BUCKETS GOLDENBERG, BOB HEISE, KENNETH LAIRD, TO STAR ON MILWAUKEE DIVISION’S SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

September and football being synonymous, Gregory Lefebvre, September program chairman for the Milwaukee Division of the Wisconsin Architects Association, has planned an all-out football evening for the dinner meeting to be held at the City Club Thursday, Sept. 20, at 6:30 P.M.

He has, says Chairman Lefebvre, been working on this program since May, and here is the lineup which he has achieved and which should bring out not only the regulars, but the not-so-regulars.

There’ll be Buckets Goldenberg, an electrifying name to all football fans. Buckets, as anyone knows, was star football player at the University of Wisconsin and upon turning professional, became star of the Green Bay Packers.

Bob Heise, sports announcer on WTMJ and WTMJ-TV, another popular star in his own field, will be master of ceremonies. And to talk on present day football, an excellent choice was made in securing Kenneth Laird, football coach at Milwaukee County Day School.

So there you have the lineup for the September meeting.

Although announcements will be mailed only to members of the Milwaukee Division, Arthur O. Reddemann, general program chairman for this division, wishes all members of the association to know that they are invited not only to this meeting, but to all others. Reservations must be in the hands of Gregory Lefebvre, 3415 N. Green Bay Ave., not later than Sept. 18.

ARCHITECTS ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL EXHIBIT, MADISON

There will be a Fall Conference of School Administrators and Supervisors at the Memorial Union, University of Madison, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, September 26, 27 and 28, in connection with which, members of the Wisconsin Architects Association have been invited to hold an exhibit of school plans and models.

Those wishing to participate, are requested to contact Carl Lloyd Ames, Chairman of the W.A.A. Exhibition Committee, 3505 W. Center St., Milwaukee 10; Hilltop 2-2568.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN COURSE OPENS SEPTEMBER 18

Classes in the Architectural Design course at the Layton School of Art will start Tuesday, September 18, from 5 to 10 P.M. Wallace R. Lee, Jr., A.I.A., continues as instructor. Mr. Lee is Chairman of the Committee on Education and Registration for the Wisconsin Architects Association. The classes will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays, throughout the semester from 5 to 10 P.M., and on Saturdays from 9:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.

Registration for the course will be on Wednesday and Thursday, September 13 and 14.
The Honorary Secretary of the R.I.B.A. Discusses Education of Future Architects

Following is a reprint from the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects of a paper read by Martin S. Briggs, Honorary Secretary of the R.I.B.A. at the British Architects' Conference in May of this year.

The Royal Institute of British Architects is an old institution which records its records with the greatest of pains and accuracy, and this paper, which deals with the education of the future architects and the draftsman, should be read carefully by the architects of Wisconsin.

In the September issue of the Wisconsin Architect, the questions asked from the floor of the R.I.B.A. Convention will be published, and they will be found most interesting.

Architectural Education

By Martin S. Briggs [F], Honorary Secretary R.I.B.A. Read at the British Architects' Conference, 31 May 1951

The President in the Chair

(Reprint from the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects)

The Institute, having been invited to provide a paper on 'Architectural Education' to open this Conference, called on me — as its Honorary Secretary and maid-of-all-work — to get busy with it. You must not expect a high degree of polish as a result of my labours, though I will do what I can with my little mop to brush a few spiders and cobwebs out of the dark corners.

But what a topic to choose for a May morning! Surely it must be worn threadbare by now? At intervals, for at least thirty years back, it has aroused a constant stream of reports, leading articles in the professional Press, pamphlets, letters from peevish architects and students, lectures, discussions, and what not. Why all this fuss, and why does it continue so persistently? What is the matter; if, in fact, anything is the matter?

Well, I am not going to inflict a sermon or homily upon you, still less a special prescription for any local needs Belfast may have. This is not the occasion for such things. All I can do is to offer a few friendly comments on the position as I see it today after a long and intimate contact with the problem.

