



THE MONOGRAPH SERIES

RECORDS OF EARLY AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE
AS SOURCE MATERIAL

EDITED BY RUSSELL F. WHITEHEAD, A.I.A.

VOLUME XXI

MONOGRAPH SIX

Some Old Houses of Warren, Rhode Island, Part II

BY J. FENIMORE RUSSELL

Research and Measured Drawings by Frank Chouteau Brown

Photographs by Arthur C. Haskell

Rhode Island had never secured a Royal Charter while the early settlements in the region now known by that name were being established. But in each separate locality the leaders made independent satisfactory arrangements with their predecessors on the land, the Indians then in possession, and set up informally their local community control, without bothering at all about the larger aspects and problems of organizing a "State" government or securing the royal permission of the English King to establish themselves among the colonies of the new World.

But when, under fear of Indian attack, the then existing 39 towns in the Colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, New Haven, and Connecticut all joined together as a "New England Confederacy," for mutual assistance and protection against the Indians, Dutch, and French—and the settlements within the somewhat uncertain boundaries of what was to become Rhode Island were refused admission—the various settlements then found on what is now Newport Island, and the shores of Narragansett Bay, decided to make common cause and themselves do something about it. As a result of this decision, Roger Williams sailed off to England, where he finally secured a charter from Charles II, dated July 8, 1663, under the name of the "Providence Plantations," which covered only the Islands and the mainland to the West of Narragansett Bay. The land to the east of the Bay was then claimed by the Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies, as the two Shawomet Sachems then living within that district had submitted,

and sold the land to them, in 1643. King Charles not only gave Roger Williams the Charter for which he asked but also appointed, as the first Royal Governor, Benedict Arnold of Newport.

The controversy as to the exact boundary line between these groups was already under way at that time (started perhaps by Williams' own first attempt to find residence upon the Blackstone River banks, that would still remain outside the control of the Massachusetts Church communities!) and continued to be a bone of contention between Massachusetts and Rhode Island for over two hundred years!

At last, in 1746, by King's decree, the boundary townships of Warren, Bristol, Little Compton, Tiverton, and Cumberland were declared part of Rhode Island; but even then the final details necessary to complete this transfer were not settled for another hundred and twenty years; and until, in 1862, the Massachusetts part of Pawtucket and the western part of Seekonk (which then became East Providence) were given to Rhode Island, while the land taken from Tiverton and included as the Rhode Island town of Fall River was finally given to Massachusetts.

But long before this, in 1644, the Rev. Samuel Newman, one of the early leaders settling first in the Massachusetts Bay district, with a part of his Weymouth congregation and some families from Hingham, located upon a ten miles square area of land purchased by the settlers themselves from Massasoit, the Indian chief who then lived within the present boundaries of the town of Warren—but then known as Rehoboth.

In 1746—just after it was set apart from Massachusetts and given to Rhode Island by King's decree—an act of the Rhode Island legislature incorporated Warren as part of Rhode Island; including "that part of territory confirmed to Rhode Island which has heretofore been part of Swansea and Barrington, with a small part of Rehoboth adjoining, with the inhabitants thereof, into a township by the name of Warren."

The town was at that time named for Admiral Sir Peter Warren, who in June of 1745 commanded the English fleet that, with the army of Americans under Sir William Pepperel, had captured Louisbourg.

Finally, one more factor should be added to this complicated minor shift of territory, in order that the record may be more complete; and for that purpose it is necessary to return to Great Britain, and start again, over two hundred years earlier.

In 1649, the first year of the Cromwell protectorate, the Rev. John Miles became pastor of a church in Swansea in Glamorganshire, a County in South Wales. In 1663, two years after the restoration of Charles II (and the same year Roger Williams secured the "Plantations" Charter), the "Act of Uniformity" was passed in England—and the Rev. Miles became a "Nonconformist," left Wales, and came to Rehoboth in Plymouth Colony! But even there, his religious views not agreeing with those established and maintained in that Colony, he again shortly removed to Wannamoisett in Barrington, at a location that has recently been established as about three miles northwest of Warren.

At this point the first Baptist Meeting House was set up; and a section of land was granted (on Oct. 30, 1667) to the Rev. Miles and his followers, and named Swansea, in honor of the Welsh town from which many of them had come. Its area then also included the present towns of Somerset in Massachusetts, and Warren and Barrington in Rhode Island.

One of the most ingenious and distinctive local developments in the architecture of Warren is the type of mantel whose variations and growth have been well illustrated in this and the preceding Monograph. It reached perhaps its final fulfillment in the ornate example from the Waterman house (pages 84, 85, and 86); and its start may perhaps be found in the mantel from the second section of the Miller house, built a score or more of years after the original part, containing the simple earlier mantel shown upon the same pages (90 and 91), was erected in 1789. The intermediate development may be followed through the two examples illustrated in Monograph Five. Along with these mantels, is a local door enframingent, with a similar crocheted top pediment.

Along with these local door and mantel details, there has also been developed similar local expressions

of detail treatments around the window openings, and upon the design of dados and staircases—as well as a number of sturdily attractive entrance doorway treatments; representative examples of all of which are to be found upon these accompanying and preceding pages. The variations of dado design and treatment are particularly intriguing; especially as they appear in connection with a number of characteristic staircase examples—from this town, as well as from Bristol.

In most of these stair run wall treatments the newel and landing posts are also represented upon the wall face, either in whole or in part—a matter of treatment that is here and there extended to apply even to a duplication of the balusters themselves, in place of the paneling, along the wall boundary of the stair run.

