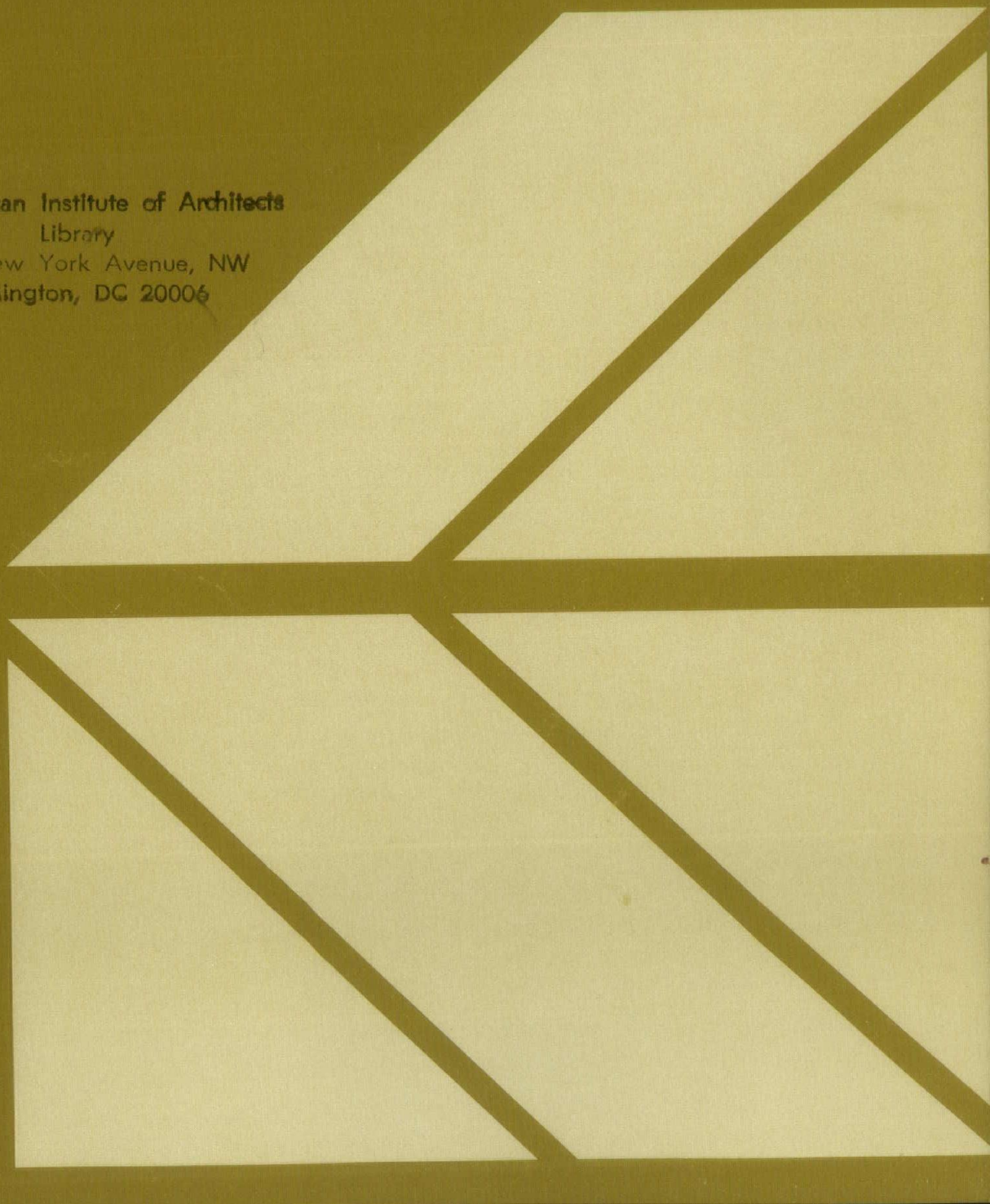
ARCHITECTURE NEBRASKA



ARCHITECTURE NEBRASKA VOLUME 4

A College of Architecture Publication

Published by the College of Architecture,
University of Nebraska–Lincoln

The views expressed herein are
solely of those of the individual authors,
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for academic credit.
1983

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Progressive Architecture magazine

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Editor's Message

H. Keith Sawyers

This, the fourth volume of *Architecture Nebraska,* is distinct from its predecessors in several respects. For example, each of the previous volumes contained a section identifying recipients of the annual Nebraska Society of Architects Design Awards. In recent years the quarterly magazine, *Dimensions,* published jointly by the UNL College of Architecture and the Nebraska Society of Architects, has assumed responsibility for publicizing the results of the awards program. Reassignment of this news segment to a quarterly publication is particularly appropriate with regard to the timely nature of the subject matter and the evolving mission of *Architecture Nebraska.* Consequently, readers will not find a complete listing of the annual design awards recipients in this volume.

Another potentially significant change introduced in this volume involves an expansion in the scope of the authorship of student work selected for publication. Since its inception in 1976, the magazine's student contributors were limited to the graduate seminar in architectural criticism. The present volume discards that restrictive policy and contains essays selected from course work in history and theory in addition to criticism. Ideally, future volumes will contain work from an even broader spectrum of professional and intellectual activities.

Organization of the present volume acknowledges three subject areas. The first four essays critically examine several building projects in Lincoln. The forms of criticism employed vary quite considerably and illustrate the range of techniques available to the critic for making a purposeful response. We are proud to be able to include among these essays a critique by an alumnus, James Murphy of *Progressive Architecture* magazine.

The second set of four essays grapple with theoretical topics of current interest and significance. This section commences with a thought-provoking essay by Professor Patrick Horsbrugh who many readers will recall taught at the University of Nebraska in the early sixties. Since that time Professor Horsbrugh has directed his seemingly boundless energy to numerous noteworthy pursuits including creation of the Environic Foundation International.

Historical subjects are the focus of attention in the final set of five essays. The first of these, an inspiring tribute by Professor Dale Gibbs, accompanies a photographic exhibition located in and featuring the Nebraska State Capitol.

Future volumes of *Architecture Nebraska* will continue to be devoted to issues and topics associated with history, theory and criticism of the built environment. Hopefully, the range of subject matter and authorship will continue to flourish and expand. If you would like to participate in this ongoing discussion send an abstract of your essay to:

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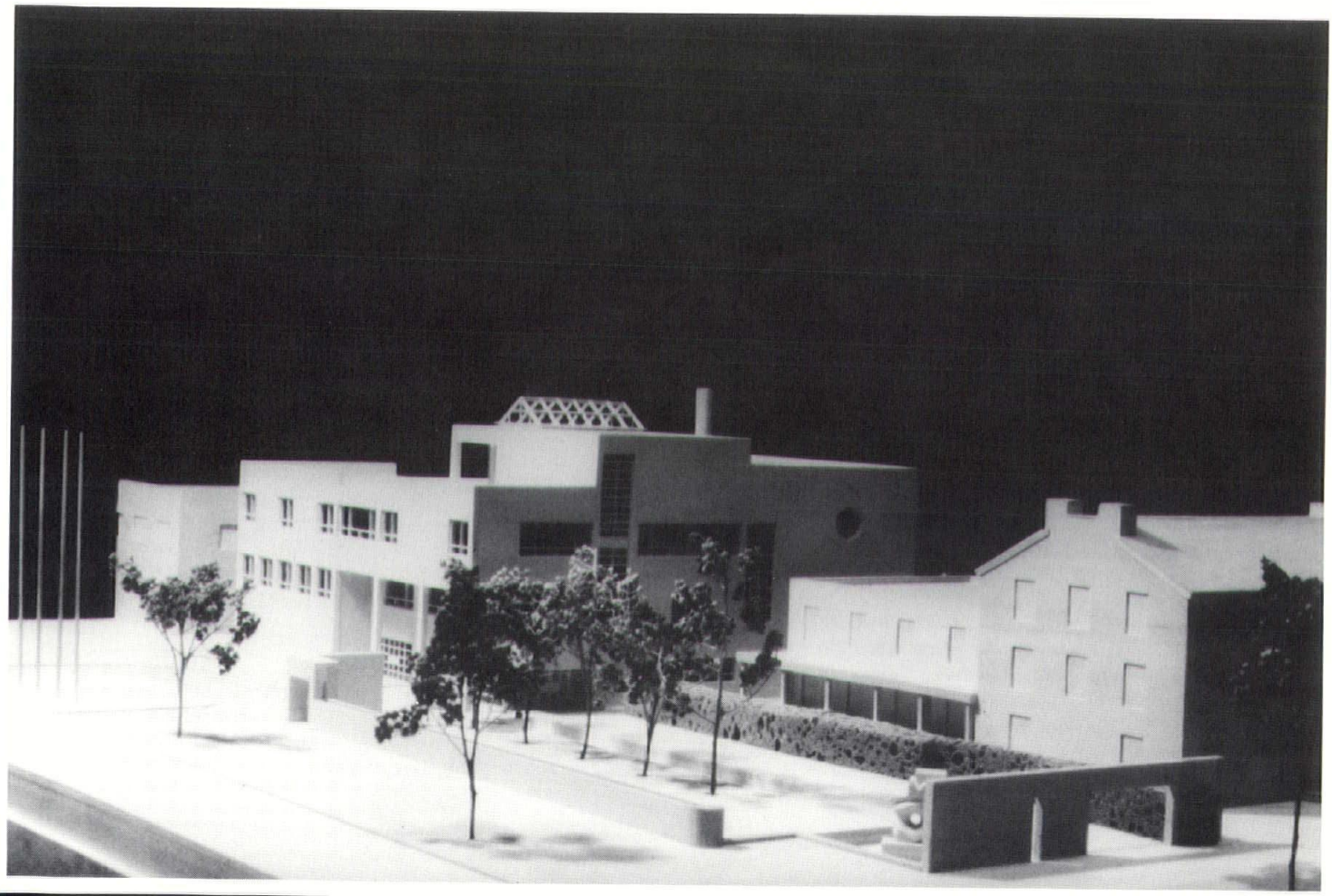


Wick Alumni Center

James Murphy

No competition is easy, either for the entrants or, to a degree, the jurors. At the outset it should be noted that the ten competitors for the Wick Alumni Center faced very heavy site and context burdens. An observer need only look at a site plan of the land at 16th and R Streets to see the tip of that iceberg. Further, lodged among sorority houses, fraternity houses, and the uninspired monolith that is the Historical Society, the building design was asked to respond in too many directions to say that there *was* any cohesive context.

Having, in effect, been away from Nebraska since 1965, it was difficult for the writer to return to chair a jury reviewing designs in some cases made by friends, classmates, and contemporaries. It is a matter of record, now, who did not get chosen; but it should also be recorded that the Nebraska-based presentations were as professional as their national competitors—in some cases more. There were elements of design brilliance among them, in fact.

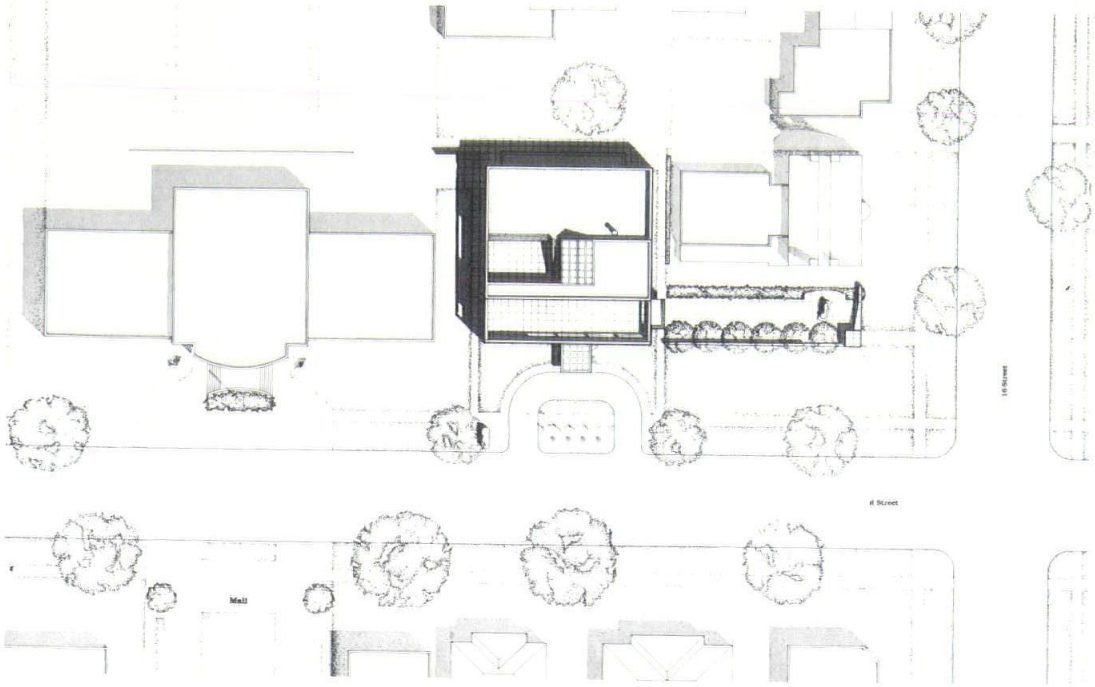
Many of the design solutions, however, tilted at what the jury felt were the wrong windmills. For instance, some made what looked like attempts to be "contextual," yet at that scale would have failed even had there been a context. In some cases roof lines seemed wrong, in others materials and massing.

Other well-intentioned entries made much of a connection with the nucleus of the campus through the parking lot to the northwest. While this is not an unworthy aspiration, it forced such contortions in plan that awkward conditions abounded. A related result occurred with attempts to infer a diagonal axis to connect with the Centennial Mall. One submission lacked any evidence of professionalism or even much thought, and prompted the jury to basically disregard it and wonder why the entrant bothered.

However, the one approach that the jury felt caused some schemes problems was an axial parti, east to west, along the R Street side of the site. Since this was the narrow leg of the L-shaped land parcel, it severely restricted building dimensions after property line setbacks were considered. One scheme, a very well-designed solution otherwise, failed because of this direction to gain jury support to continue into phase two judging. It was felt that, while the two finalists that did emerge were given jury recommendations, the axial entry would need major, if not total, redesign. This, it seemed, would be unfair in several directions at once. First, the burden on that entrant; second, unequal opportunities to start again by other entrants who chose such axial goals; and third, even with another opportunity, monumental effort would have to be expended to even out the lead of the other two.

With the field narrowed to two, the jury made its suggestions to the finalists. A request was made that a model be submitted, and certain problem areas be addressed; and the architects went back to refine. The jury was excited by the fact that, while both designs chose the narrow leg of the site for the garden and built on the wider west end, they were very different.

The product of a national competition, the winning entry for the Wick Alumni Center, University of Nebraska–Lincoln (awarded a citation by Progressive Architecture *magazine in 1982), was designed by Gwathmey Siegel and Associates Architects, New York City. The two finalists selected from the initial round of the competition, MLTW/Turnbull Associates, San Francisco, and Gwathmey Siegel and Associates Architects, were invited to submit more refined designs for the final round of judging. The graphics which accompany this article, excluding the photograph on the opposite page, illustrate both designs at the concluding phase of the competition (the MLTW/Turnbull Associates design appears on page 9). A later revision of the winning design, shown by the model, is presently under construction.*



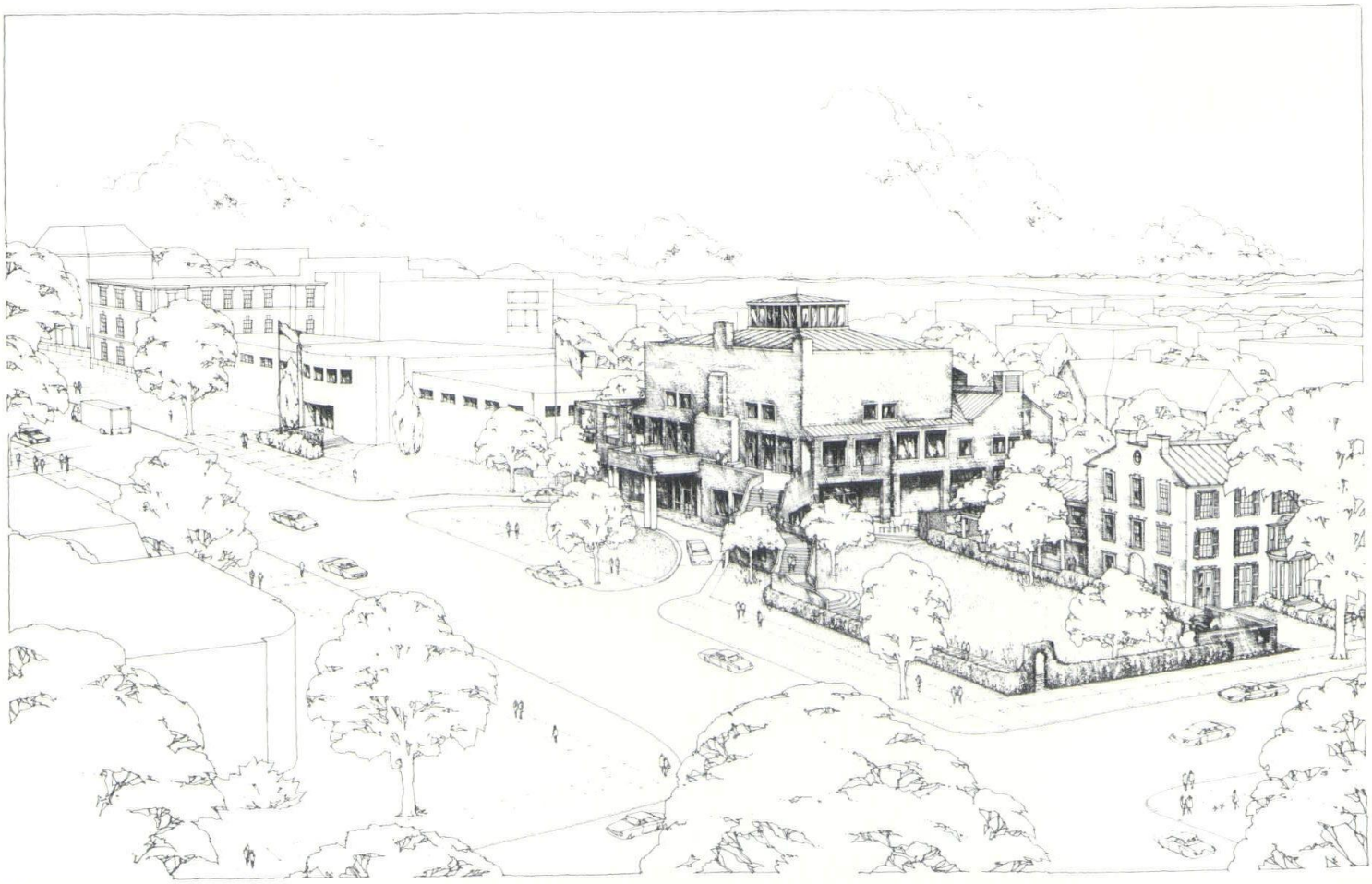
What was admirable to many jurors about William Turnbull's proposal was its warmth—the feeling that it would be a festive, happy, easygoing-but-properly-decorous place to have events. Its great hall was just that, albeit on the second floor. Its casual front stair, cascading down from a verandah-like overlook, cradled the garden in a charming manner. But, as mentioned, there were problems. Procession to the Great Hall was not as smooth as it could be; the gate/arch under the beguiling front stair was a bit miserly with its welcome; the back portion of the building seemed unresolved. The second phase competition result, for the jury, seemed to fail to improve the first scheme. To many, it seemed to lessen its quality. On first, second, third, and subsequent inspections, the Gwathmey Siegel entry showed the fastidious care for which the firm is known. An impeccable presentation of an obviously well-understood concept, nay, building, showed the jury a confidence and a commitment to the problem. Like the Turnbull entry, it didn't carry the search for contextualism to extremes. But, unlike the other parti, this was more formal. Still, it had the feel that it would elevate and celebrate and inspire on a different level. The combination of craftsmanship and design skill were somewhat inspirational, and the jury responded to the confidence and commitment positively.

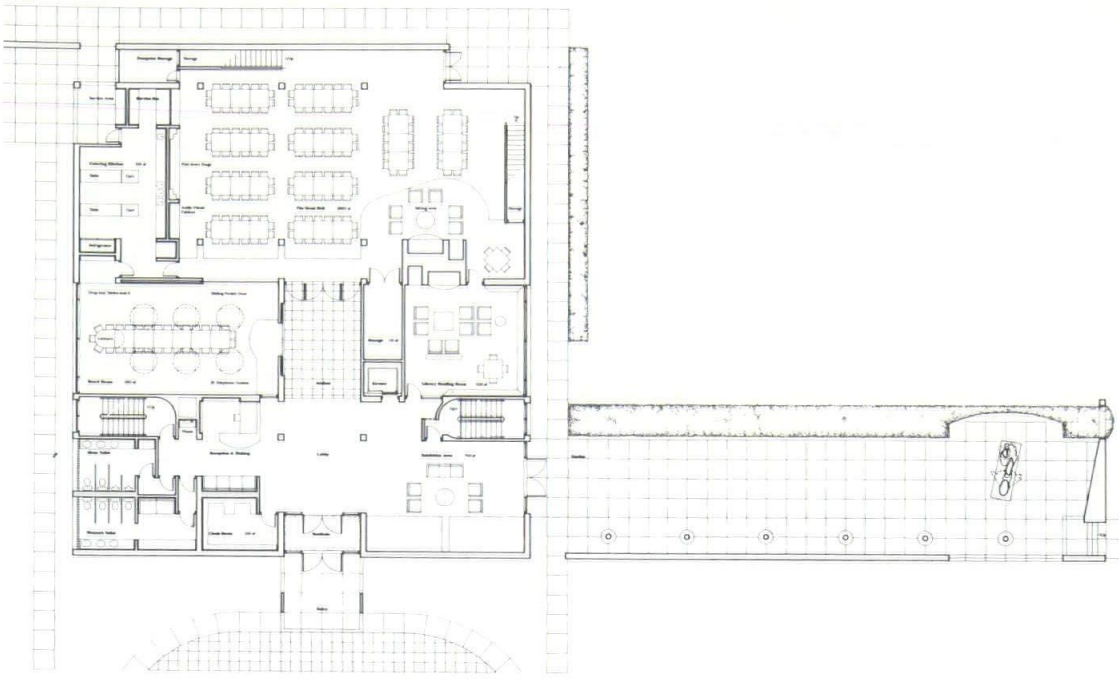
But nothing is perfect. The front facade seemed to the jury almost too slick. It needed, if not humanizing, at least some recognition of the light atrium inside and some welcome at the entry. Instead of a uniform R Street facade, the comments suggested "eroding" the garden corner. Phase two brought the design well into the range that could be dealt with in a normal architect/client relationship.

