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# ARCHITECTURE

RICE UNIVERSITY



RICE PRECEPTORSHIP PROGRAM

Department of Architecture  
Rice University  
Houston, Texas  
10 December 1961

W. W. CAUDILL, Chairman

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## T H E P R E C E D E N T

When Phil Will, the deep probing, energetic President of the American Institute of Architects, spoke before a group of architectural teachers at Sagamore Lake, he stressed the need for "architectural statesmen." He is right. The crux of the problems of our profession is the need for more architectural leaders on the statesmanship level -- men with great breadth and depth who use architecture as a means for making this planet a better place in which to live, and who have the dedication and leadership ability to influence people to action. The program presented here is an attempt to give architecture a few of Phil Will's "architectural statesmen."

This educational plan is entitled the Preceptorship Program. We borrow the concept and the name from the medical profession because doctors practice what they preach when they say that practitioners should be involved in the educational process. We hope this program has enough merit to warrant its use by other schools of architecture. We will cooperate in any way we can to help other schools benefit from our experience with this program.

## DOING THE REAL THING

After a hectic week at school and in the office, I often reserve Sunday afternoon to take a three-dimensional drive in

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my little airplane -- to get above it all, as the saying goes. I practice landing on a cloud. It is satisfying and improves my flying skills, to a point. I follow exactly the same check list I would over an airport while preparing to land. I go through the routines above the cloud until my wheels actually touch the cloud. It is fun, and provides relaxation and flying experience, but this is not doing the real thing! It certainly doesn't get me back safely to earth. Practicing landing on a cloud is a synthetic experience. It reminds me, in some respects, of architectural education.

Let's face it. Architectural education at its best is synthetic -- clientless programs, no cost realities, no construction, no supervision, no outrageous locations for utilities, no bog at nine feet to play havoc with footings, and no building committee to say no.

The student of architecture, through no fault of his own, is paper-trained. A "sexy" rendering interests him more than a building. To ooh and aah over a paper model is more fun than experiencing the spaces of real buildings. This is perfectly understandable. From the day he enters the university, the student is graded on how well he fills up white sheets of paper or pastes pieces of it together. He looks upon the 30" x 40" illustration board as architecture's greatest building material. He can draw "buildings" on it. He can make "buildings" out of it. He can sculpt paper as a Salvadori does concrete, or arch it as Candela, or cantilever it as Torroja, or hang it as Severud. We train our students to be paper architects.





We must go the paper route. Where else can we go? Real building materials for building real buildings for real clients under real circumstances are not at our students' disposal. To build real buildings would be too costly a procedure. Consequently, when the student gets his sheepskin (probably paper too), he finds it most difficult to work in a realistic world of breathing (down-the-neck) clients, limited building funds, restrictive codes, over-sold building materials, under-sold services, and hard-nosed competitors.

#### PRACTICE SHOCK

If the young diplomat serving his first assignment in a foreign country goes into "cultural shock," most certainly the architectural student, when he leaves the cool ivy and paper architecture for the hot pavement and real buildings, suffers from practice shock at the hands of pooped practitioners.

One prominent architectural educator bemoans the fact that the schools have very little influence in educating architects. He contends that any good work that the school does is lost completely after the graduate has worked two or three years in the office of the average practitioner. This is stretching it, but he may have a point. Our young architect-to-be, full of his architectural religion and paper approach, has it tough when he faces the reality of building buildings. His first boss pooh-poohs his paper approach, "We can't use that multiple hyperbolic paraboloid roof; neither my engineer nor I can figure the darn thing; besides my client won't buy it!" The boss then questions his architectural religion, "Who



cares about the 'spatial experience' or your 'phenomenological space'? This building we are doing is not a phenomenon." Our young friend then goes into practice shock.

#### CONCEPT OF THE PRECEPTORSHIP PROGRAM

Many highly trained, talented young men and women have not been able to span the gap between college and practice successfully. The contrast between paper and practice is too much for them. How to cope with the problem? Landscape architects have a similar problem with tree seedlings. If a seedling is moved directly from its hothouse to a position in the direct sun, it burns up. It needs a period of modulation in the semi-shade of a lathhouse. The seedlings are soft when they are taken from the hothouse, and are placed in the lathhouse to "harden them off," (as the process is called), to condition them for the harsh weather outside so the tree can survive to grow tall and strong.

The lathhouse approach gives us the concept for the Preceptorship Program. The program allows for the proper modulation from school to office. It makes the architect-to-be grow professionally tall and strong into an architectural statesman. We think it is a sound plan for introducing the best students to the best in architectural practice. To make the plan work, we have called and will continue to call upon some of the nation's best architects to provide the lathhouses.

