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# NC Architect



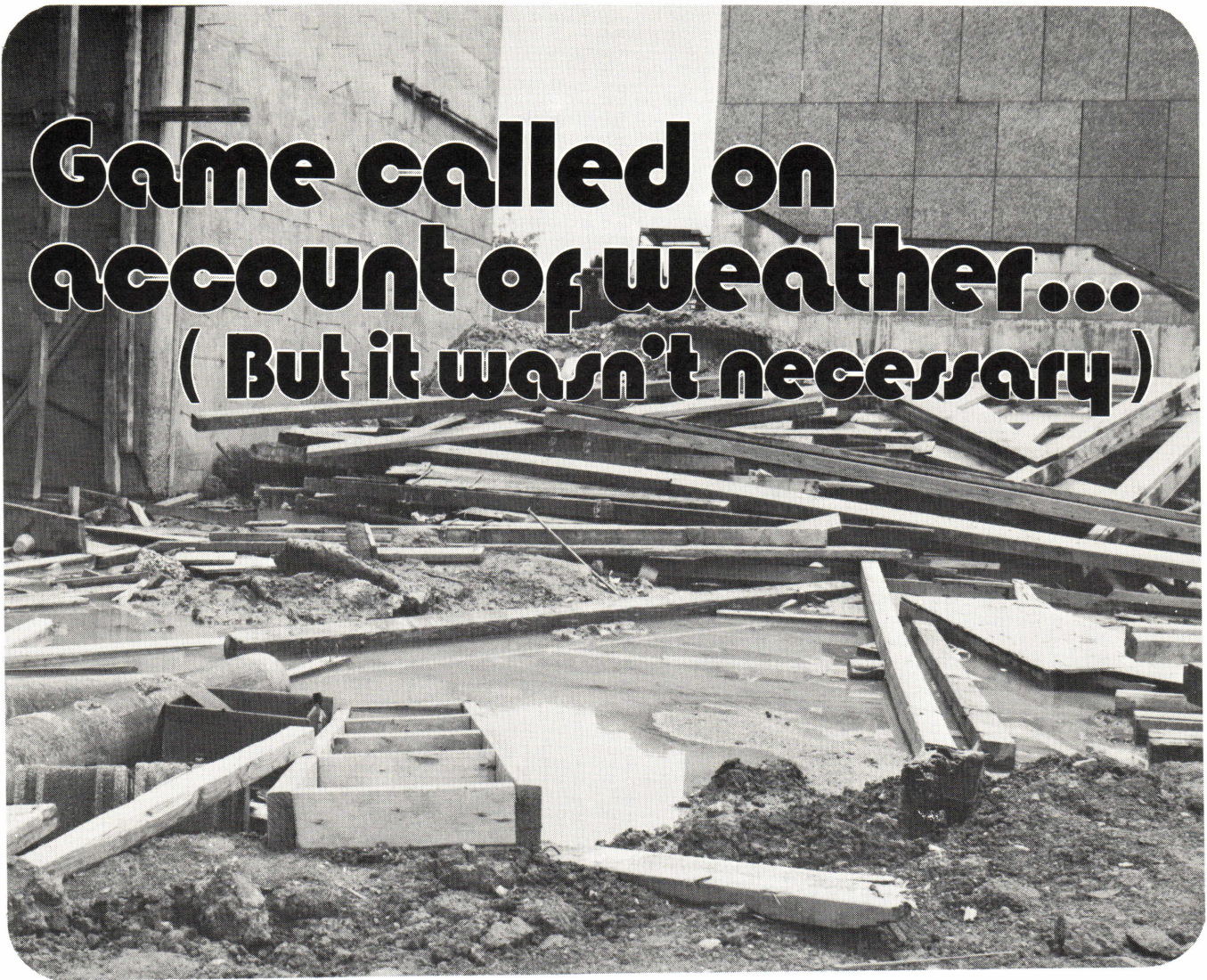
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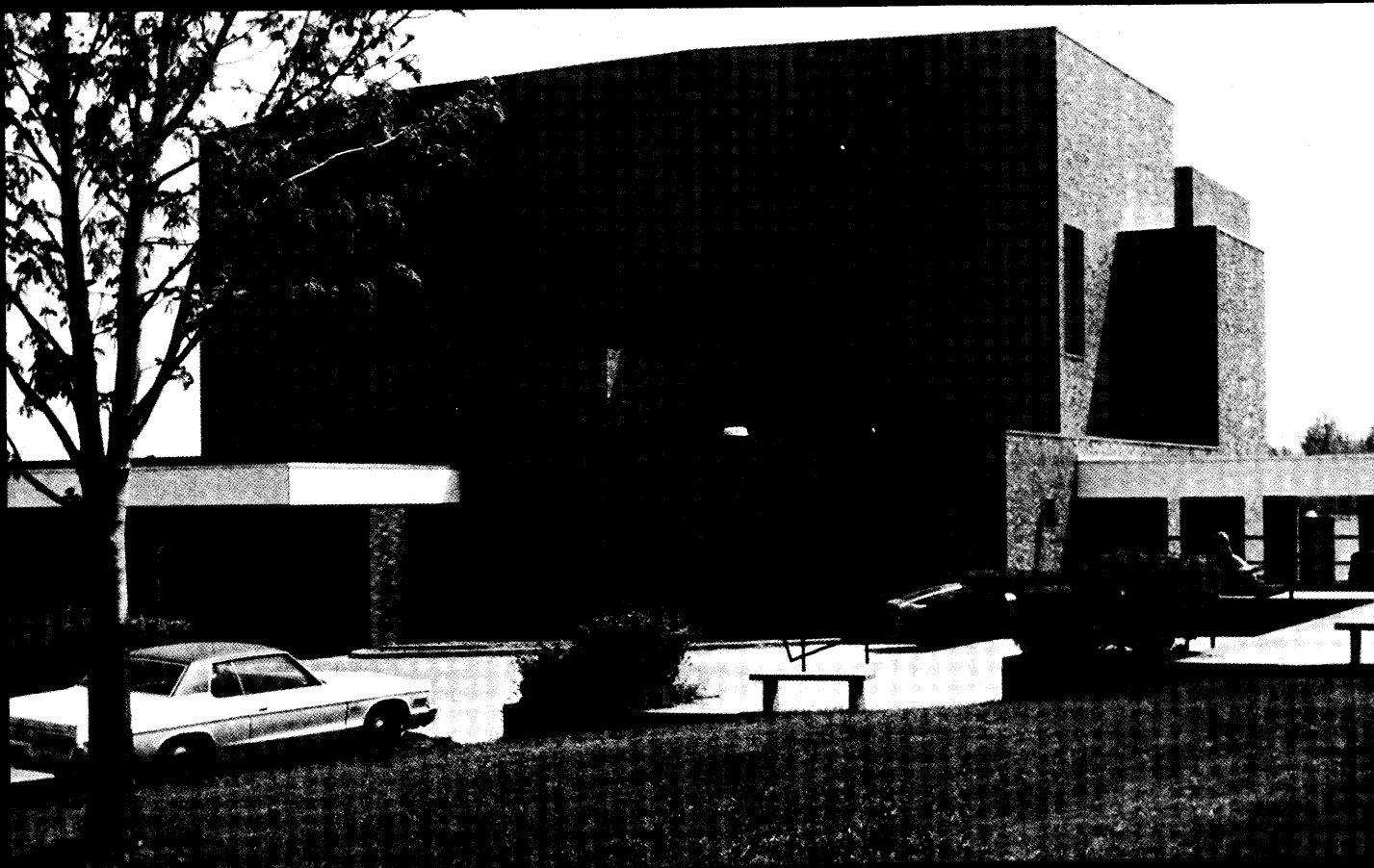
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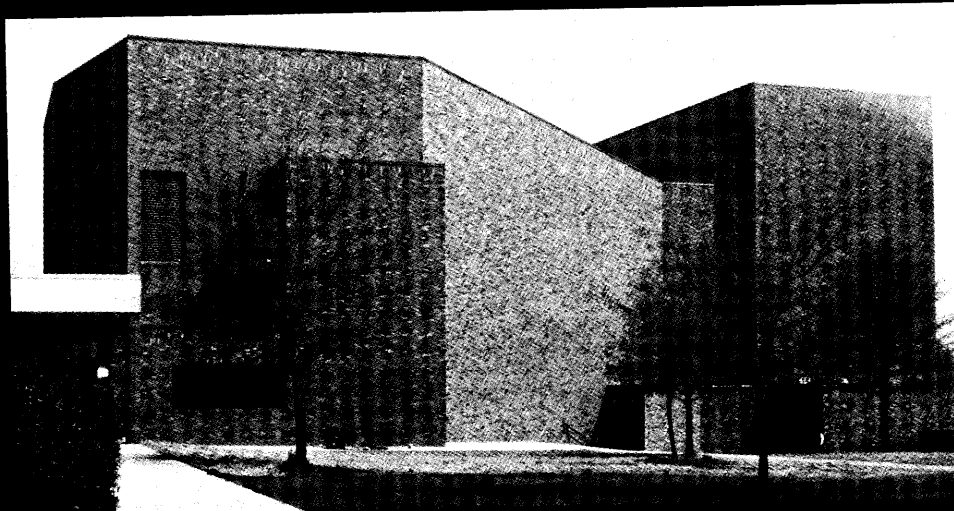
