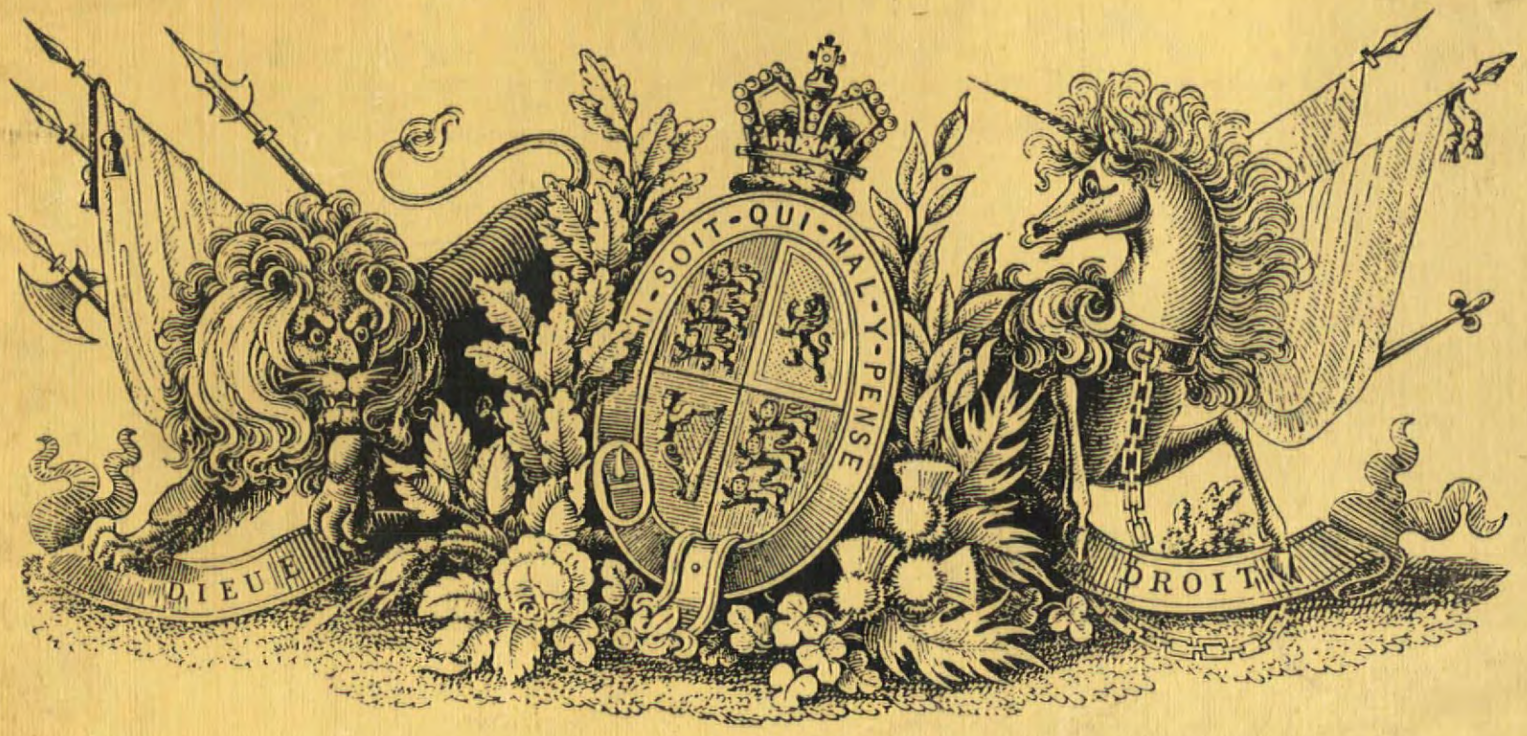
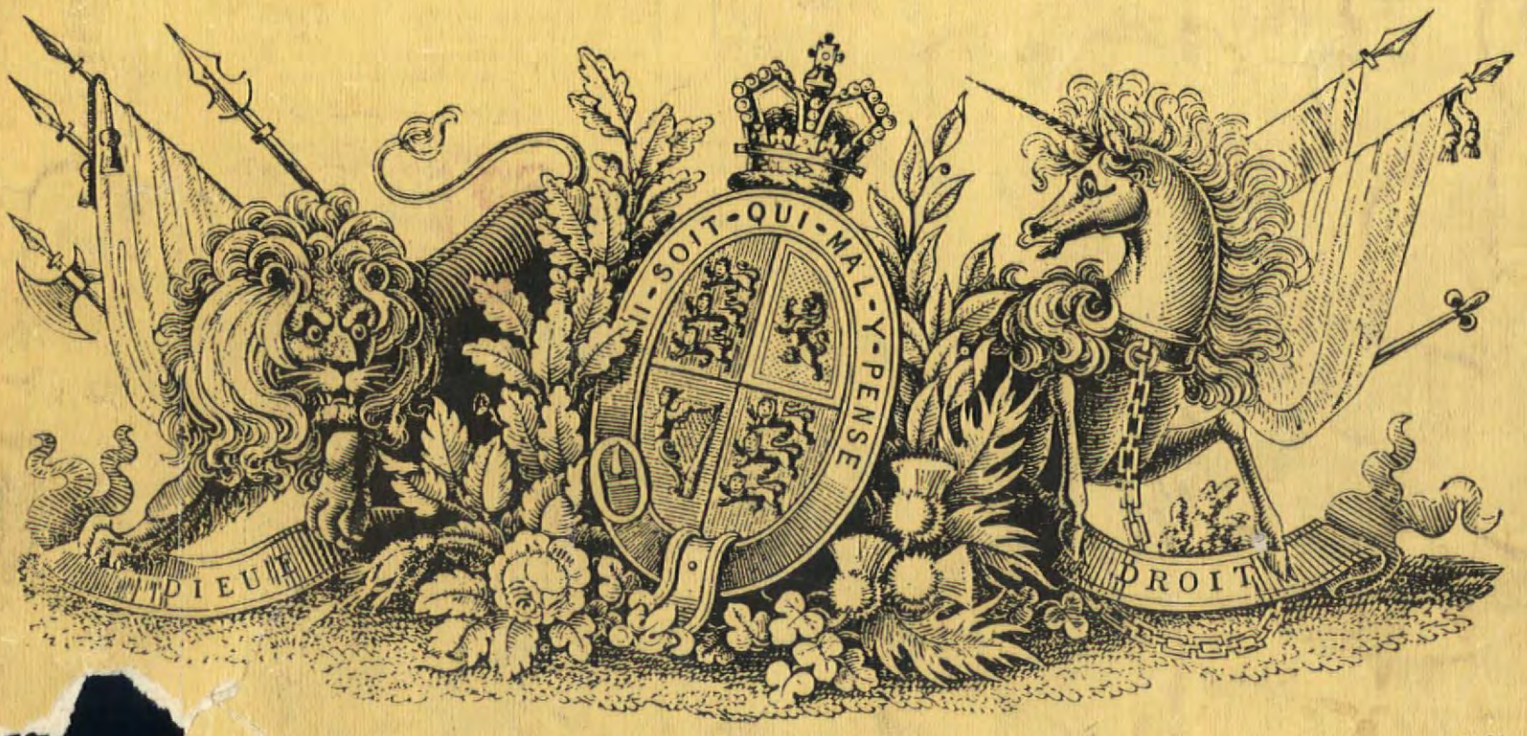
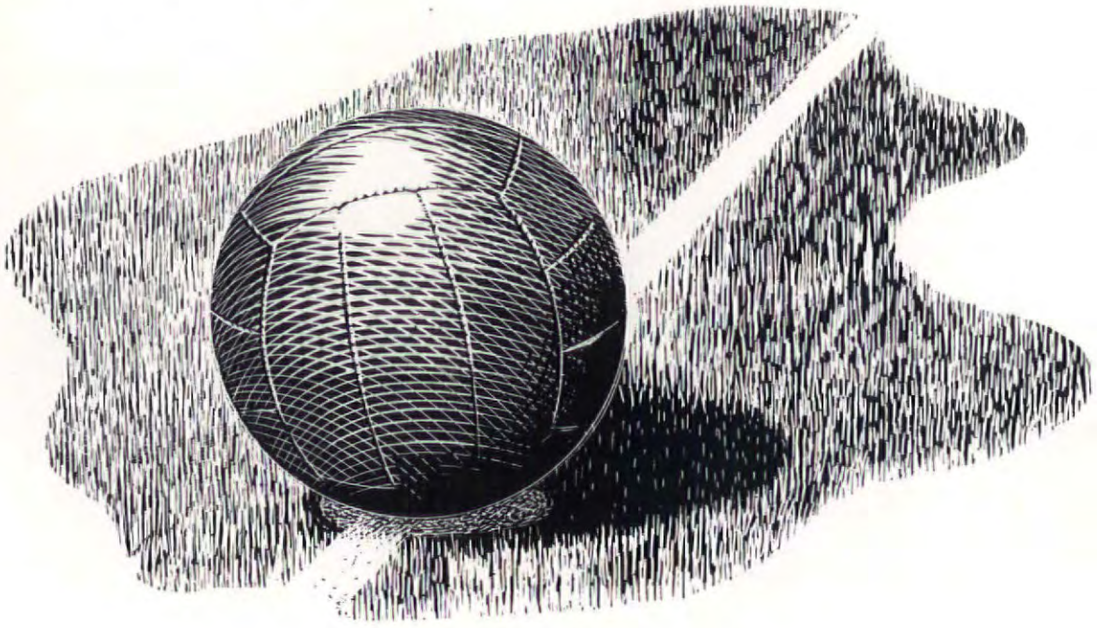


A SPECIAL NUMBER OF THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

CORONATION

VOLUME CXIII NUMBER 673 JANUARY 1953 FIVE SHILLINGS





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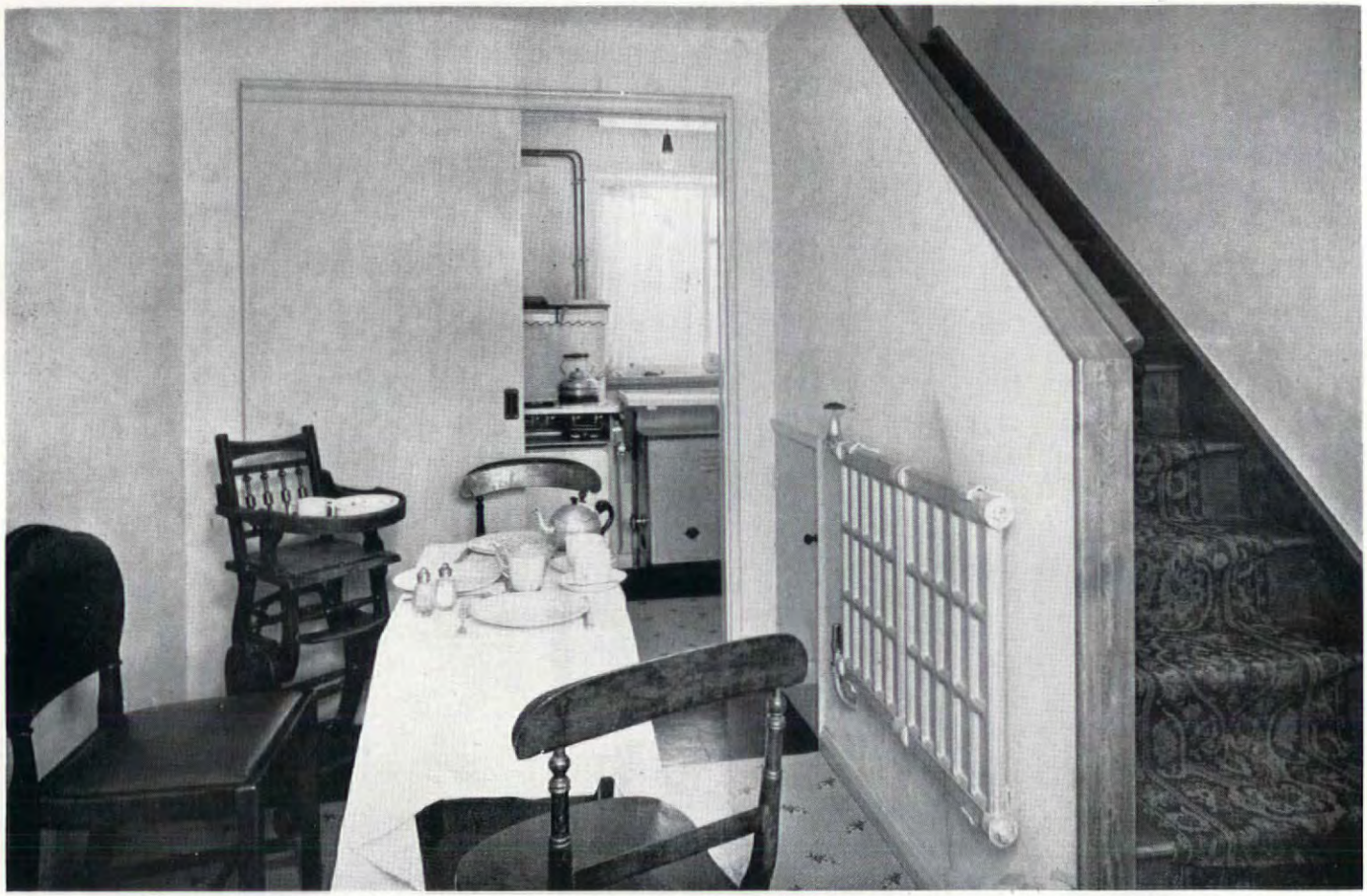
PEOPLE'S HOUSES ESTATE, Canterbury, Kent



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ELLARD "Estate" Sliding Door Gear has again been specified for a large housing estate. The photograph above shows an interior of a typical two-bedroom type house on the People's Houses Estate, Canterbury, Kent. ELLARD "Estate" Sliding Door Gear combines smooth effortless action with pleasing appearance, and offers maximum economy in use of space.

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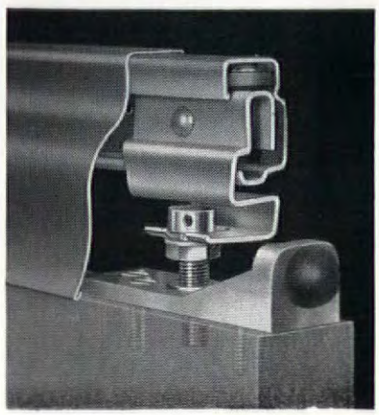

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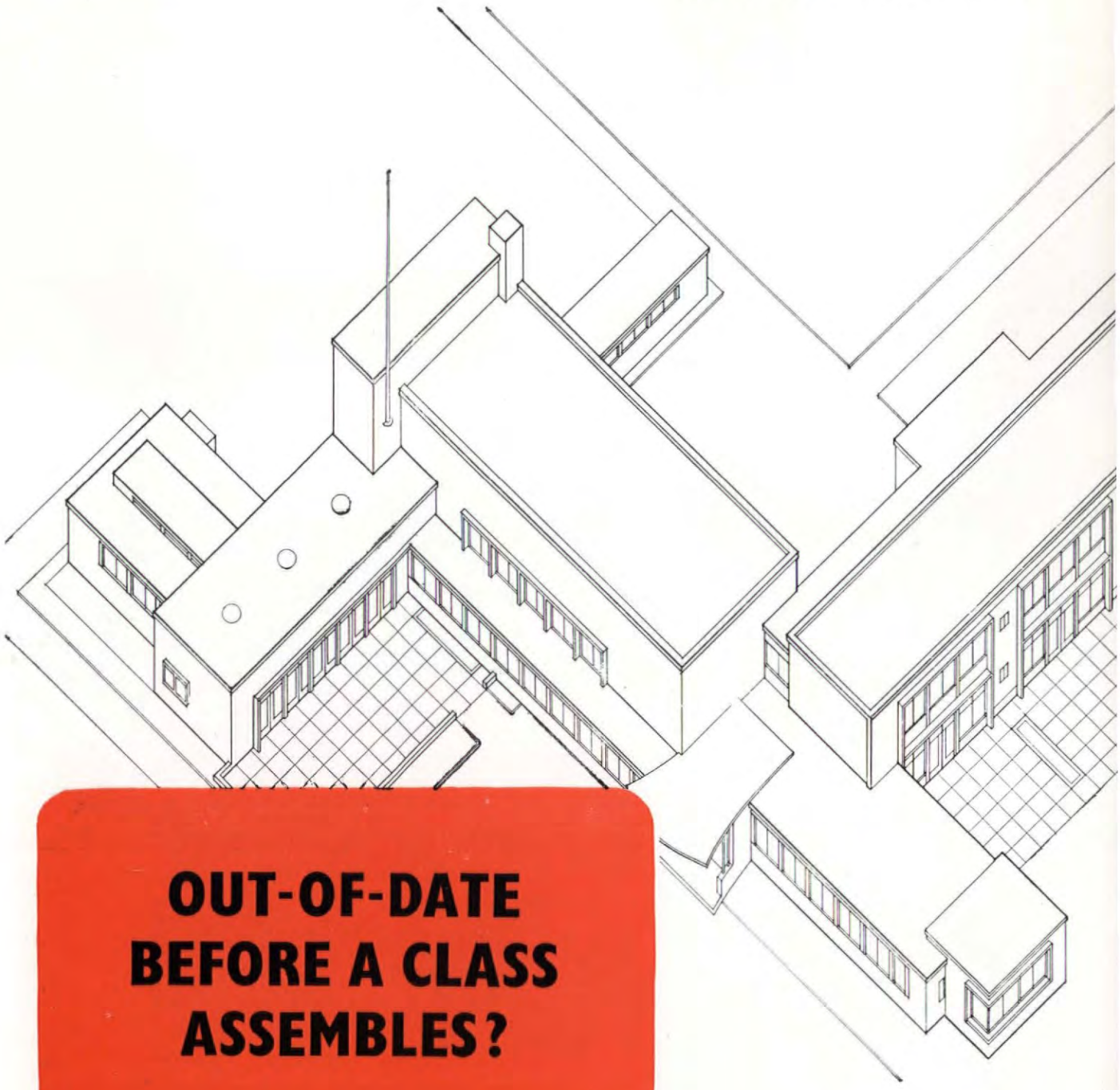
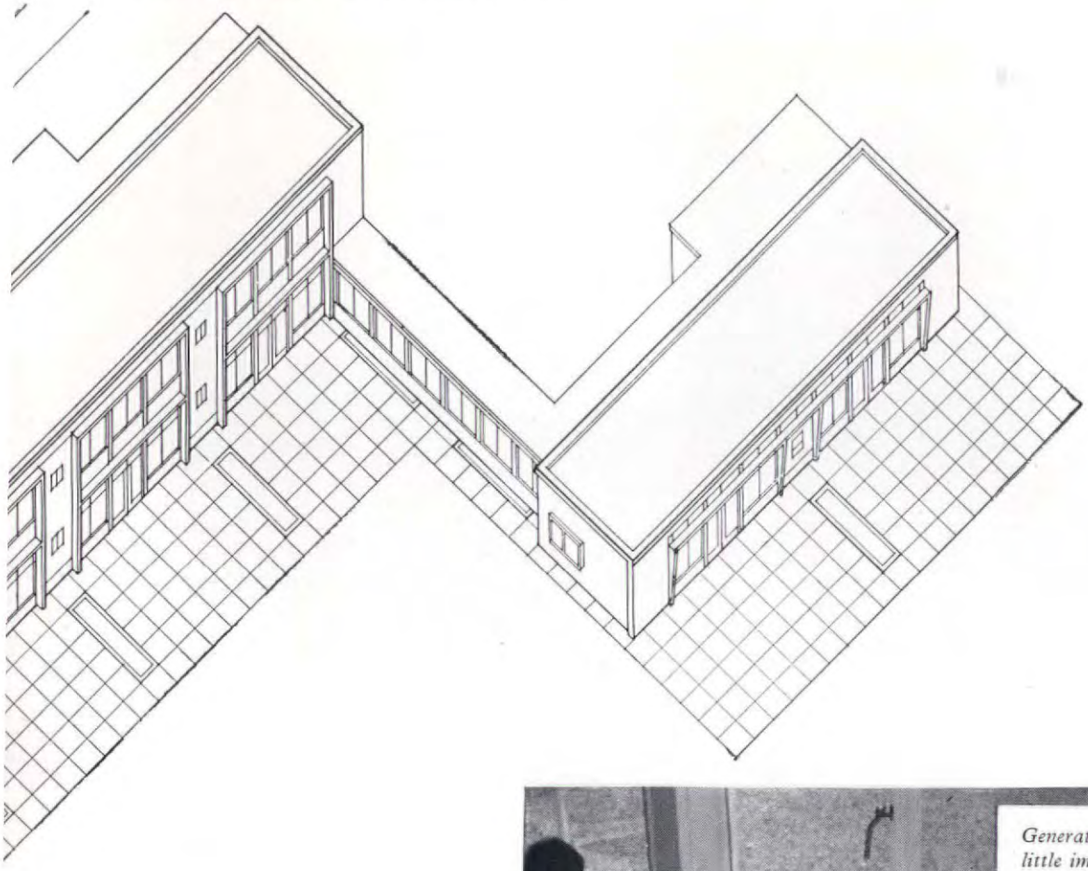
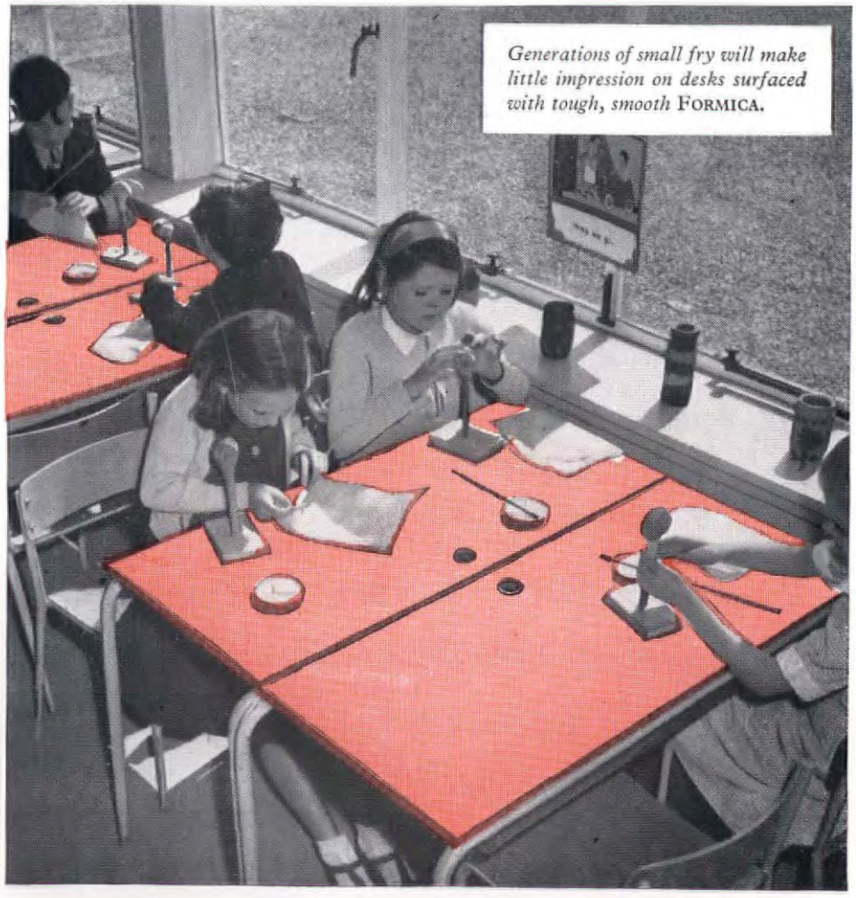


OUT-OF-DATE BEFORE A CLASS ASSEMBLES?

A SINGLE CHANGE in the fitting out of this new school could put it years ahead. Without that change maintenance and cleaning costs of much-used surfaces—desks, tables, laboratory benches, facings of corridors and staircases—will be higher than they need be. Renovation and renewal will loom up far too soon. In fact the building will, by truly modern standards, be out-of-date before it opens. The surface of tomorrow combines the advantages of traditional materials without their limitations. That surface is tough, smooth FORMICA laminated plastic. It brings cleanliness, colour and brightness; saves work, saves money and never wears out.





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"Good bread and good cheare"

The Golden Age of Elizabeth I

THE boar's head garnished with bays and rosemary and heralded by a fanfare of trumpets, symbolizes the Christmas spirit of the First Elizabethans. Merrymaking, feasting, ceremony, goodwill and charity—all had their part in the twelve-day season's celebrations. In the Great Hall, bedecked with freshly gathered holly and ivy, the laughter of lord and retainers would vie with the flute and drum. Food and drink were in abundance. Besides pork there was beef, mutton, goose, capon and the recently introduced turkey. Mince pies of many-tasting savouries might follow, with plum porridge, nutmeg and blackjacks. And yet more—shred pies, cheese, custards, apples, and steaming lamb's wool to slake a thirst. Throughout the season, while the yule log crackled, the table was never bare.

35

"Gales in sea-area ICELAND"

But these are M&P Shutters

Atlantic gales and Arctic conditions mean that special care must be taken when building in Iceland.

And especially so when the site of a building required to house the gear of Reykjavik fishermen —their nets can be seen drying on the roof of the finished sheds—is perched on top of an exposed sea-wall built of rock and earth to protect the harbour from wind and waves.

The Harbour Administration found it necessary to build the walls and the roof of solid concrete and to set the walls at an angle in order to withstand the force of the gales.

But there was no problem when it came to installing shutters in the building. The installation of Steel Rolling Shutters was the obvious answer, and some of the fifteen Mather & Platt Shutters which now successfully withstand all the blasts of a Northern winter are seen above.

Steel Rolling Shutters

by Mather & Platt Ltd.
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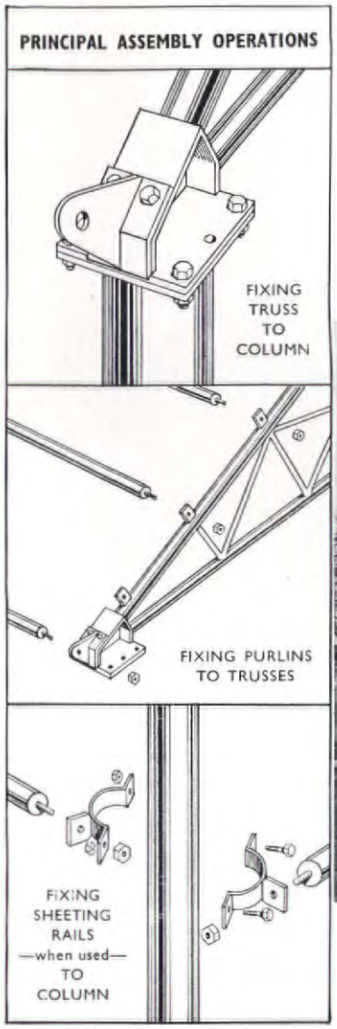
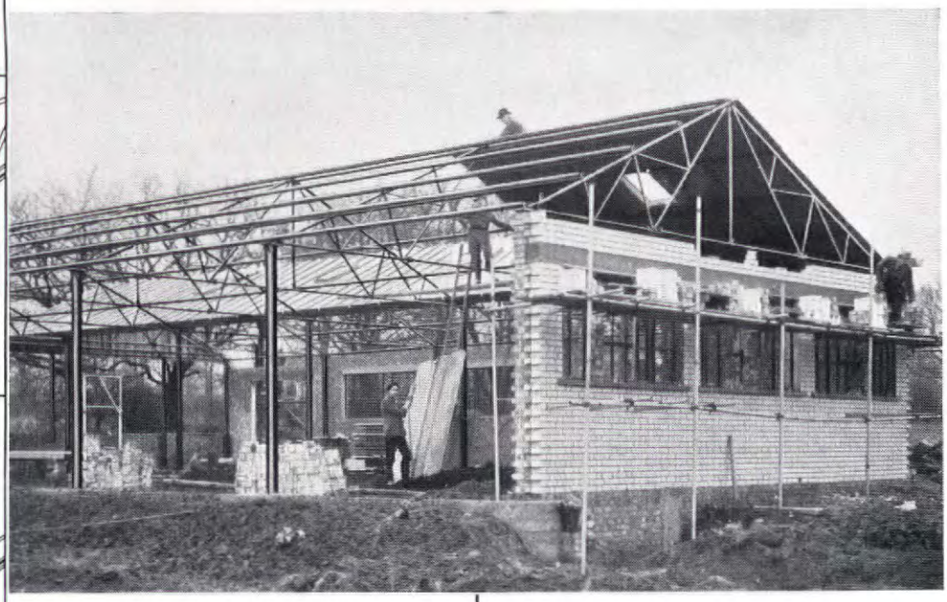
MANCHESTER 10



This is how 'UNIMER' TUBULAR CONSTRUCTION saves building materials



"Economy of Building Materials" Report says:—

"A considerable saving in tonnage is effected by welding as opposed to bolting and riveting. Further savings can be obtained by using strip-rolled or tubular members instead of hot-rolled sections.

"As an example, in a 3-bay storage shed 120 ft. wide by 210 ft. long, strip-rolled and tubular designs show savings of the order of 30 per cent. and 40 per cent. respectively over the normal bolted and riveted construction."

The 'Unimer' Building consists of tubular steel trusses, purlins and sheeting rails used in conjunction with tubular steel columns. The 'Unimer' Tubular Construction has been designed to provide the architect and builder with not only a new and economical form of construction, but one with a very versatile range. 'Unimer' Tubular Construction can be used for one storey buildings — Single or Multispan Valley Construction in any multiple of 15′ 0″ in length.

A comprehensive stock is normally held

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As tube is considerably stronger, weight for weight compared with sectional steel, the use of 'Unimer' immediately creates the following highly advantageous conditions.

★ The 'Unimer' Building, strong as a traditional sectional steel building, saves steel and money.

★ As the building is lighter—cost of erection is reduced.

★ Load on the foundation is reduced and therefore the cost of site preparation is proportionately reduced.

★ Incorporating continuous and rigid purlins, fixed as an integral part of the roof and forming a continuous tie from gable to gable, allows in most instances the omission of wind-bracing members—yet another saving in cost and materials.

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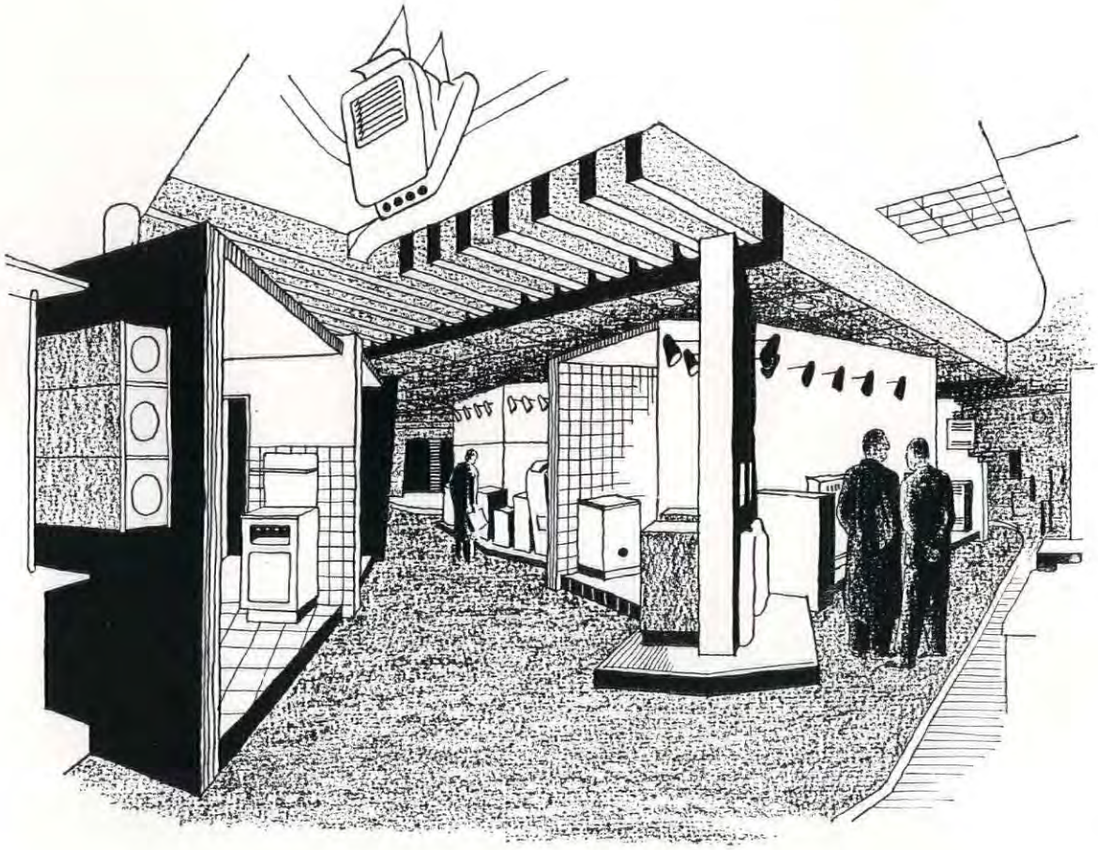
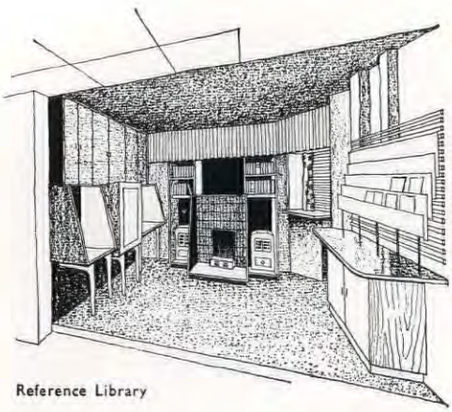
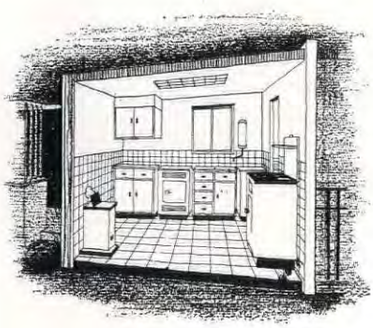


Gas in the design for living

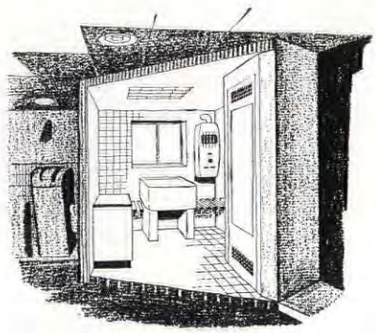
The new enlarged gas and coke exhibit at the London Building Centre is now open. In it visitors will find the latest information on the use of gas and coke, mainly for domestic, but also for commercial purposes. Also shown are appoved methods of gas and coke installation in contemporary housing. There is a sectional display of the latest gas and coke equipment, together with examples of commercial appliances. A technical representative is available to answer queries and there is a comprehensive reference library. Visits from individuals or parties are welcomed, (prior notice of a visit from an organised party will be appreciated).



Reference Library



Gas & Coke kitchen



Utility room

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GC.17

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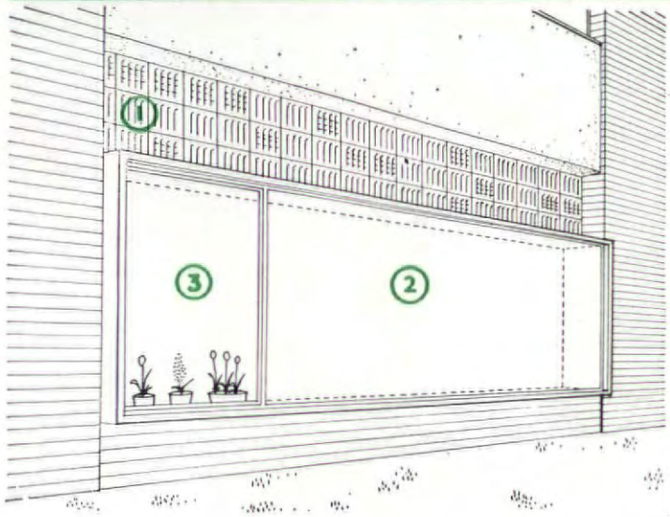
John Reid

Architect: E. Vincent Harris, O.B.E., R.A., F.R.I.B.A. Contractors: Richard Costain Ltd.

GLASS NEWS

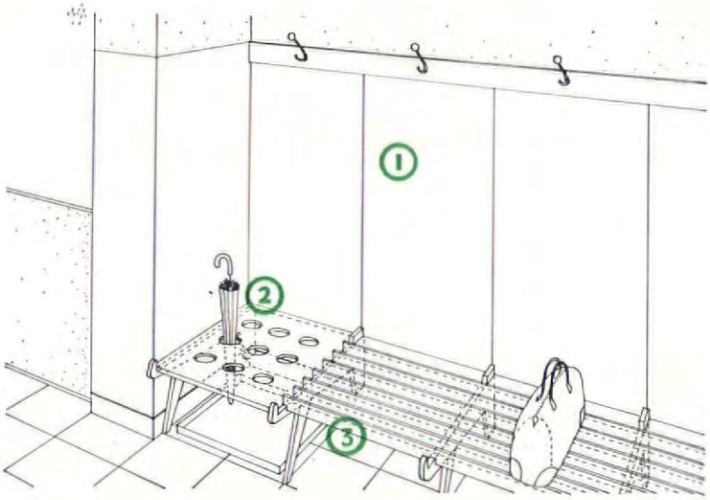


PICTURE WINDOW

1 "INSULIGHT" Hollow Glass Block panel.

2 Fixed window, "INSULIGHT" Double Glazing Unit in Polished Plate Glass.

3 Sliding window, "INSULIGHT" Double Glazing Unit in Polished Plate Glass.

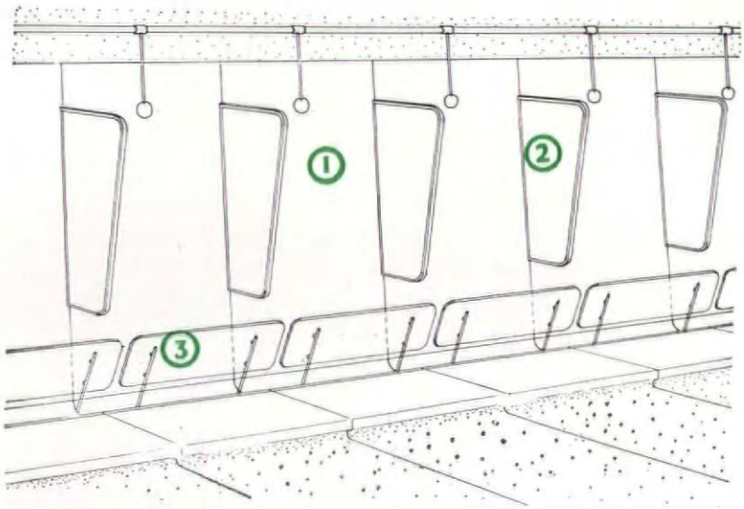


CLOAKROOM FITTINGS

1 Silvered, Fluted Glass.

2 Umbrella stand top of "ARMOURPLATE" Glass.

3 Bag rest of vertical slats of ½" Polished Plate Glass.



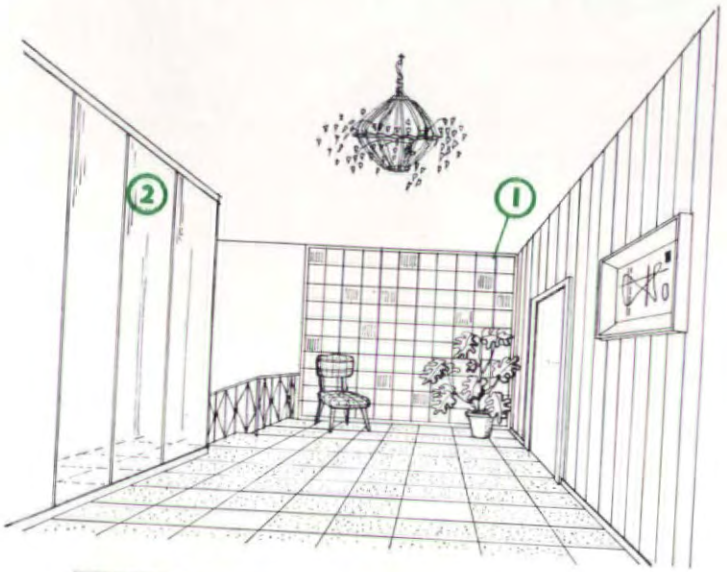
URINAL STALLS

1 "VITROLITE" back to stalls.

2 ⅜" Toughened Rough Cast Glass in aluminium frame.

3 "ARMOURPLATE" Glass panels on metal brackets.

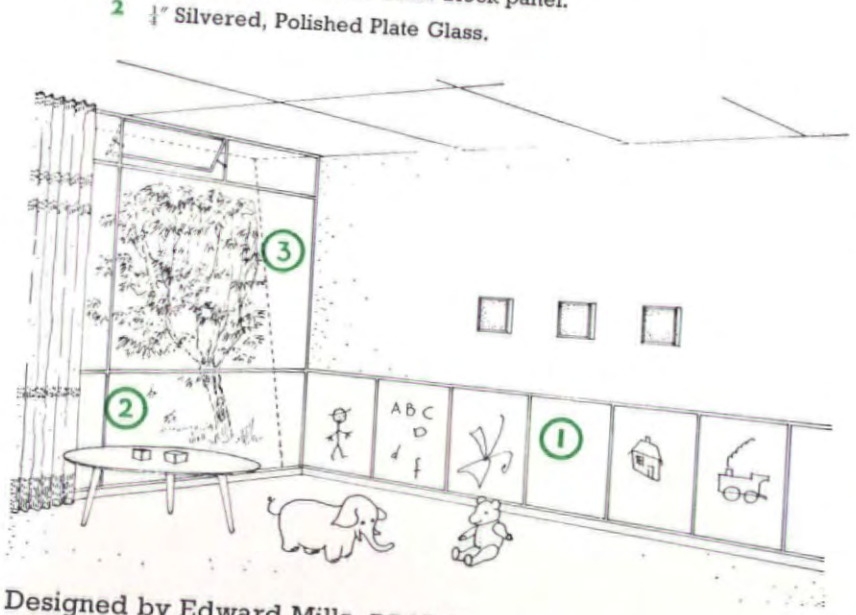
STRUCTURAL AND DECORATIVE USES OF THE MATERIAL



CORRIDOR IN BLOCK OF FLATS

1 "INSULIGHT" Hollow Glass Block panel.

2 ¼" Silvered, Polished Plate Glass.



Designed by Edward Mills, F.R.I.B.A.

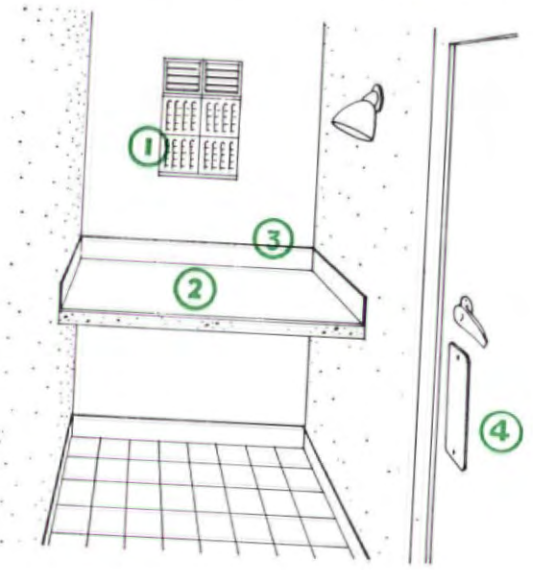
LARDER

1 "INSULIGHT" Hollow Glass Blocks, with all glass, louvred Ventilator Blocks above. Fly proof screen should be fitted.

2 "VITROLITE" top to concrete shelf.

3 "VITROLITE" skirting to shelf.

4 Polished Plate Glass finger plate.



NURSERY

1 Glass chalk board up to dado height.

2 "ARMOURPLATE" Glass lower window panel.

3 Polished Plate Glass window.

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A SPECIAL NUMBER OF THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

CORONATION

VOLUME CXIII NUMBER 673 JANUARY 1953 FIVE SHILLINGS

Guest Editor Misha Black *Typography and Cover* Ronald Sandiford (both of DESIGN RESEARCH UNIT) *Research* Patience Gray

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"It may well be long years before we can again afford to devote such leisure and energy as did our forefathers to things purely decorative. But we should be defeatist and unimaginative indeed if we concluded that because nearly everything we produce to-day must be severely practical, it must also be without taste or beauty . . . A nation whose level of good sense in art was once reflected in the furniture of Chippendale and Hepplewhite, and in the domestic architecture of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, cannot rest content with slavish imitations of foreign styles or with a simple faith in the virtue of streamlining . . . if we are destined to live in an austere age it is for us to establish that beauty is as essential to utility as it proverbially is to truth"

Her Majesty QUEEN ELIZABETH II

From a speech in 1947 when Her Royal Highness, then The Princess Elizabeth, opened the 149th session of the Royal Society of Arts

FOREWORD

As this year, 1953, *progresses the thoughts of British people and of many people abroad will turn increasingly to the Coronation that is to take place in London in June. It will be everyone's prayer that it will inaugurate a long, a peaceful and a prosperous reign. The Editors of the* REVIEW, *in offering their loyal duty to their new Queen, consider that an architectural journal can most fittingly celebrate the occasion by devoting its first issue in Coronation year to looking forward to the progress in architecture it hopes to see as a consequence of the new reign.*

A Coronation means a number of things architecturally: first of all street decoration, flags and bunting, the town *en fête*, and attention drawn thereby, it may be hoped, to the street as a thing in itself with its own rights and opportunities, not as a mere aperture between buildings. But street decorations are no more than a passing show. The architectural implications go deeper. As well as being an occasion for loyal celebrations of all kinds, the Coronation inaugurates a reign and thus a regime, and presents an opportunity of taking stock of many things that, under a changed regime, may themselves be expected to undergo changes.

There are certain categories of design where a change must automatically be made simply because the objects designed bear the sovereign's head, the obvious examples being coins and postage stamps; there are other categories where changes will very likely be made, if not on the occasion of the Coronation, then as opportunity arises, because of the different tastes of a younger generation of royalty, whose choice naturally veers towards the products of their own age. Examples are the new royal trains, yachts and aircraft. By far the largest category, however, in architecture and the other applied arts, consists of those products which there is no compulsion to change unless it is realized how badly an improvement in design is needed. Many objects answer to this description, and the present issue of the REVIEW is in part a plea for celebrating the new reign by a great national effort to improve the design of everything which, directly or indirectly, is the responsibility of the Crown. Some things need attention more urgently than others; hence the present necessity of taking stock.

The relationship between architecture and the Crown has, as Lionel Brett makes clear in his article, evolved gradually since the days when its architectural interest and responsibilities were confined to the royal residences and estates. A Government Department that practises architecture in the name of the Crown is a comparatively new thing. Previously patronage was more personal. Direct dealings with architects by

royalty reached a climax in the reign of the Georges. They have inevitably declined since then owing to the less personal part played by the Crown in day-to-day affairs of Government. Direct patronage has been replaced by a variety of indirect responsibilities, which Ministers shoulder on behalf of the Crown.

The principal Minister concerned is of course the Minister of Works, the variety of whose activities is immense. It is easy to forget that he is a direct descendant of the King's Surveyor General—and thus of Sir Christopher Wren and other famous public servants—and to identify the Ministry's activities simply with the Government rather than with the crown. We are constantly reminded that the postal services are a Royal enterprise by the sight of the Sovereign's head on the stamps and the monogram on the pillar-boxes, but when we enter a post-office, just as much as when we buy stamps, we are using designs—in the shape of architecture and furniture—done in the name of the Crown. The same applies to many other offices to which the public has access. Moreover a large proportion of the public itself works for the Government (that is, for the Crown) in the Civil Service and elsewhere, and spends much of its life surrounded by furniture, decorations and equipment designed in the name of the Crown.

Is not the Coronation an appropriate moment to ask ourselves whether these are the best our time can produce, and can we not suitably honour the Crown on this occasion by making the Coronation celebrations the first step towards bringing design in all these categories up to the highest standards? It would be easy, in criticizing design standards in official places, to illustrate the worst post offices and employment exchanges, with their all too common makeshift appearance, with their dreary air of squalor, their ink-bespattered counters and badly lettered notices peeling off the walls. We know that such places exist. But no one is proud of them and everyone is anxious to see them improved. Criticism is more usefully applied to designs that are supposed to be improved already; to those with which the officials seem to be satisfied, and to accept as a desirable standard. In Mr. Misha Black's article on the way the Crown furnishes, comparison is therefore made between good commercial designs, produced in Britain and abroad, and the designs which the Ministry of Works has lately evolved according to its own ideas of what is proper for the use of Government officials and of the public when it has dealings with them. If the comparisons are found somewhat depressing, that is all the more reason for the effort, recommended in these pages, that we should celebrate the Coronation architecturally with some achievement of a more permanent kind than street decoration.

The Crown builds and the Crown furnishes, and it also does a number of other things that involve design and therefore come within the scope of this issue. Coins and postage stamps have already been referred to. It would take too much space to retail the whole story of the changes these have undergone during recent reigns, an unhappy story of progressive deterioration as methods of photo-engraving have enabled more realistic effects to be obtained on stamps, and as sculptural whimsicalities on coins have superseded the true die-stamping conventions. But a summary of the story, illustrated by a few telling comparisons, is given in the article by Mr. Charles Hasler, who has chosen a rather different but related subject for exhaustive analysis. He traces in some detail the changes of design that have taken place during a couple of hundred years in the one printed symbol most relevant to the Coronation: the Royal Coat of Arms, using its chronological development to illustrate, once again, the fact that a search for technical perfection does not necessarily lead to artistic improvement.

Coats of Arms are also employed as a three-dimensional device on buildings, and these and similar forms of heraldic architectural decoration are also included in Mr. Hasler's review, supported by exemplary and cautionary illustrations. In spite of the somewhat discouraging picture he presents, it is nevertheless in heraldry and other forms of ancient ceremonial ornament that the British tradition of robust colourful decoration is to be found best preserved. In the section 'Coronations Celebrated' a reminder is given of the richness and variety of the traditional styles of ornament still, if not in daily use, available for adorning those occasions when Britain sets out to establish continuity with her past.

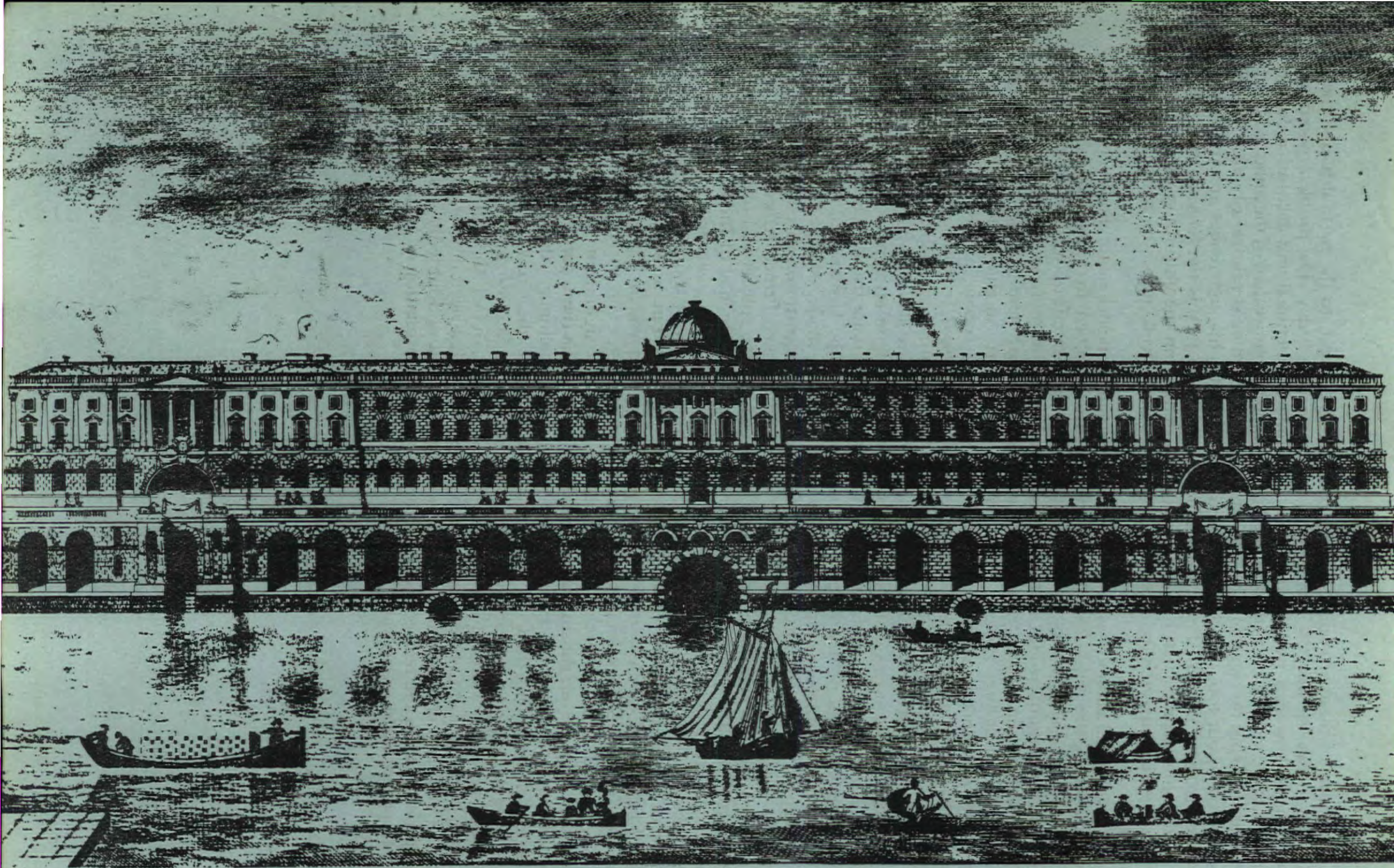
The forms of these ornaments belong, we must not forget, to the past, although they have, on occasions like the Coronation, legitimate uses today. The problem posed by this issue is how can we evolve in our own time a functional and decorative design idiom that we can regard with pride as the contemporary equivalent of the antique idiom we enjoy reviving on ceremonial occasions. The Englishman is notoriously attached to his traditions, but too often that is taken to mean that his preferences are firmly embedded in some period of the past. What he values, in fact, is the sense of *continuity* that tradition inspires, which is a very different thing from the uniformity of style that is often wished upon him, especially by those with official authority, in the name of tradition.

Our traditional ceremonies and their costumes and embellishments, however antique they may seem, are not in fact fixed; they have been evolved by a continuous process of accretion and adaptation which never stops. It cannot afford to stop, or their significance and vitality would stop too. The treasure-chest of motives, ideas and symbols which these traditions represent needs constant replenishment. Are we building up a new fund of tradition for our own posterity, in its turn, to enjoy and to draw upon when the occasion demands? Cabinet Ministers occupy rooms, as Mr. Misha Black shows, that they have inherited, though not quite unchanged, from a couple of hundred years ago. If that process is to continue, what pleasure will they be able to take in 2153 in the contributions to this continuing tradition that we are storing up for them today?

We are not unconscious of our shortcomings or lacking in attempts to remedy them, but our efforts do not bear fruit in the right places. This issue frankly criticizes the low level of much design that is perpetrated in the name of the Crown, but it must not be inferred that attempts to improve design are not being made, equally in the name of the Crown. Indeed the last ten years have seen a concentration of official efforts to improve design on a scale not seen in this country since Prince Albert, consort of another young Queen, interested himself personally in the subject just over a hundred years ago. Since the war we have seen the setting up of the Council of Industrial Design, the inauguration of a new honour, Royal Designer for Industry, awarded to outstanding designers, and the complete reorganization, with the object of training designers in the needs of modern industry, of the Royal College of Art; but a few years older is the Royal Fine Art Commission, whose purpose is to keep watch from a high level on the standard of design achieved in public places.

All, by and large, have the same objective, and it is significant that the last three bear the prefix Royal, substantiating the thesis with which these paragraphs began that for all the intervention of cumbersome bureaucratic machinery, the fountainhead of official design remains the Crown itself. They also prove the Crown's interest in promoting good design, an interest which, in spite of the failures and disappointments recorded here, is not absent from official circles. It is not, in fact, the will that is lacking but the way: the means of canalizing into the channels that need it most, the refreshing flow of skill and enthusiasm that contemporary designers undoubtedly possess. This is the process which the new era that will begin with the Coronation of Elizabeth II could most appropriately inaugurate.

The Editors



SOMERSET HOUSE

Somerset House, on which Sir William Chambers began work in 1775, *was the first major building erected by the Crown to house Government offices and learned Societies directly dependent from the Royal patron. The main body of the building was completed by* 1789, *the outer wings, not seen in this engraving, were completed by other hands in the XIXth century.*

LIONEL BRETT

'For Masters John of Gloucester and Alexander the carpenter. Because the King has suffered much damage through causing his works to be carried on by Sherriffs and other officers, the King provides that Mr. John, the King's Mason, and Mr. Alexander, the King's Carpenter, shall cause these works to be done for the future by task or otherwise and shall see to them and dispose of them personally to the better commodity of the King.'

Close Roll, November 29, 1256 (*Henry III*).

THE CROWN BUILDS

To use, for one moment, managerial jargon: a chief executive, when dealing with technical matters, will always prefer to talk to a technical officer in person, and not via an administrative officer. He will get quicker and better results that way, and in the case of building (as the London County Council has quite lately established) he has some chance of getting architecture. That is the twentieth-century analogy.

A nineteenth-century version would be that a country landowner, who has hitherto given orders on estate maintenance to his butler and had them misunderstood, appoints an estate carpenter whom he sees personally.

This was the origin of the Office of Works*, and this the role of the official who became known as the King's Surveyor. He was a royal nominee, responsible to the largest landowner in the country for the maintenance and improvement of Crown property. It was a pleasant, reasonably well-paid Court appointment, though the inability of English Kings to emulate the vast building projects of continental monarchies continually restricted its scope.

For centuries there seems to have been no formal change in the status of the office. Minor staff reorganizations took place when a new broom tackled the royal household, or when a new dynasty ascended the throne—there are records of changes in the early years of Henry VIII, of Charles II and of George I. At intervals famous names appear in the records, Yevele and Wynford, Hugh Herland, Vertue and Redman, and then after a long gap, Jones, Webb and Wren. But the duties of the office remained unchanged, and were confined to royal foundations, royal palaces and royal parks. Only comparatively rarely did a great genius coincide with a fine opportunity and produce King's College Chapel, the roof of Westminster Hall, the Banqueting House, the east front of Hampton Court.

With the eighteenth century the increasing responsibilities of the Office led to the custom of attaching distinguished architects to it in an advisory capacity. Thus Robert Adam and Chambers were attached in 1762, James Adam in 1769, and Robert Taylor and James Paine in the seventies. The Surveyors-General,[1] or rather the Comptroller during most of the eighteenth century, retained prime responsibility, and not very much seems to have been transacted at the meetings attended by these notable consultants. In the economy drive necessitated by the American War, Burke abolished these pleasant posts and restored sole authority to Sir Wm. Chambers. It was not till the peace of 1815 that the Prince Regent's passion for building induced the government to attach Smirke, Soane and Nash to the Office of Works.

A distinction begins to emerge in the eighteenth

* The historical facts in this article are based on research by Dr. S. Lang, whose help the author gratefully acknowledges.

[1] After Wren these were Vanbrugh 1719, Ripley 1726, Flitcroft 1758 (Comptrollers), Worsley 1760, Keene 1779, Chambers 1782 (Surveyors, though Chambers became Comptroller in 1769) and Wyatt 1796 ('Comptroller or Surveyor').

century between the personal Civil List expenditure of the Sovereign and the provision of public buildings for the Crown. Somerset House, the first great project in the second category, was succeeded by new schemes for the Houses of Parliament, the Bank of England, the British Museum, the National Gallery and many more as the Victorian empire accumulated. The royal building team, in fact, became a major spending department, with a consequent need for closer parliamentary control. Various experiments were tried. The 1815 reorganization tightened Treasury control of expenditure; in 1832 the Office of Works was combined with that of Woods and Forests under the direction (for the first time) of a non-technical chief; in 1851 this anomalous arrangement was terminated, and the modern Board of Works set up (which survived till World War II) with its political head and full departmental hierarchy. Four years later the load on the new department, which in Nash's day had included all 'Metropolitan Improvements,' was to some extent lightened by the formation of the Metropolitan Board of Works. But it still administered an enormous building programme,[2] in which its original care of royal palaces and parks and ancient monuments was, as the century progressed, to become a comparatively insignificant item.

In the case of the more spectacular government projects the Victorian First Commissioner, instead of attaching distinguished architects to the Board, made increasing use of limited competitions, but in a disconcertingly erratic way. Thus the Houses of Parliament were first of all to be designed by Smirke, were then put up for competition, were after all given to Pennethorne, a non-competitor, and were finally taken away from him and given to Barry. The results of competitions for the Foreign Office and War Office were also set aside, and a select committee set up to recommend an architect from among the more successful competitors. The Law Courts were finally awarded to Street, who had not at all distinguished himself in the competition. All these were symptoms of parliamentary control.

Meanwhile the position of the official architect in the department deteriorated. Nash's pupil Pennethorne, the last in the succession of notable state architects since Inigo Jones, whose best monument is perhaps the romantic layout of Battersea Park, never enjoyed the authority or the freedom of his predecessors, and died in 1871 a disappointed man. Thereafter the vast architectural responsibilities of the Board were undertaken by officials who were not necessarily referred to as architects at all. For this reason (and others which we will come to) the department ceased to attract the creative spirits of the profession. Nor can it be said that in the process of becoming a Ministry and assuming control of the whole building resources of the nation, MOW has yet significantly improved its artistic position, which remains about half way down the column of architectural advance. Some would reply that that is about the correct position for a government department.

We have in this story, strikingly, a microcosm of the post-industrial architectural problem. This problem is, briefly, how to retain quality and humane values in face of the increasing size and complexity of building programmes, and how to bring together the artist and the administrator. It was no problem to the Surveyor-General and his small staff, whose main worries were the whims of Kings, the touchiness of distinguished architects and an occasional economy drive. As with all Court appointments, the royal favour blew hot and cold, and persons as well established therein as Wren, Chambers, Wyatt and Nash could never be sure where they stood. But the Office survived, hardly altered since the middle ages, until in the symbolic year 1832 correct taste lost control and the Office lost its identity.

From that moment everything worked against the production of good architecture. There was too much work, so that well before the end of the century the personal touch of the Principal Architect and Surveyor had ceased to be felt. 'The Principal Architect and Surveyor is not to be burdened with the task of designing buildings himself nor with the execution of them unless the Board specially request it.'[3] This need not have mattered in a period which possessed either an established style or a technique for quantity production. The explosive expansion of the manufacturing towns, for instance, meant (among many other things) new Post Offices. The eighteenth century would have multiplied these with as little fuss as Wesleyan chapels; the twentieth could have turned them out as rapidly as Hertfordshire schools. But the Victorians had no grooves to run in.

This was made worse by the advent of Philistinism, the appearance of the I-know-what-I-like self-made man. How familiar to the contemporary architect are the famous scenes between Lord Palmerston and Sir Gilbert Scott.

'Lord Palmerston sent for me, and told me in a jaunty way that he could have nothing to do with this Gothic style, and that though he did not want to disturb my appointment, he must insist on my making a design in the Italian style, which he felt sure I could do quite as well as the other. That he heard I was so tremendously successful in the Gothic style, that if he let me alone I should Gothicize the whole country, etc., etc., etc. . . . . This Gothic architecture admits the sun from its very rising till its setting, so that [his] friend the Speaker, who necessarily goes to bed

[2] In addition to the Ministry's work on the maintenance of royal residences, the accommodation of British embassies and consulates abroad and the conservation of ancient monuments, Post Offices, and Telephone Exchanges, it has a wide range of other responsibilities which the following list of recent buildings or groups of buildings, selected at random, illustrates: Duke of York School, Dover, Islington Model Prison, Edinburgh Court of Law, Southampton Customs House, National Physical Laboratory, Osborne Royal Naval College, Sheffield County Court, Kingsway Public Trustees Office, Peterborough Flax Factory, Swansea Grain Stores, Selby Flax Mill, Hove Housing Scheme, Middleton Sanatorium, Record Office, London University, Patent Office, Probate Court, Revenue Buildings, Employment Exchanges, Munition services, Working Class Housing, Savings Bank, Art and Science buildings, Health Insurance buildings, Government buildings, Whitehall, New War Office, New Admiralty, GPO, Eskdalemuir Magnetic Observatory, Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden, Board of Agriculture Offices, Land Registry Extension, Addlestone Research Institute, Ministry of Pensions, Prisons, Brompton Cemetery.

[3] P.R.O. Works 22 8/7.

late, and has no shutters to his windows, can get no sleep for it.'

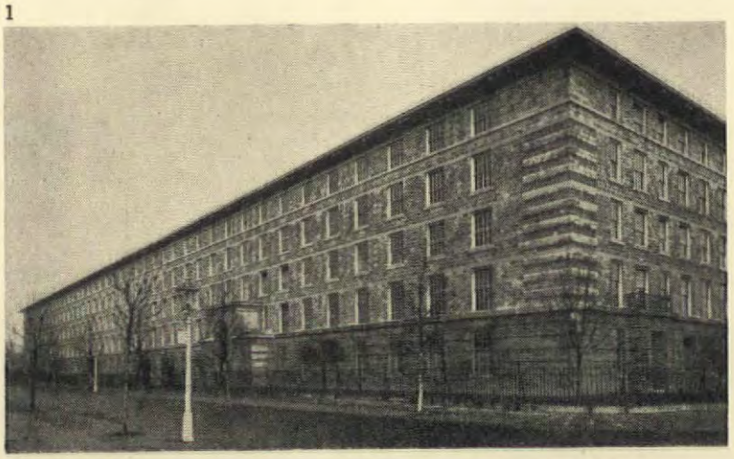
'He told me that he did not wish to disturb my position, but that he would have nothing to do with Gothic; and as to the style of my recent design, it was "neither one thing nor t'other—a regular mongrel affair"—and he would have nothing to do with it either: that he must insist on my making a design in the ordinary Italian, and that, though he had no wish to displace me, he nevertheless, if I refused, must cancel my appointment.'

One can sympathize with Scott, 'thunderstruck and in sore perplexity,' for he had in truth bumped up against a sort of Sound Barrier, which few have since been able to cross: the know-all insensitiveness of a new middle class.

As we now recognize, the trouble lay not only in Palmerston's bad temper but in Scott's artistic arrogance. By inflating the super-ego of the artist the Romantic movement created a vicious circle. The loftier the sentiments of architects, the more irritable became their clients; and the more tiresome his client, the more self-righteous became the architect. This discord was very soon reflected in a breach within the architectural profession itself, between the hacks and the æsthetes, whom we shall find sniping at each other through most of the proceedings of the first century of the RIBA. The Office of Works, with its increasing routine commitments and its liability to petty interference, was early recognized as no place for æsthetes, and it became the accepted system that its staff architects tackled the dull work, while the æsthetes, unpredictable and quarrelsome, were brought in for the more spectacular jobs, generally by means of a limited competition.

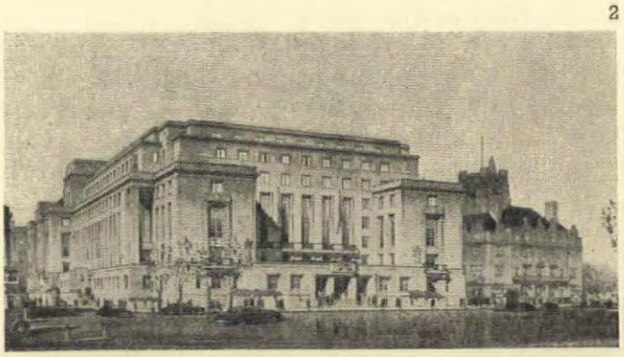
The results of this snobbery were inevitably a decline in the prestige of the Office of Works, which

1



The Ministry of Pensions building at Acton (Sir James Grey West, 1922), 1, was the first great government office block since Somerset House to be designed inside the Office of Works. It remains the best, and makes one wonder why the Ministry has on the whole been so unlucky in its choice of distinguished private architects for its major government buildings. World-War-One austerity may have been partly responsible for the massive simplicity of this great block, with its rough Celtic wall surfaces, so unlike London and yet so essential to the character of the building. Nothing quite like this had been seen since the Georgian warehouses.

2



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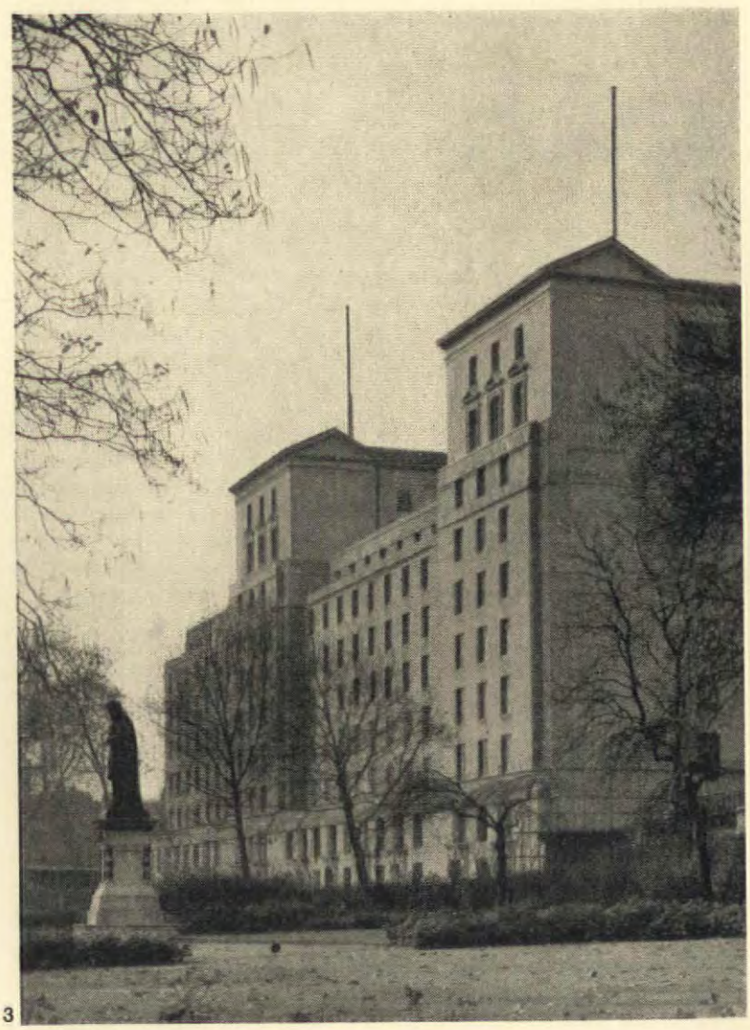
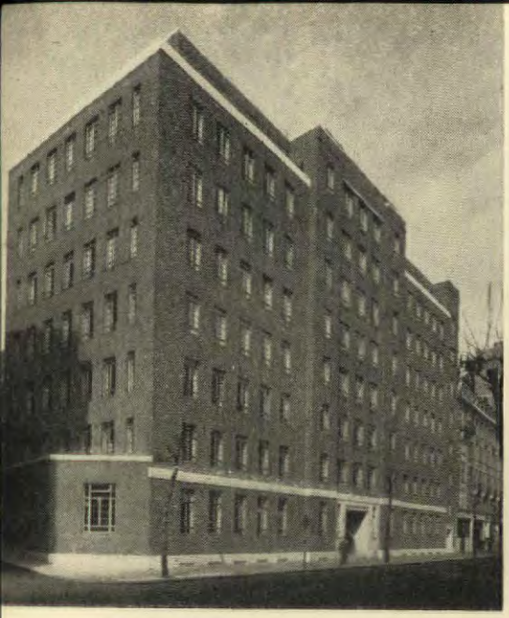


These two buildings, Government Offices, Whitehall, by Vincent Harris, 1952 (design for Colonial Office, by Burnet, Tait & Partners, 1949), 2 and 3, are much more the sort of thing we have come to expect for government offices—both clearly intimidated by their surroundings. The first was the result of a competition, the second of a direct appointment, and the most interesting thing about them is their similarity of style, considering that one was designed before 1914 and the other after 1945. They are both conceived in the Victorian tradition that what matters about government offices, as about banks, is that they should look unbreakable. It can roughly be said that this country will not have regained its architectural balance until it has the courage to use its contemporary architecture on the North Bank.



