

# TEXAS ARCHITECT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS

FOOTNOTES ON CONTROLLED FREEDOM

THE COMMERCIAL WOODS OF TEXAS

FORT BROWN MEMORIAL CENTER DESIGN

TSA BOARD OUTLINES PLANS FOR CONVENTION

**AUGUST**

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# INSIDE THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

Footnotes on "Lontrolled Freedom" — An Editorial	3
The Comfercial Woods of Texas	4
State Lumbermen's Group 66 Years Old	9
Fort Brown Memorial Center Design	6
T.S.A. Board Outlines Plans Far Convention	8
Advisory Board Aids Selection of New UT Architectural Head	10
Action Urged On Bill Allowing Tax Credit	10
T.S.A. Communique	12

## THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

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The American Institute of Architects

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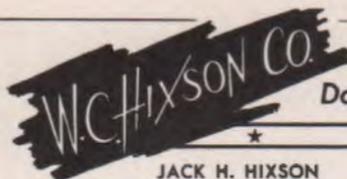
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**August 27**—Fort Worth Chapter, A.I.A. monthly meeting, Charles Restaurant.

**September 17-20**—American Hospital Association Convention, St. Louis, Missouri.

**October 14-15**—Texas Association of School Administrators, Austin, Texas.

**October 25-26**—12th Annual Convention of Texas Society of Architects, Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Texas.



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## FOOTNOTES OF "CONTROLLED FREEDOM"

### An Editorial

Before we penetrate the forest of building controls too far we should glance back at the receding panorama of the building freedoms we are leaving behind, lest we forget them. Surely we will want them again.

Granted that we must with prudence and good grace relinquish temporarily some of our building and other freedoms and submit to abnormal controls for the sake of national security and the cause of freedom throughout the world. Even so, we need not be naive about it. We cannot take for granted that the freedoms we are now relinquishing one by one will all be restored automatically when the cause of worldwide freedom has triumphed.

There is no evidence of emergency so compelling that we may not in all good patriotism occasionally lay aside the newest NPA Order long enough to reflect briefly on the history lessons we studied but may not have learned in school. It may be recalled that the study of history was primarily a study of the struggles of peoples for freedom. It may also be recalled that history tells of as many struggles of peoples for freedom under their own government's as for freedom from foreign domination.

When have we dutifully completed the latest N.P.A. form, you may reflect upon the historic fact that this country is unique among nations in its constitutional system of governmental checks and balances, which were contrived to protect the individual citizen from the inherent tendency of government toward tyranny. During the ensuing six weeks, while you are waiting for a ruling on the application, there will be time to wonder where on earth the American variety of individual freedom may be resurrected in the future if we lose it in this the only country on earth with good and sufficient means for maintaining and guarding it.

It is of the very essence of our present national freedom and strength that emergency controls have been recognized as necessary evils to be endured only when and so long as they were necessary and to be cast off without ceremony when they were not necessary. It is just as important now for us to guard against building controls becoming permanent as for us to cooperate wholeheartedly to make them work effectively while we must endure them.

Each of us should ask himself these questions about each new control regulation and, if he cannot answer them to his own satisfaction, he should ask his Congressman:

Is it necessary?

How long will it probably be necessary?

What is being done now to keep this emergency from becoming permanent?

Stayton Nunn, A.I.A.

# THE COMMERCIAL WOODS OF TEXAS

By MRS. E. S. (NELL) SCHROEDER

A plodding horse, furnishing the power for a tiny Nacogdoches sawmill back in 1825, turned out the pine board that launched the Texas lumber industry.

By 1860, the state's prolific forests had attracted enough capital and skilled workers to vault lumbering into the number one position in Texas industry, a rank seldom relinquished until 1920.

Despite the tremendous growth of the food, petroleum, chemical and machinery industries which now outrank it in some respects, lumbering holds firmly to a leading spot in the state's industrial make-up. To do this, the industry has depended heavily upon sensible reforestation policies, research, and the development of new enterprises and new products.