In dealing with it, I am puzzled why students, as a class, have taken so prominent a part in recent criticism. So far as I can ascertain after inquiry, this phenomenon is peculiar to our profession. I can say nothing about theological students, but there seems to be no comparable movement among students of law, medicine, surveying, accountancy, or the various branches of engineering. It seems to be endemic among architectural students, varying in virulence as between schools but not confined to any one type of school. Is it something to do with the artistic temperament, or what is the psychological explanation? Frankly, I do not know, but I should like to know. Has it any political origin or any political significance? Again, I can not say.

But there it is, and one wonders whether it is a good thing or not. In theory, it would be a very good thing that students should display such interest and enthusiasm about their studies and their curriculum. There is a feeling of deadly earnest about it. It is not merely high spirits, and youthful impatience with all constituted authority. If it were, one could laugh it off. A venerable professor entering his lecture-theatre and finding his person caricatured on the blackboard, or the same man reading a merciless or even cruel lampoon in the students' magazine, may well feel embarrassed or hurt, but that sort of thing often occurs and will continue to occur.

There should be a students' society of some kind in every school of architecture, and it should be a vehicle for suggestions to the authorities. If the students can suggest improved methods of lighting in the lecture-rooms, better facilities for this and that, adjustments in the time-table for the sake of convenience, their advice may be welcome and helpful. It is when they claim to influence or dictate the curriculum, the direction of the school, the trend of the teaching, the qualifications of the staff, that their status comes into question.

In preparing this short paper, I have tried to read everything published, not only by students but by older members of the R.I.B.A., about architectural education during the past five years or so. I have not gone further back, because the Institute produced in 1946 the long Report of its Special Committee on Architectural Education, dealing with the question in great detail. The Committee was a large and representative one, and its deliberations lasted all through the war. It held thirty-five meetings. Its conclusions were duly considered by the Council, and subsequently modified in some respects; but, generally speaking, it still represents R.I.B.A. policy, though that policy continues to be open to reform and somewhat fluid. It would be presumptuous on my part to offer any pontifical opinion on that weighty report: it should be sufficient to say here and now that, in the main, I do agree with it. (So now you know where I stand, for better or for worse.)

In 1948 the R.I.B.A. published in full the Report of the Architectural Science Board on The Teaching of Construction, a sequel to the same Board's report on The Place of Science in Architectural Education (published in 1940). Of those two formidable documents I will only remark that they were, to use a hideous word favoured by elderly leader-writers, 'unexceptionable': that is, that there is nothing the matter with them, though they would have been more readable and useful if they had been half their length. But they have received careful attention.

Towards the end of 1948 a storm suddenly blew up from the left (not politics!). MARS (Modern Architectural Research Group), in collaboration with the Architectural Students' Association, issued a first instalment of a long report on architectural education. (I have never yet seen the promised later instalments.) This interim Report consisted of a historical survey, followed by elaborate statistics from which the de-
duction was drawn that the R.I.B.A. was far more interested in the students of the Recognized Schools than in candidates who took its external examinations; that, in fact, the latter group far outnumbered the former; and that — to put it bluntly — the R.I.B.A. did not care a hoot (or 'tinker's cuss') about their education, which they acquired as best they could in the highways and hedges. This Report had a splendid Press. It would. It was welcomed by every
man who had a grudge against our poor old Institute, and the statistics were swallowed whole — even greedily. It all made excellent 'copy'.

The R.I.B.A. at once took up the implied challenge, and within two months published in their Journal (Vol. LVI, January 1949) full corrective statistics to prove that the MARS figures were both inaccurate and misleading, thereby rendering the sensational deductions made from them completely invalid. As Chairman of the Board at that time, I was convinced of the reliability of the revised statistics; although, not having had the advantage of training in a Recognized School, I can not be accused of having any bias in that direction.

This brings me to what is, I think, the main point of my paper, namely, the present relation of our Institute to the Recognized Schools on one hand and to the external students on the other. I believe from what Mr. Gibson said that this question is likely to be of special interest in Belfast in the near future.

The first full-time day course in architecture started at Liverpool University in 1894, was soon followed by others in London and elsewhere. Recognition for the first three years (that is, up to the Intermediate stage) was awarded to Liverpool and to the Architectural Association School in 1920, to the Bartlett School of London University in 1921, and to Manchester University in 1922. The same privilege has been accorded to many others since then; and now the score, excluding schools overseas, stands at twenty-four in Great Britain and one in Eire. Of these, eighteen have obtained Final Recognition for their five-year courses.

