

# The ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

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## THE COUNTRY HOUSE

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARCHITECT'S METHOD OF APPROACH

BY

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### I.

FROM CERTAIN POINTS of view the modern city is a triumph of civilization. Yet more and more we find those who can do so turning from it for at least occasional relief—an attitude recently expressed in the remark that straight-thinking people no longer consider cities as places in which to be born and die. Whether the revival of interest in country life represents a psychological change or whether it has taken place simply because the country is more accessible than it used to be is a question for hair-splitters. In either case the fact is undeniable. Perhaps it was first called to general attention by the publicity given the visit of the Prince of Wales to America in 1924. The Prince learned at first hand and newspaper readers learned at second hand that a characteristic and well-developed country house life, not inferior in charm to that of England itself, existed in the United States.

In our earlier history the country house was a place of seclusion, to which

one retired with some deliberateness and for a fairly long period of time. Its isolation made a degree of self-sufficiency necessary, and this in turn imposed conditions as to size and elaborateness. But the modern country house is really an extension and modification of the city itself. One might think of it, in part, as an urban residence set down in a rural park, and made readily accessible by convenient motor and electrical transportation. In point of time many of the estates of Long Island and Westchester are as near the business center of New York as the town houses on upper Fifth Avenue used to be. A similar analogy might hold for other cities.

A distinction has to be made, of course, between the country-house regions and the near-suburban districts both in the character of the architecture and in the natural surroundings. The single-family dwellings that closely hug the city are at best a compromise, neither flesh, fish nor fowl. They are small, built on cramped lots with seldom more than a meagre

patch of green grass, and of an architectural style peculiar to realty development companies. Such houses need not be bad but the profit motive too often seems to leave little incentive to make them really good. The typical country house, on the other hand, is more gracious, more deliberate, and clearly formulated as an approach to a "near-to-nature" way of living. Not, of course, that going back to nature after the manner of the well-to-do American country house owner has much in it that would seem familiar to Rousseau or Chateaubriand. But the architect is usually willing to give nature a fair chance. The broad uncrowded acres, with trees and shrubbery and frequently a rolling terrain seem to modern tastes to prescribe informality. The typical impression of the resulting dwellings is one of roominess, with the house plan deployed so as to fit the contours of the ground, and with rambling roofs that nestle unobtrusively into the landscape. One may find a pattern of what might be called the super-suburban life—a mode of existence from which the humdrum of the ordinary commuter's routine is pretty well eliminated—on the "North Shore" of Chicago or the "Main Line" of Philadelphia. But the country house rises to its glory in the neighborhood of New York city. Westchester county is largely given over to a gentlemanly rural life. Long Island, likewise, is the seat of hundreds of estates, which with their subsidiary country clubs, golf courses and polo grounds occupy nearly half as much ground as all its farms or something more than 116,000 acres.\*

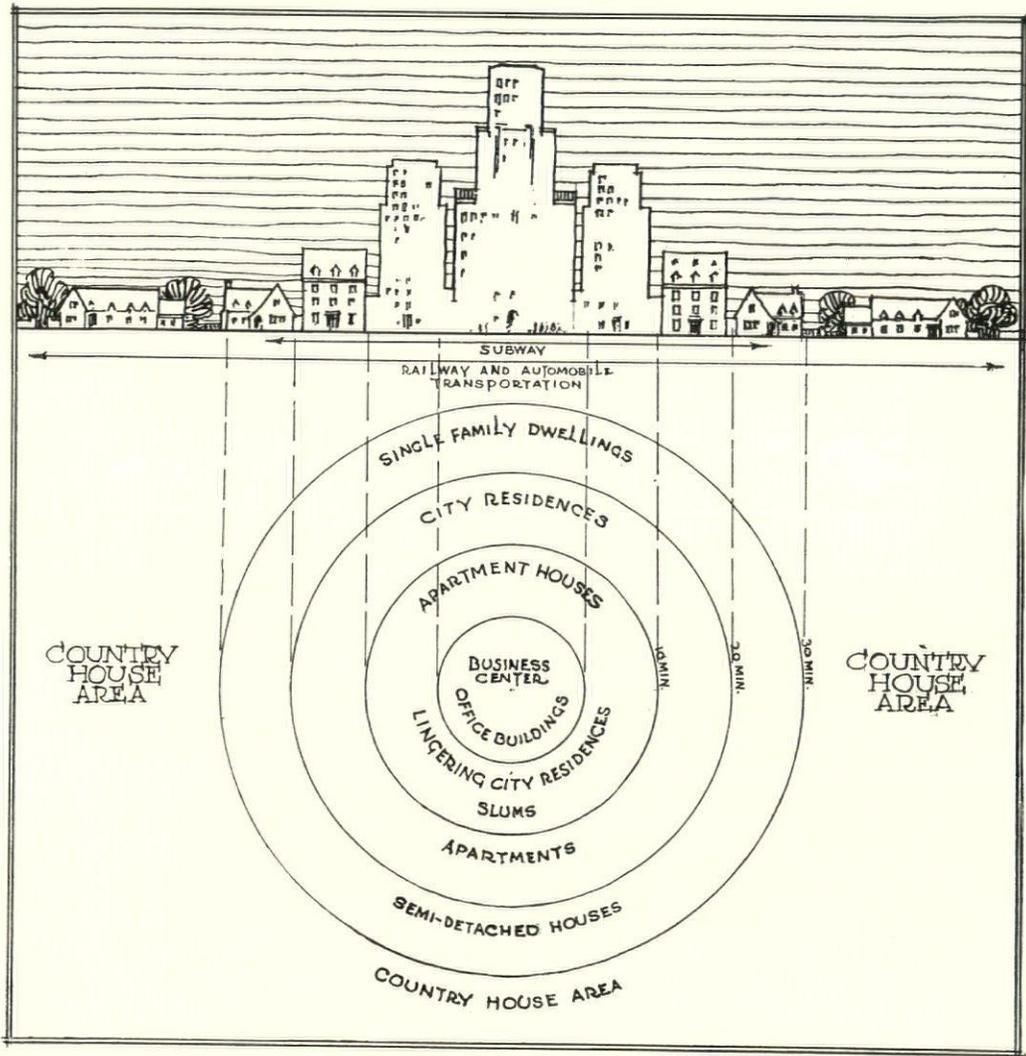
The drift of the well-to-do into the country is partly a matter of fashion and changing social custom. In the larger cities elaborate town houses are going out of style, even among the very wealthy, and being replaced by apartments in town and estates out of town. A large part of the conventional mode of social life and diversion presupposes a rural *piéd à terre*. But there is an aesthetic element in the situation, too. Man's life in cities is a

much newer thing than his life in open fields and forests. The city dweller becomes "land-minded" with very little encouragement, and moves to the country not simply because it is the popular hobby to do so but because he likes it. His ancestral tastes crave the rural scene. Because his remote forebears were owners or herders of flocks he finds himself taking delight in green fields. He longs for elbow room, for congenial neighbors, for quiet. His nerves are jangled by the mad crush of the subway, the bleak pavements, and the unending greyness and monotony of the urban landscape.

He cannot but desire in his country home the conveniences of the city, for it is of the essence of the modern temperament to want to have one's cake and eat it, too. Accessibility to the city, the nearness of schools, churches and opportunities for various cultural contacts are factors to be considered. The country house must reflect the temper of the age and the social standards of its owner. It must be to some extent an expression of his personality—or perhaps it might be better to say of the personality to which he aspires. Such is the problem which the architect is called upon to solve—and which furnishes one of the most fascinating of architectural puzzles. "To relate properly in proportion all the rooms and to achieve a delightful exterior," Mr. William A. Delano, of the firm of Delano and Aldrich, has said, "is about as perplexing a thing as I know—far more complicated than an office building where one floor follows another *ad infinitum*."

The architect will wish to create a house that will not be simply a transplanted city mansion. He will need to build with his background ever in mind and to emphasize rather than slur over the differences between country and city life. But he must begin with the realization that a great change has come over our modes of living, whether in the city or in the country. He must keep up with the swift pace of material civilization. The house is being literally made over by science. This is reflected in the fact that the standards of comfort of our grandfathers or even of our fathers are con-

\* Douglas, H. P., "The Suburban Trend" P. 261. See also "Long Island: The Sunrise Homeland," issued jointly by Long Island Railway and Long Island Real Estate Board, 1923, P. 201.



SECTION OF "TYPICAL CITY"

Showing characteristic radial lines of expansion. The area of country estates is restricted to the outer fringe of the city, with rural as well as urban relationships

sidered unbearably crude by our present younger generation. Nothing is more certain than that the United States of 1927 is no longer the United States of pre-war days; much less of the 'eighties and 'nineties. And country life has altered as completely as has city life. An instance of this is our now customary provision for the motor car. The automobile was at first housed in a detached garage, perhaps on the same principle which led the first designers of cars to

make them with dashboards and whip sockets. But the discovery that a garage was not a stable has made it a common practice to include it in the house and express it externally.

Another significant indication of change may be seen in the comparatively recent appearance of the small country house, laid out with a view to economy of upkeep and a minimum of hired help. It has been found possible to make a family as comfortable with three servants

and less space as with six or more domestics and correspondingly larger establishment. The difficulty of finding competent servants has expedited this development. The smaller and more compact house has lost nothing in luxury, but it is so put together that not a square foot of space is wasted. The plan is studied so as to attain the utmost in convenience and duplication is avoided by making one room wherever feasible serve the purpose of two. But these newer ideas make the task of the architect more rather than less difficult.

Outside as well as inside the house the designer must bear in mind requirements not formerly made. He must provide for an elaborate apparatus of games and diversions. Our marked love of outdoor life and the appreciation of the beauties of nature is such a familiar thing in the present-day world that we are apt to regard it as normal, and to forget that it is of comparatively recent origin. Games that were followed only by a scattering of nobility in the Middle Ages and Renaissance times have become the pastimes of almost a third of our population. New modes of amusement have been invented and popularized. We have time and inclination for sports of which our colonial ancestors never dreamed and which they might possibly have regarded as too pleasant to be quite godly. The American flair for games now demands that tennis courts, swimming pools, golf links and even polo grounds be provided, and it is the task of the architect to relate these to the house. Every feature of the grounds thus becomes the subject for intensive study. Otherwise the final scheme will lack unity and the utmost of beauty and fitness will not be extracted from the landscape and lay of the grounds. The testimony of the architects who are quoted below will show with what sympathy and ingenuity they strive to fit their houses to the natural setting.

The modern country house architect, in short, is dealing with a type of design that is in a state of change and transition. He must meet new needs and in doing so express the life and spirit of the day. This may seem an obvious principle. But

there is no evidence to prove that the architects of the past were dominated by such contemporary requirements. They seem, indeed, to have been grandly superior to them. The great bulk of eighteenth century architecture, for example, consists of buildings of stereotyped plan enclosed in a Palladian veneer. Any gentleman with a modicum of talent for drawing and a trace of intelligence was capable of producing such an architectural shell. All houses of that day were symmetrical, box-like and formal. Horace Walpole bitterly assailed the architect Kent for the hardships to which Holkham subjected his patrons in the interests of his Palladian design. "We are left to conjecture," said Walpole, "whether the noble host and hostess sleep in a bedroom forty feet high or are relegated like their guests to a garret. . . . All this may suffice to display the perverse energy of an architect in producing a monumental whole, but both the proprietor and his guests would in the long run probably prefer rooms of appropriate dimensions and so situated as to enjoy a view of the scenery of the park or the fresh breezes of heaven."

The modern architect is not so arrogant, either toward his clients or toward nature. He looks to the natural setting to inspire not only his design but his materials. Rough-hewn timbers, local stone quarried from the site, wrought iron and bricks are all suggested by the soil and seem to express the terrain on which the building stands. The house is built of the material of which the landscape itself is built. The flavor of nature, I believe, must become a congenial ingredient in our contrived architecture of this sort. Like the sculptor who creates the embodiment of an abstract idea in stone or bronze, the architect is called upon to express the embodiment of out-of-door life in contrast with the more urbane manner of the city residence. As an instance of the way in which a house may be made to suit its environment I may cite the adobe house of the Western plains, the California ranch-house and the farmhouse of Pennsylvania. The happy appropriateness of these indigenous buildings ap-

peals to our aesthetic sense because they literally spring from the soil and also because they are enveloped in the atmosphere and aura of their locality. They record the manner in which the builders of colonial or pioneering days, out of sheer necessity, first fashioned their habitations. They emphasize, as it were, the very texture of the country.

When we have said this, however, we have not yet provided a complete formula for the country house. The historical background of house and community may suggest traditional solutions, any one of which the architect may follow with freedom and success. A given case often demands the colonial or the even more classical. It is difficult to dislodge from our minds the association of certain Georgian or Renaissance forms with the country home. If we indulge this sentiment the surroundings become secondary to the expression of type. The setting will then serve to frame and enhance the house, rather than merge with it. And how often the "composition" requires just that exotic and slightly surprising quality in order to deliver it from too much sweetness or quaint suavity. Was it Walter Pater who said, there is no exquisite beauty without a certain strangeness in the proportions?

This is hardly the moment for a further discussion of aesthetics. I am well aware that to touch upon the aesthetic problems of architecture is to raise many-sided questions which have been hotly debated from the time of the pyramids. Kipling would have it that the failure to complete the Tower of Babel was due to differences of aesthetic taste among the builders. Yet it is the imagination and creative zest of the architect that counts for most in the achievement of the successful country house. The house which is merely practical, no matter how efficient the plan may be, nor how downright serviceable are the materials, will never draw wild applause from the passers-by. We seek for more—for an elusive fitness of expression, for the subtle atmosphere of enchantment. For a house, like a painting, is a work of

art, a wresting of beauty out of formlessness.

## 2.

So far in our discussion we have been speaking of the problems which the architect faces when he undertakes a country house. It may now be fruitful to examine the actual manner in which the representative country house architect meets those problems. In what ways does he adapt himself to diverse conditions? What, may we ask, is his process of thought and method of approach? The value of such a study need not be emphasized. It is hardly possible to pass judgment upon an example of architecture unless we consider the intentions behind it and the processes by which it came into being. It has been said that architects are seldom capable or desirous of expressing their intentions in words. Presumably they would be authors or orators if this were not the case. But I believe the assertion is chiefly true of such abstract matters as proportion and pure aesthetics—things often intuitively felt rather than reasoned. The designer should be able to speak with truth and sincerity upon the way he does his work. In order to satisfy myself that this was the case I asked five architects who are recognized as specialists in country houses to describe their own methods of approach or the system followed in their offices. Mr. William A. Delano more than any other American architect has set the style for country residences on Long Island. The question put to him was whether it was not true that the arrangement of the interior plan was the dominant factor in creating a country house. Sufficient American designers have studied in the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, or in schools in this country whose methods of instruction are based upon the French system to make such a query far from irrelevant. Mr. Delano was also asked to describe the steps that he followed in meeting the conditions imposed by the site, and to tell how the final solution of plan and design was arrived at.

"I agree with your thesis that the house should grow from the inside out,"

Mr. Delano began. "My explanation as to how I go to work must of necessity be indefinite, for each case demands different handling. But in general this is what I try to do. I avoid thinking of the new job until I have seen the site and examined it carefully. Contour maps, no matter how crammed with data, are misleading. You must see a place in all its aspects before you can have an adequate idea of its possibilities. A glimpse of a vista here or a tree there or even the roll of the ground may give you the inspiration you are always hoping for. I try in

work on a small pad, which I carry in my pocket until I find the solution which pleases me. Then it is drawn out at one-sixteenth scale and I talk this over with the client, trying to explain as clearly as possible why each room has been placed where it is.

"The exterior is necessarily determined by the plan. Unfortunately every owner wants to have a name for the style in which his house is built. I find this both difficult and annoying. I wish people would accept the present method of construction for what it is and be



HOUSE FOR J. B. TOWNSEND, ESQ., RADNOR, PA.

Wilson Eyre and McIlvaine, Architects

Preliminary study (bird's-eye perspective) made with the purpose of visualizing the house in relation to the naturalistic setting. See opposite page

general to avoid hilltops unless it happens that there is a wide plateau, and I try to have my house face as nearly as possible to the south, for in this part of the world the winds blow from the southwest nine days out of ten in summer. A southerly exposure affords not only sunlight but coolness. I try to keep the service part of the house as much out of sight as possible. If I can I put the entrance door on the north side, and by the same token the staircase, for these elements do not require sunlight as the living room and bedrooms do. Very often, unfortunately, this arrangement is not possible, and then I come as near it as I can. I generally

satisfied to call the result 'Modern.' A Modern style has as much right to exist as a Renaissance or Colonial. It does not necessarily mean anything cubistic or impressionistic. Like all other good styles it takes sound traditions wherever they can be found and adapts them to present-day conditions. It is such a deadening thing to have to follow a particular style slavishly. To do so is copying and nothing more. Yet most people want to call their houses Georgian or Norman or Palladian, and are not satisfied with accepting a good house, well arranged, without a fancy name.

"I generally stick to the sixteenth-inch

scale drawings until the plan is fairly well determined upon and then go up to an eighth or quarter scale, according to the size of the house. Then, and not till then, do I undertake the exterior, except as I have mapped it out in a very general way in my own mind. In building country houses it seems to me that the surroundings of the house are as much a part of the picture as the house itself. I have always insisted upon doing the gardens immediately adjoining the residence. I have also insisted whenever possible upon doing the interiors but in some cases I have had to succumb to the owners'

own. We urge the owner to build in the style, if there is one, which is indigenous, as we feel that a house so built adds doubly to the charm of the countryside, and that, on the other hand, a house of an exotic type, though perhaps beautiful in itself, detracts from that charm. Nevertheless the house is to belong to the client and should express him and his desires. If these desires are not so crude and impossible as to justify the architect in relinquishing his commission the attempt to meet and solve them may well yield a result having a freshness and interest not otherwise probable. The plan,



HOUSE FOR J. B. TOWNSEND, ESQ., RADNOR, PA.  
Wilson Eyre and McIlvaine, Architects

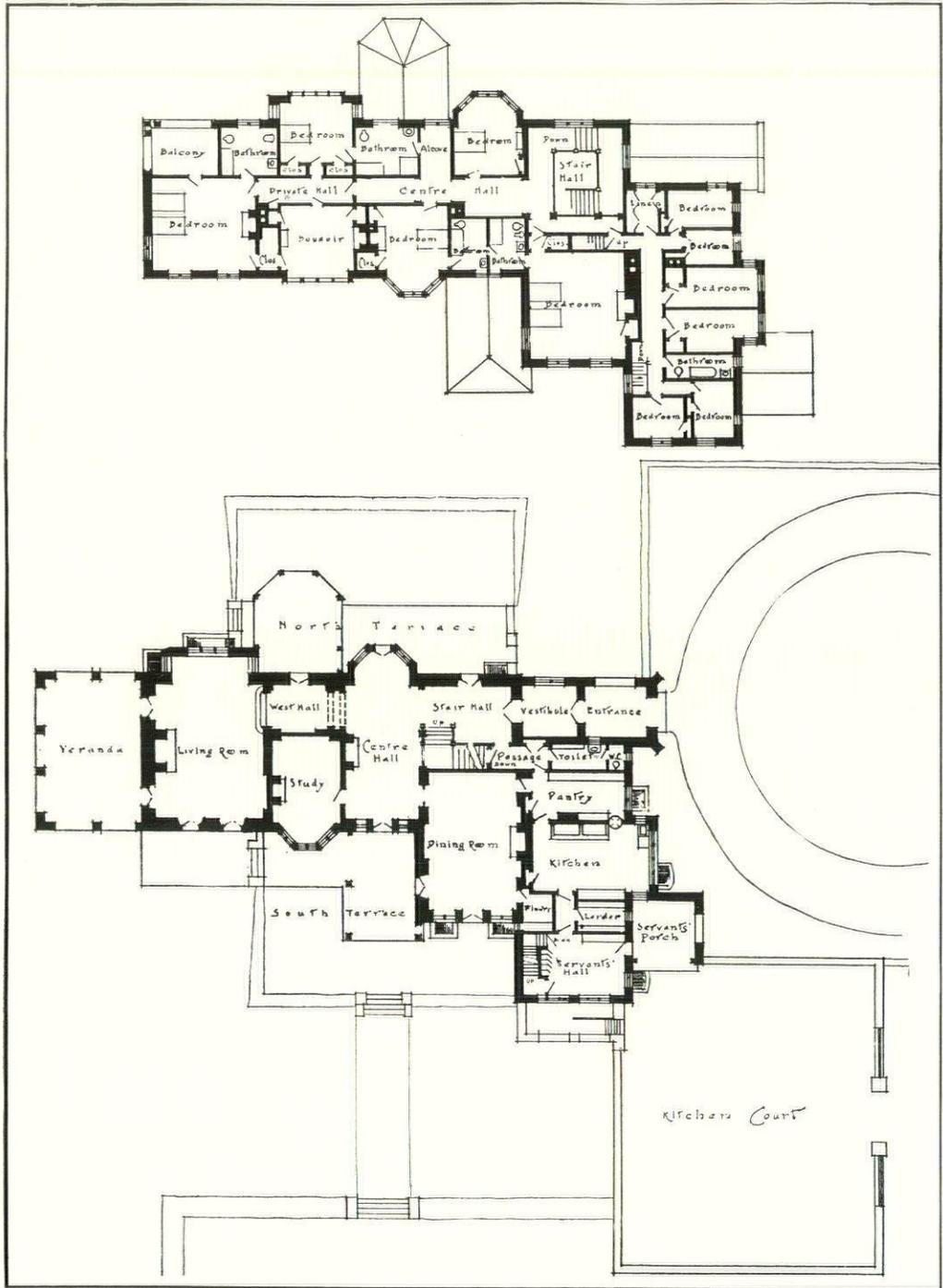
mania for buying old rooms. In many cases these rooms are more beautiful than I could design. In other cases they are a good deal worse. But there is no denying they have become a passion with a part of the American public."

For Mr. Electus D. Litchfield the first consideration is that "the ideal house, be it in town or country, should express the personality of its owner, in terms of a style in keeping with its location and appropriate to its site."

"It is generally happiest," Mr. Litchfield goes on, "when it is expressed in the architectural vernacular which the architect has to some extent made his

of course, is of outstanding importance and the exterior treatment of the house must follow the plan and express the interior arrangement.

"The actual site conditions must also largely influence both the character of the plan and its architectural expression. A rocky, informal or wooded site calls for a more informal type of house, both in plan and in elevation, than a level, formal bit of land. But though the site must have a controlling influence on the plan arrangement the desired stylistic quality of the house must also play an important part. There is a certain historical type of American house that practically de-



FLOOR PLANS OF HOME FOR J. B. TOWNSEND, ESQ., RADNOR, PA.  
Wilson Eyre and Mellvaine, Architects

mands a symmetrical arrangement of the principal rooms at either side of the axis of the central hall. But such an arrangement is quite at variance with the normal floor plan of a house which is to have a different stylistic expression.

"It goes without saying, however, that the house must be built so that the plan is thoroughly practicable and workable. Many of the plan requirements of today are entirely different from those of former times. For that reason no house properly designed today, whatever its style may be, will be a replica of an ancient house. When we talk of the style of a house we mean that suggestive reminiscent quality, both in plan and in interior and exterior expression, which it may have.

"With the plan of the house determined to meet the practical considerations and the intended stylistic expression the elevations develop readily—the more readily as the plan solution is perfect."

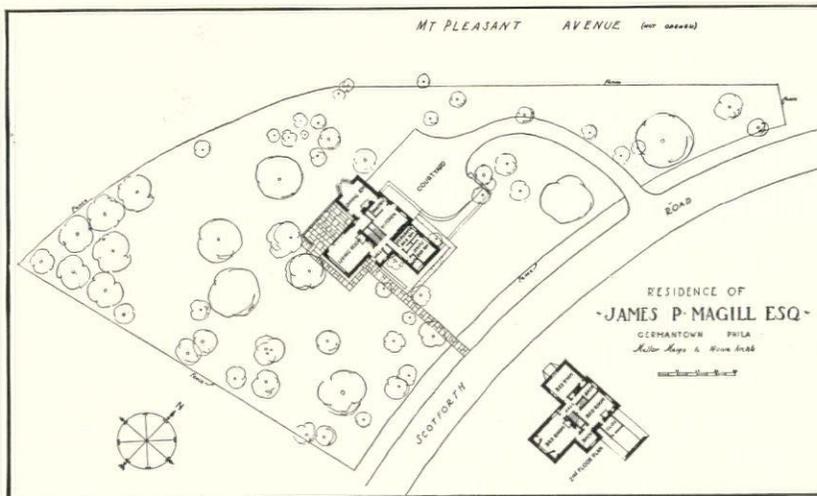
Wilson Eyre and McIlvaine have summarized their method of approach to the solution of the country house problem somewhat as follows: First there is a conference with the client as to his probable requirements, the number of rooms and so on, and the approximate amount he is willing to spend. Then there is a very careful examination of the site, including a topographical survey. The ground is gone over thoroughly and the

problem visualized from all angles. Next the problem goes on paper and the relation of the various rooms to one another is worked out. As this process continues the general exterior masses begin to take shape, and as the plan and mass begin to work themselves out the elevations are carried along. It is now possible to subject the whole problem to a bird's-eye perspective test from all angles. (Page 342) Finally the question of detail as to style is considered, and the house is made to conform to the particular desires of the client in this respect, if he have any.

The firm of Dwight James Baum follows from the start almost the same procedure as do the three architects I have just quoted. Variations among the different organizations arise in their relations with their clients, and in the method with which the preliminary sketches are prepared.