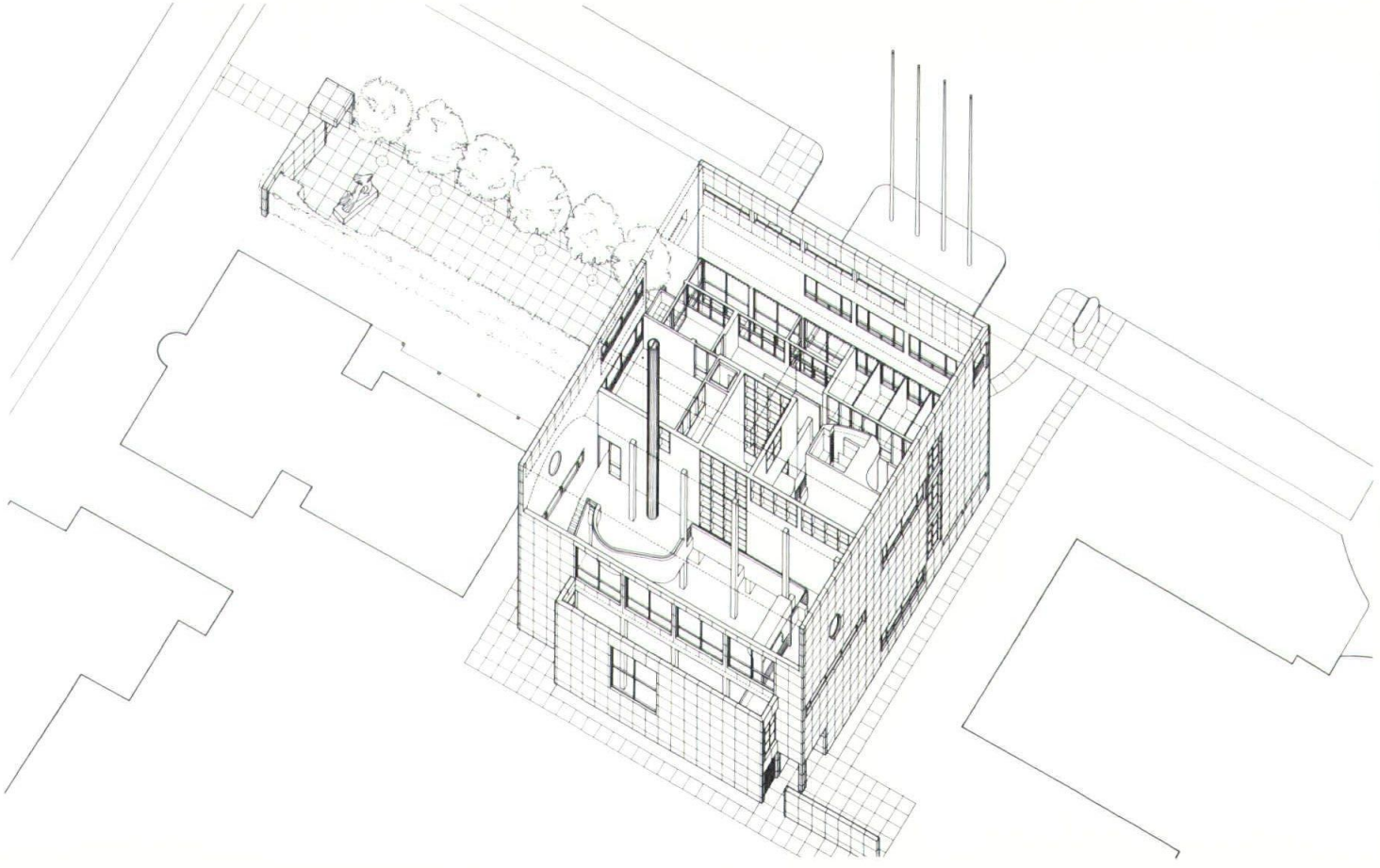
While there was an advocate of the Turnbull scheme until the end, and considerable sympathy for its ideals, it was Gwathmey Siegel who won. Since that announcement, several changes have taken place. The facade material changed from flame finished granite to brick, for budget reasons. Certain spaces were trimmed to cut back area figures, and the R Street elevation was altered in response to earlier comments.

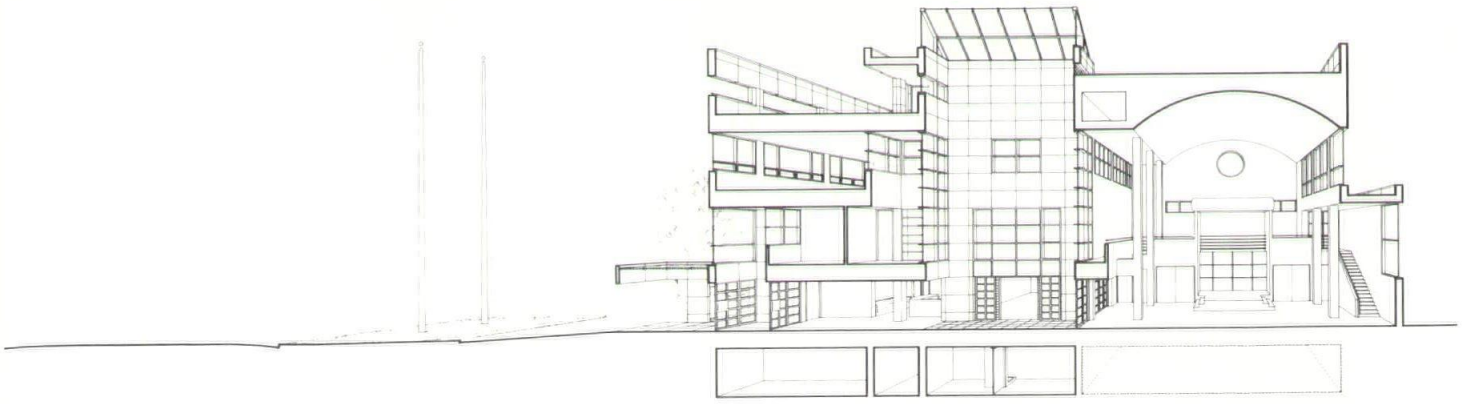
Asked about this competition and its execution, Charles Gwathmey said he felt it was well conceived and "extremely fair." "I thought that the second round, as painful as it was, was a very good idea," Gwathmey said. "Because, with comments, it allowed the users to see how architects respond in the process. I think our building improved a lot in the second phase. I think when you commit yourself to doing a competition you are in a very energized and concentrated time, and you really can't wing it. It's an obligation. There have been other competitions which—and I don't mean this derogatorily—are by their very nature rigged; geographically it can be out of balance, or the jury may not be representative. In all phases, I thought this competition was terrific."

Gwathmey and his partner Robert Siegel have done work on other college campuses, including Princeton, Columbia, and the State University of New York at Purchase. "I like to work in conditions like these," Gwathmey says, "because of the context or the anti-context. The buildings have a kind of public presence."









Besides the "erosions" on the south facade, which will be lined with green slate, other plan modifications were made. The garden-reception relationship was made stronger, establishing a cross-axis in the procession toward the great hall. Refinements in other areas are the result of more specific program input by the client. Gwathmey finds the change to brick outside a positive step. Limestone would have been a "disaster" next to the Historical Society, he feels, and the granite would have made the building "a-contextual." "By using the brick, we almost literally frame the archive building, with the largely brick Student Union, to complete the 'T' with the mall." Coincidentally, the brick chosen turns out to be a Nebraska product.

In describing his feelings about the Wick building committee, Gwathmey sees the members as being very strong. "I don't want to say that they didn't have any preconceptions, but they're very good listeners," he says. "They respect expertise, they have always been very solid. They accept the fact that their aesthetic bias may be different, that they themselves might not have chosen this particular parti; but once it was accepted, they've been totally supportive. They've been that involved in the process that their own preconceptions have been broken down. It's interesting, when clients are open, that they see that alternatives, the other options, can be as valid, and they learn."

Because of its unique program, the alumni center made the architects take a fresh look at certain aspects of their work. Gwathmey says, "That building eliminated, for us, all of the stylistic notions we may have had. The model of the Renaissance Palace comes to mind—I'm talking about the urban model, not the country model—because it is such a solid mass, basically. It is about a court, even though it's not a court, it's a big vertical space. It is the orientation, the referential space throughout the building; and then we shift the literal court into the garden. I think that, if it's built well, it will be a building with a very strong presence, and yet still have a very nice scale about it."

Anyone who has seen any Gwathmey Siegel work knows that it presupposes a high level of execution skills. It is now in that phase of the work where it can become more than a good design idea; it can become fine architecture. Its architects have poured more than a standard amount of dedication, time, and talent into the Wick. For those of us on the jury, and especially for this former Lincolnite, the intent was to help Nebraska alumni get the best. It is within our reach; this should be an outstanding building.

Pound Junior High School Addition

Michael Roach

Architecture as a process concerns the creation of the visual environment for all of mankind to freely experience and yet this creative process is exercised by a relatively small group of professionals—architects. The point being made is that the architect has a great responsibility to humanity to provide an environment that is both a satisfying and a visually pleasing experience. Brent Brolin observes:

> Yet we inspire everyone to proceed as though he or she was one of these rare creators, rather than encouraging them to make civilized, soundly designed buildings that help establish a sense of visual continuity in the community. As a result, too many of today's architects feel that they will somehow prostitute themselves if they build anything less than unique in form or concept.[1]

It is this ideal of visual continuity that must guide the creative process involved with the design of additions to existing structures. This author does not advocate rote copying of buildings but in the circumstance of an addition, particularly that of a small addition to a large existing structure, a harmonious "visual texture" must be an important overall objective of the design solution. An approach aimed at disregarding the existing visual texture for the sake of personal expression or for reflecting the "style of our times" is simply irresponsible architecture. "The architect's responsibility," Brolin states, "is notably different from that of other artists. Paintings hang in museums; people can choose whether or not they want to see them. Architecture intrudes, without invitation, everyone's daily life."[2] We must design additions with this in mind if we are to avoid problems associated with visual incongruity and distraction.

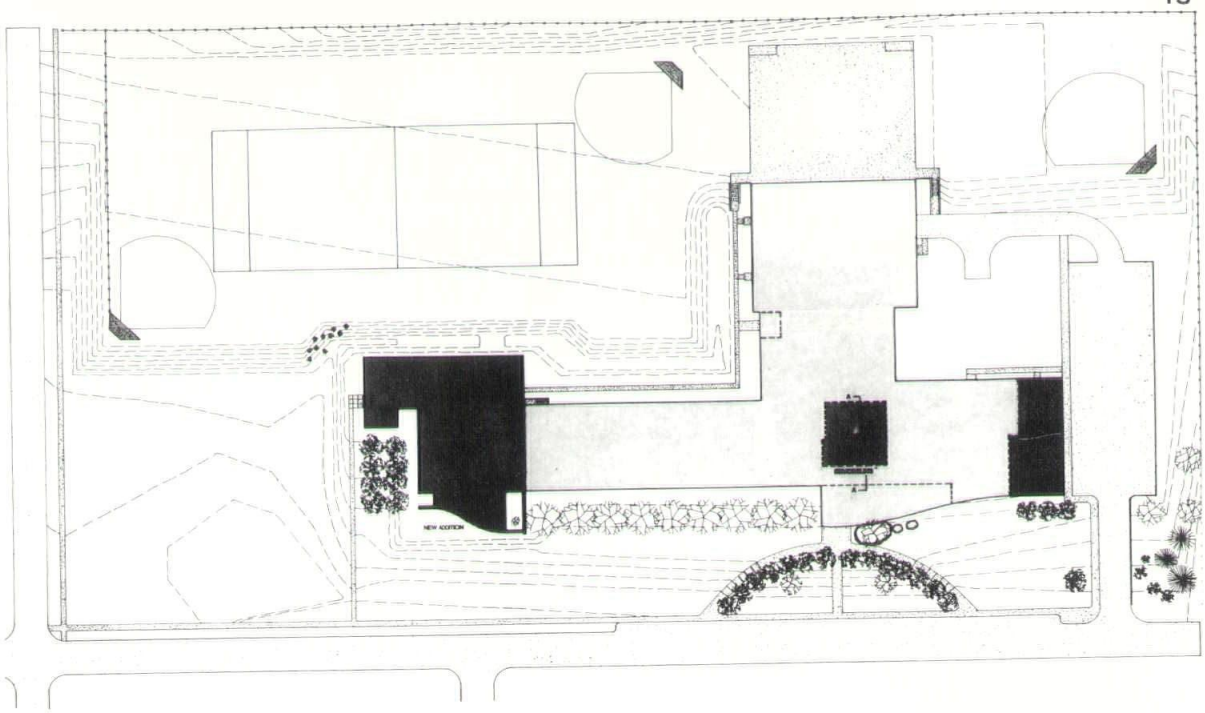
A series of objectives can be laid out from which to judge the design quality of buildings within the category at hand, more narrowly defined as small additions to existing structures. These objectives are based upon the idea of a harmonious visual texture as discussed earlier. They are as follows:

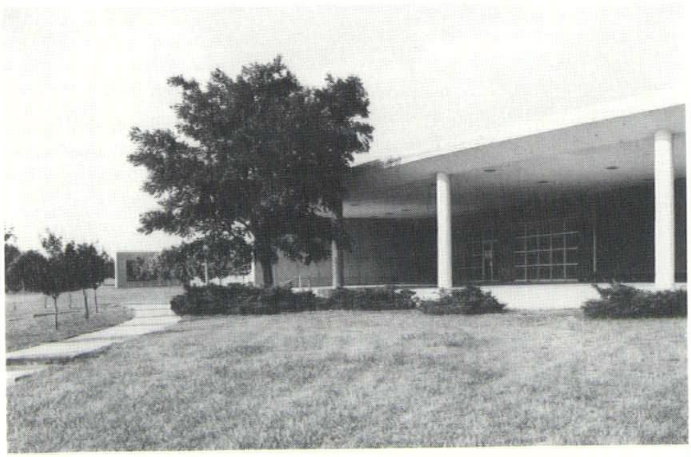
1) An overall "blending" with the existing aesthetic or style.
2) The massing elements must not overpower but should enhance the existing composition.
3) The basic composition, whether horizontal or vertical, should be continued or reinforced.
4) Any repetitious or rhythmic patterns should reflect themselves in the addition (functional considerations may dictate differently).
5) The use of materials should be sympathetic with the existing structure.

These guidelines, as the reader should note, are not intended to force the designers into compromising positions but, rather, they provide simple objectives through which he may fully exercise his creativity with an overall goal always in mind—to build upon and enhance a given visual circumstance.

Pound Junior High School is a simple two-story, brick structure built in 1963. The original building was composed of essentially rectilinear forms; the most apparent, and also the portion this review will focus attention upon, being the classroom/administration block which significantly influences the character of the front (west) facade. Toward the south end of the facade a soft, serpentine-shaped portico creates the main entry and provides an open ancillary space beneath it. Just north of this portico are classrooms, which reveal themselves on the facade by the repetitious use of a fenestration detail augmented by tan and common red brick, a pattern repeated on the opposite (east) facade.

Bahr, Vermeer & Haecker, Architects, Ltd., (Omaha and Lincoln, NE) received an award for the addition and remodeling of Pound Junior High School, Lincoln, Nebraska, in the 1981 Nebraska Society of Architects Design Competition. Jury members included Charles Gwathmey, Gwathmey Siegel and Associates Architects, New York City; William Pedersen, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, New York City and F. Thomas Schmitt, F. T. Schmitt Architects, New York City.



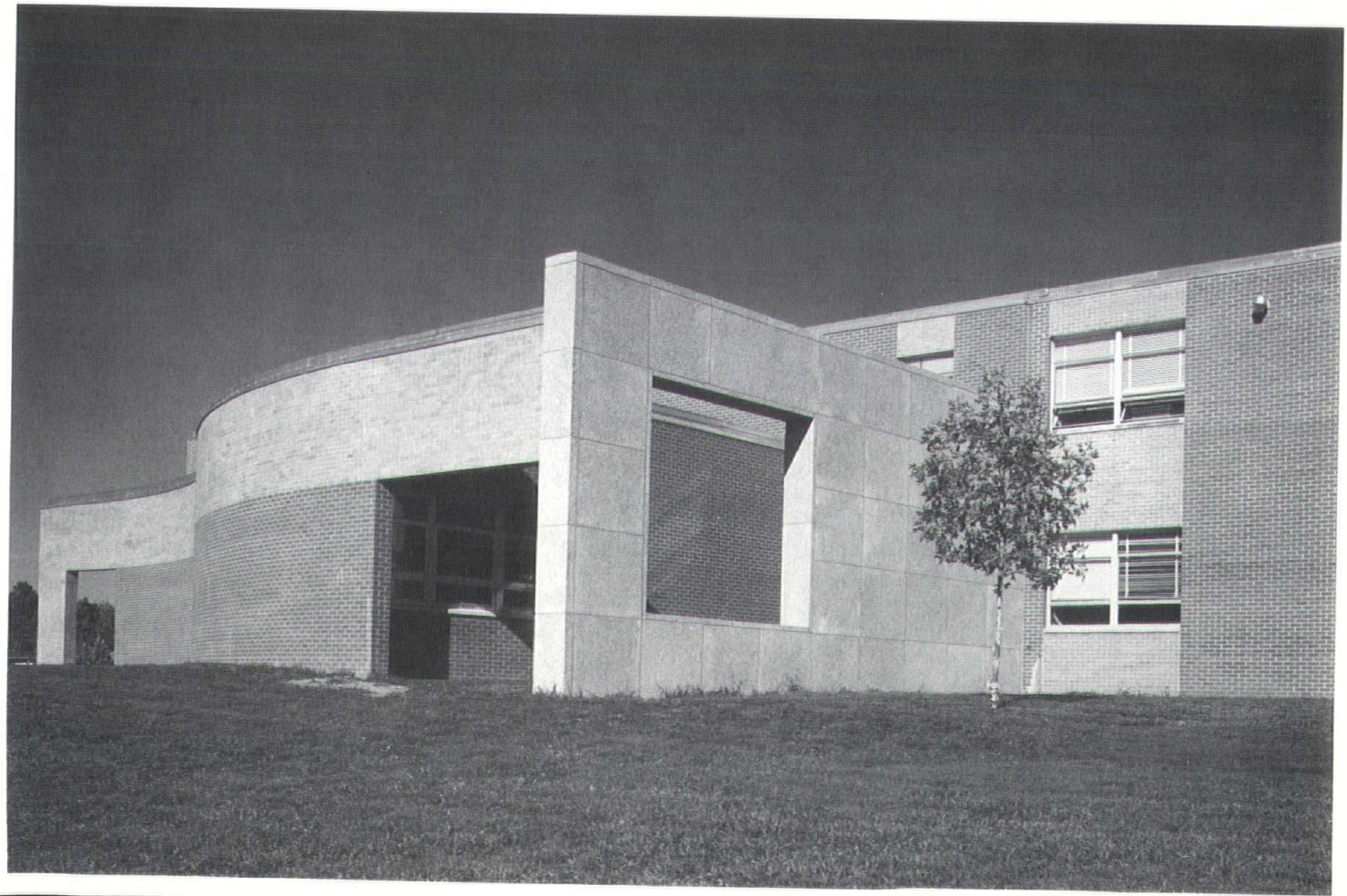


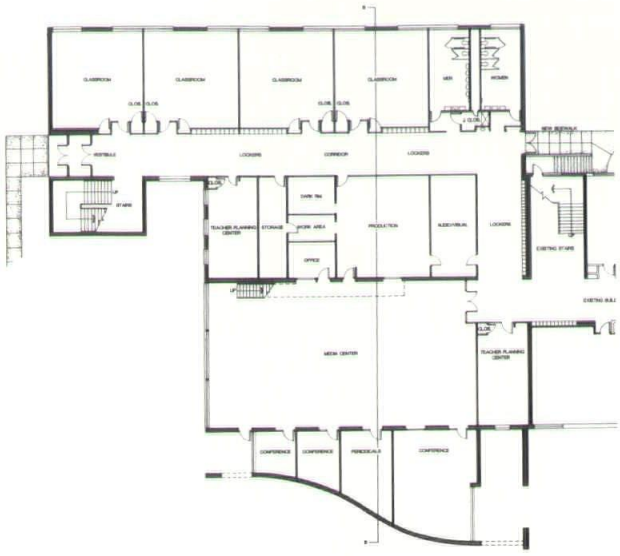
The school is located in a suburban context and has served this neighborhood with adequate facilities until recent times, when more emphasis has begun to be placed upon expanded use and more varied types of media in the education process. Around 1979 school officials came to the realization that Pound School did not have the facilities to adequately respond to this new direction in education and planning commenced on an addition. The program consisted of adding a media center, nine classrooms, and two reading labs—a small addition, but an important one from an educational standpoint. The program also called for some interior remodeling work within the entry space which will not be discussed here.

If we step back from the school, a general assessment of visual continuity between the original structure and the addition can be made. From this vantage point it can be observed that the objective was to blend the addition with the original—to enhance the visual texture of the building. In this respect, the addition to the Pound School has been successful. At a brief glimpse the school appears to be a continuous whole. The architects have acknowledged the primary visual elements of the original structure and built upon these to create a harmonious composition.

It is through manipulation of massing where the architects have most strongly exercised their creativity. Basically, they developed a rectilinear addition to an existing rectilinear composition. The addition, however, is made up of smaller elements, arranged in a manner that attempts to achieve several objectives; a continuation of the original school along an established setback, a new north elevation similar in proportion and scale to the original north face of the school, and also a sense of termination by the creation of a large nodal element at the end of the classroom wing. These objectives appear to have been successfully achieved in the design of an addition which enhances the original composition. But, unfortunately, a design flaw is to be found in the serpentine wall on the front (west facade). Its purpose is essentially to balance the serpentine form of the original entrance. Although the stone wingwall is reintroduced with a void both through it and behind it, the serpentine wall to which it is a part becomes an overpowering element in the overall composition of the school. This is due to two crucial errors: 1) the curvature of the wall is overly emphasized as compared to that of the subtle curve of the entry; and 2) more importantly, the wall is an opaque mass while the entry is almost entirely a transparent void. These contradictions seriously compromise the desired visual connections between the two serpentine forms.

The addition responds well to the strongly horizontal composition of the original school. It is an extension of a two-story element with another, smaller two-story element. The volumes thus created by the addition are essentially derived from the original school building. By manipulating these volumes, the architects have avoided a monotonous extension of the original school building and created an effective terminus for the relatively long classroom wing.





Perhaps it is in the brick patterns of the addition that the architects exhibit their most aggressive design expression. On the east facade, tan brick is banded across the entire parapet and allowed to fill in on the sides of the upper level windows. The red brick, on the other hand, continues at grade beneath the lower windows. The wide, upper level band of lighter brick turns the corners to decorate the parapet of the north and south walls of the addition. The slightly altered pattern of the brick on the east wall is a welcome deviation from the original pattern. It enhances the basic visual continuity of the composition yet subtly identifys the addition as a separate element. But use of the wide band of tan brick creates a visual problem at the meeting of the addition's south wall and the original construction. This band also creates a distraction at the north wall of the addition as it turns the corner of the stairwell. It is the solution to this problem that brings about the distraction, an overpowering "staircase" pattern of tan brick on the west wall of the stairwell.

But there are more problems created by the use of this band. It also appears in the serpentine wall on the west facade. The wall itself, as noted earlier, suffers from problems of its own, but the band of brick accentuates this flaw in the composition with a pattern of materials that does not comfortably relate to the remainder of the west elevation.

The architects quest for compatibility between old and new construction is revealed by their choosing to face the addition with materials similar to those used in the original portion of the school. Both tones of the original brick are used, as well as similar stonework and window frame details. The primary concern with regard to this approach involves the connection between old and the new. This difficult problem has been handled quite well on the east side where the addition joins the existing building at a right angle thus minimizing the visual impact of the physical connection. This, unfortunately, is not the case on the west facade, the primary visual face of the building. An awkward, flush brick joint occurs here, and although a new stone wingwall, derived from the existing facade, partially obscures it, the joint introduces an element of discontinuity which is clearly visable in an unsightly flashing detail.

Despite its shortcomings with regard to matters of detail, the Pound Junior High School Addition is an admirable example of architecture which is responsive to its visual context. More traditional motivations such as self-conscious concern for "image making" and personal expression have been surpressed in favor of a more modest approach to design stressing harmony with the environment. The end result is a noteworthy product of this design philosophy.

End Notes

[1]Brent C. Brolin, *Architecture in Context: Fitting New Buildings with Old* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1980), p. 139.

[2]Ibid.


TELEPHONE BUILDING

The Lincoln Exchange

Dan Piper

We used to know the truth
of form
of life
of meaning.
Everyone did . . .
Remember?

Each piece played a part
In completing the whole;
Interacting to make "a place"
More than just "a space"
Not just a pretty face,
The meaning went deep within.

The ornamental detail was exquisite
True quality work of art;
Blending its intricate complexity
With the fabric of the city
Yes, it was very pretty,
But the meaning went deep within.

The material was usually hard
But was manipulated in such a way;
As to create a treasure
Of visual pleasure
Which one can't begin to measure,
Against the standards of today.

The many nooks and crannies
The relief in the form;
Were stimulating and exciting
And really quite inviting
At a person's first sighting,
The meaning was still within.

A passer-by could look inside and become part
of the space
Unlike today's crass reflective glass;
Devoid of all feeling
Unaesthetically pleasing
Completely unappealing,
Where the meaning has lost its pride.

To reuse a building and capture that pride
To borrow and recall the forms;
Is a step in the right direction
To the ultimate perfection
It's the total interjection,
Of that truth that dwells within.

Now we are closer to the truth
of form
of life
of meaning.
Everyone is . . .
Don't you think so?

The Lincoln Exchange was designed by Erickson/Schulz & Associates Architects (Lincoln, NE). Located in downtown Lincoln, the bar/restaurant occupies the first floor of two renovated and interconnected nineteenth century commercial structures built in 1896 and 1914. Both buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The firm received an award for this project in the 1981 Nebraska Society of Architects Design Competition and was one of two Nebraska buildings winning recognition in the Central States Region of the American Institute of Architects 1982 Honor Awards Program. John Casbarian, Danny M. Samuels and Robert H. Timme of Taft Architects, Houston, served as jury members for the latter program.