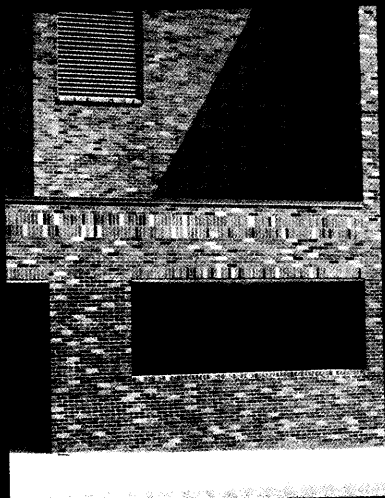
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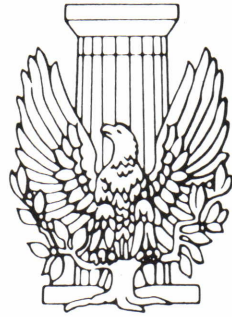
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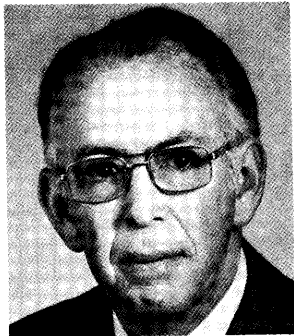
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## HAWKINS TO HEAD NCAIA IN 1977