"An inspection is first made of the site," says Mr. Baum, "and a complete topographical survey is obtained, giving not only contours but orientation and location of all trees and other details. Next the client's mode of living is both seen and discussed and an analysis made of the type of house that will suit both the client and the site. Sometimes the client has some special furniture or art objects that he wishes to retain and these must be

(Continued on page 446)

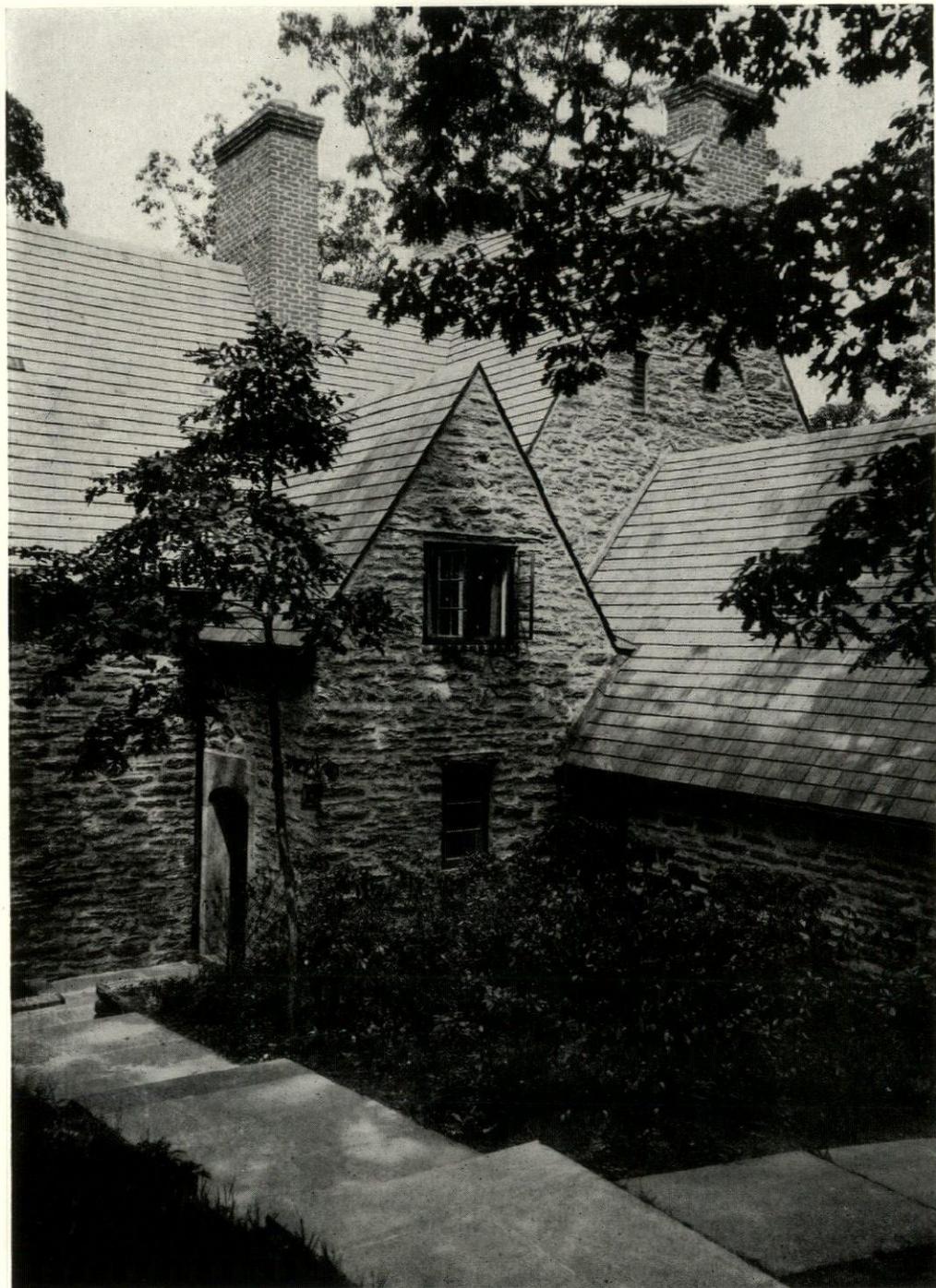




*Photo. Ph. B. Wallace*

This house is built on the slope of a hill in woods facing the Wissahickon, and the natural glade in which it is set constitutes its garden. It is of local stone, with a shingle roof. The terrace, between the Dining Room and Living Room, overhangs the Wissahickon park

RESIDENCE OF JAMES P. MAGILL, ESQ., GERMANTOWN, PHILADELPHIA  
Mellor, Meigs & Howe, Architects



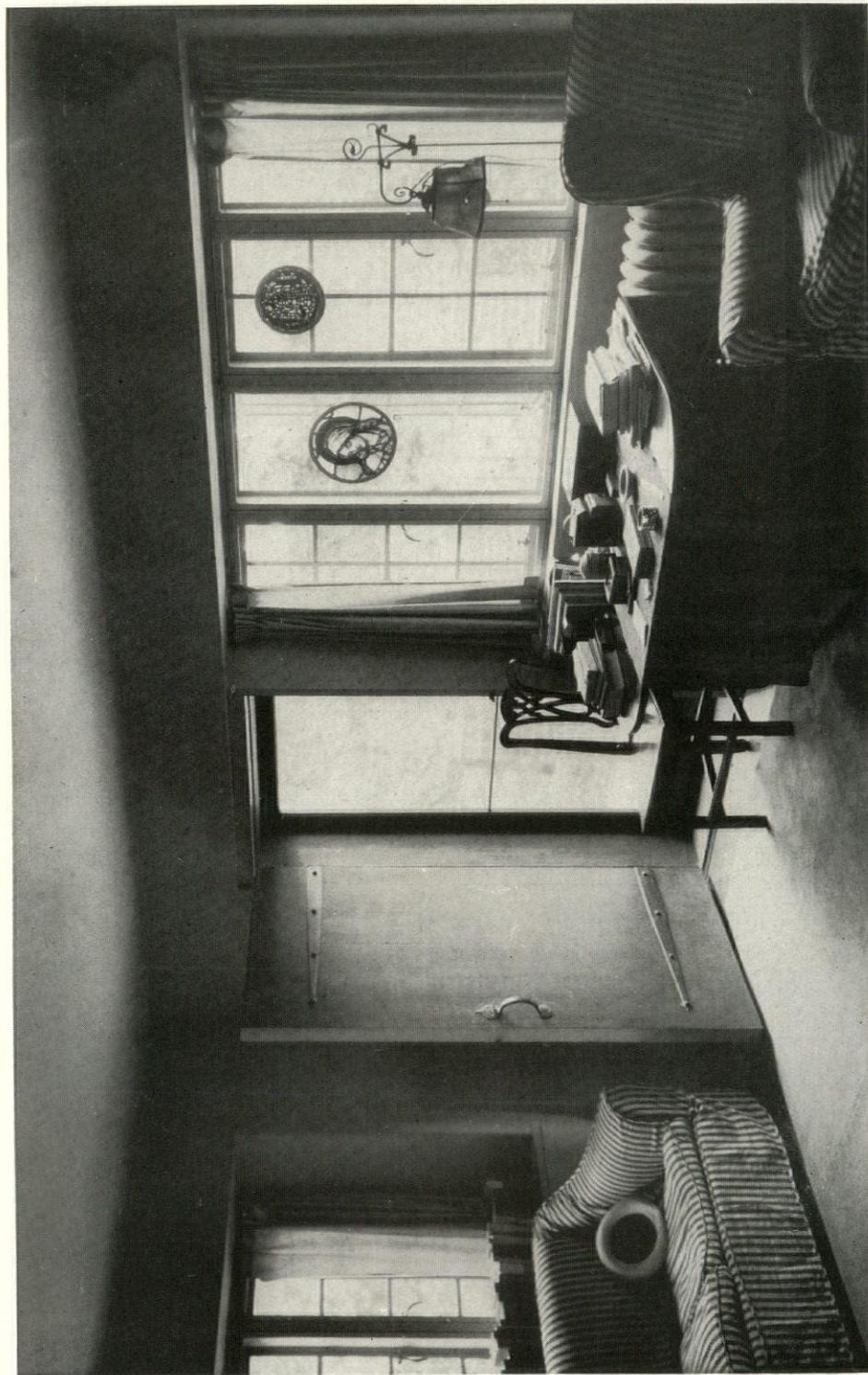
*Photo. Ph. B. Wallace*

RESIDENCE OF JAMES P. MAGILL, ESQ., GERMANTOWN, PHILADELPHIA  
Mellor, Meigs & Howe, Architects



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RESIDENCE OF JAMES P. MAGILL, ESQ., GERMANTOWN, PHILADELPHIA  
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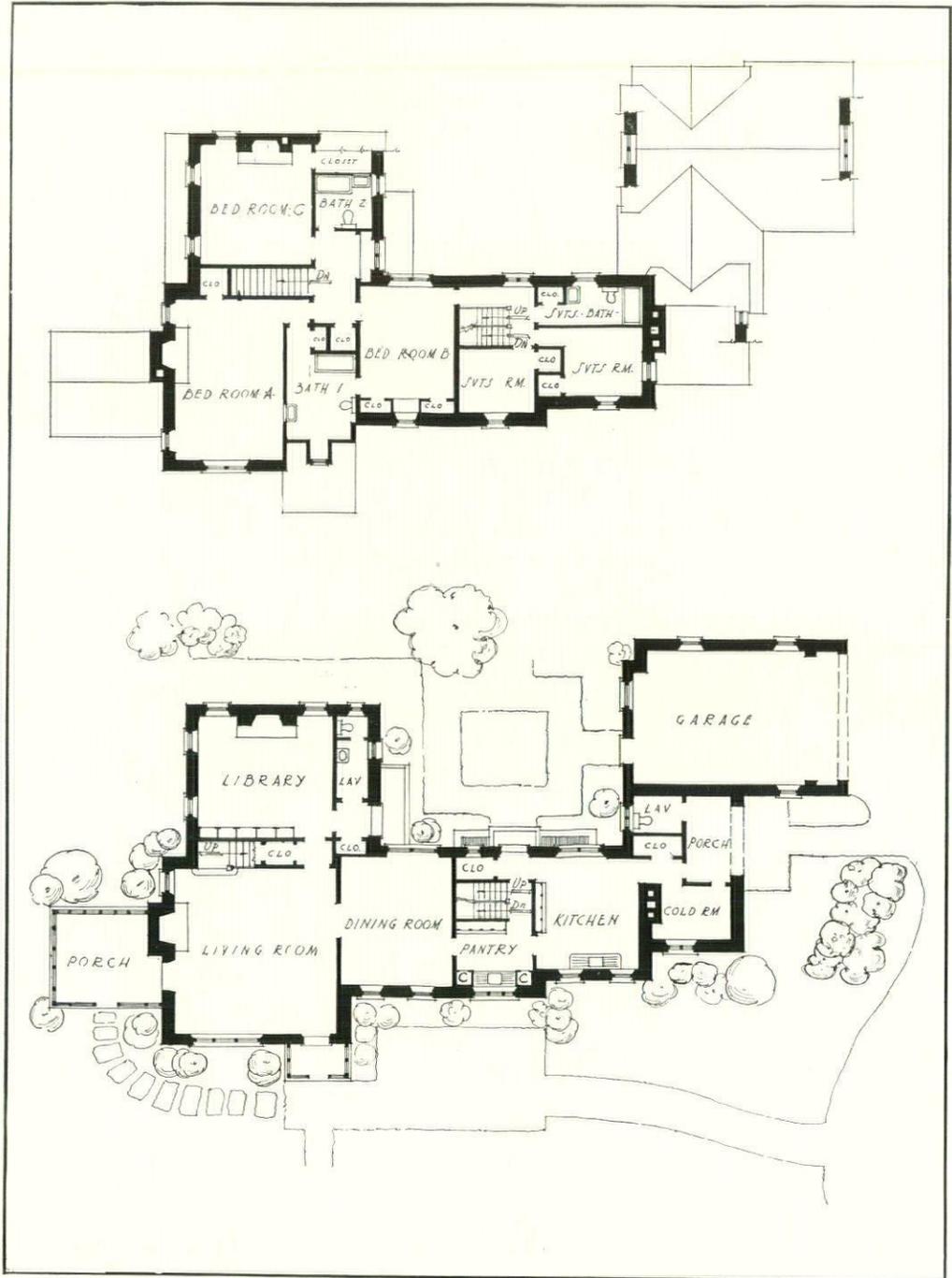
*Photo. Ph. B. Wallace*

RESIDENCE OF THOMAS EVANS, ESQ., SCHOOL LANE, GERMANTOWN, PHILADELPHIA  
Carl A. Ziegler, Architect



*Photo. Ph. B. Wallace*

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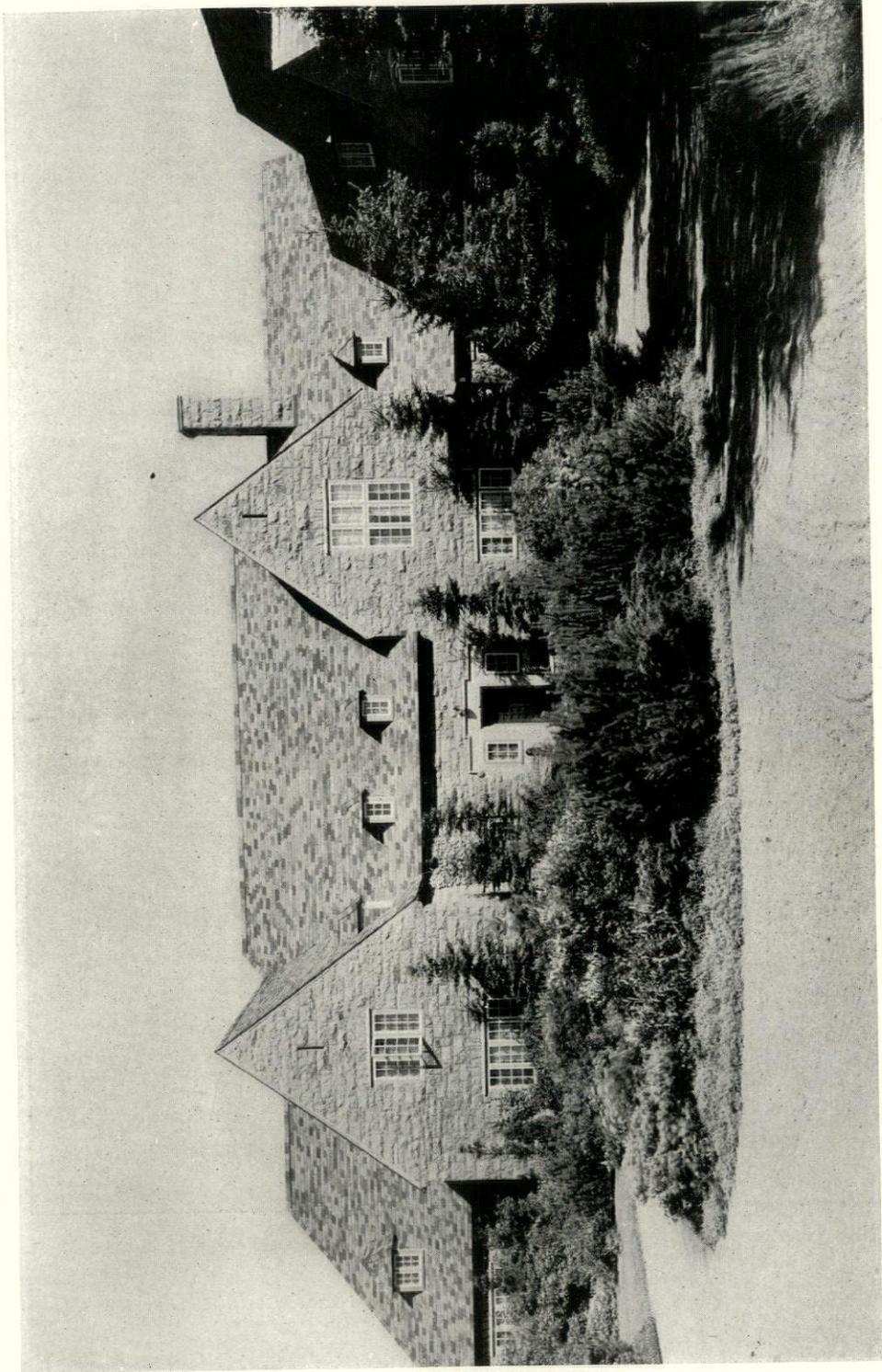
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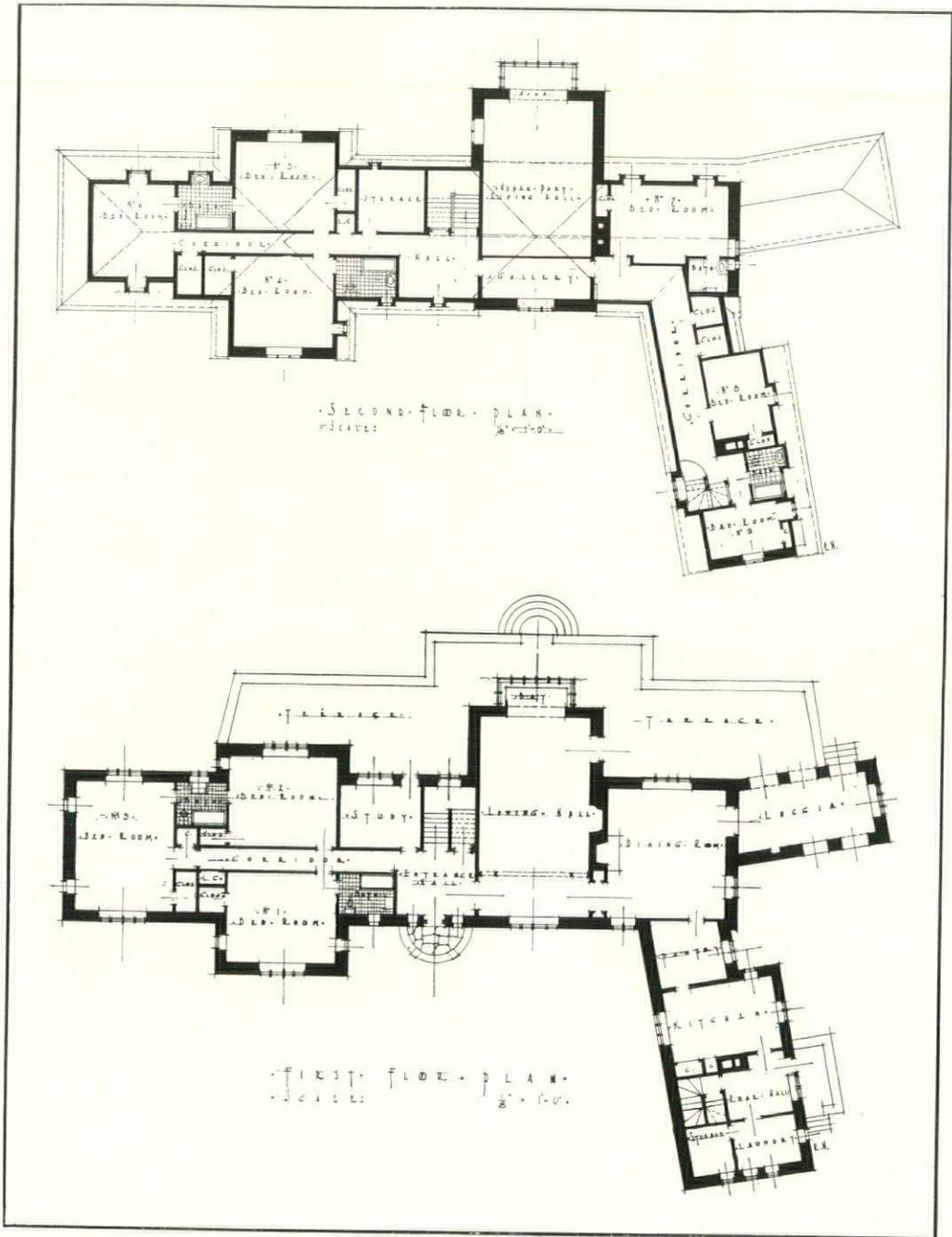
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Carl A. Ziegler, Architect





*Photo. Gillies*

RESIDENCE OF ARTHUR G. LEONARD, ESQ., EASTERN POINT, GLOUCESTER, MASS.  
Walker & Carswell, Architects



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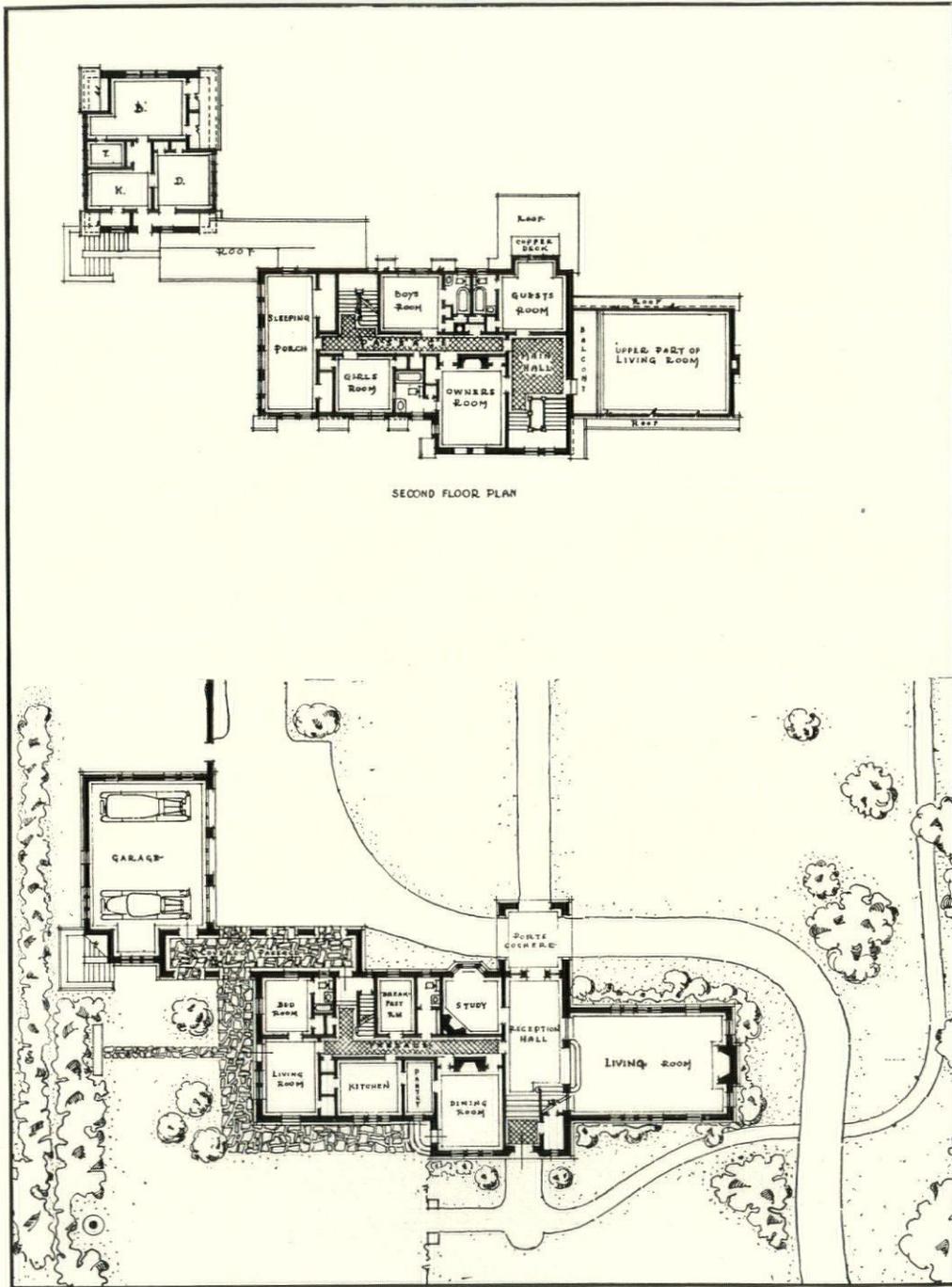
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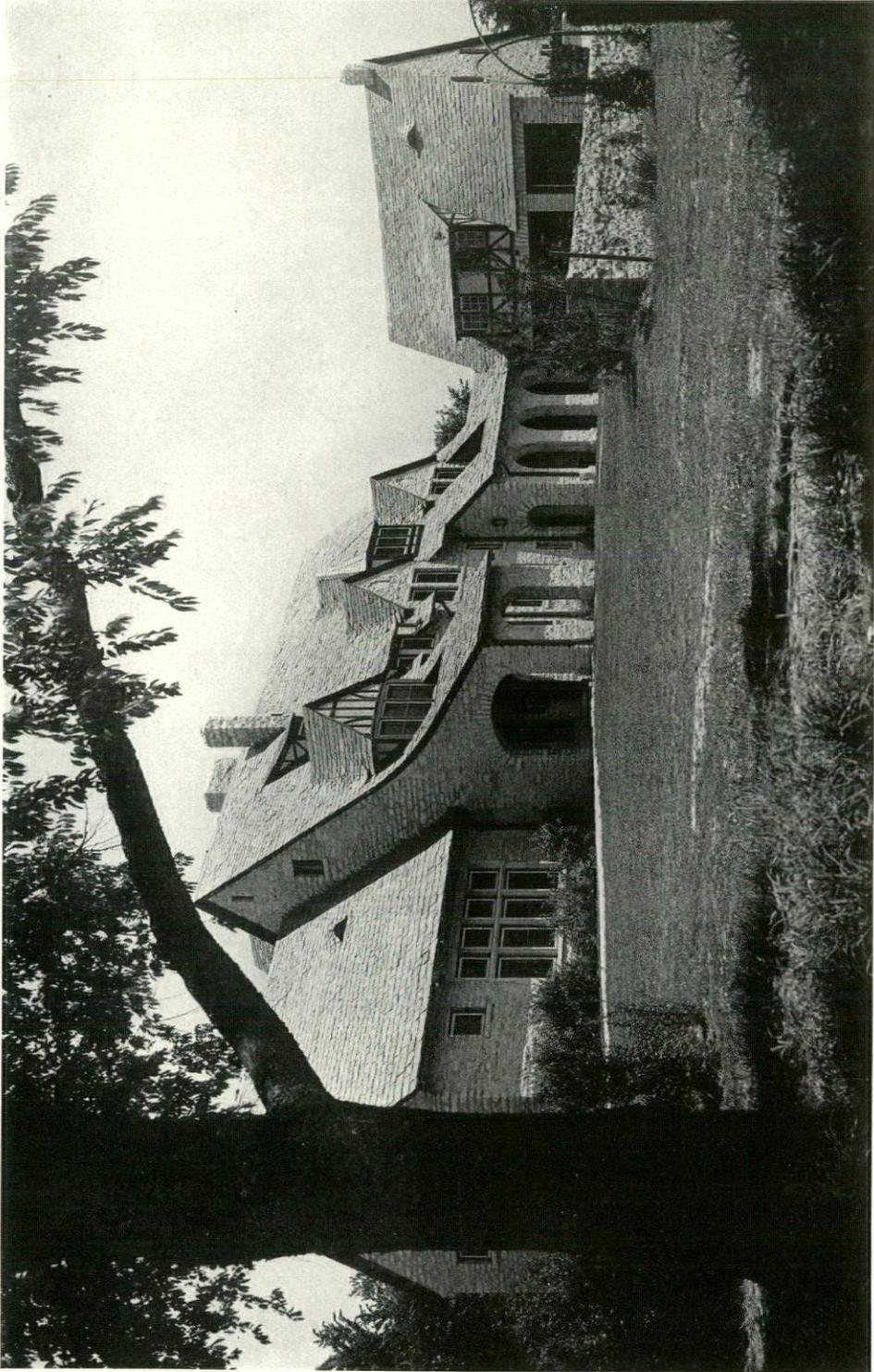
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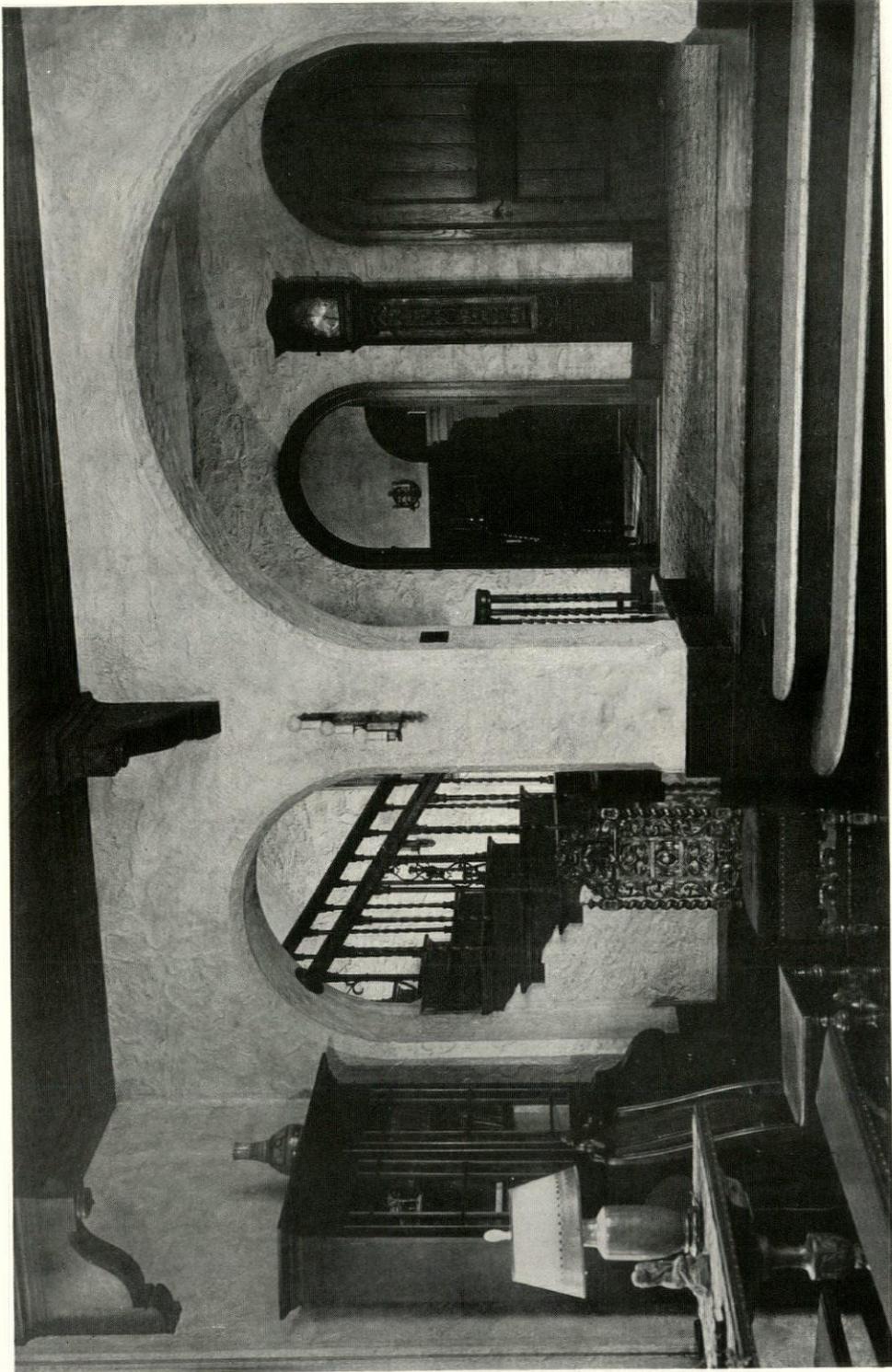