The Lincoln Exchange

Gary Joaquin

We wonder . . . if only the walls could speak.

The hour was late. The dining rooms were empty. The bar was quiet. The pictures that adorned the walls now stared out over empty seats. The Exchange had been closed for hours now. Everyone had gone home . . . or at least almost everyone. There was still a light burning in the kitchen. Here a solitary figure could be found toiling away. He didn't appear to be very happy at all and muttered to himself while he worked.

"Cleaning the #/$& place seems to take longer every night. I don't know why I keep doing this. Oh yea, I remember . . . I need to eat."

He had been working here for almost two years now. In spite of the respect and affection that he has for the people with whom he works he sorely would like to find another job. For months he has tried during his off hours to find work, but there has always been someone better or earlier than he seeking the positions for which he has applied. During these past few nights his anger and frustration have found their release in his work. Momentarily, the motion of the mop he has been pushing distracted him from his inner turmoil. Back and forth, forth and back—the rhythm was constant, almost soothing—but then it was interrupted by the sounds of shattering crystal, glistening in the kitchen light as the pieces exploded in all directions upon striking the floor.

"What stupid $#/& left those stems out so that they could get broken. I've got to clean this up or they'll take it out of my pay. Damn it!"

Just at that moment he hurled his mop across the room where it struck the back wall with a resounding thud.

"Ouch! Hey, just who do you think you are?"

Startled and shaken the custodian who had thought that he was alone whirled about and lunged for the nearest carving knife.

"Who said that?" he demanded in a state of terror.

"I did. And just what do you think you are doing? Put that thing down!"

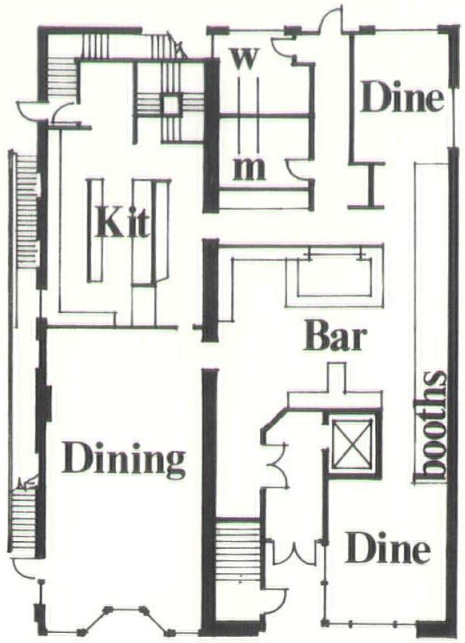
His mind raced. Yes, he had personally taken care of all of the locks. No one could have possibly gotten in. Could they?

"Who are you? Show yourself!" he demanded.

"Show myself? But I already have, silly."

Rapidly looking all about he replied, "But I don't see anything except these four walls."

"Of course you don't. There's no one here except you and me. Look around for yourself."



Frantically, the custodian searched throughout the kitchen, the lockers, the dining rooms and even within the cabinets, and all that he could conclude was . . .

"I have been working at this job too long. The pay isn't enough anymore. I'm finally starting to crack!"

"Oh, don't be ridiculous. Of course you haven't! You're just as sane as I am."

"That voice again. If I'm not crazy then why can't I find you? Who are you? Why can't I see you?"

"But you can see me. I'm all around you. I am the collective memory of the Exchange."

"Now I've heard everything. The next thing that you're going to tell me is that you're a ghost. Why me? Don't I have enough problems already?"

"You sounded like you could use some company. It can get pretty lonely for me too. I've heard so many conversations, but no one talks to me. Besides, you dented my woodwork when you threw that mop and I can't take all of that abuse without saying something."

"I'm sorry. I didn't realize . . ."

". . . that I have feelings too? Don't worry about it. Few people ever do. At least you're not as bad as that crazy lady who used to have a piano dragged up and down my marble steps. They were chipped almost beyond recognition. Still, it's very nice of you to apologize."

"Well, I didn't realize what I was doing. I was angry. I guess I still remember this place like it was when it was condemned."

"Oh, but we were never condemned."

" 'We'? Why do you say 'we'? Are there more than one of you?"

"Oh yes, there's Woodsy . . . er . . . the Woods Building next door to me. He's my Renaissance Revival cousin. He used to be the ornery one, tempting fate all the time. All around us, sterile modern buildings were being constructed during the fifties, sixties, and seventies. You know, buildings not at all like us. They didn't have any personality. Those modern architects were such disagreeable chaps then, all work and no play. Well, Woodsy over here would get so frustrated with our new neighbors that if I hadn't stopped him he would have shaken loose a few pediment stones to drop on modernists passing below. Each time it took me a while to convince him that any overt sign of decay would surely have brought the wrecking ball down on both of us. He's a good sort but he can be most difficult when he is angry. I was always hopeful that things would change and I was right. Just recently we were joined together at the lower story. It's much better for us and everyone else now-a-days."

"I don't see how it could be any better with unemployment, federal cutbacks, the energy crisis, high interest rates, world unrest . . ."

"But it is much better. It has been ever since we were joined and given facelifts. It's easier for the two of us to express ourselves. These new interiors suit my changing moods just fine. When I'm feeling kind of special and a little flamboyant I'll just listen in on the Peacock Room. It's so open and airy and people enjoy it so much. It's a touch of the Parisian street life without every having to leave home."

"Wait a minute! Why are you doing all of the talking? Doesn't Woodsy, ah . . . the Woods Building ever have anything to say?"

"But he is. I mean, we are. We are really quite inseparable. It's just that he has never heard of women's lib and the new morality. Just look at him. The dear is so solid and squat. He prefers to be the strong silent type. We get along fine but he just doesn't have the flair for conversation with others that I have so he lets me speak for the both of us. I just love to explore his spaces. They are so different from mine. They're much smaller and varied. You know what I'm talking about, the Commercial and Marketing Rooms. They always suit my serene and contemplative moods. On the other hand if I'm in the mood for a lot of activity I'll just eavesdrop at the bar. There is always something going on in there, people coming and going, talking about all manner of things. I've heard some wonderful conversations in the bar. Oh, Woodsy is so proud of that pediment that they built over the bar. Then there are seats all around which encourage people to mingle and booths for those who want more privacy."

"It sounds like you and Woodsy enjoy people very much."

"And they enjoy us. We have so many different spaces and moods. But people don't always come back to the same rooms. They're very unpredictable and it's fortunate that they have more than one type of place to experience within us. This is why we feel so sorry for many of our modern cousins. They are so anonymous. They don't have any feelings. It's also harder for many of the people who use them to express their feelings as well. They're so indifferent to people."

"A lot of what you say is true but aren't you really struck on the past?"

"No, not really, but we need the past as much as we need the present and a hopeful future. Together, Woodsy and I have seen Lincoln grow almost from its inception. The people who built us had much to do with providing newcomers, many with families, with jobs and hopes upon which to build a future. Woodsy personally knew Bertram Goodhue. We've both heard William Jennings Bryan. Oh, was that an experience! So much of what we all are is because of our past. We need to remember. We need to have things about us which are familiar. So what if we're a little cluttered, a little old-fashioned, not very clean cut? Aren't we all in

some way? Within us people are reminded of their roots which aren't very tidy, but always very personal. We all need these ties in what can today be a rootless and alienating society."

"Yes . . . yes, I know what you mean. Often I can't explain it, but when I'm working here at night I feel as if I've been here before. My memories are all around me. So much seems familiar to me without being able to locate these memories in time and place. I know that I just feel comfortable here. I guess that's why I put up with this job and keep working here."

"Then you do know what I mean. Woodsy and I have been here since the turn of the century, but we both admit that we feel much older than what we appear to be. It's a timeless feeling. Although it often seems impossible we know that we've been in other places before, but we don't know how this can possibly be. Often we know what someone in a room will say even before the words have been uttered. It's as if the past, the present, and the future have merged into a single instant, a continuum, in which there is no 'I,' no 'we,' just a blissful, far-reaching sense of union. Many people feel this at one time or another in their life. We know. We've heard many speak of it before in each of our rooms. We're very happy that this timeless quality was respected by the latest group of people who moved in and made changes. It has been a growing experience for all of us. This is why Woodsy and I are so hopeful for the future."

"You certainly are an optimist. I'm just not as positive as you are."

"And why not? What good comes from a negative outlook on life?"

"Not very much . . . I know that you're right, but I still don't understand why you even bothered to talk to me. I'm just a janitor."

"But you're more than that. You are your own unique person. Just because you mop floors doesn't make you any less special than anyone else. What we are, our feelings, our joys and sorrows, our memories and our hopes . . . they're all important, to you, to us, and to everyone else. We get ourselves into trouble when we don't believe how important everyone is, including ourselves."

"Thank you so much for sharing all of this with me. I really appreciate the time that you have taken with me."

"Oh, Woodsy and I have a lot of time."

"You've helped me begin to see that life isn't often as bad as it seems. Without this attitude the especially tough times are even harder to bear. I just wish that I didn't have this short temper. It has always made things seem worse than what they are. I just know that I'm going to lose control again and again."

"Don't worry about that. We're all human. But when you do would you please watch what you do with that mop of yours?"

"Sure . . . you can count on it."

Synecology, Synecotecture and Synecopolitan Planning: An Imperative Design Discipline

Patrick Horsbrugh

The rising realization that ecological conditions influence urban vitality coincides with the urgent need for revised concepts of urban planning, architectural design and civic seemliness.

We can no longer design for human convenience alone. The obligation for the maintenance of indigenous species, flora and fauna, must now be recognized and met by obedience to the prevailing synecological disciplines, region by region. These apparently new obligations require new academic considerations and new design concepts throughout all professional operations, planning and construction. The expansion of urban and suburban areas and the monocultural practices in farming and forestry are now so extensive as to pose an increasing peril to the synecological interactivity between differing species, threatening the extinction of some and forcing a change in the habitat of others.

It is difficult, however, to find buildings deliberately designed to afford accommodation for the benefit of other species. While the sharing of shelter with domesticated livestock is traditional in many regions, the idea of designing for synecological harmony between mankind and incidental wildlife, both fauna and flora is, seemingly, a new concept. Synecological disciplines must now provide the basis of revised design principles on a domestic and municipal scale.

The interdependence of ecological, economic, cultural and aesthetic values must now be recognized as the fundamental design commitment of the future, without which no city can fulfill its routine civic functions. These civic obligations must now include the disciplines of ecological vitality, and their consequences that follow upon any dislocation of the natural synecological complexities.

This essay, the 1981 Whittemore Lecture, was delivered by Professor Horsbrugh at the University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources and co-sponsored by the Landscape Architecture-Regional Planning Program and the College of Architecture and Urban Planning.

The decade of the 70's has witnessed what may come to be regarded as the most extraordinary period of shift in public sentiment towards a greater appreciation of the human dependence upon ecological hygiene. The significance of this relatively rapid change in social cognizance demands a similar change in design and planning responses.

This same decade has seen, also, the confirmation of the triumph of specialization over generalization and of the concentration upon detail rather than upon strategic dispositions. Such procedure is self-condemnatory, and its consequences are well illustrated by the appearance of the landscape with vast areas devoted to monocultural operations devoted to agricultural, forestry, industrial, urban and suburban uses.

Multicultural economics must be restored wherever possible, and the development of exemplary design concepts are foremost in any such revision of the humanized scene.

The novelty of this recommendation lies in the scale of disarray which now prevails. Abraham Lincoln describes our present planning dilemma very effectively in his Annual Message to Congress, December 1, 1862:

> The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save (the condition of) our country.

The planning dogmas are indeed inadequate for effective response to this necessity. A deeper comprehension of the professional planning commitments is required in the form of a new philosophy of planning. The principles of SYNECOLOGY provide a fresh and creative aspiration towards the realization of the benefits arising from the essential interdependence of differing species living in close proximity.

The prime synecological element is, naturally, the health-giving pre-

sence of vegetation. Even as this same verdure offers habitation for wildlife, so now shall the urban scene rely upon greenery for benefits in microclimatic condition, energy economy and aesthetic vitality.

From this evidence of "ecological economics" arises the design concept of SYNECOTECTURE. This combines traditional tectonics with the practical application of selected vegetation on and about the surfaces. This combination of structure and verdure produces an ecological economy which exerts an influence upon several conditions simultaneously, producing benefits for the individual building and for the urban scene in general.

The creation of structures which modify climatic conditions, and contribute to the well-being of other indigenous species, is not new. Such evidence is constant throughout history, but no architectural indentification has yet been given to such design motivation. No critical analysis has appeared to identify the validity of synecotectural design and to establish a conscious philosophy, expressed structurally, which is compatible with the human requirements.

The logical extension of synecotectural concepts to the scale of urban proportions is inevitable and may be identified by the practice of SYNECOPOLITAN PLANNING. The metropolis thereby may be endowed with those graces so eloquently expressed by the advocates of suburbanization, Ebanezer Howard (1850-1928) almost a century ago, and epitomized by the Garden City Movement and by The City Beautiful idealists.

A Personal Endeavor

I commend these concepts of synecotectural design and synecopolitan planning as a result of a personal attempt to demonstrate their merits in London in 1951 in response to the post-war social and economic urban urgencies. These concepts were offered in the form of experimental proposals for the largest multi-purpose accommodation yet made in Europe, to accommodate a high density community of 8,000 residents, with a supplementary working population of some 16,000, to be constructed over the 20 acre freightyards of the Great Western terminus, and known as "High Paddington" (Sergei Kadleigh and Patrick Horsbrugh, Architects).

The national economic imperatives, the social distress and especially the proven inventive prowess emerging from the war-strained economy of Britain provided exceptional opportunities for the reassessment of conventional architectural standards and practices. The prevailing post-war restraints imposed very different design obligations upon the planner. The urban context required stringent reassessment of materials and values, and justified an attempt to demonstrate a synecotectural planning formula. The newly established 1947 Planning Act, with its limitations of zoning, on structural height and upon population density, was deliberately defied.

The "High Paddington" composition responded to the obvious need for structural and social concentration, in preference to the territorial dispersals established by the 1946 New Towns Act, and its implementation throughout the succeeding decades. The principles of synecological design, including the systematic provision of opportunities for person-plant proximities were expressed in a synecotectural composition, coordinating transportation, commercial and domestic accommodation (superimposed) with public, community and private gardens and with areas of isolated vegetation large enough to encourage self-sustaining ecological communities in entirely artificial conditions beginning some 100 feet above the streets.

In particular, recognition was given to the unrequited psychological need for the urban inhabitant to maintain the presence of plants (as symbolized by the ubiquitous potted fern or vased flower).

Those responsible for post-war urban housing and town planning in Europe, the U.S. and in the major capitals of the world, have been unaware, it seems, of this most vital phyto-psychotherapeutic necessity. They have failed to meet this particular design challenge whereby the urban inhabitant may be sustained by the vivacity of plants in growth.

The obvious design theme exemplified by the interdependence of social necessities and ecological vitalities remains unrecognized. The environic sterility of the Pruitt Igoe community in Saint Louis may be sited as evidence of the consequences if synecotectural design concepts are not applied.

Urban Design Sterility

The urban malaise of design sterility is now so universal (with the generally disparaging comparisons between modern endeavors and historic achievements) that confidence in professional competence and cultural values is being eroded. A new and stimulating design commitment is urgently needed wherewith to rekindle professional self-respect simultaneously with social self-esteem.

Urban self-confidence requires a new design objective from which to regain these positive civic qualities traditionally recognized as civilization. The deliberate revision of principles of physical planning by adapting ecological disciplines in design formula may become, perhaps, the most effective way to restore that sense and seemliness to the urban scene, and confidence in the urban economy.

The provision of psychological relief in the urban fabric, in the form of water and verdure must be recognized as the fundamental environic design obligation of our time.

This urban planning deficiency may be summarized by three symbolic design imperatives of which every citizen is in need:

1) The sight of the horizon (in the form of high structures); the liberation of spirit by means of visual range, offering the sense of escape by contrasting the urban enclosures with the open yonder.
2) The privilege of privacy (in the form of isolation); the ability to achieve that ulitimate personal luxury, as and when required, to withstand the anxieties of routine urban life.
3) The presence of foliage (in appreciation of phyto-psychotherapy) confirming human well-being by means of natural vitality, while stimulating the arts of cultivation and confidence in the cultivator, especially if handicapped.

Any review of varied natural landscapes, of humanized landscapes and of the history of deliberate landscape design will confirm the value of these three essential intellectual requirements, VISUAL CONTRAST, PERSONAL PRIVACY, and the comforting effects of the ECOLOGICAL PRESENCE.

No substantial improvement may be expected in quality of urban habitation unless and until buildings are designed with the capacity to sustain vegetation, in synecologically sufficient quantity, in seasonal continuity, and in variety, according to regional characteristics.

The resulting psychological influence of vegetation and natural vitality upon the population is perhaps, the most important factor of urban design in that it embodies, in some measure, the necessities of visual contrast, personal privacy and confidence by reason of the evident ecological well-being. The vital aesthetic of healthy vegetation should be recognized as the symbol of social hygiene.

It is time that urban designers recognized the therapeutic values of verdure and make provision for vegetational vitality. The condition of urban vegetation should be regarded as the barometer of human well-being. We can no longer afford to build for human convenience alone. Henceforward, the obligations of the planner must include accommodation for other species upon whose vivacity all else depends.

Definitions

It must be recognized, at once, that the subjects of SYNECOTECTURE and SYNECOPOLITAN PLANNING are hindered by the limitations of current design terminology.

As ecosystematic conditions become recognized as essential ingredients in building design and city planning, the need for lucid terms to describe the complicated circumstances is obvious.

The long recognized scientific particularity of SYNECOLOGY, the science and the study of the ecology of plant and animal communities and their interdependence, is very relevant to the practice of planning. The

application of this principle of interdependence between different communities to tectonic design requires due identification. The term SYNECOTECTURE may be used to determine the special form of buildings which accommodate and sustain selected vegetation, chosen for the benefit they may provide, both for the inhabitants and for the ecological community, for microclimatic, ecological, psychological and aesthetic reasons.

Structural investments must now respond to ecological design disciplines beyond the fulfillment of the immediate economic necessities.

In consequence, the practice of Synecotecture must be recognized as distinctive from conventional Architecuture. New terms with which to develop an extended structural design technology will also be required. Such terms must be precise enough to satisfy scientific sensitivity as this becomes ever more refined. Such terms must gain, also, legal acceptance and comprehension by the public.

The concept of SYNECOTECTURE requires the confirmation of historic validity, for contemporary synecotectural evidence is relatively rare.

The practical application of SYNECOTECTURE, however, is of great antiquity. The earliest example of synecosystematic design on an urban scale is, perhaps, that of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

This extraordinary structural creation (attributed to the legendary Queen Semiramis, c800 B.C., rather than to King Nebuchadrezzer, 605-562 B.C.) was not, it seems, unique. The remains of another structure of the same period has been discovered near Shiraz, and was designed, planted and cultivated in a form comparable to the renowned Hanging Gardens.

The Semiramis Gardens measured some 402 meters square, and arose in a series of rectangular terraces forming a truncated pyramid. Archaeologial research suggests that each terrace was supported by arcades which defined galleries and chambers above which trees and shrubs were planted in soil from the Euphrates flood-plain. The luxuriant growth concealed the edifice, giving the impression of a natural verdant hill. The damp-proofed spandrills of the arches and the supporting hollow columns provided sufficent depth of soil and effective drainage wherewith to sustain trees of mature size.

"The Elevated Gardens of Babylon", symbolizes the three fundamental urban design "values", previously identified. First, the sight of the horizon, in that the hill-like form provided the height necessary for emotional release arising from the high-density confinement of a fortified city; second, the arcaded recesses offered privacy in spatial terms, refreshed by the movement of air in response to temperature differentials and humidified by the transpiration of the vegetation; and third, the plantations afforded that essential aesthetic vitality so necessary for the relief from the stress from the relatively high population densities within the palace compounds.

Such conditions of person-plant proximities, validated by thermal, economic and aesthetic benefits, offer an evermore welcome contrast to the bewildering "wall-to-wall" aridity that charaterizes the modern mechanized city.

This as yet unproven need for the individual to be associated with some natural vitality, beyond social interaction, deserves immediate investigation.

The character of urban ecosystems may be compared with those of forest, grassland and marshy biomes. As the ecological sciences expand, the inclusion of urban ecosystems becomes necessary even as the studies of specialized agricultural ecosystems have evolved. The accepted prospect of ecological stability being based upon variety of species applies, surely, to the urban scene, and should be recognized as a practical planning obligation to maintain as broad a variety of species as the region may support.

The BIOLOGICAL CONTEXT of cities is emphasized by the unrelenting conflict between the regenerative ecological forces and the exacting maintenance upon which sophisticated society now depends.

The SOCIAL CONTEXT of cities is revealed by the archaeological evidence of the continuous competition between the human endeavors and the natural forces that prevail. The entire history of the urban phenomenon needs to be reassessed in recognition of the city as a viable organism. The city exhibits all the organic features, of birth, growth, maturity and decay, and even in death it is indivisible from, and utterly dependent upon, the ecological systems on which it feeds, metaphysically and culturally.

The EMOTIONAL CONTEXT of synecopolitan design must also be established. Throughout history, the city has been regarded as representing the climax of cultural aspirations. It is only recently that the achievements of mass-production of building components is recognized as the cause of widespread emotional revulsion from the repetative, anonymous and aesthetically bleak accommodation. Reaction to this monotony which circumscribes home, habitation and setting for the daily routine erupts in ever increasing vandalism for which the use of vegetation may prove to be an effective antidote.

The introduction of an ecological discipline into the urban design process may help to redeem the impersonal effects of mass, of numbers, of components, of form, and of the monotonous effects of the so recent "international" style in architecture, and the absurdities in shape and contrivance of the prevailing style, "ubiquitous grim"!

The ENVIRONIC CONTEXT of physical condition is degraded, inevitably, by the epidemic population growth. The competitive pressures upon all habitable and workable landscape, and upon the urban fabric, require reassessments respecting both natural erosions and human abrasions. The tolerance of natural materials represents the fundamental planning restraint. It forms the basis of environic quality, and determines the conditions which now characterize the urban scene.

The biological, social, emotional and environic contexts, just described, combine to justify the extention of synecotectural design principles to the metropolitan scale and its definition by the term of SYNECOPOLITAN PLANNING.

The Concept of Unity

While ancient cities contained little ecological material, their dimensions were strictly limited by the distribution of water and by the expenditure of human energies that maintained them. In consequence, their sustaining landscapes dominated the urban scene, visually no less than economically. The emergence of megalopolis, with its inescapable psychological effects of isolation and hysteria upon the inhabitants, provides an ever more insistent obligation to incorporate ecological oases within the urban fabric wherewith to compensate for the bleak and inanimate fabric.

The social restlessness within the city, arising from the almost total lack of ecological seemliness, is causing the now desperate reach for the littoral resorts. The suburban retreats are no longer enough.

Synecological researches, if applied to the urban scene, can assist in the reappraisal of the art of city planning more significantly than any other form of analysis, in that it summarizes hygienic restraints, biological consequences and aesthetic qualities.

Such researches would emphasize, also, the holistic totality governing the well-being of all species of the region.

The application of practical synecopolitan design concepts, upon metropolitan scale, may be seen as an ENVIROCULTURAL achievement, where microclimatic, energesic, synergetic and aesthetic effects are modified in ways beneficial to humanity and to ecological species alike.

Enviroculture

While it has become fashionable to propound the essential unity and intereffectiveness of the global conditions, and to plead for the expansion of the arts of cultivation to encompass the entire human environment, there is, again, no term to convey that broader concept of ENVIROCULTURE.

The appreciation of biospherical unity, expressed by the synecological interaction between species, reconfirms the value of including the medical sciences in the process and practice of urban design. Enviroculture represents a "state of health" in both the social and the ecological realms, and represents the supreme environic design obligation implying both hygienic and ethical standards of human behavior.

Such a concept may be best described as ENVIRONOLOGY, the science and study of environmental condition necessary for the maintenance of life (human benefit in particular), while ENVIRONOGRAPHY, the physical features of the environment, determines the place, the form, the materials and the characteristics within which any habitation, natural or designed, may occur.

It is within this context of environmental condition, environology, that the environography of urban design requires to be re-examined, restated and re-inspired in terms of individual synecotectural structures and collective synecotectural effects.

International Synecological Design Exchange

The practice of synecotectural ideals is not new for such concepts have been appreciated and fulfilled, at least in part, during the past century. They have received expression in a variety of structural and urban design experiments ranging from Joseph Paxton's great conservatories to the modest domestic greenhouses and from the creation of civic parks provided by industrial philanthropists like Titus Salt (Saltair) and Andrew Carnegie (Dunfermline) to Frederick Olmstead's spectacular Central Park of New York City, culminating with the eight block clearance, in downtown Omaha, constituting the largest urban park creation since Central Park was opened.

