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RESULTS OF THE PENCIL POINTS-"SUNTILE" ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

THE Professional Advisers for the PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Architectural Competition join with the Reinhold Publishing Corporation, publishers of PENCIL POINTS, in extending sincere thanks to all those architects and designers who worked so hard in preparing their designs for this competition. The winners are to be congratulated, of course, and heartily, but those who won no prize or Mention are to be congratulated too for working out such a thoughtful group of solutions as were presented to the Jury.

The distinguished judges worked hard and speedily for three days before reaching the final verdict, and we can assure all competitors that every design submitted was given their careful, considered, conscientious examination. In the main, we feel, their selections would be concurred in by a different Jury. They did their duty well and merit an extra measure of thanks from all of us.

The following pages carry the results—the prize and Mention designs reproduced with color, and sixteen non-premiated designs in black and white, to give an idea of the variety of solutions presented. We hope that they will, when carefully studied, yield each reader some of the fruits of the architectural thinking that went into them.

We had a difficult task in selecting the sixteen non-premiated designs for inclusion, since there were many others that seemed equally worthy. If your design was omitted, therefore, it is no reflection on the merit of your solution, which may have been really better than some of those chosen.

In closing, we must all make a bow of gratitude to the Sponsors who cooperated in every way to make this competition a success.

> (signed) RUSSELL F. WHITEHEAD Professional Adviser KENNETH REID Assistant Professional Adviser

<u>REPORT OF THE</u> JURY OF AWARD

PENCIL POINTS-"SUNTILE" ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

THE jury of the PENCIL POINTS-"Suntile" Architectural Competition met at Yama Farms on Thursday, June 17, and arrived at its final decision at near midnight on Saturday, June 19. There were 347 drawings submitted, of which 35 were eliminated from judgment because they did not conform to the mandatory requirements of the program.

The procedure of the jury was as follows. On first examination by the jury, acting as a body, about sixty per cent. of the submissions were eliminated because of obvious lack of excellence as compared with the remaining forty per cent. The basis of judgment is outlined later in this report. The second elimination was made after the remaining drawings were each subjected to discussion by the jury acting as a whole. After the second judgment there remained forty-one drawings, any of which, in the minds of the jury, was possible of selection for one of the awards. The next step was for the jury to discuss again the merits of each drawing and to sort them into two groups. In the higher group there were twenty-five drawings. These were hung and each juror voted by ballot on nine eliminations. By successive majority ballots interspersed with further discussion, sixteen drawings were selected for money prizes. Before closing the competition, however, the jury went over the eliminations, first from the cull of forty-one and then from the complete 347 submissions, to see if, in the light of their tempered judgment, any brilliant solutions had been overlooked. As a matter of interest, two changes were made during this reconsideration. The next procedure was to discuss, in a body, the sixteen premiated drawings and to eliminate for the higher prize selection. Nine were held. A ballot brought the number to six. These were discussed by the jury and the four higher prize selections finally made.

These deliberations covered three days of activity. It is the jury's belief that competitors are interested in the procedure of judgment as well as the basis; hence this detailed account of its activities. The responsibility of assuring an unbiased and fair selection of awards is a serious matter. On most matters the jury was unanimous in its final point of view. When a solution of a problem contains errors, as, for example, insufficient head room at a stair, it is the jury's responsibility to determine whether that failure is of sufficient importance to disqualify it from reward if the solution contains evidence of other qualities superior to those of competing submissions. The jury was divided upon such points in many of the discussions. When such an issue arose, the majority opinion prevailed.

The program contained certain descriptions which called for the design not merely of a residence, but of a doctor's residence. Instead of the enumeration of rooms with exact sizes, the program assumed that the architect was made acquainted with the kind of life the doctor and his family lived. The competitor was furthermore privileged to select the section of the country where his house would be built. The only limitations as to the solution were the size of the plot, its topography, orientation, and the location of the main thoroughfare and rear alley. A special consideration was involved in the suggestion that the use of decorative tile was desired.

The jury based its considerations broadly upon three major premises.

- 1. Location of the house upon the plot.
- 2. Fulfillment of the two major functions of the house (a) the entertainment of guests as well as its living accommodations and (b) its use for the doctor's practice.
- 3. The use of tile as a decorative material.

The broad considerations as to appearance, harmony, inventive qualities, completeness of portrayal were, of course, read into each of the above premises. No questions of style had any particular influence in the jury's deliberations. It was, however, regretted by the jury that the solutions of houses in a northern section of the country were conspicuously lacking in comparative excellence. The appropriateness of outdoor entertainment in a warm climate perhaps suggested features that made for interest and freedom in the better plans.

