



A

Residence of  
**Mable Dodge Luhan**  
 Taos, New Mexico

One of the most famous domiciles in all of New Mexico is the rambling, hospitable and thoroughly engaging house that Mabel Dodge Luhan designed and had built over a fifteen year period in Taos. Beginning in 1922 with a simple New Mexico farmhouse of four rooms, the structure grew over the years to a complex structure 450 feet in length, strung out along the bank of an irrigation ditch and organized around a magnificent entrance court. Although designed as a unit, the main group comprises two separate residences, the smaller of which, to the south, was later bought by the Taos artist Victor Higgins. Actually Mrs. Luhan's building activities did not stop here but continued with five other smaller houses (not illustrated here) distributed around a low-lying *ejido* or common meadow.

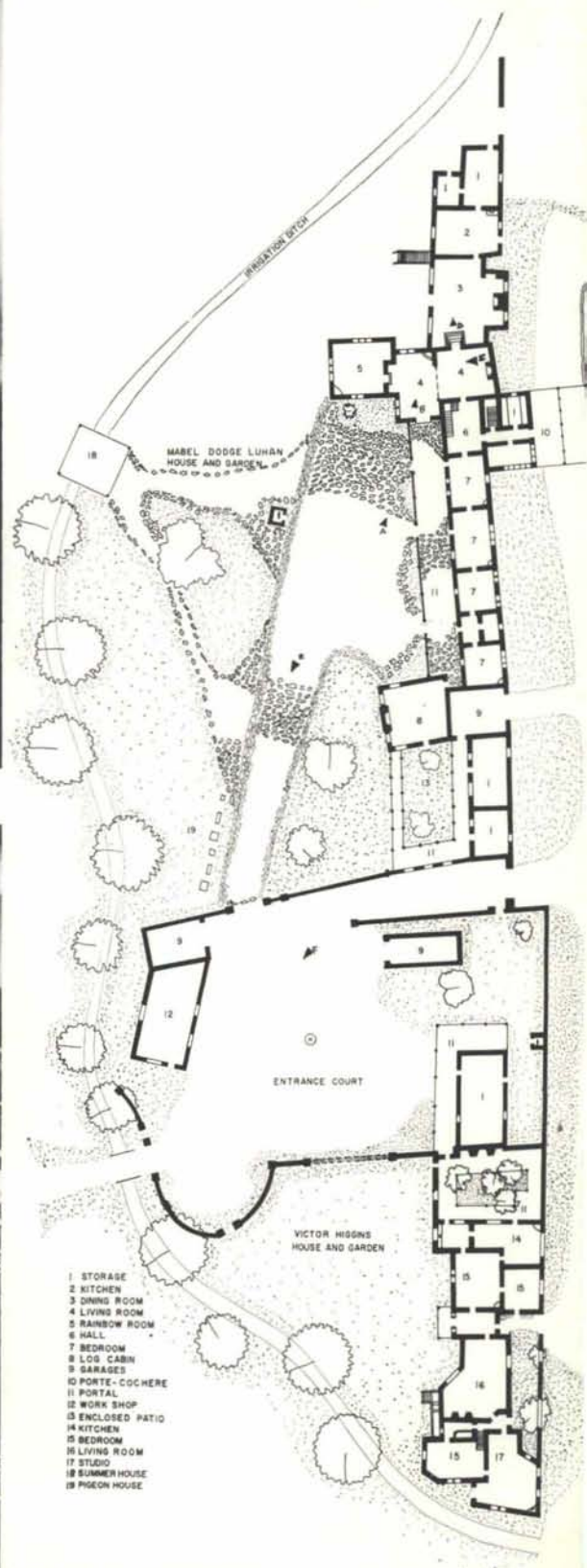


B





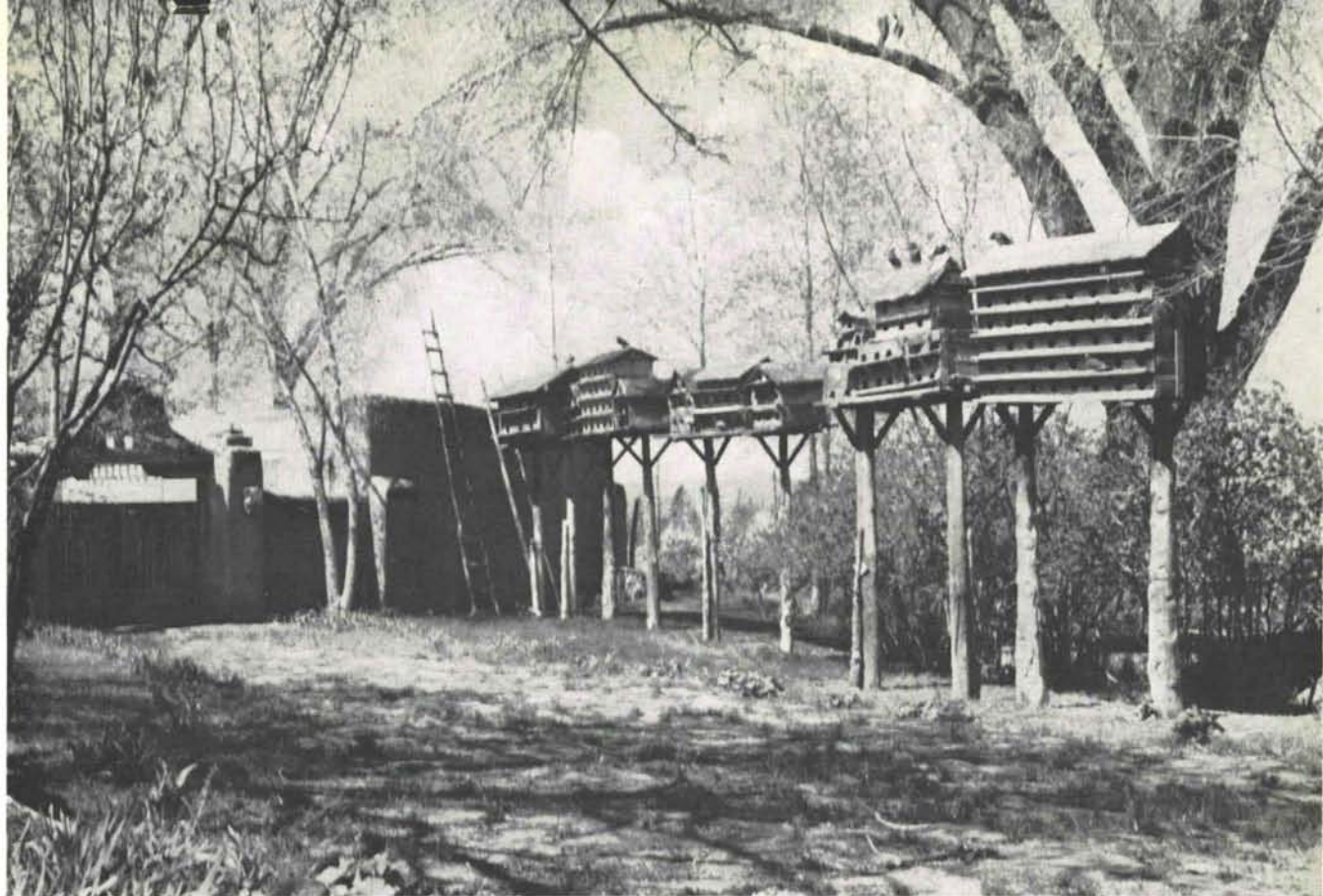
C



Photographs — Bainbridge Bunting  
Photographic prints — Mary Utsinger  
Sketch plan — Bartlett Gilbert

D





E

The work of an amateur architect, which results inevitably in certain makeshifts, the design is still of extraordinary interest. Bits from old New Mexico houses or elements brought from Old Mexico or Europe are incorporated into this adobe structure alongside the simplest of stock mill work or new doors carved by New Mexican craftsmen. The design likewise fuses elements derived from Pueblo and Spanish

Colonial architecture or gently recalls Tuscan villas such as the one Mrs. Luhan restored prior to World War I. Yet the extraordinary thing is the way in which these disparate elements and inspirations have been fused into a harmonious design by the builder. The relation of house and gardens is also effectively handled. Mrs. Luhan's architectural work is deserving of a serious study.—*Bainbridge Bunting*



F