The Waterman house stairway is a case in point. Here a rather simple and sturdy baluster is used, and the fluted newel column is echoed upon the wall opposite, as well as the upper landing posts above. A somewhat similar stair handling appears also in the hallway of the Carr house, although with many differences in the details and proportions of the parts. In a simpler (and later) form the same essential elements are employed in the staircase in the house at 582 Main Street; while, in much cruder and bolder treatment, they may also be found in the earlier built stairs of the Miller house; which may again be compared with a somewhat later example found in the house at 606 Main Street. The last two exhibit a less elaborate stair end bracket; and the latter also shows a simple use of the wall dado pilaster opposite the stair posts, employed with a ramping stair rail and dado cap.

The other marked product of the early houses in this district—and one that has more successfully succeeded in maintaining its original merits, too—is to be seen by any passer-by in the beautiful and varied examples of house doorways.

In all the elaboration of cutting that is particularly exhibited in the interior details and mantels of this district, the ingenuity with which a wide variety of detail treatment and ornamental handling of the mouldings has been obtained by the use of only one or two sizes of hollow gouge chisels must express something of the wide-spread skill in the moulding and carving of wood by the many local carpenters that were probably developed in this region by the boat-building industry on the shores of Narragansett Bay.

Two early—and simple—but beautifully proportioned small gambrel cottages typical of many others in this locality are also included in this Monograph. All these structures appear to belong to an earlier and less elaborate period. They contain little, if any, "finish" of conventional type; but depend almost exclusively for their appeal upon the excellent proportions of their roof slopes, and their low and hospitable appearance.



Stair and Hall

THE WATERMAN HOUSE—1820—WATER STREET, WARREN, RHODE ISLAND

[83]



