

Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



PETER HARRISON

November, 1946

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Fellowship Honors in The A.I.A.

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Examinations in Paris—I

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Architectural Immunity

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Honoring Louis Sullivan

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An Editorial by J. Frazer Smith

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The Dismal Fate of Christopher Renfrew

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What and Why Is an Industrial Designer?

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT THE OCTAGON, WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
SMALL HOMES COUNCIL  
MUMFORD HOUSE

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

NOVEMBER, 1946

Vol. VI, No. 5

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**The Journal of The American Institute of Architects**, official organ of The Institute, is published monthly at The Octagon, 1741 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Editor: Henry H. Saylor. Subscription in the United States, its possessions and Canada, \$3 a year in advance; elsewhere, \$4 a year. Single copies 35c. Copyright, 1946, by The American Institute of Architects. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1929, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C.



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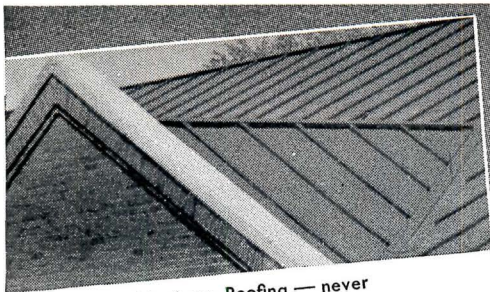
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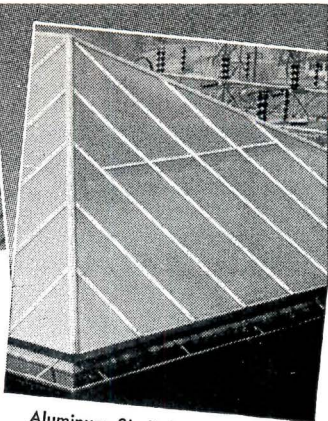
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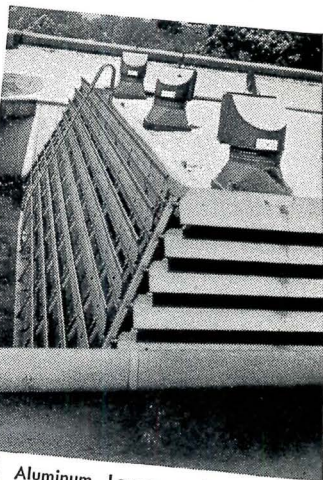
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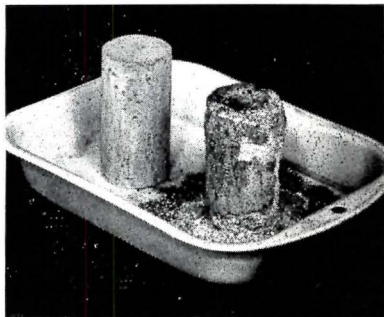
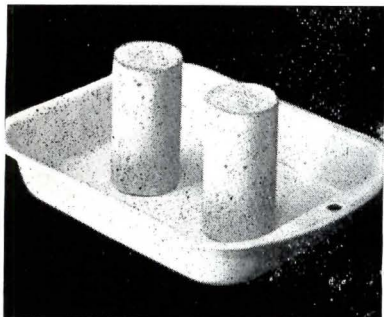


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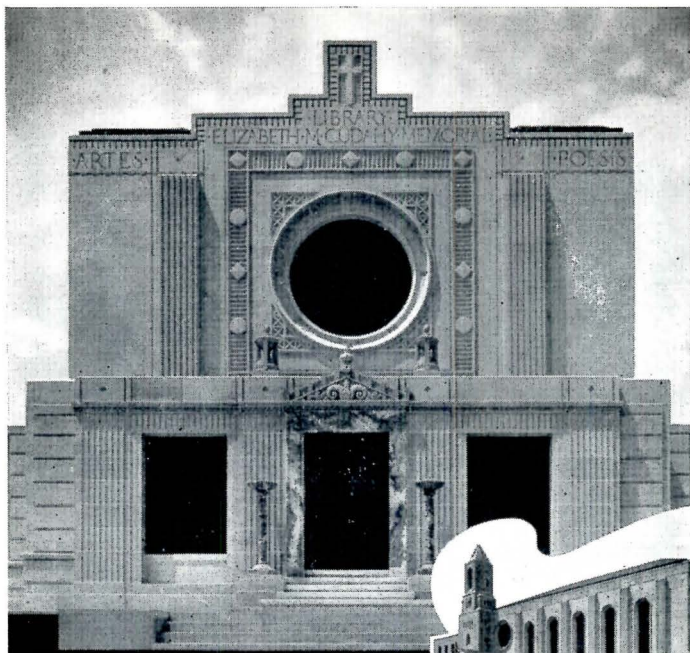
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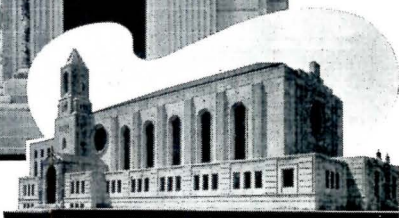
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## Fellowship Honors in The American Institute of Architects

*By Edgar I. Williams, F.A.I.A.*

CHAIRMAN OF THE JURY OF FELLOWS, A.I.A.

**F**ELLOWSHIP in The American Institute of Architects is a high professional honor. Over the years the directors of The Institute have established certain guiding principles underlying the bestowal of fellowships and they have provided an orderly procedure for making selections. ,

Each year a list of nominations for fellowship honors is turned over to the Jury of Fellows, whose job it is to weigh all the evidence presented and to recommend candidates to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors confers the honors. The whole procedure is necessarily handled behind closed doors and in consequence takes on a hush-hush character. The closed-door policy of deliberation is as it should be, but a few observations concerning the award of fellowships might help to dispel any lurking dissatisfaction with the whole business if such exists. A frank discussion of this delicate Institute

activity might bring forth suggestions for changes in the procedure if anyone has suggestions to make.

As the procedure is followed today, nominations are made at the chapter or region level but never by the Institute Jury itself. The Jury's action is prescribed by definite rules of procedure, and while deliberation is confidential, it is never star-chamber.

Americans as a rule "play the game" fairly, and are seldom self-seekers of honors. I think it is especially true of architects that they are generous in praising their fellow practitioners and happy when honors are received. While there may be disagreement with an award, it is a safe gamble that bad taste will not be shown. In carrying out the procedure by which candidates are elected to fellowship or not elected, there is always the possibility that disappointments will occur. And while there may not be open complaint, there are

in a great State, in bringing the governor, senate and assembly to recognition of our profession, is more important than the efforts of one in a simple community who instills a desire for collaboration and ethical understanding among his fellow practitioners. What counts is whether or not an architect has significantly helped the cause of good architecture and the honorable practice of his profession.

I have not heard anyone question the very foundation of the practice of selecting fellows but I dare say there are those who do. Mind you, I am not begging the question, but since the intent of this article is to brush away the clandestine or holy-holy atmosphere which I believe surrounds the bestowal of Institute fellowships, the comment seems to me in place.

All conscientious Juries must be bedeviled with some of the same questions. Should some limitation be put upon the number of fellowships or should The Institute be analogous to the traditional Haitian Army, in which there were all officers and no privates? Could a chapter be 100% fellows? Would it be fair for one chapter to have 50% fellows and many chapters have none? Should fellowship be

automatic after, say, twenty-five years membership in The Institute? Should there be some distinction between the fellowship of a designer, an engineer, an organizer, or one who has brought greater respect and strength to The Institute?

These and other questions have not been answered. Rulings have not been made to guide the Jury of Fellows on all points which such questions raise, and I do not think it is possible to do so.

A tabulation of the number of fellowships based upon the listing in the last Annuary shows 325 fellows in a total membership of 4,810. (The Institute is larger than that now, I know.) This is 6.7%. One chapter is 13.1% fellows. In four chapters, fellows make up 12.5% of the membership; only one of the latter is a large chapter. Approximately 30% of the chapters have no fellows. These may be interesting statistics and are offered without comment.

There are brilliant members of the profession outside The Institute; not many, but at least a conspicuous few. I believe The Institute would be stronger if they were in it. But there is nothing to be done about it that has not been done. Much can be said in favor



of individualism. Many of the most brilliant artists the world has produced have been non-conformers. Some second- and third-raters have developed the idea to their personal advantage and have attempted to focus attention upon themselves by attempting to pull down the common effort of many. After all, it is easy to set up a horrible straw man in the guise of an impersonal Institute, and it is legally safer than picking on an individual. Most democracies have done pretty well on the principle of majority opinion. It seems to me we have heard criticism of the idea before. But whether or not the brilliant men outside The Institute, or inside, for that matter, seek personal advantage or swelled ego by standing aloof, whether or not there are a dozen or five hundred fellows appointed each year, is not going to change our architecture—not very much anyway.

The principle behind the granting of fellowship is one of encouragement and example. While it is not the business of the Jury of Fellows to drum up trade, it may be profitable to suggest that when a chapter committee, or other group makes a nomination, it is well for them to do a thorough job in presenting the information. Whether or not the group likes the present system of making awards, that system is in effect and will stay in effect until modified. My experience as member of the Jury of Fellows leads me to comment that I have never known a more conscientious, sincere, honest body of men. To them fellowship is the high professional honor which custom has prescribed. They intend to guard its values and to see that its recommendations for award shall do honor not merely to the few men or women who receive it but to the profession itself.

