
**Society of Architectural
Historians
Southern California Chapter**

Review

**EDWARD HUNTSMAN-TROUT,
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**

BY LYNN BRYANT



*Figure 1 - Swimming
Pool of "Dios Dorados,"
the Ince Ranch (1923).*

There were few landscape architects in Southern California at the turn of the century. Not until the boom years of the teens and twenties did a sizeable number of people well trained in the field arrive and begin practice. They approached their work with both the enthusiasm of new immigrants and a sophistication which revealed their academic training in Europe or in the Northeast, under such influential figures as Andrew Jackson Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted. Together these newcomers developed an approach to landscape design which became known, not surprisingly, as the California Style.

Edward Huntsman-Trout was prominent among this group. His career as a Southern California landscape architect extended from 1920 to the early 1970's. During this time of extraordinary growth and change in Southern California, Huntsman-Trout was a prominent designer of residential estates and other non-residential commissions.

Huntsman-Trout's list of projects is a realtor's dream of fashionable addresses. Harvard trained and with early professional training at prestigious eastern firms, he was an ideal choice for collaboration with such leading period architects as Gordon Kaufmann, Wallace Neff, and Paul Williams. Huntsman-Trout's non-residential projects, such as the La Quinta Hotel. (1927: Gordon Kaufmann, arch.), Scripps College (1926; Gordon Kaufmann, arch.), and Bullocks Wilshire (1929: John and Donald Parkinson), were for clients who lived in, or aspired to, the great estates.

Though Huntsman-Trout was born just outside Toronto, he moved with his family to Florida, then California; Huntsman-Trout was an early alumnus of Hollywood High. He attended UC Berkeley, where in 1913 he received a degree in Botany. His graduate work at Harvard included courses in both architecture and landscape architecture. A major influence on his development was the work of Harvard

architect, modest and capable of inspiring loyalty and cooperation, qualities which Neutra probably knew he lacked. His writings and work before he joined Neutra (not examined by Hines) reveal that he was about as much of a functionalist as an architect can be. Alexander's professed lack of interest in form seemed to leave the role of master designer to Neutra. Hines attempts to treat Alexander fairly, but here again the situation was so abnormal that Alexander seems to be blamed for some of Neutra's mistakes. Even by 1960 Neutra's reputation was still awesome, for that was the year a volume by Esther McCoy on Neutra in the prestigious *Masters of Modern Architecture* series was published. Neutra should certainly have had the final say in the firm's designs, and the responsibility for a series of bland public buildings must rest with him. By 1963 Neutra was still the tyrant of the Silverlake office, but turned responsibility for the rebuilding of his own VDL Research House, one of his most interesting early works, over to his son, with less than happy results.

Thomas Hines has laid the life and work of this enigmatic man out for our interested perusal. ■

--Alson Clark

Von Sternberg House (1935, Richard Neutra).



SAH/SCC members who toured the Claremont Colleges last spring will be delighted that a self-guided walking tour of *The Claremont Colleges*, a tall, slim, 36-page brochure, illustrated with maps and interesting historical photographs, was recently produced by The Claremont Historic Resources Center. The tour brochure is an amazing bargain at \$1.50. It contains a history of each college and of the group plan for the five undergraduate colleges and the graduate school. The interested walker can use it as a guide to all the major buildings and landscape features on any one or all six campuses.

Also included in the tour are biographies and pictures of several leaders of the group plan: James Arnold Blaisdell, Ellen Browning Scripps, Colonel Seeley Wintersmith Mudd, George Charles Sumner Benson, Donald C. McKenna, Russell K. Pitzer, and Harvey Seeley Mudd.

The Historic Resources Center is a regularly staffed resource and information office for the City of Claremont. The research and writing for the college tour were done by one of our SAH/SCC members, Judy Wright, Director of the Resources Center. In addition, Wright, through the center, has written three other self-guided walking tours covering The Village area, Russian Village, the Memorial Park neighborhood, and a 300-page book--*Claremont: A Pictorial History*. Tour brochures and the book are available from The Claremont Historic Resources Center, 590 West Bonita Avenue, Claremont, CA 91711 (714) 621-0848. ■

Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture: A History and Biography, by Thomas S. Hines, Oxford Univ. Press 1982.



Neutra's self-portrait, 1917.

Richard Neutra and Dione Neutra, early 1960's.



Full-fledged biographies of American architects are rare (the British are much better at this) and successful biographies, such as Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture, are rarer. Hines has written a thoroughly readable, essentially accurate work on a difficult subject. Furthermore, his painstaking research has not gotten in the way of making the book enjoyable. Part of the joy of the book comes from its generous format, which is sufficient for a book in which illustrations are included with the text.

There are two main difficulties in writing a major book about Neutra. The one is perhaps parochial and provincial, the other certainly international, but they are at times interconnected. The first difficulty is that Neutra was a very dislikeable man. He made countless enemies in California and elsewhere. The second difficulty is that Neutra did not fulfill his early promise. By the time he had a chance to do major buildings the world had passed him by. Hines meets both of these difficulties head-on. In the first instance he admits Neutra's abrasive personality and, towards the end, even quotes Neutra's youngest son, a physician, as diagnosing his father as a manic-depressive. In the second instance the book is arranged chronologically by chapters, some of whose headings, "Exploration", "Breakthrough", "Transition", "Crisis", "Survival", "Eclipse", trace Neutra's rise, decline and fall. It is this frankness which contributes to the book's readability and is wholly appropriate in this case, as Neutra was a child of the modern age, even an intimate of the Sigmund Freuds in his youth in Vienna.

With a historian's skill Hines puts Neutra into context. He tells the Neutra side of the Schindler-Neutra relationship. The Schindlers are seen as part of a rich, "kooky", avant-garde circle. For these appraisals Hines has relied on the recollections and correspondence of Neutra's widow, Dione. Since Hines only met Neutra once (he moved to California shortly before Neutra's death) Dione speaks for the Neutras. Another of the great difficulties of writing Neutra's biography has not been surmounted in this case. Neutra often did not have a realistic assessment of himself or the world. Hines has managed to stay clear-headed much of the time, but he has failed to mention the influence of Schindler on Neutra's work during the early period. According to Hines Schindler and Neutra remained friends until 1930. They lived and worked in the same house and shared some of the same work. It would have been remarkable if Neutra had not been influenced by the imaginative Schindler. Hines goes to Holland to find a prototype for Neutra's "spider-leg" motif, but Schindler employed it in the Sachs Apartments of 1926.

