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A L U M N I C L U B

B U I L D I N G

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by

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Under the Tutorship of

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and the cooperation of the present

Alumni Tennis Committee.

B.S.C.E.

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P R E F A C E

The social position of the Alumni in Beirut is becoming prominent year after year. Their number is incessantly increasing. The positions its members are assuming are growing in importance. They are starting to feel a certain political significance. The feeling that the Alumni Association is a political force in the country is wide spread.

It is certainly necessary for them to act as such. Full understanding should prevail among members. Their efforts should be coordinated in such a way as to enable them to act more effectively towards the promotion of their specified ends. This will undoubtedly give each one more strength and power.

Here, and for the purpose of gathering the Alumni around a nucleus, the idea of erecting a club-house emerged.

A club seemed to be the only solution to their problem. In this club members could meet during their leisure time for some in-door or out-door games depending on the season. Here in this club they can meet to do serious work of a social, intellectual, and political interest.

The social work will consist in the effort to create more intimacy between members and to help make good contacts with personalities either in the Arab world or abroad. The club will help in the refinement of its members and will perpetuate the friendship the solid roots of which grew in the University. The club would be the meeting place of all the community, and from it will radiate evenings, invitations, and other activities of different kinds that will take place either in the club itself or in houses of members.

The intellectual work will consist of a variety of lectures from eminent visitors or members of the club who may have some interesting ideas which they may like to share with the members of the club.

Let me add in outline other items which may fall under the intellectual activity:

- (1) Discussion groups
- (2) Library
- (3) A Review or any form of publication.

The political work, if mentioned last, is certainly not least, specially in this country and in the few years to come. Who can claim to be more qualified to lead in the political life of the country than this fine elite of honest men who derive their enthusiasm and inspiration from their Alma-Matar.

I should say that a great deal of good to the country can result from this group united. In the hope that this club will be soon realized, I expect that the following pages will be read with interest.

LOCATION OF THE CLUB

The plans for the club are made for the parcel of land shown on Plan No. 1. It is part of the grounds of the University. This parcel is on the Rue Abdul-Aziz behind the hospital. This land is now used by the A.T.C.

The question arises why this piece was chosen? Is it the best?

This parcel is already occupied by the A.T.C. which is to be the future Alumni Club. Its location is near a tramway station and yet far enough from the main street and its tumult. It has these advantages. Not forgetting the most important one; the land is almost in hand. Otherwise the land would have to be purchased - which is financially impossible.

But here we should insert a word as to the most desirable location of the club were we given a perfectly free choice on the subject.

As we all know the high tide of activity in Beirut is during Spring and Autumn. In Summer the majority of the Alumni are in the mountains, and in Winter, i.e. during the bad weather and rainy season the activities here in Beirut dwindle away. Spring and Autumn are both seasons for swimming. So the best location would be somewhere on the sea shore where the club could arrange for swimming conveniences.

Bearing this in mind and hoping that such a place will be available, we proceed in our design on the basis of the locality mentioned above, if the parcel is changed then we will have to study what alterations should be made in our design.

MAIN IDEA

The club should be designed considering the number of people who are expected to be members. The members count now about fifty of both

sexes. During the club life the members are not expected to exceed 120 men and 80 ladies.

So we should bear in mind that we should have at least a common room or lounge of sufficient size to accommodate comfortably the greatest number of members and guests ever likely to be present at the club at one time. This room should be well decorated and should be furnished in a dignified manner.

There should be a library, enough bedrooms to meet the needs of the members who may wish to stop overnight at the club or to put up a friend, and usually most important of all, a dining room served by a well-planned and well-equipped kitchen.

In all, we may regard the Club as a small hotel for the use of members only with few or many added features. It should be practical in plan and equipment, pleasant, substantial and dignified.

REQUIREMENTS

A set of requirements was recommended by the A.T.C. Committee. After several conferences with the committee and Professor Yeremian the following items were agreed upon as being the final requirements for the design.

(1) Required a reception room, an assembly hall and a dining room, these three units should be separate if the budget would allow. Things being as they are, and desiring to make the club a financial proposition it was decided to make both the Dining Room and Salon serve as one big hall when need arises.