## Honors

HENRY - RUSSELL HITCHCOCK, Head of the Architectural Department of Wesleyan University, has been invited to accept nomination as Honorary Corresponding Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

WALTER T. ROLFE, of Houston, Texas, is the subject of a resolution by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture:

*Whereas*, Mr. Walter T. Rolfe, in his capacity as vice president of the Association of Collegiate

Schools of Architecture, and as chairman of the Committee on Education of The American Institute of Architects, having rendered eminent and invaluable service to the profession and in the field of education; be it, therefore,

RESOLVED, That the wholehearted thanks of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture be expressed to Mr. Rolfe for his unselfish and untiring work.

The late FLIPPEN DAVID BURGE, of Atlanta, was honored when the Georgia School of Technology gave his name to a new apartment house which is part of the apartment and dormitory pro-

jects for veterans now under construction on the Georgia Tech campus.

CHARLES C. PLATT, of New York, has been reelected president of the Municipal Art Society. He also has been elected a governor of the Real Estate Board of New York.

VICTOR VESNIN of Moscow, whom The A.I.A. elected an Honorary Corresponding Member in April, 1945, has recently been presented by the R.I.B.A. with the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture, awarded him last year but delayed in fabrication.

## Examinations in Paris—I

*By Huger Elliott\**

PARIS and its environs—before World Wars had been thought of, and there was peace and plenty in the land: Paris in 1903, with its alluring vistas, its gleaming countryside: these are memories that

mingle with those of a contest—a battle of wits fought in the halls of the Government-owned School of the Fine Arts.

Twice a year the famous École des Beaux-Arts held examinations

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\* Mr. Elliott is a Tennessean who has studied architecture through most of his life to date and has taught it for many years, although he has not practised it other than designing his own house. He has taught architecture in the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Rhode Island School of Design, and has directed educational work in design for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Pennsylvania Museum School of Industrial Art, Philadelphia, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



in its department of Architecture, and men from many nations came to compete for the privilege of being enrolled in the School. Nowhere else, surely, have tests as exciting as these been held. Sixty students were admitted each half-year. Of these, the highest-ranking forty-five Frenchmen were accepted, and fifteen foreigners if—an important if—these contestants had as high a mark as the forty-fifth native. A fair arrangement surely, since the French Government charged no tuition fees.

In June, 1903, four young men—perhaps, in my own case, I had better say youngish—met in Paris to try their luck in the School examinations. At that time, throughout our land, there was a firm conviction that student life in Paris was—could not but be—riotous; I believe the idea is still prevalent. With the group I knew, this was far from being the case. In our home cities our lives had been cleanly; none of us, to my knowledge, felt the urge to live another kind of life abroad. This may, to some, sound priggish; it is not meant to be.

We were to be examined in five subjects: Architectural Design, Modeling, Drawing (in charcoal),

History and Mathematics. And these examinations were eliminative: if you failed on the first—Design—out you went, and must wait for six months to make a fresh start. Having passed in Design, you took Modeling and Drawing. Again you ran the risk of being dropped. If, however, you were successful in these you could take the last two subjects. Exciting is a pale word for such an ordeal; it racked the nerves.

And then, for the foreigner, there was the question of the French language! The examinations in History and in Mathematics were each given in two parts, one written and one oral. And the oral exams were held in public; the sisters and the mothers and the aunts, not to mention an occasional father or brother, of the students attended—a fact that, to my great embarrassment, I learned later.

Obviously the first thing to do was to become somewhat familiar with the language. I had taken the usual French course in collage, but without enthusiasm. So I went to a *pension* kept by a French gentlewoman where we were not allowed to speak a word of English at table, nor in the *salon*. It was not unlike the establishment

conducted by Madame de Maison-rouge, though as far as I could guess the *pensionnaires* were not such voluminous writers as are those in Henry James' "A Bundle of Letters." One difficulty about learning polite French when working in an *atelier* was that the language in the latter was often far from polite, and since you were with your "brothers" they must be addressed as "thee" and "thou." Because of this it was at times hard to remember to use the second person plural when in company. Madame, quite properly, had a keen ear for such slips. Her face was a study when once, quite inadvertently of course, I addressed her as "Thou."

Not only conversational French was needed, however; one must be able to discuss conic sections, quadratic equations and what not, in the native tongue. This was a poser for one who was woefully weak in math as well as in French. I was advised by friends already in the School to enroll with a certain M. Mayence. I did so, but my studies with him were made profitable by a fellow-countryman, George Bickley.

Very soon after my arrival at the *pension* I was greatly surprised and pleased when Lansing Satter-

lee, one of my classmates in the School of Architecture at Columbia University, turned up—and as a further surprise, on the same day, came Bickley. I had known him when he was a student and I a young instructor in the School of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. We were all aiming at the same goal; why not join forces and work together under M. Mayence? Hours were fixed, and we began our studies. He proved to be an excellent teacher, but so rapid was his speech that to ears unaccustomed to mathematical terms in the French language he was hard to follow—for me, at least. However, we had bought a blackboard for home use, and after each session with our fiery instructor we would dash to it, and Bick, who seemed to have been born with a knowledge of mathematics, would go over each step in each problem, and again and again, until Sat and I saw the point. I often felt that some of the large fee we paid Mayence should have gone to Bickley.

But there was more work to be done. Those who had been through the mill advised practice in drawing, and I was lucky enough to be enrolled among a small group who worked under M. Besson, another

man who made a specialty of training students for the examinations. The great thing I learned from him was to proceed as though at any moment the drawing might be taken from me: with the first lines put upon the paper, my mental grasp of the object I was drawing must be apparent; there must be no finishing up of one bit to the neglect of the rest.

But in an architectural school Design was naturally the most important of our studies. We joined a 'prentice *atelier* conducted by MM. Godefroy and Frenet. This specialized in one thing: the training of the aspirant to solve a given problem—a monumental entrance, a mausoleum, or whatever—in an eight-hour sketch; finding a solution that would be logical, and presenting it in a striking drawing.

The *atelier* was a barn of a place, three flights up, crowded, dirty, and unbelievably noisy. When I was enrolled and the advent of a *nouveau* announced, the crowd swept out to a café, where I paid for drinks all 'round. I was not "initiated": that was reserved for those who had passed the School examinations.

The *atelier* tests were given two or three times a week. On the day following a test the *patrons*

(Godefroy and Frenet) appeared, made a tour of the room where the designs had been tacked up; on a second tour they poured out criticisms and gave marks. To these criticisms we listened eagerly, knowing that somewhat the same points of view would sway the judges on the great day when our first School test took place.

Concerning the other subjects in which we were to be examined—Modeling and History—it seemed to be generally assumed that anyone having a plaster cast of a bit of architectural ornament in front of him could copy it in clay. As for history, it was suggested that we read a certain history of the world—four-fifths of it devoted to France—"just in case"; it wasn't really important. One reason for this point of view was the system by which the final marks were determined. Your mark in Design was multiplied by 15, in Mathematics and in Drawing by 10, Modeling, if I remember rightly, by 5 and History by 1. So it was not surprising that preparation for the last subject was held to be unimportant.

You may wonder why graduates of schools of architecture in this country had to take such training. Occasionally a foreigner entered



the lists without having had this preliminary canter—rarely, I believe, with success. There was a certain technique to be learned that was almost essential: one had to become accustomed to the pace—inured to the nervous strain. This last did not, as a rule, affect the French contestants. If they did not get in this time they might the next, or perhaps succeed the time after that. For those from the United States, however, it was often, for financial reasons, a case of now or never.

My friends and I had arrived in Paris late in June. And to arrive in that city in June, with practically every building already well known from long study of plans and photographs; to look upon them as actual objects, with the added charm of color, enframed, here and there, with living greens; to see this tower glowing in the light of the setting sun, that dome blue-grey at dusk; the façade of Notre Dame mysterious in the moonlight; to sketch in the gardens of the Musée de Cluny or from the great terrace at St. Germain-en-Laye—ah, that was unforgettable! Verily we raced about the city and its surroundings, drunk not with the thin wine of the cafés

but with a delight that I believe can be felt only by those who, so prepared, see Paris for the first time.

When I entered Godefroy and Frenet's *Atelier* I met a fellow-countryman who had arrived the day before. We exchanged names—his was George Ford—and a walk to get our first view of Notre Dame was suggested. Each finding that the other liked to walk—there were few automobiles in 1903 and walking was not yet a lost art—we decided to go afoot to Versailles the following Sunday. That was the first of many tramps in Paris and its environs; looking over letters written at the time I find that walks of fifteen or eighteen miles a day were not unusual. Among our longer excursions we walked to Chartres in two days, and to Rouen in five—in each case returning by train. Today, alas, such tramps on the highways of France would be unendurable because of the ubiquitous motor.

