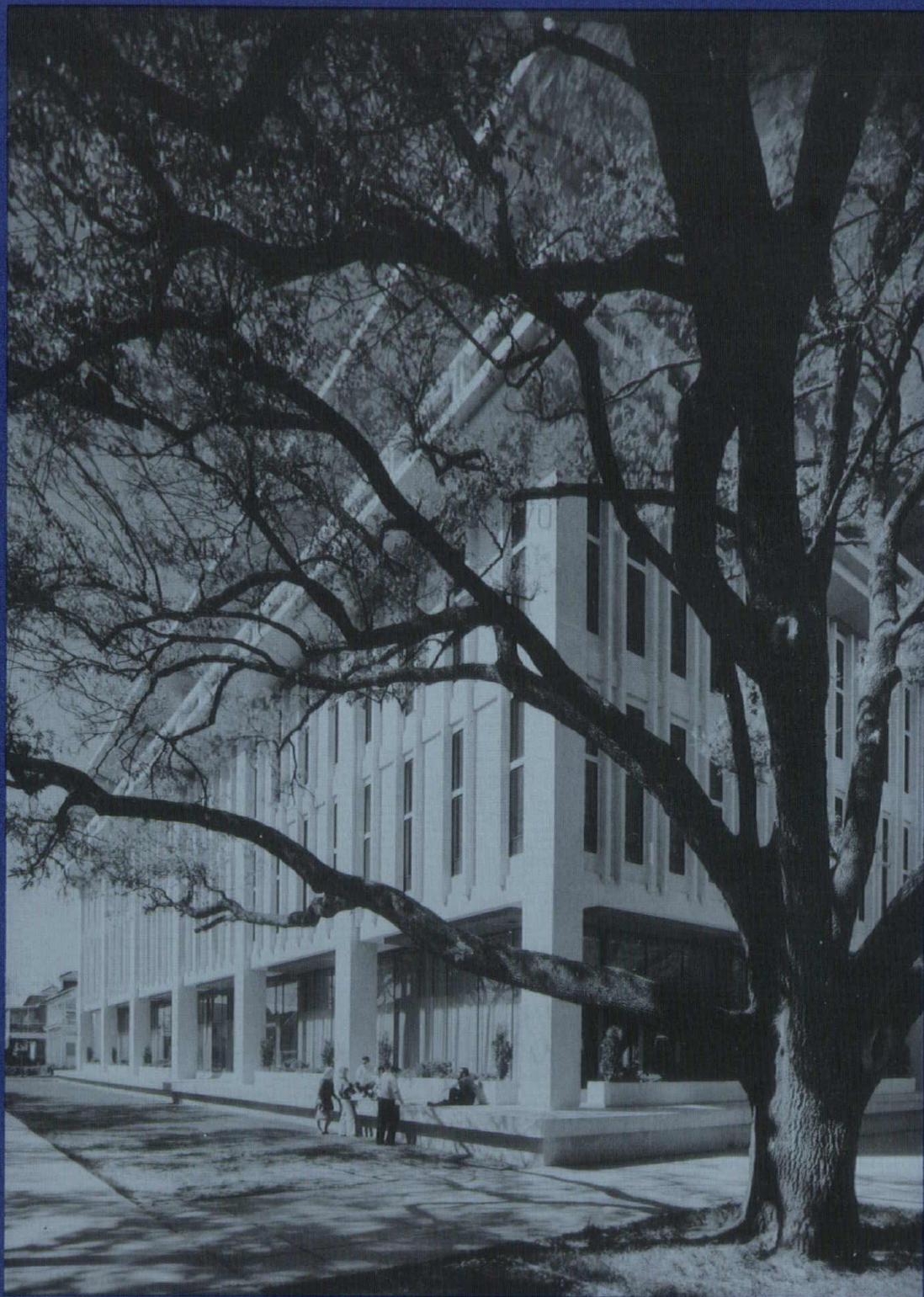


# The Louisiana Architect



February, 1970

Library

Supermannerism

Courthouse

Manresa

# FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA.



Who dumps old tires into our bays? Who picnics at our beaches and leaves litter for the tides to wash away? Who runs factories that pump refuse into our lakes? Who pours sewage into our rivers? Who throws all those beer cans overboard? Who's going to unpollute it all?

America, the beautiful. Our America. The crisis isn't in our cities; the crisis is in our hearts. With a change of heart, we can change the picture. AIA/American Institute of Architects

Send this page to your Congressman and ask him to support Federal efforts to control water pollution.

# The Louisiana Architect

Volume IX

Number 2

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## EDITORIAL

The AIA architects of Louisiana are encouraged over the broadening public interest in a clean and orderly environment.

The position taken by the Nixon Administration on air and stream pollution fulfills one of the long sought-after goals of the AIA, which is "to awaken public officials to the danger and destruction caused by pollution."

Perhaps but few of any non-architect readers are aware of this profession's concern for the conservation and use of what is beautiful and valuable in nature's gifts.

Architects have long known that good and enduring architecture comes from thoughtful planning which takes into consideration harmonious relationships between the natural and the architect's man-made environment. Being concerned with all of the physical conditions for pleasant and productive living, architects have become involved with total planning. They're concerned with the availability of parks and recreation; how sewage is disposed of, where schools are located; with the threat of floods and how traffic moves. Architects are interested in zoning and property values, city growth, the availability of air and rail services, fresh water and clean air.

You'll see architects involved in programs to provide for more parks and more parking, for beautifying river fronts and lake areas, for controls over signs that mar the beauty of our towns and highways. They're doing. Are you?

If you are interested in taking part in the decisions that affect how your environment is being changed, you are invited to voice your opinions. Your congressmen, legislators, city council and planning commission will appreciate your interest.

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# Tulane University Library



## OWNER'S GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NEW LIBRARY BUILDING

The new library will be one of the largest buildings on the campus. It will be the prime symbol of the University's tradition of excellence and its continuing insistence upon excellence as an educational and research institution. As such, the new central library must itself excel, incorporating the very best possible solutions in design for function, philosophy of service, and appearance:

1. The building should have a distinction and beauty symbolic of its central importance to the achievement of the University's goals.
2. It should harmonize with other nearby buildings.
3. It should be economical and efficient in its layout and design, without waste space and gratuitous monumentality. Its purpose is not to be a monument or tourist attraction, but a place for constant use by scholars at work.
4. It should be carefully adapted to the needs of those who will use it.