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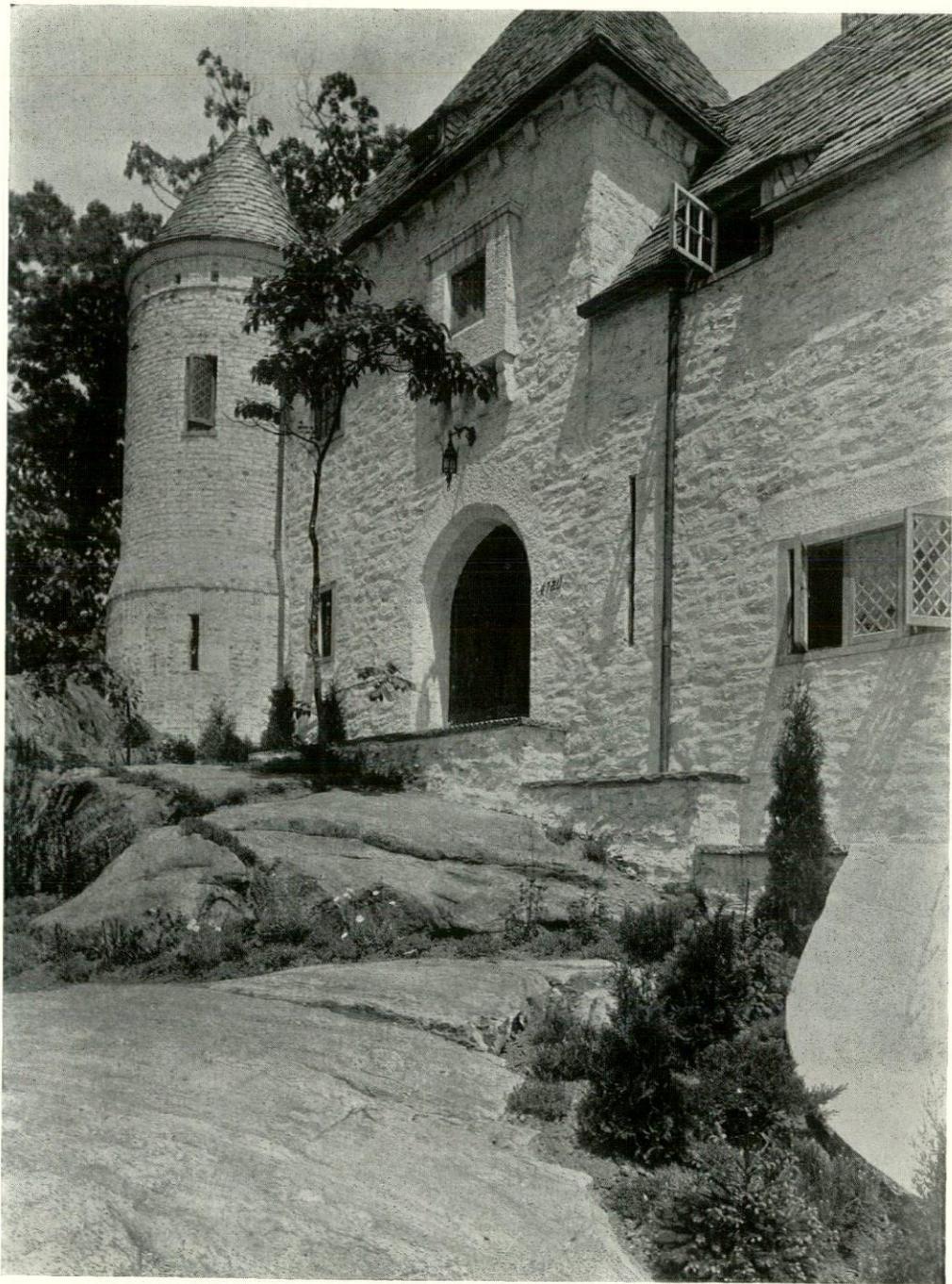
RESIDENCE OF EDWARD T. HALL, ESQ., ST. LOUIS, MO.  
Ferrand & Fitch, Architects



RESIDENCE OF EDWARD T. HALL, ESQ., ST. LOUIS, MO.  
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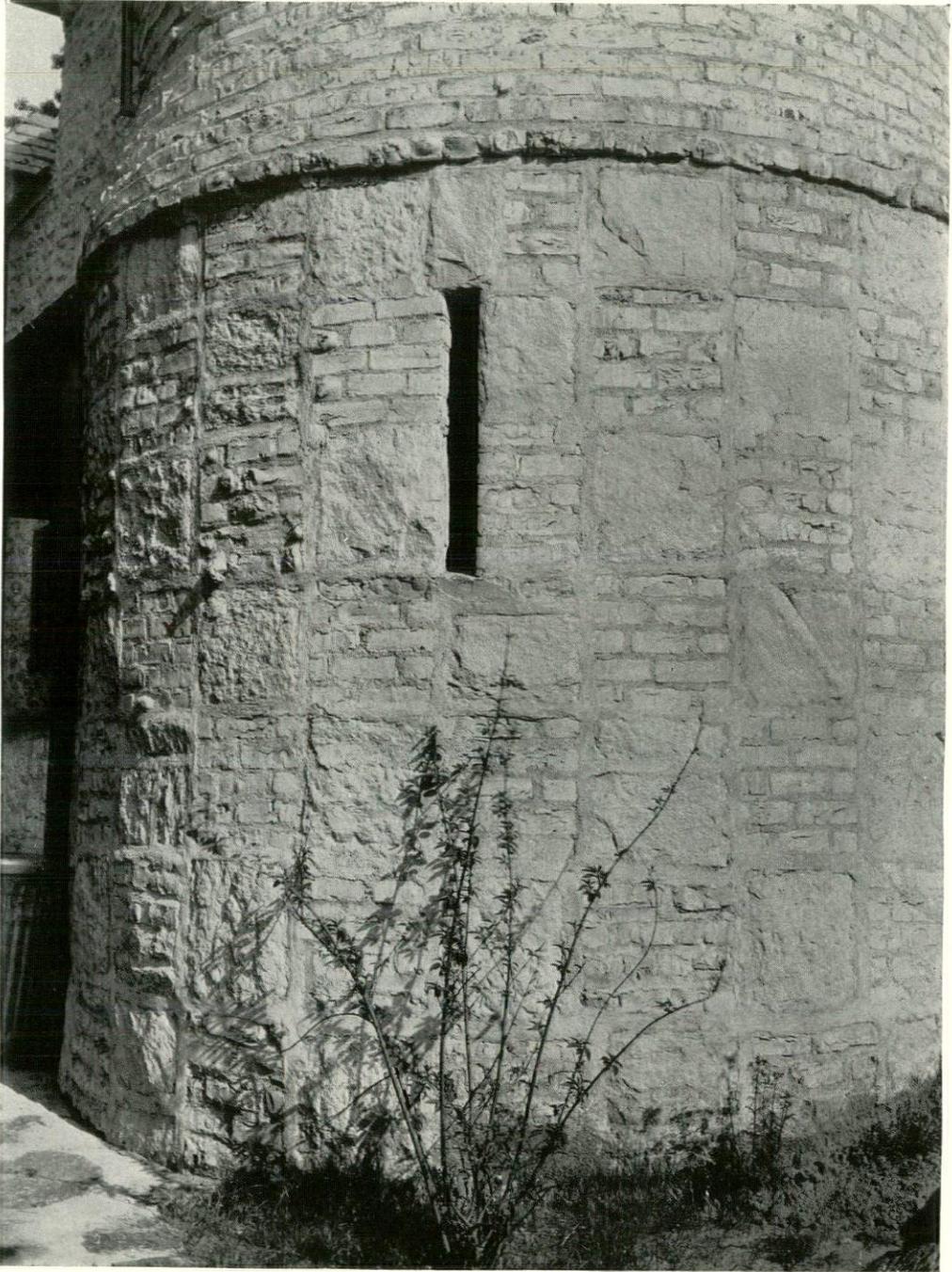
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RESIDENCE OF GIUSEPPE COSULICH, ESQ., FIELDSTON, NEW YORK  
Frank J. Forster, Architect



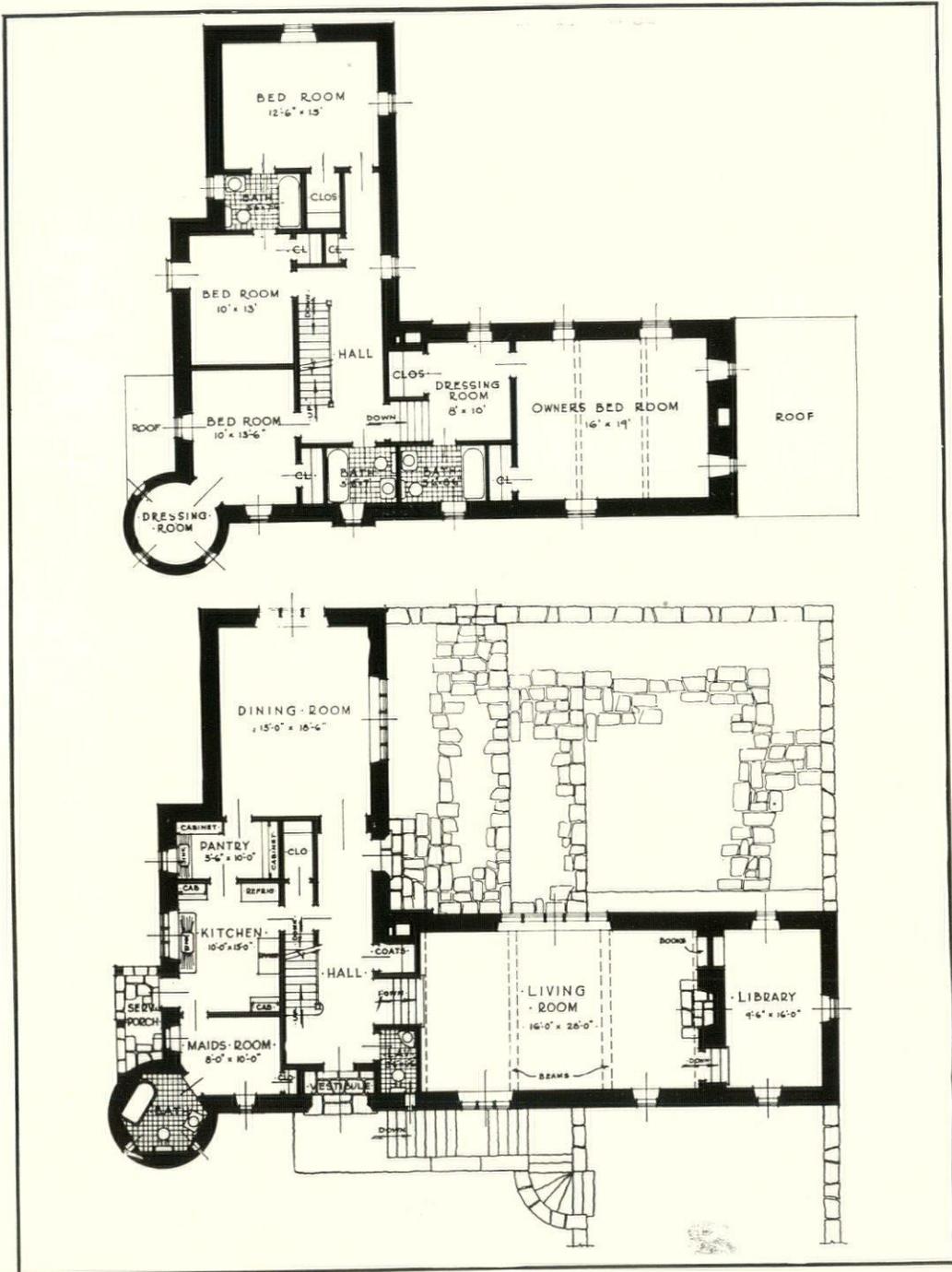
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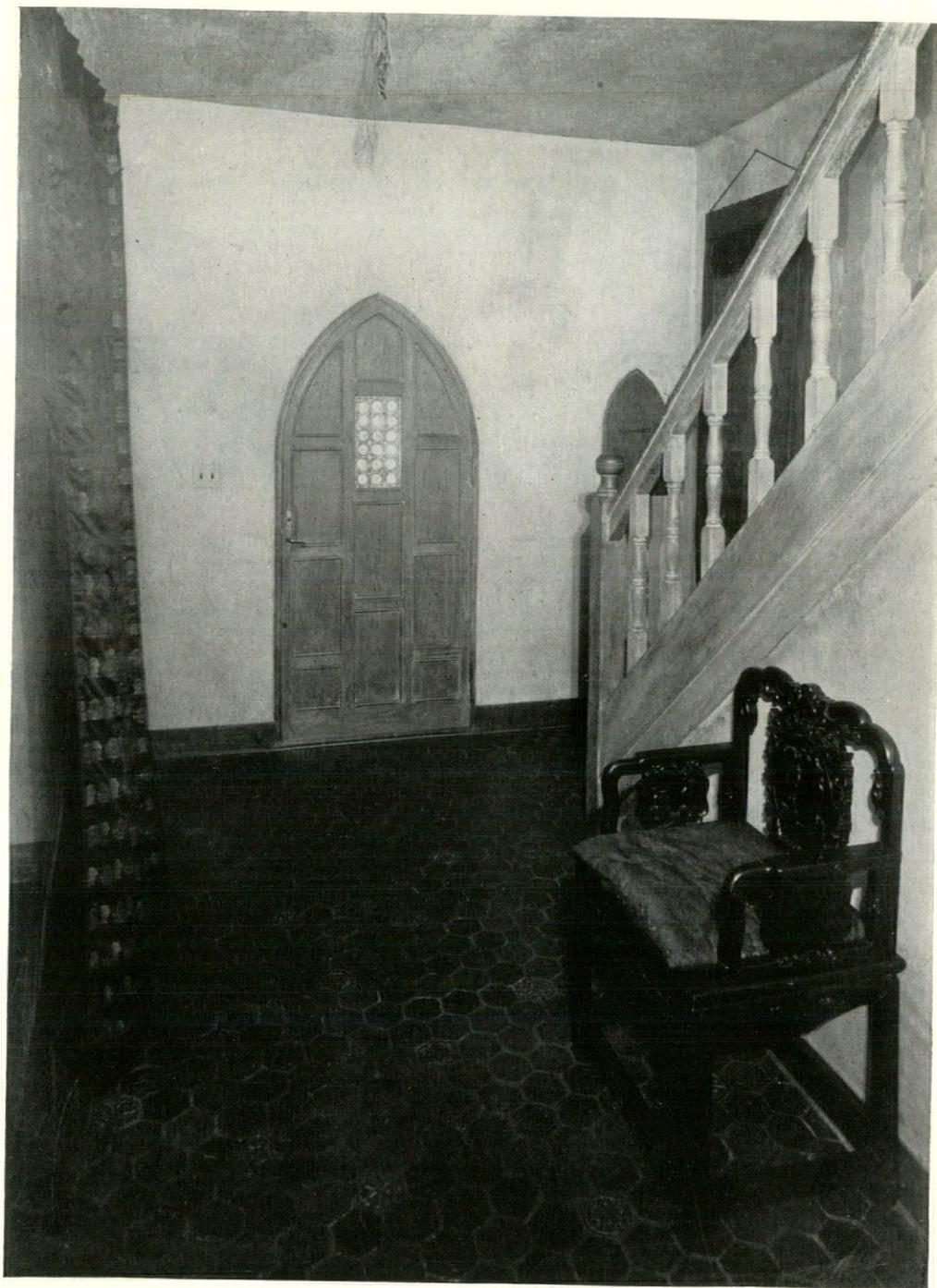


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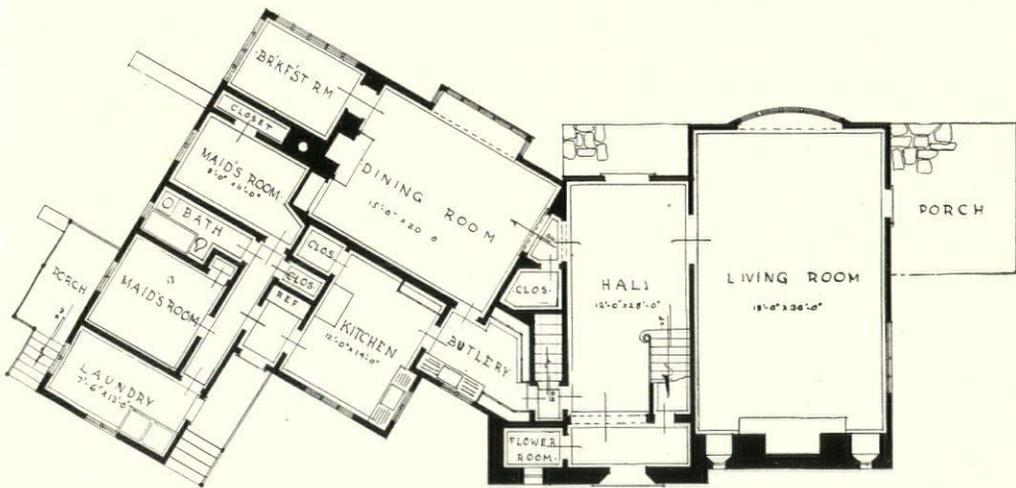


*Photo. Gillies*

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Frank J. Forster, Architect



Photo. Amemya



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

RESIDENCE OF ANTON L. TRUNK, ESQ., LARCHMONT, N. Y.  
W. Stanwood Phillips, Architect



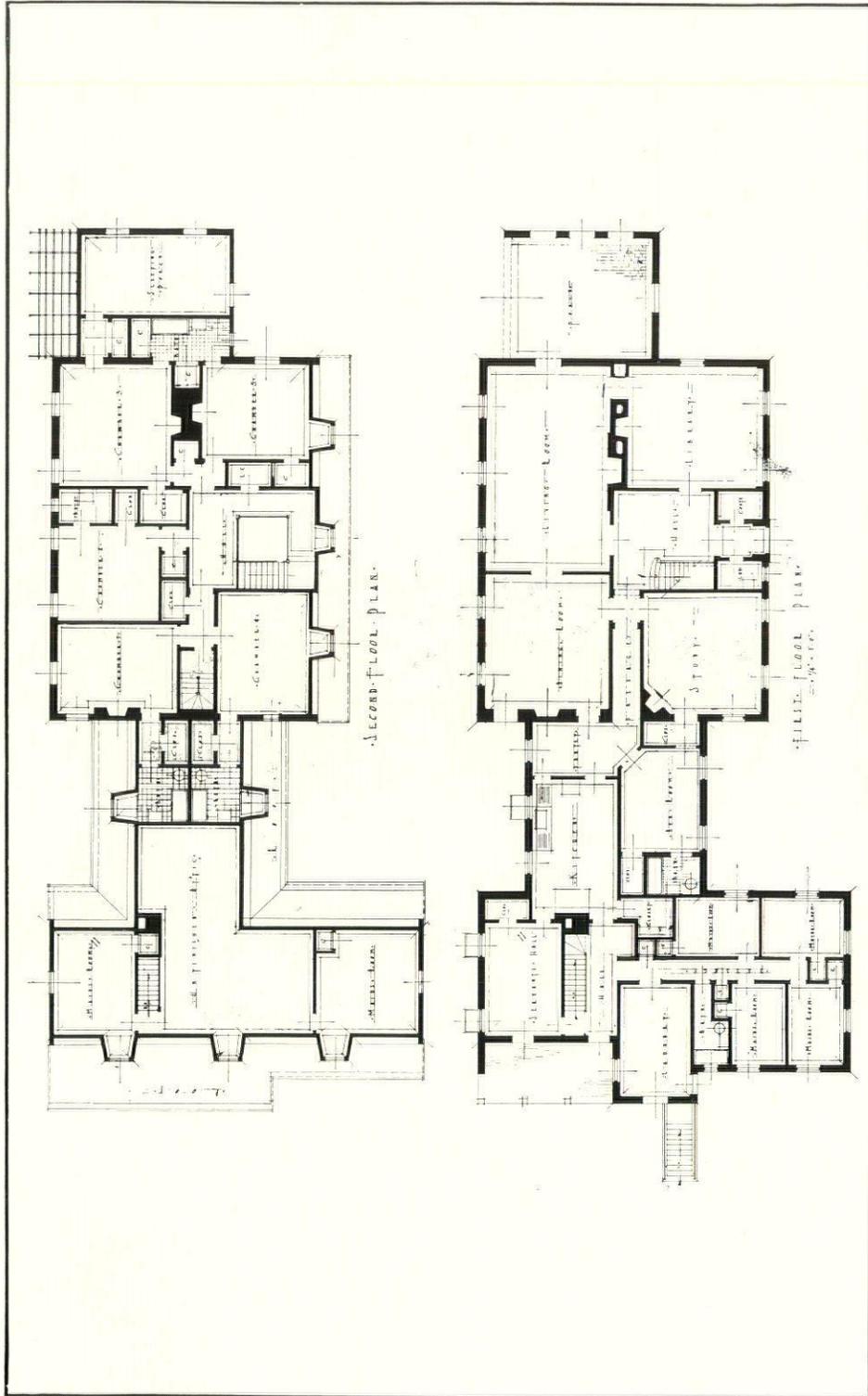
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W. Stanwood Phillips, Architect

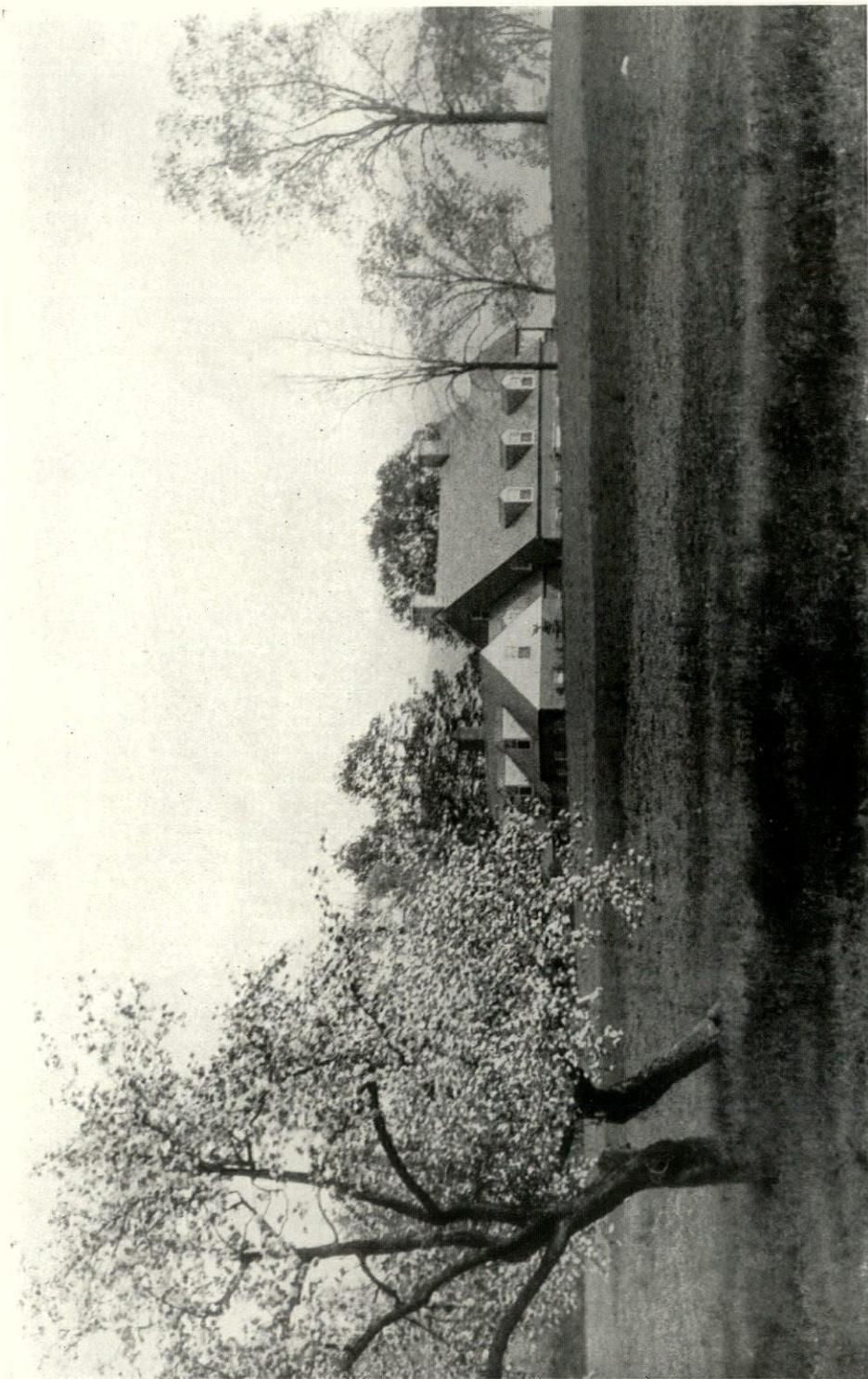


*Photo. H. Armstrong Roberts*

RESIDENCE OF JOHN L. WILKIE, ESQ., NEW WINDSOR, N. Y.  
Mott B. Schmidt, Architect

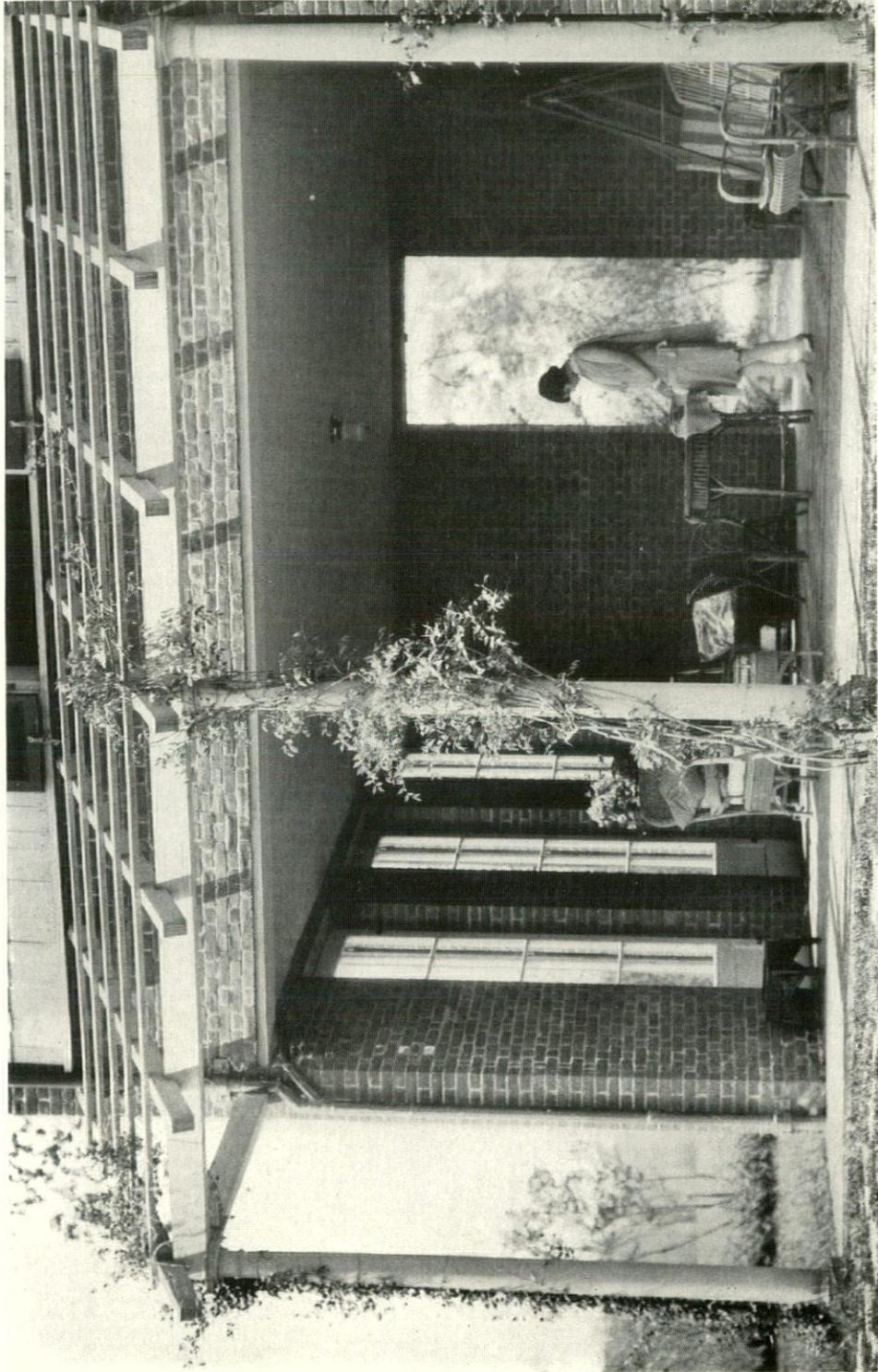


RESIDENCE OF JOHN L. WILKIE, ESQ., NEW WINDSOR, N. Y.  
Mott B. Schmidt, Architect



*Photo. H. Armstrong Roberts*

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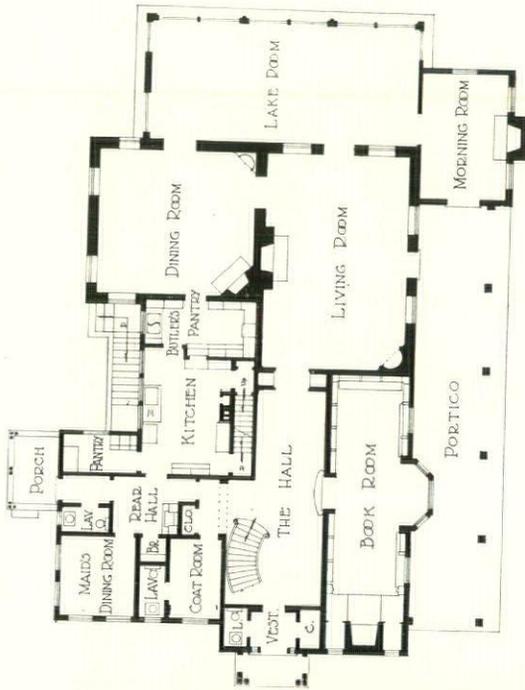
*Photo. H. Armstrong Roberts*

