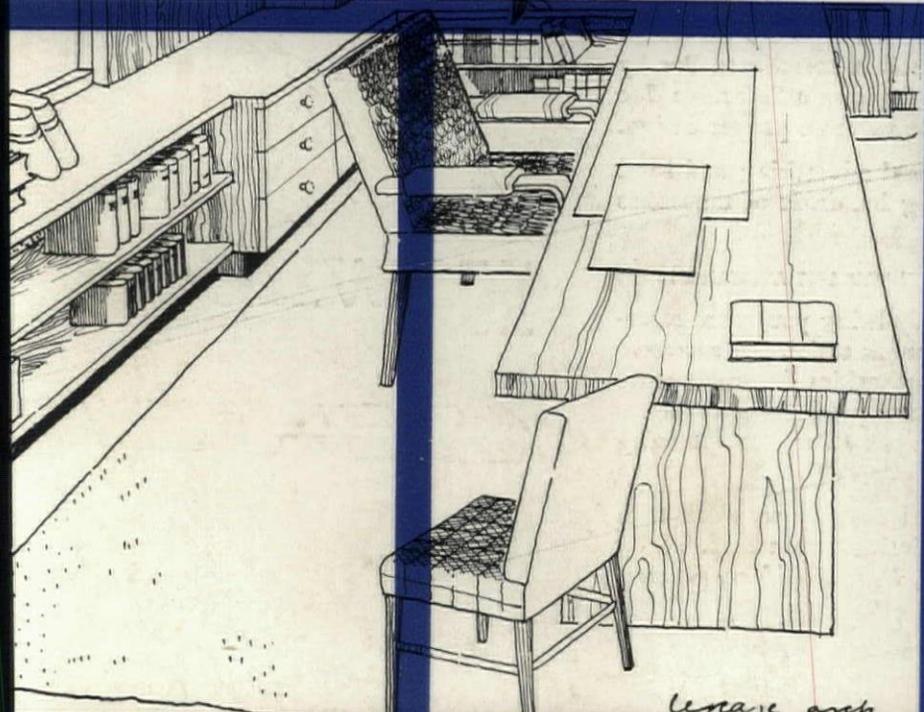
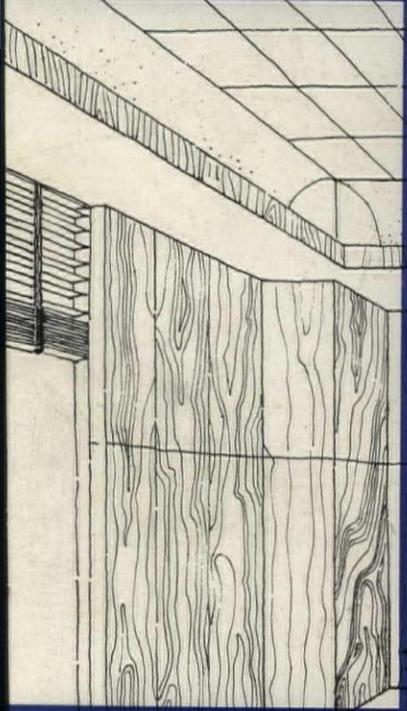
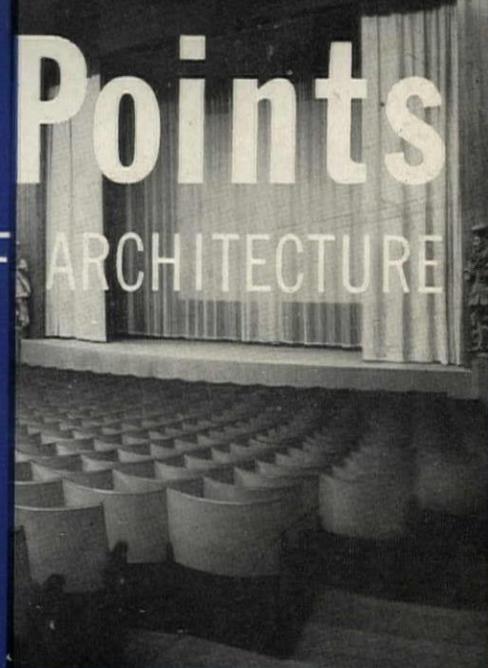


Pencil Points

THE MAGAZINE OF ARCHITECTURE

July, 1944



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Pencil Points

PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

Platform for Architects

Something has been bothering us ever since the Producers' Council formulated and published its postwar platform last November. This platform, much as we disagreed with some of its points, was at least a clear and open statement of aims and objectives. We felt at the time, however, and still feel that the architectural profession (in which we include all able persons responsibly dedicated to the creation of better architecture) should have taken the lead in setting down clearly a list of things to be striven for by the building industry in the world of peace after victory. Accordingly, now that other and more expert platform-makers are at work in Chicago, we have retired into our own smoke-filled room and have emerged after a decent interval with a small but choice set of planks to lay before our readers. They deal explicitly with some of the things we think are most important. Properly amplified, they might constitute a platform worth fighting for. Here they are:

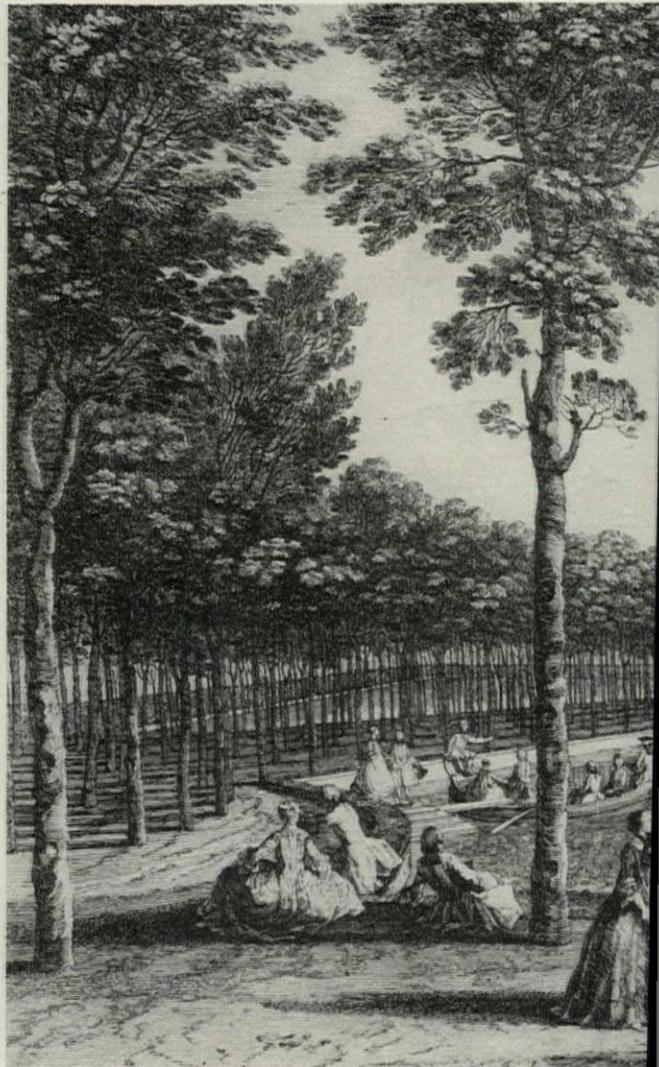
1. The prime goal of all architecture is to satisfy existing and foreseeable human needs. We will keep that goal first.
2. The true architect is concerned not only with buildings but with the whole physical arrangement of communities. Every city and town should have some competent planning authority empowered to develop and maintain for it a flexible master plan to guide its future growth. We of the architectural profession will work in our own communities to bring this about in a democratic way.
3. Though we favor private ownership of land, we recognize that some practical and enforceable form of public control of its use is necessary to effectuate sound community development and to avoid economic decay. We pledge ourselves to study this problem and to work for its equitable solution. An intelligent land policy should be developed for the nation, for the states, and for the localities.
4. We believe most building should be done privately from privately prepared plans. We recognize, however, that in some instances it is in the public interest to have architectural work performed by public agencies. Since the resulting architecture is the prime consideration, we deem it of utmost importance that any such agencies be headed and staffed by men of the highest procurable architectural competence.
5. To discover the best talent for the design of important public works, properly conducted competitions should be held with reasonable frequency.
6. The great bulk of human shelter should continue to be provided by private enterprise. Below the point, however, where private enterprise can make a reasonable profit from rental housing well-designed by competent trained men, there is an area in which publicly sponsored and subsidized housing, also designed by accredited professionals, is necessary and proper.
7. We will work toward modification and simplification of building codes. The achievement of a standard code for each state seems a reasonable objective.
8. We advocate and will work toward the improvement and modification of zoning regulations, many of which are now obsolete in the light of present understanding of planning and land economics.
9. We will continue to work toward uniform legal requirements throughout the United States for the practice of architecture. Many existing state registration laws need to be either tightened to exclude incompetents or liberalized to permit the inclusion of able designers now excluded because of some inconsequential technicality.
10. In view of great changes taking place in the philosophy and technique of practice, we urge and will work for a thoroughgoing improvement of our system of training young men in architecture with a view to bringing it into closer relationship with contemporary architectural practice. At the same time, as adult professional men, we pledge ourselves to keep assiduously abreast of technical developments in building so that we may render the best possible service to our clients and to society.
11. We urge and will work for the establishment by the profession of some practical means of furnishing its members with unbiased and reliable technical information concerning building products. We will lose no opportunity to cooperate with manufacturers of these products to the end that they may be constantly improved.
12. Finally, we will do everything in our power, acting both as individuals and through our professional organizations, to insure that the architectural men now in the armed services are promptly demobilized at the war's end and given opportunities to become re-established in good jobs or in their own practices.

Here is something to shoot at. So go ahead and shoot and let's see if we can find out what the position of the architect, collectively, really is.

Kenneth Reid

History, Broken Categories, and Architecture

BY ALAN MATHER



The Unmentionable Ruling Classes

Those who write history are held, in their view of the past, by the visual defects of their own times. Until recently, our histories of architecture have been peculiarly myopic. What made them so?

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, everything in the cultural world was caught in what Bernard Shaw called a "pseudo-science as disastrous as the blackest Calvinism." Few things escaped classification for their shape and time; one vertebrate creature, assigned by Science to a layer of rocks, found it very difficult to reach a handshaking acquaintance with a distant relative in the layer above. Architecture too got its categories—Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance—each with its sub-groups. The Renaissance was not only Early or High, it was also French and High or Early Italian, etc. Culminating in Bannister Fletcher's *History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, this science of history led an arduous, scholarly existence.

I do not know the exact date at which classifications or "styles" of architecture began to crack up. But in A

History of Architecture published in 1918, Fiske Kimball and George H. Edgell remarked that the name "Baroque" had been given by some writers to all the works of the period they (Kimball & Edgell) discussed in a chapter called *Post-Renaissance Architecture*. They felt that "Baroque" should apply only to such buildings as Santa Maria della Salute, Venice and the Zwinger at Dresden which, with their scrollwork, broken pediments, twisted columns etc., demonstrated a "freer tendency." Such a name failed to cover works which, while they had few curlicues, were nevertheless not pure Renaissance. Their post-Renaissance category or chapter had been reserved for both types. Now observing that this chapter contains immense Italian or English villas, gigantic palaces (the Escorial and Versailles), colossal cathedrals (St. Paul's, London, and St. Peter's, Rome), I am driven toward the idea that a better understanding of the entire Renaissance epoch could be attained if one understood the motives of the governing classes whose last buildings contained scrolls, broken pediments and twisted columns. I ask, why was there a Renaissance and a post-Renaissance? Was

Boucher's "L'Agréable Lecon" (left) parallels the development of Fontainebleau (below) or the Trianon in its retreat to the nicer, more romantic aspects of rusticity. Even Boucher's lion is thoroughly bored with the impossibly false classic shepherds; but they appeased the guilty conscience of the court, as did the stage-set trees, the water, the landscape so carefully tortured to make it fit for gentlemanly coat-tails.



Photos courtesy Avery Library, Columbia Univ.

the latter classification not like one of those file folders marked "miscellaneous" into which are shoved all items whose meaning hasn't been fathomed? Could not both these "styles" have had a common motivation which, if measured, might put them both in one folder?

In 1938 Lewis Mumford's *Culture of Cities* appeared with the following paragraph which put all the "architectural" renaissances into the Baroque file. "From medieval universality to Baroque uniformity: from medieval localism to Baroque centralism: from absolutism of God and the Catholic Church to the absolutism of the temporal sovereign and the National State—there is a passage of four or five centuries between these phenomena. Let us not obscure the essential nature of this change by referring solely to its esthetic accomplishments: the unearthing and measurements of classic monuments, the discovery of Plato and Vitruvius, the worship of the Five Orders in Architecture. These facts give only a superficial clue to what was happening. The underlying tendencies of the new order did not become visible until every aspect of life had departed

from the medieval whole and re-united under a new sign. This did not occur until the seventeenth century. It was then that the intuitions of precursors like Alberti were finally expressed in the Baroque style of life, the Baroque plan, the Baroque garden, and the Baroque city." That is the long view, and, if it is applied not only to the Standard Renaissances but to other styles it will be realized that our architectural historians have been unable to distinguish between the leaves, the trees, and the forest.

The Frustrated Specialists

Why? For the most part, histories of architecture have been written by architects for architects. Specialized classifications have been described by classified specialists. Now there is a terrible cultural lag in the architectural profession. Objective conditions have held us behind other arts and sciences. What are these conditions? Subdivision and sale of parcels of land in piecemeal fashion; endless gridiron street layouts; lack of definition of functions in the parts of cities; the craft-guild organization of architects' offices and the build-



ing trades. In their insidious way, these things have contributed to a maladjustment of historical viewpoint. Although a few architects do try to understand social changes and develop new forms in construction suited to them they are thwarted by the fact that the changes themselves are hesitant and unsure. Such architects would be glad to make form follow function if only somebody would define the functions. Observing this frustration of their more assertive colleagues, the purely negative architects—they who have an unquestioning faith in the craft-guild organization of the building "industry"—these men form a jeering squad. *They* know the power of the "objective conditions" listed above and it is their thought which rules the profession. It is for them that the histories of architecture have been written.

The craft-guild mentality keeps the writing of architectural history to "pseudo-science as disastrous as the blackest Calvinism." Is that contradictory? Are not guilds medieval institutions, and isn't categorical scientific theorizing a nineteenth-century phenomenon? Well, craft-guild thought is like that of a *bottega* worker in Italy of the Renaissance. Such a man was usually too much interested in *fussy* detail. Having graduated from goldsmithing to architecture, he might be little interested in *enclosing of space*, too much absorbed in *decoration of surface*. So it is with most modern architects. They may know little about decoration but the institutions which prevent them from experimenting with space drive them into a frame of mind like that of our *bottega* friend. The stupidities of 25-50-100-200-foot properties, side yards, back yards, front courts—all specified mechanically by building codes—prevent experiment. (At the moment it's a good thing that they do. Left to themselves, owners and many architects would make some rooms even darker than they are now.) Such matters being set by the struggle between rapacious owners and desperate tenants, the architect is left to wonder if the budget will permit a cantilevered canopy of the type which is so fashionable. That is all

the fun the poor fellow has left. The enforced concern with detail throws him back to the classifications of pseudo-science. Is Mr. Saarinen a streamlined Romanticist or a Reluctant Modern? Was Le Corbusier *really* a Purist painter before he became an architect and a gentleman? In architecture, as in nasty cake-eating tea parties, people ask such gossiping questions.

City Planning—a Republican Force

There are a few flashes of sunlight on this somber picnic ground. Back in 1903 Daniel Burnham said "There are two sorts of architectural beauty, first, that of an individual building; and second, that of an orderly and fitting arrangement of many buildings. The relationship of all the buildings is more important than anything else." Resisting all temptations to joke about bivalvular beauty, I say that the idea in the last sentence of the quotation has been growing stronger—the writings of Camillo Sitte, Werner Hegemann, Raymond Unwin, and Eliel Saarinen testify to that. And today, when even realtors have seen the advantages of comprehensive planning, architects dare not lag. It follows that the histories of architecture would serve contemporary practice best if they took entire cities or sections of them as units of study. Streets, plazas, interior courtyards, exterior courts, and all the rooms opening to them are understood best with an orientation toward the city. With such an attitude, the exact date at which Renaissance architects left off putting a complete tripartite entablature over each column in a church arcade might become relatively unimportant; the period within which they began to sense the different rhythms of variously enclosed spaces would be looked for. And, incidentally, once such a viewpoint had become general and if our practices were allowed to be consistent with it we could feel that we were a profession and not just a bunch of stooges who assemble trade-marked building material into specialized structures. Today there are plenty of fine gentlemen in categories: hospital architects, bank architects, housing architects; but very little architecture that demonstrates an understanding that "the re



Jumping to the early twentieth century, we find a partial development of design to fit the needs of people in Radburn, N. J., planned by Henry Wright and Clarence Stein and promoted as a community "for the motor age." Yet there is a tremendous disparity between the excellence of the concept—separation of human living activities from unhealthy traffic—and its execution in detail. The romantic voussoirs and the peek-a-boo masonry remind one of the work of Coles Phillips, commercial illustrator, whose magazine cover on the facing page, done in 1927, reflects "popular" taste in that commercial era.



lationship of all the buildings is more important than anything else."

The Democratizing Force of the Arts

I am not arguing that our histories should be "social." Still less am I looking for a program on which our modern Haussmanns may hang their hats. Those boys just want to fix the avenues and strips of greensward in such a way that the Negroes will be in one neighborhood, the "poor whites" in another, and themselves, next to the nouveaux riches, in still another. *I am saying that we should get back to the conception of architecture as an art related to other arts.* How heartless must the "architectural" talk of slums being products of congestion, and of the need for "decisive surgery," seem to the artist! It is this pseudo-scientific mentality which has sent architectural history to chasing after unimportant detail, to segregation, classification, and "blackest Calvinism." No, to my way of thinking such writers as Thomas Sharp and Steen Eiler Rasmussen take the artist's point of view, the right one, in writing the history of architecture. For example, in both *London: the Unique City* by Rasmussen and *Town Planning* by Sharp there is some reference to the influence which the landscape painters Claude Lorraine and Poussin had upon landscape gardening and, indirectly, upon architecture. Knowing this interrelationship, I can understand Major L'Enfant's grand plans for Washington (based in part as they must have been on French landscaping tradition), and, following this, can fix the nature of the argument which L'Enfant had with Jefferson over the rights of one property owner whose building projected into one of the Major's grand avenues. It was a conflict between the Baroque traditions and the tenets of a farmer's democracy (notwithstanding the fact that there was a good deal of Baroque about Jefferson). Here the conception of a gridiron plan in which all lots were given, as nearly as possible, an equality of opportunity, collided with the ideas which had governed the layout of the gardens at Versailles. These things affect architecture. Is such an explanation too involved? Well, surely it is better than the traditional view that there had just been a squabble between an eccentric Frenchman and a Virginia gentleman! It is certainly not of a kind of thinking which leads to the conclusion that slums are the product of congestion. "Madame, the people are congested!" "How silly, why don't they decentralize?" As I suggested before, there is too much cake-eater philosophy in the architectural profession.

Evolution, a Businessman's Theory

Talbot Hamlin's *Architecture Through the Ages* is another work which breaks with the cultural lag of which I spoke before. But that is because he is guilty of prowling in libraries other than the Avery Architectural. Still, he has chosen a watchword for the title page which, to my way of thinking, quarrels with one feature of the book. He quotes Hilaire Belloc: "To study something of great age until one grows familiar with it and almost to live in its time, is not merely to satisfy a curiosity or to establish aimless truths: it is rather to fulfill a function whose appetite has always rendered history a necessity. By the recovery of the Past, stuff and being are added to us; our lives, which, lived in the present only, are a film or surface, take on body—are lifted into one dimension more." I think that this contends against a book which follows *one* art through *all* the ages. For the works of architecture in any one epoch have a closer relationship to other arts in that epoch than they have to the buildings of other times. As Mr. Hamlin has pointed out, the Classicism of the Louis XVI period was only incidentally Classic: "The culture that produced this work was sick. Democratic ideals had wakened the populace to a sense of its own

tyrannical suppression, but in the minds of the rulers and the wealthy had aroused only romantic play-acting and a sense of guilt." It is the "play-acting" character of this architecture which would be best brought out through comparison with other effete arts of its time. How wonderfully does the painting of Fragonard and Boucher match the design of the Petit Trianon palace! How little of a relationship is there between the acanthus leaves of the column caps in the palace and those of ancient Rome. Now, it is the 19th Century pseudo-science, the classification of acanthus leaves through the ages, which tries to *make* some such relationship. The theory of "evolution" which runs parallel with hard classification was suited to the conception which 19th Century businessmen had of themselves. They were obviously terrible, but they must be getting better. Everything was evolving, improving. So histories of painting, sculpture, and architecture were written to prove it, just as Darwin had demonstrated improvements on the ape. By implication also, no art of previous epochs had interest solely for itself; it was interesting only insofar as it showed the germ of the "future"—of the 19th Century. Now, while it is true that Mr. Hamlin may not have the idea that everything is improving (he certainly does nothing so silly as trace the acanthus leaf through the ages) he nevertheless wrote a book covering so big a quota of eras and countries that one might guess he did have the idea. For the volume's all-inclusiveness is a hang-over from the 19th Century when the discussion of very many epochs seemed essential to the proof of improvement. However, the method of social analysis in the book's individual chapters is modern. H. G. Wells' world-and-century sweeping histories are of the same type.

Architecture as Part of a Popular Culture

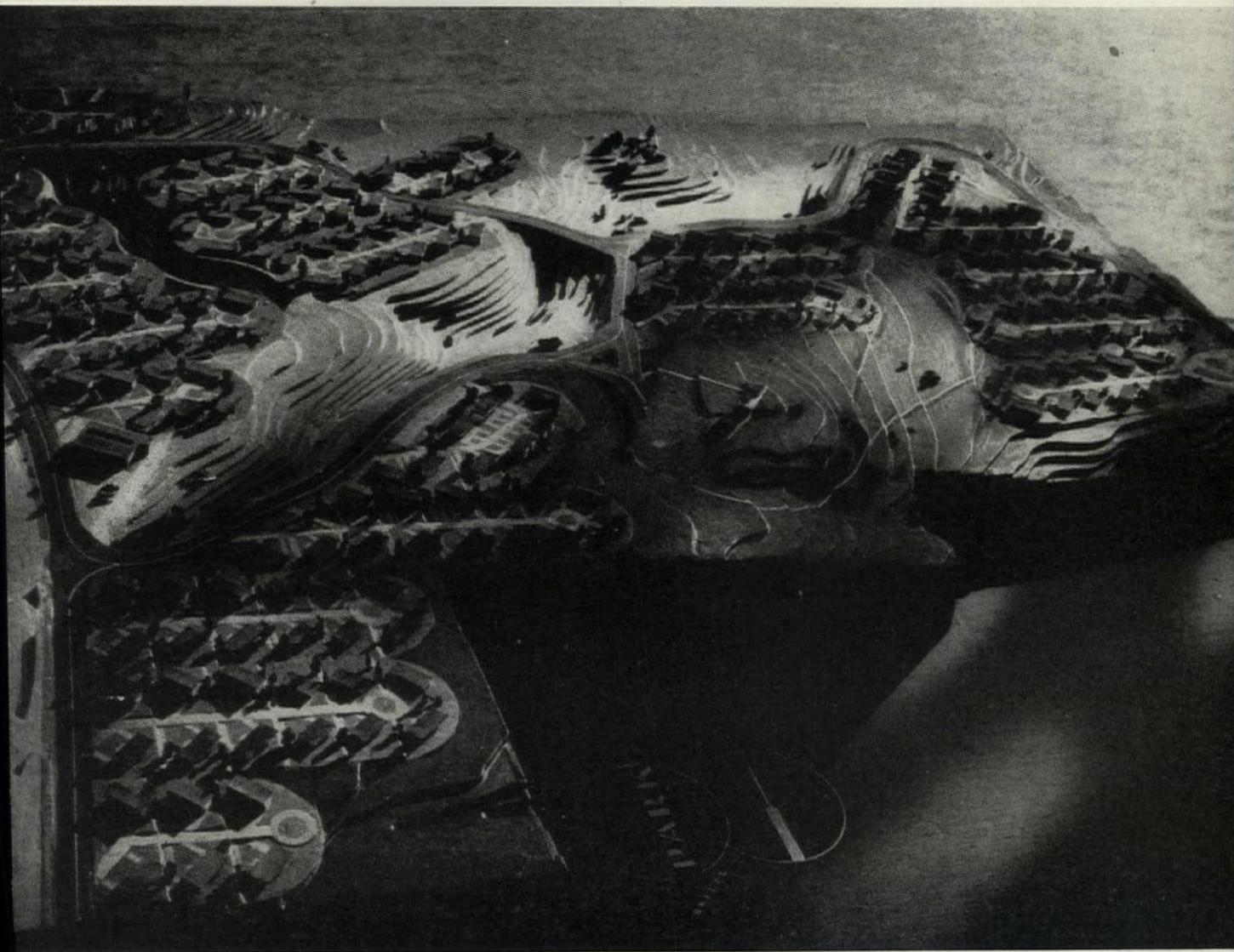
In place of histories which trace one art in a vertical line through all the ages, most of them unrelated, there is a need for more studies like John Coolidge's *Mill and Mansion* (Lowell, Mass.) which cut horizontally across all the arts of a given distinct epoch. The trend toward this kind of thing has begun already and we should be asking of it that modes of construction be emphasized a little more, literary influences a little less. We may hope also for a diminution of Ph.D. baggage (the numbered footnotes, the long quotations) and for more popular works on buildings of the Orient. Architecture is part of *general culture* and should be studied that way; it is not the exclusive reservation of architects, realtors, and the Producers' Council.

It is one thing to say that architecture is part of a culture, quite another to know exactly what that means. A student of history should reach the *sense* of another epoch as strong as that kind of perception which comes to a student of a foreign language. He goes through the irritations of, say French grammar in high school, the tiresome Racine and Molière play in college. Then comes a time when such a student standing in a classroom, is required to say everything in French and without hesitation. He may pause for a moment, stunned to hear himself jabbering away. Then he finds himself *thinking* in French without the usual translation, and, if France itself has been studied along with the language, our student becomes aware of the emotional freight of the words. For the history of a culture *is* embedded in its language.

So it is with architecture. But most of our historians have stuck at the grammar of ornament, of styles, etc. It is not because they have lacked understanding—today, the society of which they are a part has put a premium on snobbish classified knowledge. They have been trained to tear things apart and to be proud of their knowledge of small items.



