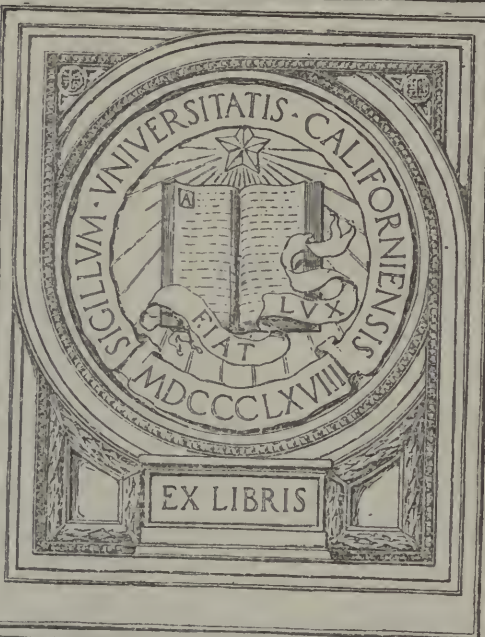


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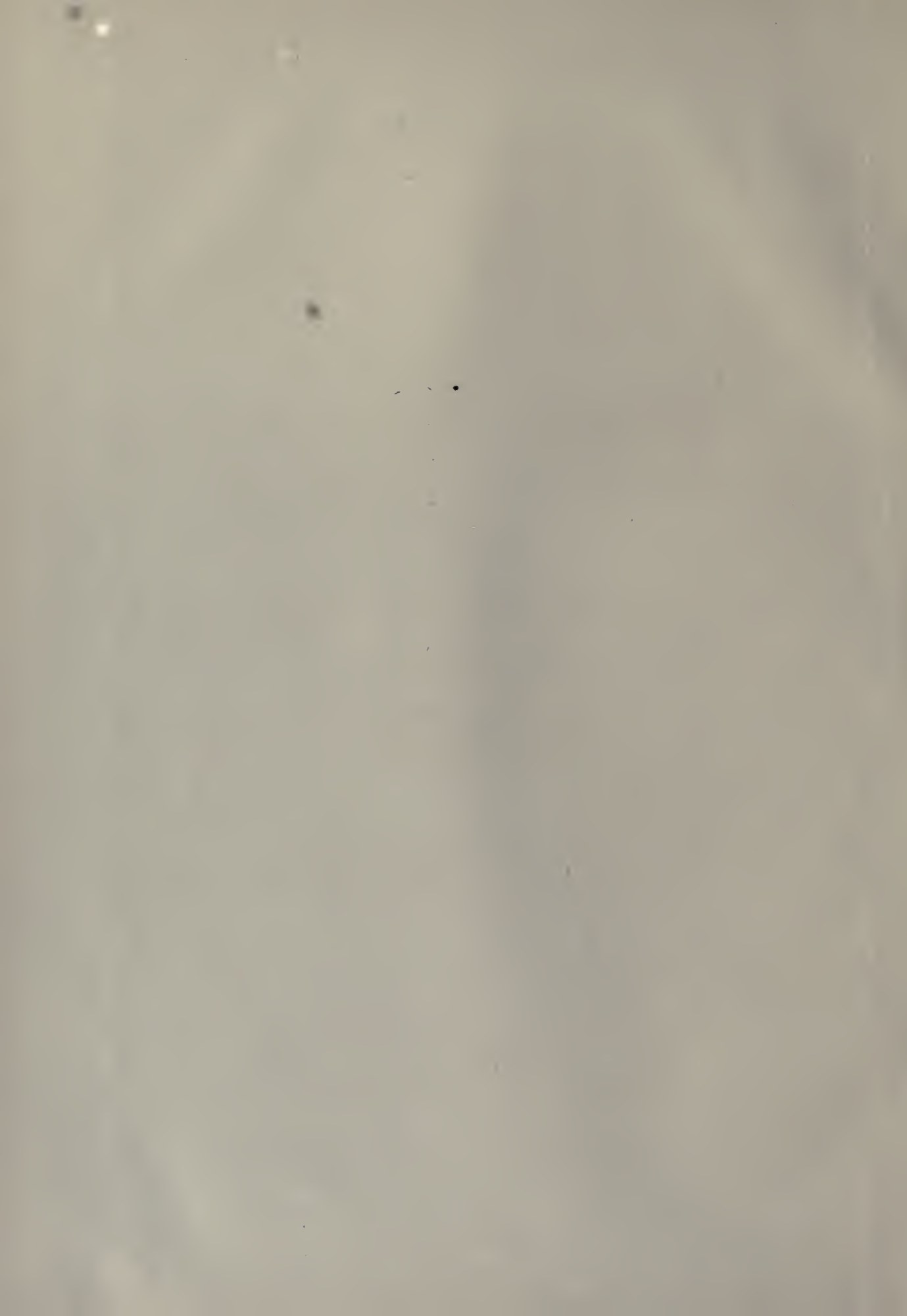


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The
WHITE PINE
SERIES OF
Architectural Monographs
Volume VII *Number 1*

PORTSMOUTH
New Hampshire
**An Early American
Metropolis**

*Programme of Sixth Annual
Architectural Competition
on Pages Fifteen & Sixteen*

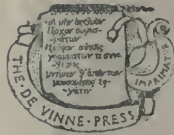
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Electus D. Litchfield*

