

PENCIL
POINTS
for June 1935

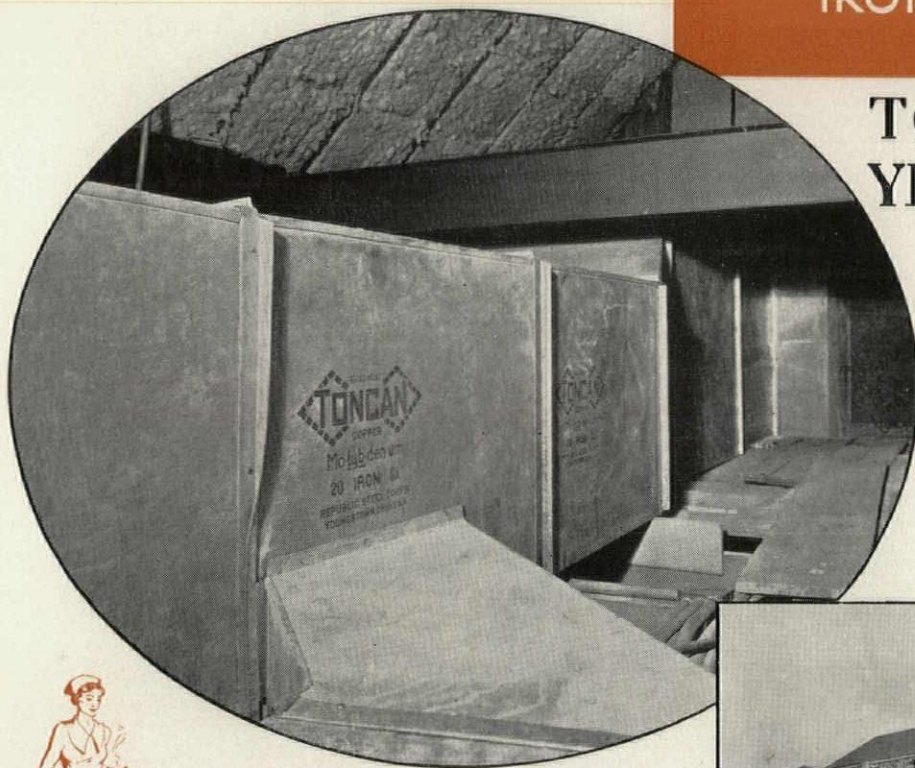


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Our June frontispiece shows a poster drawing in opaque water color by Leslie Ragan, one of a large group by the same artist on exhibition in the Grand Central Terminal in New York. It is reproduced through the courtesy of the New York Central Railroad, to advertise which the posters were made. While the color has been here reduced to a black and white reproduction, the handling of values throughout in depicting a complex arrangement of building masses is worthy of study by the architectural delineator



LESLIE
RAGAN

THE UPPER GROUND

Being Essays in Criticism

By H. VAN BUREN MAGONIGLE

D. ARCH., F. A. I. A.

"Take the upper ground in manœuvrin', Terence,' I sez, 'an' you'll be a gin'ral yet,' sez I. An' wid that I went up to the flat mud roof at the house and looked over the par'pet, threadin' delicate."

R. K. "My Lord the Elephant."

OWING to a change in the Publisher's plans, it has been decided to revert to the original compass of "The Upper Ground," four pages or thereabouts, and give less space to the correspondence with readers who have commented so interestingly upon the state of the profession, with special reference to the Institute and its part in it. This does not mean that there will not be published a selection from the hundreds of letters received by the writer or the Editors, either here or as Editorial correspondence.

I wish to make personal acknowledgment of their receipt and express my high appreciation of the interest their authors have shown in the problems of the profession outlined here since last November. Naturally I am gratified to see that my confidence in the essential soundness of the profession has been so well justified. Apparently what was needed was a place and an opportunity for thoughtful men to deliver themselves of whatever has been on their minds. These problems have not yet been solved by any means, but that the architects of the country are thinking about them and intend to press for a solution is amply shown. By the time this issue appears we shall know whether the Institute has waked up in Milwaukee and decided to go forward.

If the writer has helped in never so small a way to stimulate thought about these problems he feels repaid, whether the response was adverse or in agreement. The great thing is to find out how men's minds are working and in what direction. I may say that this correspondence was overwhelmingly in agreement with the views expressed here.

* * * *

Apropos, at the pre-Convention meeting of the New York Chapter, on Friday, May third, man after man got up and referred to the profession as

"the Industry"; they successfully confused the Building Industry (which they seemed to prefer to call the "Construction Industry," no doubt as handsomer language) and the profession of Architecture, in their own minds and in the minds of others. Even when discussing purely professional matters they seemed unable to distinguish between the two distinctly different categories, and it was impossible to tell at any moment which they were talking about. This indicated unmistakably to me how this poisonous fallacy has infected Institute men and there is a lot of work yet to do to uproot it. Perhaps the best means will be the strictly professional society to which reference was made last month in the Letter to the Profession.

* * * *

The membership of the Chapter in New York is 475. Of these, 40 were present and before the meeting was over there remained not more than a dozen or so. When the President called for a show of hands of those who considered themselves, as architects, a part of the Construction Industry, the vote was in the ratio of 2 to 1 in the affirmative—which proved nothing, for two reasons: the small attendance, and the fact that the Right Wing was not well represented numerically.

* * * *

My many correspondents throughout the country have made it very clear that they object to identification with the building business. The difference between the two camps is marked by the difference between *identification* and *affiliation* and that difference is great and wide. No one can reasonably oppose, between the building business and the architectural profession, discussion of matters of common interest—not interests. That is necessary and salutary. But there already exists a Building Congress as a forum for such discussion by representatives of the business of building and of the profession of architecture. Nothing apparently will satisfy the supporters of the moribund NRA Code but the identification of the architect with the builder.

* * * *

In a book by H. B. Creswell (printed in London, 1929), "The Honeywood File," which is a semi-fictional account of the vicissitudes of the architect in the building of a house, addressed apparently to the younger practitioner as an indication of what he may encounter and the right thing to do in the circumstances, occurs this paragraph: "To do a thing well for the sake of doing it, and not for the money it brings, is what distinguishes the professional from the commercial code."

There we have it in a nutshell. How then can a body of intelligent professional men subscribe to a code which is an integral part of another code devised for the Building Industry and by so doing identify themselves with the trades which are organized for profit as their first consideration?

I turn with relief from these disturbing matters to the detachment of the philosopher, Paul Valery, who, although a layman, writes of architecture with extraordinary penetration and understanding. I quoted from him in the initial contribution to this series and I do so again:

"Tell me (since you are so sensible to the effects of architecture) have you not noticed, in walking about this city, that among the buildings with which it is peopled, certain are *mute*; others *speak*; and others, finally—and they are the most rare—*sing*? It is not their purpose, not even their general features, that give them such animation, or reduce them to silence. These things depend upon the talent of their builder, or on the favor of the Muses.

" . . . Those among buildings that neither speak nor sing deserve only scorn; they are dead things, lower in the hierarchy than those heaps of rubble vomited by contractors' carts, which at least amuse the sagacious eye by the accidental order they borrow from their fall. . . . As for the monuments that limit themselves to speech, if they speak clearly, I esteem them. Here, they say, the tradesmen meet. Here the judges deliberate. Here captives groan. Here the lovers of debauchery . . . (I then told Eupalinos that I had seen very remarkable buildings in this last style. But he did not hear me.) These markets, these tribunals, and these prisons, when those that build them know their business, speak the most definite language. The one kind visibly draw in an active and ever-changing crowd; they offer it peristyles and porticoes; by means of their many doors and easy flights of steps they invite all to enter their vast, well-lighted halls, to form groups, to give themselves up to the seething ferment of business. . . . But the habitations of justice should speak to the eye of the rigour and equity of our laws. Majesty befits them; masses completely bare; and an awe-inspiring amplitude of wall. The silences of those bleak surfaces are scarce broken, at far intervals, by the threat of a mysterious door, or by the dismal outline of thick iron bars against the gloom of the narrow window they guard. All here pro-

nounces sentence—everything is eloquent of penalties. The stone gravely declares that which shuts in; the wall is implacable, and this work of stone, conforming so closely to the truth, strongly proclaims its stern purpose . . . "

The forms we architects use are unhuman. They compose the envelope of life, not life itself; they at once enclose and reflect the life that goes on in and about them. This profoundly differentiates architecture from painting and sculpture insofar as these are representational or imitative. And yet, devoid though it be of any other human connotation than the enclosure of human life, a great building, abstract form as it is, is capable of awakening a sense of awe in man like that aroused by a high and stormy surf beating upon great rocks, or of pleasure like that given by some wide and smiling valley among hills or by some little river murmuring in the shade of sheltering trees.

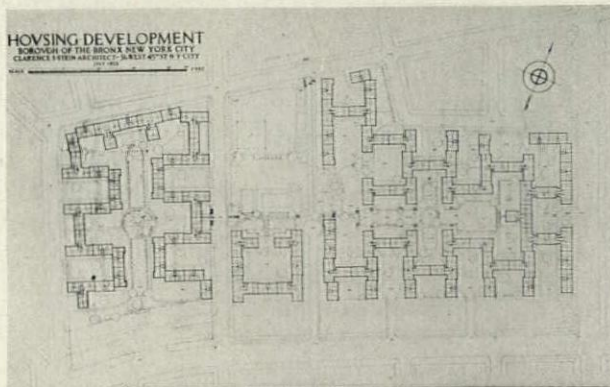
How a man can infuse a sense of the human, a sense of personality, of sympathetic warmth, into such abstract forms as we use is one of the mysteries that defy definition. The critic dissects, endeavors to explain, and finds under his hand only a dry analysis. The miracle remains—and unexplained. And it is this human miracle that lifts a mere pile of stone into the realm of a spirituality touching the divine.

The architect who takes a high view of his art should possess what Valery advances as "the most active qualities of the European psyche"—"Burning desire, ardent and disinterested curiosity, a happy blend of imagination and logical precision, a scepticism that is not pessimistic and a mysticism that is not resigned."

This is perhaps a strange precept to suggest to a profession in which a large number seem to be committed to a crass materialism. If an architect is a materialist, if he is not an individualist who resists regimentation he can never amount to much as an artist, nor, in consequence, can architecture rise above the pedestrian and the prosaic.

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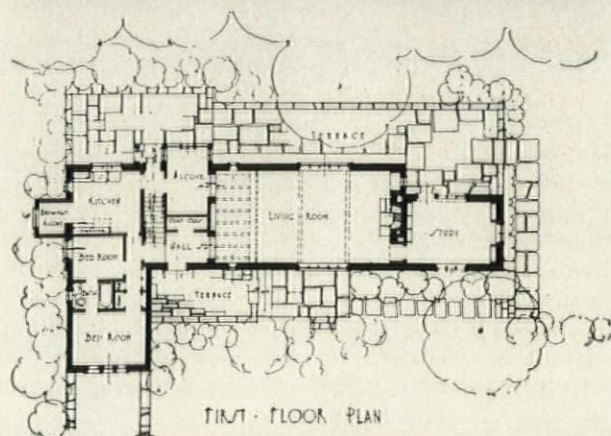
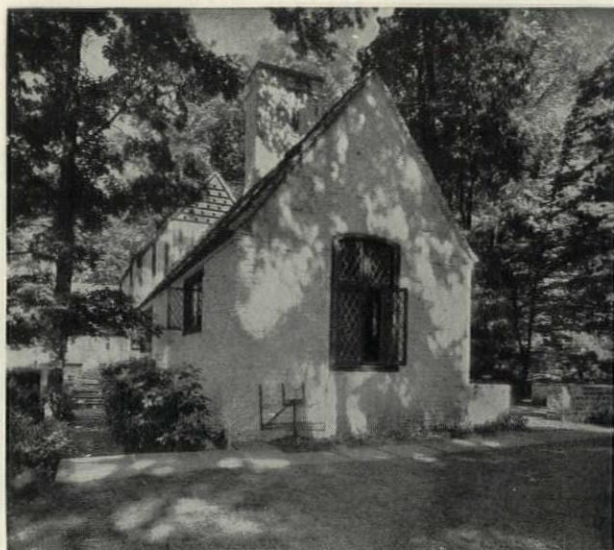
Writing of Leonardo da Vinci, Valery says: "He imitates; he innovates; he rejects neither the old



Plan of Hillside Housing project which accompanied original R.F.C. loan application. Clarence S. Stein, Architect



Final perspective of Hillside Housing project, Bronx, New York. Clarence S. Stein, Architect From *May Architecture*



Library gable and first floor plan of Frank J. Forster's favorite house
Reproduced from *May Architecture*

because it is old, nor the new for being new; but he consults something in himself which is eternally of the present."

There is a school of opportunists here in America which argues that since the life of a building is only a short, though varying, number of years, it is uneconomical to build either as to stability or beauty for more than such a term. Such men are unworthy stewards with no sense of their proper responsibility to the art of which they should be the custodians.

It is no wonder then, that so much of our architecture and especially our "business" architecture is at once incredibly huge and incredibly mean. The noble generosity of great architecture, not afraid to spend dollars for a saving graciousness, is replaced by a parsimony, masquerading as "economics," unwilling to spend even a cent to redeem a building from the flimsiness, the meagre dryness and stark ugliness that repels upon first sight of it and soon bores to tears.

The forms, the elements with which we deal—these masses of brick and stone, these cages of steel, these weights and forces active and passive,

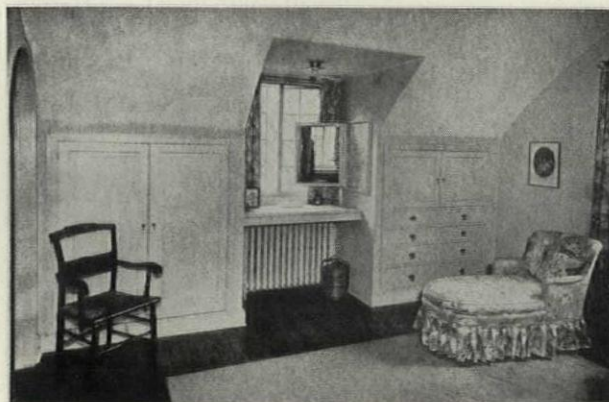
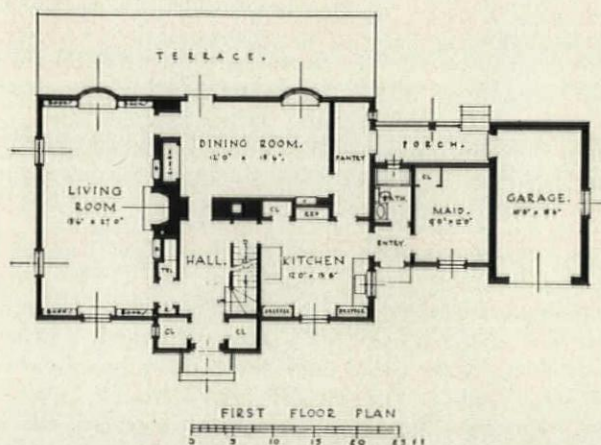
are both a menace and a help to our dream—that dim vision we gradually conjure forth from its strange and obscure origins within us and, grimly, steadfastly, clothe with definite form modulated and wrought upon until, out of stone and brick and steel, we make our dream again.