5. Avoiding ostentation and novelty for the sake of novelty, it should derive its excellence from the appropriateness with which it is related to its various functions and to its environment.

6. The overriding goals of the library, and thus the imperative goals to be met in the building, are a wholly inviting and warm atmosphere toward encouragement of use of the library's resources by students and faculty, and the utmost in facilities for their comfortable and efficient use of these resources.

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

1. Capacity—

(a) Books .....	1,250,000
(b) Readers .....	1,500
(c) Staff, Fulltime .....	118
2. Provision for future addition - four (4) floors.
3. Open stack arrangement, layout of shelving to be systematic, the objective being the greatest possible simplicity for the reader in locating the specific book he wants.

4. A minimum of corridors with their waste of valuable square footage and their tendency to complicate in labyrinth fashion a reader's search for his specific objective.

5. A single entrance and exit/control/check-out point. Emergency exits: Minimum number required by law, their ground-level exit doors absolutely controlled by electric locks connected into the fire alarm system. Folding gates or other means of locking off access via stairways or elevators to each floor are desirable.

6. Flexibility - Maximum desirable in all areas.

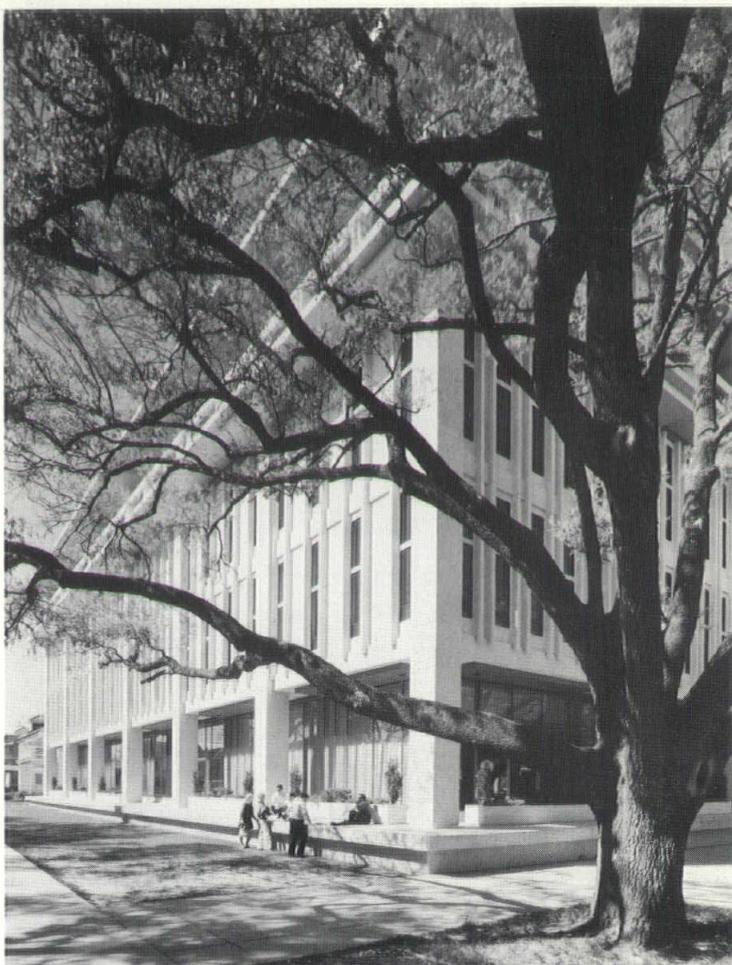
7. Book stacks - Dispersed, free-standing rather than multi-tier stacks in a central core.

8. Air-conditioning throughout.

9. Artificial illumination - According to latest standards of intensity and quality for library lighting.

10. Fireproof construction.

11. Fixed windows throughout building.



## LA SALLE PARISH COURTHOUSE

JENA, LOUISIANA

**JURY COMMENTS:** *A fine, simple structure well adapted to its site. The organization of the elements of the plan is excellent, and foresight in allowing for future expansion is commendable. A good building.*

### PROGRAM:

The problem involved the design of a new courthouse facility on the site of the existing courthouse building. The site sloped approximately 10' from front to rear. This advantage afforded the opportunity of utilizing the rear of the building as a ground level drive-in for the Sheriff's Department with parking available beneath the building; access to the Basement storage areas, drunk tank and elevator to the other floors. The First Floor, with easy access to the ground level at the front of the building, was so designed to house all the Parish facilities and some adjunct State facilities. The Second Floor houses the Jail only.

Part of the requirements were to reuse a "court bell" which, through the years, had developed into a tradition of being rung by the Sheriff as the court convened. The new building incorporated this bell at the rear entrance adjacent to the Sheriff's Department so that this tradition can be continued. Further, the corner stone of the old building was to be re-installed in the new building and this was accomplished by using it in the marble walls around the Court Room.

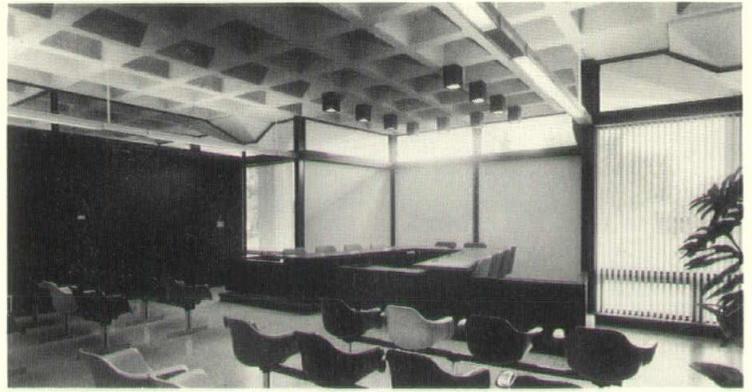
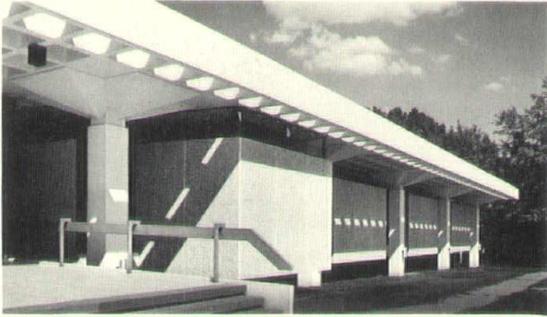
### SOLUTION:

A survey of the growth of the Parish over the last 20 years resulted in projected growth for the next 30 years and space allocations for the various Parish Departments were made from this study. The full Basement beneath the building allows for future expansion. The walls of the First Floor are so designed on a 3' x 3' grid to allow complete flexibility and relocation of partitions. The permanent walls of the Court Room were designed of marble on the corridor side and walnut plywood interior.

