

Julius Posener led a visit of German students and academics to England in March 1963. His account provides a fascinating record of the architectural scene at that time.

## English architecture in 1963: a newly rediscovered view from Germany

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This ‘document’ provides an English translation of an unpublished German typescript found in the archive of Julius Posener in the Akademie der Kunst, Berlin.<sup>1</sup> Posener, a professor of architectural history at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste (HBK), travelled with a colleague and fifteen students to England for a fortnight in March 1963. They met several prominent architects, saw a wide selection of their current and recently completed works, and attended events at the Architectural Association school. The typescript is an account of the trip that he wrote up from notes in his diary on 29 March, two days after their return.

### Julius Posener

Julius Posener (1904–96) is a figure of considerable interest for the period, and deserves to be better known by English historians. Born in a rich suburb of Berlin to Jewish parents, a painter and a music teacher, Posener must have seemed destined for a career in the arts, and in 1923 he began to study architecture under Hans Poelzig at the Technische Hochschule in Charlottenburg. In the early 1930s, he worked with André Lurçat in Paris and Erich Mendelsohn in Berlin. After the Nazis took power in 1933, he moved to Paris where he edited the journal *Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*. On Mendelsohn’s recommendation he began projects in Jerusalem, Beirut, and Tel Aviv. In 1941, he joined the British army in the Middle East as an intelligence officer. After demobilisation in 1947 Posener tried to find work in Germany, first in politics with the prominent trade unionist Hans Böckler, then as a teacher, though both attempts failed. Then he came to England, working in Aylesbury with the Buckinghamshire County Council Public Works Department.<sup>2</sup> Thanks to intervention from the Labour MP Gordon Walker in 1948, he managed to find a teaching position at the Brixton School of Building. Letters from the Ministry of Education – dated 31 July and 4 August, preserved as waste paper on the verso of typed lectures<sup>3</sup> – approve his German qualifications for the work. The same year he married the considerably younger Elizabeth Charmian Middleton (1928–40), a granddaughter of Leonard William Booth, the Colonial Secretary of Ceylon.<sup>4</sup>

They had three children and lived in a quiet Victorian street around the corner from Vanbrugh Castle in Greenwich. Posener enjoyed the teaching and liked his colleagues, especially Kenneth Douglas Bundy and Thomas Peatfield; the latter would entertain him and his students on their 1963 visit. He also grew to love London. After his initial disappointment that it lacked the grand urbanity of Paris and Berlin, its charm and variation in local character seemed irresistible, and he even endorsed Peatfield’s claim that London was the only liveable city in the world.<sup>5</sup> Posener’s stint at Brixton lasted until 1956, when he accepted an invitation to teach in Malaya. After the end of his term in 1961, unable to find a new job in London, he returned to Berlin where he began work at the HBK. This position offered a reunion with a close friend from Posener’s university days, Klaus Müller-Rehm, who now taught at the HBK and accompanied Posener to London in 1963.

Posener’s comments on his English trip reflect an understanding of architecture heavily shaped by his eight years in London, and preserved in many essays, unpublished lectures, and other documents; here I can only be impressionistic. His ideas fitted well with the modernist mainstream in England in the 1950s, enshrined in the *Architectural Review*, to which he contributed two pieces: on Poelzig and Auguste Choisy. This mainstream held, broadly, that modernism was required by the spirit of the age, but that it should be rooted in a slow, progressive tradition represented above all by the rational vernacular of the eighteenth century and the engineering marvels of the nineteenth: what the *Review* in 1947 began calling ‘the functional tradition’.<sup>6</sup> This tradition was intrinsically anonymous and communal, not the product of egoistic invention, in explicit contrast to the retrogressive and capricious historical stylism of the Victorians.<sup>7</sup> Thus Posener could declare in a 1954 lecture: ‘it appears that tradition is a good and natural influence for the architect, and that history tends to interfere with his natural expression and to lead him on to an artificial manner of design.’<sup>8</sup> Despite his insistence on tradition, he did not advocate timidity, and his sharpest criticism in

London is reserved for Howard Robertson's Shell Centre (1961), a rather leaden array of buildings near the South Bank, nodding to modern massing and form but retaining the small windows and Portland stone facing of earlier buildings like Senate House. Similarly, Denys Lasdun had written in 1957 of the Shell Centre that: 'As far as it presents us with an image at all, it is one totally without significance for us.'<sup>10</sup> What such thinkers demanded was an architecture that expressed their time: clean, bright, efficient, open, modern.

I use the word 'expressed' advisedly: Posener, like Lasdun but unlike, say, Rayner Banham, advocated the symbolic function of architecture. Again, like Lasdun, this was the basis for his critique of the older modernist orthodoxy – almost never really embodied in practice – that a building must 'honestly' show its structure. As Posener said in one of his Brixton lectures:

*We begin to realise, then, that to express structure in such a way that the result is Architecture, it is not enough to let us see the structure. It has to be translated into a kind of structural symbol which can easily be grasped by the eye. This is, in the last resort, the difference between the work of the craftsman and the work of the engineer on one side, and that of the Architect on the other.*<sup>11</sup>

The architect could not delegate the aesthetics of his building to the engineer, that is, to mere structure or function, but had a responsibility as a form-giver to produce legible images that represented his or her idea, and the modern age more generally. Again, in his 1956 article on the French historian Auguste Choisy, he wrote that 'One cannot deny that whatever is done in architecture has symbolic meaning [...] Architecture shares this symbolic character with all art and, beyond, with every activity of the mind, not excluding science nor, indeed, technique.'<sup>11</sup> Posener's attitude was that of the German humanistic tradition, and his stated point of reference in the published article was the philosopher of culture Ernst Cassirer. In his final lecture, Posener put his theory differently, perhaps reflecting the influence of Bruno Zevi's seminal gospel of Frank Lloyd Wright, *Towards an Organic Architecture*, published in English in 1950:

*Architecture's first concern is the expression of organism. Composition is only a means of clearly expressing certain types of organism.*<sup>12</sup>

If Posener was *au courant* with the latest ideas, he was unsympathetic to the fringes of the *avant garde*. For instance, he rejected Gerhard Kallmann's vision of architecture as 'endlessly-linked chains' under a 'continuous roof', something perhaps approaching the illimitable white-box factories in the American landscape of today.<sup>13</sup> This sounded dreadfully dull: Posener continued to prefer solid, individual aesthetic objects.<sup>14</sup> But it is notable that in 1963, he appreciated the more humanistic version of 'endless architecture' in Lasdun's developing plans for the residential ziggurats at UEA: 'The concept of the growing and extendable [*Erweiterungsfähigen*], in contrast to the Renaissance idea of a building as a work of art to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken away.'

