THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

FRENCH ARCHITECTURE

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THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

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THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

EDITED BY WILLIAM DEWEY FOSTER A·I·A

PHOTOGRAPHS BY F. R. YERBURY HON. A·R·I·B·A

VOLUME III JANUARY 1931 NUMBER 1

FRENCH ARCHITECTURE AS SOURCE MATERIAL

TEXT BY

PHILIP L. GOODWIN, A.I.A.

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MAKERS OF LUDOWICI TILE

FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

TOWER IN COURTYARD, FARMHOUSE AT MOREY-ST. DENIS (CÔTE D'OR)

FRENCH ARCHITECTURE AS SOURCE MATERIAL

By PHILIP L. GOODWIN, A.I.A.

FROM Dorset church towers and oriel windows,—from Surrey, Sussex, and Groombridge Place, buried in rich green trees and meadows, high spots of that quality of homelikeness, livableness, or whatever you call it in English buildings, there is a big jump to the French countryside and towns. The first series was chosen from such supremely Anglo-Saxon types. They had the stability, the avoidance of all pretension or frivolity associated with the word, "English." At the same time, a certain whimsical irregularity makes plain that this race is not merely an ox-like admirer of the substantial, but can have its fun like anyone else, provided it is always strictly within the bounds of good taste.

Now we have the French buildings. To begin with, a little of everything, covering a range of many kinds. In Vonne and Juvisy we have a trace of peacock quality; the greatness of the roof, and the dormers, the hugeness of the great chimneypiece at Vonne. In the bridge at Juvisy the elaborateness of the work which does not really need it. The superb old tile roof at Saulieu, contrasted with the "piston" tower, each vieing with the other in texture of uneven surfaces. One moss-covered, red, brown, black,—the other gray white and cream in different parts. At Héricy the bare simplicity,—correctness if you want, of a classic front. No whimsical or cosy feeling here. Just direct statement with thoroughly satisfying proportions. In one of the illustrations, a house at Bourges, we see a certain prettiness in the balcony. Perhaps it might be called the feminine strain, commonly attributed to French things but hardly noticeable in the solid plainness of this house as a whole.

As life is lived in them, so develop the houses in that region. Church, State and family were all so different in France and England, but the climate is rather similar. A good American can only feel one common denominator; that is,—it's "too cold in both their houses." Hence the smaller scale, compacter plan of the American house as it is today.

Take as an example the manor of Vonne near Artannes in the Loire country illustrated by the front and back facades and the great chimneypiece. The plan is very good; with one small partition added it would have all the circulation necessary for a modern house, but the size of the rooms, their great height, the rich carving, in other words, the "waste" is noticeable. It is near to Azay-le-Rideau, not so far from Chambord, making it natural to assume that it was built by some designer or builder connected with one of them. It may be an early example of one of those "folies," such as le Butard, Trianon, Bagatelle, and many others built for fêtes and hunting lodges. Some courtier of François, 1er, wanted something very good at any rate. The mantelpiece is superb of its kind and the dormers, although clumsily placed, are of a noble size and design.

In the first brochure, on "English Architecture as Source Material," emphasis was placed on the thin, restrained and even delicate character of American architecture, no matter what style was worked in, or what race of Americans designed the buildings. It seems to me that Vonne typifies that same restraint and severity compared with Italian work from which it derived. The grand manner is still there, less grand, less endowed with *brio*, but on the way to the severe elegance of Louis XV baroque, Empire, down to the latest villa of Le Corbusier. Sweden has it, and America too. England has lost distinction in its architecture since the eighteenth century, and Germany not yet got rid of the ponderous and brutal elements which

have always permeated their work to a greater or lesser degree. It is this combination of qualities of sense and elegance which we admire in French work. When there is too much of one or the other, we do not like it so much, but when it reaches great heights as in the Invalides, the Colonnade of the Louvre, Trianon, the Pont-Marie, or Carcassonne, we are completely satisfied. And it is well that we should have an opportunity to see a good deal of this French manner in America where the curious conglomeration and imitations of good, bad and indifferent Colonial models, have often completely got off the track of good architecture. In a new country, lately conscious of its wealth, the personal vanity element is rampant, and the knowledge of the best not widespread enough to make it passionately sought.

There is very little to apply directly in another of the illustrations, the bridge at Juvisy, because such bridges will be built no longer, but there is a spirit of mellow graciousness about it which attracts directly like some delightful person. No doubt our manners are not so good or so developed yet that we can expect our buildings to be other than curt or even rude. In 1727 when Louis XV began the bridge, manners were important and writing finished, as in the inscription on one of the pedestals "In the year 1728 the most Christian King Louis XV took pains to reduce the steep slope of this road which had always been difficult and almost impracticable, making it both more usable and more pleasant by trimming and dislodging the rocks, lowering the hill and building the bridge." On the other pedestal the terse inscription reads "Restored by Napoleon, 1813."

The Orne is fifty feet below the roadway, and the cut so high and steep that seven buttress-arches had to be put in to hold up the sides, three under the bridge and two symmetrically on either side. During construction a spring was discovered which supplies the double fountains pouring out through fine carved *mascarons* into the basins where man and beast may drink. The pedestal has the swelling lines beloved of the period. Everything at that time was curving and billowy, beginning with the pompous costumes of the day with the great skirts to their coats, the majestic abdomens, the full-bottomed wigs, to the bulging commodes in the rooms and the altars in the churches. The bridge has no such curving lines besides the simple arches. The parapets, buttresses, all combined to make a severe simplicity that contrasts so charmingly with the flowing lines of the monuments above. It is a beautiful bridge as well as a unique one.

Moving back to the centre of France from the neighborhood of Paris where Juvisy is situated, we get an example of a medium sized town house at Bourges. What could be simpler than the two rows of big casement windows one above another, with their shutters almost overlapping. What is more restrained than the grays of the stone and the stucco, the white of the shutters, the blue gray of the roof and yet what more surprising than the delicate little balcony with its broken flowing lines. No mistake was made, however, by repeating the idea too much or too often. The playful lines accent the centre window only,—there is only one elaborate keystone and the ironwork recalls the lines but does not compete in richness with the stone. Even the vine, like a long festoon of bunting on a fête day is draped across the façade to dress its bareness.

If locality persisted as much as it does in Touraine or Dorset one should be surprised to come across the villa at Héricy of which there are two views, and one of the brick trimmed *communes*. These brick dormers and arches do relate the place a little to Fontainebleau and the seventeenth century. The picturesque tiled roof warms the rather frigid quality of one front at least, while horse chestnuts soften the other, but we have gone a long way from the rich stone work of Vonne or the suave curves of Juvisy. The house does suggest, however, the classic houses of our own early nineteenth century, only without the columns. Columns never spread in France like seven year locusts as they did in America. They were reserved for public buildings and churches. The absence of them accentuates the thin flatness of the detail, although at the same time it admits more of the welcome sunshine. One imagines the rooms are few, high and well proportioned, entirely lacking in finicky smallness. The garden stair recalls that lovely curved one in the Jardin Botanique at Dijon, perhaps the most satisfactory of all light garden stairways. Dressed in its dark green vine showing some of the good iron work on the landing, this *perron* is all-important to the house as a convenience and a decoration. To put vines on the main wall would have injured the wall perhaps and only spoiled the contrast of vine clad stone and iron against a background of warm stucco. The curious base course of big square stones like huge tiles is most unusual. It is rather primitive for the rest of the house, suggesting a little economy in using up some material on hand.

After looking in some detail at these illustrations, Juvisy in the Ile de France, Vonne of Touraine, Héricy near Fontainebleau, and Bourges in the very heart and centre of the country, as well as the other views of towers, gates and pigeon houses, there comes the house with the great roof and "piston" tower at Saulieu. It is not only the question of a difference in period, a harder and earlier one, but the same difference in the

OUTBUILDING, HOUSE AT HÉRICY, NEAR FONTAINEBLEAU

race that inhabits a bleaker, colder section very much as Yorkshire is to Devonshire or Scotland to England. The country of the Morvan is one of the dourest spots in France. Other parts of the country make jokes—Scotch jokes—of the rapacious character of the people there, not with good humor, as the Scotch are twitted, but with real dislike of the miserly, ugly streaks in the Morvanais character.

Not far from the house illustrated, I found a superb mantel in the pink granite of the district. It had the thin swelling curve up and out, typical of Saulieu and its neighborhood. Three solid pieces setting far into wall and fireplace were all that it consisted of. The woman sold postcards in the little shop where it stood; scenting bigger business she offered two Restoration paintings on glass for fifty thousand francs, but the mantel I could have by replacing it with another. Under the hard shell of the Morvan, apparently there are soft spots in commerce and design.

It would take many brochures and illustrations to cover the variety in France. These simple specimens may help to point the way to the different types, periods and regions which will be shown later. It must always be remembered that rich as French work is at times, it is always logical and in good taste. The divine line from Greece has passed through France so that if any country can be said to be the modern Athens, France has come nearest to it. Once in the thirteenth century, once in painting, in the nineteenth century, and in between in many of the arts at various times. To the slightest things in such a country there is some grace.

ENTRANCE FACADE, HOUSE AT HÉRICY, NEAR FONTAINEBLEAU (SEINE ET MARNE)

GARDEN FACADE, HOUSE AT HÉRICY, NEAR FONTAINEBLEAU (SEINE ET MARNE)

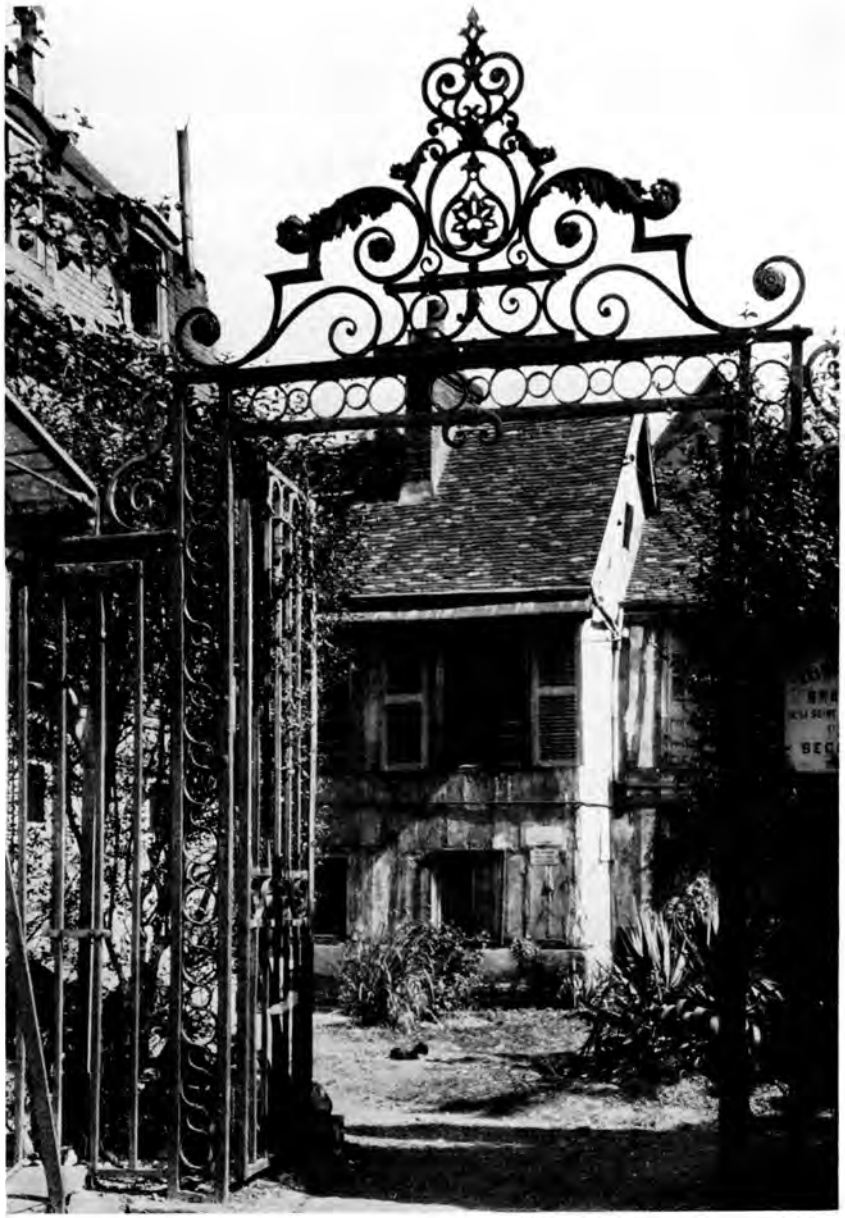
ENTRANCE FACADE, FARMHOUSE AT VONNE, NEAR TOURS (INDRE ET LOIRE)

GARDEN FACADE, FARMHOUSE AT VONNE, NEAR TOURS (INDRE ET LOIRE)

HOUSE WITH STAIR TOWER, SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

TOWER AT LA VILLETTE

PYLON ON BRIDGE AT JUVISY



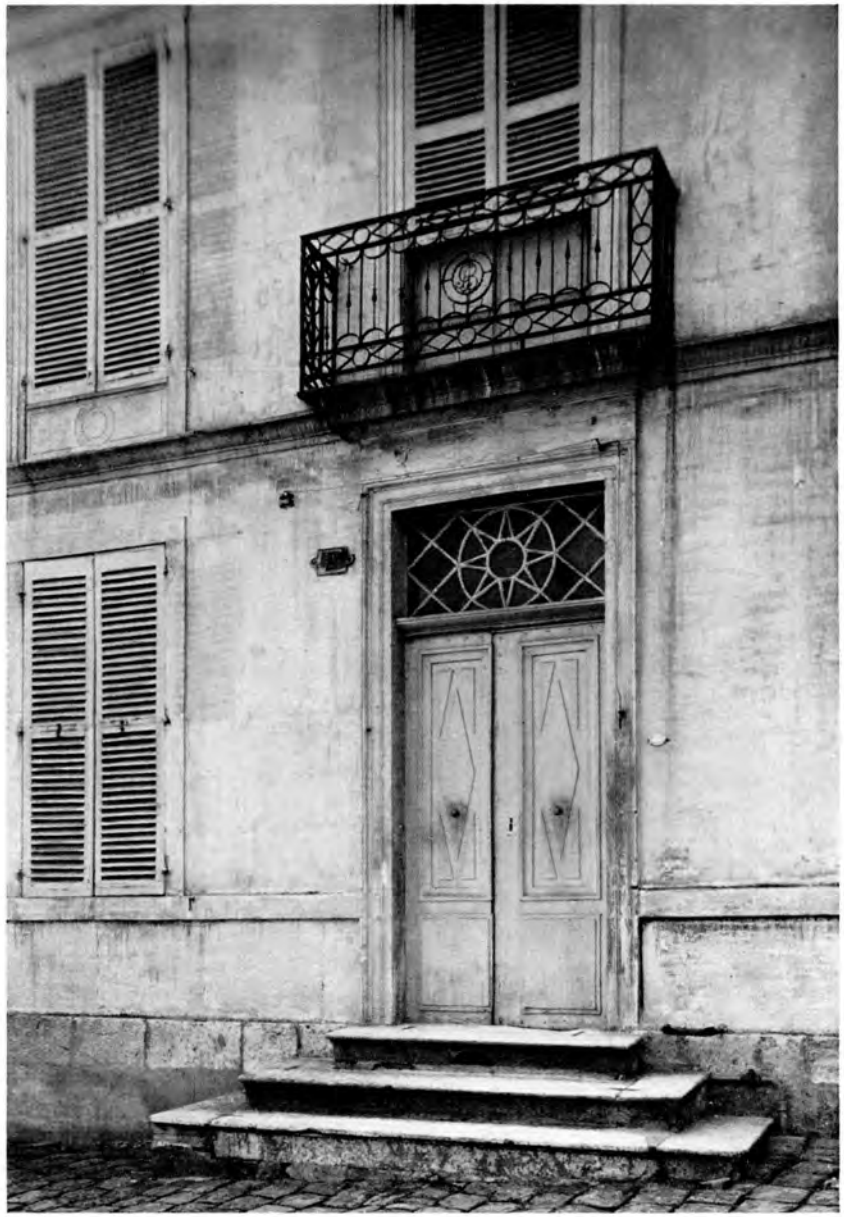
WROUGHT IRON GATEWAY, ROUEN (SEINE INFERIEURE)

BRIDGE AT JUVISY, ROAD FROM PARIS TO FONTAINEBLEAU

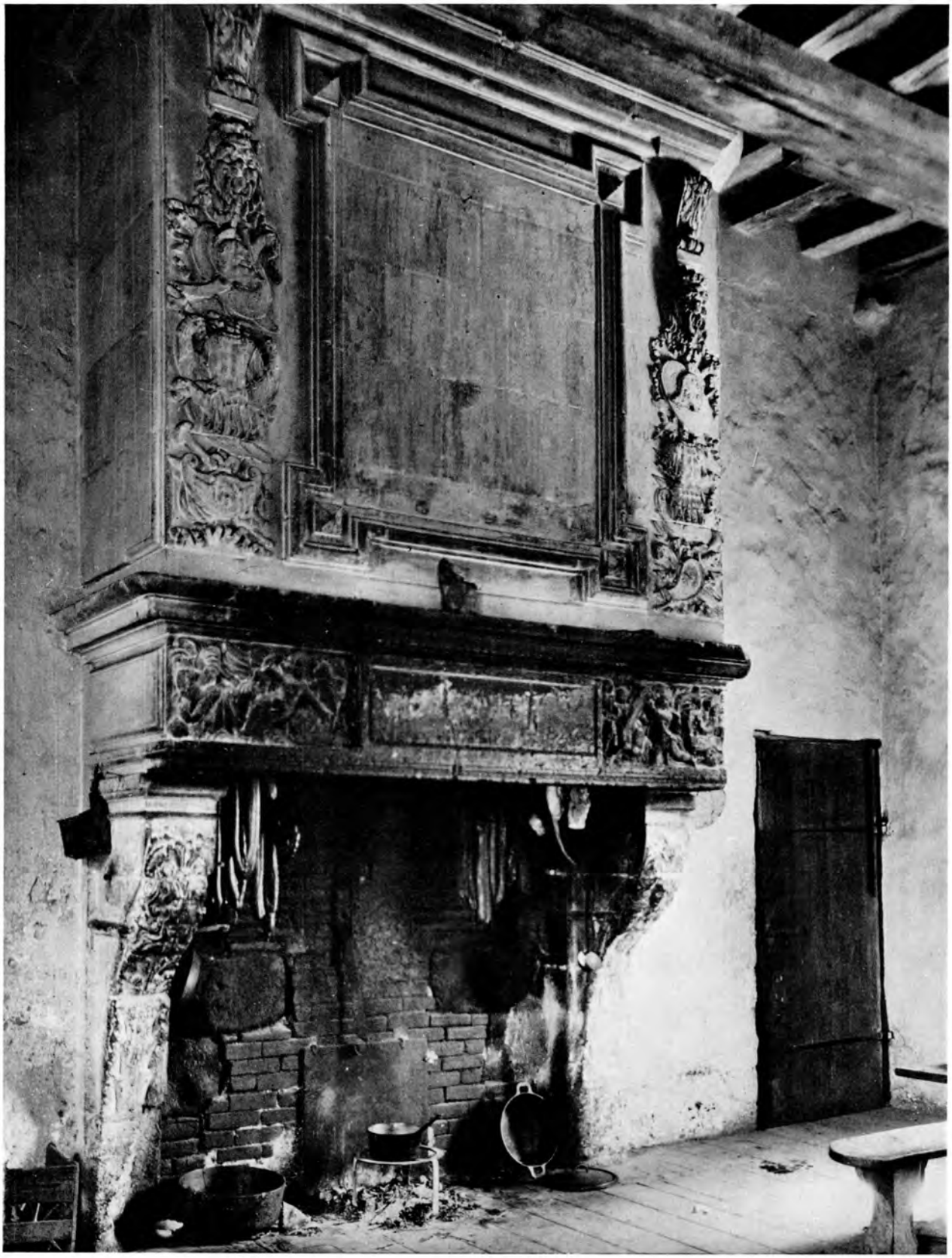
12.

HOUSE AT BOURGES (CHER)

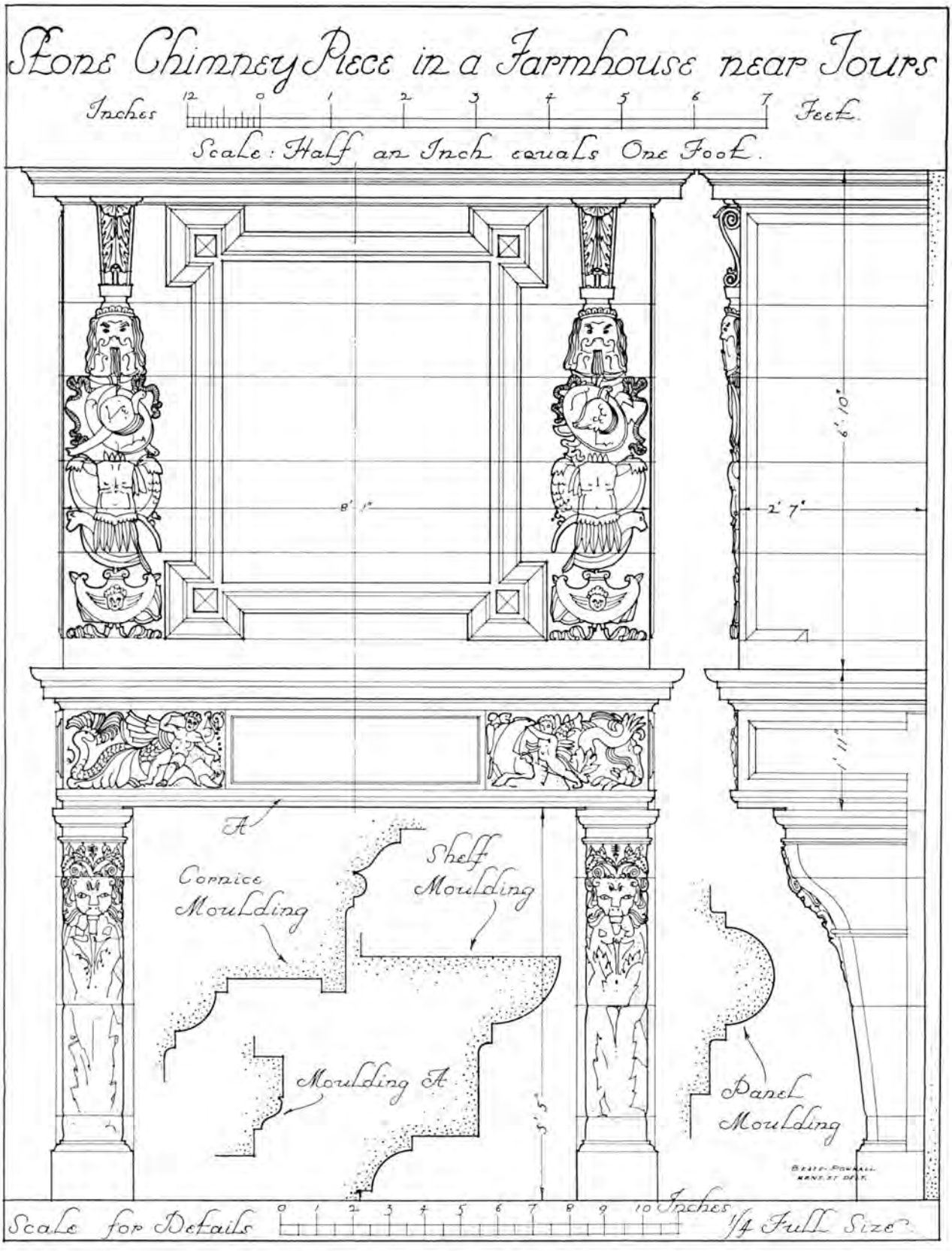
DETAIL OF HOUSE AT BOURGES (CHER)



DOORWAY, BOURGES (CHER)



STONE CHIMNEYPIECE, FARMHOUSE AT VONNE, NEAR TOURS (INDRE ET LOIRE)



SEE ILLUSTRATION ON OPPOSITE PAGE

Inspired by the smaller houses of Versailles, this residence at Bedford, New York, has an intimate charm which is enhanced by the use of tile on the mansard roof. Having no hard, smooth surface to reflect the sun and not giving any unpleasant sheen, Ludowici Tile are especially appropriate for this type of architecture.

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THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

EDITED BY WILLIAM DEWEY FOSTER A·I·A

PHOTOGRAPHS BY F. R. YERBURY HON. A·R·I·B·A

VOLUME III MARCH 1931 NUMBER 2

SOME MINOR ARCHITECTURE OF NORMANDY

TEXT BY

HENRY OOTHOUT MILLIKEN, A.I.A.

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY

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MAKERS OF LUDOWICI TILE

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RAMPARTS OF MONT ST. MICHEL (MANCHE)

MARCH 1931

SOME MINOR ARCHITECTURE OF NORMANDY

By HENRY OOTHOUT MILLIKEN, A.I.A.

THERE are some beautiful photographs on the table before me and, unfortunately they upset one, bring thoughts of France vividly up from the store of memories, and one wonders whether it might not really be possible to slip off quietly by some friendly steamer to those hospitable shores, where so much beauty has already been achieved. What is the use of struggling with refractory ideas, materials, or people, when what you really want to do has, apparently without effort, been done time and again in places so little and out-of-the-way that they do not even appear in the index of your Baedeker.

On the back of a photograph is scribbled "Laize," and it reminds you of a town you once passed through, Bretteville-sur-Laize, driving comfortably in an open carriage on the way to a "pardon" at Port-en-Bessin. You had started far from there at the Manoir of Vasouy near Honfleur and driven along the northern edge of Normandy through Cricqueboeuf and Villerville, skirting Trouville to Dives for lunch, and on through forgotten villages down to the soulless town of Caen to sleep; out early in the morning on the road to Bayeux, stopping at the Priory, with its great tithe barn full of shadows, whose name is forgotten, through the cathedral town itself; and then along country lanes which finally dipped down to the sea. Through this country at other times you had walked, stopping from time to time to try to catch some of the beauty of it with a perverse pencil or the color of it with an unruly brush. After all, walking is the best way of seeing the buildings if you have the time, for you never have to look longingly over your shoulder through a cloud of dust at something which did not catch your eye until the instant when you were being propelled past it at terrific speed; and if you walk, you seek the quieter roads and the by-roads where orchards lean over to greet you, and the farms and chateaux lie open to the view of the passerby.

The memories are fresh and each name of a town recalls buildings, or churches, or gardens in whole or in detail; so many of them, that you again wonder, as you did then, at the profusion of things architecturally worth studying. Certain of their characteristics appear clearly now and are perhaps worth considering for a moment.

The reason why one really should consider seriously these characteristics is that as a Nation, and as architects, we have been far too much interested in the surface features of these buildings, and there has been a lack of thought with regard to the qualities which are really basic, and should be considered before we digest for our own uses those which are apparent at first glance. One of the old teachers in Paris used to repeat —particularly before Americans—the simple phrase, "You cannot build a picturesque thing," and implied that the conscious effort to do so was sufficient to prevent the thing ever having a thoroughly satisfactory quality, such as the really picturesque attains naturally We struggle to create over-night effects of texture, of color, of a living line which only comes from the settlement of masonry and timbers; and all of this effort gives, as a final result, a distinct impression of self-consciousness.

Many writers will explain to you the archeological aspects of this or that building in an extremely informative and interesting way; others will tell you that the fact that it is beautiful is the only thing of importance. But real beauty cannot be attained without the elements of suitability to function and site, and a deep

feeling for composition in the mass which gives solidity. That is what makes these buildings of Normandy seem natural and at home in their surroundings. The farms are solid and stand firmly, well planted on the ground, and the relations of buildings and towers, one to another, show a very great ability, which is akin to that of a sculptor's in opposing mass to mass.

You seldom find any construction which is not perfectly suitable to its uses; the chateau, quite frankly, is the dwelling place of a man who holds himself on a level above his laborers, and who, while wishing to keep a careful eye on the horses, and the cattle, and the barns, does not wish them to intrude themselves on his private life. The farmers' cottages are made for people who live as farmers do. Each unit of the farm group expresses its uses clearly.

Architecture deals over and over again with the same problem, and it is continual cause for wonder that so many variations can be made out of the same elements, and so many beautiful ones. When we travel in Italy, we find extreme divergences of design in two towns, which may be only five miles apart. This is due to the extraordinary individuality characteristic of the Italian Renaissance, to political differences, and to the physical barriers of hills and mountains. In Normandy we have a wide country with easy communications, no important political differences, and the Norman temperament which has been proverbial for generations. Therefore, there is an unusual amount of work done under the same influences, in which the variations on the same theme are of extreme subtlety and correspondingly rewarding to close study.

Normandy stretches from near Abbeville to Mont Saint Michel and inland to Alençon and, while the coast and the important towns and cathedrals are well known, it is surprising to find how easily one can disappear up roads which automobiles have never disturbed and discover along them unsuspected treasures of interest. This is undoubtedly the richest province of France in chateaux and manoirs. Early ones are Martainville, Mesnieres, the fairylike Chateau d'O and Fontaine Henri, the Manoir d'Ango, and half ruined Quilly; all superb things built before the XVIIIth century with its stately, formal planning opened the forests and brought the wide plains into its monumental theory of design. The farm groups of the monasteries are on a grander scale than those of the private owners; Canapville, Maubuisson, and St. Vigor are all fine ones.

If you are looking for rarities you can find in Caen the school where centuries ago the monks of Mont Saint Michel were sent to learn their letters and sciences in the second capital of Normandy. In Lisieux there is a sixteenth century store front with herringbone brick between its carved timbers and a curious open gallery under the eaves where the country cheeses may have been allowed to take the air much as they do now in nearby St. Pierre-sur-Dives. If you can stand them (for this is where Camembert is now made), the latter town has an extraordinary market over 115 feet long with three wide "naves" between the thick posts which support the great roof. It is completely enclosed in stone walls pierced at the ends with gothic arches and buttressed.

The rue de la Grosse Horloge at Rouen is almost unchanged since Bonnington made his famous drawing on a lithographic stone. He also made a beautiful smaller one of the Palais de Justice, the most important monument of its type in France. Down the Seine are St. Wandrille-Rançon and Jumièges, and Caudebec with its many little streams wandering behind the houses and passing under delightful small bridges to join the river. Further down is Lillebonne with its Roman theatre and crossing the river on a ferry you pass through Pont-Audemer to Honfleur. Here on the edge of the inner harbor is a very small church with a rare wooden porch and you cannot help but be thrilled when, inside it you find inscriptions recording the sailing of the great adventurers who left the port in cockleshells to discover Arcadia and Canada. Six times Champlain sailed from here while Dupont, Chaudet, La Salle and many others followed him.

The Normans used every building material and, with a fine feeling for economy, preferred what was to be found on the site. Granite was used in the ramparts of Mont Saint Michel, limestone in the Municipal Building at Flers, while the Chateau de Manerbe combines Caenstone and brick in a very usual manner; a less common arrangement is a checkerboard pattern of black flint, brick and limestone in squares which has never been more cleverly done than at Verneuil. Much of old Rouen was carved wood like the front of Diane de Poitiers' house, and the simpler work was half timber and stucco like the building over the entrance to the cloisters of St. Maclou. This filling between the timbers is called "columbage" and in farms is simply clay mixed with straw, in the towns and manoirs brick or baked clay blocks left uncovered or stuccoed over.

Along the shore these wood-frame and clay houses are covered with thatch, the ridge-poles often planted with iris, and in the spring the damp thatch is covered with great patches of an exquisite pink flower no heavier than a spongy moss. The roofs of the more formal houses and buildings are generally of slate used in rather small rectangular units, and with few variations of treatment or color. Once in a while it is found on vertical surfaces, but this is often merely the old-fash-

HOUSES AT PONTORSON (MANCHE)

ioned way of weatherproofing, when the wall has not been tight enough to keep out the moisture.

But slate never blends with the landscape as beautifully as the small roof tiles nor does it give with the timbers when they twist and warp with age. Nowhere could a more beautiful roof be imagined than the great unbroken line of the huge covered market at St. Pierre-sur-Dives, where the undulations of the surface give a quality impossible to attain with any other material. Long conventual buildings, cloisters, farms and open timber wagon sheds, where there are no dormers with their light and shadows to interrupt the expanse are where this warm surface, formed of slightly uneven tiles, is the most satisfactory covering one could imagine. On smaller roofs the valleys blend in as though modelled by hand, and the ridges are softened by rounded sections set in thick white mortar which gives value to the soft red of the tile.

These roofs or the points of the dormers were often tipped with curious spikes of enamelled earthenware called "epis," of which a few beautiful examples still exist in provincial museums, (the modern copies are atrocious). They were tall like the lead finials used on slate roofs but heavier, as required by the material. The designs show a great freedom of invention, resembling at times the high vase like forms of some early Chinese pottery but colored with brilliant glazes like a piece of Palissy ware.

We have wandered away from our brave attempt to keep one eye on the essentials, but what does it matter really, if we at least realize the unity of design in all this work, the feeling for beauty which permeates it, and the care with which every detail is handled. May we sit down again of an evening to the comfortable fare of a good Norman inn with a bottle of wine at our elbow and a fine, ripe Pont l'Éveque cheese to finish the repast, saying as we have before, "the Normans were grand builders."

HOUSE AT IFS (CALVADOS)

BARNYARD AT IFS (CALVADOS)

TOWER IN COURTYARD AT IFS (CALVADOS)

DETAIL OF MUNICIPAL BUILDING, FLERS (ORNE)

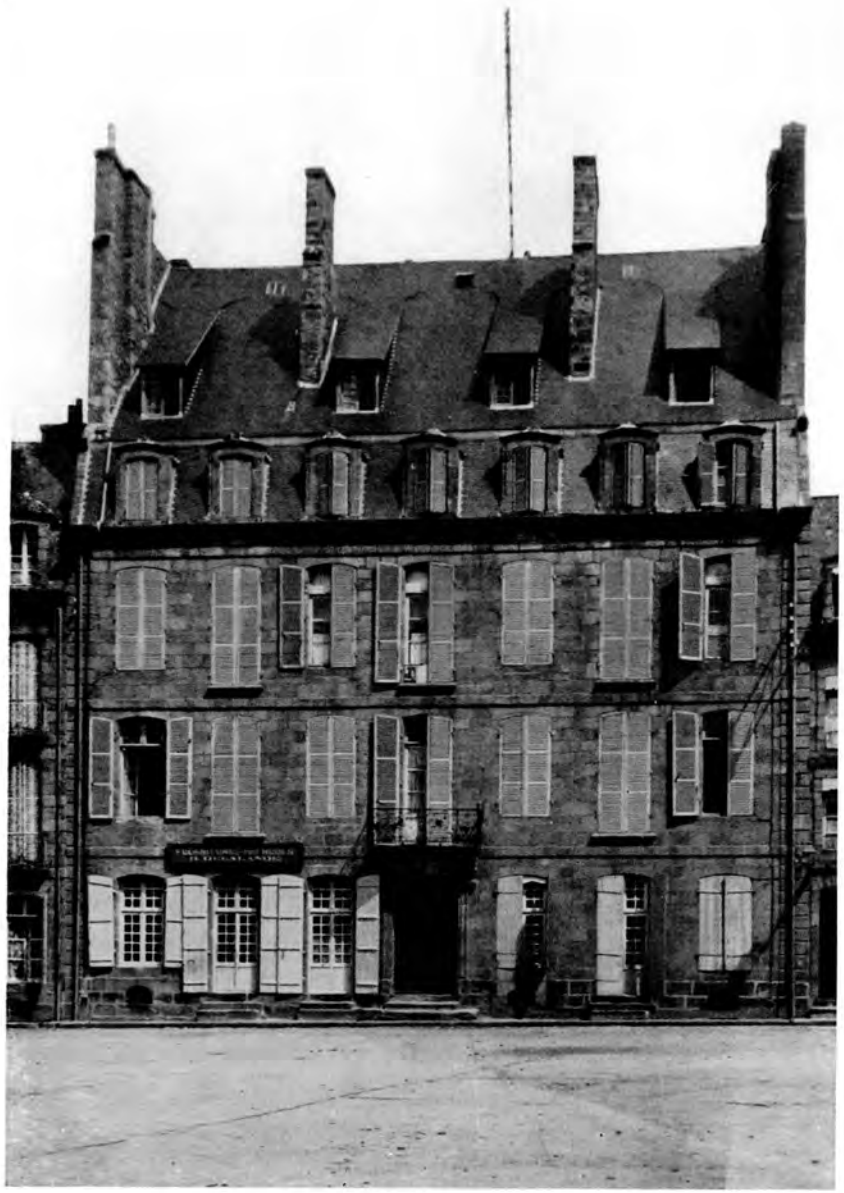
OUTBUILDINGS, CHATEAU DE MANERBE (CALVADOS)

DETAIL OF OUTBUILDINGS, CHATEAU DE MANERBE (CALVADOS)

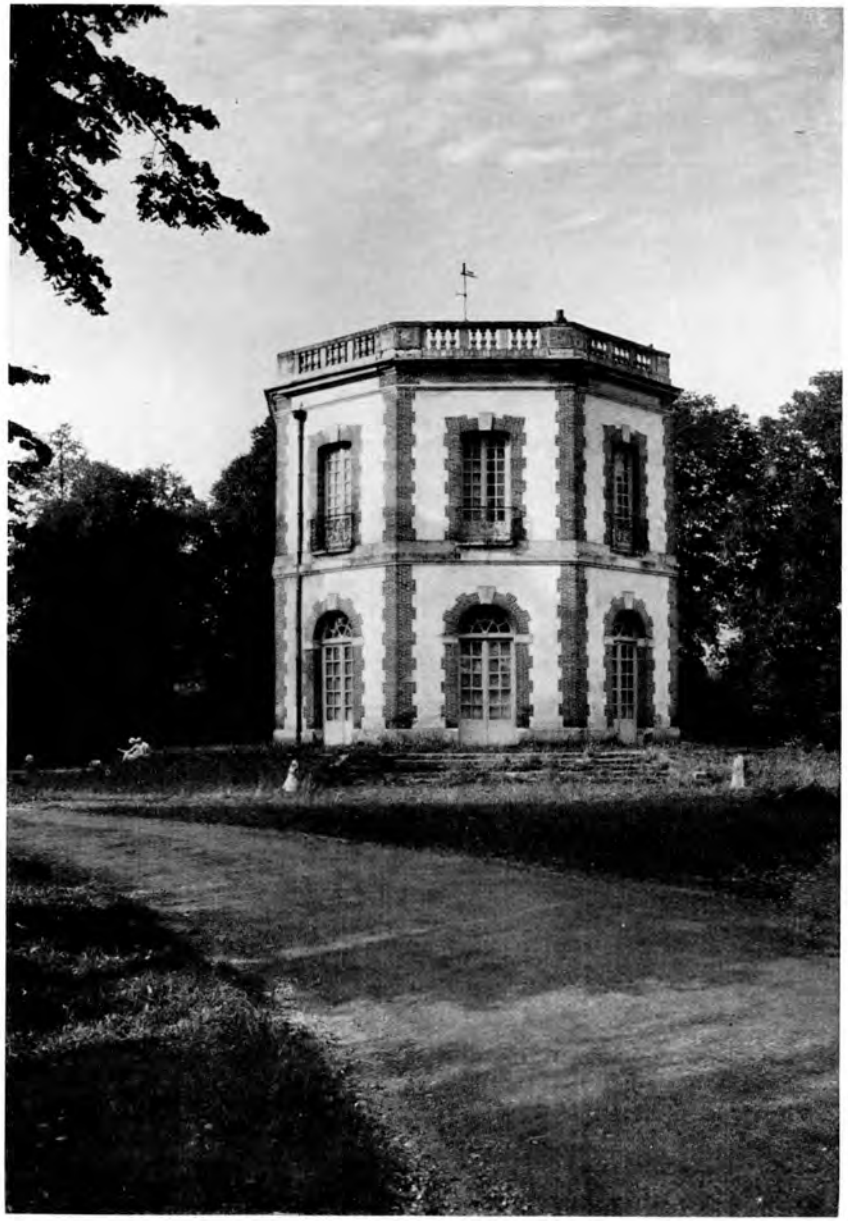
ENTRANCE TO CLOISTERS OF ST. MACLOU, ROUEN

GATEWAY TO MUNICIPAL PARK, FLERS (ORNE)

HOUSE AT LES ANDELYS (EURE)



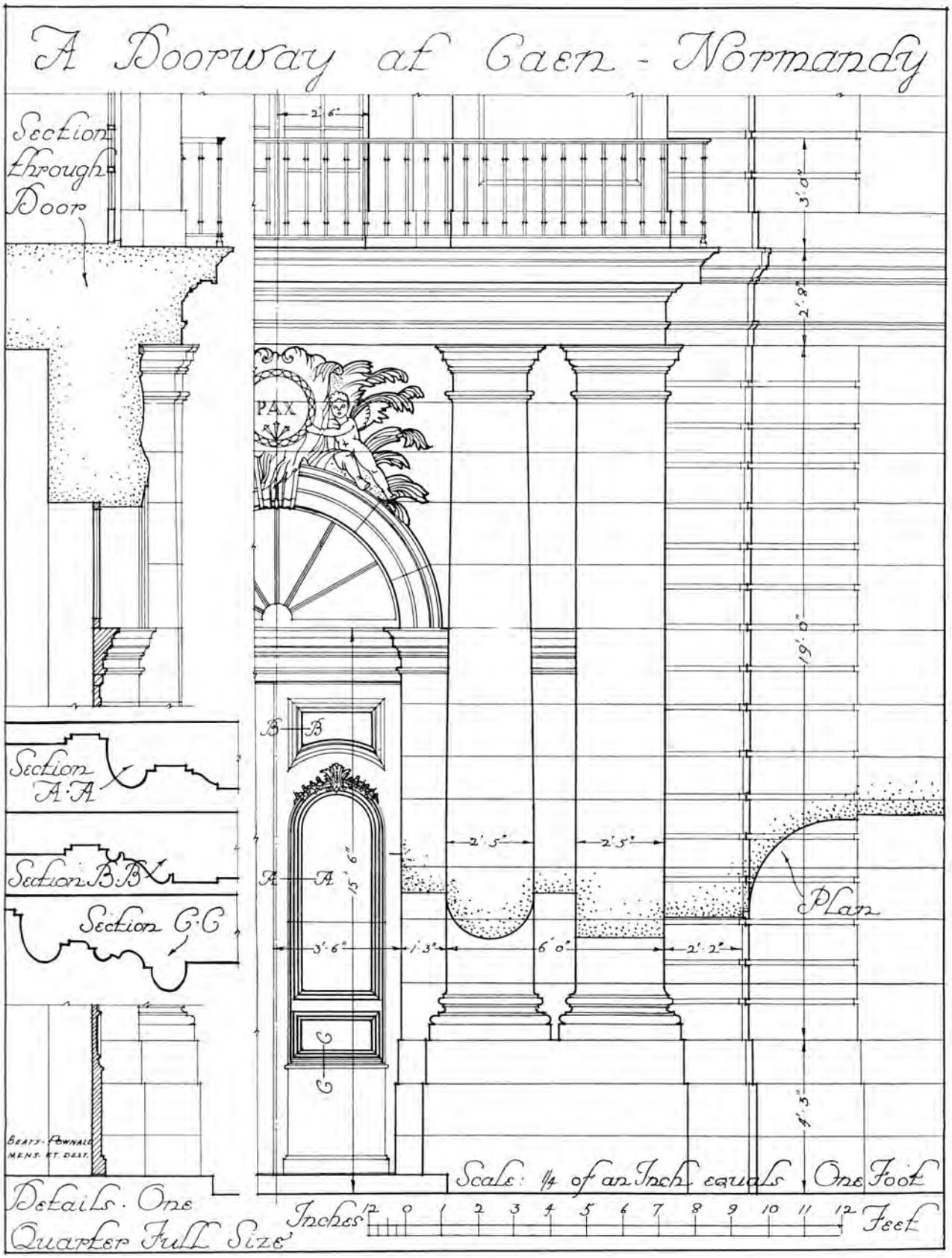
HOUSE AT DINAN (CÔTES-DU-NORD)



RENDEZ-VOUS-DE-CHASSE, FORÊT DE DREUX

MANOIR AT BRETTEVILLE (CALVADOS)

DETAIL OF BUILDING AT CAEN (CALVADOS)



SEE ILLUSTRATION ON OPPOSITE PAGE

By using tiles on the roof, a softness of texture and warmth of color is obtained which adds to the interest of any building. Ludowici Tile have no hard, smooth surface to reflect the sun or give an unpleasant sheen. They are particularly appropriate for buildings of French design as shown by their use on this Delaware residence.

