

LÅDAN
RALPH ERSKINE

CHALMERS
NORDIC ARCHITECTURE
SPRING SEMESTER 2019

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Ralph Erskine ARIBA (24 February 1914 - 16 March 2005) was a British architect and planner who lived and worked in Sweden for most of his life. Erskine was born in London in 1914 and spent his childhood in Mill Hill in Barnet. His parents were socialists, adherents of the Fabian Society, which promoted the idea of the evolution of Britain into a socialist state. His parents sent him to the Friends School Saffron Walden (1925-1931), a Quaker school, probably because of their socialist beliefs. There, he became committed to the Quaker ideals, which laid the foundation for his views on society, man's place in it, and on architecture.

During the 1930s, Erskine studied architecture for five years at the Regent Street Polytechnic, London under the direction of Thornton White. At the time, White's curriculum required the study of classical architecture before students were free to follow their own ideas. One of his fellow students was Gordon Cullen who would become a well-known architectural illustrator, urban designer and theorist. Cullen advocated the improvement of urban settlements through an understanding and analysis of their picturesque qualities. This approach was profoundly influential on Erskine, who insisted in his work that the context and landscaping of his buildings be carefully integrated.

After qualifying as an architect Erskine began work with the design team for Welwyn Garden City under the leadership of Louis de Soissons. He studied town planning and this interest broadened his approach to architecture, in particular about how buildings related physically and socially to their setting. In 1936 he became an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Before the outbreak of World War II, Erskine travelled to Sweden. He was attracted there partly by his admiration for the work of the Functionalist Swedish architects Gunnar Asplund, Sven Markelius and Sigurd Lewerentz and partly by the country's adoption of the social welfare model. In Sweden the political will was reflected in the national architecture and these two factors coincided with his own humanist beliefs. He would go on to make an important contribution to the architectural landscape of both his adopted country and to that of England.

In Sweden, England and Canada, he was responsible for the design of numerous innovative buildings reflecting his particular ideology.



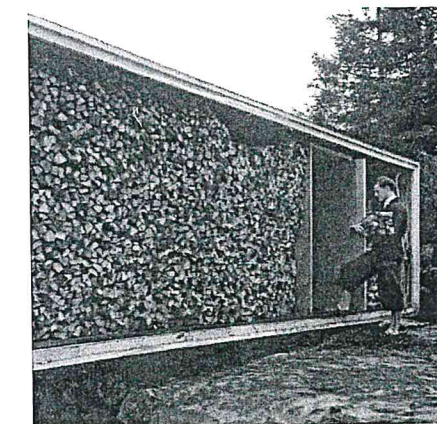
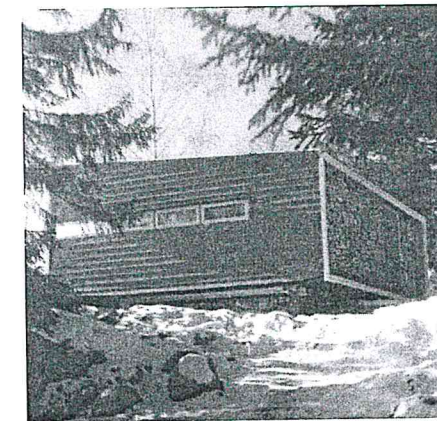
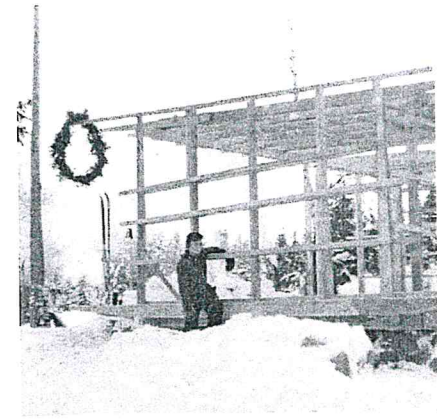
LÅDAN

Lådan was built as Ralph Erskine's first home in Sweden after moving from the United Kingdom. Erskine was fascinated by how the Nordic climate affected the architecture and a lot of his projects were influenced by these ideas.

In Lådan these ideas are materialised in, for example, how the windows all face south. The north wall has no windows at all. Another feature is how the storage of firewood is integrated in the north wall and adds a layer of insulation to the wall. The same wall also features a double door entrance that acts as an air-lock. Erskine also had ideas about how snow could act as an insulation layer if gathered on the roof during temperatures way below freezing.

Other ideas we can see in "Lådan" is how Erskine tried to shelter the house from cold winds. The house is intentionally placed a little downslope from the absolute hilltop to get a view while avoiding the strongest winds. With the strong focus on climate in the design of "Lådan" it's easy to overlook how extremely efficient the building is. With an area of only 22 square meters, "Lådan" is not a spacious house. The space is managed cleverly with flexible spaces and furniture that can be stowed away.

