Cultural Landscape Report
Site History and Evaluation
1791–1994

The White House
& President's Park

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Cultural Landscape Report

Site History and Evaluation

1791–1994

The White House & President's Park

Washington, D.C.

By

Dr. Susan Calafate Boyle

With Assistance from
Mr. David Krause

Based on Research by
EDAW, Inc.
Land and Community Associates
Cynthia Zaitzevsky & Associates
John Milner Associates

December 2001

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service

Cultural Landscape Report for the White House and President's Park
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Thank you

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Foreword

The Office of the Chief Usher of the White House and the Office of White House Liaison for the National Park Service currently share responsibility for managing the landscape of the White House and President's Park. Caring for this complex landscape presents significant challenges. Historical integrity, multiple public uses, legal and security constraints, horticultural excellence, and many other factors apply to this special place. Landscape management requires flexibility and awareness of the historic character of the land and its features and their evolution through time.

This document is a tool to assist both offices in making appropriate management decisions. It includes most of the information currently available on the history of the landscape, analyzes it, and interprets it within a broad historical context. It aims to be as definitive a study as possible given that new information on a site with such a long and complex history appears regularly.

Questions are continually being raised about a broad range of issues regarding this landscape. Managers need guidance to answer such questions, but more importantly to adopt strategies that allow for the preservation of significant landscape features while at the same time providing for the safety and privacy of the occupants of the White House.

— GARY WALTERS, CHIEF USHER, THE WHITE HOUSE

— JAMES I. MCDANIEL, DIRECTOR, WHITE HOUSE LIAISON,
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Preface

Studying the landscape of a site as complex as the White House and President's Park is a major challenge. After more than two centuries of association with individuals and developments critical to our nation's history, it has become a symbol of the presidency and of the United States. Its strong connection with leading political figures and influential landscape designers and architects intensifies the challenge.

Understanding the evolution of this complex landscape in order to reach conclusions is an overwhelming task. At times the researcher almost inadvertently begins to link the activities on the grounds to the policies and personalities of the occupants of the White House, a dangerous exercise considering that relatively few presidents clearly articulated their ideas about desirable designs for the grounds. Unclear or incomplete documentation affects any attempt to provide a definitive history of the site, hindering the clarification of certain issues, leaving many questions unanswered, and leading to mistakes.

Providing accurate information is essential in establishing credibility, but we need to acknowledge that the search for absolute historical accuracy and completeness never ends. Small factual mistakes are almost unavoidable in any historical research project and are relatively easy to correct. We will always find additional materials that shed new light on developments that we thought we had understood perfectly. The historian's crucial task is not to clarify every small detail, but to analyze the available information and to interpret it within a broad historical context.

Interpretation is always evolving, as a reflection of the perspective and the tastes of new generations. There will never be a definitive interpretation on the history of the landscape of the White House and President's Park. Each generation will rewrite the history of the site because each generation has a different perspective on the past and perceives different lessons to be learned. When Andrew Jackson Downing developed new designs for President's Park and Washington, D.C., in the mid 19th century, he departed from Pierre L'Enfant's vision, which was not highly regarded. However, with time the value of L'Enfant's plan has been reassessed and now provides the guiding principles for the management of the site.

Conversely Downing's design ideas, quite popular at the time of their development, have lost their appeal and no longer appear suitable.

The most important lesson from studying the history of this site is that it reveals as much about the world in which we live as the past that we are trying to elucidate.

Acknowledgments

This has been a challenging project, and I am heavily indebted to those who have supported me for more than two and a half years. Familiarity with the site is crucial for students of landscapes, and in my case this was made possible by Chief Usher Gary Walters and Superintendent of Grounds Irvin Williams, who facilitated my exploration of the White House grounds and answered many questions. Dale Haney led me on tours of the grounds and offered valuable insights.

White House Curator Betty Monkman met to discuss the project and provided excellent review comments. Her staff furnished photographic materials that enhanced the document. James I. McDaniel, National Park Service director for White House Liaison, provided continuous support during the entire project and made his personnel available to assist with research, site visits, and reviews.

Dr. Cynthia Zaitzevsky and EDAW, Inc., are the authors of the draft document, which provides the basis for this report. William Seale graciously received me at his house and presented suggestions and words of encouragement. Dr. Patrick O'Brien made important and valuable comments during the various stages of this project. Sue Kohler from the Commission of Fine Arts provided crucial details on the lighting system. The reviews by Maureen Joseph and Darwina Neal corrected inaccuracies and clarified questions, as did the staff of President's Park. Tom Peyton, former superintendent of President's Park, allowed his staff to guide me on a visit to the various monuments and memorials. The suggestions and information provided by Helen Matthews and Wayne Amos clarified horticultural issues. Helen led me on tours of the grounds outside the fence and provided valuable insights a number of topics. Thanks also go to Jim Doherty for answering questions about Sherman Plaza. Alicia Overby deserves my gratitude for her ability to promptly uncover and remit a substantial number of photographs. Shelly McKenzie assisted in gathering pertinent documentation for the historic images. Special appreciation goes to Linda Ray for doing such a great job with the preparation of the graphic materials — essential elements of any landscape study, and to Greg Sorensen for his patience and for the monumental task of editing this volume.

Most of the new information included in this draft is the result of the efforts of David Krause, the archivist at White House Liaison. For over two years David generously provided new data, his expertise, and never ending review comments that have greatly enhanced the quality of this manuscript. A special thanks also goes to Rick Napoli for his collaboration and for allowing David Krause to spend many hours answering my questions.

Finally my greatest appreciation goes to Ann Bowman Smith and Betty Janes, who had confidence in me and who continually provided words of support and encouragement. This project could not have been completed without their help.

— SUSAN CALAFATE BOYLE

Introduction

President's Park is a complex and constantly evolving landscape. The images of the north and the south grounds of the White House, with their immaculate lawns and flower displays, stand as symbols of the presidency and the United States. The multiple uses of President's Park add to the significance and complexity of this unique site. President's Park is the nation's most widely recognized ceremonial landscape, where events of national and international importance take place almost on a daily basis. The White House is the public office of the executive branch of the U.S. government. It also serves as the private living quarters of the president and his family. Certain elements of the landscape of President's Park reflect the work of talented landscape architects and designers. Some features were developed to meet the needs and interests of the occupants of the White House; others are indicative of the necessity to provide safety and privacy to the president without isolating him from the American people.

In addition to the White House and its grounds, as of 1994 President's Park also included the Treasury Building, the Old Executive Office Building (formerly the State, War, and Navy Building, now known as the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building), Lafayette Park, and President's Park South (including the Ellipse, Sherman Plaza, and the First Division Monument). Treatment of this complex as a single landscape makes sense for several physical and historical reasons. First, Pierre L'Enfant's plan presented the entire site as President's Park. Although the specific landscape features were not delineated, the design included an area that roughly corresponds to the size and location of President's Park today. Second, these five distinct units are physically very close, and what occurs in one area visually affects the others. For example, development on the Ellipse could adversely impact the open vistas to and from the White House. Third, although individual landscapes did not evolve concurrently, their history is closely intertwined. For example, Jefferson proposed the construction of terraces to connect the President's House with the executive office buildings on either side. The construction and completion of the Treasury Building required the removal of the existing stables at the White House. The construction of East and West Executive Avenues and the excavation for the massive State,

War, and Navy Building, which began in 1871, provided needed fill for the grounds of the Ellipse.

The White House is undoubtedly the focal point of this landscape complex, and understandably it attracts most of the attention. However, what enhances President's Park is the intricate relationship among the five units. Similarities and contrasts add interest and flavor to the site. For example, the romantic Lafayette Park differs dramatically from the massive and stark Old Executive Office Building and the Treasury Building. The curvilinear elements of the Lafayette Park path system are replicated in the circulation system for most of the site — the north entry drive, the transverse road and circular roads in the upper south lawn, South Executive Avenue, the Ellipse road, and the path systems east and west of the Ellipse. The fountains in the north lawn and the lower south lawn contribute to this curvilinear effect, which is enhanced by the artful plantings surrounding them. This prevailing curvilinear motif provides a sharp contrast to the rigid formality and rectilinear shapes of the main buildings, from the White House itself to the Treasury Building and the Old Executive Office Building, and even to the Bulfinch gatehouses.

Large expanses of open space visually distinguish President's Park. Its verdant lawns, large canopied trees, manicured plantings, and curvilinear walks and drives differ markedly from the adjacent, urban grid of paved streets, sidewalks, and tightly arranged buildings. Walls, fences, gates, and staffed guardhouses physically and visually separate the White House and its grounds from its neighborhood, and also limit access to the Treasury, the Old Executive Office Building, East Executive Park, and West Executive Avenue. Public open spaces abutting the White House grounds on the north and south expand its parklike setting. Lafayette Park, to the north, is an urban park with curvilinear walks, a variety of canopy and ornamental trees in informal arrangements, seasonal planting beds, and prominent monuments and memorials. The Ellipse, to the south, consists of a broad open lawn surrounded by an elliptical walk and drive, combining recreational open space with a number of monuments and memorials.

The Setting

President's Park is approximately 82.22 acres. The site comprises all of the land originally reserved for the development of the White House, as depicted in Pierre L'Enfant's 1791 plan. Set within a densely developed cityscape, President's Park contains public and

private open spaces, limited-access governmental office buildings and roads, public streets and sidewalks, and the White House grounds — an enclave that includes the official residence and offices of the president, as well as private living quarters. President's Park generally slopes from north to south and is bounded by city streets, sidewalks, and urban streetscapes to the west, north, and east, and by the Washington Monument grounds to the south.

Geographic and Urban Context

President's Park is located in downtown Washington, D.C., in the city's northwest quadrant. The rectangular park is oriented in a north-south direction and is aligned with the prevailing grid of the city (figure I-1). It is bounded by H Street to the north, 15th Street to the east, 17th Street to the west, and Constitution Avenue to the south (figure I-2). President's Park abuts the National Mall approximately at its center and is linked visually with the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the United States Capitol. It is part of a system of parks, gardens, and historic sites administered and maintained by the National Park Service through its National Capital Region.

The landscape of President's Park and its environs reflects the pressures of urban density and growth in the nation's capital. Historically, the Potomac River extended as far east as the present-day intersection of 17th Street and Constitution Avenue. Tiber Creek, a perennial creek flowing from northeast to southwest through much of the present downtown area, emptied into the Potomac at this point. With the growth and development of the city, portions of the river and adjacent tidal flats were filled to create parts of the Ellipse, the Washington Monument grounds, and East and West Potomac Parks. Tiber Creek still runs beneath Constitution Avenue, but it has been incorporated into the city's stormwater sewer system. Vegetation and landforms have also been manipulated to establish and define an appropriate setting for the executive branch of government within the urban environment of Washington, D.C. Plantings have been selected for aesthetics, climate control, and privacy, and landforms have been altered to create building sites, street alignments, and parklike settings.

Sections of President's Park and adjacent areas are included in several historic districts designated by the District of Columbia or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Lafayette Park and adjacent buildings are a national historic landmark. The rest of President's Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Much of the

area comprising President's Park has also been designated as historic parkland by the Historic Preservation Division of the D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, and it is listed on the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites. Some of the best known historic landmarks and open spaces in Washington, D.C., are adjacent to President's Park and contribute to its setting. The Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, the Corcoran Gallery, the Daughters of the American Revolution Memorial Continental Hall, the Capitol, the Chamber of Commerce Building, East and West Potomac Parks, and the Mall border upon or are within view of President's Park.

Study Methodology

Research for this project began in 1993 and resulted in a draft document prepared in 1995.[1] The current report, largely based on the information included in the 1995 document, is divided into three main parts. The first part (chapters 1 through 8) is a history of the evolution of the site; the second part (chapter 9) describes existing conditions as of 1994; and the third part (chapters 10 and 11) evaluates the significance and the integrity of President's Park, using the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places. The document concludes with a brief summary of findings and recommendations for further study in chapter 12.

Soon after the author started to work on this study, a decision was made to concentrate on the accuracy of the information presented and to omit an analysis and evaluation of contributing features. This made sense given time and financial constraints. However, it is important to note that a systematic analysis of individual landscape characteristics (such as views and vistas, spatial organization, circulation, use, vegetation, and cluster arrangements) and an evaluation of their evolution over time would greatly enhance the quality and value of the present document.

The landscape of President's Park is extremely complex. The site's extensive history, its association with all the American presidents and their families (as well as with many leading designers and architects), its symbolism, and its evolving character require familiarity with

1. EDAW, Inc., Land and Community Associates, Cynthia Zaitzevsky & Associates, John Milner Associates, "President's Park Cultural Landscape Report: Site History, Existing Conditions, Analysis and Evaluation" (May 1995), on file at White House Liaison, National Park Service.

large numbers of written records and visual materials, such as drawings, sketches, photographs, and plans. Most of the pertinent official records, such as the annual reports of the commissioner of public buildings and the chief of engineers, were examined in preparing this document. However, it has not been possible to conduct the massive additional research of other official sources, published documents, and private collections that might contain relevant information.

Difficulties associated with historic research have affected this project. The annual reports of the commissioner of public buildings are the most important source for the evolution of the grounds. However, the format of these reports changed periodically, and certain topics were not consistently addressed. Sometimes the information in one year's report contradicts previous ones. In some cases crucial documents have been lost or are not available; others contain incorrect information, or are not accurately labeled or dated. Pertinent data related to this site is being discovered on a regular basis, and it is likely that this will continue. The integration of this new information into this report has not been possible at this time. A strategy will have to be developed to allow for the inclusion of newly uncovered records in future updates of this document.

Part I of this document — the evolution of the site — has a dual objective. First, it provides a general interpretation of the evolution of the landscape of the White House and President's Park. Second, it presents extensive details that current managers can consider when questions arise. This is the first attempt to systematically integrate a substantial amount of previously unpublished information into a cohesive, interpretive framework.

Several aspects of the history of this landscape need further analysis, such as details on the installation and removal of fencing and light fixtures, and the change from oil lights to gaslights to incandescent fixtures. Some information for commemorative plantings is missing, particularly for trees that have died and the date and type of replacement; at times the available information is contradictory.[2] Once these topics are clarified, it would then be possible to prepare historic site plans for each of the eight periods identified in this document.

How President's Park has been used is one of the most difficult facets to document systematically because judicious analysis of a broad spectrum of historical data would be required. Ceremonial functions

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2. The use of botanical names has been limited to commemorative plantings that are listed in chapter 9. Names are based on *Hortus Third: A Concise Dictionary of Plants Cultivated in the United States and Canada* (New York: Macmillan 1976).

and uses are probably among the most important aspects of the site. However, the information available is fragmentary and needs to be pieced together to provide a systematic perspective of how ceremonial uses changed with time. Public use of the grounds has also changed. The site is synonymous with the idea of a democracy, and it has always been necessary to maintain the notion of accessibility to the president. However, security issues have often prevented public access, and information on this topic needs more systematic development and interpretation.

Finally, the relationship between the landscape of President's Park and the surrounding neighborhoods needs to be carefully analyzed.

Context of this Report

For the purpose of this document President's Park has been defined as a designed historic landscape encompassing the White House, Lafayette Park, the Treasury Building, the Old Executive Office Building, and President's Park South.[3] The National Park Service's *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* describes a designed historic landscape as:

- significant as a design or work of art;
- consciously designed and laid out by a master gardener, landscape architect, architect or horticulturist according to a design principle, or an owner or amateur using a recognized style or tradition;
- associated with a significant person, trend, or event in landscape gardening; or
- has a significant relationship to the theory or practice of landscape architecture.

A cultural landscape report is the primary document to guide the treatment of cultural landscapes. It presents the historical background of the property, describes existing conditions, analyzes and evaluates the resource's significance and integrity, and provides guidance for future treatment. Recommendations for the treatment of cultural landscapes aim only to provide a broad framework for management. They are based on the analysis and evaluation of the

3. The White House, in turn, can be subdivided into component landscapes. For example, the north lawn is a component landscape of the White House; others include the east and west gardens and the upper and lower south lawn.

landscape characteristics that contribute to the significance of the resources. The purpose of the recommendations is to clarify preservation treatment for significant landscape resources and to provide a framework for new development that is compatible with the salient qualities and character of the cultural landscape. The preservation of landscape characteristics is usually the recommended management approach for properties that are nationally significant, but this does not prevent new development.

The special nature of the site has precluded the development of treatment recommendations. Current management practices at the White House and President's Park follow the central prescription of the Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. 1935 report — preserve the historic aspects of the landscape, but at the same time adapt them to current needs.[4]

4. Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, "Report to the President of the United States on Improvements and Policy of Maintenance for the Executive Mansion Grounds" (Oct. 24, 1935), Olmsted Associates Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

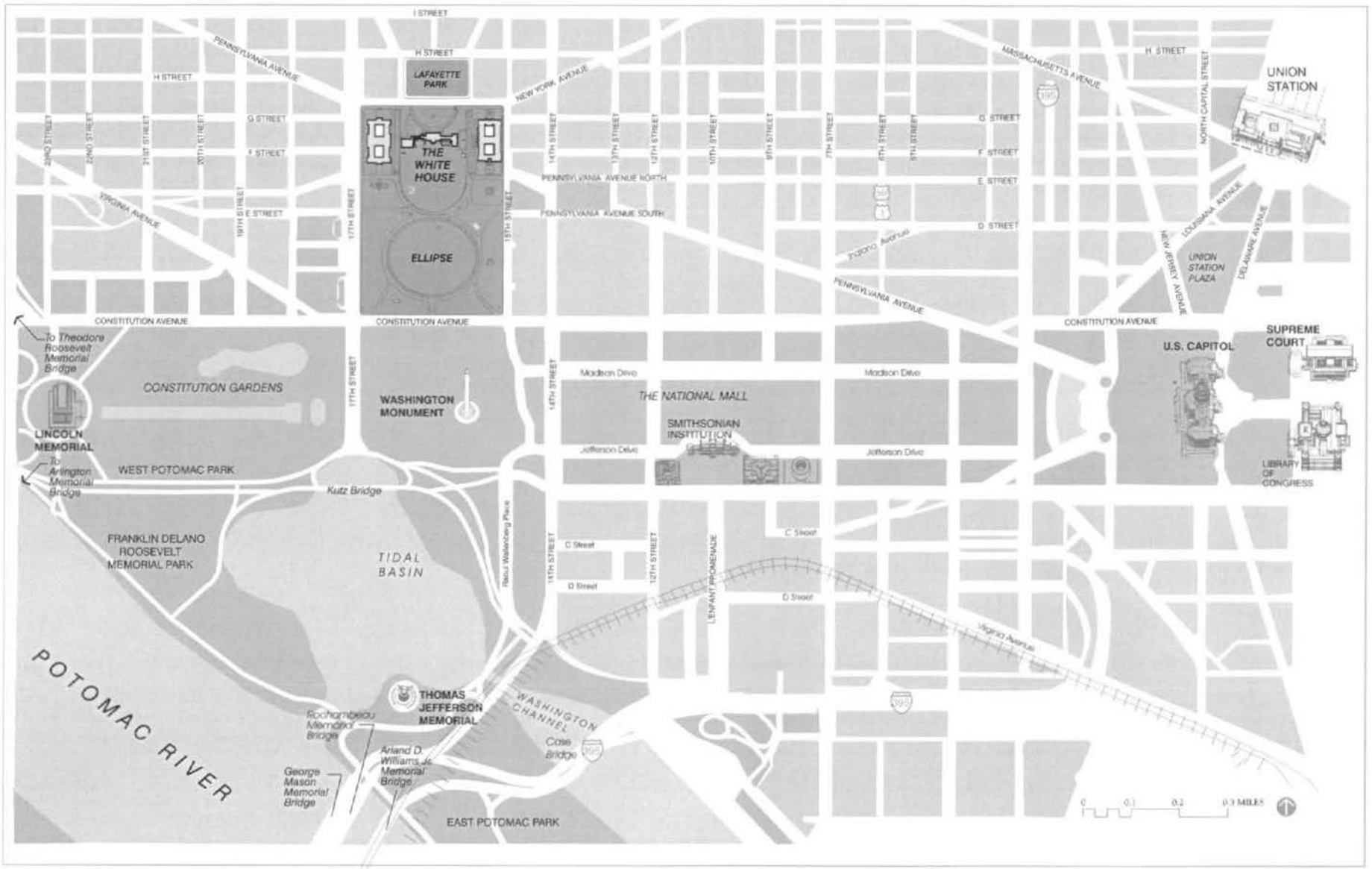

Figure I-1: Local Context — The White House and President's Park

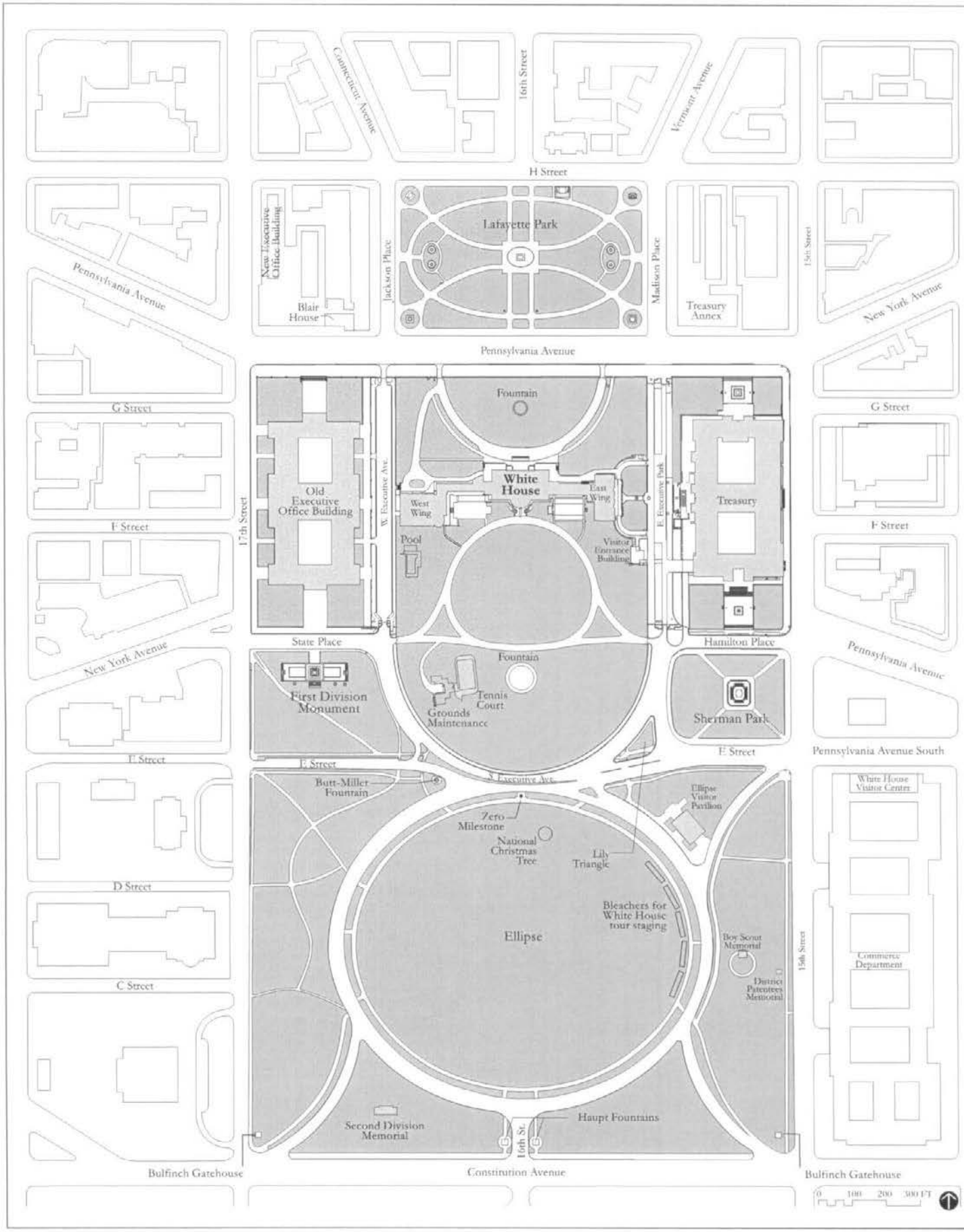

Figure I-2: Study Area — The White House and President's Park

The White House and President's Park

Part I: The Evolution of President's Park

Chapter 1. The L'Enfant Plan and the Beginning of President's Park: 1791–1814

Chapter 1 addresses the first two decades in the development of President's Park. The chief formative influence on the landscape of the site was the plan for the city of Washington conceived and drawn in 1791 by the French artist/architect Pierre Charles L'Enfant. Important features of the L'Enfant plan are its simplicity and dignity, the location of the city's main spaces and buildings, a plan for the dimensions and foundations of the President's House, and a general conceptual scheme for its grounds. L'Enfant also appears to have been the first one to use the term "President's Park."[1]

American presidents have had major influence on the evolution of the landscape of President's Park. George Washington selected the site and its original designer. Thomas Jefferson suggested important modifications to the L'Enfant plan and developed a conceptual design for landscape changes that was partially implemented. As president, Jefferson made the first concerted effort to landscape the grounds. To a lesser degree both John Adams and James Madison helped to establish the tradition of presidential participation.

After L'Enfant's departure from the project in February 1792, other talented designers refined and somewhat altered his general plan. Surveyor Andrew Ellicott drew the first engraved version of L'Enfant's plan, and Benjamin Henry Latrobe collaborated with

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1. The most complete summary of the city's initial physical history, derived from the earliest plans, maps, and views, as well as from textual sources, is found in John W. Reps, *Monumental Washington: The Planning and Development of the Capital Center* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), especially chapter 1: "Washington: The Founding and the Founders," 1-25. See also figure 1-2, *Plan of the City Intended for the Permanent Seat of the Government of the United States*, copy by the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1887 of the manuscript plan for Washington, D.C., drawn by Pierre Charles L'Enfant, 1791, at the Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division. William Seale also discusses L'Enfant and his plan in volume I of *The President's House: A History* (Washington, DC: The White House Historical Association, with the cooperation of the National Geographic Society, 1986), 2 vols., 1-21. For a recent interpretation of the L'Enfant plan and its sources as well as of early 19th century plans for Washington, see Pamela Scott, "'This Vast Empire': The Iconography of the Mall, 1791–1848," in *The Mall in Washington, 1791–1991*, edited by Richard Longstreth (Washington, DC: The National Gallery of Art, 1991), 36–58.

Jefferson in drawing plans for architectural and landscape improvements at the White House.

From the early years balancing the use of the site as private living quarters and as symbol of the presidency and the nation — the public seat of the executive branch of government — became a concern. There was a degree of tension between the need for privacy for the first family and the need for the president to appear accessible to the people. During this period a picket fence was installed (ca. 1803). It was later removed when the substantial Jefferson wall was built, making a clear distinction between the private and the public space. The construction of the east and west terraces provided additional privacy for the occupants of the President's House and allowed the public grounds to the north to be separated from the more private grounds to the south.

Location of the Capital and President's Park

During the 1780s the location of the nation's capital was the subject of considerable debate. As a result of the compromise regarding the national debt, the new Congress passed the Residence Act, which was approved by President Washington on July 16, 1790. This act did not specify an exact site for the capital; instead, it authorized Washington to select a location not more than 10 miles square on the Potomac River "at some place between the mouths of the Eastern Branch and the Connogcochegue." It also empowered the president to appoint three commissioners who were to arrange for the purchase of land.[2]

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2. The selection of a site composed of land from Maryland and Virginia was the result of a 1790 political compromise. Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton proposed that the federal government assume the states' Revolutionary War debts — an estimated $25 million — an important offer to the New England states that had not repaid their debts. Southern states, with the exception of South Carolina, had repaid 83 percent of their debt and were upset at the prospect of bailing out their northern neighbors. A compromise began with Virginia legislators who opposed the assumption of debt, but had a strong desire to host the national capital. The Residence Act refined the process by authorizing President Washington to select a location. Hamilton convinced New York congressmen to vote for the Potomac River site, and in return he secured enough support from Virginians to win. Pennsylvania and Virginia congressmen meanwhile negotiated a deal whereby Philadelphia would serve as the temporary capital, while the permanent site of Washington was developed for occupation in 1800. Paul S. Boyer et al., ed., *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People*, vol. 1: *To 1877* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Co., 1990); Joseph R. Conlin, *The American Past, Part 1: A Survey of American History to 1877* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), 161; National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior (hereafter NPS), "L'Enfant Plan of the City of Washington, District of Columbia," by Sarah Amy Leach and Elizabeth Barthold,

In October 1790 Washington visited the various sites that had been suggested for the capital, including Jefferson's first choice, the one near Georgetown that was ultimately selected. In November Washington and Jefferson discussed the matter in Philadelphia. At this meeting Jefferson recommended that two full blocks be set aside for the President's House and garden. The sketches he made showed a plan for a small town with a grid system of streets between the Potomac and the Anacostia Rivers.[3]

An accurate survey was needed before anything further could be accomplished. Washington turned to Andrew Ellicott, an experienced engineer, who began work early in 1791 to survey the boundaries of the city and to determine major features of topography. In March 1791 Washington also engaged L'Enfant to lay down "the hills, valleys, morasses, and waters between that [the eastern branch], the Potomac, the Tyber, and the road leading from Georgetown to the eastern branch, and connecting the whole with certain fixed points of the map Mr. Ellicot [sic] is preparing."[4]

Pierre Charles L'Enfant (1754–1825) was the son of Pierre L'Enfant, painter-in-ordinary to the king of France, and Marie Charlotte Lullier L'Enfant. Between 1758 and 1766 the L'Enfant family lived at Versailles, where the elder L'Enfant helped decorate the Ministry of War Building. The young Pierre Charles thus came to know the city, the château, and the grounds of Versailles extremely well. In 1771 he entered the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture in Paris, where he appears to have studied under his father.[5] In 1777, like many other young Frenchmen, L'Enfant volunteered to serve on the side of the colonists in the American Revolution. L'Enfant met George Washington at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777–78, where he drew a portrait of the general at the request of Lafayette.

National Register of Historic Places, registration form, 1994, sec. 8, p. 6; Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 1–2. The first three commissioners — Daniel Carroll, Thomas Johnson, and David Stuart — were appointed in January 1791. In June 1802 Jefferson abolished the office of the commissioners and established a superintendent of public buildings, to be appointed by the president. Seale, *The President's House*, 15. See also Frederick Doveton Nichols and Ralph E. Griswold, *Thomas Jefferson: Landscape Architect* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 38–75.

3. Both the sketches and notes Jefferson took at this meeting have survived; Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 2–4.

4. Quoted in Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 5.

5. H. Paul Caemmerer, *The Life of Pierre Charles L'Enfant: Planner of the City Beautiful: The City of Washington* (Washington, DC: National Republic Publishing Company, 1950), 1–11. The Caemmerer biography is especially useful because it includes texts (although not always complete ones) of many of L'Enfant's letters. See also Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 5–8.

Washington then asked him to design a medal for the Society of the Cincinnati. L'Enfant went back to Paris in 1783–84 but returned to this country to practice architecture in New York. In September 1789 he wrote a letter to Washington asking to be employed on the design of the new capital city.[6]

By this time, progress was being made on determining the precise location of the city within the 10-square-mile district. Initially it was assumed that the capital city would be relatively small and that it could be located at various sites within the extensive tract of land being examined. Ultimately, however, the entire area between the proposed towns of Carrollsburg (on the Anacostia) and Hamburg (or Hamburgh, near Georgetown) was incorporated into the final plan.[7] In 1791 Jefferson drew another sketch plan for the capital city, between the Potomac and the Tiber. The plan covered a very limited area, but the relationship between the capitol building and the President's House was similar to what was finally implemented. At about this time, L'Enfant was entrusted with the design of the entire city between Rock Creek and the Anacostia River. Figure 1-1 shows a retrospective map made in 1874, which illustrates the division of land within the city, the tracts owned by individual landholders, and the platted towns of Georgetown, Hamburg, and Carrollsburg; the L'Enfant plan is superimposed. As it evolved, L'Enfant's plan had marked differences from Jefferson's; L'Enfant disliked the grid street system and favored several nodes of development rather than a single concentrated settlement. At this juncture L'Enfant went to Jefferson and requested maps of the best planned and "grandest" European cities. Jefferson responded by sending him 10 maps from his personal collection. Among these were several French cities, including Marseilles, Lyon, Bordeaux, and Orléans, as well as Paris. In addition, there were maps of Frankfurt and Karlsrühe in Germany, Turin and Milan in Italy, and Amsterdam in the Netherlands.[8]

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6. Caemmerer, *L'Enfant*, 25, 38-39, 43–46, 69–130. See also Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 8–9. In 1789, L'Enfant remodeled New York's Old City Hall, which was renamed Federal Hall and served as the seat of Congress beginning in 1789, when New York City was the capital of the nation.

7. Carrollsburg and Hamburg were very sparsely populated, however, the land had been platted in both areas in the expectation of future development. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 9–13.

8. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 13–15. Contemporary plans of these cities (possibly even the same plans that Jefferson sent L'Enfant) are illustrated in Nichols and Griswold, *Thomas Jefferson, Landscape Architect*, figs. 21–32. The plans for Karlsrühe, Turin, Paris, and Amsterdam are illustrated in John W. Reps, *Washington On View: The Nation's Capital Since 1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 19.