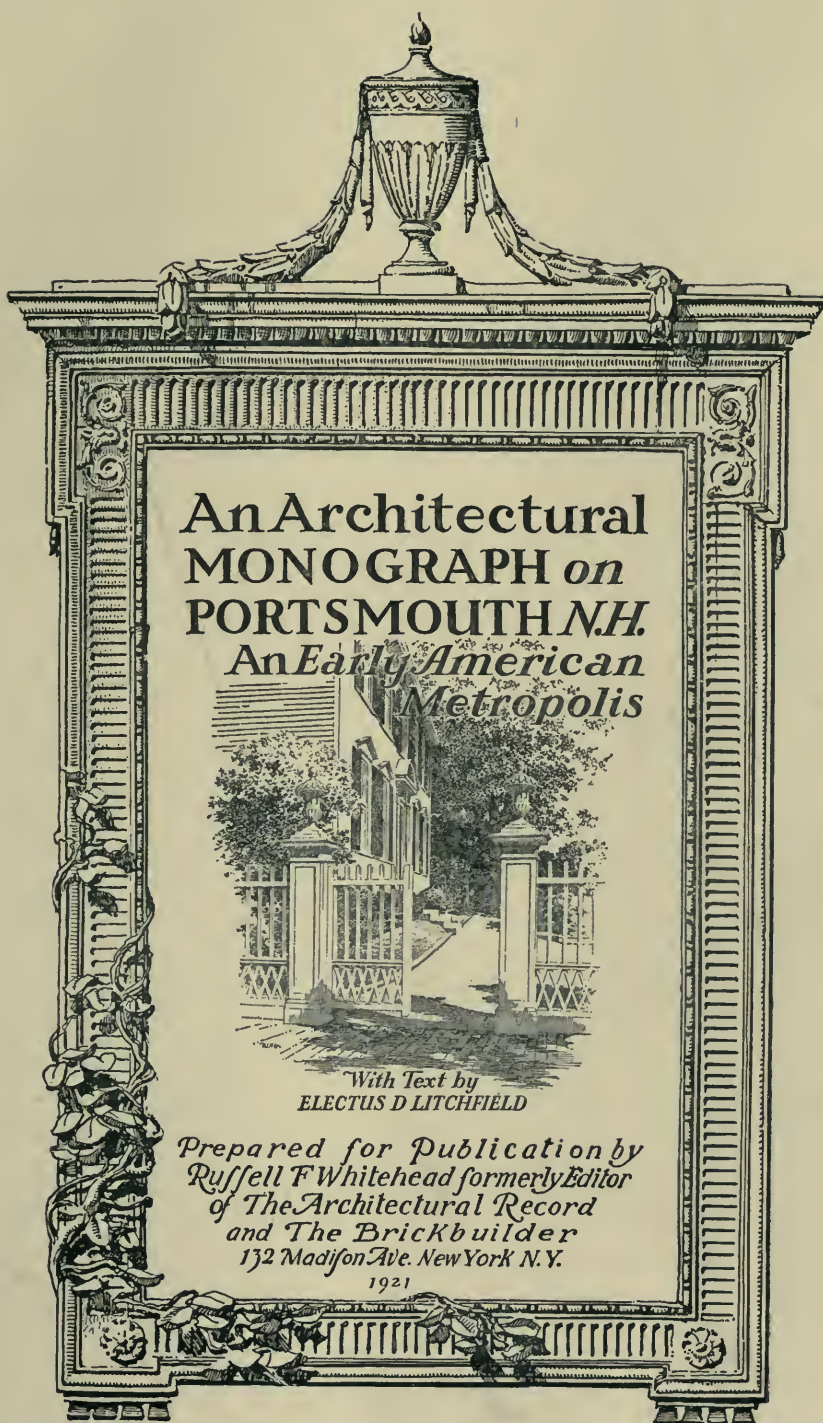
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An Architectural
MONOGRAPH *on*
PORTSMOUTH N.H.
*An Early American
Metropolis*



With Text by
ELECTUS D LITCHFIELD

Prepared for Publication by
Russell F Whitehead *formerly Editor*
of The Architectural Record
and The Brickbuilder
132 Madison Ave. New York N. Y.

1921



THE TREADWELL HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE. Built in 1750.

The WHITE PINE SERIES of ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPHS

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION SUGGESTING THE
ARCHITECTURAL USES OF WHITE PINE AND ITS
AVAILABILITY TODAY AS A STRUCTURAL WOOD

Vol. VII

FEBRUARY, 1921

No. 1

PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE AN EARLY AMERICAN METROPOLIS

By ELECTUS D. LITCHFIELD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENNETH CLARK

ANNO DOMINI 1630 saw the beginnings of Portsmouth. Twenty years after the first permanent settlement at Jamestown, and but ten years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, John Mason and his associates sailed into Portsmouth Harbor and established upon its shore the first settlement of the New Hampshire colony. No mere chance determined the site. The wooded and gently sloping shore of this beautiful and convenient harbor affording a safe haven for sailing craft on a "storm and rock-bound coast," was a logical selection. From a collection of a few small huts, the town grew and increased in importance for two hundred years. Time was when Portsmouth bid fair to be a commercial rival of New York, and in the early centuries of American history its part is written large upon the record. It reached the zenith of its development in the first years of the nineteenth century, but the invention of the steamboat and the coming of the iron-hulled deep-draft vessel marked the beginning of the end of Portsmouth's commercial supremacy. While from that time Portsmouth does not seem to have gone noticeably forward, perhaps because of the beauty of its location and the healthfulness of its climate, or because the Government continued to maintain there an important naval station, it nevertheless does not seem to have gone backward. It is to-day no decayed nor deserted city, but one which has seemed to hold miraculously unchanged the quiet and romantic character that it possessed as the home of many of the best and most distinguished citizens of our late Colonial and early Republican periods.