These Recognized Schools are of various types. Some form departments of universities, others of art schools, others again of technical colleges or polytechnics, and two are independent of academic or municipal control. This diversity of type is healthy, and the R.I.B.A. has resolutely declined to favour any one type (although it has often been pressed to do so), relying on its Board to see that uniformity of standard — not uniformity of organization — is preserved as between the different types. The staff and students of each type are always prone to argue that theirs is 'the one and only'; but, in fact, it is possible to find advantages and disadvantages in each type.

A university school, at first sight, appears to have certain obvious advantages over all the others. It
should be able to provide excellent social and cultural contacts, even if it does not possess residential facilities. The Senate should be able to exercise a beneficient control over its curriculum, preventing eccentricities and discouraging wild experiments. A university can often provide links with a faculty of fine art on the one hand, and with science and engineering on the other. The very name implies a broad outlook. Nevertheless, it may be donnish and academic, confined to its ivory tower, bound by archaic and cumbersome regulations, oblivious of modern needs, and distrustful of technical specialists. Its professors, when invited to provide a few lectures on their own particular field, tend to offer long courses instead, so that architecture is squeezed out to almost nothing.

A municipal school of art provides contacts with other artists of all types, and — whether you admit it or not — an architect is an artist. There is or should be, something inspiring and exciting about working in an art school. Conversely — you will notice I have got 'conversely' in every one of them — the social and cultural atmosphere is often very narrow and specialized, and facilities for study in the structural and scientific side of the curriculum are often inadequate.

These particular facilities are usually more satisfactory in a technical college or a polytechnic, particularly if the institution possesses a building department. Work in such colleges is often more realistic and practical than in either of the two types I have just mentioned, but there is always the danger that it may be too realistic, too near the ground, and may thus lack inspiration. Both technical colleges and art schools are municipally controlled; this fact ensures their financial stability, but may entail irksome interference by busybodies and officials, which the teaching staff is apt to resent.

Independent schools have the merits and defects of their autonomy. They are free to experiment, to adopt pioneer methods, to make quick and frequent changes of policy. Many of the best and most vigorous features of architectural education are derived from this source. 'The dead hand of officialdom', as it is sometimes called, hardly touches them in their work, which is often excellent. But this very freedom is liable to become licence. The steadying hand of the Senate or the City Education Officer is never there to clap on the brake, or to prevent amateurs in education from making mistakes that have been made in other fields long before. Moreover, financial stability is only maintained by charging high fees to students.

Nevertheless, one can not generalize by types of school. Any particular school from any one of the four categories I have mentioned may be a 'rogue' school — that is Mr. Goodhart-Rendel's favourite word for one that does not conform to type — and may possess virtues or defects usually associated with another type. It might be fair to say that architectural schools in Britain today, so far as I have seen them, usually have more in common with each other than with other faculties or departments of larger institutions of which they form only a section.

The quality of life in a Recognized School depends to some extent on both physical and cultural environ-

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menl. By "physical environment", which I think is the accepted term for our town planners, I mean the buildings occupied by a school, their equipment and quarters envisaged for architectural schools in some recent students' competitions; but under present economic conditions one can not hope for a speedy cure of this sad defect.

'Cultural environment' is more difficult to define, and depends, as I have already suggested, on the type of institution. Even in some universities, I have noticed that architectural students tend to 'keep themselves to themselves', which is a pity, for by so doing they miss those wider contacts that form so unique and attractive a feature of University life. Even from a strictly worldly point of view, such contacts are 'useful' as well as pleasant.

So far as one can generalize about Recognized Schools as a whole, two main criticisms are heard, often from people who know very little about them or who, for some reason, are jealous of them. The first is that they are given an unfair advantage by the R.I.B.A. in their internal examinations, which — being mainly conducted by the teaching staff — favour their own students and are below the standard of the more difficult and far more impartial external examinations. It is not my view but it is a criticism. (I have often heard precisely the opposite allegation made by teachers in Recognized Schools, who claim that their External Examiners prevent favouritism and are a complete safeguard of standards.)