The work is the man, raised to a higher power, strangely purified of his own cross.

* * * * *

We are told by one of the greatest of poets that Beauty is Truth (which must be Wisdom), Truth, Beauty, and that is all we know or need to know. But is it all?

There is an age-old choice between Aphrodite and Athene, between Beauty and Wisdom. Shall we put up with the slight brainlessness of Beauty for the sake of her superior warmth o' cold nights—or take cold Wisdom to our arms—or shall we do as so many have done, try to espouse them both, to the vast discomfort of the family circle and the scandal of the Grundys? They recall in principle the twin sisters we were enamored of in our pre-pubic days—so much alike that we could not tell them apart and who played tricks upon us by the exchange of identifying rings and pins; and Minnie, who may stand for Minerva who is Athene, often thus received the amatory addresses intended for Lillie who, in our young eyes, em-



Interior of Master's Bedroom in house by Waldron Faulkner.
Plan of first floor shown above From *May Architecture*

bodied all the qualities (in spite of the physical resemblance to her sister) that the Queen of Beauty should possess. It may be that it is wisdom sometimes to forsake cold Truth for her sister, Beauty. But we should know which is which, and when.

* * * *

Architecture for May publishes an analysis by its Editor of "The Hillside Housing Development" designed by Clarence S. Stein, written and illustrated with a clarity that is most engaging. The text proper is not loaded down with descriptions of details; these are wisely and cleverly relegated to illustrations accompanied by lucidly written captions that completely illuminate the problem and its solution. The usual process of taking some site and fitting a scheme to it was reversed by Mr. Stein and Mr. Eken, of Starrett Brothers and Eken who worked with Mr. Stein, the ideal plan to attain the objectives being sought first (among them being rental at 11 dollars a room) and the plot, after many studies, selected afterward, and then site and plan readjusted to their mutual reconciliation.

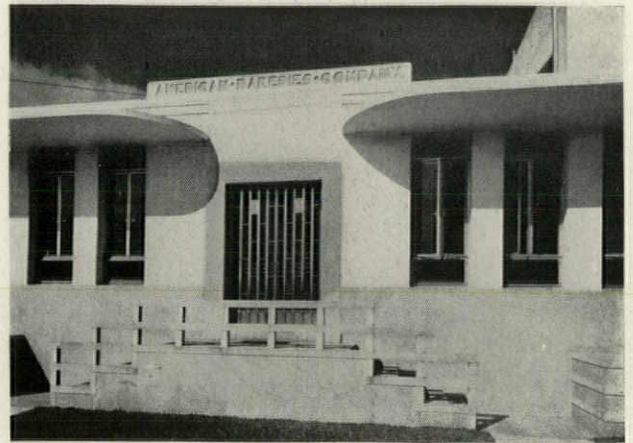
The amount of thought and patient planning from all points of view put in on this project are beyond praise. It is a new approach to the problem of low-cost housing, wisely conceived and successfully carried out. Mr. Stein and Mr. Eken are to be congratulated. We reproduce the original plot plan upon which a loan was secured from the RFC, the final plot plan being built through a loan from the PWA (the latter offering better financial conditions) and a bird's-eye view of the final scheme.

* * * *

In the same number a series of houses of moderate size and cost is inaugurated. The Editor has requested one hundred architects to send him the best small houses they have designed. Those illustrated, very fully, and here reproduced, are by Mr. Frank J. Forster and Mr. Waldron Faulkner. They are charming, they are American, they are not freaks. Can one say more? True, they do not "interlock with space." But that should not be counted against them perhaps.

* * * *

The American Architect opens its April number with an Editorial headed "Unity is Strength" which supports the idea of "Unification" soon to be dealt with by the Convention of the Institute (this is written in May) and that certain failures of the profession in securing proper recognition of its place in society "emphasize the importance of strength of numbers and purpose." Strength of



Detail of American Bakeries Company Building at Miami, Florida
From April *American Architect*

purpose, YES. Strength of numbers, NO. Numbers are nothing. Quality is everything.

* * * *

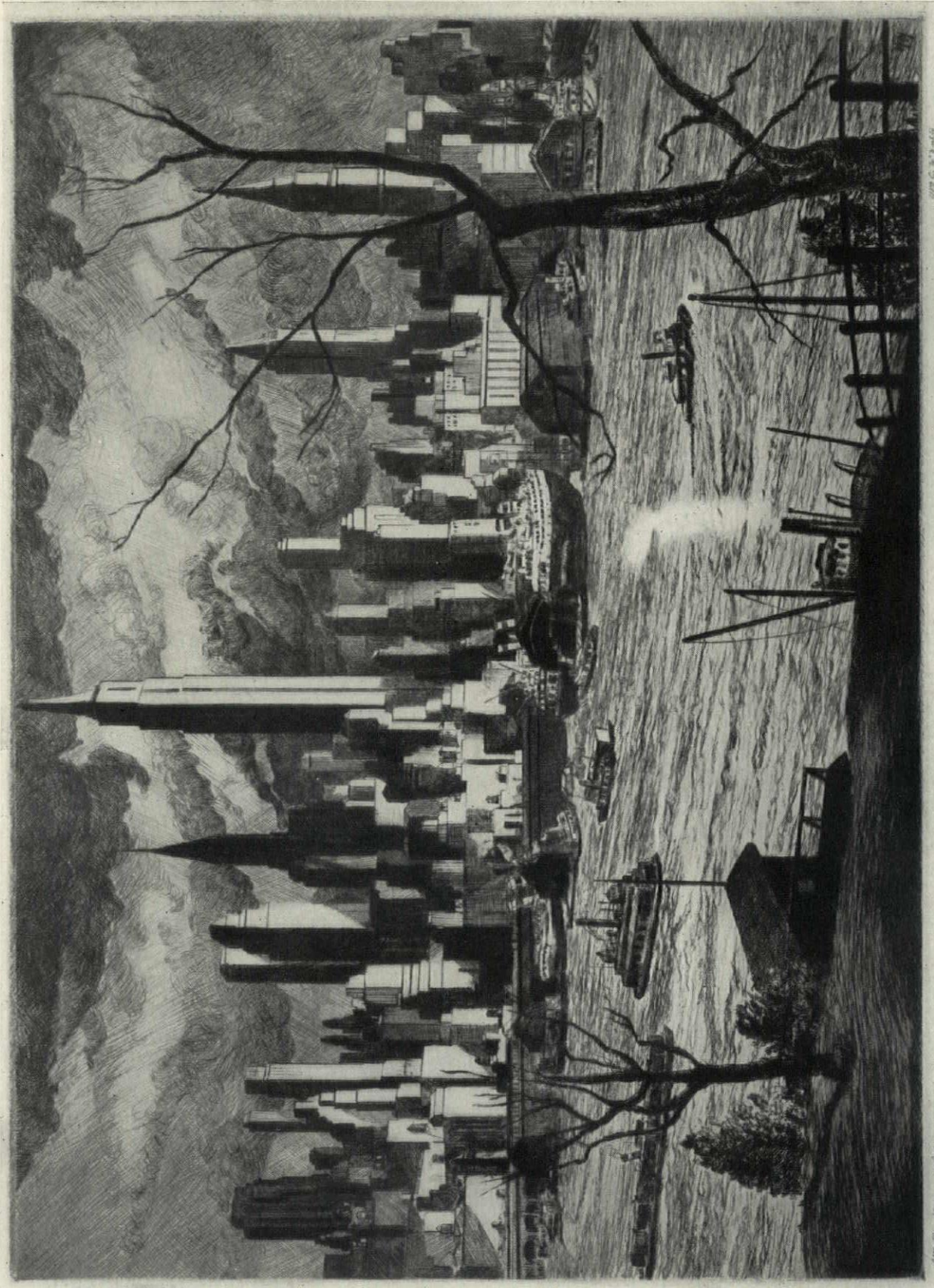
Further on is an article by a "publicity expert" who sets forth a program for advertising the profession. He says: "A definite demand for his (the architect's) services must be generated." Presumably by an advertising man. The only way a demand for the architect's services can effectively be "generated" is by the architect himself—by doing good work with all that implies—by good design, vigilant supervision, and a careful balance of the practical and the æsthetic. No advertising blurb can possibly replace these.

* * * *

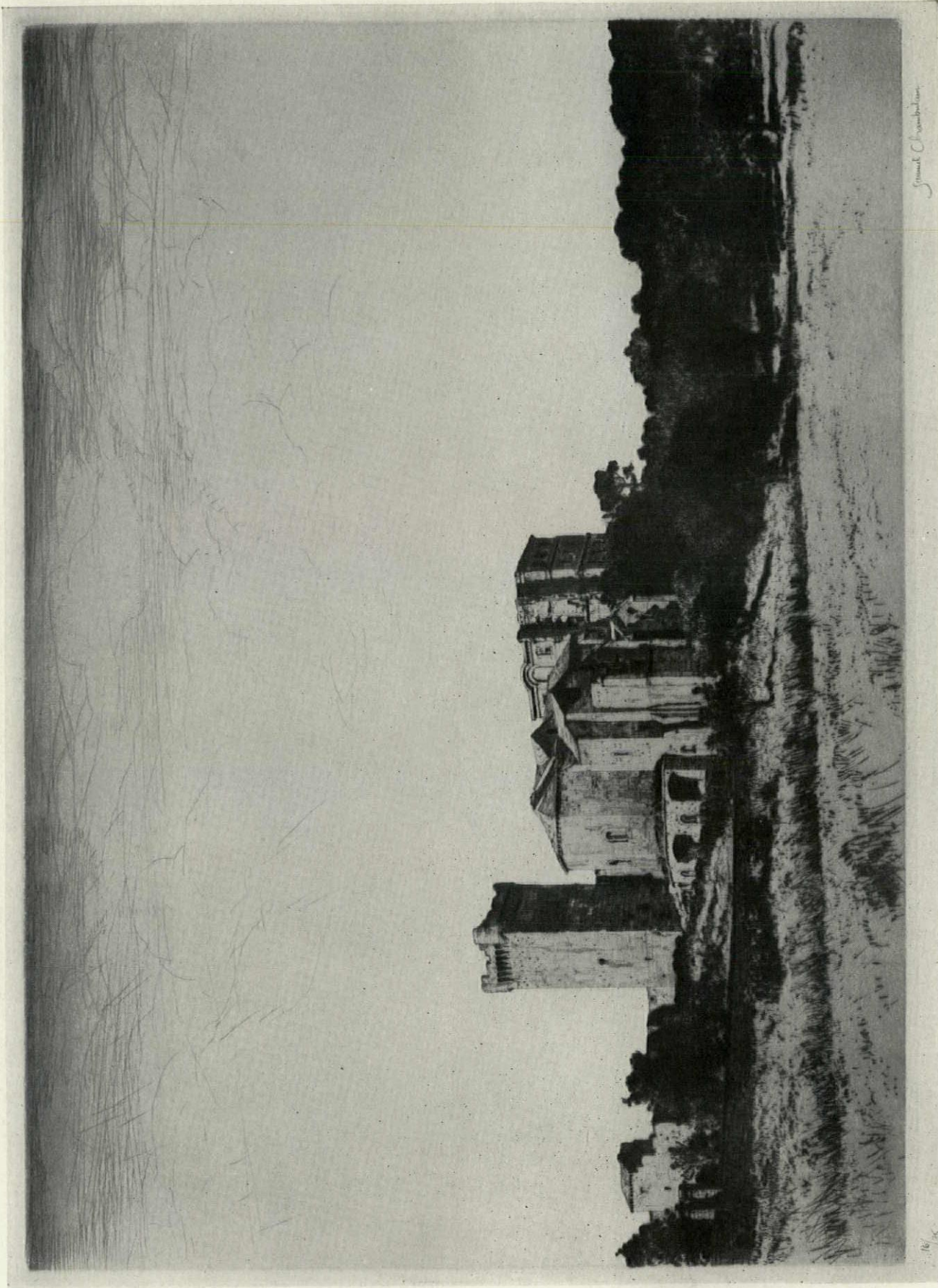
I select for reproduction what seems to be the main entrance of a new building for the American Bakeries Co. Building in Miami, Florida. It is such a perfect example of silly design that I cannot refrain from comment upon it. Here are two overhanging slabs shading the windows of the offices at each side of the entrance and giving no protection whatever to the doorway itself. The logical inference is that it never rains in Florida and that the visitor therefore needs no protection.

* * * *

The Architectural Record publishes an article in its April number by my friend Professor Walter R. B. Willcox of the University of Oregon, under the title "Draftsmanship is not Architecture," with which I agree in the main and especially as to the statement the title makes; but, as I have written him, I do not feel that the ground is quite adequately covered, and that as soon as I can reach it I promise myself the pleasure of supplementing the article by some further observations.



