Notes

NECROLOGY*

SIDNEY HERBERT HARE
June 27, 1888—April 18, 1960

A BIOGRAPHICAL MINUTE

In an editorial dated April 20, 1960 speaking of S. Herbert Hare, the Kansas City Star stated:

He brought to the relatively new profession of city planning his exceptional abilities as a landscape architect.

One of the giants of the profession, he leaves a significant void, and a challenge to all of us to continue his great contribution to the profession of landscape architecture.

Herbert Hare was born in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1888. His father was Sid J. Hare, an engineer by profession but a landscape architect by practice. Sid J. Hare was an early Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, having joined in 1912. Herbert Hare received his training in landscape architecture at Harvard University as a special student in the years 1908 to 1910. Upon his return to Kansas City, he and his father established the firm of Hare and Hare in 1910. After the death of Sid J. Hare in 1938, the firm continued to practice under the leadership of Herbert Hare. Changes in the composition of the firm were made from time to time. His practice, however, was most extensive, including all types of landscape architecture, parks, institutions, college campuses, private homes, as well as extensive practice in the field of city planning.

During World War I, he was supervising planner for Camp Funston in Kansas and a town planner for the United States Housing Corporation in Washington. During World War II, the firm undertook major projects in connection with the war effort under Mr. Hare's leadership.

Outstanding professional achievements of Mr. Hare's practice include: the new industrial city of Longview, Washington; the Country Club District in Kansas City; the Texas Centennial Exposition Grounds at Dallas; the park systems of Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas and Kansas City; the grounds of the William Rockhill Nelson Art Gallery in Kansas City; the campuses of the University of Texas and the University of Nebraska; and site planning for numerous private residences in Kansas City, Oklahoma City, and in several Texas cities. Personally, I have always been impressed by the grounds of the Nelson Gallery, several rose gardens in parks that he did, and a number of his private residences. His work had a character, an individuality of its own. Many landscape architects in the Midwest can recognize a "Hare and Hare job" on first glance. The work is beautiful, a real credit to our profession.

Herbert Hare's application for junior membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects was dated March 1, 1913. In commenting to the Examining Board, F. L. Olmsted said, "My impression of Hare was based on what I saw of him at Harvard and is exceptionally favorable. I feel quite sure he is a good man to elect to Junior membership." His application for "Fellow" membership, as it was then called, was dated February 21, 1919. Commenting on this, Mr. Olmsted said, "The best man we had on the staff of the Housing Corporation ( barring Hubbard and Parker )."

Herbert Hare was always very much interested in the American Society of Landscape Architects. His service on the Board of Trustees extended from 1924 to 1946 except for the period 1934 to 1935. He was Regional Trustee 1924-25; Treasurer 1926-33; Vice President in 1940; and guided the Society as President during the difficult period 1941-44.

The ASLA did not represent all of his professional interest. He was a Director of the American Institute of Planners; a Senior Fellow of the American Institute of Park Executives; a Vice President of the American Planning and Civic Association; and a member of the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers.

He had attended the organization meeting, held in Kansas City in 1917, of the American City Planning Institute, out of which grew the American Institute of Planners. He was active in the AIP for many years, serving three terms on the Board of Governors.

Broader community interest also characterized Herbert Hare. He was active in the Christian Science Church; a member of the Board of Governors of the Kansas City Art Institute; and a Trustee of the University of Kansas City.

In the editorial in the Kansas City Star, Mr. Hare was described as, "a deceptively modest and friendly man." The editorial went on to say that, "He held strong convictions and fought for them tenaciously. But he was invariably courteous to those with whom he disagreed. They, in turn, admired his absolute integrity and appreciated his unfailing helpfulness." A good example of his character was dramatically indicated when, after having been made official consultant to Kansas City, Missouri, in 1929, he refused to pay a political bill, even though this resulted in his being dropped from the S. HERBERT HARE position. Possibly the major tribute to both his integrity and his diplomacy is that, for many years and at the same time, he served as consultant to the cities of Dallas and Fort Worth.

Herbert Hare was always available for help and assistance, particularly to persons interested in any aspect of landscape architecture. I was brought up in Kansas City, in fact, in one of the subdivisions he designed. Becoming interested in landscape architecture I went to him for advice and counsel. He gave innumerable hours to help me with the choice of a university, in talking to me in reviewing my progress during the summer, etc., and I know that I am just one of the many that he helped in this manner. He also provided an inspiring example of what it means to be a real professional. He had a talent for making friends that was most remarkable, assisted by an extraordinary memory for names and factual information.

---

*Necrology: a register of persons, as members of a society, who die within a certain time; an obituary, or a collection of obituary notices. After this issue, these obituary notices will appear in the Bulletin of the American Society of Landscape Architects, published in Washington, D. C.
about the many people he became acquainted with in his extensive practice through the years.