The second charge is that a student, on leaving a Recognized School after five years, generally makes an incompetent assistant in an office, that he is conceited as well as utterly ignorant of practical matters, and that he is not worth the exorbitant salary he demands. (I have heard all this dozens of times.) The implication is that the Recognized Schools are unable or unwilling to accept the facts of life, that the teachers have their heads so much in the clouds that they neither know nor care what goes on in the ordinary architect's workaday world, whether in private practice or in an official employment.

Many of these strictures are either untrue or unreasonable, and the implications need not be accepted. During a five-years' full-time course a student should learn something more than elementary building construction, he should have an opportunity to spread his wings (if any), and he should be trained as a potential architect rather than a permanent hack. But, in spite of this confession of belief, I also think that some of the schools could do more than they are doing in preparing their students for entry into a very harsh and unkind world. There is hardly anything that one learns in an office that can not be worked into a five-years' curriculum, though there are many desirable things in a five-years' curriculum that one seldom encounters in the average office, public or private. By setting less ambitious programmes of design in the later years of the course, and by devoting more attention to working drawings and details of small buildings, the schools could dispose of these hostile criticisms.

Most of you must have been asked frequently by anxious parents whether architectural training is more effectively obtained in a Recognized School or as a pupil in an office. Many years ago, at an Annual Conference like this, I heard a prominent member of the Institute — after an extremely good lunch — make a speech in which he denounced architects who took pupils as criminals, or something like it. Well, it had been a good lunch, and certainly that speaker was not voicing the official view of the R.I.B.A. For my part, if I were asked that question, I should recommend a Recognized School, if there happened to be one within reach, geographically and financially. But I certainly should not condemn the pupillage system, root and branch, as something completely outmoded. There are some architects' offices to which I would sooner send a son or daughter (it is grandsons in my case) than some Recognized Schools, and that not entirely for architectural reasons. I should have some regard for the atmosphere of the school — and by that I do not mean simply social status. I mean that the atmosphere should be healthy, and the products of the school should be sane and civilized people, not cosmopolitan cranks with one-track minds.

I personally had two years' full-time training at a University before taking my Intermediate, and then three years' pupillage in an office, after which I took my Final. Some people today still favour that solution or some other form of 'sandwich course', as it is called, and it has its points. I owe it to the memory of my chiefs, now both dead, to say that they treated me very well as a pupil, and gave me time off — I think it was two afternoons a week — to attend an Art School. For the rest, I relied on private study; but for my weakest subject, Stresses and Strains, I took a correspondence course under a firm of coaches, F. F. Farrow and Banister Fletcher. During those years I received much friendly help and kindness from senior members of the local Allied Society — that was in Yorkshire — attended all its meetings, and competed for its various prizes.

What I missed was any serious systematic training in design, and that was a really serious lack. I can not see how any ordinary private architect's office can supply that; but nowadays it can be obtained in evening classes or part-time day classes at many schools which are not recognized as well as at many that are. It certainly takes longer that way, but it can be done.

Undoubtedly an articulated pupil sees more of the sordid routine-work of architecture in an office that he could do in a school; but if the office is a large one he will only see a corner of the practice and very little of the actual procedure; that is all done far above his head, by 'the boss', or by a manager who deals with the business side of things. It is most unlikely that he will ever overhear an interview with a client, and he may never be sent out on a job. A small private office gives him a far better insight into such matters than a large one. As for a public...
Recently Remodeled Interiors, Milwaukee Athletic Club

Unfortunately, black and white cannot do justice to the interiors of the Milwaukee Athletic Club, pictured here. The combination men's lounge and reading room, with a most pleasing lighting effect, is done in American walnut, stained a medium light tone. Here, writing areas are created by grilled partitions. The carving over the solid walnut fireplace was executed by Dick Wiken. The Balinese Room, or men's grill, also done in American walnut, has the same finish as the lounge. The murals, from which this room gets its name, were executed by Robert Burrell, noted mural painter of New York City. The Elephant Room, or tap room, pictured on the Cover, is in harmony with the men's lounge, the murals in this room also having been painted by Burrell.