Timber extends generally over Texas, yielding only to prairie and desert areas where the rainfall is below a critical point. A timber belt of hardwoods and certain species of pine is found widely distributed over East Texas, and these and other southern forests supply 47% of the nation's pulpwood and 37% of its lumber.

## THE PINES

Commercially, and otherwise, the pines are probably the most important timber trees of the world. Their growth is evenly distributed over the face of the globe, with many

varieties growing rapidly in soil too poor to support other profitable cultivation. Qualities of strength, elasticity, and ease of working make it more adaptable to construction than any other wood.

The Yellow Pine is represented in Texas by two general groups: the Long and Short Leaf. Today, the Long Leaf and the Rosemary Pine are practically extinct in their virgin state. However, reforestation programs have accomplished much toward restoration.

The Short Leaf group consist of, the Short Leaf, Loblolly, and Cuban or Slash Pine. The Slash Pine is more preferred for construction use, and for reforestation due to its superiority in grain and texture, as well as rapidity in attaining merchantable size.

## THE HARDWOODS

The Hardwoods are well represented in Texas, but only those commonly known to commerce are discussed. The non-commercial group is larger and serves other forestry purposes.

Topping the list are the Oaks, a truly Royal family of 57 distinct species, surpassed in number only by the Hawthorns. And this does not include the hybrids.

Of the approximately 15 species known to Texas, many cannot be distinguished from the other after manufacture, except by experts. And experts have been heard to disagree.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

*Mrs. Nell Schroeder is the wife of Edgar S. Schroeder, president of Alexander Schroeder Lumber Company of Houston. She has been active in the lumber industry for over two decades as a member of the firm.*

*Frequent export and import business trips to South and Central America, as well as Europe, have given her unusual familiarity with the lumber industry from forest to customer, and a wide knowledge of both our native woods and of foreign commercial woods.*

The Hickories are well represented with its outstanding species, 'White Hickory,' though it is growing scarce here in Texas and elsewhere. Other members of this family contributing to industry's demand for heavy duty material are the Pignut, Mockernut, Bitternut and Pecan.

Also widely used are Walnut and Maple, though the texture of the Texas grown woods is softer and the color not so good as that growing farther North. From the heart of the Sweet Gum tree, Red Gum is manufactured. The sap portion goes to the trades as 'Sap' lumber. Included in this family are the Tupelo Gum and southern Black Gum, the latter actually belonging to the Dogwood family.

Other hardwoods, represented by one or more species, include: Ash, Cottonwood, Elm, Beech, Elder, Magnolia, Sycamore, Hackberry, Dogwood, Holly, Red or Aramatic Cedar, Persimmon, Willow, Yellow Cedar, Mulberry, and even Sassafras, Ironwood, Osage Orange, Locusts and Laurels.

Eliminating trees as a source for saw timber, or for their role in soil, water and wildlife conservation, it must be remembered that many bear fruits and nuts essential for medicinal purposes. All of this adds to their commercial value.

### THE CYPRESS

While not a hardwood, but highly desirable for use in the industrial field, the Bald Cypress is used only in rare cases solely for building purposes.

Like many of the hardwoods, Cypress is rapidly passing out of the picture. Due to the factor of slow growth, and loss of the required tolerance for survival, there is doubt if any reforestation program can restore this tree to its former place.

### RESEARCH IN CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION OF WOOD

Both state and private research in the conservation and utilization of wood are finding new uses for many species now being destroyed due to their supposed lack of commercial value. More state funds should be made available to push this program forward at a faster pace.

An outstanding example of research benefits are seen in Gum Wood, a lumber that was considered practically hopeless to work. Research discovered proper drying and manufacturing methods so that today Gum Wood is highly prized by furniture manufacturers and architects for interior trim and wall paneling.

The Mesquite is another highly maligned tree. Being supposedly without profitable or useful value, thousands of board feet are being allowed to go to ruin. Yet, the lumber is beautiful, if not of great size. Strip and block flooring is handsome and wears like iron. Furniture is beautiful and durable.

Finding profitable uses for this versatile tree and others supposedly without value remain one of the many jobs for technicians in wood research. Let us hope the opportunity is given before too late.