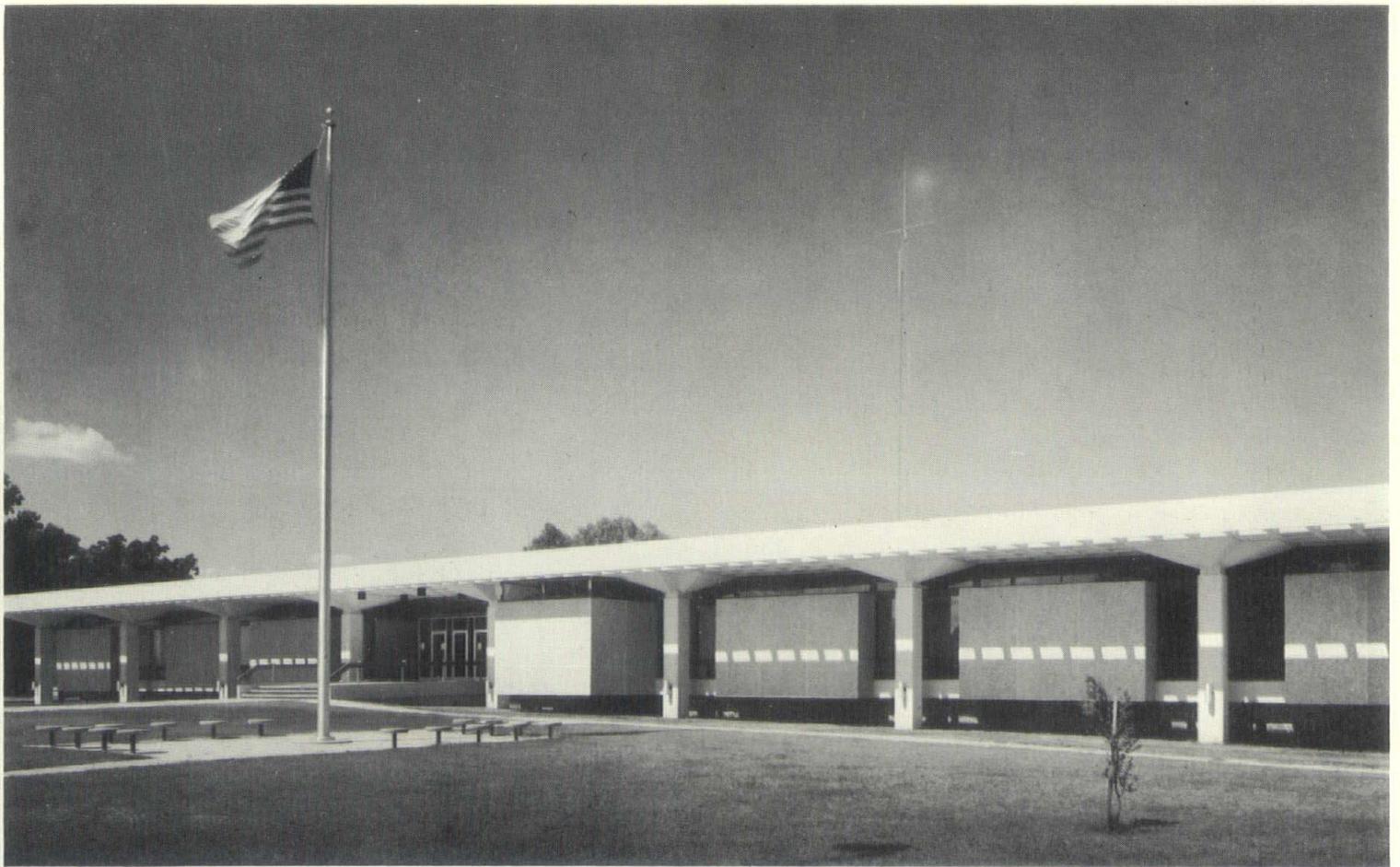
In addition to the usual Parish facilities, space was provided for housing a Court Jury, and complete Jail with Jailer's Quarters.

