KENT, William Winthrop.

b. Bangor, Maine, February 23, 1860 c.
WILLIAM WINTHROP KENT was born in Bangor, Maine, the son of Henry Mellen and Harriet Farnham Kent, on the day following Washington's birthday. He claims an advantage over his predecessor, however, in that he possessed no hatchet and could tell a lie if occasion demanded it. He was a graduate of Phillips Exeter, class of 1878 ("with no honors or debts") and of Harvard University, class of 1882. "This class," Kent states, without exercising overmuch the advantage noted above, "was one of the best and most brilliant that Harvard ever produced." Kent's literary aptitude seems to have been in evidence at this period for he humbly admits being at one time an editor of the Harvard Advocate, and of The Harvard Lampoon, "which the faculty of this notable institution still wishes to restrain."

After graduation Kent entered the dry goods business with his father at Buffalo, New York. But his bent was toward architecture. In fact, he leaned so far toward this noble calling that he finally fell into it quite unprepared, so he states. Fortunately, however, he was ultimately extricated from the latter predicament with the help of such friends as Charles Allerton Coolidge, H. H. Richardson (in whose office he first studied architecture) and Francis H. Bacon, the superb draughtsman of Assos Expedition fame.

Kent later began the practice of his profession in New York City, where he was associated with Harvey Page, for whom he designed several houses in Washington, D. C., including some on Capitol Hill. Then, with his brother Edw. A. Kent, he designed in Buffalo, among other buildings, The Church of Our Father and The Temple Beth El, also later the large mosaic floor of the Ellicott Square Building. After some years of free-lance practice in New York City, he became associated with Messrs. Heins & Lafarge in the successful design for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Later he became a member of the firm of Jardine, Kent & Jardine, New York, when he designed several Carnegie public libraries, together with a number of commercial and office buildings, including several for Equitable Life Assurance Company, among which was its seven-acre plant in Long Island.

For some years during his New York practice Kent headed the department of ornamental design for Yale & Towne Manufacturing Company of Stamford, Connecticut, and wrote many contributions on such subjects as The Schools of Ornament, published in Henry R. Townes' Architects Handbook; Architectural By-Ways; Architectural Wrought Iron, and the Life of Baldassare Peruzzi of Siena, now the standard reference on the work of this great master. He is a member of the American Institute of Architects, and of the Architectural League of New York (whose catalogs he made up for several years), and of the Harvard Club of New York.

Following his many activities Kent regained his erstwhile health by extensive travel, which took him into Europe and the Orient, Africa, Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand. During this itinerary he made an extensive study of design in general and particularly as applied to furniture, textiles, and rugs. Soon after his return appeared his book, The Hooked Rug, published in 1930 by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, which went into a second printing. This book is familiar to hooked rug enthusiasts, not only in America but in many countries abroad. It is the only book on the subject mentioned in the Encyclopedia Britannica. His contributions on the hooked rug and kindred subjects to The Magazine Antiques and other periodicals have made his name familiar in thousands of homes.
January 22, 1942

Mr. William Winthrop Kent  
c/o The Pond-Ekberg Company  
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and the edition is limited
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Yours Sincerely
E. V. Winthrop Kent
February 9, 1942

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Colonial Apartment Hotel
La Jolla, California

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