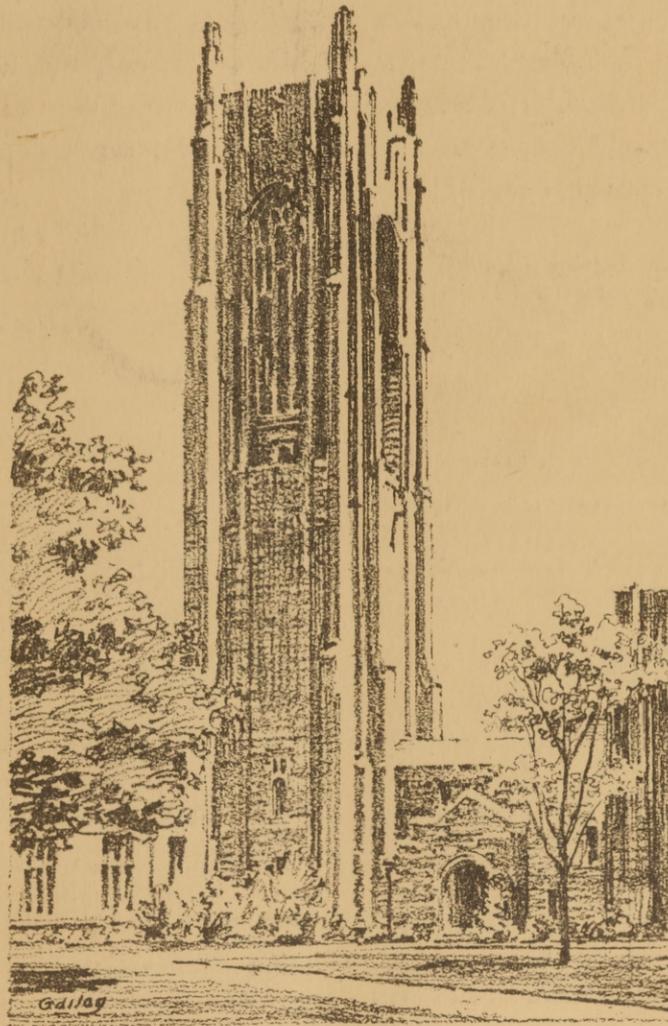


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SEPTEMBER
1928

THE SOUTH'S ONLY JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING

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Henry C. Hibbs, Architect



IT is a positive delight to be able to include in this number of the *Southern Architect and Building News*, the work of Henry C. Hibbs, as exemplified in Scarritt College, Nashville and Southwestern College, Memphis, Tennessee. A more noble group of college buildings are yet to be erected in the South. With such work as this before us we are positive that Mr. Hibbs has contributed much to a more refined American Collegiate Architecture. There is truth and beauty, originality and a scholarly conception of correct collegiate architecture reflected in every detail of these buildings. First, to know—then to do, was an early ideal in the mind of Henry C. Hibbs and the realization of this ideal is exemplified in the work included in this number. The most caustic critic can hardly indulge in a smile of architectural derision at his expense.

Mr. Hibbs is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, School of Architecture, Class of 1904; was a charter member of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Institute of Architects; served as first president of this Chapter; was author of the Bill regulating the practice of Architecture in Tennessee; and served six years as Secretary-Treasurer of the State Board of Architectural and Engineering Examiners. During Mr. Hibbs' term of office with the State Board of Examiners he sponsored a Test case of this Bill and carried it to the Supreme Court, which resulted in the establishment of the constitutionality of the Act.

Mr. Hibbs' practice is largely with colleges, having done work for Southwestern, Memphis, Tenn.; Scarritt College for Christian Workers, Vanderbilt University, Peabody College, Ward-Belmont College, and Fisk University, all of Nashville, Tenn.; Davidson College, Davidson, North Carolina; Hendrix College, Conway, Arkansas; Galloway College, Searcy, Arkansas; Middle Tennessee State Normal School, Murfreesboro, Tenn.; and others.

THE EDITOR.



THE BELLE H. BENNETT MEMORIAL TOWER,
SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENN.
HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT

SOUTHERN ARCHITECT *and* BUILDING NEWS

SEPTEMBER, 1928



VOLUME 54

NUMBER 9

The Collegiate Architecture of Henry C. Hibbs

BY CHARLES I. BARBER, A. I. A.

SOMEONE said that a civilization could be judged by its architecture. One would like to judge modern civilization by our best architecture, which brings me to a consideration of the work of Henry C. Hibbs exemplified in the buildings of Scarritt and Southwestern Colleges.

To intelligently discuss any work of architecture it is difficult to refrain from bringing into consideration the personality or philosophy of the architect—the author of the work, for in every noble building there is reflected the character of the man. Surrounded by the temptations of present day architectural eccentricities, sincerity of purpose is most difficult. Mr. Hibbs has a thorough background of training and his architectural knowledge has been gained through years of studious endeavor. Today, he is rightly, more concerned with principles and with logic than with archæology or present day vogues. "The principles discoverable in the works of the past are ours; not so the results, as that would be taking the means for the end."