By June 1791, L'Enfant had completed a draft plan and a memorandum, which he presented to Washington. Although this first plan has been lost, the accompanying memorandum has survived. Among his recommendations was a long diagonal avenue, today's Pennsylvania Avenue, connecting the "Presidential Palace" and the "Federal House." The President's House and its "garden park and other improvements" were to overlook the Potomac at approximately their present locations. "Public walks" connected the President's House and the Capitol. L'Enfant stated that

> it will see 10 or 12 miles down the Potowmack [sic] front the town and harbor of Alexandria and stand to the view of the whole city. . . . I placed the three grand Departments of State contigous [sic] to the principle [sic] Palace and on the way leading to the Congressional House the gardens of the one together with the park and other improvement on the dependency are connected with the publique [sic] walk and avenue to the Congress house in a manner as most [sic] form a whole as grand as it will be agreeable and convenient to the whole city.[9]

In this same memorandum, L'Enfant vividly described Jenkins Hill, site of the future Capitol, as a "pedestal waiting for a monument."[10]

On August 19, 1791, L'Enfant sent another plan and another memorandum to the president. The plan (which may be the document in the Library of Congress's Geography and Map Division and generally called the "Map of Dotted Lines") was a simple schematic outline map of the projected city showing principal streets and open spaces.[11] Part of the August 1791 memorandum is especially descriptive:

> The grand avenu [sic] connecting both the palace and the Federal House will be magnificent and most convenient, the streets running west of the upper square of the Federal House and which terminate in an easy slope on the canal through the tiber which it will overlook for the space of

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9. L'Enfant to Washington, June 22, 1791, published in "L'Enfant's Reports to President Washington, Bearing Dates of March 26, June 22, and August 19, 1791," in *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, vol. 2, 1899, 35–36.

10. "L'Enfant's Reports," 35.

11. "L'Enfant's Reports," 17. The 1791 "Map of Dotted Lines" is illustrated in Reps, *Monumental Washington*, fig. 8. There has been considerable question as to whether this "Map of Dotted Lines" actually is by L'Enfant, although L'Enfant used the term in his letter of Aug. 19, 1791, to Washington. See J. L. Sibley Jennings Jr., "Artistry as Design: L'Enfant's Extraordinary City," *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress*, 36, no. 3 (Summer 1979), 249. Richard W. Stephenson has suggested that the map may have been drawn by Ellicott. See Richard W. Stephenson, "The Delineation of a Grand Plan," *Journal of the Library of Congress*, 36, no. 3 (Summer 1979), 207–24.

> about two mile [sic] will be beautifull [sic] above what may be imagined — those other streets parallel to that canal, those crossing over it and which are as many avenues to the grand walk from the water cascade under the Federal House to the President [sic] park.
>
> The making of the publik [sic] walk from under the federal House as far as it is carried on the potomac [sic] and connected with the palace . . . will be productive of as much advantage . . . in giving to the City . . . a superiority . . . over most of the city [sic] of the world.[12]

Later in August, L'Enfant went to Philadelphia and presented his final plan to Washington. The explanatory references that accompanied the plan included another mention of President's Park: "L. President's park and the K. well improved field, being a part of the walk from the President's house of about 1800 feet in breadth, and ¾ of a mile in length."[13] Although the August 1791 plan has survived, the paper has darkened, and the lines and writing have faded and become almost illegible.[14] For this reason, L'Enfant's final manuscript plan for the city is rarely published. It is best known from several later versions and reprints, of which the most accurate is the 1887 facsimile copy made by the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey (figure 1-2).

After his plan was accepted, L'Enfant made arrangements to have it engraved. It was supposed to be ready before the sale of lots of land in the city began in October, but the engraving was not completed on time. L'Enfant then arranged with Benjamin Ellicott, Andrew's brother, to make the engraving before the next sale of lots in the spring. Benjamin Ellicott turned the engraving over to Andrew, and L'Enfant discovered that numerous changes had been made from his original, including the removal of his name. Because of these delays and because L'Enfant was unable to develop a good working

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12. L'Enfant to Washington, in "L'Enfant's Reports," 39, 43.

13. Quoted in Caemmerer, *L'Enfant*, 164.

14. L'Enfant's original manuscript plan is illustrated in color in Stephenson, "The Delineation of a Grand Plan," 212–13. The 1887 Coast and Geodetic Survey facsimile is discussed in the same article, 218–21. The Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress now holds the original L'Enfant plan, but because of its extreme fragility, viewers who ask to see it are generally shown the 1887 facsimile. A very detailed discussion of the original L'Enfant plan, with numerous illustrations of details, can be found in Jennings, "Artistry as Design," 225–78.

relationship with the three commissioners, Thomas Jefferson, at Washington's request, dismissed L'Enfant on February 27, 1792.[15]

The L'Enfant plan, incorporating the changes made by the Ellicotts, was finally engraved in November 1792. This is the plan that is generally referred to as the Ellicott plan (figure 1-3). A detail of the central portion of the Ellicott plan, showing President's Park as envisioned by L'Enfant, is illustrated in figure 1-4. The chief difference between the manuscript L'Enfant plan and the engraved Ellicott plan is that, on the latter, the outlines of many of the major buildings, including the president's mansion, are indicated by heavy dark lines. These may reflect preliminary designs by L'Enfant for the foundations of these buildings, for he is known to have been working on such designs early in 1792. It is almost certain that, if he had not been dismissed, L'Enfant would have designed the President's House. If it had been constructed as shown on the L'Enfant plan, the President's House would have been four times larger than it was ultimately built. L'Enfant also proposed channeling Tiber Creek into the Washington City Canal, along the line of the present Constitution Avenue. This was ultimately done, but the canal was not completed until about 1815.[16]

On the 1792 Ellicott plan, the executive mansion stands in the center of a large open space at the intersections of two major diagonal boulevards (Pennsylvania and New York Avenues) and two minor ones not yet named. On either side of the shaded area to the south, which indicates the park, are flanking executive office buildings. The Ellicott plan depicts the executive mansion in a way that, if executed, would have made the building completely open and visible from all sides and from a considerable distance down the diagonal boulevards.[17]

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15. The engraving was done by Thackara and Vallance of Philadelphia and by Samuel Hill of Boston. Caemmerer, *L'Enfant*, 169–247. L'Enfant was never paid in full for the Washington plan. In appendix A, 367–410, Caemmerer reproduces L'Enfant's numerous "memorials," or petitions, to the federal government for payment. See also Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 209–14, and Reps, *Washington on View*, 24–27.

16. Seale, *The President's House*, 7–18; Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 16, 29.

17. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 22–25. The President's Park section of the L'Enfant manuscript plan, which, because of faintness and an erasure, can barely be seen, is illustrated in Jennings, "Artistry as Design," 257. A similar but much larger arrangement is shown for the Capitol.

In 1792 the government purchased the approximately 83-acre parcel allocated to the presidential palace on L'Enfant's plan and designated it as Appropriation Number 1 or Reservation Number 1. Its boundaries were H Street on the north, 17th Street on the west, Tiber Creek on the south, and 15th Street on the east. Excluded were city blocks 167 and 221 to the east and west of today's Lafayette Park, which were allocated for private development. At that time, the land had two owners: the southern part was the farm of David Burnes and the northern part the farm of the Peerce family, which had recently been purchased by Samuel Davidson. There was a cottage on the former Peerce property, near the northwest corner of today's Lafayette Park, which was soon taken down.[18]

Within the boundaries of today's President's Park, several elements survive from the L'Enfant plan: the general location of the White House and the flanking buildings, although not their dimensions and precise sites, and the major vistas, especially along the north/south axis. In addition, most of the land indicated by L'Enfant for parks or gardens is used as such today, but in different configurations.[19]

The Grounds of the White House

On the 1792 Ellicott plan (detail in figure 1–4), the grounds south of the executive mansion were arranged according to L'Enfant's plan to frame a vista of the Potomac. The land was shaped to form descending terraces with a pool in the center of the southernmost terrace. There was no indication of a path system, plantings, or other landscaping that represents a park and gardens.

In December 1791 L'Enfant staked out the foundations of the executive mansion. Early in 1792 some foundation stones were laid according to his plan. The huge scale of this projected building became obvious, and to many it seemed excessive and unsuitable for a democracy.[20] At about this time, the term "presidential palace"

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18. Seale, *The President's House*, 23–24. New evidence shows that the Peerce cottage was more likely to have been near the northwestern corner of the present Lafayette Park, rather than the southeastern corner, as formerly thought. See NPS, "Archeological Evaluation, President's Park, Washington, D.C., 90% Draft," by John P. Pousson and Christine Hoepfner (Eastern Applied Archeology Center, Feb. 1995), 17–18.

19. The L'Enfant plan also depicts features on the south lawn that may have been intended as a pair of mounds, although it was several years before these were constructed.

20. In a similar vein, one of the commissioners of the District of Columbia is quoted as having written about the surroundings of what would be the President's House: "It may

began to fall out of use, and the "President's House" became the more accepted term. In March 1792, after L'Enfant's dismissal and at Thomas Jefferson's urging, a competition was held to choose a design for the house.

Although the projected size of the building was not indicated in the announcement of the competition, it was stated that the preference was for a plan of which the central part could be constructed first and added to later. Irish-born architect James Hoban, who had immigrated to Charleston, South Carolina, won the competition. Hoban's initial plan was more modest than Washington wanted. The dimensions were enlarged at Washington's request, but they still fit well within the excavations already made for the projected L'Enfant structure. The north entrance of the building, according to the Hoban plan, was in the same spot as on the L'Enfant plan. However, the reduction in scale from the L'Enfant plan meant that the executive mansion was no longer on a direct axis from the Capitol along Pennsylvania Avenue. Hoban began to lay foundations in July 1792, and the cornerstone was laid October 13, 1792. Huts for the workmen were built just to the north of the building site. On the low-lying land to the south of the site, a clay pit was dug and a small sawmill was erected, as well as saw pits.[21]

A distant view of the President's House from the southeast is illustrated in figure 1-5. In this sketch, which documents the rural surroundings of the site at this time, Blodgett's Hotel is the large structure in the right foreground. The White House is the building in the distance, and the building immediately to its right is the Treasury.

At the end of 1800 the President's House was sufficiently complete to allow the first family to move in. President John Adams took up residence on November 1, 1800, followed by his wife Abigail two weeks later. During the previous summer, Adams had William Thornton plant a vegetable garden on the northeast side of the President's House, near or within the former stoneyard. Except for this vegetable garden, the grounds were still ungraded and unplanted; there were no specimen trees or ornamental gardens.

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suit the genius of a despotic government to cultivate an immense and gloomy wilderness in the midst of a thriving city [but] I cannot think it suitable in our station." Quoted on a board in the permanent exhibition on "Washington, Symbol and City" at the National Building Museum, Washington, DC.

21. Preparations for construction had been made before Hoban was selected. As a result of a shortage of funds one floor had to be eliminated during construction and the north elevation modified. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 33–36, 38–39, 66.

Access was through the south entrance where temporary wooden steps were built. The Adamses lived in the President's House for only four months.[22]

In March 1801 Thomas Jefferson took up residence in the President's House. In his first recorded action concerning the grounds, he ordered the removal of an outdoor privy built for the Adamses. Instead, he had two water closets installed — one at each end of the upper floor. Another early improvement to the site was the construction of a rail fence surrounding at least the north side of the President's House. It was in place at least by 1803, as evidenced in an ad from the *National Intelligencer*.[23]

Jefferson planned so many architectural changes, most of them to the interior of the building, that Hoban was called back to implement them. In 1803 he appointed the British-born architect and engineer, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, to the newly created position of surveyor of the public buildings. Latrobe's principal duty was to complete the Capitol, but he became an important contributor to the post-Hoban designs for the President's House and its grounds.[24]

The most important of the exterior changes that Jefferson proposed was a plan for extensive terraces to connect to the executive office buildings on both sides of the President's House. According to Jefferson's conceptual scheme, the relationship between the President's House, the terraces, and the executive office buildings was similar to that in many of the designs by the Italian Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio for villas in 16th century Vicenza, which often had arcades connecting to service buildings.[25] Jefferson had also used a similar technique at Monticello. At the President's House, Jefferson sank the connecting terraces into the natural north/south

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22. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 78–81. For Thornton's garden plans, see also George McCue, *The Octagon: Being an Account of a Famous Washington Residence, Its Great Years, Decline and Restoration* (Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects Foundation, 1976), 49.

23. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 89–91, 109–11; Marilyn K. Parr, "Chronicle of a British Diplomat: The First Year in the 'Washington Wilderness,'" *Washington History* 12, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2000), 79–89.

24. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 89–91, 109–11.

25. See, for example, Palladio's Villa Barbaro, Maser, exterior, plan and landscape illustrated in James S. Ackerman, *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), figs. 4.10–4.13. Palladio's elevation for the Villa Barbaro, as well as the plan, is illustrated in plate XXXIV of Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, 1965). The Villa Barbaro is somewhat unusual in that the wings were actually built; Palladio's clients frequently elected to leave them out.

slope of the land, so that they would be barely visible from the north side of the building. On the south, they were to be fronted with colonnades and would be on the same level as the exposed basement or ground floor of the house. Construction began on the terraces, but they were never extended all the way to the executive office buildings.[26]

Plans for the east and west terraces seem to have led Jefferson to formulate a comprehensive layout for the President's Park landscape. He returned the main entrance to the north. Temporary wooden steps provided access; eventually they were rebuilt in stone. A picket fence enclosed at least part of the site. An important drawing that has survived shows a projected scheme for landscaping the grounds in the vicinity of the President's House (figure 1-6). The drawing, probably made by Latrobe and annotated by Jefferson, called for a formal entryway, or at least a substantial set of piers or gatehouses at the north entrance. On March 17, 1807, Latrobe wrote to Jefferson referring to a drawing that apparently has not survived (but which seems to be quite similar to figure 1-6):

> I herewith submit to your consideration a project for laying out the grounds around the President's house. The present enclosure together with the buildings already erected and those projected are also laid down in their proper situations. . . .
>
> My idea is to carry the road below the hill under a wall about 8 feet high opposite to the center of the President's house. At this point I should propose, at a future date to go through an arch or arches, in order to provide a private communication between the pleasure ground at the President's house and the park which reaches to the river and which will probably be also planted, and perhaps be open to the public.[27]

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26. Seale, *The President's House*, 109–17. In his design for the terraces as well as some aspects of the development of the grounds of the President's House, Jefferson followed, as he had at Monticello, the established European tradition of the *ferme ornée*, a type of residential landscape that incorporated farm or utilitarian structures blended into an ornamental setting. NPS, *Administrative History: The White House and President's Park, 1791–1983; Epilogue 1983–1997*, by William Patrick O'Brien (Denver Service Center, 2001), 45. The report cites William L. Beiswanger, "The Temple in the Garden: Thomas Jefferson's Vision of the Monticello Landscape" (Charlottesville, VA: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, 1981), 170–73, 175, 181, 185. The Beiswanger publication has not been located in the Harvard Library System (HOLLIS).

27. Latrobe to Jefferson, March 17, 1807, quoted in Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 62–64. Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.'s historical consultant was Professor Morley Williams of Harvard University's Department of Landscape Architecture.

A letter from Latrobe to Jefferson dated April 29, 1807 documents the ongoing design process for the White House grounds, on which Latrobe and Jefferson were cooperating.[28] Figure 1-6 illustrates how the horizontal extension of the building, made possible by the two terraces, allowed a complete separation between the public grounds to the north and the more private grounds to the south. This situation still holds today, although the north grounds are now open only to the eye.

Another feature of the Latrobe/Jefferson plan to increase privacy was a high stone wall to be built around the entire perimeter (with the exception of the site of the future Lafayette Square and the executive office buildings) to replace the rail fence then in place. On the north, four tree-lined allées were to converge on the front entrance of the residence. The principal approach was to be a straight road, starting at a central gate in the perimeter wall, then passing between the two central allées and ending at a circle in front of the north entrance. Informal meandering paths, one of them marked "15 feet wide," are also shown in the northern section. To the south, the main entrance was to be at Pennsylvania Avenue through a triple-arched gate and onto a drive that would curve picturesquely toward the east terrace and pass through an arch in the pavilion at the end of this terrace. On this part of the plan, a second hand seems to have drawn the line of the drive on top of a winding path drawn by the first hand. There are also annotations for a garden to the north just inside the gate, a wooded area just to the south and a "clump" between the two. The annotations seem to have been made by the second hand. A formal *tapis vert*, or rectangular panel of grass, the same width as the main block of the house and extending almost all the way to the wall, is depicted, probably by the first hand, along the main axis to the south. There is a strip marked "Border of Flowers" to both the east and west sides of the *tapis vert*. No landscape detail is shown for the southwestern part of the grounds.[29]

It is unclear just how much of President Jefferson's plan was carried out, since the records for this period do not show much landscape

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28 Latrobe to Jefferson, Apr. 29, 1807, quoted in Olmsted Brothers, "Report," 64–65.

29. This drawing is discussed in Seale, *The President's House*, 112–13 and is also illustrated in Nichols and Griswold, *Thomas Jefferson, Landscape Architect*, 74. Seale suggests that the clumps are rhododendrons, but these do not appear to be specified on the drawing. If rhododendrons were used on the White House grounds in this period, they would probably have been native rhododendrons, since few rhododendrons from the Orient were introduced before the late 19th and early 20th centuries. See Donald Wyman, *Shrubs and Vines for American Gardens* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1977), 352–87. The Olmsted Brothers in their 1935 report illustrated this drawing as their figure 32 and date it as after 1808.

activity. Jefferson completed the drives to the north and south, as well as the southern entrance gate from Pennsylvania Avenue. He also planted trees. The 8-foot-high stone wall recommended by Latrobe was built to the north and south of the grounds and probably also to the east and west. A carriage gate in the east pavilion was constructed but collapsed around Christmas 1806, when the wooden centering was removed prematurely.[30] President Jefferson likely also maintained a garden of mixed vegetables, herbs, and annuals.[31] Most of this work may have been done in 1807, but the surviving survey conducted that same year does not contain enough detail to show the progress of the work.[32]

The "Jefferson mounds," two of the most significant features associated with the south lawn, might also date from this period. The April 29, 1807, letter from Latrobe to Jefferson is sometimes cited as evidence,

> At the President's house I have laid out the road on the principle of the plan exhibited to you. A small alteration of the outline of the enclosure to the south was necessarily made, which renders the whole ground infinitely more handsome, and accommodates the public with easier access from Pennsylvania Avenue to New York Avenue.
>
> In the plan submitted to and approved by you a semi-circle was struck to the south from the center of the bow of the house. This semi-circle carried the enclosure too far to the South. Mr. King, surveyor who laid out the city streets, will lay before you the new plan which differs from the other in being of oblong figure instead of a semi-circle, thus.[33]

At this point in the letter, Latrobe drew a sketch showing the new placement of the road. No landscape detail within the south grounds is depicted. Latrobe went on to list several advantages of the new plan, including the following:

> The Nature of the ground is consulted so far as to obtain the best level for the road with the least removal of earth.

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30. Seale, *The President's House*, 116–17.

31. Seale, *The President's House*, 113–17.

32. NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," fig. 7. The survey is not dated, although it includes features that were not on the site until 1807. Elevations and topography are indicated throughout the area of the ca. 1807 survey and the "hachure" style of topographic rendering extends along the entire south enclosure wall. The survey is located in the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.

33. Latrobe to Jefferson, Apr. 29, 1807, quoted in Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 64–65.

> The road runs in such a manner that the President's house is not overlooked from below and is covered by rising knowlls [sic] as the road rises.[34]

It is this last statement that is usually interpreted to refer to the Jefferson mounds, but Latrobe could also have been describing an embankment created by the new cut of the road. No "knowlls" on the south lawn are shown in his sketch.[35]

Latrobe's April 29, 1807, letter to Jefferson is also valuable because of the detail concerning the construction of the road:

> The next step was to get down to the foot of the wall on the south side by cutting out the road to its proper width, leaving the internal dressing of the grounds until last. The building of the wall rendered it necessary to go to the permanent depth of the road, otherwise I should have contented myself with laying it down on its right place, removing only so much earth as would have made the declivities convenient to the carriages. But this could not be done, and I contracted with Wheeler and Stame to level the ground from the great Walnut S. E. of the President's house to the War Office the width of the road footpath and wall.[36]

On December 27, 1805, President Jefferson reported to Congress that, in addition to the domestic sections of the east and west terraces, a smokehouse with fireproof vaulting, a liquor cellar, and

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34. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 65.

35. A strong case can be made from other sources to date the mounds to the Jefferson period, or at least only a few decades later. In October 1991 the John Quincy Adams elm, which stood on the southern slope of the eastern mound, had to be taken down, and its rings were counted. As a result, it was conclusively dated to 1826. According to the topographical map in the Olmsted Brothers 1935 report, the elm was located at an elevation of 46 feet, about 6 feet above the level of the adjacent lawn. The mound would obviously had to have existed at the time the tree was planted. Information on ring dating and replanting of the John Quincy Adams elm was kindly provided by Dale Haney, office of Irvin Williams, The White House, Oct. 24, 1994. The John Quincy Adams elm was replaced by a clone of the original tree grafted to a seedling, also from the original tree, which was planted in the same location by First Lady Barbara Bush in the first week of December 1991. See also Olmsted Brothers, "Report," Plan no. 1. See also file on "Mounds on the South Grounds," Office of the Curator, The White House (hereafter abbreviated as OC/WH), WGA, Mar. 19, 1991. This file was compiled before the John Quincy Adams elm was taken down in 1991. Pousson and Hoepfner argue that the mounds are not shown on the ca. 1807 survey and it is unlikely to have been an oversight by the author. A comparison of the 1807 topography and the area's modern contours suggests that the mounds were created ca. 1818–24 by the removal of soil around them as well as by filling. This argument would be supported by the conclusive 1826 dating of the John Quincy Adams elm, NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 32.

36. Latrobe to Jefferson, Apr. 29, 1807, quoted in Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 66.

cellars for wood and coal had been completed.[37] In 1806 a stable and a cowshed were added on the east side of the existing terrace, and in 1809 a carriage house.[38]

On March 4, 1809, James Madison became president, and about two weeks later he and his wife moved into the White House. Madison's steward, Jean-Pierre Sioussat, supervised new plantings in the garden area designated by Jefferson.[39] A watercolor painting of the President's House, dated September 1811 and probably done by Latrobe, is illustrated in figure 1-7. This depiction may be idealized, since it is unclear whether the stone wall had been constructed at this time on the north side of the White House.[40] Although the stone eagle ornaments are not depicted anywhere else except in this drawing, apparently Sioussat purchased them from James Traquair in Philadelphia.[41] The straight approach road from the north leading to a semicircular forecourt is somewhat as shown in the Latrobe/Jefferson drawing (figure 1-6), although the four tree-lined allées and meandering paths are absent. By 1811, and possibly as early as 1796, some kind of roadway probably existed in front of the President's House, where Pennsylvania Avenue is now.[42] A stone arch on the southeastern side of the grounds, designed by Latrobe and constructed in 1807, appears in an 1820 drawing by the Baroness Hyde de Neuville, wife of the French minister to the United States (figure 1–8).[43]

On June 18, 1811, President Madison declared war on Great Britain, initiating the War of 1812. The British invaded Washington on

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37. In 1807 Jefferson was given two grizzly bear cubs, which he displayed for a time in the circle in front of the north entrance to the White House. The cubs were eventually sent to Charles Willson Peale's museum in Baltimore; Seale, *The President's House*, 97, 115.

38. File on "White House Stables and Garages," OC/WH, Aug. 10, 1992. There appears to be no further information about the 1806 stable/cowshed, although reportedly there was an earlier stable associated with the President's House at 14th and G Streets, NW (information courtesy of John Pousson, NPS).

39. Seale, *The President's House*, 119–22.

40. William Seale, *The White House: The History of an American Idea* (Washington, DC: The American Institute of Architects Press and the White House Historical Association, 1992), 41. According to Seale, the high stone wall was never built north of the President's House. This seems to contradict another statement in *The President's House*, 166, where he states that President Monroe had the wall cut down to parapet height.

41. Seale, *The President's House*, 122.

42. See H. P. Caemmerer, *Washington, the National Capital* (Washington, DC: n.p.; n.d.), 229.

43. Seale, *The White House*, 47.

August 24, 1814, and burned the President's House, as well as the adjacent office buildings, leaving only their shells.[44] An engraving by William Strickland shows that the approach road and fenced forecourt to the house do not appear to have been affected by the fire, and there was no damage to the grounds. However, the image depicts a bleak landscape, at least on the northeast side, which is the only part of the grounds that can be seen in any detail. No trees of any size are visible. Low-growing trees or shrubs and small clumps of ornamental plantings occupied the foreground. None of the plants is shown in sufficient detail for identification.[45] Figure 1-9 shows another 1815 view of the shell of the building, this time from the southwest, a drawing by the British artist George Heriot. A curving carriage drive is shown south of the President's House, and the arch at Pennsylvania Avenue is clearly visible.

Lafayette Square

The area that would become Lafayette Square and finally Lafayette Park has been described as "the panhandle to an otherwise long and rectangular tract."[46] L'Enfant refined his design so that the north corners would meet radial avenues that would extend through the "rectangular tract," converging on the north entrance of the President's House.[47] This was never implemented. On the 1792 Ellicott plan (detail in figure 1-4) this space is shown simply as a plaza or forecourt in front of the President's House. This space was not yet separated from the executive mansion by the continuation of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The center of the present Lafayette Park was occupied by a large temporary structure that served as the carpenters' workshop when construction on the President's House began. By the time the White House was completed in 1800, a temporary workmen's village had

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44. Seale, *The President's House*, 130–37.

45. William Seale, in *The White House*, 59, suggests that the low trees may be tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), a tree introduced from China in 1784 that spreads very rapidly, especially in waste areas. This is possible, but the trees in the Strickland engraving do not really resemble tree-of-heaven and seem too neatly planted to have grown spontaneously. See Donald Wyman, *Trees for American Gardens*, 3rd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1990), 150–52.

46. William Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," *White House History*, 2, no. 1 (June 1997), 6.

47. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 6.

grown up around it.[48] After the workmen's huts were removed when the President's House was completed, a market was established at this site. Thomas Jefferson decided that the space was too large to be part of the grounds of the President's House and authorized its separation into a public park.

While this area was briefly the site of the first city market, it functioned mostly as an unembellished town commons, and grazing was allowed throughout this period. During the War of 1812 the site was used for an encampment and a ground for military musters, and cannon were placed there. After the war it was used to store materials while the White House was being rebuilt.[49]

Pennsylvania Avenue was apparently not formally extended between the square and the grounds of the President's House until early in the 1820s, but there was a pathway in this location at a much earlier date, as figure 1-7 illustrates. Access to the north side of the President's House appears to have been provided by way of a short, straight drive making a perpendicular egress off the public road and ending in an elongated semi-circle at the north door of the house.[50]

President's Park South

Prior to 1791 the southern three-quarters of President's Park was part of the David Burnes farm. There is no indication that this area was used for anything except pasturage. Small parcels adjacent to Tiber Creek would have been sufficiently elevated and level to have been cultivated, but their small size and possibly poor drainage might have discouraged such use.[51]

During construction of the White House, the section of the south lawn nearest the house would have been subjected to considerable

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48. In 1797 a racetrack, which extended westward to 20th Street beyond the limits of the reservation, was laid out on the western side of the future park site. Seale, *The President's House*, 38, 66–67; Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 6-19.

49. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 8-9; NPS, *Lafayette Park, Washington, D.C.*, by George J. Olszewski (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1964), vii, 7.

50. For information regarding the possibility that the opening of Pennsylvania Avenue might have been as early as 1796, see H. Paul Caemmerer, *Washington, the National Capital*, 229 as quoted in "Historical Study of the Buildings along Madison Place, Lafayette Square, Washington, DC (Dolly [sic] Madison House, Benjamin Ogle Tayloe House, Belasco Theater and Wilkins Building)," 11; H34 National Landmarks 68A-3201, box 20, ARD/WHL/NPS; NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 29.

51. NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 22.

disturbance. Clay for making brick was secured from this area, as well as from the site of the house itself. Apparently the site was deemed too wet for substantial construction activity, but there was at least one tempering pit, as well as some saw pits.[52]

The Ellipse did not exist as a distinct space during this period. On the 1792 Ellicott plan (detail in figure 1-4) it is incorporated into the park between the President's House and the projected Tiber Canal. In 1804, Latrobe prepared a plan for a canal and locks at the mouth of the Tiber (figure 1-10). Work was not started, however, on what became the Washington Canal until 1810, and the canal opened five years later.[53]

The Grounds of the Treasury Building and the War Building

In October 1796, during the last year of his presidency, Washington himself sited the buildings for the Treasury and the War Office, to the east and the west, respectively, of the President's House. (Congress had wanted them to be located closer to the Capitol.) The following year designs by George Hadfield, an English architect who was then engaged at the Capitol, were accepted for these buildings, and after a two-year delay due to lack of funds, they were constructed between 1798 and 1800, under the administration of John Adams. They were brick buildings that were two and one-half stories in height and designed in the Georgian style.[54] Some of the work done during the construction of the War Office building was of poor quality and was removed in November 1799 under James Hoban's supervision.[55]

In 1800, 130 federal employees moved into the Treasury and War Buildings in time for the opening of the first legislative session in November.[56] The nature of the early landscaping around these buildings is unknown.

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52. NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 22; Seale, *The President's House*, 66.

53. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 29.

54. Seale, *The President's House*, 72–73.

55. Seale, *The President's House*, 74.

56. Andrew Dolkart, *The Old Executive Office Building: A Victorian Masterpiece* (Washington, DC: The Executive Office of the President, Office of Administration, 1984), 4–6.

Around 1805 Benjamin Latrobe designed a separate building for the U. S. Treasury known as the Treasury vault. It was constructed shortly afterwards.[57]

In 1814 during the War of 1812 the executive office buildings and the Treasury vault were gutted by fire, along with the White House and the Capitol.

Summary

In 1791 L'Enfant designed a grand conceptual plan for the new capital of the United States. Despite his early departure from the project, L'Enfant's urban vision for the city of Washington was realized in its most essential features. Two elements survive from his plan: the general location of the White House and the flanking executive office buildings, although not their dimensions and precise sites, and the major vistas, principally along the north/south axis. The simplicity and dignity of the original L'Enfant design, although disregarded during the first half of the 19th century, again became the guiding principles for landscape decisions in President's Park, particularly after 1935 when they received the full endorsement of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

Providing privacy for the president became a concern from the beginning. The east and west terraces, the Jefferson wall (which would not be completely removed until 1871), and the Jefferson mounds, which still stand today, are important features that reflect an effort to address this concern.

Major factors contributed to the development of the landscape during this period — the participation of incumbent presidents in designing and making modifications to the site; the use of the site both as private living quarters and public seat of the executive branch of government; the concept that the White House as a symbol of the presidency and of the nation; and the relationship of the White House to other executive offices, as well as to the legislative and judicial branches. Finally, designers like Pierre Charles L'Enfant, James Hoban, George Hadfield, and Benjamin Latrobe all contributed their talent and imagination to the evolution of President's Park.

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57. Information provided by David R. Krause (Executive Support Facility, Office of White House Liaison, National Park Service; hereafter abbreviated as ESF/WHL/NPS).