Tebee P. Hawkins, AIA, principal in the firm of Hawkins Associates, Charlotte architects, is serving as President of the North Carolina Chapter AIA in 1977. Although he officially took office on January 1, installation ceremonies were conducted at the Winter Convention of the Chapter at Pinehurst on February 11.

Serving as President-elect is Thomas T. Hayes, Jr., FAIA, of Southern Pines. Other members of the Board of Directors include Vice Presidents Marvin R. A. Johnson, FAIA, Raleigh, Elizabeth B. Lee, Lumberton, Harry Wolf III, Charlotte; Secretary, Wesley A. McClure, Raleigh; Treasurer, Conrad B. Wessell, Jr., Goldsboro;

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Mr. Hawkins, a graduate of Clemson University, served with distinction as an Army officer in the South Pacific during World War II and has been active in the Reserves since that time. He has been engaged in the practice of architecture in Charlotte since 1945. He and his wife, Dorothy, have four sons.

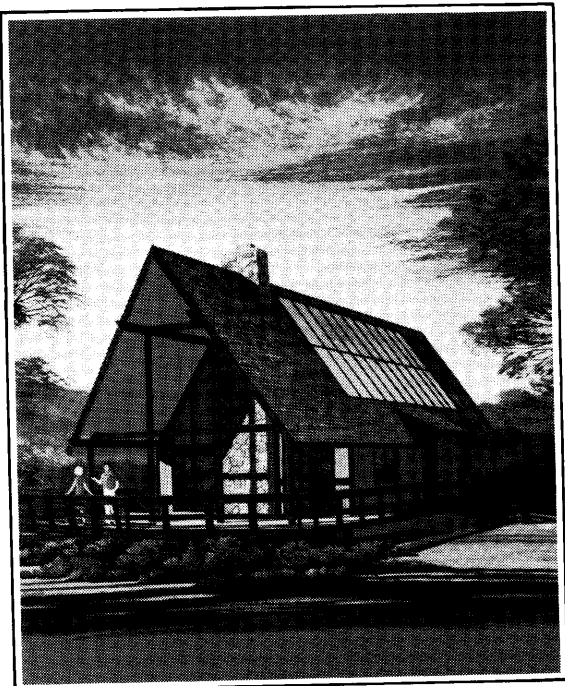
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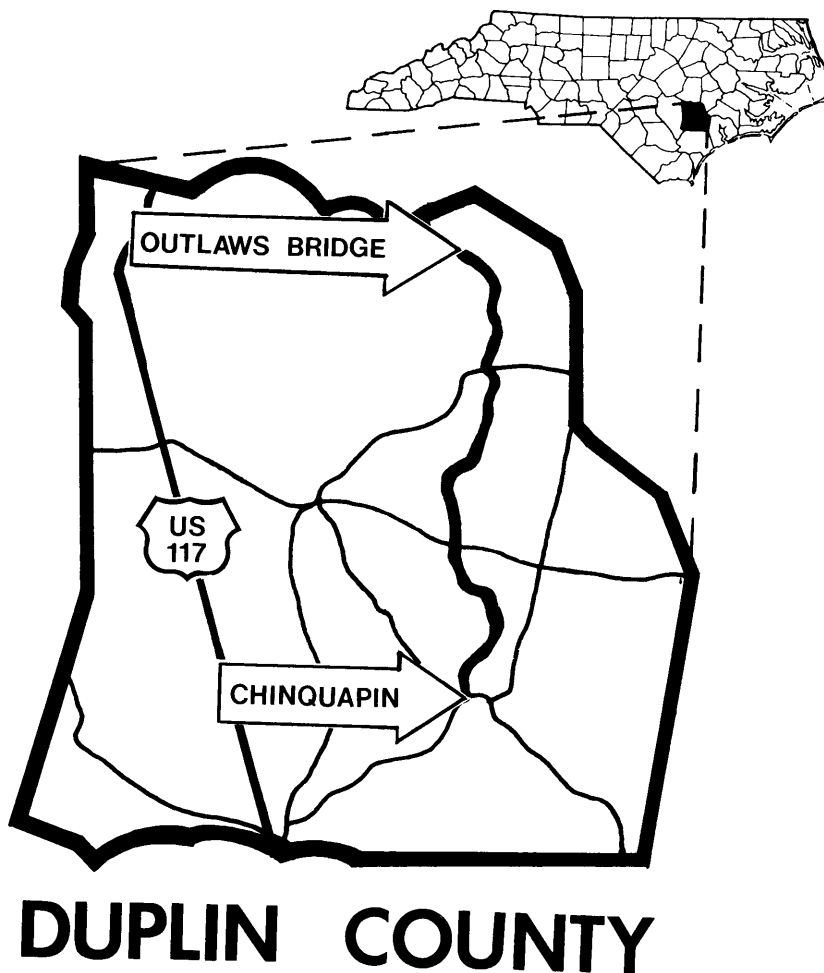


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## NORTH CAROLINA VERNACULAR:

1. A Project
2. A Scouting Report
3. An Appeal

### 1. Towards Conservation of Place, A Project



By Doug Swaim

If I've learned one thing at the School of Design it is that the making of objects-of-use is not sufficient to constitute architecture. Architecture is — or should be — the making of *places*. As Professor Vernon Shogren has said, "'Place' suggests the *origins* of architecture; 'use' is a relative newcomer to the scene."

So just what is this thing "place"? Susanne Langer, a philosopher, says very succinctly that place is "ethnic domain made visible."<sup>1</sup> It is, simply put, a people's externalized image of the world. And therefore a physical reality is sensed as a "strong" or "good" place because it resonates at depth with that image as it exists in the psyche of its makers or anyone else who shares their world view. We could say also that the person who finds no such resonance in his environment is *displaced*, or alienated, and from there a sadly familiar story could begin.

If gathering and conserving "ethnic domain" is crucial to contemporary self-conscious place-making — and who would say that it is not — we would do well to learn to read what remains of the *vernacular* in our environment, for the vernacular landscape is the richest, as well as the most democratic, reflection of that domain. Towards that end — and ultimately towards conservation of place and place-making — we at the School of Design are presently engaged in a study of North Carolina's vernacular design traditions.

Our findings will be published as Volume 26 of *The Student Publication of the School of Design* and, with the aid of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, will be made available to the general public via a video presentation over UNC-TV.

## 2. On the Road from Chinquapin to Outlaws Bridge, A Scouting Report

For my part, I am focusing on the vernacular house in North Carolina. I did my first serious looking at "old houses" this past fall down in rural Duplin County on the road from Chinquapin to Outlaws Bridge. My goal was to differentiate house types along similar lines as might have been used by the vernacular builders themselves and

significant numbers. Most likely they brought with them the idea for the earliest houses found on the road to Outlaws Bridge. The "hall-and-parlor" house was the "norm" for sixteenth and seventeenth century Britain and became similarly common in eighteenth century British colonial America (figures 1 and 2; plate 1).<sup>2</sup>

I House. Dupliners' allegiance to the hall-and-parlor stereotype appears to have been challenged during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The New World had been exposed to the Georgian house throughout the eighteenth century at British cultural landings along the east coast. By 1825 the folk mind's



Fig. 1—Early nineteenth century Duplin County hall-and-parlor house with later addition.