*Gulf-Seal*

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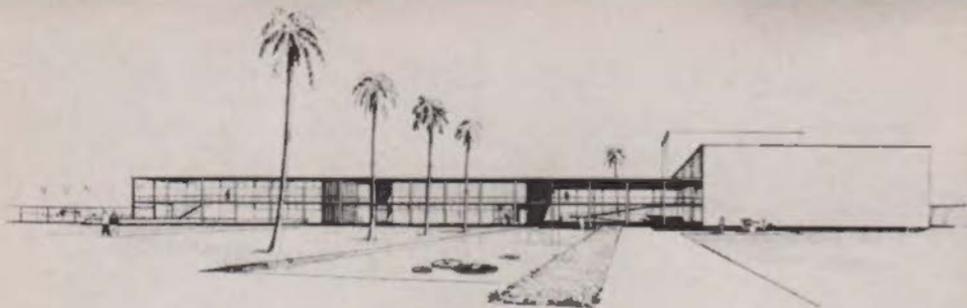
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## FORT BROWN MEMORIAL CENTER

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### FORT BROWN MEMORIAL CENTER DESIGN

A design reminiscent of the direct and straightforward simplicity of early buildings in historical old Brownsville, Texas has won the statewide design competition for the \$800,000 Fort Brown Memorial Center to be built in the border city.

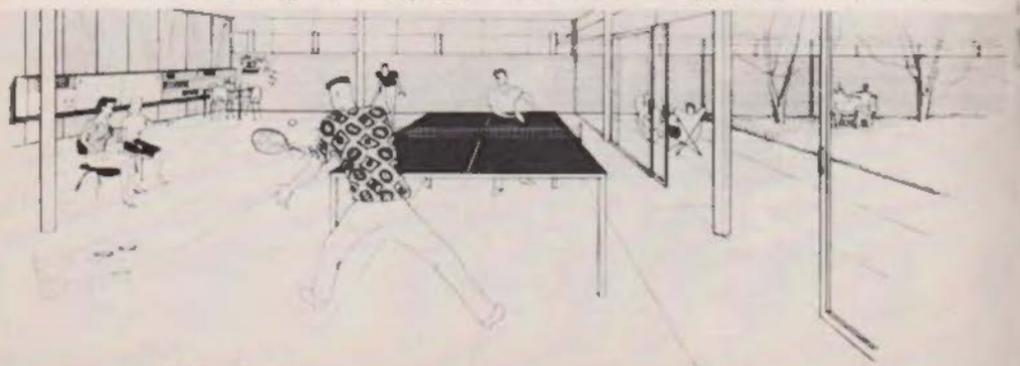
The entire competition, won by the Dallas architectural firm of Wiltshire & Fisher, has been cited by Ernest Langford of Bryan as an example of how satisfactorily such a competition can be used by cities or agencies contemplating new buildings. Langford was retained as professional adviser to the City Council of Brownsville, which sponsored the event.

The Jury of Awards, made up of TSA members Herbert Tatum, Dallas; Stayton Nunn, Houston; and Marvin Eickenraht, San Antonio; together with Mrs. George McGonigle, Jr., Brownsville; and Reynaldo Garza, Brownsville city councilman, praised the winning entry for following the sound, solid

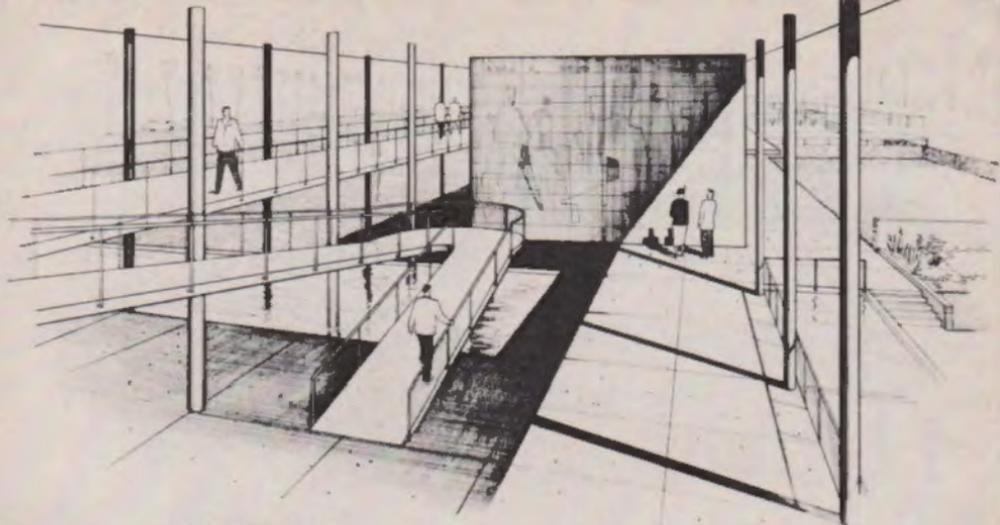
masses characteristic of early Brownsville buildings. Jury members felt that such details as two-story galleries recalled actual details used by the first Brownsville builders.

