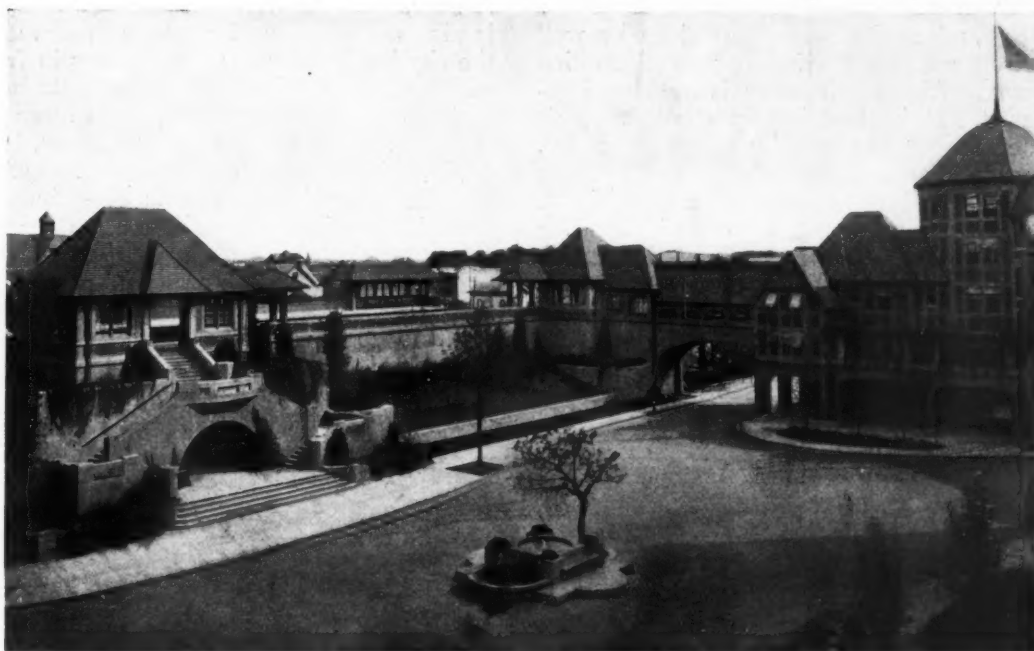


THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1912

No. 1923



STATION SQUARE, FOREST HILLS GARDENS
MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, ARCHITECT

FOREST HILLS GARDENS

By SAMUEL HOWE



THE earnestness of the architectural appeal and its part in the social and industrial uplift, which has taken vigorous hold of things in New York during the last few years, is well and practically shown in that section of the Seven Great Foundations which is dedicated to the memory of Mr. Russell Sage. Forest Hills Gardens will forever be a practical tribute to the generosity of the founder a splendid opportunity, admirably availed, to the architect-in-chief, Mr. Grosvenor Atterbury, and the

men associated with him in certain features of this important work.

These men are Mr. John A. Tompkins, Mr. Stowe Phelps, Mr. Wilson Eyre, Messrs. Albro & Lindeberg and Mr. Aymar Embury II. Mr. Frederick Law Olmstead originated the landscape design.

It is the plan that naturally first invites attention. In various forms the general scheme has been outlined and published. On the walls of the Architectural League it held a prominent place, and from the car windows as the suburb is approached from the city a fair conception of the roadways and general accent can readily be discerned, and the firm grasps of the requirements