## Visiting London

There was little chance of seeing anything too radical in England in 1963. In purely visual terms, the highlights were Lasdun's chic flats in St James's and Keeling House in Bethnal Green, and RMJM's Commonwealth Institute (aggressively refurbished in 2016 as the Design Museum) and New Zealand House. These are all fine, elegant buildings, and they can all be reasonably described as expressive symbols of architectural modernity. Posener's group also appreciated the Golden Lane Estate, especially the brutalistic terrace fronting Goswell Rd, with its fashionable segment-shaped concrete 'cornices' borrowed from the Maisons Jaoul. On the other hand, they disliked the jaunty curved hat of the Estate's point block, Great Arthur House, with its 'pseudo-functional' justification as a wind tunnel for the laundry room. Posener's highest praise goes not to aesthetic spectaculars, but to the solid, competent, unshowy efforts of Yorke Rosenberg Mardall and the LCC, the latter soon to be absorbed into the GLC. One quiet but interesting revelation of Posener's notebook is that many German students of the period did work experience at the LCC, something he seems to have encouraged.

It would be interesting to know more about architectural contacts between England and Germany during these years; this trip was the first part of an exchange programme between the HBK and the Architectural Association School, though I have not found documents relating to the English students' trip to Berlin. Posener himself had long-standing contacts, making him an intriguing bridge between the two countries. A page in his CV records that, on this trip, he met, in addition to those mentioned in the typescript, Dennis Sharp, J. M. Richards, and Reyner Banham.<sup>15</sup> He had probably already known the latter two, given his contributions to the *Review* in the 1950s. Banham must have been interested to meet a student and colleague of the expressionists Poelzig and Mendelsohn, whose historical contributions he aimed to recover in his doctoral thesis.<sup>16</sup> In 1971 Posener would correspond with Banham and translate his essay on Hermann Muthesius's early houses in Nikolassee, southwest Berlin; these houses were close to his heart, and he campaigned successfully for their preservation.<sup>17</sup>

Despite his commitment to modernism, Posener was a historian with an eye for excellence in all eras. The following document is chiefly of interest for its comments on the buildings of the early 1960s, but these are not in isolation from judgements on Wren, Inigo Jones, King's College chapel, and St Albans Cathedral. Like the most prominent mainstream modernists of the period, from Nikolaus Pevsner to Hugh Casson and Denys Lasdun, he appreciated the continuity of tradition.

## Translation

English trip, 14–27 March 1963. Written up by Julius Posener, 29 March 1963.

The participants: Prof. Julius Posener (architectural history)

Prof. Klaus Müller-Rehm (seminar leader)<sup>18</sup>

Becker, Brigitte  
 Franke, Christa  
 Atta, Ahmed  
 Balzer, Günter  
 Behr, Gustl  
 Frederich, Bernd  
 Hilbertz, Hartmut<sup>19</sup>  
 Jockeit, Werner  
 Medné, Talwald  
 Mott, Miku  
 Passoth, Jochen  
 Schiffczyk, Dieter<sup>20</sup>  
 Schöning, Harald  
 Tettenborn, Jörg  
 Walla, Hans-Peter

*Thursday, 14 March, and Friday, 15 March*

Smooth journey, calm crossing. For a long time, the ship clings to the Belgian and French coasts. The new hotel buildings on the Ostend strand, narrow concrete blocks up to ten storeys high, raise the question of whether other forms of arrangement on the shoreline are possible. Today the Ostend seafront seems hardly any different from that of Copacabana or similar places all over the world. In the vicinity of the seafront from 1914–18 one can see the tower of the Ypres Cloth Hall in the distance. The large new industrial development on the coast either side of Dunkirk is unexpected. After Dunkirk the ship leaves the coast, and at dusk appear the chalk cliffs and Dover Castle, along with the church and Roman lighthouse. At Folkestone, just before night falls, we see for the first time the pattern, typical of late last century, of rows and rows of slate-roofed cottages of the same type. Here the structure of the Victorian suburb is especially clear, as the train runs up the hill high above the town.

At Victoria Station in London we are greeted by Miss Penny Craddock, the secretary of Dr Otto Königsberger, who is in charge of the Architectural Association school while Mr W. Allen is away,<sup>21</sup> and who has planned our excursion according to our wishes.<sup>22</sup> Miss Craddock takes us to the coach that drives us to our lodgings, the German YMCA, Craven Terrace, near Hyde Park.<sup>23</sup> This coach has been laid on for our London outings.

We did not much like the German YMCA in London, which combines English comfort with German charm. Still, we put up with it well during our trip, and in one respect it is to be recommended for purposes like ours: close to Marble Arch and right by Hyde Park, it is extraordinarily convenient for tourists.

*Saturday, 16 March*

Morning: a stroll through the City, in radiant weather. We walk through the financial district and visit St Stephen Walbrook, Wren's most famous church in the City, which geometrically solves the interpenetration of a three-aisled space under the dome on eight columns. This was not successful in St Paul's Cathedral, for the width of the aisles had to be considerably less than that of the naves. The trick Wren uses there, of denying as it were the mass of the pillars, is unconvincing, as we could see later that morning. Crossed the Thames to Southwark and back, through the narrow alleys of the City to St Paul's. Climbed the dome for the view. The townscape of the City, which only ten years ago was dominated by the white towers of the Wren churches, is characterised today by high rises springing up on all sides. The large undeveloped

1 New Zealand House, Pall Mall, RMJM, completed 1963.

2 26 St James's Place, Denys Lasdun, completed 1960.





spaces of the period immediately following the war have almost all been built up, though sadly not in the way one might have wished, with the sole exception of the social housing estate at Golden Lane, which we saw later that day.

Afternoon: a stroll from St Paul's through Ludgate, the streets in the newspaper district between Fleet Street and the river and the Temple. Then the Law Courts; the great Gothic entrance hall by Street (c. 1860) convinces as no neo-Gothic building in Germany can, not excluding Schinkel's works. Müller-Rehm remarks that this shows precisely that Schinkel was the greater architect. Along the Strand past the two churches, Somerset House; Denys Lasdun's new offices for Peter Robinson;<sup>24</sup> Charing Cross and Trafalgar Square. From there, past Robert Matthew's office block at the bottom of Regent Street, still under construction, via St James's Square, to Lasdun's luxury block of flats on St James's Place [1]. Matthew's building<sup>25</sup> is the only one in London to eschew the usual curtain wall scheme with closely spaced mullions, in favour of large, unbroken glass surfaces in front of the concrete supports. Among us the dominant view was that this is to be welcomed as a one-off experiment, but that such glass surfaces are not practical on office buildings; on the contrary, the curtain wall should be replaced with somewhat wider pillars between the windows, since wall connections, cladding, etc. are always a weak point in the curtain wall. From a purely aesthetic point of view Matthew's building is undoubtedly pleasing, and the grand entrance hall will be spatially interesting. Unfortunately we could not go inside.