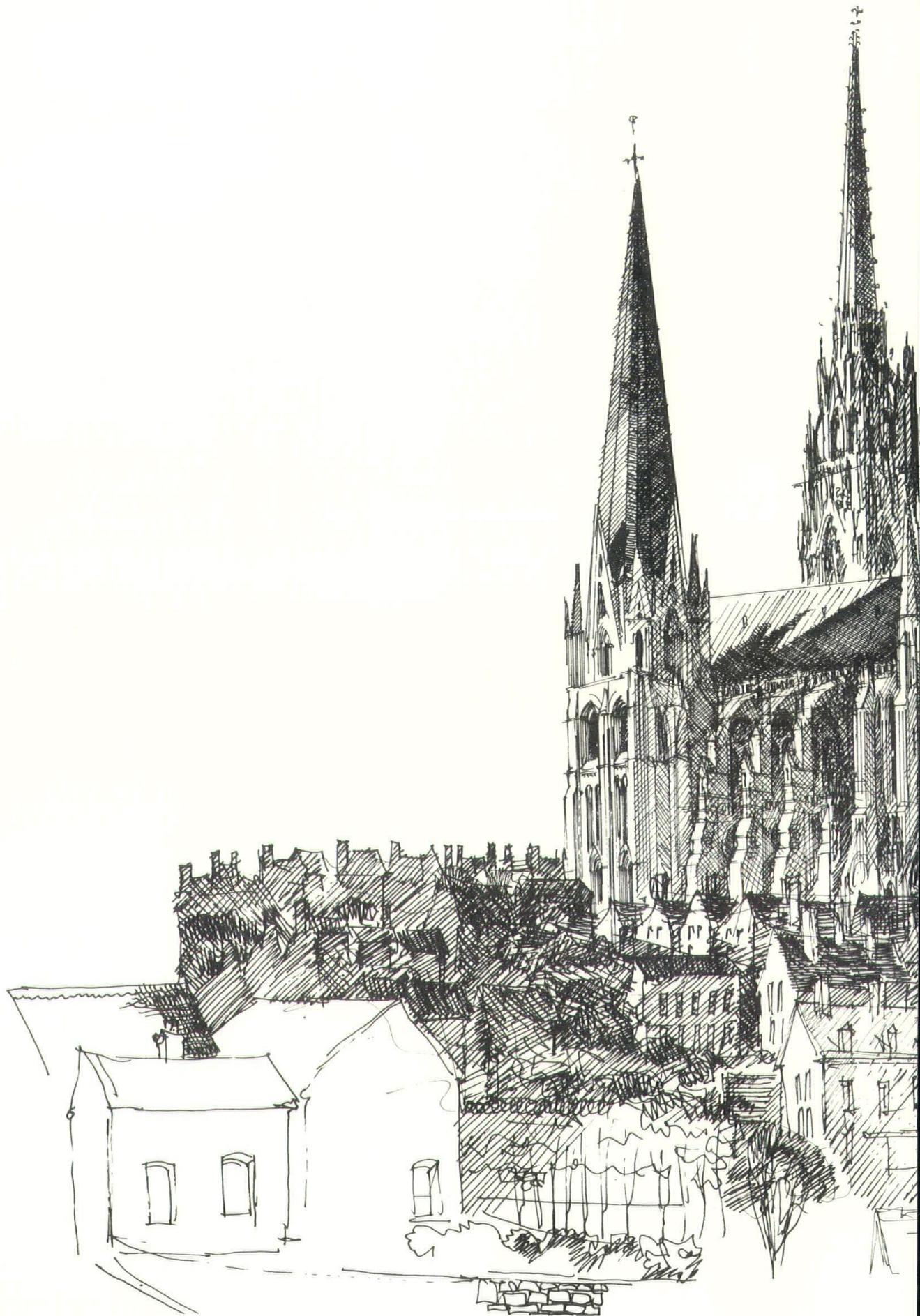
Certain areas of the Basement are so designed to serve as a Civil Defense Shelter.





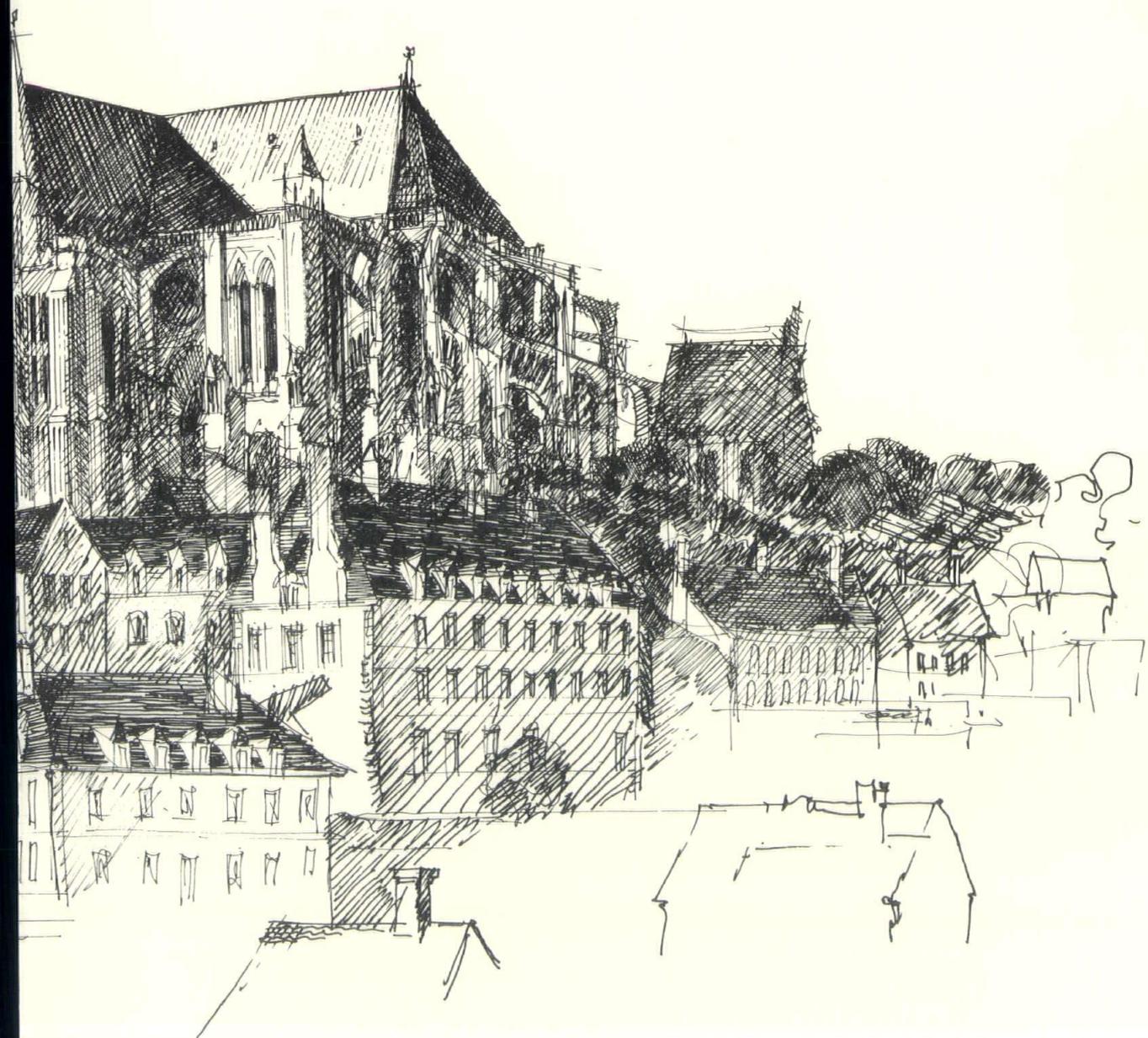
AREA: 48,500 Square Feet.  
COST: \$810,300.00





# CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

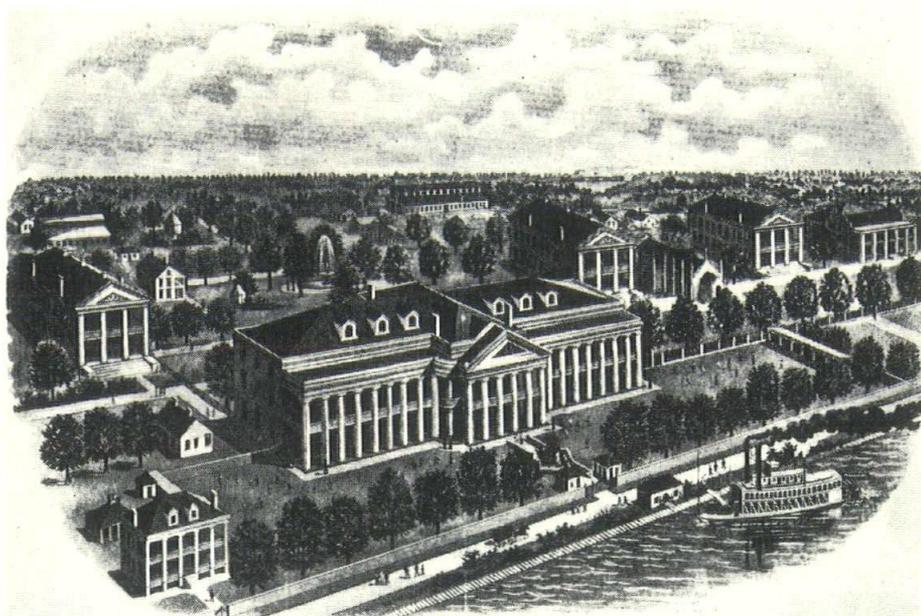
CHARTRES, FRANCE



# Louisiana's Architectural Heritage

## MANRESA - JEFFERSON COLLEGE

CONVENT, LOUISIANA



JEFFERSON COLLEGE.

1

On the River Road near Convent, Louisiana, stands an impressive group of white-columned buildings overlooking broad green lawns, shaded by ancient rows of live oaks. This is now Manresa, a Jesuit retreat house well known to most Louisianians, thousands of whom have spent weekends in retreat in these quietly beautiful surroundings.

The origin of these fine structures, originally Jefferson College, goes back to the years following the election of Pierre Derbigny in 1828 as governor of Louisiana and a return to political power of the French-speaking part of the population. It was founded by a group of these French-Louisianians led by Andre Bienvenu Roman of St. James Parish, who was elected governor in 1830 after the accidental death of Derbigny. On February 28, 1831, he signed a legislative act incorporating the subscribers of Jefferson College which he described as "an institution . . . where our children will find the means of completing their course of studies without leaving their native land."

The sixty-five acre site was purchased on July 2, 1831, from Jean Vavasseur who, for \$3500, sold his plantation at a bend in the river that soon came to be called "College Point." The construction program was financed by private subscription although the State Legislature later provided some subsidies. No record of building contracts nor mention of architects for the college have been found, but within a year construction had progressed to such a point that on July 21, 1832, an advertisement was placed in the Louisiana Courier by the building committee of Jefferson College inviting proposals to be received until August 20 at Donaldsonville "for the plastering to be done and furnishing the materials."

Construction of these first buildings was not completed until near the end of the year 1833 and on January 6, 1834, the Board of Directors announced that classes would begin the next month.

On March 5, 1835, a committee of the legislature published a report on its first inspection of the new college, stating that:

"It has been opened only since one year and the number of

students does not exceed sixty-two. The buildings, which are solidly erected with bricks, will undoubtedly last many years and are well distributed for the use of which they are designed . . . If separate lodgings from the principal building, designed for married teachers, were erected, as is the intention of the direction as soon as the means will allow of it, then the college could receive upwards of two hundred and fifty students."

The cost of the buildings and land had by this date amounted to \$70,000, with a balance of \$3,431 still due. The college was found to be operating at a loss and the legislative committee recommended state assistance to this private secular institution, adding that, "They are bound in justice to say that the college of Jefferson (established as it is to promote public interest by the liberality of some citizens) is entitled to the same support and protection that have been granted to the (state) college of Louisiana (at Jackson) which heretofore has drawn all its resources from the public treasury."

It was probably soon after this committee report of 1835 that houses were erected for married teachers, for by 1842 five such residences had been constructed. Only one of these houses had survived, the one on the up river side of the college, probably the president's house, which is a handsome square structure with a colonnade of tall, slender, fluted Doric columns across the front. All of the buildings were undoubtedly of red brick, probably painted red with the brick joints pencilled (painted white), with white columns and trim and green blinds, the sort of transitional Federal-Greek Revival style that had been brought down from the original American states after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Many Americans coming into the new territory, some by way of Natchez, were of course familiar with Thomas Jefferson's impressive group of buildings at the University of Virginia, built of red brick with white colonnades, and at Jefferson Military College in Washington near Natchez, also done in red brick but without colonnades.

The professors' houses and the twin porters' lodges at the entrance were being constructed at approximately the same

1. Jefferson College from an old print  
—circa 1880.
2. Gate Lodge, one of the original buildings  
of the 1830's.  
Photo by Richard Koch—circa 1935.
3. Detail of Columns.  
Photo by Richard Koch—circa 1935



time as Oak Alley plantation was being built across the river, in the same parish of St. James. This great house, built 1837-1839 by an American builder named George Swainey, was constructed for Jacques Telesphore Roman, brother of André Roman, principal founder of Jefferson College. Oak Alley was undoubtedly designed by Joseph Pilié, a prominent architect and city surveyor in New Orleans, the father of Madame Jacques Roman. Perhaps Pilié also was responsible for the design of some or all of the buildings at Jefferson College. Certainly the tall fluted Doric columns of the doorways at Oak Alley suggest the columns of the college buildings.