Taking the major premises of the judgment

in order, it was the opinion of the jury that on the location of the house on the lot a very large number of competitors failed to provide a simple dispositon of front and rear areas. Those solutions which clearly allowed an open clear space for lawn or terrace, especially in close connection with the entertaining and living rooms of the house, were considered best. There were many solutions in which a complex system of paths, driveways, formal gardens, and pools were shown. The jury felt that clarity of analysis and simplicity of arrangement in this element of the problem were essential. Many solutions failed to show a recognition of the points of the compass and a disposition of the house on the grounds to take advantage of the best sun and probable prevailing breezes. The jury did not consider it of basic importance whether entrance to the garage should be from the avenue or from the alley. Good solutions were possible-and demonstrated-from either.

The second premise or basis of the jury's judgment was the function of the house. The program stated that the architect had observed, on one of his scouting trips, that the doctor's office quarters were a makeshift and such as to interfere with the practical workings of the family life. Those solutions which permitted a segregation of the two functions were sought for by the jury. Nevertheless, the program stated that the plan should be such as to permit the conversion of the doctor's quarters into future living spaces, and the jury kept this in mind. Those solutions fell down which portrayed houses that obviously seemed to put this consideration above the special needs of the problem; in which a wing balancing a kitchen wing, for example, was converted into inadequate doctor's quarters. While the jury felt that two distinct entrances, one for the family and guests, and one for patients was best, they nevertheless found several good solutions in which the failure to do this was overbalanced by other considerations, and made awards accordingly.

The important feature sought by the jury was the ability of the family to entertain guests and to live in comfort in one part of the house, while the practice of the doctor could be carried on in a separate part of the house. In this respect the jury leaned toward solutions which presented basic conceptions of disposition of plan rather than trite manipulation of consistent details. This point is illustrated in the fourth prize award, which has certain faults of detail but shows a disposition of the parts of the building both interesting and fresh in conception (see detailed criticism of this design). The majority of solutions offered fell down because they failed in realizing the important consideration of the problem—that the doctor wanted a house to permit relaxation and enjoyment.

Living quarters for a resident nurse was obviously a desired accommodation. This feature was provided in most of the solutions. The jury considered it not only an essential requirement but recognized as best those plans which placed the nurse's quarters in a location independent from the doctor's and his wife's suite. The access of the doctor to his office and to his automobile without disturbing his wife, and at the same time the provisions of privacy for their suite, were considered in the judgment. In at least one of the awards the latter item was not successful.

The size and adequacy of the doctor's office, waiting room, and laboratory varied greatly. There was ample room for assumption that the offices could be small, but many solutions fell down by lack of convincing understanding of this function of the plan.

A special significance in the use of tile was written into the program and the jury felt that premiated designs should demonstrate adequate consideration of this suggestion. Some submissions failed entirely to recognize this. A large majority showed decorative panels, mantels, or spots not necessarily either appropriate or well done. The jury awarded merit to those designs which fulfilled, in their judgment, a sound location of tile, although it was disappointed in the general average of the design and treatment of the tile.

Hereafter is set down the jury's measured criticism of the prize solutions and of the mentions (which are not graded).

In conclusion, may the jury say that they assumed as fact that the competitors accepted, in submitting designs, an agreement somewhat like a marriage contract. They took the jury for better or for worse. With respect to the Sponsors, they were, in the minds of the jury, not only the papa who pays, but our anxious and prodigal hosts.

The jury accepted the responsibility, as stated in the program, that they "have sole and complete authority to make the awards and their decisions shall be final." To the best of their abilities they fulfilled that obligation.

> Jury H. BURNHAM D. K. E. FISHER A. B. LEBOUTILLIER R. R. McGoodwin Edgar I. Williams, *Chairman*

> > A U G U S T 1 9 3 7

June 28, 1937

DETAILED CRITICISM BY JURY

First Prize Design— Hays, Simpson & Hunsicker

Utter simplicity of plot and house plans, distinct and separate entrances to living quarters and doctor's offices are commended. Latter could easily be converted to living use. Each element is in its proper location. Segregation and screening of service and location of garage are excellent. Elevations of house are well composed. Location and use of tile in this design is better than in others. The tiled garden feature has excellent scale and a delightful quality. Location of guest quarters is one of several good solutions presented.

Entrance to living quarters needs further study and would be better if not made so abruptly into living room. Doctor's office and waiting room might well be reversed. Details could be arranged without changing scheme. This is the best all-round solution.

Second Prize Design-Alexis Dukelski

Features commended are the location of building on plot; use of separate entrances to doctor's office and living quarters; complete separation between frontage on street and the entertaining part of the property which flows from the interior of the house. The charming court off the doctor's office and the office arrangement are especially commended. Access from doctor's or nurse's rooms and office well managed. Second floor plan with its terrace off gallery and separation of doctor's and wife's suite from rest of house excellent. Elevations are simply composed. The screen to doctor's office garden is ably handled. Use of tile, while good, lacks the charm of the First Prize.

