



On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany and entered World War I. Several weeks later a French war mission arrived in Washington to meet with President Woodrow Wilson and other government officials to solicit American assistance. At the beginning of May, Baltimore's mayor, James H. Preston (1860–1938), upon learning that the commissioners were returning to Washington, invited them to stop over in Baltimore so that citizens could demonstrate “the feeling of affection which the city holds for them.” Preston cited Baltimore and Maryland's deep historical attachment to the marquis de Lafayette (1757–1834), the Frenchman who fought alongside George Washington during the Revolutionary War. Lafayette had camped near Baltimore during the war, he and his male heirs had been made citizens of Maryland by the state legislature, and he had been famously received in Baltimore during his 1824 farewell tour. Preston worked feverishly to secure this visit to his city, lobbying the US Department of State, which was handling the already full schedule of the delegation. A week into his campaign Preston struck on the idea that made the stop irresistible to the French party: while in Baltimore the delegation would break ground for a monument dedicated to Lafayette's memory. Preston believed this memorial would be a fitting addition to the legacy of the “Monumental City,” a name John Quincy Adams was said to have given the city during a visit in 1827.<sup>1</sup>

The groundbreaking for the Lafayette statue turned out to be a galvanizing moment in the city's design and planning history, enabling a number of large-scale city

plans to coalesce into reality—ideas that for more than a decade had been only aspirations. These plans would transform several significant areas of the city. Although the involvement of the Olmsteds in Baltimore park and civic planning is well known, the central role that the New York firm of Carrère & Hastings played in the development of the city in the first quarter of the twentieth century is little discussed.<sup>2</sup> This essay will survey the planning history of the city in this period, focusing on three sites—Mount Vernon Place, St. Paul Street, and the Civic Center—in order to demonstrate the breadth of Preston's ambition and to document the extensive role of Carrère & Hastings in Baltimore, all in an effort to reassert the city's important position in the history of American city planning at its inception as a professional discipline. Finally, it seeks a better understanding of what was meant by “modern” by planners, the public, and politicians in this dynamic moment of American urban design.

During his two administrations (1911–1919), Preston ambitiously pushed Baltimore toward grand-scale civic celebrations and improvements. In 1914 the city and country marked the one hundredth anniversary of the American victory at Fort McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812. Preston effectively lobbied the federal government to have the use (but not ownership) of Fort McHenry turned over to the city of Baltimore, adding this prized parkland with historic associations to the city's holdings. Further, for this site he obtained a \$75,000 congressional appropriation for a monumental sculpture honoring Francis Scott Key, who had been

St. Paul Street Improvement, 1919  
Baltimore Sun, 1919, author  
collection

inspired by the events of the battle to write “The Star-Spangled Banner.” During Preston’s administration a number of other public monuments were erected celebrating the War of 1812.<sup>3</sup>

Two major anniversaries followed that of the Battle of Baltimore. July 4, 1915, was the one hundredth anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of Baltimore’s Washington Monument, designed by Robert Mills (1781–1855) as the first public monument to Washington in the United States. September 1915 marked the centennial of the laying of the cornerstone of the Battle Monument, designed by Maximilian Godefroy (1765–c. 1840), which honored the city’s fallen in the Battle of Baltimore. Notably, both monuments were centerpieces of urban spaces that were designed along very different lines: the Washington Monument sited in the middle of a park-like setting, the Battle Monument the focal point of a paved plaza (today’s Monument Square).

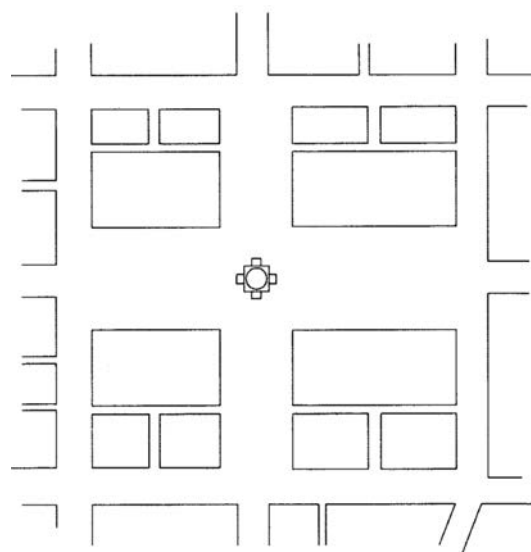
When the United States entered World War I two years later, Baltimoreans, under Preston’s dynamic leadership, were eager to display publicly their commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy. In the few short weeks he had to plan the momentous groundbreaking, Preston cast about for a place to locate the new Lafayette memorial. Initial ideas were the

Homewood area, near the Johns Hopkins University campus, and a site at the corner of St. Paul and Centre Streets, at the northern extreme of a planned improvement on St. Paul Street. Both locations were rejected for one in Mount Vernon Place, the setting around the Washington Monument. Many statues were already erected here, and one last location had recently been committed for a statue of Baltimore’s famous nineteenth-century author Edgar Allen Poe (1809–1849).<sup>4</sup>

### The Historic Development of Mount Vernon Place

Mount Vernon Place was hallowed ground. Robert Mills’ Washington Monument was the result of several years of advocacy on the part of the city to fund a public work by a state-enabled lottery. In 1814 Mills won a competition with a design for a multitiered column topped by a statue of Washington in a quadriga that was intended for the city’s former Court House Square (now Monument Square). However, residents’ fear that Mills’ towering design might topple on their houses in the event of some natural disaster was the impetus to move it north of the city to land donated by Revolutionary War hero John Eager Howard (1752–1827) from his large estate, Belvidere. On this 200-square-foot parcel of wooded land the column was begun in 1815, at the head of one of the city’s future main thoroughfares, Charles Street. The statue of Washington, by Henrico Causici (1790–1833), was raised to the top in 1829, and other details of the column, less elaborate than the design submitted, were gradually completed.<sup>5</sup>

Howard’s heirs, working with designs developed by Mills, donated additional land around the monument for a plan that benefited not only themselves but the public. The intersection of two streets was widened into a Greek cross, forming broad “places” (Mount Vernon Place to the east and west and Washington Place to the north and south), which offered impressive views of the monument from the cardinal directions and



1. Mount Vernon Place, plan, 1831, as redrawn by the Historic American Landscapes Survey  
Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, HALS MD-1

2. Mount Vernon Place, north square, c. 1906

*Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division*

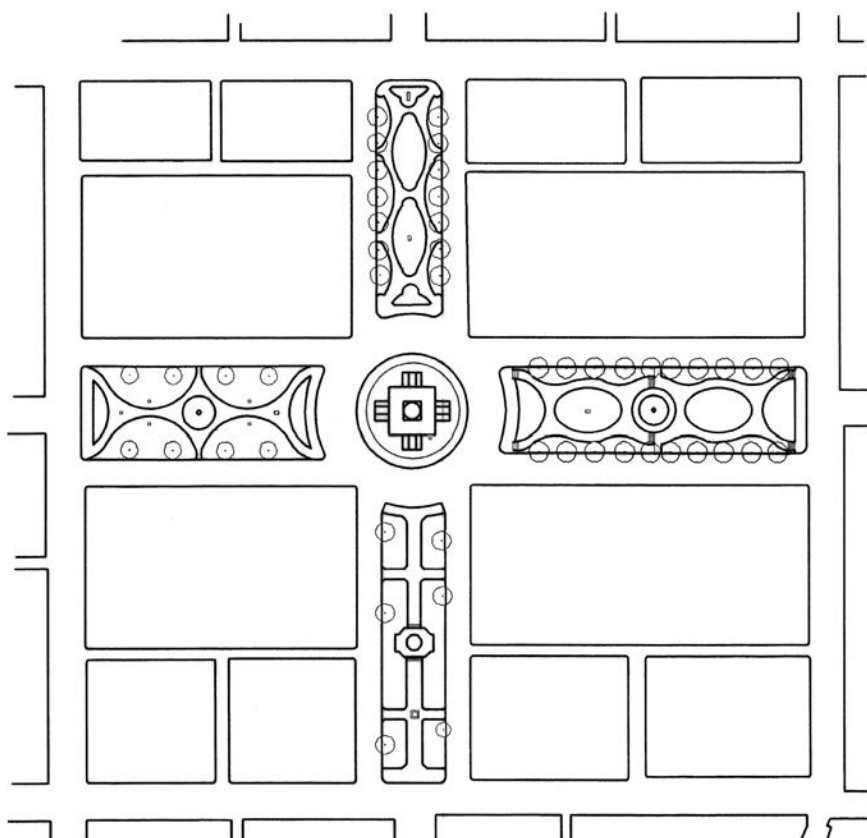


provided numerous building lots that could be sold for development (fig. 1). Between the early 1830s and 1850, the “squares,” as the arms of the cross were more often called, were gradually enclosed with first wooden and then wrought iron fences, and uniform perimeter trees were planted.<sup>6</sup> (For purposes of discussion here, “Mount Vernon Place” refers to the central site of the monument and all four squares.)

In 1875–1876, in preparation for the centennial of American independence, the city decided the squares looked old-fashioned and not in keeping with the emerging elegance of the houses and mansions by then surrounding them. Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. (1822–1903) with Thomas Wisedell (1846–1884), representing the leading landscape design firm in the nation, was commissioned to redesign the south and north squares. In 1877 the fences were removed, and low, rough-hewn stone walls and other details were installed at the ends of each square, as well as concrete paths,

all in multiple colors, considered in keeping with the style now called High Victorian Gothic. In the south square a straight path formed a strong central axis leading to the Washington Monument from the entrance at Centre Street, while in the north square curvilinear pathways cut across the square (figs. 2 and 3). The east and west squares would subsequently be treated by the city in a manner similar to the north square, and in these three squares the tradition of uniform perimeter trees was retained. Fountains were installed in all but the north square as well as gaslight fixtures and, by the early years of the twentieth century, a number of bronze statues of allegorical and historic figures.<sup>7</sup>

It was to this location, rich in historical associations, that on May 14, 1917, the French war commissioners were escorted to the cheers of the thousands gathered along the route. After a brief dedication speech at the base of the Washington Monument, Preston and commissioners René Viviani,



3. Mount Vernon Place, plan showing existing conditions of the Olmsted-era design, c. 1916, as redrawn by the Historic American Landscapes Survey and revised by author

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the French vice premier and minister of justice; the marquis Pierre de Chambrun (1865–1954), a great-grandson of Lafayette; and Marshal Joseph Joffre, a French war hero, walked down the hill to the east end of the east square. There, all three Frenchmen, beginning with Viviani, broke ground for the statue in the middle of an existing bed of pansies in full bloom (fig. 4). A participant placed a pansy in each of the commissioners' buttonholes, and they were quickly whisked off to the train station after a brief hour in Baltimore. As the crowd dispersed, those seeking souvenirs of the portentous event stripped the flower bed, taking the flowers as a keepsake of the hallowed ground.<sup>8</sup> As neither plans nor funds were immediately at hand for the Lafayette statue, Preston was adroit in seizing the opportunity to have the French commissioners break ground for the statue. Within several weeks of the ceremony, the Lafayette Memorial Committee was assembled, garnering support from

Baltimore's Municipal Art Commission, the Municipal Art Society, and several patriotic societies.<sup>9</sup>

### Needs for Renewal and Improvement

In the weeks before the groundbreaking for the statue, Preston had been informed by Baltimore City's Board of Park Commissioners of plans to repair the broken concrete sidewalks in Mount Vernon Place. Preston shortly thereafter observed that it had been "rapidly deteriorating in appearance and in value" and was "in danger of becoming a lodging-house and business neighborhood." He argued that by "beautifying and renewing the City's portion of this beautiful section, that the property on the square can be renewed and raised, at all events prevented from degeneration." At this very moment he also had other large-scale plans that had long been in development, including an improvement project for St. Paul Street and one for a civic center, both of which embraced extensive land acquisition, demolition, and redesign as public parks. The impending 1918 Annexation Act, which would triple Baltimore's size, would require significant investment in infrastructure improvements to connect this new land with the existing city.<sup>10</sup>

The park commissioners assured the mayor that a concrete repair plan could be developed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. (1870–1957), whose family firm in Boston had been involved with various local projects for a number of years. In 1912–1913, the younger Olmsted had been hired by the Johns Hopkins University to plan the university's entrance on Charles Street and develop ideas for resolving nearby street approaches. In a private memo, Preston informed each park commissioner that because of his experience since he had been in office, he did not "think especially highly" of Olmsted: "I have found him vacillating, uncertain and unsatisfactory.... I would suggest that if you are going to have a landscape or city planning man, that you make a change. Mr. Hastings, of Carrirre [sic] & Hastings ... who sits





4. Marshal Joseph Joffre breaking ground for the Lafayette memorial while Baltimore Mayor James H. Preston gestures in appreciation, 1917  
*Maryland Historical Society*

on the National Fine Arts Commission in Washington and comes through Baltimore quite frequently, is a very exceptional man in this line, or Mr. Ernest Graham, of Burnham & Graham, would be available.”<sup>11</sup>

In the end Preston took matters into his own hands and invited Thomas Hastings (1860–1929), of the New York firm of Carrère & Hastings, to Baltimore to discuss “one or two civic problems,” taking the opportunity to include the Lafayette memorial. The two had met in Washington, when Preston appeared in front of the Commission of Fine Arts, on which both Hastings and Olmsted Jr. served, in conjunction with Preston’s advocacy of the memorial to Francis Scott Key for Fort McHenry. The Baltimore mayor and the New York architect apparently found themselves to be kindred spirits in ideas about city planning, and both were passionate about promoting City Beautiful principles. This movement defined a new modernism that stressed artistic public design as good for the health and prosperity of a community. It would dramatically reshape many American cities for the new

century to meet the demands of modern transportation systems, new technologies of lighting and communications, and shifting demographics. Hastings eagerly replied that he would come to Baltimore, as he was “most interested in anything that has to do with the civic development of your beautiful city.”<sup>12</sup>

After the groundbreaking Preston had briefly considered the sculptor Daniel Chester French (1850–1931) for the creation of the Lafayette memorial statue. Preston decided on Hastings after consulting with influential Baltimore architect William M. Ellicott (1863–1944), who endorsed engaging Hastings as opposed to a sculptor because “the problem is so largely architectural in its balance between the [Washington] Monument, and the parkings etc., surrounding it.”<sup>13</sup> In addition to the firm’s general architectural reputation it was well known that Hastings had designed the pedestal and architectural setting in the court of the Louvre for an equestrian statue of Lafayette designed by Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865–1925), who was also considered as sculptor of the Baltimore memorial. At an early stage in the design Bartlett’s participation seemed so likely that in one of his drawings Hastings used the silhouette of the Paris sculpture to suggest the appearance of the Baltimore memorial (see fig. 12). The design history of the sculpture itself is not recounted here; ultimately the commission was given to another American sculptor, Andrew O’Connor (1874–1941), who had worked with Carrère & Hastings on bas-reliefs for the Memorial Amphitheater in Arlington National Cemetery.

### Carrère & Hastings

Hastings was, by 1917, the surviving member of the architectural practice that he had begun in 1885 with John Mervin Carrère (1858–1911). As a team they were responsible for one of the most outstanding civic accomplishments of their age, the New York

Public Library (1897). This commission catapulted them to fame in the early twentieth century, garnering numerous public and private commissions. In their architectural practice the team had become recognized as masters of carefully thought-out plans and for their emphasis on designing buildings from the inside out and on ordering the components of a structure according to the importance of their functions. The ordering dictated not only the elevation of a structure but also its ornamentation.<sup>14</sup> This design approach, which was characteristic of the partners' training at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, drew on a wide range of historic precedents.