In the work of this architect we find logic and an originality without the slightest striving to be different. His creations have a positive message, they speak a language that is understood and appeals to all classes,—they are good architecture. He is not tempted by the modern desire for the sensational, yet his work registers.

In pioneer days, without adequate transportation, the builder was forced to use local materials and methods—that was logical. What are we to do today when it may be cheaper to import materials and when union methods or limitations are as they are? Should we construct our Gothic buildings with all materials in compression, with heavy buttresses pushing against vaulted ceilings, or should we use the simple tie rod of steel in places where such is more economical? If a reinforced concrete roof is more practical, why not admit the fact and use it? We will have laid a foundation for another generation to build upon.

Henry C. Hibbs has the interest, the courage, and the pioneer spirit to travel away from the beaten paths, and he has ability to make his buildings practical as well as beautiful. No doubt there are others with equal ability, but he has the rare combination of many qualities that are necessary for successful accomplishments. His activities and influence are far-reaching in the South.

The buildings illustrated in this issue of the *Southern Architect and Building News*, are a distinct contribution to a more refined American Collegiate Architecture. In Southwestern, Mr. Charles Z. Klauder's influence is apparent, Mr. Klauder having been chosen by Mr. Hibbs as critic. When it is so well done as in this case, what more could one wish? One wonders how Princeton can be equaled in so many respects with so much less money. Who would have thought such beautiful masonry could be created from local stone? Imagine the influence over future generations that will result from the atmosphere created by this romantic and picturesque group of buildings.

It is well known by the Architectural profession, and by a few others perhaps, the deplorable state of ecclesiastical architecture in the South. It is a major calamity! When one looks upon the buildings of Scarritt College there comes the feeling so well expressed by a writer in *The Tennessean*—"If one could name a single material thing that has done more than many others to teach us what beauty is—and what depths of soul that beauty stirs—it would be Scarritt Tower."



GENERAL VIEW, SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENN.

HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT

Scarritt College, Nashville, Tenn.

BY MRS. J. E. CUNNINGHAM

AS the visitor approaches Scarritt College from the West across the broad expanse of parkway six hundred feet in depth, which stretches out immediately in front of the main entrance, he sees a wonderfully beautiful and arresting group of buildings that constitutes the Belle H. Bennett Memorial.

On the right the Wightman Memorial Chapel is to be seen connected by a cloister with the central Social Building, which in turn is connected by a second cloister with the Administration Unit of the group. These buildings constitute three sides of a quadrangle partially surrounding an open court, the northern angle of which is emphasized by a massive Gothic Tower that rises one hundred and fifteen feet, dominating the group with dignity, simplicity and beauty. The exterior view is thus picturesquely stamped upon the eye of the visitor as it sweeps from the broad entrance of the Chapel on past the wide facade of the Social and Administration Buildings, and follows the ascending lines of the splendid tower, the high note of the harmonious whole. The effect is arresting because of the beauty and charm of the picture, and impressive because of the deeper feelings, the distinctly religious emotions that are stirred. Instinctively one exclaims, "How beautiful!"

From the first days of the planning of the building of Scarritt College, it was thought necessary to stress the four distinctive notes that make the school unique. The four characteristic aspects of training that distinguish the life at Scarritt College are intellectual, religious, social and domestic. Consequently, the chief concern of those commissioned to direct the work was that these principles be duly emphasized even by architectural interpretation. It was by no means an easy task to combine and illustrate in the physical plant that was intended to house the Scarritt College for Christian Workers, an adequate type in architecture illustrating its dominant characteristics and expressing comodiously and beautifully, as well as economically, each of the four emphases referred to above.

The committee in charge of the building program after careful consideration, elected Mr. Henry C. Hibbs as the architect to draw suitable plans—and the results have outstripped the imagination even of the committee itself. Mr. Hibbs was chosen because of his splendid preparation and he has brought to his labors for Scarritt College a scholarly conception of correct collegiate architecture and a wonderfully

keen perception of what should constitute the physical environment of a devoutly Christian institution and an international center for missionary preparation.

It seemed quite proper to select the type of architecture known as Collegiate Gothic. It has been admirably adapted to educational purposes and is suggestive of its medieval religious uses in the Old World Cathedrals, whose tall and stately lines point heavenward, and whose pillared aisles lift the heart into the attitude of worship. So far the choice was easy. But to adapt and socialize the Gothic idea, to modify its strict requirements to suit a generous and friendly attitude, to give an air of welcome and hospitality and a broad and open approach, welcoming all the world under its roof-tree—how could such an ideal be realized?