Third Prize Design-

Robert J. Mayer and Kazumi Adachi

Features commended are the plot plan, complete separation of living quarters and doctor's offices, provision for two separate entrances, and the making of a feature of the court off the office. This could be converted to domestic use easily. The second floor plan is simple and sound. Use of tile has been very practically as well as charmingly handled to make a pleasant feature of what might ordinarily be a cold utilitarian surrounding. The elevations, while simple in mass, offer much opportunity for further study of fenestration and detail.

Fourth Prize Design-Ben H. Southland

This design represents an originality of solu-

tion that is refreshing. The first floor terrace recreation area fits the suggestion of the program and the second floor living quarters of the doctor and his wife indicate a good analysis of the problem. The plot plan has been well disposed to provide for recreation and relaxation. There is an excellent suggestion for the areas indicated for the use of tile, although the Jury feels that the figure design as shown is unpleasant and inappropriate.

The one entrance for patients and guests is not a desirable feature but possible in an open solution such as this. The jury's award has been made in full recognition of the faults of detail, especially the impracticability of the stairs as drawn. These defects it felt were outweighed by the merits of the quality and spirit that the design suggests.

Mention Design-Donald M. Douglass

Clear separation of living quarters and doctor's offices with separate entrances. The doctor's office can easily be converted into living room. Living room, dining room, and terrace have been well arranged for entertaining.

The plot arrangement would have been improved by planning the house nearer the street, thus giving larger private area. A feature of the design is the novel use of tile as a permanent screen. The elevations are well above the average of the designs submitted.

Mention Design-Emilio J. Ciccone

A simple plot plan which locates the main rooms with good orientation. Separate entrances for the two functions of the house provide a desired solution. A feature which indicates an understanding of the suggested requirements of the program is the relation between the court and living room. Tile suggested for the living room wainscot is uninspiring but the tile panel for the loggia would be appropriate.

Mention Design-Joseph Denis Murphy

This solution shows a plot plan which makes excellent use of the property. Complete privacy for entertaining has been provided and a good feature of the garden is the sunken patio which extends the recreation facilities to the basement in a good manner. The basement recreation room is particularly successful. There seems no excuse for the complicated system of cantilevered balconies or the uneasy treatment of the canopy on the roof. The single entrance for patients and family is not a good feature. The entrance to the house is congested and not in any way consistent with the handling of the plot plan.

Mention Design-Johnson & Birnbaum

House well placed on lot. Good utilization of lot area and orientation of rooms. House opens well toward rear private garden. The plan of the house is simple and direct. The elevations are good in the modern vernacular but not especially interesting. Indication of garage doors not honest. A separation of the two entrances might have been more desirable. While the location and use of tile is sound and the colors harmonious, the fireplace between two doorways is somewhat difficult of use. It would be difficult to find good use for the present doctor's offices if the house were converted.

Mention Design—Henry Asa Horton

This solution is a well arranged and livable plan for a temperate climate. Openness of the plot has been subordinated to the finding of smaller enclosed living areas which have excellent exposure. The rooms have a privacy and charm which many of the "modern" solutions lack. The whole conception contains an expression of great taste. The suite of the doctor and his wife is conveniently connected and gives separation and privacy as suggested in the program. The use of tile here indicates a quiet and restrained color scheme which might be preferred by many people to the violent colors usually suggested for tile.

Mention Design—Franklin G. Scott

This has an excellent plot plan with a complete separation of the patient and family entrances. The living terrace and living room relationship is pleasing and would accomplish what the program suggests. The doctor's suite is well separated from the living rooms but could be easily converted to future living rooms. The second floor plan is simple and the main rooms have good orientation. Tile could be appropriately used in the court as indicated. If the elevations of the building had been more successfully designed this solution might have received a higher award.

Mention Design-George D. Conner

Plot plan has many of the good basic features that characterize the group of premiated plans. There is a separation of the patients' and family entrances that is commendable. The doctor's office is more adequate in size than many others submitted and could be easily converted to other use.

The elevations are well studied. The suggestion of the program that tile be used has been fulfilled appropriately, although without great distinction.

Mention Design-Paul Schulz

Basic features of house location on the lot are good. Entrances to house and doctor's offices well separated. A good feature of the design is the relationship between the living room and garden, which is well sheltered from the street. Suite of doctor and his wife are well arranged.

Entrance hall is congested and access to dining room from hall or living room is poor.

The use of tile as a feature of the entrance and living room fireplace is commended for its imagination, though the colors suggested are unpleasantly violent.

Mention Design—Jules Couzens

This solution provides a sound plot plan and a good subdivision of the main elements of the house. The elevations are simple and interesting. The entrance is congested and the hall narrow. Tile is not convincingly used.

