
ARCHITECTS IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION: The Formal Role of The AIA, 1890-1990



A report of The American Institute of Architects Committee on
Historic Resources in celebration of the centennial of its founding.
February 1990



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This report was prepared under contract by Melissa Houghton who recently completed her graduate work in historic preservation at the University of Virginia. Her research was based on the files of the AIA Committee on Historic Resources (CHR) as housed in the AIA Archives. In addition to these materials, extensive interviews by letter, telephone, and in person with committee members--particularly past committee chairs--netted further information and insight.

Particularly helpful in the research required for the preparation of this report were Jim Massey, Erin Muths, and Anne Vytlačil, AIA, members of the CHR Centennial Subcommittee, and Tony Wrenn, AIA Archivist. All illustrations within this report are from the AIA Archives.

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ARCHITECTS IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION: THE FORMAL ROLE OF THE AIA, 1890-1990

Melissa J. Houghton, Researcher/Writer

The American Institute of Architects, founded in 1857 as a professional society, has maintained a system of national committees to reflect the interests of its constituency as well as to promote the profession of architecture to non-architects. The interest of Institute members in earlier forms of architecture is evident in their personal actions and reflected in the Institute's records. Charles F. McKim, one of the founders of the Institute, commissioned photographs of colonial buildings in the 1870's for his own use. Several papers were presented at early AIA conventions to inform the members about earlier styles of architecture. In 1877 for example, R.S. Peabody presented a paper entitled "Colonial Architecture" to the Convention in Boston. It is not surprising therefore that this interest would manifest itself in the formation of a committee concerned with the study of older buildings. Wisely, the Committee was given the more encompassing duty of protection and preservation of historic buildings, whenever possible, so that they would remain to benefit and inform future generations.

The Committee, founded in 1890 and called the "Committee on Conservation of Public Architecture," has gone through several name changes in its history which reflect changes in the profession's perception of preservation. (See Appendix A) The justification for such a committee within the AIA, however, has remained fairly constant. Richard M. Upjohn stated in 1890 that, "it is our duty as architects to be conservators of public architecture."¹ Similarly, in a 1983 policy statement on historic preservation by the Institute it was deemed "appropriate that the architectural profession, through the American Institute of Architects, assume a leading role in supporting historic preservation in its many forms and facets."²

When writing about the AIA's involvement in preservation George Pettengill, long-time librarian for the Institute, stated that

. . .architects still have a peculiar interest and a special role. As those qualified by training and experience in the design of buildings, they must be consulted for any actual restoration. Further it has been pointed out that it is much easier to preserve

¹Journal of Proceedings, 1890, page 34.

²Proceedings, June 17-18, 1983, Vytlacil Box 1, Folder 2.

a building with historic significance than a merely esthetic one, and because architecturally important buildings also merit preservation, these must be the special concern of architects.³

What follows is an examination of the relationship of architects to preservation as seen through the workings of the Committee on Historic Resources of the American Institute of Architects.

The Committee's First Decade

The Committee on Conservation of Public Architecture was formed with the unanimous consent of those present at the 24th Annual Convention (1890) of the American Institute of Architects held in Washington, D.C. The architect presenting the resolution to the Convention, Richard M. Upjohn was reacting to the threatened demolition of the Treasury Building, located on Wall Street in New York City. (See illustration #1) The Treasury Building, the former Custom House, had been modeled on the Parthenon and built before the advent of iron supports in construction. Upjohn stated that "To have such a building as that torn down merely for real estate speculation, and have it replaced by the present mode of construction, that is, by office buildings, would, in my judgement, be wrong."⁴ Upjohn's judgement was based on his belief that "The history of civilization and the world is traced by the character of its buildings and its architecture, and the degree of civilization of peoples is determined by the monuments they have left."⁵ Upjohn encouraged the Convention to appoint a committee that would "call attention of this Institute to any action which is to be taken by the authorities which would be detrimental to the cause of art."⁶ The resolution was seconded by Alfred Stone and the Committee on Conservation of Public Architecture became part of the American Institute of Architect's formal structure. Richard M. Upjohn was appointed chairman of the Committee. He was assisted by the Presidents of the local chapters.⁷

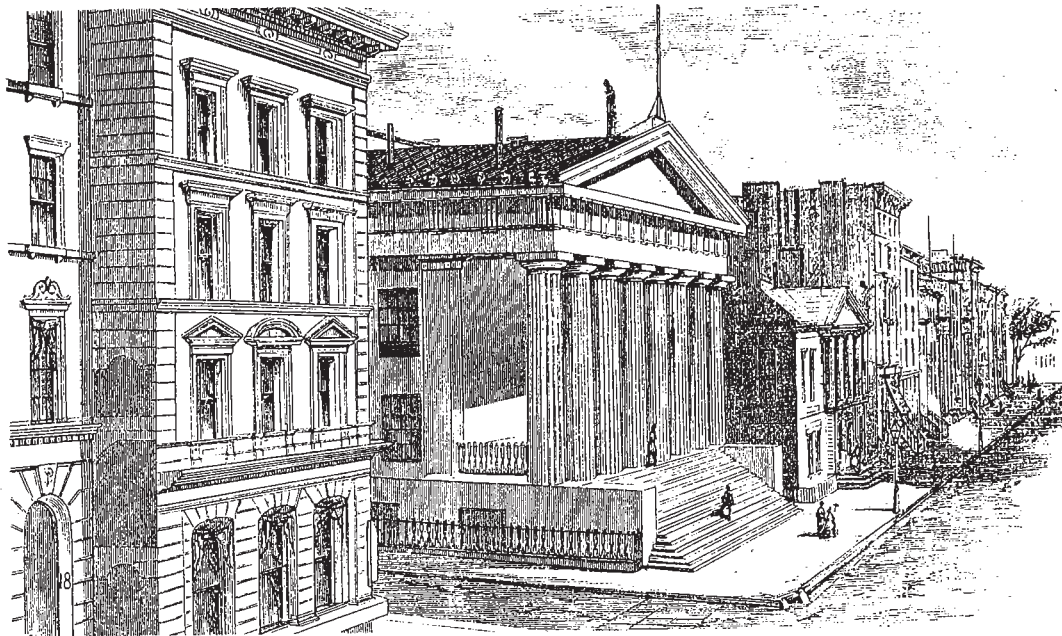
³George E. Pettengill, "A.I.A. in the Preservation Movement," Journal of the American Institute of Architects, June 1953, page 274.

⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1890, page 34.

⁵Journal of Proceedings, 1890, page 35. Upjohn's sentiments reflect those of John Ruskin, a leading preservation theorist in England.

⁶Ibid.

⁷The chapter presidents sitting on the Committee on Conservation of Public Architecture in 1890 were: Theophilus P. Chandler (Philadelphia), Alfred Stone (Rhode Island), Seth Babson (San Francisco), W.M. Poindexter (District of Columbia), George S. Orth (Western Pennsylvania), James Douglas (Wisconsin), John Murcoock (Baltimore), Edward C. Cabot (Boston), E.B. Green (Buffalo), Samuel Hannaford (Cincinnati), F.S. Barnum (Cleveland), J. Addison (Illinois), Adolph Scherrer (Indianapolis), John M. Donaldson (Michigan), Theodore C. Link (Missouri), E.T. Littell (New York), Eugene H. Taylor (Iowa), W.F. Hackney



1 Treasury Building, former Customs House
New York City
AIA Archives, RG 801, SR 2.50 Sellers, Box 1, Folder 2

The Committee made no formal report to the 1891 Convention in Boston; they did report to the 1892 Convention in Chicago. Their report was concerned with the Treasury Building in New York City which was still under the threat of demolition. In addition to making pleas for the preservation of that building, Mr. Upjohn brought the attention of the Convention attendees to the incorrect designation of the architect of the building. In the course of his research into the building's history, Mr. Upjohn had discovered that the name cut into a second story window architrave was that of the superintendent of construction and not that of the building's architect, William Ross. Mr. Upjohn requested the AIA "recommend to the Treasury Department that the name now on the building as the architect be expunged."⁸ At the conclusion of the Committee's report Upjohn spoke directly to the Institute's conscience when he wrote,

Other governments, through the intervention of kindred societies to our own, cherish such public monuments. So we, by the American Institute of Architects, should counsel that similar care be taken of our own monumental public buildings, whose character of design and construction mark periods of our art history.⁹

During the remaining years of the 1890's, the Committee rarely made reports to the Institute membership. In fact, in 1897, upon learning of his reappointment to the national committee Upjohn wrote to the Board of Directors, "It occurs to me to remark what is the use of this Committee?"¹⁰ Although Upjohn was clearly disappointed by the Institute's lethargy with respect to the conditions of the Treasury Building, he could hardly have been disappointed by the performance of the Institute members at the local level during that time. In his own New York Chapter the membership, in 1893, had suggested to the city authorities that, "the present city hall structure be incorporated into any design submitted for such new building, or else that it be carefully taken down and rebuilt in some suitable location, so that it may be perpetuated as an historical monument."¹¹ Similarly, the Philadelphia Chapter was involved with the location and protection of its city's monuments. The Boston Chapter, during 1894-1896, had been involved in the preservation of the Massachusetts State House designed by Charles Bulfinch. Upjohn encouraged the local chapters to notify the Institute of any notable buildings in their jurisdiction which were in danger of demolition or damage in addition to reporting their activities to the national Committee. Upjohn felt that the duty of the Committee was

(Kansas City), Frank O. Weary (Ohio), James G. Cutler (Western New York), and Thomas Sully (Louisiana). Journal of Proceedings, 1890, pages 140-177.

⁸Journal of Proceedings, 1892, page 18. Mr. Upjohn also encouraged Institute members to see that their names were carved into the buildings they designed so that such incorrect designations would not occur in the future.

⁹Journal of Proceedings, 1892, page 19.

¹⁰Journal of Proceedings, 1897, page 27.

¹¹Journal of Proceedings, 1893, page 40.

to remark on what they know of passing events as affecting Public buildings belonging to the Government and if anything derogatory to the cause of art is liable to happen, to report to the Institute, so that the Institute in its collective capacity may do, what they can, to ward off if possible, the desecration or demolition of Public Monumental Architecture.¹²

Even with such a charge, the Committee languished at the national level and Upjohn's query of 1897 was answered with the removal of the Committee on Conservation of Public Buildings from the structure of the Institute in 1898. Dissolution of the Committee did not signal the end of the AIA's involvement with preservation -- in that very same year the Institute embarked on its most consuming preservation project when it began renting the Octagon House in Washington, D.C. as its national headquarters. (See illustration #2)

Move to Washington, D.C.

The search for a national headquarters had been underway for several years prior to 1899. Both the Institute's collections and bureaucracy needed larger permanent facilities than had been affordable and available in New York. Washington, D.C. seemed ideal as

. . . it afforded the broadest field for the Institute to obtain national legislation in relation to art and construction; that it could more efficiently advocate the establishment of a government testing station and a National Architectural Museum, and would be in a position to make its influence felt in the methods adopted by the government for procuring designs for national buildings.¹³

Washington was also considered neutral ground for a headquarters; favoring neither the New York nor the Chicago Chapters.

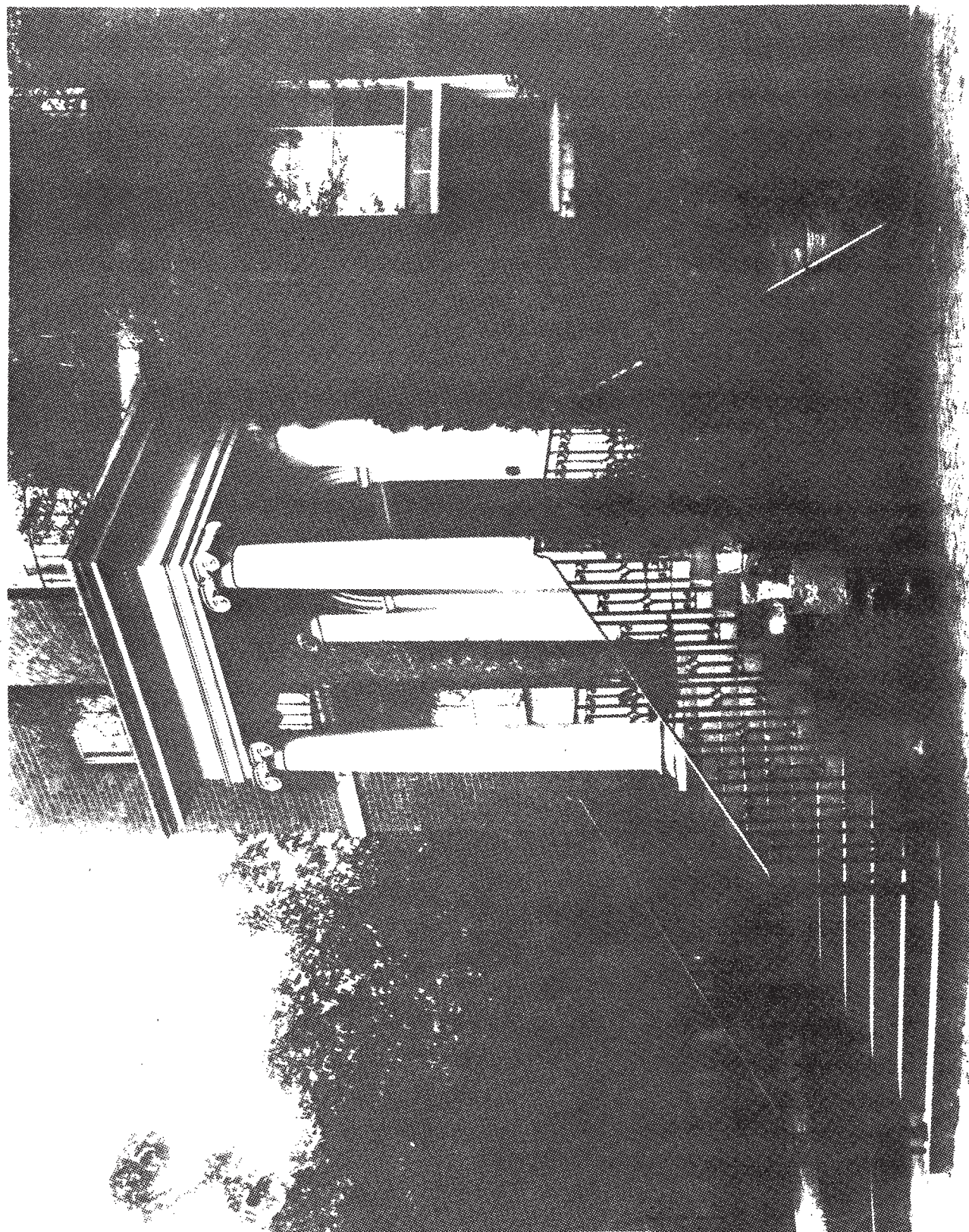
The AIA purchased the Octagon House in 1902.

It is the cause for rejoicing that the Institute which has urged upon governments, national, State and municipal, the duty of preserving historic monuments has itself secured possession of one of the historic houses of America. After four years of negotiation the Octagon House, which for several years has been rented by the Institute for headquarters, has been purchased at a moderate price.¹⁴

¹²Journal of Proceedings, 1894, page 38.

¹³Journal of Proceedings, 1898, page 12.

¹⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1902, page 9.



2 Entrance to Octagon House
Washington, D.C.
Photograph by Frances Benjamin Johnston
AIA Archives, RG 815

The downpayment of \$10,000 was provided by Charles F. McKim, who was then serving as the Institute's president. The building "was an excellent example, and one of the earliest, of a landmark advancement of the independent American building design."¹⁵ The Octagon House has, from the beginning, been subject to intervention and "the restoration itself has bestowed another chevron on the Octagon, as the first American building to become the focus of a major preservation effort in which architectural importance was paramount."¹⁶

Locating the headquarters in Washington, D.C., allowed the Institute to exert a major influence on the design of the city. Glenn Brown, a member of the Washington, D.C. Chapter, had been elevated to Secretary of the AIA in 1898. Brown used his position to see that the growth of Washington would be based on L'Enfant's Plan for the city and supervised by architects.¹⁷

The A.I.A. campaign was indeed propitious. The nation had recovered from the economic depression triggered by the 1893 Panic. America became a major colonial power in 1898 and was seeking symbols to commemorate its emergence as a great nation-state...the classical architecture and orderly arrangement of civic space at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition came to symbolize an ideal prototype for turn-of-the century city-making. Brown shrewdly combined his crusade to revive "George Washington's Vision of a National Capitol" with the emergence of "City Beautiful" planning ideology.¹⁸

The AIA has retained an active voice in the development of the capital city and has used its location in that city to influence national policy.

However, as the new century opened the Institute members were concerned more with someone else's home than their own. It had been proposed in 1900 that the White House be enlarged and the Institute waged a campaign in opposition to this plan.

¹⁵McCue, George, The Octagon, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C., 1976, page 73.

¹⁶Ibid. For accounts of the various restorations of the Octagon House, see McCue's book and the restoration reports of Glenn Brown, Milton Grigg and J. Everette Fauber, all of which are available in the AIA Archives.

¹⁷Glenn Brown's influence on the development of Washington is explored in depth in the following publications: A Centennial of the Washington Chapter of the A.I.A. 1887-1987, William Bushong, Judith H. Robinson, Julie Mueller; Glenn Brown and the United States Capitol, William Bushong; and Glenn Brown, the A.I.A., and the Development of the Civic Core of Washington, D.C., William Bushong.

¹⁸Bushong, Robinson and Mueller, A Centennial of the Washington Chapter of the A.I.A. 1887-1987, The Washington Architectural Foundation Press, 1987, page 23.

At the last convention a committee was also appointed to take active steps to prevent the disfigurement of the Executive Mansion by allowing its proposed enlargement to be carried out by parties unfamiliar with architectural design. The work of the Institute in this line has been very effective, as the measure contemplated which was before Congress failed to be brought up for ratification, because a positive feeling against the scheme was produced by the exertion of the Institute.¹⁹

Chapter Involvement in Preservation

The first decade of the new century saw the Institute encouraging its membership to promote the recording of early American buildings. Even as the Institute was influencing new development in Washington, they resolved that the Chapters "exercise a watchful guardianship over any masterpieces of architectural art within their territories to the end that works of exceptional and abiding interest be not wantonly transformed or destroyed."²⁰

Preservation, a concern of the national membership, remained within the purview of the local chapters until 1914 and the chapters did influence policy in their locales. Perhaps the most successful was the Philadelphia Chapter which reported to the 44th Annual Convention in San Francisco and Los Angeles that

they persuaded the municipal authorities that the successful restoration of historic buildings can be best obtained through cooperation with the Chapter, and the mayor of this city has appointed the Chapter's committee [Committee of the Preservation of Historic Monuments] to restore Congress Hall, one of the most important of the State House group in Independence Square, and has placed the city photographer at the disposal of this committee for the purpose of photographing any other buildings in the city desired by the committee.²¹

In New York City, the Chapter had so effectively protested the building of a county court house on the City Hall site they reported "it is now hardly possible that the present administration will allow the City Hall site to be encroached upon."²² The San Francisco Chapter presented a resolution to the Convention regarding the preservation of the Franciscan missions in California. Their resolution requested that "immediate measures should be devised which

¹⁹Journal of Proceedings, 1901, page 17.

²⁰Journal of Proceedings, 1909, page 145.

²¹Journal of Proceedings, January 1911, page 81.

²²Journal of Proceedings, January 1911, page 55.

should safeguard the preservation and restoration of the missions, and invite the cooperation of public spirited citizens with that church in which their title vests."²³ The passage of this resolution was undoubtedly helped by Arthur B. Benton's presentation at the Convention of "The Franciscan Missions of California--Their History and Their Present Status."²⁴ The AIA Committee on Chapters was so impressed with the local reports they recommended that every chapter form a committee to address preservation issues. They felt that the need was particularly acute in the eastern United States because of the large number of colonial buildings there.

In most of the larger Eastern cities, historical societies have been organized, and although these societies fully appreciate the excellence of some of the old colonial work, they have not the ability nor the facilities for restoring or making a proper record of the buildings from an architectural standpoint.²⁵

In December of 1911 the attendees of the 45th Annual Convention in Washington, D.C., were told

The aid of the Institute should be given to this worthy cause [preservation] so that its influence might be exerted from the outside as it were in awakening some communities to a realization of their own carelessness in allowing vandalism, desecration and encroachment to mar their own monuments. We suggest, furthermore, that arrangements might be made whereby students in the Colleges, universities and offices could work in co-operation with the local Chapters in making careful measured drawings of all artistic old buildings. In this connection the Institute Committee could affiliate with and receive advice from the National Trust which does such valuable work for England.²⁶

This is one of the earliest, formal references to educating future professionals through field work. Measured drawings would not only document America's building heritage, they would familiarize the student with early methods of construction and design and increase proficiency as a draftsman. The actual building was considered by many to be the best teacher. Through cooperation with schools in programs of documentation, the AIA would ultimately benefit its membership and increase its status as a professional organization.

²³Journal of Proceedings, January 1911, page 124.

²⁴Journal of Proceedings, January 1911, pages 136-147.

²⁵Journal of Proceedings, January 1911, page 82.

²⁶Journal of Proceedings, December 1911, page 114.

The Committee on Conservation of Natural Resources

It is interesting to note that while the AIA did not have a national committee to protect historic built resources, it did have a special committee, "The Committee on Conservation of Natural Resources," to monitor use of the country's natural resources. The Institute anticipated a need for this type of group because construction was dependent upon a wide range of resources. It believed that the architect was in an ideal position to conserve natural resources, being in a position to specify what materials were to be used in any construction project. The Committee advocated fire-proof construction as a means of preserving both the building and the resources that had been used during its construction.²⁷

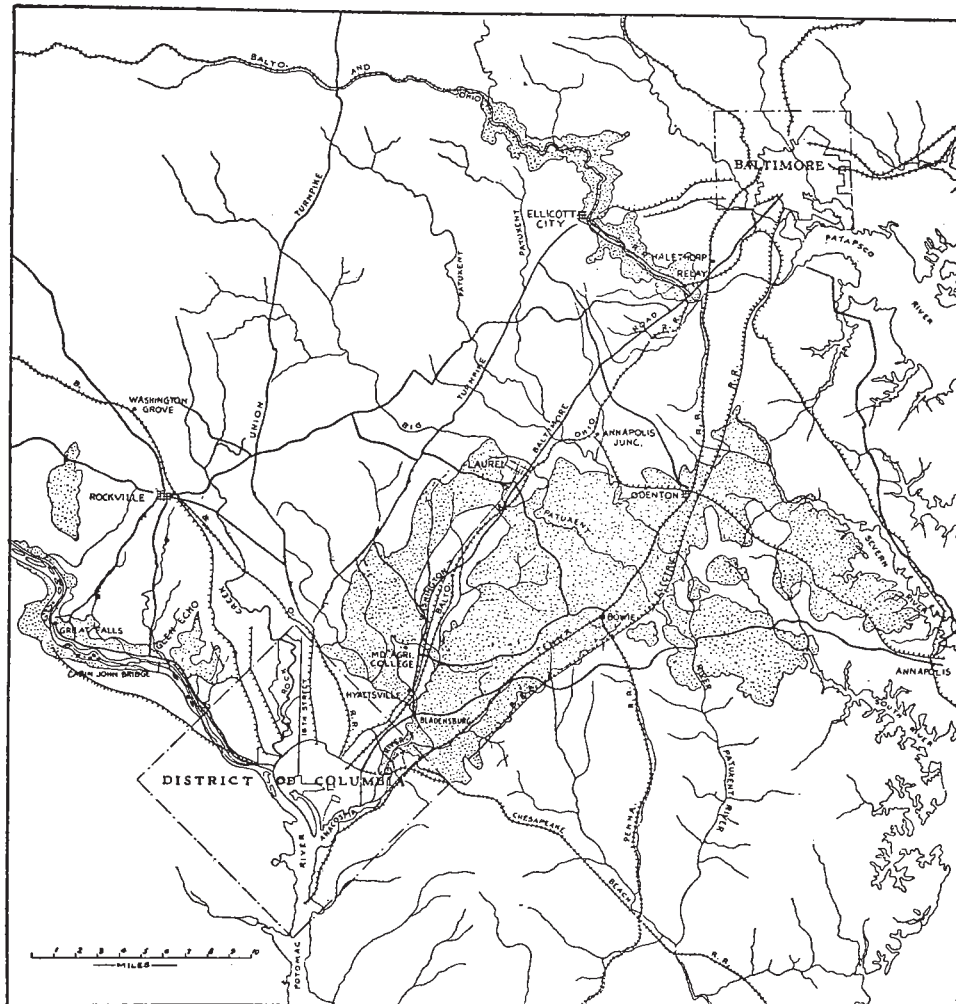
The Committee on Conservation of Natural Resources also advocated the creation of national parks, most notably the creation of a national forest "within the great unproductive area lying between the District of Columbia, Annapolis, and Baltimore."²⁸ (See illustration #3) The park, first proposed in 1910, interested William M. Ellicott. Mr. Ellicott, a Baltimore architect and sometime chairman of the AIA preservation committee, kept this idea before the Institute and other groups for many years. At one time the park was to serve as a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt; at another time, a forestry school; and later, as a housing site for returning veterans and the unemployed. Even though this national forest was never realized, the conservation of natural resources has remained a concern of different committees within the AIA.

