A TEI Project

Interview of Robert Field

Contents

1. Transcript

1.1. CHAPTER I: FAMILY BACKGROUND, EDUCATION, AND EARLY EMPLOYMENT

I recently received a call from Mr. Donald Schippers of UCLA, requesting an interview related to architecture of the recent past in Los Angeles. During this interview I found myself muttering about my childhood and, under questioning, confessed with misgivings.

From information received, I discovered that I arrived noisily on June 14, 1902, an only child, which turned out to be a mistake. My sympathy to all children without brothers and sisters. My parents, I discovered soon after arriving in the world, were Salvation Army officers, dedicated to their religion and helping the unfortunate.

My father's work required some traveling out of Chicago where he was stationed, and it was on one of these trips, sitting near a broken window, that he took a cold that soon

developed into pneumonia and, in turn, that resulted in his death. This occurred when I was four years of age.

After recovering from the shock of my father's death my mother continued her work in the Salvation Army and was appointed to a station or corps in Sacramento. From Sacramento, we were sent to San Francisco, where my mother was in charge of the work on the Barbary Coast. While there, President Theodore Roosevelt's Great White Fleet visited the city, and I remember viewing the great white ship with awe. In my memory remains the sight of the twisted steel frames and rabble of many of the buildings destroyed in the 1906 quake. After three years, much remained to be cleared.

As it was the policy of the Salvation Army of that period, officers were moved from place to place as frequently as every year or less. The end result was that I attended grade schools in Los Angeles, Long Beach, Pasadena, Santa Barbara, Pacific Grove, Seattle, Spokane, and Riverside, never long enough to make lasting friends and, as the "Army," at that time, was not held in high esteem, I was subject to much ridicule and hazing that became increasingly more difficult to bear.

The Army people were considered the radicals of the religious faiths, what with their uniforms, open-air meetings and parades, sometimes with drunks along, which made, in many minds, a ridiculous demonstration. These people were and are today dedicated to their work and, as an Advisory Board member now, I'm proud of them. At the time to which I refer, they were strict: all sin was of the devil, and this included not only drinking, but smoking, dancing, movies, games played on the Sabbath—to mention a few.

As the son of an Army officer, I was further burdened with the task of being an example to the other kids. This was not only tough, but resulted in a bloodied nose on many an occasion.

Being a "loner" meant, during these years, making up many of my own games to amuse myself. As I grew, drawing became my favorite pastime, especially boats and trains. Much of my trouble in the many schools I attended was due to drawing in class rather than listening and paying attention to my studies.

One of the experiences I remember and neglected to mention earlier was being on the scene of the Los Angeles Times Building explosion about an hour after it happened. My mother took me to see the ruins.

After all the many grammar schools I attended, and due to my mother's work allowing years rather than months in her appointments or stations, I was able to attend Manual

Arts High School, for which I was grateful. My years there were the first that permitted me to feel a part of the student body and the security that I had previously missed due to repeated moves. I not only was elected to the presidency of a number of student clubs, but was an officer of our senior class and a captain of my own company in the ROTC. During this period, I participated in a review before General John Pershing, our World War I commander.

While at Manual, and as I enjoyed drawing, I took the course in Mechanical Drawing, with Mr. Scott Quinton, a registered architect, as my instructor. It wasn't long before he noticed my work and, in due course, moved my board into his office at school end gave personal attention to my work. He departed from the routine program and started me off in planning, detailing, and designing houses and small buildings. From time to time, he would bring me actual jobs. They were small, as is to be expected, but the money I made decided me for architecture as a career. Today there are a number of successful architects whom he encouraged and helped to get a start in our profession. My partner, Charles E. Fry, also of Manual, received the same aid and start in architecture from "Scotty." He was quite a guy.

In June 1921, I was fortunate to get a job as office boy in the firm of Marston and Van Pelt, architects in Pasadena. Although the so-called "boom era" of the twenties had not yet started and jobs were scarce, Marston and Van Pelt were extremely successful in their practice, designing fine large residences in the elite Oak Knoll and Orange Grove areas. Most of the men (there were about ten) were graduates of the School of Architecture of the University of Michigan. The majority of the senior men in the firm were excellent draftsmen; their drawings were works of art of which they were proud. In those days, skill in drawing, line values and sharpness of detail was important. The result was that my training there made me conscious of the importance of drafting skills as well as the need for extensive training in the art of construction as well as design.

In that era, practically every detail of a structure was "full-sized" and drawn on heavy wrapping paper. Sometimes these drawings were eight to ten feet in length and not infrequently seven to eight feet in width. Since large blueprinting machines were not yet available, it was the job of the office boy to make three tracings of each detail and, under the scrutiny of these men, skill in tracing their work as well as intensive training in lettering was mandatory. At this time, skill in the art of draftsmanship was most important.

Marston and Van Pelt employed a number of the finest draftsmen I've known and, as a result, I was drilled, corrected, browbeaten, and supervised continually in an effort to make me a reasonable facsimile of a draftsman as I attempted to emulate the excellence of their lettering and line value. I learned the hard way, but finer training

for a starting draftsman never existed, and I only wish young men now could be trained to give them an understanding of drafting skills and excellence. But this background had its effect to the extent that in my own work and that of our men, I've become rather demanding in the quality of our work.

In 1922, I became a member of the Los Angeles Architectural Club, which was sponsored in great part by the Rapid Blue Print Company. At their place of business, they provided drafting space for a number of men, which gave us a suitable place to meet, discuss architecture and the arts, and to discuss and argue the profession that we served.

The club was a branch of the Beaux-Arts Internationale which provided the problems from which we designed buildings of all types. These competitive drawings were sent east and judged by a competent jury. Winning or placing in this competition, which incidentally was an integral part of college curriculums of that time, was a high honor and often led to scholarships in Europe. This was my basic training in architecture and, although we frequently worked all night, a close friendship and camaraderie resulted which, unfortunately, has been lost in great measure.

The time of my start in an architectural office in 1921 was also the commencement of the "boom era" of the twenties. In addition to the great houses built in Pasadena and Santa Barbara, commercial work expanded and the building explosion was underway. Sports of all kinds became a large part of our national life, bootleggers prospered, night spots grew in demand, and Income tax was about two percent of one's take. It turned out to be a wild and woolly period in our history and our profession reached unheard-of new heights in the adequacy of big work.

In about this time, while still a very young junior draftsman, I was temporarily employed indirectly by the office of Bertram Goodhue to work on a large mansion for the Lloyd Smiths. It was later built at Lloyd's Neck, Long Island. This "tepee" only had twenty guest rooms, in addition to the owner's suite, twenty servants' rooms, twenty-five fireplaces, and a garage for twenty or more cars of that vintage. It was a thrilling experience for a kid just out of high school. At this time, the wealthy entertained lavishly, not only at parties fit for a king, but expected their guests to stay a week or so.

Incidentally, for a number of years during the twenties, I continued my studies in the beaux-arts program. I never was in the class of the winners, but the experience I achieved in designing in the Classic, Gothic, Romanesque, and the other styles prevalent and popular at that time has proven of inestimable value in the following years of maturing in the knowledge of our profession.

The years of the "Golden Twenties," and the "Flaming Youth Era" was an exciting experience. Everyone that could afford the luxury had his own personal bootlegger. This was the correct way to assure a well-rounded social life.

In 1922, during the start of these mad years, one of the top men in the firm of Walker and Eisen somehow got in touch with me and offered me a job in their branch office located at Third and Western Avenue in Los Angeles. At this time I was earning the munificent sum of eighteen dollars per week. The offer of thirty-five dollars per week was so tremendous that I couldn't turn it down, so away I went to make my fortune.

Walker and Eisen, whose partnership was formed in about 1919, immediately became an important element in the rapid growth of Los Angeles as architects for the Strauss Company. Limit-height buildings (twelve stories) began to be churned out in Walker and Eisen's office in 1923, when I was transferred to the main office in downtown Los Angeles. Walker and Eisen had more work on the boards than any firm of that era could possibly handle efficiently. Getting out the work, complete or incomplete was not important; to get the building under construction was all that counted.

As a very junior draftsman I found myself suddenly saddled with work on major projects that normally required an experienced and competent draftsman. The first assignment was to work on the Gaylord Apartment building which, as the days rolled by, seemed to gradually become more and more my responsibility. From this job, I went on to that of the William Penn Hotel in Whittier, then to other sizable projects. I was not only gaining experience and knowledge but assuming more and more responsibility.

At this time, some of the foremost architects in Los Angeles were John and Donald Parkinson; Morgan, Walls and Morgan, who later became Morgan, Walls and Clements, and again, recently, became Stiles and Robert Clements. Curlett and Beelman became a factor in designing notable twelve-story buildings for such financial firms as the Sun Realty Corporation, for whom they designed and planned many notable structures. In due course, Claude Beelman practiced alone and designed, in his later years, such notable buildings as the California Bank and office building, 6th and Spring Streets; the Superior Oil Building, now the Bank of California Building; the Union Bank Building, Wilshire and Vermont; Kirkeby Building, Westwood; and the Tidewater Associated Building on Wilshire at Crenshaw. Those buildings are in addition to many others designed and built in the twenties. During these exciting years, Robert Farquhar, John and Donald Parkinson, and John C. Austin were engaging in the practice of architecture with sizable offices that were extremely busy.

In the early twenties, one of the great impacts made was the building of the Biltmore Hotel with Schultz and Weaver Architects of New York. In addition to the Biltmore, they designed the Jonathan Club and the Hellman Bank. Among the top firms of the twenties, the two most prominent in the field of fine houses were Myron Hunt; and Johnson, Kaufmann and Coate. These two firms designed outstanding residences for the wealthy of that era.

When I was asked to recall the work of Walker and Eisen during their heyday, it turned out that I found myself dictating a rambling exposé of my hectic experience. As I spent two of my early years with that firm, being a small insignificant cog in their operation, it will be necessary to tell of their activities during the years that later found me again in their employ.

During a stint of two years with architect William Ache, my training with him encompassed planning and designing a number of orange-packing plants. At that time the orange industry was at its height and the great groves needed the packing plants for preparing and shipping the golden fruit to the vast markets of the east.

At that time, 1925, I had the urge and felt the need to get experience in one of the large offices. To get additional training and responsibility, it appeared that, if I were lucky, John and Donald B. Parkinson's office would be best, due to the fine work they were engaged in. That made my little mind up for me that this office was my target of the moment.

In calling on them, Mr. Lewis, the chief draftsman, informed me that he would give me the opportunity to show my stuff. At this time, this office was handling work for both Bullock's and the Broadway Department Stores. In addition, Parkinson was handling all the work of the telephone company and many of the branch banks being built at that time, especially branches for the Security Bank.

Parkinson's office, at that time, was on the fourth floor of the Title Insurance Building located at Fifth and Spring Streets. This building later was renamed the Rowan Building. At this time the office was planning the new Title Insurance Building. I was privileged to do a little in the way of interior design; however, a fine designer, Mr. Briney, actually was responsible for what I still believe is one of the finest buildings in Los Angeles.

SCHIPPERS

> You mentioned that some of your experience came by way of the Los Angeles Architectural Club. Explain in more detail how it worked.

FIELD

The program was set up on a national basis as I mentioned. They would send out programs; and to qualify, to become a student, there were certain things you had to do. You were charged for this, of course. A program would come out one month that would call for a Greek temple, for example. They wouldn't say that, but it would be described as a house of worship for a pagan god who lived on top of a hill. They would set up specifications and conduct a program Just like a client would do for an actual building. It might be a church project, or it might be a city hall, or a capitol building, or hotel building. And these programs were printed and went all over the United States—to all the colleges, or to private homes. Most of the time they asked for buildings that were of some magnitude and that represented something that could be built in any country. Of course, it would be up to us to decide whether it should be Mediterranean or Gothic or Normandy or any other style. Then, the senior architects in Los Angeles would come and act as our patrons and critics. We would have our critiques regularly and were given indications of progress, and there was always full information as to how the drawing was to be made and presented, what was expected, and what the type of perspectives were to be. It was a very complete program. Colleges, by the way, all through the United States, followed the same thing. The colleges then used the beaux-arts courses as their curriculum. We had to learn all about all the styles—the Roman, and the various Greek types, Etruscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and the proportions would follow through in all our work. This was, I think, one of the best things that ever happened to me, in fact, to all of us of that era. I was unable to go to college (I could not afford to do it), but I was getting the same education as those who could go because the colleges were carrying on the same program exactly. Of course, very few at that time were able to go on to college. We didn't have the big state university we have today.

SCHIPPERS

Mr. [Gus] Kalionzes said that he felt you were one of the few people left who could still design a building in those stypes.

FIELD

I think I am about the only one left. I was one of the younger men at that time, so I'm one of the few who could still Bit down and do a Gothic church or

Italian villa or a Normandy cottage or a Tudor building. None of our boys today can do that, you see, because practically all their training is in contemporary architecture which is rather loose in concept and gives a great latitude. There are not any particular rules in contemporary architecture like the rules that were established for styles. I was fortunate to have been trained in styles, but, of course, I switched into the contemporary early because of the changing of the times in the mid-twenties.

SCHIPPERS

What special skills did the classic designs call for that you would say are not common now?

FIELD

Well, all the styles have very definite rules of design, and those rules were established by the limitations of building materials in those particular eras in other words, the architects of those various eras had to use the materials that they had available in those various countries. The design was established by the weather conditions, their criteria, their rules of procedure, and their evaluation of what was good and bad in those styles. We have followed what they established all these years. In other words, I wouldn't say that gave a copying effect, but we had appearance to go on that gave us the knowledge we have. Of course the classic designs are entirely mathematical in their proportions.

SCHIPPERS

They are entirely prescribed.

FIELD

Yes. Prescribed. The height and diameter of the dome, the entablature, and all these things are done by mathematical formulae.

SCHIPPERS

But there were liberties in adapting classical designs to high-rise buildings.

FIELD

Oh heck, we thought nothing of having a twelve-story, straight building in Gothic or Italian or something like that with a cornice and whatever else was

required. It was taking a lot of liberty with design, but it was done because there was no such thing as Contemporary then. Nobody would think twice of building a building with a cornice hanging up on top, no matter how high it was. If we had designed the boxes we have today in those days, the design would have been thrown right out the window. People wouldn't accept those things.

SCHIPPERS

You mean the architects, clients, or the general public?

FIELD

Well, I think architecture is an art and a science that actually trains and conditions people. We in architecture can't go so fast in our concepts that they go beyond the understanding of the public. It is a slow procedure of training. Each year we do new things that wouldn't have been accepted twenty-five years ago, but today they are accepted. People now are more fluid in their thinking—more open. Example: the use of color today. Years ago, if we had painted anything else in the interior than green or tan, we would have been thrown out. They wouldn't accept it. Today we go into a room and we'll paint it three or four colors. You might have a purple wall on one side and white on the other three walls. Purple, black and orange and all the colors in the world are accepted and understood now. People are open in all these things. I like the fresh thinking. In fact, now the problem is to keep from going too fast, because presently, the sky is the limit. Unfortunately, as a result, I think we're building a lot of monstrosities. Ten years from now, we'll look back on some of these strange forms that we're doing and think about why in the world we ever did them, but that's the way the whole world is going.

1.2. CHAPTER II: ARCHITECT IN THE TWENTIES AND THIRTIES

Following my office experience with Marston-Van Pelt in Pasadena, I went to the firm of Walker and Eisen for the first time, where I was put in charge of their office and design work. That was in 1922-23. At that time, the big boom was starting. We had so many buildings to do that they wouldn't even look at anything under a million dollars. But, it was a very interesting period.

At that time, they were just getting rolling and they came up awfully fast.

They moved from a very small operation to the biggest out here. I wouldn't say that was done overnight, but it was in a very short time. They had the biggest organization in the city, and when I was in charge of the office there, I had fifty draftsmen. At that time, Parkinson had eighteen men. Today, of course, firms like Becket's have over two hundred draftsmen; but, in those days, fifty was a large organization.

SCHIPPERS

Do you know anything about Walker's background?

FIELD

No. I know a little more about Eisen's background, because Eisen's father was also an architect. He did the original courthouse in Los Angeles. Eisen's grandfather was also an architect. Walker never told me much about his background, although I was very close to him. We used to travel together quite a bit in connection with our work.

SCHIPPERS

Would you describe Walker as a very sensitive man then?

FIELD

Extremely sensitive. He was a very brilliant man, by the way. He could anticipate things long before they happened. It's amazing how often he was right. It was a privilege to watch him work. He was quite a whiz on costs and anticipating problems. He would inform the owner so that everyone had a full understanding of the whole problem early in the game. Oftentimes, without that understanding, trouble can ensue later. But because of Walker's insight, practically all the jobs were well received by the clients and things worked out splendidly. At the time I first went to work for them, I was working on buildings like the Gaylord apartment house. In fact, Walker and Eisen in those years had the big bulk of the work in the city. They had just gone mad; and, as I said, they had a big organization by the standards of those years.

SCHIPPERS

You must have been quite talented because I understand that they hired only the very best designers.

FIELD

Well, I guess I was a pretty good draftsman. I don't know. Looking back, now, I was responsible for work I would no more think of giving to a young man today than I would fly. Of course, during that period, X wouldn't say the architecture was particularly good. In fact, it wasn't. We were wrapping up buildings too fast since speculative building was becoming popular. Strauss and others who were the big building corporations would build one to finance the next, all on a shoestring, of course. The stock market was going up the same way. Everything was going mad. That was the order of the day. We put drawings out, and they would start building before the drawings were finished. But this had to be, because that was the time. As I've mentioned, the "Golden Twenties" and the "Flaming Youth" era, which I went through, was quite something. We had our own bootleggers, and we were going to our own cocktail parties and everything else. We'd wind up next morning with large heads, but it was part of growing up. Of course, having a bootlegger in those days was quite the popular thing to do. You weren't in the swim if you didn't. That was considered the thing. In '25, I went to work for John and Donald Parkinson, who, at that time, were probably considered to have the finest firm out here. Of course, San Francisco also had some outstanding architects who did magnificent work. There was Brown (I've forgotten the rest of the name of that firm) and John Willis Polk and some other architects up there who were doing magnificent work. They were the same architects who had been responsible for the San Francisco World's Fair in 1915 and they were still active in the twenties. I believe, really, that the San Francisco architects of that era were better than those we had down here. They had bigger commissions and their buildings were larger because they had more money to work with. They were more experienced. Of course, that has changed today, but that was true during that twenty-year period from 1910 through the twenties. When I was with the Parkinsons... I won't use the word ambitious... well, yes, I was. Everything was geared to go forward. While I was there, I got married and, about two years later, the first child appeared—later on, the second. Of course, my worry then was not only for myself. I had a family to support and it created pleasurable burdens, which were fine; and I was, apparently, doing awfully well.

SCHIPPERS

What kind of salary were you getting?