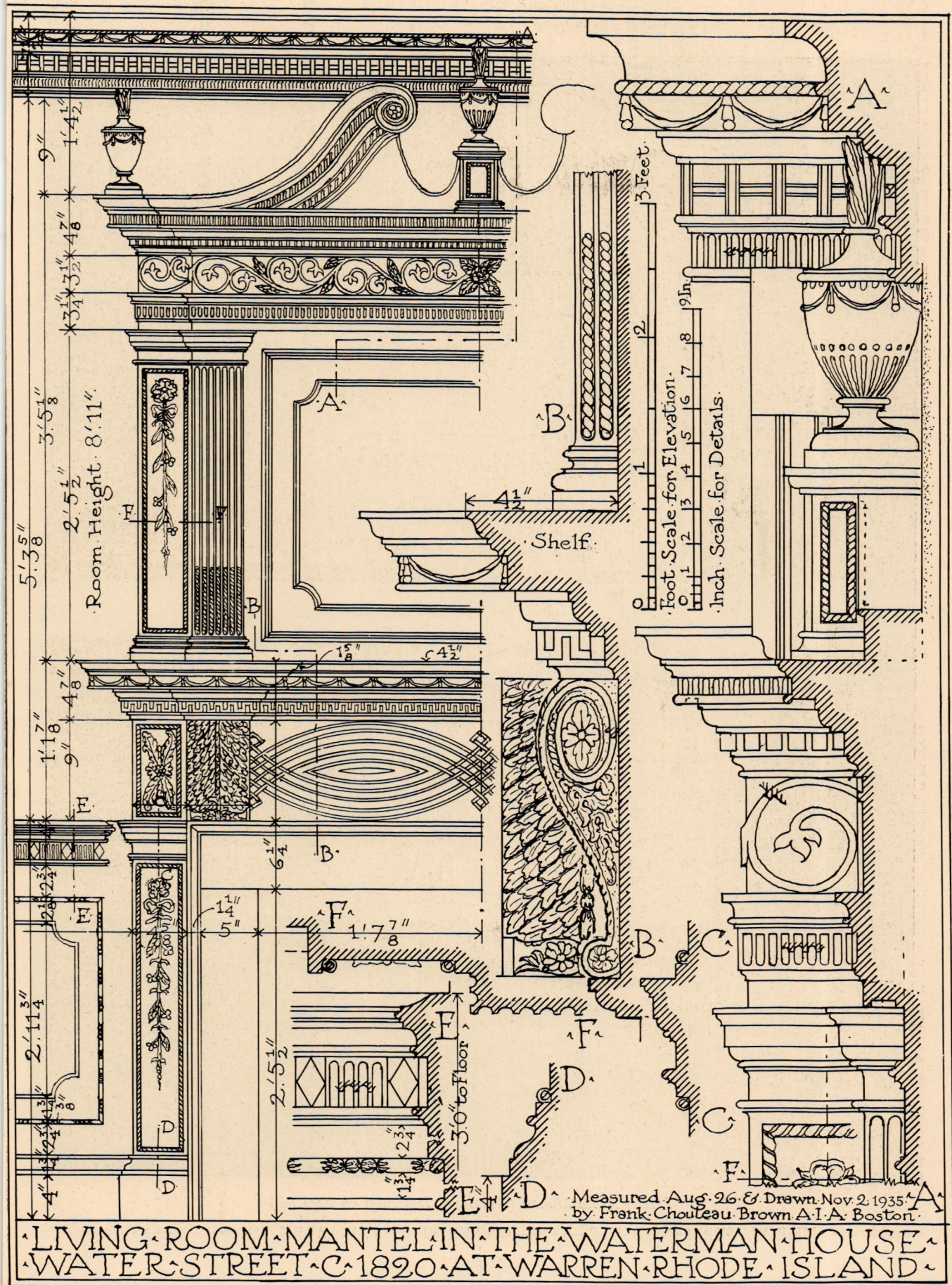
Door Enframement

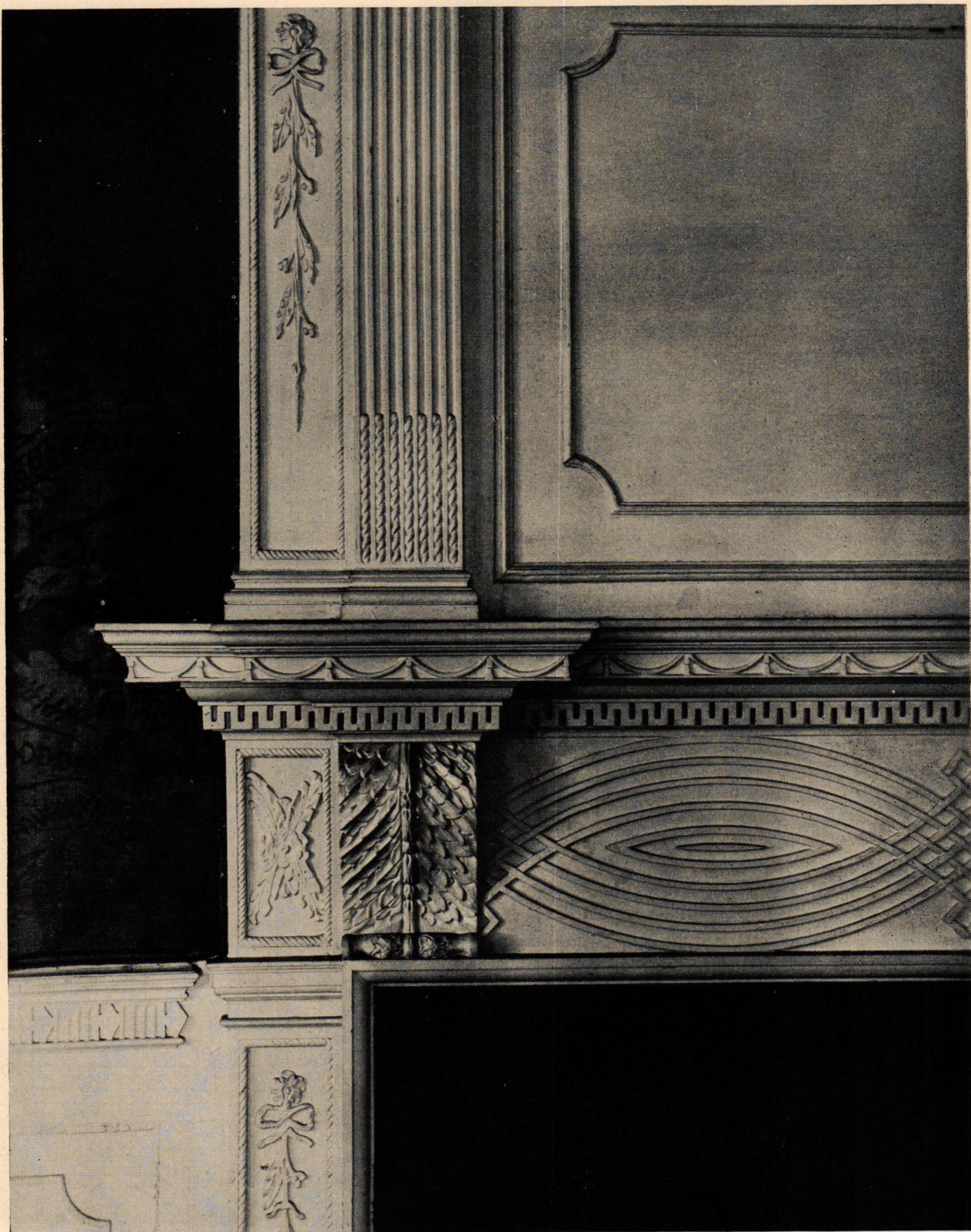


Wainscot

THE WARREN HOUSE—1820—WATER STREET, WARREN, RHODE ISLAND

[84]





Living Room Mantel (Measured Drawings on Page 85)

THE WATERMAN HOUSE—1820—WATER STREET, WARREN, RHODE ISLAND

[86]



Doorway Detail on Page 71 (Monograph Five—Volume XXI)
HOUSE AT NUMBER 41 STATE STREET, WARREN, RHODE ISLAND

[95]



THE PERRY HOUSE, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

[96]

Monograph One—Volume XXII—"Providence, Rhode Island"

The Public Comfort Station

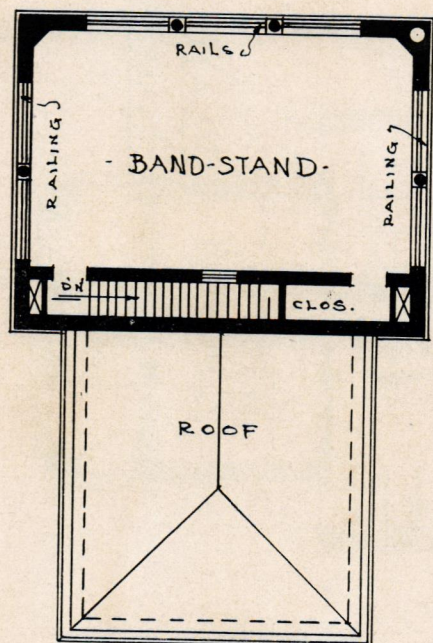
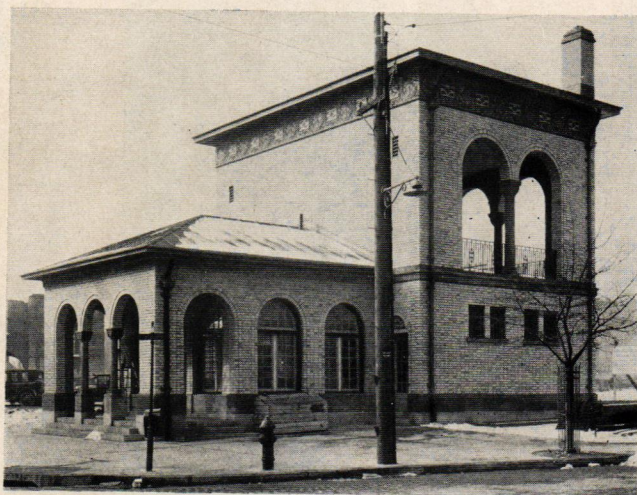
A Group of Examples from New York of this Useful Type of Municipal Public Works Project