#### HOW IT WORKS

In starting the Preceptorship Program at Rice, we selected six of



of the most outstanding architects in the South and Southwest because each of these men was a competent, creative, highly respected architect. These men were community leaders, "architectural statesmen." We wanted our students to have intimate exposure to this caliber of professional. We thought our students could benefit from the thoughts and the practices of these highly respected men. We thought such exposure might be the beginning of lasting friendships between the experienced and the beginner. We concluded there could be no better way for a good student to be introduced to the profession than through our Preceptorship Program.

This is our plan: have one of our promising students (the preceptee) live with one of the selected architects (the preceptor) for a period of two to three weeks.

During this period, the student can see how a really good architect conducts his professional business, can have the benefits of his thinking, and see how he lives (live with him in his home, if possible). He can attend civic meetings, sit in on meetings with clients, and attend church as a part of the family when they go. We want this architect-teacher to take time from his busy schedule to explain the economic facts of life of practice, to tell the student what the magazines did not tell about the architect's prize winning buildings. We want this to be a "hardening off," learning experience for our youngster. We want the preceptor to furnish the lathhouse. As we see it, the Preceptorship Program for architectural students at Rice University is a controlled, educational experience for potential leaders, by leaders.



## T H E P R O G R A M

### AIMS

1. To expose the student to the way of life, the thinking, the problems, and the satisfactions of an architect of high professional stature.
2. To give the student an opportunity to grasp the broad scope of private practice.
3. To give the student an intimate view of a successful practitioner in action.
4. To demonstrate to the student that to be a member of the architectural profession carries social and civic responsibilities.
5. To clarify for the student some of the problems of management and economics confronting the practitioner.
6. To give the student intelligent and gradual conditioning to architectural practice.





## PARTICIPANTS

### Preceptor:

1. He is an architect who is recognized as a leader in his profession.
2. He is a principal in private practice.
3. Only one practitioner in a partnership is designated Preceptor.
4. He is appointed by the President of Rice University to position of Preceptorship, Department of Architecture, Rice University.
5. Each appointment is for a two year term.
6. The school catalog will carry the names of each active Preceptor, the name of his firm, and his location.

### Preceptee:

1. He is an outstanding fourth, fifth, or sixth year student.
2. He is selected by a panel of professors of the Department of Architecture, Rice University.
3. The appointment designates the student as an honor student in architecture.



## WHEN AND WHERE

1. The program must radiate from the office of the preceptor, but the learning experiences are not limited to any location: can be either in the home, a client's office, a construction job, or the meeting rooms of civic clubs.
2. The preceptorship will last for a period of two to three weeks, depending upon the wishes of the preceptor.
3. This period of intensified training may occur during the school year or during the summer months.
4. The exact dates and length of time will be a joint decision between the architect and the student. Such a decision naturally will give serious consideration to the professional activities of the preceptor and the school work load of the preceptee.