Accordingly, it was felt that any physical plant that would house the Scarritt College family and attempt to type in its architecture the dominant notes of the institution, must provide for the expression of each phase of its life. For the successful accomplishment of the end in view nothing remained but a modifying of the Gothic principle and a deliberate adaptation of its beauty and its mode to the particular needs and ideals of the institution to be served.

The results are before us. Narrow entrance halls and high windows have been studiously avoided. The usual type of elevated window of monastic conception has been lowered to suit modern needs and to look out upon broad, inviting terraces. Light and airy halls are a similar adaptation, while no essential feature of the Gothic principles is overlooked that could enhance its ancient beauty in this modern version.

The material chosen for all the buildings is a varicolored rubble stone found in the Cumberland Mountains of East Tennessee. The stone is unusually attractive and combines great beauty with durability. Its decided color accents interspersed here and there with red and green slate from Vermont make the whole effect striking and entirely pleasing as if an artist in pastels had mixed his soft grays and tans with rose and browns, dull reds and greens, in so harmonious a fashion as to give the charm of un-studied grace to the completed picture. An effective color note is also achieved in the face of the walls by the occasional introduction of a single brick, and the subtle loveliness of this color harmony is accentuated by the precision and dignity of the workmanship.



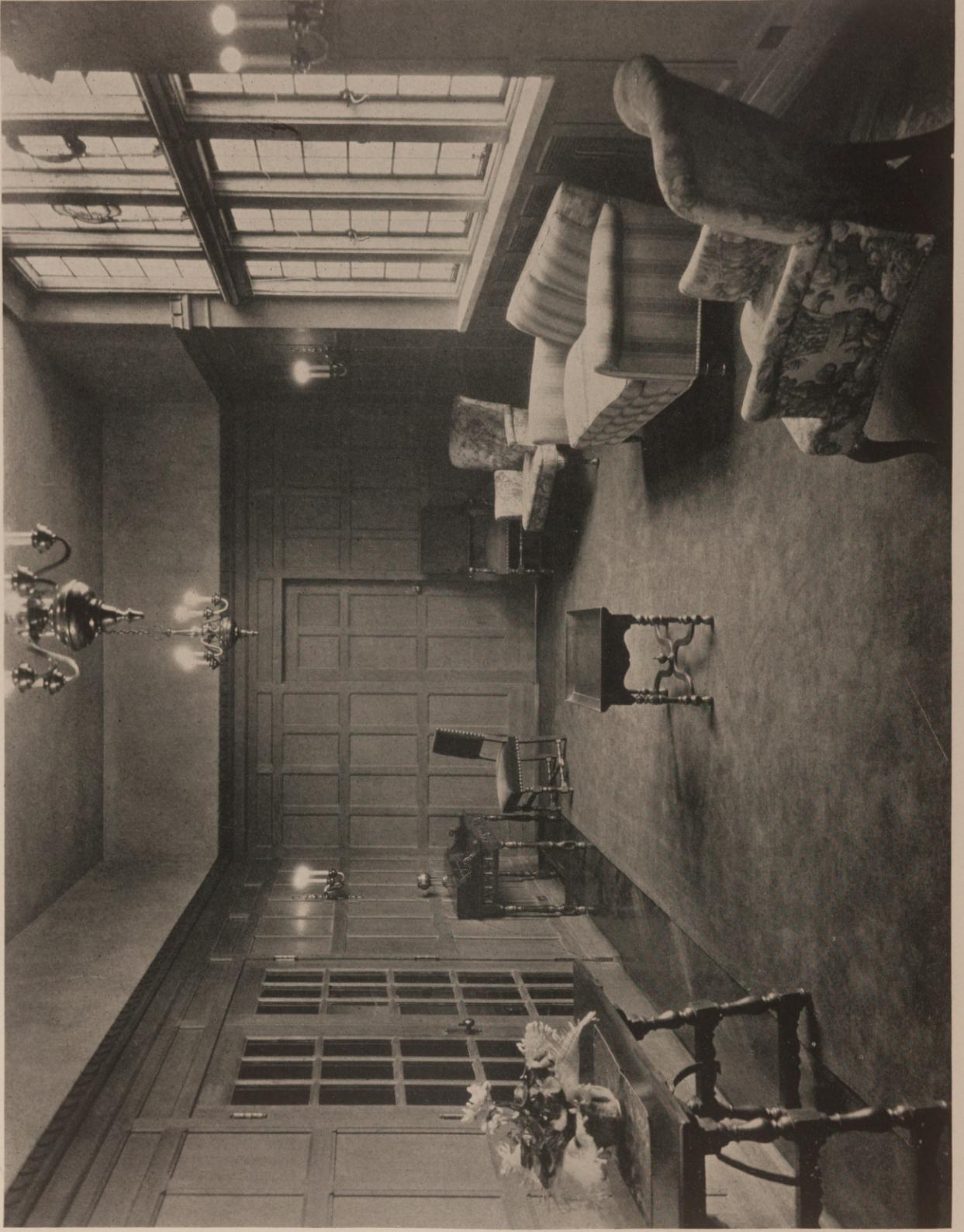
LIBRARY. SCARRITT COLLEGE. NASHVILLE, TENN.

HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT



DINING HALL, SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENN.

HENRY C. HIBES, ARCHITECT



STUDENTS' ROOM, SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENN.

HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT



FACULTY ROOM, SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENN.

HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT

The cut stone used in finish and ornamentation is from Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee. All exterior trimmings are of variegated Indiana Limestone. The fine grain of its texture is shown in the use of shields that stand out in relief under the mullioned windows in groups of four or six of both Social and Administration Units. The cloisters and terraces are paved with colored slabs of the building stone.

The doorways and window casements are deeply inset with cut stone, no wood being in evidence except in the doors themselves. The moulded steel casement sash were made in England, each window varied because of slightly colored panes adding the touch of beauty to utility. The slate for roofing from Vermont quarries shows a selection of unfading green, purple and gray tints, and is laid in graduated exposures, the largest exposure being at the eaves varying toward the ridges in thickness, the maximum thickness being at the bottom. The corners of much of the slate are broken to create a rough appearance, the whole being decidedly artistic and effective.

The dominant note of this architectural harmony is the well-proportioned tower, rising to a lofty height with pinnacled corners and cut stone trimmings at the top. Just beneath the cut stone on each side, four great points of the traceried windows arrest the eye with their grace of conception in quatre foil and slender mullions, while the charm of workmanship is enhanced by a sense of splendid proportion. The perspective effect of width and breadth at the broad base gives the impression of massiveness and solidity. Greatness in simplicity, lofty dignity, worship—all are suggested here, causing a well-known educator of the South to pronounce it "A sentinel of the spirit."

The entrance at the base of the tower forms one of the three cloisters connecting the three units of the Memorial and also the Dining Hall in the rear of the Tower. These cloisters deserve more than a passing notice because of the quaint charm of their vaulted ceilings, the great colored slabs used with antique effect for paving, and the carved entrance arches that give delightful perspective to inner courts beyond.

The North Unit of the group is the Administration Building, which the visitor enters through a large and impressive lobby with marble floor, high ceiling and paneled walls.

The business offices of the school are to be found opening into the corridor of this building, with predominating high ceilings, commodious, well-lighted, and appropriately furnished. At the end of the hall the visitor will see one of the large class-rooms with modern conveniences and equipment for school administration. Here also has been placed the large

Master Clock that regulates all the bells throughout the buildings and residences of Scarritt College.

Upstairs, the chief place of interest is the Library with its acoustically treated ceiling of ornamental celotex in gold with conventional design of blue and red. This decoration forms an attractive inlay between heavy arched beams that end in stone corbels above the top of the walnut book cases.

This has been called the International Room, distinguished as it is by the colorful coats of arms of the nations introduced into the upper panes of the windows.

Offices, recitation rooms and stack-rooms connected with the Library are to be found on this floor, while a stairway leads up into the tower. A connecting hall also leads from the Room of Remembrance over the cloister entrance into the Social Unit.

The Social or Central Unit of the Memorial, standing between the Administration Building and the Chapel, occupies a position of striking impressiveness. The grouping of its windows with rows of carved shields under the four groups is significant and artistic. The broad central doorways give entrance from a paved terrace surrounded by a cut stone wall, the ends of which are formed by two low stone pedestals, bearing a conventionalized symbol of the globe, thus indicating the character of the institution and offering an inviting portal. Within the reception hall the warmth of welcome is indicated by the architectural details of broad halls, wide doorways, and certain well-appointed furnishings, great rugs of rich coloring, chairs in choice harmony, davenport, convenient tables, and desks, so that the whole effect is homelike and beautiful.

The Gothic atmosphere predominates in the chapel unit of the group more impressively than elsewhere. The long central aisles give emphasis to the cathedral effect of the nave, ninety feet in length. The side aisles, seen through the low arches with cut stone pillars that support the buttressed roof and clerestory windows, contribute to the dignified and churchly effect. At the transept four noble double columns rise forty feet toward the ceiling, forming four lofty arches above the chancel and enhancing the worshipful note as the visitor gazes upon the splendid proportions from the entrance door.

As in the Library and Dining-room, the ceiling represents the use of acoustical celotex painted in soft blue with silver stars upon the simulated background of the sky. The heavy beams supporting the roof end in massive corbels and the effect is impressive, noble and artistic.

Such wealth of architectural beauty as found throughout this group of buildings will live forever to inspire men to noble and greater accomplishments.