Drawings by Emil Sesso Prepared for Pencil Points by Courtesy of the New York Architects' Emergency Unemployment Committee

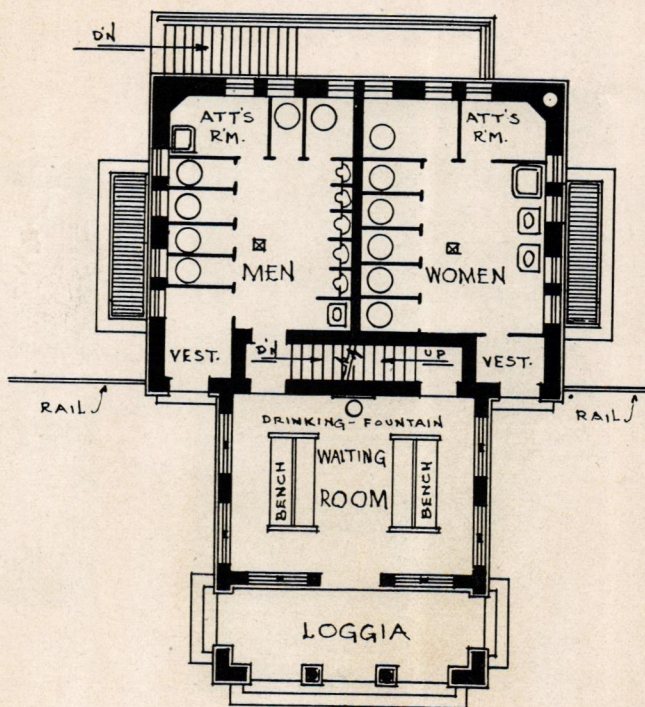
The convenience station is totally lacking in many of the sizable cities in the United States. It would seem therefore, at this time, that architects should make a special study of this type of building and the need for them in their otherwise well ordered cities.

The "Specialist" working among the rural dwellers has provided them with nearby conveniences. It remains for the architect of general practice to do his part for those who must live in the city.

The "business center station," the "main artery station," and the "market station" could well be considered "public works" and come in for their share of the funds available for public comfort and public health.



° SECOND FLOOR PLAN °

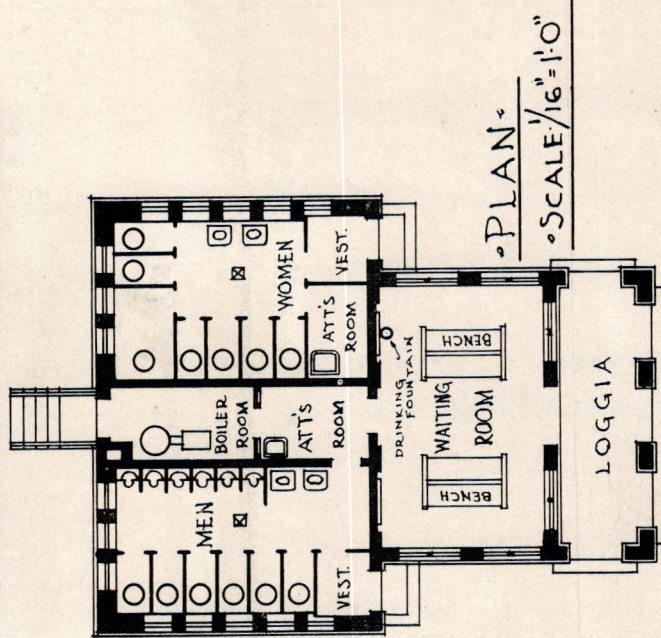
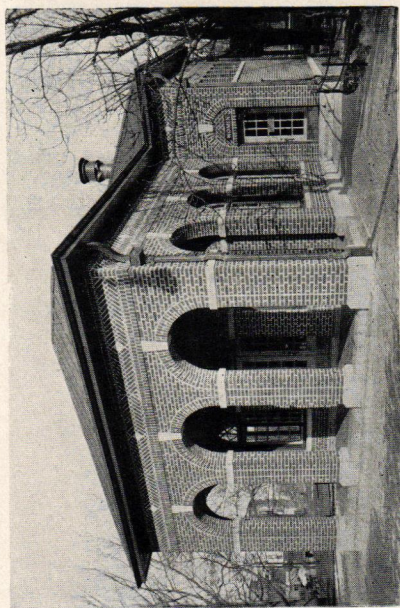


