



**ADOBE WITH APPEAL:** Many of the features that seem to belong to the adobe house are found in this picture of the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Mahoney, 5110 Helix Dr., including the veranda, red-tiled roof, ornamental tiling at the entry and the carved wood door. Note also the olla hanging from the porch beam.

# ADOBE ABODES

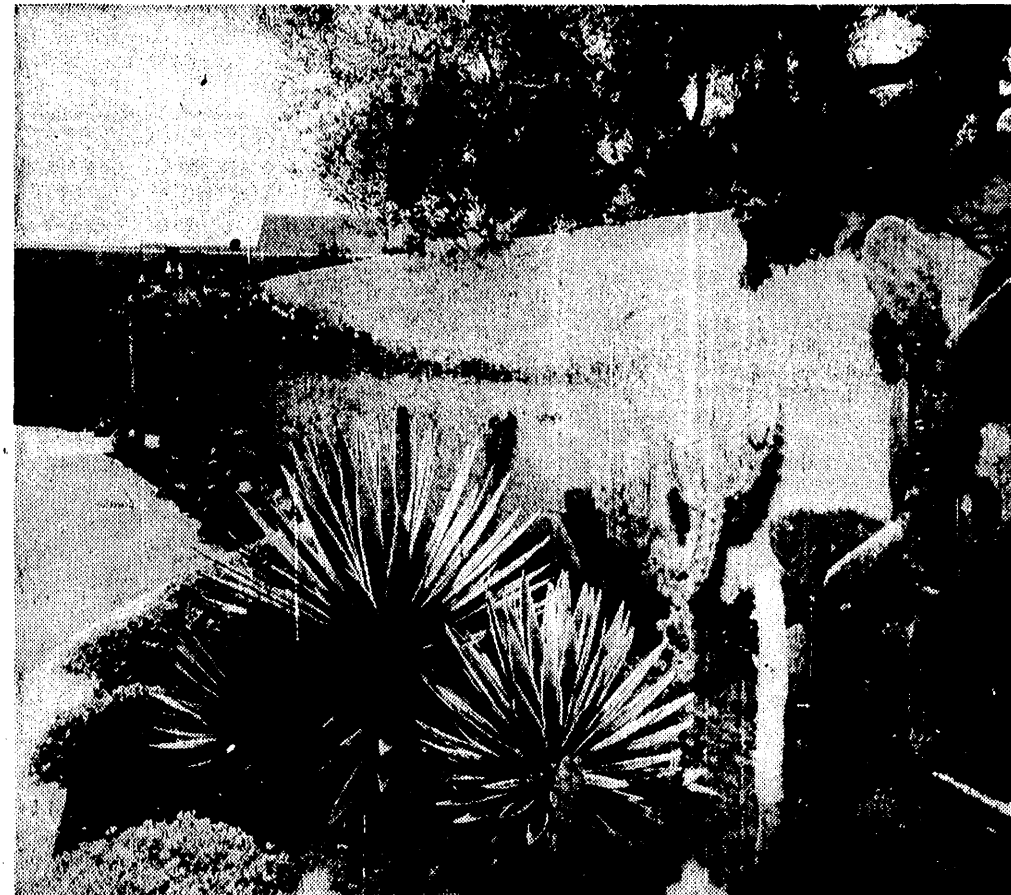
## ATMOSPHERE

Typical Southwestern in architectural atmosphere is the corner fireplace of Hopi Indian design in the Mahoneys' Mt. Helix dwelling, which is adobe throughout. Note exposed adobe on interior walls; also the exposed beam ceiling. The flooring is hand-wiped terra cotta tile. Thick adobe walls provide such good insulation that this house is adequately heated, the Mahoneys say, by electric wall heaters in each room.



## LIKE DESERT

Cactus and other desert plants lend the desert feeling to the adobe home of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Black at La Jolla Farms. Here is a corner section of landscaping outside the adobe patio wall. The Blacks' home is authentically Southwestern, with its lines patterned after the pueblos which the Indians once built for their villages in New Mexico and Arizona. In background of this picture is the typical parapet on the roof.



## FINE HOMES FROM THE EARTH

By CLYDE V. SMITH  
The San Diego Union's  
Homes and Building Writer

It may sound as if it is a weak attempt at a pun to say there is earthiness about adobe houses, but is there any better or more exact description?