Each endeavor implied the theory of synecopolitan planning, providing the inhabitants with verdure and refreshment, and it is strange that, in spite of the successes achieved, no general design dogma has arisen which acknowledges the imperative obligations of person-plant proximities, of synecotectural or synecopolitan planning.

This professional deficiency is the more strange when considered in the context of stimulating evidence provided by the suburban planning concepts exchanged by men of keen urban perception on both sides of the Atlantic, since stenographer Ebanezer Howard's return to London from Chicago in 1876.

The urban idealization, in the form of sub-urbanity, was developed between Great Britain and North America by means of a succession of mutually influential demonstrations. These continuing expressions of synecopolitan design, are encouraging the ex-urban movement of the wealthy. The resulting social revolt against the degradation of the city caused by rampant industrialization received a new justification from the comfort to be derived from verdure.

This transatlantic "conversation" in urban design, beginning with Ebanezer Howard's theories on the "Garden City," whose ideals were formalized in 1899 by the founding of the Garden City Association and perhaps concluded with the fulfillment of the British New Towns Act of 1946, now appears as a 50-year long urban design dialogue of immense social significance. This exchange should now be reviewed and be perceived as a fundamental statement of practical synecopolitan planning policy.

The concept predated Howard, of course, and began perhaps with the master gardner Joseph Paxton (1808-1865) and was sustained by the Doyen of American Landscape Architecture, Frederick Law Olmstead, (1822-1923). He was inspired by visits to the great private demesnes of England, and designed many acres of public park within the expanding American cities, confirming beyond all doubt (though without establishing proof), the psychological need of the citizen for verdure and exposed water in compensation for the effects of urban confinement.

Ebanezer Howard (1850-1928) was exposed to the influence of horizon-wide Nebraska, before experiencing the vitality of expanding Chicago, and upon returning to London he found the confinement of the seething metropolis intolerable. As a result of his Letchworth Garden City (1904) and Welwyn Garden City (1924) investments, the American convention

of building houses isolated within their plots has become the "universal suburban ideal."

The "Garden City" formula demonstration in England, encouraged distinctive professional identity, and in 1915, the Town Planning Institute was formed (receiving Royal Charter in 1963). The emergence of the American Institute of Planners followed in 1917 (now the American Planning Association, 1978). It should be emphasized that both these professional institutions arose amid the enthusiasm for the city recreated in greenery, where the authority of ecological discipline was accepted as a planning restraint even though the synecological principles were never stated as a distinctive design formula.

Meanwhile, biologist, Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) had become interested in the urban conditions of India, and emerged as the first planner in the professional sense of today. As a biologist he perceived similarities of development in the history of cities which suggested that our comprehension of the urban vitality would be improved if the inanimate materials were to be regarded as animate. He established the idea of regarding the urban fabric as an organic entity. Though the concept of synecological discipline as a planning imperative was implied it was never formalized. Geddes encouraged the transatlantic dialogue between the "Garden City"/"City Beautiful" idealists and attended the development meeting of the first American garden city venture, Radburn, New Jersey, in 1923, and fostered the influence of the Regional Planning Association in New York.

The CITY BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT in the U.S. of the 1920's stimulated interest in synecopolitan planning which received expression in the familiar "greenbelt" cities designed by synecotects Albert Meyer, Clarence Stein and others. Their urban-green achievements are recognized in turn, as influences upon the British post-war "new town" design policies which determined that the suburban verdure should become the essential ingredient of future urbanization. On the North American continent, again, post-war community entrepreneurs repeated this continuing synecological design formula of "greenspace" with the renowned examples of Don Mills, Ontario; Reston, Virginia; Columbia, Maryland and perhaps Johnathan, Minnesota and Davis, California, may be included in this influential list of recent American synecopolitan design endeavors in the continuing transatlantic urban planning design dialogue.

Synecological Disciplines as Design Criteria

Contemporary real-estate investments confirm that the retreat from the city continues, notwithstanding signs of increasing inner-city habitation. This popular movement is encouraged by the conviction that the unspecified "value" of verdure is vital to human well-being, yet these obvious human cravings for ecological associations have never been clearly identified or scientifically analyzed, in respect to mood, motivation, and material. This fundamental necessity for the jaded citizen to be refreshed by verdant rejuvenation has now become the greatest social urgency that confronts the planning profession. It is time that serious synecological research be undertaken as an architectural and planning educational imperative. Any institution which establishes a center for synecotectural design and synecopolitan planning research will ensure due recognition for pioneering a program of vital energy, economic, ecological, social and aesthetic significance.

Synecopolitan appreciation represents the logical extension of the ideals of the Garden City Association and of the City Beautiful Movement, now confirmed by the New Town formulae, ranging from post-war new towns to Chandigarh and Brasilia, from Tapiola to Davis. The concept of SYNECOPOLIS symbolizes and synthesizes that persistant human urge for contrast of conditions, inside/outside, city/country, animate/inanimate, labor/leisure, confinement and release, enclosure and exposure.

Synecological disciplines provide the exacting design criteria for which all the planning professions are searching. Architects, civil engineers, planners (regional and urban), agriculturalists, foresters, wilderness protectors, littoral planners and landscape architects have ignored this fundamental authority. If this authority of synecological discipline is dismissed the elemental forces combine in retaliation, and heavy is the hand of natural retribution.

Meanwhile, defense against such revenge by means of improved synecological appreciation is greatly enhanced by evidence arising from emerging photogrammetric and thermogrammetric interpretation skills, and from the assessment of remote-sensing data. It is upon these new facilities of constant, consistent, and comparative measurement that changing ecological influences can be perceived, analyzed and compensations made for the benefit of urban thermography and microclimates. The physical planning process can now proceed in response to scientific evidence never before revealed, while synecological disciplines provide the design authority by which such evidence can be tuned to practical use.

Urban ecosystem research involves the thermographic response of all external surfaces, pavements, roofs and walls, and includes interiors, where plant hygiene confirms that accommodation is or is not fit for human habitation. The practice of SYNECOTECTURE determines the use of vegetation on and about any structure, and provides the essential professional unity between conventional architecture and landscape architecture in response to that ultimate economy—energy and energy-conversion by natural means. Again, there is nothing new in such a concept of using plants as part of any structural composition. Every building, new or historic, denies the processes of photosynthetic energy-conversion previously transformed on the site. This sacrifice of energy conversion is not necessary for the walls and roofs can be designed to support vegetation selected to compensate for the loss of original verdant ground cover.

The practice of SYNECOPOLITAN PLANNING confirms this synecotectural design principle upon a larger urban scale. The use of vegetation as part of an energy policy for reducing thermal extremes is obvious. Summer heat, augmented by hard and reflective surfaces, agrivates the urban microclimate to the detriment of human comfort and ecological benefit alike.

Vegetation is the most economic means of modifying both urban and domestic thermodynamics with resulting energy economy. Vegetation provides, simultaneously, that sense of well-being due to the evidence of vitality, and inspires confidence in the urban future because of the aesthetic qualities arising from healthy verdure.

Urban Forestry

The implementation of SYNECOLOGICAL DESIGN principles exceeds structural applications, and includes the cultivation of vegetation normally not considered in the urban context. The practice of URBAN FORESTRY, in its entirety, where individual trees in the streets, the parks, the school yards, the college campuses and in the suburban lots are regarded as a consistent ecosystem, with its particular wildlife minutiae, in natural synecological complexity. Such rarities as urban raptores (Toronto) and urban entomology (Pittsburgh) are to be expected, and welcomed, as part of the metropolitan scene, and to be sustained in this unaccustomed setting in compensation for the increasing monocultural practices in agriculture.

Urban Agriculture

The practice of planned SYNECOLOGY embraces, also, the routine of URBAN AGRICULTURE on whatever scale the physical form of the fabric and the regional characteristics will permit.

The urgent agricultural lessons of war-time Britain, have been forgotten. The contributions made by back-gardens and allotment-parks to food production and the national diet made the difference between bare sufficiency and wide-spread starvation. Yet this experience is over-looked in urban planning procedures, where it is blithely assumed that food supplies will always be forthcoming.

Most important, however, are the therapeutic values to be gained from vegetation in general, and in practical benefits resulting from phyto-psychotherapy, from horti-psychotherapy and from dendro-psychotherapy by the disabled, the disadvantaged, the retarded and others who may find profitable employment in the cultivation of anything in any location.

Urban Wilderness

Further, the vital influence of areas of URBAN WILDERNESS upon the environment must be recognized as essential and included as wildlife sanctuaries in any coordinated urban ecosystematic planning.

This involves the most careful and conscientious selection and management of wilderness, and such practice represents the virtual reversal of the current sense of real-estate values where the rejected remnants of marsh, lakeshore, municipal dumps, industrial wastelands and steep woodland sites are realized as having vital synecological significance.

This reversal in urban real-estate economics is already in evidence where original marshlands are being traced in order to flood them again in an attempt to re-establish their fundamental synecological influence. No serious policy of urban ecology can ignore the lessons of protected wilderness and acres, long neglected, which have been rejuvinated by natural ecological processes. This issue of urban wilderness includes, of course, the hideous dilemma of toxics, the dumping of refuse and that attitude of mind which persists in regarding the landscape as capable of absorbing perpetual befoulment.

The prospect of URBAN WILDERNESS includes the entire operation of landscape rejuvination, landscape re-creation and even land creation by means of expansion into the shallows, at whatever the cost.

Urban Eco-Empathy

The individual capacity for URBAN ECO-EMPATHY is a factor requiring recognition and test amid the prevailing atmosphere of no confidence in the urban future. Some practical action is urgent for the restoration of urban self-esteem, and the concept of URBAN ECO-EMPATHY, the projection of personality (into that of the municipality) for the better understanding of its condition, may represent the best means by which affection for the city may be aroused. The application of vegetation to the urban scene, from the private potted plant to the crowded public park, has undoubted social benefits. The experiences of horticulturist Charles Lewis of the Morton Arboretum, expressed in his 1979 B. Y. Morrison Lecture, presented at the American Planning Association's Annual Meeting, under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, attest to the near miraculous improvement in personal aspiration, social mood and civic pride in such cities as Philadelphia, New York and Chicago. Urban eco-empathy is unhindered by ethnic differences, by economic stratification or by environic conditions. It establishes ecological and social urgencies as indivisible.

The reality of eco-empathy may be tested in schools, in hospitals, in institutions for the aged, the handicapped and the disadvantaged, and even in penitentiaries.

Some indication of the practical strength of this ill-defined desire for personal and collective association with greenery may be gained from an example of public policy in the crowded island-city of Singapore. There, municipal taxes are reduced if any householder maintains a garden that is visible to others. In Singapore, it seems, vegetation is regarded as a factor of such social benefit that a substantial incentive is given to gain private participation in the beautification of the city by means of vegetation.

Synecological Design Applications

The practical application of synecological design principles may appear to be excessively costly, but such investments must be measured against the intangibles of social stability based upon eco-contentment, and assessed, also, against the rapid degradation of the urban fabric due to increasing vandalism.

In practical terms, little financial outlay is required to cover gaunt walls with indigenous creepers. The aesthetic, thermal, noise and maintenance benefits from such actions are obvious. The systematic grassing of flat or near flat roofs will be shown to achieve a noticeable microclimate change, and a reduction of dust and particulates in the air.

The additional structural strengthening required to support the soil cover may be balanced by economies in heating and cooling achieved from earth and vegetational insulation, and by a reduction in maintenance costs due to expansion and contraction of roofing materials in response to exposure to constantly varying temperatures. The outlook from high-rise accommodation is enhanced if roofs are covered with grass, wild or cultivated, or by water, and become the undisturbed habitat of wildlife in its regional variety.

Henceforward, urban habitation must offer more than mere shelter and security. A sense of vitality over and beyond the human purpose must be present. The increasing artificiality of the environment has resulted in spiritual disillusionment, requiring a new urban design that offers vitality rather than stylistic symbolism. Design inspiration should arise from the demonstrable vivacity of synecological responses to the human requirement. Such response will convince the citizen of the significance of cosmic energies, modified by ecological influences, upon which human survival depends.

The Culture of Cities

If the "culture of cities" represents civilization, that ultimate human achievement, its healthy future can be maintained only by envirocultural pursuits—the husbandry of the entire environment—indivisible in material, in place and in continuity.

Design for simultaneous human and ecological benefit acknowledges that the condition of the plant provides an invincible yet gentle discipline upon the deportment of the inhabitant. This all-pervasive authority of care, and care returned, may be likened to use of a canary for the safety of workers in the mines. The condition of the bird reveals the state of the environment and the peril of the miner. Similarly, the vitality of the urban verdure reveals the vivacity of the city.

Perhaps the words of the Hindu Philosopher-Poet, Sir Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) may serve to summarize this verdant stewardship that is so urgently required for the refreshment of the human habitation:

> Death can continue to dwell in the same sepulcher; life must seek a new dwelling place. Life is a creative idea—it must increasingly find expression in changing form.

But it it not possible, now, to "seek a new dwelling place." Unless the NASA program for space colonization is to be revived, the existing urban sepulchers must be transformed.

The CONCEPTS OF SYNECOTECTURE AND SYNECOPOLITANIA are offered, therefore, as an expression of that "changing form" wherewith to restore confidence in urban place and purpose. The employment of vegetation is suggested, therefore, as the fundamental premise for revisions in design, architectural, engineering, landscape and urban planning.

In summary, it may be sufficient to declare that the Environic Decade of the 70's represents the Great Divide between historic human avarice and impending natural retribution. Nevermore shall we have the chance of choice between planning for immediate profit and ultimate benefit.

We are overwhelmed by the compounded effects of our imprudence. Henceforward, all our endeavours are committed to the protection of environic quality rather than to the promotion of economic pursuits. Indeed, environics is economics correctly spelt, for it embodies the cause and effect of life, natural and human.

All who are professionally preoccupied with the practical use of the surface and materials of the earth are, by force of circumstances, "survivalists" who bear the responsibility, first, for the fitness of environmental conditions, and second, for the human accommodation, in that order.

Transcendentalism and Organic Architecture

Dale Gibbs

I have been thinking for some time about a suitable theme for these lectures and have decided to risk a departure. I will not be showing works from the "Top 40", the New York Five or the Chicago Seven except for one or two slides which are particularly germane to the issues. I would like to present three ideas which are important in the development of American architecture: Transcendentalism and Organic Architecture, Pragmatism and the Modern Movement, and The Architecture of Pop Culture. We begin with Transcendentalism, the most illusive, and end with Pop Culture which you may find more entertaining but equally mysterious.

> Society is a wave; it rises, falls and passes, but the waters on which it was formed remain.
>
> Emerson

The colonists who fled Europe in the seventeenth century left the wreckage of a medieval culture. It was a culture which, since the fifteenth century, had steadily been under attack by the forces of the enlightenment. In Europe the disintegration of familiar structures—the church, the guild, the monarchy—were followed by desperate attempts to recapture the spirit of medieval culture. The European intellectuals turned to ancient sources of classicism, ancient Christianity and mysticism in their attempts to give existence some coherence and wholeness. It was a disintegrated and searching world which the Pilgrims left behind, its medieval structure creaking under this attachment to the past, unable to adapt itself to the emerging times.

These looks at the past, instead of providing some fundamental guidance, produced mere surface manifestations or worse, incomprehensible mysticism. The single idea from this European quest which was to follow the colonists to America to emerge later in its thinking and in its architecture was the "return to nature" of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It was not that the idea of return to nature was eminently suitable but that it was almost the only viable concept left after the disintegration of church, state and commerce.

In nature there was also an attribute so universal and omnipresent that it avoided the difficulties of a prejudiced and poisoning relation to the past. The idea of nature was suitably neutral in an era which faced the inevitable putting together of a society on the shambles of a medieval frame. Those people who came to America had to choose between the wreckage of an old culture but a complete one, and a new situation which was, in fact, more abstract, external and single-minded.

The culture which the American colonists established was very much based on the past, but it leaned from the very first on the experiences around it. In architecture as in politics, colonial America traded heavily on the past. Its architecture was, for the most part, based on the medieval English models it had known. Even the supposed adaptation of the New England house to the demands of a new society has been discounted by Anthony Garvin's research, which shows them to have emerged, not by cultural evolution, but completely formed on an English pattern.

The architecture of New England, simple and straightforward, echoed not only the material limitations of the new land, but the puritan strictures

This essay is based on one of three lectures given by Professor Gibbs as the exchange professor at the College of Technology, Dublin, Ireland, in October, 1982.

against extravagance and indulgence. This severity of the Protestant ethic which had created the spare and forbidding stone tenements of England and Scotland, expressed itself with more grace in the simple buildings of New England. But for all of our present day admiration of these forms, they were not original except that they represented in architecture the pious and strict views of the New England traditionalists. This spare architecture reflected the upright position and the too tidy moral housekeeping of the New England of Jonathan Edwards.

The best of the American architects of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries worked in a simple Roman classic style. The works of Upjohn, Latrobe and Jefferson did not make great claims to either grandeur or to the personification of the social and political invention which characterized the founding of this country. Despite the Jeffersonian ideal of the potentials in democracy and his own very great influence on the arts, we tended to repeat the European models rather than invent new ones.

It is somehow supremely ironic that the basic tenant of democracy—freedom of opportunity—should in itself have mitigated against the development of an intrinsically American architecture. But a nation which was founded on the notion of freedom of the spirit and body made itself, by those very freedoms, vulnerable to the pursuit of self-interest. The promises and possibilities held forth by this new freedom, to establish a coherent, organic cultural entity, were dissipated in the pursuit of materialism. Fed by the eighteenth century dominance of status, money, and political rights, America turned to industrialization and exploration. Man's measure of worth became not eternity but minutes.

America never really turned back this tide of materialism, for industrialization became the master of all, even the arts. In the comfort and affluence of the last half of the nineteenth century, industrialization, with its resulting regimentation and crudeness, had so dulled our senses that we could no longer respond to sensible and impassioned voices of humanism. The stress of this transformation drove some into the life of the religious recluse and others into idealized utopias.

The Gold Rush of 1848 is symbolic of the triumph of the materialistic spirit and it marked the culmination of the pioneering spirit, a spirit so devoted to fulfilling the extraneous necessities that it never fulfilled itself. The bleakness and spareness of the pioneer life, hard working and unfrivolous, separated from its historical cultural base and unable to establish a new cultural base of its own, led finally to a triumph of pragmatic materialsim. Its suppression of joy, ritual and esthetics manifested itself in all sorts of prohibitions. These prohibitions in turn provoked their tribute in later excesses in social mores, politics and in the arts.

It is perhaps not so strange that the pioneer, subjected to the cruelties of nature, and dependent upon it for his entire livelihood, saw it more as foe than as partner. It remained for the eastern intellecturals, inspired by the eighteenth century European romantics, to find in a more benevolent nature the basis for a philosophical and spiritual renaissance. Ignited by the writings of Coleridge & Carlyle, and nurtured by the intellectual Unitarianism of New England, it attempted to achieve a spiritual nakedness from which to build an American culture, dedicated to the inviolable integrity of the human mind. Their vision of man was of a changing, developing and creative nature, trusting his own thoughts rather than absorbing and then reusing the thoughts of others. Emerson was its prophet, Thoreau its practitioner, and Whitman its poetic exponent. Through Whitman, to whom both Sullivan and Wright proclaimed a spiritual debt, it found a physical manifestation in the architecture of the American Midwest. How these men interpreted the transcendental phi-

marked the architecutre of Sullivan and Wright and which finally alienated it from industrial society.

Emerson thought of this "single spirit" to which man must give himself as instinct or intuition, a mysterious something in man answering to spirit in nature. In brief, mind in man answers to matter in nature because spirit permeates both—that the axioms of physics translate the laws of ethics because, in both, mind is married to matter. It was in this glorification of consciousness and will that Sullivan and Wright found the ground of truth in architecture. Wright and Sullivan accepted the idea of consciousness or "being" in the acting, moving, alive sense of the Hebrews of the Old Testament rather than the static ordered, objective classic sense. They seemed to think always of the "person" in architecture rather than the object as architecture, and it is this idea of architecture as exemplifying man's spiritual consciousness of an organic ethic which ties them to transcendentalism.

Both Sullivan and Wright seem to have absorbed this idea of "ethic" from Emerson's writings on nature. He believed that there is an organic law at work in the universe which orders and unifies all things and that to abort the functioning of this law is to be "unethical." This conviction that their conception of architecture was above their own individuality, that it was "ethically" what should be done, clearly stems from Emerson's idea of ethical beauty. In an age which witnessed the worst kind of individualistic license, this viewpoint was often merely seen as a kind of messianic justification for the pursuit of their own personal whims. It is this broadly based and impersonal aspect of their conceptions, however, which, in the final analysis, seems timeless. It would seem to account for the power and force of their buildings which no manipulation of the style has been able to equal. Their buildings had that accomplished identity which fused the personal and the impersonal, the timely and the timeless, the specific and the universal on that "golden mean" of conception.

losophy and how they utilized it in their own conceptions of architecture, has remained vaguely in the background of their own testimony and has eluded most of their critics. Some of the difficulty arises because Emerson himself was more poetic than precise. His appeal was essentially a spiritual one which influenced mostly the emotional and symbolic aspects fo architecture, facets which are difficult to articulate and, until the Post-Modern Movement, noticeably missing in our architecture.

Part of this difficulty is caused also by the fact that architecture is a complex art whose philosophic conceptions are charged with the ordering of a bewildering array of physical and psychological considerations. It is, therefore, seldom possibly to say that the various elements of architecture manifested in a great building emanated from a perfectly crystallized philosophy of either design or life. Any attempt to do so is probably pointless because what really interests the creative mind is the original source of that judgement with which the artist establishes the relationship of his art to society. We are interested, not in ordinary fact, but in that "last fact," as Emerson said, "behind which analysis cannot go, where all things find their common origin."

Certainly in the case of Frank Lloyd Wright, that common origin is very difficult to find as anyone who has read Wright's explanation will testify. It is further complicated with Wright's work because he found inspiration in many widely different sources in conceiving the forms of his work. But behind all of these intransigent forces there remained, by his own admission, a dedication to the transcendental ideal of man as the center of our concern, the organic constitution of the universe as revealed through nature and the infinitude of the private man in a democratic society. The organic principle of which Wright and Sullivan spoke so much is perhaps best exemplified by Emerson's view that "life can be interpreted in terms of a transcendent unifier that infuses all with its single spirit." It is this unity of spirit with its nakedness, freshness and depth of concern that

Both Wright and Sullivan emerged from this cause branded forever as romantics. Their adherence to the medial position and to an ethic broadly based on man places them more nearly on the side of the conservators. This "golden mean" between that which was merely good or physically attractive, and that which was true or intellecturally rational, satisfied the demand that architecture, as a true extension of a humane or organic structure, could not be otherwise than ethically beautiful.

It is only in these terms that we can understand the true meaning of Sullivan's phrase "form follows function" of which the purport is not that the form of a building should logically be derived from and only from utilitarian and structural considerations, but, rather, that it should exuberently proclaim, should radiantly show forth the goodness of the human experience.

To see this point coupled with the transcendentalist idea of "ethic" is to recognize clearly the chasm which separated Wright from the Modern Movement. It is the difference between "function" in the classic sense as problem solving, and "function" in the Hebraic sense of "psychological understanding." The medial line of Wright and Sullivan was that golden mean between the static "rule" and the romantic "expression."

I have chosen to speak first of transcendentalism and nature not because I see a revival, for the conditions surrounding that concept are certainly not our own. There is, however, a sense of discontinuity and anxiety in America today which reveals itself in our architecture. We are, in many ways, very much like nineteenth century men, separated from the nourishing cultural symbols of our past and unable as yet to define a reasonable future. We yearn for a release from the endless partial alternatives offered by a technological society even as we recognize the bewildering complexity of our options. We have matured in our view of Modernism, rejecting the more strident and monotonous images and mediating the social and political idealism.

We have not rejected Modernism, but have gone beyond the ideas of systematic analytic functional relationships, order, and responsibility, to explore a wider world of symbol and metaphor. In characteristic American fashion we are pursuing with equal intensity the realm of semiotics while, at the same time, we search for a technological "fix" for our problems. There is in all this diversity an appearance of freshness and invention, but also a disturbing fragmentation and a narcissistic avoidance of serious creative options.

At this point we might well reflect on the idea of the transcendentalists that man is a golden impossibility, that the line of mediation he must walk is a hair's breadth.