Mention Design-Frank V. Nelson

Simple, dignified plan with good outlook into garden. The house entrance is well studied and affords an opportunity for the use of tile. There is a good separation of the two entrances and the present doctor's office suite could be easily converted to living accommodation. The doctor's office and laboratory could be interchanged to advantage.

Mention Design-Edward Killingsworth

This solution provides separate entrances for the two functions of the house, which is commendable. The plot plan is simple and direct and provides good orientation for the main rooms. The living room is well composed and so located with respect to the doctor's offices that conversion to other use could be accomplished successfully. The suggestion for use of tile on the exterior is good. On the interior the tile has been used in an appropriate place but the pictorial design of the overmantel is a feature to be discouraged.

Mention Design-John F. Bartels

An excellent and interesting plot plan which provides good features for entertaining, separate entrances for the patients and family, and a garage which minimizes the usual objectionable features of its entrance. The second floor does not provide as adequate bathroom facilities for the doctor's wife as other plans, nor privacy for their suite. Tile has been used appropriately in the living room mantel and is beautifully illustrated in the presentation. The jury feels that the presentation of the elevations is tricky and confusing.



Tile detail, First Prize Design by Hays, Simpson & Hunsicker of Seventy-first Euclid Building, Cleveland. PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Competition



FIRST PRIZE: Hays, Simpson & Hunsicker







Tile detail, Third Prize Design by Robert J. Mayer and Kazumi Adachi of 2731 West Fifteenth PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Architectural Competition Street, Los Angeles, Cal. PENCIL POINTS





Tile detail, Fourth Prize Design by Ben H. Southland of 10562 Roundtree Road, Los Angeles, California. PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Competition





MENTION: Donald M. Douglass, Wilton, Connecticut









MENTION: Henry Asa Horton, 447 Putnam Ave., Detroit



MENTION: Franklin G. Scott, 307 Porter St., Melrose, Mass.



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POINTS



MENTION: Paul Schulz, 232 Madison Ave., New York

A U G U S T 1 9 3 7



MENTION: Jules Couzens, 860 South 14th St., Newark, N. J.



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MENTION: Frank V. Nelson, 3 Arnoldale Rd., West Hartford, Conn.



MENTION: Edward Killingsworth, 4221 Linden Ave., Long Beach, Cal.





William Lake Addkison of 237 Longino Street, Jackson, Miss., designed this living room tile treatment for the PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Architectural Competition

Tile Bar designed by Frederick E. Sloan of 737 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, as a feature of his entry in the PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Architectural Competition





Entrance treatment in tile as designed by Florence Schust of the Cranbrook Academy of Art at Bloomfield Hills, Mich.; PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Competition

A novel tile mantel treatment designed by Thomas B. Benedict of 188 Crestwood Ave., Tuckaboe, N. Y., in the PENCIL POINTS-Suntile House Competition





Detail showing use of tile in the design submitted by Maynard Meyer of the Cranbrook Academy of Art in the PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Competition

Tile detail from design submitted by Arnold I. Lorenzen, B. Dwight Fuerst, and John J. Blum of 4117 Kingsbury Ave., Toledo, Obio, in the PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Competition





Detail showing use of tile as suggested by Robert Lee Corsbie of 466 Lexington Ave., New York, in bis design; PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Competition

Tile detail from design submitted by Elmer Babb and E. F. Harrer of 161 West 23rd St., New York, in the PENCIL POINTS-Suntile Competition.





SUBMITTED BY Stephen J. Alling, 101 Park Ave., New York, N. Y.



SUBMITTED BY N. N. Culin and F. D. Rink, Empire State Bldg., New York, N. Y.



SUBMITTED BY Carl R. Espenscheid and Minoru Yomasaki, 80 Joralemon St., Brooklyn, N. Y.



SUBMITTED By J. Herschel Fisher, Fred J. Mackie, Jr., and Karl K. Komrath, 221 Shell Bldg., Houston, Texas


SUBMITTED BY Elmer Grey, 170 E. California St., Pasadena, Calif.



SUBMITTED By John Thomas Grisdale, 205 So. Juniper St., Philadelphia, Pa.



SUBMITTED BY Ivan William Eppleman, 35 So. 6th St., Columbia, Pa.



SUBMITTED BY Karl E. Humpbrey, Jr., 2520 Park Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.



SUBMITTED BY Walter W. W. Jones, 327 E. 18th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.



SUBMITTED By Arne Kartwold, 1552 Sonoma Ave., Berkeley, Calif.



SUBMITTED BY Harold Nicolais, 4070 So. Normandie, Los Angeles, Calif.



SUBMITTED By Leonard W. Quann, 18 Plimpton Ave., Norwood, Mass.



SUBMITTED BY Whitney R. Smith, 201 Beacon St., So. Pasadena, Calif.



SUBMITTED BY Harvey Stevenson, 101 Park Ave., New York, N. Y.