Bickley, Satterlee and I decided that it would be cheaper, and better for our work if we took an apartment. One was at length found: a suite of rooms on the fourth floor of an old house on the rue Jacob, not far from the School. Our dormer windows, facing east,

overlooked a shady court and a garden belonging to the next house. Adjoining our entrance lobby there was a tiny kitchen with tiled floor and a cold-water tap. Having bought a flat tin tub and a large copper bucket, from which one would pour water over the head of his friend, this became our bathroom. There were two bedrooms, and beyond these a fairly large *salon* with a fireplace. Here we set up our drafting-tables and the blackboard indispensable for the working out of the problems given us by Mayence. The greater part of our meager furnishings we bought from one of our compatriots who was leaving for home. We hired a *charrette*—a large, light hand-cart—and trundled our purchases from his place to ours. Fortunately his apartment was on the hill near the Pantheon—so we had a down-run nearly all the way.

Our arrangement with the *concierge*, a pleasant woman who was always amused by our treatment of her native tongue, and who could never understand our fondness for cold baths, was that she should make our beds and keep the place

clean. As time passed we noticed that Madame's pretty daughter would occasionally come up to help her mother: by the end of the winter the job seemed to be left entirely to Marie. Madame had sized us up.

The summer wore on, and our application to the various tasks became more and more feverish. There seemed to be less and less time for our fencing lessons, which we all enjoyed, for swimming, and for tramps about Paris. Mayence would go over the types of problems that might be set us—the range was appalling—and the methods by which the desired results must be reached. Besson would sharply insist that in making a drawing the eye and hand were merely servants of the brain. Godefroy and Frenet would rage and gesticulate; the term *imbécille* was often heard during the criticisms of the eight-hour problems in design—applied to the design, not to the designers. And all too soon, we felt, the Day came: the first test was to be held.

(To be concluded in the December  
JOURNAL)

“The largest single opportunity for the rapid post-War expansion of private investment and employment lies in the field of housing,” both urban and rural” . . . President TRUMAN to Congress.

## The Dismal Fate of Christopher Renfrew



Christopher Renfrew, born too late,  
("Soul of an artist," his mother said),  
Knocking humbly at Beauty's gate,  
No one had told him, "Beauty's dead;"  
Listen, son, to the dismal fate  
Of Christopher Renfrew, born too late.

Christopher Renfrew drank in deep,  
Brackish water from ancient springs;  
Climbed Olympus, and found it steep,  
Heard the flutter of Nike's wings;  
Said "Here's a vigil I'll gladly keep!"  
As the old grey gods lay fast asleep.

Christopher Renfrew, misplaced link,  
Studied the Orders, and drew them well;  
Rendered his shadows with Chinese ink,  
Hearkened not to the tolling bell;  
Went to Rome, and with aspect solemn,  
Copied the letters from Trajan's column.

Christopher Renfrew, *toujours gai*,  
Did his stint on the old Rive Gauche;  
Christopher Renfrew *diplomé*,  
Measured a doorway down at Loches;  
Basked in the dusk of a kinder day,  
And never heard tell of Corbusier.

Christopher Renfrew never knew  
That Form must walk in the Steps of Function;  
"Truth is Beauty, and Beauty's true,"



Is what he quoted, without compunction,  
And never discovered the slightest clue  
In the magic words of Sullivan, Lou.

Christopher Renfrew, young eclectic,  
Trod sedately the Classic way;  
Using the Georgian dialectic,  
Scorning the priests of a later day—  
Christopher Renfrew didn't hasten  
To join the faithful at Taliesin.

*Christopher Renfrew woke one day,  
And a veil was drawn from his jaded eyes;  
A brilliant light had dispersed the grey,  
And he looked around him with wild surprise;  
Corner windows and thermopane,  
Form and function in mad pursuit,  
Lally columns and overhangs,  
All approved by the Institute;  
A circular house by Fuller, (Bucky),  
A spiral gallery by Mr. Wright;  
Christopher Renfrew, born unlucky,  
Hid his eyes from the dreadful sight.*

Christopher Renfrew, brain benumbed,  
Laid him down on his tousled bed;  
Darkest depths of despair he plumbed,  
Crying "I know that Beauty's dead!"  
And clutching a Despouy, too well thumbed,  
The poor unfortunate guy succumbed.

—ROBERT W. SCHMERTZ.



## Honoring Louis Sullivan

TWO ADDRESSES MADE ON THE OCCASION OF UNVEILING A  
BRONZE TABLET MARKING THE HOUSE IN BOSTON WHERE  
SULLIVAN WAS BORN

*By Charles D. Maginnis, F.A.I.A.:*

IT IS TIME that Boston became aware of Louis Sullivan. By the erection of a tablet on his birthplace today, it submits a modest claim to him. If his genius came to fulfillment elsewhere, here he was born and spent his early youth. We may not know what precocious impulse drew him away. It might well have been the apprehension that a picturesque personality of the same name was in complete possession of the Boston imagination. Withdrawn out of the shadow of that intimidating presence, he found a hospitable place where he brought the name of Sullivan to another and more edifying significance. His professional schooling here had equipped him for Chicago which opened to the young talent all its richness and freedom of opportunity. Always a thinker of independence, he was impatient from the beginning with the timidities of the architectural mind and eager to strike the note, and strike it boldly, which would express his sense of the American idea. The era of the skyscraper had begun.

He felt the challenge that lay in this dynamic thing which pleaded for an envelope as daring as its anatomy. To the thrilling problem he gave an answer which bore the unmistakable stamp of his personality. With this type of enterprise we are most prone to think of him.

It was his brilliant design for the Transportation Building of the first Chicago Fair which first brought Sullivan, however, to international attention. Some of us remember what an object of arresting simplicity it was amidst the Imperial classicism of the general scene. Nothing that he did was more characteristic of him than that fugitive creation. In the novelty of it there was no violence. Frankly a shell, the lines of it merely acknowledged the enveloping purpose. Only the great doorway stirred the designing fancy, and here within the shadows of its receding arches Sullivan lavished the delicate embroidery he had made his own. It was a triumphant achievement but its influence

could not stem the Renaissance current, and Sullivan writhed under the perversity of the national taste. The man had come to professional maturity so that clients flocked to his office, but the philosopher in him experienced the agony of frustration. He had the conviction of the leader, but the cause was in eclipse. Ardent followers he still had, like Wright, whose particular fame sustained his own till the world could perceive him again. Ill health added to the unhappiness of his declining years. Unable to accommodate themselves to his tortured spirit, his patrons fell away from him and like many another great artist he died neglected and forsaken. But his name did not die, for he was more than a leader—he was a prophet.

In our generation we have seen the end of many things. Dramatic change has brought the world to a new consciousness. The passions which have disturbed the life of our profession have largely spent

themselves, and the classic efflorescence of the White City is now a dim memory. Another moment of election is here when, as we ponder the future ways of American architecture, we should realize that the episode of Louis Sullivan holds both inspiration and warning. The past has been a tyranny but it is not to be tyrannically dismissed. We may relinquish the veneration of European souvenirs, but it is to be remembered that in that wistfulness there was always acknowledged the operation of artistic principles as valid now as they ever were. Sullivan was no iconoclast. However rebellious his thesis, Architecture was still a graciousness. He did not envision modernism as a system which denied objective felicities nor reduced the attribute of simplicity to a mere by-product of a biting logic, a defiant emptiness. Imagination still held its historic place, and beauty in architecture was a precious principle which in his name can never be invalidated.

*By William W. Wurster\*:*

**W**E have come here today to honor Louis Sullivan.

Ever since a commemoration of this occasion was set, I have been

reading into three books: "Kindergarten Chats," "Autobiography of an Idea," and "Louis Sullivan—Prophet of Modern Architecture,"



by Hugh Morrison of Dartmouth College.

Probably you know these books well. I am tempted to read aloud from numberless pages, for these books are rich and go back to the root of things as seen by Sullivan.

I hold fast to the idea that he, of all people, would believe in a changing education, that schools might be a real part of today's leadership and life. I find this firsthand when he speaks of his education and notes that "Tech" was but a pale reflection of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Later he doubts the Ecole for he says: "There came the hovering conviction that this great school in its perfect flower of technique lacked the profound animus of a primal inspiration."

He chose Chicago as his field for practice for he felt its great force and need—a feeling which I share with him extending into today's realm.

He had such great stature that much architectural philosophy you find stems from him. Like so much of Shakespeare it has become interwoven into everyday phrases so that it is all familiar. Just listen to these two quotations (he writes in the third person):

"And amid the immense number of living forms, he noted that in-

variably the form expressed the function, as, for instance, the oak tree expressed the function oak, the pine tree the function pine, and so on through the amazing series. And, inquiring more deeply, he discovered that in truth it was not simply a matter of form expressing function, but the vital idea was this: That the function *created* or organized its form."

We all know of the World's Fair of 1893. Louis Sullivan has moving pages to say on this. I will quote only his conclusions and hope you will refresh your memories by re-reading the pages on this.

"The damage wrought by the World's Fair will last for half a century from its date, if not longer. It has penetrated deep into the constitution of the American mind, effecting there lesions significant of dementia.

"Meanwhile the architectural generation immediately succeeding the Classic and Renaissance merchants, are seeking to secure a special immunity from the inroads of common sense, through a process of vaccination with the lymph of every known European style, period and accident, and to this all-around process, when it breaks out, is to be added the benediction of



TABLET MARKING THE BIRTH SITE OF LOUIS H. SULLIVAN, 42 BENNET STREET, BOSTON. HONORING HIS NINETIETH BIRTHDAY  
ERECTED BY THE BOSTON SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS AND THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS



FUR SHOP IN THE JAY JACOB STORE, SEATTLE, WASH.  
AS REMODELED BY GEORGE WELLINGTON STODDARD AND ASSOCIATES

*Photograph by Loren Smith*



good taste. Thus we now have the freedom of Eclecticisms, the winning smile of taste, but no architecture. For architecture, be it known, is dead."