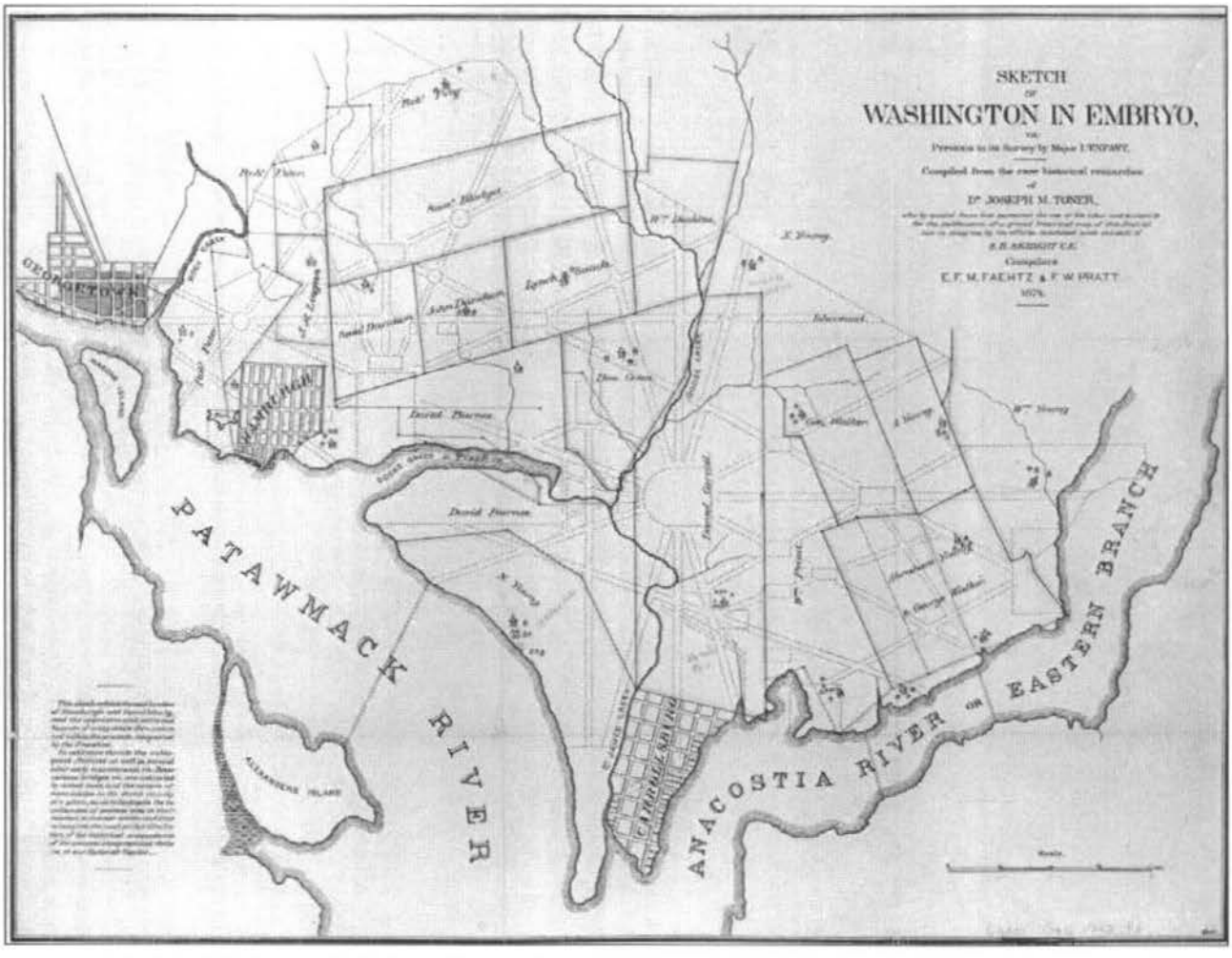

Figure 1-1: *Sketch of Washington in Embryo, Viz.: Previous to the Survey by Major L'Enfant*. Compiled from the rare historical researches of Dr. Joseph M. Toner. Compilers E. F. M. Faehtz and F. W. Pratt, 1874. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

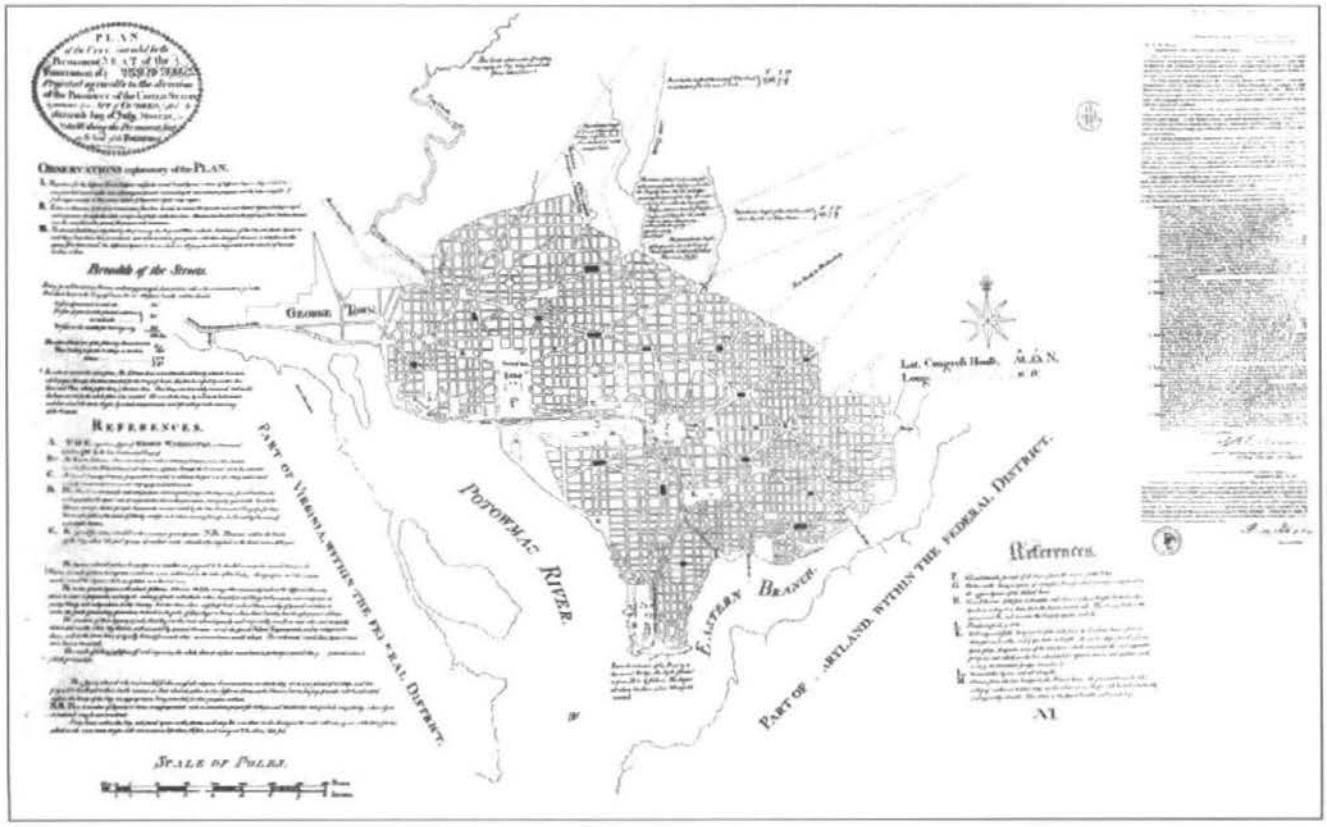

Figure 1-2: *Plan of the City Intended for the Permanent Seat of the Government of the United States*. Copy by the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1887 of the manuscript plan for Washington, D.C., drawn by Pierre Charles L'Enfant, 1791. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

Figure 1-3: *Plan of the City of Washington in the Territory of Columbia*. Andrew Ellicott. Engraved by James Thackara and John Vallance, Philadelphia, 1792. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

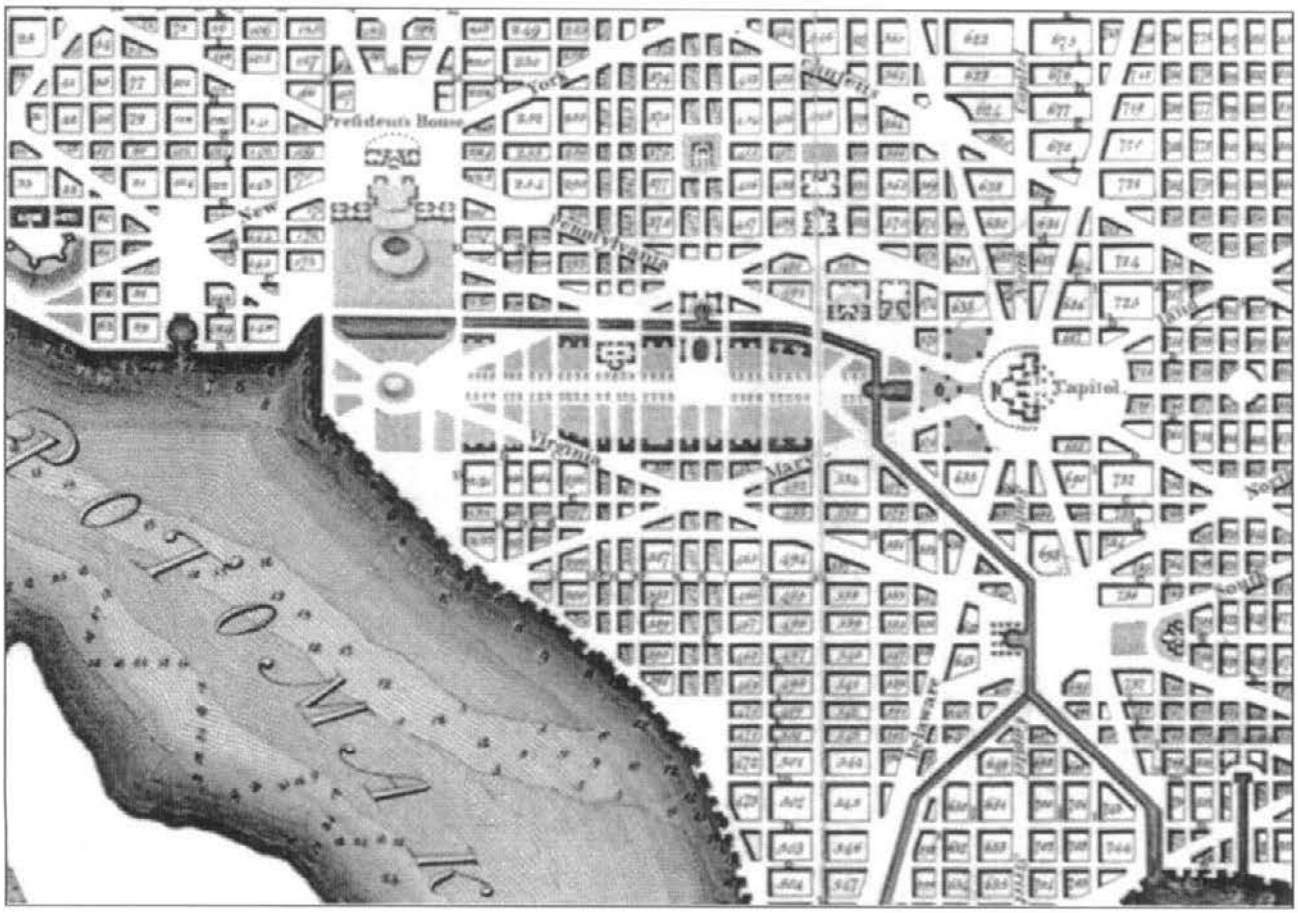

Figure 1-4: *Detail of Ellicott's Plan showing the President's House.* From *Plan of the City of Washington in the Territory of Columbia.* Andrew Ellicott. Engraved by Thackara and Vallance, Philadelphia, 1792. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

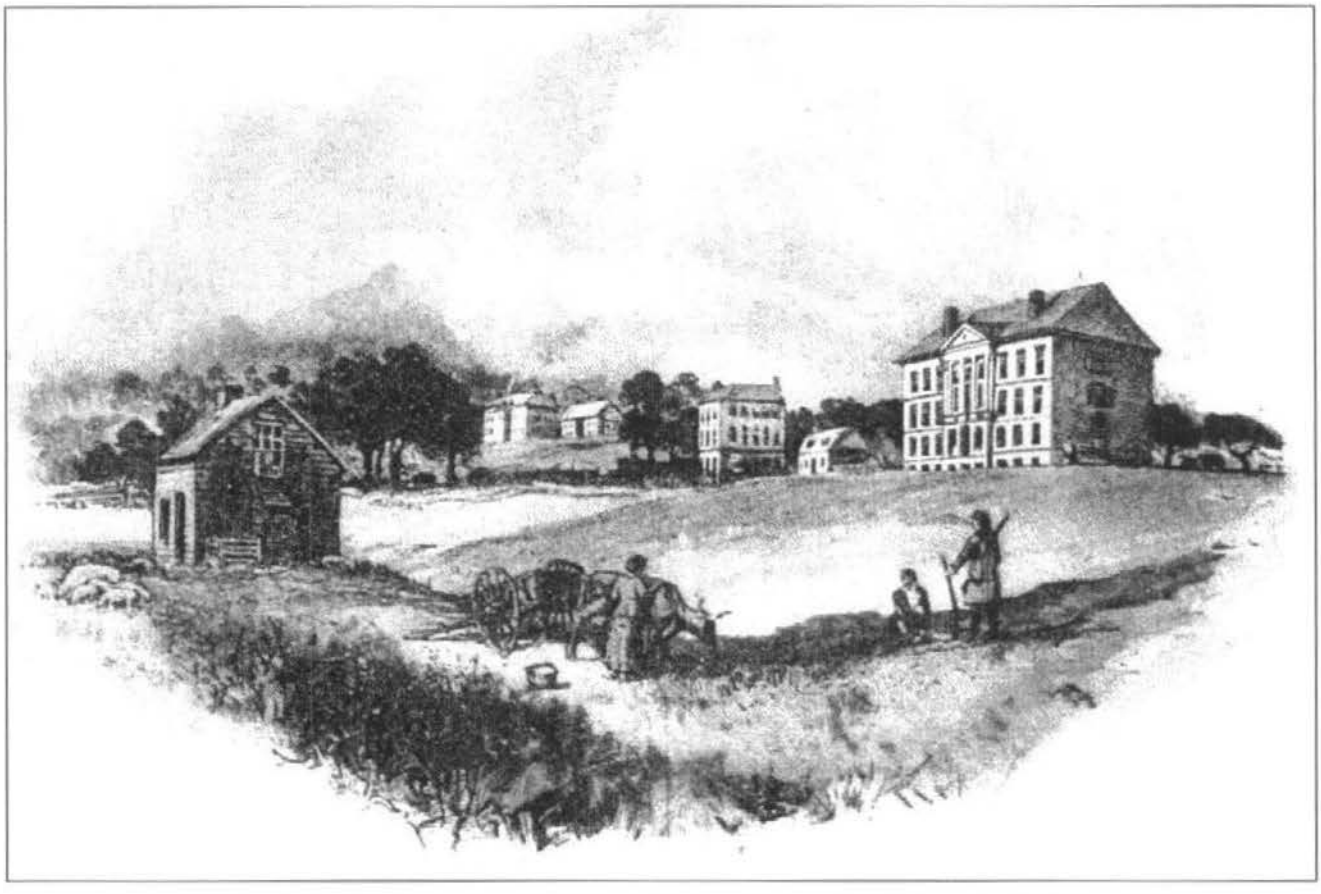

Figure 1-5: *White House*, 1799: After a Sketch by N. King. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

The White House is the building in the distance, with the Treasury Building immediately to its right. Blodgett's Hotel is the large building on the right.

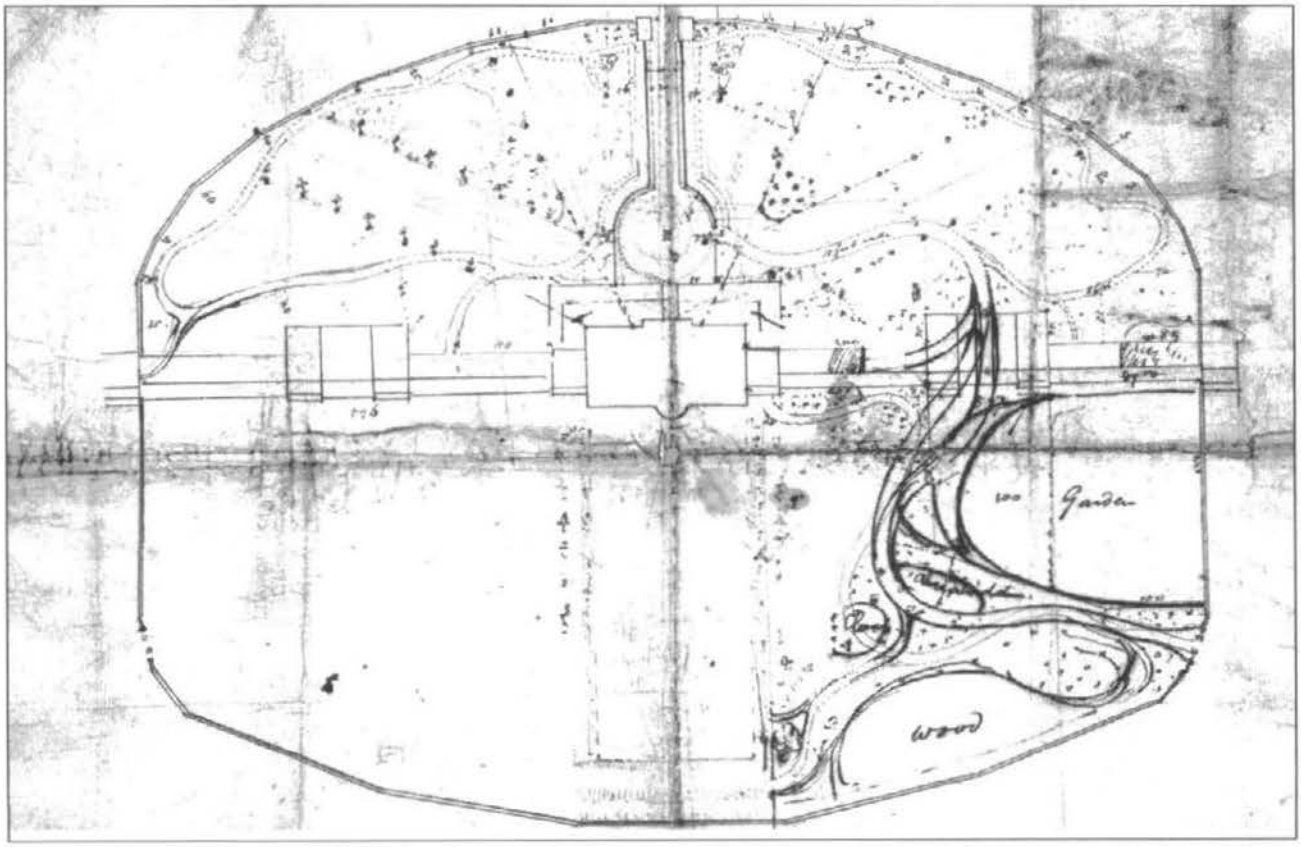

Figure 1-6: *Sketch Plan for Improving the Grounds*. Attributed to Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Latrobe, Robert Mills, n.d. (ca. 1802-1805?). Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

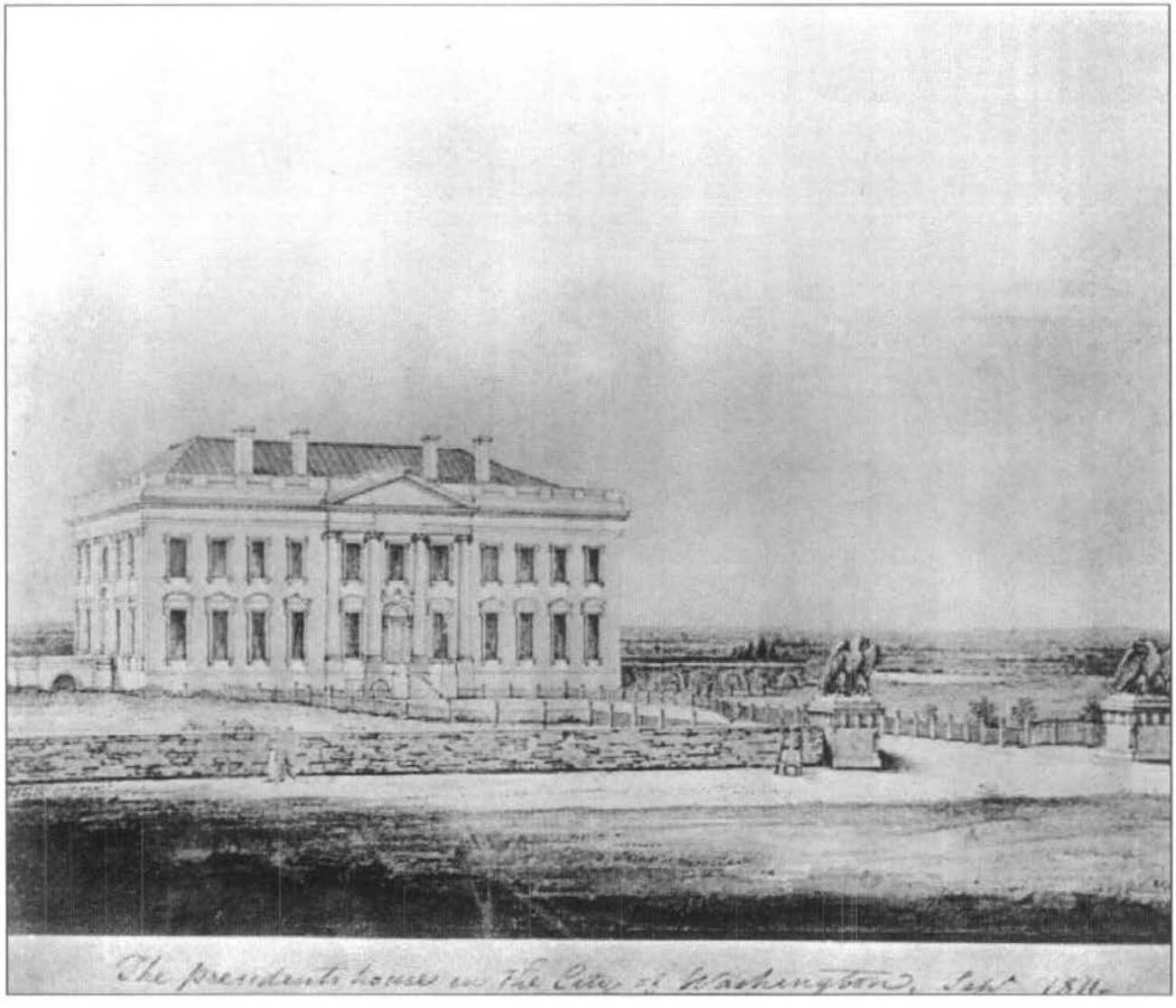

Figure 1-7: *The President's House in the City of Washington*. Attributed to Benjamin Latrobe (watercolor), September 1811. Mrs. John M. Scott, Jr., Mobile, Alabama.

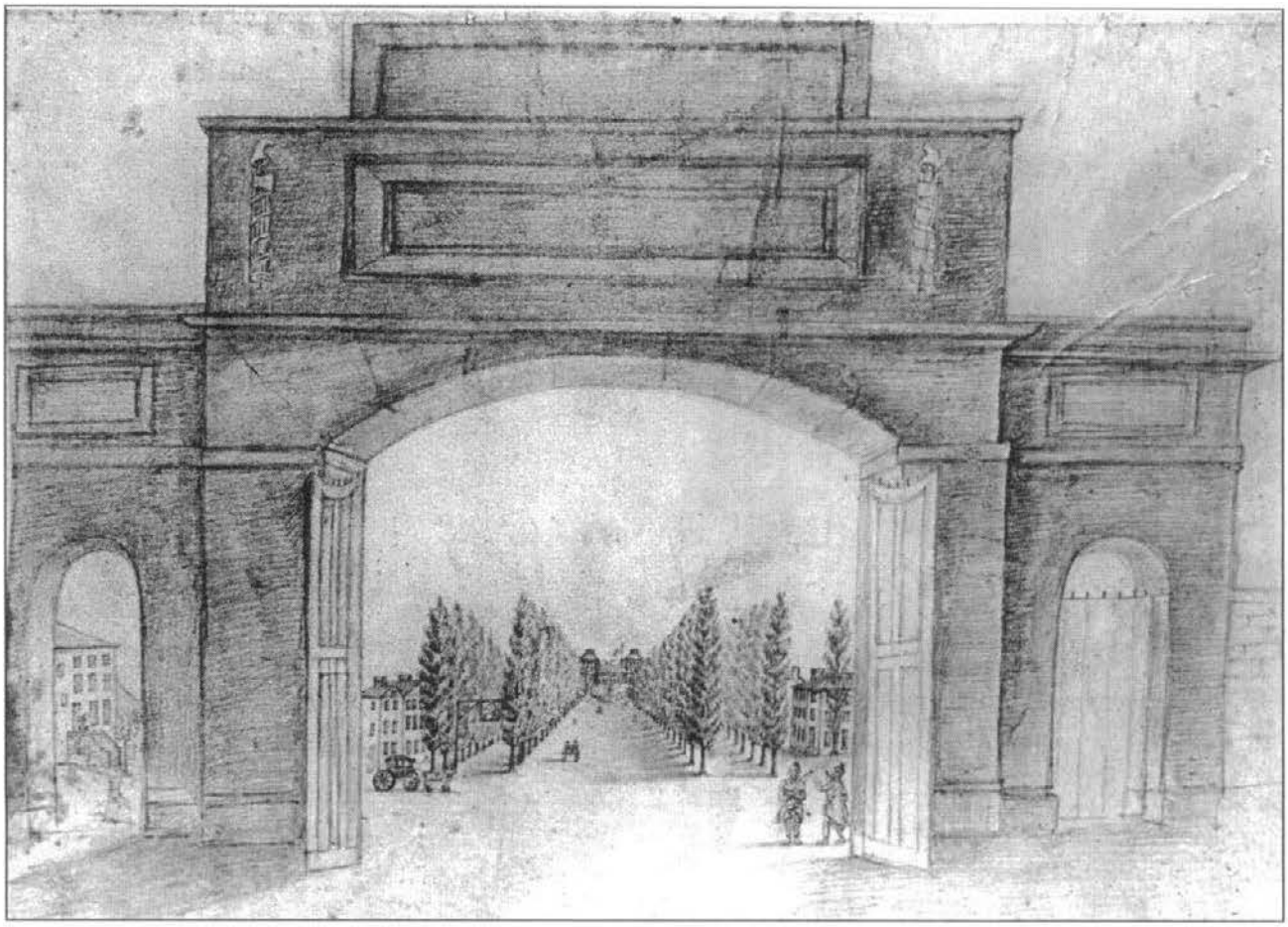

Figure 1-8: *Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington et La Porte du Jardin du Président (Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington and the Gate of President's Garden)*. Baroness Hyde de Neuville (drawing), 1821. © Collection of The New-York Historical Society.

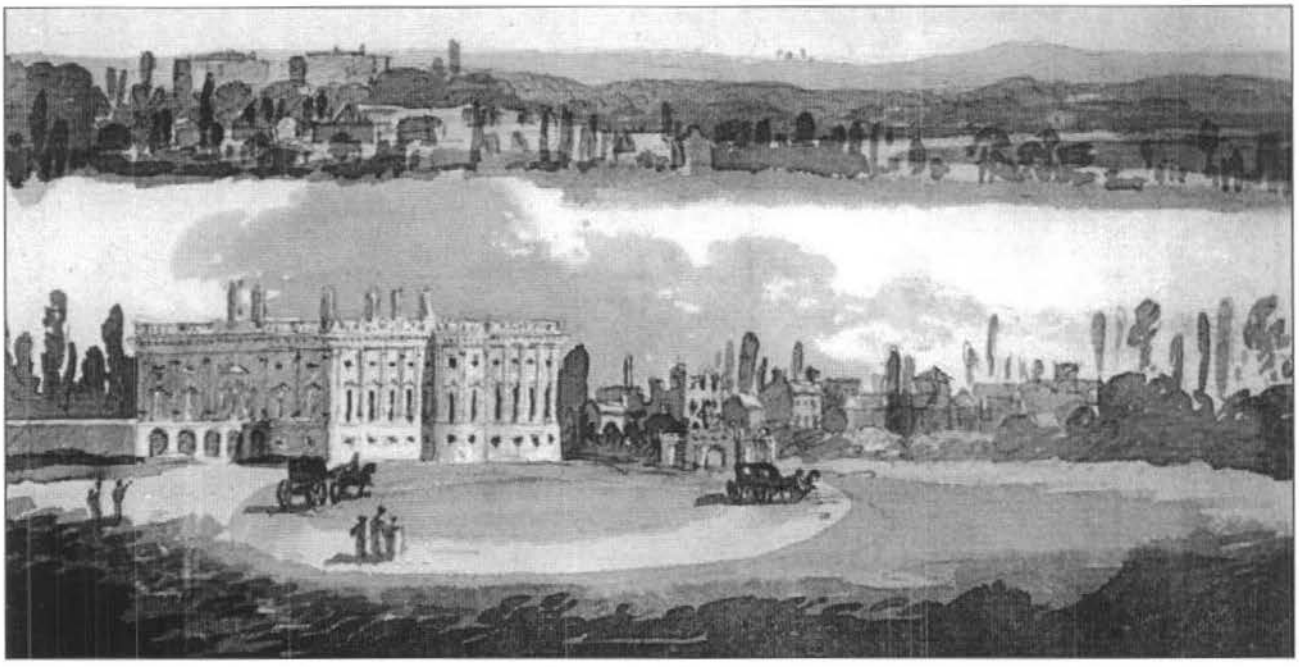

Figure 1-9: *Palace of the President*. George Heriot (sketch), July 1815. © Collection of The New-York Historical Society.

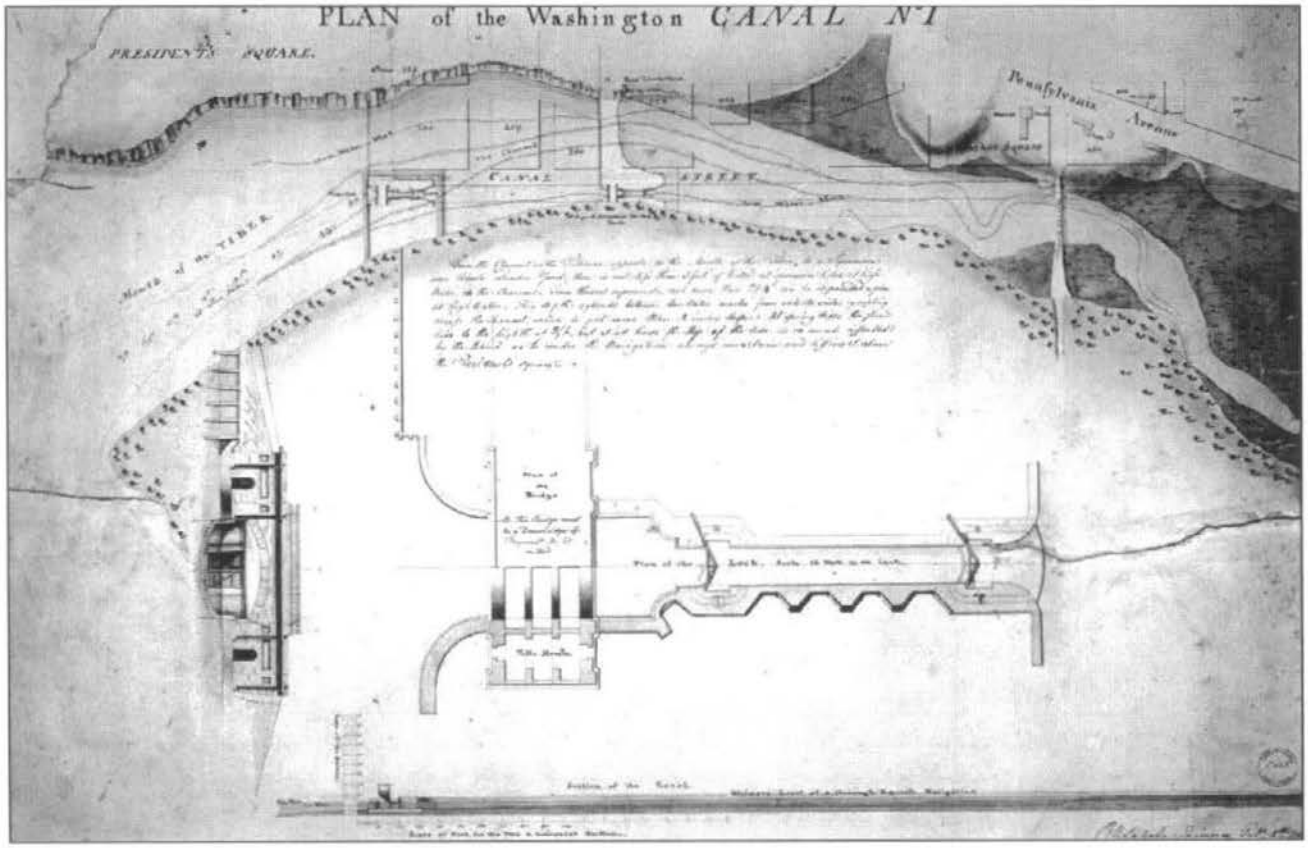

Figure 1-10: *Map of the Proposed Washington Canal and Locks*. Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1804. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

Chapter 2. The Shaping of President's Park: 1815–1850

Chapter 2 traces the history of President's Park during the first half of the 19th century. Throughout this period the grounds around the President's House slowly began to take shape as design and construction progressed in a more complete and elaborate form than that envisioned by L'Enfant.[1] Charles Bulfinch prepared a plan for Lafayette Park that was partially implemented in the early 1820s. Progress in the Ellipse was slower, but by the late 1840s improvements on the public grounds were taking place. The State and Treasury Buildings were reconstructed after the War of 1812 and two new ones — War and Navy — were added. Less than two decades later, the Treasury Building was destroyed by fire in 1833. Construction began on the newly designed structure on 1836, but it would not be finished until 1869.

During the first part of this period attention was focused on rebuilding the President's House and adjacent buildings after being burned by the British. President James Madison adopted the policy that all of the buildings that were destroyed or damaged should be rebuilt exactly as they had been before the fire. John Quincy Adams, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, and Martin Van Buren continued the tradition of presidents playing an important role in the evolution of the landscape.

President James Monroe was instrumental in attracting both Charles Bulfinch and Paulus Hedl to design important features that have characterized the landscape at President's Park. Robert Mills put forward a comprehensive plan for the Mall and designed the Treasury Building, using a fireproof construction method that he

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1. In 1816 Congress passed an act reestablishing the Office of the Commissioner of Public Buildings that had been abolished by Jefferson in 1802. During the period covered by this chapter, the commissioners of public buildings were Samuel Lane (1816–22), Joseph Elgar (1822–34), William Noland (1834–46), Andrew Beaumont (1846–47), Charles Douglas (1847–49), and Ignatius Mudd (1849–51). In 1849 the United States Department of the Interior was established. The commissioner of public buildings remained responsible for President's Park and other public buildings and spaces, but the office was placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior until 1867. Mary-Jane M. Dowd, comp., *Records of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, Record Group 42, Inventory No. 16* (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), 29–30.

had pioneered. John Quincy Adams set an important precedent by treating the grounds of the President's House as a kind of arboretum for American trees and plants. During the presidency of Andrew Jackson the grounds were extensively graded, paths laid, and drives realigned, both on the north and south grounds. Large quantities of trees and shrubs were planted, particularly on the south lawn. It was during the Jackson administration that the general form of the grounds of the President's House took on an appearance that would be recognizable today. Jackson's successor, Martin Van Buren, was keenly interested in horticulture and continued the type of landscape improvements his predecessors had begun. John Tyler initiated the practice of Marine Band concerts on the south lawn.

