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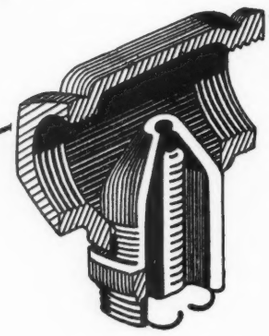

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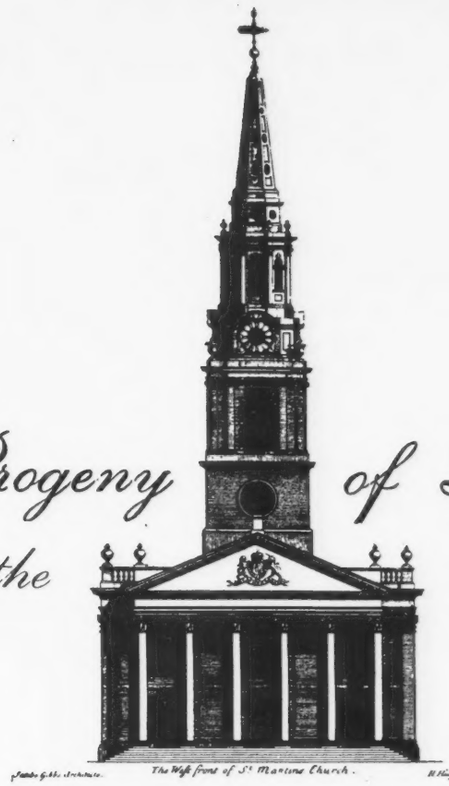
THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

THE COVER. Ruskin, discussing the art of "semi-barbaric nations" in one of his lectures, says that "supposing the intellect of the workman the same, the more imitatively complete his art, the less he will mean by it; and the ruder the symbol, the deeper is its intention." This is as good an explanation as any of the awakening interest in primitive art of the later nineteenth century, the zenith of meaningless imitation. The same remarks apply equally well to dress, particularly that of men, although meaningless imitation here continues unchallenged in the civilized world, except by a few eccentrics. It is refreshing, therefore, to consider the dress of this young Swazi who on ordinary days will wear practically nothing, but is here decked out in a manner which imposes itself as forcefully on the unfamiliar eye as any piece of primitive art. In the sculptural treatment of the hair, the hieroglyphic robe, the white scarf, the partly visible undergarment, the symbolism can only be guessed at, the depth of intention accepted and the serene expression envied.

The city roof garden provided for the employees in the Copenhagen Broadcasting Building (illustrated on pages 7–14), drives home in startling contrast the squalor of our own accustomed roof-lines. The one place in every city building which lends itself to pleasure and relaxation we have come to accept as suitable only for millionaires or water tanks. The former, it is true, serve to reinforce the argument, for the pent-house was first to show the possibilities of the landscaped roof. But now the time has surely come for other townspeople to enjoy the breadth of the sky they are used to seeing only in strips. With the day approaching when every office building will have its canteen and recreation rooms this consideration should take an important place with client, architect and planner. Backed up by legislation, particularly with regard to smoke abatement, and landscaped as carefully as street, square or park, the canteen, dance hall, club and garden could form a new landscape of city pleasures in the place most appropriate for it—just under the sky.

The Progeny of St. Martin in the Fields



By Marcus Whiffen

IN the introduction to his *Book of Architecture,* James Gibbs wrote: "What is here presented to the Public was undertaken at the instance of several Persons of Quality and others. . . . They were of opinion, that such a Work as this would be of use to such Gentlemen as might be concerned in Building, especially in the remote parts of the Country, where little or no assistance for Designs can be procured." And the opinion of the Persons of Quality and others was amply justified in the event. Gibbs's designs, largely through the medium of this volume, which appeared in 1728, had a great influence on English architecture during the eighteenth century and even later. *How* great is probably not generally realised, and the purpose of this article is to introduce some of the buildings which owe either their general form or some conspicuous feature to the precedent of the church which is often adjudged Gibbs's masterpiece.

Horace Walpole's statement that "no man talks of one edifice of Gibbs" may prove merely that Walpole, like most people with a taste for art and little real sensibility, knew what he disliked. Or there may have been some truth in it. For the kind of architecture that found favour in the eyes of Walpole and his friends—Gothic apart—was the Palladianism of Lord Burlington's circle, and Gibbs, the pupil of Fontana who was not above taking a tip from Wren, was no true Palladian. Yet, while in the middle years of the eighteenth century lip-service might be reserved for Palladio and Inigo Jones, the sincerest form of flattery was not withheld from Gibbs. The fact is symptomatic of that divergence between theory and practice in which lay both the strength and the weakness of English neo-classic architecture.

St. Martin-in-the-Fields is so familiar a building that it is difficult to appreciate how novel its combination of Roman temple exterior, high steeple, and baroque interior must have appeared on its completion in 1726. It was not the first London church in which the steeple rose immediately behind a Corinthian portico, because St. George's, Hanover Square, was finished in 1724. But while James's steeple is a comparatively modest affair, surmounted by a small dome, Gibbs's is equal in height to the total length of the church and it culminates in a spire.[1] Thus it belongs to the family of designs of which the steeples of St. Mary-le-Bow and St. Bride's, Fleet Street, are prominent members. But its carefully differentiated stages ascend with a kind of studied decorum that we do not find in any of Wren's designs.

In the first and best-known of the progeny of St. Martin-in-the-Fields it is the steeple which is imitated. Henry Flitcroft was commissioned to take down the old church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields in 1731, and the new was opened in 1734. Flitcroft was an unashamed borrower—the centre block of Wentworth Woodhouse reproduces Campbell's Wanstead House—and the steeple is practically a duplicate of that of St. Martin's. At the same time, in eschewing Gibbs's blocked window architraves, rusticating the base of the belfry, and replacing Gibbs's circular openings by rectangular ones, Lord Burlington's protégé felt, no doubt, that he had "corrected" the design.

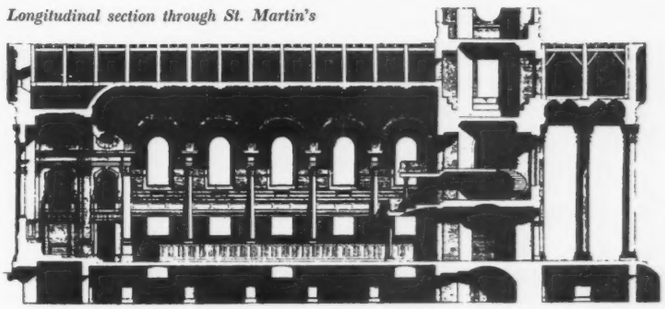
A different motive underlies the more marked variations on Gibbs's theme introduced by John Price in the church of St. George's, Borough High Street, in 1734-6. Evidently Price wanted his steeple not to resemble St. Martin's too obviously, but was incapable of inventing one for himself. With its dumpy proportions and the mean urns on the corners of the belfry, the steeple he built is the outcome of a typical carpenter's misunderstanding of the qualities of his model.

The combination of tower and prostyle portico in St. Martin's did not find many imitators, because such porticoes were notoriously expensive and few parish vestries would stand for them. An instance is provided, however, by St. Andrew's, Glasgow (built 1739-55), a church which follows the Gibbs prototype in most particulars; the architect was Allan Dreghorn. Another external feature of St. Martin's, the treatment of the windows in the flanks of the church, became extremely popular. The origin and development of the blocked or rusticated window architrave have been discussed at length by Dr. Wittkower.[2] Here it is only necessary to note that Gibbs seems to have been the first to employ it for simple round-headed windows in series; evidently he was pleased with the effect, since he repeated the motif in All Saints, Derby. Windows of this kind are to be seen in a number of small country churches (e.g. at Biddlesden, Bucks., c. 1730; Conington, Cambs., 1737). On

[1] There is another difference. The tower of St. George's is flanked on either side by a feature which forms an attic to the main entablature and has a pitched roof at right angles to the axis of the church. No doubt James got the idea from Hawksmoor's St. Anne's, Limehouse.

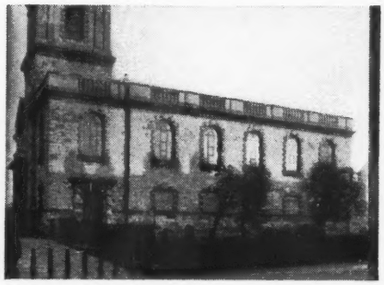
[2] In "Pseudo-Palladian Elements in English Neo-Classical Architecture," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* 1943.

Longitudinal section through St. Martin's

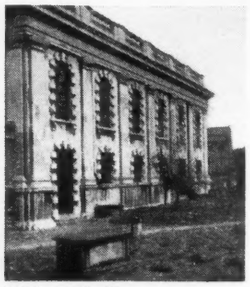


The Gibbs Motif *The most characteristic Gibbs motif, the window with a surround of intermittent rustication, appears on many of the derivatives of St. Martin's. It was considered Palladian, and also used by Campbell and Burlington. But its origin has recently been traced back to Vignola and the Mannerists.*

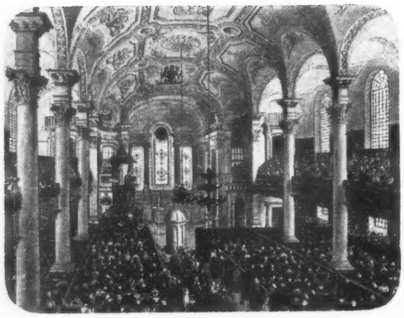
St. Paul's, Birmingham



St. John's, Wolverhampton



Gainsborough, Lincs.



the grand scale they appear at Gainsborough, Lincs., where a new nave was added to the fifteenth century tower in 1736-48. Here they are combined with a pilaster order, as in both St. Martin's and the Derby church, and, indeed, local tradition attributes the design to Gibbs himself.[3]

It used to be said that the architect of St. John's, Hampstead, was Flitcroft. But Mr. C. H. Collins Baker has shown that this church was in fact designed and built by John Sanderson, who was appointed architect late in 1744.[4] Flitcroft was simply a member of the building committee. Here it is the interior of the nave which resembles St. Martin's, although instead of saucer domes over the bays of the aisles there are cross-vaults—as in St. Peter's, Vere Street. The entablature blocks from which the vaulting springs were not, of course, invented by Gibbs, but are found in Renaissance architecture as early as Brunelleschi's Santo Spirito, Florence; the cantankerous Fergusson thought that these were "perhaps the most fatal gift of Classic Art to modern times, as nine-tenths of the difficulties and clumsinesses of the revived Art are owing to the introduction of this feature." Thus they are not in themselves proof positive of Gibbs's influence. But there can be no mistaking it in the interior of Hampstead parish church.

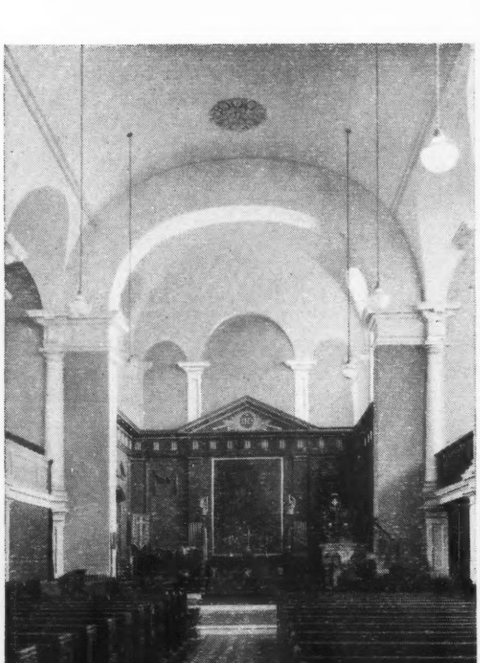
The disparate elements of temple and tower which Gibbs so skilfully combined in St. Martin's are to be seen in their pristine incompatibility at Mereworth. Who designed this church, which was built 1744-6, does not appear to be on record. (Colen Campbell, the architect of Mereworth Castle, had died ten years before it was begun.) In 1752 Walpole described it as "a new church with a steeple which seems designed for the latitude of Cheapside, and is so tall that the poor church curtsies under it, like Mary Rich in a vast high-crown hat." Characteristically, Walpole did not recognise the origin of the feature he deplored, but one cannot but agree

[3]The interior colonnades (Corinthian) support an unbroken entablature which is continued right round the apse. In a general way the interior resembles that of the rather smaller Christ Church, Leeds (1721-27, William Halfpenny, architect).

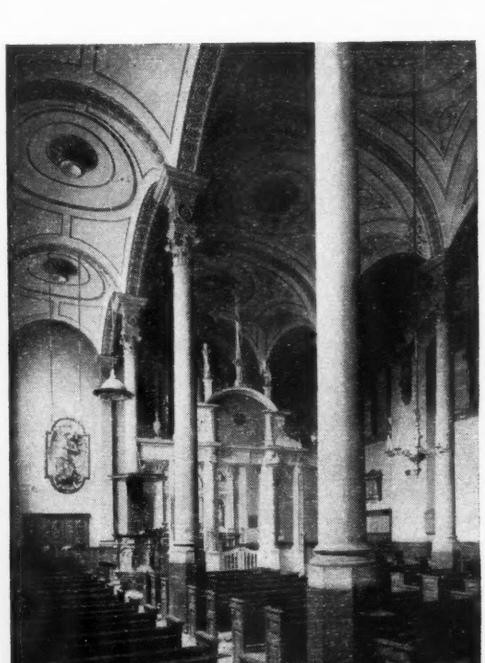
[4]See letter headed "John Sanderson and Hampstead Parish Church," following article by K. A. Esdaile, in *Country Life*, December 11, 1937.

Interiors *The most obvious characteristics of the interior of St. Martin's (as seen in the picture above from Ackermann's* Microcosm of London, *and the longitudinal section on the preceding page) are repeated in the three churches below and in many others in Britain and America.*

St. Martin's, Worcester



St. John's, Wolverhampton



Christ Church, Bristol

Spires *Six spires evidently influenced by Gibbs's St. Martin's. A comparison with the engraving on page 3 will show at once the identity in the chief distinguishing feature: the way in which transition from square to octagonal plan is managed at the clock stage. Other motifs have also been taken over more or less literally.*

St. George's, Borough, London

Mereworth

St. John's, Wolverhampton

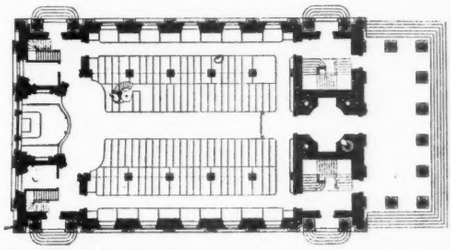
St. Paul's, Birmingham

All Saints, Newcastle

St. George's, Dublin

that the reproduction of St. Martin's steeple does sit rather oddly on this Tuscan " barn."

The designer of St. John's, Wolverhampton —whoever he may have been—risked no such incongruity but kept close to one model. This church was built 1755-60. The exterior of the nave is an a-stylar version of St. Martin-in-the-Fields; the lateral fenestration is identical. The steeple is surmounted by a tall spire, distinctly mediæval in silhouette, which rises directly from the octagon above the clock stage. Inside, the galleries are



The plan of St. Martin's.

carried on panelled piers or high pedestals and the order is Doric (as it is in All Saints, Derby). But here too the general proportions are those of St. Martin's.

So far all our buildings have been churches, but the next design is a secular one, and one of the least expected, as well as one of the most ingenious, of the adaptations of Gibbs's masterpiece. When Sir Robert Taylor was appointed architect to the Bank of England in 1765, he was faced with the task of covering an approximately square site, to the east of Sampson's original building and fronting on Threadneedle Street and Bartholomew Lane.[5] In the centre of his plan he placed a Rotunda, based on the Pantheon, and along the north, east, and south sides four oblong halls. The latter, which were destroyed by Soane, were each of the same design and dimensions and were copied from the nave of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, with the aisles returned round the ends and partly glazed domes as the only source of light. The effect, to judge by T. H. Malton's drawing of the Transfer Office, must have been charming. Taylor began his career in the studio of the rococo sculptor Sir Henry Cheere. His exterior architecture gives no hint of this apprenticeship, but these halls at the Bank had a truly rococo lightness and grace.

We return to churches with St. Martin's, Worcester. This modest church was designed and built by Anthony Keck, a local man, in 1768-72. It is of red brick with stone dressings and has a plain tower. In general conception it has not much in common with its metropolitan namesake. The windows, however, have rusticated architraves of the same patterns, and the internal colonnades with their entablature blocks are Gibbs's translated into the Ionic order.

St. Martin's, Worcester, has a flat ceiling over the centre of the nave. But an exact copy of the vaulting plan of St. Martin-in-the-Fields was carried out about 1783 in the little church which shelters under the great house at Badminton, Gloucestershire. The character of the ornament here suggests that William Paty, who is known to have followed the same model in Christ Church, Bristol, was responsible. The Patys were a prominent family of sculptors and builders in eighteenth century Bristol. William was the son of Thomas Paty, who was employed by the elder Wood on the Bristol Exchange as " ornament carver " and who designed and built St. Michael's in the same city in a curious blend of Gothic and Doric. The family was associated with other Gothic works, and although, in general, the interior of the nave of Christ Church follows St. Martin-in-the-Fields very closely, the elongation of the columns and a certain tenuity in the detail are reminders that a radical change had overtaken architecture since Gibbs's day.

In spite of this change St. Martin's continued to be admired and imitated. Its steeple, especially, remained a source of inspiration.

The Dublin church of St. George, which was not completed until 1802, has a late example of a near-copy. Its designer was Francis Johnston, who was also an early Gothicist—although no one would guess that from the chaste Ionic portico of St. George's.

More often, from 1780 onwards, Gibbs's design was freely adapted to conform to the ideals of the period. Sometimes it provided a starting-point for an excursion into " the picturesque." This was the case at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where All Saints church was rebuilt in 1786-96 to the design of David Stephenson, a local carpenter. At first sight the lofty, Gothic-looking steeple of the Newcastle church appears to have little in common with that of St. Martin's, so different is it in proportions, detail, and spirit. But when the design is analysed the near relationship becomes evident. A similar case is the steeple

[5]See H. Rooksby Steele and F. R. Yerbury, *The Old Bank of England, London.*

added in 1823 by Francis Goodwin to St. Paul's, Birmingham, which, built in 1777, already owed almost everything else to the precedent of Gibbs. In this clever Ionic design with an octagonal belfry the tendency is towards a purer classicism rather than a more picturesque silhouette, and the same may be said of the steeple of St. Michael's, Pitt Street, Liverpool, built in 1816-26, by C. R. Cockerell's fellow-traveller in Greece, John Foster, architect and surveyor to the Liverpool Corporation, where the resemblance to St. Martin's was reinforced by a Corinthian portico.[6]

The strict Grecian in designing a steeple was beset with special difficulties. Traditionally, a church had to have a steeple; also, one guesses, it must often have been thought desirable to give it one to distinguish it from the new dissenting house round the corner. But suitable Greek models were extremely hard to find. There were, in fact, only two with which much could be done—the Monument of Lysicrates and the Tower of the Winds. In London, at any rate, the Tower of the Winds was the more popular, the most famous example of its use being in the church of St. Pancras, designed in 1818 by the Inwoods, where the steeple is formed by two imitations of it, one upon the other.

To claim St. Pancras' as one of the progeny of St. Martin-in-the-Fields may seem paradoxical. The origin of the design of its steeple has already been noted and, as everyone knows, the body of the church is based on the Erechtheum. Yet when one compares the two churches it becomes clear that the Inwoods were much indebted to Gibbs. The length of St. Martin's, including the portico, is just double its width and equal to the height of the steeple; St. Pancras' has the same proportions. Then the interior arrangements at their west ends are noticeably similar. Their west elevations, too, are not so different in outline as might be expected, and a tell-tale detail in St. Pancras' is the placing of the clock, which was praised by Gwilt as a successful way of dealing with this most "unclassical" feature. And, after all, it is not so surprising, when one comes to think about it. For the Inwoods were faced with the very problem—that of adding a tower to a temple—which had been triumphantly solved by Gibbs nearly a hundred years before.

All Saints, Poplar, is slightly later than St. Pancras', dating from 1821-23. Although contemporary with the "Commissioners' churches," this was not, strictly speaking, one of them, since it was paid for entirely by a parish rate. (The parishioners, incidentally, expressed themselves pleased with what they got for their money.) It was designed by C. Hollis. Britton wrote of it: "The design, though partaking of the Grecian character, may be said to be derived from some of our best London churches." A glance at the plan and elevations in his *Public Edifices* suffices to show which "of our best London churches" was chiefly followed.