And the above was written in

1922. Louis Sullivan's greatness as an understanding prophet needs no added proof. When you see his buildings you know his place as a creative architect without further words.

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\* William W. Wurster has joined the ranks of those who commute across the continent, for he is an active member in the firm of Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons, in San Francisco, yet spends the majority of his time as Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Leading up to such an attempt are: graduation from the University of California in 1919, twenty years of practice, a year as a Fellow in the Graduate School of Design at Harvard, teaching at Yale and studying city planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Now with the past two years spent on plans for curriculum and staff, the school is ready for returning veterans and young civilians.

## Chapters of The A. I. A.

An editorial reprinted from *The Tennessee Architect* for July, 1946, of which publication J. Frazer Smith is Editor.

PROBABLY one of the most controversial subjects among architects has been, and is, just what is the relationship of our Chapter to the Institute. I think most informed persons will agree that the side one takes is largely the result of his own experience. Those who have never been active in professional affairs beyond the Chapter level too often do not see the picture above the Chapter level. On the other hand those who have gone through the Chapter routine (committee, and officers, and finally president) and who then go further into national professional af-

fairs, becoming directors or officers of The Institute, are equipped with sufficient background to think problems through on the national level. The unfortunate part here is that by this time the individual feels an urge to retire, and both Chapter and Institute suffer for the lack of the quantity of experienced leadership necessary.

*The Tennessee Architect* is a Chapter journal, and as its editor I deem it my prime duty to champion its cause in this controversy. In doing so, however, it should not be necessary to overlook Chapter shortcomings at the expense of its

best interests locally and nationally. Also I am mindful that these observations and opinions are purely personal, hence first person in this editorial.

Let's review ancient history. In the early days of The Institute some Chapters were organized by a local group to care for their own immediate local problems. Having organized, it seemed the natural thing to become part of The A.I.A. This, I am convinced, was purely a matter of seeking prestige and lending dignity to their local efforts. Few, if any, of these individuals thought beyond their immediate local problems; consequently their Chapters thought as Chapters and not seriously about actually playing a part in the nationwide organization. Other groups organized solely to gain membership in The A.I.A. and, having done so, assumed the same attitude. As late as twenty-five years ago there was little doubt in any Southern Chapter's mind that The Institute was, in fact, a distant heavenly object to which each member paid homage, also \$25 a year. Obviously enough, few received any direct benefits and only those who expected none remained members. To continue, our faults were: We were small; poor-

ly financed; lacking organization, interest, business administration and management; ignorant of our national public and industrial relations and not concerned too much with our local affairs. Our committees were inactive and our officers and directors merely so in name. This was the picture as I found it when I became an architect twenty-five years ago. And if The Institute ever suspected it, they apparently did little about it.

In our medieval history, this estranged relation between Chapter and Institute was recognized, and steps taken which paved the way for a mutual ground on which there could be understanding. This was done by a reorganization of The Institute's Board to include Regional Directors. Regional Directors, ten in number, would each represent a particular sectional group of Chapters on the Board, and in turn supervise and instruct the Chapters as to their place in Institute affairs. This, in the final analysis, placed the Chapter-Institute relationship in no better position than the individual director had time to, or cared to, function. While under this system it was easier for both the Chapter and The Institute to get together, the faults of the Chapters remained the

same, and the reasons were many: They seemed to have little faith in The Institute; they had a change of officers every year; all work was voluntary; inexperienced men were sent to conventions and oftentimes never attended a business session. Chapters never read data and directives which The Institute mailed them. In fact, I know of a case where a Southern Chapter president finally contacted The Institute, addressing his correspondence to President Voorhees—only Francis Voorhees had been past-President for two years.

The faults of The Institute also remained the same. The reason was: The Regional Director system. It was ideal, but not practical or possible to execute. A director was supposed to attend two or three meetings annually, each taking him away from his office about a week at a time. In addition, he was asked to visit all of his Chapters yearly, and more if necessary, thereby taking another two weeks. Also he was to maintain active correspondence and supervision throughout the year, which would require another two or three weeks time. All told, seven or eight weeks. Now directors were supposedly chosen from among the most successful and qualified archi-

itects available, and normally the reason an architect is successful is because he doesn't stay away from his business eight weeks out of each year. So the director apparently remained a successful architect and the system failed—Chapters were still orphans. It was not hopeless, however, because the directors themselves had, by this time, realized the futility of the system and the Board was casting around for a solution.

Our modern history I would date from the third reign of the second Roosevelt and the beginning of the second World War. With this era we found ourselves in a changing world—our own national economy and social systems dominated by well-organized Government interference and determined labor unions, which, in turn, we had to combat led by an organization consisting of Chapters and Institute (aided and abetted by State Organizations) in a more confused state than ever. Although most architects were peacefully sleeping at the beginning of this period, and were totally unprepared to meet it, the officers and directors of The A.I.A. were well aware of the situation. They had made desperate efforts but little headway up to this time because



they were unable to gain the cooperation of the Chapters. To date, however, they have made definite headway toward what we hope will be an organization which will lead the architectural profession in an effective organized effort to serve modern America. I believe this new organization will succeed because it is based on the sound philosophy of First Things First—the unification of all professional organizations. In facing this problem of unification, The Institute's committee first sought to define clearly and practically the long confused relationship between The Institute and its component parts.

With a clear understanding of this relationship as defined by the Unification Committee, the Committee on Structure of The Institute has set up, as an important part of the new organization, a special Chapter Representative. This representative is now being chosen. We have not been advised, but I hope his duty will be to spend his entire time working with the Chapters—spend several days or as long as necessary with each and every Chapter in its own home town; that he be the officers' and Board's personal representative to you and me; that he explain The Institute's national objectives as

they occur, organization policies and directives; that he instruct new Chapter officers and directors in affairs of local and national organization, membership requirements, duties, and, yes, the common courtesies between officers and individuals of the Chapter and Institute; that, in turn, he will carry our detailed problems to our own directors and together to the Board if necessary. If this is done our Regional Directors can spend their precious time and talents in the Board Room without feeling guilty and being required to make excuses why they haven't given The Institute those eight weeks out of the year.

If this is the Board's interpretation of their representative's duties to the Chapters, then I will say to the Chapters: "If you will familiarize yourselves with the new structure of The Institute, treat this representative with the courtesy and consideration due him, hear his message, use his good offices to your own advantage, and *cooperate*, you will have no more cause to think of yourselves as orphans." The greatest barrier ever existing between Chapter and Institute—misunderstanding through lack of personal contact—will have disappeared.

# What and Why Is an Industrial Designer?

Excerpts, by permission, from a bulletin of the Society of Industrial Designers—"Education Bulletin No. 2; Professional Education for Industrial Design," by Philip McConnell, who is Executive Secretary of the Society.

THE PROFESSION of industrial design is comparatively new. The term is believed to have been first used in 1919. Since that time, a vocation has come into existence which meets the usual definitions of a profession: that is, it requires a natural aptitude plus considerable specialized training; it has a large element of public interest; to its practitioners it is a life-long field of study and interest, and offers rewards in addition to the basic one of monetary income.

Definitions of this profession vary, some of its practitioners stressing one element, others another. But there is a foundation of agreement concerning the work of the industrial designer and the kind of responsibility he must assume. It is in fact startling to one who may have had little connection with the field to discover how closely similar are the ideas of men in widely separated parts of the country, who, without formal training and without mutual acquaintance or consultation, have worked out for themselves standards of practice and definitions of

the responsibility they can assume. Industrial design has come into existence in response to a need, and men who are meeting that need naturally find themselves in agreement, even though they differ in education and have come into this work through different paths.

In its broadest sense, industrial design is the profession which assumes responsibility for all those aspects of products of which the consumer is aware. It thus serves the general public indirectly, through the manufacturer whom it serves directly. It offers manufacturers skilled and creative knowledge of how to make the products of industry useful and desirable to consumers. It is a tripartite technique, in which knowledge of design and esthetics, knowledge of manufacturing, and knowledge of merchandising are of equal importance.

The industrial designer assumes heavy responsibility in his relationship with manufacturers. His decisions and recommendations are often the basis for large expenditures, and must be made months or

even years before their value receives the final test in the market. This is also a field in which integrity and devotion to general ideals and principles are essential. The work of the industrial designer affects very directly the lives of the users of American industrial products. It is no exaggeration to say that industrial designers have a real effect upon the quality of life in this country. The industrial designer who serves the consumer by insisting on a thorough analysis of each product from the consumer's point of view is giving the best professional service to the manufacturer who retains him. The industrial designer is economically dependent upon industry, but his value to industry is measured by his insistence on serving the consumer.