The partners also displayed a particular interest in harmonizing a building with its site. Regarding their recently completed First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Philadelphia, one architecture critic observed in 1911: "The public seems to be awakening to the fact that the architect can improve his building, and to an extent worth payment in the treatment of the setting, and Messrs. Carrere and Hastings have, perhaps more than any other architects practicing in the country, accomplished this result."<sup>15</sup> Their exceptional sensitivity to site design allowed the firm to become leaders in the emerging field of city planning, which gained enormous momentum in the early twentieth century during the City Beautiful movement. The architectural, landscape, and city planning history of the firm was largely neglected after the rise of international modernism, but its contributions in these fields are now recognized as among the most important of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, the firm's long engagement with the major urban center of Baltimore has not received full consideration in recent studies.<sup>16</sup>

Both Carrère and Hastings had professional and personal connections to Baltimore well before Preston took office in 1911. The architectural pair met in Baltimore while both were in the employ of the firm of McKim, Mead & White, which in the 1880s

had designed the Ross Winans house (1883) on St. Paul Street in the Mount Vernon area and the Robert Garrett mansion on Mount Vernon Place (1884). As both the Winans and Garrett fortunes had been made in the railroad industry, it is not surprising that while working on these projects the duo found their first major individual patron in the Florida railroad tycoon Henry Flagler.

While Carrère and Hastings may have formed their professional alliance working together in Baltimore, Carrère's connections to the city went much deeper. His great-grandfather John Carrère (1759–1841) had immigrated to Baltimore from France in the 1790s and immediately found a place among the city's rich mercantile class. Several generations of Carrères grew up in Baltimore, including the architect's father, John Mervin Carrère. By the turn of the twentieth century Carrère was related to some of the oldest and most distinguished families in the city.<sup>17</sup>

Carrère's connections to Baltimore, his position as a rising star in American architectural circles because of his work as a civic planner, and his role as chief architect and head of the board of architects responsible for designing the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo (1901) inspired an invitation to him from the Arundell Club in Baltimore to speak on "park extension and municipal architecture." The Municipal Art Society joined in sponsoring this lecture at its annual meeting in January 1902, on the subject of the extension of park systems and their relation to city planning. Carrère's lecture was one of several given at the meeting, the other principal talk being on the city of the future.<sup>18</sup> The Arundell Club was a women's club formed in 1894 to support efficient government management. The Municipal Art Society was founded in 1899 by Baltimore citizens interested in promoting park development and civic planning. It did so by sponsoring lectures and exhibitions on art and architecture and by encouraging civic leaders to integrate the arts into planning decisions. In its early years the society viewed adequate parks and the orderly





5. Mount Vernon Place looking west, c. 1903  
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development of the city proper to be the two most important issues facing the city. The founding of this nongovernmental organization followed the formation of the city's Art Commission, organized in 1895 and composed of the mayor and seven appointees from cultural organizations. Since the Municipal Art Society was not affiliated with the city, it had greater freedom to promote its agenda, and during this period its opinion clearly mattered to those in city hall, as its membership grew quickly. At the close of its first year, in December 1899, it sponsored the first national municipal art conference, bringing in authorities on art and civic planning from around the country.<sup>19</sup>

In his Baltimore lecture, Carrère spoke to the promotional interests of the society in one of his earliest public pronouncements, if not his first, of his park and city planning philosophies—ideas that would guide his and the firm's design choices through the next several decades. In discussing his philosophy for parks within and outside a city, Carrère explained that in "the city the treatment would be mostly formal. In some instances, as in the case of public squares, it would be almost entirely architectural." He

noted, in fact, that the Pan-American Exposition had introduced "a phase of landscape work which until lately has not been popular in this country—the extremely formal development of landscapes,—but it is becoming better appreciated." Carrère noted that the exposition might "lead to some interesting development in the same way that the object lesson of monumental architecture did in the case of the Chicago Exposition."<sup>20</sup>

While a city might have a highly formal center, Carrère argued, radiating out from this would be streets planned with good views of architectural or sculptural points of interest along the way; farther out, parkways would emerge, and "nature would gradually assert herself" in the form of parks encircling the city. Carrère cited Paris as the outstanding example of this formal-to-natural progression, beginning at "the very heart" of the city, the Place de la Concorde. He observed that a similar treatment could be realized in Baltimore, perhaps beginning at Mount Vernon Place, which "naturally occurs to one as the central point of the city." Noting that it was "dignified and full of character," he also observed that it was unfortunate that some of its approaches from the cardinal directions were "not beautiful avenues with trees of such a character as to be easily kept low or at a height as would lengthen the perspective leading up to the monument and give it a dignified approach which it now lacks, without hiding it." Speaking to a current concern of the Municipal Art Society, Carrère noted that "abnormally high buildings" were appearing on Mount Vernon Place, a reference to the building in the mid-1890s of two multiunit high rises, the Hotel Stafford and The Severn apartments, both of which introduced changes in scale and use (fig. 5). The society's concern about these buildings, which to its members signaled an unacceptable transformation of the physical and economic character of Mount Vernon Place, led to the passage of a 1904 Maryland law restricting the height of the surrounding buildings, the first building height law

enacted in the state. As a corrective, Carrère suggested trees as a framing device to create uniformity around the squares, while hiding any irregularities around its perimeter.<sup>21</sup>

Above all, Carrère stressed that Baltimoreans must develop a long-range plan for the growth of the city, developed by a commission of experts “so competent and so distinguished that their opinion will be accepted as authoritative.” Even if this scheme was not followed to the letter, the master plan would deter the haphazard development that had plagued American cities, including Baltimore, since the nineteenth century. Few American cities, he noted, had such a distinguished beginning as nearby Washington, where Pierre Charles L’Enfant had set out an impressive plan, one that, regrettably, had not always been followed.<sup>22</sup> Baltimore in particular grew quickly in the late eighteenth century and early years of the nineteenth. An 1812 account of the city noted that it had numerous well-built public buildings and houses but that none of them were situated in public view on the city’s main thoroughfare, Baltimore Street. By the time of Carrère’s speech a modest cluster of public buildings had emerged around Monument Square, but little had been accomplished in the central part of the city to position public buildings in distinguished settings.<sup>23</sup>

Carrère’s speech not only encouraged but emboldened the Municipal Art Society to continue to push for park expansion. On April 20, 1903, the society invited Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., then working on a new park project in Baltimore (Wyman Park), to speak to the group on his work on the Senate Park Commission in Washington. That project, embodied in what is often called the McMillan Plan, attempted to recapture the intent of L’Enfant’s original design for Washington, which, Olmsted informed the group, was “stimulating” where it had been realized, but “disappointing” where it had been abandoned. Within two weeks of the lecture, the society commissioned Olmsted’s firm to develop a master plan for the extension of parks throughout the city, fronting

the money for the project on the assumption that the city would see its value upon completion and reimburse the organization. The report was presented to the society in November 1903, the Board of Park Commissioners adopted its resolution and payment, and society president Theodore Marburg (1862–1946) presented the final document to the city on February 5, 1904.<sup>24</sup>

Just days later, the Great Baltimore Fire destroyed nearly all of the city’s central business district. Much of the rebuilding that followed was devoted to immediate reconstruction of office buildings so that the city could return to business. In this catastrophic environment, city and park planning took a back seat, and the Municipal Art Society’s promotion of the master plan for the center of the city was postponed. Although the Burnt District Commission, which was responsible for planning reconstruction, did take the opportunity to widen some streets, Sherlock Swann, the commission chairman, would later report to Mayor Preston that there had been “decided antipathy to the acquirement of any property within the Burnt District lines for park purposes.”<sup>25</sup>

### The 1909 City Plan

Once the emergency had passed, the Municipal Art Society once again pushed for the development of a city plan and in 1906 invited Carrère and another New York architect, Arnold W. Brunner (1857–1925), to serve on an advisory commission to investigate a new plan. They were logical choices, as the pair, in association with Daniel H. Burnham (1846–1912), had developed Cleveland’s 1903 Group Plan, a highly publicized city plan, and Carrère with partner Hastings was designing new Senate and House office buildings for Washington and a planned extension to the Capitol. The project was launched with the goal of making Baltimore “the most beautiful city in America,” and Olmsted Jr., then still working on the McMillan Plan for Washington, was subsequently asked to assist.<sup>26</sup>

In November 1909 Carrère and Brunner, without Olmsted, presented their findings to Mayor J. Barry Mahool (1870–1935), the city council, and representatives of important business interests.<sup>27</sup> Brunner made the point that their work was not to be viewed as the “City Beautiful,” but as the “City Sensible,” suggesting that if wise choices were made the results would be beautiful. As they had advocated in Cleveland, Carrère and Brunner recommended grouping public buildings around a large open space, suggesting that even mediocre buildings could have dignity if placed in a planned scheme. Acknowledging that there were two ways to design cities, the pair noted: “We have chosen the formal method of design rather than the picturesque. We are not insensible to the charm of many of the Old World cities but this charm is largely the result of time and tradition and the picturesque is not to be deliberately constructed.” Suggesting a significant change in taste from nineteenth-century landscape design, they observed that the picturesque was “mere affectation. Our minds do not work that way; an orderly arrangement is the most natural for us.”<sup>28</sup> Thus, they argued for a contemporary approach that was in the design language of a formal, or geometrically symmetrical style.

The 1909 plan largely addressed creating a civic center around Baltimore City Hall, which by this period was surrounded by a jumble of buildings in various stages of decay (fig. 6). Baltimore’s city hall (1867–1875) had been designed in the Second Empire style by local architect George W. Frederick (1842–1924). Erected at the northwest corner of Holliday Street and Fayette Street, the building replaced a number of early nineteenth-century mansions. By the time it was built, however, the elites had abandoned this street, as well as areas directly east on Gay Street, and their houses had either been demolished for commercial structures or altered into factories, tenements, and saloons. The placement of City Hall here may have been the impetus for establishing an east–west axis that

had emerged by the time of the 1909 plan, marked by buildings that included a US post office on the east side of Monument Square (on Calvert Street) to the west and a new courthouse on the west side of the square.

The 1909 plan called for the acquisition of all of the property east of City Hall, the demolition of all these earlier structures, and the rebuilding of the area into a cohesive complex including formal open space and a concentration of public buildings (figs. 7 and 8). This civic center included a large annex directly to the east of City Hall, behind which an open space would lead to the Jones Falls, a stream that entered the city from the north. The approach was several blocks long, framed by formal lines of pleached trees and entered through a monumental gateway on the east. Around this core of buildings and park, other public buildings required by the city, state, or federal government could be placed in the future. Referring to Georges-Eugène Haussmann’s Paris and the Ringstrasse in Vienna, Brunner and Carrère proposed several new monumental approaches to the center, including one designed by city civil engineer Calvin W. Hendrick, which buried the Jones Falls. Although the stream had provided much of the city’s early water power for milling operations, it also frequently flooded its banks and by the early twentieth century was often dirty and stagnant. Containing it was forward thinking not only for public safety and hygiene, but because it created a tree-lined boulevard leading to the Civic Center. At its northern end the boulevard would merge with Mount Royal Avenue and by extension link to one of the city’s large early parks, Druid Hill Park, and to the larger network of parks envisioned in the 1904 Olmsted park plan. Farther west, the committee proposed that Howard Street could be extended and artfully connected with Mount Royal Avenue, thereby forming a belt around the city. The assembled parties endorsed the plan, and in 1910 Mayor Mahool legally constituted the Commission on City Plan to further its objectives.<sup>29</sup>



6. View of Baltimore City Hall looking west, c. 1909

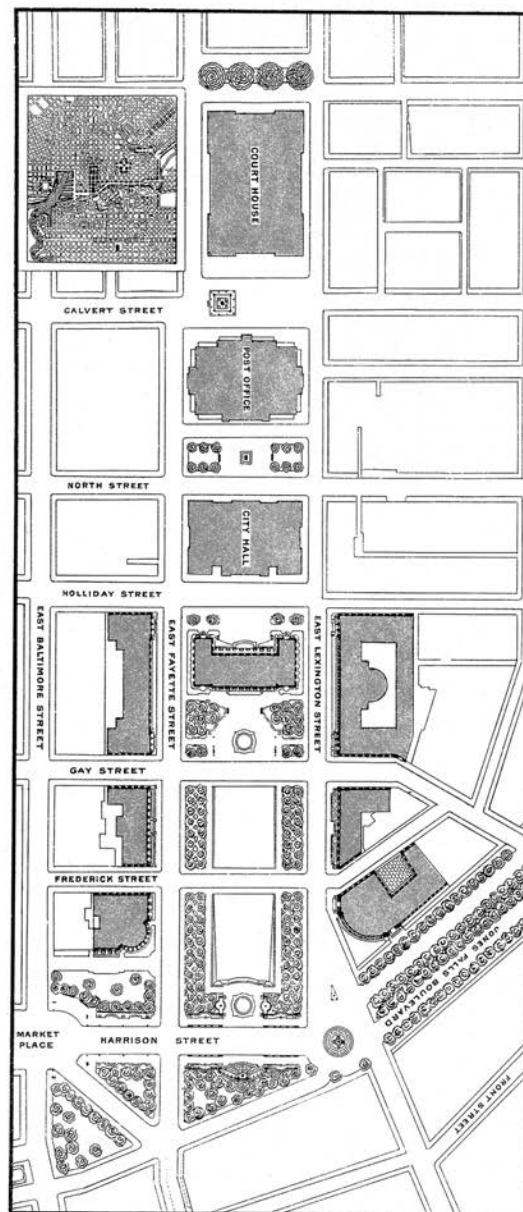
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7. Carrère, Brunner & Olmsted, Civic Center, rendering, 1909

*Municipal Art Society, Partial Report on "City Plan" (Baltimore, 1910); New York Public Library*



8. Carrère, Brunner & Olmsted, Civic Center, plan (with west at top), 1909  
Municipal Art Society, Partial Report on "City Plan" (Baltimore, 1910); New York Public Library



In May 1911 James Preston came into office with a mandate and a blueprint to promote large-scale change in the civic landscape. The *Baltimore American* quoted his statement that he was determined “to bring about a city beautiful, as exemplified by a modern system of ornamental street lamps.” He advocated a “Great White Way” installation (using lighting with very bright luminous arc bulbs covered by decorative globes, then being promoted by George A. Miller of New York) in time for the Demo-

cratic National Convention, to be held in the city in June 1912. Baltimore had been using a combination of gas and electric fixtures since the early 1880s and was the first American city to be lit with gas streetlights. The new system, which replaced some of the older lighting, encompassed sixty blocks and was stated to be the largest installation of its kind in the country, making Baltimore “the most beautifully lighted city on the American Continent.”<sup>30</sup>