By 1842 a total of nearly \$125,000 had been spent on the college buildings, according to a report made on January 14th of that year to the State Legislature by a committee appointed by the House of Representatives for that purpose. The committee reported that all the buildings were of brick construction, roofed with wood shingles. The main building facing the river was 300 feet long by 44 feet in depth. Behind this huge structure stood another one, referred to as the new wing, 100 feet deep by 42 feet wide, evidently at right angles to the first. In front of the main building a spacious yard was surrounded by high brick walls, along each of which were two sheds or covered walks, each 120 feet in length. These sheds were supported on iron columns and were to provide shelter for the pupils during recreation in inclement weather. At the entrance to the college, according to the report, were "two neat porter lodges". These two handsome small structures still stand, converted into shrines for meditation. Unfortunately the lower part of their wooden Doric columns rotted away and were replaced by clumsy brick pedestals. A few minor buildings, probably including a kitchen, completed the college group. In addition to these elegant buildings, there were, according to the 1842 report, "five fine brick dwelling houses, for the president and professors, two-story high, covered with shingles". It was then in contemplation to establish courses in civil engineering and architecture.

Unfortunately on March 6, 1842, fire broke out in the main

building of the college and the next day the Courier in New Orleans reported nothing was left except the bare walls.

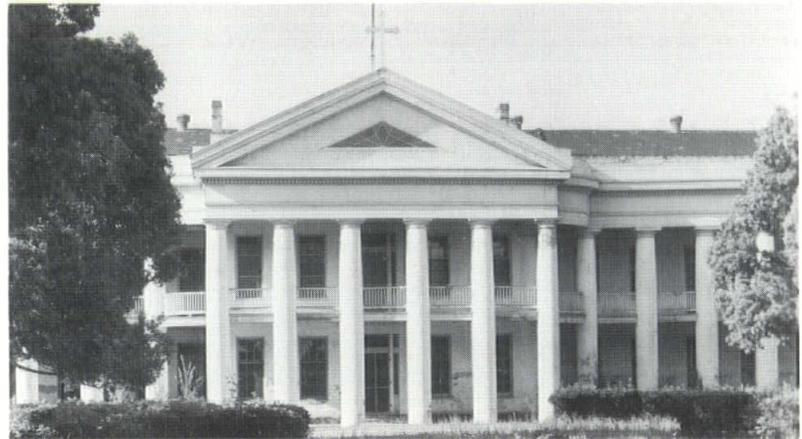
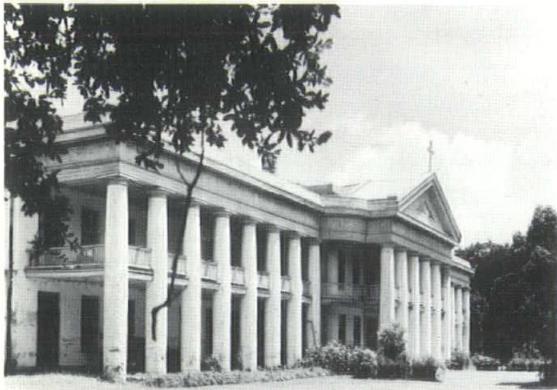
The main building was soon rebuilt, perhaps utilizing some of the bare walls that remained after the fire. This is the great colonnaded structure that stands today. No record has been found of the architect or builder responsible for the rebuilding, nor is mention made of Jefferson College in the journal of the House of Representatives for 1843. However, on March 25, 1844, W. B. Roberts, on behalf of a joint committee of the two houses of the legislature appointed to examine into the condition of Jefferson College, reported that there were then in the college "52 pupils of all ages from 10 to 19 years old . . ." Continuing, the report added:

"The college buildings are divided off into large and spacious rooms for study, recitation, dormitory, library, refectory, infirmary, etc. . . The hospital is kept in two of the lower rooms of a building separated about one hundred yards from the collegiate building and out of the way of all noise; there are a sufficient number of windows and openings to render it cool and comfortable in summer; the beds are neat and clean . . . The refectory is a large room in the back part of the collegiate building and is also kept in excellent order . . . The library is sufficiently large to contain many thousand volumes, but your committee regret to say, is now comparatively empty . . . The place where the students undergo solitary confinement during the day time as a punishment . . . may be called a prison. — This is a small building immediately in the rear of and detached from the main building, about forty yards distance, the upper story is divided by a narrow passage running the whole length of the building and on each side are situated the cells, nine in number . . . Your committee . . . would recommend the immediate suppression of this mode of punishment."

The report concludes with a lengthy financial study, pointing out that since the school's incorporation in 1831 Jefferson College state appropriations had amounted to \$223,447.74. No mention is made of the work done on the buildings destroyed in the 1842 fire but some were probably reconstructed



4. Professor's Residence, one of the original buildings of the 1830's.  
Photo by Richard Koch—circa 1935
5. Portico of Jefferson College.  
Photo by Richard Koch—circa 1935
6. Jefferson College; front colonnade and portico as rebuilt after 1842.  
Photo by Richard Koch—circa 1935



5

6

by 1843. The main building as it now stands is the result of that rebuilding, which accounts for the difference in its character from that of the surviving original structures of the 1830's. Some elements of its design, particularly the curved connections between the central portico and the flanking colonnades suggest the work of James Gallier, who employed a similar form in the residence he built in 1838 for Thomas Hale at Magazine and Felicity streets, long since destroyed.

The college never seemed to have fully recovered from the effects of the 1842 fire, although it continued in operation and in 1845 the trustees conferred an honorary LLD degree upon Henry Clay. On January 1, 1848, the college, with its land and buildings, was sold by the Sheriff of St. James Parish to the Citizens Bank. Over five years later, on September 5, 1853, before the New Orleans notary Adolphe Boudousquie, "Jefferson College, the land on which the said college and its dependencies is constructed, as well as the books, the cabinet of Physics and of Chemistry, the furniture and all the dependent movable objects and effects of the said college," its three by twenty-nine arpent site as well as the adjacent land on the lower side on which were constructed a shed, privies and cess pool, was sold by the bank to Professor Louis Dufau.

In 1852, Professor Dufau had advertised a new school to be known as Louisiana College, located on Dauphine street between Ursuline and Hospital. The school, of which he was principal, must have had a successful first year to induce the professor to purchase Jefferson College and transfer his school so far from New Orleans. Success apparently did not follow him and by the end of the academic year 1856-57 this new venture had failed and he was forced to retrocede the land and buildings to the Citizens Bank. Two years later, in May 1859, the college was purchased from the bank by Valcour Aime, represented in the sale by André B. Roman,

his brother-in-law, one of the original founders of Jefferson College.