An arrangement for a stage to be used by a lecturer or an orchestra was agreed upon and annexed as shown in plan.

- (2) Indoor games - It was agreed that the club would contain a Bowling Room, a Billiard and a P. Pong Room.
- (3) A Library - which would serve as a committee meeting room.
- (4) An office.
- (5) Card Room.
- (6) Accomodation for ten beds, i.e. five sleeping rooms.
- (7) Showers and lockers for Men.
- (8) Showers and lockers for Ladies.

I am taking the liberty of making certain repetitions by putting these requirements under another form. I am going to put them as they were fitted in the design with respect to floors.

(1) Main floor

- a) Salon.
- b) Committee Room.
- b¹ Sitting Room.
- c) Office.
- d) Vestibule.
- e) P. Pong and Billiard Room.
- f) Showers and lockers for ladies.
- g) Toilet for men.
- h) Kitchen.
- i) Maids' room.
- j) Bell boy stand and information desk.

(2) Second floor

- a) Hall.
- b) Card Room.
- c) Terrace - open dancing place.
- d) 5 sleeping rooms.
- e) Toilet room for ladies.

f) Toilet room for men.

g) Kitchenette.

(3) Basement

a) Bowling room.

b) Showers and lockers for men.

c) Boiler room.

d) Janitors room.

e) Fuel room.

f) Food room.

g) Junk room.

(4) Provision for future enlargement of the place.

This can be made possible by covering the terrace of the second floor making it as an assembly hall, then by doubling the bedrooms on the third floor and using the slab space above the hall, card room, and assembly as a terrace.

This will be practically doubling the building in size and accommodations.

DESIGN

• Now that we have agreed on the principles that are to govern our design as a whole, let us take the parts of the building one by one and discuss their dimensions. The maximum number that is ever likely to be in the club for a public meeting, a lecture or a ball will not exceed, as we said, previously the number of 120 men and 80 ladies.

Loange - Main Hall. The question of main hall did not prove very easy. The question was whether the building would contain a hall, a salon,

and a dining room, or, whether the salon and dining room could be combined in such a way as to open to one hall to be used whenever the occasion arises. Such occasions being rare all through the year it was found too expensive to devote a hall for them. The decision is to fit in the design the dining room and the salon in such a way that they could be used as one unit in case of need. The size of these two units when opened on each other would be 7 x 16^m - not considering the stage. A row of seven meters will contain five chairs on each side leaving an alley of one meter in between. If the spacing between rows is 70cm. we can put 20 rows and leave one meter before the stage and then 100cm. free for the entry from the vestibule. It will hold in this manner 200 persons. If squeezed a little bit it would contain 240 to 260 persons, which is the maximum number of members and guests that is ever likely to be found in the club at one time. In more extreme cases, as public lectures, West Hall Auditorium may be used for the purpose.

Dining Room. Our dining room proper is meant to contain 24 persons for dinner in an ample manner. (See sketch No. 2). If it is arranged properly for a banquet and a U-Shaped table set, it would contain 46 persons as shown in Sketch No. 3.

We should remark that in case of need we can combine the dining room and salon to form a big dining room which would contain 64 persons in an ample manner and about 120 persons if arranged for a banquet. For a "buffet froid" 200-280 could be accommodated.

Salon. Considering the salon as a unit by itself, it will contain 60 persons normally. If it is needed it could contain up to one hundred. The salon is going to be richly furnished and paved with parquet. Belts

of coloured marble 120cm. high will decorate its walls. Its colours will be proper and dignified. Light will be diffused not direct. It also will have a good glass area to the east which will make it more

As it was previously stated, the interior decoration of this salon and other main parts is very essential to make it a first-class place, attractive and pleasant. Or else the place would be only one more place in Beirut and will not certainly have the success desired for it.

Card Room. The card room will hold 6 tables of bridge in an ample manner. Tightly 9 tables could be accommodated. In case of a bridge tournament the hall in the second floor could also be utilized and will hold also 9 to 10 other tables, making in all 18 to 20 tables which is the largest number of bridge players that is ever likely to be there at one time.