### Hastings' Commission

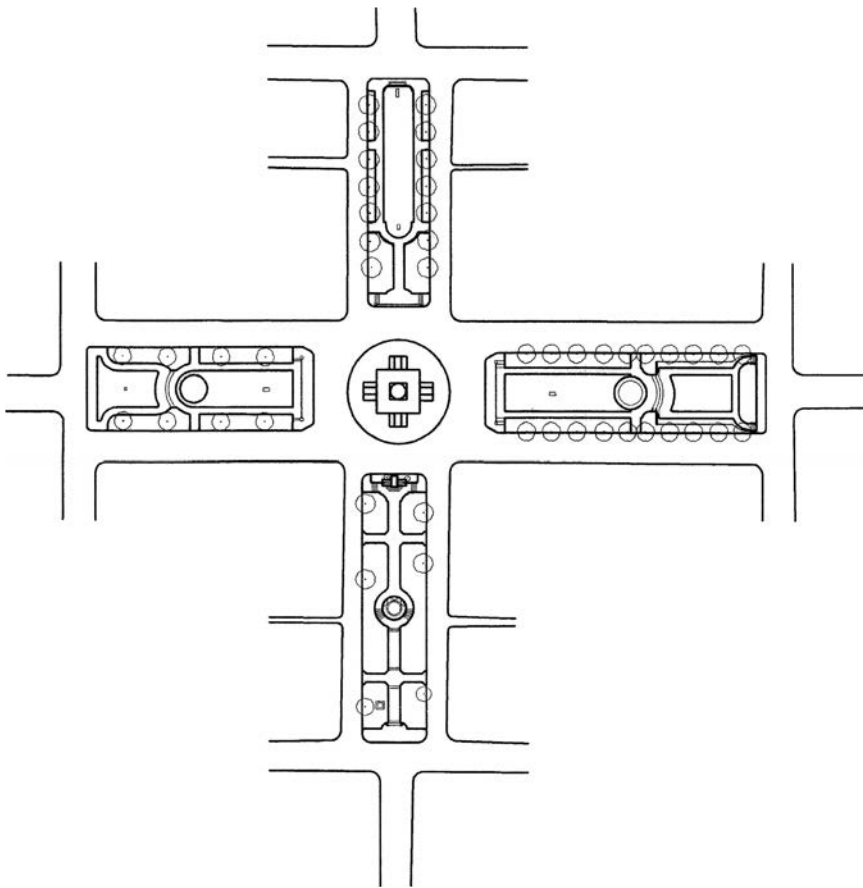
Preston's Mount Vernon Place project was a new initiative of his second term, but solutions to his other “civic problems,” the St. Paul Street Improvement and Civic Center projects, had moved at a glacial pace for several years. The Civic Center idea had been proposed in 1909 by Carrère and others and was reenergized by a 1915 ordinance approving property acquisition. The St. Paul Street project responded to a recommendation in the 1909 plan for improved streets heading north out of the central business district and connected the proposed civic center via a tree-lined boulevard to Mount Vernon Place. The mayor authorized an ordinance to realize the project in March 1915, enabling the acquisition and demolition of properties. City engineer Hendrick, who in Preston's first term had successfully buried the Jones Falls—although not as the artistic tree-lined boulevard mapped out in the 1909 plan—provided plans recommending that the St. Paul Street area, with little alteration to the existing steep grade, be turned into a park with a central walkway for pedestrians (fig. 9).<sup>31</sup>

After deciding on Hastings to address this trio of projects, over the course of two years Preston exchanged hundreds of letters with his chosen architect and met with members of the firm in New York and Baltimore on numerous occasions. The mayor's selection of Hastings to realize the Lafayette statue and tackle contemporary urban problems was heartily endorsed by the Baltimore









10. Carrère & Hastings, early designs for Mount Vernon Place, 1917, as published in *American Architect*, redrawn by the Historic American Landscapes Survey, and revised by author

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initial recommendations for the three projects. It is clear that the designs for Mount Vernon Place and St. Paul Street were the mayor's priority, and these two projects were to be treated as one construction project, with the Civic Center to follow. Accounts of Hastings' presentation observed that the plans were so comprehensive and convincing, both "technically and artistically," that "not a single alteration, addition or subtraction was suggested," a signal achievement in view of the knowledgeable and engaged audience.<sup>35</sup>

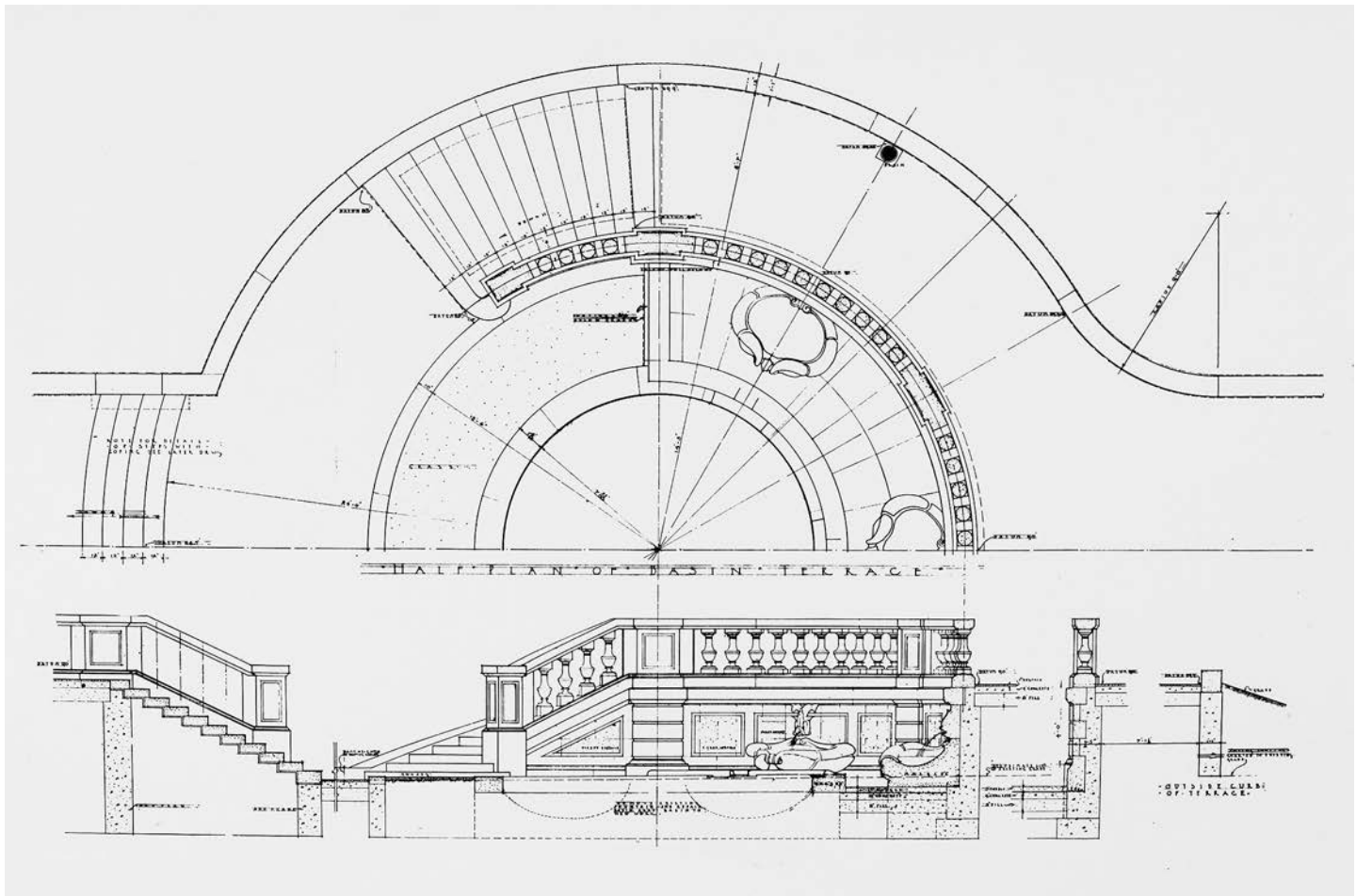
The projects each evolved in a different way: federal government policies relating to wartime work and public sentiment during war as well as procedural and financial hurdles altered their courses of development. The three projects would prove too ambitious to be fully accomplished during Preston's second term in office, and he lost his bid for reelection to a third term in early

1919. However, throughout his remaining time in office he pushed for the realization of these plans under either his own or his successor's auspices.

#### *Mount Vernon Place*

Despite the initial wave of enthusiasm for the Lafayette statue, this memorial and the Mount Vernon Place project proved the most challenging to accomplish. Unlike St. Paul Street or the Civic Center area, Mount Vernon Place was thought to be sacrosanct, and in contrast to the other locations, whose wealthy residents were long gone, it was home to some of the city's most influential citizens. After much debate regarding the site for the Lafayette statue, a location at the top of the south square was selected, where, Preston observed to President Woodrow Wilson, "these two great leaders will be historically and artistically grouped together with fitting dignity."<sup>36</sup>

Hastings was given the latitude to redesign completely the hardscape of all four squares, although he was encouraged to retain the round fountain basins in the east and west squares.<sup>37</sup> The hardscape work for Mount Vernon Place was mapped out in a series of plans, including the surviving drawings for proposed concrete sidewalks, granite steps, marble retaining walls, balustrades, and fountains. Hastings' first plans for the squares displayed an intimate scale inherently suited to the design of small formal gardens that were conceived as outdoor rooms (fig. 10). Simplified lawn panels became a principal design element, made possible by the reduction in the complexity of the pathway shapes: the Olmstedian curvilinear circulation was largely replaced by fewer, more regular geometric shapes and straight lines, in keeping with the classical simplicity of the monument (see fig. 3). The south square in this initial scheme was little altered in plan, but it and the other squares were altered in section. In the south square the central pathway, which had formerly been a rather steeply pitched ramp with one major terrace at the point of the fountain,

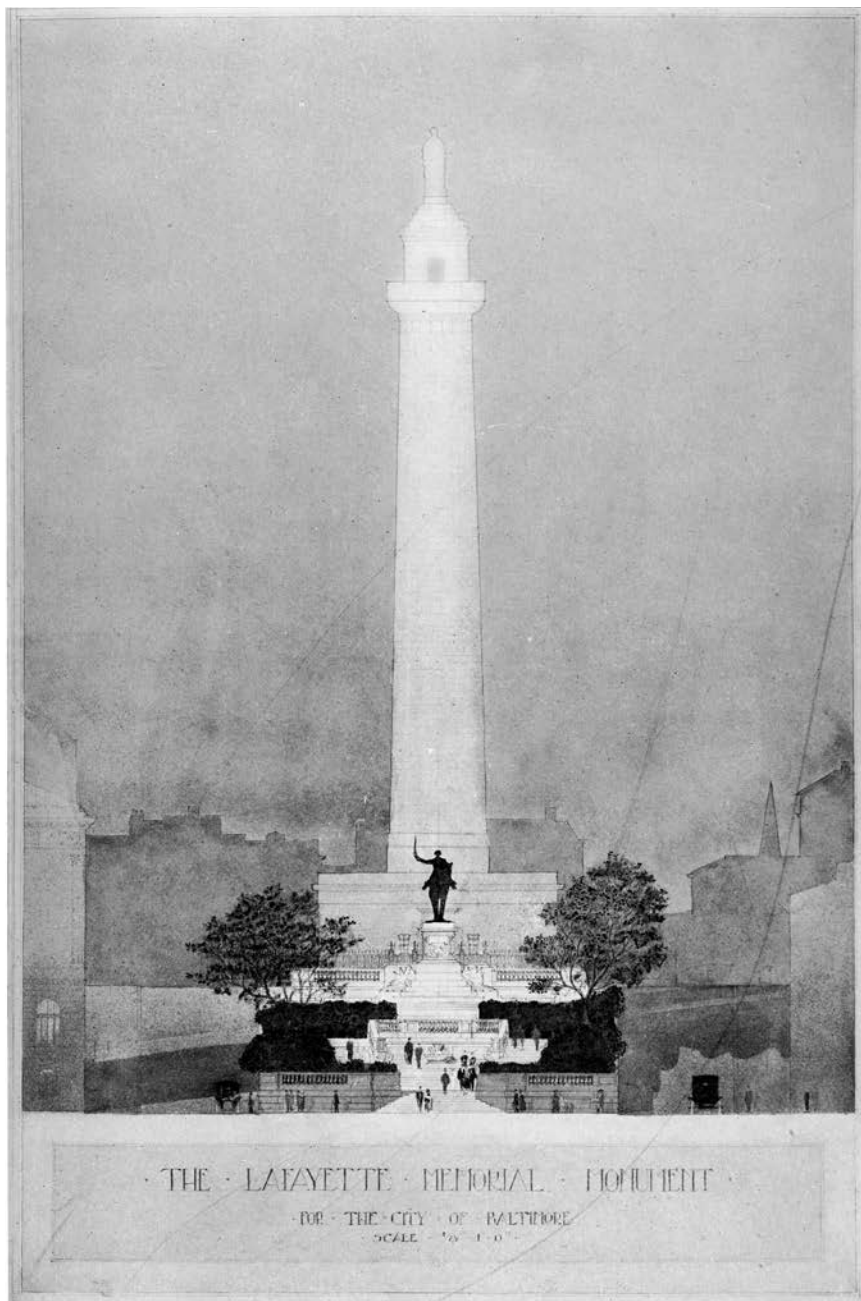


11. Carrère & Hastings, Mount Vernon Place, south square, plan and section of fountain, 1917  
*American Architect*, January 16, 1918

was significantly regraded into several broader terraces, including a reconfigured terrace for a new fountain (fig. 11) and a large one at the northern edge, which was to serve as the platform for the Lafayette sculpture. Hastings made several renderings of the Lafayette statue, including a distant view showing it dramatically silhouetted against the Washington Monument and carefully framed by foliage (figs. 12 and 13; compare fig. 14). This new grading and breaks in perspective caused by the various balustrades, foliage framing, and juxtaposition of the dark shadowy mass of the statue against the white marble of the monument were developed to emphasize the Washington Monument as the “architectural climax” of the entire composition. In the three other squares regrading for all of the park ends closest to the monument, where the ends of

the squares were lengthened and squared off, created the space for new surrounding balustrades. Also, as the mounding constructed during the Olmsted era in the centers of these three squares was to be leveled, most of the sculptures were lowered in grade. The stone walls enclosing the squares were to be replaced with new marble balustrades and retaining walls.<sup>38</sup>

As the design progressed, it was monitored in the popular and the professional press. Questions were raised in the *Baltimore Sun* about the proposed balustrades. Hastings responded in a letter to architect Josias Pennington, president of the Commission on City Plan, which was published in the *Baltimore American*, arguing that the same question could be asked of the “most famous square in the world,” the Place de la Concorde:



12. Carrère & Hastings, Mount Vernon Place, south square, Lafayette statue and Washington Monument, 1917  
*American Architect*, January 16, 1918

One of the most important principles of good planning when designing a public square is to always bear in mind that the square should be lower in the center than on the sides. A very unfortunate situation has always obtained in these four arms to Mt. Vernon Square. The ground with the grass on it was higher than the side roads. The only possible way to lower them was to meet their intersection with the roadbed around the monument by way of a low terrace to make the transition. Given this terrace, the only thing was to put the balus-