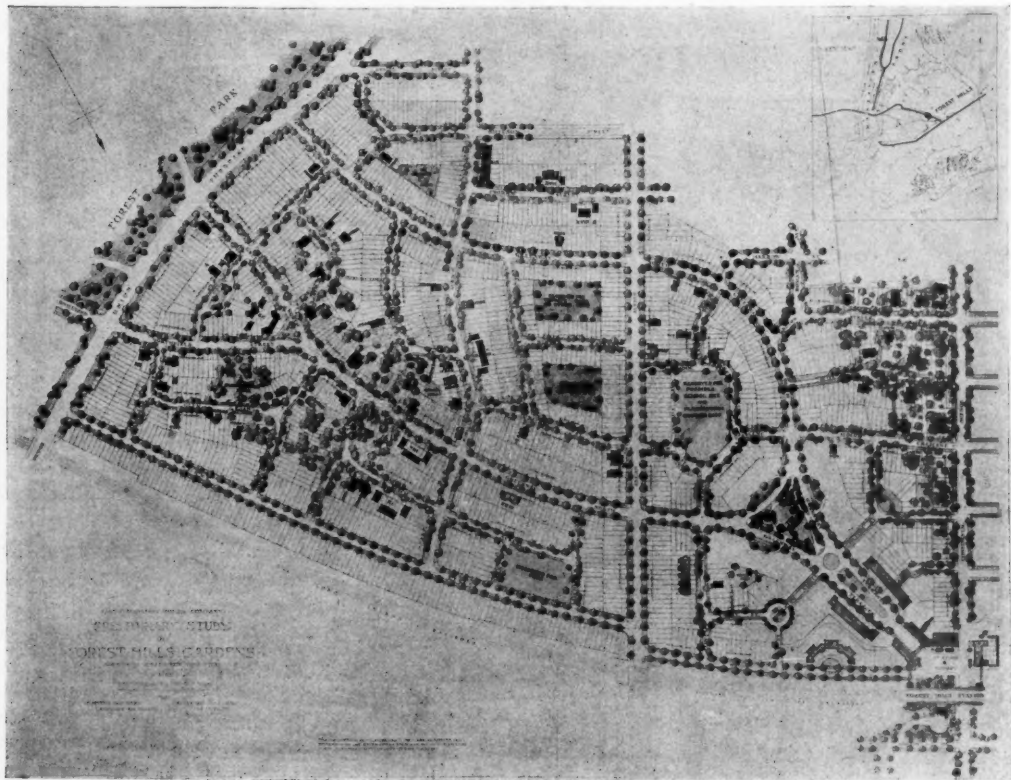
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understood. The tower is the central motive, and from it the roads radiate. There is about them a certain suggestion of the English village. The roads are easy of grade, free from sharp corners. The main one is logical and serious, liberal in its inches and decided in its direction. It is an academic road and in a way formal, striking as it does into the center of the estate and flanked on either sides by well devised terraces leading to a well studied climax. About this there is nothing haphazard. It is thoughtfully studied. This general artery is varied by wide open space, "greens" common to the enjoyment of the villagers and a welcome note to visitors. Upon it the groups of houses will front.

Much could be written about the groups of houses, for they speak eloquently for the human appeal and the thousand and one underlying qualities which go to make up the house plan. Take, for instance, the ten seventeen-foot single family dwell-

ings. There is an individuality about each of them. They are designed to encourage life out of doors. There are loggias and balconies and dormers; the whole length is divided and subdivided by gables and the skyline made interesting by naïve treatment of chimney caps. Group VI of nine twenty-six-foot family dwellings, which mark, as it were, the boundaries to the main artery, is also worthy of notice. The grouping of the skyline is unusual; the gardens in front with their fenced line, their arched entrances, their diversified design show keen attention to detail. The detached single house, I. F. 52, is an interesting development of a corner lot, the ground of which is diversified so that it required terracing. The groups XI and XIII, single family houses wherein two are set back in the road and two others kept forward so as to form as it were a central court, secure privacy and form a distinctly individual possession. This court is subdivided into gardens, each having