FIELD

At Parkinson's office, as far as I know, I was one of the highest-paid workers in the office. I got seventy-five dollars a week. Now, when I started out with Marston and Van Pelt in '21, I got fourteen dollars a week. That was considered good pay for the office boys. When I went to Walker and Eisen, I had a terrific jump from sixteen (I got a raise while at Marston and Van Pelt) to thirty-five dollars a week. Then, I was in the money. You could really live well on that. But that seventy-five dollars a week at Parkinson's represented about tops in Los Angeles. That was as much as any of the top designers were getting. They also provided a bonus each year, which, as I recall, was $150 to $175. We were just as wealthy as anybody ever could be. Of course, we had no income tax. I think we paid one or two percent across the board. We didn't have to fill out all the form and there was no withholding. Our dollar, of course, went a long way. I saved enough money at that time to buy a new Pierce-Arrow and was the proudest person you ever saw. It was during my stay at Parkinson's that I wanted to break away from styles. I was like so many young men today. You're never satisfied with what other architects do. You can do much better. I had the same impulses. What they were doing was outmoded, old-fashioned, Let's do something new. Well, the first chance I had was when Bullock's (Parkinson had long been the architects for Bullock's) wanted to build a store out on Wilshire Boulevard, At that time, this property was owned by Mr. Bullock himself: and, every year he put a Christmas tree out there on the corner. Well, the new store was to be a specialty store, and there were no stores out there then. It isn't far out by our present idea of distance or time. In fact, today it's right in town, basically. But, at that time, it was quite a gamble to build out there. Someone. had the idea that would be a smart thing to do since Beverly Hills was then beginning to develop. Up to the twenties, Beverly Hills was nothing more than an outpost. You might see a few homes, but by the beginning of the twenties, when the motion picture industry began to become big and the actresses walked down the streets with their Russian wolfhounds and their cigarettes in long holders and their hobble skirts and things like that, why, Beverly Hills became the showplace and so the money people were beginning to move into the Beverly Hills area. So they felt that the new Bullock's store, at that time, would provide a way of hitting these wealthy people with specialized deals. Well, instead of giving the contract to Parkinson, they had decided to have a competition. They invited seven firms

to submit designs, but none of the firms knew that the other firms were in the picture. Parkinson thought it was his job until, one day, it all came out. One day before that happened, John Parkinson came up to me in the office. He was a very interesting Englishman, a very dignified man, and he used to come around the office wearing a skull cap. He had a pointed Van Dyke beard and a mustache and was English from the word "go." He would even go back to England every year for a visit. He conducted a very dignified office in the English manner. Here I was, the junior of the office (practically everybody else was my senior by ten or fifteen years or more), and Mr. Parkinson came in and addressed me as "Mr. Field." Oh, that was quite a thrill. Here I was the kid in the office—the wild Indian creating upsets and everything else. During the time I was there, that kind of thing was unusual at Parkinson's office. But, in this situation, he didn't know what to do, and nobody else had any knowledge of what they were talking about, so he came to me one day and said, "Mr. Field, this is the situation. Bullock's wants a store. They don't want anything that has been done before," He was out of sympathy with the new trend. By the way, what started the main breakaway from the styles was the big expedition that was held in Paris in 1925. At the time of this exhibition or exposition, the board of directors insisted that no forms ever used in architecture before should be repeated. Everything had to be new. Complete new approach to building design, everything. Throw away the books. Come up with something, anything, that was new. The end result was that a lot of strange buildings that nobody else could figure out were built there. Probably the most beautiful thing was the metal work—the bronze grills, gates, and all those things that were developed then. But it did do this. It probably affected everybody all over the world, and they began looking at architecture with a different viewpoint. It was a complete breakaway. Well, nobody in this country had ever broken away in that manner. There had been departures, of course. Frank Lloyd Wright has always created a trend of his own. One was started by Louis Sullivan, but still their buildings were recognizable as buildings and certain of their forms were approved and accepted. But this fair created a new deal which was right up my alley. I thought this was wonderful. Well, as a result of this, Mr. Parkinson asked me to make a sketch. I started to design a building I thought I would like to see, and it looked like a box by standards then, but that was the trend. It looked exactly like a box, but it was what I wanted. Everything was vertical. There were vertical columns and everything

else, but there was lots of glass and it was rather massive. It won the competition, and won the Bullock's Wilshire job for the firm. Mind you, I was only twenty-four years old. Imagine a kid twenty-four years old designing at all today. Can you imagine that? Yet, here I was a precocious twenty-four-year-old kid designing a building which would cost two and a half million dollars. By today's market, it would cost twelve million. I also was the one that introduced the small show windows. The very small display window was a new idea. The idea was to put one figurine in the window rather than have a whole lot of things in big windows. Before Bullock's Wilshire was built, every department store, no matter how fine a building it was or how exclusive, still had glass all around the first floor. Everything they carried was shown in the window. It didn't make any difference whether it was a first-class store or just a discount house or anything else. It was the way to do it. I told them I wanted to have small windows and got them. By today's standards, they're large, but, then, they seemed like practically no windows at all. Instead of changing displays every week, they would change displays every night, with one manikin or figure in each window. So, everyday, when people drove by they'd see a different figure there. Also, I was responsible for another innovation there. Instead of having a big department store with big open spaces, I proposed to them that we divide the building into rooms. This would be so that if you want into one room where they sold jewelry, the room would be designed for the items sold there. That way there wouldn't be refrigerators next to fur coats or anything like that. You would go from room to room, salon to salon, and every room was to be designed to feature the type of merchandise in that room. If you'd go into the rooms where furs were, you wouldn't find furs on display; they'd bring them to you. The theory in back of that was that if a person could afford $1,500 for a fur coat, you wouldn't have $5,000 fur coats sitting around because that could lose a sale. So, they brought in fur coats or stoles or anything else that was within the buying power of the purchaser. The idea was put into effect throughout the whole store. Unfortunately, I didn't do the design work for the rooms. But they got so interested in it, they employed Jock Peters and Joe Feil who, at that time, were going great guns on contemporary architecture. But, nevertheless, the basic thinking was mine. I did the whole building, but when it came to the interiors, this was their job. I still look at Bullock's with fondness even after these many years. Incidentally, Parkinson wanted me to get my license right

away. He was president of the Board of Architect Examiners, and he wanted me to get my license right then I said, "Hell no," I didn't want the license yet. I wasn't ready for it.

SCHIPPERS

What about the tower on Bullock's?

FIELD

The tower came out of the fact that the building was designed to have twelve stories, but they cut that down to the size that they needed at the time. The idea was that, eventually, they would build upward and that the tower would be lost in the center of the building. Of course, since then, because of the earthquake, new building rules and conditions were created, so they can't build to the height they planned anymore because the structure wouldn't take it. So the tower stays. But the tower is purely happenstance. I wanted something that would go skyward, would grow up, and have interesting color combinations. I had a hell of a time selling that tower because only churches and railroad stations were supposed to have towers. I finally sold them on the tower, of course, and they never regretted that because it is a landmark. I used that as an argument for why they should have a tower even though it was a department store or specialty store. Well, nothing was changed from my original design. They made some additions to it, but even the additions they made to the building vertically haven't changed the basic appearance of the building. I wouldn't design a department store today like that, but that was my idea then. Of course, the use of copper was also new. I felt copper was a material that would do a fine job and the aging copper has turned out to be very interesting on that building. Anyway, I was one of the few who ever quit Parkinson. I was there long enough and I felt I wanted to make a change. So, I went back to Walker and Eisen for two years just before they ran out of work in '29, just prior to the crash. I think the crash occurred in March of '29. Just before, I had gone to Morgan, Walls and Clements, who had been trying to get me over there for some time, and while I was with them, I worked on a number of buildings. Then the crash came. Before the crash, I had built an apartment house out in the area near Carthay Circle Theater. The Carthay Circle Theater was build around '26, and that was way out of course. That was part of that development and they were trying to get homes and buildings out

there. So, I bought a lot and built this apartment house. Well, I had a seven percent loan and when the crash came the building was about half paid for. Then, the tenants moved out, and I was stuck with it. Finally, Morgan, Walls and Clements had to let all of us go except about two men. Then, I had no work. I lost the building. I lost everything I had in the world. I lost my car and everything else. I had two small children and a wife to support, and the next three years were years I don't like to remember. I wasn't proud though, I had to work. I drove laundry trucks. I did everything. We managed to survive those years, and those were years I wouldn't wish anybody go through. Those in our profession who were able to stay on were very fortunate, because they didn't take the loss that some of the rest of us did. But I was too young, and I had big things to do, and I couldn't stay with one firm. I didn't want to expose them to my genius for too long a time.

SCHIPPERS

When you look back on your days with Walker and Eisen, and at Parkinson's, would you say that the designs were good?

FIELD

No, we didn't think it was good in those days. Unfortunately, in those days we were in a speculative boom era when they wanted the maximum inch of floor space for every dollar. Architecture as such was secondary. We had to make our buildings almost boxes to get every square inch of rentable area out of them and to sacrifice any utilitarian part of the building for architecture wasn't permitted by the owners.

SCHIPPERS

Who were the owners?

FIELD

Well, the owners, basically, in those days I would say were firms such as Strauss, who was going through a big building program; and Sun Realty Company, for which Beelman did much work, had the same approach to architecture as the others. There are many others. Most of the larger buildings of that day mere built on speculative paper-finance deals.

SCHIPPERS

Was that eastern money? Fields in the main. We had no western money. All the money came out west, and, until recently, everything out here was from the east. We were still a village going up. Basically, we were a small town.

SCHIPPERS

And the clients controlled the design of the building?

FIELD

The clients controlled the architecture in that they made it impossible for us to come up with the kind of design that we were capable of doing and would like to have done.

SCHIPPERS

At the firm of Walker and Eisen, Walker was most responsible for the design work, wasn't he?

FIELD

I think Walker had a little bit more understanding of design than Percy Eisen, but Percy Eisen was the contact man and organizer and promoter. Walker was really the architect who was basically very much interested in the appearance and design of the building. He would go all out to get the very best that we could possibly do within the budget and the requirements of the owners.

SCHIPPERS

Mr. Kalionzes said that he had a flair for spectacle and that he could give sparkle to a building.

FIELD

Well, yes, but I won't use the word "distinguished," and I hate the word "spectacular." Let's say he wanted a building that had a lot of impact. He was very strong for that. During the years I was designing for them, believe me, I had as free a hand as it was possible to have to get excitement into our buildings that would be good, you know, lasting. Actually, I worked more closely with Walker than with Percy Eisen down through the years, and his understanding of good architecture, and his encouragement was a great help to me. The freedom he gave us was to encourage us to come up with good

architecture. Right from the first time I was with him, that was the thing he wanted us to do—the thing he insisted upon,

SCHIPPERS

Which would you say he was more interested in, the business aspects of the firm or the architectural design work?

FIELD

Well, the first big project that Walker designed was the Baptist Institute.

SCHIPPERS

Yes, with John T. Vawter.

FIELD

That was back in 1913. He was a very young man then, but his interests in the firm right down the line were not as a businessman but as an architect. Wow Eisen was a little different. Eisen was in it as a business. They were different personalities entirely, and as a result, they complemented each other tremendously. That's why they got the tremendous volume of work they did, I'm sure, because, as partners, they worked together and complemented each other's efforts.

SCHIPPERS

For the most, though, they were not really known as pace-setters in building design.

FIELD

No, I wouldn't say they were pace-setters. However, they weren't particularly behind anybody else either. Actually, all of us can only go as far in our design and planning as the client will permit us. And in those years these clients were pretty tough, hard-headed businessmen.

SCHIPPERS

It was the day of the Babbitts, that's for sure.

FIELD

Yes, it was. And, by golly, they would agree it would be nice, but, no, they didn't want it. We were always fighting the dollar, and it's amazing how much Mr. Walker was able to get out of the building and still keep the cost in line with the demands of the client.

SCHIPPERS

Incidentally, how do architects' fees today compare with those in the twenties?

FIELD

They were about the same then as they are now. They haven't varied. The only thing is that where today's costs are higher, actually, the architects were in a position to make more money in those days because we didn't have the governmental restrictions and taxes, and even though the building costs were considerably lower, much lower than today, the architects fared much better than we do today. Also, our costs have risen far more than building costs have risen, so it's a little tighter today. In other words, our business seems quite a bit different. The whole approach is different than it was many years ago,

SCHIPPERS

In the 1920s people were deliberately setting out to make this a big city, weren't they?

FIELD

Yes, deliberately, because we were still a village. But lots of people in southern California had the vision, if you want to call it that, or confidence that one day Los Angeles would develop into quite a city, not only for climatic reasons, but because we had the harbor here. Easterners were very slow in recognizing that we were doing anything else besides fighting Indians here. Even today, a lot of people seem to think we're a little bit behind times, when actually we're way ahead of them. Of course, at that time, as far as our profession was concerned, the topflight architects were in New York and in some of those large eastern cities.

SCHIPPERS

Were there any in San Francisco?

FIELD

No, but there were three or four very fine firms in San Francisco that were doing a fine job; but, even so, at that time the big boys were in the east. Today our western specialty architects are the biggest in the country and even the world. That's how it's changed. But the pattern for what we're benefiting from today was set by the type of architecture that Walker and Eisen and the rest of the firms were doing twenty-five, thirty and forty years ago.

SCHIPPERS

Would you say that the so-called Spanish Renaissance designs during the twenties were restricted almost exclusively to this area?

FIELD

I would say so. Of course, Florida picked it up, but I think that was primarily due to climatic conditions and our Spanish background here in the West. To a degree, Florida had a little of the same type of thing. Spanish design here was kind of a fad of the moment, and, of course, we had a certain amount of so-called Monterey architecture for the houses. Those houses are very attractive, by the way, but we were in a certain surround of architecture that we were recognized as being best suited to do and that was accepted out West here. During the Depression, I did find time to go to USC, and I spent two years going there and taking special courses in basic design and planning. I didn't take all the courses, but I took the things I lacked and I wanted to make up for. At nights, I had free time, so it was a break for me and kept my hand in drawing, too.

SCHIPPERS

Where did you learn the engineering aspect of architecture?

FIELD

My engineering training started in Pasadena when I first went to work. There were very few structural engineers, and no electrical or mechanical engineers. As a result, we artistic men had to learn engineering. We had to work out the beam and column sizes and everything else. Of course, there was no earthquake code so we didn't have to worry about that in those days. We had to learn construction by ourselves and all draftsmen knew construction. Today

very few of them do. They have to depend on engineers. Now, for example, at that time Baker Iron Works would come in and design our steel framework for buildings. There was nothing to that but just a bunch of beams and columns. We'd call up the American Blower Company to come in and design the fans that would be used to move air in the heating system. Our boiler plants were supplied and designed and engineered for us by the boiler manufacturer. Everything that we installed was done by manufacturers' representatives who aided us. That procedure was pretty well standardized everywhere. I think some of the offices had engineers, but the bulk of offices depended entirely on the manufacturers of the various equipment to determine the proper size of that piece of equipment, how it was to be placed, the size of foundation needed, and so on. The engineering was done basically by the steel companies themselves. We had engineers available who would work out wall thicknesses or something like that, but it wasn't like it is today. We are now in a world of specialists. Every time you turn around you have to confer with engineers—corrosion engineers, structural mechanical, civil, everything. We have engineers coming out our ears and under our feet. But that's the way it is because of the complexities of our modem buildings and their needs. Of course, when we designed a specific kind of building in those days, say it was an office building, all the floor plans were exactly the same. All the stores were exactly the same. They were just boxes, maybe twenty feet wide, thirty feet wide, or forty feet wide or other widths. The jewelry store would go in one side, and he'd adjust to it. Next door would go a women's ready-to-wear, a man's shop or a bakery. But they all had to fit into buildings as they were designed. They had to fit their equipment and operation into whatever was provided for them. Today, we design each shop completely different. For a man's haberdashery and men's wear shop, we have to design the whole thing with interesting areas of circulation and beef up the appearance inside the shop for excitement—the ceiling, the lighting, and everything else. In those days, we hung incandescent fixtures on the ceiling, figured two watts per square foot or something like that which was rule of thumb and that was that for the electrical planning. We would throw a switch, and that was all there was to it. We would have maybe eight drawings for a building. Today, for one of the same size, we have maybe one hundred drawings. The buildings are the same size but not the same in complexity. But I think we learned a lot about the engineering side of architecture in those days through that procedure. We

had to know it. There was no other way to do it. Today things are entirely different. Now, the biggest problem for the boys who are in architecture is to learn to be able to adjust their thinking to the structure. They have to learn the structure after they get in most offices, even though they do have a general knowledge of it from college. But to put that knowledge to actual work is a little bit different thing. When they get into actual buildings, they find the bottom of the electrical and mechanical ducts and all those things become a problem. But, in any event, to a certain extent, my background. It was just at the time of the Depression, the crash period, when we became aware of this so-called new approach to design. I think everybody was ready for a new approach. They wanted something that approached our present civilization rather than reflecting past civilizations. I think that's it. Mechanization was just beginning to show, and I think without any kind of a mass movement we all were seeking a new expression that would be typical of our era, instead of trying to revive old eras. I say all of us, not just architects. I mean everyone in the country. I had a desire to create a complete new approach that would make the architecture of our time typical of our time, not only of the way we lived, but typical of the way our civilization was functioning.

SCHIPPERS

Who do you think was important in developing this new design?

FIELD

I think Goodhue had terrific impact, and Paul Cret. Paul Cret was one. of our outstanding architects. He didn't have a very large firm, but he was extremely capable. He did the Shakespeare Library. It was one of his best buildings in Washington, D. C.

SCHIPPERS

How about Wright?

FIELD

Wright, of course, was functioning in that time, but not too well. He was still not paying his bills, and having troubles. Then, he was only doing houses. No, Wright hadn't emerged. As a matter of fact, Wright didn't emerge until

comparatively recently, when he became appreciated for what he had done as an individualist. That has been in the last twenty years, let's say.

SCHIPPERS

So Goodhue and Cret predominated.

FIELD

Yes. Goodhue, I think, probably was one of the greatest of the present-day Gothic architects. He appreciated Gothic and could do it beautifully. Of course, he was an unusual man. You know, every time I read about him, I'm tremendously impressed. He had a tremendous influence on us here in the United States. Actually, I think his design was one of the forerunners of our present-day thinking. I think Wright, of course, had his influence eventually. But Wright's influence wasn't felt at the time you were talking about. Goodhue was in his prime in the twenties.

SCHIPPERS

Yes. The Los Angeles Public Library was built in 1924.

FIELD

Yes, but I wouldn't call it one of his masterpieces. It's all right, but he did much better work in other places in the country.

SCHIPPERS

This new design, however, didn't just spring up from nowhere?

FIELD

No, you don't change that way. You're influenced by certain things that preceded you. You take them and you adjust them. They say there is nothing new under the sun. That's very true, especially in architecture. There's nothing new. What we do, however, is to take known forms, and without realizing it (We don't look at books to do it, this isn't a copying), we are influenced by them. It's like an artist that's gone to a certain school of painting. He won't paint just as the master did, but he has a certain concept and is influenced by that. The same things are true in architecture. We're influenced an awfully lot by these fine men.

SCHIPPERS

What were the elements of style that went into this new design? Are the Sunkist Building and the Farmers Exchange Building that you did representative of the new design?

FIELD

Yes, when I was with Walker and Eisen, I designed both those buildings. You see, in 1934, I went back with Walker and Eisen, and I was with them until 1938. Walker and Eisen, by the way, went broke in the Depression. That was mainly due to the fact that they were involved in so many of these buildings that were built on a speculative operation by Strauss, who in turn went broke. They had paper on these buildings, but that was all, and they were badly hurt. There was nothing unethical about that, but they became so involved in their buildings that when the crash came and the buildings went, they went too, unfortunately. Of course, they stayed in business but it was a hand-to-mouth operation. Then, of course, they came back in a big way again. Walker then was associated with the new firm of Walker, Kalionzes and Klingennan, which is now a continuation of the same firm. Of course, now it's just Kalionzes and Klingennan. When I returned to Walker and Eisen, not only was I in charge of design, but I took charge of the whole office. That was around 1936, when Gus Kalionzes and all these young fellows started out. Today, of course, they are practicing architects and are very successful. The big project that we were developing at that time was the Chino Prison. We were handling that for the state.. We designed it and it was too bad it wasn't built, because it was a fine institution. If the concept had been carried through one hundred percent, it would have been a very fine deal because it was based on a little more enlightened approach in planning.

SCHIPPERS

Minimum security?

FIELD

Yes. In fact we had three securities. We had the maximum, medium, and the minimum security. But it was a wonderful concept.

SCHIPPERS

It was Walker's idea, wasn't it?

FIELD

It was Walker's idea. The whole thing was his idea. I merely carried out his thinking in the actual concept of the various buildings. Unfortunately, we got into a political problem. It was too bad, because that prison would have gone down as one of the finest institutions at the time in the world because it was so far ahead of everything else. The wardens at Folsom and San Quentin both agreed that it would be the outstanding penitentiary of the world because of its enlightened approach to the handling of the inmates.

SCHIPPERS

But some of the original plans were used at Chino.

FIELD

Some of the original plans were used, but they didn't carry it on through. That was the unfortunate part about it, because they didn't go far enough with the whole concept. All the drawings were finished. Everything was all done. It would have been an amazing thing if they had followed it through. We're talking about 1936-37. I still have some of the drawings. It was a magnificent job of planning, but the concept was even greater.

SCHIPPERS

And the design of the Sunkist and Farmer's Exchange Buildings was also considered very advanced.

FIELD

They were just part of the new look at the time we were emerging from the stylistic era. Those were two of the early buildings. They were among the first steps taken in forming new concepts. We were feeling our way. Today, for example, we have a yardstick for evaluating contemporary architecture. Everybody can look at a modern building and say it's good or it's bad, because he's got enough background of seeing these buildings to look at it and evaluate it. Of course, if there's anything against our new buildings, it is that so many of them look alike, irrespective of their use. That was one thing that is not true about older buildings. We haven't been able to quite lick the lack of distinction, but I think we will. Now, you look at a building and it could be a

hospital, an office building, or an apartment house. I mean they are fadeless. Other than being taller, longer, or higher, they basically look the same. Fortunately, most of the other architects are reacting to this and are going back and beginning to combine forms.

SCHIPPERS

About what period was poured concrete coming in?

FIELD

During my time with Walker and Eisen, concrete was beginning to emerge not only for warehouses and bridges, but due to certain advances in plywood and other materials, for office buildings, too. That was taking the bull by the horns, because that was never done before. We took concrete and used it as a finish material on the buildings. I think the Sunkist Building was the first concrete office building to be built In an era when we were still putting marble and granite and terra cotta on our buildings. It's the first building I know of where we used concrete as the finished product on a multi-story building. Of course, the Farmer's Insurance Building followed. Now we see it all over. It's not unusual to see fine concrete buildings.

SCHIPPERS

But in this new design, there was still some of the classic left.

FIELD

That's right. We hadn't got away from it. We couldn't shake it all off at one time.

SCHIPPERS

But there was the technical breakthrough in poured concrete. Could the simpler design also have stemmed from a commercial reason, in that a lot of fuss and bother that went into the buildings in the twenties was no longer economically feasible?