Reactivation of a National Committee

As reports of the war in Europe filtered back to the United States, the preservation of buildings again asserted itself as a major interest of the architectural profession. As architects protested the wartime destruction of European monuments, they became more aware of the tenuous state of historic buildings in this country and began discussing a system for recording those resources. The AIA's response to this interest was to add the preservation of historic monuments to the duties of the natural resources committee. In 1914, the Committee on the "Conservation of Natural Resources and Historic Monuments" was formed with William M. Ellicott as chairman. As can be concluded from the title, natural resources were still the Committee's main concern. In 1915, the name was changed to the "Committee on Preservation of Natural Beauties and

²⁷Journal of Proceedings, January 1911, page 64. It has been postulated in conversation, that the interest in natural resources can be linked to the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, his interest in conservation, and his close association with members of the Institute.

²⁸Journal of Proceedings, 1919, page 65.



MAP SHOWING IN THE DOTTED AREAS THE
PROPOSED NATIONAL FOREST

- # 3 Map of Proposed National Capital Forest
Washington, D.C. Area
AIA Archives, RG 801, SR 2.50 Sellers, Box 1, Folder 3

Historic Monuments of the United States" and the chairman was Horace Wells Sellers of Philadelphia. The Committee then consisted of William M. Ellicott (Baltimore), Reinhardt Dempwolfe (York, Pennsylvania), J.E. Chandler (Boston), Ferdinand Parmentier (Los Angeles), L.A. Livaudais (New Orleans), and Ernest Coxhead (San Francisco).²⁹

A major concern of the Committee in 1915 was the City of New Orleans. Horace Sellers and Moise Goldstein, a New Orleans architect, corresponded extensively about how best to preserve the character of that city. (See illustration #4) Mr. Goldstein, who headed the New Orleans Chapter's preservation committee, devised an extensive plan for recording and protecting his city's heritage.

My programme for our local committee includes a survey of all the old buildings in the old section of the City and plotting this properly on a map with what reliable information can be secured on the related history. . . I am thinking of appointing what might be called a Vigilance Committee, composed of certain men and women outside of the Chapter who have shown great interest in the old works of Architecture. It frequently happens that something of merit is destroyed through lack of knowledge on the part of those interested that such a work is contemplated. . . .My programme also contemplates a survey of the various towns and cities of historic interest along the Mississippi River.³⁰

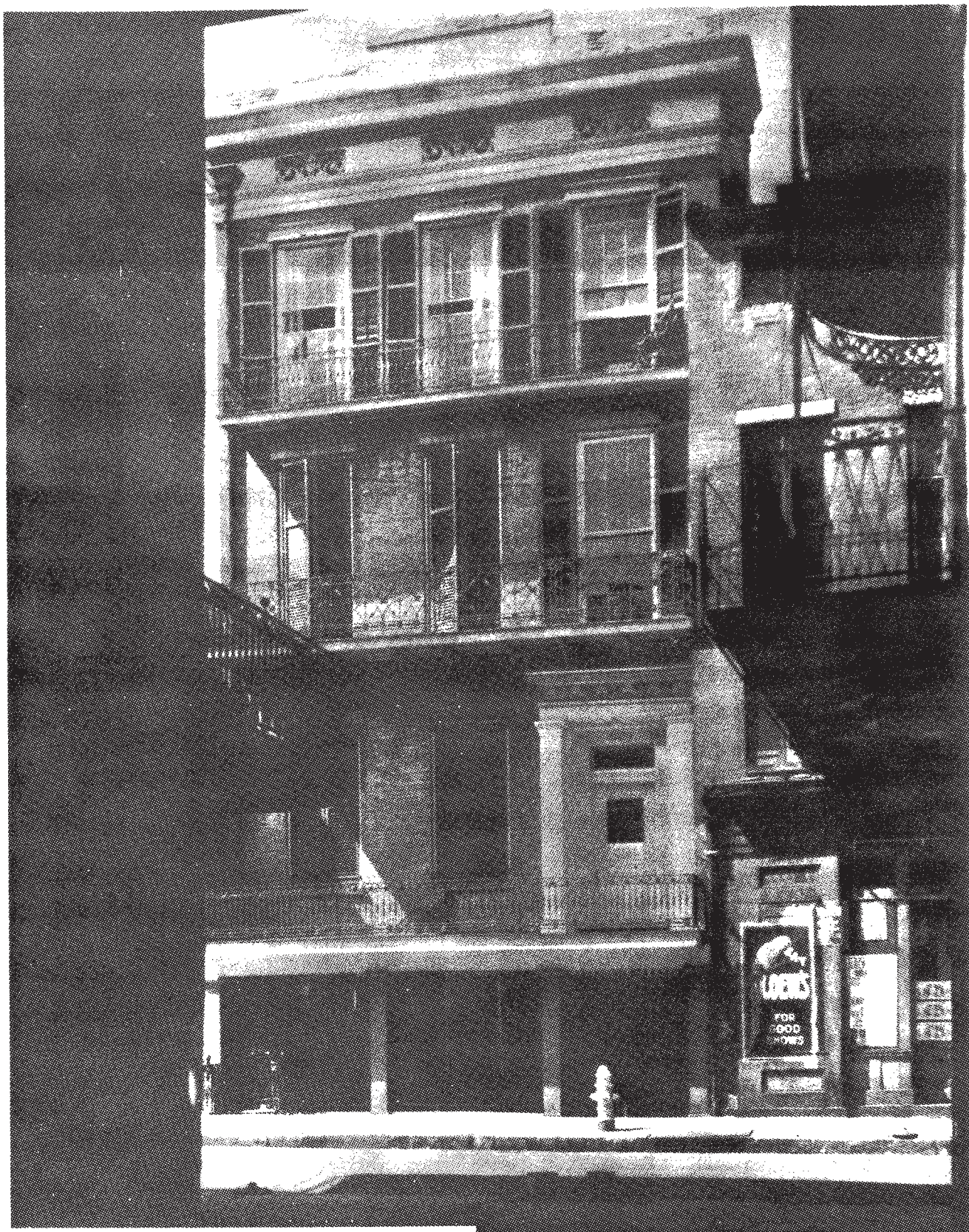
Goldstein received advice from Mr. Sellers about accomplishing these goals. The advice was based on Sellers' experience with the Philadelphia Chapter's programs. Mr. Sellers also encouraged Mr. Goldstein to "at least awaken your fellow townsmen to a greater realization of the value in dollars and cents that your French Quarter possesses to the community."³¹ Goldstein succeeded in some of his objectives as Mr. L.A. Livaudias reported to the national Committee, "That its influences were felt has been shown by our being called by the Commissioner of Public Works and the City Architect's Department to discuss several matters of considerable moment and interest."³²

²⁹Letter to Horace Wells Sellers from E.C. Kemper, Executive Secretary of the AIA, February 15, 1915, Sellers Box 1, Folder 1.

³⁰Letter to Horace Sellers from Moise Goldstein, March 24, 1915, Sellers Box 1, Folder 2.

³¹Letter to Moise Goldstein from Horace Sellers, March 27, 1915, Sellers Box 1, Folder 2. Sellers acknowledged that, "This perhaps is a rather sordid view to take of it but it is a fact just the same and I know of many people who had gone to the Panama Exhibition by the southern route who have stopped off at New Orleans simply to see the French quarter and have no doubt they belong to a host who should be reckoned with." Ibid.

³²Letter to Horace Sellers from L.A. Livaudias, March 26, 1915, Sellers Box 1, Folder 2.



4 620 St. Peter Street
New Orleans, Louisiana
AIA Archives, RG 815, Box 2, Folder 4

The national Committee also involved itself in the matter of the Assay Office in New York City. Mr. Robert W. DeForest, a New York attorney and member of the Board of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, upon hearing of the proposed demolition of the Assay Office, bought the facade which he donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art as part of its new addition. The Committee commended Mr. DeForest's initiative and felt that the Metropolitan Museum would be an appropriate guardian of the facade.³³ The facade of the Assay Office was incorporated into the garden court at the Museum.

Based on their activities, the Committee could report to the 49th Convention (1915) in Washington, D.C., that

There is in every community a considerable number of those who value the beauties of nature and the monuments of local history. . . .With efficient organizations and leadership, public sentiment is not slow to respond and the Chapters of the Institute are the natural leaders in movements of this kind.³⁴

They exercised this leadership decisively in late 1916. In October of that year Horace Sellers received a letter from Dr. Harold S. Colton, a zoologist from the University of Pennsylvania, which outlined the precarious condition of Montezuma's Castle in Arizona. The "Castle" is composed of ancient Native American cliff dwellings. Colton reported that "In these days of motor cars these ruins are easily reached from Flagstaff and should have some protection from the curio hunter who will upset a wall in his search for 'finds'."³⁵ Sellers wrote a letter to Franklin Lane, Secretary of the Interior, on October 12, detailing the situation and asking for information and advice. On October 30, Sellers received notification from the Department of the Interior that of the \$3,500.00 budget for twenty-one monuments, \$325.00 would be spent on stabilizing and protecting Montezuma's Castle.³⁶ Undoubtedly, that was the speediest resolution of a problem of this magnitude involving the AIA and the Department of Interior.

³³L.A. Livaudais wrote, "I am very much in favor of commending any movement which will result in the preserving of any meritorious work, which is of historic and architectural interest, due consideration being given to the surroundings or to the building in which the work to be preserved is to form part." Letter to Horace Sellers from L.A. Livaudais, March 29, 1915, Sellers Box 1, Folder 2. Similarly, Ernest Coxhead wrote, "it would seem that we can but commend the desire to preserve these structures in some worthy manner without attempting to express any definite opinion as to the way in which they should be used." Letter to Horace Sellers from Ernest Coxhead, April 20, 1915, Sellers Box 1, Folder 2.

³⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1915, page 17.

³⁵Letter to Horace Sellers from Harold S. Colton, October 5, 1916, Sellers Box 2, Folder 3.

³⁶Letter to Horace Sellers from Department of Interior, October 30, 1915, Sellers Box 2, Folder 3.

As the decade continued it became obvious to the Committee that input from the local chapters was critical to their success.

Your Committee in conducting its activities in the dual fields assigned to it embracing as it does the entire country, finds its knowledge of local conditions more or less restricted to the respective territories of its members and of local Chapters where such committees formed for a similar purpose exist.³⁷

The Committee understood the need to be informed of the threats to resources and the need for contacts, closer to the site, who could evaluate the situation and suggest alternatives.³⁸

World War I and Preservation

In 1918, the Board of Directors of the AIA wrote,

Although the war has tended to lessen activities within the province of your Committee, holding in abeyance especially projects which involve the expenditure of public funds, there is evidence of a growing patriotic interest in our historic monuments, and surviving examples of early American architecture.³⁹

The Committee, trying to capitalize on this interest, again requested Institute support for a program of measured drawings, made by students and professionals, to record endangered buildings. By supervising a system of documentation the Committee hoped to add professional standing to preservation projects across the country.

. . . activities on behalf of our landmarks, forests, and natural scenery should not be viewed solely as matters of sentimental interest, but as of real benefit to the public at large, and that the permanent preservation of our historical and natural monuments can be most certainly assured through awakened, patriotic and

³⁷Report to 50th Annual Convention, December 1, 1916, Sellers Box 2, Folder 5.

³⁸In the case of Montezuma's Castle, Sellers requested information from a Committee member, Ernest Coxhead of San Francisco, to corroborate the report from Dr. Colton as to the site's condition before contacting the Department of the Interior. Sellers Box 2, Folder 4.

³⁹Journal of Proceedings, 1918, page 118.

appreciative interest leading to public ownership of such objects through the efforts of such organizations as our own.⁴⁰

The Committee planned to use patriotism as a way of initiating preservation projects and realized that the preserved sites would prove beneficial as tools in the teaching of patriotism as well. In a letter to the Editor of the New York Times Horace Sellers stated this position as follows:

It should be more widely understood that these ancient buildings possess not only a sentimental value but where they have some direct association with historic events or personages they can exercise an important educational influence especially when situated, as is most frequently the case, in the older sections of our cities now given over to our largely foreign born population. . . . Properly restored and maintained they may thus be made object lessons in American history and in teaching the principles and ideals upon which our government is founded.⁴¹

Concern for Natural Resources

In 1920, the Committee focus shifted again from the preservation of historic monuments to the preservation and conservation of natural resources. The membership had been concerned with "Scenic Beauties" almost from its beginning in 1890, but threats to Yellowstone National Park centered their attention on this part of their charge. HR 12466, written by Representative Addison T. Smith of Idaho, proposed the granting of easements through Yellowstone to provide water for irrigation of arid regions in the West. The Committee opposed the bill because no study had been made of the effects of Smith's proposal. In addition to chronicling their position on Yellowstone, the Committee's report to the 53rd Annual Convention (1920) contained information about the war's effect on the nation's forestland, the formation of the Lake Michigan-Indiana Sand Dune Reservation, and an update on the National Capital Park. In the final analysis, the Committee operated more as a conduit between interested parties than as an instigator of policy when dealing with resource issues.

The Committee was able to focus on issues of resource conservation because much of the preservation of buildings was being done at the local level. In recognition of this trend, A. Lawrence Kocher, a new member of the Committee, suggested a program whereby local groups would present papers describing an

⁴⁰Journal of Proceedings, 1916, page 166.

⁴¹Letter to Editor, New York Times, from Horace Sellers, October 29, 1919, Sellers Box 3, Folder 1.

early building or trend in their region to the Committee.⁴² In this manner the Committee would be kept informed of the national picture, and local organizations would receive input from authorities in the preservation field. In the end, the structures themselves would benefit from the exchange of information.

Re-evaluation of the Committee's Duties

In response to the growing prerogatives of the local committees and the national Committee's inability to undertake individual projects, the national Committee re-evaluated its duties in 1923. The Committee, now under the Chairmanship of Fiske Kimball, outlined three major duties:

- (i) where monuments of really national importance are threatened;
- (ii) initiation and support of policies of general benefit; and
- (iii) in the conduct of a campaign of education of architects and public as to the proper methods of treatment of old buildings.⁴³

They also found a new area of endeavor opened to them: "safeguarding the historic monuments which have come into national ownership through the purchase, during the late war, of large areas for government purposes."⁴⁴ In connection with an old house at Fort Eustis, Virginia, for example, "The Secretary of War has. . . showed a sympathetic interest, in that promising, in any modifications or restorations made in the house, the advice of the A.I.A., which the Committee has undertaken to furnish, will be asked."⁴⁵

The Committee wanted to provide advice because they felt that without knowledgeable assistance a preservation project would fail in terms of documentation and historical accuracy. They cautioned Institute members against letting the demands of clients ruin good buildings. Instead of making a change on a client's whim, "endeavor to make clients realize that their own best interest lies in keeping the building as near as possible in its original condition."⁴⁶ The architect should press for accuracy in restoration because of his knowledge. "It should be realized also that restoring an old house or garden is specialized work, and not every architect has the special knowledge and experience -- to say nothing of the patience and willingness to devote

⁴²Letter to Horace Sellers from A.L. Kocher, September 26, 1920. Sellers Box 3, Folder 2.

⁴³Box 1, Folder 2, Appendix 9.

⁴⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1923, page 105.

⁴⁵Ibid. "Probably the Jones house, a 'Jacobean' survival of considerable interest." Letter of Charles Peterson to author, August 17, 1989.

⁴⁶Ibid. The Committee added that, "Experience in the past shows that such changes are almost always regretted within a generation."

adequate time -- to do this work."⁴⁷ Architects were becoming more assertive because of the experience they had gained in early preservation projects. By 1923 there were projects to review and people in the field kept one another informed of the mistakes and successes of others.

The Philadelphia Chapter and its preservation committee headed by Horace Wells Sellers were often consulted about preservation projects because of their earlier success with Independence Square. In 1921, they were contacted by the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) about restoring the spring house at General Varnum's headquarters at Valley Forge.⁴⁸ In response to the request, the Philadelphia committee surveyed the site, did preliminary research into the building's authenticity, offered alternative options for restoration, and prepared an estimate of costs. Mr. Sellers and his committee were the ideal choice for such work, not only because of their proximity to the site, but because they had the knowledge, honed by experience, to render professional advice to concerned private societies. The cost, approximately \$3,000.00, was too much for the D.A.R. at that time and they, regretfully, were unable to pursue the project.

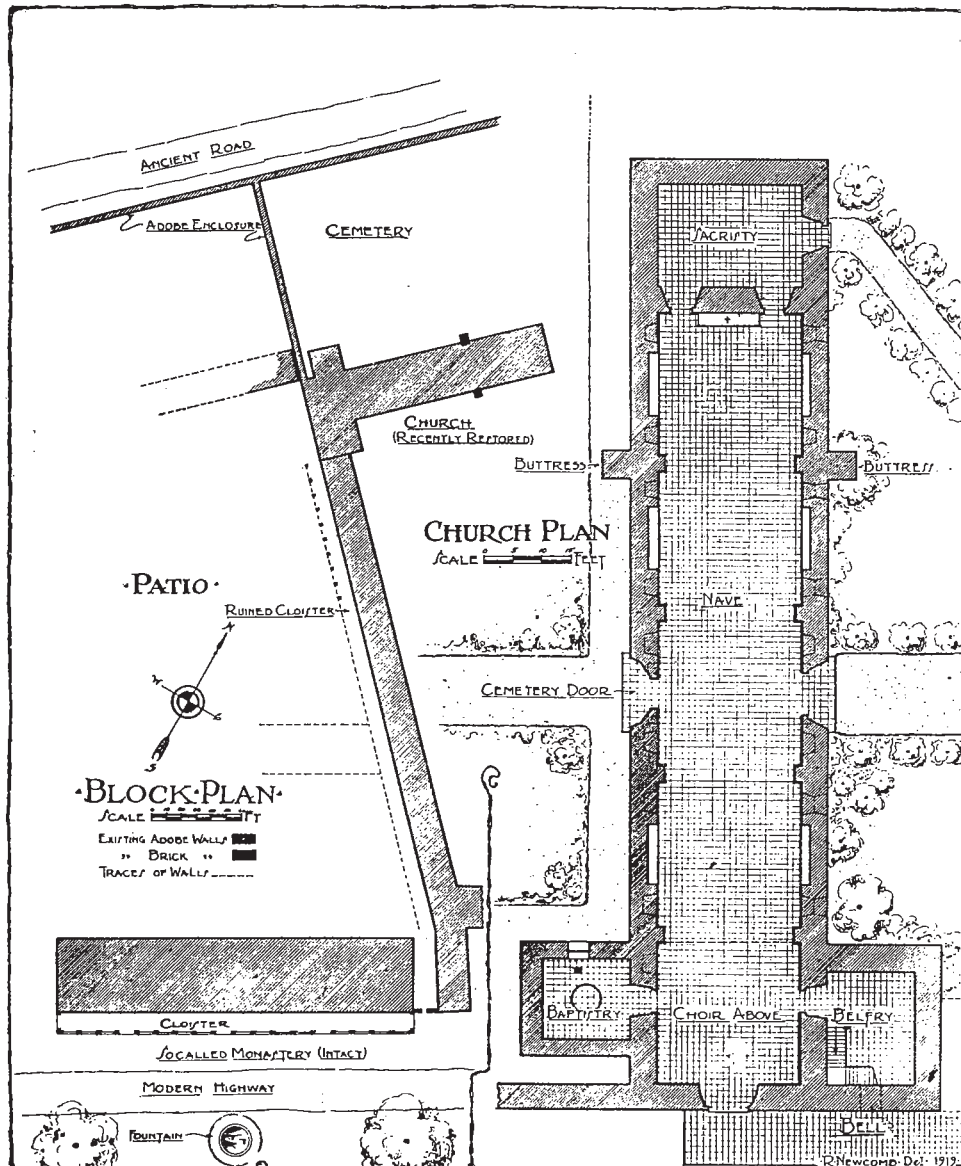
In 1924, the national Committee broadened its information base when its membership was extended to one member from each Chapter. The Annual Report noted that "much is being done by individuals in measuring and photographing, and the publication of articles with a record of old work."⁴⁹ The reports from the Chapters are enlightening as to the scope of work being conducted under the banner of preservation. The Central Illinois Chapter had requested that their State Assembly allocate funds for the purchase of the Mound Builders' monuments for development into a state park. The Central New York Chapter wanted to reconstruct the Onondaga Valley Presbyterian Church which had burned. In Nebraska, the Chapter was proceeding with scenic drive designations. The San Francisco Chapter reported success in having the Standard Oil Company remove its 1,200 billboards from the city. In Southern California, the committee provided its services to aid in the restoration of the San Fernando and San Juan Capistrano Missions. (See illustration #5) They also had a representative on commissions to "enable him to help in preventing some of the wholesale destruction of landmarks caused by the phenomenal growth in population of Los Angeles."⁵⁰ Other chapters provided updates on projects they had undertaken or on those projects being done by historical societies and other private groups. In spite of all this activity, the national Committee summarized their report by writing: "Suggestions in some quarters that there will be more occasion for activity in preservation there fifty years hence, can be matched by the regret

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸See various letters between Miss Brazier and Horace Wells Sellers, Sellers Box 1, Folder 4.

⁴⁹Journal of Proceedings, 1924, page 126.

⁵⁰Journal of Proceedings, 1924, page 129.



