

JOURNAL OF
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

WITH THE AIM OF AMPLIFYING
AS THROUGH A MICROPHONE
THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION

FEBRUARY, 1955

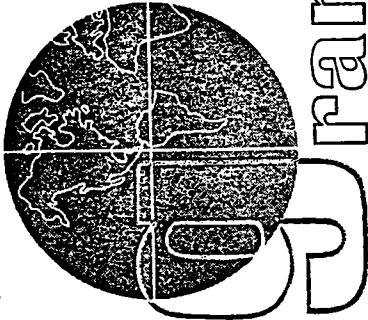
VOL. XIX, No. 2



CONTENTS

A Look at Our Defenses By <i>Kenneth E. Wichmeyer</i>	51	Reginald Davis Johnson, F.A.I.A., 1882-1952	81
Design Behind the Iron Curtain By <i>Fernon DeMars</i>	54	By <i>Robert E. Alexander</i>	84
How to View the Out-of-Doors By <i>Edwin Bateman Morris</i>	63	The Institute's Headquarters Staff: Walter Andrews Taylor, A.I.A. By <i>Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A.</i>	87
The High Adventure of Mahogany Hunting By <i>George N. Lamb</i>	65	Books & Bulletins	88
The Architects' 1952 Trek Abroad—IV By <i>George Bain Gummings, F.A.I.A.</i>	69	Scholarships and Fellowships	90
Architect Minus Client	74	They Say: <i>Russell Lynes, C. P. Rodacanachi, Norris K. Smith, Howard M. Robertson, F.R.I.B.A., Leonard W. Doob, John R. Fugard</i>	91
News from the Educational Field	75	Panel-Door Design Competition	92
Architects Read and Write: Edgar Williams' Annoyance By <i>Denison B. Hull</i>	76	The Editor's Asides	93
Architecture Defined By <i>George Peter Keleti</i>	77	ILLUSTRATIONS	
Technical Competence and the Professional Man By <i>C. E. Silling, F.A.I.A.</i>	78	Cover, octagonal spot: Water channel bed-stone, Kumatgi, near Bijapur, India. Redrawn from "Bijapur and its Architectural Remains," by Henry Cousens, Bombay, 1916.	
"The Avery Library" By <i>Charles Allan Baratzki</i>	79	Treptower Park, East Berlin, Germany	59, 60
Commodity, Firmness and Delight By <i>"Hubertus Junius"</i>	80	Reginald Davis Johnson, F.A.I.A., 1882-1952	85
		Walter Andrews Taylor, A.I.A., Director, Department of Education and Research	86

The *Journal of The American Institute of Architects*, official organ of The Institute, is published monthly at The Octagon, 1735 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Editor: Henry H. Saylor, F.A.I.A. Subscriptions in the Americas, U. S. possessions and Philippines, \$3 a year in advance; elsewhere, \$4 a year. Single copies 35c. Copyright, 1953, by The American Institute of Architects. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1929, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879.



Granite

Fine colored granites from producing quarries of worldwide reputation now offer the designer a wider range of colored stocks than have been commercially within reach in the past. The distinguished roster of domestic Fletcher granites, widely used and admired, have been supplemented with imported granites of rare beauty from Canada, South America, Europe and Africa.* Surprising economy is possible by specifying Fletcher Granite Veneer. Domestic sheets may be ordered in sizes up to 12 feet by 8 feet and in imported stocks in sheets up to 6 feet by 3 feet. Optimum economic thickness for either veneer is 1 1/2 inches. Fletcher consultants will be pleased to collaborate in the solution of any problems incident to the use of granite.

*Our Bulletin No. 8, COLOR IN GRANITE, illustrating 17 imported and domestic granites in full natural color, available on request.



H · E · F L E T C H E R C O M P A N Y
WEST CHELMSFORD, MASSACHUSETTS · 104 EAST 40TH STREET, NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

"Plagiarism and Originality" (Ch. V, "Parallel-Hunting," pp. 51-61, especially what Lindsey describes as its "vices," pp. 60-61).

11. *Legally, similarity is not sufficient to brand anyone as a plagiarist.*

12. Trying to reinforce his earlier, untenable allegation that I had plagiarized an *unpublished* manuscript, the critic inconsistently quoted a *published* source!