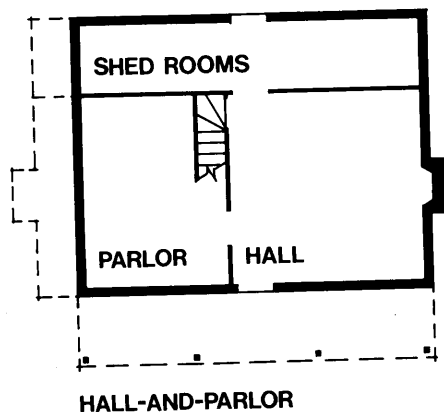


Plate 1—Type plan. Dimensions are representative of type.

then to read those types as carriers of cultural information. I offer my findings here as tentative truths in need of scholarly confirmation — as a scout's firsthand report of what's likely to be found in a vast and uncharted territory.

I will introduce the types I've identified in the same order they seem to have appeared in Duplin County, but it is important to remember that once a type "appeared", it became a part of the local builder's repertoire and could — and often did — appear much later, after the rise and fall, so to speak, of other types.

Hall-And-Parlor. Scotch-Irish debarking in New Bern and Wilmington just prior to 1740 were the first to settle the Duplin area in

The porch incorporated into the front of practically every hall-and-parlor house built in Duplin County suggests a possible West Indian waystation for the hall-and-parlor idea on its passage to the Southern tidewater. The result, however — especially where the porch is structurally integrated and the roof loses its broken appearance (fig. 2) — is a memorable formal whole that we can rightly claim as native.

"Shed rooms" were consistently appended to the rear of Duplin hall-and-parlor houses in conceptual symmetry with the front porch. Thus, where the porch is integrated, the shed rooms are likewise. This shed room element, though of distant origin, finds uniquely distinct expression in the building vocabulary of the Carolinas.



Fig. 2—More recent hall-and-parlor house with the porch and shed rooms completely integrated.

distillation of the classic Georgian idea was spreading throughout the hinterlands where it had come to symbolize agrarian prosperity and respectability.<sup>3</sup> That folk rendition, the so-called "I house" (figs. 3 and 4; pl. 2), eventually became the most pervasive vernacular house type in the eastern United States.

By 1825 the Duplin area was no longer frontier. In fact, during the next decade America's longest railroad cut across the landscape on its way from Weldon to Wilmington. In the countryside an elaborated social life was no doubt emerging. One can speculate that it was this newly arrived formality to life that made welcome Georgian symmetry and the central hallway with its implications for reception and separation.

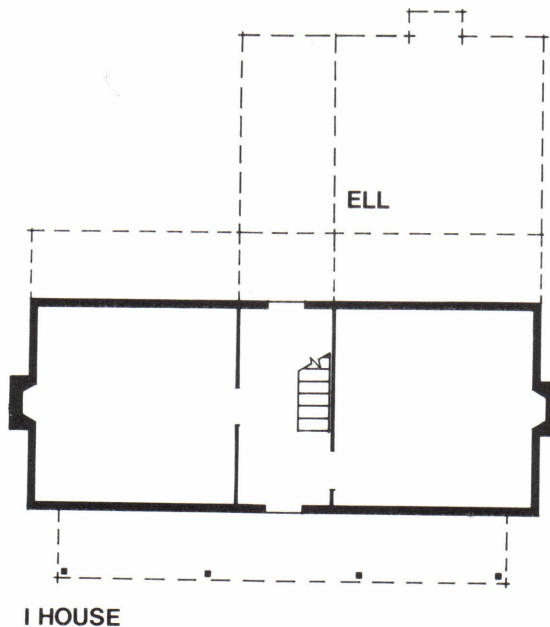


Plate 2



Fig. 3—Typical Duplin County I house. The painted facade is a folk treatment more common in the deep South.



Fig. 4—The Georgian idea become farm factory, a classic ante-bellum "Carolina I" house (rear view).

Duplin County I houses consistently received the regional front porch, sometimes two stories high, and, more often than not, shed appendages on the rear of the ground floor. The resulting "subtype", if you will, has been called the "Carolina I."<sup>4</sup> Of course "ells" and "tees" quartering kitchen and dining facilities were commonly added to the rear of the house, usually with another porch facing either east or south.

One-Story Georgian. In 1853 a house was built across the road from the Kenan mansion in Kenansville that represented another way of slicing up the Georgian idea. Essentially it was a single floor of the Georgian plan with hipped roof and internal chimneys retained, facade again simplified — as in the I house — to three piercings, and porch added. Several versions of this house were later built along the road to Outlaws Bridge (fig. 5; pl. 3).

The type eventually became popular throughout the South in a more vernacular variation with a generous pyramidal roof more responsive to the needs of southern shelter. The type's rather strict and compact formality renders it the most urban of the vernacular forms encountered in the Duplin countryside. No doubt it once reflected the "uptown" aspirations of its nineteenth century inhabitants.

One-Story I House. By far the most popular house type in Duplin County during the post-Civil War nineteenth century was a one-story, one room deep, central hallway structure that I call the "one-story I house" (figs. 6 and 7; pl. 4). It seems quite telling that when reconstruction economies dictated a reduced building program, instead of reverting to the tidy hall-and-parlor idea, the vernacular designer chose by and large to

stay within the vocabulary of his more recently acquired competence. Apparently the needs that first drew elements of Georgian formality through the native sieve were still at large in Duplin society. The one-story I house is the most reined-in version of the Georgian idea to be found.

The thread of vernacular development is lost in Duplin's twentieth century roadside chaos. By 1910 forces of change were fast loosening tradition's hold on the mind of the folk designer. The transformations worked on the carpenter's stock of ideas — transformations that proceeded slowly enough during the nineteenth century for the homeostatic fixing of practices and products that I have called "types" — were soon to accelerate and make utterly viscous that stock. After 1910 the vernacular expression of dwelling on the road from Chinquapin to Outlaws Bridge was largely deflected from house form to other things — to landscaping and, perhaps, ornamentation. Hopefully future research will be able to trace these more subtle vestiges of our recent cultural domain.