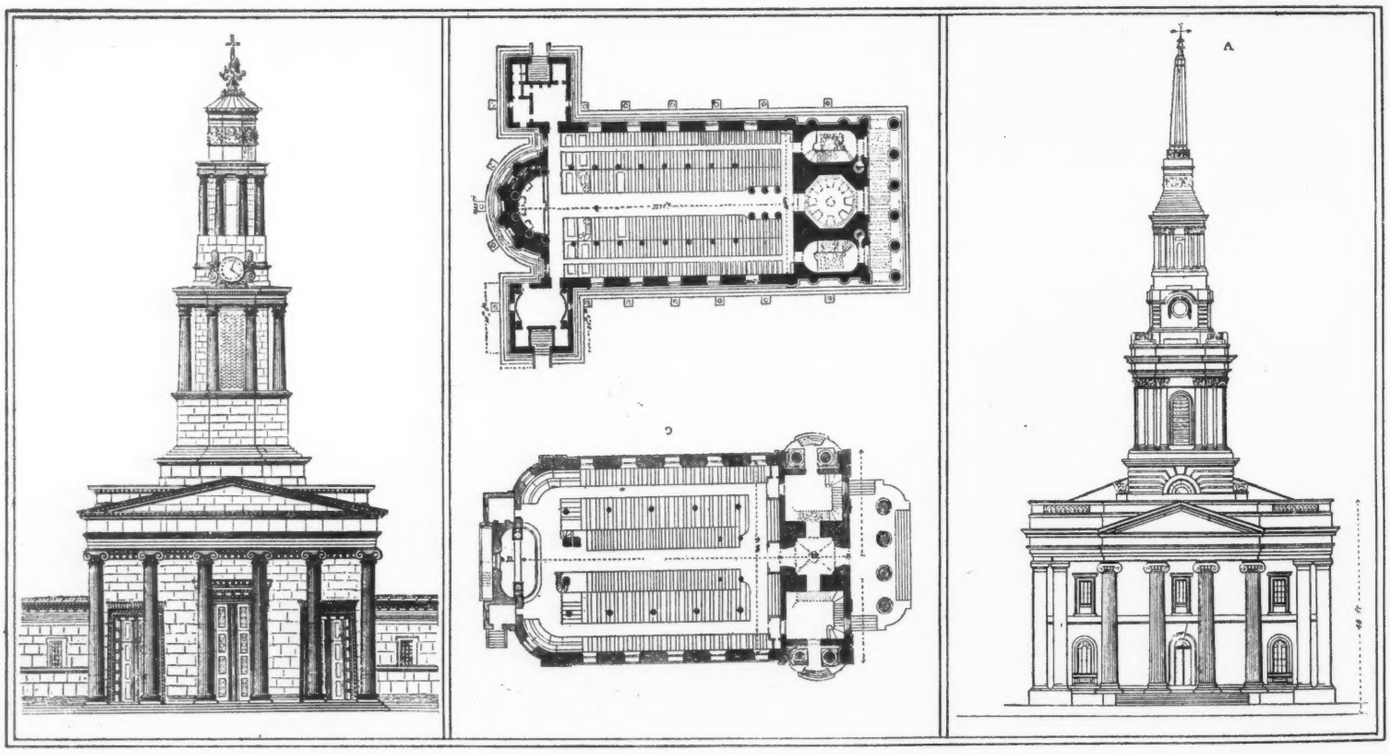
There are, of course, other buildings—notably a number of churches in the New World—which derive from St. Martin-in-the-Fields. But enough have been named to indicate the historical importance of Gibbs's design. Every age canonizes, as it were, certain buildings. Sometimes these belong to times remote from those which admire and imitate them. Throughout the neo-classic period the Roman Pantheon was such a one; during the early stage of the Gothic Revival Boston stump was another. Of the other category, represented in our own century by Östberg's Town Hall at Stockholm, St. Martin-in-the-Fields was a prime example. Intrinsic merit and accessibility are required in any building which is to enter this category. But it must also succeed in filling some special need of the times. This St. Martin's did. By 1726, Wren's empirical classicism was outmoded, and most of his church plans were in too great a degree *ad hoc* solutions of specific problems to have wide applicability. Hawksmoor's churches were in too personal an idiom for imitation; Archer's spoke an international language which demanded too much intellectual discipline to be suited to the English temperament. And so the church in which Gibbs arrived at an acceptable compromise between baroque "licence" and Palladian "propriety" became, and remained for a hundred years, the standard on which architects based their designs and against which they measured their achievements.

[6]This church was bombed and subsequently demolished. See *The Bombed Buildings of Britain*, edited by J. M. Richards with notes by John Summerson.

Acknowledgments

The photograph of Badminton Church is by Sydney Pitcher, F.R.P.S., that of Mereworth Church, by E. A. Sweetman and Son, of All Saints, Newcastle, by Harry O. Thompson. The photographs of the London churches, and of those at Birmingham, Bristol, Wolverhampton, and Worcester, are from the collection of the National Buildings Record.

Two of the last English descendants of St. Martin's: St. Pancras, London, by the Inwoods, father and son, designed in 1818, and All Saints, Poplar, by C. Hollis, designed in 1821. The length of St. Martin's is 160 feet and that of All Saints, including the portico at the entrance, is 124 ft. 6 ins. The engravings are from Britton and Pugin's Public Edifices.



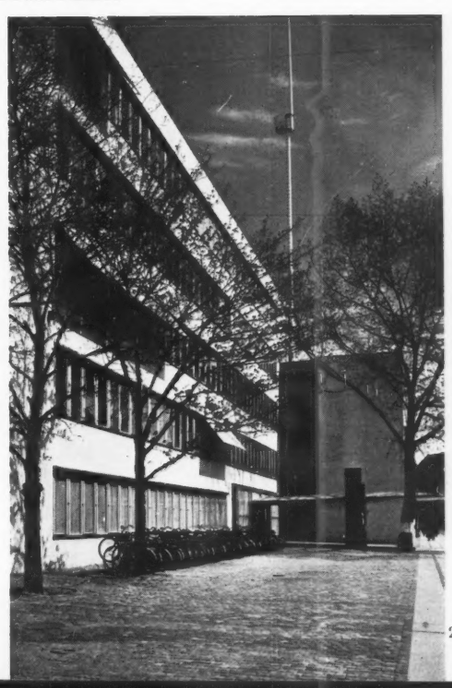
1

COPENHAGEN BROADCASTING BUILDING

general The sketch designs for the building of The General Broadcasting Corporation were made during 1934-5, and the building was started in 1938. In January 1941, part of it was ready and put into use, and in September 1945, after completion of the concert studio, the actual inauguration took place. The Chairman of the Building Committee was Kammerherre C. Lerche, and the Chairman of the Technical Board, Kay Christiansen, who was later replaced by Fr. Heegaard. The engineers were: Professor Chr. Nokkentved, structure; Professor Chr. Nokkentved, replaced by Dr. Vilhelm Jordan, acoustics; Ludvig Birch, replaced by H. Peschardt-Hansen, installation.

VILHELM LAURITZEN

planning The construction of the building permits the office block to be divided into offices, the sizes of which may be any multiple of 50 sq. ft. Partitions may be placed at the window-posts, which are spaced at a distance of 3 feet. The radiators under the windows are arranged and divided so that no modification to them is necessary on altering the position of partitions. The same applies to other installations. The studios for lectures, discussions, announcements, etc., are on the first floor of the taller part of the office wing connected with the main hall. (A single studio for news broadcasting is situated on the upper floor of the lower office wing). The studios are placed around a central room which serves as a lounge for the artists and from which access can be had to all studios (excepting the concert studio which has other access) through sound-locked doors. Every studio has its own separate walls and its own separate foundation, and the whole block of studios is surrounded by a protecting wall. Likewise the ceilings of the rooms are insulated from the roof of the building. Above the central room is the technical department. Above the largest studio is the canteen carried by pillars and by the outer wall (there being no contact with the



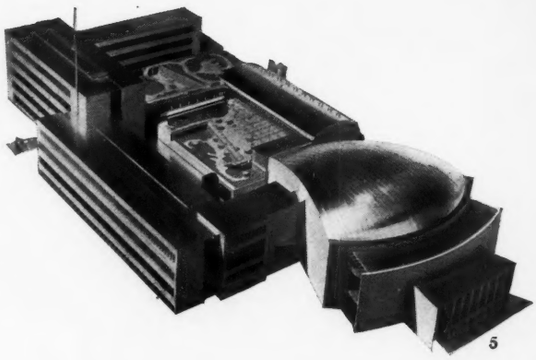
2

3

1, the entrance to the main concert studio on the right and, on the left, part of the office wing. 2 and 3, the entrance to the offices and the two main office wings.

4

4, the director's house in the grounds of the broadcasting building; the landscaping of the garden and the successful relationship between the house and the existing building in the background call for special mention. 5, a model of the building showing the gardens laid out on the roofs of the studios in the centre of the block; they are designed to act as a sound barrier.



5

walls of the studio). On the outer roof of the other studios roof-gardens are laid out the soil of which acts as protection against noise from the air. The canteen is connected with the stage in the concert studio by a staircase.

The cubic capacity of the concert hall is 42,000 cubic feet. There are 1,200 seats, with 400 on the ground floor and 400 on each of the two balconies. It is considered to be an advantage that as many seats as possible are placed at a higher level than the orchestra.

construction and finishes The buildings are chiefly of concrete construction. The block of studios only is of brick. The office block has no frontal pillars, but the floors are supported on the horizontal members between the end-walls and on a few heavy partitions (span about 20 yards).

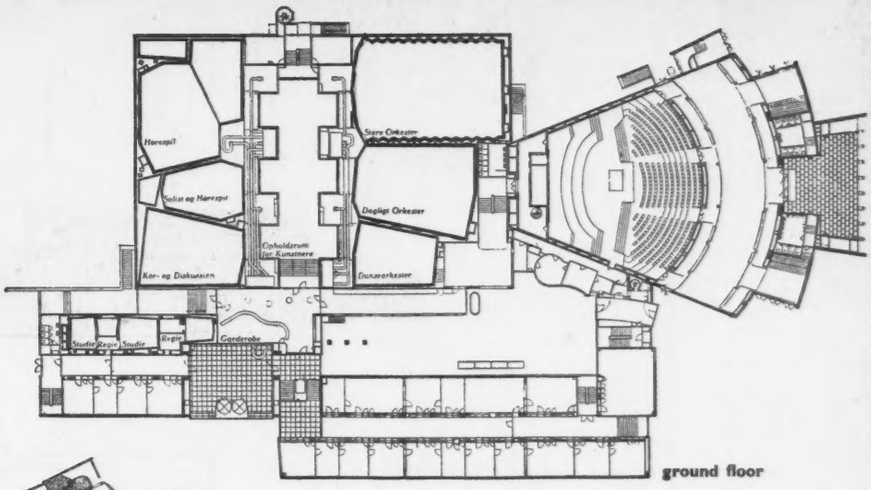
The roofs of the canteen and the concert studio are of shell construction, 4·8in. thickness. The undulated ceiling in the concert studio is made from concrete of 2·4in. thickness. The forms which were made from 1·25in. × 3in. laths, were left and after being stopped were covered with strips of beechwood. The forms are held to the concrete by nails on its surface cast into the concrete. The interior walls in the concert studio are of brick.

The facades are covered with pale yellow tiles (unglazed), 1ft. × 1ft. 8in. each in size. Inside, the studio walls are faced with laminated wood, the smaller ones with plywood fixed on laths. To avoid risk of fire the wall panels in the sound-locks at the studio exits are made from iron. There are parquet floors in the concert studio, birch in the hall and a combination of birch and teak in the ante-rooms. The stairs are covered with teak. Most of the building work took place during the war. The concert studio was finished during the last difficult war months. This has of course influenced the result. In the main it has been possible, however, through pre-war purchases of the most important materials and by use of some suitable home products to maintain the desired standard.

acoustics The qualities of absorption of walls and ceilings are determined by the depth of the hollows behind the sheets, by the density of the filling, and also by the perforation of the sheets (holes or gaps). The sheets in the large studios are attached to the frame-work by means of clips. This arrangement ensures that the acoustic properties may be altered at any time. The same arrangement is made for the deadening of sound in ante-rooms, wells, soundlocks, and similar rooms.

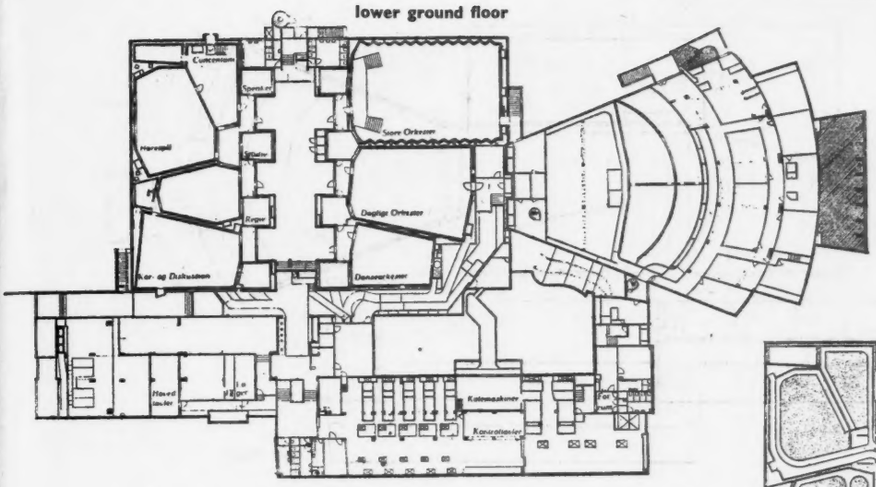
In the foyer of the concert studio the sound-deadening panels are made of beechwood strips nailed at staggered intervals (0·25in.) to a rockwool-lining.

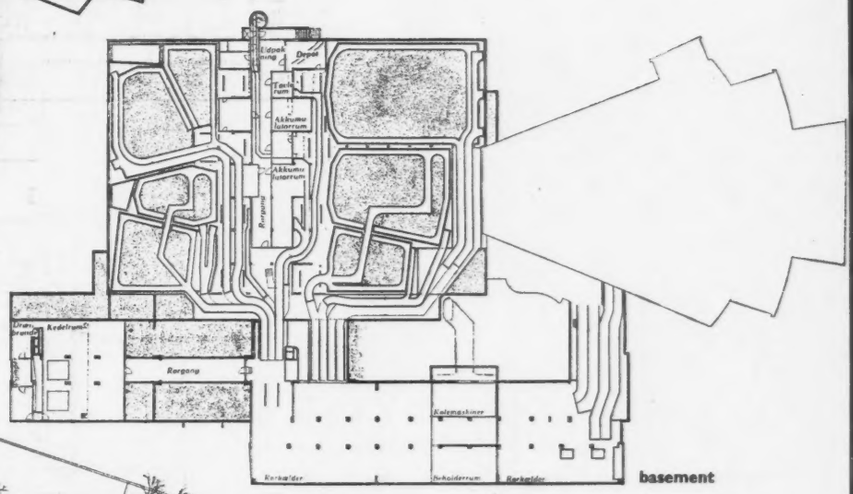
ventilation and heating All machinery, control panels, and switchboards of the ventilation plant of the studios are concentrated in a large engine room occupying



ground floor

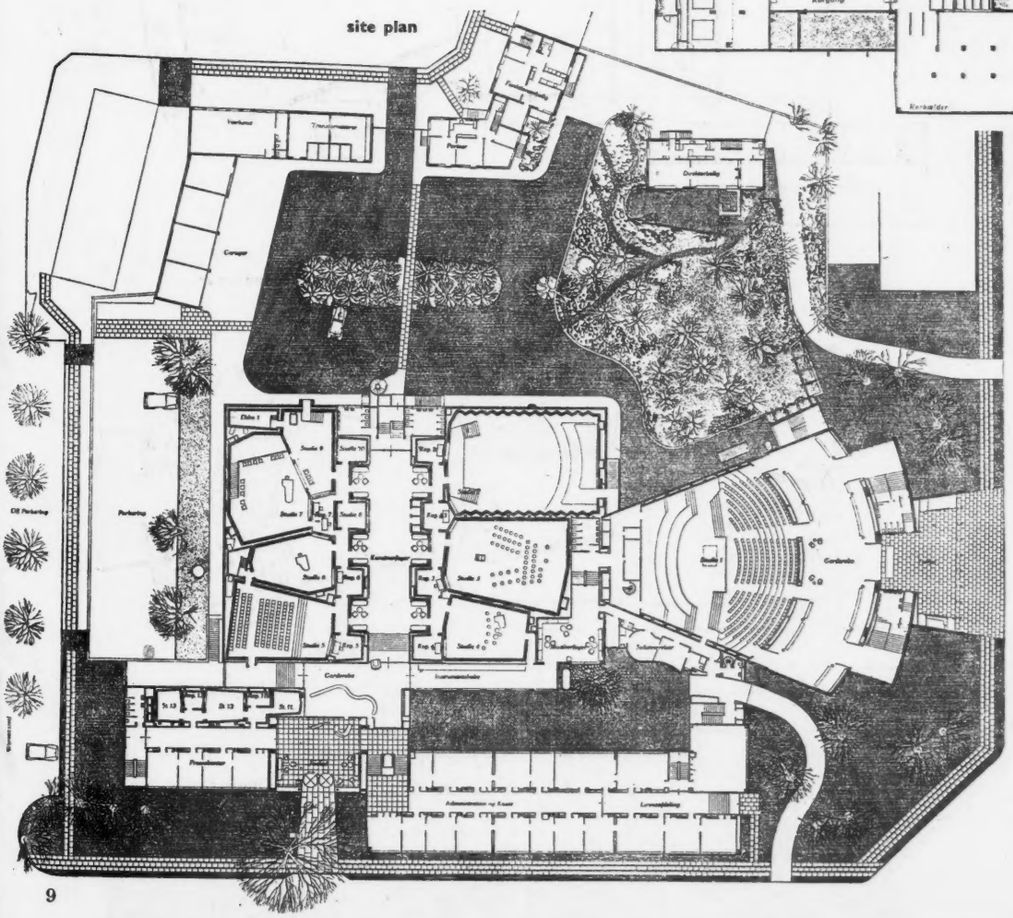
lower ground floor





basement

site plan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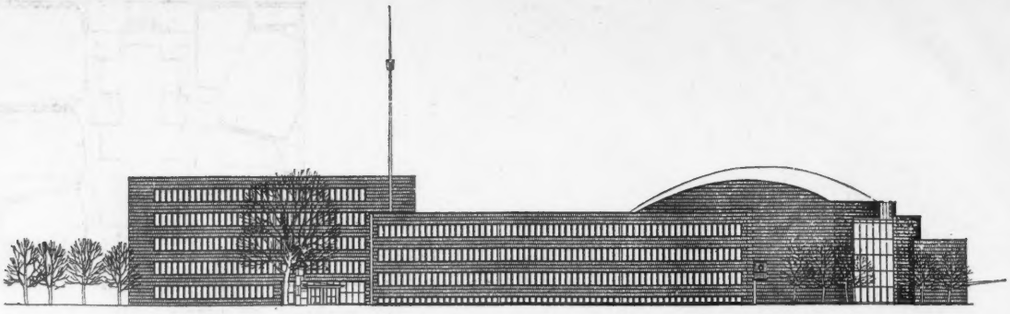
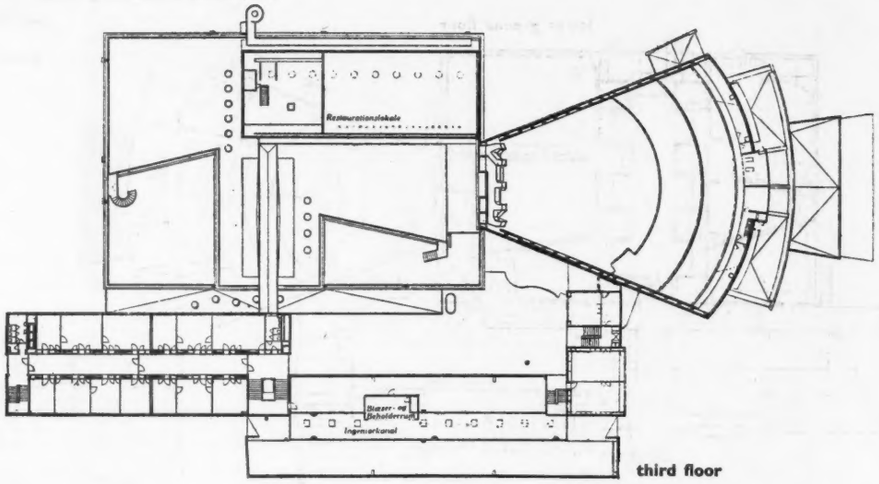
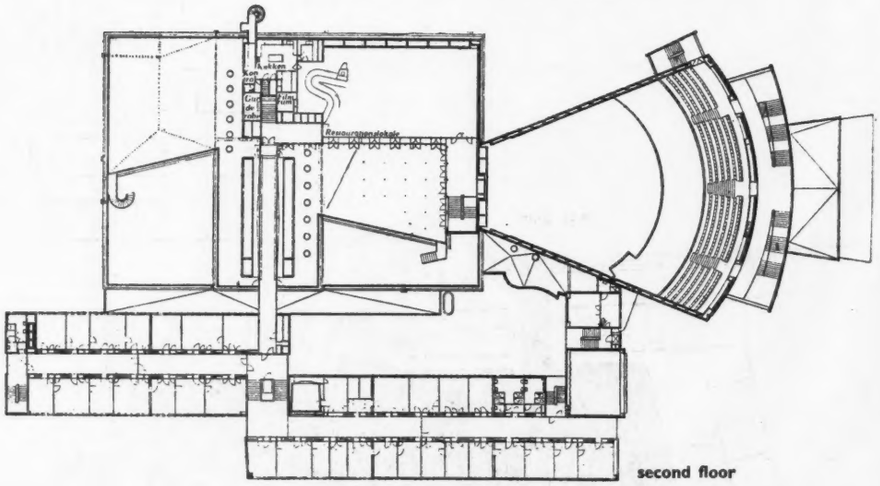
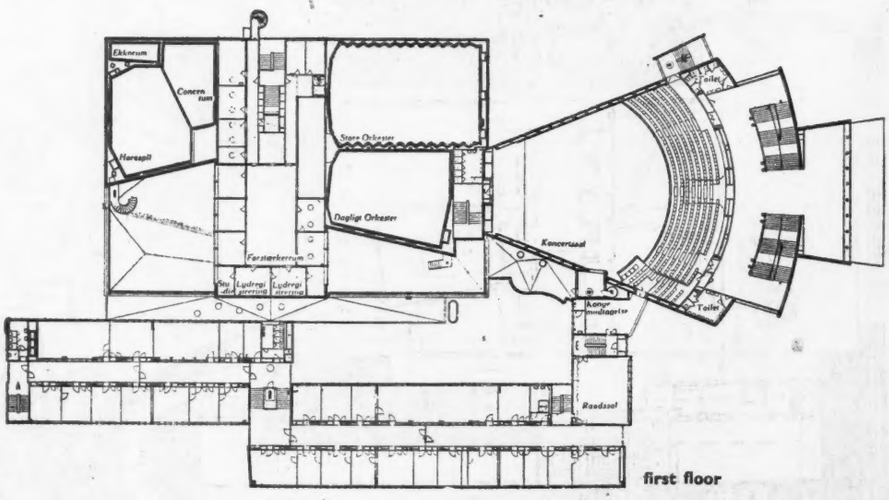




third floor



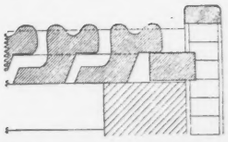
second floor



first floor

6

6, the board room. 7, 8 and 9, the main staircase to the upper galleries of the concert studio, the first floor foyer, and the ground floor cloakroom foyer, respectively. The detail below shows the panelling which is made of beech-wood strips nailed at staggered intervals to a rockwool-lining.



the basement of the east wing of the administration buildings. The ventilation plant is automatically controlled by means of a pneumatic regulating system. There are special ventilation systems for (1) the hall of the Radio Council, where air is blown in through a large number of funnel-shaped nozzles and removed through openings in the opposite wall, and for (2) the canteen, where an upward stream of air is blown in at the north windows and removed through apertures in the ceiling above the doors opening out to the roof garden on the south. Office rooms are ventilated by blowing in heated air which, when vitiated, passes away through gratings in the windows. The administration offices and the corridors are heated by hot-water radiators. In the offices there is a radiator in each window recess. The distribution piping is placed in horizontal grooves in the ceiling of the storey below. Vertical (rising) pipe strings are placed at the gable ends of the buildings. Partition walls may thus be erected without paying any regard to the heating system. The corridors and staircase of the concert studio are heated by ceiling panels. The very tall outer walls of the concert studio are heated by automatically regulated heating coils built into the walls. The heater plant consists of four 90 m^2 oil burners placed in the cellar under the west wing. In front of the building are four subterranean fuel oil tanks with a total capacity of 100 m^3. A "settling tank" is employed for separating water from the oil by heating. The heaters can burn any kind of oil; during the war they were actually fuelled with tar. The maximum obtainable quantity of heat is about 3,000,000 cal/h.