A combination of loud-speakers connecting the D.R., Salon, and Terrace can be installed at will to make it possible for an orchestra or a speaker to be audible in all three pieces on special occasions. This arrangement would enable double the amount of persons mentioned above to enjoy a speech or a party.

Showers and Lockers. The arrangement made in the toilet room is to hold eighty lockers whose base is 30cm x 30cm and height is 75cm. The lockers will be arranged in a double row, one on top of the other. The room contains four showers and two toilet seats.

As for the toilet room for men, it will hold 130 lockers, four showers and two toilet seats and two urinals.

For these also the maximum number to be attained is calculated. If there is an increase two persons could use the same locker.

Bowling Room. For the dimensions of the bowling room refer to the Architectural Graphic standard by Ramsey and Sleeper. These dimensions in the design are taken from this book.

A point worth mentioning is the isolation of the bowling alleys from the building so that the vibrations caused by the ball when it rolls will not disturb all the floors. For this reason the alleys and pit are going to be constructed separately on a layer of sand. This layer will act as an absorber to the vibration. Also a curtain wall, separating the main wall of the building from the pit so as to prevent the ball from striking the wall, will be erected. The concrete laid on the sand to constitute the floor will be divided into blocks of 30cm x 30cm. Over these blocks comes the parquet of the alleys. By so doing, Bowling will not disturb the whole building as is the case in West Hall.

Bed Rooms. The bedroom will contain twin beds, the width of each bed being 100cm. A space of 90cm. will be left to make room for a stand and a passage. This would make the width of the room 290cm. Remembering that these rooms are made for members who intend to stay only a few days or perhaps one night, the size of the room as it is made is justified.

Stand for Information. A stand for information and a telephone room will be placed under the stairs. Also switches for telephones in the rooms and in the second floor will be put in proper places. A subsidiary telephone in the second floor will be made transferable to rooms according to its need. An information desk, quick and easy telephone communications add very much to the comfort and luxury of the place. If experience proves that the 'phones are necessary the wires are already fixed only receivers are to be installed.

Coat Room. For the accommodation of coats see sketch No. V. Their place, as is shown on the plan, consists of the two corners to the left and to the right of the main entrance door. The third corner of the vestibule adjacent to the library and salon will have a corner sofa for people to sit and wait, in case they are not members of the club, and they need someone from the members. The two corners are enough, bearing in mind that the activities are not at their climax in rainy days.

Toilet Rooms. A toilet room is provided for ladies in the second floor where they can do their make-up and if necessary have a chat. This room is necessary, so that a lady needs not come down from the second floor if she wanted to look into a mirror.

Toilet rooms for men are placed in main and second floors.

Sitting Room. The sitting room joining the ladies toilet room to the salon is a very necessary part of the building because it has many functions. Members who have been playing and do not feel in shape to enter the salon, either because of their dress or because they did not shave or for any other reason, would use it as a sitting room. Ladies will use it as waiting room in case showers are full. A small group seeking privacy could retire to it. It might be used also at night as a smoking room. A table of bridge might be put up in this room in case it is needed. This room seems to be very practical and convenient for various purposes.

BARS.

Main Bar is placed between the kitchen and the dining room. The bar should be clean and attractive. It is easily accessible from all sides.

Auxiliary Bar is up in the second floor which will be open when there is a party or crowd in the second floor. This bar will serve the hall, card room and terrace, because these are not easily accessible to service from the main one.

Library. This is the nucleus of the intellectual activity. It should be mainly devoted to books published by graduates of the University and some journals and magazines. I made the restriction because if we do not have this restriction any library will be too small. Besides there is no need for a general library since Alumni may have access to the main library of the University. Having the publications of our graduates would acquaint us with books we ought to read and would give us an idea as to what our group has accomplished and as to what remains to be done.

ARCHITECTURAL EFFECT

The club should have a pleasant and dignified external appearance, so as to attract those Alumni who would be tempted to join only on account of the attractive architectural design. The colonnade formed of six circular straight columns 7 1/2 meters high is expected to give a certain "effet de grandeur", joined to the entrance properly arranged as shown in the location plan, the garden artistically and wisely planned.