If we think about the implications of this passage, it is clear that it calls for the individual to impose some sort of order or discipline on the extremes arising from natural instinct. Emerson felt that this imposition came from a "free willed" responsibility, aided by traditional institutional agreements and spurred by the historic examples of greatness. It is this kind of mediation—a mediation of superlatives—which moved Sullivan and Wright and which gave their work force and power instead of mere brilliance and shock.

Energy Alternative Design

Kathleen Lechleiter

In a shift away from Modernism, contemporary architectural theory has searched for more humanistic and environmental concerns. New styles of architecture and alternative design froms are present everywhere. From Post-Modernism to Twenties Revivalism to Free-Style Classicism to metaphor, all are attempting to address issues which the Modern Movement either ignored or failed to recognize. Along with these familiar styles of architecture there is a growing trend towards environmental design as an alternative design form.

Environmental design is generally concerned with not only the built environment, but also the social, political, and economical environments. It sees the world from various points of view—historical, physical, biological, social, and geological—which in turn aids us in seeing the present moment, and ourselves, in perspective.[1] This new perspective lends itself to a new design language and energy alternative design.

Malcolm Wells, a practicing architect and author, is a strong advocate of this form of environmental design and approaches his own design work from this new perspective. His approach has taken the form of underground architecture or earth sheltered design. Wells' attitudes concerning architecture deal with a moral architecture, which respects the aspects of this planet and rewards itself both environmentally and aesthetically (His concern for the land is one of reverance: if the land can not be improved upon by building then building should not occur). This distinction between where land ends and building begins becomes ambiguous. To achieve this, Wells suggests a gentler, smaller-scaled, decentralized architecture, with its emphasis on natural systems—natural ventilation, natural lighting, natural treatment of wastes, natural heating and air conditioning.[2] In addition he outlines the following checklist for designers attempting to create a form of architecture which is harmonious and balanced with nature:

—creates pure air
—creates pure water
—stores rainwater
—produces its own food
—creates rich soil
—uses solar energy
—creates silence
—consumes its own wastes
—maintaines itself
—matches nature's pace
—provides human habitat
—moderates climate and weather
. . . and is beautiful[3]

One would hope that this list could be achieved, and the design it outlines could be developed even further. For this design form to develop the last item, beauty, is one of the most important. As James Marston Fitch stated, ". . . to be genuinely effective, a building must conform to aesthetic as well as physiological standards of performance."[4] But unfortunately as Suzanne Stephens states, ". . . the environmental architecture of America is almost without exception depressingly ugly."[5] Environmental or energy alternative design need not be ugly. It also need not be difficult for the architect to produce. It must be understood, however, that environmental design possesses additional parameters that help define its programmatic building requirements. Aesthetics and beauty are included in these requirements.

When we consider aesthetics in building in an environmental context the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright are of great importance. Wright's designs,

under the heading of organic architecture are both aesthetically pleasing and energy efficient. These designs stress the importance of the flow from interior space to exterior space which supports Wells' belief in the unclear division between land and building and man and nature. Whether we call this form of design "organic architecture" or "environmental design," our concerns are the same—holistic design with energy efficiency. A biological analogy was made by Wright which states, "an organic form grows its structure out of conditions as a plant grows out of the soil, both unfold similarly with within."[6] The analogy reinforces the concept of man and nature in balance and stresses the importance of the conditions from which the structure arises. These conditions certainly include energy consciousness. A direct relationship occurs between the use of energy and its inherent beauty. Without sufficient availability of energy, beauty dies. If that availability exceeds its requirements, it is wasted. Only a balanced relationship assures total efficiency and beauty of the form.

Environmental design, although not new in its attitudes, has gained strength recently through the public's cry for more energy efficient buildings and more aesthetically pleasing designs. In a bizarre twist, it is a renewal of vernacular architecture, an architecture born of necessity, free of technological exploitation at the expense of human comfort, on which environmental design is based. This vernacular recognizes expendability and longevity. We can no longer exploit our knowledge to benefit only our energy needs, but must adapt to those realities which exist in a form which is aesthetically pleasing. To achieve this type of energy alternative design, which Wells suggests may take the form of earth sheltered design, we must remember the properties of energy which allow us this approach. The design's use of energy must be diverse, renewable, relatively simple, understandable from the user's point of view and be at a scale and qualtiy appropriate to our range of end-use needs. These five properties were outlined by Amory B. Lovins in *Soft Energy Paths: Toward a Durable Peace* and parallel Wells' own checklist with the exception of aesthetics.

These two guidelines in conjunction emphasize that contemporary and future forms of architecture can be aesthetically pleasing and also relate to our environment, but do it in an energy efficient manner. Energy alternative design offers more than a mere architectural style revival to satisfy our sense of history. It offers a sense of permanence and order in an unordered society as it responds to our most basic human and environmental needs.

End Notes

[1]Malcolm Wells, *Gentle Architecture* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), p. 3.
[2]Ibid., pp. 19-20.
[3]Ibid., pp. 38-40.
[4]Ibid., p. 41.
[5]Ibid., p. 43.
[6]Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977), p. 84.

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Captives of Continuity

Ron Eddy

> To hit upon a right conception is a difficult step; and when this step is once made, the facts assume a different aspect from what they had before; . . . before these facts are seen as detached, separate, lawless; afterwards as . . . possessing innumberable new relations before unseen.[1]

In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* Thomas Kunn underscores the emergence of the paradigm as an accepted frame of reference as necessary for the elaboration of a science. He describes a cyclical process including: semi-random, multi-schooled casting about; the emergence of the paradigm because it most effectively deals with the problems being encountered; pursuit of inquiry based on the acceptance of the paradigm; gradual accumulation of questions unexplainable by the paradigm; and the crumbling of the paradigm and return to casting about.[2] "The most immediate observation regarding the nervous system is that its functioning is *prima facie* digital."[3]

In spite of the fact that we may perceive and experience, even at the microscale of daily affairs, a series of discreet events, with no necessary connection except that they impinge on us in succession, still, our fundamental tendency is to link, if not fuse, these events into a continuous flow. It is in the nature of the acquisition of knowledge to collect, organize, and project events. The problem is not that we do this, but that our collections and projections take on lives of their own, to the extent that they exclude the addition of new events that do not fit the presumed form. We make it a habit to assume that there *is* continuity because we see it, and we are, as a result, not prepared to deal with the idea of discontinuity.

The problem of discontinuity is addressed by Loren Eiseley in *The Unexpected Universe:*

> There was no order. Or better, what order there might be was far wilder and more formidable than that conjured up by human effort . . . the dog was, in actuality, an illusory succession of forms finally, but momentarily frozen into the shape "dog" by me . . . We deceive ourselves if we think our self-drawn categories exist there.[4]

Eiseley ignores that our category "dog" has not sprung from the canyons of our minds, but is a summation of personal experiences with dogs as owner, breeder, science student, etc. "Dog" also includes a set of cultural attitudes toward dogs which are usually implicit in our perceptions. These experiences and attitudes are grounded in the behavior of dogs, as well as in our perceptions of that behavior. Eiseley maintains that one is "real" the other "illusion." I think it more useful to say there is no necessary connection between the two but some connection nevertheless always exists. Eiseley is shocked by the dog in the woods because of a perceptual discontinuity between this experience and previous ones. This may change his interpretation of earlier experiences, but it should not render them false.

Knowing something, by common understanding, includes the assumption that the object of knowledge does not change while we are in the process of learning about and using it. This is an efficient assumption to make if change is occurring slowly. "Attitudes economize on thought and effort," say the management texts, but this is an economy only realizable if change is not a factor. When the rate of change increases, is it advantageous to conclude that nothing is fixed? I don't think so.

An important attitude to achieve is that of not clinging to particular ideas and patterns of action in the face of evidence that they no longer enhance our existence. To do this without falling into the valueless void of moral relativism requires that those ideas and patterns of action be based on an appeal to both observation and experience functioning as mutual checks and balances. To discard either leads from action to reaction based on formula, rule, and routine. Peter Drucker, in *The Age of Discontinuity,* emphasizes the importance of the process of knowing over any specific knowledge:

> The most important thing . . . is . . . using knowledge and its systematic acquisition as the foundation for performance, skill, and achievement.[5]

With the advent of the Modern Movement, architecture expanded beyond "building" to "environment" by taking on social issues and, later, environmental concerns. The fact that the architecture produced frequently did not deal effectively with these issues is beside the point. The point is that the conceptual foundation of architecture shifted (and more importantly is still doing so), but we continue to see only "architecture"—four square, based on classical perceptions and interpretations, social as well as spatial. This is especially obvious in the return of classical forms via the neo-free-classical-revivalist "movement."

But it is clear that this architecture has nothing to do with that which it echoes. Instead it represents, at best, a plea for psychological consideration, density, warmth, etc. in design, and at worst, architectural irresponsibility. The primary alternative, a scientific examination of problems, tends to degenerate into building technology for lack of a unifying theoretical foundation. Are we clinging to ideas and patterns which no longer enhance our existence?

What becomes apparent with the increasing pace of change is, not that we are looking at a different animal, but that the animal we are looking at is vastly different than whatever we thought it was. Much of our architecture was absorbed as a collection of culturally evolved assumptions, implicit formal relationships and broad associational networks with links to other aspects of the culture. When objects of associational links disappear, when sets of formal relationships are altered, when fundamental assumptions no longer apply, and when all of this begins to occur at a rate that outstrips the pace of "evolutionary" change, then architecture changes. First, it becomes more "conscious" and second, the range of issues to be dealt with consciously is seen to be broader, more complexly intertwined, and as no longer definable, even in theory, in static, final terms.

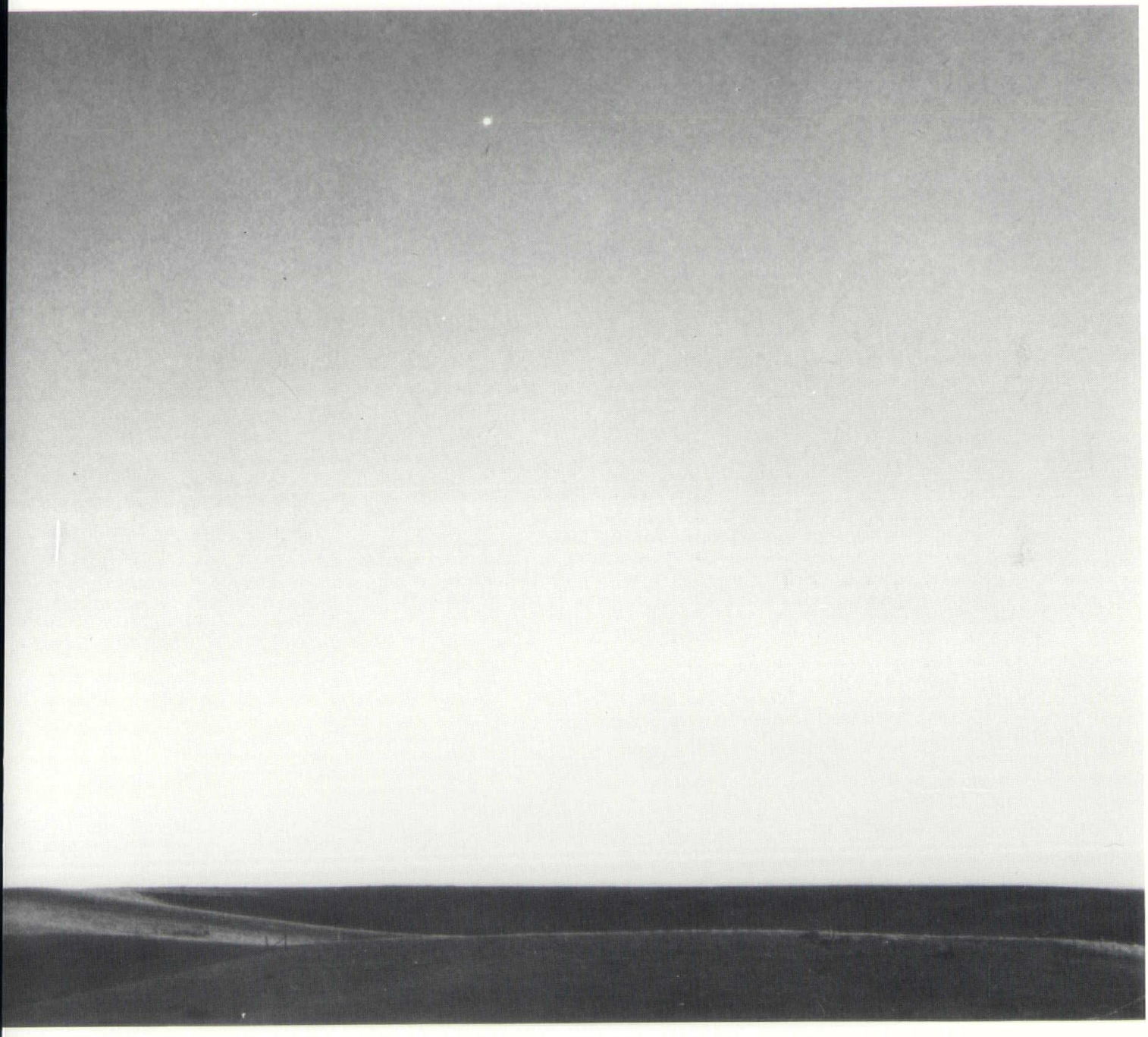
Peter Drucker sees the same problem in modern economic theory. Even with the tremendous accumulations of data made possible by computers, economic theory is incapable of dealing with economic problems because it does not incorporate "change in productivity." He proposes shifting the emphasis of economics from cost (static) to risk (dynamic)—how can an economy support "bigger but better risks"?

> . . . Innovation is more than a new method. It is a new view of the universe, as one of risk rather than of chance or certainty. It is a new view of man's role in the universe; he creates order by taking risks. And this means that innovation, rather than being an assertion of human power, is an acceptance of human responsibility.[6]

We might well consider this idea of innovation as applied to architecture. Ultimately, architecture is what crystallizes as a result of man/environment interactions. This includes strip-mines, nuclear waste dumps, single family houses, supermarkets, superhighways, Las Vegas strips, etc. The study of architecture is the study of how these crystallizations can be controlled, stopped, redirected, made more responsive to needs, more life enhancing, more reflective of the dynamics of the culture that produce them. Viewed from this perspective, classical architecture, Modern architecture or Post-Modern can be seen as a very particular and restricted instance of "architecture" in general. While the normal scope of architectural effort may be considerably narrower than this, it seems to me that starting from a global definition of this sort should allow more effective pursuit of the opportunities available to us and would allow architects to express in a clearer way those "new relations before unseen."

End Notes

[1]D. W. Theobald, *An Introduction ot the Philosophy of Science* (London: Methuen, 1968), p. 110.
[2]Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (2d ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
[3]John von Neumann, *The Computer and the Brain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958).
[4]Loren Eiseley, *The Unexpected Universe* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969), pp. 202-203.
[5]Peter Drucker, *The Age of Discontinuity: Guidelines to Our Changing Society* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 320.
[6]Peter Drucker, *Landmarks of Tomorrow* (New York: Harper, 1959).



Tribute to the Tower on the Plains

Dale Gibbs

This occasion is one of several to be held this year to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the dedication of this building. The original design was conceived and presented in 1920 at that moment when nineteenth century Beaux Arts architecture, with its deep sense of history and symbolism, was giving way to the functional and impersonal theories of Modern Architecture. The building is transitional in style, with all the confidence of a traditional vocabulary seeking to express a future as yet not clearly defined. It is the tension and ambiguity of that circumstance which produced a design of extraordinary vitality.

It is, we sense, a wonderful creation in space, rhythm, color, and light. It is courageous and bold in form, and yet it yields its details, symbols and interlocking patterns in poetic succession to searching minds and sensibilities. "A poem," according to our guest of honor, John Ciardi, "is a formal structure in which many elements operate at the same time." This building might be compared to a poem, filled with symbol, metaphor and analogy which can be appreciated at various levels of meaning over time.

The most obvious level is Goodhue's composition of base and tower which form an unforgettable symbol of our state. That is the most familiar and popular image. But as a work of art, that symbol is the manifestation of a profound desire—the human longing for freedom, justice and equality and the conviction that these are best achieved through a system of laws. This building is, like all great architecture, the symbol of human aspirations, in this case, the desire for community and protection from chaos. It is the symbolic structure of a civilized society. The fulfillment of those desires and aspirations was entrusted to the architect, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, to Hildreth Meiere, the mosaicist, to Lee Laurie, the sculptor, and last, but of special interest to us tonight, to Hartley Burr Alexander, the philosopher and humanist who created the thematic structure of Law, History, Nature, Symbol, and Myth which fill these halls.

"What did those people know of Nebraska?" we might ask. Goodhue, the genteel Yankee; Meiere, the worldly New Yorker; Laurie, the self-taught German immigrant—how could they interpret Nebraska or Nebraskans? It was through the philosophical theme put forth by Hartley Burr Alexander that their talents were joined to express an idea infinitely more profound than regional concerns or ambitions. I think they might have expressed that theme as follows:

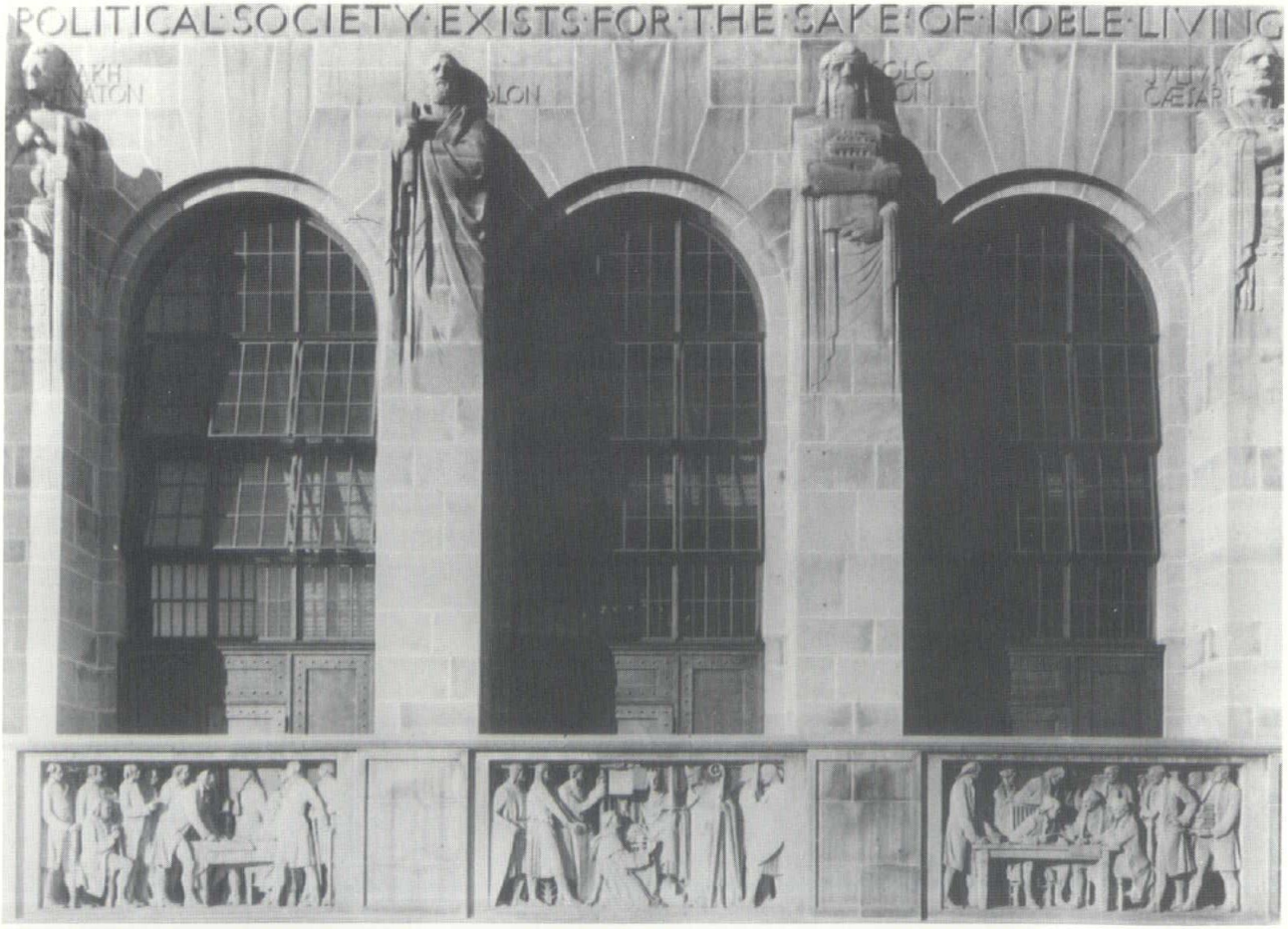
> However much alone you may feel plowing the open fields of trying to establish a life in an isolated town, you are, in fact, very much a part of the panorama of history which led you here and you are surely the inheritors of its civilizing traditions. Solomon, Napoleon and the Magna Charta are a part of that inheritance. Ancient myth is a part of it. All the systems of nature, the stars, and endless sky around you—these are a part of it. The poetic vision of the Sioux and the Omaha who came before you, with their stewardship of the earth, are a part of this inheritance.

That is, I believe, the meaning of this building. It addresses, not specifically Nebraska, but the human experience. With that as its theme, it will, like the good house, survive the trivial fancies and fashionable pretensions of men.

As I look around at these beautiful examples of skill, craft, and creativity which, in concert, address the ideas of time and man, I am reminded of the words of T. S. Eliot reflected in the theme of this great work of architecture:

> Time past and time future
> What might have been and what has been
> Point to an end which is always present.

This brief address was delivered by Professor Gibbs at a ceremony (sponsored by the Nebraska Committee for the Humanities) in September 1982 commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the dedication of the Nebraska State Capitol.


POLITICAL SOCIETY EXISTS FOR THE SAKE OF NOBLE LIVING

Swedish-American Romanticism: Cervin's Church at Wakefield, Nebraska

David Murphy

One of the most important, and until recently overlooked, phenomenon regarding the settlement of the Great Plains concerns the large numbers of European immigrants who found a new home in the region.[1] While overall figures were quite high, especially in the central and northern Plains states,[2] figures for scattered locales often indicate the existence of significantly concentrated ethnic communities. That this fact, once accounted for, should have profound influence on our study of the cultural and social history of the region seems obvious.

The impact of this phenomenon on architecture has been largely observed thus far in pioneer domestic architecture.[3] Occasionally, however, special conditions have produced buildings more academic in origin which relate directly to Old Country architecutre. Some examples are so obvious that the connections can simply not be denied, while others are so subtle that they exist only subliminally[4]. One subtle example is the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Salem Church in Wakefield, Nebraska. Designed by Swedish-American architect Olof Z. Cervin, and dedicated in 1906, Salem's architectural associations are so sublime that they cannot be appreciated other than as a creative eclectic synthesis of *both* contemporary Swedish and American architectural ideas.[5]

* * *

The mass emigration of Swedes to America ranks as one of the most profound nineteenth century European experiences. In the middle of the century Sweden had a population of three-and-one-half million, but before the passing of a generation, more than one million had left for America.[6] Although the main cause of this exodus was based on economic reasons, religious dissatisfaction played a significant role as well, and was, according to some scholars, ". . . more potent than either political and social unrest."[7]

The most significant of the mass Swedish immigrations came in two waves; one between 1868 and 1873, and the other from 1880 to 1893.[8] The Middle West was the prime area of settlement during these migrations, with Illinois and Minnesota receiving the largest numbers. Of the Great Plains states, Nebraska was the favored location.[9]

The first Swedish settlers to reach Nebraska came in the late 1860's and early 1870's. Settlement opportunities here were first made known to Swedes east of the Missouri River through the paper *Hemlandet.* Initially they were attracted to Omaha and its vicinity, but by the 1880's and 1890's, during the second wave of the great nineteenth century migration, Swedes and Swedish-Americans alike were enticed to northeastern Nebraska including the area around Wakefield.