The ventilating system represents a greater load upon the heaters than the radiator system ($\frac{2}{3}$ against $\frac{1}{3}$). The heaters are accordingly divided into two groups, each having its own pump equipment. In view of the ventilating system, the heaters are run at a high water temperature throughout the year, some 80°-90° C. For use in the radiator system this temperature is reduced by adding water. The radiator installation is divided into groups, each having one more set of automatic-controlled valves for adding water to the return water. These pneumatic control devices are governed by feelers placed on the outsides of the respective walls. By the operation of hand valves the temperature adjustment can be changed so as to give a low night temperature and a high morning temperature, resulting in a quick heating of the rooms.

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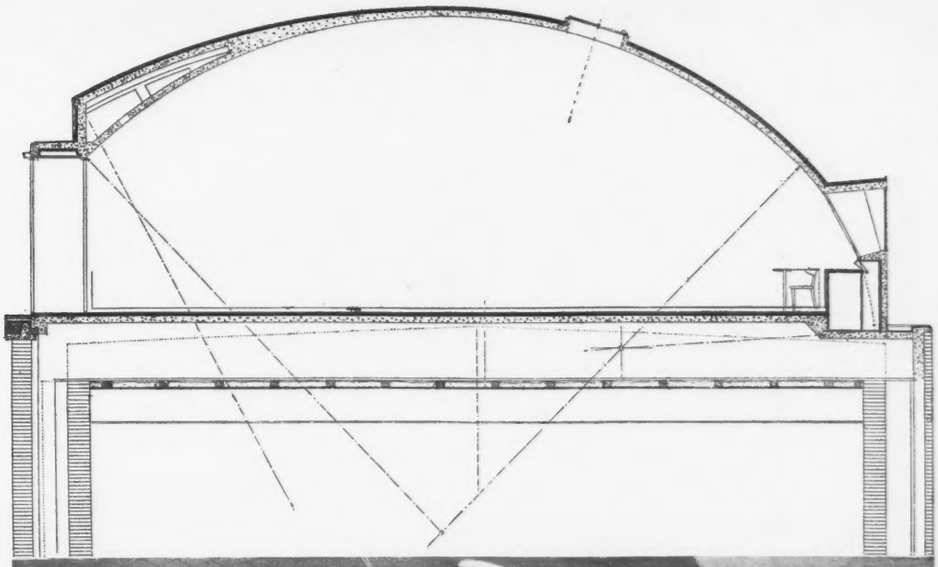

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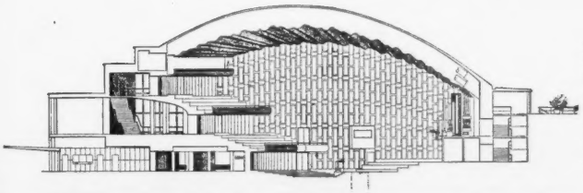
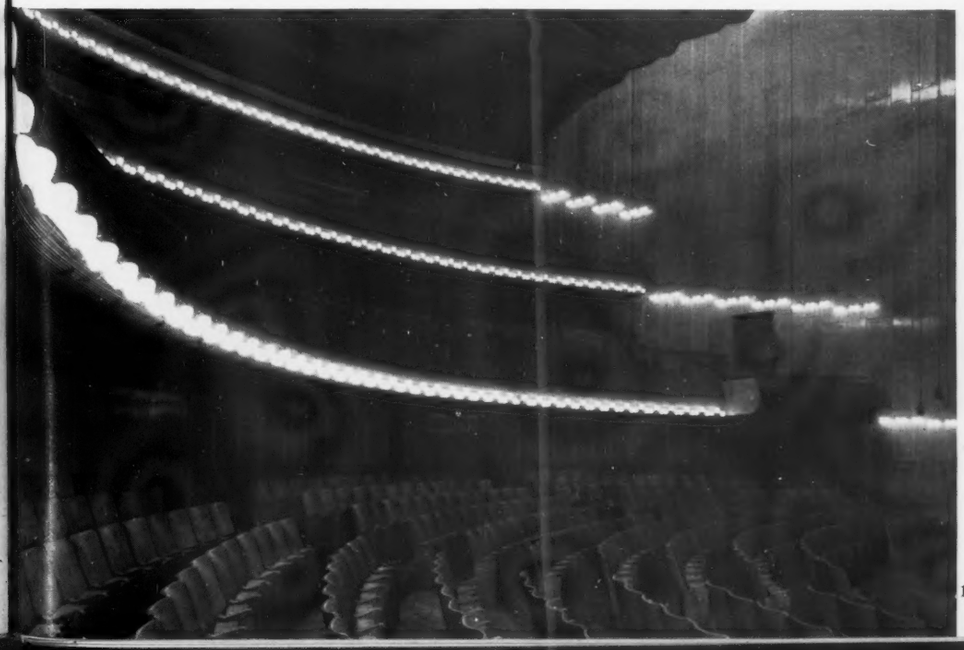


10 on the facing page shows the orchestra platform in the main concert studio. The organ has 87 stops, 7,700 pipes and 4 manuals. 11, the canteen on the roof of the studio block; as the section above shows, it has a shell concrete roof 4·8 inches thick. 12 and 13, the main concert studio; there are 1,200 seats, as many as possible of which are placed at a higher level than the orchestra. The section on the left shows the undulating ceiling, made of concrete 2·4 inches thick.



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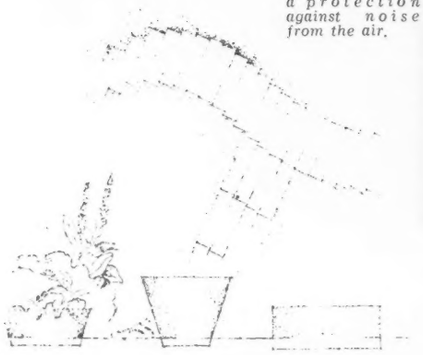
14, 15 *and* 16, *the roof garden laid out over the studios, the soil of which acts as a protection against noise from the air.*



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THE WAR-TIME POSTER BY ERIC NEWTON

The æsthetic standard of poster design during the recent war was exceptionally high. No doubt some of the credit for this must go to the between-the-wars sponsors of good poster design, especially to London Transport, Shell-Mex and the G.P.O.—organisations, be it noted, that had no need to consider the problems of competitive advertising. With this high standard to build on, many of our younger artists have done excellent work during the war years. Without it they might easily have succumbed to the temptations of slick and swift mediocrity that characterised so much of pre-war poster design. But during the war, the poster underwent profound changes, and in many of the new fields that were opened up by changed conditions there was immense progress. In the following article, Eric Newton, by analysing these changes, assesses the contribution of the wartime poster and gives a pointer to peacetime developments. Now that, technically, we are no longer at war, much of the urgency of the war poster's function has disappeared, and with it some of the war-poster's essential grimness. But it is unlikely that the poster of the future will slip back into its bad pre-war habits. Not only will the conditions that engendered those habits never return, but our eyes and minds are now accustomed to a more varied and inventive æsthetic. The poster must always be based on mass-psychology, but we now have a deeper understanding of what mass-psychology means. Art, like science, tends to become more experimental under the stimulus of war. And the results of experiment cannot fail to be carried over into the ensuing peace.

Function conditions appearance. The function of a war poster is different from that of a peace poster. Therefore the appearance of posters, their very shapes and colours, have undergone a profound change during the past six years.

That is a simple syllogism whose implications require to be worked out in detail. In what way did the poster's function change with the outbreak of war? And what corresponding change was brought about in the poster's appearance?

Basically, of course, all posters have the same function. Their only purpose is to persuade, either by shock-tactics or by repetition or both, certain classes of people to take certain courses of action. It is not part of the poster's duty to be æsthetically satisfying, though one suspects that a poster that isn't will fail to be persuasive in proportion to the æsthetic sensitivity of the class of people at whom it is directed. None the less, the poster stands or falls by its success as propaganda. There are a thousand possible propagandist methods, varying from peremptory command ("Post early in the Day") to insidious suggestion ("Why didn't he propose to me last

night ? ") and the merit of each depends on its success in producing the requisite action, from the purchase of a tube of toothpaste to a resolution to enlist in the A.T.S.

What changed with the outbreak of war was the *kind* of action aimed at. It would be roughly true to say that the message of the pre-war poster was " Please do ! " whereas the war poster's message was either " For Heaven's sake don't! " or else " Do this even though you don't like it ! " The pre-war poster usually contained a temptation, and its stock symbol, the glamour-girl, made her incessant appeal to men and women alike. To men, she cooed " Give her X's chocolates and she'll smile at you as winningly as I do " : to women she whispered " Buy Y's silk stockings and you'll look, to him, as desirable as I look." Her only disadvantage was her monotony. She served so many purposes that, as a symbol, she almost ceased to be valid. One hardly knew whether she was selling beer or bicycles ; and in the end, one ceased to care.

But the war poster could not so easily use the symbols of temptation. Their place was largely taken by the symbols of warning. " If you do, so much the better for you " changed into " If you don't so much the worse for you." At once it became apparent that a new and a far subtler technique was required. The problem, in almost every case, was not only to persuade people to do something they didn't want to do but to do so, if possible, without bullying or hinting that their personal freedom was in danger. It was also necessary to persuade them quickly, for war has a more urgent tempo than peace and ineffective propaganda can be disastrous. The poster became not only more subtle but more necessary. If the gossip doesn't keep his mouth shut, men will die :. if the cook doesn't switch over from sirloin to cabbage, health will suffer : if the man in the street doesn't buy savings certificates, the squanderbug will get him : if the housewife doesn't keep a lookout for moths, the contents of her wardrobe will soon be useless.

All this involves a good deal of specific instruction, sometimes of a highly technical kind, and it is interesting to note how the artist, whose main weapon is symbolism, but who has to exchange the simple pre-war symbolism of temptation for the complex war symbolism of warning, must also graft on to the language of symbolism the contradictory language of realism. A simple instance of this amalgam can be seen in Pat Keely's poster : " One of our fighters is missing if you are off work with an accident." Two symbols are used. The red triangle of warning marks the poster's message as " Beware ! " The concentric red, white and blue circles add the message : " This concerns the R.A.F." But in order to make the messages personal to each factory-hand, realism must be added. The blue circle dissolves into the formal pattern of a cog-wheel, and, by way of this transitional semi-realism, leads the eye to the photographically-treated empty chair. That is one type of war poster with its general emphasis on the " Don't " and its particular stress on the " You." The method recurs again and again. The photographed sleeve eaten by the pen-and-ink moth with swastika markings : the three photographed soldiers (*your* brother, husband, fiancé) reading letters written by the formal, impersonal hand and fountain-pen. The hand and pen hit the eye harder and convey the basic idea, " letter-writing " in a flash. The photographs work more slowly and less vividly, but they imply the actual existence of a specific Tom, Dick or Harry.

Colour, too, can be used either symbolically or realistically, and the contrast between the two in the same poster can be equally effective. In the French Resistance poster, for example, the red, white and blue suggest the tricolour, and the green face of the helmeted German, death. The neutral grey of the photographed hands is no more than a conventional sign for the non-symbolic " You " to whom the poster is addressed. On the whole the poster-artist's use of colour is emotional and extremely simple—red for warning or emphasis, green either for coolness and freshness or else for villainy in green moonlight, grey for purely documentary statements of fact. A typical example is the " Grow your own Food " poster, where the green and earthy brown of the allotment changes to the more cheerful red and yellow of the dining-room.

A third factor—letterpress—presents the war-time poster artist with, perhaps, the most difficult problem of all. Lettering on a poster follows two rules. It must be reduced to a minimum, and it must form an integral part of the design. Both are good rules. The less lettering the better, for the pictured idea is always more compelling than the written idea : otherwise pictorial posters would never have come into being at all. And unless the poster is to be split in two by dividing its appeal between the eye and the mind, design and lettering must form part of the same conception.

In the " temptation " poster of peace-time, there is no difficulty in conforming to these two rules. Once the precise nature of the temptation has been established, little is needed but the name of the maker. Provided the pictorial side of the poster has made clear the desirability of silk stockings, the letterpress need say no more than " Robinson's." And the word " Robinson's " has to be so placed that the eye takes it in almost unconsciously together with the stockings. But in the warning poster or, even more, in the instructional poster of war-time, the problem is not so simple. Here there is usually something that cannot conveniently be expressed pictorially. It may even happen (though rarely) that pictorial expression is entirely inappropriate, or a factual message, such as the place and time of an exhibition, must be added to the pictorial statement of the exhibition's scope. But the problem of letterpress arises in its acutest form when there is a new habit or a new attitude of mind to be engendered. For the propaganda machine, which runs easily enough as long as human inclination is working with it, begins to get into difficulties as soon as it encounters the resistance of human inertia or human conservatism. In the placing of his letterpress, as in his general con-

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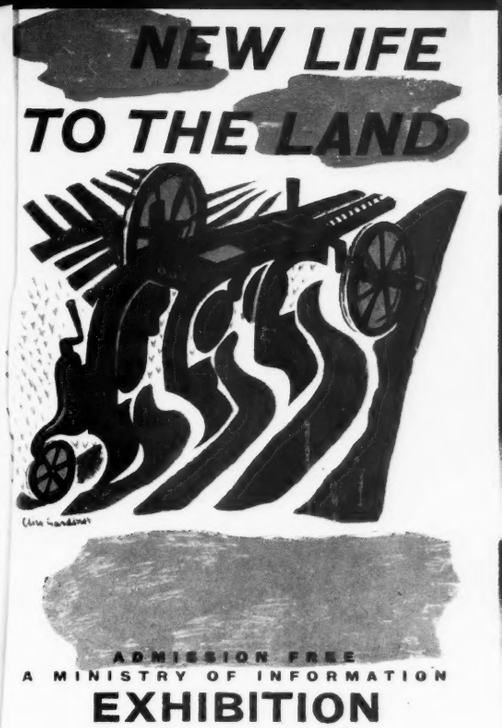
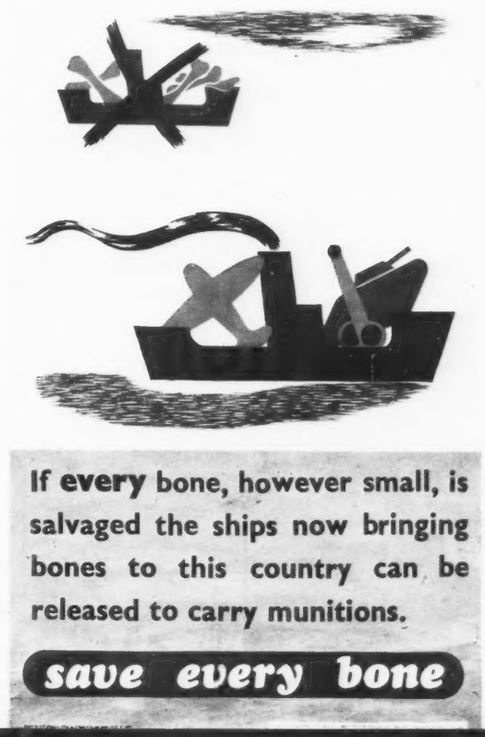
NOTES TO THE ILLUSTRATIONS

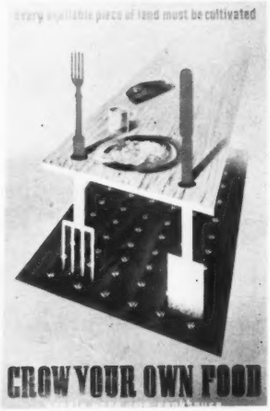
ERRATA : *in the caption below, for 8 read 27 ; for 10 read 29 ; for 7 read 26 ; for 9 read 28.*

Notes to the colour reproductions : these posters have been selected for reproduction in colour, either because they express their meaning mainly in terms of colour—for example, the symbolic colour of the French Resistance poster 35, or the accident poster 36—or else because their colour is inherently pleasant. The delicate colour of the two posters by Lewitt and Him 8, 10, and the cheerful cottage-parlour colour of TURN OVER A NEW LEAF 7, give them their air of distinction. SAVE EVERY BONE 9, is a charming piece of shorthand both in design and in colour. The colour's function, in this case, is to sort out the elements of the design rather than to add anything to its significance.