Other strong points in the winning design were the following: Providing sufficient means and areas for handling large crowds; separate heating and air-conditioning equipment locations, allowing for heating or cooling major elements of the Memorial Center without having to condition areas not in use; and ingenious designing of seating arrangements within the Jacob Brown Auditorium, a part of the Center to be used for such diverse purposes as exhibition games and stage presentations.

The problem called for a design reminiscent of Brownsville architecture of the past century, reflecting the history of Fort Brown, one of the nation's oldest military posts. Specifications were for a 3000-seat auditorium, a swimming pool, town hall, library,



ROBERT E. LEE  
YOUTH CENTER



MEMORIAL HALL

youth center, and women's center to be erected on property acquired from the U. S. Government by the City of Brownsville.

Used principally for public or civic works, design competitions afford a means of getting a variety of entries while safeguarding the interests of both the owner and competitors.

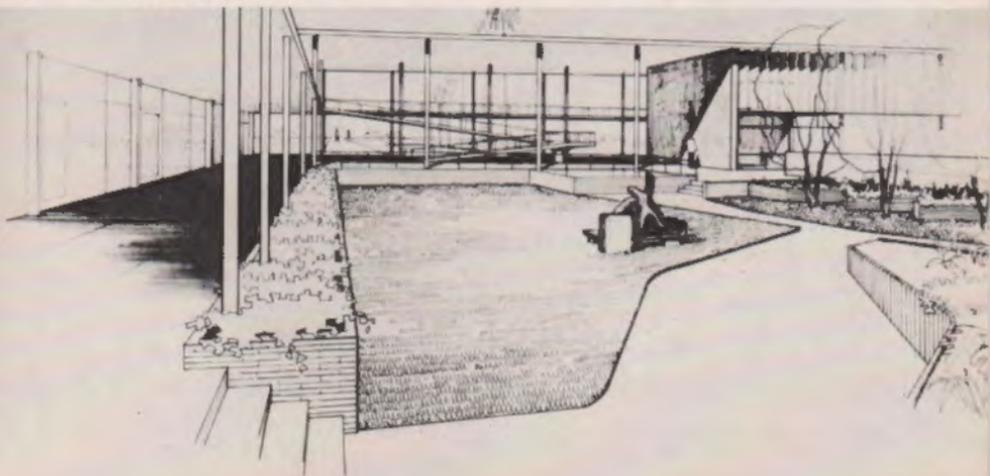
The first step in conducting such a competition is the appointment of a competent architect as professional adviser to the owner sponsoring the event. The adviser then sets up a program which will conform to the competition code of the American Institute of Architects, and allow a fair chance under uniform conditions for all entrants.

One of the professional adviser's principal duties is to assist the owner in the selection of a Jury of Awards, composed of at least three persons. A majority of the Jury should be architects.

Strict anonymity must be preserved in all stages of the contest, with entries identified only by number.

The owner must agree to employ as architect the author of the winning design.

Both the professional adviser and technical members of the Jury of Awards are generally paid according to the extent of their duties and responsibilities.