Second, the interior decoration of the main parts, especially the salon and its proper and luxurious furnishing should make the sight of this building something inviting and pleasant. Also the glass area of the eastern facade, the recess of the first floor, the recess of the second floor are expected to have their effect.

Yet none of these parts is unuseful. All have their function. But the way they were designed is in accordance with harmony. The balcony on the first floor is not intended only as a recess but also for the effect it produces. It is a suitable place where from people could watch the games. The upper terrace can be made use of as a dancing floor in summer for out-door parties.

The colonnade, although it is intended mainly for the effect yet members can come down from their cars sheltered by it from rain. This makes it more convenient to them and cleaner to the club inside.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

Exterior walls will be built of nice yellow limestone (Fourni). The main Facade will be of fine hammered dressed stone. The corners and window frames will be rock pitch with three cm. corners hammer dressed boarders.

Exterior steps in the garden and on the main facade of the building will be granite stone of which the columns are going to be polished face columns.

Inner steps will be paved with white marble with an inner belt of coloured marble. The main halls will have a belt of coloured marble some 120cm. high.

Main hall will be paved with parquet. Other halls will be made of Terrazo tiles.

I mentioned under this heading only materials which do not usually enter in construction. Other materials that are going to be used in this building in other parts, are used in all buildings and are not worth special reference.

FINANCIAL ORGANIZATION

The idea of a club is already agreed upon as desirable. How to realize it financially is the question we have to consider. There are two suggestions.

The first is to collect the capital by selling shares. Thus making it a business enterprise. The other is to collect money in the form of a loan from members who will be repayed after a certain number of years.

I prefer the second choice. In my opinion the first gives it the character of business which is not desirable. In a way some people will start feeling it is their own. It is their business. Their concern. No one can interfere in somebody else's business.

While the second proposition makes every one feel that he should help to make the club pay back the loan. Benefit balls and other finance campaigns could be organized for it. While in the other case nothing of the sort could be done.

Some of the things that could be done are for example: Lotteries, Balls, tournaments, tea, bridge tournaments, etc., A great deal of profit could be gathered if it is properly organized.

Let us hope for the best.

MANAGEMENT

An executive Committee should be at the head of this club with a manager working under its supervision.

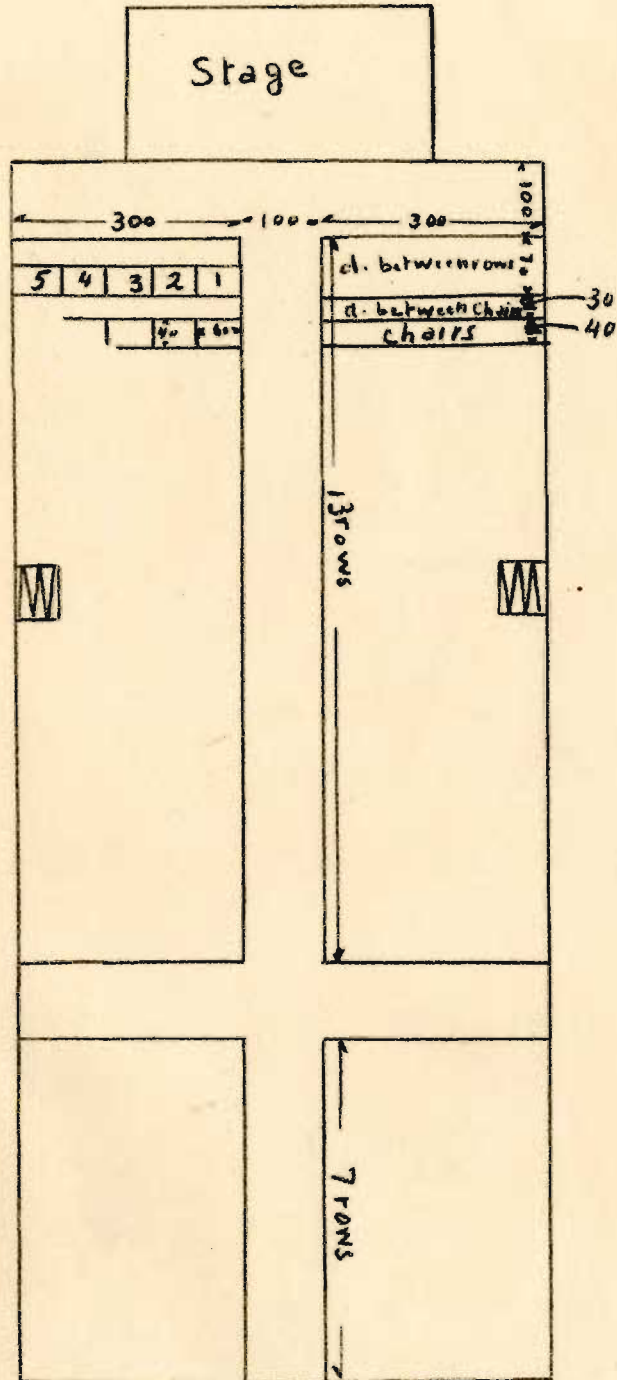
Sub-committees: for finance, politics, intellectual interests, social life and sports, etc.,