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Mott B. Schmidt, Architect



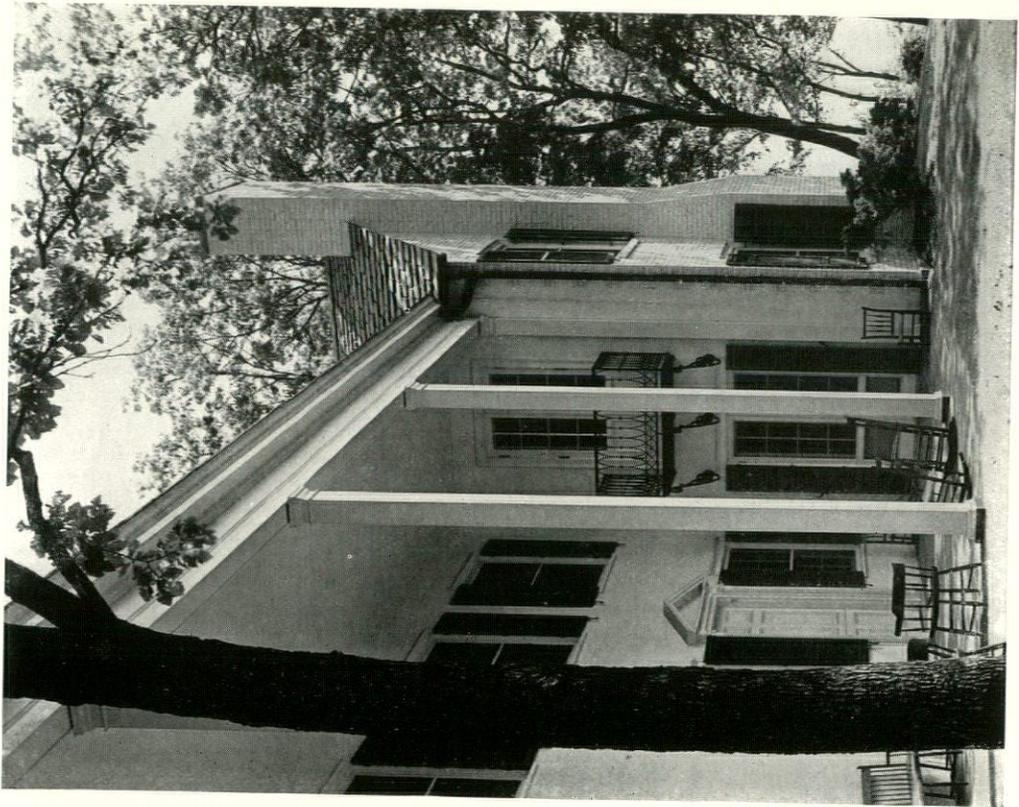
*Photo. Troscbridge*

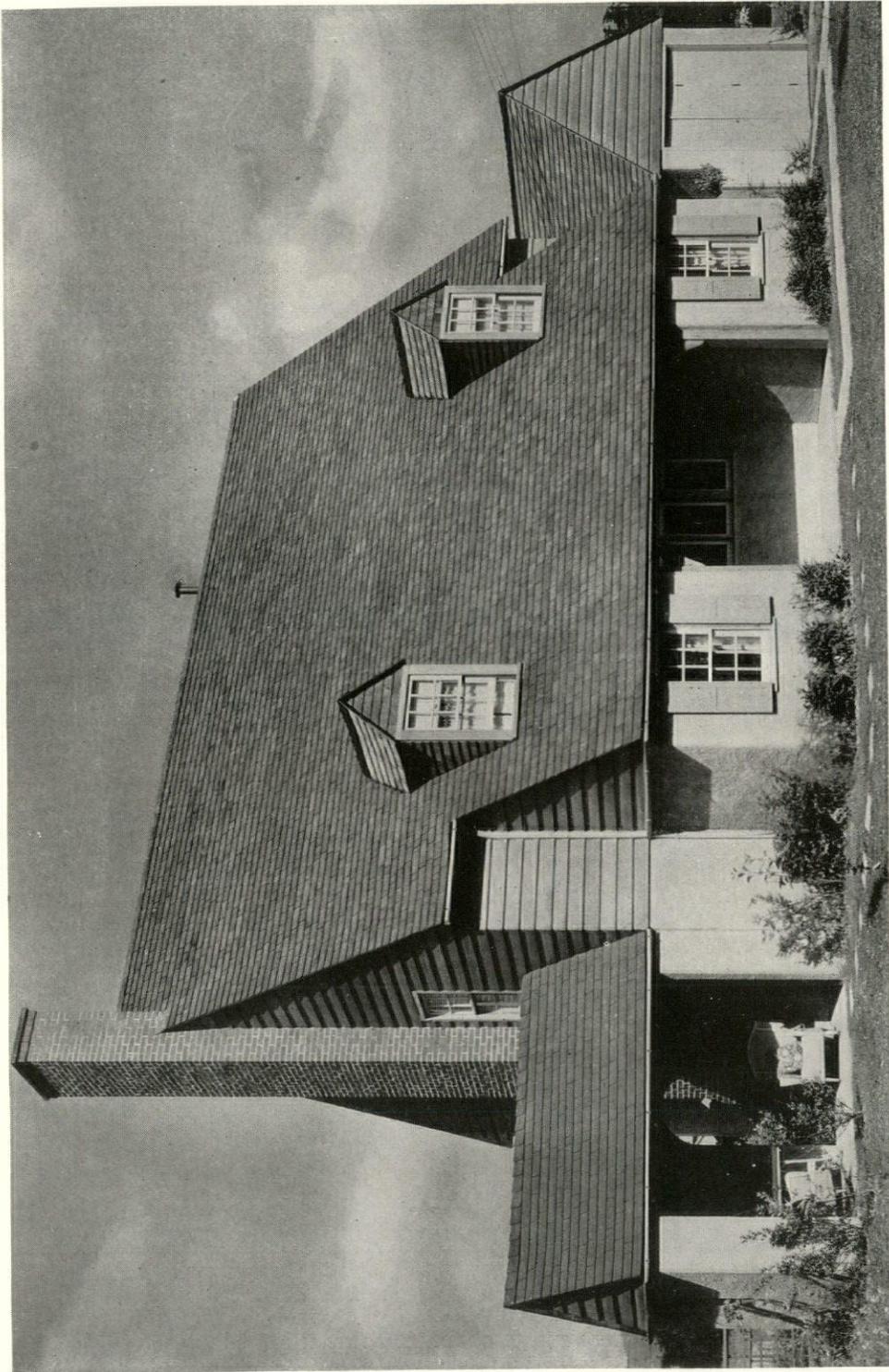
RESIDENCE OF BRUCE MACLEISH, ESQ., HUBBARD WOODS, ILLINOIS  
Chester H. Walcott, Architect; H. C. Alley, Collaborator



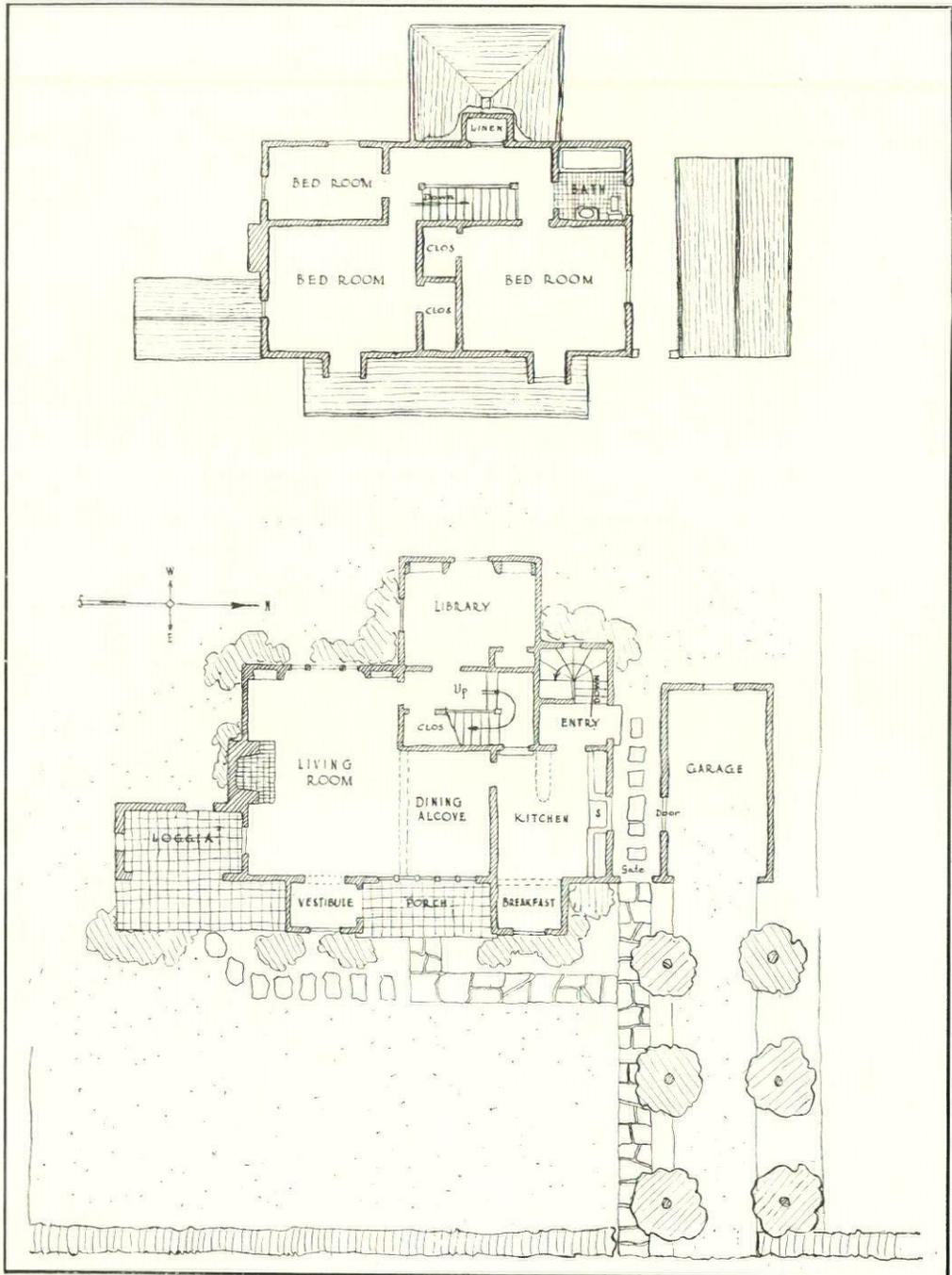
First Floor Plan

RESIDENCE OF BRUCE MACLEISH, ESQ.,  
HUBBARD WOODS, ILLINOIS  
Chester H. Walcott, Architect  
H. C. Alley, Collaborator





RESIDENCE OF KENNETH C. GOODALL, PORTLAND, OREGON  
Harold W. Doty, Architect



RESIDENCE OF KENNETH C. GOODALL, PORTLAND, OREGON

Harold W. Doty, Architect

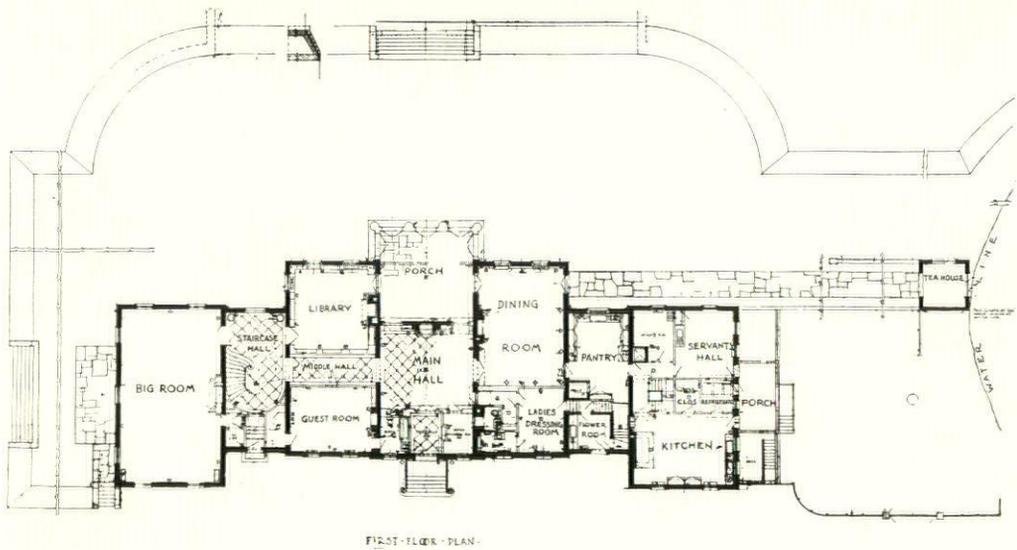


*Photo. Tebbs & Knell*

RESIDENCE OF MISS LILLIAN BEHREN, BEXLEY (COLUMBUS), OHIO  
Howell & Thomas, Architects



Photo. Tebbs & Knell



RESIDENCE OF ROBERT G. MCGANN, ESQ., LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS  
Delano & Aldrich, Architects



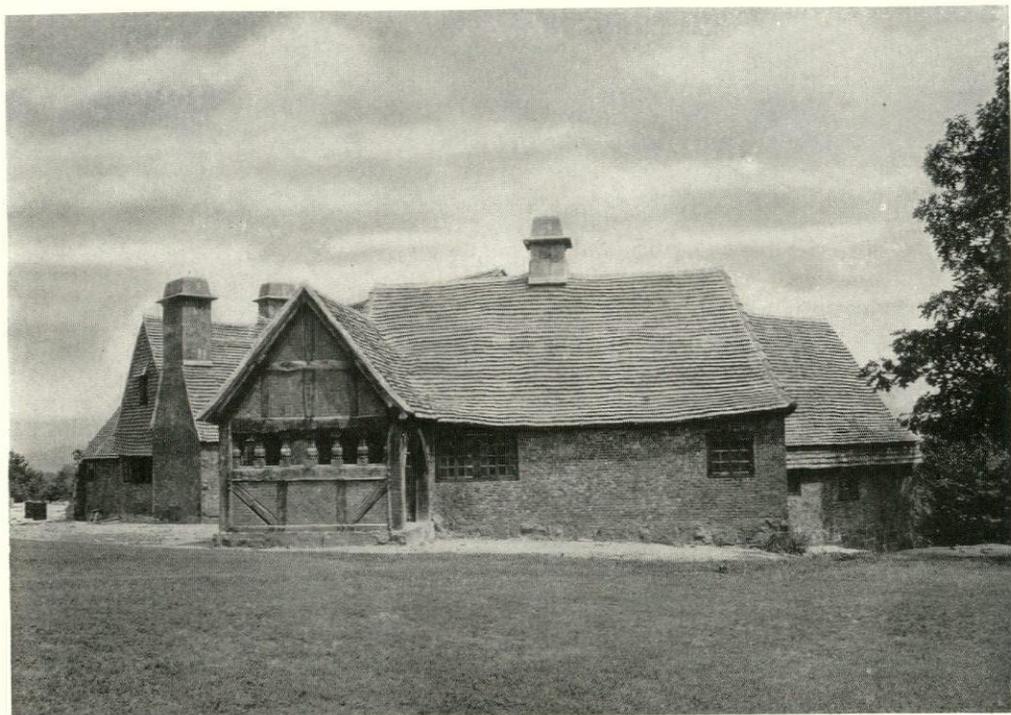
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RESIDENCE OF ROBERT G. MCGANN, ESQ., LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS  
Delano & Aldrich, Architects



*Photo. Tebbs & Knell*

RESIDENCE OF ROBERT G. MCGANN, ESQ., LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS  
Delano & Aldrich, Architects



FARM MANAGER'S COTTAGE, AVON COTTAGE, OLD FARMS, AVON, CONN.



Architect's Working Drawing

FRONT ELEVATION OF FARM MANAGER'S COTTAGE  
Miss Theodate Pope, Architect

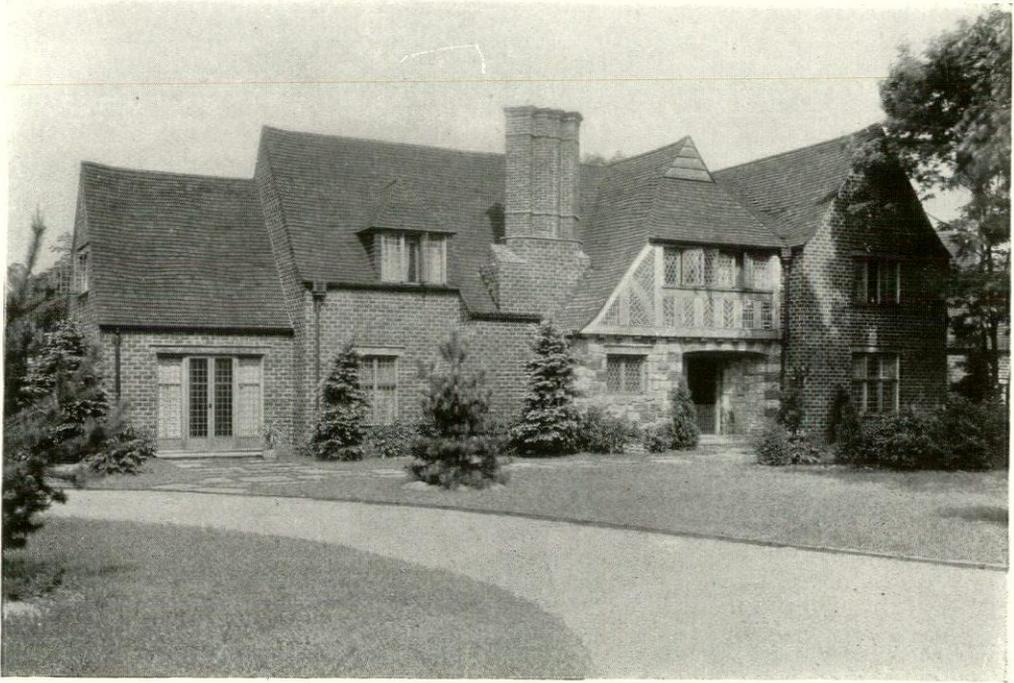
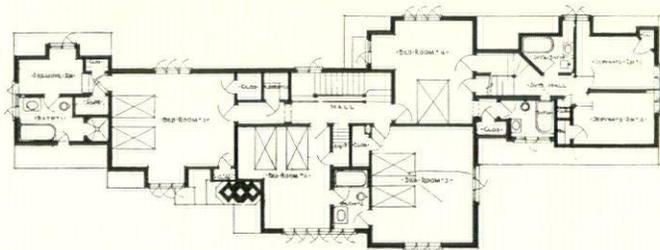


Photo. Gillies



SECOND-FLOOR PLAN



RESIDENCE OF J. J. SLATTERY, ESQ., BRONXVILLE, N. Y.  
Lewis Bowman, Architect



*Photo, Gillies*

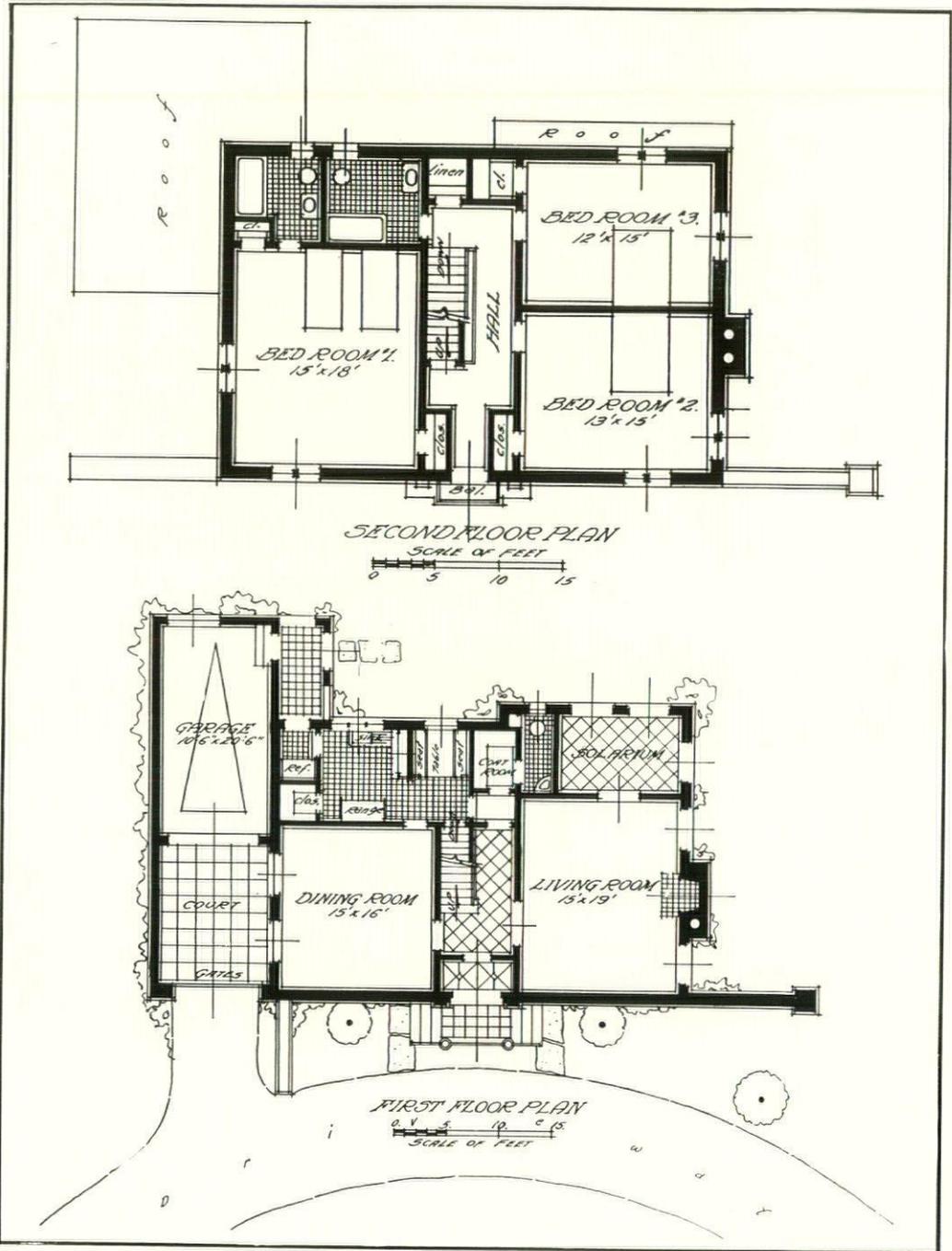
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Lewis Bowman, Architect



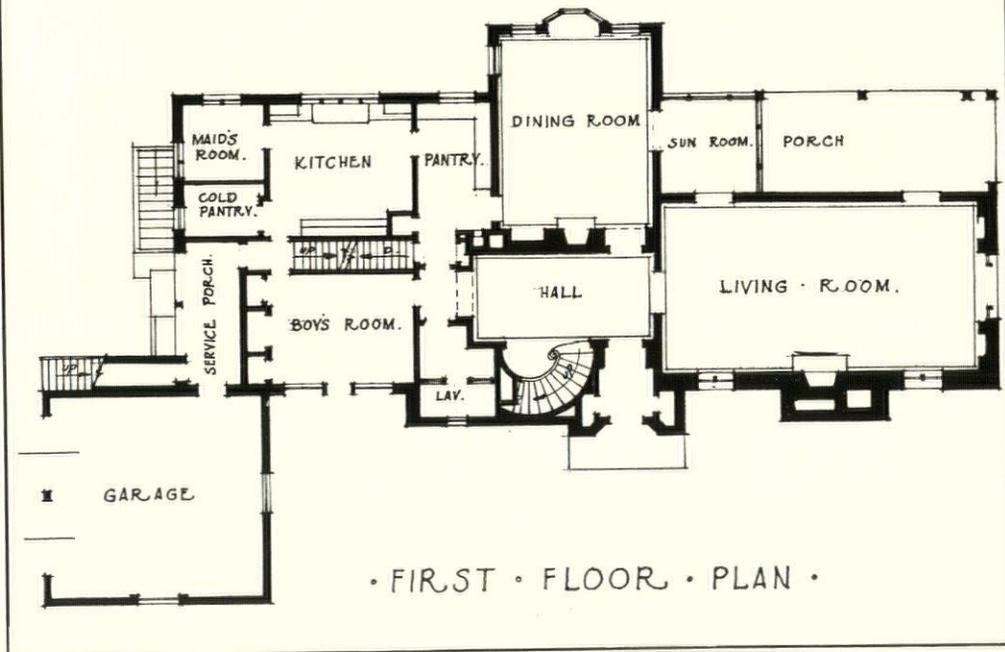
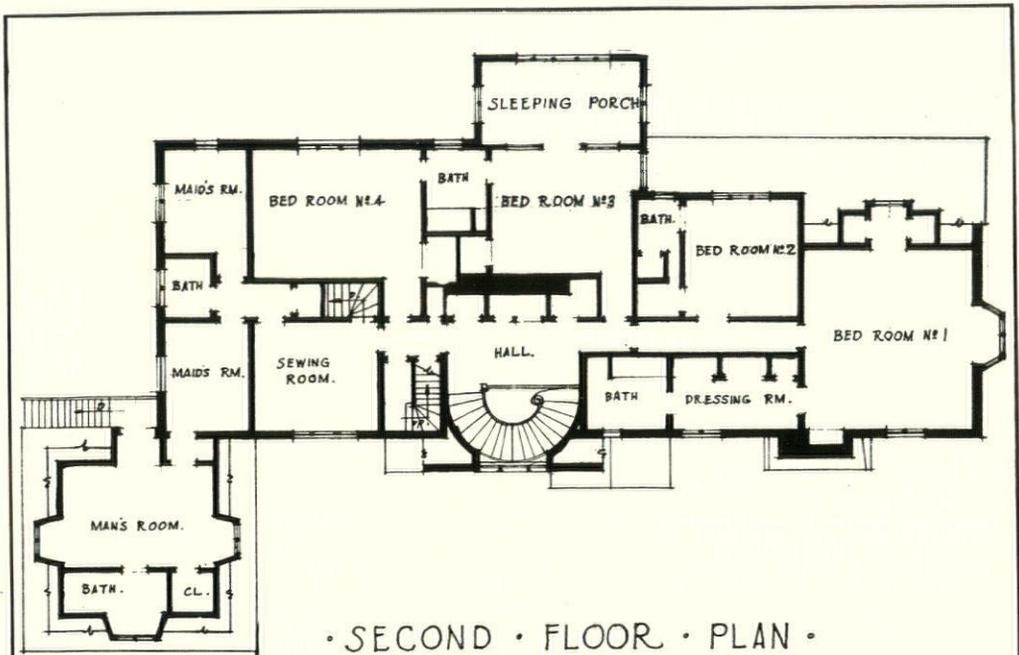
RESIDENCE OF E. H. McKIEVER, ESQ., FIELDSTON, NEW YORK  
R. C. Hunter & Bro., Architects



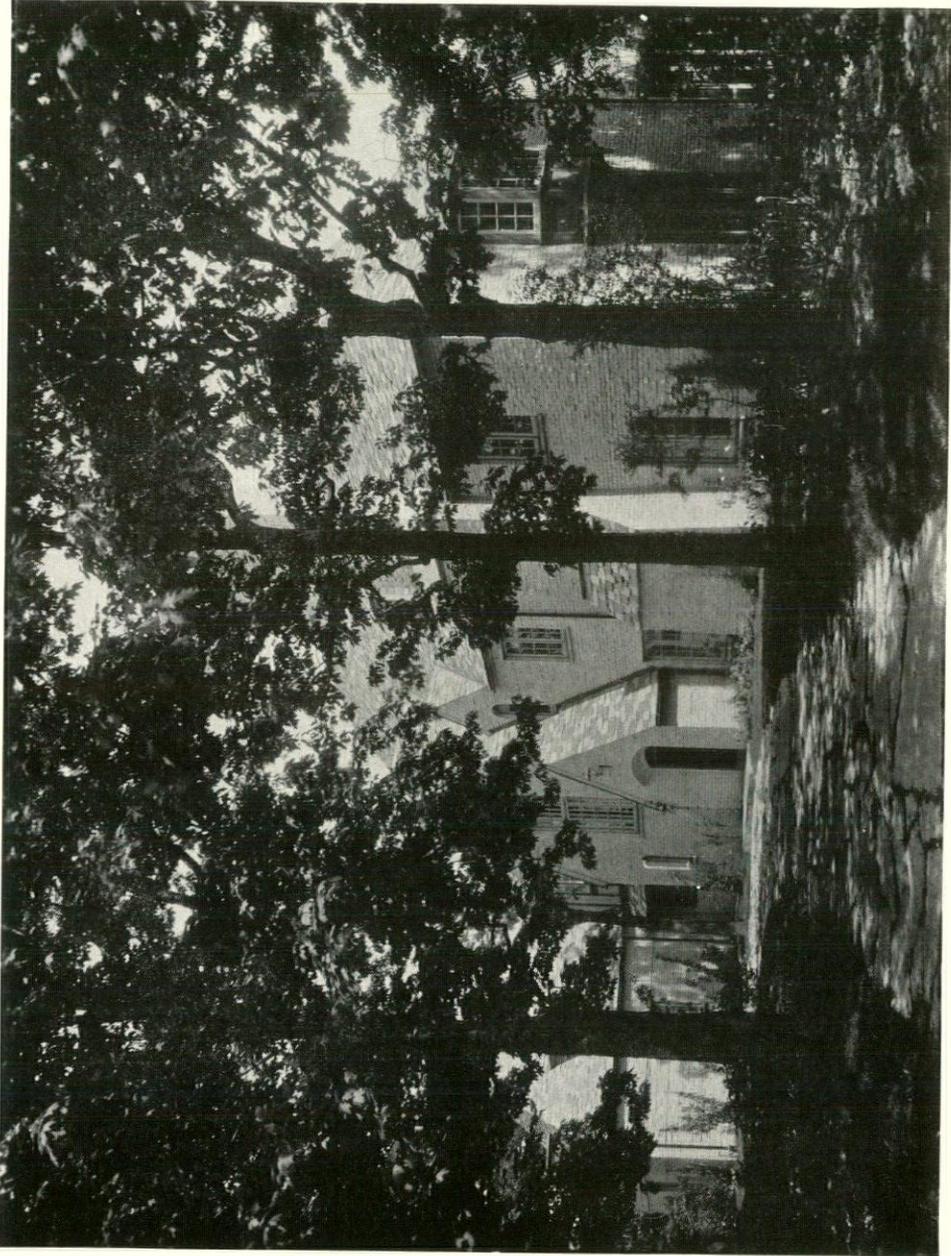
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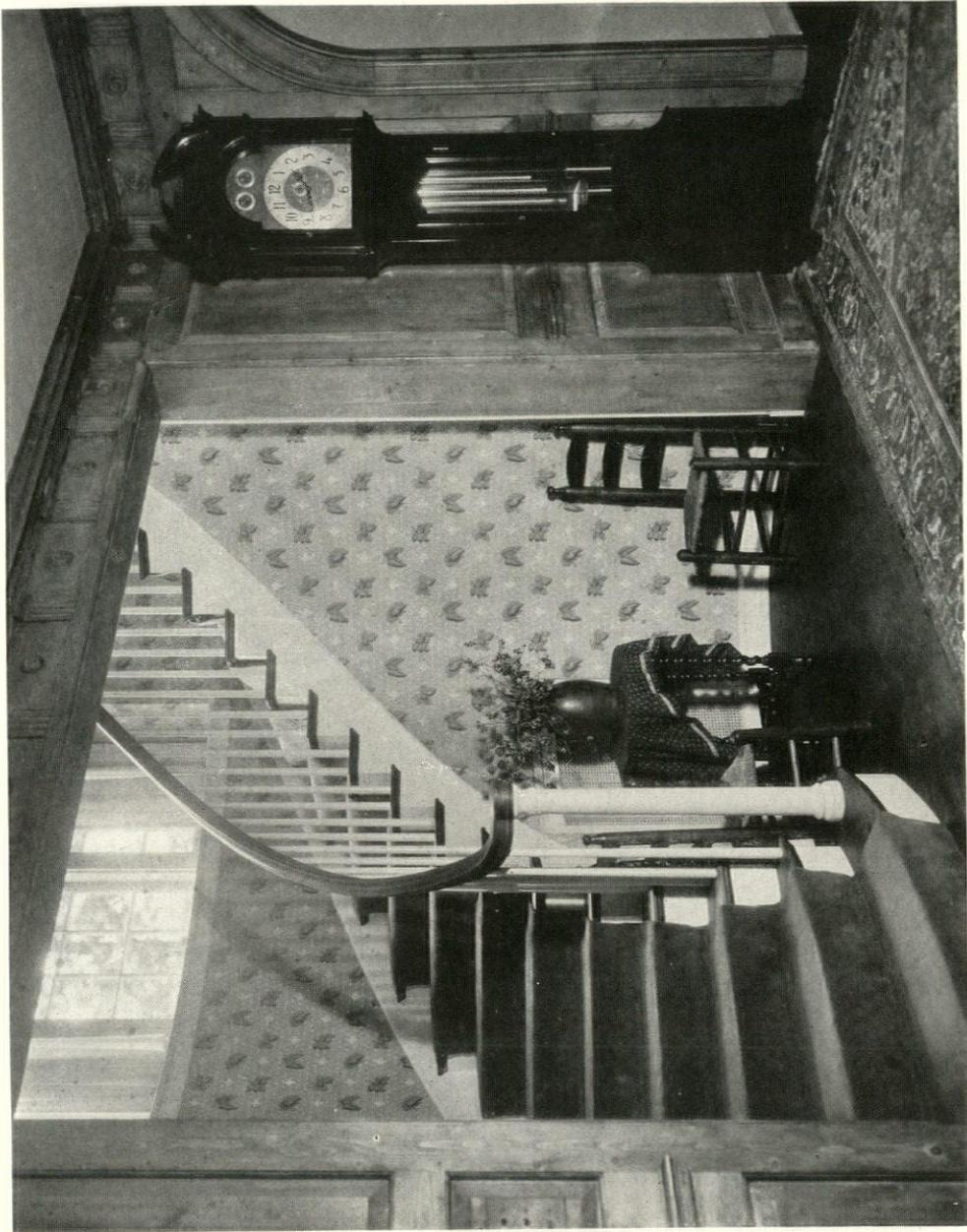
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R. C. Hunter & Bro., Architects



