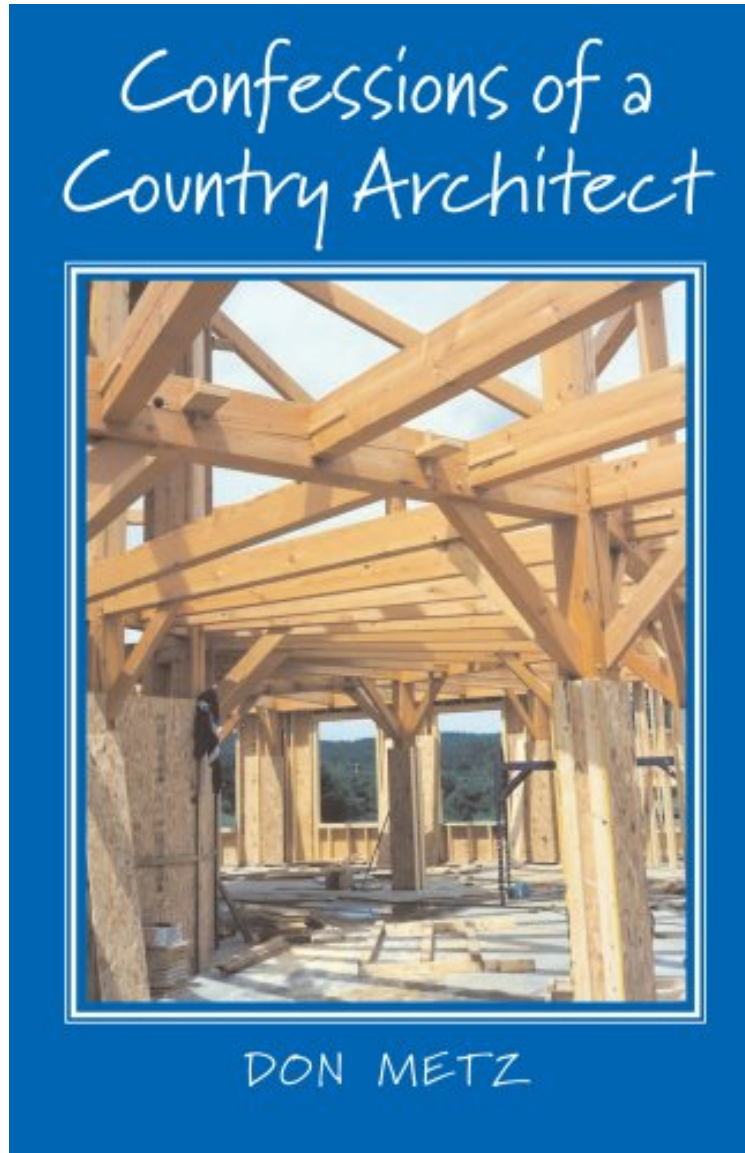


(Free read ebook) Confessions of a Country Architect

## Confessions of a Country Architect

*Don Metz*

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**Don Metz : Confessions of a Country Architect** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Confessions of a Country Architect:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Thoroughly satisfying on many levelsBy Mike M.This book neatly encapsulates a wide range of experiences, projects, people, and perspectives that one might come across in the practice of architecture, and more generally, in a life rich with varied encounters, characters, and adventures. The reader becomes familiar with the author through his experiences and how he handles them, and through the relationships he