Vitamin value, goodness, taste 'go up in smoke'—result is waste





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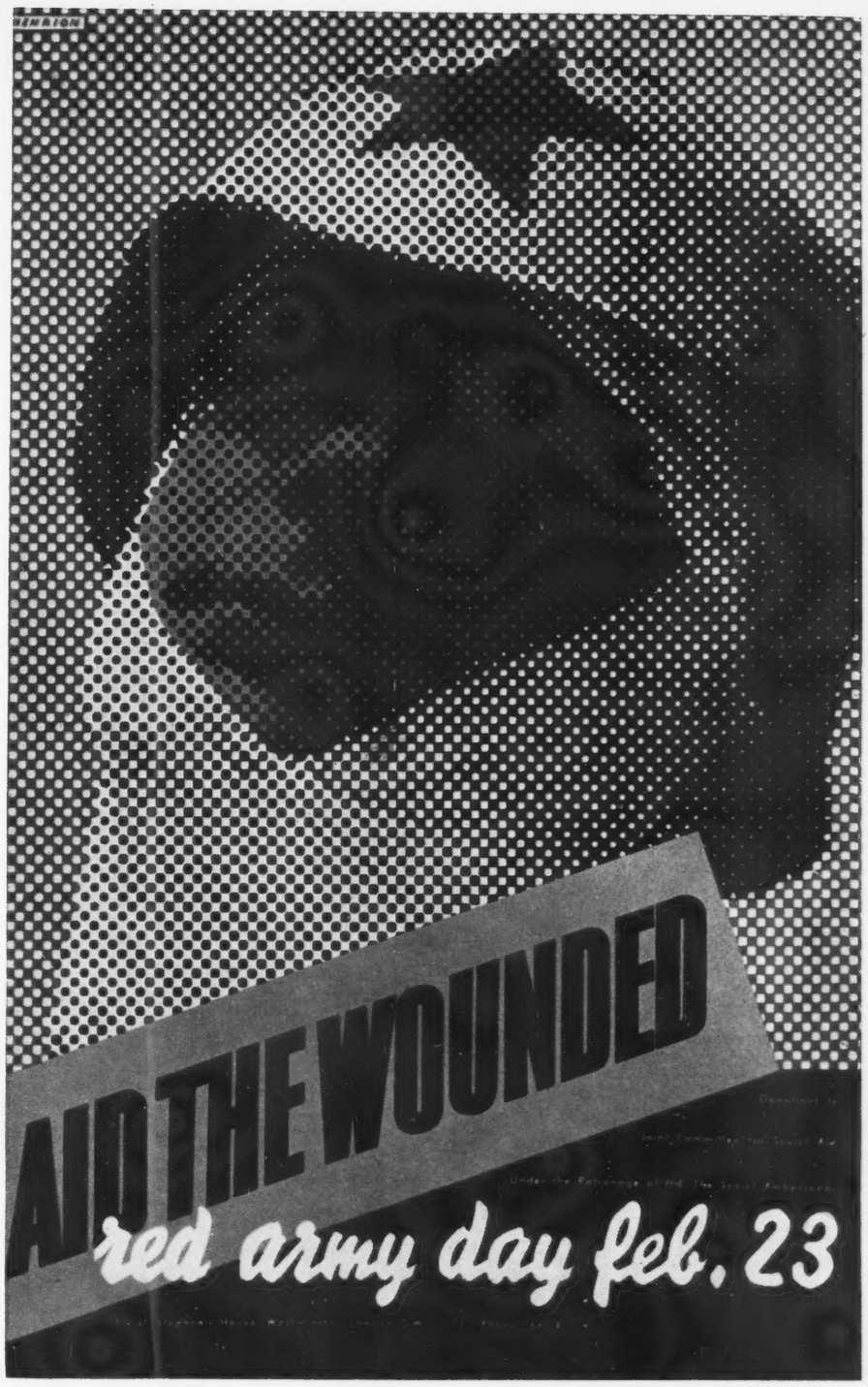

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Given his theme, the poster artist's first decision must concern itself with his method. For example, two of the posters reproduced have the same message—"Don't Waste Food"—but the two artists have chosen opposite methods. One relies on the attractiveness of a clean plate and has backed it up with a pleasant colour scheme 20: the other has chosen to depict a dirty plate and has deliberately aimed at a slightly repulsive effect 2. For the purpose of analysis the illustrations can therefore be grouped by method more effectively than by message. Broadly speaking the methods are five. **A.** THE WARNING, *with the stress on the consequences of ignoring the warning.* **B.** THE TEMPTATION, *with the stress on the advantages of yielding to the temptation.* **C.** THE APPEAL TO PATRIOTISM. **D.** THE INGENIOUS, *with its many variations—humour, whimsy, visual punning, and especially the vivid presentation of an intellectual idea in terms of pictorial symbolism. It is this method that owes so much to Surrealism.* **E.** THE INSTRUCTIONAL, *which ignores the emotions and relies on the repetition of a message or a piece of information. The above classification is, of course, rough and ready, and in many of the posters illustrated, two or more methods are used in conjunction.* **A.** THE WARNING POSTER, *too frightening for the milder atmosphere of peace time, is essentially a war product. Its main purpose is to prevent accidents or waste, and its main target is the factory hand or housewife. MAKE WAR ON MOTHS 18. An excellent example of the mixture of the photographic with the stylised. A stylised sleeve would have failed to give the necessary reaction "There goes my sleeve." A realistic or photographic moth would have lacked the sinister quality of the enlarged woodcut. IF YOU DIDN'T WANT IT WHY DID YOU TAKE IT? 2. Note the repulsively photographic mess of the crumbs spilling over on to the slab of lettering, and the slightly peevish tone of the wording. YOUR TALK MAY KILL YOUR COMRADES 7. Essentially a warning poster, but it also uses the method of pictorial symbolism—the spinning spiral of gossip that gradually straightens itself and turns into a bayonet. EYES CANNOT BE REPLACED 5. Startling use of the purely photographic together with strict economy of means. Apart from the carefully lit face, nothing but four words and an impenetrable black background. PREVENT LOOSE HEADS 8. One of the most telling of the warning posters. The pink blur behind the separated portions of the hammer emphasises the hiatus by attracting the eye to the focal point of the design. STAND FROM UNDER 11. Less successful than the last because less surprising. A touch of Surrealism here would have struck the Grand Guignol note that is lacking. BROKEN STRANDS, TORN HANDS 14. Terrifyingly effective. The loose strand in the middle of the simple geometry of straight line and circle makes it quite unnecessary to reinforce the warning with even a suggestion of a torn hand.* **B.** THE TEMPTATION

THE ARTISTS

1, Robert Harling. 4, Robert Bruce. 5, G. R. Morris. 6, Henrion. 7, A. Games. 8, Eckersley. 9, A. Games. 10, A. Games. 11, Lee-Elliot. 12, Lewitt-Him. 13, A. Games. 14, Eckersley. 15, Zéró. 16, Henrion. 17, Fitton. 18, Beverley Pick. 19, A. Games. 20, Fitton. 21, Henrion. 22, A. Games. 23, Henrion. 24, Clive Gardiner. 25, A. Games. 26, Fitton. 27, Lewitt-Him. 30, Henrion. 33, 'P'. 34, Louise Dahl-Wolfe. 35, R. Louvat. 36, Pat Keely. 37, Eric Fraser.

POSTERS OF THE ALLIES

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POSTER. *This—the favourite pre-war advertiser's method—is almost useless for war purposes. One of the few instances of it is Games's recruiting poster for the A.T.S. 10. Even here, glamour has been discreetly angularised and made unwontedly purposeful.* **C.** PATRIOTISM. *Not a popular method with the British, owing to peculiarities in the national temperament which a psychologist could probably explain. Plenty of French war posters have employed it in its primary form—Heroics : and plenty of Russian posters have used it in its secondary form—Hatred 32. It is not by accident that, of the three posters included under this heading, two are French and one American 31. Henrion's ET EN AVANT 30, is magnificent. The same artist's poster of the breaking of the Swastika 16, is clever but not nearly as powerful.* **D.** INGENIOUS *is, perhaps, not quite the right word for this category : but I doubt if a single word could cover it. Its main weapon is surprise—an unexpected twist, a touch of humour or naïveté, a species of visual witticism. The G.P.O. and the Ministry of Food have both been alert to its possibilities. POST EARLY 37, employs the vision and technique of children's book illustration. MILK : THE BACKBONE OF YOUNG BRITAIN 17, uses symbolism in an arresting way and the colour, though simple, is unexpected. GROW YOUR OWN FOOD 9. An example of the ingenuity that can link two ideas into a single pattern. The connection between the allotment and the dining table—including the instruments used—is established with a minimum of pictorial means in which colour plays an important part. A CLEAR PLATE MEANS A CLEAR CONSCIENCE 20. The contrast with No. 2 has already been pointed out. It is not merely between an empty plate and a full one but between the gay tablecloth and the colourless background and, in the lettering, between the comfort of a clear conscience and the rebuke of a guilty one. EAT GREENS FOR HEALTH 15. The trickiness with which the letterpress has been inserted so as to rob it of its didactic flavour and throw the onus of the message on to the newspaper might easily escape (as, of course, it was intended to) the notice of the casual observer.* **E.** INSTRUCTIONAL OR FACTUAL *posters include those composed of pure typography. POST IN THE MORNING 1, is an example of type skilfully used with just enough variation (the small black words among the larger red type) to give interest without spoiling simplicity or balance. Pictorially, the method is useful for announcements of exhibitions. WHEN YOU WRITE TO THEM 4, has been referred to in the accompanying article. So has the poster about how to deal with the last third of the loaf, 3. Posters of this kind offer little scope to the artist. There can be no appeal to the emotions and the element of surprise or ingenuity would interfere with clarity.*

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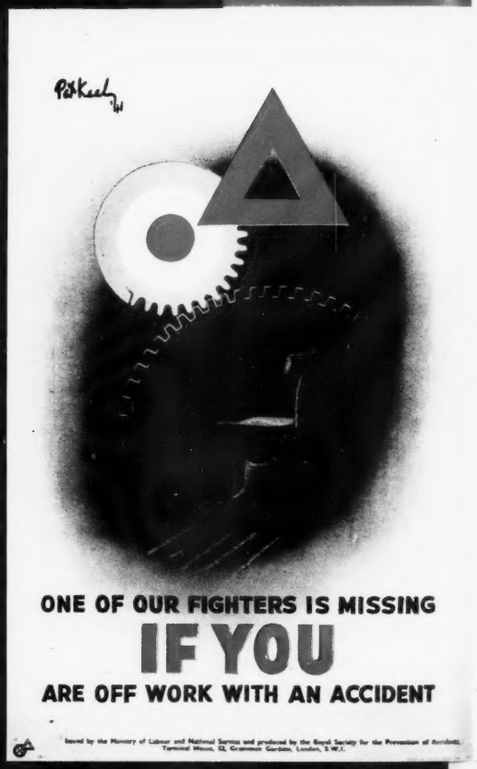
FRENCH RESISTANCE
HELPS THROTTLE THE BOCHE


ONE OF OUR FIGHTERS IS MISSING
IF YOU
ARE OFF WORK WITH AN ACCIDENT
Issued by the Ministry of Labour and National Service and produced by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, Tavistock House, 52, Gravenor Gardens, London, S.W.1.

ception, the poster artist has to exercise the utmost ingenuity. Note, for instance, how in the "Eat Greens" poster the word "Eat" has been cunningly inserted in skeleton outline between the spoon and the fork, while the word "Daily" has the casual air of belonging to the morning newspaper.

The illustrations and their accompanying notes will show in how many ways the artist is able to make unfamiliar and even unwelcome messages palatable. Sometimes he uses the bogy-man method—"See what awful things happen if you don't": sometimes he falls back on the temptation method—"See how nice it is if you do": sometimes he appeals to patriotism: at others he disguises the pill under a coating of playful ingenuity or whimsy or even prettiness. Among the posters I have selected only one is frankly instructional—the advice to housewives in dealing with the last three inches of the loaf.

Many of the posters illustrated here will be unfamiliar to the general public. With the exception of the War Savings poster and the G.P.O. posters they are addressed to special sections of the community, and have been placed where those specialists can most easily see them. It follows that their technique can afford to be a little different from that of the "general purpose" poster. This applies in particular to the factory poster which can always count on an audience of specialists and can usually be viewed from close quarters. Cooks may need wheedling into new habits, women may need wheedling into the fighting services (note that the only poster with even a suspicion of glamour is the A.T.S. recruiting poster; and learn, with surprise, that it was withdrawn by the Government for that very reason); but factory workers need no coating to the pill. The result is that their posters are among the most forceful and satisfactory the war has produced. The loose strand of cable under the magnifying glass and the hammer-head parting company from its shaft must have done more to prevent accidents than any number of printed notices imploring workers to exercise care.

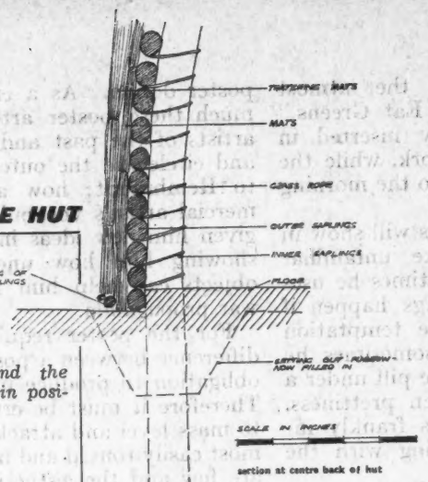
Oddly enough, though the poster's first duty is to appeal to the mind, and though æsthetics play no specific part in its production, beauty of form and colour do frequently appear as a by-product. Partly, of course, that happens inevitably because, to the artist, bad spacing, inharmonious colour, and untidy rhythms are in themselves intolerable. But also it happens because what is known as "good design"—art for art's sake rather than art for the sake of patriotism, safety, health or economy—is in itself persuasive. It tempts the eye to dwell on it. It acts as a bait to the propagandist hook. Fitton's poster "Turn over a New Leaf" is ostensibly a plea to use more vegetables. But there is nothing in it beyond two lines of small black lettering to suggest that vegetables have any connection with health. Instead, the artist has relied on sheer attractiveness of colour and pattern and the atmosphere of a comfortable home suggested by a nice wall-paper and a framed motto. I would like to think that this has been an effective poster from the propagandist point of view, just as I would like to think that the didactic poster about the last three inches of the loaf, with its inharmonious distribution of colour and pattern, has been ineffective. But one must avoid wishful thinking about the æsthetics of poster design. As a critic I am tempted to point out how much these poster artists owe, stylistically, to the "fine" artists of the past and present. How Pat Keely's triangle and circle are the outcome of Léger, while his chair belongs to Rembrandt: how abstract art has enlarged the commercial artist's vocabulary of shape and how Surrealism has given him new ideas in the handling of his subject matter, showing him how unexpected juxtapositions of common objects can help him in working out the shock-tactics of war propaganda.

For the poster requires shock-tactics. The fundamental difference between a poster and a picture lies in the poster's obligation to produce instant action. It must work quickly. Therefore it must be crude as well as simple. It must stoop to mass level and attack the maximum number through their most easily roused and most violent emotions. These emotions are few and the æsthetic emotion is not one of them. Fear and lust and hunger and patriotism are far more potent levers. It is they that dictate the poster's method, and provided they have been taken into account, æsthetic appeal is hardly more than an added luxury. Fortunately, luxury is not altogether to be ignored. Pure function has the penultimate but never the final word to say in determining the shapes of things. Just as, among six equally comfortable chairs, one may be delightful to look at, another downright ugly and the rest mediocre, so, among six equally potent posters, there can be wild variations of æsthetic merit. Certainly, to the sensitive, æsthetic merit increases their potency, but posters are not addressed to the sensitive. Nor, alas, are they always, or even often, commissioned by the sensitive. The lamentable general level of the War Savings posters would suggest that whoever had charge of this department was either an unscrupulous person with a theory that posters are effective in inverse ratio to their quality as works of art or else a philistine with quite exceptional gifts for ignoring the advice and dispensing with the services of artists.

But to deplore such a state of things is outside the scope of this article. To the art-historian, viewing the question dispassionately, the æsthetics of advertising are important; to the critic, whose main concern is with æsthetics, they are interesting, but only mildly so; but to the propaganda departments of the various ministries concerned, the question of æsthetics is a trifle academic. The ultimate test of a poster is its effect on large groups of human beings, and its ultimate judge is not the art critic but the psychologist.

It is obvious that in pre-war days a certain amount of rough and ready psychology determined the propagandist flavour of the poster. Shell petrol and Rolls-Royce engines were bought by a different class of purchaser from backache pills and floor polishes. The difference of class reflected itself rather in different degrees of refinement—the avoidance or the deliberate introduction of vulgarity—than in different degrees of æsthetic merit. But the war poster has no need to differentiate between income groups. Consequently its æsthetics are less bound up with snobbery. It can afford to be a reputable work of art, but it is still the psychologist's job to determine whether its propaganda value is affected, one way or the other, by its artistic value.

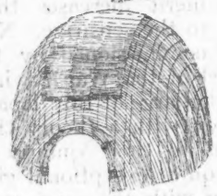
CONSTRUCTION OF THE HUT



section at centre back of hut

1 *The back and the doorway are in position.*

2 *Before the two sides are joined.*



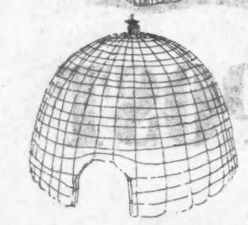
3 *Left to season.*

4 *The mats are in position.*

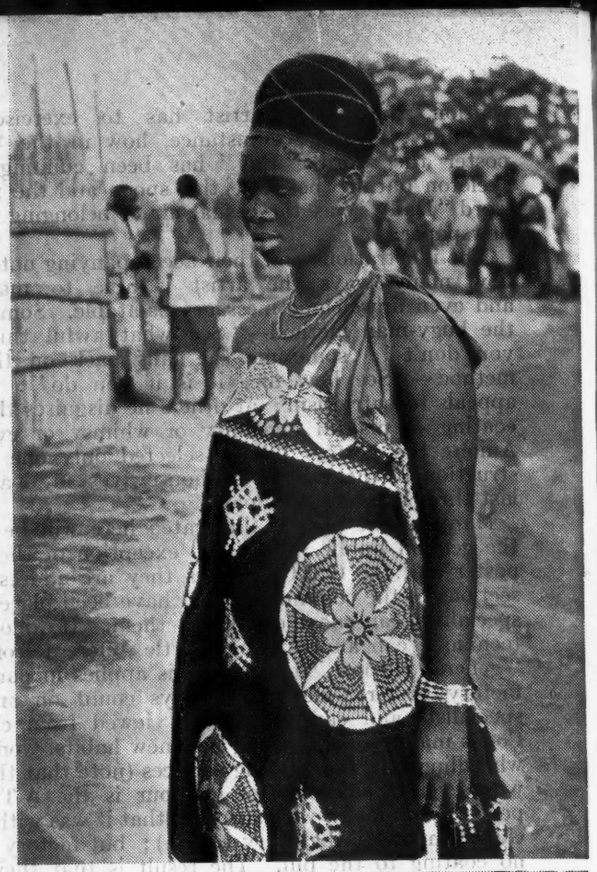
5 *The first fringe of thatch.*

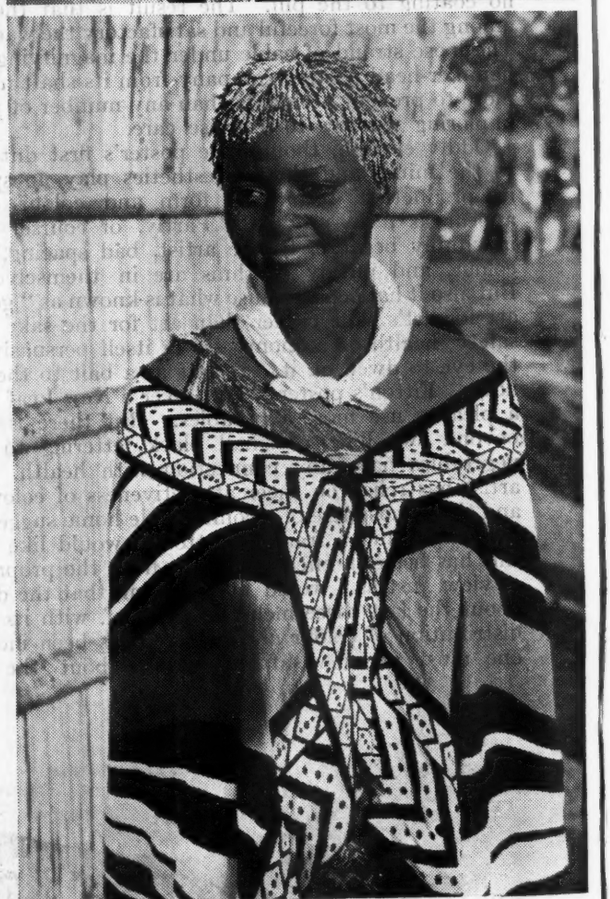
6 *Subsequent layers of thatch.*

7 *Beginning the binding.*



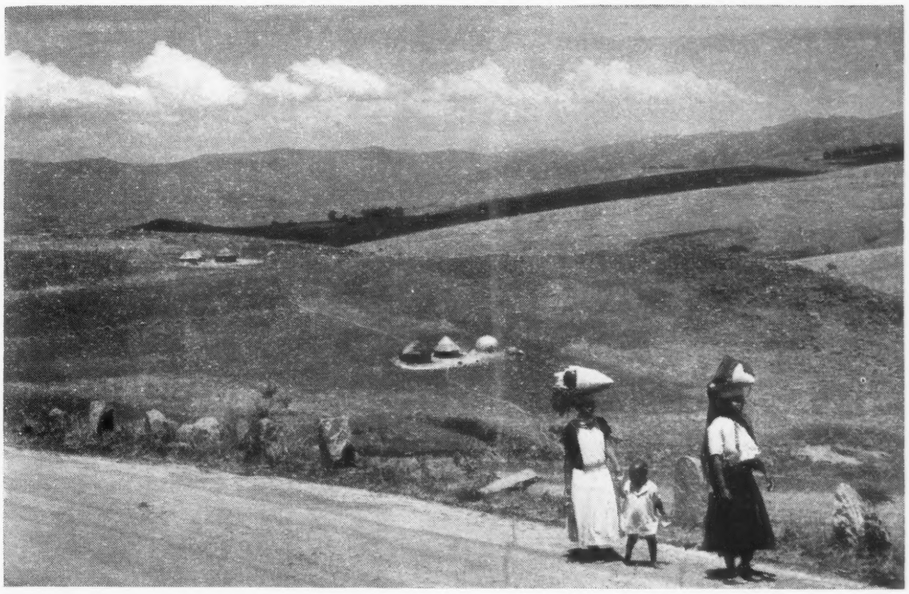
8 *The completed hut.*





THE PEOPLE *The ideal Swazi homestead is polygynous; polygyny, however, is attained for the most part only by aristocrats and wealthy, elderly commoners. . . . The importance of the mother, and her control in all matters affecting the homestead, is an outstanding feature of Swazi family and national life. So far as young people are concerned, a growing daughter has her girl's hut near her mother's where, before marriage, she receives a recognised lover. The unmarried men live in barracks which stand at the entrance to, and guard, the homestead.*

THE ARCHITECTURE OF SWAZILAND



HILDA KUPER

So far as is known, this is the first detailed description of any indigenous South Eastern Bantu construction to be published. For anthropologists, architecture is only a minor sideline, and architects are not in possession of the necessary material. In the work which is published here the author has, therefore, been able to act as intermediary. The material and photographs presented in this article were collected between 1934–1937 under a Research Fellowship from the International Institute of African Language and Culture. One point which emerges from the study is the obvious capacity of the Bantu to engage in complicated forms of construction. The skill required in the plaiting of rope, weaving of mats, spinning of the cobwebbed outer network and in making the complicated pinnacle, would dumbfound the average European. The skill required in the construction of a house of brick and mortar seems infinitely simpler. In fact it is of a different order being rather the capacity to work machine made articles to the straight edge and plumb bob than to fit nature's irregularities to circular form. If no comparison can be made, it is apparent that the individual Bantu requires at least as much skill in his own construction of grass and trees as the individual European in his construction of steel and concrete. However, physical construction does not complete the Swazi home, to neutralise any evil or destructive influences and to ensure general prosperity and health, nearly every home is "doctored." A description of this interesting, if not strictly architectural, process is given in Marginalia on page lix.