CONCLUSION

Before closing, I must express my indebtedness to all those who contributed towards the realization of this project. Special thanks should be expressed to Professor Yeramian and the members of the A.T.C. committee who made quite a number of interesting suggestions that were taken into consideration in the final formulation of this plan.

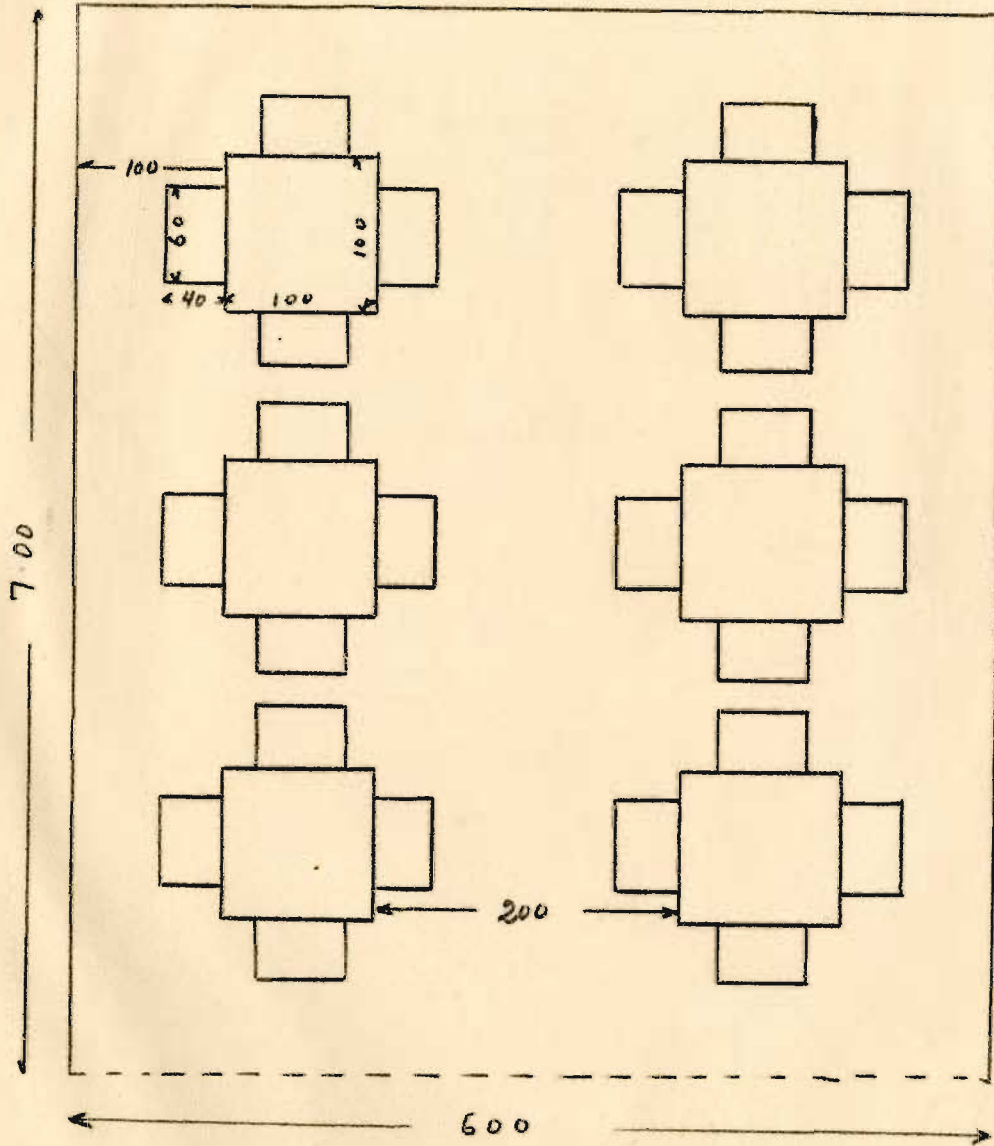
Let us look forward to the occasion when this plan will be put into practice and in this way the suggestions here made realized.