THE PRELIMINARY STUDY

MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, ARCHITECT

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BIRD'S-EYE VIEW FROM TOWER IN STATION SQUARE

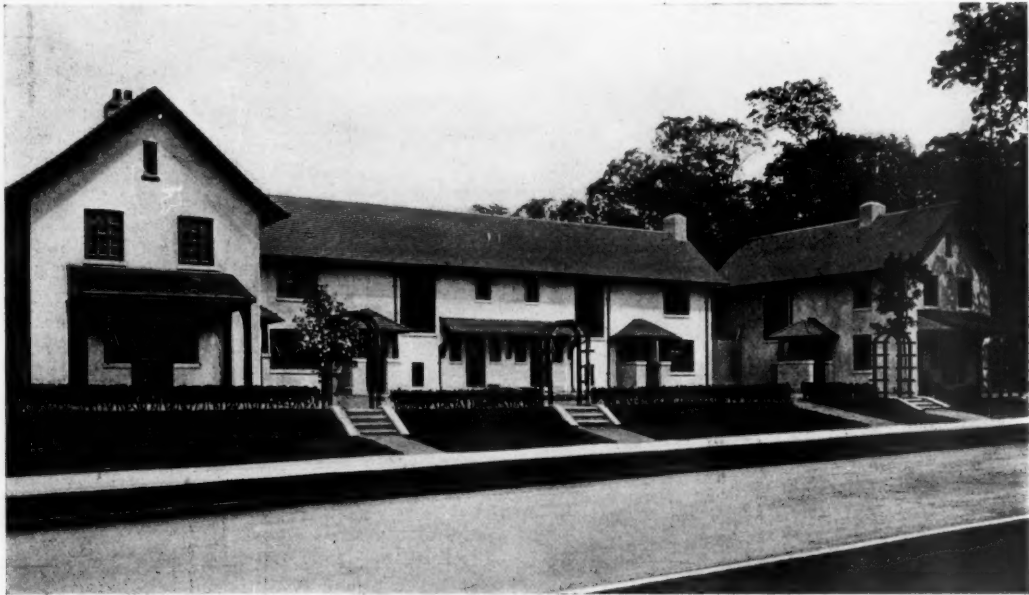
its own entrance, arched and planted.

One scheme marked as Block 23 provides for sixteen individual lots, the houses of which are to face the roads and a central court which it is proposed to divide into a play lawn, tennis court, croquet lawn and garden plots. For a number of years this open court is to remain for the enjoyment of the property owners. Should they, however, fail to purchase it collectively, a road will be cut through it and other houses built.

The tower to the administration building and hotel, the architectural accent which rises above the flat landscape, screening and foiling the long railroad embankment, has received well-studied attention. It is frank and open in its structure, and is intensely modern and vital. About it is an element of repose. It is intended for all-year-round guests, and is crowned with an octangular dome of red tiling, forming the dominant color note, which finds an echo in the roofing to every house of the suburb. The court presents many of the characteristics of a college or cathedral city with its cloister-like passageway connecting the stores and forming one frontage running

parallel to the railroad. The arching from one section of the building to the other also does much to help in the illusion, as it ties the building together and gives a sense of mass and scale. The center of the court is accented by a fountain. The view from the balconies of the second floor, the arrangement of the rooms, ingenious devices for giving individual treatment and satisfying the most capricious guest, set a new standard for a hostelry. This building is not simply an architectural construction to which certain ornamental enrichments have been added, for everywhere lingers the testimony of human and unusual contrivances for the enjoyment and the daily life of the guest. It is not simply the haphazard grouping of rooms, entrances and exits, but combines with those practical details that are insistently required in the modern hotel the added and most desirable touch of good architectural design. The insertion of bright, color bearing pebbles, spar, quartz, crushed particles of mica, bearing stone into the gray concrete gives variety and color, and lends a cheerful element to the architecture.

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GROUP XIII OF FOUR HOUSES
MR. WILSON EYRE, ARCHITECT



DETACHED HOUSES (I. F.-52)
MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY AND MR. JOHN A. TOMPKINS, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS
FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK

DEMOLITION OF A TOWER BY EXPLOSIVES

OWING to projected alterations on the property of the Port Talbot Railway and Docks Company, according to a writer in *The Builder*, of London, it recently became necessary to undertake the demolition of a power-house, together with brick-built hydraulic accumulator tower fifty-six feet high by seventeen feet square, the walls averaging two feet three inches thick. Some large blocks of concrete, formed as foundations for boilers, engines and machinery, had also to be removed.

Having regard to the proximity of the docks, it was necessary that operations should be conducted with the greatest possible care, and, as all the structures were of considerable thickness and built of concrete made with a view to permanent durability and strength, the work of removing them was one of considerable difficulty.

For the purpose of razing the accumulator tower the walls were drilled horizontally near the base along three sides. The holes were one foot nine inches deep, and were charged with ammonal explosive, four-ounce and six-ounce shots being employed on two opposite sides and eight-



AN EXAMPLE IN GROUP BUILDING (XI)
FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK
MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, ARCHITECT

ounce shots on the third or falling side.

The total quantity of ammonal required to bring down this tower, the weight of which was fully 600 tons, was only eight and one-half pounds, a fact illustrating forcibly the extraordinary power of modern explosives.

All the charges were connected by the means of Cordeau cable passing around three sides of the tower and finished at the ends by electric detonator fuses coupled together and placed in connection with an electric battery.

