

Alpha Rho Chi fraternity was founded at the Universities of Illinois and Michigan on April 11, 1914. It is a social undergraduate fraternity limiting its membership to students of architecture, architectural engineering, landscape architecture, or the allied arts, enrolled in the departments leading to a bachelor's degree. The name Alpha Rho Chi is derived from the first five letters in Architecture. The title of the magazine is derived from the same source.

EFFLO E. EGGERT, Managing Editor

Four Centuries of Progress or One Century of "Utility Progress"

The Selection of Mexico Is Backed by 1700 Photographs

VERLE L. ANNIS

I HAD MY CHOICE of a Century of Progress or four centuries of progress, and always having had a greedy nature I was more impressed by quantity of years as represented in the progress of Old Mexico than in that of Chicago.

Furthermore, I had in mind the fact that even the four hundred years since the Spanish Conquest of Mexico were only recent history. There were some fifty centuries of history and architecture in their temples and pyramids.

My Spanish-Mexican trip was really begun in June when I went to San Francisco and, both going and coming, covered the old missions that dot the Southern California coast, with such towns as Monterey and San Luis Obispo. This trip showed the heritage which California received from Spanish and Mexican rule, and served as a background for my actual invasion into Mexico.

Mexico was entered by way of the comparatively new railroad along the scenic West Coast to Guadalajara, a trip of several days enlivened by having the private car of General Calles on our train, not to mention a few hundred supporters, generals, and a governor, all armed with very beautiful and awe-inspiring six-shooters. Military demonstrations, lines of troops, and bands playing at every station along the line helped to make a hot and tire-some journey interesting if not comfortable.

Guadalajara, a stop-over on the way to Mexico City, proved to be a fine city with a wealth of fine architecture and interesting suburbs. Of particular interest, in view of my very recent study of the California Missions, was the little town of Zapopan, with its beautiful monastic establishment, from which the padres set out to found the chains of missions in both California and Texas. This was the parent mission and the starting point for California's revered Father Junipero Serra. But even without historical significance, it would still remain one of the most beautiful church institutions in Mexico, with its fine Plateresque facade and twin towers dominating the entire countryside thereabouts.

Mexico City was to be mainly a junction point. It is too metropolitan, and too modern. Real Mexico is in the smaller cities and towns, and in the countryside.

Just to name a dozen smaller places does not convey any impression except to those who have been there. And words cannot express Mexico anyway. That is why I took more than 1700 photographs.

Old Mexico contains a wealth of architecture covering a series of colorful, historical periods. It brought from Spain a knowledge of architecture that was grafted boldly onto an older civilization. There was no need for long years of experimentation. A handful of Spanish Conquistadors and religious followers directed the immediate construction of hundreds of vice-regal palaces and public buildings and thousands of church and monastic structures. It is almost beyond belief that any church building of the tremendous scale and structural features of the Cuernavaca Cathedral could have been built by a few Spaniards in 1527, only eight years after the landing of Cortes and but thirty-three years after Columbus first sighted the New World. If that was the only example of those immediate years following the Conquest, one might not wonder at such an accomplishment. But scattered over all of Mexico are other marvelous buildings as old or older. Notable among these is the fine old monastery of San Francisco de Huejotzingo which dates from 1525 and which contains extensive black and white murals of exceptional beauty, resembling charcoal drawings in technique.

Even the great spiritual, political and wealth-crazed energy of the Spaniards would have been helpless in that vast and rugged country without the almost immediate co-operation of an Indian people. These people, fortunately for Cortes, were easily led but not too humble. They had centuries of a certain type of civilization behind them, strangely similar and seemingly contemporary with that of Egypt. Although a race almost as primitive today as the Spaniards found them, these same people possessed a rare

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Mexico



The four pictures on the four corners are of Taxco, a small town set on the side of a hill 5000 feet above sea level, populated entirely by Guerrero Indians.

Top center: Court of Monastery, San Francisco de Huejotzingo, 1525.

Lower center: Templo de las Capuchinas, in Morelia, a larger town of excellent architecture and unspoiled and picturesque native life.



knowledge and ability for craftsmanship that has resisted four hundred years of alien rule and the more recent attacks of our own machine age. They have kept their native ability and yet easily assimilated the more beautiful suggestions from the old world in the product of their labors. It will be but a few years until Mexico is covered with hot dog stands, auto camps, and sign boards. If this happens, you will miss seeing a mild and lovable, pyjama-clad Indian nation going about their simple tasks, driving a string of burros to market laden with every conceivable product of their own handiwork.