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THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

EDITED BY WILLIAM DEWEY FOSTER A·I·A

PHOTOGRAPHS BY F. R. YERBURY HON. A·R·I·B·A

VOLUME III MAY 1931 NUMBER 5

PROVINCIAL ARCHITECTURE OF NORTHERN FRANCE

TEXT BY

FRANK J. FORSTER, A.I.A.

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY

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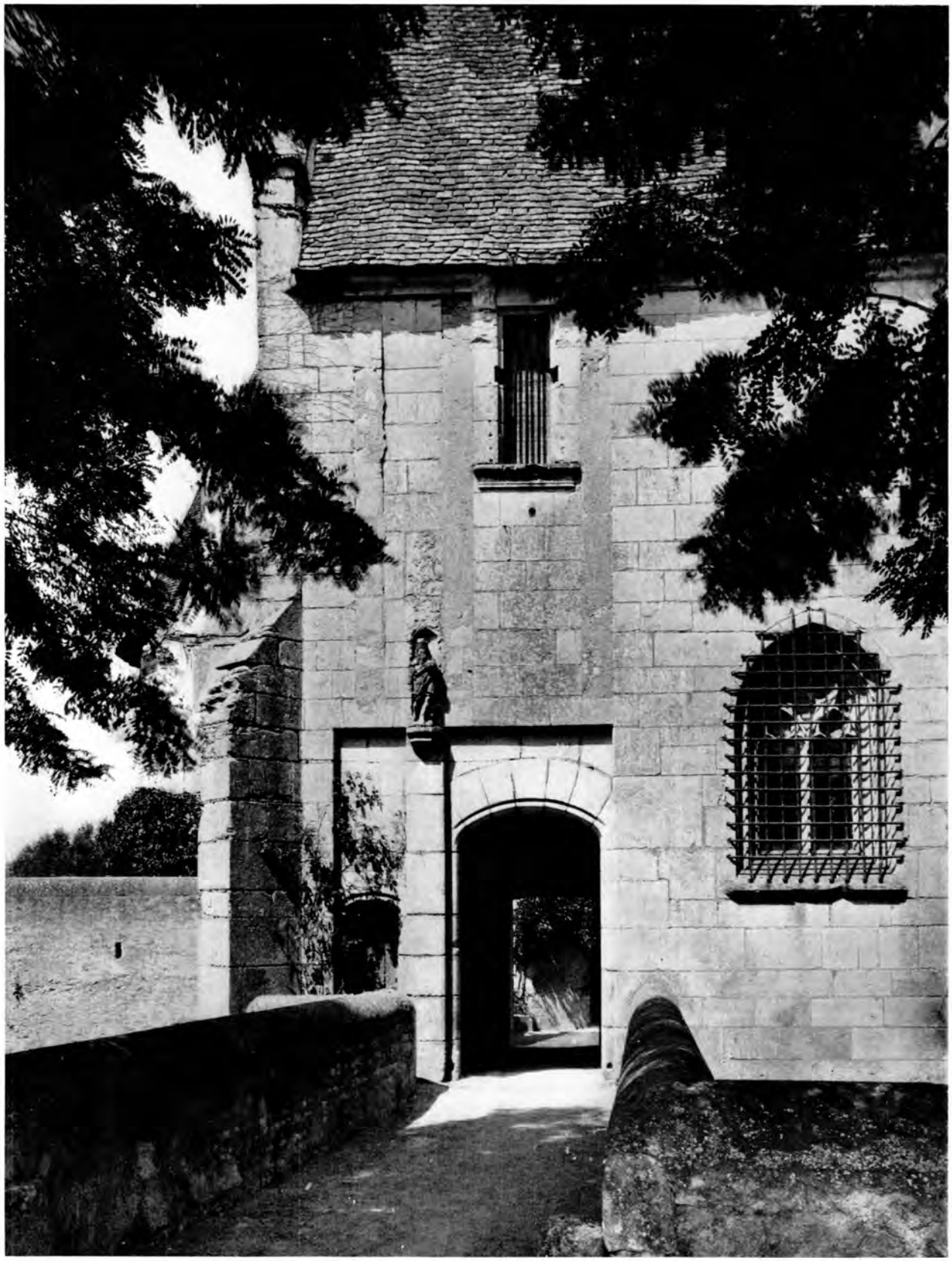


ENTRANCE TO MOATED FARM GROUP AT LE MARAIS (L'OISE)

MAY 1931

PROVINCIAL ARCHITECTURE OF NORTHERN FRANCE

By FRANK J. FORSTER, A.I.A.

IN TRAVELING through France, one soon becomes aware of the fact that the best of French provincial architecture seldom is found on the main highways or railways. The true richness of the native architecture usually is discovered only along the unfrequented country roads and in the tiny hamlets, many of them too small even to be noticed by the railways or the maps. The countryside itself is a joy to behold, and a worthy setting for the sincere and colorful peasant architecture. Sometimes for miles the road passes through great stretches of open country, with lines of tall poplars in the valleys or against the horizon, and the red roofs of distant villages clustered around their church towers. The tillable ground is very frugally worked, yet space is always allowed for stone walls or lines of shrubs dividing the fields. The farm buildings usually are enclosed within high stone or brick walls, with a great gateway at the entrance, high enough to permit the passage of a wagon loaded high with grain. The house and perhaps a tower or "columbier" may stand free from the walls, but the rest of the farm buildings usually form part of the enclosing wall and face the inner court, in which there is often a duck pond.

There are few buildings that remain as they were built. So often, what once was a subject of great beauty has been ruined by some modern innovation; corrugated iron replaces tumbled-down walls, or tar paper is substituted for the hand-made tiles of former times. But many such disappointments are balanced by the discovery of a farm group or cottage of excellent design and well disposed materials. The true character and beauty of these structures is due mainly to the subtle handling or playful use of the natural local building materials. There is no rigidity or stiffness whatever, nor any sharp mechanical lines. No quick and easy methods were used to achieve these results; speed and cheapness were not the motives, but rather durability and natural, simple beauty were the ultimate ideal. Economy was often expressed, but never cheapness. Long experience taught these old builders that their methods were the ultimate in honest construction. Their point is proved by the fact that their buildings, hundreds of years old, have given service and comfort to many generations.

Hard surfaces and sharp lines are not beautiful or satisfying to the eye. The Greeks, exact and mathematical as they were, understood this fact. Straight lines are never found in their structures, no lines are exactly true, all lines are slightly curved or converging. The French peasants, romantic rather than mathematical, and guided by an unschooled sense of fitness rather than by laws of optical illusion, also have achieved softness and grace of line. Repetition is tiring and uninteresting; forms are always more pleasing when slightly varying. But good balance must always prevail; one detail must not overpower another and the eye must be satisfied both as to scale and as to structural purpose. The relation of one detail to another must be governed by the work each is performing. A ponderous cornice appears too heavy for the walls supporting it; a slender chimney looks too weak to perform its duty. Such reactions of ours are often almost entirely matters of feeling, perhaps having very slight rational foundation. We are well aware that a slender steel beam can support hundreds of times its own weight, and is much more efficient, mechanically, than is a heavy stone arch. Nevertheless, we gain greater æsthetic satisfaction from the stone arch. Our minds accept the discoveries of the last thirty years, but our

hearts still prefer the usage of the past thirty centuries.

It is not so much in structural form as in surface quality that there lies the greatest gap between the modern and the old. For eyes wearied with the sight of monotonous machine-made brick and thin veneered facades, there is a great solace to be found in the human imperfection and variety which are the inescapable result of hand work. It is particularly in the one feature of surface interest and richness that the old buildings of provincial France so far surpass the modern.

An intimate knowledge of the past, enriched by contact with beauty and enlivened by a sturdy native imagination, made it possible for these untutored peasants to produce truly great architecture. These people had their roots in the soil; they were born in a village and usually died in that same village. When a man built a house, it was with every intention of living in it all his days, and then handing it on to his children. The house was built of the best materials and by the best of workmanship; it was intended to endure for centuries, and usually it did. Few people knew anything about the life or art of other countries. Native themes in architecture persisted through habit and through lack of outside influence. Thus, the Norman type, with its friendly red roof and whitewashed walls, enlivened with half timber and patterned brick, is quite distinct in style from the Breton house, usually a more severe structure, built of darker and harder materials seldom relieved by carving, and with a grey slate roof, —on the whole a somewhat more stern and somber dwelling. The Southwest of France shows a strong Spanish influence, with rigorously plain white walls and flat pitched roofs of curved red tile. These variations in type were dependent on the nature of the people and on the regional materials. Native materials were used because it was next to impossible to ship in foreign materials; at least, such shipment was far too expensive for those in moderate circumstances. Thus, in a region of native limestone, we find it used almost exclusively, varied at times with brick. Wood was never abundant in France for building purposes, so we find almost no wood houses, but much half-timber construction. In clay countries, brick and tile are the usual materials; where there is no clay, slate is used for roofs and stone for walls.

Under such conditions it is only natural that an intense conservatism should grow up. Each generation revered the buildings of their ancestors and were influenced by them. Even the Renaissance, which revolutionized the design of the larger and historically more important buildings of France, left the provincial architecture practically untouched in its major aspects, though there is much fine Renaissance detail. The traditional motives of design have persisted almost to the present time. Nevertheless, we find a healthy individuality expressed. Each dwelling takes on the personality and robust fancy of its builder. This identity of the maker with his creation we find also in the greater buildings, as in the carvings of the churches, the stained glass, the mural decorations, and the various crafts. Each builder expressed a bold faith in his own ideas and at the same time a consideration and deference for traditional themes.

Confronted with such architectural principles,—tradition, the use of native materials, and the builder's belief in his own genius,—we can do no less than to acknowledge the success of the result and let it serve as an inspiration to us. Nowhere in the whole scope of architecture is better illustrated the harmony between buildings and background. Ancient customs, traditions and peoples have left us this precious heritage to reflect upon, a record of sturdy lives spent in quiet, homely pursuits. Often one house embodies the ideas of not one man but of several generations of men, worked out in harmony. Additions have attached themselves to the old main house according to the necessities of the passing years. Half-timber has been added to stone and brick to half-timber, to fit the circumstances of the builders. Utility and the honest, unashamed economies of the passing generations give the place simplicity and beauty.

Sometimes one hears the peasant architecture of France criticised as being more picturesque than architectural. Whether or not this is a just criticism depends on the definition of the terms. If we take "picturesque" as meaning stagy, forced, or illogical, we are rather abusing the word. Let it be defined rather as livable, inviting, warm. The word "architectural" also is often carelessly defined. If we apply it to the classic or grand style of building it means conformity to certain clearly defined rules or principles. But "architectural" has another meaning as well, less mathematical but none the less logical. There is unbalanced symmetry as well as balanced, but in the former the rules are more subtle. Certain of the best examples of French domestic architecture conform just as truly to the general rules of unity, balance, and proportion as do the classic Greek or Roman buildings.

The characteristics of the northern French provincial architecture are the steep roof pitch; frequent towers of various shapes, round, square and hexagonal; outside staircases, and dormers of varied treatment. The dormer window rising directly from the line of the eaves is everywhere noticed. The steeply pitched roof above generally low walls throws the roof mass into

MOATED FARM GROUP AT LE MARAIS (L'OISE)

prominence and has earned for this type the name of an "architecture of roofs." In the general groupings of buildings, most noticeable in the farm buildings and minor chateaux, the beauty of composition and line is expressed mainly in the pleasing masses of roof at different levels. The height of a central motive will be accentuated by a tall massive chimney. At lower levels a long low wing will depart from the main mass, or a high wall will assist in tying in a group of smaller buildings. A background of tall trees and vines upon the walls do their part in blending the building into its environment.

We must be guided by the spirit rather than by the letter in studying this type of architecture. Merely to copy, line for line, will gain us nothing. We must absorb the tradition and background of these old builders, must understand their lives as well as the houses they built. We must remember that while their culture was not broad, it was thorough; that they were intelligent craftsmen with a mighty pride in the work of their hands; that their work is both naïve and subtle; that their lives were natural but often far from dull. Perhaps if we can absorb the significance of their lives we can hope to gain the essence of their architecture.

RIVER SIDE OF FARM GROUP AT ST. PIAT (EURE-ET-LOIRE)

FARM BUILDINGS AT ST. PIAT (EURE-ET-LOIRE)

FARM BUILDINGS AT ST. PIAT (EURE-ET-LOIRE)

FARM BUILDINGS NEAR MANTES (SEINE-ET-OISE)

MOATED FARM GROUP, LE MARAIS (L'OISE)

GATEWAY TO FARMYARD, PETIT COURONNE (SEINE INFERIEURE)

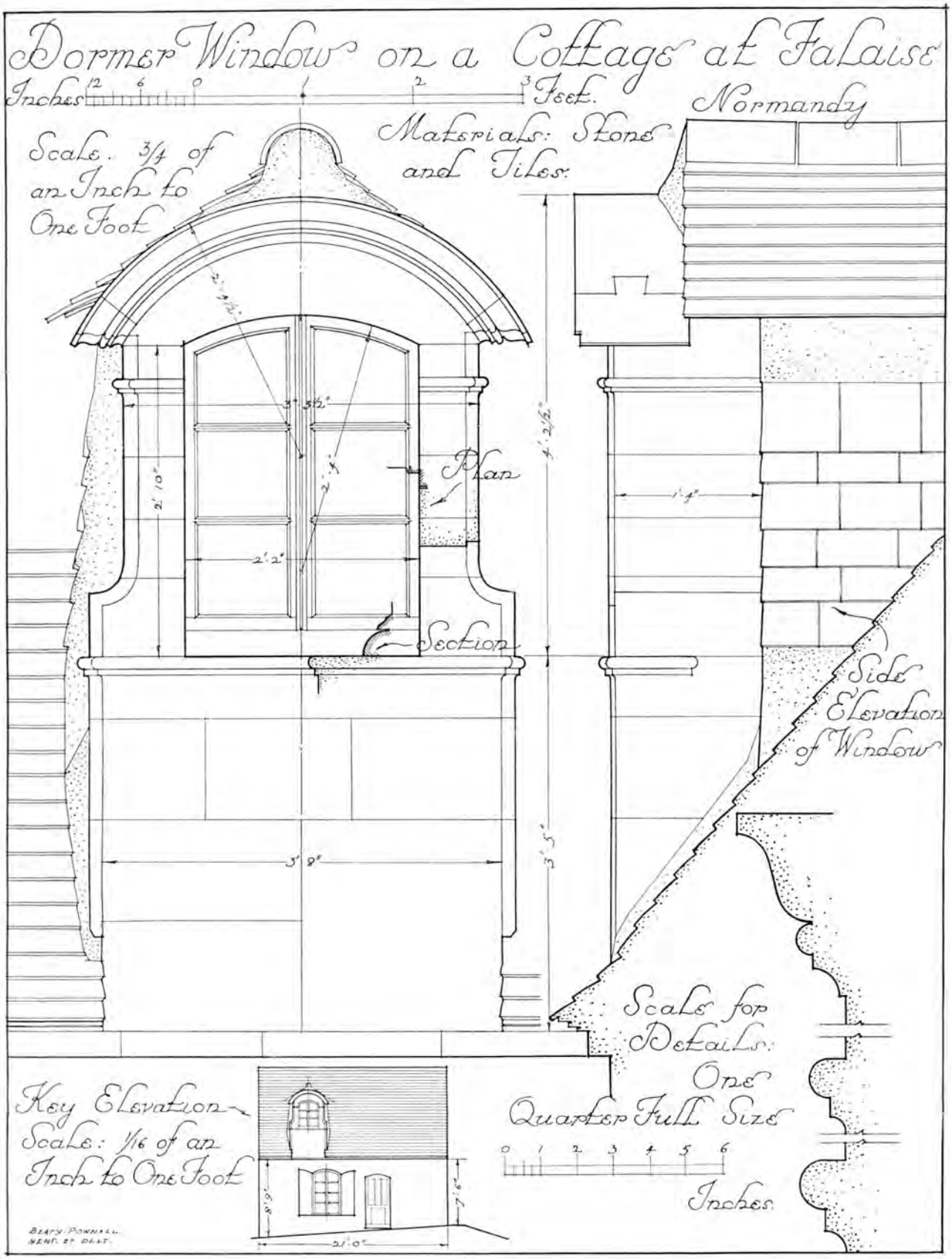
TOWER IN FARM GROUP AT LE MARAIS (L'OISE)

MOATED FARM GROUP AT LE MARAIS (L'OISE)

DETAIL OF FARM GROUP AT LE MARAIS (L'OISE)

FARM GROUP AT LE MARAIS (L'OISE)

DORMER WINDOW AT FALAISE (CALVADOS)



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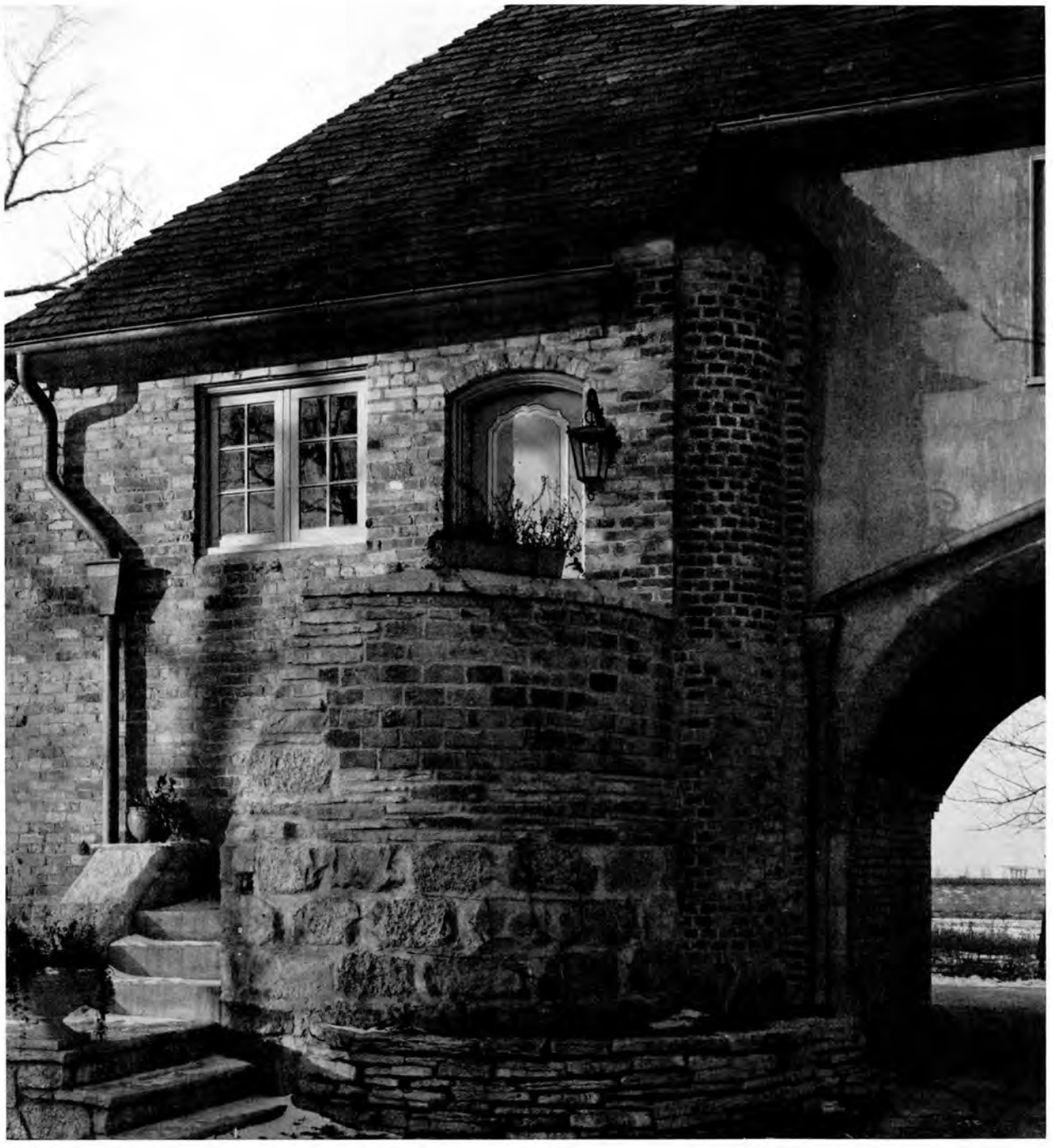

Reminiscent of the farmhouses of France, this detail of a residence at Wilmette, Illinois, shows an interesting use of various materials, the roof being covered with Ludowici Tile. Whether a building is formal or informal, of French, English or Colonial derivation, there is a pattern of Ludowici Tile which will be appropriate for the roof.

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SOME SMALL HOUSES FROM FRENCH VILLAGES

TEXT BY

HARRY HOWE BENTLEY, A.I.A.

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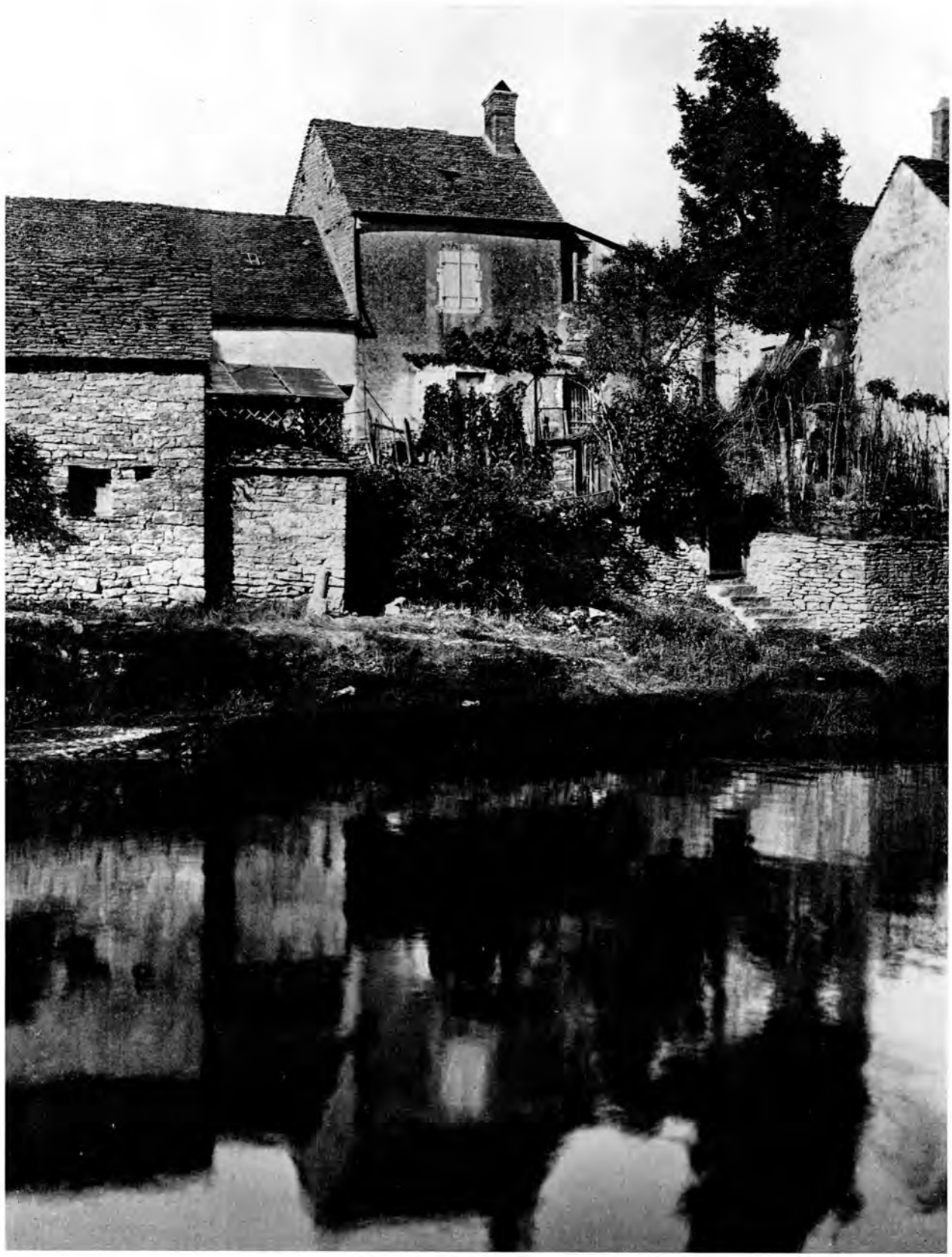


LABUSSIÈRE-SUR-OUCHE (CÔTE-D'OR)

JULY 1951

SOME SMALL HOUSES FROM FRENCH VILLAGES

By HARRY HOWE BENTLEY, A.I.A.

AS I look over the several photographs of small houses from French village and countryside sent me by the editor of the "Tuileries Brochures" and read his request for an article to accompany them, I find myself speculating as to the kind of reader who will see these pictures and who may read these words; thumbing over the recent issues of the "Tuileries" in an attempt to start my mind and pencil working in the proper grooves, I see on the title-page a notation that I had forgotten — "for circulation among the members of the architectural profession"—and the task seems, if not easier, at least more definite. Could we not, without taking ourselves too seriously, consider this as a one-sided conversation, *entre nous*, as to what use we can and should make of material of this nature that comes to us?

In these days when the winds of modernism are blowing about our ears, it is proper and right for us to scrutinize with particular care our use of the heritage from the past. Many signs point toward an end to the period of eclecticism in which we have revelled for the past decades. Labels are losing their potency and our clients are less insistent upon houses that are stylistically English, or Mediterranean, or French. Our own traditions, brief as their background is, show promise of ripening into a maturity where our good work may be classified as *American*. How can we help make the result not only a true product of its own time but one that has emerged gently and without break in continuity out of the good things of the past? A partial answer to our question may be that we should make less literal use of these sources so far as their outward aspects are concerned, and seek more zealously the intangible qualities—the intellectual and spiritual factors—that went into their conception. What are some of these qualities that may become apparent as we examine through our subjective spectacles the many fine old houses here pictured?

For one thing, they are modest and free from pretense. Their builders accepted with pride and independence their stations in life as farmers or tradesmen or small *rentiers* and did not ape the chateau or manor-house of the aristocracy. They are frankly small houses and recognize the fundamental principle of scale that a small thing must have fewer parts and motives than a large one. If building may be taken as an index of social character, it is interesting to speculate on the partial disappearance of this contented non-assertiveness in the French *bourgeoisie* of today. Reviewing our visits to France, we will remember observing few if any really good small houses built within the past fifty years. Does this result from an exaggerated and false sense of class consciousness? While the American of moderate means occupies with pride and content a whitewashed suburban house reminiscent of an old-world farm, the French citizen of similar station fears loss of social prestige if his dwelling suggests a peasant precedent, and he builds the sort of thing one sees in the *banlieues* of French cities—a "villa" that is a mock-chateau, bristling with towers and turrets, and as smooth and shiny as a piece of varnished golden-oak furniture.

These old houses do not become servile in their modesty and restraint; there is none of that enforced class-humility of the children in the English village school who chant

"God bless the Squire and his relations
And keep us in our proper stations."

No, these walls are as thick, their stones as sound, the roofs as tight and enduring, as of the chateau up on the hill above the river. Very often the farmer in his old house, half dwelling and half barn, even though he wears *sabots* and smells of the stable-yard, will be

richer in money and bonds and lands than the *chatelain* himself. Why should he not be conscious of his own integrity—of his small part in a national culture that for uninterrupted continuity is unrivalled in the world? For his fortune, like his house, has resulted from similar processes and motives—small increments gained by hard labor, contentment with slow progress for the sake of a result that will be enduring, determination that in the long cycles of years his contribution shall be a worthy heritage to his posterity.

The examples shown in this issue are singularly free from any attributes of mere prettiness and florid picturesqueness. It would be damning with faint praise to label as picturesque the little wayside house at Pernay shown on page 61, with its stone wall and steps and well-placed planting, or the venerable house and barns near Tours on page 56. Interest and charm they do possess in large degree, but it is the compositional interest of parts correlated to form a simple and logical plan arrangement, the color and texture interest given by worthy materials that will become dignified and not decrepit as they grow old, and the charm bestowed by nature and time in softening their contours and wedding them to their sites.

A brilliant critic analyzing the appeal of Mei Lanfang to an occidental audience ascribed it, quite apart from the novelty, to "the effect of strength and passion that there can be in the absolute renunciation of originality." Is it not true that when laudable originality is present in the houses we architects design, it has come unsought and as a by-product of ardent enthusiasm in solving the problem? We see in these houses no conscious attempt to be original or different. Their builders, using local materials and neighborhood methods, did not dread the inevitable family resemblance to the other houses of the village. What Henry James once called a "decent monotony" in grouped buildings may become an effective background for the subtle minor and accidental variations that insure reasonable individuality. The homogeneity of these seasoned French villages is one of the most striking features that differentiate them from the over-emphasized individualism of the average American community.

In these days when "functionalism" as expressed in the design of a house is so likely to mean a flat roof and a gas-pipe rail, it is interesting to seek its manifestations in a style too often admired for mere surface picturesqueness. Take for instance the French fondness for placing the dormer at the eaves level, as we may see illustrated in the charmingly architectonic facade on page 60, and the great unbroken expanses of roof surface that seduce us as compositional and textural assets and provoke us as cubage producers; in the house referred to, the batten door with its hoisting-hook, for the obvious purpose of access to a loft used for storage only, is forced into the plane of the wall to secure unobstructed vertical hoisting space, while the use of the great volume of space under the roof obviates the need of an additional shed or barn. We may remember that the French for attic is "grenier"—the "granarium" or grain-bin of the American farm. When habitable rooms are developed in the attic and the opening becomes a window, custom keeps the dormer in the same place, necessarily so when it is faced with stone; but even when built of wood the power of tradition is not to be denied and instead of sitting back on the rafters it proudly insists upon its seat in the front row, as we may see in the house at Pontorson on page 57, where the boarding and lozenge-shaped panel filling the space between gutter and sill become a detail of quaint interest.

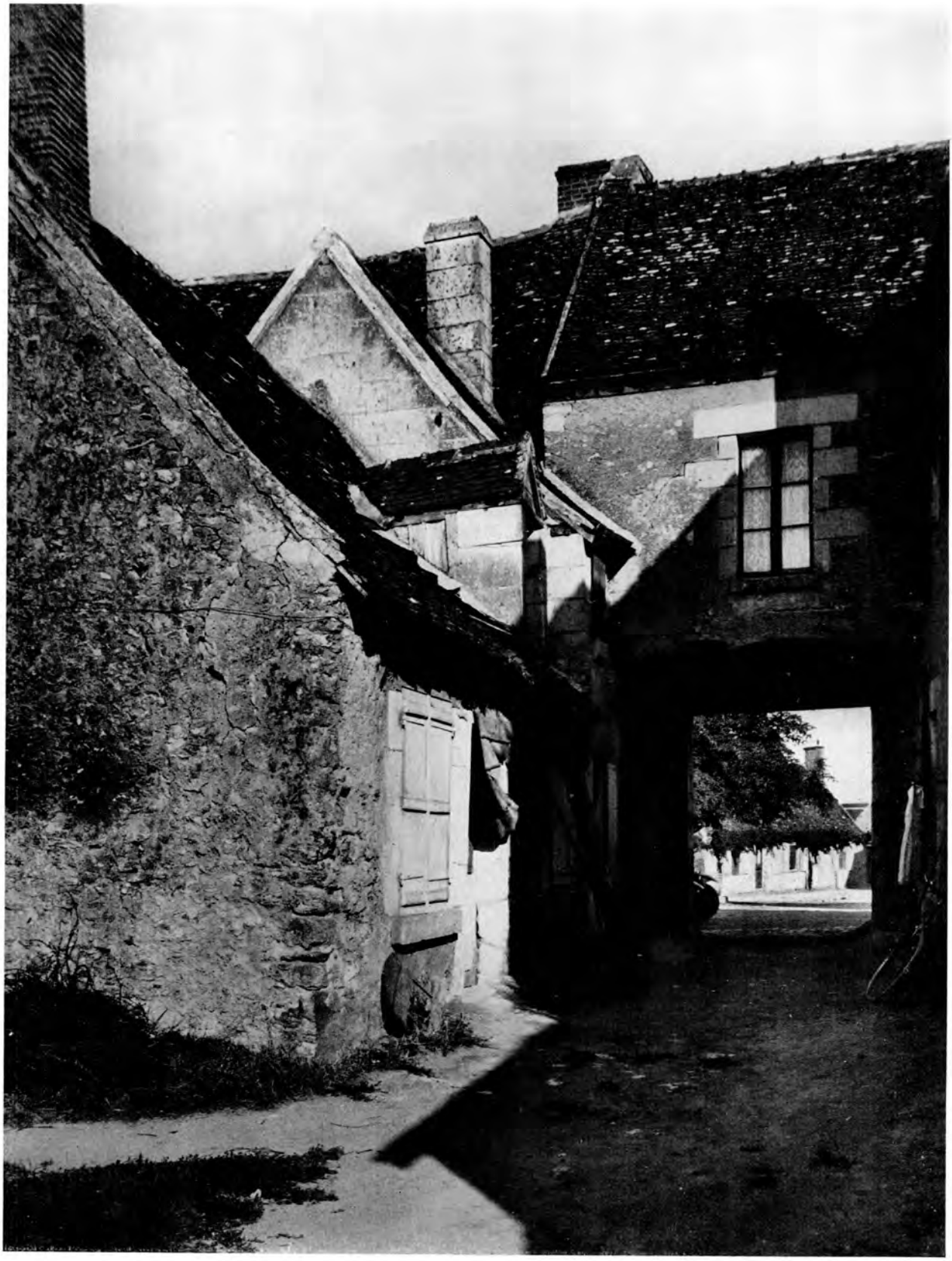
We learn from these pictures that houses must be sturdy and substantial to age gracefully and we can or should learn that attempts to simulate during construction the mellow maturity endowed by time, weather, and accident may be betrayed by their own insincerity. If "intellectual honesty, the courage to look at things as they are, is the first test of mental maturity," as a modern writer has said in an analysis of French character, such attempts on our part may well make us doubt whether we are fully grown. When we see a wavy ridge line and a billowing roof surface on an old French house we may know that it has resulted from a miscalculation or error by its builder, who after all was only human; would he not smile in derision if he saw us trying laboriously to achieve the same result in a new building? The interesting variety of wall texture in the house at Courcay on page 59 is not the result of artful effort, but of variations in weathering, replasterings over periods of years, and an ageing that sturdy construction prevents from becoming decay.

It is academic to ask us to wait a hundred years for our buildings to ripen into their ultimate beauty, but it is quite right that we should use honest methods in seeking today a reasonable freedom from spick-and-span newness and raw immaturity; these houses can teach us truthful methods of achieving color and texture interest in buildings that are new—methods that we have not been slow to learn, as can be seen in our better work of recent years. We have outgrown the mechanical and dry precision that was considered a part of good construction a few years ago and no longer specify pressed brick with one-eighth inch joints and "stone to be of an even shade of color throughout so that one stone shall not look of a different shade from another when set in place." These houses furnish us

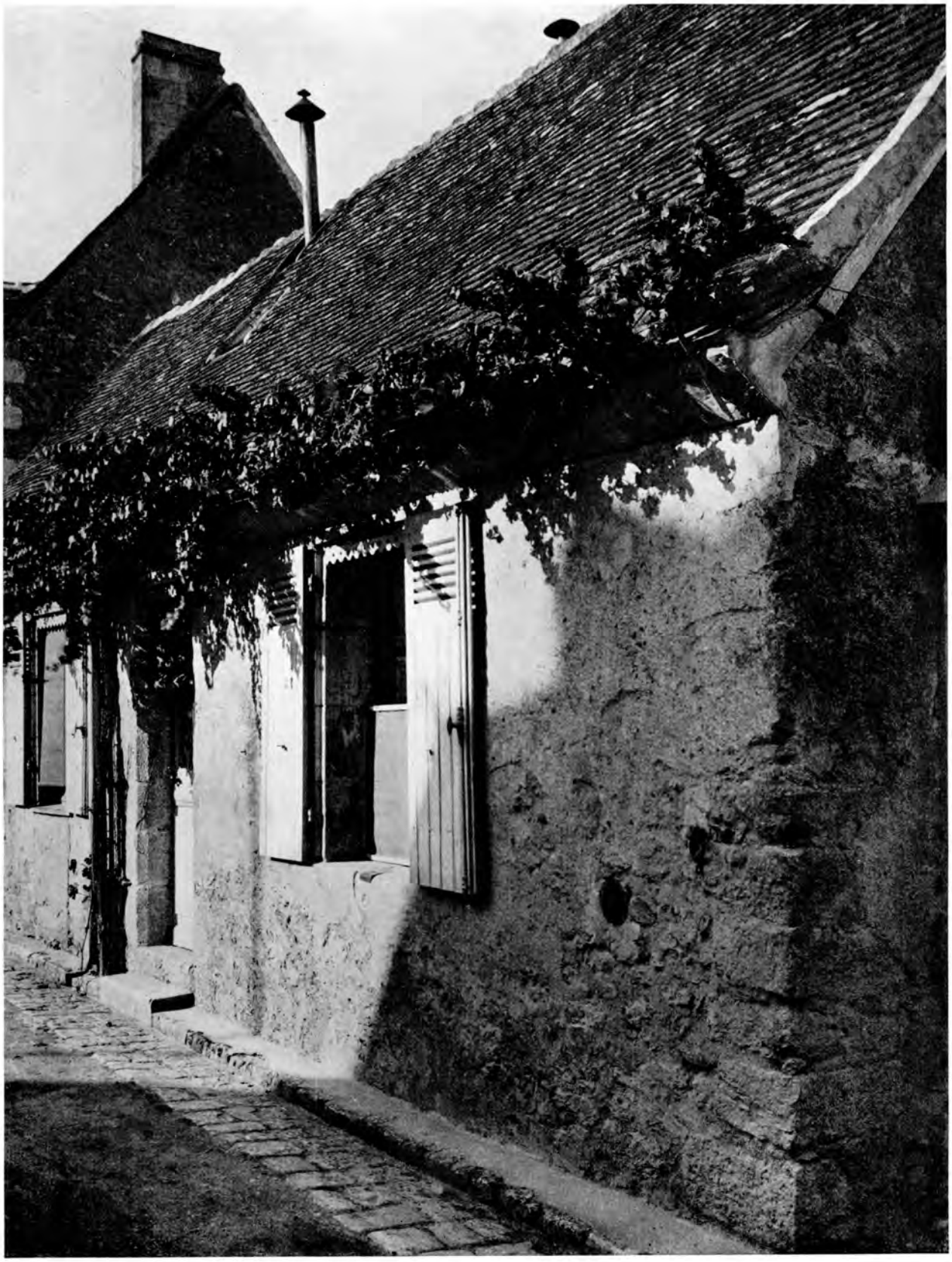
VILLAGE OF PERNAY (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

countless instances of the sparkle and interest resulting from the inevitable natural inequalities between different units in wall and roof. While the heat and aridity of American summers does not permit our roofs to acquire a patina of moss and lichen, we are enabled by natural variation and differences in kiln temperature to secure materials with color and texture interest. Note the difference in texture of roofing tile and slate on the adjoining buildings at Pernay on page 53 and of the reroofed house near Tours on page 56. How much of the simple dignity of the facades on page 60 results from the contrast between the cut stone quoining at corners and windows and the rubble stone in the main body of the walls. These variations may suggest to us possibilities of studied harmony in arriving at an ensemble—the roof texture that goes best with a certain wall texture, and formality versus informality as influenced by materials.

It is not easy to dominate our materials and secure perfect results, working with the indirect machinery of modern methods; it means bridging the gap between drawing-table and mason's scaffold and supplementing the unimaginative superintendent's approval of a "sample section of wall laid up according to specifications" by many visits to the job, and patient tact with workmen who have lost the old tradition. Still more difficult is it to give our houses the intangible attributes of honesty and sincerity and unpretentious modesty. These old houses were conceived, not by trained architects seeking a balance between intellectual and emotional factors, but by village stone-masons who were not given to philosophical analysis of their methods and materials. The successful result is one that comes through simply *doing*, without too conscious effort. When we play golf, our game suffers if we think intently about each detail of stance and swing; success arrives only with subconscious facility in each detail and perfect synchronization of all details. As architects, our present conscious effort will surely bear fruit in a future facility that will become instinctive; our exertion of to-day will help establish the continuity of tradition, and when the tradition has acquired power and vitality it will automatically give this power and vitality to the buildings we design.