5 Plan of Mission San Fernando Rey de Espana
California
Drawn by Rexford Newcomb, 1919
The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California
by Rexford Newcomb, page 202

that this activity was not begun years ago when many buildings now lost were still standing."⁵¹

The Committee had many occasions to regret the losses of buildings -- either through lack of notice or their inability to muster enough support. One dramatic incident occurred late in 1924 with the destruction of Madison Square Garden in New York City. Members of the Committee had tried to prevent the demolition but were foiled when the wreckers started their job without warning. In a reconciliatory action, eighteen columns from the facade were offered for sale, but the time limit on the offer expired before money was raised. This destruction illustrated a major shortcoming of the preservation movement -- concerned groups reacted only when the crisis was at hand and not in anticipation of change. As was observed of the Madison Square Garden incident, "it is vital that action shall be taken long in advance."⁵² The Committee did endorse the rebuilding of the tower at Madison Square Garden with materials that has been salvaged.⁵³

The Committee was aware of the need to move from a mode of crisis response to one of management of the built environment. "There is, perhaps, a general impression that the chief function of this Committee is to write indignant letters to the press or to property owners, protesting against the removal or alteration of some beloved old building which we fondly cherish for artistic reasons."⁵⁴ However, because preservationists required public support to fund their activities they could only act when the public was sufficiently aroused, usually for sentimental reasons, to save a building from demolition or alteration. The most the Committee could do without widespread public support was to continue "Through the Chapter organizations, a careful appraisal of monuments. . .which will include the making of drawings and photographs and the collection of whatever historical data may be available."⁵⁵

Restoration Work at Valley Forge and Williamsburg

Restoration of buildings at Valley Forge gave the Philadelphia Chapter a chance to move from crisis management into the field of preservation planning. Although an initial project fell through in 1921, the Philadelphia Committee on

⁵¹Journal of Proceedings, 1924, page 130.

⁵²Letter to Board of Directors of the AIA from Horace Wells Sellers, October 31, 1929, Sellers Box 5, Folder 7. Fiske Kimball managed to rescue the statue of Diana which topped Madison Square Garden for the Pennsylvania Museum of Fine Arts.

⁵³Journal of Proceedings, 1925, page 78.

⁵⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1926, Supplementary Report, page 158.

⁵⁵Ibid.

Preservation of Historic Monuments was contacted again in 1925 by members of the Valley Forge Park Commission for advice about how best to restore the area of the colonial army's encampment and how to make it more accessible to the public. Mr. Sellers, chairman of the Committee, responded that they were interested and able to help. "This advisory service in the interest of historic monuments under public ownership is of course gratuitous, being a public service that falls within the province of the American Institute of Architects to render as a technical society."⁵⁶ The Valley Forge Park Commission was most concerned about

a plan for a system of comfort stations throughout the park and, secondarily, a plan for the restoration of the grounds about General Washington's headquarters including the provisions for parking automobiles, for housing articles of historical interest, and for providing a central and convenient location for the administrative offices and public rest room.⁵⁷

The Park Commission was intent on developing a long-term plan for Valley Forge and they intended to have the Pennsylvania State Art Commission approve the plan so that its comprehensive nature would be protected. "Unless our plans have some protection, extensive planning seems unwarranted and the cure must be effected in other quarters. Piecemeal work should if possible be avoided."⁵⁸ Their proposed restoration

would not only more firmly establish the place in the hearts and visions of the American people, but would create more interest and would instill in those who visit there that respect due a private home; possibly lessen the great degree of rowdyism at present manifested at times by visitors, and greater still, preserve for the people a typical parcel of colonial homestead with all of its appointments.⁵⁹

The Philadelphia Committee members made several trips to Valley Forge to assess the situation and monitor progress of the work. Their advice was sought for everything from paint color and the proper material for steps and stairs to the appropriate style of fence to surround the headquarters or the moving of an old

⁵⁶Letter to Albert C. Myer from Horace Wells Sellers, November 10, 1925, Sellers Box 4, Folder 9.

⁵⁷"Portion of a report to the Valley Forge Park Commission," February 18, 1926, page 1, Sellers Box 4, Folder 10.

⁵⁸"Portion of report," page 4, Sellers Box 4, Folder 10.

⁵⁹"Portion of report," page 2, Sellers Box 4, Folder 10.

pump.⁶⁰ (See illustration #6) The Committee advised the Valley Forge Commission based on the consensus of its members and supervised the drawings based on their recommendations. The Philadelphia Committee summarized their work for the 1927 Convention held in Washington, D.C.

The tendency in the past to create park effects in the treatment of the ground to the disadvantage of the historical aspect of the place, led to a call to the Philadelphia Committee for advice. This has resulted in the removal of various incongruous features at the Washington Headquarters House and the restoration of the building in matters of detail to what would appear to have been its condition at the time of the encampment. This was also extended to the adjoining buildings, thus preventing the removal of several and adapting them to uses which made their retention of practical utility as well as lend to the place something of its original appearance as a farmstead of the period. The Committee's advice extended also to the furnishing of the Headquarters House which was carried out in a manner appropriate to the early period.⁶¹ (See illustrations #7 and #8)

The national Committee was aware that the field of preservation itself needed to undergo a shift in focus, a maturing. The history of the movement was overwhelmingly concerned with individual projects undertaken to enshrine a moment or person in history. They wrote in 1927, "While many worthy buildings could only be preserved by public acquisition it would nevertheless be more desirable that motives for preservation be prompted by a sincere and widespread appreciation of the aesthetic values of old buildings."⁶² They believed that the workmanship contained in buildings and the fact that the buildings illustrated the styles and personal needs of another time should be sufficient reasons for preservation, even if the site had not been connected with a famous event or person. They realized that not every building should be saved, but they did want to save characteristic buildings to record the craftsmanship and artistic values of an earlier time.

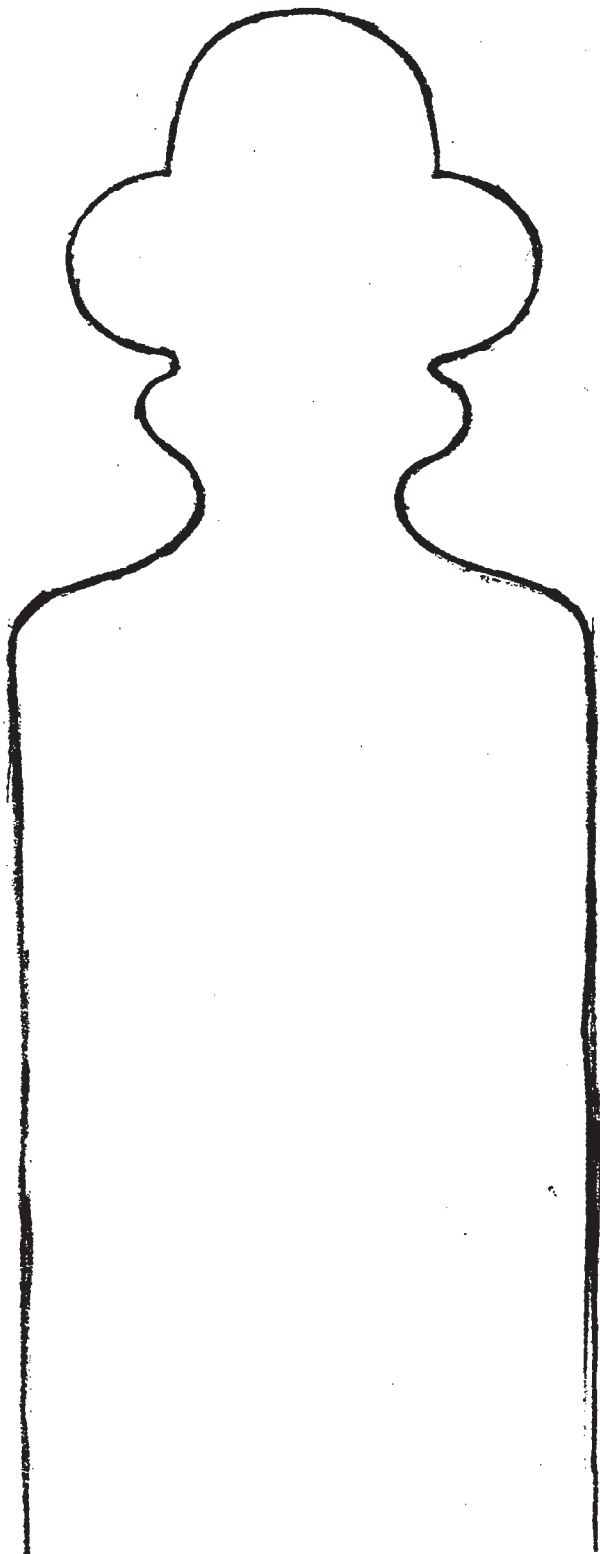
The work at Williamsburg is an example of this type of preservation.

It is proposed to bring back in as convincing a manner as possible a picture of an early colonial village, scrupulously preserving the existing old buildings and restoring many more of which only the foundations or records exist. There are naturally many difficulties that result from the intermingling of new structures with old work, but every possible effort is being expended to make the new (restored) buildings as nearly like the originals as possible. New

⁶⁰Letters from various Committee members outlining their recommendations can be found in Sellers Box 4, Folder 10.

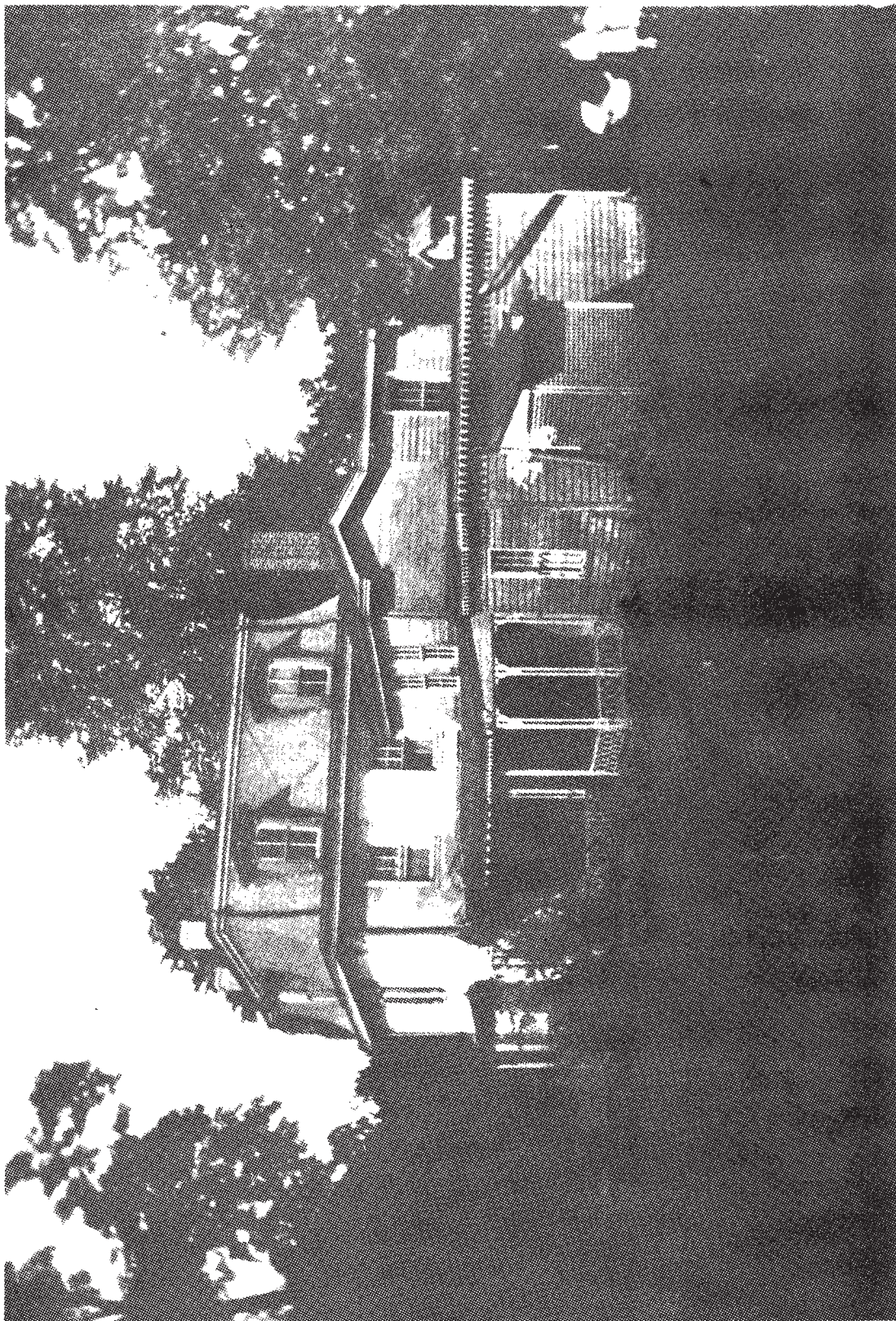
⁶¹Journal of Proceedings, 1927, page 154.

⁶²Journal of Proceedings, 1927, page 157.



6 Proposed picket for fence to surround Superintendent's House
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
Drawn by Carl Ziegler, 1926
AIA Archives, RG 801, SR 2.50 Sellers, Box 5, Folder 2

1



7 Superintendent's House before restoration
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
AIA Archives. RG 801, SR 2.50 Sellers, Box 5, Folder 4



8 Superintendent's House after restoration
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
AIA Archives, RG 801, SR 2.50 Sellers, Box 5, Folder 4

materials, where used, are to be of a character approximating the old with no attempt made to "antique" them by theatrical means. It appears to be the intention of the architects to show not an old town but one restored as the setting of great historic events and as an object lesson in early town planning.⁶³ (See illustration #9)

The Committee itself was never involved with the work at Williamsburg per se and the reconstruction is rarely mentioned in the Committee's records. However, the project at Williamsburg does affect the Committee and architects in general because it provided training for architects interested in preservation. (See illustration #10) Many of these men would one day serve on the Committee. Interestingly enough, until Columbia University developed a historic preservation program in 1963, Williamsburg would be the premier training ground for preservation architects even though the National Park Service had administered preservation projects since 1931 and had trained practitioners through their Mission 66 Programs.

Concern for Colonial Interiors

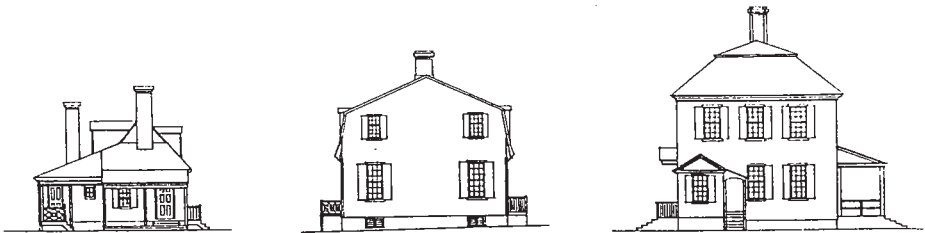
At the end of the 1920's, the Committee was concerned with the rapid urbanization of the United States and how that affected the resources under their care. They noted the losses of the Deane House in Hartford, Connecticut, and the Archer House in Richmond, Virginia, to provide parking and storage garage facilities.⁶⁴ Often if buildings were not torn down they were stripped of their interior furnishings. Charleston, South Carolina, was particularly hard hit: "...every spring during the tourist season great quantities of old furniture, silver, china, etc. are bought up and carried away. In recent years iron balconies, fences and gates have been deported. Two extremely fine panelled rooms were purchased last year and sent to a museum in the Middle West."⁶⁵ (See illustration #11)

In 1931 the "Committee for Safeguarding Charleston Architecture" was established as a subcommittee to the Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings to turn the tide in that city. In addition to citizens of Charleston, the committee included the following architects: Albert Simons (Charleston); Franklin O. Adams (Tampa); Fiske Kimball (Philadelphia); Alfred L. Kocher (New

⁶³Journal of Proceedings, 1929, page 153.

⁶⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1928, page 125. Charles Hosmer noted, "Only two professional organizations in 1926 even paid lip service to the ideals of preservation: the American Institute of Architects and the American Historical Association. Both of these groups had committees that dealt with historic buildings; one --the architects -- did make some efforts to improve restoration work from time to time." Hosmer, Charles, Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1981, page 874.

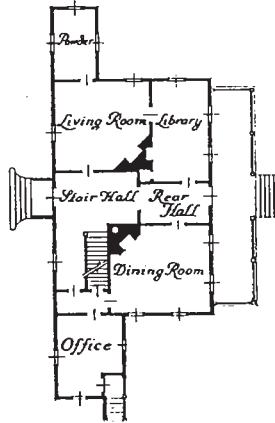
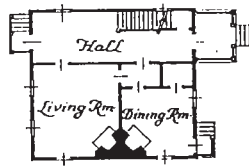
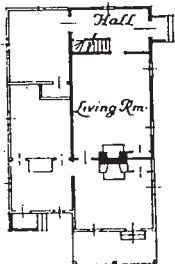
⁶⁵Albert Simons as quoted in Journal of Proceedings, 1928, page 125.



Galt House

Nightengale House

Dinwiddie House



- # 9 Elevations and plans of houses
Williamsburg, Virginia
"Notes on the Architecture" William Graves Perry
Architectural Record, December 1935, page 374

- #10 Door showing profiles of many of the Williamsburg
restoration architects
Williamsburg, Virginia
Drawn by Thomas T. Waterman
"Thomas Tileston Waterman: Student of American
Colonial Architecture"
Fay Campbell Kaynor
Winterthur Portfolio, Summer/Autumn 1985, page 109





#11 Houses on Meeting Street
Charleston, South Carolina
Photograph by Tebbs and Knell
AIA Archives, RG 815, Box 7, Folder 10

York); Robert D. Cohn (New York); Everett V. Meeks (New Haven); and John P.B. Sinkler (Philadelphia).⁶⁶ The Committee was formed, in part, at the request of Charleston citizens "to help the beleaguered city by bringing the American Institute of Architects into the deteriorating condition at the Joseph Manigault House."⁶⁷ The Institute's help was solicited in order to bring the crisis before a national audience because "publicity is of great importance in arousing the force of public opinion."⁶⁸ The Committee also provided advice to the Charleston groups on how best to handle so large a project.⁶⁹

The national Committee decried the destruction of colonial interiors and was alarmed by the duplicity of museums and collectors who would destroy the historical value of these prizes in order to add to their collections.

Public opinion should be aroused to see the futility of such trading and the architectural profession should exert every effort to discourage this evil. At the same time, the Institute should encourage the recognition of contemporary craftsmanship which is capable of producing work as fine as the old and, logically, expressions of our present-day art and life.⁷⁰

This problem resurfaced in 1932 when in November of that year Leicester B. Holland, chairman of the Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, wrote a short article for The Octagon entitled "Colonial Interiors as Museum Trophies." It was written in response to a letter from Albert Simons which recounted yet another tale of a buyer looking for a panelled room from Charleston for a museum. The article includes the resolution from the April 1932 Convention in an attempt to inform museum officials of the Institute's concern.⁷¹ Holland points out that the majority of period rooms "have little claim to be considered works of art" and yet they are collected because they are

⁶⁶The Octagon, August 1932, pages 7-8.

⁶⁷Hosmer, Preservation Comes of Age, page 245.

⁶⁸Journal of Proceedings, 1932, page 44.

⁶⁹In fact, the Committee has offered advice well into the 1970's, "Charleston has continued to be a thorny issue. Our position has acknowledged this sensitivity where we must respect the historical integrity of a center of preservation, yet we cannot ignore the potential for good design infill." This was in response to a proposal which would have placed a hotel in the historic downtown area of the city. Vytlacil Box 1, Folder 1.

⁷⁰Journal of Proceedings, 1928, page 125.

⁷¹"Resolved, the American Institute of Architects urges that museums abstain from the devastating practice of purchasing or installing interiors or other portions of early buildings except those whose demolition is inevitable." "Colonial Interiors as Museum Trophies," Leicester B. Holland, The Octagon, November 1932, page 6.

"particularly popular and particularly cheap."⁷² Holland suggested that museums use replicas and photographs of colonial interiors instead of the actual rooms in their exhibits.

Surely, if we try we can persuade the museum that it is a rather shoddy and uncultural act to destroy the native heirlooms of any community to titillate the sentimentalities of casual wanderers weary of looking at great works of art.⁷³

Concern for the Countryside

In addition to the destruction of houses, the Committee took note of the demise of the character of the countryside. Their summary of the problem:

The character of the rural countryside in America has become menaced by rapid change on account of extensive automobile travel and road building development. Rural villages and historic towns in many instances have been disfigured by the erection of new buildings, service stations, roadside restaurants and billboards that are quite out of keeping with the atmosphere of the invaded localities. Country lanes are being straightened and converted into direct, concrete highways. Outside of towns and cities these highways have attracted nondescript buildings on either side resulting in what is termed "ribbon development." This situation deserves the attention of the Committee on Community Planning, but since old buildings suffer by the loss of an appropriate setting, we have entered our protest against cases of vandalism."⁷⁴

Overall, the Committee was not optimistic about the future of preservation or their role in the movement.

Although there is nothing which industrial prosperity may create fully to compensate our country for the loss of its artistic heritage, yet it is seldom that oral pleading and influential pressure have succeeded in checking destruction where anticipated financial return by rebuilding is a factor.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, the Committee did provide "constructive suggestions" regarding principles for restoration: ". . .to say that no reconditioning should be made would be a humiliating admission of our professional helplessness as well as the

⁷²The Octagon, November 1932, page 7.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1928, page 125.

⁷⁵Ibid.

despair of modern art."⁷⁶ Repair of the building's fabric was to be conducted although replacement of parts of the building should not be attempted unless there was sufficient evidence to support such reconstruction. They acknowledged that modernization was often necessary if a building was to continue to function in a useful capacity. Finally, if a building was doomed, they suggested that the building be bought, pulled down, and reconstructed elsewhere.

It would be incorrect to assume that the Committee was composed of men who were unwilling to join the twentieth century. Instead, they were men who hoped to utilize the best of the past to create a more liveable present. In that way, all periods would be represented as a record of man's progress. Their philosophy becomes clearer when commenting on gas stations and billboards.

On the other hand there is the frank recognition of the filling station and roadhouse as a twentieth century utility. As such it should be without camouflage, direct, efficient, cleanly and entirely without style pretense. In this way it may be recognized unmistakably as in the fashion of the time. The attempts made to harmonize the filling station with a Colonial setting are as ineffectual as would be the adoption of a Tudor style for an automobile to suit a Tudor style house.⁷⁷

Similarly billboards were considered objectionable not so much because of what they were but because of where they were. "There will always be abundant room for outdoor advertising in its proper place, but that proper place is the commercial districts of towns and cities and not the American countryside."⁷⁸ Their position on the problem of ribbon development was discussed earlier. These concerns became so widespread that the AIA established a special committee to study roadside structures and scenic features in 1932.

Ballots for Buildings

In an attempt to locate historic buildings for study, Leicester Holland published a "ballot" in the February 1933 Octagon. The Committee reasoned that "with the widely distributed membership of the Institute, there should be no great difficulty in preparing a reasonably complete general survey of the more important buildings, if all members will assist."⁷⁹ He requested that the buildings be at least one century old and that they be nominated by chapter area to achieve the best national coverage. Mr. Holland had bemoaned the lack of such a list in 1931 in a letter to Horace Wells Sellers:

⁷⁶Journal of Proceedings, 1928, page 126.

⁷⁷Journal of Proceedings, 1930, page 160.

⁷⁸Journal of Proceedings, 1930, page 161.

⁷⁹Leicester B. Holland, "A Vote on Historic Buildings," The Octagon, February 1933, page 15.

In districts where the old buildings are scattered through the country, many citizens would find a good objective for Sunday afternoon excursions in visiting the old houses on the list. And where much of the material is concentrated in a city, a list like this would form an excellent basis for zoning laws, like the admirable one now in effect in Charleston, South Carolina.⁸⁰

Formation of the Historic American Buildings Survey

The lack of a systematic survey was rectified by the creation of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in the waning months of 1933. Charles Peterson, then working for the National Park Service, Branch of Plans and Designs, drafted a memorandum for the program in response to a general request from the Roosevelt Administration for programs to aid professionals who had been hard hit by the Depression. Peterson justified his proposal as follows:

The chief virtues of this plan as a practical relief project are that men could go to work almost at once, and that a very minimum of equipment, supplies and overhead is necessary. From the cultural standpoint an enormous contribution to the history and aesthetics of American life could be made. Relief would be offered to one of the professions that has suffered most conspicuously during the years of the economic depression.⁸¹

Mr. Peterson noted that similar programs were being conducted successfully at the local level. The first of these programs was begun by the Philadelphia Chapter in 1930 upon the receipt of an anonymous donation of \$5,000.00 to record old Philadelphia.