° FIRST FLOOR PLAN °

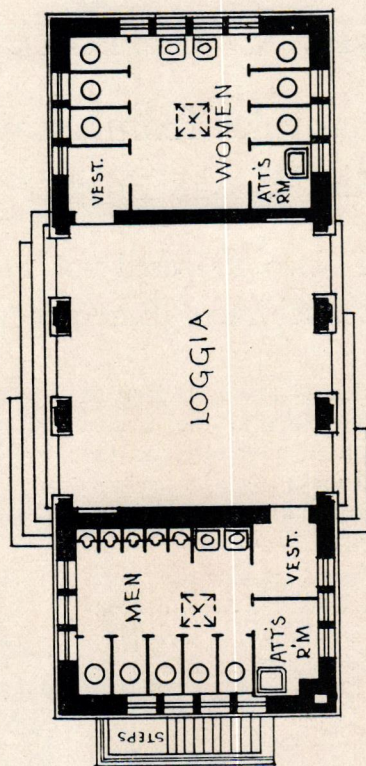
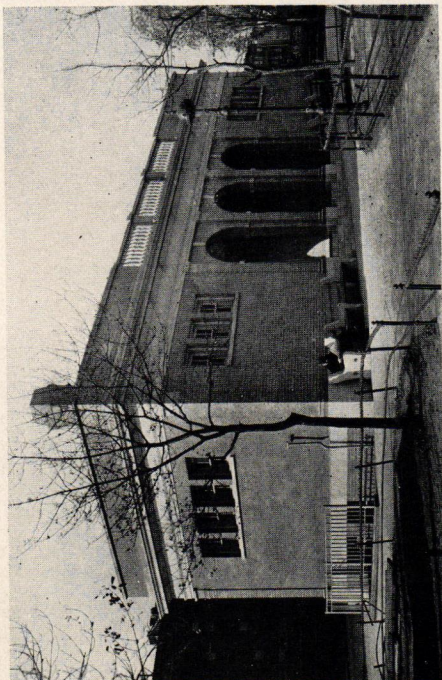
° SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0" °

COMFORT STATION—TREMONT AVENUE AT WESTCHESTER SQUARE, NEW YORK

Max Hausle, Architect



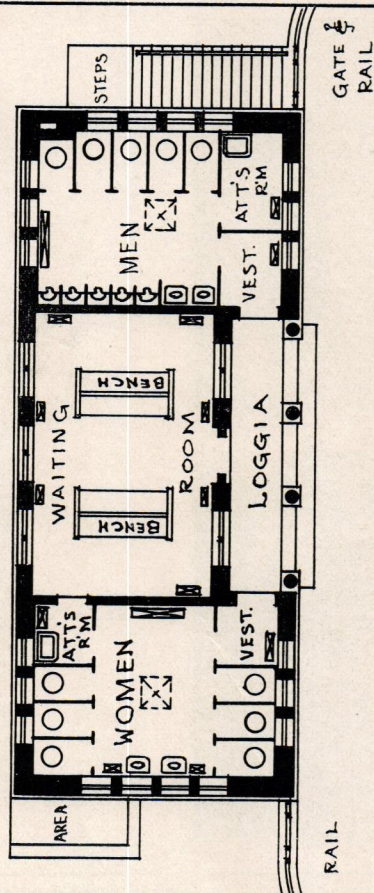
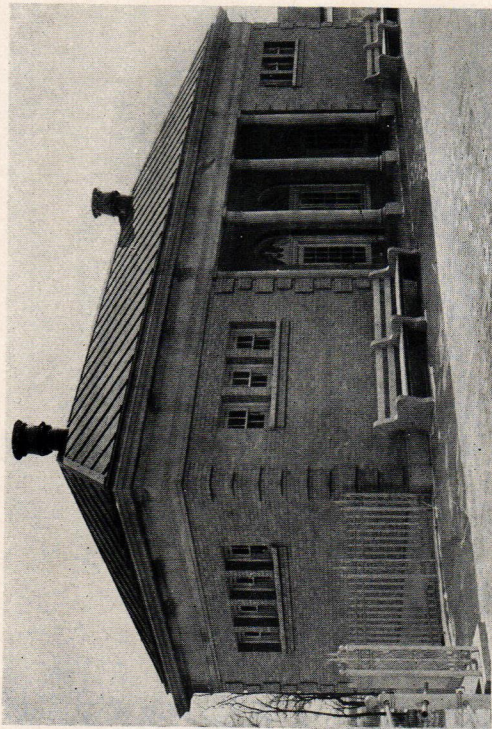
COMFORT STATION—WEBSTER AVENUE AND FORDHAM ROAD
Max Hausle, Architect



PLAN
SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0"

COMFORT STATION—161ST STREET AND COURTLANDT AVENUE
Max Hausle, Architect

THE PUBLIC COMFORT STATION

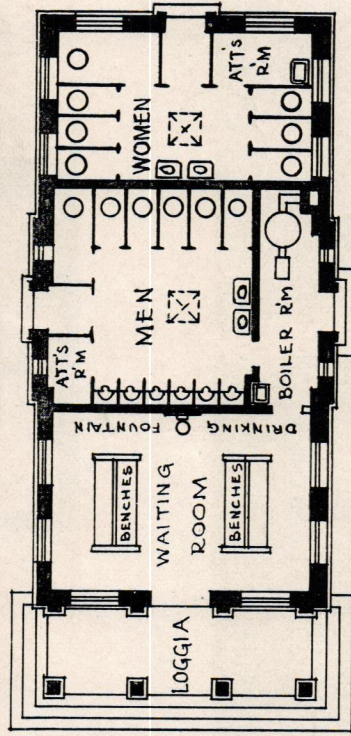
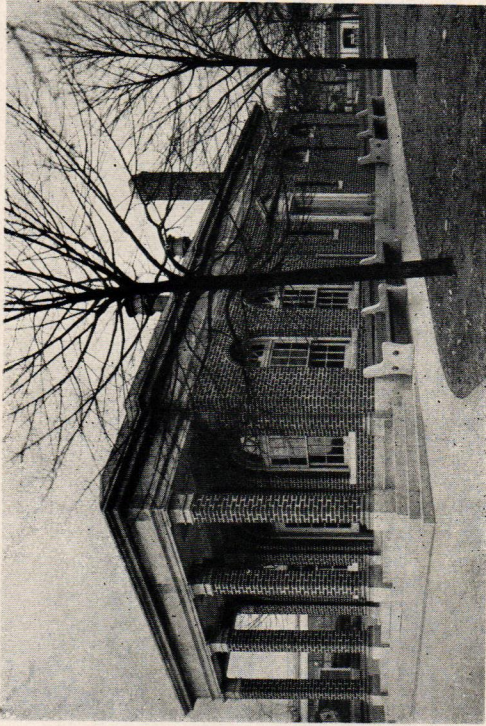