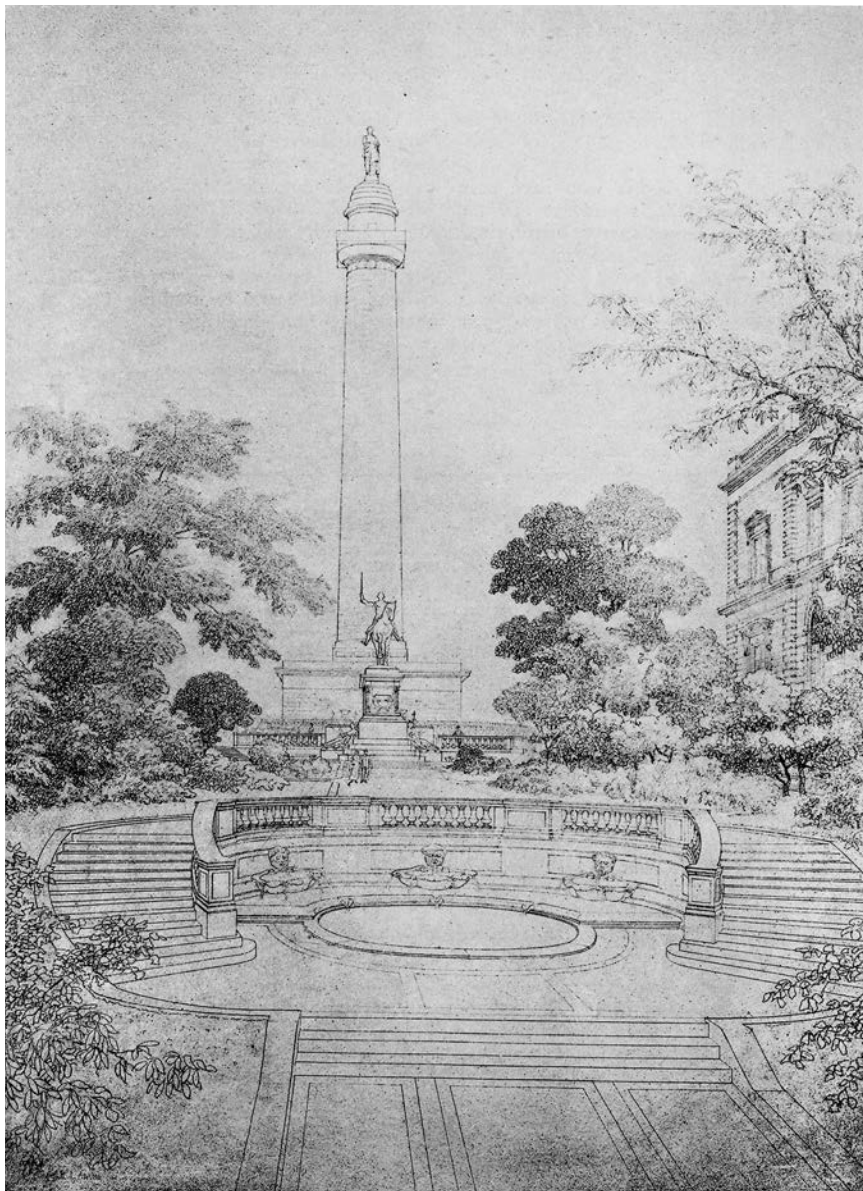
trade on it, — a balustrade which one associates with the human scale gives real scale to the monument and makes it look its real size. It also gives the Square platform for the monument to stand upon instead of a circular one which was badly related to the four corners of the buildings around the monument.<sup>39</sup>

Hastings' observations suggest how functionality and design were intertwined in the firm's design decisions here as they would be elsewhere.

Carrère and Hastings believed that sculpture should be integral to an architectural program. As the sculptures had been placed on or around pathways that were being moved, their former positions no longer made sense, especially because, according to Hastings, the statues, including the allegorical bronzes of War, Peace, Order, and Force, by Antoine-Louis Barye (1796–1875), had been “thrown down anywhere, unrelated to anything and not properly appreciated.”<sup>40</sup> In an attempt to make some of the sculptures integral to the architectural framework of the squares, Hastings moved the four Barye allegories from their positions in the center of the west square, placing them on the corner plinths of the new balustrades of both the west and east squares, facing the monument, an arrangement he believed would be especially evocative after the placement of the new Lafayette bronze in the south square.<sup>41</sup> The addition of the Lafayette statue and the repositioning of the allegories transformed the sculptures from a collection of art objects, some with local significance, to a program with national and symbolic meaning linked to the American Revolution and to democracy.

A lighting plan and the question of whether the parks should be electrified concerned William Mohr, superintendent of lamps and lighting, who reported that the “gas lighting systems now installed in these [Mount Vernon Place] Squares is inadequate and antiquated, and it seems to me a more modern type of lighting and fixture should be considered to harmonize with the new conditions.” Hastings, in the interest of





13. Carrère & Hastings, Mount Vernon Place, south square, Lafayette statue and Washington Monument, 1917  
*American Architect*, January 16, 1918

economy, first suggested that the “ornamental post and globe” used in some of the city’s squares would be sufficient. Although he was subsequently asked to design a unique light fixture, it is unclear whether a new design was presented. The lights first installed, consisting of a round ball globe on a decorative pole (fig. 15), were different from those used on the contemporaneous project on St. Paul Street.<sup>42</sup>

For the initial campaign Hastings encouraged the retention of the existing trees in the west, east, and north squares, which

at the time presented a canopy of uniform size and height within each square. In 1915 eight “beautiful and symmetrical” matched pin oaks had been transplanted to the west square in celebration of the Washington Monument centennial, while the east square had an older canopy of silver maples. The north square as well had an older canopy of uniform trees, European lindens (see, for example, fig. 2). While the north square had a few shrubs at its entrances, the east and west squares had none, their only ornamentation being planting beds with annuals. The south square presented an appearance different from that of the others, as it was fully planted with a mixture of largely deciduous shrubbery, with only some perimeter trees remaining from an earlier planting campaign. Dating from the Olmsted period, this landscaping was a solution to the problem created by the small size and steep grade of this square, which did not lend itself to a grass plat.<sup>43</sup> Hastings’ first stage of work kept the existing trees and shrubbery until the hardscape had been installed, after which necessary planting adjustments could be made (see figs. 12 and 14).<sup>44</sup> The firm also presented the city with a detailed ground-plane planting plan for the west, north, and east squares. Hastings encouraged the use of evergreens at points where they might be seen near the white marble balustrades, a striking contrast he thought “would appeal to the general public” year round. Hastings noted that these evergreens could be box-wood or holly plants, in keeping with the “Colonial” character of the monument and reenvisioned squares.<sup>45</sup>

In a letter to the trustees of the Peabody Institute, Hastings described his firm as the “architects commissioned to restore certain features of the Mt. Vernon Square so as to harmonize with the splendid old Washington statue, designed by Mills, and which is Colonial in character; and at the same time we have been asked to design the architectural features of the Lafayette memorial to compose and harmonize with their surroundings.” That a monu-



14. Mount Vernon Place, south square, 1946  
*Maryland Historical Society*

ment from 1815 was viewed as “Colonial” was typical of the American Colonial Revival, which drew loosely from classically inspired antebellum design sources.<sup>46</sup> In designing these new surroundings, for instance, Hastings traveled to Charlottesville, Virginia, to examine Thomas Jefferson’s University of Virginia, which he informed Preston embraced “much interesting Colonial architecture.” He also studied architecture books published in the United States around the time Mills designed the column, claiming that he drew the balustrade and molding profiles from an 1815 pattern book. Hastings also insisted that it was “important that the newer modi-

fied features surrounding the Washington Monument should be of the same, or as nearly as possible the same, material as the monument itself.”<sup>47</sup> To accomplish this, the marble for the new work came from the Beaver Dam quarries near Cockeysville, Maryland, north of Baltimore—the quarry area that had supplied the marble for the monument.<sup>48</sup> The architect made multiple references to his search for “Colonial” (that is, “American”) inspirations and suitable hard- and softscape materials. Clearly he wanted to make the Washington Monument the “dominating feature” of Mount Vernon Place, as was reported of “this dignified city development” in *The American Architect*.<sup>49</sup>

As plans for the project were under development, critics brought up the wartime restraint on new building projects. Other newspaper articles and letters to Preston from representatives of civic organizations voiced concerns about wartime spending, particularly in Mount Vernon Place. They also complained that the changes might alter Mount Vernon Place’s “original” condition. Pennington insisted that nothing being altered was part of the “old original condition” of the squares, but merely the work “carried out some forty years ago,” deflecting any charge that the current plans were impinging on the authenticity of the Mills-era design. Criticizing the Olmsted design from the 1870s, Pennington observed that the “present arrangement of the squares was carried out in a style of work which has been so frequently referred to as not in any way harmonizing with the architectural style of the monument.” Hastings went so far as to say that these “so-called Gothic Victorian accessories made out of polished granite around the old colonial monument” were an act of architectural “vandalism” on the part of someone who could not have understood the monument (see fig. 2). “Our own work in the case of Mount Vernon Square is one of devout submission to the character and temperament of the men who designed the monument in every detail.”<sup>50</sup>



15. Mount Vernon Place, west square, c. 1922, with the new design fully implemented and new lights and trees in place  
*Maryland Historical Society*

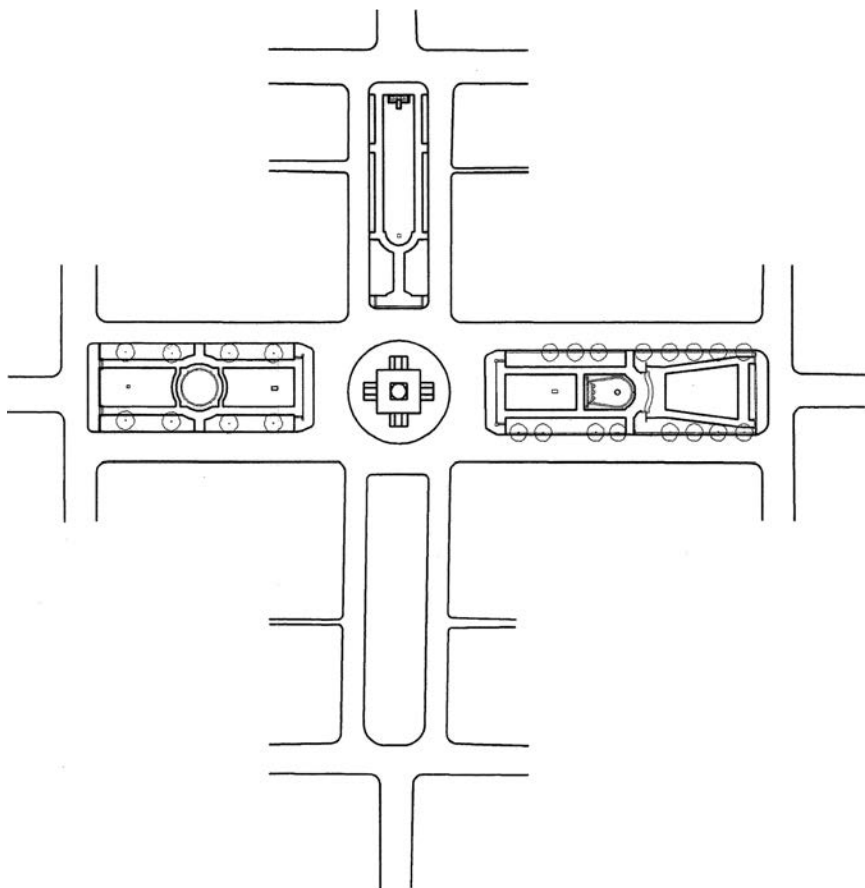


Opposition was expressed not only in concern for retaining the “original” character of Mount Vernon Place but also in reception of the new design. Despite Hastings’ insistence that the new work was in fact retrieving a lost original harmony of design, criticism of the project was couched in terms of concerns about “modern” change. One letter to the editor observed that the squares of Mount Vernon Place were among “the most charming in America. They have what no modern planning can give them, atmosphere, color, charm. What might be the finest scheme of civic planning for a new town in the Middle West, is the poorest taste in an eastern city whose character has been stamped upon it by the passing years.” The writer proposed: “Suppose the new plan should be more truly classical, more letter perfect?” It might not even so be an improvement: “Are we not in danger of being deceived by high sounding phrases, and cleverly rendered architectu[r]al drawings?” As the rhetoric and worry about

this change escalated in the late spring of 1918, the editors of the *Baltimore Sun* published their own thoughts on the matter: “There is no doubt of what we have; there is a great deal of doubt as to what the Mayor proposes to give us in its place. Marble magnificence, the artificial pomp and circumstance of the modern landscape artist’s staged effects, may impress the minds of veneering and fashion-plate types, but there is danger that in this modernness we shall lose a spiritual asset which can never be replaced.”<sup>51</sup>

Despite concerns, Preston and the Board of Park Commissioners were in full agreement that the work should go forward. However, responding to pressures, some of them financial, Preston pulled back on the implementation of plans at Mount Vernon Place, commencing work on all the south square modifications but only the installation of the balustrades in the three other squares. The day armistice was declared, on





16. Carrère & Hastings, new designs for Mount Vernon Place, 1919, redrawn by the Historic American Landscapes Survey from blueprints in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society and revised by author

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, HALS MD-1

November 11, 1918, Hastings wrote to the park commissioners encouraging them to complete the parks according to the original plans. Reiterating his strong interest and his vision for the squares as a whole, he repeated: “I do hope your Board will find its way clear to secure the money to perfect this Square and make it entirely in character with the splendid old Washington Monument.”<sup>52</sup>

With the war over, Hastings was brought back to town at the commencement of 1919 and encouraged to rethink, without reservation, his designs for the three partially completed squares. In February 1919 the firm submitted additional plans for the completion of the east, west, and north squares. Each carefully delineated where new work was already in place and what yet needed to be accomplished (fig. 16). The east square fountain was redesigned as an elaborate cascade responding to the steep

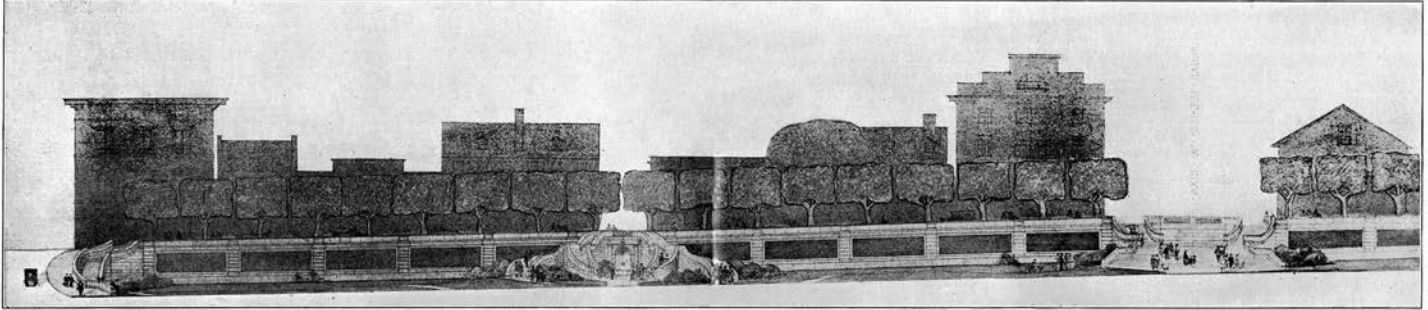
grade, and the sidewalk pattern altered in response. In the west square, a new circular fountain was composed of circular and square shapes. In the north square an exedra was designed for the Howard statue, and in all the squares any vestiges of the Olmsted-era steps and walls were scheduled to be removed.<sup>53</sup> While Preston launched his unsuccessful attempt at a third term, he placed this new work on hold, but the south square work was completed, the plantings were augmented, and the new lighting was installed throughout.<sup>54</sup>

#### *St. Paul Street*

Hastings’ plan for St. Paul Street moved forward to completion under Preston’s administration with very few complications or changes to its original design.<sup>55</sup> The conditions of this site, which was being cleared when the architect was brought in, included an extreme change of grade on its very narrow east–west axis between St. Paul Street on the west and Courtland Street on the east. The planned improvement had to reconcile this shift, which left the first floors of the buildings on the east side of Courtland easily two stories below the entrances to the buildings on the west side of St. Paul.