By June 1932 Sidney Martin of the Philadelphia chapter reported on the success of the enterprise: More than sixty draftsmen had been helped for considerable periods of time (according to their needs) and complete sets of measured drawings had been made on fifty-six buildings. The chapter itself, together with some private donors, had put together a fund of \$18,000.00 that covered all the work, while materials and office space had been donated.⁸²

⁸⁰Letter to Horace Wells Sellers from Leicester B. Holland, December 9, 1931, Sellers Box 6, Folder 13.

⁸¹"American Notes," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, volume XVI, number 3, October 1957, pages 29-30.

⁸²Hosmer, Charles, Preservation Comes of Age, pages 550-551. "The gift of Five Grand that started the 1930 Survey (in which Sydney Martin FAIA was a leader) was not exactly anonymous. Mrs. Curtis, wife of the publisher, was the donor; Miss Frances A. Wister hatched the idea." Letter from Charles Peterson to author, August 17, 1989.

The Historic American Buildings Survey developed into a public/private organization with the federal government providing the money and the American Institute of Architects and the Library of Congress providing the organization and manpower.

Holland [Leicester B. Holland] joined us with ready enthusiasm and he helped design the format of the H.A.B.S. record so as to make them both convenient to file and yet readily available to users in his reading room and to those ordering copies by mail. Edward G. Kemper, executive secretary of the A.I.A., . . . saw the possibility and quickly obtained the unanimous approval of his national board. He telegraphed the local Institute chapters across the country, which brought forth the best talent in the profession. Special pains were taken to recognize those who had already achieved success and recognition in the historic field. Richard Koch of New Orleans, Charles Morse Stotz, Jr. of Pittsburgh and Frank Chouteau Brown of Boston stood out from the start.⁸³

The relationship between the National Park Service, the AIA, and the Library of Congress was formalized in the Tripartite Agreement effective June 23, 1934. The agreement extended the program begun under the Civic Works Administration because,

1. There is a vital need for a permanent national plan to coordinate all work of this nature and to make it available to the public for research.
2. The present standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey form an excellent basis for a continuous and much more comprehensive survey.⁸⁴

The Survey was organized through the existing chapter system of the Institute with each chapter overseeing one of the sixty-seven geographic districts. The Park Service provided standardized drawing sheets. All other materials were to be donated or paid for by parties other than the Park Service. The Library of Congress would get the approved drawings and make them available to the public. This set-up was devised because,

A comprehensive and continuous national survey is the logical concern of the Federal Government: -- The National Park Service in the Department of the Interior seems the proper place for such responsibility. The local execution must depend on some permanent non-governmental body, of national scope, functioning by local organizations: -- The American Institute of Architects fulfills

⁸³Peterson, Charles, "The Historic American Building Survey: Its Beginnings," Historic America, page 8.

⁸⁴"Memorandum of Agreement between the National Park Service, The American Institute of Architects, and the Library of Congress," The Octagon, November 1934, page 16.

these requirements perfectly. For the guardianship of the records, the government again seems the proper functionary, and for this purpose the Library of Congress with its Pictorial Archives of Early American Architecture stands equipped and ready.⁸⁵

The Survey was successful in fulfilling its charge; even before the Tripartite Agreement had been signed in 1934, the program had employed 772 person, almost all of that number unemployed architects. In the two months the Survey operated with Civil Works Administration funds, 5,110 sheets of drawings were completed, 3,260 photographs were processed, and an additional 1,461 structures were inventoried.⁸⁶ (See illustration #12) This tremendous output on the part of the HABS teams is responsible for a shift in the justifications for the program.

Although H.A.B.S. officials continued to exploit the public relations value of the employment dimension, the main focus shifted to the product of the Survey. Park Service officials and others came to realize the great value of a thorough, accurate, well-organized archives of historic architecture for purposes of recognizing, planning, and managing historic resources.⁸⁷

In a 1935 Circular of Information Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, wrote,

it is admittedly impracticable to preserve all buildings or sites associated with events of incontestable historic importance. It is possible, however, to record in a graphic manner and by photography, before it is too late, the exact appearance of these buildings and their surroundings. This is the purpose of the Historic American Buildings Survey.⁸⁸

Management of the Survey occupied much of the Committee's time during the New Deal, but not all. Another important consideration was securing the passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (S. 2073). The Act was designed to "recognize the expansion of the national program of historic sites that had taken place in government since the passage of the Antiquities Act of 1906. . . [and centered on] the planning and administration of the historic preservation program of the

⁸⁵Ibid.

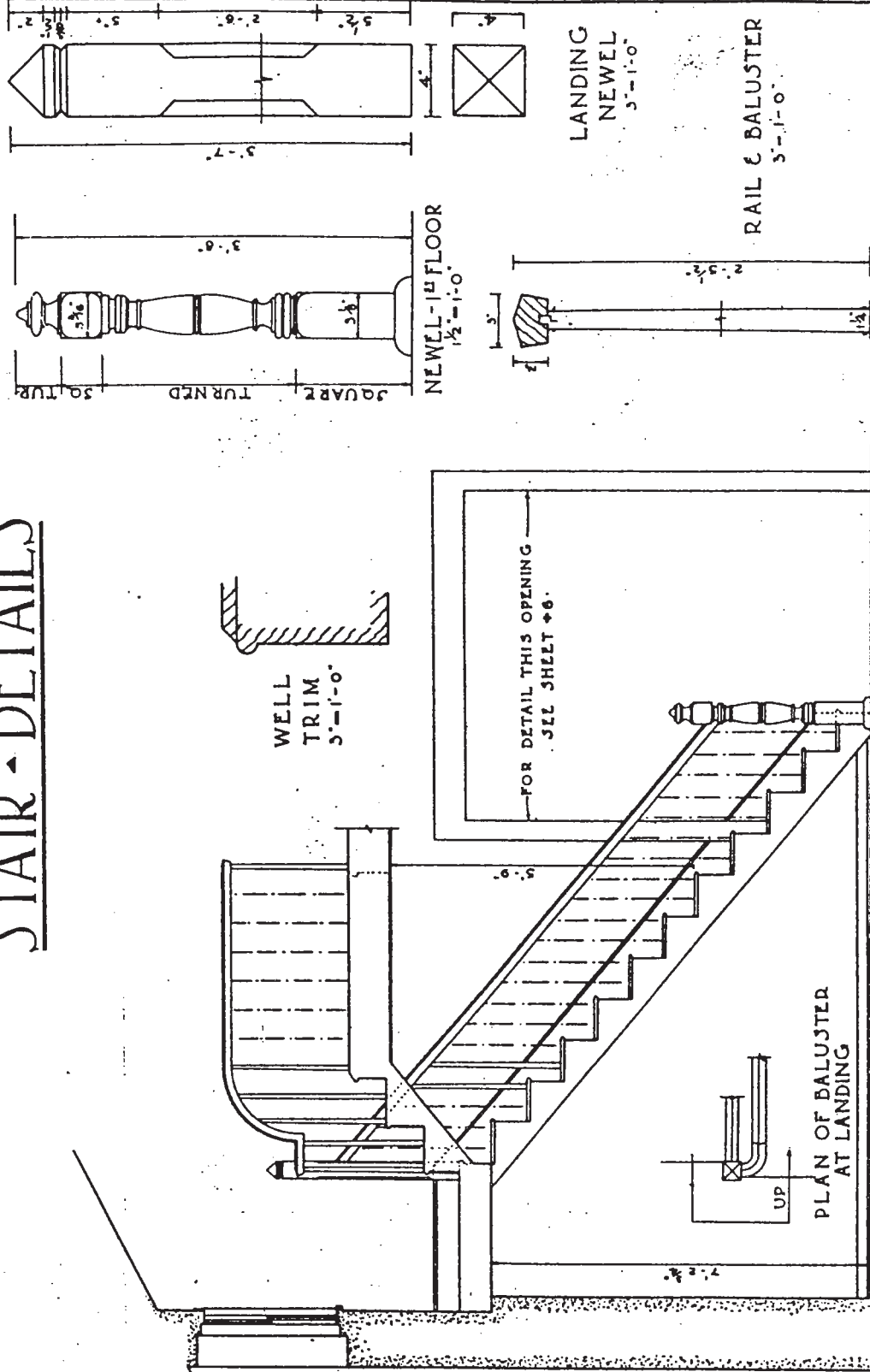
⁸⁶"H.A.B.S. Redivivus," The Octagon, November 1934, page 15.

⁸⁷Corkern, Wilton C., Jr. Architects, Preservationists, and the New Deal: The Historic American Building Survey, 1933-1942, Dissertation, George Washington University, 1984, pages 140-141.

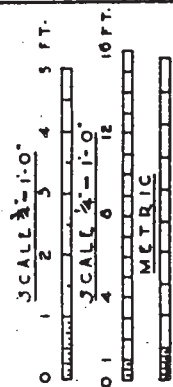
⁸⁸Ibid., page 141.

15

STAIR - DETAILS



SIDE ELEVATION OF STAIRS
3/4'-1'-0"



H.C. DOZIER, DEL.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 63-1715
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA ARCHIVES
100 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, SUITE 200, GAINESVILLE, FL 32601

FLORIDA

PRINCE MURAT HOUSE
ST. JOHN'S COUNTY

ST. AUGUSTINE

FLA 14
0-9-36

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 6 OF 7 SHEETS

#12 HABS drawing of details from the Prince Murat House
Saint Augustine, Florida
Delinated by H.C. Dozier, 1936
HABS/AIA Archive of Women in Architecture

national government in the Department of the Interior."⁸⁹ The Historic Sites Act legitimized the work that HABS had begun in 1934.

In 1937, the Committee again opposed alteration of the United States Capitol. At the 1938 Convention in New Orleans, they presented a resolution condemning the use of federal relief funds for any reconstruction projects because

such reconstruction may not only deceive the public, but render impossible careful examinations of the remains and later correct rebuilding; and. . .the use of Federal funds for relief purposes facilitates hasty or ill-advised undertakings of this nature.⁹⁰

Retrenching in the 1940's

The Committee narrowed its focus and decreased its membership as the United States became more involved in the Second World War. In 1941, the Committee had only eight members⁹¹ and in 1942, the Historic American Buildings Survey was suspended due to a lack of funds. The Committee recognized the fact that their chief function was to "lay plans for the future" and consequently, they monitored preservation activities as best they could.⁹²

In the mid-1940's, as the war effort wound down, the Committee began to reassert itself. In the 1945-46 Report of the Committee its seven members took the initiative in re-establishing the Institute's place in the preservation movement. When referring to their charge they wrote,

The Committee assumes that the enumeration of these duties to a committee of the Institute implies that all members of the Institute should have a profound interest in the legitimate aims of

⁸⁹Johnson, Ronald W. and Michael G. Schene, editors, Cultural Resources Management, Robert E. Krieger Publishing Co., Malabar, Florida, 1987, page 9.

⁹⁰Journal of Proceedings, 1938, page 10.

⁹¹Those members were Leicester B. Holland (chairman), Edward W. Donn, Jr. (vice chairman), Turpin C. Bannister, Frank C. Brown, A.C. Eschweiler, Jr., Charles E. Peterson, Herbert G. Ripley, and Carleton M. Winslow. "Special Board Committees," The Octagon, August 1941, page 13.

⁹²Annual Report of the Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, 1942, pages 35-36.

preservation and should actively support such programs of preservation as are adopted by it.⁹³

They further wrote,

It is proper to ask what a small committee of seven architects can do to ameliorate this situation, or even what a group of 6,000 architects absorbed in contemporary affairs can accomplish. To many of them the problem is no doubt at first thought of minor importance. It is an altruistic civic activity involving tedious trail-blazing and perhaps a few contacts for future commissions. Nevertheless, to some it is a social and professional responsibility not to be shirked. It is a work that must be fostered by those who by training, experience, and profession, appreciate the precarious plight of irreplaceable legacies.⁹⁴

Instead of relying solely on moral persuasion, the Committee presented concrete aims for preservation and the means to achieve those aims. Foremost among their suggestions was that the various preservation groups band together to present a unified front.

The American Institute of Architects, through the Committee, should take the initiative in calling an exploratory conference. . . such a conference might well develop into a permanent coordinating organization that could bring our present isolated efforts into focus and create sufficient pressure to implement a substantial expansion of preservation work.⁹⁵

Additionally, they believed that the Institute should aid or sponsor the publication of a general history of American architecture.

It is inexplicable that there is at present no lucid, well-balanced, well-illustrated history of American architecture in print. . . . The need is for a work that by text and illustration will encourage both architect and layman to obtain a sympathetic understanding of the evolution of the United States of all types of architectural expression. With such a background both laymen and architects could no doubt recognize more easily those buildings which in their

⁹³1945-1946 Annual Report of the Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings, page 1. The Committee consisted of the following: Turpin C. Bannister (Chairman), Frank Chouteau Brown, Duncan Lee, Rexford Newcomb, J. Frazier Smith, Ossian P. Ward, and Addison P. Worthington. Ibid., page 8.

⁹⁴Ibid., page 2.

⁹⁵Ibid., page 3.

several communities deserve preservation. The present popular criteria of mere age would be replaced by a more tenable judgement.⁹⁶

The Institute was encouraged to provide training and educational materials for practitioners and interested parties so that preservation projects would be handled by competent professionals.

In addition to formulating a plan for the future, the Committee was involved in three urgent preservation matters. The first concerned the expansion by the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis into the campus and buildings of St. John's College. The Committee, while not opposing the expansion, did send letters to federal officials and others urging the preservation of St. John's buildings, including the Pinkney House. (See illustration #13) The second matter involved yet another expansion of the White House. "The ever-increasing pressure for executive office space led to the new proposal to increase the west wing by another 15,000 square feet. The question was what limit should be established on further construction within the White House grounds."⁹⁷ The Committee chronicled the proposals for expansion and the erection of "temporary" structures which dated back to 1899. Their concern was that "the appendage may well come to overshadow in mass, the stately form of the historic and symbolic residence."⁹⁸ The Committee noted that even though the expansion plans had received approval by the Commission of Fine Arts, opposition to the proposal still existed. For their part, the Committee forwarded the following statement to Mr. Edmunds, President of the Institute:

It is the sense of the Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings of the American Institute of Architects that further expansion of so-called "temporary" buildings be deplored as endangering the unique, original and symbolic character of the White House proper. The Committee urges the President and Congress to provide forthwith suitable, convenient and commodious quarters for executive business at a site to be determined.⁹⁹

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid., page 6.

⁹⁸Ibid. This concern was well founded. In 1948, President Truman constructed a balcony within the South Portico of the White House. The Committee "strongly opposes the addition of the balcony which would mar the fine scale of the south portico, and create ugly, heavy shadows." The Commission of Fine Arts also opposed this addition. Their suggestion for stopping the additions to the White House was to designate the house and grounds as a national historic monument. Their suggestion for Mr. Truman's balcony was "that it can be easily removed next January." (The balcony remains to this day.) 1947-1948 Annual Report, page 2.

⁹⁹1945-1946 Annual Report, pages 7-8.



#13 Pinkney House
Annapolis, Maryland
"Old St. John's" A. Lawrence Kocher
Journal of the AIA, March 1928, page 89

Finally, the Committee alerted Institute membership to the rumor that a plan to rebuild the east facade and portico of the central block of the United States Capitol was once again afoot in Washington. (See illustration #14)

The 1945-1946 Report signaled a shift in the action profile of the Committee. In addition to reporting events and trends in the field of preservation, the Committee proposed courses of action for Institute members to take. The plans they proposed for the future -- maintaining an inventory, cooperating with like-minded groups, training practitioners, and providing educational materials -- were all obtainable with little monetary support from the Institute.

A further example of the Committee's approach to preservation can be seen in the 1947-1948 Annual Report where they related their actions regarding the Jefferson County Courthouse in Louisville, Kentucky. A letter to the Mayor of Louisville balanced their concern with advice and encouragement.

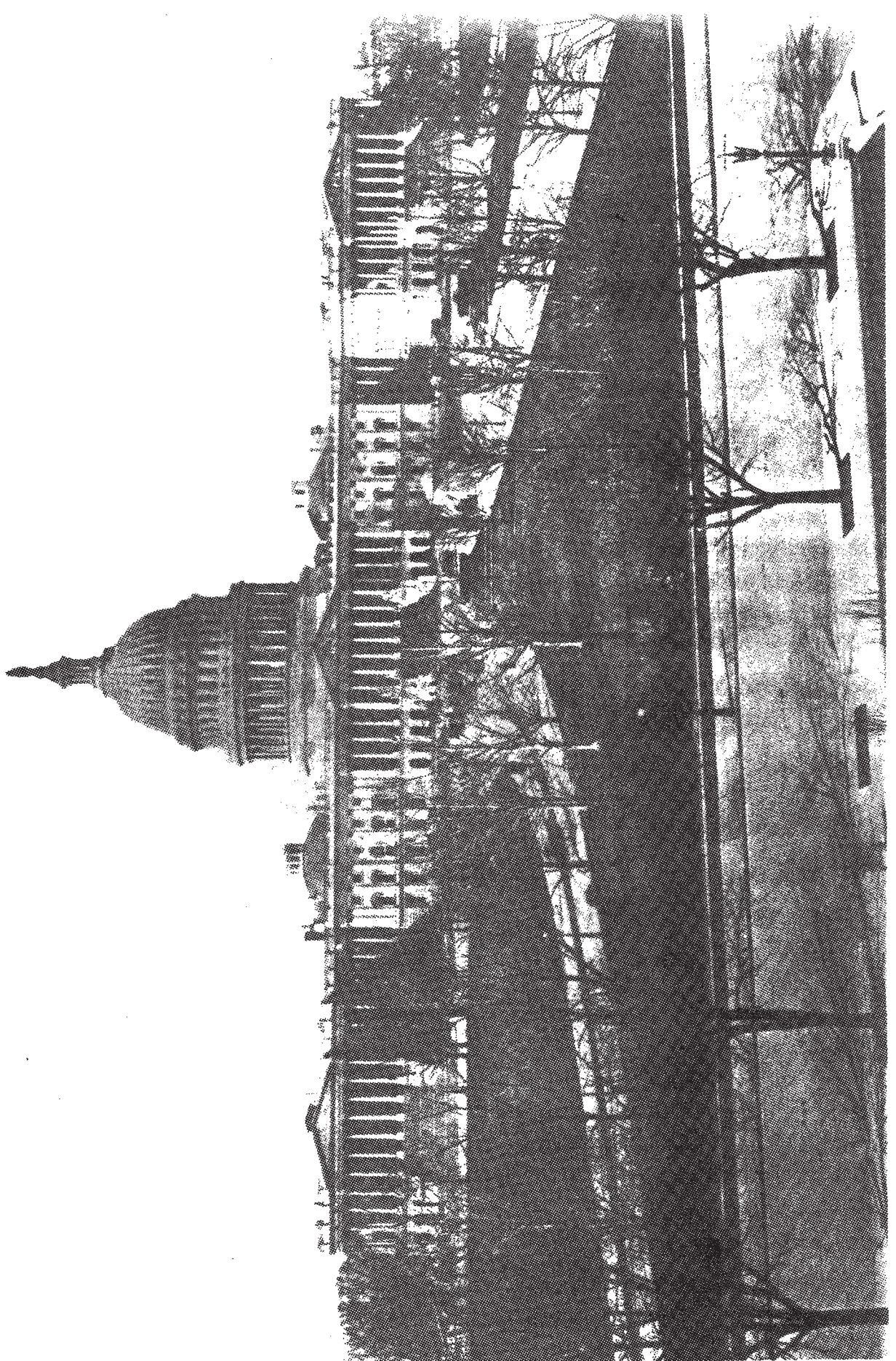
No doubt the land occupied by the Courthouse is very valuable. No doubt it will take some ingenuity to plan a new and appropriate use of the structure. For a city of vitality such as Louisville, those are not sufficient reasons to scrap the fine mementoes of its earlier days, but rather a challenge to demonstrate once again its courageous concern for its traditions. It is inconceivable that Louisville should consciously and methodically destroy her few remaining links with a glorious past. It would be a blow not only to Louisville alone, but also to the nation as a whole. The preservation of the uniquely beautiful and irreplaceable Courthouse would be valuable not only to your own citizens, but also a challenging example to other communities to renew their concern for their historic monuments.¹⁰⁰

Demolition was averted and the Courthouse has been restored.

Designation of significant sites was considered to be of the utmost importance to the Committee if preservation was to be more than the saving of random buildings as they were threatened.

The Committee believes that these isolated problems would have been much easier to meet if these buildings had been previously designated as of architectural or cultural importance on an authoritative list prepared through the cooperation of appropriate national, state and local agencies. When destructive proposals are already instigated, it falls upon the friends of preservation to prove a structure's significance to an extent warranting preservation. Too often these friends are stigmatized as woolly-minded sentimentalists who do not deserve consideration. The

¹⁰⁰1947-1948 Annual Report, pages 3-4.



#14 East Front, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C.
The History of the United States Capitol by Glenn Brown
volume II, plate 224

establishment of an authoritative list would effectively encounter such arguments.¹⁰¹

The Committee foresaw, quite accurately, that the only way to bring preservation into a "modern era" would be through the preparedness of the preservation community. Preservationists could not afford to lag behind developers and depend on patriotic slogans to protect buildings. Others also saw the need to protect sites before they were in danger:

The Committee received three inquiries regarding methods by which local communities might protect their own heritage of historic buildings. This evident need presents an important opportunity for tangible assistance. . . .The Committee has begun the compilation of existing enabling legislation and plans, during the coming year, to study the possibility of drafting a model ordinance for the guidance of individual communities.¹⁰²

Focus on Education and Inventory - the 1950's

At the Chicago Convention in 1951, the Committee was put in charge of a nationwide education program. The Institute believed that "recent jeopardy to and disfigurement of certain historic American buildings of merit has recently occurred, arising from widespread and general ignorance of their cultural, architectural and historic value."¹⁰³ The AIA Board of Directors hoped that through education it would be possible to "protect our historic buildings, in advance of possible destruction and preserve them for prosperity."¹⁰⁴ The educational campaign was to be long-term and its main component was the continuation of an inventory of buildings of historic and cultural significance. In order to conduct a successful campaign the Committee formulated the following recommendations:

1. That a preservation officer be appointed in each chapter, or that a preservation committee be appointed.
2. That an inventory should be made by each chapter of the Historic Buildings in its chapter territory.
3. That a country-wide voluntary roster of architects interested in doing restoration or preservation work be established.
4. That there be established certain recommended standards and methods to be used as the criteria in preservation work.
5. That a survey of state laws be made with respect to their authority or lack of same, in protecting important historical buildings.
6. That

¹⁰¹Ibid., page 5.

¹⁰²Ibid., page 9.

¹⁰³Journal of Proceedings, 1951.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

a survey of the Institute's accomplishments in the field of preservation of historical buildings be made.¹⁰⁵

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Earl H. Reed, believed that an inventory would be the best teaching tool because it would educate both the public and professionals.