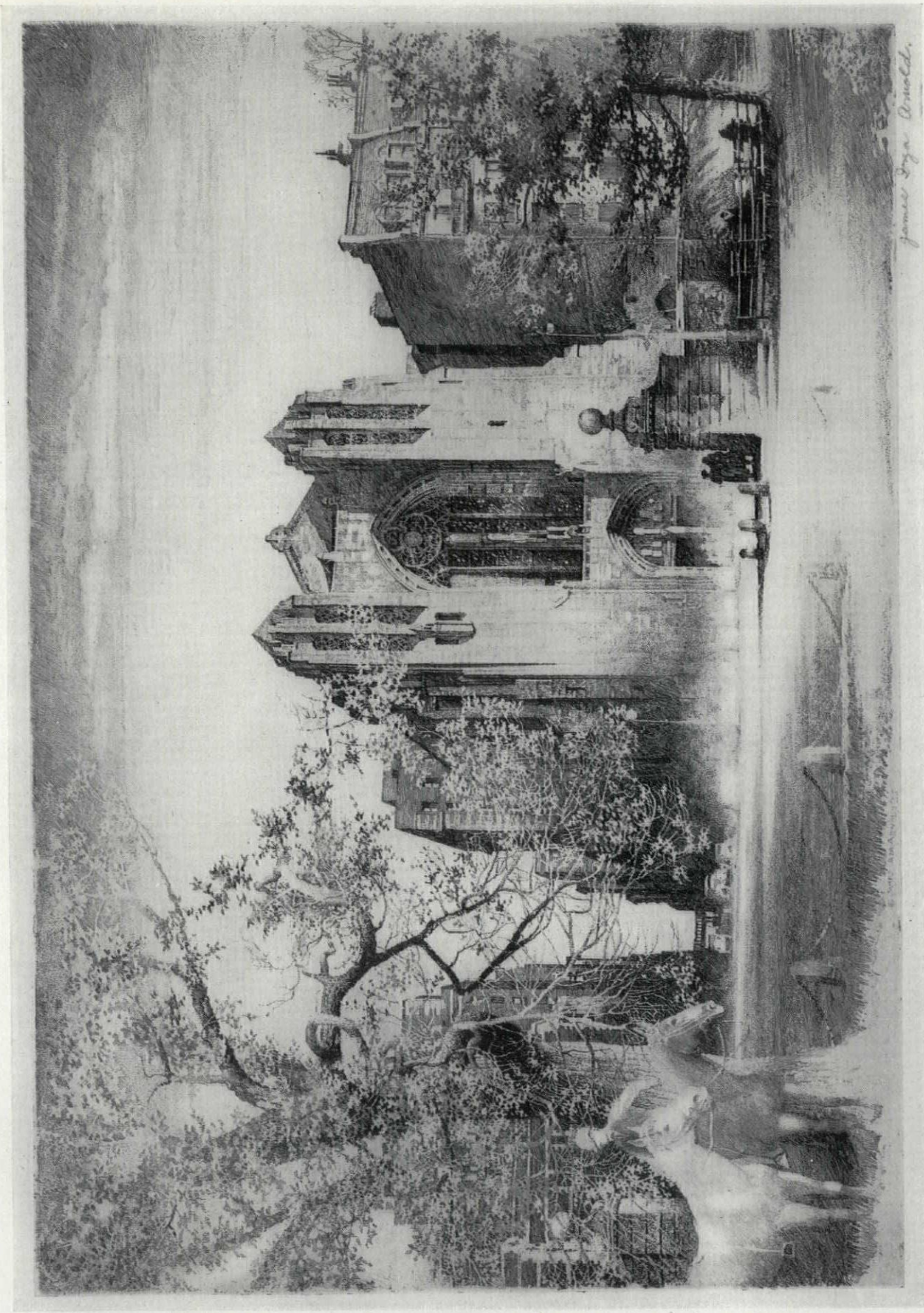
"After the Storm." A dramatic conception of New York's skyline from Stevens Institute. Rendered in drypoint by William C. McNulty



Samuel Chamberlain

"The Abbey of Montmajour." From a recent drypoint by Samuel Chamberlain—size, 11 1/4" x 8". Reproduced by courtesy of Goodspeed's, Boston

16/18



James Irza Arnold.

“Church of the Heavenly Rest, New York.” From an etching by James Irza Arnold

Reproduced by courtesy of Arthur Newton Galleries



"Foundry Interior." A Lithograph of extraordinary quality by a contemporary artist, Stow Wengenroth, George Miller, Printer

A FEW MORE HOUSE DESIGNS

From the General Electric Competition, Classes C and D

LAST month PENCIL POINTS presented a group of selected designs chosen by the editors from among the hundreds submitted in Classes "A" and "B" of the General Electric Company's "Home Electric" Competition. This month eight of the Class "C" and "D" designs, calling for a somewhat larger house (35,000 cubic feet), are printed on this and the following pages. These designs, while

not awarded prizes by the Jury of Award, are believed to be of sufficient interest and merit to warrant their publication here for purposes of comparison with those that did win prizes and which were published elsewhere. They all contain ideas and are deserving of study.

The first one shown, by Royal Barry Wills, is unique among this particular group in that the garage is entered from the rear, the driveway passing the eastern end of the house. In other respects, this plan is not dissimilar from many of the designs submitted. It has good circulation with no wasted space and is obviously the work of an experienced architect who knows how people like Mr. and Mrs. Bliss live and use their homes.

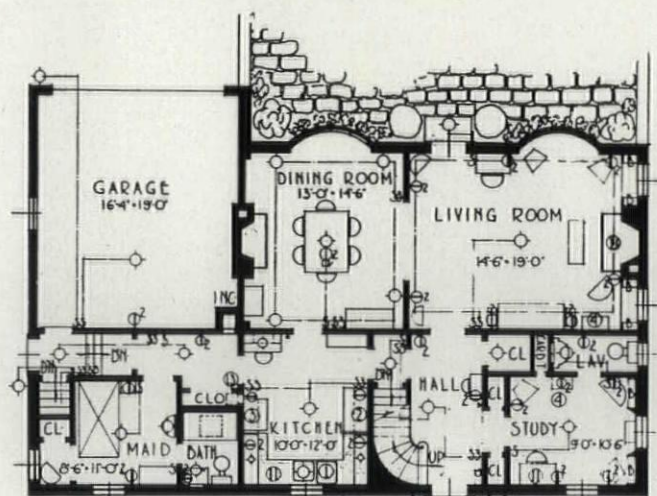
Donald M. Douglass has chosen a little more "modern" type of design for his Class "D" house and has made use of roof decks accessible to all the bedrooms and giving privacy to each. The orientation of his minor first floor rooms, perhaps appropriately for the southern climate, is opposite to that of Mr. Wills—the kitchen and service to the west instead of the east. This plan appears



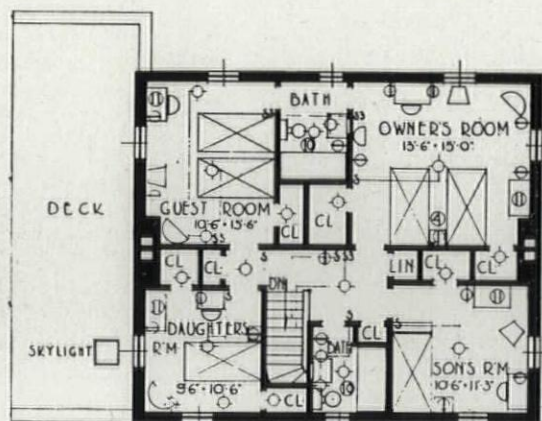
FRONT



REAR

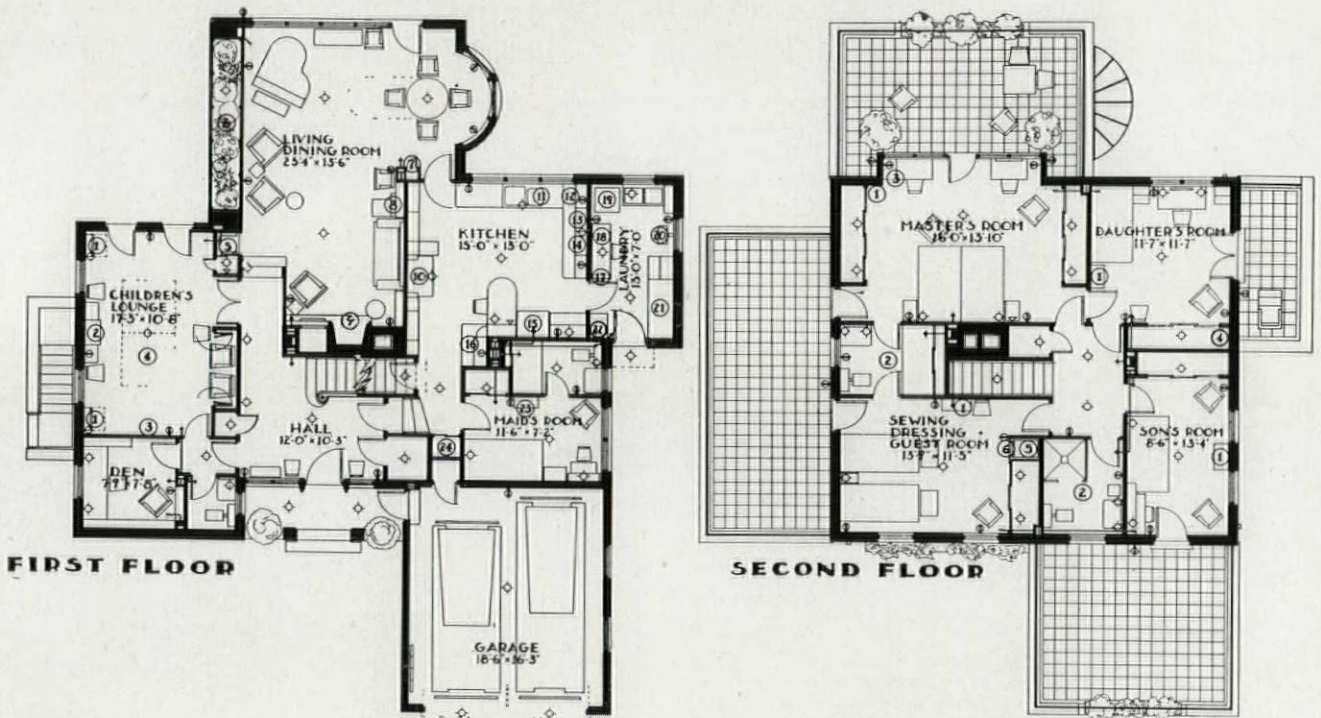


FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Class "C" Design submitted by Royal Barry Wills in the General Electric "Home Electric" Competition



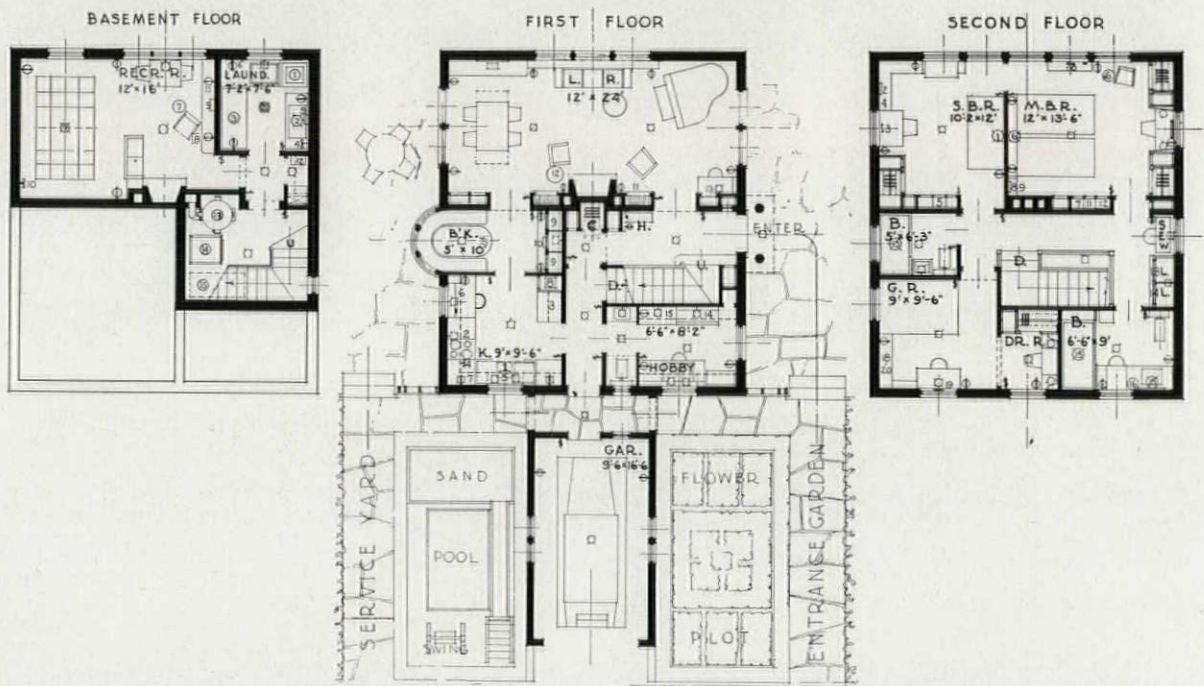
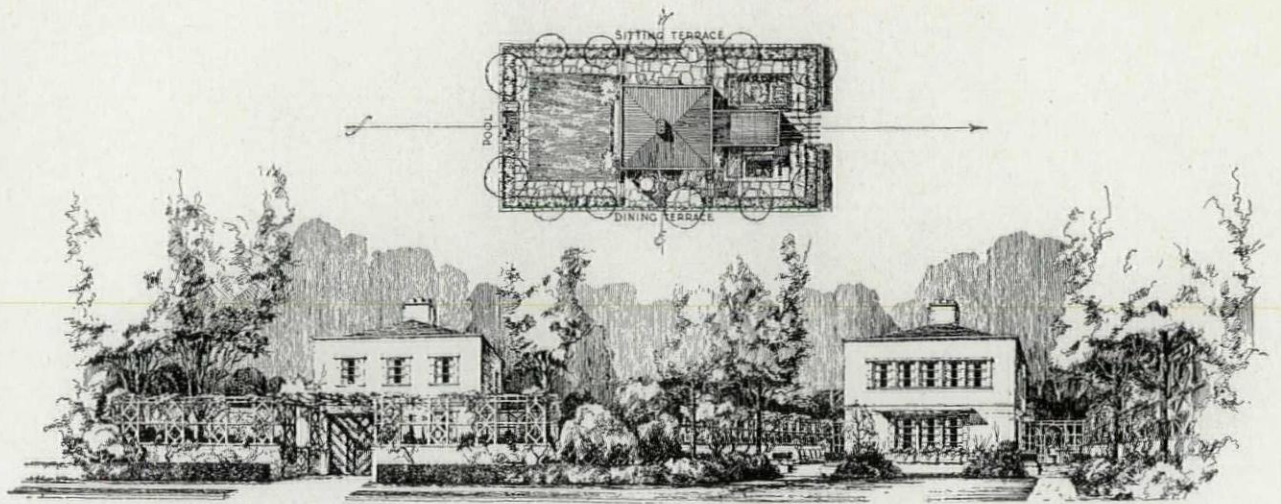
Class "D" Design submitted by Donald M. Douglass in the General Electric "Home Electric" Competition

quite liveable and includes many thoughtful conveniences.