The architect approached this project as a “sunken garden,” the term most often used to describe the proposed work at the time. Notably, Hastings observed that, in contrast to his work at Mount Vernon Place, “there was no historic monument with which our design had to conform” and therefore “greater freedom of design.” Thus his “object [was] primarily a practical study ... to improve the circulation and to connect the Municipal Center with Mt. Vernon Square, [and] at the same time improve the general character of the neighborhood, which though so near to City center had become stagnant and out of touch with its vicinity.”<sup>56</sup>

On St. Paul Street, the central area of the street improvement was treated as a divided boulevard, with a long retaining wall, extending for several city blocks between Saratoga and Franklin Streets, cutting away



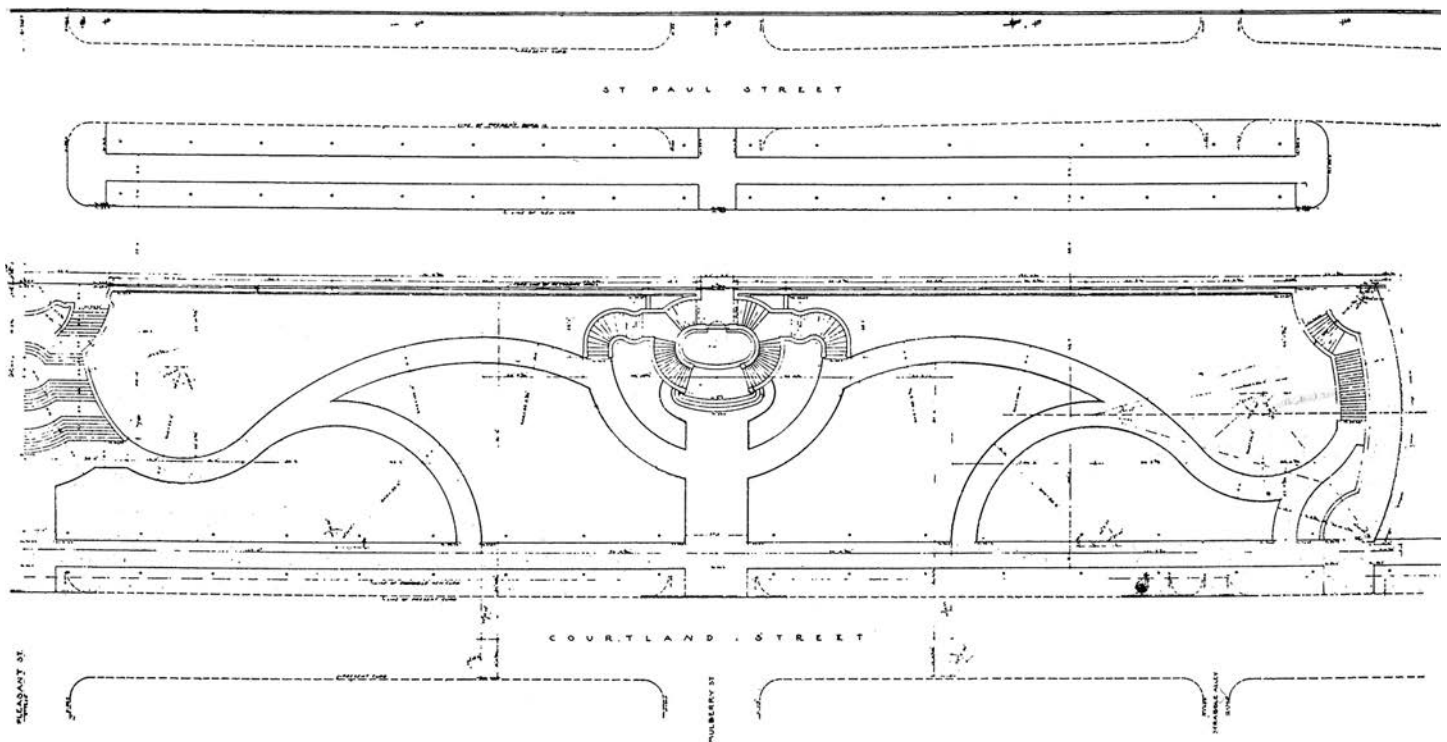
17. Carrère & Hastings, St. Paul Street Improvement, elevation, 1917  
Baltimore Municipal Journal, October 5, 1917; Enoch Pratt Free Library

18. Carrère & Hastings, St. Paul Street Improvement, plan of central area, 1917  
American Architect, January 16, 1918

the hillside and adding drama and monumentality. This feature, originally intended to be built of stone, with the stairs in either marble or granite, and the walls of Indiana limestone with inset panels of brick, was carried out in concrete and brick (fig. 17). The plan (fig. 18) called for a series of alternating cascading stairways, the more elaborate ornamented with a fountain, likened by the press to an “old Italian type,” or more specifically, by Hastings, to the Spanish Steps in Rome. New uniform electric street lighting, the “Ornamental Luminous Arc Lamp” the city had adopted several years

before as the Baltimore standard, replaced an admixture of earlier electric and gas fixtures on both St. Paul and Courtland Streets.<sup>57</sup>

Allées of pleached trees on St. Paul Street were to be pruned into crisp cubic forms, acting as a unifying device to hide the many irregular building shapes behind them (see fig. 17). On the lower level on the park side of Courtland Street, a row of evenly matched trees flanked the sidewalk. In the central park area, “grouped shrubbery and floral arrangements” were planned at various intersections of the curvilinear pathways. While







19. St. Paul Street Improvement,  
1919  
Baltimore Sun, 1919, *author  
collection*

20. St. Paul Street Improvement,  
c. 1920s  
*Library of Congress, Prints and  
Photographs Division*

the southern and northern terminuses of the improvement were of different shapes and uses (a sunken car park on the south and a park at the north), the transition to both of these areas was a curved street, on the

outside portion of which massed shrubbery framed the large centerpiece of masonry work. With plans approved and the existing buildings demolished, a year-long building and planting campaign commenced in April 1918 (figs. 19 and 20).<sup>58</sup>

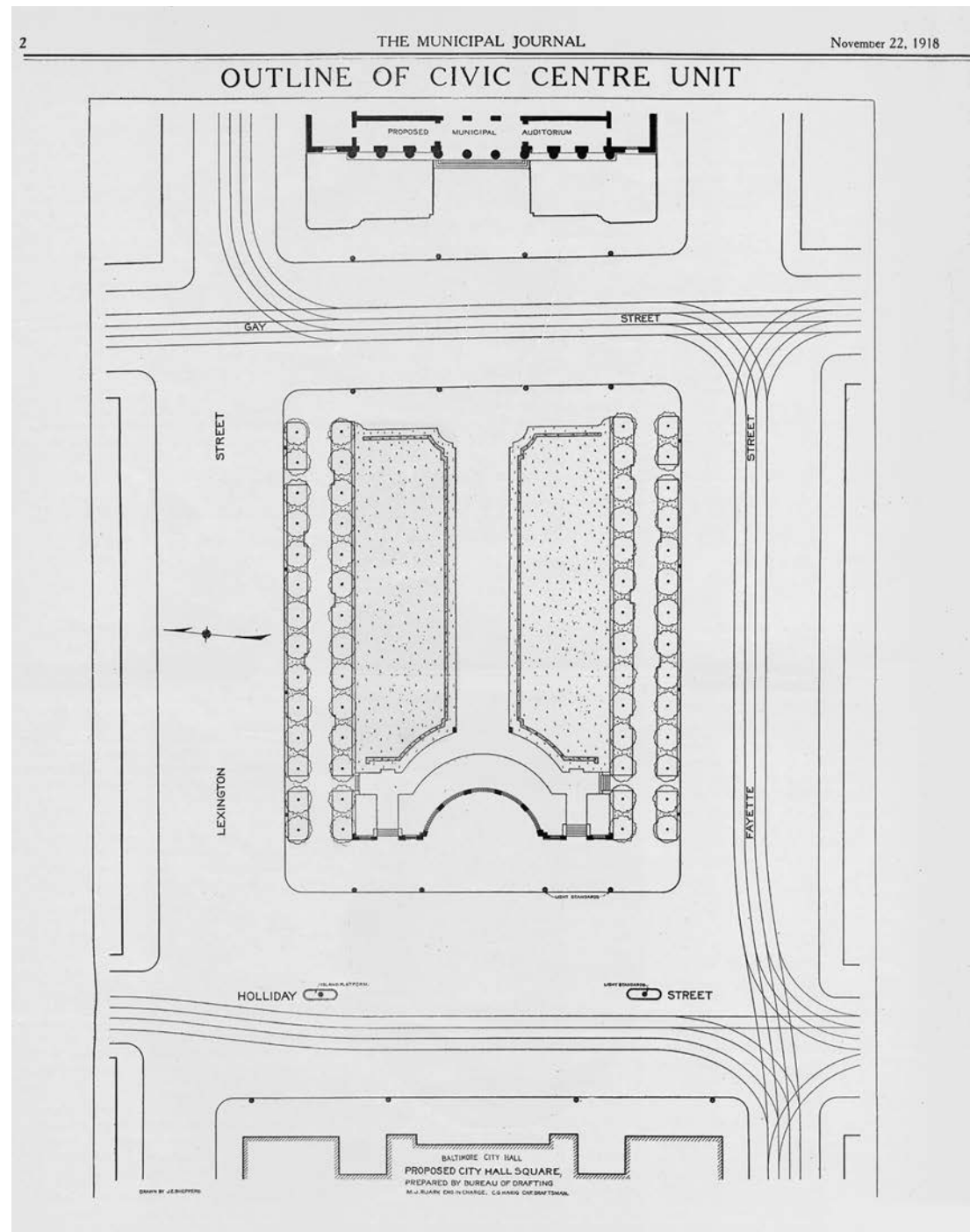
#### *Civic Center*

As mentioned, Preston's priorities immediately after hiring Hastings were clearly focused on Mount Vernon Place and St. Paul Street, but Hastings had created the original drawings for the 1909 city plan (see figs. 7 and 8).<sup>59</sup> At the time Hastings was brought in, in June 1917, the Municipal Art Society had recently reaffirmed its wish for a city hall annex, behind which would be a park area, followed by a convention, music, and exhibition hall at the realized Fallsway, the street that covered the Jones Falls, which had been completed in 1915. The convention center was frequently discussed, as is any large-scale civic undertaking, as an economic development tool, apparently in response to the 1912 Democratic National Convention, which had recently been held in the city.<sup>60</sup>





21. Carrère & Hastings, Civic Center, plan, 1918  
 Baltimore Municipal Journal,  
 November 22, 1918; Enoch Pratt  
 Free Library



In the winter of 1917–1918, while the other two projects were moving forward, Hastings continued to work on ideas for the Civic Center, and by March 1918 Preston had reviewed well-developed plans for this project. In April Hastings was authorized to make working plans that could be carried

out by the next administration, especially the proposed park design, which had been moved from the east of the annex, as suggested in the 1909 plan, to directly in front of City Hall (fig. 21). As the grade of the property between Holliday and Gay streets was not flat, Hastings opted, as elsewhere,

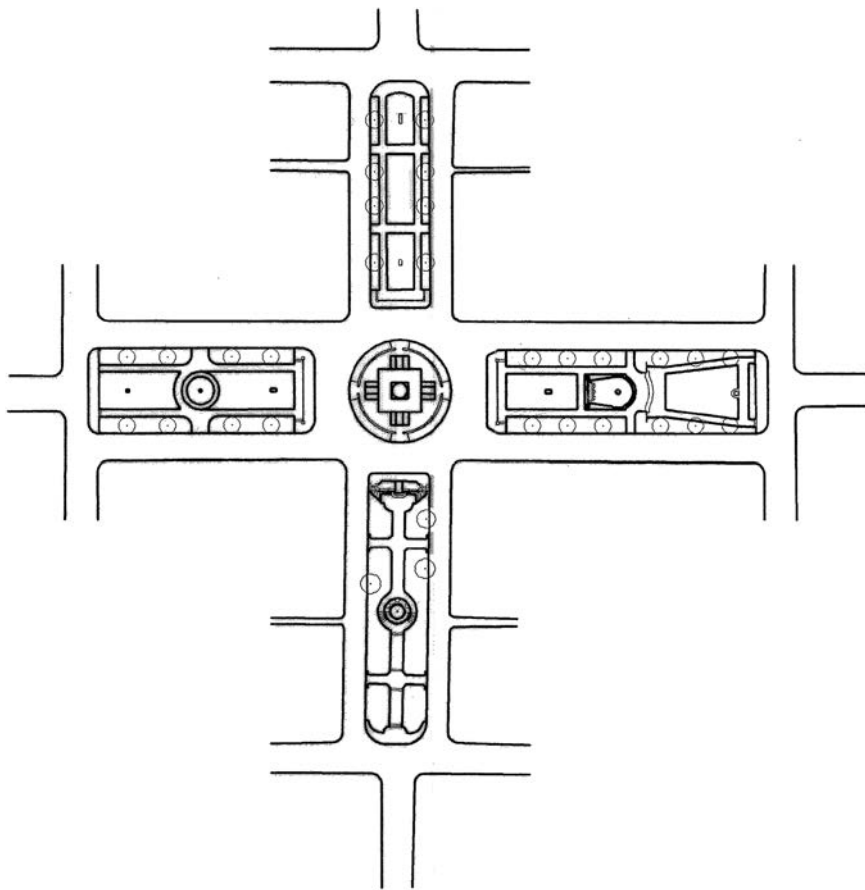
to treat the green space as a “sunken garden,” accommodating the grade change with four small flights of stairs on the west, leading up to a balustrade, which topped the short retaining wall. The entire composition was made to provide an axially symmetrical framed view of City Hall to the west, as well as to provide similar framed views of the planned new building to the east. The lawn panels on the west gained interest by following the curve of the central area of the balustrading, and on a smaller scale, similar incurvate corners ornamented the Gay Street entrance. The shape of these panels was to be emphasized by a hedge mimicking the layout of the concrete pathways. Rows of Norway maples were planned for the north and south sides of the park.<sup>61</sup> As this project evolved, however, the idea of a paved square like the Place Vendôme emerged, with Hastings’ endorsement, some arguing that an “ornamental park without the possibility of utility” would serve no civic function here, unlike a paved space where masses of people could congregate, especially important if, as was also suggested, the new public space might serve a memorial symbolic purpose. Even after Preston lost his bid for a third term, he pushed for the development of Civic Center, and in the final days of his term Hastings sent down a plaster model of the project.<sup>62</sup>

### **The Legacy of Preston and Carrère & Hastings**

In early May 1919 Preston received from Carrère & Hastings the firm’s “Report of the City Plan Committee of the City of Baltimore” regarding the development of the newly annexed territories, a document he had commissioned the previous fall. This planning document embraced numerous recommendations regarding the future development of the city, including parkways, transit hubs and nodes with park designs at their intersections, bridges, a combined railroad and rapid transit station, and developments to the harbor, among other improvements.<sup>63</sup>

In the final week of Preston’s administration, at a ceremony on May 15, the St. Paul Street project was officially turned over to the Board of Park Commissioners, which took the opportunity to rename the improvement Preston Terrace. (It is now called Preston Gardens.) Preston invited Hastings, in town for the dedication, to a meeting with the incoming mayor, William F. Broening (1870–1953). As part of his dedicatory speech Hastings noted that “any civic problem well solved to adapt itself to the practical needs of a people and to its spiritual uplift must express itself in beauty of plan and construction.” In speaking of Preston, Hastings observed that in all of his experience with federal and municipal work, he had never known of an elected official “who has had so wise and comprehensive an understanding of the physical and social conditions of a city and who has had a vision as particular and clear of the future opportunities and possibilities in the development of a growing community.” These qualities had resulted not only in what was realized but also in what he had initiated for his successors in Baltimore: “truly [we] may say the City which has the promise of becoming The City Beautiful of these United States of America.”<sup>64</sup>