Adobe homes are about as earthy and as natural as the soil from which the walls are made. In fact, that is part of the appeal of building with adobe—the result is a rustic, rugged massiveness that gives the home the charm of natural strength and simplicity.

People who live in adobe homes are enthusiastic about them. With any choice, they wouldn't live in any other kind of dwelling. They like the appearance of the brown adobe, they enjoy the feeling and the atmosphere that it creates, and they can cite many advantages of convenience in adobe construction—the insulating values of the foot-thick walls, the sound-proofing qualities and ease of maintenance.

In spite of this appeal and in spite of the fact that building walls from the earth was one of the earliest construction practices in the Southwest, only a tiny fraction of the new homes built in San Diego County today are adobe.

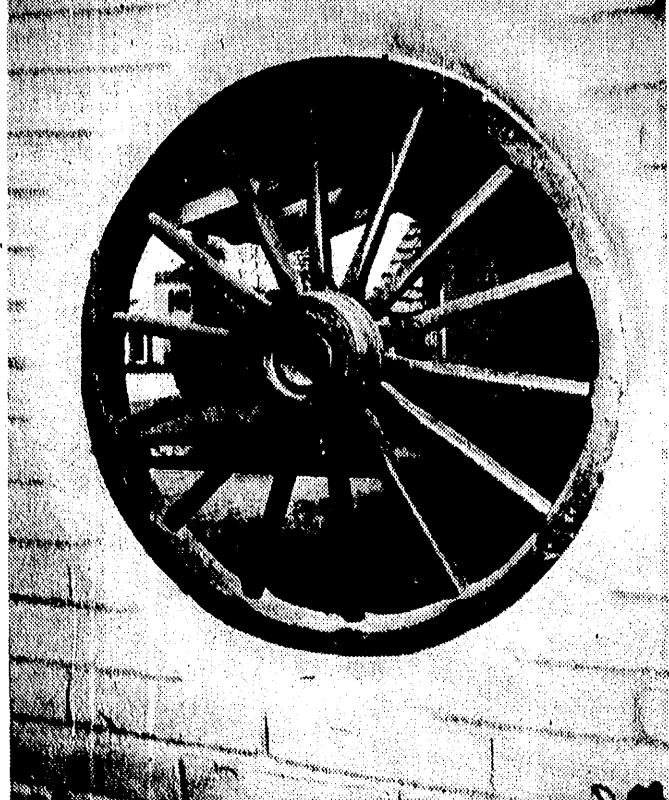
In the last five years, a total of 66,434 new dwelling units were built in the county. Probably no more than 200 of them were adobe.

about 100 houses in the last four years. He added, however, that each year finds more people wanting the adobe home.

The cost factor may be the influence limiting more general use of adobe block in home construction. It is not that adobe itself is expensive, but the labor, the code restrictions on its use and other materials that are complements to the adobe house tend to increase the price.

Some adobe builders contend that adobe construction is no more expensive than other "good" construction—they emphasize the word "good."

F. M. Holly of Ramona, who has specialized in adobe for several years, says adobe walls in a house, including labor, run about 12 to 14 per cent of the total cost of the home.



**ADDED ATTRACTION:** A wagon wheel imbedded in the adobe wall in the carport of the Arthur Lamberts' home adds a bit of rustic interest to the design.

have with adobe that really hikes the cost," he said. "Most families want the red tiled roof, tiled flooring, often they want unusual arches, hewn-beam ceilings, massive fireplaces and perhaps some natural wood paneling. All of these features are important and go well with the adobe home, but they also hike up the cost."