Improvements during this period included lighting the grounds, first with oil lamps and by the late 1840s with gaslights. Ornamental anthemion fences were installed on the north grounds between the columns of the north portico, lining the southern edge of the carriageway, and serving as a parapet on both side of the north portico to prevent possible falls.[2]

The Grounds of the White House

After the British burned the President's House in 1814, President James Madison and First Lady Dolley Madison lived in the Octagon House at 1799 New York Avenue. They never returned to the White House.[3] In 1815 James Hoban was brought back to reconstruct the President's House and also to rebuild the two executive office buildings. At the same time Latrobe returned from Pittsburgh, primarily to supervise the rebuilding of the Capitol (also damaged by the British), although he soon began making plans for the President's House. Latrobe's 1817 plans called for the north and south porticoes, but also envisioned a complete new plan for the interior of the house. Latrobe's plan was contrary to Madison's mandate to rebuild and repair, and by the end of 1817 Latrobe left Washington for New Orleans. Meanwhile, Hoban undertook the actual work on the President's House. Hoban's plans also included north and south porticoes, but they would be completed at a later date. The initial structural assessment of the building after the fire had proved

2. Anthemion is a Greek ornamental motif based on the honeysuckle or palmette. It consists of floral or foliated forms arranged in a radiating cluster, but always flat.

3. McCue, *The Octagon*, 58–62; Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, Buildings of the United States Series, Society of Architectural Historians (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 216–17.

optimistic, and some of the exterior walls had to be taken down. In order to finish the rebuilding quickly, Hoban substituted timber for brick in some of the interior partitions, one of the factors that forced the massive rebuilding of the President's House some 135 years later during the Truman administration.[4]

On March 4, 1817, James Monroe became president and by the end of that year, the rebuilding of the President's House was complete. It was officially opened to the public on New Year's Day, 1818. Jefferson's terraces were rebuilt as they had been at the end of his presidency, but the planned extensions of the terraces to the executive office buildings were never made. In 1818 Monroe added a stable to the west terrace but had it turned south at right angles to the main block of the President's House, so that it was not visible from the north. Between the President's House, the west terrace, and the new stable was a brick courtyard. In 1818 Monroe also had the New York ironworker Paulus Hedl construct entrance gates for the north side, possibly designed by Hoban, Hedl himself, or Charles Bulfinch, and mounted on a parapet wall.[5] This ornamental fencing remained on the grounds until the 1970s, when the last remaining section was reproduced in heavier materials and securely anchored in concrete. Monroe wanted to complete Jefferson's terraces as he had planned them, but the Panic of 1819 prevented it.[6]

In December 1819 Hoban reported that the pedestal work, coping, iron gates, and iron railings "circular and straight" at the President's House had been completed. He also reported that the area north of the house had been "graduated" (graded) and the carriageways and footways laid out and graveled. Additionally, posts were built that

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4. The south portico was a feature of Hoban's 1793 floor plan, although in Hoban's plan the portico extended across the entire façade; Seale, *The President's House*, 138–43. Also see Seale, *The White House*, 59–63.

5. The present entrance gates are replicas of Hedl's; the originals are in museum storage; Seale, *The President's House*, 144, 149, 151–52; Seale, *The White House*, 88.

6. The Panic of 1819 was the first major depression to affect the emerging nation. The years of prosperity following the War of 1812 had witnessed sharp price increases and uncontrolled land speculation. Both the state banks and the Bank of the United States extended generous credit to business promoters and land speculators. However, by the end of the decade an accumulation of adverse economic forces brought a sudden end to these activities. A decline in European demand for American products and a shrinking market for textiles, combined with the Bank of the United States calling in loans, produced a financial panic that forced many state banks to close. Prices fell dramatically; farmers and planters saw their lands sold at public auction, speculators and business promoters forfeited property for failing to pay their loans, and more than half a million workers lost their jobs when factories, offices, and shops closed or curtained operations. John M. Blum, et al., *The National Experience: A History of the United States* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1989), 189, 201–2.

were to be connected with iron chains for the protection of the footways.[7] However, in January 1820 it was reported that "repairing and finishing the wall, gates, railing, etc. north of the President's House" had not yet been completed.[8] In 1824 Monroe had Hoban build the long deferred south portico in Seneca stone.[9]

Numerous drawings and engravings show the President's House as it appeared shortly after its rebuilding. Perhaps the most vivid is the watercolor by the Baroness Hyde de Neuville in 1820 (figure 2-1), which illustrates the reconstructed President's House looking almost diminutive between the two rebuilt and the two new red-brick executive office buildings. By the time the baroness made her watercolor, the wall, fence, and gates had been completed, and some neat but very small plantings appear near the north boundary on either side. The group of five buildings seems to sit in the middle of a barren plain, at least in this view, since Pennsylvania Avenue does not yet seem to have been cut through between the grounds of the President's House and Lafayette Square. No planting whatsoever is visible in Lafayette Square.[10]

In the summer of 1817 Monroe visited Boston where Charles Bulfinch, Boston's foremost architect, greeted him. During Monroe's weeklong visit, Bulfinch was his constant companion. Bulfinch's son Stephen Greenleaf Bulfinch recalled that Monroe "was pleased with the public buildings . . . and found that the architect of them was the gentleman at his side." A few months later, Monroe offered Bulfinch the position of architect of the Capitol with a salary of $2,500 a year and relocation expenses. Bulfinch accepted and stayed in Washington until 1829, when he retired to Boston.[11]

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7. "Report of James Hoban in Report of the Commissioner of the Public Buildings," Dec. 23, 1819.

8. "Report of the Committee on So Much of the President's Message as Relates to the Public Buildings, January 6, 1820," in *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Nov. 27, 1820, 2.

9. Seale, *The President's House*, 159–60.

10. A photograph of another painting by Anne-Marguerite Hyde de Neuville shows the President's House from the southeast in 1821, OC/WH. No landscape detail is shown. The painting itself is in an unidentified collection in Paris. The whole ensemble has an eerie but probably accidental resemblance to Inigo Jones's Queen's House in Greenwich, England, as seen from the London side of the Thames, framed by Christopher Wren's later Royal Naval Hospital buildings; John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530–1830* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), 130–32, 247–50.

11. Harold Kirker and James Kirker, *Bulfinch's Boston*, 1787–1817 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 264–271. Bulfinch's letters relating to his period in Washington are published in Ellen Susan Bulfinch, ed., *The Life and Letters of Charles Bulfinch, Architect*

Like Latrobe, Bulfinch became involved in plans for the President's House and grounds. In January 1818 he wrote to his wife, "I have visited with the superintendent all parts of the President's house. This building does not form any part of my concern or impose any duties upon me; but I thought it best to become acquainted with it."[12] He also visited "the kitchens, out grounds and intended improvements."[13]

Bulfinch appears to have made plans, now lost, for laying out the grounds, which were not implemented (possibly because of the Panic of 1819), unless the improvements made later by John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson were derived from them.[14]

Toward the end of 1817 Monroe engaged Charles Bizet, a French immigrant to Virginia, as gardener. His duties are difficult to document, especially in view of the fact that visitors to the President's House during the Monroe administration described no evidence of any landscaping activities. Bizet may simply have maintained a vegetable garden.[15] Few landscape activities were documented for the remaining years of the Monroe administration, although in 1824 the road near the president's gate (probably the southeast gate) was surfaced with a mixture of sand, tar, and gravel, the first known attempt to pave driving surfaces at the site.[16]

During this period lighting of President Park's became a reality. The 1820s drawing by the Baroness Hyde de Neuville (figure 2-1) shows five lighting fixtures (quite likely wrought iron oil lamps) along the Pennsylvania Avenue fence — one on the central panel and one at each of the four gate piers.

(New York: Burt Franklin, 1973), 191–269. Bulfinch and President Monroe had met for the first time six months earlier when Bulfinch was touring the country inspecting hospitals before submitting his design for Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Monroe had never been to Boston, however, and thus had not seen Bulfinch's architecture, nearly all of which is in Massachusetts. See Kirker and Kirker, *Bulfinch's Boston*, 265.

12. Charles Bulfinch to Hannah Apthorp Bulfinch, Jan. 7, 1818, in Bulfinch, *Charles Bulfinch*, 215. There are no other Bulfinch letters in this book, originally published in 1896, that relate to President's Park. Bulfinch's papers were then in the possession of the family, but the manuscript materials seem to have been lost since that time, except for some family letters that were owned by Comdr. Charles Bulfinch in 1969. See Harold Kirker, *The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 389.

13. Kirker, *Charles Bulfinch*, 389.

14. Seale, *The President's House*, 167.

15. Seale, *The President's House*, 167.

16. NPS, *Administrative History*, 59, cites "Journal of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1824," p. 9, RG 42.

In 1825 John Quincy Adams became president. Adams, whose principal hobby was horticulture, had a special interest in raising trees from seedlings and in growing mulberry trees for silkworms. When he moved to Washington, he helped to establish the city's first botanic garden. Throughout his life, he maintained a library on gardens and tree culture.[17]

As president, Adams hired John Ousley to replace Charles Bizet; Ousley stayed at the White House as head gardener until 1852. Adams's diary records his numerous activities on the grounds of the President's House. During his one-term presidency, Adams set the precedent for treating the grounds of the President's House as a kind of small arboretum of American trees and plants. Among the native trees that he grew from seed were walnuts, oaks, chestnuts, catalpas, honey locusts, and the American elm that survived on the eastern of the two Jefferson mounds until 1991.[18] When they reached a sufficient size, Adams's seedlings were transplanted to a nursery area on the southwest part of the grounds. Undoubtedly, some were eventually planted permanently on the grounds.[19] Adams also expanded the ornamental, vegetable, and herb gardens designed by Jefferson just inside the south entrance gate to 2 acres. Enclosed with a wooden fence, the garden area was equipped with its own water supply and two cold frames. Among the vegetables that Adams grew were carrots, parsnips, and Jerusalem artichokes. It was not unusual for Adams to mix in the same bed fruit trees, spring bulbs, perennials and annuals, ground cover plants and berries. Adams used Jefferson's Treasury vault, which was in disrepair and fire damaged, as a tool shed.[20]

In the summer of 1827, Adams wrote:

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17. At his family home in Quincy, Massachusetts, Adams planted several American elms, the last of which survived until 1981. No trees planted by Adams appear to survive today at the Adams National Historic Site, but after the move to Washington Louisa Catherine Adams took a yellowwood tree to Quincy. It still grows in the garden at Quincy. NPS, "The President's Garden: An Account of the White House Gardens from 1800 to the Present," by Eleanor M. McPeck (Washington, DC, 1971), 14–16.

18. Seale, *The President's House*, 168–69. See also Barbara McEwan, *White House Landscapes: Horticultural Achievements of American Presidents* (New York: Walker and Company, 1992), 81–95. The John Quincy Adams elm was ring dated and proved to be 165 years old in 1991; meaning it was planted in 1826. If Adams planted this elm in the fall of 1826, it might have been to commemorate his father John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, both of whom died on July 4, 1826. See chapter 1, footnote 35.

19. NPS, "The President's Garden," 15.

20. NPS, "The President's Garden," 15; Seale, *The President's House*, 168–69.

> In this small garden of less than two acres, there are forest and fruit-trees, shrubs, hedges, esculent vegetables, kitchen and medicinal herbs, hot-house plants, flowers and weeds, to the amount, I conjecture, of at least one thousand. One half of them perhaps common weeds, most of which have none but the botanical name. I ask the name of every plant I see. Ousley, the gardener, knows almost all of them by their botanical names. . . . From the small patch where the medicinal herbs stand together I plucked this morning leaves of balm and hyssop, marjoram, mint, rue, sage, tansy, tarragon, and wormwood, one-half of which were known to me only by name — the tarragon not even by that.[21]

On May 23, 1828, Adams noted the following tree seedlings sprouting in his nursery: 50 Spanish cork-oaks, several black walnuts planted two months earlier, almond trees, ashes, and ash-leafed maples.[22]

Figure 2-2 presents an 1826 watercolor sketch of the President's House and its grounds from the southwest made by Anthony St. John Baker. In the foreground is Adams's fenced-in tree nursery. The stone wall built around the southern part of the grounds during the Jefferson administration is clearly visible, although Latrobe's road seems roughly cut, especially to the west. Adams's 2-acre enclosed garden is out of view to the east, but a clump of trees on a low mound can be seen near the southern edge of the lawn.

Between 1822 and 1859 John Sessford published yearly reports of improvements in the city of Washington in the *National Intelligencer*. Reprinted in 1908 by the Columbia Historical Society, these reports provide a valuable source for activities on the grounds of the President's House since the administration of John Quincy Adams.[23]

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21. John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1876), 8:141, quoted in NPS, "The President's Garden," 15.

22. John Quincy Adams, *The Diary of John Quincy Adams, 1794–1845*, edited by Allan Nevins (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1951), 374–75. This one-volume edition gives only a small sampling from John Quincy Adams's diary, and even the 12-volume edition of the *Memoirs* (cited above) is a selection as well. For the Spanish cork oak, which Thomas Jefferson also used at an early date, see Wyman, *Trees for American Gardens*, 411.

23. John Sessford emigrated from Northumberland, England, as a young man and settled in Washington about 1802. A printer by trade, he was at one time foreman of the composing room of the *National Intelligencer*. About 1808 he received an appointment in the Treasury Department, where he remained until his death on February 23, 1862, at the age of 86. Between 1822 and 1859, Sessford published his accounts of construction activity in the District of Columbia in the *National Intelligencer*. See "The Sessford Annals," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, vol. 11, 1908, 271–72.

In 1826 Sessford wrote that the grounds attached to the President's House were nearly ready for laying off in walks. The following year he added that, "the grounds around the President's House have received the form required for laying off into walks, etc."[24]

Andrew Jackson became president on March 4, 1829. Like his predecessor, Jackson was a devotee of horticulture and garden art and his home at the Hermitage near Nashville, Tennessee, reflected his interest.[25] Whether because of the recent death of his wife or for other reasons, most grounds improvements date from his second administration, except for the construction of the north portico in 1829.

Up to this time there was a small fence to keep the carriages off the north lawn. After the north portico was finally built the area became better defined as three anthemion railings were installed.[26] One was located between the columns of the portico and was mostly ornamental. The second served as a parapet on both sides of the portico to limit accidents and prevent falls; the third along the inner (northern) edge of the semicircular carriageway limited access and damage to the north grounds. By this time the north side of the President's House was relatively well illuminated, with at least eight light fixtures, three had been added to the five lighting fixtures already present when the ornamental anthemion railing was installed between the columns.[27] During the Jackson administration both the line of the northern entrance drive and the fence line were realigned. The fence line along Pennsylvania Avenue still bowed in slightly at this time.

Jackson may also have had two milk cooling troughs installed under the portico, one of which still survives today although not in its original location. In 1830 an estimate was given for "closing of the public grounds between the circular road and the Tiber." Presumably the circular road was the one built for President Jefferson by Latrobe that appears in the 1826 watercolor illustrated in figure 2-2.[28]

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24. "The Sessford Annals," 284, 287.

25. Stanley Horn, *The Hermitage, Home of Old Hickory* (New York: Greenberg Press, 1950), 74–75, cited in NPS, "The President's Garden," 17.

26. The anthemion railings in the front of the President's House can be seen in figures 2-5, 2-6, 3-5, 3-12, and 4-6.

27. Seale, *The President's House*, 202-3.

28. Seale, *The President's House*, 172–76; file on "Water Trough on South Grounds," OC/WH, June 5, 1991. For the circular road, see *Journal of the Commissioner of Public Buildings*, 7 (1830): 19, cited in NPS, *Administrative History*, 88–89.

In 1833–34 a new stable of stuccoed brick with Aquia stone trim was built just outside the Latrobe/Jefferson arched entrance gate and technically off the grounds of the President's House. It had a brief existence, being taken down when the Treasury was extended in 1851, and no view of it seems to have survived.[29] In 1833 a new water supply system was installed for the President's House. Fresh water was piped from natural springs in City Square no. 249 (now Franklin Square) to three reservoirs on the grounds: one between the Treasury and State Buildings on the east and the others between the War and Navy Buildings on the west.[30]

During his second administration, President Jackson returned to his interest in landscape and horticulture. He retained John Ousley, but in the early 1830s he also hired Jemmy Maher, public gardener of the city of Washington. Maher, who owned a nursery in the city, had experience in large-scale public works and took over earth moving and tree planting activities on the grounds. Ousley, whose title became "gardener to the president," retained his horticultural duties. A third gardener, William Whelan, was in charge of the vegetable garden.

In 1833 a writer praised the condition of the President's House, but he commented that, "the grounds . . . have an unfinished and neglected appearance; we hope they will not long remain so rude and uncultivated."[31] During the summer of 1833 and into 1834 extensive work, especially grading and the laying of paths, was done on both the north and south grounds. If this work was done according to a prepared plan, the plan has been lost.[32]

To the north of the President's House, a new straight iron railing along Pennsylvania Avenue replaced the curving fence built by

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29. Seale, *The President's House*, 197–98; file on "White House Stables and Garages," OC/WH, Aug. 10, 1992. The stable added by Monroe in 1818 to the end and at right angles to the west terrace probably lasted until at least 1853, although it would not have served the same function after the Jackson stable was constructed. In an 1853 drawing by Thomas U. Walter, this structure appears to have an open front with a colonnade on its east side and may have been used for storage. (Thomas U. Walter, drawing of the floor plan of the President's House, 1853, Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress.) A local builder, William P. Elliot, completed the drawings for the Jackson stables.

30. Seale, *The President's House*, 199–200.

31. *The People's Magazine*, 1, no. 7 (June 15, 1833).

32. Large quantities of trees and shrubs were ordered from local nurseries and from the famous Prince Nursery and Bloodgood Company, both on Long Island, New York. Robert Mills, architect of the new Treasury Building, was brought in to measure walks. Seale, *The President's House*, 200–5.

Monroe in 1819 (see figure 2-1). The two gates and piers were moved farther apart, realigning the curving entry drive into a wide horseshoe form. In the spring of 1834 grading continued, but there was also considerable planting of grass seed and ornamentals. After an assassination attempt on Jackson's life at the Capitol on January 30, 1835, a sentry box was installed on the grounds, but its location is unknown.[33]

On the south side of the President's House even greater changes were made. Apparently for the first time the south lawn was thoroughly graded. The Latrobe/Jefferson road was also leveled and graded, and the Jefferson wall remained in place. Descriptions of the property during the Jackson administration sometimes identify several trees near the arched entrance gate at the southeastern edge of the grounds. If these trees were planted, they could have been put in no earlier than the Jefferson administration. However, there may have been some existing native trees on the grounds at the time the President's House was built, possibly including the "great walnut" southeast of the building, as described by Latrobe in a letter of April 29, 1807, to Jefferson.[34] During the Jackson era, two weeping willows near the gate were described as "ancient" and presumed to date from the colonial period, but weeping willows can grow very fast.[35] Tradition dates the two southern magnolias located west of the south portico to the Jackson administration, but documentation is lacking for a precise planting date.[36]

In the fall of 1834, a hothouse, benches, fences, and trellises were built. Some of the trellises were specified for roses, and a long arbor was also put in for vines. Maher continued to order numerous trees, including sugar maples, elms, oaks, silver-leaf maples, and horse chestnuts. On the grounds were also several altheas; some of them possibly brought by John Quincy Adams, for this had been a favorite plant of his mother, Abigail Adams.[37] In 1835 many more

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33. Seale, *The President's House*, 200–5.

34. Latrobe to Jefferson, Apr. 29, 1807, quoted in Olmsted Brothers, "Report," 64–65.

35. Seale, *The President's House*, 203, note 59. The weeping willow was introduced to the United States from China in 1730. See Wyman, *Trees for American Gardens*, 419–20.

36. The southern magnolias do not show up clearly in photographs until the Lincoln administration, but southern magnolias grow very slowly, particularly when young (Information on growing habit of southern magnolias provided by Dale Haney, Office of Irvin Williams, The White House, Oct. 24, 1994).

37. Seale, *The President's House*, 203–5, notes 62 and 63. Around the turn of the century, Abigail Adams planted an althea (*Hibiscus syriacus*) at the family home in Quincy, Massachusetts, which John Quincy Adams had to cut down after her death. See NPS, *Adams National Historic Site, A Family's Legacy to America*, by Wilhelmina S. Harris

plants were purchased, including dwarf tree roses. In 1835 the former Treasury vault, then John Quincy Adams's tool shed, was turned into an orangery for President Jackson, housing a sago palm from Mount Vernon and other plants. While work continued on the grounds of the President's House for the remainder of Jackson's administration, it appears to have been mostly maintenance, but new trees and shrubs were purchased.[38]

John Sessford recorded the progress on the grounds during the Jackson era. In 1833 he described the mounds with new walks either on, or more likely, around them:

> The improvements made by the United States have been considerable. Those around the President's Mansion, as far as done, are of a permanent nature; the entrances and lawn on the north front being greatly enlarged by the removal of the gates farther east and west, connected by an iron railing, and the outer circle of the road, and cast iron fancy railing around the lawn. This improvement would have been better if the gates had been placed opposite the streets on the east and west side of the enclosed ground north, with proper lodges at each. The walks on the south front, and the mounds, are also completed.[39]

It was during the Jackson administration that the general form of the grounds of the President's House took on an appearance like that of today, although later changes would modify it. Photographs and plans from this period illustrate what is sometimes referred to as the "fiddle-shaped" or "bell-shaped" configuration of the south lawn that was created by the walks established during the 1830s. Andrew Jackson, who admired George Washington, probably patterned this arrangement after Mount Vernon, which had a similar "bell-shaped" pattern of walks, lawns and flanking gardens.[40]

(Washington, DC, 1983), 50. Shrub althea was introduced into this country from China before 1790. See Wyman, *Shrubs and Vines*, 239–40.

38. Seale, *The President's House*, 206–7, notes 64–67. In 1835, $3,828.57 was spent "for alterations and repairs of the President's house, for gardener's salary, and for keeping the grounds and walks in order, including the cost of trees and shrubs." See *Report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 4, 1836. An important city map from this period is "City of Washington," drawn by Henry S. Tanner in his *A New Universal Atlas* (Philadelphia: H. S. Tanner, 1836). The map unfortunately gives no detail of the internal layout of President's Park. Tanner's map is illustrated in Reps, *Washington on View*, 79.

39. "The Sessford Annals," 304.

40. Seale, *The President's House*, 206, note 66. Mount Vernon is discussed in Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 253–57.

The best view of the grounds of the President's House, probably dating from the Jackson era, is an engraving illustrated in figure 2-3. Unfortunately it presents many problems since it went through numerous editions, often with small changes in content and composition, from at least 1829 through 1833. Furthermore, an elaborate ornamental garden appears in the foreground (southwest) part of the south grounds, when it is well documented that such a garden was located at the opposite end (southeast). It has been suggested that this engraving was made from a reverse print of a daguerreotype.[41] The engraving is illustrated here, because, despite these problems, it gives an excellent sense of the grounds immediately south of the President's House during the Jackson era.

In March 1837 Martin Van Buren became president. Like John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, he was interested in horticulture. While ambassador to England in 1831, he had visited English gardens with Washington Irving.[42] He continued the type of improvements John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson had begun, and he retained both Maher and Ousley.[43] At the end of 1837 it was reported that "the grounds at the Capitol and the President's house have been faithfully attended to by the public gardener; and choice trees and shrubs, selected with care from the most celebrated nurseries, have been planted under his direction." New fruit trees were added in the orangery. The lawns were regularly rolled and watered, and paths were graveled. Cast-iron benches and settees were also purchased, including circular benches around some of the trees.[44]

As Van Buren sought a second term in 1840, his love of fine living made him the object of attack, led by Congressman Charles Ogle of Pennsylvania. Ogle ridiculed every expenditure made at the President's House, comparing it to Versailles and some of the royal palaces of England. Ogle singled out the grounds for special attack, enumerating the more sinister sounding of the flowers: "false fox glove, enchanter's nightshade, dragon's head, lizard's tail, adder's tongue, monkey flower, and touch-me-not." He observed that one grounds employee was paid to do nothing more than "pick up falling leaves."[45] Among Ogle's accusations was that Van Buren had been

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41. Seale, *The White House*, 82. The engraving was published in *The People's Magazine* 1, no. 7 (June 15, 1833). See also the memo by Bernard Reiley (curator, Div. of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress), Mar. 29, 1979, OC/WH.

42. NPS, "The President's Garden," 20.

43. Seale, *The President's House*, 217.

44. Seale, *The President's House*, 217.

45. Seale, *The President's House*, 223; chapter 9, note 11.

"constructing fountains, paving footways, planting, transplanting, pruning, and dressing horse chestnuts, lindens, Norway spruce and Balm of Gilead."[46]

William Henry Harrison was inaugurated in March 1841 but died only a month later, when John Tyler assumed the office of president. Little is recorded in the way of landscape improvements during Tyler's administration.[47] Tyler initiated the practice of Marine Band concerts on the south lawn. Initially the band played on the south portico, and the public sat on the south lawn. The grounds were open for visitation during Saturday evenings in the summer.[48]

In 1842 Charles Dickens visited the President's House and observed:

> The President's mansion is more like an English club-house, both within and without, than any other establishment with which I can compare it. The ornamental ground about it has been laid out in garden walks; they are pretty, and agreeable to the eye; though they have that uncomfortable air of having been made yesterday, which is far from favorable to the display of such beauties.[49]

Early in the Tyler administration (1841), public architect Robert Mills put forward a major planning proposal. Mills designed a building for the National Institution for the Promotion of Science, what is now known as the Smithsonian Institution, and also planned a botanical garden on the Mall between 7th and 12th Streets. He expanded this project into a comprehensive landscape design for the

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46. Quoted in NPS, "The President's Garden," 21. The 1838–40 annual reports of the commissioner of public buildings appear to be missing. Under 1841, there is listed only a memorial about macadamizing Pennsylvania Avenue, dated Jan. 20, 1840.

47. An expenditure of $2,544.69 was reported in 1842 "for annual repairs of the President's house, gardener's salary, cartage, laborers, tools, and top dressing for plants," for repairs of the fence on Pennsylvania Avenue and the "President's garden" and for repair of flag footways at the Capitol and the President's House. See *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Jan. 12, 1843, 1–2. For the 18 months preceding June 30, 1844, $2,377.78 was expended "for annual repairs of the President's House, gardener's salary, etc." In addition, flag footways were still being repaired. See *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Jan. 8, 1844, 2. Tyler was also unpopular with Congress, another possible reason for the relative lack of landscape work during his term.

48. NPS, "The President's Garden," 23; Seale, *The President's House*, 243; Elise K. Kirk, *Music at the White House: A History of the American Spirit* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 56.

49. Charles Dickens, *American Notes* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 112.

Mall, including the grounds of the Capitol and the Washington Monument but excluded President's Park.[50]

James Polk became president in 1845. During his one-term presidency, John Ousley and Jemmy Maher immaculately maintained the grounds. Maher remained gardener of all the public grounds and continued to be in charge of larger projects, while Ousley tended to fine gardening, caring for the plants in the cold frames and orangery, raking gravel walks, and other such tasks. By this time the trees that Ousley and John Quincy Adams had planted were substantial, but still not large. The grass on the lawns was allowed to grow until a local livery stable keeper could scythe it. A farmer then drove in sheep, which cropped it close. After that, Ousley flattened the lawn with the roller. Flower and vegetable gardens were planted south of the President's House and were neatly fenced. Ousley raised about 100 varieties of roses, some of which grew over the long arbor or were trained over trellises. Traces of this "old garden," with its typically mid 19th century plantings, furnishings, and landscape effects, lasted until about 1859.[51]

Polk's presidency coincided with the first widespread use of photography, in the form of the daguerreotype. An important early photograph probably dating from the Polk administration is illustrated in figure 2-4. Taken by John Plumbe about 1846, it shows the south side of the President's House with the neatly maintained grounds described in the commissioners' annual reports. Taken apparently in winter or early spring (there is a bit of snow on the grounds), the daguerreotype shows newly planted trees and shrubs near the foundation of the building. Not visible, however, are the Jackson magnolias, although the spot where they would be located can be clearly seen. One trellis also appears, to the far left.

In 1848 a new iron fence was built on the north side of the President's House and painted. At the northeast and northwest corners interior gates were constructed to control access to the south

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50. Scott, "'This Vast Empire,'" 48–53; Cynthia R. Field, Richard E. Stamm, and Heather P. Ewing, *The Castle: An Illustrated History of the Smithsonian Building* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), 4–8.

51. Seale, *The President's House*, 269–72, note 41 cites commissioners' vouchers, etc. The 1845–49 annual reports of the commissioner of public buildings provide only the total figures for "repairs to the President's house," and such very general statements as, "The public grounds at the capitol and President's house have been kept in good order by the public gardener and the hands under him" (*Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Jan. 8, 1846, 3). See also *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds*, Jan. 16, 1849, 2. The long arbor was in the flower garden, probably on the southwest side of the house.

grounds.[52] The same year a bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson by sculptor Pierre-Jean David d'Angers was moved from the grounds of the Capitol to the center of the lawn at the north side of the President's House and was enclosed by a small circular path.[53] An 1848 lithograph from the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue (figure 2-5) shows this statue and also several small trees at the front of the President's House. Wrought iron oil lamps were the norm until 1848 when gas lighting was introduced. The 1848 lithograph (figure 2-5) shows the first gas streetlights along Pennsylvania Avenue.[54]

Zachary Taylor became president in 1849 but died in July 1850; Millard Fillmore succeeded him.[55] During this period apparently no important landscaping changes were made except for the installation of gaslights. Even though Robert Mills had documented to Congress in 1840 that carbureted hydrogen gas was safer, more manageable, and more economical than oil, Congress waited until 1848 to purchase lampposts. At the President's House, contractors installed gaslights both inside and out. By January 22, 1848, 76 lamps lighted the way from the President's House to the Capitol, and 42 more lamps lighted the Capitol grounds. Officials expanded the system to 176 lamps. Commissioner Ignatius Mudd reported that gas lighting for the President's House and Pennsylvania Avenue had been completed and had been operating since June 1849. Lampposts were located erratically in front of federal buildings until after the Civil War, when Alexander Shepherd instituted a lighting program.[56]

In 1850 Fredrika Bremer, a Swedish novelist and friend of A. J. Downing, visited Washington and recorded her impressions of the city. On July 1, 1850, she visited the President's House:

> In the afternoon, the senator from New Hampshire took Miss Lynch and myself to the White House, the residence of the president, General Taylor, just outside the city. There in the park, every Saturday afternoon, is military music, and

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52. Expenditures listed under the appropriation for annual repairs to the President's House from Jan. 12, 1848, to Jan. 8, 1849, Stanley McClure Files, ESF/WHL/NPS. Information on the inside gates courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

53. Seale, *The White House*, 105.

54. The lights apparently were installed during 1848–49. See *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1849*, Jan. 21, 1850, Ex. Doc. no. 30, 14.

55. Seale, *The President's House*, 278–89.

56. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1851*, 11; Sarah Pressey Noreen, *Public Street Illumination in Washington, D.C.: An Illustrated History*, GW Washington Studies, no. 2 (1975), 15–18. At this time Shepherd was the commissioner of public works for the city of Washington. U. S. Grant would later appoint him territorial governor of the city. Information from Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

the people walk at pleasure. The president was out among the crowd. I was introduced to him, and we shook hands. He is kind and agreeable.[57]

Lafayette Square

After the War of 1812 new buildings were erected around the still undesignated Lafayette Square. St. John's Church, based on designs by Latrobe, was constructed in 1815–16 on the corner of 16th and H Streets. An 1816 perspective sketch of the church by Latrobe (figure 2-6) shows a distant view of the burnt-out President's House and the absolutely unadorned expanse between the two. In 1817 Latrobe also designed a house for Stephen Decatur on Lafayette Square, which was completed about two years later.[58] (An 1822 painting of Decatur House by Mme. E. Vaile is illustrated in figure 2-7.) While Congress appropriated funds in 1819 to open 16-1/2 Street, later Jackson Place, only a narrow dirt road appears in this painting.

On April 30, 1818, Congress appropriated $10,000.00 for "Graduating and Improving the President's Square," and by June workers were busy clearing the land with hoes, shovels, and pushcarts. Charles Bulfinch, who received $25.00 for a plan for improving the square, first turned his attention to grading, as the site varied dramatically in level.[59] Although Bulfinch's plan has not survived, enough evidence exists to describe the design in general terms — a plantation of alternating elms and red cedars planted close together and forming allées.

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57. Fredrika Bremer, *America of the Fifties: Letters of Fredrika Bremer*, selected and edited by Adolph B. Benson (New York: The American Scandinavian Foundation, 1924), 171–72. Bremer had attended debates in Congress, which may account for her describing the White House as "outside the city." A later translation of Bremer's letters may be responsible for the use of the term "White House."

58. Bremer, *America of the Fifties*, 160–61.

59. In 1824 an account of expenditures between 1818 and 1821 was issued. Most of the 1818 work must have been grading, because the largest expenditures ($1,537.55 in September, for example) were for laborers' pay and carts. Beginning in September 1818 Charles Bizet was paid quarterly as a gardener at the rate of $450.00 per year. Except for orchard grass seed in 1820 and clover seed in 1821, nothing was spent for plants. "Message from the President of the United States Transmitting an Account of the Disbursement of the Sums Appropriated by the Acts of 30th April 1818 and 3rd March 1819 for Improving the President's Square, etc.," Apr. 20, 1824. Abstracts are included of disbursements made by Samuel Lane for grading and improving President's Square between 1818 and 1821. In addition to these abstracts, Seale (*The President's House*, 168, note 13) cites field notes by F. C. DeKrafft, plus numerous warrants and bills that indicate the site was poorly drained and full of mudholes and gullies.

By January 1820 work was underway on improving the square according to the Bulfinch plan. It was anticipated that considerably more money would be required to complete the work, but a further appropriation was not recommended.[60] In Madame E. Vaile's 1822 painting (figure 2-7), little is visible in the way of improvements to the park, except for a narrow, beaten dirt path.