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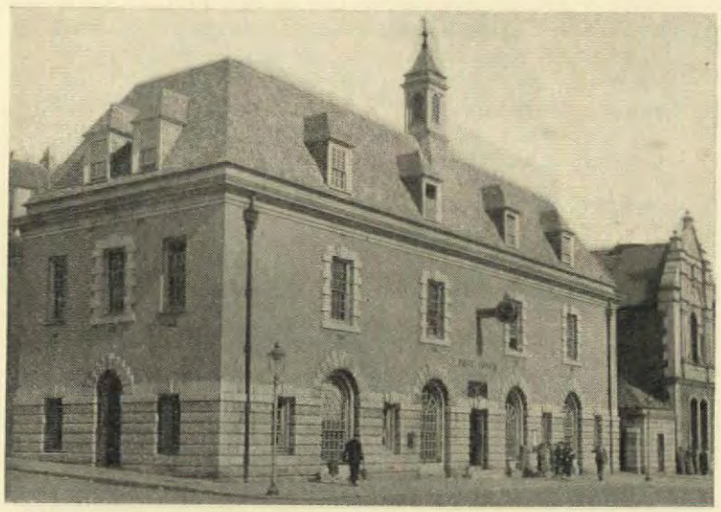
5

The Ministry of Works did not, of course, design these now notorious office buildings, 4 and 5, but they were erected under its auspices and could, therefore, presumably have been brought under its æsthetic control. There is nothing new to be said about them. They exist.



6

The GPO earned high marks among the amenity interests in the twenties and thirties for the amount of public money it was ready to devote to Harmonizing. Some Georgian towns were undoubtedly worth it, though not this particular street in Falmouth, whose Post Office (1937), 6, for all its laudable granite and stucco, is quite out of scale. Incidentally, huge sums would have been saved, without any disharmony, if the GPO had chosen George III or IV as model period instead of Queen Anne. On Edwardian Ascot (1949), 7, there is, perhaps, no need for detailed comment. The Office of Works has had a century in which to do some research on the Perfect Post Office. Instead it seems to have gone on the principle of No Two Alike. Compare the post-war record of the Ministry of Education, which deserves a bouquet from every taxpayer for its tireless efforts to give him value for his money.

7

by the turn of the century had sunk so low that the RIBA President, Leonard Stokes, did not hesitate to devote the bulk of his presidential address of 1911 to an attack on official architecture.[4] This was followed by an editorial in *The Architects' and Builders' Journal*.[5]

'The only expedient that would render the Office of Works a safe authority for such a task is a change which many persons have been clamouring for years; namely, the permanent appointment of a First Commissioner of Works selected for architectural knowledge and genius, and holding his position independently of changes of Government. . . . Unless that course is taken, the Office of Works, as far as architecture is concerned, were much better abolished.' This must have been the first expression of the twentieth century's characteristic hankering for a Ministry of the Fine Arts or a Dictator of Taste—symptom, if there ever was one, of cultural disintegration. In putting forward this anachronistic and inappropriate solution, the *Journal* does not seem to have been aware that it was advocating a return to the Georgian and pre-Georgian set-up.

The division of the Art world into an impossible *avant-garde* and a stodgy main body took place during a period in which the monarchy achieved enormous success in cultivating the tastes and regaining the affection of the man in the street. Thus whereas the Prince Regent had taken the lead in every artistic folly, the Prince Consort judged art in terms of its utility, and Edward VII had no use for it at all. This helped to confirm the Office of Works in its attachment to safe mediocrity, so that by the nineteen-thirties it had become inconceivable that buildings or rooms to be used by royalty, or British official buildings abroad, should have the slightest æsthetic value. The 'King's House' presented to George V on his jubilee by the Royal Warrant Holders is as good an example as any of what was thought suitable.

But we do not have to end on this depressing note. Since the thirties the whole background has changed. For one thing, the architect (under the impetus of a quite different social philosophy) has descended from his ivory tower, and done work in such fields as prefabrication and housing which have quite changed the popular picture of him. Much of this work has been done under the nose, if not in the office, of MOW, which has itself developed from a stuffy backwater into the central executive of the building industry. Moreover the difficulties of private practice, sometimes combined with a stern sense of public duty, have sent into the better-run official departments architects of a calibre not seen there for at least a hundred years. And not least, the Queen Mother has set an example of enlightened patronage for which contemporary artists and designers will be for ever grateful.

Charitably, therefore, taking such buildings as the Rio Embassy and the Board of Trade as hangovers from an earlier period, architects patiently await from a rejuvenated Ministry of Works solid proof that it is as wide awake to its creative opportunities as they have found it unsleeping in the exercise of its restrictive powers.

[4] Printed in *Architects' and Builders' Journal* 1911, p. 516.
[5] Ibid. p. 505.

8

9

The Embassy at Rio de Janeiro (Robert R. Prentice, 1950), 8, is an outstanding post-war example of the British refusal to compete. No one would want to see a British dab at *brise-soleils* and *azulejos*, but we have, of course, other export lines in architecture than the Herbert Baker. We are here in the realm of psychology rather than design, and it is probably true that this vision of England appeals to a certain type of Brazilian.

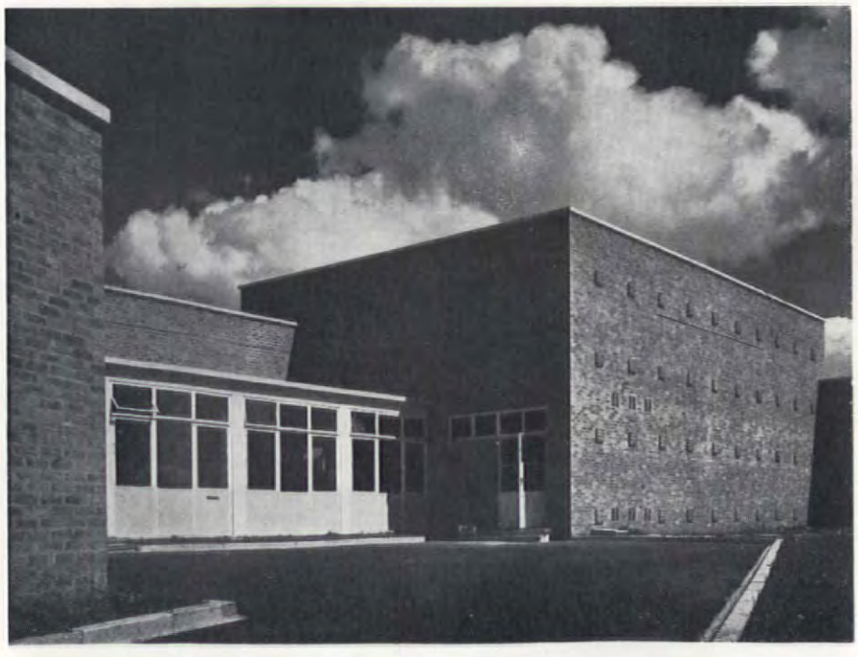
The familiar Kensington Gardens Tea House (Sir James Grey West, 1934), 9, is typical twentieth century Royal Parks architecture. The obvious allusions to Sir Christopher Wren may have been in deference to Kensington Palace; if so they are another case of deference overdone. It is fair to add that the Ministry would not do this now, after 1951.

10
11
12

The telephone exchange at Great Yarmouth (1938), 10, is not at all a bad bit of Georgian, though it would have been better with less plinth and no enrichment above the entrance pediment. But how much more interesting to have carried through in contemporary terms the broader fenestration of the sawn-off Victorian building alongside. But one feels almost a nostalgia for it after the post-war (1950) equivalent at Broadstairs, 11, perhaps the most illiterate government building since the war.

The King's House, 12, presented to George V on his Jubilee by the Royal Warrant Holders, is a fair example of the real terror of commitment in any direction which froze the designer of anything to do with Royalty between the wars. One remembers the tactful captions: 'British dignity expressed in modern craftsmanship; a free interpretation of the Georgian tradition, combining modern labour-saving devices with the elegance of an earlier age,' etc., etc.

13



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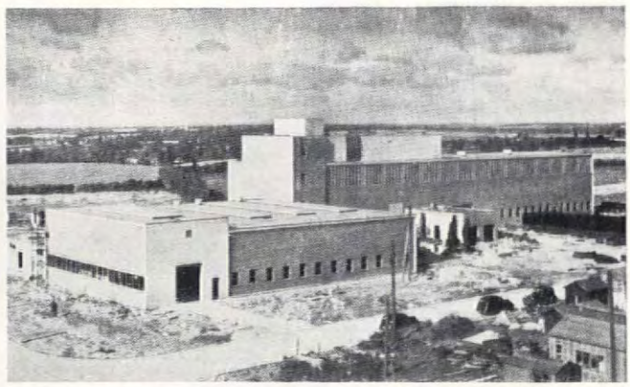


In its eclectic way, MOW inevitably puts up, among other things, some very decent contemporary buildings. The Abattoir at Guildford (Chief Architect's Division, MOW, 1952), 13, and the High Speed Laboratories at Bedford (same, 1950), 14, appear to be straightforward solutions of practical problems and could be welcomed with real enthusiasm if one could be sure they represented firm leadership in a consistent direction.

1 2

3 4

In 1947 *the Treasury published a report* Working Conditions in the Civil Service. *Two years later the demonstration offices at Ebury Bridge House showed how the report was being implemented. Post-war rehabilitation of Government premises is now sufficiently advanced to allow an assessment of the achievements of the Chief Architect's and Supplies Divisions of the Ministry of Works.*

MISHA BLACK

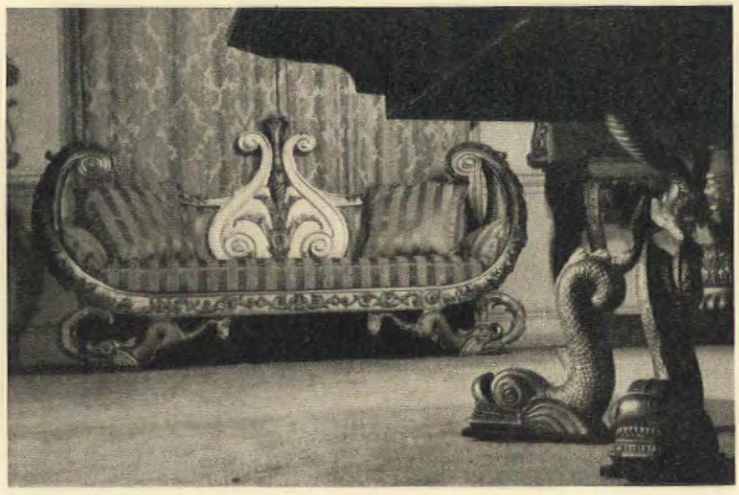
THE CROWN FURNISHES

The magnitude of the problem inhibits criticism. The Ministry of Works is responsible for all civil Government buildings in Great Britain and abroad (excluding only Police and some Ministry of Civil Aviation and Post Office projects) in addition to substantial works for the Services. Its duties range from designing vaccine laboratories at Eskgrove to the furnishing of Whitehall Gardens, from adapting the Manor Hotel at Harrogate for the Air Ministry to building the new Colonial Office. Abroad its activities during the current financial year embrace thirty-one countries and range from Baghdad to Monrovia, from Paris to Singapore, with Tokyo, Vienna and Washington added for good measure.

In the financial year 1952–3 the Ministry has planned to spend £28,885,000 on public buildings in Great Britain and £1,952,000 overseas: its over-all estimates total £67,178,962 and even if, for the purpose of this review, we exclude the Royal Palaces, Royal Parks and ancient monuments, the magnitude of the project is only equalled by its fragmentation into so large a number of completely different jobs as to make particularly difficult any unified æsthetic control.

Anyone who has tried to control the appearance of even the single office building of a large commercial undertaking appreciates the difficulty of achieving and maintaining quite modest standards of good design and orderliness, and even architects' and designers' own offices are not beyond reproach. But the Ministry has, in addition, the special problems of an over-zealous public eager to criticize anything which to them smacks of extravagance, an almost equally vigilant civil service ready to object to any sign of expenditure on seeming non-essentials, and the need to combat jealousy by that rigid adherence to standards which has fathered all the jokes about civil servants' carpets. Towering over these problems is the monumental legacy of war; the antiquated,

There is a continuity (which has always meant much to the British) actually visible in 10, Downing Street, which links the present office of Prime Minister with Walpole and the eighteenth century in a most authentic way. But authenticity is a perishable article, which must be safeguarded by sensitive and affectionate remodelling. The introduction of even one thoughtless piece of routine like the alabaster bowls that now light the Cabinet Room, 1, can destroy the work of centuries, while electric light imaginatively used could have enhanced it. For purposes of comparison with this example of British traditionalism, here are the plain wooden walls, conscientiously if non-committally modern, of the Council Room at Stockholm, 2, the Washington Cabinet Room, 3, with swathed and beflagged windows and somewhat nondescript furnishing and the Ministerial Council Chamber at Rome, 4, impressively monumental on a scale with which even a film-politician would be satisfied.



5, the Dolphin Suite made by William Collins and presented by Mrs. John Fish to the Admiralty in 1813 and still in the First Lord's reception room. Would the Ministry of Works to-day accept a gift of furniture that was equally contemporary and equally a departure from orthodox models?

blitzed and temporary offices and the products of minimum war-time standards for furniture, equipment and decoration.

But if the war created special problems, it also provided exceptional opportunities. The intolerable working conditions which civil servants, in common with most other people, were then content to accept cannot continue into a less warlike period. A large programme of Government building is under way, staff is gradually being moved from temporary to permanent accommodation, and the furniture and equipment allowed to fall into disrepair has to be replaced at a faster rate than would have been the case if normal maintenance and replacement had been possible during the war.

The Treasury was conscious of the coming problems during the war itself, and in 1943 established a Study Group to consider 'how the efficiency of the Civil Service might be increased by bringing its standards of physical working conditions into conformity with the best standards in commerce and industry.' It is important to note that this study group was not a commission of outside experts, but consisted of civil servants drawn from various Government Departments, including the Treasury and Ministry of Works, and its report, which was completed in September, 1944, and finally published in 1947, states in its foreword that 'in all future planning the recommendations of the Report should be taken into full account.' This report, *Working Conditions in the Civil Service*, is an excellent document, and its recommendations would, in general, satisfy the most enlightened architect, office planner or employer; certain aspects of it have been amplified by Post-war Building Studies and one may presume that it is on the basis of this report that the Ministry of Works now operates.

Its recommendations range from the general of the natural lighting of office buildings, the levels of artificial illumination, and space allocation in offices, to the particular of the correct clearance for thighs under tables and whether a middle drawer tends to make clothes shiny. The report shows a clear understanding of the importance of good working conditions in its effect on the psychology of the employees; 'in terms of hard cash, it pays an employer to provide good office working conditions . . . up-to-date equip-

6, *office of the First Sea Lord.*

8, *office of the President of the Board of Trade.*

7, *office of the Foreign Secretary.*

The offices of the First Sea Lord, 6, and the Foreign Secretary, 7, retain the solemn distinction of a Head Master's study. There is nothing wrong with the tradition they represent as long as it is only modified (and at the same time revitalized) by, for example, the personal fancies of a reigning Minister with a proper appreciation of what the room stands for. It is routine official contributions (like the light-fittings in the Foreign Secretary's room, 7) that damage the tradition, while attempts to furnish modern rooms traditionally from scratch (as in 8, the office of the President of the Board of Trade in the new building in Whitehall Gardens) with standard antique furniture consorting incongruously with the characterless interior architecture kills it altogether.

ment and accommodation have a potent psychological effect upon the efficiency of staff . . .' and so on.

Two years after the Working Conditions report was published, the first results were made public at demonstration offices in Ebury Bridge House, London. This exhibition was well presented, criticism was invited, and the whole project was an admirable example of democratic participation by the public in design problems which vitally affect them, either as taxpayers or as the people whose working environment was there under detailed review.

With minor modifications the Ebury Bridge furniture has now become standard, and is the basis on which the recently completed Whitehall Gardens offices have been decorated and furnished. It can, therefore, be considered as the best the Ministry can produce, although admittedly it is accommodated in a building which was outmoded in terms of office planning before the first stanchion was raised.

Compared with the general level of Government offices the improvements are impressive. The traditional cream walls and olive drab dados are replaced by pinks, cool green and grey, carpets are quietly mottled, heavy cotton rep replaces leather cloth. The Ministry has tried its best to implement the 1947 Report and now sits back for a moment's satisfaction in its achievement. An achievement it certainly is, if compared with previous Government practice or, for that matter, with many current commercial offices, but already the patina of institutional drabness is growing round these rooms, as insidiously as the ubiquitous green creepers cover the walls of Scandinavian showrooms.

Admittedly a great deal depends on the accommodation officers who are responsible for running the buildings; much also depends on the occupants of the rooms; for however well designed the furniture and fittings, the overall effect is nullified if the walls are a dreary blank, if the atmosphere is untidy and the furniture is seemingly arranged with the intention of destroying any merits it may possess. The architecture of Whitehall Gardens—like that of most other Government offices—does not assist the achievement of a satisfactory working environment, but neither does the design of the individual pieces of furniture: they are practical, well intentioned, in-

9, *American Secretary of State's office, Washington.*

10, *Swedish Cabinet Minister's room, Stockholm.*

American Governmental furnishing, 9, suffers from the same assumption as much of the British, that the antique or its imitation—even when it is not part of a complete traditional setting—is the right way of supporting the dignity of a great power. The Swedes are less concerned to announce their antiquity; here indeed they abandon all attempt at ceremonial formality by installing such things as frilly curtain pelmets in a Cabinet Minister's room, 10.

The office of Stockholm's Town Planning Director, 11, does not provide a direct comparison with the British and American examples, but it indicates that a proper regard for the function of an office can result in a dignified and at the same time workmanlike interior.

11, *office of Stockholm's Town Planning Director.*

offensive and dreary.

During the financial year 1952–53, the Ministry of Works will spend some £2,725,000 on new furniture and equipment for Public Buildings in Great Britain alone, and a further £500,000 on the repair and maintenance of furniture and equipment. Expenditure of this order appears to allow for some experimental work to be undertaken by the Ministry in association with designers outside it, especially as most Divisions in the Ministry normally budget for professional fees for 'outside consultants.'

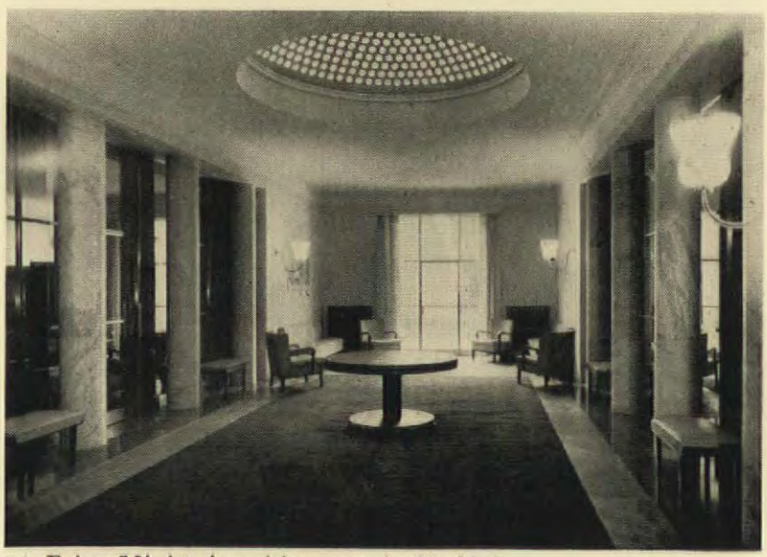
Where, we might reasonably enquire, does the Council of Industrial Design impinge on this problem? The answer is 'not at all.' All furniture and equipment is either bought from stock or, especially in the case of furniture, designed within the Department. Occasionally, furnishing firms are invited to submit free schemes, but no designers are being commissioned. The Ministry of Works has never approached the Council of Industrial Design on its own initiative. Nevertheless, a Joint Advisory Committee to advise on furniture was established in 1947 with Gordon Russell representing the Council of Industrial Design. The result was a severely critical report by Gordon Russell, uplifted noses at the Ministry and the design of all furniture and equipment remains the responsibility of technical officers and their draughtsmen.

The Ministry appears to be generally satisfied with its present standard of achievement and sceptical that anyone outside its organization could appreciate the problems of standardization, hard wear, grading, maintenance and economy.

Progress will remain slow and unspectacular and design will remain poor so long as the Ministry is content to continue without a first-class designer at the head of the production section of the Supplies Division, who is able, by infusing a really progressive character into the work, to attract to it junior designers with an equally enterprising attitude to their job. The now considerable experience of the COID should immediately be brought into Ministry of Works deliberations, and a fractional percentage of their vast expenditure allocated to experimental work by the best furniture and equipment designers in the country. Plans should be made for the systematic and sustained training of accommodation officers on the

12, *entrance hall at Whitehall Gardens.*

13, *reception room of the U.S. Secretary of State.*



14, *Prime Minister's waiting room in Stockholm.*

In the new Government offices at Whitehall Gardens, 12, the checkered counter serves as introduction to the reception room on the first floor, reached from this first reception hall by escalators. They may be compared with the lobby to the Secretary of State's office in Washington, 13, and the Prime Minister's Waiting Room in Stockholm, 14. Neither of the last two have great distinction, but the Swedish furniture and fittings have a coherence and quality lacking in the American mêlée and not even attempted in the British.

lines of the COID Courses for Furniture Salesmen.

If this seems harsh criticism, an examination of the furniture donated by the British Government through the Ministry of Works to the United Nations building in New York, and for which the Ministry presumably produced of its best, will show that æsthetic appreciation is not added to the admirable administrative qualities of the Supplies Division.

While its contemporary furniture remains so undistinguished, it is not surprising that the Ministry continues to interest itself so actively in the purchase of antiques and the manufacturing of pseudo-antiques. The Minister's room at Whitehall Gardens is resplendent with eighteenth-century furniture disturbed only by a gold mottled 'Angle-poise' lamp. It is general practice so to furnish Ministers' offices, although any Minister's special preference would be respected—why, therefore, should not the Minister of Works himself give the lead?

Similarly, when additions or replacements are required for the traditional rooms in Downing Street, the Admiralty and elsewhere where the eighteenth-century pattern still remains, more antiques are bought or copies made, but even here a lack of sensitivity is painfully apparent, and the great rooms that are the home of British statesmanship are, by and large, degenerating into disorderly antique depositories. No one would argue against retaining the ancient atmosphere of these rooms and buildings, or wish to transform them into well-mannered Scandinavian parlours, but antiques must be purchased with discrimination as well as money, and arranged with taste as well as with an eye to efficiency.

Overseas the situation is no different. In embassies and consulates standard Ministry of Works designed furniture is provided for the less senior staff, while antiques or their copies are bought for the ambassadors' offices and reception rooms. A degree of elegance remains, but nowhere yet can be seen any appreciation that there is a living British tradition. Where attempts at providing something more creative have been made, as in the case of the John Piper panels in the dining room at the Embassy at Rio de Janeiro, the total effect remains apologetic.

It has recently been announced that the Residency now being built at Colombo may be equipped with

15, *the Colonial Office, Church House, Westminster.*

16, *board room, Lever House, New York.*

17, *Town Planning Office, Stockholm.*

The Board Room, designed by Raymond Loewy Associates for Lever House in New York, 16, and the Session room for Stockholm's Town Planning Office, 17 (both representative of good current practice), might not provide the ideal setting for British Government deliberations, 15, but the solution in this case should be equally positive in character, not characterless official routine. Nondescript fabric with box pelmets is not the only way of curtaining windows, and pendant mushrooms are not the only light fittings compatible with dignity.

This room at the Colonial Office at Church House, Westminster, is a typical example of Ministry of Works 'high level' furnishing. The general mediocrity is not made tolerable by some fine individual pieces.

contemporary furniture, but this is more a cause for alarm than rejoicing when it is known that the Ministry's only link with the world outside the Civil Service is with the design departments of the long-established furnishing firms.

Under the present Minister of Works an appreciation at least of the importance of wall decoration has begun to grow, and pictures are being bought for use in Government buildings and embassies that include a percentage from contemporary British artists, but only the edges of the biscuit will be nibbled until a really first-class architect or designer is appointed at high level to control the æsthetic aspect of all the work of the Supplies Division.

Where furniture impinges on building the Supplies Division works in close co-operation with the Chief Architect's Division. To some extent, therefore, the criticisms of the Supplies Division apply also to that of the Chief Architect; there is the same tendency to play safe rather than to battle against internal opposition to anything which is different from accepted practice. There is also the difficulty of attracting staff of the right calibre into a department which has a reputation for competency rather than inspiration. But there are some signs of a change. The colour schemes for new offices, the decoration of small buildings such as the reception room at Faraday House, and the experimental work at Post Offices and Employment Exchanges all hint at internal convulsions which may eventually make us look forward with as much excitement to a new Ministry of Works project as we already do to a new LCC building or Hertfordshire School.

The Architects' Division does not, at least, suffer from the parochial isolation of the Supplies Division and in the current year it has budgeted to spend £168,000 on fees to outside consultants. It would be pleasant if one could be confident that the outside consultants are always those who would strengthen the inside men of progressive outlook and help achieve a climate of progressive experiment that will attract the best young architects to the service of the Ministry.

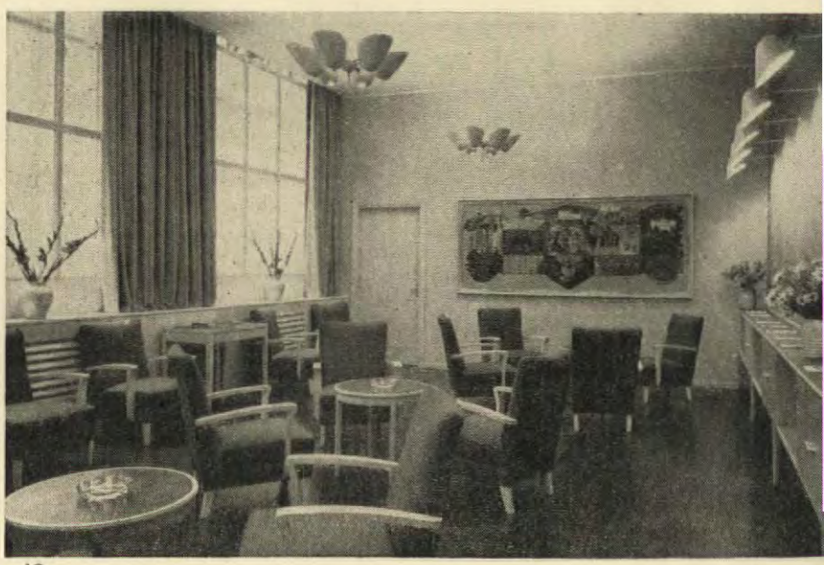
The 1947 Treasury Report admirably states the need. 'We suggest,' it says, 'that human demands are based on human needs—amongst them the satisfaction of desire for self-respect, self-expression and group activity in worthwhile work. We further suggest that what will be wanted will be a policy based on these needs and such a policy would best be carried out through inspiration and initiative from the top.'

The Civil Service, speaking from its highest level, has expressed that humane appreciation of a problem which we have grown to expect. The gulf between good intentions and the capacity to turn them into an acceptable visual form is no wider at the Ministry than elsewhere. Tentative approaches towards the gulf's edge have already been made; resolute action could now bridge it. The British Government showed itself ready to sponsor the highest design standards at the Festival of Britain, admirable work was done on utility furniture by the Board of Trade during the war, the Government finances the Council of Industrial Design with the aim of improving design in industry; now it should consider taking its own prescription and take measures to ensure that the Ministry of Works shall, in future, lead the field instead of remaining content with its present far more modest achievements.

THE BRITISH TRADITION

18

BRITISH MODERN



19

The Admiralty Board Room, 18, has been beautifully restored after war-damage, and is a reminder of what official standards were like in the eighteenth century.

The visitors' reception room at Faraday House, 19, is a brave attempt by the Ministry of Works to achieve something contemporary, but is marred by standard Supplies Division furniture and the accommodation officer's taste in floral decoration. We must wait a little while to see with what result the Ministry's Chief Architect applies contemporary design standards to more important projects when his budget is less limited.

20

21

20, 21, 22, *the British Embassy at Rio de Janeiro.*

22

A PAGE OF NEW EMBASSIES

It is difficult at first glance to tell which Embassy is British, which French and which Italian. The Embassy style is properly lavish but oddly international.

The Finnish Embassy in London a few years ago made a break with ambassadorial tradition, and in adapting a Victorian mansion in Grosvenor Place as the new Irish Embassy Raymond McGrath has tried to introduce a less ornate character, suited to a new republic; note the architect-designed Donegal carpet. The news that the new British residences at Colombo and Canberra may be provided with contemporary furniture is, nevertheless, disquieting rather than encouraging. Without assistance from outside the present ranks of Ministry of Works Supplies Division, the result can only be schemes of decoration which will lack the virtues either of the antique or of the contemporary and bring us no nearer to an Embassy that really expresses the *living* tradition of the country.

23

24

26

25

23, *the Residence of the French Ambassador, Kensington Palace Gardens.*
24, *the Italian Embassy in Great Britain.*
25, *the Indonesian Embassy in London.*
26, *the Ambassador's Private Study, Irish Embassy, London.*

MINISTRY OF WORKS

These offices are a substantial improvement on pre-war Government practice. Consideration has been given to the technical problems of efficient use, manufacture and maintenance, and the walls are painted in pink, cool green and grey in an attempt to disguise the unhappy shape and architectural detail of the rooms themselves.

A stride forward, but while the intentions are admirable, the research patient, and construction sturdy, not a single piece of furniture is above the commonplace in design.

The Supplies Division of the Ministry of Works which produced the furniture is headed by expert administrative and contracts personnel who do not add æsthetic judgment to their other excellent qualities. The more the pity therefore that they refuse to co-operate with the Council of Industrial Design or seek other advice from outside their organization. The Ministry should divide design from administration, recruit designers of the highest calibre and give them the power necessary to ensure that the visual quality of all Government furnishing will equal its present technical efficiency.

27

COMMERCIAL PRACTICE

The furniture at Lever House, New York, 32, and the Swedish insurance building, 33, is not markedly more expensive or contentious than that which the Ministry of Works provides, but it avoids the institutional quality which characterizes even the best Ministry of Works furniture.

The other three photographs show the contemporary commercial treatment of openly planned (as distinct from individual) offices, 34, is in Lever House, 35, part of the Time-Life offices in New York and, 36, a British example at the Austin Motor Company. In all these examples reasonably acceptable steel furniture is used allowing for the application of colour to the furniture itself which is denied by the Ministry of Works standard oak for general offices.

32

28, 29

30, 31

33

35

34

36

MINISTRY OF WORKS
SUPPLIES DIVISION

37–46, ten typical pieces of furniture designed by the Ministry of Works, all in current use. Some go to offices, some to embassies, others are produced for hostels and staff quarters. These are the best examples chosen from those selected by senior officers of Supplies Division whose wishes have been respected by the omission of less creditable pieces. Some of the furniture is adequate, none excellent.

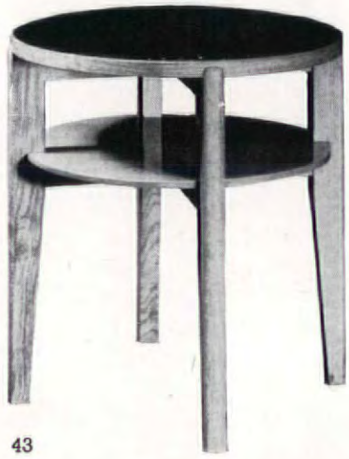
The Council of Industrial Design reported in 1947 that the production of really well-designed furniture by the Ministry is impossible under the present system by which control of design is vested in administrative officers who seemingly lack visual discrimination.

Since that report there has been no contact between the Ministry and the Council—an odd state of affairs when the agency created by the Government expressly to advise on design problems is deliberately ignored by the Department responsible for the furnishing of practically all public buildings in Great Britain and abroad.

37

38

42

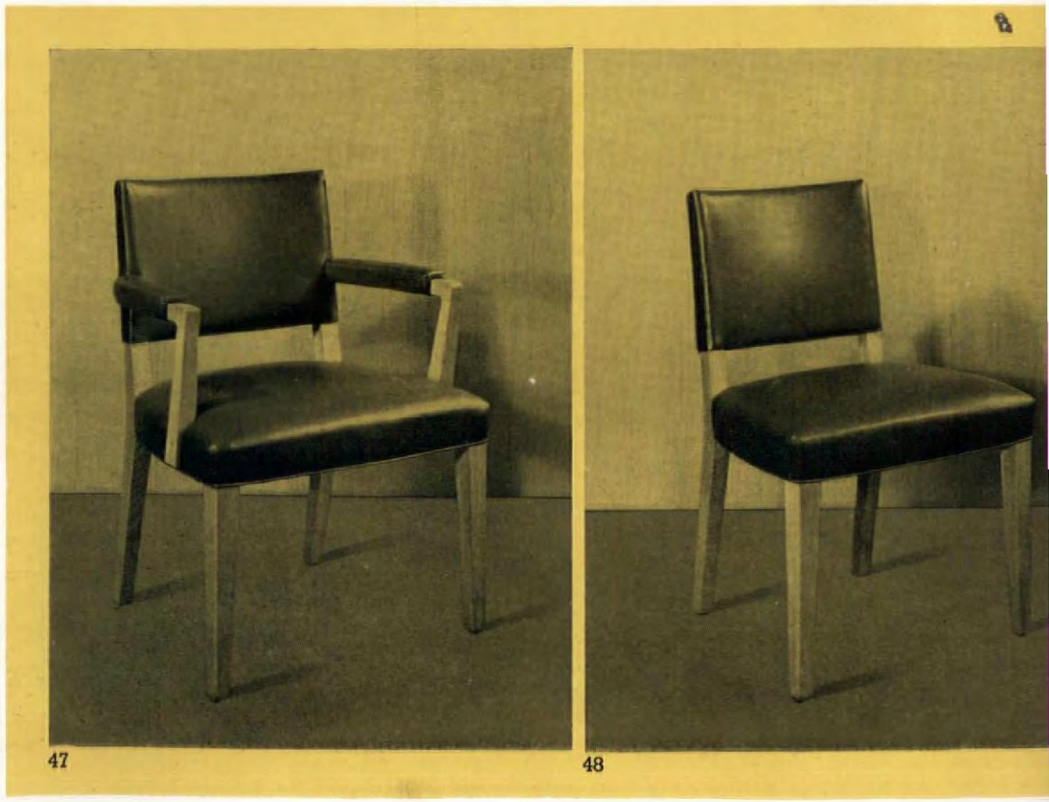


43

UNITED NATIONS

The British contribution to United Nations Headquarters is the panelling and furnishing of one committee room. The horizontal oak panelling, 49, was designed by C. T. Pledge of the Chief Architects' Division of the Ministry of Works, and the table and chairs, 47, 48, 49, by the Ministry's Supplies Division.

The other photographs, 50 and 51, illustrate the Danish and Swedish contribution to UN. The British Government may consider we are too poor to match the scale of the Scandinavian gifts, but it is disappointing that we should also lag so far behind the smaller countries in the design of our contribution.



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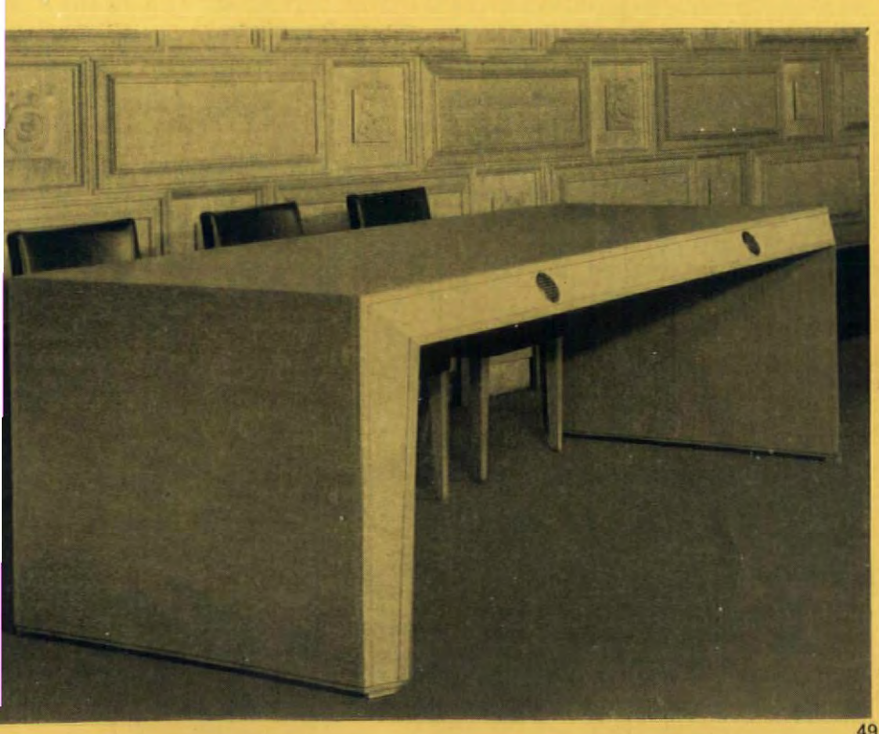

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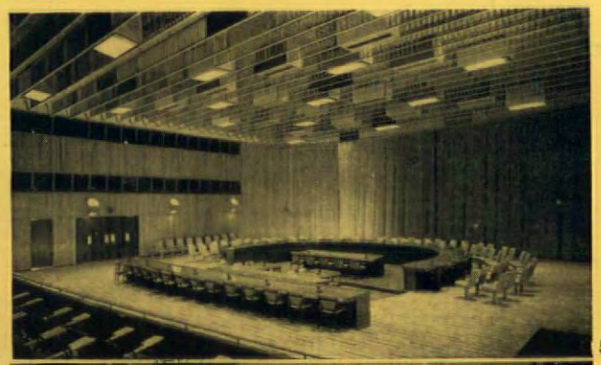


50

51

POST OFFICES

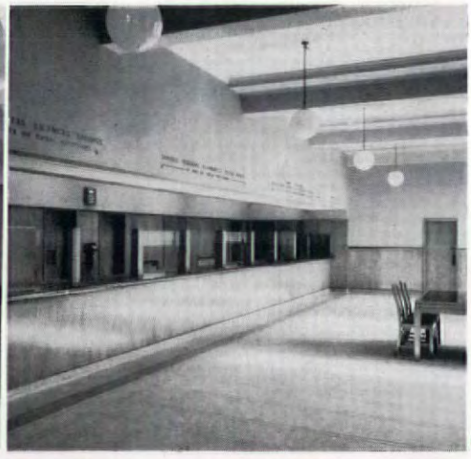
The Government architects responsible for Post Office building have lately shown a welcome willingness to experiment. The new counters at Littlehampton, 52, are an example. They owe something to the saw-tooth plan of the South Bank Post Office designed by the Architects' Co-operative Partnership. At Littlehampton, too, the combined station system has been further developed to obviate queues at one portion of the counter while other assistants are less busy.

The new Post Office built at Queen Street, Edinburgh, in 1937, 53, and the 1951 Lancing Office, 54, are both inoffensive, but retain an institutional atmosphere which compares unfavourably with the suburban Post Office in Stockholm which was also built in 1951, 55. This is partly the fault of the commonplace detailing of the British building, partially of poor light fittings and other equipment which are not the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Works architects and which they agree are over-ripe for re-design.

The Italian Post Office in Milan, 56, is more self-conscious in design; enterprise has been shown in the use of murals and sculpture, though not in this instance with very happy results.

52


53


54


57


55


56

The new British Post Offices express the character of the people who use them more than the pomp of the Government which provides them. But if the marble columns of this example, 57, designed by Sir Henry Turner in 1910 must give way to cheaper materials, a real humanity must replace official magnificence.

58

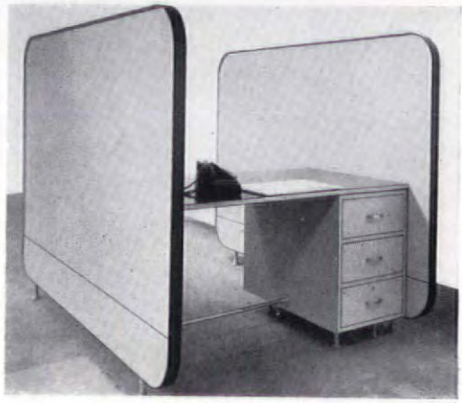
59

EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES

The experimental office for the Ministry of National Insurance at Kew, 58, was not found satisfactory, but rather for administrative reasons than for its mannered decoration. The Ealing Employment Exchange, 59 and 60, sets the current standard for interior treatment.

Privacy of interviews is now obligatory at new Exchanges and the partition unit, 61, is normally supplied, but usually with curved walls for greater seclusion. These examples are typical of the highest Ministry of Works standards; efficient, intelligently designed in terms of usage, but poorly detailed and somewhat negative in character, lacking especially a positive style and a sense of humanity.

60



61

62

63

64

65

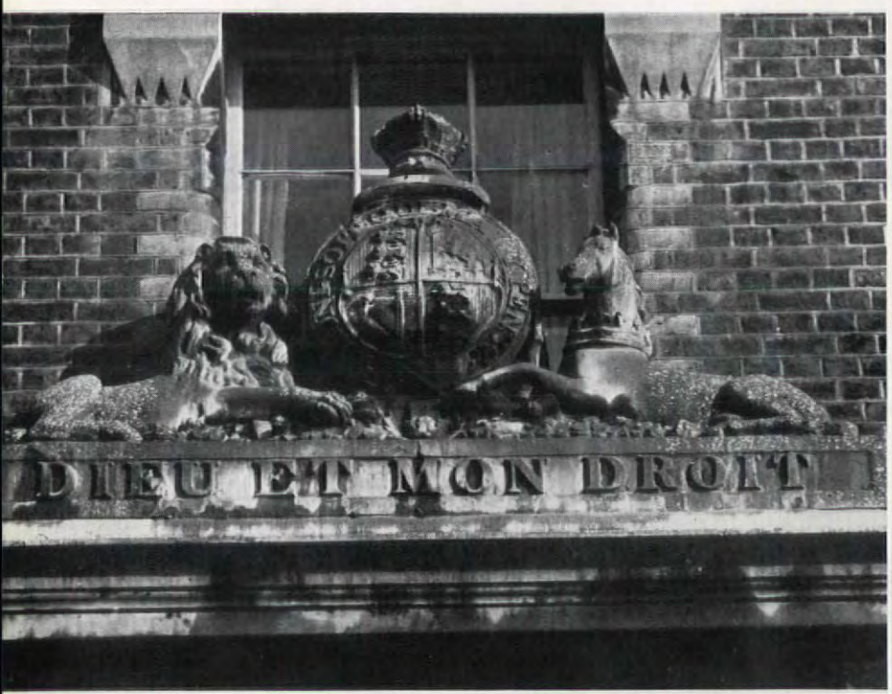
CANTEENS

62 and 63 are recent Ministry of Works designs. The wall colouring has been carefully considered and a design standard achieved which equals average commercial practice, but is well below the best which is being done elsewhere. 64 is a small canteen for Swedish Post Office workers. Greater attention has been given to detail, light fittings and furniture, and a willingness shown to spend that small extra sum which allows for a human atmosphere to be added to the mechanics of canteen food production.

65 is the new canteen at Lever House in New York. It has, perhaps, too much glitter for British tastes, but at least tries to avoid the barrack-room atmosphere of most Ministry of Works schemes.

1, *Shop at Windsor.*

2, *Customs House, Wapping.*



3, *Police Station, King's Cross Road, London.*

4, *St. Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square.*

Coats of arms were in use in architecture in the thirteenth century, some fine examples in carved and painted stone being those in the choir at Westminster. This early use of heraldry is found, often with a lavish and skilful use of colour and gilding, in the adornment of such widely differing features as royal tombs, roof bosses and hammer beams (as at Westminster Hall) and in humbler forms like the Malvern type slip-tiles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first four illustrations show how in more recent times some fine examples are to be found on buildings down to the late nineteenth century, but carved heraldry has paralleled the decline of printed coats of arms and the fifth photograph typifies the stilted angular style of design often found in the present century, of which even this is one of the least debased examples.

5, *Heal's, Tottenham Court Road.*

CHARLES HASLER

This article is mainly concerned with the visual aspects of arms, stamps and money, with the designers, engravers and artists whose problems they were, and how they reflect the times of which they were the products. Tudor ruggedness gave way to the elegance of the eighteenth century and the vigour of the early nineteenth century which gradually declined into the duller competence of our own times.

ARMS STAMPS AND MONEY

The Royal Arms appeared in printing within a generation of its introduction into England in 1476. At the beginning of the sixteenth century they were being used as decorations on the earliest English bookbindings, and a little later woodcut designs were printed on Tudor proclamations and on the title pages of printed volumes of statutes.

Later still, they appeared on Acts of Parliament, in announcements of the granting of Royal privileges (e.g., to print or publish); then in the early eighteenth century, newspapers began the practice of displaying them in their headings. At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries their use extended to holders of Letters Patents and Royal Warrants and licensees under Acts of Parliament (such as theatre proprietors), until in 1887 legislation virtually confined their use, apart from the Royal Family and Government Departments, to Royal Warrant holders.

At all events they did not come into general use until the early years of the eighteenth century and their production and sale as cast ornaments by the typefounders for use as stock blocks by printers did not begin until the 1780's, from which time they were in prolific use until the 1887 prohibition.

The earliest coats of arms have a ruggedness which sorts well with the black-letter types used in the books and proclamations which they occasionally adorned. Two instances of their very early use are Pynson's *Petrus Carmelianus* of 1508, and part of an architectural border printed by Siberch at Cambridge in 1521, but both are integral parts of their respective pages as distinct from movable pieces of decoration, complete in themselves, which seem to begin with Henry VIII and were used by Thomas Berthelet and Richard Grafton, the King's printers. Of the two varieties of arms seen, one shows angels as supporters, 1, and the other, the more usual dragon and greyhound, 2. Christopher Barker and his successor Robert, printers to Queen Elizabeth I, show three extremely decorative varieties, 3, 4, 5. Oddly enough, their second design appears on a proclamation dated October 30, 1561, for the 'reverent usage of all churches and churchyards.'[1] Their first design, 3, was in one instance flanked by great Dutch flowered initial letters E R, of the kind which were in use later at the Oxford University Press. The Bagford collection contains title pages from volumes of statutes printed in the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth in which simplified arms form part of the woodcut borders surrounding the titles, and an Edinburgh royal printer, Robert Walde-grave shows the Scottish Royal Arms on a title page in 1597.

Throughout the seventeenth century we find a greater use of the Royal Arms in connection with official printing, and Acts of Parliament now carry them on their title pages.

By the early years of the eighteenth century wood engraving had declined, and although still practised was overshadowed by metal engraving. Our eighth illustration is in all probability an example of one of these metal cuts. It is from a volume of Maittaire's Latin Classics (Tonson & Watts, 1713) for which Elisha Kirkall (?1682–1742) is known to have engraved decorations. He came to London in about 1702 to 'grave arms, ornaments, etch and cut stamps in hard mettal for printing in books.'

This period also saw the establishment of a new custom. In 1715, *The* (morning) *St. James's Post* and *The St. James's Evening Post* carried a royal device as part of its title, consisting of a shield ensigned by a crown imposed on a cope. A fine factotum of the full arms appeared at the beginning of the text, the initial letter being inserted in the place normally occupied by the shield. By 1725, if not earlier, the main heading device had also become a full coat of arms by the addition of supporters and national emblems, 9.

One newspaper and periodical after another copied the *St. James's*. The 1749 volume of the *Universal Magazine* carried no less than four different coats of arms in its first five pages, two of which we reproduce, 10 and 11.

One of the most distinguished of the newspapers was *The Daily Universal Register*, which began on January 1, 1785, and was renamed *The Times* on January 1, 1788. This paper began a long series of designs which have remained very much in harmony with its typographical presentation to this day, 39, 40, 41, and on October 3, 1932, when the paper was restyled the arms of George III were restored.[2] That most official of all newspapers, *The London Gazette*, although established in 1664, did not incorporate the Royal Arms into its title until 1785, 37, 38. It is in this same year that two typefounders (themselves letterfounders to the King), began showing King's Arms in their specimens, and in this sense they must have been the first holders of Royal Appointments to display arms on their own printed matter. William Caslon's version, 12, appeared as a headpiece and dedication, but Joseph Fry's appeared both on his title page and within his specimen, indicating that they were already available for use as stock blocks by the printing trade.[3]

By the end of the eighteenth century,

[1] After Henry VIII's breach with Rome in 1534, coats of arms were displayed in churches as a reminder that the king was 'supreme head on earth of the Church of England.' See Royal Arms and Commandments in our Churches, by H. Munro Cautley, ARIBA. Adlard, 1934.

[2] There appears to be no authority for use of Royal devices by newspapers save that of long-established custom.

[3] Fry was also the first typefounder to show ships among his cast metal ornaments. His specimen of 1786 raises an interesting speculation. The dedication to George, Prince of Wales, shows a plate-printed coat of arms below which are the words 'Blake Sc., Change Alley.' William Blake was apprenticed to an engraver in 1771.

wood engraving was enjoying a great revival and two schools were flourishing. The first and most important was the great Newcastle school of Thomas Bewick (1753–1828), who was not only the leader of the revival but was head and shoulders above all his contemporaries as an artist. The second was known as the London school, of which Robert Branston the elder (1778–1827), who came to London in 1779, is considered to be the founder.[4] These two schools must also have had a great influence on the metal engraving of the time, since typefounders made use of both kinds of engraving for their cast ornaments, and it is often impossible to tell whether the original was cut in the one or the other.

Of these engravers few are known to us for certain; they worked individually as engravers to the printing trade or in even greater obscurity in the commercial engraving houses which came into existence later on.[5] Apart from Bewick, their work is more conspicuous for its technical excellence and brilliance of cutting than for its artistry, but they were great experts at exploiting to perfection the limitations which the medium imposed on them, as also the possibilities of variations of tone by slightly lowering the surface of the block. Most of them were engaged in the interpretation of the work of other more famous illustrators and designers.

Richard Austin (fl. 1785–1830) was a craftsman who was equally at home with wood and metal. In addition to wood engraving he cut punches for the type foundries. His vignette for William Miller, 'Letter-founder to His Majesty for Scotland' appeared in the specimen of 1822 and is a good example of the technical standard of the time, 17.

The rapid growth of ephemeral or jobbing printing for advertisement purposes early in the century led to a bewildering number and variety of designs for the Royal Arms for use on anything from trade cards to posters, including theatre and music-hall playbills.

So long as the armorial bearings and the supporters were correct the rest did not seem to matter. On the grandest Victorian scale backgrounds of ships and flags were added, symbolising the great prosperity and colonial empire of Britain, and foregrounds were strewn with scientific instruments and military equipment in great variety. Bold and vigorous wood blocks of arms were cut for use on posters to such dimensions as eighteen inches in width. The Protection of Inventions Act of 1851 allowed intending exhibitors in the Great Exhibition provisionally to register designs for new inventions, and hundreds of the prospectuses of the time show almost as many various designs for Royal devices. It is not unusual to find as many as 150 different varieties and sizes of designs in one typefounder's specimen book.

The fashion for 'old style' printing[6] in the 1860's brought a new greyness to the printed page, and soon we find correspondingly greyer, three dimensional 'fireback' designs appearing, 24, 25.

The engraver, together with the qualities inherent in his craft through the limitations imposed on him by his medium, gradually disappeared with the coming of process blocks at the turn of the century, by which time a design could be drawn in ink in any style or mixture of styles which the designer fancied, for photographic reproduction as line blocks, stereos and electros. The day of the modern commercial artist had already begun and the engravers in their dying kick, almost reproduced the fineness of the half-tone screen, such was their effort to survive. The first realization in the twentieth century that all was not well with Government printing led to the setting up of a Committee in 1920 to 'Select the Best Faces of Type and Modes of Display for Government Printing,' whose report was published in 1922.[7] It was observed 'that the reproductions of the Royal Arms at present used on Government printing are generally quite unworthy. Especially is this true of the smaller sizes, which at the best are apt to be a blur of confused detail, and at the worst an unsightly blot upon the page.' It was also suggested '. . . that new drawings might with advantage be obtained. . . .'

The result was a new design in the fireback style by Kruger Gray, 29, which made its first appearance in the report, together with a somewhat squarish variant evidently intended to replace the old one then in use, 28.

In cases where space was limited or where a small device was required, it was suggested that '. . . an Emblem such as a lion or other national emblem, or . . . a portcullis ensigned by an Imperial crown might be used . . .' But consider the small one, 34, used by the Council of Industrial Design which is anything but a 'blot upon the page.'

Kruger Gray's design did not survive, but was modified by various stages into the 'snowstorm' design, 30, which was recommended by the Royal Fine Art Commission in 1923 and has been in use since 1924, the Royal initials having been omitted since Edward VIII, thus establishing its use indefinitely.

It is certainly one of the less fortunate examples of how committees, even when they contain brilliant members, can water down a design in their wish to please everybody. (Dare we mention the British Railways Lion?) The ultimate result is merely to take one more step towards a state of things which a contemporary has rather acidly termed a 'mediocracy.'[8]

And so we are reluctantly forced to the conclusion that perhaps the older designs afford more real pleasure to the eye than do those of today; somewhere the tradition has gone wrong—the supporters are getting tired; the lion is not so good humouredly gruff nor the unicorn so coy. But there are some notable exceptions, both official and unofficial, in the work of Milner Gray for the Council of Industrial Design, 36, and of Reynolds Stone for the Victoria and Albert Museum, 33, and other bodies and the present device for *The Times*, which was designed under very severe restrictions of depth when the type area of the page was recently increased.

It is curiously significant that the most spirited and agreeable coats of arms in regular use today are the relatively early official designs used on letter headings by the Prime Minister, the Royal College of Art and the Council of Industrial Design, 34, 35, and the designs used for display purposes by *The Times*, the Council of Industrial Design and more recently the Festival of Britain Office. The Government departments mentioned are those which are (or have recently been) most actively concerned, in both precept and practice, with propagating the principles of good design; and they have found the best designs are either those dating from earlier times or those new versions which are unofficial in so far as they do not emanate from recognized official sources.

[4] Of the leading engravers who worked in London, a surprising number came from the provinces. Kirkall came from Sheffield, Branston from Lynn, Baxter from Lewes, Hughes from Liverpool, Clennell from Ulgham, Nesbitt from Swalwell, Harvey from Newcastle, Jackson from Ovingham and Thompson from Manchester.

[5] These firms were the predecessors of the modern commercial studios and among them were Swains, Dalziels, Dellaganas and Laytons, still in existence as process engravers and typesetters. The work of the wood-engraver has now become the work of the photographer and the acid bath.

[6] Old style printing began with a revival of Caslon's classic old-face types of the eighteenth century and ended with their being completely supplanted by a thin, colourless, Victorianized version of them which appeared in 1860.

[7] Joseph Thorp, a member of the Committee, says in his book 'Friends and Adventures,' (Cape, 1931): Mr. Bowerman [the chairman] handled his team with a gentle skill and was, I think, just a little puzzled to account for the queer enthusiasm of some of the members. One learnt something of the way 'unanimous reports' are arrived at: 'I'll yield on this point if you meet me on that' . . . Mr. Kruger Gray designed at our instance a new coat of arms to replace the muddy smudge that had hitherto graced these publications. And I think in general we made similar official publications of an earlier date look rather squalid by comparison and proved our main point . . . Whether anybody who was not officially bound to do so read this excellent report I do not know. No doubt the Government contractors pshawed and pished over it, gnashed their teeth and asked 'What's all this fuss about nothing.'

[8] *Future*, June, 1949. The word is quoted only in the sense that it suggests admirably the prospect of an age in which high quality disappears in favour of a dull average though maybe efficient standard.

1. 1518 Henry VIII

2. 1535 Henry VIII

3. 1576 Elizabeth I

4. 1578 Elizabeth I

5. 1578 Elizabeth I

6. 1683 Charles I

7. 1689 William & Mary

8. 1713 Anne

9. 1725 George I

10. 1749 George II

11. 1749 George II

12. 1785 George III

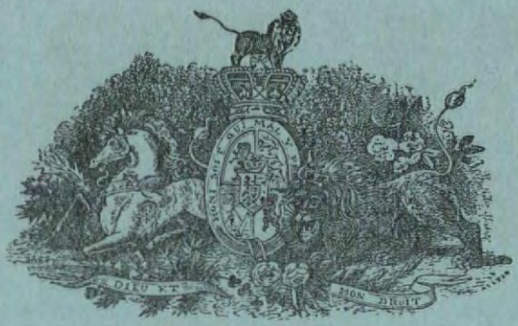
13. 1785 George III

1 to 5 are arms from Tudor proclamations in the British Museum. 1 to 7 and 13 are all from official publications, 13 being a factotum initial from an Act of Parliament. 9 is the first Royal Arms used by a newspaper and 12 is one of the earliest uses by a holder of a royal appointment (in this case William Caslon, typefounder).

14. 1799 George III

15. 1805 George III

16. 1816 George III



17. 1822 George III

18. 1825 George IV

19. c1850 Victoria

20. c1850 Victoria

The influence of the wood engraving revival. Two are by the well-known engravers John Lee, 14, and Richard Austin, 17. 19 is a type much used on the Great Exhibition publications.

21. c1850 Victoria

22. c1853 Victoria

23. c1853 Victoria

24. c1863 Victoria

25. 1863 Victoria

26. c1877 Victoria

27. c1880 Victoria

28. 1911 George V

29. 1922 George V

30. 1924 George V

34. Council of Industrial Design

31. George VI

32. George VI

33. Victoria & Albert Museum

35. Royal College of Art

36. Council of Industrial Design

The decline of the last years of the 19th century and since, and the attempts made in recent years to retrieve the situation. Of the examples shown, 21 is by one of the younger Branstons, 29 by Kruger Gray for the 1922 committee, 33 by Reynolds Stone and 36 by Milner Gray. 30 is the final version of the 1924 design; prior to 1936 the royal initials had been included on either side of the crown.

37. 1785

38. 1872

39. 1821

40. 1868

41. 1932

37 and 38, from *The London Gazette* which first displayed the Royal Arms in 1785. 39-41, from *The Times* which displayed them from its first issue in 1785. 41 shows the arms of George III, restored when the paper was restyled in 1932.

POSTAGE STAMPS

Postal services have been in operation since the fifteenth century in Europe and the early sixteenth century in England when Brian Tuke became 'Master of the Posts.' The office of Postmaster-General was finally created in 1657, at which time it was the practice to 'farm' the Post Office to the highest bidder, Henry Bishop, in 1660, paying £21,500 per annum for the privilege (it had been £5,000 in the 1640's). Postal charges were high and were worked out on a complicated sliding scale, and were usually paid by the recipient on the delivery of the letter. In 1680, William Dockwra established a prepaid local penny post in London; this was a private undertaking, very efficiently run and was, in fact, the first really organized postal service, but it was absorbed into the state monopoly in 1682, as indeed all such services were in due time.

Bishop introduced the practice of stamping, with a small symbol, all letters which passed through his office, 1, and Dockwra carried the idea a stage further by showing the office at which the letter was posted, 2. These handstruck stamps are the precursors of our modern postage stamps and postmarks.

Postage rates continually rose, and in 1835 Sir Rowland Hill began suggesting postal reform, nothing less in fact than a uniform rate of a penny per half ounce. There followed a Select Committee to consider the proposals and a Treasury Competition in 1839 for the submission of designs, and although well over 2,000 entries were submitted and four prizes awarded, none was found suitable. The entrants included James Chalmers (who submitted previously prepared designs), Charles Whiting (of lottery bill fame and a great exponent of rose engine designs), James Bogardus, William Oldham, Robert Sievier, George Bissager, Henry Cole and William Wyon. On May 6, 1840, after many experiments against frauds and counterfeits, the public were able to buy what was in fact a receipt for prepaid postage of one penny for letters weighing up to one ounce. This receipt (or adhesive label as it was then called) was the famous Penny Black, 5, followed early in 1841 by a similar design, the less famous, but now more sought after, Twopenny Blue, designed by Henry Corbould, FSA, engraved by Frederick Heath and printed by Perkins, Bacon and Petch, who received sevenpence halfpenny per thousand for the work, which was printed and gummed by hand.

These early stamps were exquisite examples of engraving and printing and since those days printers have used widely differing methods, from the simple resources of colonial newspaper offices to the great rotary photogravure machines of today. Stamps provide a microcosm of printing techniques and illustrate the decline in design standards. They also provide a fairly good record of outstanding events in history, and it has been said that their design has usually been in the spirit of the age which produced them. The processes used in printing stamps fall into two groups: first, recess or intaglio, which includes line engraving and the modern methods of photogravure, and the second group, surface printing, which subdivides into typographic and lithographic methods. All these methods are still in use, but have become partly or wholly mechanized.

Recess printed stamps

In this method, the primary die was engraved on steel, hardened, and multiplied by being repeatedly punched into a large copper plate, the corner letters being punched in after the plate was made. Jacob Perkins, of Perkins, Bacon and Petch, had introduced this method just before the firm began producing the plates for the 1840 Penny Black. The design itself was cut into the surface of the plate, which was then inked solid and wiped clean, the paper receiving the impression from the ink left in the engraved lines.

The two main influences on the earliest designs were William Wyon's medal, 3, commemorating Queen Victoria's visit to the City of London on November 9, 1837, and the portrait by A. E. Chalon, RA, of the Queen in her coronation robes, 6. These early designs were produced by a combination of hand engraving of the heads and values with backgrounds produced mechanically on the rose engine.

Many of them had a brief but glorious life and there can be no doubt that they include some of the finest work of the Victorian engravers.

Most of the fine early issues were printed by Perkins, Bacon, and the most outstanding engravers associated with them were Frederick and Charles Heath, whose interpretations of Wyon's head retained pride of place for British stamps throughout Victoria's reign, and William Humphrys, who is associated mainly with Colonial issues, particularly the heads, which were based on Chalon's portrait. Perkins, Bacon also produced the 'Britannia' design, 13a, the first standard type for use in the colonies, a practice which has survived into the reign of George VI.

The first colony to produce its own design was Mauritius, 8a. It could hardly be called a fine piece of engraving, but as a design it ranks at least with the Penny Black, on which it was obviously based. The two values, a penny and a twopenny, were engraved side by side on one small copper plate by J. Barnard, a local watchmaker, and individually printed by hand.

Many stamps are still produced by line engraving, and some very fine craftsmanship is still to be found on Commonwealth issues, particularly in the pictorials. But it is a far cry from the Penny Black of 1840 to the Papua issue of 1932, 11j, which might equally have been a commercially produced design for a travel poster.

Surface printed stamps (*typographic*)

Typographic printing also involved the cutting of a master die, but the non-printing areas were cut below the surface, leaving the design in relief. Casts of this were then made, and either assembled in a chase for printing direct or, more usually, for recasting as one large electrotype plate. This method of printing was suggested by Henry Archer in 1851 and the first printers to use it were de la Rue, their first postage stamps appearing in 1855. Few of these stamps reached the great heights of the line engraved issues, and their chief claim to distinction was the series of diademed heads of the Queen, engraved by J. F. Joubert de la Ferté, a French engraver who had settled in London and worked for de la Rue until 1866, during which period the firm produced some of its best work, 12a.

The seventies and eighties saw an extension of the idea of standard types, both for Britain and the Colonies, 13a-f, and many of them were printed on coloured papers or in two colours on white paper. This process was considerably cheaper than line engraving and has therefore been much more used than any other, and its only serious rival has been the comparatively new process of photogravure.

Typographic printing of stamps should properly include a reference to emergency methods resorted to when supplies of stamps ran short in the Colonies and fresh supplies from home did not arrive in time; printers often produced temporary stamps such as those of British Guiana illustrated (10 a and b). which are composed entirely of type and printers' ornaments.

Surface printing (*lithographic*)

Transfer lithography had been introduced in the 1840's and was first used in stamp production in the early fifties for some of the Colonial issues. The Indian issues of 1854, 9, were produced at the office of the Surveyor-General in Calcutta. They were printed in enormous numbers, the two values of half and one anna reaching a total of over 45,000,000 copies before the stamps were placed on sale.

Recess printing (*photogravure*)

Photogravure is the modern photomechanical method of intaglio printing, used for stamps as early as 1914 by Bruckmann, of Munich, for a Bavarian issue. Harrison first used the process for Egypt in 1923 and the first British gravure stamp was the three-halfpenny value of George V in 1934, 14a, an adaptation of the typographed design which it replaced. But so far the only designer who has exploited the possibilities of the process to any extent is Barnett Freedman in his Jubilee design of 1935, 14b.

To quote a philatelist, '. . . the tendency has been for individual craftsmanship to be replaced by methods of production capable of turning out huge quantities of the desired article, good enough to serve its practical purpose, but with little regard for æsthetic qualities.'[9] *Good enough to serve its practical purpose*—therein lies one of the great design problems of the twentieth century, whether it be for a postage stamp or an office block. The early designs had more homogeneity in that they were the work of very closely associated craftsmen working in a common medium, in the actual size of the finished job, and they were able to extract to the full all the possibilities from their medium; while today a greater number of specialists and technicians are concerned with the production of a design, each pre-occupied with his own contribution.

Some of our recent designs show only too clearly how the very versatility of photogravure, in releasing the designer from the discipline imposed on him by the earlier techniques, destroys those elements of scale and appropriateness which were so characteristic of British stamp design up to 1860.

[9] Stanley Phillips: 'A Century of Postage Stamps.' In Stanley Gibbons' Postage Stamp Catalogue, Centenary edition, 1940. See also John Easton's 'British Postage Stamp Design.' Faber, 1946, and Robson Lowe's 'Encyclopædia of British Empire Postage Stamps,' Vols. 1, 2 and 3, 1947-51.

1, the Bishop Mark 1661–73, the first handstruck postage stamp.
2, the stamp of William Dockwra, 1681, indicating his St. Paul's post office.

3, William Wyon's medal of 1838, the head of which provided the model for Corbould's head on the penny black of 1840.

4, one of several drawings by Henry Corbould FSA for the engravers Charles and Frederick Heath. This head remained in pride of place throughout the reign.

5, the penny black, engraved by Frederick Heath and printed by Perkins, Bacon and Petch. The simple beauty of this stamp and number 7 has rarely if ever been surpassed.

6, detail of the coronation portrait by A. E. Chalon RA, on which some of the best work of William Humphrys was based.

7, the sixpenny New Zealand issue of 1855, engraved by William Humphrys, also printed by Perkins, Bacon & Co.

a

b

c

d

e

8, early line engraved issues which have become classics of postage stamp design.

a. Mauritius 1847, engraved and printed by J. Barnard, and the first Colonial stamp.
b. New Brunswick 1851.
c. Cape of Good Hope 1853, designed by Charles Bell and engraved by Humphrys.
d. Nova Scotia 1853, Humphrys's first interpretation of the Chalon portrait.
e. Newfoundland 1857, adapted from b.
All except (a) printed by Perkins, Bacon & Co.

9, the India issue of 1854 is an early example of multiple transfer lithography. These stamps were designed and printed in the Surveyor-General's Office in Calcutta.

10, emergencies and makeshifts.

a

b

a. Set up and printed at the 'Official Gazette' office at Georgetown, Feb., 1856.
b. Set with printers' ornaments by George Melville at the office of the 'Royal Gazette,' Georgetown, Oct., 1862. Six different sets of ornaments were used.
c. A British provisional of Jan., 1883.

c

a

b

c

d

e

f

g

k

h

j

11, line-engraved issues, 1857–1939.

a. 1857 William Humphrys.
b. 1860
c. 1861 William Humphrys.
d. 1868
e. 1850 (the first pictorial) Robert Clayton.
f. 1891
g. 1925 W. G. Fairweather.
h. 1913 Bertram Mackennall.
j. 1932 E. Whitehouse.
k. 1939 Edmund Dulac.

a

b

c

d

e

f

g

h

j

12, typographed issues 1855–1929.

a. 1855 Joubert.
b. 1860
c. 1867
d. 1869
e. 1887
f. 1902
g. 1912 Bertram Mackennall.
h. 1913 G. W. Eve.
j. 1929 John Farleigh.

13, standard designs 1852–1935.

a

b

c

a. 1852
b. 1879
c. 1890
d. 1902
e. 1903
f. 1935 H. Fleury.

d

e

f

14, photogravure 1934–1951.

a

b

c

d

e

f

g

h

j

k

l

a. 1934 after B. Mackennall.
b. 1935 Barnett Freedman.
c. 1936 after J. H. Brown (a schoolboy).
d. 1938 Eric Gill.
e. 1939 Edmund Dulac.
f. 1940 H. L. Palmer.
g. 1946 Reynolds Stone.
h. 1949 Percy Metcalfe.
j. 1937 H. Baxter.
k. 1951 Abram Games.
l. 1948 G. T. Knipe & Joan Hassall.

15, coronations 1910–1937.

a

b

c

d

a. 1910
b. 1937 Edmund Dulac.
c. 1937
d. 1937

Information regarding the designers is not available in some cases where the stamps were designed in the printers' own works.

MONEY

Coining, in both precious and base metals, perhaps the oldest instance of design for quantity production, dates from the pre-Christian era in Europe.

The earliest coins, some of which show quite extraordinary skill in die-cutting, were hammer-struck, a trimmed blank being placed between a fixed lower die and a moveable upper die which received the hammer blows. Coins produced by these means continued in use into the seventeenth century, but all were taken out of circulation during the time of William III. After the pleasant crudities of the very early designs, these coins had many characteristic qualities. The lettering of the inscriptions was very bold and was often separated from the central decoration by an inner circle, 1–3, and they are noteworthy for the fine treatment of the Royal Arms, which varied from the cross on which the shield was imposed with its arms continuing the quartering to the coin's edge, to the beautiful scroll decoration of Charles I, 3. Henry VII introduced the true portrait to the coinage and with a few exceptions of Charles II, the series ended with the simpler but cruder coins of the Commonwealth, when the inscriptions were lettered in the English language.

The milling* or mechanical production of coins originated in Italy in the late fifteenth century, three great artists of the Renaissance, Bramante, da Vinci and Cellini being associated with these experiments, which were directed mainly to the production of medals. By the 1550's coins had been struck successfully in France by the new method and by the 1560's in England. Great improvements became possible—coins could be made thicker and perfectly round; this gave the designer smoother fields, higher relief and better treatment of the edges. Modern British coinage begins with that of Charles II, in 1662, based on the gold twenty shilling piece, and ranging in twelve denominations from the five-guinea piece to the silver penny, all dated.

* The term 'milling' is derived from the fact that wind, water and horse mills were used to provide the power required for this early machinery. It has nothing to do with the treatment of the edges which is known as graining and lettering.

The influence of the Renaissance is now apparent and really conscious design appears for the first time. The obverse shows a fine uncrowned broad based bust to which the lettering is superbly related, with a hint of decoration in the divided lower serifs, 4. On the reverses the cross of shields runs through the whole series.