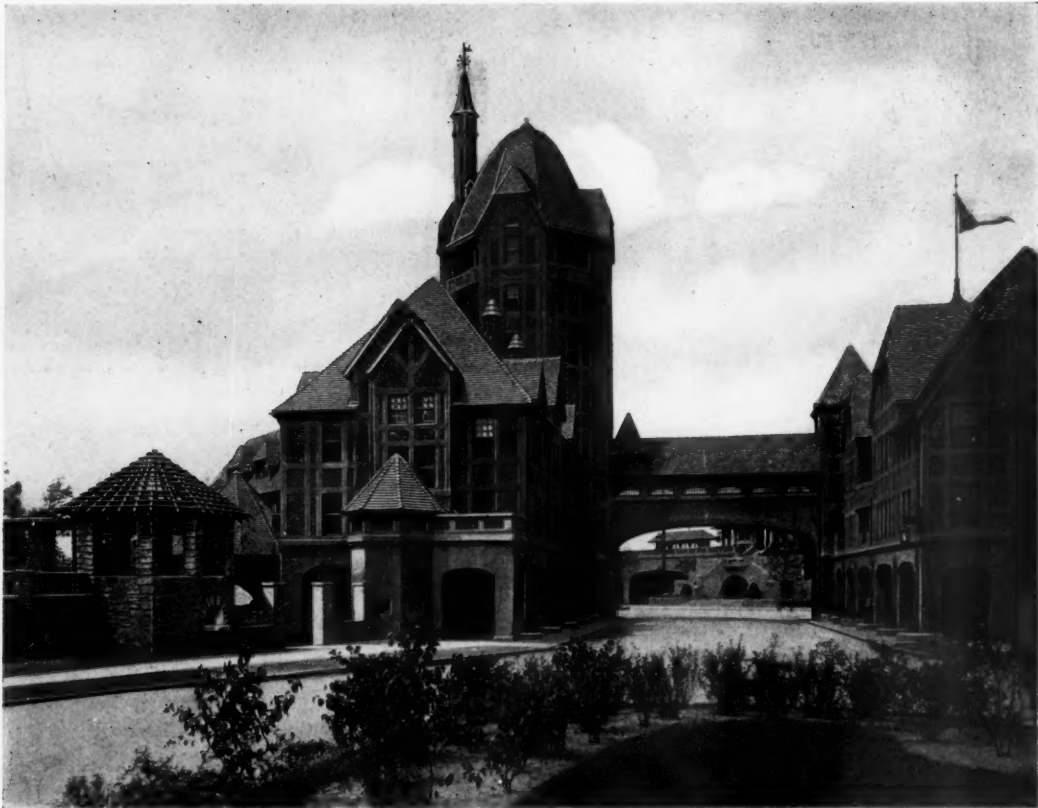
In order to obviate the risk of flying debris railway sleepers were stacked around the base of the tower, a device that proved quite efficacious after the firing of the charges.

The power-house walls also were demolished by blasting, the charges being fired by the Cordeau detonator.

A few days after the first series of operations the massive foundation blocks previously mentioned were destroyed in a similar manner. In every case the concrete was broken up into fragments of size convenient for removal from the site. The operations were conducted throughout without any misadventure or injury to property and to the entire satisfaction of the company.



ANOTHER VIEW OF GROUP XI



STATION SQUARE, LOOKING FROM VILLAGE GREEN
FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK
MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, ARCHITECT

WERE THE GREEK TEMPLES PAINTED?

IN the course of a lecture on "Grecian Architecture," delivered by Professor W. A. Scott, A.R.I.B.A., before the Society of Architects, England, Professor Scott, with reference to the contention often advanced that early Greek temples were painted, the natural surface of the exposed stone being covered by pigments, stated:—

"We are told that the Greek temples were painted, that the beautiful white marble (or I should call it ivory-colored marble, as it now is), was covered with paint in blues and reds. Only those who have visited Greece, and have had opportunities of carefully examining the remains, can have any correct ideas on this matter. I do not think that designers and masters of refinement, such as the Greeks admittedly

were, would call to their aid color applied, as distinguished from the legitimate color of the materials in which they worked. It may be that there were periods of decadence in Greece, just as there are in our own times, and that some leader of the fashions in architecture was turned loose upon the temple, and that he did spread his paint. Can you imagine a building of the undoubted and admitted beauty of the Parthenon covered all over with paint? I do not force this view, which is a personal one, and I may be wrong. The existing lacunaria (otherwise the flat slabs of marble which formed the ceiling) of the peristyle of the Theseum still retain some of their original colouring. The metopes and frieze of the cella were sculptured, and both pediments were ornamented with sculpture, but none of the sculpture in the pediments remains."