PLAN

SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0"

COMFORT STATION—BROADWAY AND 245TH STREET

Max Hausle, Architect

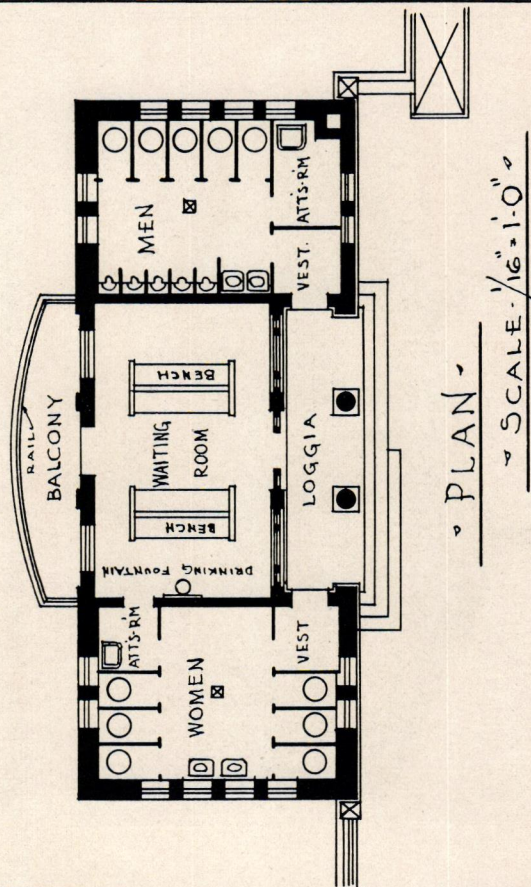
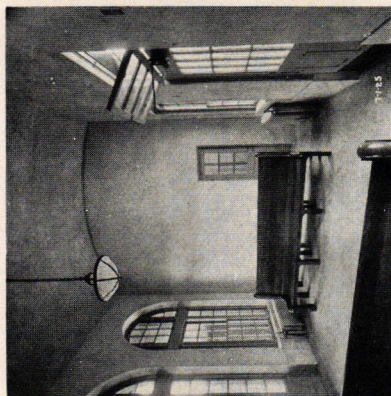
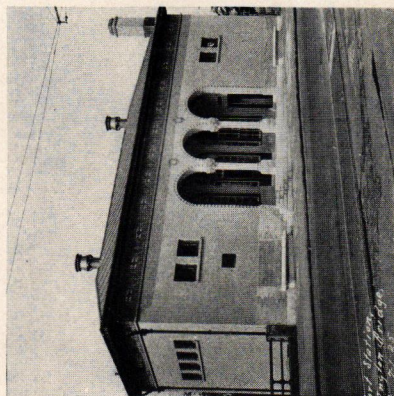


PLAN

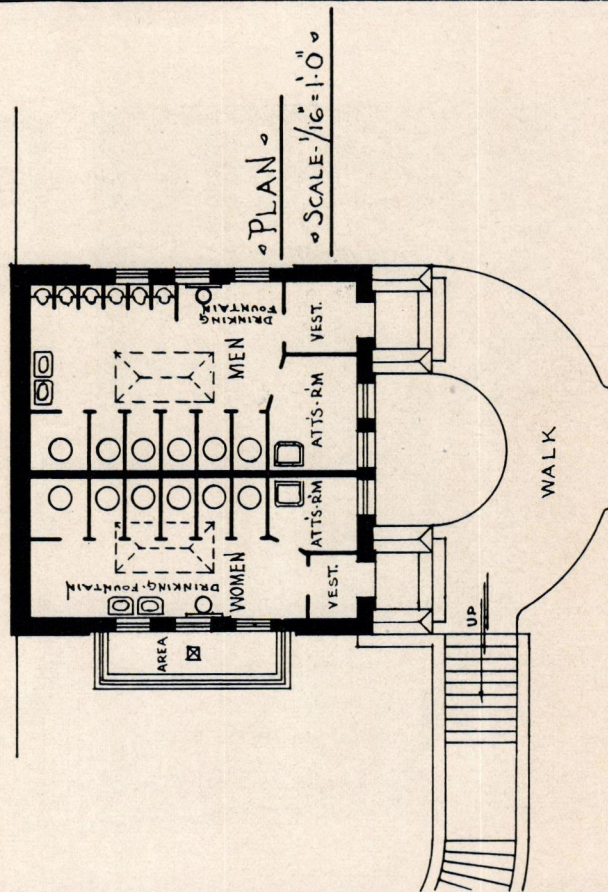
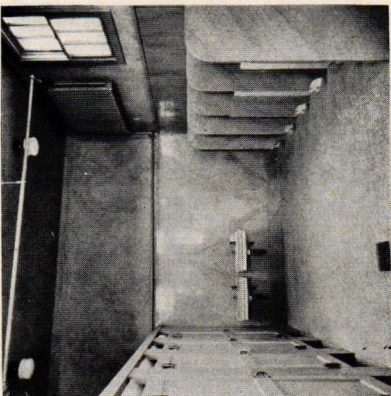
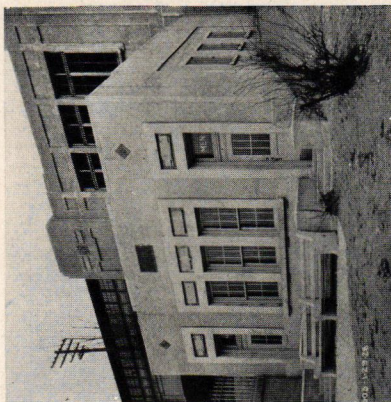
SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0"