Two famous engravers were then employed at the mint; Thomas Simon, who had been graver to Cromwell, and Jan Roettiers of Antwerp, brought in by Charles II. Simon's work was the more inspired, but the two men were incompatible and personal feelings gave Roettiers pride of place as regards the more important coins; Simon's famous 'Petition Crown,' which remained unissued, was the result of a trial of skill between them. The tradition established by Simon and Roettiers continued throughout the eighteenth century until George III's recoinage of 1816, but in the meantime some good work was produced for Colonial coinages, portraying among other devices, animals and flowers indigenous to the country, 25, a practice still continued.

With the new 1816 coinage, based on the sovereign of twenty shillings, William Wyon (1795–1851) began his great series of designs. The Royal Mint had recently been equipped with up-to-date machinery by Boulton and Watt of Birmingham and the series of coins which followed were of very great beauty. Charles II's coinage had been highly praised, but Wyon's designs had a sense of scale, an Augustan beauty which is hard to analyse and there was a fine relation of ornament to inscriptions; the lettering was worthy of Bodoni himself, 13, 14. Wyon carried on the great tradition of eighteenth century conscious design, modelling his heads of George IV and William IV on busts by Chantrey, into the early years of the young Queen's reign, beginning with the head modelled by him from life. He was the greatest member of a distinguished family, and the first medallist to become a Royal Academician. One of his last heads was that on the gothic crown of 1847.

One of the weaknesses which began to show in the later Victorian coinage was the enlarging of the heads together with the diminution of the lettering of the inscriptions due to the expansion of the royal titles, and by Edward VII's reign coin design had reached its lowest ebb. The king's head by Emil Fuchs reached enormous proportions relative to the coin area and the reverses lost all real sense of ornament and modelling. The early coins of George V followed much the same style until in 1922 a Select Committee was appointed to advise on coin design, followed in 1927 by revised designs by Kruger Gray and Percy Metcalfe, but retaining Sir Bertram McKennall's head, and coins of this character have continued. One further weakness shows up in our present coinage in the fact that the obverses and reverses are by different designers; this is most obvious in the treatment of the lettering, 27, 28.

Dies and punches are still occasionally produced by hand, but most designs for modern coins are prepared in plaster of paris many times their actual size; from these models electros are made, and the punches are produced mechanically in a reducing machine. This master die is used for every size of coin, so that although each size is identical in proportion the scale is upset as the design gets smaller. What is appropriate at ten inches diameter is not necessarily so at an inch. Typefounders have long been aware of this change of scale in the cutting of varying sizes of typefaces and the point can be demonstrated by comparing a 72 point letter with a 12 point letter enlarged to the same size, when the difference in proportion becomes apparent.

R R

Separate master patterns are prepared for almost every size in a given fount of type, and it seems, therefore, that a coin designer should produce several models for a series of coins.

Plaster of paris also has the disadvantage of being too coarse a material for working in smaller dimensions, and the result is much flatter when compared with designs which are cut in metal, and unless coin designers are prepared to work in metal to perhaps two or three diameters the flatness which is so characteristic of plaster modelling will remain, and good punch and die engravers will become as rare as flint-knappers.

The design of bank notes is very much the story of the battle against the counterfeiter. At first no special precautions were taken against forgery. That problem arose at the end of the eighteenth century when notes of small denomination came into use, and the precautions took the form of geometrical backgrounds produced on the rose-engine, combined with finely engraved figures and vignettes, until photography and anastatic printing raised the problems anew. In 1852, Henry Bradbury introduced a second colour and this served until it became possible to photograph the colours separately with filters. Another colour was then added and all were photographically related and consequently became more difficult to separate.

Since then metal threads and mechanical ruling have been added to the defensive armour. Modern bank notes still follow the conservative tradition established in the early nineteenth century and are remarkable examples of technically fine printing. But there the matter ends. The massing and mixing of countless unrelated styles of ornaments with realistic representations has sent overboard all considerations of good or imaginative design in the pursuit of security.

Of the four subjects discussed, coats of arms and coins have the longest tradition and are closely linked by the persistent use of heraldic designs for the coinage. Yet the farthing, halfpenny and threepenny piece in current use, the only departures from the heraldic tradition, are those which aroused tremendous public interest. They were a welcome change from the atrophy into which heraldry has sunk in the twentieth century.

But there still remains much to be learned from the work of the past which need in no way produce the pseudo-antiquarianism with which so many modern designs seem to be afflicted.*

1, *Fourteenth century nobles*

2, *Edward VI Crown* 1551

3, *Charles I Crown* 1632-3

* The new coins and stamps appear on page 60.


4, 5, *Charles II*

6, *James II*

7, *Anne*


8, 9, *William & Mary*

10, *George II*



11, 12, 13, *George III*

14, *William IV*



15, 16, 17, *Victoria*


18, 19, *Edward VII*


20, 21, *George V*



22, 23, 24, *George VI*




25, *Nova Scotia*, 1856 26, *George III* 27, 28, *George VI*

The coins above range in value from a farthing to a guinea. 25-28 are examples of non-heraldic coins.

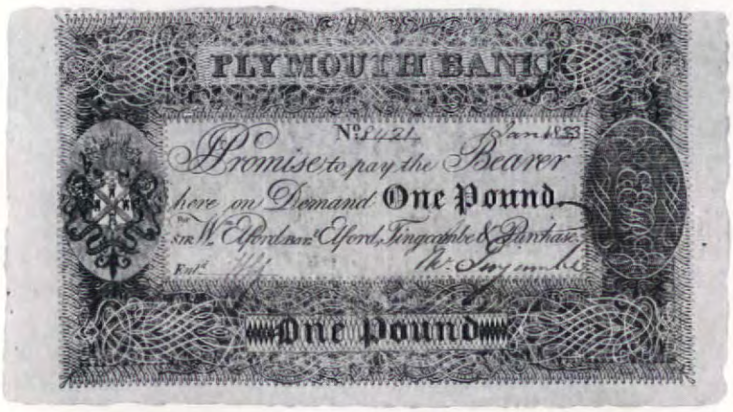
BANKNOTES

29, *a typical eighteenth century engraved note of small denomination.*

30, *an early nineteenth century banknote. A second colour appears in the elaborate border, but it appears to be printed from a relief block.*

31, *a printer's specimen of* 1854 *showing the value printed in a second colour on an engine-turned background. Printer: Perkins Bacon and Petch. Notes of this kind were used more on the Continent than in England.*

29



30

31

MISHA BLACK

CORONATIONS CELEBRATED

1

CIVIC PRIDE

The natural warmth of the British character needs only the excuse of a great occasion to escape from its usual reserved and staid politeness. For the Coronation of George VI and his Queen, in 1937, the streets of East London became gay with bunting and paper streamers; borrowed trestle tables, the kitchen chair and paper hats completed the background for spontaneous celebration.

In Birmingham a sedate tram and bus were transformed by 3,550 electric lamps, and toured the city in blazes of glory.

Selfridges showed that commerce could also rise to an occasion and twenty-two sculptors and painters laboured for months under the direction of Sir William Reid Dick and Professor Ernest Stern to produce a magnificent wedding cake of a decoration at the cost of a pre-war £25,000.

2

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

3

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

Norroy King of Arms reads the proclamation and the ancient ritual moves towards its climax when the Golden Coach will travel slowly to the Abbey. The Trumpeters, Heralds and the Pursuivants Rouge Dragon, Blue Mantle, Portcullis and Rouge Croix take their places in the rich pattern. The 11th Huzzars prepare their green and cherry overalls, the Highland Regiments dress in their piper green doublets and the Royal Horse Artillery in their gold braided jackets.

Elements in the pattern have changed over eight centuries—the King's Herbwoman is no longer followed by six maids strewing sweet herbs; the pasteboard castle erected for the Coronation of Richard II from which four virgins blew leaves of gold into the King's face, while wine flowed from founts at each side, has vanished—but the majestic solemnity remains.

No other country can equal this traditional display. No sense of incongruity or of fancy dress disturbs its poignant serenity.

4

5

6

CORONATION AUXILIARY

7

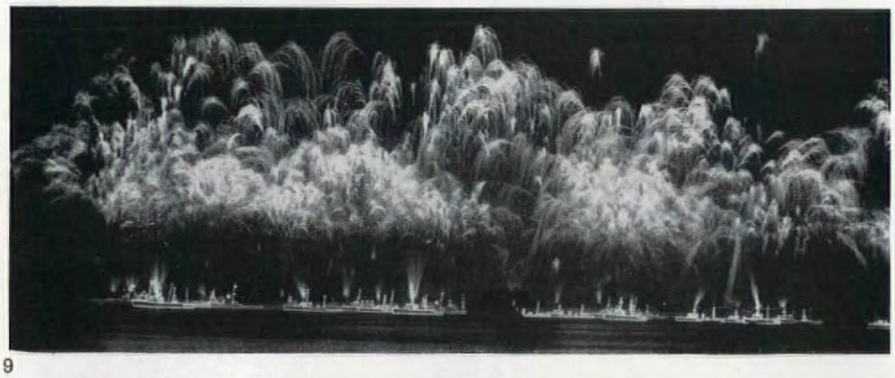
THE CRAFT TRADITION

No ceremonial robes without embroidery; here the Royal College of Needlework reigns in her own queenship. Across the road at the Royal College of Art there is a new interest in needle crafts which allows hope that the new Elizabethan embroidery may regain its earlier fame.

More mechanized decoration for the King's Choir Boys who will sing in the Abbey: larger ruffs add glamour to the older boys of the Temple Choir.

8

LIGHT, WATER AND FIRE



9

Fireworks at Spithead in 1937 above the light-dressed fleet. Southend-on-Sea, not to be outshone, built a replica of Windsor Castle in fairy lights. In London the historic monuments were electrically transformed with Nelson's cape of birds' droppings forming the reflector for his illumination. All credit to the Ministry of Works for proving that Britain can illuminate buildings as brilliantly as any and that her engineers hide artists' souls under their overalls.

But it will be difficult to better the glamour of the gas illuminations which welcomed the Coronation of Queen Victoria, when Mr. Proctor, the snuff merchant of Fleet Street, erected a double revolving star in gas between laurel wreaths of green and red stained glass, and the whole city from Leadenhall Street to St. James glittered with gas and glass.

10

11

12

CORONATION INDUSTRY

The raw material of celebration. Shields, crowns and flags by the hundred thousand. Those produced in back-yard factories can be no better than our popular taste and talents allow, but the larger manufacturers could well afford to commission the best artists, sculptors and designers. The Council of Industrial Design has given a well-timed lead in its patterns for Coats of Arms and Crowns; perhaps we may find that others who have planned more secretly have done so equally well.

13

14

15

16

SOUVENIRS: 1953

A coach and horses for the boyish and excellent diamond etched crystal for their richer elders. The glasses are designed by W. J. Wilson, of James Powell & Sons, who vie with Wedgwood for the custom of the sophisticated souvenir collector. The Wedgwood shapes are traditionally satisfactory, but the decoration surprisingly coarse.

For those with more robust tastes, crown-shaped cakes will doubtless again be offered, as they were in 1937, but perhaps not the Union-Jack-printed chiffon underwear which was also produced for the last Coronation.

17

18

CROWNED COMMERCE

A custard crowned on a velvet cushion did not offend in 1902, but 1953 respectfulness walks hand in glove with the Council of Industrial Design and Courage offers a fine two-handled toasting mug designed by Milner Gray.

19. William Wyon

20. Langford Jones

21. N. A. Trent

MEDALS

Some of the Elizabeth II medals are improvements on those of George VI; none have the quality and precision of Wyon's medal for Queen Victoria. The 1953 Coronation Medal Panel has been carefully constituted, but only criticizes submissions and does not commission designs. Does this explain the ordinariness of the medals produced, or are the best British sculptors now too involved in abstractions to serve royal occasions?

22. Mrs. Paget

23. G. H. Paulin

24. Charles II

27. George V

MUGS

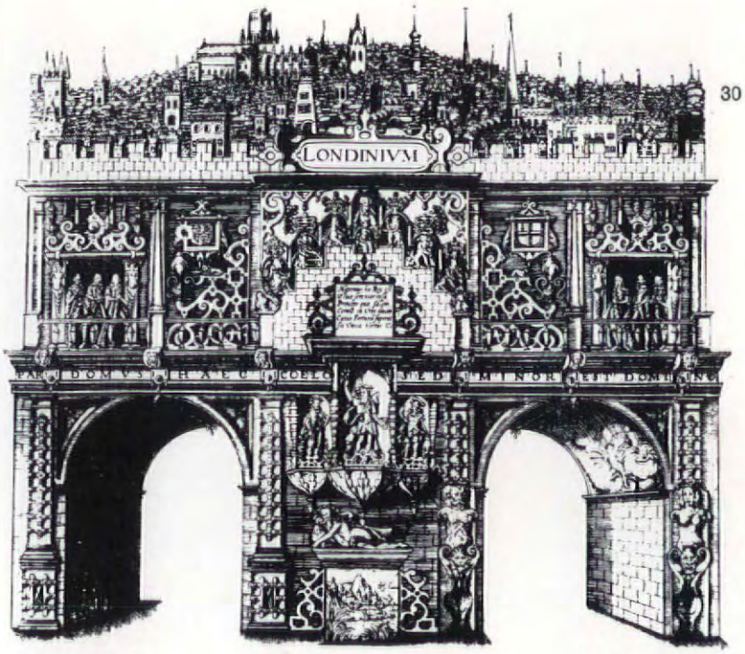
The design by Eric Ravilious for Wedgwood, 28, stood proudly above its pathetic competitors in 1937. For 1953 Richard Guyatt has designed a new Wedgwood model, 29; rather a disappointment. Perhaps other Elizabethan mugs will later appear with at least the vigour of 1911, 27, even if no one produces the exquisite decorative quality of earlier reigns which has turned these domestic souvenirs into collectors' pieces.

25. William IV

26. Victoria

28. George VI

29. Elizabeth II



30

Fenchurch Street *James I, 1602*

CORONATIONS DECORATED

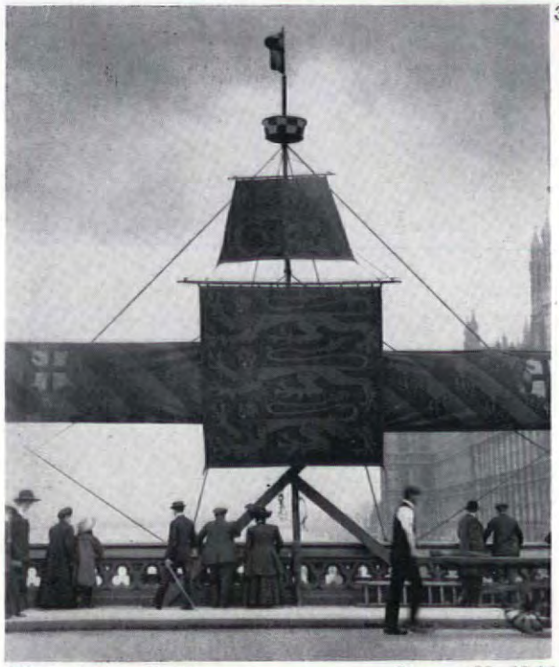
The 50 foot high triumphal arch erected in Fenchurch Street for the Coronation of James I finds a melancholy echo in Whitehall 300 years later. Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's banners on Ludgate Hill are less lavish than the cloth of gold which decorated Cheapside when Henry VIII was crowned, but if democracy does not encourage such lavishness today even bunting and flags can be exploited with spirit and imagination and with an eye to architectural values. In recent years they have been handled with a sad inadequacy (see Piccadilly below) and with a confusion of forms and motifs that is neither spontaneously amateur nor professionally efficient.

Piccadilly *George VI, 1937*

31

32

Whitehall *Edward VII, 1902*



33

Westminster Bridge *George V, 1911*

34

Ludgate Hill *George VI, 1937*

35

The Mall, 1937

37

Edinburgh, 1952

YESTERDAY

Edinburgh follows London, and the disciplined lines of banner-hung poles repeat the now accepted pattern of official street decorations. The Bond Street shopkeepers bring out their white flags; only the Festival of Britain, in recent years, has introduced original ideas into the decoration of streets (*viz.* the Northumberland Avenue star).

When the stage is to be set for a performance as ancient as the Coronation, a modest respect for tradition is proper, but the tradition must constantly renew itself if atrophy is to be avoided; some indication of a contemporary spirit will not be misplaced in the decorations which will herald the new Elizabethan epoch.

36

Bond Street, 1937

38

Northumberland Avenue, 1951

39

TO-MORROW

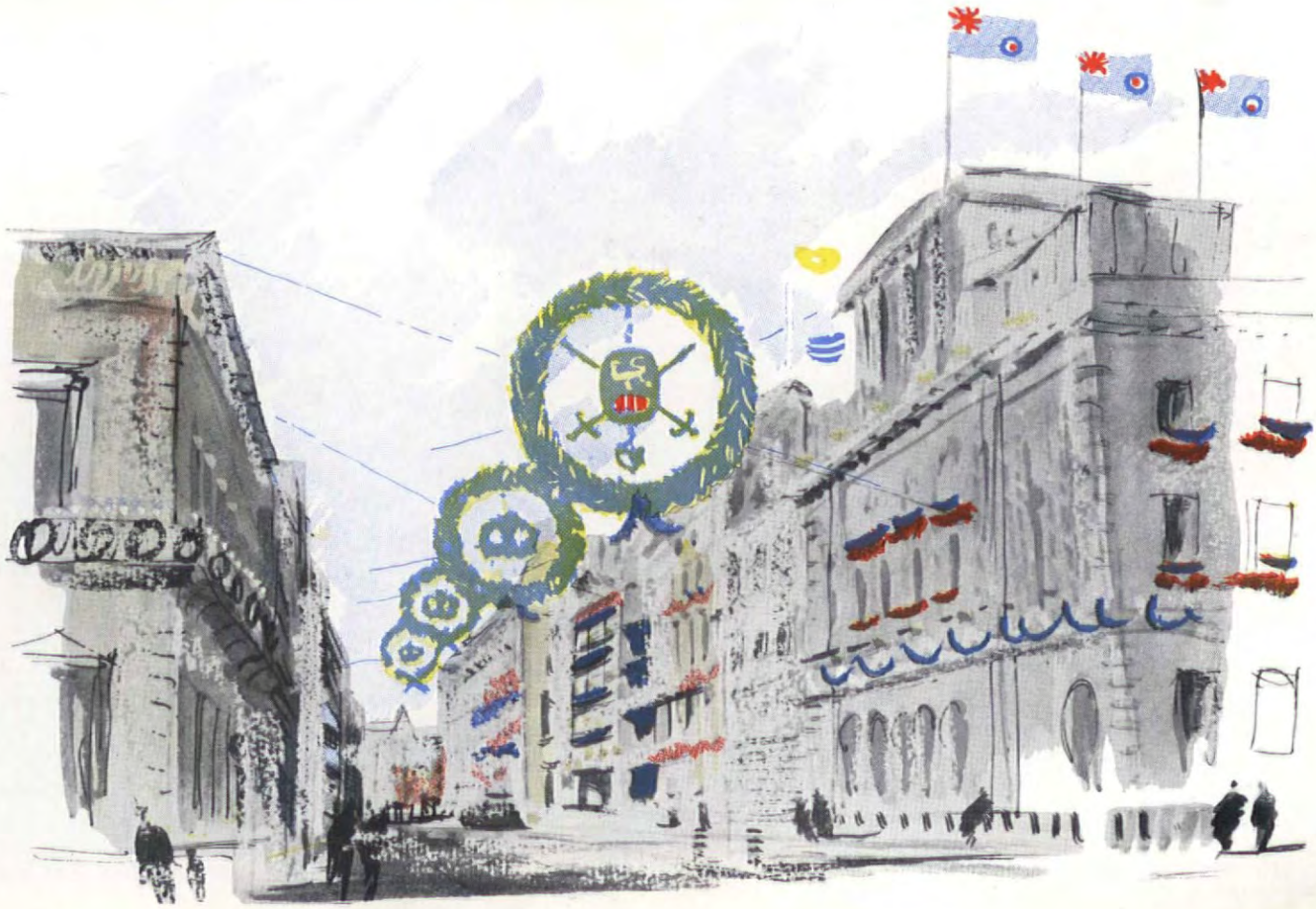
The City of Westminster has given the lead to the rest of Great Britain in appointing Sir Hugh Casson as consultant for the design of street decorations on the Royal route.

If execution equals invention, London will be as justifiably proud of its decorations next June as of the occasion which they celebrate.

39, *The 'Canopy of Crowns' designed by Misha Black for St. James's Street.*

40, *'The Armed Services' motifs designed by Sir Hugh Casson for Pall Mall.*

40



41

42

Two more designs adopted by the City of Westminster.

The illustrations so far published of decorations by Street Associations do not reach the same excellence as these, but they also, as it is hoped the Ministry of Works schemes will do, reflect the general improvement in design standards since 1937.

41, *The arch to be erected in Parliament Square designed by Robert Goodden.*

42, *Sir Hugh Casson's design for Oxford Street.*

BARBARA JONES

ROYAL TRANSPORT

Everything royal must be best. As 'a right royal time' and a 'truly regal bloom' describe only the most splendid of expeditions and the most magnificent new florists' flowers, so the things connected with kings and queens themselves are always expected to be superlatively fine.

This is an appropriate time to consider royal transport, for in the past fifty years it has changed more completely than at any other period in history, and, the change being now well established, we can look for the new forms, the motors and aeroplanes of which it now so largely consists, to take on these royal attributes. But not to the old pattern; the barges of Tudor and Stuart royalty burned on the water in full accordance with Shakespeare's demands; new transport for a new Elizabeth must fulfil a new poetry, not an old.

'Best' certainly implies superb quality, but it does not imply, in spite of a strong English tendency to think so, that good quality always means traditional design. It does not even necessarily mean good design at all; many well-made things are exceedingly ugly.

However, we have this great love of tradition, held in common with every other race in the world, each believing its affection unique, and where tradition can reasonably be maintained what could be nicer than to preserve it?

Tradition in royal transport gives us some scarlet and gold barges, a series of magnificent coaches and carriages, with their harnesses, some pretty sleighs which our declining snows have rendered obsolete, and the horses. The barges are now museum pieces, but as the Thames is easily London's least crowded and most open processional way, a new royal barge of this type, slow and splendid, for river use only, might encourage the City companies to follow the royal lead where they once led themselves, and river traffic, already showing signs of revival, might flourish again; here is an opportunity for the new barge to be traditional but not a revival, rich but not a copy.

Horses to ride and horses to draw a great variety of fantastic coaches and sober carriages, were the transport of most people who could afford not to walk from the time of our first kings until the eighteen-thirties, and though the railways killed the stage coaches stone dead in a few years, private carriages continued to hold their own till the motor car was a reasonable proposition, when they disappeared almost as quickly as the stage coaches. But through all those centuries horses and their equipment had offered a wonderful opportunity for decoration, a live, mobile, glossy, tolerably obedient peg capable of carrying a weight of ornament impossible to man, but still so intimately associated with him as to transfer its whole lustre to his person.

These trappings of the horse were even better made and more lovingly designed than the clothes of man himself, for fashion in them changes slowly and a set of harness or a coach would be used, by all except the richest dandies, till it was worn out, and special ceremonial caparisons were passed down for many generations.

The royal family has preserved an amazing baroque state coach and a series of state and semi-state coaches, landaus and barouches of remarkable elegance; the best of them have the finality of great works of art—one cannot conceive redesigning them. This is not true of the State Coach itself, but of the later carriages, built just before the art was cut off for ever by the petrol engine; they are perfect. All are wonderfully made; some are hung by little gold serpents from their huge springs on great leather straps with gilded buckles, like the belts of giants, varnished till they glow, alive with crowns and garlands; some are dark and sombre, relying on line and lustre for their beauty. No newer form of transport can rival these for state drives. A crawling car is an anachronism, it looks unhappy and defeated, going at a snail's pace when it is designed for speed—a special body of the most regal baroque would not provide an answer because the only kind of car we associate with a foot pace is a motor hearse—so the horse, which appears as much to advantage walking as galloping, is the motive power for those ceremonies whose speed should be slow enough for the Queen to be seen. Most of the royal carriages are, however, at London or Windsor, and few cities have a Lord Mayor's coach, hence cars must often be used away from London, whether they are ideally suited to the occasion or not. But it would be pleasant to see the carriages, if not the state coaches, used more in Town.

The barges, the coaches and the carriages are not things which have become beautiful only through age and preservation, they were good when they were made; they were also strictly contemporary—George III ordering a new coach in the first year of his reign, did not ask for a copy of one made for Charles II. Though it would be

shocking not to preserve and use them, it should be equally shocking not to follow their example; newer forms of transport should be characteristic of today. Where functional design is logically necessary, should it not be used, rather than a compromise with some tradition which in its day was revolutionary?

Where mathematics dominate æsthetics, the design of present-day transport is one of our most satisfying achievements, but where the beauty of pure mathematics need not dominate, we are on less sure ground. It has been proved, for instance, that at present speeds a locomotive gains nothing from streamlining, but nevertheless it does go fairly fast and so it is mentally less worrying when kept simple. And since train travel is too fast for the passengers to be clearly seen, there seems little reason except stops on a progress for the exteriors of royal trains to be different, so far as design goes, from any others. The most admirable distinction could be made, however, in the painting.

The early trains quickly settled down to a sensible, functional shape. Certainly the first ones looked like coaches on iron wheels; Queen Adelaide's saloon, still preserved, is precisely like two and a half stage coaches mounted one behind the other, with no intercommunication (though having, we must admit, a fine view forward from the front, which no modern train in England gives today), but Queen Victoria's saloon built in 1869, although distinguished externally from the coaches of common trains by gilded carving and finely chased brass door handles, was very definitely designed as a train. The more recent royal train coaches are, dully, precisely similar, except for negligible differences in paint, to all the others. However excellent this anonymity may have been during the war, would it not be better now to be able to single out by colour the royal train on its way to Balmoral; it might be painted scarlet and gold perhaps?

It may be argued that royal is almost synonymous with tradition in Britain, but the fact that we have both a long tradition of royalty and a strong tendency to preserve nice old objects and customs does not mean that we should expect the Queen to sponsor stuffy old copies and compromises. Victoria's train, though very royal, was also up to date; outside it is only reasonably different from the rest of the train, and inside it is difficult to find any comfort missing but bedside lights. The walls and ceilings are insulated against noise by padded silk, there are alternate lighting systems (the Queen's personal preference was for oil, but electricity was installed too), buckets for ice to cool the air, and an elaborate communication system. The workmanship and materials take the breath away, and the colour is bold and exciting; the character of both the Queen and her age are firmly and indelibly everywhere.

Edward VII's royal train is less satisfying—the stout comfortable olive green leather chairs and the white enamel are again characteristic and personal, but the tiny fretful mouldings are so dull that one begins to wonder if they are worth the effort it must take to keep them all clean; the whole coach shows a distinct decline but only, one feels, to the extent that Edwardian design was on the whole weaker than Victorian; it is good for its period. We have not been allowed to see the newest series of royal train coaches in use today, but photographs of them were issued in 1947 and show decline of a different kind; while everyone's personal foibles in house decoration must be beyond criticism, it is difficult to believe that this prohibition should hold good here, for these might be rooms (all sense of train is lost) from an expensive store catalogue or a five-star hotel—all sense of the special is lost as well.

The same considerations apply to the liner Gothic, prepared for the Australian tour in 1952. Are the chairs and sofa the best we can do, or the imitation-candle lamps, or the cautious fabrics? Is the whole pale green suite with grey carpets our best, or only our best quality mediocre?

It may be unfair to say much about the exterior of the Gothic, an ordinary Shaw Savill liner refitted for the tour—just alas that a ship as beautiful as, say, S.S. Presidente Peron, which was built in Britain, could not have been used.

With yachts of course it is much harder to go wrong, for they are one of the things that we design and make really well; indeed, the finish, materials and workmanship of British yachts are generally so superb that that extra royal gloss cannot be easy to produce. But the interiors *often* tend to go wrong, neither truly following nor truly denying the nautical tradition—neither ship-shape nor splendid.

Yachts, we might think, are consistently beautiful because they are so functional, so polished by wind and water that the designer is never even tempted to abandon purity for trompe l'oeil or chastity for chinoiserie. If this were true aeroplanes, even faster and more polished than yachts, would be still safer from transgression, but this is not so, for in America at least, aeroplanes have rapidly evolved a decorative tradition all their own. There is charm in the concept of painting the President's personal plane to represent an eagle; wings, head, and body though too stiff, have still a superficial resemblance to a bird, and we visualize neat golden feathers painted all over it, but the actuality is comic, like a dodg'em.

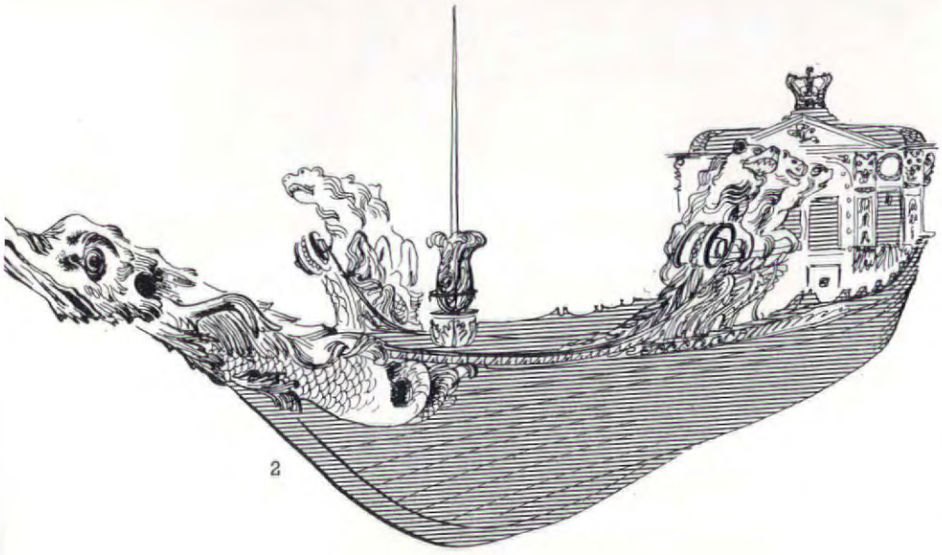
This is an enormity we have not committed with our royal planes, and a Viking of the Queen's flight remains an aeroplane, although colour might well add distinction. The opportunities and problems of the interior are almost the same as those of the railway coaches and are little better taken or solved. Aeroplane travel suspends individuality, certainly, but only in the air—the designing was surely done on the ground, with the personality still intact.

The Queen probably uses motors more than any other form of transport, so they should answer all the demands made on them even more completely than other forms of transport—discomfort in a state coach used once or twice in a year is not so serious. The chief problem of royal cars is clearly that of speed: something made to go fast will often have to go slowly. As most English cars have kept a lick of carriage tradition, though now going too fast for it, we have had plenty of opportunity to see if they have proved especially suitable for slow progress, but they have not; the longer one of the compromised cars is in sight, the longer we have to criticize its lines, and these are exasperating; in the expensive cars only quality remains of the virtues of the carriages, in the cheap cars nothing, while no grade of car has yet achieved the virtues of true aerodynamic design. It is very sad, because trains, however badly they may be designed now, were very well designed indeed twenty or thirty years after their invention, and cars after an equally good start are going the same way; they have lost one style and not yet gained another. For royal transport the very high speeds that demand streamlining do not apply (though the dignity of some foreign contemporary car designs should certainly be considered), and a return all the way to the carriage tradition would be defeatist, so that a modern royal car presents an entirely new problem that is surely not beyond our skill—high enough to show the occupants, different from all others, comfortable at fifty miles an hour and dignified at five.

Of all these forms of transport, trains are now the deepest sunk in bad design—not even a good positive bad, but a dull bad—and theirs would be the most exciting renaissance, but transport occupies an ever larger place in all our lives and transport design all round, except for boats, aeroplanes and underground trains, is not very good—it is difficult, for instance, to find more than two or three really good cars; this makes an influential lead more important than ever. If royal transport is superlative, we can expect something tolerable for ourselves.

1

1, *William and Mary, proceeding to Westminster Hall.*
In the late seventeenth century the Royal Family could not but be public when it travelled; speed did not blur its passage, and consequently its vehicles were all made to give the most suitable and splendid background. The baldaquin is both shelter and picture frame.



2

2, *Frederick Prince of Wales' Royal Barge.*
The same principles apply to this boat, designed by William Kent in the interest of royal splendour, though the process which has led to the closed car has here already begun. The cabin is completely enclosed and the occupant less easily visible.

3, *the Royal Barge.*
This is hardly specifically royal, being of course in the naval tradition; magnificent polish, bright brass work, saucy dolphins, and snow white fenders on a lovely piece of functional design. It is the best single piece of present day transport used by the royal family.

3

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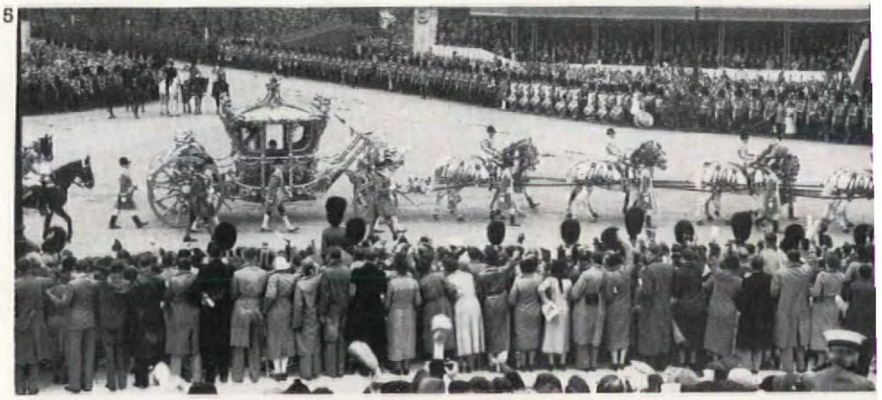


4 and 5, the State Coach.
The first photograph shows the coach with box and hammer cloth, the second when the horses are ridden by postillions and there is no necessity for a coachman. Without the box the coach makes a better shape and does not look as if it has broken in the middle. This is the oldest and most elaborate piece of royal transport used today. It evokes a different response from that of the barouches and landaus, for they are in an almost contemporary æsthetic whereas the state coach is in a dead one. The carriages remain good design when they are standing still; their rich and subtle simplicity is an enduring pleasure but the state coach on the other hand should be seen in movement in the sun, when its glittering elaborations enchant us to forget its air of imminent collapse. The carving is full of variety and interest, details we cannot see as it goes by but sense to be there, like the two alternated designs for spokes on the back wheel.

6

6, State Landau.
This is the kind of coach which some peers may use at the coronation. A piece of superb Victorian design in the direct tradition of the eighteenth century.

7

7, State Barouche.
The best of all the carriages used by the Royal Family, though the proportion of the wheels has been slightly altered by the addition of rubber tyres. Brass lining is used on the door to accentuate the horizontals, and along the curve below the doors. Everything royal should be best; here is that standard.

SHIPS

8, *Victoria and Albert.*
Launched in May, 1899, this was the last Royal Yacht used solely to take the Queen across to the Isle of Wight and later Edward VII to the Continent. Because of inherent instability in her design, she never made long sea voyages; for these a warship or a chartered liner was used. A truly royal vessel fitted up with great luxury and able to carry a large number of people in comfort for delicious luncheons.

9, *Bluebottle.*
The Dragon Class yacht owned by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.

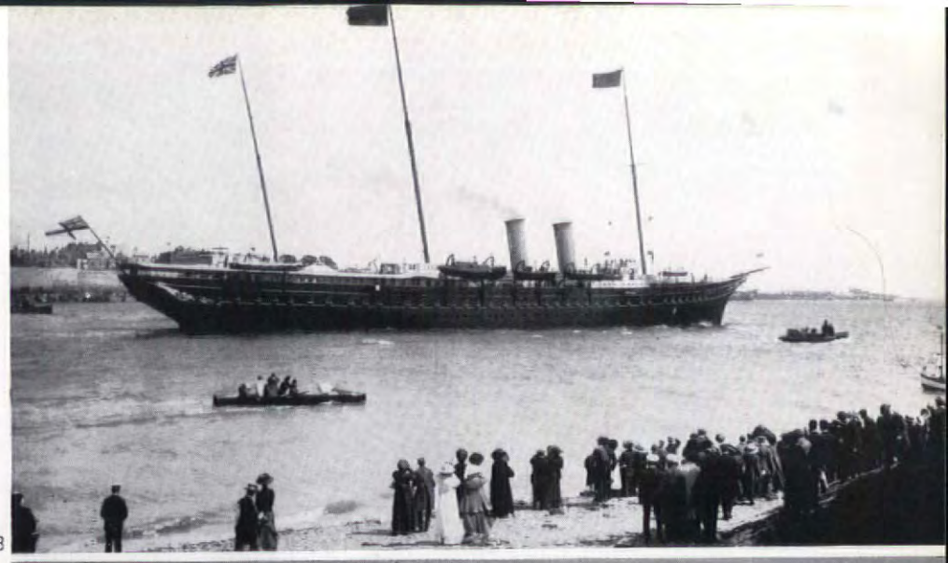
9

Royal sport more than royal transport, but magnificent design.

10, *USS Williamsburg.*
The exterior of the President's yacht has some of the virtues lacking inside, though more could perhaps have been done to single it out from all other yachts. It is sad that our own new royal yacht should, in fact, be a hospital ship.

11, *day cabin for the Queen, when Princess Elizabeth, on the Gothic.*
Georgian revival, though some of the furniture comes from the Royal Yacht *Victoria and Albert.* Pleasant as an example of this pattern of taste, though perhaps a mistake to use so heavy a design for chair-covers, but certain details are inexcusable: the flower vases; the lamp standard.

12, *the main lounge of the USS Williamsburg.*
Not a revival, certainly, but no better. Is this a room in a house, hunting lodge, or hotel? There is no indication that this is afloat. Admitted that part of the glamour of being rich or well placed is making the normally uncomfortable luxurious, it is still possible to retain the vital context.



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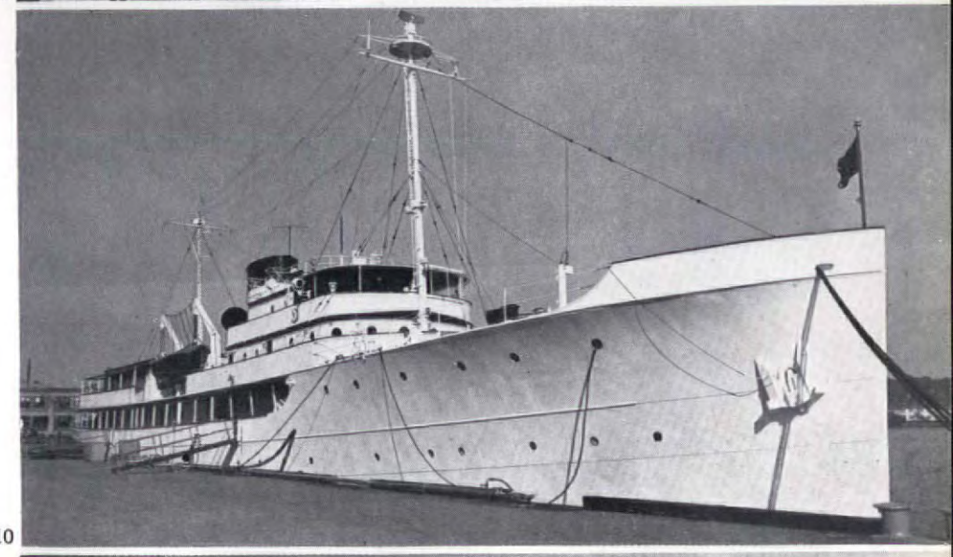

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13

13, *Royal Train for the South African Tour.* The worst kind of interior by any standards. Note the tight little armchair on the right like something in a French hotel bedroom, the wireless which could fill the Albert Hall with sound, and the two quilted cushion covers; a terrible and depressing piece of design.

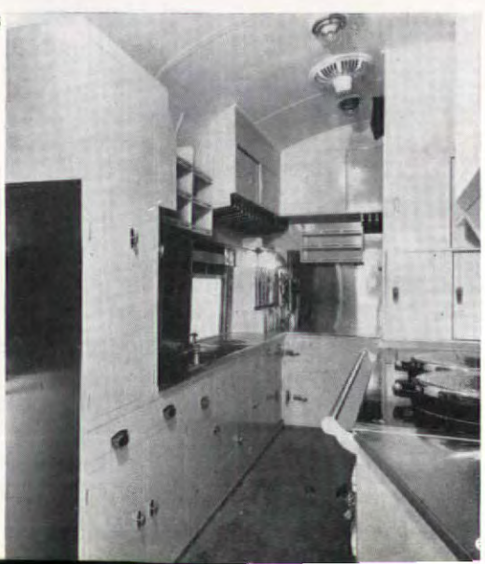
15

15, *Queen's Compartment, Swedish Royal Train.* Contemporary in an idiom whose influence on us is now weakening, but one can say with confidence that here is a modern train; it looks comfortable without being stuffy, it is also modest and unpretentious, the seats convert into beds at night, above all it is cheerful even if unexceptional and comfortably middle class rather than regal.

14, *Queen's Lounge, British Royal Train.* The usual royal train is better, but still not good. The chairs are comfortable and the cushions have a well-stuffed downy look but they are hardly elegant. The air-conditioning louvres and the pelmets are quiet except for the fussy verticals, the curtains and floor covering are a break from railway practice, but again not good enough, a half-way outmoded conception of what is modern governs their design. In this carriage is none of the regal uniqueness which is so apparent in Queen Victoria's coach.

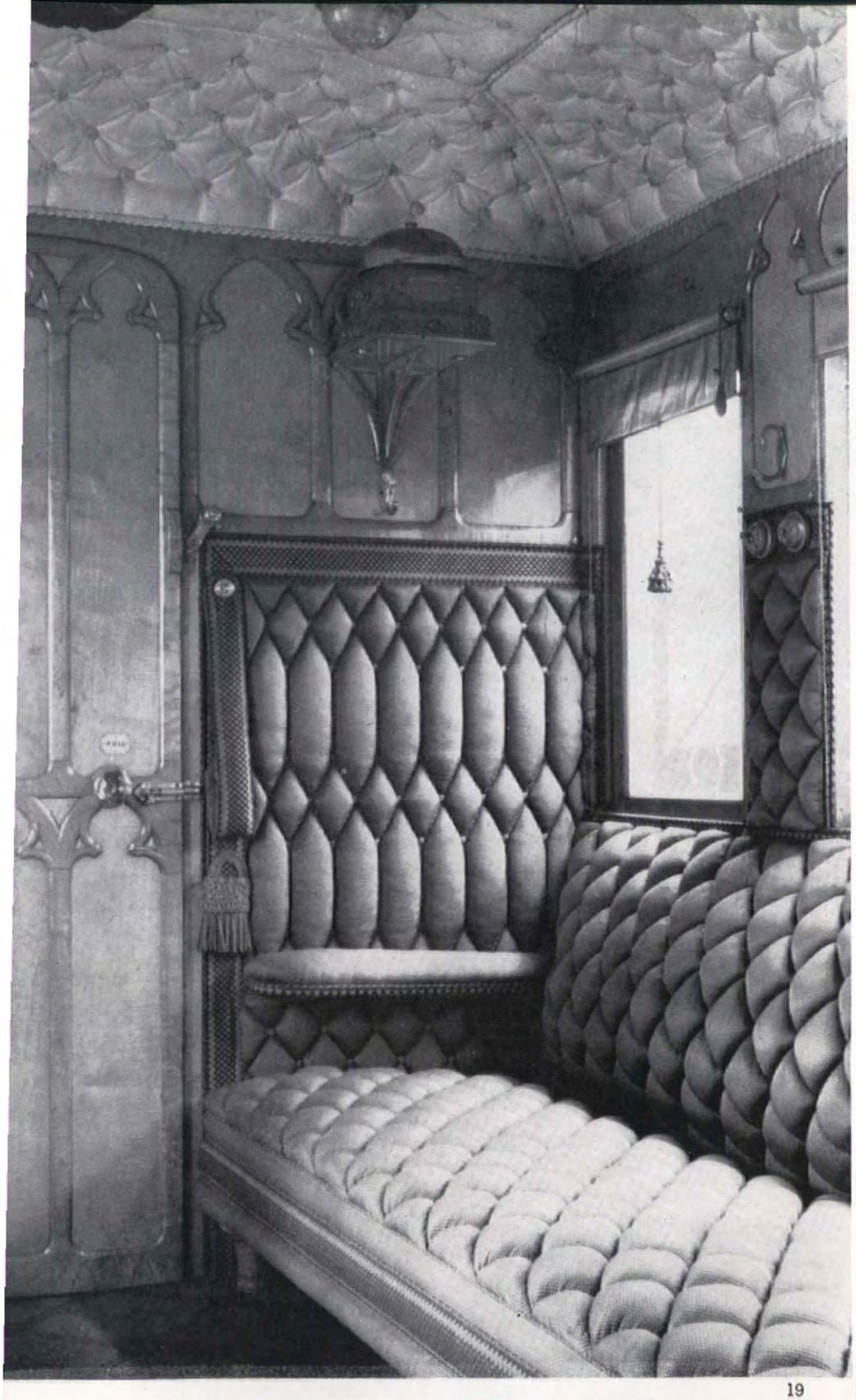
14

16



17

16 *and* 17, *kitchens on the Iraqi British-built Railway and on the Royal Train.* No two pictures could show more clearly than these two the archaic design still surrounding the royal family. A kitchen for a royal train could be superlative in every way, the *A per se* of mobile cooking equipment, a standard which all other railway trains should be pleased even to approach; the kitchen is the least suitable place in the world for the preservation of antiques; though on the other hand nothing is gained by replacing a good solid tradition by the merely modernistic.



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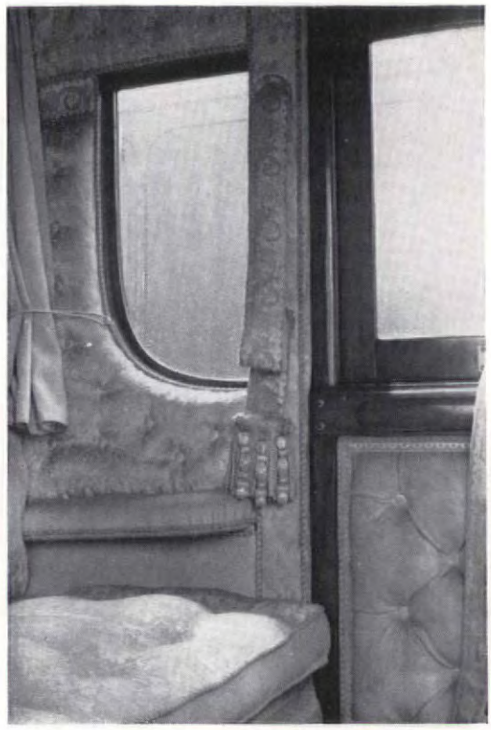
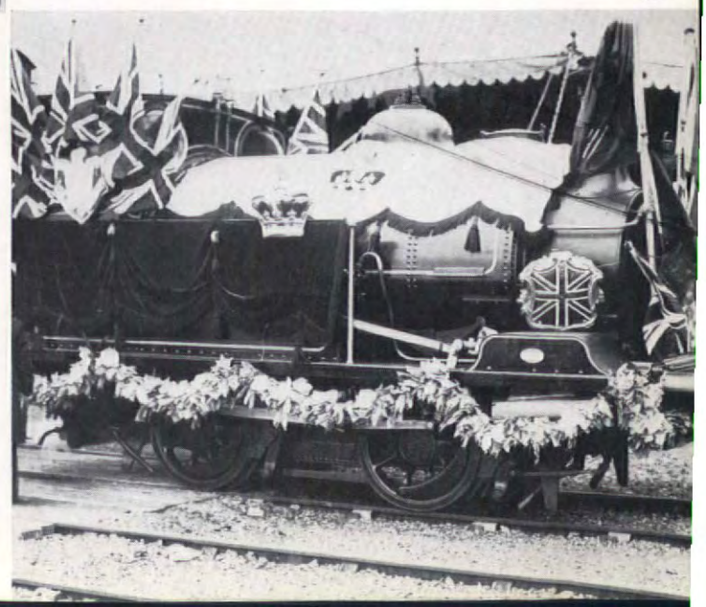


18, *the front compartment of Queen Adelaide's Railway Coach.*

19, *the day saloon of the Ladies in Waiting in Queen Victoria's royal train.*
The day saloon is upholstered in gold silk, and the ceiling in white silk, all in order to minimize the noise of travel. Here is a unique object, royal in every way down to the tassels of the blinds, blue on pigeon's blood. The design of the present Royal Train is still influenced by distorted shadows of this, but instead of grandeur there is now well-mannered mediocrity. Victoria's train is still the most comfortable carriage to sit in, and the most pleasant to look at on all our railways; the new Royal Train could be the same, could be even better with modern springs and air-conditioning.

20



20, *engine of King Edward VII's train at opening of Cardiff Docks.*
The endearing quality of vernacular decoration when a Royal occasion removes all restraint. Not one ingredient of routine processional glory has been left out—even the little quilt to keep the boiler warm can be seen as the saddlecloth of a horse.

21

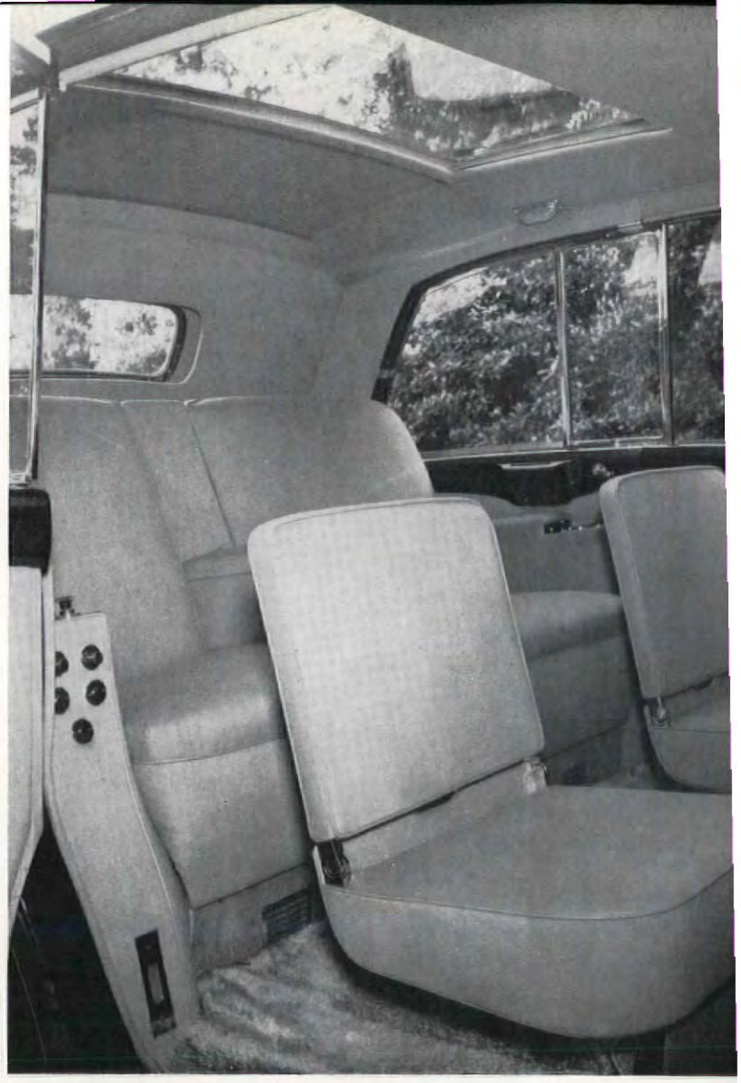
21, 22 and 23, *King Edward VII's Daimlers and the Queen's Rolls-Royce.*

The carriage tradition and the compromise. King Edward's cars, in the shape of modified carriages, have a feeling of invigorating travel—one motored in those days for *pleasure*; the Queen's car has lost this. The Rolls-Royce has a body evolved during the thirties, only slightly modified by present design practice.

On this car the confusion in design between streamline and tradition is very marked. The comfort and mechanical efficiency of this car are indisputable, but for royal purposes the design might well jump one way or the other; either towards aerodynamic design or towards a complete display vehicle making no pretence at having to conquer wind resistance at speed.

22

23



24

24, *interior of the Queen's Rolls-Royce.*

This shows the George seat, a device invented by King George VI so that he could be seen when travelling slowly through towns on State visits. With a contemporary body not forced to nibble at tradition the George seat would be unnecessary; the superb luxury of this interior could still be maintained.

25, *a Royal Daimler.*

The criticism of the Rolls-Royce exterior applies very similarly to this car; both have the very serious disadvantage that crowds who have waited for hours for a royal visit have a very poor view of the occupants when the car finally arrives.

25

26, *the Independence.*
Liaquat Ali Khan arriving for a state visit to the USA; he has just left the 'Independence,' President Truman's personal aeroplane. Aircraft of this type are used by many companies in Europe and America, but to single out this machine from all others it has been decorated.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when rulers and princes could use baroque conceits to amplify their grandeur it was possible, transport not being dominated by the mechanics of speed, to transform a barge into a swan, to have chariots drawn by dragons, and to imply by the sublimity of the vehicle the splendour of the ruler.

With an aeroplane this treatment is difficult, the shape does not lend itself to elaborate, three-dimensional *trompe l'oeil*, there can be no carved feathers on the wings, the undercarriage cannot be disguised as claws. However, the Americans have a strong tradition of decorating their planes; American volunteer fighter pilots in China painted their aeroplanes' noses to resemble sharks' mouths, and in the last war Flying Fortresses were lavishly decorated with scantily-clad girls. The President's plane is a victim of this urge; the eagle is the national bird of his country, so his aeroplane must be converted into a stylised eagle. Feathers have been painted on the nose and tail, and one on either side extended into a conventional speed whisker.

27, *Viking of the Queen's Flight.*
There seems little point in designing at vast expense a special plane for the Queen when the safe and efficient Viking is already to hand, but even BOAC aircraft are more gay than this—why should not the royal Viking be really splendid in colour?

28, *interior of the Viking used by King George VI on the South African Tour.*
The tables are miserably reminiscent of third class railway travel, and even if the solid chair arms are necessary to hide the tilting mechanism, surely they need not take on this cheese-like curve?

PROJECTION ABROAD

Since the Universal International Exhibition at Brussels in 1935, official British pavilions have expunged memories of plaster Elizabethan mansions which in earlier times were considered a suitable background for the sale of British products in South America.

In the quickly receding perspective of the last seventeen years, criticism of the amalgam, in Belgium, of white boxes, drums and rectangular pillars is replaced by an appreciation of how far ahead of current official architecture at home was that projection overseas.

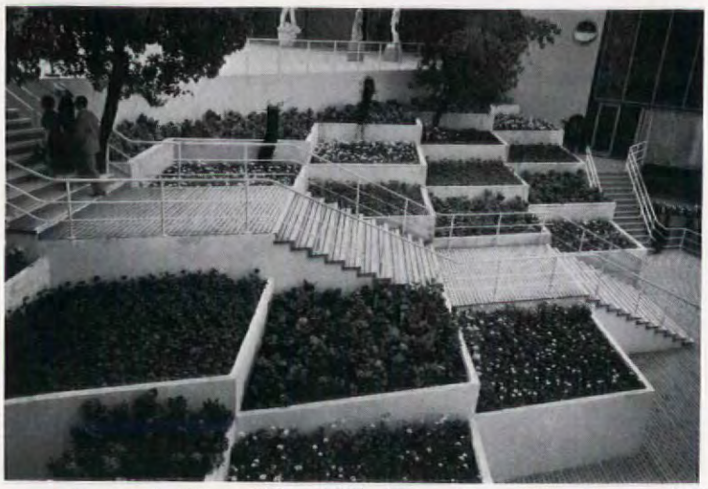
The Brussels pavilion was marred by its interior, where the undistinguished orderliness of the government display was the only relief from the mediocrity of the commercial exhibits, arranged in purchased space as though this were a displaced area of the British Industries Fair.

The Paris victory in 1937, where the British Pavilion interior was at last considered as carefully as the building, was dimmed by violent dismay at the prominence given to displays of good sportsmanship while other countries extolled their social, civic and industrial virtues. But the Board of Trade were properly undismayed and a year later, at Glasgow (which for this purpose only can legitimately be considered as being abroad) the United Kingdom pavilion at the Empire Exhibition dealt expertly with social services, research and heavy industry. If there were differing views about the decorative architecture, there was unanimity that this was the most impressive building in the exhibition.

The 15,000,000 visitors to the British Pavilion at the New York World's Fair in 1938 seemed unperturbed that Magna Carta was not displayed in a mock antique showcase, and the British Government once more showed that its conservative caution was reserved for permanent domestic consumption and that it was willing to cut a dash overseas when only temporary structures were concerned: an attitude which later produced the war-time exhibitions and eventually the Festival of Britain.

Since 1935 the British Pavilions abroad have properly been the experimental spearhead of official architecture. It may now be hoped that the main body of Government building and design has been seriously infected with similar enterprising qualities through the series of incisions these spearheads have made.

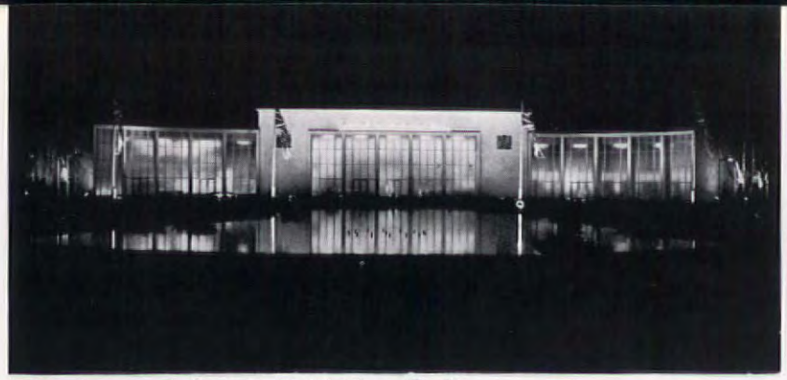
1935 *Brussels. Architects: Easton & Robertson.*

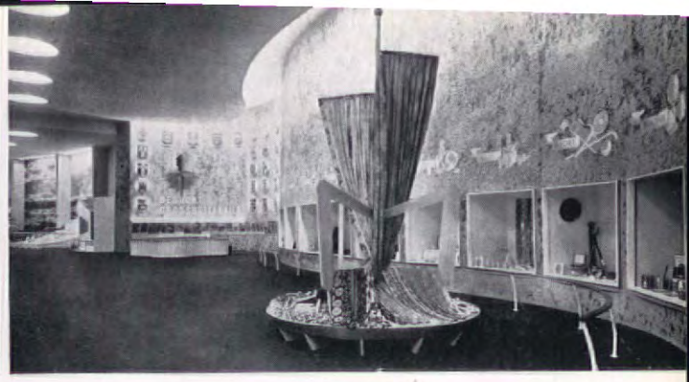


1937 *Paris. Architect: Oliver Hill. Glass Decoration: Raymond McGrath.*

1938 *Glasgow. Architect: Herbert J. Rowse. Display: Misha Black.*

1939 *New York. Architect: Easton & Robertson. Display: Misha Black.*





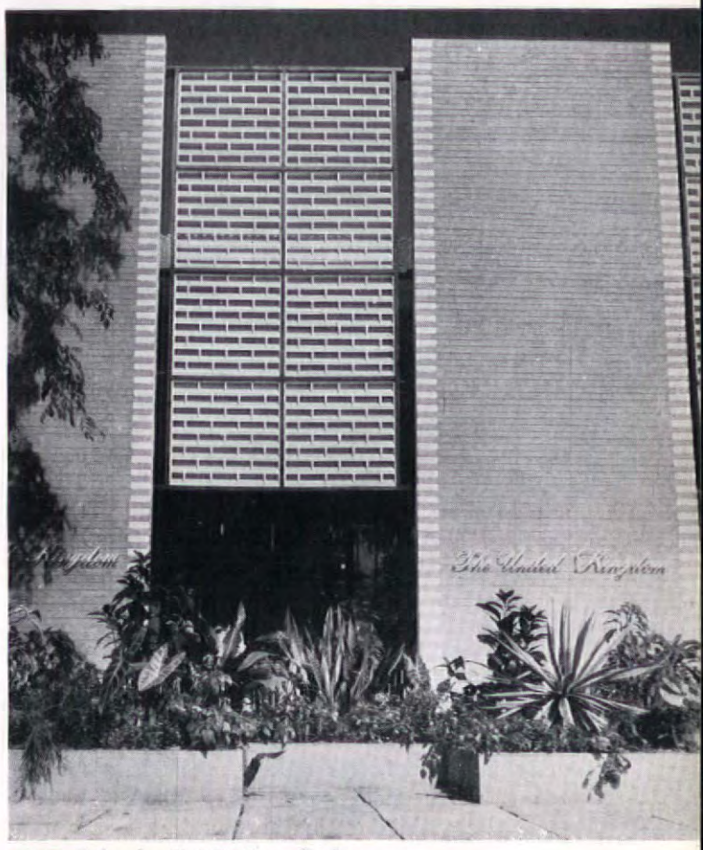
1950 *German Industries Exhibition. Berlin.*

The British Pavilion above was designed by the German architect Fritz Bonemann. The display consisted partly of Festival oddments, but was welded by Victor Rotter into a tidy whole with many new exhibits, of which the television demonstration was a particular success.

The Colombo and Capetown Exhibitions in 1952 were the nearest thing since the war to the Great International Exhibitions of the past. The budgets for the British Pavilions were cut to figures which, by their paucity, would have amused the Festival of Britain office and amazed commercial exhibitors.

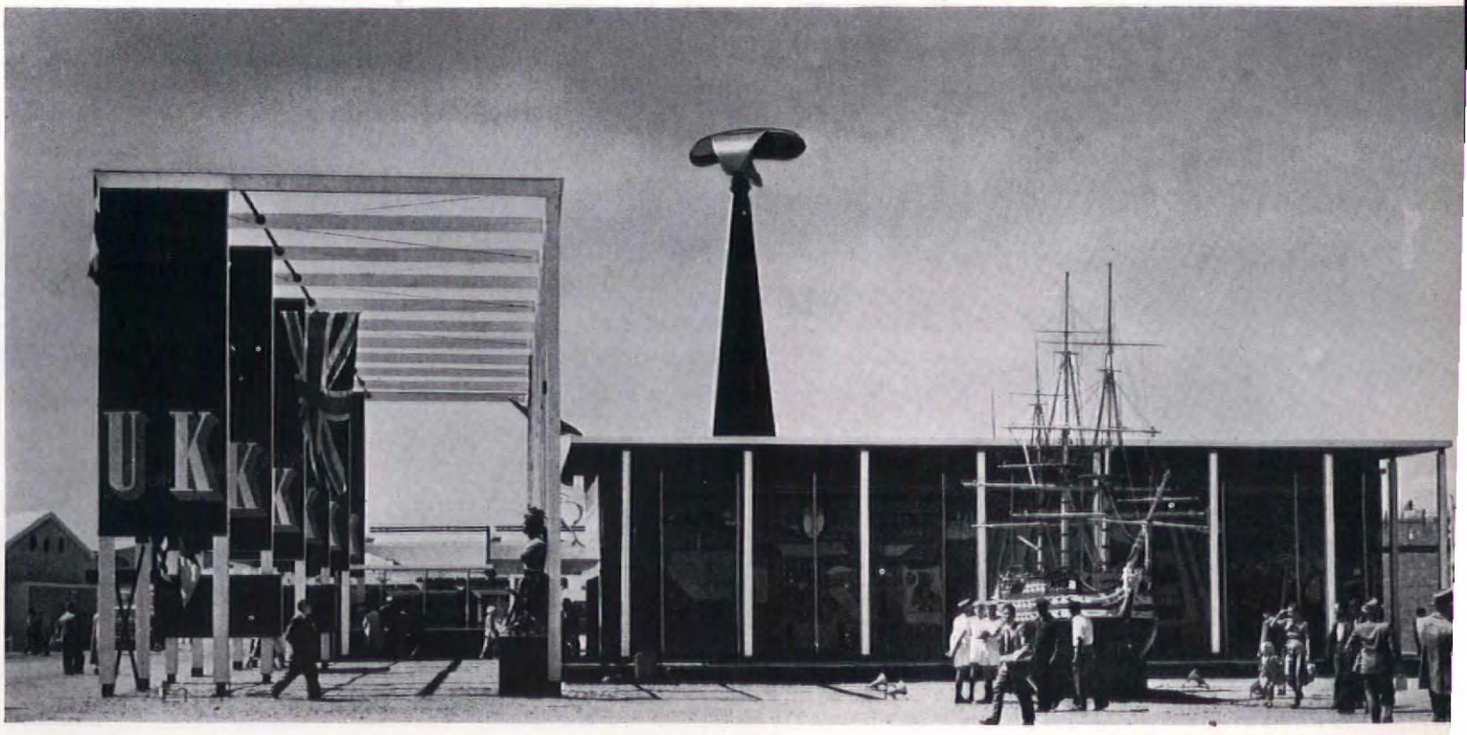
But poverty cancels pomposity, and if there were complaints of scaffold-pole construction at Capetown, and if the colour-washed brick walls at Colombo contrasted strangely with the gilded decorations of the Indonesian pavilion, both British pavilions did show that the Government is not content to rely only on its ancient monuments when selecting architects to present the British story overseas.

Architects. Colombo: Misha Black, Kenneth Bayes and Ellis Miles (DRU). Capetown: Sir Hugh Casson and Neville Conder.



1952 *Colombo Exhibition. Ceylon.*

1952 *Van Riebeck Festival Fair. Capetown.*



QUEEN ELIZABETH II: NEW STAMPS AND COINS

An article on pages 32—37 assesses the designs of stamps and coins up to the reign of King George VI. On this page are illustrated the first stamps and coins to appear in the reign of Queen Elizabeth II, and their design is commented upon by Charles Hasler, the author of the earlier article.

1

2

1, *designed by Enid Marx.* 2, *designed by M. C. Farrar-Bell: photograph by Dorothy Wilding Portraits and printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons.*

3

3, *obverse for British and Commonwealth coinage: designed and modelled by Mrs. Mary Gillick.*

Gravure is again the process by which these stamps will be produced. The photograph of the Queen (which will appear on the whole series in due course) is a logical medium for this process, but gravure often has a flattening effect on half-tone subjects; a portrait with more contrast of tone would have avoided this and would have stood up better to the sharply-drawn designs.

Enid Marx's three-halfpenny stamp, 1, is only just the better of the two. The space is much more comfortably filled, though the garland which surrounds the portrait would seem more appropriate to textile than to stamp design, and the lettering could have been considerably refined. Mr. Farrar-Bell's design, on the other hand, 2, is one of pedestrian dullness. The portrait is so large for the stamp area that all the other elements of the design give the impression of having got in only by the skin of their teeth, and all the canons of good lettering have been disregarded.

The new coins, on the whole, are not quite so disappointing as those they will supersede, but even so they still leave much to be desired. Mrs. Gillick's design for the obverses, 3, shows a nice balance, but does our young Queen really need that over-idealization of youth.

Of the reverses, those by E. G. Fuller and Cecil Thomas, 7, 8, 9, are the most agreeable, with the sixpence and half-crown taking pride of place; at least they fill the space well and to some extent avoid an antiquarian flavour. Although they all show a better relation of lettering to design as a whole, at any rate as far as weight is concerned, there is a far greater variation of lettering than ever before, and Mrs. Gillick's near-sans will certainly not pair well with Mr. Gardner's bloated classic on the shillings and threepenny piece, 4, 5, 6. In other words, lettering remains the weakest point of all. Three of the coins will each be the work of three designers, and it is a great pity that it was not someone's responsibility to co-ordinate the lettering. Had this been so, a far greater unity between the obverse and the reverse of the coins would have been achieved.

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4, 5, 6, *reverses designed and modelled by W. M. Gardner.*

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7, 8, 9, *reverses designed by E. G. Fuller and modelled by Cecil Gardner.*

The Studio Window

BY EDWARD ARDIZZONE

A large window with a north light is an essential for all painters. The technique of metal window construction, working on traditional lines, is ideal for such 'purpose-made' windows. Crittalls can provide a solution for all contemporary window problems.

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ENCHANTMENT *April 23rd 1661*

About 4 I rose and got to the Abbey, where I followed Sir J. Denham, the Surveyor, with some company that he was leading in. And with much ado, by the favour of Mr. Cooper, his man, did get up into a great scaffold across the North end of the Abbey, where with a great deal of patience I sat from past 4 till 11 before the King came in. And a great pleasure it was to see the Abbey raised in the middle, all covered with red, and a throne (that is a chair) and footstool on the top of it ; and all the officers of all kinds, so much as the very fidlers, in red vests. At last comes in the Dean and Prebends of Westminster, with the Bishops (many of them in cloth of gold copes), and after them the Nobility, all in their Parliament robes, which was a most magnificent sight. Then the Duke, and the King with a scepter (carried by my Lord Sandwich) and sword and mond before him, and the crown too. The King in his robes, bare-headed, which was very fine. And after all had placed themselves, there was a sermon and the service; and then in the Quire at the high altar, the King passed through all the ceremonies of the Coronacon, which to my great grief I and most in the Abbey could not see. The crown being put upon his head, a great shout begun, and he came forth to the throne, and there passed more ceremonies: as taking the oath, and having things read to him by the Bishop; and his lords (who put on their caps as soon as the King put on his crown) and bishops come, and kneeled before him. And three times the King at Arms went to the three open places on the scaffold, and proclaimed, that if any one could show any reason why Charles Stewart should not be King of England, that now he should come and speak. And a General Pardon also was read by the Lord Chancellor, and meddalls flung up and down by my Lord Cornwallis, of silver, but I could not come by any. But so great a noise that I could make but little of the musique; and indeed it was lost to every body. But I had so great a lust to . . . that I went out a little while before the King had done all his ceremonies, and went round the Abbey to Westminster Hall, all the way within rayles, and 10,000 people, with blue cloth; and scaffolds all the way.

THE DIARY OF SAMUEL PEPYS, ed. Wheatley,
London, 1904, Volume II, Pages 18-20.

DISENCHANTMENT *September 28th 1761*

What is the finest sight in the world? A Coronation. What do people talk most about? A Coronation. What is delightful to have passed? A Coronation. Indeed, one had need be a handsome young peeress not to be fatiqued to death with it. After being exceeded with hearing of nothing else for six weeks, and having every cranny of my ideas stuffed with velvet and ermine, and tresses, and jewels, I thought I was very cunning in going to lie in Palace Yard, that I might not sit up all night in order to seize a place. The consequence of this wise scheme was, that I did not get a wink of sleep all night; hammering of scaffolds, shouting of people, relieving guards, and jangling of bells, was the concert I heard from twelve to six, when I rose; and it was noon before the procession was ready to set forth, and night before it returned from the Abbey. I then saw the Hall, the dinner, and the Champion, a gloriously illuminated chamber, a wretched banquet, and a foolish puppet-show. A trial of a peer, though by no means so sumptuous, is a preferable sight, for the latter is interesting. At a Coronation one sees the peerage as exalted as they like to be, and at a trial as much humbled as a plebeian wishes them. I tell you nothing of who looked well; you know them no more than if I told you of the next Coronation.

Letter to Sir Horace Mann from THE LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE,
ed. Toynbee, Oxford, 1904, Volume V, Pages 121-122.