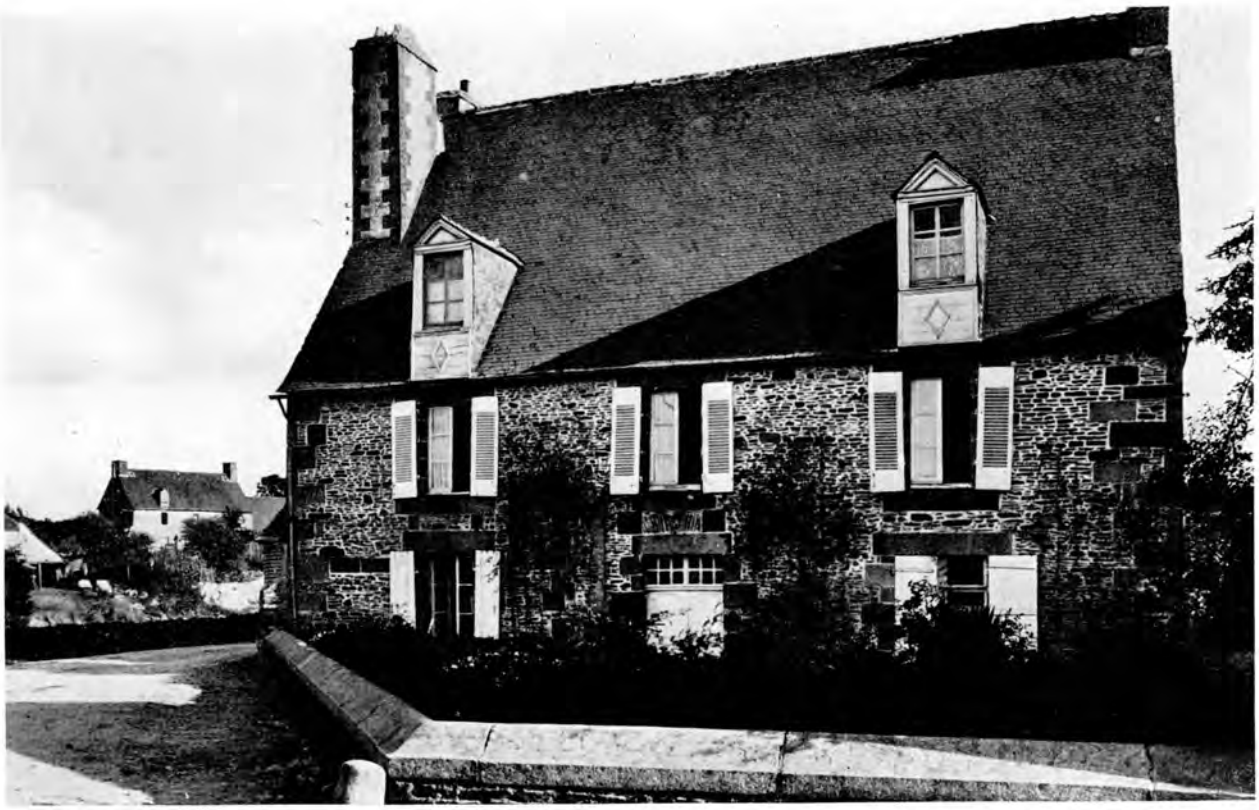
PASSAGE AT REIGNAC (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)



COTTAGE AT REIGNAC (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

FARMHOUSE NEAR NEVERS (NIÈVRE)

FARMHOUSE NEAR TOURS (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)



HOUSE AT PONTORSON (MANCHE)

HOUSE NEAR CAEN (CALVADOS)

HOUSE AT COURCAY (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

HOUSE AT COURCAY (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

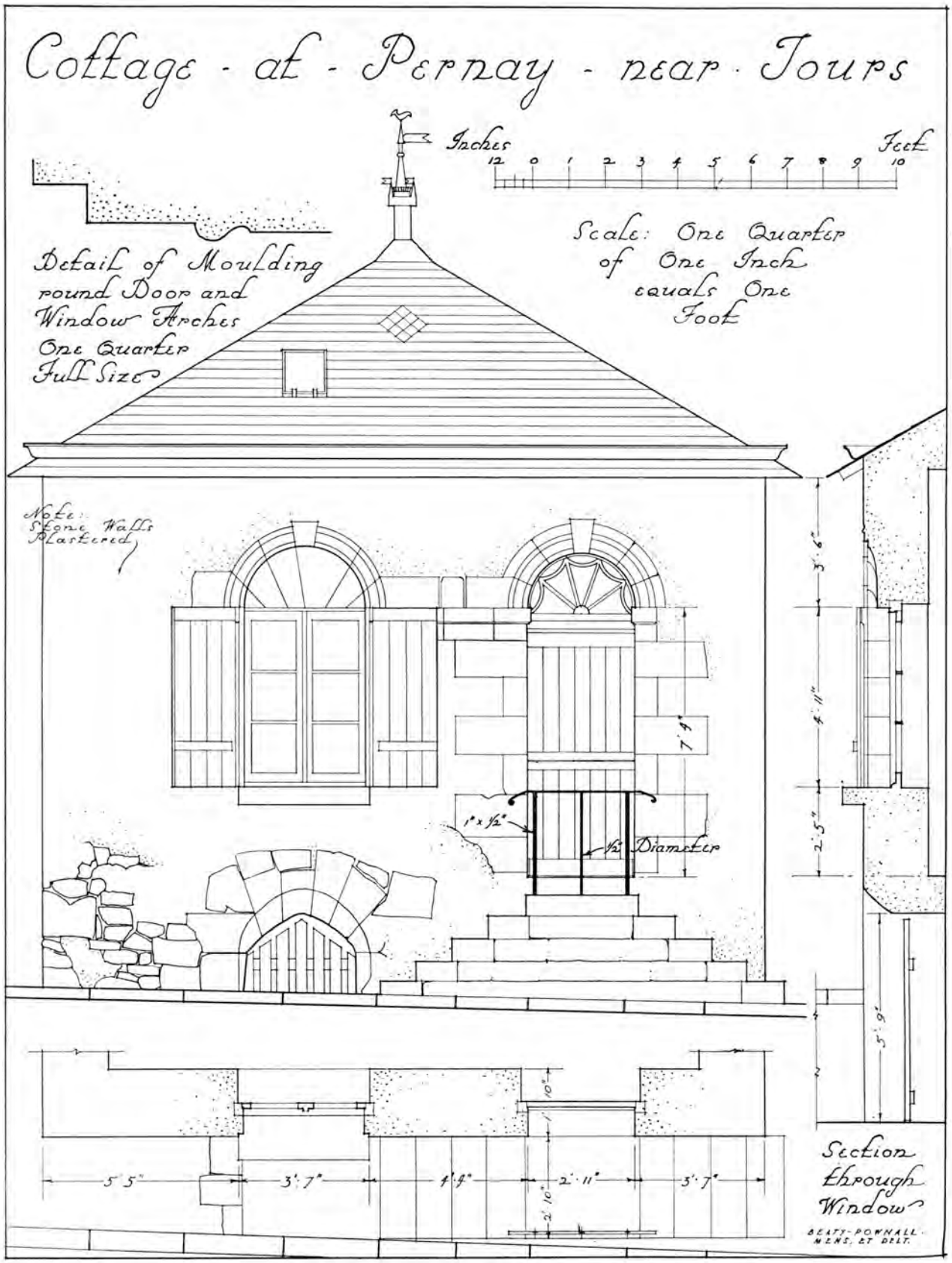
COTTAGE IN NORMANDY

COTTAGE AT BRÉCEY (MANCHE)

COTTAGE AT PERNAY (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

FARM GROUP IN TOURAINE

COTTAGE AT PERNAY (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)



SEE ILLUSTRATION ON OPPOSITE PAGE

Thoroughly American, yet based on the tradition of French farmhouses, this residence at Baltimore shows how excellently a roof of Ludowici Tile complements this type of architecture. There are many different patterns of Ludowici Tile and also variations of texture and color, making them adaptable to various types of buildings.

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FORMAL DESIGN IN MINOR FRENCH BUILDINGS

TEXT BY

ALFRED EASTON POOR, A.I.A.

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY

LUDOWICI-CELADON COMPANY

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FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

HOUSE AT MANTES (SEINE-ET-OISE)

FORMAL DESIGN IN MINOR FRENCH BUILDINGS

By ALFRED EASTON POOR, A.I.A.

En prenant l'architecture à l'origine d'une civilisation qui succède à une autre, il faut nécessairement tenir compte des traditions d'une part et des besoins nouveaux de l'autre."— Viollet-le-Duc

IN STUDYING these examples of the more formal types of French architecture let us follow the advice of that wise architectural critic, Viollet-le-Duc, and consider first the mode of life of which these buildings are the expression, and second, the changed requirements of today. Most of the houses shown in the accompanying photographs were built during the late 17th, 18th, and the first quarter of the 19th century. This was a period of dignity; a formal habit of life and of thought tinged expression in literature and in the arts. It was the age of the court and the courtier, as well as of the cultivated provincial bourgeoisie. The French of that time wanted their homes to be an appropriate setting for the sophisticated, polite life.

The desire for a similar background exists in America today. France, during the 18th century, was experiencing the same reaction that is going on in this country against the cumbersome chateau and the huge estate. There was a desire for a smaller, but perfectly designed and appointed town or country house. The plan was to be convenient and compact because of the difficulty and dislike of being dependent upon a large corps of servants. It is natural to ask why one should turn to France for inspiration rather than to England, Italy, or Spain. The answer is that the charm of these French houses rests almost entirely upon the excellence of their scale and the unpretentious balance of design; not upon accidental picturesqueness, nor upon the beauty that age alone can give to surface texture. Take away the mellow color of the brick and the dark lustre of the encircling vines from examples of English Georgian small enough to be of present day domestic interest and there is often left but a cold and unstudied mass; take away the vastness of scale, impractical today, from the Spanish and Italian examples, and remove the delightful irregularities of hand work and age and we see a soulless, forbidding box.

Why, again, should we take French architecture of this particular period rather than that of an earlier time? Precisely because the charm of the French Formal style depends upon intrinsic excellence of design rather than upon the charm of softening line and surface texture resulting from the decay of age as in the farmhouse type. It is the spacing and balance of the windows and their relation to the wall surfaces that pleases us, not the irregularities of hand work. The wall surfaces are as true as the machine-minded American workmen of today could make them; the lines of the ridge and the eave do not sag despondently.

In the last analysis is not this fad of living in imitation primitive farmhouses, surrounded carefully by all modern conveniences, a little ridiculous? Is it not as absurd for a twentieth-century commuter to make his home a synthetic stable group as it was for Marie Antoinette to play at being a milkmaid in her "Hamlet" of rustic half timbered houses?

It is precisely this decadent and artificial note which we avoid in adapting the formal French type of house to our life of today. In all essentials, it suits our needs; in smaller details, the transition must be made by recognizing the differences as well as the amazing similarity of the two modes of life.

The French of the 18th century desired, as we de-

sire, a dignified house in which to live with comfort and elegance, and in which to entertain. They considered the privacy of their home an essential right; we do today. To this end they protected their house and their garden from the gaze of the passer-by with a high wall. Now that our countryside is getting more built up and our tastes more civilized, we are doing the same. However, in spite of many similarities the French 18th century man's way of living was after all somewhat different from ours, and this difference expresses itself in the plan of the houses. There was no especial room set aside solely for use as a dining room. This was because they habitually had breakfast in their bed rooms; the other meals, depending upon the number of people present and upon the weather, in the boudoir, the library or the salon. The American scheme of entertaining makes the dining room of major importance and it must be large enough to seat a great number at table. In France the *salon* was generally on the *premier etage*, the floor above the ground floor. In America the living room is on the ground floor, and opens onto the garden so that one may walk in or out freely, or sit outdoors. But the Frenchman was content to overlook his garden from a charming balcony opening from the *salon*. He was not accustomed to sit out of doors, and when he went for a walk it was a serious undertaking, and was prepared for accordingly. The position of the *salon* on the second floor was reflected in the facades. The largest windows are generally found in the center of the *premier etage* with balconies from which to take the air and enjoy the garden.

The house at Bourges, illustrated on page 78, shows admirably the location of the *salon*. The second floor windows are larger and open down to the floor, allowing access to the balconies. The center window in the composition is cleverly accented by the trefoil shape of the balcony with its decorated keystone beneath, and by the change in character of the wrought iron railing. The Archbishop's Palace at Chartres with the round headed central window; the house at Pernay; and those at La Pailleterre and at Mantes all accent the *premier etage* by the size and the richness of the windows. In contrast, the ground floor generally appears bleak. This is an outgrowth of the French desire for privacy and for protection from outside. The ground floor of the Archbishop's Palace at Chartres has no windows in the view referred to, only a door, and this provided with heavy bars. The photograph of the house at Pernay (page 75) shows small windows with solid shutters; the other house at Chartres, illustrated on page 72 also has solid shutters. It is characteristic for the shutters of the ground floor to be solid, or to have slats in the top panel only, as at Bourges, while the shutters on upper floors have slats for their full extent. The house at Morey-St. Denis, on the page opposite, shows an attractive and usual treatment of the garden facade. The main rooms are obviously on the *premier etage*. In the center of the composition a glazed door opens onto a long balcony from which graceful steps curve down to the garden. The overhang of this balcony gives shelter for the woodpile beneath, a shelter screened from curious eyes by the tubs of plants standing in front.

The general mass of these houses is first of all satisfying and shows, as at La Pailleterre, a harmonious relation between the main block and its dependencies. The roof is a conspicuous and important part in the composition of nearly all French houses. The simple gable, the hip and the mansard all were used, and used in an intelligent and pleasing fashion. The horrible adaptations of the mansard roof have given it an evil reputation today; but the old examples such as the house at Richelieu and the stable at the Chateau de Breuil have a rare beauty. It is the relation between the two angles of the mansard that spell success or failure, and on looking at these photographs we see that the upper part of the roof has a much steeper slope than we are apt now to give it. The subtle flare-up of the roof at the eaves is of the utmost importance; if overdone the result is ghastly, if not done at all the roof looks severe. This "kick" to the roof had a practical use as well as the aesthetic one of softening the line; many of the houses had originally no gutters and this served to throw the water away from the walls to drop upon the paved washes that ran around the buildings at the ground.

The wall surfaces are most often stucco; or stucco with cut stone trim, quoins and bands. The texture of the stucco is a fairly smooth sand finish that can be easily produced today without any elaborate hocus-pocus of training special workmen or using special materials. The color of the walls is usually a warm grey; the shutters and trim generally grey or white. Occasionally, a door will be accented by being painted black or a dark green, such as the illustrations of the two doors at Mortain. These doors are very good examples of the Directoire period when the French, due to the renewed interest in the archeological discoveries in Rome which followed the campaigns of Napoleon in Italy recalled in their designs the spirit of the Ancient Empire. During this period there was a reaction from the use of flowing curves as exemplified in the panelling and in the furniture under the Louis; and as shown in the photograph of the door at Saulieu; panels became severely rectangular or had raised portions fea-

HOUSE AT MOREY-ST. DENIS (CÔTE D'OR)

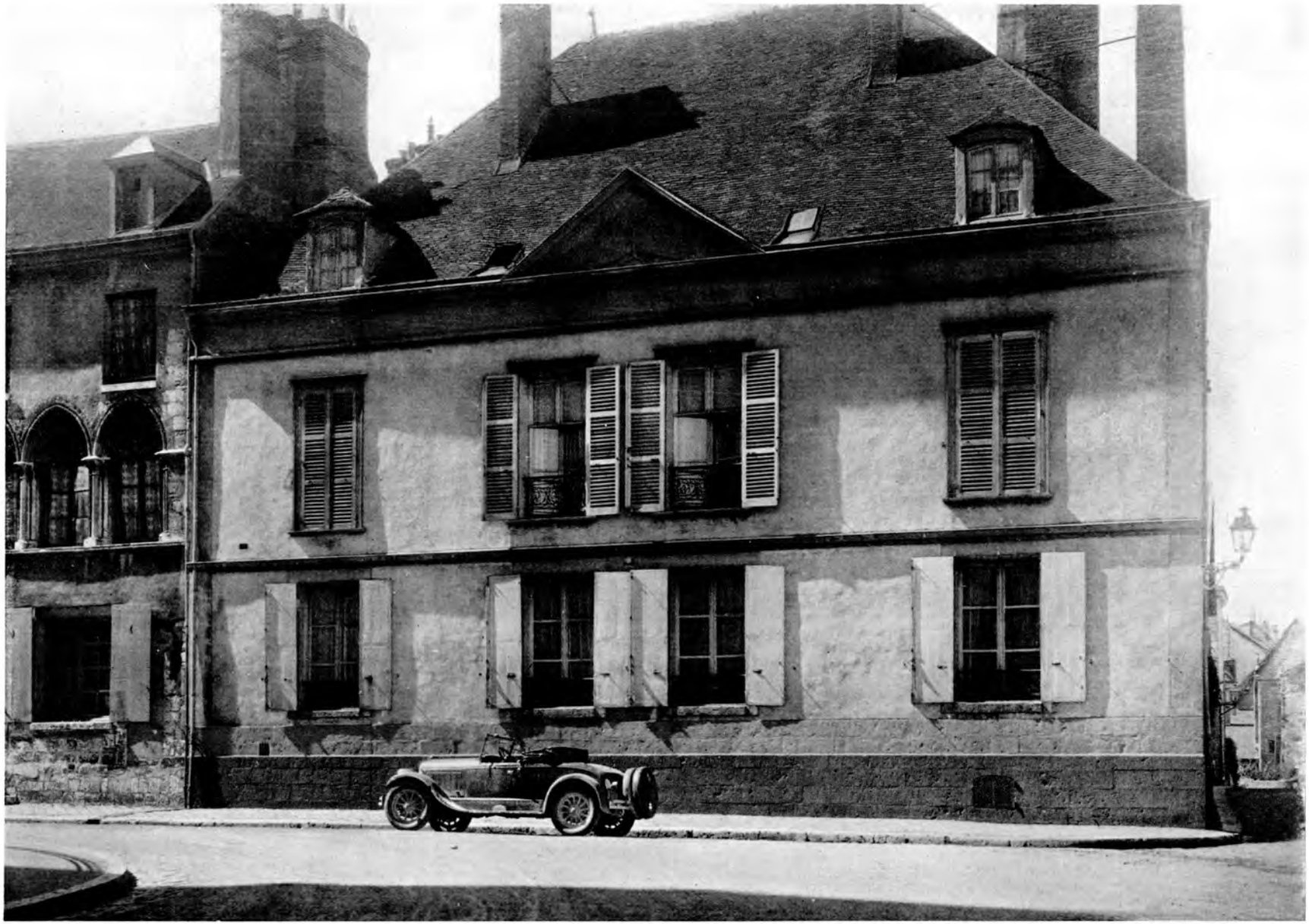
turing the diamond shape. The mouldings lost their full bodied curves and deep undercuttings and became flatter and more classic in outline.

We have examined briefly the traditions of the people who lived in these houses; we have noticed the similarity of their requirements to ours and have called attention to the few differences; and we have pointed out some of the many excellencies of this style. But in adapting this pleasing style to our use, let us not imitate any example slavishly. Let us avoid the mistake of the Chinese tailor who, when told to make a new uniform for an American Naval Officer exactly like his old one, copied even the patch on the knee. Let us adapt this architecture to life of today; build strongly and well; make a satisfying composition of mass; design the openings with balance and in good scale, and we can be confident that our houses, like true aristocrats, will grow old gracefully.

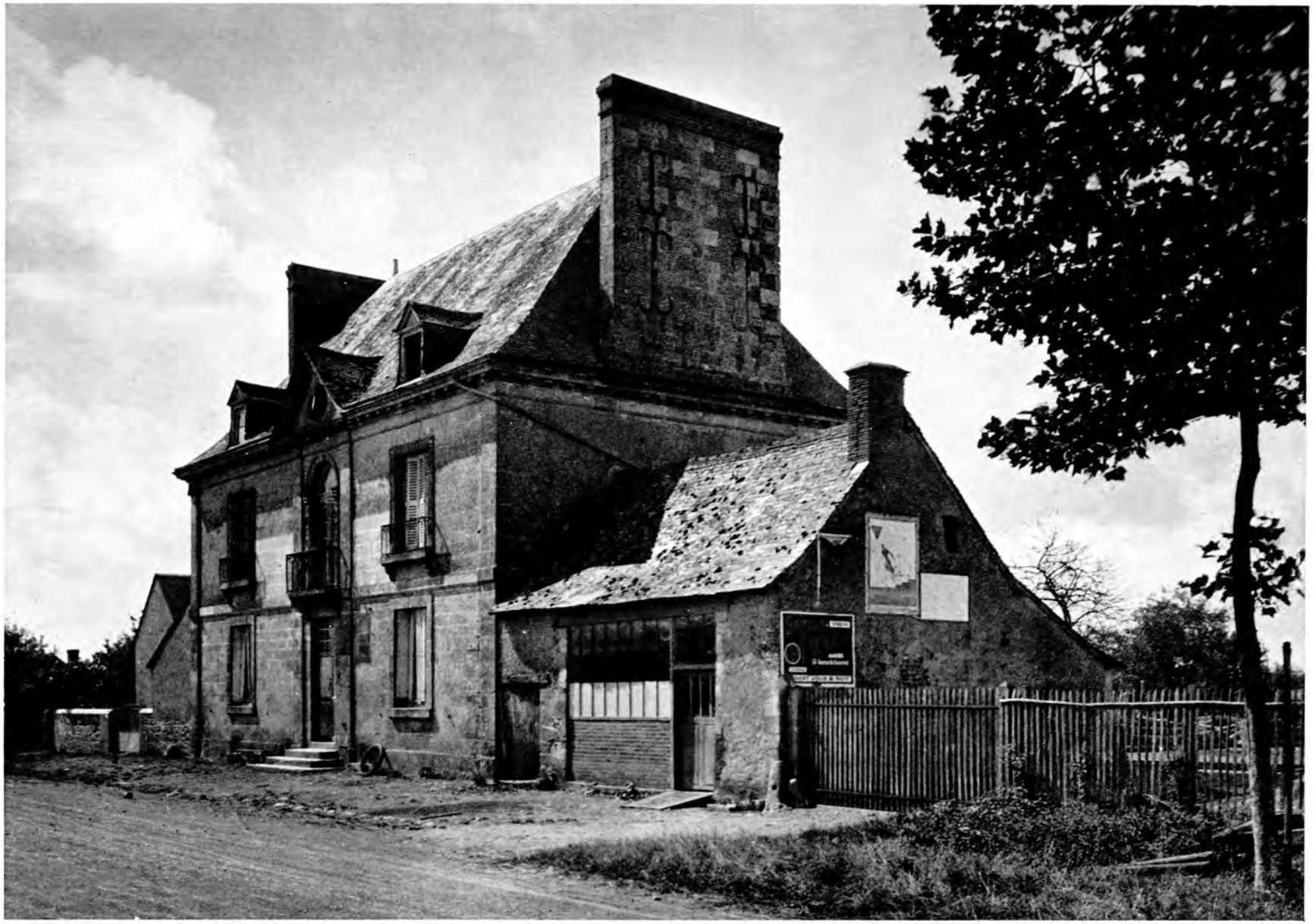
HOUSE AT RICHELIEU (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

COURTYARD AT RICHELIEU (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

STABLES, CHATEAU DE BREUIL

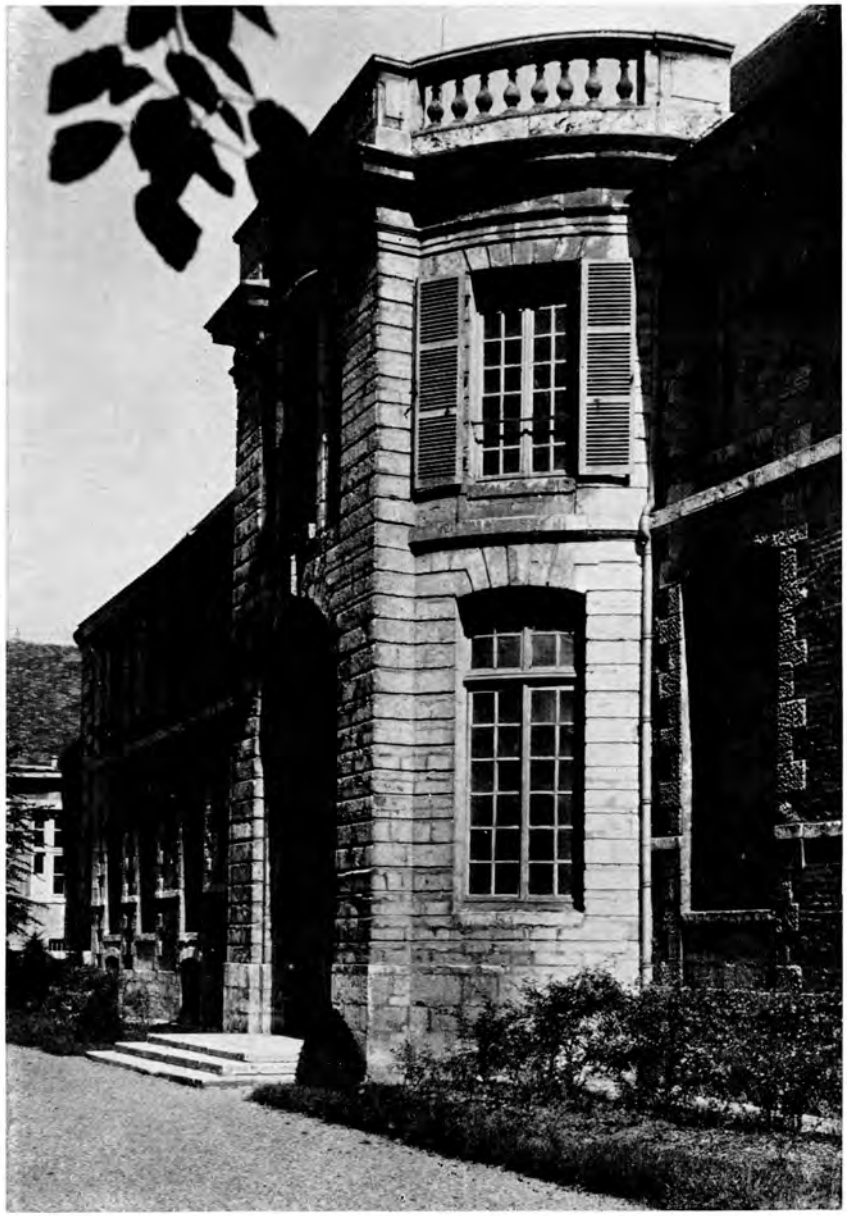


HOUSE AT CHARTRES (EURE-ET-LOIRE)

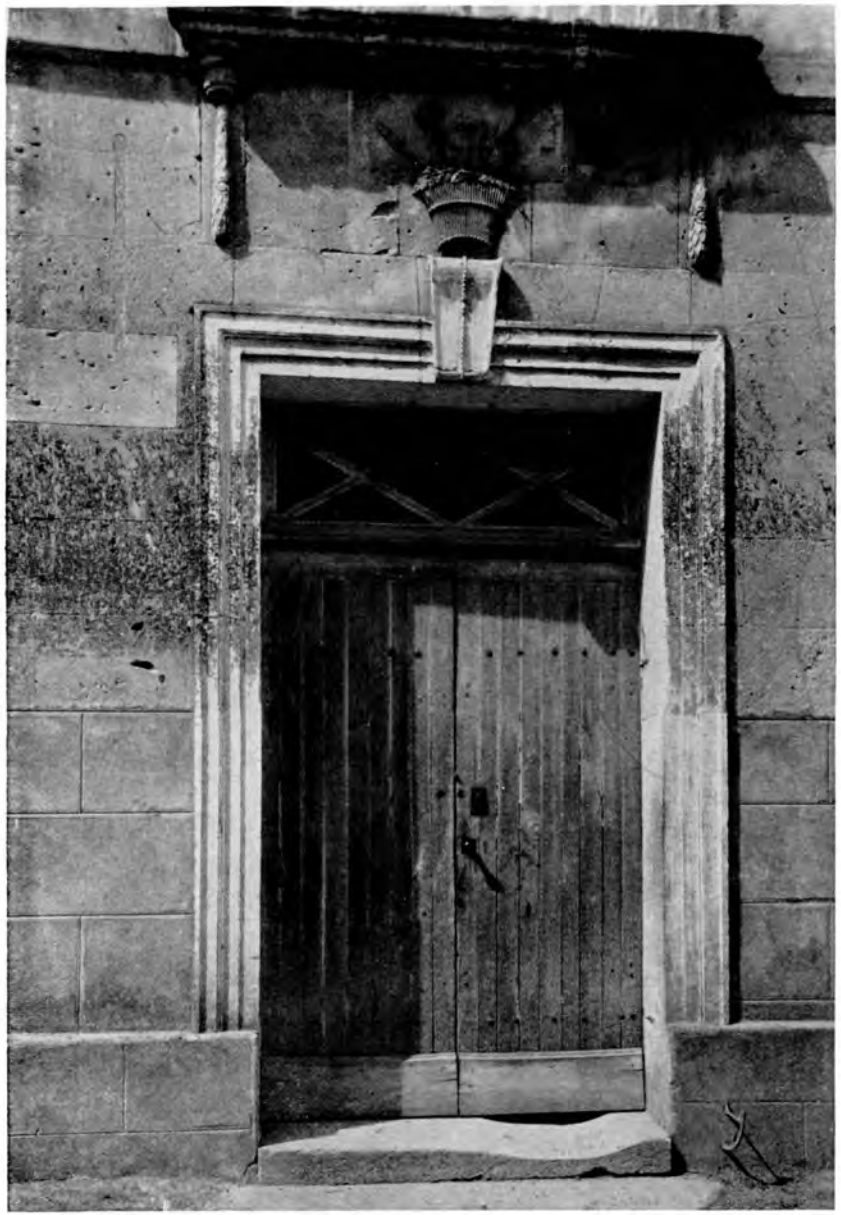


HOUSE AT LA PAILLETERRE

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE, CHARTRES



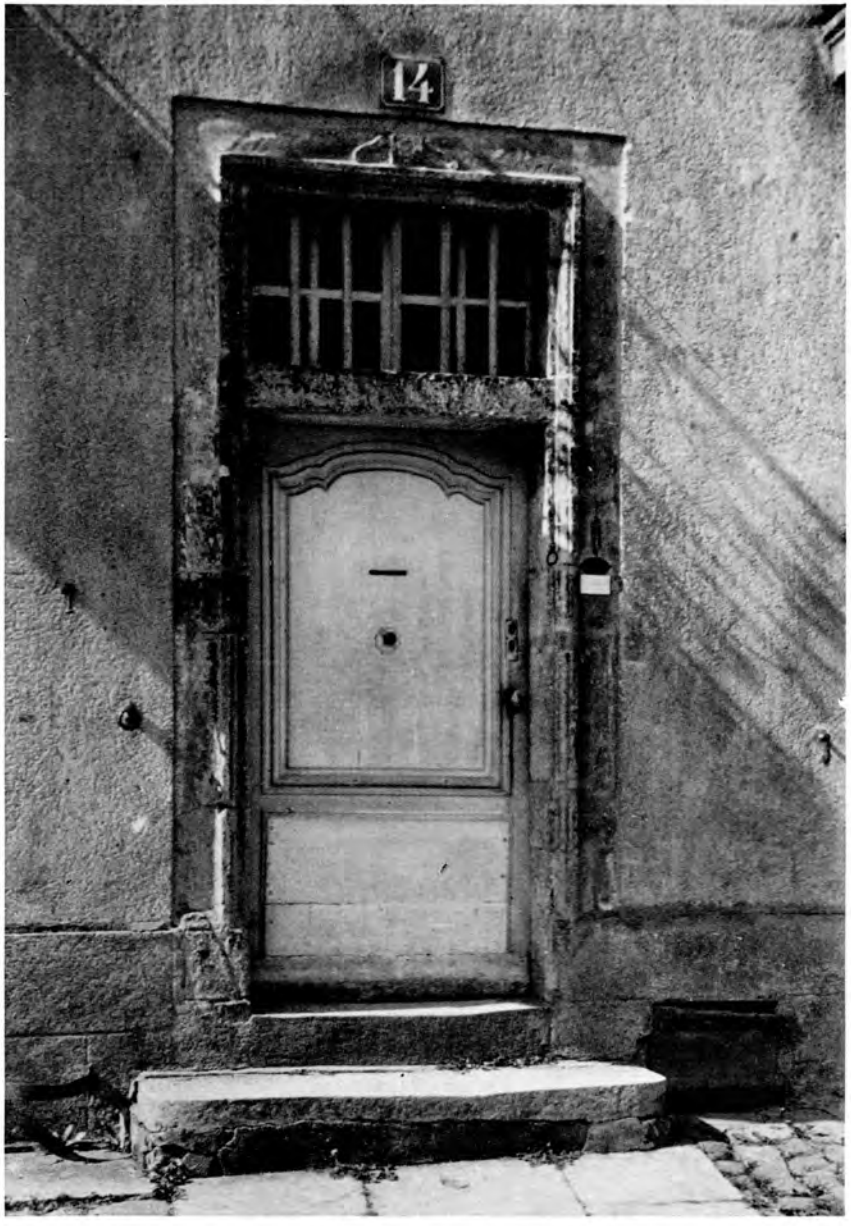
ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE, CHARTRES



DOORWAY, HOUSE AT PERNAY

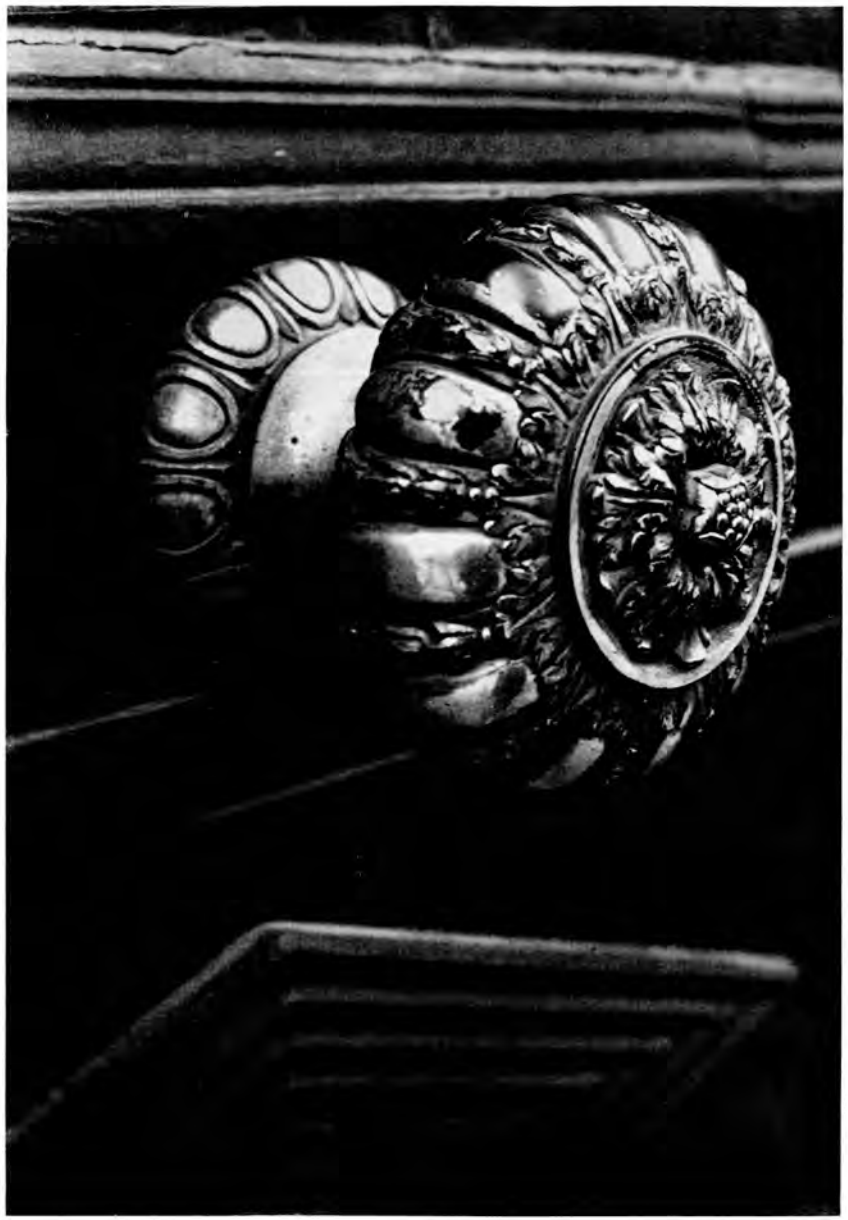
HOUSE AT PERNAY (INDRE-ET-LOIRE)

DOORWAY AT MORTAIN (MANCHE)



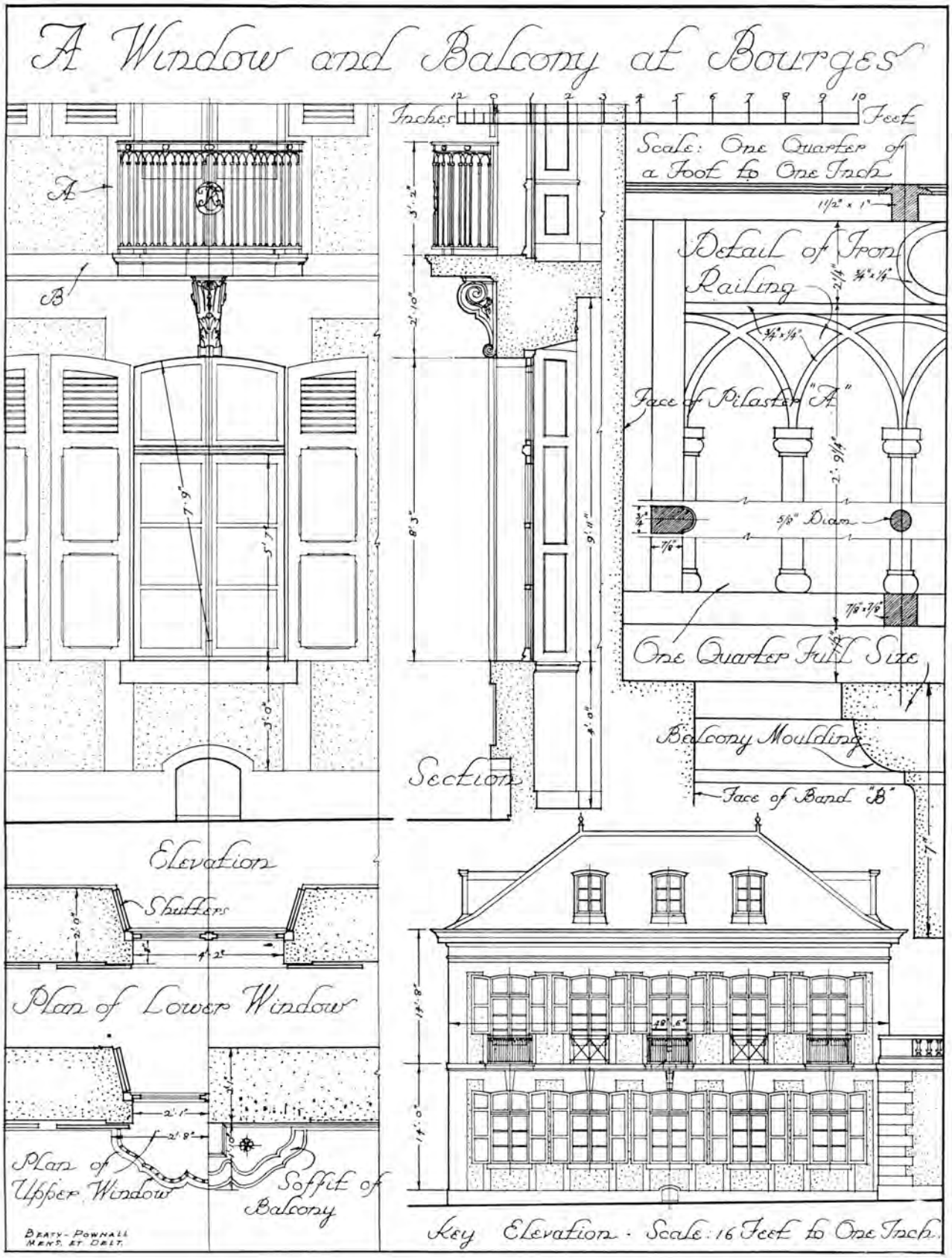
DOORWAY AT SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

DOORWAY AT MORTAIN (MANCHE)

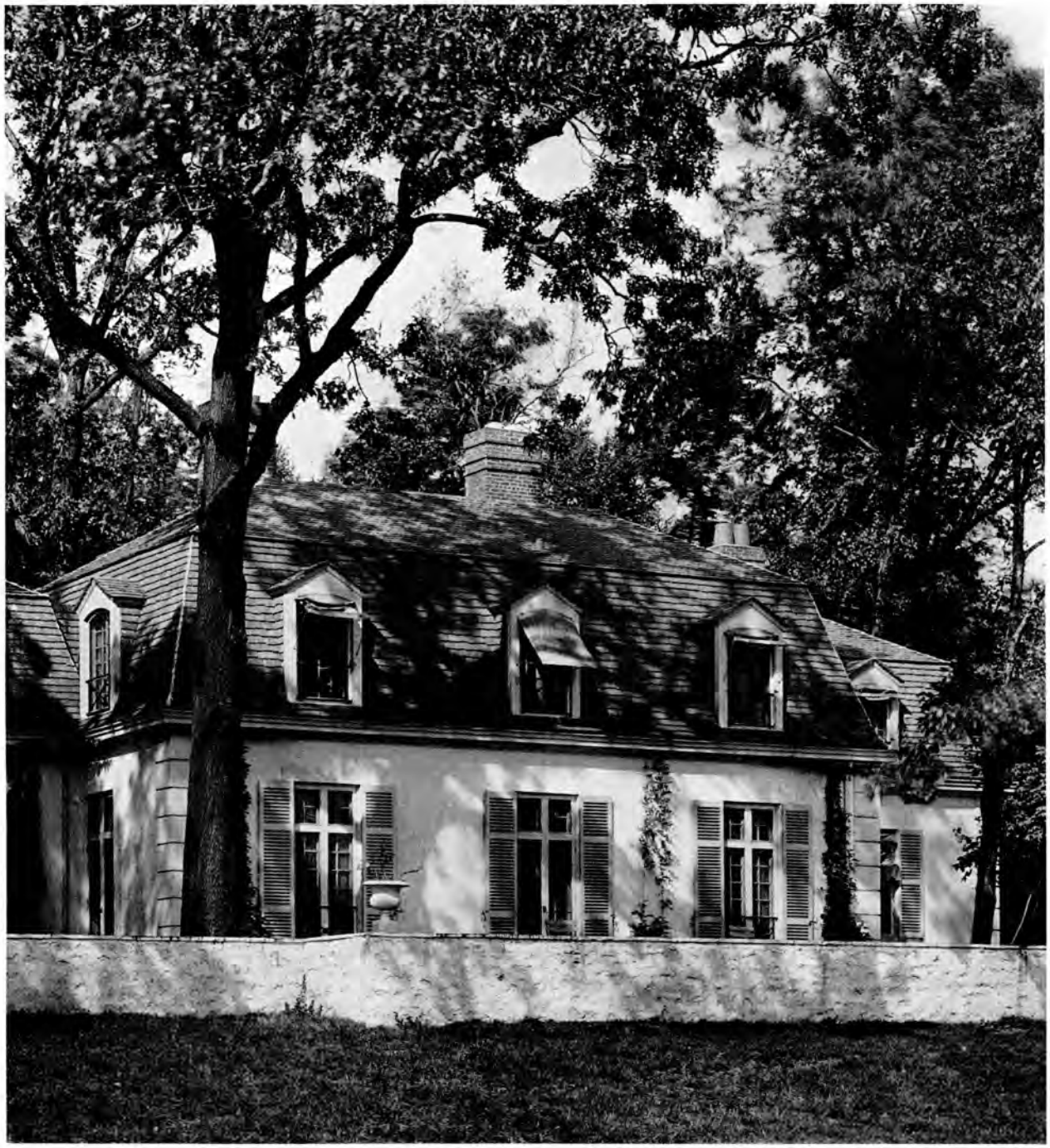


DOOR PULL, DOORWAY AT MORTAIN

DETAIL, HOUSE AT BOURGES (CHER)



SEE ILLUSTRATION ON OPPOSITE PAGE



The delightful formal French character of the country house shown above is completed by the use of Ludowici Tile. A tile roof is always appropriate for a house of French design, whether it has a hipped roof or a mansard. There are many types of Ludowici Tile from which correct selections may be made for any type of architecture.