THE Protectorate of Swaziland lies wedged between the Union of South Africa on three sides and Portuguese territory on the fourth. It is a small country, with a rich variety of scenery, climate and soil.

From west to east Swaziland falls roughly into three topographical regions. In the west is the high veld, 3,000 to 6,000 feet above sea level, wild and broken, frequently veiled in mist and drizzle. On clear days serried mountain peaks are visible, rising to the supreme Makonjwa spur, a beacon between Swaziland and the Transvaal. Short grass covers the mountain sides, and clumps of trees and ferns grow near the streams that sparkle down narrow gorges into steep sheltered valleys. The country slopes towards the plateaux of the middle veld, 1,500 to 3,000 feet, its gentle undulations interrupted by odd-shaped kopjes—outcrops of dolerite, basalt and granite. The river beds are wider, cultivable stretches larger, the grass longer and the weather warmer and drier, than in the high lands. The midlands merge with the lowlands (700 to 1,500 feet), where the eye roves over thick bush, low thorn trees, short sparse grass. Here in the heat of summer days there gleams the mirage of water in unattainable distance. On the extreme east, forming a boundary with Portuguese territory, the Ubombo range rises abruptly. The bush country has a fascination and richness of its own: it is the haunt of wild game; there is fine timber in the scattered forests; when rain is sufficient, corn sprouts luxuriously in the rich turf soil, the best in the country; cattle thrive on the bush foliage and, except in years of drought, remain sleek and heavy uddered when they are lean and withered in the middle and high veld.

Four main rivers—the Komati, Mbuluzi, Usutu and Ingwavuma—and their tributaries, water the country. Generally speaking, they flow from west to east into the warm Indian Ocean. Here and there are lovely waterfalls and deep still pools, and many strange tales are told of creatures that live in the water and affect the lives of men.

There is no system of irrigation, and Swazi rely almost entirely on rain for their water supply. Rain is expected from September, the beginning of spring, until February, the end of summer. Steady showers fall in the high lands, torrential storms break in the low veld. Over a period of ten years, 1922 to 1931, the annual rainfall at Mbabane in the high veld averaged 57.572 inches, 32.32 inches at Bremersdorp in the middle veld, and 18.322 inches at Balegane in the low veld. Throughout the country, but more particularly in the eastern flats, there is a constant danger of drought.

The climate, for the most part, is delightful and exhilarating. In the winter the air is cold and still, and the sun shines from a cloudless sky. But sometimes in summer, the heat in the bush veld is over 120 degrees in the shade, and Swazi say they are too "burnt" to work. On the whole, the country is healthy though there is the danger of bilharzia in some of the rivers and of malaria in the lower altitudes. Men from the mountains are well aware of the danger of "the fever of the bush"; many refuse to believe that it is carried by a mosquito.

the homestead

Within the peasant society the major social unit is the homestead under the control of a headman. He sometimes subdivides his homestead into local subsections, but all are under his control and are recognised as parts of a single and effective unit.

Swazi homesteads lie scattered at irregular intervals over the countryside. In the middle and high veld people build on the hills and mountain slopes; their beehive huts of dried grass can scarcely be distinguished from the rounded granite boulders. Unfenced and irregularly shaped gardens straggle over the lower slopes, in the sheltered valleys, and on the open plains. In the bush veld, homes and gardens are made in clearings in thickly wooded country.

The ideal homestead is polygynous; polygyny, however, is attained for the most part only by aristocrats and wealthy, elderly commoners. Monogamy is therefore the rule, and even most polygynists rarely marry more than two women. Very few ordinary Swazi can attain double figures in wives.

A homestead is seldom occupied solely by a single biological family. For economic and ritual benefits, additional kinsmen or even unrelated dependants attach themselves to the immediate family. Single men stay with older brothers on the parents' death; widows sometimes return to their fathers or brothers; children of relatives or of friends are often "borrowed" to assist in the herding of cattle and nursing of infants; married sons often remain on the patriarchal estate.

The number of occupants in the homestead varies with factors of wealth and status. The smallest homestead that I know belongs to a Christian widow, who lives with her two unmarried sons several miles from their nearest kin; the largest is that of the Queen Mother, numbering at present nearly 300 occupants.

Homesteads are built according to a fairly standardised plan. In each homestead or local division there are three key structures: the cattle byre, great hut, and bachelors' quarters. If the lie of the land permits, it is built facing the rising sun—a symbol in family and national ritual. The cattle byre is usually a circular and occasionally a square enclosure, in which are dug flask-shaped grain pits (about 8 ft. deep and 2 ft. across the mouth), their openings marked with stones and sealed with dung. Swazi say this type of granary was devised in the days of tribal warfare to hide the harvest from the enemy. Placing the pits in the cattle byre serves another purpose as well, for it gives the headman an opportunity to control the food stores. Women, especially young and inexperienced housekeepers, may only enter the cattle byre on rare occasions. If they want grain from the pits they must send a child, who is usually assisted in taking out the grain by an older woman or by the headman himself. Men have complete freedom of access to the cattle byre. Homesteads without the cattle byre are few and usually belong to insignificant people—men without cattle or without sons to herd them.

Facing the cattle byre is the great hut associated with the elders of the headman's lineage, and decorated with the skulls of cattle sacrificed to the ancestors. The erection of the great hut marks a complete homestead. Alongside it, within a single reed enclosure, are other huts used for sleeping, cooking and storing food. They are arranged around a yard where people often sit, cook or work. In charge of the great hut is the chief woman of the homestead. She is the mother of the headman, the link between him and his "fathers." If she is dead, a classificatory mother[1], or the first wife of the headman, or a wife of the same clan as the dead mother, is substituted. She too is called mother and assumes the duties of the real mother. Ordinarily the great hut is taboo to wives, since it is the sanctuary of the husband's male ancestors whom they must avoid and respect. The importance of the mother, and her control in all matters affecting the homestead, is an outstanding feature of Swazi family and national life.

The barracks for unmarried men and male visitors guards the entrance to a homestead. In large homesteads there are often two barracks, one on either side of the cattle byre, each with a few huts surrounded by a strong wall of branches. Between the barracks and the great hut, forming with them a rough arc round the cattle byre, are the quarters of wives and married dependants.

Each married woman, after a year's apprenticeship to the "mother" of the headman, usually receives her own huts and yard, where she and young children in her care live and eat. Since wives may not enter the enclosure of the great hut without observing special restraints on behaviour, clothing and language, the husband usually visits them in their own quarters. A "modern husband" may build a room for himself to which he will summon a wife.

Senior wives are usually placed close to the main hut. Sometimes a senior wife has a subordinate co-wife, who contributes to her larder, and shares her kitchen, and who builds her living huts close by. A growing daughter has her girl's hut near her mother's, and there receives a recognised lover. A married son also often builds his huts near to his mother who is in charge of his young wives.

construction of homesteads

I have limited myself in this article to the conservative Swazi; in recent years there have been many new types of building and a group of specialist builders has arisen. The structure and furniture of present-day Swazi homes cover all varieties from the primitive Swazi hut to the middle-class European house. The characteristic Swazi hut belongs to the beehive type characteristic of most Nguni tribes.

Swazi homesteads are not permanent. They are moved from one site to another and, if it is necessary to move a great distance, abandoned altogether. When the headman or another important person dies, the cattle byre and all the huts (except that of the deceased) are literally carried a short distance from the old site and re-established on the old pattern under the old name.

The homestead is also transferred if there is an epidemic, if pasture and garden lands become exhausted, if quarrels break out with neighbours, or if the headman has a dispute with his political overlord. Sometimes, sons move away and form independent homesteads.

Building or moving may only take place after the spring and summer rains or it is believed that lightning or other misfortune will strike the inhabitants.

The following is a description of the building of a new homestead.

Before the first stick or stone is cleared the headman has the new site approved and then treated by an inyanga—a specialist in various types of native medicine, a man usually labelled by the ethnocentric European as "magician." To the conservative Swazi, the security of his home depends as much on the inyanga's ritual as on empirical craftsmanship. The preliminary treatment consists in sprinkling the site with various medicines and tying knots in the grass where the huts will be placed. The main ritual, described later on, is performed when the homestead is complete. In the interim period, there are taboos on the making of fire, on sexual intercourse and other normal behaviour.

Building of the ordinary Swazi homestead is not the work of individual specialists, but is carried out according to accepted rules of the division of labour on the basis of sex. The men bring in the heavy logs required for the palisade of the cattle byre and as supports for huts and fences; and they cut the long pliable saplings required for the framework of the huts. The women cut the grass for the thatching and plait the vast coils of rope for binding it down. Every Swazi has the right to take for his own homestead wood, grass and reeds growing in the district of his chief.[2] The two sexes undertake complementary parts in the building, the work of the men being usually more strenuous and that of the women more continuous.

The men clear the site of any trees and boulders, and then, with the help of the women, remove the grass and rubble. The area required must allow for a few feet between the huts and the surrounding veld. The rubbish is heaped up on the outskirts.

Each homestead is erected in a stereotyped sequence. Building begins with the cattle byre, then, since the cattle are transferred as soon as the byre is ready, the barracks is put up for the herders. Thereafter come the groups of huts belonging to each woman, ending with the great hut of the "mother."

The cattle byre is entirely the work of the men. Where suitable trees are obtainable, it is made of strong branches in between which may be twined pliable twigs. In the more rocky areas, and possibly as a result of Sotho influence, some headmen prefer to build with stone which saves the bother of repair. The stones are piled loosely one on top of the other for four or five feet, whereas the wooden cattle byres are usually higher. The byre of a commoner has one entrance, that of a chief two or more. The gateposts are important points in doctoring and establishing the status of a homestead. They are strengthened with heavy thongs to withstand pressure, and across the narrow opening a headman usually places a log to stop the animals from going out. Structurally, the cattle byre is nothing more than an open pen, and after heavy rains I have seen the beasts sink knee deep in slush from which they were tugged by valiant herders.

The most developed construction, and that for which most skill is required, is the living hut. It is difficult to describe in terms comprehensible to a European the amount or type of material which is used since Swazi measures and materials are of a different order from our own. A Swazi is able to gauge with extraordinary accuracy how many "bundles" of saplings or grass he will require and he is also able to discuss with keen appreciation the quality of different species.

The grass takes the longest time to cut and prepare. It should be brought in when it is honey gold but not too brittle. The women go out in work parties for the purpose, leaving early in the morning and returning in the late afternoon. The grass is tied into bundles roughly 2 ft. in diameter and the average woman brings home two bundles a day, or, as one informant put it, "three if she is a quick worker and if there is a lot of grass." In addition to these large bundles required for the actual thatching, different varieties are required for the rope and for the ornamental pinnacle.

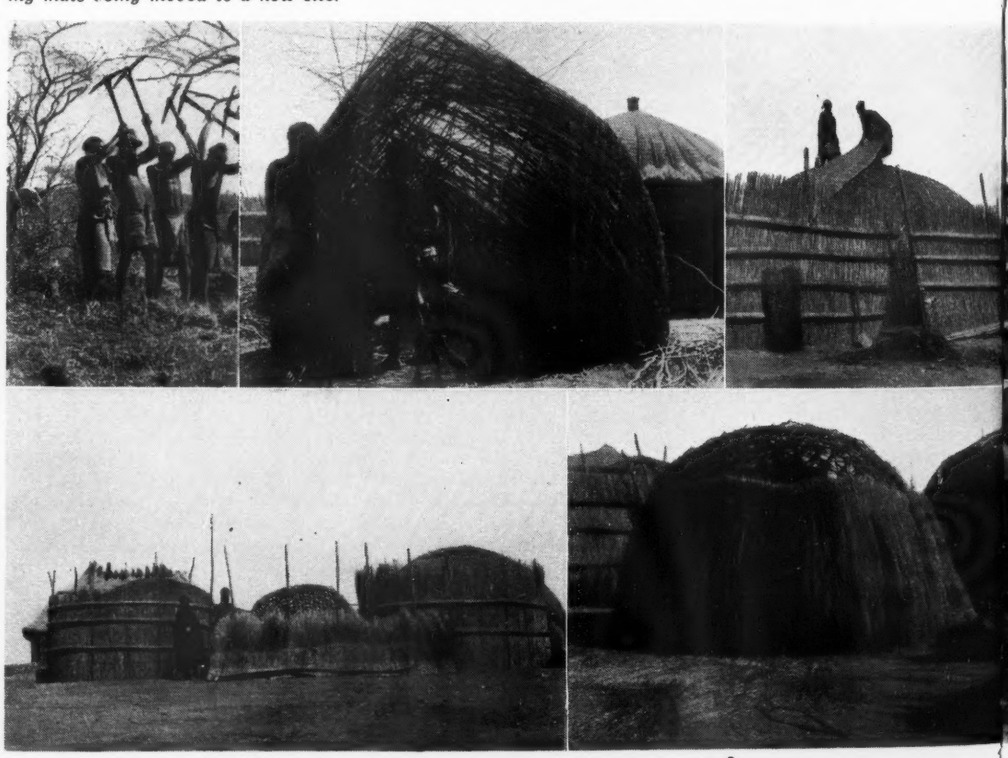
While the women are grass gathering, the men usually start on the construction. By shuffling a foot along the ground a man draws a rough circle. A more modern method is to make a compass of a nail in the ground with a string attached to it. A furrow a few inches wide is dug round the mark.

The framework is begun. The butt ends of large, freshly cut and therefore pliable saplings

[1]i.e. another wife of the man's father.

[2]This does not apply to plantations or other cultivated trees.

1, clearing a site in the low veld; picks are in general use. 2, the framework of a hut before the two sides are joined. 3, laying the first mat, known as the umncengo. *4, the* umncengo *is in place; note the fantail spread of the side of the hut; the log is a footrest for workers to reach the top of the hut. 5, a woman binding the elaborate pinnacle of a hut. 6, a detail of the webbing at the foot of a hut. 7, the framework of a store hut before the two sides are joined. 8, a fringe of thatch against screen supports, with the framework of the store hut behind. 9, the first fringe of thatch on the store hut, with additional fringes on the ground. 10, beating reeds into a loop for the end of band. 11, binding the bands. 12, a completed screen with the tops of the reeds neatly trimmed; note the crude ladder used by the women doing the thatching. 13, a living hut stripped of thatching mats being moved to a new site.*



1 2 3 4
8 9 10

are sharpened and placed at what will be the back of the hut. They are spaced some six inches apart and six to nine inches deep. Immediately outside is dug a close layer of smaller saplings, arranged so that the shorter are in the centre and the longer towards the outside. Using the inner layer for vertical supports, the outer are bound into concentric hoops radiating from the centre of the back. Where the saplings cross each other they are tied tightly with grass rope or hide thongs.

The back is left in an incomplete fantail and the builders begin on the doorway directly opposite. This is formed by pliable saplings bound firmly together and bent to form an arch high enough for a crouching figure to pass beneath.

The men then build up the two sides beginning with the man's side, the right side of the hut as one goes in. In this case the inner saplings are bound into hoops while the outer ones rise to the crown of the hut. Finally, the two sides of the hut are drawn together, sometimes with the addition of extra saplings in the centre. The framework thus consists of two layers, the first a series of arched ribs passing from back to front, the second a close covering running from side to side. To support the framework two, or more often four, wooden poles are placed under the central ribs. On the top of the poles, attached at each end to the inner framework, are strong wooden supports.

A ritual for which I could obtain no adequate explanation but which appears to have a sexual symbolism is enacted when the two sides of a living hut are about to be linked together. The woman who will own the hut is told to run away. She goes a short distance and returns when the work is done and "the man's side and the woman's side are joined."

Over the framework are placed the thatching mats made and usually fixed by women. In every living hut, running from back to front, covering and reinforcing the join between the two sides, is sewn a long grass mat. This has a special name, umncengo, and is likened to the clothing marking the status of a bride or of a woman pregnant for the first time. The umncengo, which is never employed in a store hut, resembles a crude sleeping mat tied with three or four rows of plaited string. The framework is then deliberately left exposed for days or even weeks for the moisture to dry from the saplings.

When the framework is considered sufficiently "seasoned," it is covered over with mats similar to the umncengo, some being laid crosswise and others in circles. These mats form an inner lining which is sewn down firmly to the ribs. Round the base of the hut over the mats a strong ring of one or two saplings is bound, to which the grass ropes are later attached. The outer thatching consists of layers of grass bound only at the stalk end, giving the impression of a long fringe. It is prepared in convenient lengths and rolled into bundles. The first layer is wound round the base facing upwards, the stalks either touching the ground or a few inches above it. Subsequent layers point downwards and mount in circles to the pinnacle. The women sew the fringes to the framework through the mats.

The Swazi have an ingenious method of finishing the crown of the thatching—always a tricky spot. An ornamental pinnacle of specially fine grass is made by women experts. It resembles a huge tassel with a strongly and elaborately woven top, some nine inches in diameter and a binding about nine inches deep round the waist. The whole pinnacle is about three feet long. It is carefully set on the crown of the hut with the tassel spread out to cover the loose ends of thatch. In huts of other native tribes which I have seen, where there is no similar construction, there is a tendency for the roof to leak at the top, whereas a good Swazi hut is waterproof.

Radiating from the "neck" of the pinnacle is a spider web of strong ropes preventing the ends of the grass fluttering up in the wind. This binding which requires a great deal of skill is usually the work of the women. The binder fixes the ropes firmly to the pinnacle and throws down the free ends to a helper who ties them over the thatching to the ring sapling round the bottom of the huts. If these ropes were tied to the framework itself, holes would be made right through the covering of the hut. Then, starting from the pinnacle and working round and round the hut looping the rope tightly to the vertical strands, the binder spins a firm net.

To reach the top of the hut, whether it be to join the saplings or stitch the thatching or fix the pinnacle, the worker stands on a log tied firmly to the framework. Some Swazi nowadays use rough ladders.

The floors are prepared from loosened earth which is moistened with water, stamped flat and rubbed smooth with a large pebble. A shallow circular depression is made in the centre for the hearth. When the people are in the hut they smear the floor as often as once a week with a mixture of cowdung and water to check insects, give a clean, pleasant smell and keep down damp. There is no drainage though a few Swazi dig trenches round the huts. As a rule very little surface water penetrates because the floors are usually slightly higher than the ground outside and the thatch overlaps the floor.

In olden times, the doorway was closed by a square, hard, closely woven mat; to-day wooden doors are often made, or bits of corrugated iron are used. The screens in front of Swazi huts fulfil some of the functions of doors, giving privacy and protection from the weather.

A Swazi hut is cool in summer and pleasantly cosy in winter. The inside is practically empty even in the houses of the wealthy. The Swazis' main possession is their cattle, and luxury goods are few. Mats for sleeping and sitting are rolled up and stuck in grass slings hung from the framework. Clothes and blankets are slung over sticks attached to the sides. Odds and ends such as horns, ornaments, medicine containers, snuff-boxes, hairpins, porcupine quill head scratchers, are stuck in the thatch. Nowadays most Swazi keep a few European clothes in a large box—often the only article similar to the furniture we associate with the European house.

In addition to her living hut, every woman has at least one store hut which is also sometimes used as a kitchen. It is built very like a living hut but with less care. The framework is not as fine, both layers of saplings being spaced at approximately six inches apart, and the thatching and binding being coarser. The thatching is deliberately thin in order to allow smoke from the hearth to escape, but this is not an effective flue and after a few months the inside of a cooking hut is pitch black with soot. In the store huts are flexible conical grass grain baskets and occasionally a built-in wooden platform for unhusked mealies and pumpkins. On the floor and tied to the walls are the limited range of household utensils—pots, beer strainers, food mats, calabashes, spoons and platters and grinding stones.