The desk is folded out of the wall and the bed is lowered from the ceiling during nights. The clever construction of the bed also allows for it to be used as a sofa if needed. Unfortunately, the original house fell into disrepair and was demolished, but in the 1981 a replica was erected. Ralph Erskine consulted in the design of the replica in order to make it as authentic as possible.

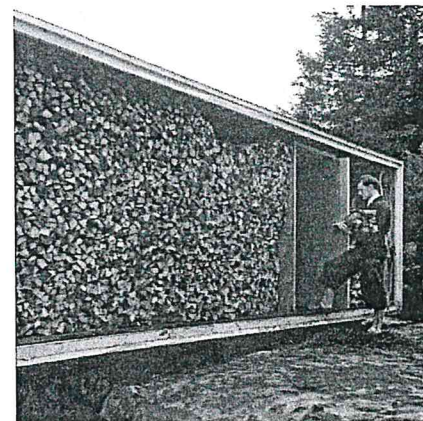
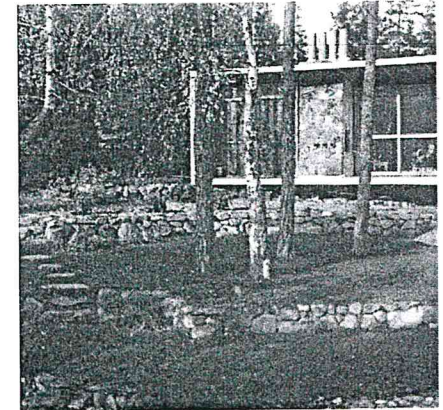
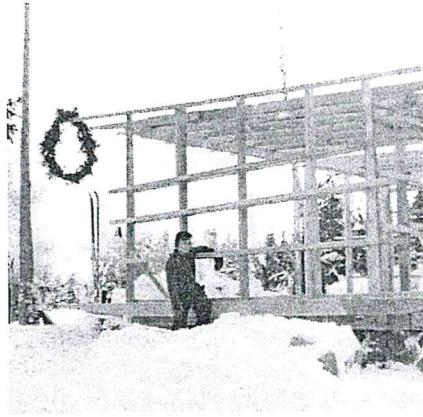