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DIJON—CAPITAL OF BURGUNDY

TEXT BY

GEORGES SEBILLE, S.A.D.G.

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY

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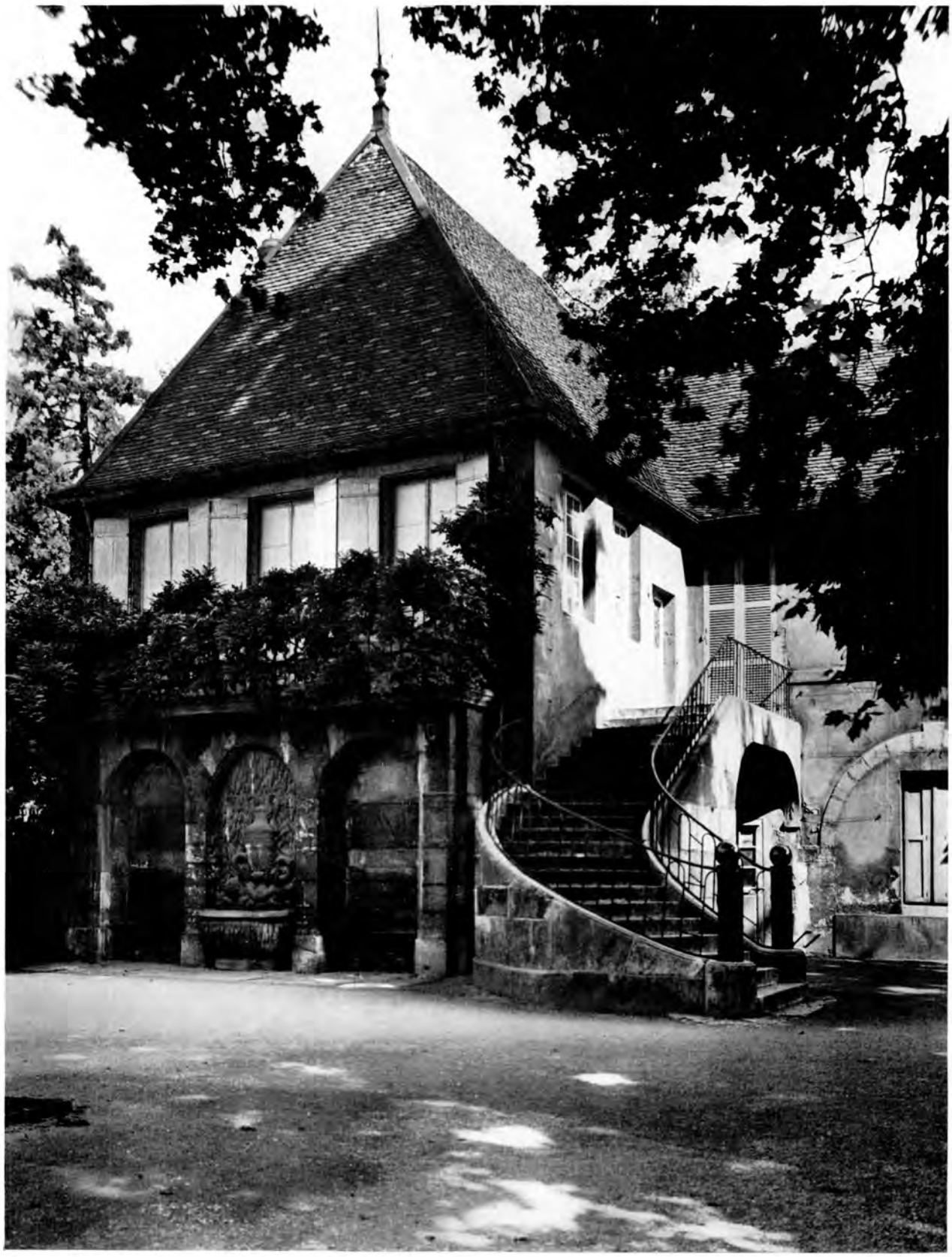


BUILDING IN THE BOTANICAL GARDEN, DIJON

DIJON—CAPITAL OF BURGUNDY

By GEORGES SEBILLE, S.A.D.G.

EVEN the Parisian, although surrounded by monuments of the past, experiences a very real and somewhat melancholy pleasure when he finds himself amidst the architecture of other old cities of France—and which he visits only too rarely. "Familiarity breeds contempt;" and by the same token those things which surround us daily while not becoming actually contemptible do lose much of the mystery of their age. Moreover, here in Paris, "modernity" is undermining even the most venerable buildings like a furious sea beating the cliffs. The disturbance has even reached the peaceful nooks of the "rive gauche." It is then with great joy that one finds again, after some hours of travel, the calm of the old streets of a city such as Dijon.

Not long before reaching Dijon we have noticed the wooded heights of Alésia with its dominating statue of Vercingétorix and at once have been transported back twenty centuries. For it was there that the Gallic hero surrendered to Caesar, who after having him guarded as a prisoner for six years then had him beheaded. But even before this, in passing through the beautiful undulations of the Côte d'Or, we have let our minds wander into the past of this historic region which, within these same unchanged horizons, has submitted to the power of many different masters but without letting its peculiar spirit or the fundamental qualities of its people at any time cease to affirm themselves.

At the first view of the nearing city, these qualities begin to disclose themselves. A ray of sunlight makes the roofs of the cathedral towers sparkle with the gorgeous yellows, the rich browns and the fine greens of their tiles. This richness of deep tones applied with such audacity to the roofs, which in other provinces are generally quite neutral, is the first revelation of the Burgundian temperament. The artistic power of Burgundy is seen in the ability to combine a super-abundant richness of color with a simplicity of conception most satisfactorily.

Soon after entering the city we find, on either side of the main thoroughfares, smaller streets, tranquil but yet quite alive, looking as they did two or three hundred years ago with their little shops and narrow houses. And then a bit further on we come to other streets, more tranquil still, which are lined with fine old private homes. From the great trees which occasionally reach over the walls we can imagine the gardens which these houses have. Passing along, we hear the sound of a piano coming from one of the ancient *hôtels*. Someone is practising. Into the peaceful calm come the strains of modern music; but it does not seem out of place in these surroundings for there is always an affinity between the serious and sincere works of all epochs; Debussy is not an outsider in the home of the great Rameau.

One must see in order to realize this charm which is so intriguing and which is fast disappearing in many towns under the push, not of progress as is so often said, but of private interests. The evil seems to be somewhat checked, for to-day the demolition of a work of art is a rather rare occurrence (at least in France! *Ed.*). One might hope that the restrictions imposed in Morocco, where new construction is limited to the new quarters, sparing the old cities, would be adopted in France if the results obtained were really appreciated.

It is an interesting fact that many cities of France, which have been deprived of their former political importance through the centralization of governmental agencies in Paris, gradually are regaining their old character of provincial capitals. This is particularly true of Dijon—Capital of Burgundy. The Universities play an important part in this change. More and more are these provincial centers of learning finding favor with foreigners who realize they can make a more direct contact with the real France here than at Paris.

The best professors no more desire to leave these Universities and the French students, to the great pleasure of their families, are able to follow the most advanced studies in their own districts.

And, thanks also to all the facilities of communication of the modern world, it is a complete as well as tranquil life one can enjoy in such a city.

But what of the architecture of Dijon? Commencing with the Prehistoric, the city has some fine collections which afford ample opportunity for study. For the next step, the Roman occupation, we can find evidences of this at various points in the district; at the Sources of the Seine, which the City of Paris now owns and has had surrounded with a park, almost piously maintained, there are traces of an ancient temple.

Following on chronologically, we can examine the crypt of the Cathedral of St. Bénigne and, while the crypt as a whole dates from the eleventh century, we will find portions which are even as early as the fifth. The rest of the Cathedral is from the twelfth and the following centuries.

Of the thirteenth century we have a real chef-d'oeuvre in the Church of Notre Dame, the facade ornamented with sculpture of great movement and quite typical of the Burgundian spirit. There are yet other churches which permit us to follow the evolution through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to the coming of the Renaissance and with it the Church of Saint Michel, the facade of which is one of the most remarkable of that style in all of France.

The civil or military architecture of the Middle Ages also offers us ample opportunity for study, with the Palais de Justice and the Palais des Ducs de Bourgogne, the tower of which dominates the city. The kitchen of this latter building, of vast proportions, and with its multiple fireplaces and central chimney, is full historical proof of the right of Dijon to the title of "Capitole Gastronomique," which is given it by gourmets. From what remains of the memoirs of Olivier de la Marche, we learn of the great repasts served at the Court of Burgundy—complete explanation of the importance given the kitchen at the Ducal Palace.

As for the architecture of the Renaissance, besides the Church of Saint Michel there is the Hôtel de Vogué, shown on page 86, and many less important façades enriched with a heavy sculpture which adds an unexpected note to the picturesqueness of the city. The fine work increases in proportion as we approach modern times; the houses of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are very numerous, but the vast Palais des Etats de Bourgogne is particularly worth our attention. It was added to the Ducal Palace during the seventeenth century when the States of Burgundy decided to restore and "complete" that building, according to the taste of their time.

But in order to bring together into one view this collection of successive architecture we must go to the tower of the Palace. From there we are dominated by the still higher towers of the churches but we have a sense of depth and relief and of variety which disappears on going higher. From this tower we can enjoy fully the harmony of the colors on the variegated and patterned roofs, the intimacy of the courtyards, and the intricacy of the entangled gardens and houses. We cannot but regret some of the obvious mistakes made at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The bad, however, does not seem irreparable and we can only hope that the new generations, inspired with a finer feeling for things of art, will not increase the faults but rather will suppress those already existing.

About the middle of the nineteenth century there was added to the palaces an important wing which now contains the Museum; a museum quite worth our attention as it is one of the most complete to be found in the provinces. What gives it particular importance, other than the richness of its paintings, is the sculpture galleries. These are especially of Dijon because of the large collection of the work of Rude, including the first studies for his "Chant du Départ," which gives so much life to the Arc de Triomphe at Paris.

The sculpture of Burgundy has always played an important part in its architecture. Even in the thirteenth century this special taste revealed itself, as we have already noted, in the façade of the Church of Notre Dame. The influence of the sculpture of the Low Countries was strong in Dijon, as the famous well of Moses with the figures of Claus Sluter clearly shows. It thrived here, where it was understood and appreciated; perhaps even it received in these surroundings influences which determined the direction of its own evolution.

After a visit to the Museum, we find we have a more sympathetic appreciation of the sculpture and carving on the churches, the fine old stone houses and even on the half-timber houses, which have been decorated with the work of generations of artists and artisans, work which to-day still has a living quality for our enjoyment.

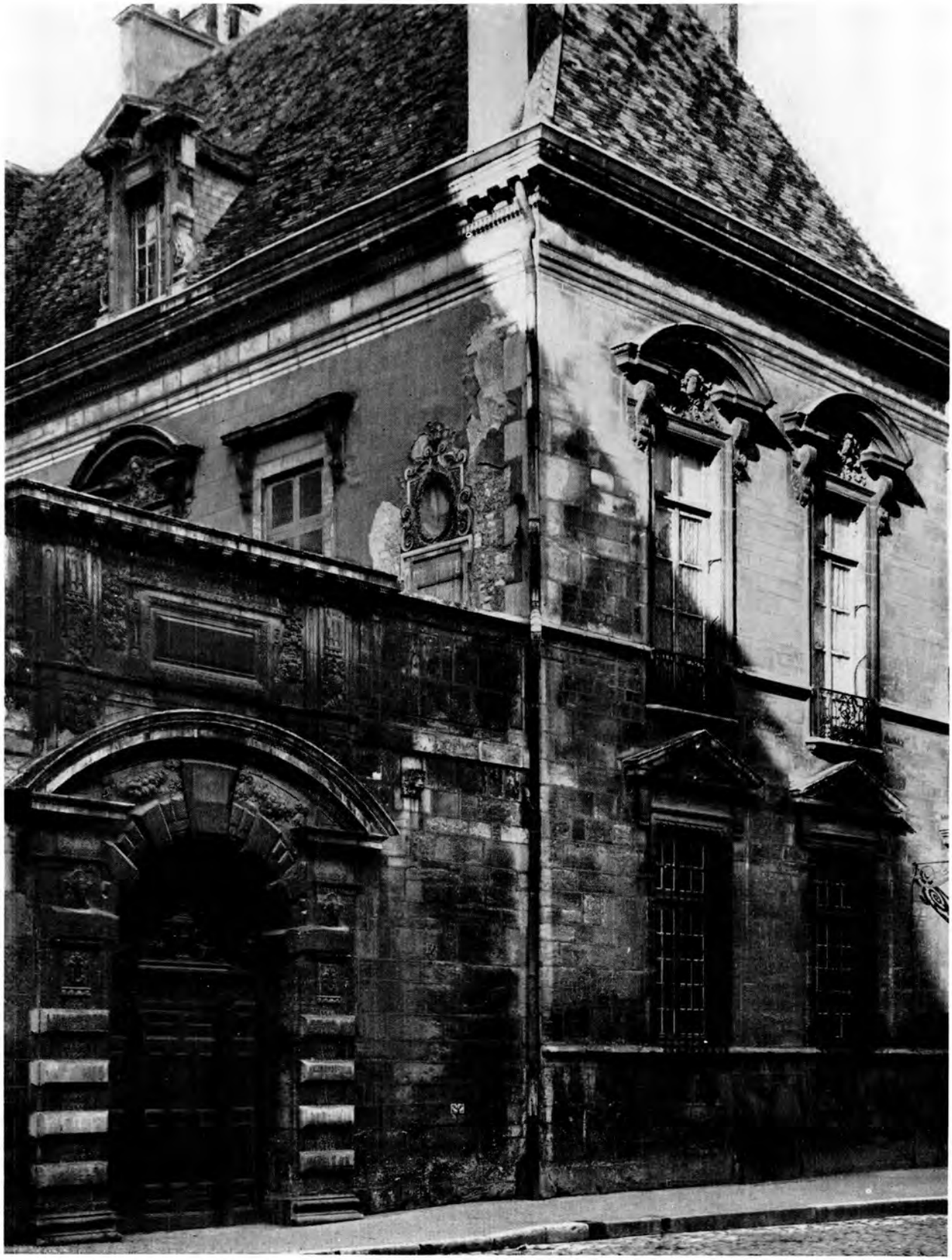
We experience no less pleasure when, pausing from this uninterrupted succession of monuments and buildings which has held our attention, we enter the vast park which is on the edge of the city and which was designed by Le Nôtre. It is extremely simple. The great artist, on ground which was flat and almost square, was unable even to attempt one of the grand effects

SMALL HOUSE NEAR DIJON

which he generally used; all the charm comes from the great alley of trees which leads the eye to an old and modest manoir, located at the end of the park and separated from it by a stream. The city of Dijon has had the foresight to acquire this park of some seventy acres and to open it for the use and pleasure of the public. The immediate country around the city, which is already beginning to be built up, finds in the park an element which connects it with the old city.

On the other side of the city and not far from the Hospital—a precious example of seventeenth century architecture—is another city-owned park, the delightful Jardin de l'Arquebuse. This was, as the name implies, formerly the shooting-range of the Arquebusiers, and is now an annex of the Botanical Garden. It is at the street entrance to the Botanical Garden that we find the charming building which is occupied as the Museum of Natural History and which is shown as the frontispiece of this brochure.

Many people visit the Museum and the Garden. Children are brought there by their mothers and on Sunday mornings by their fathers. Also we frequently notice students busily preparing for their examinations. These young men, however, have a retreat all their own, one yet more tranquil than this, for the University has provided rooms in the old Seminary where, in the shade of great trees and with the tall façade of the Cathedral of St. Bénigne looking down on them, they can meditate in an almost religious calm. There in the shelter of seventeenth and eighteenth century architecture they can look forward toward the future of science.



HÔTEL DE VOGUÉ, DIJON

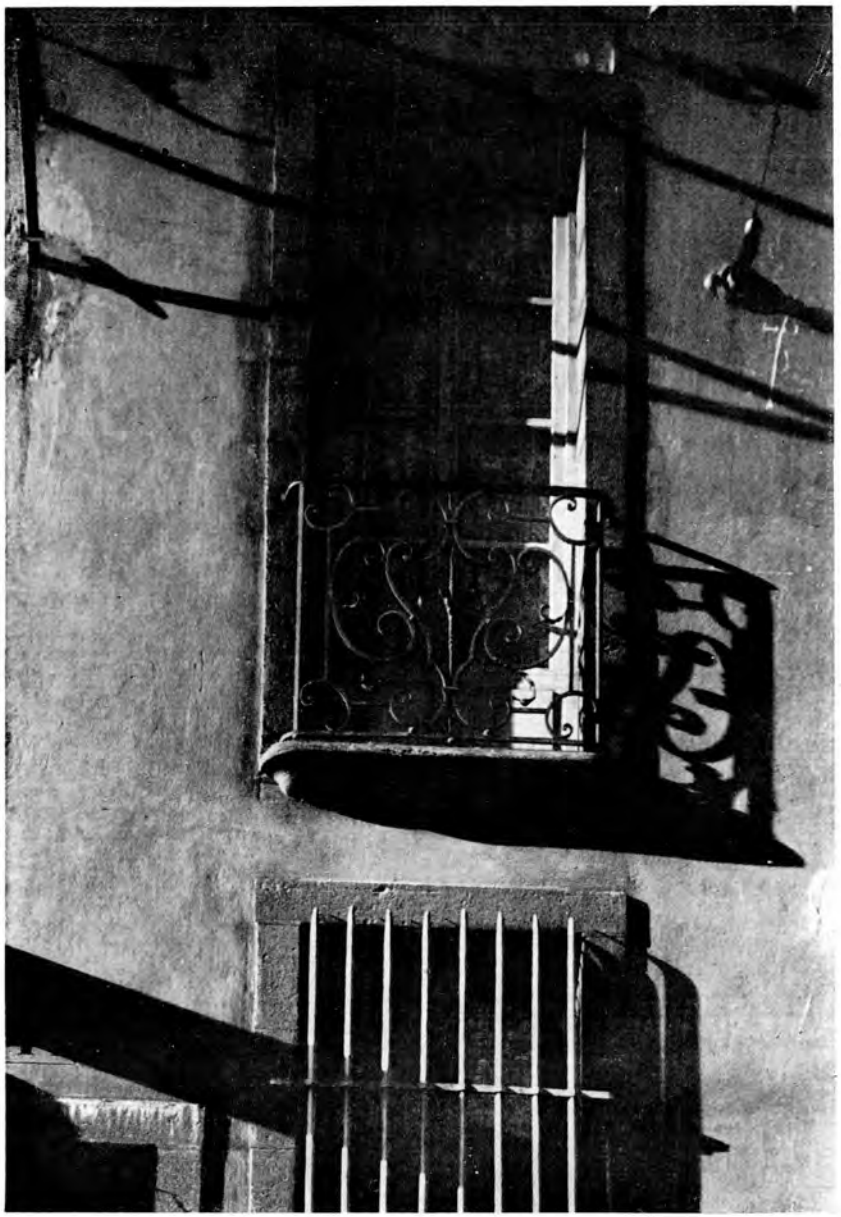
HOUSE IN DIJON

HOUSES IN DIJON

HOUSES IN DIJON

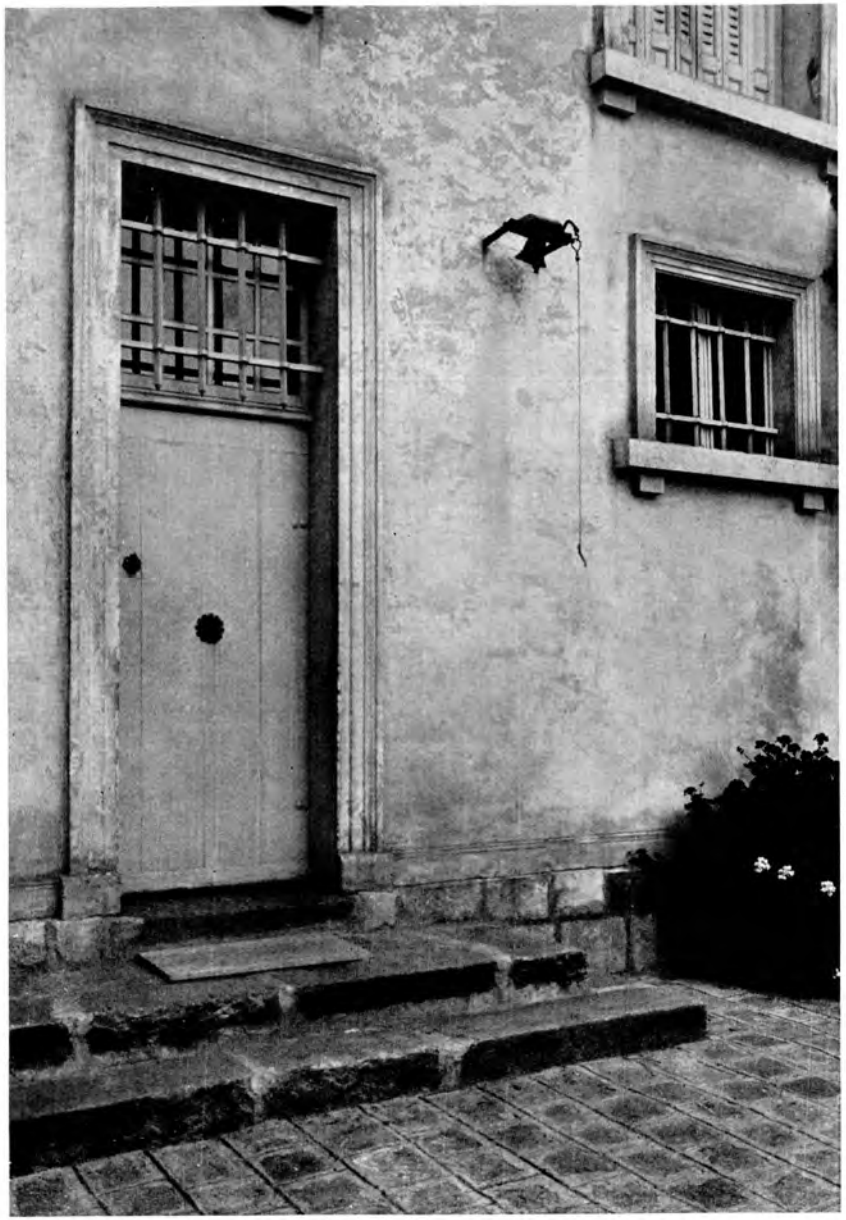
STREET IN DIJON

HOUSE IN DIJON



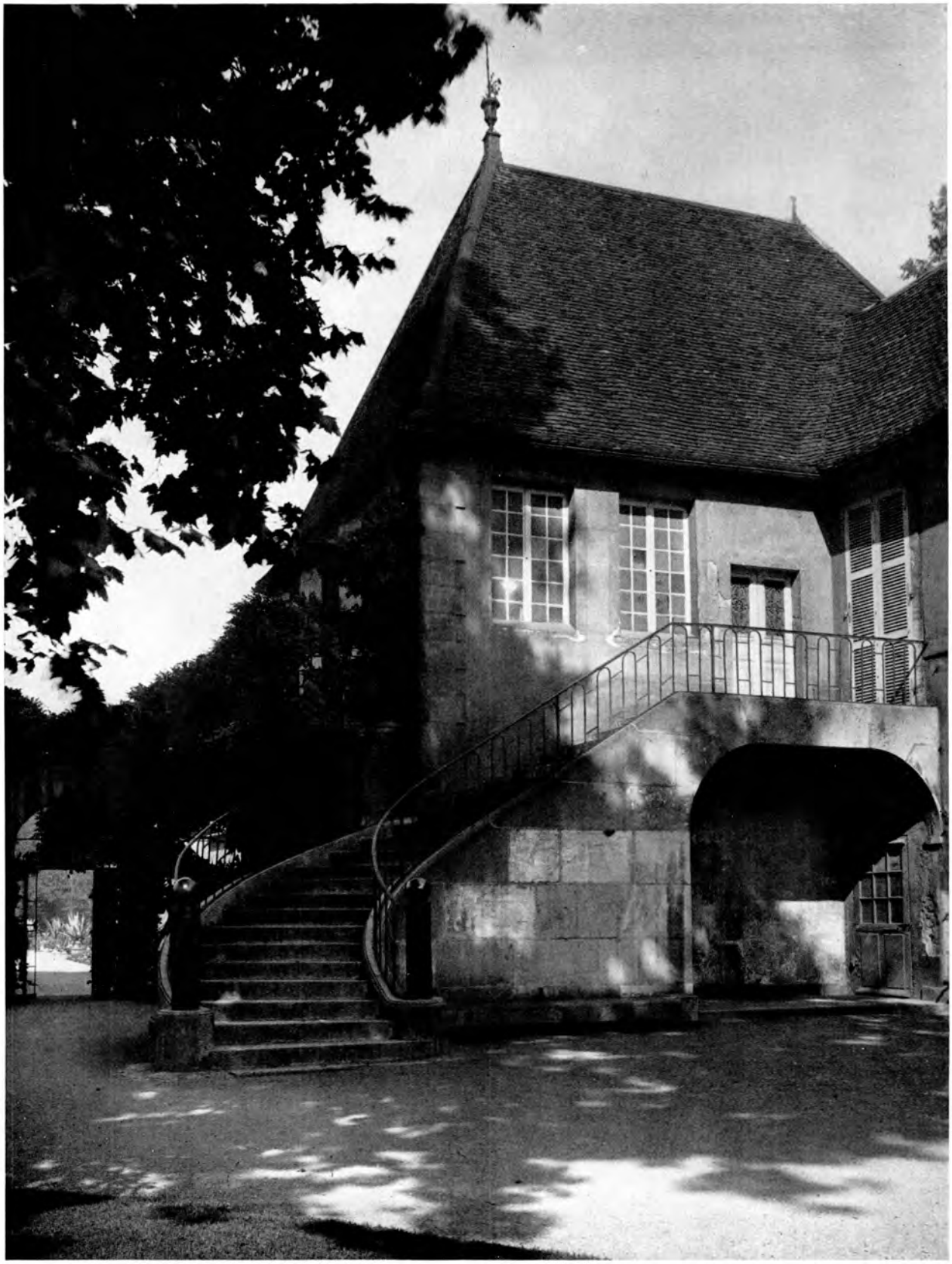
DETAIL, HOUSE IN DIJON

DETAIL, HOUSE IN DIJON

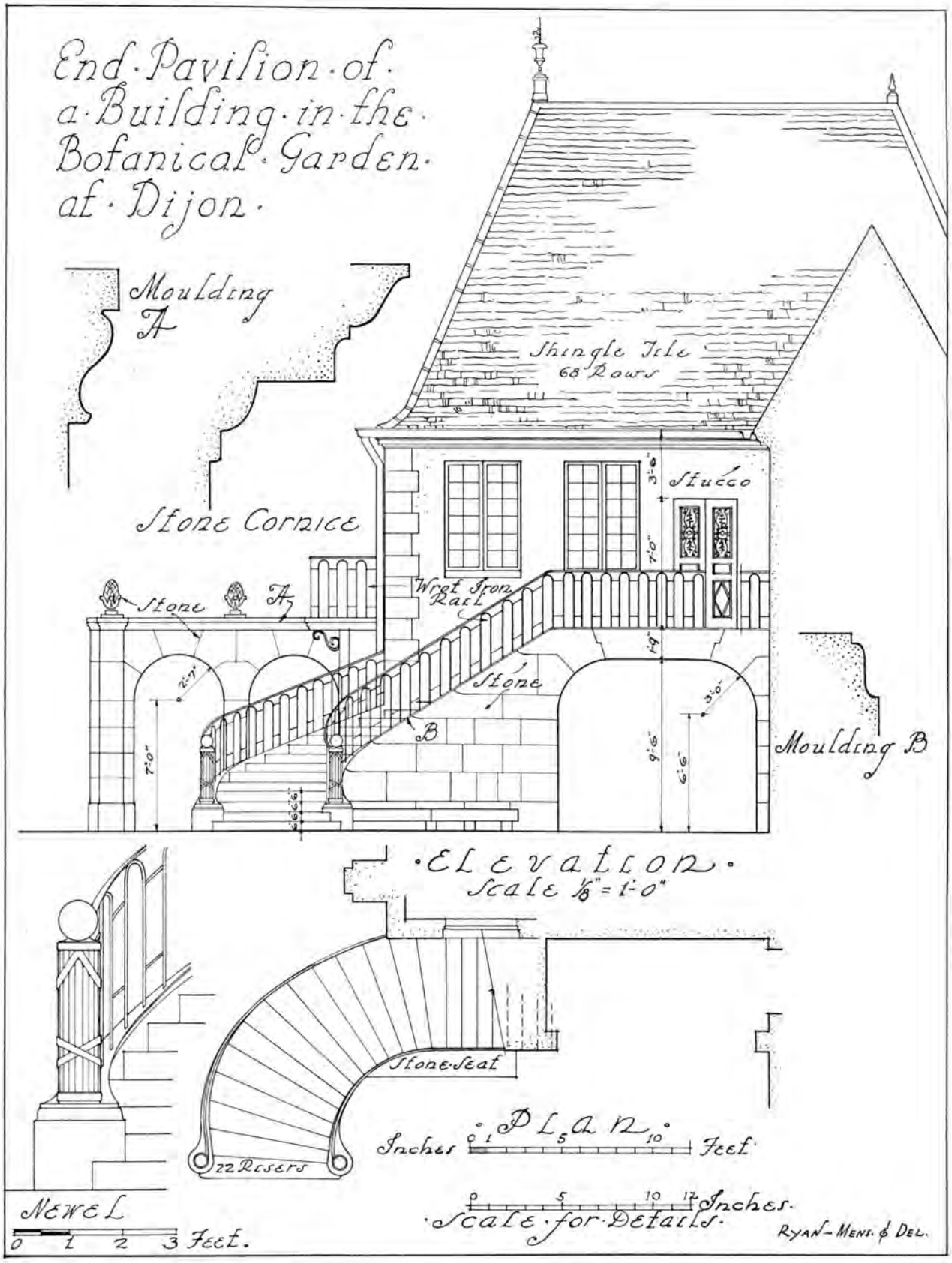


DOORWAY, DIJON

DETAIL, HOUSE IN DIJON



PAVILION OF BUILDING IN THE BOTANICAL GARDEN, DIJON



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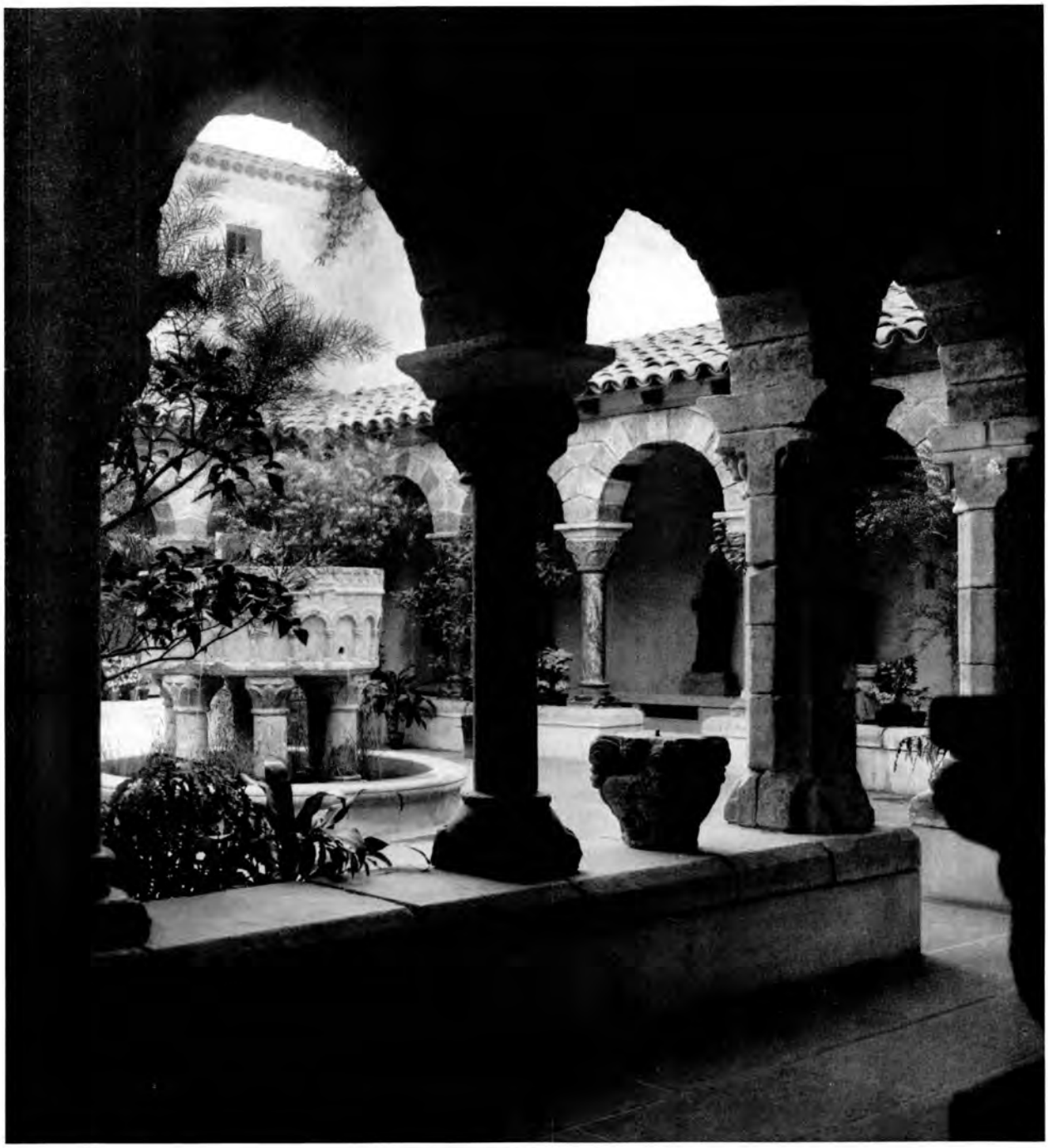

In installing the Cloister from the Abbey of St. Genis-des-Fontaines at the Pennsylvania Museum of Art the architects selected Ludowici Tile as the logical roof covering to complete the historical accuracy which they have achieved. The many different patterns of Ludowici Tile permit selecting the correct type for any style of architecture.

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SAULIEU OF THE MORVAN

TEXT BY

HILAIRE BELLOC

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CALVARY AT SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

JANUARY 1932

SAULIEU OF THE MORVAN

By HILAIRE BELLOC

SAULIEU might be made the text for a sermon on the paradox that modern travel kills the object of travelling; which is to see and to know. For all the things that Saulieu *is* remain unseen and unknown to nearly all those who come today to Saulieu as travellers. Very much better was it known in the days before the internal-combustion engine!

Our fathers used to say that the railway had killed the understanding of towns, that men came to them hurriedly, arrived by the back-door, left hurriedly, and had no sense of approach, fruition or farewell. They said—quite rightly—that the road and the river were the two proper entries to any town, any town of tradition and lineage, any town that had grown up through the millioned intercourse of men.

But the railway did not do as much harm as the automobile has done; for when men went to Saulieu by rail it was by the little railway running from lovely Avallon to the immense age of Autun. They could not get to Saulieu without some little trouble, so it was a thing of price to them when they got there. And before going there they read up something about it. They received it intelligently, in spite of the railway station and the wrong approach. But today Saulieu is but an episode on one of the most obvious of modern trajectories, and one where when men stop they stop only to eat. They come to it in a flash, not knowing through what they came; and to go on through that landscape which is crammed with history and what used to be the long double stage to Autun (the two days' march of the Roman Legion, of the merchants and pilgrims, the first two days' journey of the missionary Augustine and his men on their way to evangelize England) is only another flash: all over in an hour, and nothing seen.

My advice therefore to anyone that would know Saulieu is first of all to read all he can about it. Let him understand that it is a high central point upon what was the main road of western civilization for fifteen hundred years; the road from the Mediterranean to Britain. That is why it has the memory of early Christian martyrs (its famous Church stands over the grave and was under the invocation of one of those witnesses). That is why, again, Saulieu was—to its hurt—so continually visited by armies; and that is why for instance the Chancel of the great Abbey was burnt during the Hundred Years War.

That is why, worse luck, the automobile runs in crowds—or ran when people had money—through the the place. For the rich coming from Britain to the Riviera found Saulieu on their way, and it was a convenient place to stop for food.

However much you read up your Saulieu before going there you will not understand it unless you regard it first in three ways: as a city of the high-land—that is, a city of the water-partings; as a city Burgundian; and especially as a city of the Morvan, the granite Morvan, the lump of woods and tarns and rounded high places which happily no one knows.

The rise to Saulieu is gradual and you must get your map well into you to grasp where it is you stand, when you reach this summit, 1600 feet and more above the sea. You are just on the divide between the Loire to the south and the Seine to the north. You have not that great view northwards of the Seine basin which you get best I think and most wonderfully above the sources of the Seine itself, on the edge of the forest in which is the lost little Val-Suzon—also unknown—to which I heartily recommend you. But if you have a sense for country, and have got the map into you as well, you will feel that you are on the divide.

To the north of you are the provinces which Paris directly ruled, the northern French who made the northern language and thereby the northern culture of the Occident. To the south is all the central land, reaching

to the mountains, the Provinces which were not directly ruled by the King of Paris until the Middle Ages were coming to an end.

That Saulieu should be of the Morvan, though only on the edge of the Morvan, on the slope of that great hump, will not mean much to you unless you have the leisure to go about the Morvan itself, wandering in its deserted woods and coming upon its deserted meres. But remember at least that so strongly isolated a piece of land nourished the Gaulish tribe which was fiercest in its independence, even from its fellow-Gauls, and thereby opened the door to the Roman invader. When it was too late they tried to think better of this fiery isolation of theirs, these warriors of the hill-tops, they joined with all the rest in the last rally against Caesar. But the hour for turning the tide of the battle had passed, and they saw the last garrison surrender behind the big earth-works of Alesia, to their north and east.

So much is Saulieu of the Morvan that the people have the speech of the place, and the heroes of the Morvan have given their names to the streets. The great Vauban is one of them; the man who founded the new fortifications which supplanted stone walls and endured almost from his time to our own. Yet being upon the edge of the Morvan only, and on the sunward edge, high as it is Saulieu would not remain in the mind as part of the dark and lonely Morvan to those who visit it—or rather pass through it as men pass through it now. And if I were you, if you happen to have the leisure to see Saulieu as it should be seen, do not come by this main road from Avallon from the north, or upwards from Autun and the south, but rather get into the Morvan first and start from Château-Chinon and so make your way across east ward to the edges of the land.

Then Saulieu is Burgundian, and that means all that such a mouthful of a word should mean. The Provinces are the realities of France, and though Burgundy grew up within Gaul and was no original division of Gaul, though it was but the appanage of a King's son, yet a line of strong rulers gave it unity and the Burgundian inheritance still lives and a savour of the Burgundian spirit, from the last confines down by the Vosges right northwards to the rich towns of Brabant and of Flanders.

Of Burgundy Saulieu is a frontier town; the accident of politics put it just barely under Burgundian rule, but only just, by some few miles. Nevertheless it is fully Burgundian, drinking the same wine which helps to make the unity of the Burgundian tradition in spite of all the changing and re-changing of frontiers through seven centuries, and of all the changes in transport and dues and the rest. That wine which you may get if you are wise at the "Poste," brought up from what they call "The Hills of Gold" to the east, a Chambertin or a Clos-Vougeot, sold perhaps out of the Hospice of Beaune; that wine which the men of Saulieu will most recommend you and most love themselves is the same that you will find best known and most firmly established in the northernmost of the Burgundian influence, right away on the broad muddy rivers of the Netherlands; in Antwerp or in Maestricht or in the clearer air of Liège. Saulieu is the more Burgundian because it looks out eastward towards the rising sun to which its slope leans, and from their windows every day the higher houses see the dawn coming up beyond the eastern heights from the heart of the Burgundian land far off, beyond, near to the upper waters of the Saône basin.