When the huts are finished the characteristic reed fences are built to screen the group of huts belonging to each woman, and smaller fences are made to shelter the entrance of each living hut. The fences are mainly the work of women. They dig a narrow trench and place in it heavy wooden supports (brought by the men) at distances of

4 5 6 7

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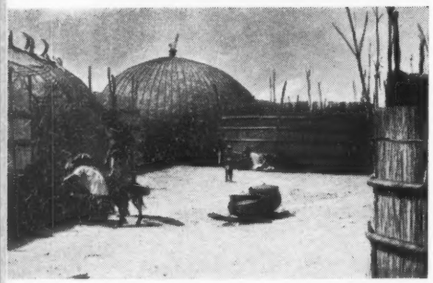
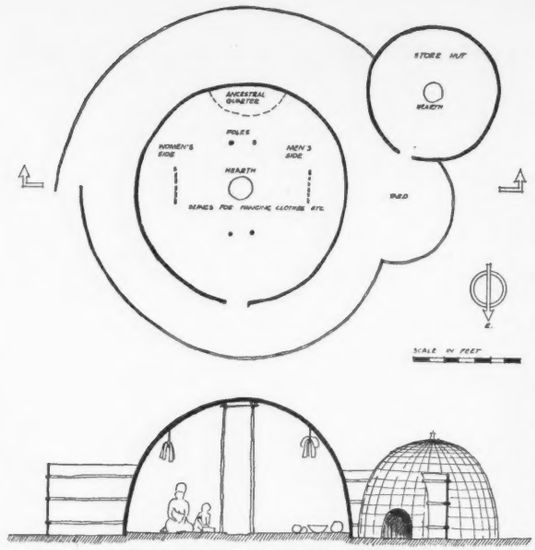
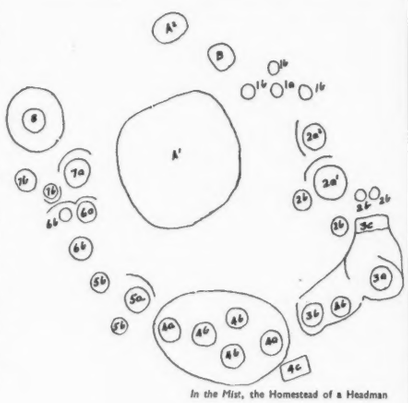




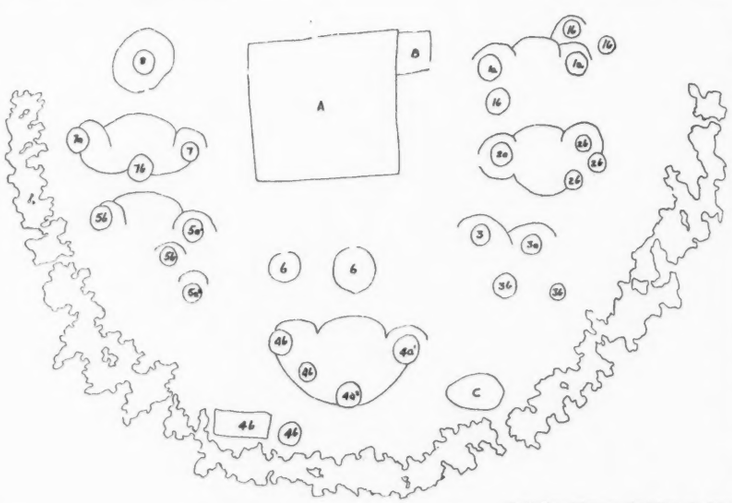
PLAN AND SECTION OF A WIFE'S QUARTERS

Enkungwini—In the mist, Homestead of a Headman. A1, Main cattle byre. A2, Enclosure used when A1 is too muddy. B, Calf byre. 1, Enclosure of a wife who died : her huts are all empty. (a) Living hut. (b) Store huts and kitchen. 2, Enclosure of wife, daughter (20 years) and boy (7 years), son of wife's sister. (a1) Living hut of mother. (a2) Separate hut of daughter. (b) Store huts and kitchen. 3, Enclosure of wife and small girl (10 years) " borrowed " from her people to look after wife's baby. (a) Living hut. (b) Store huts and kitchen. (c) Large grain platform. 4, Main enclosure, inhabited by headman's old mother, young wife and two small grandchildren (5 years, 2 years). (a) Living hut. (b) Store huts and kitchen. (c) Large store hut attached to great hut. 5, Enclosure of married son of headman, his wife and baby (4 months). (a) Living hut. (b) Store huts and kitchen. 6, Enclosure of wife who has been moved to a new homestead : her huts were being transferred. (a), (b). 7, Hut of headman's young unmarried brother (30 years). 8, Barracks for adolescent boys and men visitors.

Ekuhhetsheni—At the Place of Rumours, Village of a Chief. A, Cattle byre (square, and of stone). B, Calf byre. C, Pig-sty. 1, Enclosure of wife and her small son (2 years old). (a) Living hut. (b) Store or kitchen. 2, Enclosure of wife, two daughters (10 years, 6 years) and son (3 years). (a), (b). 3, Enclosure of wife, 2 sons (8 years, 5 years) and daughter (2 years). (a), (b). 4, Main enclosure. Senior wife, acting as " mother," one daughter (18 years). (a1). Living hut of mother. (a2) Separate hut of daughter. (b) Store huts. (c) Special store huts attached to great hut. In them are kept grain from headman's main fields. 5, Enclosure of wife, her grown daughter with young baby. (a1) Living hut of mother. (a2) Living hut of daughter. No lobola has been paid and she and her baby are staying at her parents'. (b) Store huts and kitchen. 6, Rondavels built for the chief. It is an innovation for the headman to have such private quarters. 7, Enclosure of wife, two daughters (8 and 5 years old) and son (12 years). 8, Barracks of men, occupied at night by adolescent and unmarried sons.



In the Mist, the Homestead of a Headman



At the Place of Rumours, the Village of a Chief

about five feet. Between the poles they put reeds, closely packed and held in place by two, three or four thick bands made of bunches of reeds or grass. To start a band a woman takes a handful of reeds and ties a rope round the middle of it for about one foot ; she then dips this into water and beats the bound section with a stone until the reeds are flexible. This is then looped round the end pole and two women, one working on the outside and the other on the inside, pass the rope to each other, pushing in new reeds to keep the band of a uniform thickness. The rope must be wound so closely and tightly that the work is slow and it takes a whole morning to bind only a few feet. Finally, the feather ends of the reeds are cut off.

The space between the huts and the fencing is carefully cleaned and smoothed. Part of it will be required in fine weather as an open-air kitchen, and harvested crops may be kept in the yard before being stored elsewhere.

Swazi building material requires to be frequently renewed. It is buffeted by rain and hail and wind and, though local conditions vary, the fences seldom last more than two years, or the thatching ropes and grass more than five. In certain areas, mildew and white ants precipitate the end.

moving a homestead

The process of moving a homestead is almost as elaborate as building anew ; the same order of building is maintained. The cattle byre is the first structure to be erected, the headman laying the foundation by carrying the main gatepost of the old byre, and a libation of beer is poured into the hole where the post is to be placed. When the rest of the palisade is built, the huts, beginning with that of the bachelors and ending with the great hut of the mother, are carried to the new site.

A special technique is involved in moving each hut. The binding ropes are removed, and the mats and fringes are carefully rolled up. All the material which is in good condition is used again. The framework is loosened from the soil and lifted ; the uprooted ends of the saplings are firmly bound with rope to prevent the building from spreading. The main weight is taken by poles passed under the hut. Twenty to thirty men are needed to carry an average sized hut. Married women do not, as a rule, take part, but the girls can help the men. They, however, do not hold the heavy poles. (It is interesting to note in passing that while the Hottentots, in many ways less advanced than the Bantu, packed their portable huts on the backs of their oxen, the Bantu do not use their animals as beasts of burden.) The hut, carried to the words of a rhythmic tune, is finally set down with great care so that it does not spread and collapse. When the great hut is finally moved the workers, led by the headman and his mother, sing special songs and perform special ceremonies to induce the ancestors associated with the old home to share and bless the new.

Because building is strenuous and at times monotonous a headman and his wives usually seek assistance from kinsmen and neighbours whom they reward with meat or beer at the end of the day's toil. The size and number of work parties depend on the size of the homestead and the status of the headman. Building is recognised as an expensive business which may cost an entire harvest. But work in the peasant community is carried on in a far more leisurely and convivial atmosphere than in an urban environment ; it is accompanied by songs, gossip, discussion ; there is no strict foreman, no calculation of man-hours, no differential payment in terms of skill. The feast at the end of the task is shared equally by all labourers who give their services willingly, appreciating that sooner or later they will require similar assistance.

DESIGN REVIEW

for a discussion of new designs, new materials and new processes, with a view to developing the essential visual qualities of our age: functional soundness, the outcome of science, and free æsthetic fancy, the outcome of imagination.

Advisory Committee

Misha Black
Noel Carrington
John Gloag
Milner Gray
Nikolaus Pevsner
Peter Ray
Herbert Read
Sadie Speight

THE POST-WAR CAR

If you said that the motor-car is the most significant art-form of our age, you might cause some raising of supercilious eyebrows but you would be far from wrong. The motor-car is a quantity-produced machine to whose appearance as much thought is given by its designers as the craftsmen of the pre-machine age gave to their less complex productions. And, though the creation of car design may be the work of a few, the extent of its appreciation certainly goes into many millions. The man who doesn't know a Modigliani from a Matisse has strong views on which is the better of two rival makes of car—and he does not judge entirely, nor even mainly, by mechanical standards, but (as Herbert Read has pointed out) "betrays unconsciously æsthetic appreciation."*

For most of us, the prospect of owning a new car is at present remote—British factories are reported to have 230,000 outstanding orders—but the appearance of motor-cars is nevertheless a matter of general interest since we cannot, even if we would, avoid seeing them. The fact that they are as pleasant to see as, in general, they are, is evidence that we have to-day anonymous engineer-trained designers of æsthetic sensibility; for the motor manufacturer rarely goes to the consultant designer, or indeed anywhere outside his own industry, for the design of his product.

To-day there is a trickle of new designs from a few of the British motor factories, but it must be emphasised that the industry, here and in all major manufacturing countries, has had a long period without opportunity to produce new models and, moreover, with little opportunity even to *plan* them, since it has been occupied wholly with war production.

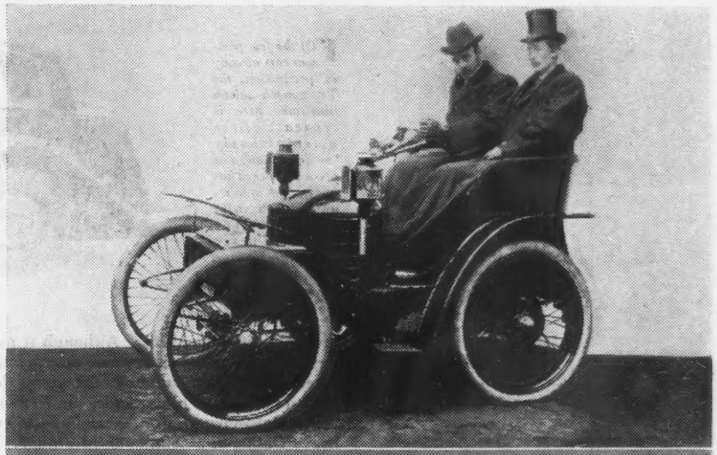
Until now, there have been no new British cars since 1939; none in the United States since 1942. At present there is less evidence of new production models in America than in Britain, because of the mass-production methods of American industry, and the post-war strikes which have affected it.

A glance at the products of the biggest manufacturers in this country (e.g., Ford, Morris, Austin, Standard, Vauxhall, Humber, Hillman) shows that the cars they are making now are basically the same as their last pre-war models, though "freshened up" by the addition of the odd strip of chromium plate here and there. Similarly, the newest American designs in quantity production to-day were designed before Pearl Harbour. But from a few of the small and medium sized Midland car factories, really new designs are now emerging. The latest Rolls-Royce, Armstrong-Siddeley, Riley, Lanchester and Triumph, for example, are very different outwardly, as well as constructionally from their pre-war counterparts. Perhaps the most interesting feature common to them is that their appearance shows very little American influence, though the Americans went on designing new cars two or three years later than we did.

When we consider the bulbous, pretentious and highly unfunctional shapes of the typical 1942 American cars (especially the more expensive models), we may be glad that their influence is not very evident over here; for the English style in motor-car design, which is very similar to the continental European style though generally more conservative, has points in its favour despite its numerous detractors. Even the small car, that typical British product recently derided by the Member of Parliament for Widnes as "nothing more than a joke, a glorified expensive toy"† has a usefulness which surely is

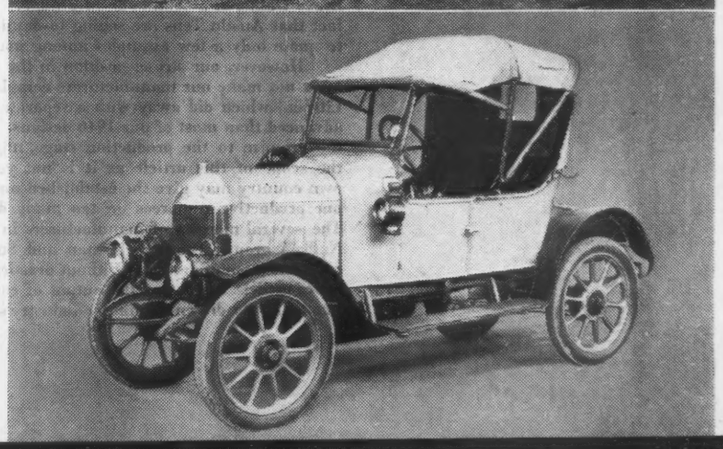
* *The Meaning of Art* (Faber).
† C. N. Shawcross, M.P. (reported in *The Times*, April 6, 1946).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MACHINE FOR TRAVELLING IN



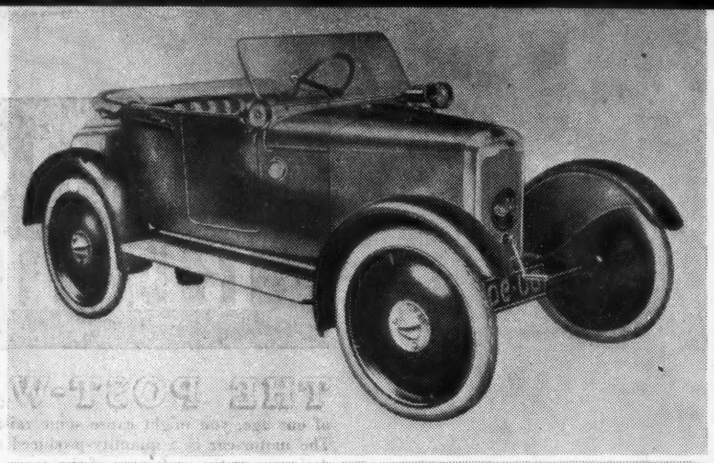
150a *The 1900 Wolseley Voiturette was one of the first British light cars. Engine, passenger seats and transmission had already taken up the relative positions still regarded as orthodox to-day—though final drive was by chain instead of shaft, and steering by tiller instead of wheel.*

WOLSELEY 1900



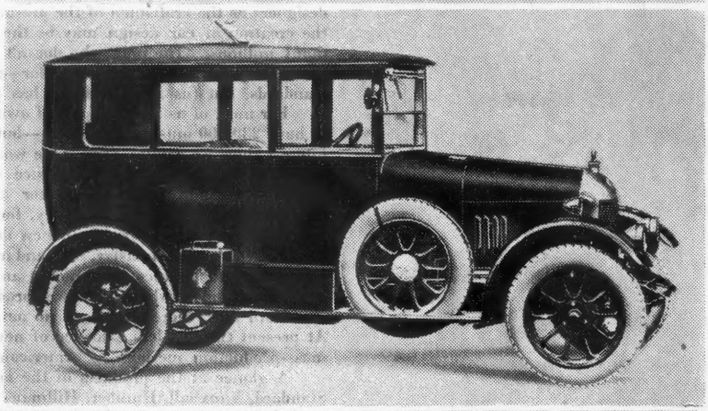
b *Untidy, but it worked. Such light cars as the Morris of 1912 (illustrated) and the Singer of 1913 introduced many features which remained characteristic of English light car design for the next twenty years.*

MORRIS 1912



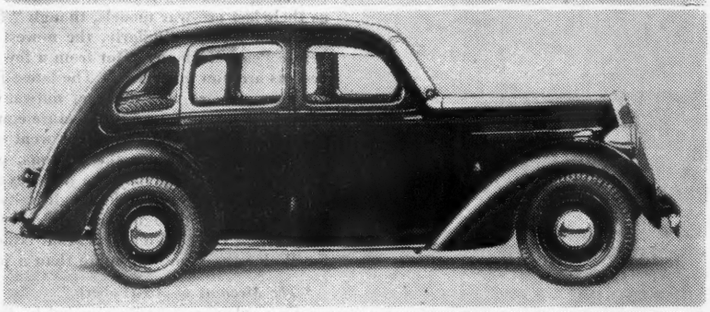
c After the Great War there was a flood of new models, orthodox and unorthodox. One of the most popular was the Rover, with twin-cylinder air-cooled engine of 8 horse-power behind a dummy radiator: 5,000 of this type had already been built when this photograph was taken in 1922.

ROVER 1922



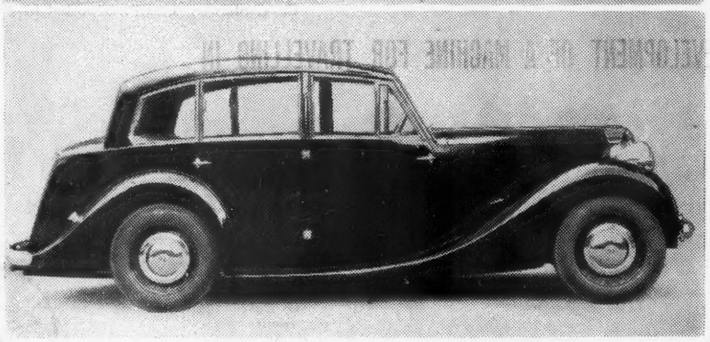
d But 1922 saw the introduction of the still more successful Austin Seven. And a year later small engines had been developed to provide sufficient power for a full-size saloon body, such as this 1923 Morris - Cowley — one of the first small cars with enclosed coachwork. The small car need no longer be a light car; no longer a fair-weather vehicle.

MORRIS-COWLEY 1923



e When this stage of mechanical progress was reached, it was only necessary to smooth-out angular lines, eliminate or merge exterior fittings, and introduce detail refinements, to arrive at such a 'finished' small car as this 12 horse-power Flying Standard of 1936.

FLYING STANDARD 1936



f Of the few post-war cars already in production, the Triumph saloon illustrated here is typical. Less ostentatiously 'modern' than some pre-war types, it has an air of quality which designs in the medium-size medium-price range hitherto have generally lacked.

TRIUMPH 1946

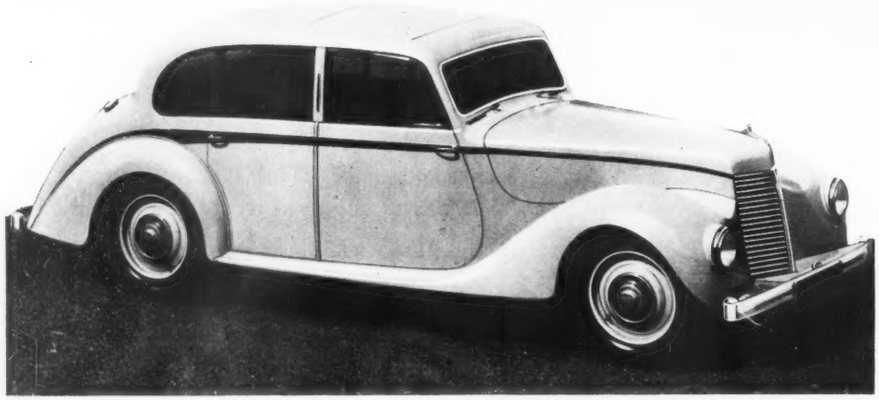
proved by its popularity. Although it may be conceded that the majority of the world's motorists want large high-powered cars, made desirable by long distances and bad roads in many countries, there is still a very considerable minority for whom the small car, costing less to run, is adequate. Even in countries with undeveloped hinterlands, many motorists use their cars mainly for short house-to-office, shopping and social journeys in or near large towns—and for these a large car is not merely unnecessary but, in heavy traffic, at a definite disadvantage. That this is something more than empty theory is shown by the fact that Austin Tens are selling to-day in Oslo and Valparaiso, and Standard Eights in New York . . . to quote only a few examples among many.

However, our strong position in the small-car field (and in the allied field of sports-car production) must not make our manufacturers complacent or neglectful of progress in design. Technically the 1934 Citroën, which did away with a separate chassis and gave the body a structural function, is still more advanced than most of our 1946 designs. Even the German " people's car," which has now passed from the promise to the production stage, might teach us something. The new Healey car, though outside the scope of this article as it is not yet in quantity production, shows that new, small firms in our own country may give the established manufacturers food for thought. Moreover, we are squandering our productive resources on too many designs which are basically similar and differ only in detail. The several mergers of manufacturers in recent years (e.g., Morris, Wolseley, M.G. and Riley in the Nuffield group, Humber, Hillman and Sunbeam-Talbot in the Rootes group) have so far shown little rationalisation of design. Without drastically narrowing the buyer's field of choice, we could well produce fewer models, increasing the output of each and so reducing the cost : a fact to which the Government has pointedly drawn the motor industry's attention.