FIELD

I think that's true. I'll tell you what was happening. Certain trades had been prevalent down through the centuries, such as the iron worker's trade, but the Italians who did the beautiful staff work and so on were losing out as we

gradually pulled away from these overly enriched types of building and got to more simplified forms. But as you said, we were still influenced in that early day by what we had done before and what we were trained in. Also there were items and building materials that were coming out that had not been available before that allowed us to move into the use of concrete, for example. The fine form work that we. were being trained to use and the new forms that were emerging came as the result of new materials. It was quite an advance. We made quite a rapid step there for about eight or ten years—changing into what we now know as Contemporary.

SCHIPPERS

And the next big change didn't come until after World War II?

FIELD

That's right. There was a gap of about, I'd say, fifteen years in there. Things were kind of status quo. There was a little movement. Yes, the big change has been since World War II.

SCHIPPERS

Did you know Carl Jules Weyl?

FIELD

Yes, very well. Jules was a highly educated man. He was an artist—extremely articulate and extremely able. But he was a beaux-arts man right from the word go. I'm afraid he'd have a little difficulty doing today's architecture, but during his era, he was a top-flight man.

SCHIPPERS

Do you know Haldane Douglas, who also worked for Walker and Eisen?

FIELD

Not too well.

SCHIPPERS

Who were some of the other designers that worked for Walker and Eisen that you know?

FIELD

Rube Ransford. When I went to work for Walker and Eisen my second time, Rube Ransford was their chief draftsman. He was a very able designer. That was in '29.

SCHIPPERS

And his educational background.... Fields I forget what college Rube attended, but when he left Walker and Eisen, he went out to one of the movie studios which, at that time, were gobbling up the finest men in architecture for their art departments. He became a director, and was highly successful out there.

SCHIPPERS

Walker and Eisen also profited by getting contracts through the motion picture industry, didn't they?

FIELD

Yes, the famous producer, Joe Schenck, and Walker were extremely close personal friends. For years and years they met together regularly. Socially, of course, both Mr. and Mrs. Walker moved in the very high social circles. She was very active in various women's clubs and was an extremely fine and capable person. Joe Schenck, of course, because of his tie with the movies had a great deal to do with Walker and Eisen moving in on that big array of United Artists theaters they did. They did those theaters at the time I was with Parkinson. I don't know how many there were, but there were just literally dozens of them all over southern California. In fact, I guess at that time they were the leading theater architects in the area. And there were a lot of theaters being built in those days.

SCHIPPERS

Was the money for theaters that were being built in the late twenties and then in the thirties a pretty good source of Income for architects?

FIELD

I think so because, at that time, Grauman's Chinese was being built, end the Egyptian, and Grauman's downtown, the Paramount, and others. All these

fabulous million- and two-million-dollar theaters were going up, and remember, a million dollars in those days was like five million dollars today.

SCHIPPERS

How did these big firms such as Allison and Allison; Parkinson; Morgan, Walls and Clements; Curlett and Beelman; and Walker and Eisen get along?

FIELD

Well, some of them got along well, but, as a general rule, I wouldn't say so. The competition in those days got almost personal. That's not true today. We're friends with all the architects. Oh, we compete against each other, but it's on a different basis. In those days, it was really bitter, and they often times almost hated each other. I think that was true, due to the boom era. I think that was almost true in every line and it reflected in our profession.

SCHIPPERS

But designers, like yourself, went back and forth between firms.

FIELD

We circulated through all business offices, but we stayed out of this personal thing. We moved to different offices for many reasons. Draftsmen still do today. A draftsman that works for us today may have worked for Becket last week or one might go from here to there tomorrow. That's the way they improve their standing to a degree. Also, all offices operate differently. That's the way these boys get their training. But architects still retain individuality. We can look at every building and tell you who did it and when it was built because of the change of styles. Now, no layman could do that. A person who designs women's hats can tell you when a particular hat was designed and who designed it. The same thing is true in our profession and our buildings. I could take you around Los Angeles and I know I could point out when any building was built and who the architect was. It's a funny thing. I can't remember the contractors, but I can remember the architects.

SCHIPPERS

Speaking of contractors, during the twenties, almost all of Walker and Eisen's buildings seem to have been built by a contractor named Chris Thome. Was it common practice to work with a single contracting firm?

FIELD

Well, I think you'll find that, in many cases, these jobs were negotiated and not bid competitively. You would think everybody would bid on a job in those days because of the competition, but they didn't. Even today, we would prefer to select a fine contractor and negotiate with them on a fee basis. What happened in those days was a similar type of thing. Chris Thome, [Godfrey] Edwards and [Otto G.] Wildey, L. E. Dixon, and other contractors would sit down together with the owners and find out what they wanted and then the contractors would say, "We will build this for so much money," The architects were party to that, of course, beer-use they have to know what the arrangement will be. Architects encourage this type of operation. Undoubtedly, Walker and Eisen talked owners into using their contractors, because they would perform well. We like to have a contractor who does an all-right job because it solves all our problems. We know the owner is getting everything he's paying for, and we don't have to worry that a strange contractor is going through a training program on the job at the expense of the owner.

SCHIPPERS

But there was bidding in the twenties?

FIELD

Yes, they were bidding competitively, but let's say negotiation was the thing that was just coming in then, and selecting a firm and giving them some sort of a job on an agreed-upon basis.

SCHIPPERS

Would you say that this city has a right to be as proud of its architecture as any other?

FIELD

Oh my, yes! In fact, I think we're long overdue in being recognized. I think all of us in our profession out here were designing much more interesting, exciting, and beautiful buildings for less money than the architects in the rest of the country would do. We couldn't afford granite, and we couldn't afford any of these fine materials that they used in the East; and, as a result, we used

simple material and still got good buildings. Of course, we haven't had the excitement of skyscrapers because we were not permitted by law in Los Angeles to build high-rise buildings, but we could do it just as well as anybody else. If you can build a twelve-story building, you can build a fifty-story building. But we were not able to get up in the air, and lots of people look at the ability of Los Angeles architects as being questionable because our buildings weren't as high as those in New York or Chicago, or even San Francisco. Actually, it takes more skill to design a lower building than it does these higher buildings. The form and mass of the higher buildings offset a lot of what would be otherwise questionable architecture. You know, New York was rebuilt three times. They have gone through three phases of complete rebuilding. "We're just starting on our first phase, but we're coming in now and moving out again. I don't say this from the point of my own ego, but knowing the main architects from the other part of the country, I have always felt we have the smartest bunch right here. We're in the most highly competitive city in the world for architects. We have more competent firms in Los Angeles than any other city of comparable size and many more than some of the larger ones.

SCHIPPERS

More than three thousand.

FIELD

And of that number, a tremendous number are specialists. If these so-called good firms from other parts of the country came out here, they wouldn't last a week with this competition. We have to fight for survival.

SCHIPPERS

That was true even in the twenties. There were about two hundred firms listed.

FIELD

Yes, it was true, but not like it is today. You see, actually, in the twenties, I would say six or seven firms did all the work. Also, in those days, there were no architects in Pomona, maybe one architect in San Diego, and no architects in Santa Ana. Maybe there was one in Long Beach, but that was about it.

Today, our problem is that we go into all these other cities and we find architects in those cities who are also competing. It's pretty hard for us to buck the local people who pay taxes there. So our problem of getting work now is getting more and more difficult. And these firms are competent. Their weakness, if they have any, is that they do not have the experience or are not large enough organizations to do big buildings. In big projects, we have the advantage. Sometimes it's because our LA firms have the manpower or the know-how to do a big project, but only because of that, not because we know any more. These young men are smart boys. I'm for them, but I just wish there weren't so many of them.

SCHIPPERS

In the twenties, how did house construction differ from today?

FIELD

Well, no matter what the weather reports say, in the early twenties, we didn't have the rough winters we have today. Our houses were adequate for our weather, and we could have a little heater in the living room and that would take care of the whole house. They were little light, plain cottages and they were adequate because our weather at the time was milder. What's happened in the meantime I don't know. I also remember when Hollywood was a big lure and the movies were actually being made there. Hollywood was all lined with pepper trees, and you could see these movie stars with their Russian wolfhounds walking up and down. They looked like a strange bunch of people, but it created color, and atmosphere was fabulous. That actually existed, and that was a terrific drawing attraction for all young people who wanted to get into the movies, you know. The situation was so different then. I think one of the penalties of growing big is that we have lost all of these things. The charm is gone, and unfortunately, we are just another city. In fact, we can't even go out for a ride in the country any more.

SCHIPPERS

And these changes have reflected in our architecture.

FIELD

Oh, no doubt about it. I think architecture reflects the feeling, the economic situation, the certainties or uncertainties of the time, I think our buildings reflect that by the impact made on us by the needs of the clients and the conditions under which we build our buildings.

SCHIPPERS

Are there any particular buildings that could be used as examples for this kind of change?

FIELD

Down on Fourth and Broadway, the old Bradbury Building is still standing. That's one of the finest examples of our redstone or brownstone era in Los Angeles. We call it redstone out here. The old City Hall was redstone and so was the old Courthouse building, but the Bradbury Building gives a very definite picture of what Los Angeles was like around 1900. When I was a little kid, my mother used to take me to the Nattick House, which was a hotel on the corner of First and Main Street. It was one of the leading hotels here. We went there for Sunday dinner every Sunday, and all the gals there dressed in white starched uniforms. It seemed like they would set one thousand dishes on the table when they served you, I don't know who washed the dishes but you never saw anything like it. Then, the downtown area began to spread west. I think it was in 1911 when they built a Hamburger store way out there on Eighth and Broadway in the wheat fields. That was way out of town, X remember that. I also remember that in downtown Los Angeles on Main Street at six o'clock every night, all the lunch wagons would come out from First Street up to about Fifth. The whole street would smell of cooking hot dogs and things from these lunch wagons. That was one era in LA, and the strange part about it (yet it isn't strange), the buildings of that time represented that era and the way we were living. Good architecture represents civilization more than anything else.

SCHIPPERS

Was the design of these buildings unique to Los Angeles? Could they have been placed in New York and fit just as well?

FIELD

No, they couldn't have been placed in New York. They were distinctly Los Angeles architecture. So many of our buildings now are faceless and could be put anywhere, but this was not true then or later during the twenties. Cur western buildings would look out of place in New York because the designs that we used in the twenties were basically Mediterranean. They would never do in Connecticut.

SCHIPPERS

So that was a regional style?

FIELD

It was a regional style which is now lost. We now have the International style. I was on a two and a half month tour this last year through the Mediterranean, and in Palermo, Istanbul, Cairo, you see these modern buildings coming up right next to buildings that have been there for hundreds of years. The new ones look out of place. This so-called international style is ugly looking, and I think we're in a faceless architectural period. All our buildings look alike. They are all curtain wall. That's the thing many of us architects resent. Yet, in some cases, because of certain types of clients, we're forced to go along with this present mood or we don't get the job. We all like to eat, of course, so we try to do the very best we can, although we're not necessarily sympathetic with it.

SCHIPPERS

That has been true in any decade, hasn't it?

FIELD

Yes. Let's take Frank Lloyd Wright, for example. He didn't care if he ate or not and so he owed everybody. We're not all that fortunate. But he didn't get big building contracts as a result. Actually, Frank Lloyd Wright's big buildings started with the Johnson Wax Building some twenty years ago or less than that. That was the first tall building he did. At the time, he did houses, churches, and schools. Then the last fifteen years of his life, he got into sizable structures and high-rise structures, of course. He designed that crazy mile-high spire and the big apartment house at Bartlettsville Field, which is very, very exciting, but whether people will like to live in one of these buildings remains to be seen, that's up to the opinion of the people. But, at least, they are

outstanding and they distinguish him as a person apart. The rest of us haven't quite the guts to do that, nor the courage.

SCHIPPERS

So, the twenties were faddish and it showed in the architecture?

FIELD

It showed in the architecture. I think our buildings of the twenties were inclined to be a little bit on the garish side. We loaded them with ornament, and that was the way we were living then. The architecture, I think, reflected the whole era. It was kind of a false-front era, if you want to call it that, because there wasn't much in back of it, as we discovered in the crash. But it was an interesting era. Never any dull moments. But I wouldn't want to go through the Depression that followed.

1.3. CHAPTER III: THE WAR YEARS AND THE BEGINNING OF AUSTIN, FIELD AND FRY

Towards the end of the Depression, I got a job with Roland Crawford who's head of Gordon B. Kaufman's office. When I was with them, we designed a good part of the interior of the Times Building.

In '38, I took my State Board examination and passed it the first time. Walker and Eisen wanted me to stay on as junior partner; but, unfortunately, we weren't being paid regularly, and I knew if I became a junior partner, I'd never get paid. I decided I wanted to go out myself.

We had been doing quite a bit of work for Foreman and Clark over the country, and I know Foreman and Clark personally. We had finished a store for them in Hollywood. So, they found I had left Walker and Eisen and they ran me down to do some work for them. I told them they would have to see Walker and Eisen, because I couldn't take clients from them. That wasn't my idea of ethics. But Charles Thomas, who was president of the company and who was later Secretary of the Navy and is now president of Irvine Ranch Company, advised Walker and Eisen of their intention to change, so I started the first job for them at home. I had no office, because I didn't know what I was going to do. In fact, I didn't plan to open my own office. I didn't want to. I just wanted to make a change. I thought that it was about due, and so I started working in ray back pore.

Work started coming in, basically through Foreman and Clark. Well, my wife got madder than the deuce, and insisted that I get the heck out of the house. We had two boys, you know. So, I got an office out here at Wilshire and Carondelet, and later took a partner. So our firm was known as Field and Hoak. We were just getting going, and we had some insurance buildings and then it was lovely when industrial housing, low-cost housing, got a big start and became the thing all over the United States. Most architects here in Los Angeles, of course, joined joint ventures and went after these big housing projects. I wouldn't have any part of them. I had all the work I could handle and we were growing. I was very happy about the whole thing.

Then, of course, the war work started, but one year before the war, of course, everything stopped and we were wiped out of business. We were stopped because I wasn't smart enough to get into that war work, and all these things, because I thought I would have all the work I could handle, and I didn't want to be involved in these things.

Then, before Pearl Harbor was bombed, a friend of mine asked me if I couldn't come and help him out. He had the Kistner, Curtis and Wright account. Henry Wright was president of the Art Institute last year. Henry. was a good friend of ours, and he had a bunch of these Navy air bases to design. So, he asked me if I would become project manager for one of them. I thought I might just as well, since my business was shot. So, I went up to Mojave and took complete charge of the main air base in Mojave. I was in the Marine Reserve, by the way. When the war hit us, of course, the Navy held me up from active duty till the base was finished, or almost finished.

In the meantime, with the war on, my partner and I dissolved our partnership because I didn't know whether I would come back. Being a Marine, I didn't know if I would be back, or what would happen. Of course, people change, too, and I didn't want to stymie him. But we parted with the understanding, however, that after the war we would go together again. That was kind of a tacit understanding.

Even a friendly breakup of an architect's firm is complicated. Whose clients are whose and who owns the drawings? I mean it's a tough thing when partners break up. Often they become enemies as a result of an unfortunate incident, and it's tough enough when partners break up who are friends. When they go into partnership, it's like getting married. You can get married tomorrow, but, boy, to get a divorce, it takes months. Well, to form a partnership you can sit down and shake hands and form a partnership before an attorney and sign a contract in a matter of an hour or two hours. But to break up a partnership is as bad or worse than getting a divorce. I've been a little anti-partnership, basically, due to that experience. It was a pleasant experience from one standpoint, but, still, breaking up is a routine that's most unfortunate no matter what the conditions are.

Well, the war hit us, of course, and then I went back to Quantico and went through the regular HOC, Officer Candidate School. Of course, I was a commissioned officer, but I still had to go through the same training as a junior officer. Then I was immediately sent back to Mojave and served there.

From Mojave I went to San Diego, Miramar, then to Cherry Point, North Carolina, where I became a construction officer for the third wing of the main corps which was formed there. I was there one year. It was different, from Quantico where we were living under combat conditions. We would attack under fire regularly, using light ammunition; we crawled through those bushes in the forests of Virginia, practiced landings on the Potomac after midnight, at two in the morning or at four in the morning in icy water and had to wade to shore and move inland and spend three or four days at regular campaign training under wartime conditions. I wouldn't wish that on anybody and I wouldn't do it again for anything, but I wouldn't take a million dollars for the experience either. How we lasted, I don't know, but we all did.

At Cherry Point, I was transportation officer for that whole wing. We had two troup trains, and we had a seventy-car freight train which I was responsible for. I flew out to the west coast with the General's staff on the plane; and then, at North Island, there was nothing to do for about two months but wait for a ship to meet our units and move out.

Well, later on, I served out in the South Pacific and various places for the duration of the war. I don't think it would be very interesting to tell what happened out there in the places where I was. Eventually, it was over for me, at least, and I came back in '45.

Of course, everybody was getting ready to build. Everybody had been waiting to build when the war was over and orders were placed and contracts were let, and they thought they were really going to get going. They were really ready to go to town and everybody was bulging at their seams. As a result, draftsmen were worth their weight in gold—designers, draftsmen, anybody that could hold a pencil. I got about five letters from various large firms here asking me if I would come with them the minute I got back.

When I got back, I sought my release, as I was due to go back out again. I had a hunch the war was getting close to the end, and I had served my country. I didn't know what more I could do. I certainly didn't want to get involved in the occupation and be stationed in one of the various countries indefinitely, you know. So, I was able to be released and resume my reserve status.

Well, I got two or three jobs and some of my men came back to me (they left some of the firms they were with), and I started my own office, Charlie Fry, incidentally, had worked for Mr. John C. Austin for most of his career. I had become very friendly with Charlie Fry (he was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Air Force), and I proposed that he come to work with me when he got out, since I was getting jobs right and left. I had a number of men, and I was able to function because Foreman and Clark gave me offices, rent free. X was very lucky, of course, because I didn't have much money when I came back. So, you can understand that this was a wonderful thing. It was the first time I had my own office without even wanting it, because I thought I would go back with one of the big firms. I had had enough experience of running one before with the responsibilities and paying salaries and the problems with clients. I thought I had had it.

Well, Pry was all set to come back and go in with me, except that Mr. John Austin, his father-in-law, had held his office open for Charlie during the war years and had done no work at all. Well, Mr. Austin had only one man at that time, but Austin had a tremendous background and a tremendous reputation. That was a wonderful thing to have. Well, it was discussed that Charlie and I would go together with Mr. Austin, but I wasn't sure of the situation because Mr. Austin was of the old school. I was a little bit concerned whether or not I would have freedom of design and planning of contemporary buildings that I wanted, and I was a completely contemporary man. I was not extreme, but I didn't want to do any more Spanish Mediterranean because I got away from that fifteen years earlier. I was a little bit afraid that Mr. Austin, being of the old school, the Classic and all those, would want his buildings in those designs. So, we discussed this for about six months. In the meantime, I was busier than hell in my office. I was going great guns and enjoying life thoroughly. I was getting back on my feet again, you see. I had some financial problems in meeting all my payrolls and my clients, but it was just after the war and it was still exciting. Finally, we went together and formed our first partnership in March 1946. Austin, Field and Fry.

We started downtown, and then in '49, we built our own building. We had sixteen or seventeen men, and we were one of the largest offices in the West at that time. But we never wanted to be a big office. Some of the other offices that have cropped up since we started have grown big enough to employ 150, 200, and even 500 men. I never wanted to get that big, because, really, all of the principals in those firms become paper shufflers—administrators. I'm not an administrator. I like to get out on the board. I like to be party to what goes into the building, how it's designed, what selective specification. These are the things I'm trained for, and I like to do. You see, my desk here is kind of messy. I put these things off as long as I can because I'm out in the drafting room. I like to know what goes on. I like to know what goes into the

buildings, and check through until the drawings are complete. These are the things I'm interested in.

So, we made up our minds many years ago, when we first started, that we would never allow ourselves to get bigger unless we were forced to by some big budget and we had to put on men like mad. But, basically, we would like to keep an office of around fifty men. We figured the amount of work we would do then would be adequate. That would handle jobs from $20,000 up to $25,000,000 without any trouble. That's if you have the right type of manpower and if they are top-flight men. We have the men. In fact, in the last month, three of our men have retired who have been with us for twelve to fifteen years, which is remarkable. We have men out here, now, who have been with us for years and years and they stay with us. These men are worth their weight in gold. They are priceless, because of their knowledge and experience and understanding and know-how. Of course, we always keep a big batch of younger men coming up, and these older men help to train them. Unfortunately, often when the younger ones get to the point where they can pay for themselves, they get a better job and they're gone. But that's par for the course.

Of course, since we built our own building, we've had our problems. What architect doesn't? But, actually, my interest in architecture today is as it was when I began. I'm not interested in tremendously big projects. I want every building we do to be just as good as is possible within the budget—within the framework of the program. We turn out a lot of buildings where I wish we had had more latitude. Fortunately, most architects look at other architects' buildings with that in mind. I think that is the reason I never criticize another architect's work, because I know what is imposed upon us by the client, We're not all Frank Lloyd Wrights who can just spend money madly and say to heck with the client. Our clients sometimes hem us in, but since we're in the habit of eating, we go ahead rather than be martyrs and tell them to go somewhere else. We try to do the best we can.