Would that Saulieu had kept its full continuity with the past, but this nothing French has done; because the energy of that soil has driven its sons ceaselessly to civil war:—"Civil war, the vice of the Gauls," but also their glory. After its Pagan time, as a posting stage on the great road, it grew and became great through its Abbey and Abbey Church; but the community has gone, the Revolution has passed over all that, and, long before the Revolution the decay which the revolution revived into a new life and perhaps a worse one.

Though Saulieu, like all things French, has suffered this material gap between the present and the past, there is a continuity of the spirit much deeper and surviving in all its stones, especially in its great tiled roofs, Burgundian; and its Burgundian garden walls—all its Burgundian air. And most of all, I am afraid, in something wherein Burgundy excells, the companion to its wine,—I mean the table.

It is sad but true that all those rich people who flashed through to the Riviera (in the days when there was money going about not long ago) remember Saulieu for its food—and usually for nothing else. It woke up after the War to find itself famous again after a long sleep; but famous only for its cooking.

God knows I do not belittle such a glorious thing! They cook (or did cook when the rich still passed through, as they may pass again) as well as anyone in Europe. But they did not cook at large or generally; they cooked particularly, in the Burgundian way. And it was not for nothing that some of their dishes were served on vine leaves. Good cooking is a great thing; and when it is as good as the cooking is (or was)—the cooking of mid-day at the "Poste"—it is a very great thing. But it should be an adjunct, a last memory, coming even after the memory of the wine, and married with, not disassociated from the enormous history

VIEW IN SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

of those fields and woods and heights, history going right back into the beginnings of our race, the times before record.

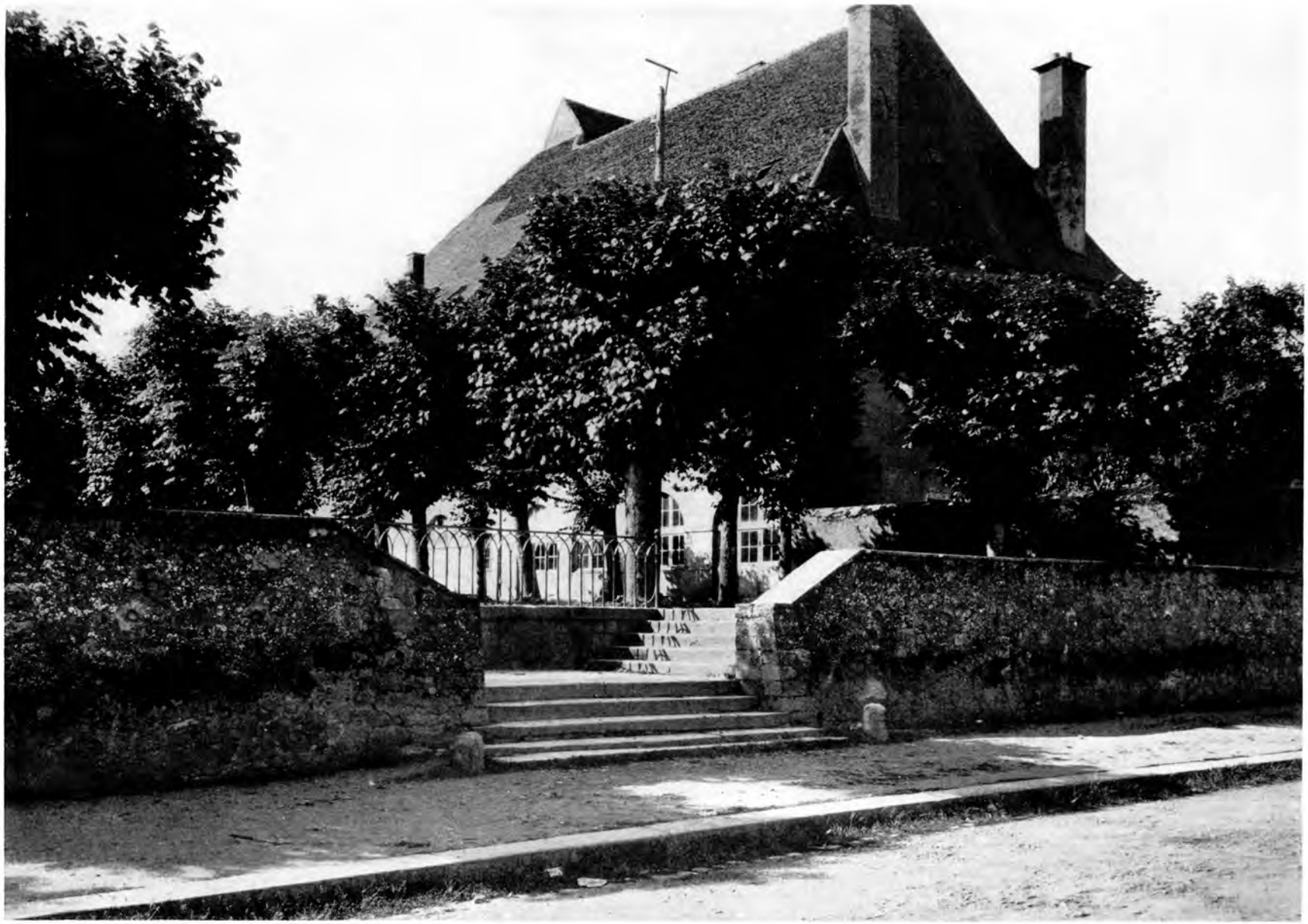
There is one last good thing to be said about Saulieu, as of all the French Provincial towns, and particularly the rooted towns of Burgundy. The foreign tide may ebb or may return but Saulieu itself will never die. I doubt even whether it will be marred by that modern chaos whose worst mark is the dreadful architecture which we suffer in greater places today—at least we suffer it in Europe. It has half ruined Rouen already; it is disgracing Paris with marks of its plague. Such obscenity should have no hold on Saulieu. It ought not to be known there, among the old balconies of wrought iron and the deep eaves.

Therefore I will not write any final goodbye to Saulieu as I have written it to more than one of the many towns I have loved. I believe it to be permanent.

HOUSES AT SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

PUBLIC BUILDING, SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

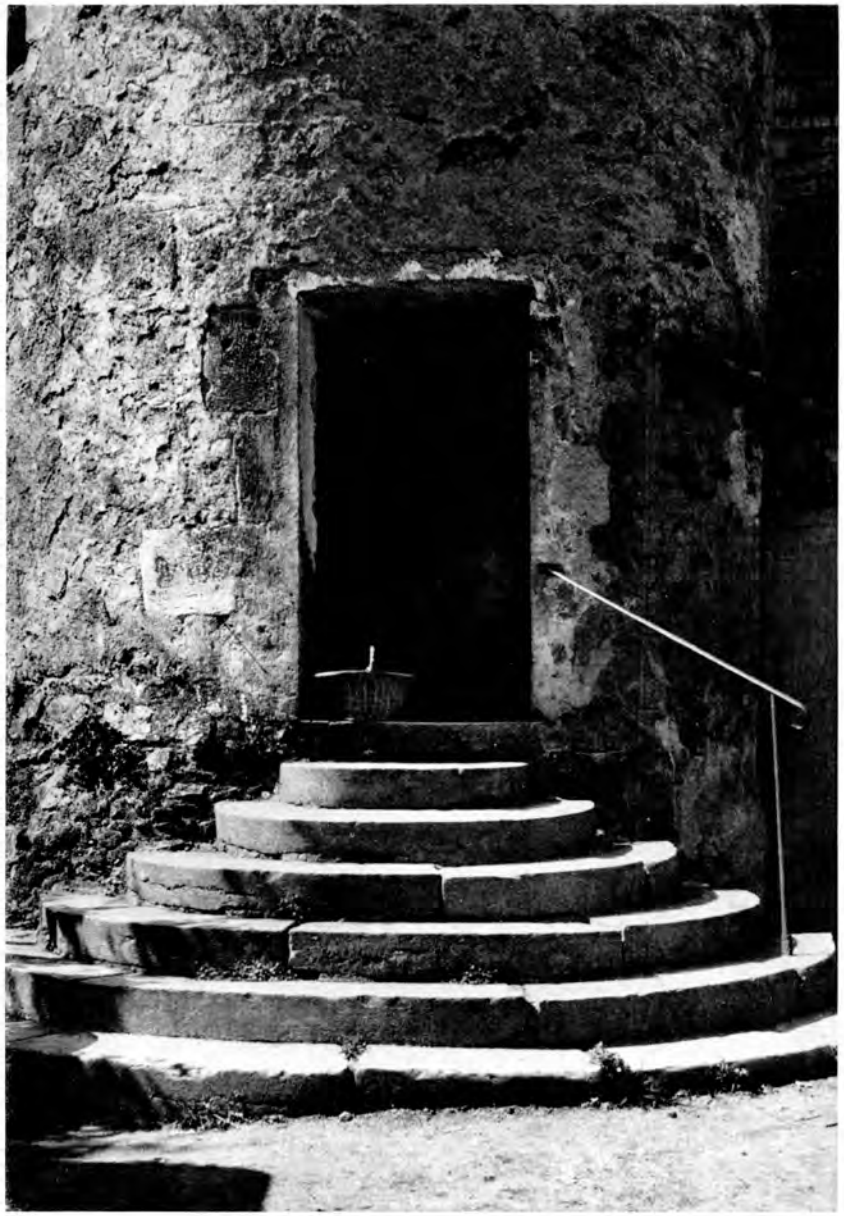
INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING, SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)



ENTRANCE TO THE PUBLIC PLACE, SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

STREET FACADES, SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

BALCONY AT SAULIEU



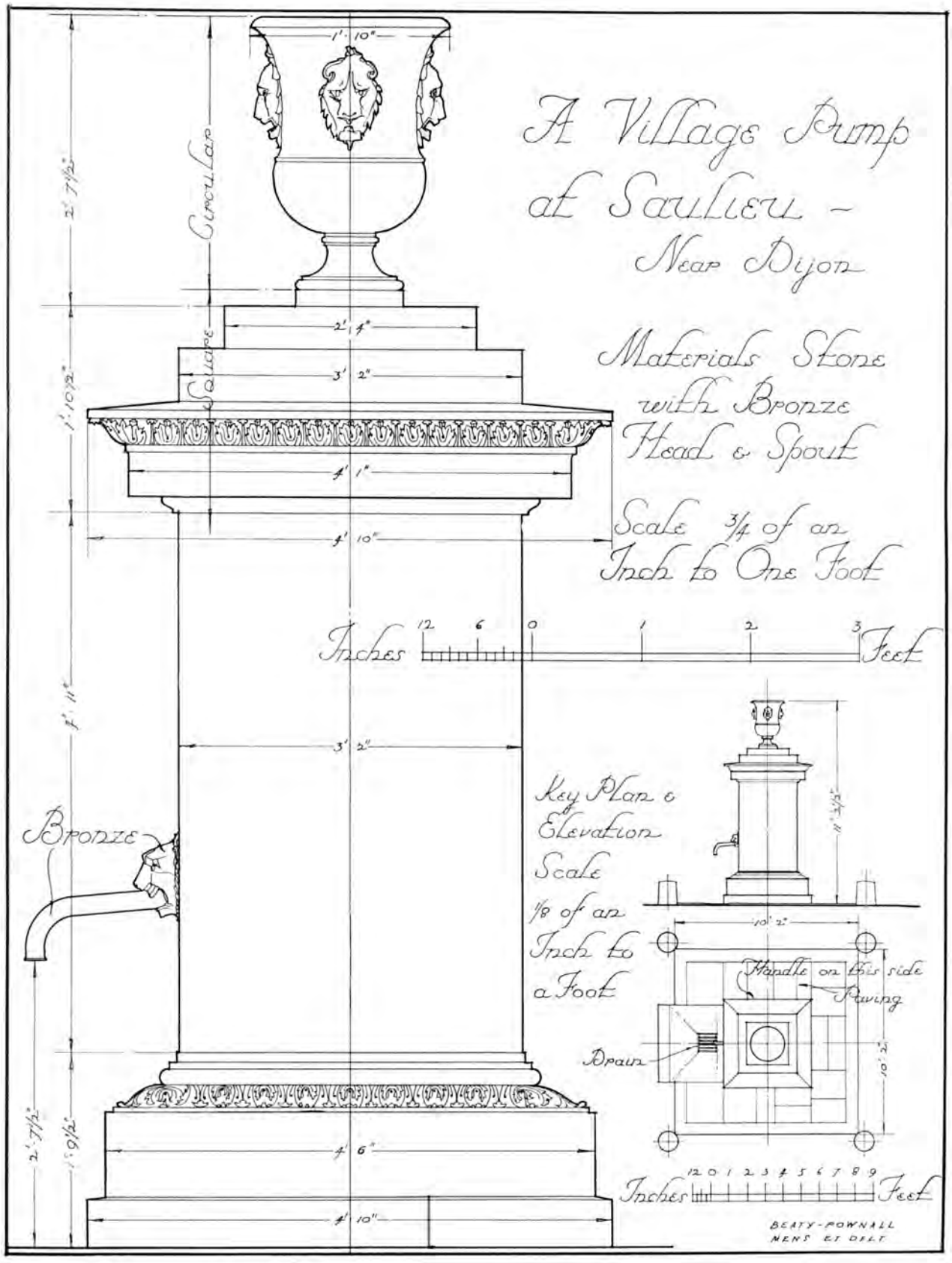
DOORWAY AT SAULIEU

BALCONY AT SAULIEU

IRON RAILING AT SAULIEU

HOUSE AT SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)

PUBLIC PUMP AT SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)



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Ludowici Tile contribute to the pleasing appearance of this country house near Baltimore. Combining warmth of color, beauty of texture and a feeling of adequate weight with durability and reasonable cost, Ludowici Tile make a perfect roof covering. Various patterns permit a selection appropriate for any type of architecture.

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EDITED BY WILLIAM DEWEY FOSTER A·I·A

PHOTOGRAPHS BY F. R. YERBURY HON. A·R·I·B·A

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FALAISE—THE HEART OF NORMANDY

TEXT BY

JACQUES CARLU, A.I.A.

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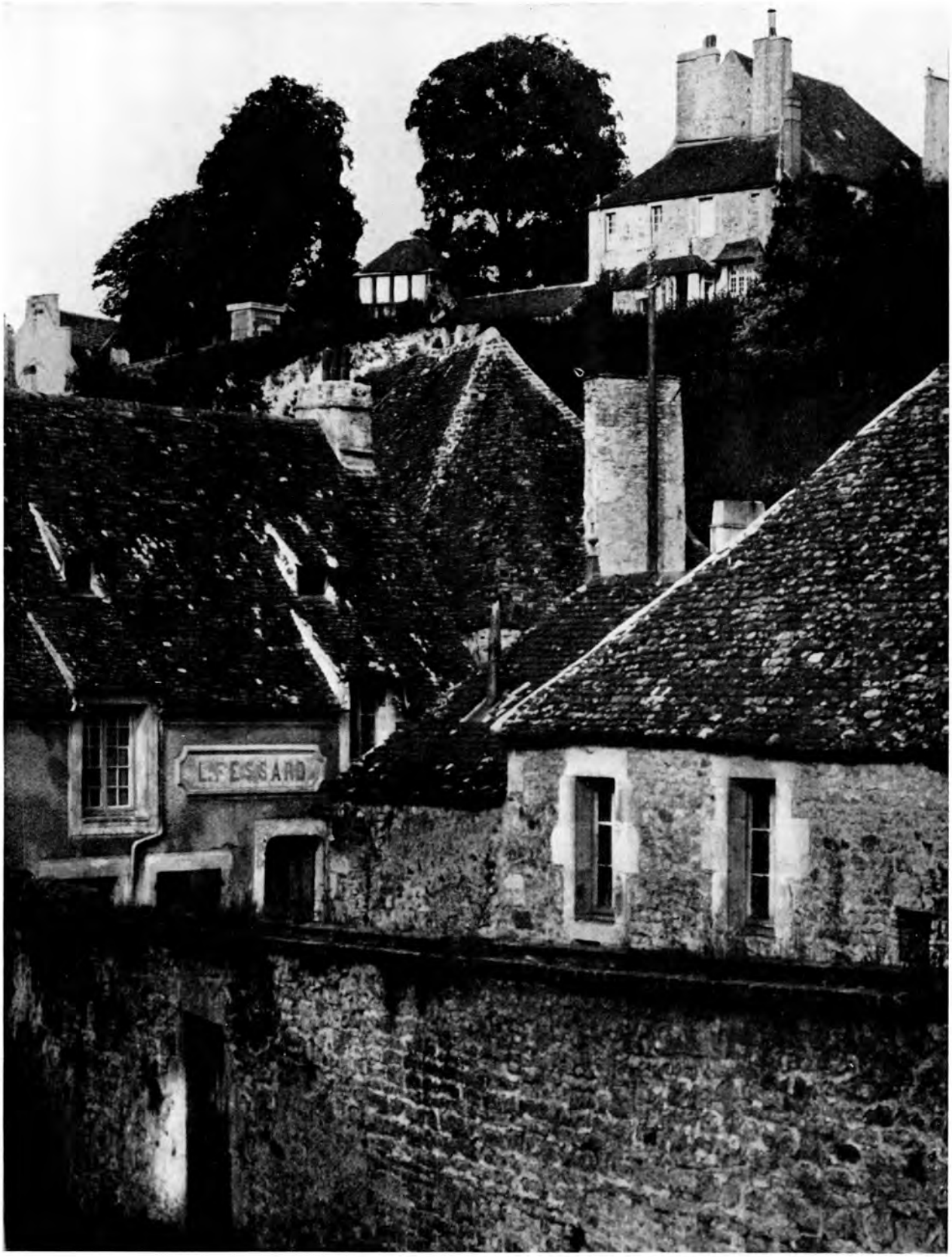


ROOFS OF THE OLD TOWN, FALAISE (CALVADOS)

FALAISE—THE HEART OF NORMANDY

BY JACQUES CARLU, A.I.A.

JOURNEYING toward Falaise across the Norman countryside, one's eye is often attracted by all the particularly rich greenery of this fertile land. The route crosses a rolling country, cut by valleys where the domains of the farmers, their fields, their pastures and orchards, are framed by great trees spreading their woolly heads, shining with dew, against a silvery sky. Everywhere little rivers glide at the feet of poplar trees or under the veil of light willows; these streamlets sparkle an instant amid the grass and then disappear to emerge further on, giving to all the countryside a fresh fecundity.

Here and there a more important farm, a sort of small manor, strikes an architectural note in this pastoral symphony, giving one an example of the taste and talent of the Norman architects. And spotted along the way are charming old towns and hamlets, with their little houses leaning against each other; some with an air of ancient pride; some with the modesty of mere ordinary well-to-do-ness; but all with a medieval and rural feeling.

Falaise, cradle of William the Conqueror—known as "The Bastard"—is a sort of reliquary of Norman glory and if Rouen the Superb is the head of the province it could be said that Falaise is its heart. Nine centuries ago, at the time of the Conqueror's birth, Falaise was already a very old city, for tradition has it that the Druids celebrated their mysterious and barbaric rites on the gigantic altars of Mont Myrrha. Since the prehistoric epoch, during the Gallo-Roman period, the first Viking invasion in 841, the witnessing of William's departure for the conquest of England, and until the French Revolution, Falaise, a sort of cross-roads where men of arms and traders used to meet, has always been the theatre of epic struggles, marked by the usual alternating periods of suffering and prosperity.

Before attempting to picture the small heroic city and its architecture let us recount the story of the courtship of Robert the Magnificent and the beautiful Arlette, mother of William the Conqueror, as it has been transmitted to us by the chroniclers, Wace and Benoit de Sainte More; because this story, now legendary, is for Falaise the beginning of its own history.

Nine centuries ago, one day in early autumn, we could have seen a joyful group of girls at work along the banks of the Ante, the stream which washes the foot of the Donjon of Falaise. They are gossiping and laughing and their main topic of conversation is the Seigneur Robert, Vicomte d'Exmes, called "the Magnificent."

The reputation of Robert is of the kind that wins the feminine heart. He is young, handsome and brave; everybody, from Barons to peasants, agrees in praising his generosity and these praises are accordingly on the lips of the young girls. They discuss his prowess at hunting, his grace in the saddle, "which can be compared only to that of St. George," his liberality. . . . "How happy would be the one who could be his; the daughter of some Duke or King, without doubt." And all try to guess who that happy one might be.

Meanwhile the sound of hunting horns, the baying of hounds and the shouts of huntsmen, first from far off, had then come nearer and nearer. A group of horsemen and running dogs, drowned in a cloud of dust, soon are in sight of the girls. At the head of the group is the handsome Robert, in person, returning from the hunt. The girls are dumbfounded and, while seeming to continue their work, risk furtive glances in the direction of their hero. Robert, for his part, looks with all the eagerness of his youth at the

pretty group bent over the stones or wading in the stream. He stops and exclaims: "By all the Saints, a happy meeting. What do you think of that, my friends?" And conversation ensues.

But suddenly Robert notices an especially beautiful girl wading in the stream. Asked her name, she becomes more purple than the "Emperor's mantle" and replies: "They call me Arlette and my father is Herbert the Councilor." "By Heaven," exclaims Robert, "there is no King in the world who would not be proud to have a girl like you to adorn his Court"; and in thoughtful mood he spurs his horse and resumes his journey, followed by his troupe.

At the Chateau, away up in the Donjon he falls into deep meditation; looking through the window he can see again in the valley the group of giddy girls, still gossiping while they work. Robert is in love and His Lordly decision is quickly made. The Chamberlain is called and told: "Listen well. You will go to Herbert and tell him that I want his daughter. She shall come at dark to the secret door of the Chateau and tomorrow return by the same way, and nobody will know of it."

But the words of the messenger grieve Arlette very deeply. With pride she exlaims: "Sir, I refuse. If my Lord desires me let him treat me like the Councilor's daughter!" The Chamberlain regains the Chateau, greatly fearing the anger of his master; but Robert takes the message calmly, even with pleasure. "The brave, proud girl," he says simply. "It would be truly a pity for her to be the founder of a lineage of churls. Go to her tomorrow as she desires, at noon, and bring her here on my most beautiful palfrey, that my subjects may gaze upon her whom I have chosen to be my bride."

This is the story which the old chroniclers have left to us. They added that Arlette awoke one morning at the castle after a dream, in which it seemed to her that from her body grew an immense tree and that under its spreading branches were sheltered on one side the Duchy of Normandy and on the other the Kingdom of England. "This vision," she said, "greatly frightened me."

William the Conqueror, "The Bastard" of Arlette and Robert, was to realize years later this vision.

Now, lying at the bottom of the charming Ante Valley, like the Sleeping Beauty of the enchanted castle, Falaise lives with the memories of the glorious "Bastard," the hero of the most universally conquering race since Rome. Only the sound of the bells of its numerous churches and the cry of birds about the old Donjon seem to wish to disturb this slumber of several centuries. However, for those who, like the Prince Charming, provoke its momentary awakening the finely wrinkled face of the old city comes to life and recounts its story, altogether epic and charming. The actors are gone forever but the setting is still there.

Separated from the fortified castle by a deep ravine, which seems cut by the sword of Roland, abruptly rises Mont Myrrha. It is from this culminating point, or from the summit of the Donjon, that one can best enjoy the contemplation of the city. One can see from here, rising from the river banks, about the haughty ruins of the old castle, a spiral of gables, of spires, of roofs of delicate colors—gray, mauve, rose-violet. Above these the foliage mounts alone to assault the uncrowned ramparts where no longer one sees the menacing necks of the culverins of other days; although down in the Valley of the Ante the tanneries still display their widely gaping vats, as in the times of the pretty Arlette.

From this height the whole city can be made out. There are the four largest churches of Falaise—Guibray, of Romanesque style; St. Gervais, of Gothic; La Trinité, partly Gothic and partly Renaissance; and far below, outside the walls near the river, St. Laurent, of no discernible style, a small, country church, modest and pathetic. The ancient residences stand out, ennobling and overshadowing certain narrow streets; gardens and terraces climb the ramparts; the park of Fresnaye planted with century-old trees makes a large spot of verdure in the landscape; the waters of the fountain and the brooks flow and murmur night and day; the public promenade seems to be a long green carpet stretched between two alleys of elms and lindens.

How charming it is, this pretty village with its pointed roofs, its tortuous lanes, the spires of its churches, and its bouquets of trees; a ravishing spectacle, soothing to the soul. Human thoughts, thoughts that are gay, thoughts that are sad, rise with the smoke from the roofs and stir us.

These houses of Falaise, so small one can hide them behind one's hand, have nevertheless sheltered centuries of love and of hatred, of pleasure and of suffering. They have survived wounds that seemed mortal. They confide their secrets to us, the visitor who looks down from the hilltop to contemplate them. But finally the old city, with its Norman houses, merges into the dusk of the evening and resumes her lethargic sleep.

But, more of the architecture!

When one speaks of the Norman house, this term calls to mind immediately a house of wood, with its

FARM HOUSE NEAR FALAISE

frame showing and probably a projecting gable. But Normandy, ensemble of diverse provinces, is known for other very different types of construction.

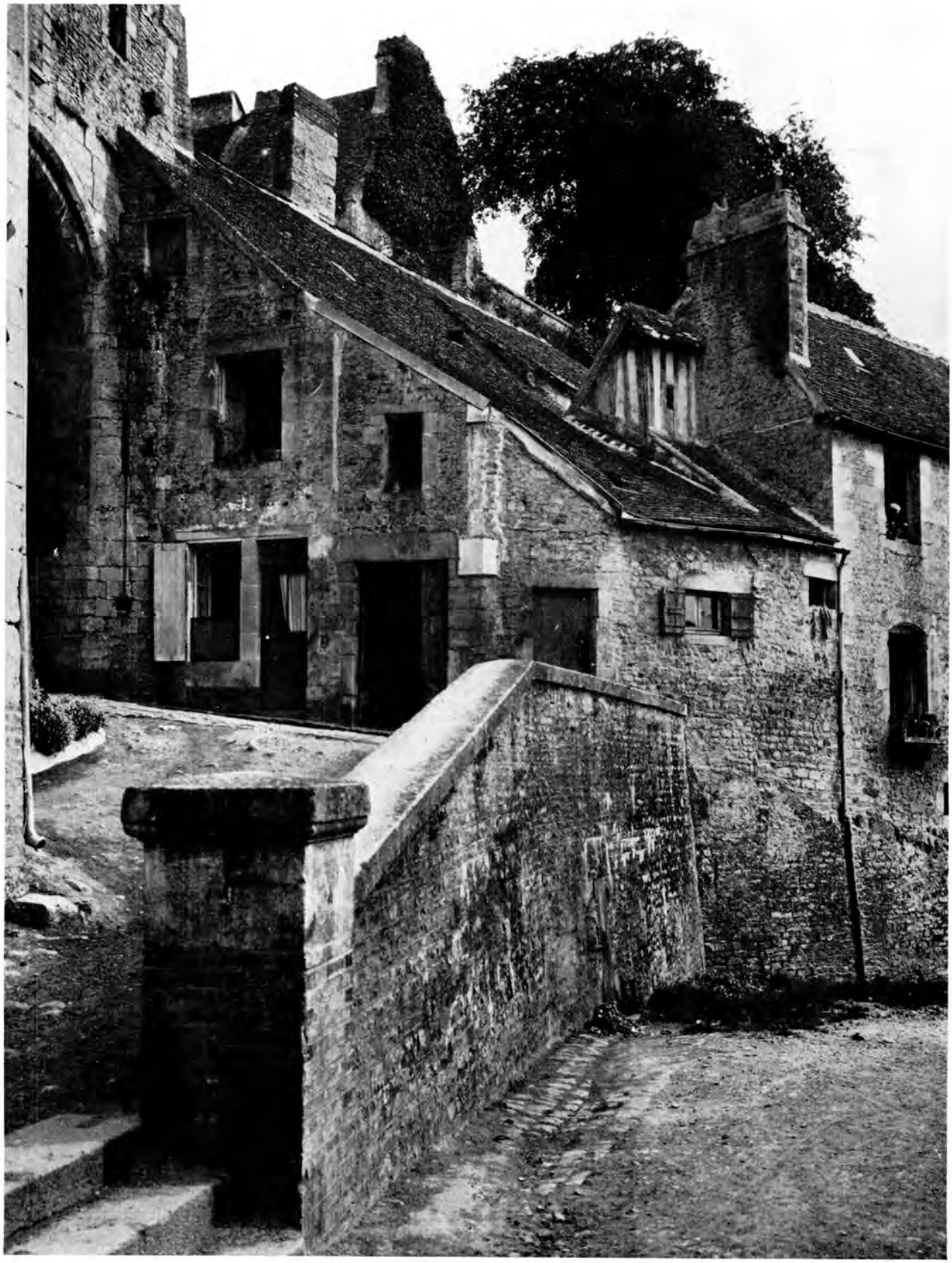
At Falaise and in its environs is found above all an architecture of stone which recalls very closely the architecture of Touraine. There are without doubt two reasons for this: the Angevine domination in 1148 with the influence of the Normans on Touraine, or vice versa, which followed; and, even more than this, the quality of the stone of the country, a kind of schist.

Here and there are houses of stone and larger groups of stone farm buildings, the silhouette of whose dormers or windows indicates their period to be of the 15th or 16th century. Sometimes a well-proportioned tower or a monumental doorway gives to one of them the added touch which indicates a real manor house. The local stone, laid in parallel courses and bound with mortar, as well as the use of quoins, shows in these often very modest structures a real quality of originality.

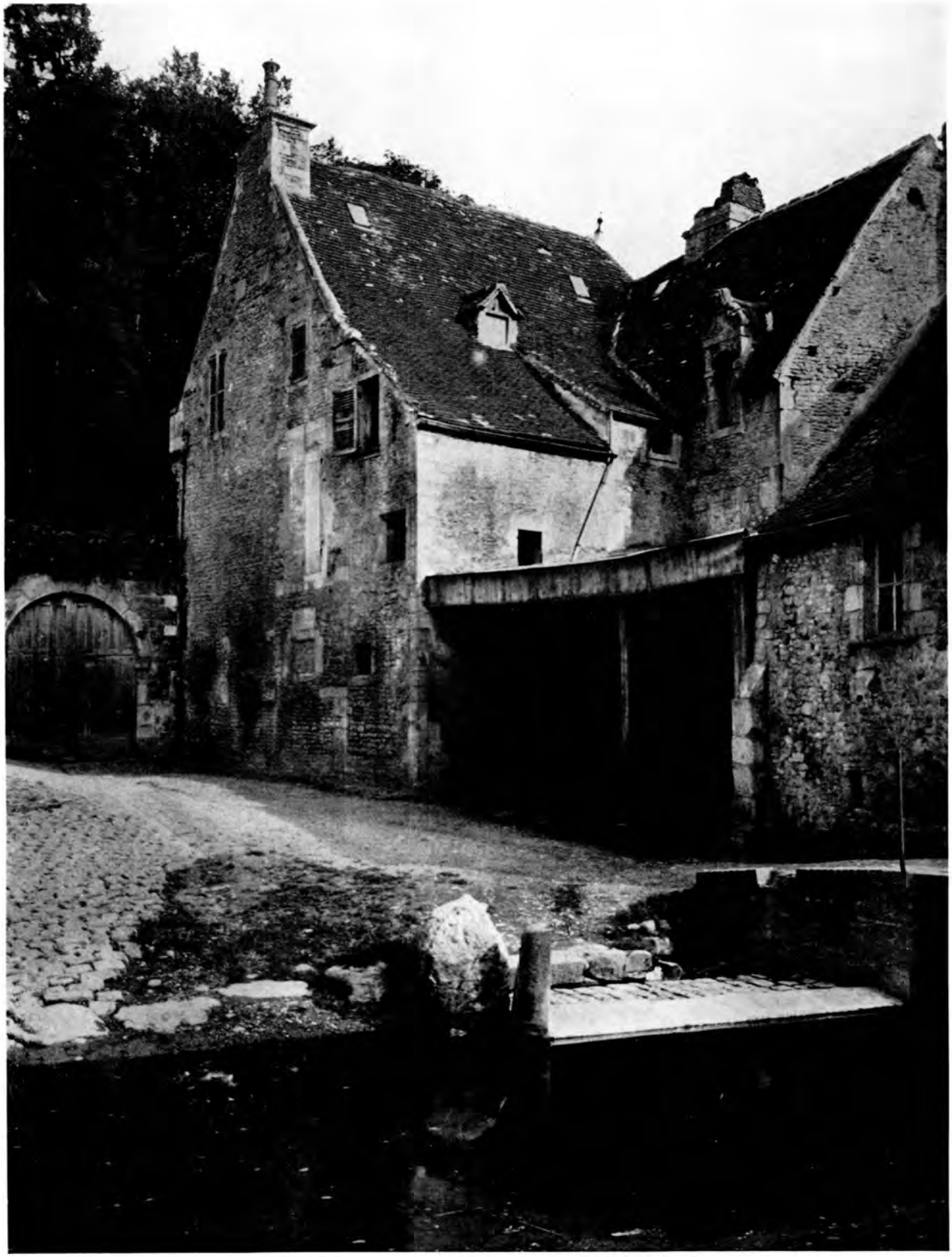
In the very simple houses of the old Falaise an exterior stairway, sometimes a dormer window, or now and then the manner in which the different buildings project one on the other, gives them life and a singularly picturesque appearance. The poets have sung of them. And how many artists with pen and pencil have they tempted! There are corners of old streets in Falaise which have been drawn, engraved and painted by literally hundreds of artists of France and of other countries.

While the use of stone in domestic architecture is common in and around Falaise, there are certain ancient buildings framed of wood which attest, even after so many ages, to the comfortable and simple life of the burghers of the 15th and 16th centuries, and also to the mastery of the Normans in this form of construction. A man of the sea, the Norman has brought to the construction of his home of wood the crowning qualities of the sailor, qualities of logic and finesse. Thus, for example, the rare churches in wood which Normandy still possesses often give the impression of the solid holds of vessels in a shipyard. In the wood houses everything is logical and—what is an important architectural quality—the useful becomes ornamental.

In short, although the house of wood frame is not confined only to Normandy but many beautiful examples of it are to be found in innumerable villages, nevertheless nowhere in all France will you find them built with such boldness, such purity and elegance of style as here in this province.



VIEW IN THE OLD TOWN, FALAISE

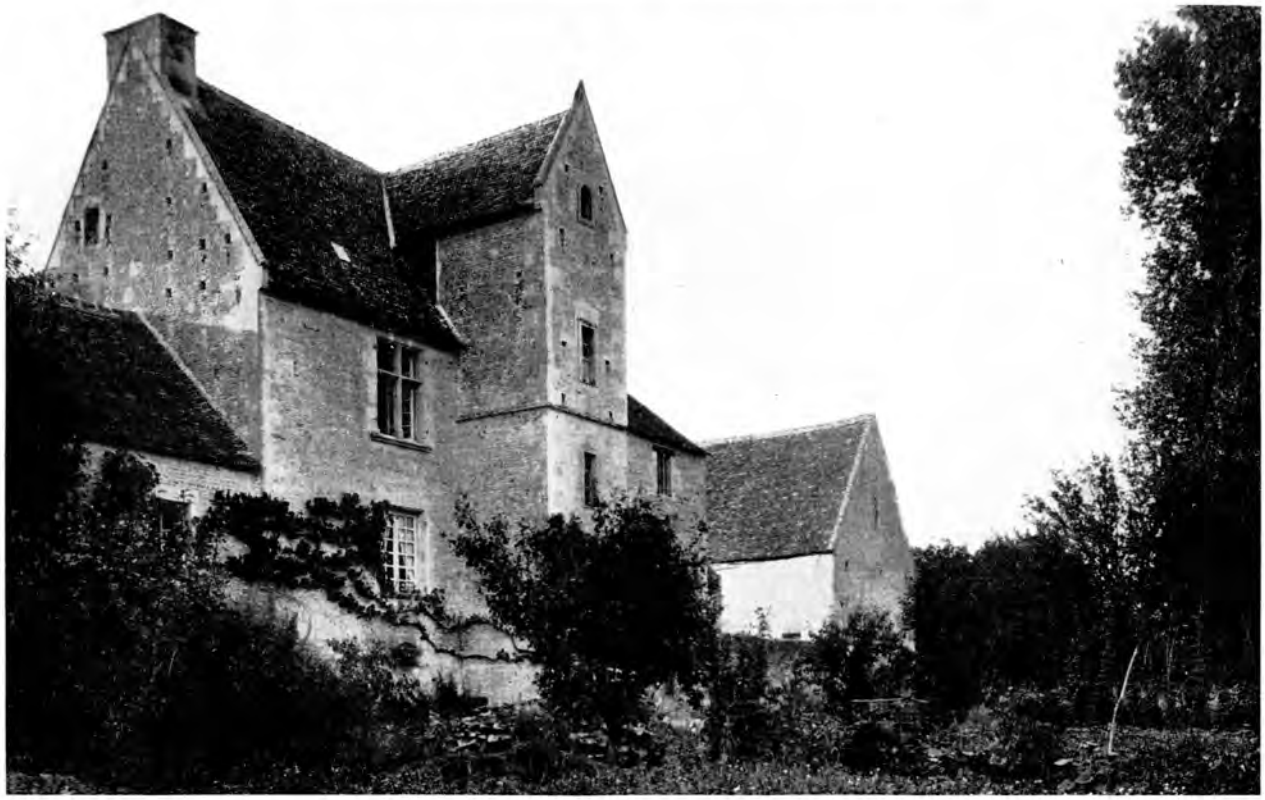


HOUSE IN THE OLD TOWN, FALAISE

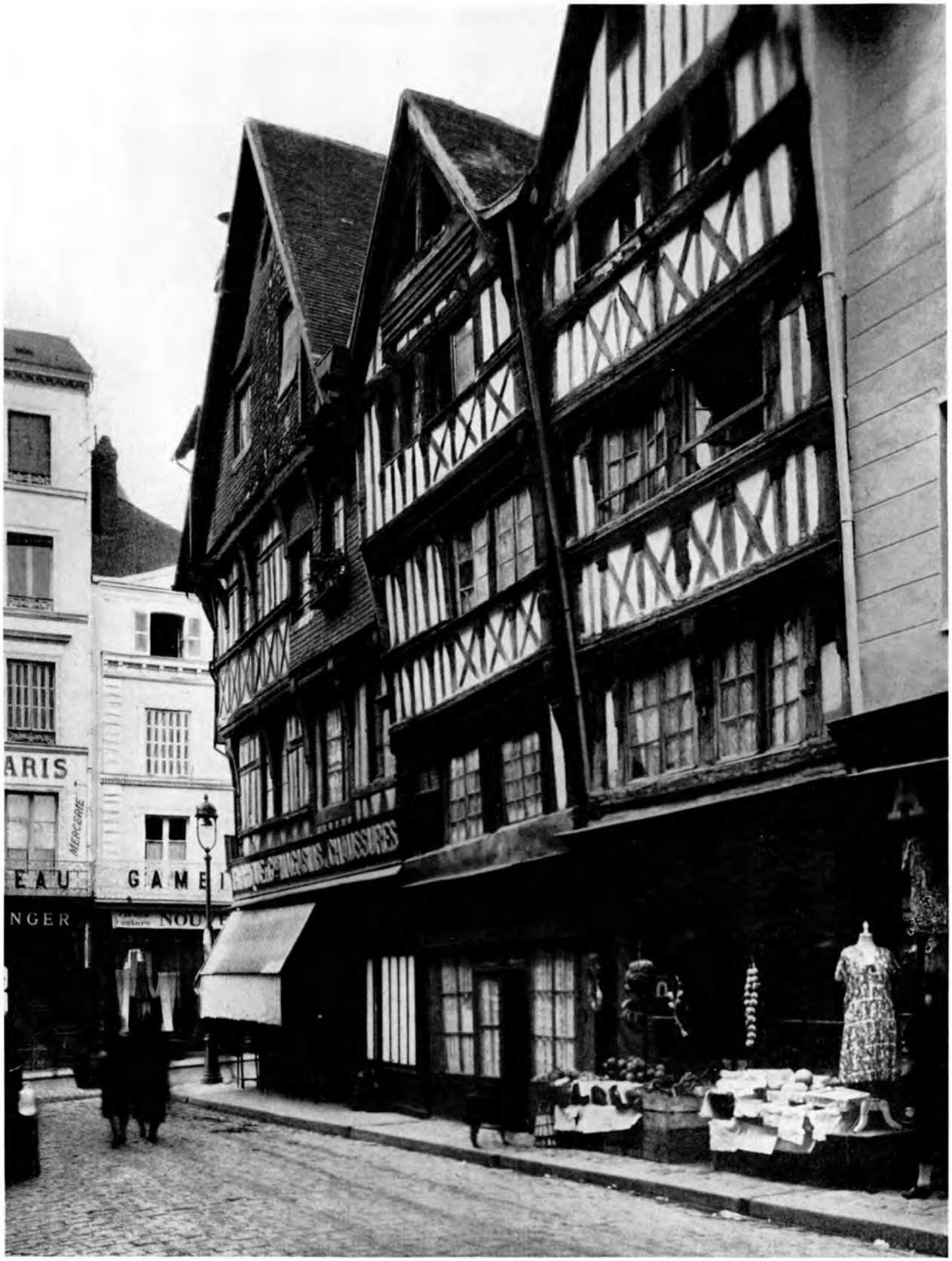
LOOKING DOWN INTO THE OLD TOWN, FALAISE

STREET IN THE OLD TOWN, FALAISE

FRONT OF SMALL MANOR HOUSE NEAR FALAISE

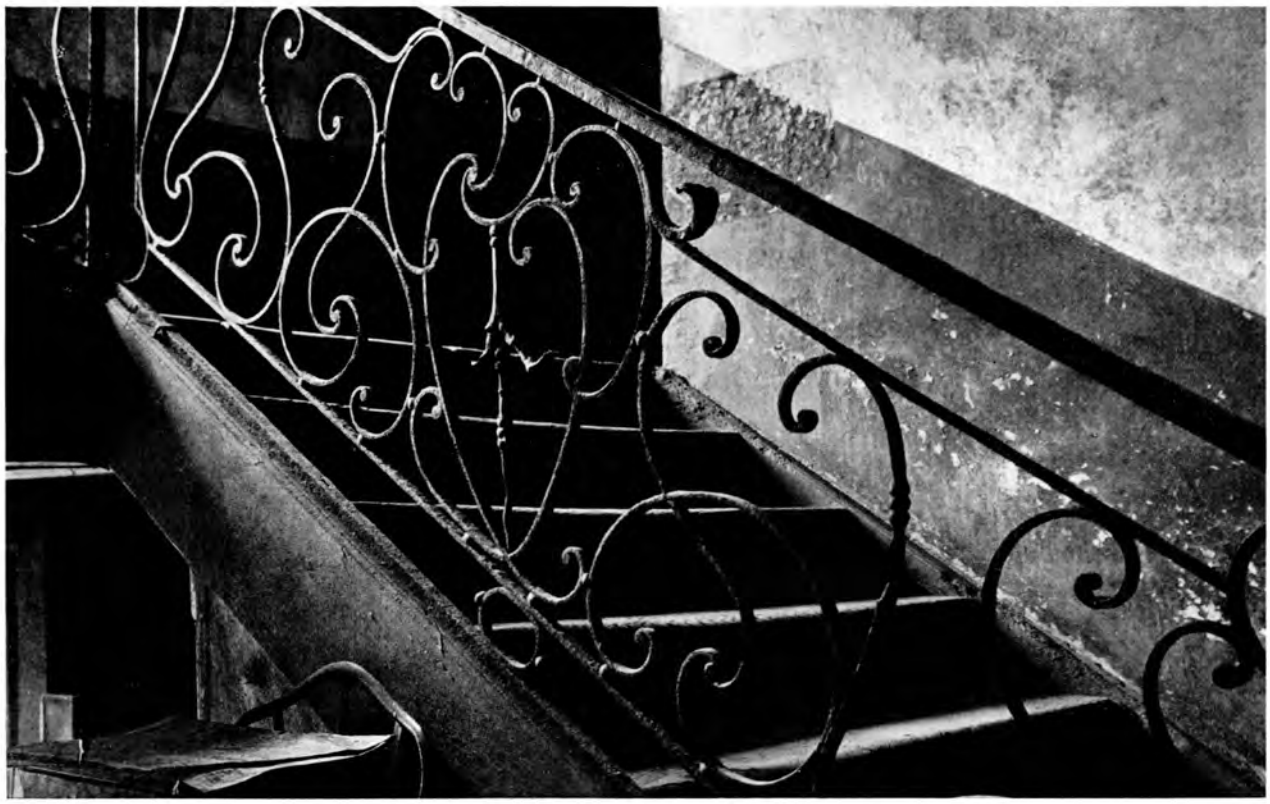


REAR OF SMALL MANOR HOUSE NEAR FALAISE



WOOD HOUSES AT LISIEUX (CALVADOS)