As soon as Hines emerges from this difficult thicket he gives us a fine, much-needed record of Neutra's work. When he left the Schindler house Neutra produced a long series of buildings which were entirely his own, at first making brilliant use of the new technology, but gradually coming to terms with traditional American building practices. These accomplishments were recorded in numerous books which Neutra published over the years but these works are now mostly out-of-print and lack the objectivity which characterizes most of Hines' assessment.

This articulated "form-follows-function" approach worked well for houses, as Neutra had a sensibility to site and a feel for the third dimension which most of his California imitators lacked, but application or "expansion" of this design approach to major buildings produced buildings which were disappointing. Neutra's choice of Robert Alexander as a partner in 1950 was unfortunate for both men, although it seemed a good arrangement at the time. Hines seems uninterested in Alexander, perhaps an unconscious manifestation of a wish that Alexander had never existed. Alexander was a respected "good citizen"

Probably it is not so much the encroachment of trade as it is what is so often called "Progress" but it is certain that many of the buildings and streets recorded so clearly and faithfully in this book are either gone or so changed as to be unrecognizable. Much of the change has been brought about by what was known in the fifties and sixties as Urban Renewal and some of it was caused by the creation of the Civic Center and the building of the freeways.

This is another in the Los Angeles Miscellany series, a collection of books published by Dawson's Bookshop which deal with different aspects of Los Angeles history. One of them is on early cemeteries, another on the City's earliest forms of lighting. All of them are beautifully printed and bound, and together they make up a delightful library of unusual features of the City. This volume is the twelfth in the series and the second by Arnold Hylan, the first being his volume of photographs and text about Bunker Hill, another valuable record of a part of Los Angeles which is forever lost except in photographs and paintings.

This book is in two parts. In the first part, Mr. Hylan writes about the history of the City and then goes on to describe his photographs. The second part of the book contains more than one hundred photographs of the streets and buildings making up the heart of the oldest segment of Los Angeles, from Macy/Sunset on the north to Seventh Street on the south, and from Alameda on the east to Beaudry on the west. A map which helps to locate the sites depicted in the photographs is also included.

The text is written with a freshness of style that is particularly enjoyable. Sadly, it contains several errors of fact. Some of these are repetitions of errors which had already been perpetrated by the prolific number of authors who have written on the history of Los Angeles. To cite a few examples: The Merced Theatre is incorrectly described as the "Teatro Mercedes", perhaps because Mrs. Christine Sterling had the wrong name painted on the pediment. Nor was the theatre reopened in 1876 as Wood's Opera House as that building was located four lots to the south of the Merced Theatre and was later known as the Club Theatre. Mr. Hylan also speaks of Dona Luisa Garfias as the daughter of Jose Maria and Encarnacion Avila when in fact her parents were Francisco and Encarnacion Avila. It was Jose who died in defense of the pueblo rather than his brother Francisco and further, Commodore Stockton arrived in Los Angeles in 1847 rather than 1827 as printed.

Mr. Hylan has a rather lyrical description of what he calls a "Gabrielino metate" under an olive tree at the northerly end of Olvera Street. The tree is actually a rubber tree (*ficus rubiginosa*) but what is more interesting is the true story of the very large sandstone trough which can be found in place there. Thanks to Robert Scherrer who provided a copy of an article by Don Meadows, we now know that this trough had been incorrectly labelled as having been "hewn by Mission Indians in 1820" and is not a "Gabrielino metate". The trough had been presented to Olvera Street by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in 1930 as part of the beautification of the street when it was opened by Mrs. Sterling and her friends as a Mexican marketplace. George Scheikard told Don Meadows in the 1950s how when he was a boy of about twelve in 1897, he and his father had scraped a trough out of a huge piece of sandstone on their ranch in the San Fernando Valley where the Chatsworth Reservoir now is in order to crush acorns for their stock. The Department of Water and Power recently changed the plaque on the trough to reflect its true origin.

I wish that Mr. Hylan had consulted with William M. Mason of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History before publishing his book as the latter is probably the most knowledgeable person about the early history of the Pueblo. He could well have caught these mistakes. However, I do not wish to detract too much from what is really a lovely book. The photography is clear and concise and is enormously interesting to those who love Los Angeles and its history. A single photograph of the Sepulveda House on Main Street was regarded by the architect responsible for its restoration (now under way) as worth the price of the book alone.



Arnold Hylan photograph of the former Hall of Records and the former site of New High Street, Los Angeles Before the Freeways.



Arnold Hylan photograph looking toward Fort Moore Hill and the first Los Angeles High School from City Hall, note the County Hall of Justice at right, Los Angeles Before the Freeways.

The more than one hundred photographs are a most valuable historic record of the way Los Angeles used to look. ■

--Jean Bruce Poole

FIVE BOOKS REVIEWED

A.D. *Architectural Design Profile: Los Angeles*, subtitled "AD/USC Look at L.A.", Guest Editor: Derek Walker. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981. 176 p. \$19.95 (ISBN 0-312-49877-2).

The *Architectural Design Profile, Los Angeles*, is as guest editor Derek Walker admits, "probably, at first sight, ... as confusing as the city it endeavors to represent." *Los Angeles* is a loosely structured sampling of images and essays produced by London's A.D. and L.A.'s USC architecture faculty. Like the city Los Angeles, the publication can be both frustrating and immensely satisfying as you search for the "Watts Towers" midst mundane sprawl. The frustration with the city is that you must, they say, drive for 14 minutes in order to get anywhere of interest. The frustration with A.D.'s *Los Angeles* is that you must skim past a hodge-podge of photos, graphics, and myriad maps (many with legends often entirely lacking or illegible) to get to the heart of the effort; an important analysis of the morphology, architecture and culture of L.A. which each receive the attention of a chapter.