### 3. Help Wanted, An Appeal

Volume 26 of *The Student Publication* needs your contributions — and here I don't mean money (although we need that too!). The North Carolina vernacular landscape is indeed "vast and uncharted." For our explorations to proceed beyond its more obvious peaks we must of necessity draw upon the expertise of those who inhabit the backwoods. Please let us know what you know.

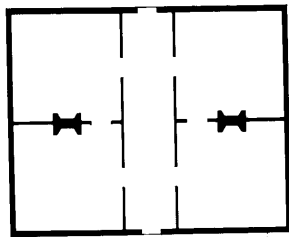
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<sup>1</sup>Susanne Langer, *Feeling And Form*, New York, 1953, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Glassie, *Folk Housing In Middle Virginia*, Knoxville, 1975, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup>Fred Kniffen, "Folk Housing: Key To Diffusion," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Dec. 1965), p. 555. Kniffen first named the "I house" in 1936 "in recognition of the Indiana, Illinois, or Iowa origin of many of its builders in prairie Louisiana. The 'I' seems a not inappropriate symbol in view of the tall, shallow house form it designates." To my knowledge, Glassie (See footnote above) is responsible for making the connection between the I house and Georgian architecture.

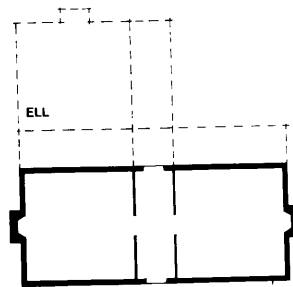
<sup>4</sup>Kniffen, p. 554.



ONE-STORY GEORGIAN



Plate 3



ONE-STORY I HOUSE



Plate 4



Fig. 5—One-story Georgian house on the road to Outlaws Bridge.



Fig. 6—One-story I house with Greek Revival detailing.



Fig. 7—One-story I house from the early twentieth century.

## CONCERNS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

by R. Mayne Albright, Hon. AIA

Architects, both personally and professionally, are concerned and involved not only in all phases of design and construction, but also in Energy Conservation, Land Use, and the "Total Environment", including the economic, social, political and cultural development of the community, state and nation.

These concerns have organizational expression through the American Institute of Architects on the national level. Through the North Carolina Chapter's Government Affairs Committee, continuing contact is maintained with state and federal agencies and with related professions in order that the profession may be in position to make substantial and effective contributions at the State Legislative and policy-making levels.

As the 1977 General Assembly begins, the following are some of the matters likely to be considered and on which it is hoped that the experience and suggestions of architects may be helpful to individual legislators and to legislative committees.

1. GS 83: In view of recent Court Decisions and actions of Federal Agencies, and in accord with the North Carolina Attorney General's reviews and recommendations concerning State Licensing Boards, some revisions may be proposed to the 1977 General Assembly concerning North Carolina Licensing Boards, including GS 83 "Architects".

This 1915 Act, last revised in 1957, is one of the earliest North Carolina Licensing Board Acts, and, in the past has been considered among the best in all fifty States. However, architects agree that it should now be updated to include a public member on the Board, to provide for

continuing education, to clarify and coordinate its provisions with the 1976 Administrative Procedures Act, the 1969 Professional Corporation Act and other recent North Carolina Acts and with the professional Practice Acts of other States including reciprocity, qualification requirements and disciplinary procedures.

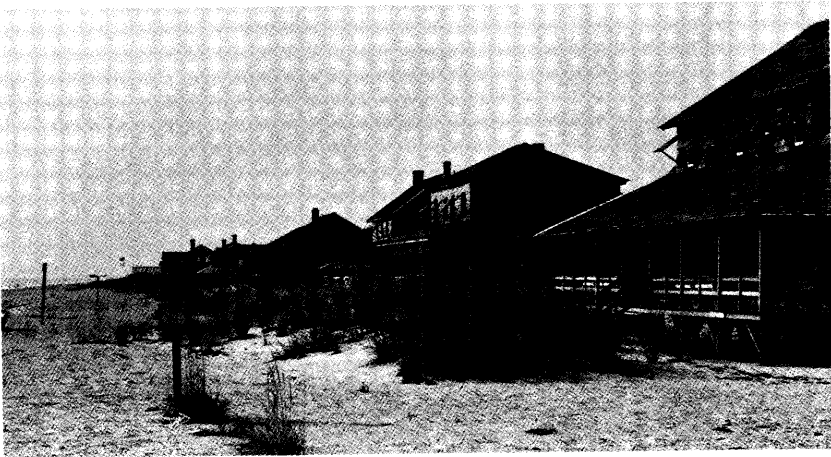
2. GS 150A: Architects support the Attorney General's proposal to add to the new Administrative Procedures Act (GS 150A) the right of Licensing Boards to seek Court Injunctions against violations, as provided in GS 150 until its 1976 revision as GS 150A.
3. GS 143-128; 143-129; GS 133-1.1: During the past year, Architects, Engineers, Land Surveyors and General Contractors have been in joint conferences with the Attorney General's Office, the Department of Administration, and have served on the Governor's Advisory Panel on Design and Construction Practices. Some revisions, largely technical, may be proposed for the above Sections of the General Statutes and concerning policies and practices in the design and construction of Public Buildings.
4. GS 44A: The 1975 Amendments to the Lien Law apparently need further amending concerning matters of notice and of priority among lienors.
5. GS 1-15 (c) The 1976 "Medical Malpractice Act", contains some sections, including the Statute of Limitations, applicable to "all professions". Clarification and coordination with other Statutes appear needed.
6. Building Inspectors—(Legislative Committee Report): Architects and others in the design and construction fields support the recommen-

dations of the 1976 Legislative Study Research Sub-Committee on Building Inspection to improve the scope and quality of county and municipal building inspection to assure better compliance with State Building Code requirements in the interest of public safety.