Sketch No. I - Assembly Arrangement.



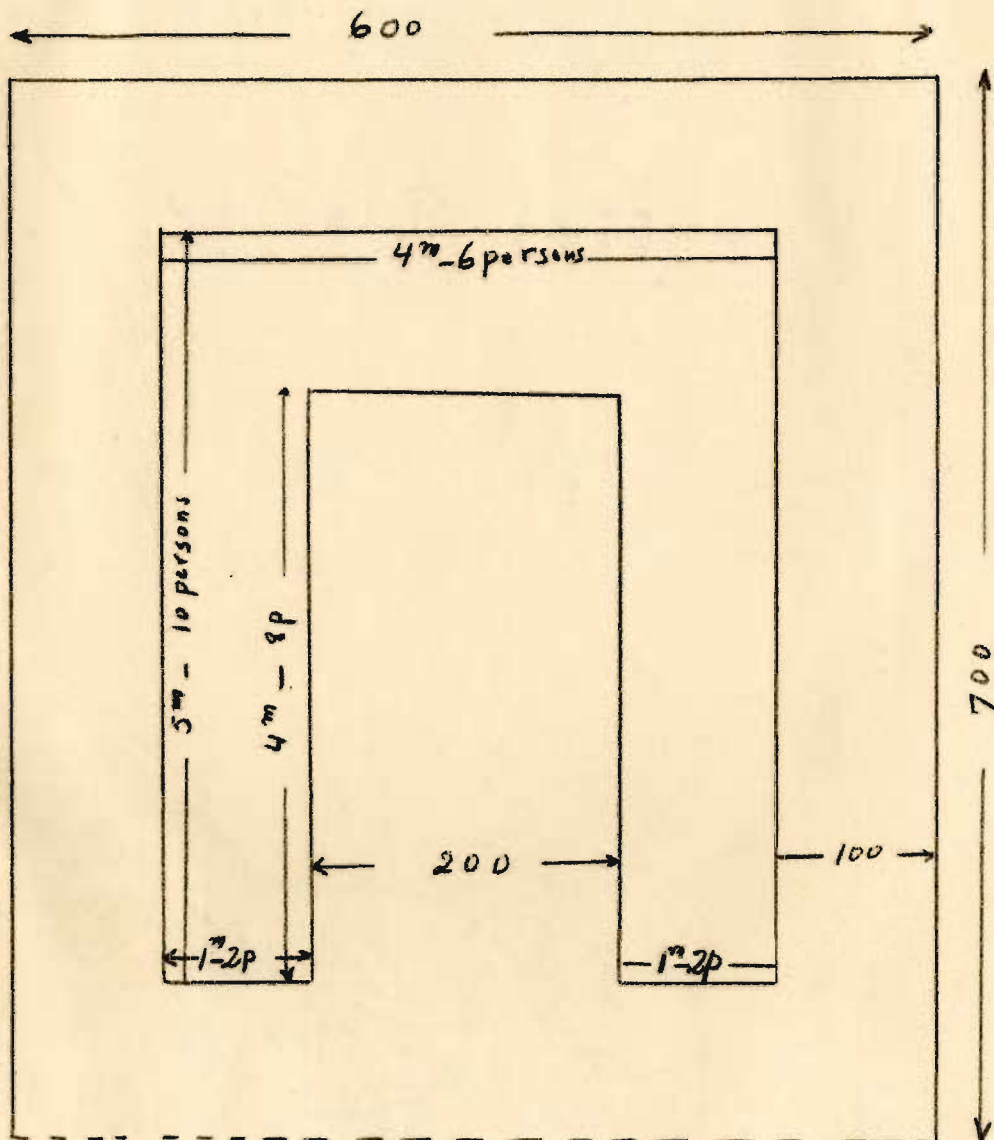
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Sketch No. II - Dining Room (ample).