The Morphology of Los Angeles sets the city's historic, demographic and physical context. Unfortunately, census maps from the Urban Atlas are reproduced at a reduced scale which makes them frustratingly illegible. SAH member Alson Clark ties the second chapter *The Architecture of Los Angeles* together with an Introduction (reprinted by permission in this issue) and essays, "The Forgotten Rational Tradition" and "The Case Study Programme". These and other essays by SAH members Paul Zygas, Randell Makinson and Emmet Wemple are joined by excellent work by USC faculty members Stefanos Polyzoides, James Tice, Dick Berry, Roger Sherwood, John Mutlow and Charles Lagreco to form the substantive heart of the publication.

Many fine line drawings by USC architecture students add important documentation of local architectural history as well.

Published in Great Britain, the use of British spelling throughout seems peculiarly out of character with the topic, a city which as noted by Farnsworth Croder, quoted in the introduction, "snubs tradition, formality and dignity". Despite the grace of British spelling, L.A.'s bizarre character is blatantly apparent in the final chapter, *The Culture of Los Angeles*. With the requisite sense of humor, the editors delved into the artifacts of our infatuation with health, media, cars and fantasy (billboards, bumperstickers, roller skates, etc.). What is missing, however, is a look at the cultural contributions of L.A.'s ethnic mix. A.D.'s *Los Angeles* contains a few too many photos of Santa Monica, Venice and Beverly Hills and next to nill of downtown's most vital street, hispanic Broadway, for example.

A.D.'s *Los Angeles* is as amorphous as the phenomenon Los Angeles. Whether by ironic accident or deliberate intent, it is the hodge-podge which makes the publication truly reflective of L.A. Providing you can be tolerant of some sloppy graphic treatments, oversights, terse captions and a few too many photos of Santa Monica Beach, the book is certainly worth exploring. ■

--Mary Houha Power

Architectural Photography. Techniques for Architects, Preservationists, Historians, Photographers, and Urban Planners, by Jeff Dean. Nashville, Tennessee: The American Association for State and Local History, 1981. x + 132 pp., illus. \$19.95/\$14.96 to AASLH members (ISBN 0-910050-54-6).

The author claims that he is not an architectural photographer in the sense that Jack Boucher, Julius Schulman, and Ezra Stoller are. Nor does he claim to be writing for those who are or plan to become professional commercial photographers with a specialty in client-contracted architectural photography. The subtitle of his book pretty well describes his intended audience.

The author assumes a very minimum of photographic knowledge and experience. His primary message is that anyone seriously interested in architectural photography can now take acceptable photographs of structures with 35mm equipment using currently available PC (perspective control) lenses. The author discusses rather thoroughly the selection and use of 35mm equipment for obtaining suitable photographs of architectural subjects.

Dean had to add, at the last moment, a chapter on medium-format equipment (6 x 7 cm, or 2-1/4 inches by 2-3/4 inches) because some PC lenses had just been introduced for some cameras of this size.

Of course, a chapter on the basics of using the large-format view camera (4 inches by 5 inches and larger) for architectural photography had to be included. He does quote John Veltri as saying, "Only one camera type, the view camera, has the ability to handle nearly all the situations an architectural photographer is likely to encounter... the view camera will help to extend your vision, and will expand your ability to control the final picture in a way that is unsurpassed by any other camera type."

There are additional chapters covering most of the problems that might arise in architectural photography from film selection to the photographing of interiors along with some very interesting comments and examples on the merits of using infrared film. Another chapter deals with the special problems of photographing historic structures for documentation. Also included is a simplified method for making rectified photographs that can be used for making scaled elevation drawings.

The appendix lists sources that will be useful for locating equipment and additional information. The many illustrations by the author add much clarity to the text.

Jeff Dean is director of the Historical Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Dean holds a bachelor's degree in art and architecture. In addition he studied for four years at the Yale University School of Architecture. ■

--Chuck Powell

Los Angeles Before the Freeways, 1850-1950, by Arnold Hylen, published by Dawson's Book Shop, Los Angeles, 1981

This is a wonderful book of photographs of a Los Angeles that has largely been lost. That Arnold Hylen managed to make these astonishingly clear pictures and to save them for so long before assembling them into a book makes the photographs all the more valuable as documents of a vanished era. Mr. Hylen starts by quoting a passage from Emily Dickinson:

"A quality of loss
Affecting our content
As trade has suddenly encroached
Upon a Sacrament,"

completed. Roots did best when architects had something to relate to. Santa Barbara, a charming little spot up the coast, actually had a Mission and some real old houses, and James Osborne Craig and George Washington Smith went on from there to create the most convincing Mediterranean oeuvre of the region. It is significant that the University of California, Santa Barbara, has the only systematic collection of documents relating to the area's architectural past. No one in LA thought they were particularly interesting.

There was a shortage of true relics, and most of those were anything but romantic. To please the folks who loved to ride the 'Pacific Electric', Henry Huntington financed the Mission Inn. It grew over the years into a marvellous example of what people thought the Spaniards ought to have built, had they been a little more enterprising. It is the most significant monument of the 'Day-dream' style.

The palms, oranges and eucalyptus were soon thriving and the population was growing equally fast. Younger Beaux-Arts-trained architects sensed the uniqueness of LA and wanted to express it. The bounds of the city were still somewhat under control, so the many groups of buildings which people like Stiles Clements built around Western Avenue gave LA a sense of place for the moment. The patterns of the form boards gave the concrete commercial structures scale; the large areas of steel sash, often arranged as rows of simple verticals, lighted the interiors well. Churrigueresque or Mayan ornament emphasised and enlivened the more important parts. The residential work of Wallace Neff combined simple Andalusian forms with dove-cote towers, topped by weathervanes in the shape of galleons. A Neff plan, admittedly atypical, was the Villa Papa Gulia, turned around backwards so that autos could sweep up. Inside it was the Villa Rotunda, but in this case the circular central space was an ellipse. Arthur Zwebell and others translated this approach into multi-family complexes around courts, and the builders made whole districts coherent with less inspired versions.