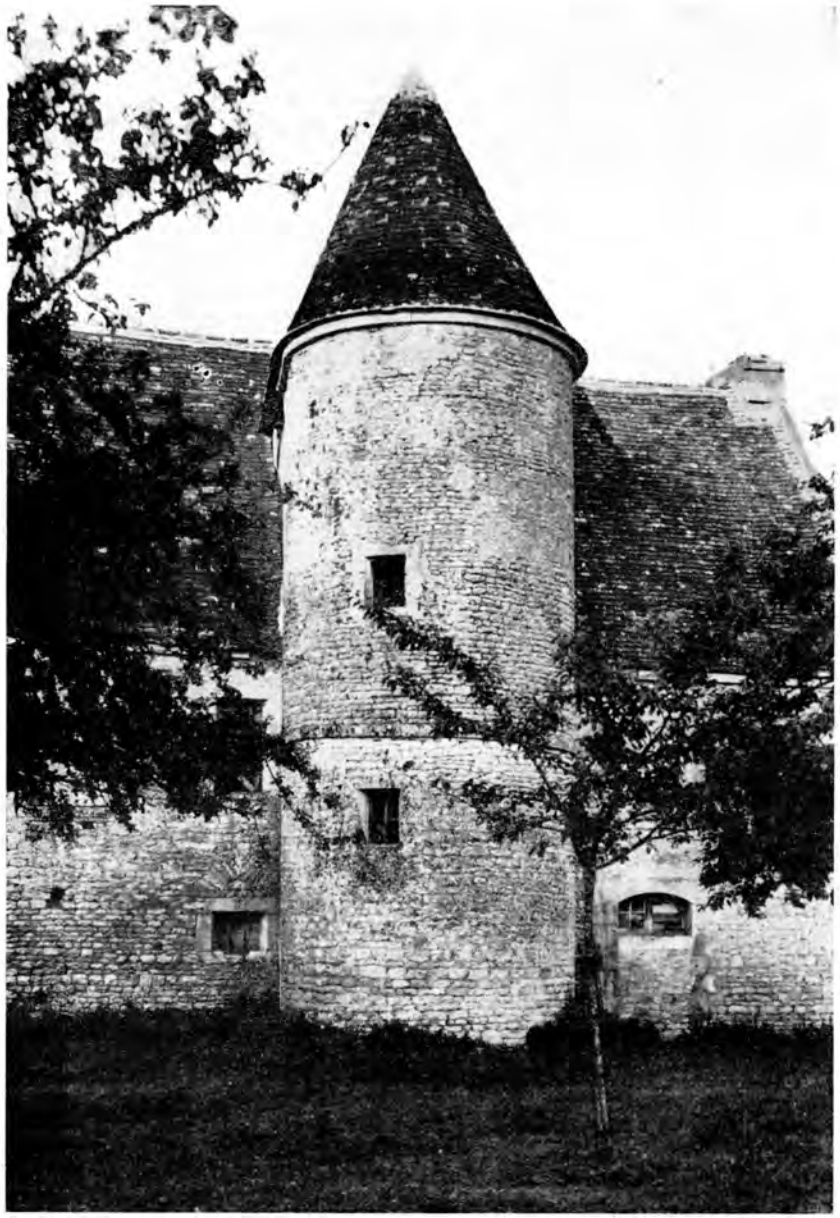
RAILING AT STAIR LANDING, MORTAIN (MANCHE)



STAIR RAILING AT MORTAIN (MANCHE)

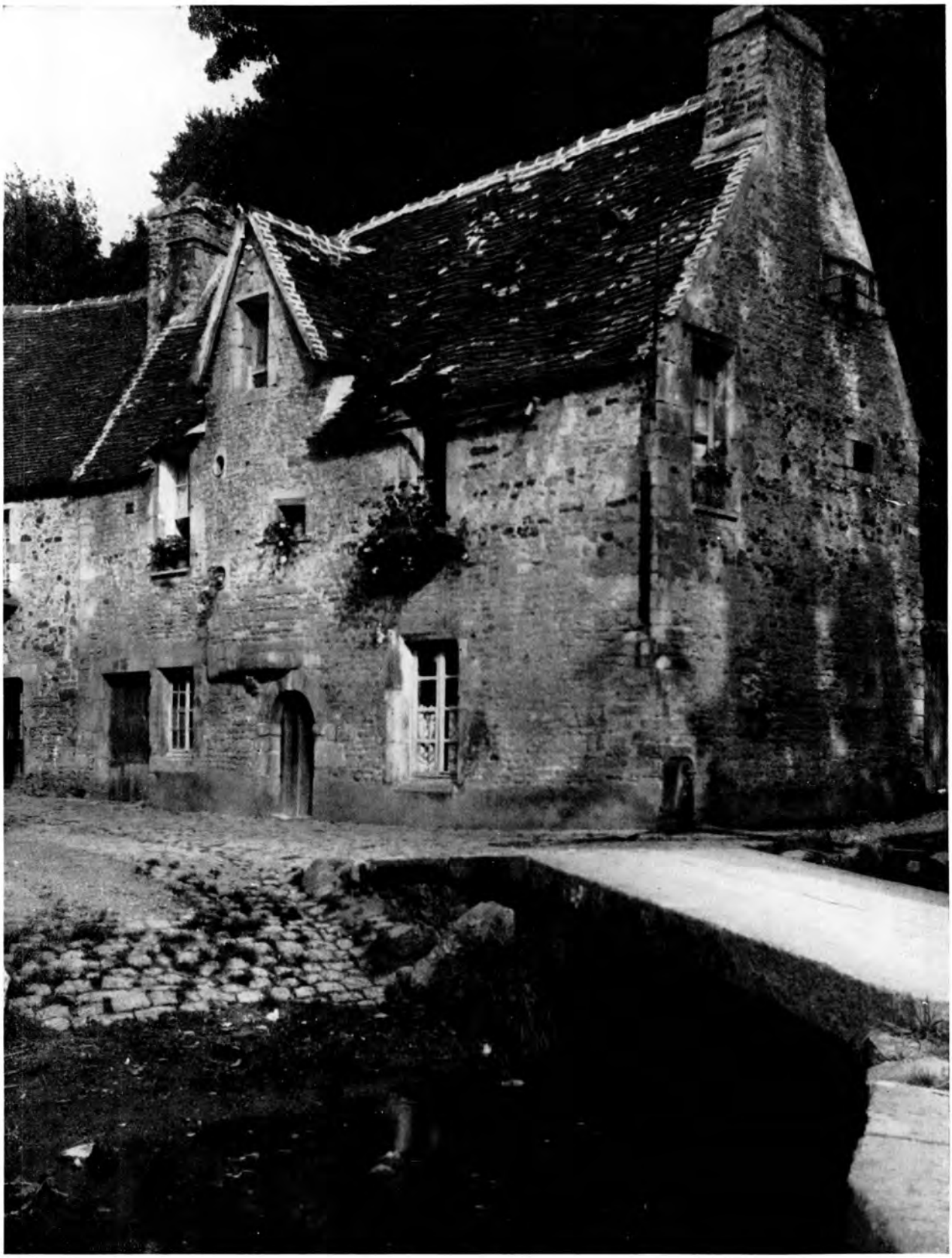
GATEWAY AT BRETTEVILLE-SUR-LAIZE (CALVADOS)

STAIR RAILING AT MORTAIN (MANCHE)

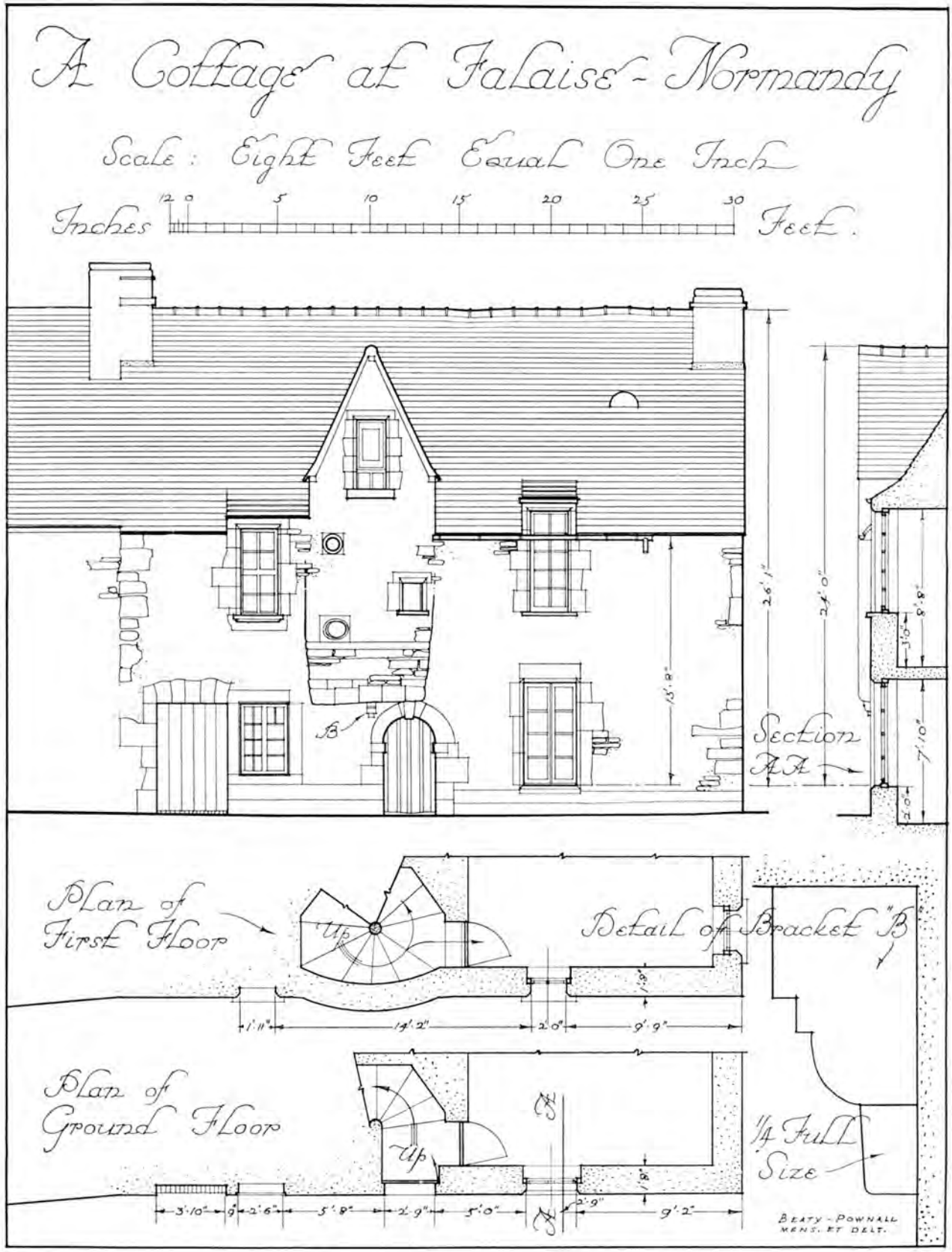


FARM BUILDING NEAR FALAISE

FARM BUILDING NEAR FALAISE



COTTAGE ON THE ANTE, FALAISE (CALVADOS)



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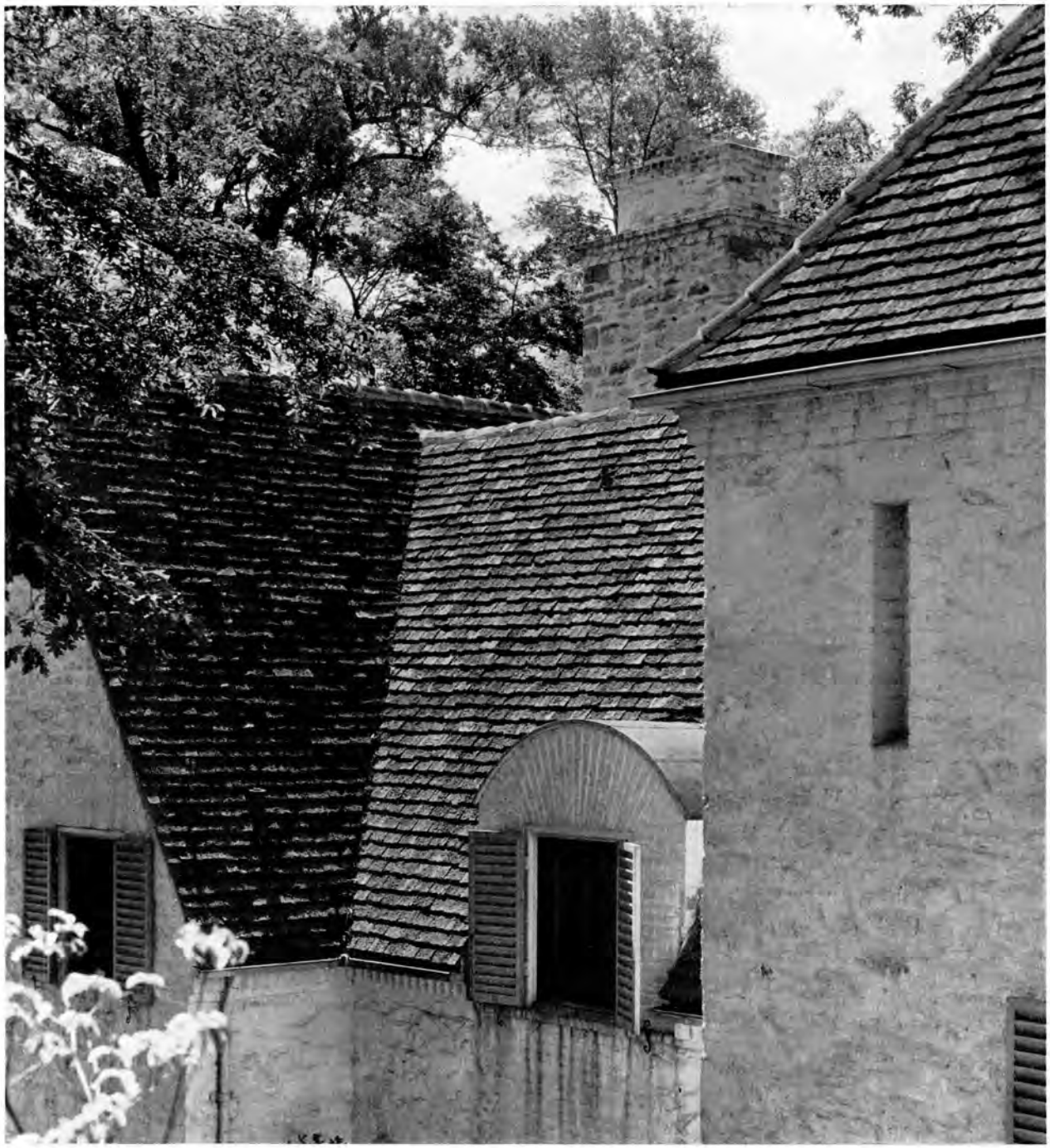

Texture and tone are important features of a roof, as shown in this detail of a country house near Baltimore. Permanence and durability should also be considered when selecting a roofing material. Ludowici Tile meet the most exacting requirements of all these points. They are available in various patterns and colors.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY F. R. YERBURY HON. A·R·I·B·A

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AN ARCHITECT REVISITS FRANCE

TEXT BY

SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN

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FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

ENTRANCE, CHÂTEAU IN BURGUNDY

MAY 1952

AN ARCHITECT REVISITS FRANCE AND SOME MINOR CHATEAUX

BY SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN

THE first warm breath of Spring in Paris brings out many things: the charming open air caresses of the mating young, the newest frocks on the midinettes, the street fairs. A minor manifestation, along with the buds and birds and fresh asparagus, is that soul-satisfying spectacle, the visiting American architect about to embark on a tour of the provinces. He is distinguishable at once, sitting on the terrace of the Deux Magots or some other favorite haunt. First of all, he is vastly more at home than the average visitor. He is more likely to be conversing quietly in French with an old *copain* from the École than to be declaiming in resonant English. He orders an *apératif* that the untutored tourist never heard of, and quite probably smokes strong black cigarettes from a yellow French package. The chances are that he is dressed in good roomy, relaxed Harris tweeds, punctuated with a necktie that is not timid and a favorite hat which has become slightly battered. Out at the curb, he has parked his car, a moderately antique Citroën or Renault, which he has just bought second hand. In the rumble seat he has stored a jumble of pleasant accessories: a faithful camera, a sketching stool, a sheaf of road maps, plenty of pads of Whatman's and Canson and Fabriano which he will never use up, and a grand old box of water colors from by-gone days. He hasn't got a Baedeker, but in his pocket he has a notebook, crammed full of names: restaurants he mustn't miss, hundreds of villages he must visit, dozens of old acquaintances he is supposed to look up.

Decidedly he is to be envied. Guides, sight-seeing busses and other vexations of the uninitiated tourist are not his concern. He is apt to understand the language and the viewpoint of the amiable people in whose country he is visiting. He knows good food and good wines. Many a mild adventure lies ahead of him, no matter which direction he turns. A countryside, incredibly rich in minor architecture, stretches out before him, ready to reveal a wealth of treasures at the whim of his steering wheel.

Such a prospect would invigorate an architect of any nationality, but I think it appeals especially to an American. First, because he is a more habitual and enthusiastic traveler. Secondly, because he is more vitally interested in domestic architecture, because more houses are built in his native America. He himself has probably had three times as many houses on his boards as his European colleague. Thirdly, he is not bound by any nationalism in architectural tradition, such as prevails in so many European countries. He is free to absorb other ideas, secure in the knowledge that some of them will be received sympathetically by his clients. Not so receptive are the home owners of other countries. It would take a protracted search in rural England, for example, to find a country house which betrayed a strong Italian or French tendency. The fringes of France reflect somewhat the architecture of neighbors across the border; that is true, but there is little in the essential French countryside which is not "typically" French. An American Colonial house in France is unique enough to attract the gaping millions which crowded around the reproduction of Mount Vernon at the recent Colonial Exposition. But the American home builder, due to the wide diversity of his terrain and climate, and a variety of

influences difficult to separate or define (probably our often-cited yearning for the romantic and picturesque is among them), is peculiarly receptive to foreign ideas in planning his house. He is quite at home in a Tudor manor on Long Island or a Spanish patio in California. He has never insisted upon the evolution of a national domestic style developing from the early Colonial.

All of this, I realize, is so self-evident to the readers of these pages that it is trite. But the fact is significant, for it permits the American architect to rejoice in a larger vocabulary, and he embarks on a journey which is apt to be fruitful in fresh and practical ideas, as well as in landscape, gastronomy and even adventure.

Finally, antiquity being lacking in most of the houses of his land, the American is extraordinarily receptive to the mellowing effects of age. And here a paunchy parenthesis may be in order, for antiquity in French houses is a fit subject for an elaborate essay in itself.

As one gazes upon a grand old French *manoir*, one conclusion is obvious: there would be no houses capable of withstanding the rigors of centuries if they had not been well constructed. And the old houses of France are magnificently built. This fact is easily accounted for. The thrifty French people build for permanency as a measure of sensible economy. Furthermore, France has always been a country of unhurried, individualistic artisans, who build deliberately and well. Even in this headlong century, even during the present *crise*, the French workman is a leisurely soul. He has as many daily snacks as a passenger on an ocean liner, each calling for a recess, a glass of red wine and a great deal of conversation. This atones, in a way, for his rather meagre wages. Accomplished carpenters, masons or painters in the French provinces earn about two dollars and forty cents a day at the moment. They do beautiful work because they contrive to take beautiful leisure in doing it. (Having lived in more than one French house that gurgled, I am less sure about the genius of the plumbers.)

Much of the individuality, the charm and the sturdiness of old French houses is accounted for by this thorough, unhurried temperament of French craftsmen, which has prevailed down during the centuries. Long ago they discovered that only a well built house will grow old gracefully. Even the pink and mustard villas of 1900, studded with bulbous blue-green gew-gaws and cornice lacework in filigreed zinc, are well put together (though the process of aging will have to work miracles to mitigate their ugliness). But the aged, shoddy shack condemns itself. Civilized Frenchmen look with horror (mingled with apprehension), upon the cheap, post-war construction which is evident in a few patchy suburbs of Paris.

A great many factors contribute to the reposeful ensemble of an old French *manoir*. Its time-stained stones may have had a century or two of weathering before they reached their present resting place. How often have abandoned churches and public buildings been stripped of their cut stone facing to embellish the homes of the *bourgeoisie*? One gazes at the ragged, unprotected remains of the unachieved aqueduct at Maintenon, and wonders how many houses in the village are built with facing filched from Louis XVI's ill-fated enterprise. The fantastic picturesqueness of many a timbered house can be explained by the fact that it was built up of salvaged timbers.

The varied texture and gorgeous *patine* of many a tile roof are often the results of endless patching. Quite possibly they were second hand tiles when they were laid. Any roof will ultimately need repairs, but your economical Frenchman is likely to avoid completely relaying it if he can. He will patch in spots, or in vertical strips. Result, a casual and perfectly delightful variety of texture and tone. The moist climate of France, which encourages the softening touch of microscopic moss and lichens, does the rest. There are other things to account for the irregularity of old roofs. The beams and rafters are almost sure to be hand-hewn from small, irregular logs. The old-fashioned tiles are hooked on slats of hand split oak. Finally there is the subtle sag of centuries to add an intangible touch of rhythm to the ensemble. Certainly the mellow effect of an old French house is not gained without the pleasant conspiracy of time, nature and man.

With all this in mind, it is not surprising that our American adaptations of European houses sometimes seem a trifle cold. At the same time it is encouraging to recall the tremendous strides that have been taken in American home building during recent decades. We may be permitted to boast (even though boasting is a bad habit), that no nation has produced as worthy an outcropping of well designed houses since the dawn of the century. The American countryside is graced with a multitude of distinguished houses, whose design would be a credit to the architects of any generation. Moreover, they have been built intelligently and well, by worthy craftsmen, with materials which, in quality, frequently surpass those of other days. This scattered

army of fine American houses can face the future with equanimity, and it is pleasant to contemplate the ripening effect that age will have upon them. A century or two will soften them into just such tranquil, weather-beaten, reposeful treasures as the old *manoirs* of France, to which their very architects now pay appreciative visits.

But my wordy digression has led me far from the impatient architect and his touring car. His whim can lead him in a dozen directions, and he may be sure that adventure lurks in each of them. Supposing that he chooses at random to leave Paris by the Porte d'Italie, buoyantly bound for Fontainebleau and points South. The cathedrals of Sens and Auxerre are on his road, the picturesque citadels of Avallon, Sémur-en-Auxois and Vézelay are barely off it. Along the way he will dig up half hidden old *manoirs*, such as the glorious little Renaissance estate at Chailley or further on the earlier buildings of Ragny, both here illustrated. More than one massive château will silhouette itself against the Spring sky.

An epic of Burgundian cooking awaits him at Dijon, particularly if he dines at "Aux Trois Faisans." If he has enough energy to drive on after a Dijon *déjeuner*, he finds himself spinning down that magic little valley, blessed by just the right soil, drainage and exposure, which for centuries has produced the rare vintages of Burgundy. Vines are on both sides of him, hundreds of thousands of vines, all sprayed and pruned and protected with infinite care. On the slope above the smooth highway are villages with names which are sacred to the epicure and the expert on rare vintages, Gévrey-Chambertin, Morey, Chambolle-Musigny. One village will probably catch his eye more than the rest, for it is dominated by the handsome little château of Clos Vougeot, shown on these pages.

May our roving architect be bitten with curiosity at this point. A delightful hour lies ahead of him if he will only approach the château and pull the aging bell cord. The owner of the château is more than likely to receive him at the door with an expansive smile, and to exclaim, "Ah, you've come to present arms to the Clos Vougeot!" This salutation is more than a mere happy phrase. It relates to an episode which has gone down in history. More than a century ago, the celebrated Colonel Bisson was leading his regiment to join the army on the Rhine. Passing before Clos Vougeot, he noted the luxuriant grape vines. An inspiration came to him. He halted his troops, ordered them to do a left face, and had them present arms before the château, while drums beat and trumpets blew. This gesture of the old soldier remains a cherished bit of French tradition, and his words at that moment are immortal: "Now you understand, soldiers, why we are prepared to make such sacrifices! It is because we have riches such as these to defend!" To this day the tradition prevails, and many a band of young French recruits is puzzled the first time it is ordered to present arms before this historic façade.

The proprietor of Clos Vougeot is a ruddy, cordial man, as every good *vigneron* should be. Generations of his forefathers owned vineyards before him. If the visitor betrays the fact that he is an architect, he is apt to hear a curious story. All parts of the château, architecturally speaking, have not the charm of the views shown here. From the inner court there is an impression of clumsiness. The affable owner has a yarn to offer in explanation, namely that a young and rather self-assured monk drew the plans and grandiloquently displayed them to the venerable Abbé Loisier, who built the château. The latter perceived the faults of the plans, but to punish the young monk for the cardinal sin of conceit, he built the château exactly as the impetuous ecclesiastic had conceived it, and supposedly as we see it today.

If there is a trace of angular gauntness outside, there is great majesty and atmosphere in the interior, once the newcomer passes the distinguished Renaissance portal. Here are imposing baronial halls, marked by sumptuous panelling and monumental fireplaces. But this opulence is paled, once the owner leads the way to the vast vaulted cellars. Here is concentrated the true magnificence of Clos Vougeot. In the cool, dimly lighted *caves* are ranged dozens of tremendous vats, scores of huge hogsheads, capable of holding 1,450 casks of glittering red Burgundy. Dim in the distance is an historic oak wine press, whose power has not diminished after centuries of use. Sharp streaks of sunlight cut through occasional slits in the wall and brighten the darkness for a few feet. In the demi-obscurity the architect can just discern the perfect vaulting and a succession of handsome old capitals. But his host calls his attention to something else, an aged oaken vat labelled "Clos Vougeot—1911." He takes two crystal goblets and cautiously draws out a rich, red, incredibly clear liquid. They hold their glasses up to one of the streaks of sunlight, which makes them blaze like flawless rubies.

Then, with charming cordiality, they clink their glasses. And here, gentle reader, is a good place to leave our wandering architect.

CHÂTEAU DE CLOS VOUGEOT (CÔTE-D'OR)

ENTRANCE COURT, CHÂTEAU DE RAGNY (YONNE)

CHÂTEAU DE CLOS VOUGEOT (CÔTE-D'OR)

ENTRANCE TO CHÂTEAU DE RAGNY (YONNE)

ENTRANCE COURT, CHÂTEAU DE RAGNY (YONNE)

REAR OF CHÂTEAU DE RAGNY (YONNE)

COURTYARD, CHÂTEAU IN BURGUNDY

FARM BUILDINGS, CHÂTEAU IN BURGUNDY

END PAVILION, CHÂTEAU IN BURGUNDY

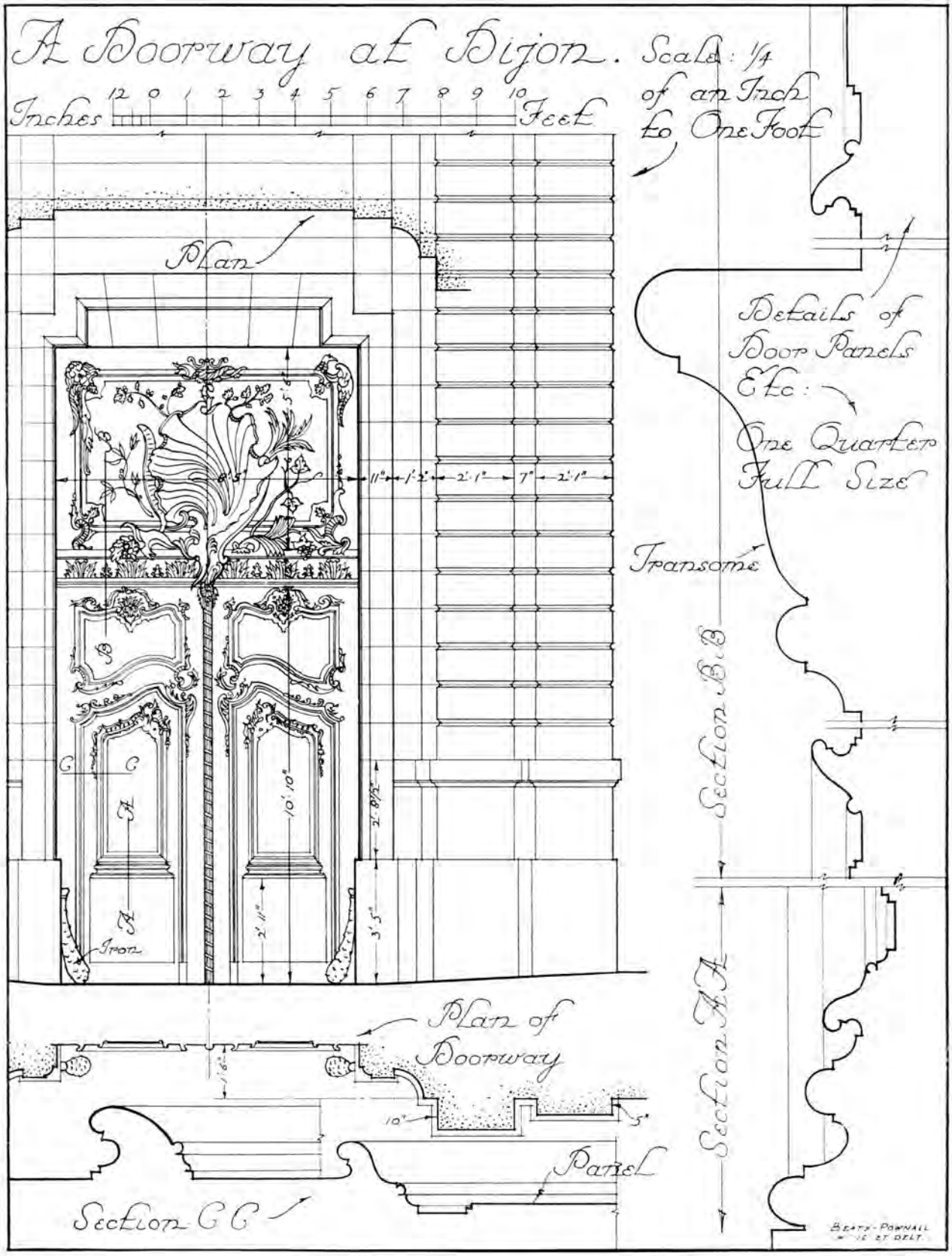
CHÂTEAU DE CHAILLEY (YONNE)

CHÂTEAU DE CHAILLEY (YONNE)

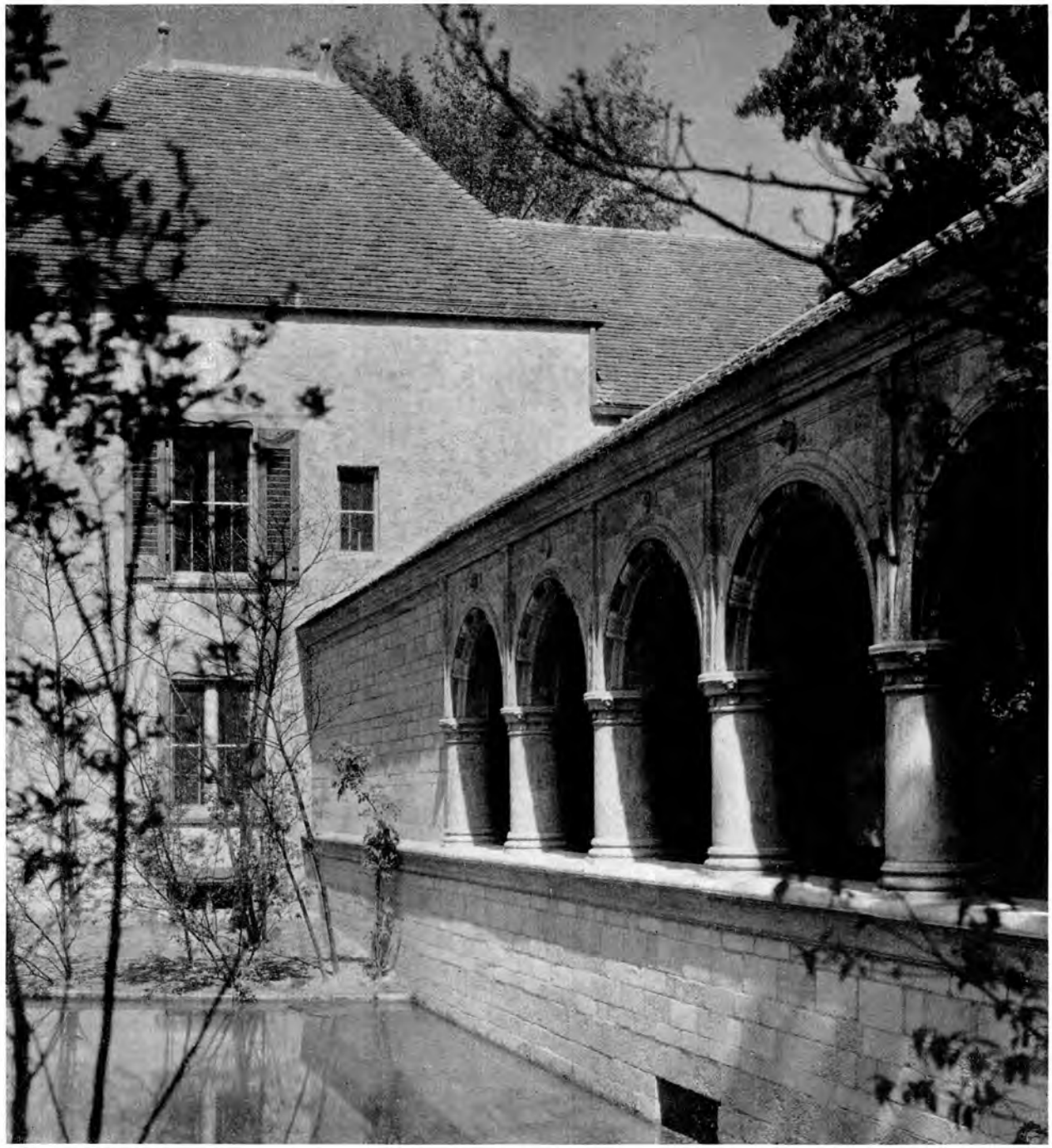
DETAIL, CHÂTEAU DE CHAILLEY

OUTBUILDING, CHÂTEAU DE CHAILLEY

A DOORWAY AT DIJON (CÔTE-D'OR)



SEE ILLUSTRATION ON OPPOSITE PAGE



This detail of a large farm group in New Jersey, based on French precedent, shows the effective use of Ludowici Tile. As a roofing material tile gives texture and color combined with great durability while in Ludowici Tile the variety of patterns permits a selection to meet special requirements of taste or design.

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TWO CHATEAUX OF TOURAINE

TEXT BY

MME. MARC DEBROL

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VIEW FROM LANTERN, CHATEAU OF LA MORINIÈRE (LOIR-ET-CHER)

JULY 1932

TWO CHATEAUX OF TOURAINE

LA MORINIÈRE AND CHANTECAILLE

BY MME. MARC DEBROL (MRS. JOHN H. STORRS)

WHEN one mentions the Chateaux of Touraine, immediately one thinks of the royal residences which are scattered along the Loire like the brilliant chords of an architectural arpeggio: Blois, Chaumont, Amboise, Saumur, Angers, etc. One omits, too easily, in this admiring evocation, the Chateaux which are not royal, the residences which did not belong to the sovereigns but to the nobles who followed the kings. These smaller *"gentilhommières,"* country homes less official and less formal but more individual, have an intimate charm and a livable quality which often are preferable, even in architecture, to the immensity of a Chambord, or the austerity of a Langeais. The *dames d'honneur* are frequently more beautiful than the queen.

Instead of following faithfully the tourist-programs of the autocars, slaves of routine which never vary their regular trips and never deviate from their imposed itinerary except to branch off towards a Cheverny or a Chenonceaux of classic reputation, we are going on an intimate pilgrimage to discover two practically unknown small residences. Timidly, as with apologies, they add the title of Chateau to their names, although each one seems to be the most exquisite expression of a nobleman's habitation in a definite part of France and in a definite period.

The Chateau de La Morinière is situated near Mur-de-Sologne, in the *departement* of Loir-et-Cher. In this region almost all of the estates have names finishing in "ière"; it is a uniform spelling which after many years' usage imparts a certain local color.

The landscape here is flat, with forests of pines planted in symmetrical lines. The soil is light and sandy, drinking the rain and giving forth a renowned white wine. Some ponds, big as lakes but without real depth, reflect the sky, neither blue nor gray, both sentimental and witty, with enough sceptical irony in the shades to save it from being too suave and enough sweetness not to be too hard. In this country there is no rock, no earth-bone; everything is genteel, subtle, *en finesse*. The peasant houses are built of brick, held in place by strips of wood and are roofed with pinkish tiles; the Chateaux are all elegance, harmony and fantasy.

La Morinière was built by René des Roches, the uncle of Ronsard. Erected in the first part of the 16th century, in the time when Pierre Nepveu was building Chambord in its immediate neighborhood, it belongs to a transitional period when the newly imported Italian art was mixing with the remnants of Gothic principles. One finds in the disposition of the plan, in the moat encircling the court of honor and in the protective defense of the small square towers very evident traces of the medieval tradition lightened by the fancy of the decoration and the richness of the ornamental motives. These seemingly secondary details date the construction, placing its time much more definitely than could the meticulous precision of a scholarly biography. In addition to this character of the middle of the 16th century, La Morinière has a local distinction which places it in space as well as in time.

When one speaks of La Touraine, one embraces a part of France including several different regions. The environs of Angers do not have anything in common with the environs of Orléans, other than that both are on the same river; a river which reflects on a moving background many facades, all varying and yet showing a vague family-likeness—*un air de famille*. The regions situated on the South side of the Loire have not the same character, neither the same elements or the same taste and consequently not the same plastic expression that those of the North bank have. In Sologne (the South side of Touraine) there is no stone; one substitutes for it

the brick made on the spot, in this country of clay-potter soil.

La Morinière is accordingly built of brick, since it is situated in Sologne, but the brick is mixed with stone because it was built as the lodging of an aristocrat. Stone being much more costly to quarry, to import and to work, it was therefore considered a sign of wealth and power and for these reasons was reserved for the homes of the Lords. The dependencies, servants' quarters and pigeon-cotes were made of brick. Pigeon-cotes were legally authorized only on estates of certain importance and were the privilege of nobility; even the number of pigeons permitted was in close relation to the rank of the owner. La Morinière was such an important place that it had the right to possess 1500 pigeon-holes in the *pigeonnier*.

The use of brick was in high favor during the 15th and 16th centuries and was very much appreciated even before the reign of Louis XIII which saw its height. The castle of Plessis-les-Tours where Louis XI died seems to have given the taste for this varicolored workmanship and it was immediately imitated in the nearby Chateau de Luynes. In general the walls were decorated with curious geometrical patterns by mixing natural colored bricks with black varnished ones. The builders in the region of Blois instead of making scattered patterns which, as at the Chateau of Gien, seem to destroy the essential idea of a wall, its solidity and consistency, adopted the shape of lozenges in their decoration. One sees this motive in almost all the residences of that time in the region, as in the Chateau du Moulin built previously to La Moriniére and the Maison du Tison at Romorantin. But in this latter the colored bricks forming the geometrical ornamentation are of pale green which gives more richness and a certain originality to the effect.

This *fantaisie* of color from the union of dull, smooth stones with rough, porous bricks; the exquisite asymmetry of the windows opening where they were needed for utility, not merely for effect, and yet without upsetting or destroying the general equilibrium; the secret intimacy of the interior court protected by the girdling moat; the double line of the out-houses with their humble, low facades leading up to the climax of the chateau with its lantern which seems to stretch it yet more in height; the solemnity of the portal which frames a view of the ensemble; the horizon of water, of land, of wood; the long prospects opening on simple spaces, punctuated by the groups of really venerable oaks; all this makes La Morinière an exquisite residence, full of charm and intimate beauty, but a beauty which is easy, human,—I was going to say, tender.