The small, rural community of Wakefield was incorporated in 1883, having at that time about 200 inhabitants. The first Swede to locate in the vicinity was Gustus Johnson, who came to Dixon County from Farmersville, Illinois in 1881. Johnson encouraged other Swedes to follow, and within several years a Swedish settlement was established in southern Dixon County, in the immediate area of Wakefield. On Ascention Day, May 3, 1883, the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Salem Church was organized under the Augustana Synod, the synod of the Swedish Lutherans which was founded in 1860. Regular services were held in a local school until 1885, when the Salem congregation dedicated its first house of worship, a small frame building with a twelve foot square entrance tower. By 1906 when the second and present church was dedicated, Salem was regarded as the center, and the mother congregation of the thriving Swedish colony in Dixon, Wayne and Cedar counties. Upon its completion, the church was pronounced by the newspapers of a neighboring community as being ". . . without a doubt one of the finest churches belonging to this religious denomination and . . . [is] a credit to the congregation and the little city in which it is located."[10]

* * *

Architecturally Salem Church is a distinct entity, but one which does not fit comfortably into any conventional American stylistic categories. To be sure, Salem's striking Gothic Revival ornamentation provides the most obvious associations, associations which have virtually become synonymous with traditional American church architecture through the first decades of the twentieth century. The elaboration of this detail, particularly at the porches and at the belfry, is notable among other Gothic Revival

ornamentation on traditional Nebraska churches built of wood.[11] The highly developed character of its details provides focus for the composition; a focus whose strength tends to mask an otherwise eclectic design, diverse in its intended associations.

Three key characteristics of Cervin's design belie Salem's Gothic Revival associations. The first of these is the utterly simple, almost Neo-Classical design for the main body of the church. While punctured with the traditional lancet-arched windows, and provided with shallow transcepts along each side wall, the character of the body is decidedly Classical in association. This character is enhanced by the large proportion of wall to window area, and in the return and modillion cornices of the gables which are common to the Neo-Classical Revival style. The simplicity of this portion of the church is reinforced by the plain, hip-roofed appendage to the rear of the auditorium.

The shift away from the Gothic is even more pronounced in the auditorium where the low-vaulted ceiling with its evenly textured pressed-metal surface and the smooth plastered walls dominate the space. Gothic elements here are confined to the window openings, and the chancel arch which frames the beautifully detailed high altar, a design feature preserved from Old Country churches.[12] The removal of the early yet restrained wall stenciling only accentuates what is essentially a non-Gothic interior space. Furnishings preserve some Gothic character through minor details, but architectural fittings display the simple trabeated motifs common to the vernacular Neo-Classical Revival style.

Finally, formal considerations suggest special qualities about the church beyond decorative elaboration. While the academic architectural genre often produces formally distinct buildings, churches in Nebraska, particularly those built for traditional communities, most often follow traditional formal schemes. This has been true from the beginning of settlement well into the twentieth century. Single-spired churches typically locate the spire as a central entrance tower placed on axis with the roof ridge. The major exception to this rule involves churches of the Akron plan where the entrance tower is located in the interior of an ell-shaped structure, the Sunday school space being located in one leg of the ell.[13] The third most common formal arrangement follows Continental preferences for twin towers located on the front gable. Symmetrical towers here are perhaps most common, but inequal towers have found some favor was well.

The placement of Salem's single tower represents a clear departure from traditional American formal schemes. The tower is pulled forward nearly free of the front gable and stands as a semi-detached tower; more as a campanile than a traditional American steeple. The nearly detached nature of the tower is emphasized both by its placement slightly beyond the edge of the side walls, and by its relationship to the single-storied narthex which was placed outside the main body of the church.

How, then, does one account for Salem's distinct architectural expression? The architectural symbols are too clearly expressed, too carefully placed, and too well developed to dismiss the structure as naive or to accuse the architect of stylistic indecision. To be sure, a diverse eclecticism was one of the period's chief characteristics, a period dominated by a movement which Richard Longstreth has called Academic Eclecticism.[14] The search for an appropriate stylistic vocabulary was one of the most important architectural endeavors of the period. While based upon an academic understanding of the styles of the past, the movement still sought to avoid the kind of historicism which leads to simple revivals. Salem's architect participated fully in the search, both academically and professionally. His background and interests provide a point of departure for his work in Swedish-Nebraskan communities.

* * *

Olof Z. Cervin (1868-1949) was born at Paxton, Illinois.[15] Son of Anders Richard Cervin (1823-1900), an 1856 immigrant from Skane province in southern Sweden, Cervin's life was intimately associated with Swedish tradition, higher education, and the Augustana Synod. Cervin's father

was a Synod pastor, professor at Augustana College, one-time assistant editor of *Hemlandet,* and long-time editor of *Augustana.*[16]

Olof Cervin was a scholar and a traveler as well as an architect. He received his B.S. from Augustana College in 1887, and his M.A. in architecture from Columbia University in 1894. He was noted for his numerous writings on architecture, as well as for his prominence as a practicing Swedish-American architect.[17] In addition to his own priviate practice in Rock Island, Illinois, he served that community as chairman of the City Planning Commission and as a member of the Zoning Commission. He was for a period the official architect of the Augustana Synod.[18]

As an author and scholar, Cervin participated fully in the architectural thought of the day, particularly in the growing concerns for a regional architecture, an outgrowth of the strong national sentiment following America's Centennial celebration.[19] His first two articles, one on America's colonial architecture, and one on the Spanish missions of the southwest, contributed studies pertinent to the developing regional approach to design.[20]

Cervin must have sensed, however, that neither regionalism nor nationalism had any strict relevance in his recently-settled, mid-continental milieu. As Barr Ferree had noted in an 1891 article, a nation with as culturally diverse a population as the United States can not realistically hope to find a National Style.[21] Cervin soon began to seek a cultural appropriateness for his architecture, one prompted both by his Swedish-American background, and his practice within a Swedish-American context. Travels to Scandinavia produced a second series of articles which reveal a growing interest in Scandinavian architecture, particularly in the National movements. His article on contemporary Swedish practice was the most broad in scope.[22] In it, in a rare statement of opinion, he conceded that to architecturally link the present with the past was a worthy effort, an effort that he connected with the "National school" in Sweden.[23] A second article focused on what was to become one of the important monuments of the Danish National movement, the Copenhagen City Hall,[24] while a third presented the distinctive stave churches of the Norwegian countryside.[25]

The architectural movement to which Cervin was drawn in Scandinavia was not unlike the regionalism which had captured his attention here in the United States. The movement was dominated by a search for appropriate traditional and national forms in what Henry-Russell Hitchcock has called "National Romanticism."[26] The trend was not toward a simplistic copying of historical styles, but was complex and intellectualized: ". . . a technical renaissance, which expresses itself in the condemnation of inferior material and false construction, followed by a stylistic renaissance which, rejecting academic and hackneyed conventionalism, aims at individual and national forms suited to the particular purpose in view."[27] Significantly, some of the most lively and distinguished traditional architecture of the early twentieth century was produced by the National Romantic movement in Scandinavia.[28]

* * *

Salem Church at Wakefield is an early Cervin approach to a "Swedish-American Romanticism," a subtle, carefully coded approach which is manifest in certain formal and stylistic treatment. Formal distinction was noted earlier, particularly in the placement and the semi-detached character of the tower, and in the development of the entry. Furthermore, the tower serves an important landmark function due to its extreme verticality, rising to a height of 100 feet or nearly three times that of the body of the church.[29]

Salem shares formal associations with several of the more impressive churches erected in Sweden during this period. Perhaps most striking in comparison are two of Eric Lallerstedt's churches—the M.E. Church and the St. Matthew's Chapel, both in Stockholm and both illustrated in Cervin's article.[30] Semi-detached towers with strong vertical emphasis were significant to buildings which both introduced and closed the National Romantic period in Scandinavia, opening with Nyrop's Copenhagen Town Hall in 1892 and closing with Ostberg's Stockholm

Town Hall, completed in 1923.[31] Similarly, exaggerated vertical towers are important to many notable Swedish churches of the period including Boberg's Saltsjobaden church, Wahlman's Engelbrekt and Kristiana churches and Ericson's Masthugg's Church in Gothenberg.

Cervin's specific stylistic associations should be viewed within a context of American eclecticism, but his careful placement and development of the ornament is intended to signify a product that is Swedish-American in association. Cervin has focused his Gothic ornamentation at strategic points, particularly at the entrance and at the belfry, leaving the shaft of the tower unadorned and punctured only with a few small openings. His stylistic shift toward the Classical on the auditorium both heighten the effect of the focused ornament and provides transition to an interior which is neither Classical nor Gothic. The resultant emphasis on the Gothic ornament at the points of focus serves not only to reinforce the formal distinction of the church, but serves to establish connections with other products of Swedish National Romanticism where ornamentation is similarly focused.[32]

From this early, subtle attempt, Cervin developed cultural associations further in later projects. More explicit associations were elaborated a decade later at the Bethphage Mission near Axtell, Nebraska.[33] The planning and building of the Mission is perhaps his most significant Nebraska effort, and has to be considered a masterpiece of "Swedish-American Romanticism" in Nebraska. Cervin's Wakefield Church, from this view, is an important early product of Swedish-American Romanticism: Swedish in its subtle inflections toward contemporary Swedish architecture; American in its specific ornamental associations; and Swedish-American, both in Salen's central role in the Wakefield area settlements, and in its association with Olof Z. Cervin, an architect who sought to make connections not only across time but across national boundaries as well.

End Notes

[1]Frederick C. Luebke, "Ethnic Group Settlement on the Great Plains," *The Western Historical Quarterly,* VIII:4 (October, 1977), pp. 405-430.

[2]Luebke, Ibid., pp. 405-406.

[3]A few examples will illustrate the point, see: John C. Lehr, "Ukrainian Houses in Alberta," *Alberta Historical Review,* 21:4 (1973), pp. 9-15; William C. Sherman, "Prairie Architecture of the Russian-German Settlers," in Richard Sallet, *Russian-German Settlements in the United States* (Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1974), pp. 185-195; and David Murphy, "Bohemian-American Log Technology in Northeastern Nebraska," Paper presented to the Vernacular Architecture Forum, Madison, Wisconsin, May 6, 1983.

[4]Ukrainian onion domes in Canada provide the case in point, see: John C. Lehr, "The Landscape of Ukrainian Settlement in the Canadian West," *Great Plains Quarterly,* (Spring, 1982), pp. 99-101.

[5]This paper should have perhaps been subtitled "A Preliminary Assessment of Cultural Influences on Academic Architecture in an Ethnic-American Context." The temporal circumstances of Great Plains settlement provided opportunity for various manifestations of National Romantic design. Several fine examples have been recorded thus far in Nebraska, particularly among Bohemian, Swedish and Danish groups. Salem Church is presented in this discussion because it has been a difficult building to explain, because of recent interest leading to a National Register of Historic Places nomination, and because it should offer a good case for criticism of the phenomenon presented here.

[6]Harold Runblom and Hans Norman, *From Sweden to American: A History of the Migration* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), p. 11.

[7]Adolf Benson and Naboth Hedin, *Americans from Sweden* (New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1950), p. 178.

[8]Ulf Beijbom, "Swedes," in Stephan Thernstrom (Ed.), *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 972.

[9]Luebke, op. cit., footnote 1, p. 417.

[10]*Wayne* (Nebraska) *Herald* (March 15, 1906), p. 1.

[11]Only two other exceptional examples come immediately to mind. One is Salem's sister church, Thabor Lutheran at Wausa, Nebraska, also designed by Cervin but smaller, less elaborate and substantially more altered. The other is St. John's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod), designed by German-American architect Joseph Guth.

[12]Pastor Robert V. Johnson, Wakefield, Nebraska. Personal communication, August 24, 1976.

[13]James F. White, *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture: Theological and Historical Considerations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 126-129.

[14]Richard Longstreth, "Academic Eclecticism in American Architecture," *Winterthur Portfolio,* 17:1 (Spring, 1982), pp. 56-57, 70.

[15]I am indebted to Kermit B. Westerberg, Archivist at the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center in Rock Island, Illinois for much of the biographical information on Cervin.

[16]Benson and Hedin, op. cit., footnote 7, p. 237.

[17]John A. Nyden, "Swedish-American Architects in Illinois," in *The Swedish Element in America: A Comprehensive History of Swedish American Achievements from 1638 to the Present Day,* Vol. 2 (Chicago: American Biographical Society, 1931), p. 377.

[18]Benson and Hedin, op. cit., footnote 7, p. 237; and Kermit B. Westerberg to author, 27 January 1983.

[19]See Longstreth, op. cit., footnote 14 above, pp. 70ff; and Richard Guy Wilson, "American Architecture and the Search for a National Style in the 1870's," *Nineteenth Century,* 3:3 (Autumn, 1977), pp. 74-80.

[20]Olof Cervin, "The So-Called Colonial Architecture of the United States," *American Architect & Building News,* 48 (May 18, 1895), pp. 63-64; (May 25, 1895), pp. 75-77; (June 1, 1895), pp. 87-88; (June 8, 1895), pp. 97-99; (June 15, 1895), pp. 107-108; (June 22, 1895), pp. 115-118; (June 29, 1985), pp. 130-131; and Olaf Cervin, "The Spanish-Mexican Missions of the United States," *The Architectural Record,* 14 (September 1903), pp. 181-204.

[21]Barr Ferre, "An American Style of Architecture," *Architectural Record,* 1:1 (1891), p. 39.

[22]Olaf Cervin, "Sweden To-Day," *American Architect and Building News,* 88 (September 16, 1905), pp. 91-95 and plates.

[23]Cervin, Ibid., p. 91.

[24]Olaf Z. Cervin, "The City Hall at Copenhagen," *The Architectural Record,* 18 (October, 1905), pp. 283-299.

[25]Olof Cervin, "Quaint Timber Churches of Norway," *The Architectural Record,* 20 (August, 1906), pp. 93-102.

[26]Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 395.

[27]Hakon Ahlberg, *Swedish Architecture of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 18.

[28]Hitchcock, op. cit., footnote 26, p. 396.

[29]The extreme height of the tower and its relative proportion to the church is not well described by the photographs. This aspect is most striking in distant views of the church where the landmark nature of the tower is clearly visible.

[30]Cervin, op. cit., footnote 22, p. 92 and plate.

[31]Hitchcock, op. cit., footnote 26, p. 395.

[32]Note particularly the treatment of the towers on several of the buildings mentioned earlier.

[33]Arthur A. Christenson, *A Miracle of the Prairies: A Story of the Bethphage Mission at Axtell* (Axtell, Nebr.: Bethphage Press, 1944), p. 26; Paul A. Olson, "Scandinavians: The Search for Zion," in *Broken Hoops and Plains People: A Catalog of Ethnic Resources in the Humanities, Nebraska and Thereabouts* (Lincoln, Nebraska Curriculum Development Center, 1976), p. 260.

In Consideration of American Queen Anne

Lu Perantoni

When I began my investigation into the Queen Anne style of architecture, I had the misconception that I would be examining a superficial, provincial, rather unattractive divarication from the expected nineteenth century architecture development pattern. Upon closer scrutiny, however, I have come to view American Queen Anne with respect as a style with much complexity, merit, and long lasting effect on later architectural developments. The purpose of this paper is to explore some of the possible causative factors in this style evolution.

General style characteristics are enumerated in Appendix A. Additional descriptive characteristics, based on specific architects' work or geographical area idiosyncrasies, would also be applicable here, but for now, I have limited the list to those qualities which I feel are most representative of the style directions I have addressed.

The term "Queen Anne," or more appropriately "Queen Anne Revival" had originally, in the nineteenth century, been used more correctly when it was applied to the English Renaissance (or Re-renaissance, as claimed by Richard Norman Shaw) work of Shaw, himself, and other English architects involved in eighteenth century historical study. Unfortunately, Shaw's more medieval based work, such as Leyes Wood, became included under this title. Eventually, the term "Queen Anne Revival" became an umbrella term that covered all manner of eclectic combinations, especially those containing some Jacobean and Renaissance elements.

This looking-back preoccupation was not just an English idiosyncrasy. In America, interest in the past was evoked for a variety of reasons. As a result of gargantuan industrial growth after the Civil War, crowded factory cities and discontented middle classes developed. The outgrowth of this was that in summer, since they had no country estates to flee to, in order to escape the city heat and crowded conditions, middle class families went, for their vacations, to quieter, less crowded environs such as the sea coast towns. They passed, on their way, the vestiges of days gone by—the old colonial homes, which, in their pastoral settings, with their pleasantly low ceilings and welcoming nooks and crannies, with their softened wood contours, suggested a more comfortable way of living—a style of design to be utilized in their dream homes.[1]

In addition, displeasure with the political system, with the political scandals that were being uncovered at the time, along with the inequities of the dispersion of wealth—all this kindled the desire to move back into a "saner, safer time."

But most overtly, the event that did most to light the flames of interest in America's roots was the first centennial celebration of the birth of the nation. And the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, held in 1876, as part of this celebration, is usually cited as the beginning of American Queen Anne. Ironically, the term "Queen Anne," as used to refer to the American development, came to identify not only the colonial revival, but "Old English" revival as well, and generally, as in England, the result was an eclectic mixed-bag of historical details.

In America, two strong design concepts emerged from the seemingly hopelessly confused disorganization. First to be considered are the innovations that resulted in freer, less symmetrically composed plans, and second are changes in surface treatments.

Before the onslaught of neo-classicism, there had been, possibly due to some familiarity with earlier Adamesque and/or French design, some attempts to experiment with room shape and situation. But because of the formality and regularity necessitated by imposing Greek form above functional considerations, such experimentation was short-lived, and the "Anglo-Palladian plan with central stair-hall and four nearly equal-sized corner rooms . . ."[2] became firmly entrenched.

One early way that Yankee ingenuity devised to get around this spatial rigidity was to install large, sliding doors between rooms so that spaces could be opened up for more functional flexibility.[3]

But by the 1870's, designers had begun to reinvestigate the grouping and sizing of rooms. Based in part on the now-popular examples of

resort structures and colonial survivors, as well as on rudimentary rational analysis of the functional needs of a new class in society, specific rooms began to be placed where they could be utilized most efficiently, not where historical antecedents dictated that they should be.

Additional influences are cited as being the impetus needed to develop the new style, such as:

> . . . the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876 and the British Pavilions there which had a powerful impact on American architects, breaking the conservative historicism of academic architecture. Not only did this fashionable new mode of building encourage greater diversity of materials, it allowed for a far less formal arrangement of interior spaces. The static compartmentalized rooms gave way to a more fluid plan, the entry hall became larger and more important, and rooms could be sized and juxtaposed according to actual use rather than arbitrarilly filling out the corner of a preconceived square or rectangular floor plan. Concurrently, American social mores were becoming more relaxed and the less formal architecture coincided with less rigid social expectations in a mutually dependent evolution.[4]

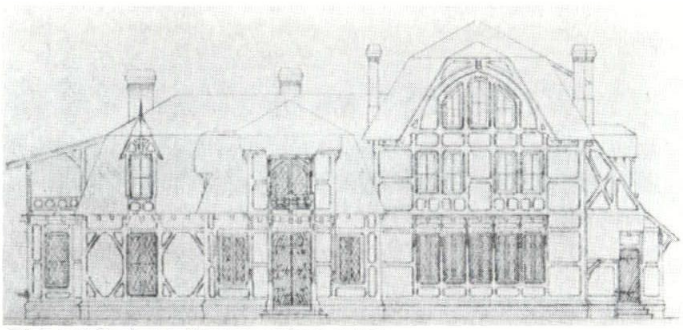
In addition to the British Pavilions, Americans' attention was attracted to displays of Japanese domestic architecture. Thus began what continued throughout the careers of Wright and Mies into modern architecture—the American love affair with Japanese moveable partitions and flexible space.[5]

This unconscious attention to room volume, rather than to mass, which has been termed ". . . peripherally additive planning . . . controlled by the center,"[6] resulted in the hall becoming a main core, around which the rest of the spaces were developed.

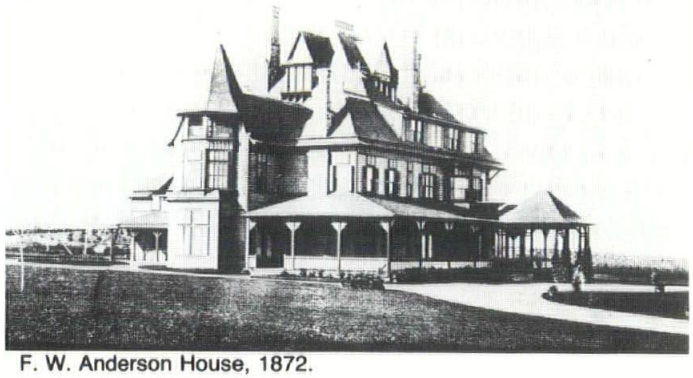
As the interior space pressed outward, attempts were made to integrate exterior and interior spaces. The temple portico of the neo-classical facade began to be enlarged until it encompassed whole elevations of the house in a veranda, or piazza form. While this type of porch had made its way much earlier, via the West Indies, into our southern regions,[7] the Queen Anne form tended to be a development of the extension of the interior plan, rather than an added-on element. In short, it seems to have organically grown outward from within.

As mentioned above, the hall was undergoing evolutionary changes from a simple vestibule to a combined stairhall-entry. The concept of the combined function hall had been addressed by the English architects, namely, Kerr in the 60's and later by Shaw. However, the idea of the hall as actual expanded living space, with multifunctional activities, seems to have been an American innovation developed by H. H. Richardson. Rudiments of this idea first appear in his unbuilt Codman Project, and are carried to culmination in his later domestic plans such as the Andrews House, Watts Sherman House and Stoughton House.

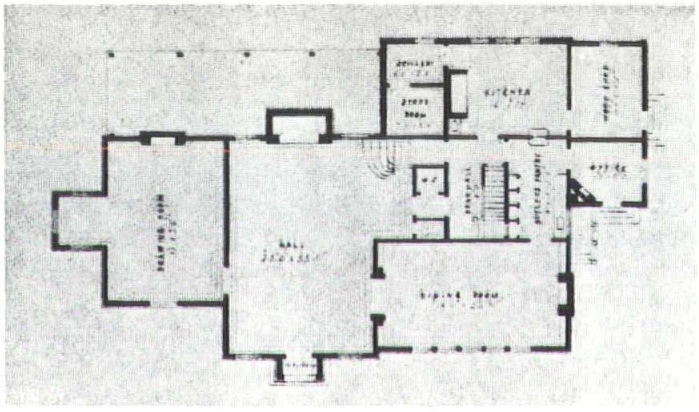
It is probably a moot point to argue that American Queen Anne was a heterogeneous "home-grown" product, when in fact, most American architectural development bears some vestiges of its old-European roots. But I take issue with the sources that imply that Richardson's plan development was "lifted" from that of Shaw. For this reason, I have arranged relative events in chronological order in Appendix B. to illustrate that, while Shaw had had elevation drawings published in literature to which Richardson had access at this time, he did not have a plan published until the 1874 publication of *Building News,* which showed his plan for Hopedene. By this time Richardson's living hall concept, et. al., had been sufficiently developed to be considered his own innovation. Richardson's informal living hall areas contained great and dramatic staircases and fireplaces. From the hall, one could pass to upper floors, to the exterior, to the dining room, and especially to the kitchen, in a much more efficient manner than in the English homes.[8] As Scully says, ". . . the American house had now undergone a vareity of changes adapting it to American conditions, functional requirements, and materials, which separate it, as an original style, from Richard Norman Shaw's Queen Anne. The openness and flow of its space are American."[9]

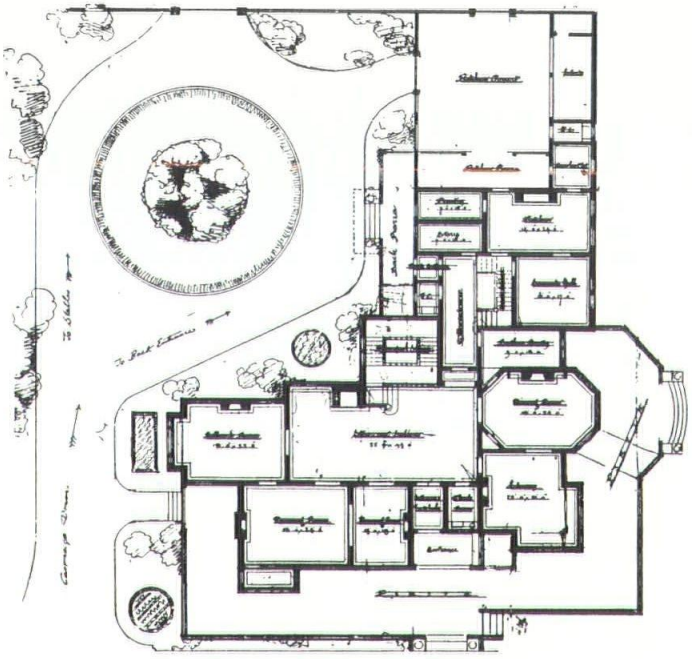


Richard Codman House project, 1869.