After the Twenties, the coherent shape of LA was destroyed. All the flat areas had been plotted in gigantic gridirons, one road so many hundred feet wide per mile, one a little narrower per half mile, and so on. Presumably, this was to take care of traffic problems for all time. Place gave way to circulation. All the hamlets began to be joined together to form the present city.

The Depression struck and brought what was thought to be an end to the eclectic era. Actually it had been building up for some time. In 1923 Alice Millard, a Huntington employee in the book-collecting department, built a house in Pasadena. It is uncertain whether the aged Henry Huntington ever visited 'La Miniatura', but if he did he probably didn't like it. Motives borrowed from savages were not likely to bring culture to his domain. Schindler had come, caught the spirit, and built his little masterpieces almost unnoticed. Neutra, more conscious of critics, had his first real commission, the 'Health House', included in the famous MOMA 'Modern Architecture' show of 1932. There were admonitions from Hitchcock and Johnson about not being pure enough. They must never have visited LA! Of course nothing by Schindler was considered pure enough for the show, which visited LA. It was housed, not in a museum, but at Bullock's Wilshire, now the best remaining example of the moderne era. Architecture is hardly something that belongs in a museum here. Bullock's Wilshire is one of the few major modern buildings not threatened with destruction. Our vigilant, intelligent preservationists are fighting to save the others. Preservation may seem a strange activity for LA, but saving things like the Schindler House with government help is an activity which has solid local support.

The product of the sober, rational years of the Depression escapes the notice of visitors because it is so self-effacing. The work of Harwell Harris, Gregory Ain and other architects and builders was meant to serve the needs of the people who built them. You have to get out and walk to see them and few hurried visitors bother to do that, when they can have such fun hunting down giant doughnuts.

Arts and Architecture, which documented this era and the time of the Case Study houses which followed, is no longer published. At times it seems as if we hardly know what's going on unless we drive around or look at pictures in undecipherable Japanese magazines. The corporate packages we see in A plus U seem to be more interesting than their Miesian counterparts of the Sixties, and of course, Cesar Pelli's Design Center, although not as pure as the work of the New York Five (this is LA), is the source of some local pride. Charles Moore, who defies classification (he is already an Angelino) has built a few things, and every one looks forward to more.

Oldenburg is now hung in the same museums as Poussin, so our whole crazy city has become an art form. It has spread to about its limits and what is happening now is infill. In the older districts this kind of thing, when done well, seems to pull things together. A little pink plaster High Tech (or is it low Tech?) duplex by Gehry or someone like that set down in a Venice street of old vernacular is something that has not occurred much in LA, where vast areas were developed all at once. Our latest leap forward has been encouraged, if not made possible by the establishment of two new centres of architectural thought, UCLA and SCI-Arch. These have encouraged the older schools to become more stimulating.

We sometimes wish H. E. Huntington could be reincarnated and would proceed to give us a transit system in jig time. The proposed substitute has been floundering through the democratic process for nearly 20 years and, since the oil derricks on Signal Hill stopped pumping, this has given us an uneasy feeling. We have reached the age when we are reviving our revivals, but this should not be taken as a sign of old age if you examine the product closely. It is not nearly as good as the Twenties, as nobody really bothered to learn any lessons from the rich work of that period all over town.

We are rediscovering our modern tradition. We discovered Schindler, rediscovered Schindler, and are now re-discovering Schindler. But it seems to do no harm. There are no Schindler revival buildings to speak of. We are producing beautiful drawings of the old and the new by the carload, now that we have a good educational set-up. It's about time for this, and some of them are bound to be built. It was said at least 40 years ago that LA was 25 suburbs in search of a city. This still fits, but at least the suburbs are growing more interesting. ■



Interior, Bradbury Building

walkways. Drought tolerance remained a desired trait in plants. The interpenetration of interior and exterior space and the development of functional outdoor areas remained as goals.

"I send you enclosed with this two prints showing the approach grounds without swimming pool... The present straight-up drive seems to be a blight, and I propose to swing to the left...so as to allow the native cover to be the foreground for the first intimate view of the hill-hugging house. ...Trees here, redwood and others, and brush, will flatter the setting of the house, and will clothe the necessary grading so as to do no violence to the hill....

"A swimming pool close to the door would be very popular, but I feel that you will have a much better hilltop without it."¹⁰

Huntsman-Trout may be seen as a transitional figure. Many early landscape architects were plantsmen first, designers second; as such, they had difficulty adapting to the less garden-like, more complex programs of this century. Huntsman-Trout, though an outstanding plantsman, used plants to enhance rather than determine his designs. He used the design lessons of earlier centuries as abstract principles to inspire the handling of a particular site and program. In this way he adapted earlier traditions to serve the needs of this century.

As with many of his contemporaries, Huntsman-Trout relied on referrals for clients and apparently was not interested in having his work known outside his circle of friends, clients and collaborators. At the same time there was no tightly-knit group in Los Angeles, such as that which was centered in the Bay Area during the 1930's and '40's, which fostered critical discussion and the study of landscape architecture. Fortunately there is now an increasing interest in the work of Southern California's first landscape architects, those who offered the most idealized vision of what the real and mythic landscape of our adopted region could become. ■

*Figures 1,2,3 & 4 are courtesy of
The Department of Special Collections,
University Research Library, UCLA*

NOTES

1. These commissions were discussed in *Review*, Vol. 1, No. 3: "The 'Californian' Architecture of Gordon B. Kaufmann," Alson Clark.
2. Streatfield, David C., "The Evolution of the California Landscape: The Great Promotions," *Landscape Architecture*, May, 1977, p. 418.
3. Ray Page, interviewed by the author, February 23, 1981.
4. Beatrice Huntsman-Trout, interviewed by James Mink, November 27, 1976.
5. Philip Chandler, interviewed by the author, May 14, 1982.
6. Philip Chandler, interviewed by the author, May 14, 1982.
7. Philip Chandler, interviewed by the author, May 14, 1982.
8. Sturdevant, Roger, interviewed by Suzanne Reiss.
9. Beatrice Huntsman-Trout, interviewed by the author, October 12, 1981.
10. Edward Huntsman-Trout, letter to Claire Dentony, February 22, 1970.