As a correction to and extension of the Historic American Buildings Survey sponsored by the Institute about twenty years ago, buildings up to 1900 with outstanding ones later, will be included and will be accompanied and followed by Chapter Committee and Preservation Officer activities aimed to protect, preserve, restore, and record our historic structures, reversing the present destructive trends as far as is practically possible.¹⁰⁶

If people knew what significant buildings were in their area they would be more likely to act when those buildings were threatened. An example of a successful survey was undertaken by the Oregon Chapter which included a portfolio entitled Early Oregon Architecture to document noteworthy structures in their state. (See illustration #15)

To make the Preservation Officers more effective the Committee formulated procedures to be followed when a building was "menaced." The first step was to give the national Committee a full report so they could get the Institute involved. Second, the owner of the property was to be informed of the building's importance and urged to take all possible preservation measures. Third, local patriotic, civic and historic groups were to be involved, especially in the organization of public meetings. Fourth, the building and its significance were to be publicized in the hopes of raising latent public interest. Fifth, if the building was publicly owned, pressure was to be exerted on the proper public officials. Sixth, letter campaigns were to be staged. "To be most effective, these should be practical and realistic rather than sentimental. The owner is often in a dilemma, otherwise demolition might not be considered. Have all acceptable alternate uses presented and secure delay to permit building up of preservation forces."¹⁰⁷ The Preservation Officers were reminded that every case was different and should be treated as such. "Unfortunately many are unavoidable circumstances -- but act in time! If all measures fail, secure a complete record following Historic American Buildings Survey standards if the building is unrecorded."¹⁰⁸

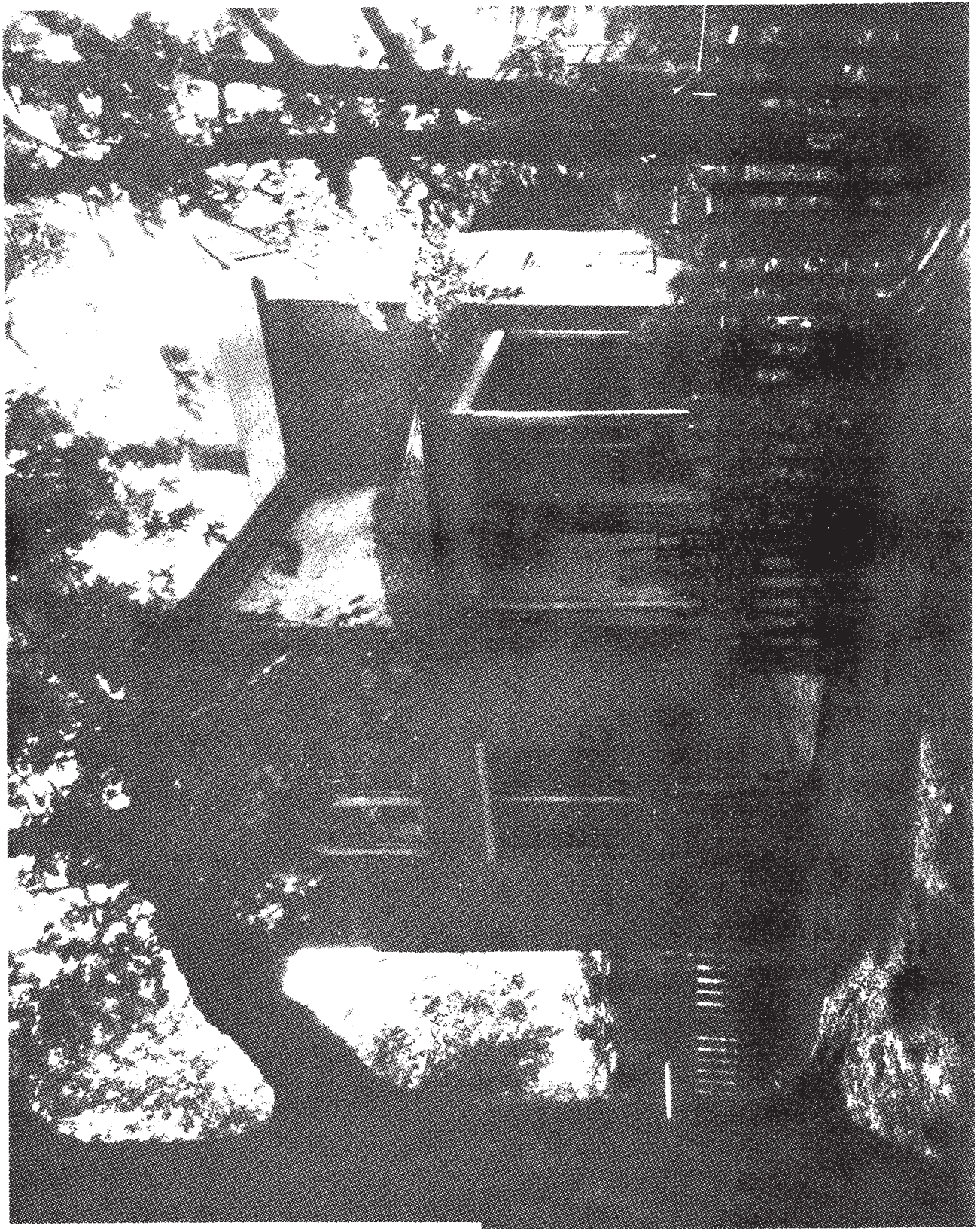
Preservation Officers were mobilized to inventory their territories. In 1959, there were 120 Preservation Officers to monitor the preservation of the

¹⁰⁵Document #358, page 30, Gaede Box 1, Folder 1a.

¹⁰⁶1953 Annual Report, Gaede Box 8, Folder 1.

¹⁰⁷"Preservation Procedures," January 1954, Gaede Box 8, Folder 1.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.



#15 House in Jacksonville, Oregon
Photographed by Walter Boychuck
Early Oregon Architecture
AIA Archives, RG 815

local chapters. In Chicago, area newspapers were contacted to run editorials and photo contests of early houses to educate the public.¹⁰⁹ Connecticut enlisted students to fill out the inventory forms and in Charlottesville, Virginia, private citizens were doing the inventory.¹¹⁰ The Committee in New Jersey chose to compile data instead of intervening in the demolition process.¹¹¹ Officers throughout Virginia had found that "It is difficult to fight 'progress' and a positive counter program and plan is much stronger than the negative obstructionist position."¹¹² The mid-Tennessee Chapter reported progress in saving endangered churches. They also kept a record of the progress being made with the restoration of the State Capitol at Nashville.¹¹³ In Wisconsin, the Chapter was involved in several restoration projects in addition to supporting a translation from the German of Voelcker's work on Frank Lloyd Wright.¹¹⁴ Several chapters set up historic house tours to get other groups and the public at large personally involved and interested in buildings. In 1959, Edward James and Emil Lorch, members of the national Committee began a study of the possibility of using historic properties as housing for the elderly.¹¹⁵ All of the Chapters were encouraged in their endeavors; through their cooperation the program would succeed. Preservation Officers were reminded that "Today's masterpieces will be tomorrow's preservation problems"¹¹⁶ and that the groundwork they laid would aid those buildings in the future.

The Saving of Ainsley Hall

The Preservation Officers retained their importance in the 1960's when urban renewal programs emerged as the major threat to historic buildings. They formed a ready system of communication to inform one another of successes as well as losses. One notable success of the system of local architects as Preservation Officers was the saving of Ainsley Hall Mansion in Columbia, South Carolina.

The bulldozers were at work on the grounds and demolition crews were working in the cellar of Ainsley Hall Mansion, one of the last two remaining masonry houses by Robert Mills when a visiting architect

¹⁰⁹1955 Annual Report, Gaede Box 8, Folder 1.

¹¹⁰1956 Committee Reports, page 34.

¹¹¹Ibid., page 36.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Ibid., page 37.

¹¹⁴Ibid., page 38.

¹¹⁵1959 Committee Reports, page 5.

¹¹⁶1957 Committee Reports, page 97.

noticed them, just before quitting time. He spread notice of the impending destruction to civic leaders, who formed the Historic Columbia Foundation overnight, and found funds before morning to stop the destruction.¹¹⁷

The architect on the scene was Walter Petty. In addition to stopping the bulldozers, Mr. Petty helped organize the Historic Columbia Foundation, spearheaded the fund raising activities to purchase the mansion and grounds, and worked on the passage of an ordinance to protect buildings in areas zoned "cultural" or "civic center" in Columbia.¹¹⁸

Committee Projects - 1960's

In fulfilling their duties to educate, protect and inventory, the Preservation Officers helped move preservation to the forefront of civic issues. Because the Committee could rely on the Preservation Officers to monitor preservation at the local and regional level, the national group could concentrate on projects of a larger scope. One of those projects was Orin Bullock's writing of the Restoration Manual. The Manual was designed to fill a void in the literature with a book for general use which would "stress the precise techniques of sound restoration."¹¹⁹ As Morris Ketchum, Jr. would write in the Manual foreword, "It is our hope that it may prove to be an effective weapon in creating cities which inspire man's knowing and deliberate participation in the history of his day and age and thus enrich both his mind and his heart."¹²⁰

The second project was the documentation of certain works by Frank Lloyd Wright. Karl Kamrath of Texas served as the chairman of the subcommittee which had originally been formed as the special "Frank Lloyd Wright Memorial Committee." The subcommittee recommended projects for special recognition by the American Institute of Architects and proceeded to have working drawings of those projects reproduced for the AIA collection.¹²¹ Owners of selected projects received a plaque, designed by Mr. Kamrath, to commemorate the selection. (See

¹¹⁷Rains, Albert and Laurance G. Henderson, With Heritage So Rich, Random House, New York, 1966, page 60.

¹¹⁸Fellowship Application of Walter Petty and Letter to Earl H. Reed from Walter Petty, April 6, 1963, Gaede HABS Liaison, Box 1, Folder 1.

¹¹⁹1964 Annual Report, October 29, 1964, Gaede Box 6, Folder 2.

¹²⁰Bullock, Orin, Restoration Manual, Silvermine Publishers, Inc., Norwalk, Connecticut, 1966.

¹²¹Photostats were received for thirteen of the projects totalling 141 sheets. Mrs. Wright would not allow reproduction of the Taliesin and Taliesin West drawings. Copies were also not made for the S.C. Johnson Administration Building or for the Robie House. The photostats are under strict regulations as to their use and further reproduction.

illustration #16) The projects were the Robie House (Chicago, Illinois), the Ward Willetts House (Highland Park, Illinois), the Frank Lloyd Wright Studio (Oak Park, Illinois), the V.C. Morris Shop (San Francisco, California), the William H. Winslow House (River Forest, Illinois), the Unity Temple (Oak Park, Illinois), the Barnsdall House (Los Angeles, California), the Kaufmann House (Bear Run, Pennsylvania), the S.C. Johnson Administration Building and Heliolaboratory (Racine, Wisconsin), the Unitarian Church (Madison, Wisconsin), the H.C. Price Tower, (Bartlesville, Oklahoma), the Paul R. Hanna House (Stanford, California), the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York, New York), the Beth Sholom Synagogue (Elkins Park, Pennsylvania), Taliesin (Spring Green, Wisconsin), and Taliesin West (Scottsdale, Arizona). The two Taliesins were removed from the subcommittee's list at the request of Mrs. Wright as she had made her own plans for their recognition and preservation. Mr. Kamrath also sat on the Robie House Committee throughout the 1960's and monitored the Imperial Hotel situation, trying to prevent the Hotel's demolition.

A third project was a program to publicize the benefits of preservation. Arousing the Community was the publicity manual the Committee prepared for use by the Preservation Officers.

The Committee format changed in the 1960's. It became a two-tier structure with regional members and corresponding members. The Institute administration decided that a regional system would allow the Committee to run more smoothly, as fewer people would be involved at meetings. It was a sign that the Institute was enlarging its bureaucracy and expected its committees to do the same. Earl Reed, chairman of the Committee for several years, did not care about the system as long as the job got done. "The work of this Committee is an endless thing involving numerous contests to prevent the destruction of historic buildings and the gains and losses experienced by this Committee makes it evident that preservation needs the constant attention of all."¹²²

The Woollett Plan

In the early 1960's several Committee members believed the AIA could be most effective in the field of preservation by working at the national level.¹²³

¹²²Meeting of the Committee Chairmen, January 12-13, 1962, page 15.

¹²³"In my opinion the A.I.A.'s most basic problem in getting a square deal for history in our cities is the fact that the big dough is with new construction. Architects who know very well that crimes are underway talk fierce among themselves but when it comes time to plead in public they all make for the underbrush.

So it would generally be best for the A.I.A. to wage the preservation war on the national level and let housewives and others fight the local battles like Society Hill."

Letter to William H. Schieck from Charles Peterson, January 10, 1963, Gaede Box 1, Folder 1a.

William Woollett, an architect in California, proposed the AIA sponsor an elite group of architects to advise citizens on a full time basis.

It is believed that a few dedicated, subsidized architects, who have received training in the A.I.A. preservation program, could bring about further national coordination by effectively directing these many efforts. In two or three years' time, the tide could be turned on the current debauchery, through channelization into solid economic and cultural areas. At the same time, a new, revitalized look could be given to the country's building industry and cityscape.¹²⁴

By allowing selected architects to devote themselves totally to preservation efforts instead of dividing their time between new construction to support their families and civic work in preservation, those architects would "bring experience, order, inspiration, and finally, almost immediate acceleration to this already active and splendid program."¹²⁵ In addition to helping citizens and governments with their preservation projects this corps of advisors would be on call to the local chapters of the AIA to

give much needed, on the site, advice and guidance. . .on building civic awareness, and the recording and inventory of existing buildings; each could enlist help from Chambers of Commerce and other civic agencies in smaller cities (where no A.I.A program is immediately available); each would be able to obtain and guide publicity, assist committees with the organization of civic presentation legislation and tax relief measures in a number of locations; and each would know how to help in acquiring resourceful persons for Historic American Building Inventories, qualified to prepare detailed HABS surveys.¹²⁶

These advisors would also develop education programs for citizens and government agencies to foster an awareness of the value of historic buildings in a community. Woollett's plan was designed to fill voids in the profession caused by the absence of qualified specialists in the field of preservation.

This void in the ranks was anticipated by the Committee as early as 1945-1946 when they encouraged the Institute to take a more active role in the field after the Second World War.

The reorientation of contemporary architectural design into non-traditional channels will create as the years pass a new problem of securing personnel skilled in the modes of historic styles who can direct the technical phases of preservation projects. The need is

¹²⁴"A Proposed Plan for Increasing the Reach of the A.I.A. Preservation of Historic Buildings Program," page 1, Gaede Box 2, Folder 5.

¹²⁵"Proposed Plan," Gaede Box 2, Folder 5.

¹²⁶"Proposed Plan," Gaede Box 2, Folder 5.

aptly shown by the plight of a very large metropolitan firm who found that no one of their large staff was competent to take charge of a large commission that demanded the use of the Georgian Colonial style. Even if contemporary points of view are fully accepted as the only healthy approach to present day problems, there remains a very real need for specialists trained and experienced in the sympathetic use of historic styles.¹²⁷

This lack of trained personnel continued to be an irritation and concern for Committee members.¹²⁸

The "Woollett Plan" was determined by the Committee to be more than the AIA could handle efficiently, still they felt that the AIA would be most effective at the national level in a supervisory capacity. The Committee suggested a strengthening of the structure already in place, using the Preservation Officers of the local chapters as the front line in the preservation battle.

Even as the Committee acknowledged a lack of trained personnel in their ranks, they were fighting for recognition by other professionals of what they had accomplished. They protested those conferences and committees discussing preservation which did not plan to include representatives from the Committee on their panels.¹²⁹ Their reasoning was that they had made contributions to the field and should be heard.

As far as we know there have been no large-scale restorations in this country (including those at Williamsburg) that were not done from plans drawn by architects. We feel that while investigators of restoration work such as art historians may have a great deal to

¹²⁷1945-1946 Annual Report of the Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, page 4.

¹²⁸"I have discovered to my dismay that very few, and I do mean few architects are any longer knowledgeable in the history of architecture, and I am equally disappointed at their lack of interest in recording and other preservation activities. In the entire Wisconsin Chapter I have found only one other man who shares my enthusiasm and who has studied the history of American architecture sufficiently to be regarded as truly knowledgeable. . . .Therefore, I cannot honestly say that I look to the architectural profession at least at the local level, to exert any leadership in the preservation of historic buildings. It seems to me that those architects who are qualified and who have this interest could make the greatest contribution by aligning themselves with other groups and individuals who while not as well qualified technically would be more apt to undertake an aggressive preservation program." Letter to Orin Bullock from Richard Perrin, January 25, 1966, Bullock Box 4, Folder 4.

¹²⁹Organizations which received "protest" letters included the groups sponsoring the International Session on Historic Architectural Restoration held in Williamsburg on September 8-11, 1963 and the "Rains Committee" which wrote With Heritage So Rich for the Joint Council on Housing and Urban Development.

offer on this subject, that there is no real substitute for experience.¹³⁰

The Committee and Urban Renewal

The experience of the Committee members was tested with the advent of urban renewal on a large scale in the United States in the 1960's. Historically, the greatest threat to historic buildings has been the growth and renewal of urban areas. In the sixties, problems ranged from the intrusion of power lines at Taliesin West in Arizona to demolition of entire blocks. The Committee members believed they were in a unique position to mitigate the decisions of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA):

I contend that our Committee could establish itself as the authority -- possibly jointly with the SAH [Society of Architectural Historians] -- to which URA would naturally and immediately turn for advice. . . . Surely our chapter committeemen know their own cities, know those areas where renewal is likely to take place and know the historic buildings therein that are worth saving. Why not be prepared for the eventualities of urban renewal in advance and avoid the crises of "unexpected" emergencies?¹³¹

It rapidly became apparent that the preservation movement needed to pull many options together to present a workable package to its allies.

Last ditch stands are commonplace across America today inasmuch as we have only scratched the surface relative to heading off the destructive predilections of local politicians, developers and mis-directed progressives by way of putting a protective ring around significant buildings through thoughtful zoning or special treatment ordinances. Before these old and new devices of city-form-making are tried, tested and refined, hundreds of worthy structures from three centuries of buildings will fall to the wrecker's axe. A few years later the public will feel sorry for their haste but the deeds will have been done. Most important now, is to plant the seed of "pride" in the local citizen's mind by constant publicity about the noteworthy quality of the best local buildings. As this proceeds

¹³⁰Draft letter to Gordon Gray from Robert Gaede, March 21, 1963, Gaede Box 1, Folder 4.

¹³¹Letter to Charles Peterson from William Scheick, January 7, 1963, Gaede Box 1, Folder 1a.

the avenue of private protective devices need investigation and some action started.¹³²

The Committee believed that the architect would be the key player in the changing cityscape. Architects would be consulted by concerned civic groups for advice and by developers and government officials to propose alternatives or to recreate the cityscape. "But in city after city the architects are abdicating this role to others -- to planners, lawyers, housewives and politicians -- out of a combination of indifference and unpreparedness."¹³³ It was clear that the Committee had "to maintain a strong appeal, via all of the instruments provided by the Institute. . .to the local architects so that they will not readily squander a position of civic leadership which is reasonably theirs and theirs for the taking -- provided they qualify."¹³⁴ Once again the Committee turned to its system of Preservation Officers to strengthen its contact with the local architect.

The Committee needed to extend its influence at the national level and sought to do this through cooperation with other preservation agencies. Because of the Committee's size and professional commitments it did not want to duplicate the work of other groups or undertake projects that others were better able to accomplish. The Chairman, Robert Gaede, was additionally convinced, "that the architect's role in the future of preservation hangs substantially on how much interest the architectural graduate of today has in the subject."¹³⁵ In order to interest students, Gaede proposed that the recording project be taken over completely by architecture schools.

The process of urban renewal brought the Committee to a crossroads: they could either sit back and complain about the results of the program or they could assume an active role by directing the process with sound alternatives and publicity. Ideologically, the Committee members could not choose the former; physically, they could not undertake the latter. All of the national Committee members had been active in their state organizations and were uncomfortable with the constraints at the national level. When representing the Institute they were bound by its procedures and unable to act independently. Additionally, the Institute was unable to provide the staff support that would promote speedy communication between members for consensus and resolution of issues. Because the staff member in Washington, who often worked for another committee as well, had to correspond with Committee members across the country and wait for their replies before running a statement past the Institute's hierarchy, it was difficult to operate efficiently. The Urban Renewal Authority did not have these constraints; it could move quickly and still be ready to counter any

¹³²Letter to Harrold deGroff from Robert Gaede, May 28, 1963, Gaede Box 2, Folder 1.

¹³³"Comments by the Chairman," November 15, 1963, page 1, Gaede Box 3, Folder 2.

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Committee Memorandum #3, December 1963, Gaede Box 3, Folder 3.

opposition to its plans. In contrast, the Committee had to muster its forces in every location as a situation arose. Orin Bullock hoped to increase the scope of their work regardless of the constraints and hoped to align the Committee with that of Urban Design.

I do think that there is hope, just over the horizon, through urban renewal, through our truly comprehensive surveys and broad planning and selection. Things can be done, and I hope will be done to protect our architectural heritage but it must be a wholesale program, a city wide, state wide even, program to select and evaluate -- AND FIND MODERN USES -- and then we can do things for the future in a broad way. It's fun to save a house here or there, or a store front, and there are often successes -- to save the character of a city, or to preserve something of its architectural history bit by bit is impossible, overall appreciation and governmental action are essential.¹³⁶

The nature of historic preservation itself further complicated the position of the Committee, as expressed by Marvin Eickenroht.

I agree with you that "Preservation" should be a word of action. However, I still feel that this committee can work most effectively in the recording field. The energy used in saving, or trying to save, some structure is, in most cases, more available in the ranks of local conservation and heritage societies.¹³⁷

Consequently, even as the Committee tried to operate more effectively at the national level they were required to work at the local level as well, a level which required quick action and personal involvement. An additional constraint was the Committee's concern about the preservation work that was being accomplished. "It is true that any good office has the potential to do historic work, if they care to devote the time to study the subject and staff up for it."¹³⁸ Given all of these constraints the Committee had to choose a middle course of action, continuing programs of publicity and education while trying to anticipate the public trends and government programs. They were quick to note in 1964 that "Interest in historical material is clearly on the up-swing with young people showing excited interest, the architectural magazines

¹³⁶Letter to H. Roll McLaughlin from Orin Bullock, August 1966, Bullock Box 4, Folder 3. At the time he wrote this letter Orin Bullock was the Chief of Property Rehabilitation for the Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Authority.

¹³⁷Letter to Jon Bowman from Marvin Eickenroht, September 17, 1964, Gaede Box 6, Folder 1.

¹³⁸Letter to Robert Gaede from Orin Bullock, January 1, 1964, Gaede Box 4, Folder 1.

publishing a good bit about it and, in fact, preservation is becoming good business."¹³⁹

The Institute's response to the federal urban renewal program was to mount a campaign against urban ugliness.

The A.I.A., as you know, is mounting a War on Community Ugliness in support of the President's program which seeks to improve our urban environment. The Committee on Historic Buildings is in the vanguard of the Task Force since we are charged with the preservation of worthy examples of American architecture which play such a significant part in the physical atmosphere and character of our cities.¹⁴⁰

Saving older buildings was a major component for maintaining livable cities.

Retention of our late nineteenth century monumental public buildings is becoming so critical as relatively few remain in excellent state of repair and many are those who abandon them for air-conditioned plainness elsewhere. Without these massive stone and brick textured monuments, many downtowns would revert to the drab ordinary, universal monotony so widespread in newer commercial areas.¹⁴¹

Continuation of the inventory was seen as the best way to counter the government's expenditures for urban renewal. When referring to the loss of a mill at Thoroughfare Gap, Orin Bullock wrote,

¹³⁹Committee Minutes, February 3-4, 1964, Gaede Box 8, Folder 3.

¹⁴⁰Letter to William L. Slayton (Head of the Urban Renewal Administration) from Orin Bullock, September 27, 1965. Bullock Box 3, Folder 3.