To one who enjoys beauty of architecture and scenery in combination with picturesque people and quaint customs and costumes, an old world still old in the Twentieth Century, then Mexico is worth seeing. But I might add, as an aside, that Mexico City has numerous fine examples of the so-called "modern style" of architecture that are superior, in my own personal opinion, to almost anything that I saw in Paris last year. It may be entirely "borrowed" architecture from European sources, but what I saw in Mexico I enjoyed. I know that many will not agree with me unless I stick to a discussion of Old Mexico. Surely no one can deny the charm and beauty of that.

It would be impossible to write about each place that I enjoyed, but I would not be fair to myself if I did not write regarding Taxco, in the State of Guerrero. I went there with the expectation of staying over the week-end and stayed a week instead. It combines every element that I enjoyed most in Mexico. A small town,

set on the steep side of a hill, about 5000 feet above sea level, it had everything I desired in a country that is full of enchanting places. There was the beautiful architecture of simple little homes, and several more pretentious examples climaxing in the cathedral completed by Borda in 1757. But that date does not indicate the antiquity of the town. To get the proper perspective, one has to know that the first silver mined in the new world and sent to Spain, came from that hillside in 1522. Terrace after terrace of quaint white houses covered with weathered tile roofs are but incidental to the picture. The town has not changed in a century. In fact, it was practically forgotten by even the Mexican government during that time, and still is populated almost entirely by Guerrero Indians. In addition to the fact that it is perched on the face of a hill which rises another thousand feet behind the town, and which drops immediately into barrancas fifteen hundred to two thousand feet below the town, the town itself is cut into sections by deep ravines. Everywhere there is the sound of water dashing over rocky slopes. Several waterfalls that almost rival those of the Yosemite are within a few minutes walk. And with a good saddle horse, it is possible to ride up the hill to where dozens of natural springs gush out of the mountain-side to furnish the pure water for which the town is well known. Or one can ride down into the barrancas where tropical conditions exist. And all of this within a few miles!

Taxco appears at a short distance like the painted back drop for a stage setting. But it is real, and after climbing over and through its crooked, steep streets for a week, I was convinced that it was actually not a movie set but a little bit of heaven. Every turn was a new picture. I exhausted my supply of films within two days. I exhausted the supply of the only store in town within four days, and made a sally into Iguala to get what film they had to last out my week's stay. To take more than three hundred pictures in a town inhabited by a few thousand Indians must be proof of something, says I!

The streets, in addition to their mountainous irregularity, form a maze which can only be solved by experience. They pass under arches, over bridges, up steps, are sometimes too narrow for anything but pack trains of burros, and almost all impassable for autos. The paving is in patterns of light and dark cobble stones, each street having an inset of black stones bearing a date of the early Nineteenth Century. But even given the scenic setting, old and beautiful architecture, quaint narrow streets, views over unlimited miles of valleys and mountains, an ideal climate, pure water in abundance, cloud effects beyond description, and a profusion of flowers and trees of both the tropic and temperate zones, we still would have only a museum town. It is not that! It has the life that goes with it. There is no railroad. Even the highway to Acapulco has to be content to go along the hillside below the town. There is no commerce except in the Indian market in the beautiful old cathedral plaza. Everywhere are the native characters, men in white pyjamas, big straw sombreros, and serapes, women with black or dark blue rebosos, all barefoot or wearing crude sandals, and above all calm but happy faces. They apparently enjoy poverty, or perhaps it isn't poverty but only life that they enjoy. Certainly they do not know of any other existence.

Also everywhere, there are dogs, pigs, chickens, goats, cows, and especially burros. The burro might very well be the national emblem of Mexico, for it is seldom that one is out of hearing of the clatter of their hoofs on the cobbled streets, or their braying in the countryside. These sounds are with you everywhere in Taxco, but there are no auto horns, just happy children, animals, birds, and running water, to which is added occasionally the ringing

of church bells, and the equally musical ring of anvils in the blacksmith and iron workers' shops, and the explosions of rockets and fireworks on the innumerable Saint's days. And one must not omit the village band while enumerating the audible features of Taxco. During the week I was there, no less than four days were celebrated by holidays with the usual fiesta trimmings of fireworks, castillos, toritos, music, dancing, and church services. Put all these elements together and they form a complete cross section through Mexico, the real Mexico, and yet I found all these in the one town of Taxco. I do not need to give any other descriptions of what I found to admire and enjoy.

Of the larger places Morelia proved most interesting in the combination of excellent architecture with unspoiled and picturesque native life. Guadalajara, San Luis Potosi, and Puebla came next. To name further points of interest would make this article assume the aspects of a guide book.