Even today, with every building we design and plan, we look ahead and try to see in our minds how that building will look thirty years from now, because the owners were going to have to live in that building for the next fifty years. That building won't be paid for for twenty-five years and maybe longer than that. Well, if the building is dated or outmoded within the next two or three years, we have done a tremendous disservice to our clients. As a result, our buildings get no gold medals, but I'll tell you one thing, I can go back over my buildings from fifteen and twenty years ago and they are still good-looking buildings. They are working well and. they are not out of style. They're not dated and they're good investments, whereas a lot of buildings that were built in different moods or modes of the time, like women's dresses, have become earmarked.

We can go out and look at buildings all over the country and see buildings that were built with all the grill work that was popular and then see a latter vogue of showing the skeleton of the buildings. The designs usually are too stark or they are over-decorated and too embellished. The problem we have is to stay in the middle of the road so our clients get an up-to-date building with maximum efficiency and planning and so they can adjust and grow within their building, but with a design that won't be something that looks like it was done ten or twenty years ago when it's been built for that long.

So, as I say, we will never get any gold medals. We don't give a darn, even if we might like to say we had one. But we never get any gold medals from the Institute because we don't go either radical, or pull something out of a bag of tricks or employ the extremely conservative where nothing happens. We hew to what we think is a service and is providing our clients with what they want. I think the evidence of our work indicates that. I think we are performing the service that architects should perform.

I've given you an awful lot of stuff from my background, but this pretty well encompasses the outlook of Charlie Fry, too. He is active in the community and is president of the Jonathan Club; president of the Southern California Chapter of American Institute of Architects; and president of the California Council of Architects. I've been vice-president, but I've been less fortunate because I'm not as good a politician. I was vice-president of the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. I'm on the Advisory Board of the Salvation Army, by the way, after all these years, with Earl Gilmore and all the other leading citizens. I'm president of the University of Southern California Architecture Guild. I'm involved with the Masons, and, of course, I play a little high-handicap golf out at the San Gabriel Country Club, where I've been a member since 1950.

I'm a grandfather now, and one of my boys is a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy. He's a regular in Japan. Incidentally, he was trained as an architect. He is a wonderful draftsman, and I just thought it would be a tremendous thing for him to go into architecture, but he had to enlist after World War II because he was due to be drafted. He went into the Navy, became an officer and liked it, so he stayed in. He enjoys sailing. My youngest boy was sent to college by the Navy under the NROTC Program and became a regular in the Marine Corps. He's now a Captain in the Marine Corps Reserve, since he resigned a couple years ago. But he retained his commission and is in the Reserve. He now is a contractor, and he's doing pretty well. He had a couple of difficult years trying to get established, but he's in good shape now. So, the family side is in good shape, and the office here, is in very good shape.

I never want to retire. I hope someday I will be in the position that when I want to take a month off I can take a month off, but if I ran away from architecture permanently, I'd have to sit at home just wondering what to do with myself next. I don't think I'd live very long. I'd go crazy, because this thing is the most exciting thing that ever happened to me. It's exciting to plan and design buildings and see them built and see them occupied and see people delighted. That is, you hope that they are delighted in what they see; and, in most cases, this has been our experience. I think possibly I would like to have buildings where I wasn't tied by budget—where I could use fine materials and do what I wanted. I think it would be fun. It would be like Bullock's Wilshire, which was the only building I ever worked on where money wasn't an item. Of course, that was so long ago, I don't even think about it anymore. I'd love to have a contract and enough land where I could build a building that would have not only mass and profile but the detail and charm that comes with the use of fine materials. You know, I don't care how you design a building, you can't use concrete and have the beautiful results you get with granite when it's properly used. The choice of material still has a lot to do with how they last. The first two or three years, it's not so important, but as they age, the richness of good materials can't be replaced. Unfortunately, we can't always do that, so we work. along and try to improve as we can.

SCHIPPERS

Is getting granite and so forth a regional difficulty?

FIELD

I think it's an economic problem. In my knowledge, out West here, that aspect has never changed, although they're putting up better buildings than they did years ago. But the boards of directors and stock holders still always insist, at least for building out West here, on using every inch of the floor space. They want this done at the minimum cost so they can get in with the roof and walls and get into operation right away and to heck with what the property looks like. Building cost is about the main thing now. School is taught about the same way. How cheap can they build them—not how good can we build them.

SCHIPPERS

Is there a shortage of good facing materials in the area?

FIELD

No. We have all the facing materials we need. We're using granite and everything else. There's no problem on facing materials.

SCHIPPERS

Even in the twenties?

FIELD

Oh yes. It was the same then. We were building space—boxes to get the maximum rental area in a building and the maximum usable area. To heck with appearance. But there was no shortage of stones, granites, limestone, terra cotta, brick. No, no shortage of bronze or all those things. Ho problem there at all. Our problem has been just one—economics and, usually, selfishness. Now once in awhile a nice building comes along. I had quite a bit to do with the Title Insurance Building, for example. It was built in the mid-twenties when I was with Parkinson. I didn't design it, but I had quite a bit to do with parts designed in the interiors. That's a fine building. Even today, when you go downtown to the Title Insurance Building with its marble interiors and nice elevators, you have the feeling that the building is just as usable today as the day it was built. That's not true of buildings where we weren't allowed to use fine materials. Of course, in the fine buildings, with good materials, It's not only appearance, but they'll have ease of maintenance down through the years. That takes quality whether it's in hardware, whether it's in paint, or floor coverings, or roofing. There's no substitute for the very finest thing. In fact, we think, here, that since labor costs are about the same to build any two buildings of the same size, the whole thing is in the finish on the walls, floors, ceilings, air conditioning, and the quality of the roofing. These are the things that make for permanent usability and these are things we always fight for. We can make the building, basically, structurally, as inexpensive as possible, but the things that take the beating are the things that count. The floors have to withstand walking and the walls have to withstand touching—these things, you know.

1.4. CHAPTER IV: VARIOUS PROJECTS OF INTEREST

In talking about specific buildings, of course, every building is a problem, due to the clients' peculiarities and needs, but most of all, the budget. The programs that are established for their various projects are frequently set up by people who have no

knowledge of building conditions and usually, and most unfortunately, they use their present quarters as the determining factor for their new buildings. In practically every instance, new building and new compact planning is so utterly different that there's just a little problem there of convincing the clients that that new concept of compact office planning is the right thing. Of course, in practically every corporation, there are men who have worked in older buildings for many years, and it's part of their empire. Each man feels that if he has a private office, completely segregated you might say, with partitions all the way up to the ceiling, it gives him more dignity. By today's concept, we have very few such offices.

Usually a completely closed office is now used only for the president, the chairman of the board, high-ranking officials, and for conference rooms where what is being said must not go beyond the doors. Other than that, moat of our offices, nowadays, have all sorts of partitions that are high enough to screen the individuals but do not break the air space. By proper acoustics and, sometimes, lower ceilings, we are able to control sound so that what is being said in one office won't be distinguished in the other office. There are a number of reasons for this approach. One is, basically, cost. Every private office, now, costs a lot more, because air conditioning, especially, is the thing. When we just had radiators in a room, why you could have as many offices as you wanted. But, today, with air conditioning and controls and the zoning, why the costs go skyrocketing up. Partitioned offices also give the building greater flexibility for rearranging space. Now, I'm talking basically about buildings where firms are using a good part or all of the building and not renting offices. There are two different approaches to this. Where we get into office buildings that are for rentals, of course, Individual offices are built for tenants according to the layout.

Among the interesting things that have happened in my career, one has to do with a refinery. This was a big project about ten or eleven years ago. We were asked by Union Oil Company to come down and do some remodeling on their research lab facility in the Wilmington refinery. This was the first time I had run into a research project and, of course, being naive and not knowing anything about It, I did some research myself. I had to so that in talking with them, I had at least some idea of what they were saying, so that I could talk intelligently to them. You know one of the peculiar things about this profession of architecture is that no matter who the client is, whether he's building a restaurant, a research facility, a private laboratory, an office building, school, or a shop for men's haberdashery, the client looks at you as if you should know as much about this business as he does. If we did, we would be limited to one or two buildings and we could do nothing else. So, the main thing for all of us is to have enough knowledge to be able to talk intelligently when we meet this client. We have to show that we do know enough about his own business to be able to plan it intelligently. This takes a lot of doing. It takes a lot of research. Sometimes, they

make tremendous suppositions about your ability to understand their needs. As a matter of fact, often they will expect you to come in and just tell them how to plan it, how to merchandise, how to do all these things. That's not right, of course, because we're not trained that way. A few firms in the past twenty years have become specialists in planning shops, in department stores, in merchandising. But that's a completely separate bit of training. Getting that understanding and know-how is a complete career in itself.

However, in this particular instance we went down to the Union Oil Research Laboratory to do some remodeling. Remember this old building was built around 1917, when Union Oil was a small company, but just getting started in a rather large way. They had only one, two-story building. It was an old brick building and that housed their administration headquarters, the refinery, their research facilities and the libraries. Everything was in this one, two-story, U-shaped building. Well, when we got into the thing (started making some studies of modernization), why, we found that we were going to spend almost two million dollars on that building.

So, one day in meeting with the whole group down there, I came out with the statement that I felt very definitely that for two and a half million or three million dollars we could build a complete new facility. You see, by the time we got around to tearing everything out and rebuilding, it would cost around two million dollars and they still would have limited areas, because their quarters were badly planned as we saw it. So they had a long discussion. Of course, months passed. On this type of thing, of course, you want the job to come in because you need the job, and you think, "Boy, I wish they'd hurry up." Months pass and nothing happens.

Then they called us in and told us that they had decided that to build a new building might be a wise investment and would I go ahead and prepare enough preliminary drawings to indicate clearly the planning of the thing. I was to take into account the needs they had and allow for expansion and everything else that was necessary for a complete, well-balanced, research project. Remember, we had never done anything like this before, and being babes-in-the-woods, we went into this thing bravely. That story that fools rush in where angels fear to tread is true in this business. Go in madly. We can do it.

Of course, we architects don't know all the things that are necessary for such projects, but we do know how and where to reach out and bring people together who do know. Our job, nowadays, more than ever before, is one of coordination. Presently, we are not only involved with structural, civil, and mechanical engineers, but we are involved with landscape architects, corrosion engineers, and sound and acoustical engineers. Every time you turn around there's a new kind of engineer to collect fees. So, by the time we're paid, we've paid out almost all our fees to engineers. But, that's beside the

point, The main thing is that we do have people at our fingertips who know these things. So, as any good, sound, firm will do, we bring them all together and start planning these facilities. That's true in almost any line of work. As a matter of fact, another group we have today are these kitchen layout engineers whose entire job is to make layouts for all the necessary plumbing, electrical work, and so forth. They even select the stoves, dishwashers, and everything else. Years ago, we called in Dorman's Tool and Supply and others, and they'd do the planning. It wouldn't cost you anything, because they expected to get the job. Most of the time they did get them, because there were only one or two supply outfits in town. Dorman, at that time, almost invariably got the jobs. Since then, competition has grown and other companies have come in. Now, you must pay a fee and employ these layout men.

Well, we did that with this research project, and we made a very complete brochure. Sounds like we did all this overnight. Actually, a couple of months passed. We had requested that a single liaison man collect the ideas from the various scientists and research people and others who were responsible for the various departments and bring the ideas to us. We did that because, when you start talking to scientists and physicists, they have a new idea every day, and each new idea rescinds the one they gave you the day before. Well, this goes on and on, so the only way you can work is to stay away from them. You let your liaison man pin them down, which is a very difficult thing to do.

However, we made big brochures and made our submittal. Apparently, they were very much impressed with it. We still didn't know if we had the job, but the most gratifying thing about it was that, as they got into this thing, they kept increasing the size of the project. I was delighted, of course, because I had always advised them that this building would cost money to do properly. They finally realized this, and it wound up that the basic facility ran about five million dollars. That was just for the buildings. Actually, when they were through with the whole project, they had about twelve million in it because lots of equipment goes in to that kind of plant. For instance, the analytical research part and the mass spectromers and all that cost as much as the buildings do or more. A fabulous amount of money for electronic equipment is needed.

Well, anyway, we made the official presentation, in a very orderly brochure. We had the foresight to include prints of every drawing, gave the cost, and worked everything out right down to the last detail. Well, at that time, they still hadn't decided on what land they would use, but we were interested in selling the project anyway. Then they decided to move the lab away from the refinery and get it off by itself, because they realized this new, pure research was going to be quite different from what they had been doing before.

Well, we had laid this thing out in a completely different manner than anything like it had been done before. I had visited all the petroleum research facilities throughout the country with our liaison engineer from Union Oil, and we spent three weeks visiting all the main laboratories. We went to Standard of New Jersey, which had a tremendous facility which they had just finished. It was fabulous. Of course, they spent a lot of money on it—around twenty-five million. Well, we were talking about building for four or five million, so you see the problem. Then we went to Du Pont's in Delaware, and Gulf... oh, we went through all of them. At every laboratory we went to, they would tell us we were designing our plant all wrong.

A laboratory, actually, is nothing more than walls, a roof, and a bunch of pipes. They are a mass of mechanical and electrical equipment. The problem, however, is that they are always changing their piping and everything else all the time. So, they must be able to get to these pipes regularly. The system they used then was to have a multi-story building where the pipes ran vertically. They have what is called a "pipe chase," where all the pipes run up to the ceiling. Then they cut across the ceiling in one laboratory to supply the laboratory benches on the floor above. It meant this. If they were to replace a pipe on the second floor, for example, the first-floor laboratory was out of business while they were removing the ceiling (demountable ceiling, of course) to replace the pipes. So that wasn't good.

Our plant was only one story high and we had used a campus type of spread with the finger buildings all integrated into one layout. Everyone said, "Oh no, that's not the way you do it." When we got to Standard Oil of Indiana (they're near Whiting, Indiana, not far from Chicago), however, they went along with us and said we were designing it the only way it should be designed. It was the most encouraging thing we had heard. Of course, before then, I was getting a little bit discouraged. I thought, "Gee, here we have gone off on a tangent. We are all wrong. What do we do now? Do we go back and report to Union Oil that our whole plan is completely wrong?" That would have been almost disastrous at that stage of the game because even Union Oil was looking to us as people who knew what we were doing. But Standard of Indiana said, "No, this is the way to do it."

We had developed tunnels in these laboratories, big enough for a truck to go into and service all the overhead pipes. These pipes extend through the first floor and connect to each of the laboratory benches on ten-foot four-inch modules in each of the various laboratories themselves. This was quite a new approach. But every pipe was available, and the tunnels were wide enough to get at them. Incidentally, since we did that, that system has been copied all over the United States. The Navy laboratory up at China Lake is almost a cold copy—the dirty dogs. But, actually, It's flattering when other people like what you've done and copy you. You don't mind them copying. It's just that you feel kind of good that you're the reason for it.

However, when we got back, there was another delay because the board of directors was all tense about cost. I think the cost had gone up better than two million dollars over what I told them it would be originally. That was not hay in 1948, and that was when money was worth more than it is today.

Well, I decided to take my family (the boys were rather small) for a couple weeks vacation on Catalina Island, but I wasn't enjoying the vacation because I was just wondering all the time. Then, one day, all of a sudden Charlie Pry, my partner, and Mr. Jackson, the office manager, showed up on the island. They had got lost in the fog and the plane had to go back once, but they finally got over there. I was impatiently waiting for a phone call, but instead, these characters appeared and informed roe that the thing had been approved and that the board of directors was delighted. Well, that was a very, very fine thing, because we had been doing schools and office buildings down through the years, but to get into this field was a one chance in a lifetime. If you don't get a chance like that, you don't get much consideration for other jobs as years roll by, because you lack background experience.

Well, needless to say, the project turned out to be a tremendous job. In the ensuing years, we have made additions to it because we master-planned for enlargement. We've built three or four new buildings out there through the years. At the same time we did the original work, Union Oil decided to build a pilot plant to set up the initial run for the new gasolines for the refinery. I guess this is the first time an architect was ever employed to design such a structure. It was a big monster. But it's been highly successful. Anyway, that's my first experience in research. That job shows you how these things develop. That's one of the most interesting examples I can think of right now of getting a project of some magnitude underway.

Another program that has a continuing interest for us has to do with Hollywood. Some years ago we were party to tearing down the old Hollywood Hotel that was on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue. The hotel had been a landmark for years, and I guess all the famous people, some time or another down through the years, had stayed there. Of course, it deteriorated into a firetrap, actually, and was filled with pensioners and old ladies whose husbands had died, leaving them, presumably, well fixed. These poor old gals' income had decreased because of inflation and so forth, and they were just sitting around there with no place to go. They lived in the hotel for years. That was one of the sad things about that deal. It was sad to see these people, who at one time were very prosperous and whose income now was meager, dislocated.

But Mr. C. E. Toberman, who was our client in that deal, had very great ideas on what to do about the whole situation. He wanted to bring back Hollywood. He was sold on Hollywood, Its future, and everything else. He was trying, singlehandedly, to save

Hollywood from all those second-rate stores that had developed and to bring back the good companies that had moved out of Hollywood from the twenties when it was a gay and exciting city. So we planned a complex for him which embraces a large hotel, a department store, office buildings, and garages. It is quite a sizable thing. To date, we have built a twelve-story office building, which was built one year before the height limit was changed. If the change had been made sooner, vie could have had twenty-two or twenty-four stories there for the First Federal Savings and Loan of Hollywood. In the last four years, we've built garages there that take care of twelve hundred cars. On the boards now, we have a department store with two towers. The hotel is being built by another firm—Holiday Hotels or Holiday Inns of Memphis. We have masterplanned the whole thing, but they wouldn't consider letting our firm do the hotel, because we haven't had hotel experience. We wanted to integrate the whole thing, architecturally, and everything else, but we weren't able to do it.

But that type of job, I think, most firms enjoy having because they are continuing things. So often when you do one large building for a client, you're through. But this is one of those jobs that is a continuing thing. As time goes on, you add more buildings which every architect thinks is wonderful. Actually, it is our bread and butter. The same thing holds true for the work we have done for Union Oil and Shell Oil. That's been a continuing thing. I think the most difficult thing for a firm of architects ever to be able to achieve is to get a client whose continuing work will keep your office, not necessarily wildly busy, but well supplied with work. In these things, there's always something coming all the time. That's very gratifying. You can think, "Well, I won't have to go out and do a sales job and battle all the other competent architects," and it makes you feel good. I wish we had a few more of these jobs and so do all the other firms.

1.5. CHAPTER V: MODERN-DAY PROBLEMS IN PLANNING AND DESIGN

Probably the biggest problem we have is that our firm was established in 1895, and up to the last five years, we have been one of the larger offices in the West, We used to average around sixty-five to seventy men, which was considered a large office. We never wanted our firm to grow big, because, as I've said, if it got larger than that, my partner and myself wouldn't actually be able to know what was going on even in our own building. We would have to delegate the responsibilities to employees no matter how competent we were. We would not be architects as we're trained. Actually, we'd be businessmen shuffling papers, and all the pleasure and satisfaction of planning and designing and taking part in making determinations in the structures would be lost. We would be denied that. This is true in the larger offices, and I wouldn't like that.

I do like the firm, however, to be of sufficient size so that we can handle jobs of twenty, thirty million dollars without any trouble. We can do that with our

organization by amplifying a few of our key positions with secondary draftsmen, you might say, and have the senior draftsmen act as job captains. But even the fifty-five we have now make for a sizable payroll. based on one man or maybe two men who have established their eminence in our field. For instance, Eero Saarinen established his own office. Bertram Goodhue did all the design in his office, or he had men he had trained and who worked closely with him all the time do it. So, he was right close to the design all the time. But when you get into the big production you lose that.

SCHIPPERS

How about quality and efficiency?

FIELD

Well, actually, as offices get larger, the efficiency goes down because you begin to break up into component parts. You have your office managers and their staff, and you have your various divisions of engineers. Then, you'll have a project architect and a secretary. He has a few men working for him, and he'll handle one job. Down the way a bit, you'll have another architect who will handle another job. Each job, you might say, is a complete separate entity from the rest of the work in the office.

SCHIPPERS

How does it affect the quality of the design?

FIELD

Well, I don't think that quality as far as materials is necessarily affected. You take offices as large as Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, and they have a large firm, and it seems like the quality of their work holds up very well in spite of their size. However, even their firm is broken down into units across the country. Their San Francisco unit is not Offices like Becket's, of course, have gone up to two hundred and fifty. I think Luckman has that many with his firm now, too. I believe Daniel, Mann, and Johnson, about three years ago, had seven hundred and fifty men. That's a lot of people. They have offices in the East and everything like that. But we never wanted that because then we would be lost in a production line. That personal touch would be lost. As a matter of fact, all your fine architects down through the years had small offices. We'll use this as a guide, but this indicates that the finest work has come out of offices like Bertram Goodhue's and Eero Saarinen's son's office.