Not all Institute members approved of this program. "It is most unfortunate that the A.I.A. has chosen to bend its pick in a national campaign against 'urban ugliness.' No amount of tree planting, underground wiring or billboard removal can even begin to make a dent in the mess that is caused by inadequate planning, ineffectual land control, withering public transportation systems and chaotically structured local governments. The lack of broad political understanding and support for better planning is the primary cause of the mess we live in, and until the A.I.A. recognizes this, our members will continue to dabble in the quiet backwash of American Society. We need a positive program, one that can enable our members to assume leadership in the most important issues before the country today, urban expansion, mass transit, open space -- a place that we can pass on to our children that will be better than the one we have now." Letter to Robert L. Durhan from Gerald Williams, September 17, 1964, Gaede Box 6, Folder 2.

¹⁴¹Letter to John B. Cabot from Robert C. Gaede, June 5, 1964, Gaede Box 5, Folder 2. This letter is in reference to the proposed demolition of the Omaha Post Office Building.

This and dozens of other examples point up over and over again the need for an inventory of worthwhile buildings. Fighting rearward actions is hardly ever successful and even though prior designation of "landmarks" does not make them entirely safe, it does give the planner a little notice and us preservationists a bit more ammunition.¹⁴²

The Committee planned to develop a visual program about the benefits of preservation to further support their position.¹⁴³ All of this is brought together in the Committee's proposals for 1966. The Committee, with Orin Bullock as Chairman, wanted the Institute to include a "Restored Building" category in the annual awards program. On their own part they planned to distribute guidelines for preservation to their local representatives and to encourage regional conferences on the importance of historic buildings for urban aesthetics. Their visual program would be part of these conferences. Finally, they planned to recommend buildings for designation under the National Historic Sites Act.¹⁴⁴

Let us make use of this new tool Urban Renewal to not only renew our cities and make them better places in which to live, but also to conserve and preserve and perpetuate the aesthetics values, the physical features of buildings and streets that are responsible for the character, the atmosphere, the individuality of our cities. They are not marts of trade alone.¹⁴⁵

The View in 1963

The year 1963 may not have been an exceptional year for the Committee in terms of buildings saved or recorded, but it was a year when the Committee spent a lot of time trying to assess and assert its place in the field of historic preservation. In the September minutes, Chairman Robert Gaede concluded that "the major role of this committee is to keep working on the architectural profession's own practitioners who must be convinced of the need for their interest in preservation of their architectural heritage."¹⁴⁶ To accomplish this he suggested the Committee focus on education of the profession, and those

¹⁴²Letter to J. Everette Fauber from Orin Bullock, February 5, 1965, Gaede Box 7, Folder 1.

¹⁴³Letter to Llewellyn W. Pitts from Robert C. Gaede, December 10, 1964, Gaede Box 6, Folder 4.

¹⁴⁴1965 Committee Reports, page 35.3.

¹⁴⁵Draft, "Urban Renewal Construction and Rehabilitation Program," Bullock Box 2, Folder 4.

¹⁴⁶CHR Minutes, September 1963, page 2, Gaede Box 8, Folder 2.

hoping to enter the profession, by encouraging the schools of architecture to teach more preservation-related classes. Practicing architects could become better prepared, through continuing education programs, to deal with preservation issues in their communities and the student would be able to "design and construct as modern as Rudolph, and yet spend his Saturdays measuring a building of the 18th century."¹⁴⁷ This was the type of trained practitioner the profession needed; someone who could combine creativity for new building with a sensitivity toward existing architecture. As Mr. Bullock believed,

The architect selected for the responsibility of doing a restoration should be humble, inquisitive, open minded, patient, well grounded in frame and masonry construction methods from personal association not book learning, with at least a speaking acquaintance with architectural history and historical research methods; he should be something of a scholar with if not an understanding of, an appreciation for the taste in architecture of past periods and an ability to subjugate his own creations as an improvement on theirs. It is desirable if he can be a first rate architect, in the broadest business sense, as well.¹⁴⁸

This broad education has become even more desirable as preservation has grown in popularity.

Preservation Moves into the Mainstream

The concerns of the Committee and the Institute were shared by Secretary of the Interior Stuart Udall who, with President Johnson, urged the Joint Council on Housing and Urban Development (often referred to as the "Rains Committee") to do a study on historic preservation in 1965. Although there were no official representatives of the Committee or the AIA on the Council, the resulting publication, With Heritage So Rich, aided the Committee's efforts to make preservation a central issue in America's redevelopment program.

Preservation did move into the national limelight in the mid-1960's and the Committee had every intention of responding to the call for increased information that would result.

Preservationists are no longer an esoteric group engaged in happily contemplating our navels, our interests in older buildings are shared by many. Our opportunity is to so plan and organize the potential strength of our Preservation Officers that we will make a solid contribution. I think that our job at the national level is administrative and as such our work must be to isolate the

¹⁴⁷Ibid., page 3.

¹⁴⁸Letter to Faynetta Nealis from Orin Bullock, October 13, 1963, Bullock Box 5, Folder 3.

problems and cures, create procedures and plans, and see that they are carried out at the local level.¹⁴⁹

In late 1965, the Committee requested a full-time staff member to coordinate their activities. The request was denied for financial reasons and the Committee, through no fault of its own, missed another opportunity to occupy center stage. They did however, remain on stage as may be seen in this summary of activity at the 1966 Convention in Denver:

Indicative of increasing preservation interest, the A.I.A. during the Denver Convention attended by the writer, passed resolutions as follows: deploring the proposal to build a waterfront expressway in New Orleans; asking a halt to wanton destruction of historic buildings; declaring that "a nation's buildings, like its books, might convey knowledge and insight to future generations," and urging that the Mayor of San Francisco restore and preserve the Old Mint. Also a Commission of Architectural Planning for the Capitol was called for, and it was voted to restore the Octagon, purchase the adjacent Lemon Building property, and sell the Octagon to the A.I.A. Foundation thus allowing needed expansion of facilities without damage to the garden as long advocated by the A.I.A. Committee. In spite of the ex-Committeemen Thiry's plea, a resolution was proposed condemning west front Capitol extension and the Convention endorsed a Bill setting up the above-mentioned Commission.¹⁵⁰

The Committee and its members were involved in much besides urban renewal during the 1960's. The Restoration Manual by Orin Bullock, as mentioned earlier, was published in 1965. The Committee became involved in international affairs when Charles Peterson was sent as their representative to the Second International Congress of UNESCO in Venice in May of 1966.¹⁵¹ Mr. Peterson was instrumental in establishing relationships between the AIA, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). However, the Committee's main occupation was the Octagon House grounds and plans for the Institute's expansion.

The Octagon House and Grounds

The Octagon House had been a part of the Committee's agenda from the early 1900's. They had approved all of the restorations including those done by

¹⁴⁹Letter to M. Elliott Carroll from Orin Bullock, September 25, 1965, Bullock Box 3, Folder 3.

¹⁵⁰Memorandum to Earl H. Reed, July 7, 1966, Bullock Box 4, Folder 2.

¹⁵¹See Charles E. Peterson, "The Monumental Patrimony," AIA Journal, January 1965, pages 57-59 for an overview of the international preservation organizations.

Milton Grigg (1949-1956) and J. Everette Fauber (1968-1970). That the House should be taken care of was not an issue for the Committee; they were concerned that the Institute should fulfill its duties concerning the grounds under a resolution passed at the Convention held in Minneapolis in 1916, which stated

that the American Institute of Architects hereby commits itself to a policy of a complete restoration of the Octagon house, grounds and outbuildings, and their refinishing in such a manner as to form a permanent exhibit of a residential establishment of the period of 1800; to the construction of adjoining property, belonging to the Institute, of a simple and inconspicuous fireproof building suitable to house the executive offices of the Institute, and upon the completion of such an office building to remove all business offices from the Octagon house and dedicate it to the public under the curatorship of the Institute.¹⁵²

Throughout the Institute's ownership of the Octagon House, the Committee had promoted the idea that it was important historically as an ensemble of buildings, "any additions or subtractions from the original layout of the house, garden and outbuilding would inevitably destroy the original conception of the designer of this group and consequently diminish the value as a true record of the cultured past."¹⁵³ (See illustration #17) However, the AIA needed office space that could not be provided by the Octagon House. As early as 1929, AIA President Charles Hammond stated "I believe that further delay in securing a suitable building will be an embarrassing reflection on the character and dignity of the profession."¹⁵⁴ Since none of the interim office buildings or schemes had provided adequate solutions to the growing needs of the Institute, it sponsored a competition in 1964 for the design of an office building on their property. The Committee passed a resolution which recommended that

in any plans for a competition for a new Headquarters Building, the Board be urged to include stipulation that both the old Smokehouse and the Stable be retained as an element in the design of the future office building. They are appropriate, attractive, authentic and desirable elements which should be preserved.¹⁵⁵

For a time the original stable served as a library and exhibit hall. (See illustration #18)

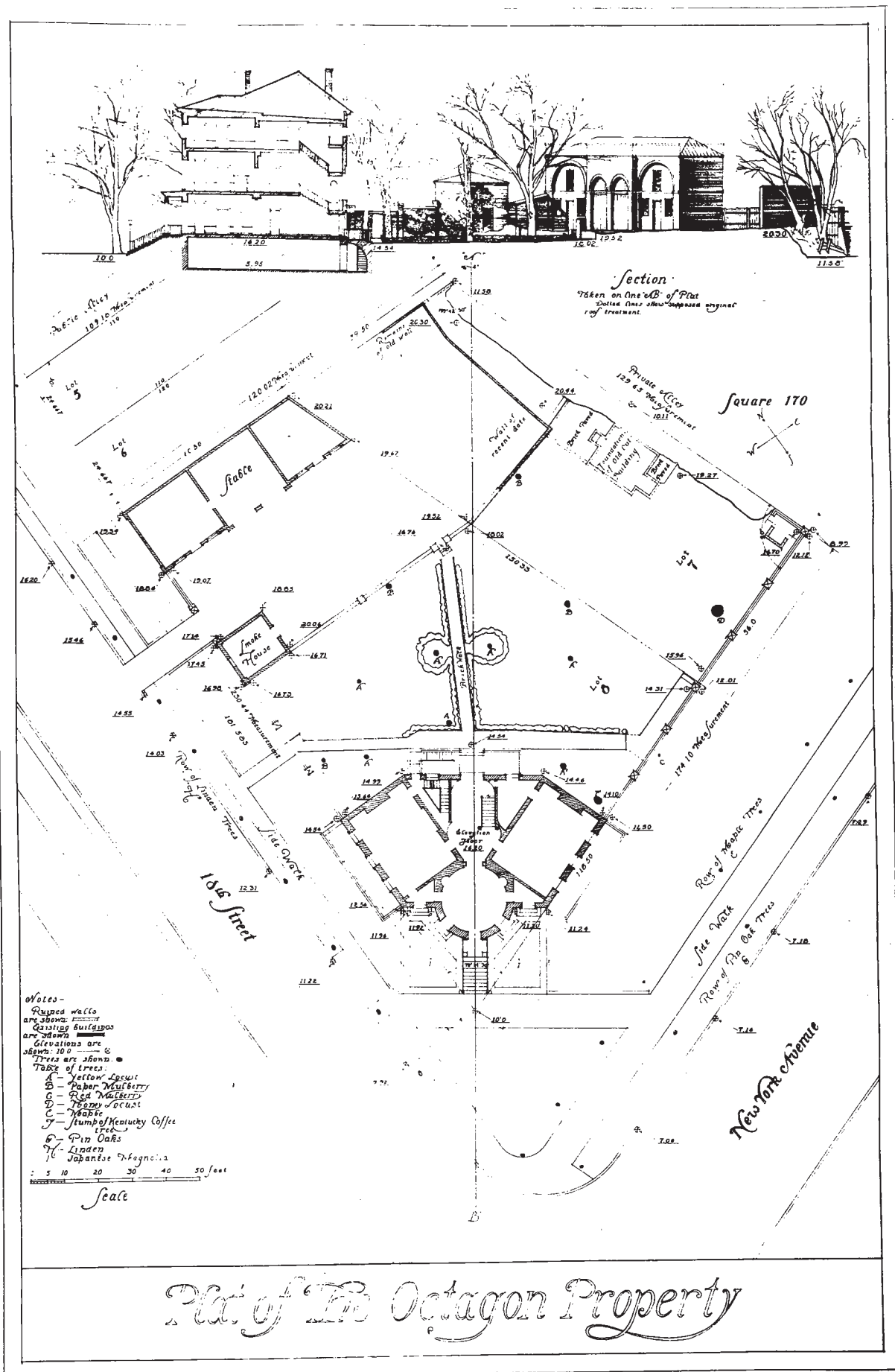
The local committees were vocal in their support for preserving the outbuildings. They believed that "only if the Institute itself sets an example in the preservation of its own historic monument can its Chapter and Regional

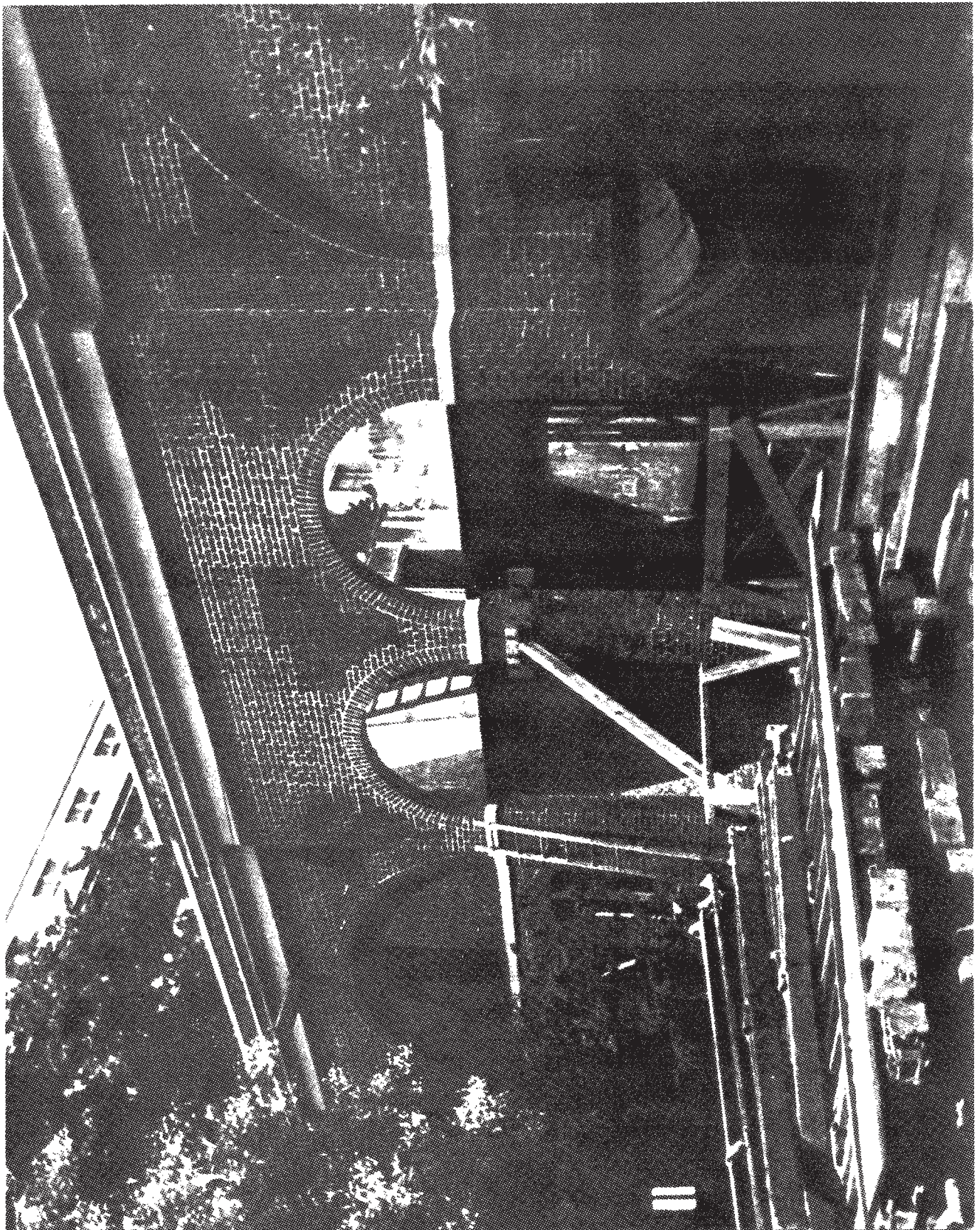
¹⁵²Journal of Proceedings, 1916, page 25.

¹⁵³Journal of Proceedings, 1926, page 40.

¹⁵⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1929, page 5.

¹⁵⁵Letter to Walter F. Petty from Robert C. Gaede, April 30, 1963, Gaede Box 1A, Folder 4.





#18 Octagon stable undergoing conversion to library
Washington, D.C.
AIA Archives, RG 813

Committees on the Preservation of Historic Monuments speak with an authoritative voice in their endeavors to preserve our national heritage."¹⁵⁶ In 1965 the Committee issued its strongest statement against development of the Octagon property.

. . .we believe that the further development of office space in this limited area should be stopped. In fact, we believe that the trend should be reversed and that a gradual return to the historic layout of the grounds should be undertaken -- as close to the original condition as possible. Not the least element on this limited site is the original stable -- which must have been nearly as important to the house in the eyes of Tayloe, the Virginia horseman who built the place. The announcement of the plan for the new building -- as designed for the competition -- has filled with dismay and indignation the very people in public life who ought to be our best friends. We believe that the Institute needs to reassure these people that it is backing the same amenities, including historic preservation, that they are.¹⁵⁷

In the end the Institute sold the Octagon House and those portions of the garden contained in Lot 35 of the Survey of the District of Columbia to The American Institute of Architects Foundation, Inc., "to provide a means, through the Foundation, of restoring and refurbishing the Octagon House, and maintaining the same as an historic, architectural landmark, dedicated by the profession as a public monument."¹⁵⁸ The Committee could do little to overturn this "compromise" regardless of how much they believed it compromised the position of the Institute in matters of historic preservation.

The State Preservation Coordinator System

Undoubtedly, one of the Committee's most effective tools for promoting preservation is the system of State Preservation Coordinators (SPCs) begun in 1967. The system was developed to "provide a focal point for chapter preservation officers, to coordinate state-wide programs, to assist with

¹⁵⁶Letter to Executive Board, Philadelphia Chapter from John Harbeson, April 23, 1963, Gaede Box 1, Folder 4. This feeling was echoed by those outside the Institute as well. "Though the entire membership does not express the unity of attitude toward our cultural past that would seem eminently desirable there are within your membership strong voices deeply concerned over the need for recognition of our historic and evolutionary heritage. The question might well be asked if the architects and their national leadership do not actively endorse and participate in the preservation of our historic buildings, to whom should the public look?" Letter to J. Roy Carroll, President, AIA, from John B. Cabot, National Park Service, September 18, 1963, Gaede Box 2, Folder 5.

¹⁵⁷Committee Minutes, February 17-18, 1966, page 9, Gaede Box 7, Folder 3.

¹⁵⁸Building Our New Headquarters, page 2.

HABS/HABSI projects, and to establish liaison with collegiate schools to develop education programs in preservation."¹⁵⁹ Those coordinators were necessary because of the increase in preservation activity caused by the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 [Public Law 89-665].

The SPCs were chosen to represent the needs and resources of their state to the national Committee. This allowed the Committee to achieve a deeper knowledge of preservation problems and activities throughout the United States. It also allowed the Committee to respond more quickly to preservation emergencies since they had people in the field able to gather information and then monitor the situation. The SPCs numbered about 200 in 1969 and "are charged with coordination of A.I.A. state and local activities, working with local groups, local officials and state legislative authorities. There is a very close association with the State Liaison Officer, the governor-appointed National Park Service representative for preservation as decreed by Public Law 89-665."¹⁶⁰

Committee members realized that this new position would require much of those willing to accept the appointment. Consequently, four conditions to acceptance were included in the appointment letters.

1. Sincere interest in and appreciation of the importance of historic preservation, especially in its relation to urban design.
2. Organizational and administrative capability rather than competence as a preservationist.
3. Liaison with government, business and profession.
4. Willingness to spend the time and effort required to:
 - a. Appear before amateur, professional and governmental groups concerned with preservation.
 - b. Maintain effective communications with Chapter Preservation Officers and with the Committee on Historic Buildings, to include those nasty but necessary biannual reports.

These conditions are hard, but they are prerequisite to successful participation of architects in the crisis of preservation. The A.I.A., challenged by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, and by a rapidly growing list of frightened preservationists, is dependent on full and active support by the architectural profession, especially from the CHB and its preservation officers. The strength of the entire system will be the State Preservation Coordinator.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹Letter to Bruce Kriviskey from F. Blair Reeves, January 25, 1989, page 4.

¹⁶⁰Memo to A.I.A. Department of Public Affairs from Faye Nealis, December 5, 1969, page 1.

¹⁶¹Letter to Nicholas Holmes from F. Blair Reeves, May 29, 1967.

The SPCs swung into action almost immediately when the Keeper of the National Register requested that they attend regional meetings during 1967-1968 to help orient the newly appointed State Historic Preservation Officers to the Register's goals and programs. The annual reports filed by the SPCs provide a valuable record of preservation in the United States.

The Committee in the 1970's

Early in the 1970's the Committee's charge was expanded by the Institute to acknowledge the importance of preservation in the renewal of cities. The Committee was to promote "enhancements of the urban environment through architectural continuity. The fact that many historic buildings and areas are located in so-called ghettos charges the committee with special responsibilities in neighborhood improvements and conservation."¹⁶² In addition to this broad mandate the Committee received three specific charges:

1. Promote strong architectural leadership in planning for the Bicentennial at the local level, particularly in the design and erection of any permanent structures.
2. Develop professional education for students and professionals through Workshop programs and liaison with schools of architecture.
3. Promote courses in architectural history and preservation at the graduate level.¹⁶³

All of these duties would occupy the Committee for a large part of the decade.

To accomplish their general charge the Committee explored the idea of demonstration projects to combine preservation "with renewal of deteriorated or abandoned areas of a city for human use and enjoyment."¹⁶⁴ It was hoped that the projects would be funded, at least in part, by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Although different cities were looked at, it was decided that such a program would be a duplication of the efforts of other organizations, public and private.¹⁶⁵ At the 1976 Convention in Philadelphia this idea resurfaced in the guise of Preservation Assistance Teams (PRAT). This program was based on the successful R/UDAT program operated by the Institute. The two programs were combined in October of 1977 and the resulting Preservation-Reuse/Urban Design Assistance Teams (PR/UDAT) were "to assist individuals, organizations, and communities with specific historic preservation oriented programs ranging in size from an individual landmark or site to

¹⁶²1970 Charge to Committee, Bullock Box 2, Folder 3.

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴1970 Committee Reports, page 36-1.

¹⁶⁵Committee Report, November 4, 1970, Holmes Box 1, Folder 3.

historic towns or districts."¹⁶⁶ It was believed that the expertise of the Committee of Historic Resources and the interdisciplinary nature of the Urban Design Assistance Teams would make it possible to

. . .reconcile the conflicting interests between preservationists and local business interests which appear to make landmark conservation unworkable. Modern historic preservation philosophy recognizes that economic feasibility and social concerns are as much part of the conservation of cultural resources as are sentiment, historic scholarship, and advanced preservation technology.¹⁶⁷

The Committee planned major involvement during the Bicentennial because of the way historic buildings could serve as a link to the colonial past. Before any positive programs could be developed, however, the Committee had to counter what they saw as a negative trend.