There are several different types of relationship in which the industrial designers work. The largest group numerically, and the type usually thought of as typical, is the independent practitioner who from his own office serves a number of different manufacturers. This kind of arrangement may remain a small operation or may grow into a sizable organization of designers and specialists co-

operating on the solution of design problems. There is a growing tendency for the head of such an organization, while retaining supervision over the work done, to give to industrial designers under him a large amount of independence and responsibility. Such an organization usually includes also specialists in fields related to product design, such as engineering, architecture, and consumer research. With the business managers, accountants, and clerical staff that a large organization requires, from 8% to 30% of the staff of an industrial design organization may be people who are not professional industrial designers. However, many of the specialized workers look forward to assuming design responsibility as a result of their practical experience. This is particularly true of men who are working as engineers or architects, but it also includes draftsmen, renderers, modelmakers, and the like.

Besides this type of organization, industrial design is practised by people in the employ of large manufacturing or merchandising companies. Many companies big enough to have a large output of varied consumer products find it desirable to have separate depart-



ments in which the consumer aspects of products are analyzed and their appearance established. The organization of such a department is likely to be similar to that of the office of an independent consultant.

To some extent industrial design is practised by people employed by a third type of organization. There have sprung up, just prior to and during the War, several organizations which attempt to offer to manufacturers an over-all product design service. Such organizations usually treat design for consumer appeal as only one aspect of their service, which may include everything from tool design and factory layout to consumer studies. Such organizations may foster a division of loyalty of the sort which has caused criticism of architects who work also as contractors. They sometimes seem unprofessional in their too-aggressive methods of promotion. However, it is probably too soon to estimate fairly the possible use which this type of organization can have for manufacturing in general.



There are no dependable statistics covering the whole profession of industrial design and its growth. In an effort to get infor-

mation concerning the growth of the field and its probable future expansion, the Society of Industrial Designers circulated to its employing members, in December, 1945, a questionnaire asking for facts concerning the history of each organization, and the number of persons employed. Questionnaires were returned by 22 industrial design organizations. Of these 22, 11 were in existence in 1934. The first was founded in 1921. These 22 organizations now give employment to a total of 715 people. It is certain that the 22 firms whose figures are summarized here are only a fraction of the total number of firms and individuals who could properly be called professional industrial designers. It is also certain that the total number of business enterprises in the United States which might use and profit from industrial design service is much greater than the number of such enterprises now in the habit of retaining industrial designers. To the same degree that businessmen depend upon the service of professional architects when they plan buildings, manufacturers will eventually depend upon industrial design service and advice in planning products for the market.

In connection with their replies, seven of the designers, including several of the most experienced, went out of their way to add a comment to the general effect that the education available at the present time is unsatisfactory. One industrial designer stated flatly, "To my knowledge there is no qualified school offering industrial design." Others are equally emphatic, the general criticism being that recent graduates from industrial design courses are usually no more than accomplished renderers, and have little real knowledge of engineering or of merchandising. It is for this reason that heads of some large industrial design organizations state their preference for graduates of architectural or engineering courses, even though men so trained are without real grounding in industrial design.

Professional education for this calling has not kept pace with the development of the profession itself. In a purely quantitative sense, the facilities available are insufficient. But much more important than the over-crowding in existing schools and courses is the fact that practitioners of industrial design are nearly unanimous in the opinion that the education now available has too little relation to

the needs of the profession. Practising designers feel that much of what is called industrial design in schools and colleges is inadequate for practical work in the profession.

Industrial design is a new profession based on contemporary conditions, while the field of design is as old as history itself, and is the subject of a large body of literature and theory. Many teachers of design, whose work in that field is entirely admirable, are not sufficiently aware that industrial design from the point of view of its practitioners and of manufacturers is much more than design applied to industry. Because of the natural preoccupation of teachers of design with their subject, it is sometimes difficult for them to realize that the forces of economic and industrial development have brought into existence a technique which, though dependent upon design, is much more than design.

Design in itself is an absorbing study, and can completely pre-occupy the working life of persons who have an aptitude for it. The esthetics of design and the study of its history and traditions are essential subjects for the industrial designer, but he must by force of circumstance have much the same



REMODELED COUNTRY HOUSE OF COL. HENRY ANDERSON,  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY, VA.

DUNCAN LEE, ARCHITECT

Below, the house before remodeling. The earliest portion, at far right, dates from 1720; the remainder, from 1820, excepting that the front porch was added probably about 1880



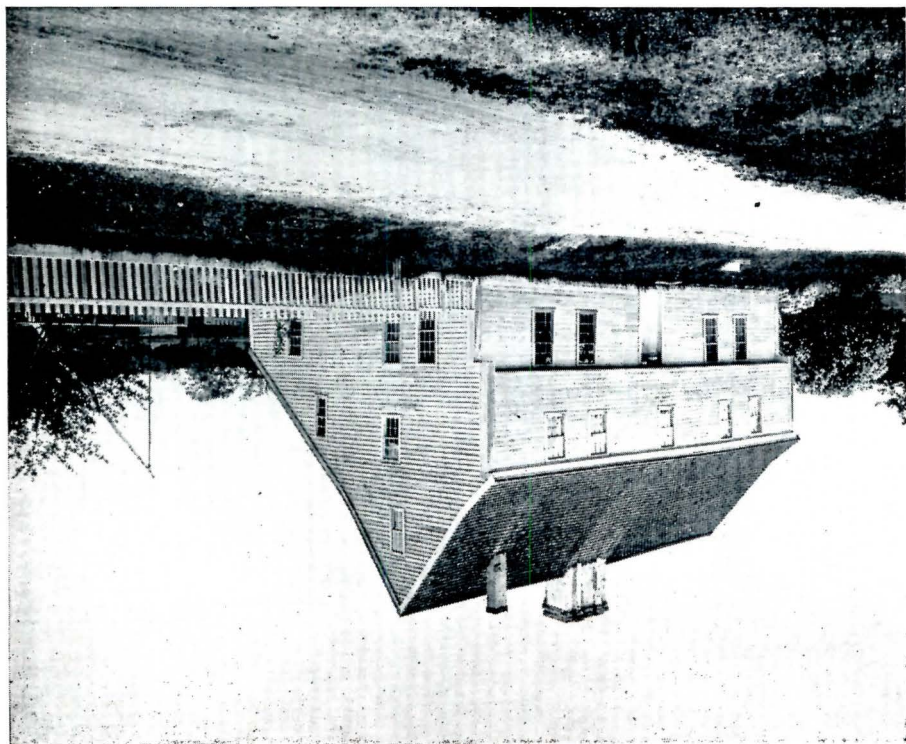


THE "SCOTCH"-BOARDMAN HOUSE (1651)

SAUGUS, MASS.

*Photograph from Society for the Preservation of  
New England Antiquities*

*Do you know this building?*



attitude toward design that the architect has, or that the practising lawyer might have toward legal history. It is a field which he is aware is more than large enough to fill the lives of persons who choose to devote themselves to it; and it is in no way patronizing or derogatory when an industrial designer says that the study of pure design is only a third of the technical foundation essential for his profession.

The industrial designer does not compromise or lower his standards in acting as a specialist in consumer taste. The growth of the profession is full of examples which show that the industrial designer must face the fact that mass production is meaningless without mass distribution, and that therefore it is his task to make products sell. The integrity of the industrial designer and his self-interest as well make him a force in the manufacturing situation which tends toward the improvement of a product. Even in the art industries—that is, those industries like ceramics and furniture, where a large share of a product's value lies in its shape and appearance (i.e. its external design—the dilemma of a choice between good design and big

sales can often be resolved by approaching the problem from the industrial designer's point of view. Although there are many cases which seem to show that objects of inferior design have a greater appeal in certain markets, and are therefore more profitable to the manufacturer than objects of good design, the industrial designer can sometimes enter the situation and re-analyze the product and the market together, and reach a design solution that makes the product more acceptable both to the critic who applies esthetic standards and to the consuming public.

In fields lacking a long esthetic tradition, such as home appliances and industrial equipment, the dilemma of good design versus sales is more easily resolved. The vacuum cleaner which has been thoroughly studied from the consumer's point of view and designed with integrity is almost sure to be a more salable product than the vacuum cleaner which has been superficially "streamlined" to catch the buyer's eye.

The industrial designer is only one-third equipped if he can merely give a product an appearance which is in some abstract or historical sense appropriate or beautiful. He must also know how to

analyze the use the product will have in the hands of its purchaser or user, and how to make its appearance both appropriate to its use and attractive to its user. As a third facet of his activity, requiring a third element in his training, he must understand the manufacturing problems to be met in carrying out his design ideas. An industrial designer's training must make him a specialist in forms and shapes and their historical development, an imaginative specialist in the psychological problems of the consumer and the consumer's relationship to the things he uses, and an expert on materials and processes of manufacturing.

Any course of training which purports to prepare a student for a career as an industrial designer is seriously deficient if it does not equip the student to work in each of the three branches of the field, and to synthesize them in his own practice. There is apparent agreement among all educators and practitioners of industrial design that this is a profession which adapts the age-old problems of pure design to the conditions imposed by our system of mass production and distribution. Yet many educators do not face the fact that to equip the would-be industrial

designer to deal with the problems of design for mass production requires as much study of mass production as of design.