Eschweiler and Eschweiler were the Architects and William MacArthur, the Interior Decorator.
office, I just do not know how a junior manages to learn much about practice or procedure there, even in some of those enlightened municipal offices where the staff is organized in groups or teams, each undertaking a specific job. So much depends upon the personality of the chief, at any rate in the case of a private practitioner, that comparison between pupil-age and a Recognized School can not be very useful.

Speaking for myself, but also, I believe, for many other people, I do not favour early specialization, or any differential type of training as between potential private practitioners, potential assistants in their offices, and potential public employees. I can not believe that anyone can forecast, either at the beginning or at the Intermediate stage, what is likely to be a student's future. So I continue to accept the hackneyed theory of 'the field marshal's baton'.

Some men blossom late, some have unexpected opportunities which can only be regarded as flukes or good luck; and one takes a very grave responsibility in assuming that a youth of 18 or 19 will never have such luck, that he will not blossom late — look at Winston Churchill! — and that he must be marked down for ever as a wage-slave. I have read too many biographies of successful architects to be able to take that view! The student should be trained, I maintain, as an architect and nothing else.

Turning now to the non-recognized schools, the R.I.B.A. has recently subdivided them, not very euphoniously, into 'Listed Schools' and 'Facilities Schools'. The former category comprises schools which, while not granted the exemption enjoyed by Recognized Schools, do provide a fairly comprehensive full-time curriculum. Thus they form an alternative to Recognized Schools for full-time students, not for articled pupils, though they may also provide evening and part-time day classes for such pupils. The 'Facilities Schools' are so called because they provide reasonably comprehensive facilities in evening and part-time day courses, and are able to help articled pupils and others very considerably. Then, besides the 'Facilities Schools', there are many others where a measure of education is obtainable in evening classes, certainly better than nothing; and, finally, there are correspondence courses run by private individuals or firms.

Students from all these sources, except the Recognized Schools, take the R.I.B.A. external examinations. The Institute is sometimes accused of being

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too conservative in its policy of restricting the number of Recognized Schools to a couple of dozen for all Britain, and those confined to the cities and largest towns. That policy is, however, common to other professions, and it seems to me quite sound. The award of recognition confers great privileges and great responsibilities on a school; it should not be handed out too freely. Moreover, an architectural school can not function effectively, or be able to maintain an adequate staff, unless it has a substantial group of students in each year of the course. Since the war, all schools of all grades have been flooded with students whose training is in arrears and is being paid for by the State. Even now it is impossible to foresee exactly what are likely to be the so-called ‘normal’ numbers in each school.

It is ridiculous to suggest that the Institute holds the balance unfairly between the Recognized School students and the others. It is also unjust to assert that it is neglecting those students who happen to live in remote places, by failing to provide courses of study in every small market-town. Such provision forms no part of its duties. It is the responsibility of the local education authority, which pays the bill. Where there is a reasonable demand in any town, justified by numbers, the Allied Society concerned can usually exert pressure on the authority to have classes started. It can encourage its member pupils to attend, it can watch over and guide the classes; but remember, small classes are always expensive and often inefficient! (I should have said earlier that the help, support and advice of architect members of the Allied Societies is absolutely essential to the efficiency of all schools of all types, even in the large universities.)

But, when all is said and done, isolated students in remote corners of Britain can not all be catered for by classes; so either they must move to a neighbouring town, claiming if possible a grant from the local authority; or they must take a correspondence course; or, if they prefer it, rely entirely upon the old-fashioned Victorian gospel of ‘self help’.

In conclusion, I will offer a few comments upon some current problems of architectural education. Almost the only substantial criticism that one hears from ‘leftish’ quarters of the existing curriculum relates to the teaching of the classical ‘Orders’ and to the setting of so-called ‘period designs’. Frankly, both of these are out of fashion, but how far should adult and responsible people in positions of authority be influenced by ephemeral fashions? There are two arguments at least in favour of continuing historical studies, including the study of the Orders.

The first is that architecture is and always has been a plant of slow growth, with its roots firmly embedded in tradition; and that study of its evolution is valuable, even in modern practice. Besides, if we admit that there is any such thing as a science of aesthetics, that ‘proportion’ and ‘scale’ mean anything at all, how can we exclude some study of masterpieces of the past from the scheme of visual training? Many of our most successful and original young de-

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signers have undoubtedly benefited from their strict training in classical architecture.