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THE SAGE FOUNDATION AT FOREST HILLS

FOREST Hills Gardens, illustrated in this issue, is not, as many people have inferred, an endowed neighborhood where buildings have been erected to house working people, but a business investment of the Russell Sage Foundation. It is in no sense managed as a charity, for whoever deals with it is expected to pay fair value for everything received. It may be stated to be an attempt to solve the housing problem for persons of modest means and its development will be watched with interest as perhaps the first example in America where a barren site has been treated along the lines of modern methods of Town Planning.

The general layout of the property can be determined from the bird's-eye-view and ground plan. With reference to its plan, Mr. Frederick Law Olmstead, the landscape architect, who is a member of the Development Committee, and who evolved this plan, has stated:

"In laying out Forest Hills Gardens there has been an attempt to secure the full benefit resulting from three important principles in city planning, the advantages of which are coming to be more and more clearly recognized as part of the rapidly advancing expert knowledge of the subject.

"One of these principles relates to the main thoroughfares, which should be direct,

ample and convenient, no matter how they cut the land. Two eighty-foot streets are carried straight through the property, in accordance with the city's tentative street plan covering adjacent territory. A boulevard 125 feet wide, also coinciding with the city's tentative street plan, is provided along the line where the property fronts on Forest Park. In addition, two avenues seventy feet wide, with ample set-back of buildings, radiate from Station Square on direct but gently curving lines, so located as to secure the best grades and the most agreeable setting, through the middle of the property to the entrance of Forest Park and to the boulevard which is to follow its easterly boundary. These two important lines would be wholly unprovided for under the usual rectangular layout of New York streets and blocks. Other streets secondary to the above in importance are sixty feet in width; they also have set-backs for buildings, and follow lines which are direct but carefully related to the topography and connect with the adjacent street layout of the city's tentative plan.

"A second principle, which is very important to supplement the first, but which has been too generally ignored in American street layouts, is that those streets which are not needed as purposes of quiet, attractive residence streets in the best possible manner. To this end the local streets at Forest Hills Gardens are laid out so as to discourage their use as thoroughfares. While not fantastically crooked, they are never perfectly straight for long stretches; and their roadways, well paved with bituminous macadam, are made narrow, thus permitting additional space to be devoted to the planting spaces and the front gardens which will be one of the characteristic features of the whole development.

"A third principle that has controlled the design of Forest Hills Gardens is the deliberate setting apart of certain areas for the common use and enjoyment of the residents. The fortunate location of the tract on the very borders of Forest Park has of course made it wholly needless to provide any large park within the tract itself, but in spite of this advantage a public green has been formed at the point where the two main avenues divide, within

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view of the station and central to that part of the property which is farthest from Forest Park. This will form the residential focus of the community just as the neighboring Station Square will be its business focus.

"In addition to the green, two spaces in other parts of the tract, one containing about an acre and a half, the other a little less than an acre, have been set apart to form small parks for the use of the residents."

Mr. Grosvenor Atterbury, the architect, has, we believe, grasped with artistic perception the opportunity afforded for the novel use of material and the origination of ingenious methods of construction. While much of the land comprised in the tract will be sold without buildings, the present buildings have been designed and erected to set a standard to future owners, whose activities will be restricted so that no jarring note may disturb the present harmonious and coherent ensemble.