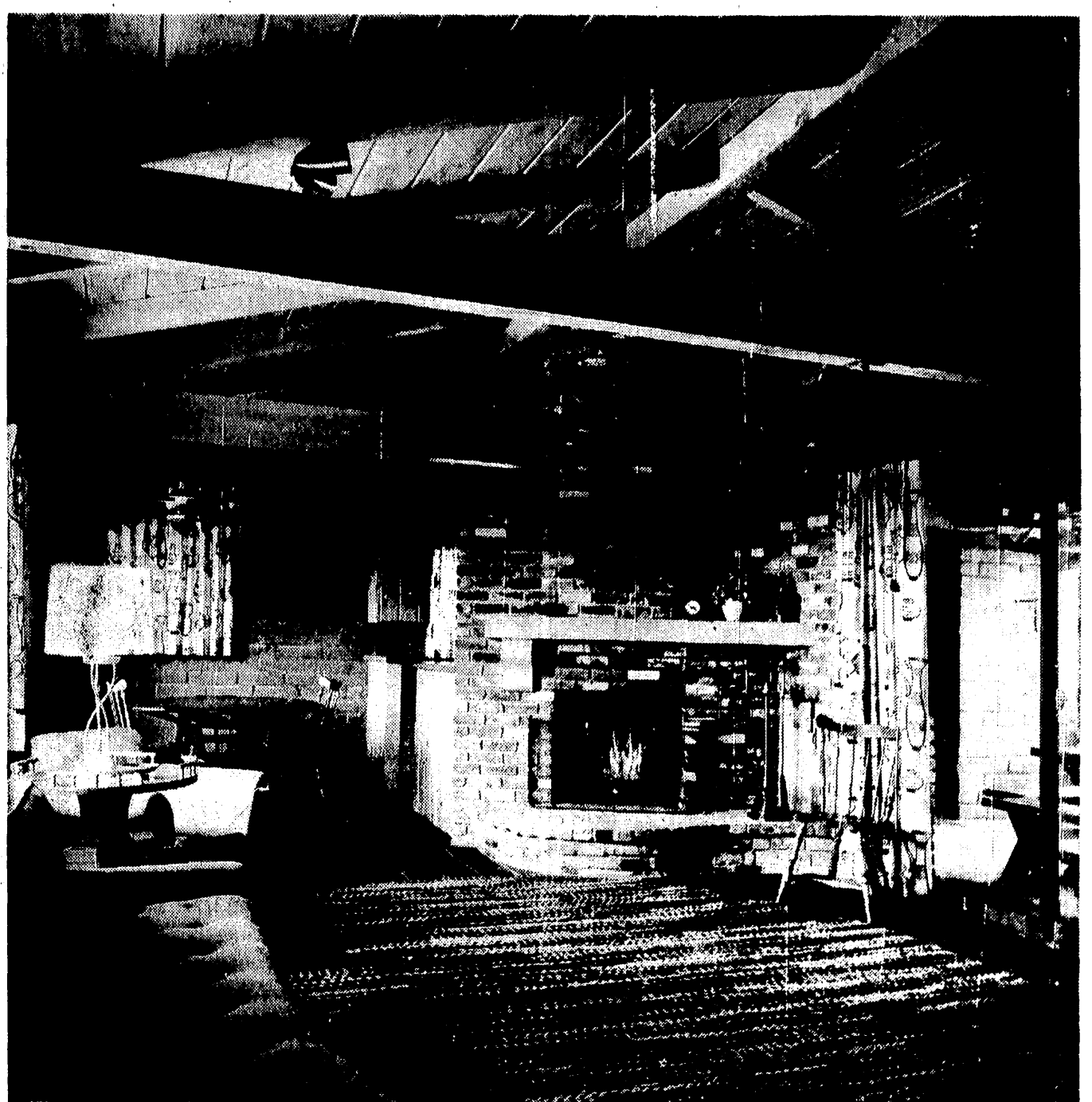
An adobe block for the outside wall of a house is made in dimensions of 4 by 12 by 16 inches and weighs 45 pounds. This is the most common size used, giving the foot-thick wall.

But a 45-pound block involves a hefty lifting assignment for the masonry worker. The block probably seems much heavier along in late afternoon and the work pace probably slows. Hence, there is an extra labor cost factor.

Building codes also require heavy steel reinforcing, both horizontally and vertically, for the adobe building, a matter with which the early-day builders did not have to contend. The steel requirements add again, of course, to adobe construction cost. The code demands for adobe are about the same as for concrete block, but it usually is a more difficult job to reinforce the solid adobe than it is the hollow concrete block.

Although adobe residential construction is limited, there are many interesting adobe homes in San Diego County. Adobe lends itself to architectural imagination.

Adobe can be either painted or plastered over but many people prefer to leave the exposed natural adobe on both interior and exterior walls. The textural appearance



**ADOBE INTERIOR:** Here is a more modern adobe treatment, in the interior of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur R. Lambert's new home at 4272 Altamirano Way in Mission Hills. Exposed beam ceilings are characteristic in adobe houses. Walls are exposed natural adobe. The fireplace of used brick offers interesting contrast.

(Continued on Page f2, Col. 1)