Parrel Stone, for example, had offices from ten to twenty men. But they were excel lent men. They were probably men who were worth their weight in gold. They were hand selected. Of course, fine men were the finest investment a firm can have and they are hard to get.

SCHIPPERS

Could we go so far as to say that the size of the office has something to do with the quality or the character of the architecture?

FIELD

Well, yes, to a degree. In other words, there's a limit to the size an office can be where the personality of the architect or the designer is effective. When offices get too big, everything has to go to other people. Most architectural offices are pretty well terribly big. But they are able to control it, because they are not going to be able to have so many men in one place that it becomes a production line. They still are large, though, and they are one of the firms that is able to hold quality, I think, quite well. Now whether we agree with all the designs is beside the point, because no two architects will ever agree that the design of a building is good. One will say, "I like it. This is wonderful." The other guy will say, "It's pretty bad." This is one of the peculiarities of architects that a layman doesn't understand. I think it's what makes architects such odd people. We are individuals and a little bit eccentric. We all approach a building with a completely different feeling as to the shape of the building, the mass, texture, and relationship to the site. For example, we went through a period some time ago when Mies van der Rohe was very popular. He shows the bones of the building. You see the skeleton frame. It's a very rigid building. That's his particular style. It was very popular for awhile. However, I don't care for it too much. He does fine buildings, but, to me, you don't get the identity of the building. Other than being taller, wider, shorter, fatter, or whatever you want to call it, they all look alike. It could be a hospital, an apartment house, an office building, or almost anything, because in the basic concept they all look alike. They have lost their identity and they become sterile and stark. Now, I have nothing against Van der Rohe's style. It's just that from my standpoint, I like buildings to show their function. Then, we have other architects that over-elaborate and who pull out every trick in the bag, like trick stairways outside, and trick entrances with strange-looking marquees and

canopies which take strange forms. At the moment that seems to be quite popular. However, again, I don't go that way. We have two divisions in architects. We have what they call the leftist group and the rightist group. Just like in politics, the leftist group are the ones who are, I won't say experimenting, but are way out. The leftists in architecture do the exciting things—big cantilevers, everything that is exciting and exotic at the moment. However, the weakness of that is that their work so frequently is dated. After twenty-five years or even five years, that building becomes obsolete and the owners still have to pay for the building. They have to occupy it for maybe fifty years before it starts paying off. So he's stuck with a building that's, well, a show at one time, and five years later becomes completely outmoded. This does not necessarily mean the planning is outmoded; I'm speaking about the appearance, the tricks, and everything else that gives the building a lot of oomph, you might say, in its exterior elevation. Then, there's the other type who go to the extreme conservative, which is just as bad. They fight the contemporary to a degree. However, in the last two years, that has died out as the older architects have retired or died. They refused to recognize contemporary architecture and they stayed with the styles. Our policy is that we want to be up-to-date in design. However, we also try to anticipate how any building we design is going to look twenty or thirty years from now. Is that building going to be one you will still be proud of? Is it going to be one that people will want to occupy? Will offices be rentable there, or whatever the use of the building, is it still going to be useful? As a result, we try to make our buildings reflect the middle of the road in design—maybe we're a little left of center. But we're not going to have our buildings outmoded. We owe it to our clients, and we owe it to ourselves. We want our buildings to be good.

SCHIPPERS

How do you establish the criteria for designs that will last and that will be up-to-date and not become outmoded?

FIELD

That's the hardest thing in the world to describe to the layman. It's like clothing. How do you know that clothing is up-to-date? New York comes up with something new and that's up-to-date, but it might be way out someplace else. Tomorrow it's all changed again. Now, buildings go through the same

evolution, you might say. We can look at buildings and walk around LA and any other city in the United States and say, "This building was built in '25; this one was built in '35; this was built in '40." Some of them are still excellent today and will be good for a long time yet. Some were bad the day they were finished, but they were built to an emotional reaction, you might say, to the times in which they were designed. The designer wanted to create something really out of this world, and he lost his hold a bit.

SCHIPPERS

How is good taste, or judgment in design developed?

FIELD

Well, I think possibly more than ever before, we're beginning to come back to the thinking of the stylistic period. I know a number of architects feel that, basically, the fundamentals, of the classic buildings, the proportions that were established in the classic era, are still good, I think the classic era developed good design of mass, the shape of the building; its form and the fenestration had the charm of balance or even unbalance. Of course, we don't insist on perfect balance now and I'm in favor of that. Everything used to be in the center, and the center always used to be exactly in the middle. Everything was done in the middle, The tower was in the middle. The interest was in the middle. Everything was balanced above the center line. Thank God, we got away from that, because sometimes the interest is somewhere else and serves a more practical function in the planning of the building. In most of our new buildings, for example, it just so happens that we've put our elevators at one end of the building. That means all the rest of the floor space on every floor in that whole building is usable, because it isn't broken up right in the middle of the building by the mechanical core, which is for air conditioning, electrical rooms, janitors' closets, elevators, stairs, and the rest of those things. Sometimes, how-ever, the law requires central stairways, so we cannot always control where they go. Basically, we try to keep elevators in such a place they won't interfere with the flexible planning of a building. But getting back to your question of what is the determining factor for good style and how you arrive at it, I can say this much to you. I think teaching architecture design is one of the most difficult and elusive things there is. A painter uses a face, a figure, trees, and other things of nature to develop his own impression of

what he sees. He can make that into anything he wants, but he uses the basic idea even though the picture doesn't look like what he is seeing. Well, in our profession, we do something similar. It's very elusive but we say, "Building develops character." It's an architect's expression. The building defines Its use by its appearance, but we don't overemphasize that. In other words, we don't want a hospital to look like a factory; but, as a matter of fact, we don't want it to look like a hospital, so we define Its character. An undefinable quality of the building somehow reflects what its use is. That's what we attempt to achieve. However, most design is based on things that have been done by the older firms of architects. The designs have been handed down and there is a certain tie with the styles that have been established, whether or not we like to acknowledge it. Also, the proportions inside buildings are pretty much fixed by the size of human beings You don't have offices with twenty-foot ceilings because people seldom grow beyond six feet tall. Everything is scaled as far as possible to human occupancy. Now in big assembly rooms and things like that, the ceilings are higher but there is a reason for it. But for any of these things there is a scale, and we sense or feel what it is, but to define it is almost impossible. I don't think I could define what it is, but the scale of a building is one thing we are always fighting for. In other words, a great big building with little tiny windows looks all wrong, doesn't it? So you make your windows large enough so that they belong to the pattern and that begins to evaluate the scale. Usually, to help people visualize how big the building will be, a human figure is drawn at ground level to establish the scale. Of course, that's how things have been worked out. All goes back to the human figure being the basis for the size of a building and decides how big the windows will be, how high the ceilings are, how wide the hallways will be and everything else. That's a pretty poor explanation but it's a difficult subject.

SCHIPPERS

You mentioned that the strictly formal centering of things has given way to informality. Has that come about partly because of our different style of living?

FIELD

Yes, we're very informal now in our buildings, and we're living that way, aren't we? We don't come in to the office with a topcoat and a bowler hat and a

cane and our buildings don't show that formality. Everything in our whole life now is informal. Our buildings reflect that and still retain a certain dignity. That's what we want. We want buildings to have dignity and still have a basic informal feeling, so you feel at home. Our homes reflect that in particular.

SCHIPPERS

How much do you think design has been affected by technological breakthroughs and new materials such as aluminum?

FIELD

We are the recipients, or should I say the target for these breakthroughs, because the companies that develop these things look to the architects and others in the designing profession to make use of these new materials. Of course, in nine out of ten cases, the reason for these breakthroughs has been to find ways and means of building our structures at less cost or at no more cost than we have been building. For example, since World War IX, curtain walls with their modular facing devices have been built all over the place. Of course, originally, they leaked like sieves. For example, one of Skidmore and Merrill's early buildings of this type, the Lever House in New York, was all glass and metal. Well, what they didn't anticipate, or what they didn't realize was that when you have acres of glass and acres of metal there's a terrific movement of that metal due to the expansion and contraction when the temperature changes. Metal actually is very thin, and it's only when you put it into shapes that it gives it strength. But it's still susceptible to temperature changes. Well, the movement of the metal in that building was so great that all windows leaked. They tried to caulk them for years, but they weren't successful until Thiacol came out with a caulking compound that, you might say, was almost fool-proof. I forget how much it cost, but it was a fabulous amount just to caulk the windows. They told me back there one day (I wouldn't let the architects know that I'm telling you) that they swept out twenty tons of water after a rainstorm. You see, what happens when all these new things come out is that people get excited about them and use them, but there always seems to be something that can't be anticipated that happens. In this case, it was the movement of the metal in the building which the architects thought they had taken care of but they had not done it adequately. Now, we all know from experience what to do and what-not to do. Well, other

things that are changing our whole concept of designing also have to do with materials. Such things as curtain walls are done with lightweight materials because we can no longer afford to have massive buildings with marble or granite going all the way up to the top of these high-rise buildings. The weight alone prohibits it, because the structure that supports such materials has to be increased tremendously. So these new light materials have allowed us to go up higher and have safer buildings. We also can build them more rapidly, and that's an economy. I think it's the way it should be. These buildings represent the technology of our present age. What, is going to happen in twenty years from now is going to be as different then as our buildings are from the past. We know these things are going to continue to improve In every aspect of building. Little changes accrue to make big ones. For example, with electronic devises and everything else coming out, lighting is changing every day. With tele-push-button-control, you don't even have to push a button. It's almost gotten to the point now that if you sneeze, something happens. You wave your hand in front of an elevator button, and the elevator stops or moves on without an operator. I mean all of these things, big or little, affect your thinking and design and planning. Of course, we are also cultivating an international look, which is rather discouraging to me. I just returned from a two-month cruise through the Mediterranean. At Palermo and all these old cities that were so charming, right in the middle of them, you see one of these damned high-rise buildings that are of the character-less type you see all over the world. There it stands and ruins the appearance of the whole city. It's completely out of place. Unfortunately, there are, today, hundreds of competent architects whose idea of design is to establish something different, outstanding, and to hell with the building's environment. They want their buildings to stand out. Well, I feel what they're doing is wrong. I'm sure many others go along with me on that and have the same feeling. I do not think we have the right to destroy the charm of an area by putting up unsightly buildings. Now, maybe the building itself is handsome, but if it is put in the wrong place, that destroys everything. The building itself looks out of place no matter how good it is. At the same time, the area in which it goes has been hurt by that monster that goes up there. As I say, it could be the best-looking building in the world if it were in the middle of the city that it was right for. I think my complaint today, as a result of my travels is that we are doing great damage to the appearance of our cities. I am probably as responsible as

anybody else, but in our excitement of building things different, getting them up in a hurry and making a name for ourselves we don't stop to think. Actually, we work harder to be different than anything else. Apparently, we are in an era right now when everybody wants to do something different—something that has never been done before. That seems to be the trend. But, I think the worst thing we are doing as architects is clobbering up our cities. Those people in the areas that permit this to happen are also to blame, so we're all in this thing together. The architects do it, but the community permits it. Every city in the United States looks alike, basically, don't they? Washington and New Orleans look a bit different, but when you drive through Midwestern cities, you drive through Podunk. Every Main Street looks alike. Some of the cities have town squares, and in most of them you see the same red brick buildings. There's no character. They are faceless. Los Angeles has got that way, and I'm ashamed of Los Angeles because it has been permitted to go that way. Other than loud talk, there are never any steps taken to re-plan and to re-evaluate and direct and guide the development of the city. And this is the crucial time, because the city's old enough now that we're beginning to tear down and rebuild. But so far, nothing has been done about improving the thing as a whole. All we do is tear down buildings and build new ones with the result of getting the unfortunate look of another Main Street. In fact, some areas that were once lovely have deteriorated beyond belief. I feel this is my home city because I've spent most of my life here. I'm very shocked at what I see, but there doesn't seem to be any pride in anything but one's own property and to hell with the community.

SCHIPPERS

And this lack of community concern also affects the esthetic value of buildings?

FIELD

Well, I can't tell you exactly how much esthetic value my own buildings have. I wish I knew. I used to have the illusion that a beautiful building was a joy forever to everybody. I find that I am the only one among ten thousand who thinks that. The others think, "The hell with it—how does it work? How does it function?" They see the building once and never look at it again. So it stands there, maybe it's a beauty, but nobody cares about it except other architects

or somebody who might drive by and take a picture of it. That's one of the discouraging things that, luckily, is disappearing in other arts. Radio and television, if they haven't done anything else, have made people appreciate good music, haven't they? You can't do that with buildings, because you're not exposed to them the same way. When people can turn on good music for twenty-four hours a day, year in and year out, pretty soon, against their will, they get to know the difference between good music and poor music and appreciate good music. Painting is more and more becoming a fad. People are getting involved in the arts and painting. I think a lot of this, actually, has resulted from the "do-it-yourself" encouragement. People take a short course on how to paint, or somebody paints and enjoys it and tells others to do it. I think that's true in many other areas and it has created an appreciation for the arts. But buildings still are not appreciated by the average person as compared to other things in art. This doesn't hold true in all cases, because if a building is built on a beautiful site, it usually is appreciated. But the average building that's built in the metropolitan area is rarely seen above the second floor. Architects spend a lot of time and concern in designing nice-looking buildings for metropolitan areas, all the same but people don't notice it. Incidentally, in this connection, landscaping has become a wonderful aid to architecture. We tie in landscaping with our buildings more than ever before. We always did have architectural landscaping, but not quite to this extent. Now, we're bringing back water fountains and such and placing them in the foreground along with planting. We place the buildings so there is room for this in front of them and with this new approach to spacing, the buildings become more beautiful. Probably the greatest advance we've made, however, is the way we are designing factories. In various parts of the country, you see. that factories are placed in very attractive settings and yet they are factories efficiently producing materials and products of all kinds. This is one of the most gratifying things to architects. Instead of just being boxes, built as cheaply as possible, they are becoming interesting buildings. We are usually able to screen, to a certain degree, the area where the actual manufacturing operation is going on and have nice administration buildings placed around so that the site becomes attractive. That goes a long way towards improving the environment of all the communities where this kind of building is done.

And it's good for the business to have good looking buildings.

FIELD

Well, we think so as architects. We think it's the finest business in the world, because we feel it's an improvement to have a building that's attractively designed and is a lasting design. In conjunction with wonderful landscaping, the design automatically reflects itself in the morale of the employees. Of course if you are going to. make a building attractive on the outside, you almost instinctively make the inside attractive through the use of colors, good ventilation, air conditioning, the excellent lighting, and all of these things which we have available today. Then there are side effects like attractive lunch rooms, cafeterias, and lounge rooms. The increasing attention we are giving to those facilities is helping to create a completely new environment for the people who work in those plants. This is all part of the architecture as a whole. These things are not done individually. It's all part of our endeavor to upgrade conditions in these plants, and I think we've been highly successful throughout the country. I'm sure everybody has seen pictures of these big plants in *Life* and *Fortune*. Some of them are magnificent structures. And they're factories. This is one kind of building that architects are influencing. Even with that kind of improvement, however, many of us are concerned because almost nothing is being done about our cities that have become blighted. Even the development of our own young city (Los Angeles is a young city, you know) is going very badly. I don't know what the answer is. We are putting trees on the streets where trees didn't exist before and this is helping to a degree, but the basic problem of planning is not being tackled. We need efficient transportation and all the other things that make a city a delightful place to live. Here the battle for planning is being lost.

SCHIPPERS

Where do you think the responsibility for planning rests?

FIELD

Well, architects take the stand that they are probably the leaders. However, they are not strong enough, numerically or anything else, and, besides, people are automatically suspicious of architects. I think that general attitude extends to decorators, too. We are thought of as a kind of necessary evil, and all we do

is spend money and ignore the practical side. Of course, that's the farthest thing from the truth. Actually, successful, present-day architects are as much engineers as they are architects. But the old concept of the architect persists—the Windsor tie, smock, and head in the clouds. Actually, we have to be practical businessmen to begin with, because even though this is a profession, it is also a business. Next, we've got to analyze the problems of the clients in a highly practical way as an engineer does. So, we're acting as engineers in the layouts, which has nothing more to do with planning than design, although design and planning go hand in hand. You can't have one without the other. There is the statement that good planning, functional planning, makes for good design. Well, that's not quite so, although it aids tremendously. Orderly planning is bound to reflect, architecturally, in a very pleasant manner. In this office, we approach planning first. That is the most important thing. I've been in offices down through the years, where we have designed a building first and then tried to fit a plan to it. That was because we were doing the exterior of the building, and someone else did the planning. To me, that's all wrong. That's not our function. Our function, first of all, is to design a building so the occupants can operate efficiently, make money, expand, have pleasant working conditions for themselves and their staff. If they want to make changes, why, at minimum cost, they can do this. If that is done properly, the exterior of the building will reflect the excellence of the firm who owns and operates the building. So, I try to identify to what use the building is being put if it's at all possible. Sometimes it isn't possible because the requirements are such that you aren't allowed to do anything like that, but where it can be done, we like to do it. Today, of course, the exteriors are less important than they were thirty years ago because of the advancements in designing the interiors of the building. I think in the last ten years we've made remarkable advancements in lighting, acoustics, sound control, and air conditioning. Now, the first thing is to make the building inside highly efficient. The use of color, for example, is important. We now go in for all kinds of colors, and you know they affect the moods of people. You can make people depressed or you can make them cheerful, simply by the use of colors. Nobody knows why. Of course, you have got to use good judgment, because you can't make colors that will detract from what they are doing. The colors have got to be worked out so that people can easily concentrate on their work, whatever their work might be. For instance, where machines are

involved you don't want to have distracting colors around, and yet you use bright colors to the parts of the machines that are hazardous. Again, it's a matter of judgment. Basically, these are things we are doing with color and the wonderful materials we are using presently. Ten years from now, they will probably seem very mediocre. But vinyls and things like that make maintenance very much easier and are helping tremendously in buildings.

1.6. CHAPTER VI: TWO WINDOWLESS BUILDINGS

Inasmuch as you want me to talk about some of our recent buildings and some interesting features of those buildings, it might be worthwhile to tell about a trend that we were involved in some short years ago when we were doing windowless office buildings. This, of course, has always been a subject that you dwell on very lightly with clients. From time immemorial, windows have always been a must. The idea that everybody had claustrophobia and had to have a window in his office or in his home is a hangover, I guess, from the days when men used to live in caves. However, we have watched with interest, down through the years, how people operate in their own offices. Almost without exception, we'll go into an office and find the Venetian shades closed, and, if they have nice drapes, they're drawn. About the only item that is of interest is the glow through the drapes and the fact that there are windows there. Beyond that, without a question, windows are a nuisance.

Actually, the windows on our present buildings create enormous maintenance problems. The windows have to be washed three to four times a year. They act as a transmitter of both hot and cold air from the outside. In the summertime, they build up the tonnage load of warm air sent through for refrigerated air conditioning units. In addition, of course, the sun in this area is very tough on drapes and furniture and fabrics of all kinds. Because of fading they have to be replaced far earlier than should be the case even where fine fabrics are used.

Well, we had a client (the California Electric and Power Company) who operates in the San Bernardino-Riverside County area and they were going to build a new office building right in the middle of the orange groves where they had beautiful views. Everything was desirable for windows, but they wanted a windowless office building We could understand that for downtown Los Angeles, where there would be no view particularly, except of other buildings or areas that might be blighted. But out there of all places, you would think that windows would be highly desirable. However, we designed their building the way they wanted it. It was one of the early pre-stress, post-tension, lift-slab jobs, where we use long spans and thin slabs.

It came out exceptionally well. Other than their cafeteria, a large entrance lobby, and the stairways, the rest of the building is completely without windows. We also discussed the possibility of having music in the building as background sound to lower the sound level with the client's representatives. We also proposed using more open office space than we would normally use in the average building. As I mentioned, up until recently, everybody in office buildings had to have a private office. That was sort of a status symbol. A man has only to sit in his private office and look quite grand to be important. More and more, however, large corporations are using large open spaces with five-foot or even six- or seven-foot partitions. That allows overall planning for air conditioning and lighting. With close studies of acoustical properties of various materials, we have found they can be used in such a way that people in the adjoining offices are not conscious of what is being spoken in the office adjacent to them. Of course, until we had all these acoustic materials and new kinds of lighting, and many other things, what we're doing now wasn't practical. Even ten or twelve years ago it wouldn't have been.

By the way, in this building, we relied heavily on color. On the different walls in an area, we used different colors. That, in conjunction with the background music, did a terrific job in offsetting any tendency to claustrophobia the people working there might have. Shortly after the building was completed, we joined with the administration in watching the reactions of the people in this new building and how they worked under new conditions and we were very delighted. So was the administration, A claustrophobia reaction wasn't apparent at all. In fact, we had no indication of it. Possibly, unknown to us, there may have been one or two cases, but the bulk of the people who were in that building didn't show it, and there's some four or five hundred clerical workers. They all found the building to be delightful.