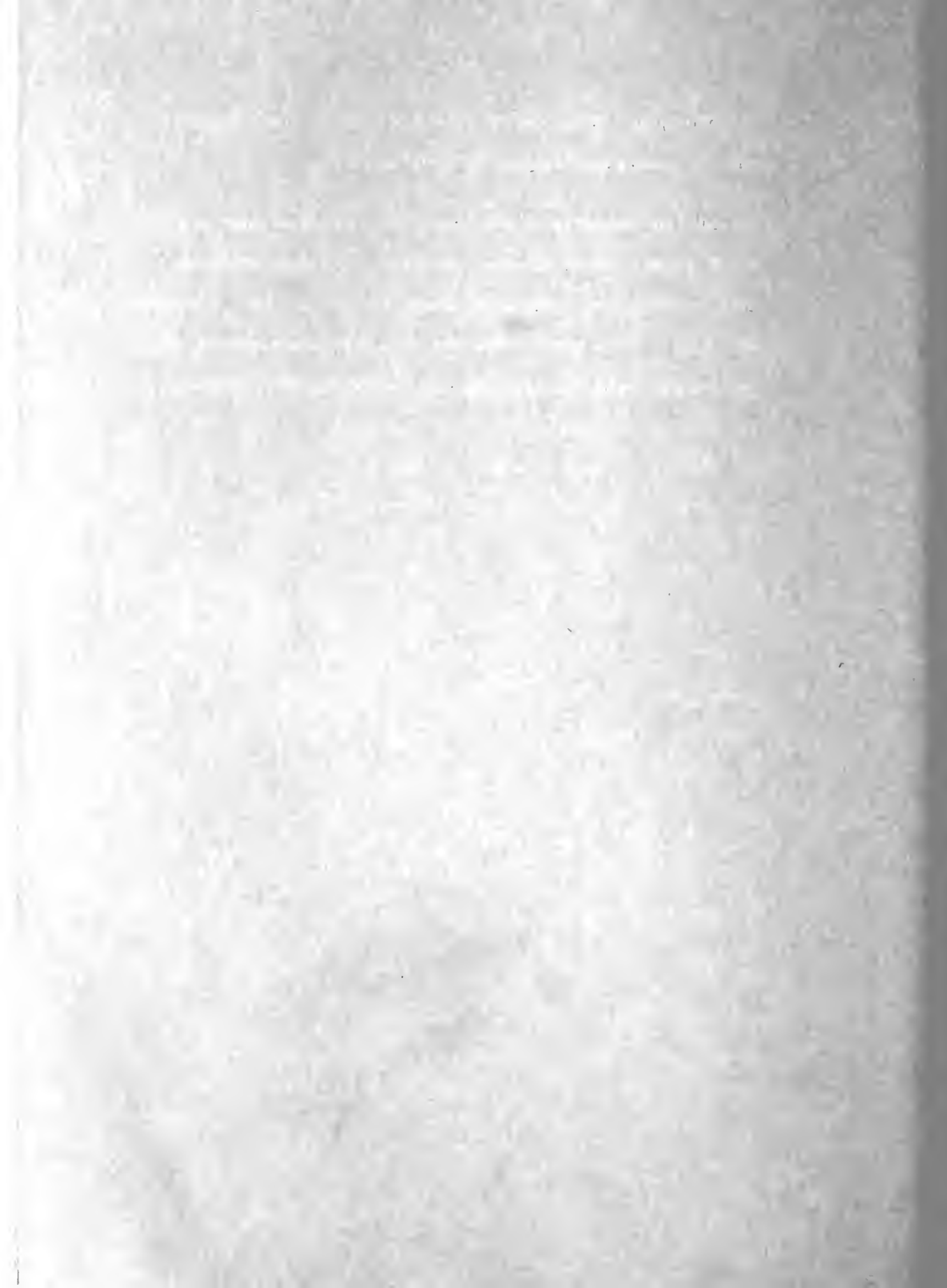


## METHODS

1. The preceptor uses any teaching method at his disposal.  
This must depend upon the current activities of his practice and his own personal preferences. The chief concern is not the method but the learning experience to meet the needs of the student.
2. The preceptor takes the student with him on construction supervision trips and discusses with him the complexities of getting a building built.
3. The student participates during the hectic periods of wrapping up a set of working drawings or preliminary plans and experiences some of the excitement and confusion that accompanies this process. (If the student can render a service during this period, this is well and good, but the objective is primarily educational.)
4. The student has the opportunity to see first hand some examples of successful buildings and learn from the architect who did them some of the trials that do not appear in the magazines.
5. The preceptor invites the student to sit in and be allowed some participation in client conferences.
6. The student witnesses a bid letting and is told of the problems that occur when the bids are over the money, or too low.



7. The preceptor discusses the hard facts of office management and the economical aspects of architecture.
  
8. The student accompanies the preceptor to professional meetings, civic clubs, church and town meetings to clarify the architect's social and civic obligations to our society. (It works two ways: it is good to let the public know architects are interested in better training for better future architects.)





## GROUND RULES

1. The student is treated as an individual and as a colleague.  
He is a "student-architect."
2. The preceptor, as a practitioner-teacher, is responsible for a thorough indoctrination of the student into the profession.
3. The preceptee comes to the preceptor with humility, an open mind, and a willingness to work, study, discuss, and observe on a night and day basis.
4. It is hoped that there will be some learning opportunities connected with current projects in the office, but it should always be remembered that this program is primarily education at a high level and the student's function is secondary and incidental. The student is not to receive pay for work done.
5. The preceptor is financially responsible for the student's transportation (from and back to Houston), his board and room, his laundry, and \$15.00 for miscellaneous expenses for the two to three week period.
6. It would be most beneficial if the student could stay in the home of the preceptor; however, this is not a necessary requirement.
7. The student is expected to participate in office routine and work at night, if necessary, to help meet a deadline and to experience some of the pressures of the architect.



8. Within two weeks after having completed the assignment, both the student and his preceptor shall submit, individually, a short, confidential report in writing to the Chairman of the Department of Architecture, Rice University.