26

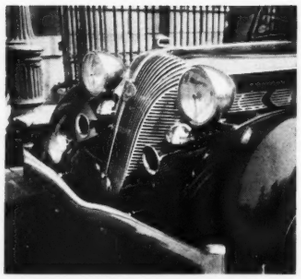
151 *As the apparent radiator is no longer a real radiator but merely a protective grille embodying vents through which air can reach the concealed radiator, it need no longer present a vertical frontal surface and so dominate the lines of the car. This fact has been sensibly realised by some American car-designers, but it has gone to the heads of others, who have produced glittering chromium monstrosities seemingly inspired by the maw of a Disney whale or the dolphin on a Thames Embankment lamp-post.* (*Photo above: Peter Ray.*)

152 *As long ago as 1933, the Riley Kestrel adopted a "downswept" tail — one continuous curve from roof to floor level—which was subsequently adopted by many designers. Later, Rileys broke away from this fashionable but not particularly functional shape, and the new 1½-litre model* (picture on right) *follows immediate pre-war practice* (below) *in this respect. Though similar in general lines, the new car has subtle differences in design which put it into a more distinguished class than any of its predecessors. Not a large car, it nevertheless has all seats within its wheelbase of 9 ft. 4½ in., and a luggage boot which, according to* The Motor, *will hold two large and two medium suit-cases, two attaché cases and a bag of golf clubs. In present circumstances, Rileys are concentrating their whole output on one engine, one chassis, one body design.*



153 *Probably the most drastic change in appearance between pre-war and post-war models is seen in the new Armstrong-Siddeleys. The new convertible coupé and saloon* (illustrated above) *are named respectively* Hurricane *and* Lancaster, *and the exceptional cleanness of their lines suggests that they owe more than their names to aircraft design. Being aerodynamically clean they are also easy to keep clean in a more domestic sense: such fittings as headlamps, door hinges and traffic indicators are built-in; bonnet louvres are eliminated; those excrescences which remain—such as door handles and filler caps—are reduced to an inconspicuous minimum; even the familiar Sphinx mascot has been redesigned. Though Armstrong-Siddeley introduced the self-changing gearbox (Wilson epicyclic) in 1936, they still offer this device only as an alternative to a standard synchromesh box.*

154 *Pre-war, the Triumph was a typically English light car until somebody incongruously stuck an American-type radiator-cowling on the front* (picture on right) *. . . an example of the unfortunate result of attempting to compromise between two styles. The new Triumph* (*now manufactured by the Standard Motor Co. Ltd.*) *bears no resemblance to the old except in name. Points of design interest are: Chassis frame of tubular members claimed to be* $2\frac{1}{2}$ *times as rigid as the normal box-frame girders; gear lever mounted on steering column and readily accessible through the two-spoked steering wheel; independent springing for the two front wheels—a feature common to many of the new British cars, in this respect following accepted Continental practice. For the convertible coupé* (below) *acceleration from a standing start to 50 m.p.h. in 15 seconds is claimed, with a top speed of 84 m.p.h. The saloon* (150f) *has the same 1800 c.c. engine.*



BOOKS

Frank Lloyd Wright

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By Frank Lloyd Wright. Faber & Faber. 35s.

IT is a good moment for Wright's autobiography to make its impact on the English public. For six years we have been compelled, not merely to stand still, but to step back to more primitive conceptions of building. We had to put our theories and ideals on a high shelf and devote our energies to emergencies—to hasty improvisations and salvage. We are still improvising and making do with inadequate materials and insufficient labour. Planning, on any imaginative scale, is done in coloured inks, not in steel and cement. But in this atmosphere of frustration and austerity we have had time to think over first principles, and it is my impression that a good number of artists and architects, especially young architects, find themselves in no mood of complacency. It is not a matter of post-war fatigue: it is rather a reaction against austerity and severity, and inevitably this reaction includes within its scope certain tendencies which are older than the war—namely, constructivism in the plastic arts and functionalism in architecture.

We should not be afraid to re-examine our principles, and it may be that we can convincingly demonstrate that for the time in which we live, and under the economic conditions of our living, these principles are logical. But a revolt may be directed against a prevailing dialectic: æsthetic principles need not necessarily be logical—they can be illogical, imaginatively irrational. It was not *reason* that determined the architectural motive of the Gothic cathedral or of the Baroque palace. It is not reason that has determined the character of Frank Lloyd Wright's buildings. Another reviewer of this book called Wright "the Father of the Functionalists," but the truth is rather that Wright has been a lonely giant battling against contemporary academicism: a functionalist does not put carved larva peacocks over his doorways, build dwellings over waterfalls, or erect above a chapel a concrete tower-trellis for flowering vines.

Frank Lloyd Wright is, of course, a romantic—perhaps the greatest romantic of our age. The mistake is to assume that a romantic is a kind of village idiot with no interest in science or "modern developments." On the contrary, typical romantics like Goethe and Shelley had keen scientific interests: a contempt for science is more characteristic of the classicist. It is his romanticism which gives Wright's autobiography its typical flavour—it is an epic of self-absorption, of expansiveness, of quixotic idealism. It is a big book, and it is all about the man himself, his notions and achievements, but never for a moment does it flag. And it is never petty. Failures are accepted with courage, tragedy with dignity. Call the man a charlatan if you feel that way about him, but then recognize that his background is a continent and that he fills it without strain, with ease and affluence. If he is a charlatan, so was Whitman, so was Goethe, so was Beethoven. "In Beethoven's music I sense the master mind, fully conscious of the qualities of heartful soaring imagination that are god-like in a man. The striving for entity, oneness in diversity, depth in design, repose in the final expression of the whole—all these are there in common pattern between architect and musician." The man is conscious of this kinship, and when we have measured his achievement, we are not disposed to deny his claim—though we might have doubts about the claims of the grandiose in general: doubts about Beethoven and Whitman no less than doubts about Frank Lloyd Wright.

In addition to the Man, there is in this book a philosophy and an architecture. The philosophy preaches "organic integration." It says that if you want to create a healthy civilization and a beautiful culture, man's artifacts must be in unison with the natural: there must be no hard and fast division between man and his environment. This is given a literal interpretation:

> "In integral architecture the *room-space itself must come through*. The *room* must be seen as architecture, or we have no architecture. We have no longer an outside as outside. We have no longer an outside and an inside as two separate things. Now the outside may come inside and the inside may and does go outside. They are *of* each other."

This conception has a general application:

> Thus in this rise of organic-integration you see the means to end the petty agglomerations, miscalled civilization. By way of this old yet new and deeper sense of reality we may have a civilization. In this sense we now recognize and may declare by way of plan and building—the *natural*. Faith in the *natural* is the faith we now need to grow up on in this coming age of our culturally confused, backward twentieth century. But instead of "organic" we might well say "natural" building. Or we might say "integral" building.

Integral building includes "an awakened sense of Materials—their nature understood and revealed." Away with plaster and paint—let brick remain brick, stone stone, and wood an organic texture. But might not a painter claim that paint is also a material? And certainly a plasterer can go into raptures over *his* "textures." Wright extols glass, "a super-material," and textiles are admitted as "a beautiful overhead for space, the textile an attribute of genuine architecture instead of decoration by way of hangings and upholstery." There seems to be an unreasonable prejudice here: let us rather demand freedom to exploit the æsthetic potentialities of any and every material. This prejudice in favour of an arbitrary range of materials—brick, stone, glass and untreated woods—might explain Wright's deficient sense of decoration. Admittedly I am judging from photographs, but his interiors look bleak, his furniture is hard and angular, his ornament empty, and there is just no place at all for "art" (paintings, drawings, sculpture). Wright wishes to abolish the "cave" and restore "something of the freedom of our arboreal ancestors living in their trees." But in man's evolution the cave was a slight improvement on the tree-top, and for inhabitants of a temperate or arctic zone it was at any rate "cosier." Wright seems to be an enemy of *Gemütlichkeit*: his forefathers were Welsh Unitarians.

But I speak without experience of living in a Frank Lloyd Wright house, and cosiness may be a prejudice. Alexander Woolcott found one of Wright's recent (1940) houses "exhilarating"—"just to be in that house uplifts the heart and refreshes the spirit. Most houses confine their occupants. Now I understand, where before I only dimly apprehended, that such a house as this can liberate the person who lives in it." We could do with a few more testimonies of this sort. If we can take the human aspect for granted, there is no denying the poetry. The houses are married to the landscape: there is lyricism in an office building, integrity in everything. No doubt inferior architects have built better houses—better in the sense that they will give satisfaction to dull-minded people for a century or two, and then pass into oblivion. But Wright's genius, always romantic, sometimes mad, hovers at the threshold of a new epoch, and no modern architect has offered so much inspiration, inspired so much hope. He is like his great painter-contemporary Picasso in that the fertility of his genius has given no excuse for the foundation of a new academicism.

HERBERT READ

The Australian House

HOMES IN THE SUN. By Walter Bunning. W. J. Nesbit, Sydney. 12s. 6d.

IN dealing analytically with the past, present and future of Australian housing, Walter Bunning, the distinguished Australian architect and town-planner, puts in a strong plea for more imaginative home design. He takes nothing for granted, and by examining the factors which influenced the growth of the Australian house stimulates the reader to think again about those features which have become standardised through force of habit rather than logical thought. My own criticism of the Australian architecture I have seen is just this lack of imagination in using European and American forms without due regard to Australian conditions. It is indeed disappointing to find houses covering large areas around Sydney harbour whose designers seem far more concerned with English suburbia than the sunshine of New South Wales, or even the unrivalled views of the harbour.

Within the compass of this small book, Mr. Bunning has given an admirably complete analysis of the factors affecting the early development of housing in a new, undeveloped country with special reference to Australia; an investigation of the principles which should be observed in building houses to-day; and also of Community Centres and the ideas and principles of modern town-planning. In the introduction we are told "This book is concerned with general principles and not with cut-and-dried solutions. It is for the citizens to plan their own particular needs and to see that they become a reality." The text succeeds in carrying out this policy, and the layout of the book is most stimulating. The short, clear-cut chapters are amplified by continuous marginal notes comprising captions to the numerous diagrams and photographs and references to housing legislation, historical events, and so on.

Several of the illustrations, as well as the arguments, are familiar to architects to the point of being hackneyed, but this is not primarily an architects' book. Although the arguments themselves may be familiar they take on new point in being applied to a specific country and in being linked to a specific historical background.

It is chastening to town-planners concerned with bringing new order into the relics of Victorian chaos, to find how concerned with the subject were the administrators of an earlier age. Thus Captain Hunter, who accompanied Governor Phillip in 1788—"There are few things more pleasing than the contemplation of order and useful arrangement arising gradually out of tumult and confusion: and perhaps this satisfaction cannot anywhere be more fully enjoyed than where a civilised people is fixing itself upon a newly discovered or savage coast . . . large tracts are opened, plans are formed, lines marked, and a prospect of future regularity is clearly discerned." In 1790, Governor Phillip writes to the Colonial Office, "I have the honour to enclose your lordship the intended plan of the town . . . the principal streets are placed so as to admit a free circulation of air and are two hundred feet wide . . . and as the ground which runs to the southward is nearly level, and a very good situation for buildings, streets will be laid out in such a manner as to afford a free circulation of air; and when the houses are to be built, if it meets with your lordship's approbation, the land will be granted with a clause that will prevent more than one house being built on the allotment, which will be sixty feet in front and one hundred and fifty feet in depth; this will preserve uniformity in the buildings, prevent narrow streets, and the many inconveniences which the increase of inhabitants will occasion hereafter." An aerial photograph of a typical congested part of Sydney is contrasted with this passage.

In his Conclusions at the end of the section of the book dealing with the growth of Australian cities Mr. Bunning, speaking with the authority of his position as Executive Officer of the Commonwealth Housing Commission, says that the reason for the failure to fulfil the early promise of ordered development "can be summed up in one word—POVERTY. A large section of the Australian people cannot afford to pay the rental for a home worthy of the name. The investigations of the Commonwealth Housing Commission proved conclusively that under the economic system the controlling force—private enterprise—finds it financially unprofitable to build homes for the basic wage earner in suitable localities at a rent within his means. On the other hand, private enterprise finds it highly profitable to speculate in slum housing and to let these houses at such high rentals that one family alone cannot afford to pay the price. Two or three families are then forced to move in and share the rent. Profit has been of paramount importance at the expense of human personality."

The book throughout is full of sound, practical commonsense. An example is the way in which the author treats all kinds of houses, flats as well as cottages, as *Forms of Shelter* and gives the pros and cons in an objective manner in relation to the type of family which may be considering living in them, at the same time pointing out that "satisfaction to be derived from a house is not in the amount of space provided, but in the way that space is arranged."

There is only one minor point on which I would join issue with the author: his treatment of kitchens solely as places in which to prepare food with the greatest efficiency possible. The scarcity of maids (which is just as acute in Australia as here) makes it necessary for the kitchen to function as a children's playroom and a place where the housewife can take her lunch in comfort. A cliff of white cleanliness, however shiny, is not permanently congenial when considered as part of a living room.

BRYAN WESTWOOD

Betjeman in the Belfry

NEW BATS IN OLD BELFRIES. By John Betjeman. John Murray. 6s. net.

IN the title of this new volume our topographical poet-laureate forsakes the chancel for the belfry. But be not alarmed. Mr. Betjeman's belfry is no ivory tower. Sturdily built—to the design perhaps of Butterfield?—it stands firmly on English soil, buttressed with affection, ivy'd with nostalgia. From its summit Mr. Betjeman, neither Yogi nor Commissar, observes as keenly, wittily and musically as ever. What does he see? The places we all see, but few of us perhaps with so fond an eye:—

Cricklewood . . . ["land of laundries . . . nuts and nuggets in the window, trucks along the lines below"]. *Camberley* . . . ["The Hillman is waiting, the light's in the hall, the pictures of Egypt are bright on the wall" . . .]. *Margate* . . . ["how lightly municipal, meltingly tarred, were the walks through the lawns by the Queens Promenade" . . .]. *Oxford* . . . ["Belbroughton Road is bonny, and pinkly bursts the spray" . . .]. *South London*: . . .[. . . "and calmly rise on smoky skies of intersected wires the Nonconformist Spirelets and the Church of England Spires" . . .] and *Henley-on-Thames* . . . ["and 'boats for hire' the rafters ring, and pink on white the roses cling,

and red the bright geraniums swing in baskets dangling down " . . .]. Mr. Betjeman, you see, is still the metrical maestro, still master of the evocative phrase. And the bats, are they really new? Well, we've met some of them before—the toothbrush airing on the N. Oxford window sill, Miss Hunter Dunn, " furnished and burnished by Aldershot sun," the poultry farm girls, the barking athlete, the village organist—but how nice to see again their familiar furry little faces and hear the effortless beating of their wings. And those of you who still think Mr. Betjeman is just a funny man read the last verse of " Parliament Hill Fields," or " Before the Anæsthetic " or " Sunday Afternoon Service in St. Enodoc Church, Cornwall." Send not to enquire then, Review readers, for whom Mr. Betjeman's bell tolls. It tolls for all of you—and each note is a summons.

HUGH CASSON

Caviare in a Famine

COLOUR SCHEMES AND MODERN FURNISHING. By Derek Patmore. The Studio. 25s.

IF the architect has a different outlook from the interior decorator it is because his training and inclination give him an organic view. He places furniture as planning requires and decoration becomes a product not a pastiche. Technical knowledge gives a skeletal discipline that is essentially the same for Robert Adam and Walter Gropius. The decorator tends to still-life picture making, searching for colour harmonies and decorative schemes. He composes rather than plans. If he is often despised unfairly—for he has to deal with unsatisfactory raw material and must supply backgrounds to personalities too unoriginal to do much for themselves—he does act the middleman, marketing wares of which he often has as little craft knowledge as he has building techniques. Miss Edith Oliver in her *Four Victorian Ladies* relates how " this minor art," both eclectic and fashionable, was until recent years a wholly domestic one, managed with high competence. There seems something at once precious and theatrical in the pre-war habit of leaving interiors down to the smallest detail to professional background designers. This book largely deals with such backgrounds, rooms for living up to rather than living in where one cannot move a chair or change a flower without calling in the designer. Scene after scene might have come straight from the west-end stage, an illusion aided by the photography which (in unconvincing technicolor) seldom conveys the impression of a whole room while leaving flashbulb shadows in some instances even cast towards the windows—and how few of these there are. Machine or no machine for living in the House is surely not a stage for living on? In this rarified atmosphere of fashion, both unpractical and expensive, so few of the rooms give the impression of habitation that it is a relief to find Miss Jean de Casalis leaving her daily paper on the couch. How carefully these people must choose their clothes " to go with the colour scheme "; one wonders what happens when they visit each other?

If it is luxury to view so lavish a collection of pre-war interiors, it is the luxury of the glossy fashion magazine (which has the advantage of being periodical) for like clothes many of them have dated. Now it appears that " the modern movement in interior decoration has already shown an eastern influence. . . ." I'll wager M. Charles de Bestegui's London Club revival wins by a horsehair. Incidentally in spite or perhaps because of all the latest decoration gossip in which both Messrs. Goethe and Ruskin acquire new halos, no mention is made of Swedish furnishing. The architect must often envy the decorator his easy juggling with plexiglass, chromium steel and Empire furniture in what Peter Quennell calls the unholy marriage between Art and Fashion. He can seldom feel happy about it; his is a long term policy. As a social commentary this book may have historic interest, practically it is caviare in a famine.

FELLO ATKINSON

Hints from the Poles

THE POLISH SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, 1942-1945. Charles Birchall & Sons. 30s.

FOR three years the National Polish School of Architecture has been established in the Liverpool School of Architecture just as the National Polish School of Medicine has been in Edinburgh, but with this important difference: that the Polish School of Architecture has been able to publish the work of its students in all its branches in a handsome and informative volume which does justice too to their delightful methods of presentation. Looking at these drawings by students of all five years, for apparently Polish Schools of Architecture have five year courses like ours, I can well understand the enthusiasm with which the present head of the Liverpool School, Professor Budden, writes his introduction and the value to the Liverpool School it must have been to have had these keen, imaginative and able students and teachers, about fifty in all, scattered over the five years, in the same building and often sharing the same programmes—indeed I wish they had shared them more often for there is clearly a great deal all of us could learn from these Poles. Their historical studies of course are very different and perhaps more thorough than ours, which is probably the reason why even the most mechanical rectangular blocks of buildings have always delightful touches of the baroque somewhere to give contrast. It was natural with such people as this Polish School has clearly had—I say "had" for, sad to say, its work is now closing down—that sketch design should achieve gayer and more fantastic results than with us, but it comes as a surprise that a whole section of their work was devoted to the design of factories for which they first travelled over large sections of Lancashire and Yorkshire and then produced a series of designs for a newspaper building, a tyre factory, a hammer mill, an iron foundry, several for jam factories, for dairy products, bacon and such-like things, including the rebuilding of a large "blitzed" Liverpool department store. In all these, particularly in the latter, it is interesting to see the ideas, new to us anyhow, that they introduce. The store building designs, for instance, all give up more room for people to walk in shelter and look at the windows than we do who mainly keep them to the street pavement. One design for this particular store even shows an internal street. But everywhere there are things of interest in plan and programme as well as in elevation and general shape. Every block of flats, for instance, has its own community centre with theatre and dance hall.

There is a considerable town planning section in which Liverpool's traffic problem is bravely tackled, but I notice in the schemes for the extensions to new villages and towns there is even less attempt at community planning than with us (except that the community is rigidly confined) and that the isolationist house unrelated in plan to the community centre still prevails. Nevertheless this is a very interesting section of a valuable book, much more valuable than any ordinary collection of students' work, first because of the clear and beautiful and to us new form of presentation used in which line and shadow are given sharply with little wash, then because of the lively baroque details used with modern work, for instance in a town hall for a Liverpool suburb, or in the more ambitious thesis design for a Parliamentary precinct on an acropolis (where, incidentally, I notice there are three legislative chambers not two and a cathedral-like chapel). This latter is by Z. Borysowick, whose anglicised name of Boris should at least be remembered for I am sure he will be a great architect one day. Religious buildings are included in a number of projects and churches are themselves, unlike with us, a common programme. One must allow something of course for a different historical background, but I can well imagine this book with its several hundred illustrations, carefully explained in English, being, as it is bound to be, not only invaluable to all teachers of architecture in this country, but to our younger architects too—and by younger I do not necessarily mean those younger in years.

CHARLES REILLY

The Brass-Tacks of Planning

NORTH LAMBETH AND SOUTHWARK REDEVELOPMENT AREA. Study prepared for His Majesty's Council of the Duchy of Cornwall by Holroyd F. Chambers and Louis de Soissons. 21s.

THIS study applies the principles of the L.C.C. plan to a small area on the south bank, and was undertaken at the request of the Duchy of Cornwall in order to discover what, if anything, the Duchy could do to help forward the replanning of London. The significant conclusion is—nothing. Herein lies the value of the report. It picks out with a spotlight the impediments which are holding up progress. Statistics, always confusing, are replaced by lists of names related to definite sites; general descriptions by accurate survey maps clearly coloured and easy to read if not to handle. Anyone not directly concerned with the preparation of the L.C.C. plan might be excused for failing clearly to understand its implications. But when it is applied, as it has been here to a small and typical area, and worked out firm by firm and street by street, there is no escape from them.

The first fact which strikes home is that the preparation of the plan has been instigated by a body which is not a planning authority; and that the area chosen for study, because it forms a natural neighbourhood unit, includes parts of two boroughs. The second is that even assuming the necessary measure of co-operation, it could not easily be scheduled under the existing Town Planning Acts. Thirdly the nature of the problems involved in re-zoning industry is made clear. In this 459 acre redevelopment area there are at present 222 industrial undertakings occupying a total of 57.1 acres. Road improvements and a new central park, both essential parts of the L.C.C. framework, require the immediate removal of 38 firms occupying 5.2 acres. Re-zoning within the redevelopment area on the lines recommended in the L.C.C. report requires the removal of a further 129 units covering 35.5 acres. And that is not the full story. The elimination of non-conforming users from sites zoned for industry and commerce would bring the total of firms to be shifted from their present sites up to 170, including such large undertakings as John Oakley, the sanitary engineering works, J. C. & S. Field and Doultons. The report concludes that central redevelopment cannot begin until alternative sites for industry have been provided in satellite towns and trading estates, and adds a rider to the effect that it will not begin (most of the premises in question having been more or less severely blitzed) so long as owners are debarred, under the War Damage Act, from claiming cost of works payments for buildings rebuilt on new sites.

