

# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

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# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

This is its working capital. It has also received \$1.00 for each plan sold by any of the divisions of the Bureau. This constitutes its income. The officers of the United States Bureau are and have been for five years working without any salary, and, in but a very few instances, without having any traveling expenses whatsoever paid; the stenographic work has been carried out in their own offices by their own office force, the United States Bureau paying merely such things as postage, stationery, telegrams, and such incidentals. There has been no charge for office rent.

With the divisions the matter is somewhat different, and conditions vary in each one. The Northwestern Division, which is the most prosperous, and which is doing by far the largest business of all of the Divisions, has been unable to pay back to its members any of the money invested in the Bureau; it has not even been able to pay a dividend on the capital stock issued. The Northwestern Division and the Mountain Division have maintained salaried directors of publicity and sales, and these salaries are small. I think it safe to say that with the exception of the stenographers, draftsmen and clerks, the salaries paid have been ridiculously small, and only the loyal support of the men and their belief in what the future of the Bureau means to the architectural profession has kept them going.

The above shows that the United States Bureau is practically without funds to carry on its work. How then could it carry on the enormous publicity program, provide the Home Clinic to the various newspapers, who take it throughout the country, publish the *Small Home*, a monthly magazine that is now rapidly becoming successful, on, so to speak, a shoestring?

In the early days of the Bureau movement Mr. Maurice I. Flagg, who was employed by the Northwestern Division to carry out its sales work, conceived the idea of a monthly magazine and of a building clinic in the newspapers of the country. It was immediately established that a local office, situated in Minneapolis, or New York, or San Francisco, would not interest the public at large or the newspapers or the magazines. Only a great national program could interest these. Seeing the possibilities for the proper publicity of first—architecture; second—the architect; third—The American Institute of Architects; fourth—the Small House Service Bureau movement, the United States Bureau applied to the Board of Directors of the Institute for permission to publish a monthly magazine and a clinic in the newspapers and this permission was accorded to them, and approval was set upon this permission at the next Convention. The United States Bureau then, having no funds, stated to the Northwestern Division that if it, as it had stated, had the courage and the belief that these things could be made successful, then the United States Bureau would turn over to the Northwestern Division the actual handling of these matters, under the direction of Mr. Flagg, the Northwestern Division to assume all expenses and in return to receive all the income, the only proviso being that the Clinic and the *Small Home* should be absolutely national in scope and in operation. This has been carried out so successfully that Mr. Flagg now devotes his entire time to the publicity work of the United States Bureau at a salary that is small compared with the salaries of any other similar proposition in the United States. He has been appointed by the United States Bureau as its official "Director of Service"; Mr. Robert Taylor Jones, A.I.A., has been appointed by the United States Bureau as its official "Technical Director" and he answers the various questions that come to the Bureau and is in charge of the policy of the United States Bureau and so of the various Divisions. Mr. Jones gives all of his time during

the summer and part of his time during the winter to this work and is recompensed therefor at an absurdly small salary.

Perhaps I should repeat once more the fact that the Small House Service Bureau, both the United States Bureau and the Divisional Bureau, are duly incorporated and in their articles of incorporation have limited the returns to the investors to an 8% dividend; in other words, they are limited dividend corporations and are, therefore, practically "non-profit making." Since neither the Bureau nor any of the Divisions have ever declared a dividend, or repaid to any of their members any money invested in the different corporations, they are actually "non-profit making."

In regard to the various complaints as to plans that do not meet with certain special housing laws, I merely ask any architect to ask himself whether he has had any difficulty with differing housing laws. All the plans can be easily adapted to meet local conditions.

If anyone has ever made a statement that the Bureau was "a branch of the American Institute of Architects" it is without the knowledge, or the authority, or the consent of any of the Bureaus or of the Institute. The Bureau should not be held responsible for sporadic, erroneous statements concerning it.

If the profession could only differentiate between the service which the Small House Service Bureau is striving to render to the public of the United States, and to the architectural profession, and the so-called plan services which are being offered by this, that, and the other commercial organization, the Bureau would be in a position to do thoroughly the job it has set out to do, and surely no one reading through the articles of incorporation should feel that there is any possibility for any individual architect or group of architects to indulge in the aggrandizement of their own personal finances.

EDWIN H. BROWN, *President,*  
*Architects Small House Service Bureau*  
*of the United States, Inc.*

## Obituary

### Peter Bonnett Wight

Elected to Fellowship in the Institute in 1866  
Died at Pasadena, Calif., 8 September, 1925

Peter Bonnett Wight, student of art and life, builder and designer, early a Fellow, and for many years a secretary of the American Institute of Architects, passed away at his home at the advanced age of eighty-seven years.

With his civic- and social-mindedness, Mr. Wight became, and continued to be, a factor in the architectural life of Chicago, in which city he passed the greater part of his professional career.

Mr. Wight's contributions to the professional literature were many, varied, and instructive. His history of the CHICAGO CHAPTER of the Institute teems with interest and will long keep his memory green in the hearts of its members, his friends to whom, as to all, he gave himself without stint.

In the passing of Peter B. Wight the Chapter and the profession have lost a vital force for good, a companionable and friendly spirit.

IRVING K. POND.  
ARTHUR WOLTERS DORF.