To the architect and the historian the city of

Portsmouth makes a special appeal. Other towns have retained much of their early flavor, but in none of them, as in Portsmouth, do we have a whole community the character of which has not really changed for a century. The summer tourist may think of Portsmouth only as a railway center from which he passes to Rye Beach or the Isles of Shoals, and remember alone the orange cake for which one of its modest confectioneries is noted; but to one whose eyes are open and whose mind is attuned to the memories with which its streets and docks and homes are filled, this old town has an enduring charm. For this ancient metropolis played a stirring part in our early history. It was here the expedition started which captured Louisburg, and high in the steeple of old St. John's Church still hangs the bell that pealed over that early capital of New France. Paul Revere was no stranger to the New Hampshire town, and an earlier ride of his, not chronicled in verse, provided powder and shot used at Lexington and Bunker Hill. Here lived Governor Langdon, that stalwart patriot who pledged all his money and a warehouse of Jamaica rum to provide uniforms and arms for Stark's Continentals, who at Bennington won lasting fame and saved Mollie Stark from widowhood. The docks of Portsmouth were no less familiar to John Paul Jones than the quarter-deck of the *Bonhomme Richard*, and on foggy nights his spirit and those of a galaxy of other gallant heroes still wend their way through its well-loved streets to the Yard. When the moon is just right you can see them: Hull of the *Constitution*, Decatur, Bainbridge, and the gallant Lawrence, and after they have passed, great men of a later day,—Franklin Pierce and Daniel

Webster, and a host of others. There are memories here, too, of statesmen of our own generation who met and signed the treaty which ended the Russo-Japanese War. Portsmouth has played no mean part in history, but, after all, it is not that which holds for us its greatest interest. It is because it stands to-day, just as it stood more than a hundred years ago, simple and unostentatious, and yet clearly the home

which must have been very gentle and very fine. They are still full of exquisite furniture and china which are the envy of collectors; portraits by Copley and other distinguished painters abound, and help us in imagination to see those gentlewomen of that early day with powdered hair and flowing silks, Colonial governors and other imposing dignitaries in velvets, young blades in knee-breeches and satin waistcoats,



THE GOVERNOR LANGDON HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Built in 1784.

of an early American "Four Hundred." There is an atmosphere of elegance and refinement in the old city of Portsmouth not found often in America. The wealth of many other Colonial towns is physically more evident. Portsmouth has no street of wealthy "nabobs" like Chestnut Street in Salem; and even to such a discerning eye as that of George Washington, when he visited Portsmouth after his inauguration, the pine-built homes of Portsmouth seemed "inconsiderable," compared to the brick mansions of Virginia. But these houses stand to-day a unique record of a civilization and a culture

dining tables groaning under their weight of damask and silver, fine wines in glittering decanters, and the rarest of china from the Orient.

It is a snug and well built city. Twice or three times fire had swept across it, and, rebuilt, it seems to have been each time better than before. Not a city of great mansions with outbuildings for slaves and other retainers, but a city of homes of high-bred, God-fearing gentlemen; for if architecture can record, as it surely does, the character of a people, it writes large in Portsmouth the refinement and gentility of that early town.

The author regrets that an earlier *White*



THE GOVERNOR BENNING WENTWORTH HOUSE, LITTLE HARBOR, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE. Built in 1750.



THE BUCKMINSTER HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Built in 1720 by Daniel Warner.

Pine Monograph told of the "Three-Story Colonial House in New England," and thus took from this paper the pictures of several of Portsmouth's most important houses. Nowhere as here was the three-story American house of wood so successfully and consistently developed. The Haven house, built about 1800, with its well designed fence, after the manner of McIntyre in Salem; the Governor Woodbury mansion, built in 1809 by Samuel Ham; the Langley Boardman house, with its charming palladian window and delightful semicircular porch, its unique mahogany door paneled with oval inserts or moldings in whalebone; the Ladd, or Moffit, house, with its magnificent interiors; and last, but not least, the John Pierce house on Court Street, with its well designed façade, its delightful stairway, and interesting plan, are all

than those of special outstanding merit. Some of the most charming of them are of the Wendell house, built by Jeremiah Hill in 1789 at the cor-

(Continued on page 10)



HOUSE AT 363 STATE STREET, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

distinguished examples of this unusual type.

It is characteristic of Portsmouth that its houses are essentially city houses, and not, as in so many other places, suburban dwellings swallowed up by the city. It is characteristic, too, of Portsmouth that, with but three important exceptions, its houses are uniformly of wood.