The Society of Industrial Designers, as part of its effort to give advice and orientation to veterans, has drawn up a list of all the institutions which make a serious effort to teach professional industrial design. It is of course difficult to compare courses from the one-word descriptions in catalogues. However, it is significant that of the 20 institutions listed, 6 give no courses in marketing, advertising, or economics. Even those schools which include elementary economics may have little of the kind of training in merchandising and consumer psychology that the industrial designer needs. Similarly, 9 of these schools offer no engineering courses or courses in any branch of factory technology. These are courses in design, rather than industrial design.

The need for the three elements in an industrial designer's training has led several prominent industrial designers to suggest that in the present state of our educational system, a would-be industrial designer can get better training by combining the study of



architecture with courses in engineering and business. This is obviously a stop-gap recommendation. A single curriculum in which subjects from each of the three fields are brought together in a planned sequence is certainly much better. And the fact that much of the material needed is available in the various schools of the larger universities means that the establishment of professional courses would not be an impossible undertaking.

It should be clear that this is much more than the complaint sometimes heard among professional men that the schools which teach their profession do not sufficiently emphasize the practical aspects of the profession. In this case, a new profession has reached

clearer definitions and a greater degree of solidity than is commonly realized, and it is in need of a system of education and training. It is now served by educators and institutions whose traditions and body of doctrine are based upon only a third of the techniques and knowledge needed for its full practice.

Industrial Design is a profession fully as complex, and carrying fully as much responsibility, as the professions of architecture and engineering. Its influence on the quality of American life and on our culture generally can scarcely be exaggerated. Training for industrial design should be as carefully planned and as standardized as is the training available for other professions.

## Architectural Immunity

*By Daniel Paul Higgins*

FOR MANY YEARS we architects have felt a sense of security, almost akin to immunity, insofar as we might be held liable in damage suits arising out of our issued plans and specifications.

Are we immune? We are not immune if we are charged with negligence, inadequate plans or

specifications, or incompetent supervision and are found guilty by a jury. A recent lawsuit, with serious implications, was won by the plaintiffs with all interested parties made defendants. The architect was found not guilty, inasmuch as his contract specifically limited his services, which did not

bear on the issues of the trial. The architect necessarily had to defend himself through a protracted trial and incurred serious financial burdens.

Regardless of our viewpoint as to our immunity, we cannot escape the interpretation of a jury or their evaluation of the facts. Neither can we escape the self-evident truth that it is expensive to contest legal actions, particularly court cases. We are dependent on many people, and our own personal risk is proportionately increased in these days when we may have a greater personnel and at times may have to rely on assistance less competent than in normal times. The stringencies in the labor market do not offer any assurances on the adequacy of performance.

The current stalemate in construction, the ever-increasing demands on architects, is developing a total load of field work which will increase the ratio of risks. I am neither optimistic nor pessimistic, but am endeavoring to face the facts as they affect our office.

Now, we are all human and at best we shall have a percentage of errors. All of us do everything in our power to keep the percentage at the very minimum. To err is human, and we must accept the

fact that but one error in a vital sense could prove disastrous, should we be held accountable.

Can we guard against such an eventuality as well as protect ourselves against actual damages and the legal costs?

I have one solution to offer. For several years we endeavored to work out an insurance policy with several carriers which would protect the architects. It has been a long search, but finally we have now in force an insurance policy which protects the architect against errors of commission and omission. Under this policy, up to stated limits, the carrier must meet any legal damages; and more than that, in the event of any legal actions arising out of the work of the architect, the carrier must take over the obligation of defense.

There is also one more important point to be covered. When the architect retains consulting engineers for specialized services, such as structural or mechanical engineering, what is the relation of insurance protection to the architect for work executed by the engineers? Under the present form of insurance policy, by payment of a relatively small additional fee, the architect secures protection against

similar risks to cover the engineering. The several engineers with whom we cooperate recognize that it is unfair for the architect to pay an insurance premium for engineering. The engineers, through their own society, are now endeavoring to institute a group policy. When this is done we shall be relieved of part of the premium expense, and the engineers can assure all architects with whom they operate of being able to provide this protection.

Architects, too, can execute a group policy, thus reducing the premium cost. We have given to our local A.I.A. Chapter full details, and they are investigating the matter insofar as it relates to Chapter application.

The pioneering in this form of insurance has been done, so that it is a relatively minor matter to institute this protection. Each member of the profession is the arbiter of his requirements, and should others wish to acquire further details, I will have furnished the method to our national A.I.A. office to answer inquiries.

In the course of deliberations arising out of the development of this policy, one particular point was of serious concern to all parties. In fact, several insurance

companies shied away due to the implications involved.

In our standard (A.I.A.) form of agreement between owner and architect we state, Article 1, "and supervision of the work." In Article 7, wherein we also introduce the "Clerk of Works" we presume to water down the responsibility of supervision. We just do not define supervision for ourselves, or for the owner, and if I were on a jury as a layman, I would certainly get the definite impression that the architect agreed to supervise something; and under the skillful maneuvering of a plaintiff's lawyer I'd be very apt to believe the subject matter in court was within the purview of the architect's supervisory obligations. The manner in which we use words relating to supervision, even if understood by an owner, is very ambiguous when torn asunder or their meaning bantered about in court. We supervise and we do not supervise. Can we not clarify this part of our responsibilities so that it will unmistakably relate exactly what the architect contracted to do, what he was paid to do? We certainly should clarify the application of the words so that a disinterested party cannot say, "If that is what you understood you were to do,



why do you not say so unequivocally?"

If a general contractor is similarly a party to the same suit, is he free from responsibility because, as he might say, all his work is subject to the direction and control of the architect and the supervision of the architect? In our A.I.A. Form A2, General Conditions, Article 38, we say, "The Architect shall have general supervision and direction of the work." That's what we ourselves tell the general contractor. Do we mean that in the event of a case in court we absolve the general contractor because we have assumed that liability?

This whole question raises interesting and serious problems for the architect and general con-

tractor. Granted we require controls, we must have a way of being assured that construction meets our intent, our plans, specifications, interpretations thereof, but I am quite sure none of us meant to relieve the contractor of his due liability nor to put ourselves in a position wherein a general contractor would endeavor to shield himself behind the architect.

Consequently, what do we mean and how can we define the relationship so that we do not leave our flank exposed to a withering cross-fire of oratorical outbursts which arise to make the architect vulnerable through words out of his own mouth?

It's worth studying before some of us become the sacrificial offering.

## News of the Chapters and Other Organizations

THE BOSTON SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS at its October meeting honored a former member of its Executive Committee (1935-1941) and former vice president (1938-1941), in the following tribute:

"The death of Eliot Putnam gives a sense of personal loss to everyone who knew him. From his Harvard days, when he was

one of the sturdiest bulwarks of the football team and at the same time a very hard-working student of architecture, throughout his life, he made hundreds of devoted friends.

"At M. I. T., where for many years he taught the history of architecture (and his knowledge of that subject was profound), his lectures

gave inspiration to many college generations, though in late years he felt keenly that there was a growing tendency to neglect the lessons of the past as superfluous candles in a world-to-be, brilliant with the neon light of modernism. Students and graduates were always coming to him for advice, and never left empty-handed.

"He was modest to a fault, and painfully shy, but the most entertaining and charming companion with old friends—outspoken, stubborn in argument, but never close-minded. He had a great way with boys and girls, who absolutely idolized him. He was not only good at all games, but extremely clever with his hands, a good carpenter and all-round mechanic. Filled with a boundless physical energy, he was always chopping down trees, mowing the grass, never idle for more than a few minutes. He was the most courageous man I ever knew and during his long illness never gave in to pain—he was always master of it, no matter how severe.

—GORDON ALLEN.

THE DELAWARE CHAPTER has been especially commended by the chairman of The Institute Committee on Public Relations as being

at least one organization within The Institute which reads reports sent to it and for having devised a Chapter program in public relations which should give encouragement to others.

The Delaware Chapter gave freely of its time and energies to the development of a city planning project for Wilmington, Delaware. These activities have thus far resulted in an acceptance by the Mayor of the Chapter's resolution recommending a Master Plan and promising on the part of the Mayor a conference to be held in the near future between city officials, Chamber of Commerce representatives, and the Delaware Chapter's president, who was also appointed chairman of the Master Plan Committee.

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER is noticing an unusual increase in the number of men taking the examinations for license to practice in California. The examination last June was taken by 180 applicants. Of this number 75 passed the written portion and became eligible for the oral examination. Apparently also there has been a very heavy volume of applicants for license from beyond the state borders.

THE SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER recently elected to honorary associateship in the Chapter, Miss Beatrice St. Julien Ravenel. The honor was conferred in the Chapter's belief that in writing her recent book, "Architects of Charleston," she rendered distinguished service to the profession of architecture.

THE IOWA CHAPTER recently passed a resolution looking toward the establishment of its dues on the basis of the volume of work done by the various members. The possible difficulties in such a course are still to be faced.

The new TEXAS PANHANDLE CHAPTER, chartered August 15, 1946 by The Institute, has elected as president, F. A. Kleinschmidt, Department of Architecture Technological College, Lubbock, Texas; and as secretary, James E. Atcheson, 2219 Ninth Street, Lubbock, Texas.

THE NEW YORK CHAPTER among many other activities is attempting to bring about through enlightened criticism a higher standard of architectural design for work in the profession, as well as a fuller appreciation of good

design on the part of the public. To this end the Chapter is urging the several architectural magazines to publish more critical material on architecture.

THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS CHAPTER, chartered this year by The Institute, has elected as president, Edward A. Kane, Bohm Bldg., Main St., Edwardsville, Illinois, but has not yet reported the election of a secretary.

The new ILLINOIS ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION, which now becomes the state organization body of The A.I.A. in Illinois, has elected as its officers: president, C. Herrick Hammond, 160 North La Salle Street, Chicago; and secretary-treasurer, Earl C. Worthington, Myers Building, Springfield, Illinois.

A new organization, THE WYOMING SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS, has been formed, with officers as follows: Frederic Hutchinson Porter, president, Cheyenne, Wyoming; Leon C. Goodrich, vice president, Casper, Wyoming; G. C. Hollo, secretary, Cheyenne, Wyoming; and C. W. Shaver, Jr., treasurer, Sheridan, Wyoming. The new Society started out with a mem-



bership of seventeen, and hopes to apply shortly for a charter as a Chapter of The A.I.A.

The new FORT WORTH CHAPTER, chartered August 15, 1946,

has elected its officers, as follows: president, Joseph R. Pelich, Commercial Standard Building, Fort Worth 2, Texas; and secretary, Robert P. Woltz, Jr., Dan Waggoner Building, Fort Worth 2.

## The Producers' Council

JAMES W. FOLLIN, since 1939 Managing Director of The Producers' Council, has resigned this post to become deputy to General Fleming in FWA.

Succeeding L. C. Hart as president of The Council is Tyler Stewart Rogers, of Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation, who has, since its inception, served as co-chairman of the Joint Technical Committee of The Council and The Institute.

To fill the post formerly held by Mr. Follin The Council has appointed Andrew L. Harris as its executive secretary. Mr. Harris leaves the Eagle-Picher Sales Company of Cincinnati, where he has been manager of sales promotion.

At the annual meeting of The Producers' Council held in New York in September last, fourteen pioneers who contributed to the advancement of dimensional co-ordination were individually hon-

ored. Those receiving the citations were: M. W. Adams and Prentice Bradley, Modular Service Association; Theodore Irving Coe, Technical Secretary, A.I.A.; E. W. Dienhart, Executive Secretary of the National Concrete Masonry Association; Max H. Foley, architect; James W. Follin; Frederick G. Frost, Sr., architect; Frederick Heath, Jr., Consultant, NHA; A. Gordon Lorimer, Chief Architect, Department of Public Works, New York City; Harry Plummer of Structural Clay Products Institute; W. C. Randall, Chief Engineer, Detroit Steel Products Company; W. M. Steinbauer, formerly of National Door Manufacturers' Association; Henry Wright, Managing Editor of *Architectural Forum*; and in addition, a posthumous citation to the family of Albert Farwell Bemis, former industrialist and pioneer exponent of standardization.



# Architects Read and Write

Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative.



## “ORGANIC ARCHITECTURE”

BY WILLIAM G. PURCELL, Pasadena

MR. Waldron Faulkner's (Aug. JOURNAL) analysis is excellent, but it is in his implied deductions that wish appears to be father to his logic. Whether a resulting form “looks” to a few of us professional students like something in architectural history is incidental. What others see may, for them, resemble either incidents in historical esthetics, or the furniture of our mechanical world. But a building can be alive regardless of any superficial reactions to it. Mr. Faulkner's valid concepts of the vast organon from nature are related by him to the flippant patter of passing fashion in class conscious building since A.D. 1492.

Tradition is the inheritance of skills, not any continuity in the *appearances* either of art or of nature. The buildings we want are resultant materializations of a long interrelated series of thoughts, emotions, acts, habits, convenience and economics. But it is what these historic crystallizations of our very selves are doing or are capable of doing, or inviting us to do, that is the issue; and these immaterial engagements are the spiritual “material” of the object sought. The “form” of a function is not neces-

sarily a solid object. The form of a function may be dynamic, a “doing” rather than a being.

In living buildings, resemblances to either Parthenon or plumbing are fortuitous. “Looks like” is in the beholder, not in the building, and the moment an architect defers his creative procedure to the *appearances* of past buildings, his work dies by just that much. To know too much, too soon, about the historical past of art, is an insurmountable hurdle to creative design.

Our living buildings are not the sons of what Chartres and St. Peter's and Paestum “look like” to us now, but are the sons of *how those buildings came to be*, and by *that* heritage, our buildings become brothers to our locomotives, airplanes, bridges, highway systems, production know-how, *no matter what they look like*. “Streamline” is not organic except in certain specialized moving objects, or where moving people press.

Whitman said, “Architecture is what a building does to you when you look at it.” He might have added, “Architecture is what a building does to you when you make use of it.”

## ADVERTISING FOR ARCHITECTS

By O. H. MURRAY, Rhinebeck, N. Y.

HOW FAR shall an architect descend (!) into the field of advertising? There was a time when any form of advertising by the members of the profession was looked upon with a good deal of righteous horror. An architect who so much as hung out over his office a shingle which was larger than 6" x 12" was considered somewhat of a charlatan, while one who published a modest professional card in a local paper was entirely outside the pale.

However, in spite of this, professional magazines were never debarred from publishing photographs, plans, and even specifications for buildings of all types and sizes, and woe betide the editor who failed to give full credit to the author of the designs!

Recently there have issued from the presses various brochures presenting the work of specific firms and individuals. These brochures bear a very close resemblance, in some cases, to the familiar books of plans issued by lumber companies, manufacturers of ready-cut

houses and the like. Business cards in local newspapers are increasing in size and quantity, and now we are breaking out on the air waves.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not so old-fashioned as to feel that these efforts to bring the functions of the architect, or even the architect himself, into the public eye are to be deprecated. I will even endorse the actions of two young architects, recently released from the service of our country, who established a small and dignified booth at a country fair, and by their efforts undoubtedly broadened the public conception of the architect's functions and incidentally, I imagine, laid the groundwork for a substantial block of future commissions.

The purpose of this letter is to arouse discussion and to bring the whole function of architectural advertising into the open; and so clarify it that the members of the profession may get, if it is at all possible, a clear directive from The Institute covering their activities in this field.

### A DISPLACED ARCHITECT WITHOUT DOCUMENTS

By PIAN DRIMMALEN

c/o Loan Van Meerdervoort 837, The Hague, Holland

BEFORE I was sent to Holland this year to regain my health from the sufferings during 3½ years of imprisonment with the Japs, I was an architect in Ban-

doeng (Java, Netherlands East Indies). I spent a good deal of my time and money to study the philosophical and cultural background of the art called architecture. I

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was not pleased with the way my colleagues built their houses in the tropics. There was no real "style"; it was transplanting European coziness into Java. When flat roofs were popular in Holland, people asked for them in Batavia and Bandoeng, only because it was "modern." And so they imitated wall paper, cushions, furniture, paintings, carpets, lamps. It was nothing owing to a real colonizing people.

The few real architects in our Indies live at great distances. The rest are contractors, calling themselves "architects." So I had to search by myself and a fine study it was. I do not know if I succeeded (I am still unsatisfied) but there is for me one thing to do: build up the smashed East Indies. But the Japs destroyed every possession, every drawing, every design, annotation and study. We who lived in the East Indies have nothing, and even a watch is not in our reach. We feel that we are "too much" in Holland, which is already overcrowded. There is only one thing to do: return and rebuild. And we love to do it. Never mind that we cannot live in comfortable houses, and have insufficient food. We lived like that 3½ years. . . . But before we can

work we have to rebuild our brains and our skill. And here I need your help. I know there are plenty of manufacturers, firms and organizations who send everybody free copies of the most interesting leaflets, books and magazines. Besides there must be plenty of architects in the U.S.A. who have many books, magazines, plans, photographs, etc., they do not use or look at. You are one of the few countries the War did not destroy. That is the reason why I have to ask you for help. If it is in your power, please send us all the things and materials you do not use any more.

I know my English is very bad. We did our best, those years, to keep our "white men's place." But we are hungry for everything about art, philosophy, economy, religion—in short, culture. The few books that are printed in Holland are on very bad paper and too expensive for "refugees," as we are. The Dutch colleagues I meet are very kind, but do not know what it is to lose everything. They sit on their possessions like a hen on her eggs.

I hope to hear something from you and if you cannot help, I understand. In the meantime, all my hope depends on you.

## News of the Educational Field

THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE at the University of Oklahoma announces the appointment

of two new members to the faculty. Richard N. Kuhlman has been appointed Assistant Professor of

Architecture and Chairman of the Administrative Committee of the Faculty. Cecil D. Elliott has been made Instructor of Architecture. Joe Smay, for seventeen years Director of the School, has resigned the directorship but is continuing on the teaching staff.

NINE RESIDENT CRITICS in design have been added to the teaching staff of the School of Architecture of Columbia University.

Three of the new appointees are former members of the Columbia staff. They include Don Hatch, practising New York City architect who has just returned from Marine Service; Percival Goodman, winner of the Paris Prize in 1925; and James Marshall Miller, who has returned from leave of absence during which he directed the city planning program of Pasadena, Calif., and who now will direct the school's Planning and Housing Division.

The other new critics are Charles Rieger, graduate French architect; Albert O. Halse, who will be in charge of drawing and design techniques; Harvey Clarkson, LeBrun Travelling Fellow of 1938; Antonin Heythum, industrial and stage designer; John C. B. Moore, of the New York firm of

Moore & Hutchins, and Wallace Sanders, of Sanders & Malsen.