Nor could we enter Lasdun's luxury flats; the tenants do not permit visits [2]. We met Mr Addleson there, who had been working for Lasdun on this block and could tell us about it.<sup>26</sup> It is a block for millionaires. Maintenance alone costs £2,000 a year. The luxury consists in exquisite materials: blackened bronze for the window frames, polished granite for the balustrades, with first-class workmanship. A little-known contractor was chosen, who at first had grave doubts as to whether the building could be completed at all; but the company fell in love with the building during construction, and worked with an enthusiasm and willingness to experiment seldom seen among builders today. It is characterised by a connection between a high storey and three lower ones, which leads to very interesting differences in level in the plan, and the architect has succeeded in holding together this complex section in a calm total mass. The building overlooks Green Park – and therefore also the Buckingham Palace gardens – which was one of the reasons that made planning permission difficult; the other was the fear of erecting a modern building in this neighbourhood, and especially bang up against the pretty classical house next door.<sup>27</sup> The result has silenced both criticisms. The eighteenth and twentieth centuries make good neighbours precisely because of their uncompromising contrast, and the new building is the more elegant of the two. Mr Addleson showed us another block of flats erected by the Park at the same time, one whose indecisiveness

and poor detailing illustrate Lasdun's achievement. Posener said there was no house of this quality in Berlin, to which it should be immediately added that there is no other modern building of such quality in London either. Lasdun emerged from the Tecton Group (Lubetkin), but has been following his own path for about ten years, and is probably the most interesting architect here today.<sup>28</sup>

Mr Addleson then took us to see another work by Lasdun, a group of social housing estates in Bethnal Green [3], a slum area northeast of the City. The contrast could not be greater, and one had to admit that the architect's work was less convincing here; indeed, some suggested that this discovery put the luxury block's merit in a rather different light, simply because that kind of building is less important. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the architecturally perfect achievement of any kind of building is important. This group comprises an elongated building with maisonettes, that is, two-storey flats; a tower block, also with maisonettes; and a two-storey block with single-storey flats for the elderly.<sup>29</sup> The materials are interesting: very dark clinker bricks – as at St James's Place – and slabs of concrete with off-white granite aggregate, which is left to stand as permanent formwork in front of the slab of poured concrete. These are used only on the tower block, influenced by Louis Kahn.<sup>30</sup> It comprises a core containing the vertical circulation, from which four wings of maisonettes can be reached on bridges. We visited one of the flats, and it seemed narrow and labyrinthine. Müller-Rehm and Posener debated

3 Keeling House, Claredale Street, Bethnal Green, Denys Lasdun, completed 1957.



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whether the architect should seek to influence or even stipulate the choice of curtains in such buildings; Posener was against it. Mr Addleton said that a strong enough architecture obviates such intervention by the architect. We all agreed that the tower's architecture was strong enough for us to overlook the tenants' hideous curtains, but that this was obviously *not* the case in the low block of maisonettes and the old people's flats.

On the way home we visited the apartment complex in Golden Lane on the edge of the City. Here we found a wide variety of dwelling types unified in a group with several courtyards (architects Chamberlin, Powell and Bon). The group is entirely pleasant and interesting in appearance, but it was criticised on two points:

1. The connections between the different blocks were not always solved convincingly.
2. The outlay on 'art' was substantial and visible, especially in the wide stairwells and more generally in the design of the courtyard floors. The architects had devoted themselves a little too lovingly to the oft-neglected 'floodscape'. One walked on art, so to speak. In one place the courtyard has two levels, and the upper one is pierced by large round holes that let light in below; although these are of course surrounded by concrete balustrades, this arrangement is highly dangerous for children. We liked the high block with two-room flats of the access-balcony type on both sides of a central corridor.<sup>31</sup> The balustrades are clad in stained glass panels, and on the roof is a communal laundry room in the form of an abstract sculpture – more art! – the shape of which is meant to generate a constant flow of wind; but perhaps that is no more than a justification after the fact, that is, pseudo-

functionalism [4]. Better than this problematic building was the long, curved row of shops, one-storey apartments and maisonettes under segment-shaped roofs,<sup>32</sup> which separates the whole group from the road to the south; the use of unpainted timber on the exterior particularly stood out for us in London. The best weather protection for such timber is impregnation under pressure and then treatment with teak oil. Despite individual criticisms, our impression was that the group as a whole seemed thoroughly pleasant and lively, and that we had much to learn from it.

#### *Sunday, 18 March*

A day off. Everyone went for walks in different parts of town. Some bought a day ticket (six shillings) for the bus, with which they could change as often as they wanted.

Here everyone has to share his own diary. Müller-Rehm and I took a stroll through Westminster, starting at the National Gallery. We ambled down Whitehall and admired Inigo Jones's Banqueting Hall, then watched the Changing of the Guard at Horse Guards Parade. A policewoman kept order and put the gathered spectators in the four corners of the courtyard; this she did with the genial severity of an English aunt. Then a policeman appeared, to whom the aunt reported, and finally the two groups of Household Cavalry on their black horses, one group in blue tunics, the other in red, and the relief greatly entertained the spectators. 'Fifty years ago', said Müller-Rehm, 'we had this too.'<sup>33</sup>

We walked through St James's Park, with its beautiful waterfowl in the lake, to Queen Anne's Gate with houses from the Queen's time (c. 1700). This is where the Architectural Press has its offices. The



4 Roof detail of Great Arthur House, Golden Lane Estate, Chamberlin, Powell and Bon, completed 1957.

leading organs of the new architecture seem fond of nesting in the eighteenth century: the AP in Queen Anne's Gate, the Architectural Association in Bedford Square. Then to the churches: Westminster Abbey and St Margaret's, against the neo-Gothic backdrop of the Houses of Parliament (Barry and Pugin, c. 1840). Back to the National Gallery to see its astounding collection of paintings.

#### *Monday, 18 March*

Morning: rain. This prevented our planned stroll in Regent's Park. Nevertheless, we did see John Nash's Cumberland Terrace (after 1815), an aggregation of terraced houses into mock-palaces on the edge of the park; we even entered one of the empty flats and got a sense, if an imperfect one, of Nash's urban planning, which had surrounded the great park with such groups. At the entrance to the park we saw the Royal Institute of Physicians under construction (Lasdun).

Then we visited Denys Lasdun. Lasdun is a short, dark man with owlish eyelids, looking more French than English. He showed us his project for the University of Norwich, for 6,000 students, situated on the edge of a river valley. The student flats are on stepped terraces with stair towers at the back – again, Kahn's influence – like bastions in a zigzag pattern around the core of the complex, which chiefly contains the college buildings: administration, lecture halls, common rooms, etc. There is also a medical institute, hospital, technical institute, etc. in the Norwich area. The university is essentially a college, in the English sense (we later had the opportunity to see old English colleges at Cambridge). The staggered residential bastions let the whole group emerge softly out of the valley. Denys Lasdun uses this building to explain his idea of contemporary architecture. Two principles are dominant:

1. The use of prefabricated and prestressed components for the construction itself.
2. The concept of the growing and extendable, in contrast to the Renaissance idea of a building as a work of art to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken away. That idea is by no means limited to the Renaissance: it still dominates the work of the masters, Mies, Le Corbusier, even Gropius.<sup>34</sup>

Lasdun explains various possibilities in construction, for instance a building with large, undivided floor-spaces that rest on four hollow bodies at the corners, each containing stairs, pipes, ventilation. He explains the plan of the Royal Institute of Physicians that we saw under construction, and shows how the initial 'finished' design – finished in the Renaissance or Corbusier sense – was deliberately transformed into a growing one. He also clarifies his design technique: constant control through models showing only masses and constructions. Even the builder is shown only these not so 'beautiful' models. Lasdun has no draughtsmen in his office, only fully trained architects. His person and his work left a strong impression.