Bulfinch based his plan on the concept that the cedars would grow fast; by the time the elms reached maturity the cedars would be large and old trees that would be cut down, allowing the elms sufficient room to grow.[61] The park was kept closed most of the time in the first years, but as the cedars grew, paths were cleared. There might have been a post-and-chain fence all around the square for a while, but it did not deter the livestock that ran free or the people who took shortcuts across the park in several places.

In 1824 the Marquis de Lafayette visited Washington, an event that is generally credited with spurring improvements to the grounds.[62] That was the year when Pennsylvania Avenue was formally extended in front of the President's House, probably leading to a redesign of part of Lafayette Square.[63] Sessford provides some information about Lafayette Square during this period. In 1826 he wrote that the square north of the President's House was nearly leveled and enclosed, but "the view of the President's House is still obstructed by unsightly frame sheds and stables, which ought to be removed, as unsightly to the eye and offensive to the senses."[64] In

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60. "Report of the Committee on So Much of the President's Message as Relates to the Public Buildings, January 6, 1820," in *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Nov. 27, 1820, 2–3. Commissioners' reports indicate that Bulfinch's plan, now lost, was not fully carried out in 1820 for lack of funds. There is no way to tell from the financial records alone whether the post-1824 expenditures were used for a belated realization of his plan.

61. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 10.

62. NPS, *Lafayette Park,* 7.

63. Apparently early attempts to formalize Pennsylvania Avenue can be dated to 1800, when stone debris from construction of the Capitol and perhaps the White House began to be used to pave Pennsylvania Avenue; see Bob Arnebeck, *Through a Fiery Trial: Building Washington, 1790-1800* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books), 566, 573, 582, cited in NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 23. The yearly financial records indicate that money was spent on Lafayette Square only between 1818 and 1821, in 1827, and in 1832–33. The annual report of the commissioner of public buildings for 1825 appears to be missing, but in February 1825 an appropriation of another $5,000.00 is recorded, again for "graduating and improving the President's Square, *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* March 22, 1826. At the end of 1827, $2,891.92 of this amount had been expended, but the work done is not specified. *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Dec. 31, 1827. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia,* 158.

64. "The Sessford Annals," 284.

1827 he reported that the square was completely enclosed with a fence and "paved around it."[65]

It is difficult to reconstruct with certainty the development of Lafayette Square between 1818 and 1833.[66] It was likely fenced about 1826 with a simple split-rail fence of the type used south of the President's House at this time (see figure 2-2). In 1837 Robert Mills, the public architect, proposed enclosing it with "an iron railing of suitable dimensions" with a granite curb and two gateways, but the wooden fence remained until 1845. In 1836 Alexander Jackson Davis sketched a proposed office building in the center of Lafayette Square.[67]

There seems to be no clear visual representation of the whole area until about 1845–50, when an isometric view of the President's House, grounds, surroundings and public buildings was published (figure 2-8).[68] In this unsigned lithograph the site appears as a simple rectangle planted with grass and surrounded by a double row of trees. Down the center are two more double rows of trees along the line of 16th Street, although the street does not cut through the park. Other than this broad alley, there are no internal paths in the park, not even the one shown on the Vaile painting.

In 1845 a program was initiated to improve many of the "streets, avenues, and public reservations" in the city of Washington. The reservations designated were "Lafayette square, the reservation south of the President's mansion, Fountain square, the mall, and the vacant ground adjoining the capitol." In 1845, as part of this program, an estimate was given to enclose Lafayette Square with posts and

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65. "The Sessford Annals," 287.

66. No expenditures on Lafayette Square are recorded in 1828 or 1829. The report for 1831 is again missing, but on December 13, 1832, Commissioner Joseph Elgar reported an expenditure of $3,000.00 on the improvement of the President's Square out of an appropriation of the previous session. Again, the work is not specified. *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Dec. 13, 1832, 1. In 1833 an expenditure of $14,660.00 was recorded for President's Square. Although a brief report follows describing improvements to the Capitol and President's House, there is no explanation of what was done with the money spent for the square. *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Dec. 20, 1833, 1.

67. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park, " 11.

68. The isometric view was dated as ca. 1845 in the Olmsted Brothers report and in many later publications. Since at least 1991, a date of ca. 1857 has been given to the view. See John Guidas, *The White House: Resources for Research at the Library of Congress* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1992), figure 10, page 43; and also the file on the "Mounds on the South Ground," OC/WH, WGA, Mar. 19, 1991. This date seems problematical, since the isometric view does not reflect the 1851 Downing plan, and it does not indicate the Andrew Jackson equestrian statue, erected in 1853.

wooden railings "of the best materials," possibly to replace the existing rail fence built in 1826–27.[69]

President's Park South

Between 1815 and 1851, the area now known as the Ellipse was still not defined as a distinct space. In 1815, the Washington Canal, which had been proposed by L'Enfant in 1792 to replace Tiber Creek, was opened after years of construction. However, it never attracted the expected commercial traffic and gradually stagnated.[70]

In the 1845 annual report the commissioner of public buildings noted that work was underway for "enclosing reservation south of the President's house with posts and railing of wood of the best material."[71] This is probably a reference to the Ellipse, and in particular the white picket fence that surrounded the unimproved common. That same year Commissioner of Public Buildings William Noland reported that it was intended that the reservation south of the President's House and the Mall should be enclosed and planted with ornamental shade trees. He added that gravel walks and carriageways should be completed to allow people to exercise on foot, on horseback, or in carriages for their health and recreation.[72]

At the end of 1848 Commissioner of Public Buildings Charles Douglas noted that the improvements being made on the public grounds south of the President's House were successfully progressing. He hoped that when finished they would meet the approval of Congress and the citizens of Washington. He went on to add,

> After the necessary observations were made upon these grounds, the plan of terracing them was preferred to the inclined plane — it being most economical, best adapted to their shape and condition and best calculated to beautify them. The low ground will be reached by two terraces, each fifteen hundred and eighty feet long, four feet high, and seventy feet wide from bank to bank. From the foot of the

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69. *[Annual] Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Dec. 12, 1845, 2. The cost for enclosing Lafayette Square was $803.60. See also NPS, *Administrative History,* 124–25.

70. Reps, *Monumental Washington,* 29.

71. *[Annual] Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Dec. 12, 1845, 2. The cost was $2,235.80.

72. Seale, *The President's House,* 279.

> second terrace to the surface of the low ground the earth will be gently sloped.
>
> Fifteenth Street on the east, and Seventeenth Street on the west of these grounds, will be graded to their full width, and the grounds fenced as soon as the embankments have been completed, and are sufficiently settled to firmly sustain the fence posts.[73]

What Douglas seems to have had in mind for the south grounds was something very similar to the terraces indicated on L'Enfant's 1791 plan but shown most clearly on a detail from the 1792 Ellicott plan (figure 1-4).[74] The terraces under construction in 1848 were probably located in what later became the southern enlargement of the grounds of the President's House (upper south lawn), not in what today is the Ellipse.[75]

Douglas's proposal was not just concerned with aesthetics. It also aimed to eliminate the unhealthy surroundings of Presidents' Park due to lack of good drainage along Tiber Creek. Congress appropriated the money and work was begun at once.[76]

At the end of 1849, Ignatius Mudd, the new commissioner of public buildings, reported:

> The unoccupied ground . . . lying between the south wall of the President's enclosures and the Washington canal, contains about forty-nine acres, a portion of which presents an irregular, uneven surface. The last Congress made an appropriation for 'grading, enclosing, and planting it with trees'; and considerable progress had been made in the work of grading by my predecessor when I entered upon the duties of this office. The greater part of the appropriation was thereby exhausted, so that I was only able, with the means which came into my hands, to make such gradings around the marginal lines as were necessary to its being enclosed. I also planted it with trees, so far as was deemed

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73. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds*, Jan. 8, 1849, 9.

74. Seale, *The President's House*, 279.

75. Information courtesy of John Pousson (NPS).

76. It is possible that the city's primitive water and sanitation system was partially responsible for the health problems affecting the occupants of the White House — President James Polk died a few months after leaving the White House, President Zachary Taylor probably died of cholera, and President Franklin Pierce came down with malaria during his term, McEwan, *White House Landscapes*, 121, 124.

> expedient, in advance of the grading yet required to be done.[77]

As Mudd noted, the existing system of sewerage at the south grounds was inadequate:

> To facilitate and perfect these improvements, as the appropriation referred to indicates they should be made, it will be necessary to increase the sewerage by which waste water is conducted from the President's house and the adjacent public buildings. These sewers now discharge from their present terminus all the water, to stagnate upon the surface of, or render marshy 'the grounds lying south of the President's house.' To extend them to the Washington canal, and to cut down a part of Seventeenth street to its proper level, becomes, therefore, a work indispensable in connexion [sic] with the improvement of the southern portion of President's square. The sum requisite for these objects is included in the estimates with which I furnished the Treasury Department, and will, I trust, obtain the favorable consideration of Congress.[78]

The Grounds of the State and Treasury Buildings

In 1816 the rebuilding of the two damaged executive office buildings began. James Hoban supervised the repairs and reconstruction and added some architectural embellishments of his own. The structure of these brick buildings was still sound, but repairs were so hasty that the scars from the fire were simply painted over in red with white painted lines to simulate brick and mortar. In 1818 Monroe added two more buildings, one in front of each of the two existing ones: a new State Department building in front of the Treasury and a new War Department building in front of the Navy Department. Each of the four buildings had a great portico of Aquia stone, two facing north and two facing south.[79] The effect of this group can be seen in the Baroness Hyde de Neuville's 1820 watercolor (figure 2-1).

In 1833 the Treasury Building, with the exception of Latrobe's fireproof vault, was destroyed by fire. Robert Mills was asked to write a

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77. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Jan. 24, 1850, 6.

78. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Jan. 24, 1850, 6.

79. Report of James Hoban, in *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Dec. 23, 1819, 6–7; "Report of the Committee on So Much of the President's Message as Relates to the Public Buildings, January 6, 1820," in *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Dec. 27, 1820, 2–3; Seale, *The President's House,* 151.

report on the fire damage and was eventually retained to design a new Treasury Building on a site selected by President Andrew Jackson.[80] Mills's winning competition design was for an E-shaped building with its spine along 15th Street and three porticoed wings facing the White House. Construction on the new Treasury Building did not get underway until 1836, when the foundations of the building were complete and part of the front range of rooms was begun.[81] Construction continued in 1837, but there was difficulty in obtaining materials.[82] By the end of 1842 the colonnaded east front along 15th Street and the central wing had been completed. No visual documentation survives for this period, but a lithograph from the 1860s provides a good illustration of the south and east sides of the building (see figure 2-9).

The Treasury Building is remarkable for its early use of fireproof construction, a technique that Mills had pioneered in a records building (now the Fireproof Building) in Charleston, South Carolina.[83] The isometric view dated ca. 1845–50 (see figure 2-8) shows the Treasury as if completed with a suggested landscape treatment. Ultimately, the entire Treasury complex would be built in four stages between 1836 and 1869. Mills's design for the Treasury has been frequently criticized because it blocked the view of the White House along Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol.

The Grounds of the War and Navy Buildings

The War Building, which was reconstructed after the fire in 1814, and the new Navy Building lasted longer than the State and Treasury Buildings. Robert Mills prepared plans for a proposed new War and Navy complex, and a competition was held in 1845–46. Among the entrants in the competition in addition to Mills were the distinguished architects William Strickland, Ammi B. Young, John Notman, and Isaiah Rogers. However, the outbreak of the Mexican

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80. The most complete architectural analysis of Mills's Treasury Building is found in William H. Pierson Jr., *American Buildings and Their Architects: The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970), 404–17. See also Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 154–57; Seale, *The President's House*, 207–8.

81. Robert Mills, "Report," in *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Dec. 8, 1836.

82. Robert Mills, "Report," in *Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Dec. 15, 1837, 3–6.

83. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 154–55.

War kept any of these competition plans from being realized, and the two early brick buildings remained for almost three more decades.[84]

The ca. 1845–50 isometric view shows a proposed new War and Navy complex identical to the Treasury, with the same kind of landscape treatment (see figure 2-8). It is probable that this illustration was related in some way to the 1845–46 competition for a new War and Navy complex. There is little information about the actual landscaping of these buildings between 1815 and 1851. One exception is a general description of the grounds of the War and Navy Buildings, along with those of the State Building on the east, found in an 1850 guidebook:

> State Department, War Department, and Navy Department are but ordinary brick buildings, two stories above the basement, which is built of freestone, fire proof; the dimensions of each building are nearly the same, that of the War Department being 130 feet long by 60 wide. The War and State both have a portico, facing north, of the ionic order. In each there is also a hall running the whole length of the buildings, having offices on each side for the accommodation of Clerks of the several Departments, and are all located near the President's house, and surrounded by neat iron fences, the grounds of which are ornamented with numerous shade trees.[85]

Summary

The period between 1815 and 1850 witnessed important developments in the evolution of the landscape of President's Park. The buildings destroyed by the British in 1814 were reconstructed. President John Quincy Adams set an important precedent by treating the grounds of the President's House as a kind of arboretum of American trees and plants. During the presidency of Andrew Jackson extensive work, particularly grading, laying of paths, and realigning drives, was completed both on the north and south grounds, and

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84. Dolkart, *The Old Executive Office Building*, note 11; Donald J. Lehman, *Executive Office Building*, Historical Study No. 3 (Washington, DC: General Services Administration, 1970), 9–18. Robert Mills's diaries include sketches for a new War and Navy complex, which show that he began thinking about such a project some years before his first official proposal and the competition. See Robert Mills, "1834–1840 Journal," Robert Mills Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. See also John Bryan, ed., *Robert Mills, Architect* (Washington, DC: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1989), 184.

85. E. S. Streeter, comp., *The Stranger's Guide, or the Daguerreotype of Washington, D.C.* (Washington, DC: C. Alexander, Printer, 1850), 22–23.

Summary

large quantities of trees and shrubs were planted. President Van Buren continued the improvements began by John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson. The grounds of the President's House began to assume an appearance still recognizable today. Improvements included lighting the grounds, first with oil lamps and by the late 1840s with gaslights. Ornamental anthemion fences were installed on the north grounds between the columns in the north portico, lining the southern edge of the carriageway, and serving as a parapet on both sides of the north portico to prevent possible falls.

At this time commemoration began to influence the evolution of the landscape with the relocation of the Thomas Jefferson statue from the Capitol to the center of the lawn on the north grounds of the White House. The need for increased security became evident with the installation of a sentry box on the White House grounds.

Important new buildings were being erected around Lafayette Park, but a landscape plan by Charles Bulfinch was apparently only partially executed. Preliminary construction work, such as filling and grading, was also underway in the area now known as the Ellipse, but it was not until the second half of the 19th century that these last two components of President's Park would be fully developed.

President's Park continued to attract talented designers. Charles Bulfinch, Robert Mills, and Paulus Hedl developed distinctive features that have characterized the site for many years. Bulfinch's gatehouses still stand today. Mills's design of the Treasury complex and its fireproof construction were remarkable. The Hedl fence was removed in the 1970s and replaced with a sturdier one of the same design.

The reconstruction of the State and Treasury Buildings was hastily done. Scars from the fire the British had set were simply painted over to simulate brick and mortar. During the Monroe presidency two buildings were added — a new State Department in front of the Treasury and a new War Department in front of the Navy Department. In 1833 the Treasury Building was destroyed by fire. Robert Mills designed the new Treasury Building. Construction, however, did not get underway until 1836 and was not finished until 1869.

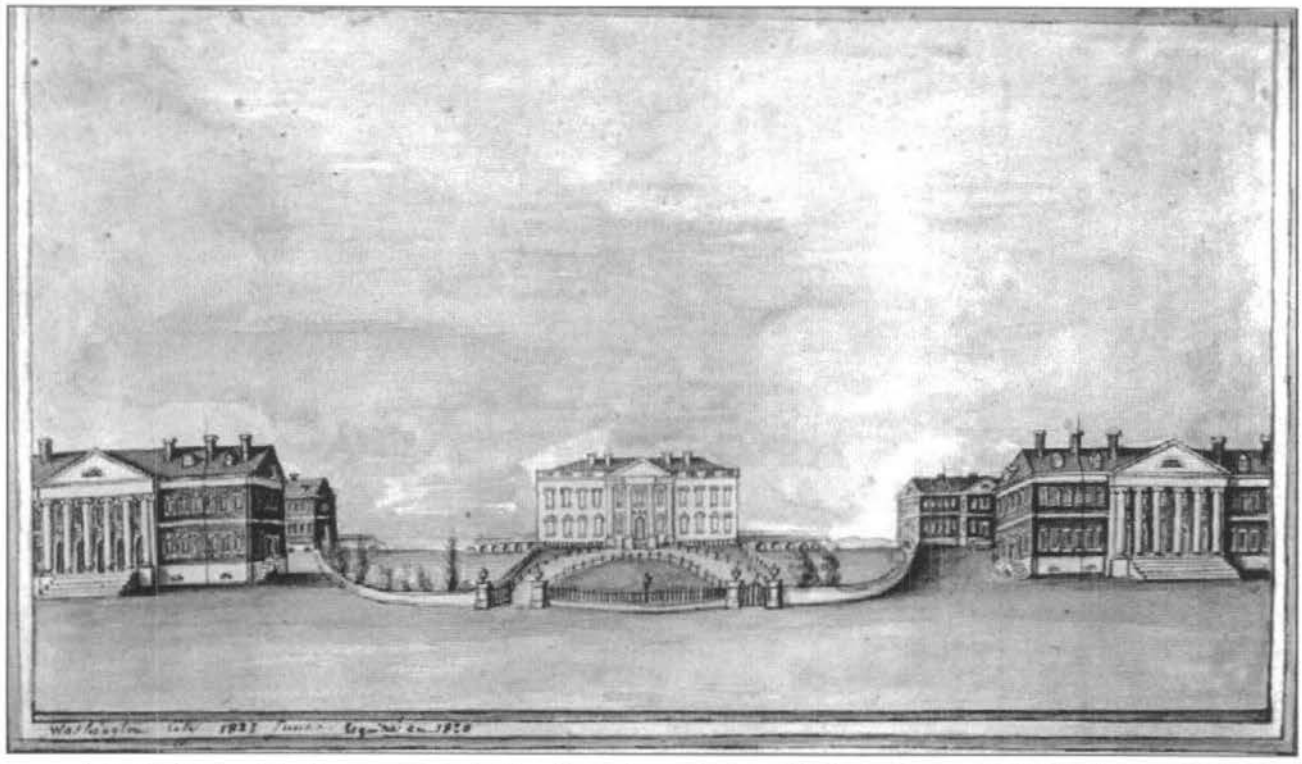

Figure 2-1: *Washington City*. Baroness Hyde de Neuville (watercolor), June 1821; Esquisse en 1820 (sketched in 1820). The Phelps Stokes Collection, The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints, and Photography, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundation.

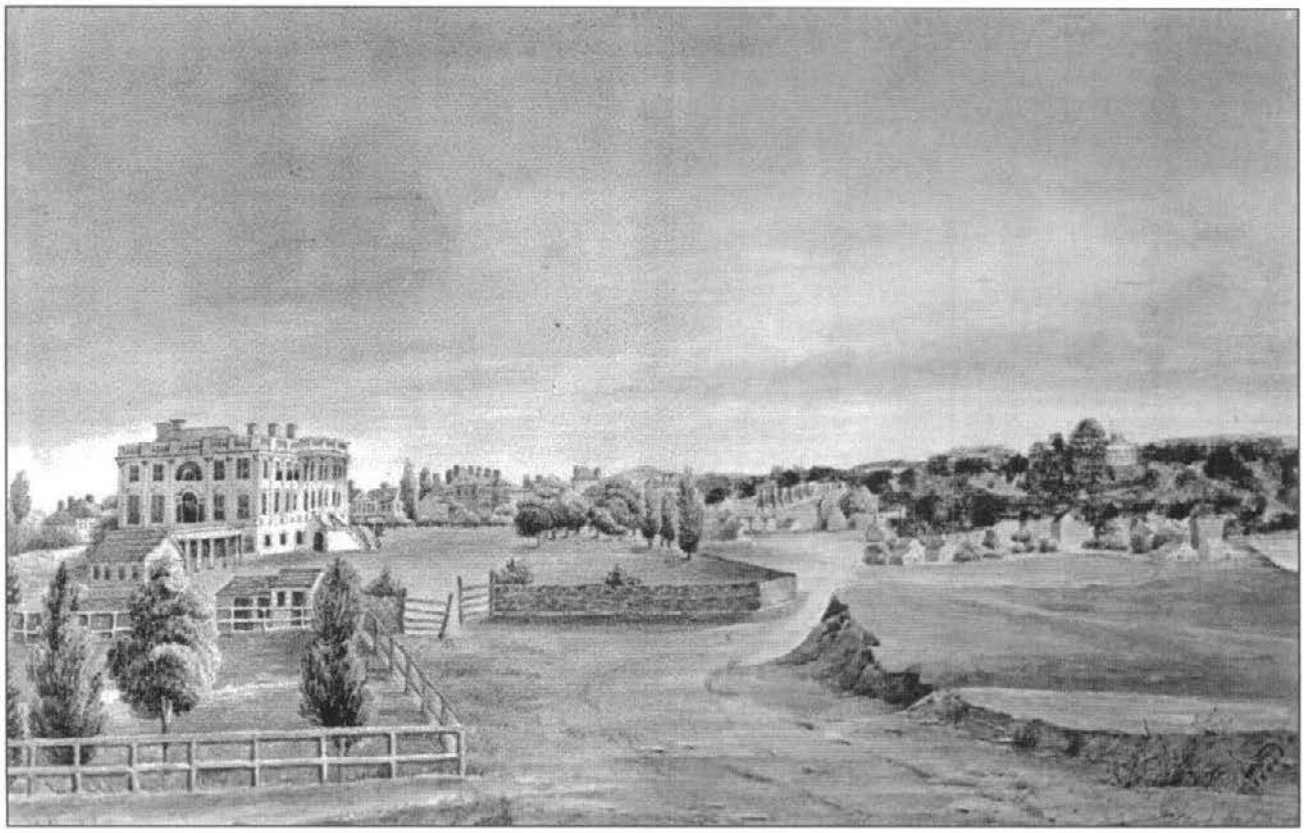

Figure 2-2: *View of the President's House from the Southwest*. Anthony St. John Baker (watercolor), 1826. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

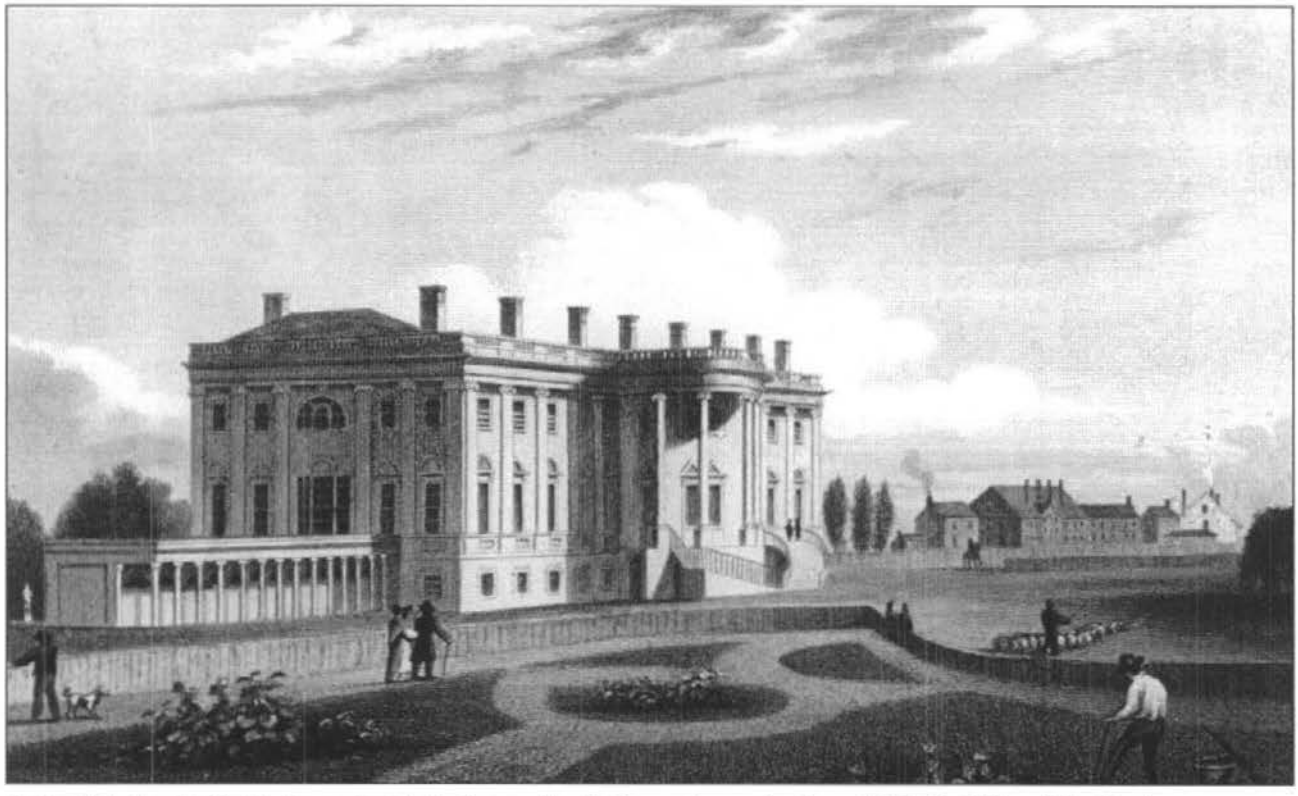

Figure 2-3: *The President's House*. Joseph Andrews after H. Brown (engraving), ca. 1827-33. Office of the Curator, The White House.

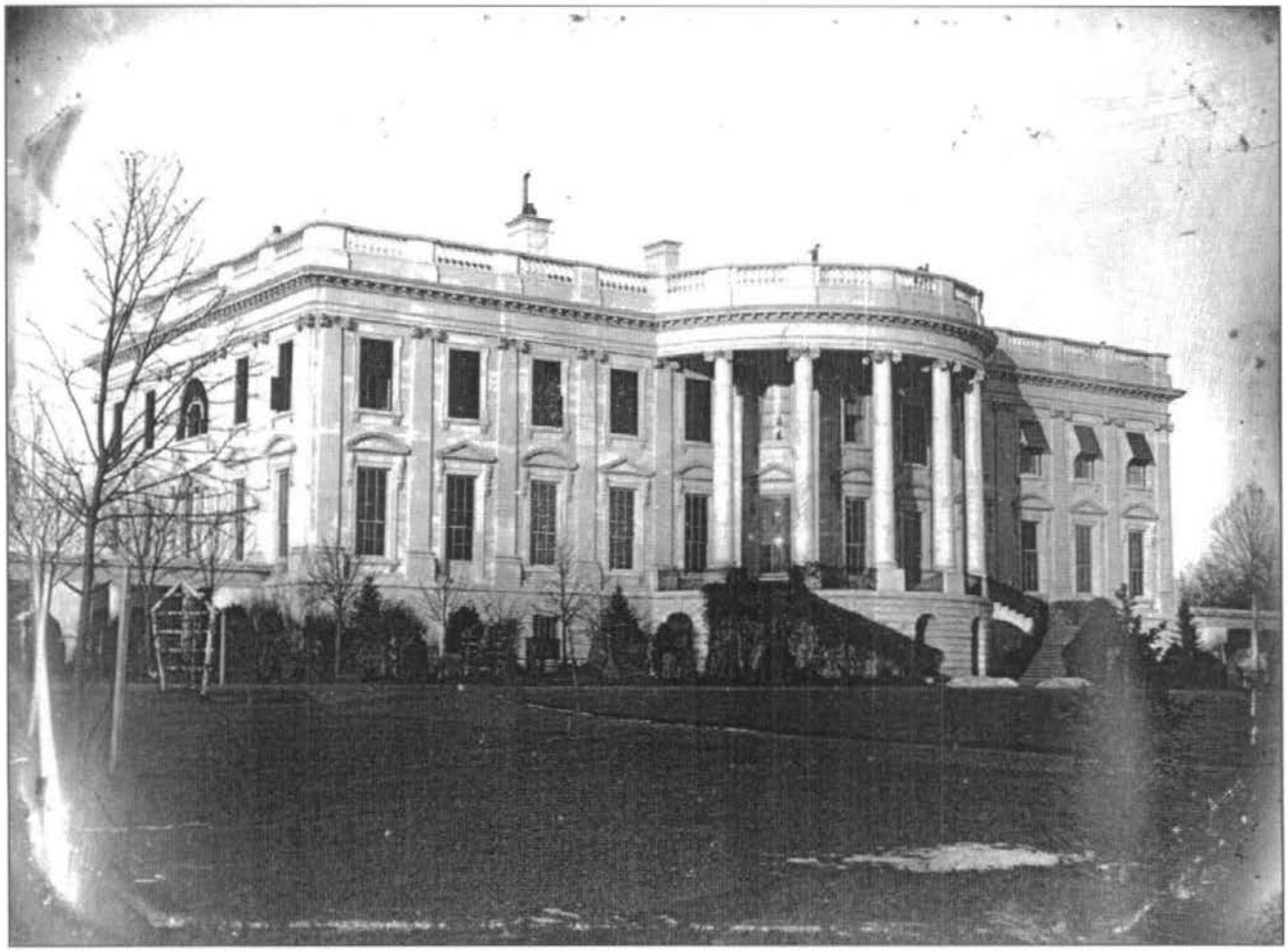

Figure 2-4: *View from the Southwest of the President's House*. John Plumbe (daguerreotype), 1846. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

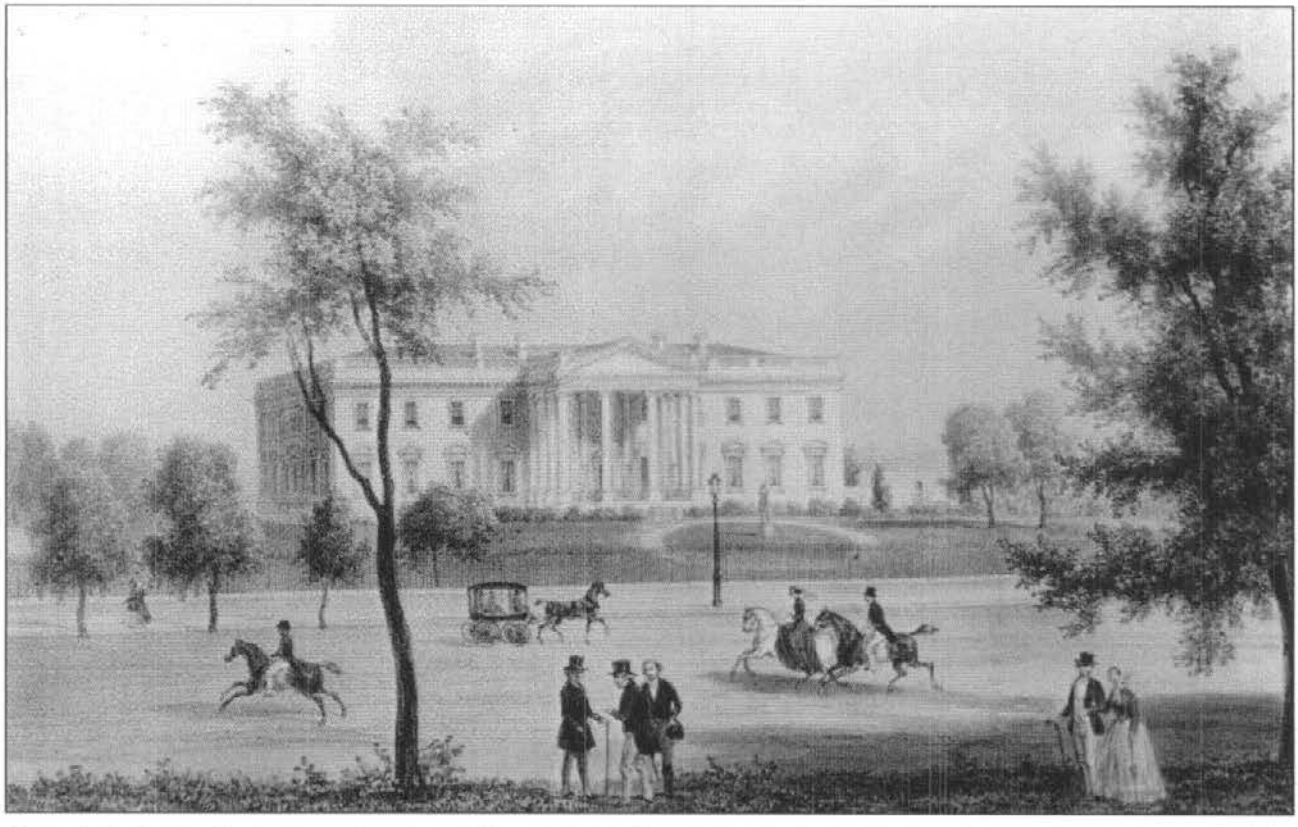

Figure 2-5: *The President's House*. Augustus Kollner (lithograph), 1848. Drawn from Nature by Augustus Kollner; lithograph by Isidore-Laurent Deroy; published by Goupil, Vibert and Company, New York.