“ . . . today, when even realtors have seen the advantages of comprehensive planning, architects dare not lag . . . histories of architecture would serve contemporary practice best if they took entire cities or sections of them as units of study. . . .”
Above, the contrast between the New Town, Edinburgh, Scotland (begun in 1775) and the old town, from “Town Planning in Practice,” by Sir Raymond Unwin. Below, model for Channel Heights, community in California, designed in 1942 by Richard Neutra, in which the concept of design to provide improved facilities for the populace has been carried to as logical and unified a conclusion as the times permit. Community plan, traffic flow, individual sites, single units, and interior arrangement of the units all focus on this one objective.





Which Came First:

The Ugly Duckling or the Golden Egg?

A Casual Visitor walked into our office the other day and asked us some very odd questions. A complete stranger, he seemed stranger and stranger as time went on.

"What would you think," he queried, "of a family that built a thoroughly modern home inside a windowless boiler room?"

Foolish question number one, we thought to ourselves. Having just come from what we consider a pleasant home in the suburbs, our sole reaction was that our Casual Visitor was a queer bird.

Seeing us unperturbed, the C. V. continued his questioning. "Tell me," he said, "would you admire a perfume manufacturer who packaged his product in milk cans?" The picture of a milk can topped by an atomizer bulb caught up in a snood at the back made us feel a little silly. Also a little annoyed, for a full day's work lay before us. "Well, no," we said, "but—"

"Of course not," he said. "And don't say it's ridiculous. I know that already. But I must say I'm surprised that you architectural fellows understand such matters. They're pretty basic, you know."

"Basic is as basic does," we tossed off, speaking before we thought, hoping that the accident of the inspired quick retort might produce a gem of wisdom. At once, of course, we knew we'd laid an egg because the C. V. looked disdainful.

"You see, you aren't thinking," this objectionable little man went on. "You're not even trying to think. Now, stop trying to be so smart. Listen very carefully; you might learn something."

All we could do was to blink at that; but we managed to summon up a taut sort of smile.

"What would you think," the persistent one nagged on, wagging a pointing finger at us, "of a farmer who stored his hay in the farmhouse and moved his family into the hayloft?"

"Mighty queer goings-on," we murmured.

"Ah, there, now *that's* better," the C. V. said. "You're beginning to see the point. Now, let me ask you just a few more questions. I'll make them short and snappy. Possibly my initial queries were a touch complex."

Insufferable little man, we thought. Nevertheless we were curious. What in the world was this rude, uninvited guest trying to prove?

"Would you expect to find peanuts inside a baseball?" he asked.

"No," we answered.

"Or a pearl inside an eggshell?"

"Certainly not," we sparked.

"Or a red, red rose enclosed in a coconut?"

"No, no, a thousand times no," we almost sang. In the groove at last!

"Right, right, a thousand times right," this impossibly smug creature aped. "Now, I really must be going, and I thank you kindly for letting me plant a little thought. Big oaks from little acorns grow, you know."

Yes, and time wounds all heels, too, we thought, but we didn't say it.

"Just one final question," (C. V. talking) "You'll find it an interesting one to consider in connection with the things you publish; particularly, as I understand it, the

things you're publishing in July. You now know the answers to my simple little questions. You would *not* expect to find pearls in eggshells, peanuts in baseballs, or red, red roses in coconuts. My final question is: Why not?"

With that, he left us in a welter of confused thoughts.

Oh, well, on with our work; think about the Casual Visitor another time. Now, let's see what we've scheduled for publication in this issue.

Here's an interesting one—modern radio broadcasting studios and company offices built into an old Elks Lodge building. Uh-huh. Now, Mr. Lescaze did a fine job, considering.

And the chic offices and showrooms for a wholesale clothing concern contrived within loft space of a plain, old building. What was that about pearls in eggshells? Well, no matter.

Now, this sparkling new night club's an interesting solution. And just think, it's actually the lower floor of an obsolete city house on a New York side-street. Say, now, come to think of it, that's a little like opening a coconut and finding a rose in it, is it not?

But it's a design problem that architects frequently face, isn't it? Every day, as a matter of fact?

What's the trouble? How come?

Well, for one thing, people like to make money; and people are funny. Land, building, rents, profits; same land, more building, more rents, more profits. Etc. Some think that's the point of living. Some don't even see anything perverse in building or owning a slum, so long as it makes money. Funny people. Funny money. Nothing new here. Only, with the war for freedom now taking its heavy toll of lives, doesn't do a bit of harm to ponder things like this. Because, after all, there's going to be a new world to build, and *HOW* we build it is going to make a lot of difference.

At present, as we all know, the world is a very, very imperfect place. And while nature would abhor such a course as depositing gems in rotting tomatoes, man continues to find it necessary—or, better, say profitable—to force things to serve purposes for which they were never intended.

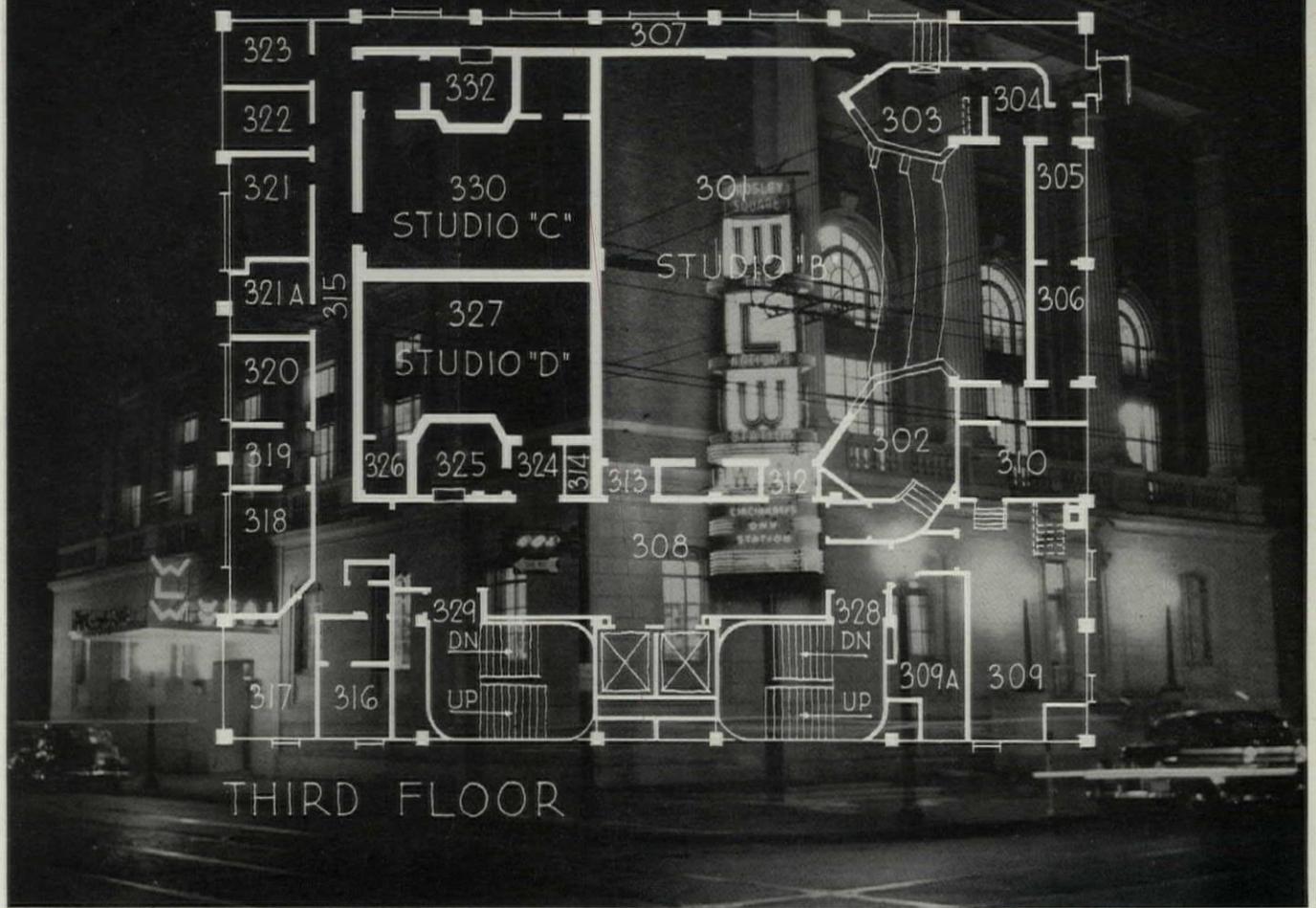
Granting these poor premises—and we do mean poor premises—all honor to those creative minds that contrive to make our ugly ducklings lay golden eggs; who manage to put to useful work some unused space in an outdated, inadequate, or awkward building; who, by intelligent organization and expert planning, find ways to make this space once again serve a useful purpose—and serve it well.

Surely, when it becomes our responsibility to design a whole new building, let us not be the incubators for yet further broods of misshapen plug-uglies. Particularly not these snares and delusions—things like the Baths of Caracalla in a great metropolitan railroad station where it's next to impossible to meet a train; or elaborately carved Gothic-style confessional booths housing dial phones in a great university's library. Or a Turkish corner in a Cape Cod cottage.

Those days—at least—are gone forever.

Or are they?





The exterior was essentially unchanged except for the addition of a marquee at the visitors' entrance.

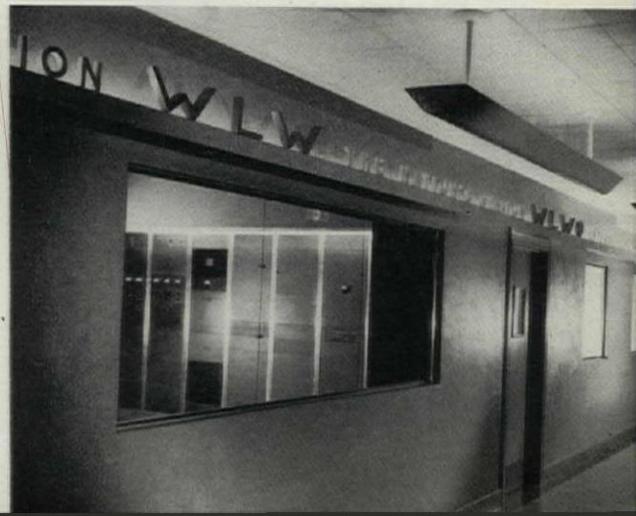
Offices and Broadcasting Studios, Station WLW Crosley Corporation, Cincinnati, Ohio

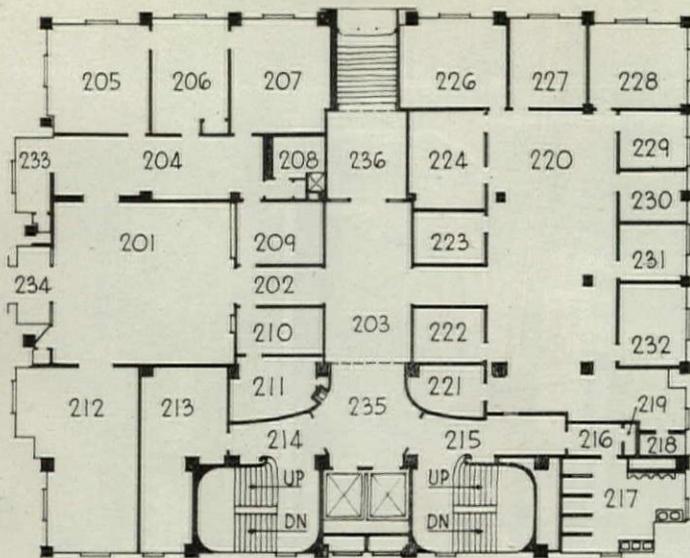
**WILLIAM LESCAZE, A.I.A., ARCHITECT, in
collaboration with TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT
CROSLEY CORPORATION**

The Crosley Corporation had for years operated its broadcasting station, WLW, within the manufacturing and administrative buildings of its plant, but with a tremendous increase of war work all station facilities had to be moved to new premises and the old Elks' Building was acquired. Shortly after the Corporation's Technical Department had outlined requirements, Mr. Lescaze was called in. Upon examination of the premises and after conferences with WLW department heads, it was agreed that major studios A and B with stages, control and client rooms, and public attendance space, should be contained within the two former large lodge rooms; other smaller studios should be carved out wherever possible; traffic should be routed to studios A and B without conflict with other operations; as much office space as possible should be provided.

To an unusual degree, the architect's commission permitted him not only to develop the floor plans and space organization of the building as a whole, but also to design the cabinet work and furniture for the various rooms. This inclusive approach produced particularly harmonious interiors.

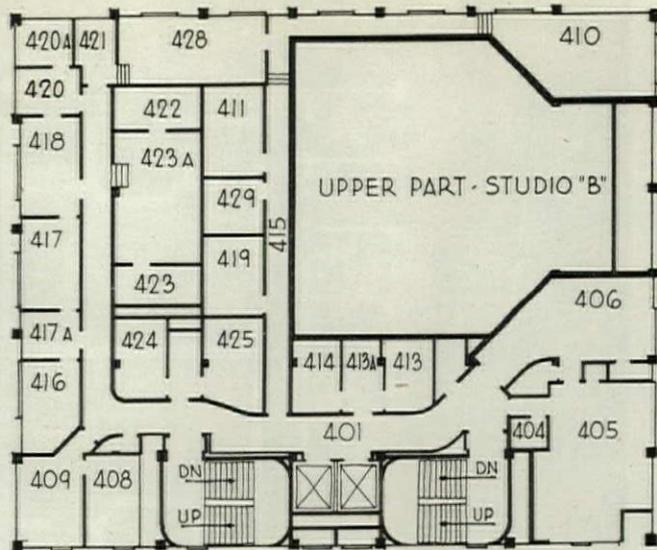
Master control room, in basement, is easily viewed by the public. News room, next to it, is surrounded by small studios for speakers.





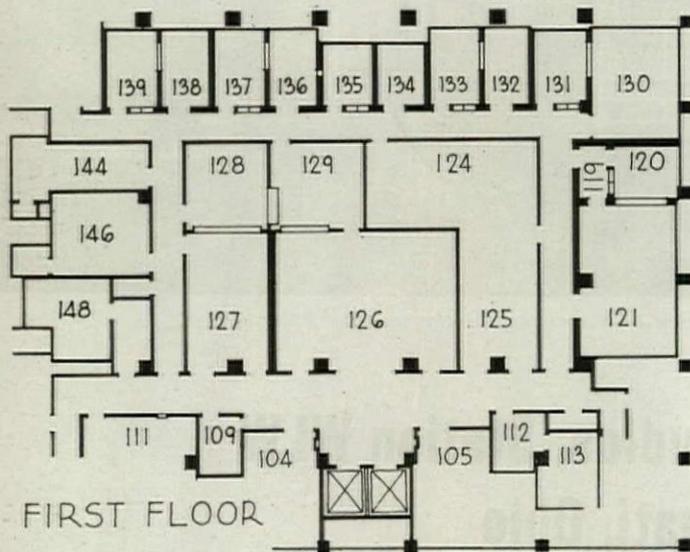
SECOND FLOOR

201. Recep. Rm.; 202. Corridor; 203, 214, 215, 235, 236. Public Space; 204. Ante Rm.; 205-7, 209-11, Offices; 208. Toilet; 212. Conf. Rm.; 213. Air Cond.; 216, 234. Vestibule; 217. Men; 218. Vault; 219. Janitor's Clo.; 220. Gen. Work Space; 221-232. Offices; 233. Stor.



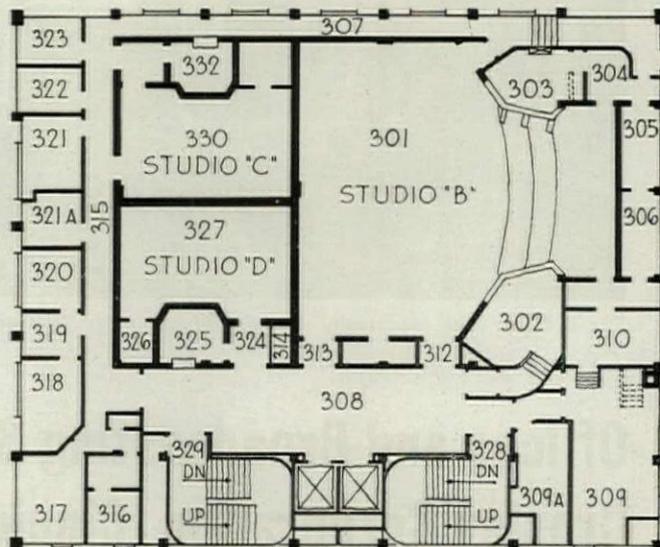
FOURTH FLOOR

401. Corridor; 404. Lav.; 405. President's Office; 406. Secretarial; 408-9. Women; 410. Office; 411. Musicians Lounge; 413-429. Offices.



FIRST FLOOR

104-5. Foyer; 109. P.B.X.; 111. Research Work Rm.; 112-3. Women; 119. Vestibule; 120, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139. Control Rms.; 121, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138. Studios; 124-5. News Rm.; 126. Master Control Rm.; 127. Recording Lab.; 128. Technical Off.; 129. Maintenance; 144. Announcers; 146. Traffic Dept.; 148. Men.



THIRD FLOOR

301, 327, 330. Studios; 303, 325, 332. Control Rms.; 302. Client Rm.; 304. Corridor; 305-6. Organ Chamber; 307, 315. Passage; 308. Public Foyer; 309, 310. Sound Dept.; 312-3, 324. Sound Locks; 314. Clo. 316. Men; 317. Smoking Rm.; 318-323. Offices; 326. Stor.; 328-9. Vestibule.

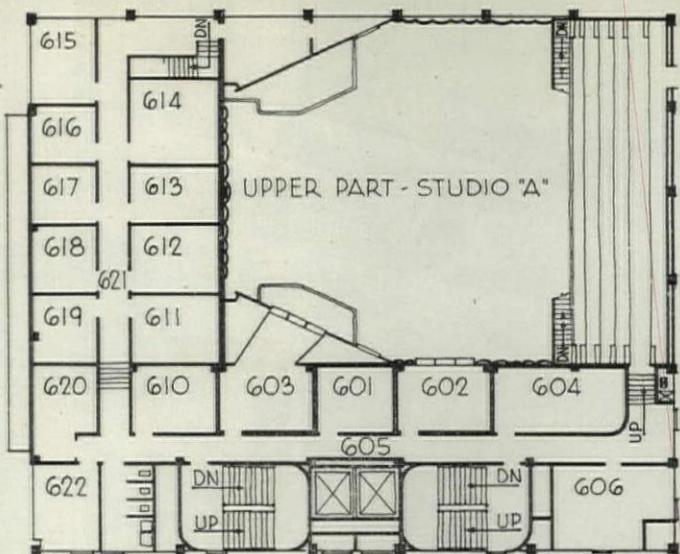
Entrance and Elevator Lobby



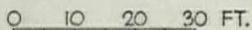
On the project as a whole, Mr. Lescaze comments: "The forms existed, and the challenge was to distribute space activities and communication within these exterior forms without disturbing them." A study of the six floor plans reveals how the new facilities were incorporated within set factors: existing exterior walls, window locations, and main stairs and foyers adjoining elevators. Even the major studios—A and B—are simply contemporary translations of large public rooms—main lodge and social sessions rooms of the original Elks Building.

Radio studios require characteristics like those of a precision tool: sound must be controlled with a fine degree of exactitude; lighting must be adequate to insure flawless performance and audience comfort; and since, as in this instance, the rooms are entirely inside the building, the air conditioning system must function perfectly.

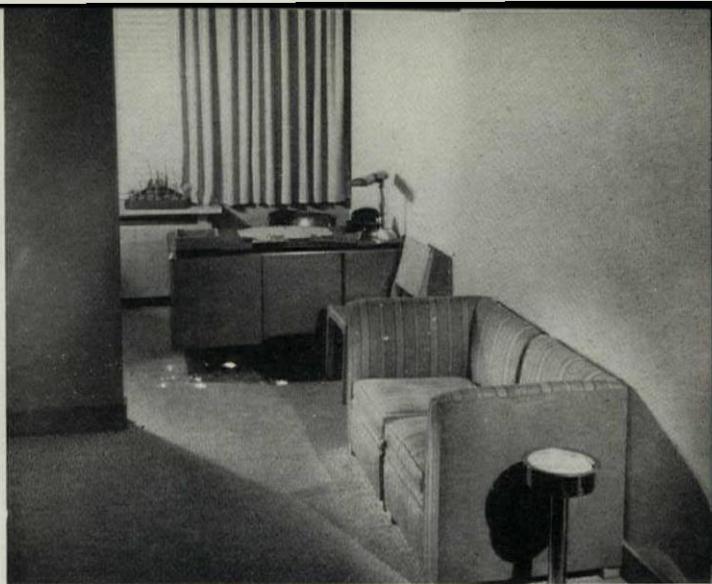
Years ago studios used to be made "dead" with a lot of sound-absorbing material. More recently, studios have been made "live" in order to produce more natural tones. But the sounds originating within four hard walls are likely to bounce forth and back and to create an unpleasant flutter at the microphone. WLW engineers had conducted satis



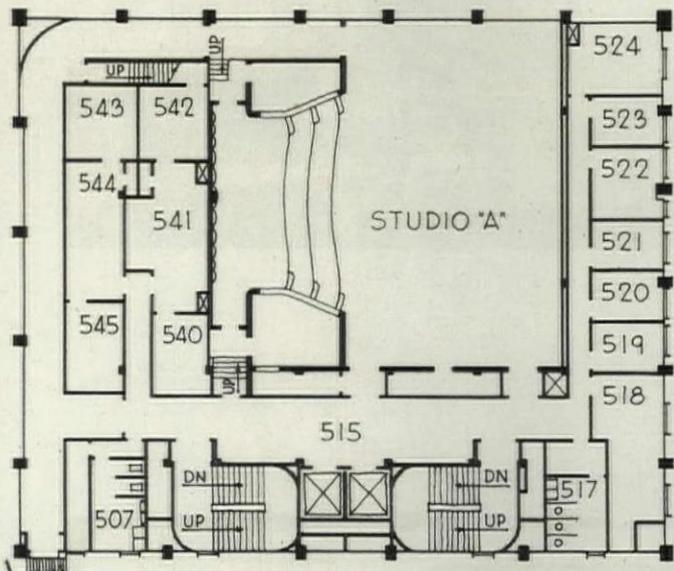
SIXTH FLOOR



601. Office; 602-3. Organ Chamber; 604. Eng. Stor.; 605. Exit Cor.; 606. Eng. Mach. Shop; 610-20, 622. Offices; 621. Corridor.



Reception Room



FIFTH FLOOR

507. Men; 515. Corridor; 517. Women; 518-24, 540-545. Offices.

Room 206



Room 207



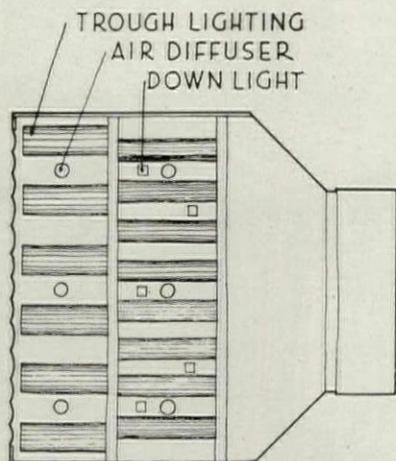
factory experiments with walls lined with flat cylindrical shapes of varying sizes, running vertically on one side and horizontally on another. This arrangement, they found, gave a live quality to sound, without flutter. It was adopted throughout WLW studios. The flat cylindrical forms are made of compressed wood fiberboard, bent into shape and used on all walls and ceiling. In the major studios, A and B, a control room and a client room flank each stage. Designed as parts of the whole planning and decorative scheme, they necessitated but minor structural changes.

A high level of illumination was desired. At the same time, it was important that the source of light should produce as little heat as possible in order not to overburden the air conditioning plant. In several executive offices and reception rooms, cold cathode indirect cove lighting was used; in general offices, the lighting derives from fluorescent lamps with flush, lensed, ceiling fixtures; in most studios a combination of cold cathode and incandescent lights is used.

Most of the building—all the studios and executive offices—is air conditioned, providing for heating, cooling, and humidification through a system of asbestos-board ducts. A deep well was sunk to furnish abundant, cool water for chilling.

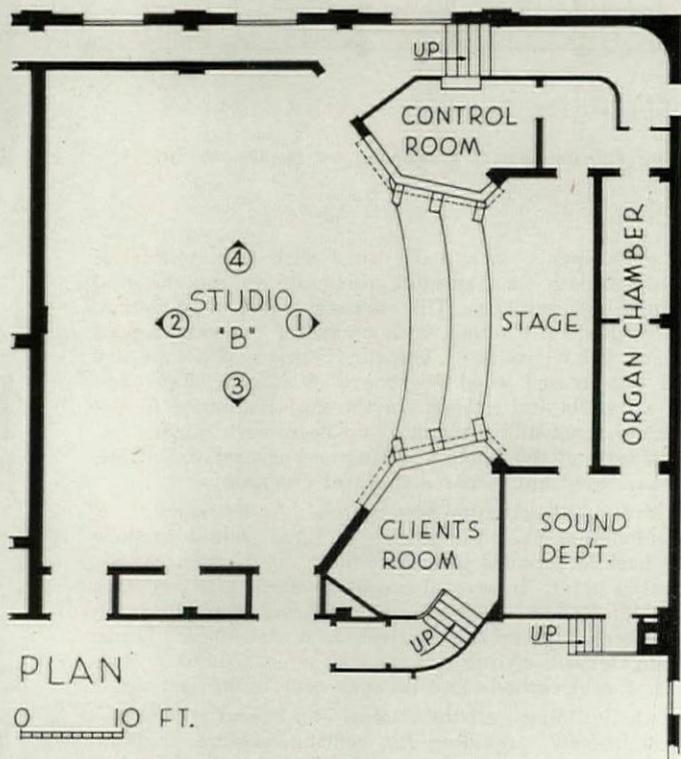


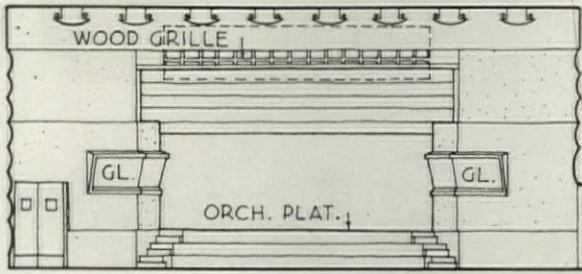
Studio B has walls and ceiling surfaced with curved sound-diffusing shapes formed from compressed fiber board, running in different directions, to eliminate reverberations and "flutter" of sound. On auditorium and stage ceilings these shapes serve also as baffles for concealed cold cathode lights used to reduce the heating load. Some incandescent downlights are introduced. Studios have complete air conditioning. Side walls are light gray, doors are red, rear wall is dark gray. Auditorium ceiling is white with brown diffusers; stage ceiling and plaster walls of control and clients' rooms are white.



