

THE NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
115 EAST 40th STREET • APRIL, 1941 • ALBERT G. CLAY, EDITOR

UT INFRA

In my sanctum one sunny afternoon, while basking in a semi-conscious but glorious state of being, a little, old and extremely dirty individual slithered into my somnolence. Weather-beaten, shiny, blue-serged and felt-hatted, he limped forward aided by a cane as disreputable as his unkempt self. By this time I thought I was fairly awake. A closely clipped mustache graced my slightly bald visitor's face. To my questioning look he introduced himself: "I am a Mr. G. T. Hamilton of South Jamesport, L. I., and have been sent to you by a Doctor Henry W. Manning."

In short, Dr. Manning was to be the Managing Owner of a hospital group for convalescents. Mr. Hamilton was an engineer-builder who had been asked to prepare sketches for this enterprise. Knowing his limitations, he thought the best procedure was to go to an architect, and so upon recommendation had come to me. Having done a few layouts for doctor friends and medicine being a hobby more or less, the fact that I did not know Dr. Manning personally made no impression.

Hamilton proceeded to tell me the requirements and entered into details most minutely, drawing a plot plan and a general arrangement of a plan group. It was evident from the intelligent disposition of the units with regard to orientation, interrelationship, economy, etc., that some thought had been given to this scheme.

He jotted down the various rooms required per floor, aided somewhat by my promptings where I thought his plan could be improved. A main building, convalescent cottages, internes' cottages, nurses' quarters, heating plant—all in a 3.5 acre landscaped terrain. Pennies from heaven!

Would I write Dr. Manning at 97 Midland Avenue, Mattituck, L. I., regarding his visit, and did I think I could take this commission? He had done the Babies' Hospital in town and several others and was conversant with this type of work.

We were getting along famously by this time. Suddenly the little man winced and asked if I could get him a glass of water. I could and did. I had visions of losing my commission then and there, but after a good five-minute rest he sat up and seemed to recover his strength.

Upon my anxious inquiry regarding his health he informed me that he had

APRIL MEETING

Time: Tuesday, April 29, 6:30 p.m.

Place: Architectural League

Subject: PRE-CONVENTION MEETING

As previously announced, the April Chapter meeting will be the pre-convention meeting for discussion and clarification of all issues to be put before the A.I.A. for consideration. Delegates must also be instructed how to vote on convention business. We will see a film "The Yosemite Valley" (the convention locale), which is presented by courtesy of the Southern Pacific Railroad over whose tracks much of the journey is to be made.

The Convention train starts from Chicago, Monday, May 12, which means leaving here on Sunday.

been in an auto accident that morning, coming in to town, at Artists' Lake on the Middle Road on Long Island. Knowing well the bad turn in the road at this point, I was interested, and he described how he was following a truck that had suddenly skidded on ice at the turn and blocked his road, resulting in a smash-up. He had just come from the hospital where his son was resting, badly bruised and under observation.

I remarked that he was in luck, upon which he said he thought so too, but that getting to the hospital and around town had used all the cash his son or he had and he wanted to get home as quickly as possible to rest, as the doctors said he should. Would I do him a favor and lend him \$1.56 to get his railway ticket with? I did.

Profuse thanks and a promise to repay me by the next day's mail. Upon my commenting on his courage to "carry the message to Garcia," he arose, declining my assistance, and shuffled out of the office—and my life.

I mentioned the above happenings to our President a short while afterwards, and he looked long and searchingly at me, finally remarking, "Ted, you make me mad as hell! Either you don't listen when I tell you things or you are a damn fool—I told you all about that old rascal last year, when he called for you one day when you were out and gypped me for two bucks.

J. T. H.

Note: This little man is still working the architects—the habitat and projects change. A.L.H., W.W.C., and E.C. were also honored. Any others?

—Ed.

PARTIAL SERVICES

Our professional attitude toward Partial Services for State and City was given a preliminary airing at the meeting following the Chapter lunch on March 25. The subject had been assigned for discussion at the special request of the Legislative Committee. President Frost called on Max Foley as Chairman of that Committee to present the subject. As an appropriate introduction Mr. Frost read an excerpt from the Board of Estimate calendar in which a contract with a private architect for supervision at 1% was referred to as the new policy of the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Foley said that for years bills have been introduced in the State Legislature and also in the council, all with the same purpose; i.e., to keep the architect in private practice from performing full services.

The attitude of the Chapter has always been a defensive one and up to now we have succeeded in preventing these bills from being passed. Since this legislation appears to be perennial we should now consider taking an offensive attitude and introduce counter legislation; or, recognize that this legislation is initiated by interested parties concerned with Government bureaus, accept the fact that bureaus are here to stay, and form some policy of working amicably with them.

Mr. Foley felt that our decision must be whether we want a whole loaf, half the loaf or no loaf at all. He reminded the Chapter that if we decide on either of the first two we will get nowhere unless we back up that decision with an active campaign, which will require money and effort.

He then called upon Lorimer Rich, also a member of our Legislative Committee, who presented the case for compromise. Mr. Rich set forth his subject in a paper which scored a new high for thoughtful and sincere development of a Chapter problem, delivered with the earnestness of real concern.

"Before 1933," said Mr. Rich, "Government work of major importance was designed in the offices of private architects. Now, with the exception of a few defense contracts, it is all handled by the bureaus.