Also announced was the appointment of Theodore Rohdenberg as instructor in construction. During the War, Mr. Rohdenberg constructed field hospitals as the Americans advanced from Normandy to Germany.

SIDNEY WAHL LITTLE, Associate Professor in the School of Architecture and Arts, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, and recognized practising architect, has been named Dean of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts in the University of Oregon. Dean Little was recently discharged from the Army with a brilliant record of service. He held the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

BUFORD L. PICKENS, recently Professor of Design and History of Architecture and Art at Wayne University, has been made Head of the School of Architecture at Tulane University.

DR. FRANK ROOS, recently Professor of the History of Art at Ohio State University, has been made Professor and Head of the Department of Art at the University of Illinois. Dr. Roos succeeds Professor James Vanderpool, who resigned recently to accept a post at Columbia University.

## The Editor's Asides

THE Director of Public and Professional Relations, in flying abroad to deliver a paper on "Building and Housing" before the International Technical Congress in Paris, got himself on a spot. Discovering that Major Purves, among all the American and English conferees, was the only man who spoke French, the president of the Congress summoned him for a round-table discussion which was broadcast. The president, with two other eminent French engineers, the president of an engineering society in Czechoslovakia and our own Ned Purves discussed the general state of technological development in Europe and America. Without a prepared script, and with but a hasty suggestion in advance as to what general form the talk might take, the five men and the station announcer put French on the air waves for half an hour. Purves, whose conversational French must have betrayed the rust of ten years' non-use, voices the earnest hope that no one of his acquaintance happened to be listening in.

THE GENIAL FOUR-STAR ADMIRAL BEN MOREELL, Chief of the

Bureau of Yards and Docks since 1937, has retired from the Navy after almost thirty years in its service. Not that he expects to rest from his labors as a master builder, for he becomes president of the Turner Construction Company, with offices in New York City.

WHATEVER may be said about Mr. Wyatt's efforts to produce houses, he has set a new high record in news releases. I count that day lost which fails to bring at least two multigraphed messages from NHA. And today *five* envelopes arrive with their notes of great things accomplished, greater expectations just around the corner.

THE JOB of our newly-appointed Director of Education and Research is being made easier for him even before he tackles it. Both the portland cement and plywood industries, through their associations, are devoting newly-aroused energies toward painstaking and constructive research in their respective fields. Portland Cement Association has elected Dr. A. Allan Bates, widely known for his accomplishments in chemistry, ceramics and metallurgy, vice president for



research and development. The Plywood Research Foundation, established by the Douglas Fir Plywood Association, in one phase of its program, expects to make it possible for every inventor in the industry to submit his ideas to the Foundation for development, if found practical and patentable. Expenses of development, patent fees and the like would be advanced against future royalties the inventor would earn on his patent.

I SUPPOSE one could work up an argument at any time by throwing into a group of architects the question: "When, if ever, should honest brickwork be painted?" Passing an old brick building the other day, the conviction settled upon me that at least one form of painting brickwork is well outside the pale. Aluminum paint on a smooth sheet of wood or metal has its appeal, but this old, rough-textured brick wall seemed hopelessly degraded by it.

BELIEVE IT or not, FHA, which, from its birth in 1934 operated in the red through its first five years—showing a deficit for that period of nearly \$22 million—ends up twelve years of operation \$70 million in the black. And its current

income is almost three times its operating expenses. If other Government activities could follow that pattern, instead of paying taxes we'd be getting dividends.

PSYCHOLOGY came to the aid of a building contractor who shuddered at the noise he would have to make in driving 1600 piles 120' long through fill to bedrock. Boston's Back Bay section has its own ideas of what kind of a noise annoys. So the public was invited to visit the Critics' Corner—a canopied observation stand overlooking the job. Entry for all is through a door marked "Amateurs' Entrance." Exit is through one marked "Experts' Exit." Visitors are given cards enrolling them as "construction connoisseurs." It remains to be seen whether the land of the bean and the cod can be thus lulled into taking noise and liking it.

THE AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION AND SALVAGING OF ARTISTIC AND HISTORIC MONUMENTS IN WAR AREAS (I'd hate to have to write a check to their order) goes out of existence with the expiration of its three-year appointment. Its continuing functions have been as-

sumed by the Department of State, to be administered by the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs.

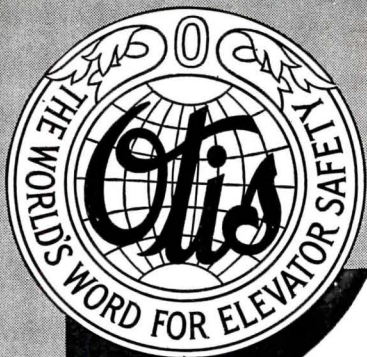
A.S.M.E. brings the sad news that possibly 80% of the salable products of the lumber mills and woodworking industries is matched by the waste resulting from the fabricating processes. This waste is not to continue, for wood-resin combinations are in the making, even sheathing board made from the reassembling of sawdust with resin binder.

M.I.T.'s Professor Walter C. Voss points out that our present use of building materials is wasteful not only in our failure to keep pace with technical advances, but also because of our long-established habit of testing structural members individually instead of completed structures, and thus setting up false codes.

CLAUDE FAYETTE BRAGDON, F.A.I.A., passed quietly out of this life on September 17th at the ripe age of 80 years. In his book "More Lives Than One," he left his own appraisal of what he had done in this world and also left no doubt as to the joy he had in the doing.

Architect, writer, master of numbers, pioneer in geometrical decoration, publisher, designer of theater settings, and a mature devotee of the occult, he was indeed a man of many lives; and through all of this ran a deep undercurrent of mysticism. When Loomis Harmon designed the Shelton Hotel in New York, Bragdon—then a widower after two unusually happy marriages—took up his abode there and clung to his high eyrie until his death. As regular and essential as his morning bath was his Yoga habit of meditation at dawn. Seated Buddha-like and naked, he emptied his mind and emotional consciousness in that mighty effort to glimpse the unseen, to comprehend the ultimate mystery of life. It is well that Claude Bragdon himself told us of his more lives than one, for it is unlikely that any other biographer would have attempted to unravel such a closely woven and brilliantly patterned fabric.

STUART CHASE repeats in "For This We Fought" a conviction that we have expressed more than once: "We in America can have anything we want in a material way, provided we want it badly enough to organize and discipline ourselves."



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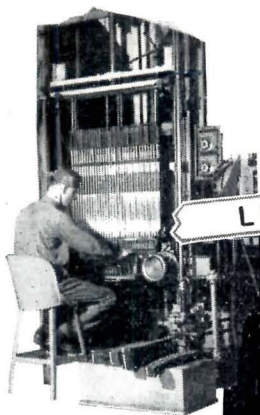
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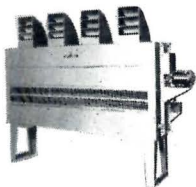


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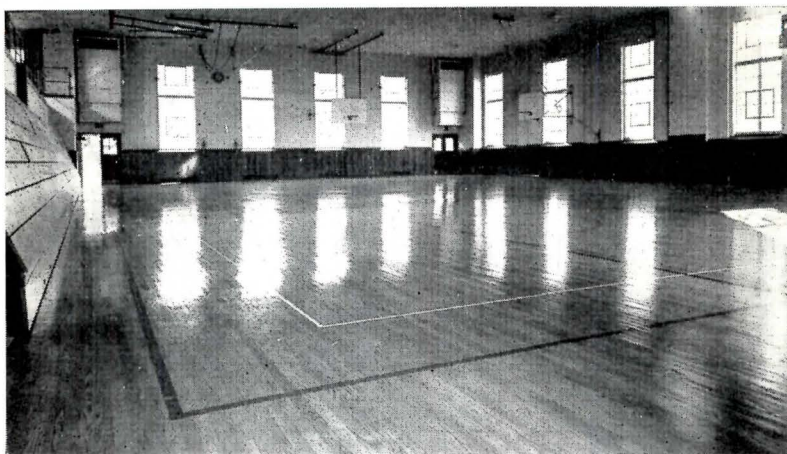
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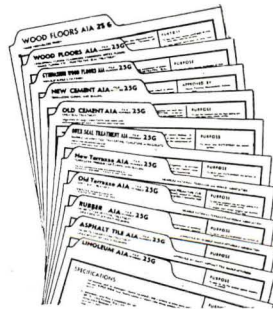
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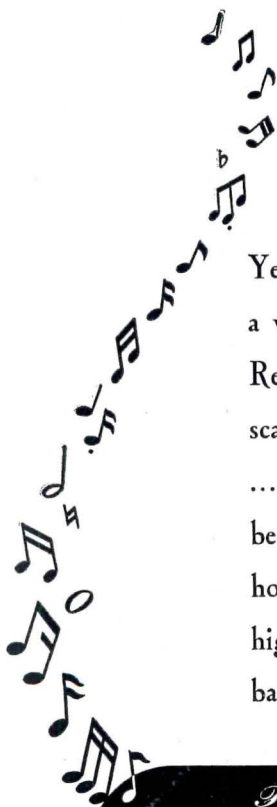
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