

# The Double Front Gabled Bungalow

Exploring the subtype.

BY ROBERT SCHWEITZER

**MAKES ITS OWNERS PROUD**



*Sears Roebuck's "Argyle" model from 1920 is a classic Double Front Gable plan.*

**The ARGYLE**  
No. 7018 "Already Cut" and Fitted.

**Honor Bill** \$2,874<sup>00</sup>



THROUGHOUT THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY, THE BUNGALOW WAS FAST BECOMING the most widely built home in North America. That is evident today as this generally small, compact, efficient style of house inhabits nearly every city, town and village from coast to coast. Even in rural areas, the bungalow was employed as a farmhouse well into the 1940s.

Walking through any bungalow neighborhood you see a variety of shapes and sizes of the house. There seem to be a widely disparate range of homes all labeled

**left:**

*This Fargo model from the Building Services Bureau is only 24 feet wide.*



as bungalows. This variety is due to the fact that the bungalow era followed the late Victorian period, which employed myriad design and exterior decoration options. Queen Anne homes of the 1890s were often irregular in shape, orientation and color. It's then logical that the bungalow carried on this tradition of being offered in a large number of types, sizes and colors.

To better appreciate the types and sub-styles of bungalows, this article will highlight one commonly acknowledged subtype: the Double Front Gabled. This more complex design gained its popularity in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Its distinctive feature is a narrow footprint that allowed it to be built on a small lot near a streetcar line. The automobile was not widely in use at this time. The transportation mode of choice for many middle class citizens was the Interurban mass transit system. The Double Front Gabled bungalow was perfect for suburban and newly developing urban fringe home sites because many plans were only 30-feet wide and fit onto the common 45-foot wide lots of the period.

The second noticeable feature of the house is what provides the name: the two front facing gables. One is on the porch and the other is on

**top to bottom:**

*This 1921 Bungalow shows extensive architectural detailing with brackets, rafter tails and a wide front porch.*

*Design No. 11954 from American Homes Beautiful illustrates the use of grouped windows and plantings at the foundation level.*

*House Plan No. 79 from Brown Blodgett of St. Paul employs extensive stonework on the front porch and rustic chimney.*







Floor Plan—The Winthrop

## The Winthrop

See prices on inside of front cover.

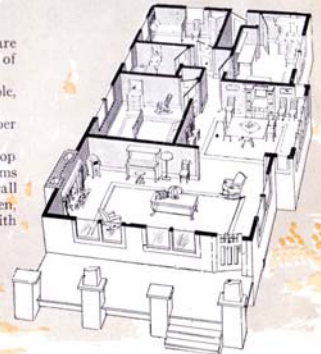
**C**AN you imagine this bungalow nestling among trees and shrubbery on your own lot? A few cobblestones are gathered from nearby fields and when blended with brown stained shingles, natural shrubbery and a setting of velvety green, the observer is fascinated.

A bungalow should always be set close to the ground. When local conditions seem to make this impossible, the same results can be secured by terracing close to the building.

The Winthrop is of the pure bungalow type—low, a touch of rough stones, bracketed eave supports, heavy timber work, shingles, and broken outlines.

And as the real bungalow is always compactly and conveniently arranged inside—you will agree that the Winthrop is typical. The large living room is lighted by three group windows and the fireplace at the end forms an inviting nook. Extra length is secured to the dining room by the interesting bay window. Lots of wall space is available in the front bedroom. The centralized hall, and entrance from dining room, kitchen, bath and bedrooms is a good feature. Bath located between bedrooms. Can you help falling in love with this interesting bungalow?

For price of the Winthrop refer to inside of front cover. See General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. Detail Specifications for the Winthrop will be sent on request. See Terms on page 2. Masonry is not included.



**above:** Aladdin "Winthrop" kit home from 1916. This early model was so popular it was presented as a fold-out in color. Note the complete floor plan that included furniture placement.

the house façade. These triangular gables are not lined up directly behind each other, but offset to highlight the feature. In many designs these gables have large "knee-brackets" that appear to support the roof. They are low-pitched suggesting that the house hugs the ground and thus is more in tune with nature.

As the illustrations show, porches sit on a wide variety of bases from brick, to stone, stucco and siding. Early versions of the porch are open and some span across the entire front width of the house. Versions shown in the late 1920s are smaller with room only for a chair and table. Still later versions have the porch space enclosed into a sunroom and were particularly popular in northern cli-


mates. Some open porches had trellises to hold vines and most are pictured with flowers growing around the foundations. Foundation plantings were a new concept in the early 20th century, as Victorians tended to have their plants in the middle of the lawns. This became less practical on small urban and suburban lots, so the flowers moved closer to the house.

Other decorative features include exposed rafter ends as the eaves; a side bay window, often in the dining room; and windows in groups or bands to allow in the maximum amount of light and air. Chimneys tended to be prominently featured in the design and were often built of stone or with elaborate brick patterns. Because of



the extra detailing usually associated with this subtype, they tended to be priced above the average bungalow.

Exterior surface materials for the Double Front Gable bungalow are similar to others of the era and encompass such types as small shingles, stucco, brick and thin clapboards. Exterior colors ran wide range from simple soft gray stucco to more complex schemes that featured four autumn toned colors on the body alone. Trim colors were generally light with window sashes either matching that color or painted in the more traditional Victorian colors of black or wine. Roofs were colorful as well, but never in black as that was thought "industrial." Popular colors included red and green.

Although not as elaborate a home as the Victorians that preceded them, the Double Front Gabled Bungalow seems elegant and abounding with special details in comparison to the house designs in our modern era. 

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR.

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**top to bottom:**

*The Built-Well Mill Work house plan from the late 1920s is shown in brick with an enclosed front porch. Note the soft yellow trim and bright green windows, both hallmarks of the period.*

*Built-Well's home (BW-4243) is stucco covered and has a screened-in porch as opposed to a completely enclosed window version. Note the clipped gables in the English fashion.*



## BUNGALOW RESOURCES

### Bungalow Book Tour:

- *Craftsman Bungalows 59 Homes* from the "The Craftsman," edited by Gustav Stickley, published by Dover Publications, © 1988.
- *117 House Designs of the Twenties* by Gordon Van Tine, published by Dover Publications, © 1992.
- *The American Bungalow 1880-1930* by Clay Lancaster, published by Abbyville Press, © 1985.

All books available from [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

### Walking Tours:

- Reidsville, North Carolina Historic Walking Tour  
<http://reidsvillenc.accountsupport.com/WalkingTours.htm>
- Hickory, North Carolina, Kenworth Historic District  
[ci.hickory.nc.us/library/hickory/kworth.htm](http://ci.hickory.nc.us/library/hickory/kworth.htm)