# THE NAGS HEAD BEACH COTTAGE ROW HISTORIC DISTRICT



The Nags Head Beach Cottage Row Historic District, located on North Carolina's Outer Banks, is one of the few areas of late nineteenth to early twentieth century resort development along the eastern seaboard that retains essentially its original character. Along the ocean front beach, facing the Atlantic, stands an irregular row of frame cottages whose shapes, texture, color, and detail are expressive of their function and the demands for survival on the weather-tortured Outer Banks. The regular rhythm of one and two-story units, the somber gray-brown colors, the rough texture of the wood shingled walls and roofs, and the repetition of sweeping gable roofs and expansive porches, relate in an almost organic fashion to the slope of the beach to the sea and to the light sand and the gray and blue water of the changing ocean.



Within the unit of scale and shape, several variations occur. Probably the most common house type, dating from the 1910-1940 era is the large bungaloid cottage, 1-1/2 stories high, with nearly full-width dormers extending across the front and back slopes of the gable roof to create essentially a two-story house. The house may be two, three, four, or five bays wide, and usually features porches on at least two and usually four sides, plus any number of wings, ells and additions. Also common and usually older is a simple gable-roof two-story cottage type, three to five bays wide. Single-story porches on two to four sides soften the boxiness of this house type.

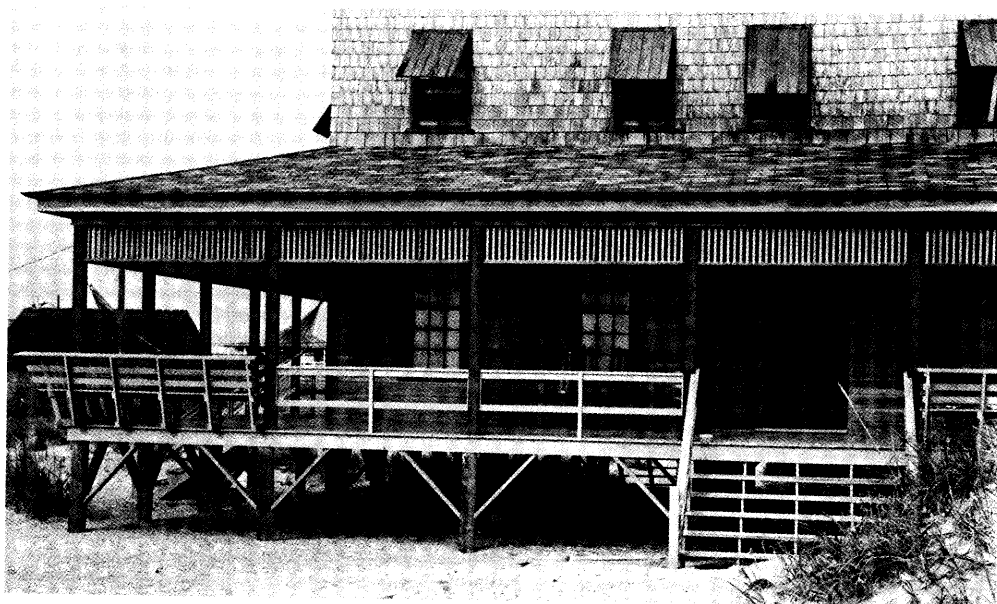
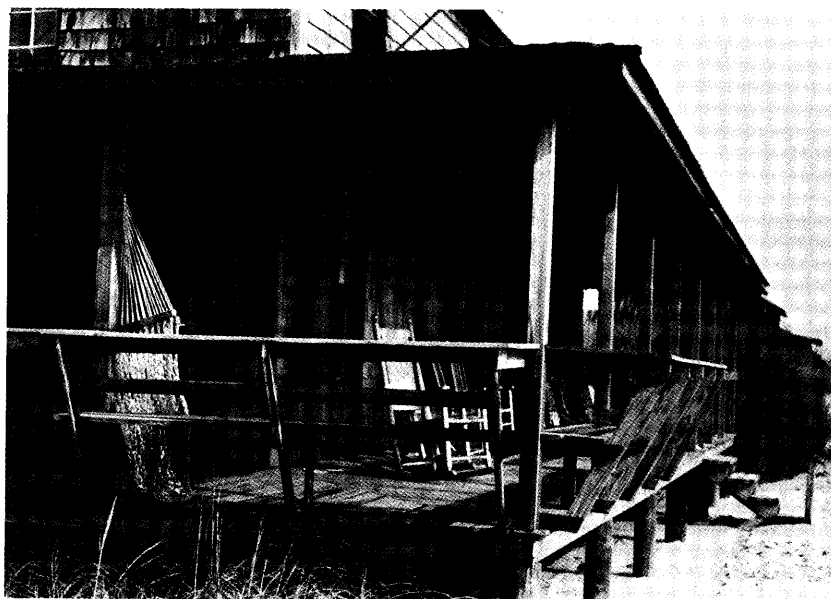
Closely related to the two-story gable-roof house is an even more boxy form, the two-story with hip or pyramidal roof, whose highly restrained geometric quality is a

foil to the sweeping expansiveness of the bungaloid cottages. One-story cottages, too, are interspersed among the larger structures. Particularly appealing are the steep gable rooflines of some of these, which have the multi-slope gables sometimes called the "coastal cottage", with the lower, shallower slope of one or both sides engaging a porch.