We are apt to remember of most of our New England towns, a few houses of special architectural merit which stand out against a background of others of the simplest character; but in Portsmouth the standard of all the houses is so high that it is a virtue that our illustrations are taken from the rank and file of its early buildings rather



THE JACOB WENDELL HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.
Built in 1789 by Jeremiah Hill.



THE JACOB WENDELL HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.
Entrance Detail—Built in 1789.



HOUSE AT 271 COURT STREET, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.
Entrance Detail.

ner of Edward and Pleasant streets. Its exterior is of clapboards set a few inches to the weather, like so many other houses of northern New England. It is delightful in mass as well as in detail. The door, of twelve panels, beautifully designed, carries, it would seem, the original knocker and an ancient door-plate, while in the broken pediment above is set a most interesting feature consisting of a whale-oil lamp carved in wood, set upon an ornamental base, suggesting the source of the wealth of its original owner. A

height and the detail of the iron posts and rails. It would have been so easy to have made the railing of the usual and accepted height, and to have missed the scale which it lends to the whole composition.

The little house at 314 Court Street is of piquant interest. The frame of the entrance door is delightfully original and interesting, but it is terribly marred in its effect by the modern door and transom within it. How many architects have passed this house and wished that



HOUSE AT 124 PLEASANT STREET, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

close examination of the detailed photograph will discover a repetition of the lamp motif in the pediments of the dormers. It is interesting to find this record of the owner embodied in the architecture of his house, and a pity it is, that one so seldom finds such a personal note. It is a pleasing indication of the early interest of architect and owner in the details of its construction; but wherever one turns in a careful study of this modest and unassuming structure there is found the evidence of the affectionate interest of its designer. Notice such seemingly unimportant things as the moldings at the chimney-caps, the sweep and proportion of the granite steps and copings, the

they might have the courage to ring the bell and ask its history, or to suggest the pleasure that it would give them to set inside that charming frame a door and fanlight which would be in keeping!

The houses at 124 Pleasant Street; Livermore Street; and the Samuel Lord House are quite of the general run of Portsmouth's houses. They are simple, straightforward buildings, two windows flanking on each side an interesting doorway in the first story, and with five windows across the front in the second, the roof being hipped or gambreled, as the case may be, and, in the case of the Lord House now occupied by the

Portsmouth Historical Society, pierced with dormers. This house, historically as well as architecturally, is the most important of the three, as it was the home of John Paul Jones during his residence in Portsmouth.

The fence and fence-posts for all these houses are well designed, and recall those built in Salem during the same period. Those who planned them had no hesitancy in combining carefully cut granite bases and steps with wood fences and posts. It is of value to note that though built

the close-spaced clapboards, the studied disposition of windows and doors, together with the charming detail of its window heads, entrance door, and trim. It should be an incentive to the architectural draftsman of to-day to realize how much genuine pleasure there is in the contemplation of this studied, but simple, building. It is the sort of thing "anybody could do," yet almost nobody can. It has the qualities of great monumental architecture—correct proportion, simplicity, and interest.



THE SAMUEL LORD HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

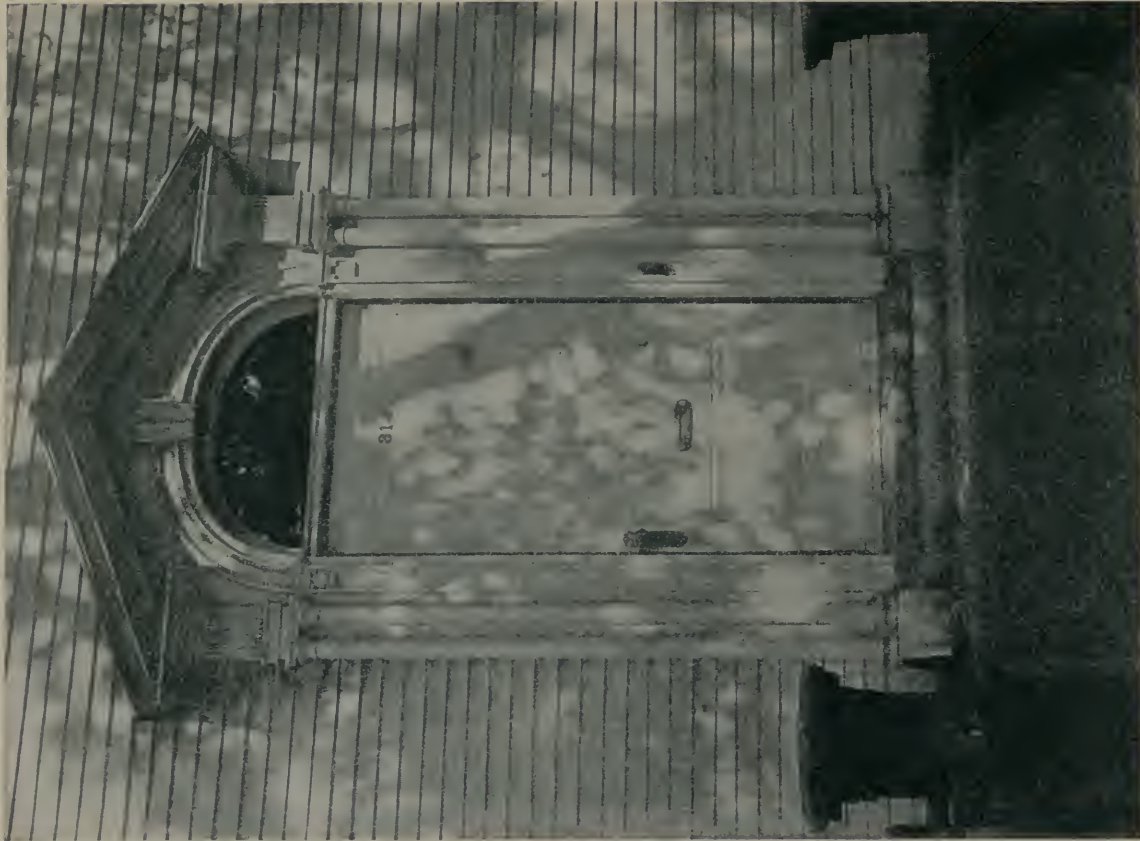
Built in 1730 by Captain Purcell. The home of John Paul Jones during his stay in Portsmouth.