RESIDENCE OF NATHAN KLEE, ESQ., HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS  
Russell S. Walcott, Architect



RESIDENCE OF NATHAN KLEE, ESQ., HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS  
Russell S. Wainwright, Architect



RESIDENCE OF NATHAN KLEE, ESQ., HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS  
Russell S. Walcott, Architect



RESIDENCE OF NATHAN KLEE, ESQ., HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS  
Russell S. Walcott, Architect

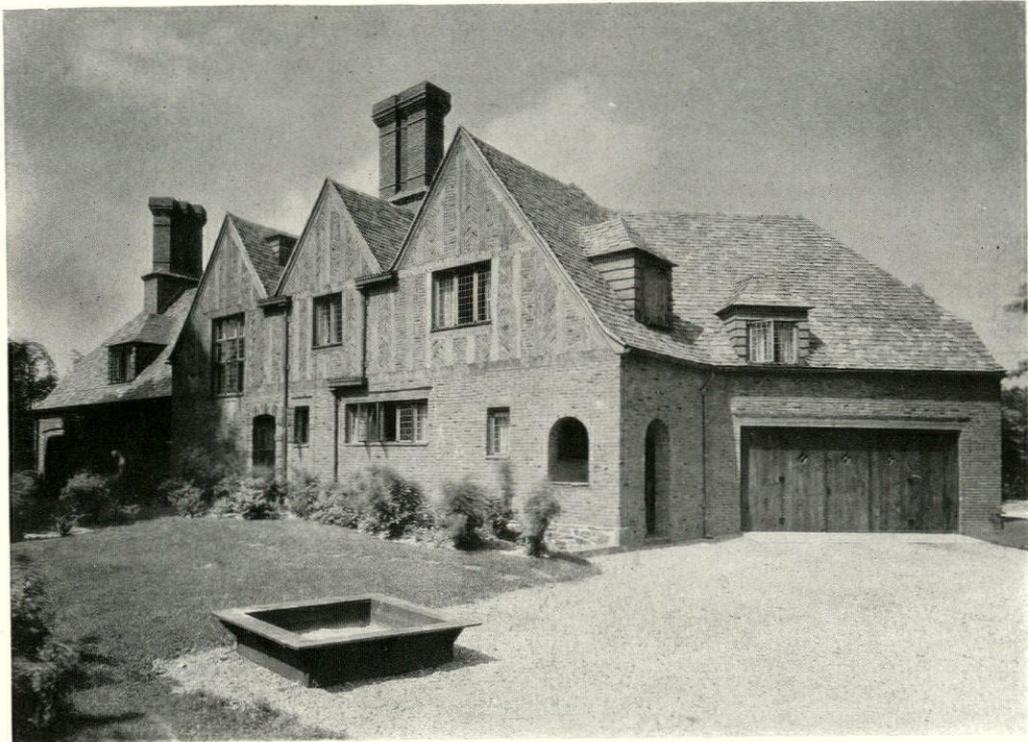
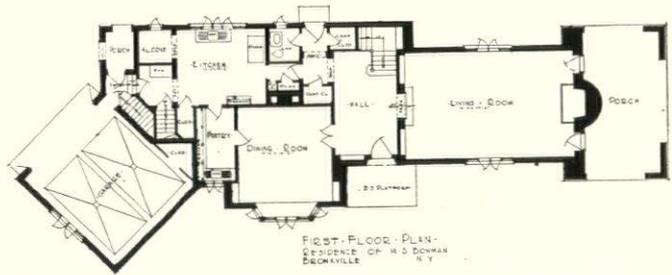
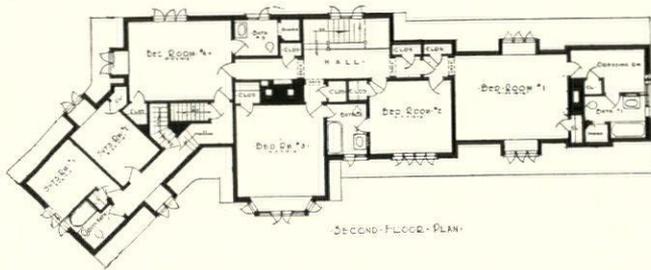


Photo. Gillies

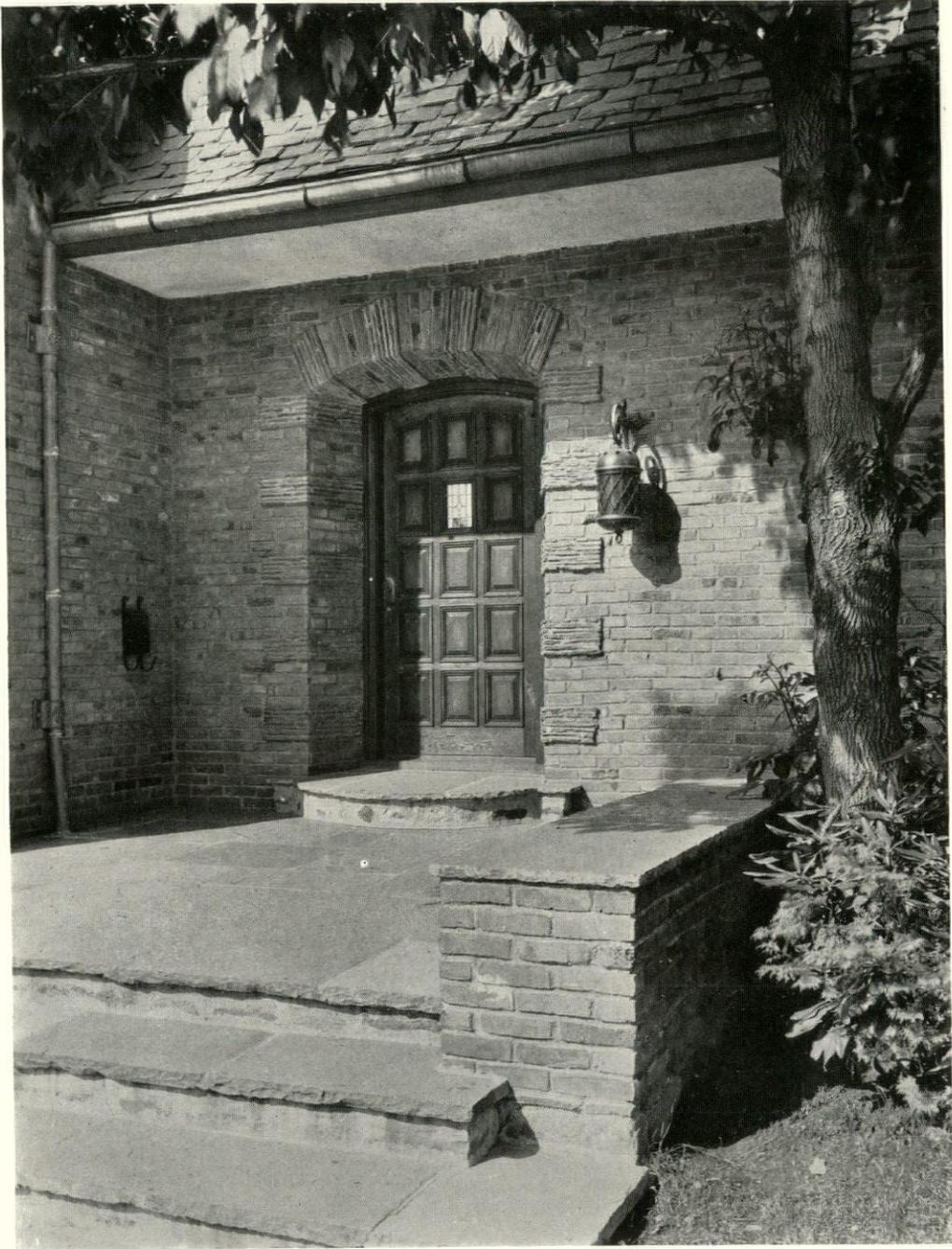


RESIDENCE OF MILTON S. BOWMAN ESQ., BRONXVILLE, N. Y.  
Lewis Bowman, Architect



*Photo, Gillies*

RESIDENCE OF MILTON S. BOWMAN ESQ., BRONXVILLE, N. Y.  
Lewis Bowman, Architect



*Photo. Gillies*

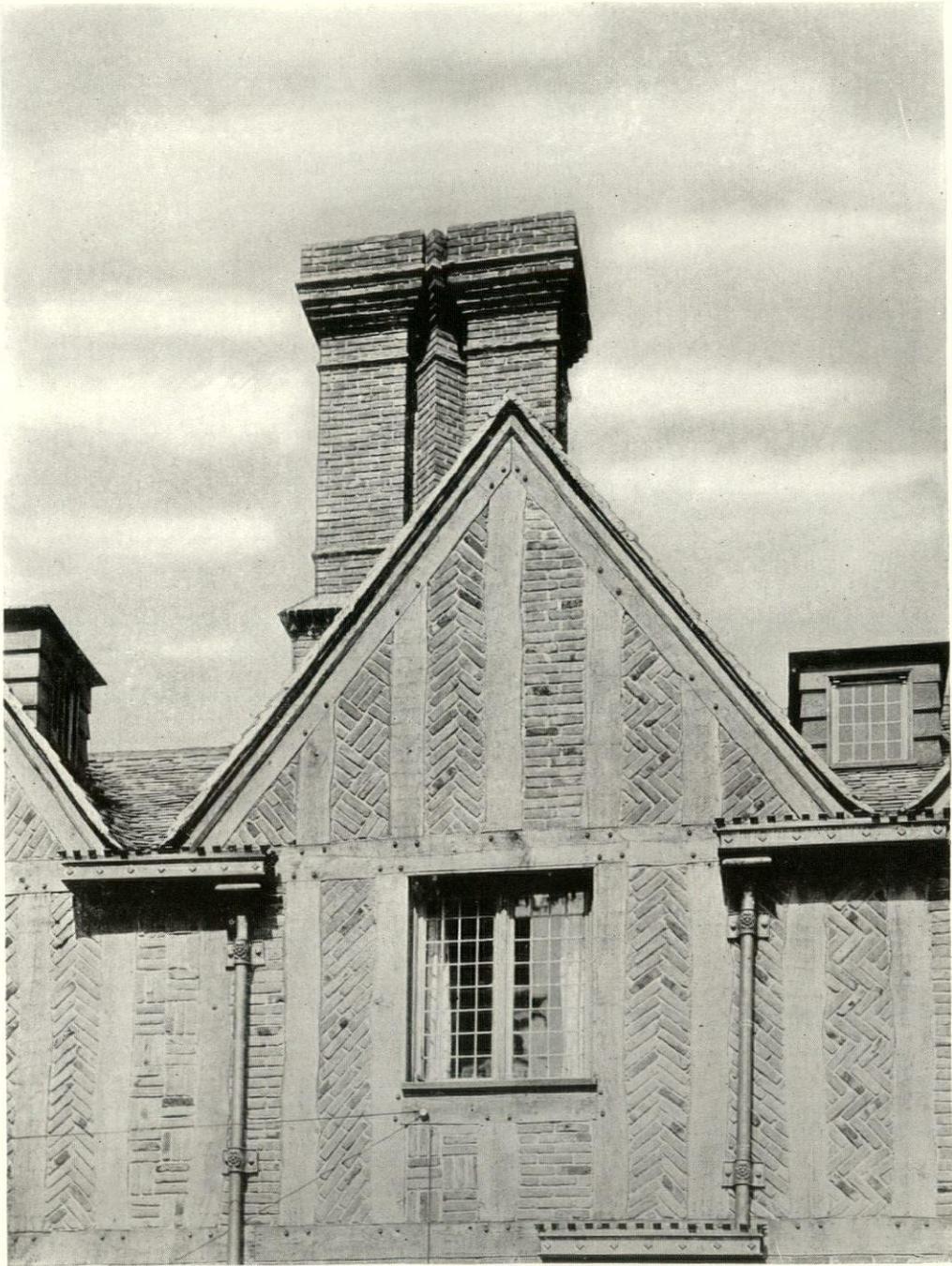
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Lewis Bowman, Architect



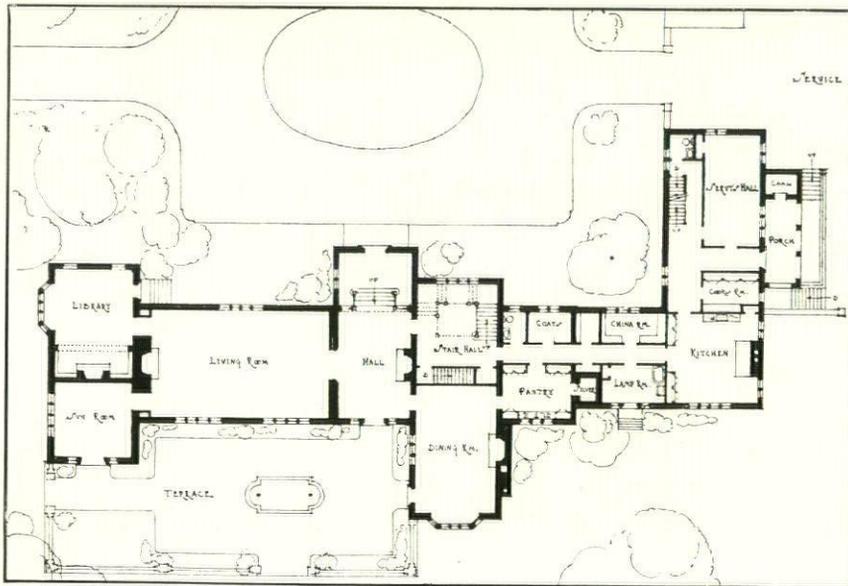
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Lewis Bowman, Architect



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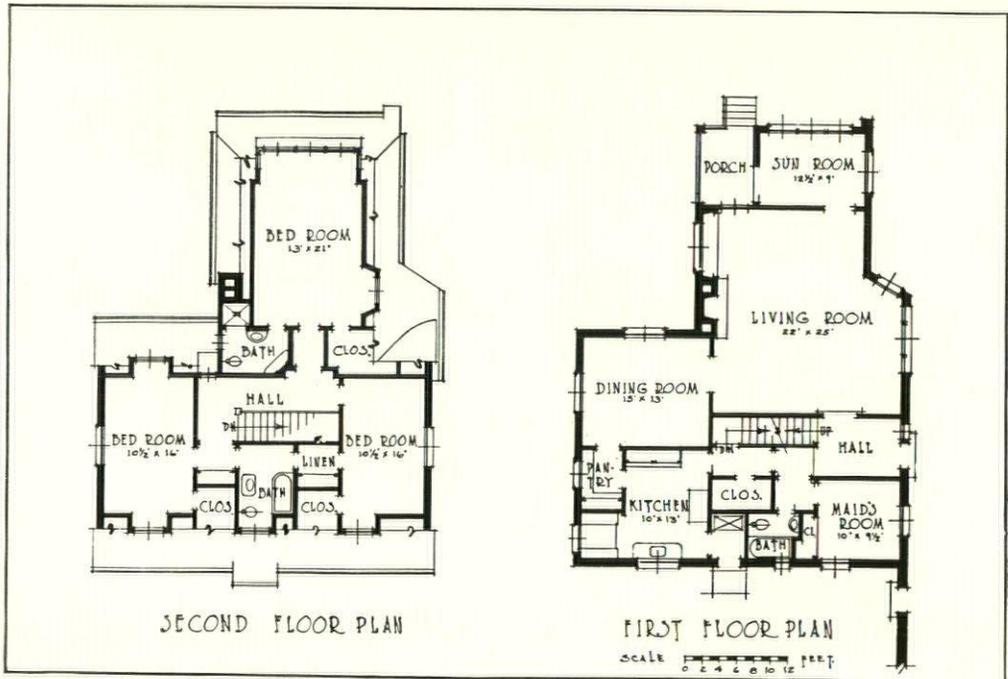
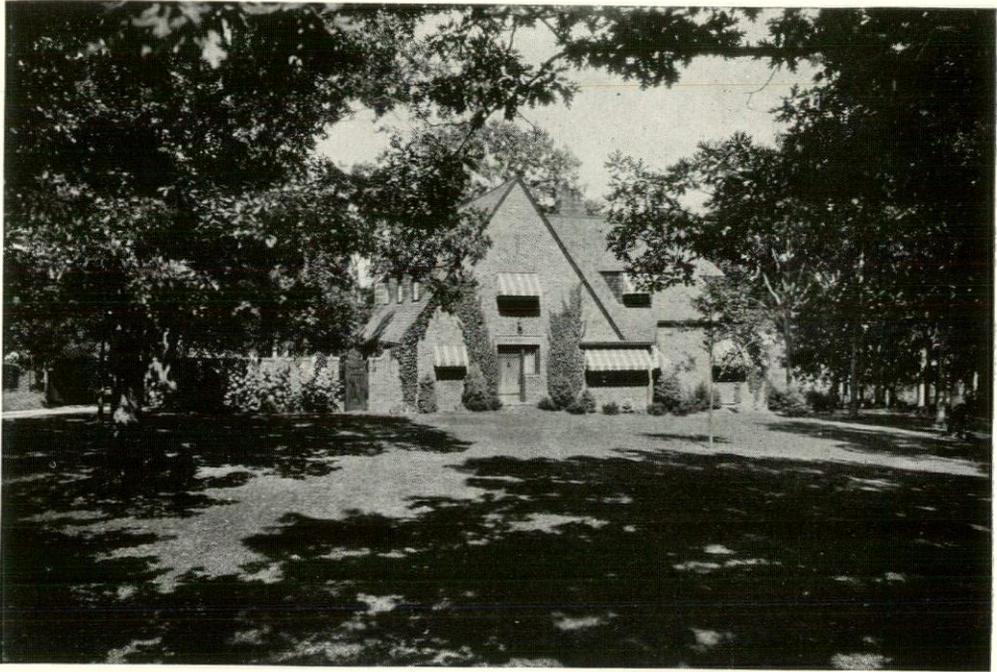
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Lewis Bowman, Architect



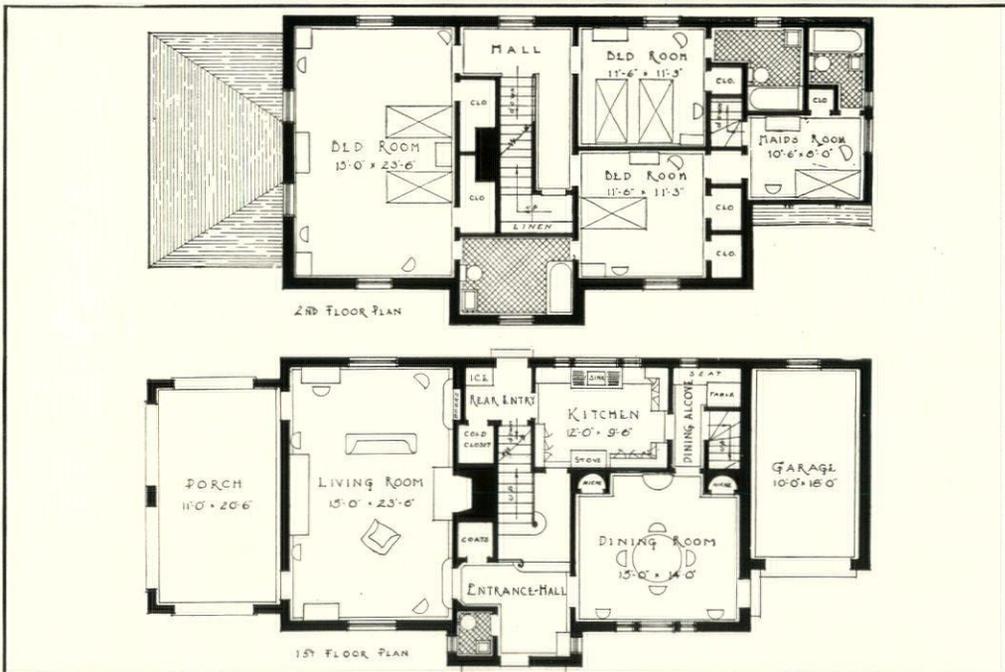
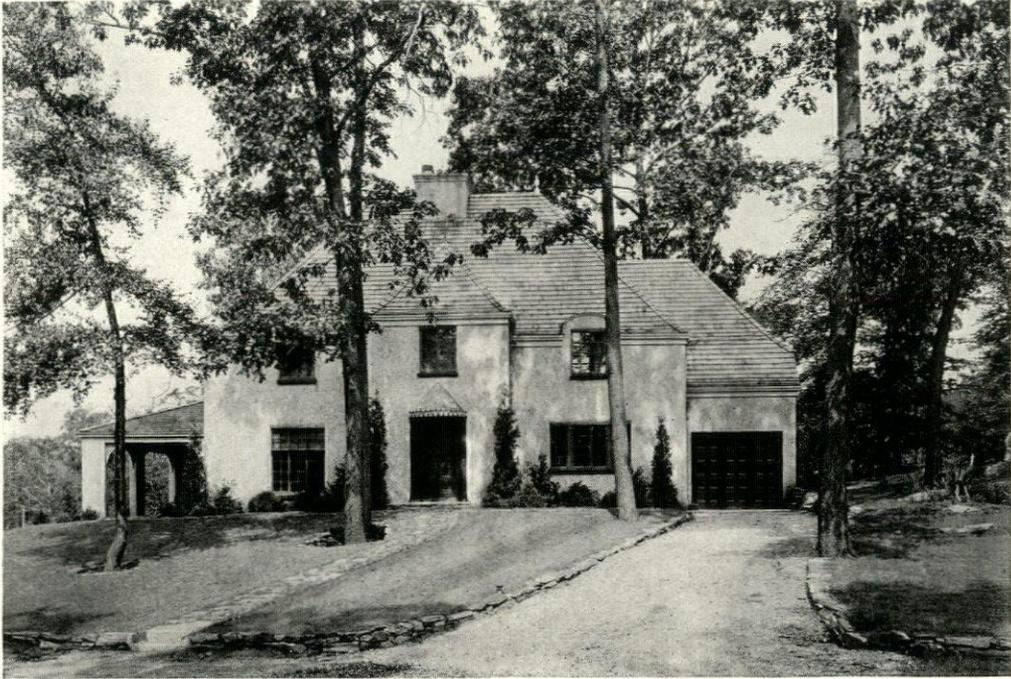
RESIDENCE OF MRS. M. McLEAN ALLEN, BROADMOOR, COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.  
Robert R. McGoodwin, Architect



RESIDENCE OF W. R. OWEN, ESQ., DENVER, COLORADO  
M. H. and B. Hoyts, Architects



RESIDENCE OF FRANZ W. WOOD, ESQ., DES MOINES, IOWA  
Wetherell & Harrison, Architects

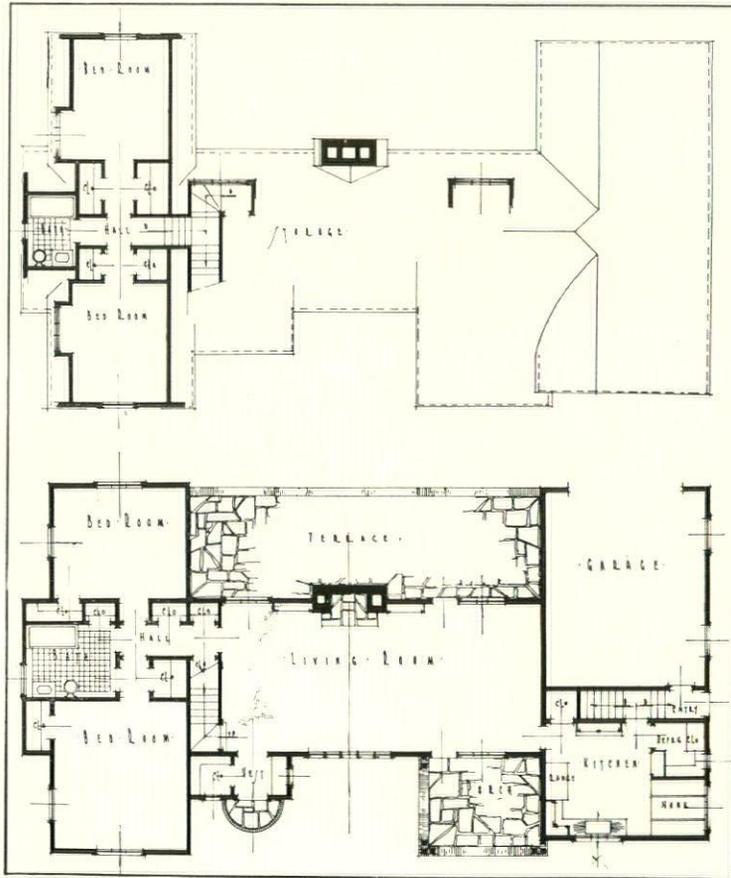


RESIDENCE OF P. S. KAUFMAN, ESQ., FLEETWOOD, N. Y.

Howard & Frenaye, Architects



Photo. Gillies



RESIDENCE OF C. H. PETERSEN, ESQ., PORT WASHINGTON, L. I.

Otto Preis, Architect



*Photo. Gillies*

RESIDENCE OF C. H. PETERSEN, ESQ., PORT WASHINGTON, L. I.