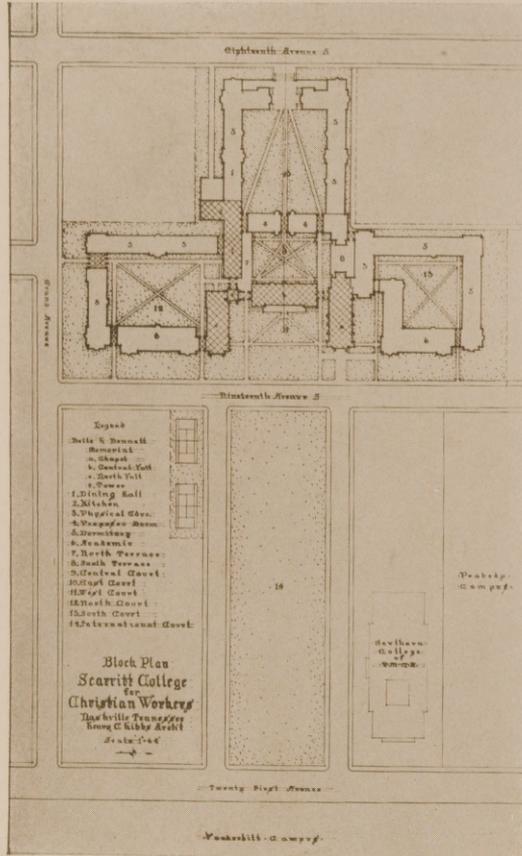


Photos: By Herace C. Hime

BELLE H. BENNETT MEMORIAL TOWER
SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT



VIEW IN ENTRANCE COURT
SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT



BLOCK PLAN
 SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
 HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT



CHAPEL

SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT



SOCIAL ROOM

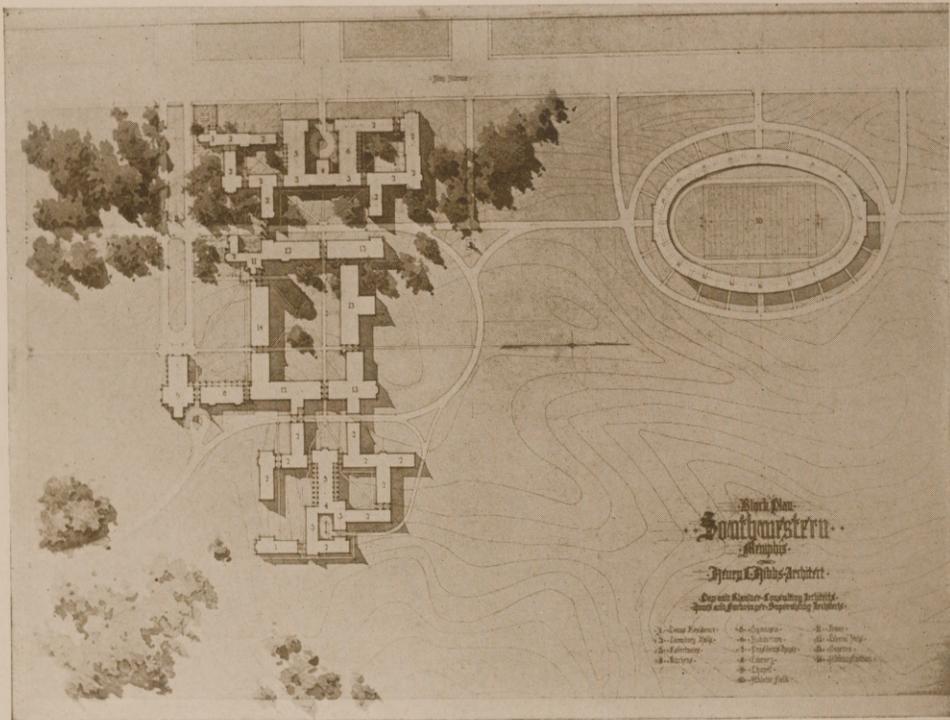
SCARRITT COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
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ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE



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BLOCK PLAN

SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE



Photo: By Tebbs & Knell, Inc.

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CORNER OF DORMITORY

SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE



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SCIENCE BUILDING

SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

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ALUMNI MEMORIAL HALL
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY, NASHVILLE, TENN.
HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT

Southwestern College, Memphis, Tenn.

BY DR. CHAS. E. DIEHL, *President Southwestern*

SOME years ago Southwestern, a Presbyterian college which for fifty years had functioned at Clarksville, Tennessee, and which had an honorable record of achievement, determined to move to Memphis. The authorities were faced, among other things, with the necessity of erecting an entirely new plant. They decided upon the Collegiate Gothic type of architecture because of the infinite variety and charm of that style of architecture. Here was the chance of a lifetime; a chance to set the standard of an institution for all time; a chance to go forth unhampered by past mistakes, architectural and other, and to launch an institution which was as nearly ideal for its purpose as painstaking investigation and careful thought and planning could make it. Realizing that the good is ever the enemy of the best, Southwestern did not seek merely the good, but the best. It was proposed to launch in Memphis an institution which would endure for centuries, and which would command the respect and quicken the pride of succeeding generations.