more than a hundred years ago, the work in wood shows no greater signs of decay than the New Hampshire granite itself. The house at 363 State Street has a latter-day American basement effect, with its steps and entrance door recessed within the front wall. The Doric columns of its addition and the slight modifications in its detail would indicate that it was made some years after the building of the original house.

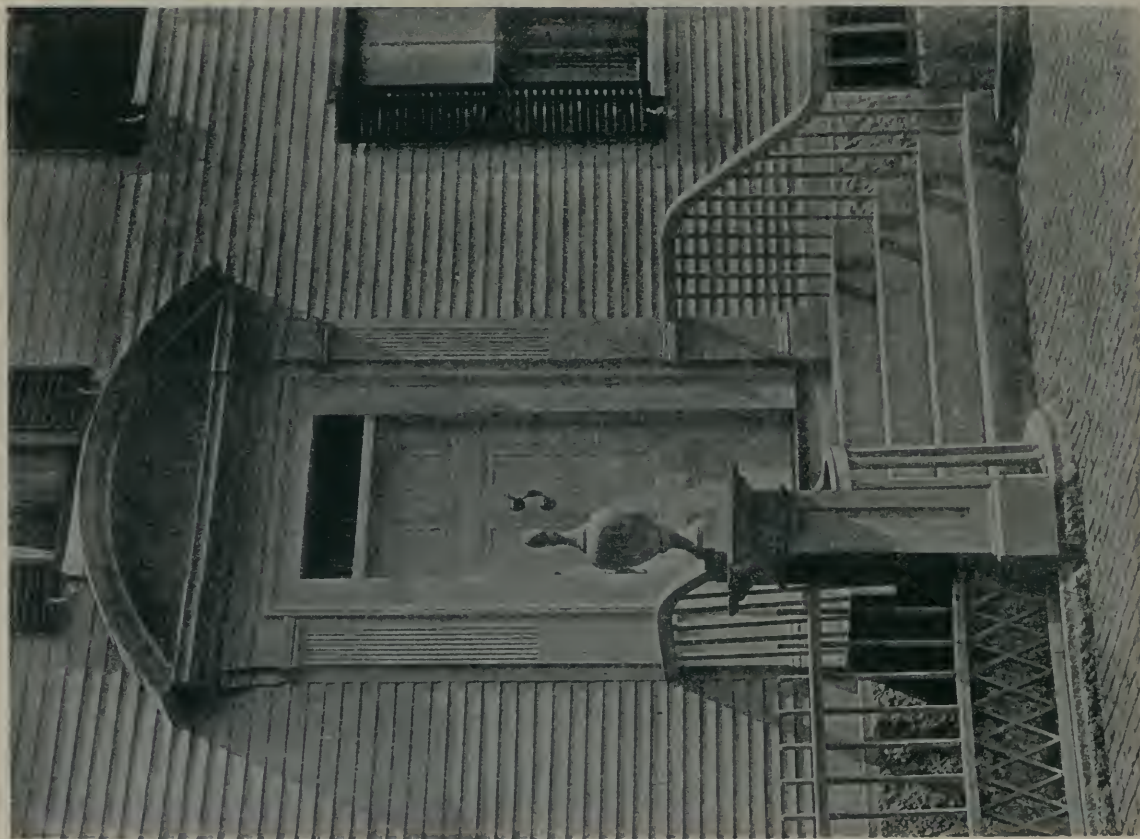
There is something delightfully satisfying about the old house on Meeting House Hill, and it is valuable to analyze its charm. It seems to consist in the fine texture given by

An interesting architectural fragment is shown on page nine of the doorway of 271 Court Street. Here is the rounded pediment found often in Portsmouth and traceable, perhaps, to French influences.

The Governor Langdon house, though not the largest, is perhaps the most pretentious of the wood houses of Portsmouth. We can believe that no money was spared in its construction, and it has suffered from the consequent overrichness of its design. Its Corinthian capitals are marvels of wood-carving and of preserva-



House at 314 Court Street.



House on Livermore Street.

TWO DOORWAYS AT PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

tion. This was the home of the early Governor of New Hampshire who pledged his means for the Continental cause, and within its walls have been entertained admirals, generals, and world-renowned statesmen of more than one generation.