13. Mr. Van Derpool mentions "writings." Where are his *signed*, printed writings on Avery?

14. He misleadingly implies

COMMODITY, FIRMINESS AND DELIGHT

By "HUBERTUS JUNIUS"

SENOR Raul J. Alvarez, Honorary Corresponding member of The American Institute of Architects, from the gracious city of Buenos Aires, has seen fit to challenge my definition of Architecture.

Of course, the good Senor does not understand that the pronouncements of elder statesmen are supposed to remain unchallenged. How else can we retain our profundity?

We, of course, erred in failing to recognize the need to include "economy" in our definition. This has happened time and time again in our practice, and we really

FEBRUARY, 1953

80

faculties may be said to vary enormously from person to person, to which fact we no doubt owe a large percent of our growing population.

On the other hand, Senor, delight is an experience in which our critical faculties operate without the guiding judgment of the mind. The heart experiences a lift of



Reginald Davis Johnson, F.A.I.A.

1882 - 1952

MOST ARCHITECTS over forty-five years of age today have passed through a major change in their architectural philosophy. Few changes have been as dramatic as that which transformed Reginald Johnson at the age of fifty-three, when he appeared to have reached the zenith of a distinguished career. Most important in social content, orientation, and action as a citizen, his change was unique among architects of my acquaintance.

We first met in the summer of 1932 when I was an "itinerant draftsman" seeking employment. He conducted a substantial practice even during the depths of the depression. His distinguished work had been accorded national recognition for years. Many architects in Los Angeles had worked in his office. Two outstanding leaders of the profession, Gordon Kaufmann and Roland Coate, had been in partnership with him. During an age of eclectic architecture in a region where monstrosities were the rule, he employed his superb taste and skillful critical judgment to produce lavish but restrained houses which raised the standard of residential architecture generally.

He had served as President of the Southern California Chapter and had been elected a Fellow of The Institute.

After accepting the commission for the Santa Barbara Post Office, he announced his withdrawal from

JOURNAL OF THE A. I. A.

81

general architectural practice in 1934. He had won all the honors to which most professional men aspire. He felt that this was the end of a satisfying professional life, but, in the end, he found a new beginning. He grew young.

His "withdrawal" gave him an opportunity to think, to look back and, more important, to look ahead. Early in 1935, he was suddenly reborn architecturally. His "conversion" occurred at about the same time as that of his good friend Sumner Spaulding, fellow alumnus of M.I.T., and this fact brought them close together. From this time on, I had the privilege of knowing both of them well. Both instances had a certain content of religious enthusiasm and ecstasy, yet they were different in orientation. Although they both for the first time admired the designs of Richard Neutra, for instance, Sumner's change was more abstract and was oriented directly toward objective order and design. Much more important in Reg's development was his association and long friendship with Clarence Stein, whose warm humanity and philosophy offered Reg a high purpose to suit his own stature. For the first time, Reg saw people in architecture, and

FEBRUARY, 1953

82

with reading, he personally investigated local conditions. He took others to see the slums. Although public speaking came hard to him, he spoke frequently in public with great dignity and integrity, unafraid of criticism. With steadfast conviction, he provided leadership and inspiration in the never-ending battle to clear slums and provide housing for people at the opposite end of the economic scale from his former clients. He took a significant part in establishing the first program of thirty-five hundred low-rent dwellings for Los Angeles, as well as in all subsequent political campaigns in the housing field. He was one of the founders of the Los Angeles Citizens' Housing Council and, during the last fifteen years of his life, was constantly an officer of local, state and national citizens' housing organizations. During this period, in association with other architects, he made notable contributions in the field of large-scale housing. He served as Chief Architect for Harbor Hills and as Coordinating Architect for Rancho San Pedro, both public housing projects in the Los Angeles area. He was active during the last few years as Consultant to the Housing Authority.

He was also Managing Architect for Baldwin Hills Village, a private rental project which won a Distinguished Honor Award in the 1946 Southern California Chapter competition of work completed during the previous ten years. This project, appraised by Lewis Mumford as one of four milestones in urban design, was selected by the Museum of Modern Art as one of forty-seven important architectural works completed in the twelve years prior to 1945 in the United States. He worked tirelessly with rare dedication, not only during the seven years from inception to completion of the project, but during succeeding years as a member of the Board of Trustees and as a tenant-citizen. He lived in the Village for a year in order that he might learn the tenants' problems and help the Villagers construct the social life of their new community. He helped organize the life of the Village itself. Initiation of a nursery school, square-dance group, lending library, and a tenant organization occupied his attention. He experienced at first hand the serene island he had helped to create in the chaos of the city, and took an active part in bringing it to life.

In the construction of his own home in 1947, he created a splendid

JOURNAL OF THE A. I. A.

83

but simple example of contemporary design which seems to have captured the spirit and the soul of the man. Divorced in form from his past work, it shows the unerring taste and painstaking attention to detail characteristic of all his residences. With his own self as client, he had the freedom to be himself and experiment happily with his new concept of design.

Like other architects, Reginald

Johnson leaves part of his life in the buildings he designed. Their simple dignity and integrity are symbols of his own qualities as a man. Less perishable than buildings in his case, however, is the part of his existence he devoted, with telling effect, to the people and their struggle for better homes, which remains a subtle tribute to a man who found himself.

ROBERT E. ALEXANDER

Calendar

February 12-14: Annual meeting of the Church Architectural Guild of America with exhibition of recently completed church projects. Hotel Statler, Washington, D. C.

February 14-19: National Convention of American Association of School Administrators, Atlantic City, N. J.

March 4-6: Spring meeting of the A.I.A. Board of Directors, The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

March 23-April 4: York Course on Protection and Repair of Ancient Buildings. Details from Secretary, York Civic Trust, St. Anthony's Hall, Peaseholme Green, York, England.

April 9-11: Second Regional Conference, Western Mountain District, A.I.A., Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, Colo.

April 23-25: Annual Assembly of Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Royal York Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

April 25-May 2: Historic Garden Week in Virginia.

April 27-May 8: British Industries Fair, London and Birmingham, England. Further information from British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y.

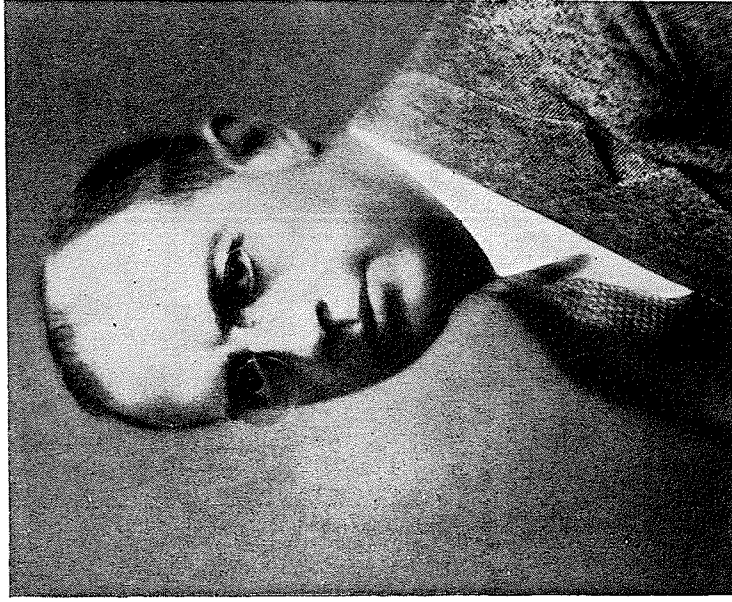
May 25-30: Eighth International Hospital Congress, Church House, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, England.

June 9-12: 4th National Store Modernization Building and Maintenance Show, Madison Square Garden, New York, N. Y.

June 10-13: British Architects' Conference, Canterbury and Folkestone, with the South Eastern Society of Architects celebrating their Silver Jubilee. A.I.A. visitors welcome. Details from C. D. Spragg, R.I.B.A. Secretary, 66 Portland Place, London W. 1.

June 10-13: Annual meeting of the A.I.A. Board of Directors, Olympic Hotel, Seattle, Wash.

June 15-19: 85th Convention, A.I.A. Olympic Hotel, Seattle, Wash.



REGINALD DAVIS JOHNSON, F.A.I.A.
1882-1952