Although perhaps seen by the public during Preston’s administration as “court architect,” Hastings stayed on after Mayor Broening took office. Broening, with Hastings’ Civic Center model at hand, continued to like the idea of a paved plaza for the Civic Center. However, as the project materialized it became a competition for a combined city and state war memorial project. Most of the architects invited in 1921 to participate were from Baltimore, but several nationally recognized firms were invited, including Carrère & Hastings. Baltimore architect Laurence Hall Fowler (1876–1971) submitted the winning design. His plan for the park area in front of City Hall was a not a fully paved plaza but a sunken paved plaza flanked by trees on the north and south, as Hastings had suggested. Hastings’ international



22. Carrère & Hastings, designs for Mount Vernon Place as realized (1920) and replanted (1922–1928), redrawn by the Historic American Landscapes Survey from early photographs and revised by author

*Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, HALS MD-1*

achievements continued to be touted as assurance that Baltimore had put the projects at Preston Terrace and Mount Vernon Place and the city expansion plan in the best hands. An article in the city's own journal that hailed Hastings as "Architect and Prophet" quoted his statement: "Our monuments of to-day should adequately record the splendid achievements of our contemporaneous life, the spirit of modern justice and liberty, the progress of modern science, and the genius of modern invention and discovery, [and] the elevated character of our institutions." Arguing that "to express our present age we should neither break with the past nor select from it arbitrarily," the architect argued for "the style of our own time."<sup>65</sup>

At Mount Vernon Place in the fall of 1919, the park board and Broening took up Hastings' plans from February. After further meetings Hastings was asked to retain the west square fountain and simplify the

walkway pattern in the north square. He provided final plans for these requirements at the end of the year (fig. 22).<sup>66</sup> This hard-scape work was completed by the end of August 1920, and grass was planted in the just-completed north, west, and east wings. With the masonry work completed, the parks department became interested in the views to and from Mount Vernon Place and in addressing the existing tree canopy. Hastings was brought in to examine the state of the work and recommended the replanting of oaks in the west square, which had not fared well since their planting in 1915, with either oriental planes or European lindens. At this time he also suggested that "small elms" be planted on the sides of the south square to replace the larger framing trees on the sides as they died. He also agreed with the park commissioners that the view out of Mount Vernon Place should be addressed by planting trees on Monument Street to mitigate the view in that direction, which was largely industrial in nature.<sup>67</sup> Hastings' observations encouraged the parks department in early 1922 to announce that the trees in Mount Vernon Place would be replanted, the city forester observing that the oaks in the west square were dying and that the silver maples in the east square were "all past maturity and past any tree surgery on the part of foresters. In such a formal environment it would not do to remove dead and half dead trees and leave the few living ones where they are." The forester recommended that the oaks and silver maples be replaced with American elms, a course of action that was put into place in the late fall (fig. 23; see also fig. 15). Several years later, as the lindens in the north square began to fail, the entire square was replanted in elms, maintaining the tradition in these three squares of uniform trees, an important element of Carrère & Hastings' design philosophy.<sup>68</sup>

As the principal work was completed on the squares, controversy arose once again regarding the siting of the Lafayette monument. Architects like William M. Ellicott defended the location, stating it was the



23. Mount Vernon Place, east square, c. 1922, shortly before trees were replanted  
*Maryland Historical Society*



crowning glory of the entire conception, as it was a “great symbol of the relation of two nations in the cause of human liberty.”<sup>69</sup> The sculpture arrived in the early fall of 1924, and with President Calvin Coolidge, Governor of Maryland Albert C. Ritchie, Mayor Howard W. Jackson, and other notables in attendance, the Lafayette statue was dedicated on the Frenchman’s birthday, September 6, in front of a crowd said to number twenty thousand. Coolidge implored the audience to take the opportunity to “re-dedicate ourselves to the inspiring memory of a true son of world freedom ... in the shadow of the stately monument reared to his great friend, Washington.”<sup>70</sup>

Thus Preston’s campaign for improving the city of Baltimore, begun seven years before in a bed of pansies, finally achieved its objective. Its legacy survives to this day in Baltimore’s built environment in two

realized projects by Carrère and Hastings, perhaps rare survivals of City Beautiful landscape design and recognized as “among the most successful and fully realized of the firm’s urban designs.”<sup>71</sup> Further, Carrère & Hastings’ long work in establishing a civic center lives on in the project realized by Fowler. Preston seized every opportunity he could to promote the beautification of his city. The projects demonstrate the tenacity required to reshape the urban landscape, as was true of other City Beautiful dreams, many of which were never realized.

## NOTES

An early version of this essay was written for the Historic American Landscapes Survey, National Park Service, largely focusing on Carrère & Hastings' work at Mount Vernon Place, Baltimore. This report has been expanded to include a broader discussion of their work in the city. I thank J. Laurie Ossman for early assistance with the work of Carrère & Hastings. I also thank Nicol Regan for graphic design assistance in revising several Historic American Landscapes Survey drawings for inclusion in this essay.

1. See "French Commission Will Ask for Army," and "The Visitors from France," *Washington Post*, April 25 and 26, 1917. See "French Invited to City," *Baltimore Sun*, May 2, 1917, and the change of purpose for the visit in "Plans Monument to Gen. Lafayette," *Baltimore American*, May 7, 1917.
2. See, for example, David Holden, "1904 Olmsted Bros. Report: The Advancement of City Planning in Baltimore," *Olmstedian* 15, no. 2 (fall 2004), and Duncan Stuart with research assistance from Eric Holcomb, "Baltimore City Planning: The Critical Role of the Olmsted Firm," *Olmstedian* 17, no. 2 (spring 2008).
3. On this moment in the fort's history see Mark Davison and Eliot Foulds, *Cultural Landscape Report for Fort McHenry* (Brookline, MA, 2004), 81–86, which also discusses the Key monument. On the 1812-related monuments, see the unpublished report by Kathleen G. Kotarba and Walter Edward Leon, "The Monumental City: Famous Baltimore City Public Monuments," Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, Baltimore, 2002, nos. 16, 28, 53, 56, 57, and 78.
4. On the location change see "Joffre May Visit City on Return from West," *Baltimore Sun*, May 8, 1917, and "Enthusiasm for Lafayette Statue," *Baltimore American*, May 16, 1917.
5. For the monument within Mills' larger career, see John M. Bryan, *Robert Mills: America's First Architect* (New York, 2001), 105–119.
6. Several variations on the final scheme survive in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society (hereafter MdHS). See Mary Ellen Hayward and Frank R. Shivers Jr., eds., *The Architecture of Baltimore: An Illustrated History* (Baltimore, 2004), 118, and an unexecuted example illustrated on 119. See the laws regarding Mount Vernon Place in "Appendix B: Historical Data Relating to Parks and Squares," in *46th and 47th Annual Reports of the Board of Park Commissioners to the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore for the Fiscal Years Ending December 31, 1905, 1906* (Baltimore, 1907), 80–81. Not mentioned in these reports is the iron fence; on it see "Improvement of Washington Place" and "Improving Mt. Vernon Place," *Baltimore Sun*, April 13 and 17, 1850.
7. Work began in March 1875 as noted in "Appendix B" 1907, 81. Those involved and details of the plans for the north and south squares are discussed in "Washington Monument Surroundings," *Baltimore Sun*, June 8, 1877. See also M. Edward Shull, "Mount Vernon Place," *Olmstedian* 15, no. 1 (fall 2003).
8. See "Baltimore Bows to Joffre and Viviani," *Baltimore American*, May 15, 1917, and "Baltimore Acclaims Joffre; French Mission Is Lionized During Hour's Visit to City," *Baltimore Sun*, May 15, 1917.
9. See Lafayette Memorial Committee, membership list, and other documents, all file 118, Baltimore City Archives (hereafter BCA preceded by file number). The papers of Mayor James H. Preston (hereafter Preston) at the BCA are extensive.
10. See J. V. Kelly, Secretary, Board of Park Commissioners, to Preston, April 13, 1917, enclosing Olmsted Brothers to J. V. Kelly, April 11, 1917; both 3a, BCA. Preston voiced this concern in "The Mayor's General Message to the City Council," *Baltimore Municipal Journal*, October 18, 1918, 3. Preston's papers and the *Baltimore Municipal Journal* all reveal the convergence of these civic challenges.
11. The park commissioners' communication to the mayor: Kelly to Preston, April 13, 1917. On Olmsted's involvement see "Big Plan for Parkway," April 18, 1912; "Oval Facing Homewood," October 24, 1913; and "Hopkins Oval Work Starts," November 16, 1913; all *Baltimore Sun*. On Hastings see Preston to George Washington Williams, April 19, 1917, 3a, BCA. Preston's frustrations with Olmsted may have been the result of Olmsted's involvement with the mayor's Fort McHenry and Key memorial projects, for which he had been hired by the city to assist in plans but in his role as a member of the Federal Commission of Fine Arts was also passing judgment on them. This dilemma is outlined in Davison and Foulds 2004, 81–83.
12. Preston, Hastings, and Olmsted are placed in the same meeting of the Federal Commission of Fine Arts in "To Help Key Memorial," *Baltimore Sun*, October 10, 1914. See Preston to Thomas Hastings, Hastings & Carriere [sic], May 31, 1917, 118, BCA, and Hastings to Preston, June 5, 1917, 118, BCA. On the City Beautiful see William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore, 1989). Although both Carrère and Baltimore are mentioned in this volume, their contributions to the larger movement receive little elaboration. On this period in Baltimore's development see Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (1980; revised and expanded edition, Baltimore, 1997), in particular the chapter "The Art of Urban Landscape, 1900–1918," 245–301.
13. William M. Ellicott to Theodore Marburg, June 11, 1917, 118, BCA.
14. The work of the firm has recently been cataloged in Mark Alan Hewitt et al., *Carrère & Hastings Architects*, 2 vols. (New York, 2006). See also Laurie Ossman and Heather Ewing, *Carrère & Hastings: The Masterworks* (New York, 2011).
15. On the church and its site see "Architectural Criticism," *Architecture*, April 15, 1911, 49–50.
16. This essay adds another dimension to Hastings' public work, which, according to Hewitt et al. 2006 (1:253–254), was of less interest to him than to Carrère.

17. On the Carrère genealogy see Thomas Barbour, "Some Notes on the Backgrounds of the Carrere, Buchanan, and Related Families," [c. 1888], filing case A, MdHS, and "Buchanan Family Reminiscences," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 35, no. 3 (September 1940): 262–269, which discusses the Carrère connections.
18. See "Mr. Carrere to Lecture," *Baltimore Sun*, December 15, 1901, which lists these credentials, and "Illustrated Lecture, Delivered by John M. Carrere," *Architects and Builders Journal* 3, no. 7 (February 1902): 8–9, 11–14. See also *The City of the Future by Albert Kelsey; The Municipal Art Society, Its Activities, Aims and Hopes by Theodore Marburg. Addresses Delivered at the Annual Meeting of The Municipal Art Society of Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, January 8, 1902* ([Baltimore], 1902). This publication did not include Carrère's speech, noting that it had just been published. See the report of this meeting, "To Beautify the City," *Baltimore Sun*, January 9, 1902.
19. See Charles H. Caffin, "Baltimore Municipal Art Conference," *Harper's Weekly*, December 23, 1899, 1332.
20. "Illustrated Lecture," 8, 11, 13. Hewitt et al. 2006, 1:253–254, note the seminal nature of this lecture and subsequent reworkings included for delivery in Harford in 1910.
21. "Illustrated Lecture," 8, 11–12; see the firm's visual realization of this ideal in Hewitt et al. 2006, 1:252. See Garrett Power, "High Society: The Building Height Limitation on Baltimore's Mt. Vernon Place," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 79, no. 3 (fall 1984): 197–219, which discusses the 1904 law, among other preservation actions.
22. "Illustrated Lecture," 8.
23. See "The City of Baltimore," *Niles' Weekly Register*, September 19, 1812, 46. This article is one of many that discuss the rapid growth of the city.
24. On Olmsted's speech and his employment at Wyman Park, see "To Beautify Washington," *Baltimore Sun*, April 20, 1902. See Olmsted Brothers, *Report upon the Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1904), including Marburg's presentation letter of February 5, 1904, to the park board president outlining the genesis of this project (8–9). On the McMillan Plan within the context of the City Beautiful and early city planning efforts see Richard Longstreth, ed., with a new introduction by Therese O'Malley, *The Mall in Washington, 1791–1991*, National Gallery of Art, Studies in the History of Art, vol. 30 (Washington, DC, 2002), in particular the essays by Thomas S. Hines and Jon A. Peterson.
25. Sherlock Swann to Preston, March 14, 1917, 78a, BCA.
26. See "For an Ideal Baltimore," January 16, 1906, and "Mr. Olmsted to Co-operate," January 31, 1906, both *Baltimore Sun*.
27. See the report on the presentation "To Beautify the City," *Baltimore Sun*, November 20, 1909, which notes that Olmsted could not attend. Given Olmsted's joining the team after it was formed and Carrère's 1908 comment that he was doing all the work (quoted in Hewitt et al. 2006, 1:259), his role may have been limited.
28. See Municipal Art Society, *Partial Report on "City Plan"* (Baltimore, 1910), 4, 5, 7, 14. The report contains a transcript of the hearing, a preface outlining the plan's history, and supporting documents in appendixes.
29. Municipal Art Society 1910, 19, 20–21, 23, 40 (and plan opposite), 47. See also "To Beautify the City."
30. "Soon to Be a City of Lights," *Baltimore American*, January 16, 1912. See Stuart Stevens Scott, "Baltimore's Great White Way," *Municipal Journal* [New York], August 8, 1912, 184, which illustrates a street scene with an example of the new pole. See John Allen Corcoran, "The City Light and Beautiful," *American City* 7, no. 1 (July 1912): 46, 48–49 (example illustrated on 48). Preston is quoted on Baltimore's recent extensive installation of these lamps, noted to be produced by the General Electric Company of Schenectady, New York, and to use a pole design patented by the city. See two advertisements, the first by the General Electric Company, the manufacturer of the bulb, and the second by the Lundin Electric and Machine Co., Boston, the manufacturer of the pole (design no. 4024, illustrated), the latter of which notes Baltimore's place in national lighting: *Public Service* 13, no. 3 (September 1912): 131 and 136. The 1900 findings of Baltimore's Municipal Lighting Commission were reported in various civic periodicals. See, for instance, Allen Ripley Foote's review "Electric Lighting in Baltimore," *Municipal Affairs; A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to Consideration of City Problems from the Standpoint of the Taxpayer and Citizen* 4, no. 1 (March 1900): 232–235. The first electric arc lamps were installed in 1882.
31. Hendrick's plan is sketched out in "St. Elizabeth Bought," *Baltimore Sun*, November 2, 1915.
32. The abandonment of Hendrick's plan is noted in "Lafayette Memorial Site South of Monument Urged," August 10, 1917, and his resignation in "Hendrick to Talk Soon," August 22, 1917; both *Baltimore Sun*. See Ellicott's letter to the editor, "The Mount Vernon Place Improvements," *Baltimore Sun*, October 27, 1918. The outcome of Hendrick's St. Paul Street plan exemplifies the move of urban design from the hands of engineers to "artists" (architects) during this period.
33. Hewitt et al. 2006, 1:259–262, catalog the Mount Vernon Place project, in which the St. Paul Street work is mentioned. Hastings' newer work at the Civic Center is not discussed. The quotations are from, respectively, "Takes Up Civic Plans," *Baltimore Sun*, June 23, 1917, and "Points Way to City Beautiful," *Baltimore American*, June 23, 1917.
34. Preston's goals are noted in "Memorial Site for Lafayette," *Baltimore American*, August 10, 1917; on his regional competition see "Greater Baltimore—A



City Beautiful and Useful," *Baltimore Municipal Journal*, November 22, 1918, 1.