The Wentworth-Gardner house stands upon a terrace shaded by a magnificent linden, and looks out across beautiful Portsmouth Harbor.

of stone ashlar, but might well pardon its architect when he studies its delightful proportions and details, both in exterior and interior. The house as photographed is not quite as it was built. Some of its interest is due to the fascinating doorway with scrolled pediment and gilded pineapple applied by its recent owner. There are not many towns where there is anything much finer than the interior of this house,



THE WENTWORTH-GARDNER HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Built in 1760.

It is with mixed feelings one learns that it has been bought by the Metropolitan Museum, and that perhaps even by this time its interiors have been transplanted to New York. Its location is quite apart from the other best residences of Portsmouth, and in a section of the town which perhaps most shows its age. One cannot help regretting that the house could not have been maintained, perhaps by the city of Portsmouth, or perhaps by the State of New Hampshire. A purist like Ruskin might criticize the design of the façade, made as it is in wood in imitation

but there are so many other towns where it seems so much harder to keep the fine old things, that one regrets that it is one of Portsmouth's houses that had to be taken.

Thus ends our little glimpse of this ancient metropolis. There is so much more to be said, and so much there to be seen, that this ending, like that of school, should be but the commencement. For the student of American architecture no sojourn will be happier or of more lasting value than the time he spends in this delightful city.



HOUSE AT 43 MEETING HOUSE HILL, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE.
Detail of Doorway.

SIXTH ANNUAL ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

PROGRAMME FOR A THREE TEACHER RURAL SCHOOL WITH TEACHERS' COTTAGE OUTSIDE FINISH TO BE OF WHITE PINE

PRIZES AND MENTIONS

Design placed first will receive	-	-	\$750.00
Design placed second will receive	-	-	400.00
Design placed third will receive	-	-	250.00
Design placed fourth will receive	-	-	100.00

SIX MENTIONS

JURY OF AWARD

James O. Betelle	-	-	Newark
Wm. B. Ittner	-	-	Saint Louis
Guy Lowell	-	-	New York and Boston
Arthur I. Meigs	-	-	Philadelphia
Irving K. Pond	-	-	Chicago

Architects and Architectural Draughtsmen are cordially invited to compete

Competition closes at 5 p.m., Monday, May 2, 1921

Judgment, May 13 and 14, 1921

IN the center of a small but progressive community it is desired to erect a model school building to take care of the children in the elementary grades in the village and a number of children from the surrounding districts who will be transported to this school in the village by the means of motor buses over fine concrete roads.

It should be realized that education in the rural sections of our country has never before received the intelligent attention that is now being given it. The amount of illiteracy discovered among the drafted men during the war has spurred the Government and the various States into active educational campaigns. The typical rural school as it now exists, both from an architectural and a scholastic standpoint, is very lamentable and unattractive. We are concerned, however, only with its architectural aspect.

The progressive community in which this school is to be erected wants something more than merely four walls and a roof enclosing just sufficient class rooms for the number of pupils to be accommodated. They desire a building expressive of the purpose for which it is to be used, and one which will set a high standard of good taste and architectural beauty for the community. They desire to see abandoned several of the old one-room schools adjacent to the town and to build a model school building in the village which will consolidate a few of the schools in the outlying districts.

Rural school buildings in a village such as the one we are dealing with are no longer used but a few months in the year to teach the three R's. They are used as community centers throughout the entire year, and interest is created in the school and the education of the children by providing something of educational and social interest for the adults, and in this way making the parents feel that the school really belongs to them. This is done by providing facilities in connection with the school building for activities outside of strictly school work, such as a meeting place for the Parents' and Teachers' Association, for the local Grange, and the use of the building for entertainments, dances, and moving pictures. Modern movable desks are used for the pupils, so the center of the floor can be cleared when desired. Folding partitions are installed between class rooms so that the enlarged area

is available for the community activities. Besides the standard Class Rooms, the school should include a small Library, where current magazines are kept on file and from time to time packages of books are received from the central library in the adjoining city, which are loaned to the school children and their parents.

A child in the country needs to be taught many practical things besides his book studies, therefore a room is provided for the boys in which there is a work bench, a grind-stone, a cobbler's bench, a cabinet for tools, a long table for agricultural work, etc. A similar room for the girls, which contains a cook stove, a work table, laundry trays, dining-room table, sewing machine, etc. Since the ordinary teacher cannot handle all these special subjects, it is contemplated having a special teacher for the boys and a special teacher for the girls, who will have several schools in charge and visit each one possibly one day a week. These special rooms are also useful to the adults as demonstration places in modern agricultural methods and farm management for the men, and canning and cooking demonstrations for the women. Also as a place to prepare refreshments for entertainments and meetings and serving hot lunches to the pupils.

There should be play rooms which in rainy and winter weather the children could use during recess periods and before and after school.

It is desired to lay out the grounds with paths, shrubs, and trees in an attractive way so that it will be the pride of the community. A portion of the site is to be equipped with play-ground apparatus and space assigned for various games for use of the children and adults both during and outside of school hours. Part of the ground will also be devoted to a demonstration garden for the use of the pupils in connection with their studies in agriculture.

