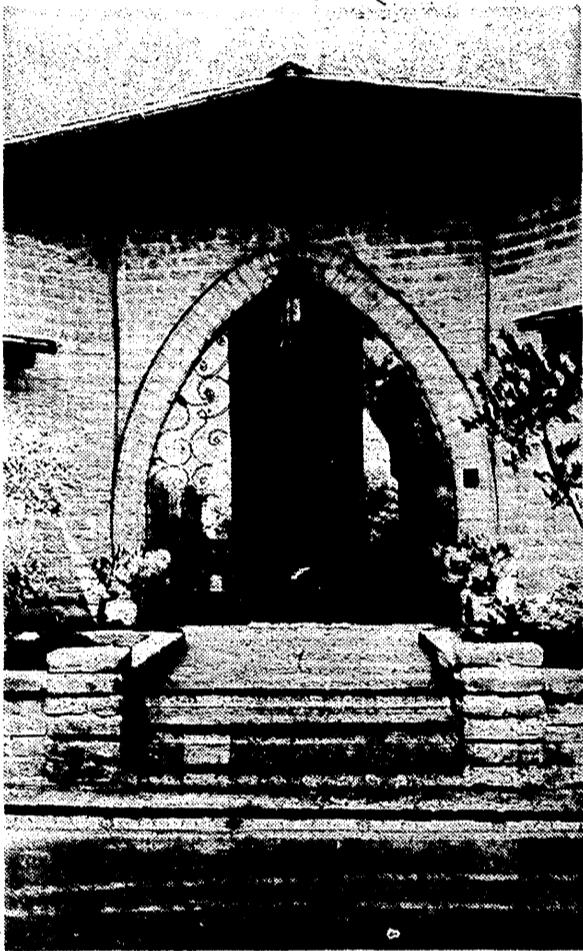


## Adobe Homes Revive Warm Rustic Charm



**ADOBE PLUS IMAGINATION:** Entry arch, with panels of glass and wrought iron, introduce visitors to adobe dwelling of Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Dorgan, recently completed in Rancho Santa Fe.



**MADE FROM THE EARTH:** Appreciation of the warm, rustic charm of adobe, a building block made from heavy clay soil, is leading to a growing revival of adobe construction of contemporary houses,

sparked by designs reminiscent of the Spanish and early California styles. This new home of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Freeland is nearing completion in Rancho Santa Fe. Thick adobe walls remain ex-

posed on both interior and the exterior. Front patio with swimming pool will be shape of amphitheater, framed with walls of adobe. Contractor is Larry Weir of Escondido.

# Ancient Blocks Build To New Popularity

By CLYDE V. SMITH  
The San Diego Union's Real Estate and Building Editor

Adobe!  
There's something old, something romantic, something fascinating, something Spanish about the word, and the impressions that it conveys.  
Many homes of old, especially in the Southwest, were fashioned from the earth at the site on which they were built.  
These were the original adobe homes.  
Adobe is made from heavy clay usually found only in desert or arid regions. This soil was about the only material available to pioneers who wished to build housing for their families.  
They dug up the soil, mixed it well with water and straw, then molded the mud into blocks which they put out in the sun to dry and harden.

When the adobe was sufficiently "seasoned" or "cured," these folk of yesteryear then had building blocks, made by their own hands, with which to erect houses.  
The adobe blocks were crude, to be sure. They were far from uniform. Yet they were rugged, massive and had a natural rustic appeal.  
More important, these early adobe houses provided adequate shelter. The thick, strong earthen walls were a shield against the cold of winter, the heat of summer and the storms of any season.  
But adobe, as it aged, also proved vulnerable to the elements, especially to rain. Moisture caused the blocks to erode and deteriorate.  
Some of these old adobe houses, built a century or more ago, still stand, as monuments to a romantic past. But

many, many others have crumbled away. They are either gone or only the remnants of jagged walls remain.  
Thus adobe, as a building material, fell into disrepute. Progress brought other means of building better with other materials at a more economical cost. For decades, prior to World War II, adobe construction was rare, almost nonexistent.  
Today, then, it is significant that adobe is experiencing a revival in popularity as a material for construction, mostly homes but for other buildings as well.  
Actually, this revival in the appreciation of adobe has been going on for more than 20 years, but, again significantly, the demand for and popularity of the adobe house has been increasing in each of those 20 years.  
The start of the adobe revival corresponds roughly to an

important breakthrough in manufacture of adobe block. They found a way to waterproof the earthy mixture. Or more specifically, chemists of Standard Oil Co. during the late years of World War II discovered that by careful mixture of asphalt emulsion with the clay mud, they could "stabilize" the adobe brick; i.e. make it waterproof, and as permanent as concrete masonry.  
The result has been wider and growing acceptance of adobe for new construction. It has rustic appeal unmatched by other materials, an appearance that gives a dwelling the charm of natural strength and simplicity. Adobe homes are about as earthy and as natural as the soil from which the walls are made.  
One of the greatest tributes to modern adobe is that the  
(Continued on F-8, Col. 3)



**ADOBE VILLAGE:** The earthen block also can give charm and warmth to the small house. Street scene is in Pala Mesa Village, a new community

in the north county, built around a recreation center. Entire subdivision, projected for 270 homes, is restricted to adobe dwellings.



**FORMAL TREATMENT:** Most adobe homes reflect informal decor, but Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Dorgan have demonstrated that fine, formal antique fur-

nishings can be used effectively in their Rancho Santa Fe home. Adobe walls remain exposed inside, except for white paint covering.