35. See the city's own account of the meeting, "Plans Approved for Beautification of City," *Baltimore Municipal Journal*, September 14, 1917, 6.

36. The change in location is noted in "Hastings Plans His Work: Architect Approves of Site Chosen for Lafayette Memorial," June 29, 1917, and "Lafayette Memorial Site South of Monument Urged," August 10, 1917, both *Baltimore Sun*. Preston made his observation to Wilson in a letter of November 9, 1918, 118, BCA, in which he asked the president to write an inscription for the base.

37. The retention of the fountains is evident in the earliest plans submitted and in later discussion about a new design for them when an additional design phase commenced.

38. The south square design intent is discussed in "Plans Approved for Beautification of City," 6. In these earliest existing plans, the steps and wall at the east end of the east square and some coping at the north end of the north square were to be retained in addition to the two circular fountains.

39. Hastings to Josias Pennington, December 23, 1918, 80, BCA. The letter appeared as "Hastings Defends Use of Balustrades," *Baltimore American*, December 28, 1918.

40. Hastings to Pennington, December 23, 1918. Pennington noted in other correspondence that the placement of the statues had been determined by available space in the old arrangement (Josias Pennington, Commission on City Plan, to J. Cookman Boyd, March 17, 1919, 80, BCA).

41. For an appreciation of the new locations of these bronzes see J. Carrell Lucas to Preston, November 14, 1918, 80, BCA. Preston, as elsewhere, noted that he left these kinds of artistic decisions up to Hastings: Preston to J. Carrell Lucas, November 15, 1918, 80, BCA.

42. See William Mohr to George Weems Williams, President, Board of Park Commissioners, January 14, 1918, 121, BCA, and his other letters from this period. J. V. Kelly, secretary of the Board of Park Commissioners, writing to Carrère & Hastings, suggested the need of a lighting study (January 16, 1918, 121, BCA). Upon receipt Hastings replied to Preston on January 19, 1918 (121, BCA), regarding "economy" but saying that he would investigate a design. "Parking Estimates Ready," *Baltimore Sun*, March 14, 1918, noted that "artistic electric lamps" would be used, but the installation was deferred, as reported in "City to Put Up Statue," *Baltimore Sun*, April 6, 1918.

43. The existing trees in the squares are documented in "Big Oaks Nearly Ready," *Baltimore Sun*, March 17, 1915 (west square), and "Mount Vernon Place to Have Fine New Trees," *Baltimore Sun*, May 7, 1922 (east square); the species for the north square is suggested in a letter to the editor, *Baltimore Sun*, March 26, 1918. See also McHenry Howard, "The Washington Monument and Squares," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 13, no. 2 (June 1918), which outlines the

history of the squares, noting (181) that in the late nineteenth century the trees were ash (south), European linden (north), and maples (east and west). He implies (182) that the Olmsted firm installed the south square shrubbery to good effect, noting that if left as grass the square would have appeared "mean" and "uninteresting."

44. See "Plans Approved for Beautification of City," 6, which had noted that no changes would be made to the softscape. Hastings, subsequently writing of the south square, noted that after construction was finished he would do "some elimination and some planting." See Hastings to Preston, January 17, 1919, 80, BCA. When it was inaccurately stated that the shrubbery would be removed, a debate ensued in the *Baltimore Sun*; see "Old Shrubby to Go," January 15, 1919, and "Old Shrubby to Stay," February 5, 1919.

45. Hastings to Preston, November 16, 1918, 118, BCA, notes sending the plans and evergreens. The specific "Colonial" plantings are mentioned in "Mt. Vernon Place in Movies," *Baltimore Sun*, March 15, 1919, which names other possible plant varieties.

46. Hastings to the Board of Trustees, Peabody Institute, July 19, 1918, 118, BCA. On the Colonial Revival see Alan Axelrod, ed., *The Colonial Revival in America* (New York, 1985). Hastings is discussed throughout Mardges Bacon's essay, "Toward a National Style of Architecture: The Beaux-Arts Interpretation of the Colonial Revival," 91–121.

47. See Hastings to Preston, October 27, 1917, 118, BCA, regarding Charlottesville; "Hastings Defends Big Improvement," *Baltimore American*, November 24, 1918, on the pattern book reference; Hastings to Preston, November 13, 1917, 121, BCA, on his interest in similar materials. Hastings does not mention his 1815 source, but it could have been an issue of one of Asher Benjamin's publications, such as his *Rudiments of Architecture* (Boston, 1814), which includes plates (23, 24), showing similar balusters and pedestals.

48. See Preston to Hastings, October 25, 1917, 121, BCA, introducing the Beaver Dam Marble Company to the architect. The mayor's office to Addison H. Clarke, April 26, 1918, 118, BCA, refutes a claim that it was Indiana limestone, confirming that it was Beaver Dam marble. In "Defends Improvements," *Baltimore Sun*, May 8, 1918, Hastings stated that Indiana stone was never considered.

49. "Washington Monument, Baltimore, Md.," *American Architect*, July 6, 1921, 12.

50. As quoted in "Hastings Defends Use of Balustrades" and "Hastings Defends Big Improvement."

51. "E. E. G.," letter to the editor, March 26, 1918, and "Come, Mr. Mayor, Let Us Reason Together," editorial, May 9, 1918, both *Baltimore Sun*.

52. See Hastings to J. V. Kelly, November 11, 1918, 3a, BCA.

53. These blueprints survive in the collection of the MdHS. An additional version of the plan for the west square is in the collection of the Baltimore City

Department of Recreation and Parks. The firm was not consistent in the surviving 1917 and 1919 plans regarding showing existing or planned new trees.

54. "South Wing of Squares Open," *Baltimore Sun*, March 6, 1919, and Preston to Hastings, April 19, 1919, 80, BCA, regarding the lights.

55. The surviving plans submitted in September 1917 and published in January 1918 in *American Architect* appear to be those used for the project. Subsequent alterations have obscured the fact that the project was built as proposed; namely, the Orleans (or Bath) Street viaduct was cut across the garden; Courtland Street was widened, eliminating some pathways in the garden; and the upper tree-lined boulevard was abandoned.

56. See Hastings as quoted in "Greater Baltimore—A City Beautiful and Useful," 3, and the brief description in "St. Paul Street to Be Important Adjunct to Civic Center," *Baltimore Municipal Journal*, October 5, 1917, 4, and the accompanying rendering (a reprint of a version of that in *American Architect*). The text notes that the lower-level shrubbery was not included in order to show the details of the retaining wall and steps. For an interpretation of this early urban renewal project from the perspective of racial segregation, see Antero Pietila, *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City* (Chicago, 2010), 50–52. The author is in error that this neighborhood was called Gallows Hill; that area was on the east side of the Jones Falls.

57. "Shows City Beautiful," *Baltimore Sun*, September 14, 1917, mentions materials originally suggested for walls; for "old Italian type," see "Plans for Civic Center Approved," *Baltimore American*, September 12, 1917. Hastings notes the similarity to the Spanish Steps in "Greater Baltimore—A City Beautiful and Useful," 3. The arc lamps are discussed in correspondence about the St. Paul project, where they are described as more powerful than smaller incandescent lights. The latter required more poles and were therefore more expensive. See William Mohr to Hastings, February 2, 1918; Mohr to Hastings, February 20, 1918; and Preston to Hastings, March 1, 1918; all 121, BCA. The light poles evident in the earliest photographs of the project appear to be the model so named and discussed in note 30 above.

58. The beginning of work is noted in "A Question of Principle," *Baltimore Sun*, April 25, 1918. See "City Improvements Will Be Pushed," *Baltimore American*, November 22, 1918, for the planting of the trees on St. Paul Street, and Preston to Hastings, April 19, 1919, 80, BCA, regarding trees, topsoil, and grass, apparently for the lower level. Preston to Board of Park Commissioners, February 6, 1919, 3a, BCA, notes that Hastings had developed a planting plan for this project. It remains unlocated, but early photographs suggest that the trees and shrubbery were planted in accordance with Hastings' plan published in *American Architect* (see fig. 19). The species of these plants is not detailed, but photographs suggest that the trees planted on the lower level may have been maples, as was proposed for the Civic Center.

59. According to a newspaper report of a meeting in which Preston discussed the 1909 plan, he credited Hastings with the drawings. As Hastings was in attendance, this attribution seems likely, although it is not mentioned in the 1909 plan. See "First Action on Memorial Project," *Baltimore American*, January 4, 1919.

60. See "Wants City Hall Annex," March 9, 1917, and "Lafayette Memorial Site South of Monument Urged," August 10, 1917, both *Baltimore Sun*.

61. See "Mayor at City Hall," *Baltimore American*, March 10, 1918, and "City to Put Up Statue," *Baltimore Sun*, April 6, 1918. The earliest datable plan (shown here as figure 21) is illustrated as "Outline of Civic Centre Unit," part of the article "Greater Baltimore—A City Beautiful and Useful," 2. The caption describes the details mentioned here.

62. At the conclusion of the war many ideas regarding the Civic Center circulated in the newspapers; see, for instance, "For Great Paved Square," *Baltimore Sun*, December 7, 1918, for the plan promoted by civic leader Sherlock Swann. On the utility of a paved space, see Swann to Preston, November 26, 1918, 80, BCA. Inviting a number of individuals to see the model, Preston recapitulated the history of the project and reiterated the similarity to the Place Vendôme; see Preston to Philip Cook (and copies to others), May 19, 1919, 80, BCA.

63. This report is mentioned in "Will Plan for Annex," *Baltimore Sun*, August 8, 1918. A copy of the report of May 1, 1919, with photographic illustrations of numerous plans, is in 80, BCA.

64. Hastings as quoted in "Sunken Gardens Are Dedicated," *Baltimore American*, May 16, 1919. Copies of the full speeches are in 80, BCA: see "Mr. Hastings [sic] Speech," [1919]. Preston's speech was more pragmatic, thanking the appropriate parties; see "Mayor Preston's Speech," [1919].

65. See "Model of Civic Center," *Baltimore American*, April 26, 1919; "Mayor for Paved Plaza," *Baltimore Sun*, January 15, 1920. The history of this project is discussed in Karl Singewald, "The War Memorial, in Baltimore," *Baltimore Municipal Journal*, May 11, 1923, 2–3. See "Thomas Hastings, Architect and Prophet," *Baltimore Municipal Journal*, August 25, 1922, 6, which discusses his recent receipt of a gold medal from the Royal Institute of British Architects.

66. See "To 'Balance' Square," October 8, 1919, and "New Plans for Square," December 4, 1919, both *Baltimore Sun*; and "Mt. Vernon Squares Plans Explained," *Baltimore American*, December 4, 1919.

67. See "Mount Vernon Square Work Ends Tomorrow," *Baltimore Sun*, August 29, 1920, and "Mt. Vernon Square Is Now Completed," *Baltimore American*, August 29, 1920. See "Hastings Would Close Monument Street Hill," *Baltimore Sun*, September 10, 1920, discussing the need for screening, which he voiced later in "Trees Urged as Aid in Monument Vista," *Baltimore Sun*, December 27, 1923. Photographs dated to around this time in the collection of the MdHS

document the parks as of this moment of work, showing the west square replanted and the east square immediately before it was replanted; see photographs PPII.422–424.

68. “Mount Vernon Place to Have Fine New Trees,” May 7, 1922, and “Residents Mourn as Workmen Fell Mt. Vernon Trees,” November 16, 1922, both *Baltimore Sun*. The failing linden trees are documented in a letter to the editor, *Baltimore Sun*, May 7, 1927. Their replacement is documented in a photograph from 1928: Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR / California Museum of Photography, University of California, Riverside, image 1996.0009.KU88935. In discussing subsequent shrubbery plantings the new species is mentioned in “Square North of the Monument Now to Get Improvements,” *Baltimore Sun*, January 9, 1932.

69. Agitation emerged in 1921–1923 regarding the site of the statue, including a public hearing in 1923. Ellicott is quoted in “City-Wide Congress Backs G.O.P. Fight,” *Baltimore American*, October 29, 1921.

70. See “President Coolidge Speaks at Unveiling,” *Baltimore Municipal Journal*, September 10, 1924, 2–3, which provides a hindsight history of the Lafayette statue, and “City to Unveil Statue Today to Lafayette,” *Baltimore Sun*, September 6, 1924.

71. Hewitt et al. 2006, 1:259.



*Modernism and Landscape Architecture,*  
1890–1940

*Edited by*

THERESE O'MALLEY AND JOACHIM WOLSCHKE-BULMAHN

National Gallery of Art, Washington

Distributed by Yale University Press  
New Haven and London

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF ART • 78 •

*Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts*

Symposium Papers LV

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This volume was produced by the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts and the Publishing Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington  
www.nga.gov

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Typeset in Sabon and Whitney by Princeton Editorial Associates, Inc., Scottsdale, Arizona  
Separations by Prographics, Rockford, Illinois  
Printed in China on 157 gsm fsc-certified Gold Sun by Asia Pacific Offset

Distributed by Yale University Press  
New Haven and London  
www.yalebooks.com

Abstracted and indexed in BHA (Bibliography of the History of Art) and Art Index

Proceedings of the symposium "Modernism and Landscape Architecture, 1890–1940," co-organized by the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, and the Zentrum für Gartenkunst und Landschaftsarchitektur, Leibniz Universität Hannover, and sponsored by the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations. The symposium was held March 7–8, 2008, in Washington and October 16–18, 2008, in Hannover.

The Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts was founded in 1979 at the National Gallery of Art to foster the study of the history, theory, and criticism of art, architecture, urbanism, and photographic media, through programs of meetings, research, publication, and fellowships, and through the formation of a community of scholars.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Modernism and landscape architecture, 1890–1940 /  
edited by Therese O'Malley and Joachim  
Wolschke-Bulmahn.

pages      cm

(Studies in the history of art, ISSN 0091-7338; 78.

Symposium papers; 55)

Includes index.

ISBN 978-0-300-19639-9 (hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Landscape architecture—History—19th century.

2. Landscape architecture—History—20th century.

3. Modernism (Art)—Influence. I. O'Malley, Therese.

II. Wolschke-Bulmahn, Joachim.

SB470.5.M63 2015

712—dc23

2014038065

ISBN 978-0-300-19639-9

ISSN 0091-7338

*Frontispiece:* Rockefeller Center, roof gardens, plan  
rendered by Associated Architects, 1932, ink and  
watercolor. © 2014 The Rockefeller Group Inc./  
Rockefeller Center Archives



# *Contents*

vii Preface

ELIZABETH CROPPER

ix Foreword

JOACHIM WOLSCHKE-BULMAHN

i Introduction

THERESE O'MALLEY

9 The Form of Function: Theorizing Modernity in the Garden, 1920–1939

DOROTHÉE IMBERT

27 Landscape and Gender in Weimar Modernism

MICHAEL G. LEE

51 Modernism for the People: Swimming Pool Landscapes in Switzerland

JOHANNES STOFFLER

71 Modernism and Romantic Regeneration in the English Landscape, 1920–1940

ALAN POWERS

95 Making the Past Modern: Jože Plečnik's Central European Landscapes in Prague and Ljubljana

STEVEN A. MANSBACH

117 Pines, Palms, and Holm Oaks: Historicist Modes in Modern Italian Cityscapes

FRANCO PANZINI

137 “Per la difesa del giardino”: Gardens, Parks, and Landscapes between Tradition and Modernism in Early Twentieth-Century Italy

SONJA DÜMPPELMANN

169 Modernity and Regionalism in the Gardens of Spain (1850–1936): From Radical Opposition to Misunderstood Synthesis

JOSÉ TITO ROJO

205	Critical Practices in Modernism: Origins in Nineteenth-Century American Landscape Architecture	ANITA BERRIZBEITIA AND KAREN M'CLOSKEY
225	Benito Javier Carrasco (1877–1958) and the Redefinition of Landscape Architecture in Argentina	SONIA BERJMAN
247	Baltimore and the City Beautiful: Carrère & Hastings Reshapes an American City	LANCE HUMPHRIES
279	Rockefeller Center: Modernist Paradigm for the Urban Core	MARDGES BACON
309	Contributors	
312	Index	

## Preface

This volume of *Studies in the History of Art* has been long in the making. The twenty years or so over which it has evolved have seen many shifts in focus in the relatively young field of the history of landscape design. Modernism, especially in architecture, has also been placed under deep scrutiny in these decades. The symposium from which this volume results, dedicated to the discussion of landscape design and modernism from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of World War II and including developments in Europe, Latin America, and North America, recognized an opportunity for genuine interdisciplinary and international collaboration.