## T H E P R E C E P T O R S

On October 15, 1961, Dr. Kenneth S. Pitzer, President, Rice University, appointed the following outstanding architects to Preceptorships for the years 1961-62 and 1962-63:

1. Richard L. Aeck, F.A.I.A.  
Aeck Associates  
Atlanta, Georgia
2. O'Neil Ford, F.A.I.A.  
O'Neil Ford and Associates  
San Antonio, Texas
3. Charles Granger, A.I.A.  
Fehr and Granger  
Austin, Texas
4. David G. Murray, A.I.A.  
Murray, Jones and Murray  
Tulsa, Oklahoma
5. George F. Pierce, Jr., F.A.I.A.  
George Pierce - Abel B. Pierce, Architects  
Houston, Texas
6. E. Davis Wilcox, A.I.A.  
E. Davis Wilcox Associates  
Tyler, Texas



In his letter to each of the newly appointed Preceptors, Dr.

Pitzer stated:

We are very pleased that you find it possible to become associated with the educational activities of Rice University and greatly appreciate your willingness to contribute so materially to the success of the new and exciting preceptorship program. We are especially happy that honor students in Architecture will have the opportunity to associate with a man of your professional stature and are confident that it will be a challenging and rewarding experience for them, and we trust for you, also.

By accepting Dr. Pitzer's appointment, each architect demonstrated these outstanding qualities:

1. A deep feeling of a professional obligation to help train young architects.
2. A willingness to take a large block of time from his practice to teach.
3. A desire to bring a promising architect-to-be into his own home.
4. And a volunteering of the money necessary for travel and expenses to give one student a year this opportunity for a high level leadership, learning experience.

Every teacher and student in the Department of Architecture shares Dr. Pitzer's appreciation for the "willingness to contribute" of these generous practitioners. We shall always be grateful for the Aecks, the Fords, the Grangers, the Murrays, the Pierces, and the Wilcoxes.



View across the Outdoor Dining Pavilion in Pine Mountain, Georgia.



RICHARD L. AECK

Dick Aeck, an architect with a truly international slant, is a graduate of Georgia Institute of Technology, 1936, and principal of his firm, Aeck Associates, Architects, Atlanta, Georgia.

Aeck has combined practice with teaching, and has been a visiting design critic at the Georgia Institute of Technology, Cornell University and Syracuse University. His practice has taken him around the globe, and included such projects as a Japanese legation, labs for the Rockefeller Foundation in Bogata and Villavicencio, Colombia, the Pan American Airways Terminal, Brazilian District, and numerous Army and Navy airport bases abroad. This fall he is working on a school project in Cambodia. His architectural work in the United States, primarily in Georgia, has made him one of the South's leading architects, i.e., the Alexander Memorial Building at Georgia Tech, Carver Heights School in Columbus, Outdoor Dining Pavilion in Pine Mountain, the Banks-Jackson-Commerce Hospital in Commerce, the Williams Parking Deck and the Henry Grady Stadium in Atlanta, the I.B.M. Office Building in Savannah, and campus development plans for eight Georgia colleges and three experiment stations.

A member of the American Institute of Architects, he was elected to the College of Fellows in Design in 1961. He has been a member of the National A.I.A. Committee on School Buildings, and the National A.I.A. Committee on Advancement of the Profession, and is currently on the Board of Directors of the Modular Building Standards Association.