Excerpt from AD/USC Look at LA

THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOS ANGELES: an Introduction

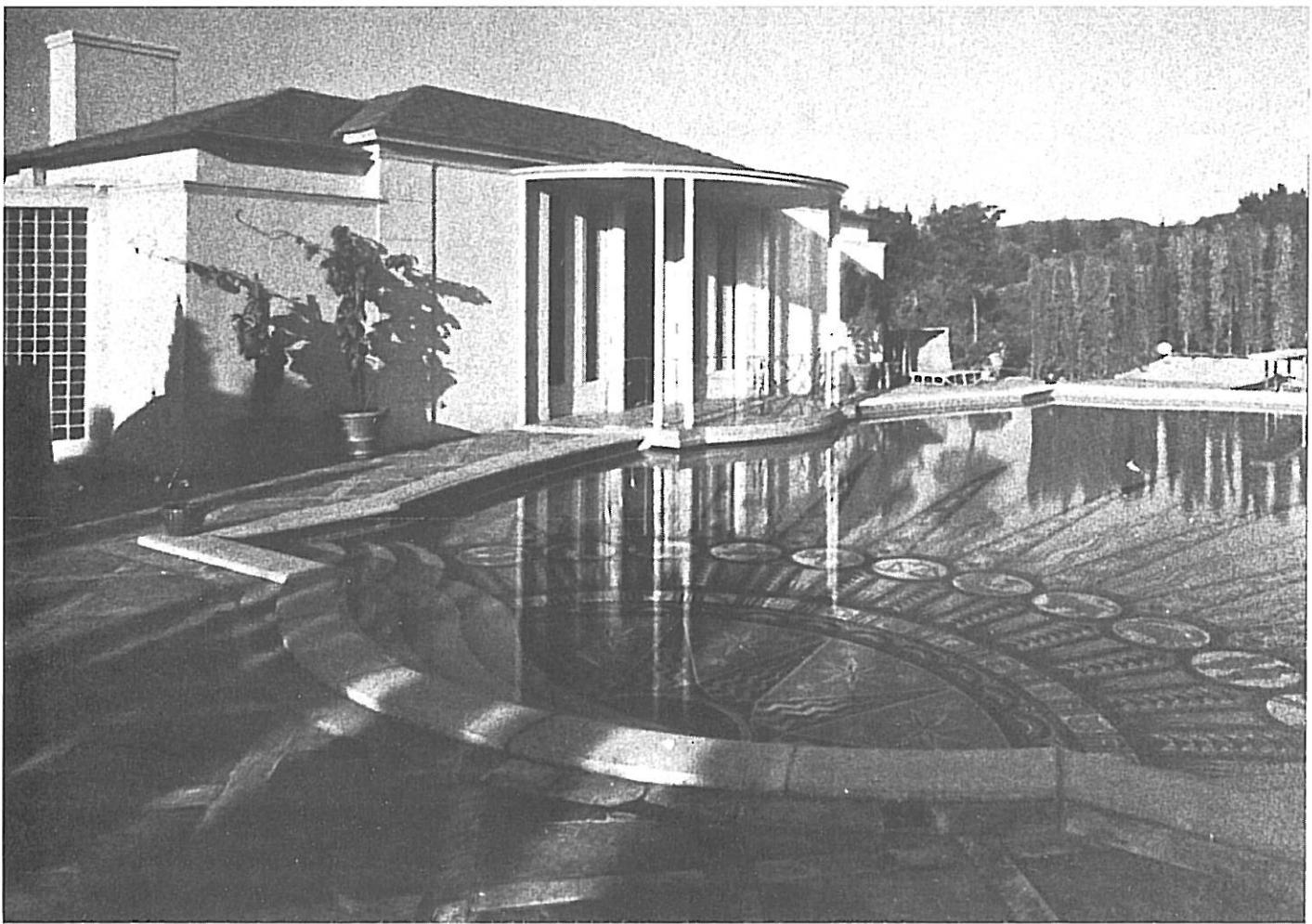
BY ALSON CLARK

The fact that LA will celebrate its 200th birthday in 1981 has caused little stir among the populace, as almost everyone realizes that this is a 'paper' anniversary. For 75 years, LA was a seedy back-water Pueblo on the fringes of the Spanish Empire, and for 35 more it was a small Victorian place filled with pattern-book mediocrities. In fact we don't like to think we're growing old at all. When the Beaux-Arts LA Public Library and Pasadena City Hall began to acquire a patina which might have mellowed them, cosmetic spray-painters were rushed to the scene, in the former case destroying the subtle distinction between the plaster walls and the stone relief panels which Bertram Goodhue and Lee Lawrie, his sculptor-collaborator, had so carefully planned. Never mind: another wrinkle had been hidden.

We are young and determined to stay that way. We are also quite rich, at least wealthy enough to re-landscape the whole of our recently acquired property. We found it much too drab, so most of the arid Colorado Desert has been converted into green golf environments, where ex-Presidents can get in 18 holes every single day, because it never rains. For the masses there is the landscape of the freeways. Miles of eucalyptus and acacia (not native plants) blot out the tacky development of the valleys, suggesting that these semi-deserts are some kind of 'Arcadias'. All this has attracted people who find their tradition-bound native heaths stultifying and regard LA as a relief if not an escape.

It was not always so, at least not so much so. When we began to get rolling decisions had to be made. Decisions used to be made by the rich and powerful, and Henry Edwards Huntington arrived rich and powerful and decided to build a transit system which would link the whole vast place together. Of course this set the pattern of sprawl which is our most distinctive characteristic. After the lines were built in record time, Huntington decided LA needed some roots. As time went on he had to be dissuaded from buying every First Folio Shakespeare and Romney portrait he could lay his hands on, in order that something might be left over to endow the cultural complex he was building in his princely park. There was the question of style for the buildings at 'San Marino Ranch'. He rather liked the one-storey wooden houses (bungalows) that were springing up in Huntington Park, Huntington Beach and all the other hamlets along his routes. He liked the more elaborate versions eastern millionaires were building as winter cottages in Pasadena, the town adjoining the Huntington holdings; he even had a large 'Craftsman' run up for his son. But wood is not terribly permanent, so in 1908, he employed Myron Hunt, a well trained, well-travelled architect, to build a place with white plaster walls, red-tiled hipped roofs and cut-back, refined cornices and pediments. American Beaux-Arts was then known in Europe as 'chaste', a term which architectural critics no longer seem to employ.