In the mid-1990s close ties between Steven Mansbach, then an associate dean of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn of Leibniz Universität Hannover were consolidated in a pair of roundtable meetings held under the auspices of the Center and Dumbarton Oaks. In 1994, during Wolschke-Bulmahn's tenure as director of garden and landscape studies, "Hostility towards Nature: Avant-Garde and Garden Design" was organized at Dumbarton Oaks in collaboration with Mansbach. In December 1995 Henry Millon, then dean of the Center, and Associate Dean Therese O'Malley convened "The Design and Management of the Environment under Authoritarian Regimes: 1920–1950" at the National Gallery of Art. Mansbach and

Wolschke-Bulmahn subsequently published a selection of their material in a special issue of *Centropa* (2004), to which Gert Gröning, formerly professor of urban horticulture and landscape architecture at the Universität der Künste, Berlin, also contributed. Discussions among Mansbach, Wolschke-Bulmahn, and Gröning, joined by Therese O'Malley, continued over the years, leading to a symposium held in two parts, in Washington and Hannover, in which several lifetimes of scholarship were brought together in the context of recent and new developments. Environmental concerns, gender issues, and questions of political ideology, for example, were less prominent in the field some fifty years ago than they are now, and yet the pioneering work of the earlier generation of scholars in laying the ground for a cultural, political, and institutional history of landscape design in the broadest sense remains vital and relevant. The symposium, organized by Steven Mansbach, Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, and Therese O'Malley, recognized the essential continuity in this rapidly expanding field, and we are especially grateful to Gert Gröning, one of its founders, for his contributions to these meetings.

The two parts of the symposium, each two days long, took place seven months apart, with the organizers attending both. In Hannover we were honored by a welcome from Professor Dr.-Ing. Erich Barker, president, Leibniz Universität Hannover. The



staff of the Zentrum für Gartenkunst und Landschaftsarchitektur, especially Lidia Ludwig, gave tremendous support to the events, including arranging visits to the historical gardens at Wörlitz and to the Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, with tours of Walter Gropius' masters' houses and his housing estate in nearby Törten, as well as of Leopold Fischer's settlement houses in Knarrberg. In each of these sites the historical, political, and cultural implications of landscape design are now seen as essential to the understanding of the built environment as a whole, not as additional or peripheral to it.

The sense of shared values and design ideas that characterized earlier definitions of modernism has given way to more com-

plex and even contending sets of visions and expectations. We hope that this publication will contribute to a deeper understanding of changes both in the field of landscape architecture and in approaches to its history over the long term. Special thanks are due to Cynthia Ware for her editorial work in preparing this volume for publication, and especially to Therese O'Malley for her enormous contribution as scholarly editor, together with Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn. A grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation made this publication possible.

ELIZABETH CROPPER

Dean, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts

## Foreword

As director of the Zentrum für Gartenkunst und Landschaftsarchitektur (CGL) at Leibniz Universität Hannover, I was pleased to co-organize and jointly host the two-part symposium at which the contributors to this volume originally presented their essays. Founded in 2002, the CGL is dedicated to conducting and promoting research on garden art and garden memorials and to engaging with the current practice of landscape architecture.<sup>1</sup> The CGL's mission includes the exchange of information and experience among scholars nationally and internationally and presenting research findings to the public through publications, lecture series, and exhibitions. Since its founding, the CGL has dedicated particular attention to questions of modernism and garden design in Germany, a topic addressed in several volumes of the CGL-Studies publication series.<sup>2</sup> A German edition of the present volume will be published as part of that series.

As Elizabeth Cropper notes in the preface to this volume, Steven A. Mansbach, Therese O'Malley, and I organized the symposium "Modernism and Landscape Architecture, 1890–1940" in order to expand the international parameters of a scholarly discourse dating back to the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> When I began to study the history of modern landscape and garden design, what had been written was largely from the perspective

of fine arts, graphic and applied arts, and architecture.<sup>4</sup> Neglect of landscape design and garden history had become deeply entrenched and seemingly little questioned. This disregard can be explained historically. Historians of modernism attributed to the arts a profound suspicion of nature and of the natural landscape. In the early twentieth century many "modern" artists and architects banished nature from their "new society." Nature, they claimed, was inconsistent with their utopian project for a world founded on universal laws. For them, nature was guilty of promoting arbitrariness, encouraging emotion, and sanctioning history. They promoted a focus on man, rather than nature, as the necessary approach for the future. They installed rationalism in the place of emotionalism and internationalism in place of chauvinism. As Steven Mansbach said in his opening remarks at the symposium, "Nature was perceived by the makers of modernism as incompatible with a projected, man-made world of pure, rational, and transparent relationships."<sup>5</sup>

In an environment so inhospitable to nature, garden design was rarely considered. And yet throughout the period of modernist art, landscape architecture and garden design offered fertile grounds on which to work out new definitions and practices of this art. Particularly after World War I,

garden architects in Europe searched for new models for “modern,” meaningful garden designs. Regarding modernism and garden design in Germany, these developments have been investigated since the 1980s. Given this volume’s chronological focus on the years 1890 to 1940, it is worth reflecting on an essay of that period, “The Modern German Formal Style,” which appeared first in 1917 (with subsequent editions in 1929 and 1931) in Henry Vincent Hubbard and Theodora Kimball’s still remarkable book on the tasks of landscape architecture, *An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design*. They wrote that before “the very modern national consciousness of the German empire,” there was nothing in Germany that could be said to be an independent historical style of landscape design:

The modern German conscious seeking for national expression in every field has had its influence on German landscape architecture notably in the production of a formal style of landscape design, intentionally different from any style which has gone before. In many another style the artist has consciously adapted his means to his ends to express the ideal which seemed to him of most worth, but here for the first time landscape designers have gone deliberately to work to determine what their national ideal ought to be and then logically deduced what means should be employed for its attainment.<sup>6</sup>

In all aspects of landscape design concerned with aesthetics, according to the authors, “the modern German feeling that a German must be different from other men in his nature and in his needs has found an interesting expression.”<sup>7</sup> Hubbard and Kimball thus assigned the concept “modernism” in Germany to the “Modern German Formal Style,” a mode of geometric formality that, from 1900, under the influence of English theorists, was propagated by architects such as Hermann Muthesius and Peter Behrens.<sup>8</sup>

It is notable that Hubbard and Kimball did not mention Willy Lange (1864–1941) in their book, for he was one of the landscape architects who were trying at that time to develop a national and modern style

in Germany. Developments in the modern natural sciences during the late nineteenth century—particularly in such disciplines as ecology, plant geography, and plant sociology—stimulated Lange’s efforts.<sup>9</sup> He was perhaps the first German landscape architect to take up the concept of ecology, which he understood not in the sense of preserving nature (a motivation that is captured by several essays in this volume), but rather as “the science of communal living among entire groups” of similar species, or, in other words, as a “physiognomic understanding of the plant world within nature.”<sup>10</sup> This approach to landscape garden design would, Lange claimed, be “the truly modern garden, the garden for our time.”<sup>11</sup> But Lange’s concept of the *Naturgarten* was highly influenced by his racist ideas about a close and harmonic relationship of the German people to nature. In his book *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (1984) Jeffrey Herff coined the term “reactionary modernism” for “the mixture of ‘great enthusiasm for modern technology with a rejection of the Enlightenment and the values and institutions of liberal democracy’ which was characteristic of the German Conservative Revolutionary movement and National Socialism.”<sup>12</sup> Lange’s “modern” ideas about garden design fit well under this umbrella.

With the advantage of our historical perspective we know, in fact, that the first three decades of the twentieth century in Germany saw developments in garden design that lie outside the parameters of the formal style and that their relationship to concepts such as modernism and nature warrant discussion. Indeed, the introduction of formal modes of garden design in Germany after 1900 and the rejection of the landscape style (or, as it was then also called in Germany, the “Lenné-Meyersche” style) heralded the beginning of modern trends in garden design. But attempts were also undertaken in that period to develop aspects of the Jugendstil (art nouveau), expressionist, and



Dutch De Stijl art movements. In those cases, designers objectified gardens to an extreme degree, seeking to exclude both nature (in the form of naturalistic design and plantings) and—particularly—romanticism. These developments were linked in Germany above all to garden architects such as Leberecht Migge (1881–1935), Hans-Friedrich Pohlentz (1896–1960), and Georg Pniower (1896–1960), who pioneered the introduction of the most advanced technology into the garden and its culture.<sup>13</sup>

These efforts toward modern garden design in the Weimar Republic were vilified under National Socialism; blacklisting and other Nazi persecution measures terminated the professional careers of most practitioners. José Tito Rojo describes parallel political obstacles to modernism in landscape design in Spain in an essay that brings that historical episode to light for the first time.

The search for a modern national expression in landscape is a theme taken up by many of the essays in this volume. Spain, Argentina, the United States, and Italy all produced rhetoric proclaiming their attempts to define progressive—even avant-garde—landscape design, whether formal or naturalistic, as an expression of cultural modernity. Scholarly discussions and publications have explored the theme of modernism in Germany since the 1980s; yet, as demonstrated by Michael Lee’s essay in this volume, new methodological approaches to the topic are yielding important results.

The contributors to this volume address important questions that have not previously been raised and that will shed new light on the relations between modernism and garden design. It is to be hoped that many of these questions can be answered; we can be sure that from them, new ones will arise.

JOACHIM WOLSCHKE-BULMAHN  
Director, Zentrum für Gartenkunst und  
Landschaftsarchitektur  
Leibniz Universität Hannover

## NOTES

I thank Therese O’Malley for an extremely fruitful and enjoyable collaboration, and particularly for carrying by far the major burden of preparing this volume for publication.

1. For information on the Zentrum für Gartenkunst und Landschaftsarchitektur, one of seven research centers at Leibniz Universität Hannover, see Hubertus Fischer, “Angelommen in der Mitte der Gesellschaft: Die eindrucksvolle Erfolgsgeschichte des Zentrums für Gartenkunst und Landschaftsarchitektur (CGL),” *Unimagazin*, no. 3/4 (2013): 4–7.

2. Relevant examples in the CGL-Studies series (published by Martin Meidenbauer, Munich) include Gert Gröning and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, eds., *Naturschutz und Demokratie!*? (2006); Eberhard Eckerle and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, eds., *Landschaft, Architektur, Kunst, Design: Norbert Schitteck zum 60* (2006); Andrea Koenecke, Udo Weilacher, and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, eds., *Die Kunst, Landschaft neu zu erfinden: Zu Werk und Wirken von Bernard Lassus* (2009); Andrea Koenecke, Walter Rossow: “Die Landschaft im Bewusstsein der Öffentlichkeit” (2014); Gert Gröning, *Zwischen Dangast und Colorado Springs: Irma Franzen-Heinrichsdorff 1892–1983; Leben und Werk der ersten Absolventin eines Gartenarchitekturstudiums* (2014).

3. In addition to the scholarly collaborations with the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts mentioned in the preface, during my term as director of landscape architecture studies (1991–1996) Dumbarton Oaks organized several other scholarly gatherings and publications either partly or wholly dedicated to topics relating to modernism and landscape. See, for example, Therese O’Malley and Marc Treib, eds., *Regional Garden Design in the United States* (Washington, 1995); Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, ed., *Nature and Ideology: Natural Garden Design in the Twentieth Century* (Washington, 1997); Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, ed., *Places of Commemoration: Search for Identity and Landscape Design* (Washington, 2001).

4. The following remarks are based on Steven Mansbach and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, “Introduction,” *Centropa* 4, no. 2 (May 2004). I thank Steven Mansbach for the inspiring collaboration in guest editing this special issue and for his outstanding contributions to it.

5. The symposium was preceded by many years of research into questions of modernism in the arts by Mansbach, whose focus has been on central and eastern European countries. His publications include *Graphic Modernism from the Baltic to the Balkans, 1910–1930* (New York, 2007); *Modern Art in Eastern Europe: From the Baltic to the Balkans, ca. 1890–1939* (New York, 1999); *Standing in the Tempest: Painters of the Hungarian Avant-Garde, 1908–1930* (Cambridge, MA, 1991); *Visions of Totality: László Moholy-Nagy, El Lissitzky, and Theo van Doesburg* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1980).

6. Henry Vincent Hubbard and Theodora Kimball, *An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design* (New York, 1929), 51–53.

7. Hubbard and Kimball, 1929, 53.
8. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Nature and Ideology: The Search for Identity and Nationalism in Early 20th-Century German Landscape Architecture," *AICGS (American Institute for Contemporary German Studies) Seminar Papers*, no. 17 (February 1996): 1–31. Regarding Muthesius and his impact on garden design, see Uwe Schneider, *Hermann Muthesius und die Reformdiskussion in der Gartenarchitektur des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Worms, 2000).
9. See Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Political Landscapes and Technology: Nazi Germany and the Landscape Design of the *Reichsautobahnen* (Reich Motor Highways)," *Selected CELA Annual Conference Papers: Nature and Technology* 7 (September 1995): 157–170; Gert Gröning and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "The Ideology of the Nature Garden: Nationalistic Trends in Garden Design in Germany during the Early Twentieth Century," *Journal of Garden History* 12, no. 1 (1992): 73–80; Gert Gröning and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Some Notes on the Mania for Native Plants in Germany," *Landscape Journal* 11, no. 2 (1992): 116–126; Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "The 'Wild Garden' and the 'Nature Garden': Aspects of the Garden Ideology of William Robinson and Willy Lange," *Journal of Garden History* 12, no. 3 (1992): 183–206.
10. Jost Hermand, "Rousseau, Goethe, Humboldt: Their Influence on Later Advocates of the Nature Garden," in Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, ed., *Nature and Ideology: Nature and Garden Design in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1997), 48–51.
11. Willy Lange, *Gartengestaltung der Neuzeit* (Leipzig, 1909), 28.
12. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Reactionary Modernism," accessed September 15, 2014, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reactionary\\_modernism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reactionary_modernism).
13. Regarding Migge, see David Haney, *When Modern Was Green: Life and Work of Landscape Architect Leberecht Migge* (London and New York, 2010). Pohlenz presented his avant-garde and provocative garden design under the title "Sonderbarer Garten" (peculiar garden) at the Juryfreie Kunstschau Berlin in 1925; see Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "The Avantgarde and Garden Architecture in Germany: On a Forgotten Phenomenon of the Weimar Period" in *Gartenarchitektur und Moderne in Deutschland im frühen 20. Jahrhundert: Drei Beiträge*, ed. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn and Andrea Koenecke (Hannover, 2005), 8–24. Pniower, one of the outstanding modernists in German garden design, also tried to develop expressionist approaches to garden design. See Peter Fibich and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "'Garden Expressionism': Remarks on a Historical Debate," *Garden History* 33, no. 1 (2005): 106–117.