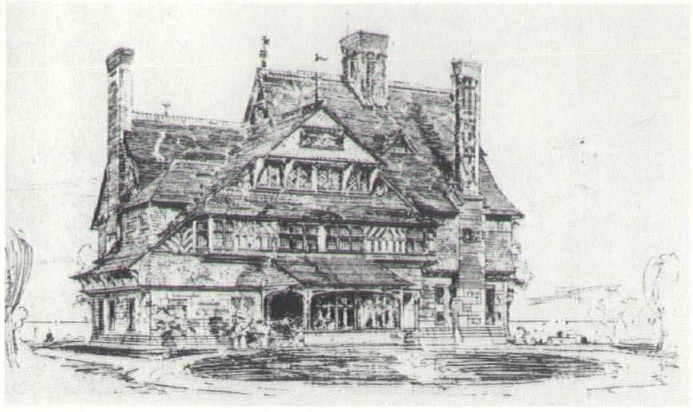
F. W. Anderson House, 1872.



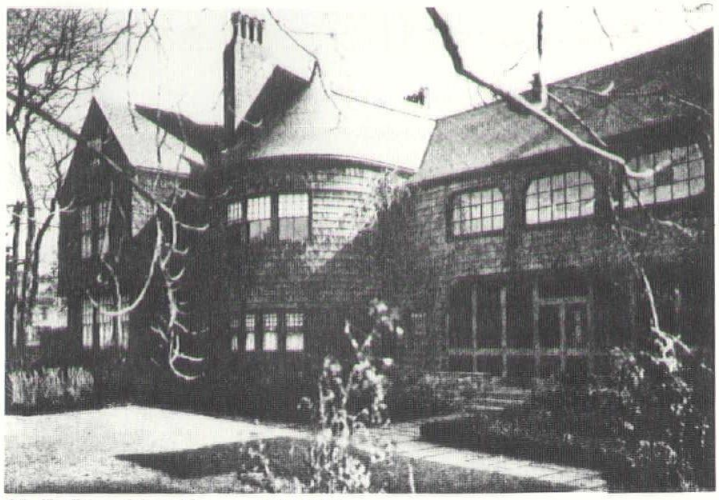


As mentioned earlier, the other important design innovation, brought about through American Queen Anne, involved the treatment of surfaces. In America, early on, after the Chicago Fire and the development of balloon framing, wood, and not masonary as in England, became the dominant construction material. Queen Anne occurs chronologically between the Stick Style, in which all framing was skeletally articulated on the exterior,[10] and the Shingle Style, where the frame is intentionally concealed, with the roof and walls like thin membranes which take the shape of what they enclose.[11] As a result, with the development of Queen Anne, the preoccupation with skeletal articulation gradually yielded to an emphasis on surface materials and small scaled details. A variety of materials and colors were often applied to the surfaces of the same building.[12] "The emphasis now was on the broad surfaces of the wall, itself and the free flowing interior planning which it expressed . . ."[13]

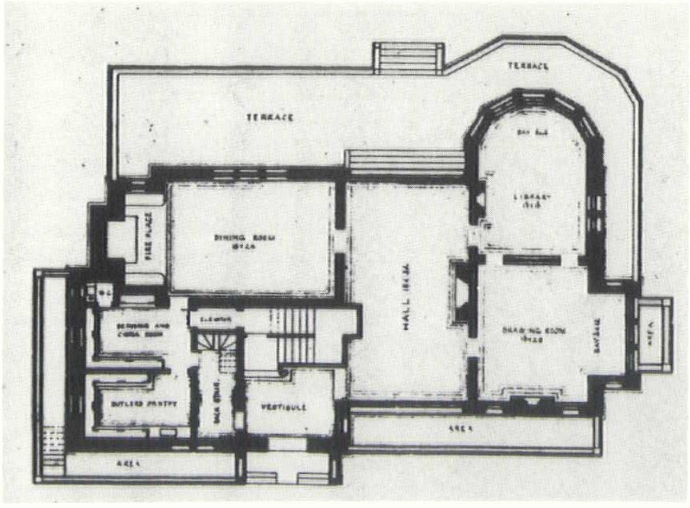
Timbering generally was used only as a means to create the effect of continuity, and all elements, such as windows, were planned and grouped as parts of horizontal elements or bands (harbingers of Wright's Prairie Houses). From the English government buildings at the Centennial, Americans had learned to use casements connected in seemingly endless, uninterrupted lines.[14]

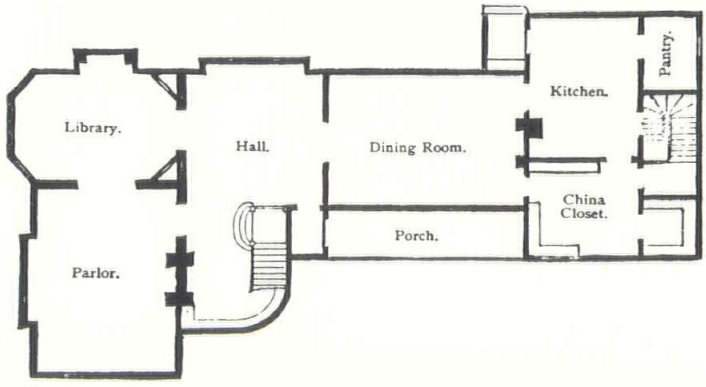


Watts Sherman House, 1872-76.



M. F. Stoughton House, 1882-83.





A major difference in English and American surface treatment was the degree of practicality that influenced the choice of the material. In England, wall and roof covering, often in the form of tiles, was used almost exclusively for ornamentation purposes. In America, besides the fact that there was neither the clay or the craftsmen, to produce decorative tile, practical reasons induced the architects and designers to look for other means of surfacing. Stucco was used, as was clapboard, terra cotta, brick, stone, and wood paneling, but, in most cases, even before shingles were considered a "style," American architects were using them as surfacing material. Shingles were plentiful, were good for keeping out the heat in the summer and cold in the winter, weathered to lovely soft hues, could be traced back to colonial useage, were comparatively easy to install and long-lasting, lent a feeling of informality and coziness to the structure, were of small enough scale to lighten and soften the feeling of the building, and additionally, were probably more appropriate for the middle class self-concept. "Shingles may have been an American translation of the Dutch tile that had become fashionable for walls and roofs in Jacobean England. Or they may have been a vernacular survivor from the Saxons, who had used oak shingles more than a thousand years earlier . . ."[15]

The explanation for the growth in popularity of shingles that I find most intriquing was suggested in Scully's discussion of Sanford White's ability to capture momentary pictorial visions—such as changing light patterns on shingles.[16] How interesting that this increased awareness of surface treatment occurred at approximately the same time that the process of photolithography was perfected (allowing extremely textured effects to be reproduced graphically)![17] Is it possible that a whole new design

concept might have been developed in response to a graphic arts process? And if the development of photolithography caused an increased awareness of the textural surface quality in the nineteenth century, one can only speculate in what direction the new CRT drafting methods might influence the design of the future.

The development of Queen Anne in America was basically a free, creative process, despite the fact that it had been born out of antiquarian and academic concerns. It is ironic that, after its short flight which lasted only about ten years, these same elements of academicism and antiquarianism were what finally brought it down, destroyed it as a style, by squeezing from it its lightness and liberty, and suffocating it with stuffiness.

End Notes

[1]Mark Girouard, *Sweetness and Light: The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 208.
[2]Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1978), p. 356.
[3]Ibid.
[4]Allen T. Denison & Wallace K. Huntington, *Victorian Architecture of Port Townsend, Washington* (Saanichton, B.C.: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 1978), p. 148.
[5]Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *Shingle Style* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), p. 22.
[6]Ibid., p. 14
[7]Hitchcock, p. 356.
[8]Scully, *Shingle Style*, p. 88.
[9]Ibid.
[10]Antoinette F. Downing & Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island* (New York: Bramhall House, 1952), p. 146.
[11]Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969), p. 128.
[12]Unpublished *Guide to Architectural Styles*, presented by the St. Louis Historical Society.
[13]Mary Mix Foley, *The American House* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1980), p. 175.
[14]Scully, *Shingle Style*, p. 20.
[15]Foley, p. 15.
[16]Scully, pp. 83-86.
[17]Ibid., footnote 35, p. 10.

Appendix A

General Characteristics of American Queen Anne Style

Picturesque massing of a variety of shapes and textures in a non-symmetrical composition.

Surface treatment usually was accomplished with a variety of materials.

Long wrap-around verandas, or piazzas, often with delicately turned, small scale spindlework.

Elaborately fluted or flare-topped chimneys.

Gables, dormers, round turrets, eyebrow and oriel windows, combined in a non-archeological manner.

Asymmetrically and dramatically shaped roof forms.

Windows, wall materials worked together to form horizontal, decorative bands.

Appendix B

Chronology

1859	H. H. Richardson travels to Scotland, England and Wales.
1859-1864	H. H. Richardson at the atelier of Andre at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris.
1864-1865	Designs of Kerr are published, great hall concept is discussed.
1867	Frank Lloyd Wright is born.
1867-1870	McKim attends the Ecole des Beaux Arts.
Late 1860's	H. H. Richardson is a subscriber to *Building News.*
1869	By now Shaw is using a living-hall concept but no plans are published.
1869	*Harper's Monthly* begins publishing a series of nostalgic articles on colonial days.
1869	H. H. Richardson first shows his living-hall concept in the Codman House Project (Surface not delineated in elevations).
1870	McKim possibly passes through England on his way home from Paris.
1870-1872	McKim is a full time employee in office of H.H.R.
Oct. 1872	Stanford White is employed in office of H.H.R.
Early 1870's	Introduction of photolithography.
1871	Shaw's textural perspective sketch of Leyes Wood appears in *Building News*—reproduced by photolithography.
1872	McKim uses shingle treatment at Peekskill & Cayuga Lake areas in New York.
1872	Richardson designs Andrews House. Surface is rendered on the elevation.
1872	White is thought to execute famous sketch of Watts Sherman House.
1873	Financial Panic causes building hiatus.
1874	First Shavian plans published—for Hopedene, in *Building News.*
1874	*Harper's Monthly* publishes articles on resort architecture.
1876	First indications of relationship of English Queen Anne to colonial discussed in *American Architect* & *Building News,* January.
1876	Philadelphia Centennial Exposition.
1877	McKim, Mead, & White journey to New England to sketch colonial remains.
1878	White leaves office of H. H. Richardson.
1879	Formation of the architectural firm, McKim, Mead and White.
1882	Stoughton House—last of H. H. Richardson's living-hall experiments.

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The Free Style of Edwardian London

James Fagler

> I have defined the function of art: it is the setting in order the house of mankind. I now define the future of art: it is the setting in order the house of mankind in exalted consciousness of the environment amid which it is placed . . . Art is . . . primarily and chiefly, and always, the doing a right thing well in the spirit of an artist who loves the just, the seemly, the beautiful.[1]

The opening quote sets forth an attitude, Ruskinian in nature, an "exalted consciousness" in content and refers askance to the continental Art Nouveau movements of the turn of this century. This attitude towards art and towards architecture as an exalted consciousness speaks to the thesis of the Edwardian architectural movement termed the "Free Style."

During the last half of the nineteenth century, the English architectural profession was engaged in what has been termed the "battle of the styles." The use of Gothic, Classical, Byzantine, Tudor and other historical styles as a precedent of architectural form was debated, written about and built in a variety of manifestations. By the late 1880's, however, English architects' plagiarizing of historical forms began to give way to a more original manipulation of the historical vocabulary and a decade later these historical forms were being transformed into quite novel construction. The early years of the twentieth century saw this evolution continue toward simplification and monumentality, especially in public buildings.

The next step in this progression was pursuit of an architectural idiom with *no* stylistic precedents. Undertaken by a small minority of English architects, this movement has come to be known to contemporary British historians as the English "Free Style." English architects and writers of the Late Victorian and Edwardian period however, referred to the movement by a number of terms, including: "naturalistic style" and "English vernacular," but they mostly spoke of "free design," "free style" and of "free" versions of historical styles. Modern historians have dubbed the movement "Free Style" to incorporate the tremendous range of experimentation of new forms and details within the movement.

The originality and experimentation characteristic of this movement can be loosely summerized into two strong ideas as described by Tim Benton: (1) the search for a national "free" style which could be seen to be more practical and monumental than Gothic Revival architecture and (2) the retention of the high-minded attitude toward materials, construction, nature, planning and unity of the arts as espoused by the Arts and Crafts architects and designers.[2]

The chief proponents of the Gothic Revival; Pugin, Street, Butterfield and the Ecclesiological Society, proposed to combine the spirit of the Gothic Revival with an innovative, flexible attitude to problem-solving. The Gothic Revival was centered on such ideas as rationality, propriety, structural logic, craftsmanship and a method of planning which articulated each part of a buidling as clearly as possible. Although Free Style architects rejected the belief that the Gothic Revival style was the most appropriate expression of Christian ideals, they did, however, retain the Gothic Revivalist's design attitudes toward rationality, nationality and planning theory.

The second major influence on the Free Style movement was the Arts and Crafts movement. The ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement flourished within the Art Workers Guild, whose architects produced a variety of domestic buildings during the 1880's and 1890's in a Free Style manner. One of the main principles underlying the design of these dwellings was the revival of standards of workmanship and design which these architects believed had declined since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Using vernacular materials and local building traditions,

The research for this essay was initiated during the summer of 1981 when the author attended the Victorian Society Summer School in London, England and was continued during the spring term of the 1982 Overseas Studies Program in London sponsored by the UNL College of Architecture.

the architects designed these houses to blend with the context. The Free Style architects of major public buildings in London later adopted these attitudes toward materials, craftsmanship and locality as their own.

A third influence, negative in form, was the continental Art Nouveau movement. Four leading Free Style architects and designers summarized the contemporary British view of Art Nouveau architecture by saying:

> We explained that the main motive of the design was a conscious striving after novelty and eccentricity, which is the basest of all motives in Art: that the forms of the objects, instead of expressing and illustrating the lines of the construction, obscured and ignored them . . . and that there was throughout a fidgety, vulgar obtrusiveness quite destructive of all dignity and repose . . .[3]

Another Victorian architect was a bit less diplomatic in his assessment:

> L'Art Nouveau, forsooth! Absolute nonsense! It belongs to the young lady's seminary and "duffer's" paradise.[4]

As with many progressive and experimental movements, it must be kept in mind that the Free Style architects were very much in the minority. The majority of Edwardian architects were unsympathetic or even hostile to the thought of the rejection of historically derived styles. In fact, many historically derived structures were built by Free Style architects, using their originality and daring when there was an opportunity for experimentation.

In 1895, such an opportunity appeared for creative experimentation. A competition was held for a large charitable building in the Bloomsbury district of central London. The aging Richard Norman Shaw, the leading architect of the eclectic Queen Anne Revival period, was appointed assessor of the competition. It's possible that Shaw let it be known that

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he was looking for adventurous solutions, for many of the Free Style architects entered imaginative designs. The winner, the young architectural firm of Smith and Brewer, displayed a design of bold, elementary forms (fig. 1). Originally known as the Passmore Edwards settlement, the building opened in 1898 to a cautious architectural press: "The originality of the design is a little aggressive at first sight, but the originality is at least refreshing."[5] Providing a perfect example for Free Style experimentation, the Mary Ward House, as it is now known, was a new type of building—part hostel, part community center. It was intended to bring together "persons of kindred tastes and interests, more especially those engaged in social and educational work in a given neighborhood to form a home in which the conveniences of family life shall be combined with individual seclusion and liberty."[6]

The simple, yet ingenious interior contains a variety of functions, including various dining and drawing rooms, a gymnasium, teaching rooms for

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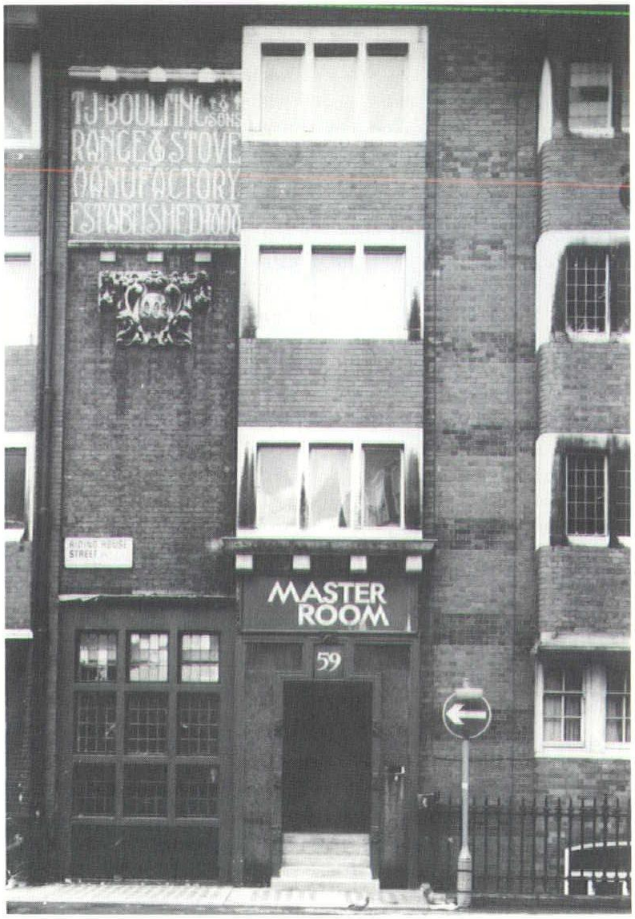
discussions, a library and residential rooms on the upper floors. The exterior however, is an essay of Free Style thought, using several bold devices to exploit a dramatic originality. A long, low geometric street facade is bounded by twin brick projections at each end which are visually linked by a white plastered strip under a deep overhanging eave. The fenestration rationally expresses interior functions such as the gymnasium, stair towers and teaching rooms. The plaster strip is derived from C.F.A. Voysey's domestic roughcast designs, later to be an idea taken up strongly by the architects for the London County Council in their housing schemes after 1900.

Another bold exterior feature is the protruding stone doorway. Massive, yet organic in the manner in which it blends with the pavement, the doorway is topped by two stone eggs. The organic character of the doorway reflects the influence of the leading Victorian theorist, William Lethaby. In his book *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth,* Lethaby describes in symbolic terms the relationship of nature and built form. In the case of the Mary Ward house, the organic character of the doorway and the eggs, which represent the symbols of creation according to Lethaby, are directly inspired by his influential writings.

A second and more severe version of the geometric mode of the Edwardian Free Style is the office for T. J. Boulting and Sons, Sanitary and Hot Water Engineers, 1903. Constructed in the Marylebone district in the heart of London, this corner building, designed by H. Fuller Clark displays fascinating street elevations. The facades are broken up by a series of varied projecting vertical bays of brick and windows (fig. 2). The windows originally consisted of leaded lights set in very simple square-section stone frames and mullions (fig. 3). The bays rise to a varied series of dormers, silhouetted against a slate mansard roof with large square chimney stacks. While inference of historical precedent would be oblique in any sense, the vivacity and richness of the street fascades rival those of the mid-Victorian era.



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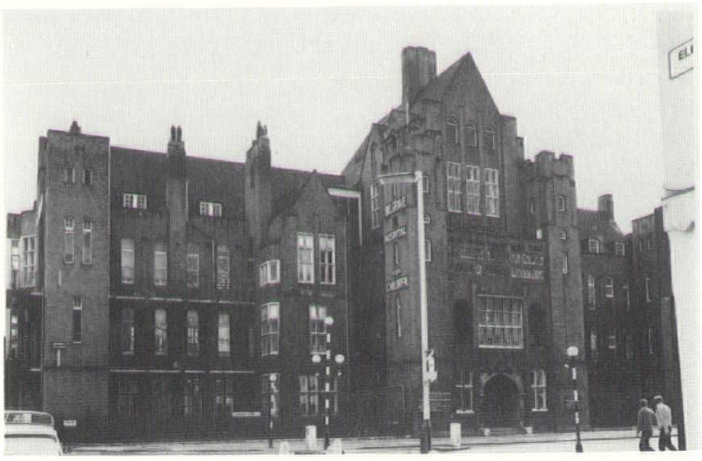

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A structure similar to the Boulting and Sons office building is the Fire Station on Euston Road (fig. 4) also built in 1903 and located one-half mile north of the Mary Ward House. Designed by the London County Council, the section in charge of fire station design was headed by Charles Winmill, a disciple of William Morris and Philip Webb. The architect was faced with a difficult problem—that of combining barrack block housing with offices and large halls for the fire engines. All of this was to be squeezed onto a small site in a residential area. The solution exhibits a plan clearly expressed on the exterior in bold free forms, within a traditional masonry structural framework. Strong brick verticals, trimmed with stone, are varied by a complex pattern of projecting bay oriel windows and an unexpected connecting balcony. This play of geometric forms on the exterior aggressively demonstrates the Webb and Ruskinian principle of "changefulness." Domestic forms are also suggested in the gablets, stone base, oriel windows and small balcony.

A building of simpler, yet bolder forms is the Belgrave Hospital for Children near Kennington Oval in south London, finished in 1903 (fig. 5). The architect, Charles Holden, is described by the noted British architect/writer, H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, as "the man who had the greatest influence over all of us."[7] The plan of this charitable hospital for children of poor families is a response to the need to isolate any ward from the rest of the hospital in case of infectious disease. Once again, however, it is the exterior which is handled in an imposing, free manner. The main entrance is composed of austere buttressed masses rising up to high gables. The wings, extending from the central mass to form large "piers," are bold, self-confident masonry compositions.

The final architect which will be discussed and who designed three of the most important Free Style buildings is Charles Harrison Townsend. Articled to a Liverpool architect, Townsend then moved to London in 1880, joining the Art Workers Guild in 1888 and subsequently becoming an Arts and Crafts zealot. Townsend was significantly influenced by Lethaby's writings. *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth* encouraged Free Style and Arts and Crafts architects to utilize nature as a source of design inspiration. Though the book was vague and somewhat pretentious, it added a degree of profundity to the current thought of the progressive movement.

Townsend also seemed to be greatly attracted to the work of the English architect, Henry Wilson, and to the work of the famous American architect, H. H. Richardson. Allured by the organic aspect of both men's work, Townsend freely adapted the use of the arched portal, massive facades and organic materials and detailing.

Townsend's first experiment with organic imagery and Free Style massing was also to be the first use of symbols of nature integrated into the exterior of a public building in the manner of textile and wallpaper designs by Morris, Mackmurdo and Voysey. This structure, the Bishopsgate Institute built in 1892, contains a library and large meeting hall connected by a long hallway (fig. 8). As with all three Townsend buildings to be discussed, the interior was kept austere and simple, with a minimum of detailing. The exteriors, however, are bold and free designs, highlighted by large masses of unadorned masonry playing off highly detailed sections of masonry and tile.

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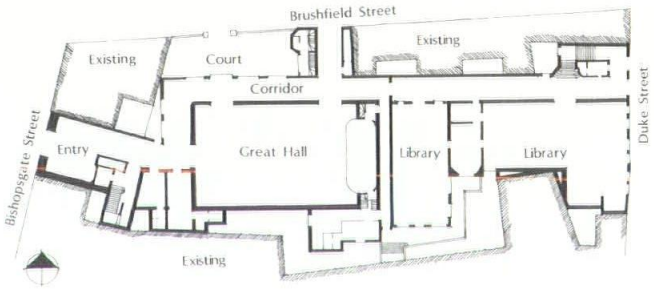

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The narrow street frontage of the Bishopsgate Institute (fig. 6) exhibits two prominant towers framing a central square window and tied symmetrically to a large arched opening. Though somewhat disguised, this elevation is composed of several strong, basic forms. Lethaby writes: "Of all forms, the cube and the hemisphere are the most sacred . . . to combine the two has been the builder's problem in all ages."[8] The use of the square and the arch in this facade is part of a complex symbolism which is further developed in the use of the tree of life symbol appearing in reliefs above the arch, above the central square window and on the towers. The use of flowing tendril and foliage detailing contrasts sharply with strong, simple masses of unadorned masonry.

Townsend's Whitechapel Art Gallery of 1896 (fig. 7) continues the development of concepts explored in the Bishopsgate Institute. Whereas the street elevation of the Bishopsgate Institute is centered on a great square window, that of the Whitechapel Gallery "has a symbolic central square concealed behind the slope of the battering of the towers . . . Squares and semicircles play everywhere in the composition, often hidden in part or disguised as if to express 'the irregularities of nature's growth,' (Victorian architect Edward Prior's words) giving buildings the sort of organic character which also appealed to Townsend."[9] Square at their base, the towers of the gallery are terminated by small turrets. Originally, cupolas similar to those at the Bishopsgate Institute were to adorn the top of the towers but, alas, they were never built. The same fate befell a tile mural by the Arts and Crafts designer, Walter Crane, which was to have been placed between the towers.