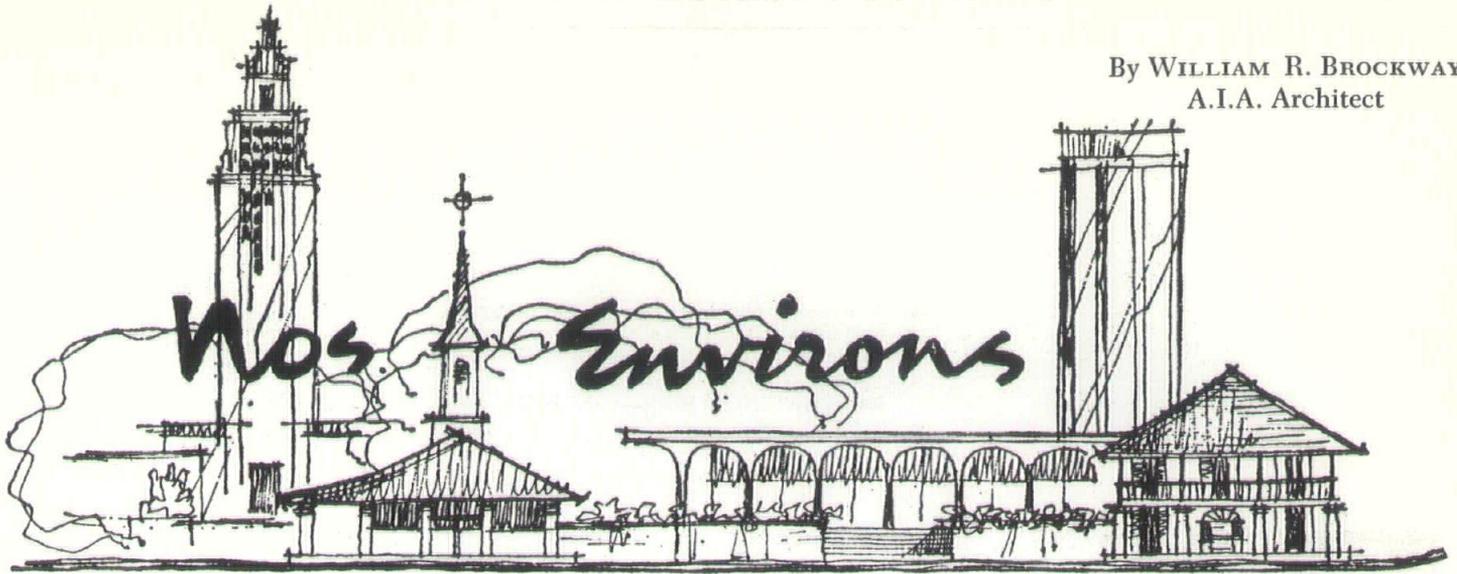
The college was then reorganized and renovated thoroughly.

With the coming of the Civil War, however, the college encountered further difficulties. According to Father Niehaus, "During the Civil War the directors of the corporation, under the influence of Valcour Aime, invited the Marist Fathers to operate the college. It remained in their hands until 1931 . . ."

During the years of Marist operation various improvements and changes took place. Perhaps the first of these was the erection of the handsome Gothic chapel which is said to have been built in 1865. It may have been designed by James Gallier, Jr., whose drawings for a somewhat similar, unidentified chapel are in a private collection. In 1911, on March 6, the cornerstone was laid for a new science hall. According to the Times Democrat this new building was "the beginning of efforts to expand Jefferson College into a Catholic University". The Times Democrat continued: "Andry and Bendernagel have drawn plans for several more buildings on the grounds, which may not all be erected in the next few years, but which will come gradually." The newspaper also reported that "Two handsome brick structures have gone up, one for the senior pupils and another for the juniors, providing reading rooms, libraries, billiard halls, play halls and society meeting rooms. A central heating plant has been installed and two dormitories have been renovated . . . The Alumni Hall, built by Archbishop Blenk when he was professor there, is fitted out now with opera seats".

Most of these buildings have since disappeared; the Science Hall has been converted into a dining hall, the main building and chapel renovated and a new library and dormitory constructed, Jules K. de la Vergne, AIA, now practicing in New Orleans, being the architect for the Jesuit's Manresa Retreat House for Men.

By WILLIAM R. BROCKWAY  
A.I.A. Architect



## Supermannerism—Super Joke?

Progressive architectural theorists, always ready to deny the existence of style as a causative in the development of good architectural design, are nevertheless, let it be whispered, sometimes just as affected by style as the rest of us. Which simply proves that all of us are human, whether we want to be or not.

The latest in-thing with wayout designers is what the trade publication, *Progressive Architecture*, refers to as Supermannerism, a blatant system of decorating otherwise sensible building forms in wild, bold patterns of paint, photographs, alphabetic symbols and anything else the designer can think of to expand on or otherwise alter or destroy the integrity of the original space.

Supermannerism, so called in reference to the period immediately following the Renaissance (mannerism) in which architects had the temerity to use traditional forms in what were then considered untraditional ways, has also been referred to, by various writers as Supergraphics, Hippie architecture, LSDesign, Mega-decoration and Campopop (after camp, op, and pop art).

Supermannerism, at least so far, has not extended itself into the area of designing total buildings, which is after all the architect's primary concern. Rather it is the imposition of strange and exotic decorative forms and patterns on existing buildings.

In Supermannerist manifestos, one word keeps cropping up, the newly

coined word, "lifestyle." Nobody seems to know exactly what this means, but it is the objective of the Supermannerists to express the "lifestyle" of the buildings' inhabitants.

Supermannerism seems to be a totally visual art, with the immediate objective of destroying with trompe-l'oeil any semblance of the original shape of the place. Thus we have rooms with three dimensional painted patterns running across floor, walls and ceiling, with no regard for the traditional boundaries of each. Another room is furnished with upholstered furniture which completely covers every square inch of the floor. You simply walk around, up and over hills and hummocks of foam padded floor—furniture and sit down where ever you want to, or can fit. Colored lights can be used to change the appearance of a space by taking advantage of contrasting interior colors and reflective walls have been used to repeat the patterns of the room on into infinity, ala clothing store mirrors.