"In 1933 the Government required speed to meet the unemployment situation, and efficiency and economy to meet budgetary requirements. The inability of many of the private archi-

texts who received the first contracts—particularly those architects outside the metropolitan areas—caused the Government to expand its own architectural bureaus. Under the policy of the present administration, draftsmen in the bureaus are offered steady employment and a security which the architect in private practice can not offer.

"It is wishful thinking," Mr. Rich continued, "to hope for a change in public policy. The bureau is here. We must be realistic and recognize the trend of the times and adjust ourselves to the economic and social changes which are taking place around us."

"A properly set-up system of Partial Service" is Mr. Rich's answer to the problem. Under such a system the private architect can study the problem in his own office, make the preliminary sketches and supervise the working drawings, while the routine carrying out of the work is left to the bureaus. The bureau assumes the responsibility of overhead, draftsmen's salaries, expenses of delays, etc. Thus the architect's creative urge as a designer is satisfied and the question of security and continuity of employment for the technician is solved.

Mr. Rich urged that the Chapter meet this situation by arranging round-table discussions with other architectural organizations, public authorities, and especially with the groups responsible for the legislation referred to by Mr. Foley. This would be an attempt to iron out all difficulties and arrive at some reasonable working program.

"No phase of architectural activity should be of more concern to us than public architecture," continued Mr. Rich. "Our public buildings, hospitals, schools and post offices throughout the city and state come to the close attention of all classes of people. An efficient and well-planned building which serves the purposes of the public causes the thoughtful to realize that good architecture is an asset."

The meeting was then thrown open to general discussion which was brief, owing to lack of time at a luncheon meeting. Mr. Litchfield said there is only one position we can take which is absolutely sound, and that is—how can we give the State and City Governments the very best architecture possible?

Mr. Clay arose to remind those present that Partial Services are not confined to government work and that architects are continually called upon by private clients to perform services which are in effect partial. He recalled that at a recent Chapter meeting \$4,000 of our funds was appropriated for the purpose of making the profession of greater service to the public,

and pointed out that government work is in effect our most important form of public service.

He felt that although we as individual practitioners are able to sell our clients only as much service as they will buy, it would be a mistake for the Chapter as a professional body to put itself on record as suggesting anything less than a complete job.

Mr. Clay suggested that in placing this question before the Chapter it would be interesting to ascertain the proportion of our membership who are personally interested in the architect's relation to government work, and who are willing to spend time and perhaps money in forwarding this interest. President Frost asked for a show of hands. Only 18 of the 51 members present signified interest!

Mr. Foley, in order to put the discussion into concrete form, proposed a resolution to the effect that the President of the Chapter be authorized to appoint a committee to consult with other organizations in the State and City, in an attempt to formulate a definite and unified policy toward this whole question.

This motion was made and carried after an amendment was accepted providing that the committee members first agree among themselves upon a working program, and that this program be approved by the Executive Committee before other architectural organizations and Government authorities are consulted.

President Frost has appointed as members of this committee the following: L. Andrew Reinhard, Chairman, Lorimer Rich, and William Gehron. Members who have a word to say on this subject should go direct to the committee-men.

STEP ONE

The outstanding firm of Baldwin, Munson and Mann, 10 Rockefeller Center, public relations counsel, has been engaged by the Chapter to make a thorough study of the question which is on the mind of every architect today—what is the future of the profession to be?

Hence the ills of our profession are about to be put under the microscope for professional diagnosis. This is the result of studies and numerous conferences held by our Profession and Society committee (the \$4000 Committee, so-called). This committee was created by the December meeting for the specific purpose of finding ways and means of making our profession of greater service to the public.

All available information, plus the list of Chapter members, has been put in the hands of this firm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The New York Building Congress will hold its 20th annual meeting on Wednesday, April 23, at the Hotel Commodore. George McAneny will speak on the developments in lower New York.

Also to be held at the Commodore is the New York Society of Professional Engineers' annual convention, May 8 to 10. This is planned as a joint meeting of architects and engineers for the purpose of discussing mutual problems, including the practices and ethics of our professions.

Frederick H. Zurmuhlen, President, expresses the hope that "such a get-together will bring about a better fellowship and understanding between our groups whose interests are so similar."

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On file in the Chapter office is information about coming examinations to fill architect positions in the Federal Government under the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Salaries range from \$2000 to \$4600 a year and applicants may qualify in design, specifications and estimating. Except for the junior grade, which requires completion of a 4-year architectural course, persons may substitute additional experience for all or part of the college work qualified.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CANDIDATES

The names of the following men have been presented:

For Institute Membership

1. Henry Boak
Sponsors { Harold R. Sleeper
Clarence S. Stein

2. Albert C. Schweizer
Sponsors { Edgar I. Williams
George A. Licht

For Associate Membership

1. Vincent Scott Fox
Sponsors { Richard S. McCaffery, Jr.
Lyle F. Boulware

GAINS

Adolph Knappe, readmitted
Ben John Small, transferred from Brooklyn Chapter

NEWLY ELECTED ASSOCIATES

Carl J. A. Carlson
Nembhard Nottingham Culin
Donald Dodge
Carl Feltz
Roscoe Monroe Hersey, Jr.
Daniel Paul Higgins, Jr.

LOSSES

By Resignation:
George Howe
Duncan Candler
By Transference to Chicago Chapter:
Col. Horatio B. Hackett
By Death:
William MacMurray, February 20
Arthur C. Jackson, April 6