Chantecaille*, situated only a few kilometers from La Morinière but on the other side of the Loire, is quite of "the other side" which means of an entirely different aspect though still in Touraine, still in the county of Loir-et-Cher. The village near La Morinière has a name almost identical to the name of the village near Chantecaille: one is Mur-de-Sologne, the other is Mer-en Beauce. However this hyphen modifies everything,—the physiognomy of the country, the color of the atmosphere, the quality of the soil, the type of the race, and even the style of the architecture. There are no more sylvan veils on the face of Nature; the fields are bare; the horizon is uncovered. This Chateau has a name of multiform spelling. In the Middle Ages Champ-de-Cailles, later Chant-de-Caille, and now Chantecaille, always referring to quails—a field of quails, or the song of quails, or singing-quail,—these birds being the habitual dwellers of this exact location.

Chantecaille is posed on the edge of the valley as on a pedestal which raises it and isolates it like a pious offering. Protected from the north wind and from the breezes of the Beauce by a curtain of trees which hides it from the indiscreet, Chantecaille opens its court of honor to the South. There it presents its regular façade, its yoke-elm hedges spreading along as a continuation of its architecture and its terraces lined up with wisely spaced gradations. There it stands confident, simple, dignified.

Built in 1452, Chantecaille has kept from this dark Gothic period only one ogival window, the north facade with its few and narrow openings, the open beamed ceilings, the floors of hand made tiles, the walls of quite medieval thickness, and the general plan and distribution of the interior with its width of only one room. All that was remodeled and enlarged in the period of Louis XIII and Louis XIV. Then the old slate roof was broken up with a trio of classical dormer windows, the rooms were dressed up with panelled woodwork and large windows with small panes of bottle-green glass (the color of the time) were cut in to light the interiors. The court of honor, decorated with orange trees in boxes, the low walls of the three terraces covered

**Built in 1452 by the family of "De Dampierre" to whom it had belonged since the twelfth century, Chantecaille passed by marriage during the sixteenth century into the hands of the Count de Boisrenard with whose descendants it remained until recently when acquired by Mr. and Mrs. John Storrs of Chicago.*

OUTBUILDINGS, CHATEAU OF CHANTECAILLE

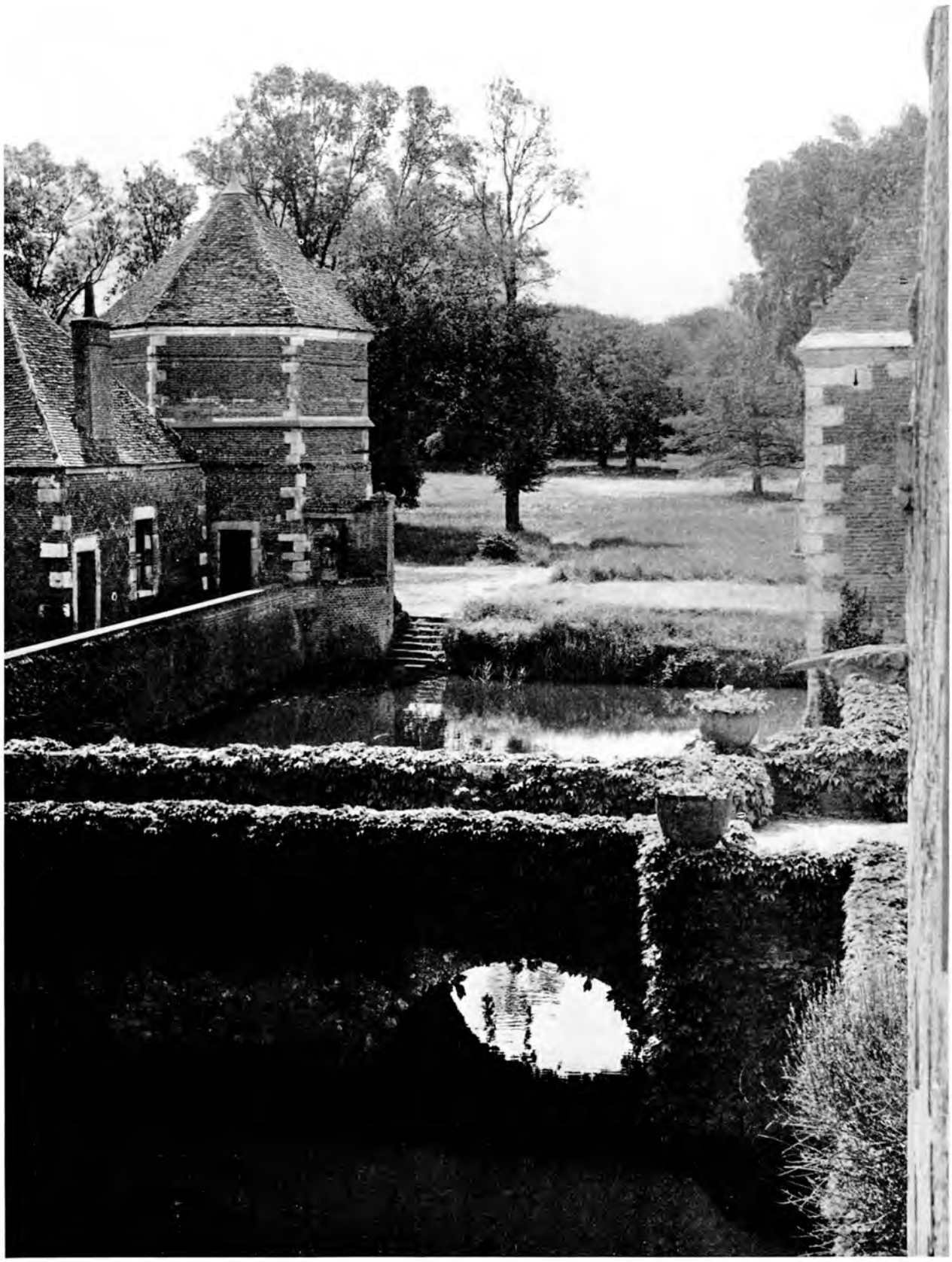
with grape-vines and espaliered fruit trees, the moat continuing where the walls end and making a complete enclosure of water and stone around the estate, the absolute correctness of the lines of the buildings as well as those of the garden where everything is subjected to the Supreme Law of Order; all this makes up an *ensemble* of great nobility, without artificiality or trickery, an ensemble of great majesty due to its calm, its honesty, and its absolute correctness. The useful, necessary things are not dissimulated or camouflaged. There are no lies, no make-believe.

Nothing is left to chance or hazard. The pears ripen where they must ripen; the roses blossom where they must blossom; the water of the moat does not run; it carries the reflection of the castle like a faithful mirror. The grass follows the limits of its *tapis vert*, the fine sand of the alleys hems the borders of box-trees planted *au cordeau*, as though with a rule. The slate roofs on the main house are in their place while the tile roofs on the dependencies and servants' quarters obey the secular law which requires that the master lodging have finer and more expensive material than do the secondary buildings.

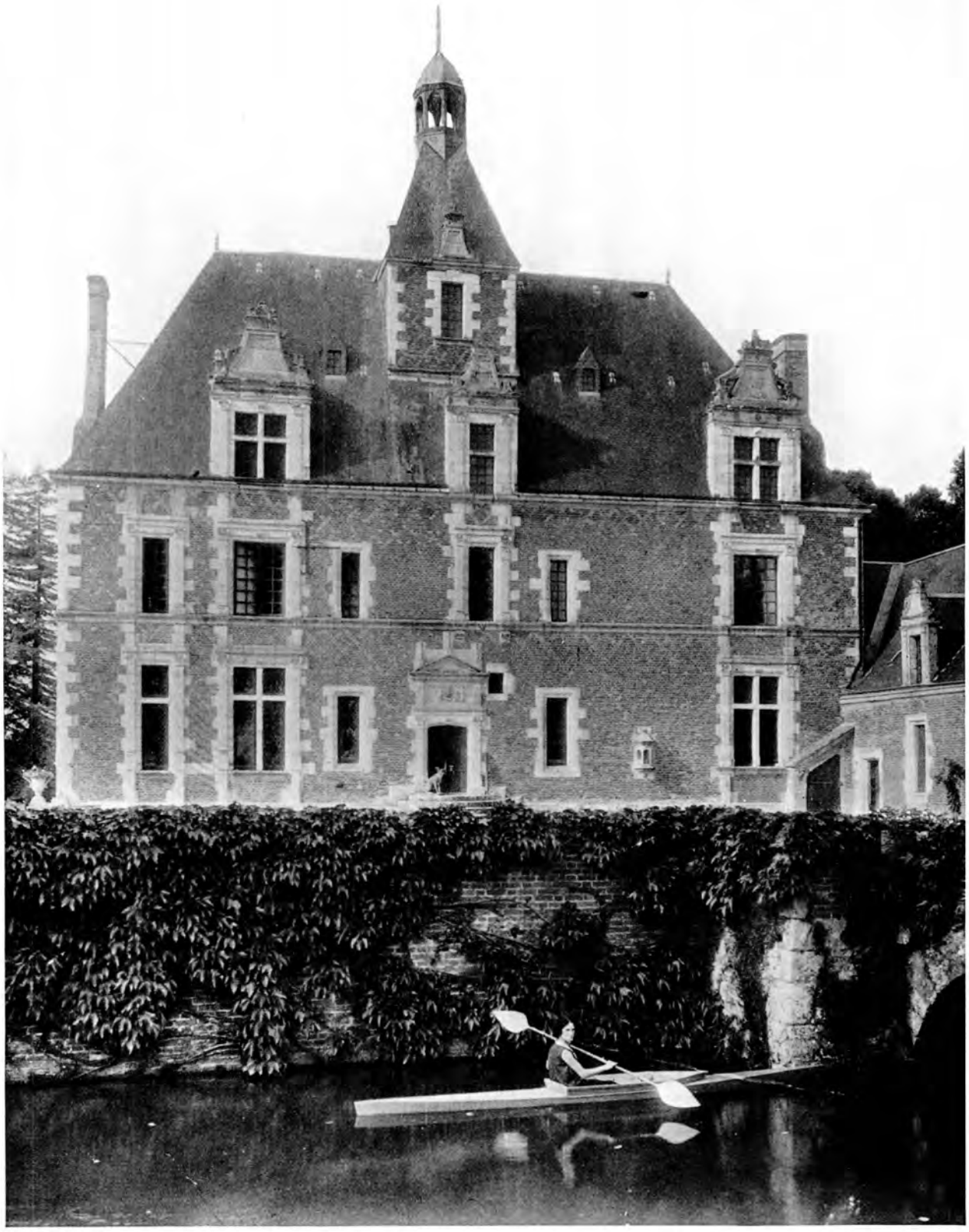
In a *jardin à la Francaise* like the one of Chantecaille where everything is directed and regulated, even mastered, where the water is contained in an armature of stone, the trees ruled by order, the flowers controlled by the limits of symmetrical borders, where the trunks form columns and the bushes walls, the garden becomes really a continuation of the house, the imposition of the taste and will of Man on Nature.

A French proverb affirms that the happy nations have no history. It seems as if fine buildings do not need description. To see them one feels that satisfaction, that quietness and confidence which one has when reading a poem which rhymes well, when listening to a symphony which develops logically, when looking at a statue of exact proportion or when discovering some one with a well balanced soul. La Morinière and Chantecaille do not need any comments. A few guides describe them and a few tourists visit them but behind their screens of big trees they have the modesty and reserve of real beings who lead their own lives and prefer the respect and love of true friends and appreciative connoisseurs rather than the international advertising of historical reputation.

VIEW FROM ENTRANCE, LA MORINIÈRE (LOIR-ET-CHER)



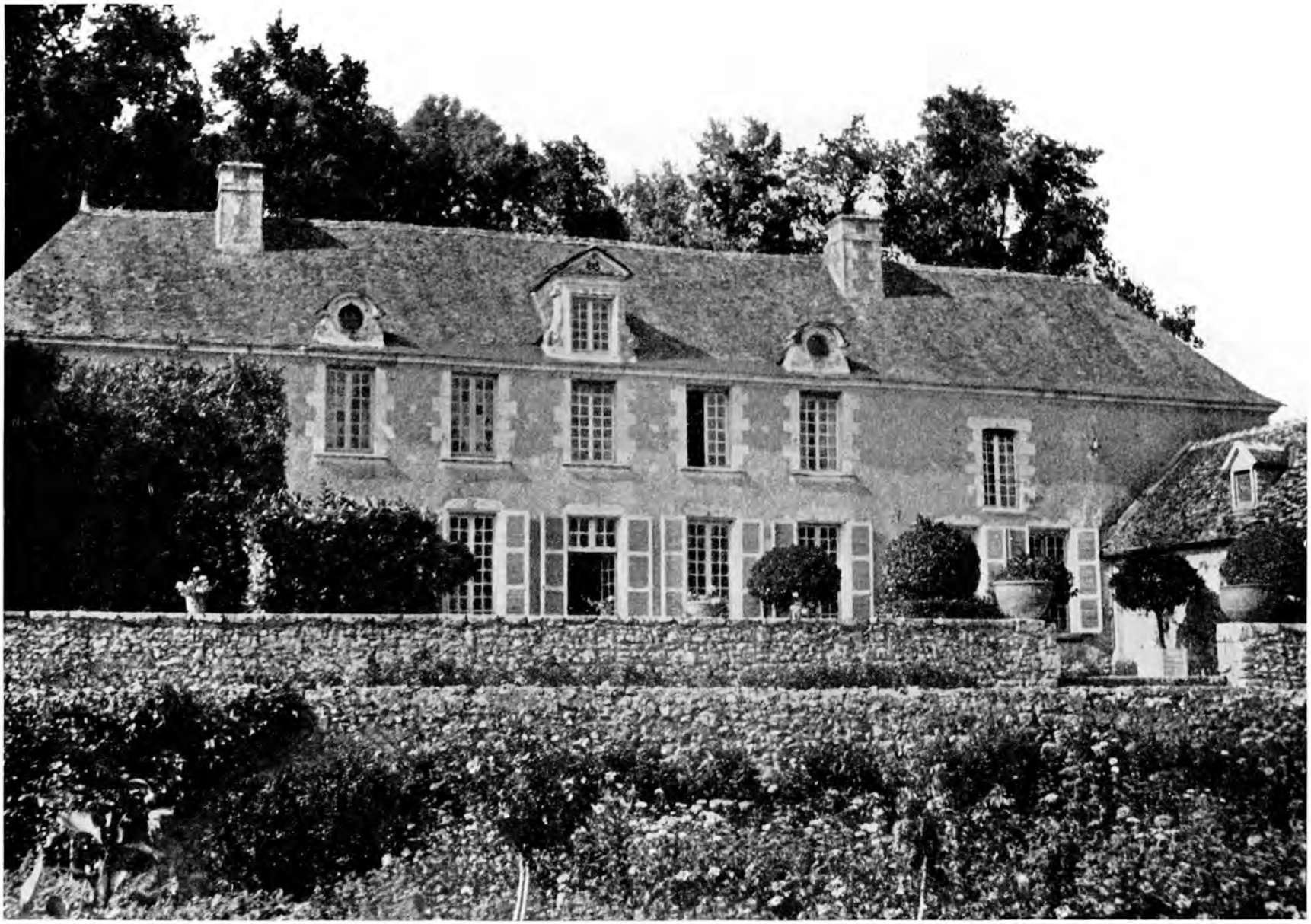
BRIDGE AND PIGEONNIER, LA MORINIÈRE (LOIR-ET-CHER)



CHATEAU OF LA MORINIÈRE (LOIR-ET-CHER)

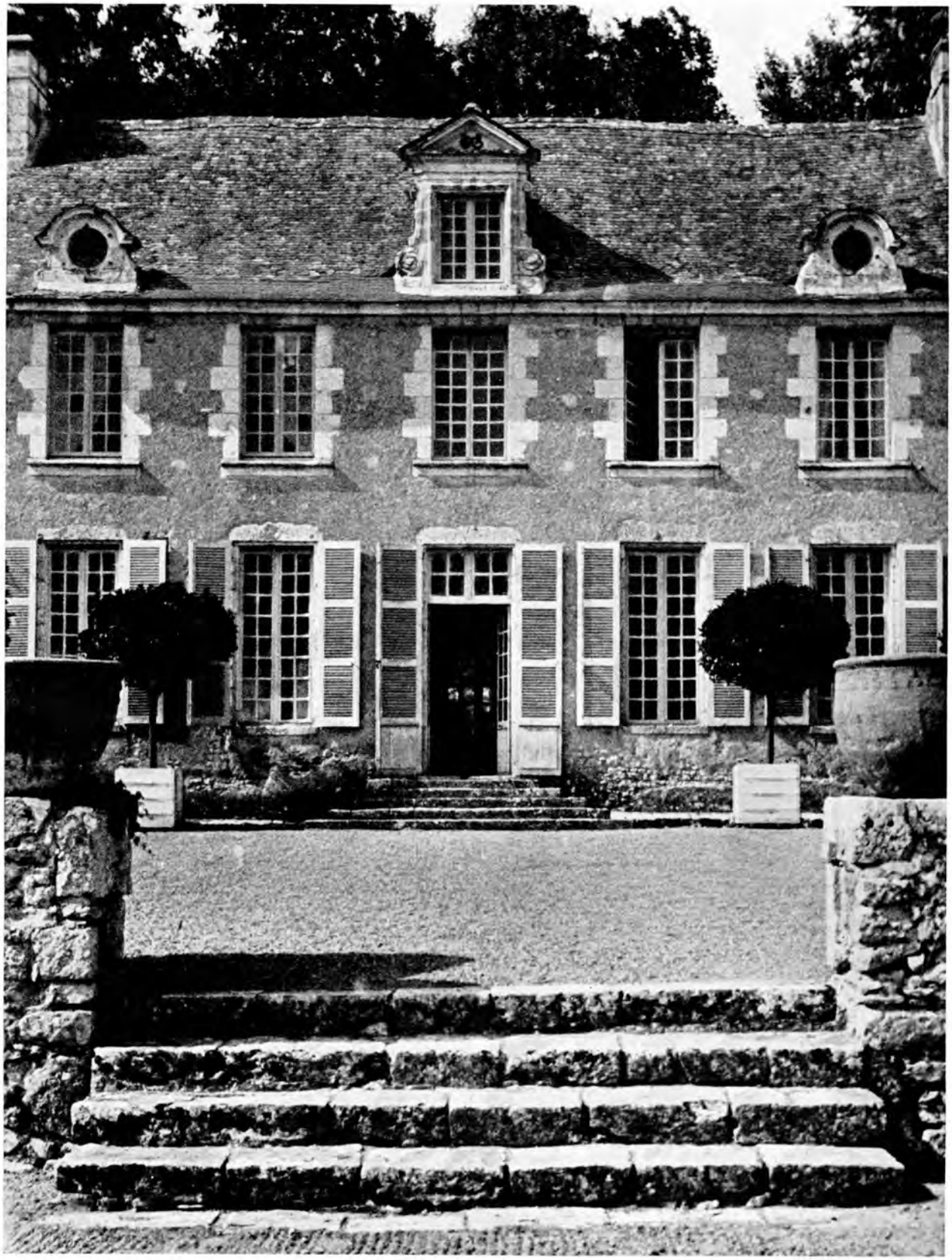
MOAT AND CHAPEL, LA MORINIÈRE (LOIR-ET-CHER)

MOAT AND COURT OF HONOR, LA MORINIÈRE (LOIR-ET-CHER)



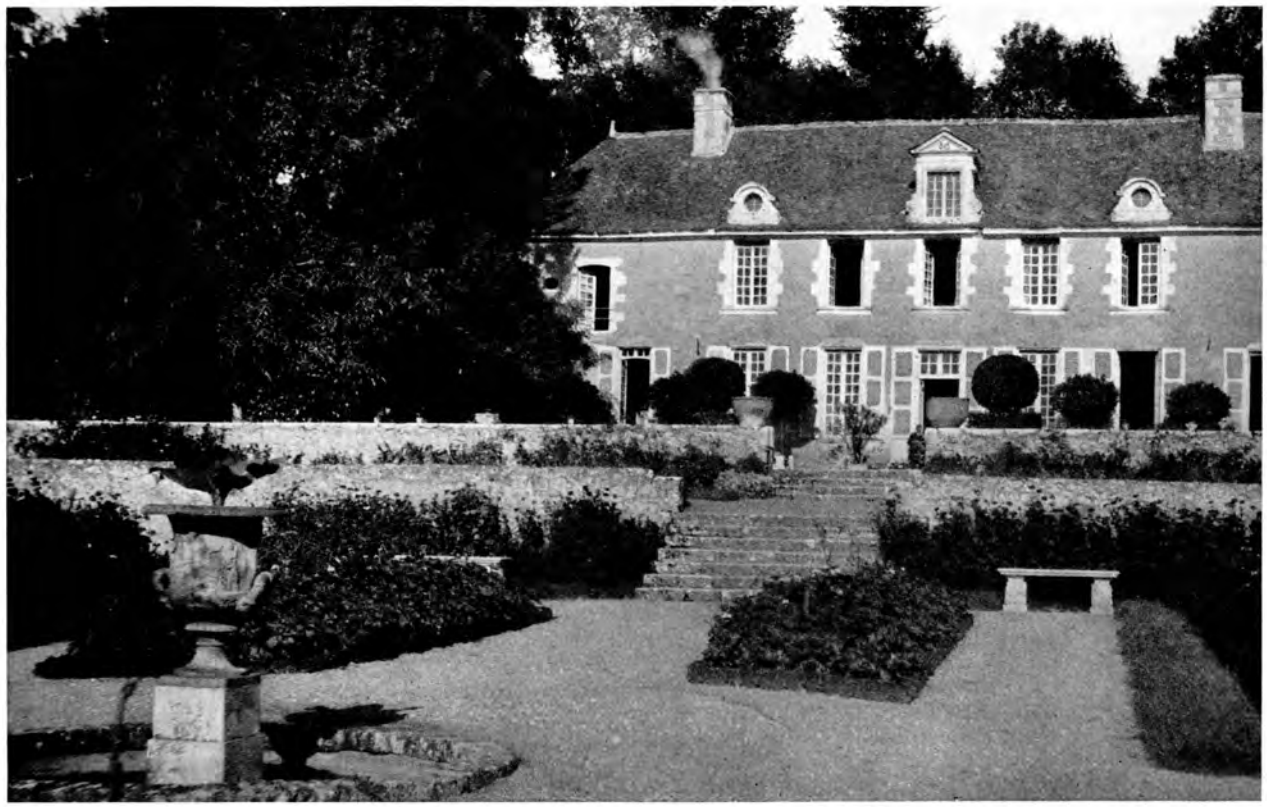
VIEW FROM GARDEN, CHATEAU OF CHANTECAILLE (LOIR-ET-CHER)

TAPIS VERT LEADING TO WOODS, CHATEAU OF CHANTECAILLE (LOIR-ET-CHER)

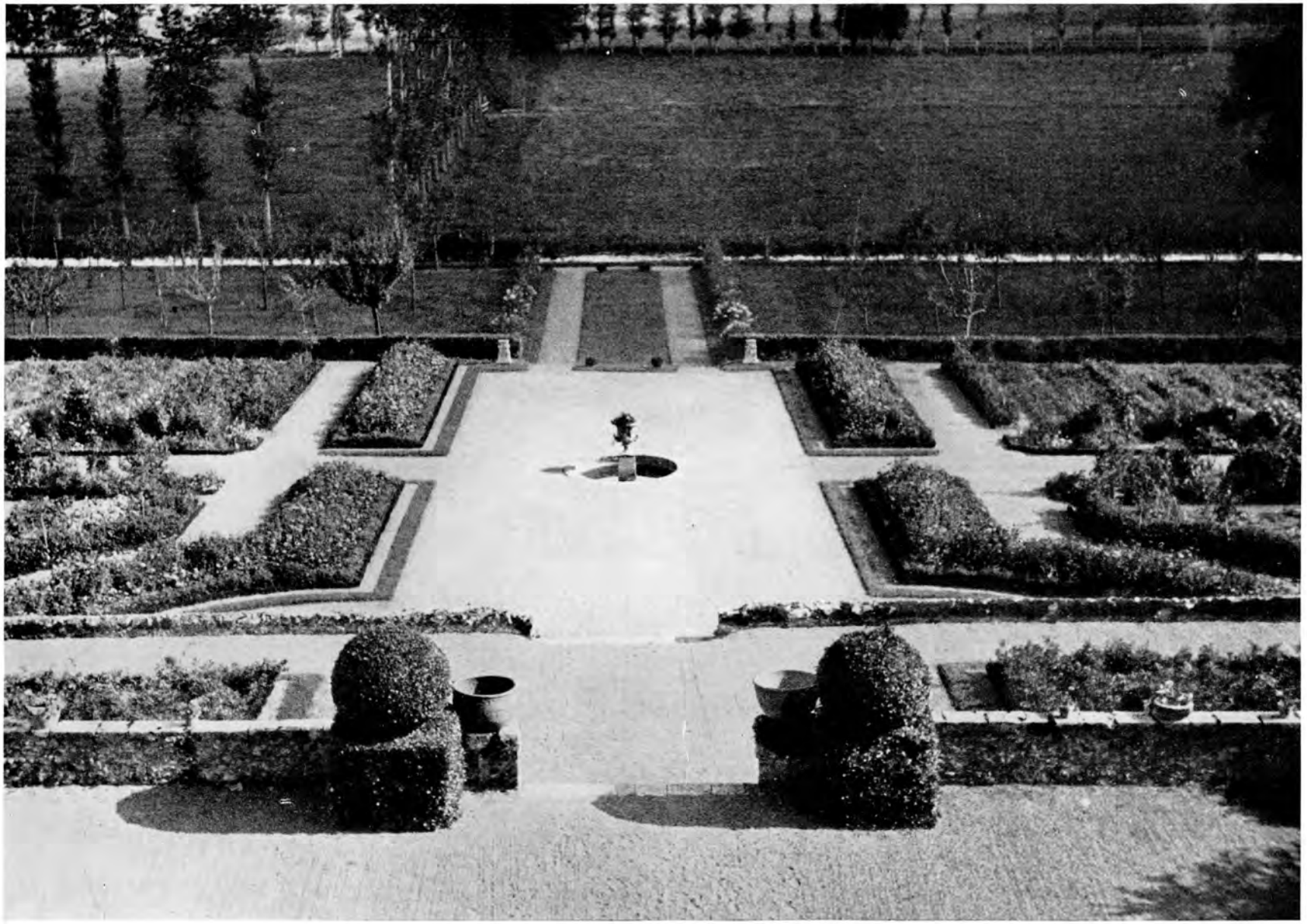


MAIN FAÇADE, CHANTECAILLE (LOIR-ET-CHER)

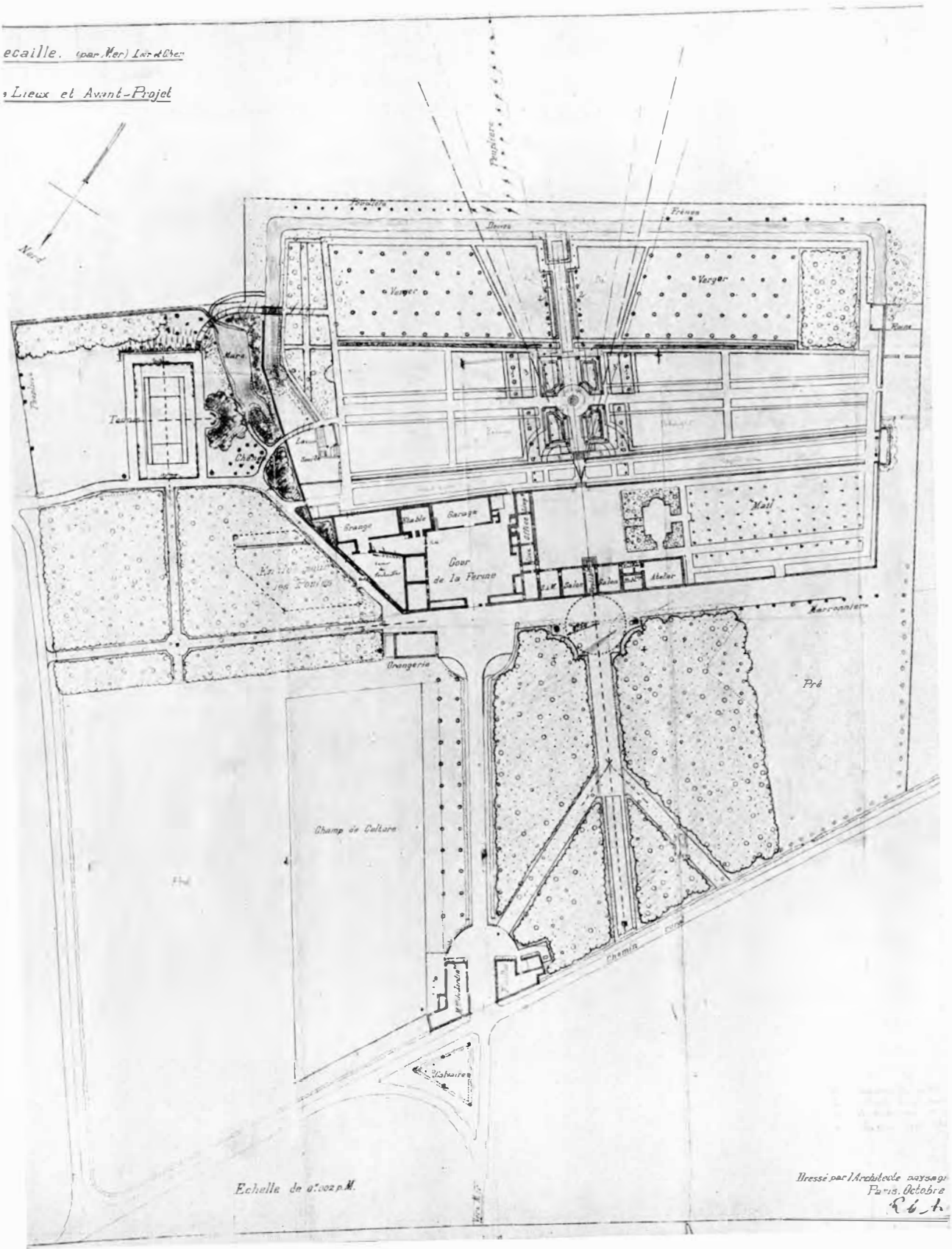
OUTBUILDINGS, CHANTECAILLE (LOIR-ET-CHER)



GARDEN AND CHATEAU OF CHANTECAILLE (LOIR-ET-CHER)



VIEW OF GARDEN FROM HOUSE, CHANTECAILLE (LOIR-ET-CHER)



PLAN OF THE GROUNDS, CHATEAU OF CHANTECAILLE

The architect of this residence—part of a New Jersey farm group—selected Ludowici Tile as most fitting for roofing a building of French precedent. With a wide range of colors and textures to select from and with undisputed durability, Ludowici Tile is the logical roofing material for buildings of any style.

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A VISIT TO VÉZELAY

TEXT BY

HOWARD H. BARTON

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ENTRANCE TO THE GIRARD HOUSE, VÉZELAY (YONNE)

A VISIT TO VÉZELAY

BY HOWARD H. BARTON

Editor's Note—*Mr. Barton is an American architect who has been practising in Paris for several years. He has spent much time in Vézelay and is thoroughly familiar not only with the town but also with the surrounding countryside.*

IT is my privilege to go often from Paris to Vézelay across the face of a constantly varying landscape, every turn of the road bringing fresh bits of beauty to view. One blesses the invention of the automobile that permits such an extended range of travel and the enjoyment of so many sensations in such a short space of time but I have often wished for that leisure that would permit me to spend five days rather than five hours for this trip. However, in true modern way, we rush madly along stopping at the bigger places, only glancing at the incomparable cathedral of Sens, Villeneuve-sur-Yonne with its beautiful city gates, Joigny and its picturesque pile of half timber houses jumbled over the hillside by the river Yonne, and then Auxerre with its splendid churches and towers.

From here on, the fields are generally replaced by vineyards stretching their undulating length up the hillsides, thus emphasizing their graceful outlines. We leave the main road and take a small one by the river—almost in it, in fact. Cherry orchards mount the hills to our right and a village with a beautiful Romanesque porch compels our attention for a moment. This is simply by way of showing that the paths leading to Vézelay are pleasant and distracting. So much charm and beauty is found on the road that it takes determination and perseverance to continue without dallying too long by the way.

The country of the Basse Bourgogne becomes more hilly. The Yonne is replaced by the Cure River and forests vie with the patchwork of the fields as a covering for the slopes on every side. A tunnel through a bluff, covered to the north by trees and on the south castellated with rugged rocks, is the gateway to the Avallonais and the Canton de Vézelay. A few more kilometers, winding by the swift river and through two charming villages, and we suddenly sweep around a curve to see the object of our trip—still some ten kilometers distant—between a rift in the hills. To those on a first pilgrimage, it is hard to believe that the two towers one sees can belong to the same building, so far apart they seem to be.

Soon we arrive at the little town of Asquins, one of the two valley satellites of Vézelay. We pass between the little church, crowning a bluff above the road, and the rushing river and commence our climb, circling around the pinnacle above us on which the town of Vézelay is massed. With our rapid ascent, the valley of the Cure spreads itself further and further before us. The countryside opens like a great book and we look upon a landscape dotted with villages, and hills covered with fields and forests. Below, the second satellite of Vézelay appears, St. Père-sous-Vézelay, with its remarkable early Gothic church spire struggling to reach the sky. We recall that this picturesque little stone built and tile roofed town was the first seat of the Abbey of Vézelay. Later the monks were forced for protection from marauding hordes to move to the top of the neighboring mountain where already there was a small church and village. In fact, Vézelay of our day was the Vezeliacum of Roman times, although nothing remains to indicate its early importance.

We are now far above the river—and around the next bend of the road we suddenly come upon the serrated roofs of Vézelay climbing up to the great walls that hold aloft the *Parc du Chateau* and its trees; while above the trees we can just distinguish the two fine towers of the great Basilica.

To all who first come to Vézelay the church itself is the revered object of visit. All architects know its important place in the development of Romanesque and Gothic architecture. They are familiar, through study, with its form and sculpture; but few realise before making the pilgrimage to the church that the town itself has charm. Fortunately, the modern bad taste seen in so many French towns is absent. Each house has its hanging gardens and balconies while the remnants of the old 13th century fortifications, which have withstood many a siege, have finally succumbed to the more peaceful role of supporting this enchanting picture, ivy and wallflowers have softened their outlines. Already the pilgrimage to visit a church has become a warm desire to wander through this intriguing town.

We turn a sharp corner by the first house and climb sharply into a large crescent-shaped *place*, the horns of which become the *chemin de ronde*, the curving sides lined with a picturesque silhouette of houses. Here the two principal hotels greet us but we choose the more modest "*Hotel du Cheval Blanc*" to restore our tired bodies before starting our explorations. The enormous poppies on the dining-room wall paper are a momentary shock bringing us to a realization that this is 1932—immediately dimmed however by the warm greetings and homely hospitality of the Jossier family and soon completely forgotten in the enjoyment of the succulent 12 franc meal prepared by Madame and of the mellow Burgundy wine.

Refreshed, we leave the car to wander up between the two 17th century posts that replace the destroyed Gothic Gateway of St. Etienne, determined to close our eyes firmly to everything till we reach the *Basilique de la Madeleine*. Still, we are often forced to hesitate as we go—a view of the valley below, a door, a well against a wall, courtyards with oleanders and hydrangeas in large tubs, hollyhocks and roses against the houses, all distract our attention. We pause to look at the green and red bottles of the Pharmacy and admire the poor snakes preserved in alcohol, to perceive that the inside of the store is semi-circular in shape with row upon row of white bottles lettered with gold, quite Directoire in period. A little further up, a small plaque tells us that Théodore de Béze, successor to Calvin, was born in a fifteenth century house with large mullioned windows and high roof. This is cause for another pause of reflection. Vézelay, steeped in the history of St. Louis, St. Bernard, the Crusades and centuries of monastic life, giving birth to a leader of protestantism! Times certainly have changed since he was driven from the town as a heretic, for a street is now named in his honor. Almost every house has some visible relic of the past centuries—a gable, Gothic windows half buried in later stonework, fragments of arches, a sculptured head here and there. All these bits recall the Vézelay of its prime with its pilgrimages and active life, a city of 15,000 souls centering around the great monastery. The *Place du Puits* and its double-gabled 15th century house with its modest inscription of its modest (I really wonder!) one-time owner makes us smile:

"Comme Colombe humble et simple seray
Et à mon nom mes meurs conformeraynt"

Still we push on and are surprised to see signs of 17th century magnificence in the old *Hotel de Ville*, a large square mansion in heavy cut stone, a semi-circular court in front and the garden behind. The iron gates are a delight and the inside has some interesting woodwork of the period. It somehow seems out of place in this medieval town and we are pleased to find later a really old house with a beautiful garden and two great Oregon fir trees, given to the town by a widow named Borot for its *Hotel de Ville* and now in use as such. A lane to the right leads up to the old Tower of the Church of St. Pierre—now the clock tower; the church was destroyed to form the *Place du Marché*. After all, a town of 600 inhabitants hardly requires more than the great basilica for its religious needs.

We then pass under the arches of the house of the Debain family—a truly remarkable construction with its hanging garden, tower-staircase and great terrace in stone supported by two stories of vaulted cellars dating from the 13th century. What a view there is from this terrace!

At last we reach the *Place de l'Eglise* and are confronted by the *Basilique de la Madeleine*. This forbidding building, severe in outline, massive in form with its unfinished façade, was once the crowning feature of a great monastic group. On one side, the chapter houses and on the other, the cloisters, refectories and dormitories of the monks and behind, the palace of the Abbot and his garden, all this must once have formed an imposing pile. Little is left of the secondary buildings. The many struggles of this independent and rich little city with the neighboring duchies of Auxerre and Nevers, combined, with the wars of Religion, dismantled this great pile. Many of the later houses of the town have been constructed from the ruins so that little is left to show the actual extent of all the buildings.

Fortunately, the church was left. We enter it by

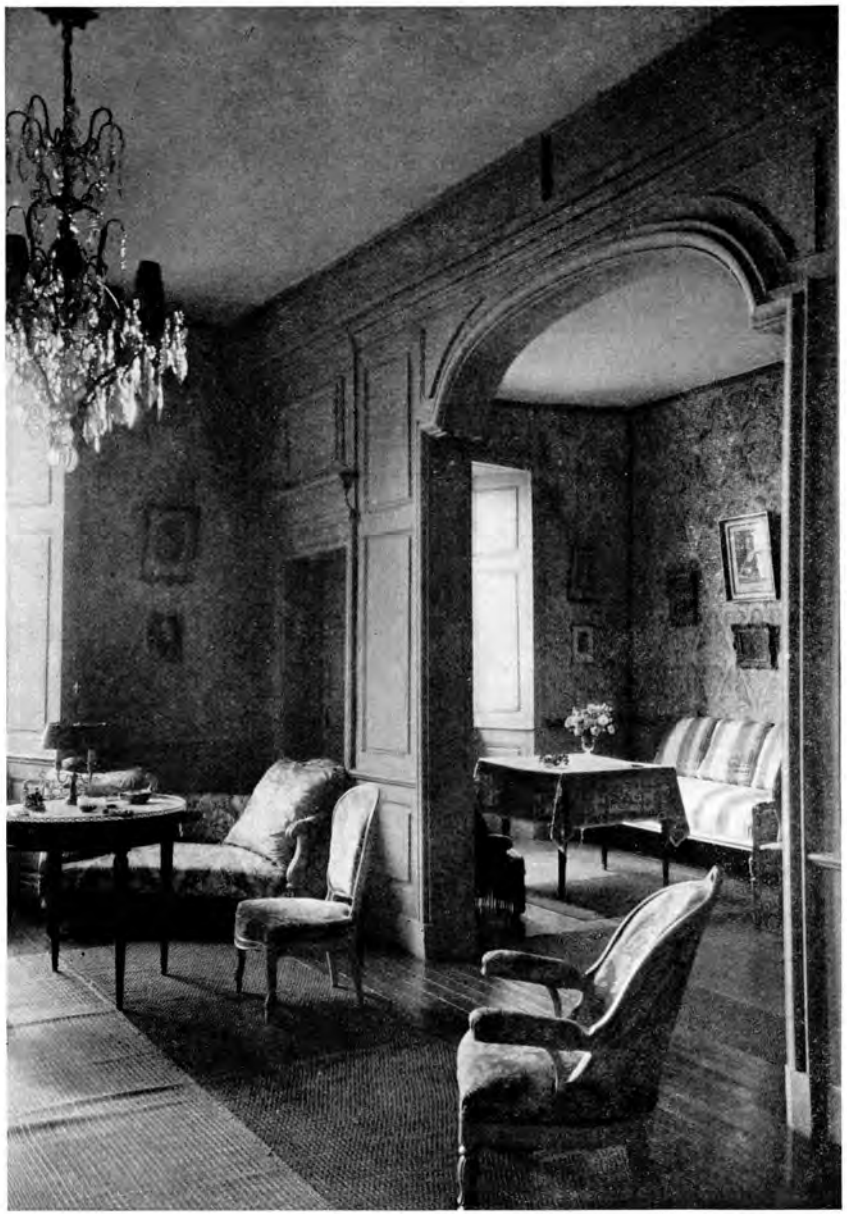
SIDE VIEW OF THE BASILICA, VÉZELAY

a minute side door and are therefore all the more awed by the surprise of its interior. The sombre simplicity of the outside is forgotten in the color and height of the great barrel vaults with ribs of cream and brown stones. The 240 capitals depicting every phase of the Christian life as well as flower and animal forms—the color of the stones themselves ranging from pure white to dark green through creams, yellows, browns, roses and mauves —all are breath taking. Then to go into the great narthex where we stand in contemplation and admiration of these old monks and their efforts, the elaboration of the great doorways, the magnificent length of this church—it is longer than Notre Dame of Paris. It is impossible here to do more than mention these great qualities. History breathes forth from every stone. Here is the pure early Gothic apse rebuilt following a disastrous fire in the early 13th century. There is the *Salle Capitulaire* with its beautiful vaulting supported on two columns, the early 9th century crypt.

So much can be said but space and time forbid and we must go back into the sunshine and around the church to the terrace or *Parc du Chateau* to contemplate the untold vistas that carry our eyes clear to the Côte d'Or. We think of Burgundy, its history rich with souvenirs and redolent with the aroma of its great wines. It is a beautiful country and this little town with a great past is a jewel in a perfect setting. The church behind us is worth the visit—many visits—and the charm of the town and its delightful inhabitants is only an added and irresistible charm that draws all of us who love the beautiful in life back to Vézelay again and again.