J. Floyd Yewell, also represented by a Class "D" design, has gone yet more modern, and has produced a design with very little window area towards the street and a great expanse of glass towards the southern garden. He has been thoughtful enough, however, to extend a balcony out at the second floor level affording some protection for the living room from the hot midday sun. Some clients might object to providing a common bath between the master's and daughter's bedrooms while the son and guest have private baths.

Deam and Scheick have been extremely ingenious in working out the treatment of the street side of their lot with the garage flanked by treillage forming a screen to give privacy, a flower garden to the west making a pleasant entrance for the family and guests while a play yard and service entrance lie to the east.

Edmond P. Crocheron has taken the "Motor-centric" parti, sandwiching a long narrow vestibule between two single garages. The absence of a usable lavatory in the vicinity of the dark entrance hall (unless, perchance, the guest bathroom serves this purpose) or in the otherwise well



Class "C" Design by Arthur F. Deam and William H. Scheick in the "Home Electric" Competition

appointed basement would be considered by some people to be a fault.

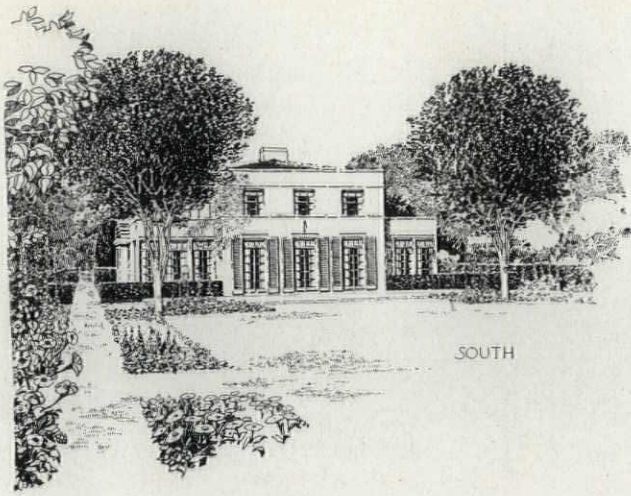
Palmer and Lamdin of Baltimore present a flat-roofed house for the northern climate, omitting a basement and providing generous contact for the family with the out-of-doors by means of terraces. A not too large storage closet on the second floor recognizes a need often overlooked by designers of atticless and cellarless homes.

Miller and Warnecke have chosen a rambling plan and an attractively picturesque exterior. For the southern climate they have provided plenty of ventilation with admirable privacy for all occupants.

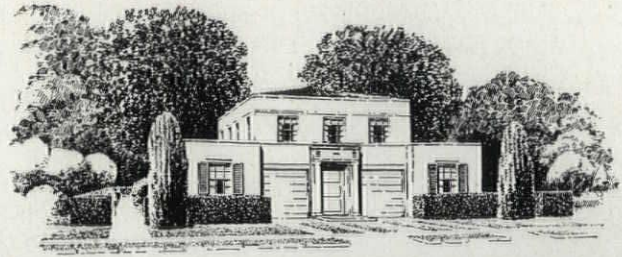
Wendeborg and Neilinger's design exhibits on its exterior the charm of simplicity and good propor-

tion. Their plan does not strain to be compact but segregates the various functions with logic and dignity. The basement recreation room is not too easily accessible from the living room but perhaps this is as it should be.

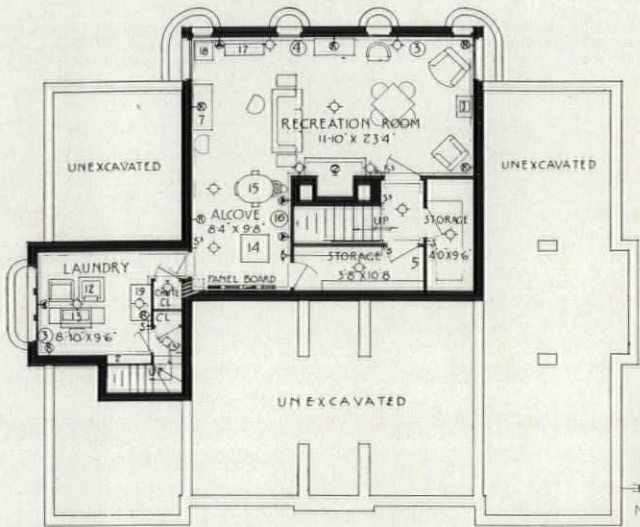
On the whole, these designs and a great many of the others that did not win the preference of the Jury of Award are evidence of the skill and ingenuity of American architectural designers. The choice we have made here for publication of a limited number of designs implies no criticism of or disagreement with the findings of the official jury but suggests the vast variety of the drawings submitted and the difficulty of making the judgment. Needless to say, the order in which the drawings are shown here has no significance.



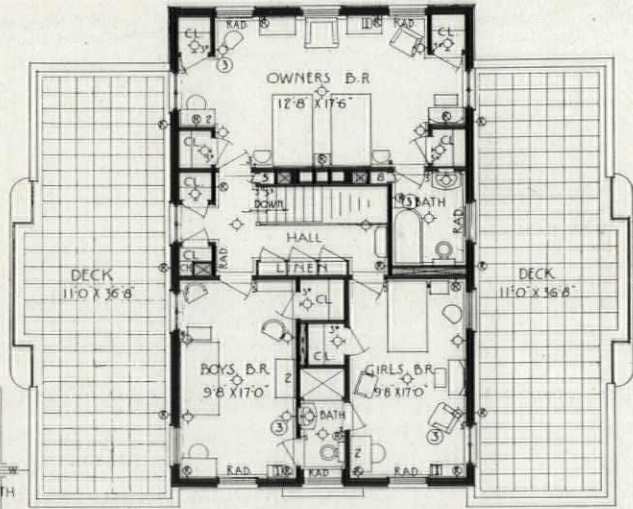
SOUTH



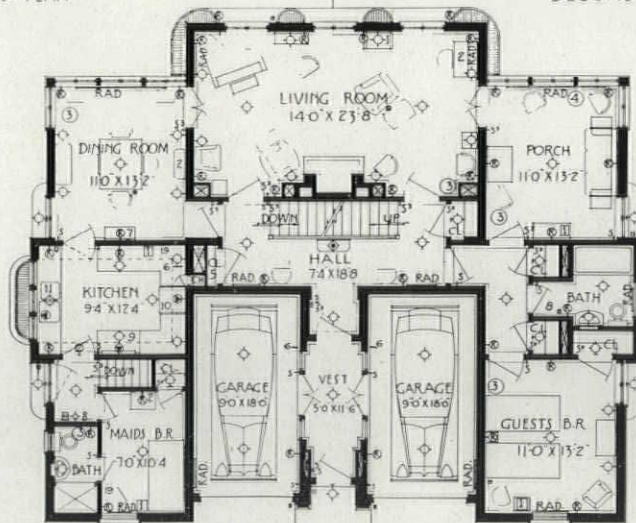
NORTH



CELLAR PLAN

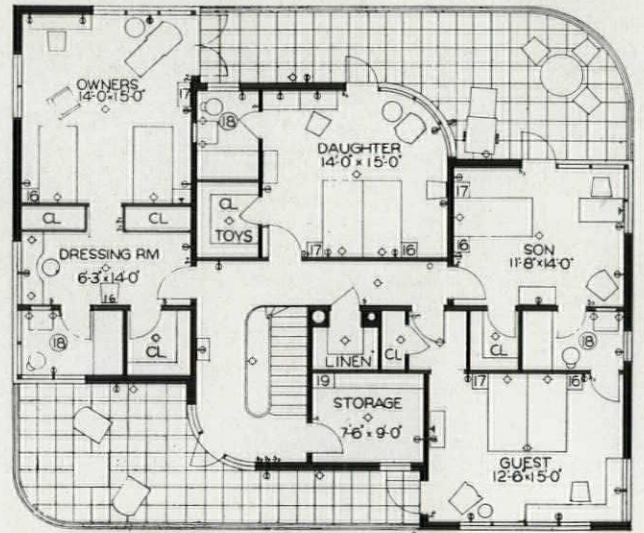
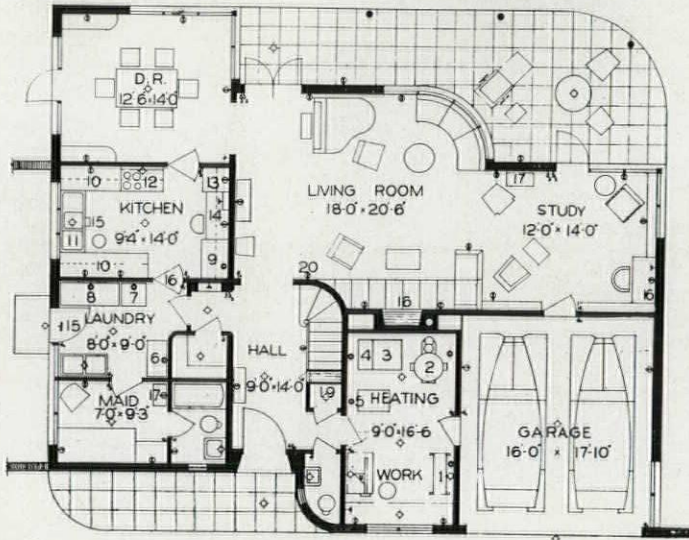
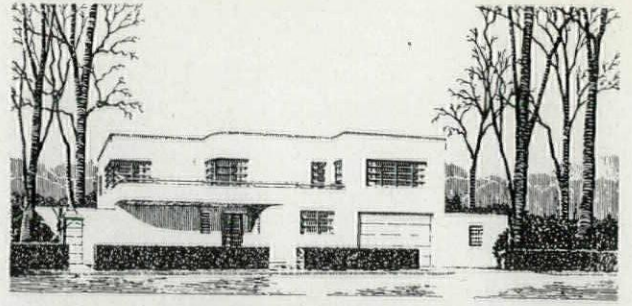


SECOND FLOOR PLAN

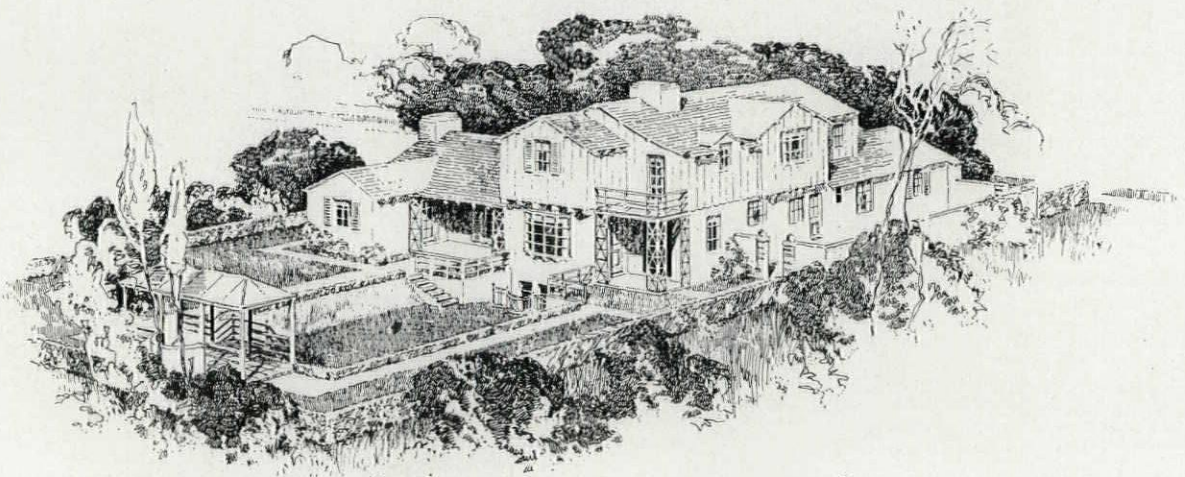


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

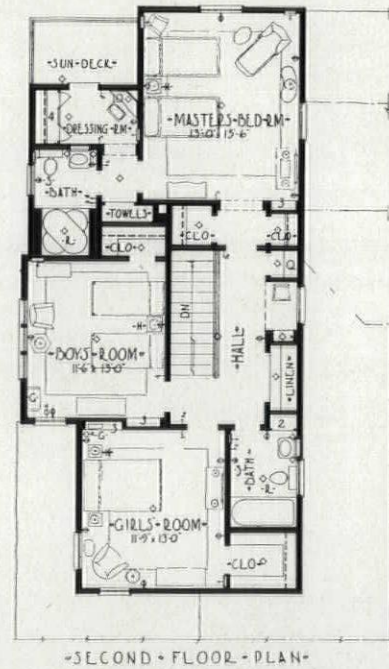
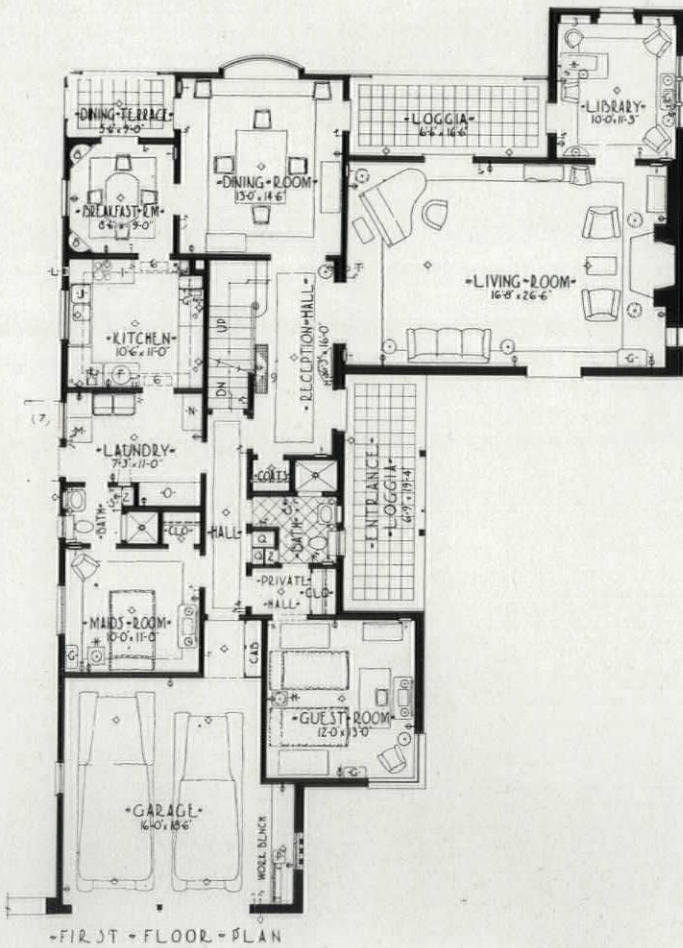
Class "C" Design submitted by Edmond P. Crocheron in the General Electric "Home Electric" Competition