My return to the States was made through Monterey, a very American city, and San Antonio, a city having a delightful Spanish touch to its make-up. Several days in San Antonio gave me a chance to revisit the old missions and the Mexican quarters of that city. And this was a very appropriate climax to a Spanish-Mexican summer vacation.



H. A. B. S.

THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY and CWA have given temporary employment to many Alpha Rho Chi men during the winter months. Many of the boys in the Chicago district have been working on H.A.B.S. One of the last projects was measuring several historic structures at Galena, Illinois. After measuring, monograph plates are made to send to Washington.

Reports from Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Cleveland show many of the members enlisted in CWA work. About the first of the year, every architecturally trained man in Columbus, Ohio, could or did have a CWA job.



Mentions and Medals

JOHN S. JENKINS

POLYKLITOS has been having an enjoyable year, opening the social season with a pledge party at the house. B. Murray Davidson, who studied in Glasgow, Scotland, entertained with some rollicking Scotch ballads.

We have adopted a new pledging system which should result in a larger number of new men being initiated. Arsene Rousseau, the present house manager, has been doing fine work this year, receiving a first mention in the Class A summer problem, and a second medal on the Archaeological problem, "A Hypostyle Hall."



Yost Opens Architectural Office

ROBERT S. ARNOLD and L. Morgan Yost, Dem. '31, announce the opening of an architectural office in the First National Bank building, 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Illinois.

Annis Carries Camera

VERLE L. ANNIS, W.G.S., has developed an interesting hobby during the past two or three years. He has taken up amateur photography on an extensive scale and is doing some very fine work.

When he was on the East coast three summers ago, studying New England colonial architecture, he took a few pictures and tried enlarging them himself. He was so much pleased with his experiments that when he went to Europe year before last he bought an Ikomat camera and took hundreds of pictures.

Last summer he packed his camera and toured Mexico. He came back with around 1700 more pictures, which depict the spirit of Mexican architecture in its various and picturesque forms.

To date Annis has taken over 3000 pictures of which 1000 have been enlarged, mounted and classified. The original negative is three by four centimeters and this is enlarged to seven by nine inches. The mounting is light gray, and sixty pictures are placed in each book-binder, according to classification.

This collection of photographs is attracting much attention both from the standpoint of subject matter and photographic beauty. Several exhibitions have been formed and are being shown to many groups in southern California. Annis expects to make many of the photographs into slides for use in history of architecture and general lecture work.

In searching for a suitable place to set up a permanent dark room, Annis found an unused room in the basement of the Andronicus chapter house that he claims makes a perfect laboratory. He has installed a sink, his enlarging camera, and all the other necessary apparatus. Now he has a very complete dark room and spends most of his spare time working on his photographs.

He is giving a mounted print of his best pictures to the library of the Andronicus chapter. These will be bound and classified for future reference. The chapter feels that it is very fortunate in getting these photographs, as material of this nature is seldom found even in the best libraries.

In all his travels Annis goes alone and carries little more than a raincoat, a clean shirt, a tooth brush, and his camera. He travels on all the back roads and tries to visit the places that are not overrun by tourists. Of all his travels he says that he liked Mexico best. Every one is now speculating where he will go a-cameraing next.



Dinocrates Maintains Credit Rating

CARL H. STAUTZ

RUSH DAY, which occurred December 17, found the Texas boys pledging six men out of the seven rushed.

The first of February we acquired a house at 2511 Nueces Street. Among fraternities at the University of Texas, one was expelled from the campus and seven others were put on probation, because of financial distress. Dinocrates has maintained an A-1 credit rating. The help of Alumni R. E. Everett, George Kneip, Dan Driscoll, and Hugh McMath is responsible in a large measure for this rating.

At a recent election of Tau Sigma Delta, Dinocrates placed three men on the honor roll. Only three men were elected. The new men were Carl Stautz and Clifford James.

Fanning Spent Summer in Spain

WILL EESLEY

THE DEMETRIOS CHAPTER entertained with their annual holiday dinner December 4, special guests being faculty members and alumni. The honor guest was Professor Ralph Fanning, Anth. Hon., of the Department of Fine Arts. After dinner Professor Fanning gave an interesting lecture on his travels through Spain during the past summer, and illustrated his talk with his own water color and pencil sketches. The complete series on bull fights found much favor among the guests.



Chicago Briefs

JAMES PURCELL, Anthemios '24, is a partner in the firm of Redman and Purcell, General Contractors, 6535 N. Fairfield Ave., Chicago. Their work consists of several Government jobs in neighboring States. Jim says they are fairly busy.