Perhaps the Horniman Museum of 1901, located in the South Bank district of Forest Hill, expresses most clearly the incorporation of nature with Free Style ideals. Its prominant tower (fig. 9), including a massive arch and nature symbolism in relief, gradually evolves in form from a square at the base to a circle at its highest point. Two bays of gallerys and library (fig. 10) are expressed on the exterior using arched and pedimented gables. The exterior gives a rare and satisfying union of arts and craftsmanship as evidenced in some very fine metalwork, tile mosaics and beautiful masonry reliefs.

In conclusion, the British Free Style movement had its moments of tremendous originality and experimentation. The desire of its practitioners to establish a national style ultimately succumbed to its own idiosyncrasies and to the repercussions of the First World War. Too individualistic to ever reflect popular taste and too expensive for all but the most wealthy patrons, the Free Style fell victim to the popular English Grand Manner exemplified in the work of such men as John Belcher and Edwin Mountford and to the war which diverted attention away from these romantic experiments to a more somber and practical view of building.

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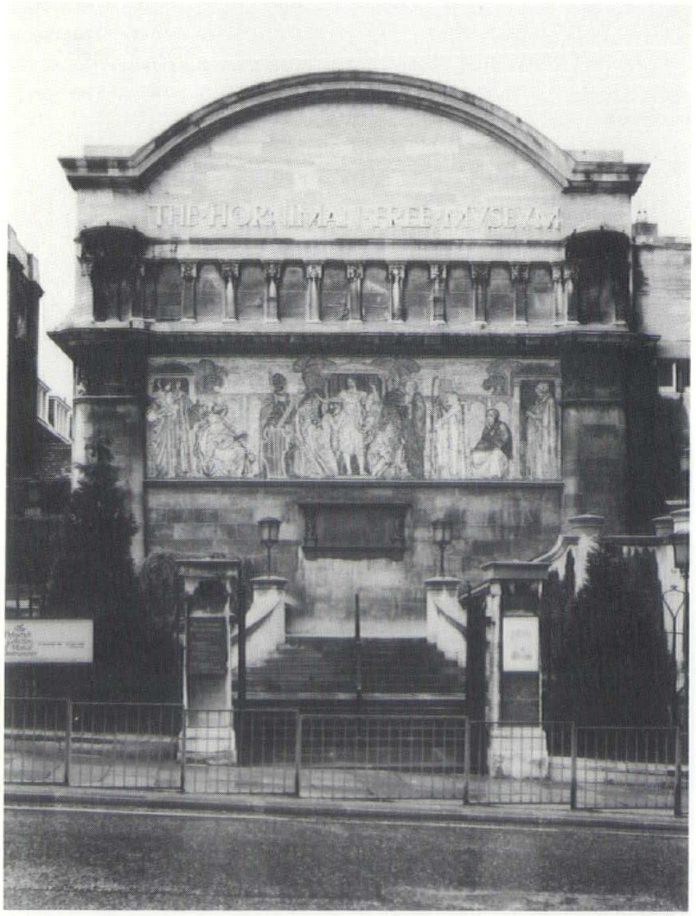

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End Notes

[1]T. J. Coaden Sanderson, "Of Art and Life," *Arts and Crafts Exhibiting Society Lectures,* 1897.
[2]Frank Russell (ed.), *Art Nouveau Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli International Publishers, 1979).
[3]"L'Art Nouveau; What It Is and What Is Thought of It," *Magazine of Art,* N.S. 11, 1904, p. 210.
[4]Ibid.
[5]*The British Architect,* February 25, 1898.
[6]G. L. Morris and Esther Wood, "The Architecture of the Passmore Edwards Settlement," *Studio,* Vol. XLV, 1899, p. 11.
[7]H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, *English Architecture Since the Regency: An Interpretation* (London: Constable Publishers, 1953).
[8]W. B. Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth* (New York: G. Braziller, 1975).
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An Architecture of Richness: The Country House Practice of Edwin Lutyens

Gary Kohn

The period of British history between 1890 and 1914 is a unique and fascinating topic for study. It was a time of intense activity and social development, and a period of unprecedented British prosperity. This economic fortune was complemented by the emergence of a rapidly growing middle class of businessmen and merchants who were starting to challenge long established British social hierarchies. It was a significant period of transition brought to a halt in 1914 by the ravages of World War I.

The architectural climate in Britain at the time was also in the throes of change. It was a time of high architectural achievement, and of the many talented architects at work perhaps the most popular and skilled was Edwin Lutyens. It was Lutyens' unrivalled practice in the genre of the country house which brought on this popularity and constitutes the topic for exploration in this article.

The country house has long been an integral part of Britain's social history. From the earliest days of civil order, the so called "power houses" (the seats of the landed aristocracy scattered about the English countryside) controlled Britain's affairs. With the end of the nineteenth century came a change in the status quo as the old, landed aristocracy were being displaced by the "new rich" of business. This new middle class sought to establish itself in higher social circles, and one sure way to accomplish that objective was to invest in a house in the country.

People were in love with the notion of a house in the country; it represented to them peace, tradition, beauty and dignity. Popular magazines of the period such as *Country Life* contributed to these ideas with feature articles and pictorials romanticizing life in the country. With rapid developments in transport and communication it became less difficult for businessmen to conduct their affairs on a daily basis from their homes in the country. In general, these contemporary country houses took on more of a lived in, domestic character than the sprawling estate houses of earlier times. There were still requirements for servants, and rooms and accouterments for entertaining, but these generally were not as lavish or expansive as their Victorian or Georgian counterparts. There was still the occasion when a grand mansion was built, but for the most part the archetypal "country house" took a position somewhere between those and the common worker's cottage.

The period architect who exhibited perhaps the greatest talent in this realm of design was Edwin Lutyens. His houses display a richness and creativity few other architects of the period were able to equal. Part of Lutyens' success derived from his ability to read the personality of his client and transpose it into a built expression. Equally important were the particular regional characteristics which influenced the nature of the house. There is no hint of a universal style or method in Lutyens' work. Each house is a distinctive, intuitive response to the many varied qualities of site, client and program.

In addition to his obvious technical and organizational skills, the personality of Lutyens lent a strong flavor to his work. For him, architecture was a wonderful game full of opportunities for expression and wit. It's an uncommon pleasure to explore Lutyens' houses and note the exceptional treatment of form and space, and then discover the delightful overlay of planned inconsistencies, quirks and surprises. It is this remarkable talent which makes the work of Edwin Lutyens an exceptional and timeless topic for study.

The four houses presented are examples which seem to best describe the personality and skills of Lutyens as a country house architect. Nothing can equal the experience of exploring these houses first hand, but perhaps this overview will add support to the statements outlined above.

This article was researched and developed as an independent study project by the author during his participation in the 1982 London Program. Observations are based in large part on personal visits to project sites.

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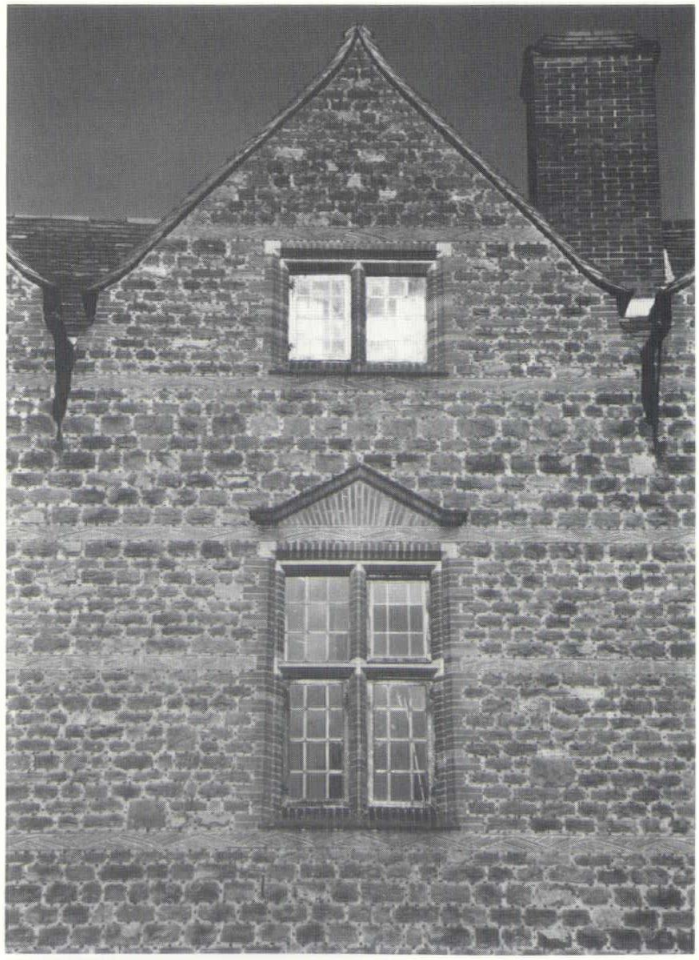
Tigbourne Court, Whitley, Surrey

Tigbourne Court was designed in 1899, early in Lutyens' career. The architectural mood in England at that time was influenced greatly by the Arts and Crafts movement; an attitude which dismissed the pretense of style and promoted a return to simpler, traditional values. Lutyens was sympathetic to the cause and this small house in Surrey shows his understanding of the local vernacular through the manipulation of form and materials. It is not without its quirks, though, as various subtle undertones contribute to make this one of his most sophisticated and interesting schemes.

The most dominant feature of Tigbourne Court is the entrance front which faces a main road running south out of Witley. Lutyens apparently focused his attention on this principal elevation. Note the very obvious symmetrical composition and the curved walls of the entry court (fig. 1). This rather grand effect is offset very well by the triple gables at the center of the composition and the two massive chimney stacks placed on either side. The plan in this case is completely subservient, as are the other elevations, to the tremendous power of the entry facade.

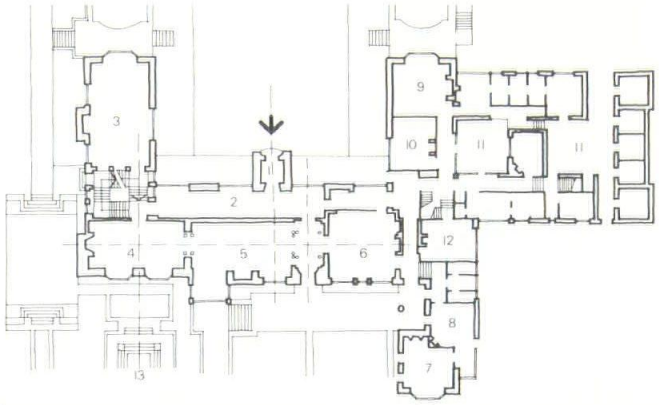
Lutyens instilled even further cause for delight through his playful mix of "styles." The predominant Arts and Crafts theme has been combined with elements of classic origin. The aediculae at the upper storey windows are pleasantly decorative and the Doric columns and lintel of cut stone highlight and define the entry to the house very effectively (fig. 3).

The aspect which makes this house most irresistable is the incredible richness of the materials. A local, Bargate stone is the principal building material and within the mortar joints stone chips were inserted under the pretext of strengthening the joints. The stone and mortar give a very coarse texture and color to the facade which is wonderfully contrasted with string courses of red tile, and smooth, red brick at window openings (fig. 2). The result is a visual feast of textures, forms and juxtapositions; vernacular with a twist.



3.

1 Porch
2 Vestibule
3 Billiard Room
4 Drawing Room
5 Hall
6 Dining Room
7 Smoking Room
8 Gun-Room
9 Kitchen
10 Servants' Hall
11 Yard
12 Housekeeper
13 Pool



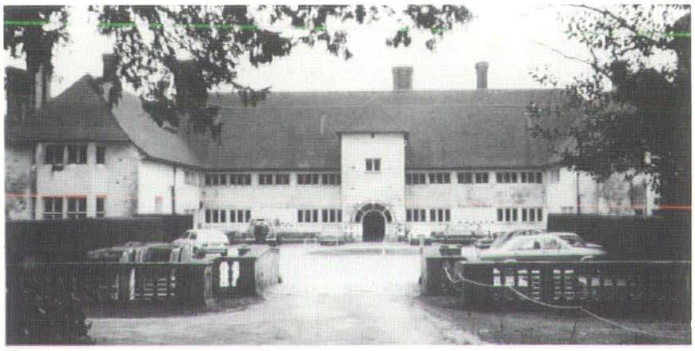
4.

Marshcourt, Stockbridge, Hampshire

As important as the preceding example which shows Lutyens' command of the vernacular, is this much larger and more complex house buitl in 1901. Marshcourt is another essay in the use of regional materials (this time in the chalk and flint of Hampshire), but far outweighing that aspect is Lutyens' complete mastery of the plan.

As Tigbourne Court leans toward the picturesque, Marshcourt takes airs of a much grander country residence. The experience of approach, passage and arrival is carried out to the fullest extent. The sequence is initiated by the passage between two lodge houses several hundred yards north of the main house. Immediately the visitor is forced to approach along a tree lined axis which focuses on the projecting entry porch. Gradually the front elevation is revealed as the visitor approaches a small bridge which then allows access to the entry court (fig. 5). Finally you are allowed to enter the house, but still you have not arrived because the axis has been so boldly terminated by a transverse corridor! The climax is finally reached by entering, in roundabout fashion, the richly detailed Great Hall (fig. 6). The journey is not yet complete as the visitor is then introduced to numerous vistas from room to room and enticing axial relationships between house and garden. These heightened experiences of movement through space, both indoors and outdoors, are only possible through a very sophisticated organizational scheme.

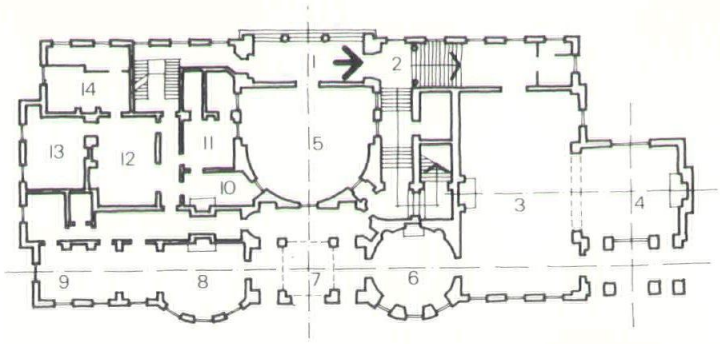
Another aspect of Marshcourt which deserves some discussion is the relationship of house to garden. The two become extensions of each other as the geometry of the house is pulled into the landscape and the natural sloping characteristic of the site reinforces and defines the building mass. Notice the direct relationship, both physical and visual, between the suite of reception rooms, (Drawing Room, Great Hall, and Dining Room) and the garden (fig. 4). Imagine the pleasure of exploring the many varied enclosures, level changes, lawns and pools so intricately and completely planned.



5.

6.

1 Porch
2 Entrance Hall
3 Big Room
4 Billiard Room
5 Court
6 Drawing Room
7 Winter Garden
8 Dining Room
9 Smoking Room
10 Servants
11 Pantry
12 Kitchen
13 Servants' Hall
14 Scullery



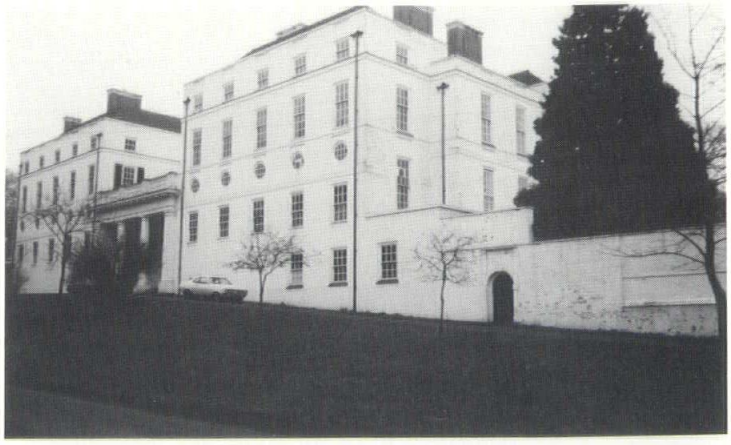
7.

Nashdom, Burnham, Buckinghamshire

With Marshcourt, Lutyens demonstrated his ability to plan and control movement and the perception of space in a sequential manner. At Nashdom, he exerted the same control in the manipulation of plan, elevation and section, but with the intent of creating an intriguing ambiguity.

Nashdom was designed in 1906 for a Russian prince and his English wife primarily for entertaining. Lutyens provided the necessary pomp in his design, but not without a variety of surprises. Perhaps the most noticeable trait is the Georgian flavor of the composition, perfectly acceptable for a lavish house for royalty; but on close inspection it's revealed that the house is built of common, whitewashed brick! Other visual characteristics are equally contrasting. The entry elevation with its sheer facade, raised elevation and suggestion of portico is reminiscent of an urban housefront (fig. 8). The house is pushed very close to the road to reinforce that suggestion, while the garden elevation with its green, contrasting shutters takes on the characteristics of a resort hotel (fig. 9). There is an interesting duality created between the discreet elegance of the entry facade and the lighthearted garden elevation that pervades the entire house.

Lutyens took full advantage of the entertaining aspect in organizing the plan (fig. 7). The guest would approach the entry porch as expected and move into the court only to find that there are no doors into the house. The actual entry is at the end of the portico and opens to a formal stair which leads the visitor up to a large ballroom. Opening off the ballroom is a series of reception rooms adjacent to the garden, each of a different shape and character. The skylit Winter Garden virtually completes the split of the house started by the entry court, and when taken into three dimensions creates an ambiguity in the reading of the building mass. Is the house a solid rectangular block, or is it two pieces joined, or maybe it's a courtyard scheme? With all its unorthodox gestures, Nashdom may at first appear to be the work of an awkward amateur. On closer inspection, however, the design reveals the innovative control and stylish flair of a master purposely avoiding the obvious.



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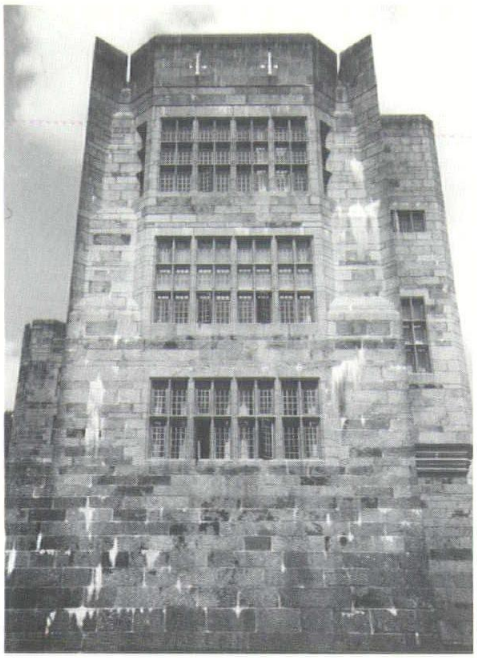

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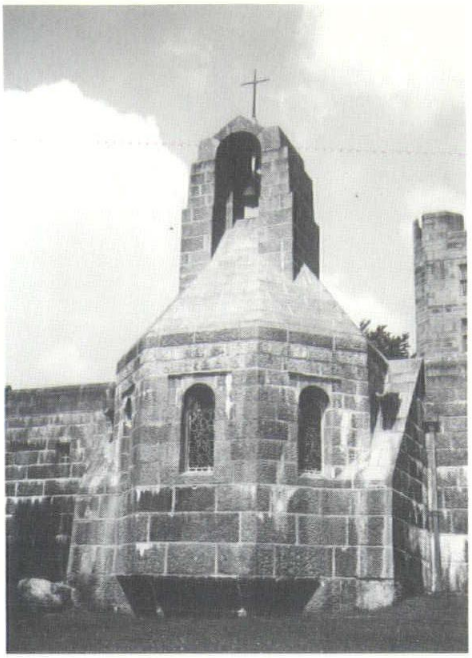


11.

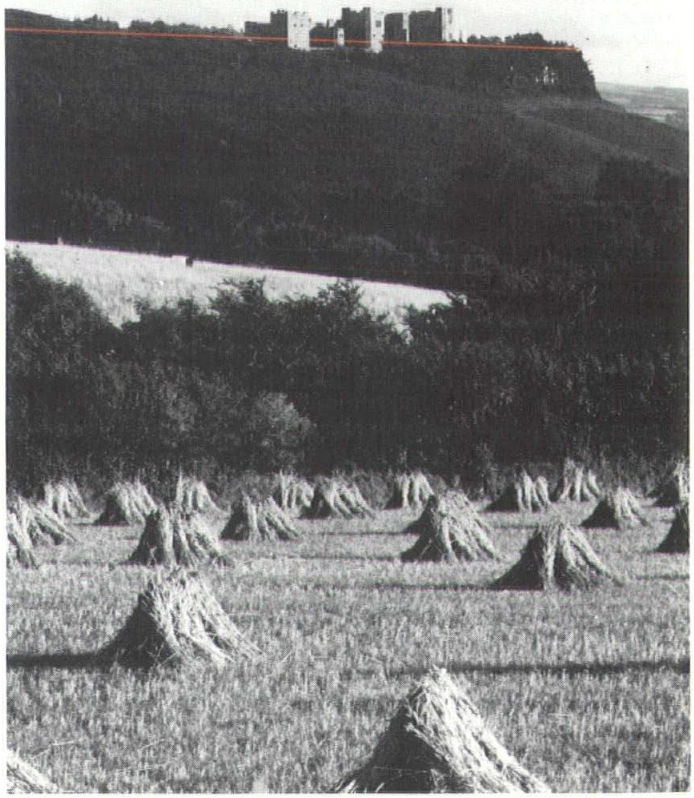
Castle Drogo, Drewsteignton, Devon

This concluding example is probably the most well known of Lutyens' country houses which is unusual because it is the least "house-like" of all. Drogo is a very special accomplishment as it is the result of an uncommon notion on the part of the client; a desire to build a romantic version of a medieval castle.

Julius Drewe, a wealthy, self-made businessman came to Lutyens in 1910 with a sizable budget, a beautiful site and a desire to create a huge, ancestral home. It was a perfect opportunity for Lutyens to vent his own romantic tendencies. So, after siting the building in a most dramatic location on the edge of a steep embankment overlooking the river valley, he began to organize the elements and visual cues that would make this a castle in both a suggestive and real sense.

Drogo is not a stage set; its battered walls are built of solid granite as much as six feet thick. The soaring south bay takes on tower-like proportions and the great mass of the wall is expressed by the carving away of stone to create a full bay window near the top (fig. 10). At the parapet, abstracted battlements complete with arrow slit openings further describe the nature of the wall and contribute to the military imagery. A wonderfully descriptive, sculptural quality was also given to the chapel which was added at a later time to put to use the foundations of the unconstructed Great Hall (fig. 11). The forceful manipulation of forms and the great mass of the building anchored to the hillside provide a very evocative image of the medieval castle (fig. 12). The conviction of the architect made this building a powerful expression. There is no delicacy or hesitance in the statement of concept at Drogo.

Castle Drogo was a tremendous undertaking and unfortunately was never completely realized. The client had neither the endurance or the financial means to resume work after the outbreak of World War I brought a halt to progress for a number of years. Regardless of its uncompleted stature, Drogo is still a remarkable accomplishment.



12.

These are just four of the many country houses designed by Lutyens during the important years between 1890 and 1914. They are all very individual responses to different sites, clients and influences, but in toto they expose the diversity and broad range of Lutyens' abilities. Each house describes a different aspect of his personality as a country house architect. Tigbourne Court reveals a great sensitivity to regional characteristics through the use of materials and vernacular forms. Marshcourt continues the regional theme while exhibiting a keen understanding of complex organization, geometry, and perception and movement through space. At Nashdom, the complete mastery of organization and geometry is enlivened with complex, intentional ambiguities, and finally Castle Drogo is a prime expression of Lutyens' romantic spirit.

There are not clear-cut divisions in Lutyens' practice in the country house genre as described in this article. He continually reverted to previous methods and biases for inspiration while developing his understanding of the formal aspects of architecture. The mark which makes all of these houses unmistakably "Lutyenesque" is the display of wit and vitality in playing this wonderful game of architecture.

For architects today this attitude is undoubtedly a refreshing and welcome change of pace. The occasions to learn from Lutyens are frequent, thereby making this a meaningful topic for study. In addition to the learning aspect there is a nostalgic value, at least for the British, in reviewing the buildings of this period. The country house is both a product and symbol of Britain at its peak of power and prosperity.

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