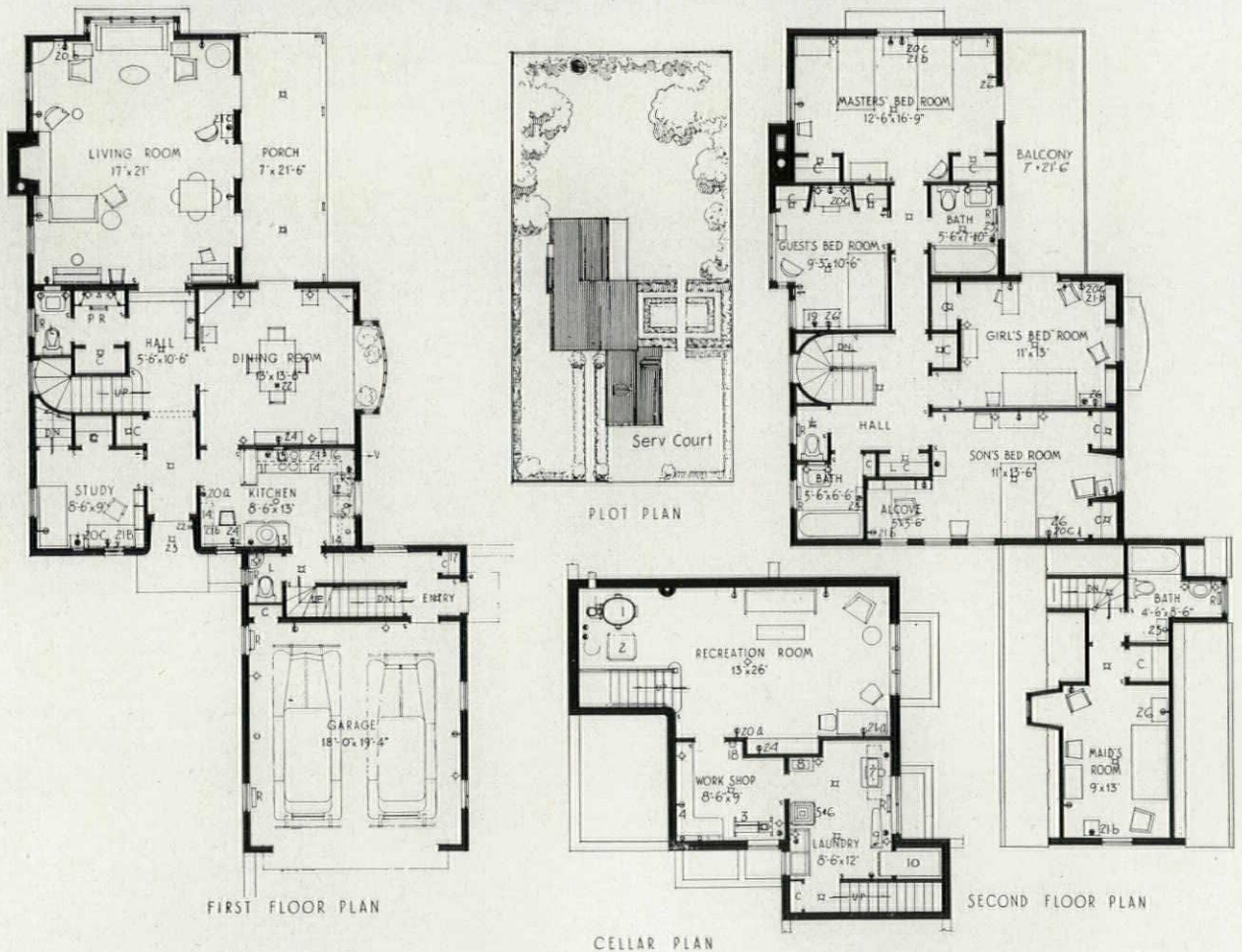
Class "C" Design by Edward L. Palmer, Jr., and William D. Lamdin in "Home Electric" Competition



Another perspective of the Class "D" Design by Miller and Warnecke shown on the next page



Class "D". Design by Chester H. Miller and Carl I. Warnecke in G-E "Home Electric" Competition



Class "D" Design by Harrie T. Lindeberg and Daniel Neilinger in "Home Electric" Competition

1935 LE BRUN SCHOLARSHIP PRIZE AND MENTION DESIGNS

Scholarship awarded to
HARRY A. GNERRE
Pupil of Lloyd Morgan

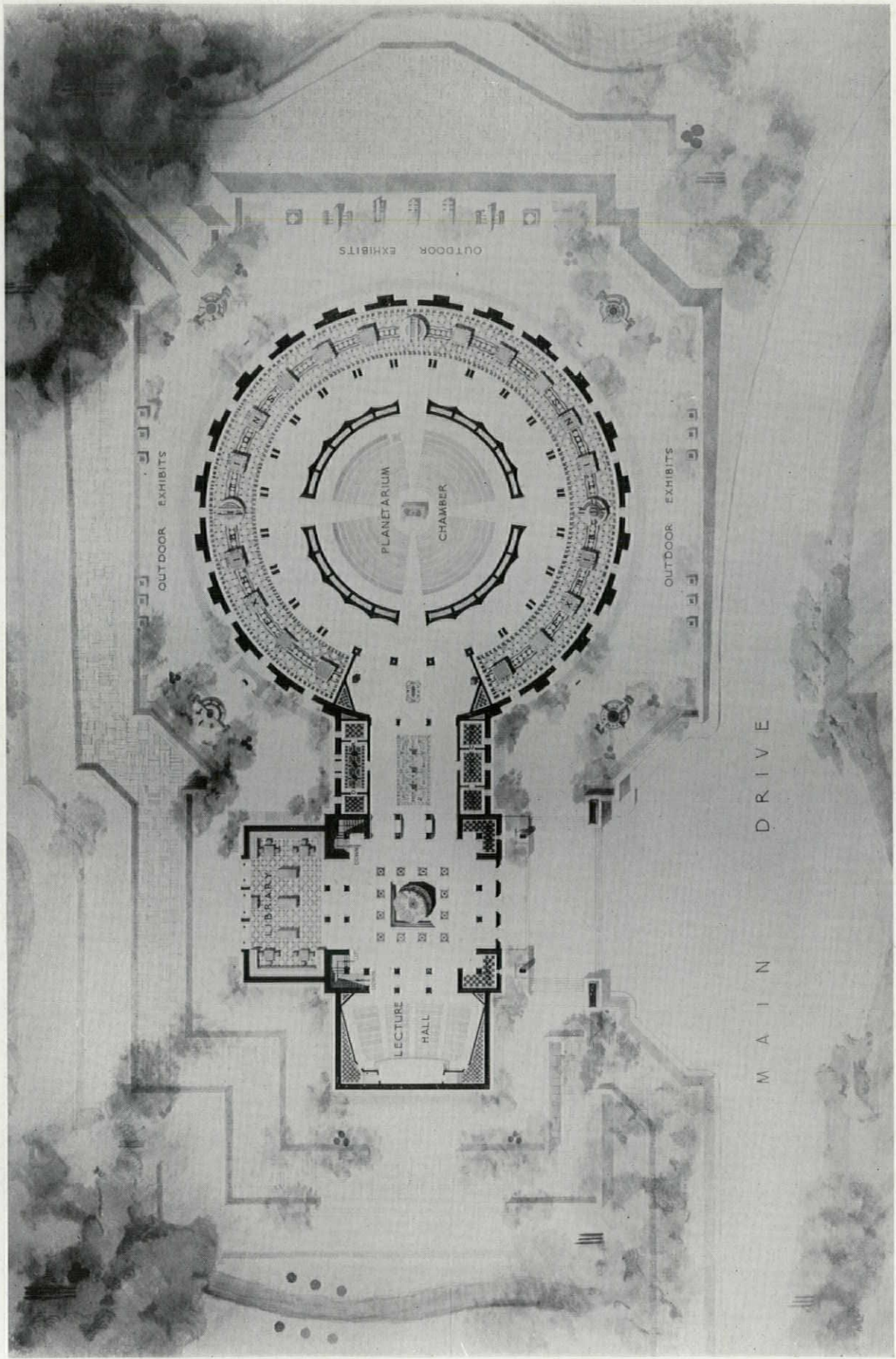
First Mention to
GEORGE T. LICHT
of Yale University

Second Mention to
SUREN PILAFIAN
Pupil of Lloyd Morgan

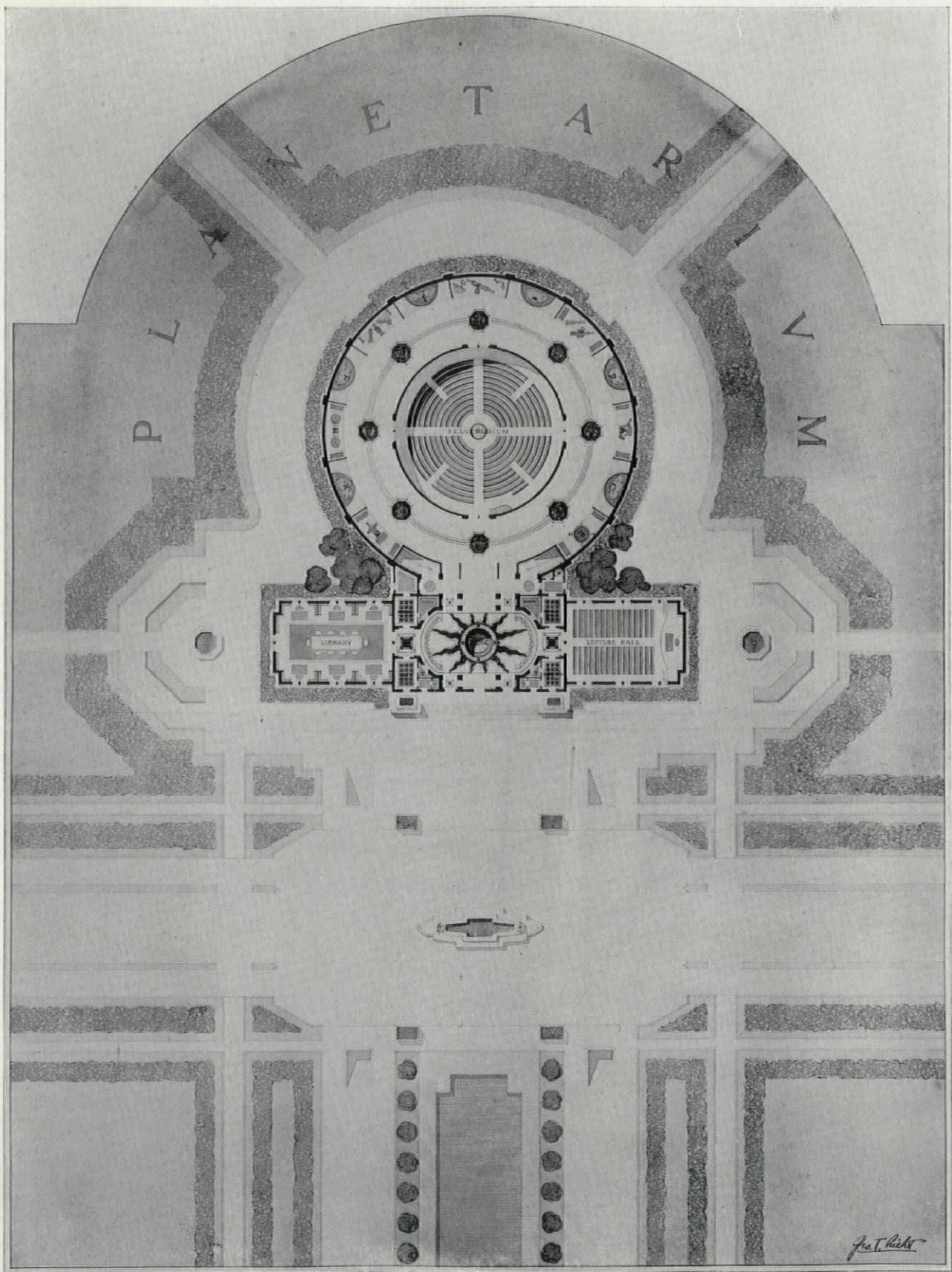
Third Mention to
JOHN B. APPLGATE
of the T-Square Club, Philadelphia



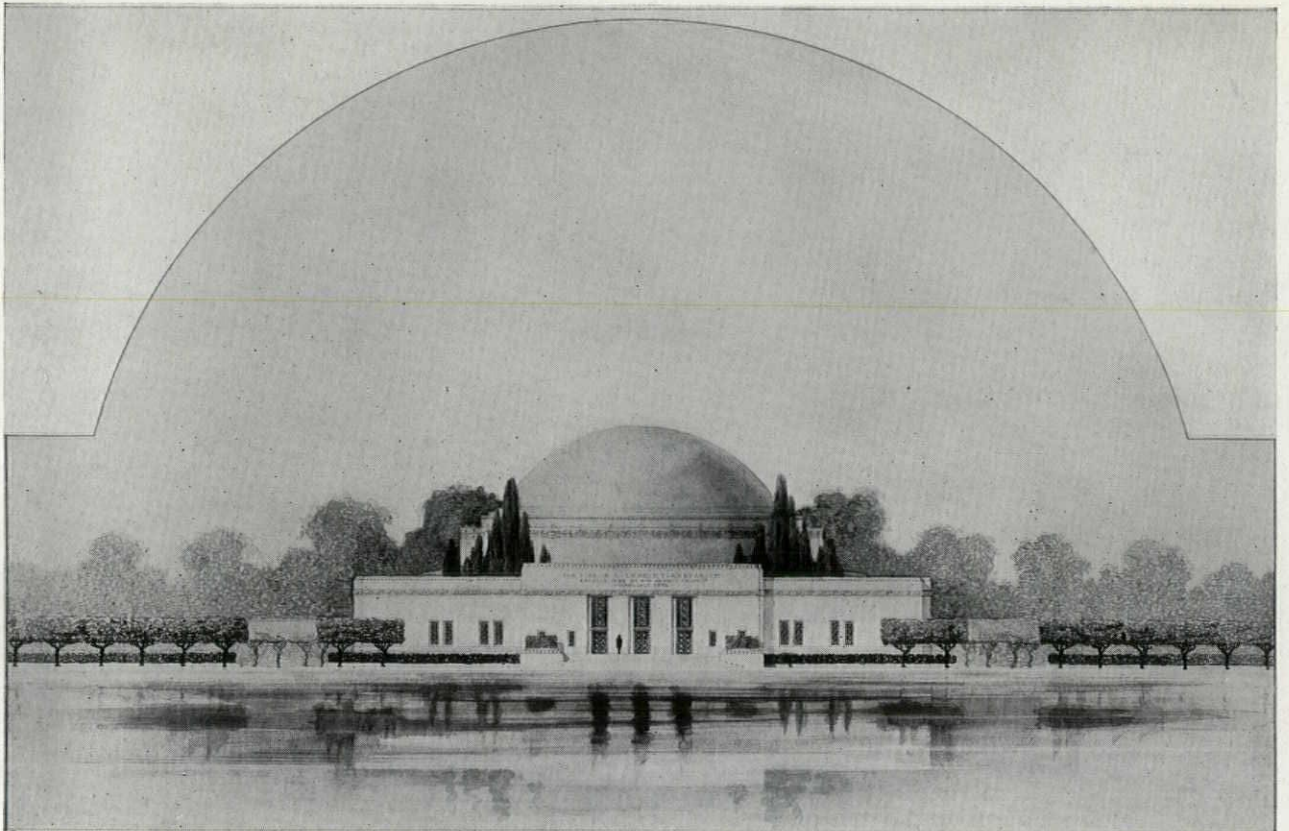
Harry A. Gnerre's 1935 LeBrun Prize winning design for a Planetarium shown in perspective



