

Edward H. Bennett

Architect, city planner (1874 – 1954)

Bennett was born in Bristol, England and later moved to San Francisco with his family. He was encouraged by architect Bernard Maybeck to pursue his education in architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and was a student there from 1895 to 1902. After graduating, he spent a short time in New York with prominent architect GEORGE B. POST, who sent him to Chicago to work with DANIEL H. BURNHAM on the plans for the military academy at West Point. Burnham invited Bennett to move to Chicago and collaborate on the comprehensive plan for San Francisco, and afterwards, the Plan of Chicago. The completed San Francisco plan was not implemented in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake, but Bennett became well known for his design work and co-authorship of the 1909 “City Beautiful” Plan of Chicago.

Burnham, who curtailed his practice after 1905, then directed clients to Bennett, who, with partners WILLIAM E. PARSONS and Harry T. Frost, served as a planning consultant to many cities, including Minneapolis, Detroit, and Portland, Oregon. Bennett’s office overlooked Grant Park, which he designed, as well as its structures including Buckingham Fountain and the original Peristyle in today’s Millennium Park.

Bennett served on the Chicago Plan Commission in various capacities into the 1930s and developed a substantial private practice and a national reputation as a city planner. From the late 1920s, he was involved in planning for the 1933-34 Chicago Century of Progress Exposition, and designed a number of structures for it. From 1927 until 1937, Bennett served as Chairman of the Board of Architects responsible for the development of the Federal Triangle in Washington, DC.