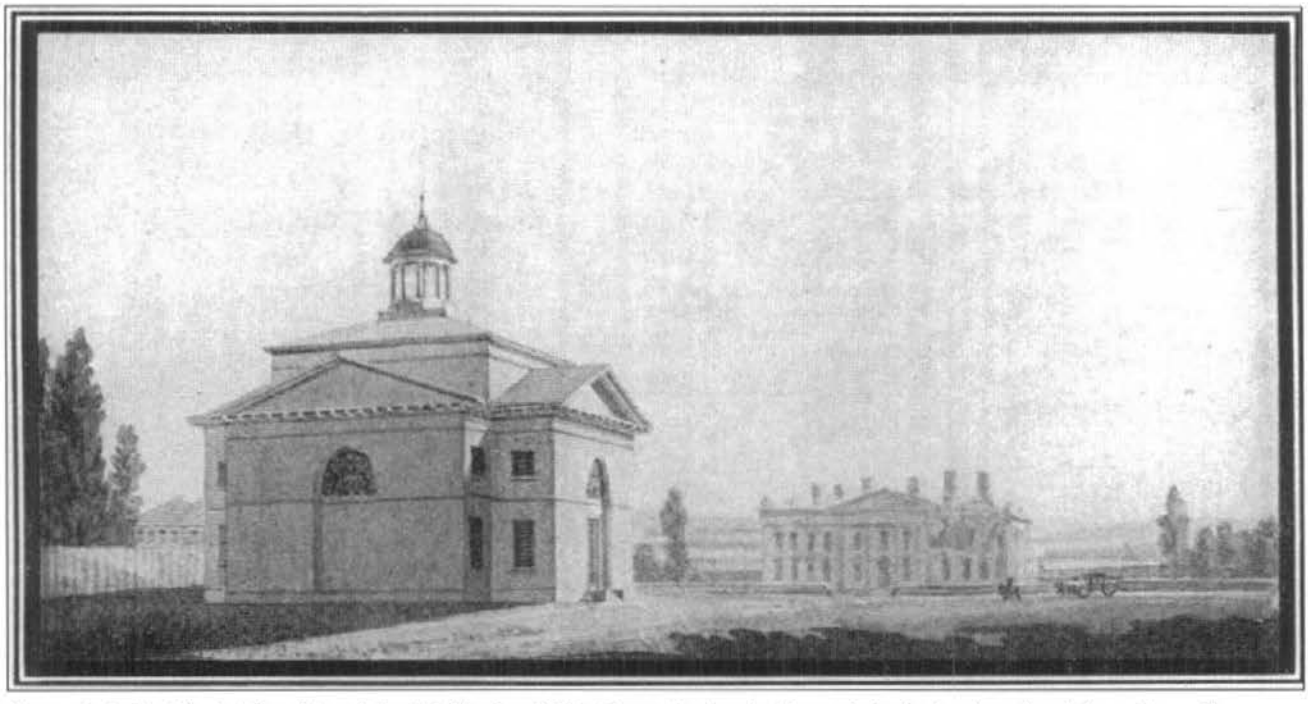

Figure 2-6: *St. John's [Church] and the Neighboring White House*. Benjamin Henry Latrobe (watercolor, ink, and pencil on paper), 1816. St. John's Church, Washington, D.C.

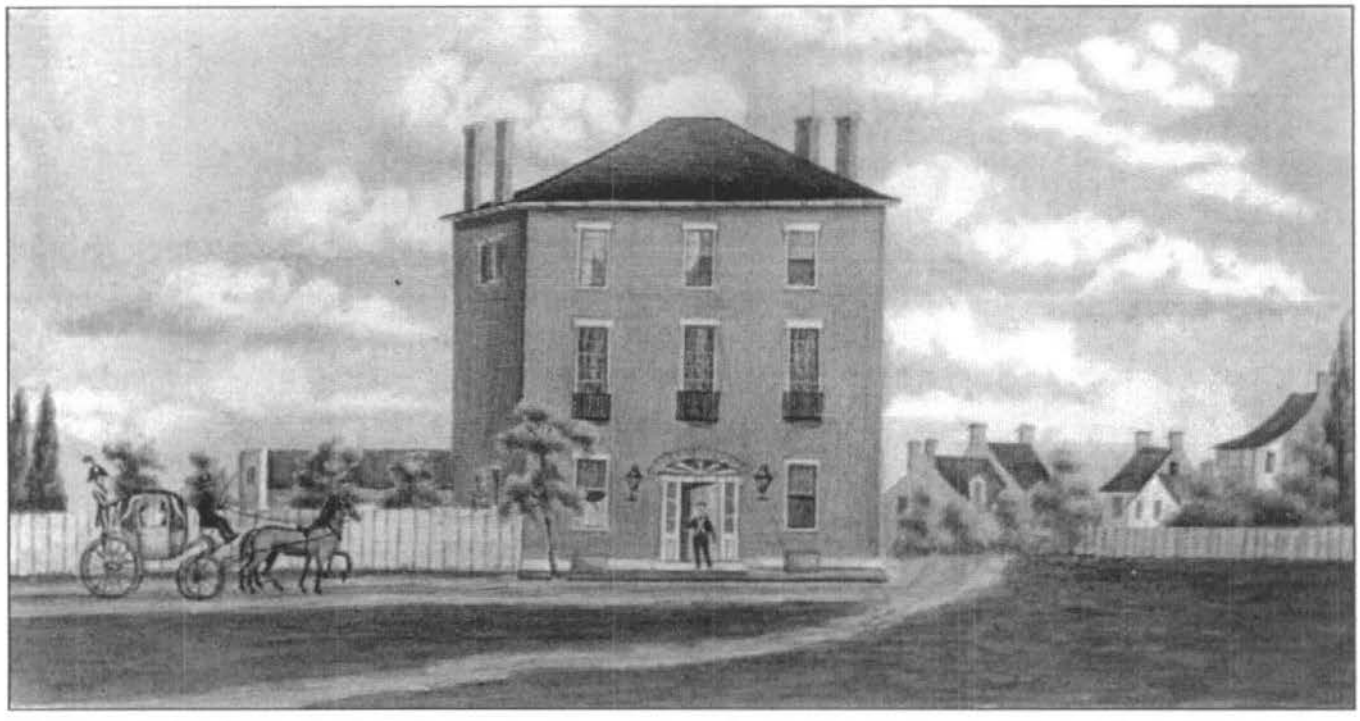

Figure 2-7: *Maison du Commodore Stephen Decatur* (*House of Commodore Decatur*). Madame E. Vaile (painting), 1822. Decatur House Collection.

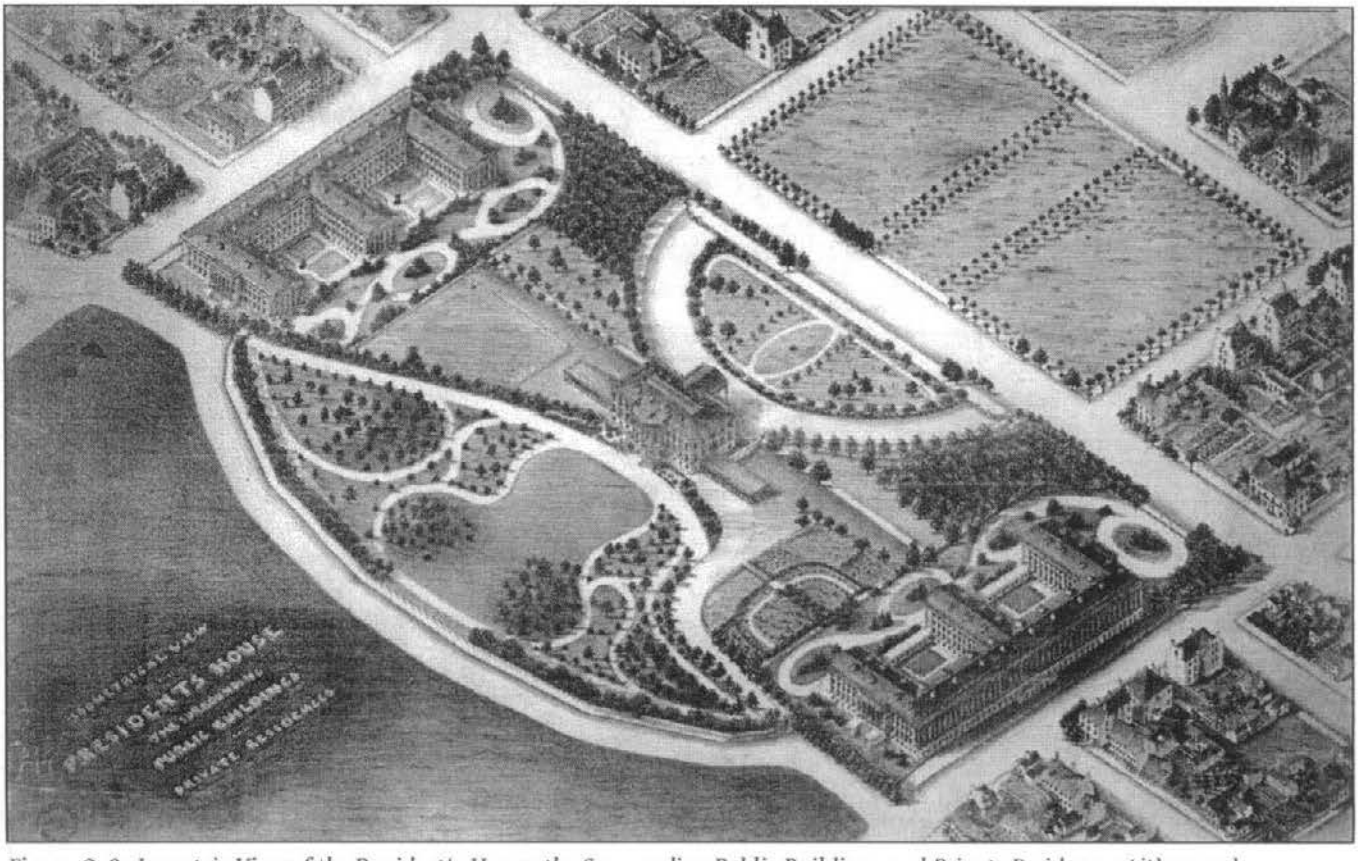

Figure 2-8: *Isometric View of the President's House, the Surrounding Public Buildings and Private Residences*. Lithograph, ca.1845-1850. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

Figure 2-9: *U. S. Treasury*. Lithograph, ca. 1863-67. Printed by Sachse & Co., Baltimore; published by C. Bohn, Washington. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Chapter 3. President's Park and the Influence of the Downing Plan: 1851–1865

The years between 1851 and 1865 were difficult for the United States. The impending secession crisis and the eventual conflict between the North and South greatly affected the outlook of the nation and the evolution of the landscape at President's Park. The important role that presidents had played up to that time in influencing the evolution of the landscape diminished. However, the health, privacy, and safety of the president and the first family continued to be an important consideration in making modifications to the grounds. The most substantive landscape changes involved fencing and massive plantings. Alterations and additions, such as the new stables or the conservatory, were relatively small.[1]

Andrew Jackson Downing's plan for the public grounds of Washington prepared in 1851 greatly influenced development during this period. It was the first plan for a large-scale public park in the United States. His untimely death precluded him from developing a detailed plan for the White House grounds, but some of his ideas are still evident in Lafayette Square, and to a lesser degree in the Ellipse. In general, his landscape designs have not fared well, and Lafayette Park and the Ellipse, both of which have since been redesigned, may be the only Downing landscapes that survive in any condition.[2] It has been argued that Downing's picturesque plan for Washington was inappropriate and revealed a profound misunderstanding of the ideas of L'Enfant for the capital.

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1. The commissioners of public buildings in these years were Ignatius Mudd (1849–51), William Easby (1851–53), Benjamin B. French (1853–55), John B. Blake (1855–61), William S. Wood (1861), and Benjamin B. French (1861–67). Dowd, *Records of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, 30.

2. Claims are frequently made that Springside, the Matthew Vassar estate in Poughkeepsie, New York, was designed by Downing, but there is no evidence that Downing did anything more than make suggestions to Vassar. (Information courtesy of George Tatum.) See Harvey K. Flad, "Matthew Vassar's Springside: 'The Hand of Art, when Guided by Taste,'" in *Prophet with Honor: The Career of Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815–1852*, ed. George B. Tatum and Elisabeth Blair MacDougall (Washington, DC: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia and Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1989), 219–57. For Downing's landscape commissions and their relationship to the evolution of English and American landscape design, see Tatum, "Nature's Gardener," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 43–80.

In his writings Downing acknowledged the need to provide privacy for the first family. Although he allowed for a degree of public use of the White House grounds, he proposed that the gate allowing access to the current upper south lawn be open only during reception days, making the "President's grounds on this side of the house private at other times." He also recommended plantings to afford more privacy for the president's family. Downing was a strong advocate of the public use of President's Park. He planned for the Ellipse to be used for public festivities and celebrations, and his design provided pedestrians the opportunity to enjoy an "agreeable shaded promenade."

However, the grounds of the President's House continued to be open to the public on Saturday evenings in the summer, with the Marine Band providing musical entertainment. Modifications to the grounds were rather limited during this period. A fence and two gates were installed on the north grounds, probably in the early 1850s.

Commemoration began in earnest with the unveiling of the Andrew Jackson statue in Lafayette Square in 1853. The square was laid out according to a Downing plan that apparently has not survived. In 1853 gaslights were also installed in the square. During this period the Ellipse underwent extensive development, and by the 1850s was planted following Downing's design. During the Civil War the site was occupied by barracks and used to graze cattle. Presumably, most of the landscape improvements were destroyed.

Substantial progress was also made on the construction of the Treasury Building, and although it would not be completed until 1869, landscape plans were made public.

The Downing Plan

A Biography of Andrew Jackson Downing

Andrew Jackson Downing was born on October 31, 1815, the fifth and last child of Samuel Downing, owner of a nursery in Newburgh, New York, and Eunice Bridge Downing. As a youth, Downing studied at an academy in nearby Montgomery, New York, and then joined his brother Charles in the nursery that their father had bequeathed to them. After his marriage to Caroline De Wint in 1838,

Downing built his own home in Newburgh and established a model garden on the grounds.[3]

Downing's Career

There were three different aspects to Downing's career: the nursery business; horticultural, landscape and architectural writing; and landscape design. Although he took these activities up more or less in succession, each one grew logically out of the preceding interest, and frequently they overlapped. Writing was perhaps the most consistent activity in his career. Except for the garden of his own Newburgh house, most of Downing's known landscape designs date from the last part of his brief life. Earlier commissions tend to be documented only through brief references.[4]

In summer 1850 Downing left for England, hoping to find someone with professional experience with whom to set up an architectural office in Newburgh. Downing found his partner, the 26-year-old architect Calvert Vaux, in London. While Vaux's role was as an architect, the new firm also received important landscape commissions. In February 1852 Downing took on a second English architect,

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3. In 1837 Downing continued the nursery under the name of A. J. Downing and Co., although his brother seems to have retained some sort of an interest in the business. In 1839 Andrew Saul, a native of County Cork, Ireland, became manager of the nursery. George B. Tatum, "Introduction: The Downing Decade (1841–1852)," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 1–20. See also George William Curtis, "Memoir to A. J. Downing," in Andrew Jackson Downing, *Rural Essays* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1974, reprint of 1853 edition), xi–xxiii. John A. Saul, "Tree Culture; or a Sketch of Nurseries in the District of Columbia," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, 10 (1907): 51–62; George B. Tatum, "Nature's Gardener," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 44, note 5.

4. At 17 Downing began writing articles for contemporary farming and gardening periodicals, such as *The New-York Farmer* and Hovey's *Magazine of Horticulture*; Tatum, "The Downing Decade," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 20–2. Downing's first book, and his most influential in terms of landscape gardening and design, was published in 1841: *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841). His first architectural book, which featured many of the designs of his friend the architect Alexander J. Davis, was *Cottage Residences* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1842). Downing continued to write strictly horticultural books and articles; for example, his book *The Fruits and Fruit Trees of America* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1845). In 1846 Downing became the editor of a new monthly, *The Horticulturist*, and about this time he sold the nursery to Andrew Saul and two others. Downing's editorials in this publication were as influential as his books. He also took the trouble to maintain an active correspondence with his readers. Downing's personal charm, attested to by all who knew him, seemed to communicate itself through his writing. Tatum, "The Downing Decade," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 24–36, 34, note 70. Andrew Saul became the sole proprietor of Highland Nurseries in 1859 and ran the business until his death in 1862. On April 14, 1863, the nursery stock was sold at auction and the land subdivided into lots.

Frederick Withers, and enlarged his home/office to accommodate his "Bureau of Architecture."[5]

Downing's Work in Washington

One of Downing's landscape clients was banker and art collector William Wilson Corcoran of Washington, D.C.[6] Through Corcoran Downing was asked to do the plan for the public grounds of Washington.[7] By November 1850 Downing had gained the support of Commissioner of Public Buildings Ignatius Mudd, as a letter from Joseph Henry, first secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, indicates:

> The same evening I called a meeting at the office of the mayor, of Mr. Mudd the commissioner of public buildings, Mr. Corcoran and the Mayor. After some conversation it was at length concluded to send for some competent landscape gardener to give a general plan of the improvements to be made and on the suggestion of the Mayor it was resolved to request the President to direct that Mr. Downing from Newbourgh [sic] be requested to examine the grounds and report a plan of improvement. We (the Mayor, Mr. Mudd and myself) called next day on the President, pre-

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5. Downing visited many English parks and gardens, such as the Royal Horticultural Gardens at Kew near London and the Duke of Devonshire's estate, Chatsworth, in Derbyshire, about which he contributed interesting articles to *The Horticulturist*, 36–39. Tatum, "The Downing Decade," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 36–39. See also Curtis, "Memoir," xlvii. For Vaux, see William Alex and George B. Tatum, *Calvert Vaux: Architect and Planner* (New York: Ink, Inc., 1994).

6. In 1849 Corcoran had Downing landscape the grounds of his house (now demolished) at 1611 H Street on the north side of Lafayette Square, which James Renwick was in the process of renovating and enlarging. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 30–31; see also James M. Goode, *Capital Losses: A Cultural History of Washington's Destroyed Buildings* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979), 34–56. For Corcoran, see *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1930, s.v. "Corcoran, William Wilson."

7. Corcoran undoubtedly made overtures on the subject, but as a letter written by Calvert Vaux shortly after Downing's death makes clear, Downing did not want to promote himself actively for the project. "He was solicited by the Government to undertake the arrangement and superintendence of the Park at Washington. He refused to take any steps to push himself forward when the matter was talked about and it was not till he received an official request that he took the matter up. His arrangements once made however, he devoted himself with immediate energy to the work," Vaux to Marshall P. Wilder, Aug. 18, 1852, J. Jay Smith Papers, Library Company of Philadelphia, now on permanent deposit at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Wilder, a prominent Boston horticulturist, had asked various people for information on Downing for a eulogy to be read before the Pomological Congress. Information courtesy of George B. Tatum.

> sented the matter and received the sanction for writing to Mr. Downing.[8]

There was apparently some delay in contacting Downing, but on November 25, 1850, he made his first visit to Washington, which was also recorded in Mudd's annual report for 1850. After referring to his report for the previous year and saying that "little care or attention had been previously bestowed" upon the public grounds of Washington, Mudd continued:

> At the suggestion, however, of several prominent gentlemen of this city, and by the approbation of the President, I invited A. J. Downing, esq., of Newburg [sic], New York, to examine and inspect the public grounds with reference to their more decorative and artistic improvement. Mr. Downing, who is a gentleman of the first accomplishments in the art of landscape formations, readily accepted the invitation, and upon a recent visit to Washington for that purpose, made a thorough examination of their surface, soil, and features. From his own observation, and the plats and profiles furnished him from this office, he will be able to submit at a convenient period a general plan for improving the public grounds, which I shall probably communicate to Congress.[9]

On March 19, 1851, Henry wrote to President Fillmore, strongly supporting Downing and his plan and urging his appointment as superintendent. He went on to say:

> It is a work which requires the direction of a person, who has been as it were educated to the business. The preparation of the soil, the adoption of a system of drainage, the procuring and planting the proper trees, all requires a peculiar skill and experience which no person in the country possesses in a higher degree than Mr. Downing.[10]

By March 27, 1851, Congress formally authorized President Fillmore to engage Downing as "rural architect" to landscape the entire area from the Capitol to the President's House.[11] Initially he was offered a

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8. Joseph Henry, "Locked Book," entry of Nov. 25, 1850, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7001, Box 39, M151 023323. (Transcription courtesy of the Henry Papers, Smithsonian Institution.)

9. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1850,* Ex. Doc. no. 47, Feb. 6, 1851, 9.

10. Henry to Fillmore, Mar. 19, 1851, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY. Copy courtesy of the Henry Papers, Smithsonian Institution.

11. William Easby to Downing, Mar. 27, 1851, microcopy 371, Letters Sent, Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1791–1867, RG 42, National Archives (NA). Hereafter cited as "Commissioner's Letters Sent."

yearly "salary" (actually a commission, figured on a yearly basis and paid monthly) of $1,500, but it was ultimately raised to $2,500. Downing's professional responsibilities for the Washington public grounds were to provide the design and be involved in a general supervisory capacity. He was not required to live in Washington, but he came down for several days each month at times of the year when the work was actively progressing.[12] Superintending the work in Washington was William D. Brackenridge, a native of Scotland who came to the United States about 1837.[13] To assist him in the Washington project, Downing sent to England for John Saul, the brother of Andrew Saul, who at that time was manager and part owner of Downing's former nursery in Newburgh.[14]

Downing's experience in the Washington project was not entirely positive. Some members of Congress and the general public seemed under the impression that he had been hired as a full-time employee, but because he spent little time in Washington, they began to question his employment. The problem escalated after William Easby replaced Mudd as commissioner. In June 1851 an unidentified person went directly to President Fillmore and complained that the last time Downing had been in Washington he stayed only long enough to

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12. Mr. Jones of Tennessee, in debate of Mar. 24, 1852, *The Congressional Globe: New Series, Containing the Debates, Proceedings and Laws of the First Session of the Thirty-second Congress*, vol. 24, part 2 (Washington, DC: John C. Rives, 1852), 853.

13. In 1838 Brackenridge was appointed the botanist of the government-sponsored Wilkes expedition, which traveled to the south Pacific under the direction of Capt. Charles Wilkes between 1838 and 1842. In 1850 Brackenridge was put in charge of the National Botanic Garden. Tatum, "The Downing Decade," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 39; *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1929, s.v. "Brackenridge, William D."; W. D. Brackenridge "Editorial Notes," *The Gardeners' Monthly and Horticulturist* 26, no. 312, (Dec. 1884): 375–76. Brackenridge moved to Baltimore in 1855 and became a nurseryman and landscape designer, laying out the grounds of many of the estates around the city. For Robert Buist's nursery, which supplied some plants for President's Park in the 1850s, see U. P. Hedrick, *A History of Horticulture in America to 1860, With an Addendum of Books Published from 1861–1920* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1988).

14. John Saul was born at Carey's Wood, County Cork, Ireland, on December 25, 1819, and died in Washington, D.C., on May 11, 1897. His early professional experience was in England and Wales. Between 1836 and 1841 he assisted his father in the gardens of East Cowes Castle, on the Isle of Wight. The castle had been built in 1798 by architect John Nash as his own residence, and its original landscape design is thought to have been the work of Humphrey Repton, Nash's frequent partner. Saul's next position was as foreman at Llantarnam Abbey in Gwent, Wales, where he stayed for two years. In 1843 Saul went to Durdham Down Nurseries in Bristol, where he had been briefly employed earlier. He was made manager in 1844 and remained there until February 1851, when he was summoned by Downing; Saul, "Tree Culture," 53; Vicky Basford, *Historic Parks and Gardens of the Isle of Wight* (Isle of Wight: Isle of Wight County Council, Cultural Services Dept., 1989), 54; Elisabeth Whittle, *The Historic Gardens of Wales, An Introduction to Parks and Gardens in the History of Wales* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1992), 65, 70.

draw his pay.[15] Henry reported the incident to Downing, who responded forcefully that he did not want interference from the commissioner and that the work was going well.[16]

On June 12, 1851, Downing wrote to President Fillmore. He explained that he had every confidence in his foreman to do the work correctly and that the time he was spending in Washington was sufficient until planting and other work would require more of his time and personal attention.[17] A few weeks later Downing and Henry met again with President Fillmore to settle the matter as to who had the jurisdiction of the grounds — Downing or Easby. Henry reported that,

> After much difficulty and perseverance Mr. Downing was called to give a plan of the grounds and afterwards to take charge of the improvement. . . . The city is susceptible of great improvement, and all the squares at the intersection of streets should be laid out tastefully, and surrounded with iron railing. This can be best effected under the direction of Mr. Downing. If some one of his character is not employed, the whole will be badly accomplished — one superintendent will make it his business to undo what the other has done, and so on. I am to see the Secretary of the Interior on the subject.[18]

A few days later Henry noted that improvements of the public grounds were progressing and that Downing was "to take charge of the small open spaces, formed by the intersection of streets and avenues, and is to enclose them with iron fences, and plant them with trees."[19] Apparently, steps were taken in this direction. In addition to the Mall, the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution, the grounds surrounding the President's House, the grounds south of the President's House, and Lafayette Square, Franklin Square, and an

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15. Henry to Corcoran, Corcoran Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division. Copy courtesy of the Henry Papers.

16. Downing to Henry, June [14?], 1851, Smithsonian Archives, record unit 7001, M101 00 9951. Copy courtesy of the Henry Papers.

17. Downing to Fillmore, June 12, 1851, microcopy 371, Letters Received, Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1791–1867, RG 42; hereafter cited as "Commissioner's Letters Received."

18. Henry, Locked Book Diary, entry of July 1, 1851, record unit 7001, box 39, M151 023325, Smithsonian Archives. Transcription courtesy of the Henry Papers.

19. Henry to Alexander Dallas Bache, July 10, 1851, Locked Book Diary, record unit 7001, box no. 39, M151 023326, Smithsonian Archives. Transcription courtesy of the Henry Papers.

unidentified triangular intersection on Pennsylvania Avenue became Downing projects.[20]

On July 28, 1852, Downing set out for one of his regular visits. The first leg of his journey was a steamboat trip down the Hudson River on the *Henry Clay*. The *Henry Clay* began racing with its rival, the *Armenia;* the *Henry Clay*'s overheated engine room caught fire. Seventy lives were lost, including that of A. J. Downing.[21]

Specific Plans

Downing had been asked to develop a plan for the land between the Capitol and the President's House, an area that had been set aside as a public space in the L'Enfant/Ellicott plan. The interior layout for the land between the Capitol and the Mall had never been clearly worked out, and the President's Park section was very much in the process of evolution. Downing's design for the city's public grounds was the first plan for a large-scale public park in the United States.

The original Downing drawing is in poor condition and is best known from an 1867 copy shown in figure 3-1; a detail of the plan for President's Park is shown in figure 3-2. As is readily apparent, the Ellipse is very fully designed, even though at this point it is a true circle and not an ellipse. The grounds around the White House are indicated only in a schematic way, and Lafayette Park appears as an empty rectangle. Accompanying the plan and report was a sketch of a new arch from Pennsylvania Avenue and also a sketch for a proposed suspension bridge over the Tiber Canal.[22]

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20. "Disbursement: Franklin Square, A. J. Downing's roll for Superintendent," Oct. 4, 1851; "Disbursement: Triangular Space on Pennsylvania Avenue, to Corcoran and Riggs for advances made by them on bills approved by A. J. Downing, including payment to Robert Wood for Iron Railing, N. Acker, granite coping, etc., totaling $5,019.49," Sept. 16, 1852. Both entries are found in Daybook 13, 1851–53, 67-Cashbooks, Financial Records 1817–83, RG 42, NA. See also Easby to Downing, Aug. 25, 1851, Commissioner's Letters Sent. The Franklin Square project is also referred to in the congressional debate of March 24, 1852, *The Congressional Globe, New Series, Proceedings and Laws of the First Session of the Thirty-second Congress*, vol. 24, part 2 (1852), p. 854.

21. Tatum, "The Downing Decade," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 39–41; John Clagett Proctor, "The Tragic Death of Andrew Jackson Downing and the Monument to His Memory," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, 27 (1925): 248–61. Curtis in his "Memoir" also describes Downing's death (*Rural Essays*, liii–lvii). See also the account of the *Henry Clay* in *The New-York Daily Times*, July 29–August 4, 1852.

22. The sketches for the arch and suspension bridge are illustrated in David Schuyler, "The Washington Park and Downing's Legacy to Public Landscape Design," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 299. See also Seale, *The President's House*, 292–301.

Downing's plan for the space between the Capitol and the White House was ambitious. He divided the site into six areas, the first of which was the President's Park or parade to the south of the White House. For the parade, Downing wrote:

> This comprises the open Ground directly south of the President's House. Adopting suggestions made me at Washington I propose to keep the large area of this ground open, as a place for parade or military reviews, as well as public festivities or celebrations. A circular carriage drive 40 feet wide and nearly a mile long shaded by an avenue of Elms surrounds the Parade, while a series of foot-paths, 10 feet wide, winding through thickets of trees and shrubs, forms the boundary to this park, and would make an agreeable shaded promenade for pedestrians.
>
> I propose to take down the present small stone gates to the President's Grounds, and place at the end of Pennsylvania Avenue a large and handsome Archway of marble, which shall not only form the main entrance from the City to the whole of the proposed new Grounds, but shall also be one of the principal Architectural ornaments of the city; inside of this arch-way is a semicircle with three gates commanding three carriage roads. Two of these lead into the parade or President's Park, the third is a private carriage-drive into the President's grounds; this gate should be protected by a Porter's lodge and should only be open on reception days, thus making the President's grounds on this side of the house private at all other times. I propose to have the exit of guests on reception days on this side of the house, the entrance, as now, on the other side.[23]

Downing explained the reason for the lack of detail in the White House grounds part of the plan:

> I have not shown on the plan several ideas that have occurred to me for increasing the beauty and seclusion of the President's grounds, because I would first wish to submit them for the approval of the President.[24]

Initially President Fillmore authorized the adoption of Downing's plan only for a portion of the Mall area west of Seventh Street. In the spring of 1851 work began on grading, draining, and clearing the area near the Smithsonian. Downing's death in August 1852 dealt a

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23. A. J. Downing, "Explanatory Notes to his Excellency the President of the United States to accompany the plan for Improving the Public Grounds of Washington," 1851, reprinted in Wilcomb E. Washburn, "Vision of Life for the Mall," *American Institute of Architects Journal* (March 1967).

24. Downing, "Explanatory Notes."

severe blow to the project, although Brackenridge and Saul continued with construction and planting until the appropriation approved by Congress was exhausted. President Fillmore approved the design and authorized an appropriation for the eastern part of the grounds in February 1852.[25] A detail of a map of Washington drawn by surveyor James Keily in 1851 is illustrated in figure 3-3. This appears to reflect the Downing plan, since the Ellipse and grounds of President's House are shown as he proposed them.

The design concept behind Downing's plan for the Mall, although never fully realized, persisted as an ideal and served as a model for a national public ground incorporating a museum of horticulture.[26] Downing's picturesque plan for Washington, at least the Mall portion of it, has frequently been criticized as being "grossly inappropriate for this unique site and indicates Downing's complete misunderstanding of the imperatives so clearly dictated by the L'Enfant plan."[27]

The Grounds of the White House

The portion of Downing's plan that deals with the grounds of the President's House (figure 3-2) is not very detailed. Among the (presumably) existing features are two clumps of trees at the location of the Jefferson mounds. From a debate that was held in Congress shortly after his death to discuss compensation to his widow, it is clear that Downing produced many plans, specifications, and drawings for the project, but all of them have disappeared.[28] Since the detailed drawings were lost, and since many of his ideas for the

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25. Schuyler, "The Washington Park," 301–3. See also NPS, *Administrative History*, 94.

26. Therese O'Malley, "'A Public Museum of Trees: Mid-Nineteenth Century Plans for the Mall," in *The Mall in Washington, 1791–1991*, ed. Richard Longstreth (Washington, DC: The National Gallery of Art, 1991), 66–74; Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 53. Since Downing (and later Brackenridge) was the government's agent for the work done under this plan for the Mall and President's Park, the commissioner of public buildings never reported in detail on the execution of the Downing projects, explaining that the agent would file independent reports. Except in the form of correspondence, no such reports appear to have been filed by either Downing or Brackenridge. Brackenridge resigned by 1854.

27. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 53.

28. *The Congressional Globe: The First Session of the Thirty-second Congress*, vol. 24, part 3 (Washington, DC: John C. Rives, 1852), 2374–75. Brackenridge sent a letter to Congress attesting that the drawings, etc., most of which were apparently still in Newburgh and not in Washington, were worth $5,000 above and beyond Downing's salary, since it would cost at least that much to obtain new drawings. The government eventually paid Mrs. Downing the $675 in arrears on her husband's salary, but there is no evidence that they paid anything further. Whether the drawings remained in Newburgh or were sent by Vaux or Mrs. Downing to Washington, no trace of them has ever turned up.

grounds of President's House were not incorporated into the 1851 plan, it is difficult to analyze what Downing may have intended for this part of the plan. It is possible, however, that he might have eliminated much of the landscape that existed in 1851. The new marble archway he envisioned at the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance on the east and the drives connected with it would have altered the southern part of the grounds.[29]

In a letter written to a friend in June 1851 Downing described how he found the state of the grounds:

> The Public grounds already planted about the Capitol & Pres[iden]ts House show a firm and luxuriant growth of trees, but it would entertain you to see how far behind us at the North they are here in all matters of horticulture. The President has a gardener at 1200 a year (a stupid Irishman) and the government pays about 10,000 a year to men employed as gardeners, and yet there is no fruit of any kind for the President's table, no greenhouse, and only a miserable kitchen garden. Trees & grass are the sole luxuries of the gardening art known by our chief magistrate, be he whig or democrat.[30]

Although Downing's criticisms focus on the shortcomings of the kitchen garden, his account differs significantly from a description of the south side of the President's House given in an 1850 guidebook:

> This front overlooks the promenade garden, which is beautifully ornamented with three artificial hillocks, forest trees, garden shrubbery, various flowers, blooming from early spring to late fall, and serpentine walks. The grounds of this mansion are surrounded, on the north by an iron fence; on the west, by the War and Navy Departments; on the south, by a sexangular stonewall; and on the east, by the Treasury and State Departments.[31]

In June 1851 William Easby, the new commissioner of public buildings, purchased "wire" (iron) fencing, on Downing's recommendation, "to inclose [sic] the border around the President's House." It is probable that a portion of this fence was used to line the southern edge (outer side) of the semicircular carriageway on the north

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29. Seale, *The President's House*, 294–301.