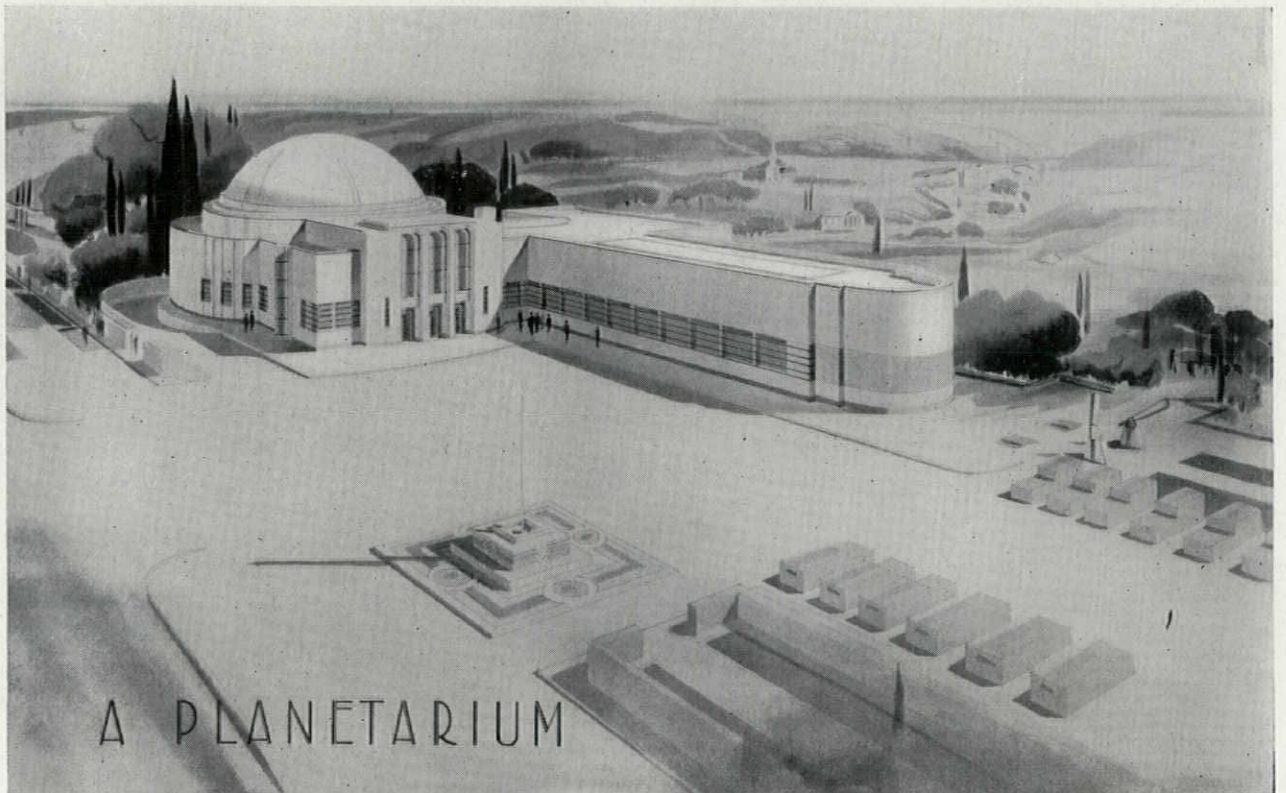
Plan of winning design by Harry A. Gnerre, "A Planetarium in a Park." 1935 Competition for the LeBrun Traveling Scholarship in Architecture



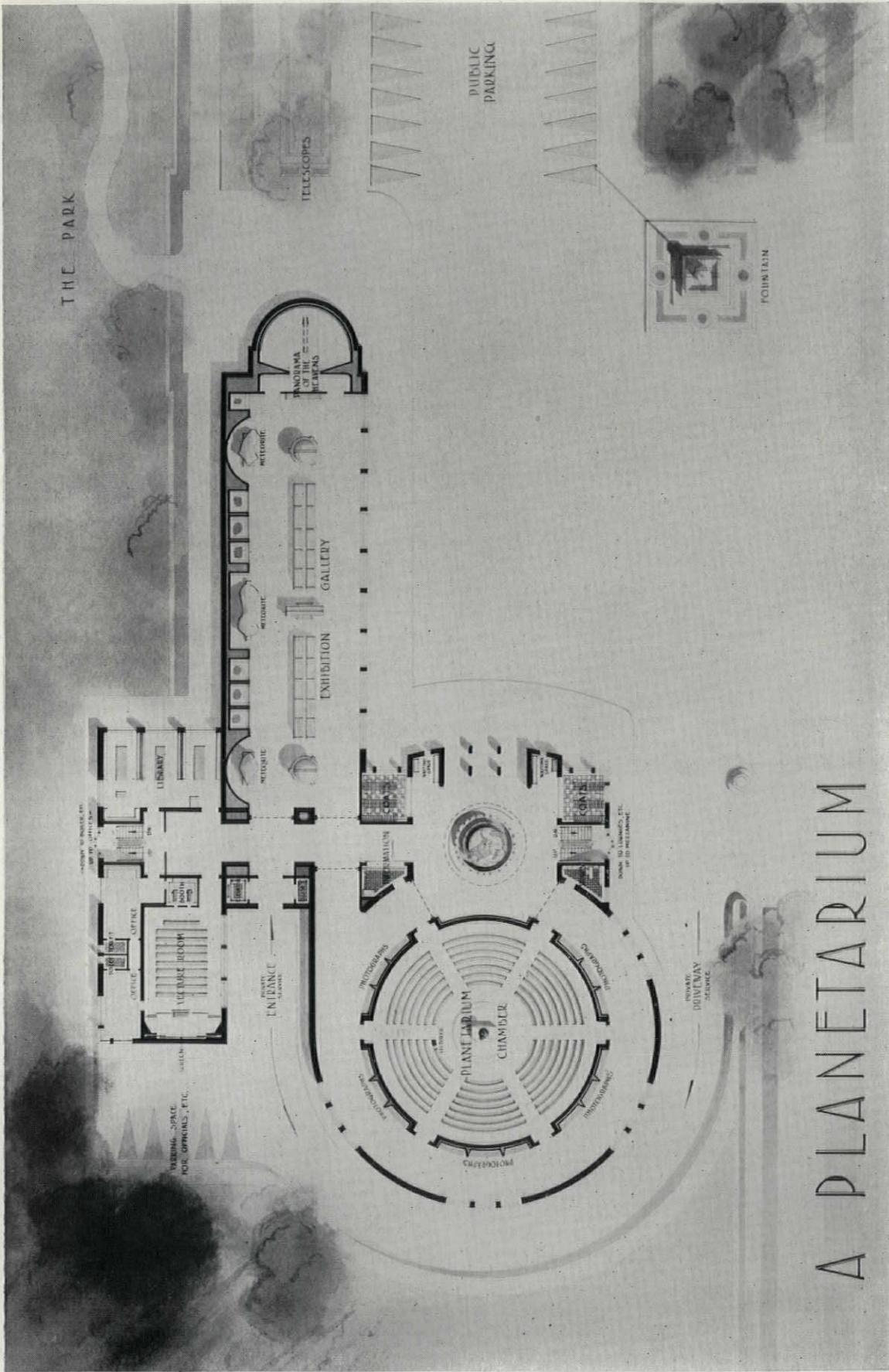
Plan, First Mention design by George T. Licht, 1935 Competition for the LeBrun Traveling Scholarship



Elevation of design by George T. Licht, placed second in 1935 LeBrun Scholarship Competition



Perspective of Suren Pilafian's design placed third in 1935 LeBrun Traveling Scholarship Competition



A PLANETARIUM

Plan of Second Mention design by Suren Pilaftan

1935 Competition for the LeBrun Traveling Scholarship in Architecture

WASHINGTON MONTHLY LETTER

By CHESTER M. WRIGHT

DECISIVE action on the spending of the \$4 billion work-relief fund began May 16 with the allocation of \$1,091,802,200, or more than a fourth of the fund. Harry L. Hopkins, director of the Works Progress Administration, indicated that the rest of the program would be put into effect with equal speed when he pledged "quick action" on all projects to be carried out on a "straight grant" basis.

The largest allotments included \$500,000,000 to the Bureau of Public Roads of the Department of Agriculture, \$249,860,000 for slum clearance and low-cost housing, \$100,000,000 to the State of Wisconsin for a unified work program sponsored by Senator LaFollette and his brother, Governor Philip LaFollette; \$102,186,500 to the Army Corps of Engineers, largely for river development work, and \$100,000,000 to the Resettlement Administration headed by Rexford G. Tugwell.

Indications that the low-cost housing program would move along slowly were contained in the announcement that, on the recommendation of Secretary Ickes, the amounts allocated for the thirty-four new low-cost housing and slum-clearance projects and their locations would not be made known. Furthermore, \$110,000,000 of the amount allocated for housing represents repayment of funds of the PWA housing division "impounded" for direct relief purposes before the Work Relief Act was approved. However, cities to which funds had been tentatively allotted under the PWA housing program were assured that the work started or planned would be finished.

The three main agencies for carrying out the program are:

1. The Division of Application and Information of the National Emergency Council, directed by Frank C. Walker.
2. The Works Progress Administration, under the supervision of Harry L. Hopkins.
3. The Advisory Committee on Allotments, headed by Secretary of the Interior Ickes.

In addition to the Administration's effort to take men off the relief rolls as rapidly as possible, the following standards governing approval of projects have been set up:

1. The projects must be useful.
2. The projects must be of such a nature that a large proportion of the money spent will go into wages for direct labor at the site.
3. Projects promising an ultimate return to the Federal Treasury of a considerable share of the cost will be given preference.
4. Funds provided for each project must be promptly put to work, since it is the purpose, so far as possible, to complete all projects by July 1, 1936.

MODERNIZING MAIN STREET. By the time this issue of *PENCIL POINTS* is mailed to readers, it is expected that the amendment to the HOLC act permitting FHA loans for modernization as high as \$50,000 will have been passed by Congress. At this writing it has been passed by the Conference committee and recommended for passage.

As soon as it becomes official a new FHA modernization campaign will be under way. Plans have been made and campaign literature prepared which will be directed chiefly at modernization of business properties and apartment house buildings. It will be known as "Modernizing for Profit." Here is the main argument:

"The successful store must attract the passer-by into the store. And to do this requires first, a modern, attractive exterior that promises good merchandise and service; and secondly, an interior that fulfills that promise."

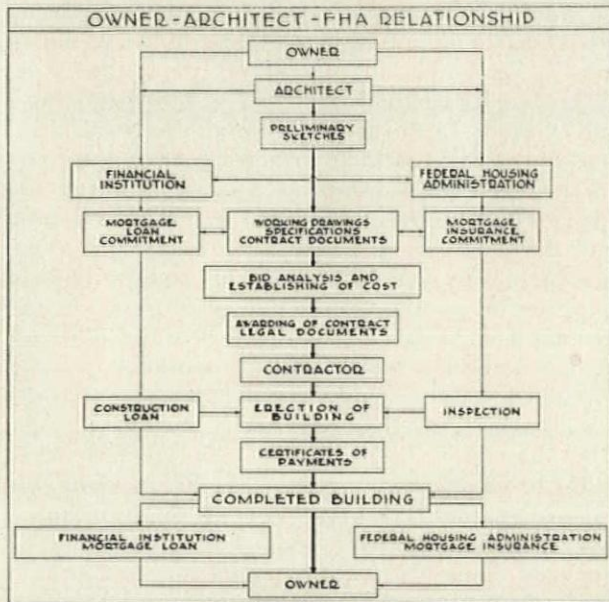
This is a job for architects. In some cities plans are being made to modernize entire blocks. Successful modernization of the "wrong" side of the street has changed the flow of shopping traffic. In one city with a population of over half a million, a large business structure became quite obsolete. Changing shopping habits left that structure isolated from business. But the owner did a complete modernization job, changing back the shopping habits of the town, doubled the value of his property and rented every store. Mainly it is a job of obsolescence that the architect must tackle.

HOUSING FOR POOR. The government is intent on providing housing for the poor who have crowded into city slums. It is prepared to subsidize low-cost housing projects for cities. Secretary Ickes says that the high cost of cheap housing has been far greater than any investment which the government might now make. Thus a slum area in Cleveland yielded \$225,000 a year in taxes, but police and fire protection and other municipal services for the same area cost the city \$1,357,000 a year. Mr. Ickes also says that one-third of our people cannot afford good housing under the existing system. Labor spokesmen are arguing that it would be better to provide good housing to this third through the payment of higher wages than by a perpetual system of government subsidy.

