

*Excerpt from an interview before he retired. C. G. Bostwicks, predictions on the future of roofing and architecture.*

## **QUALITY ROOFER SEES FUTURE IN MORE SLATE AND TILE WORK**

By O. J. Marr

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As a veteran master roofer, C. G. Bostwick, founder in 1902 of the Hartford, Conn, firm that bears his name, has bent with many blows of the wind. "As a lover of beauty in his craft he looks forward to the wind of taste that will blow fine slate and tile work back into fashion. ...flat roofs have taken the place of slate and handsome metal cornices are scorned by the new architects."

Having installed or repaired many institutional jobs such as slate roofs for Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY, Williams College, and the Phillips Academies in Andover, Mass., and Exeter N.H., Mr. Bostwick has good cause to regret that the beauty of a new building is seldom expressed in its roof any more, and that built-up roofing is the unflattering result of economy.

Now that he is looking forward to retirement, Mr. Bostwick has made sure that the firm would continue as a Hartford and New England Institution. In February, 1952, the business was incorporated, and two brothers, Dexter F. Ordway, and Robert S. Ordway were taken in. The founder is confident the two young men will continue his policies of quality and standards, as they face and meet the challenges of progress and change.

Mr. Bostwick, although philosophical about the changes from the days when a great many institutional and residential buildings were featured by an attractive roof, regrets the inevitable loss of skills that will ensue when old houses are abandoned. The beauty of a house used to rest in the color distribution and special features such as patterns, valley work, as well as ornamental sheet metal work. English architects were especially alert to the possibilities of a decorative roof and cornice.

Large residences are not being built today. "The Prospect Avenue mansions, which cost \$300,000.00 to build before World War I, are now being sold for \$50,000.00, or are a drug on the market, with owners being eaten up by taxes. Many are being converted to multiple dwellings. You don't see any owners trying to maintain the beauty of the roof on those buildings," Mr. Bostwick observed. The whole new architectural style is toward flat roofs and the elimination of cornices, either for economy or on aesthetic principle, or both.

He hopes he will have the call to pass on his lore of fifty years' gathering, on the installation and repair of slate and tile roofs. "Sooner or later men choose beauty over economy," is his belief, and there are few things more beautiful in the construction line than a variegated slate or tile roof, according to C.G. Bostwick.

*We think Mr. Bostwick would be pleased with the appearance of Prospect Avenue today.*