This was rather a pleasant finding, because, for a number of years, we felt this was the most practical thing to do in congested buildings. It not only saves the maintenance costs of windows and the costs of additional refrigeration, but it also gives one more solid wall that can be used and makes for greater flexibility in the building itself. That's very important, because in most of our office buildings today, we use modular partitions which can be moved, and adjusted to any size. Any number of offices or work areas can be made without great cost. By having ceilings that are suspended lights can be adjusted simply by replacing the acoustical tiles. A surprising amount of changes can be made easily at a very low cost.

That was our first experience. Then about four years ago, we had another interesting challenge when we did a building for North American Aviation. Since their plants are adjacent to the International Airport, they have a tremendous sound problem out there, because of the jets. They wanted office buildings where the office workers wouldn't be disturbed by the tremendous whine of the jets that continues all day long, I guess it

was almost impossible for people to ever become accustomed to the noise. People do become accustomed to a great many sounds and other conditions in which they work, but they discovered nobody ever; became accustomed to the sound of the jets or could adjust to it. Well, this building was designed and studied from the point of sound transmission to determine the type of materials and the type of insulation that would be necessary to cut out that sound. Again, we used color to brighten the interior, but not quite as extensively as in the building we did for the California Electric and Power Company, That was because North American had greater areas, open spaces, for clerical work than the California Electric Company had. There's about a thousand people in the building, and we just finished an addition to the building about a month ago.

Both of these buildings are windowless structures. They have been interesting to us, because we think the trend is gradually going to take hold with companies and corporations that need new housing or office buildings for their firms. It works out very, very well for them, but, of course, this can't be done with buildings that are being built for tenants. The man who rents an office wants to be able to look outdoors when he so desires, so it's not applicable to the average office building. But for corporations or industry or even governmental buildings, why it's highly practical. It cuts down on the maintenance costs tremendously and gives greater flexibility within the structure than is allowed by buildings with windows.

Just two weeks ago, Mr. Fine and myself came back from Washington where we negotiated for this new custom house to be built at Reeves Field, Terminal Island. We discussed the possibilities of a windowless building with them, and they were very receptive. This is for the General Services Administration of the Federal Government. They are the housekeepers for the government and have everything to do with all the buildings that are built for the Federal government. They were very open to the suggestion and very much interested. So, we're now in the process of making a number of preliminary studies—buildings with windows and buildings without. This way, they'll have a chance to decide which way they want.

SCHIPPERS

> What has been the general reaction of the people who work in these buildings?

FIELD

> It's been wonderful. We were afraid of that in the beginning. That's the reason we were kind of treading lightly on recommending them. It turned out that both of the clients we built for wanted windowless buildings. So, we didn't do

a job on selling the idea. If we had sold them on it, and it had turned out to be bad, it would have been rather unfortunate that we were involved in the thing. But in this case, both these big companies asked for this type of building, and we were delighted to be able to be part of it. I think as time goes on, we're going to see more and more buildings of this type because it does affect maintenance and cost tremendously and greater space utilization within the building. Well, anyway, those were interesting experiences. The surprising part is that there were no cases of that claustrophobia we have been told about by the companies in question. I'm sure If there had been, they'd let us know, even If there had only been one or two. I think the whole thing is that to offset any closed-in feeling you have to make the offices and spaces delightful, colorful and bright so a person has a feeling of cheerfulness and well-being. Of course, for some years we've known that color affects people very definitely. You can go into a room and become very depressed, or you can go into another room and be cheerful. You don't know what it is or why it is, but the colors themselves are attractive and they do affect our temperaments tremendously. In fact, that's a lot more true than people a few years ago even thought it was. I remember not too long ago that the average color on most all of the interiors of these buildings was all green or all beige. They were afraid of color. That seems strange to us, because paint is less than paper thick on the walls and it's something that can be replaced easily. One coat will cover it, but it becomes quite a serious thing to the people that build and occupy the buildings, no matter how well it's designed. An architect can lose out because the color doesn't suit the client, if the architect himself is involved, and he usually is, to a greater or. lesser degree. But claustrophobia is one thing that we've not heard about because of the manner in which we handle these buildings. Now, I'm not saying that this won't occur in other buildings, because people are still people and you can't change them. But, as of now, from our experience, we see great possibilities In the windowless building and we don't think it will inhibit people at all.

SCHIPPERS

There's a heavy reliance then on technology in such things as air conditioning. What would happen in case of a power failure? Are there auxiliary systems built in?

FIELD

There hasn't been so far. The chance of power failure is very remote, of course, because our electric companies now have standbys. Hospitals, however, still have standby power. But there are many companies whose business is completely dependent upon a continual power supply, at all times and under any conditions. So, our big power companies have standby generators that snap on almost immediately and take up the slack whenever a plant might fail or where something happens to a circuit that causes it to blow out or whatever the case may be. Fire, for example, might cause the power lines in the vicinity to be destroyed, but these companies have standby lines and they are set up so that it would be a rare occasion that they would be totally cut off.

SCHIPPERS

Are windowless buildings mere substantial than steel-glass construction?

FIELD

Basically, the building frame is the same. The only difference is that in place of the glass, you use lightweight curtain walls or masonry or concrete. So, your structure is not affected. Our buildings here, as you know, in the West, are all designed to withstand earthquakes, and they are unusually substantial to begin with. So, building without windows doesn't change the basic concept of the building at all.

SCHIPPERS

Would you say they're more economical to build?

FIELD

It's more economical to maintain. I don't think glass costs much more than other wall materials, but it's more economical if you look at the whole cost, because your air conditioning is going to cost less. Now, the lighting in offices, schools, or any place where there are windows is affected by outside light. The light that comes through the average window is either glaring or very dim in wintertime and in cloudy weather. Bright or dim, it reflects the walls and that fluctuation causes a little problem with the general lighting. Sometimes, you'll have brightness one minute, and dullness the next. If you don't have that problem, and your lighting system is designed for undisturbed spaces, you can

have evenly distributed light over the whole area. You're better off, because your lighting isn't affected by outside light coming through a window. This is an advantage of windowless structures. With our fine lighting today (which has been rather recently developed), we're far better off without windows than we are with them. It's better on the eyes and better for the health—all those things. All-glass and curtain-wall buildings are still going to be done, of course, because the look of a building that's all glass is very exciting. However, there's one thing in an all-glass building that I find a problem in my own home. Unless that glass is kept spotless, it gets pretty dowdy looking. I have a contemporary house and I have lots of glass, but nothing near the amount used in a lot of these houses. I know that because of the fogs and the mists and the dusts from outside that our windows require far more washing than we had to do in houses with windows that were cut in small panes. The dirt was unnoticeable. But with all this glass, unless these windows are kept spotless, the house looks dowdy. Of course, there are also the problems of fading, deterioration of fabrics because of the sunshine, and heat loss as I've already mentioned. Buildings that have all this glass have to be kept spotless to look "white and glistening" as they call it. They use the expression many times in these papers or articles about these buildings. They glisten if they wash windows all the time. Well there's a cost. Once the companies get a building they find they're stuck with a cost they didn't plan on in the beginning. They get carried away by the new design or the smartness of design, and they pay the piper after the building is finished. Of course, I don't want to give you the idea we won't do buildings like that. We will do it and have done it because we have to be up with the herd and we like to be progressive in our thinking here in the office. Fortunately, in the two buildings I'm referring to, the companies had determined to build with no windows. In the case of North American Aviation, the noise couldn't be blocked out by layers of glass. In the other case, I suppose if I would ask the question, it was because they didn't want a lot of people looking out the windows all day at the orange groves and forgetting their work. I don't know that is the case, and I never did discover exactly why California Electric and Power Company went to windowless buildings, because they are right in the middle of all those wonderful orange groves. It's the last place I would want to have a windowless building. I mean, personally. We would never have suggested one for that area. I would suggest it, personally, for downtown Los Angeles, though.

Windows are valueless unless you get up to around twenty-five or thirty stories as they are doing now. Then you have a fine view. But, after people look at the view for the first two or three days, they close their shades and they don't bother to look any more. They've seen it. They want to control the light that comes through the windows; and, it becomes, I guess, a distraction to a degree. But no man can sit in his office and look out his window all day long. He's got to work.

SCHIPPERS

So the site and location of the building influences your design. Isn't that something advocated in the organic approach to architecture?

FIELD

Well, you know this organic thinking came out of the mind of Frank Lloyd Wright. He stressed that heavily. Looking back, most of his houses reflected that. I think he featured the windows which opened out on beautiful courts or other vistas. Now a good part of the time he created those vistas for his homes and when they were located where vistas already existed, he would take advantage of it. In one house he did many years ago ("Laughing Waters"), the balconies went out over this beautiful creek and the stairway went right down to the water. You couldn't go anywhere unless you jumped into the water, but it is a fabulous thing. Architects are definitely influenced by the site. The location has a tremendous amount to do with our reaction to the planning and designing of a building. They are almost entirely designed to suit the site—that is, if our clients allow it. What I might tell you is good for one building might be entirely wrong for a building somewhere else. You might wonder what was wrong with a building and wonder why the same features look good on another building. Well, it's because of where the building is built. It's the relationship to nature, if you want to call it that. Of course, the organic scheme of things that Frank Lloyd Wright worked on so much was that we use organic materials—stone, timber, everything that is organic. However, he did get into steel buildings quite a bit and used the steel frame. But, basically, he stayed with Nature's elements. That was anything you dig up or mix up with water and put together. Everything like that. That was one of his ideas that he advocated strongly for a long time. He developed that to quite a degree. I think we're all influenced to a certain extent by Frank Lloyd Wright. For other

architects, however, he was a pain in the neck, because only he existed. But that was part of his sales campaign. He did that for color and glamour. He was a very smart operator. Actually, there are not many Frank Lloyd Wrights in the world. It's good there are not too many of them because we'd all be fighting among ourselves. But we do have some magnificent architects today that are doing wonderful jobs. I could name them easily and they are from different schools. Mies Van der Rohe, who is well known, shows the skeleton of the building. His buildings are boxy, and the steel columns on the exterior walls became a part of his architecture. He puts glass in between them. He goes so far as actually showing the framework of the building. It's a strong way to do things, In this thinking, but fortunately, architects are individuals and we don't always follow the herd. We're individualists. I don't agree with Mies Van der Rohe's approach, in the main, because to me his buildings lack character. Whether it's a hospital, a hotel, or a factory, they all look alike except for the height and the length and the width. Basically, they are all designed the same. Looking at the building, you couldn't tell what its function was. I like to be able to look at a building and know the exterior represents what it contains on the inside. Now, you can't do that all the time, but design can pretty well identify the use of the building. A church looks like a church. Now, what does a church look like? Today, we see churches that look completely different from what they used to. When I was a youngster, I could think of a church in only one way. Of course, when I was growing up a church was either Gothic or it was English Tudor. There were a lot of these quaint, country churches of English style with their stone and timber combinations. There were towers on every church. But, today, that identification has ceased to exist in our minds. We see churches of all shapes and designs. However, it's surprising that with all the strange shapes and forms that. In the main, most of them look like churches. The clever architects have got the essence of the house of worship. I think that's what we're all trying to do in our buildings. We want to do something that meets the need and still moves forward. Now in this moving forward, as with everything else, we're going to make mistakes. We have made mistakes, architecturally, and the unfortunate thing about an architect's mistake is that the owner, the client, has to live with that mistake for as long as the building stands. He looks at it every day. That's the one thing we have to be very careful about» We always see our mistakes, though, because you can't bury them.

SCHIPPERS

In trying for designs that correspond to the building's use, doesn't the individual interpretation of the architect also show more, that is, his own stamp or signature?

FIELD

Well, I think that was true up until just recently. Most all of our firms now want their building to be different from what somebody else is building, so it's a little more difficult for architects to develop an Individual style now than it was a few years ago. In other words, several years ago, I could have walked down the street with you in Los Angeles and many other cities and tell you who designed each building. However, this so-called International design that we are seeing all over has changed that. They tend to all look alike. It is very unfortunate. In the effort to be in vogue, a lot of these modem buildings, in my opinion, have become faceless. They've lost character in their design and they're meaningless. They have nothing that distinguishes them and there are a thousand others like them all over the world. That's happening everywhere, unfortunately. Not only American architects do this, but the foreign architects do, too. The new buildings I saw in the Mediterranean were designed that way, and that is too bad. I think the time will come when it will settle down a little bit and, in designing buildings, we will take a little more cognizance of the areas in which our buildings are being built and try to make them belong there. In our office, every time we design a new building we look at it from the point of how it's going to look twenty years from now. Our buildings are deliberately done that way. We won't get a gold medal from the American Institute for progressive design because I know from years of experience that the pendulum in architectural design is like anything else. One year we're way over to the ultra-conservative, and the buildings are stark. Two years later, we move the other way and the buildings are over-ornamented. Then we come back again. Tastes in designs change just like women's fashions. That's one reason why I can look at these buildings and tell you what year they were built, but not necessarily who built them, as I used to be able to do.

SCHIPPERS

I have always thought your buildings look very solid and very handsome. "Solid," I think, is the word to describe them.

FIELD

Well, thank you. We try to look ahead, whether we're doing a major building or whether it's a small building; whether it represents a million dollars or whether it's a building that represents two or three hundred thousand. To the man who has two hundred thousand dollars, the building he wants is as important to him and to the success of his business as a twenty-million -dollar building is to a corporation. So we look at them both equally. We try to imagine how that building might fit in. Of course, we can't look ahead and tell exactly what's going to happen, but we know the company is going to have that building for the next fifty years, at least, if it's well built. How is it going to look twenty years from now and how is it going to function thirty years from now? We try to look ahead both in design and planning. We try to allow for adjustment to any needs that will arise ten years from now or even five years from now, because things change so rapidly. As I say, we're not doing very exciting buildings by today's standards, but these exciting buildings of five years ago are pretty well outmoded now. You see a lot of them around and they look pretty sad. In the endeavor to create excitement and interest and a thrilling sight the designers have resorted to the bag of tricks and haven't selected wisely.

SCHIPPERS

The windowless building seems to be an important movement in a new direction. How much would you Bay your firm, in particular, has contributed to this innovation?

FIELD

Well, they Bay there's nothing new under the sun. We Bay we started something and find out later that someone has beat us to it. Actually, as far as I know, those two offices we designed were the first windowless office buildings in the western United States. I'm not saying they're absolutely the first, but they're the first I know of. I'm sure there are others that have been built, but probably not of the magnitude of these two buildings. I do know, very definitely, that they have been highly successful. In other words, today I'm not afraid to propose windowless office buildings. I do it without any hesitancy because they are good, efficient, and doing a fine job for the corporations who are using them.

SCHIPPERS

Where did the ideas for windowless buildings come from? Did you get ideas from industrial or other closed buildings? Was there any carry-over?

FIELD

I don't think there was particularly. I think what has brought it about is not the building as such, but improvements in lighting. In the last ten or fifteen years, fluorescent lighting has given us illumination we could never achieve with incandescence. In the older schools, for example, we used 750-watt or 1,000-watt light bulbs which burned out every 400 hours. They not only give out light, but they gave out a terrific amount of heat. They were heaters in the room, just as if you had had a flame. Well, when fluorescent lights came out, after they were improved, that gave us lighting with a very low heat output. That's the first thing that made it possible to give us windowless buildings because we now have light that's far superior to anything we've had before. Of course, this is being improved all the time. But that is the first thing. The second thing is air conditioning, which has become very efficient in comparison to former standards. And it's going to improve in efficiency in the next five years far beyond what we have today. The very fact that we have dependable and efficient air conditioning has allowed us to do away with windows that hinge. The air-conditioning units can be serviced, and, of course, we put at least two units in so that if one has to be serviced, the other is put to work so there's no particular discomfort. The second unit doesn't carry the entire load one hundred percent but it gives you time to repair the other unit. Well, these are things we didn't have a few years ago that influence our thinking today.

SCHIPPERS

What other innovations have affected building?

FIELD

I think that since I started in this profession one of the biggest innovations is prestressed concrete work. I think probably it's one of the finest things that has happened to us in the masonry field. We can now precast large elements of concrete in thin dimensions instead of having walls ten inches thick. Walls now are four or five inches thick and that cuts down the weight of the

building. This is possible because we now control concrete by mathematical means which is rather inflexible as opposed to the old water-ratio method. Because of the testing laboratories that have come up in the past few years, we can control the density and the strength of our concrete. So, we have cut down the mass and weight of buildings, and, I think it's one of the finest things that has happened, because we can do so many more things as a result. For example, all over southern California you can see tilt-up warehouses. They are very inexpensive because the pattern of the concrete slabs is duplicated many times over. They are precast somewhere else and brought to the site by truck and lifted into place. About six years ago, we designed a complete facility for Shell Oil Company research at Modesto using slab construction. They had a small research laboratory there and they had one in Denver, They wanted to combine the two and bring all their people together. Well, we were in an area where we weren't so sure that the contractors were large enough or experienced enough to handle the job. They could do small buildings, but this was another thing. There were seven buildings at that time. We've added several since. We designed them and had Basalt do the concrete work. They have this big plant where they precast long-span girders for bridges and everything else. They cast tremendous lengths right there. They steam and cook them. Well, we had all our building columns, our girders, roof sections, everything, precast there. Their plant is only about 100 miles from where the buildings were being built, but trucking the material was cheaper than doing the casting on the job. It was amazing to watch these things go together. They poured the foundations, the floor slabs and everything else. Here was this big open space and not a thing up. The first truck came through and trucks kept coming through and these buildings all went up—just put together like cardboard. Within a week, we had all seven buildings all framed up and ready for the plastering and the interior finish. It was a fabulous thing. But they were designed that way. Well, we didn't have that advantage even fifteen years ago. Now, to me that's a wonderful thing, If you can do it economically. That is just one of the interesting things that we have developed in the last few years. We have so many things now that we can turn to, as architects and engineers, that our only problem now is to know when to use these things and where to find them. If they are available to us, we have to know how to use them in the interest of our client and in the interest of good building, economical building, and well-planned building.

1.7. CHAPTER VII: BUILDINGS IN THE LOS ANGELES CIVIC CENTER

SCHIPPERS

In what way was your firm involved in the planning of the new Civic Center in LA?

FIELD

Our firm was one of the firms involved in the Courthouse and Hall of Administration. Of course, there are a bunch of buildings down in LA Civic Center that our firm is connected with. The City Hall and the first State office building were built, some years ago. Then we did the Los Angeles County Law Library, which by the way, is not a county operation. It's a state operation. The word "county" is kind of misleading there. Then, later on, with some other firms, we entered a joint venture on the two big buildings—they are big buildings. I'm not at all happy about either one of those buildings to this extent. I think an error was made that wasn't the architects' fault. We tried to talk them into high-rise buildings, especially in the Courts building, so there would probably not be more than eight courts on a single floor. Well, what we have instead is a building that is seven hundred and fifty feet long. People walk miles; then everybody converges at the same time in the same place. The traffic pattern and the walking problem is tremendous. As architects, we felt that people should be able to go to whatever floor a particular court was located on and not have to walk, let's say, more than 150 feet from the elevators. In other words, if it had been on the vertical plan, it would have offset the miles of walking that has to be done now. But, unfortunately, the Citizens' Committee of Los Angeles, and the judges got the idea in their mind to do it another way. You know how that can happen. They informed the architects that the building was going to be long and low and follow the contour of the hill, which was almost impossible to do. We cut off Olive Street, so these buildings extend from Hill Street clear up to Grand. That's a heck of a long way for people to walk. To this day, I'm very sorry that we were forced to do that. We do the job because we don't feel safe enough to demand that our ideas be carried out. That is probably the way it should be. But we feel that our job is to try to indicate to the owners, whether it's at the government level or whether they're private owners, that there are certain things that should be considered. We feel it is our right and our duty. We should inform them of our

opinion and the reasons for it. We did this, and we were turned down cold. They ignored us completely because this is what they wanted. Naturally, we wanted to do the job and we did it to the best of our ability and the best we could. But, between the judges completing the design and the Citizens' Committee dictating how long the building should be and things like that, the architects wound up doing very little. Now, the designing of the building could have been so much better if we had had the right to have our designs approved and gone the way we wanted. But we didn't. Of course, if you want to do governmental work, well, you agree in the beginning you're going to have to conform to their thinking or you don't do it. We wanted to do the buildings and we did the best we could. Considering everything, we think they are very good buildings. They certainly are built "hell-for-strong." They'll be there forever. But, I'll always regret the fact that we had to build the buildings 750 feet long and were not able to cut down on the walking time for the people who use it all day, day in and day out. You see, a lot of those attorneys are down there every day. It is quite a hardship for older men to have to walk miles. But there's no choice.

SCHIPPERS

Are there other things about those projects that stick out in your mind?