It is not clear from the text of the report how many people must be decentralized in order to arrive at the proposed population of 17,600, but the creation of approximately 120 acres of new open space clearly involves some reduction of the present population, and the density figures suggest that fewer people would be rehoused in new parts of the housing area than live there at present. Which raises the further question " How are local authorities to finance their redevelopment plans? " and explains their unwillingness to prepare them.

The study of North Lambeth and Southwark redevelopment area does not only point out difficulties. It shows better than the larger plan what is at stake. The open spaces seem more spacious. The newness less terrifying. Clearly when one gets down to it there is no difficulty in retaining any building or institution which has worn well or is capable of further growth. The authors are to be specially congratulated on their handling of that awkward intruder, the community centre, which they have civilized and made to mix with old friends. But mightn't something more be done to civilize the small house?

AILEEN TATTON BROWN

Planning Law

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING LAW. By E. C. Mekie and Harold B. Williams. Spon and Eyre and Spottiswoode. 37s. 6d.

WE have now three Acts of Parliament dealing with Town and Country Planning, all passed under differing political conditions and all reflecting in some way the differences in those conditions. The result is something of a mosaic of political colour, attractive to the eye, but inclined to cause a headache to those compelled to look too closely or for too long. One result of this state of affairs is that books in which lawyers attempt to explain the laws are beginning to multiply.

This latest book is technical and very good of its kind. It is in two sections. The first deals in detail with the phases of a planning scheme, its inception, its growth and its effect, and records the various clauses of Act and Order that govern each step. The second prints in full the three major Acts, those of 1932, 1943 and 1944, without which, of course, the book would lose a great deal of its value. The result is not easy reading but it is essential reading for those who have to understand the details of what they do and why. No one has ever claimed that learning one's way about Acts of Parliament is a light task for a sunny afternoon.

The effect of reading these Acts and the authors' explanations of the procedure they lay down is to convince the reader that what we need very badly is a new Town and Country Planning Act. In the last three years we have travelled a long way, right from the period in which a man might think of his land as his castle to the time when the use of his land is ceasing to be a thing in which the owner has the last say. The authors regret this change. They sigh for the days when lawyers decided what an Act of Parliament meant, not a Government Ministry. They say, a little sentimentally, that while perhaps we may avoid in the future the worst mistakes of the past it is doubtful whether anything even approaching the best of the past can ever be achieved under this modern legislation. It is an interesting argument and it is doubtful if the authors will find the majority on their side but, happily, it is irrelevant to the main purpose of their book.

The effect of these Acts and of the present Minister of Health's determination to make local authorities learn how to plan their locality by the practical method of building it is to make a change that can only be described as revolutionary. As a guide book to this revolution this work is of very great use.

ERNEST WATKINS

ANTHOLOGY

Colour at Westminster

I fear that I have not done justice to the colour aspect of the Houses of Parliament. I have suggested that the exterior of the building is of greyish limestone which can look yellow in some lights. Westminster Hall (a place of mortal and sepulchral cold in all weathers) is ice-grey ; its roof-beams are the colour of walnuts ; the shafts of light that slope through the Gothic windows fill the whole huge hall with a kind of periwinkle or violet glow. For the rest, the various rooms and chambers and passage-ways and lobbies of the Palace are warm brown and dull gold ; with scarlet carpets in the corridors (and in the Princes' Chamber and the libraries), and Minton tiles of yellow, blue and russet underfoot elsewhere. The walls of rooms not coated with frescoes or burdened with royal statuary are papered with florid designs of gilt and brown which shimmer dimly in the electric light. The Royal Gallery, a fine wide apartment, tiled throughout its length, contains the two great frescoes by Maclise (*Blucher Meeting Wellington* and the *Death of Nelson*). These pictures, forty-five feet long and twelve feet high, have now faded like most of the other frescoes in the Palace and give to the whole Gallery (with its dull gold statues of the English sovereigns on brackets at either end) an autumnal aspect which adds considerably to its beauty. . . Many English buildings, particularly English Palaces, create an impression of coldness and formality, even of supercilious hostility, upon the unwary stranger. In contrast with these stands Barry's Palace of Westminster—one of the most amiable buildings in the world.

HANS WILD and JAMES POPE-HENNESSY
(*The Houses of Parliament*).

MARGINALIA

Doctoring the Swazi Home

Proofing the Swazi home against evil and destructive influences is as important as damp-proofing is to the English home. The constructional techniques employed by the Swazis are described in the article by Hilda Kuper on pages 20-24; in the following notes she describes the extremely interesting process of doctoring.

"Practically every Swazi insists on having his home 'doctored' when it is built, and again at intervals of roughly three to five years. Furthermore, if any misfortune befalls the huts or the inhabitants, the inyanga (doctor) is invariably summoned. The aims of the treatment are to neutralise any evil or destructive influences and to ensure general prosperity and health.

"According to the Swazi outlook, there is a very close connection between the people and their huts. It is more than the sentimental attachment which Europeans feel for their homes ; it is almost a physical bond, or identification, a 'mystic participation,' so that when misfortune strikes the human occupants, the village as well as the people is cleansed by the inyanga, and when lightning or fire or other disaster strikes the village, the people must be strengthened to resist contagion of evil. As a result the Swazi regard the doctoring as part of the structural work needed for satisfactory building and occupation.

"The ritual itself is described as ukubetsela, 'to peg down,' i.e., to make firm and secure. It varies considerably from one doctor to another, depending on his experience and inspiration, but certain ingredients and methods are common to all. The following very condensed description of a doctoring which I witnessed in the Piggs Peak district in 1936, will bring out the main features.

"Headman Zwane had not 'treated' his home for four years and his wives insisted that he neglect his duty no longer. So he sent for a neighbouring inyanga, who arrived early one morning with an assistant. They set to work in one of the huts in the presence of the headman and a couple of the senior members of his homestead, all of whom took a keen and vocal interest in the procedure. The 'betsela' of a hut is private, but unlike certain other medico-magical treatment, is not secret, for it is considered the right and essential thing to do, an obligation of all good headmen.

"The inyanga cut up a wide assortment of barks of trees, roots of plants and skins of animals, and he accompanied his labour with fascinating stories of the power of each ingredient, which acted as a psychological voucher of its efficacy. The inyanga reminded me of a most persistent insurance agent.

"Many of the substances were selected on the common principle that like produces like (i.e., Frazer's principle of sympathetic magic). Thus, certain barks were chosen because they had the qualities of hardness and resistance, and in consequence the homestead would be assisted to withstand attacks from witchcraft of enemies. One of the roots used in the potion grew deep and firm in the soil, thereby symbolising security and permanence. Most vegetable ingredients possessed specific names, frequently indicative of supposed inherent powers. Among the Swazi, the rigid spell is rare, but the names of materials used in the rites serve much the same purpose ; they themselves are believed to help achieve a desired end. One bark in the building potion was named 'pass each other by,' signifying that if enemies came to attack they would miss their mark ; and another was 'to hit back,' i.e., to turn the evil on the doer. The animal ingredients are used to protect the inhabitants from the harm which is believed to emanate from certain creatures of the veld, some of which are associated with witches' familiars.

"The inyanga cut up the necessary ingredients, and put them in a potsherd on the hearth to boil. The brew is called *intseleti*, a generic name for any mixture used for sprinkling for protection, defence and well-being. Into the brew he also dropped a number of small hollow reeds known as 'pegs,' to 'peg down,' or stake the huts securely. After a while the pegs were removed, stuffed with medicines and smeared with the fat of certain powerful animals.

"Towards evening, the doctor, accompanied by the headman, staked the pegs into the floor and the thatching of the huts ; and at the entrance, and around the sides, of the cattle kraal. The remaining pegs were dug outside the village along the pathways radiating in the four directions, North, South, East and West, to protect the homestead from travellers imbued with dangerous 'foreign' contacts. As he worked, the inyanga addressed the pegs in an informal spell : 'Guard these people, do not let them be killed. Strengthen them. People of the Zwane (clan)—' and so forth. When he had done this, he took a switch of leaves and the potion, and he ran round sprinkling the medicine with gusto, quite unmindful of any people who were in the way, into the doorway of the huts and round the site.

"The doctor's work was nearly over, but a final and somewhat uncomfortable treatment remained for the inhabitants. The next day medicine was roasted in a potsherd, and all the inhabitants, men, women and children, were called together to inhale the smoke through long reeds. They held these to their mouths, coughing and spluttering as the acrid smoke went down, whereafter it was considered that they had been purified and strengthened. The soot of the medicine was collected to be used subsequently if one of the inmates fell ill. The inyanga finally made small incisions on various parts of the body of each person, according to age and sex, and into the incisions rubbed a mixture of burnt medicines.

"For his work, which lasted two full days, he received a goat, in addition to food, meat and beer given him and his assistant during their stay.

"Some tinyanga (plural) also use a goat for doctoring, selecting special portions for their purpose ; the skin and head and part of the carcass are recognised as their prerogative, and the remaining meat is enjoyed by the inhabitants. It is also customary to give a small gift, nowadays money, when at the beginning of the treatment the inyanga 'opens his bags.' Occasionally, a cow is paid for his services, and subsequent treatment may be free. When the inyanga's task is over, the inhabitants have that feeling of security which accompanies every faith."

A National Amenities Council

A new organization which will be known as the National Amenities Council was described by Sir Charles Reilly, Chairman of its Provisional Committee, in a recent letter to *The Times*. It is being formed to bring together architects, engineers, members of the medical profession and scientists, on equal terms, for the purpose of considering every human need and every form of amenity that is essential to promote health and mental efficiency in connection with building development. "Aesthetic amenity," says Sir Charles, "will not be ignored ; but, though it often follows, it is not the only form of amenity, and thought must also be given to those types that produce efficiency in daily work and general well-being. Among such essential physical amenities, consideration should be given to sound functional planning, methods of construction, facilities for healthy recreation, the enjoyment of adequate daylight and sunlight, ventilation, heating, acoustics, and good atmospheric conditions. Protection from fire and noise too should not be overlooked. But those amenities are merely typical and do not constitute the limits that circumscribe the extent of the activities contemplated. They will, however, serve to indicate the nature of the work to be done. No other society covers the whole of the same ground. A few overlap slightly in isolated aspects, and in these collaboration might be possible."

All architects and others who wish to participate in the work of the council are advised to write to the hon. secretary (*pro tem.*), Mr. John Swarbrick, F.R.I.B.A., 3, North, King's Bench Walk, Temple, London, E.C.4.

Lutyens Memorial

A memorial tablet to Sir Edwin Lutyens, President of the Royal Academy from 1938 to the time of his death in 1944, was unveiled by Sir Alfred J. Munnings, his successor, in the crypt of St. Paul's on May 9. The tablet is of stone and was designed by Mr. Curtis Green, R.A.

National Galleries

The report of the Massey Committee, which was appointed on April 28, 1944, "to examine the functions of the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery, and, in respect of paintings, of the Victoria and Albert Museum, with special reference to their relations with one another and to the fuller representation of British art ; and to consider the working of the Chantrey Bequest," was published during May (Cmd. 6827. H.M.S.O., 6d.).

Briefly the report recommends that the Tate, housing the best nucleus of a representative collection of British painting, and the only national gallery qualified to provide a general survey of modern painting and sculpture, both British and foreign, should be divided into two departments : (*a*) the National Gallery of British Art of all periods ; and (*b*) the National Gallery of Modern Art. For sculpture, it is suggested that the Victoria and Albert Museum should house the nation's collection, both British and foreign, keeping all the medieval examples, since they are best shown in relation to architectural carving and objects of applied art, and also the bulk of the seventeenth and eighteenth century sculpture. However, they propose that "a limited number of representative examples of seventeenth and eighteenth century sculpture" should be acquired, some perhaps by transfer from the Victoria and Albert Museum, "to complete the illustration of British art provided by the collection of paintings" at the Tate.

Stevenage

During his visit to Stevenage, following the outspoken comments of some Stevenage residents on the plan to turn Stevenage into a "new" town, Mr. Silkin explained some of the reasons behind the selection. First of all, it is in a convenient situation to attract industry; then, it has direct and easy road and rail communications with the industrial parts of the north; it is on the side of London where the greatest overcrowding exists; the railway can be extended and electrified, and provision can be made for a new railway station with sidings for factories. From nearly every point of view it is admirably situated for expansion as a self-contained community, with a proper balance of industry and population. The land is good for housing, its slope is largely south-west and west. There are already a number of established industries, and inquiries have shown that there would be no dearth of light industries; many which would otherwise have settled in London, or which are already in London, are ready to come to Stevenage to expand.

In view of the almost total absence of organized public relations activity by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning among those concerned in such an important planning move as this (the first signs of activity apparently came from the people themselves) it is surprising the opposition is not stronger or more bitter than it is. Unless some consistent publicity on a national scale is started fairly soon for town and country planning, and unless important steps in reconstruction, such as the purchase of land for new towns, are explained in detail along with the reasons behind them, to the people most closely concerned, the authorities must not be surprised if these people marshal opposition strong enough to be a serious obstacle to the planned reconstruction of the country.

St. Thomas's

The Court of Governors have approved a preliminary scheme for the reconstruction of St. Thomas's Hospital, which will make it the best organized and equipped medical treatment and teaching centre in Britain. It is explained, rather cryptically, that the design and site layout will observe the æsthetic requirements of the Abercrombie plan, proximity to the Houses of Parliament on the opposite side of the river, the new London County Hall to the east, and Lambeth Palace to the south.

The Arts Council

Sir Ernest Pooley's appointment to the chairmanship of the Arts Council in succession to the late Lord Keynes is most appropriate. As well as being a member of the Senate of the University of London, he is vice-chairman of the governors of the Old Vic company and the Sadler's Wells Opera and Ballet companies, which are in association with the Arts Council.

Manchester School of Art

A recent exhibition at the Manchester School of Art showed the work done by students while serving in the forces from 1939-1945. Subjects ranged from *San Salvatore Atrani* to *Night in a dhobie shop*. The notes on the exhibition describe how a wartime city found it had need of art, and how the school so admirably met that need. The cover to the exhibition notes deserves special praise; it is composed of Chisel and Ultra Bodoni types on a khaki and white striped background.

Cellophane

In *Design Review*, March, 1946, the word "cellophane" was used inadvertently in such a manner as might tend to create the impression that cellophane is a name applicable to any transparent cellulose sheets and films. The word "Cellophane" is, of course, the trade mark of British Cellophane Limited, and denotes, exclusively and distinctively, the brand of cellulose sheets and films supplied by that Company.

CORRESPONDENCE

William Townesend and the Clarendon Building

The Editor,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

SIR—My article on Townesend in THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW of October, 1945, left his contribution to the Clarendon Building an open question, as, at the time of writing, I had not examined Hawksmoor's drawing preserved at Worcester College. This has now been done, and the endorsement "Designe for the Printing house at Oxon by Mr. Hawksmoor" identified as being in the hand of Dr. George Clarke, evidence we should, perhaps, accept without any question. But there are other considerations that prompt us to believe that Clarke might have more truthfully used the word "drawing" rather than "design." There is the Delegates' strange treatment of Hawksmoor in 1715—"gratifying" him with £100 two years after the masonry was finished, and their use of the word "drawing"; moreover, Clarke's attribution is opposed by Dr. Ayliffe's statement, in 1714, that "the plan or model of this structure was contrived by that ingenious Artist of a Mason, Mr. Townesend of Oxford." I submit that Hawksmoor's drawing was based on Townesend's ideas and like his unpaid viewing of the site in 1712, was unofficial—hence the belated "gratification" of Hawksmoor in 1715.

Yours faithfully,
W. G. HISCOCK.

Christ Church Library,
Oxford.

Rickman and Cambridge

The Editor,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

SIR—Apropos of my article, *Rickman and Cambridge* (December, 1945) Mr. Hugh Gatty has kindly called my attention to a set of drawings, representing a design for a new court at St. John's, which antedate by some months the limited competition in which Rickman and Hutchinson were successful.

[continued on page lxii

'THE LIVING STONE'

Hopton-Wood is warm and true as the very heart of England whence it comes. This eager stone matches the high endeavour of mind and hands: gives freely of its own inherent beauty to the old, familiar tools that work upon it.

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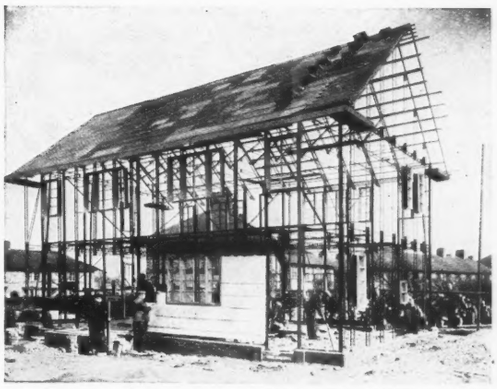
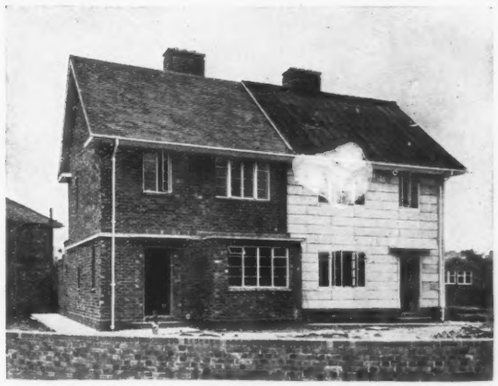
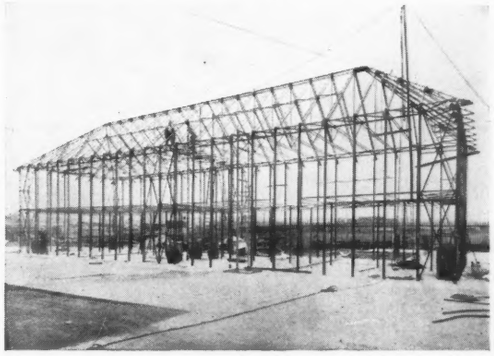




City of Birmingham Experimental Houses by Herbert J. Manzoni, Esq., C.B.E., M.I.C.E., City of Birmingham Engineer & Surveyor.



Demonstration Housing Site, Northolt, Middlesex, by the Ministry of Works.

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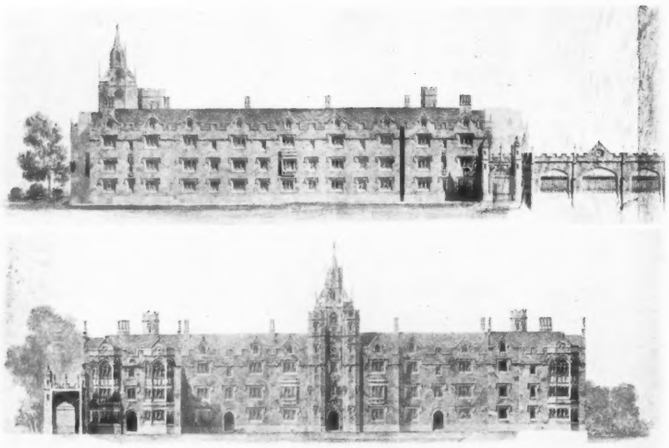

continued from page lx]

These drawings (comprising site plan; cellar, ground floor and first floor plans; four elevations; and two perspectives) are preserved in the College muniment room. They are signed "John C. Mead Archt. London October 1824" and show a three-sided court facing towards the river, lying slightly to the south of the present one and entered at the south-east corner by means of the so-called Wren bridge, which was to have been provided with a Tudor superstructure.

John Clement Mead (1798-1839) has a fairly long entry in the A.P.S. *Dictionary of Architecture*. The son of a surveyor, he seems to have been something of a prodigy in his youth, winning the second premium in the G.P.O. competition—for what that was worth—at the age of 22. But his great triumph came a year later, when he defeated twelve other architects, including Wilkins himself, in the competition for the University Observatory at Cambridge. The portico of this building (which cost nearly twice as much as the original estimate) was copied, according to the architect, "from the Temple of Minerva at Athens." But Mead's classical scholarship, unlike Wilkins's, was mere book-learning, for, as the A.P.S. *Dictionary* puts it, "his travels were limited to England and some parts of France."

Mead's design for St. John's is decent but dull. It may be held that its chief interest is that it shows up the merits of Rickman's building by contrast. In particular, it shows that Cambridge owes a debt of gratitude to Rickman for seizing on the romantic possibilities of the site and, in defiance of the axial arrangement of the rest of the College, turning his court to face south. The idea is obvious enough in retrospect, but evidently it did not occur to everyone at the time. Rickman was something more than the mild archæologist he is often thought to be; anyone who still doubts this after seeing St. John's New Court should examine his fantastic project at the R.I.B.A. for a Gothic Fitzwilliam Museum.

For permission to publish Mead's drawings, which are not mentioned in Willis and Clark, I am much indebted to the Master and Fellows of St. John's College.

Yours faithfully,
MARCUS WHIFFEN.

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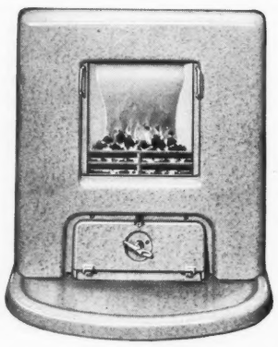

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