SUBMITTED BY Harry Wijk, c/o Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch, and Abbott, 122 Ames Bldg., Boston, Mass.



SUBMITTED BY John Floyd Yewell, 10 E. 40th St., New York, N. Y.

HAVING A WONDERFUL DIME

THE GREAT ARCHITECT TAKES A VACATION

BY EUGENE RASKIN

"AH, there you are, my boy," boomed the Great Architect. "Good to see you again!"

So saying, he smote me mightily between the shoulder blades. Removing my face from my knees, I gazed at him in not unresentful amazement.

"Your vacation certainly did you a lot of good," I said, acidly. "How can you stand being so healthy?"

The Great Architect chuckled as he settled into his favorite chair. He looked remarkably well. A deep coat of tan covered his beaming features, and his eyes were as clear and bright as a child's. Even his faint hint of a paunch seemed better designed.

"It was a grand vacation," he sighed. "Simply grand."

"Where'd you go . . . fishing? Hunting?"

"No, I get enough of that vicariously, looking at pictures of vacationing architects in our magazines."

"Well, then," I pursued. "Where did you go?"

"Guess," he said, coyly.

"No." My tone was frigid. "I don't mind exhibiting a polite interest, but I refuse to play guessing games. I have better things to do with my time."

The Great Architect gazed at me sympathetically.

"Tsk, tsk," said he. "Nerves. Too much nose-to-the-grindstone. Why don't you get away for a while? A rest and a change will make a new man of you."

"Thanks for the suggestion, but I have no desire to become a new man. Look at the trouble my parents had making this one."

But the Great Architect, strangely enough, ignored the wide opening I had given him. Leaning forward earnestly, he stuck to his subject.

"The basic impulse behind the desire for a vacation is the subconscious wish to become a new man. It's not really our work that tires us, or our surroundings. It is our own personalities." At this point I closed my eyes and prepared to listen to one of his eternal expositions. I could sense its approach. Nor was I mistaken. Clearing his throat oratorically, he sailed ahead.

"By changing his locale, by changing his activities, the vacationist endeavors to change his way of thinking, his way of reacting. In other words, he is trying to alter his personality. To become, temporarily, a new man. That is why, on his return, so many familiar things seem different, and so many problems that were difficult, become easy. That is—if he has really done a good job of vacationing.

"All too often, however, we make the mistake of going to some place full of our friends, accompanied by our wives and a folder or two of business papers. That's no vacation . . . that's nothing but a long Sunday. Now, the right way is to do what I did. And I'll tell you about it if you'll promise not to say anything about it in those disrespectful articles of yours."

"No promises." I opened my eyes momentarily. "If you've done something you're ashamed of, keep quiet about it."

"Oh, well, if you feel that way." He stopped, and moved restlessly until his affection for the sound of his own voice became irresistible. "But then again, it can't do any harm, as long as you don't divulge my name."

"You know I won't give away your identity. But I ought to tell you that I've heard some remarkably good guesses."

"Have you really?" The Great Architect smirked. "There's no mistaking the stamp of uniqueness, is there?"

Once again his face became serious.

"But to return to our subject," he went on. "You insist that I tell you about my vacation. Very well. I shall not deny you.

"Realizing the fundamentals of this vacationing business, I decided to do a thorough job of it. If becoming a new man was the idea, then that's what I would do. And that's what I did. First I went down to Canal Street and bought myself an entirely new outfit of cheap, ill-fitting, but sturdy clothes. I also acquired a shoe - shine box and accessories. Thus equipped, I changed my name, moved to Brooklyn, and opened shop in Prospect Park."

"What?" I squeaked. "You, an architect, spent your vacation shining shoes in a public park?"

"Why not?" His tone was matter-of-fact. "There are many points of resemblance between the two professions, if you can call architecture a profession. In both cases a service is rendered to a client. That service is esthetic as well as utilitarian. In both cases the fee is unsatisfactory. Both professions are governed by rigid codes of ethics, though the boot-blacks don't hold conventions. And in both cases, there are a large number of potential clients who prefer to muddle through without professional service."

The Great Architect's eyes gleamed enthusiastically.

"Just picture it. Outdoors all day, engrossing, but not too strenuous work, a new slant on life, arguing questions of jurisdiction with fellow-professionals, exchanging technical information, looking at people's shoes instead of their faces . . . Very refreshing, I assure you. Highly stimulating."

"I suppose," I sneered. "You brought some new architectural brain-storm back, too."