MARGINALIA

BRS Returns Thanks to Australia

Few things are as difficult as to return adequate thanks for goodwill gifts such as food-parcels, and BRS are to be congratulated on using a work of art for this purpose. The food parcels have come regularly since the war from the Building Research staff of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, in Australia, and the staff of BRS

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have given their gratitude concrete form in this group by Daphne Hardy, 1, whose work has also been seen on the South Bank, in Hertfordshire Schools, and on housing at Hackney. Its title is *The End is to Build Well*, but one imagines that its symbolism will be apprehended, in a general way, by anyone, building researcher or not, who looks at it, and walks round it, for a couple of minutes.

Oxford Observed

Under this title *Country Life* have issued (at 12s. 6d.) a book of photographic observations of Oxford assembled by Thomas Sharp, and supported by him with a text which underlines the serial nature of townscape as seen by the perambulating observer, and insists that this is a worthwhile æsthetic experience. The result is a stimulating book, and the experiment could profitably be extended to many other towns. It will be reviewed later.

New Publication

Most architectural publications tend to be platforms on which views can be aired, but *Perspecta* is different. It is a turntable on which arguments can revolve around the axis of contemporary architecture—or so it would appear from the introduction, by George Howe, to the first issue. *Perspecta* is also, and for this reason very welcome, the *Yale Architectural Journal*, published by the students of the Schools of Architecture and Design. Considerably less obstreperous than some other student publications, the first issue contains a distinguished essay by Henry-Russell Hitchcock on the early development of the three masters—Wright, Mies, and Le Corbusier; houses and projects by Paul Rudolph, Philip Johnson and Buckminster Fuller; Fello Atkinson's Third Programme talk on American commercial buildings, and various other contributions by authors to whom *Perspecta* has, to quote the introduction once more, offered a place on the merry-go-round.

DIGEST

Opinions of the Festival of Britain

Comment, of some sort, on the South Bank Exhibition is known to have appeared in at least twenty foreign periodicals devoted to architecture and design. The type of such comment varied from simple news paragraphs acknowledging the exhibition's existence, to extended discussions, some of the highest interest, of individual buildings and of the scheme as a whole. Some periodicals employed English architects and writers, whose opinions lacked the interest, for us, of an outside view, while other publications whose comments would be of value have failed to make any at all.

The discussion was opened by a back-end article in *Spazio* (August, 1950) headed 'Soccorso agli Inglesi,' in which the originality of structures like the Skylon was called in question. A number of Italian precursors were proposed, notably the exhibition stands of Zavanella, and the idea that such structures were not capable of exact description was vigorously scouted; the current Italian terms *puntone* (for the tapered pylon) and *tensistruttura* (for the structure as a whole) were proposed as adequate.

The main body of opinion did not appear, of course, until the summer and autumn of 1951, and may be divided into three main parts: viz. criticism of fittings and furniture; of individual buildings; and of the whole scheme, urbanistically. Furnishings were discussed by *Décor d'Aujourdhui* and *Art et Décoration*, both of which found the exhibition excellent, detected a strong Italian influence but differed as to the source of the other major influence, Scandinavian or Victorian? and the overall effect of the Homes and Gardens section was described as *confus* by the former, *un peu précieux* by the latter. *Bonnyt* (Norway) made the Festival an

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PARK SEATS: This wooden seat is to become the standard equipment of all Royal Parks, and will replace a number of earlier types such as the wood and cast iron example on the left. While one applauds the intention of MOW to modernize and re-equip, one cannot help wishing that their idea of modern did not dawdle quite so far behind other people's, and that while other public bodies, like London Transport, have developed good contemporary seats, MOW should continue with the safe, Cotswoldy, and rather lumpish taste of the beginning of the century. How much more sensitively adjusted to the artificial æsthetics of urban gardens the not-very-gracious Victorian seat appears.

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A CROWN FOR CORONATION YEAR: To assist manufacturers and the public in their quest for appropriate emblems to reproduce in Coronation souvenirs, street decorations, displays and favours, the Council of Industrial Design's Coronation Souvenirs Committee commissioned Milner Gray to prepare a rendering of the Royal Arms (shown in 3, above), simplified to facilitate reproduction in various media and sizes, and also to design a symbolic crown. Three versions were made of the crown: suitable for embossing or reproduction in one colour outline, 4, for reproduction in solid colour or for die-stamping in very small sizes, 5, and for use in full colour, 6. These designs were submitted to the Queen; also to Garter King of Arms to ensure that they did not conflict with designs already approved for the Royal Cypher. 7 shows Milner Gray's original pencil sketch design for the Crown, which was subsequently modified to produce the final versions illustrated here. He derived it from the treatment of the crown on the reverse of the gold half-pound minted in the reign of Elizabeth I, and his aim was to create a crown for the new Elizabethan age which was both feminine and traditional in character. The modifications, which give it, perhaps, a somewhat weaker and less graphic form, were due to Garter King of Arms's insistence that it should be more like the existing cypher crown.

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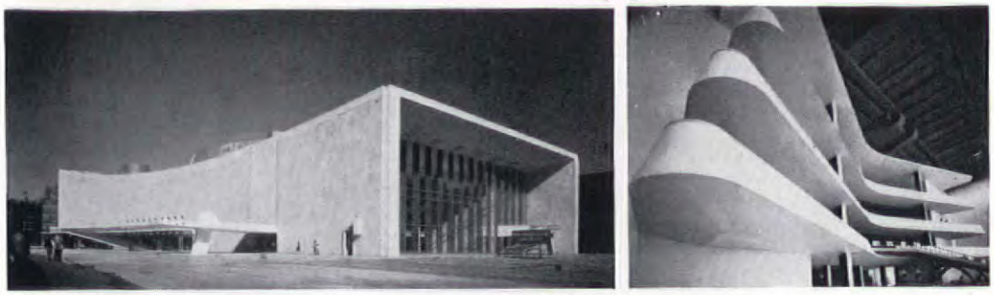


UNO ASSEMBLY. The completed General Assembly block of the UN headquarters, New York, built mainly to the designs of Wallace K. Harrison, the UN's Director of Architecture, marks a greater departure from the spirit of the Committee's original model than any other part of the scheme. Though the general form of the block is retained, the exterior, 8, shows how a sagging catenary roof replaces the stiff and sprightly proposed profile, and a single egg-plan assembly hall thrusts its head through the roof of the block, being located in the waist of the building, and not, like the two halls originally projected, under the higher ends. The fenestration of the south porch is a redeeming feature but the lumpish porte-cochère seems to repel, rather than invite. The interiors are even more startling, and the balconies of the north porch, 9, lashing to and fro within a few feet of the outer wall, sum up the Boracic ostentation of this extraordinary design. Paul Rudolph has called this the bankruptcy of the International Style, but it is difficult to see any real connection between this building and that austere and sinewy discipline.

occasion to review the work of Lucienne and Robin Day at some length, comparing the latter to Finn Juhl.

Individual buildings noticed included: Regatta Restaurant, sympathetically described in *Arkitekten* (Copenhagen); Dome of Discovery, considered in its structural aspects by *Architecture Française*, which was almost alone in noticing its symbolism—its form was held to be *bien fait pour accentuer l'idée de la découverte;* Royal Festival Hall, discussed shortly by *Bauwelt* (Berlin) and at some length by *Baukunst und Werkform* (Frankfort)—but, of course, many individual buildings were noticed in articles dealing with the South Bank at large, and this piece in *Baukunst* was one of a series of three, the other two dealing with the whole exhibition.

In these articles there appear the key-words of all generalized comment on the Festival—*neue Stadtlandschaft, Phantasie, räumliche Gestaltung*, to which may be added *Selbstironie* from the long article in *Werk* (Switzerland). A new Townscape, a new handling of space, the element of fantasy are constants in Nordic comment, but *Werk*, besides observing the 'self-irony' of the Lion and Unicorn, also quoted 'More matter with less art' when confronted with the display techniques in other pavilions. Two long and thorough Scandinavian studies appeared in *Byggmastaren* (20, 1951, Stockholm) and in *Byggekunst* (9, 1951, Oslo). In the latter Gunthorn Kavli subjected the whole exhibition to a piece by piece analysis, attending closely to detailing and to the weathering properties of temporary structures. To *Byggmastaren*, Nils Ahrbom contributed an acute study which attempted to relate Festival architecture to the whole field of English development, in society as well as building. His overall approval is tempered by some sharp words, about the interior of the Dome and the exterior of the Concert Hall, but, like nearly all foreign critics, he was captivated by the Sea and Ships, which received on all hands praise exceeded only by that lavished on the Lion and Unicorn.

A long, but purely factual, study by Earl Levin appeared in the *Journal* of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, but by far the most interesting general articles on the South Bank were published in journals from Southern Europe. *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* (Madrid, November, 1951) contained a lively study by Rafael de Aburto. Very personal and subjective, it was most valuable for the acuteness with which it brought out the contrast between North and South, between the Architecture of Humanism and the Architecture of Technology. 'Architecture, once in repose, now speaks . . . subjected to excessive demands it defies the attraction of gravity . . . a triumph of aluminium and precise calculation.' He noted the absence of axial planning, and the landscape tradition which inspired the layout, and was clearly worried by the state of monumental sculpture, for his article ends with a curious 'poem' bidding farewell to the traditional statue, and uneasily hailing the Skylon as a technological substitute.

Monfredo Nicoletti, in *Rassegna Critica di Architettura* (Rome, November–December, 1951) adopts a related viewpoint. His article on exhibitions occupies nearly the whole of the magazine, his method is historical, not to say Giedionesque, and the South Bank is its pretext and pivot. For him, Festival architecture was Northern and anticlassical, but emphatically part of the English tradition. Thus, he discusses the layout as an urbanistic experiment for the future, but also as part of a continuous development of picturesque thought; the Festival Hall interior as part of an expressionist tradition going back to William Blake; the Transport Pavilion he relates to Tudor structures like Choplloyd's, Chester; and the poetic chaos of any overall view to the disorderly comfort of a Victorian interior. These judgments are embedded in an article which is well worth reading in any case for his practically unique attempt to discuss the psychological effects of modern exhibition architecture.

P.R.B.

EXHIBITIONS

The 'Ceramics in the Home' exhibition, organized by *The Observer*, was an altruistic attempt to lure a travelling public very slightly off its course and acquaint it with some contemporary experiments in pottery. The site in the entrance hall of the Underground station at Charing Cross was ideally suited to the purpose, but it was no larger than the area covered by an exhibition stand at Olympia, and Margaret Casson, who undertook the arrangement of the exhibits, had an unenviable task. She had to display nearly two

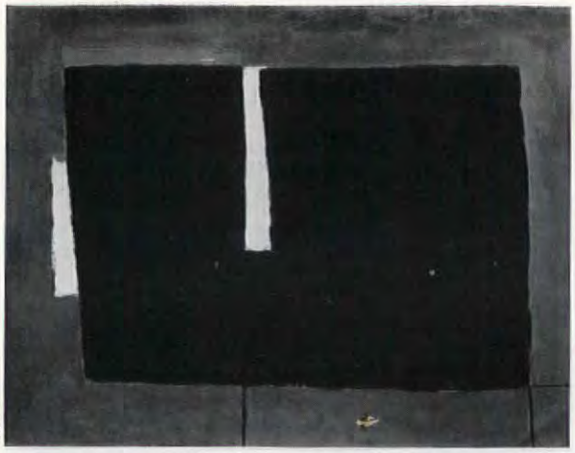
10, The Observer's *Exhibition 'Ceramics in the Home.'*

hundred pieces of pottery, and find space for a dining room, a living room, and a section for the practical demonstration of processes. She made brave use of fishnet, grass matting, bamboo, metal rod and coloured ball, and the indispensable succulent, but had to rely on lighting to obtain a sense of homogeneity, leaving some of the exhibits in pools of shadow.

The exhibits themselves disclosed very little experiment with form. The most enterprising pieces in this respect were large dishes by Peter O'Malley and James Tower, the one a clever transformation of a Sussex trug, the other reminiscent of a Zulu shield.

A number of plates, dishes and tiles were effectively patterned by some well-known painters, but Lanyon was the only painter who showed any concern with the form of the things he decorated. His distorted little pots had a pleasant air of benign ferocity. Pasmore's linear motifs on plates—spirals interrupted by straight lines—might well become popular if taken up by one of the big firms, for they have the bite of the good contemporary abstract and the inevitable look of traditional patterns. First-rate craftsmen such as Newland and Vergette achieved richer colour effects, in some of their slipware and underglaze decoration, than the painters, but their designs were somewhat banal, and I had the impression that if the painters and craftsmen could get together they might produce some very exciting things.

The London Group held its first exhibition thirty-eight years ago, and no art society can keep going that long without becoming either eclectic or stodgy. The London Group is still lively because of its selective inclusiveness, and the judicious hanging of its 1952 miscellany at the New Burlington Galleries procured an orderly but animated intercourse between



11, Black and White and Red Painting *by William Scott* (*New Burlington*); 12, Cart Filled with Wounded Soldiers *by Théodore Géricault* (*Marlborough*); 13, Font and Flowers, North Grimstone *by John Piper* (*Leicester Galleries*); 14, The Swans *by Sir Frank Brangwyn* (*Burlington House*).

evolved and evolving styles. Paintings by Josef Herman and William Scott rose well above a good general level. The sombre earth colours of Herman's Breton village invades the sky, making the exterior world as warm and enclosed as the inside of a cottage, and the setting sun has a grubby splendour, as if it were a saint's halo that had fallen out of Heaven on to the village and been shoved back into the sky by the soiled hands of peasants, leaving smears of gold on a wall or two and a roof. It is the stirring physical presence of Herman's pigment, its responsiveness to human needs, that is so impressive, and it's much the same with Scott's abstract called *Black and White and Red Painting*. This is simply a rough parallelogram of black and two thick runs of white on a reddish-brown ground, with fierce edges of pure red emerging from behind the black, but it achieves the remarkable effect of an almost desperate act of moderation, for the black parallelogram seems to have been hastily but accurately placed over a blinding vermilion fire.

Géricault's first London exhibition was held in 1820, and his second has just closed at Marlborough Fine Arts. To arrange a show in London that did justice to his genius would require collaboration between two Governments, and then we should probably find that not all his magic is in the work but lies partly in the fantastic promise of an artist who died young. There was much evidence of a great and troubled spirit in the sixty-two items devotedly assembled by the Marlborough. The powerful squat forms of his *Cart filled with Wounded Soldiers* convey both the misery and the fortitude. The turbulent oil sketches of rearing horses, which are emblems of natural forces and human exultation, and the compassionate yet perverse still lives of guillotined heads and severed limbs are among the clearest pictorial statements of the nineteenth-century romantic agony.

The paintings of John Piper and Elinor Bellingham-Smith at the Leicester Galleries were sharply opposed in manner, but equally expressive of romantic sentiments. Poised midway between chancel and churchyard overflowing with associations, Piper's paintings of baptismal fonts with flowers at their foot are defined with a new, clear ecstasy in the colour. Elinor Bellingham-Smith's colour is delicate and melancholy. The pictures composed an enchanting frieze of young girls standing quite still in the midst of endless country walks, staring at their dreams. Whenever the girls failed to put in an appearance—and occasionally they abandoned some picture of sad, moist fields—one managed to look at the quality of the painting with a colder eye, and found it to be disappointingly thin.

That eminent Edwardian, Sir Frank Brangwyn, RA, who has been called the Veronese of *art nouveau*, and whose galleons and panchromatic clouds have enthralled multitudes of schoolboys, has been suitably honoured by a Retrospective in the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House. I found it a shattering display of talent exploited and fulfilled at the level of a decorative and theatrical sentimentality. His most persistent recipe becomes quite gruesome with repetition: one grandiloquent and airless scene after another is dappled with arbitrary 'sunlight' to brighten up conventional tonal painting, and the most extraordinary thing is that he seems to have adopted this grotesque device after looking at Monet and Vuillard. There is never the faintest sign of a desire to come to grips with reality: it is idealism on its last tottering legs.

Robert Melville

CORRESPONDENCE

Palladian Villas

The Editors,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

SIRS,—During a series of visits to the Veneto I have seen some sixteen of the twenty-nine villas which are ascribed to Andrea Palladio.

Only one of the sixteen suffered war damage, but five of the others are in such a state of decay that if nothing is done to save them, they will soon be reduced to the ruinous condition of the Villa Marcello at Bertesina, or worse. (There is a certain amount of argument about the attribution of Villa Marcello, but I cite it, as it is in the worst condition of any I have seen.)

Very nearly approaching it are the Villa Poiana at Poiana, and the Villa Badoer at Fratta Polesine; both of which have been reduced to the condition of tenements; either by the neglect or the lack of means of their owners. This is particularly tragic in the case of the Badoer Villa, which retains more of its original Palladian features than any of the other villas, with the possible exception of Villa Emo at Fanzolo. Even the frescoes, which were thought to have disappeared by the end of the eighteenth century, are still there, as I discovered when I saw the Villa last year, and found them

15, *One of the wings of the Villa Poiana.*

[continued on page 66

continued from page 64]
behind flaking coats of whitewash. What further damage, if any, the Villa suffered from the disastrous floods last autumn, I do not know.

Of the thirteen villas which I have not seen, I understand that at least four are well maintained, but that some of the others are also in a very bad condition. There has been a certain amount of agitation in the Italian Press and in public opinion about the fate of the Villas, but so far, nothing concrete has been done. I fully appreciate the difficulty of any assistance coming from England, in view of currency control, etc., but wondered if it might be possible for some body like the RIBA or the Georgian Group to help in planning an exhibition or a tour of the Villas, in order to interest public opinion in England and the United States in their fate, and possibly to assist in raising some fund to help in their maintenance. I have no doubt that the Italian authorities and the owners of such villas as the Rotunda, Maser, Malcontenta, Villa Emo at Fanzolo and Villa Sarego at Santa Sofia, which are maintained in excellent condition, would co-operate.

If nothing is done, it is likely that within fifty years something like a third of the villas of Andrea Palladio, whose influence upon our own country house architecture and that of the United States needs no exaggeration, will have declined into ruins.

Yours, etc.,

Rome. GEORGINA MASSON.

16, *The Poiana coat of arms, thrown into a ditch by an electrician with a nice sense of symmetry, so that he could affix electric wires to the centre of the gateway of the villa.*

TRADE & INDUSTRY

Catering at Bankside House

Bankside House is the British Electricity Authority's enormous new power station that towers across the river from St. Paul's. Some idea of its size may be gathered from the fact that the dining hall and kitchens are designed to accommodate and serve 800 people.

The main all-electrical cooking equipment has been supplied by The Jackson Electric Stove Co. Ltd., 143, Sloane Street, S.W.1, together with stainless steel sinks and other fittings in the kitchen and wash-up area, a 40 ft. service counter, smaller counters, a hot-cupboard and a tea bar in the dining hall and mobile trolley equipment with insulated urns for use throughout the building.

The kitchen equipment includes a bank of five

17, *The Jackson Electric Stove Co.'s kitchen equipment at Bankside House.*

elevated ovens, a pastry oven, three steaming ovens, two boiling ovens, two fish fryers, three 30-gallon boiling pans and a double compartment table grill. There are also a variety of food preparation machines and storage vessels. The firm has also equipped the servery to a smaller dining room on the first floor. In all, the total loading of the four installations amounts to 320 kW.

A Satin Emulsion Paint

The biggest problem to-day in building is that of costs on site, in other words, skilled man-hours on site. In renovation and redecoration, man-hours must form an even greater percentage of total costs. Any materials or techniques calculated to produce economies of this nature all help to halt the rising cost of building work. In paint, as in most other sections of the industry, many such products have come on to the market since the war, and the new emulsion paints are one of the most interesting of new developments.

Cellon, Ltd., of Kingston-on-Thames, for example, have recently introduced their Cerreen range of

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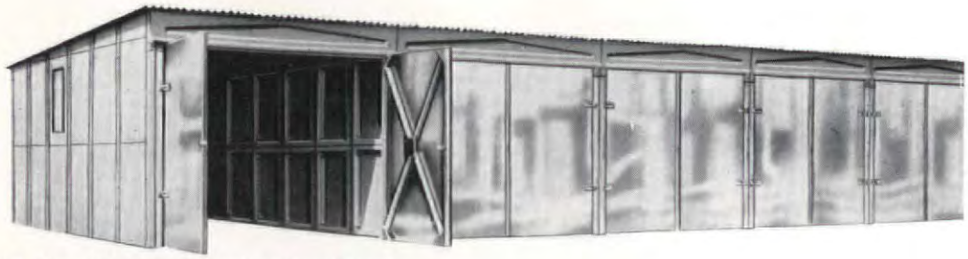

18, *Ernest Batley's multiple sectional garage.*

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Satin Emulsion Paints. Cerreen is a synthetic-resin, water emulsion paint, i.e., it is based on a non-oxidizing plastic-resin dispersed in water. The water evaporates after application and leaves a continuous unbroken film of pigmented plastic-resin which is tough, elastic, extremely resistant to water and dirt, and washable. It is easy to apply since it requires no overbrushing, it dries in two to three hours, varying with humidity and temperature conditions, and can be applied with brush, roller or spray-gun.

It can be used on practically any surface—wood, plaster, concrete, wallboard, brick, glass and on all surfaces which previously have been painted. For the last, as with all paints, proper preparation is, of course, necessary, but with the exception of unpainted metal, no priming is needed at all.

In use, time is also saved since the paint is supplied ready mixed, and requires no thinners. Consistency may be adjusted with the addition of clean water depending on the porosity of the surface to be painted. A second coat can also be applied after three hours.

Cerreen also has the advantage of being non-poisonous, non-inflammable and discouraging to mould growth. For Factory Act purposes it comes in the category of an oil paint and, therefore, needs renewing only once in seven years.

The Cellon Co. has taken the opportunity, on introducing Cerreen, to issue a new colour book of their interior finishes.

Multiple Sectional Concrete Garages

The comments which head the previous note apply equally to the prefabrication processes which are designed to apply mass-production assembly-line processes to building.

An example of this, although, perhaps, on a minor scale, are the sectional concrete garages and other buildings manufactured by Ernest Batley, Ltd., of Holbrooks, Coventry. This firm has now developed a multiple sectional garage from their established single lock-up garage, for assembly in blocks of as many garages as are desired. The wall panels, which are tongued and grooved, beams and posts are of steel reinforced concrete, the roof is of $\frac{3}{16}$ inch toughened corrugated asbestos, and the doors are made from a non-corrosive aluminium alloy. Erection can be carried out by unskilled labour due to the simple construction, for there are no parts to fix to the ground and the concrete parts are merely bolted together. Subsequent maintenance is not necessary, for even the nuts and bolts are of aluminium alloy.

Each garage measures, internally, 15 feet 8 inches long, 7 feet 9 inches wide and provides a clear 6 feet 3 inches of height. Due to the materials used it is claimed to be fireproof.

The cost, for example, of a row of six garages works out at an average of £57 10s. 0d. per garage, a moderate amount in comparison with alternative materials.

Unusual Problem of Sound Insulation

The Royal Festival Hall, despite the excellence of its acoustic properties, has recently been the centre of an unexpected acoustic problem which could not possibly have been planned for originally. The ballet season organized during the early months of the Hall's existence made a temporary stage necessary. Ballet is obviously a severe test of a stage at the best of times, and particularly so of a temporary structure. During the first season there was considerable trouble from 'drumming' noises. The architects consulted Jones & Broadbent, Ltd., the insulation specialists, and as a result packed round the piers and other parts of the temporary stage with sacks of loose 'J. & B.' mineral wool, with the result that the 'drumming' problem was completely overcome. At the end of the ballet season the sacks of mineral wool can be removed for storage with the temporary stage, ready for use when required.

The 'J. & B.' mineral wool produced by the above company is a highly adaptable product, is highly resistant to fire, does not support vermin, repels moisture and does not deteriorate.

Booklets Received

The Use of Mastics in Building. Published by Secomastic, Ltd., 15, Upper Grosvenor Street, W.1, this well-produced booklet deals with a subject of great importance, but on which little has so far been written. Mastics, used in the sense of a non-

[continued on page 70

continued from page 68]
hardening seal between two components which are expected to move, were originally developed to meet problems of prefabricated construction. The fruits of ten years' experience of this subject have been collated and digested in this booklet and presented with many sectional drawings in a very informative and simple manner. Copies are available from the company.

The Journal of the House of Mallinson is the house organ of Wm. Mallinson & Sons Ltd., 130-150, Hackney Road, E.2, and of their associated companies. Issue No. 16 deals with a wide variety of subjects connected with the company's activities.

Pollaganda, issued by E. Pollard & Co., Ltd., 159, St. John Street, E.C.1, is a revival of a pre-war publication. It is to be devoted to surveys of the modern shop, the fitting up of shops being, of course, the company's main activity. This first number is nicely produced and deals with some of their recent jobs both at home and overseas.

The Collapse Method of Design is No. 5 of the series of technical studies produced by the British Constructional Steelwork Association, Artillery House, Westminster, S.W.1. It is an amplification of their booklet No. 3, covers the design of fixed and continuous beams and pinned-base portals, under static forms of loading, applying the Plastic Theory to the design of mild steel beams and rigid frames.

Progress in Glass is a photographic survey of glass at the South Bank Exhibition. Published by Pilkington Brothers, Ltd., St. Helens, Lancashire, it makes a very attractive 48-page memento of a very important occasion.

Atlas Fluorescent Lighting Handbook published by Thorn Electrical Industries, Ltd., 105-109, Judd Street, W.C.1, is a neat little catalogue and price list of the company's wide range of fluorescent lighting fittings and equipment.

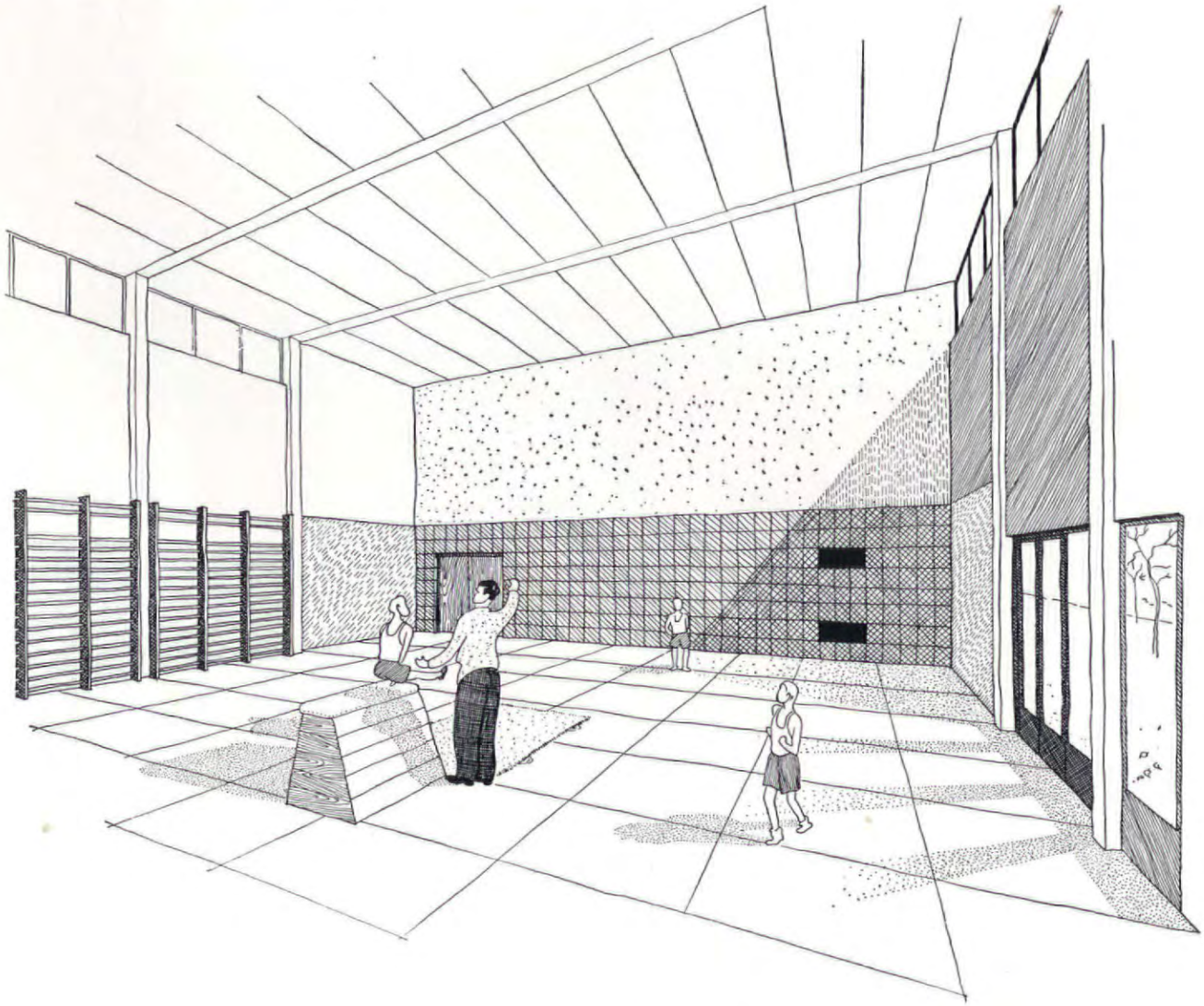
Notices

John Wright & Sons (Veneers), Ltd., announce the appointment to directorships of R. N. Smith and J. C. McIntosh, respectively Works Manager and Sales Manager of the Decorative Veneer department. Both will continue in these capacities, W. J. O. Jenkins continuing as Sales Director of the company.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks are due to the following for help in the production of this issue: The Admiralty; The Coronation Committee on Medals; The Council of Industrial Design; Italian General Post Office; The London Transport Executive; Ministry of Works; The National Maritime Museum; The Post Office—Architect's Department; The Railway Executive; The Railway Museum; Mrs. Sampe-Hultberg; Swedish Cultural Institute; Swedish General Post Office; Swiss General Post Office; The Treasury; United States Office of Information.

Acknowledgments for illustrations in the issue are due as follows: FOREWORD, pages 3–5: medal designed by Paul Vincze, photograph The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. THE CROWN BUILDS, pages 6–11: page 6, *Picture Post*; 1, 2, 3, 8, Ministry of Works; 4, John Maltby; 5, E. R. H. Read; 9, Herbert Felton; 6, 7, 10, 11, by courtesy of The Postmaster-General; 12, Fox Photos; 13, Galwey, Arphot; 14, Her Majesty's Stationery Office. THE CROWN FURNISHES, pages 12–25: top of page 13, Keystone; 1, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, Ministry of Works; 2, 14, C. G. Rosenberg; 6, 7, Keystone; 9, O'Donnell; 10, 33, Bergne; 11, 17, E. Hólmen; 16, 65, Alexandre Georges; 18, *The Times*; 23, Topical Press; 24, 25, Galwey, Arphot; 26, Sydney W. Newbery; 50, 51, Ezra Stoller; 52, 54, 57, by courtesy of The Postmaster-General; 53, Francis Caird Inglis; 55, 64, Wahlberg; 56, Bacci Attilio. ARMS, STAMPS AND MONEY, pages 26–37: 1, 2, Eric de Maré; 3, 4, 5, Henry Grant; 27, 28, Fox Photos. W. Turner Berry, librarian of the St. Bride Foundation; Robson Lowe; Spink & Son; and the Institute of Bankers, loaned original material, books and photographs. Permission to reproduce illustrations was granted by The British Museum; Director of Postal Services; H.M. Stationery Office; The Bank of England; The Victoria and Albert Museum; The Royal College of Art; *The Times*. CORONATION CELEBRATED, pages 38–47: page 38, Black Star; 1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 20, Fox; 3, 9, Keystone; 4, 6, Central Press; 5, 37, The Scotsman; 13, 19, 29, R. Sandiford; 16, Council of Industrial Design; 21, 22, 23, The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths; 24, 25, 26, 27, London Museum; 28, John Martin; 31, 35, Associated Newspapers; 30, 32, 33, 34, *Picture Post*; 36, Jack Howe; 38, Black Star. Drawings pages 47 and 48 by Hugh Casson except for drawing of St. James's Street by Clifford Hatts. ROYAL TRANSPORT, pages 48–56: 1, British Museum; 2, drawing by Barbara Jones; 3, The Admiralty; 4, 8, 20, 21, 22, *Picture Post*; 5, *The Times*; 6, Keystone Press; 7, International News Photos; 9, 28, Central Press; 10, 12, 26, United States Office of Information; 11, 13, 27, 28, Central Office of Information; 14, British Railways; 15, Nordiska Kompaniet; 16, Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Co.; 17, 25, Fox Photos; 18, 19, Tom Ingram; 23, Central Press. PROJECTION ABROAD, pages 57–58: all photographs Board of Trade except for centre photograph page 58, Design Research Unit; bottom photograph page 58, Press Photo Service. QUEEN ELIZABETH II: NEW STAMPS AND COINS, page 59: 1, 2, General Post Office; 3–9, British Official Photograph, BIPPA. MARGINALIA, pages 62–70: 1, F. H. K. Henrion; 2, Ministry of Works; 8, 9, Ezra Stoller; 10, Jane Bown; 14, Photo Studios; 15, 16, Marion Johnson; 17, Studio Briggs; 18, Stowe and Bowden.

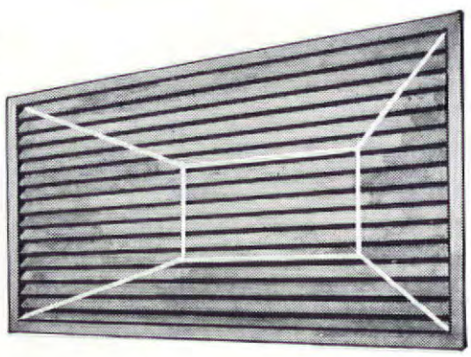


ALL-OVER HEATING BY WEATHERFOIL

One of the big advantages of WEATHERFOIL heating is that quite large areas, such as the gymnasium illustrated, can be kept at a comfortable temperature by a single unit, built into the structure in such a way that it does not encroach on useful floor or wall space.

WEATHERFOIL heating eliminates projecting heating surfaces and greatly reduces pipe runs, thus promoting clean interior design as well as cutting down installation costs.

Operated by room thermostat, WEATHERFOIL units give a flexibility of control not possible with other systems. Because the system is so responsive to changes of temperature and because it lends itself to being built into the structure, consultation with WEATHERFOIL engineers is desirable when the first plans of the building are being drafted. Such early consultation has resulted in some of the most efficient and economical heating systems of recent years.



WEATHERFOIL HEATING SYSTEMS LTD. 185, BATH ROAD, SLOUGH, BUCKS. Phone: SLOUGH 25561

ALPHABETICAL LIST TO ADVERTISERS

ALPHABETICAL LIST TO ADVERTISERS

continued from page 332]

Precast concrete roofings: Concrete Ltd. *Roofing felt:* Wm. Briggs & Sons. *W.C. Partitions:* Standard Pavements Co. *Dome lights:* T. & W. Ide Ltd. *Woodblock flooring:* S. Bennett & Son. *Patent flooring:* Korkoid Decorative Floors Ltd.; North British Rubber Co. *Central heating:* J. E. Heath & Son. *Electrical works:* Edgar C. Porter Ltd. *Boilers:* Ideal Boilers & Radiators Ltd. *Sanitary fittings:* Adamsez Ltd. *Stairtreads:* Stuarts Granolithic Co. *Door furniture:* Nettlefold & Sons. *Casements:* Crittall Manufacturing Co. *Rolling shutters:* Shutter Contractors Ltd. *Sunblinds:* J. Avery & Co. *Fibrous plaster:* G. Jackson & Sons. *Metalwork (entrance gates and staircase balustrading):* Light Steelwork Ltd.; H. & C. Davis Ltd. *Stonework:* Harris, Wood & Co. *Cement glaze:* Modern Surfaces Ltd. *Asbestos spray ceiling finish:* Turners Asbestos Cement Co. *Staircase handrail:* F. J. Lewis Ltd. *Shrubs and trees:* R. C. Notcutt & Co. *Craft and science room fittings:* Charles Hearson & Co. *Cloakroom fittings:* Clark, Hunt & Co. *Clocks:* Gent & Co. *Signs:* The Lettering Centre; J. & L. Signs.

Government Offices at Rickmansworth, Herts. *General contractors:* Y. J. Lovell & Son. *Sub-contractors: Bricks:* Henry J. Greenham Ltd. *Stone:* Bath & Portland Stone Firms Ltd. *Artificial stone:* Globe Building Products Ltd. *Structural steel:* Smith Walker Ltd. *Fireproof construction:* Caxton Floors Ltd. *Roofing felt:* D. Anderson & Son. *Roof lights:* J. A. King & Co. *Invisible embedded panel heating system:* J. Jeffreys & Co. *Electric wiring:* Grierson Ltd. *Terrazzo:* Marriott & Price Ltd. *Casements:* C. E. Welstead Ltd. *Metalwork:* Clark, Hunt & Co. *Joinery:* Broomhall Joinery Co. *Tiling:* Carter & Co. (London). *Shrubs and trees:* Sear & Carter. *Office fittings:* Holoplast Ltd.

Flats in Wiltshire Close, Chelsea. *General contractors: Excavations, dampcourses, reinforced concrete and plumbing:* Holloway Bros. (London) Ltd. *Sub-contractors: Asphalte:* Excel Asphalte Co. *Bricks:* Finnis, Rault & Nicholls Ltd. *Artificial stone:* Enfield Stone Co. *Special roofings, paropa:* Frazzi Ltd. *Hollow tile partitions:* London Brick Co. *Glass:* Aygee Ltd. *Woodblock flooring:* Stevens & Adams Ltd. *Patent flooring:* S. Towers & Son. *Waterproofing materials:* Sika Ltd. *Central heating:* G. N. Haden & Sons. *Gas fires and fixtures:* N. Thames Gas Board. *Boilers:* Ideal Boilers & Radiators Ltd. *Electric wiring:* Berkeley Electrical Engineering Co. *Sanitary fittings:* J. Bolding & Sons. *Door furniture and bells:* Nettlefold & Sons. *Casements, window furniture:* Crittall Manufacturing Co. *Folding gates and metalwork:* S. W. Farmer & Son. *Plaster:* Jeffries & Grant Ltd. *Decorative plaster:* Southern & Midland Plastering Ltd. *Joinery and doors:* L. Montague Meyer Ltd. *Wall tiling:* Carter & Co. *Kitchen fittings:* Built-in Furniture Ltd. *Lifts:* Keighley Lifts Ltd. *Lettering and signs:* Wm. Pickford Ltd.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Appointments

SUDAN GOVERNMENT

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The Director of Education invites applications for the post of Senior Assistant in the Department of Arts and Crafts, Khartoum Technical Institute, aged not less than 30 on the 1st of July, 1951.

Candidates should possess good qualifications in craftwork and be experienced in Art Teaching. Preference will be given to an A.R.C.A.

Crafts of special interest include typography and process reproduction, cabinet making, jewellery, metalwork, wood and stone carving and textiles.

Appointment will be on probation for either a Long Term Contract (salary range £E.617—£E.1316) with special post-service gratuity, or a Provident Fund Contract (salary range £E.720—£E.1547) or a Short Term Contract (salary range £E.771—£E.1644) with different post-service benefits.

Cost of Living Allowance varying between £E.142 and £E.352 p.a. according to the number of dependents is at present payable, and, subject to certain limitations, an Outfit Allowance of £E.60 is payable on appointment. Free passage on appointment. There is at present NO INCOME TAX in the Sudan.

Further particulars and application forms are available on written application, from the Sudan Agent in London, Sudan Agency, Wellington House, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1. Please mark envelope "Senior Assistant, Art.—4/308."

Exhibitions

LEICESTER COLLEGE OF ART

FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN

The City of Leicester Art Gallery Committee is proposing to stage in the Autumn an Exhibition of the work of students and staff who have been associated with the Leicester College of Art. Will all past students and those who have served on the staff who are willing to submit work for this Exhibition write at once to the Principal of the College, The Newarke, Leicester.

continued from page 330]

very well produced set of catalogues.

Troughton and Young (Lighting) Ltd., 143, Knightsbridge, London, S.W.1.

At the BIF 1951

G. A. Harvey & Co. are showing at both London and Birmingham. At Olympia, Stand G23, they have a complete range of steel office furniture and storage units, while at Castle Bromwich, Stand B329, they are displaying in addition, examples of their heavier equipment. This includes their 'Harco' range of perforated metals, woven wire mesh, sheet metal ventilators and cowls.

G. A. Harvey & Co. (London) Ltd., Greenwich, London, S.E.7.

Frederick Braby & Co. this year have a larger stand at Birmingham (B517/416) constructed from their 'Bar-Form' metal partitions. Among their large range of exhibits are perforated metals, nested galvanized steel cisterns, industrial steel sinks, an aluminium desk and bookcase, rooflights and skylights, cisterns, cylinders and hot water tanks.

Frederick Braby & Co., Ltd., 352, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

The Ruberoid Co. display at Stand B423 at Castle Bromwich a comprehensive range of their roofings, dampcourses, bituminous paints and compounds. Their mineral surfaced roofing is used as the cap-sheet of a typical built-up roofing standard specification for a flat roof, complete with flashings and outlets, and they are also showing their insulated metal roof and flexible strip tiles.

The Ruberoid Co. Ltd., New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1.

Holoplast Ltd., showing in the Building section at Castle Bromwich on Stand B315, demonstrate the applications of their 'Holoplast' 1⅛ inch panels as exterior walls, as well as for internal partitioning, flooring, furniture, doors and acoustic finishes. Their laminated plastic corrugated roofing sheet known as 'Corroplast' is displayed as a roof sheeting on a demonstration building that forms part of the stand.

Holoplast Ltd., 116 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

D. Anderson & Son occupy Stand B625 in the Building section at Birmingham and are displaying their range of Red Hand roofing felts, linings and under-slatings, insulating and deadening felts and dampcourses. In addition there are models of their built-up roofing systems, and of their 'Thermolok' and 'Thermosteel' insulated metal roof deckings.

D. Anderson & Son, Ltd., Stretford, Manchester.

The Radiation Group Sales (Solid Fuel Division) have a wide selection of the solid fuel appliances made by their three production centres on show at Stand B501/400 at Castle Bromwich. These include cookers, fires, convector grates, combination grates, and other heating appliances, all designed to provide increased efficiency with greater economy.

Radiation Ltd., 7, Stratford Place, London, W.1.

CONTRACTORS etc

Official Architecture in the West Indies. Housecraft Centre. *Sub-contractors: Asbestos roof:* Universal Asbestos Mfg. Co. *Armitage-ware fittings:* Edward Johns & Co.

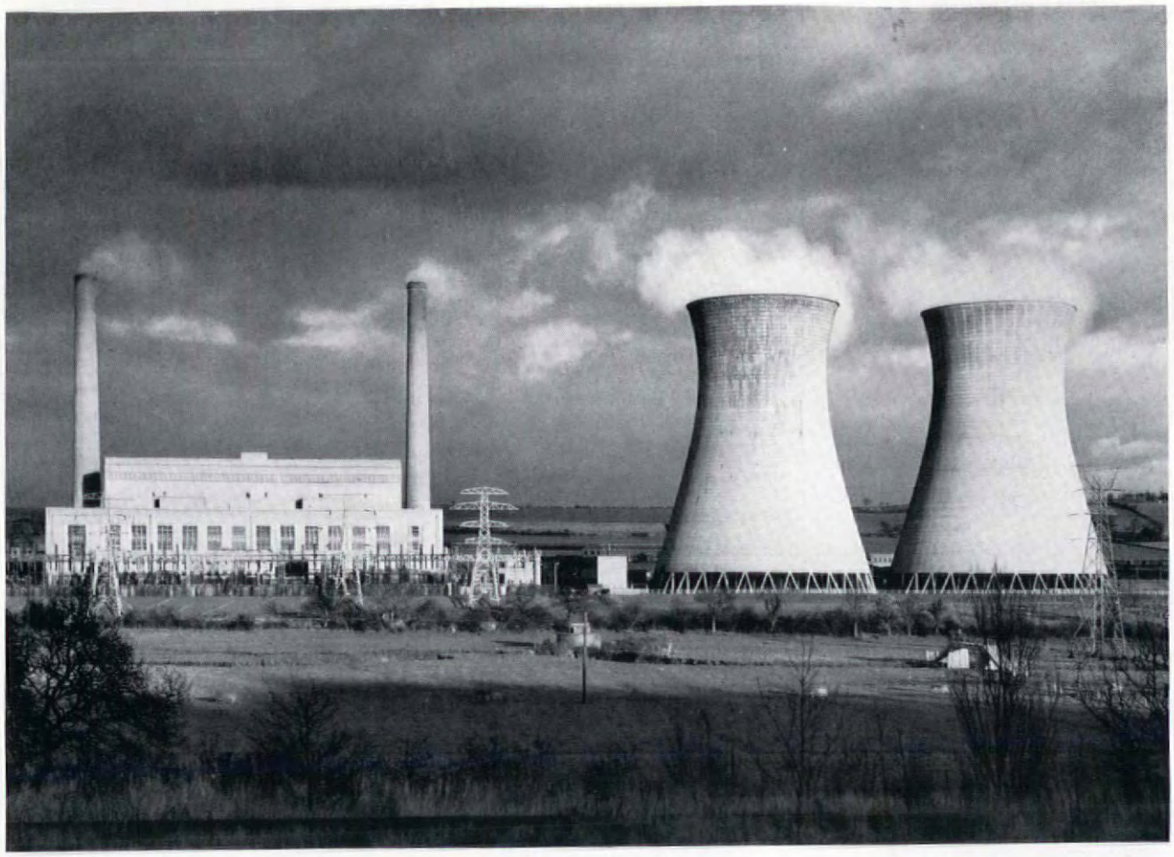
Science Laboratory and Housecraft Centre. *Sub-contractors: Specialist laboratory equipment:* Baird & Tatlock (London) Ltd. *Roofing:* Turners Asbestos Cement Co. *Tropical louvred pressed steel windows:* Henry Hope & Sons.

Hospital at Grenada. *Sub-contractors: Sanitary fittings:* Doulton & Co. *Ironmongery:* James Gibbons Ltd. *Fire appliances:* Merryweather & Sons. *Glass:* Chance Brothers Ltd. *Copper fittings and pipes:* J. H. Lamont & Co. *Wall tiles:* Carter & Co. (London). *Paints:* Lewis Berger & Sons.

Canteen at West Auckland, County Durham. *General contractors:* H. E. Pitt Ltd. *Sub-contractors: Bricks:* Eldon Brick Co. *Artificial stone:* Crossley & Sons. *Tiles:* Commercial Marble & Tiles Ltd. *Roofing felt:* The Ruberoid Co. *Glass:* Elders, Walker & Co. *Block flooring:* Terradura Ltd. *Central heating:* The Brightside Foundry & Eng. Co. *Electrical:* North of England Electrical Eng. Co. *Plumbing:* G. Waine & Co. *Sanitary fittings:* Shanks & Co. *Door furniture:* N. F. Ramsay & Co. *Metal windows:* The Rustproof Metal Window Co. *Rolling shutters:* Hardy & Stewart. *Plaster:* R. Banks. *Metalwork:* Selborne Engineering Co. *Foundation stone:* C. S. Ormerod Ltd. *Roof lights:* Lenscrete Ltd. *Precast floor:* Kingston Concrete Products Ltd. *Dome lights:* Pilkington Bros.

School at Chigwell, Essex. *General contractors:* Thomas Bates & Son. *Sub-contractors: Dampcourses:* The Ruberoid Co. *Asphalt (Playground):* Constable, Hart & Co. *Bricks:* W. H. Collier & Co. *Artificial stone:* The Empire Stone Co. *Structural steel:* Dorman Long & Co. *Tiles:* Messrs. Summers & Co. *Suspended ceiling:* Anderson Construction Co.

[continued on page 334



MEAFORD POWER STATION, STAFFS

SIR ALEXANDER GIBB & PARTNERS, CONSULTING ENGINEERS

HOPE'S WINDOWS

HENRY HOPE & SONS LTD

SMETHWICK, BIRMINGHAM AND 17 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1

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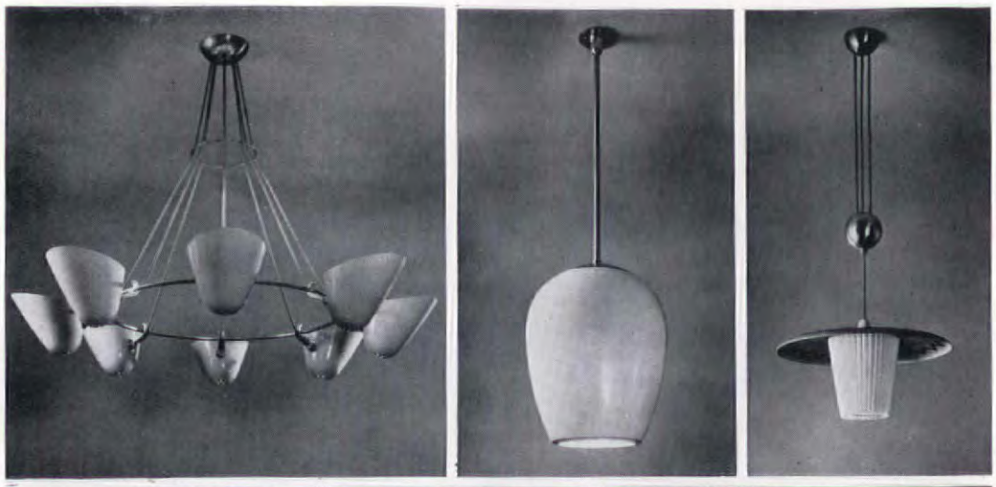

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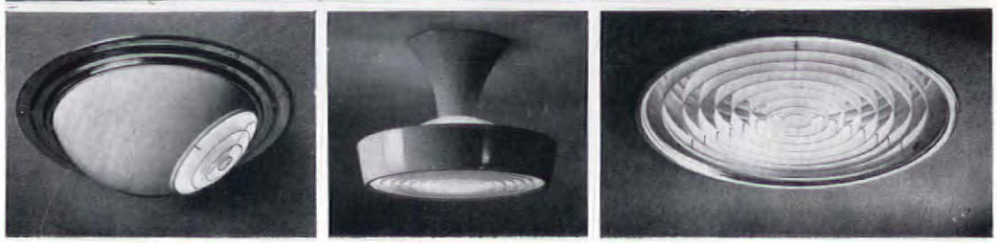

Light fittings made by Troughton and Young: 13 *Versalite pendant FV* 118/*R*, 14 *Ultralux pendant U*203, 15 *Mondolite pendant F*901 *with H*3 *Shade and counterweight device*, 16 *Mondolite recessed ceiling display fitting F*1200, 17 *Mondolite ceiling fitting F*936, 18 *Mondolite recessed ceiling fitting F*922.

continued from page 328]

Since the war, Troughton and Young have successively added the Versalite, Tubalux and recently the Mondolite ranges of fittings to their well-established Ultralux range, which has also been considerably expanded. Now their Knightsbridge showrooms have been entirely remodelled to do justice to these many new fittings. The proper display of lighting fittings in a showroom is a very difficult problem but with the clever use of semi-partitions, alcoves, good colours and display devices, Troughton and Young have contrived a first-rate job.

In the matter of fitting design, they have set themselves the ambitious target of carrying a large stock of a very wide range of designs. To make this economically possible it has been necessary to evolve design series each based on a restricted number of interchangeable parts. This makes quantity production possible but necessitates very high standards of precision manufacture. It also achieves the company's primary object and enables them to offer a remarkably comprehensive choice of light fittings of contemporary design for almost every conceivable purpose.

The four ranges are grouped as follows:—

The Mondolite, their newest, in which the F800 series of pendant fittings and the F900 series of domestic fittings are outstanding.

The Versalite, their first post-war series based on the use of small conical reflectors, which has now been increased to include a greater variety of multi-lamp pendants.

The Tubalux, a series of fluorescent light fittings for single and twin tubes in the three, four and five foot lengths designed to the same standards as the incandescent fittings.

The Ultralux, their firmly established series of pre-war fame, the design of which was based on spherical and mushroom shaped opal glass bowls. To these basic shapes have been added the very interesting U200 series in which the sphere has been elongated into an egg shape.

Full details of these ranges are set out in a

[continued on page 332

Corset Department, Messrs. Selfridges of Oxford Street

EFFECTIVE display setting can interpret an atmosphere appropriate to the product — interpretation of design characterises the work of The George Parnall Organisation.

Messrs. Selfridges of Oxford Street, London, W. have completed certain replanning of departments and it was the pleasure and privilege of George Parnall & Company Limited to carry out this work under the direction of the House Architect Mr. R. L. Heath, L.R.I.B.A., and Consulting Architect Mr. J. S. Beaumont, F.R.I.B.A.

Design and Craftsmanship by

GEORGE PARNALL

GEORGE PARNALL & CO. LTD. 4 BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON, W.C.2

gravy, the skilful French cookery of Jean Hugo at the Hanover Gallery was a relief. If people who are not in the least *naif*—Jean Hugo is a grandson of the poet Victor and best known as a designer for ballet—really must paint pictures that look nearly (but never quite) as if they had been painted by prodigiously gifted car-park attendants on their days off, these charming holiday scenes from the coasts of France could hardly be bettered. Also at the Hanover Gallery was a gay show of the works of Victor Brauner, who might be labelled a conceptual surrealist—that is, a surrealist in the tradition of Klee rather than of Dali.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Room on Wheels

To the Editors
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

DEAR SIRS,—I was very pleased to read the article 'The Room on Wheels' in the January issue of the above publication, and in particular would like to refer to a couple of captions in connection with the illustrations to this article.

The first refers to picture No. 28 in which the author suggests a further stage of simplification incorporating new materials. He continues that it is not altogether an improvement in design. In this respect, I would like to mention that in general there was no intention of a revision to design, but an introduction of a new material together with perhaps a 'tidying up' line of thought behind the building of this Coach. His reference to the plastic fascia to the luggage rack is perhaps not quite correct, since the fascia actually conceals the metal construction of the front of the luggage rack. This metal front was a standard railway fitting, and its section and dimensions were more concerned with strength and rigidity than æsthetic viewpoint. You will note the absence of intermediate luggage rack brackets, hence the need for a section such as was used. The alternative to a plastic fascia would have been either a timber fascia or the bare metal. My authority for making these comments is based on the fact that I could claim responsibility for the majority of the design details, as well as a considerable amount of layout detail.

The second comment refers to picture No. 41, for which the author has more regard, although he adds that it was never put into production. It should be pointed out that this was not an attempt to show British Railways how to design rolling stock, but an illustration of how laminated plastic in conjunction with other materials could be used for interior panelling, etc., within a dining car. From the production point of view, it might be added that a number of rail cars have been built and others are under construction, which show a considerable similarity. I was responsible for the design of this interior which was included in the De La Rue Stand at the BIF 1948.

Yours, etc.,
W. J. HARDMAN,
Thomas De La Rue & Co., London.

To the Editors
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

DEAR SIRS,—In the article on Railway Carriage Design published in the January number of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, a statement was made that the tavern cars have been withdrawn from service by British Railways.

This is certainly not so, as not only have I recently travelled on a main line Southern Region train which included a tavern car as part of the facilities, but also I observed another being drawn into Waterloo Station the other day.

I think you will agree with me that it is high time BR executed their promise of withdrawal.

Yours, etc.,
London. S. M. WARD (Miss).

London Shopfronts

To the Editors,
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

DEAR SIRS,—As a practising typographer I was interested to read in Fello Atkinson's article on shopfronts the suggestion that there are 'plenty of first-rate typographers' who could advise the architect on the highly important choice of suitable lettering for contemporary shop fascias.

Typographers have long been necessary members of exhibition design teams, and have done much fine work in this field. Surely it *is* time typographers undertook the choice of appropriate lettering for more permanent structures.

At present, styles are varied indeed; to quote Mr. Atkinson: 'lettering . . . remains generally undistinguished.' As to its future, however, let us not be too purist. Fanciful types, and even ugly, can be most effectively adapted for use by an imaginative typographer with taste. An excellent example being the grand use of a quite dull letter of the Ionic type family on the South Africa Travel Centre. Rarely have I seen such an appropriate choice. But let us see more!

Yours, etc.,
Aylesbury. FRANK OVERTON.

Letters of Loudon

To the Editors
THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

DEAR SIRS,—I am writing a biography of John Claudius Loudon (1783–1843), the landscape gardener and author of many works on gardening and architecture. I should be glad to hear from any reader who has or knows of any letters written by Loudon or his wife, or who knows the present whereabouts of the journal that he kept from about 1800 until the end of his life, if it still exists.

Yours, etc.,
London. JOHN GLOAG.

TRADE & INDUSTRY

Pioneers in Design

With the South Bank Exhibition, contemporary design celebrates, to all intents and purposes, its coming of age in this country. For the last twenty-one years this new conception of design, after surviving a somewhat prolonged gestation period, has gradually been pervading our everyday lives in the form of buildings, machines and consumer goods. To many who have grown up during this period, what we see now is a proper and natural development, a mere matter of evolution. But these things do not happen naturally and certainly this has not been the case with contemporary design. The handful of manufacturers and designers who early hitched their livelihoods to this new conception of design have trodden the slow, hard road of the pioneer. They literally had to create a demand for the goods they designed and made.

Contrary to the usual idea, one of these pioneers in design was a practical engineer and man of business. Director of an established firm of electrical contractors, he turned his attention to the lighting fittings which were the main object of much of the wiring that he installed. His policy in this new venture was to produce in quantity fittings of contemporary design only. On this he was and still is uncompromising. In his own industry his firm became unique.

His first problem was that of design, and he engaged a young Royal College of Art man to help him, another move equally unusual at that time, for the year was in 1928. That practical man was H. T. Young of Troughton and Young and the young lad from the RCA is now A. B. Read, his Director of Design, and present Master of the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry. [continued on page 330

12, *Troughton and Young's remodelled showrooms at Knightsbridge* (see Pioneers in Design).

MARGINALIA

The exhibition of Fauve painting at Roland, Browse and Delbanco divided itself into two parts—the French and the rest. Among the French, Derain was the best represented, both in point of numbers (nine paintings) and—since Derain in his Fauve period was a better painter than he has been since—quality; his London riverscapes are paintings one seems to have seen many times in recent years, yet is always ready to see again. There were three Braques but, disappointingly, there was only one Matisse and a poorish one at that; the five Vlamincks were much what one would expect them to be, and the single Van Dongen made one wonder, as usual, that he should ever have been taken seriously as a painter. Dufy came off well, especially in the *Le Havre* of 1907, which is reproduced here. The rest—English, Scottish and German painters—were not of course Fauves specifically, but painters who owed enough to the liberation in the sphere of colour achieved by the French to justify the stretching of the term to cover them. Franz Marc is a painter whose horses, red or blue, have carried his name into every moderately progressive schoolroom in the land; for all that, one does not often come up against his paintings in adult life, and was glad to find *The Red Woman* (dated 1912) in Cork Street. Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, who was represented by two works, is a less familiar name in England, where eastward-turned eyes are too easily blinded by the lights of Paris; but its bearer is at least as good a painter as Marc. From nearer home there were Matthew Smith, with the brilliantly decorative *Lilies* of 1913-14 and a *Fitzroy Street Nude* of two years later, and two estimable Scots, J. D. Fergusson and S. J. Peploe. There were also two pastels by Gaudier-Brzeska. Though neither comprehensive nor very well balanced, this was a welcome exhibition.

Any Englishman in whom the historical sense is at all developed must approach an exhibition of the New English Art Club with a certain respectfulness, not to say reverence. Yet once inside the swing doors of the New Burlington Galleries, where the latest (the hundred and fourth) was held, it was disappointing to find that the emotion could not easily be sustained—nor any other appropriate to the contemplation of works of art readily summoned up to take its place. There were plenty of pictures that it must have been nice to paint, and plenty that would have got by the selection committee of the Royal Academy. But the prevailing atmosphere was of amateurishness—that higher amateurishness which has a special place in the British art world. The five paintings by Ethel Walker, whose recent death deprived the New English of its most considerable artist, were scarcely enough to retrieve the situation.

After so large a dish of wholesome greens and

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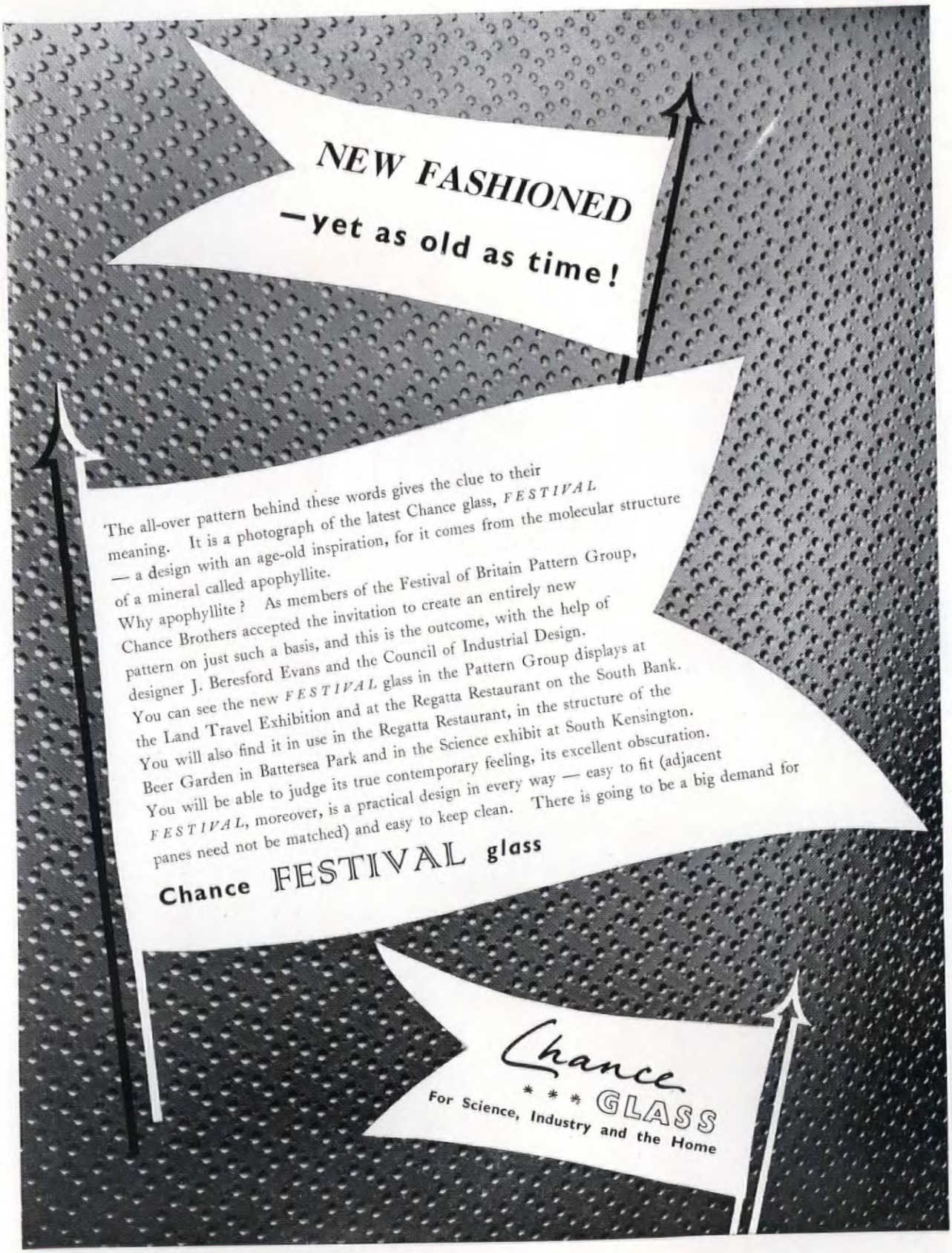
7, Le Havre *by Raoul Dufy and* 8, The Red Woman *by Franz Marc from Les Fauves exhibition at Roland, Browse and Delbanco Gallery*; 9, Beach Scene, 10, House on the Moor *and* 11, Street in Pendlebury *by L. S. Lowry from his exhibition at the Lefevre Gallery.*



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2

3

The east-west route, Warsaw: 2, *in December,* 1948, 3, *in July,* 1949. *From the recent exhibition* Poland Rebuilds Her Capital (*see note on this page*).

furniture and decoration of the whole room.

The Council Chamber, a fine eighteenth century room with an Adam ceiling, is not over large, and the design of the furniture has been kept as light as possible. Wood used is natural mahogany with a clear polish; the chairs are basically traditional in proportion and weight, though slightly lighter than is usually found in Board Rooms. The construction of the chairs and table is expressed on the exterior by small

4

Chairman's desk designed by Basil Spence.

cover plates that cover the joints and thus form part of the decoration. The Chairman's desk was designed to fit his own requirements.

The Reconstruction of Warsaw

The devastation of Warsaw by the Nazis was of a thoroughness it will take an atomic war to accustom one to. On the left bank of the Vistula destruction was almost complete; of the whole city 84 per cent. was destroyed. Yet the population of Warsaw today is about 650,000—as against 22,000 in 1945.

The remarkable feat of reconstruction which this represents was recently made the subject of an exhibition, 'Poland Rebuilds her Capital,' sponsored by the Polish Cultural Institute, at the Royal Water-Colour Society Galleries. The astonishing speed with which the work is being done is well brought out by the two photographs reproduced above from Arthur Ling's commemorative booklet, *The Reconstruction of Warsaw* (Polish Cultural Institute, London, 1s. 6d.), showing a section of the new east-west route in December, 1948, and again in July, 1949; this whole project, which now includes a five-mile-long road with a tunnel under the city centre and a bridge over the Vistula, together with the construction or restoration of the buildings along the entire length of the route, was completed in ninety-five weeks. Architecturally, the new city will show a certain conflict of tendencies, with the modern movement represented most notably by the Central Station, and academicism of the Russian brand most irrevocably by a Central House of Culture.

Correction

The designer of the Factory at Duxford, illustrated in *Current Architecture* in the March REVIEW, should read Ove Arup and Partners, assistant architect Barbara Priestley; in *Furniture since the War* the designer of the chair in 25, page 157, should read O. Boldt for F. H. Eftfl of Copenhagen, and in 74, page 163, F. Hardoy of Argentina.

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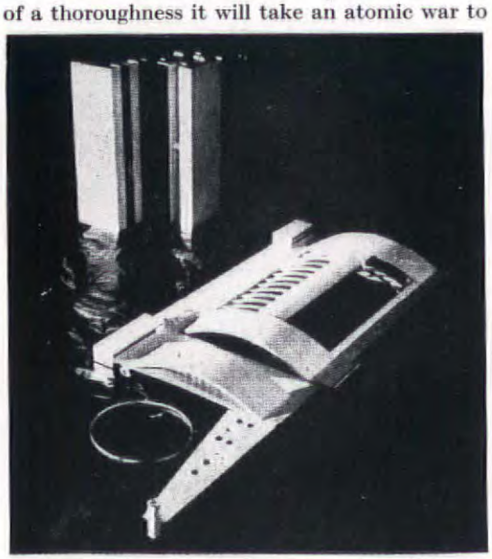
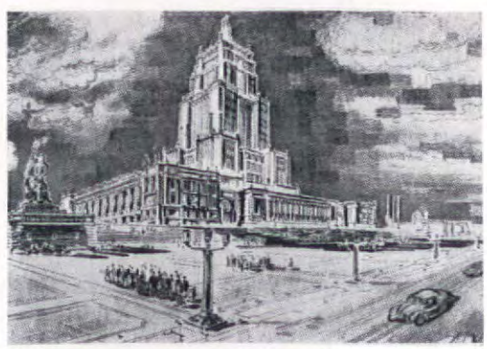




5, model of the winning design in a competition in 1948 *for the new Central Station, Warsaw. 6, project for a Central House of Culture to be built in* 1955.

INTELLIGENCE

At County Hall, adjoining the South Bank Exhibition site, an exhibition will be opened this month of pictures and pottery, costumes and coins, models and manuscripts presenting the history of riverside Lambeth and Southwark over nearly 2,000 years, recalling their associations with Chaucer and the Tabard Inn, Florence Nightingale and St. Thomas's Hospital, Shakespeare and the Globe Theatre.

The first book in English printed by the first English printer and many first editions, as well as manuscripts, portraits and busts of English writers, will be exhibited at the Festival of Britain Exhibition of Books at the Victoria and Albert Museum this summer.

EXHIBITIONS

L. S. Lowry, forty-five of whose recent paintings have been shown at the Lefevre, is an admirable artist. His technical accomplishment is limited, though perfectly adequate for his purposes; he is not in the least experimental. But his pictures, though occasionally overcrowded, are easy on the eye and create their own special atmosphere. Because they often contain a large number of small figures going about their business in surroundings which in half-tone reproductions look as if they are covered with snow (but aren't), he has been likened to Brueghel. Perhaps the comparison is not so very silly if one uses it to stress the overwhelming difference between the two. Lowry's people are quite unlike Brueghel's peasantry: lacking the animal vitality and appetites of the latter, they give the impression—even the children—that they have seen through life long ago and have decided that the only thing to do about it is to carry on. The landscapes through which they hurry in their mood of north-country stoicism are generally Lancastrian and industrial—more often composed than reproducing actual scenes; transmuted by affection the drabbest industrial buildings take on a kind of elegance, and the utter blackness of chimney and Gothic Revival spire becomes as desirable as it is always (to the southerner) astonishing.

ANTHOLOGY

West Indian Ecclesiology

Much of the frontage of the white plank houses consisted of shutters that were fitted with slats like Venetian blinds. As the day grew cooler, many of the slats opened like gills, as though for breathing purposes, and some shutters were hooked back to let in the evening air; proving that pulses were beating somewhere in the recesses of those silent husks.

At the end of this broad street, which sloped slightly as it receded, from the shallow harbour, an Anglican but extremely baroque-looking cathedral stood among the trees. The twin towers that flanked the classical facade were topped by polygonal bronze cupolas and everything in the treatment of the massive stone fabric led one to believe that it had been built in the late seventeenth or the eighteenth century. Accustomed as we were becoming to surprises of this kind, we were taken aback by the information that it was built—on the exact lines, though, of its predecessor, which an earthquake had destroyed—in 1847. There was nothing inside to impair the illusion. The spacious and airy proportions, the Corinthian pillars, the panelling, the gilding, and the lettering of the Ten Commandments all belonged to the Augustan age of English architecture. And the presiding Godhead, one felt (as one feels in all the churches built between Wren and the Gothic revival) is also a denizen of that prolonged and opulent afternoon. He is not the mysterious Presence of the Middle Ages, nor is He the avenging Thunderer of the Puritans, nor the top-hatted Puseyite of later times, nor yet the stoled and white-overalled Scientist of today. Gazing through the thin, drained atmosphere at the fluted columns and the acanthus leaves, the cornucopias and the formal flutter of the ribbons of wood that secure the carved festoons, our island Deity of the reigns of Queen Anne and the Georges slowly begins, like an emerging portrait by Kneller or Gainsborough or Raeburn, to take shape. The placid features assemble and the misty grey eyes with their compound expression of humour and severity; the heavy judicial curls of the wig, the amaranthine volume of the robes, and the soft blue of the Garter are unfolded in mid-air. A forefinger marks the place in a pocket edition of Voltaire; on a marble table, the tea-time sunlight rests on the vellum-bound Pentateuch and the Odes of Horace, and gently glows on the scales, the marshal's baton and the metal strawberry-leaves. A heavy curtain is looped back, and beyond, with the sweep of soft shadow and faded gold of a gentleman's deer-park, lie the mild prospects of Paradise, the pillared rotunda reflected in the lake, the dreaming swans, and at last, the celestial mansion built by Vanbrugh, rearing, against the sky of Sèvres blue and the whipped-cream clouds, its colonnaded entablature, its marble Graces and its urns. . . . This Elysian fancy paled all at once at the sight, on the cushion of one of the pews in the chancel, of the black pom-pom of a biretta. The Hanoverian vision grew vaporous and confused with anachronistic draughts from Oxford and Rome; and vanished.

PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR, *The Traveller's Tree*. John Murray, 1950.

MARGINALIA

The Gowers Report

Although nine months have passed since the publication of the Gowers report on the preservation of houses of outstanding historic or architectural interest (see *Marginalia*, August, 1950), the Government's attitude to it remains undefined. Speaking recently in the House of Lords, Lord Pakenham said on behalf of the Government that consideration of the report was 'steadily proceeding' and that the delay was due to the financial problems raised by the recommendations contained in it rather than to lack of interest; he assured the House that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was no less interested in the subject of the report than his predecessor Sir Stafford Cripps (who appointed the Gowers Committee) had been—an assurance, unfortunately, which the Chancellor's budget speech has done little to bear out. In support of the Government's inactivity Lord Pakenham quoted figures designed to show that the plight of the houses concerned was not so desperate as had been held; since 1945, he said, the provisional estimate was that nineteen houses had been demolished and four were threatened, while twelve thousand houses had appeared in statutory lists and sixty thousand had been noted for listing. It is to be feared, however, that the implied comparison between the loss that has been sustained and the riches that remain is a false one. The figures of nineteen houses destroyed and four threatened can only refer—if they refer to anything at all—to houses of the 'designated' class,* of which the Gowers Committee thought there might be about two thousand; the number of houses of all degrees of architectural or historical interest in the Ministry of Town and Country Planning lists is beside the point.

The occasion of Lord Pakenham's statement was a debate that followed Lord Methuen's calling attention to the report of the Gowers Committee. Moving for papers, Lord Methuen described the report as a historic memorandum and said that it contained an inescapable warning. Lord Salisbury said that the Government had got to make up their minds whether they wanted the country's historic houses preserved or not. If they did, they would have to do something about it; and that meant either giving the owners of such houses assistance by way of tax relief, or taking over the houses themselves; he was in favour of the former course both on financial grounds and because he knew that the public preferred to visit houses that were lived in and not mere museums. Lord Wemyss, chairman of the National Trust for Scotland, suggested that the law should be amended to extend maintenance claims and that owners' rates should be suspended for a year and the houses protected from requisitioning by service departments while the Government made up their minds. Lord Silkin favoured the acquisition of the houses by the State and their maintenance in their present form, if necessary as museums; he held that it would be extremely difficult to get the country to accept the alternative.

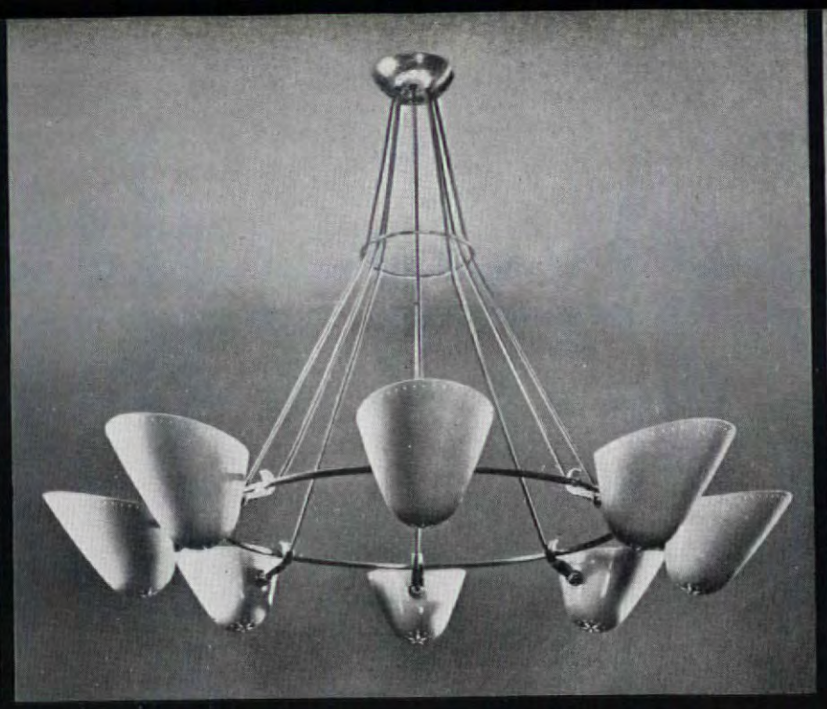
* Even then, they seem to be remarkably low. See for instance the ninth annual report of the National Buildings Record, as quoted in Marginalia, November, 1950 ('The Trail of Destruction').

Furniture for the Furniture Development Council

The Scottish Furniture Manufacturers' Association have given the Furniture Development Council the furniture and furnishings for their Council Chamber in Adelphi Terrace, London. Basil Spence was commissioned to design the

Furniture designed by Basil Spence for the Council Chamber of the Furniture Development Council.

BRACKET. Fixed. Small metal reflector. eflector, off-white ; backplate, satin brass or satin Lamp : up to 60 watts.



FV. 118/R PENDANT. Eight-light ring with large metal reflectors. Finishes : reflectors and supports, off-white ; remainder, satin brass. Flexible cords, white. Lamps : up to 8 x 100 watts.

FV. 51/R BRACKET. Adjustable metal reflector. Finish : all off-white. Lamp : up to 150 watts.

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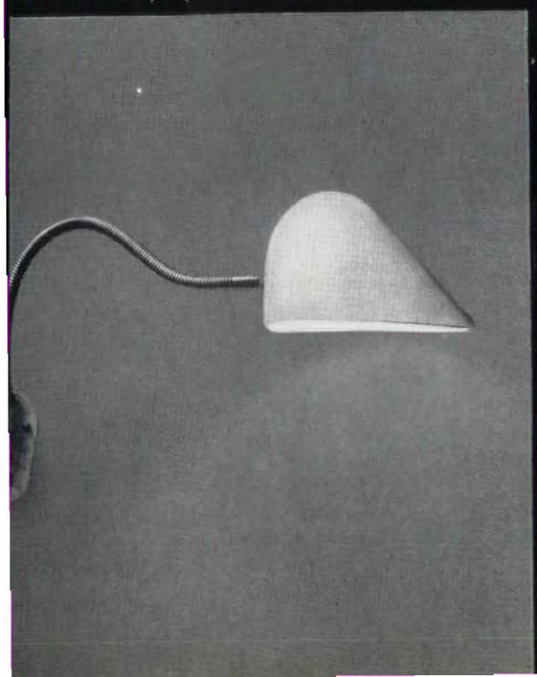
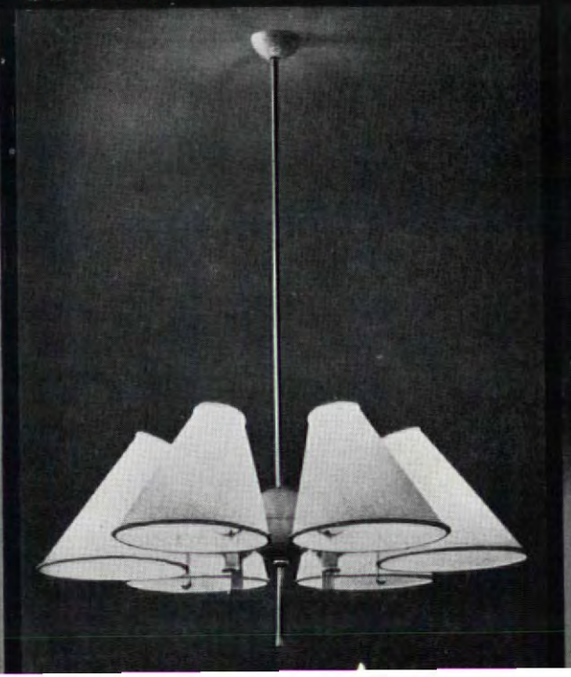


FV. 16/S PENDANT. Six-light. Shades with turning arms. Finishes : centre body and ceiling plate, off-white ; remainder, satin brass or satin chromium. Shades : ivory or peach plastic. Lamps : up to 6 x 75 watts.



FV. 2/R BRACKET. Adjustable arm. Large metal reflector. Finishes : reflector and backplate, off-white ; arm, satin brass or satin chromium. Complete with switch. Lamp : up to 100 watts.

longer the desire, which there had been in Wren's day, to conceal the ecclesiastical origins of Parliament's home, and the fact that the old House had once been a chapel made it, as the romantics of the 1830's thought, particularly appropriate that the new House should be of a pseudo-ecclesiastical architecture. (I think that Dr. Hastings somewhat exaggerates the importance of Catholic Emancipation on artistic taste, but that is a detail.) The authorities of the 1830's, far from desiring Sir Charles Barry to conceal ecclesiastical evidences, definitely ordered him to make the House—somewhat against his better judgment—'Gothic or Elizabethan.' Therefore it was in Barry's House *and for the first time* that Members were ranged on to the two sides after the manner of the two parts of a choir, and it was only in Barry's House not many years afterwards that, also for the first time, the two-party system developed. There were other reasons for this development besides the architectural, but it is beyond question that architecture had its contribution to make to it. The ecclesiastic influence, whose strength the reformers were so anxious to destroy, has had in these later days its strange, last laugh and played its curious part in English history.

I must apologize to Dr. Hastings if my interest in his arguments is so great that I have not left myself space to pay all the compliments to his learning that I would like. There can be no one whose occasions cause him to wander about the Houses of Parliament who would not learn much from Dr. Hastings' book. For myself I blush to think to how many constituents I have pointed out the exact spot where I alleged that Guy Fawkes had placed his gunpowder. I lied.

Christopher Hollis

A STUDY IN ICONOGRAPHY

CLUNIAC ART OF THE ROMANESQUE PERIOD. *By Joan Evans.* 121 *pp.*, 426 *illustrations. Cambridge University Press*, 1950. 70*s.*

Readers of Dr. Joan Evans' works have come to expect a profound erudition coupled with a flowing and cultivated descriptive style. Nor will they be disappointed in this magnificently produced and copiously illustrated volume. Dr. Evans sets out to do for Cluniac Art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries—a time when that order was the principal inspiration of European art and learning—what her pre-war volume did for its architecture. She begins with a survey of those works in sculpture or manuscript illumination which typify the finest products of the various monasteries of the order, taken chronologically by the periods of rule of the great Abbots of Cluny. The second half of the book comprises an analysis of the sources of iconography for French sculpture of the twelfth century. In this she follows the main lines laid down by Emile Mâle over twenty years ago, but enriches the subject by her vast knowledge of the vanished treasures of the past, the now scattered contents of the libraries of the greater monasteries, and the works of sculpture destroyed during the wars of religion or the Revolution, and of which only contemporary descriptions remain.

Nevertheless, the reader cannot escape feeling a little uneasy about some of the wider implications of the book. In the first place, it is not concerned with art history proper, with the tracing of stylistic development, the identification of local schools and the study of their interaction upon each other, the assessment and valuation of æsthetic purpose and content; nor even, except incidentally, with problems of chronology. It is not, indeed it does not pretend to be, more than a study in iconography. Secondly, was there in fact such a thing as Cluniac art, or Cluniac iconography, as distinct from the general influences common to all Benedictine monasteries of the age? Again and again, Dr. Evans is forced either to confess that there was not (pp. 39, 44, 57, 81, 91), or to create the most far-fetched and tenuous relationships in order to prove the Cluniac connections of the sculpture she wishes to illustrate (pp. 33, n. 7; 35, n. 5; 37; 67, nn. 4, 5). The book in fact should more properly be described as 'a study in the iconography of French Romanesque sculpture as illustrated by works associated with the order of Cluny.' These criticisms however are concerned only with the wider problems Dr. Evans has by implication raised. Everywhere her truly remarkable erudition deepens previous knowledge and understanding, while the 426 magnificent plates which have been so admirably reproduced at the end of the volume to illustrate her theme, are themselves a most valuable contribution to Mediæval scholarship.

Lawrence Stone

Shorter Notices

RECOLLECTIONS OF THOMAS GRAHAM JACKSON. *Arranged and edited by Basil H. Jackson. Oxford University Press.* 25*s.*

If the buildings among which a man spends his youth are as important in the formation of his character as we are sometimes told, Thomas Graham Jackson must have had as much influence on well-educated Englishmen of the last two generations or so as anyone alive or dead. As the Professor of Poetry said in presenting him for his Hon. DCL at Oxford: '*Quot collegia auxit vel ornavit, quot bibliothecas et officinas, quot scholas seu puerorum sive puellarum, quot remigium vel pilariorum papiliones ut vocant,* apud nos erexit*'—and even the Cambridge man, spared the penance (or so Ruskin thought it) of entering the Examination Schools of the other university, can hardly escape taking some impression from that extensive exercise in eclecticism by this *artifex Oxoniensissimus* which occupies so much of the south side of his Downing Street.

Sir Thomas's warmest admirer would have to admit that he was a somewhat uneven architect. But uneven is the last adjective one could apply to his life, that long and busy and useful life, beginning in 1835 and ending only twenty-six years ago, the greater part of which is described in these recollections. It was, it is true, very nearly halved by a fall from the cliffs near Whitby, but most of it can be described in the phrase that Sir Thomas himself uses of his entry into the state of a married householder—'everything went smoothly.' So smoothly, indeed, did things have the habit of going, that the champion of Architecture the Art was awarded the Gold Medal of the Institute that he had resolutely refused to join, and the restorer whose attentions to the steeple of St. Mary's, Oxford, had brought all Anti-Scrape about his ears remained on calling terms with William Morris.

These recollections were written, for family consumption only, between 1904 and 1915. They add usefully to our knowledge of the background of more than half a century of English architecture, besides supplying an engagingly unpretentious self-portrait of one of the most eminent of the lesser Great Victorians. **M.W.**

* I.e.: 'How many boathouses and cricket pavilions.'

ALEXANDER GIBB: THE STORY OF AN ENGINEER. *By Godfrey Harrison. London: Geoffrey Bles*, 1950. 15*s.*

The career of an eminent civil engineer still retains—or did until the recent war—some of the romance and much of the pioneering character that it had when the profession was founded 150 years ago. It demands endless improvisation and therefore has not declined, like other sciences that were once excitingly empirical, into a matter of routine. It still calls, too, for wide vision combined with an instinct for the significant detail.

The subject of this book can claim to belong to the great tradition of civil engineering, both on account of the pattern his career has followed, and in the literal sense that he represents the fifth generation of a family of engineers. His great-grandfather was a friend and associate of Telford, the greatest of them all.

Sir Alexander Gibb has not been altogether fortunate in his biographer, who, though he has taken pains, has clearly regarded his book as a work of piety, and it has the defects inseparable from a too reverential attitude. Sir Alexander's fine and forceful character would have emerged just as effectively from a factual account of his achievements as it does from the author's moralizings about them, and the author's numerous sycophantic anecdotes must be as embarrassing to the subject of the book as they are to the reader.

Leaving these aside, however, there remains an interesting picture of a big firm of consulting engineers in operation, and numerous revealing glimpses of the difficulties met with and overcome in the wide range of undertakings with which Sir Alexander was associated as either contractor, consultant or engineer: the Rosyth naval base, Barking power station, the Forth bridge at Kincardine, Rangoon harbour, the Captain Cook dock at Sydney, the Galloway power scheme and many others. **J.M.R.**

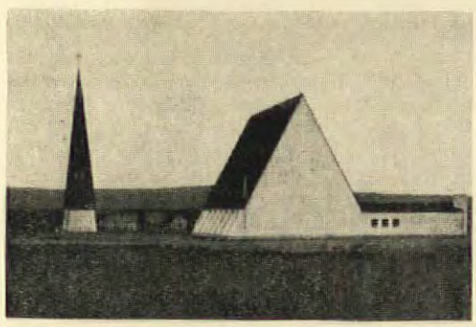
MUSEUM ADVENTURE: THE STORY OF THE GEFFRYE MUSEUM. *By Molly Harrison. University of London Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

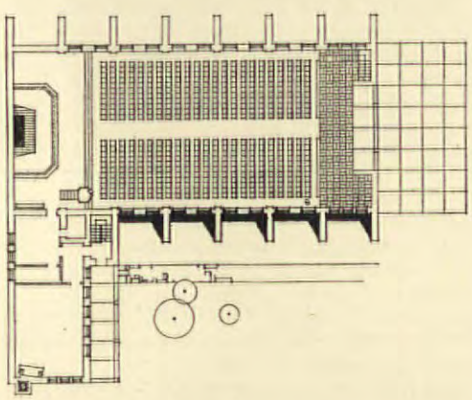
If anyone really doesn't know what Mrs. Harrison has been doing among East End children at the Geffrye Museum these last ten years or so, it is high time he did. Yet even those who have an inkling or more should read this book, in which she explains the methods followed in her remarkable experiment in educating the visual, historical and creative senses at the same time. 'Experiment,' it should be added, only because it is always developing: its success and worthwhileness have been proved beyond doubt. In putting down Mrs. Harrison's book (which is fully illustrated) one does not know whether most to admire her clarity in exposition or the enthusiasm that emanates so burningly from her pages. **M.W.**

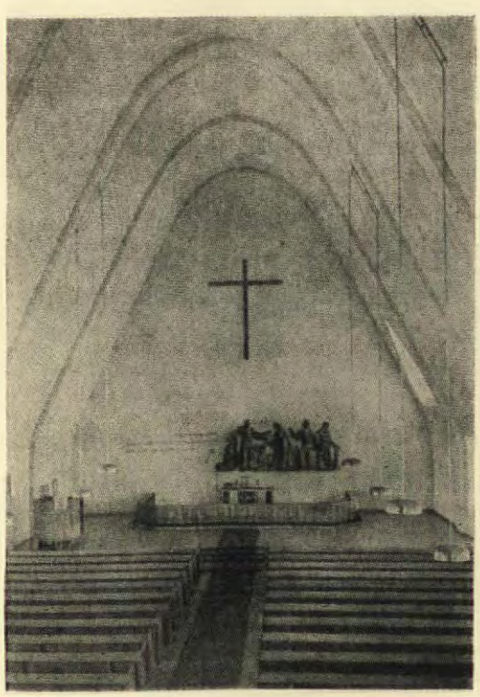
plan, from the virgin site to decoration using an average team of seven men takes fourteen days. The inclusive cost of these houses is 12s. per square foot. **Ralph Crowe**

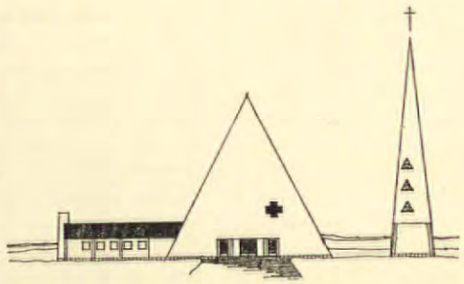
FINLAND

This church in North Finland was designed by two architectural students Eero Eerikäinen and Osmo Sipari and won the first prize in a competition. The former parish church on the site,









designed by C. L. Engel and completed in 1838, was destroyed during the Winter War of 1940. The new church, which accommodates 600 people and a choir of 50 in the balcony, is constructed of concrete with the exterior rendered near-white. It has a black wooden shingle roof and an independent spire. **Arkkitehti, March 1950**

BOOKS

THE COMMONS CHAMBER

PARLIAMENT HOUSE. *By Maurice Hastings. Architectural Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Let us first get rid of the pedantries. It is not by any means true, as Dr. Hastings says on page 32, that 'a Member must put his (hat) on even today when he asks a question.' He only has to put his hat on when he raises a point of order during a division. I do not understand why the Contents tell us that the View of the Cloisters after the Fire of 1834 is the Frontispiece, when in fact it appears on page 18. No one ever suggested that Pitt said, 'Roll up that map' on his deathbed. What he did say, if it was not 'Oh, for one of Mr. Bellamy's pork-pies,' was 'My country, oh, my country.'

Now to the argument. Dr. Hastings' two main theses, fascinatingly argued and with a wealth of illuminating detail, are first that the House of Commons for the first time obtained a permanent home when it was housed in St. Stephen's Chapel in Edward VI's reign, and that its rapid growth in importance over the next hundred years was largely due to the possession of such headquarters—secondly, that the architecture of a chapel compelled Members to range themselves in the two sides of 'decani' and 'cantoris,' and that it was that compulsion which drove this country to a two-party system in distinction to the multi-party systems of the horse-shoe Continental Chambers.

On the first argument I would merely say that I do not doubt that the possession of a permanent headquarters was a most important contributory factor to the growth in the influence of the House of Commons in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But, fascinated by his architectural researches, Dr. Hastings, I think, a little overlooks the most important reason for that growth—which was undoubtedly that the King's income had not increased nearly as steeply as prices had risen, and therefore the Stuart Kings could no longer, as could their predecessors, 'live of their own' and were far more dependent on taxation.

On the second argument, there are two comments to be made. It was in Edward VI's reign that the House moved into St. Stephen's Chapel. But it was not for many centuries after that that anything remotely resembling the modern two-party system emerged. There were no regular parties in Tudor times. The first party-manager was Pym, but he did not establish his management until he had first made himself master of the House of Commons and the battles of that day were not fought out within Parliament but by Parliament against the King. There was then no system of regular seating, one party one side and the other the other side of the House. In the eighteenth century there were indeed two parties—the Whigs and the Tories—but there was no approximation to equality in numbers between them. The Whigs flowed over impartially to both sides of the House. Anything like the present party system and the present party seating dates only from the time of Gladstone and Disraeli.

So much for one side of the argument. On the other side it is true that Edward VI's House sat in St. Stephen's Chapel. It did so, as Dr. Hastings truly shows, not to honour religion but to ridicule it. Its establishment there was a deliberate desecration by the reformers of the potent mediæval shrine of the Virgin of the Pew. Therefore from the first it was the purpose of the Parliamentarians to make the chapel as unlike a chapel as possible. They set up the Speaker's chair on the site of the altar, and—what is of great importance to this argument—they altered the seating so that, instead of Members sitting facing one another in choir-stalls, the benches ran right round behind the Speaker, or the altar, those of the one side joining those of the other. The famous 1624 engraving of the House, which Dr. Hastings reproduces on page 130, shows Members thus seated all round the Speaker in a U-formation. Wren in his time made it his business still further to conceal the ecclesiastical and, as he thought, barbaric origins of the Chamber, and Wyatt, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, though he introduced a certain amount of pseudo-Gothic, at the same time destroyed much that was genuinely Gothic and certainly did nothing to remind people that here had once been a chapel. Sir George Hayter's painting of the House in 1833—the last painting of the old House ever made—again shows Members seated in the U-formation and some of them seated behind the Speaker.

So up till the fire of 1834 it may be said in comment on Dr. Hastings' argument that neither was there a two-party system nor was there a two-party seating—in the full modern sense. But to say this is by no means to say that Dr. Hastings' argument is not both enormously interesting and enormously important. As he truly brings out, the fire happened by accident to come at a time when the Gothic revival was in fashion—at a time when people liked secular buildings to be built in a pseudo-ecclesiastical style. There was no

promoters and recently exhibited a hundred of the designs, described these entries as surprising and gratifying and pointed out how few traditional motifs were submitted. Very few entrants began with an early American or flower design, and where they did soon developed the design as a free abstract pattern of shapes and colours. Names of the winners are as follows: first—Leroy Wolfe, Chicago; second—Nancy Carlson, Thorndale, Pennsylvania; third—Sister Mary Remy, Chicago.

WORLD

HOUSING EXPERIMENT IN BARBADOS

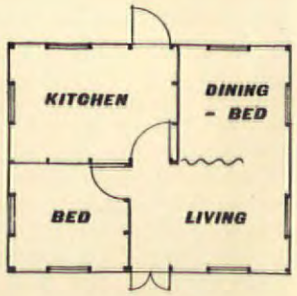
Imported softwood from Canada or the United States is the traditional material for small house building in Barbados. However, there are many objections to its use: it is no longer cheap, its purchase is a drain on dollar resources from the sterling area and a house requires major replacement after five years because the soft timbers are so readily attacked by termites. In spite of all these objections there is a reluctance to give it up. Tradition is strong and change not readily accepted. Sentimental attachment is reinforced by the strong importing and distributing industry, the owners of which recognize a threat to their business if alternatives are found. Opposition to alternatives is usually on the grounds of cost and to collect factual evidence on this the Architectural and Planning Department of the Government of Barbados recently carried out an investigation into costs of traditional and some alternative new methods of house construction.

This is a new house built in the traditional manner by the owner who had assistance in labour and transport. It is propped on random lumps of stone and the timber is left untreated against ants. It cost the owner 14s. per square foot.

Next shows the condition that such houses fall into after a very few years; it is typical of housing all over the island. An earth pit is dug within the curtilage of the property, probably not fenced or hedged from its neighbour. Water supply is provided free in stand-pipes which may be anything up to four hundred yards away from the house. It is carried home in a pail on the head.

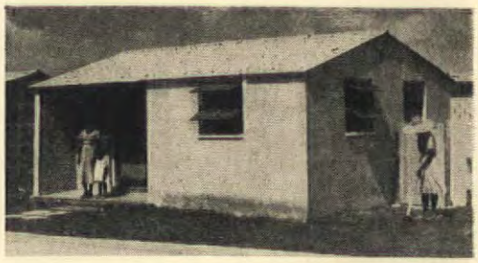
The investigation carried out by the Department of the Government Architect and Planning Officer at the Pine Estate (illustrated on pp. 285–287) in 1949-50 covered timber, coral-limestone and a prefabricated system based on a material which uses waste fibre from the sugar industry.

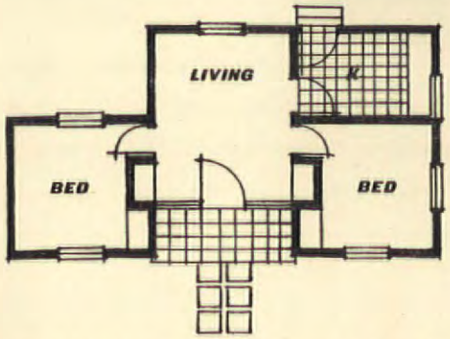
Timber If the Government were to use timber for subsidized housing, a proper foundation would have to be provided and the timber would have to be treated against termite attack. Photo and plan



show the timber house built at the Pine Estate provided with adequate foundations and dwarf walls and painted. Its cost was 18s. per square foot.

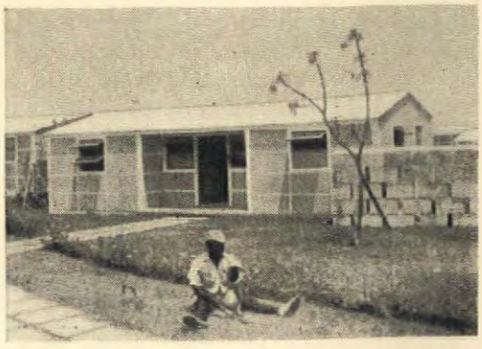
Coral-limestone This material is an obvious first alternative as the island is of coral formation exposing the stone over nine-tenths of its area. Coral-limestone was used for the first 38 houses built at the Pine Estate. As their standard is much higher, the cost of these cannot be taken for comparison with the prefabricated houses. The limestone house, top, next column, was, however, built to the same





plan and standards as the prefabricated house. (The reason why this plan was not used for the timber house is that it is not a 'timber plan.' The plan is a slight variation on the traditional plan and provides a much better cost for comparison.) The limestone house cost 15s. per square foot.

Megcrete is the name given to the prefabricated system using units made from *megasse*, the waste fibre from the sugar industry. Unlike timber, buildings constructed with this system are permanent and ant-proof. The dimensions of the prefabricated unit are 3 feet 6 inches by 1 foot 9 inches by 5 inches. These units as well as pre-cast concrete door frames, window frames and purlins are manufactured in a factory, transported to the site in house loads and erected. Pre-cast door frames, window frames and purlins show a saving over a similar timber product of 30-50 per cent. The units, by reason of having a finished wall surface inside and out, show a corresponding saving over other forms of walling, but as well as the saving in material, the method of construction gives considerable reductions in labour costs. A four roomed



house is erected from a prepared foundation to purlin level, including all door frames and window frames, in three and a half days. A complete house, above, and

park-starved neighbourhoods further afield. What other considerations—the need of space for new houses and schools even—can possibly weigh against a decision to hang on, for the benefit of the whole of London, to this miraculously surviving endowment from a more spacious age?

O.L.

TRIM

ECONOMY OF MEANS

Of all the devices that clutter up the average townscape, the vestigial fence *is perhaps the one that could be most easily done without.* In nine hundred and ninety-nine cases in the thousand it has neither effectiveness nor beauty in its favour. Set up by the tidy-minded, it defeats their purpose by itself becoming an object of squalor, like the pathetic bent wire affair in 1, opposite; against extraneous litter it offers no protection at all, as 2 shows only too well. But if we are not to have a vestigial fence where a fence proper will not do, what then? The answer is duosyllabic: Whitewash. Of course whitewash won't keep the litter out—not in any physical way; but in psychological effect well-kept whitewash is a great incitement to orderliness. And visually it is just right: it makes a neat job of a job in which neatness counts for nearly everything. So here, 3, 4 and 5, are some good examples of whitewash used to define edges on Long Island, USA. But when so used it should be allowed to speak for itself, as it perfectly well can. Don't insult it with a redundant chain, as in 6.

SCULPTURE

THE RETURN OF SYMBOLISM

In sculpture formalism is in full retreat: symbolism is on the way back. Even the symbolism of classical mythology is showing a disposition to venture forth from the salons and Royal Academies, where it has skulked for so long, into the light of common day.

The figure on the opposite page is a case in point. The sculptor was Louis Leygue, who carved the war memorial figure at Nantua (illustrated in the REVIEW of May 1950). It is Triptolemus, who (as it will probably be necessary to remind amateurs of sculpture for a year or two yet) was sent out to till the whole world. Ceres gave him an ear of corn and a chariot drawn by two serpents, and he still keeps the corn and the serpents. His chariot, however, is now a tractor; and perhaps this is the first time the rigid posture of the tractor driver perched up on his vibrating machine with his gaze fixed on the far headland—as characteristic of our century as the man astride a horse was of others—has been adequately celebrated in art. In sheet iron, to be precise, beaten when hot and oxy-acetylene welded, while the serpents are of wrought iron.

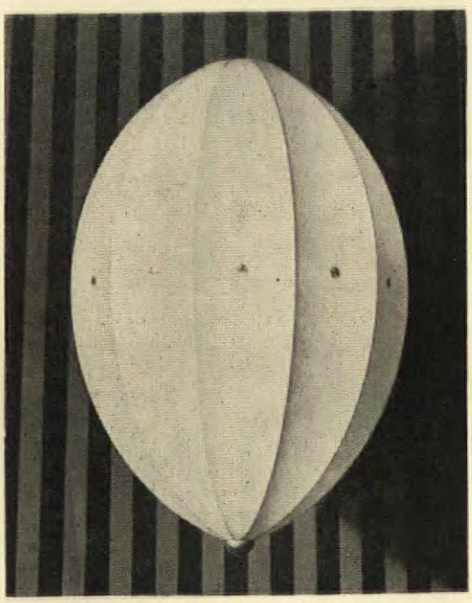
A.H.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

CHRYSALINE LAMPSHADES

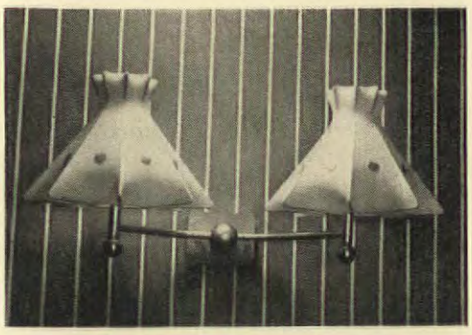
The liquid plastic which is sprayed on to guns and battleships to protect them during storage can also be sprayed on to a wire frame to make a domestic lampshade. The frame is revolved at speed and the plastic (chrysaline) which comes out of the spray-gun as a thin spider's web wraps itself round the frame like a cocoon. As it drys it shrinks and forms a concave curved surface. When dry it is waterproof and fireproof and acts as an excellent diffuser of light. The process makes possible shapes, double curvatures for instance, hitherto unobtainable with the use of conventional materials.

A material as adaptable as this is most suitable for seafront lighting and similar outdoor illumination. One of the first attempts at this use of chrysaline consists of some over life-size swans which it is intended to float on one of the Battersea lakes in a small group, trailing their own



underwater cables, lit up by night and casting reflections on the dark water.

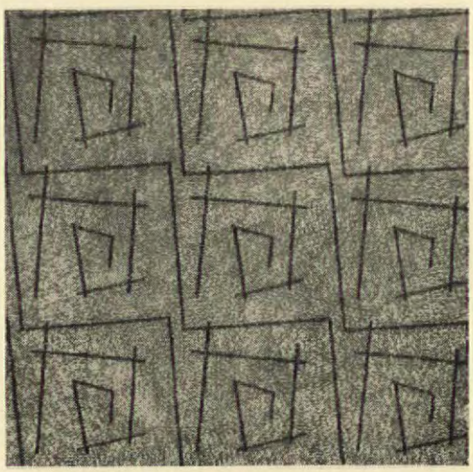
Some light fittings of this material are planned for the South Bank Exhibition, and at the Poplar Live Architecture Exhibition the VIP reception lounge will have a table-lamp and floor standard lamp with



shades similar in design to that illustrated above. The designer is Beverly Pick.

CARPET COMPETITION

Student designers won first, second and third places in a national competition for carpet designs held recently at Detroit. It is interesting to note that no well-known professional designer received even an honourable mention. The winning design is shown



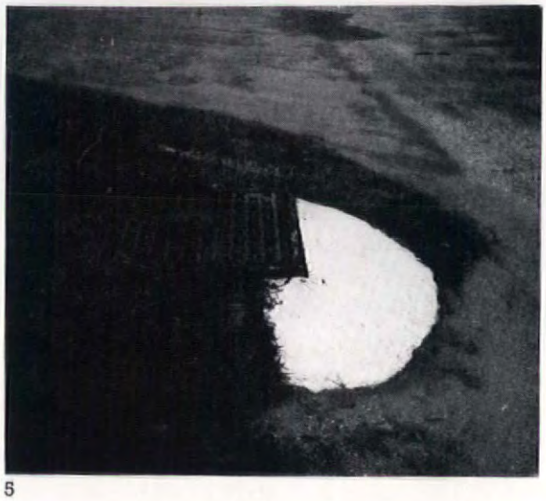
above, the second below. The promoters, a firm of carpet manufacturers, hoped by their competition to infuse new life and draw new talent into what they felt had become one of the most stagnant fields of industrial design. The Director of the Detroit Institute of Arts which assisted the

1

2

3

4



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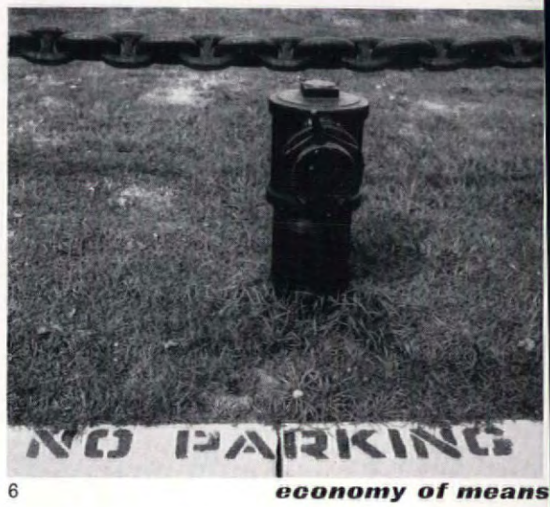


6

economy of means

return of symbolism

Dotted line indicates half-mile distance from Holland House which is printed in solid green. Numbers indicate Underground Stations: 1, Kensington High St.; 2, Notting Hill Gate; 3, Addison Rd.; 4, Uxbridge Rd.

built rib-and-matchboard style with carved porch-boards and pieces of carving between the chamfered ribs. Inside, the roof is lined with a patterned chenille stretched over the framing immediately beneath the canvas. These vans have a rather dark interior due to the absence of side windows but for comfort, lightness and durability combined they are unequalled by any other type.

V, FOUR-WHEELED TILTED POT-CART This is an elaborately built 'boat-shaped' cart fitted with a detachable canvas tilt. The sides of some of the older makes are built of open-work spindle framing, but those made in recent years have solid rib-and-matchboard sides. Like a living-wagon the pot-cart has a pan-box and spindle cratch at the back. The hood or tilt is of heavy canvas on a bowed wood frame slotted into the sides of the cart, and there is a detachable matchboard back with a small window in it. There are

no interior fittings; pot-carts are used by gypsies in conjunction with tents and living-wagons for extra sleeping accommodation and for carrying provisions and gear.

Denis E. Harvey

INDOOR PLANTS

CISSUS STRIATA

Cissus striata *is one of the most attractive of this family of recent immigrants from Scandinavia.* It has finely cut, smaller leaves than *Cissus antarctica* and is an evergreen climber. The cissus are, like their relatives the vines, tendril climbers, and are sometimes known as Kangaroo Vines or Cape Grapes. Their

flowers, which are inconspicuous, are yellowish in many-flowered cymes opposite the leaves and their grapes, the size of small peas.

Cissus striata is propagated by 2-3 noded cuttings at any time of the year, and needs bottom heat and abundant water. It is best grown in a light general purpose potting soil and should have constant moisture at the roots. The plant can be placed in an east or west window, and generally likes a cool, light situation.

This variety of cissus is unfortunately susceptible to red spider, that animated grain of red pepper, for which the best antidote is forceful spraying with rain water.

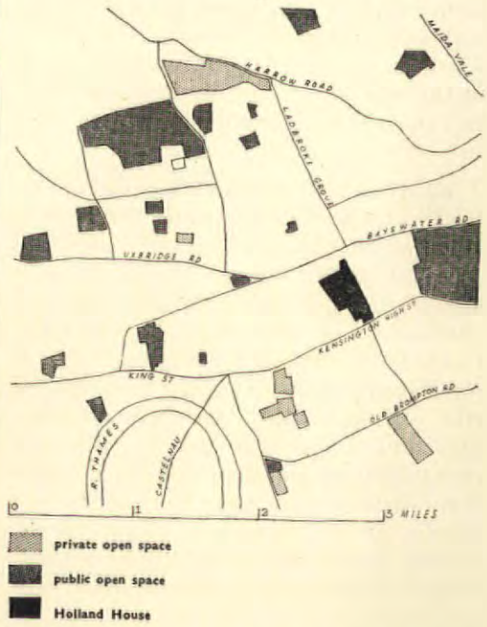
H. F. Clark

TOWN PLANNING

HOLLAND HOUSE

There remains one piece of thickly timbered parkland in London, sadly diminished since the eighteenth century yet still considerable, the grounds of Holland House. A hundred years ago they stretched from the Oxford road (Holland Park Avenue) on the north, to High Street, Kensington, on the south, and extended eastward as far as the present railway line. In Victorian times the south-east corner was cut into first by Addison Road, then by Holland Road and its adjacent cross-streets and at the end of the century, first by the æsthetic development of Melbury Road and later by that first swallow of the six-storey apartment block summer to come, Oakwood Court. In recent times this section has been further reduced by the appearance of Melbury Court, on the High Street frontage, and Ilchester Place behind Oakwood Court. What remains, however, is still by urban standards vast.

It is not, however, so much their extent but their arboreal character which makes the retention of Holland House so vitally important. Open spaces are not parks and so no matter how many of these are contemplated or laid out they will prove but inadequate substitutes for many years to come: even if they were opened and planted tomorrow, few people now living would ever see them in the same light as Kensington Gardens or Battersea. But here, situated in the heart of residential London, exists a beautifully landscaped fully grown area, capable of considerable extension by taking in some of the smaller, but still large, gardens that adjoin it on the slopes of Campden Hill, and which are already mostly used for public purposes. Moreover,



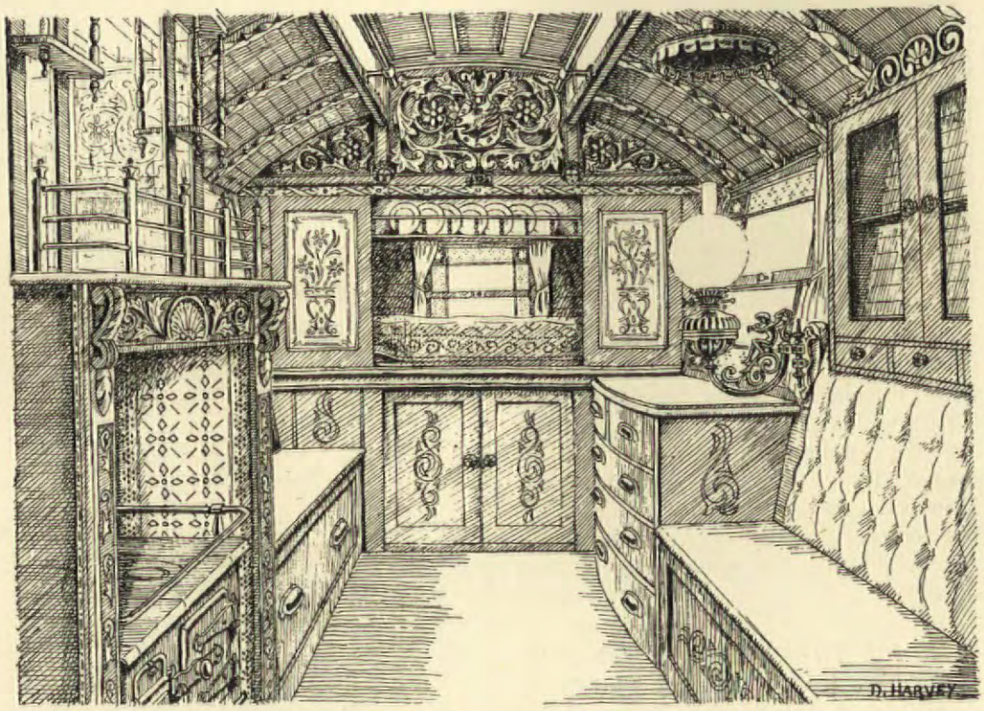
Holland House is close at hand for the appalling slums of Notting Dale and N. London (than which the East End can show none worse). As the map above demonstrates these areas are further removed from Kensington Gardens than the majority of similar districts are from their nearest park. The airview on the facing page shows how easily accessible the gardens of Holland House would be, not only for the neighbourhoods surrounding it, but also by Underground and bus, for

POPULAR ART

ENGLISH GYPSY WAGONS

There are five distinct types of gypsy wagon in use on the roads today: the Reading wagon, the Showman wagon, the Ledge or Cottage wagon, the Bow-topped wagon and the four-wheeled tilted pot-cart. With the exception of the pot-cart these types have certain exterior features in common and the interiors conform to a set pattern. The typical gypsy living-wagon is a one-roomed house on four high wheels with a door, shafts and movable steps in front, sash-type windows at the back and sides, a back rack called the 'cratch' for carrying tents, peg-wood and domestic articles, and a pan-box which is fixed under the van at the back and used generally as larder and kitchen cupboard. Inside the wagon on the left is a narrow wardrobe cupboard, a boxed-in fireplace with airing cupboard above and a locker-seat under the window. On the right is a corner cupboard for china, another locker-seat and a chest of drawers, the top of which serves as a table. Across the back of the wagon is a two-berthed bed-place and above it the rear window.

I, READING WAGON Originally built by the Dunton family at Reading, this is probably the oldest type of van and is generally accepted as the 'gypsy shape.' It is a straight-sided wagon with a pronounced outward slope from floor to roof. The body, built of beaded tongue-and-groove matchboarding with upright chamfered ribs, is slung between tall wheels. It has a high arched roof built usually with concealed gutters and a clerestory skylight. Some of these vans made to order for rich gypsies are veritable palaces on wheels, lavishly carved and gilded inside and out. Poorer travellers have to be content with



vans where the carving is limited to the front and rear porch-brackets, but the basic design of a Reading van is always the same with sloping walls and wheels outside the body. The drawing above shows one of the more elaborate interiors of this type of van.

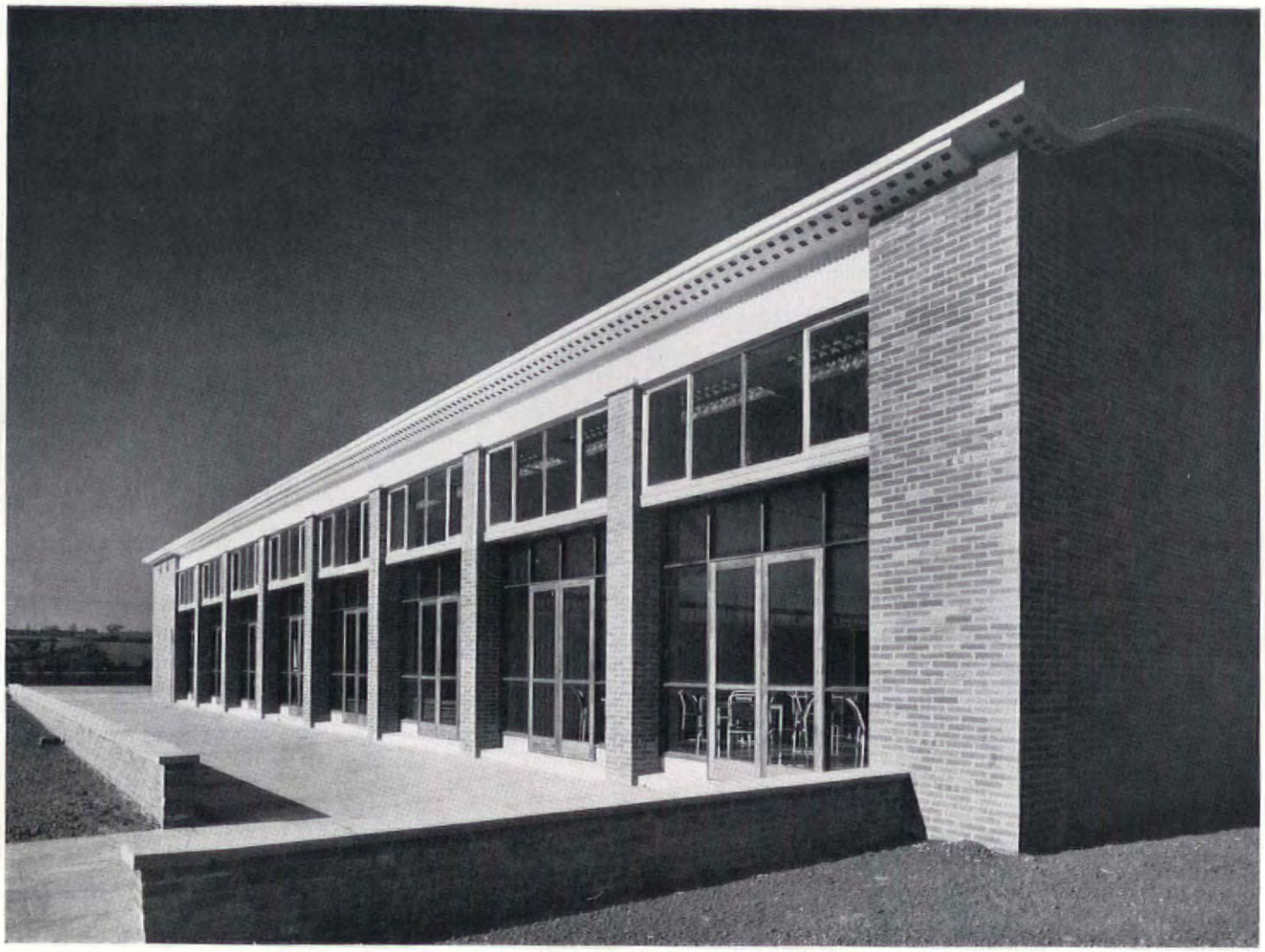
II, SHOWMAN OR BURTON WAGON This is perhaps the type most commonly seen on the roads today, and was made by

nearly all the recognized builders throughout the country. It is a straight-sided van with wheels under the body. The walls may be either panelled or of rib and matchboard build like the Reading, but they never slope out more than two inches. The roof, which always has gutters and a skylight, has a flatter arch than that of the Reading van. The most ornate wagons of this type are panelled front, back and sides, with elaborately carved oak plaques fixed to each panel.

III, LEDGE OR COTTAGE WAGON This wagon has a narrow base with upright sides, but from a point about 18 in. from the floor the body is built out on ledges over the wheels to a width similar to that of the Reading wagon. The

ledges are reinforced by scrolling brass supports which rest on projecting cross-beams at floor level. The matchboarding of the side walls projects front and back and is cut to form the porch-brackets which are decorated with pieces of carving, usually gilded, and strengthened by a thin iron brace curved to the shape of the brackets.

IV, THE BOW-TOPPED WAGON, also called the Midland, Leeds, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, Bell and Barrel-topped wagon, is built with ledges like a Cottage wagon, but has a round canvas top on a bowed wood frame. The front and back walls are



5

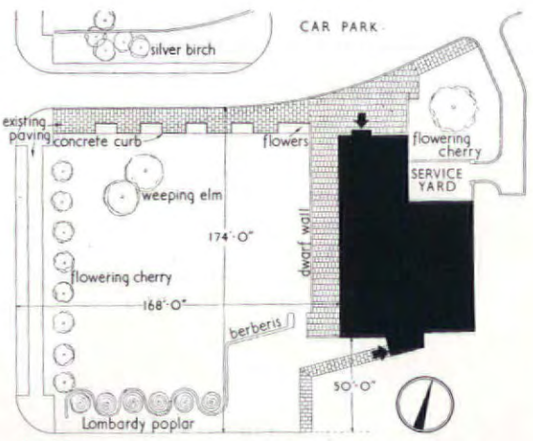
West elevation.

CANTEEN AT WEST AUCKLAND, DURHAM

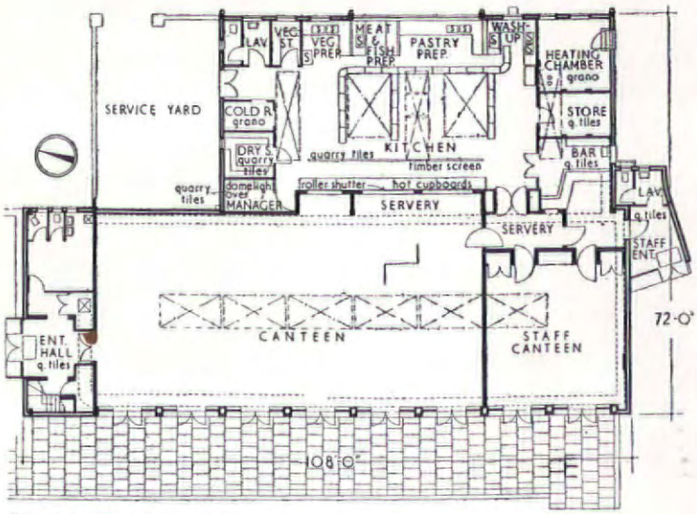
ARCHITECTS: NAPPER AND TAYLOR

This canteen for the North Eastern Trading Estates seats 200 people, provides meals on a self-service basis and can be used for social functions.

The restricted bearing capacity of the ground necessitated reinforced foundations and intermediary columns in the length of the barrel. Shortage of steel dictated the form of construction. Floors are concrete, external walls are 11-inch cavity brick and internal walls 4½-inch and 9-inch brick. The roof is of shell concrete covered with mineral surfaced felt lined with ½-inch building board. Sills, lintels, transomes, coping and frame to north entrance are of artificial stone, window frames are of metal. Entrance doors are teak. Walls are finished with sand-faced yellow bricks, external concrete surfaces are painted white. Square counter-sinkings in the eaves soffit are painted deep blue. Internal finishes of walls are plaster painted grey, partition wall buff with vertical white stripes.



site plan



floor plan scale 1/32 in. = 1 ft.

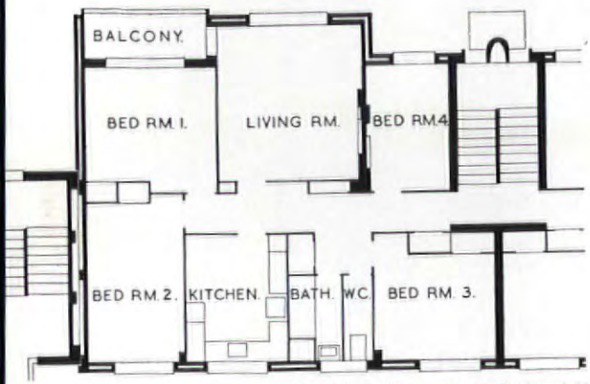
6

The staff canteen.

FLATS IN WILTSHIRE CLOSE, CHELSEA

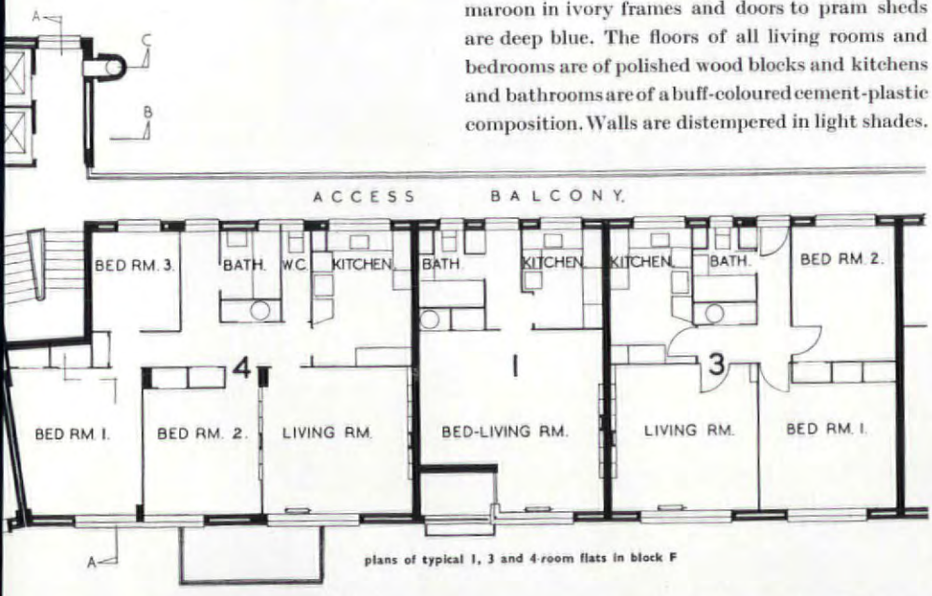
ARCHITECT: EDWARD ARMSTRONG

This, the second major housing development completed for the Borough of Chelsea since the war, consists of 214 flats for 986 persons. The site has a gross area of 3½ acres, originally consisting of seven separate island sites intersected by short streets. Owing to high land values the Council were permitted a density of 256 persons per acre but zoning restrictions limited the building to a height of 60 feet.



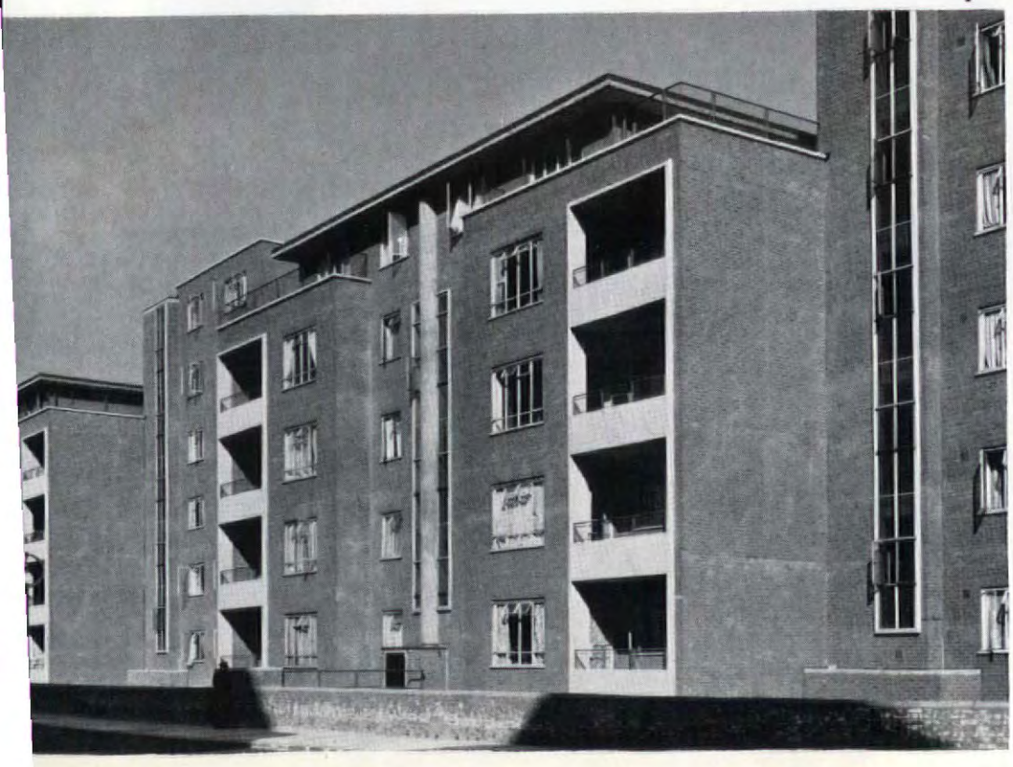
plan of typical 5-room flat, blocks A1 and A2

Construction is of reinforced concrete frame with cavity brick panel walls, reinforced concrete floors and roof slabs with cantilevered balconies. Partition walls are of 2-inch hollow tiles. The windows, which are standard steel casements in wood surrounds, and balcony railings are painted ivory colour. Entrance doors to flats are maroon in ivory frames and doors to pram sheds are deep blue. The floors of all living rooms and bedrooms are of polished wood blocks and kitchens and bathrooms are of a buff-coloured cement-plastic composition. Walls are distempered in light shades.



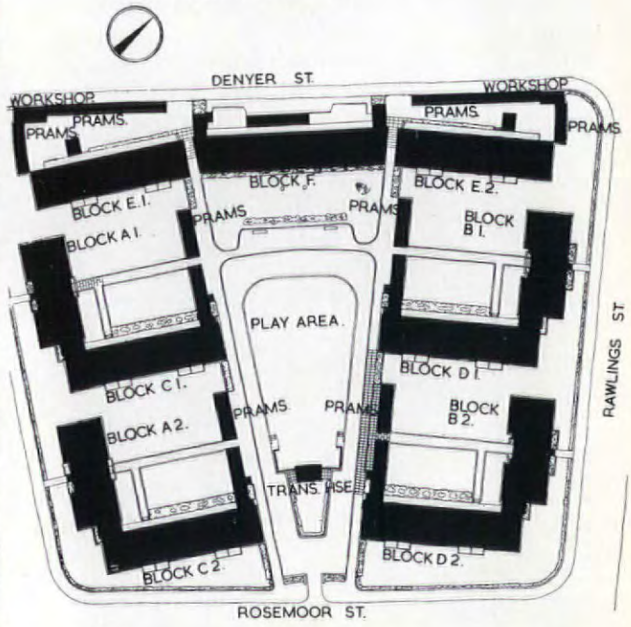
plans of typical 1, 3 and 4-room flats in block F

3



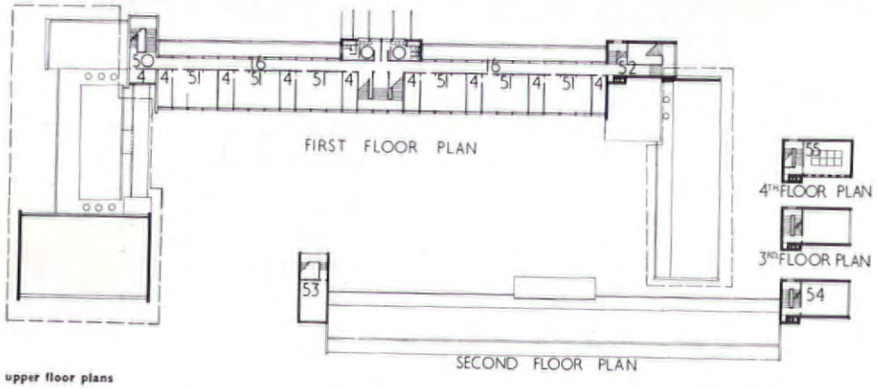
4

3, *blocks* E2, F *and* E1, *looking south-west.* 4, *blocks* A1 *and* A2 *looking north, showing set back end walls of blocks* C1 *and* C2.

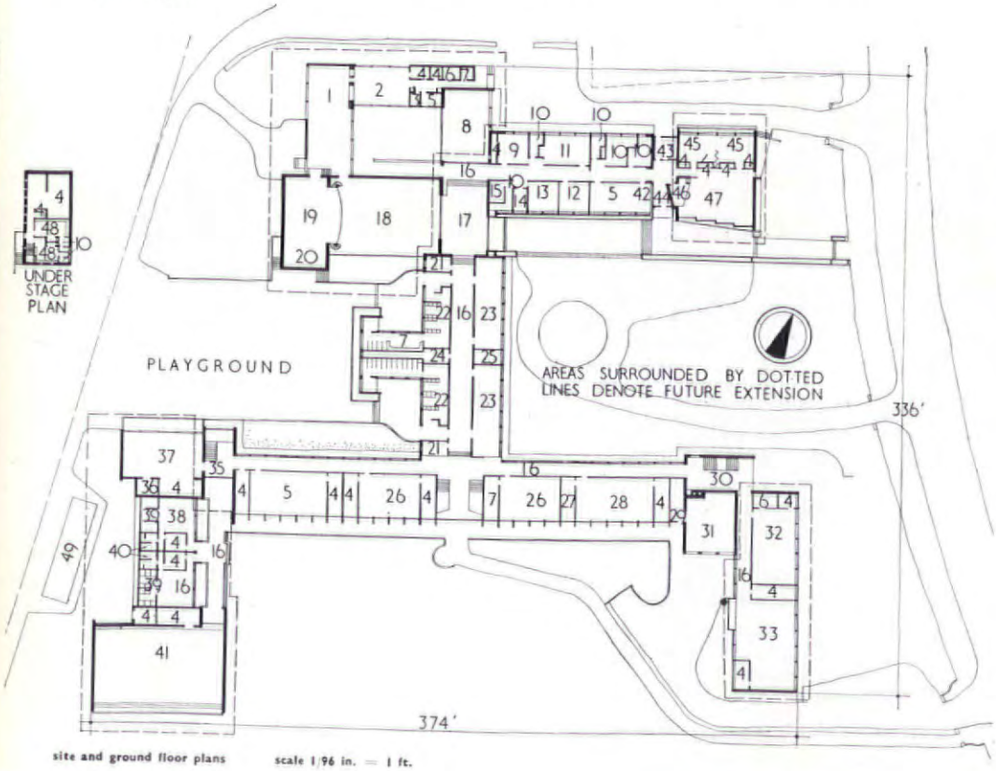


site plan

Classroom wings from the south-west.



upper floor plans



site and ground floor plans scale 1/96 in. = 1 ft.

SCHOOL AT CHIGWELL, ESSEX

ARCHITECT: H. CONOLLY

A two-form entry secondary modern school was required for a nearby housing estate, with facilities for evening adult education. As the site is bounded on the east by the new main estate road, and on the west by Central Line underground railway, the need to screen the teaching rooms from the noise of the railway and the road was a very important planning consideration.

Except for the tank towers, which have load-bearing brick walls, the construction is steel frame. The external cladding is mostly of hand-made sand-faced primrose facing bricks and concrete slabs. To deaden noise foamed slag screed was laid on floors and absorbent wall and ceiling finishes were used where possible. The first floor corridor was finished in strip rubber with an underlay of impregnated felt. As a result, when teaching is in progress in each room, and music being played in a general purpose room, nothing of this is heard in the classroom wing. Where excessive wear will be met wall panels are finished in hard plaster with cement glaze finish. Elsewhere a lime sand (ungauged) plaster has been used. Metal windows are white; metal cills and mullions are grey; fascias, sun baffles, etc., are jasmine yellow.

key

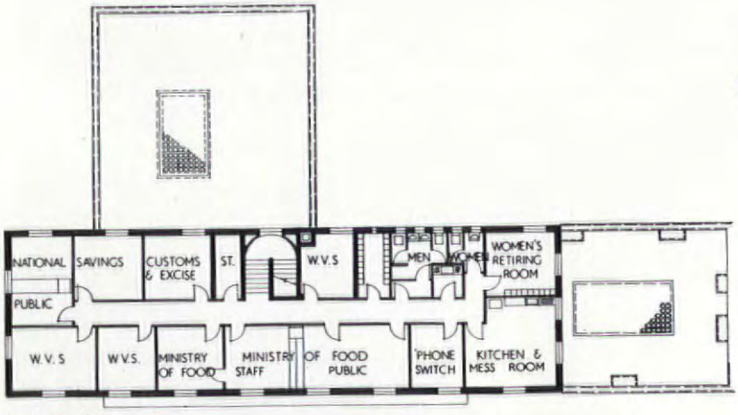
1. dining room.
2. kitchen.
3. office.
4. store.
5. staff room.
6. larder.
7. w.c.
8. library.
9. waiting room.
10. lavatory.
11. M.I. room.
12. headmistress.
13. headmaster.
14. secretary.
15. meter room.
16. corridor.
17. crush hall.
18. assembly hall.
19. stage.
20. scene deck.
21. drying room.
22. ablutions.
23. cloakroom.
24. cleaners.
25. caretaker.
26. G.P. room.
27. science preparation.
28. science laboratory.
29. pump room.
30. E. tower entrance hall.
31. boiler house.
32. housecraft.
33. handicraft room.
34. handcraft.
35. W. staircase hall.
36. pottery kiln.
37. art room.
38. changing room.
39. showers.
40. instructor.
41. gymnasium.
42. warden.
43. servery.
44. adult education entrance.
45. discussion room.
46. platform.
47. lecture room.
48. green room.
49. cycle shed.
50. W. tower landing.
51. classroom.
52. E. tower landing.
53. prefects' room.
54. study group.
55. tank room.

current architecture

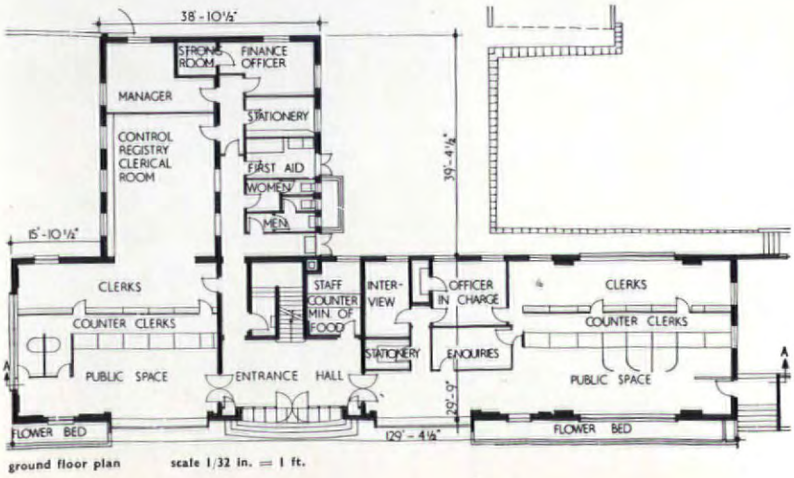
a revival of a pre-war feature. To supplement the detailed illustration of outstanding new buildings, recent buildings of interest are here briefly illustrated.

1

View from the south.



first floor plan



ground floor plan scale 1/32 in. = 1 ft.

OFFICES AT RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS

ARCHITECT : G. W. POLLARD

The new combined Government offices building designed in the Chief Architect's Office, Ministry of Works, provides accommodation for the Ministries of Labour, National Insurance, Food and Health. The ground floor consists mainly of two large public reception rooms for the Ministries of Labour and National Insurance with a common entrance hall. The public reception spaces contain counters and private interview cubicles separated by screens 5 feet high.

Walls are 11-inch cavity load-bearing brickwork supporting hollow tile floors and partition walls. The roof is also of hollow tile construction. The walls are faced with 2⅝-inch hand-made dark multi-facings, generally brown in colour. The pointing is struck off flush and is buff coloured. The roof is covered with sanded roofing felt on lightweight concrete screed with a cork overlay. The floors have a thick lightweight screed concealing telephone ducts, electric conduits, etc. The windows have reconstructed stone linings with moulded jambs. Internally, the large public rooms have silver grey walls with a terrazzo dado and ceilings and windows ivory coloured. The floors are finished with grey-blue tiles and the doors are painted blue. The counters and screens are constructed of grey plastic with dark brown tops. Heating is by low-pressure hot water in embedded panels concealed in the ceilings.

Moorish, Italianate and Adamesque

One would think that any client familiar with 'Lyndhurst' would demand a Gothic design, but for business men who shook their heads at Tudor towers, Davis was ready with alternatives. The Moorish palace he planned for Senator Archer, of Virginia, has disappeared, but one of his finest Italian villas, the home in Brooklyn of the railroad magnate E. C. Litchfield, is still to be seen in Prospect Park (23), and his most magnificent Italian design, the Dix Hill Insane Asylum at Raleigh, North Carolina, is yet serving its original purpose (24).

Should a client be so perverse as to frown at the prospect of an Italian villa after having denied the beauty of a home in the Grecian, Gothic, and Moorish styles, Davis as a last resort could always compose in the Adamesque manner, which he did when asked by the widow of Edward Livingston to remodel 'Montgomery Place,' one of the ancient seats of the Livingston family in Dutchess County, New York (25).

23

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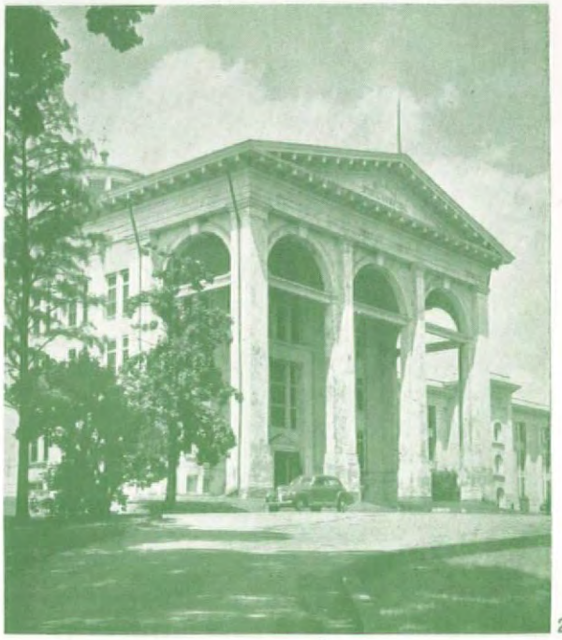

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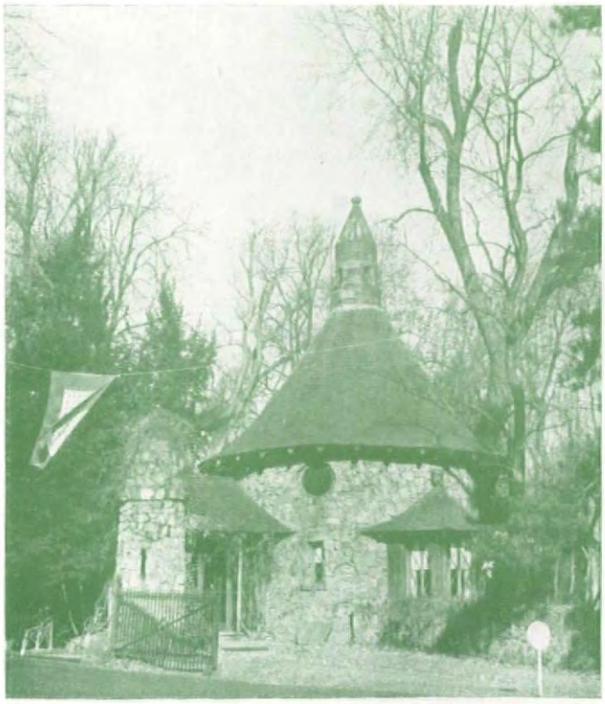

26

Cottage Orné

Probably no patron appreciated the architect's aims as fully as the wholesale druggist Llewellyn P. Haskell, who prevailed upon Davis in 1857 to create the rustic gate lodge for Llewellyn Park, a real estate development in West Orange, New Jersey (26), which proposed to exploit with discretion the wild nature of the Orange Mountains. It was in Llewellyn Park that Davis built his own home, a Gothic cottage vanished many years ago; here he retired; here, once American taste turned against the Romantic Movement, he spent his mornings rambling in the woods, his afternoons re-reading Gothic novels, and his evenings scribbling in his diary.