In order to obtain and keep well-trained teachers of a quality equal to the high standard set by the school building, it is necessary to provide some suitable living quarters for them. A highly educated teacher is not willing to make her home in the county hotel or usual boarding house, which may be quite a distance from the school and in other ways objectionable. To make the school plant complete in every respect a teachers' cottage will be built on the school property.

THE PROBLEM

A. The design of a three-room rural school building to be built of wood—all outside finish, consisting of siding and corner boards; window sash, frames and casings; outside doors, door frames and casings, outside blinds; all exposed porch and balcony lumber; cornice

boards, brackets, ornaments and mouldings, etc., *not* including shingles, to be of White Pine. The school property is level and contains about five acres. It is located on the east side of the main street of the village, which runs north and south, and between two minor

roads, making a frontage of the property of three hundred feet on the main street and a depth of seven hundred feet to a property line. The building is to be kept well back from the main street and the front portion of the property developed and used as a small Park or Village Green. The requirements are as follows:

Building to be one story with or without a basement, or with basement partially excavated for boiler and fuel rooms.

Three standard class rooms, each with an area of 720 square feet, and seating 40 pupils each. Two of these rooms separated by folding partitions.

Ceiling heights not less than 12' 0" in clear.

Class rooms lighted from left side only. Windows in one long bank. Heads of windows as close to ceiling as possible. Net glass area of windows to equal not less than 20% of the class room floor area.

Adjoining each class room shall be provided a coat room for the pupils' clothing.

An industrial art room shall be provided for boys, equal in area from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a class room. Net glass area to be same proportion as called for in class room, but windows may be on one or two sides of the room.

A domestic science room for girls, equal in area from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a class room. Net glass area to be same proportion as called for in class room, but windows may be on one or two sides of room.

A room for library, 150 to 200 square feet.

A teachers' room with toilet accommodations and about the same size as library.

Toilet room for boys, containing two W. C.'s and three urinals and two lavatories.

Toilet rooms for girls, containing four W. C.'s and two lavatories.

A play room for boys equal to about a class room in area.

A play room for girls, equal to about a class room in area.

These play rooms may be either in the basement or on main floor. In any case, they must be adjacent to and the toilet rooms made available, as these play rooms are used before and after school and in summer time when the main portion of school is closed. Toilet rooms should also be easily accessible from main part of school building. Play rooms must be directly accessible from outside of building and also accessible to main portions of building from the inside.

Two or more entrances must be provided.

A flag-pole, higher than the school building, must be located on the property in a dignified position.

The building will be heated and ventilated by a hot-air furnace or steam boiler. Therefore, a furnace room and a fuel room are necessary, also a small general storage room, janitor's room, etc.

Electricity, water and sewerage facilities are supplied by the village. For this reason the school will not have the usual outside drinking pumps, toilets, etc., but will have modern city conveniences.

The architectural style is optional.

B. The design of a teachers' cottage—construction materials similar to those of school building. The requirements are as follows:

Living room with fireplace, area 225 square feet.

Dining room, area about 150 square feet.

Kitchen and accessories, area about 130 square feet.

Three teacher's bedrooms with clothes closets, area about 125 square feet each.

Bath room; closet for trunks; and a porch.

The teachers' cottage may be one story or two stories in height, at the option of the designer. It should have a domestic character, but correspond in general architectural style to the school building.

IT IS REQUIRED TO SHOW: A pen and ink perspective of school building, projected from $\frac{1}{8}$ inch scale plan, clearly indicating the character of exterior

finish. If teachers' cottage comes within the picture, it should be shown. A pen and ink bird's-eye perspective showing the entire property and including school building, teachers' cottage, layout of grounds, such as paths, drives, planting, vegetable garden, playground equipment, etc., projected from $\frac{1}{32}$ inch scale plot plan. If all the rooms called for in school building are on one floor, only one floor plan is needed. If building has both basement and first floor, two plans will be needed, at $\frac{1}{16}$ inch scale. Front and side elevation of school building, at $\frac{1}{16}$ inch scale. Plan of each floor of Teachers' Cottage if more than one floor is contemplated at $\frac{1}{8}$ inch scale. One elevation of teachers' cottage, at $\frac{1}{8}$ inch scale. Detail drawings at $\frac{3}{4}$ inch scale of main entrance feature of school and other details either of School, Cottage or Village Green embellishments to present the subject attractively.

JUDGMENT: The Jury of Award will consider the architectural merit of the design and the ingenuity shown in the development of the plans; the fitness of the design to express a wood-built building; the appropriateness of the design to the given site.

Excellence of rendering of the perspective, while desirable, will not have undue weight with the Jury, in comparison with their estimate of the contestant's ability if otherwise shown.

The Jury positively will not consider designs which do not conform in all respects to the conditions of the Competition.

PRESENTATION: Drawings are to be shown on two sheets only. Each sheet is to be exactly $26 \times 34\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Plain border lines are to be drawn so that the space inside them will be exactly $25 \times 33\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Whatman or similar white paper is to be used. Bristol board or thin paper is prohibited, and no drawings are to be presented mounted. All drawings must be made in BLACK ink. *Diluted black ink is particularly prohibited.* Color or wash on the drawings will not be permitted. There is to be printed on the drawings as space may permit: "DESIGN FOR A WHITE PINE THREE TEACHER RURAL SCHOOL." The drawings are to be signed by a *nom de plume* or device.