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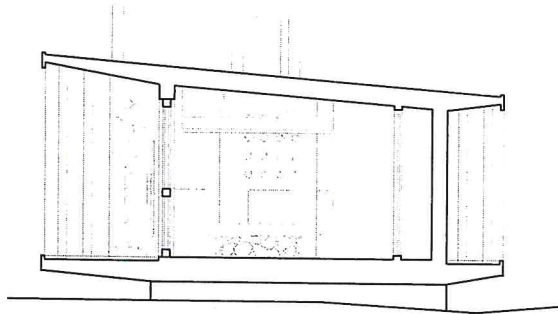
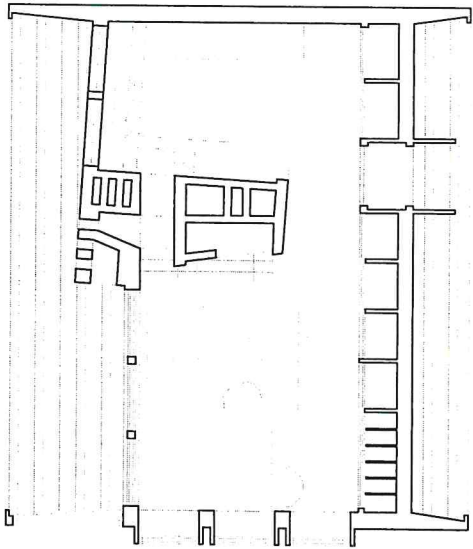
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Lådan" is how
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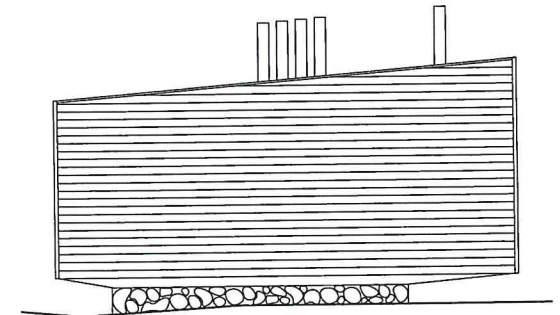
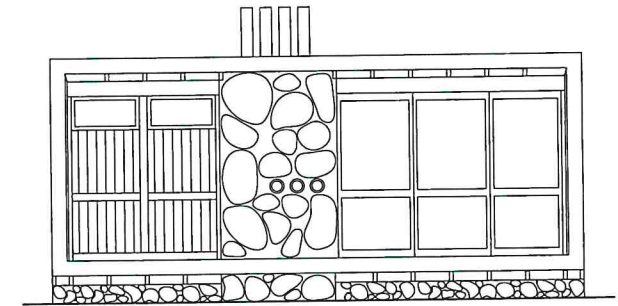
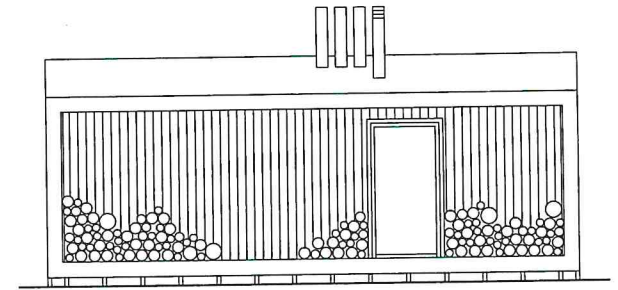
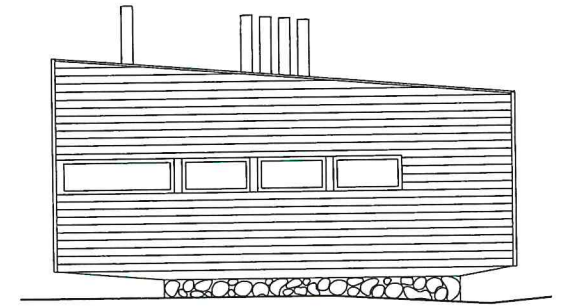
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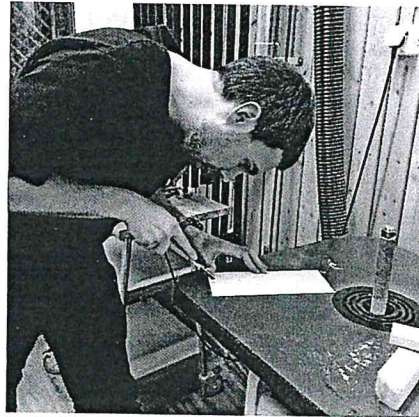
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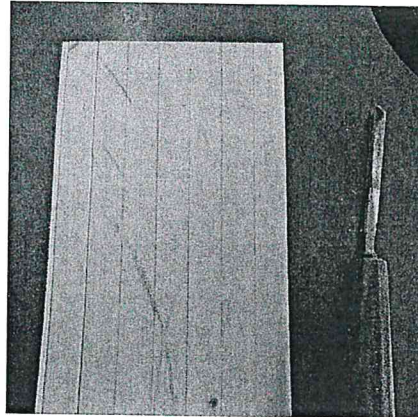
DRAW

MAKING MODEL

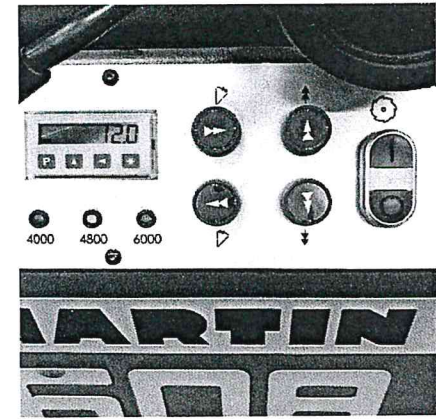
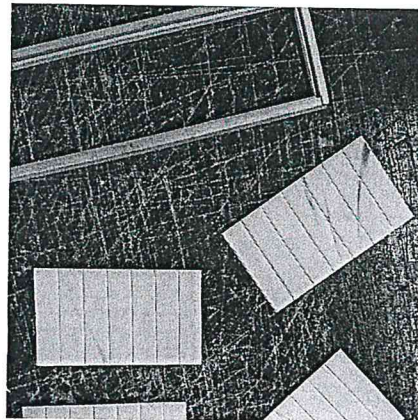
For our detail we decided to craft an explanatory model of the adjustable bed and sofa in the scale of 1:10. When making the rib pattern as a imitation of the boards that cover the bed frame, we used a chisel to handcarve the gaps.



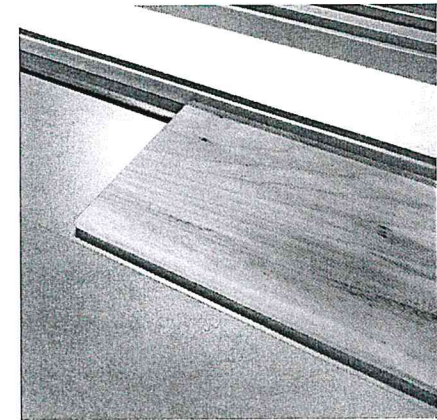
A steady hand is needed when carving out the wood with a chisel. Tobias made a good effort for first time trying.