Gothic in New England

15

16

In New England, where most of Davis's clients made their homes, the Gothic yield is even richer. Though 'Whitby,' the suburban villa at Rye, New York, of William P. Chapman (15), has been slightly injured by an unfortunate addition to suit the golf club now occupying the premises, the tiny cottage of the banker Henry Delamater, at Rhinebeck in the Hudson River Valley (16), is unharmed and so, despite a minor alteration, is the town house in New Bedford, Massachusetts, of the whaling capitalist William J. Rotch (17). Much more splendid than these three, and altogether remarkable for its original interiors, is 'Walnut Wood,' the residence in Bridgeport, Connecticut, of the leather merchant H. K. Harral (18–20). Here one may marvel at two splendid parlours reflecting the taste of the reign of Louis-Philippe, parlours made most poignant by the statuary in the Grecian style of Chauncey B. Ives, and then pass on to room after room fitted out in the most ardent Gothic, ending one's visit with a glance at the oriental billiard room.

'Walnut Wood' fulfilled so well the Gothic requirements of the business man of the time that it was not in the least surprising that Davis was called to Newport in 1848 to build the elegant Prescott Hall, a villa from the ruins of the home of the eighteenth century trader Godfrey Malbone (21). 'Malbone,' as the Hall mansion came to be known, is a handsome example, handsomely maintained, of Davis in the baronial mood, yet it can scarcely be compared with 'Lyndhurst,' the estate in Tarrytown, New York, of the merchant William Paulding (22). A miracle to begin with, 'Lyndhurst' was so tantalizing an achievement in asymmetry, once Davis completed the additions required by later owners, that it must be accounted his masterpiece. Unfortunately, no definitive photographs exist of 'Lyndhurst,' and none can be taken so long as it remains the property of Anna, Duchess of Talleyrand.

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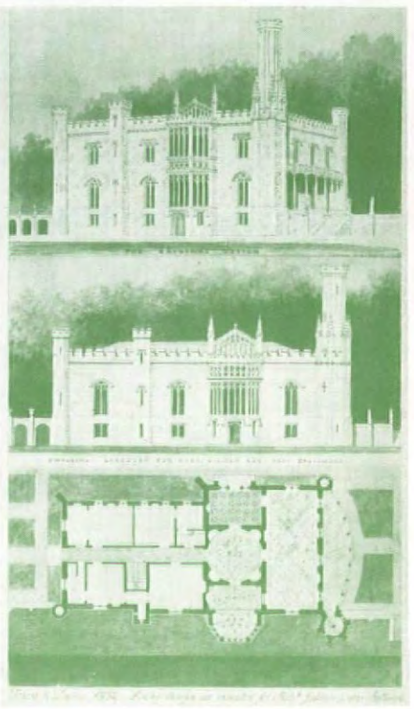

10

The Gothic Mood

Davis may have rejoiced in the proportions of the North Carolina capitol, but it is doubtful that he composed in the Grecian style with anything like the fervour which seized him in the act of sketching a battlement; the Gothic was ever closer to his temperament, and it was in the Gothic style he designed the formidable building of New York University on Washington Square, a pile torn down many years ago, but which still torments the imagination in the grand allegorical fantasy of the Square painted by Samuel F. B. Morse. Equally Gothic, if not equally dramatic, was 'Murray Hill,' the town house of W. H. C. Waddell (8), and 'The House of Mansions,' a row for the corner of Forty-Second Street and Fifth Avenue, both of which are missing from the New York of 1948. Bolder than either of these was 'Ericstan,' the baronial home at Tarrytown of the flour merchant J. J. Herrick (9), which has only recently been pulled down. Far subtler was 'Glen Ellen,' the country house at Towson, Maryland, of Robert Gilmor (10), a young gentleman whose leisure had been graced by a visit to Abbotsford. Abandoned in after years by the Gilmor family, 'Glen Ellen' sank in our time into a ruin, the last vestiges of which are now all but obliterated.

11

But one must not imagine that no traces remain of Davis's Gothic triumphs. If 'Belmead,' the James River estate of the planter Philip Saint George Cocke (11) —now in use as the headquarters of Saint Emma's, a Roman Catholic school for Negroes—survives, outraged by the loss of its umbrage or porch, the greatest care has been taken to preserve Davis's intentions in nearby Lexington, where not only the cadets of the Virginia Military Institute, but three members of the faculty and their families as well, dwell in a battlemented setting (12 and 13). And in Lexington, Kentucky, a thousand miles to the west, the Tudor mansion of attorney F. K. Hunt has been saved from destruction by being turned into a community centre (14).

12

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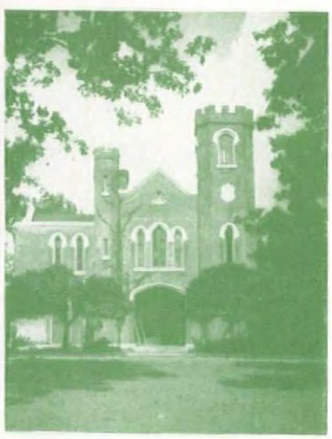

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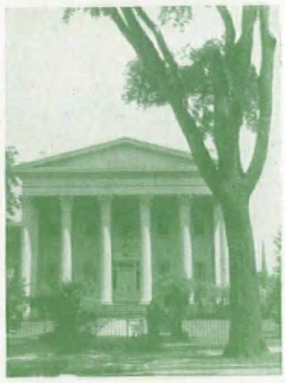

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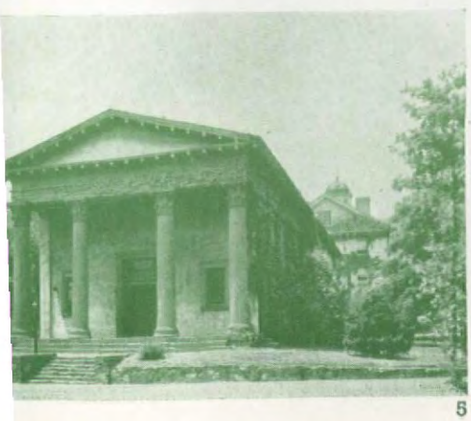
The Grecian Mood

Possibly Davis was already meditating on this approach to the Greek Revival when he designed his first house, the Ionic villa commanded in 1828 by the New Haven poet James Abraham Hillhouse (1), for his drawings were for a larger mansion than actually executed. Unfortunately, thanks to the indifference of the trustees of Yale University, the Hillhouse residence has recently been demolished, and we are not always able to ascertain, in the case of other buildings erected when the partnership of Town & Davis was in effect, which design was the work of which member of the firm.

If Davis is to be credited with the details of the Corinthian mansion in Middletown, Connecticut, of the Hong Kong trader Samuel Russell, James Harrison Dakin (2), who joined Town & Davis before setting up his own office in New Orleans, may well have had a hand in the creation of La Grange Terrace, the long row of Corinthian houses still standing in part on Lafayette Street, New York (3). Typical of the confusion which greets the historian is the haze surrounding the execution of the Doric Sub-Treasury on Wall Street (4). This building, known today as the Old Custom House, was erected to the designs of Town & Davis, but with the collaboration of the sculptor John Frazee and the advice of William Ross, an English architect who happened to be in New York at the time.

It seems evident, however, that under Davis's influence the works of the firm in the Attic manner were at once too charming to be archæological, and too sensible to belong merely to the world of make-believe. The Old Library of the University of North Carolina (5), now used as the Playmakers' Theatre, which Davis alone conceived in 1850, is proof enough for the claim that he had much if not most to do with the graceful façade of the Ionic town house of Aaron Skinner in New Haven, dating from 1830 (6). As originally conceived, the wings of the Skinner house were of but one storey; the second was supposedly added by Henry Austin.

Moreover, since Davis in later years was summoned to be the consultant on the plans of three other architects for the capitol of Ohio, we may assume that he was more than partially responsible for the four state capitols by Town & Davis. The old Connecticut capitol at New Haven is no more, neither is the old capitol of Indiana, while the Illinois state house of Lincoln's time has been altered out of recognition; happily the capitol of North Carolina (7) is extant and undamaged. Executed with great care by the local superintendent of the works, David Patton, it is one of the nobler monuments of the romantic era.



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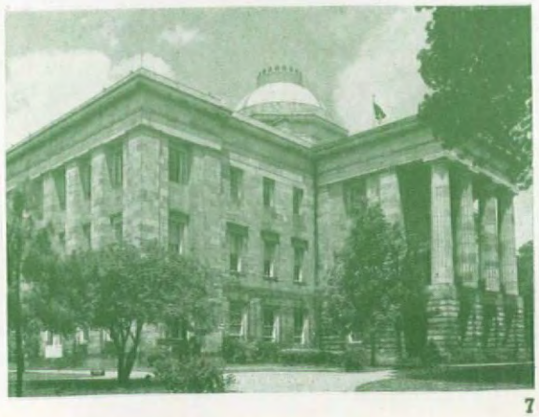


7

Church which he pronounced 'one of the best things in the city.' Then there was the Bank of England, 'a very extensive building and in many respects a fine one,' and the British Museum in its still incomplete state, where he and Samuel F. B. Morse whiled away a morning contemplating the Elgin Marbles. Above all, however, Town warmed to the kinship between English and American architecture. 'Many of the old churches seem like old acquaintances,' he reported.[3]

With Morse for a guide, Town went on to tour the galleries of Paris, only to reach the conclusion that 'the school of painting in England is far superior. How this should happen when there are so many more facilities in France, is a little to be wondered at.' Yet Paris was not unrewarding. The Pantheon was 'a more perfect specimen of architecture, especially the inside, than I had any idea of.' And he added: 'Great improvements are making in the Palais Royal, and such a splendid display of cheap shop fronts with large plate glass I believe is not to be seen anywhere else in the world.'[4]

In Italy, besides glancing at every art centre from Florence to Naples, Town paused in Milan to take in the Cathedral, whose façade he fancied was the noblest Gothic in Europe, dallied in Venice and Vicenza, where he hunted out the masterpieces of Palladio, and made a point of viewing the remains at Paestum. But he was at his happiest in Rome, where he joined Fenimore Cooper at a celebration of Washington's Birthday, and strolled again and again through St. Peter's. 'The inside,' he confessed to Davis, 'seems among works of art what the solar system is among works of nature.'[5]

Town was back in New York in six months' time, but not apparently because of any apprehension over the affairs of Town and Davis. In 1835 he retired to a Grecian villa in New Haven, emerging only once to toil at the drafting board—when Davis, in 1842, asked his help for a few months to lighten the ever-increasing load of commissions.

Left to himself, Davis became one of the most prolific architects of the nineteenth century, dashing off anything from a shop front to a state house for the hundreds of clients from Maine to Louisiana who either descended in person on his Wall Street office or harried him with mail orders. Since he rarely supervised his work, leaving the laborious details to local builders, he was almost never bothered by home owners fretting over construction costs. Yet these local contractors did by no means invariably damage the character of Davis's designs, and the quality of his executed work is on the whole as high or higher than any of his contemporaries, no mean achievement when one recalls the feats of his competitors. These were the years when Richard Upjohn was tempting Anglicans with churches now quaint, now awesome, when John Haviland was adorning our county seats with picturesque prisons both Gothic and Egyptian, when Isaiah Rogers was amazing our cities with the splendour of his Grecian hotels, when Robert Mills, ever the conservative, was housing government offices in sober classic monuments, when Thomas U. Walter, who leapt into fame as the favourite of the banker Nicholas Biddle, went on to reap even greater honours completing the Capitol in Washington, and when James Renwick, the only American architect to keep two steam yachts, planned gentle Grace Church, New York.

The measure of Davis's accomplishment is most accurately taken when one realizes that he alone, of all the architects of romantic America, came close to being an intimate of Andrew Jackson Downing, the critic usually supposed to have 'set' the styles in the 1840ies and '50ies. Even to make Downing's acquaintance was easier said than done; as one of his admirers observed, he was 'marked by the easy elegance and perfect *savoir-faire*' of the Escorial.

No doubt it was Downing's love of the Gothic past that drew him to Davis. Easily bored with the Greek Revival, Downing campaigned with such fervour for the Italian and Gothic styles that not a few businessmen came to feel they were meant for something nobler than a Doric colonnade. 'There is,' Downing reminded his readers, 'something wonderfully captivating in the idea of a battlemented castle, even to an apparently modest man, who thus shows to the world his unsuspected vein of personal ambition.' Only as an afterthought did Downing throw out a word of caution. '*Unless there is something of the castle in the man*, it is very likely, if it be like a real castle, to dwarf him to the stature of a mouse.'[6] As Downing went on to publish edition after edition of his treatises on landscape gardening and architecture, Davis went on to furnish most if not all of the illustrations for them.

If Downing had any fault to find with Davis, it was that he was occasionally too elaborate for the average home-builder. 'I find our people are foolishly frightened at a few crockets and finials,' he criticized one of the architect's designs.[7] Meantime the critic lived in dread that some other writer would 'take up' his favourite designer. 'I beg,' Downing wrote Davis in regard to a particularly fine drawing, 'you will not print it in the *Brother Jonathan*, or allow the editors of that or any other paper to write slang articles on taste in your name. I think it does you harm, and I do not hesitate to say this as I am sure you are aware how entirely I have always endeavoured, as far as it was in my humble way, to advance your professional interests.'[8]

Like many another celebrity, Davis was asked to dine at Downing's Gothic home in Newburgh, and perhaps he was one of the favoured few whose breakfast plate the critic heaped high with magnolias. Though Downing was never observed to laugh out loud, he was not above entertaining a guest, and was fond of springing unannounced from behind his Tudor bookcases, alarming those unfamiliar with the machinery of Gothic novels.

When, one summer afternoon in 1852, Downing died a hero in a steamboat fire on his beloved Hudson, Davis was so sure of his niche in the architectural world that he no longer needed puffing by any journalist no matter how distinguished. So versatile that he was the master of any style, whether Moorish, Italian, Grecian, or Gothic, he played with the past as gaily as John Nash, never trying to produce a faithful copy of any masterwork, but aiming above all at capturing the poetic symbols of dead worlds. He was, besides, a genius at massing, and behind his preference for asymmetrical designs was concealed a liking for freer plans than the Federal architects had ever dreamed of.

Even in a Grecian mood, Davis thought of the asymmetrical wants of a growing family. The Grecian style, he jotted down in one of his notebooks, 'affords an opportunity for additions which most Americans eventually require . . . additions as will not, as too commonly, increase or produce difformity.'[9] His success in the thirty years between Jackson's and Lincoln's inauguration was so inordinate, his practice so large and varied that when at last the revolution in taste came immediately after the Civil War and his artistic ideals were all of a sudden considered obsolete, he could hardly believe his senses. But while he was puzzled, he was not exasperated; for out of the profits from the years of grace he had saved a sufficient sum to guarantee the utter tranquillity of his mountain home in Llewellyn Park; at his ease in his library once the day's walking and reading was over, he set down in his notebooks exactly what he thought of the new trends in American architecture.

As one might imagine, Davis was not impressed with the achievements of the younger generation. 'The wretched character of the buildings in New York' was, he wrote, 'despicable and indicative of manners and morals.' Mullett's Post Office was no better than a 'costly, diseased courtesan,' a 'broken heap of littleness,' while Hunt's Lenox Library was only another instance of 'depraved architecture.' There were days when Davis sought out his own works with the desperation of a man eager to keep sane in a demented world. One July 4th he confessed he was comforted by the sight of a Doric success of 40 years before. 'Most beautiful was the moon,' he told his diary, 'reflected in the waters of the Bay, and shining on the Treasury Building. All other illumination poor. Procession of thousands, with torches, drums, and harsh music. All poor to the moon's quiet serenity, and the divine proportions of the Dorian shrine.'[10]

[3] Ithiel Town to A. J. Davis, October 21, 1829, Metropolitan Museum.

[4] Ithiel Town to A. J. Davis, January 12, 1830, Metropolitan Museum.

[5] Ithiel Town to A. J. Davis, May 20, 1830, Metropolitan Museum.

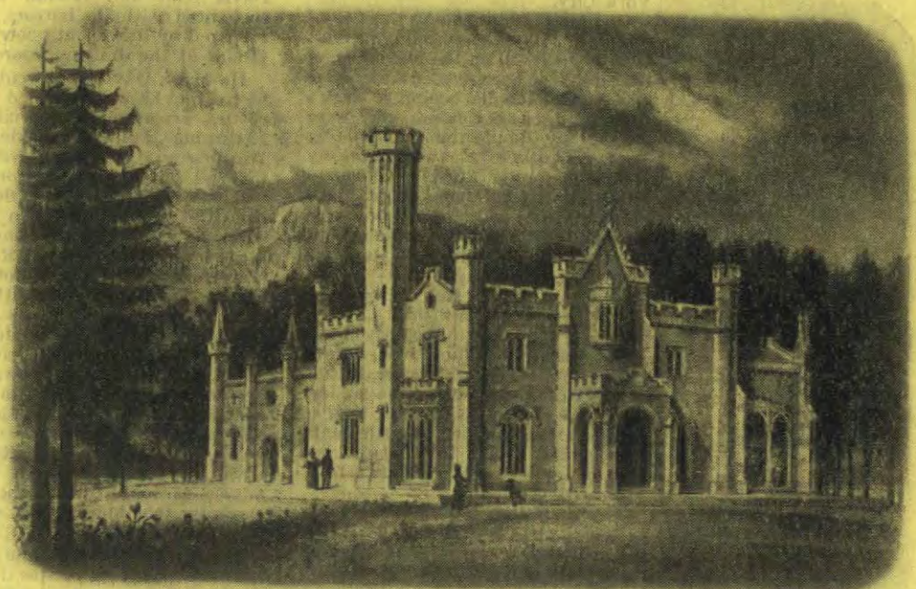
[6] Andrew Jackson Downing, *Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850, page 261.

[7] A. J. Downing to A. J. Davis, January 8, 1841, Metropolitan Museum.

[8] A. J. Downing to A. J. Davis, February 19, 1844, Metropolitan Museum.

[9] Undated entry in Diary, Metropolitan Museum.

[10] Diary, Metropolitan Museum, Entries for January 15, 1873, October 17, 1872, September 1, 1872, July 4, 1876.



An undated project for a residence in the English Collegiate Style on the Hudson River.

Alexander Jackson Davis in 1858

Wayne Andrews

Alexander Jackson Davis, the most versatile and perhaps the most imaginative of American architects in the years between 1825 and 1865, is not a discovery of Mr. Wayne Andrews. There is even a recent book on him, Mr. Roger Hale Newton's TOWN & DAVIS, ARCHITECTS, 1942. *But Mr. Andrews's assessment of Davis's style, character and importance differs considerably from Mr. Newton's, while in addition his documentation is wholly based on passages of the original letters not quoted by Mr. Newton. The photographs, nearly all of which were specially taken by the author who also provided the commentary to them, are mostly of hitherto unpublished buildings.*

ALEXANDER JACKSON DAVIS

NOT EVERY PIANIST is meant to die the death of Chopin; not every artist is meant to be misunderstood. Alexander Jackson Davis never outgrew a fondness for Gothic novels, yet succeeded so brilliantly in imposing his visions on the moneyed men of his time that he spent the last thirty-two of his eighty-nine years on earth in the most comfortable retirement conceivable—in a Gothic cottage of his own design set down on top of a modest but unmistakable mountain in the suburbs of New York City.

One might point to any number of reasons for Davis' astonishing success. One might dwell on the phenomenon that the same hard-headed Americans who stuck Melville behind a clerk's desk in a custom house and were accused by Baudelaire of hounding Poe to his untimely end were strangely willing to forgive flights of fancy in lath and plaster. Or one might make much of the fact that Davis was astute in settling down in New York City, taking advantage of its ever-increasing prosperity in the 1830ies, 40ies, and 50ies. But perhaps it would be safer to say that he owed his rise in the world to the doggedness with which he laboured to force into architectural form the darker dreams of the Gothic romancers. As tireless as Schedoni, the evil monk in *The Italian*, Davis would talk battlements one minute to a stove king from Albany, and turrets the next to a James River planter.

This ambitious romantic was born in New York City on July 24, 1803, the son of the editor of a religious review. At sixteen, when Davis left New York to become his brother's helper in a printing shop at Alexandria, Virginia, he no sooner stained his fingers sorting type than he joined a group of young men involved in amateur theatricals. To say that he played many passionate rôles, planned many a set, and memorized, among other pieces, a solemn poem dealing with the misfortunes of a maniac, hardly disposes of these years. One of the very favourite dramas in Alexandria was *Bertram*, a tragedy from the pen of Charles Robert Maturin. Maturin may be half forgotten to-day, but his *Melmoth the Wanderer* is perhaps the most Gothic of all Gothic novels. Like Balzac and Sir Walter Scott, Davis read and re-read *Melmoth*; enchanted with its horrors, he was prepared by its violent poetry for his visions at the drafting board.

However, Davis was twenty before he realized he was intended to build castles according to specifications. Returning home one day from Washington, he found New York City all but abandoned for fear of yellow fever, and when he fled to the comparative security of a country town, he discovered that gazing into a *camera obscura* was one of the rare amusements available. To others the *camera* may have been little more than a toy; to Davis it was a revelation. Challenged, he made a few sketches of the neighbouring landscape, and then, in his own words, began 'designing streets in Venice, conjecturing the fashions of gondolas, and planning interiors for churches, palaces, and prisons.'[1] A little later, when he asked Rembrandt Peale for advice as to a career, the painter shrewdly told him he was meant to be an architect.

Davis was not one to idle away his twenties. Studying perspective at the Antique School out of which grew the National Academy of Design, he put his knowledge to immediate use, striking off views of New York to be sold by the booksellers. And after practising rendering in the office of the church builder Josiah Brady, he sacrificed over a year and a half to the perusal of folios of ancient monuments in the private libraries of Boston. At the end of 1828, when he was barely twenty-five, came the great opportunity of his life, the chance to become the partner of Ithiel Town in New York. Town was an unimaginative architect, and so ill-natured that he quarrelled even with the gentle painter Thomas Cole, but he was an alert engineer for all that, and out of a patent for building bridges had made a snug fortune; investing it thoughtfully in books, he acquired the biggest and best architectural library in the New World, and Davis, who did not hesitate to accept his offer, must have lain awake nights dreaming of the delight of thumbing through the latest publications from France and England.

To be associated with Town was a privilege; but this was, besides, an ideal time for a young romantic to bid for clients. If the first families of Salem, Boston, and Providence were still quite content with their Adamesque drawing-rooms, the rising businessmen of the nation were anxious to consolidate their social position with mansions more startling than any to be found on Chestnut Street, Beacon Hill, or Powers Street. Aware of the demand for a new approach to architecture both civil and domestic, Gulian Crommelin Verplanck, a connoisseur whose blood was of the best, and whose opinions commanded the awe of civilized New Yorkers—was he not the intimate friend of Washington Allston?—declared as early as 1824 that the day of the Federal Style was done. Weary of all American attempts to work over the themes of Robert Adam, Verplanck lectured the American Academy of Fine Arts on 'that corruption of the Roman, or rather, Palladian architecture, which delights in great profusion of unmeaning ornament, in piling order upon order, in multitudes of small and useless windows, columns and mean and unnecessary pilasters.'

Men were meant to live in time as well as in space, Verplanck insisted, and the proper architecture for America would be rich in remembrance of other civilizations. Paraphrasing Sir Joshua Reynolds, Verplanck wondered if even the temples of Greece were as inspiring as the Gothic cathedrals with 'their peculiar and deeply interesting associations which, I know not how, throw back the architectural remains of the Middle Ages to a much remoter antiquity in the imagination than those of Rome and Athens.'[2]

So the stage was set in the United States for what might be termed the architecture of the fourth dimension, time itself, and architects who hoped to win their due share of the business in the prosperous years ahead would be adept at designing Grecian and Italian villas, Gothic castles, and Moorish palaces. It was all very confusing and Ithiel Town decided he might do well to take a look at the Europe he had been reading about for so long in his library. In the fall of 1829, when he was nearly forty-six, he set sail for England.

In London, Town was disappointed with Buckingham Palace which would, he wrote Davis, 'make a finer plan for a nest of French milliners.' Much more satisfying was St. Pancras

[1] Davis notebooks, Metropolitan Museum.

[2] Gulian C. Verplanck, *Address on the Fine Arts*, 1824.

3

HOUSE NEAR STOCKHOLM

roof is of slates, except over the living room, where it is of copper. Copper is also used for all outside metalwork. Glass in windows and doors is framed in oak. Internal walls are of light oak. In each room built-in cupboards and fittings have been designed by the architect in consultation with the owner. The kitchen, for instance, has a hot air cupboard for drying dishcloths and the service hatch has a cutlery drawer below it opening on both sides.

4

3, the hearth and, behind, one of the doors leading to the sun terrace.
4, the interior of the living room; the staircase leads down to the library.

NEAR STOCKHOLM

BENGT LINDROOS: ARCHITECT

Built during 1949, this house at Stocksund stands among pine trees on a steep hill overlooking a fine view to the north-east. It is planned on two levels with two main wings and a connecting link. The north-east wing contains on its upper level the main living room, with a study, library and verandah on the level below. The connecting link consists of a dining room and kitchen on the upper level with the maid's room below. The longer south-west wing contains the bedrooms, with the garage, heating plant, laundry, drying room and a small workshop below.

Walls are of precast blocks rendered but revealing the joints. On the recessed wall in front of the library the rendering has been given a bright bluish tint. The

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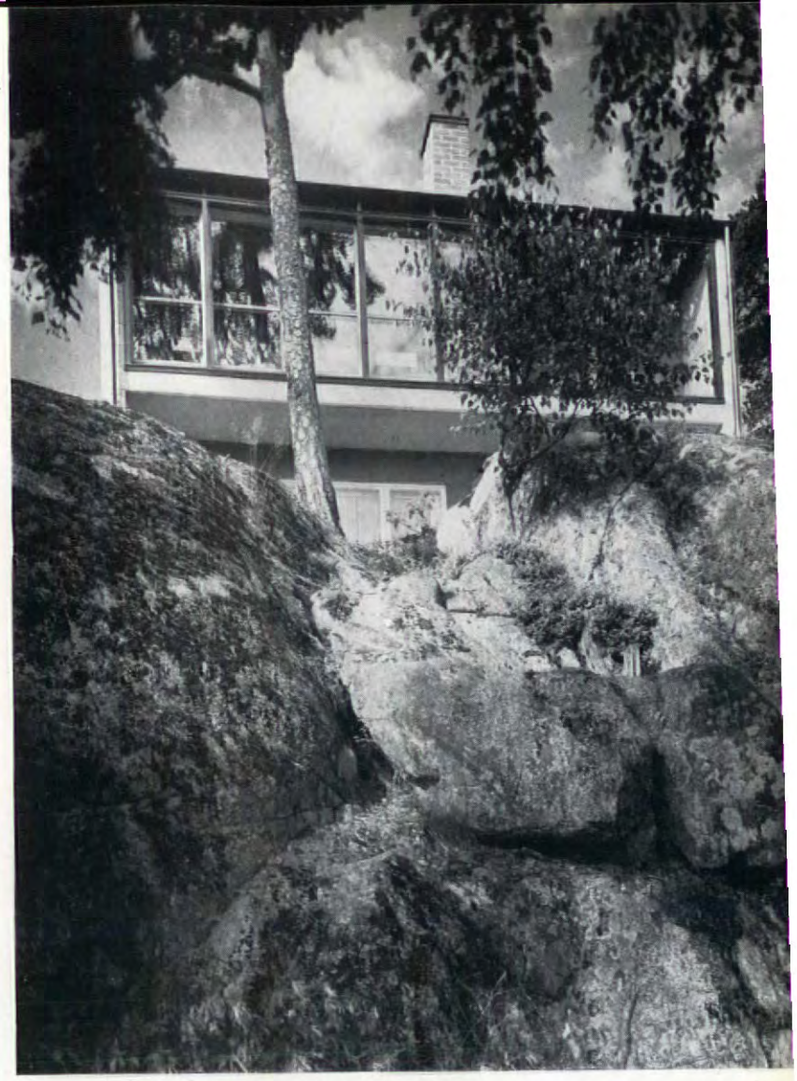

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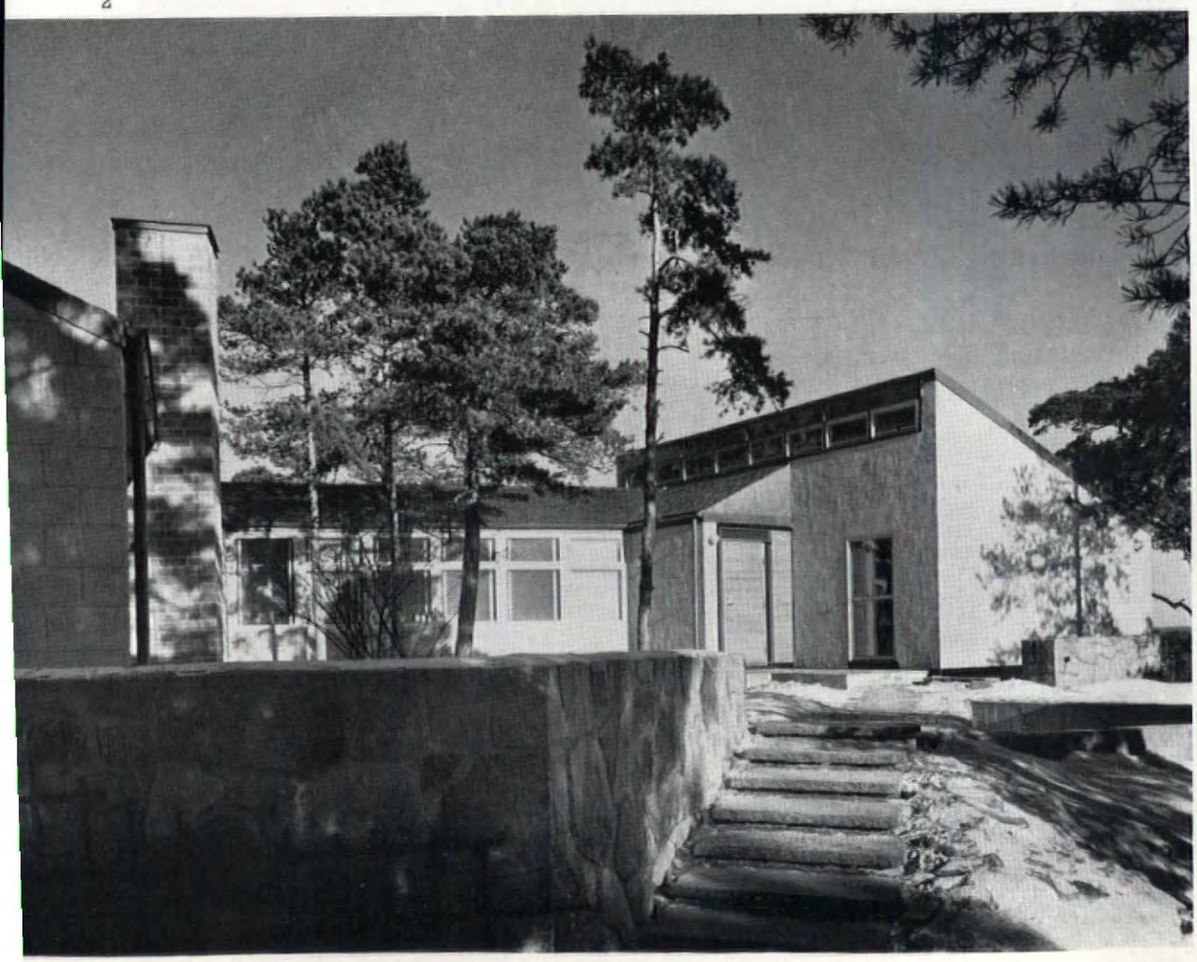
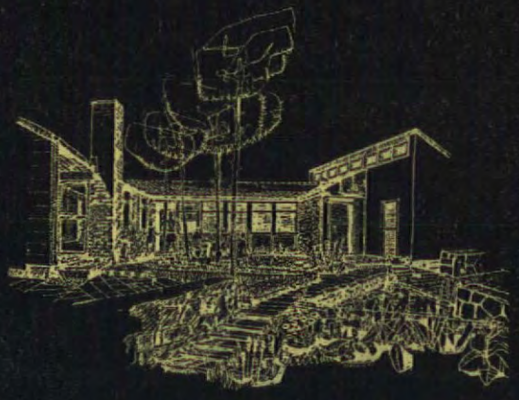


1, the main living room window which faces north-east overlooking the magnificent view. The roof of this living room is copper covered. Below can be seen the windows of the study and library situated on the lower floor, which are rendered blue. 2, the house from the south-east, the main living room is on the right, the dining room in the connecting link and one end of the bedroom wing shows on the extreme left. The space inside the arms of the wings is laid out as a simple courtyard-garden.

house near Stockholm



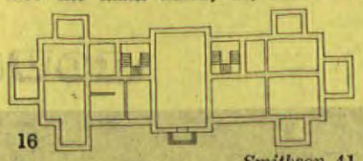
scale 1:750

site plan

upper floor plan

scale 1:150

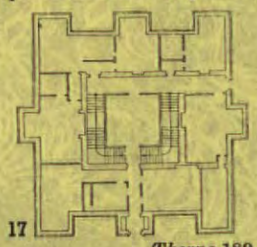
A next stage, more in accordance with the gradually infiltrating principles of Renaissance architecture, was to have two symmetrical staircases not as annexes but incorporated into the main block, 16, and this



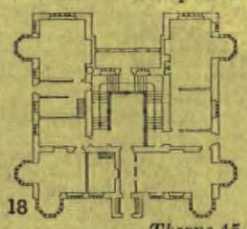
16 *Smithson* 41

arrangement, once developed, remained in favour almost to the close of the eighteenth century.

The same can be said of another solution which appeared first in the late sixteenth century. This provided for one great staircase as the centre of the whole plan. The idea must have seemed most revolutionary to people accustomed to the haphazard disposition of mediæval vices, and such arrangements as those of Thorpe 189 and Thorpe 45, were



17 *Thorpe* 189



18 *Thorpe* 45

certainly inspired by continental prototypes,[6] 17 and 18.

Thus by the end of the sixteenth century the mediæval conception of staircases as enclosed narrow elements in a building had finally disappeared. For a time—in those instances where flights of steps go round a solid core—the old conception of space lingered on and the staircase was still nothing but an assemblage of unrelated spatial units. Even if the central well was opened up, staircases such as those of Audley End or Cranborne Manor, 19, do not convey the impression of spatial integration and free flow. But during the first quarter of the seventeenth century this changed rapidly and some of the grand Jacobean stairways, 20, with their ample dimensions and many landings are sufficiently open in their spatial effect and uniform in their decorative treatment to show that they were conceived as coherent monumental entities.

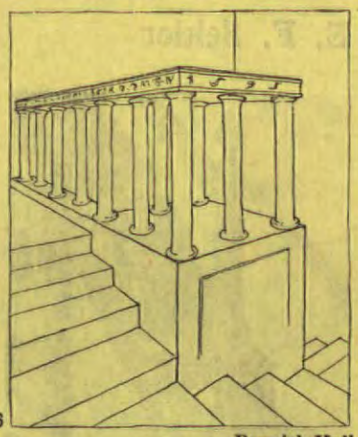
We need not go into a detailed description of their elaborate balustrades, newels with richly carved finials and pendants, screens of columns, panelled and painted walls and fretted ceilings. They represent a great achievement in English building, though their effects may sometimes be too strong for the tamer tastes of our century. But if we try to imagine the people who mounted and descended these stairways in their colourful costumes, and recall the whole spirit of Jacobean England, so full of exuberant vitality, we can, I think, understand and appreciate their splendour.

[6] Cf. *inter alia* plans in T. Perret's book, *Des Fortifications et Artifices Architecture et Perspective*, Paris 1601.

19

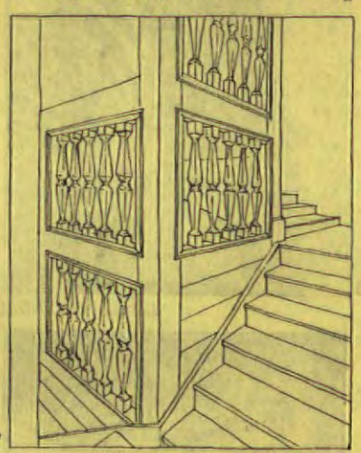
20

several flights of steps had a core built up in solid masonry[2] or in timber framework with plaster in-



6 *Borwick Hall*

filling.[3] Later, parts of the walls of the well were opened up and filled with balustrading instead of plaster panels until finally only the space below the handrail retained all or part of its infilling.[4] At Chastleton House, Oxon, 7, a partly enclosed well was built as late as 1603, and the method of carrying the newel-posts continuously up through the whole structure remained in use even longer. This constitutes one of the most striking



7 *Chastleton House*

and original features of the early seventeenth century staircase in England.

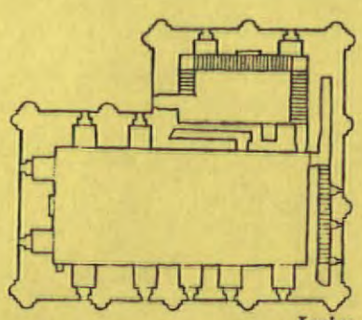
However, the open-well staircase cannot be explained solely by such a simple process of evolution. The staircase with straight flights mounting round a central open space which was to become so important in the seventeenth century and later, made its first appearance in mediæval military architecture. At Loches in France, 1080, 8, the entrance at second floor level was reached over a stair which ascended in three flights round an open well, turning at right angles inside a forebuilding. A similar approach existed at Corfe Castle, 1130, 8, where the steps began parallel to a wall of the keep but mounted again inside a forebuilding along the walls.

At first sight it appears hardly probable that there could be any connection between these mediæval

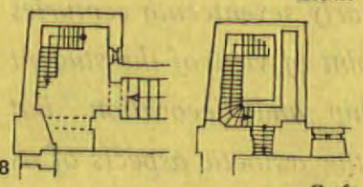
[2] E.g. at Gaythorn Hall, Asby, Westmoreland, and Borwick Hall, Lancs, fig. 6.

[3] E.g. at Canonbury Tower, Islington, Queen Hoo, Herts, Rakehouse, Surrey.

[4] E.g. at Winwick Manor House, Northants, and in Great Kewlands, Kent (cf. W. H. Godfrey, *The English Staircase*, Lond. 1910. Other examples in W. W. Ryder, *The English Staircase*, Lond. 1939).

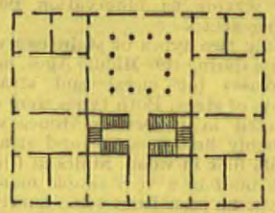


Loches



8 *Corfe*

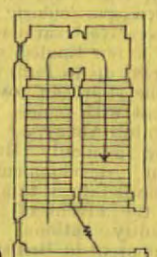
staircases and the open-well Renaissance stairs that were created in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by Italian and, in greater number, by Spanish architects. But it may be significant in this connection to note that Francesco di Giorgio, who included in his *Trattato* a plan with open-well staircases, 9, the very first so far traceable in Italy, actually used such a stair in his reconstruction of a castle, the Rocca di Mondavio. But



9 *Rocca di Mondavio*

wherever the idea may have originated, Spain was the first country to become fully aware of its possibilities of artistic expression. From Spain it probably went first to France and then further westward.

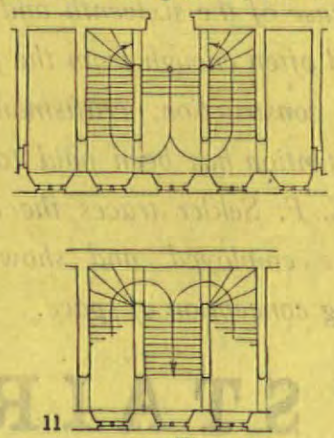
At the same time in England another type of staircase came into use which was an adaptation for construction in timber of the Italian Renaissance type *par excellence*, 10,



10 *Italian Renaissance*

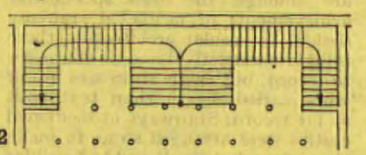
that which has two flights, one mounting to a landing and the second proceeding from the landing parallel to the first but in opposite direction to the first floor. Each flight in this type is still a completely independent spatial unit, unconnected visually with the rest of the staircase, and thus the whole fitted well into the Renaissance conception of tranquil harmony derived from units complete in themselves. Later on the dividing walls were gradually opened up until they disappeared completely in a process similar to that which has just been noted in the evolution of the open-well staircase in England.

Last of all there appeared in this country the variations and modifications of the most monumental type of staircase, the type which has a central flight leading up to a landing from which two flights branch off symmetrically either parallel or at right angles and ascend to two further landings. The earliest occurrence of a similar plan in England is No. 163 in John Thorpe's famous collection of drawings at the Soane Museum, 11. It represents 'Monsieur Jammet in Paris his house, 1600.' This would point to France as the country where the idea came from. But again the French are



11 *Thorpe* 163

anticipated by the Spanish, who used such stairways more than once in the sixteenth century and called them 'escalera imperial,' 12, obviously a very appropriate expression of their magnificence.[5]

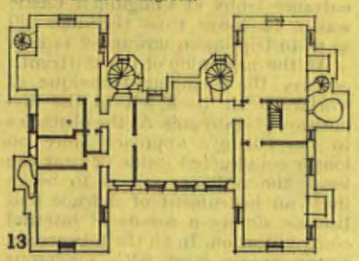


12 *'escalera imperial'*

It is only natural that this type should have appeared very late in England, because its use implied an attitude towards the staircase which differed completely from mediæval tradition. How strong this tradition was is apparent not only from a survey of the typological evolution but also from a consideration of the gradual changes in the placing of the staircase.

As for the position of the staircase in the house, this remained for some time after the beginning of the Tudor period still that of the Middle Ages. The re-entrant angle between two wings was still favoured for stair turrets. The first innovation in such

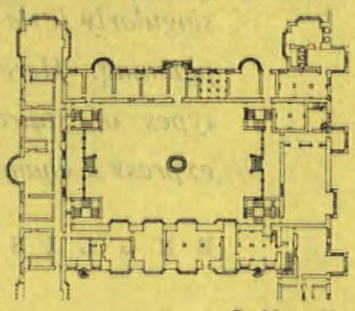
[5] On the other hand there occur in some provinces of Germany quite independently very early arrangements which have the possibility of development into the 'imperial staircase.' Hildesheim, Altemarkt 54 (1418) and Hameln, Baeckerstrasse 45 (See K. Eicke, *Buergerliche Baukunst Niedersachsens* Strasburg 1919, p. 159) are examples, where a flight of steps in the main axis of a great hall ascends to a landing from which two flights branch off at 90 degrees.



13 *Plaish Hall*

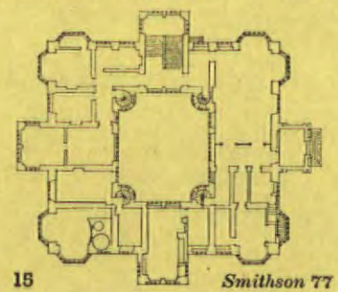
houses as Plaish Hall, Salop, 13, and Eastbury Manor House, Essex, is a striving for symmetrical arrangement, a trend which henceforth never altogether disappeared. The next stage is described by Bacon in his *Essay on Building* (1598) where he stipulates that an ideal palace should have '. . . in all Four Corners of that Court fair Staircases, cast into turrets on the outside, and not within the Row of Buildings themselves. . . .' This description recalls at once contemporary French plans and fits exactly the two large houses, plan 51 and 77 in Smithson's collection, 14 and 15.

But while the arrangement of stair turrets in the four corners of a courtyard was essentially no more than a transformation of a mediæval idea within the framework of regular, symmetrical planning and did not



14 *Smithson* 51

necessarily imply a fundamentally new attitude towards the staircase itself, Smithson's No. 77 introduces a feature which conveys a completely new conception. In addition to the four vices in turrets a great, straight staircase is provided which occupies a considerable space in a considerable position. The importance attached to it is not only the result of a superficial imitation of foreign models in architecture but reflects a radical



15 *Smithson* 77

change in the whole art of living which had been brought about in England during the sixteenth century. The new emphasis on the individual led to an increased demand for privacy and for personal display, and the new position and type of the grand staircase satisfied both.

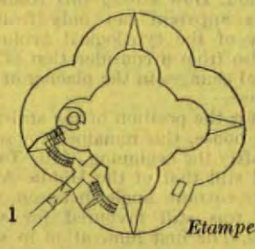
The major problem confronting the Elizabethan and Jacobean architects in connection with staircases was how to find a dignified position without losing the customary close connection with the dais-end of the hall and without destroying the functional pattern of the rooms or disturbing the symmetry of the façade. To begin with the mediæval expedient of providing projecting stair annexes which also served to enrich the elevation was still used. Such stair annexes which were now square and much bigger than their earlier predecessors were commonly placed at the junction of the lateral wings and the middle part of an H- or E-shaped house or on the outer side of a block or lateral wing.

E. F. Sekler

The English staircase of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has been discussed often enough from the point of view of the student interested in its construction, craftsmanship and decoration. But singularly little attention has been paid to the æsthetic aspects of its planning. Here E. F. Sekler traces the development of the several types of staircase employed, and shows how their modifications express a changing conception of space.

ENGLISH STAIRCASES

IN TALKING OF mediæval staircases, we think almost exclusively of secular architecture, but it should not be forgotten that the broad staircases leading up to Romanesque chancels with crypts underneath, are amongst the most spectacular achievements of mediæval staircase design. In secular architecture there is little of a strictly domestic character to record, but castle staircases are of more varied design than textbooks so far record. Stairways in mediæval castles were arranged so as to make the approach difficult and to bewilder an intruder who might have forced the entrance. External stairways were frequently dominated by galleries and machicolations; sometimes, as in the French example at Etampes, 1160, 1, they would mount to a



1 *Etampes* 1160

door placed halfway between ground floor and first floor through which an enemy rushing forward in attack would plunge headlong into space, while the initiated would at once turn sharp right or left and gain a winding stair in the thickness of the wall. Similarly the level of the entrance lobby at Craigmillar Castle was 3 ft. lower than the door sill so as to trip up an unwanted visitor.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century the changing technique of warfare made itself felt in the disposition of staircases. As the obstacles to the enemy's approach were no longer constructed inside or near the keep, the staircase ceased to be in itself an instrument of defence and became simply a means of internal communication. In all the Edwardian fortresses we meet with numerous stair turrets, commanding a wide view and serving as observation points during attack.

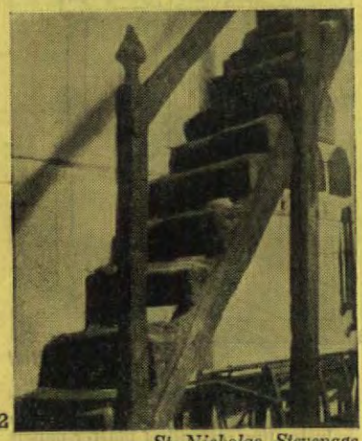
Only two types of staircases were in use during the Middle Ages, newel staircases (or vices) and straight flights of steps. Both types were constructed in timber or stone, vices probably first in stone and straight flights first in wood. Stairs in timber were built in a very simple manner, as can be seen from some surviving examples, e.g. at Stokesay Castle or in St. Nicholas' Church, Stevenage, 2. Newel staircases were built with ashlar steps supported by coarse spiral vaults, or with self-supporting steps. In Lincoln Cathedral a circular staircase in stone is supported by a recessed ribbed vault, with pointed arches, 3, and a similar construction in brick with recessed segmental arches is to be found at Laughton Place, 4.

As a rule the staircases during the late Middle Ages were less ornate in the British Isles than on the Continent, where, particularly in France, a rich decorative treatment was not rare. Only in few English vices is the newel carried up to form a vaulting shaft or the stairhead covered by a ribbed vault with panels of tracery as at Thornton Abbey, 5.[1]

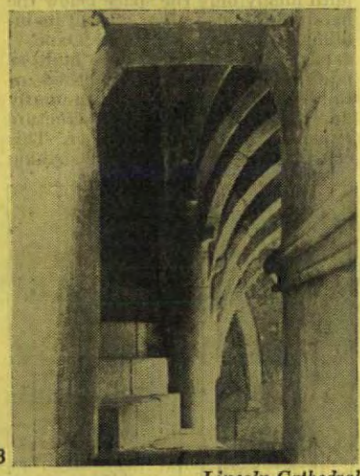
Speaking generally British and continental developments were roughly parallel down to about 1500. But with the advent of the Tudors predominantly national tendencies become apparent in British staircase building. These tendencies are chiefly a leaning towards the ornamental and decorative rather than the spatial, a tradition of excellent workmanship in wood and a great reluctance to break away from mediæval forms. Accordingly the mediæval vice remained a favourite in sixteenth century England, and its first modification consisted only of an increase in diameter. In addition the enclosing shell and the newel were frequently made square instead of cylindrical, thus preparing the way for the straight Renaissance types to come.

The first straight staircases with

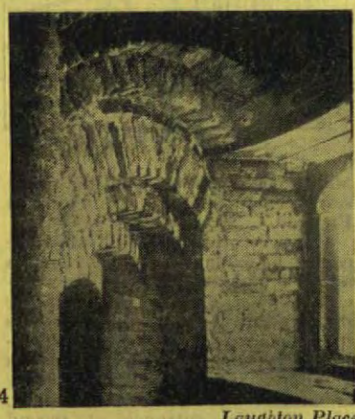
[1] Also Belsay, Alnwick and Warkworth Castles and All Saints Church, Hillesden, Bucks.



2 *St. Nicholas, Stevenage*



3 *Lincoln Cathedral*



4 *Laughton Place*

5 *Thornton Abbey*

Above, a bas-relief of the 'modulor' man, on which is based Le Corbusier's system of proportions (see Le Corbusier's Modulor, the System of the Golden Mean by Matila Ghyka, AR, February, 1948, pages 39-42). The method has been employed in the design of the Unité d'Habitation, down to the smallest detail.

velopment, it would have a very real application to social requirements. At first sight the rigid grid structure of the plan may suggest a lack of variety in the individual flats; in fact, apart from the combined accommodation of shops, hotel, communal rooms, health centre and recreation area, there are twenty-seven different types of flat-plan. The richness of this variety combined with the remarkable sense of space achieved within a small area constitute a miracle of organization.

the flat-plan Criticism of the vertical disposition of deep flats in relation to internal roads centres itself mainly on two issues. The central access corridors artificially lit and ventilated are open to criticism on the counts of climate, hygiene and potential hooliganism of children. The other issue was the difficulties of lighting and ventilating in the centre block caused by the deep section. Set against this the fact that light penetration in the Mediterranean climate is such that it is possible to read a newspaper by natural light in the centre of the blocks, that the lighting and services to the central utility area of the flats were thoroughly approved by many speakers and have been officially inspected and approved by the local authority at Le Corbusier's request (in order to quash rumours of uninhabitability); and finally, as Powell pointed out, that the 'deep' plan is no more than the traditional terrace-house wedge-plan with central unlit stair and rooms front and back of this.

While the east-west 'through' orientation of the balconies may be made more desirable both by the intense heat of a southerly aspect and by the splendid views across to the mountains on one side and to the Mediterranean on the other, the actual size of the balconies is somewhat cramped.

aesthetic The most remarkable feature of the Unité is that in spite of its size it is completely devoid of any oppressive qualities. It looks human. This is true both of the overall mass (instinctive relation of number of floors and width, light 'perched' impression given by the pilotis) and of the subsidiary detail. The use of the Modulor has not only ensured the absolute relation of parts to the whole but in so far as the starting-point of its geometrical progressions is that of a typical 6-foot human figure, these relations are not abstract but inherently human; 'a whole structure, a whole set of components, a whole series of spaces designed on a system of dimensions all harmonically related.' (Howell.)

It is particularly important that the real effect of this geometry as well as its practicability and lack of mumbo-jumbo should be stressed. In England lack of geometry during the last 100 years (Regency architecture still lived on the residue of eighteenth century geometry) has given licence to that wholesale reliance upon 'intuition' and 'individual taste' that contributes so much to the confusion of the day. *The Unité is an outstanding vindication of the Modulor both on æsthetic grounds and on the practical coherence it gives to the ordering and relating of prefabricated elements.*

technical and structural Comments upon site organization covered the various stages of the building during the last eighteen months. General verdict: 'Mediæval.' Shuttering for the in-situ concrete is 'quite crude, knocked together from rough timber.' However, the answer to this may well be, as Max Gooch suggested, that the roughness of finish is an attempt to avoid monotony.

There is a very noticeable contrast between the use of comparatively flimsy materials within the flat itself and the almost indestructible nature of both structure and finish in the public and circulation areas.

Heating of corridors and flats is carried out by plenum; electrical heating elements are placed under windows past which air from the plenum is introduced. And in this respect too insulation is good owing to the great depth of each flat in relation to the short length of external wall.

Finally, the introduction of the Garchey system is nothing less than merciful in a locality where the normal method of refuse disposal is (as most of us who have spent a few nights in Marseilles have found to our cost) to throw it from the window into the street between midnight and 3.00 a.m.

One of the staircases leading to the first floor.

with Mr. Gooch that the roughness of the precast concrete work is intentionally contrived to avoid monotony.

Incidentally, I tried running round the semi-circular end of the running-track. There is no banking at the moment, and the bend is so sharp that unless it is very steep indeed I visualize runners reaching parapet level at full speed and flying off the edge of the building.

But I have been asked to consider how far the Unité has an immediate application to our own housing problem. The principle of the deep slice plan is, in point of fact, traditional to the Victorian terrace-house and can be arranged, as in the Unité, to give good light in any flat. It would be particularly suitable over here for studios. However, I have some doubt about the advisability, in this country, of a bedroom overlooking a living-room except in studios. I would like to see double height flats with double height gardens as opposed to the minimum size box balconies, even if this meant (for financial reasons) the reduction in area of some of the rooms inside the flat. That, of course, means 'away with the Housing Manual.'

Most people with families of any size prefer houses with gardens. But the possibility of twenty- or thirty-storey blocks, suggested by the Unité (yet reserved for smaller families) mixed with two- or three-storey compact house-with-garden development, seems to be the only rational approach to high-density planning.

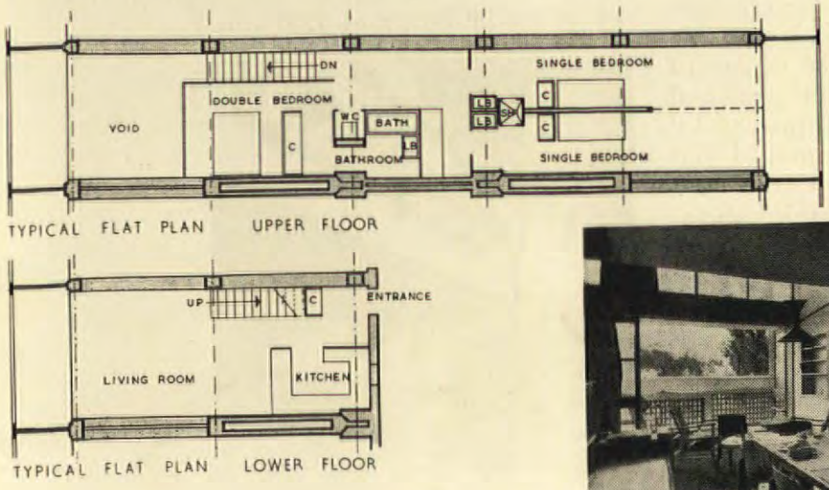
Instead of alternating two- and three-storey houses or flats with five-, six- or even eleven-storey blocks of flats on, for instance, a thirty-acre site, we might divide the site in half, giving one half over to two- and three-storey garden terraces and the other half to, say, two twenty- or thirty-storey blocks of single, two and three room flats, giving, I feel, a happy contrast between the domestic, small-scale effect of the houses with their small enclosed open spaces and the blocks of flats standing in wide public gardens. Of course the present system of subsidies might artificially make this development, with its increased number of houses, more expensive—in which case, scrap the present subsidies system. And the present by-laws would make a thirty-floor block of flats impossible—therefore scrap the by-laws too.

SUMMARY The main observations and criticisms that arose during the subsequent general discussion are incorporated in the following summary of the symposium.

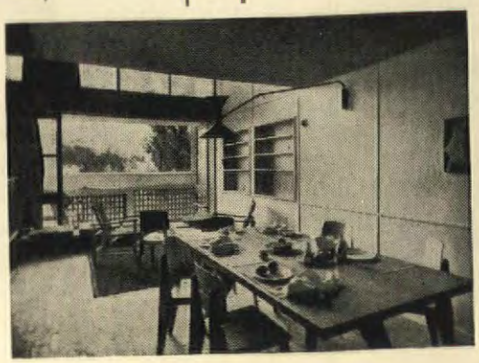
town planning and social questions It is a common mistake to criticize the Unité d'Habitation on the grounds that it is isolated by three miles from the true social life of Marseilles. But, as the contractor's notice board proclaims, this is Unité d'Habitation No. 1, and, as both Easton and Howell in particular pointed out, this single building must be considered only in relation to other similar and related buildings. In the absence of an available plan for Marseilles, Howell referred to the project for St. Dié to stress the open 'participating' nature of each Unité as a counter to the objection made by Williams that the building was too self-contained and introvert ('the housewife will have little need and less inclination ever to leave the building for days on end'). At the moment, it almost looks as if Le Corbusier had been sent out into the desert to make his experiment 'in safety.' The St. Dié plan, however, shows five (ultimately eight) Unités disposed in relation to and 'attracted' by, a civic centre; and it is hard to suppose that what Easton calls an 'agora-minded' population would fail to take advantage of this. And in this context it should be stressed that the segregated level of pedestrian circulation from Unité to piazza provides that trafficless milieu that Venice proves to be so suitable to the Latin temperament and climate.

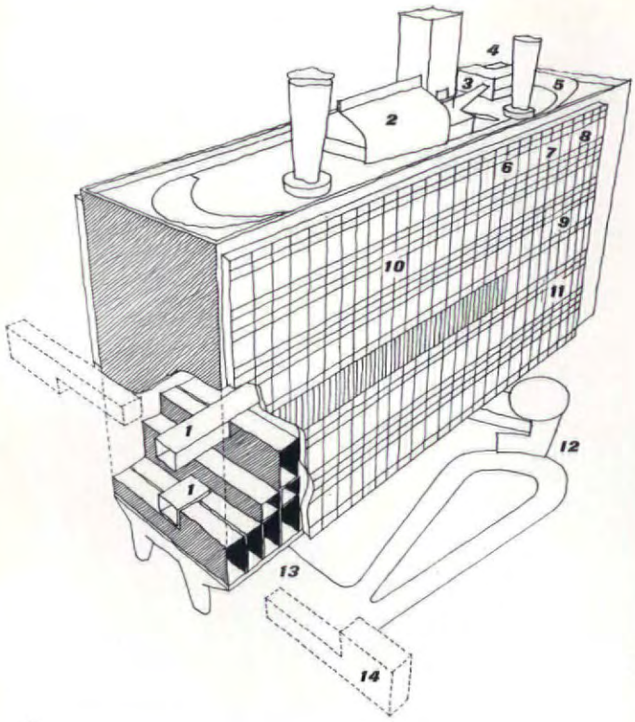
'How much social research was carried out in the neighbourhood before the building was planned?' Another line of criticism put forward by Cleeve Barr, Oliver Cox and Robin Rockel implied that Corbusier's approach had been too arbitrary and abstract and too monumental. 'He is at fault when he suggests that it is the task of architecture to create a new way of life.' It is suggested that that is 'imposing conditions' on the people. And 'it is interesting that in Moscow Corbusier is accused of Fascist tendencies.' Philip Powell replied that by putting people in houses at all you are 'imposing conditions' on them; 'these are simply different conditions which, in point of fact, provide better conditions and greater liberties than any other flat developments.' And as a question of 'social research,' Corbusier claims that his concept is precisely the result of twenty-five years of such research.

It is unfair to suggest that the Unité is merely an essay in the monumental. In the first place, every speaker testified to the 'humanity' of the scale. Secondly, statistics suggest that, in the form of small flat de-



Left, plans of a typical flat and below, two views of the double-height living room. The overall dimension of each flat is 12 ft. by 60 ft., lit at each of the narrow ends, which face east and west, with magnificent views over the mountains and the Mediterranean.



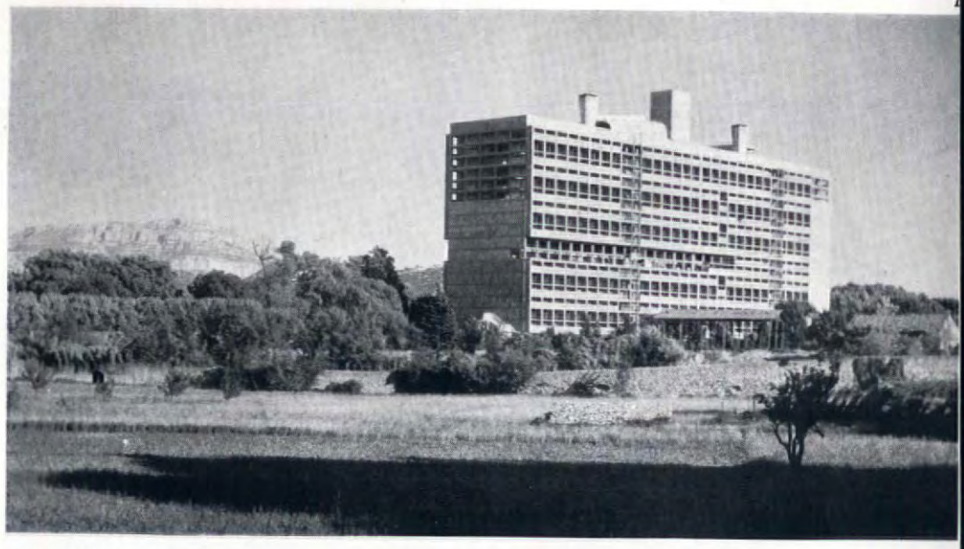


key

1, internal thoroughfare. 2, gymnasium. 3, cafe and sun terrace. 4, cafeteria. 5, children's playground. 6, health centre. 7, creche. 8, nursery. 9, pub. 10, youth clubs and workshops. 11, communal laundry and drying rooms. 12, entrance and porter's lodge. 13, garages. 14, standard two-floor flat.

Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation

7



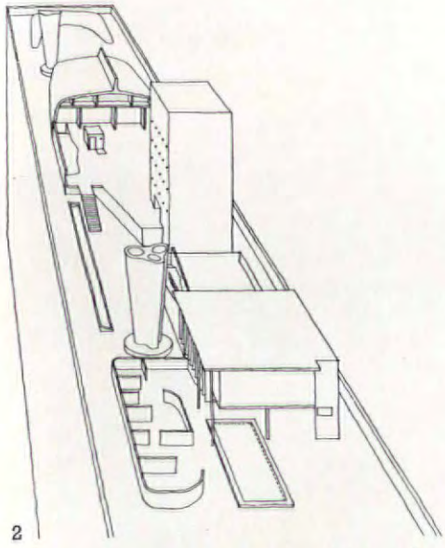
Above, axonometric drawing of the Unité d'Habitation. 7, *view from the north-west of the building which was intended for the lower paid workers of Marseilles, and is due to be finished this summer. The overall plan dimensions are* 460 *ft. by* 80 *ft.* 8, *view below the overhang of the building, showing the pattern left by the rough formwork.* 9, *detail of the balconies and brise-soleil. It is suggested in the accompanying discussion that the rough finish of the pre-cast concrete units is a deliberate attempt to avoid monotony.*

8

9

Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation

1



2

3

4

5

1, *the south end of the roof with the solarium on the left and the structural framework of the cafeteria beyond. Below the vent is an open-air garden for children, surrounded by low walls and visible in the drawing,* 2. 3, *the vent at the north end of the roof with one wall of the gymnasium on the right.* 4, *looking up the inside of one of the vents.* 5, *general view of the roof looking north. The cafeteria is in the foreground.*

like to say). The use of strong colour in the reveals of the balconies is perhaps a bit violent but when the whole building is completed in this manner we will be able to judge better whether this use of colour has achieved its object which is presumably to lighten the dead character of so much exposed concrete.

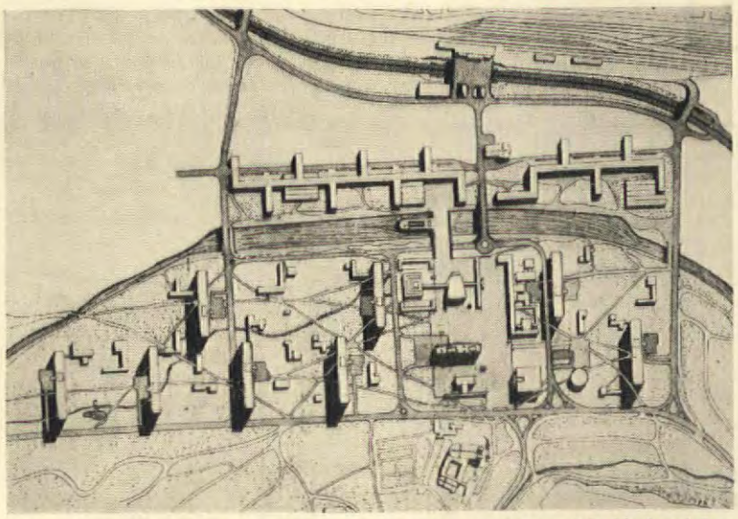
Generally speaking one would say that the æsthetic quality of the conception is beyond dispute; the photographs here will enlarge upon that better than I can. But in execution the performance falls rather short, the constructional methods being almost mediæval in their crudity. This is particularly unfortunate where the reinforced concrete so handled is left exposed. My own criticisms, however, are of a more sociological character. Firstly, the attempt at completeness made by the inclusion of shops, post office, library, clinic, etc., within one single building must be a limitation to the social life of the inhabitants; one can well imagine that the housewife will have little need and less inclination ever to leave the building at all for days on end. And this seems particularly unfitting to the temperament of such people as the Marseillais. The conception seems to dominate rather than to liberate.

Finally, there are those rumours about rising cost of the project; and unless the final rentals are within the reach of the workers for whom it was originally planned, it will have failed in its principal objective.

W. G. Howell I don't think it is possible to understand the Unité as a contribution to urban architecture if it is considered merely in its present isolated setting.

When Corbusier was called in to build apartments for the Marseilles Municipality, no plan of development for the city existed, and the lack of any such plan is reflected in the chaotic rebuilding in the old port. It is unlikely that anything built in an unplanned milieu can produce out of the blue a patch of balanced urbanism. Therefore I suggest that, in discussing this aspect of the project, we examine it as it is used in the plan for St. Dié.

This post-war project by Corbusier for rebuilding a small town in the Vosges represents the most recent development of his ideas on urbanism. In the plan, Corbusier shows eight Unités, closely related to broad pedestrian ways leading into and through a series of 'piazzas,' from which runs another broad pedestrian route across the river to a *place d'industrie*, the centre of gravity of a group of factories which stretch along the river-bank. All vehicular traffic is isolated on different levels.



Above, Le Corbusier's plan for St. Dié in the Vosges, with its eight blocks of flats on the same principle as Marseilles, linked by pedestrian ways leading to the town centre.

The eight Unités form a series of vertical streets within a few minutes' walk of the town centre, and are set in a landscaped park with schools disposed around them. Then, from this highly concentrated centre (something like 250 people to the acre), long ribbons of low houses run out into the countryside along parkways, which are separated from the main approach roads to the town. These two, the vertical street related to the piazza and the horizontal street radiating into the countryside, are clearly differentiated in the plan, each an imaginative interpretation of a particular way of living.

The only reservation I would make here is that I would like to see a higher proportion of houses—in St. Dié the proportion is three persons in flats to every one in the houses, though there seem to be provisional sites for more houses.

Bearing in mind this setting one may discount Thurston Williams's fear that there would be no incentive for the housewife ever to leave the building. What in fact Corbusier has suggested is that the people living in flats should be given the choice of communal facilities and services both in their own buildings and in the town centre five minutes' distant. We give them no such choice, but force them always to go out. Corbusier also makes it possible for those who live on the ground to shop or have a drink eight storeys up, whereas the flats we build are inaccessible to non-residents.

Two further points we should study in this exciting and beautiful building—first, the idea of a whole structure, a whole set of components, a whole series of spaces, designed on a system of dimensions all harmonically related, and all related to the human figure. Everyone who has seen the building testifies to the human and domestic quality of the building, contrasting with what Easton has called the heroic scale of the pilotis. To what extent the quality of the building derives from the use of such a geometrical system, or to what extent it is a result of the handling of such a system by a very great artist, we might discuss.

The other idea which seems most relevant to us is the development of the principle of the deep, narrow-frontage flat. The saving in external walling, maintenance cost and heating must be enormous, and if you want to know just how exciting and generous an interior of these proportions can be, I can only advise you to go to Marseilles.

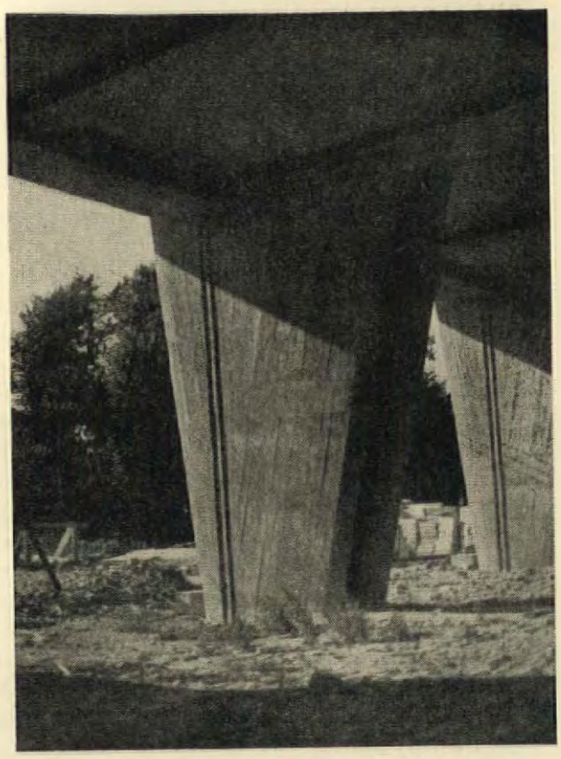
Philip Powell My immediate reaction is that this is a very lovely building—even the trial colours on the balconies. Some speakers have objected to these, and I would agree that anybody with pretensions to 'good taste' would not like them. I found their strength stimulating. (Especially, I remember a very wicked green.)

The poor craftsmanship in the handling of the concrete was very evident—as it happens, most effective in the case of the in-situ work and probably giving an intentionally rough effect. But I am not so sure I agree

With 1,600 persons closely packed into one block, sound insulation obviously becomes a major problem, and this has probably been the greatest single factor influencing Le Corbusier's structural design. Each flat is a box, complete in itself, made up of light prefabricated panels of dry construction whose dimensions are based on the Modulor. These boxes are assembled inside the structural frame, but do not touch it directly. They rest on joists of pressed steel spanning between the main frames, but insulated from them by pads of lead.