More than that, it was to be an institution of a very definite type, a college of liberal culture which is avowedly Christian, and which as such is shot through with that passion for honesty and that hatred for all sham which is really fundamental in any interpretation of Christianity, and without which no institution can be regarded as Christian, whatever be its claims, its forms of government, its courses of study, or its ceremonies. The institution was to be vitally concerned with scholarship, but was to be even more concerned with character and manhood; an institution which believes in the life eternal, and, as a consequence, in real moral values, an institution which stands for the essential permanence of truth, beauty and goodness.

Having determined definitely upon the type of architecture, they sought to discover and ally with themselves for this work the outstanding authority in this country on Collegiate Gothic. There is all about us much pseudo-Gothic architecture, a cheap imitation which may content the ignorant or untrained, but which calls forth the contempt of the enlightened critic. It was proposed to avoid this. There were three ideals in the minds of those who were planning for Southwestern—the ideals of genuineness, of permanence, and of excellence. Genuineness is characteristic of the heart of Southwestern, and the officials wanted this note sounded everywhere, even in the construction of the physical plant. The structures were to be enduring, for they were building for generations to come. They were to be

beautiful, for the æsthetic side of man's nature is important, and a college of liberal culture, such as Southwestern is, dare not overlook it. There were to be no substitutions, no cheap, make-believe effects, for Southwestern has a hatred for that which is shoddy.

With these ideals before them, the authorities secured Mr. Henry C. Hibbs of Nashville, as the architect. Mr. Hibbs retained Mr. Chas. Z. Klauder of Philadelphia, to criticize the design and associated with him Jones & Furbringer of Memphis as supervising architects. It is a source of satisfaction to know that our architectural ideal has been realized, and that not even the most caustic and unfriendly critic can now or hereafter indulge in a smile of architectural derision at our expense.

The first step in launching Southwestern in Memphis was the adoption of a very carefully worked out block plan of the completed plant, a plan which forecast and which located accurately the buildings of the future. This plan provided for some forty-two buildings, exclusive of faculty houses and fraternity lodges. The plan provided for a cluster of small colleges, much after the Oxford plan, making such adaptations of this scheme as seemed wise and beneficial. The plan provided for unit colleges of from 150 to 200 students as about the ideal size for the helpful development of a common life, and, further, for the breaking up of this number into smaller groups for more intimate fellowship. This unit college was to have a common dining hall, but was to be housed in five small dormitories, each of which would care for some thirty-five men and an instructor. The officially adopted principle which guided the Board of Directors in all its planning is stated as follows: "That, while every proper economy will be observed in the planning for and the administration of Southwestern, the fundamental principle upon which all our planning shall proceed is the welfare, and especially the moral welfare, of the students, for whom the institution exists, even though the application of this principle proves to be more costly in dollars and cents."

Mr. Hibbs has done a great piece of work at Southwestern, one that will endure through the ages. It is encouraging, too, to note that, while Southwestern can boast of as beautiful college buildings as there are in the South, they are not the most expensive, and they are much less expensive than are the same sort of buildings in those two colleges in the North where such construction is found. This is due in part to the fact that Southwestern pur-



Photos by *Tebbs & Knell, Inc.*
HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT

DINING HALL
SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENN.