"Yes, indeed," he replied. "And I don't like your tone. I came across something which has made me scrap all my drawings for that housing job of mine, and start fresh. It happened this way. I was giving a shine to a lower - middle - class workman one Sunday morning, and overheard the conversation between my client and his waiting friend. My

client was complaining about the new apartment into which his family had recently moved. In particular, he criticized the kitchen-dining room arrangement. It seemed that he liked to eat in the kitchen. What's more, his wife preferred the kitchen, too, because, what with serving, watching the stove, and supervising the kids, a dining room meal was practically impossible. The half-and-half scheme, kitchen and dining room combined, was better, he admitted, but best of all he would have liked a really large kitchen, no dining room at all, and a small living room. After all, he explained, due to his daughter's boy friends, he had to read his paper in the kitchen anyway, and the youngsters could pet as well, if not better, in a small room. He mentioned a few other things, too, all of which convinced me that I've been on the wrong track in my plans. But now! I have a new head designer. Yes, I hired him on the spot. There was an awkward moment or two during the process, and for a while it looked as though I might be sent to Bellevue for observation, but finally everything worked out."

The Great Architect rose and squared his shoulders. "So that, my boy, was my vacation. And, believe it or not, I came out ten cents ahead on the whole affair."

He strode towards the door, and just as he reached it, I suddenly called out.

"Hey, Tony!"

"Yes, sir?" The Great Architect spun around, then stopped short. His face turned magenta, with purple high-lights. He breathed heavily for several seconds and then began to speak . . .

After he left, I picked myself up from the floor and went out to buy a shoe-shine box. With accessories.



An interior view of the East River Savings Bank submitted in the 1937 Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition by Reinhard & Hofmeister, Architects, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City



The Promenade Lounge of the Shoreban Hotel in Washington, D. C., submitted in the 1937 Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition by Charles E. Dillon & Joseph H. Abel, Designers, 1327 Connecticut Ave., Washington, D. C.











A combination table and aquarium submitted in the 1937 Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition by Gerald M. Stafford, Designer, 1708 Wethersfield Rd., Austin, Texas



DETAIL OF AREA-B

1/2 PLAN OF TOP









HALF PLAN OF ONE BAY

A tennis court wind break at Coronado, Cal., submitted in the 1937 Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition by Donald McMurray, Architect, 480 California Terrace, Pasadena, Cal.



The Mun Hing Cafe at Minneapolis, Minn., submitted in the 1937 Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition by Art Brammer, Designer, 1004 Marquette Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.



.GENERAL NOTES.

GLASS BRICK DIMENSIONS=6"+6" 50-% RED CEMENT JOINT USED EXCEPT IN EVERY OTHER HORI-ZONTAL ROW WHERE THE JOINT IS INCREASED TO 11/4" **** FRONT LIGHTED BY RED NEON ** ILLUMINATION KEPT ABSOLUTELY EVEN BY PERMITTING NO DIRECT LIGHT THROUGH BRICKS *



AUGUST 1 9 3 7



Factory of the Friden Calculating Machine Co. at San Leandro, Cal., submitted in the 1937 Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition by Frederick H. Reimers, Architect, 233 Post St., San Francisco, Cal.





PLAN OF /AULLION IN CURVED BAY







A U G U S T 1 9 3 7

SOME THOUGHTS ON ENGLISH HOUSING

A REPORT TO THE ROTCH SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

EDITOR'S NOTE:—We have all read or heard plenty of discussions of English Housing by experts of all degrees of expertness. This report, sent back this spring by a student now traveling on the Rotch Scholarship, may, however, be of interest as recording the observations and impressions of a young man who comes upon the scene with a fresh mind. It is printed at the suggestion and by the permission of Mr. C. H. Blackall of Boston, Chairman of the Rotch Scholarship Committee.

ENGLAND has been credited with advancing far beyond other countries in Housing because it was that country that first felt the need, a need brought about by the slum conditions resulting from the Industrial Revolution. With her many years of experience as a background, dating in some cases from the eighteen-sixties, we can turn to England for fruitful study. Many types of Housing have been created there in the attempt to raise living conditions to a level fit for human beings. These will be presented in order.

First of all, following the great pioneer of Garden Cities, Ebenezer Howard, England has three great projects - Letchworth, Welwyn, and Wythen Shawe. Of these three, Letchworth, the largest in population size, presents many interesting aspects. We can note here, however, that at Letchworth no great economic or sociological problems have arisen. There is work for those living in the town-a sufficiency of factories provides the workand in general the sociological problems of creating happiness so far as it can be done by means of recreation and leisure occupation for adults and children have been met. Interesting indeed is the system of rental employed, making for economic soundness.

The Corporation which controls the financial management of the development owns all the land. It leases the land (a) to the individual who builds his own house thereon, (b) to a private company which builds houses and in turn rents or sells them to the individual, or (c) builds its own houses which it then rents

BY LEON HYZEN

or sells to the individual. In this way private enterprise is satisfied and competition is set up between private enterprise and companybuilt houses. All designs are approved by the management in order to maintain harmony of design in the development. Although it has been found that the practical limit of population size for efficient workability is thirty thousand, Letchworth will expand its plan to include fifty thousand before it will be considered complete.