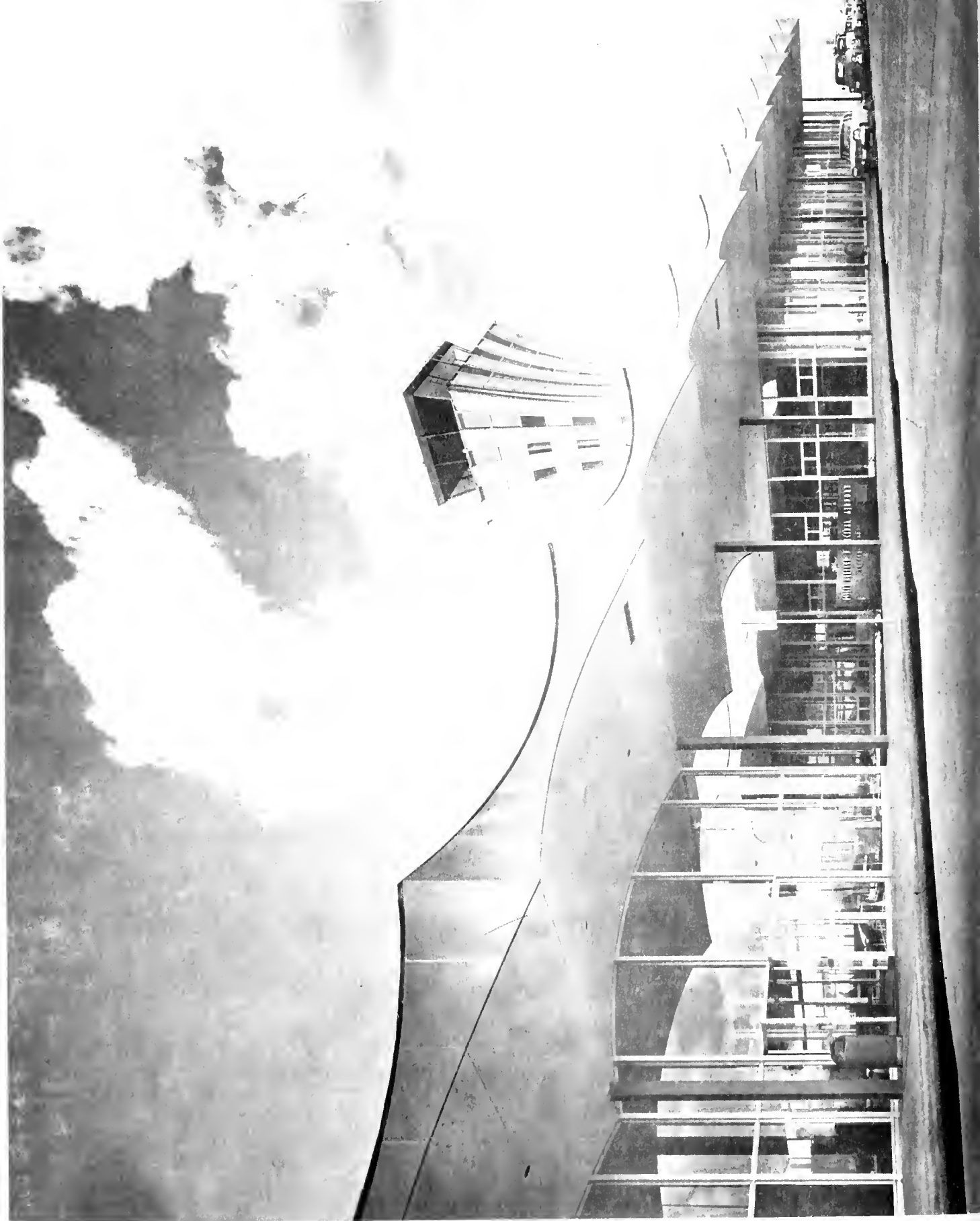
View of the entrance to the Crossroads Restaurant, Great Southwest Corporation, between Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas.

## O'NEIL FORD

O'Neil Ford of O'Neil Ford and Associates, San Antonio, the architect for the tremendous Texas Instruments plants in Dallas and Houston, is a pioneer of the lift slab technic, first used in the buildings of Trinity College. Ford attended North Texas State College in Denton, but got his start by designing furniture and lighting fixtures. His first architectural assignments were with government projects in Texas and Georgia. After serving as flight instructor in the Army, he went into research and private practice in 1948. Always interested in indigenous architecture and architectural engineering, he has averaged ten lectures per year for the last ten years on these topics. His lectures, teaching assignments, and consultations have taken him all over the United States and to Europe seven times.

In 1960 he was elected a Fellow in the American Institute of Architects and has served as a chapter president. He has participated on various A.I.A. committees and juries and has won numerous awards, both professional and personal. His works and ideas have often appeared in national magazines.

Ford's recent work has covered a wide range of building types: schools, apartment houses, a home for the aged, a bowling center, industrial buildings, a bio-medical laboratory and baboonery, residences, and has worked with I. M. Pei on the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Earth Sciences Laboratory. His specialties, if one can call them that, are not only the design and engineering, but the history and development behind American architecture.



Looking toward the tower at the Austin air terminal building.

## CHARLES GRANGER

Charlie Granger, one of the real pioneers in architecture involved in the modern movement in Texas, was graduated from The University of Texas in 1936; and as a Graduate Fellow, he received his Master of Arts in Architecture and Urban Design from Cranbrook Academy in 1946.

Quite active in the profession, he is a member of the American Institute of Architects and the Texas Society of Architects. In 1955 he became the President of the Central Texas Chapter of the A.I.A. In 1956 he became a member of the National A.I.A. Committee on School Buildings and Educational Facilities, and was elected to Chairmanship in 1959.