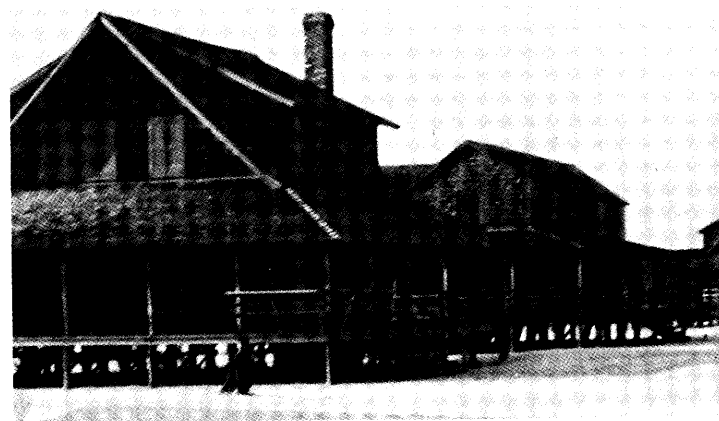
Whatever the size or shape of the cottages, certain features of detail dictated by convenience, function and custom recur; this repetition contributes much to the architectural unity of the district — as well as to the comfort of the residences.

Cottages are consistently placed high on open foundations of timber pilings. The pilings place the houses high enough to be above low waves in case of storms, as well as making the houses more accessible to breezes. The height of the foundation varies, but it is often high enough to sling hammocks for sleeping and to hang up wet gear. Some of these foundations are screened with latticework, originally meant to keep pigs and cows from straying under the cottages. Until the mid-1930's there was no fencing and the locally owned livestock roamed at will.

Intersecting angles of wooden members make up the porches of the cottages as well. Nearly always roofed and supported on simple posts, the porches also feature enclosing balustrades of different, simple kinds. A particularly handsome and functional feature of Nags Head cottages is the ubiquitous porch bench. These are benches built into and extending out from the porch balustrade, with the base beginning flush with the balustrade and the back sloping outward from the porch. This



**Nags Head**  
cont'd.



catches breezes and provides adequate porch seating without cluttering the porch with furniture. These benches are seen in the early documentary photographs of the turn of the century or so, and continue to be used on new construction. A comparatively new addition to these covered porches is the sun deck, usually appended to the protected southwest corner of the cottage porch and encircled by lean-out benches.

Heavy seas and strong winds that blow sand into the cottages are plagues during the off-season. To protect against this, nearly all cottages feature similar door and window treatments. Most doors have normal inner doors and outer screen doors, useful during the season. Outside of the screen door, though, is a sturdy wooden batten door which is kept open during most of the season, but which is secured when the cottages are closed up. Also of wooden batten construction are the window shutters. Each is a single leaf, hinged at the top and held open with a prop stick. Open, the diagonal awning-like angle of the shutter provides shade and closed, shelter from storms. In winter, the boarded-up look of the windows and doors emphasizes the stern dignity of the waiting cottages — which look, as one visitor remarked, “like a bunch of haughty old ladies.”

In the early cottages, the kitchen was separated from the living area by a porch and often the ice box stood on the porch. Many of these porches have been enclosed. With few exceptions, the rear ell of the cottage projects from the north portion of the rear elevation. Many houses have porches on all four sides. If, however, porches occur on but three sides, it is generally the north side that lacks a porch.

This arrangement takes advantage of prevailing breezes.

The interiors of the beach houses are finished as simply as the exteriors. Generally, there were no fireplaces originally, although some have been added. Walls are either covered with simple sheathing or in most cases left unfinished, with the studs and exterior covering visible. Partition walls are typically of a single thickness of wood sheathing. Doors are of whatever type was popular at the time of construction. Interior wood is generally left unpainted. Floor plans vary, but all are simple and functional. The typical 1910-1940 floor plan is a variation on the center-hall plan two rooms deep, except that the chief front room, the living room is not partitioned from the hall, but includes space normally allotted to the hall; this produces a plan with two rooms across the front and two rooms divided by a hall at the rear. To the rear of the main block is the ell, often separated from the main block by a breezeway. This space usually contains servants' quarters, children's rooms and/or kitchen.

It should be noted that nearly all the cottages are virtually without the usual trappings of architectural "style" inside and out, but rely on the simple expression of functional forms, materials and plan for their character. This is particularly interesting since many of those for whom these houses were built either built or lived in some of the grandest and most fashionable houses of the Albemarle.



*In 1976 The North Carolina Division of Archives and History nominated the "old" Nags Head cottage row for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. This article is excerpted from the nomination form.*

## CHINA: CLEANER THAN CHARLOTTE, HARDER LIFE



*Charlotte architect A. G. Odell Jr. recently returned from a visit with other American architects to China. Here are some of his observations and impressions.*

The Chinese today live very simply and economically. Everyone works, is clothed, fed and housed. For the past 15 years, there has not been a serious food shortage. That's quite an achievement.

The Chinese welcome us and other visitors, not so much for the tourist money we will bring but to propagate friendship, so we visitors will tell others about what China is doing.

There is a sharp contrast between the old and new life-style of China, but many aspects of the culture remain backward. China is trying to change its backwardness by hand, a laborious process.

The city streets are crowded, but the larger cities like Peking have tremendously broad boulevards, some eight to 10 lanes wide. That's quite a contrast to this visitor from Charlotte. You see many buses, trucks and bicycles, as well as makeshift pickup trucks powered by motorcycle motors, but very few private cars.

Piedmont residents would be especially interested in seeing a Chinese textile mill. A mill we visited in Kweilin had 10,000 spindles and 400 looms. It was obvious they had more workers per machine than you would see in a Piedmont textile mill. Their mill used both silk and synthetics.

Judged against my 1968 visit to the Soviet Union, the Chinese people are more pleasant than those in Russia. The Chinese do little handshaking, but everywhere I saw smiles.

The people get up very early. At dawn, you'll see many doing calisthenics in parks. Entertainment is mostly ballet, gymnastics and circus-type activities. The major sports are table tennis, badminton, volleyball and acrobatics.

We visited several schools, and learned the students work at least two months each year in a factory or a commune. The students are graded jointly by their teachers, employers and each

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other. They have very short breaks in the summer and a one-month winter vacation.

The junior high school we visited averaged 48 students in each classroom. They were studying plane geometry, applied in a practical way to machinery design.

In the elementary school, children 9 and 10 years old repaired motors and switches. A basic knowledge of industrial production is combined with public school education.