Secondly, an architect's ordinary practice comprises much work besides designing new buildings: it involves the extension or modification of old ones, whether they be mediaeval churches, Jacobean mansions, or Georgian terraces. Such work can not be handled sympathetically or even competently without a full knowledge of the historical styles. A special post-graduate course in the conservation of old buildings has started this session for the first time in England at University College, London; but quite apart from those who undertake specialized work of that sort and therefore need intensive training for it, almost every architect is bound to encounter similar problems.

As for the much-ridiculed 'period studies' that were regularly set in all architectural schools a generation ago, they were perhaps a hang-over from the time when much so-called 'design' consisted in lifting or adapting details from the popular folios of Gotch, Garner and Stratton, and Belcher and Macartney, to say nothing of The Practical Exemplar of Architecture. Nowadays that habit has waned, partly as a result of economic stringency, partly because of changes of fashion. But you will all admit, I am sure, that an architect learns primarily by using his eyes; and that only by laboriously drawing-out exercises in the various period styles will he really understand and memorize them. A few hurried sketches in a notebook or on a study sheet, a hasty glance at a lantern-slide, are not enough to impress them on his memory. Exactly the same applies to the Orders. I used to think that the 'compositions' of the Orders, such as all the schools were laboriously preparing thirty years ago on Beaux-Arts lines, were overdone; but today I feel that some schools have gone too far in the opposite direction. In any case, measured drawings of good traditional buildings should be compulsory for all students; but it is a question whether they provide all the visual training required even if taken from good examples.

Now on this subject of historical studies I should like to say three things. First, that I am still — fancy that, I am still — a University lecturer on that subject, so I may be suspected of bias. Secondly, that it happens to be a hobby of mine and I love it. Thirdly, that I believe I am in the same age group as the President — I am one of the old guard.

The teaching of construction, in all its aspects and in all its stages, seems to be one of the most difficult problems of all. It has become infinitely more difficult since the war. The only kind of building that is now permitted is building in its lowest terms, quite apart from applied ornament. Almost everything is
cut to the bone, and generally it is only the cheapest type of construction that is approved by the controlling authorities.

Admittedly some so-called 'traditional' construction is permitted, but only under the most stringent conditions. Are we to regard this state of affairs as transient or permanent? How much of our crowded curriculum is to be allotted to these current methods, and how much to what are commonly called 'textbook methods'? 

Recently I had to review a new edition of a very popular manual of building construction, and I looked with interest to see how the editor had solved this problem. He had met it by lengthening the book by approximately 50 per cent! Some obsolete drawings of cast-iron columns and girders had been omitted; a great deal of excellent new information had been added; revision had been thorough; but most of the old favourites had been retained, including trussed timber partitions and all the usual types of roof-truss. Now that is all very well for use by a practising architect, but how much of it should you include in a student's course which remains the same length as before? Something must go, and I leave it to you to consider what that should be.

Lastly I must mention the vexed question of 'Practical Experience' which has worried the Institute so much during the last year or two. It was precipitated by the reports of the deputations which recently visited America, suggesting that architects in Britain often lacked a proper grounding in office procedure, site procedure, and practical knowledge of materials and construction. The reports recommended a longer obligatory period of actual experience of such things between the passing of the Final Examination and the award of the diploma of A.R.I.B.A. However, that question has now been settled, and there is no need for me to say any more about it. So, after these rather rambling remarks, I will conclude my talk.

If it has been dull or flat, I should like to say that I could have made it far more amusing if it were not to be published in the Press.

There is one point I should like to make to end with. I have spent part of my life as a practising architect and part as an educationist, and I have sometimes been asked to compare the two occupations. Well, as you all know, if an architect makes a mistake in his dimensions, if the foundations collapse, he is for it. His reputation may be ruined. On the other hand, he may become famous. The work of the educationist is usually less exciting and harassng, and therefore perhaps less interesting. On the other hand, it is almost impossible for the educationist to make a mistake, or rather, to be caught when he does, because for every 50 people who support any educational theory there are at least another 50 who violently disagree with it. So it comforts me today to think that even if half of you think I am all wrong you will find it very difficult to prove.

(Continued in the September issue)

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