Afternoon at the Architectural Association school.<sup>35</sup> Reception by Dr Königsberger. Then we took part in the jury on the third and fifth year work: an

urban study of the town of Ashford in Kent and a hospital for Salisbury. The jury here consisted of the 'Yearmaster'<sup>36</sup> – the leader of the whole year group, not of our seminar, where students from different semesters work together – and some other faculty members: Arthur Korn, Dr Königsberger, and a few others, as well as two invited architects from the Architectural Association. One of them was Cadbury-Brown who, together with Sir Hugh Casson, designed the Royal College of Art that we later got to see with Casson.<sup>37</sup> The author of the plan explains his work and defends his ideas before the jury with complete impartiality. The jury is not convened to judge a finished design, but to examine the student's work on his plan to date, either accepting it or rejecting it – which hardly ever happens – in principle and advising the student on the kind of work still to be done. The members of the jury are by no means always of the same opinion, and there are lively arguments between them. In this way the student hears several opinions, although in the end the jury reaches a certain degree of unanimity.

We originally planned to attend several such meetings, but linguistic difficulties stood in our way. The students were nonetheless impressed with the method developed here, and I think everyone wished that we could attempt something along these lines as well.

Working in years – or semesters – instead of seminars is the norm in England and the British Commonwealth. It is virtually enforced by the educational programme of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). More on this in a moment. The AA has long had a programme for each year, such as:

- First year: foundations, with particular emphasis on structure (models), texture, colour, lighting, stereometry. The last, which plays a dominant role for us, is only one topic among others here.
- Second year: team planning of a village.
- Composition of individual buildings in the village by individual students.
- Third year: the same for a smaller urban task.
- Intermediate exam (practical architecture).
- Fourth year: urban planning on a metropolitan scale.
- Fifth year: diploma thesis.

The printed instructions given out for each work are incredibly detailed, although they do not stipulate the exact spatial layout; this is to be worked out by the team or student himself. Rather, what is required, and indeed supplied, are very precise analyses of urban structure, sociological and geological conditions, climate, demography, traffic, etc.

A former head of the school, Walter Segal, was critical: 'I left the school early – on friendly terms of course – because I found it impossible to work at a school where building construction was neglected.' I feel it necessary to at least relate this criticism, although I cannot judge to what extent it is justified.

Something should be said about the educational system of the RIBA. This institute seeks to guarantee professional protection by granting the architect the

title ARIBA (Associate of the RIBA) only after passing three exams. The three exams are: the intermediate (preliminary) exam after three years, the final (main) exam after five years and the exam in professional practice, which can be taken only after two further years of working in an architect's office. Although anyone can call themselves an architect in England, only a registered architect can sign application plans, and registration is through the Institute. The RIBA has established the educational plan for architects, whether the candidate wants to teach themselves or attend an architecture school. Only a few schools are exempt from this system; these are the so-called 'recognised schools', to which the AA school belongs. Only these schools have the right to establish their own curriculum and hold their own examinations, to which the Institute merely sends observers. The other schools have to abide by the Institute's programme more or less – there are degrees of recognition – and down to the last detail. The Institute publishes, every three years for instance, collections of tasks that must be based on the designs of the students. The exam is then held twice a year at the Institute itself, and the schools have to send their students there. The disadvantages of such centralisation are obvious, and I felt them particularly when I was informed that I would have to let my programmes, which began something like 'In a small town in Worcestershire [...]', be adopted in Malaya as well. I never did this, though, and the RIBA hasn't asked for it overseas since 1956. In addition, such a system blossoms, for instance in the correspondence courses, that is, schools that correct tasks in writing.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that one can see in a positive light the fact that the Institute deals with architectural education at all – perhaps its most important work. For one may grant that the RIBA, in the fifteen years I have known it as a teacher, has become considerably more flexible. In any case the Institute, for better or worse, plays a much more significant role in the life of the profession than, say, the BDA [Bund Deutscher Architekten].<sup>38</sup>

After the jury, we heard a lecture held in the school's tropical institute by the most important contemporary specialist in hospital architecture, Mr Weeks,<sup>39</sup> on his subject; we could admire the concentration with which Mr Weeks clarified the complex subject in just under an hour using some drawings and diagrams of the fundamentals.

#### *Tuesday, 19 March*

Excursion to Crawley New Town and Gatwick Airport. Before leaving for Crawley, we visited Eugene Rosenberg, from the firm of Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall, at its newly built offices near the City.<sup>40</sup> Yorke, who sadly died last year, was one of the first architects in England to practise the new Continental architecture in the early 1930s, and the firm has been for many years the leading major company in architecture today. What this office produces is not radical, maybe not even exciting, but it maintains a level of design and execution that is, it must be said, not seen in the large architecture firms in Berlin.

Rosenberg showed us designs for a school and also for a warehouse in Stevenage New Town designed by Felix Candela,<sup>41</sup> which kept our group so busy that we were considerably late to leave for Crawley. He also showed us around his exquisitely detailed office building, with paintings from his own collection: originals by Picasso, Chagall, Buffet, and others. On one point he agrees with Lasdun, whom he naturally holds in esteem: he too prefers more and more prefabricated parts in construction.

The best part of the trip to Crawley was driving through the Downs, the hills south of London; again we were lucky with the weather. At Crawley we were received at the Corporation<sup>42</sup> office by a man from the colonial service who is very proud of the new town, and showed us more than we had asked to see, including an all but hideous church. We entered one of the houses and shivered at the thought that none of the rooms but the living room could be heated, except, at most, with small electric stoves. In addition, the houses have steel windows, and simple ones at that. Our prior experience of the English lack of comfort in the German YMCA was confirmed here. The town is fragmented into several neighbourhoods separated by green belts. Most of the houses by far are terraced houses of five rooms – small rooms, as rooms are generally smaller in England than in Germany – and small but entirely adequate gardens. It was striking how little work the residents had done on these gardens, especially since gardening is an almost obligatory occupation for the Englishman, as one can see in the beautifully kept gardens in the London suburbs. The best thing is the centre, connected by a pedestrianised shopping street to the wide avenue that forms the old town centre. But here too the hard, dry style of the buildings was striking. The square is wide and seems empty, with no 'middle', nothing to give it any urban life.

Much progress has been made in England in the last decade, although I must say straight away that most of the houses in Crawley are less than ten years old. We had lunch in a new 'pub', that is, a bar with a restaurant, which had the same unhomey atmosphere as the other buildings. The modern pub is generally a problem not yet solved, and those who appreciate the old Victorian pub prefer to copy it. The leading journal, the *Architectural Review*, keeps its own pub in the basement, assembled from Victorian parts.<sup>43</sup>

Crawley's industrial zone is also disappointing, although it reveals an interesting detail: factories built in long rows and then rented out by window bays. In general one must say of Crawley that the brick colour is ugly, whether red or yellow (London stock brick), the details are flimsy and mechanical, the house plans are composed of small and not yet liveable cells, and the whole place is too spread out; green belts, which are a blessing in, say, London, are not needed here in the country. Moreover, it has been shown that Londoners moving out to these New Towns are not after idylls and hygiene at all; they want urbanity, and the most recent New Towns, which are not yet complete, especially Cumbernauld in Scotland, are trying, somewhat artificially, to



create that urban concentration in the countryside. It remains to be seen if this procedure will have greater success.

When I say 'success', I mean two things: first, the purely aesthetic aspect, and second, the well-being of the inhabitants. Probably the two cannot be separated. On both counts Crawley fails, as do the other New Towns around London: Harlow, Hemel Hempstead and even Stevenage, despite its considerably better planned centre. There is no denying that the New Towns have had some success: after all, they have drawn over 200,000 souls from London, and most of those people work in their New Town.

The New Towns mark a revival of the Garden City idea of Ebenezer Howard (*Tomorrow*, 1899); the idea, that is, that the wild growth of the big cities, and London in particular, could be curbed by founding towns that combined the advantages of city life and country life.<sup>44</sup> Garden cities would have their own agriculture, industry and centre; they were designed not to grow beyond a definite limit (Crawley has 60,000 inhabitants, Howard's ideal city had about 30,000, six of which were to be arranged around a larger centre of about 50,000 inhabitants, making up an urban group of 250,000 inhabitants total): finally, they stood on urban land, so that the land's increase in value benefited the community, not the investors. On our last day we had the chance to briefly visit the town Howard himself founded, Welwyn Garden City. The New Towns were envisaged in the framework of the 1944 Abercrombie Plan for Greater London, and begun soon after the war. They differ in certain respects from Howard's Garden City, but are the fruit of his thoughts. The experiment has not yet been abandoned, and for all our criticism of the execution of a place like Crawley, one must admit that it is

quite fruitful and is relevant to us. It was for this reason that the excursion was brought about. At the end our injured aesthetic sense enjoyed a recovery with Rosenberg's maternity hospital and the adjacent rows of doctors' houses, buildings of the quality that distinguishes the office.

Gatwick Airport, also designed by Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall, is a clean, modern concrete structure with steel and glass curtain walls. The concrete pillars are extraordinarily slender. We asked the airport official who was showing us around what complaints the administration had received from the public, and he named those 'bare' concrete pillars inside as the most common. It must be said that the contrast in colour between the *beton brut* pillars and the wall behind them is not well expressed: the walls should have been darker. Gatwick will soon more than double in size, and the one landing stage that leads out from the building into the airfield today will be joined by two more. These stages guide the passenger to and from the aircraft without the aid of airport buses.

We lost some time at Gatwick visiting the control tower, which required lengthy negotiations on the part of our guide. We therefore arrived late at the Royal Festival Hall in London, where we heard a symphony concert [5]. First impressions of the building idea: the opaque hall on supports in the middle of a glass 'container' is not expressed clearly enough on the exterior. The transparency is interrupted by very wide, fashionably (for 1951) patterned surfaces, behind which are fire escapes, toilets, etc. Another disadvantage is that one can check one's coat only on the ground floor. For instance, since we arrived a little late, we had to schlep our coats to the gallery corridors and then take them with us into the hall. The acoustics are



5 Royal Festival Hall, South Bank, LCC Architects Department led by Robert Matthew and Leslie Martin, completed 1951.

5



astounding, but they are too good: the listener does not miss the slightest nuance, no matter where he sits, but the sound is hard and lacks body, especially during the *forte*.<sup>45</sup> Despite its size – space for around 3,000 – the hall seems intimate. One is visually close to the orchestra everywhere. The use of wood in the interior dates to a period that is already past; buildings age quickly. It can already be done better: and the drawer-like boxes are an element foreign to the room. This was felt as early as 1951.<sup>46</sup> The foyer, which lies under the entire width of the hall – that is, under its amphitheatrically rising floor – and extends beyond the hall on several levels at the side, is just as convincing today as it was on the first day: some details aside, it has not aged. This is where the idea of the ‘stone in a glass container’ is expressed most clearly. The next morning we had the opportunity to deepen these impressions with a tour of the building.

#### *Wednesday, 20 March*

Morning: reception at the London County Council Architectural Office by Mr Geoffrey Horsfall. The Architectural Office of the LCC is one of the largest public architectural firms in the world, and perhaps the most successful. Besides the usual tasks, such as social housing and schools, it is responsible for special buildings, the most significant of which is the Royal Festival Hall (architect Sir Leslie Martin). Mr Horsfall is now the head of this ‘special works division’ after having headed the schools’ department for many years.<sup>47</sup>

The Royal Festival Hall, as it stands today, is a fragment.<sup>48</sup> Originally it was to be extended on the south side facing away from the river, and was to contain a second concert hall. The existing south side is temporary. Now the LCC has decided to house the smaller hall (for 1,200 people), plus an 800-person auditorium and an exhibition gallery, north of the Festival Hall in a special building near Waterloo Bridge, to enlarge the Festival Hall itself only a little, and to connect the whole complex with footbridges and squares at the level of the Festival Hall foyer. This pedestrian level is to extend on both sides: to the south around the planned National Theatre, and to the north as far as a hotel that will not be built by the LCC. Car traffic and parking spaces for the theatres and concert halls are at ground level, separated from pedestrian traffic. Work on these buildings has begun, and during our second visit to the Royal Festival Hall we were able to get an image of the state of affairs and of the site itself. We also saw a model of the entire complex there, but its massing did not seem convincing.

The halls and the gallery are planned in a sculptural group. Horsfall himself used this expression, and mentioned that Shell House, whatever its other qualities – and here he made a sour face – provided a calm backdrop behind it. Shell House (architect Howard Robertson) is indeed the ugliest large building in London that we have seen, and it is in a prominent position, behind and overshadowing the Festival Hall and the other planned halls. The so-called South Bank, that is, the

area inside the great curve of the Thames between County Hall and Waterloo Bridge, was a neglected part of the city before the 1951 Exhibition. Casson devised the excellent plan for the major Exhibition of 1951, from which only the Festival Hall remains as a permanent building. However, it was already intended to build the National Theatre to the south, and the LCC made a mass plan for the whole site, which, in the course of a major revitalisation of the south side of the river, would finally acquire the importance befitting its position opposite Whitehall. The plan also included a building for Shell, which has now been realised by Howard Robertson. It is a steel-framed building, which, like older American skyscrapers, has a stone shell with small windows. The protest against this design was, one can say, unanimous in the London architectural community. It could not stop the building. We are told that the draft had been presented to the Fine Art Commission – a body that oversees the preservation of London’s cityscape – and they had rejected it; but the architect was too powerful. Robertson is an old gentleman of great influence who advocates the ideas of the *École des Beaux Arts* in England. His pro-Beaux Arts *Principles of Architectural Design* was still the student textbook on architectural theory when I first began teaching in London.<sup>49</sup> Neither the book nor the author’s buildings strictly adhere to the *École des Beaux Arts*, which is perhaps the worst thing about them. Robertson is one of those reactionary architects who lack the courage to react fully, believing that the new architecture is not really so ‘bad’ since it too is subject to the well-known ‘eternal laws’. He considers himself the interpreter of this tamed sort of modern architecture. The result, as represented by Shell House, is embarrassing, and the fact that this huge structure stands in the heart of London is a disaster.

We also had opportunities elsewhere to see anachronisms – and sadly very visible ones – in the architectural image of the new London. For alongside Norman Shaw’s Scotland Yard building stands a ministry on the river: tall windows, pilasters, pediments, the work of another old gentleman, Vincent Harris.<sup>50</sup> It roughly faces the Festival Hall and dates from the same year, 1951. Harris received the RIBA Gold Medal that year, the Institute’s highest award. After all, Harris is an *honest* reactionary.

This was the only visit that day. The afternoon was free.

#### *Thursday, 21 March*

Morning: visit to the Roehampton and Brandon Estates with two architects from the LCC. Roehampton was built in the mid-1950s at the edge of the large public green space of Richmond Park, on a site previously occupied by the old gardens of Victorian villas. The magnificent trees in these gardens have been saved wherever possible and the whole estate now stands in the park on two gentle slopes. The first section contains eleven-storey point blocks, rows of two double-storey maisonettes and terraced houses; the second, slab blocks with maisonettes in six double floors.<sup>51</sup> At the bottom is a

library, a primary school, and two streets with bungalows for old people, a social club and a larger bungalow for the superintendent. Roehampton is the greatest achievement of the LCC and seems to have been successful in every respect: the urban planning, the layout of the flats, the detailing and the building materials. We visited the old people's club, where a jolly former squadron leader, almost eighty years old, received us very warmly; likewise the superintendent's house and part of the school. On the hill behind the second estate is a college under construction, and below, near the old people's streets, is a community centre. One criticism was raised: the shopping centre is small and a little lifeless. Here, too, the middle is missing.

Brandon is in a slum area in South London (Oval, Kennington), and it was not easy for us to do justice to this estate after Roehampton. It comprises a row of very high point blocks and maisonette houses in two double floors. Within the estate are some excellent 'terraces' from the second half of the last century, which the LCC maintains and repairs.

Afternoon: another architect from the LCC guided us through the East End, starting with Tower Bridge and the Docks. We saw the market and shopping centre of Poplar in the Borough of Stepney (1954, architect Frederick Gibberd), which, after Roehampton and Brandon, struck us as very inchoate, even a little basic. Again we became aware of the progress of English architecture in the 1950s. Admittedly, even these buildings seemed progressive compared to the anachronism of Adrian Scott's Catholic church of the same year.<sup>52</sup> The Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall school, on the other hand, still works well.<sup>53</sup> I had mentioned it to Rosenberg, knowing we would see it, but he rebuffed me, saying 'But that was so long ago.' In reality, however, this

building has aged less than any other in the centre. Poplar remains historically significant as an early attempt to create a pedestrian shopping street and market. We then headed west, and the extent of the redevelopment undertaken by the LCC in this slum area was most impressive. After these visits, which gave us a definite impression of the gigantic work that the LCC organised, it would really have been advisable to see the architect's office in person – as originally intended. But here, as before, we suffered from the lack of time that our brief visit imposed on us. Some HBK students have already worked in the LCC, and Matthies, who graduated last autumn, is going to work there. One would like to advise more students to do so. But now the LCC's fate is uncertain: it will most likely merge into a larger entity, the Greater London Council, and it looks as if in this Greater London – the London of the Abercrombie Plan – the planners will have considerably less possibility of impact than before. We heard the opinions of several architects – Thomas Peatfield, Trevor Dannatt – who bitterly lament the proposed move and accuse the government of wanting to put an end to the successful work of the LCC for party political reasons. (The government is Conservative, the LCC Labour, roughly corresponding to the CDU and SPD.<sup>54</sup>)

#### *Friday, 22 March*

Morning: Meeting with Alexander Gibson in the post office on South Molton Street (near Bond Street) remodelled by Sir Hugh Casson.<sup>55</sup> Stroll with Gibson to the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square, by Eero Saarinen [6]. We were able to go inside. Müller-Rehm and several students murmured: 'Shades of Speer'. That verdict does not entirely do the building justice. It can at least be said that the construction with the diagrid and prefabricated window frames



6 Façade of American Embassy, Grosvenor Square, Eero Saarinen, completed 1960.

6

on the front is original and competent; but there is something pompous and cold about it, and the travertine-covered platform on which it stands does not mollify this impression. At the same time, the plan is weak from a Beaux Arts point of view, which is relevant here: such a monumental entrance ought to lead to more than the small atrium with the 'swimming pool', as we called the shallow basin of the fountain inside.

Meeting with Sir Hugh Casson in the Time and Life Building, whose interior decoration he designed ten years ago. These rooms also appear very dated today; Casson himself felt this keenly and was a little embarrassed to show it to us. After all, the workmanship of the details is very fine, but it is just arts and crafts.

Afternoon: Sir Hugh Casson guides us through the Royal College of Art near the Albert Hall, Kensington. The building is designed by Cadbury-Brown and Casson. The second section, which contains the refectory, common rooms, and offices for the tutors, is not yet complete. The building with the workshops, meeting rooms, and administration is operational. We met several masters at work. The most interesting point was a conversation with Professor Russell (furniture, especially chairs).<sup>56</sup> There are excellent chairs from his workshop in the meeting rooms. Only the applied arts department is housed here; painters and sculptors work in another building. The building itself made us jealous.

From there Casson took us to his planned extension of the old Holland House, an Elizabethan country house badly damaged in the war. It is now a youth hostel, and Casson has juxtaposed the old restored Elizabethan Renaissance (Flemish influence) building with a modern block, connecting the two with a low wing. The experiment is a complete success.

Sir Hugh then took us to the Imperial Institute's nearby large exhibition centre [7], a beautiful building: a tent-like roof is held up by two sloping supports. The way in which this large building is connected to smaller administration blocks is unfortunate, and inside the impression of space is spoiled by the many brightly coloured galleries.<sup>57</sup> Here, Casson, who had kindly made himself available to us for the best part of the day, made his excuses. It was rather remarkable: he suddenly shook my hand and was gone before we could thank him properly.

#### *Saturday, 23 March*

Outing to Cambridge. On the way we stopped for a moment at Audley End, one of the finest country houses of the early seventeenth century: large, unadorned window surfaces make this building remarkably modern in effect, just as the best buildings of the Elizabethan Renaissance, that is, the least Flemish influenced, are somewhat timeless. On the other hand, its era is fixed by the enforced symmetry, which does not correspond to the old English design of the floor plan. Magnificent location in a river valley, at the end of a broad meadow.

Sadly we did not meet Sir Leslie Martin in Cambridge, although he had promised to receive us at the architecture school. He was in Portugal. Instead we saw his partner, Mr Wilson,<sup>58</sup> who first showed us the extension to the school he had designed, a sympathetic building of reclaimed bricks that illustrates the latest phase of the new architecture in England.<sup>59</sup> We later saw a dormitory in a similarly sturdy style designed by Martin, the architect of the Festival Hall.<sup>60</sup> The student bedrooms are built in three stepped terraces around a courtyard. In the



7 Commonwealth Institute, now Design Museum, Kensington High St, RMJM, completed 1962.

7



middle of the courtyard can be seen the upper part of the students' breakfast room, which is lit by a skylight. The backs of the terraces are supported by brick pillars that are deliberately made a little heavy. The student 'common room' is outstanding, especially the wood-framed windows set back deep between strong pillars, looking out onto a park. The detailing is solid and extremely simple.

We took a walk, unfortunately too short, through Cambridge: Queens College, Kings College with the glorious chapel, Trinity with Wren's library. Hilbertz found too brutal the way the wooden rood screen (Italian Renaissance) cut through the King's College chapel, and a lively discussion ensued as to whether it had been intended as a single or a double space: congregation and choir. The professors and most students were of the latter opinion, pointing out that the internal layout differs in the two parts. A visit to St Albans Cathedral on Monday, which features an even taller masonry screen from the Middle Ages, confirmed our view.

The unique layout of Cambridge, where the colleges are all lined up along the River Cam with the beautiful gardens beyond – the 'Backs' – along with the abundance of beautiful details and especially the structure of the college itself, which does not exist in Germany, left a strong impression. It is only a pity that we came during the holidays. Cambridge was empty.

In the evening the Architectural Association students held a dance party in some design rooms in the basement of a Bedford Square house opposite the school. It was a 'bottle party', that is, apart from beer, which flowed freely, all the guests brought drinks. It was packed, the band was good, and it was fun. Our students had made contacts on their first visit to the school, and the AA students welcomed us in a most friendly and hospitable manner. A reciprocal visit is planned for July or December. The only advantage to December is the fact that the Philharmonie will be finished by then – an important reason to postpone our English friends' trip.<sup>61</sup>

#### *Sunday, 24 March*

Free day for the students to walk around London and visit the museums. Here everyone must share their personal diary.

My Sunday was very pleasant, as a friend, the architect Thomas Peatfield, drove both professors and the two female students in his car through Surrey and Sussex. We had glorious weather. First we saw Chiswick House, Lord Burlington's 'Villa Rotonda', then the beautiful country estate south of Guildford, between Haslemere and Chiddingfold, and finally came to Chichester, where we visited the cathedral, an intricate mass of old grey limestone. Most interesting inside is the view of the rooms in the two west towers, and the way in which the original Norman building has been modified in a

Gothic style. Fine Lady Chapel behind the choir. In the south transept the astounding relief of the early twelfth century – some authorities give it an even earlier date – the Raising of Lazarus. Here can be seen what treasures Henry VIII and Cromwell destroyed.

From Chichester we drove to Hayling Island to see the sea. Müller-Rehm and Christa Franke even waded in, despite the bitter cold.

#### *Monday, 25 March*

Outing to the Building Research Station in Garston near Watford. Arriving at Watford early, we used the time to see St Albans. The cathedral with the crossing tower made of Roman bricks from the old Verulamium, and its very early interior, started almost immediately after the Conquest, made a great impression. Here even Hilbertz declared himself a convert to English architecture.

Next to the austere majesty of the Norman structure, the early Gothic ('Early English') parts appear fragile and complex. The visit to Garston was disappointing. We heard a lecture on Modular Coordination, which I'm afraid most of us failed to understand for purely linguistic reasons, and then we were taken through some of the experimental workshops.<sup>62</sup> The most interesting thing we saw were magnetic models with which one can very quickly build, for example, apartment plans. Curiosity was aroused by a toilet waste pipe of transparent plastic.

We drove back via Welwyn Garden City. There is an astonishing difference in the quality of the town planning, and also in the style of the houses, between this second town by the founder and the New Town of Crawley that we had seen. The greater poverty of Crawley is not only a poverty of means, but a poverty of thought and love.

#### *Tuesday, 26 March*

Departure. The trip went perfectly smoothly. We have seen many interesting things in a short time, too short, and it will take the students considerably longer to master their impressions and organise them into an overall picture. Probably only a few have such a picture. Most were astonished at the huge differences between the English town and English life and those on the Continent. I have the impression that the majority reaction is positive: they leave England with the wish to return. The encounters with people were especially agreeable, not only with the architects and students who welcomed us, but also with the 'man in the street'. London – the City, Westminster, the Thames, parks, Bedford Square, Whitehall, etc. – made the strongest impression. Of the new things we saw, the work of the LCC was the most impressive, despite the fact that we hardly got to know at all its most important division, the schools. The trip was undoubtedly a success.

## Notes

1. Akademie der Kunst (AdK), Julius Posener archive, 3/2/3330.
2. Posener's 1948 naturalisation certificate is in London, The National Archives (TNA) HO 334/221/47957. A draft autobiography also exists at TNA 2012.27, but I have been unable to consult it.
3. AdK, Posener 3/2/3295/4
4. See Jill Posener, 'Charmian', in Rosa Ainley, *Death of a Mother: Daughters' Stories* (London: HarperCollins, 1994), pp. 202–11, for her daughter's rather intense memories.
5. Julius Posener, *Fast so alt wie das Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Siedler, 1990), pp. 284–6.
6. 'The First Half Century', *Architectural Review*, January (1947), 26–36 (p. 30).
7. Posener would later develop his thoughts on anonymous architecture, now responding to Bernard Rudofsky: see 'Anonyme Architektur' (1978), in his *Aufsätze und Vorträge 1931–1980* (Braunschweig and Wiesbaden: Vieweg, 1981), pp. 359–61.
8. AdK, Posener 3/2/3307.
9. [Denys Lasdun and J. H. V. Davies], 'Thoughts in Progress: Seagram versus Shell', *Architectural Design*, December (1956), 377–781.
10. February 1952: AdK, Posener 3/2/3295/5.
11. Julius Posener, 'Choisy', *Architectural Review*, October (1956), 235–6.
12. June 1952: AdK, Posener 3/2/3295/10, p. 15.
13. Gerhard Kallmann, 'The Way Through Technology: America's Unreleased Potential', *Architectural Review*, Dec (1950), 407–14. Kallmann, best known today for Boston City Hall, was of considerable interest to the British avant garde in the 1950s; Banham, for instance, cited his theory of 'action architecture' as a parallel to the New Brutalism. For the white boxes, see, for instance: Oliver Wainwright, "'The Countryside is Where the Radical Changes Are": Rem Koolhaas Goes Rural' <<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/feb/11/rem-koolhaas-rural-countryside-the-future-guggenheim>> [accessed 23 May 2022].
14. April 1952 lecture, AdK, Posener 3/2/3295/6, p. 12.
15. AdK, Posener 1/1421/2.
16. Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, 2nd edn (New York, NY, 1970), pp. 82–3 on Poelzig, and pp. 167–83 on Mendelsohn.
17. AdK, Posener 2/2/3433. For the original article, see Rayner Banham, 'Hermann in Eden', *New Society*, 9 December (1971), 1154–5.
18. 1907–99. A friend of Posener from his interwar student days, and a fellow student of Hans Poelzig; the two had collaborated on *Wohnbauten von heute* (1955). With Gerhard Siegmann, he built Klopstockstraße 2, a residential point-block in the Hansaviertel, Berlin, for the 1957 Interbau showcase. For an affectionate description of Müller-Rehm, see Posener, *Fast so alt*, pp. 148–9.
19. Wolf Hartmut Hilbertz, 1938–2007; he would become the most notable architect of the students on this trip.
20. 1935–2010. Specialist on hospital architecture: see his 'Infame Räume oder: Die toten Vögel von Lyon', in *Krankenhausgeschichte heute: was heißt und zu welchem Ende studiert man Hospital- und Krankenhausgeschichte*, ed. by Gunnar Stollberg and others (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011), pp. 271–97, with his biography at pp. 338–9.
21. William Allen, 1914–98, on whom, see: Patrick Zamarian, 'William Allen and the "Scientific Outlook" in Architectural Education, 1936–66', *Architectural History*, 64 (2021), 379–402.
22. An AA school committee memo from 31 December 1962 looks forward to the visit of Posener in autumn; whether this is mistaken or whether the visit was moved forward remains unclear.
23. Not the current building, which opened in 1973 on the same site, but rather Lancaster Hall, a Victorian complex occupied by the YMCA since 1959.
24. 65 Strand, built in 1959 and demolished in 1996.
25. New Zealand House.
26. Lyall Adleson.
27. Spencer House, built by John Vardy and James Stuart in 1758.
28. Posener's essay 'Knots in the Master's Carpet', *Architectural Design*, December (1951), 354–6, criticises the pattern making in Lubetkin's estates. But in an undated [1954] letter to Lasdun, RIBA Archives, Lasdun papers, LaD/3/4, he praises the Hallfield Estate.
29. Bradley House (1959) and Keeling House (1957), Claredale Street. The former was demolished in 2005; the latter has been converted, almost inevitably, to luxury housing.
30. The aggregate used for the Keeling House concrete was in fact Portland stone.
31. Great Arthur House.
32. Crescent House.
33. At the Neue Wache, Unter den Linden, Berlin.
34. Compare Richard Llewelyn Davies, 'Endless Architecture', *Architectural Association Journal* (1952), 106–13, which puts Mies's recent work at Chicago in the 'endless' or extendable category.
35. On this rather turbulent period in the AA's history, see: Patrick Zamarian, *The Architectural Association in the Postwar Years* (London: Lund Humphries, 2020), pp. 123–30.
36. At the time the third-year master was Roy Landau; the fifth-year master was David Oakley. Other staff, beyond those mentioned by Posener, included Tony Eardley, Patrick de Saulles, John Winter, Roman Halter, and Hermann Senkowsky.
37. H. T. Cadbury-Brown (1913–2009), a member of MARS, who had worked with Ernő Goldfinger and Frederick Gibberd.
38. A professional association founded in 1903.
39. John Weeks (1921–2005), a close collaborator of Richard Llewelyn Davies.
40. 2 Greystoke Place, off Fetter Lane, completed in 1961.
41. On this remarkable building, see Marisela Mendoza, 'Felix Candela's First European Project: The John Lewis Warehouse, Stevenage New Town', *arq: Architectural Research Quarterly*, 19:2 (2015), 149–60.
42. The Crawley Development Corporation had dissolved in 1962.
43. The Bride of Denmark, designed in 1946 by the journal's editor, Hubert de Cronin Hastings.
44. In 1972 Posener would publish an essay on this topic, 'Ebenezer Howard', repr. in *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, pp. 230–43.
45. On the acoustics, see the contemporary report by the Hall's sound engineers W. A. Allen and P. H. Parkin, 'Acoustics and Sound Exclusion', *Architectural Review*, June (1951), 377–84.
46. J. M. Richards, 'Criticism', *Architectural Review*, June (1951), 355–8 (p. 357): 'the abruptly protruding shapes are confusing and appear uncomfortably crowded together. The contour

- of the balcony fronts, which are of fibrous plaster, is also a little heavy, as though they were an external feature rather than part of the furniture of an otherwise elegantly detailed interior.'
47. 1915–86; appointed to the special works division in 1959. Horsfall later worked on major brutalist projects in South London, such as the Crystal Palace Recreation Centre and the Thamesmead Estate.
48. An unpublished 1953 essay on the Festival Hall, AdK, Posener 3/1/3305, contains a fuller assessment: Posener is generally positive about the building's modernity, but criticises the fussy patterning of the sides and the flatness of its planes, which have already started to weather poorly.
49. 1948. Robertson's *The Principles of Architectural Composition* was first published in 1924 and reissued until 1963.
50. The Ministry of Defence.
51. Alton East (1958) and Alton West (1959), respectively.
52. SS Mary and Joseph, Upper North Street.
53. Susan Lawrence (now Lansbury Lawrence) School, Cordelia Street. Completed in 1951.
54. The Christian Democratic Union and the Social Democratic Party, respectively.
55. 1960.
56. Sydney Gordon Russell, 1892–1980.
57. The Commonwealth Institute, by RMJM, completed in 1962.
58. Colin St John Wilson, 1922–2007.
59. 1958, with Alex Hardy.
60. Harvey Court, Gonville and Caius College, completed in 1962.
61. By Hans Scharoun, opened in October 1963.
62. Another document, AdK, Posener 1/1421/2, records that the group met George Atkinson, the head of the Building Research Station.

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The author declares none.

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