As for the arts, there seemed to be little originality or creativity. In a workroom, I saw about a dozen people laboring over a piece of sculpture, a painting or making artificial plants and flowers. One man was working on a piece of jade, developing a sculpture with a chain link. He was about two-thirds finished and had been working on it for 2½ years.

The people seem to be healthy, well-fed and adequately clothed, although everyone dresses in the same Mao coat and trousers. The women also wear trousers, but with some variations in their jacket design, which are nevertheless all of the same colors—dark blue, sometimes a paler blue for the women, gray-green or black.


For this Charlottean proud of our city's magnificent trees, it's interesting to learn that each Chinese city has a tree-planting program. In Peking, a city of eight million, a million additional trees are planted along the streets each year. That means one tree is planted annually for every eight people. The principal boulevards are flanked by double rows of trees, and the overhead electric wires are behind these trees and barely noticeable as you drive along.

Chinese cities are even cleaner than Charlotte. There is very little grass planted around the homes, but the sand in front of each door is carefully swept. The streets and sidewalks are free of

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litter. People constantly sweep them. In the old China, misery and war were foundations of the social structure—famine periodic, death from starvation common, disease rampant and thievery, graft and corruption unrestrained.

Now the Chinese people apparently have found a sense of purpose and self-confidence. Everybody seems to work. The regime, bent on production, has organized the masses for work. Part-time production is encouraged at home; children work part-time at such tasks as textiles.

Manufacturing plants, power plants, radar stations and other work places are scattered throughout the country. Brick kilns and smoking chimney tops are everywhere.

Even with this modern equipment, so much work is still done by hand, like cutting a canal through mountains to provide water to agricultural areas.

The two-wheeled cart, often pulled by humans, carries building stones, manure, waste paper or manufactured products. Even the canal barges are pulled by human beings. Such a human work force leaves an impression that China remains backward; yet, if engine power replaced manpower, what would become of all these people

whose livelihood depends on their work ethic of human labor?

Communes are organized like army camps with some plots allocated to individuals, all responsible to governmental authority. The communes average 27 square miles and 40,000 people, with half of these being industrial, construction or maintenance workers.

As an architect, I was especially interested in the new housing. It seems to be based on things the Chinese learned from the Russians when they were on more friendly terms. The living structures are usually three or four stories tall, but some newer ones in the larger cities rise more than 10 stories. Little electricity is available; the one lightbulb in each household is rarely turned on until dark.

People spend lots of time on the sidewalks. They hang out their laundry; get their hair cut; they play cards; they tend babies; they work the sewing machines; they live, sell food products and other items outside on the sidewalks of their suburban homes.

I read The Observer and have access to many more newspapers, but there are only two newspapers in China.

Most people, as in Russia, read their newspapers in the glass-framed, outdoor boxes, bulletin board fashion. There also are gigantic billboards in red and gold which, although unreadable to most Americans, are a great improvement over the plethora of billboards across our country.

Most Chinese were uneducated prior to 1949. Even today the Chinese know little about history before they were born, except what is fed to them daily. Perhaps this is the secret of their success. The people look forward, not backward. They work unconcerned with the 40-hour week.

A resident of the Piedmont is surrounded by houses of worship, and the contrast with China is enormous. In that country of 850 million souls, the sayings and teachings of Confucius and Buddha have given way to those of Mao. Mao Tse-tung, I feel sure, will prove to be the greatest leader in all Chinese history. He organized a splintered and corrupt country which had been the victim of other nations for generations.

After three weeks in China, I am home—tired, but exhilarated by the opportunity to find out much about a people we must learn to live with.

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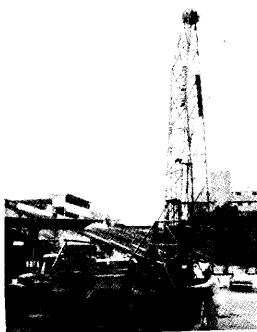
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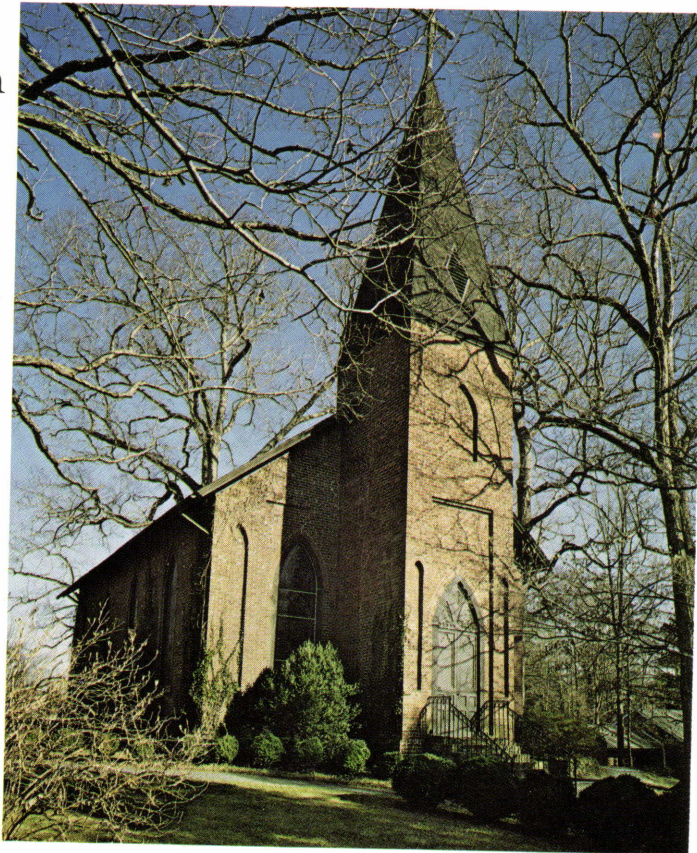
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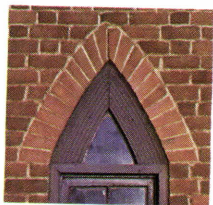


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