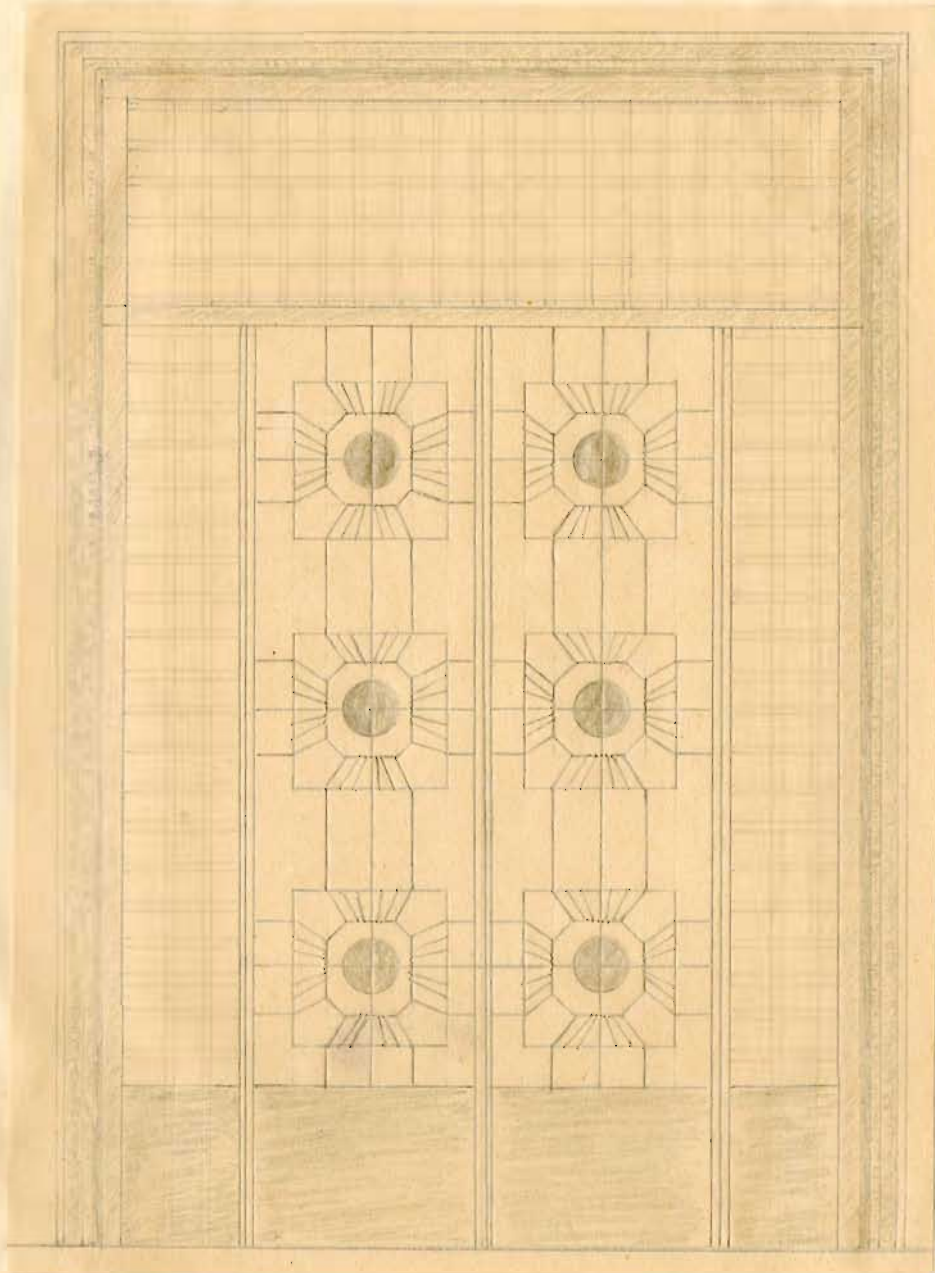
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Sketch No. III - Dining Room (Table U-Shape).