Granger started his practice working with Richard Neutra in Los Angeles and was associated with Arthur Fehr, now his partner, in private practice. He left his practice during World War II to serve as the planning coordinator on Atomic Energy Contracts and the Engineering Division of Consolidated-Vultee Aircraft Corporation. Back in practice in 1945, he became a designer for the office of Saarinen and Swanson on the \$80,000,000 General Motors Technical Center, after which he again associated with Fehr in their Austin firm, Fehr and Granger.

His most recent work is the air terminal building in Austin which expresses his devotion to the cause of modern design in architecture.



Walkway adjacent to Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

DAVID G. MURRAY

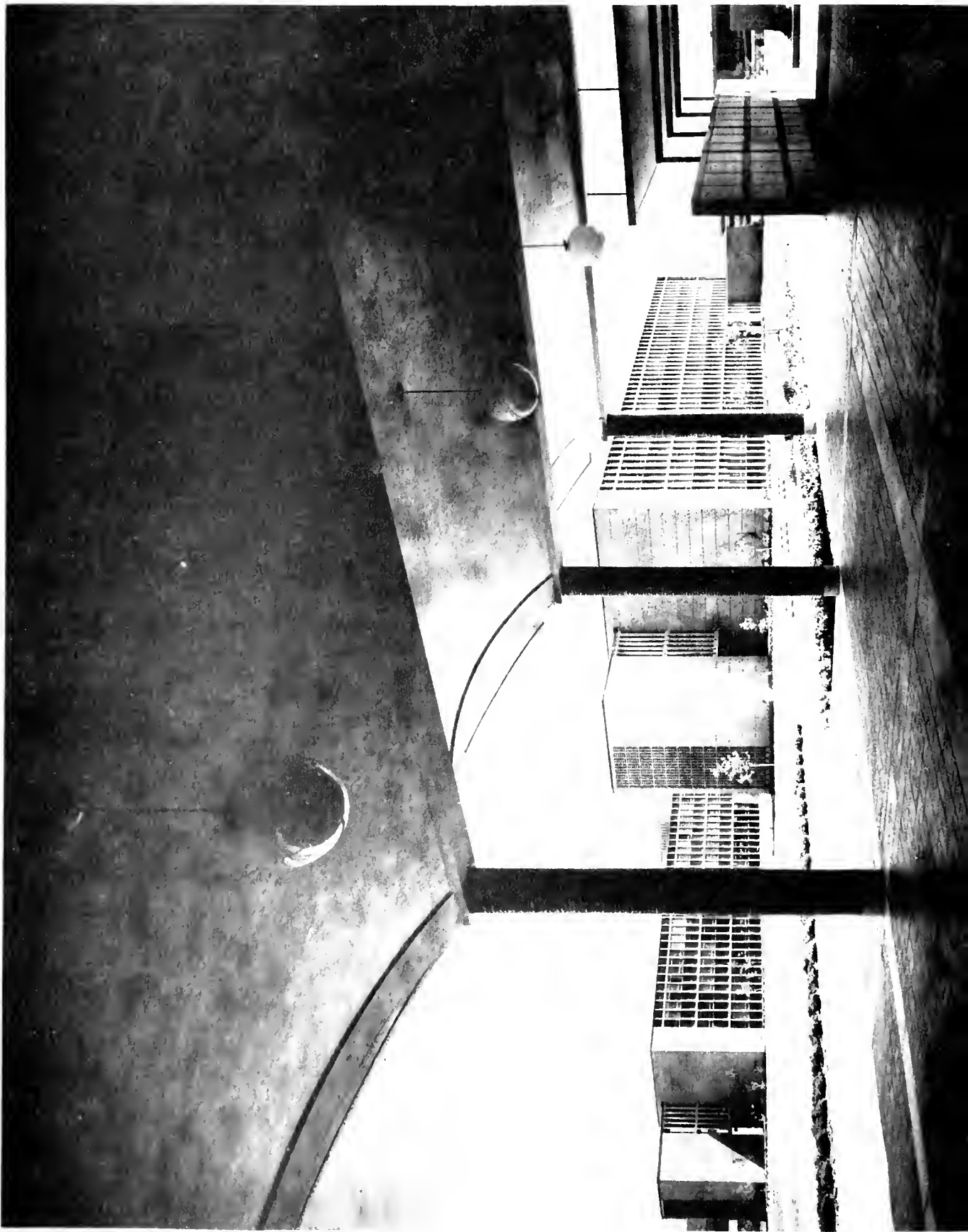
Dave Murray, an Oklahoman with his Bachelor of Architecture from Oklahoma State University, 1942, has worked his way up to be a partner in the Tulsa firm of Murray-Jones-Murray, Architects.