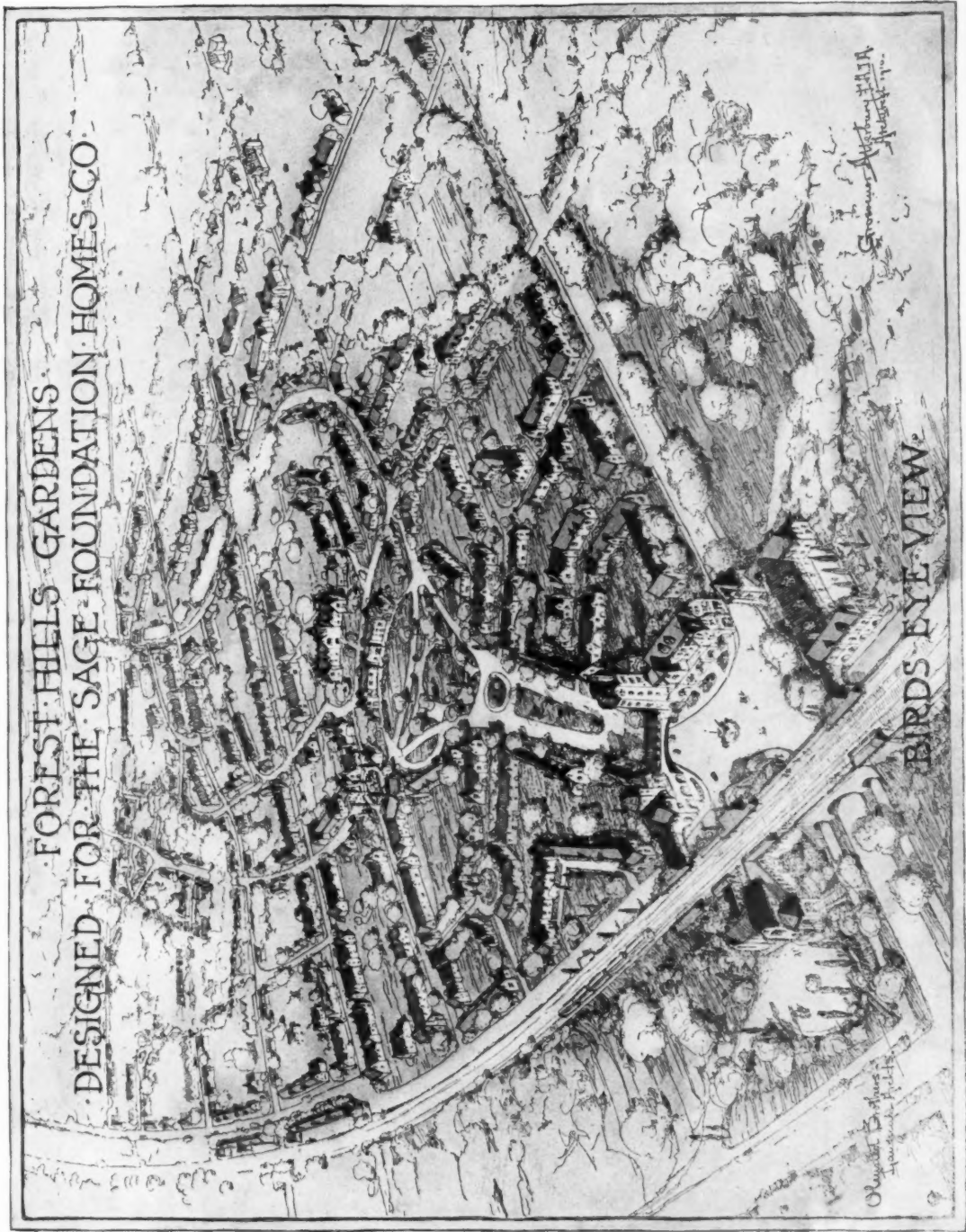
The exterior materials used in construction are brick and cement. Their artistic possibilities when handled with restraint

are admirably shown in the various illustrations in this issue.

The whole subject of this new town becomes one of Town Planning. It is perhaps more nearly typical of what may be regarded as the future American town than appears at first glance. And, while it no doubt represents the adoption and application of all the solutions of certain problems of plan and design, that have been urged to-day as to the relative placing of buildings and the recognition of the details of a daily communal life, so rapidly do we advance, so ruthlessly do we root up and discard the comparatively new for the "newest" idea, that we may look to see in the future development of this scheme the incorporation of many ideas that are not considered or, perhaps, even dreamed of, in the present development. It is, however, we believe, safe to assume that the foresight and careful consideration that characterizes the present state of this town will be continued in its extensions, and that it will remain as it is now, a very interesting and instructive example of modern town planning.