Otto Preis, Architect



RESIDENCE OF WILLIAM J. MURPHY, ESQ., COLIGNI AVENUE, NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y.  
D. A. Sumno, Architect



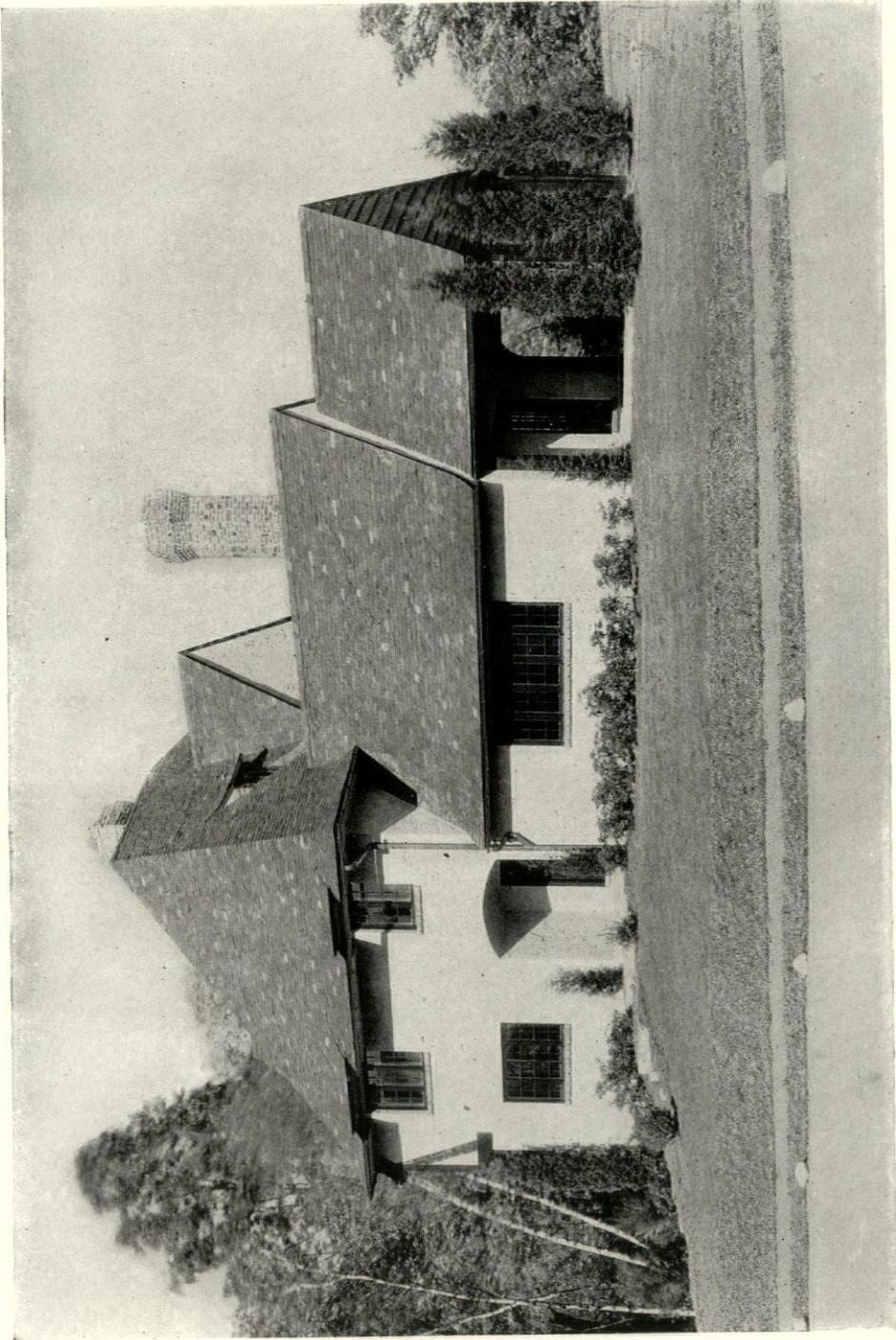
*Photo. Tebbs & Kuell*

RESIDENCE OF J. L. V. BONNEY, ESQ., BEXLEY (COLUMBUS) OHIO  
Howell & Thomas, Architects



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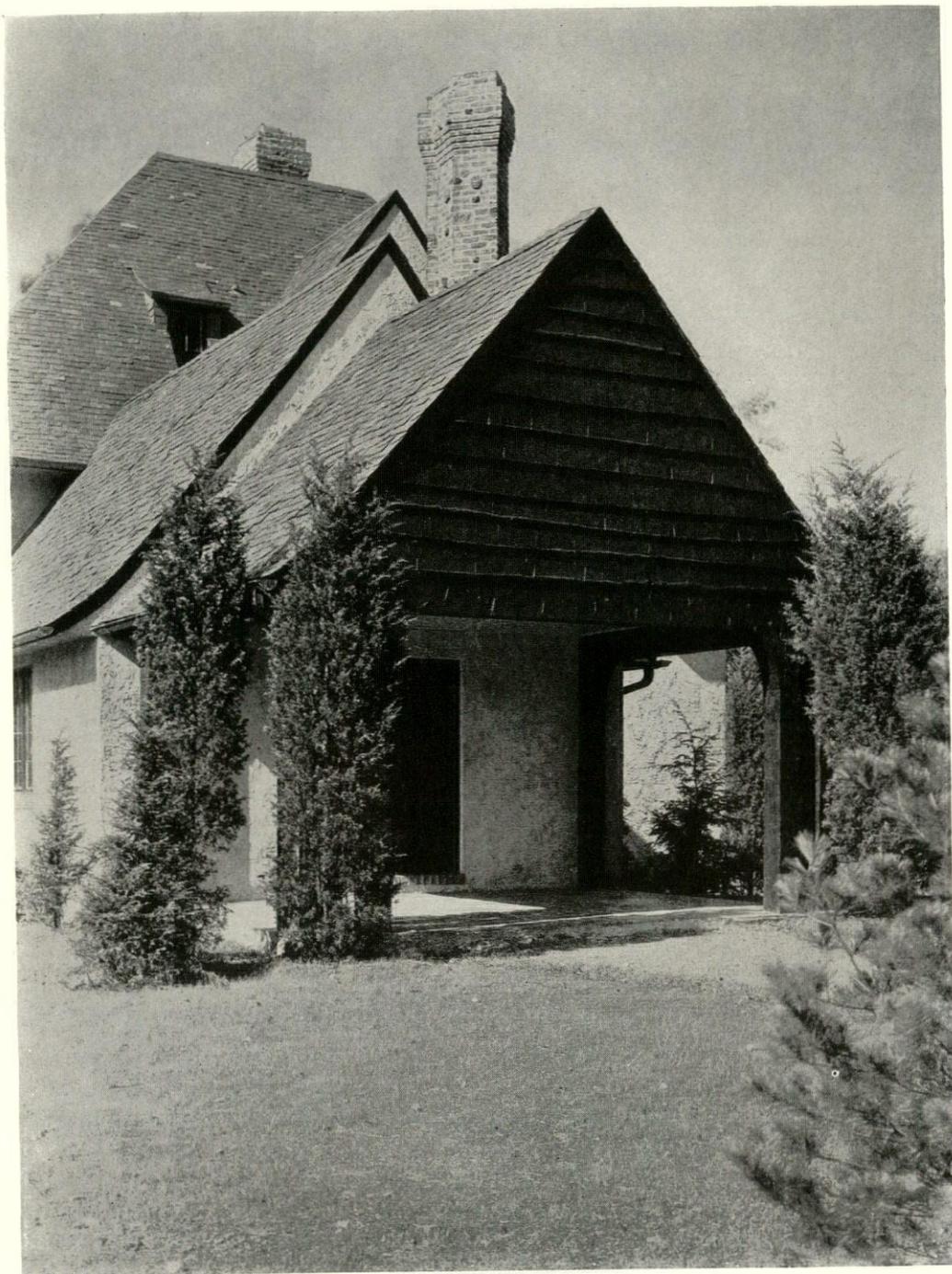
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SUNNY RIDGE HOUSE, HARRISON, N. Y.  
Julius Gregory, Architect



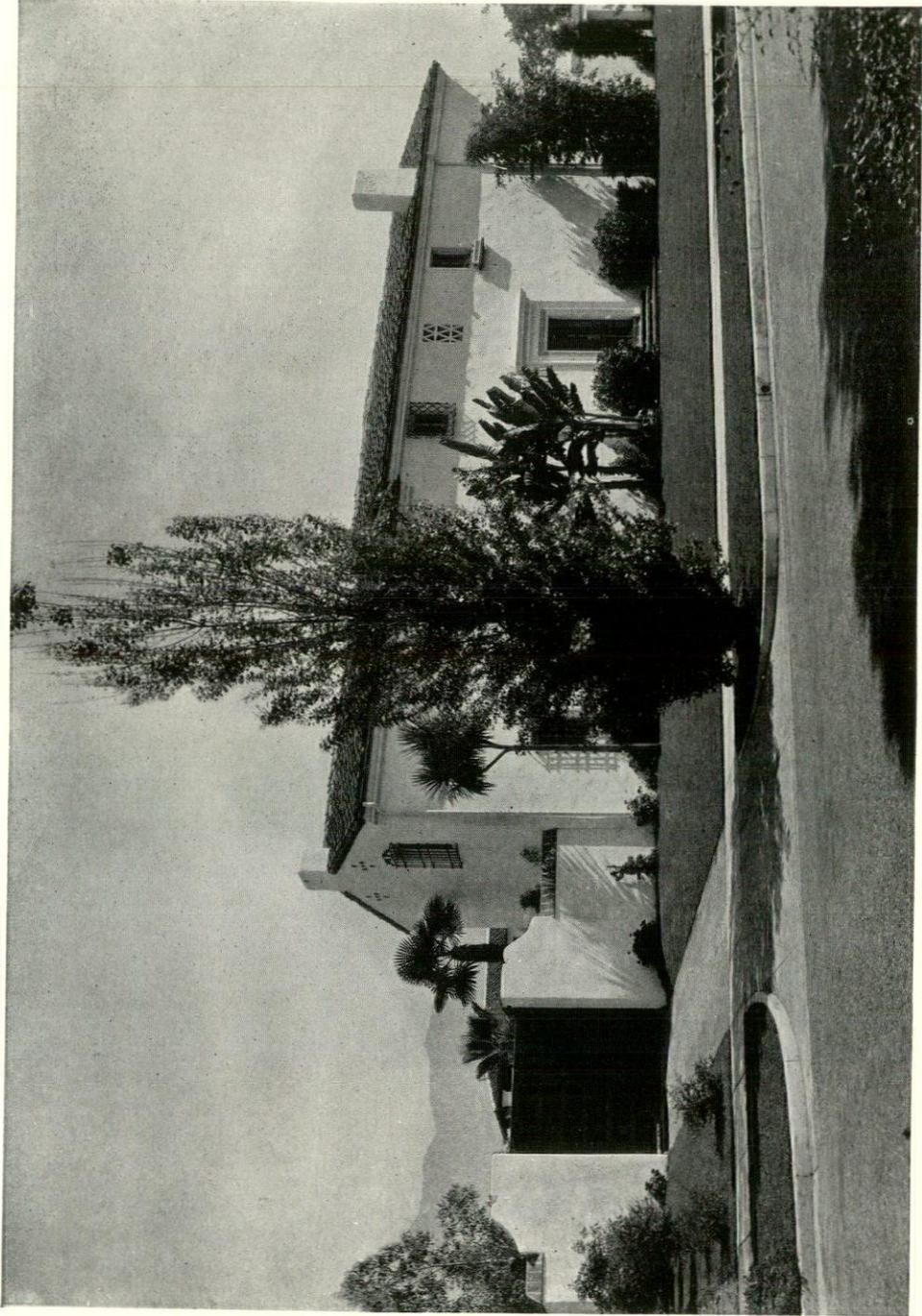
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Julius Gregory, Architect



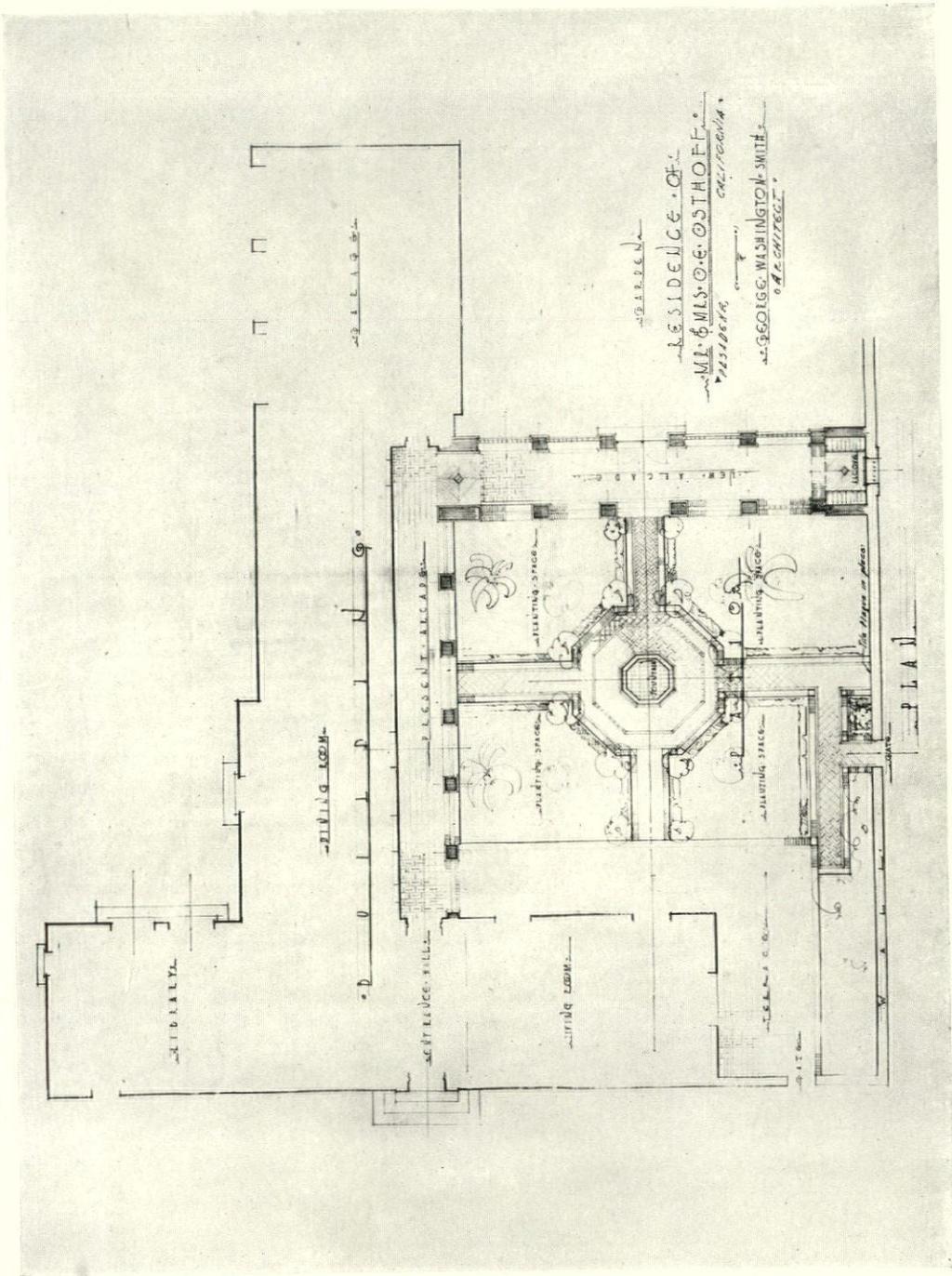
*Photo. Gillies*

SUNNY RIDGE HOUSE, HARRISON, N. Y.  
Julius Gregory, Architect



*Photo. Hiller*

RESIDENCE OF OTTO E. OSTHOFF, ESQ., PASADENA, CALIFORNIA  
George Washington Smith, Architect





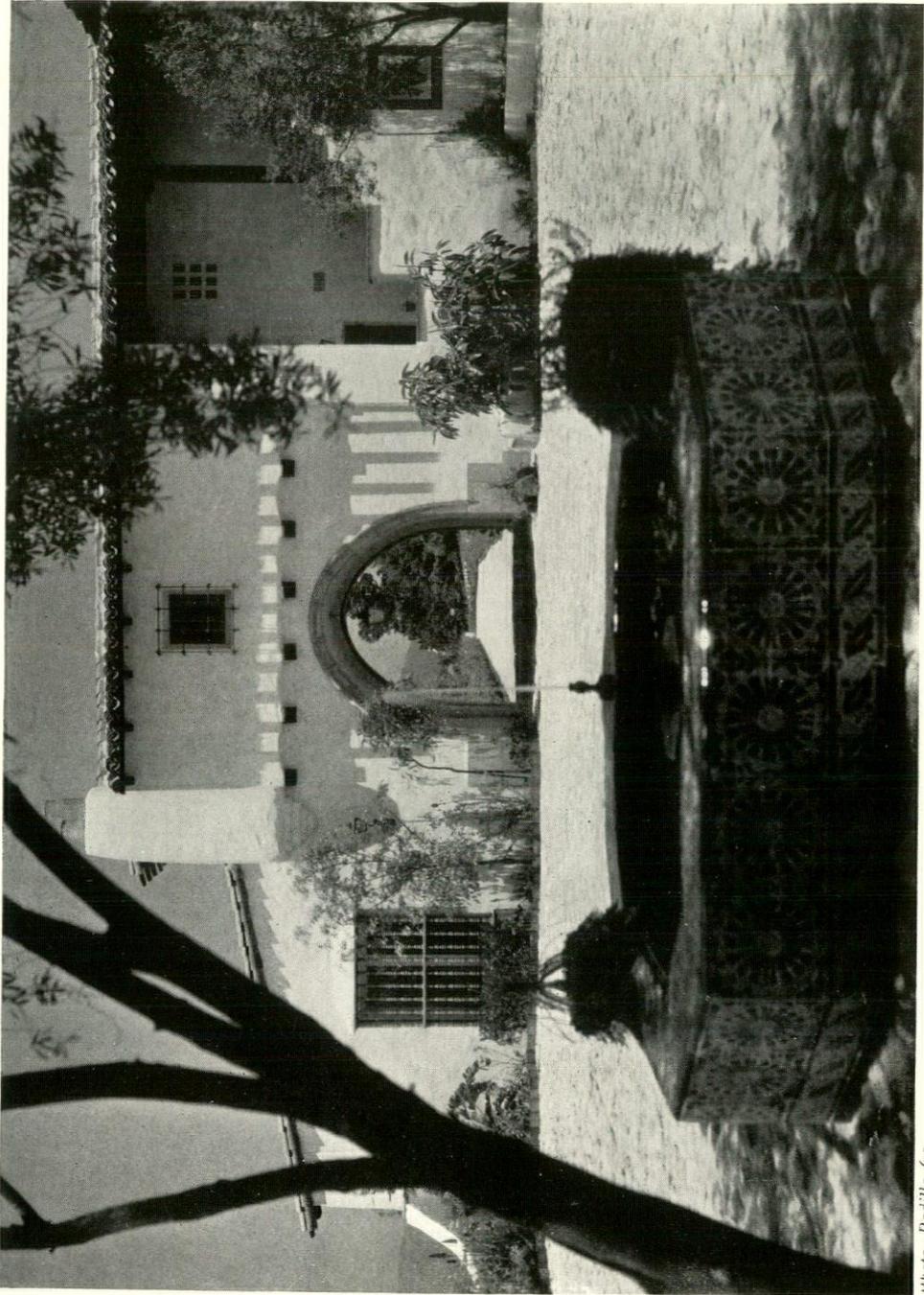
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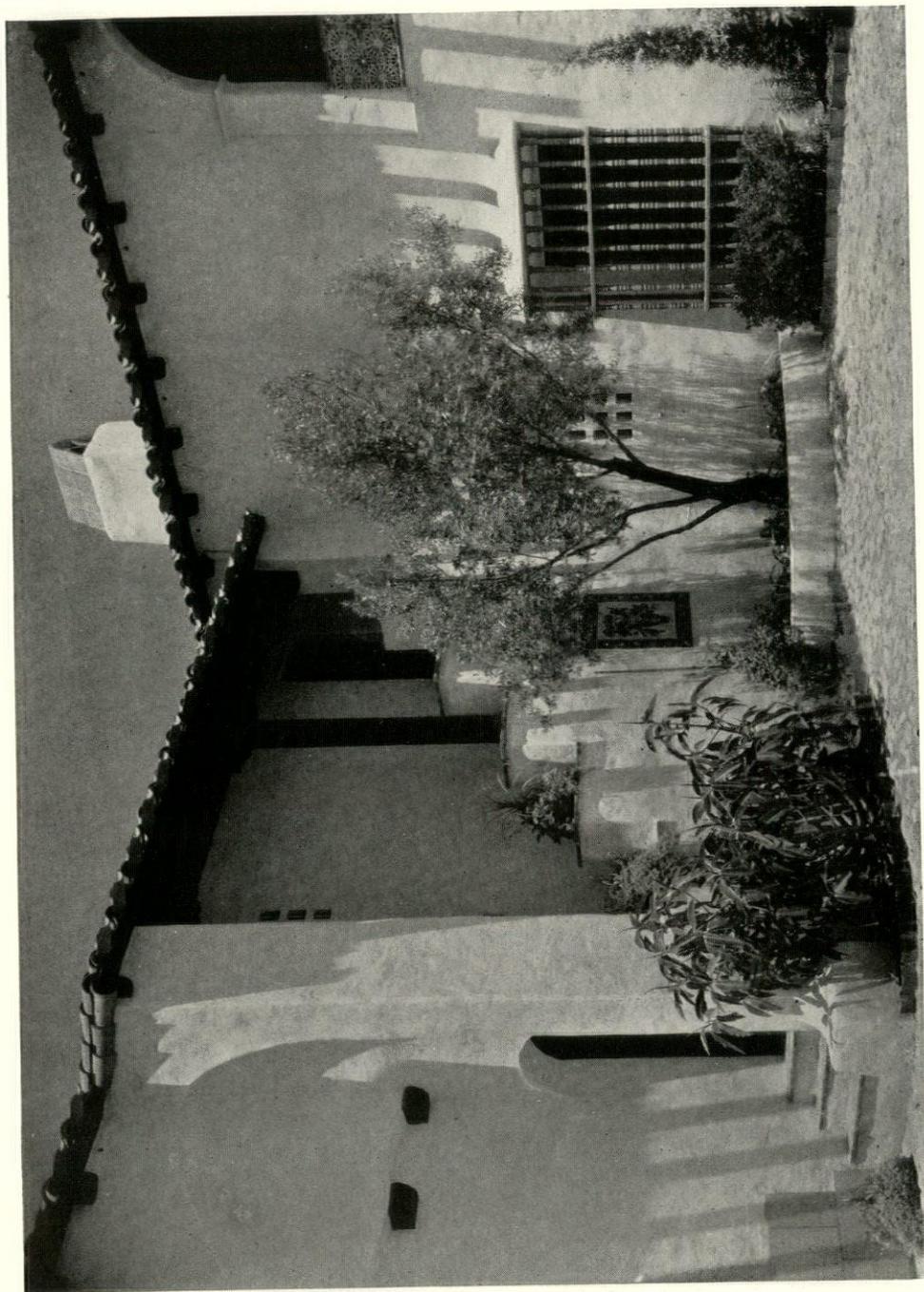
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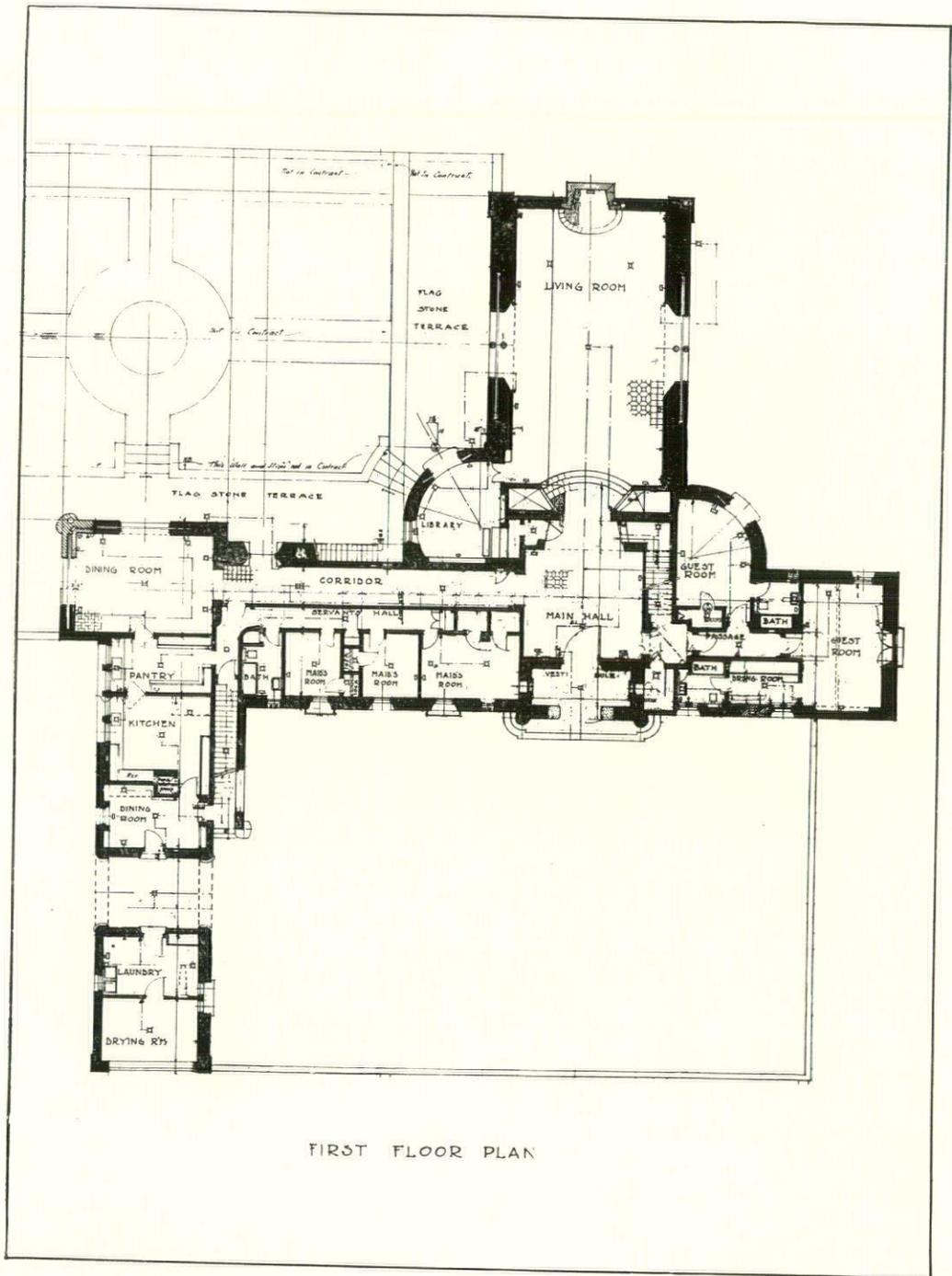
*Photo. Padilla Co.*

RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. FRED C. THOMSON, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA  
Wallace Neff, Architect



*Photo. Padilla Co.*

RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. FRED C. THOMSON, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA  
Wallace Neff, Architect



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. FRED C. THOMSON, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA  
Wallace Neff, Architect



*Photo. Padilla Co.*

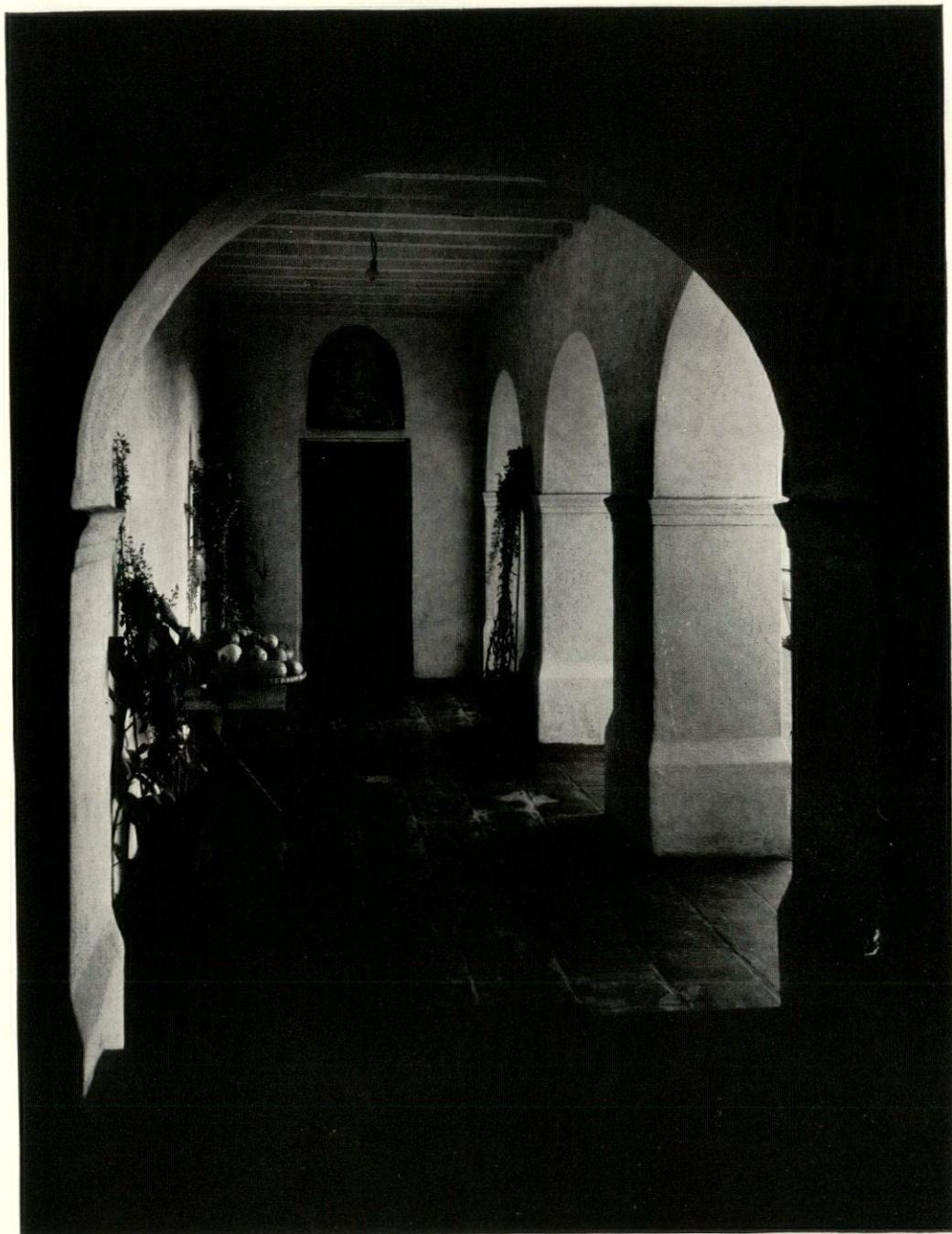
RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. FRED C. THOMSON, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA  
Wallace Neff, Architect