Murray's architectural design work has centered around Tulsa and Oklahoma City. His work includes schools, Monroe Junior High School and Bishop Kelley High School; churches, Church of the Madalene, St. Patrick's Church and Sts. Peter and Paul Church; and other diversified projects such as the Doctors Building in Tulsa and the Tulsa Municipal Airport Terminal Building, his most recent work. The only time in which Murray was not in private practice was during World War II, during which he was assigned to the combat engineers and later the Air Force.

In civic affairs, he is a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and Vice Chairman for the Urban Development Committee, 1959, Director of Goodwill Industries, and on the Camp Committee of the Y.M.C.A. His professional affiliations are topped with the Oklahoma A.I.A. Honor Award for Design, 1954, and the honorary fraternities of the Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Eta Sigma, Blue Key and Sigma Tau. In the American Institute of Architects, he has been the Director of the Tulsa Chapter of the A.I.A.

FORUM, PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE, ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE, and BAUEN AND WOHNEN and other trade publications have all carried articles of Murray's work.





View from the loggia of Hammon Hall across to the Geology and Biology Buildings, Rice University, Houston, Texas.

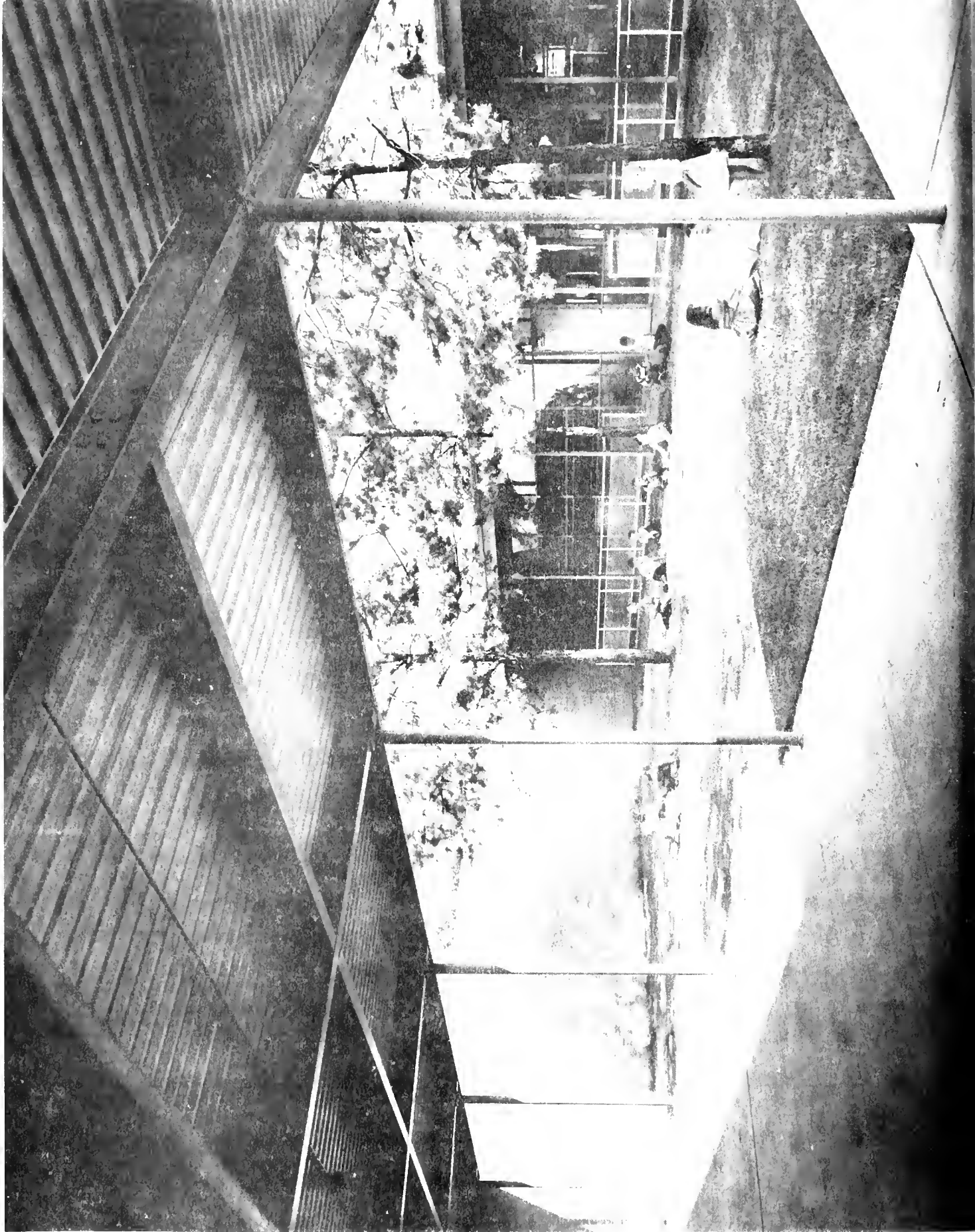


GEORGE F. PIERCE, JR.

George Pierce, one of Rice's most distinguished architectural graduates (1943), attended Ecole des Beaux Arts (Diplome 1958) and taught architectural design at Rice prior to entering practice in his Houston firm, George Pierce - Abel B. Pierce, Architects.

A Fellow of the A.I.A., he has participated and led in A.I.A. affairs as chairman, secretary-treasurer, director, panelist and member of special committees involving student activities, honor awards, A.I.A. affairs, student forums, and the National A.I.A. Chapter Presidents' Conclave, 1960, 1961. He was honored as one of Five Outstanding Young Texans for 1955, and his firm has won 27 awards and citation from the A.I.A., T.S.A., P/A Magazine, and other organizations and publications. His civic activities include the Executive Board of the Houston Area Boy Scouts of America, the Contemporary Arts Association, past president and chairman of the Board, the Commission on Zoning, the Houston Junior Chamber of Commerce, past officer and director, and the Urban Redevelopment Committee of the Houston Chamber of Commerce, and the Museum of Fine Arts.

His work spreads over Texas and New Mexico: the new science complex and Hammon Hall at Rice; Houston Psychiatric Institute; Humble Office Building, Midland; Umphrey Lee Student Center, S.M.U.; Magnet Cove Barium Corp., lab and office building, Juvenile Detention Facilities, and the Dresser Electronic Center, Houston. His present commissions include the Houston Petroleum Club, Museum of Natural History, Bank of Texas, and the Jetero Intercontinental Airport Terminal Master Plan, all in Houston.