FIELD

Well, of course, we were criticized very heavily by certain sources for using marbles and other materials in that building, but we were right in that. We used materials in that building that are going to give the County of Los Angeles and the tax payers minimum costs in maintaining those buildings for two hundred years. We think that we should do that, and we did it. Now, we were criticized heavily for gold-plating. People are so quick to call things gold-plated, you know, but if you had a chance to talk to these people who are doing the criticizing they would understand. But, again, you have to use quality materials or they won't last. Now, when the buildings of the magnitude those two buildings are, if you expect them to be good for any number of years, you have no choice but to use materials that are going to give you service for years. If they don't, then you haven't done the job. Today, nine times out of ten, buildings are built as a monument to reflect the company's integrity and their advancement. It's a matter of pride. Usually they could stay

in their old building, but they want their buildings to be efficiently planned and, especially, economical to maintain. Of course, you can't maintain a building economically when cheap materials are used in the beginning. For example, even though we don't use too much marble, we know very well that the marble in the Courts building and the Hall of Administration and the old City Hall that this office did years ago, looks as good today as the day it was put in there. Nothing has changed it in the last thirty-five years. Just wiping it down occasionally is enough to take care of it. How inexpensive it Is. If that were a painted wall, those walls would have had to be painted probably three or four hundred times in the interim. Each time more money goes out for painting. Then, after three, four, or five years, the paint gets pretty dowdy looking. Then you have to paint it to brighten it up again. Marble, fine woods, and so many materials that can be used, last. Of course, now, we have fine veneers, laminates, such as Formica, and other materials that have fine colors and finishes and they will last Indefinitely with no maintenance. These things are wonderful to have, because they go on practically forever, I guess. At least they will last beyond our lifetime. Well, these are the things that we contend in our office are the greatest economies. The way to save money is to spend a little bit more on floor coverings, hardware, wall coverings, and the roof, because they are the items that take the beating. Of course, in addition to that, it's necessary to have good electrical service and good air conditioning. But I'm speaking about the stuff we touch, we handle, walk on, sit on, rub against, and that we don't have to wash down all the time to keep it looking good.

SCHIPPERS

To what extent were political pressures exerted on you during the new Courts building project?

FIELD

Well, I think we're always subject to political pressures or the opinions of the individuals who are top-level seats in government. For example, Mr. John Anson Ford, who. at that time was supervisor, wanted balconies on the Courthouse. He wouldn't listen to anything else, so balconies were put on the courthouse. Then the judges insisted that their courts have oak paneling throughout. We have been criticized heavily for the amount of money spent in

the judges' chambers and the courtrooms which are all wood paneled. They just reek of money. But we were told to do it. We weren't even given the opportunity to object. X know that originally we had it in mind to cut down heavily on the paneling in the courtrooms and to use less costly materials even though it might have needed a little more attention for maintenance. But we had no choice. Of course, when the building was finished, the public went through to see these elaborate courtrooms, and automatically blamed the architect. Actually, we do what the client instructs us to do in practically every building.

SCHIPPERS

Was this a pretty small group that had the authority to decide?

FIELD

Well, let's say different people were given the authority to make decisions on behalf of whatever level of government they represented. For example, the judges had a building committee who had to pass on the drawings. In fact, they had to pass on everything. They were the ones who Influenced the thinking on the finishes and the planning of the courtrooms.

SCHIPPERS

Did they reflect more of their own personal taste or was it good judgment?

FIELD

Well, let's put it this way. I don't think any one man was responsible. I would say it was the feeling of judges—what, in their minds, a courtroom should look like. They think of the dignity of the court. I don't think their decision was based on any idea or influenced by the showiness of materials or design. I think, basically, they felt a court should represent to the people something of the dignity, which, of course, is needed. To their minds, down through history, courtrooms have always had paneled walls—English courts and everywhere else. I believe the idea of establishing the character of the courts and giving dignity to the courts influenced their instructions to the architects as to how they wanted the courtrooms finished. I know it did. Money wasn't particularly the issue because the judges were interested in the future, since we are going to have those courts there for two hundred years. They wanted those courts

to reflect the permanency of the law and the justice of our government. The way they were planned in their finishes, they really do. You walk into the courtroom and you know you are in the courtroom, and not in any-thing else but a courtroom. These judges are all very fine men. Men of high character; men I know personally. I know in working with many of the same judges on the Law Library, they would tell us all of their thinking and they would justify their thinking by the impact they wanted to make in the interest of law and order. Criminals go in there who have no respect for law. Of course, justice can be dispensed anywhere. It can be dispensed in a bar like in the Vigilante era or the frontier days. But what they wanted to do and felt was important was that the influence of law and justice was there when you walked into the courtroom. As I say, they wanted to get the character of the court, just as when you walk into a church, you have a feeling you're in a house of worship. This is what they wanted, and I have nothing to say against that. You can't beat that thinking, except it is not inexpensive to achieve. And architects are subject to public accusations of wasting the public's, the taxpayers' money. One reason the Citizens Committee gave for wanting the building to conform to the hill there and to be low was so that it wouldn't stick up like a sore thumb or some such statement. We hadn't yet gotten into change of height limits, but I was awfully sorry, and I regret it to this day. People shouldn't have to walk that far to court. Lots of people are old, infirm, sick, and. then for the judges and the older attorneys, it's quite a hardship.

SCHIPPERS

You might almost say that Los Angeles thinks low.

FIELD

They have been. They have been fighting these high-rises since time immemorial, you know. The funny part about it is, the way the law is today, high-rise building doesn't change the density of population in these areas even though we can go higher. For example, today we can take a lot 100' by 100' and we can go thirteen stories and use all of the lot as we did on all those downtown office buildings in the twenties and since. But today, we can build a building 50' by 100', or half the lot area, and go twice as high. So you have twice as much open space around the building than when you fill a whole lot

with a thirteen-story building. And the lower buildings are packed one against the other.

SCHIPPERS

Where did the idea for the original height limit come from?

FIELD

Mr. Austin, our senior member, was influential to a degree in establishing a height limit. It never occurred to them, at that time, about maintaining the same area and Increasing heights. Today, the area of the ground on which you build determines the area of the building, which is thirteen times the area of the ground. Now, for instance, if you have a piece of ground a mile long and half a mile wide, you can go up a hundred stories. But, even if you do, that brings no more people to that area than if there were twelve stories or fifteen stories over the same area. But at the time they established the old height limit, they had the feeling in Los Angeles that they didn't want a jagged skyline like they saw developing in San Francisco, Philadelphia, and New York City. They felt that in the interest of the community an even skyline was more desirable. Unfortunately, it gives the most deadly appearance, and it lacks the interest and excitement that we see in New York and the rest of those cities. Those towers go up, and give a very exciting profile to those cities. You can't achieve that any other way. This limit was retained for years and years and couldn't be broken. We tried many times to give justification for the law to be changed, but it became a chartered law, which meant we had to get the vote of the people. Unfortunately, those who wanted to maintain this old way of life would come out end protest with the fact that density of population would increase downtown and that we would be like New York City. They couldn't Bee that the population density would never change if the area-height ratio was used. If a building was two feet wide and went up a thousand stories, no more people could be in that building than if it took the whole lot and was thirteen stories high. But, luckily, five or six years ago, we were able to see things change. It took a lot of doing, but now, we are going to see buildings downtown that are going to be far more attractive. It will give us a skyline which will be exciting and we can be proud of rather than the monotony of a straight line.

SCHIPPERS

Isn't this going to happen all over the city?

FIELD

Of course, you are conscious of a twelve-story building looking high in an area where there are only houses, but downtown where there is already that monotony of height, the break in that skyline is going to be the most noticeable difference. I'm using downtown as an example.

SCHIPPERS

It also indicates that the downtown area is going to grow.

FIELD

Yes. I think we're going to see downtown Los Angeles go through a terrific change in the next ten years. I think we're going to see lots of buildings being torn down and new buildings going up, because you'll never get away from the fact that the heart of Los Angeles is in the downtown area even though shopping is gone. The financial district will remain, and lots of companies want to stay downtown because they are close to governmental buildings, close to the board on the Stock Exchange and all those things. There are many reasons why they want to be downtown. Attorneys, especially, want to be downtown and more than ever be-fore because there are so many new courts now functioning. They don't want to be way out in an outlying area when they have to go to court for cases. The very fact that the courts have grown and that there are so many more uses of courts creates a need for more attorneys and judges, and they want to be downtown near these things. And, of course, the railroad is downtown where everything merges and that will never change. In the next ten years, I expect to see LA completely changed. It will be higher and more attractive. I don't expect it to ever be a merchandising area, though. I don't think women will shop downtown. I think merchandising will remain in the outlying shopping areas that have grown up. But the heart of business will be downtown. I think many companies will set up their home offices downtown and many that are elsewhere in the country will move here as time goes on. I think it also has a lot to do with the Port of Los Angeles. The city has grown and the port's become very big. I think more and more concentration of companies that have to do with import and expert is going to occur. They will have to have bigger quarters and all those things and I think that's going to

have some effect on downtown, too. There are many things that are going to happen downtown, and what the city needs is hotels. We're shy of first-class hotels. We talk about the Statler, the Biltmore, because these are the only first-class hotels we have downtown today. The rest of them are so old that they are obsolete. The average person doesn't want to stay there. I think we're going to see some very fine hotels soon. They won't be the gold-plated type resort hotel, but we're going to have some fine commercial hotels downtown. We need that downtown, because of the conventions coming in. I think the downtown area will have to have facilities for conventions because as it is now, they are all spread out and that Isn't satisfactory. Besides the concentration of hotels and office buildings, I think a lot of banks are going to build large new buildings downtown like the California Bank did. These are the things I expect to see in downtown Los Angeles.

SCHIPPERS

Will apartment buildings follow?

FIELD

I think Bunker Hill and the area close to downtown will be in apartment buildings as it is in New York.

SCHIPPERS

Then perhaps theater and cultural activities will also take hold downtown.

FIELD

Well, of course, we will have that with the new music hall. That will be a permanent entity downtown. But in any event, I look forward in the next ten years to see some tremendous changes in LA.

1.8. CHAPTER VIII: SOME BUILDINGS AT UCLA

Looking back on some of our projects, I think that some of the buildings that we planned and designed at UCLA might be of some interest. The first of them was started in '46, right after the war. At that time, the supervising architect of UCLA was the man who had considerable Influence in establishing Romanesque as the basic architectural design of UCLA. Incidentally, I was never in accord with that idea. Because of its setting in those rolling hills, when the school was first conceived, I think the architecture should have been planned to be a little more along the native

Californian style. Let's use the word Spanish for lack of a better definition, but there are offshoots of the Spanish architecture that would have been highly suitable. The lines of that kind of architecture flow with the hills and is characteristic of California, especially the southern part.

Anyway, the first building that we did at UCLA was the Business Administration Building. Incidentally, it was the last building built on the campus following the Romanesque design. It's brick and stone and it's detailed in the manner of the Romanesque. I wouldn't say that it is particularly outstanding, but it IS well-constructed and well-planned for its use, Unfortunately, the planning we did those days, even though it was not too long ago, as compared with the planning we do today is quite different. There, we built fixed partitions and didn't give too much consideration to the changing needs of such a building. Today, we anticipate in our planning that whatever building we're working on may need major changes in the future. So it should be planned so changes can be made with a minimum amount of cost and work.

Among the buildings that we planned and designed out there are the Home Economics Building and the Humanities Building—known as the classroom office building. Incidentally, that was the first and tallest lift-slab job on the west coast until about three years ago.

Then, the last building that we were party to was the Faculty Club, which is completely apart design-wise. It's more of a country club than part of the campus. To get the informality of a wooden building was the desire of the supervising architects and the faculty.

But the problem out there, as I mentioned before, has to do with the use changes of a building. This is shown in the Home Economics Building, which is quite a structure. It's designed for laboratory research to help develop good foodstuffs and to train people in hotel management and handling foods. It even has laboratories for research on fabrics and many other items. But, just recently, with the new state colleges coming up, the University has done away with this particular course at UCLA and now the state colleges have taken over the responsibility of providing Home Economics courses. So now they are faced with adapting a building that was designed for only one use and is a single-purpose building. I don't know what they are going to do with it, and I don't think the University itself knows, but something has to be done with it.

The building that we think is a very fine example of our work is the office and classroom building. I don't recall if it is five stories or six stories, but anyway, it's a lift-slab job. It worked out very successfully, and we have been told even recently that

it's considered one of the best-designed buildings on campus. That is very gratifying because many buildings have been built since that one.

These two buildings, of course, departed very definitely from the original Romanesque concept of design. They are more contemporary, but we used the same materials that were used in the original buildings so they are not too dissimilar. However, the change in building concepts is indicated by the new buildings. The further they get from the center of the campus, the more the character and the materials and the design of the buildings changes. They are changing radically. In fact, when I was on the campus just recently, I wondered how some of those buildings were ever designed and conceived. They are such a departure from the original design, the effect is not good. This is a personal opinion, but I think they've gone off the deep end on a couple of those buildings. They don't conform to anything else there, and their appearance doesn't lend anything artistic to the campus. They've created a hodge-podge. I've been a little bit disappointed in the trend out there recently. The buildings are so unrelated. At least what we did, and what was done for some time there, was to retain a certain relationship by the use of materials such as brick and stone and other things. I raised my eyebrows on hearing the final decision to depart from coordinating the new and the old whether it was the best thing in the world or not. I know there will be other architects who will disagree with me, and that's the way it should be. We all are Individuals and architects.

The Faculty Club, of course, was a complete departure in every respect because of the use of the building. The building is for recreation and relaxation. It's a meeting place for members of the faculty and so it was planned and so it looks like it. Of course, it's located in an area that's not readily seen and it really has no bearing on the campus. The face or appearance of it doesn't intrude because it is obviously different in its use and concept.

SCHIPPERS

> The six-story office and classroom building you were speaking of is right behind Royce Hall.

FIELD

> Yes, it's right behind Royce Hall. Of course, they've changed the landscaping from time to time. When it was built, there was only a little narrow driveway beside it. Now they've opened up that space and made beautiful landscaped areas. Incidentally, the landscape architect, who is a very good friend of mine, is doing a magnificent job at the University. I was very pleased when I went out to the campus last week to find that the campus landscaping is really very

delightful. They have done a wonderful job on a very tough site. Of course, as you know, originally there was a big canyon in there and one of the streets was a bridge. They took thousands of yards of dirt to fill it up. Now you wouldn't even know there was any canyon that ever existed. It's unbelievable. I think our experience out there was very interesting. We took part in the change from the type of design that was originally used and that was an interesting experience. I'm in favor of using new building concepts out there because I think very definitely that fixed ideas of buildings and their design should give way to change and as buildings are added to a complex, to copy any style exactly is all wrong. I think the newest buildings should show newer concepts. I do feel, however, that when the new and old are brought together a certain relationship should be maintained so they belong to the same family. You can't depart too far in this whole concept or you have a hodge-podge. The art building fits in and so does the music building and most of the other buildings, but recently they've been going too far out. I think deciding upon what the feeling of relationship of the buildings in a complex is going to be is a very delicate decision. You don't want them to look alike, God forbid, but they should look like they belong to the same group.

SCHIPPERS

How did you come by the commission for the buildings?

FIELD

Well, this is a routine that all architects go through. First you have to make application and show evidences of your capabilities as an organization. Also, as much as anything else, they want to make sure the architects that they employ (they call them "detective" architects) for their projects are men who not only have integrity and ability but who will understand their needs and be able to work with them. They don't want someone who will try to make ideas paramount and exclude theirs. After all, they have to live in the buildings. Then, two recommendations by the University architects, the supervising architects, are submitted. Usually, I think, what is done, and this is also done when Air Force, Navy, or Army work is concerned, three names are submitted and listed one, two, and three. The first one has the preference. They have tried, down through the years at the University, to distribute their work with

reasonable balance to the firms capable and competent in handling the work out there.

SCHIPPERS

I was going to say that most of the major architectural forms in the city have done buildings there.

FIELD

Yes, all the leading firms, at one time or another, have done buildings of varying types out there. Of course, like everywhere else, there are limitations on the amount of money budgeted for a building and the use of the building allows little leeway in design effects The end result, as elsewhere, is that the architects can't design the building they want to design. We design to conditions and because of restrictions, we don't come up with a building that will get us a gold medal. It's not that we wouldn't like to have a gold medal, but we certainly wouldn't sacrifice the designing and planning of the building for it. That would make it a monument, but that is not our job. It's the last thing, in fact, we would want to do. We would much rather have happy clients. We enjoy eating regularly and doing architecture as good as possible within the realm of the budget and the efficiency requirements of the building. I think you'll find that our philosophy is like that of the majority of firms. To be successful in this business, you have to serve the clients well and build according to their needs so that they have a building they can operate in and be successful in. If you've done that, then you've done a good job.

1.9. CHAPTER IX: SOME INNOVATIONS IN PLANNING

I think you might say that this transition from the stylistic to the contemporary that we have been going through in the last twenty-five years has established a certain appreciation and understanding of contemporary architecture. You know in the beginning, nobody knew what in the world these new buildings meant or what they represented. They could understand, say, Gothic or Spanish, or any other type, but not contemporary. I was fortunate to be a party to the development of contemporary and having been trained in the classics and stylistic beaux-arts school and then getting into something where form and everything else was completely different. That was bringing something to people for which we had no yardstick of evaluation, good, bad or indifferent.

Of course, the first impression of contemporary architecture in the early days was like one of a bunch of boxes. To a degree that is even true today. The buildings are viewed as a series of boxes of varying heights, lengths, and widths compounded into a certain mass arrangement. They are square, rectangular objects, mainly because pitched roofs, towers, and all those things that we used and knew in the stylistic period are no more. But, in the last twenty years or thirty years, the average person has developed an eye for contemporary buildings and can look at a contemporary building and tell if it's good or if it's not so good. They now have a knowledge and appreciation so they can evaluate architecture.

Actually, architecture leads the way for new styles of living. I don't know how many people realize that. We design a building or a home with the clients' concurrence, but when the clients move in they have to adjust their living to a completely new living situation. The relationship to rooms is different and so is the architecture of those rooms. The characteristics of those rooms, in turn, establish a need for a type of furniture that has not been produced previously. For example, shortly after contemporary architecture came in, some firms started low, broad furniture. Actually what adapted itself most readily to contemporary architecture was the Oriental furniture, especially the Japanese. It seemed always to fit in. As a matter of fact, I think, a lot of our contemporary architecture has been influenced a certain amount by Japanese design. I would say we have a combination in our home or a restrained contemporary. We find that fine Chinese furniture fits in with our contemporary furniture and that together the two styles make a beautiful and very interesting combination. It's delightful. Well, this change in furniture is something that has developed as a result of the buildings that were developed. So, today we see all these contemporary buildings and now people have a yardstick.

I think another thing that has changed is the taste for color. We have brought color into play, and in new buildings we use colors that are far more exciting than those used in any of the styles. It's true that we used to have color in Mediterranean architecture. The friezes were made of colored plaster and tile. Spanish architecture, especially, has a lot of tile. But that was peculiar to only a certain type of architecture around the Mediterranean. Now, we generally use color, not only in tile, but in all ways, on the exteriors of buildings and also in the interiors. People will accept color now that would never be conceived of or considered twenty years ago. When I first started in architecture, I think we used only two different colors in office buildings and everything else and that was either beige or green—green outnumbered the beige two to one. Today, we use as many as three colors in a room. Sometimes we even paint all four walls a different color but that's a rare occasion.

Of course, fabrics and furniture and drapes have gone along the same line and are very colorful and the new wallpapers are just delightful for the new look today, If you want

to call it that. The only things that haven't been changed are plumbing fixtures. They haven't kept pace with the rest of us. Where they will go, I frankly don't know, but they still are as they were many years ago.

I think some of the other projects that might be of interest are these projects in research which we have found tremendously interesting and challenging. We have two or three large research projects. A few years ago, we conceived a completely different approach for Union Oil Company. I think I mentioned earlier that in this game sometimes fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Well, I was one of the darned fools. We've done some projects since that were equally challenging. What we have been doing and what others are doing now in these research projects is to plan them almost like a college campus. There are beautiful courts and areas that are planted and better facilities for the employees and it makes the whole situation absolutely out of this world. We are just delighted every time we do get one to do, and we hope we'll get more. The latitude of design and planning Is quite wonderful for these companies doing these big research facilities.

The reason for this, I think, is that these companies want to retain all these chemists and physicists. They are highly temperamental, highly skilled and highly paid, so the important part is keeping them happy. If they're not, somebody else steals them away. So they go a long ways towards making a surround, an environment for these people, that is conducive to the type of work they have to do. This also improves their performance and helps them to come up with ideas and thoughts. So, this, of course, is interesting planning work for architects to get into.

Other areas that we have been dealing in fairly heavily are industrial buildings. It's surprising how much thought they are given by the architects. In the old days, the average factory owner would get some contracting firm to build a steel building that was deadly in appearance. They were interested in one thing minimum cost of the building and the minimum amount of space to make the maximum amount of money. How it looked, how it acted, how it affected the neighborhood, nobody cared. But that has changed, I'm pleased to say. Most people know that, now, a lot of our new plants, not only in this area but all over the country, are well-designed, landscaped and delightful in appearance as well as functional. By today's standards, these buildings are improving and creating better areas and neighborhoods, so, actually, people nowadays don't mind being reasonably close to some of these plants because they are assets rather than detriments to a neighborhood.