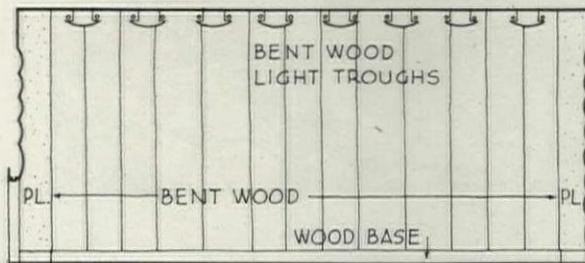
CEILING PLAN

0 10 FT

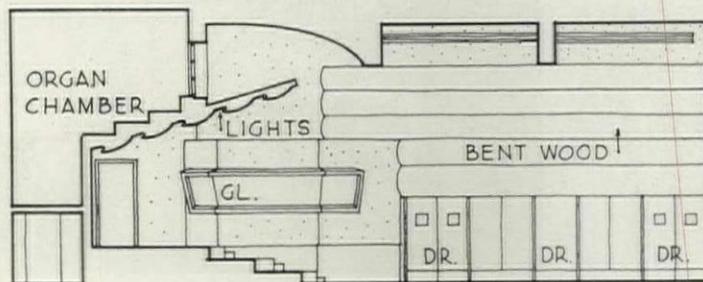




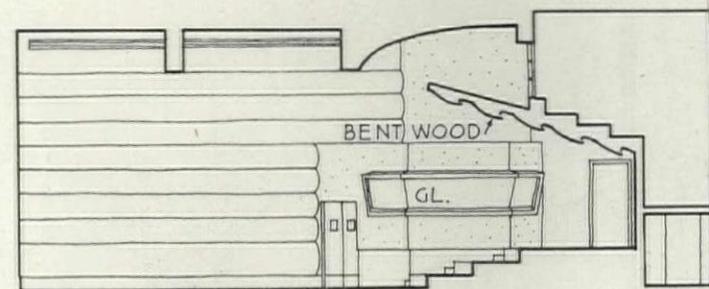
·1



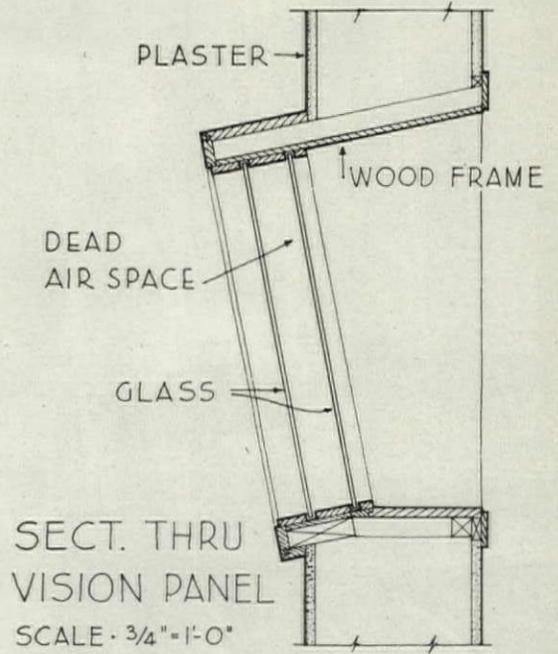
·2



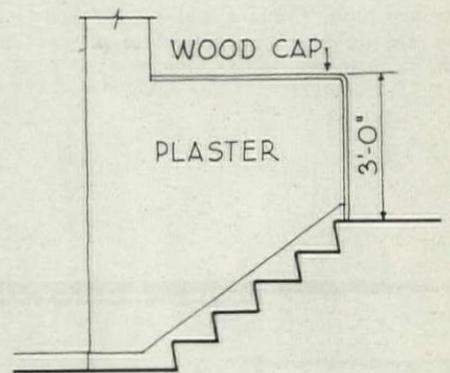
·3



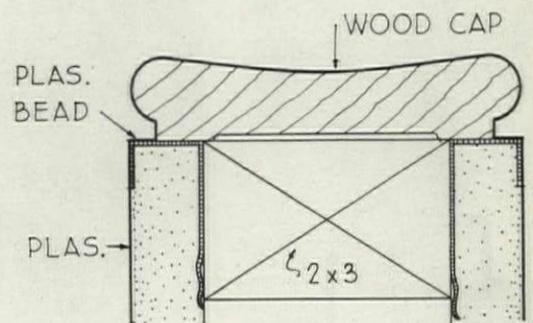
·4
SCALE · 1/16" = 1'-0"



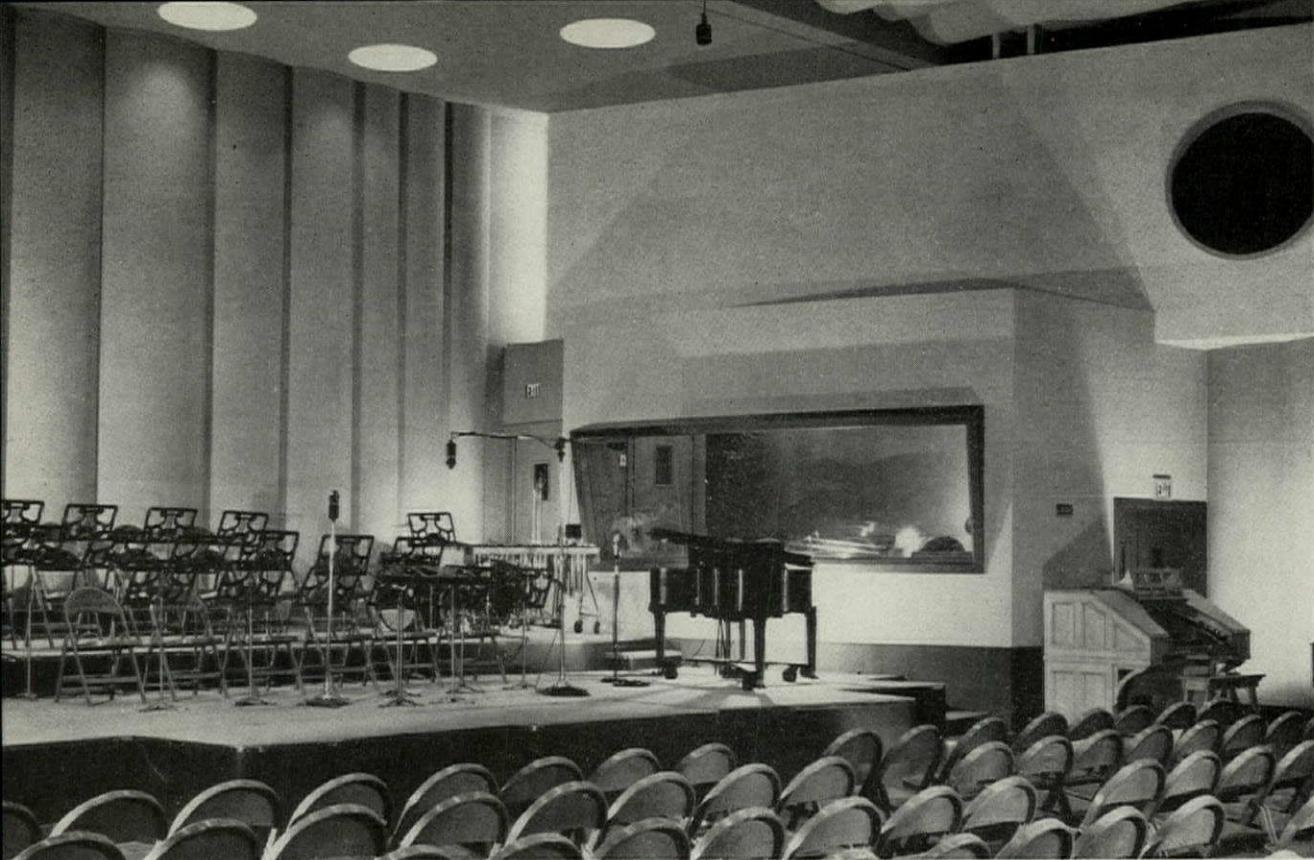
SECT. THRU
VISION PANEL
SCALE · 3/4" = 1'-0"



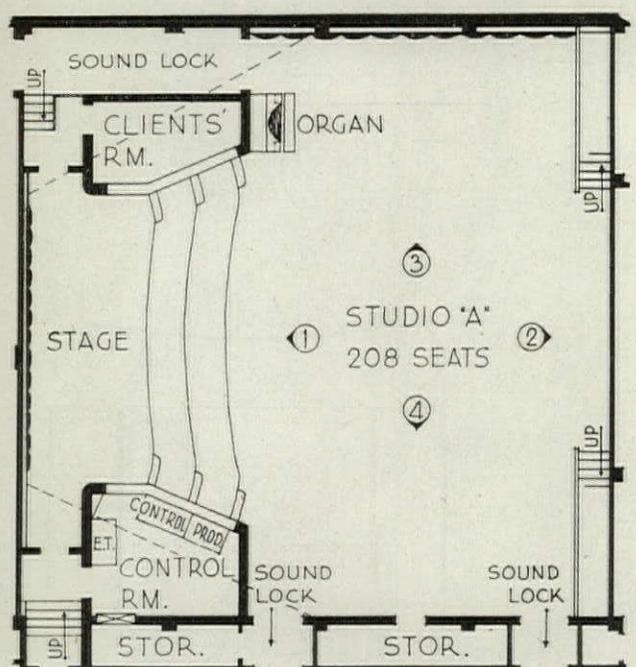
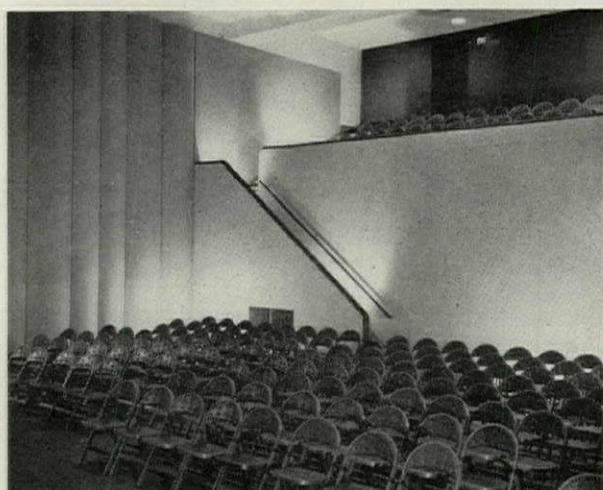
STAIR PARAPET
SCALE · 1/4" = 1'-0"



WOOD CAP
SCALE · HALF FULL SIZE

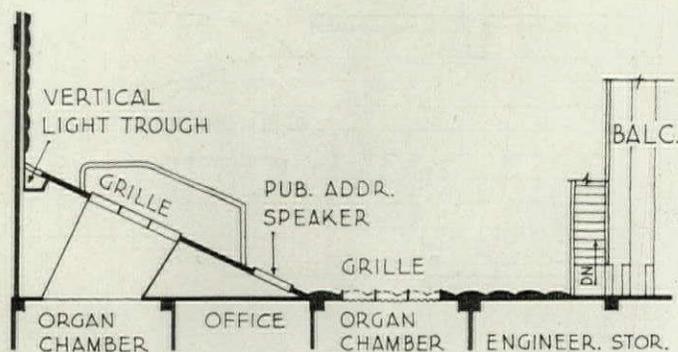


Studio A, like all WLW studios, has curved wall and ceiling diffusers for acoustical purposes. Here, however, diffusers are in different locations, and are varied in size, as shown in illustrations. Ceiling is painted white; rear wall is dark gray; diffusers on side, walls, and stage are blue. Control and clients' rooms at sides of stage are light gray, with white plaster baffles above them; trim in general is blue.

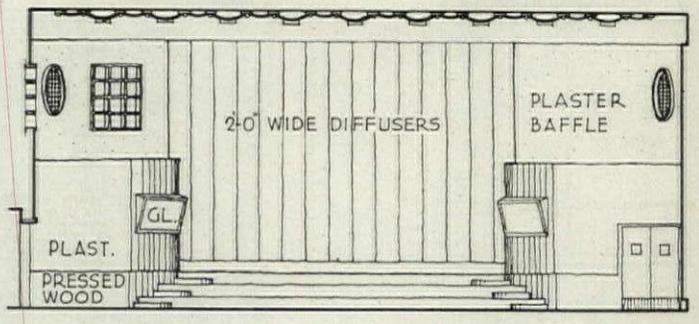
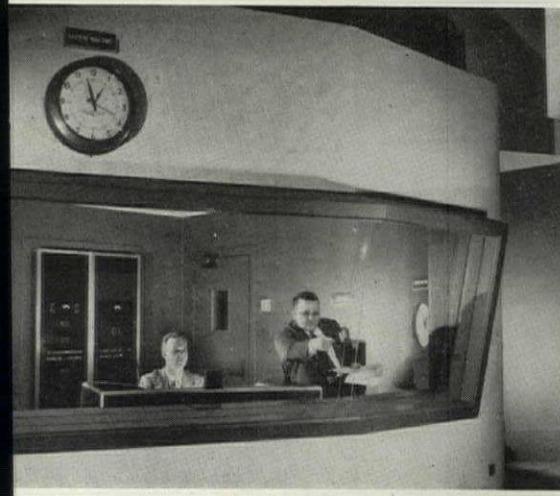


PLAN

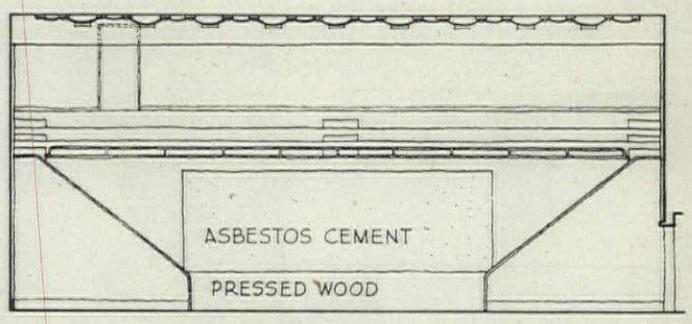
0 5 10 15 20 FT.



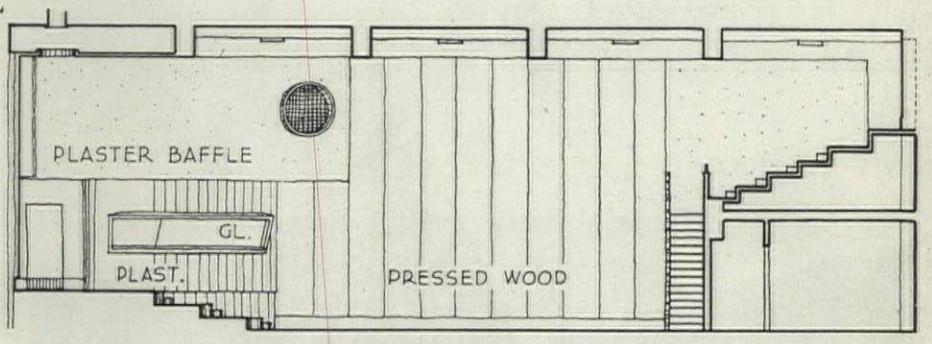
PLAN - UPPER PART



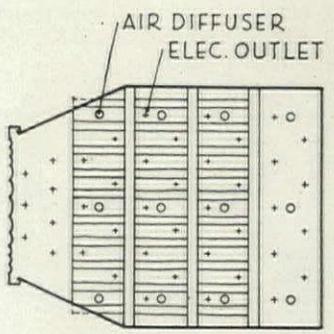
SCALE · 1/16"



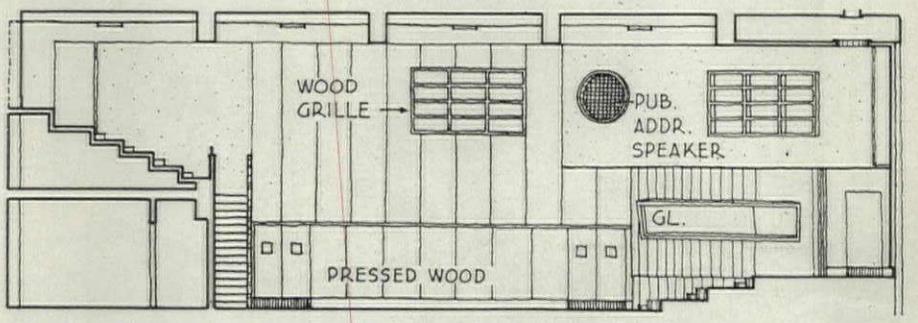
·2



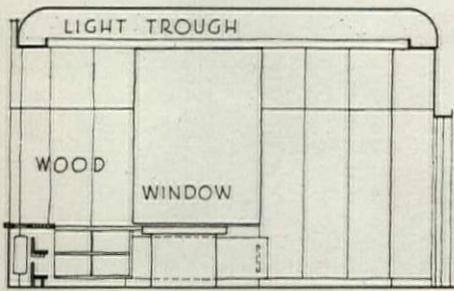
·3



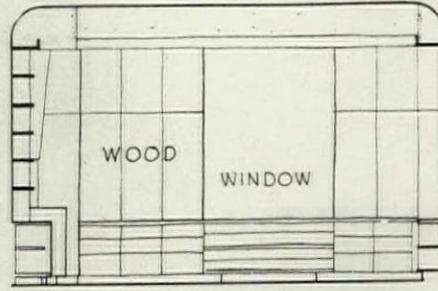
CEILING PLAN
0 10 20 30 FT.



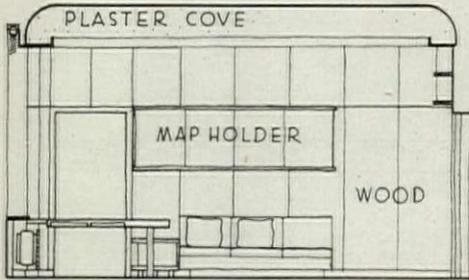
·4



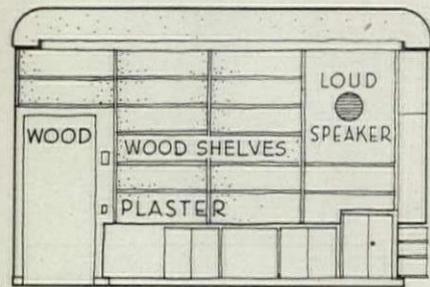
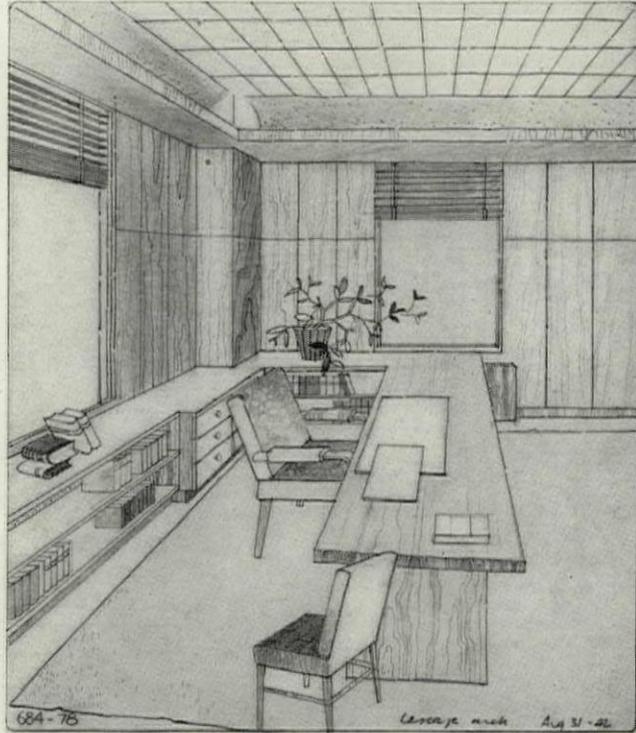
•1 $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$



•4



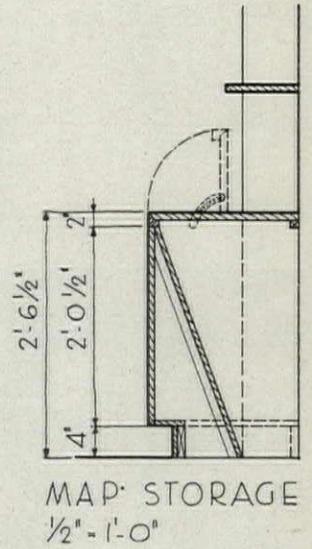
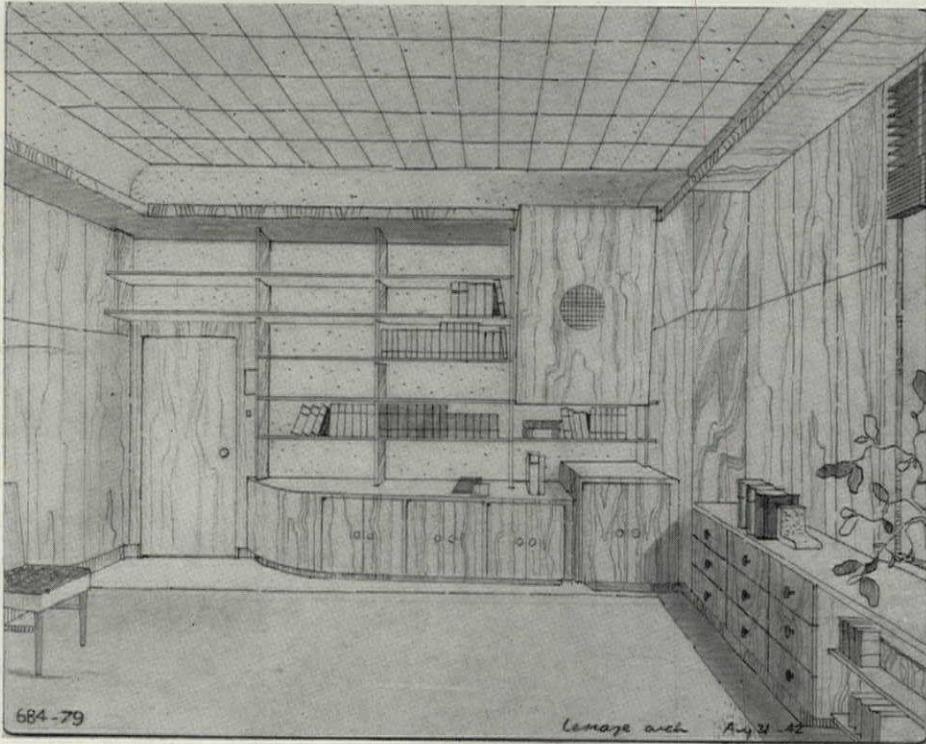
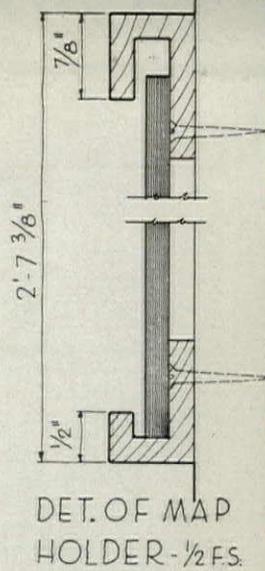
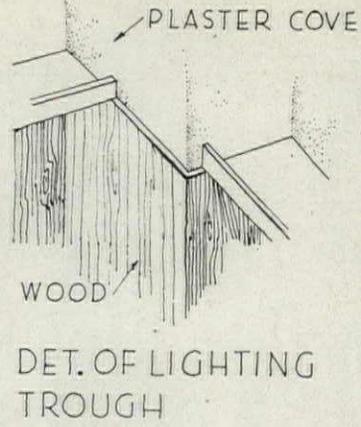
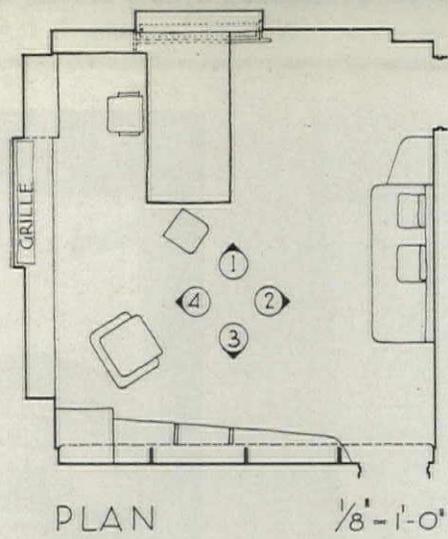
•2



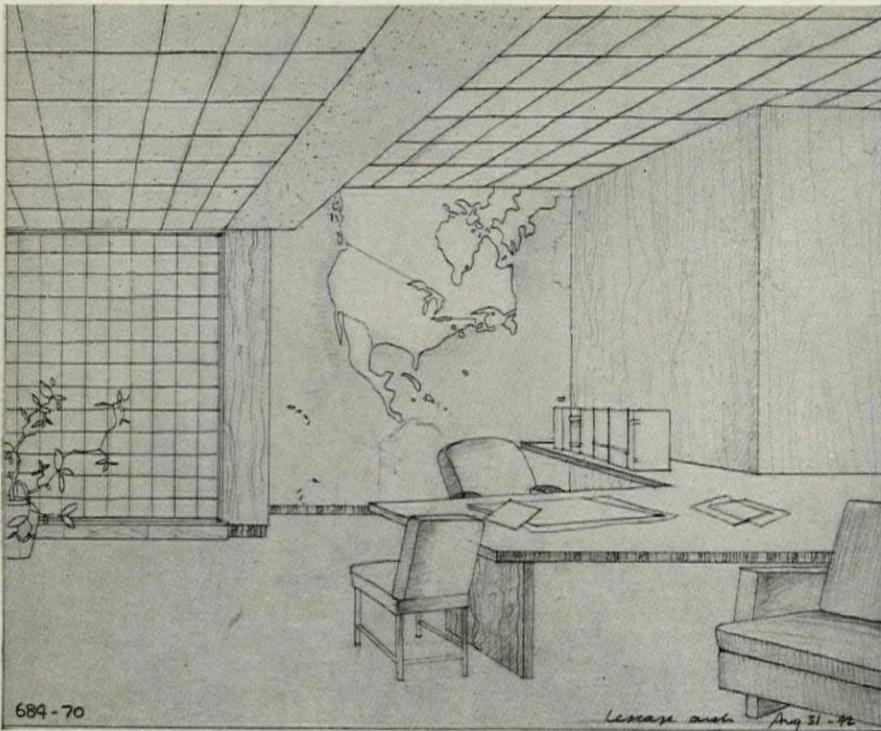
•3



The offices of the executive vice president in charge of operations (room 205) is organized with the office of the vice president and general manager (207), a conference room (206), and a secretarial room (204) to form a harmonious suite of executive offices. Above, architect's sketch; left, interior as executed.



Left, above, architect's sketch; below, interior as executed. Carpeting is a pepper-and-salt-patterned weave, wall panels are solid chestnut, salvaged from the old building and re-finished; ceilings are acoustic tile; curtains beige, venetian blinds natural wood, upholstery mostly brown fabric with dark accents in room 205, and red leather in the conference room.



684 - 70

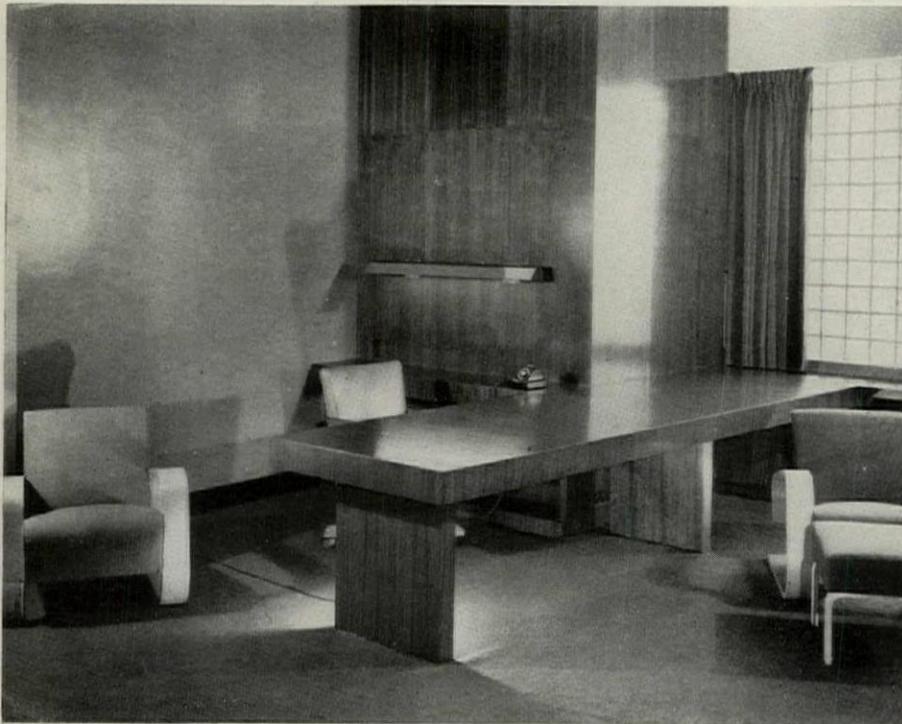
Lescaze archt. Aug 31 - 42



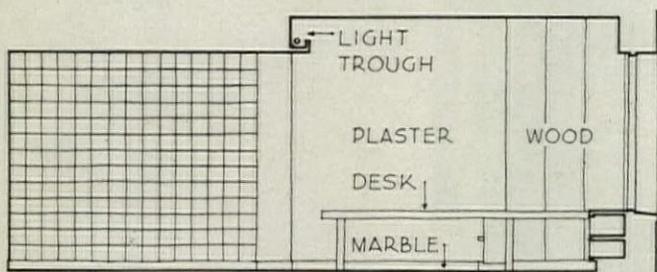
Entry and waiting space

Architect's preliminary study

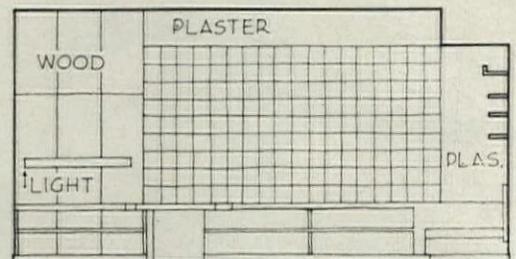
Interior as executed



The president's suite (detailed on these pages) comprises an anteroom, a secretary's office, the main office, and a lavatory. Large panels of glass block transmit daylight from two directions. Ceiling is of acoustic tile; wall panels, chestnut; carpet, nubian; and some upholstery fabrics are dark gray-blue. Mr. H. Shamp was in charge of construction for the Crosley Corporation.

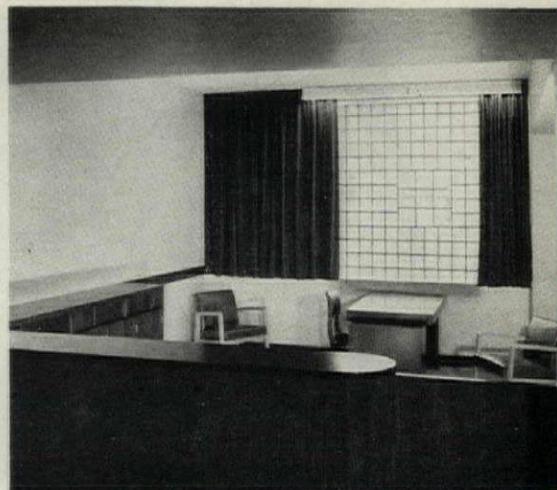
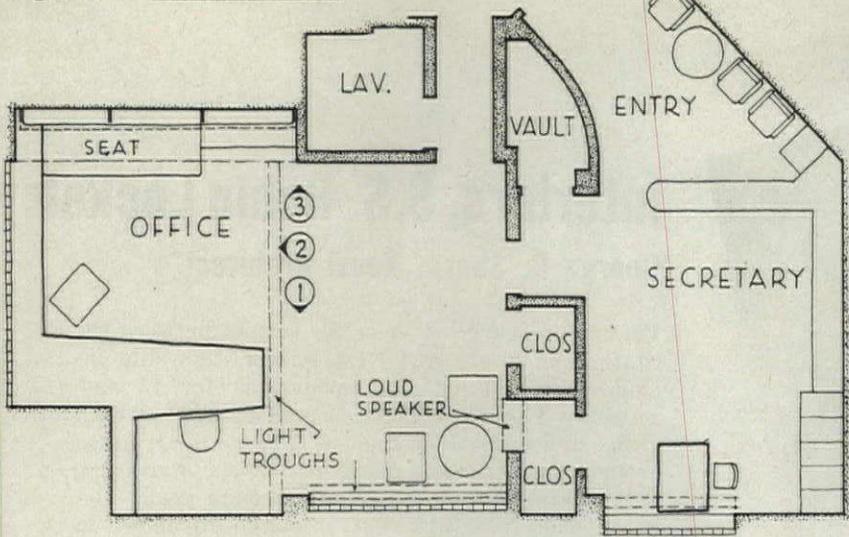


SCALE $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$



2

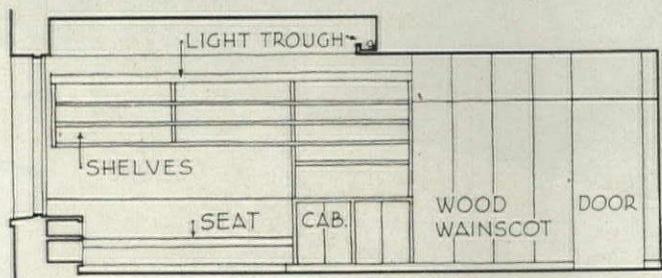
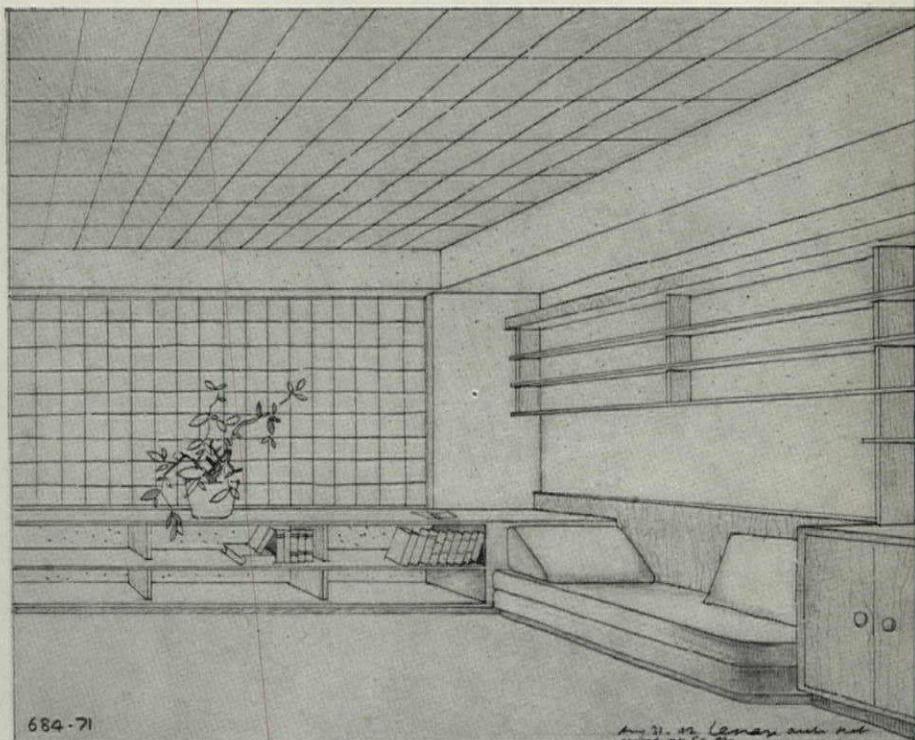
PLAN 0 5 10 FT.



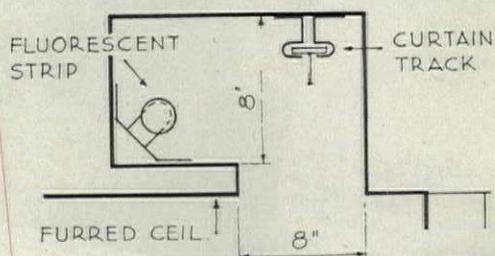
Secretary's office

Interior as executed

Architect's preliminary study



3



DET. OF LIGHT TROUGH
ON WALL 1. 0 5 10 IN.

A corner of a single stateroom opening onto one of the verandas. Gray case furniture and pastel-blue upholstered chairs are arranged against pale yellow walls. The curtains are a gray and yellow plaid-patterned fabric



Interiors, S.S. Robin Locksley

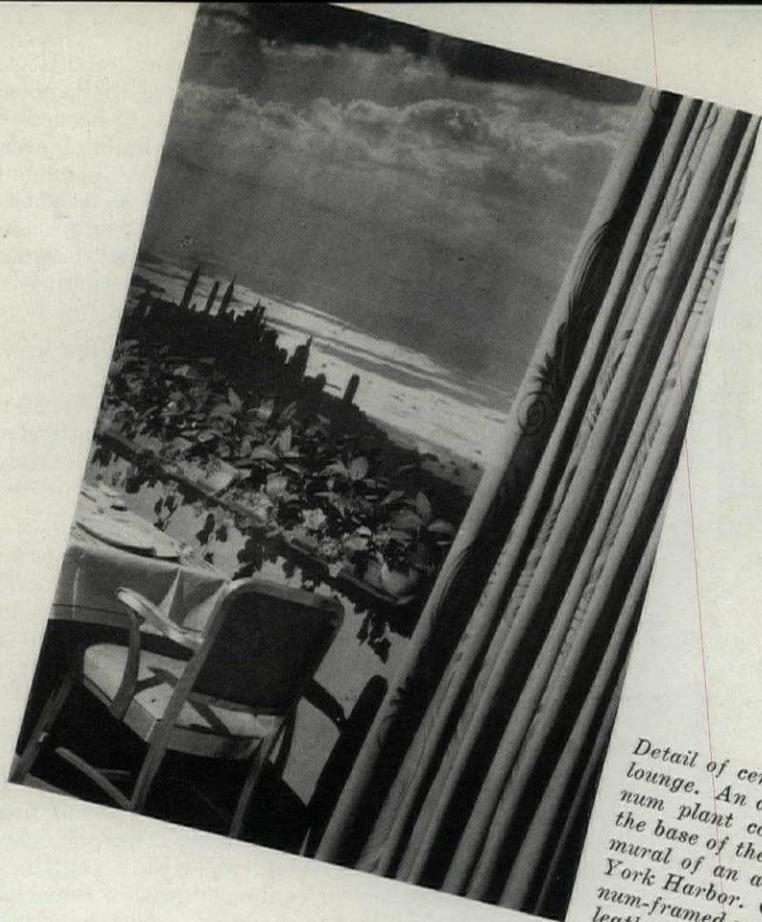
George G. Sharp, Naval Architect

Primarily a cargo steamer for service between the States and South and East Africa, this ship includes luxury-liner accommodations for 12 passengers—4 double staterooms, and 4 single, all with either private bath or shower. These are arranged around two verandas, one port and one starboard, with four staterooms grouped around each. Between, there is a high central lounge, furnished to serve as a dining room as well. According to the architect, cost of these facilities was kept within limits that "compare favorably with much less distinctive results in ships of the same class." All of the furniture was designed by the architect.



Table top, plate glass; lamp base, plastic; upholstery, dusty rose and beige, tufted fabric; curtains, leaf-patterned in beige, green, and dubonnet

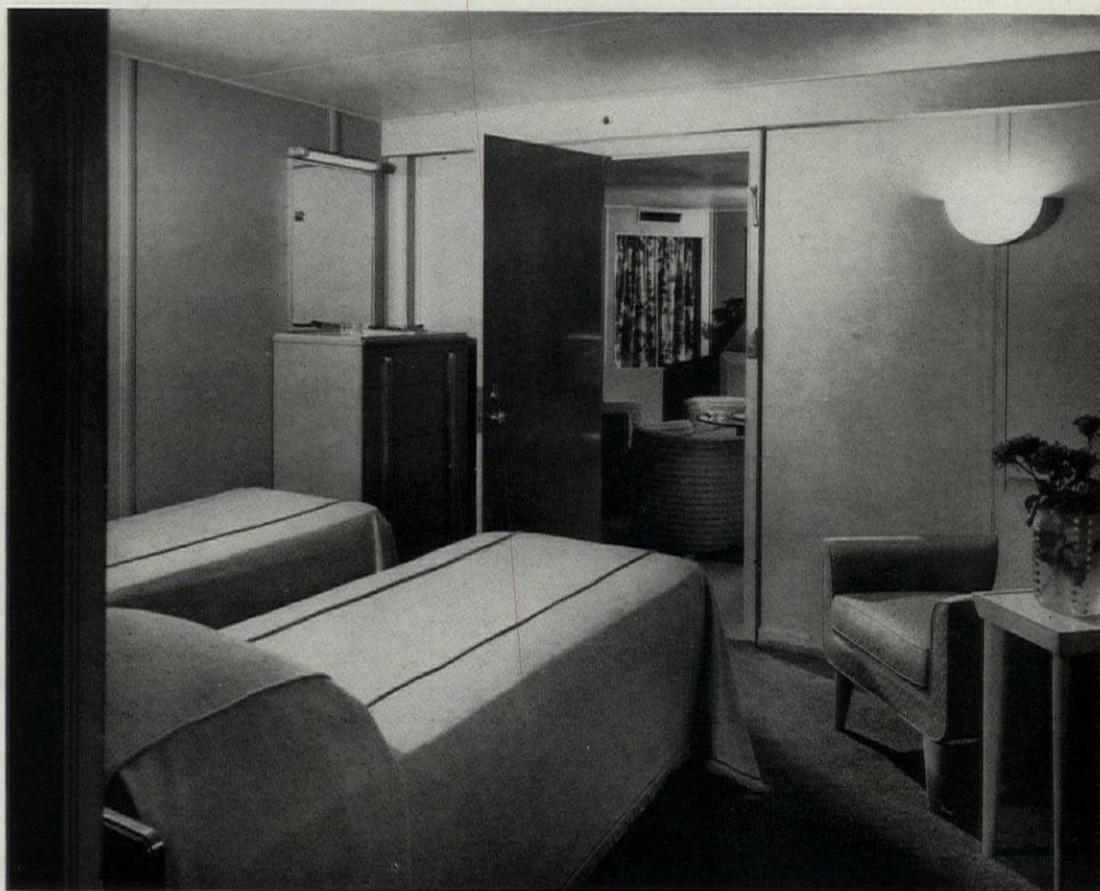
The port veranda, looking through plate glass doors and screens to the central, raised-ceiling lounge and the starboard veranda beyond. On both faces of the central glass panel, an aluminum plant and light trough is installed. Daylight in the lounge comes from glass-block panels set in the vertical bulkheads in the overhead boat deck. Walls of the room are pale blue-green; a deeper green rug is placed on the rubber surfaced floor



Detail of central dining-lounge. An anodized aluminum plant container runs along the base of the sepia-toned photograph of an air view of New York Harbor. Chairs are aluminum-framed and upholstered in leather



Private bath for a double stateroom. The flooring is white and two-toned gray "nonskid" tile. The extended grab bar over the tub is a thoughtful provision that on-shore architects might emulate



A typical double stateroom (veranda beyond). The walls are painted light blue-green; bedspreads, curtains, and chair covering are in rose tones. The upholstery base is foam rubber. All table or cabinet tops throughout the accommodations are of glass or other flameproof material



Community Room

Smith Creek Village Community Center
 Apalachia Dam, Tenn.

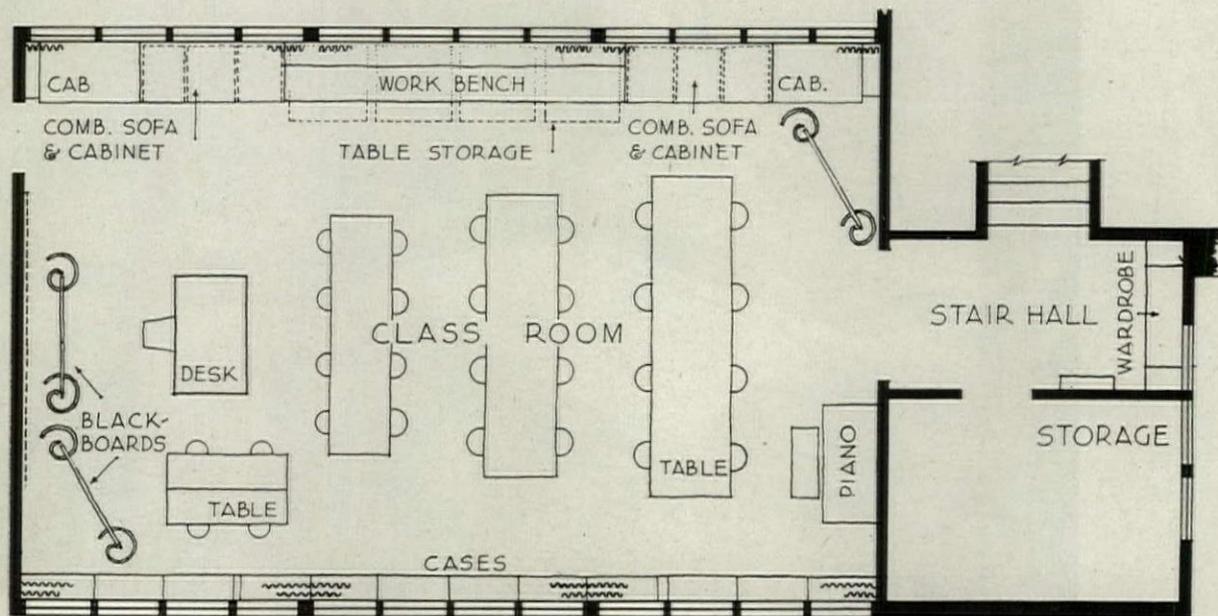
DESIGNED BY THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY,
 ROLAND WANK, HEAD ARCHITECT,
 DIVISION OF REGIONAL STUDIES

Unlike most of the other projects shown in this issue this room was not designed under the limitations of existing building walls or the necessity to conceal eyesores. It was designed as part of a new building erected for duration use by 20 families in a TVA community. However, the little building (presented as a whole in the February 1944 PENCIL POINTS) was planned under some severe restrictions of its own—strict budgetary and hence space limitations and limited wartime materials.

The community room shown here occupies the greater part of the second floor of the structure. The only room of any size in the community, the 23 by 36-foot area had to be made to serve all of the settlement, cultural, social, and recreational needs—school, citizen council, and other general meetings, movies, and recreation.

Since this type of provision is one badly needed in many communities in the southern highlands, the TVA architects attempted to treat this room as an example that might be followed elsewhere. All equipment and furnishings are of cheap, locally available material and of simple workmanship; hardware and curtain materials are of the kind found at the five-and-ten in rural general stores.

To adapt the room to a multiplicity of uses, all equipment, except the work bench and a few minor pieces, has been made in movable sections. The principle of nesting of units has also been employed, permitting inclusion of a great deal of equipment within remarkably limited space. Tables are made of varied heights for varied use by different age groups. All tables may be raised to a normal level for adult uses, however, by means of removing caps from the pipe legs and screwing on extender sleeves in their place.

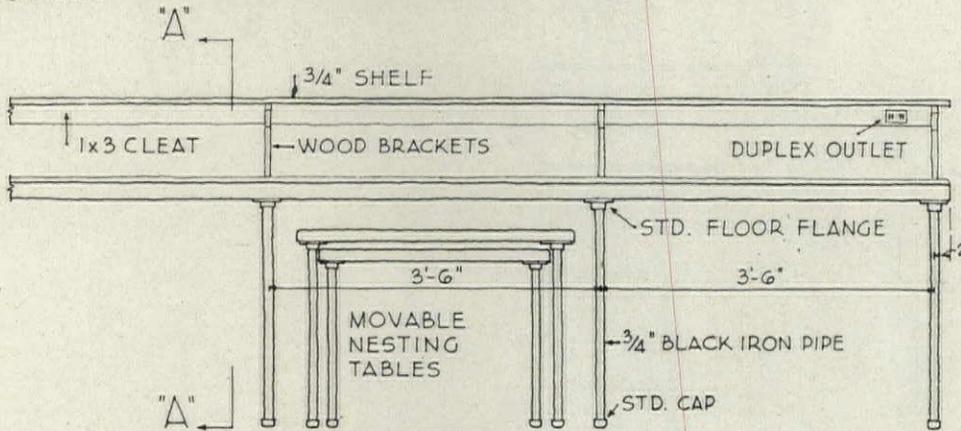
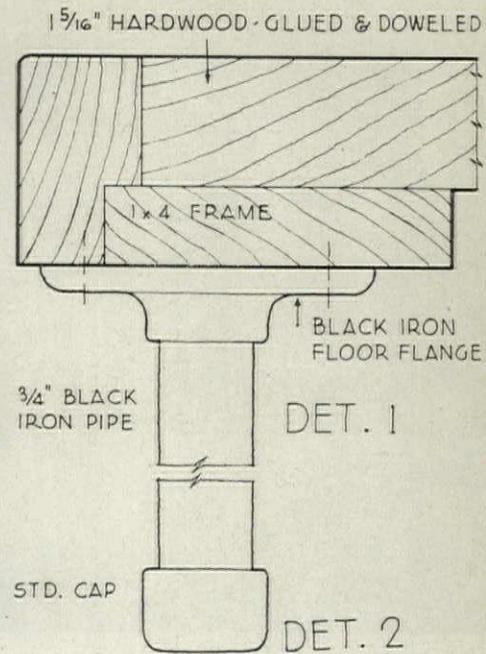


PLAN

SCALE · 1/8" = 1'-0"

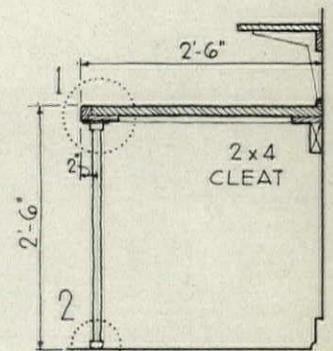


Citizens' Council meeting. Frequently the whole community gathers around to listen or enter the discussions. Along the wall are various sectional storage units.



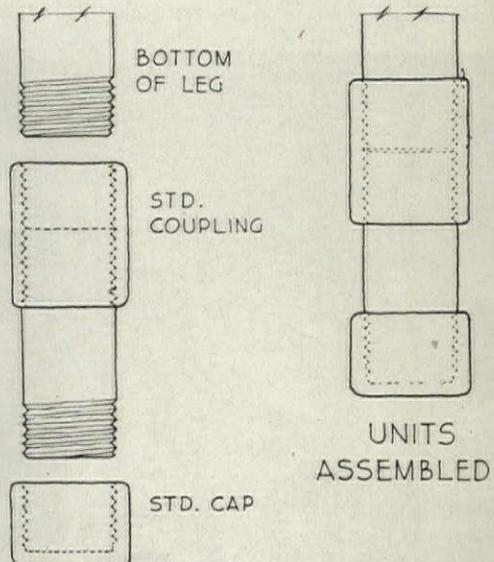
ELEVATION OF WORK TABLE

SCALE 1/2"=1'-0"



SECT. "A-A"

The room put to concentrated use by several age groups. At right of photo, note the nested adjustable tables detailed on this page



UNITS

DET. OF LEG EXTENSION

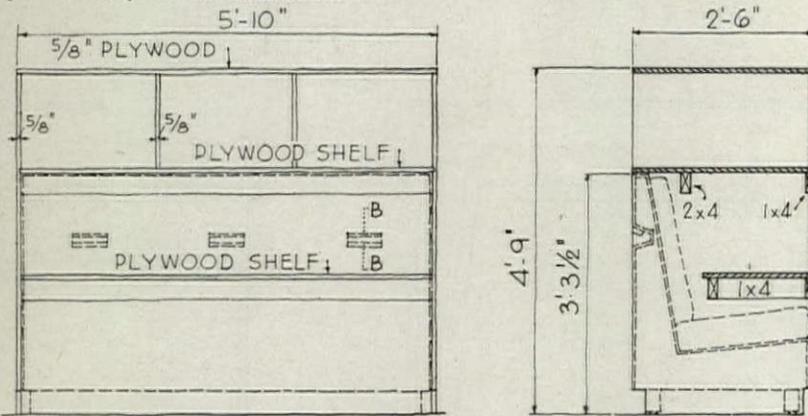
SCALE · HALF FULL SIZE

TVA Community Room

Another feature of the room that allows use flexibility is the provision of two sofa units which may be turned out toward the room or placed anywhere within it to divide space for special purposes. When the room is in formal use, as for school instruction, these sofas may be pushed into special wall cabinet units, to form a flush panel surface facing the room (see details).

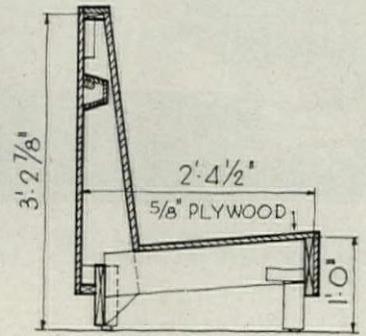


Beyond the work bench and nested tables, one of the sofa units is being pulled out from its wall cabinet

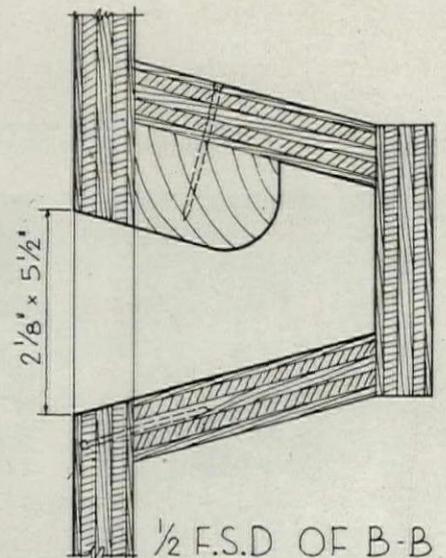


ELEV. OF COMB. SOFA-CABINET SECTION
3/8" - 1'-0"

Low tables for little children; at left, a tackboard, showing one of the pipe standards made to nest with others for storage in minimum space



DET. OF SOFA 1/2' - 1'-0"



1/2 F.S.D OF B-B

Three pairs of nesting pipe standards (storable in no more than the space needed for the pair with the largest bases) support tackboard or blackboard panels and may be linked in series to create temporary partitions anywhere in the room.



At left, one end of the central partition; background, a fabric-covered wall painted dense blue; ceiling and right-hand wall are painted a light sand color

Member's Room, Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, N. Y.

DESIGNER: C. COGGESHALL

The Need:

A room in the museum for members' social functions, special exhibits, reading, study, and privacy

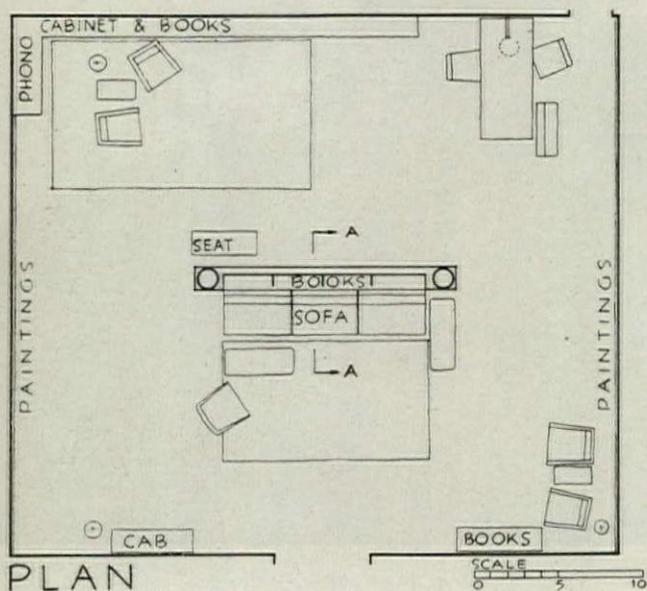
The Only Available Space:

A 40-foot-square basement room, with two structural columns rising within the area

The Solution:

Liabilities turned into assets: the columns enclosed and joined with other materials to partition the space and provide separate areas for separate functions

On the side of the screen wall shown in this photograph a recessed bookshelf and long sofa compose to form a reading area



Plan of the 40-foot square room

Objects in the display cabinet on the reverse side of the screen wall (at right of photo) are lighted by concealed lamps

Instead of bemoaning the interrupting columns, the designer put them to work to serve as the end members for a multipurpose screen wall, surfaced with rigid, structural board. On one side, the partition supports a built-in bench with seat and back cushions arranged under a recessed bookshelf, lighted by concealed fluorescent lamps. On the reverse face of the screen, another lighted recess at eye height forms a display cabinet for small sculptures and other art objects.

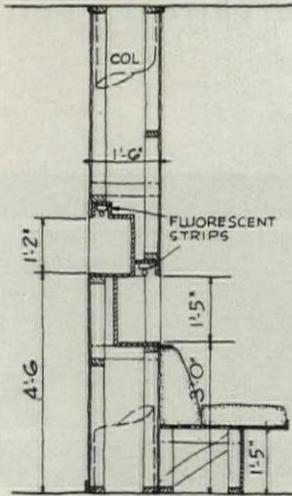
To assist sound control, the walls of the room are surfaced with fabric, painted. Two of the facing walls are a dense slate blue; the other two walls and the ceiling are painted sand color. General illumination derives from tubular lamps installed in ceiling troughs above the lighter walls, which are used for display.

Upholstered furniture is covered with navy blue gabardine; on the four black yacht chairs, seats and backs are of heavy natural sole leather. The cement floor is painted black; temporary rugs are natural-tone rush squares.



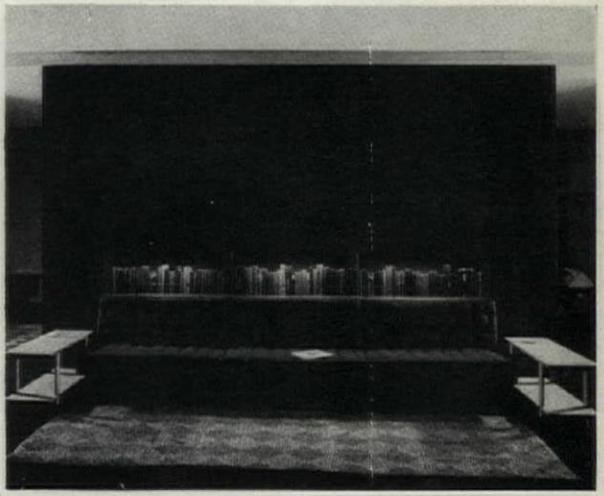


Even a black-and-white photograph indicates the contrast obtained by walls of complementary colors, upholstery in both blue and natural leather and the black floor with natural rush rugs



Detail of central partition

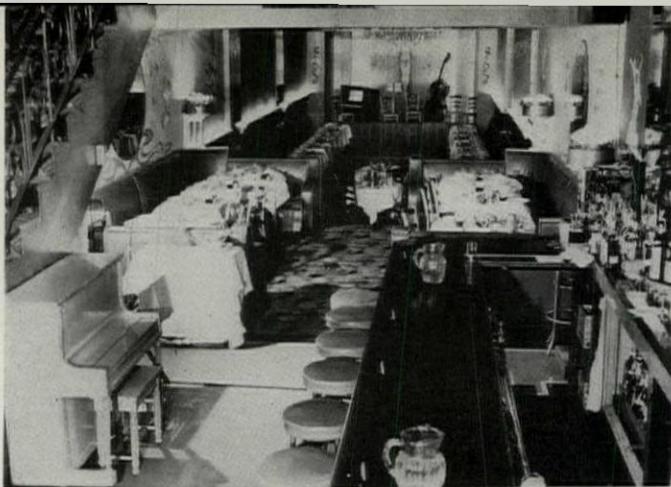
SECTION A-A
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



The framework of the sofa is built into the partition



The two sand color walls of the room, light-flooded by ceiling troughs, are used for special exhibits

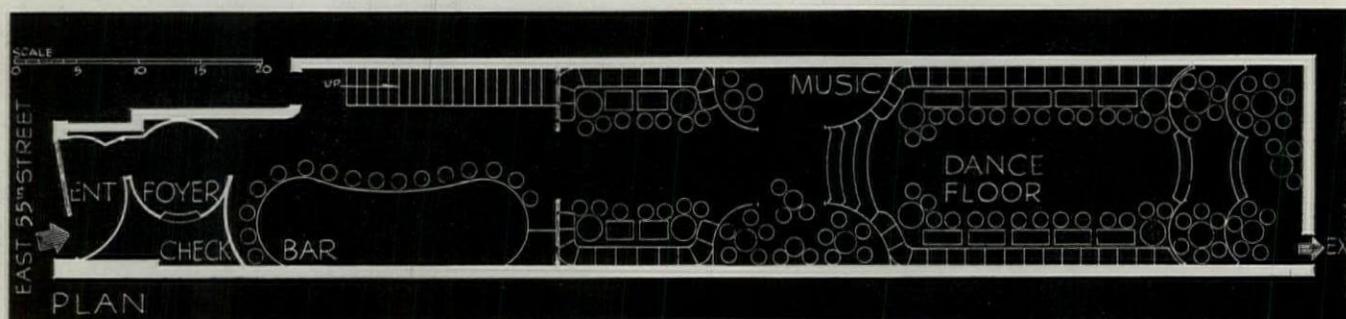


The premises before remodeling appear to be a jumble of unrelated elements

Radio Frank's Knight Club, New York City

DESIGNER: PAUL BRY

MARIE FROMMER, Architect, Collaborator



Throughout history, society has demanded pleasure domes of rare device—places where people go because they find them gay or chic or pleasant places in which to dine, dance, and drink, or to be seen there. The only limits imposed on the designer's imagination are the physical space provided and the budget within which the work must be done. Illusion, even pure fantasy, is entirely in order, provided the prime requisite is met—that the desired clientele will come, and come again and again.

On these two pages, we present a successful wholesale face-lifting operation performed on what was formerly a dine-and-dance establishment of dated and routine design. The mood desired by the manager for his particular clientele was one that would combine festivity, elegance, and intimacy.

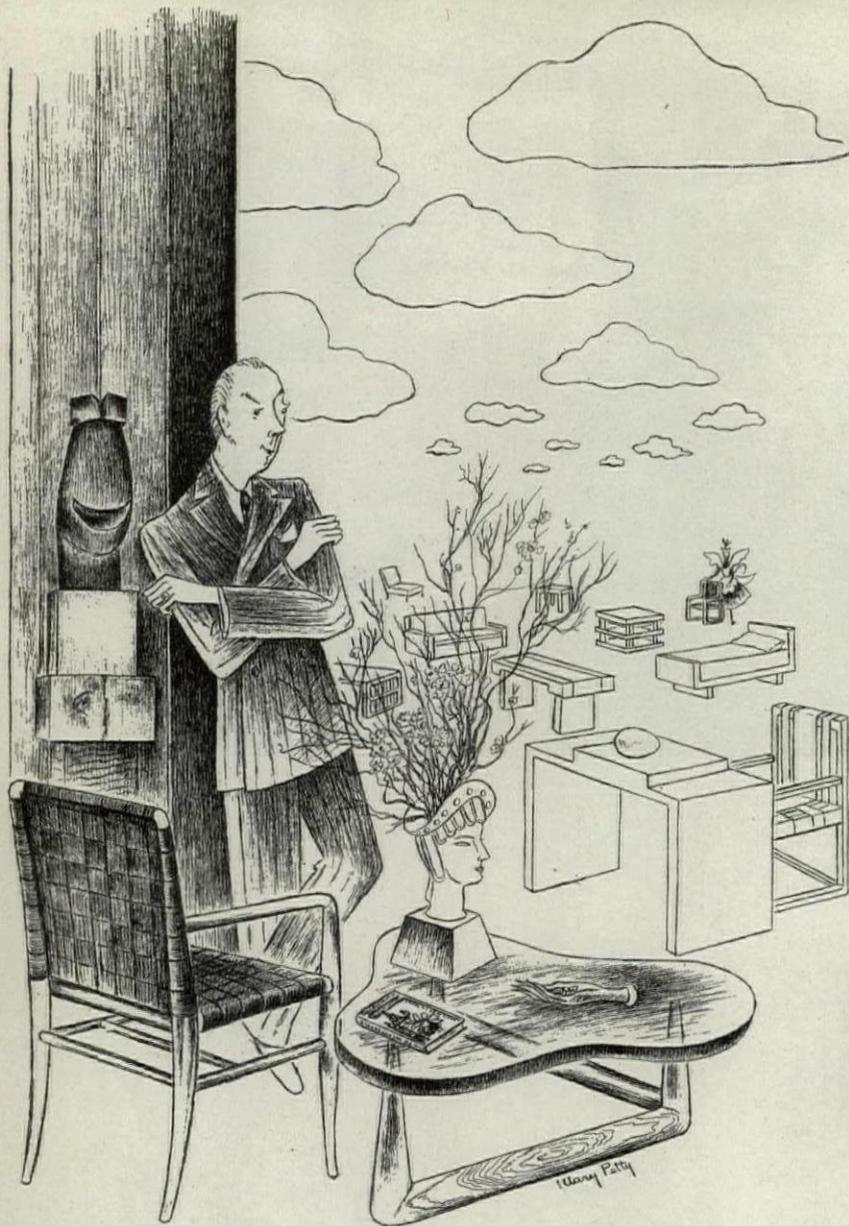
It's partly done with mirrors—a very sensible device, increasing, as it does, the apparent width of the space to considerably more than the actual 15½ feet. New wall surfacing, a judicious color scheme, and an ordered arrangement of decorative elements—in this instance, a practical though unconventional use of lighting fixtures—were other design elements. The subdivision of the space into entrance, circular foyer, and a sunken dance floor with dining balconies at either end, assists in bringing into better balance the extreme proportions of the elongated room. The kitchen is located on the second floor.



The stools and undulating bar front are covered with gold leatherette. The ceiling height mirror surmounting the back of the bar is placed against a wall painted the color of fuchsia.

Looking down to the dance floor from one of the dining loges. The wall sofa-seats are upholstered in fuchsia leatherette. Walls and ceilings are painted gold, except for the central portion where full height mirrors are flanked by black walls against which are placed 44 wall light fixtures mounted on diagonal strips. At the far end of the room, the huge mirror is made up of several diamond-shaped sections.





Perspectives

From Oscar Wilde to
Buffalo Bill: T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings

Several months ago, we read a book. It was not our first book, we hasten to say, nor our last—but it was one of the most memorable. Its name was “Goodbye, Mr. Chippendale.” We took it along on a trip to Chicago and alternately chuckled and roared through half the night as we read it to completion in the privacy of our roomette. (We could never have gotten away with those belly-laugh in a lower!)

From there on we urged all our architect friends to read it—and not only to read it themselves but to present it to their potential clients. For we recognized, in this wittily devastating attack upon the superstitions and pretensions so carefully fostered for decades by the ancestor-worshipping, fashion-mongering racketeers of the antique and decorating trades, a powerful educational weapon on behalf of common sense and good taste in design. The enthusiasm and sincerity that showed clearly on every page, in every paragraph, could have come only from genuine understanding and conviction on the part of the author that people—especially American people—deserve from the designers of their environment more honest treatment than they have been getting for lo, these many years. Since we share this conviction, and ourselves delight to take a whack now and again at those who would maintain the status quo, it occurred to us that we, and you, should

know more about this unusual author who has struck such a telling blow for good democratic architecture.

“Uncluttered” is the word for Gibbings. (Or to be more precise, though it spoil the meter of the paraphrase, for T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings.) Judging from the frequency of its application to examples of his work in print, magazine editors seem to agree unanimously that this somehow complimentary adjective most aptly fits his interior designs. We may as well go further and say that, for our money, its aptness extends equally to his slim, well-tailored person and particularly to the smoothly-working intelligence that animates it.

For here is a man with a well-formed and purposeful philosophy, tuned to the changing present and the challenging future, free of the excess baggage of archaeological pedantry yet soundly-based on hard-earned understanding of principles established in the past.

He was born in England thirty-nine years ago and began his career in the field of furniture design the hard way by going to work at the age of fifteen as a draftsman with the London firm of Heaton, Tabb and Company. Eight years of this, followed by a brief but hilarious experience with a film company, were topped off by a tour of the United States at the beginning

of the great Depression. Already an enthusiast for contemporary design, he saw in this country a tremendous field for his future activity and decided to make it his home when things became more favorable.

Meanwhile he went to Europe and used his remaining savings for further study of the work of the best designers of Scandinavia, Germany, and France. In 1934, broke but full of zeal for his chosen mission as a designer, he returned to London, yielded to necessity, and took a well-paid job with a fashionable West-End antique dealer. Here, for an aristocratic and plutocratic clientele he did elaborate period decorations by day while pursuing his contemporary studies at night and on week-ends. It was at this time that he researched in antique Greek furniture at the British Museum and, through understanding it, developed the sure feeling for delicacy of form and proportion that permeates his own furniture design today. Also probably at this time he developed the fine scorn that appears in his book for the sort of intellectual snobbery he encountered among emulators of the filthy rich.

Finally, in 1936, he came to New York and set up as a designer of furniture and interiors. His real talent is undoubtedly principally responsible for the steady subsequent growth of his practice but his warm and friendly nature and his good business sense have also contributed. Aside from a wholly natural wish to be successful he has stoutly pursued another objective—to restore the faith of Americans in their own country as the source of a highly worthy and truly democratic art. The passionate sincerity of his belief in our national destiny as the birthplace and home of a great and growing creative movement, founded by Sullivan and Wright, led naturally to his becoming a United States citizen as quickly as the law allowed. He is now definitely one of us: thinks and talks authentic and unaffected American, though still with an equally authentic and unaffected British accent. His complete Americanization was hardly as sudden as the story indicates, but he tells of approaching a visit to Cranbrook feeling much like an Oscar Wilde and leaving it with the conviction that he was more like Buffalo Bill.

Thoroughly wedded to his work, but otherwise a childless bachelor, Robsjohn-Gibbins lives in an austere (that is to say, uncluttered) apartment next to his Fifty-Seventh Street studio. Here, each day, come five o'clock,

he relaxes for tea and an hour or two of sleep before dinner. Later, being essentially a city man, he takes advantage of New York's facilities for civilized evening enjoyment—the theatre, music, and a discreet modicum of night-clubbing with friends.

The country rather bores him: a few days among the trees and growing things give him the sensation of turning green. The sea, however, he finds wholly fascinating and he loves to take long walks along the beach, especially in late autumn and winter when it is free of crowds. A collection of delicately tinted shells, quartz pebbles, and bits of wave-worn colored glass, garnered piece by piece during these walks, lies unexpectedly on a glass-topped, free-form, coffee table in his office to remind him of pleasant experiences. Walking is his habitual exercise and you early risers are likely to meet him any fine morning at dawn or thereabouts, stepping along briskly through Central Park as a prelude to breakfast. Among objects of his enthusiasm are drawings and paintings by Picasso and abstractions by a young British sculptor, Henry Moore; his aversions include dogs along with antiques and feudalistic thinking. These trivial details are included of course to shed whatever light they may on his curiously contradictory way of joining luxury with asceticism.

It took courage to present the views contained in his book. He risked the ire of the group from which come his wealthy customers, by treading on the corns of some of their close friends and respectable exploiters. Yet the quality of his audacious wit is so good-humored and its application so just, that like the skilfully administered spanks of a loving parent it gets the point across with no permanent bitterness. Grand Rapids, for example, takes a lambasting in the book—not because it is Grand Rapids, not because it is in the furniture business, but because it has failed until now to understand and live up to its opportunity. But there's a change coming. Robsjohn-Gibbins is designing a complete low-cost line for one of the big (and smart) manufacturers out there so that after the war it will be possible to buy inexpensive but well-designed and well-made chairs and tables and dressers and beds suitable for the average American household and pocketbook. If his stuff is as good as we think it is, R-G may yet turn out to be the greatest benefactor G.R. has ever had.

KENNETH REID



Perspectives



The Diffident Gascon: Antonin Raymond Part II

Brief facts from Part I (June 1944 issue): Tony Raymond, who came to the United States in 1910 and worked on the design of the Woolworth Building in New York City, left again to practice in the Orient for several years. He returned to this country before the outbreak of World War II and reestablished himself permanently with a New York office, and with a group of earnest young practitioners who worked collaboratively at his New Hope, Penna., farm—a large establishment where he raises pedigreed cattle.

Life with the New Hope group was always stimulating whether or not the financial reward was abundant. The group was quartered in more or less rehabilitated farm buildings; the common table at meal times was then—and still is on weekends—likely to provide food for the minds and bellies of intensely interesting and interested creative people of several different nationalities, who would often talk simultaneously in several tongues. Mrs. Raymond mothered the whole group; if one departed for a time, on his return she would greet him expansively, clasp him to her bosom, envelope him once more in the exciting atmosphere of the farm and the group. Above all else, she has this capacity for affection, and she is not backward in its employment. It is natural for her to greet friends or welcome guests with the extravagant phrase, and she means what she says. One cannot help responding, even though the more diffident may be somewhat bewildered. It is not the Raymonds' fault if a guest remains a stranger after five minutes.

Several things led the group to break up as a practicing association operating at New Hope. Apparently some felt an overemphasis on family life, a loss of independence; it seems that small jealousies grew between New York personnel and the New Hope group; there were difficulties about state licensing to practice because the group was such an informal organization; and the monetary return was disappointing. It was idyllic while it lasted, and though like most idyls it could not endure forever, its practical results in terms of developing individual resourcefulness and capability to turn out work are apparent in the accomplishments of former members who are now in Raymond's office.

Some outsiders have believed that Raymond was exploiting the group, and condemned him for it. This impression might have been due in part to an attitude of Raymond's which has changed since his return from the Far East. At that time he was contemptuous of labor unions, of the "right" of the mass to collective bargaining power. He expressed himself vociferously on the subject, and to the liberal mind this made the New Hope experiment at once questionable.

There is no doubt that Raymond is shrewd in large matters, though spendthrift in small, both in financial affairs and in the common social contacts (which seem more important to him.) But he is also sincere, and he is entirely willing to change his mind given sufficient

reason: There is likewise no doubt that he was sincere about the New Hope group, and he probably does not yet fully understand why it could not be permanent.

He has changed his mind about unions, and about the painful manifestations of social progress which surround us now in America. It is not easy to explain why; the change is characteristic and deep. To state it oversimply, he has come to believe that there is no chance for an esthetic expression in this country—in most of the world, for that matter—today, because our civilization is struggling through a material phase. Cultural advance, which must be preceded by spiritual advancement, he will say, has little opportunity to flourish when all peoples' minds focus on money-getting or the acquisition of power for power's sake. He believes the basis for each great architectural expression of the past was a high, popular, spiritual concept of life, coupled with, but never dependent upon, advance in mechanical knowledge. He points out the decline of Roman taste coincidentally with the rise in Roman material success as a facsimile of conditions today; he views the rise of Romanesque and Gothic coincidentally with the growth of Christianity as effect due to cause, and sees a potential parallel in our rising interest in social welfare, in unionism, in medicine, housing, and other manifestations. He takes this stand as dispassionately as he can take anything—more so than most things because he is primarily interested in a high cultural level, in architecture as the expression of the cultural level, and his convictions are so fundamental that he does not feel he has to argue for them. If in our social concerns we can find a spiritual purpose sufficiently healthy to raise that level, he is all for them.

Today well over half the key men in his office are members of FAECT-CIO. He complies with the wages and hours laws not just because he has to, but because it seems to him part of the social program. He does this despite the difficulty of classifying to the satisfaction of uncomprehending officialdom men who may be designers today, draftsmen tomorrow, specification writers the day after.

Raymond is more than willing to give youngsters a chance, yet he will accept nothing less than the best from any employee. He detests architectural styles as they are applied today because they are pretentious; and included in his detestation is what is called the "International" style. This, curiously, is not only because it is a style but also because it is Germanic in origin, and he feels that the German hand is perforce heavy, productive of little that contributes to light-hearted enjoyment of living. This is entirely aside from political considerations, although international politics cannot help but be of import to as cosmopolitan an individual as Raymond. Yet he reveres Richard Neutra, and has stated publicly that he believes Neutra is one of a limited group of great architects now alive and practicing.

He does not include himself in that group, although he is a Chevalier of the French *Legion d'Honneur* and holds decorations from other countries. To revert to the paradoxical, he may be positive in his statements, assertive in conversation, sure as can be of what he is doing and where he is going, but he is essentially modest, almost humble, because for all his efforts he is still pursuing his ideal. He does not know that a reputable, mature architect from conservative New England (a man who shall be nameless here because he does not know Raymond intimately and because in his work he is typical of many in America) believes Tony Raymond is one of the three greatest architects in this country.

When he learns this, Tony will probably not go into retirement; but if he did, he would emerge shortly, very likely wearing an impeccable brown suit, a pink shirt, and a green—bright green—necktie.

—FRANK G. LOPEZ



Offices and Show Rooms

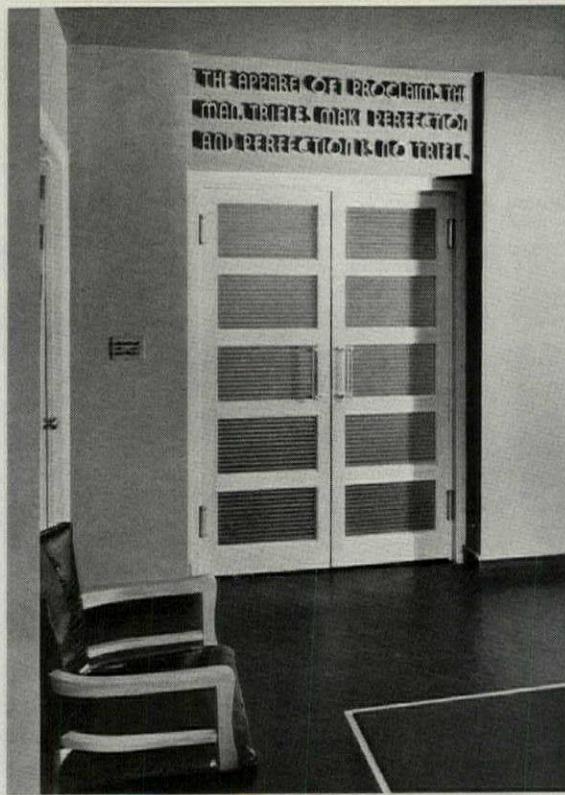
Jaxton Clothes, Inc.,

New York City

ARCHITECT: JOSE A. FERNANDEZ

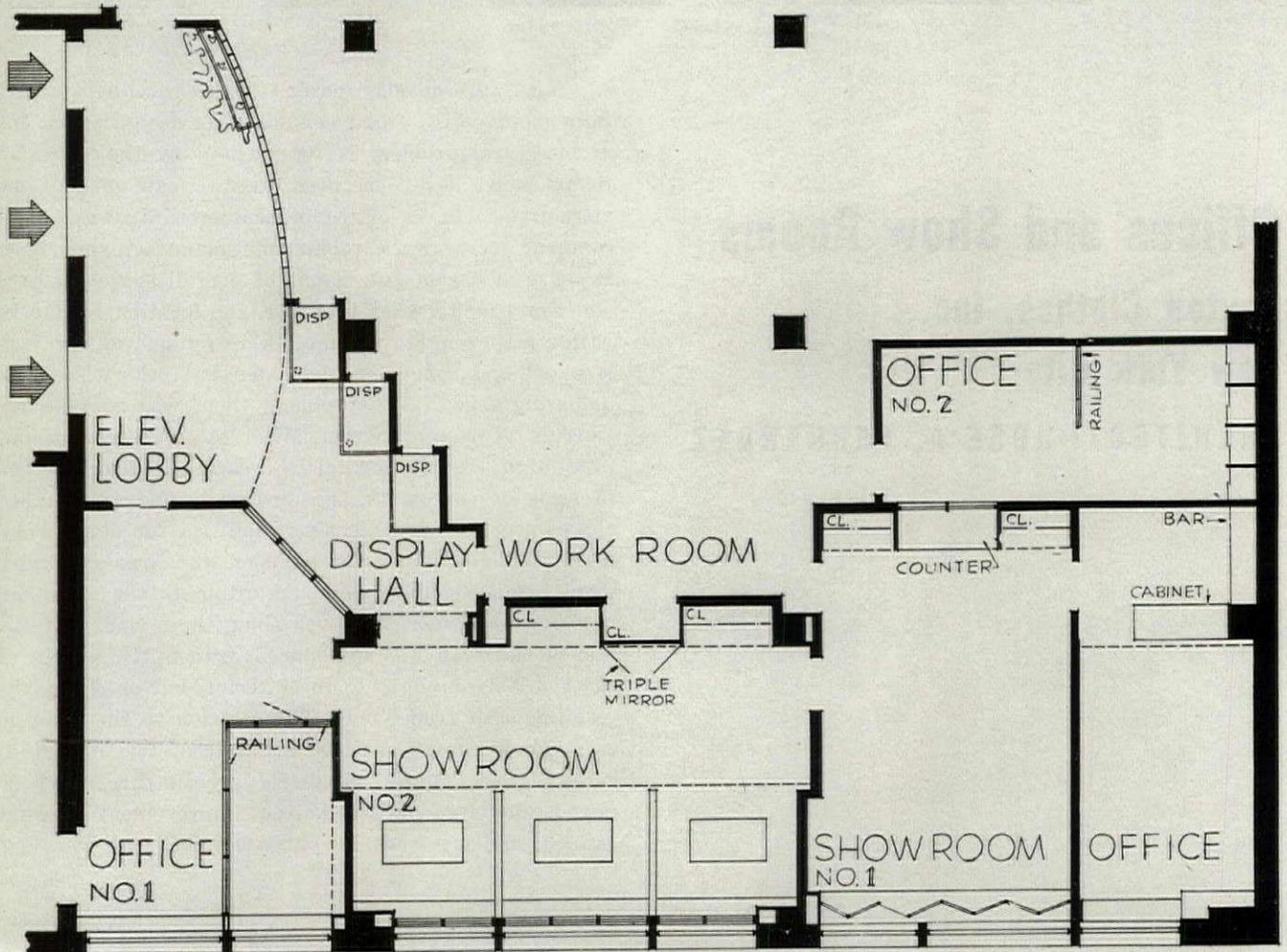
A typical present-day poser for the architect which falls about halfway between stage-set design and a full architectural problem is represented by the series of rooms shown here. The need was to create efficient and attractive business offices immediately adjacent to the company's city work rooms and manufacturing floor. Because of the large amount of overall space required and rents being what they are, the location had to be within a thoroughly routine building that was well constructed and conveniently located but otherwise quite undistinguished. The problem, then, was to take advantage of whatever was advantageous, screen whatever might be detrimental to creating a favorable impression on customers, and develop the newly assigned space into neat and pleasing facilities for doing business. While the exterior walls of the area contained many windows, they were, according to the architect, ugly in appearance. So, even along these walls, a false, translucent wall was introduced, transmitting most of the available daylight to the interior, but shielding the existing sash from view. The solution to the problem as a whole checks out well on at least two important criteria for judging successful architecture: for the purpose involved, it is a distinct improvement on what existed, and it serves its purpose well.