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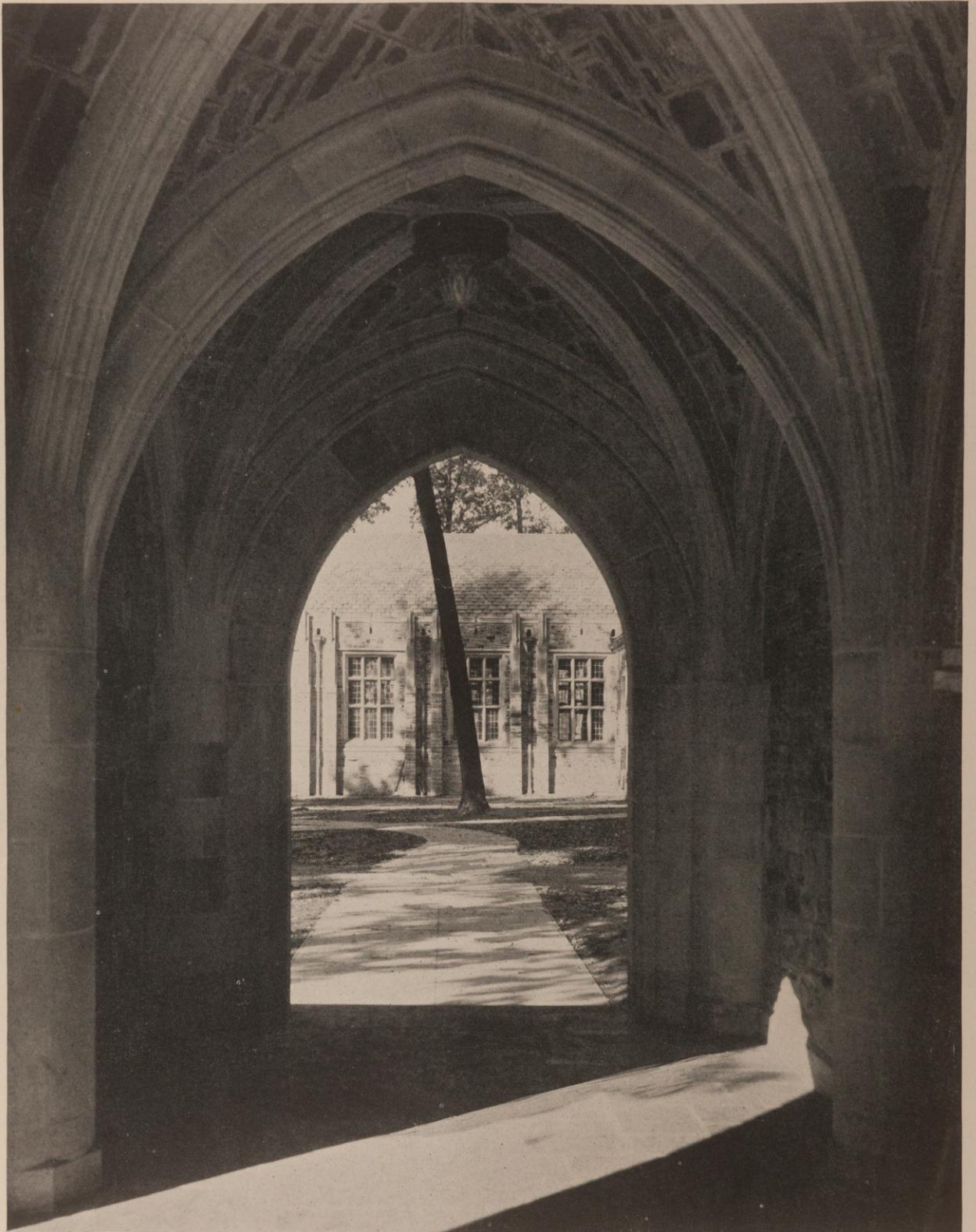


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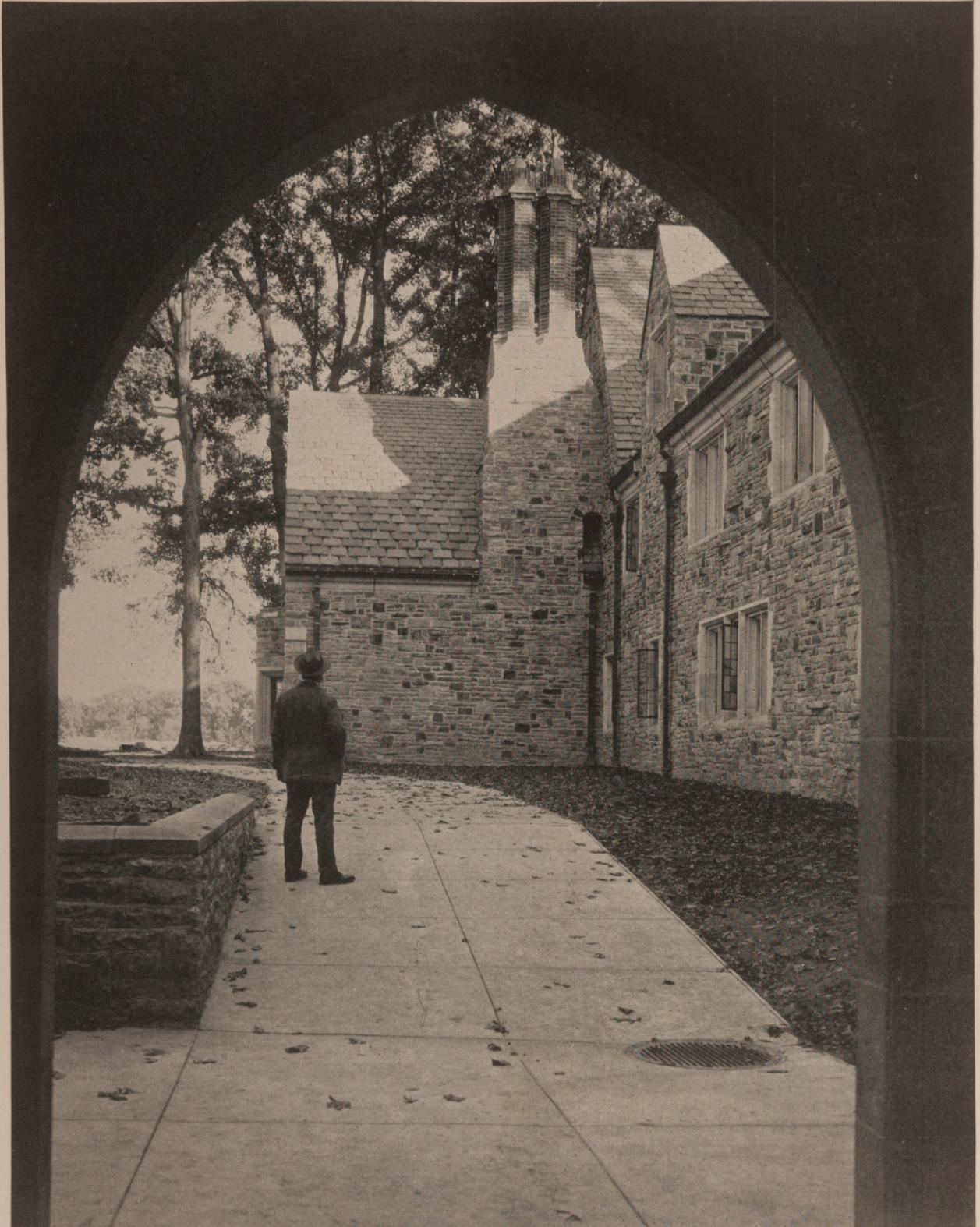
DIRECTORS' ROOM

SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENN.

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CLOISTER LOOKING TOWARDS DINING HALL
SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENN.
HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT
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VIEW OF DORMITORY
SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE, MEMPHIS, TENN.
HENRY C. HIBBS, ARCHITECT
JONES & FURBRINGER, SUPERVISING ARCHITECTS

chased its own quarry at a very reasonable cost, and that it quarries its own stone. Thus, in addition to having an adequate supply of ideal building material for the future, Southwestern is able to construct these magnificent buildings about as cheaply as they could be constructed of brick.

It was necessary, of course, to erect buildings which would provide for the business offices, the class rooms, social rooms, auditorium, library, and for instruction in the sciences. These needs were provided for, at least for the present, by the erection of Palmer Hall, which is the administration building, and the chemical laboratory. Later there will be a library building, but the immediate needs are provided for by equipping the third floor of Palmer Hall for library purposes. In planning for the chemical laboratory, a building was erected which for the present, at least, will provide adequately for all the sciences. Every proper economy was practiced but nothing essential was omitted. This building is probably the last word in a chemical laboratory for a college of arts and sciences. Larger and more expensive buildings may be found in some university centers, but there is nothing better, and this building will easily meet the most exacting requirements for thoroughly efficient scientific work. This building is equipped throughout with hot and cold water, gas, compressed air, steam, distilled water, and alternating and direct current.

Inasmuch as Southwestern is avowedly a Christian college, the authorities felt that it was necessary to provide at least the beginnings of the residential group. This group was planned with the greatest care and in accordance with Southwestern's expressed ideal, so that the student could be expected to do his best work and attain his highest development. The authorities had in mind the development, not only of his intellectual, but also of his moral and social and æsthetic nature. All students who are not residents of Memphis are required to live in the college dormitories. These dormitories were to be comfortable, sanitary, enduring, and beautiful. There is nothing monumental about

them, but the domestic note is sounded, and there is the atmosphere of home.

For the most part there are suites of two rooms for two men—a common study and a common sleeping room, the arrangement which is preferred by southern students. Some rooms are naturally more desirable than others, but the same price is charged for each, in the hope that the spirit of democracy may thus be encouraged. An attractive living room or social room is provided in each dormitory. This room means a great deal in the social and religious development of the students. In each dormitory there is also an instructor's suite. As a result of this provision, an unmarried instructor lives in close and intimate contact with the students in each dormitory.

The Hugh M. Neely Hall, which is the dining hall of the college, is a memorial to a heroic soldier and a public spirited citizen, the late Hugh McDowell Neely of Memphis, established through the generosity and affection of his wife, Mrs. Mary Sneed Neely, as a token of her interest in the development of youth to Christian manhood. This beautiful hall is joined by a cloister to Calvin Hall, and provides adequate boarding facilities for the students. A modern kitchen, commodious and well adapted for the needs of the college, is joined at the north-west corner to the dining hall. The kitchen is sanitary throughout, is of great architectural beauty, and is known as the "Kitchen of the Seven Gables." The arrangement of the kitchen was planned by expert engineers, and it is scientifically adapted to the needs of the institution.

Only seven of the forty-two buildings shown on the block plan have thus far been erected, but detailed plans for some of the other buildings have been worked out, and they will be erected when donors are found. Southwestern maintains a high standard in its faculty, its curriculum, and its material equipment. It offers only the bachelor's degree, and attempts no courses which it is not qualified to give thoroughly and well.

Of all human ambitions an open mind eagerly expectant of new discoveries and ready to remold convictions in the light of added knowledge and dispelled ignorances and misapprehensions, is the noblest, the rarest and the most difficult to achieve.

JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON, in
"The Humanizing of Knowledge"