COMFORT STATION—FORDHAM ROAD AND SOUTHERN BOULEVARD

Max Hausle, Architect

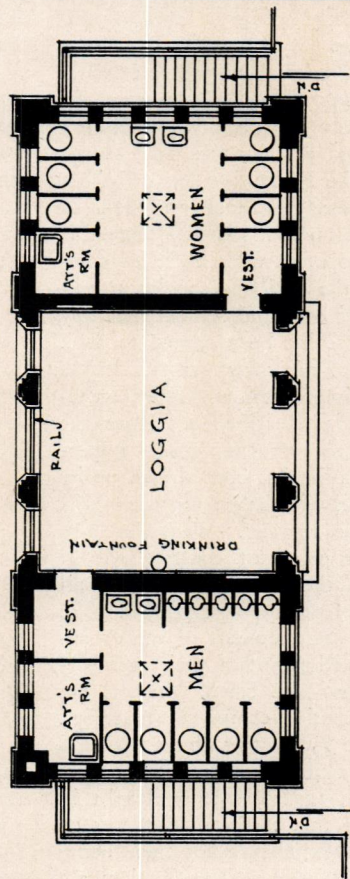
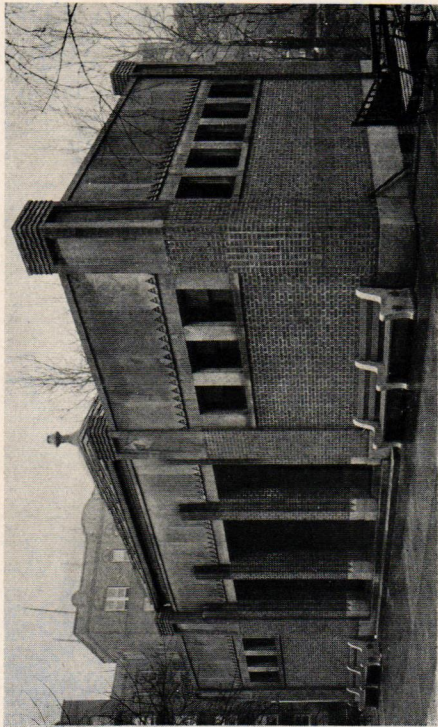


COMFORT STATION—WASHINGTON BRIDGE, NEW YORK
Max Hausle, Architect



COMFORT STATION—MOSHOLU PARKWAY AND JEROME AVENUE
Max Hausle, Architect

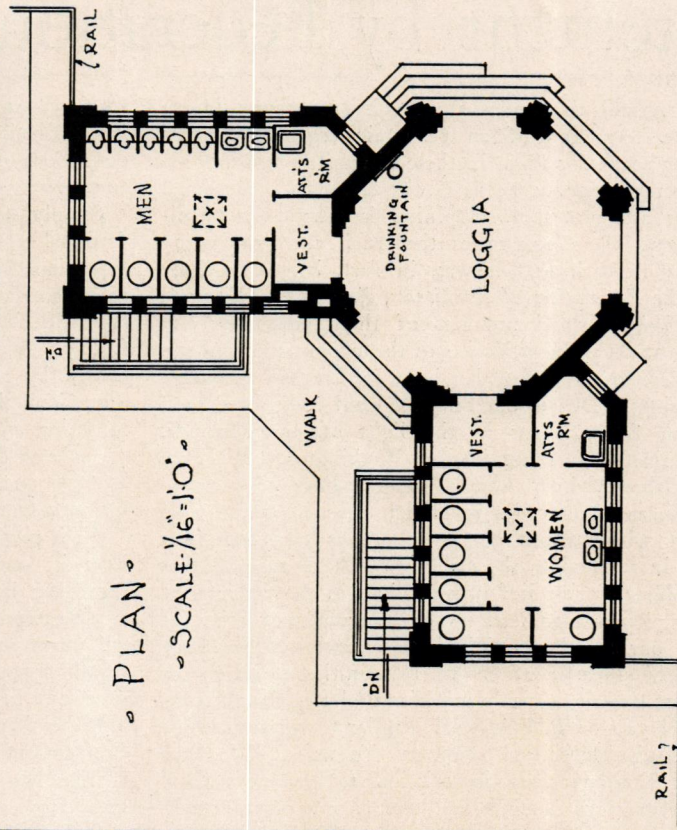
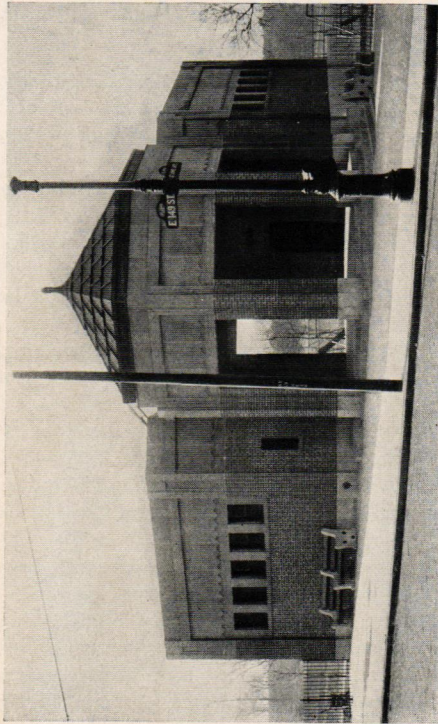
THE PUBLIC COMFORT STATION



PLAN
SCALE - $\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$

COMFORT STATION—WEBSTER AVENUE AND MOSHULU PARKWAY

Max Hausle, Architect



PLAN
SCALE - $\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$

COMFORT STATION—149TH STREET AND ST. ANN'S AVENUE

Max Hausle, Architect

Statement by Federation of A.E.C. & T.