**Jose A. Fernandez,
Architect**

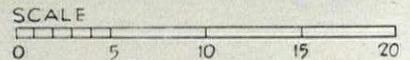


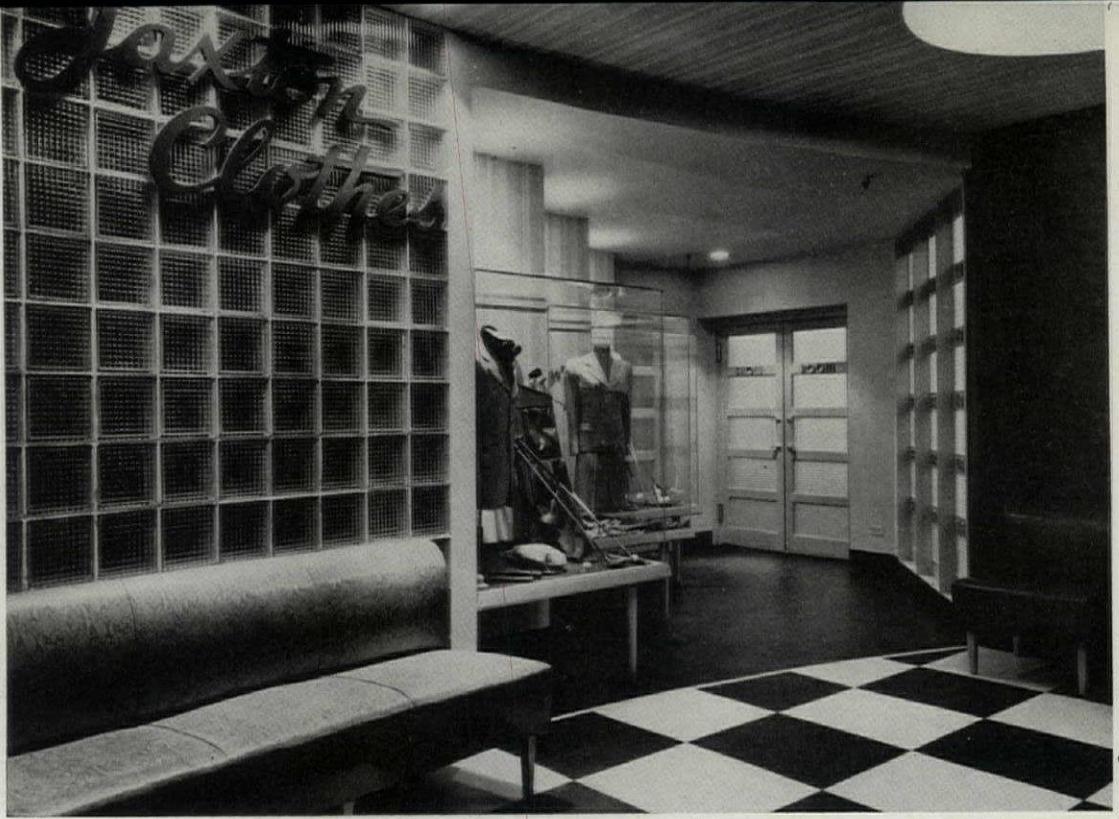
Doors, paneled with fluted glass, occur between one of the showrooms and the display hall. Surmounting the doors are lofty thoughts expressed in raised lettering.

A stepback organization of plan places public and waiting space within wholly interior space; private offices and showrooms are arranged along exterior walls



PLAN

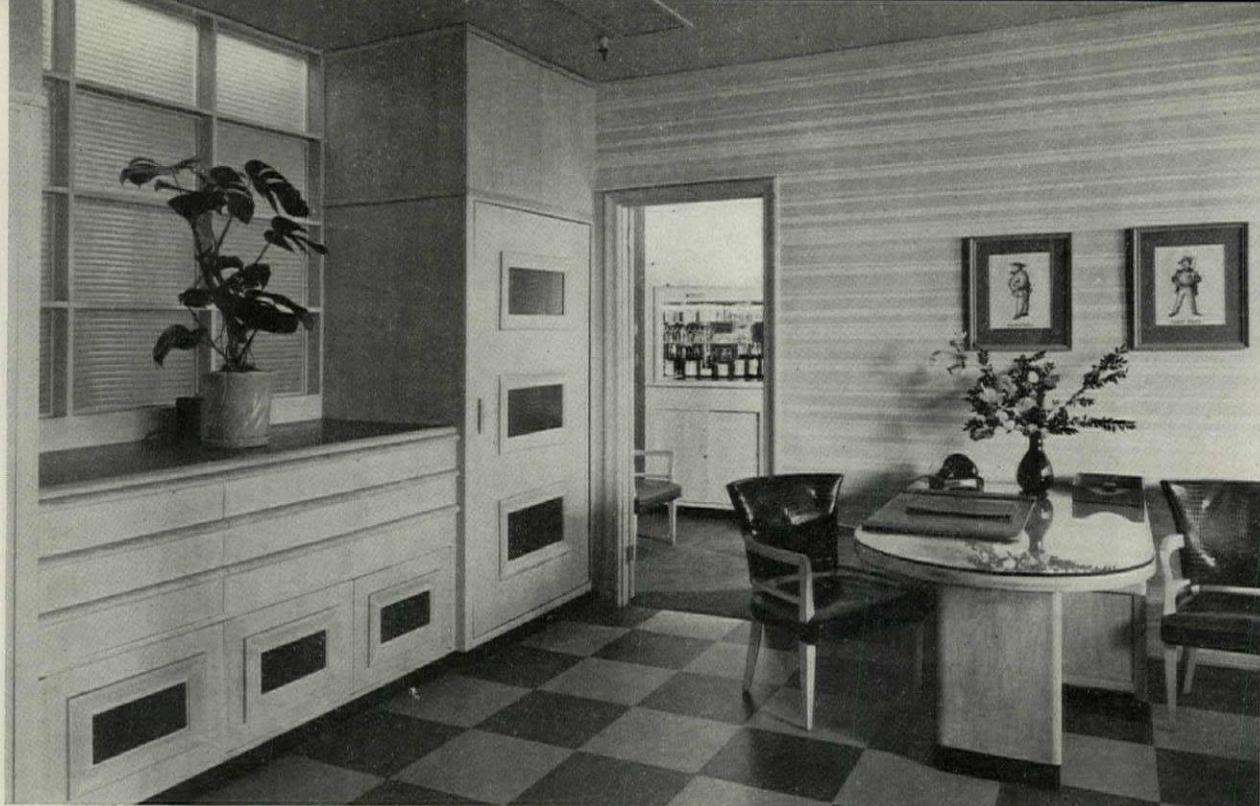




Above: The entrance lobby provides both waiting space and merchandise display. Details of the setback showcases are given on Page 72. The wall at right is covered with midnight blue leatherette; a curved wall of glass block extends from floor to ceiling and serves as a background for the settee upholstered in cherry red leatherette and a dramatic version of the company trademark. The floor in the foreground is of oversize black and white linoleum squares; in the passage area, the linoleum is solid black.

Below: Men's Clothing showroom. Dividers between the display booths carry out the design used for the false window sash. They are framed in pickled oak and glazed with fluted glass panels. Above the booths, the ceiling is wallpapered, with broad green and eggplant stripes separated by fine lines of lemon yellow; remainder of the ceiling is painted the eggplant tone. Walls of the room are a soft gray-green. The false sash are operable, providing extra ventilation as well as light. The floor is surfaced with dark green linoleum applied in squares.

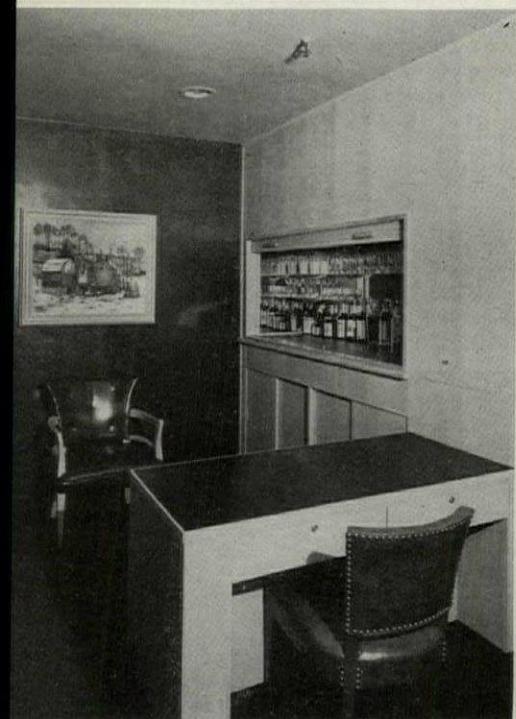




Showroom for Ladies Sportswear, looking through into the private office shown below

Jose A. Fernandez, Architect

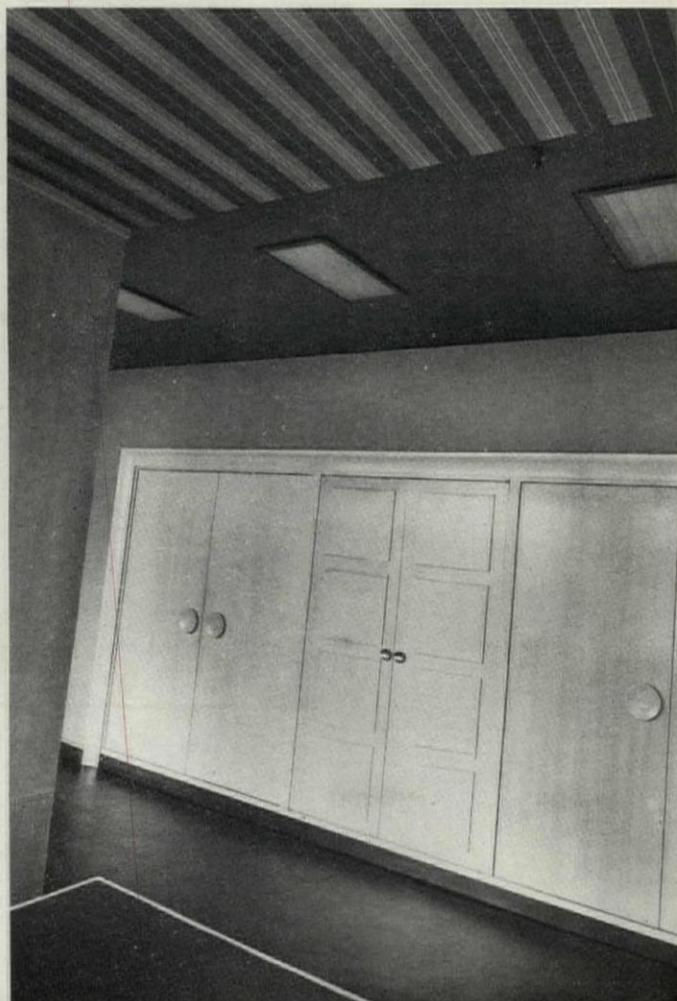
The chief executive's private office. In one corner (photo at left) is a small built-in bar





The series of sawtooth sash in the sportsweat showroom is hinged at the exterior angles and may be opened inward

Pickled oak merchandise cases in the men's clothing showroom

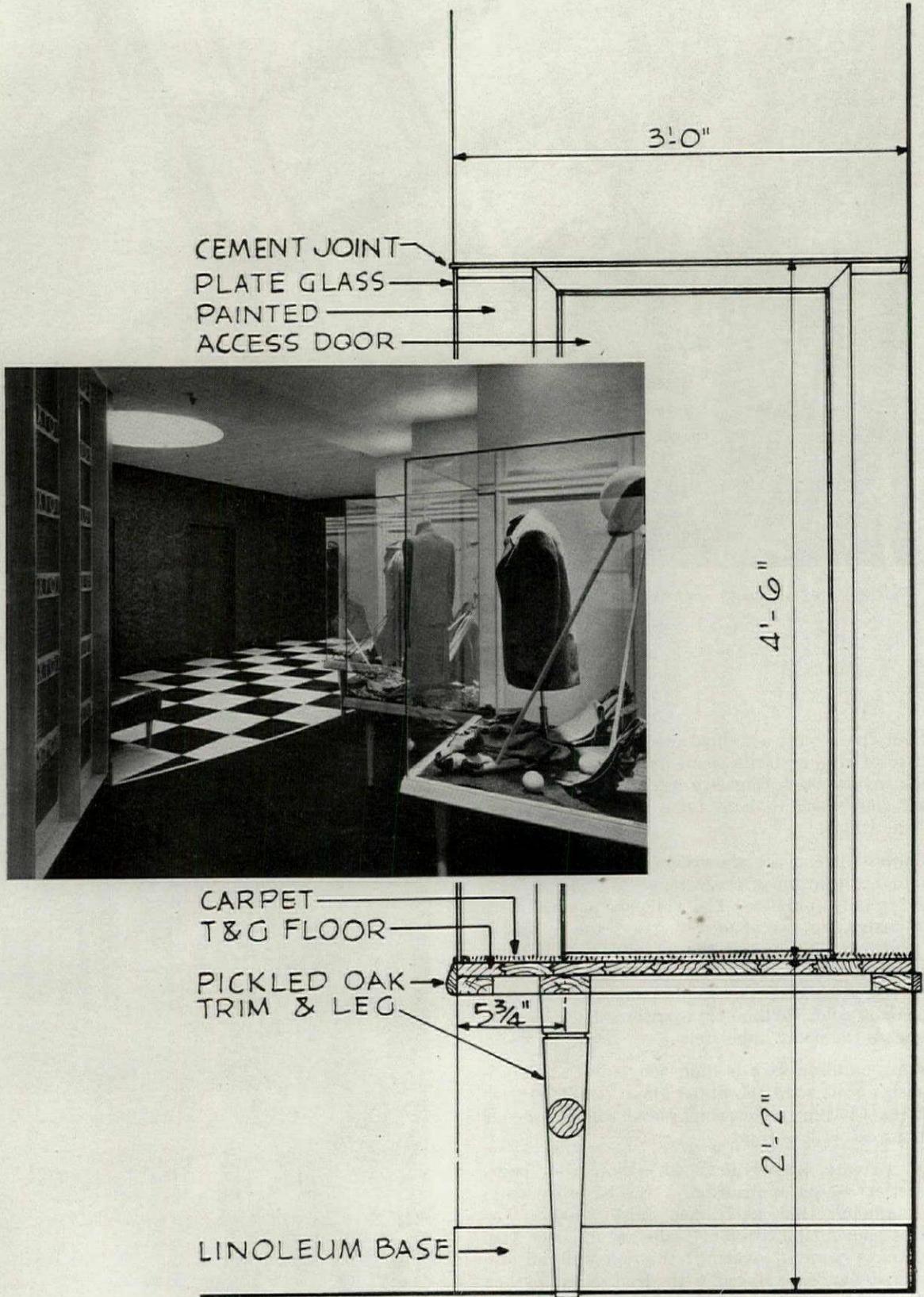


throughout the rooms, a unified design is achieved by various use of similar basic elements—stripe-patterned paper, oak woodwork, leatherette in different colors and fluted glass used in both false window walls and exterior partitions.

In the Ladies Sportswear showroom shown in the two large photographs at top of these pages, the color scheme is gray, burgundy, and blue. The walls are papered with striped pattern in two shades of gray; the ceiling is painted gray. As elsewhere in the establishment, pickled oak is used for the case work. For purely decorative purposes, a balanced series of panels are finished with burgundy-color, python-skin-patterned leatherette, which repeats the chair upholstery.

The existing building sash is hidden by false sawtooth-shaped sash glazed with the fluted glass. Like the sash in the Mens Clothing showroom, these can be opened to admit air as well as light.

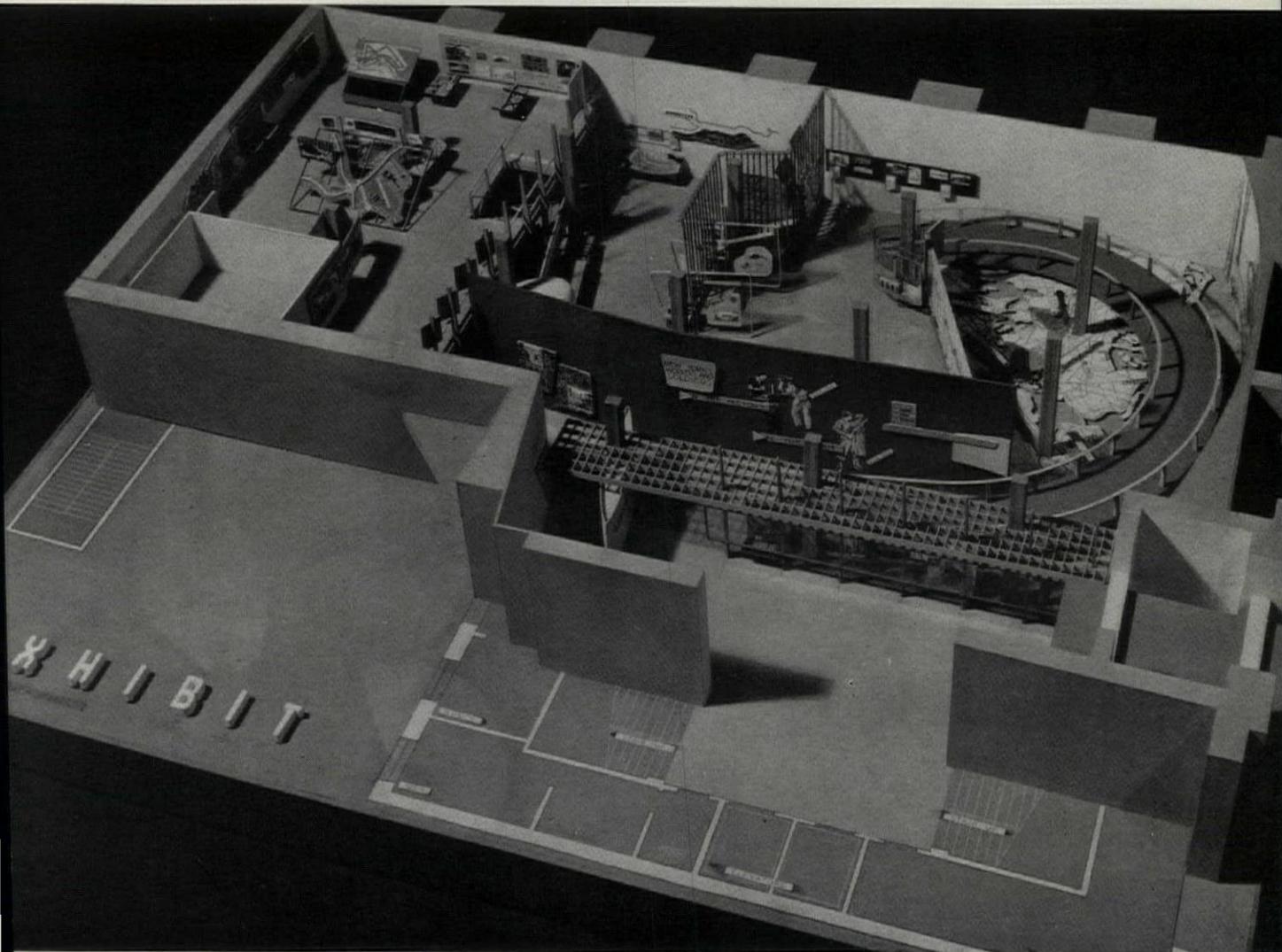
The chief private office, shown directly across page, is yet another design application of the basic elements used throughout; the oak-framed false window has fluted glass panels; the two long walls are finished with basket-weave pattern covering; the end wall, adjoining the small bar is surfaced with deep green python leatherette. A brown rug covers the floor. The settee and chairs are upholstered in natural color leather.



DETAIL SECTION of DISPLAY
in DISPLAY HALL
SCALE • 1" = 1'-0"

Postwar Question Mark

BY TALBOT F. HAMLIN, A.I.A.



A brilliantly designed exhibition by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill: New York City's postwar building projects—a billion and a quarter dollars worth. But WHAT is exhibited? Does it promise well for the city's future?

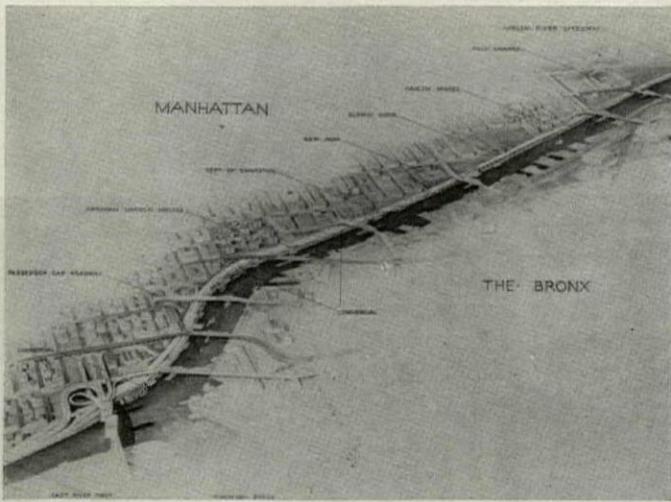
A billion and a quarter dollars is a lot of money. With it one can buy a lot of city. With it perhaps one might have been able to buy a better city. A brilliantly designed exhibition—which also cost a lot of money—should allow some judgment as to whether or not a better city is on the way. To answer this, of course, one must decide what a city is for. Is it just a place to make money in, a place for speculation, a place to move madly around in; or should it be above all a place in which people can live happily, quietly, and with love for their surroundings and the greatest opportunities for enriching their lives?

We know what New York is today. We know that it is strangling itself, that its areas of blight are growing, that its population is gradually becoming stabilized and in certain areas decreasing. It is a city designed for congestion of traffic, for waste motion, for minimum play areas and little open space close to residences. In other words, by any humane standards it is a city less rewarding to live in than it was fifty years ago. New York has a City Planning Commission, created with great effort, initiated with great hopes. The Commission's answer to the question of what the new

city is to be is written plain across the clearly displayed map at the entrance to the exhibition. It is simply: More of the same—a billion dollars more. Crowded housing developments, congested beyond reason through some fantastic allegiance to completely unreal land values, in a town of stationary population, will serve only to produce still further blight.

Traffic

One thing new alone is evident: that the planners are obsessed with the problem of automobile traffic. A fat slice of the billion goes to that, and of that fat slice a tremendous segment is devoted to parkways for limited traffic—for pleasure traffic—as though the ability of a relative few to get out of the city in ten minutes' less time could count in the human scale against the convenience, the happiness, the safety of the many. Children going to school or playing in the afternoon, mothers shopping, men young and old seeking pleasant, quiet, constructive after-hour recreation—for these the plan has little to offer. Of real neighborhood conception, of the effort to build with this enormous sum a city based on the individual, on



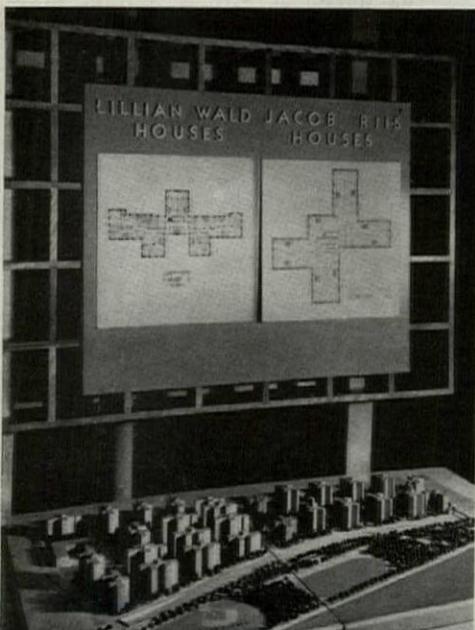
Harlem River Drive. Office of the Borough President of Manhattan, Edgar J. Nathan, Jr.; W. W. W. Jones, Architect



Flushing Meadow Park, Queens. Department of Parks

Lillian Wald Houses. Frederick L. Ackerman; Lafayette A. Goldstone, Architects

Jacob Riis Houses. William Hohausser, William Gillette, Reinhard & Hofmeister, Architects (N. Y. City Housing Authority)



neighborhoods which might help the individual to lead a richer, a more democratic life, there is not a trace.