The Mediterranean 'roots' approach seemed to be the thing. White walls and red-tiled roofs were to tie together the monumental Civic Center which was planned in 1922 for the heart of 'old' LA. Actually only one such building was



Facing page, Figure 3 - Site Plan, Jay Paley Estate (1935 with Architect Paul Williams).

Above, Figure 4 - Pool and Bath House, Jay Paley Estate.

"A lot of people had lost their money and were living in more modest circumstances and they discovered what a job it was to live inside and out...And this was part of the Depression. When these monied people who had lost the excess...had to stay home, then they began to enjoy home. You had a patio outside, you had a place to eat outside and it was enough."⁸

This adjustment to a simpler way of life, born of necessity, was to develop into a new set of ideals and a new aesthetic.

Huntsman-Trout spent World War II as a camoufler for Douglas Aircraft. His major initial responsibility was to camouflage the Douglas plant.

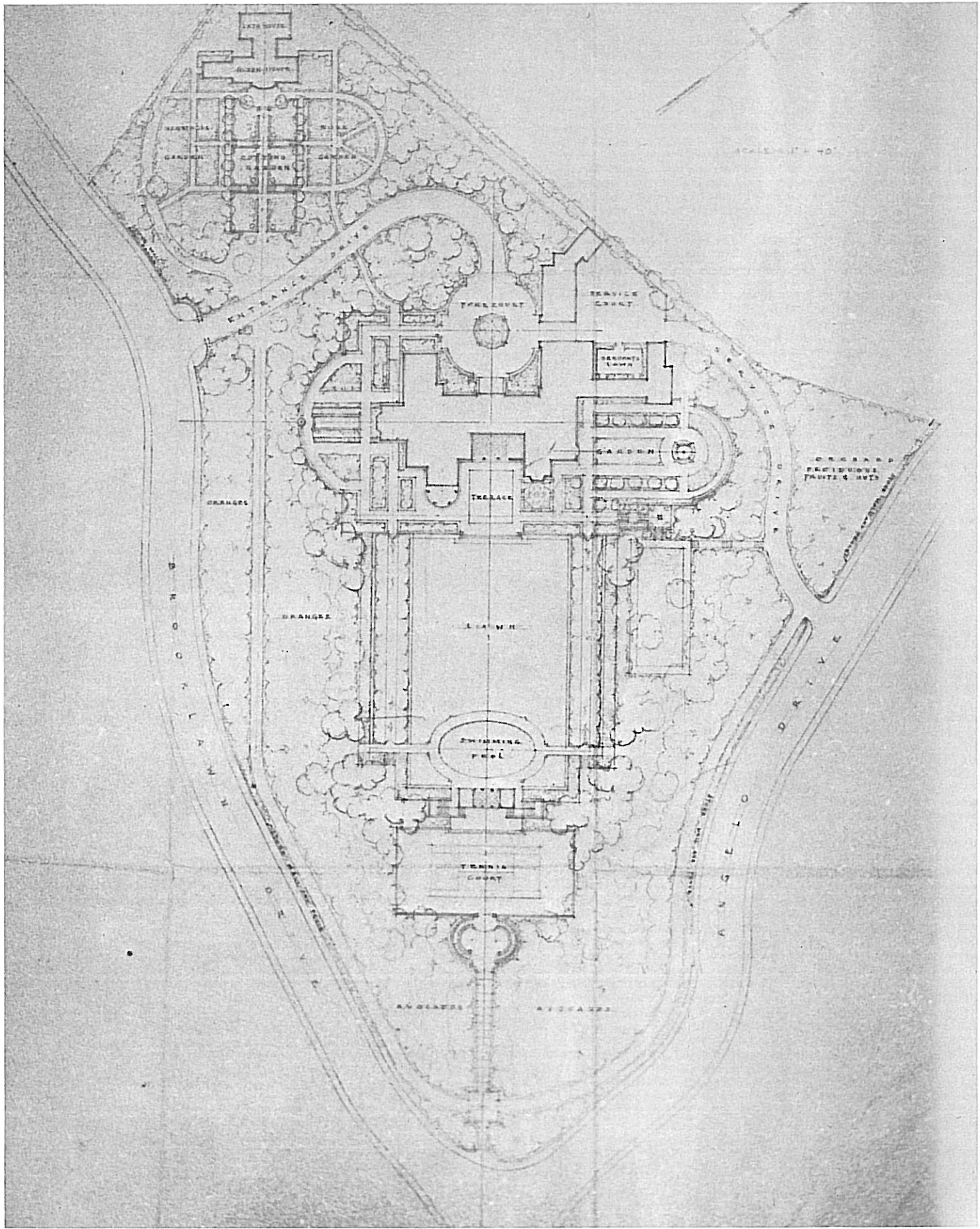
"Edward and Allen (architect Allen Siple)... went all over the roofs of everything....They finally decided they were going to make it (Douglas) look like a subdivision, because that was what everybody knew Los Angeles had, was subdivisions. So, with the help of another man,...they put chicken wire all over the top of Douglas, both where you would walk or run an airplane and where the building itself was....It gave a certain amount, because there is a lot of wind coming off the ocean, and it had to be able to withstand it. They put chicken feathers on it that they colored different ways. Around the 'houses' they put...clothes, so that it looked as if you had just put out the washing. Different colors and everything, painted up there on this chicken wire."⁹

Only one defense project remains in Huntsman-Trout's collection, Project OO, a "Bomber Hide for Liberator or Flying Fortress." Project OO was a portable camouflage

tent, designed to disguise an airplane "where conditions are most severe." The camouflage cover was suspended from wires. This allowed the airplane to taxi easily beneath this semi-permanent structure and prevented the cover from sitting directly on the airplane and thus taking on its contours. It would be interesting to know whether this design was ever put into production.