MEMORIAL COURT

## TSA BOARD OUTLINES PLANS FOR CONVENTION AND TEXAS ARCHITECT

Plans for improving the TEXAS ARCHITECT and approval of the committee assignments and the tentative program for the annual convention at San Antonio October 25-26 highlighted the quarterly meeting of the T.S.A. board of directors at Austin June 30.

Committee reports follow:

**TEXAS ARCHITECT:** David C. Baer, chairman of the Publication Board, reported that changes in format are being made to improve the publication and make the magazine self-supporting. T.S.A. members are loaning funds to finance current operations and relieve the T.S.A. treasury of providing capital necessary for the new magazine, designated the main T.S.A. public relations effort for 1951.

**CONVENTION:** Grayson Gill, chairman of the Seminar Committee, received approval of his committee nominees. Bartlett Cocks, co-chairman of the general convention, outlined the tentative convention program. Arrangements for reservations have been made at the following hotels in San Antonio: Menger Hotel, 100 rooms (Oct. 24, 25, 26); Plaza Hotel, 50 rooms; St. Anthony Hotel, 15 rooms (Oct. 25-26).

**LEGISLATURE:** Max Brooks, chairman, stated revision of the State Board of Architectural Examiners from three to six members had been achieved. Recommendation by President Phelps for new appointees, based on geographical location, have been made to the Governor.

**SCHOOL PLANT STUDY:** Herbert Voelcker, chairman, reported excellent cooperation from the Texas Education Agency on the joint committee now studying policies and regulations pertaining to school plant facilities.

**STATEWIDE FEE SCHEDULE:** Albert Goleman, chairman, said complimentary letters have been received from over the nation on the Statewide Fee Schedules published by the T.S.A. Consulting engineers are now preparing a pamphlet of recommended fees and standards of practice for consulting work, stimulated by the success of the T.S.A. Schedules.

**CAPITOL PLAN:** Karl Komrath, chairman, indicated by letter that a Bill will be introduced at the next regular Legislative session creating a Commission to make an impartial survey of the long range expansion possibilities.

(Continued on Page 12)



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## STATE LUMBERMEN'S GROUP 66 YEARS OLD

As much a part of the construction industry and of Texas lumbering as the woods themselves is the Lumbermen's Association of Texas, which for 66 years has been a guiding hand and loyal servant to the more than 1,500 retail lumber yards that comprise the Association's membership.

Under the leadership of officers elected annually, now headed by President W. B. Milstead of Houston, the Association carries on a continuing program to raise the standards of the industry, and promote closer cooperation with other fields of construction. Responsible for a large portion of the work is Executive Vice-President Gene Ebersole who maintains executive offices in Houston, where they have been located for 41 years at the Western end of a 13-state pine belt.

A point of pride is the Association's educational program for members and their staffs. These include 30-day retail training courses held twice a year at S.M.U. with instructors from various phases of lumbering and related fields, and a four-year Marketing course developed at A. & M. College, combining Business Administration, technical training and supervised work in the industry. Correspondence courses with similar subjects also are offered.

### Producers' Council Elects

New officers of the Houston and Dallas Producers' Council Chapters, elected recently are:

**HOUSTON:** Creighton Pickett, president; A. A. Sterling, Jr., vice-president; Earl Dragics; secretary; and George Rummel, treasurer.

**DALLAS:** Horace Butler, president; M. B. Vifquain, vice-president; C. H. Peters, secretary; and Harry Roberts, treasurer.

### In Memoriam

The Texas Society of Architects extends its sincerest condolences to the family and friends in the death of Kai J. Leffland, Victoria member of the San Antonio Chapter, A.I.A.

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## ADVISORY BOARD AIDS SELECTION OF NEW UT ARCHITECTURAL HEAD

A five-man T.S.A. advisory committee has collaborated with a faculty selection group at the University of Texas in naming Harwell Hamilton Harris, 47-year-old practicing Los Angeles architect with a long and successful teaching career, director of Texas University's School of Architecture.

Harris takes over September 1 as head of the UT School of Architecture, now an independent unit of the university.

Educated at Pomona College in Claremont, Cal., the new director continued his architectural studies at Los Angeles schools which included the Otis Art Institute, Frank Wiggins College, the Art Students' League, the Los Angeles Trade School, and the Los Angeles School of Architecture and Engineering.