ENTRANCE COURT OF THE GIRARD HOUSE, VÉZELAY

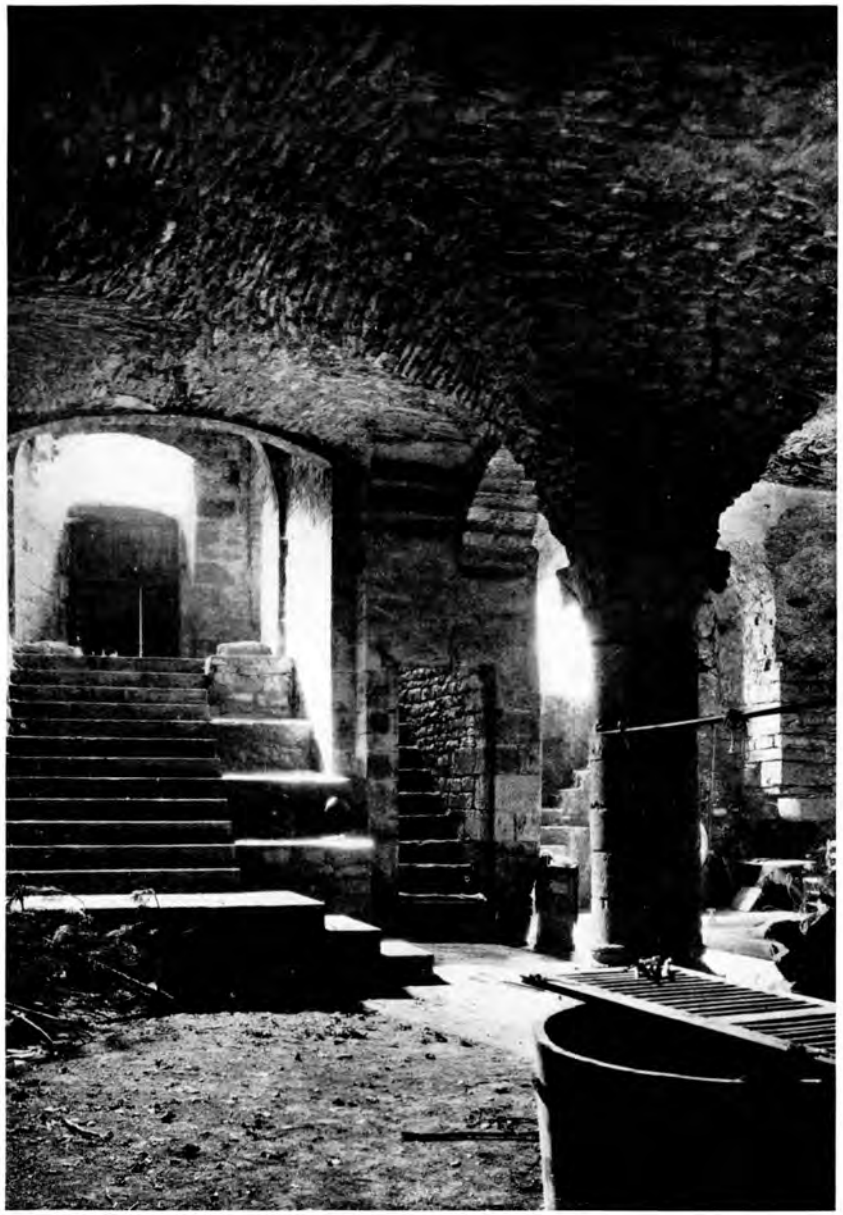
DETAIL OF THE GIRARD HOUSE, VÉZELAY



INTERIOR OF THE GIRARD HOUSE, VÉZELAY

VIEW FROM GARDEN, THE GIRARD HOUSE, VÉZELAY

REAR OF THE GIRARD HOUSE, VÉZELAY

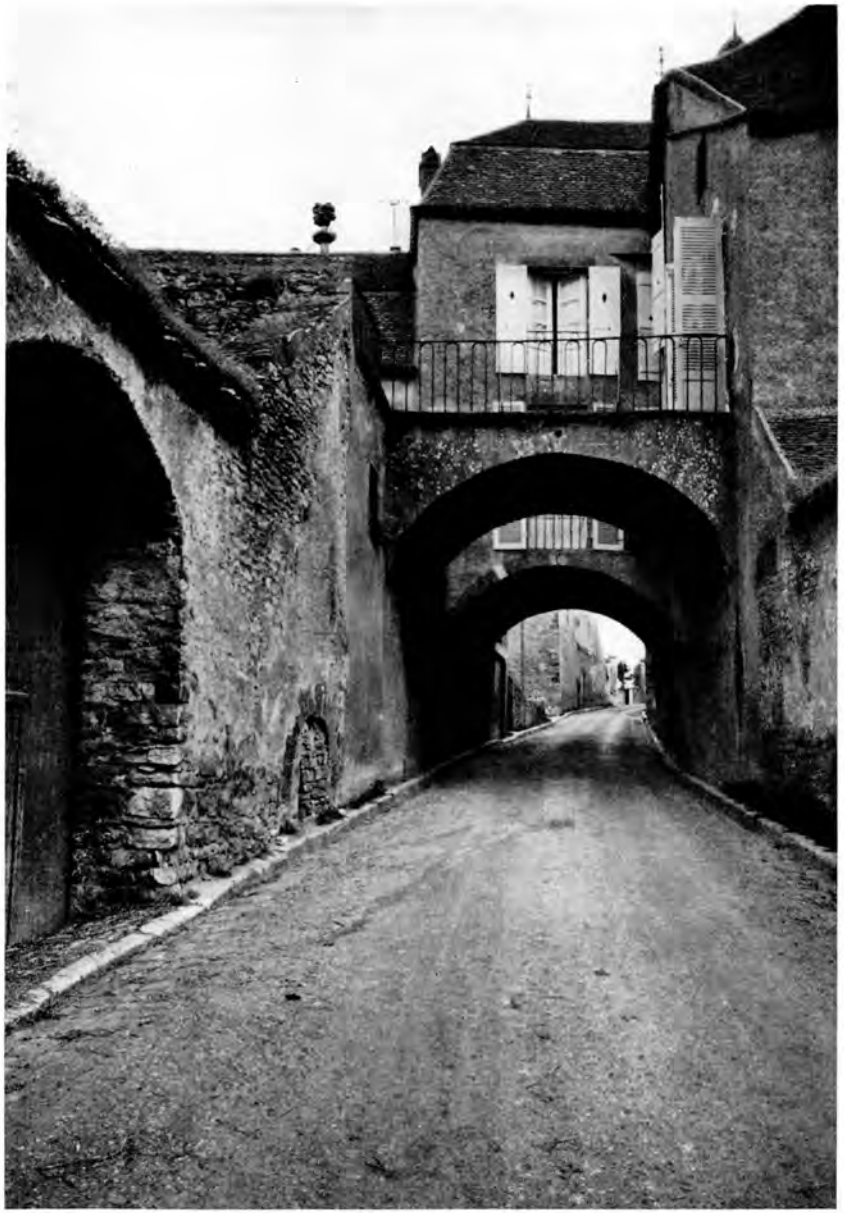


CELLAR OF THE PENSIONNAT STE. MADELEINE

COURTYARD OF THE PENSIONNAT STE. MADELEINE

TERRACE OF THE DEBAIN HOUSE, VÉZELAY

THE DEBAIN HOUSE, VÉZELAY



THE DEBAIN HOUSE, VÉZELAY

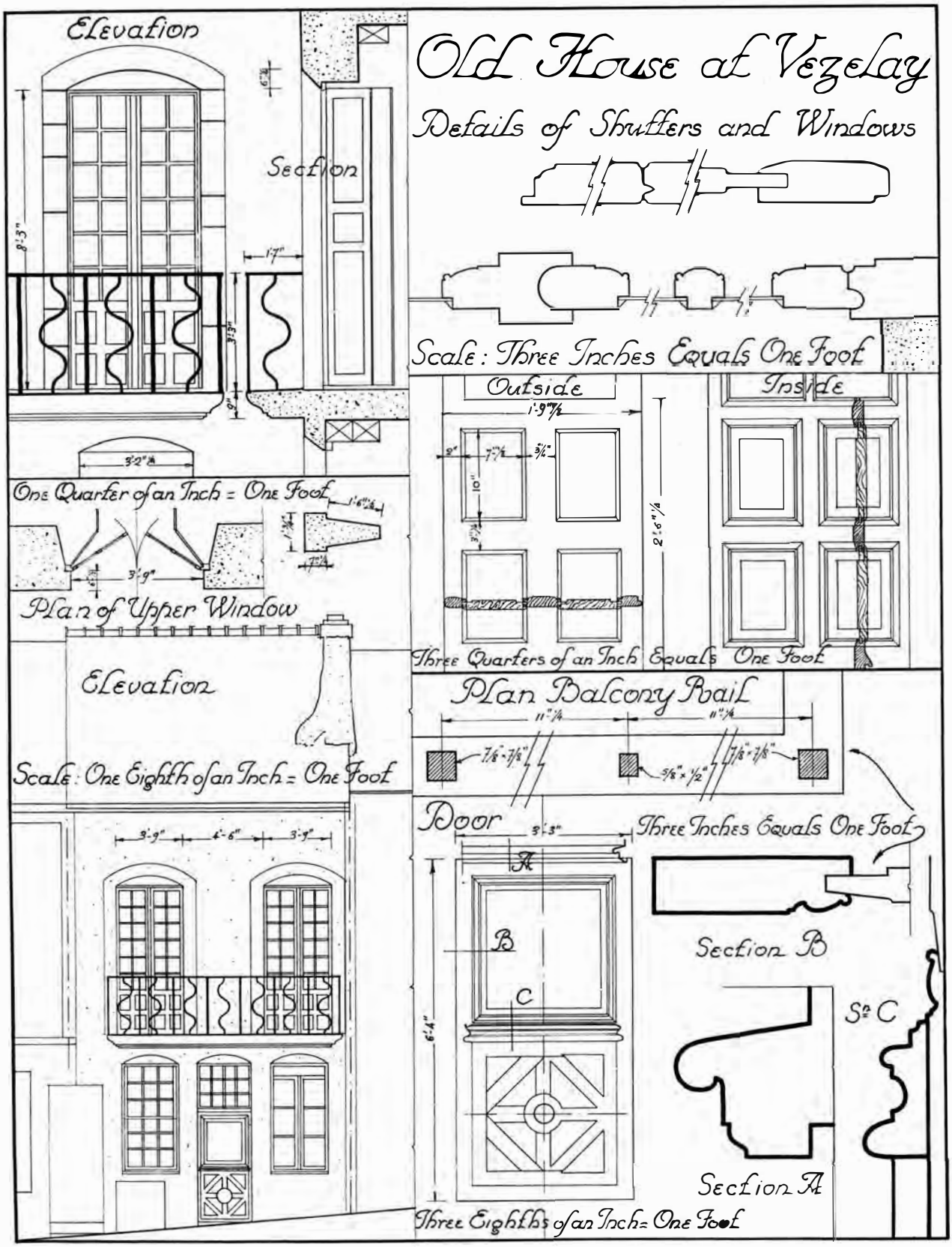
ENTRANCE TO A SMALL HOUSE, VÉZELAY

DETAIL, A SMALL HOUSE, VÉZELAY

GATEWAY, PLACE DU MARCHÉ, VÉZELAY

GATEWAY, THE DUBOIS HOUSE, VÉZELAY

OLD HOUSE ON THE MAIN STREET, VÉZELAY



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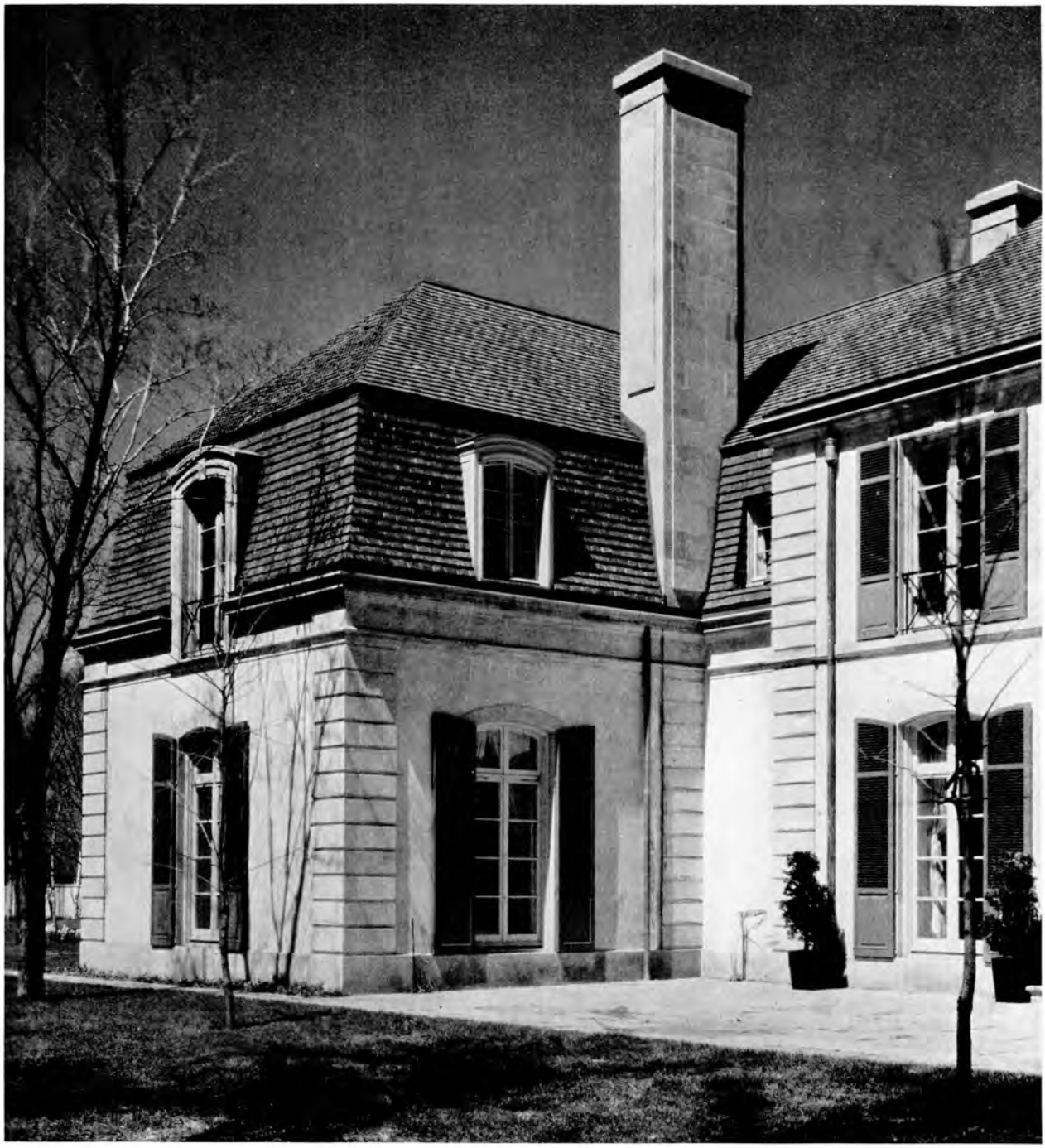

In designing this charming French house at Kenosha, Wisconsin, the architect wisely chose Ludowici Tile as being appropriate for the roofs, from the viewpoint of appearance and durability. The variety of patterns and colors found in Ludowici Tile make them suitable for any design and their durability is unquestioned.

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MEMORIES OF RURAL FRANCE

TEXT BY

H. VAN BUREN MAGONIGLE, F.A.I.A.

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FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

BRIDGE AT SAINTE-MARIE-SUR-OUCHE (CÔTE D'OR)

MEMORIES OF RURAL FRANCE

BY H. VAN BUREN MAGONIGLE, F.A.I.A.

"Life was happy, Life was gay,
We have come the primrose way."

I NEVER think of rural France without thinking of the bicycle; they were made each for the other; plain shank's mare is too slow; the automobile too swift, too aloof, alien to the spirit of it; the motor-cycle, horrible anywhere with its hideous din, is anathema and should never be permitted to defile the air and shatter the silences of lane and by-road; but the bicycle, not too highly geared to deal adequately with the hills, silent save for the pleasant whirr of the wheels and the low tinkle of the warning bell, bears us along the primrose way, not so fast that we pass everything before we see it, not so slow that our goal seems ages away.

You have risen just as the sky shows signs of coming day; you have breakfasted like a king on coffee and a roll or so and half a melon large enough for any monarch; and while the shadows still fill the little sunken road from bank to dewy bank, you swing your leg over the saddle and ride away to new adventure secure in the faith that as yesterday was so today will not be. Wise counsel has caused you to eschew the great white and dusty *Routes Nationales*, marching straight before you over hill beyond hill to a vanishing point; to disdain the secondary, departmental roads not so stiff and purposeful as the *Grandes Routes*, but too austere for the shy spirit of the rural France we seek that loves to wind with the tertiaries, the shady lane, and the mere *sentier* amorous of riversides and all delectable haunts of romance and of revery. Wherefore this little road. Winding gently downward, fragrant with dew-drenched growing things, to a stream that presently widens to a miniature mill-pond and, turning a sudden corner, gives you the old stone mill, the miller's house of half-timber with panels of thin brick in patterns, the tiny church, the *curé's* house beside it with one or two other cottages, each designed and all so composed by the divine hand of chance or the Spirit of Rural France that perfection is surpassed, and you take a gasping breath of that sweet morning air; in one unconscious motion you are off the machine and your sketch book and pencil are out. If the sketch turns out well the morning brightens and you fare onward to be halted a dozen times by some other breath-taking hamlet, or pay tribute to the infinite imagination and resource of those inspired builders of the little churches of France, or pass a little mansarded, blue-slated porter's lodge set admirably with its grille in a park wall that dips its mossy foot in a moat-like stream with white ducks aswim in it; and after *déjeuner* beside the stream you have been following—or were you merely led along, a passive thrall, by the glamor of its low voice and the sparkle of the ripples seen like the flash of an eye through discreet lashes of streamside willow and alder—there comes a delicious yielding to the drowsy gods of good food, good wine, and murmurous river, deep sleep; a slow awakening to long cool shadows, long cool drinks, and a long cool ride in the late afternoon to the place you had chosen for that night's bivouac. By a miraculous blend of the artistic sense with that of the horse the French seem so to have planned these by-roads that they intersect the less interesting arteries of travel just where it is most advantageous for the wayfarer to have them do it—where the best inns are. So here it is; you cross the bridge so beautifully portrayed by our frontispiece and there is the inn; an unbelievably good dinner, a little stroll back to the bridge all blurred by the tears that follow a series of prodigious yawns, and so to bed.

Very different memories of a day when a good companion rode with me to Azey-le-Rideau, where we got the steward of the *Château* very tight at the

hotel, returned to the *Château* with him, lolled with him in his absent master's lordly chairs in a great and noble room having a balcony overhanging the moat, and fed the golden and voracious carp; and at last after many adventures headed up hill for Tours. Rain came on and we took shelter in a little farmstead where a young peasant and his wife and little girl kept us company to a late hour—strange beings dropped with the rain into their quiet world. To requite their hospitality and lighten the hours of waiting, we drew pictures of all animals known and unknown and made the noises peculiar to each. One has wondered since whether that excited child ever closed an eye that night. At last the rain let up enough for us to go on and we arrived at the City Gates after midnight. They were closed and locked. Somehow we got them open and rode through, thinking of a night-cap and bed and not at all of the *gendarmerie* of Tours which lined up six strong and abreast and commanded us to descend. We did so. These *messieurs* were riding the *bicyclette*, at night, in the dark, without lights *figurez vous* and what were their names, prenames, and other etceteras because they were in *contravention* of the Law. Name and prename proving difficult, recourse was had to the license plaque of my friend. Duly copied, it then became a question of my name also; duly pronounced they said O la la it is Chinese and where is the plaque of *M'sieu'? M'sieu' has no plaque!!* Ah ha! Then he is in *double contravention!!!* At last we were allowed to proceed, walking and pushing. I thought the chapter was closed, but my friend, unaccountably experienced in the ways of the French police, said they would be knocking on our doors at six o'clock and the thing to do was to go away from there at five. So five o'clock found two very sleepy and tired American malefactors riding hard up a series of stiff hills with a strong head wind blowing straight down every hill. My only memory of the daylight hours is of bending over the handle-bars counting the toil-won inches. But they brought us to Le Mans at last and we sallied forth to see what we could see.

We were on the hill with the Cathedral and groped our way through the dark streets to a lower level. Now Le Mans is an army headquarters and where the army is there are its wonderful bands. We were dropping with fatigue when round a corner swung a big band and crashed out into a superb march; that music plucked every vestige of exhaustion out of us and set our feet to work, left, right, left, right, and we followed that band on and on and ever on, our hearts beating high, and sweet and decorous it is to die for one's country, the band wheeled sharp right, great solid wooden doors swung to behind it, the music bit itself off short and there we were—somewhere, in the dark. I know not how far that band had lured us. I know not how far it was back up hill to the hotel. I do know we did it without music. On the way, unquenchable student of architecture that I was, I pointed out to my friend the dramatic silhouette the Cathedral made against the flying clouds. He answered nothing. He merely limped on toward bed. His usually pleasant face wore a slightly murderous expression.

I must go back to the morning following the concert we gave the Dogs of Loches. Up early as usual, for my friend was all for early rising and long runs at high speed, we buzzed through a number of picturesque villages, made some notes, and came toward midday to a cherry tree laden with fruit; we were in a hurry to reach Tours, for the exchequer was painfully low and we could touch money there; we were in a hurry, but there was that cherry tree and here were two unsung Washingtons; there was but one thing to do—obey that patriotic impulse inhaled with the milk of infancy by every American worthy of the name, and attend to that cherry tree. We had no hatchet but the tree was large enough to bear one hundred and eighty pounds of American patriot. I contented myself with the lower branches, easily reached from a convenient stone wall, and where I could use both hands; the other patriot ranged above like a very Tarzan. Deeply absorbed, it gradually appeared to me that it was raining smartly; I gazed about me at the gay sunshine; the steady pattering continued and then I knew: it was raining cherry stones.

We reached Tours that night, although detained by adventures at Chinon which, important as they were for the future of architecture in the United States, we omit. It was St. John's Eve and we went out with all Tours to see the lighting of the fires of St. John on the heights along the Loire and on the shoals in the river bed, springing up like fireflies out of the dark as far up and down the river as we could see. We sat on the parapet of the bridge until they died out and passed into beautiful memory—and here they are, rekindled after half a lifetime.

As I look back over not only what I have written but what I have not, I am struck by the fact that my clearest and sometimes my dearest memories are not distinctively architectural although architecture formed their envelope; but this is always true of student memories. I am also painfully impressed by the absence of profound observations and inspir-

FARMHOUSE AT ASQUINS (YONNE)

ing thoughts. I can but regret that space forbids recounting The Memory of the Dogs of Loches, The Memory of the Cooing of the Doves in the marvellous dove-cote of the Manoir d'Ango and what there befell; a Dissertation upon the Use of Local Materials upon the Architecture of a District as exemplified by the black and white flints of Normandy where they give you punctures on the roads and six mile walks in the dark. Above all I should like to share with you The Memory of the Young Postmistress, Woman or Goddess; develop the question: Is it fair to make the post-office windows so small and place them so impractically low; the French are logical beyond all things and there must be a reason. Nevertheless, *je me demande:* Is part of one eye, slightly inflamed, a large enough specimen of one's attractions to exhibit, half upside down, to a young Goddess deigning for a little while to dispense un-needed postage stamps to architectural students in rural France. . . . . .

FARMYARD AT BENGY-SUR-CRAON (CHER)

FARMYARD NEAR MANTES (SEINE-ET-OISE)

BARN, FARM NEAR BOURGES (CHER)

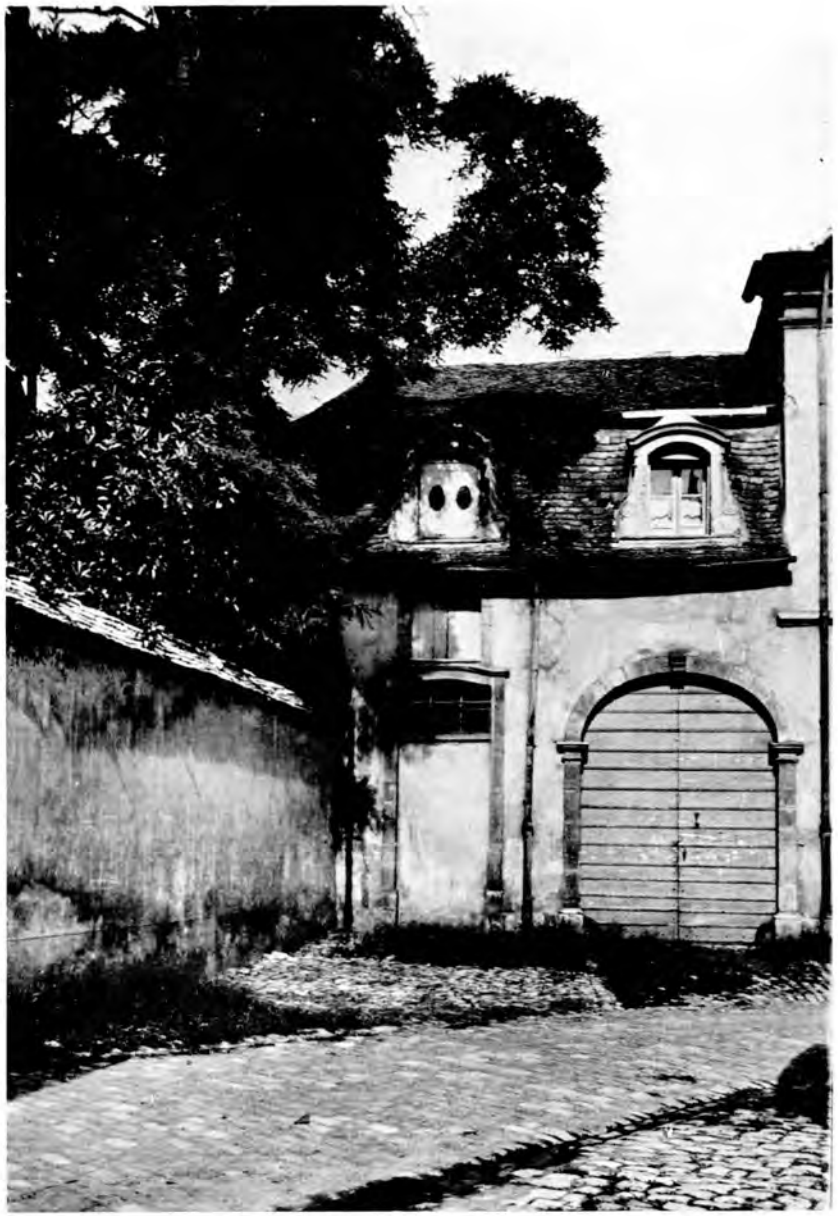
COTTAGE, FARM NEAR BOURGES (CHER)

FARM BUILDING AT FONTENAY-LE-MARMION (CALVADOS)

FARMYARD AT FONTENAY-LE-MARMION (CALVADOS)

FARMHOUSE AT LAIZE-LA-VILLE (CALVADOS)

GARDEN SIDE, FARMHOUSE AT LAIZE-LA-VILLE

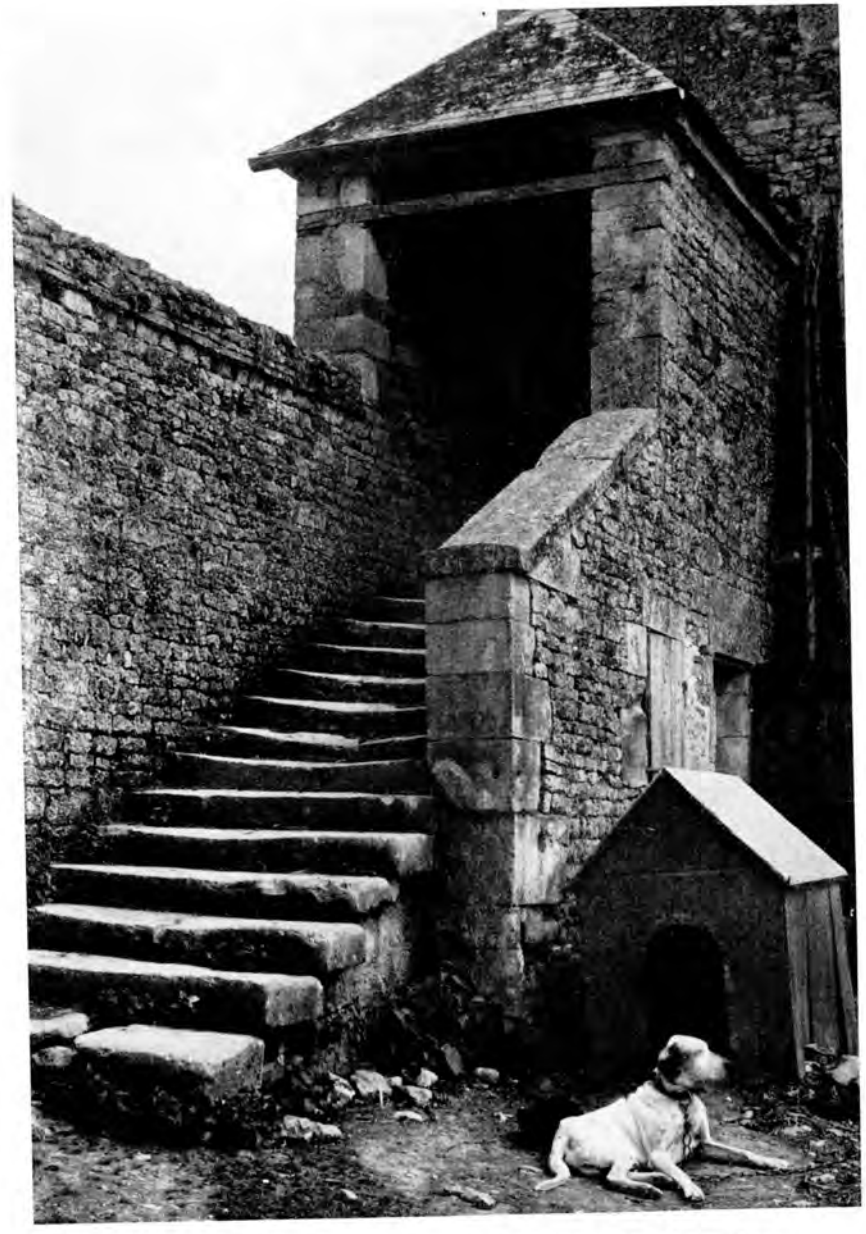


STABLES, FARM NEAR BEAUNE (CÔTE-D'OR)

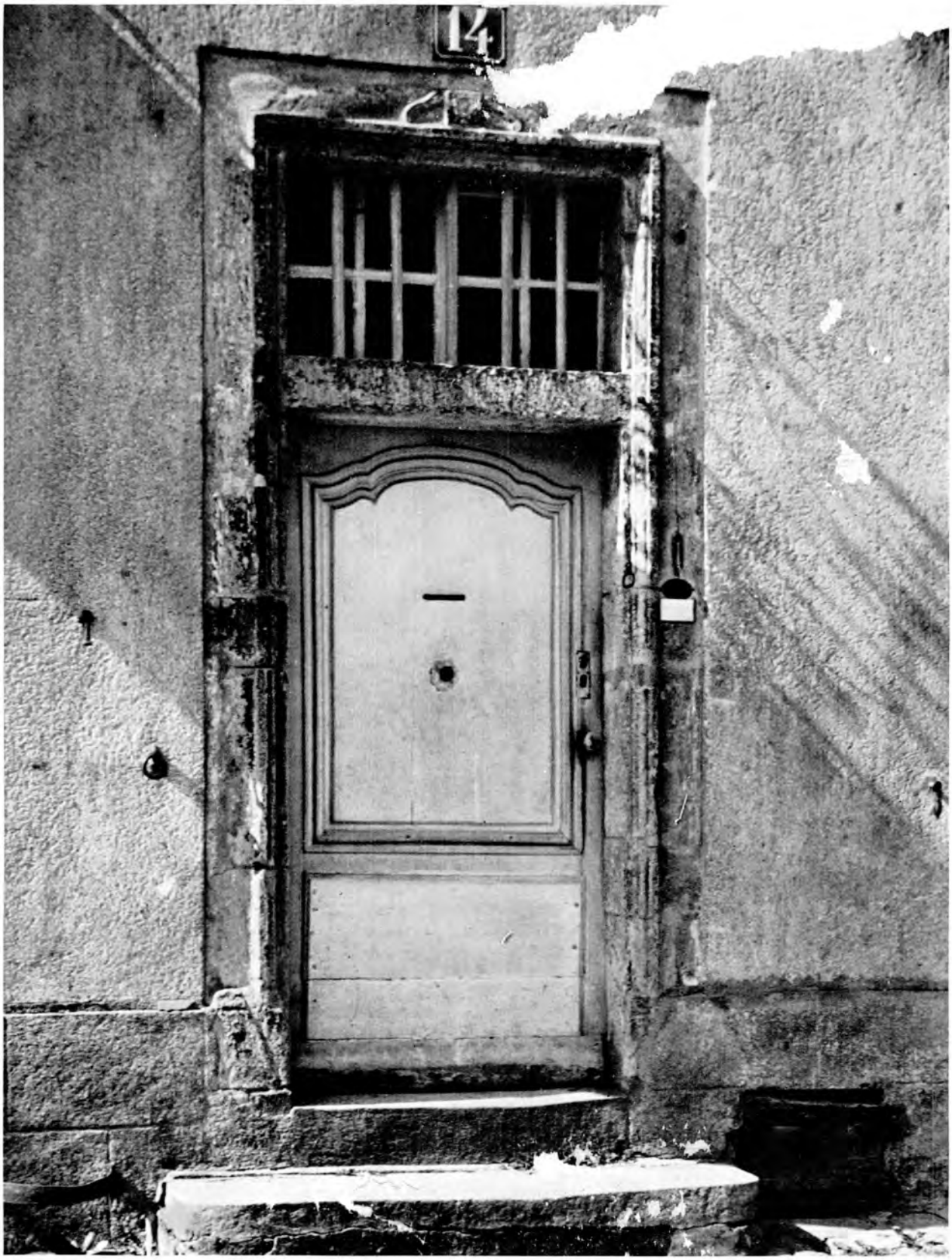
ENTRANCE TO FARM, FONTENAY-LE-MARMION

FARMYARD NEAR BOURGES (CHER)

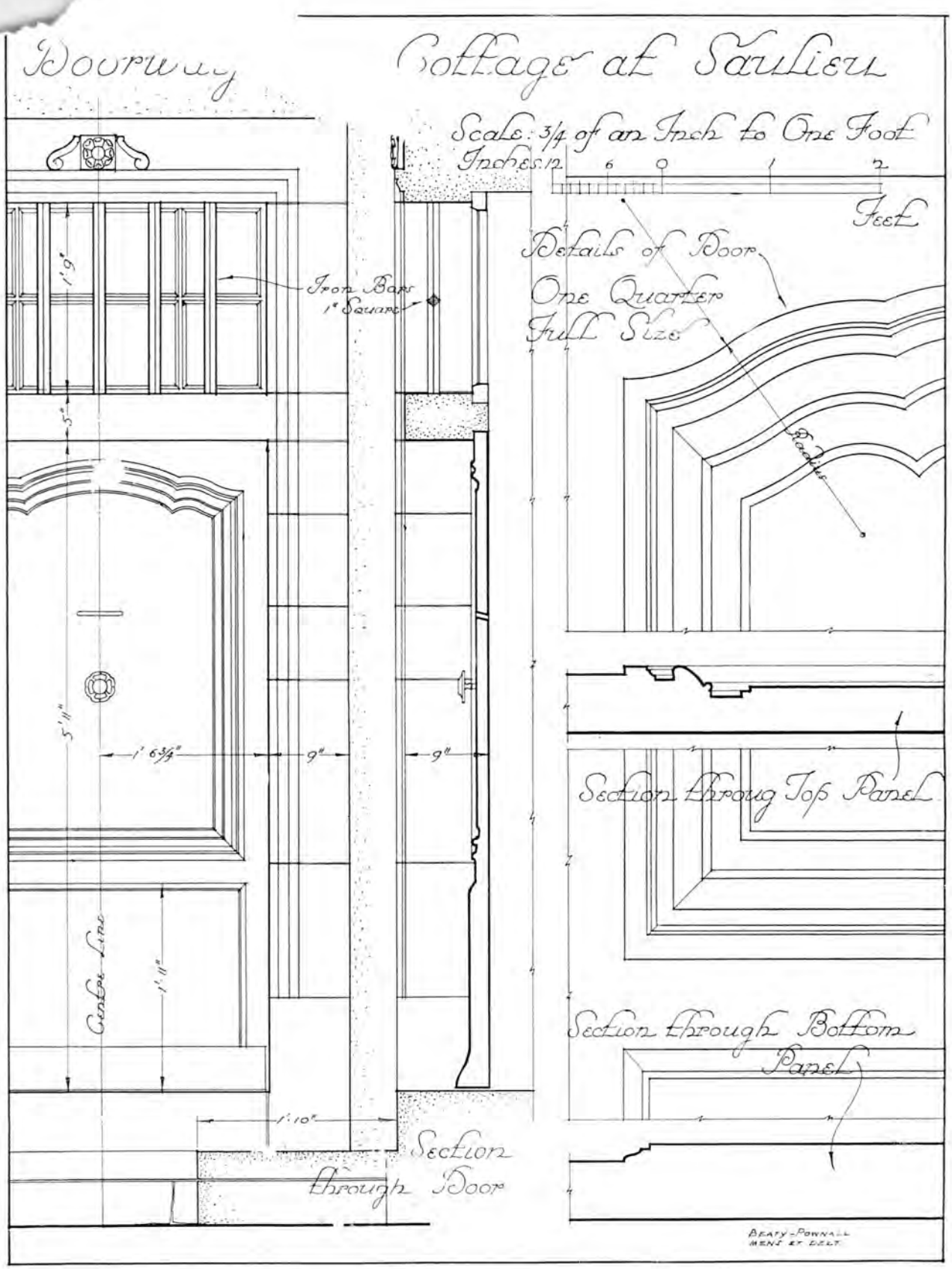
FARMHOUSE AT BENGY-SUR-CRAON (CHER)



DETAIL, FARMHOUSE AT FONTENAY-LE-MARMION



DOORWAY AT SAULIEU (CÔTE D'OR)



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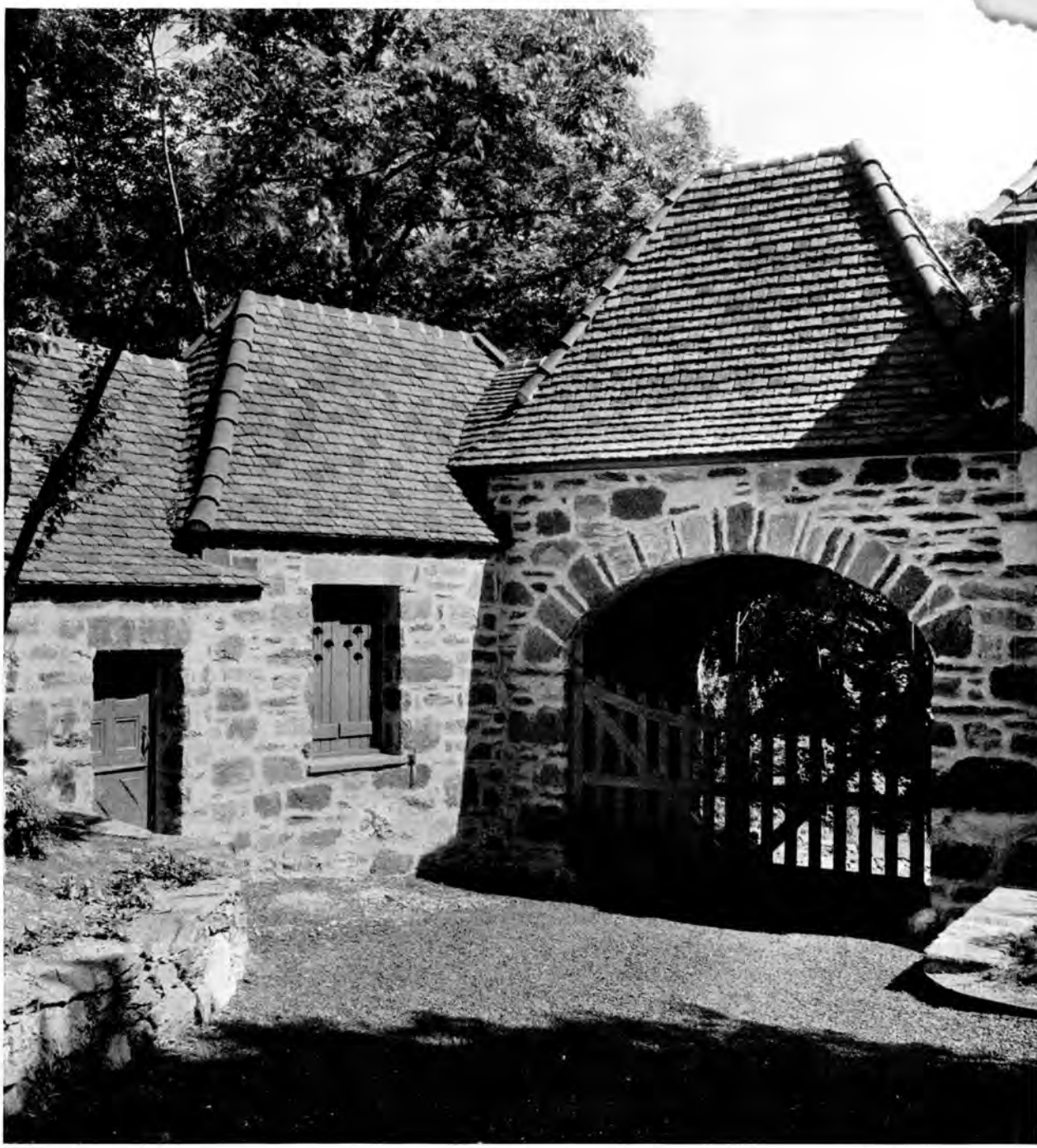

Ludowici Tile in reds and blacks play a large part in producing the delightful effect of this service wing, part of an architect's own house at Greenwich, Connecticut, based on the rural architecture of France. As in this case, Ludowici Tile are generally the choice of architects when designing their own residences.

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