30. Downing added, "Foreign grapes are a thing unknown in this meridian." Downing had persuaded Corcoran to put up two vineries, and he also wanted the president to have fresh fruit all season. Downing to Roswell Colt, June 27, 1851, Roswell Colt Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

31. "Three" artificial hillocks must be a misprint or an error. This guidebook is not illustrated; Streeter, *The Stranger's Guide*, 20–21.

grounds. This fence was higher and built of lighter material than the anthemion railing installed in 1829, which lined the northern edge (inner side) of the semicircular carriageway. Two gates facing east and west (the enclosed northeast and northwest portion of the north grounds) were placed where the anthemion railing at the parapet met the lighter and higher fence that edged the carriageway.[32] The gates controlled access to the grounds of the Executive Mansion.

In 1851–52 work was done on the grounds of the President's House, as well as on the Mall. In 1851 Easby reported that the stables had been repaired, a new cow barn built, and new drains and paving put in around the stables and stable yard. In addition, a new watch house was built, new iron gates were installed at the northeast and northwest entrances, and roads were paved and repaired.[33] In 1852 iron settees (portable benches normally taken in for the winter) were purchased for the President's House as well as the Capitol.[34]

In January 1852 John Ousley was discharged, presumably at Downing's request.[35] Asked to recommend a replacement as a "vegetable gardener," Downing chose John Watt, a market gardener whom Downing had employed for a short time and whom John Saul, his foreman, had known for years.[36]

In 1853, just before Franklin Pierce's inauguration, Congress appropriated an additional $12,000 for the "grounds south" of the President's House. In June 1853 President Pierce appointed Benjamin B. French, a New Hampshire native, to be the commissioner of public buildings. During the Pierce administration French supplied the

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32. Downing to Easby, June 4, 1851, and June 5, 1851, Commissioner's Letters Received. Correspondence with the same firm in 1853 about the same "pattern" of fencing mentions pickets and ornaments, so it could not have been literally wire. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 17, 1852, Ex. Doc. no. 79, 16–17.

33. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 17, 1852, Ex. Doc. no. 79, 16–17.

34. The settees were purchased from James Beebe & Co. of New York City. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 12, 1853, 6; James Beebe & Co. to Richard H. Staunton (chairman, Public Buildings and Grounds), Aug. [?], 1852; Alexander H. H. Stuart (sec. of the int.) to Easby, Oct. 14, 1852; both in Commissioner's Letters Received. Easby to James Beebe & Co., Oct. 18, 1852, Commissioner's Letters Sent. The Beebe company sent a "pattern" of the kind of settee the company recommended, which Easby ordered, but this is not included with the letters. The Beebe & Co. catalogues could probably be located in some repository in New York City, such as the Avery Library at Columbia University. The circular settees, which wrapped around a tree trunk, may not have been a type that was taken inside in the winter.

35. Easby to Ousley, Jan. 19, 1852, Commissioner's Letters Sent.

36. Downing to Fillmore, Jan. 7, 1852, *Millard Fillmore Papers*, ed. Frank H. Severance, Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society, vol. 10–11 (Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo Historical Society, 1907); Easby to Watt, Jan. 31, 1852, Commissioner's Letters Sent.

White House with orchard trees, including 12 pear trees and 11 apple trees, from his own grounds. It is difficult to tell how much of the $12,000 was actually used for the grounds and greenhouses of the President's House. Later records suggest that most of it went for the Ellipse. John Watt obtained approval from President Pierce to overhaul the gardens, but Downing's plan may have been disregarded in favor of a general sprucing up of the existing arrangement. Watt demolished the old orangery down to its brick walls in order to expand it into a greenhouse, which was constructed between May and August or September 1853. The original orangery remained as the centerpiece of the new structure and was used as a private solarium for the president; this greenhouse stood for only four years.[37]

In the flower garden a new picket fence was put up and gravel was spread on the walks. The old arbor was rebuilt and painted white, and as many as possible of the old roses growing on it were preserved. Benches under the arbor were painted dark green. In 1853 Watt ordered several varieties of camellias, as well as star jasmines and lemon and orange trees, undoubtedly for the orangery.[38] That same year 500 additional feet of iron railing was ordered, of the same type as recommended by Downing, but it is unclear where it was placed.[39]

During the Pierce and Buchanan administrations the grounds at the President's House continued to be open to the public on Saturday evenings in the summer, with musical entertainment by the Marine Band. These events were extremely popular and drew large crowds.[40]

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37. Seale, *The President's House*, 310–13, notes 9–15; NPS, "The President's Garden," 29, plates 42 and 43. French's first annual report lists an expenditure of $7,848.24 to complete the improvements on the square south of the President's House, as well as an expenditure of $3,499.23 for annual repairs of the President's House, an item that usually included maintenance to the grounds. Salaries of the public gardener (Maher) and of laborers were additional items, as were materials such as tools, trees, and manure. See *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Jan. 30, 1854, House of Representatives misc. doc. 11, 23. The two 1857 photographs in "The President's Garden" show the first greenhouse in the background, partly hidden by the west wing of the Treasury, then under construction.

38. Some of these were supplied by the Philadelphia nursery of Peter MacKenzie; Seale, *The President's House*, 313–14, note 16.

39. It is difficult to see how Watt could have stocked so much plant material so quickly, including hundreds of trees mature enough to set out in parks. One possibility is that Saul may have worked out some sort of an arrangement with his brother, Andrew, then part owner of Downing's former nursery, so some of this plant material may actually have come from Newburgh, New York. Easby to J. B. Wickersham, Apr. 23, 1853, Commissioner's Letters Sent.

40. Kirk, *Music at the White House*, 72, 74.

On January 2, 1854, Sessford reported that the grounds south of the President's House (possibly referring to the Ellipse rather than the president's grounds) had been further improved.[41]

After leaving as superintendent of construction and planting, John Saul established a nursery that became a major supplier for President's Park and other government grounds. Another nursery supplied flowering shrubs and annuals, including camellias, azaleas, begonias, china pinks, and sweet alyssum, for the president's garden.[42] In spring 1854 fruit trees, camellias, dogwood, quince, and redbuds all bloomed.[43] An 1857 photograph of the southwest grounds shows trees and several trellises (figure 3-4). The Jackson magnolias are not evident.[44] One of the earliest known photographs of the north side of the White House, taken before 1857, shows the Jefferson statue and its encircling path (figure 3-5). A later photograph from the same period but taken during a different season reveals substantial changes in the vegetation planted on the north lawn. The evergreens paralleling the anthemion railing are gone, and two substantial trees have been added, framing the north portico (figure 3-6).[45]

In October 1854, Benjamin French prepared a plan to realign the original wall and carriage road south of the President's House "agreeably to the plan of A. J. Downing, for improvement of said road and grounds." The new alignment would extend the southern boundary of the White House grounds by about 15 feet.[46]

Work resumed on the Treasury Building in 1855. Earth removed during excavation appears to have been used to create a mound just to the south of the Jefferson wall, in preparation for removing the

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41. "The Sessford Annals," 362.

42. "Disbursement, President's House, John Wall for John Saul for trees of various kinds for the use of the President's Garden from October 27, 1853 to March 1854, $198.50," June 10, 1854; "Disbursement, President's Garden, to Robert (Halliday?), camellias, etc., Oct. 28, 1854." Both items are in Daybook 14, 67-Cashbooks, RG 42, NA. See also NPS, "The President's Garden," 29.

43. Seale, *The President's House*, 324–326, note 32.

44. Another print from the same point of view and dated to the 1850s appears to show the grounds in full summer, with much more elaborate planting than can be seen in figure 3-4, with many plants in tubs, etc.; OC/WH.

45. These two trees had not been planted and the evergreens were still along the anthemion fence ca. 1853 (see figure 3-13).

46. NPS, "The President's Garden," 29.

wall and the southern extension of the grounds.[47] By October 1855 the Jefferson wall still had not been removed.[48] In a photograph dated about 1861 and attributed to Matthew Brady (figure 3-7), the wall is very visible in the foreground. An 1858 report from Commissioner John B. Blake suggests that it would be some time before the wall came down and the road was realigned,

> The grounds never looked better. Owing to the extension of the Treasury building they have been very much compressed and ought to be enlarged. Congress made an appropriation for taking down the south wall and reconstructing it in such a manner as to give the house the benefit of the grounds south of it. The plan adopted for the Treasury extension interfered with the plan for the improvement of the President's grounds, and the latter was abandoned.
>
> Congress subsequently authorized the adoption of a new plan, such as the President might approve; but the street immediately south of the wall being occupied by the workshops and materials of the Treasury building no new plan has been submitted. My own opinion is, that the grounds south of the house ought to be added to the President's grounds without any intervening wall.[49]

The extension of the Treasury Building necessitated the removal of the existing stables south of the grounds of the President's House. In 1856–57 a new stable with stalls for 12 horses was built even farther south, well into the area that would become the Ellipse. The stable and greenhouse had to be removed, and a new conservatory was constructed on the west terrace, the major activity affecting the landscape during James Buchanan's administration. Another factor that may have contributed to the removal of the earlier greenhouse was severe damage from a hailstorm on June 21, 1857, when more

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47. Seale, *The President's House*, 343, note 32; correspondence between Secretary McClelland, John P. Blake, and James Guthrie, July 6 and July 13, 1855. The two new mounds south of the White House and south of the wall appear to have been Blake's idea. See file on "Mounds on the South Grounds," OC/WH. The Stanley McClure Files (ESF/WHL/NPS) include a partial copy of the letter from McClelland to Blake of July 6, 1855, "I transmit to you, herewith, a copy of a letter this day received from the Secretary of the Treasury on the subject of constructing a mound, in the grounds south of the President's house, out of the dirt to be excavated in making the foundation of the South Wing of the Treasury Building." This documentation does not seem to indicate whether this "mound" (singular) was ever even constructed. Seale cites bills for moving earth, describes two mounds being built just outside the Jefferson wall in the summer and fall of 1855.

48. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 11, 1855, 597.

49. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 18, 1858, 692.

than 5,000 panes of glass were destroyed.[50] In 1857, as a result of the expansion of the Treasury, the "old garden" and conservatory, and ultimately the Latrobe/Jefferson gate, also had to be removed.[51]

Albert Boschke, a surveyor for the United States Coast Survey, published a map of the District of Columbia based on surveys he conducted between 1856 and 1859.[52] A detail of the 1857 Boschke map showing President's Park has been frequently reproduced (figure 3-8). Boschke has a reputation for being very accurate, but it is not clear if the President's House grounds section of the plan is a survey or a projection of proposed plans.[53]

In 1858 gasolier porch lamps were mounted in the stone columns in the north portico. Similar lighting fixtures are still extant on the north gate piers.[54]

During 1859, $11,542.90 was spent on annual repairs of the President's House and the grounds. In May Blake ordered horse-drawn mowing machines from Robert Buist of Philadelphia. Before that time, the public grounds had apparently been either scythed or mowed by hand. Blake also purchased a large-size garden roller.[55]

During the Abraham Lincoln administration, John Watt remained gardener and ordered many new plants, especially roses and camellias; gardening, however, was not a top priority during the Civil War. Since the screening plantings recommended by Downing had never been installed, the grounds were too open to provide any seclusion. The Lincolns had little privacy inside the President's House, and they frequently resorted to the conservatory for that purpose. On February 10, 1864, the new stables caught fire, destroying

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50. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Oct. 15, 1857, 718, 719. See also Blake to McClelland, Feb. 5, 1857, and file on "White House Stables and Garages," Aug. 10, 1992, OC/WH. Seale, *The President's House,* 343–45, notes 32–38; NPS, "The President's Garden," 31. See also file on "Greenhouses," OC/WH.

51. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Oct. 15, 1857, 718, 719.

52. For background on this plan, see Reps, *Washington on View,* 118–19.

53. A fountain is included on the northern part of the south lawn, where such a fountain is known to have existed from at least 1861; see file on the "White House Fountains," OC/WH.

54. Seale, *The White House,* 88.

55. In spring 1859 James (Jemmy) Maher, the long-time public gardener, died and was replaced by T. J. Sutter; *[Annual] Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Oct. 13, 1859, 842, 850. *[Annual] Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Oct. 13, 1859, 850. Blake to Robert Buist, May 6, 1859, May 7, 1859, May 21, 1859, and Aug. 19, 1859; Commissioner's Letters Sent. In 1860, $3,378.62 was spent on repairs of the President's House, grounds, etc.; *[Annual] Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Nov. 16, 1860, 493.

nearly all the horses that were housed there. Later that year, new stables were built near the Navy Building on the western part of the grounds. The new stables are usually described as being south of the Navy Building, but they may have been located closer to West Executive Avenue. A small structure shown in this location on the Boschke map may have been a cottage.[56] Figure 3-9 shows the stables as they appeared in an 1869 publication.

In 1861 Commissioner Benjamin French reported that because of the extension of the Treasury Building, it would be necessary to change some of the walks and fences to the south of the President's House and requested an appropriation to do so.[57] Between November 1, 1861, and June 30, 1862, $6,261.23 was spent on annual repairs to the President's House. Most of the work seems to have been to fix defective arrangements for pumping water out of the basement and grounds of the building.[58] During the next fiscal year the commissioner was again primarily concerned with the condition of the house, especially its rat-ridden ground floor. He asked Congress to consider building a new presidential mansion in a healthier location. He reported that even though the new public gardener, James Nokes (who had replaced Sutter) was extremely efficient, a large part of the president's garden suffered from standing water and that without new drains it was almost futile to attempt to grow fruit trees or cultivate a garden.[59]

Relatively little was accomplished on the landscape of the President's House during the Lincoln administration. However, several prints and photographs provide a good idea of its appearance in the early 1860s. By 1861 a small fountain with a shaft sea serpent had been set into place on the northern part of the south lawn a short distance from the portico. This was the first time that an attempt was made to carry out the L'Enfant idea of locating some body of water in President's Park.[60] This fountain, which was replaced by another in 1869, can be seen clearly in the print illustrated in figure 3-10. In an 1861 photograph of the Clay Battalion in front of the south facade of the White House (figure 3-11), many fewer trees appear than in figure 3-10. However, to the left of the portico, two good-sized trees

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56. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Nov. 8, 1864, 683–84; Seale, *The President's House*, 391–96, notes 27–41, 411; file on "White House Stables and Garages," Aug. 10, 1992, OC/WH; and NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 42.

57. *Annual Report, Commissioner of the Public Buildings*, Nov. 8, 1861, 849.

58. *Annual Report, Commissioner of the Public Buildings*, Oct. 29, 1862, 2, 8.

59. *Annual Report, Commissioner of the Public Buildings*, Oct. 13, 1863, 661–62, 664–65.

60. File, "White House Fountains," OC/WH.

are visible, probably the Jackson magnolias, although they seem a little too far to the west. An 1862 Matthew Brady photograph (figure 3-12) shows grounds workers with a lawn roller.

Except for a two-year period following the death of son Willie, when Mrs. Lincoln allowed no Marine Band program in the President's House or on the grounds, social events went on fairly regularly during the war years, and music played an active part. Lincoln was fond of the Marine Band. He appreciated its excellence, and in 1861 he established the first act to recognize the band by law. He attended the concerts whenever he could.[61]

A guidebook to Washington published in 1864 described the north grounds of the President's House, in front of the portico, as "a neatly ornamented yard, of semicircular form, its carriage ways and foot pavements leading to gates at either corner, which afford ingress from Pennsylvania Avenue."[62] For the south side the guidebook noted that:

> The garden on this side of the Mansion is a lovely spot, and favorite resort. The grounds are laid out in a tasteful and romantic style, adorned with artificial mounds, trees, shrubbery, flowers, and a fountain. From the grounds a splendid view is obtained of the surrounding country, the Potomac, and the City of Alexandria.[63]

Lafayette Square

In his annual report for 1850 Commissioner Ignatius Mudd stated that Lafayette Square should be improved. Appropriations should be increased so that a suitable fence could be designed and constructed. This work had been planned the previous year, but it had not been funded.[64]

Although it did not form a part of the 1851 plan, a letter from Calvert Vaux to Marshall P. Wilder clearly demonstrates that Downing had prepared a plan for Lafayette Square that had been almost completely implemented by the time of his death:

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61. Kirk, *Music at the White House*, 88–89.

62. *The Stranger's Guide-Book to Washington City and Everybody's Pocket Handy-Book* (Washington, DC: William F. Richstein, 1864), 23

63. *The Stranger's Guide-Book to Washington*, 23–24.

64. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 5, 1851, 11.

> The ground opposite the other front of the President's House, called President's Square, was first laid out, planted and completed all but the railing and I was to have sent him on a drawing of the same to lay before the Committee during the time he would have been at Washington had he lived. This design was an idea of his and was to have been an adaptation of the American Corn.[65]

Downing's plan called for the thinning of the trees that Bulfinch had planted, setting up a base for the Jackson statue in the center, and laying out the square in a pattern of winding graveled walks. Beds and shrubbery were to adorn a mowed lawn.[66]

The annual reports, correspondence, and unpublished financial records of the commissioners of public buildings document the construction of Lafayette Square. In his annual report for 1851, Commissioner William Easby reported that the appropriation made by Congress in September 1850 had been expended under Downing's direction.[67] He noted that the old wooden fence had almost been destroyed and that a new iron one was indispensable. On December 31, 1851, John Sessford reported that the ground had been laid off into walks.[68]

Beginning in September 1852 and continuing through the end of 1853, expenditures were made for construction and planting.[69] The

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65. Vaux to Wilder, Aug. 18, 1852. See also Schuyler, "The Washington Park," 303, and A. J. Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, 6th ed. (New York: A. O. Moore and Co., 1859), 572. For this posthumous edition, Henry Winthrop Sargent, a close friend of Downing's, added a supplement, making this perhaps the most useful of the editions of Downing's *Treatise*.

66. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 12.

67. In October 1851 a payment was made for the laborers employed by A. J. Downing, as well as another sum for manure, together totaling $1,173.25; Disbursement, Lafayette Square: "Paid A. J. Downing's roll for labor $1,038.50; Paid A. J. Downing's roll for manure $134.75," Oct. 4, 1851, Daybook 13, 67-Cashbooks, RG 42, NA. On November 3, 1851, a total of $1,680.17 was entered to record payroll and manure for Lafayette Square, as well as Downing's monthly compensation as "Rural Architect." A figure for manure only is recorded for Dec. 5, 1851; *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 17, 1852, 14.

68. "The Sessford Annals," 349.

69. There are no further daybook entries for Lafayette Square until August 10, 1852, about two weeks after Downing's death, when Corcoran and Riggs were reimbursed $1,989.82 for sums they had advanced on Downing's payroll and one month of his salary (December 1851 through April 1852); "Disbursement: Making Roads and Walks in Lafayette Square." Payments for five months of Downing's payroll and one month of his salary "made to Corcoran and Riggs for advances made by them to A. J. Downing," entry of Aug. 10, 1852, Daybook 13, 67-Cashbooks, RG 42, NA. This sort of arrangement may simply have reflected banking practices of the period; in effect, Corcoran and Riggs may

only recorded purchase of plants for this site was in October 1852 for unspecified trees.[70] In 1852 Easby reported expenditures of $5,988 for laying roads and walks and planting and $1,404.98 for erecting a pedestal for the statue of Andrew Jackson.[71]

On January 8, 1853, Clark Mills's equestrian statue of Jackson was unveiled.[72] An early lithograph of the Jackson statue, Lafayette Square, and the north front of the White House, drawn by Casimir Böhn before the statue was enclosed within an iron fence, is illustrated in figure 3-13. Beginning in April 1853 large sums of money were paid for the iron fence around Lafayette Square, and for blocks of stone for the fence, which survive to this day.[73] John Sessford described the completion of the park in 1853: "Lafayette square beautifully laid out and enclosed by an iron fence, which, with the Jackson statue, is much admired."[74] Although the executed iron fence was much simpler than the "American Corn" motif that Downing had designed, it was made of heavy cast iron and included massive ornamental gates on the four sides with gas lamps.[75]

Gaslights were installed in Lafayette Square in 1853. Later photographic evidence shows two light fixtures at the southern gate piers, and it is possible that similar light fixtures crowned the piers at other

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have given the government an overdraft, entries of Sept. 4, 1852, Sept. 16, 1852, and Sept. 24, 1852.

70. Entry of Oct. 28, 1852, Daybook 13, 67-Cashbooks, RG 42, NA. The trees were purchased from Ed. Boulsant[?]. In the congressional debate on August 26, 1852, over the compensation of Downing's widow, Senator Davis described meeting Downing, saying, "He was here constantly during a certain season of the year. I saw him every day until the frost became so severe that he could no longer set trees. When the ground was closed up so that he could not set trees he went away until the ground opened again. Then he returned, and was here constantly superintending the transplanting of trees, many of them large, and requiring his own attention. He was thus here far into the spring." See *The Congressional Globe: The First Session of the Thirty-second Congress*, vol. 24, part 3 (Washington, DC: John C. Rives, 1852), 2374–75. Downing's personalized "tree setting" must have taken place on grounds of the Smithsonian, since no trees were planted in either Lafayette Square or the Ellipse before his death.

71. The pedestal was designed by Clark Mills, sculptor of the statue; *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 12, 1853, 21.

72. For the Jackson statue, see James M. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, D.C.: A Comprehensive Historical Guide* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974), 377–78. The Jackson statue was the first bronze equestrian statue cast in the United States. Mills, a self-taught sculptor, had never seen an equestrian statue.

73. Entries of Apr. 26, Apr. 27, May 27, May 28, and June 7, 1853, Daybook 13, 67-Cashbooks, RG 42, NA. The stone foundation of the fence was "rediscovered" during excavation in the fall of 1999.

74. "The Sessford Annals," 362.

75. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 13.

major gates (one in each corner and one on the north side). There is no evidence to indicate if the two smaller gates on the east and west sides of the site also had lighting fixtures.[76]

In 1858, Commissioner Blake reported that at last it was possible to keep cattle out of Lafayette Square:

> Lafayette square has been very much improved. The underground drainage which was made in it last year, has corrected the dampness that existed in some parts and prevented the grass and shrubbery from growing, and now everything is as flourishing in those localities, as in any other portion of it. The entrances to it have been made easy by the erection of small circular railings, with light gates, just within the large and heavy gates, which give great satisfaction, and answer the purpose of keeping out cattle.[77]

In the Boschke map (figure 3-8), Lafayette Square appears fully laid out. Assumed to represent the lost Downing plan, the Boschke map shows what was eventually carried out for this space.

In 1861 British novelist Anthony Trollope visited Washington and described a landscaped Lafayette Square:

> Here in front of the White House is President's Square, as it is generally called. The technical name is, I believe, La Fayette Square. The houses round it are few in number, — not exceeding three or four on each side, but they are among the best in Washington, and the whole place is neat and well kept. President's Square is certainly the most attractive part of the city. The garden of the square is always open, and does not seem to suffer from any public ill-usage.[78]

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76. Seale's article includes a photograph dating from the 1880s that documents the nature of the fence, the gates, and the gas lamps; Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 7. Another photograph from the late 1880s does not clearly show if lighting fixtures topped the corner piers; Constance McLaughlin Green, *The Church on Lafayette Square, 1815-1970* (Washington: Potomac Books, 1970), 67.

77. In the annual reports of the late 1850s, expenditures for Lafayette Square and Reservation No. 2 (Capitol Square and the Mall to 14th Street, including the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution) were usually lumped together. For example, in 1858, $3,000 was spent on Reservation No. 2 and Lafayette Square together, and $814.14 was spent on lampposts and lamps on the north, east, and west sides of the square. In 1859, $3,000 was again spent on Reservation No. 2 and Lafayette Square, and in 1860, $2,000. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 18, 1858, 692, 700; ibid., Oct. 13, 1859, 851; ibid., Nov. 16, 1860, 493.

78. Anthony Trollope, *North America*, 1861, quoted in Reps, *Washington on View*, 72.

In 1863 Commissioner French reported that Lafayette Square was in admirable order and that it could be kept so at small expense under the daily supervision of laborers at the President's House.[79]

President's Park South

The Ellipse was Downing's creation and is one of his most permanent legacies to the Washington landscape. Labeled "Parade or President's Park," Downing's design shows it in considerable detail as an open round space with a row of elm trees on its inner side. Around the periphery and filling in the sides and corners of the space are wooded groves with an intricate system of winding walks (figure 3-2). What little visual information has survived seems to indicate that the pure circle of Downing's early plan was modified into an ellipse during construction, possibly an even smaller one than now exists.

The commissioners' financial records amply document extensive construction work on this site under Downing's supervision in 1851. After a hiatus due to his death and the continuing debate in Congress over the appropriation needed to complete the work, William D. Brackenridge oversaw the implementation of the plan for several months in late 1852 and 1853. Huge numbers of trees and shrubs were also planted in 1854. The sheer volume of construction work recorded seems to indicate that most of the funds designated for the south grounds in 1851 were spent on the Ellipse. However, having spent a large sum, the government had trouble maintaining it properly. During the Civil War, the Ellipse was used for barracks and animal grazing, and by 1863 it had become a "almost a desert."[80]

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79. Between November 1, 1861, and June 30, 1862, $729.30 was spent on Reservation No. 2 and Lafayette Square; *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 29, 1862, 8; ibid., Oct. 13, 1863, 665.

80. Although the commissioners' annual reports give the total amount of the appropriations and expenditures under the category "Grounds South," the nature of the work is not detailed. In the cashbooks much more information can be found about the type of work carried out, and as discussed above under Lafayette Square, Downing's involvement is explicitly mentioned. For example, in the annual report for 1851, $16,681.85 is listed as the total expenditure on the "grading and planting of the grounds south of the President's house," out of an appropriation for that year of $10,000 and an unexpended balance from a former appropriation. However, the first expenditure listed for the grounds south of the President's House was for a messenger who carried Downing's plan to the President's House. This was followed by a disbursement for "embankment," undoubtedly fill. There was also a $25 item to P. M. Magill, presumably a draftsman, for drawing a plan; by May 1851 there were regular expenditures for "Downing's roll" of laborers, and Downing's monthly salary of $208 was frequently

Concerns over the health of the president and the first family also played a role in the design of the Ellipse. In December 1851 John Sessford, reporting for the *National Intelligencer* on "material improvements" in the city during the year, observed that "On Reservation No. 1, south of the President's House, a great amount of work has been done in grading, draining and excavating for a pond."[81]

Influential social reformer Dorothea Dix also became involved. In April 1852 she wrote to President Fillmore regarding the pond under construction on the grounds south of the President's House. In her letter Dix scathingly dismissed all of Downing's work (and incidentally the Smithsonian Institution building) and described the pond as "Downing's Death Hole," probably because it served as a mosquito breeding habitat.[82] She apparently sent a copy of the letter to Joseph Henry, who mildly replied, "Please accept my thanks for your remarks relative to the pond south of the President's house. I shall speak with Mr. Downing on the subject and inform him that this part of his plan for beautifying the public grounds has awakened much criticism."[83]

The debate in Congress on March 24, 1852, over the $12,000 appropriation sheds considerable light on the actual appearance of the Ellipse or "Grounds South" at this time. Mr. Stanton of Kentucky was successful in having the funds restored, but he did so for public health reasons, primarily the president's health:

> But there is an imperative necessity for this appropriation, and it must be made. It is needed, because the grounds proposed to be improved are so low and marshy as most seriously to affect the health of the neighborhood. The sooner we can have them filled up, graded, and planted

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allocated to the "Grounds South" category. By the end of 1851 close to $15,000 had been spent: $525.90 for fill, $11,214.04 for Downing's roll, $616 for Downing's salary, $163.96 for building and glazing a watch house, $1,709.61 for a sewer and culvert, and $729.34 for manure, tools and other miscellaneous items. Entries dated Mar. 19, 1851, Apr. 12, 1851 (for "embankment," $525.89), and May 3, 1851, Daybook 13, 67-Cashbooks, RG 42, NA. For 1852 Easby reported an expenditure of $3,658.05 out of an appropriation of $4,000 for "improving the square south of the President's House," *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Feb. 12, 1853, 21.

81. "The Sessford Annals," 349.

82. Dix to Fillmore, Apr. 5, [1852], in Charles M. Snyder, *The Lady and the President: The Letters of Dorothea Dix and Millard Fillmore* (Lexington, KY: 1975), 129–31. The original letter is in the collections of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY. Copy courtesy of the Henry Papers.

83. Henry to Dix, Apr. 7, 1852, Houghton Library, Harvard University. Copy courtesy of the Henry Papers.

> with trees, the better it will be for the safety of the President and family. It is true that the work has cost already a considerable sum . . . but it is a work of great magnitude. A large, low, flat piece of ground, embracing many acres, has to be filled up with earth, brought from a great distance and necessarily at great expense. The earth in the neighborhood, which could be used for the purpose, has been exhausted in the work already done, and what is necessary to complete it will have to be brought from streets now being excavated and graded in other parts of the city.[84]

Another Congressman stated that the pond was made for economy, since it was less expensive to build the pond than to cart dirt in to fill it.[85]

Dix was successful in her campaign to have the pond removed before it was fully constructed, for it was filled some time in 1854 by order of the secretary of the interior at a cost of more than $6,000. In view of the fact that Brackenridge described this body of water as a "large pond, or lake," it may well have been on the Ellipse rather than on the grounds of the President's House.[86] The topography would indicate that it was on the northern part of the present Ellipse.[87] This episode also illustrates the fact that Downing made significant modifications to his original plan (figures 3-1 and 3-2), which does not show a pond anywhere in President's Park. According to Vaux, Downing presented the plan "with the understanding that he was to be at liberty to make such alterations as a further and more exact study of the grounds might suggest."[88]

Large expenditures were devoted to the Grounds South in 1854. Between February and December 1854 approximately 3,000 trees were ordered from a number of nurseries.[89] Even if they were used

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84. Debate of Mar. 24, 1852, *The Congressional Globe: New Series, Containing the Debates, Proceedings and Laws of the First Session of the Thirty-second Congress*, vol. 24, part 2 (Washington, DC: John C. Rives, 1852), 853.

85. *The Congressional Globe*, 854. Statement of Mr. Brooks (state not identified).

86. Brackenridge to French, Jan. 10, 1854, in *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Jan. 30, 1854, 25. The estimated cost of $6,370 for filling the pond is found on page 26. The report for the following year does not mention an expenditure specifically for this filling, but it was obviously done.

87. NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 45.

88. Vaux to Marshall P. Wilder, Aug. 18, 1852, J. Jay Smith collection.

89. As was the case with Lafayette Square, the commissioner's cash books show no expenditures on the site in the first several months of 1852. Beginning in October 1852, more than $3,600 in expenditures was recorded, most of it for grading and laborers on Brackenridge's roll; see Daybooks 13 and 14, 67-Cashbooks, RG 42, NA. In 1853 almost

for both the grounds of the President's House and the Grounds South, the quantity seems extraordinary, but this was an era in which the dictum "Plant thick. Thin quick." was frequently invoked. Since the trees were purchased more than a year after Downing's death, he was unlikely to have made up the plant list. Whether it represented his taste is difficult to determine.

In his annual report of October 1854, Commissioner French reported the following under the heading of "Improvement of the Grounds South of the President's House":

> These grounds were laid out by the lamented Downing, under the immediate supervision of President Fillmore, and the improvements were commenced.
>
> After Downing's death, the care of the grounds was given to Mr. Brackenridge, and up to the time of his resignation the Commissioner had no charge whatever of them. As soon as Mr. Brackenridge resigned, the care of these grounds was assigned to Mr. Watt, the gardener at the President's [House], and the general oversight of them, and of all that had been under Mr. Brackenridge, was given to me.
>
> These grounds are now in a good state of improvement. There will be many thousand trees and shrubs planted in them, this autumn, and before another year they will begin to assume a beautiful appearance.[90]

The report made by Commissioner Blake in 1860 confirms that the work on the Ellipse had been completed in accordance with the Downing plan by the late 1850s but had been poorly maintained, especially in terms of drainage:

> All the public grounds that have been inclosed and improved are in excellent order, with the exception of the grounds south of the President's House, and the small appropriation made at the last session of Congress for preserving and improving them, was wholly insufficient

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$18,000 was spent on "Completing the Improvements on the Square South of the President's House." Many of the trees ordered were exotic and many were conifers. In November 1854 almost 1,595 trees were ordered. They included 14 *Paulownia imperialis*, 100 horse chestnuts, 100 European birch, 40 *Magnolia acuminata*, 100 European and American oaks, 25 each American and European linden, 12 Kentucky coffee trees, 100 weeping willows, 100 European larch, 50 Deodar cypress, 12 Carya, 50 *Catalpa syringifolia*, 25 osage orange, 25 Vergilia, 100 Norway spruce, 25 Scotch pine, 12 Austrian pine, and 12 silver balsam fir. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Jan. 30, 1854, 10, 23.

90. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 5, 1854, 601. In 1857, $2,417.52 was spent on the area south of President's House (ibid., Oct. 15, 1857, 729); in 1858, $2,274.28 (ibid., Oct. 18, 1858, 700); and in 1859, $2,719.71 (ibid., Oct. 13, 1859, 851).