*Photo. G. Moulin*

Stair Hall

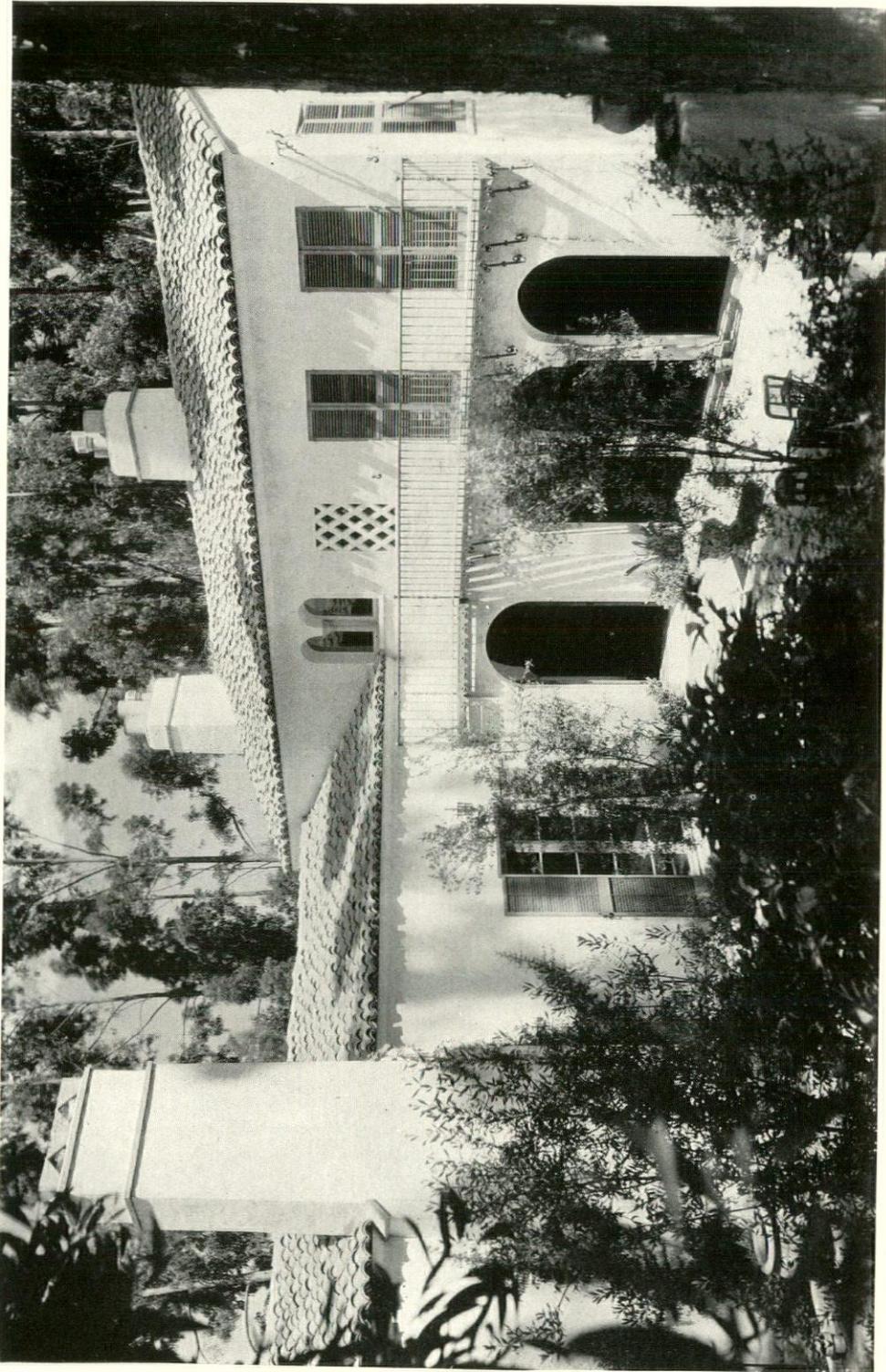
RESIDENCE OF DUNCAN McDUFFIE, ESQ., BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA  
Willis Polk & Co., Architects



*Photo. G. Moulin*

Loggia

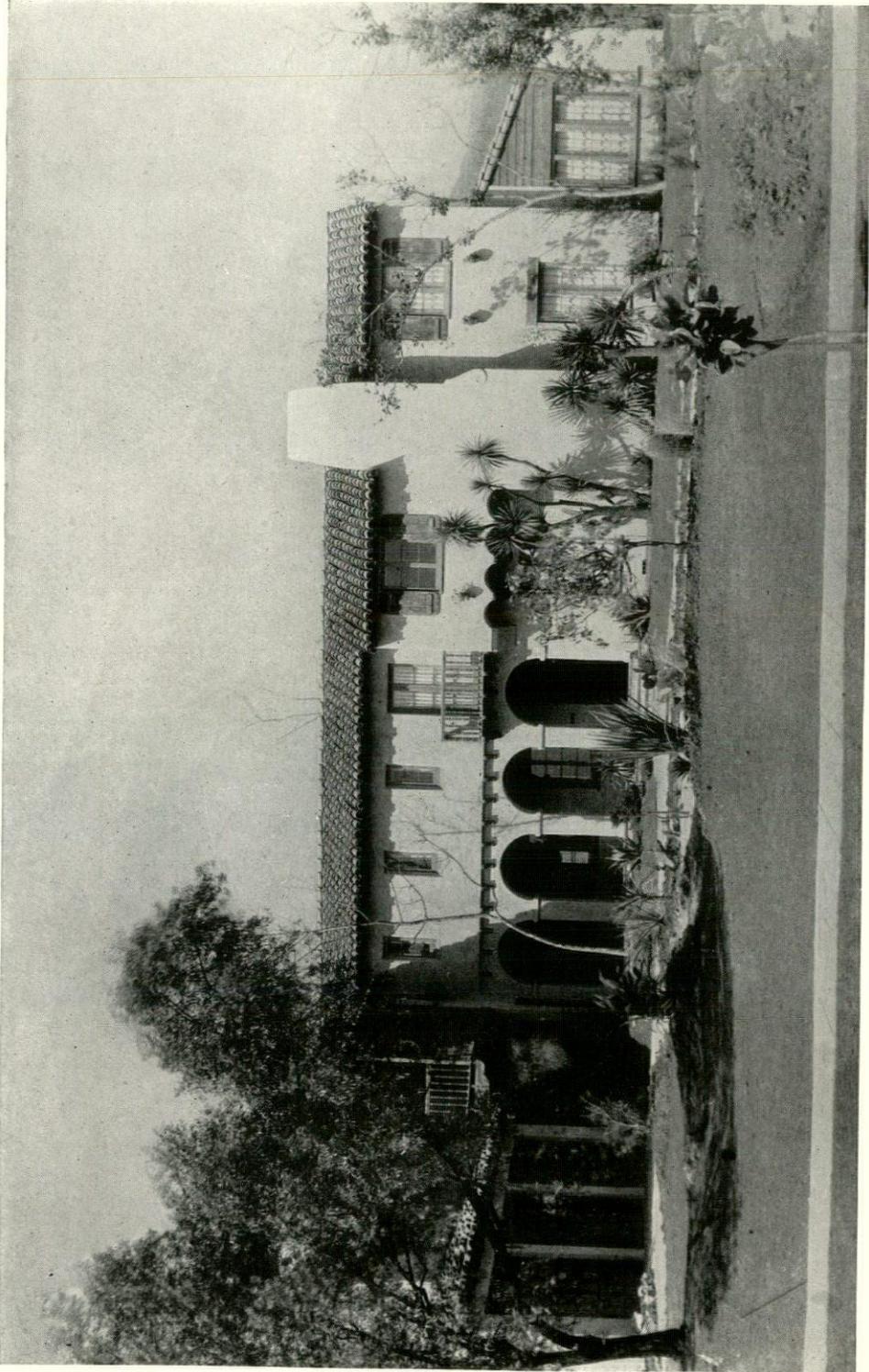
RESIDENCE OF DUNCAN McDUFFIE, ESQ., BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA  
Willis Polk & Co., Architects



RESIDENCE OF DUNCAN McDUFFIE, ESQ., BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA  
Willis Polk & Co., Architects

*Photo. G. Moulin*





*Photo. Margaret Craig*

RESIDENCE OF C. R. L. CRENSHAW, ESQ., SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA  
Gable & Wyant, Architects

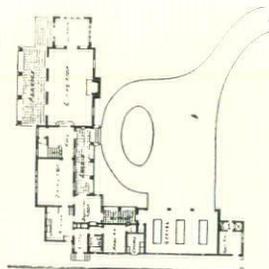


*Photo. Margaret Craig*

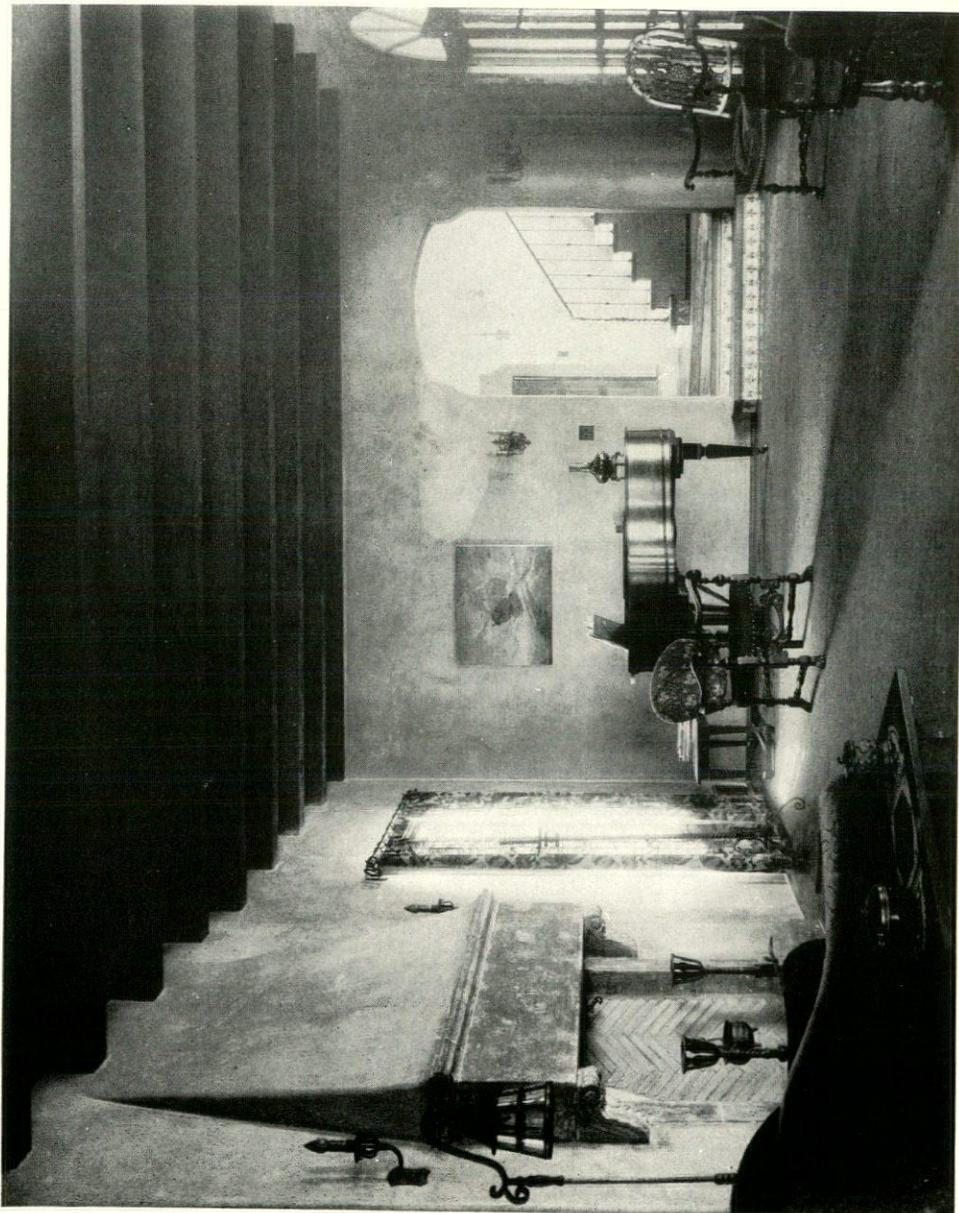
RESIDENCE OF C. R. L. CRENSHAW, ESQ., SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA  
Gable & Wyant, Architects



Second Floor Plan

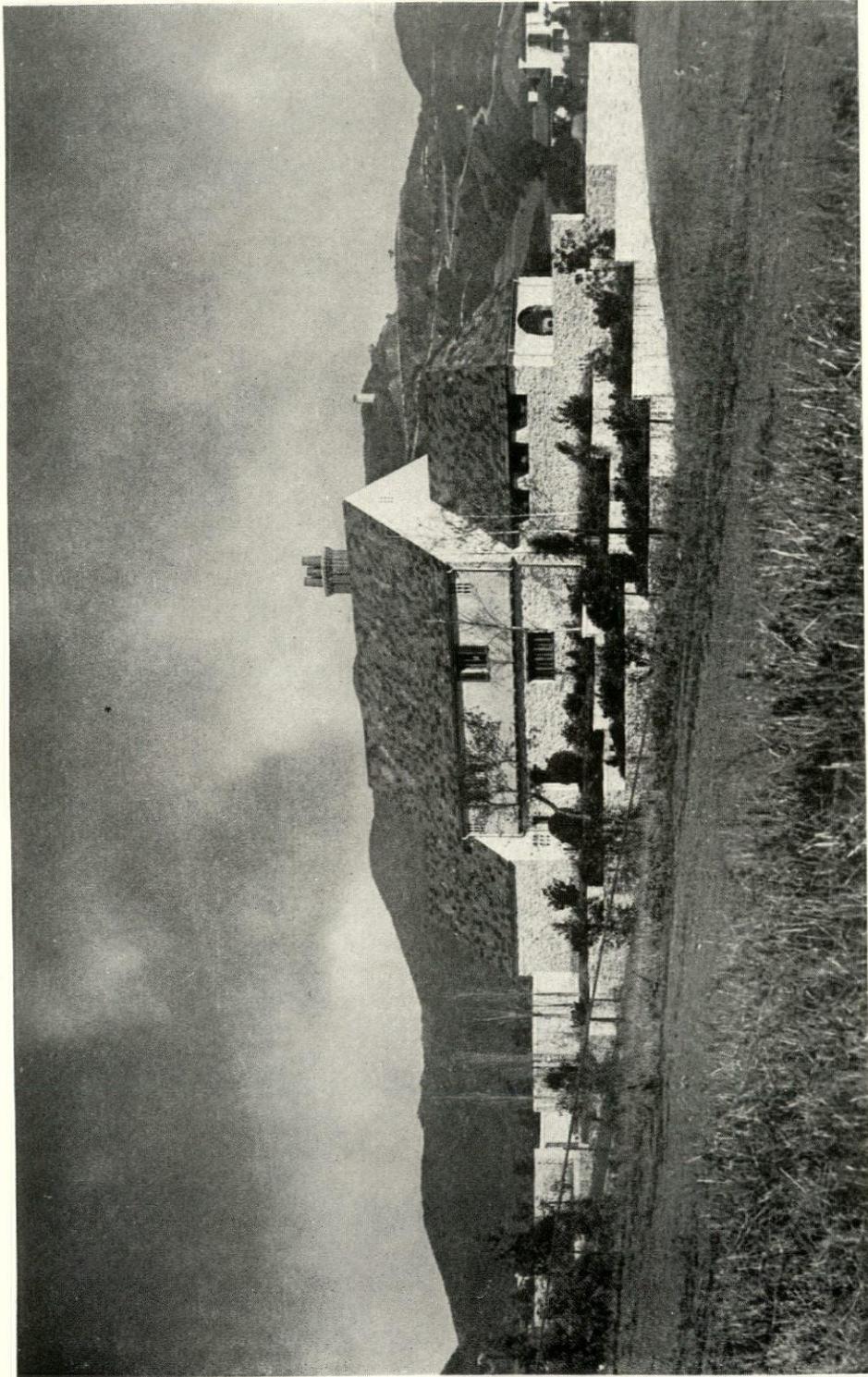


First Floor Plan



Photo, Margaret Craig

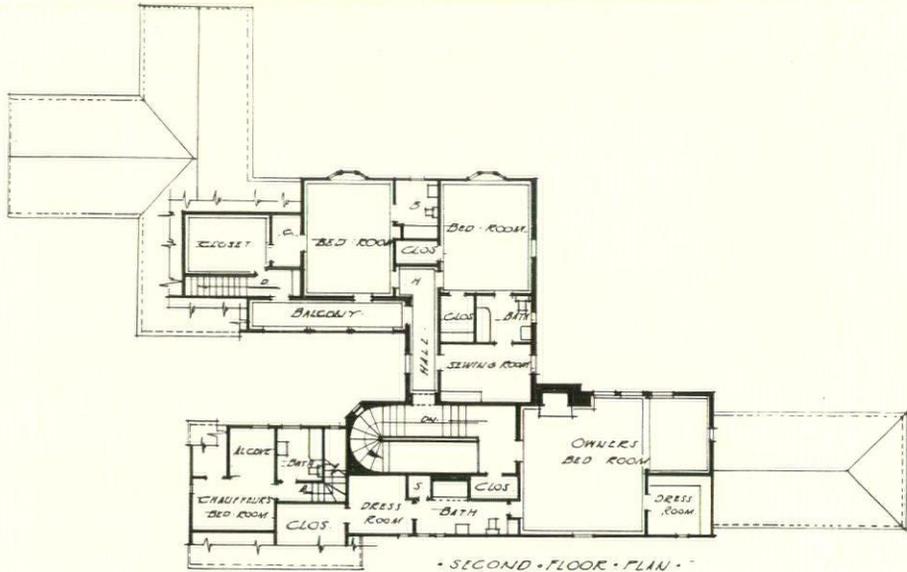
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Gable & Wyant, Architects



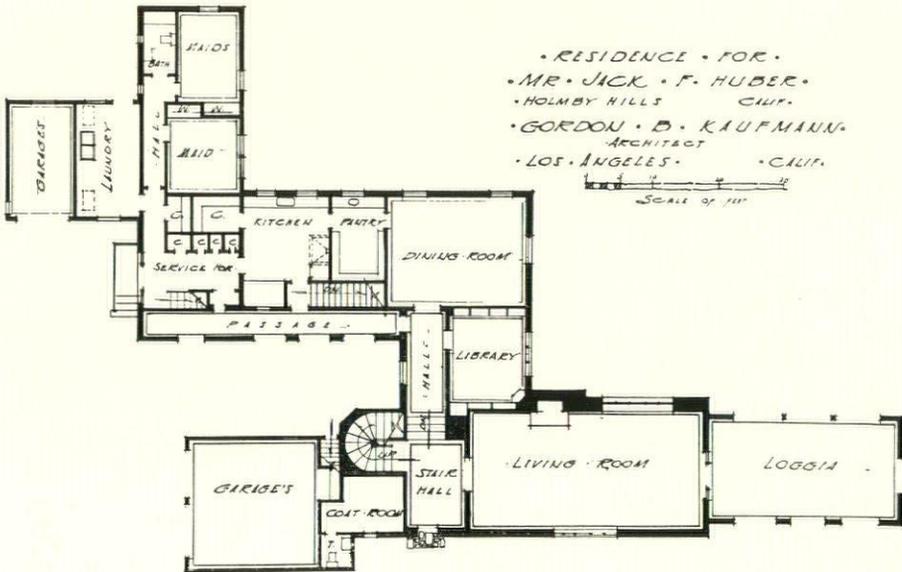
*Photo, W. M. Clarke*

RESIDENCE FOR JACK HUBER, ESQ., HOLMBY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

Gordon B. Kaufmann, Architect



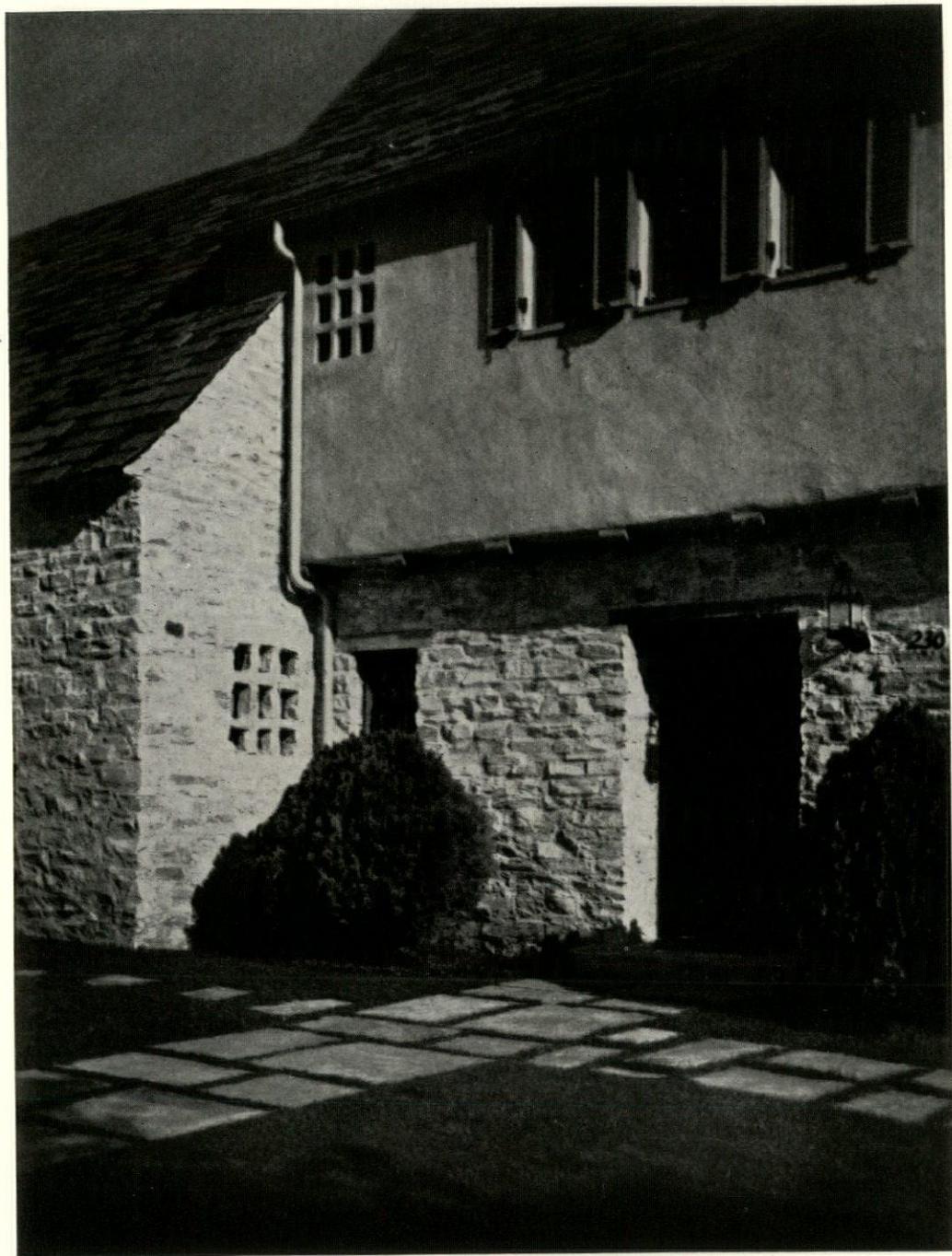
• SECOND FLOOR PLAN •



• FIRST FLOOR PLAN •

• RESIDENCE FOR •  
 • MR. JACK F. HUBER •  
 • HOLMBY HILLS CALIF. •  
 • GORDON B. KAUFMANN •  
 ARCHITECT •  
 • LOS ANGELES • CALIF.





*Photo, W. M. Clarke*

RESIDENCE FOR JACK HUBER, ESQ., HOLMBY HILLS, CALIFORNIA  
Gordon B. Kaufmann, Architect



Detail of Front Entrance

RESIDENCE OF H. C. CHRISTIANS, ESQ., RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS  
White and Weber, Architects



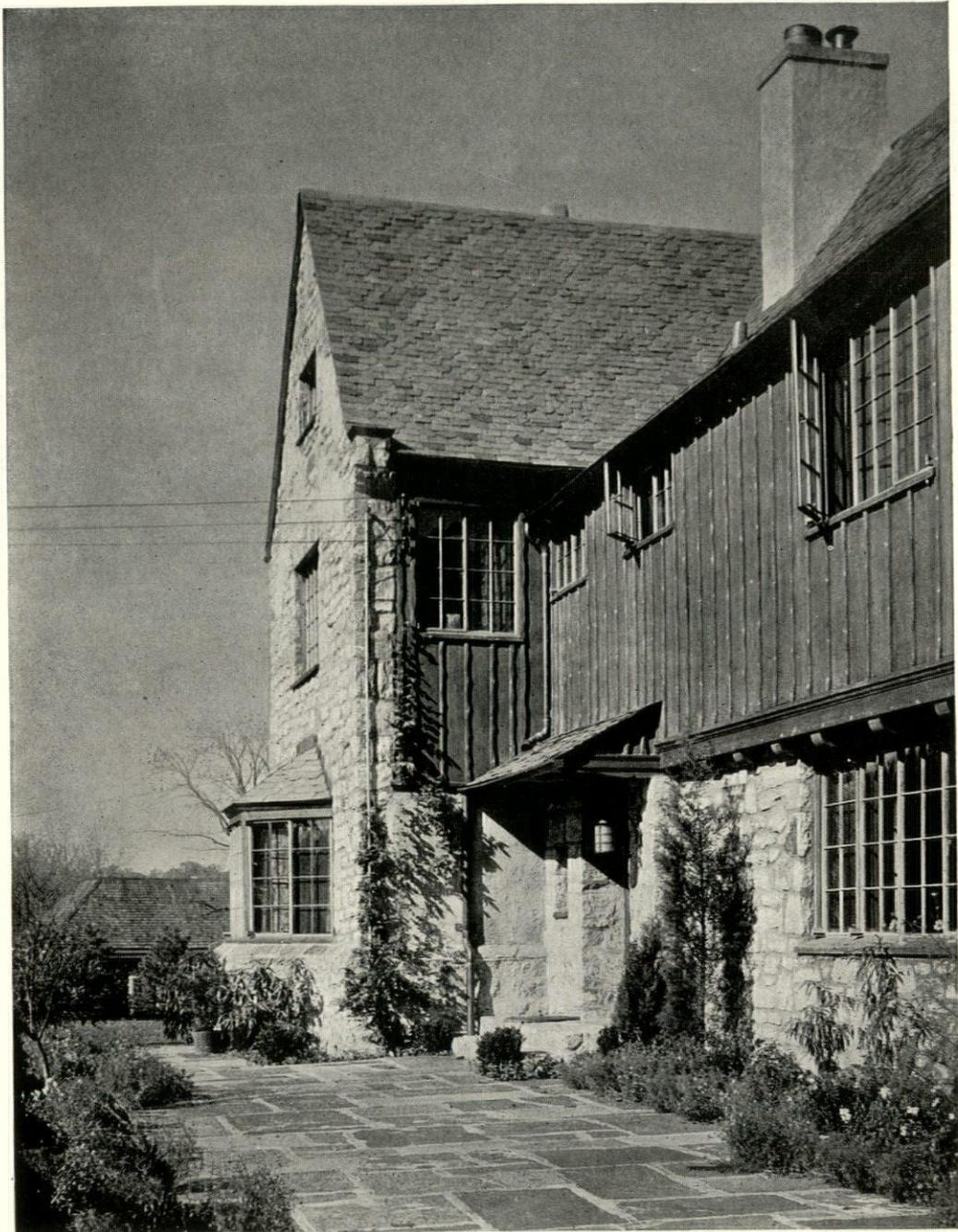
*Photo, Tebbs & Knell*

RESIDENCE OF A. G. LOHNES, BEXLEY (COLUMBUS), OHIO  
Howell & Thomas, Architects



*Photo, Tebbs & Knell*

RESIDENCE OF A. G. LOHNES, ESQ., BEXLEY (COLUMBUS), OHIO  
Howell & Thomas, Architects



*Photo, S. H. Gottscho*

RESIDENCE OF D. C. GRIFFITH, ESQ., SCARSDALE, N. Y.  
Franklin P. Hammond, Architect