A DETACHED SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE (L. F.-50)
FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK
MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, ARCHITECT





VIEW SHOWING INN, WITH CONNECTING BRIDGE AND TOWER IN CENTER

FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK

MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, ARCHITECT



THE RAILWAY STATION AND FOUNTAIN IN STATION SQUARE

FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK

MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, ARCHITECT



STATION SQUARE, LOOKING FROM HOFFMANN BOULEVARD



STORES AND APARTMENTS IN STATION SQUARE

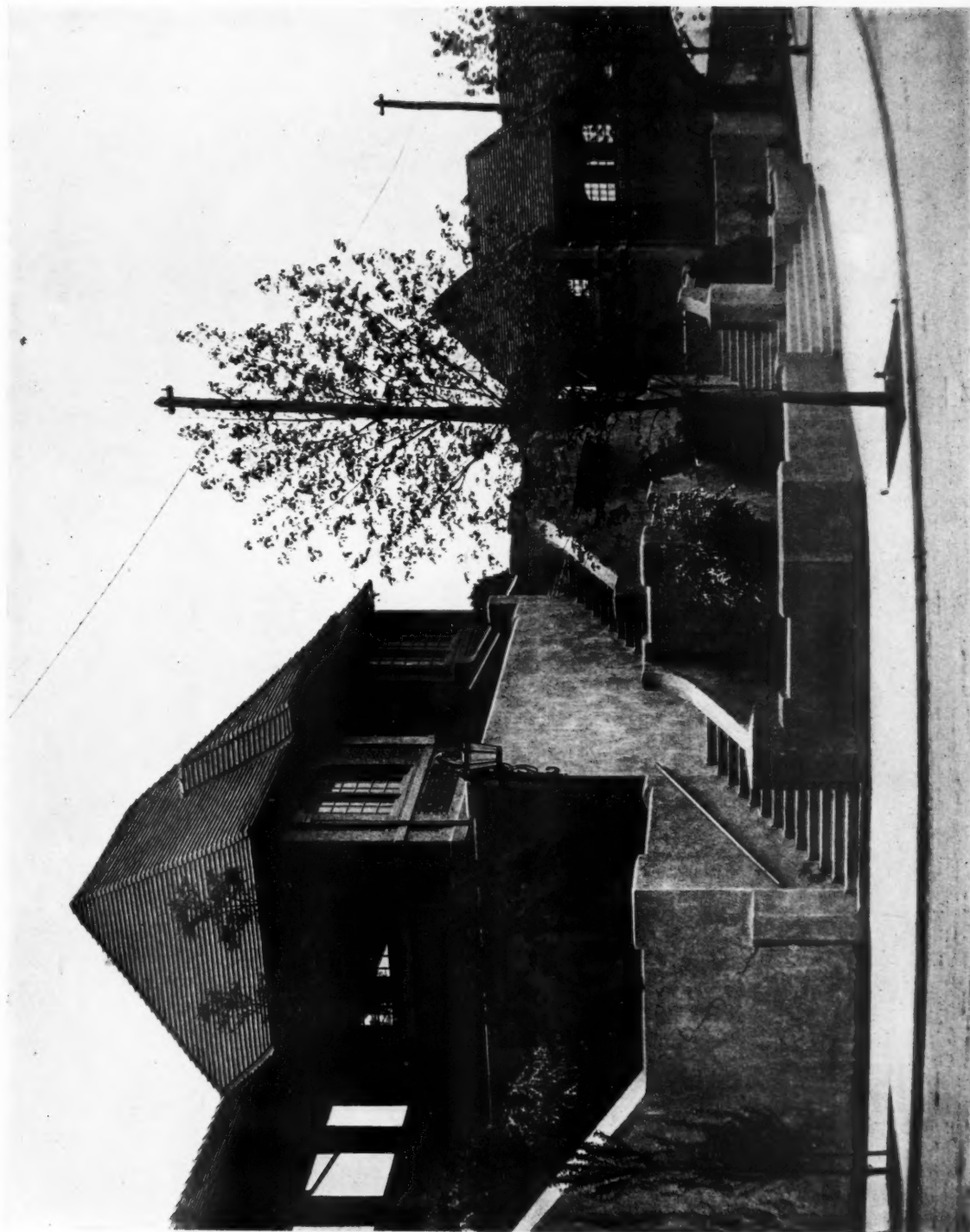
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THE INN, STATION SQUARE

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THE RAILWAY STATION

FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK
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TEA GARDEN WALL AND ADJACENT HOUSES

FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK

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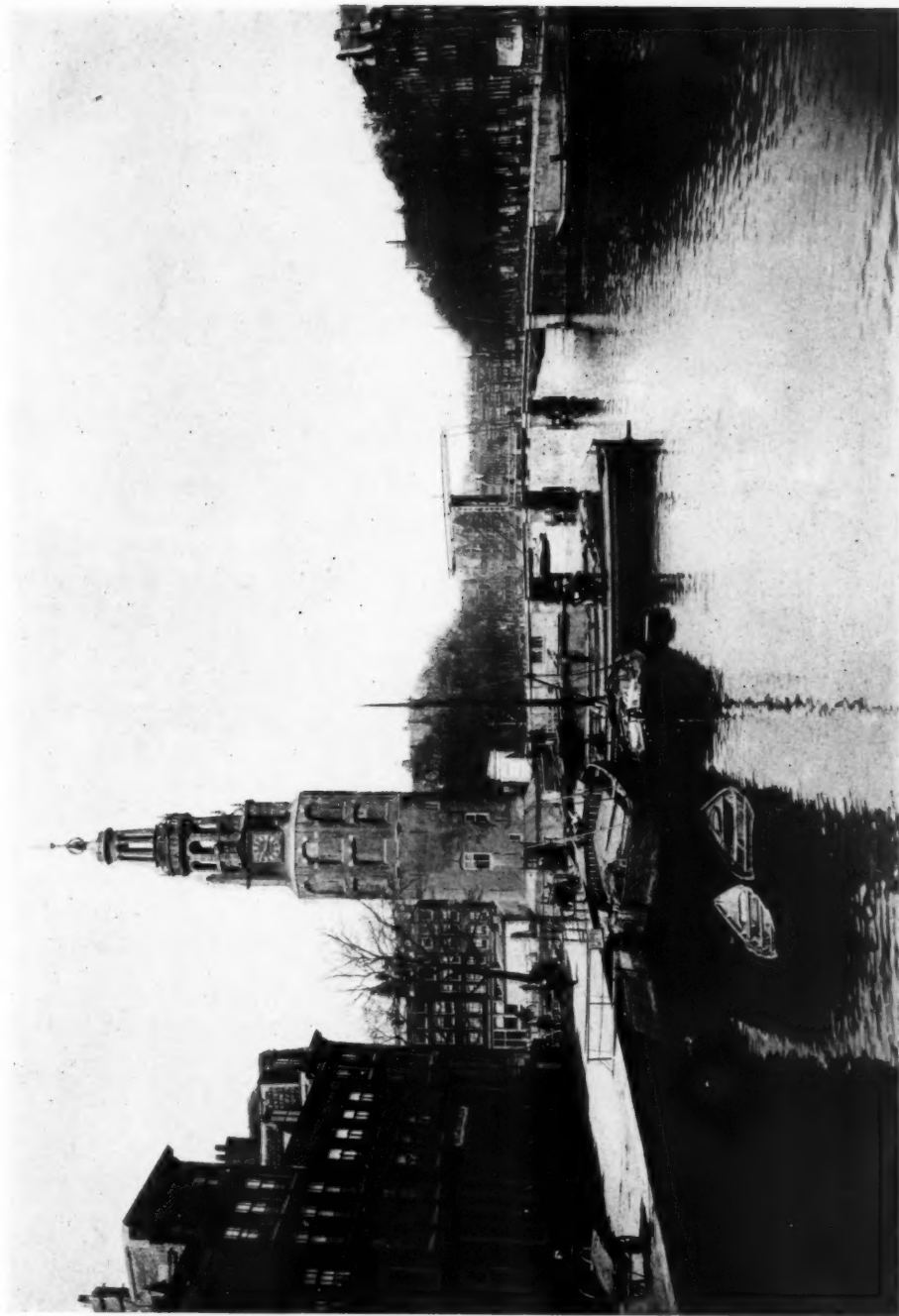


GROUP OF FOUR HOUSES (TWO DETACHED, TWO SEMI-DETACHED), GROUP XII.
MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, *ARCHITECT*



A DETACHED SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE
FOREST HILLS GARDENS, FOREST HILLS, L. I., NEW YORK
MR. GROSVENOR ATTERBURY AND MR. JOHN A. TOMPKINS, *ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS*

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