Architectural draftsmen are much encouraged to see the formation of an economic organization that can speak for them in these distressful days and see to it that the economic needs of the technical professional employees are protected. Opinion is practically unanimous among these employees that such an organization was sorely needed, that it was, in fact, belated. They greeted the *Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians*, and numbers of them enthusiastically joined its ranks in New York and throughout the country.

The *Federation* to date has been represented at twelve code hearings. Due to our efforts several codes have been withdrawn for revisions in the light of our demands. Our organization is recognized in Washington. We have had two labor advisers chosen from the *Federation* to appear at hearings on codes involving technical men. We have met with various employer groups to discuss our demands in relation to the codes. We have appeared before the New York relief organizations in the interests of our unemployed members. We have obtained jobs for many of our members. We have interviewed Secretary Ickes and his department and we have instigated action for a ruling on definite equitable minimum salaries for all technical employees on P.W.A. work, similar to what was done for skilled and unskilled labor on this work. We have instigated similar action in relation to the new Civil Works program to obtain Civil Service salaries for technical employees. Our proposals for the various codes were recorded in a previous issue. These accomplishments, besides many others not directly affecting architectural employees, speak for themselves.

Despite the formation of the *Federation* some time before the existence of the *Architectural Guild of America*, the *Federation* has been erroneously labelled, "Opposition." We have never taken this stand and in fact have always pleaded for united action. The *Federation* has called on the *Guild* to rescind its 50 cents per hour provisions in relation to the A.I.A. code, which it has finally done. It has called on the *Guild* to cooperate with its relief committee and has also written to the *Guild* to appoint a committee to meet with a *Federation* committee to settle any differences. No such committee has been named to date.

Heretofore, it is true, the *Federation* has not had a definite constitution for the simple reason that its activities have taken a major portion of its time. Since the form of organization has become of mountainous importance to some minds, a constitution has been drawn up by the executive committee which will be submitted to the membership by the time this goes to press. We believe this constitution meets squarely all points of controversy. It must be borne in mind that the *Federation* has at all times insisted on a democratic form of organization. We wish to point out further that the members of the executive committee of the *Guild* still maintain their membership in the *Federation* and that Mr. Sasch, himself, has always participated in our executive committee meetings. In such an organization as the *Federation* there is bound to be difference of opinion, but no one has taken a difference of opinion as an occasion for an attempted split in our ranks. It stands to reason that if any differences of opinion do arise, there is a better chance for their being straightened out within the *Federation* than if they are in separate individual groups.

The significance of the diagrams showing the proposed

form of organization of the *Federation*, published in the November issue of *PENCIL POINTS*, depends entirely on the definitions of the various connecting lines and on the duties and powers of the different units.

Simply stated, each urban Chapter is divided into professional sections. Two-thirds of the executive council is apportioned to and elected by the sections. The remaining third is elected by the membership at large. Each section has at least two delegates in the council, and where a large Council is wanted or needed, additional delegates are chosen by each section in proportion to its membership. The Council will be an executive and administrative body, initiating and determining matters of policy affecting two or more sections. In turn it will pass on policies initiated by any one section. In all cases the decisions of the Chapter Council will be subject to membership approval.

Each professional section, such as the architectural, will have its own officers and initiate and determine policy regarding its own sphere, subject to the above. It will receive reports of the chapter council for approval. It will make recommendations to the chapter council. It can recall its council delegates at any time. Questions in dispute can be referred to a chapter membership meeting. The section will also elect delegates to the National Convention and Conferences.

The National Convention will be composed of delegates from all sections and chapters. It will legislate and also elect a National Executive Council. This Council will include at least two members of each profession and representatives of at least three states. It will represent the organization nationally.

National professional conferences will be held in conjunction with the National Convention, to discuss individual professional problems. These conferences will become the National Administrative Departments, a right arm to the National Executive Council. These administrative departments will co-ordinate the work of all sections of their respective professions in matters affecting the particular profession nationally.

This should answer the objections of Mr. Sasch that the *Federation* might have:

- (1) A top-heavy preponderance and undue influence exercised by some one profession or unit.
- (2) The condition that professional identity as a body would be submerged and obliterated.
- (3) Any and all problems concerning only one profession resolved by heterogeneous group of technicians.
- (4) The condition where local professional groups will be isolated from each other.

As to his objection that the treasury funds will be expended for any activity a "small governing body may decide," it must be noted that the funds to date have only been expended on matters concerning the entire *Federation*. Definite determination of this matter is left open for the first national convention and conference. His objection "the inability to hold together a gigantic organization for police duty only," in matters of codes, can readily be answered. The function of the *Federation* is not only a question of policing the codes but to obtain effectual enforcement of the labor provisions where our interests are concerned. A national organization is certainly more capable of fighting for enforcement than isolated units.

232 Seventh Avenue, New York.