

Type I: 'Californian Architecture' defined as its own distinctive style.

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CALIFORNIAN ARCHITECTURE

California will hereafter claim as its own that distinctive style of architecture, with tile roof and light colored plaster walls, and in the romantic treatment reminiscent of Spain, Italy and the Mediterranean, which is now so general throughout the state. Chambers of Commerce in Santa Barbara, Riverside, Palos Verdes, Palm Springs, Stockton, Redlands, Redondo Beach, Glendora, Hollydale, and in Lassen County and Madera County, have already adopted resolutions calling upon the members of their staffs, civic bodies and the newspapers to adopt the term "Californian Style" and to discourage the use of the terms "Mission Style," "Spanish Style," and "Mediterranean Style." They say these are unfortunate misnomers for an art which has progressed to a degree in which all Californians may justly take pride, one that is peculiarly appropriate to this state, where it has now been developing for so many years as to be known as typical. A number of school boards, library boards and city planning commissions have also adopted it. The directors of the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects approve it, as do many prominent architects of the state.

Californian architecture is defined as that distinctive style which for several decades has been successfully developing in this state, deriving its chief inspiration directly or indirectly from Latin types which developed under similar climatic conditions along the Mediterranean, or at points in California, such as Monterey.

Color is generally very light in tone.

Materials used are plaster, adobe or stucco exterior wall surfaces, of a durable construction, or of concrete, brick, stone or artificial stone.

Roofs are low-pitched, seldom steeper than thirty degrees, with thirty-five degrees maximum, usually of tile laid random, but sometimes, in the galleried Monterey type, using shakes or shingles, often with thick butts.

At the request of a number of these bodies letters have been sent to the editors of California asking that they post the above definition and make general use of it. Letters have also been sent to women's clubs and chambers of commerce, and to many civic bodies in California by the Art Jury of Palos Verdes Estates requesting co-operation, and the proposal has met with enthusiastic response from many parts of the state, according to Chas. H. Cheney, secretary of the Jury.

There are many evidences not only in California but throughout the country that this style of architecture is considered typical of the

state. During the past decade or more, articles have appeared in many journals of nation-wide importance so alluding to it. Thomas E. Tallmadge of Chicago, in his delightful new book, "The Story of Architecture in America," writes: "We must approach the work of a group of men on the Pacific Coast with more respect. Led by the late Willis Polk, whose water temple at Sunol, California, is one of the loveliest things in architecture, certain architects banded together in a common high ideal of beauty and fitness have evolved a style so personal and so Californian that we sometimes fear it is hardly American. We are building today better homes for the American citizen than we have ever done before. They are not all good, as they were in Colonial days—many of them are still very bad; but improved taste in the people and extended education in the architect is refining the vintage and precipitating the dross."

Myron Hunt, dean of California architects, and president of the Art Jury, says: "The time is now ripe for us in California to recognize that we have arrived at a distinctive style of architecture which is our own, and which is a real expression of our culture and civilization. Whether it has been arrived at through the rich Colonial heritage of the Spanish fathers who used forms that they knew and loved from their earlier days on the Mediterranean, or through that fortunate blending of the New England Colonial with the Spanish Colonial at Monterey which gave us the pleasant galleried type of house with its tile, shake or shingle roof, or through our better trained architects of recent years who have wider knowledge and understanding of the architecture that preceded us, all that we have done here is, after all, of a new time, in a new spirit, and the product of our western thought and progress in expression."

David C. Allison, prominent Los Angeles architect and vice-president of the Art Jury, also believes this a proper step. He says, "The romance and beauty of the tile-roofed, plaster exterior building, often arched or arcaded, have had a strong appeal to all of us, and certainly this is the most distinctive style of architecture in this state, today. We may justly and appropriately term it Californian."