Is this just another crazy fad? Perhaps a visual extension of student anti-establishment activities in other areas? I think not. Of course, some of the Supermannerists are in it just because it is the thing to do. But others are deadly serious. They are not saying to us that we must all live in houses with upside down rooms. What they are saying is that perhaps there are better ways of doing things and, as students, they are in a better position than anybody else to do the experimenting

necessary to discover new expressions. After all, the Baroque, one of the loveliest of all architectural periods (if somewhat schmaltzy), was developed by the Post-Renaissance Mannerists. Much of our present day painting, cinema and stagecraft is a direct outgrowth of the turn of the century Dadaists (nonsense school) and Fauves (wild beasts).

Already, Supermannerism has found some very practical applications in the work of some very substantial designers. The Quickborner Team, a German interior design group, has invented a system of office interiors which they refer to as "Office Landscape," in which curved partitions of varying heights, moveable furniture and lots of potted plants are used to subdivide large offices, in lieu of partitions. Two major installations have been in the new John Hancock and DuPont buildings in New York City. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, architects, have created, in their new Illinois State Bar Association Headquarters in Springfield, a Supermannerist atrium-lounge. A number of the smarter ships in New York and San Francisco are making use of Supergraphics as an effective public relations tool and to make up in style what they lack in floor space. The trend is continuing.

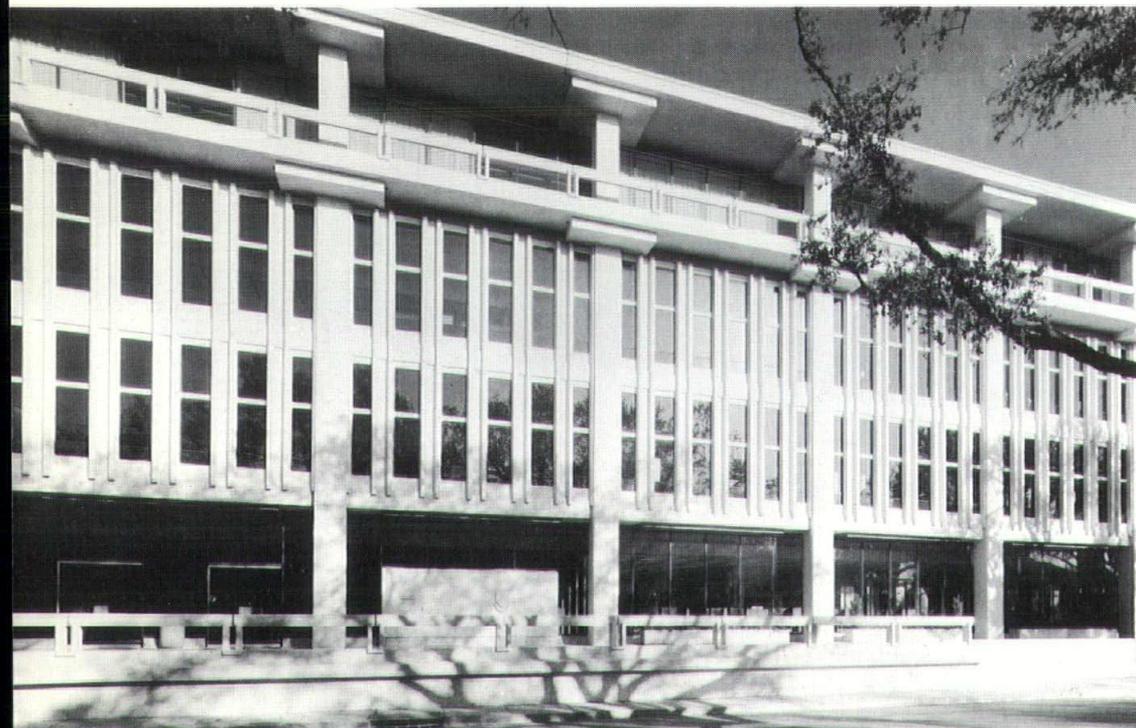
Where will this all lead? Nobody knows. Even the popular press has taken up the cry. In the May issue of *American Home* magazine there are articles on Supermannerist furniture and lifestyle. Maybe it's not so avant-garde after all.



Installers of Armstrong luminaire Ceilings—Tulane University Library

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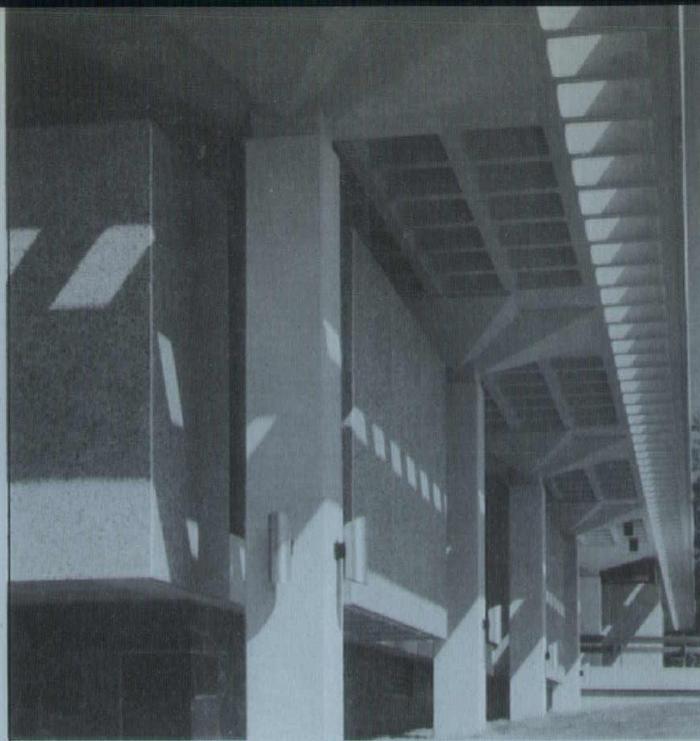
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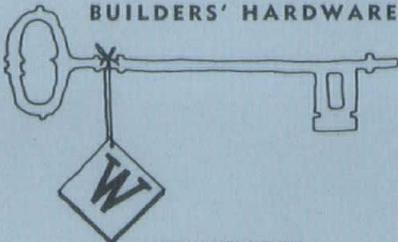
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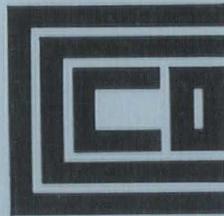
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