View of an interior courtyard of a prize winning elementary school, Tyler, Texas.

## E. DAVIS WILCOX

Dave Wilcox, versatile in his personal life as he is competent in the design of his prize winning schools, is the principal in his firm, E. Davis Wilcox Associates, Tyler, Texas. Educated at Georgia Institute of Technology, Fountainebleau School of Fine Arts, Paris, and Yale University, he has combined the honors of architecture with civic recognition and collegiate football. He was recently honored by being appointed to the Silver All American Team by SPORTS ILLUSTRATED.

Wilcox is a member of the A.I.A., is Chairman of the Committee on Schools, T.S.A., is on the State Board of Architectural Examiners, and the American Association of School Administrators. He has also been Director of the Texas Architectural Foundation, 1958-60, and twice an executive officer of the North Texas Chapter A.I.A. He has balanced these professional activities with civic responsibilities. A member of the Tyler Chamber of Commerce, the B.P.O.E. Lodge, the Tyler Club, and the Building Code Committee of the Tyler Willow Brook Country Club, he has been Director for the Smith County Youth Foundation and the Texas Rose Festival Association and Chairman of the Salvation Army Advisory Board. While in the service, he was a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy in World War II.

In architecture he has won sixteen awards and honors which include nine school projects, three on the Texas Eastern School of Nursing, two on residences, the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Museum and the Ft. Brown Memorial Center. His work has also been published by five architectural magazines, two school magazines, and LOOK.



Those of us in the Department of Architecture, Rice University, agree that architectural education can not be isolated from the profession. We want to do everything to make the student feel he is a part of the profession. We abhor the common assumption that architectural education is supplementary to and preparatory to life, and not life itself. We want the student to feel that he is IN architecture, not preparing for it. We believe that the Preceptorship Program will make our students feel IN.



ARCHITECTURE AT RICE SERIES

Number	Title & Date	Author
1	ON PEOPLE AND THINGS 20 September 1961	William W. Caudill
2	THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE NEW SOURCES OF ENERGY (CONFERENCE DES NATIONS UNIES SUR LES SOURCES NOUVELLES D'ENERGIE) 30 October 1961	Paul Jacques Grillo
3	RICE PRECEPTORSHIP PROGRAM 10 December 1961	William W. Caudill

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