The Committee is disturbed over reports from a number of local areas where Bi-Centennial planning groups are considering the erection of imitation architecture such as Independence Hall and the like, as part of their celebration planning for 1976. The Committee believes state and local governments should be urged to avoid engaging in the erection of dubious architecture structures which would cause embarrassment after the Bi-Centennial is over.¹⁶⁸

The Committee was much more comfortable with the "encouragement of imaginative contemporary design of any new permanent structure related to the Bicentennial celebration rather than copies or replicas."¹⁶⁹ In the main, however, the Committee saw the Bicentennial "as a golden opportunity to celebrate America's past, present and future architecture. This means not only recording and preserving important examples, but it means making architectural heritage part of the design necessity in the successful planned environment."¹⁷⁰ The State Preservation Coordinators played a major role in the Bicentennial programs by promoting and coordinating local projects.

As shown by the specific charges, education continued to occupy much of the Committee's attention. In this case they were able to continue projects begun earlier such as the Workshop: Architectural Preservation (W:AP). The Workshops were run jointly by the Committee and architecture schools to bring preservationists, students, and practitioners together to discuss preservation

¹⁶⁶Proposed text announcing the program, page 1, Orr Box 3, Folder 7.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., page 2.

¹⁶⁸Memo to Terry Morton from Faynetta Nealis, November 17, 1970, page 2, Holmes Box 1, Folder 2.

¹⁶⁹1971 Committee Reports, page BD-1.

¹⁷⁰Statement of the Committee for Historic Resources, December 8, 1975, Myer Box 1, Folder 6.

philosophy and methodology. Consequently, W:AP served to highlight courses in the schools as well as to provide continuing education opportunities for those in the field. Workshops were held at the following Universities: Florida (Gainesville), Arizona (Tucson), Oregon (Eugene), Maryland (College Park), Michigan (Ann Arbor), North Dakota (Fargo), Texas (Austin), and Tulane (New Orleans). The Committee promoted visual education through slide and film presentations. Some Committee members encouraged the development of slide collections for donation to schools of architecture.¹⁷¹

All of the Committee's work was aimed at achieving the goals of "Develop the Professionals, Develop the Tools, Develop the Climate, Develop the Client, and Develop the Institute."¹⁷² These positive programs were seen as the best way for the Committee to shape the future. The goals were formulated to keep the Committee and preservation before the public so that the Committee would be consulted early to work out solutions to preservation problems rather than being called on at the last minute. To develop the climate, the Committee intensified its lobbying program on Capitol Hill and improved its liaison relations with federal agencies, industry and labor. They began a survey of building codes and regulations in order to develop consistent, safe variations to allow for sensitive restoration work. To develop the Institute, the Committee looked outside the organization to strengthen international ties and secure additional funding.

The Committee involved itself in several specific projects during the 1970's as well. Some of these had involved them before, such as the proposed expansion of the United States Capitol¹⁷³ or the importance of up-to-date inventories. They continued to push for qualified personnel on restoration projects.

When plans for a restoration project under Public Law 89-665 [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966] indicate a lack of expertise in restoration techniques, it be required that, after a conference between the State Preservation Coordinator of the A.I.A. and the State Liaison Officer, an experienced restoration consultant be engaged on the project.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹Committee Minutes, May 13-14, 1971, Holmes Box 1, Folder 3.

¹⁷²Committee Reports, 1971, page BD-9.

¹⁷³"We deplore the decision of the Commission to destroy the last portion of the original walls of the Capitol. The A.I.A. refuses to accept this decision as irrevocable; we intend to make every effort to prevent the destruction of part of the nation's heritage. The Institute, which has always been in the forefront of the battle to save the East and West Fronts of the Capitol, will again take a leadership role in marshalling the support of all those concerned in this fight against the demolition of the West Front." AIA Opinion regarding the Capitol, March 13, 1972, Holmes Box 1, Folder 5.

¹⁷⁴Memo from Maurice Payne, March 27, 1972, Holmes Box 1, Folder 5.

The Committee disapproved of the additions of Hawaii and Alaska to the roll call on the Lincoln Memorial as such modification to accommodate later occurrences would compromise "the design integrity of these historic structures which represent the thoughtful contribution of earlier architects and eras."¹⁷⁵ The Committee also faced attitude problems.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation reports that the greatest single preservation problem in Federal Government is not unwillingness of agencies to preserve properties but the unanticipated discovery of historic resources in the path of important projects. When we fight for preservation of such resources, no matter how important they may be, we risk the charge of obstructionism. In a time when economic and energy problems demand an increase in development, we cannot afford such a stigma.¹⁷⁶

Nevertheless, they refused to give up because they believed that, "mass adaptation without adequate respect for history is destructive and nothing other than a covert version of destruction. We also believe that the defense against careless adaptation must and will come from the architectural profession."¹⁷⁷

The Committee took on new projects to aid the cause of preservation. Members of the Committee were concerned by the loss of drawings and specifications of early buildings due to the lack of repository facilities.¹⁷⁸ Consequently, they continued to lobby for a national building museum and advocated the development of a national clearinghouse for information regarding original drawings. They suggested that this clearinghouse be overseen by the Historic American Buildings Survey. The Committee willingly agreed to help the General Services Administration of the federal government to inventory the historic buildings under its control. Inventories were to be conducted by the State Preservation Coordinators. The Committee had been recommending such an inventory to the federal government for years as the first step to the better utilization of those properties. The Committee was also ready with suggestions when the Department of Housing and Urban Development proposed the use of federal money in the purchase of easements. Based on their experience, the Committee recommended that the easements:

1. Preserve the exterior architectural features of such buildings, including their volumes, exterior walls and roofs and their appropriate sitings, to preserve as much of these as is considered both feasible and appropriate by the local regulatory agency. 2. That easements be only granted and/or accepted if they are accompanied by the requisite financial arrangements to ensure their

¹⁷⁵CHR Minutes, April 1-2, 1974, page 5, Bullock Box 2a, Folder 1.

¹⁷⁶Letter to Donald Myer from Jerry L. Rogers, February 5, 1976, Myer Box 1, Folder 7.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

¹⁷⁸Committee Minutes, September 16-17, 1971, Holmes Box 1, Folder 4.

perpetual maintenance and that there be provisions for periodic inspection to ensure proper maintenance.¹⁷⁹

Members of the Committee were also called on to solve problems caused by the energy crisis.

The current high cost of energy is resulting in thousands of old frame buildings having their walls lined with granular foam insulation without a vapor barrier being installed on the heated side, thus allowing condensation to form inside the walls with subsequent paint-peeling, resulting usually in the installation of aluminum or vinyl siding which then accelerates the damage done by the condensation trapped in the walls. The complete deterioration of the walls may be the ultimate result.¹⁸⁰

Saving the Wainwright Building - Effective Cooperation

The Committee did participate in a rousing preservation success. In the July 1973 CHR/SPC Newsletter there were dire predictions about Louis Sullivan's Wainwright Building in St. Louis; the building was operating at a loss and the owner had a proposal to turn the site into a parking lot which would yield an annual profit of \$45,000.00. A committee was formed in St. Louis which included the local AIA committee representative. In the Committee Reports of 1974 it was noted that the building had been saved. At least as important as the saving of the building, however, is the fact that the crisis demonstrated the effectiveness of the Committee's procedures. The process to save the building had begun at the chapter level; they saw the problem and prepared a study for the national committee. Input was received from the national level and liaison groups were contacted. The local chapter continued its involvement by sending representatives to the Governor of Missouri to state their position. The result was that the National Trust for Historic Preservation put an option on the building to safeguard it from the wreckers and the State of Missouri purchased it from them for the use as an office building.¹⁸¹

Other Successes in the 1970's

Although other accomplishments of the Committee might not have been as dramatic as that of the Wainwright Building they too would exert major influences in the field of preservation. Most notable among these was the

¹⁷⁹Committee Minutes, March 2-3, Holmes Box 1, Folder 5.

¹⁸⁰Item of Concern, CHR Meeting, October 26-28, 1978, Vytlačil Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁸¹Committee Reports, 1974, page EP-16.

passage of the Tax Reform Act of 1976 which included tax incentives for preservation work. Committee members and the Institute had offered advice for correcting a system which had made it "more attractive for a property owner to tear down a viable structure than to preserve it."¹⁸² The Committee renewed its interest in rural preservation stating that the "uncontrolled development and lack of local leadership have endangered many of our unique and architecturally significant eighteenth century rural communities."¹⁸³ The Committee also encouraged the Institute to join in an amicus curiae brief to try and avert demolition of New York City's Grand Central Station. The Institute joined the brief of the Committee to Save Grand Central Station supporting the "validity of landmark preservation laws on the basis of the police power rather than the power of eminent domain."¹⁸⁴

During the late 1970's the Committee developed a policy on preservation and adaptive use which was meant to guide the Institute.

The charge was given to the CHR to develop an Institute Policy, by the AIA Board, in order to provide the Institute with a position on preservation and the ability to respond to preservation issues that were within the Policy in a timely fashion, without waiting for the Board to act on specific CHR resolutions. . . . There simply was no existing policy upon which to act in 1978. A very important element of the policy was the development of a "brushfire procedure", which allowed for swift Institute action in the case of significant endangered buildings.¹⁸⁵

The five part policy statement encouraged practitioners to design new buildings which would be compatible with existing structures. Economic solutions were to be found to preserve notable examples of a community's architecture. The Committee realized that taxing and banking attitudes would have to be modified to make these suggestions possible. Preservation was to be used as a means of reinforcing the community and halting the decay of residential areas. Codes and zoning regulations were to be developed that would enhance the adapted use and make it barrier free. Amenities were to be maintained as part of any design

¹⁸²Letter to Senator Henry M. Jackson from Louis deMoll, President, AIA, April 1, 1976, page 1, Myer Box 1, Folder 6.

¹⁸³Ibid., page 3.

¹⁸⁴Committee Reports, 1978, Appendix 2, Vytlačil Box 1, Folder 1. The Committee had encouraged the Institute to join with the brief of the National Trust for Historic Preservation but the administration of the Institute was not comfortable with the position taken in that brief and chose to join the Committee to Save Grand Central Station brief instead.

¹⁸⁵Letter to Bruce Kriviskey from Theodore Bartley, Jr., December 13, 1988.

solution.¹⁸⁶ It is on this positive note that the Committee prepared for the 1980's.

Work in the 1980's

The Committee had reason to be optimistic, for as Harvie Jones wrote, "In most cases, economics will favor preservation versus demolition and new construction. Owners who are not interested in history are always interested in saving money, and then the preservation achieved becomes icing on the cake."¹⁸⁷ Preservation seemed to be an integral part of the building industry and destined to remain so because of the favorable tax treatments available to owners interested in saving old buildings. However, the acceptance of preservation meant that the architectural profession had to be modified to deal with the requirements of the process;

traditional architectural services -- voluminous drawings and details -- have little place in most preservation work, . . . different sorts of services are needed. For example, we have projects in which photographs (with notes) play the major role in the architectural documents.¹⁸⁸

In order to aid the practicing architect in his work, the Committee put together The Historic Preservation Notebook. The Notebook was written to be a

source of sources for the general practice of architecture that will help design professionals provide more and better practice of architecture in historic preservation. The program goal is the publication of an annually updated sourcebook.¹⁸⁹

The Committee had yet another reason for optimism in its corps of State Preservation Coordinators. These architects continued to operate effectively as liaisons between the AIA and preservation groups at the state and local levels. The SPC Report from Alabama noted the work of Nicholas Holmes who, "after the City of Mobile sustained enormous damage during Hurricane 'Frederic' September 1979, assisted the City with a damage survey of all its historic buildings."¹⁹⁰ From Iowa, William J. Wagner told of the formation of Foundation for Historic Conservation by six architects to "save good buildings from [the]

¹⁸⁶"CHR Policy on Preservation/Adaptive Use," Committee Minutes, November 4-5, Orr Box 1, Folder 3.

¹⁸⁷Letter to Robert Ketzner from Harvie Jones, February 1, 1980, Jones Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁸⁸Ibid.

¹⁸⁹CHR Minutes, April 27-29, 1980, Vytlačil Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁹⁰1980 State Preservation Coordinator Reports, Vytlačil Box 2, Folder 1.

headache ball."¹⁹¹ Activity in South Dakota involved AIA members in photographing and recording the Homestake Gold Mine as well as consulting work for Historic South Dakota. This type of liaison activity was crucial if the Committee was to achieve its preservation goals. In a letter encouraging members to attend a meeting in Des Moines, William Dikis stressed the Committee's role in accomplishing preservation through encouragement and example. With reference to the Polk County, Iowa Courthouse, he wrote that "the CHR might be helpful in encouraging resumption of a continuous program of restoration."¹⁹²

Early in 1980 the Committee analyzed a draft of the National Heritage Policy Act of 1979 (S.1842) and forwarded their position to the Institute. In April, Ray K. Parker appeared before a Senate Subcommittee to present the Institute's views with regard to the Act. He stated that S.1842

undercuts historic preservation programs in favor of natural conservation efforts. While the Institute is on record in support of the safeguarding of our natural resources, we must emphasize that these efforts must not override our commitment to the preservation of our historically and architecturally significant heritage.¹⁹³

The AIA, with the Committee's input, presented its criticisms to the Senate which reflected long-standing opinions of the Committee.

First the Institute would like to see a proper balance maintained between natural and cultural preservation programs. Second, we would urge that experienced professionals be utilized in the conduct of all historic preservation programs -- national, state and local. Third, we would encourage the committee to give the issue of documentation the proper emphasis in the final legislation. Finally, we urge that this committee consider incorporating a provision in its final bill legislatively establishing a Museum for the Building Arts.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹Ibid.

¹⁹²Letter to Ann Vytlačil from William Dikis, April 23, 1983, Vytlačil Box 2, Folder 3. This was expected to be a two-way street: "Committee members may benefit from visiting other sites of historic and preservation interest." Ibid.

¹⁹³CHR Minutes, April 27-29, 1980, Appendix A, Vytlačil Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁹⁴Ibid. The support by the Committee for a Museum extended beyond its own constituency and Mr. Parker's comments acknowledged that. "The building industry is one of the two or three largest national assets; yet there is no organized institutional memory of our building history. A national museum for the building arts would collect and record this history, and more importantly provide a mechanism for the dissemination of important information on the built environment. Support for a Museum of the Building Arts is widespread throughout the building industry and includes organized labor, crafts and artisan groups, artists, as well as design professionals."

The legislative subcommittee of Historic Resources, under the leadership of Charles T. McCafferty, had developed the analysis of the National Heritage Policy Act. In addition to reacting to specific pieces of legislation they were to develop a position paper to guide the Institute in matters of preservation. McCafferty's committee felt the paper should reflect:

(1) Recognition of the specific merits of preservation, and not only as corollaries of some other consideration such as economic development, natural resources, and community planning, (2) Development of specific architectural profession position with substantial content, contrasted with only a reflection and endorsement of other interest positions, (3) Resolution of potential disagreements vis-a-vis the proposed integration of preservation and natural resources, (4) Increased authorization and appropriation to respond to the needs and opportunities in preservation, (5) Extension of Historic Preservation provisions of TRA 76 [Tax Reform Act of 1976] with improvements and enhancements to make it more effective in the market place and more attractive to development interests.¹⁹⁵

All of these points were taken up by the Committee in the 1980's.

When looking back, Harvie Jones would write,

1980 was a difficult year for the CHR. The Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record were being transformed by the then-current administration into an amateur adaptive-use advocacy and "planning" group. There was talk of dropping the expiring 1979 Tax Reform Act. The National Heritage Policy Act and Amendments were being drafted. The National Register was proposed to be modified and diluted. The proposed National Museum of the Building Arts was in its beginning efforts to be approved. Some "UDAG" projects threatened historic properties (and some helped) -- etc. Most of these problems came to a reasonably happy ending, and the A.I.A. had a measurable impact on the resolution of these problems.¹⁹⁶

Even as the Committee was dealing with issues of policy it dealt with the public on a more personal level providing specific information and advice.

A danger in these downtown efforts is to convey to the owners the idea that if only they fix up their buildings, business will be good again. The first order of business is basic planning (traffic, parking, access, market studies, merchandising, etc.). Only after

¹⁹⁵CHR Minutes, January 13-15, 1980, Appendix C, Vyltacil Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁹⁶Letter to Tony Wrenn from Harvie Jones, October 19, 1983, Jones Box 1, Folder 1.

these are taken care of will the condition of buildings be of help. The buildings can intensify success, but they cannot create success.¹⁹⁷

The Committee continued to be encourage documentation, "Whereas some might assume that the documentation of historic structures is only of scholarly interest, many architects have found these documents to be of invaluable aid in restoration, and even in saving historic buildings from demolition. The documents are of direct practical value."¹⁹⁸

Congressional Appearances

Throughout the 1980's the Committee sent representatives to Congressional budget hearings. In regard to fiscal 1982 preservation appropriations, Tomas Spiers remarked

We suggest that by eliminating the preservation fund the Administration is cutting the federal budget's leverage muscle rather than trimming the fat. . . . Unlike the Department of Interior's FY82 recommendation for deferring land acquisition -- historic buildings and districts will not survive that type of budgetary approach.¹⁹⁹

Because they were one of the few groups who monitored the entire preservation agenda rather than pet projects, the Committee was able to call up wide-ranging sources of information. To support his position, Mr. Spiers used information on the availability of matching funds, construction statistics, and energy use projections as well as information regarding historic trends.

In early 1982 Henry J. Browne appeared before Congress to present the Institute's view on the conditions of the national park system and of the role of the National Park Service in maintaining historic properties within its system. Mr. Browne's statement acknowledged the role of the Park Service to manage the properties, but he also voiced the Institute's concern that the professional resources of that organization were inadequate to meet demand. Again, the Committee had voluminous experience to draw from when making their comments. Because they had encouraged the federal government to inventory its significant architectural resources and had aided, through the State Preservation Coordinators with that inventory, they knew what the shortcomings

¹⁹⁷Letter to Ann Youngren from Harvie Jones, May 23, 1980, Jones Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁹⁸Letter to Carol Miller from Harvie Jones, December 12, 1980, Jones Box 1, Folder 1.

¹⁹⁹House Hearings, FY82 Preservation Funds, February 24, 1981, Vytlacil Box 1, Folder 1.

of the inventory were.²⁰⁰ The Institute declared that the inventory was merely the first step in protecting those properties. In order to act on the information revealed by the inventory [List of Classified Structures] the National Park Service would need to augment its inadequate professional staff. For example, in both the San Francisco and Pacific Northwest regions only one architect was available to supervise the work being done. Additionally, what staff existed was inadequately trained and insufficiently seasoned to carry out their responsibilities.²⁰¹ The Institute recommended that

Training programs must be established within the National Park Service that go beyond traditional regional districts so that specialty teams will be able to react, crossing the jurisdictional lines in order to maintain a high level of scholarship.²⁰²

The Institute also addressed the funding of preservation efforts to be carried out by the National Park Service. Mr. Browne reiterated the Institute's position that budget deferrals worked against historic buildings which require steady, long-term appropriations if their preservation is to be handled well. Similarly, the Institute recommended "that the large amounts of money required to stabilize the current inventory not be infused into the program all at once. This glut would over burden the small number of Park Service personnel dedicated to historic properties management."²⁰³ This report to Congress demonstrates how the Committee's resources were utilized by the Institute in areas of preservation policy. Mr. Browne drew on personnel from the different CHR subcommittees to add to the information received from his own sources and

²⁰⁰"The inventory has significant reporting gaps ignoring the numerous parks added after 1976, especially the newly acquired Alaska parks. There are many parks which while listing no historic structures, are clearly historic in content." A Current State of National Parks, February 8, 1982, page C-13, Vytlačil Box 2, Folder 2.

²⁰¹Ibid. This was hardly a new concern. "I am wholly convinced that the cause of historic preservation, particularly the historic architecture of America, has been greatly slowed and retarded by the failure of Federal, State and local agencies to recognize the vital and essential role of architects in decision making on historic architecture, both at the policy level of the parent board or commission, and at the staff level where the technical and executive functions take place. . . .In my opinion far too many staff members of Federal, State and local agencies are assuming and presuming architectural and construction expertise, at great cost to the whole Federal historical architecture program." Letter to Donald B. Myer from Clarence E. Moran, April 7, 1976, Myer Box 1, Folder 7.

²⁰²A Current State of National Parks, page C-13, Vytlačil Box 2, Folder 2.

²⁰³Ibid., page C-15. Mr. Browne continued, "This would also create serious program inefficiencies. While Park Service sources have estimated that approximately \$250 million will be required for stabilization, the current programs and personnel can probably utilize only about a \$10 million increase for FY83 above the \$7 million anticipated for FY82."

experiences and presented a report which provided a well-rounded analysis of the subject together with practical suggestions for action.

The Committee undertook a similar analysis, at the request of the National Park Service, with regard to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Revised Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The Committee, through Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., stated that

We feel the Standards as set forth are most appropriate. They are simple and concise. They address the areas of concern while still allowing for flexibility. However, the guidelines for applying as written appear just the opposite, inconsistent and inflexible.²⁰⁴

The Committee raised specific objections to the guidelines based on their combined practices and experience in applying the Standards to actual building rehabilitations.

In most cases we are not dealing with landmark buildings, but rather secondary buildings which have historical merit. There must be flexibility available or the major gain, the reuse of historic structures, as envisioned under the Tax Reform Act will be lost.²⁰⁵

The Committee made internal recommendations to the Institute as well. It encouraged the Institute to adopt a policy regarding acid rain as early as 1982.²⁰⁶ To counter the effects of deterioration of the built environment, the Committee suggested that the Institute encourage scientific research to counter the destruction.

In turn, on its part, the committee will publish to its members for their use and dissemination abstracts, synopses and bibliographies resulting from these research efforts. As much as possible, fashionable code words and political emotion will be subordinated to the production of factual scientific data directly useful by the practitioner members for guidance to the client public.²⁰⁷

Building Codes and Standards

One area where the Committee aided the work of practitioners was that of building codes and standards. Committee research, begun in the 1970's and continued 1983, suggested an amendment to ANSI 117.1-1980 so that problems of

²⁰⁴Letter to Gary L. Hume from Theodore J. Barley, Jr., November 11, 1982, Vytlacil Box 2, Folder 2.

²⁰⁵Ibid.

²⁰⁶Letter to Robert Stafford from Robert Lawrence, August 5, 1982, Vytlacil Box 2, Folder 2. The National Park Service made acid rain a focus in 1988.

²⁰⁷CHR Proceedings, June 17-18, 1983, Vytlacil Box 1, Folder 2.

handicap accessibility would not compromise rehabilitation projects. The proposed amendment read, in part,

It is not the intent of this Standard to compromise the historical integrity of nationally and locally designated historic buildings and sites. Handicapped accessibility to such historic buildings and sites should be made in such a way that intervention does not destroy historic quality. The addition of innovative alternatives through administrative changes and/or the use of interpretive materials to full accessibility should be considered where physical access is infeasible.²⁰⁷

The Committee made the findings of this subcommittee available to practitioners and wrote articles for AIA publications. In 1984, the members were concerned with the drafting of facade easements and air rights regulations as well as reviewing the BOCA rehabilitation code and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Code.²⁰⁸

Self-Evaluation

In 1984 the Committee conducted a "self-evaluation" of its work as the first step in the formulation of a three year plan of action. Its findings showed that "The Committee continues as the nation's largest private organization of professional expertise in architectural preservation and conservation knowledge."²⁰⁹ They also pointed out to their members and the AIA that "CHR participation can be an important part of the development of professional expertise in historic preservation, but it is not a significant avenue for job development and its members are unlikely to find client contacts through CHR participation."²¹⁰ By being straightforward about this relationship, the Committee would continue to attract only those AIA members interested in the cause and techniques of preservation and those willing to disseminate information to other practitioners. This dissemination was critical to help the architect remain a force in shaping the built environment: "Most analysts on the building market are agreed that rehabilitation (and historic preservation)

²⁰⁷Letter to Diane Stern from Anne Vytlačil, July 12, 1984, Vytlačil Box 3, Folder 3.