A hobby which is undoubtedly unique among architects is the one developed by Buford Pickens, Anthemios '29. Pick is a book-binder and a good one—so good, in fact, that no small part of his living expenses have been derived from this source in the past year or so. No branch of this highly exacting art is beyond him apparently: tooled leathers, gold leaf work, and other artistic details are accomplished without any of the concessions to inexperience one sometimes expects. A favorite demonstration of his to illustrate the strength of his bindings is to bend the covers back to break and jerk the body of the book from side to side.

A visit to Pickens' basement workroom in Oak Park is very instructive. Certain economies in construction are as evident after they are explained as similar ones in architecture. In fact, the corded backs seen on the bindings of fine books are frequently imitated in cheaper books, just as Keene cement is marked off in a bathroom to imitate tile. This would be a swell place to point some moral about functionalism but the subject is fairly well worked over. The point is, we think that a hobby such as this can be as valuable to an architect as such time-honored efforts at sketching as most of us make or are going to as soon as the weather gets a little warmer or cooler.



Editor's Mail Box

ANDRONICUS

The Los Angeles alumni chapter in January elected S. Graham Latta, '27, A.A., and Merrill W. Baird, w'27, Alumni Scribe.

ANTHEMIOS

Reuben J. Peiffer, '24, moved from New York to Route No. 1, Adell, Wis.

Robert H. Bowen, '31, may be addressed at 2504 Wichita, Austin, Tex.

Harold C. Kniebusch, '26, is located at P.O. Box 113, Cleveland, Ohio.

William A. Rolliston, '25, was married to Miss Jane Shoemaker, of Bridgeton, N.J., October 28, 1933. They are at home at 134 Chester Street, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

Gilman B. Young, '24, resides at 11548 Maple, Oak Park, Ill.

DEMETRIOS

Thomas T. B. Cook, '33, reports his latest address as 1356 Bonnie View Ave., Lakewood, Ohio.

Marion F. Ross, '23, lives at 2688 Calumet Street, Columbus, Ohio.

Thomas E. Brand, '18, is superintendent of a CWA project at the Ohio State Deaf Institute. Justus M. Koch, w'30, is on the same job.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

The Editor's Mail Box found individually designed Christmas cards from the following: Thomas Cook, Dem. '33, Andronicus chapter, Paeonios chapter, Iktinos chapter, and Verle L. Annis, W.G.S.



Directory Changes

Make the following changes in the last Directory published in October, 1933, supplemented December, 1934. The next complete Directory will appear April, 1934.

DEMETRIOS: R. E. Prince, W.A.; E. C. Schramm, W.F.

DINOCRATES: 2511 Nueces St., Austin, Tex. Clifford H. James, WA.; Carl H. Stautz, W.E.

POLYKLITOS: John S. Jenkins, W.S.

PAEONIOS: 335 N. 15th St., Manhattan, Kan. Wade Crawford, W.A.

LOS ANGELES ALUMNI CHAPTER: S. Graham Latta, A.A., 1041 Orizaba Ave., Long Beach, Calif.; Merrill W. Baird, A.W., 130-a Palisades Ave., Santa Monica, Calif.



New Initiates

The official Grand Council record as certified by W.G.E.

PAEONIOS (Oct. 6, 1933): Leppenberger, Raymond E., '36, Fort Morgan, Colo.

ANTHEMIOS (Nov. 18, 1933): Burkle, Russell P., '35, Indianapolis, Ind.; Cherwin, Theodore F.; Fjelde, Olaf, Faculty, Urbana, Ill.; Gramza, Gasmir E., '36, Chicago, Ill.; King, William J., '37, Indianapolis, Ind.; Stevenson, Willard H., '35, Chicago, Ill.

IKTINOS (Nov. 25, 1933): de Gelleke, Gerrit J., '35, Milwaukee, Wis.

ANDRONICUS (Jan. 6, 1934): Brady, Jules E., '34, Long Beach, Calif.; Combs, John, '36, Pomona, Calif.; Garton, Will M., Jr., Grad., San Diego, Calif.; Georgi, Boyd E., '33, Alhambra, Calif.; Kline, Levi B., '36, Los Angeles, Calif.; Williamson, Donald M., '35, Pasadena, Calif.

PAEONIOS (May 13, 1933): Munns, Arthur R., '34, Kansas City, Kan.

ANDRONICUS (Feb. 1, 1934): Mann, Bill M., '38, Hollywood, Calif.; Slinkard, Bill J., '38, Los Angeles, Calif.; Weaver, Frederick P., '36, Phoenix, Ariz.



Studies in Ceramics

COURSES in ceramics for students in architecture and fine arts are now being offered at Southern California. Two kilns of the latest type have been installed.

Glen Lukens, who is nationally known for his work in ceramics, is in charge of the instruction.