The main structure of the block is of in situ reinforced concrete, and the shuttering for this is quite crude, being knocked together from rough timber. There is no use of standard metal moulds as one might have expected. However, the concrete comes out remarkably clean. Only at every third floor is there a solid concrete slab, to provide a fire-break. The intermediate floors are of the same type of dry construction. Outside the main frame the floor slabs cantilever to form balconies, and on these stands the exterior cladding of precast slabs and grilles. The rough finish of these precast elements has surprised some people familiar with the precision of the Pavillon Suisse, but I think this is quite deliberate, and that Corbusier realized that an assemblage of smooth precise slabs on this scale would be intolerable, a point borne out, in my opinion, by some recent American office-blocks. On the in situ work of the ground floor too the boardmarks are clearly shown (*beton brut*), and all this seems to me a great contribution to the architectural handling of concrete.

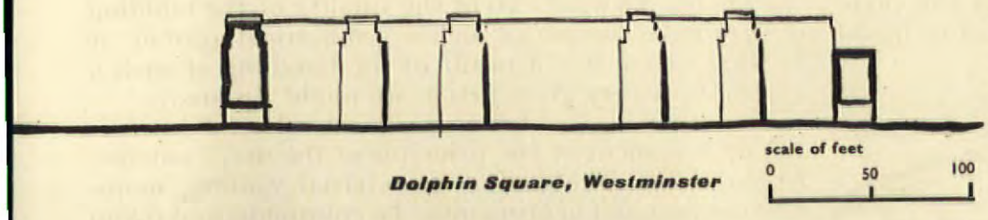
The main structural frame, seventeen storeys high, stands on the *sel artificiel*—the classical Corbusier device as used in the Pavillon Suisse—some 30 feet above the natural ground. This massive slab collects the point loads from the closely spaced columns above and transmits them to the huge portal-framed pilotis.



Right, one of the massive pilotis which carry the whole load of the seventeen storey building, and house various pipes and mechanical services in their thickness.

As an example of the careful study which Corbusier gives to form it is said that he spent several months arriving at the exact form for these pilotis, and in his Paris office is a precise model of one of them in plaster, about five feet high.

Thurston Williams What I have to say is entirely impromptu—an attempt to recall certain immediate personal sensations on visiting the site. In the first place I was impressed by the fact that Unité seemed less vast than I had expected; this is probably due to the excellent proportioning of the building (though how far this in turn is due to the Modulor I would not

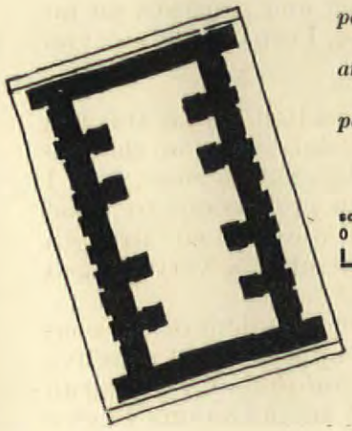


Dolphin Square, Westminster

population 3,000

area 7.25 acres

persons/acre 415



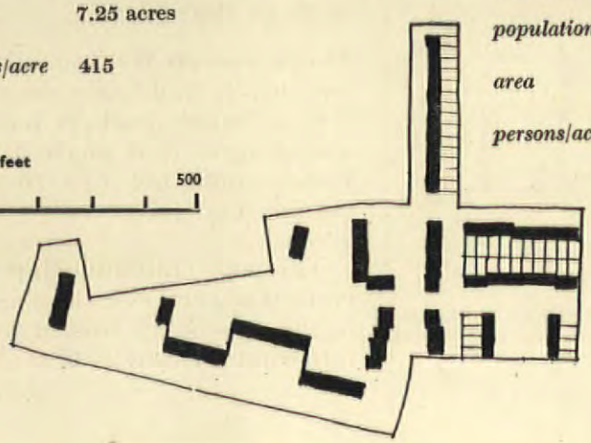
These sketch plans and elevations afford a means of relating the Marseilles flats to two London schemes. The first, Dolphin Square, Westminster, reputed to be the largest block of flats in Europe. This has a total population of 3,000 people as against 1,600 people in the Unité d'Habitation and 1,500 in the second comparative example, part of the Lansbury neighbourhood, East London, which is now under construction.

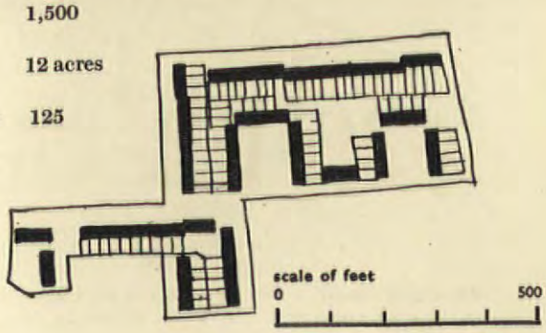
Lansbury (Poplar and Stepney)

population 1,500

area 12 acres

persons/acre 125





which left the boulevards and the high buildings of the town behind, passed the stadium and the villas dotted among the eucalyptus and olive trees of the outskirts and fetched up level with a contractor's board announcing that this was 'Unité d'Habitation No. 1' and that Le Corbusier was the architect. (Two facts which, by the way, are known to everyone in Marseilles.)

At first sight the building looks deceptively small, the seventeen storeys sitting on the truly heroic pilotis seems a masterpiece of deliberate understatement. Scale, the treatment of planes, patterns and surfaces are as magnificent as the bad finish of the precast concrete work is deplorable. Both inside and out—and this includes the *jeu d'esprit* on the roof—I found a building which was always interesting and often exciting. The demonstration flat which is completed and furnished makes magnificent use of its 1,000 square feet (costing about £1,100 before devaluation) and has excellent services and equipment.

Of course if you are not wildly enthusiastic during or immediately after a visit to any Corbusier building it is unlikely that you ever will be, and later, after I had left the site and had recovered myself physically and mentally, I found some doubts, which are summarized in the following questions, still persisting.

1. Does the whole approach and conception of Unité give us the sort of building which can properly fulfil our current sociological functions?
2. Have the full benefits of such a scheme been curtailed by limiting it to one block instead of to a group of blocks?
3. Will the final capital cost make it a failure in quite another way by demanding rentals which are too high for the people for whom it has been designed?
4. Is this the beginning of vertical housing in concentrated densities and if so is it a solution which we can accept and agree to develop in this country?

I shall not attempt to answer these questions now but simply throw them out for discussion.

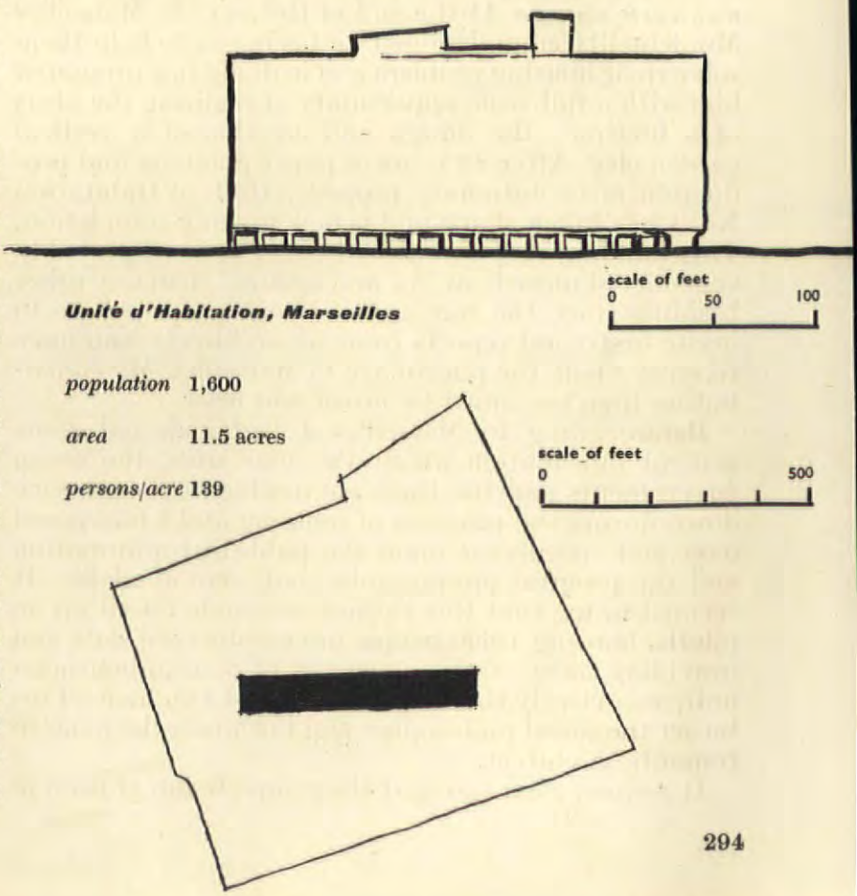
Maholi and King Although Unité is on a monumental scale it should not be regarded only for its architectural features. It is the culmination of twenty-six years' study of urban development, and its sociological significance is perhaps more important to planners than its architectural conception. Indeed its architecture is the physical expression of certain sociological precepts.

For the first time Le Corbusier is now executing the ideas which he has for so long propounded in his writings. And like all great artists he has in many respects relied on intuition rather than scientific method and analysis in order to create a building which will fulfil its anticipated social functions.

The Unité must not be considered as the ultimate realization since it is proposed to be the first of a number, which will then comprise his long cherished dream of *une cité-jardin verticale*. Its name is a guide to its accommodation, since it is designed for the social life of a small community. In addition to 330 flats for 1,600 people (at a density of 139 to the acre) it will contain a post office, a shopping centre on the 7th and 8th floors, a library and restaurant, an hotel for guests, club-rooms, a clinic on the top floor and a running-track and gymnasium on the roof; while a swimming-bath and a school are sited in the 11½ acre grounds surrounding the building. These, by contrast in size, will provide a foil to the architectural mass of the building.

Perhaps a comparison between Unité and one of London's largest blocks of flats will help to clarify some of the more tangible town-planning factors involved. Dolphin Square, Westminster, is one of the most 'luxurious' blocks of flats erected during the inter-war period; designed as a quadrangle, its multi-storeys enclose an area laid out with gardens, terraces and tennis courts, and cater for different sized families. It has its own restaurants, dance hall, laundry, gymnasia and squash courts. The whole conception aims to provide a social refuge from the immensity of London. Occupying a site of 7¼ acres, its population density is 415 persons an acre, a figure that far exceeds the maximum density of 200 persons an acre for London advocated in the County of London Plan. Although this figure is considerably greater than the density of the Unité d'Habitation (139 per acre) can we truthfully say that Dolphin Square has a closer resemblance to a beehive than Unité? A balanced judgment can only be made when other Unités have been erected and occupied for some years, and I therefore leave the issue as a matter for your conjecture. (Further interesting density comparisons are the proposed LCC development at Princes Way, Wimbledon, where 1,600 people are to be housed in an 'open' park site of 27 acres and the residential area of Lansbury (Poplar and Stepney): 12 acres, 1,500 persons, 125 per acre.)

Max Gooch In explaining the structure (which is my contribution to this symposium) the clearest way is to start from the individual flat and work outwards.



On the facing page, looking towards the partly finished structure of the gymnasium on the roof of the Unité d'Habitation. The photograph brings out with particular clarity the close relationship between Le Corbusier's paintings and buildings (referred to by A. D. B. Sylvester in February, pp. 80-89). Further photographs of the roofscape are on page 301.

LE CORBUSIER'S UNITÉ D'HABITATION

Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation *in Marseilles has been more disagreed about than any other building going up anywhere since the war—besides being the subject of wilder rumours. As a fair sample of the diverse opinions which informed observers maintain about it, here is a discussion held recently by members of the Housing Division of the London County Council Architect's Department and their guests; it serves as introduction to a full account of the building which will be published later, and as a further contribution to the venture into architectural criticism which was launched last month. It will be seen that, however much speakers differed about the social and structural aspects of the* Unité d'Habitation, *about its æsthetic qualities—and in particular, curiously enough, the 'humanity' of its scale—there was no disagreement at all.*

Kenneth Easton At the end of the war the Marseilles Municipality commissioned Le Corbusier to help them solve their housing problem and in doing this presented him with a full-scale opportunity of realizing the ideas of a lifetime—the design and erection of a vertical garden city. After 25 years of paper planning and production of evolutionary projects, Unité d'Habitation No. 1 has taken shape and is now nearing completion. This building and the ideas behind it have probably engendered more heat 'for and against' than any other building since the war and it is our purpose here to invite first-hand reports from six architects who have recently made the pilgrimage to Marseilles. My contribution therefore must be broad and brief.

Before going to Marseilles I had collected some general information about the four sites, the seven governments and the three contractors who had gone down during the progress of building and I had pored over and speculated upon the published information and the progress photographs that were available. It seemed to me that this elegant rectangle raised up on pilotis, housing 1,600 people in two-storeyed flats and providing most of the amenities of a neighbourhood unit, was clearly the fusion of ideas of two men—Corbusier the social philosopher and Corbusier the modern romantic architect.

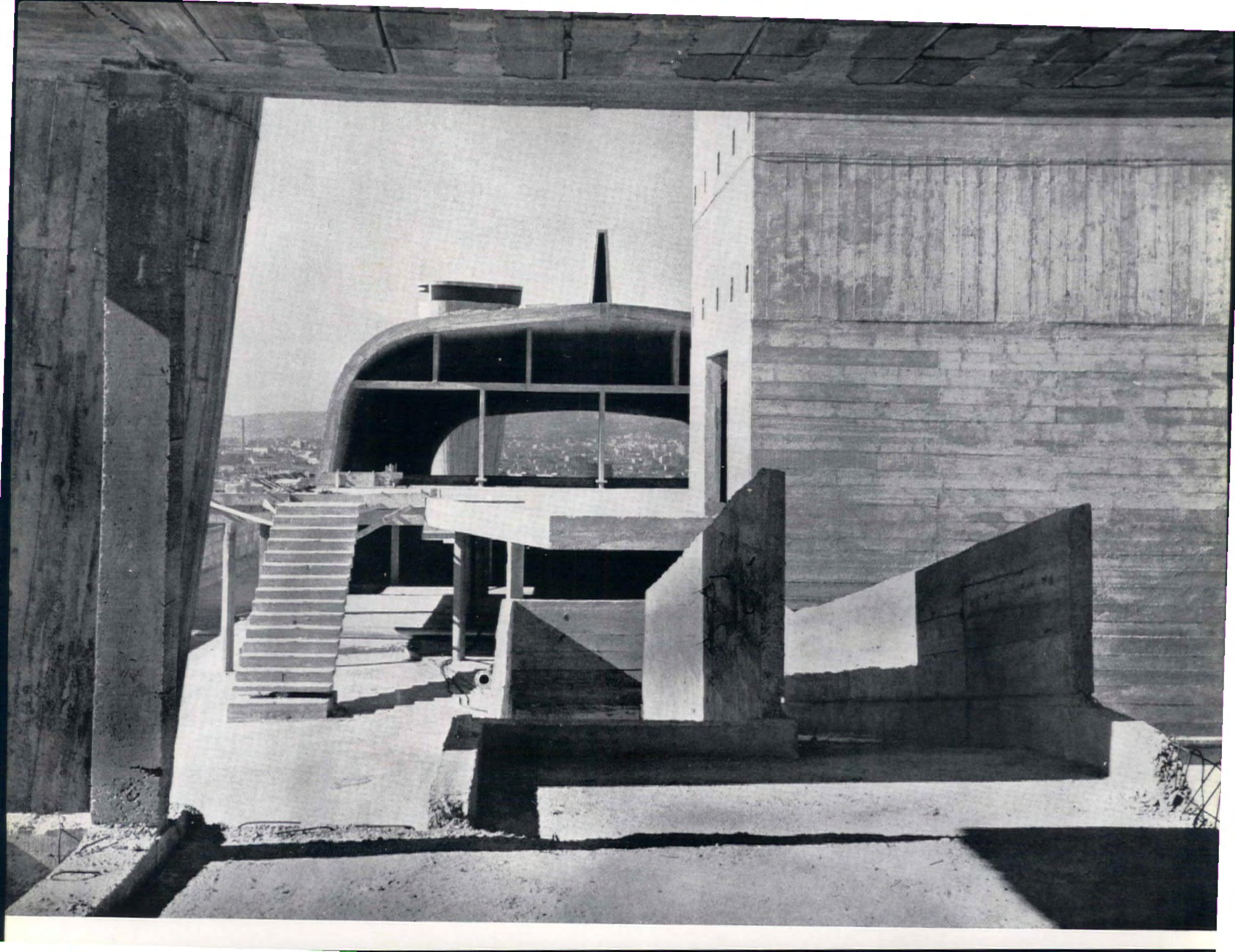
It seemed clear too that the complete integration of structure and form and the high degree of standardization should fulfil Corbusier's claims that the building would be speedily and economically built; the vague reports that work was rather slow and that costs were mounting alarmingly seemed difficult to credit. The internal planning itself, the thin slices of double-storeyed living accommodation 12 feet wide and 60 feet long, lit only at the ends, and served only by internal roads, artificially lit and ventilated, seemed more doubtful, and this sort of doubt struck at the whole economic conception of planning vertical houses.

However, as a background to the building I decided to first take stock of Marseilles and the Marseillais.

The second city of France, and surely her first for noise and perpetual bustle, is Mediterranean rather than French in its way of life. Its vigorous and multitudinous inhabitants, a fifth of whom I believe are Italian, live, eat, shop, and carry out their business in the open air along the wide boulevards of their busy *canebiere* and around the picturesque harbour and horseshoe of sunny quays of the *Vielle Port*.

How, I wondered, could 1,600 of this essentially 'agora-minded' and volatile community ever be happily contained in this great rectangle on the outskirts of the town?

Mixed feelings, however, do leave one with an open mind and it was in this state that I boarded the tram



7 HOSPITAL AT GRENADA

J. C. Rose: Executive Architect of the Windward Islands

This group of buildings replaces an old medical outpost and serves the north end of the island, supplementing a 200 bed hospital in the capital town. It was required to be a pavilion type building with 32 beds, a small operating theatre, laboratory and dispensary, and quarters for a residential doctor, dispenser, matron and seven nurses and servants. The site is an open pastureland about 800 feet above the sea and sloping towards the windward coast.

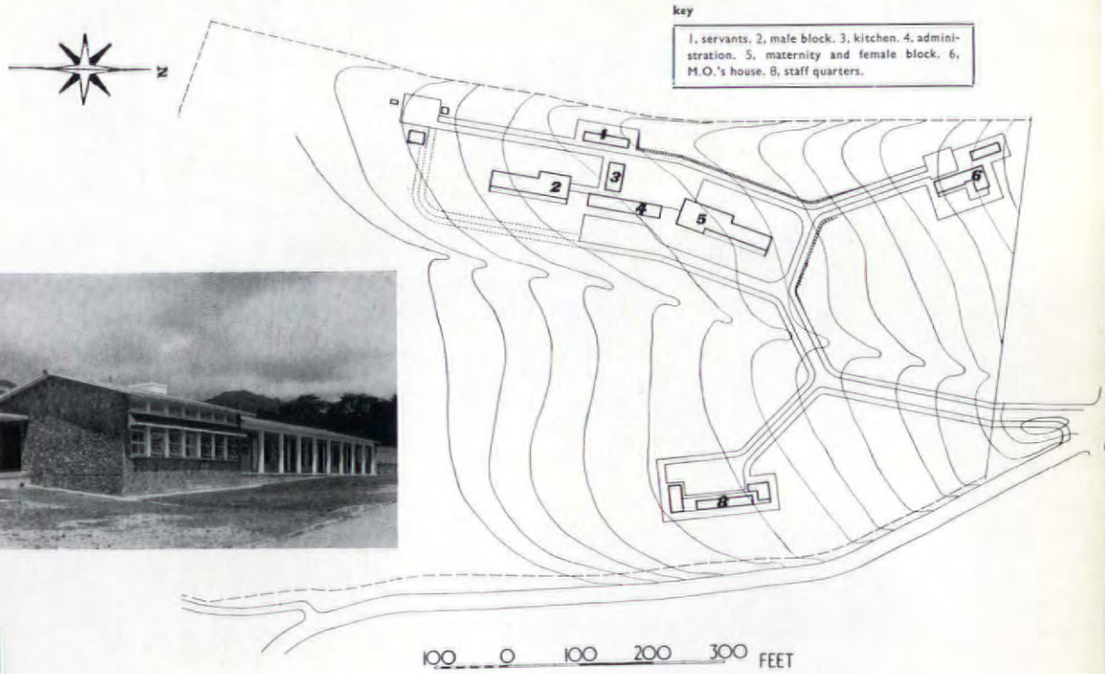
Wards, administration and kitchens are linked by a covered way, the residential buildings being set apart elsewhere on the site. Water comes from a regional supply system and storage tanks have been installed on an upper floor over the entrance. Lighting is from a diesel oil generating plant with batteries. A limited supply of hot water is provided by solar heating systems on the roof of each ward block. Fuel for cooking and washing is local firewood. The drainage system was designed by the Public Health Engineering Unit and consists of a series of septic tanks for soil drains and soakaways for stormwater. Eaves gutters have been omitted to reduce mosquito breeding and roofwater discharges into shallow concrete gutters at ground level.

Walls are rubble masonry with stones from neighbouring river beds and concrete blocks using a local form of laterite, rendered inside and outside. Roofs are timber with corrugated asbestos covering and fibreboard ceilings. Floors are granolithic, terrazzo, coloured cement tile and, in the wards, masonite sheets laid in mastic on a screed. Joinery is Trinidad red cedar and teak.

The buildings were erected by competitive tender at a cost of £32,000, that is £1,000 per bed.

27

27, *the administration block seen from the nurses' quarters.*



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29

28, *the maternity and female block and* 30, *the male block, both east elevations.* 29, *the kitchen and* 31, *the head doctor's house.*

30

31

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21

22

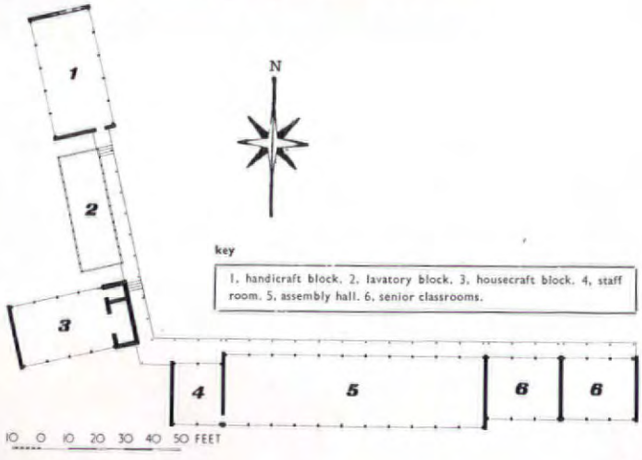
23

24

20 and 21, the covered way which runs round the east and north sides of the Vide Bouteille School at St. Lucia. 22, the school hall looking north towards the stage and 23, entrance porch at the south end. 24 shows an outdoor classroom which is situated to the east of the main school building near the domestic science room.

25

25 and 26, the River Sallee School, Grenada, from the playing field.



26

with panel infilling of louvres, shutters and glazed windows, a wood roof with corrugated asbestos covering, wood and grano floors. Bright coloured paints and distempers are used internally.

The buildings illustrated have been erected by the Public Works Department under the direction of Mr. Clarence Renwick, Superintendent of Works in Grenada and Mr. Curtis Knight, Colonial Engineer in St. Lucia. Building costs vary from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per foot cube and £18 to £25 per place.

17

18

17, *the flag-post and access balcony above the main entrance.* 18, *detail of roof at south-west corner of the open first and second floor galleries.*

girls' high school

6 TWO PRIMARY SCHOOLS

J. C. Rose: Executive Architect to the Windward Islands

These primary schools replace inadequate one-room wooden buildings which have long been unfit for use, or are in districts not previously possessing a school; they are based on standards laid down by R. Gardner-Medwin, Town Planning Adviser to the Comptroller of Development and Welfare in the West Indies from 1945 to 1947. In that period three prototype schools were built. Since then twelve schools have been added in the four islands.

The schools provide for the subdivision of children into age groups with separate classrooms and craftrooms, lavatories and cloakrooms and a unit of three classrooms convertible into an assembly hall and stage. Sites chosen are large enough to include a school playing field. Theoretically space allowances are 10 sq. ft. for juniors and 15 sq. ft. for seniors, but lack of trained teachers and an ever increasing school population make these standards difficult to maintain.

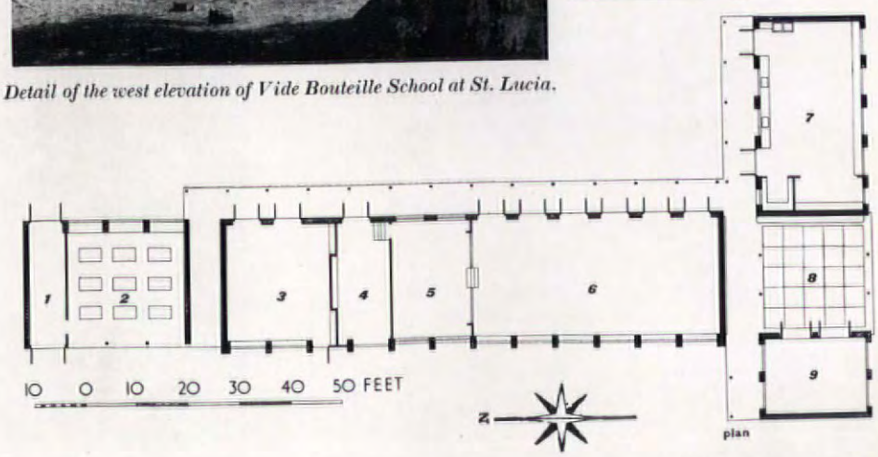
Materials used are the local rubble stone for walling, reinforced concrete columns or rubble piers

19

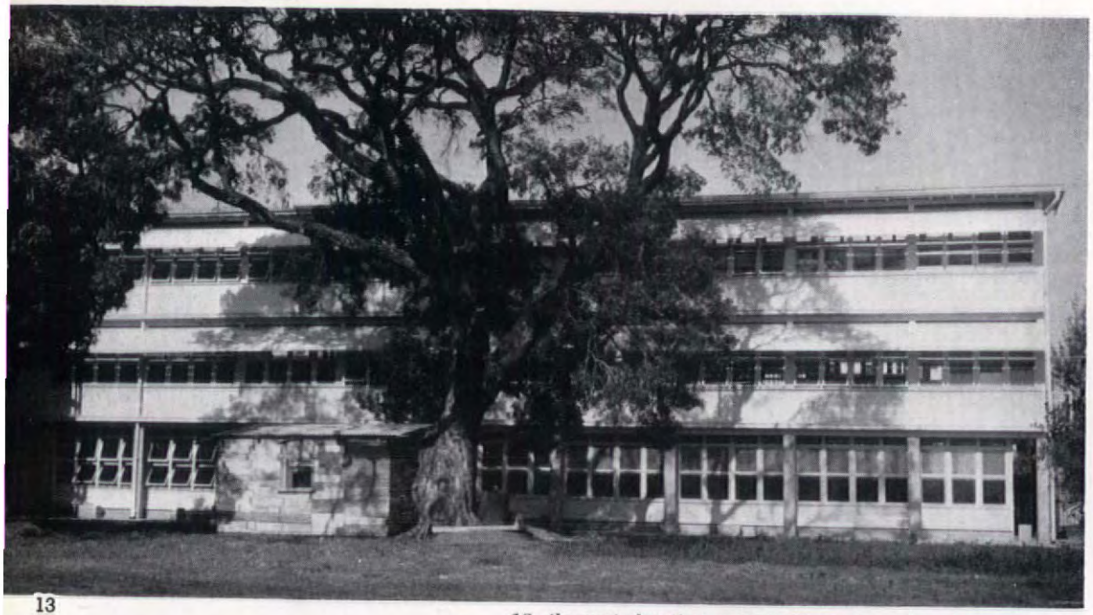
Detail of the west elevation of Vide Bouteille School at St. Lucia.

key

1, wood store. 2, handicraft. 3, senior classroom. 4, teachers' room. 5, stage. 6, assembly hall. 7, domestic science. 8, entrance porch. 9, infant classroom.



plan



13

13, *the west elevation and* 14, *the south and west elevations.* 15 *shows the hardwood brise-soleil which protect the open vents from driving rain.*

15

14

play space. A domestic science room annexe was required in a separate building, which could be used for evening classes.

With the frequent, almost horizontal driving rain, typical of this region, it is necessary to shut all windows for short periods. To provide adequate ventilation at such times the building is designed with continuous open vents set back at ceiling level and protected from the rain. With these vents are incorporated projecting hardwood brise-soleil which protect the rooms from direct sunshine whilst allowing the air to move freely and reflecting sunlight from the upper surfaces of the louvres.

Continuous air inlet vents are also constructed at skirting level. Partition walls on the gallery access side of the building have louvred openings at ceiling level to allow additional cross ventilation.

The building, which rests on reinforced concrete columns, is wholly constructed of greenheart hardwood from first floor level on a grid of 12 feet by 24 feet 6 inches. The roof is of corrugated asbestos. Ceilings are lined in ½-inch insulation board. All woodwork is painted. Floors are in polished purpleheart hardwood.

16

16, *east end of the north elevation showing entrance and glazed hall and staircase-well.*

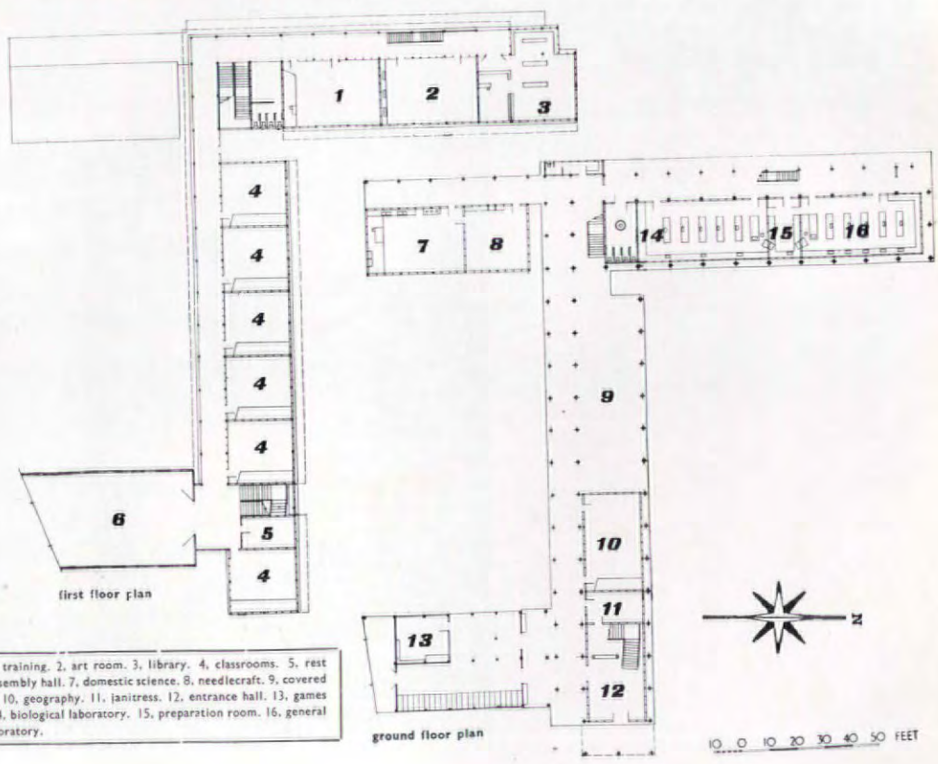
11, *the south end of part one of the Pine housing estate looking north.*

5 GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

Leo de Syllas: Government Architect and Planning Officer of Barbados 1945-7

The site for this school, which is in the centre of a residential area of the capital city of British Guiana, was already occupied by a large school building in a serious state of decay, with a relatively modern assembly hall. The programme called for a new school building incorporating the existing assembly hall. As the whole of Georgetown is below sea level, buildings are traditionally raised on pilotis to guard against flooding and to get maximum benefit from the prevailing easterly winds.

The standard accommodation is based on 20 square feet per pupil in classes of 30. There are 10 standard classrooms, in addition to biology laboratory, general science laboratory, geography classroom, business training classroom, library and two sixth form classrooms, which are on the first and second floors, a large part of the ground floor being left open as a covered



key

1, business training. 2, art room. 3, library. 4, classrooms. 5, rest room. 6, assembly hall. 7, domestic science. 8, needlecraft. 9, covered play space. 10, geography. 11, janitress. 12, entrance hall. 13, games mistress. 14, biological laboratory. 15, preparation room. 16, general science laboratory.

local shops and a playing field in the layout.

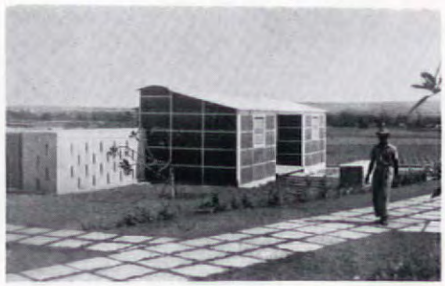
Part One of the scheme consists of thirty-eight terrace houses which all face north-east, the direction of the prevailing wind. Accommodation provided includes living room; one, two or three bedrooms; kitchen; shower bath and w.c. Densities are up to forty-eight houses per acre, but this does not appear overcrowded because of the terrace construction. Each house, which has a minimum of 2,000 square feet, is divided from its neighbour by a cactus hedge and has a stone wall with a back gate on to the access road behind. Houses are constructed of 6-inch coral-limestone walls plastered inside, rendered and colour-washed outside. Floors are of suspended timber and timber purlins support a corrugated asbestos roof. Windows are solid wood with top lining shutters.

The houses in Part Two of the scheme provide the same accommodation as in Part One with the exception that shower baths and w.c.'s are contained in a four-square sanitary unit at the intersection of four sites in order to economise in piping, plumbing and drainage. Existing standards provide no shower baths, an earth pit at the bottom of the garden, and a public stand pipe, anything up to 800 yards from the house for water, which has to be transported in a pail carried on the head. It will be seen therefore that the four-square unit, though far from ideal, is a big advance. Houses are built of prefabricated wall units manufactured principally from the waste fibre of the sugar industry. They are grooved on the four edges, and concrete, reinforced if required, is poured into the cavity horizontal or vertical where the two units meet. Details of the system, with costs, are given in full on page 322. Precast reinforced concrete door frames, window frames, purlins and corners were used. Roofing is corrugated asbestos. There are top-lining louvred shutters in the window frames.

A space standard of 48 square feet per person with sex segregation after the age of five years was adopted in both Parts.

6

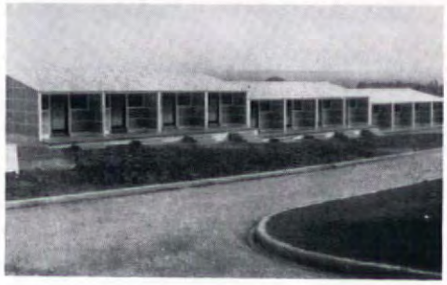
7



6 and 7 are individual houses in part two. Exteriors are colour washed brown, pink, blue, yellow or grey. 8, *the path running centrally*

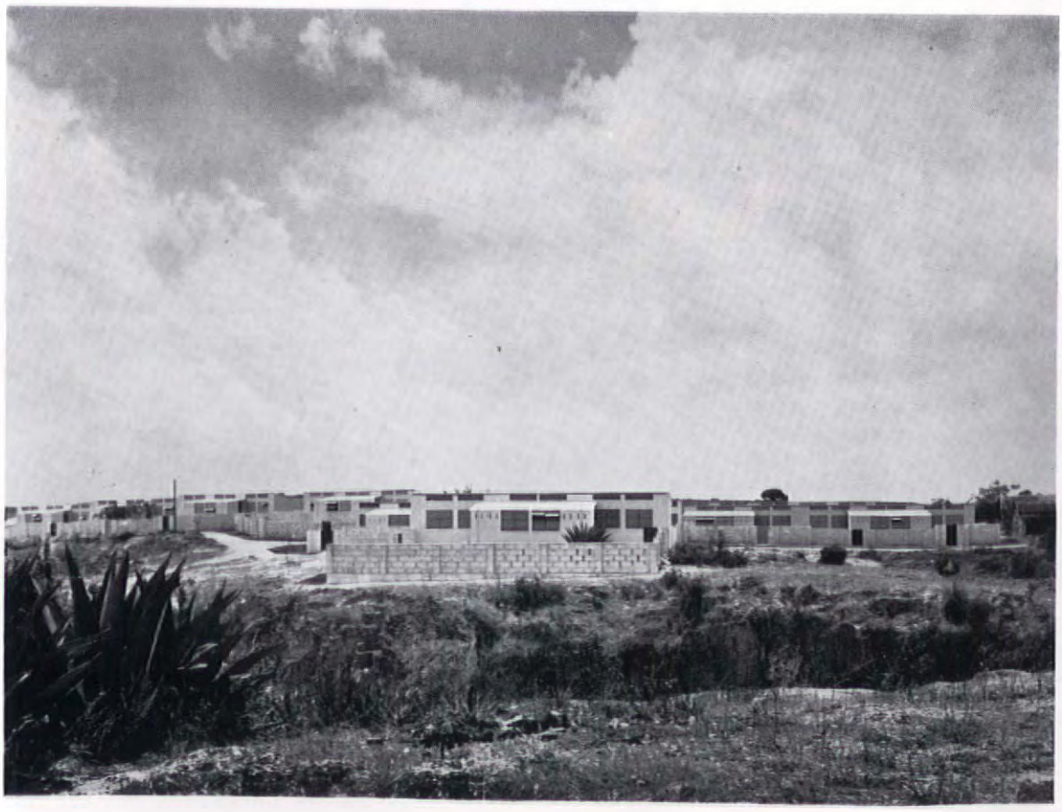
8

9



between the two groups of houses at the north end of the site. 9, *the only terrace in part two.* 10, *the estate seen from the west.*

10



4, the science laboratory on the ground floor and 5, the cantilevered balcony of the housecraft centre on the second.

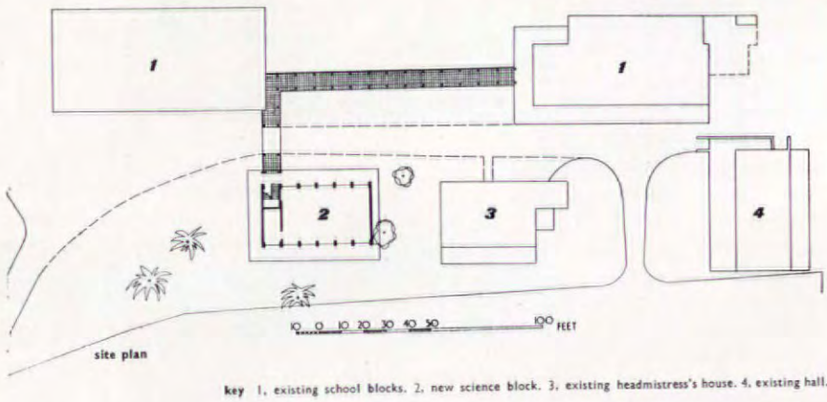
science laboratory for thirty pupils, suitable for lectures, demonstrations and individual experiment in chemistry and physics, a housecraft centre for the same number and its store and preparation room.

As housecraft activities take up more space than science, the housecraft centre is on the first floor extending over the cantilevered balcony on one side. These cantilevered sections form the necessary protection from sun and rain for the ground floor windows.

The structure consists of coral limestone piers supporting an encased steel beam for the first floor and timber roof trusses. Panels and cupboards are plastered and colour-washed hollow concrete blocks. First floor is of pre-cast reinforced concrete slabs 16 inches wide. All services are accessible in vertical ducts or in a trench with removable covers in the ground floor. Drainage is closed in acid-resisting pipes and traps running in the trench.

Coral-limestone piers are unplastered. Floors have four-inch T and G wood boarding for sitting areas and six-inch square concrete tiles for working areas. Doors, windows, fitments and furniture are locally made of imported soft-wood and are painted. Workbench tops, chain seats and backs are treated with acid-resisting solution which gives a polished black finish.

science laboratory and housecraft centre



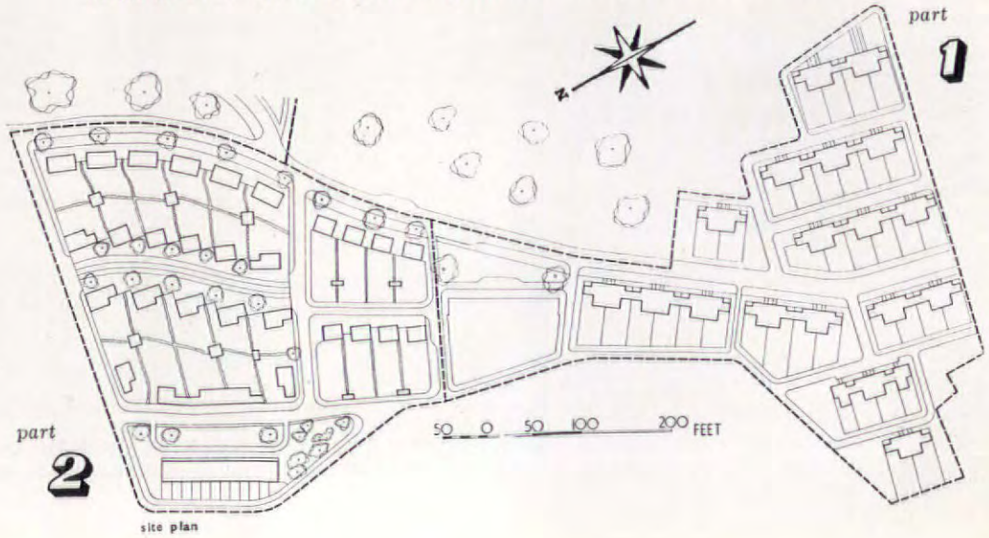
site plan

key 1, existing school blocks. 2, new science block. 3, existing headmistress's house. 4, existing hall.

4 PINE HOUSING ESTATE

Ralph Crowe : Government Architect and Planning Officer of Barbados 1947-50

Bridgetown suffers from serious ribbon development and this housing estate is intended to relieve the congestion within the city area. It is approximately a mile and a half from the city centre, on undeveloped land between two radial roads. Some 300 acres were purchased by the Government, 200 acres of which are used for a stock breeding station and other experiments by the Department of Agriculture and the remaining 100 acres for housing development. The housing area is separated from the Department of Agriculture's area and will be served by buses; it is also intended to include eventually an infant school,



site plan

2 HOUSECRAFT CENTRE

Leo de Syllas : Government Architect and Planning Officer of Barbados 1945-7

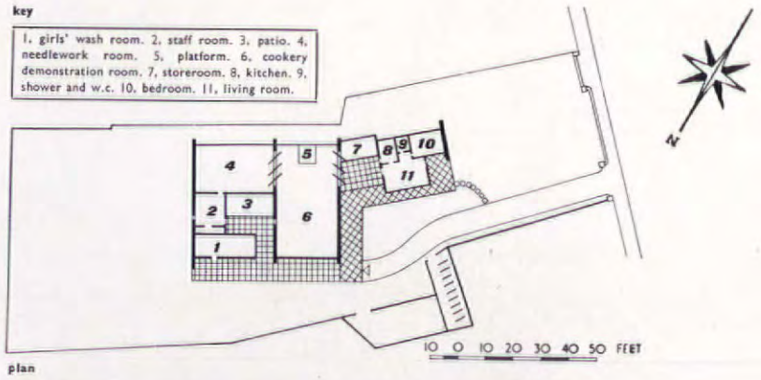
This building is for training secondary school children and young people who have left school in domestic science, and has been used

1

for experiments in training nutrition and welfare workers. It is planned round a central patio, and includes a main demonstration and practical room, equipped for cookery (by gas, oil, electricity and charcoal pot), and laundry work. There is also a large needlecraft room and, attached to the main building, a small cottage unit for classes in housewifery and home management. The architect was required to design these three main elements so that a senior instructor could generally supervise the classes simultaneously from one point.

Eighteen-inch thick cross walls of solid coral stone masonry, spanned by laminated plank timber trusses, carry corrugated asbestos roofing. A clerestory gives light and ventilation to the centre.

No timber was used structurally where it could not be removed without damaging the masonry in case of termite attack.



2

1, *the central patio of the housecraft centre.* 2, *the main entrance.*

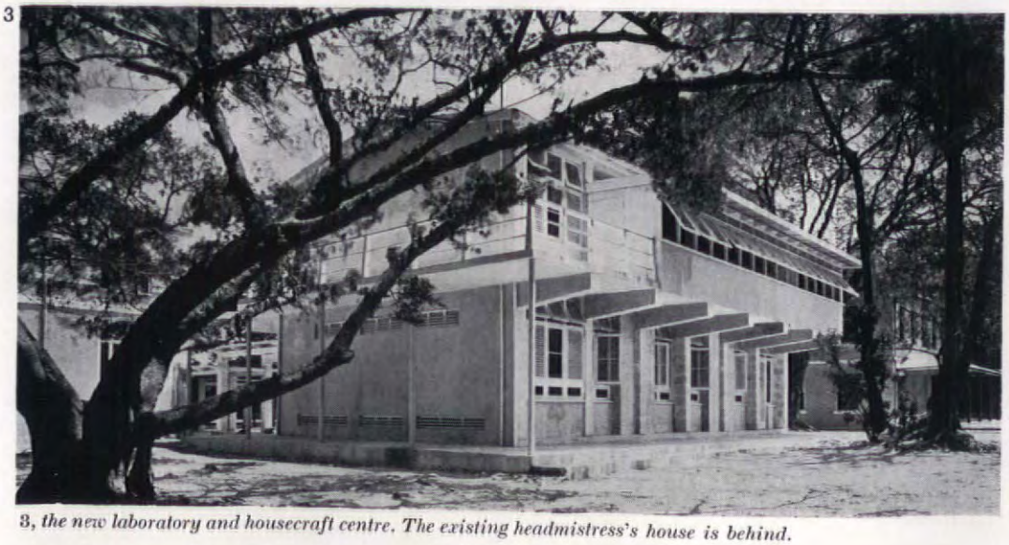
3 SCIENCE LABORATORY AND HOUSECRAFT CENTRE

Ralph Crowe : Government Architect and Planning Officer of Barbados 1947-50

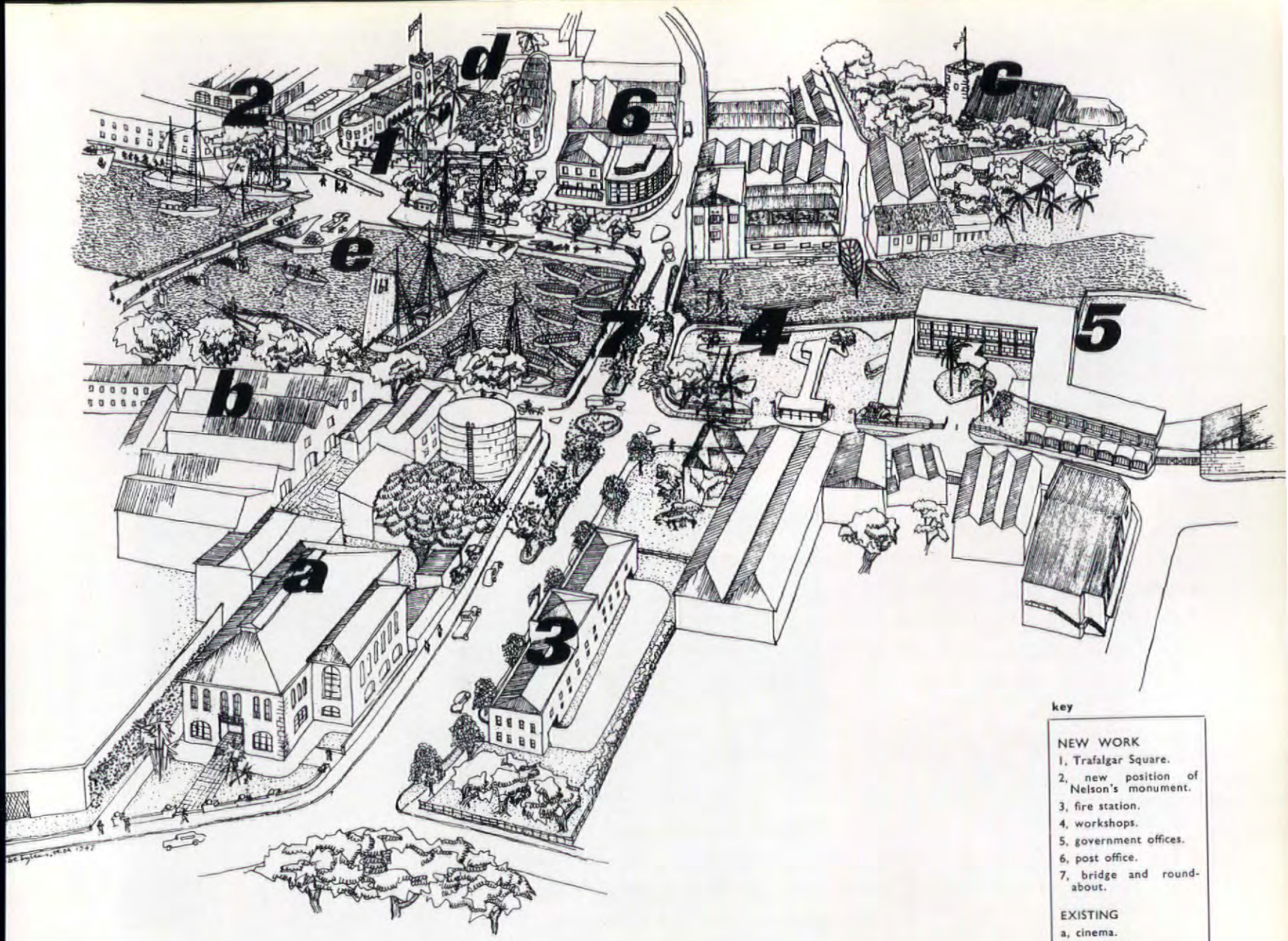
Queen's College is a first grade Girls' Secondary School housed in two old and inadequate buildings in Bridgetown. Between the two main buildings was a timber structure used as a science laboratory, but attempts to repair it revealed it to be so dilapidated that the Board of Governors decided to demolish it and rebuild. A new position was chosen to allow a clear site for the designer if the school is rebuilt in the future. The new science laboratory and housecraft centre will then serve the new school. Until rebuilding takes place the old and new buildings have been connected by a covered way.

Requirements were a general

3



3, *the new laboratory and housecraft centre. The existing headmistress's house is behind.*



key

NEW WORK

1, Trafalgar Square.
2, new position of Nelson's monument.
3, fire station.
4, workshops.
5, government offices.
6, post office.
7, bridge and roundabout.

EXISTING

a, cinema.
b, warehouses.
c, parish church.
d, government buildings.
e, careenage.

1 MASTER PLAN FOR BRIDGETOWN

Leo de Syllas : Government Architect and Planning Officer of Barbados 1945-7

In common with a number of West Indian islands, the Government of Barbados created in 1946 a new department to undertake the preparation of a master plan for the capital city as well as to co-ordinate building programmes for housing, education, health and other social services within the framework of a long term urban and rural development plan.

The Bridgetown master plan, prepared during 1946 and 1947, was based on draft model legislation for the creation of a planning and housing authority which had been worked out in collaboration with the Development and Welfare Planning Adviser and the Government of Barbados, and constituted a continuous background to the general work of the new department for the first two years of its existence. The master plan also made it possible to establish a general system of priorities for projects which the Department was to undertake.

The plan aimed at giving a general answer to all questions concerned with new housing development and slum clearance so that pilot schemes in this field could be undertaken against the long term background of housing development for the following ten year period. In view of the extremely serious traffic congestion the plan proposed a road development system which also indicated, by means of its zoning recommendations, where sites for projects should best be located.

It is regrettable to record that the Government of Barbados has failed up to the present to pass into law the draft legislation setting up the machinery to implement this plan.

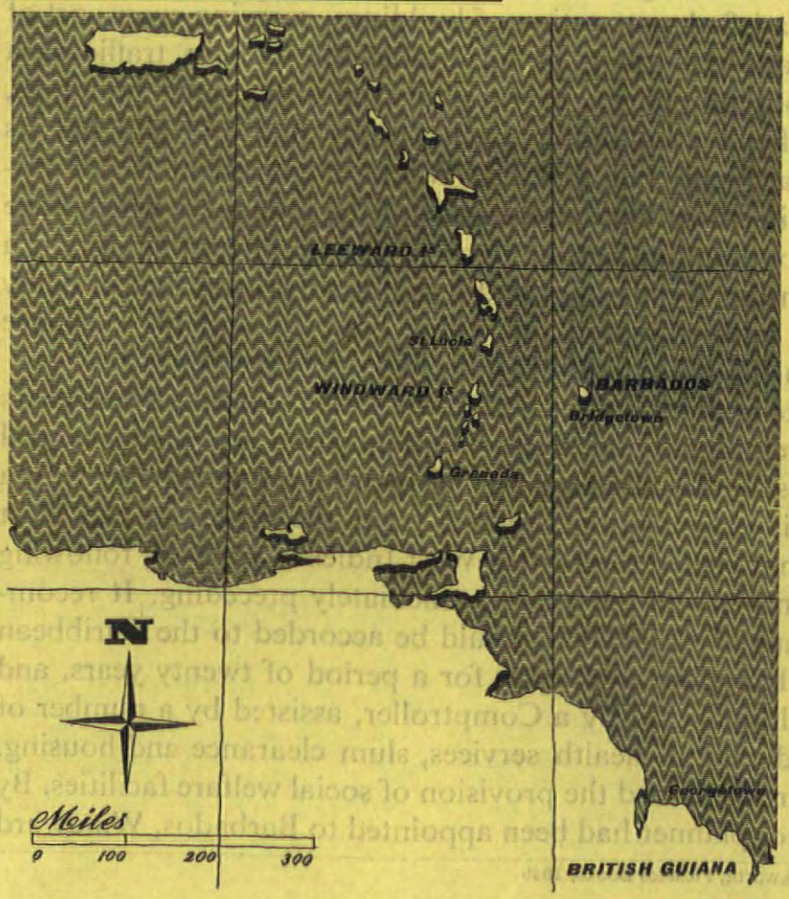
Islands, Leeward Islands and British Honduras and town planners to Jamaica and Trinidad. With this achievement it was decided to disband the central office in 1947.

Only the larger colonies have simple by-laws; the smaller ones have none. Development proceeds with little or no control and the architect's first task is to show that he has more to offer society than the practical man who builds for to-day but forgets that he is laying down a permanent feature perhaps for a hundred years. In the face of a rapidly growing population this would appear to be self-evident, but many interests are involved and because the architect has so recently arrived upon the scene, this is not very readily accepted.

Each colony has different local resources of building materials; coral-limestone in Barbados, clay in Trinidad and timber in Trinidad, Jamaica, British Honduras and British Guiana. These are but a few examples. A cement factory is now under construction in Jamaica and gypsum plaster is being produced near Kingston. All materials not found locally are imported, mostly from the United Kingdom but some from Canada and the United States. The agents and merchants through whom these materials pass add to a landed cost already high on account of freight charges.

A Building Liaison Officer has been appointed by the Colonial Office to collect and distribute building information between all British Colonies. Slowly the achievement of each colony will be communicated to the rest and the high standard set by the administrative and military authorities of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries will again be a contribution which Britain makes to the colonies.

The West Indies



contents of pages 283-291

Housecraft centre, Bridgetown, Barbados, illustrated on page 284.

official architecture in the WEST INDIES

Introduction by Ralph Crowe, Government Architect and Planning Officer of Barbados, 1947-50

Architecture in the West Indies has no roots in the region or in the Carib people. It is all derived from Europe. All through the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth, the age of prosperity for these islands, fine buildings were being erected. Most of these, it is true, were for public purposes, but the standard set was quickly adopted by the settled Europeans and the wealthier coloured population producing a good general Georgian 'Colonial' style. This style, although not universal, is sufficiently distributed for a thread to be recognized running through all permanent building. Craftsmen in wood and plaster were imported by successive Governors and the Royal Engineers attached to the Military Garrisons contributed to a high level of building. The history of this phase of West Indian architecture has already been documented.* We are here concerned with building to-day and the immediate influences upon it.

During the hundred years 1825-1925, the struggle of the sugar industry and the attendant economic strain threw the West Indians very much upon their own resources. The practical man was in great demand and although the first requirement of shelter was partly satisfied, congestion of buildings, carrying every sort of applied decoration, has made the towns as unsuitable for modern traffic as a medieval village but without its charm. In rural districts, the same buildings, viewed from a distance, offend even more. Each colony had and still has its official Public Works Department, but a Public Works Department is not primarily concerned with architecture. There were none of the influences which have produced the approach to building in Europe to-day. The architect therefore is a new and strange creature in the West Indies and it is not surprising that in many quarters his functions are misunderstood, his value doubted and his existence viewed with some suspicion.

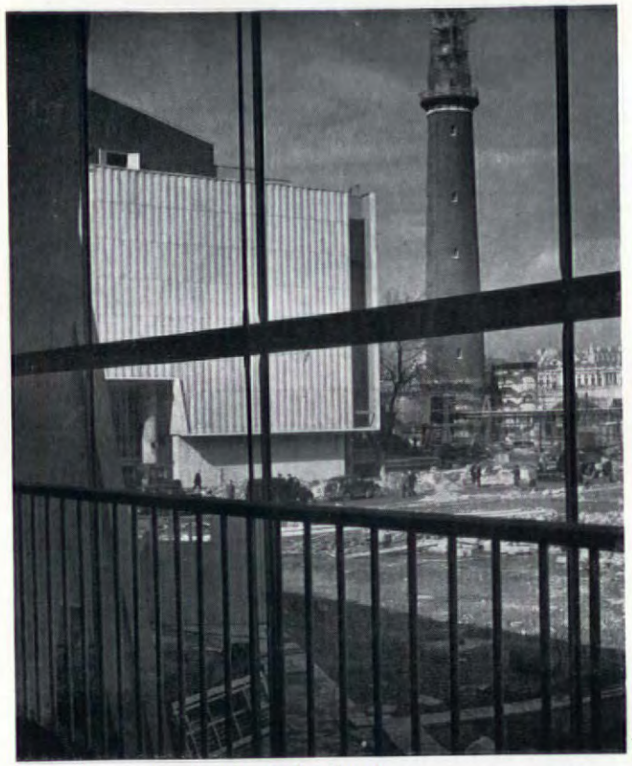
A small number of private architects appeared in the larger colonies some years before, but in 1943 the Development and Welfare Organization provided a central advisory service for the West Indies consisting of a Town Planning Adviser with a technical staff of four. This organization resulted from the report of the West India Royal Commission that visited the British West Indies in 1938-39, following disturbances that had taken place in the years immediately preceding. It recommended that an annual grant of £1,000,000 should be accorded to the Caribbean Colonies from the United Kingdom exchequer for a period of twenty years, and that this fund should be administered by a Comptroller, assisted by a number of advisers for assistance in education, health services, slum clearance and housing, the creation of labour departments and the provision of social welfare facilities. By 1947 an architect or architect-planner had been appointed to Barbados, Windward

* *Treasure in the Caribbean* by A. W. Ackworth, Pleiades Books, 1949.


HOUSECRAFT CENTRE

FIRST LOOK AT THE SOUTH BANK

Centrepiece of the 1951 Festival of Britain is the South Bank Exhibition which faces the Thames (on a site partly cleared by bombing, previously occupied by derelict industrial buildings), between County Hall and Waterloo Bridge. The exhibition is designed to show what the modern world owes to British achievements, particularly in science and industrial design. At the same time it will tell the story of the British people at work and at play, in industry, transport, the farm, on the seas, in sport and at leisure. The photographs on this page provide a first glimpse of the exhibition, to be fully illustrated in the August issue.



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1, the temporary facade of the Royal Festival Hall and the Shot Tower seen from the Lion and the Unicorn building. Waterloo Bridge can be seen in the distance. Boxes, 4, suspended from steel bipods and connected by corridors form, with the offices below, the Administration building. Architects are the Architects Co-operative Partnership. 5 is the Transport and Communications building designed by Arcon. The ground floor is open and laid out to display heavy exhibits such as railway engines. Behind the fully glazed upper facade an aircraft is suspended. 6 shows the lettering on the west end of the Television building, designed by the Festival Typography Panel (see AR, March, '51, pages 193–194). The Dome of Discovery designed by Ralph Tubbs, seen in 7 from the staircase of the Power and Production building, in 8 from the staircase of the Sea and Ships building and in 9 from its own staircase looking up at the Dome. 10 is an abstract of a ship's hull in the form of a canopy in the Sea and Ships building, designed by Basil Spence and Partners.

2

3

2, the south-west facade of the Lion and the Unicorn pavilion, designed by R. Y. Goodden and R. D. Russell. The eye-shaped windows are intended to provide a pattern of sunlight inside the building, and the louvres conceal the view of Hungerford Bridge. 3, the interior of the Lion and the Unicorn pavilion. The birds have been released from their cage by the lion and the unicorn—twin symbols of British character and tradition. On the end wall is a mural by Edward Bawden depicting English country life.

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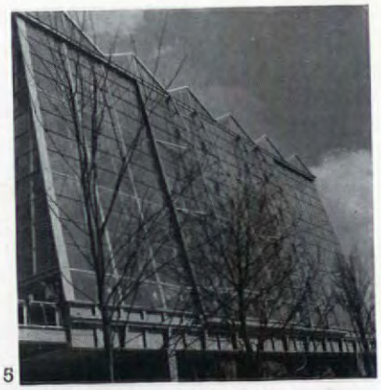

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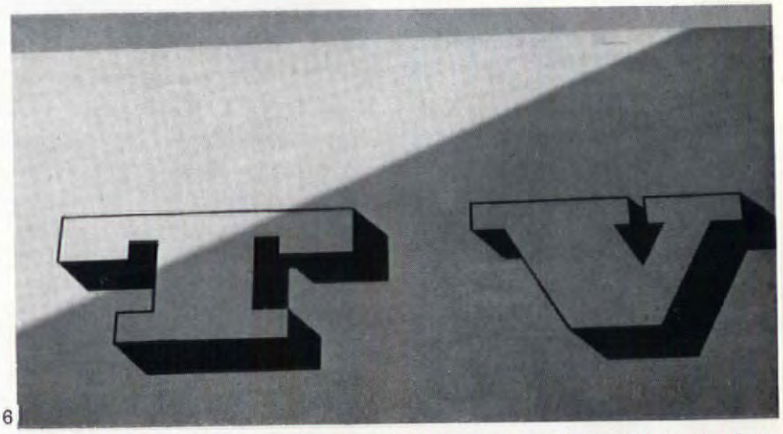

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10

J. M. Richards

1951 THE PRINCE'S VISION REALIZED

Somehow exhibitions do get completed, though they frequently conform to the tradition of being completed a little late. In a special sense the Great Exhibition of 1851 may be said to have been completed exactly a hundred years late, with the opening of the Festival of Britain this month. The Festival is not international in scope, but in all other respects it answers the 1851 purpose of demonstrating the application of art to industry and does so in the thoroughgoing fashion which the earlier exhibition, in spite of its resounding popular success, altogether failed to achieve.

The Prince Consort, were he to visit the South Bank this summer, would immediately recognize the fulfilment at last, after a whole century of gestation, of the project he and Henry Cole dreamed of. It is not on record how deeply the Prince was conscious of disappointment over the absurdities with which the Crystal Palace was crowded in the name of art and the misplaced ingenuity that stood for the achievements of industry. But he must have been aware that the exhibits—or at least those exhibits that indicated a conscious exercise of taste, as distinct from the machinery and engineering exhibits—were not going to open anybody's eyes to the revolution that science was due to bring about in every sphere of design. A hint of it—more than a hint for those who, unlike Mr. Ruskin, were not blind to the æsthetic significance of 'sparkling and of space'*—was indeed offered by the building that housed them, but although the Crystal Palace is frequently referred to as one of modern architecture's forerunners it had no direct influence. Rather than the first monument of a new era it was the last monument of a disappearing one, that era of inspired engineering which has bequeathed to us the masterpieces of Telford, Robert Stephenson and the younger Brunel. It was not till three-quarters of a century later, when 'sparkling and space' had already, through various different means, found the way of letting some fresh air into the stuffy store-houses of Victorian period revivalism, that modern architecture discovered its own reflection peering from the glass walls of Paxton's Crystal Palace.

It has been a long and uphill road which has led from the Prince's, Henry Cole's and Matthew Wyatt's prophetic words, uttered as a preliminary to 1851—words so enlightened in themselves yet so oddly out of character with the works to which they gave their approval—to the world-wide acceptance in the year 1951 of a modern architecture nourished by science and founding its æsthetic idiom thereon. The road has taken a circuitous route—by way of Paris, where a series of impressive exhibitions, owing much to the pioneer venture in Hyde Park, established once again the architectural respectability of creative engineering, by way of Vienna of the Sezession, of the Brussels of Henri van de Velde, of the Deutsche Werkbund and its descendant the Bauhaus, of Stockholm, Milan, Zurich and many other centres of thought and activity, and—last but not least—by way of the educational enterprises launched in this country as a direct result of the success of the Great Exhibition.

In their quiet way South Kensington, the Royal Society of Arts and their indirect offspring like the DIA and the CID have done valiant work and the theories they have propounded can now be seen taking practical shape on the South Bank and elsewhere. Britain has for the first time this summer instead of a few freakish examples of a modern style, a whole quarter where the twentieth century Englishman can wander about in a world of his own making.

The Prince Consort, knowing (as he had good reason to) the obstacles that stand in every reformer's path, would not perhaps have been surprised that it has taken just a hundred years for his ideas to achieve full-scale realization in the city where they were so earnestly conceived. Though some of its aspects might surprise him a little, it is not likely that he would have any difficulty in recognizing his offspring. He would find it the more easy to do so if he had been permitted to watch the events that accompanied its birth, since 1851 and 1951 have found themselves involved in much the same difficulties and controversies. If Hyde Park had its Col. Sibthorp, the South Bank has had its equivalent in the shape of an intransigeant press baron; if rumours were put about that the exhibition in Hyde Park would bring the riff-raff of Europe thronging round its doors, rumour has likewise asserted that an exhibition on the South Bank will bring all the traffic of London to a standstill. And a mere plague of sparrows is nothing to the problems—whether economic, political or meteorological—that the Festival organizers have had to overcome.

In spite of these problems, the South Bank exhibition—together with its adjuncts at Battersea and Poplar—is clearly destined to be a triumphant success. Apart from its intrinsic merits, the mere fact that it has been conceived and built in a contemporary spirit, with no sign of the compromise usually thought necessary in order to placate conservative and official taste, is sufficient triumph in itself. In August a special issue of the REVIEW will illustrate and analyse the South Bank exhibition in detail. Since it represents the biggest concentration of modern architecture with which the British public has yet been confronted, it will then be the REVIEW'S duty to criticize it in accordance with the most exacting standards. Meanwhile the preliminary pictures on the facing page and this brief introduction have as their purpose to welcome it as a bravely conceived undertaking, to salute the efforts of Gerald Barry, director-general, and Hugh Casson, director of architecture, and to state that, whatever faults the critics may find, the exhibition is in the literal sense epoch-making. With its completion the idea that animated the Prince Consort in 1851 at last finds appropriate expression.

* 'It is to this, then, that our Doric and Palladian pride is at last reduced! We have vaunted the divinity of the Greek ideal—we have plumed ourselves on the purity of our Italian taste—we have cast our whole soul into the proportions of pillars, and the relations of orders—and behold the end! Our taste, thus exalted and disciplined, is dazzled by the lustre of a few rows of panes of glass; and the first principles of architectural sublimity, so far sought, are found all the while to have consisted merely in sparkling and in space.' John Ruskin: *The Opening of the Crystal Palace Considered in Some of its Relations to the Prospect of Art.* London, 1854.

did not speak down to people from the cosy vantage point of theory, but talked to them as a practical man, conscious of ignorance but anxious to remove it. He himself was carefully instructed in both drawing and music, and he always said that this was an enormous advantage to him in appreciating the work and difficulties of others. This background of experience enabled him to speak his mind freely and he once startled Gilbert Scott by launching out into a tirade against the education of architects which he called 'contemptible in the extreme.' He went on to compare the æsthetic appreciation of architects most unfavourably with those of builders and even sappers. Surveying to-day the excruciating performance of most Victorian architects who shall say that he was wrong?

He was a careful reader of the *Builder* and it was due to his personal attention that the cottages on the Balmoral and Osborne estates were improved out of all knowledge, winning a warm encomium from Chadwick, the great sanitary reformer. He took the Queen to see Stephenson's bridge over the Menai Straits and while she drove across it he walked along the top of the tube. With characteristic brevity he commented in his diary about the bridge 'splendid'. Occasionally he made mistakes, and one of these was his decision to take the Queen and several of his children to an extraordinary concert in the Polytechnic. The musical instruments were played in a cellar and the noise was carried up to a lecture room (where the illustrious victims were sitting) by means of tubes which were connected with the sounding boards of three harps.

But he never held himself out as anything other than a searcher after scientific and philosophic truth. He never of course pretended to be a practical scientist. When he took on the Presidency of the Royal Association in 1859, he was at pains to say that he was nothing more than a simple admirer and would-be student and that it seemed to him impossible that he should be the spokesman for the leading scientists of the day. For scientists and men of learning—too often regarded as bores by the robust statesmen of mid-Victorian England—he had a great respect and he explained that one reason for his accepting the Presidency of the British Association was to give public testimony to the Queen's interest in what scientists were achieving.

Although to some too hasty students of these matters the work which the Prince did in encouraging science and the arts may seem obvious and such as any intelligent man might do—it has to be set against the general intellectual background of the time in which he lived. There are too main points to note. The first is that although the Victorians generally recognized that ugliness was abroad, they combined with this recognition a feeling of despair about curtailing ugliness and at times a sense almost of revelling in it as being something essentially British. It was, in those days, a commonplace that the cold and damp made it essential that beauty of design in houses should be sacrificed to comfort. The second, which is more formidable, was the prevailing and all pervading religious outlook of the Victorians. Religion dominated the whole intellectual life of those years, and the independent thinkers and researchers, with whom the Prince was numbered, undoubtedly attracted attention and criticism. One of the Queen's less respectable uncles described the Prince 'as very loose in his religious opinions and practically an atheist' and the following anecdote illustrates the gulf between the Prince and orthodoxy. When the Crystal Palace was moved to Sydenham the Bishops sent a message to the Prince that they could not possibly attend the opening ceremony unless the nude statues were draped. A prominent scientist suggested to the Prince that he might perhaps borrow a set of episcopal aprons for this purpose. But it would not be right to minimize the sincerity with which the opponents of science, in those days, feared it. They had the testimony of Darwin himself that in the course of his researches he had progressively lost his taste for literature, music and religion. Against that background it is possible to see the magnitude of Prince Albert's influence over nineteenth-century thought. A close examination of his speeches and writings and a consideration of the Great Exhibition as a practical demonstration of his ideals will show that his claim to inclusion among the greatest minds of Victorian England cannot be resisted. For some people (steeped in their Strachey) that claim may still seem too strong—to be based too much on the pathetic eulogies of the Queen and Tennyson. But even such critics will agree that the Prince possessed—and it is a rare combination—both an artistic and a scientific mind and that he was, in the truest sense of the word, a philosopher.