ARCHITECT'S SERVICE CHART. FHA has prepared a chart showing owner-architect-FHA relationship as an exhibit to demonstrate to the average citizen the need of an architect's services in any building project. The story reads:

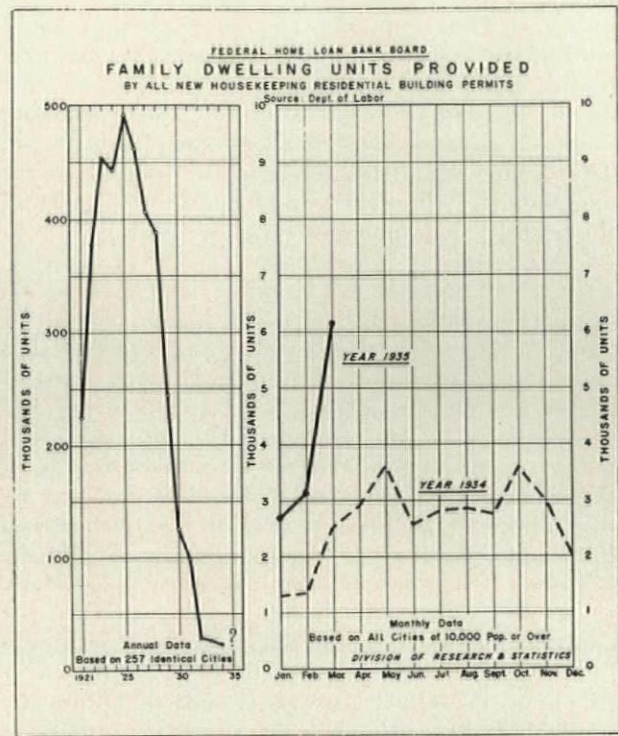
"The architect, by education, training, and experience, is the physician of the building industry. It is his duty to diagnose the problems of the owner and to see that the owner gets value received for all money expended."

After the architect has been told everything about the housing needs and what the prospective home owner can afford to invest in a home, preliminary sketches are prepared. With these the owner can arrange financing. Throughout the process the architect is revealed as a financial adviser as well as a craftsman.



HOUSING COORDINATION. There has been much talk in Washington recently about coordinating federal housing activities. The public is bewildered by the number of agencies: PWA, Emergency Housing Corporation, Home Loan Bank, Home Owners' Loan Corporation, Farm Credit Administration, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Federal Housing Administration, Subsistence Homesteads Division, Tennessee Valley Authority and others. Sullivan W. Jones, Chairman of the National Construction Planning and Adjustment Board, thinks that the FHA is the logical place for the coordination and control of all government housing activities. He reaches this conclusion not on personalities but because he still feels the Housing Act is the most constructive legislation enacted during the New Deal.

BUILDING CHART. The chart reproduced herewith from the Federal Home Loan Bank Board shows that in March, 1935, new family dwelling



units provided throughout the United States show an increase of 95.9 per cent over February, 1935, which is far above the usual seasonal rise. March, 1935, construction of new family units was 144 per cent above March, 1934. For the first quarter of 1935, total new family dwelling units exceeded by 132 per cent the number built in the first quarter of 1934.

MORE EQUIPMENT IN HOMES. Building permits for residences are running double those of a year ago and prospects are encouraging for an abrupt upswing in this division during the third quarter of the year. This is not alone the opinion of government officials but of private statistical organizations also.

One trend of significance to architects is the increased use of built-in home equipment. Its popularity has been stimulated by the advertising and publicity of home equipment manufacturers and dealers. Consistent consumer demand for electrical household appliances, especially refrigerators, ranges, washing machines and ironers, is already about 25 per cent ahead of the sales volume at this time in 1934. Demand will increase further if the proposed plans for rural electrification are carried out. During January and February alone producers shipped 91 per cent more refrigerators to distributors than a year ago. Sales of air-conditioning equipment are phenomenal.

Some architects look upon stimulation of household equipment as possibly excessive and out of line with the investment in the house proper. But that is not the view of government officials interested in home building as a means of stimulating

industry. They contend that acceptance of home equipment as insurable and mortgagable features of the house and the more liberal terms of payment provided by cooperation of the government, justify increased investment in home equipment. They contend that the job of equipping the house adequately with utilities and comforts is part of the architect's responsibility in the future.

THE NATIONAL BETTER HOUSING DAY, originally scheduled for May 25, was finally set for June 15. President Roosevelt is expected to participate in a nationwide radio broadcast as part of the ceremonies in ground breaking in every important city in the country. The program now being organized by FHA provides sponsorship by the local FHA committee of building projects by contractors or builders, which the committee will help advertise. In one community the largest department store is building seven model homes. In another city a large utility is arranging for the construction of twenty model homes. One manufacturer, in cooperation with local builders, is planning to launch several hundred homes on June 15. Believe it or not, but the FHA announces that "reports received indicate that ground will be broken for several thousand homes on June 15."

AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT. Work for architects as airport designers is forecast by Secretary of Commerce Roper's prediction that the government would complete with federal funds the development of more than 500 airports started a year ago under the Civil Works Administration. Mr. Roper said he had been assured PWA funds for these.

BETTER MARKETING STANDARDS for the home itself, "the central core around which all other merchandising revolves," was urged upon the Association of National Advertisers at the White Sulphur Springs convention by John H. Fahey, Federal Home Loan Bank Board chairman.

"It is largely your own responsibility, as the creators of American taste and demand, to bring about higher and more exacting public standards in neighborhood planning, in home construction and in home equipment and decoration," he said.

"The typical American home owner is gradually waking up to the fact that he is riding in a palace and living in a shack He is beginning to demand not only a more attractive, more durable dwelling, but a way to make home ownership a less serious drain on his flattened pocketbook."

CONSUMERS ON HOUSING. This matter of better standards for housing has been taken up in a serious way by the Consumers Advisory Board

of the NRA. Mrs. Emily Newell Blair contributed this thought to the National Public Housing Conference in New York: "On account of the complexity of the problems, the average person cannot obtain all the information necessary to specify and direct the technical details connected with satisfactory construction. Standards would aid the consumer, and would likewise protect the honest producer from unscrupulous competitors.

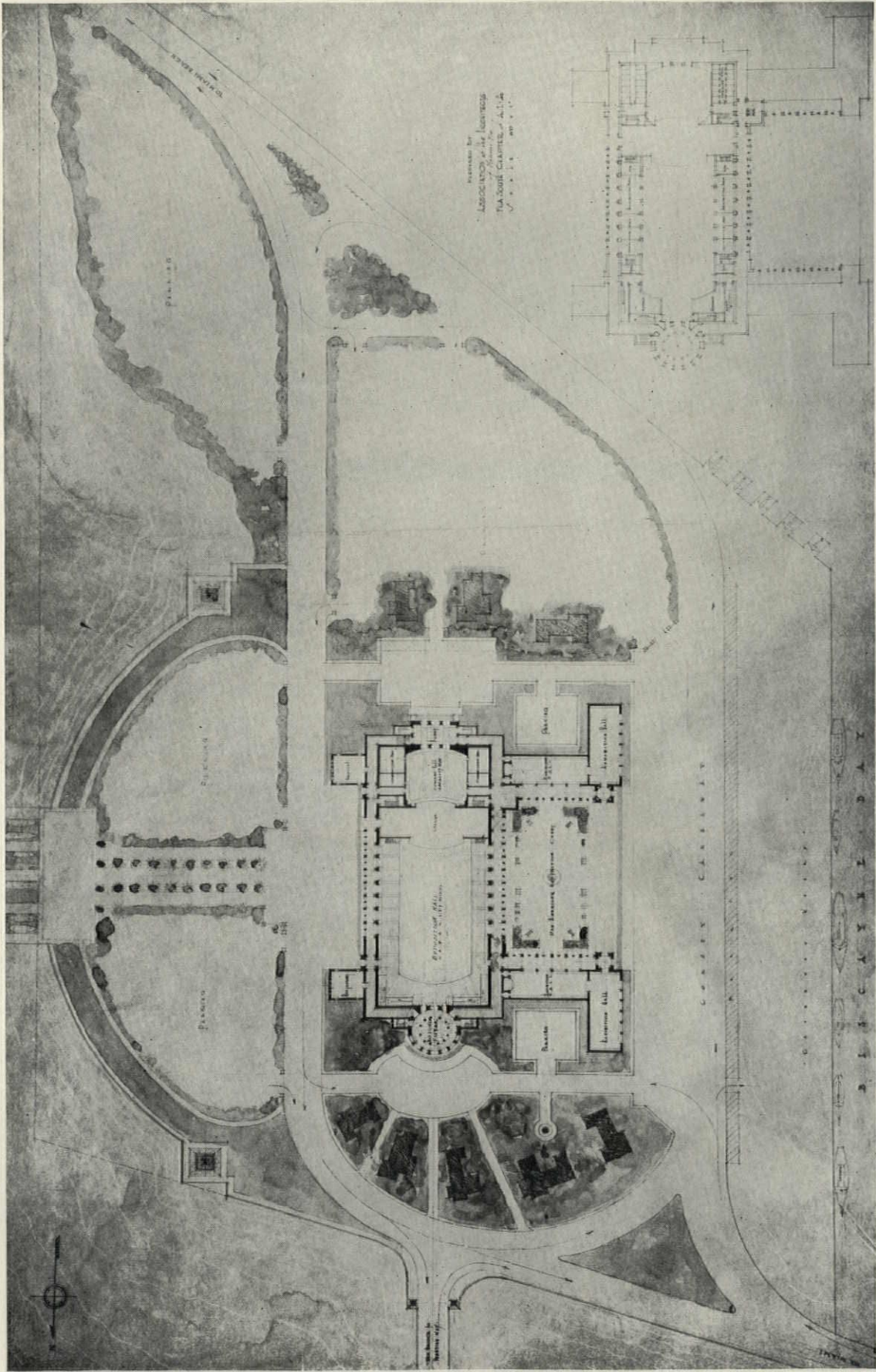
"The consumer's interest, therefore, would seem to require that some non-profit technical agency should inspect, grade, and certify completed structures and such certification should serve as an informative label for the purchaser of the houses as well as for the lender of funds."

RESEARCH URGED:—The Special Lumber Survey Committee of the Timber Conservation Board on lumber consumption, which made a report to the Department of Commerce on May 20, makes one recommendation of interest to architects. It finds that if the lumber industry is to participate substantially in the small house and low cost small building market, which promises greatest activity in the event of substantial general building upturn, it must undertake more extensive research and development in architectural style and engineering design and in other forms and methods of building economies; and that such research and development activity should seek improvements in distribution as well as in fabrication.

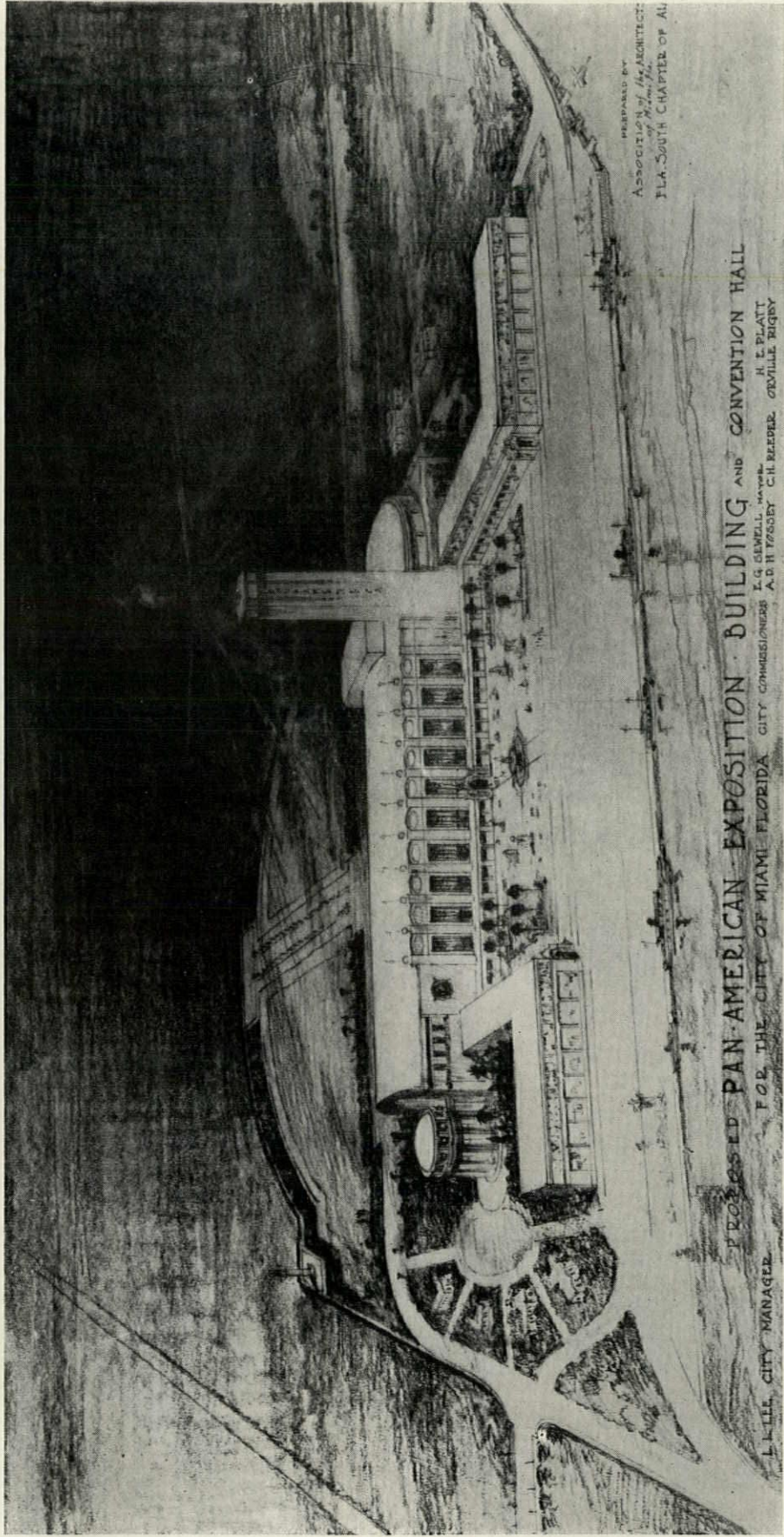
EXTENDS MODERNIZATION LOANS. The FHA has opened up Title I (Modernization) to building and loan organizations by insuring the customary 12 to 14 year loans of these organizations for the first five years. This is expected to increase home alteration and repair activities throughout the country. It is reported that the building and loan organizations have done as much unreported modernization loan business without FHA insurance as the banks have done with FHA insurance.

FHA insurance on home building loans (Title II) took a new lease on life this month. Total applications are now \$57 million.

HOUSING MARKET. FHA and other groups promoting home building estimate a demand for one million to one and a half millions of new houses. This year they look forward to \$250 millions of new residential construction as against \$108 millions last year. They estimate \$390 millions for alterations and repairs to residential and non-residential structures. It is estimated that forty per cent of the housing market is located in New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, California.