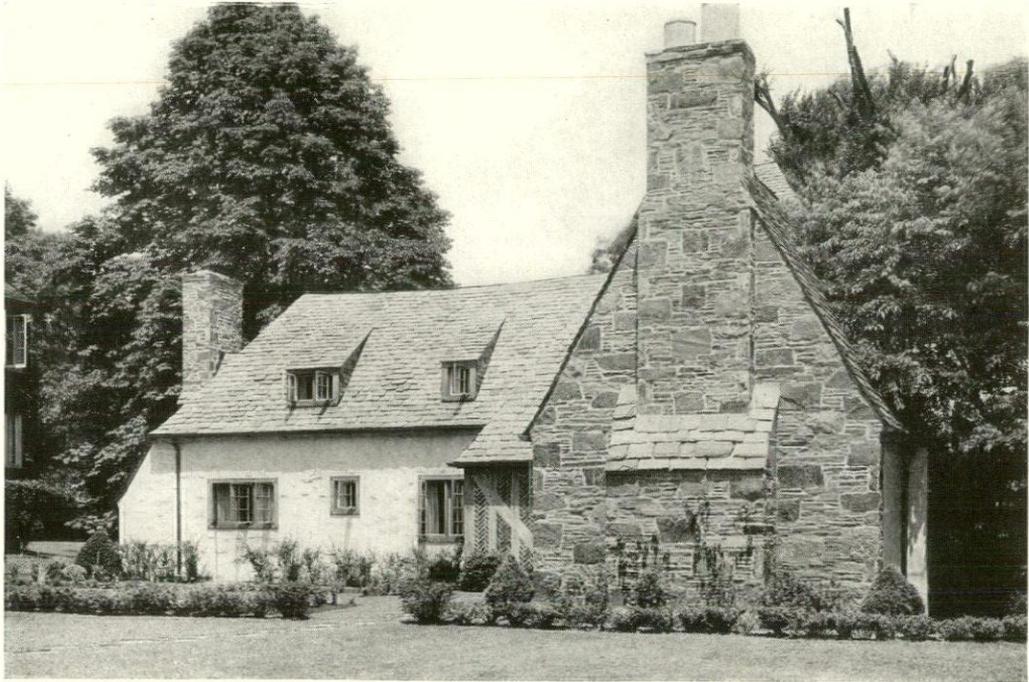
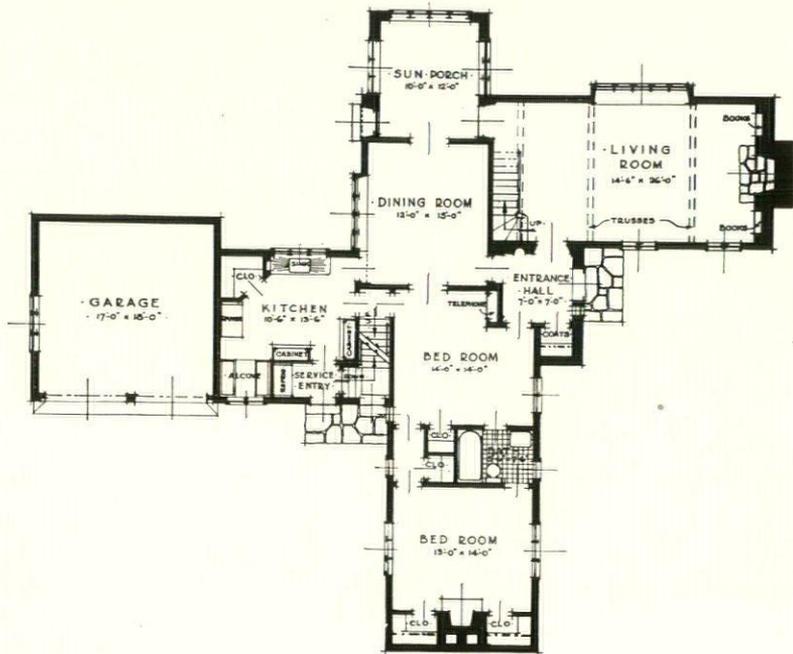


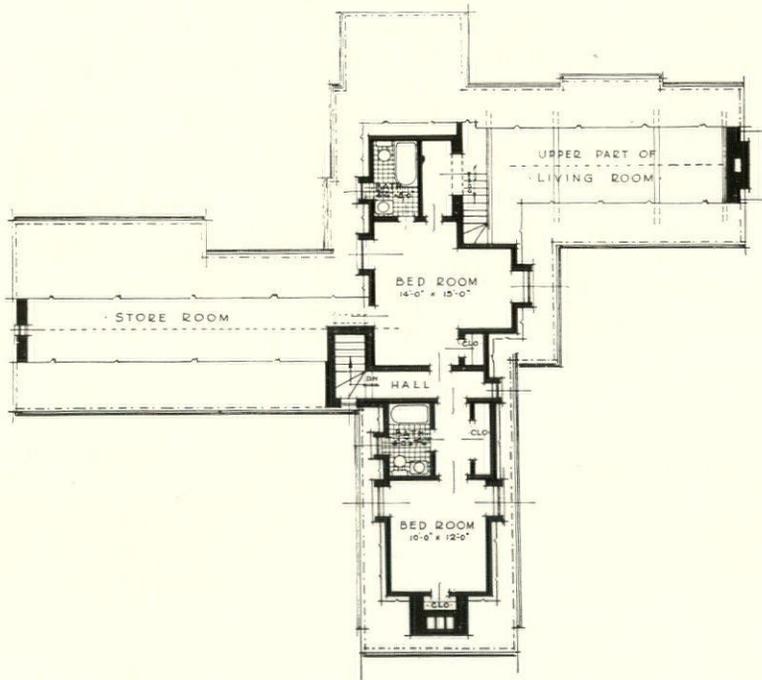
Photo Gillies



RESIDENCE OF MILTON HATFIELD, ESQ., MONTCLAIR, N. J.  
Frank J. Forster, Architect



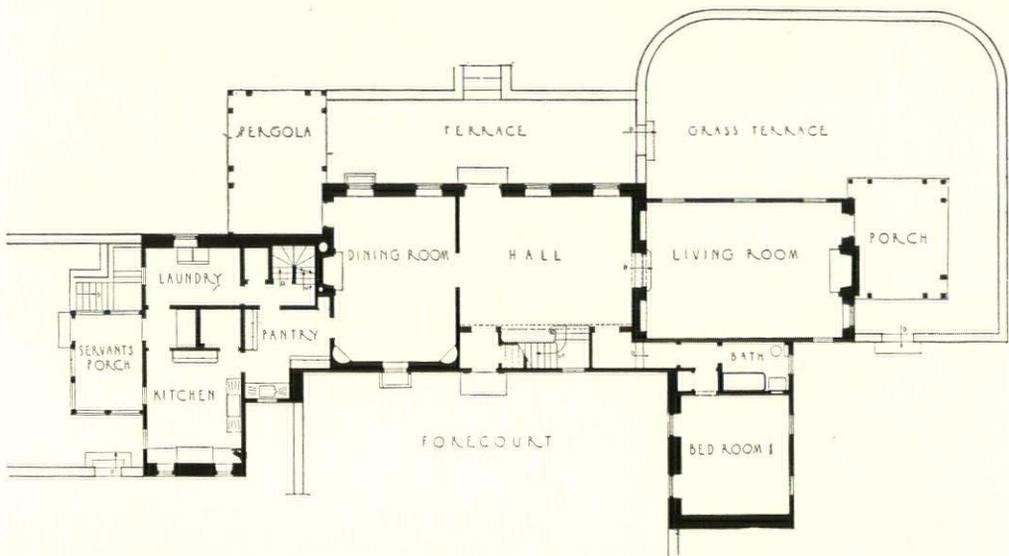
Photo Gillies



RESIDENCE OF MILTON HATFIELD, ESQ., MONTCLAIR, N. J.  
Frank J. Forster, Architect



Photo, Amemya



RESIDENCE OF CHESTER W. CUTHELL, SOUTH NORWALK, CONN.  
James C. Mackenzie, Jr., Architect



Photo, Amélya

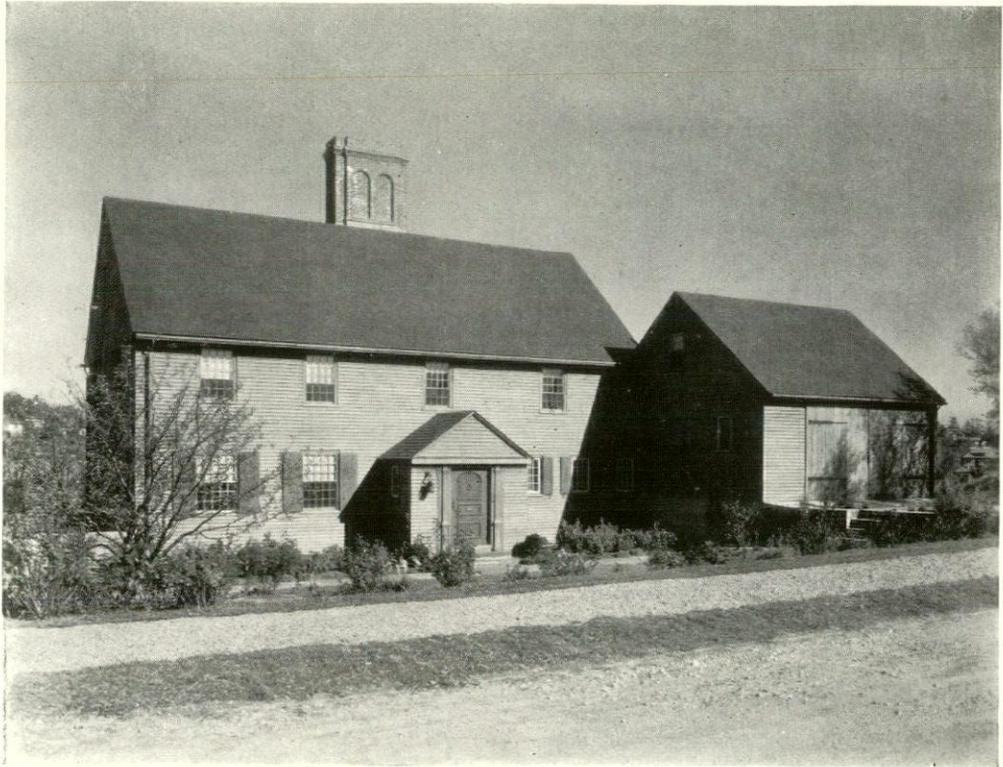
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James C. Mackenzie, Jr., Architect



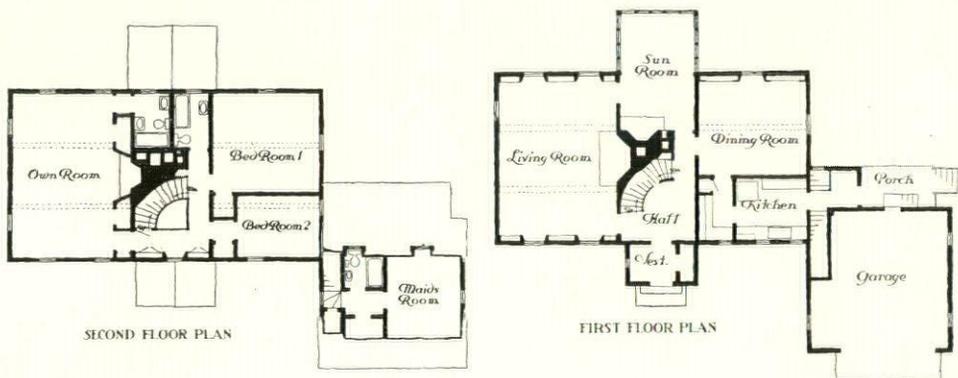
RESIDENCE OF CHESTER W. CUTHELL, SOUTH NORWALK, CONN.  
James C. Mackenzie, Jr., Architect



RESIDENCE OF CHESTER W. CUTHELL, SOUTH NORWALK, CONN.  
James C. Mackenzie, Jr., Architect



Photo, Haskell



RESIDENCE OF C. A. SAWYER, JR., ESQ., NEWTON, MASS.

Derby & Robinson, Architects

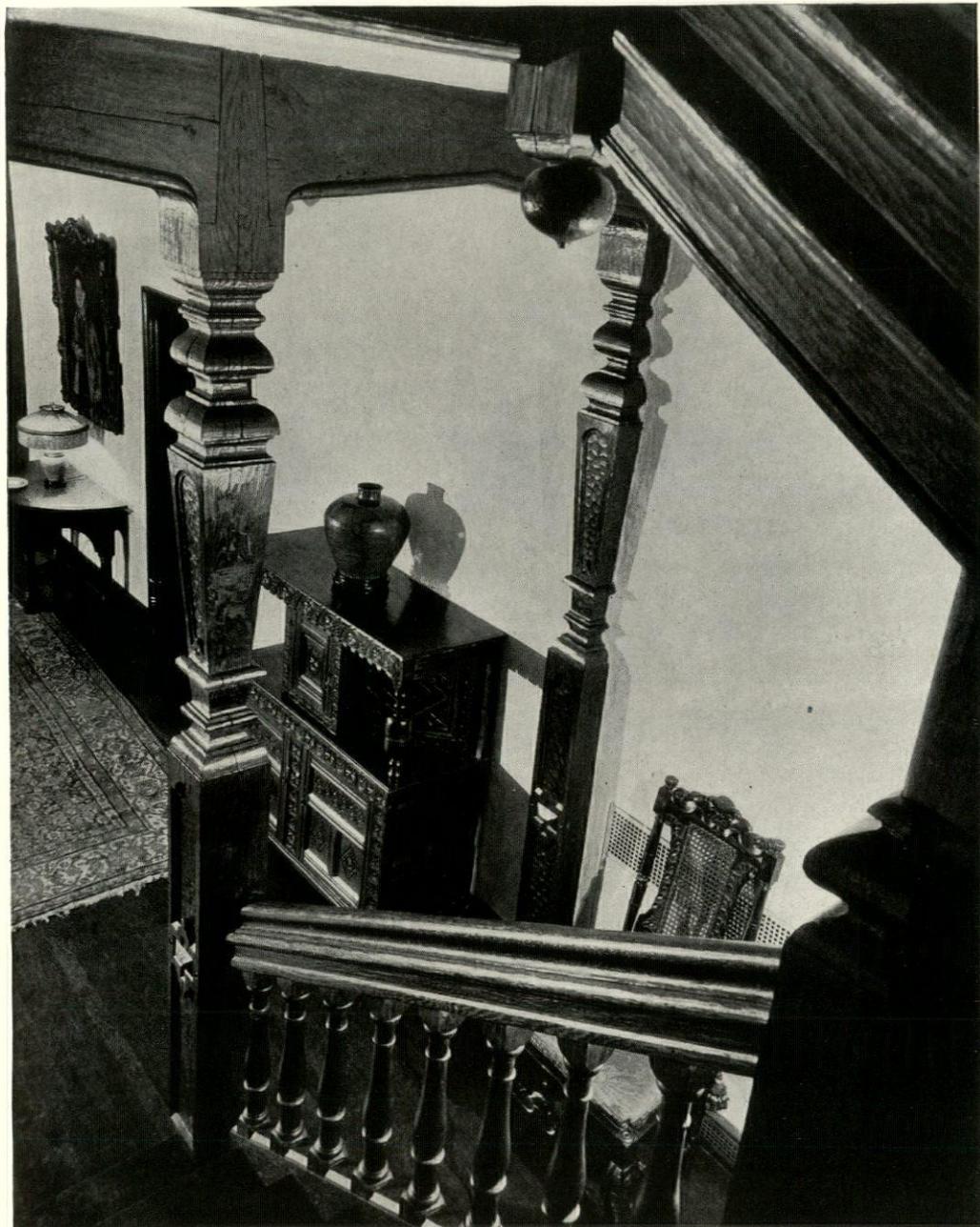


RESIDENCE OF C. A. SAWYER, JR., ESQ., NEWTON, MASS.  
Derby & Robinson, Architects



*Photo, Haskell*

RESIDENCE OF C. A. SAWYER, JR., ESQ., NEWTON, MASS.  
Derby & Robinson, Architects



*Photo, Sigurd Fischer*

RESIDENCE OF SIDNEY H. SONN, ESQ., HARRISON, N. Y.  
Julius Gregory, Architect



*Photo, Sigurd Fischer*

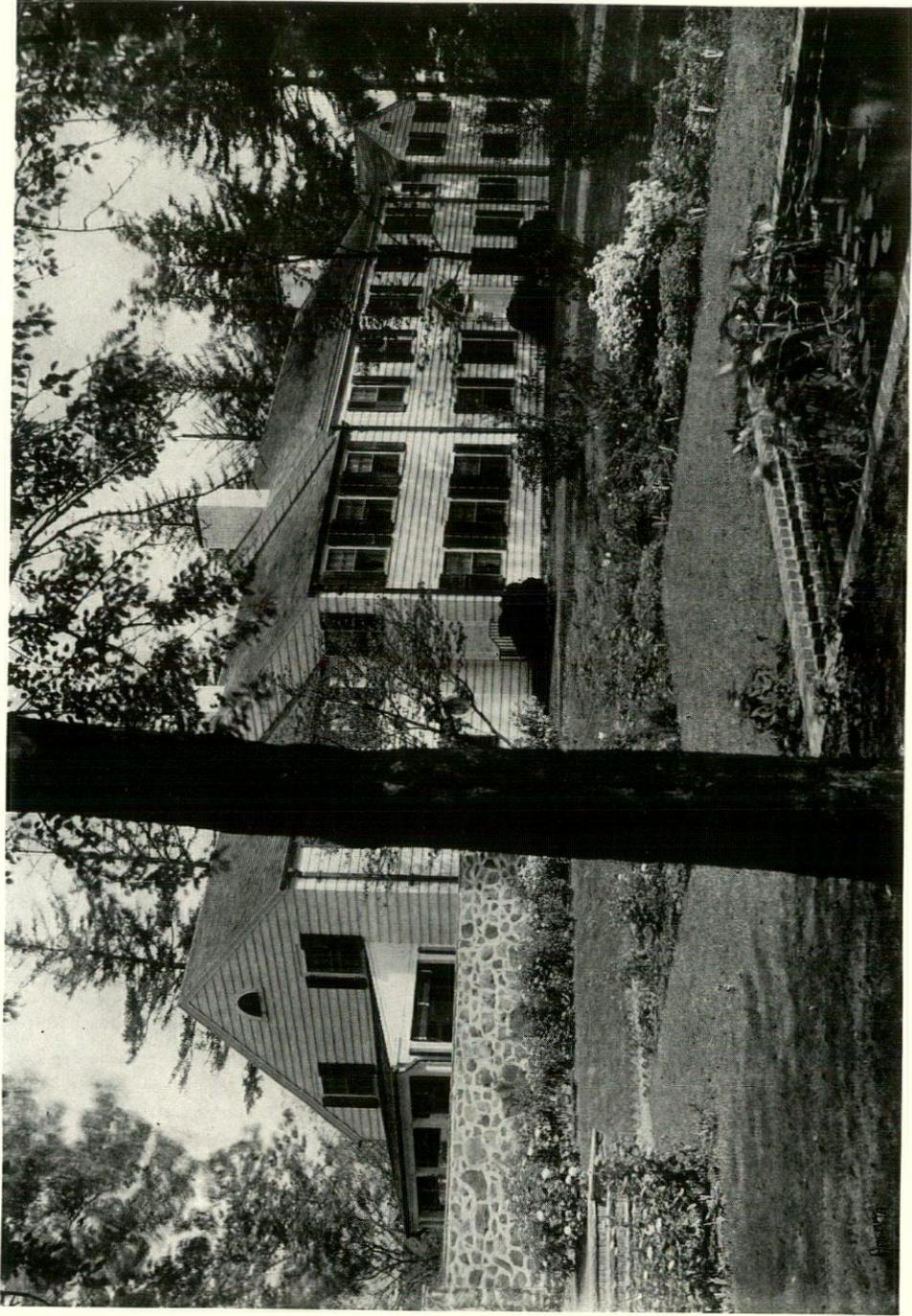
RESIDENCE OF SIDNEY H. SONN, ESQ., HARRISON, N. Y.

Julius Gregory, Architect



*Photo, Sigurd Fischer*

RESIDENCE OF SIDNEY H. SONN, ESQ., HARRISON, N. Y.  
Julius Gregory, Architect



*Photo, Anemaya*

RESIDENCE OF WARREN KINNEY, ESQ., MORRISTOWN, N. J.  
James W. O'Connor, Architect



*Photo, Amemya*

RESIDENCE OF WARREN KINNEY, ESQ., MORRISTOWN, N. J.

James W. O'Connor, Architect



*Photo, Amemya*

RESIDENCE OF WARREN KINNEY, ESQ., MORRISTOWN, N. J.  
James W. O'Connor, Architect



*Photo, Amemya*

RESIDENCE OF WARREN KINNEY, ESQ., MORRISTOWN, N. J.  
James W. O'Connor, Architect

considered. Or the client may think he desires a colonial type when some of the furnishings or plot conditions call for an entirely different type. In that case architectural plates and pictures showing old work are carefully selected and left for the client to consider. In this way, as the job proceeds, the client begins to feel that his house has a certain personality and that it is his conception as well as the architect's. It is also quite customary to take the client on a tour of inspection, so that he may see a concrete expression of type, material and other aspects of the problem. We also show him the many processes gone through during the preparation of the plans, instead of making a mystery of them.

"The client sees the small sketch studies in pencil or charcoal as well as the studies for the details. In this way he has a continued interest in the architect's work, realizes more fully the many problems involved, and is more willing to co-operate. The same attention is paid to the landscape work and the interior decorations with the hope that the job when completed will tie together and be a success in all ways."

A novel exhibit at a showing of the decorative arts at the Salmagundi Club in New York city about a year ago was a miniature stage, not more than two feet high, with a country house painted as a back-drop and a stage setting of trees and shrubs represented in flat planes as scenery. The front of the stage made a frame for this charming setting. Skillfully arranged lights gave the whole an aspect of reality that is more or less absent from the customary tentative sketch or the rendered perspective. This arrangement was the idea of the architect, Julius Gregory. The experiment seemed so successful in producing the desired illusion that I asked Mr. Gregory to describe his experience with models.

"The only instances where I have made scale models," wrote Mr. Gregory in reply, "have been when in the development of elevations of larger domestic work and churches I have built them up with clay for the purpose of studying masses. To try to construct a model at small scale and

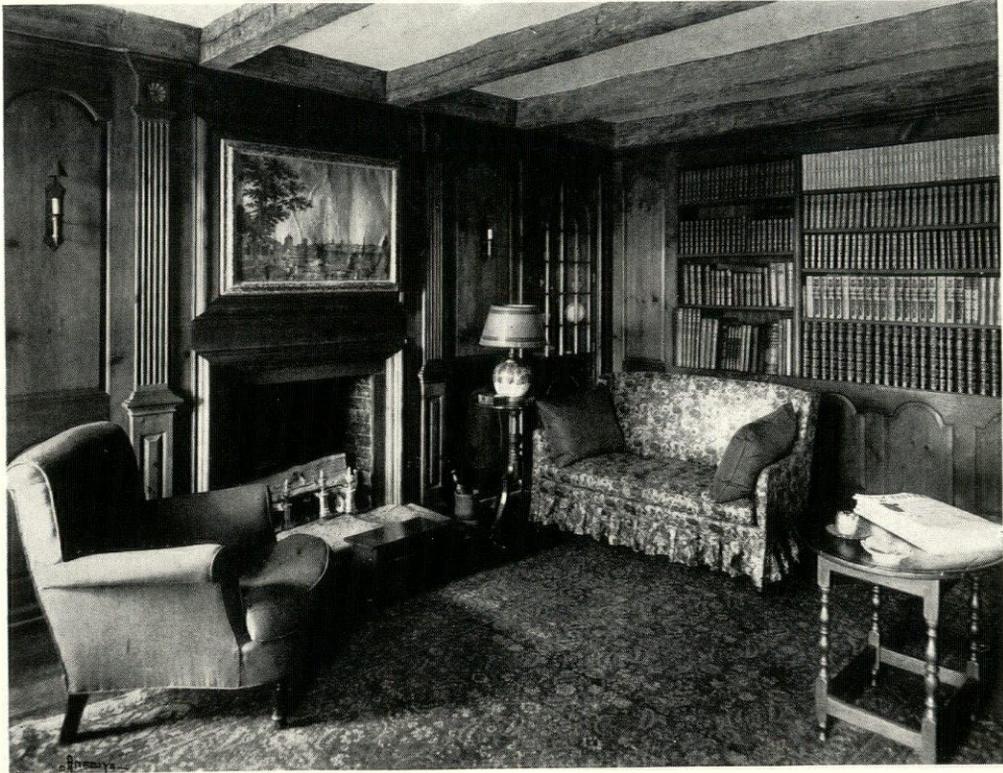
keep it in actual scale is practically impossible—at least I have never seen one that was not difficult to look at. The walls, if imitating stone or stucco, were leaden, all of the details were crude, the trees were colored sponges, and altogether the labored effort to produce the model was apparent, with a result not only difficult to visualize but actually unreal.

"Because of this feeling it occurred to me that if a well-drawn perspective of a house were painted and set up as the feature of a miniature stage setting, with actual foreground and the trees in flat planes placed as scenery, a result would be produced which would satisfy the eye as no actual model ever could. I tried out the idea satisfactorily. I am now planning to construct a small stage set with such equipment as will enable me to study my work and show it in this manner, and I think it an experiment worth trying.

"Every house I do is designed to its site. A topographical survey is the first step. The style practically grows out of the ground, unless the client has some definite style predilections. Even then it is inevitably expressed in the terms of my way of doing. I find that whatever the drawings may show the real spark of vitality in the finished house comes through actual work on the job. It is more than supervision—it is bringing the spirit of the men to weld with the materials, rousing their enthusiasm to create something at once beautiful and functional."

### 3.

There are several points that stand out prominently in this discussion of architects' methods. We are impressed, first of all, by the thorough and exacting care with which the site, the surroundings, the intended expenditure and even the client himself—or herself!—are studied before the plans are drawn. I think it is now possible to put the steps in the architect's approach to the problem of the country house into a group of headings. The first is what we may term the preliminary stage. The architect first studies his material and gradually learns its possibilities and limitations—the feel of it, in short. His sole con-



RESIDENCE OF WARREN KINNEY, ESQ., MORRISTOWN, N. J.

James W. O'Connor, Architect

cern is how best to handle the job with all the modifying conditions.

The second, which we may call the development stage, embraces the preparation of a series of sketch plans in which the ideal and the practical are brought together. The architect tries to visualize the lay-out from every angle. He plays checkers with the rooms, imagining the house under actual conditions of occupation, figuring the sizes of the apartments and their relation to one another, seeing as though they were actually under his eyes the vistas from one room to the one beyond and from the important rooms of the first floor out to the terrace and gardens. Nor does he neglect the placement of major pieces of furniture and the most effective relation and separation of the servants' quarters. Finally, he bears in mind the effect of these interior arrangements on the exterior elevations.

All of these salient considerations are to a small scale, something sound as well

offered for the owner's criticism and are modified to meet his views. They are modified, also, by the architect's own developing conception. It is after the plan has been tentatively formed that style enters. Style as such need not hamper the architect, though he will, of course, have his personal preference and cannot help being influenced by the traditions of design in which he has specialized and feels most at home. Tradition, in most American offices, is no fetich. It becomes a standard to follow only in so far as it may suit the individual taste and the personal desires of the architect. Historic forms lend themselves to an infinite number of variations. The designer who has mastered his style and his materials is able to create plans based on the old but alive with the vigor of the new. Little by little, through the exhaustive method of making study after study on tracing paper

as original develops. Nothing has been found which takes the place of hard work under this system known in our offices as "trial and error."

As the development stage proceeds the architect prepares rendered perspectives, elevation sketches or models both to supplement his own studies and to aid the client to visualize the final result. These presentation drawings vary from the most casual freehand sketches to the carefully constructed perspective rendered in crayon or color. Some firms, like that of Wilson Eyre and McIlvaine, even make perspectives with bird's-eye views from different angles. (Page 342)

After the architect and his client are satisfied that the solution has been reached and the outlines of the plans and elevations are fixed the conception is crystallized into working drawings. Except for execution the evolution of the design is now complete.

A possible fourth stage would be the period of supervision. Mr. Gregory speaks of his influence on the design at the job and during construction. But he is perhaps exceptional. It is customary in most offices to settle everything in the drafting room before the contract is let and construction commenced. A recent visiting British architect was astonished to find that in the American office all questions of size, shapes and every possible detail were determined in this way beforehand. He was particularly impressed by our three-quarter and full-size details, and by the discovery that such minute matters as the run of every pipe and the position of every rivet were exactly and finally located before a nail was driven. After all, supervision in such cases is a routine affair, intended merely to see that the contract is carried out and that the materials and workmanship are in all respects as specified.

From the standpoint of "efficiency"—our national god—there may be something to say for this method. Yet the American architect might do worse than study the procedure of his English colleague. The English architect makes very few working drawings. He leaves much for decision at the time the building is erected, taking time, in his conservative and unimpulsive way, to think out the job as he goes along. What is the result? To my mind there is an unmistakable freshness and originality, the natural consequence of direct observation. The Englishman's concern is with reality rather than with the literal following of minute or large scale drawings. And in houses it is reality that counts.

I am not under the illusion that ideal methods of approach, such as I have tried to discover in this article, will guarantee the building of beautiful country houses. The architect must have good taste and imagination or no amount of system can save him. He must be able to give his work the intangible quality which distinguishes good building from indifferent and gives to the product of one office the distinction that is lacking in that of another. This quality is personal, artistic, vital. It demands abilities not far from genius. The successful architect offers something out of his own experience, something he himself has imagined and created, a system of design he himself has hammered out and made his own. Like every successful artist in every medium he produces significant form out of thin air. But when such a man brings originality and a sense of aesthetic values to bear upon the problem of the country house, and supplements these qualities with a logical and painstaking method of approach he may indeed create that "delightful conception" which is Mr. Delano's ideal.