After the war Huntsman-Trout returned to the same office location, but to a much changed profession. Immediately after World War II, there was an unprecedented building boom in Southern California. At the time it must have seemed as if every soldier who had passed through on his way to the South Pacific had returned to stay. In the 1940's the Los Angeles population increased by nearly one-half million, from 1,504,277 to 1,970,358. To accommodate this influx, entire cities, such as Lakewood, sprang from beanfields and cow pastures in a few years. Partly in an effort to hasten this process, the nature of subdivisions changed. In earlier land promotions, the developer more often sold improved lots; the client then hired his own architect or contractor. During the post-war boom, the developer took on large scale housing construction as well.

Huntsman-Trout adjusted at once to this new level of building activity. He was involved with seven subdivisions, in major or minor capacities. His commissions for private grounds actually increased in number; because each project was smaller, he could design more of them. Huntsman-Trout's post-war residential landscaping shows his continued interest in the California Style. While the individual appearance of each garden varied widely, certain concerns remained consistent. He minimized lawns; where he could he eliminated them. The front yard was typically given to an extremely generous driveway and parking court, often surrounded by natural-appearing trees and bushes. The back and side yard were filled with patios, pools, and



"He liked it to look as if it happened (on its own) and he had a great distrust of things that were terribly 'put.' But where symmetry was inevitable or appropriate, he wanted it that way."⁵

Huntsman-Trout generally did not specify particular plants. With his extensive background in botany and horticulture he felt comfortable in making on-the-spot decisions as to what available plant materials would achieve the intended design effect. In anticipation of maintenance problems, he preferred plants that were drought-resistant, not particular about soil or feeding, and that would flourish with only routine attention.

First he chose trees; these established the basic elements of the design. Favorites were sycamores, oaks, and Brazilian peppers. Their asymmetrical growth habits, lack of conspicuous flowers, and muted leaf colors appealed to him and contributed to the desired "shaggy" effect, while the muted colors and general lack of conspicuous visual characteristics help turn attention from the individual trees toward the overall garden design.

Next, he chose shrubs and vines; these also reflected his concern that individual plant materials be subordinate to the overall plan. Large shrubs were often intermingled with trees. In addition, shrubs and vines of several species were mixed together. While Huntsman-Trout "felt that there was not the proper maintenance for most flowering material,"⁶ he frequently chose shrubs and vines that flowered readily, without careful feeding or pruning. Planting plans of the Winnett Estate (one of the few projects with specific plant lists) indicate some of his choices: Baily acacia, leptospermum, fremontia, mock orange, pink melaleuca. Reference books refer to the growth habits of these plants as "rampant," "inclined to be rangy," "used to clamber into tall trees." The visual effect of so many bushes and vines fighting for space and flowering profusely must have been striking.

Small flowering plants, perennials and annuals, were chosen last. These were reserved as accents in areas bordering walkways and in the formal gardens near the house. Huntsman-Trout had no apparent preferences as to color and no prejudices about mixing color, though "he distinguished between the use of the word 'clash' and the word 'discord.' 'Sometimes,' he would say, 'clashing is wonderful.'"

The Jay Paley estate (1935; Paul Williams, arch.) is among the last of the great estates, and among the few that are still essentially intact; the house sits on a site of six acres. While the plan exhibits the angular character and clear spatial organization of the Winnett estate, it also shows a free accommodation of site irregularities (Figure 3).

A curving driveway segregates the kitchen gardens from the ornamental ones. It leads the visitor to an ornately paved forecourt in front of the house, which begins the dominant axis. This axis penetrates the house and crosses a huge, unobstructed lawn to a swimming pool and a Hollywood Regency bath house (Figure 4). Beyond, on a lower level, the axis continues through a tennis court and along a walkway to the very edge of the property. In contrast, there are several cross axes through the house, which organize highly formal gardens. Most of the pedestrian circulation is peripheral; rather than leading directly from one location to another, it leads the visitor around the property. This is a characteristic of Huntsman-Trout's designs. It provides an ever-changing view along what could, in less skilled hands, become a static, boring path. Also, by not bisecting the plan, the spaciousness of the site is made more apparent. Trees at the outer edges of walks and driveways provide privacy and a sense of enclosure; an orchard of orange, avocado and other semi-tropical fruit trees fill the grounds between walkways and property boundaries.

The Depression lessened the size and extravagance of estate commissions. Rationing and other preparations for World War II ended the era.



Figure 2 - Service Building, Winnett Estate (1928-29).

instructor Charles Platt, who in turn was influenced by Renaissance and Baroque Italian landscape architects; the primary goal was that of creating a clear spatial organization which glorified the natural terrain.

When Huntsman-Trout left Harvard he served in World War I, worked in two landscape architectural firms, those of Fletcher Steele in Boston and A.D. Taylor in Cleveland, and returned to California. Once here, he was hired by the Beverly Hills Nursery, one of some fifteen nurseries in Southern California with design staffs². During the 1920's Beverly Hills Nursery "had nine landscape architects going out of there every day, and a hundred men and trucks and equipment leaving ...every day to do the gardens."³ Huntsman-Trout stayed for about three years before he left to begin his own firm. Among his first independent commissions was Dios Dorados (1923). Also known as the Ince Ranch, Dios Dorados, designed for movie director Thomas Ince, was a flamboyant exercise in the emerging California Style. This style was derived from historic precedents found in the Mission gardens and in Mediterranean and other arid climates. Drought-tolerant plants were to replace water-loving ones. These plants, with courtyards and patios, were to take the place of lawns; fountains could provide the cooling effect of lawns while actually requiring less water. This philosophy, with its explicit reliance on historic precedent, responded to client preferences. Its direct response to existing climactic conditions appealed to Huntsman-Trout.

"I think he cared very much about Southern California's natural landscape. To him it was very beautiful and he felt not only that the land should be graded so that the lot fitted in with the natural hills...He felt too that we should work on developing places that used materials that were naturally happy in our surroundings."⁴

East Coast and European estates featured houses recalling Classical and Gothic traditions; their gardens often contained ornaments which alluded to a literary or a historical past. At Dios Dorados, the allusions were to the romanticized past created in Ramona, with a little Robinson Crusoe added. The house, sited atop a hill, was Spanish Colonial Revival in style. It was surrounded by native and exotic semi-tropical plants California sycamores, oaks, and pittosporum, among others. These plants swept irregularly down the hillside to a swimming pool, built to resemble a natural pond with one side bordered by a sandy beach (Figure 1). The beach was thickly planted with palms and was surrounded by changing rooms, built to resemble grass shacks. The sand provided continuity with a contiguous area, the "Desert Garden." In this garden, with its cacti and Joshua trees, was set a version of the traditional English "folly," an artificial adobe ruin.