Parkways—Still Traffic

A hundred million dollars goes into parks, to be sure, but the greater part of this amount goes for parkways, for improvements of existing park areas, and for the development of new gargantuan schemes on the outskirts far from the centers of population. How much better, perhaps, to have taken some of this huge outlay to build more Tompkins Squares, to have cut long, narrow, purely pedestrian parks connecting, say, Central Park with the East and Hudson rivers, so that nowhere in our city would anyone live more than a few blocks from a green area. How infinitely the city cries out for these open spaces and for local playgrounds! Would it not, for instance, have been almost better, instead of building so many terrifyingly congested housing developments, merely to have razed all the buildings in occasional blocks, so that the people living in the surrounding houses could find green play areas at their doors?

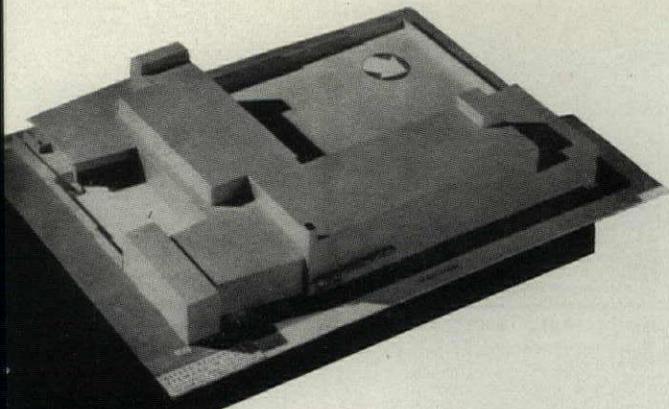
Hardboiled Housing

This almost complete failure of human imagination vitiates the entire program. It is responsible for the stupid monotony of enormous and inhuman schools. It is behind the tragic, backward-looking housing, where intensity of land usage has forced building heights and coverages that make any satisfactory solution impossible. Take, for example, the group which combines Jacob Riis and Lillian Wald Houses, with their monotonous repetitions of high buildings surrounding inadequate open space; or take Brownsville Houses in Brooklyn, where the density of population is less and the buildings are lower, but where there is the same crowded monotony of red brick walls surrounding insufficient open areas. In a city which possesses such a successful group as Harlem River Houses or the row-house groups of Clason Point and Markham Houses on Staten Island, in a city which has already seen the products of disastrous over-crowding in Queensbridge and Fort Greene or in the asphalt areas of East River Houses, these failures are all the more tragic. Even the unit plans suffer. Living rooms that are half passage, and over-small to boot; kitchens frequently inadequate; long corridors and circuitous circulations—these all result from ingenuity used not to produce livable homes with adequate standards, but merely to crowd more and more people onto the land.

All this is done, I suppose, in the name of realism. It is the politician's boast that he is hard-headed, cold-blooded, and realistic. Yet by what criterion is this realistic? The history of blight in our cities is certainly a fact. The downward population trend is a fact. Growing decentralization in our cities, with consequent waste of time and energy, is a fact. Behind blight lies everywhere the attempt to use land more intensively than human beings can tolerate. **But every effort of this postwar program seems directed toward increasing in the city of the future every single element that is evil and, in the long run, economically destructive.** These evils will not be checked by increasing the causes which produce them.

Stylized Schools

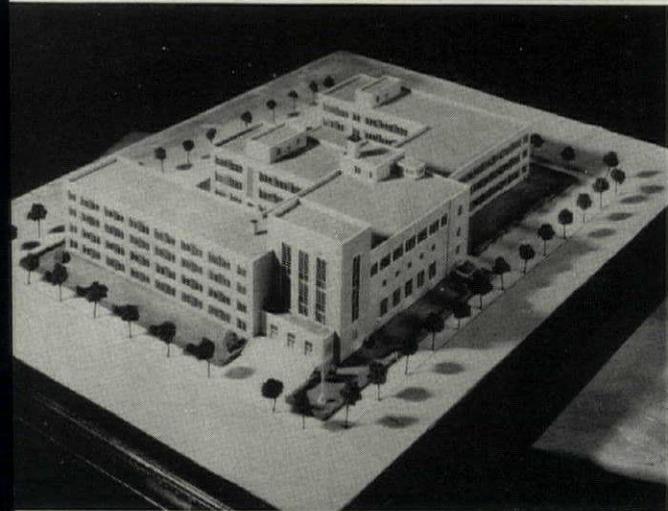
It may be this lack of vision, this failure to realize what a billion dollars could do, that is at the base of the aesthetic failure of the greater number of the projects illustrated. More than seventy schools, with an average value of well over a million dollars, surely offer an opportunity for the most creative, the most



Public School 40, Brooklyn. *Fellheimer & Wagner, Architects.*



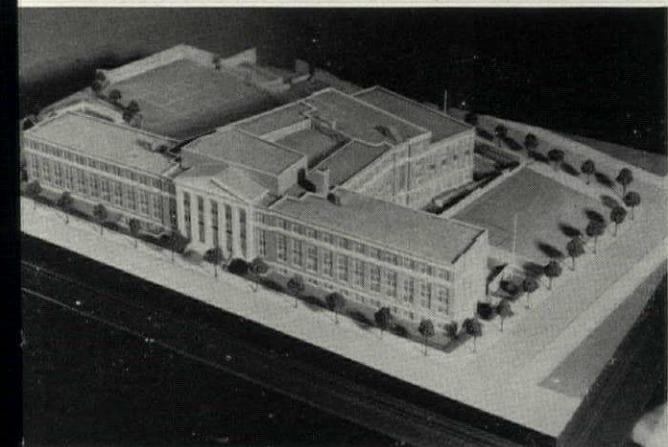
Public School 33, Manhattan. *Eric Kebbon, Architect*



Thomas Edison Vocational High School, Queens. *Eric Kebbon, Architect*



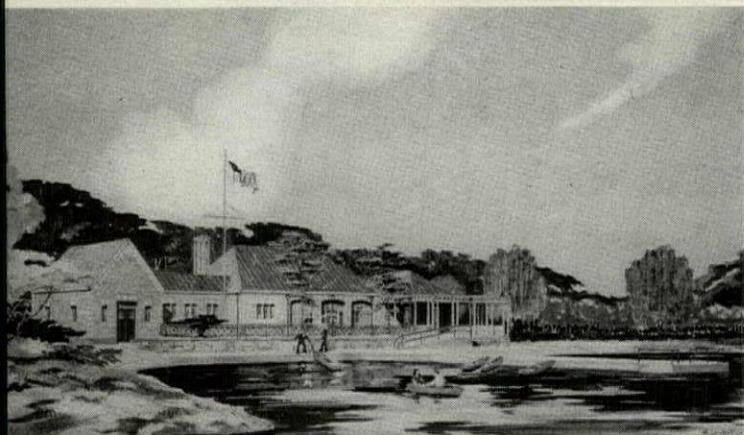
Concessions Building, Pelham Bay Park. *Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, Architects*



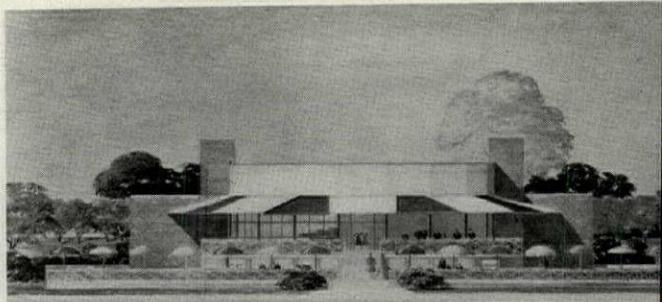
West Bronx Vocational High School, The Bronx. *Eric Kebbon, Architect*



Central Park Skating Rink, Manhattan. *Aymar Embury II, Architect*

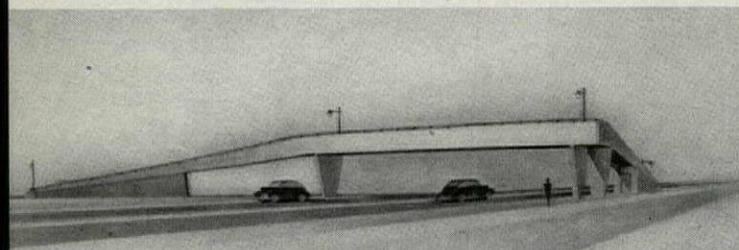


Central Park Boat House, Manhattan. Department of Parks. Aymar Embury II, Consulting Architect

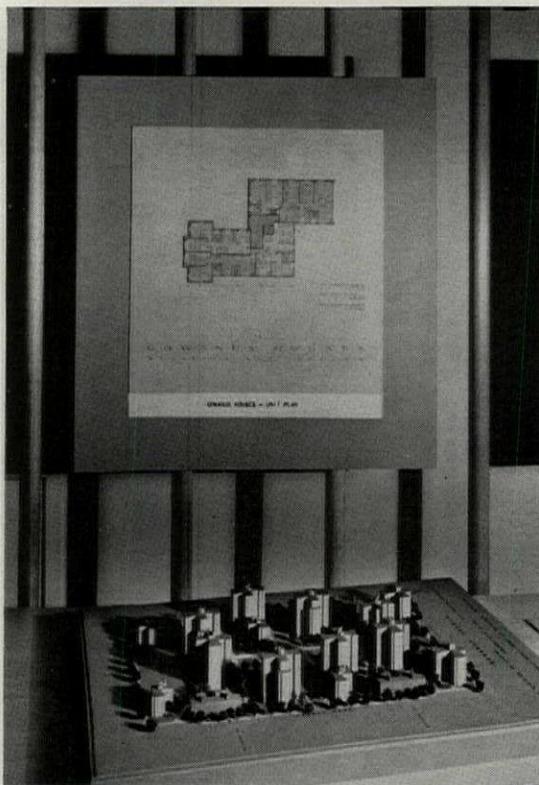


Restaurant, Bronx Park Zoological Garden. Aymar Embury II, Architect

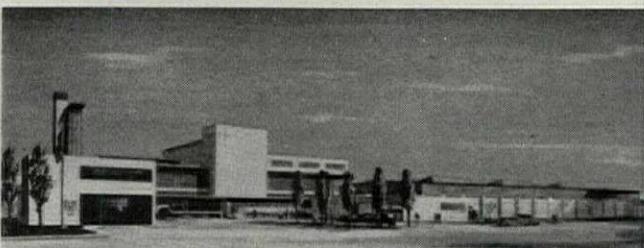
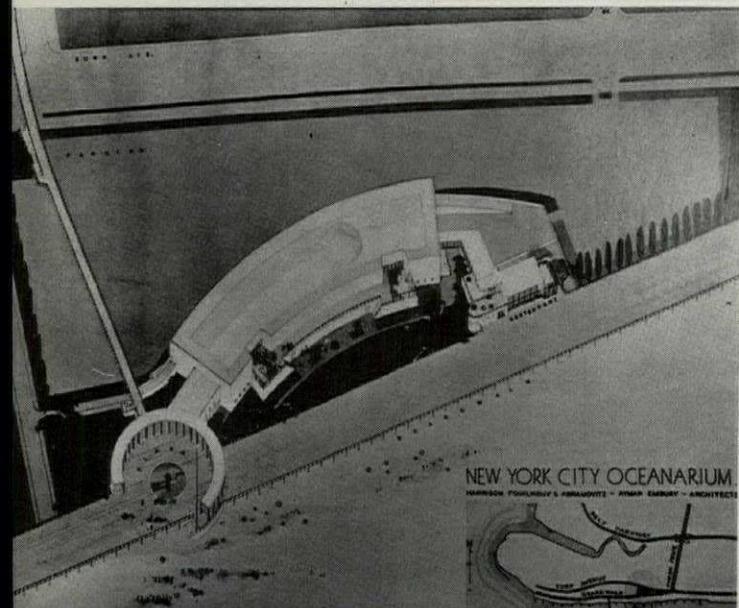
Gowanus Houses, Brooklyn. Rosario Candela; Kahn and Jacobs; William T. McCarthy, Architects (N. Y. City Housing Authority)



Pedestrian Overpass, East River Drive and 116th St., Manhattan. Office of the Borough President of Manhattan, Edgar J. Nathan, Jr.; W. W. W. Jones, Architect



Oceanarium, Coney Island. Harrison, Foulhoux & Abramovitz, Aymar Embury II, Architects



Laundry and Garage, Welfare Island. Moore and Hutchins; Percival Goodman, Architects*

*Credit is also due the Bureau of Architecture, Department of Public Works; A. Gordon Lorimer, Chief, Bureau of Architecture; Isadore Rosenfield, Chief Architect, Hospitals

imaginative, the most exciting design. In occasional examples there seems to be a glimpse of the richness of this opportunity, as for instance in Fellheimer and Wagner's Public School 40, the Thomas Edison Vocational High School, or P.S. 33, near the proposed Elliott Houses in Manhattan, with its cross-shaped plan; but elsewhere the results are deplorable. Old-fashioned plans, factory-like and stupid in mass, are garnished with modernized Georgian or classic detail which has none of the vitality of the old and none of the beauty of the new. Mechanical repetitions of mechanical bays, or forced artificial compositions full of silly breaks and changes of motifs, like those of Junior High School 117, produce buildings that seem designed not to be the happy gathering places of children, but to look like the "architected" factories of twenty years ago. I should have thought that all the schools should be designed for children and not to satisfy the false, fancy taste and pseudo culture of reactionaries.

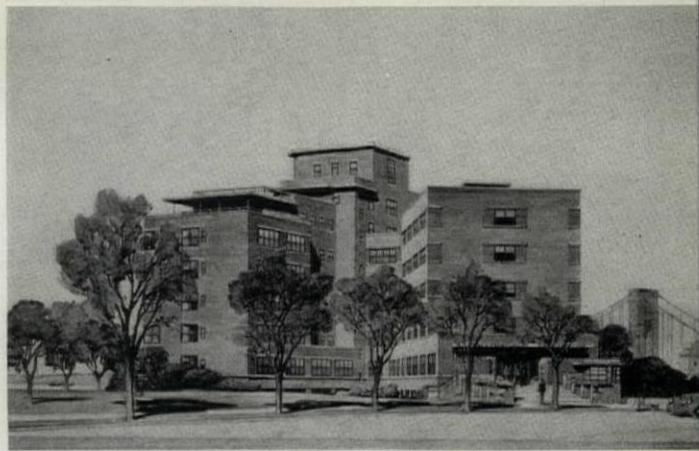
Rus in Urbe

The Park Department architecture is little better. Again and again the simplest structures—comfort stations, concessions buildings, and what not—buildings which offer the freest opportunity for pleasant, fresh, and imaginative design—are not only stupid but full of the most obvious design ineptitudes. I cite the concessions building for Pelham Bay Park, (designed by the same architects who designed the other concessions building shown on page 75) with its weird combination of hipped roof, gables, decks, and a dormer awkwardly introduced into a valley, as an example which shows a violation of the simplest rules of harmonious design. In these buildings the designer was evidently searching for some kind of contemporary feeling, but, afraid perhaps of shocking the tender susceptibilities of his superiors, he has fallen into a banality which combines the dullest features of both old and new. In the more ambitious buildings—the boathouses and skating house—where the effort was to reproduce some of the exuberant interest of the early park work of Mould and Vaux, the result is frankly terrible. These buildings are obstreperous, vulgar, eccentric, meaningless. Far better the simple wooden boathouse of today than the flaunting, meretricious brick-and-stone number which is designed to replace it!

Oases in the Gaudy Desert

Of course there are exceptions, the excellence of which still further points up the banality of this *architecture for New York's future*. Certain of the schools have already been mentioned. The incidental bridges, particularly the pedestrian overpasses for the Harlem and East River Drives are often fresh, vivid, and direct, and the solution of the Brooklyn-Queens express highway along Brooklyn Heights is superb with its two stories of cantilevered driveway and the great cantilevered pedestrian walk above. The original design for the Idlewild airport (of which Delano & Aldrich were the architects), with its tangential runways worked out by the architects and engineers of the eight airlines operating from New York, was a brilliant solution of a difficult problem; but one notes that the model shown in the exhibition is of a different plan, the only quality of which is conventional complexity and traffic disorganization. I have recently heard, however, that there is a possibility of a return to the original, logical scheme.

The Oceanarium, by Harrison, Fouilhoux & Abramo-

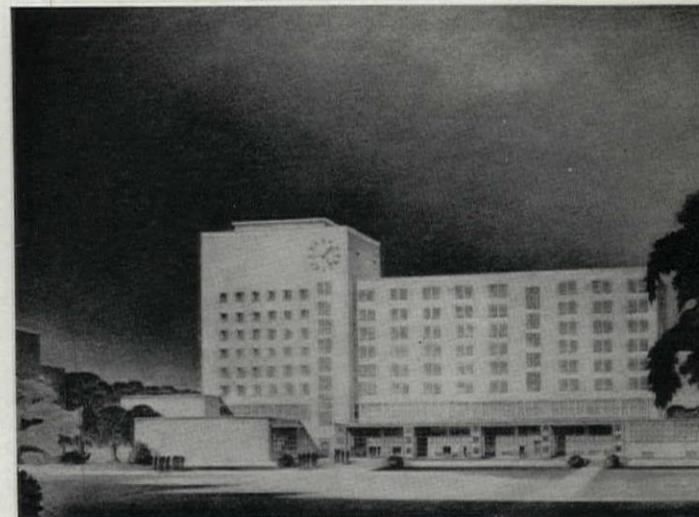


Nightingale Hospital, Manhattan. James Gamble Rogers, Consulting Architect*



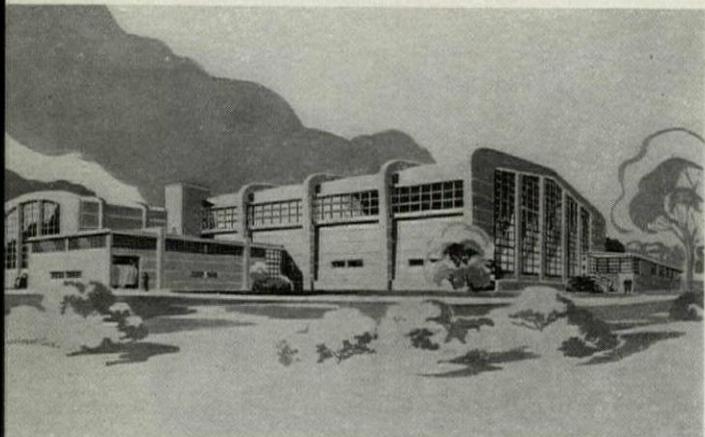
Outpatient Department, Cumberland Hospital, Brooklyn. Lorimer Rich, Consulting Architect*

Nurses Residence, Queens County Hospital, Brooklyn. William Gehron, Architect*



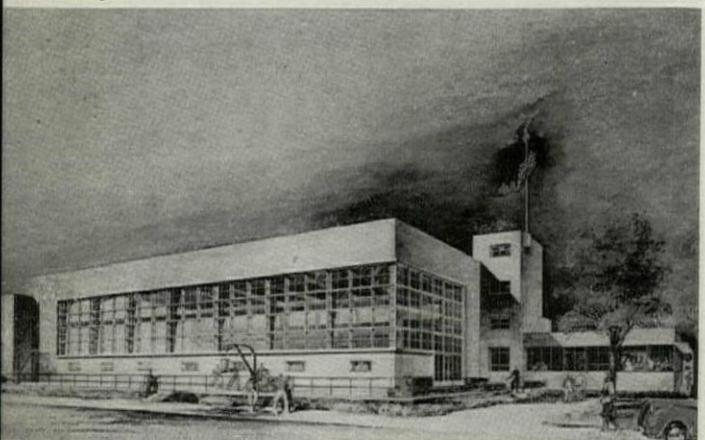


Tuberculosis and Chronic Disease Pavilion, Kings County Hospital, Brooklyn. *James Gamble Rogers, Architect**



Newtown Creek Sewage Disposal Plant. *Albert Bauer, Supervising Architect***

26th Ward Sewage Disposal Plant. *Albert Bauer, Supervising Architect***



*See note on Page 76.

**Credit is also due the Bureau of Architecture, Department of Public Works; A. Gordon Lorimer, Chief, Bureau of Architecture

vitz, is brilliantly interesting, and the proposed Restaurant for the Bronx Park Zoo is simple and gay. The proposed buildings for Great Kills Park have a certain quality of direct simplicity despite their rather effeminate "Regency" detail.

Certain of the housing work stands out also. One notes, for instance, that in spite of the crowded site plan of the James Weldon Johnson Houses, by Whittlesey, Prince, and Reiley, the unit plans are far ahead of the average; in them the architects have succeeded in returning almost to the decency of the old PWA housing standards. One notes, too, that the site plan of Abraham Lincoln Houses, by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, has more than the usual effectiveness and a better use of open areas, and the group is given greater interest by varying the heights of the buildings. One notes also with pleasure one project which seems outstanding because of both its site plan and its unit plan—Gowanus Houses in Brooklyn, by Candela, Kahn & Jacobs, and McCarthy. Here is a project with a most interesting handling of different-height buildings, one in which the fact of its being housing has not deterred the architects from a creative approach, one in which the views from both outside and in are varied and interesting, yet integrated.

The laundry and garage for Welfare Island, by Moore & Hutchins and Percival Goodman, also stands out as a true, creative design expressive of its time and its function, a design which like that of Gowanus Houses reveals the architect as more than a mere maker of space for rent or for use. One notes also occasional hospital work which rises above the average—the designs, for example, for Nightingale Hospital, the Outpatient Department of the Cumberland Hospital, and the Nurses' Home of Queens General Hospital. But why, in the Chronic Disease Building of Kings County Hospital, after a straightforward design of strong horizontals had been achieved, was the whole crowned by a great hipped roof and a Gothic flèche, like a man in sports clothes wearing a periwig?

The Science Building of Queens College is another design with interesting mass and honest expression. But above all else the work of the Departments of Sanitation and Public Works stands out. It is creative, effective. The Newton Creek Disposal Plant and the 26th Ward Sewage Disposal Plant are especially good, in their frank display of contemporary building methods and their fresh use of the materials of today.

Piecemeal Construction Isn't Planning

Thus the exhibition reveals that New York's much vaunted postwar program is no plan. It is an improvisation to give employment, not to make a better city. And it reveals that the architects in most cases have lamentably failed to rise to the superb opportunity which the expenditure of this money will give. There is little evidence of love or enthusiasm in these designs; much of boredom, disintegration, a sort of aesthetic defeatism, and despair. Perhaps, with the program given, no other reaction was possible. For the future there is one great hope: On only a little of this work has construction been started; perhaps if those who have the future of New York close to their hearts—and see the possibilities for developing a city that will be the pleasantest city in the world in which to live, with buildings that enshrine its history and express its present and its future—can develop a sufficient protest, some of these poor, starved designs may be changed, some of these inconsistencies abolished, some of this so-called realism which has doomed all future New York City Housing Authority work may be replaced by greater vision.



Fig. 1. Steel-framed house construction of rather complicated design: detail of one section of framing showing how continuity of connections was obtained.

Welding Beam Connections for Continuity

BY C. M. SIQUOT, CONSULTING ENGINEER

From a paper submitted by C. M. Siquot, Consulting Engineer, Baltimore Md., in the Industrial Progress Award Program sponsored by The James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio.

The use of continuous slabs and beams in reinforced concrete construction has brought about considerable economies of concrete and of steel reinforcing. It appears that the same principles of continuity could be applied to the steel construction and thereby economies of metal could also be realized in this field. In doing this we were confronted with the problem of making a continuous member out of beams of different heights carried by a deeper girder (or by a column).

The bending moment at the support had to be transmitted from the smaller beam to the larger one through the girder (or column) which we proposed to do in the way shown in Fig. 2 by means of welded plates and angles. The beams and girder are supposedly flush on top. On the tension side, a plate (P1), runs on top of the girder (G), and is welded to both top flanges of the beams (BF1) and (BF2). On the compression side, clip angles take care of the shear of each beam. In addition each beam is welded to the girder web and two angles (A), are welded to the web of the larger beam (BF2), and to a vertical plate (P2), which is welded to the girder web to reinforce it. The angles (A), and the plate (P2) take care of the compression stress of the bottom flange of the smaller beam (BF1), protecting the girder web against lateral deformation and obtaining a rigid connection. Another plate (P3), welded to the bottom flange of the smaller beam (BF1), will be necessary to stand the negative bending moment at the support.

Fig. 3 shows the connection of the same beams designed for riveting.

Fig. 4 shows the connection of the same two beams

(BF1) and (BF2), to a column. When the beams are connected to a column web, the conditions on the compression side are similar to the conditions of a connection to a girder, and the angles (A) are also necessary to protect the column web at the bottom flange.

When the beams are connected to the flanges of a column and centered on the column, the web stiffens the column flanges and transmits the compression stress of the bottom flanges.

As for the top flanges of the beams, it is necessary to provide for the tension stress through the column. This can be done as shown by means of angles (B), welded to the top flanges underneath and straps welded in turn on these angles and connecting them past the column, flush against the column side.

Such connections could also be obtained by riveting elements as shown in Fig. 3, for connecting beams and girders, but it would require a greater weight of steel and would be difficult to obtain good contacts, thereby reducing the possibility of realizing complete continuity. It is therefore obvious that real continuity, and the economies of continuous construction, can be obtained only by welding.

Continuity causes greater bending moments at the supports and smaller bending moments at the centers of spans. By taking advantage of this, lighter beams can be selected to resist the bending moments at centers of spans while the beam sections at the supports are reinforced to resist the larger negative moments. For example, in continuous beams of equal spans which are uniformly loaded, the bending moments are as follows in fractions of WL^2/L , W being the total load per linear foot, and L being the span of the beam:

	Moments at support	Moment at center of spans
for three spans	.10	.08-.025
for seven spans	.106-.077-.084	.078-.034-.044-.040
for single span	0	.125

It can be seen that the saving for the end spans is about .125 minus .080 divided by .125 or 36 percent of the resistance of the single beam, while for the intermediate spans, it is .125 minus .040 divided by .125 equals 68 percent. This is not a net gain. From this must be deducted the material necessary to provide sufficient strength at the supports, this to be extended to about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the spans or beams. For the end spans the addition must correspond to .10 minus .08 equals .02 on $\frac{1}{4}$ of the span or an increase of .005 on the whole length, so that the saving is only .125 minus .085 divided by .125 equals .32 or 32 percent. In the same way, for the intermediate spans, the addition must correspond to .084 minus .040 equals .044 for $\frac{1}{4}$ of the span at each end or .022 on the whole length, so that the saving is only .125 minus .062 equals .50 or about 50 percent.