Harris collaborated with Richard Neutra of Los Angeles from 1930-33, and maintained his own practice from 1934-43 and from 1945-51. His teaching experience includes appointments at the Chownard Art

Institute and the Art Center School, Los Angeles; the University of Southern California, and U.C.L.A., plus special courses at Columbia and Yale.

Harris won first prize for 1-A residences in the Pittsburg Plate Glass competitions of both 1937 and 1938. He received honorable mention in the House Beautiful competitions of 1934 and 1936 and was given the honor award of the Southern California chapter of the A.I.A. in 1938.

The author of both technical and non-technical articles which have appeared in leading magazines over the world, Harris has also held numerous exhibitions, including showings of his work at the Museum of Modern Art in 1943 and 1944.

Members of the T.S.A. advisory committee who aided in his selection for the Austin post were Tom Broad, Dallas, chairman; Bartlett Cocke, San Antonio; Karl Kamrath, Houston; Ed L. Wilson, Fort Worth, and Herb Tatum, Dallas.

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# AN OPEN LETTER TO ARCHITECTS

## SUBJECT: 3/16 INCH THICKNESS VS. 1/8 INCH THICKNESS ASPHALT TILE FLOORS

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The thickness of 3/16 inch asphalt tile is 50% greater than 1/8 inch, and theoretically it should last at least 50% longer. However, it will be found in actual use that in most instances where asphalt tile is worn down to a thickness of approximately 1/16 inch that it starts to give trouble because of not having sufficient strength to stand up under traffic. Therefore, a simple calculation will show that 3/16 inch tile will have twice the effective life of 1/8 inch tile.

Although 3/16 inch tile is priced at 50% more than 1/8 inch tile, its cost of labor for installation per square foot is practically the same as the 1/8 inch. This combination of longer wear and with the same cost of labor for installation would indicate a saving to the owner of the floor over the number of years in which it is used.

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## TSA BOARD OUTLINES

(Continued from Page 8)

**EDUCATION:** Herbert Tatum, chairman, stated all architectural colleges in Texas have been visited, except A. G. M. The visit had to be cancelled, but will be made in the early fall. Reports by each member of the visiting teams, and schools visited will be compiled in the final report.

**INSURANCE:** Harry D. Payne, chairman, reported by letter that while the new T.S.A. Group Hospitalization Plan has been well accepted, additional enrollers are needed to put the overall plan into statewide effect.

President Raymond Phelps requested outline reports from all Chairmen by September 1, for inclusion in the final report for the pre-convention board meeting, October 24.

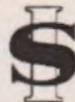
Attending the meeting were: **OFFICERS:** Phelps, Tatum, Richard Vander Straten. **DIRECTORS:** Lee R. Buttrill, Marvin Eickenroht, Fred Mackie, Zeb Rike, Edward L. Wilson (Regional A.I.A.), and Thomas D. Broad (past Regional A.I.A.) **COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:** Boer, Brooks, Cocke, Gill, Galeman and Voelcker.

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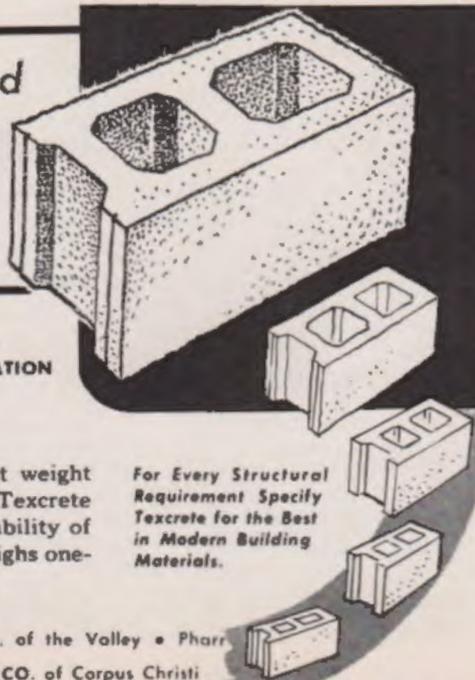
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