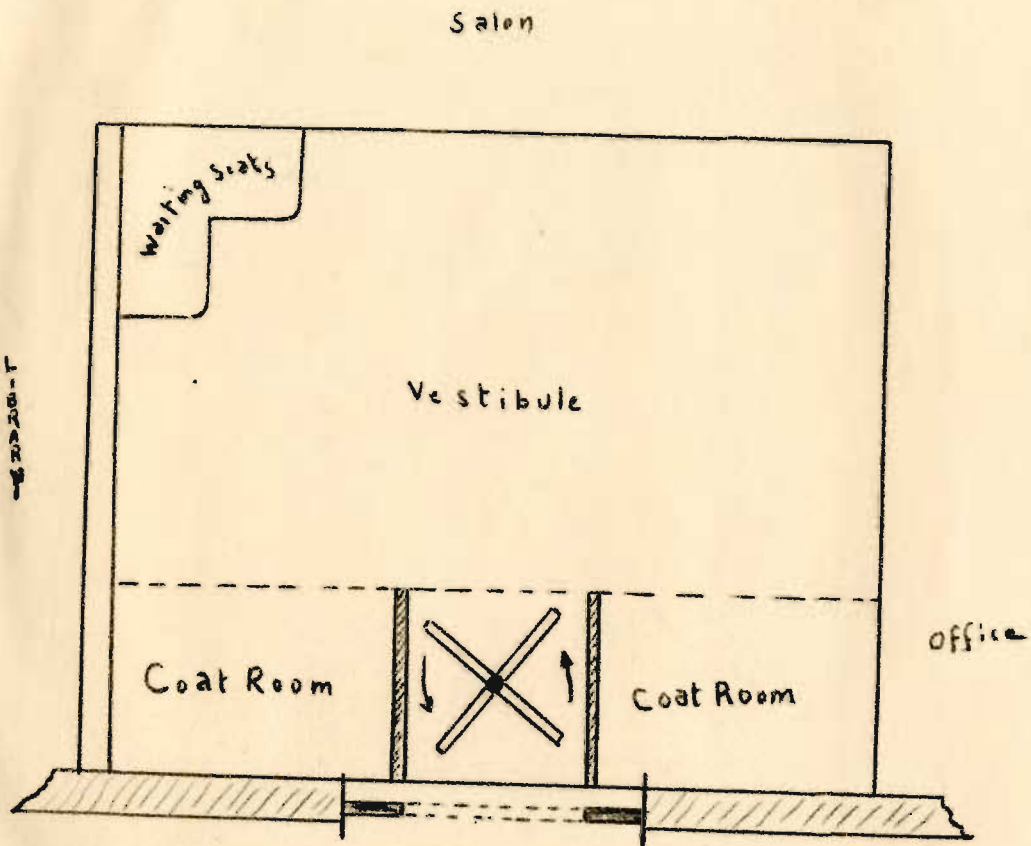
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Sketch No. IV - Main Door.



Scale 1:20

Sketch No. V - Coat Accomodation.



Scale 1:50

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Plans

- Plate I - Floor Plans
- Plate II - Main Facades & Perspective
- Plate III - Location Plan

H. H. H.