Welwyn, patterned today after Letchworth in many aspects, launched its career on several unhappy ventures. In this town the original scheme was that the management should control, not only the land and the houses, but the business enterprises as well. The motive was to keep prices of all commodities used by the community as low as possible and eliminate the middleman's profit. Whatever profit might be made would have been turned in against the management's expenses. Letchworth, even from the beginning, allowed business to be run by the individual. Welwyn's management lacked experience in such matters and was pressed by problems more important, consequently the venture proved a dismal failure. Many thousands of pounds sterling were lost before all business was turned over to experienced retailers. The Company still owns the buildings housing the various business enterprises but leases the property.

Wythen Shawe, the third and latest of England's Garden Cities, is being developed as a satellite town by the Manchester City Council. The general layout, similar to Letchworth (Mr. Barry Parker having designed the town plan of both), is financially sound and growing under the careful administration of the Wythen Shawe Committee. Planned ultimately to be a self-sustaining Garden City, its population will be one hundred thousand. The layouts of the individual estates and the municipal houses have been designed by the Corporation Housing Department. The larger houses provided by private enterprise unfortunately exhibit the characteristic lack of taste which in England distinguishes such property from the architect-designed municipal houses.

Leaving Garden Cities for the moment we come to England's next great venture—the satellite town, Beacontree. The largest single development of the London County Council, Beacontree is an unhappy mixture of Housing and a Garden City. It presents probably a greater number of problems to its management than any other single development. From their handling we may learn a great deal. A city today of one hundred twenty thousand people, it was planned to relieve the congestion of overcrowded London and provide a community large enough to be self-sustaining. The encouragement of industry to settle within its plan was for the provi-



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sion of work for the dwellers. This plan, although well conceived, met many unforeseen troubles. When the first houses were built and occupied, the tenants still maintained their jobs in London. It was found that because of the long distance in travel the workers disliked the inconvenience and moved back to the city. The original plan of having work provided close to the homes did not materialize. Industry could not be encouraged to build close to the new town. With this problem, another arose, much to the distress of the management. Beacontree was settled by former slum dwellers of the various sections of London, all with approximately the same wage income. These people, familiar with the bright lights of the shopping sections of the city and with frequent "pubs," an established custom of England, missed these features. Discouraged and unhappy, the tenants slowly began to leave Beacontree. This has resulted in the town suffering from a transient population running as high as fifty per cent of the community. Those who do remain are not, as was expected, raising the standard of living. As mentioned above, the people are of one class and have no initiative. Under these conditions, which might have been corrected by the intermixture of a "white-collar" group, the standard of living has not altered as much as was expected. Beacontree's salvation lies principally in (a) industry coming into the area which will provide work near the homes, (b) creating a large central shopping area, and (c) the intermingling of the low and a middle wage income group.

Next, and by far the largest of all the branches of housing of the County Council, is the clearance of slum areas and proper rehousing of the former slum dwellers under the 1930 Act. From the very beginning of this great work, carried on in intervals of government aid, the Council has endeavored to provide for each family only the fundamentals of a clean flat and a better organized arrangement of living. Very little else in connection with the large blocks was provided. As the plans of the Wapping, Gleb, East Hill, and China Walk Estates testify, open spaces of any considerable size where adults or children may find recreation have been ignored. The primary reason, of course, is the high value of the land which makes such a desirable factor prohibitive. Still, the problem of what the large number of children will do for recreation close to their homes as distinct from "playing" in the playgrounds which more or less form a part of every scheme, remains for the

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present unsolved. The former slum dwellers are re-housed but does this mean that the Council's job is complete? Unquestionably this is a sociological problem and an important one. These people may, it is true, have better houses in which to eat and sleep, but will the younger generation have a more rounded environment to formulate habits fitting in with the much desired standard of living? Nor are these examples, the earlier work of the Council, the only projects which have ignored this issue. Kensington Park Estate, the latest development, also suffers from the same defect. Technically, many improvements have been made, but the question of providing the desirable playground areas adjoining every group of flats in a large city remains unanswered.

One or two technical problems may be brought in at this point to illustrate how, even with careful planning, it is only when these plans are put into practice that we can find out whether or not they are workable. The proper height of block dwellings, after many years of experimenting, has been placed at



LIVERPOOL SCHEME

four stories. Experience has shown that when these blocks are built to five and six stories rents become cheaper the higher one goes. The following sketch illustrates the method employed at Liverpool. In consequence, the climbing of stairs makes it difficult for mothers and the height dangerous for young children. Even though five and six stories have been built and are still in the process of construction in English slum clearance, the more advanced work attempts to maintain a fourstory limit. In Liverpool, where five stories are usual, we may claim an exception.

Another detail which faced planners was the question of whether to combine bathroom and kitchen or to separate these two elements. Economically, the former is to be preferred; the tub placed in the kitchen is covered by a board when not in use and utilized as a work table. This really did not help to raise the standard of living since it was a slum device and discouraged the use of the bath. It has been learned that when attempts are made to clear slums once and for all, no methods should be employed that would tend to direct the in-



habitants back to old habits even if it is necessary to raise the budget or build fewer units in order to avoid such conditions. Otherwise, new projects will only last for a short period of years, after which slum conditions become evident. False economy must be avoided.

In Liverpool, the Liverpool Corporation Housing Department has undertaken a redevelopment which will undoubtedly present a scheme as a model solution of many problems. One of the present undertakings, known as the Central Rehousing Area, is the first Redevelopment Area to be declared under the 1935 Act and will be completed at the end of four years. It will house 6000 persons and provide utilities necessary for the comforts of the tenants. Here at Liverpool, the problems mentioned concerning Housing have been faced and an attempt made to solve them. The plans show clearly how the changes made will benefit the area. By intelligent planning it is possible to provide more light and freedom of open areas besides placing almost twice as many people in fine livable quarters. Playground areas, Clinics, and Boys' and Girls'



More than 6000 persons will be reboused in buildings of modern standard when this Central Rebousing Area in Liverpool is completely developed about 3 years hence. All equipment and buildings necessary for various civic services will be brought up to date, and intelligent planning will provide light and freedom of the open areas

Clubs have been incorporated in the scheme. The Liverpool Corporation may even, at the completion of its present eight years' program of 10,700 flats and 5000 cottages plus many thousands of flats and cottages to relieve overcrowding, be faced with other problems. There is no question, however, that efforts have been made to obtain a model housing scheme. All eyes of the Housing profession in England are turned towards Liverpool whose Housing Department, under the direction of Mr. L. H. Keay, O.B.E., M.Arch., F.R.I.B.A., has displayed outstanding initiative. The latest development is the creation of the satellite town of Speke, adjacent to the Municipal Airport. The plan of this town shows an entirely new departure in planning which has attracted widespread attention.

Today, with most of its slum clearance well

in hand and in all but the great cities nearing completion, England has taken up the problem of overcrowding. In London, the problem is where to place people who live today in highly settled areas. Beacontree, its great satellite town, was to provide relief. Since this experiment is not wholly satisfactory, the idea of satellite towns has lost some favor. Still, it appears as a possible solution of this growing problem. Garden Cities, with the excellent results at Letchworth, Welwyn, and Wythen Shawe should at least have more examples in the future. With the exception of Speke, near Liverpool, as a result of armament preparation no more Garden Cities are being planned. Cecil Harmsworth ably points out in his lecture, "Some Reflections on Ebenezer Howard and His Movement," the reason for the Garden Cities' death. "Why have we only

two* Garden Cities in Britain . . . ? No one need have any doubts about the future of Letchworth and there are few to deny that it presents, even in its unfinished state, the best existing object lesson in the solution of the allied problem of congested population and congested transport." Continuing, Mr. Harmsworth says, "In a sense which you will understand, I would say that the present Housing Crusade has brought about with it a positive hindrance to the Garden City movement." Contrary to this thought is the fact that the advocates of the Garden City do not appear to understand that flats are an absolute necessity in the great cities. Even at a density of 60 to the acre the land costs often work out at 300 pounds per flat. Consequently, the Garden Cities movement has tended to oppose multi-story flats as a solution of the problem. Actually, the solution demands in the larger cities a combination of both flats and cottage development.

So from England we have this great object lesson, that in spite of Mr. Harmsworth's be-

*Note: Evidently Wythen Shawe was not counted.

lief there is room for both Garden Cities and urban and suburban Housing. In the United States, we need to rehouse properly our slum dwellers. This can only be done by a proper housing crusade carried on a large scale plan, using Liverpool as an example. Only a large scale plan will be effective, for this is really the only means by which it might be carried out economically over a long period. In England, the power to re-develop large areas is one of the great benefits of the 1935 Act. Our own small bites and stabs at Re-housing will only bring more problems in the future. In relieving overcrowdedness in our large cities, we can employ the Garden City method in preference to the satellite town. All of this can only be accomplished by government aid. It has already been proven, over and over again, that private enterprise demanding its snug profit cannot build suitable houses and at the same time maintain rents low enough for the low wage income group. Government assistance for these projects is the only means by which the slums will be cleared and their dwellers properly rehoused. This fact is fully recognized by all political parties in England.

A rendering by John MacGilchrist showing the permanent park designed by the New York City Dept. of Parks that is to enhance the beauty of Flushing Meadows after the 1939 New York World's Fair









Whitman Bailey found and sketched these three bits of New England color in old Pawtuxet, Rhode Island. The scene at top is the foot of Bridge Street, old Elm Street is registered in the center, and the bottom sketch is of an old sea captain's house at the foot of Peck Lane