At that time scientists, rather like painters, still looked to the aristocracy for patronage. Encouraged by Peel the Prince joined the company of versatile investigators and patrons of science. He first asked that a competent scientist should investigate the Drainage System at Buckingham Palace. The result was alarming, since it was found that the main sewer ran through the courtyard and that the Palace was connected to this without any system of trapping. It was likewise found that the Palace kitchens had charcoal fires but no flues, and that the fumes went straight up to the royal nurseries. At Osborne, where the terrain was particularly suitable, the Prince, with the help of Professor Lyon Playfair, invented a system by which the sewage from the house could be used to fertilize farm land. In his own farms at Windsor and in speeches to the Royal Agricultural Society he was always anxious to illustrate the help which the scientist could bring to the farmer. The application of science to industry was naturally a topic which arrested the attention of anyone placed at the centre of public life in England at that time. Both Peel and the Prince were intensely alive to the importance of this and there can be no doubt that they both saw in the Exhibition a chance of furthering this.

In an important speech at the Mansion House which the Prince made a year before the Exhibition, he expounded the ideals which were behind it. There has been some debate as to the person really entitled to the credit for thinking of the Exhibition. At the start of his speech the Prince gives the answer to this when he expresses his gratification that 'a suggestion which I had thrown out' and which seemed 'to me of importance at this time' should have been so generally welcomed. After emphasizing the international character of the project he says that Man, whose reason is created by God, must use it to discover the laws by which God governs the world. 'Science—he went on—discovers these laws: industry applies them. . . . Art teaches us the immutable laws of beauty and symmetry, and gives to our productions forms in accordance to them. Gentlemen—the Exhibition of 1851 is to give us a true test and a living picture of the point of development at which the whole of mankind has arrived in this great task.'

When the Exhibition ended there was an immediate clamour for the Crystal Palace to remain in Hyde Park and to be used as a glittering species of Winter Garden or, as the Prince succinctly expressed it, 'for a lounging place.' He immediately drafted out a suggestion for employing the surprisingly large surplus of £186,000 in the provision of a permanent museum. He said that the object of this would be that art and science should not again relapse into a state of comparative isolation from each other, in which their progress is necessarily retarded. This was the germ of South Kensington and it was due to the Prince that that splendid site, on which metropolitan sporting men were shooting partridges in 1851, was secured for the nation. How strongly he felt on the subject is suggested by his writing of the man who went to bid for the site 'May God speed him that he may not have to pay too much.' The ghastly monstrosities, depressing to both eye and spirit, which later Victorian architects have piled on this coveted site should not blind us to the sweep and foresight of the Prince's plans.

Nor would it be wise to view the Exhibition as an isolated instance of the Prince Consort's enthusiastic pursuit of the ideal of harnessing science and art to industry. Four years after the Exhibition he went to Birmingham to lay the foundation stone of the Birmingham and Midland Institute. The zest with which Victorian philanthropists encouraged these institutes and the work which they did—in those days before the start of provincial universities and the growth of extension lectures—is a topic which has yet to be adequately explored. The Prince explained that he regarded the Birmingham Institute as much more than 'a simple act of worldly wisdom' but as one of the first public acknowledgments of the principle destined to play a big part in the future—namely 'the introduction of science and art as the unconscious regulators of productive industry.' This sentence illustrates the Prince's rather uncertain command of English. Though the meaning of the word 'regulator' is clear enough, its use is awkward. He went on to criticize—with a boldness which was rare and refreshing in a royal speech—the conventional education of Englishmen and the absence from their curriculum of any scientific instruction. This speech was described by Sir Norman Lockyer, the astronomer, many years later as 'the charter of the new system of teaching.'

What is striking about the Prince is that in his encouragement of science and the arts he

Roger Fulford

THE PRINCE CONSORT

VICTORIAN PHILOSOPHER

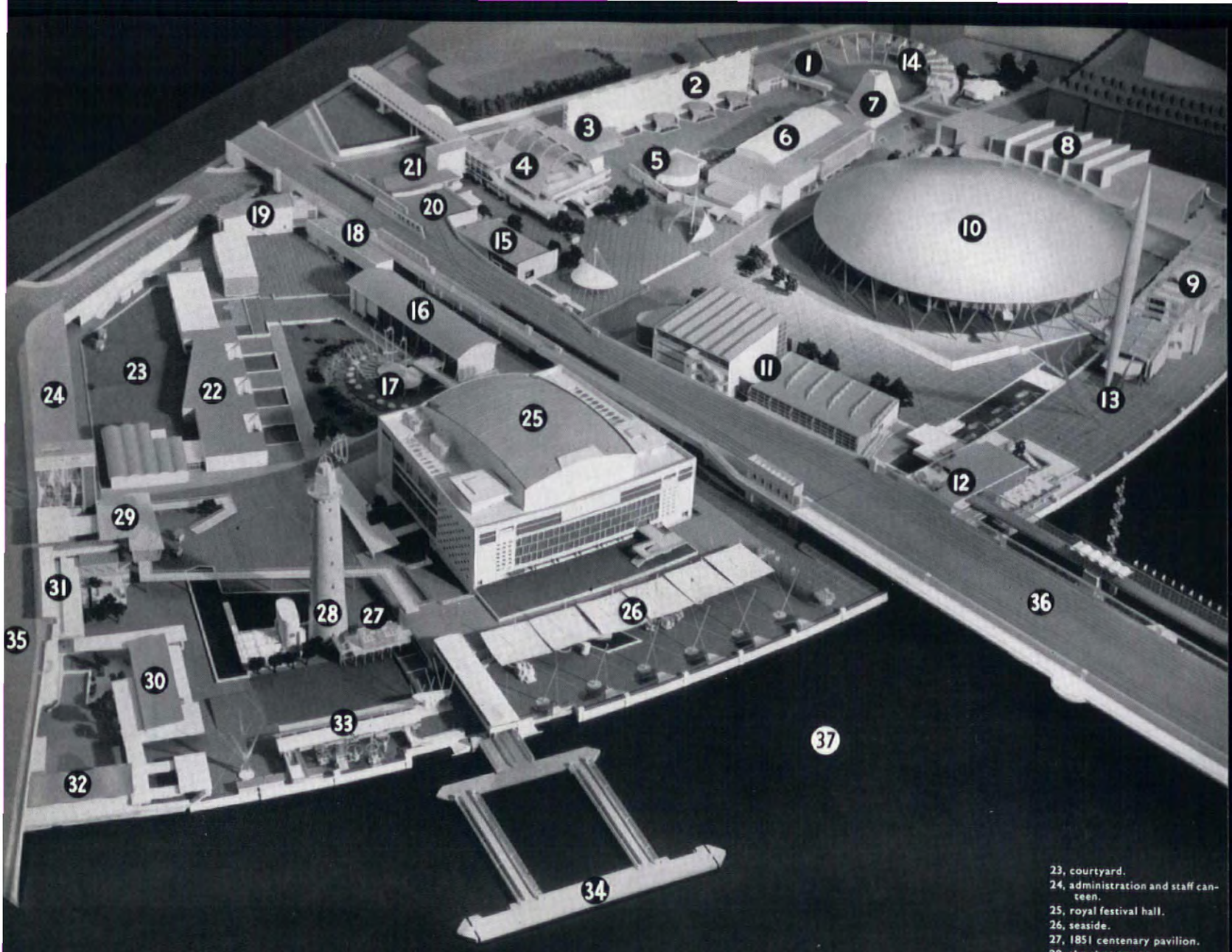
1851 HIS VISION OF INDUSTRY AND ART

No one could pretend that posterity has done justice to either the attainments or the influence of the Prince Consort. We see him in those middle decades of Victorian England —a fine, solemn, industrious figure yet somehow formidable and even forbidding. The perpetual eulogies which the Queen poured out to his memory—the more solid tributes of Hall, Memorial and Mausoleum—all combine to invest him with something of the stiffness of the centre of interest at a gigantic funeral. He is never brought back to life for us by one of those vivid, easy phrases which have done so much to vivify the characters of his contemporaries. For example, we can almost see the Queen when we read of her saying about Florence Nightingale 'What a head! I wish she was at the War Office'; or Palmerston when we remember his speaking of 'The watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong'; or Disraeli when we think of his remark 'I am the blank page between the Old Testament and the New.' We seem in a flash to see the speakers in all the glow and glitter of life. But from the Prince no saying of that kind has survived: in consequence there is no short cut to an understanding of his character, which can only be achieved by study of what he thought and stood for in the somewhat ponderous volumes published after his death. This helps to explain why easy-going writers like Lytton Strachey have allowed themselves to caricature the Prince by speaking of 'the portly and flabby figure' with 'the desiccated, discouraged brain.' By concentrating on the Prince's political work, which he did not enjoy and which did not come naturally to him, researchers might find some stray evidence to support Strachey's strictures but the whole picture of the man leaves them revealed in all their stark absurdity.

The gifts and interests of the Prince were principally concentrated in science and the arts, and this side of his personality is of particular interest to-day when the public attention is concerned with the Exhibition of 1851. The Prince's interest in these matters has never been properly explored.*

The prominent Englishman of that period with whom the Prince was most in accord was Sir Robert Peel. This statesman formed, for his own enjoyment, a superb collection of pictures and he was likewise intensely interested in the advancement of science. He was responsible for suggesting that the Prince—then a youth of 22—should become the chairman of the Fine Arts Commission which was appointed in 1841 to see whether the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament might not afford a means of encouraging the fine arts. This Commission provided the Prince with his introduction to English public life and he rapidly impressed his fellow-Commissioners. In a confidential letter to a friend Peel wrote 'You will find him one of the most extraordinary young men I have ever met with.' Writing to the Prince in 1844 Peel describes how he is entertaining at his home in the country 'some very distinguished scientific men' and how he has invited all his principal tenants to meet them so as to discuss the application of science to agriculture.

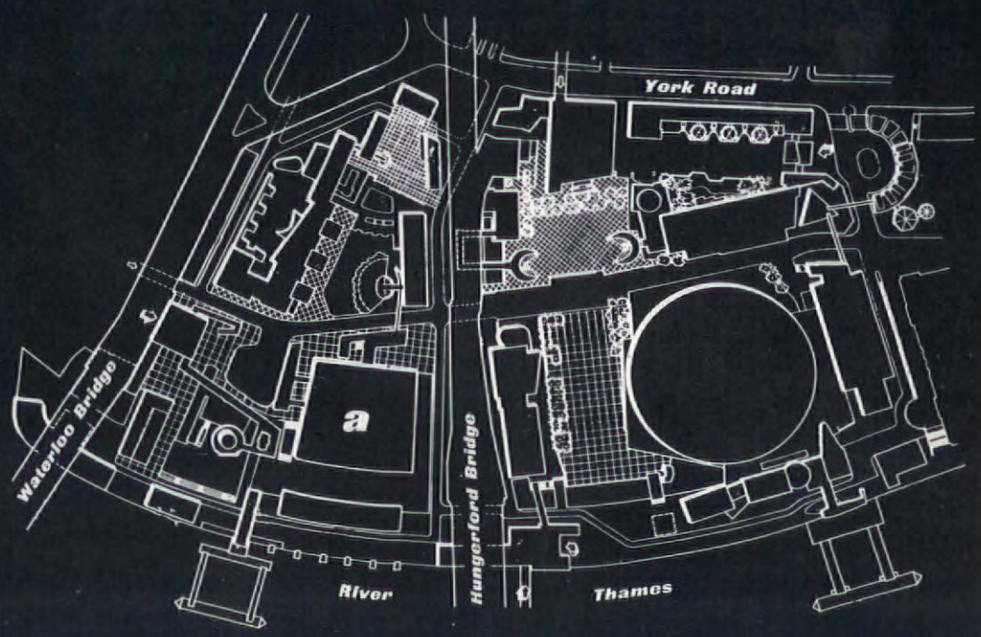
* Although the gap—so far as art goes—has been admirably filled by Mr. John Steegman's book *Consort of Taste.*



The South Bank exhibition of the Festival of Britain opens this month and will provide a large part of the population of London—besides many thousands of visitors—with their first view of modern architecture on a scale bigger than that of the isolated individual building. It will introduce them to the æsthetic possibilities of modern structures and materials in the specially stimulating way that the legitimate exaggerations of display architecture permits; also to the charms of informal townscape, in which architecture plays its part in providing interesting changes of view for the perambulating spectator. Above is a model of the exhibition, which will be fully illustrated in the August issue, showing the layout of the temporary exhibition buildings on their 27-acre site beside the Thames. The site also contains one permanent building, the London County Council's concert hall (a, on the plan), which is the first instalment of the projected redevelopment of this derelict industrial area as a cultural centre. The concert hall will be illustrated in a special number of the REVIEW *next month.*

key

1, Chicheley street gate.
2, information and post office.
3, fairway café.
4, station gate, escalator hall for underground below.
5, the land of Britain.
6, the natural scene and the country.
7, minerals of the island.
8, power and production.
9, sea and ships.
10, dome of discovery.
11, transport and communications.
12, regatta restaurant and embankment gate.
13, the Skylon.
14, administration block.
15, the people of Britain.
16, the lion and the unicorn.
17, unicorn café.
18, television.
19, telecinema.
20, locomotive exhibit, turntable café below.
21, police and first-aid.
22, homes and gardens.
23, courtyard.
24, administration and staff canteen.
25, royal festival hall.
26, seaside.
27, 1851 centenary pavilion.
28, the shot tower.
29, Waterloo bridge gate, new schools and design review below.
30, harbour bar.
31, health.
32, Thames-side cafeteria.
33, sport.
34, Rodney pier.
35, Waterloo bridge.
36, Hungerford bridge.
37, river Thames.



THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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The Cover is from a photogram by Nigel Henderson. A photogram, it will be remembered, is a photograph made without the agency of a camera, the objects to be included being laid direct on sensitized paper; in this case all the objects are ones connected with the building trades. Nigel Henderson, whose powers of design turn what in origin was a Victorian nursery game into a serious art, is a Londoner, born in 1917. Before the war he worked for three years as assistant to the picture restorer at the National Gallery. The war he spent in Coastal Command; after it he went to the Slade. He has exhibited in a collage exhibition at the Guggenheim Gallery. His interest in photograms developed as a by-product of part-time employment in a photo-copying agency; an exhibition of his work in this medium will be held at the Hanover Gallery in the autumn.

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THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

englische Treppenhäuser wiederholt in Bezug auf ihre Anlage und Dekoration untersucht worden sind, ist ihre aesthetische Bedeutung im weiteren Sinne bisher kaum beachtet worden. Der Verfasser untersucht die Geschichte des englischen Treppenhauses vom Mittelalter bis ins beginnende 17. Jahrhundert, er schildert die Entwicklung der Haupttypen und zeigt wie sie in ihrer Formensprache und in der Stellung, die sie im Gesamtplan einnehmen, den Wandel in der Auffasung offenbaren.

Seite 307: *Alexander Jackson Davis von Wayne Andrews.* Alexander Jackson Davis war einer der erfinderischsten und zugleich erfolgreichsten amerikanischen Architekten in der Zeit von 1825 bis 1865. Er gehört keineswegs zu den Vergessenen, über ihn und seinen Mitarbeiter Ithiel Town ist kürzlich ein Buch erschienen. In diesem Aufsatz jedoch untersucht Wayne Andrews die bisher unveröffentlichten Notizbücher und Briefe von Davis im Metropolitan Museum in New York, die seine Laufbahn in neuem Licht zeigen. Eine Reihe zum ersten Mal photographierter Bauten gibt ein Bild von Davis, das sich von der bisherigen Vorstellung in wesentlichen Punkten unterscheidet.

Май 1951 г.

КРАТКОЕ СОДЕРЖАНИЕ СТАТЕЙ

Стр. 275. **РОДЖЕР ФУЛФОРД.** ПРИНЦ — СУПРУГ, ВИКТОРИАНСКИЙ ФИЛОСОФ. ЕГО ДАЛЬНОВИДНОСТЬ В ВОПРОСАХ ПРОМЫШЛЕННОСТИ И ИСКУССТВА (1851 Г.)

Если бы можно было приписать кому-либо единоличную заслугу в создании Великой (Лондонской) Выставки 1851 г., то этим лицом был бы несомненно Альберт, Принц Уэльский, муж королевы Виктории. Ибо это был он, кто, как он сам выразился, „бросил эту мысль", которая быстро пустила корни в плодотворной почве Англии раннего Викторианского периода, давши в необыкновенно короткое время такие обильные плоды. Это по его замыслу прибыль от Выставки была использована для создания постоянных музеев, и в результате этого замысла появился в Южном Кенсингтоне (одном из наиболее интересных муниципально-автономных районов Лондона) теперешний многообразный центр рассадников науки и искусства (музеев и университетских колледжей). Слишком часто, однако, образ этого человека, сыгравшего такую значительную роль в истории своего времени и столько после себя оставившего, связывается с грандиозным, но высшей степени неудачным, памятником, который был ему воздвигнут в Хайд Парк'е. В этом памятнике ему придана окоченелость центра внимания гигантских похорон, наряду с тучной и рыхлой фигурой, смешной и мало-привлекательной, и высушенным, обескураженным мозгом карикатур Литтон'а Стрячи. По мнению автора, ранее написавшего биографию короля Георг'а IV, сейчас пришло уже время для переоценки этого выдающегося человека. В настоящей статье автор приводит ряд фактов, ясно свидетельствующих о живом интересе и большой осведомленности принца Альберта как по отношению к искусству, так и по отношению к науке. По заключению автора, всякий согласится, что принц Альберт обладал как артистической натурой, так и научным умом, иначе говоря, он был философом в истинном значении этого слова.

Стр. 278. **ДЖ. М. РИЧАРДС.** ЛОНДОНСКАЯ ВЫСТАВКА 1951 Г., КАК ОСУЩЕСТВЛЕНИЕ ЗАМЫСЛА АЛЬБЕРТА, ПРИНЦА-СУПРУГА.

Автор задает себе вопрос о том, как бы отнесся принц Альберт к заново перестраиваемой Южной Набережной реки Темзы в Лондоне, если бы он мог видеть ее в это лето. Перед тем, как дать ответ на этот вопрос, автор приводит ряд иллюстраций, показывающих эти новые здания и сооружения. Автор высказывает мысль, что принц признал бы в этих новых строениях осуществление проектов, о которых он мечтал в свое время, теперь, наконец, после целого века шутливого к ним отношения. Он признал бы в них наглядное доказательство плодотворности органического сотрудничества науки, промышленности и искусства, которого выставке 1851 г. осуществить не удалось. Выставка, сама по себе, по содержанию своему, является осуществлением идеалов принца Альберта; здания же ее как бы исполняют обещание Новой Архитектуры, воплощавшейся в Хрустальном Дворце, этом знаменитом сооружении спроектированном на эстетической основе „сверкающего блеска и пространства", столь антипатичной для Джона Раскин'а. Трудности, стоявшие на пути организаторов нынешней выставки, скорее превышают те препятствия, которые пришлось преодолеть их предшественникам сто лет тому назад. Несмотря на все эти трудности, совершенно ясно, что выставке предстоит триумфальный успех. Новейшее же зодчество, которое будет на этой выставке развернуто перед британской публикой в невиданном еще ею масштабе, неизбежно окажет огромное влияние на ее вкус.

Стр. 293. ЖИЛИЩНАЯ ЕДИНИЦА ЛЕ КАРБЮЗЬЕ.

„Жилищная единица", которую Ле Карбюзье создал в Марселе, вызвала больше споров, чем какая-либо другая послевоенная постройка. Редакция нашего журнала еще раньше выразила свое намерение уделить место обзору предстоявшего тогда обмена мнений относительно построек Ле Карбюзье, который теперь имел место на частном собрании Жилищной Секции Архитектурного Отдела Лондонского Графства, совместно с приглашенными на это собрание гостями. В этом обсуждении были затронуты все стороны этого вопроса, как технико-строительные, так и эстетические и социально-бытовые. Те, кто по этим вопросам высказывались, были непосредственно осведомлены относительно этой схемы Ле Карбюзье.

Стр. 301. **Е. Ф. СЕКЛЕР.** АНГЛИЙСКИЕ ЛЕСТНИЦЫ.

Редко какая часть строения так непосредственно и так определенно выявляет чувства зодчего относительно материала и пространства, как лестничная клетка. Конструкция английской лестничной клетки, ее орнаментация и степень ее художественной законченности исполнения, обсуждались довольно часто. С другой стороны, очень мало внимания уделялось эстетическому значению лестничной клетки, в широком смысле этого слова. Автор излагает историю английской лестничной клетки, начиная со средних веков и кончая началом XVII века. Он прослеживает эволюцию главных ее типов и показывает, как она отражает в себе меняющееся со временем общее отношение к архитектурному проекту, как в своей форме, так и в том месте, которое оно занимает в общем плане здания.

Стр. 307. **УЭЙН АНДРЮС.** АЛЕКСАНДР ДЖЭКСОН ДЭВИС.

Александр Джэксон Дэвис был одним из наиболее одаренных богатым воображением и вместе с тем одним из наиболее успешных архитекторов в Америке, практиковавших в период 1825-1865 гг. Он далеко не позабыт еще, и только недавно о нем и о его партнере Айтиел'е Таун'е вышла книга. В настоящей статье Дэвис использует неопубликованные заметки и письма, хранящиеся в Столичном Музее в САШ („Метрополитэн") бросающие новый свет на карьеру архитектора и на его творчество. Статья иллюстрирована рядом совершенно новых фотографий с возведенных им зданий.

Traductions Übersetzungen Переводы

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW MAY 1951

Mai 1951

Page 275: *Le Prince Consort—Philosophe de l'époque de la Reine Victoria, par Roger Fulford.* 1851. Sa vision de l'industrie et de l'art. Si la Grande Exposition de 1851 peut être attribuée à une personne quelconque, l'honneur en revient à Albert, Prince Consort, époux de la Reine Victoria, car ce fut lui—comme il l'exprima d'ailleurs lui-même—qui sema la graine qui germa dans le sol fertile de l'Angleterre de la jeune Reine et qui, en un espace de temps très court, porta des fruits si remarquables. Ce fut le Prince Consort aussi qui conçut l'idée d'appliquer les bénéfices de l'Exposition à la fondation d'un musée permanent et les résultats s'en admirent aujourd'hui dans la grande concentration d'arts et sciences à South Kensington. Pourtant voilà l'homme qui, lorsqu'il est contemplé sans rapport à ces autres monuments qui 's'associent pour l'investir de la raideur de l'objet principal d'un enterrement gigantesque' devient trop aisément dans notre pensée un personnage comique et peu attrayant—'la forme potelée et flasque' au cerveau desséché et découragé de la caricature de Lytton Strachey. L'heure est venue, dit le biographe de George IV, de pratiquer une revalorisation et, au cours de cet essai, il examine une partie des abondants témoignages faisant ressortir l'intérêt éveillé et bien renseigné du Prince Consort en ce qui concerne les arts et la science. Tout le monde, conclut-il, sera d'accord que le Prince possédait un esprit à la fois artistique et scientifique et qu'il était, dans le sens le plus juste du mot, un philosophe.

Page 278: 1951. *Réalisation du rêve du Prince, par J. M. Richards.* Que penserait le Prince Consort s'il pouvait rendre visite au South Bank (rive droite de la Tamise) cet été? J. M. Richards, en présentant ces quelques illustrations préliminaires de l'Exposition du South Bank (qui sera pleinement illustrée et commentée dans le numéro spécial de la REVUE d'août) suggère que le Prince reconnaîtrait la naissance enfin, après un siècle entier de gestation, du projet dont il avait rêvé—une démonstration de la collaboration fructueuse de la science, de l'industrie et des arts, ce qui manquait malheureusement à la Grande Exposition de 1851. Et si le contenu des bâtiments incorpore des 'illusions' du Consort, les bâtiments eux-mêmes représentent la réalisation de la promesse d'une nouvelle architecture qui se trouvait incarnée implicitement dans le Crystal Palace (Palais de Cristal), architecture basée esthétiquement sur le 'scintillement et l'espace' de cette construction fameuse, dont John Ruskin reçut l'empreinte d'une façon si désagréable. Les difficultés contre lesquelles ont eu à lutter les organisateurs de l'Exposition du South Bank ont égalé au moins celles qui confrontèrent son prédécesseur d'il y a 100 ans. Malgré ces difficultés, l'entreprise est destinée évidemment à remporter un succès éclatant et, en tant que la plus grande démonstration d'architecture moderne présentée jusqu'ici au public anglais, son effet sur le goût de ce public sera probablement énorme.

Page 293: *L'Unité d'Habitation de Le Corbusier.* L'Unité d'Habitation de Le Corbusier à Marseille a fait l'objet d'un plus grand nombre de discussions que tout autre bâtiment quelconque construit n'importe où depuis la guerre. L'intention annoncée précédemment par la REVUE de consacrer de la place à la critique de l'architecture contemporaine se trouve exécutée ici sous forme condensée par le rapport d'une réunion, au sujet de l'édifice de Le Corbusier, qui a eu lieu dernièrement entre les membres de la Section du Logement du Département des Architectes du Conseil Municipal de Londres (LCC) et leurs invités, réunion d'ordre purement officieux. Tous les aspects du projet: social, structural et esthétique, ont été discutés par des conférenciers connaissant personnellement l'édifice.

Page 301: *Les Escaliers Anglais, par E. F. Sekler.* Peu de particularités font ressortir sans équivoque les sensations de l'architecte au sujet de la matière première qu'est l'espace, que le fait l'escalier. Pourtant, quoique les escaliers anglais aient été discutés bien souvent, du point de vue de ceux qui s'intéressent à leur construction, l'adresse de leurs artisans et leur décoration, leur signification esthétique, dans le sens général du mot, n'a fait l'objet que de peu d'attention. Dans cet article, Mr. Sekler examine l'histoire de l'escalier anglais depuis le Moyen-Age jusqu'au début du 17e siècle, il trace l'évolution des types principaux et démontre comment, tant par la forme qu'il revêt que par la position qu'il occupe dans le plan général, il reflète la façon changeante du dessin architectural.

Page 307: *Alexander Jackson Davis, par Wayne Andrews.* Alexander Jackson Davis fut l'un des architectes américains les plus imaginatifs et les plus couronnés de succès pendant l'époque 1825-65. Loin d'être oublié, il vient (avec son associé Ithiel Town) de faire l'objet d'un livre paru récemment. Au cours de cet article, Wayne Andrews se sert de notes inédites et de la correspondance de Davis qui se trouvent au Musée Métropolitain pour jeter un nouveau jour sur sa carrière et il donne des illustrations d'un nombre d'édifices qui n'ont encore jamais été photographiés. L'effet en est de présenter un aspect qui diffère quelque peu de celui accepté jusqu'ici de l'accomplissement de Davis.

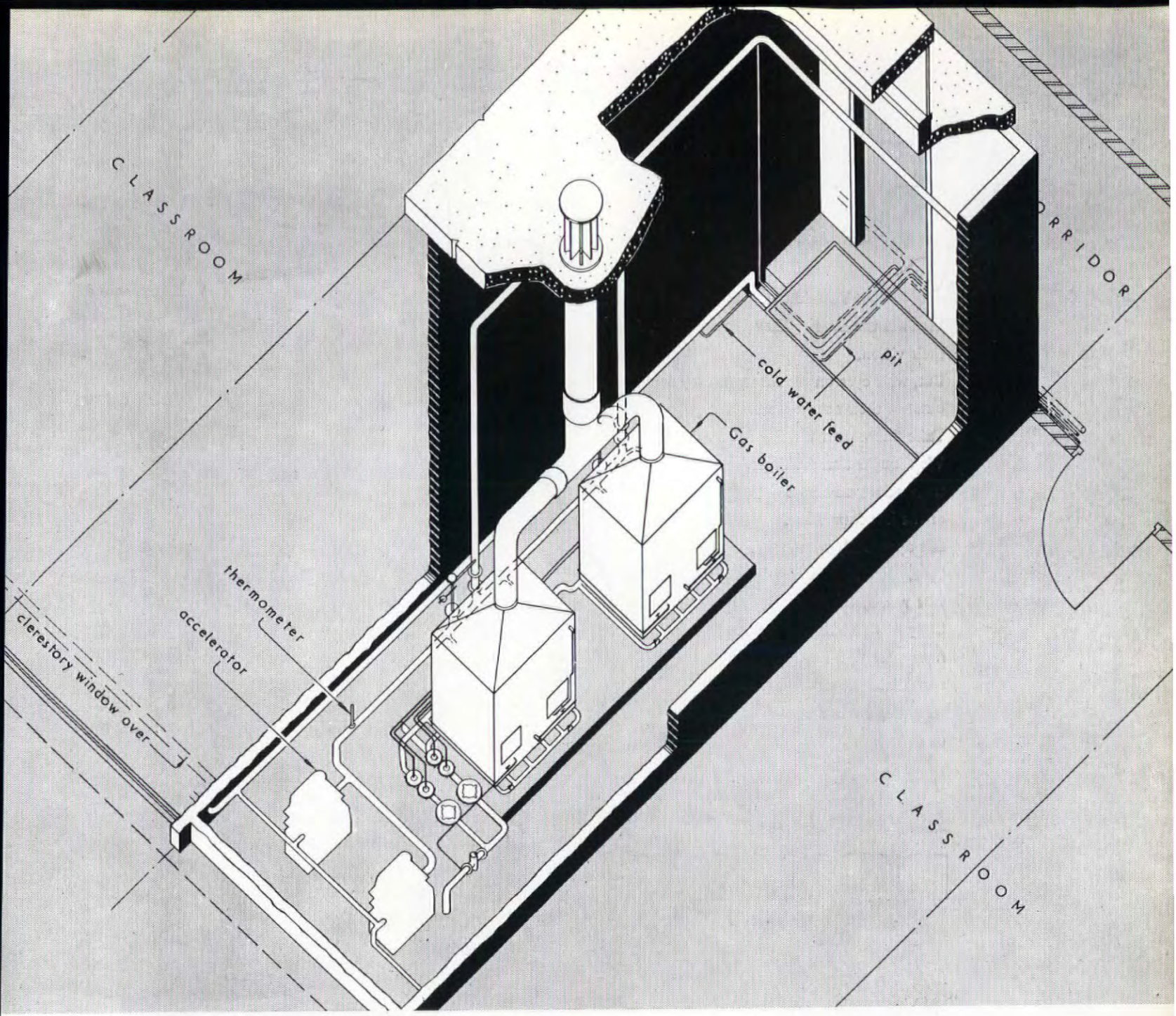
Mai 1951

Seite 275: *Der Prinzgemahl, ein Philosoph aus der Victorianischen Zeit, Seine Vorstellung von Industrie und Kunst im Jahre* 1851 *von Roger Fulford.* Falls ein einzelner Mensch das Verdienst für die grosse Ausstellung von 1851 für sich beanspruchen darf, so ist Prinz Albert, der, wie er es selbst formuliert hat, 'die Anregung gab,' die im fruchtbaren Boden des frühen Victorianischen England Wurzel schlagen und in erstaunlich kurzer Zeit so reiche Frucht tragen sollte. Er war es auch, der den Gedanken hatte, den pekuniären Ertrag der Ausstellung für die Gründung eines Museums zu benützen. Das Ergebnis sehen wir in den grossen Sammlungen für Kunst und Wissenschaft in South Kensington. Und doch ist dies der Mann, der, wenn man an ihn denkt, ganz abgesehen von anderen Denkmalen, 'welche dazu beitragen die steife, frostige Atmosphäre eines gigantischen Begräbnisses zu schaffen, dessen Mittelpunkt er bildet,' zu leicht in unserer Vorstellung eine lächerliche und nicht gerade anziehende Figur wird, 'arrogant und kraftlos mit trockner schwungloser Phantasie'—eine Karikatur von Lytton Strachey's Gnaden. Der Biograph von Georg IV findet, es sei Zeit, Prinz Alberts Verdiensten gerecht zu werden; im vorliegenden Aufsatz untersucht er das lebendige Interesse, das der Prinzgemahl für Kunst und Wissenschaft hatte. Er kommt zum Schluss: 'jederman muss zugeben, dass Prinz Albert für Kunst und Wissenschaft im stärksten Masse interessiert war, ja dass er im wahren Sinne des Wortes ein Philosoph war.'

Seite 278: *Die Verwirklichung der Ideen von Prinz Albert im Jahre* 1951 *von J. M. Richards.* Was würde der Prinzgemahl denken, wenn er die South Bank Ausstellung in diesem Sommer sehen könnte? J. M. Richards veröffentlicht einige Abbildungen der Ausstellungspavillons (die REVIEW wird im August eine reich bebilderte Sondernummer der Ausstellung bringen) und ist der Ansicht, Prinz Albert würde nach hundert Jahren in dieser Ausstellung die Verwirklichung von Vorstellungen und Plänen sehen, die ihm vorgeschwebt haben, ein fruchtbares Zusammenwirken von Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst, das in der grossen Ausstellung von 1851 seine endgültige Form nicht finden konnte. Wenn die verschiedenen Ausstellungsobjekt in den Ausstellungspavillons dem Ideal von Prinz Albert nahekommen, so sind die Gebäude selbst eine Erfüllung des Versprechens des Kristallpalastes, eine Architektur 'voll Licht und Raum' wie Ruskin es in diesem berühmten Bauwerk empfunden hat. Die Schwierigkeiten, die die Veranstalter der Southbank Ausstellung zu überwinden hatten. waren keineswegs geringer als jene, mit denen ihre Vorläufer vor hundert Jahren zu kämpfen hatten. Trotz alledem wird die Ausstellung ein ganz grosser Erfolg werden, und diese grosse zeitgenössische Architektur, die das britische Publikum in dem Umfang noch nicht gesehen hat, wird ihren Eindruck nicht verfehlen.

Seite 293: *Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation in Marseilles* hat mehr Anlass zu Kontroversen gegeben als irgendein anderes Einzelgebäude, das seit dem Weltkrieg entstanden ist. Da die REVIEW ihre Absicht bereits angekündigt hat, zeitgenössische Architektur kritisch zu untersuchen, so nimmt sie die Gelegenheit wahr, auf eine Sitzung des London County Council Architect's Department zurückzukommen, wo Mitglieder und Gäste rein privatim diesen Plan in sozialer, organischer und aesthetischer Hinsicht untersucht und diskutuert haben.

Seite 301: *Englische Treppenhäuser von E. F. Sekler.* Wenig Dinge offenbaren das Gefühl des Architekten für sein Rohmaterial—den Raum—so eindeutig wie Treppenhäuser. Aber obgleich



Boiler house for New Classroom Block, Twickenham Technical College. County Architect : C. G. Stillman, F.R.I.B.A.

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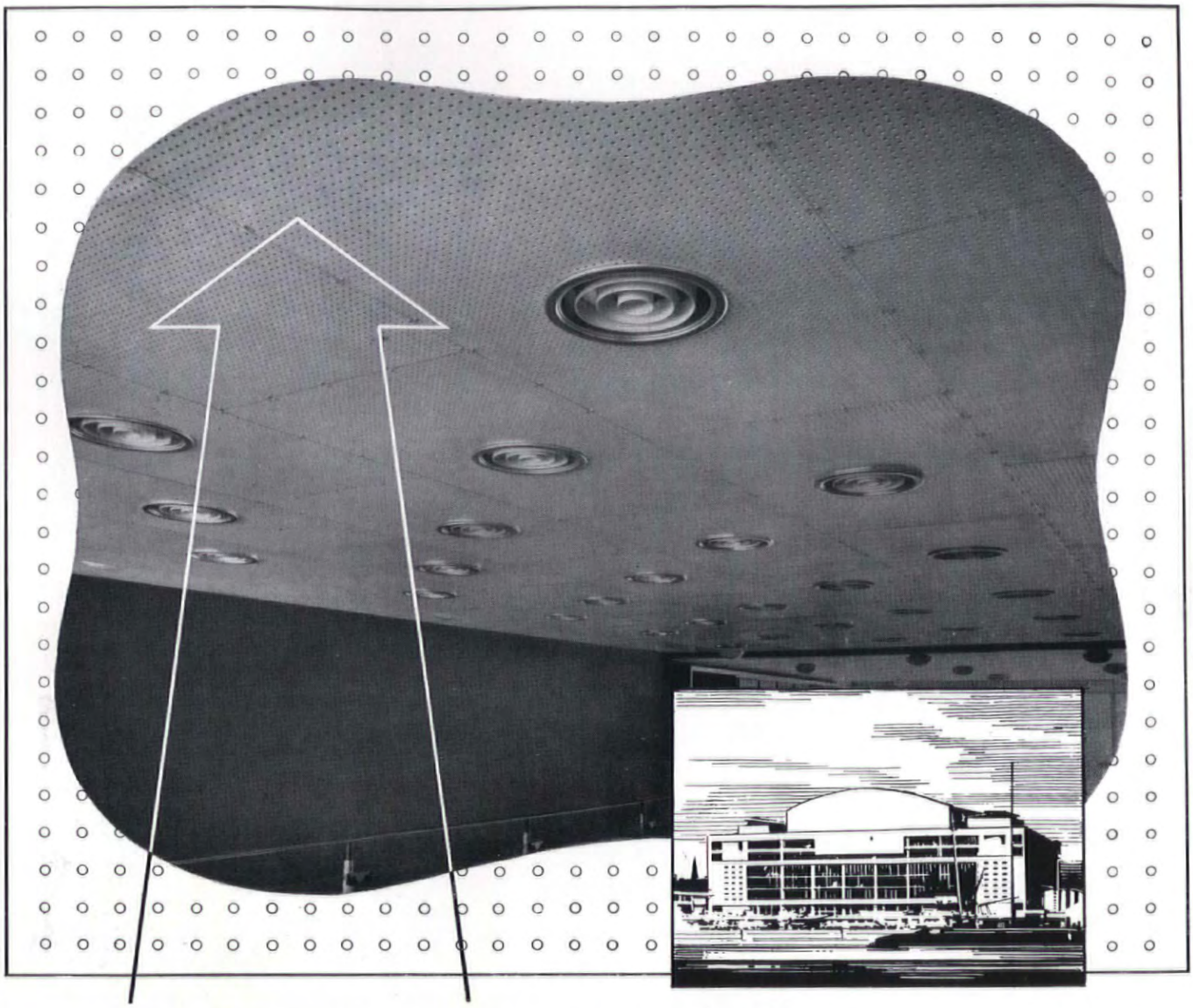

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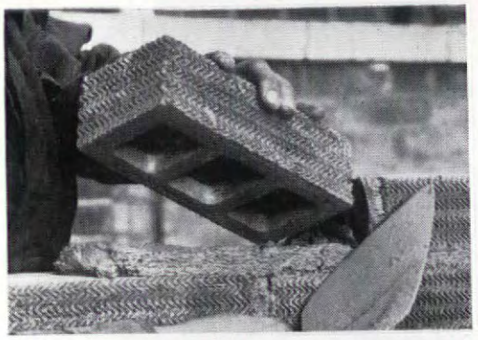

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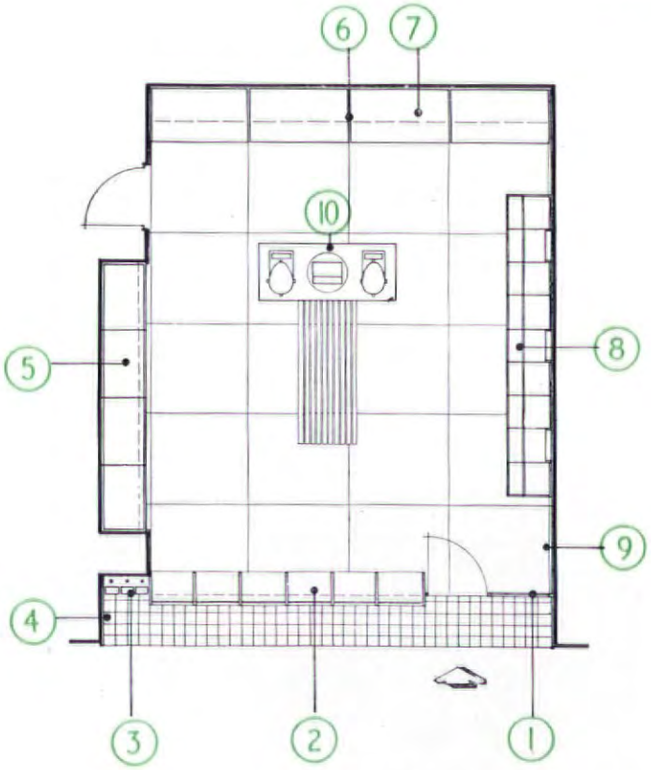

Plan Greengrocer's shop.

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

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4. **Reveals to shop front**
   Faced with black "VITROLITE" in standard Ashlar sizes.
5. **Vegetable bins**
   Constructed of hardwood with removable front panels in "VITROLITE". Mirror reflector behind at an angle to increase visibility. Shelves over for tinned goods.
6. **Frozen food storage cupboards for perishable foods, etc.**
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7. **Special display cupboards** with frameless sliding polished plate glass doors.
8. **Fruit display**
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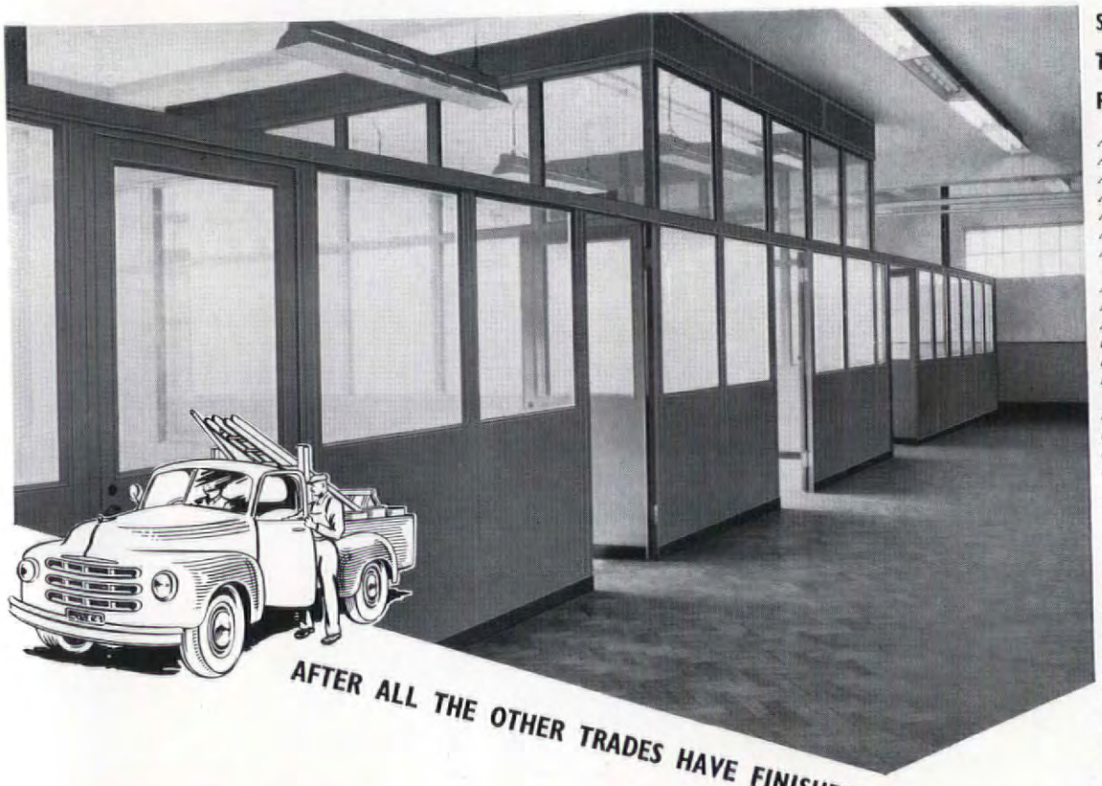

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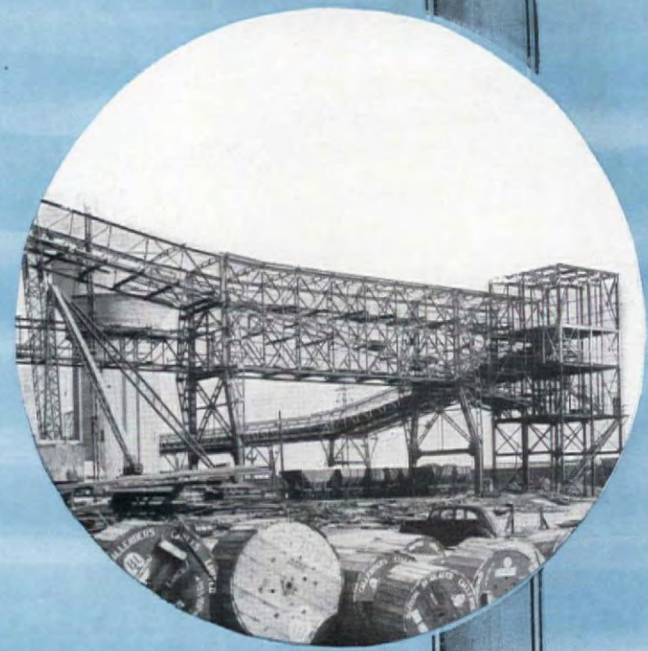

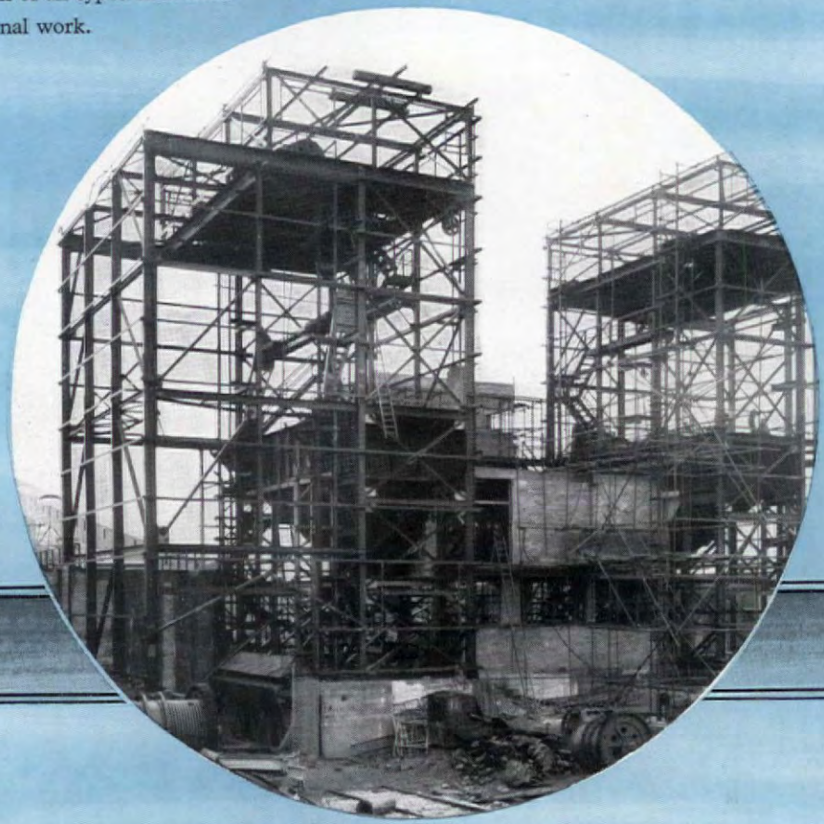

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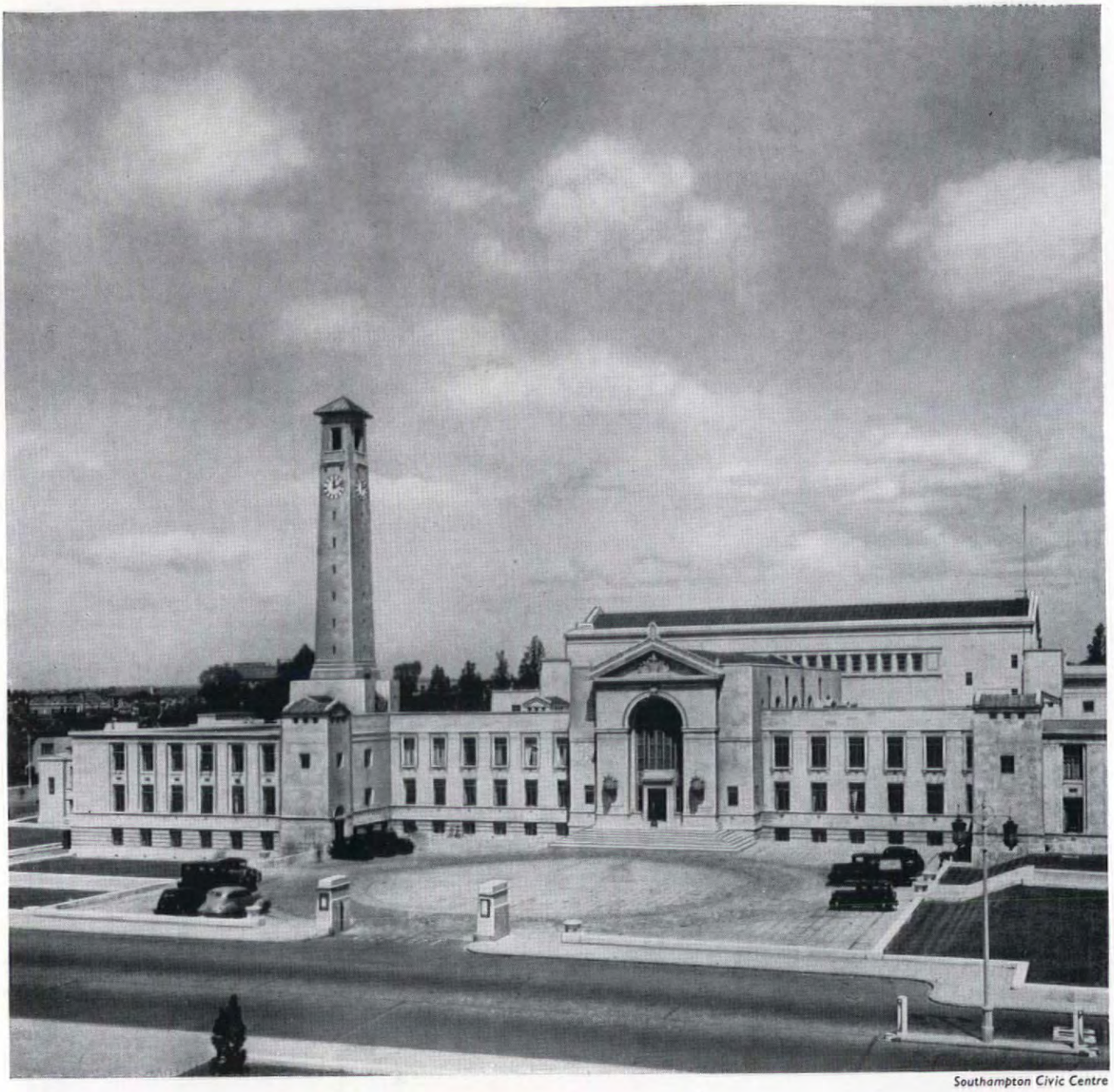

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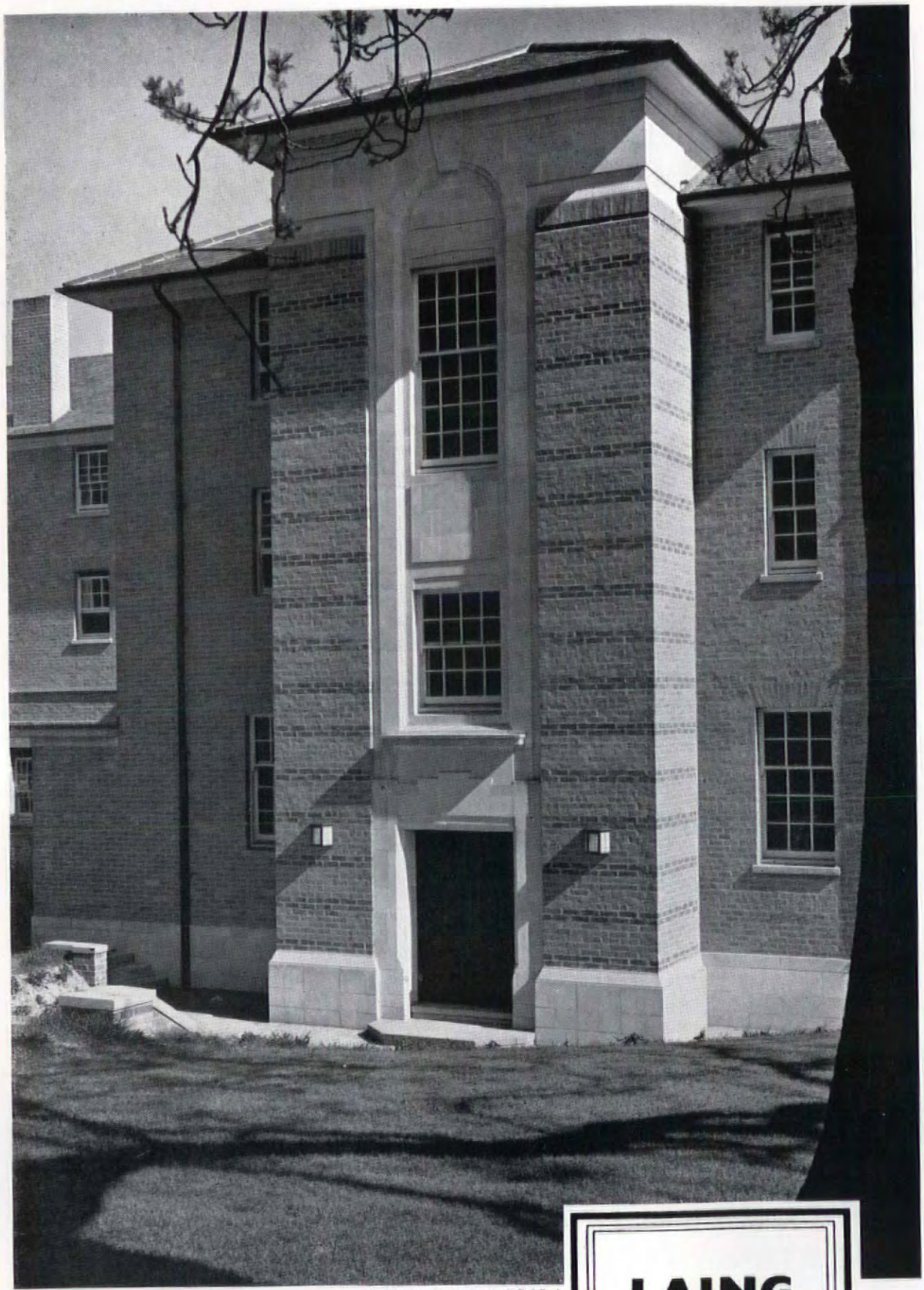

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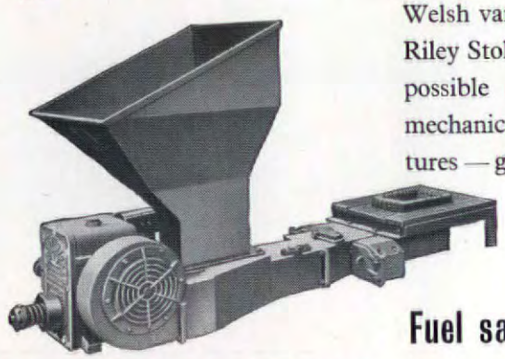

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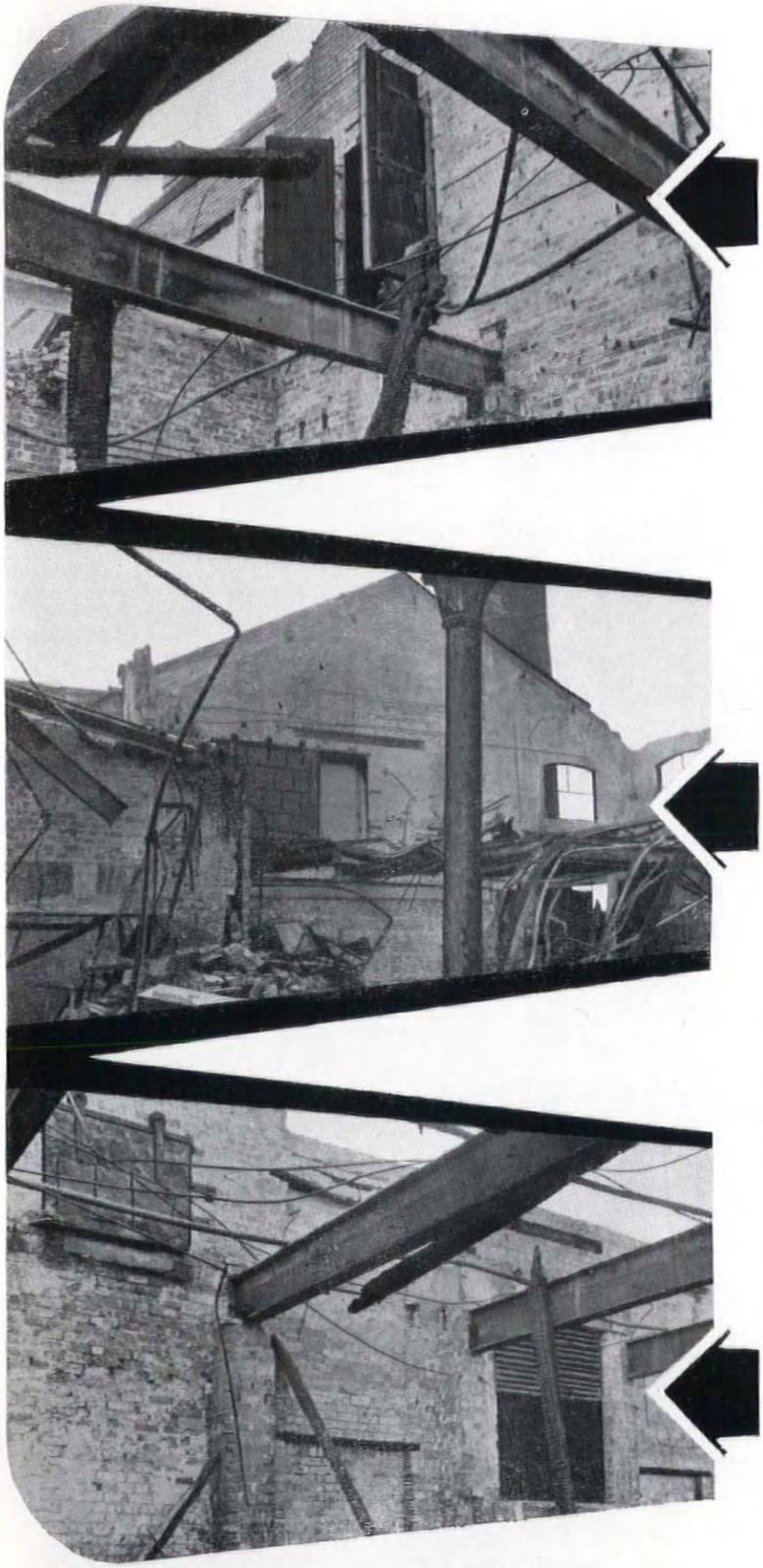

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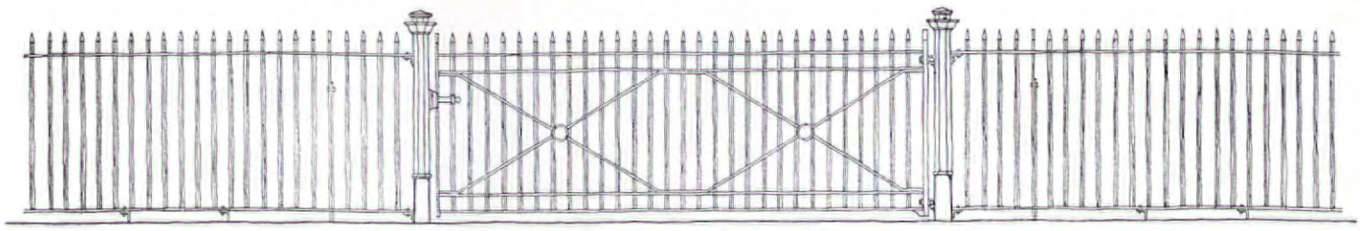

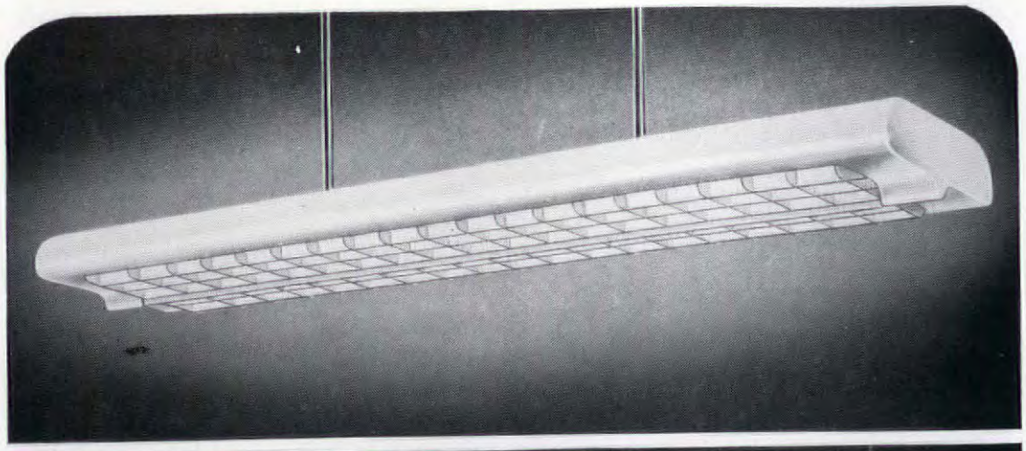

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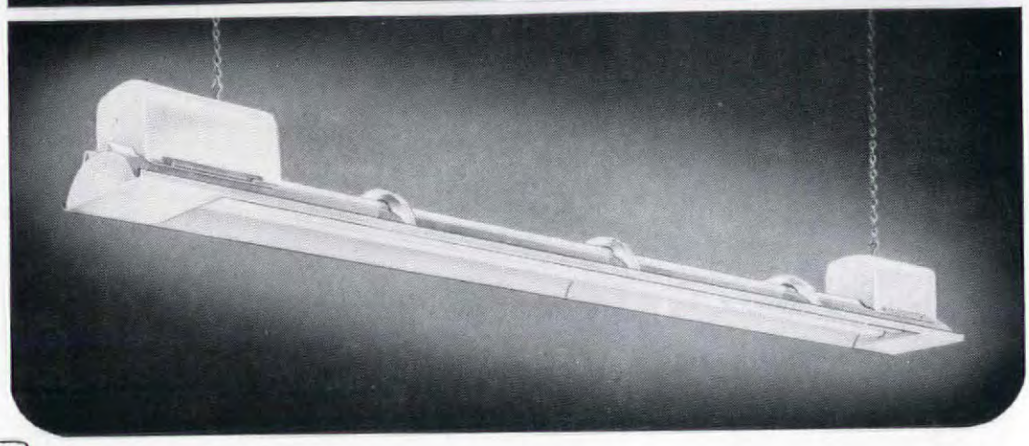

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standing and its appearance is enhanced by the clear razor-edged lines of the extruded aluminium sections.

The Aluminium Alloy double action swing doors in the main entrances to the building (above right) and the entrance lobbies (centre right) were specially designed by Williams and Williams to fulfil the Consulting Engineers' requirements. The leaves were constructed from hollow extrusions produced expressly for this particular job.

Extrusion gives freedom of design

This is an excellent example of the freedom of design which the use of aluminium gives to the architect, as special extrusions can be made available without undue delay and at reasonable cost.

The canteen is well lighted by its series of sidewall windows, and there are also anodised aluminium lay lights made by Williams and Williams Limited.

Below is a view of the east elevation, showing the canteen and locker room windows, and swing doors. These windows and doors are in conformity with good modern practice, and in order to resist the special corrosive conditions at the Beckton Gas Products Works, they are in extruded aluminium sections by

Williams & Williams Ltd

Metal Windows and Doors

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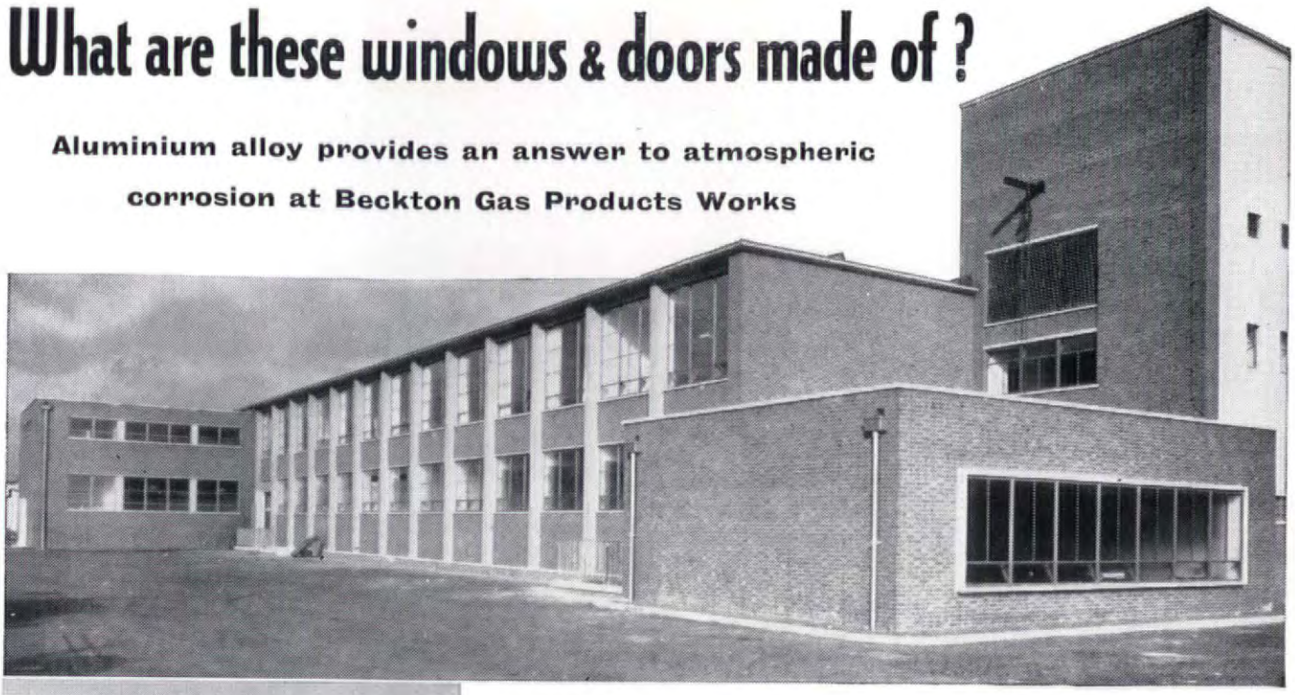
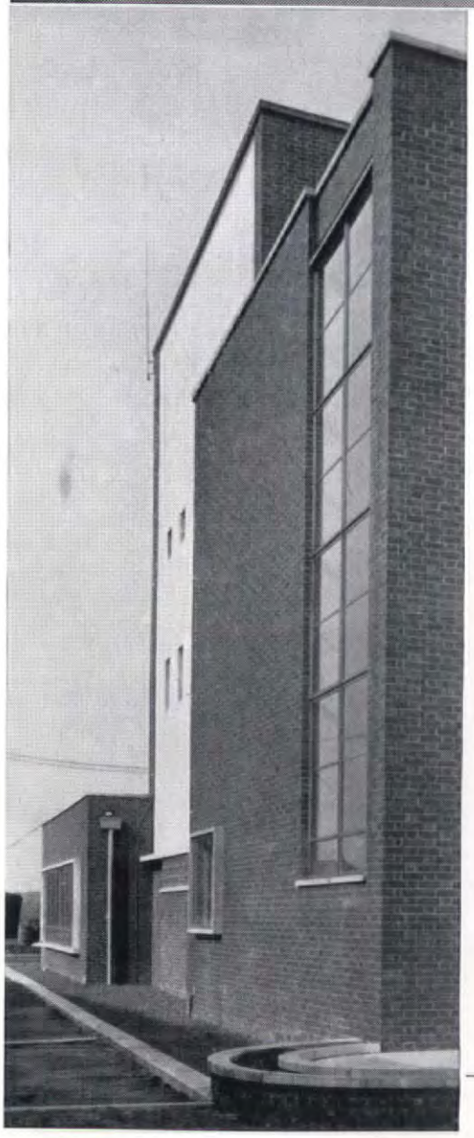
What are these windows & doors made of ?

Aluminium alloy provides an answer to atmospheric corrosion at Beckton Gas Products Works





ATMOSPHERIC CORROSION at Beckton Gas Products Works set the Consulting Engineers of the new buildings many problems. Not least of these concerned the doors and windows. These had to be highly resistant to corrosion and at the same time strong enough to withstand the high winds blowing over the Thames marshes to which the Beckton buildings are exposed.

Aluminium alloy and intelligent workmanship were combined to supply the answer. All the windows in the Welfare and Canteen Block at Beckton are Williams & Williams purpose-made aluminium windows of specially extruded sections which are *electrically mitre-welded.*

To resist corrosion

Had these windows and doors been made in steel they would have been remarkable only as an example of an excellent architectural design correctly interpreted by the window manufacturer. But by specifying aluminium alloy, the Consulting Engineers obtained not only a faithful interpretation of their design, together with adequate strength and durability, but also a special resistance to the highly corrosive atmosphere associated with these works. In addition, the extruded sections give an air of sleekness and precision very much in keeping with the general character of the building.

The windows and doors were treated at Works by the Alocrome process to give good paint adhesion, and then primed and stoved. The finish, which was in pale blue cellulose, was applied at site. The effect of this high finish on the slim, precise aluminium alloy sections is most pleasing.

Additional ventilation

An impression of the window layout in this building is quickly gained from the photograph of the west elevation (above). Here, the windows are fitted with hopper ventilators and are glazed internally by means of aluminium beading. The building is air conditioned and the hopper ventilators are provided for extra ventilation in the hottest weather. The staircase window, 28 ft. high (left), is entirely free

CONSULTING ENGINEERS: *Brian Colquhoun & Partners.* CHIEF ARCHITECT: *A. H. Shearing, A.R.I.B.A.*
CONTRACTORS: *Taylor Woodrow Construction Ltd.* WINDOWS AND DOORS: *Williams and Williams, Ltd.*

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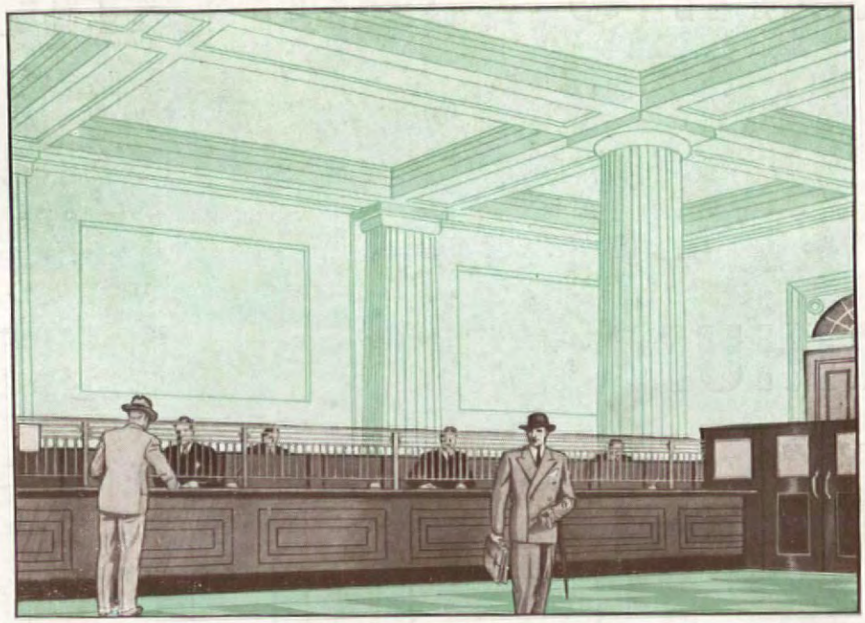

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