Plan of proposed Pan-American Exposition at Miami, Florida. Prepared by Association of the Architects of Miami, Florida South Chapter, A.I.A.



Bird's-eye perspective of proposed Pan-American Exposition Building by Association of the Architects of Miami, Florida South Chapter, A.I.A.

A. L. Gouptill's Corner

A LITTLE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL ESTHETICS, WITH EMPHASIS ON SKETCHING AND RENDERING



I have taken every recent opportunity to show to architects, artists, and others either the original drawings of our Competition No. 1, or the proofs of those selected for publication last month and this. It has been so interesting to hear the comments that I have concluded it would be helpful to you readers for me to hand on a few of those (whether for or against) that relate to the examples published in this issue. While some of these opinions came from members of the jury, I shall not attempt to isolate them from the rest.

Place's drawing attracted considerable attention, mainly because of its remarkable resemblance to the original photograph. It was handled with the utmost care, and had the prize been offered for the most faithful photographic likeness, this would surely have been the winner. It was the consensus of opinion, however, that, commendable as it was, it was too photographic, lacking the evidences of spontaneity, speed and suggestiveness usually looked for in sketches.

The very bold sketch by Kautzky (who was the first prize winner) was pointed to by several as exhibiting to a marked degree certain desirable qualities which Place's sketch lacked: two sketches of one subject could scarcely differ more. Surely it is a clever thing, for despite the quickness with which it was obviously made, it shows adjustments of values, as in the lightened windows of the gambrel wall, which contribute to a splendid breadth and simplicity of effect. To some, however, this treatment seemed too meager, and the shortening of the house masses a fault. But agreement was general that Kautzky's drawing shown below (in the middle row) was very capably managed. While it lacked the exceptional dash of his previous example, leaning a bit more towards typical rendering handling, its superb composition and technique, with striking contrasts of lights and darks, made it outstandingly successful. It was favorably compared by several with his first prize sketch, making his right to the prize more evident.

Perkins' example, done with a lighter hand and finer point, unfortunately has lost much in this small reproduction, and

seems a bit pale because of the vigor of its companions. Yet it reveals qualities which elicited most favorable comment. The decidedly architectural and somewhat decorative use of fine lines was liked. Possibly the value adjustment might have been a bit better; one observer felt that the background dark was too emphatic in relation to the rest, the foreground or the large trees needing more strength in relation to it.



EVEN SPOOKS AND SUCH LIKE

Bruce's sketch, with its darkened gambrels and low tones generally, was commended for its individuality of mood and technical expression. One described it as "delightfully spooky" and another as "dreary-dismal," so it's often a matter of point of view. To me it has nicely caught a feeling of mellow age, transporting one to the land of "good old times." Note that this drawing forms a definite "spot" on the paper, with emphasis on the horizontal.

Rome, too, received praise for his originality of conception and execution, his vast expanse of snow and his lighted windows being quite different from anything else submitted. One commentator points to the perspective of his house as being too acute (the vanishing points too close) for a structure so far from the spectator. Another felt that the angle of the fence could have been improved. Yet these are minor criticisms for, after all, he obtained the effect he went after.

Clark's drawing again was the center of divergent opinions, for while some liked it as a simple sketch, free from mannerisms and trickery—such a sketch as one would be most likely to make on the site—another said "line too wooly; composition, especially in foreground, spotty." And so with Smith's drawing.



AND CRITICS JUST DON'T AGREE

Where one exclaimed "Splendid! Lots of punch! Natural values; concentration of interest! Adequate treatment!" his com-

panion asserted it was too inky, especially in the windows; hard, and lacking in imagination. So it's the old story, boys, that you can't suit 'em all.

The only adverse comment which I recall on Sherwood's drawing was that the large background trees were a bit too heavy in tone. It was especially liked for its real and inviting look with an air of respectable old age; its sunniness; its centering of interest with the eye led naturally into the composition.

Ochs' drawing was described as "refreshingly different," yet the primary thing which makes it distinctive—the impression of light from the left background—was liked by one but not by another. One thought the foliage particularly "happy," another praised the sky; several commented on the restfulness and simplicity of the whole. While by no means extreme, it has a decidedly modern look.

The sketch by de Felice, being less dramatic than some, evoked fewer remarks. On the whole it seemed quite well liked—the figure was noticed with approval; one thought the foliage, though well balanced, to be a bit over-insistent, spotty, and lacking in variety.

Hillier's drawing, while favorably received by many, resulted in considerable exchange of conflicting opinion. One said, "that's a swell tree"; another, "that tree is too complicated." One remarked, "well, it's a crisp, snappy job, anyhow: those tree shadows on the house are good," while the other combated with, "but they add to the restlessness of the roofs; the contestant has thought too much of technique and too little of values." All of which again shows that while we must always profit all we can from criticism, we must never take it too much to heart, for the element of personal taste is ever present.



SO LOOK 'EM OVER AND VOTE

So there you are, folks. Cast your own votes. Sorry we can't find room to publish more of these truly splendid drawings—we have another dozen or so of quality equal to these—but we have done enough to show many comparative solutions and to hint at the possible variety.

And hasn't it been an interesting little competition? I thank you all again, and hope you have enjoyed it and profited from it as much as I. Why not let me know what you thought of it?

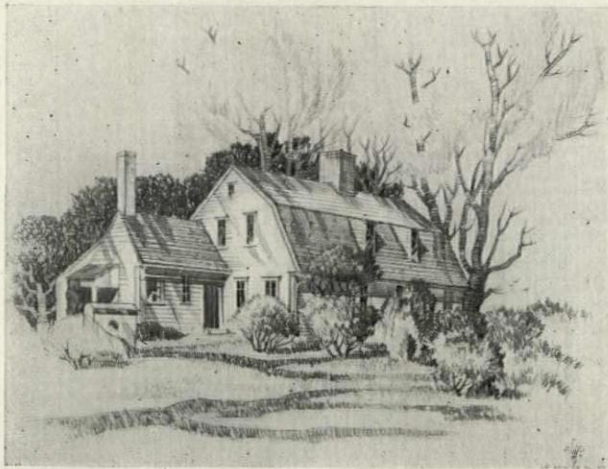
Incidentally, a group of selected drawings is, at this writing (May), on view at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, and will doubtless go from there to some other school. In an early issue (possibly next month) another competitive program will probably be announced, calling for some other medium or type of subject.



An almost photographic likeness, by Lew Place of Tucson, Arizona, shows the utmost patience in reproducing values



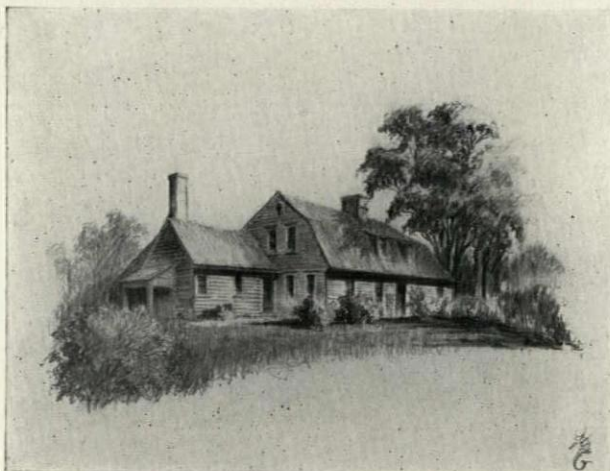
Contrasty and dashing is this treatment by the first prize winner, Theodore Kautzky, who comes from Yonkers, N. Y.



Willard Perkins of Bridgeville, Pa., has here used a fine point and a light hand to good advantage in individual style



Theodore Kautzky, again, has recomposed the subject with striking contrasts of value and form which satisfy the eye

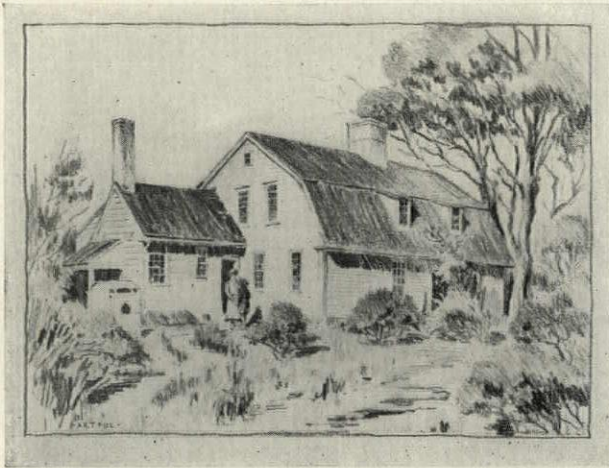


An appealing antiquity has here been made more emphatic and convincing by Frank J. Bruce of Jackson Heights, N. Y.



Snow and lighted windows give this sketch, by Lyford Rome of Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., a charmingly individual atmosphere

Some typical Mention drawings from the recent Pencil Points-Guptill Corner Sketch Competition No. 1



Laurence Clark of Philadelphia gives a true pencil sketch, freely treated with the graphite characteristics undisguised



M. Dale Smith of Camp Hill, Pa., is definite in line and tone and straightforward in every part of this honest study



A well focalized pencil "painting," by George H. Sherwood of South Bend, Ind., shows far more than customary charm



Frank Ochs of New York shows individuality of conception and handling coupled with simplicity and a modern flavor

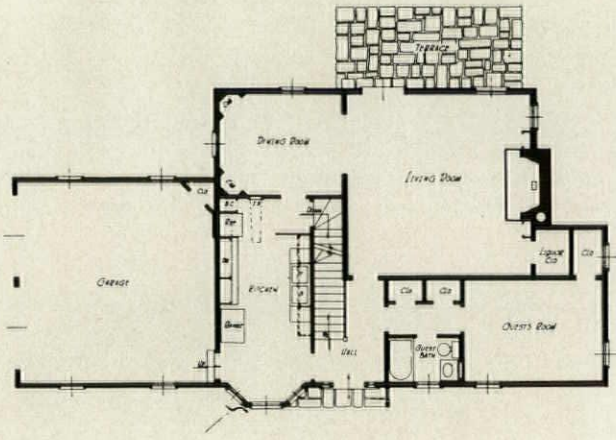
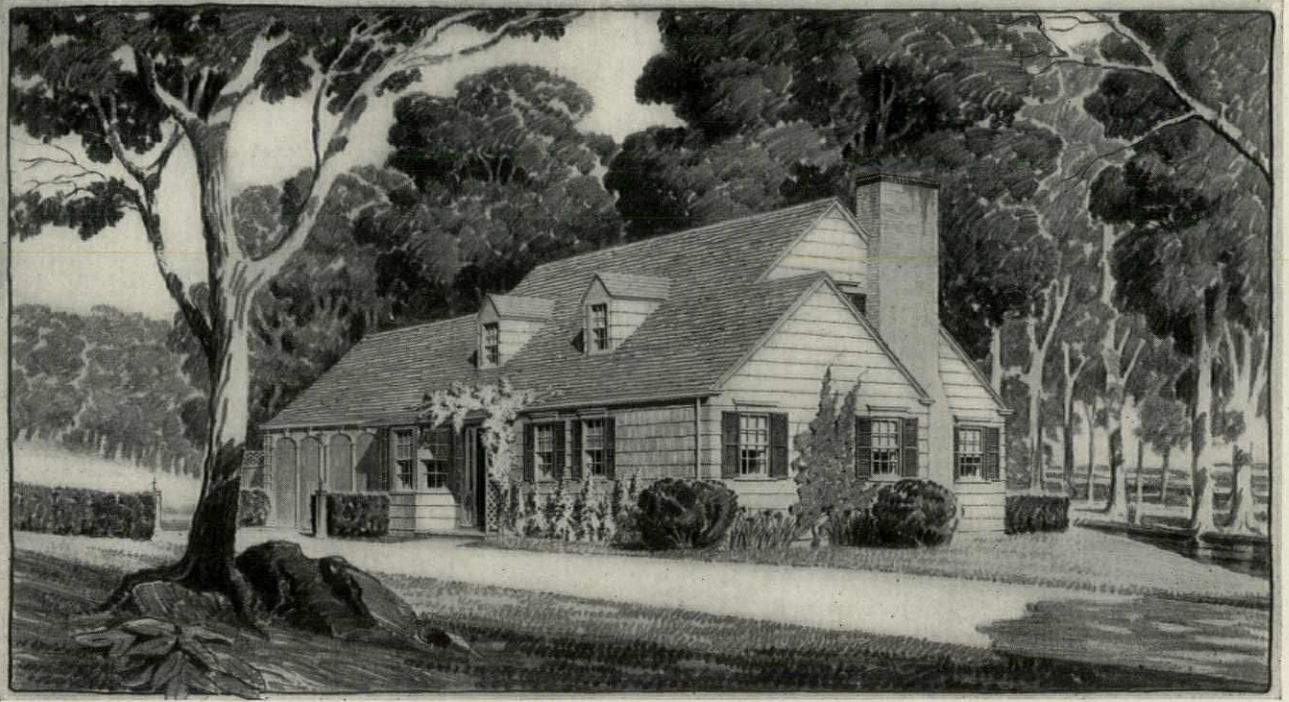


House and surroundings have been here wedded by Torquato de Felice of Washington, in a commendable manner

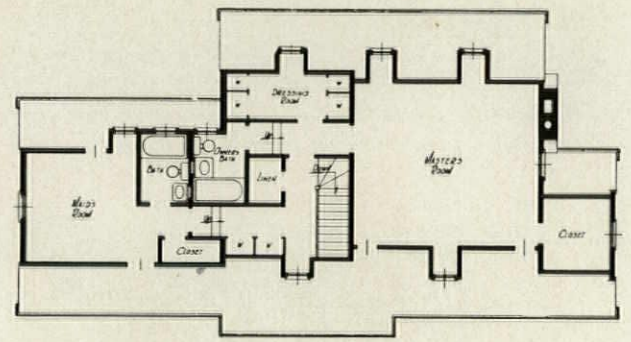


Robert I. Hillier of Brooklyn, N. Y., presents sparkle and sunniness as the result of crisp value contrasts throughout

Some typical Mention drawings from the recent Pencil Points-Guptill Corner Sketch Competition No. 1



- FIRST FLOOR PLAN -



- SECOND FLOOR PLAN -

A house at Chappaqua, New York, by Arthur T. Remick, Architect. Rendering by Alan C. Davoll. Note that on the plan, which shows the way the house was finally built, the garage has been turned endwise