Herbert Hare had a strong sense of continuity. While he had a conservative attitude toward most things in his personal life, professionally he was always receptive to suggestions and new ideas. This is particularly true in relation to the professional practice of his firm. He was most anxious that his firm be perpetuated. During the years following the passing of his father, five partners were added from time to time with a stair-step of ages in order to insure the continuance of the office. In recent years he gradually gave up his share of the business in order that his partners could advance, and in his will it is stipulated that his remaining part was to stay with the firm. It is most fortunate to the profession that he carefully planned his affairs so that only the minimum amount would be lost by his departure and that the office could follow in the tradition established by him and by his father.

Numerous tributes were published in the metropolitan papers throughout the Midwest and the Southwest. Probably the greatest tribute, however, is that given every day, unknowingly, by the tens of thousands of children who play in the parks that he designed. He knew that, in the words of the founder of his church:

The embellishments of the person are poor substitutes for the charms of being, shining resplendent and eternal over age and decay.

ELDBRIDGE LOVELACE

EMERSON KNIGHT
July 12, 1882—May 10, 1960
A BIOGRAPHICAL MINUTE

Emerson Knight's background is at once puzzling and revealing as examined in relation to his accomplishments and in the field of landscape architecture. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1882 but the family very soon moved to Los Angeles and he lived there until about 1915. His father engaged in various literary pursuits and was well known in the Los Angeles area but apparently not overly successful financially, if one may judge by the fact that Emerson had only one year of high school and went to work for the Crane (plumbing) Company in the stock room of its Los Angeles office when he was sixteen. Later he became a salesman for the company and was the first salesman in Los Angeles to use a company automobile.

The whole Knight family always was much interested in cultural things—music, art, painting—and Emerson himself took advantage of every opportunity. For a number of years he sang with a choral society group. He was also much interested in nature and in exploring the then-unpopulated mountains about Los Angeles. Along about 1916 he walked alone all the way, some 500 miles, from Los Angeles to Monterey. In 1913 he managed to spend six months in England, France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy, and had two months' study of life drawing at the Julian Academy in Paris.

Emerson probably left the Crane Company before he went to Europe. In any event he found driving over unpaved roads in the then-primitive automobile and selling plumbing supplies too nerve-wracking and decided to do something else that was closer to art and nature. His first work directly connected with landscape architecture was in 1916—he was then 34 years old—with a man in Santa Barbara who was probably a gardener and not a really landscape architect. The next year found him superintendent of a large estate on the Peninsula just south of San Francisco, and in 1918 he began the independent practice of landscape architecture in San Francisco.

His practice was apparently concerned with small city gardens and larger places in the outlying areas. How he managed to accomplish so much with so little in the way of the tools of technical training is interesting to speculate upon. Perhaps it was just a case of the triumph of native intelligence and good judgment over training and experience.

EMERSON KNIGHT

He did considerable writing over the years for magazines, including Sunset, Sierra Club Bulletin, American Forest, California Arts and Architecture, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE; and during the depression era he wrote reports on numerous potential park sites for the Save-the-Redwoods League, the California State Park Commission, and the National Park Service. One of these reports was on the Point Reyes Peninsula, nearly 30,000 acres about 30 miles north of San Francisco, now at last being very seriously considered for a National Shoreline Park.

For eleven years, 1932 to 1943, he was a member of the Art Commission of San Francisco. In this capacity—or in any other for that matter—he never hesitated to express his true opinions and to take issue with other members of the Commission, no matter how rich or prominent, on any matter of principle such as the proposed encroaching on a park by a library or other non-park building. In the long run his position practically always stood up.

Emerson Knight appreciated greatly his opportunity to assist E. L. Olmsted, Jr. in making a report for the California Beaches and Parks in the '30s on state park sites of potential value. He often spoke of it. Regard seems to have been mutual. There is a letter written by E.L.O. in endorsement of Emerson for fellowship in the Society, in which he said that he sets a high value on Emerson's opinions.

In 1940 at 58 Emerson had serious physical difficulties and a series of operations and was greatly limited in his activities for the rest of his life. But he still kept a small office which eventually became entirely filled with papers and books of the most erudite sort—music, art, architecture, philosophy, history—and he attended all of the cultural events that he could. He never married.

Emerson Knight did a number of out-door theatres. He regarded the Mountain Theatre, on the slopes of Mount Tamalpais north of San Francisco, as his most notable work (see LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, October 1929). And indeed it is a notable work by any standards, even those of Greece or Rome. It was built on a remarkably beautiful site by C. C. C. labor, the tiers of seats made of great native stones embedded far into the earth backing, quite in the manner of the ancients. The Mountain Theatre is used now and no doubt will continue to be used for many years to come.

One wonders how many landscape architects with so little educational and technical background could have become Fellows of the Society; and one doubts that there is another of similar background who has designed anything to compare with Emerson Knight's Mountain Theatre.

PHENTISS FRENCH