DELIVERY OF DRAWINGS: The drawings are to be rolled in a strong tube, not less than 3 inches in diameter, or enclosed between stiff corrugated boards, and sent to RUSSELL F. WHITEHEAD, EDITOR, 132 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y., to reach him on or before Monday, May 2, 1921. Enclosed with the drawings is to be a sealed envelope, bearing on the outside the chosen *nom de plume*, and on the inside the true name and address of the contestant. Drawings sent by mail must be at the first-class postage rate.

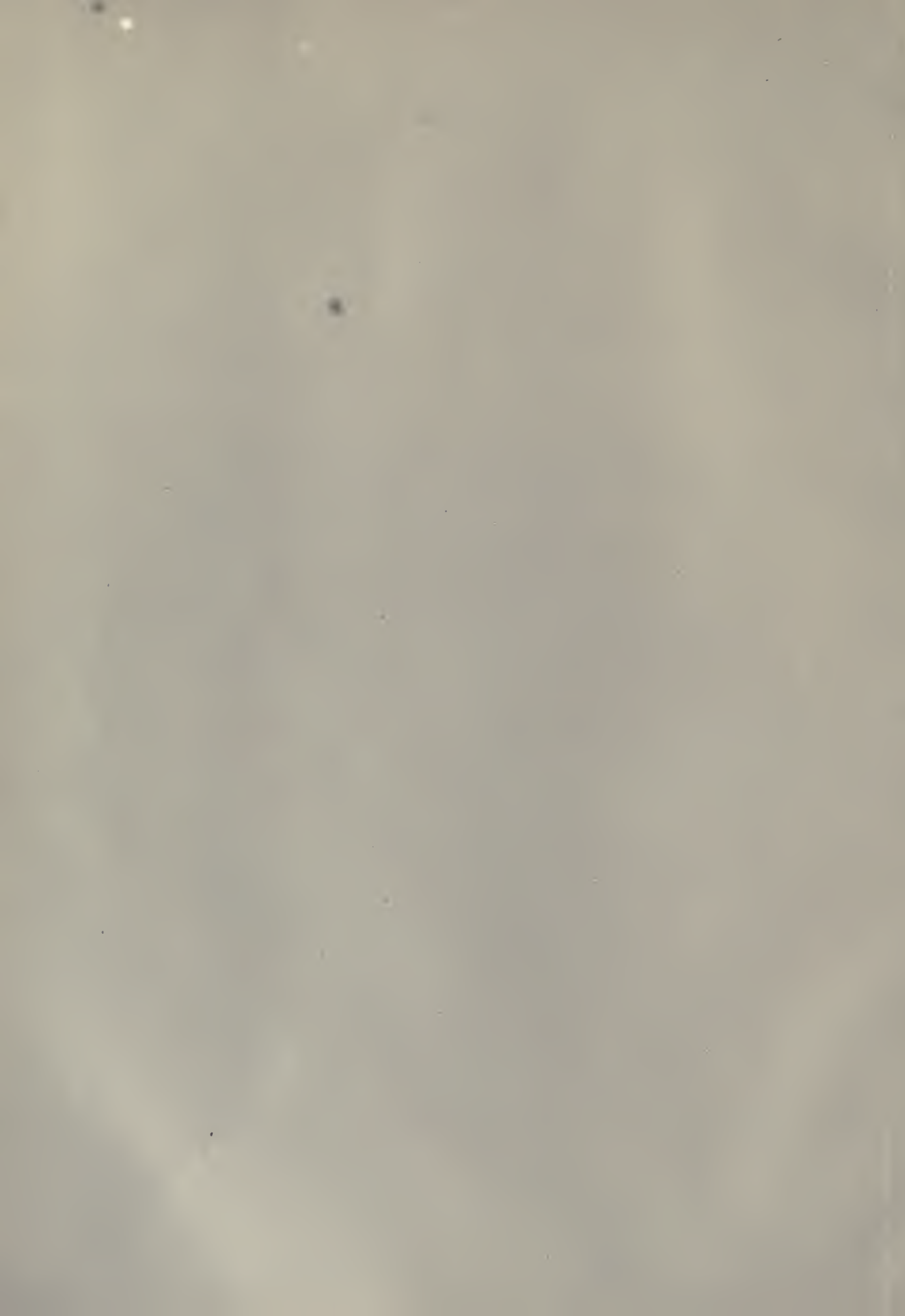
Drawings submitted in this Competition are at owner's risk from the time they are sent until returned, although reasonable care will be exercised in their handling and keeping.

THE PRIZE DESIGNS are to become the property of *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs*, and the right is reserved by this publication to publish or exhibit any or all of the other drawings.

PUBLICATION OF DESIGNS: The Prize and Mention drawings will be published in the August, 1921, number of the Monograph Series; a copy of this issue will be sent to each competitor.

Where drawings are published or exhibited, the contestant's full name and address will be given and all inquiries regarding his work will be forwarded to him.

RETURN OF DRAWINGS: The authors of non-premiated designs will have their drawings returned, postage prepaid, direct from the Editor's office.



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