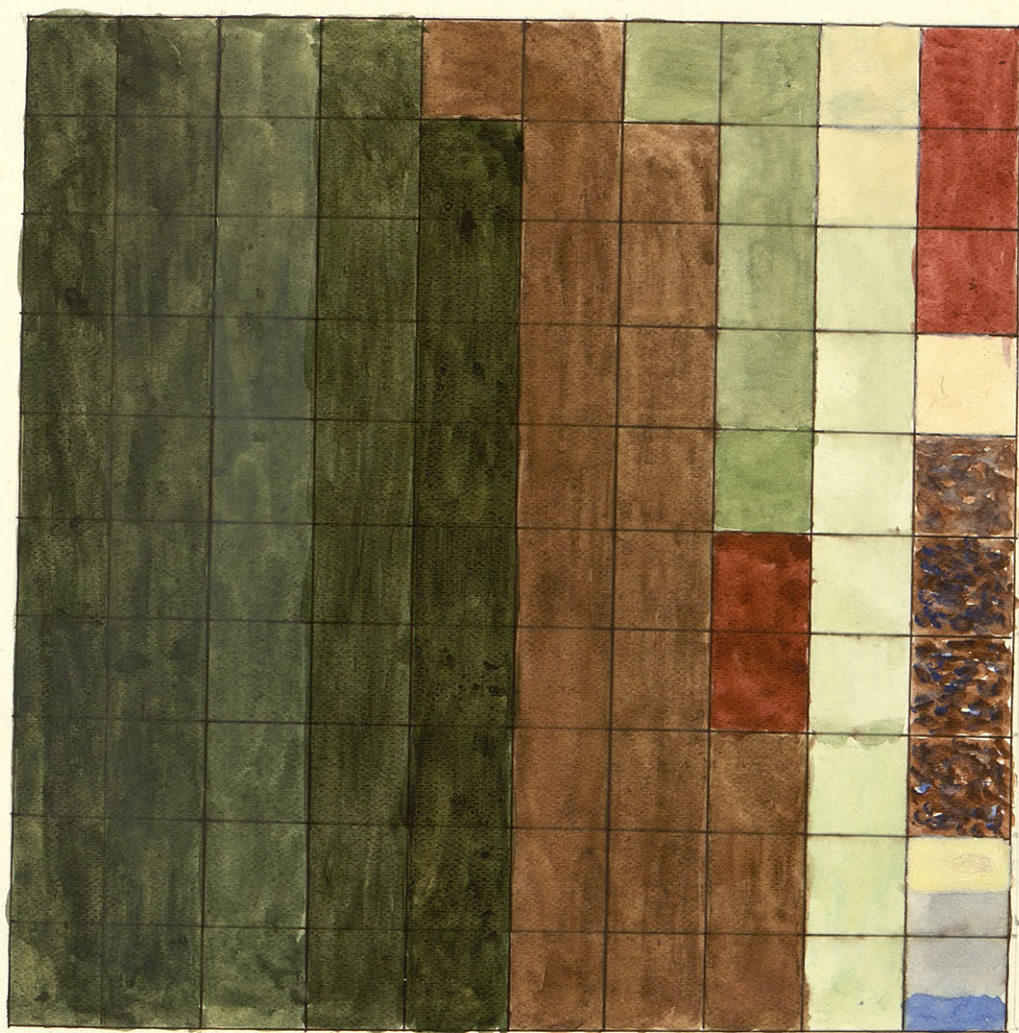






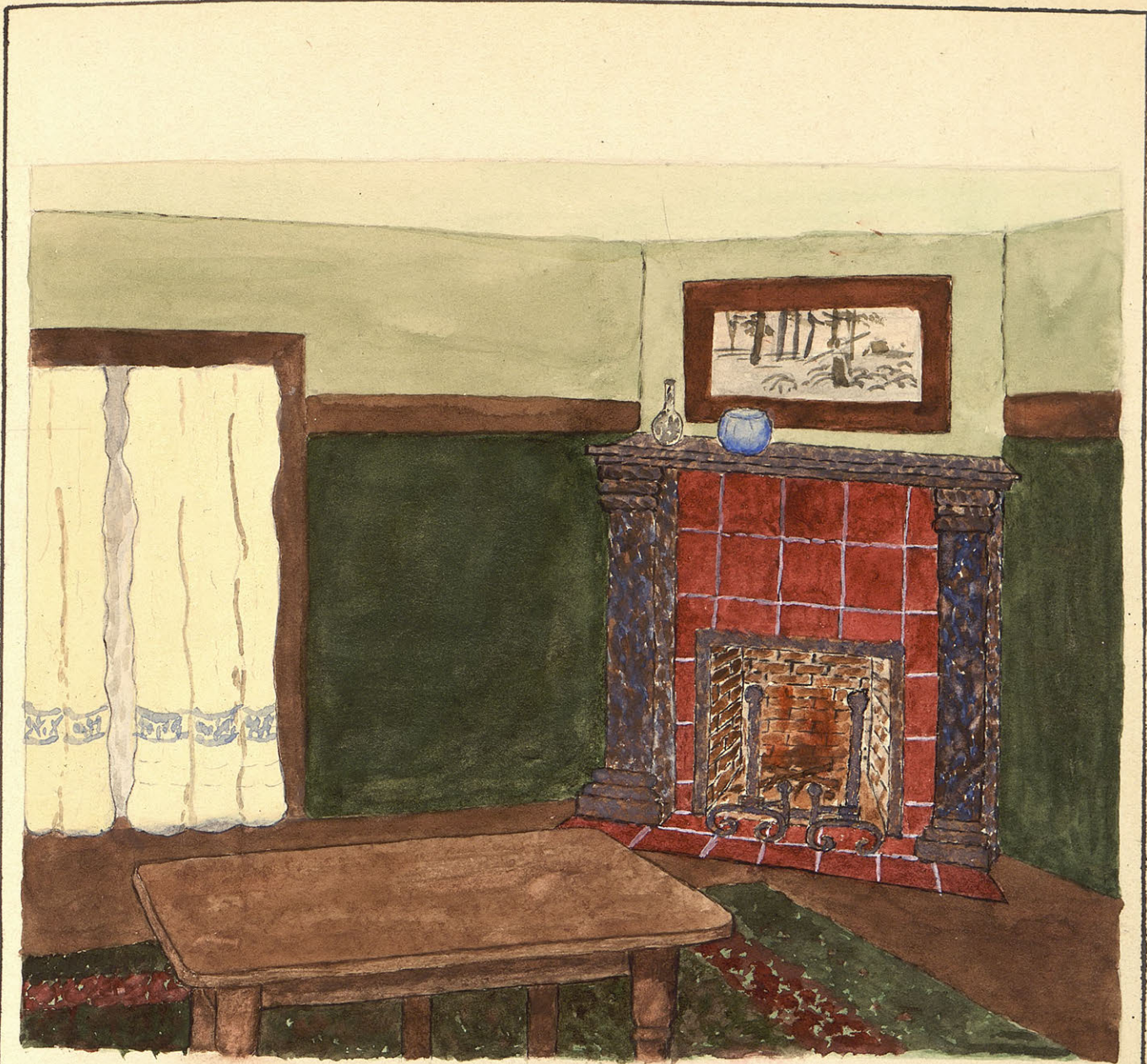
Perspective drawing of chair in color.





Working colors on 100% basis.





Color Scheme for Dining Room.