²⁰⁸1985 Planning/Program Proposals, July 18, 1984, page 5, Vytlačil Box 3, Folder 3.

²⁰⁹Ibid.

²¹⁰Ibid.

will continue to grow, to be 75-80 percent of the building market in the 1980's."²¹¹

In presenting the 1985 goals and three-year plan to the Institute, the Chairman Designate of the Committee, Alfred Staehli, wrote "In sum, CHR represents one area of architectural practice that is interrelated to several other areas of Institute interest."²¹² This interrelatedness has been the focus of the Committee in the 1980's. When possible, meetings are scheduled to coincide with those of other Institute committees or with liaison groups. (See Appendix B) At these joint meetings relationships are explored and information shared. "The result is an information bargain for the Institute members, produced at much less cost than if done more efficiently by an augmented full time staff."²¹³

An Overview of the Architect's Role in Preservation

As the Committee continues to work for the Institute, its focus will change to accommodate the trends and needs of preservation just as the role of the architect in preservation has shifted over the years as perceptions and methods of preservation have changed. In 1915 it was noted that

Everywhere strong movements, backed by popular sentiment, are demanding the preservation of the architectural landmarks and monuments of our earlier history. The study and appreciation of these has been the work of architects, and has led not only to accurate and reverential restorations, but also to that fine new work based on old traditions, but full of vital imagination.²¹⁴

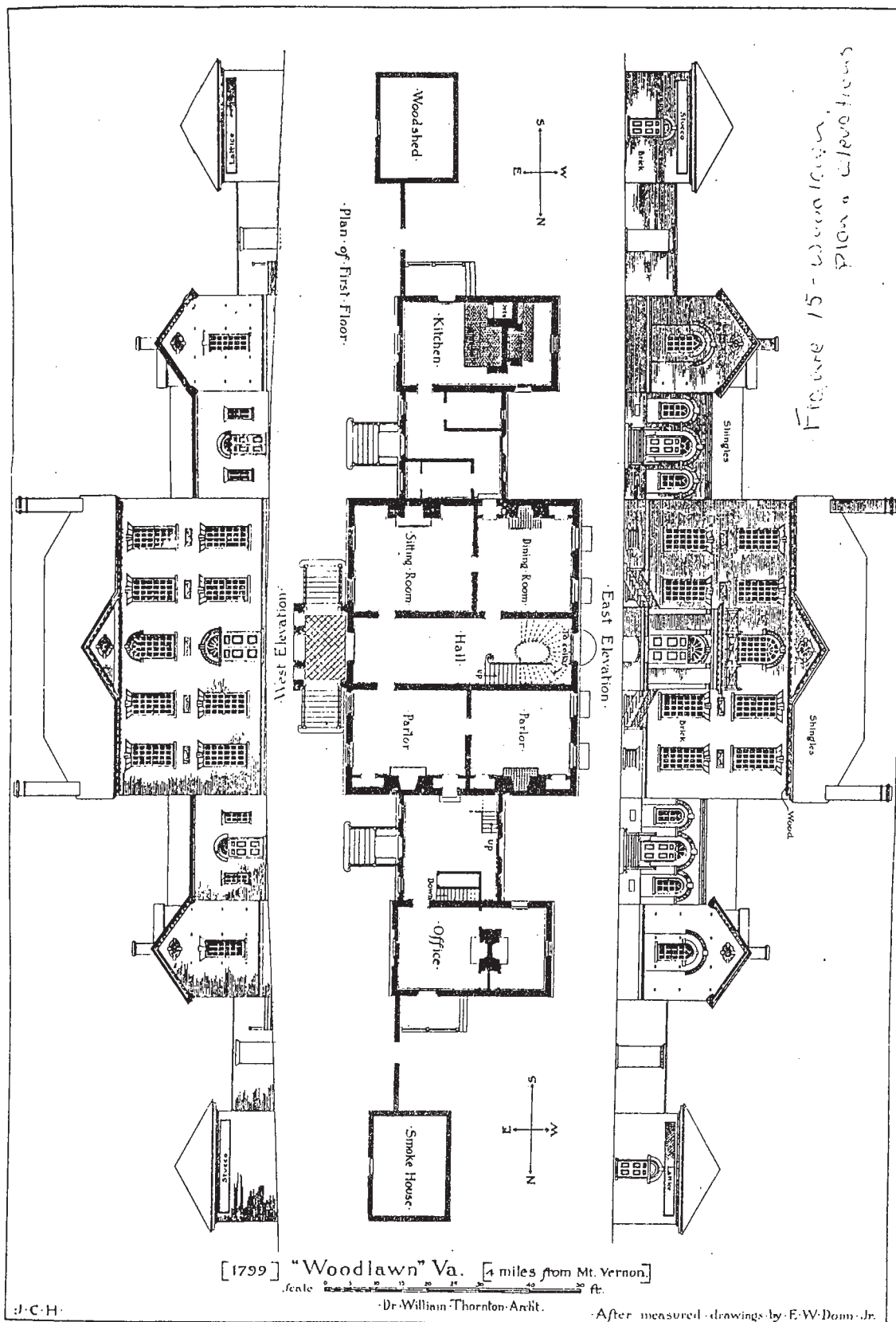
In the formative years of the Institute, members often sketched America's early buildings in their spare time. (See illustration #19) This habit was partly a result of their Beaux Arts training which stressed drawing from life and learning from example. This training and the resultant drawings aided the architect in his practice by providing familiarity and patterns that could be used as a basis for design. Measured drawings of colonial architecture were encouraged by the profession because they could serve as models for design when their clients requested colonial revival buildings. ". . . prospective

²¹¹Letter to John V. Busby, Jr. from Alfred Staehli, November 27, 1984. In a letter to the author dated December 20, 1988, Mr. Staehli wrote, "The percentages you cite for predictions of future preservation/rehabilitation activity in building have been repeatedly confirmed by industry publications, Dodge Reports, and Commercial Remodeling. The forecast for the 90's is even higher."

²¹²Ibid.

²¹³Ibid.

²¹⁴Journal of Proceedings, 1915, page 8.



#19 Elevations and plan of Woodlawn Plantation
Fairfax County, Virginia
Drawn by Edward W. Donn, Jr.
The Georgian Period, volume I, plate 213

homeowners as far away as Kansas City and San Francisco had got the urge to live in red brick Georgian houses. Their architects were glad to accommodate and in the East they began to make measured drawings of old floor plans, facades and interior details."²¹⁵ Several books of drawings and photographs were published in the early part of this century to serve as "pattern books" for the profession.²¹⁶ (See illustration #20) The drawings had the added benefit of providing preservation of the nation's early architecture through documentation.

Given this relationship, it seems natural that when the Historic American Buildings Survey was proposed, measured drawings were chosen as the major medium for recording the chosen structures.

As preservation entered the mainstream of American culture, the architect retained his position in the process because of the requirements of preservation laws and the structural and aesthetic problems present in any preservation project. Gordon Orr, Chairman of the Committee in 1978, believes that the architect holds a prominent position in the field for several reasons. In the first place, the architect has a natural affinity for appreciating cultural and aesthetic values. Additionally, the architect possesses the talent and sensitivity needed by the preservation movement. Because of these attributes, preservation has become an important business market for architects. Finally, Orr believes that the architect is the professional most capable of meeting legal and procedural requirements of preservation in his client's behalf.

"Selling" Preservation

Without a doubt, there are architects who have experience and interest in preserving the built environment. In 1955, Earl Reed, then Chairman of the Committee, received a letter from Cameron Clark, F.A.I.A., who detailed his activities in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

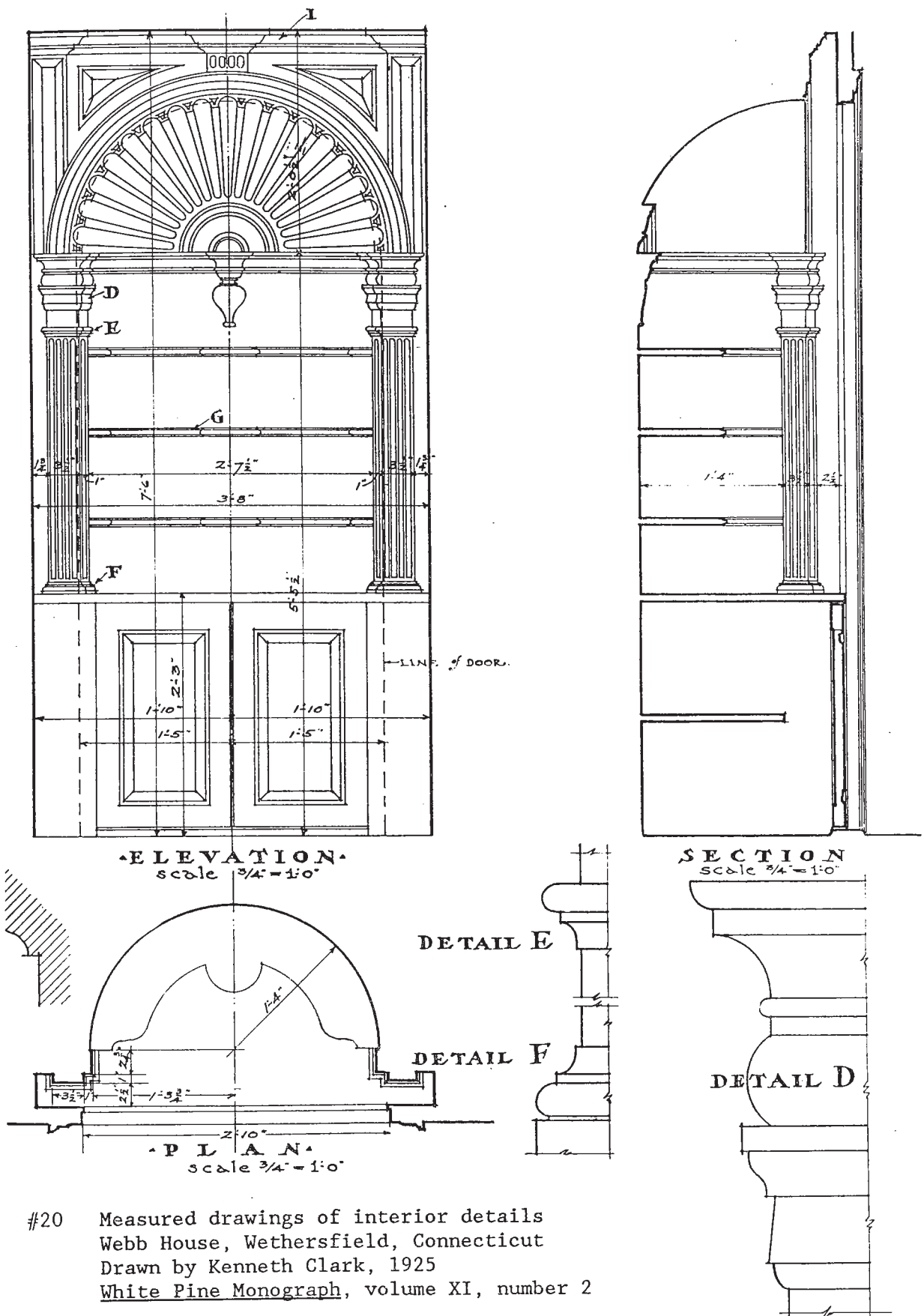
I came down here for a week thirty years ago and spent all my time photographing the lovely old town and when planes came in and made it a habit of coming here during the Xmas Holidays each year, then when I was taken sick last year came down here for good and have been selling preservation ever since.²¹⁷

Mr. Cameron's letter illustrates two of the architect's roles in the preservation process: doing preservation and promoting preservation. As a

²¹⁵Charles E. Peterson, "The Historic American Buildings Survey: Its Beginnings," Historic America: Buildings, Structures, Sites, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1983, page 9.

²¹⁶The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs published from 1915-1940 would be one example of a pattern book used widely by the profession as would The American Vignola by William R. Ware (1902 and 1905).

²¹⁷Letter to Earl Reed from Cameron Clark, January 5, 1955.



#20 Measured drawings of interior details
 Webb House, Wethersfield, Connecticut
 Drawn by Kenneth Clark, 1925
White Pine Monograph, volume XI, number 2

whole, the Committee is aware of these roles and encourages the individual chapter Preservation Officers to

. . . "sell" this program to his local Chapter members and especially to his Chapter Board. Interest your local news media in Historic Preservation. . . We also have a great obligation, as Architects, to lead the way toward the preservation of our Architectural Heritage, with as much vigor as our abilities and time permit.²¹⁸

The Committee sees the architect as an active participant in the preservation process, as do the local Preservation Officers. In explaining his role in the process, Olaf Shelgren, Sr., former Chairman of the Historic Resources Committee of the Western New York Chapter, stated

. . . it is the duty of my committee to give advice and help when an old building (of significant architectural period of historic interest) is threatened with destruction or remodeling -- also to prepare an inventory, and to record some of the worthwhile buildings in the area.²¹⁹

Mr. Shelgren took his duties to heart as the archival records reveal that he, and later his son, Olaf W. Shelgren, Jr., spent many weekends recording buildings for HABS inventories and drawings.

When the government entered the field with the Preservation Act of 1966, the demand for qualified professionals escalated. Not only was the average citizen becoming a proponent of preservation, so was the government. A survey of architects conducted by the AIA in 1971 revealed that 77.1 percent of the firms questioned had done building remodeling in the preceding two years.²²⁰ The Committee on Historic Resources also grew during this time period.

. . . the H.R.C. is now one of the biggest and most potent in the AIA. Unlike years past we now have a good budget, excellent staff, and a direct line to the AIA Board and President. We have a 100% batting average and one hell of a powerful and effective historic resources force.²²¹

Outside of the Institute,

²¹⁸Letter to Preservation Officers, South Atlantic District, from Charles Petty, January 5, 1963, Gaede Box 1, Folder 1.

²¹⁹Letter to E. William Ahlstrom from Olaf Shelgren, March 27, 1963, Gaede Box 1, Folder 3.

²²⁰"Practice Problems in Remodeling," Architectural Record, December 1971, page 110.

²²¹Letter to Henry J. Magaziner from Donald Myer, April 26, 1976, Myer Box 1, Folder 8.

. . .the role of the Historic Resources Committee has been an important one which is central to the fast growing preservation industry. This involvement has stretched to assisting federal funding levels, legislation, inter-professional programs, education, codes, archives, and overall AIA urban design policy. In every one of these areas the AIA and the CHR have great prestige, deep involvement and strong potential returns to the profession.²²²

There is no doubt that the profession of preservation expanded greatly during the 1960's and 1970's. More people and agencies, outside of architecture, had become involved in making decisions about the built environment. The majority of these groups required informed architectural advice to put their policies into practice. Being thrown into the limelight did, however, have its downside for the Committee.

The problem, I think, is that preservation has suddenly developed in a huge national enterprise. This proves the success of the efforts of all who have worked in preservation over the years, but there are too few people in the architectural profession, in government and in other fields who know how to handle preservation. A lot of old buildings will become victim of that success unless we can do some fast educational work beginning with the architects.²²³

How the Architect Sees his Role

Even as the focus of the Committee has changed to accommodate the needs of preservation, the architect's view of his role in the process has remained stable -- they must record, advise, educate, and inform.²²⁴ Bernd Foerster summarized his career in preservation as follows:

Since the late fifties, I have become increasingly aware of the importance of preservation, and have been very active since the early sixties. I did surveys, consulted with communities and neighborhoods, gave lectures, wrote books and articles and made a film on the subject of preservation. . . .Occasionally, I do some

²²²Letter to Jack McGinty from Donald Myer, September 16, 1976, Myer Box 1, Folder 9.

²²³Letter to Charles Peterson from Harvie P. Jones, April 21, 1980, Jones Box 1, Folder 1.

²²⁴As part of the research of this essay the author wrote to ten current and former members of the Committee asking them to describe the role of the architect in preservation and the role of preservation in their practices. Responses were received from Giorgio Cavalligieri, Bernd Foerster, Robert Gaede, Walker Johnson, Harvie Jones, Alfred Staehli, and Samuel Wilson, Jr.

consulting, but my extensive preservation efforts are largely voluntary.²²⁵

Alfred Staehli believes that his practice is "an outgrowth of committee activity."²²⁶

Other architects, while appreciative of what the Historic Resources Committee does, sense a rift between the objectives of the Committee and the AIA. Giorgio Cavaglieri has served on the Committee for nearly twenty years and credits it with educating the profession. However, he feels that the State Preservation Coordinator Program is its most notable success.

The creation of the position of the State Preservation Coordinator gave to many of us, by being independent sometimes of the local official position, the authority to speak at public gatherings occasionally in disagreement with some of the large firms which had direct interests in large development jobs connected to demolition of old, smaller buildings. The most flagrant act in that respect occurred when, while I was working a local civic group, I presented a statement in favor of the preservation of Grand Central Station and against the opinion of the then-president of our chapter.²²⁷

This independence might also conflict with the national body.

. . .in the late 1950s many of us architects in New York City participated in the actions which eventually led to the creation of a landmarks preservation law a few years later. . .the official position of the A.I.A. was still the one geared to "newer and bigger is better" which was fostered by all our largest firms.²²⁸

Robert Gaede basically agrees with this assessment of the profession when he writes about the rise of preservation.

What equally turned the situation around to one favorable to preservation, was a broad-based change in public opinion from one supportive of renewal for its own sake to one supportive of preservation. Many reasons can be cited for this. Unfortunately, leadership by the AIA cannot be included since it remained so minuscule through the 50's and 60's, gaining a bit in the 70's and gradually catching up with the mainstream in the 80's.²²⁹

²²⁵Letter to author from Bernd Foerster, August 24, 1988.

²²⁶Letter to author from Alfred Staehli, August 22, 1988.

²²⁷Letter to author from Giorgio Cavaglieri, August 22, 1988.

²²⁸Ibid.

²²⁹Letter to author from Robert Gaede, August 31, 1988.

Gaede went on to explain this lag-time at the national level.

The fact is that the majority of practicing architects in the post WWII era could not care less about historic preservation. To be excited about that subject was viewed by most chapters and individuals as being hopelessly out of step if not "flaky." The practitioners of architecture were among the worst offenders in the 1950-1970 era in contributing to the demise of our heritage via actively supporting renewal programs and vigorously altering the surviving buildings to the then current mode with small regard for the original.²³⁰

Perhaps because he credits involvement with the Committee for the focus of his career, Alfred Staehli has developed his own understanding of the role of the Committee of Historic Resources.

I believe that CHR plays a vital role in AIA to guide its policies regarding our cultural patrimony, to guide and offer training for the Institute's members regarding historic preservation, and to maintain liaison and influence with government agencies. Committee membership continues to reflect the interests of a relatively small number of Institute members. Architects are trained to be problem solvers and readily tackle any project they are asked to do. Very few are interested in our committee's work until confronted with a project or questions about a project involving historic preservation work, our committee does not offer the same introit to commissions that Health, Justice and Schools do; nevertheless, we do produce some of the AIA's most important and biggest volume of program and technical information.²³¹

Robert Gaede, based on his experience with the Institute in the field of preservation ended his letter to me with the following:

It behooves the profession to remain visible and influential in the public eye as well as in the reality of preservation affairs today. It has taken us a long time to reach this position but we now have it. We express it via our effective personal practice, our service in architectural boards of review and historic commissions, our participation in workshops and seminars and our regular appearances in the media and on the lecture platform. The local, state and national committees on historic resources give us additional persuasion. I hope the AIA will never relent in its leadership role in this subject for in spite of obvious success of late, the

²³⁰Ibid.

²³¹Letter to author from Alfred Staehli, August 29, 1988.

pressure to dismantle, destroy and disrupt our architectural achievements will always be near.²³²

²³²Letter to author from Robert Gaede, August 31, 1988.

Appendix A

Committee Titles and Chairmen

1890-1892	Committee on Conservation of Public Architecture Richard M. Upjohn
1893-1897	Committee on Conservation of Public Buildings Richard M. Upjohn
1898-1913	INACTIVE
1914	Committee on the Conservation of Natural Resources and Historic Monuments William M. Ellicott
1915-1917	Committee on the Preservation of Natural Beauties and Historic Monuments of the United States Horace Wells Sellers
1918-1924	Committee on Preservation of Historic Monuments and Scenic Beauties Horace Wells Sellers (1918-1922) Fiske Kimball (1923-1924)
1924-1927	Committee on Preservation of Historic Monuments and Scenery Fiske Kimball (1924-1925) A. Lawrence Kocher (1926-1927)
1928	Committee on Historic Monuments and Natural Resources A. Lawrence Kocher
1929-1930	Committee on Preservation of Historic Monuments and Natural Resources A. Lawrence Kocher
1931	Committee on Historic Monuments and Natural Resources A. Lawrence Kocher
1932-1934	Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings Leicester B. Holland
1935	Committee on Historic Buildings Leicester B. Holland

1936-1964	Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings	
	Leicester B. Holland	(1936-1943)
	Turpin C. Bannister	(1944-1948)
	Earl H. Reed	(1951-1959)
	Samuel Wilson, Jr.	(1960)
	Earl H. Reed	(1961-1962)
	Robert C. Gaede	(1963-1964)
1965-1969	Historic Buildings Committee	
	Orin M. Bullock	(1965-1966)
	F. Blair Reeves	(1967-1969)
1970-	Historic Resources Committee	
	H. Roll McLaughlin	(1970)
	Richard C. Frank	(1971)
	Nicholas H. Holmes, Jr.	(1972)
	Martin H. Cohen	(1973)
	William Bodley Lane	(1974)
	Thomas B. Muths	(1975)
	Donald Myer	(1976)
	John J. Cullinane	(1977)
	Gordon D. Orr, Jr	(1978)
	Theodore T. Bartley, Jr.	(1979)
	Harvie P. Jones	(1980)
	Bruce Judd	(1981)
	William M. Dikis	(1982)
	Tomas Spiers	(1983)
	Anne Vytlaclil	(1984)
	Alfred M. Staehli	(1985)
	Bill Peavler	(1986)
	Bernd Foerster	(1987)
	Henry Chambers	(1988)
	Russell Keune	(1989)
	Spencer Leineweber	(1990)

Appendix B

National Liaison Organizations with the Committee on Historic Resources 1989

American Architectural Foundation
American Institute of Architects Octagon Committee
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
American Society of Interior Designers, Committee for
Historic Preservation
American Society of Landscape Architects
American Society for Testing Materials
Association for Preservation Technology
Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies
Committee on the Preservation of Architectural Records
Fine Arts Commission, Washington, D.C.
U.S. Coast Guard
U.S. Forest Service
Friends of Terracotta
General Services Administration
Library of Congress
National Building Museum
National Bureau of Standards
National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers
National Institute of Building Sciences
National Institute for Conservation of Cultural Property
National Park Service
- National Register Programs
- Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American
Engineering Record
- Park Historic Architecture Division
- Preservation Assistance Division
- National Historic Landmark Program
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Preservation Action
RESTORE INC.
Society of Architectural Historians
U.S. Capitol Historical Society
U.S. Committee, the International Council on Monuments and
Sites
Victorian Society in America

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The majority of the information contained herein was gathered from the records of the Committee for Historic Resources in the American Institute of Architects Archives, Record Group 801, Series 2. References to boxes and folders in the footnotes refer to these records. The Journal of Proceedings is also found in the A.I.A. Archives. Tony P. Wrenn was invaluable in tracking things down.

The Journal of the American Institute of Architects, in all of its various titles, was consulted. Specific references can be found in the text.

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