SCHIPPERS

What are some of the buildings you built that would fall into that category?

FIELD

Well, we've done a steel plant. We've done a large number of industrial plants, but I can't think of any right now that I can call completely outstanding. We did one plant for a jewelry company at the top of the hill in Santa Barbara, it's on top of the hill overlooking the ocean, but even though it's a factory, it's delightful. There are walled-in courts and landscaping, and it's the most delightful area you ever saw Right in the middle of a wonderful neighborhood. Very close to Santa Barbara and Montecito. Right on the top of the hill with a wonderful view. Now, they could have put that plant back inland a ways, you know, in some hidden area where it wouldn't be seen. But no, they just stuck it out there. Of course, they have a wonderful relationship with their people. Their employees never quit and their production has gone up. We used lots of color inside the building, and we used dark smoky glass so there would be no glare and so you can look out and see the ocean and the mountains. The darned place is fabulous! What a place to build a factory! These are things that we run into and other architects are doing the same thing. You take lots of these new electronics plants that are being built around the country. One up in Santa Barbara looks almost like a country club. We weren't party to it, but we've seen the buildings and the complex. Even the plants down on the Irvine Ranch, big electronics plants of all kinds there, are wonderful buildings and set up in these wonderful courts. They are just delightful. Who wouldn't like to work in plants under conditions like that? They are all air conditioned, of course, and the food is always excellent. I know in our buildings, we have put much thought into making the employees comfortable. The lounge rooms, dining facilities, the quality of the food, the recreational areas. Recreation is one thing that more and more of these companies are taking care of. I read the other day in my golfing magazine that, in many parts of the United States, big companies like Du Pont and Firestone have even developed very fine golf courses for their employees. Well, this isn't just because they like their employees that well. It is also to keep their employees from being taken away by a competitor. It's also part of the new routine of providing extras when they can't always pay bigger salaries. These facilities often offset to a great deal the lower salaries these people are being paid. We haven't brought golf courses into our factory planning yet, although we have designed golf courses. We designed one up at the Edwards Air Force Base, and we have done a number of parks, but actually, this is a little bit apart from our normal work.

1.10. CHAPTER X THE BEVERLY HILLS PUBLIC LIBRARY

SCHIPPERS

You have mentioned before that sometimes special knowledge is necessary in planning. Certainly that also holds true for the Beverly Hills Public Library.

FIELD

Well, the Beverly Hills might be a good example of what we architects go through from the beginning. In the first place, it shows how architects are selected. Of course, there are so many fine architects out here in this area, the competition is just tremendous. You never get established in this profession. You're always fighting for the next job. In the case of Beverly Hills, of course, as is always the case, many architects applied for interviews. I think they had some fifteen to twenty firms apply. Out of the fifteen to twenty firms, I would say that two-thirds of them were fine firms. Any one of them could do a good job. In this particular case, however, an unusual situation occurred. Five firms were interviewed, but out of that five, two were retained because the board couldn't decide which firm they wanted. They were split. We don't recommend this procedure, but this is what they did. I think competition is fine up to a point, but there's much more at stake than just straight competition on a smart design. But they did this. They employed our firm and the other firm under consideration and gave us the program. They had three sites. One was adjacent to the City Hall and the plan called for using the present building for part of the library. Another was a site adjacent to the City Hall, and it was planned that they would then move the fire station and use that for the City Hall. The third site was directly across the street from the City Hall, and was the property of a lumber company. It is now the parking lot directly opposite and to the east of the City Hall. Both firms were paid for this planning work. The winning firm, however, did not get paid for the designs. The one that was selected had to assume the cost for it as part of the penalty of getting the job. So we made designs and studies of all three sites. We then prepared a complete brochure showing the three sites and the three studies. In the brochure, we described and discussed each site as to the advantages and the disadvantages. Then we made recommendations on the basis of our study of each condition. We discovered that the addition to the City Hall was very uneconomical and didn't give us a chance for good planning. It would be

a very poor library. Then, for the other site, which is on the end of the City-Hall, the area was not big enough for a one-story building so we had to design a two-story structure. I think it came out very well and had an interesting design. It's an eight-sided building. Because the shape of the property is rectangular, we couldn't use a rectangular shape even with a two-story building. But once you take a library and give it two floors of operations you increase the manpower problems of the library. There are more calls for help and your control is not going to be as good, so your problems of general administration increase. Lots of libraries are two and three stories, but they are two and three stories because the site was such they had to be. They had no choice in the matter, but vertical transportation always leaves a lot to be desired at its best. That's what we had to do in this case. However, I think we got a very good-looking building out of that, design-wise. But I think the design was less important than the function of the building, by far and away. We made that statement in the brochure and presented it to the board. Then we recommended one for across the street which was basically a library on one floor. Some 32,000 square feet. This is ideal, of course, but we had to have two things there. One of the requirements was that, because we displaced valuable parking space with the building, we had to put parking within the building. That meant we had to start with some sort of modular system that would allow for ease of self-parking at various levels. The building wasn't large enough to get too many levels in, so we had a spiral garage. It actually spirals around. By putting columns at thirty feet from center, both ways, three cars can park within the area between two pillars, with a little less than a ten-foot space for each car. You need all of that nowadays to allow for self-parking, especially for women drivers in larger cars. So that was one problem that had to be solved in this building. The other problem was that we were to plan for expansion for future needs. That was to be five thousand square feet. Well, to put five thousand extra square feet in a building is quite a problem. Where would you put it? What area would need expansion? Nobody knows. Would it be the adult area on one side of the building; would it be the children's area on the other side; or would it be the working area on another side? In other words, where would the expansion go? If you put it on a side it would look like a little wart sticking out of the building. Five thousand extra feet against the thirty thousand would look like a very stinky little area and it would be just an eyesore. So, again this is where an architect, by using good judgment, can

come up with sound thinking. We proposed that we put a mezzanine of five thousand square feet almost in the center of the building and over the work area and that it would be left unfinished for now. They then could pay for this mezzanine when it became time to use it. They would have five thousand square feet that could be expanded into any area of use they wanted. It could be a post for any part of the library. It could become stack rooms, reading rooms, or could be used as rooms for cultural groups and meetings or art exhibits. They could apply elevator service to it, and that way no matter what the expansion needs would be, because it was in the center, it would take care of their needs. So that's what we proposed. They were taken with it, and that's the way it went. Of course, it added somewhat to the building, because there was an additional foyer that was not to be used right away, but had to be planned for beyond the realm. So, we provided for that extra capacity in the air conditioning system and in the capacity of the power panel- boards. When they wish to open it, all they have to do is to extend ducts for air conditioning to the various rooms as they subdivide them into areas and they also have additional capacity on the panels to extend conduit to those rooms for lighting. They can divide that five-thousand-foot area for any type of use they want. They can hang a ceiling in there, put new floor covering on, and they have a new space. It's that simple. The roof is there, the floors are there, the walls are there, so all they have to do is to fit into that area and put the lights in. A more economical space without having major disadvantages can't be found anywhere. We thought this was a wonderful way of achieving room for expansion. Also, they wouldn't need to wait for years if they needed small areas. They could go up there and subdivide it in a small way if they wanted to. As soon as they need it, it could be ready for occupancy. So that is one of the services that we architects provide and that we did for them there. Basically, there's the story on that building.

SCHIPPERS

Did you have to get into any special knowledge about housing books?

FIELD

Well, all buildings are standardized up to a point. A library is no exception. The library has come a long way from being a purely book-lending agency as we used to think of it. In the old LA County libraries, all we had was books. That

was all. Your present libraries are cultural centers for a community. We have to provide facilities for art groups to meet, with sections on art available. Then we now have audio-visual equipment and little theaters, you might call them, for review of movies that are lent to schools and groups of all kinds. The meeting of the garden club often takes place at the library, as well as other such societies that are part of the cultural activity of the community. Also, we provide for microfilming. There are young people's areas and there are always programs and lectures going on all the time. Now these have to be provided for. We provide areas that can be used for teas for women's clubs who come to hear talks and lectures. Also there are provisions throughout the whole library for the hanging and exhibiting of fine paintings when they are on tour and so on. It has become more than a library. One of our men and myself visited about a half-dozen of the newer libraries on the west coast before we did the design for Beverly Hills. We didn't go east. We discovered that in each city the libraries were different because that library in that city was designed to serve certain needs of the community. For example, in the San Leandro Library, they have a very sizable auditorium and a stage, besides eating facilities for banquets. They even have two art rooms; one for instruction in ceramics and painting, and the other for instruction in sculpture work and clay modeling and all those things. And they are all considered library facilities. Can you imagine that? And they're busy all the time. That's one example of how libraries are beginning to fit into community cultural life. So having books and records and microfilm are just part of the picture. In the Beverly Hills Library, of course, in the adult section and in the children's section, there will be turntables with earphones. So, records will be played right there in the middle of the library and no one else will hear a thing. Everybody plays their own record, sits back and smiles and then can take home any record they wish or they can stay there and play them and enjoy them. It's part of the facilities. Now, this is what a library today does. In other words, a library today is a cultural center for the community. Of course, there's limitations to this even in the big cities, but this is the trend. I like the trend. I think it provides a wonderful place where children and people of all ages can go and enjoy all these things that haven't been possible under the older order.

SCHIPPERS

Several times before you mentioned that when you are going to get into a new kind of project you take a reconnaissance trip of some sort. is this standard practice?

FIELD

Good, sound information is not really available through all the literature we receive—architectural magazines and other books. As in the case of the oil research buildings, we took a three-week trip to the East and Midwest and visited all the research projects of similar types to the ones we were doing. You know research projects vary like everything else. There are some in the petroleum industry; there are others who work in the synthetics and agriculture field and everything else. So we selected those who were doing pure research but that were in the same field of endeavor that we were interested in planning. The library inspection trip was a short one. We spent about a week going up and down the coast seeing the new libraries and talking to the librarians. We find out a lot more in talking to these people in the various areas than in reading. If we're discussing libraries, we talk to the librarians of many libraries and we find out their thinking. Invariably, we like to know what it is they would like to have that they don't have and what it is that they have and would not like to have. We find out if it is gold-plating or if it is not. In other words, we like to separate the wheat from the chaff, you might say. We find out what is good and what would be nice even though it is not necessarily essential to a certain operation. We found, for example, that the old feeling about having outside garden courts where children would move out with their books and sit under the shade of the trees is a lot of malarkey. Maybe two or three libraries have used them, but most haven't and they are expensive and completely useless. These so-called patios and all these inside-outside deals aren't used because people want to sit inside where they are handy to the stacks and in nice surroundings. Of course, we found it easy to make the seating informal with comfortable chairs. It's not necessary to have rigid tables with five or six places to the table. You can't always arrange for informal seating but we put that in certain parts, especially the teen-age section. They are casual and informal, and so we have chairs where they can flop all over them if they want to and do their reading.

1.11. CHAPTER XI THE PARKING PROBLEM

On this matter of parking apace, we used to allow eight feet which was more than adequate. Today it's got to be ten feet. Of course, we've gone through a phase with the compact cars, but now people are getting fed up with that and are going back to more comfortable, bigger cars. Even though I don't think cars will be made any larger, they will continue to present a problem. In fact, one of our major problems today is not actually the planning of our buildings as much as it is to take care of the parking space that is needed for the buildings.

For example, we have an office building now in West Covina that's going to be fifteen stories high and we have an awful lot of ground, but one of their requirements is that for every three hundred square feet of the building there must be space for one car. That's an unbelievable number of parking spaces. In fact, the parking lot will take acres and acres and acres. A parking lot of that size is an expensive item. It makes an impact on the building cost-wise, even when the ground is available for that type of thing.

Now, when you get into parking structures— that's really costly. They cost from five dollars to twelve dollars a square foot according to whether or not they are built outside the building or built within the building itself. Of course, the law now requires that a certain amount of parking space must be provided with every new building. And finding some way of handling the parking on the property is the greatest problem we architects have nowadays. So frequently the property is not of sufficient size to allow economical building for car parking. If it is within the building, you have to start thinking in terms of the column spacings that allow for parking and driveways, and then relate them back to the planning of the building so that it will be economically and efficiently planned. The columns affect planning because they set up your modular system. This is a headache for all architects today. Now if we're doing some project way out in the country it's less of a problem but we are gradually losing projects of that sort.

Schools also are finding parking a problem today. Schools have to go up somewhere and, of course, some of the sites are expensive. They have to be even bigger because of the parking area that is needed, when I was a boy, we didn't even think about cars, but today, on the high-school level, I would say every third kid has a car. You have a school of three thousand students and you have to provide space for a thousand cars apart from the faculty parking. They have to be placed somewhere. They can't be out on the streets.

I think of all the worries all of us have today in this profession, the problem of taking care of the darned cars is the biggest. The clients never think of cars. They think of their building, their needs, their banks, and their offices, and their stockbrokers' rooms, and their restaurants, or whatever is involved in the building. They never think

about the cars or what the cost involved for providing for these cars is. This is the thing that is giving us real concern. There is no way of licking the problem because cars are not going to shrink. They probably won't get any larger, but they are here and they are going to stay with us.

I don't know what the answer is, but this is the one thing we're fighting endlessly. We're doing it right now on that project out there in Covina. It's a fifteen-story building on, what you would think by looking at it, acres and acres of ground. We have a piece of property there that's about five hundred and six feet deep by three hundred and fifty feet wide. That's damned near a block. And yet we cannot get all the parking space on that site that is required. It was suggested that we cut down the size of the building, but, unfortunately, that's not feasible. A building is built for an investment. There is a certain relationship of basic costs and the utilities within a building that affect the income. For example, in a building of twelve stories, you need four elevators, you need a certain size in air-conditioning equipment. Then you relate the floor area to that and with the toilet rooms and everything else. This all determines the usable area and that relationship is not easily changed. The building is sized for a gross area that includes these mechanical rooms. In planning toilet rooms, stairways, and those things, you've got to consider the efficiency of the total area and allow for seventy-five percent or better of the gross area to be working space. That's damned tough. That area relationship determines the size of the building. The income potential of the building also affects the planning of building space.

In some locations, for example, you get five dollars a square foot. In other places, you only get four dollars a square foot. In Beverly Hills, you get six and seven dollars. So you have to think in terms of the location and the demands of tenants. If they can afford to pay high rents, of course, they will want more. Let's say the cost of a building is going to be such that the owner is only going to get five and a half dollars per square foot and that that is not going to cover the costs of the structure, the maintenance, the depreciation, and the costs of the parking area. Kent figures are based on a minimum of eighty percent occupancy, and let's say this building was planned to be twelve stories high. So, to solve the problem, we go fifteen stories because the three extra stories are the cheapest thing to add to the building. It merely adds to the cost of extending the elevator up three floors, but the number of elevators are still the same. So, in this case, the money, the cream, comes from the top three floors. You could add four floors, but if it goes much higher than that, you would have to add another elevator. These things pyramid. It's kind of a vicious circle. Then there's still the relationship of the cost of the ground and the cost of building to its potential income to consider. All these factors have to balance out.

Now, the thing against a building being a good in-vestment might be the cost of the ground and the cost of the structure that houses the automobiles. Because what

income are you going to get from that? It's questionable. If you charged rent for parking a car, that would be one thing, but most often, there is a validated-ticket arrangement. So, you can't finance the building on the strength of what you expect to see on returns from your parking. You have to figure your returns solely on the building itself. So parking space becomes part of the overhead and in developing a building, these things are part and parcel of the entire package, Therefore, you need a building of a certain magnitude. Then you have to determine if you can get enough renters in that area to fill the building and make it a sound investment. You don't know for certain but you hope so.

Now, if a building is being built for a home office for any company, let's say for a bank or an insurance company or a savings and loan or a gas company, it doesn't matter. They don't care about rentals, because that building doesn't represent an investment to them, and they are not expecting a return on their investment. The building is a kind of monument, being a home or a major office of theirs, and the rent they get from the floors they don't need is just so much cream. But when buildings are built for investment, the whole problem basically turns upon parking facilities. Really, that's it, as strange as it sounds.

1.12. CHAPTER XII THE OTIS ART INSTITUTE

SCHIPPERS

> Would you care to make some comments on the Los Angeles County Art Institute?

FIELD

> The County Art Institute was designed in increments, We picked it up after our first building had been designed by the county, although they worked through a master plan that we had previously prepared for the site. At the time we started on that job, of course, the Otis home was on the comer and there was a large house on the other corner which I believe was the Earl house. That was a very fine old house, tremendous size, and part of it was used by the school. The school, which has now changed its name to Otis Art Institute, has been planned around a center court. So, when the next two increments are completed, and, I hope, will be before too long a time, this building will be a block long. In all, they will surround a large center court. The purpose of the whole building is to serve art in its various forms—sculpture, painting, ceramics, everything you can think of in the art field. The various studios in that building are designed for these uses. We did a ceramics building there not

too long ago, that's highly refined and is an excellent, efficient building. It was designed primarily for teaching ceramics with large kilns. So, large objects of art, large pottery, can be processed very nicely in those kilns. Eventually, the school will have an auditorium, more art studios, and an additional large art exhibit room which will be connected to the present exhibit room. It will be for travelling art exhibits. Already, it's a very popular place for the artists to meet end for showing various works of art from modern to the ancient art treasures of all kinds. But they have a very restricted, selective group of students. Of all those who make application only the gifted ones can go there. They are people who show all the signs of becoming successful professionals in the field of art. It must not be confused with the so-called art centers in the area where various types of commercial arts, photography, and so on are taught and shown. Otis is for teaching pure art in these various basic forms. It's a very unusual type of school. I don't know if there's another one in the country like it. Maybe there is, but none I know of on the west coast. In these large studios, there are never more than two or three people working at a time. Of course, Millard Sheats, who was one of the directors, started the trend. He wanted the "upper, upper, upper," if you want to call it that, of the art groups. He visualized a school that would turn out the finest artists of today. They are doing, apparently, from what I've Been, an outstanding job. I have to confess to you that when I was over there I saw a lot of art I don't understand. It's beyond me. It's way out there someplace. But, nevertheless, it is an amazing place. It's surprising that it would be a public facility.

SCHIPPERS

Did Mr. Sheats have anything to do with design of the building?

FIELD

No, we designed the whole building. Of course, we worked with Millard Sheats. He may have designed it originally, but, actually, the present design is one that we achieved. But he did want to have statuary outside of that first building out there on Wilshire. So you see pedestals sticking out of the wall which never will be filled, but they're sticking out there for something. Of course, he's incorporated sculpture with many buildings, and he's done a magnificent job in my opinion. He's been party to many of these buildings around the country for Home Savings and Loan where they brought in

sculpture and ceramic arts. That leads into a wonderful area and makes for greater appreciation of commercial buildings. We think it's terrific. We try, where we can, to use sculpture. The Western Life Insurance Building is one where we have a fountain with three large eagles in flight. The sculpture work was handled by Malcolm Cameron and he did a magnificent job, The statue is about eleven feet tall. These eagles are wonderful birds. Simple, strong forms of winged birds in flight with magnificent heads. He did a magnificent job on it. But in any event, Millard has done an awful lot for architecture in bringing art into buildings. Now we architects can always say to our clients, "Well, it's been used elsewhere, you know." People are susceptible to what they see around. Incidentally, I have to speak about art as it relates to many of the clients all over the country. Chase National Bank, of course, has a hundred million dollars invested in art works—masterpieces that they have displayed, under guards, in their New York office. I know of many other companies now who are doing likewise. They're getting works of art, paintings and sculpture and everything else, and using them as part of the decor of these buildings. We did a small Reseda Bank recently where we provided painting spaces so they could hang pictures. They rotate beautiful paintings, originals, in all their branch banks. I think that's wonderful. I think one of the most encouraging things I've ever seen is this interest of the layman and the people who you consider hard-headed businessmen in works of art. They buy them as investments. I mean, they don't consider them poor investments. In the meantime, while they have their investment there it's being appreciated and lends tremendously to the beauty of their buildings, both inside and out. It's still mainly displayed on the inside, of course. I think it's a great thing because it is creating an opportunity for worthy artists. I separate the worthy from the unworthy, because there's a million artists. Out of the million, there might be just a half-dozen who deserve to have the opportunity to be seen. This is going to give them that opportunity to make not only a bare living, but will enable them to live like they are entitled to because of their ability. I hope to see more and more of this, because arts and architecture are so closely interwoven. They belong to each other. One without the other is stark. Together they complement each other. They make a building a warm, living thing. We hope more and more of our clients will bring these things together. Well, anyway, out of this school, the Otis Art Institute, or the Los Angeles County Institute, we feel there are going to come some outstanding artists. And that's why that building is a little

but unusual. It's designed for very few students. Of course, if you based the cost of the building on the number of students there, that building would be tremendously expensive. But, of course, it's going to be there for the next one hundred years. Likely, thousands of competent young people will be trained there and receive their degrees and take their place in society as capable and competent people and have something to offer our country, I think it's magnificent, myself.

Date: