

Edward Durell Stone Dead at 76; Designed Major Works Worldwide

By The Associated Press

Edward Durell Stone, one of the nation's premier architects, who designed major buildings worldwide, including the Kennedy Center in Washington, died yesterday at Roosevelt Hospital in New York City after a brief illness, a family friend said. He was 76 years old.

Mr. Stone, who married three times, is survived by his wife, Violet Campbell Moffat, their daughter, Fiona, and three sons from previous marriages, Edward Durell Stone Jr., Robert Vandiver Stone, and Benjamin Hicks Stone III.

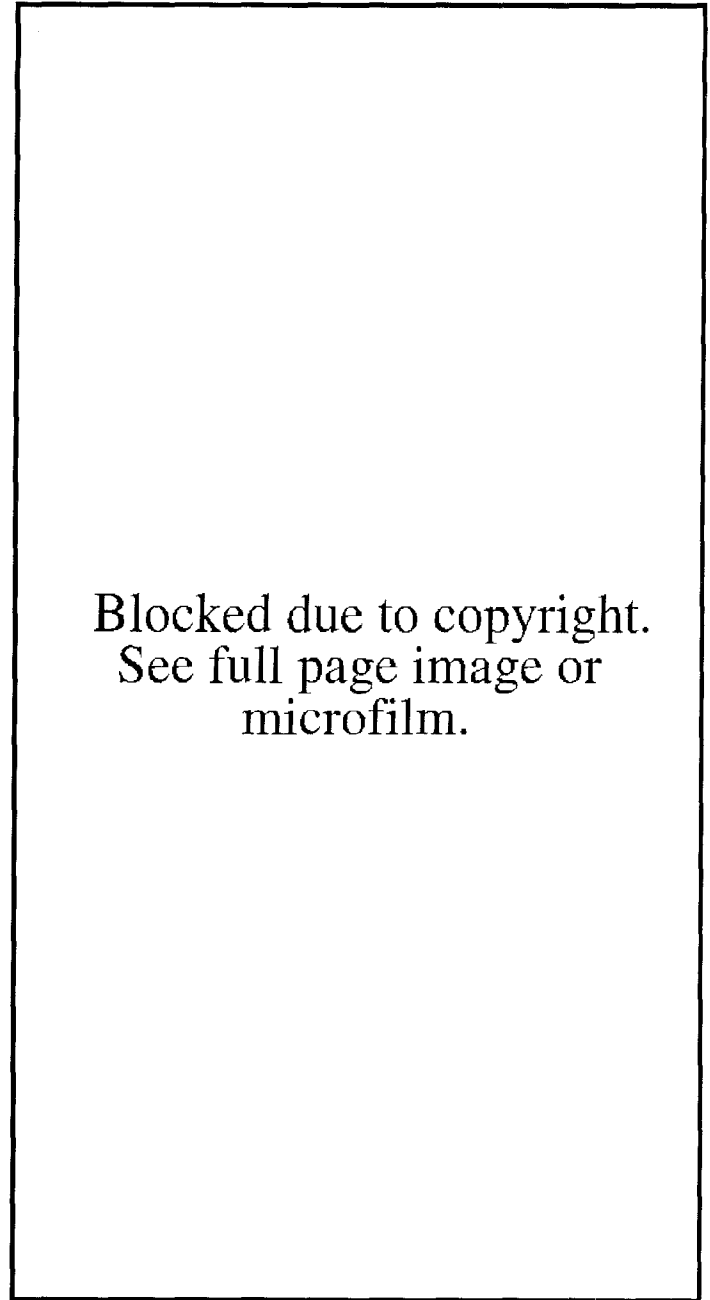
A Reversal of Direction

By PAUL GOLDBERGER

Edward Durell Stone's career as an architect was marked by a dramatic reversal of direction. He gave up a position as one of America's leading advocates of the International Style just as that austere modern style was gaining wide public acceptance, and he began instead to evolve a personal style that was lush and highly decorative, the very opposite of the International Style.

The switch came in the early 1950's, when Mr. Stone, who was born in 1902, was more than 50 years old, and it brought the architect a degree of commercial success that few of his fellow pro-

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Edward Durell Stone in a photograph made some years ago.

*Tom - be warned -
this article has
many of Goldberger's
generalizations, projections
& some info. - Mike*

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European

The design of the United States Embassy Building in New Delhi by Edward D. Stone, with its sharply detailed facades, was a dramatic reversal of his earlier style and was one of the best-known pieces of American architecture in 1950's.

Edward Durell Stone, Renowned Architect, Dies at 76

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professionals could match. He had received critical approval for the sharply detailed glass and concrete facades of his early houses, but they led to few major civic projects except for the original section of the Museum of Modern Art, which Mr. Stone designed with Philip Goodwin in 1939.

But when his new style made its debut in 1954 with the United States Embassy in New Delhi, a formal, white-columned box enclosed by an ornate concrete grille and surrounded by fountains, it became one of the best-known pieces of American architecture of the decade, and it led to such major buildings as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, the Huntington Hartford Gallery of Modern Art in New York, the General Motors Building in New York and the State University of New York campus at Albany.

The grille was, for a while, so ubiquitous a Stone trademark that the architect even used it on a gasoline station at John F. Kennedy Airport, a building that looks like a miniature version of the New Delhi Embassy, and when he renovated a brownstone for himself on East 64th Street in 1956, the new facade consisted entirely of a four-story high Stone concrete grille.

Mr. Stone once wrote that he was wary of what he called the "dubious activity" of giving architects stylistic labels, but he conceded that his work could be called "romanticist." He felt that his style, by its use of concrete, brick and stone, conveyed "the assurance of permanence," and he rejected the aluminum and glass style of his early years as an approach that "bears more resemblance to the latest model automobile, doomed to early obsolescence."

Mr. Stone's late work was unashamedly conservative; his lavish use of marble, rich woods and delicate tracery separated his buildings from the work of other architects, such as Louis Kahn, who joined him in his repudiation of the International Style. Mr. Stone sought not to go beyond the International Style but to turn the clock back to a personal kind of modern architecture that, as he put it, would "follow a grander and more ageless pattern."

Edward Durell Stone was born in Fayetteville, Ark., on March 9, 1902. He attended the University of Arkansas there and worked as an architectural apprentice at the office of Henry R. Shepley, a distinguished Beaux-Arts architect in Boston.

From 1925 to 1927 Mr. Stone — who never received a college degree until his later years, when an honorary doctorate was conferred upon him by Arkansas — attended the architecture schools of Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1927 he was awarded the Rotch traveling scholarship, a coveted architectural prize that permitted him to spend two years of expense-paid travel abroad.

He went to Europe, where he had his first glimpse of modern architecture, and shortly after his return in 1929 settled in New York and took a job with the consortium of architects designing Rockefeller Center. There he worked on what was to be considered his first major early achievement, the design of the interiors of Radio City Music Hall.

First House in Mt. Kisco

Mr. Stone became deeply involved in the growing modern movement in New York, and in 1933 designed his first house, a starkly modern concrete and glass-blocked estate for Richard H. Mandel in Mount Kisco. The boxy white house with strip windows and a semicircular glass-block dining area attracted wide attention, and Mr. Stone was soon called to design a compound for Mr. and Mrs. Henry R. Luce at Mepkin Plantation in South Carolina.

His next major commission was the Museum of Modern Art, and at the same time Mr. Stone designed a house in Old Westbury, for A. Conger Goodyear, the museum's president. The house's strong horizontal lines and large roof overhangs displayed a certain Frank Lloyd Wright influence that was to become even more marked in Mr. Stone's later buildings.

In 1946 came the last significant project of Mr. Stone's early career, the El Panama Hotel in Panama City. A high white slab oriented to water breezes, the hotel's bedrooms opened to balconies, and its design became a prototype for hotels throughout the world.

The hotel was followed by a number of houses that continued Mr. Stone's modernist leanings but indicated the increasing influence of Wright — his buildings became lower, more horizontal, and relied more on the use of wood.

In 1953, Mr. Stone wrote, "My life took a new and highly significant turn." By then single — he had been married in 1930 and divorced in 1950 — he sat next to Maria Elena Torchio, a fashion writer, on a transatlantic flight, and proposed to her before the plane landed. They were married not long afterward, and Mrs. Stone proceeded to make clear to her husband her preference for a more ornate architecture.

Her influence was felt in his first major

project of the 1950's, the United States Embassy at New Delhi. The building's rectangular shape and temple-like form, its gold-leaf columns, surrounding fountains and reflecting pool, not to mention its concrete grillework, epitomized Mr. Stone's new way of looking at architecture. He was to repeat the elements of New Delhi in a number of subsequent projects, including a round version for the United States Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair of 1950.

His work generally became more romantic and more highly embellished as time went on. In the 1960's Stone designs appeared at both the southwest and southeast corners of Central Park. The building on the southwest corner, originally the Huntington Hartford Gallery of Modern Art and later the New York Cultural Center, is an eccentric marble box on delicate legs with arches at top and bottom and characteristic Stone grillework tracery up and down the sides. The building on the southeast corner, General Motors, is a 50-story shaft with a sunken plaza, with bay windows and a marble facade instead of metal to emphasize Mr. Stone's distance from the Miesian steel-and-glass towers of Park Avenue.

Critics generally disliked the building, criticizing not only its marble and its chandeliers — one writer called it a "high-rise Schrafft's" — but also its setback from Fifth Avenue. But by the late 1960's Mr. Stone was becoming less concerned about pleasing architectural congenescent.

Kennedy Center Controversy

His design for the Kennedy Center in Washington, completed in 1971, was perhaps the most controversial Stone project, however. The enormous marble building resembled the New Delhi Embassy, but was blown up to vast scale, with three auditoriums connected by a single formal hall decorated with red carpeting.

Mr. Stone's large office at 745 Fifth Avenue remained active throughout the late 1960's and 1970's. Among his other major projects were the headquarters of the National Geographic Society in Washington; the North Carolina State Legislative Building at Raleigh; the 80-story Standard Oil (Indiana) Building in Chicago, which was a larger version of the General Motors tower, and the Garden State Arts Center in Holmdel.