

-2- The Rev. H. Masterson, Jr.

4/5/23

The plan does work out admirably as far as we see it, and you had better withhold judgment until the new plans arrive.

Very truly yours,

(sgd) Cram & Ferguson

COPY.

April 5, 1923

The Rev. Harris Masterson, Jr.,
Autry House,
Houston, Texas

Dear Mr. Masterson:

Your telegram of April fifth simplifies matters considerably, particularly with regard to the "Administration Wing" which you had applied to our plans. We understand now why you suggested this, but it does not seem to us that it would have formed an adequate solution to the problem, which is, apparently, the question of a proper circulation of air in the workrooms connected with the library administration. We have another suggestion along this line, and shall send the set of plans revised in accordance with this scheme of our own, and also incorporating such of your suggestions as are acceptable, the end of this week. If you can accept the thing in principle, please wire us to that effect. After all, we are not bound to the first set of preliminary plans we send on, since the administration part of the building is not contemplated in the first construction, and there will be time to re-consider and revise before the rest of the work goes on.

Our plan is, in general terms, the concentration of the stack on three floors. In the lower portion of this stack building at the street level will be the offices for branch libraries, receiving department and supply department. Above the three stack floors the whole stack wing will be given over to administration.

Now while it is true that these workrooms will not receive a full southern exposure, they will have a good deal of this, although the intervention of the main library building will, of course, cut off the direct wind. On the other hand, we have so arranged the plan that this whole stack wing is very largely isolated, so that it will have on all floors windows to the four points of the compass, which must mean a good circulation of air even if the direct south exposure is masked by the main library building.

It seems to us that this is infinitely better than your scheme. By putting your administration in a distant wing, you necessitate a long and inconvenient walk from the main library building and the stack to this administration department. Moreover, the projecting of this two-story building as you suggested, one bay beyond the westerly end of the main building, would have meant only one south window in one room on each of the two floors. In other words, you would have sacrificed convenience of administration to a very doubtful gain in two rooms only. This gain was the more doubtful as even these south windows were pretty well blocked by the westerly end of the main building which would have cut off all the wind from the southeast, and much of that from the south.