has with the characters that populate his storytelling. Ranging over several decades of schooling and practice, the stories relate experiences profound and mundane, and are mined by the author for occasional laughs and with a thoughtful resonance without being preachy or heavy-handed. It presents the arc of a life well lived. Among other tricks, he squares a heavily theoretical education with real world worries, delineates the anxieties and joys of a first big project, and describes a summer spent working in a rock quarry. Here and elsewhere in the book, the author demonstrates a reverence for simple jobs done well, from the perspective of a profession burdened with an array of complex jobs that must be interwoven seamlessly, and he manages to do it with humility. Which makes it all the more rewarding when you later read about a client whose hubris blinds him to his own ineptitude, and you're rooting for the guy to get his just desserts. Other favorite sections deliver a concise history of American architecture in a handful of pages, stories of clients who present a broad range of challenges, and win-win adventures with Habitat for Humanity. A chapter describing a client's wishes to build an environmentally sensitive home perfectly encapsulates the hidden complexities of building Green. The client can't realistically afford either the lifestyle or the costs of building as green as he would like to, but the author shepherds him through the maddeningly complex process of balancing science, ethics and costs in pursuit of what is for that one client the perfect compromise. It's been a while since I've enjoyed a book this much.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Thoroughly enjoyable! By P. Moran In addition to "House" by Tracy Kidder, I was reminded of James Herriot's tales of practicing veterinary medicine in Yorkshire, England, where the stories aren't so much about the animals (or in this case, the architecture) but rather the people, their qualities and quirks, their relationships with their local vet (or architect) and the land. I found this book to be a thoroughly enjoyable read in a few different ways. First, it provides insight into the workings of a profession most don't know much about, and how a country architect in particular spends his time. It also follows the career trajectory of someone gutsy (and perhaps wacky) enough to take the road not normally taken. Being curious about both the natural and built environment, I learned a thing or two from the author's broad knowledge of things both natural and man-made. The book provides a taste of New England culture and values, with touches of dry humor appearing without being overdone. Lastly, I found the writing style to be interesting and easy to read, elegant but not overly complex.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. An engaging trip. By A. DeWolf This very enjoyable trip through one man's journey in his chosen field is part memoir, part ramble on the New England Yankee mystique, and part serious soul search on the relevance and meaning of one's life work. Don Metz has woven an engaging story around the progress made by himself and two classmates and colleagues who choose different paths in the world of architecture following graduate school. For any one who loves their own dwelling, or just dreamed of building their own house, or for that matter, anyone who has ever picked up and hammer and saw...for anyone who enjoys wry humor with touches of pathos, this is a grand read.

After graduating from the Yale School of Architecture, Don Metz decided to take up a small country practice in lieu of seeking success with a popular commercial firm. His choice led to personal and philosophical fulfillment, as well as recognition as a maverick architect who could build honest, reliable, and sustainable homes. It only followed that he would go on to write several books on architecture. Metz is also a novelist, and in *Confessions of a Country Architect*, he adroitly blends his writer's craft with his years in architecture to detail a touching and waggish memoir of his career. With warm wry humor and slapstick pathos reminiscent of James Herriot's *All Creatures Great and Small*, the feisty flatlander modestly recounts the ever-challenging and often-comical life of a country architect. A builder in his own right, Metz is also a practical -- but always creative and problem-solving -- hands-on architect. From his early years working with a weapons-grade jackhammer in a quarry to the construction of an earth-sheltered house, Metz details the panoply of noble goals and eccentric whims of his diverse clientele. Whether you are ready to summon up the courage to build a house, or content with an armchair with a view, *Confessions* provides a delightful account of the author's adventures as he navigates the awkward, intractable, and hilariously messy job of building dreams.

"This retrospect on forty years of house design shows as much care in its narration as its author has applied to his superb architecture. Don Metz's latest book is remarkable for its compassion, enthusiasm, joy, pathos, appreciation of character, and, crucially, humor. *Confessions of a Country Architect* is a home, at once quiet and magisterial, for the reader's spirit." "Anyone who has built or renovated a house -- or who is thinking about doing it -- should read this book. Don Metz puts you in the middle of things, honestly and directly. We know the scent of the land, the feel of the construction site, and we experience the variety of emotions that appear when people set about changing raw materials into livable dreams." "From hilarious to poignant and back again, Don Metz guides the reader through a lifetime of intriguing experiences and characters, reinforcing our belief that residential architecture is often more about being a psychiatrist than designing and building. This book is a great mix of Reality TV and musings on the philosophical underpinnings of both the structure of buildings and the fabric human existence." About the Author A graduate of the Yale School of Architecture, Don Metz is a pioneer in the field of green architecture, including four decades of residential work throughout New England. He is the author of several books on architecture as well as two novels, *Catamount Bridge* and *King of the Mountain*. This book delivers an architect/writer's insights into the foibles and

triumphs inherent in the close and sometimes perilous relationships between architects, builders and their clients.