The saving coefficients here mentioned do not apply to the weights of the beams but to their section modulus. To estimate the actual saving of metal, suppose the single beam conditions require a 12-inch WF @ 25 pounds with a section modulus of 30.9. The end span would require a section modulus of 30.9 times .080 divided by .125 equals 20 for which a beam of 10-inch WF @ 21 pounds might be satisfactory, a saving of 16 percent in weight. An intermediate beam would require a section modulus of 30.9 times .040 divided by .125 equals 10 for which a 10-inch BJ @ 11½ pounds might be satisfactory, a gain of 54 percent in weight. Of course the lighter beams would have to be checked for shear and for lateral and vertical rigidity and would also have to be reinforced at the supports.

Unequal conditions of loading and unequal spans would alter the gain coefficients in a positive or negative way.

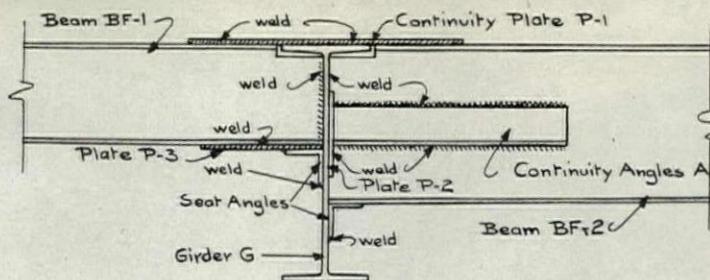


Fig. 2

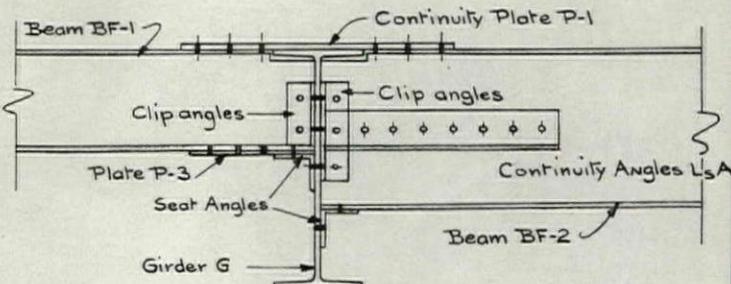


Fig. 3

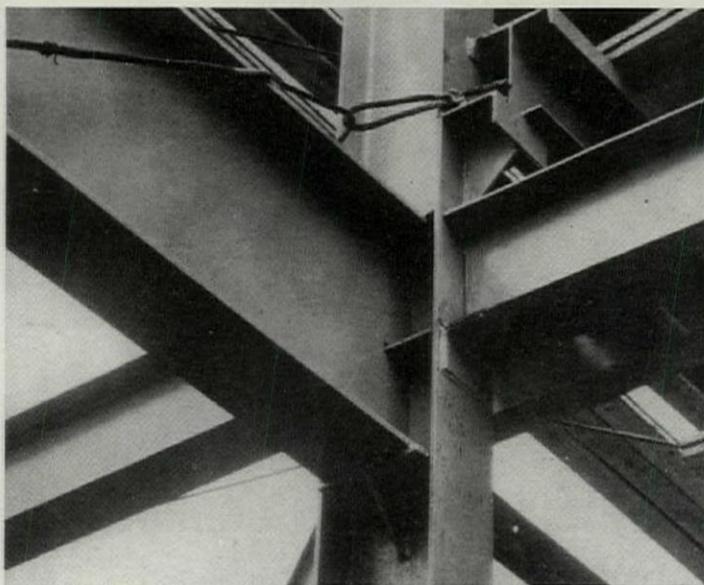
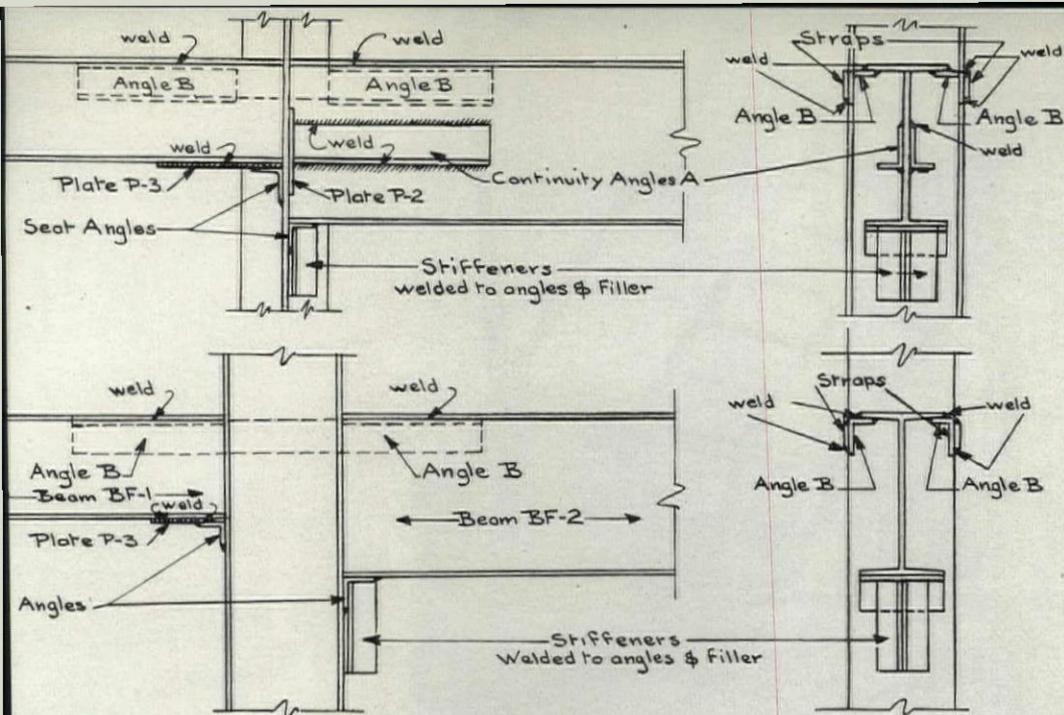


Fig. 6

But the figures given herewith show that considerable saving of metal can be effected by welding of parts to secure absolute continuity, which would not be possible by riveting, even at a greater expense of additional metal.

This structural welding technique makes possible many unusual design possibilities. Fig. 5, for instance, shows a typical connection of a girder and beam to a column in the erection of steel framework for a Canadian industrial plant. Another illustration of structural design is shown in Fig. 6. Here, the technique permits utilization of girder and beam seats together with connection plates fused to members during fabrication, then welded to columns.

The design shown in Fig. 7, a tree-form column and inter-connecting members, was used in the construction of a midwest fabricating plant. This further illustrates the possibility of making use of rigid end connections to decrease the center bending moment so that lighter



4



5

sections can be used as compared to a heavier, simply supported beam or riveted connection. In this and in the following cases, members of sufficient strength and rigidity were selected to withstand the bending moment at the support without any reinforcement at the support. In many cases this design will be more economical than a lighter section reinforced at the support.

Figs. 8, 9, and 10 illustrate the framing of a modern church structure. The roof pitch in this building is 45 degrees with no lateral bracing. Bent channel and plate were arc welded to form the haunch section of columns. A vee was first cut into each channel which was then bent to desired contour. The bent channels were placed in a special jig with a cut plate section touching each channel at the center line of the web and the haunch was fabricated by fillet welding at each side of the plate. The haunch section web plate was outt-welded to the webs of the I-beam columns and beams, while the haunch channel flanges abutted the I-beam flanges as shown in Fig. 9.

Fig. 2 shows welding for continuous beams carried by a girder; Fig. 3 shows riveting for the same condition. Fig. 4, top, connection of continuous beams to the web of a column; bottom, similar connections to the flange of a column. Fig. 5, Typical welded connection of girder and beam to column. Fig. 6, Close-up of floor beam, girder, and column connection. Fig. 7, Tree form column and inter-connecting member construction.

Fig. 7





Fig. 8. Welded design illustrating 45 degree roof pitch of church structure with no lateral bracing.

WELDING FOR CONTINUITY

Fig. 9. Detail of I-beam construction of columns and roof frames of framework shown in Fig. 8.



Fig. 10. All-welded, steel-framed church in which welded framework provides efficient use of steel and high degree of rigidity despite unusually high roof pitch (45°).



The British Architect and London

BY RALPH WALKER, F.A.I.A., OF VOORHEES, WALKER, FOLEY, AND SMITH, ARCHITECTS

Aristotle long ago said—"A city should be built to give its inhabitants security and happiness." The aim, therefore, of any urban inhabitant might well be to see that his city secures the best possible use of its land, the best distribution of its population and industry, so as to give security to the public interest, i.e., security and happiness.

Camillo Sitte said—"The science of the technician is not sufficient to achieve these aims—we need in addition the talent of the artist."

In London lately there have been born many plans of different characteristics—attempts to solve the varied and difficult problems inherent in modern urban life. As the problems, themselves, are universal, these experiments have an appeal far beyond their immediate relationship to London and the men who have presented them.

* * * *

A group of young architects—under the influence of C.I.A.M., (see Sert's book "Can the City Survive")—sometime before the war made a philosophical plan for London based on the "linear" principle started by Tony Garnier in the early 1900's. This M.A.R.S. Plan—itsself not developed beyond diagram and thought, more or less "A Midwinter Night's Dream"—was a statement of planning unrelated, in large measure, to the stumbling block realities of present day London. It nevertheless carries the ordered city idea into an interesting conception very well worth noting. While in principle it recognized the historical center and the industrial and commercial areas along the Thames, it completely disregarded the existing radial form and suggested in its place an elongated central industrial-commercial core from which there would reach out, to mesh in with the countryside, long finger-like housing islands of great size, each set apart by large green areas which would also separate the work areas from the living parts; so that there would be everywhere in the city an opportunity to enjoy both urban and rural amenities. In a sense this plan, elongated and string-like rather than reaching out as in a molecular structure, represents another type of satellite thinking. Here conscious use of the river as a living backbone instead of a division line and barrier, its development for work and natural beauty, is worthy of consideration.

Given new areas for development in a new world

these ideas appear both possible and desirable to adopt. But here, however, is a way of thinking about an urban problem which annoys the practical-minded and which in many ways is like writing a Utopian novel. You must appreciate its impractical aspects even while the thoughts are interesting enough to remain persistent. *For these dreams have an unwanted virtue of being orderly, while present nightmares are the easily accepted realities.*

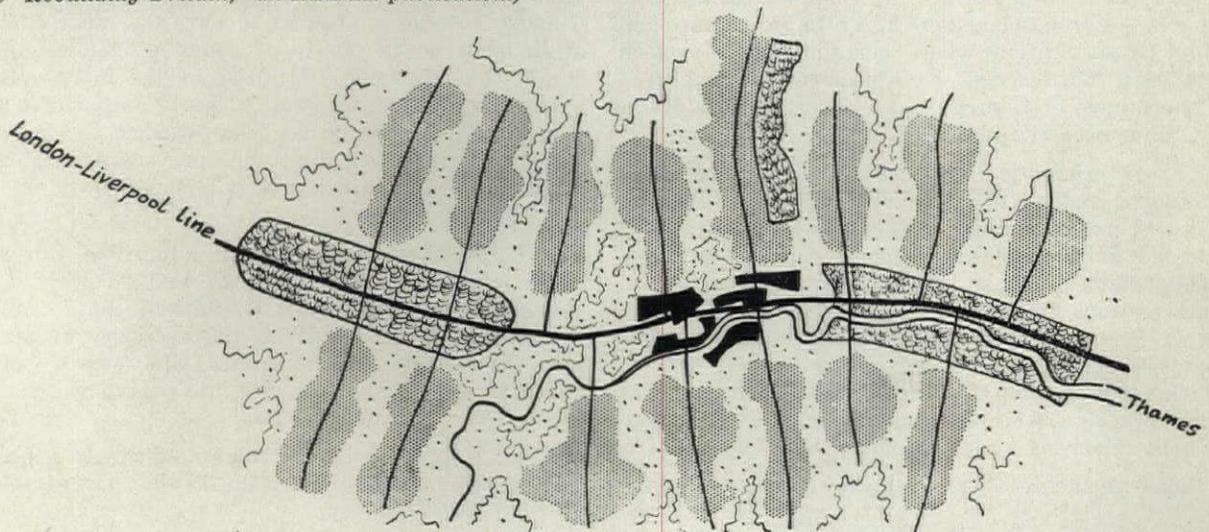
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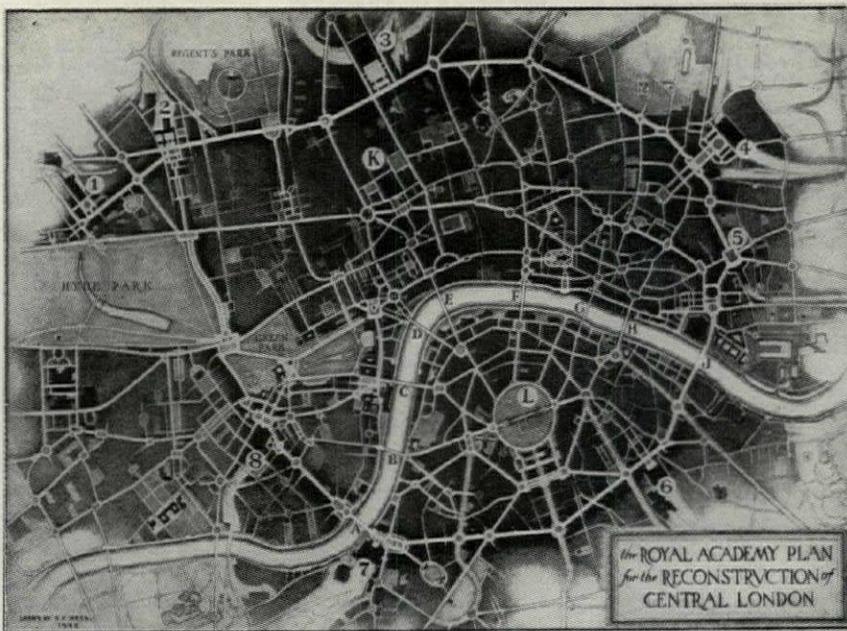
Planning is both looking at the future and at the past. Were the hangovers of the past something perfect for the use needs of the present, the future might reasonably be a consistent imitation of things gone by. But in every country the city's past, especially that of the nineteenth century, is a general and unmistakable illustration of *bad thinking* and *bad economics*. Unfortunately, the past then presents to us the larger problem of reorganization and reconstruction. (Illustrations will be furnished by a ten minute walk about the center of any city.)

What is wrong with London? Four outstanding problems are to be solved—traffic congestion, depressed housing, a jumble of industry and housing, and a maldistribution of open spaces. Changes are vitally necessary; no one denies the presence of these problems and, if the past is any criterion, many changes will take place with or without plans. Roads will be widened, parkways built, housing torn down and reconstructed, playgrounds and parks added as amenities, schools, hospitals, health centers, libraries, museums—all the so-called stimuli of the city—will be built and relocated as the tides of the city growth change with population needs.

Were the city static, were the past irrevocable, the reasons for planning would be nil and the question—"And how are you going to pay for it?"—would have meaning. *But financial setups are just as necessary to an acceptance of the chaotic growth of the unplanned future as they are for master plans because the city now obviously needs development not inherent in the unplanned past.* The four urban problems are not static; they increase with the great sprawl of the modern city. In fact, they are indices of the growth of the sprawl, for as it spreads the center shows increasing traffic con-

The linear M.A.R.S. (Modern Architectural Research Society) plan for London (from "Rebuilding Britain," an R.I.B.A. publication.)





Proposed main-road map of London prepared by the Royal Academy (from "London Replanned," Royal Academy interim report.)

gestion, more and more depressed housing, greater jumbles of industry and housing, and an increase in the haphazard and involuntary open spaces due to real property failures.

The British architect, aware that a rebuilding of the small extent of the blitzed areas would not bring into being a better urban existence, has tried in several ways to solve these difficulties.

* * * *

The Royal Academy, under the leadership of the late Sir Edwin Lutyens, tried to solve the traffic problems of an empire capital stacked upon a world trade center by a series of monumental "roundabouts" (as the British call the traffic circle). The empire capital and the trade center had grown through the ages, persisting through many stubborn generations, upon the circuitous residuals of an old mediaeval city. It is painfully evident that monumentality, not the solution of the traffic problems, was the fundamental concept underlying all the elaborate drawing done in the proposed and beautifully presented Royal Academy schemes.

While often the complicated intersections were simplified into more geometric "roundabouts," the result would be a traffic condition generally *much* more involved. One example is the proposed change at Trafalgar Square and Charing Cross Station where certainly the potential "snarls" and "bottlenecks" have been aggravated. Too often there have been suggested as many new intersections as have been eliminated.

It is almost axiomatic that each time an intersection is eliminated and a use island made larger, the easier becomes the control of traffic. Regardless of its aesthetic aspects, the gridiron makes the movements of men and vehicles a matter of ease in comparison to the flow at the intersections caused by the great diagonals so admired in French and Early American planning. One of the best designed parts of London is the Lincoln Inn Fields and another the Russell and Bedford Square section, both eighteenth century examples of city planning, both relatively simple in their plan forms.

The Royal Academy Committee, in its plan-thinking

concerning all these areas together with the nearby Covent Garden Market and the British Museum, has forgotten the delightful human scale and spaces of the old squares and gone over to the grandiose French idea of rigid monumental symmetry. The comparison between this type of plan arrangement and those great new mediaeval walls proposed by Le Corbusier is one of degree only. Both are unrelated to human-living scale. The followers of both ideas would be greatly helped by an understanding of Camillo Sitte's statement of space relationships. (The lessons made evident by the "dwarfing" of old continental cathedrals by the removal of the conditions through which they grew was forgotten in the R.A. plans for St. Paul's.)

There is, moreover, throughout the plan a strange inconsistency in the alternate elimination and introduction of diagonal streets; admittedly bad in one place they are arbitrarily introduced in another. The R.A. Plan, of course, takes no account of the needs back of the new facades; the boulevards, the squares, are like those of Hausmann and Burnham. Where people live, how they work, are blandly ignored. A stage-set for Kipling's Empire is the proposed ideal. Since the publication of the London County Council Plan, a constructive job has been undertaken for the Royal Academy by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in an attempt to solve the inner ring road of its plan on the basis of sound economics and the elimination of traffic difficulties by the introduction of a new type of round-about. The "Pomp and Circumstance" monumentality has been forsaken as a theme and well-proportioned building and open space relationships substituted. It is still to be published.

* * * *

The R.I.B.A. has done several admirable works. Its pamphlets "Rebuilding Britain" and "Toward a New Britain," and its national exhibitions, have continued the basic work of instilling the necessity of planning into the literate British mind. The job of bringing tradition and a hoped-for goal into conjunction has been attempted with some success.

The R.I.B.A. Committee which undertook a plan for the entire London Region (the London County Council

Plan considers but a very small part of it) started on the premise that there was no time to develop coordinated scientific information but, regardless, that now was the time, now was the opportunity, for a dramatic presentation of what London might be as a place for good living, and of the part order could play in such a goal. If the plan resulted in that which was highly improbable of accomplishment—in that which was contrary to well established relationships—it would make no difference, because the plan was not to be considered final but as merely suggestive. The plan when exhibited met opposition at first from those who said it was impractical. At present it is part of yesterday's yesterday, without much influence, and its authors are not invited to take part in other planning efforts now being made. Complaint is made that the "good suggestions" are not being heeded. It was a splendid effort, not far from the London County Council Plan in its main objectives; in fact, the two plans are alike in many ways factually because the result desired in both is the same, i.e. the solution of the famous four problems.

The following are some of the main concepts of the R.I.B.A. credo:

- (1) Railways and arterial highways are considered part of, and linked up to, national systems.
- (2) Railways and arterial highways are destructive of amenities and endanger life and are to be regarded as fundamental barriers between urban areas.
- (3) Main trunk highroads should run through and share parkways or greenbelts in common with railways and canals. (The canal has been revived in England as a cheap means of internal transportation.)
- (4) Access to arterial highways should be very limited.
- (5) Railways within the city should have fewer terminals, and those connected by a ring communication.
- (6) Arterial highways should be directly connected with industrial and distribution areas.
- (7) The Port of London, should be reorganized and enlarged to take larger vessels and to have a greater capacity near the Isle of Dogs.
- (8) A new airfield should be provided near the Isle of Dogs as a terminus for international airways. An airfield within the city.
- (9) Industrial areas are to be located near or between important lines of trunk communications.
- (10) It is essential that industrial areas be near but not part of living areas, and
- (11) That the islands between the arterial highways be developed as self-contained communities with all the necessary amenities—schools, health and community centers, and playgrounds.

These objectives are generally agreed upon by most British planners as being desirable. The R.I.B.A. mistake, if there has been a mistake, was to attempt a plan the making of which was so emotionally removed from the members of the community for whom it was designed. It burst as an idea for a complete master plan upon a public lacking proper preparation and was presented in a manner of exposition difficult for public understanding. Maps, charts, diagrams—all these removed from easy and ordinary visualization—requiring close study from the technician—were offered as the new idea for London's future.

It is to be questioned whether this effort accomplished anything other than the education of its makers and the word "planning," as an idea, before the British public.

The same committee, coordinating R.I.B.A. members in other British cities, is preparing a national plan for

England and Wales. Here again, the effort required is large and again is being made without public responsibility. Its place in the national scheme again must be wholly self educational, which will, without question be beneficial because in Great Britain, as well as in the United States, there is a dearth of trained planners.

Here are three plans, each made without the public support—private enterprises engaged in an attempt to catch the public attention and turn it toward the needed planning—and if the city of London is to emerge in a new dress worthy of the greatest city in the world this effort must be intensified.

* * * *

The only published plan which is in any way official is that of the London County Council, and even that one is but a test balloon to try out public reaction. It is wholly a plan for the London County and does not profess to have made more than a general and bold visualization of what the future of London might be under an orderly growth. It was organized under Mr. J. H. Forshaw, Civil Service Architect for the London County Council, and Professor Patrick Abercrombie. It is a magnificent effort and attempts—in the same dramatic fashion as did the Burnham Plan for Chicago—to arouse public interest and approval. It is contained in a splendid book (considering the war restrictions), and was exhibited at the London County Council Building and the Royal Academy in London where large crowds of all ages had the opportunity of examining it. Here too, the plan attempts to solve the problems of traffic, of industry, of living, and of recreation. Here, however, the plan is more complete, for included are many of the social and architectural amenities which go to make up the appeal of the city. The banks of the Thames, long neglected, are designed to increase their use in further prolongations of the Victoria Embankment and a new embankment on the south bank. Recently on a moonlight night it was a matter of surprise to find, under war conditions, a large number of people, civilians and soldiers alike, strolling on the embankment.

The traffic problem is stated, in much the same way as in the other plans, as a matter of ring roads "to screen" the entering traffic and radials connecting with the national highways. The insistence is again the same as in the other plans—that traffic be canalized into arterial highways so as to leave large islands of work and living free from the corrupting influence of the automobile. The community, or the island, called by Mr. Alker Tripp (Deputy Commissioner of the Police at New Scotland Yard) a "precinct"—a word gathering favor in Great Britain—has become a well recognized form in planning. The roads within the island are not to be of a thoroughfare type but relatively short and in broken patterns—everything being made difficult for a break-through between arterial highways. It has become as well recognized in England as in America that roads which invite traffic through residential communities are so used to the detriment of the community itself.

The L.C.C. community plans show an attempt to escape the monotony of large scale developments by a very broken building pattern, almost haphazard in appearance; too much so if one compares the result with older parts of London, especially the Bloomsbury Section. In regard to housing densities, an interesting study was made to determine a desirable factor for the replanning. The relatively low net density of 136 persons per acre was judged to be the most satisfactory, which is in sharp contrast to the net average of 395 persons per acre built by New York City Housing Authority.

The British planner has convinced the intelligent public that open spaces and greenbelts are desirable, that cities should have population limits and physical ones as well. The blitz has opened up people's minds as well as spaces in the city, so that there are an increasing number who follow the logic of order.

There is no strong public feeling against a city owning land or against the principle of satellite cities. Decentralization is accepted not only as desirable but necessary to do a good job with the devastated areas. It is necessary, in the opinion of most intelligent people, for the city to control its growth.

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There has been a consistent failure on the part of London's planners to suggest the separation of the Empire's Capital and the world trade center. In every plan these remain—the hard core of Westminster and the "City," to which daily some two and one-half million people must be transported. The bottlenecks are vast and many, even in peace time. It has been estimated that 8% of the average Londoner's yearly income goes to pay for this daily travel. Tied up with this reluctance to decentralize government and business, is the idea that only in the great cities do you find the amenities of the theatre, the museums, good restaurants, etc. The number of people who attend the theatre in the center of London is roughly 6,000,000 a year. London has a large number of out-of-town visitors who go to the theatre. The police estimate these as approximately 1,000,000 persons, leaving a total of 5,000,000 Londoners who like the "legitimate." But if you have a factor of three shows for theatre-loving people you have 5,000,000 divided by three, or approximately 1,600,000 Londoners who go to the theatre. That kind of stimulus, therefore, leaves the vast majority untouched, and as much can be said for the museum attendance. In fact

in London, during great occasions like the Jubilee and the Coronation, large numbers of people do their own celebrating in small community affairs and do not leave their neighborhoods to see the main attractions.

All the London plans have had architects connected with their development. This is not true throughout the country as a whole. Many engineers are leaders and some, like Mr. Manzoni of Birmingham, are recognized as being outstanding. Some of the architects, however, are making notable contributions, and Mr. E. E. Gibson, City Architect of Coventry, is, for a young man, taking a national place of increasing importance. Whether the planning is done by architects or engineers, the ways and techniques of planning display need much new thinking. There has not been much if any advance since the exhibitions of the Chicago Plan at the beginning of the Century. The London County Council Plan used the late William Walcot, whose etched restorations of classical times were so refreshing and imaginative, to delineate some of the ideas. Their delicate lines and washes made but little impression on the average mind. Models, pleasant to look at, were difficult to translate into human scale, and the maps and charts were much too technical. The pictures of actual buildings or parks, playgrounds, or traffic congestion, were much more easy of comprehension. Modern display tricks of the Bauhaus type only aid in increasing the chaos of ideas.

The great difficulty is in getting technicians to understand how the non-technical mind works, in getting the man who knows much to appreciate the necessity for a primer-like approach to even the most informed lay mind. New techniques are necessary if the planner is to avoid the danger of having his efforts always remain in the realm of merely interesting ideas. The planner must put over these ideas to "those who are being planned."

Suggested redevelopment of 980 acres in East London showing proportions of multiple dwellings and houses possible to provide housing density of 136 persons per acre (from "County of London Plan 1943".)

RECONSTRUCTION OF AN AREA IN SHOREDITCH AND BETHNAL GREEN