Part of the delight of Dios Dorados, the playful translation of the elements of the traditional European/Northeast estates to a new cultural and geographical locale, derived from Huntsman-Trout's familiarity with the older tradition. The Winnett Estate (1928-29) shows his handling of these elements in a more customary fashion. The Winnett Estate was located on the bluff overlooking Santa Monica Canyon. The plan shows a series of formal gardens, sited so as to celebrate the estate's spectacular location and views. Photographs reveal the estate's rich material textures and the intricate architectural detailing of the garden ornaments.

The Winnett site was L-shaped; it extended between San Vicente Boulevard and the bluff overlooking Santa Monica Canyon. The long angle was a series of five rectilinear areas of varying length and equal width, beginning with a tennis court and terminating with a promenade along the bluff. Two formal gardens separated the tennis court and promenade from the middle garden, the Long Garden. The Long Garden was an axial strip of lawn, with perennial borders to either side and a high wall with an ornate Italianate fountain at one end, the terminus of the major axis of the house. A cross axis extended from the house across a broad lawn, broken in an informal manner by large

trees, walkways, and a pond. A balustrade at the edge of the canyon terminated this axis and opened the garden to the view.

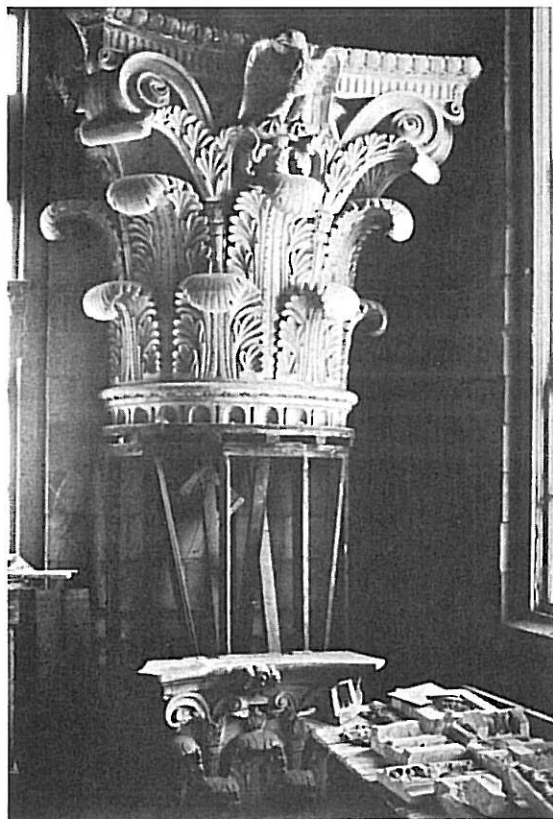
The irregularly-shaped Winnett site was made to seem regular by the placement of trees and garden walls in clear rectilinear patterns; the odd corners were planted with trees which helped define the boundaries of the site and direct the views. The site was further unified through the use of two major sight lines; one through the length of the house to the end of the Long Garden, the other through the center of the informal lawn area. A rich variety of spatial scale pervades the design, from the intimate corners of walkways, through the more spacious orchard, to the grand lawn where one's plunge into the canyon beyond was halted only by the low balustrade.

The historic references of the design are to types which are combined and romanticized so that several precedents are recalled; the sum perhaps made more inviting for the transformation. A multi-roofed service building (designed by Huntsman-Trout) which resembled a German hunting lodge actually housed pigeons, dogs, and presumably cars and a caretaker (Figure 2). The belvedere, a familiar feature in many Moorish and Italian gardens, was here kept almost secret. Hidden by trees and reached only by two minor walkways, its spectacular view through the canyon to the ocean was made more special by its unexpected appearance.

The extensive drawings and other documents which remain of the Winnett estate give some indication of the wide scope of responsibilities of the landscape architect during that era. Often he did the site plan; in some cases the architect seems merely to have designed a house for a blank space marked "house." The landscape architect frequently designed everything outside the foundation line, from patio paving to the aforementioned "hunting lodge." The landscape architect often began work on a project at its inception, in some instances even advising on the purchase of the property. In many cases he had his own crew of laborers and craftsmen to do the work, and his duties continued after the house and gardens were in place; continuing maintenance of estate grounds was often supervised by the landscape architect. His instructions to the head gardener and the gardening staff assured the maturation of the gardens according to the original intentions.

Huntsman-Trout's designs began with consideration of site conditions and an inventory of existing on-site plants to be retained; he was apparently far more likely than most of his contemporaries to accommodate existing conditions and mature plantings. Whenever possible he fenced the entire property; often all that remains of the estates are parts of these fences; a stone archway or a masonry wall topped by rusting wrought iron. A thick band of trees and hedges just inside this wall ensured privacy. Once inside this boundary, Huntsman-Trout worked to manifest his feeling for the site and the house. The Revival-style house was seldom a simple rectangular shape; wings sprouted in all directions to allow light and air throughout. The site immediately surrounding the house was regularized through placement of paving and formal gardens. Cars and service buildings were located to one side of the house, out of sight, while views from the house were to other sides, toward the formal gardens, auxiliary structures meant for viewing, distant hills and other "borrowed" scenery, and his own version of a lawn.

"Things were almost never used symmetrically....There was sort of a shaggy look.... Usually in private gardens there was no clipped lawn. He liked them to undulate, and not be evenly clipped....He loved the thing to have lots of leaves on it. He used lots of sycamores and he got very impatient with the extreme neatness and the "Beverly Hills look" -- the kelly green lawns in August, you know, when in Southern California you're supposed to have straw-colored lawns...."



Plaster model for an architectural terra cotta column capital, Model Maker's Room, Gladding, McBean & Co., Lincoln, CA.

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