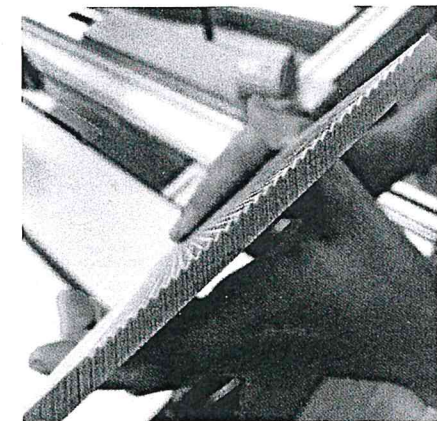
The board was then cut into 4 pieces which then is glued to the front and back of the frame. By using this method, a lesser number of tracks was necessary to be carved as well as improving the consistence of the straight lines.



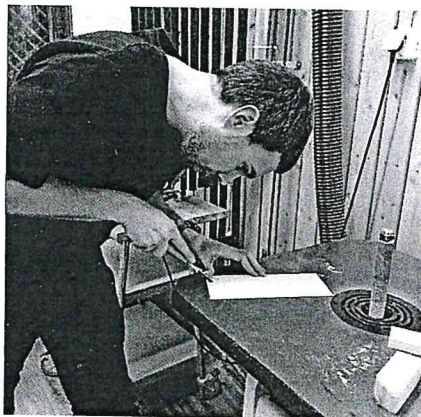
In order to 1:40 we use a tiltable to the corner



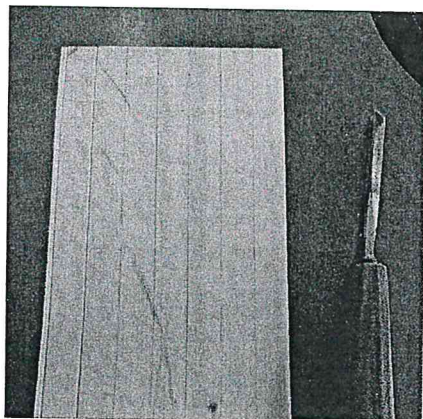
A plane tilted along the direction "scratched" of 105 mm of 1:40, i.e.



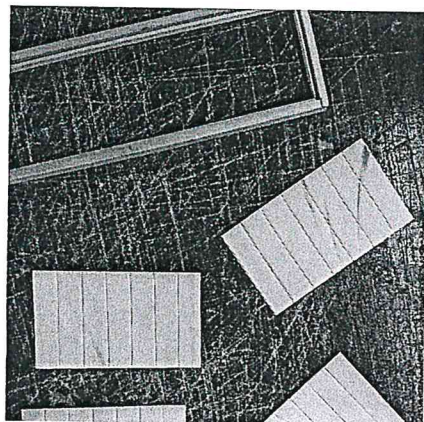
The result of running horizontally of 12° along friction be resulted in



to craft an adjustable bed. When making preparation of the frame, we used planes.



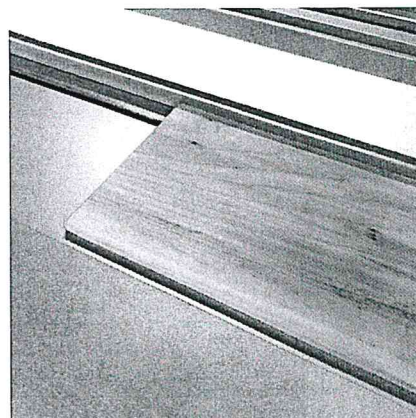
When carving out the wood, a good



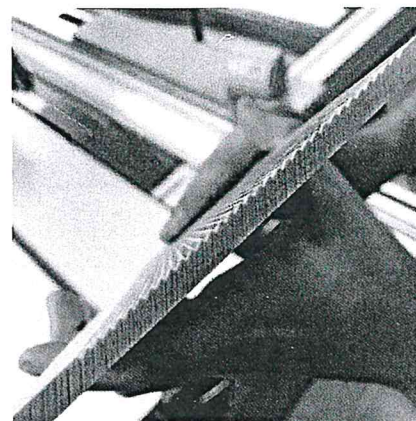
pieces which are used for the front and back of the bed, a lesser necessary to be consistent



In order to craft a clapboard in the scale of 1:40 we used the table saw which features a tiltable circular blade which is adjusted to the corresponding angle of 12°.



A plane tilia board with the veins running along the direction of the clapboard is then "scratched" in the corresponding interval of 105 mm which is translated to the scale of 1:40, i.e. 2,625 mm.



The result is a tilia board with tracks running horizontally and with an angle of 12° along the surfaces. Moreover, the friction between the blade and the tilia resulted in a slightly burnt surfaces.