> for the purpose. These grounds were laid out and improved by the late A. J. Downing, at a heavy expense to the government. The blind drains and sewers are much out of order and discharge their functions very imperfectly. The consequence is, that neither grass nor shrubbery, nor trees grow with uniformity. In some parts they are water-soaked and it is with difficulty they can be kept alive. It stands to reason that such an extensive field, containing about sixty acres, beautifully laid out and planted with valuable trees and shrubs, with carriageways and footways circling and winding through it, cannot be preserved in a creditable condition without the annual outlay of a considerable sum of money.[91]

The Ellipse was constructed and planted by the mid-1850s according to a plan by Downing, but one that must have varied from the design illustrated in figure 3-2. This again indicates that the Boschke survey (figure 3-8) may be accurate for the period, but little visual documentation exists for corroboration. For this reason and because the Ellipse seems to have been almost completely obliterated during the Civil War, it is difficult to determine what its exact configuration and appearance would have been about 1855. However, in 1862, John Bachmann, considered to have been a highly accurate delineator, published a bird's-eye view of Washington that showed a layout of the Ellipse area similar to that in the Boschke map. In Bachmann's lithograph the land south of the wall below the President's House was divided into two sections, a squarish space, and, to its south, an elliptical space. Both spaces were open, but each was surrounded by heavily wooded groves.[92]

In 1861 Commissioner French reported that the Washington Canal had become a public nuisance filled with "rank vegetation and offensive soil" and an "immense mass of fetid and corrupt matter." He urged that the canal be thoroughly dredged and cleaned and a tide-gate constructed.[93]

Between about 1861 and 1871 the Ellipse was known as "the White Lot" and was surrounded on three sides by board fencing, possibly painted white. Otherwise, the origins of the name are unclear.

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91. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Nov. 16, 1860, 487–88.

92. Boschke's 1861 map was considered to be so accurate that the Department of War seized it in 1861, after only a few impressions had been struck; Reps, *Washington on View,* 138, 156–57.

93. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings,* Nov. 8, 1861, 855; between November 1, 1861, and June 30, 1862, $2,029.52 was spent on the grounds south of the President's House; ibid., Nov. 8, 1862, 8.

During the Civil War, at least two and possibly as many as four barracks occupied the site, and cattle grazed there as well.[94]

In 1863 French echoed Blake's pessimistic appraisal of the Ellipse:

> The grounds south of the President's House, on which much money was expended some ten years ago, have, for want of money to enable the Commissioner to take care of and improve them, and in consequence of their having been converted at times into a military camping and parade ground, become almost a desert. To put them in decent order would require a larger expenditure of money than Congress would be willing to appropriate. So I presume they must be left in their present dilapidated condition.[95]

In 1864 French repeated the section from his 1861 report on the condition of the Washington Canal, saying that nothing had yet been done, despite his direct appeal to Congress with the assistance of Joseph Henry, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.[96]

The Grounds of the Treasury and State Buildings

Construction on the south and west wings of the Treasury Building began in July 1855. Since Robert Mills, the original architect had left government service in 1841, Thomas Ustick Walter, who closely followed Mills's lead, prepared preliminary drawings. Ammi B. Young, an architect from Boston, supervised the work. The south wing was completed by September 1861 and the west wing in 1864.[97] Between 1851 and 1865 the grounds around the Treasury Building were used for construction activities, and although landscape schemes were published (see figure 2-8), no serious proposals for the grounds seem to have been made at this time. However, in 1863 iron railing and two iron gates, located south of

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94. *Stranger's Guide to Washington, D.C.: The City as Mr. Lincoln Knew It* (Washington, DC: T. Loftin Snell, Double Dot Press, 1968, reprint of 1865 edition). (Neither the original 1865 edition of this publication nor the 1968 reprint has been located in the Library of Congress, the Harvard University Library system, the Boston Metro Library system, or the Boston Athenaeum. A map was made up for the reprint edition, which is interesting but of questionable accuracy.) See also Richard M. Lee, *Mr. Lincoln's City: An Illustrated Guide to the Civil War Sites of Washington* (McLean, VA: EPM Publications, Inc., 1981), 121.

95. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 13, 1863, 665.

96. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Nov. 8, 1864, 686–87.

97. Betty Bird, "Overview of the Architectural History of the U. S. Treasury Building," Sept. 6, 1984, 8.

the Treasury (currently Hamilton Place), were purchased and installed in conjunction with the extension of the building.[98]

The Grounds of the War and Navy Buildings

Overcrowding remained a serious problem in the War and Navy Buildings, especially during the Civil War. Two floors were added to both buildings in 1862 as an emergency measure, and an ell was added to Old Navy. The photograph in figure 3-14 shows Old War (front) and Old Navy (rear). While undated, the picture was taken before the regrading and paving of 17th Street in 1870. It also shows some venerable elm trees; their removal in 1879 aroused protest.[99]

Summary

Between 1851 and 1865 the White House grounds became more fully developed, and an attempt was made to implement some elements of Downing's plan for the public grounds of Washington. At Downing's suggestion iron fencing was purchased to enclose the President's House, and iron gates were installed at the northeast and northwest corners of the President's House. In addition, a new watch house and a short-lived greenhouse were built, as well as a new conservatory on top of the western terrace.

The screening plantings recommended by Downing were never installed and the need to provide privacy for the president and his family remained an issue. The conservatory was the only area that provided a certain measure of seclusion for the president and his family. To partially remedy this situation, a fence and two gates were installed east and west of the north portico. Plans to remove the Jefferson wall were articulated. The idea of adding the current south lawn began to be discussed in earnest. Consideration was also given to building a new executive mansion at a healthier location.

Between ca. 1851 and 1853, Lafayette Square was laid out and planted according to the Downing plan. Downing himself apparently supervised the work. The 1853 unveiling of the Andrew Jackson

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98. The iron railing was purchased from Hutchinson and Wickersham of New York City, who had supplied similar railing for the White House grounds in 1851; voucher no. 1, Treasury Extension, Aug. 19, 1863, Office of the Curator (OC)/Treasury.

99. Lehman, et al., "Executive Office Building," 20–23.

statue marked the beginning of commemorative activities. That same year an iron fence with light fixtures was installed around the square. The fence itself would be removed in 1888, but its foundation was recently rediscovered. Despite three later phases of rehabilitation and redesign, important elements of the Downing plan still remain today, which means that today's Lafayette Park may be one of the few surviving Downing-designed landscapes.

In the 1850s the Ellipse was also developed according to a modified version of Downing's original plan, partially implemented under his supervision, and completed after his death. During the Civil War, however, its use for wartime activities severely damaged the layout and the new plantings. At this time it was called the White Lot, as it was surrounded on three sides by board fencing, apparently painted white.

Between 1851 and 1865 substantial progress was made on the construction of the Treasury Building, but little appears to have been accomplished on the surrounding grounds. Landscaping of the War and Navy Buildings did not attract much attention at a time when the nation was experiencing one of its most profound crises.

President's Park continued to attract talented designers. Andrew J. Downing and Thomas U. Walter were among those who left indelible marks on the landscape of the site. Downing's designs for Lafayette Square and the Ellipse, as well as his plan for the public grounds of Washington, influenced the evolution of President's Park for decades. Walter, following Robert Mills's basic concept, prepared the drawings for the south and west wings of the Treasury Building.

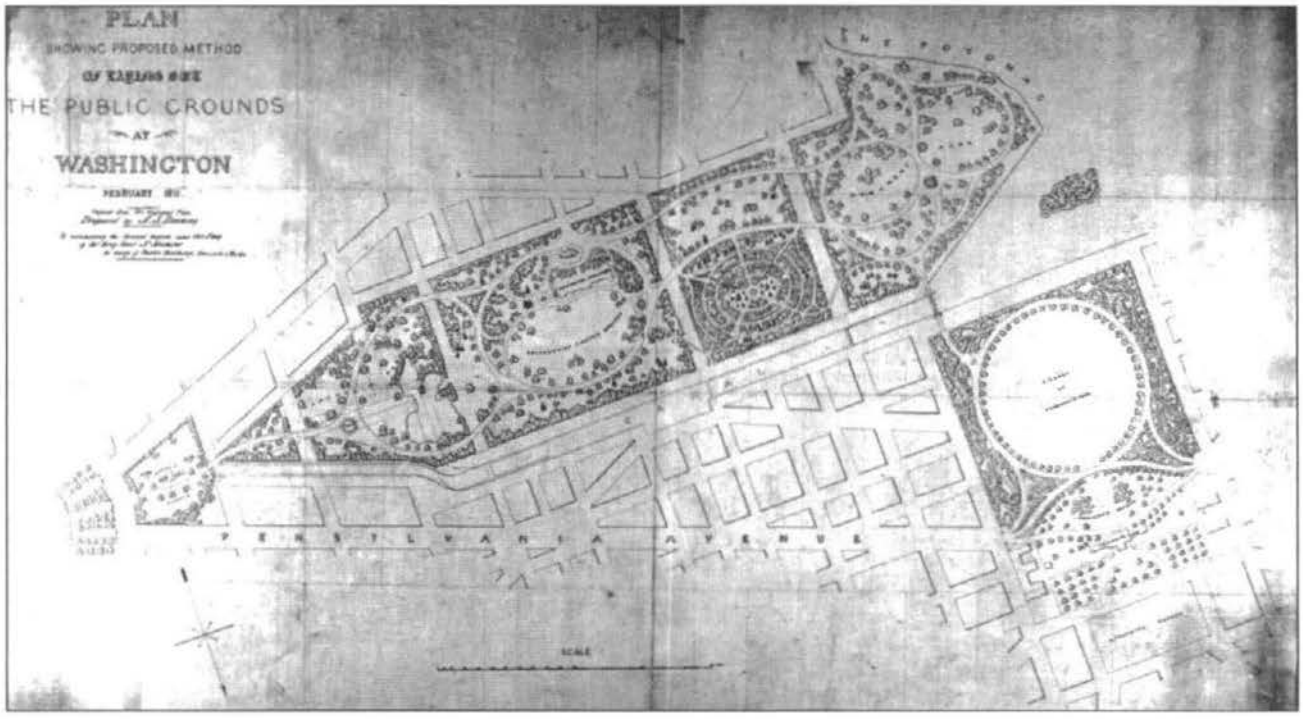

Figure 3-1: *Plan Showing Proposed Method of Laying Out the Public Grounds at Washington, D.C.* Andrew Jackson Downing, 1851. Copy from the original plan to accompany the Annual Report, 1867. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77.

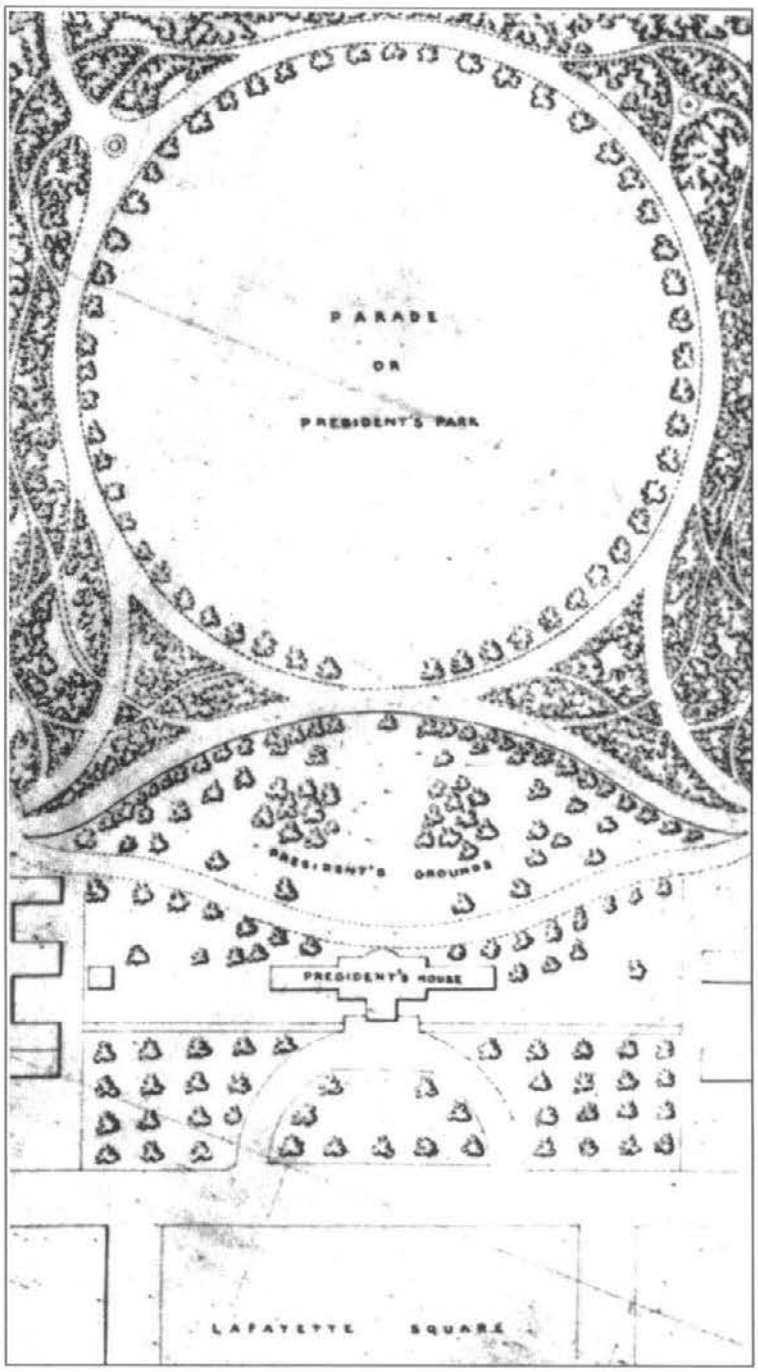

Figure 3-2: *Detail of Plan Showing Proposed Method of Laying Out the Public Grounds at Washington, D.C.* Andrew Jackson Downing, 1851. Copy from the original plan to accompany the Annual Report, 1867. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77.

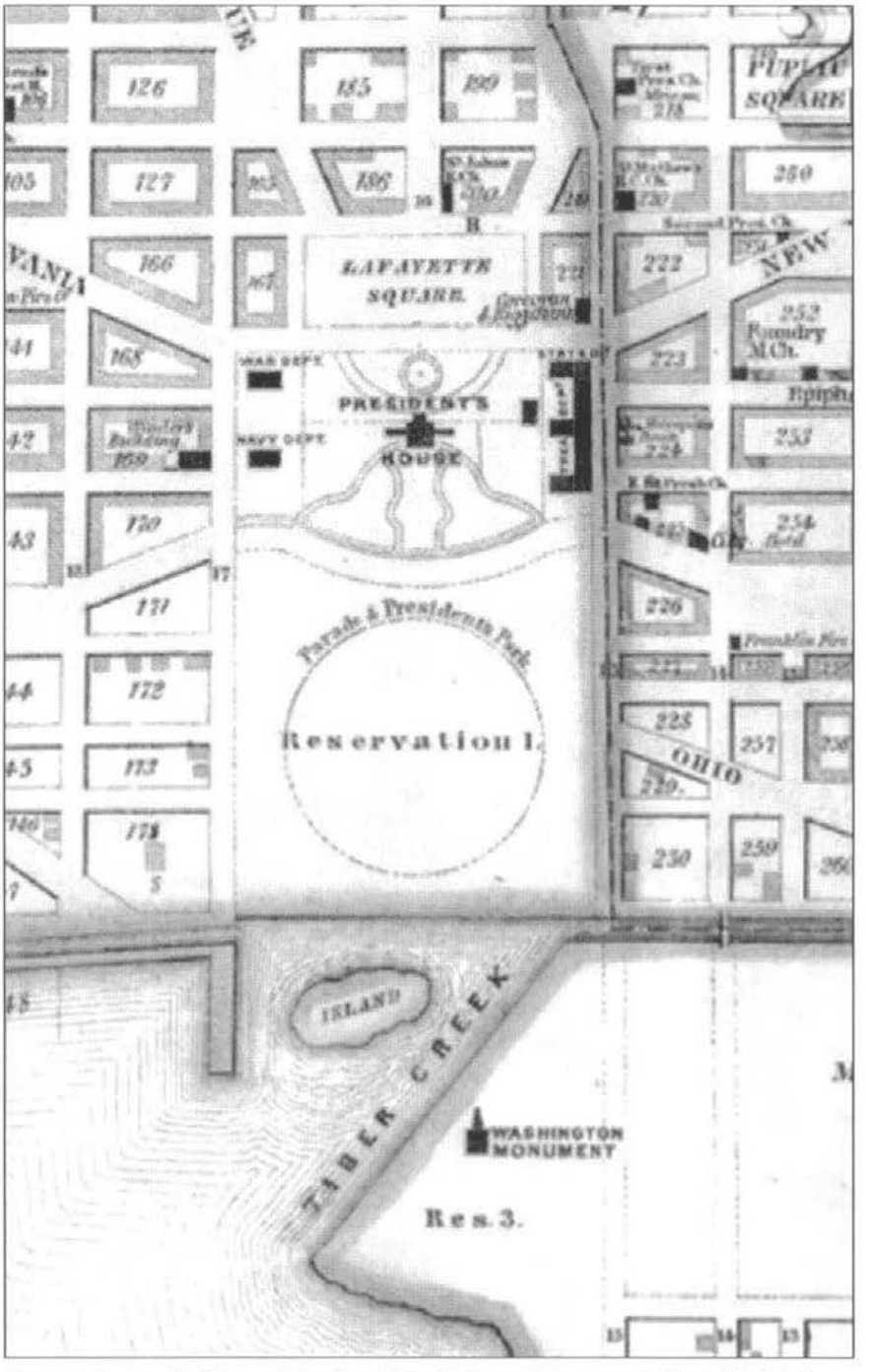

Figure 3-3: *Detail of Map of the City of Washington, D.C.* James Keily. Published by Lloyd Van Derveer, Camden, New Jersey, 1851. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

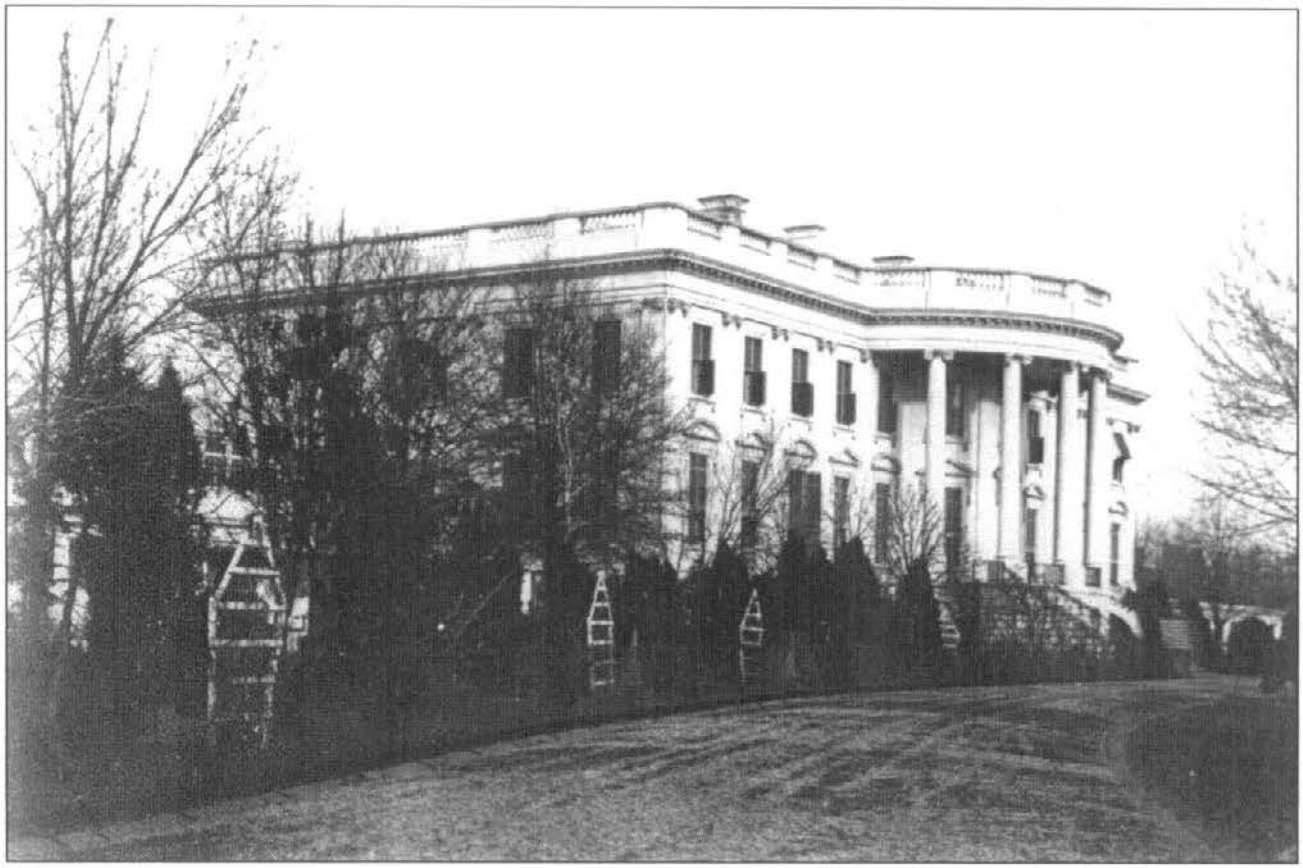

Figure 3–4: *The White House from the Southwest*. B. B. French (photograph), 1857. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Figure 3-5: *North Front of the White House.*Photograph, pre-1857. Office of the Curator, The White House.

One of the earliest known photographs of the north front.

Figure 3-6: *North Front of the President's House with the Jefferson Statue in the Foreground.* Photograph, ca. 1857. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

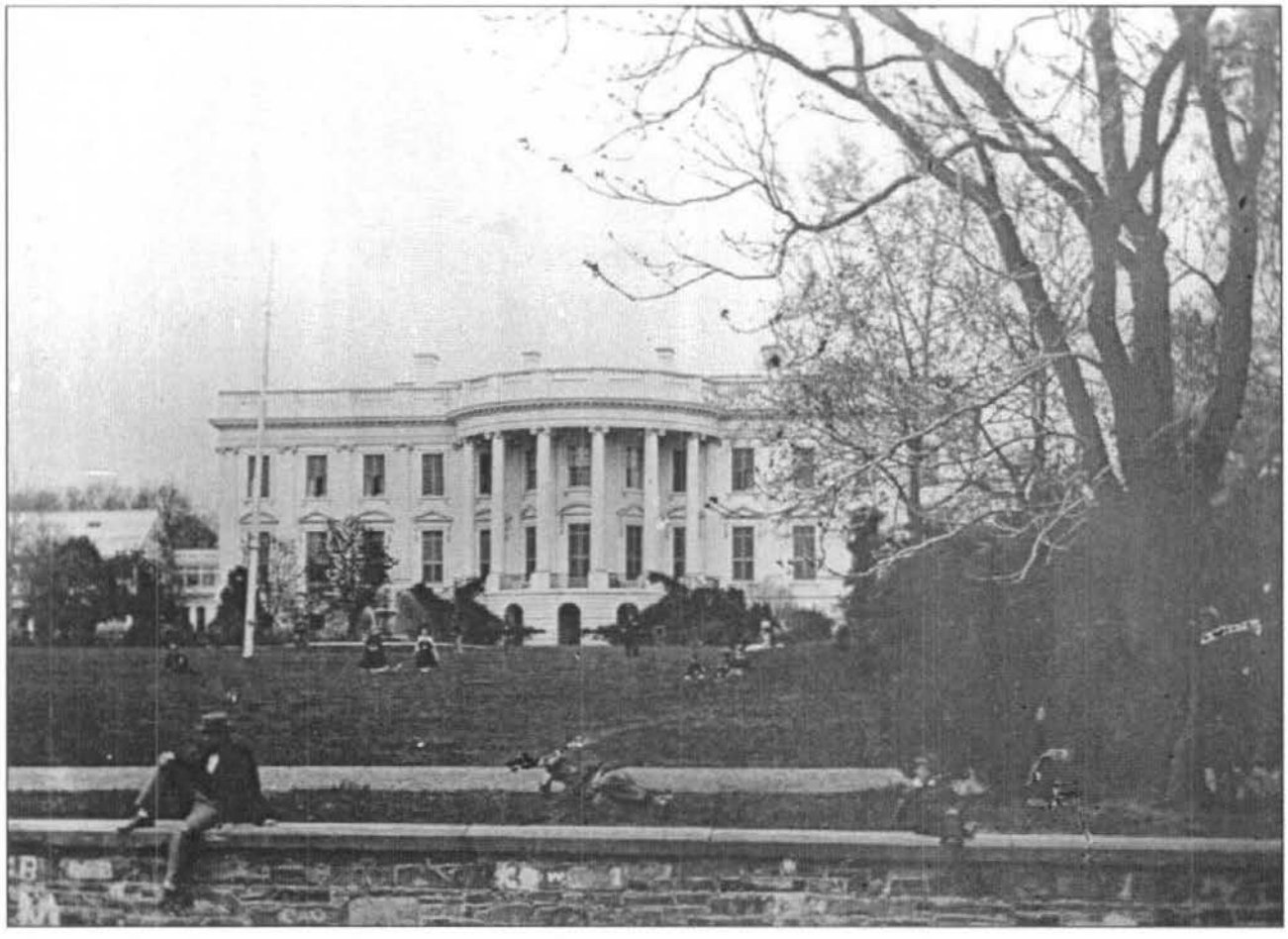

Figure 3-7: *South Grounds of the President's House with the Jefferson Wall*. Attributed to Matthew Brady (photograph), ca. 1861. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, Record Group 111.

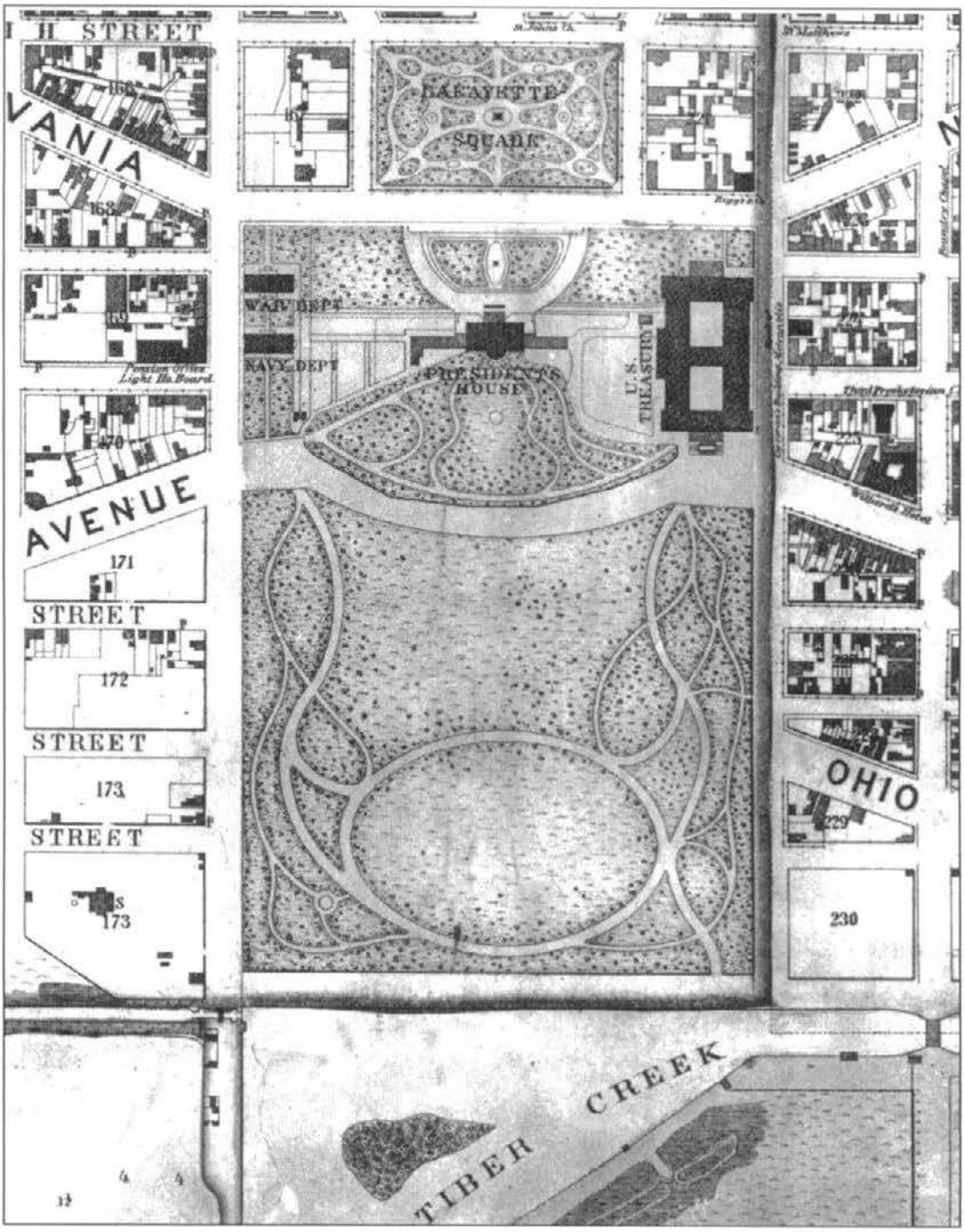

Figure 3-8: *Map of the District of Columbia. Surveyed in the Years 1856, 1857, 1858 & 1859.* A Boschke. Published by D. McClelland, Blanchard and Mohun, Washington, D.C. 1861. Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Division.

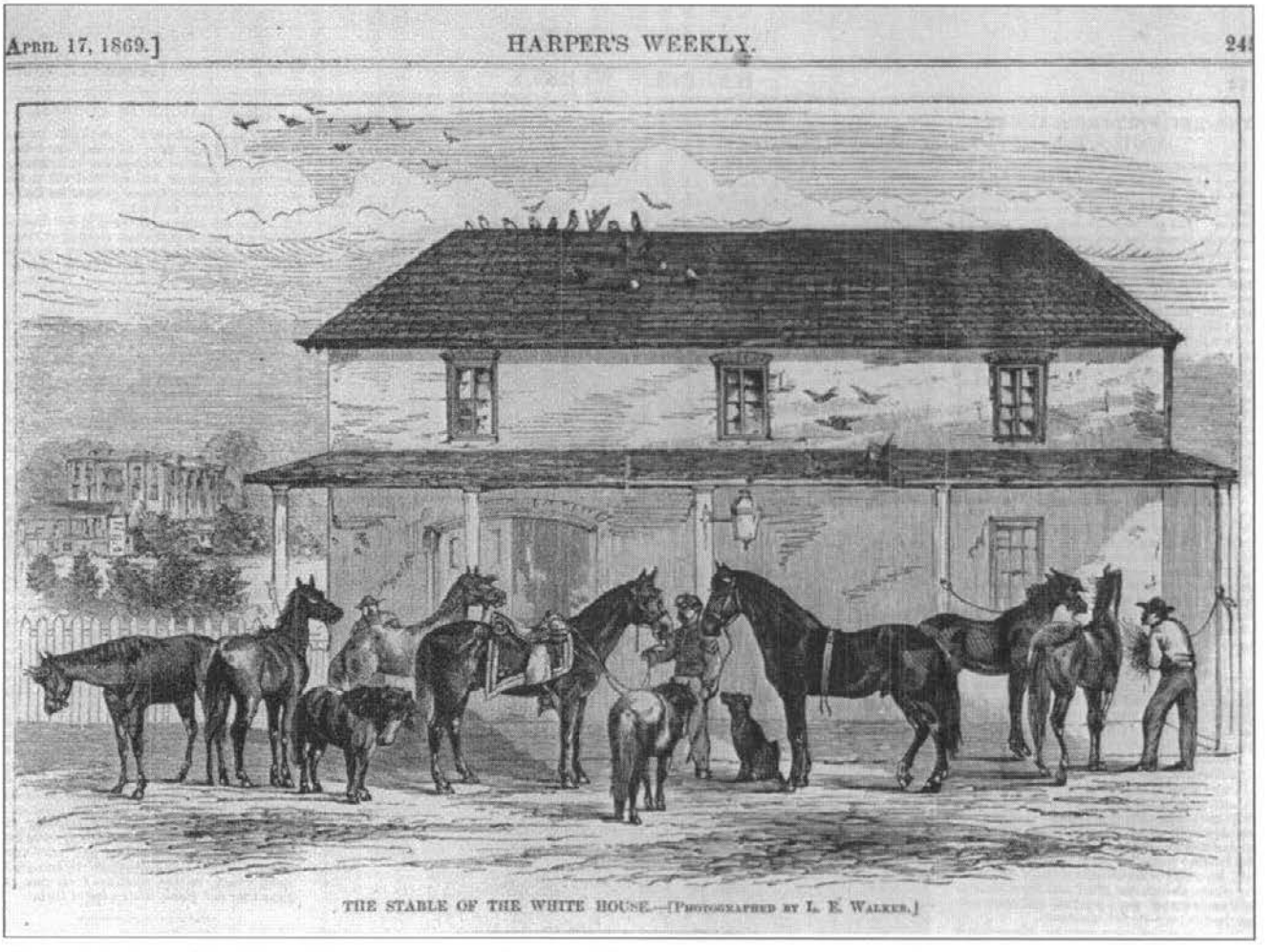

Figure 3-9: *The Stable of the White House*. From a photograph by L. E. Walker, *Harper's Weekly*, April 17, 1869. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

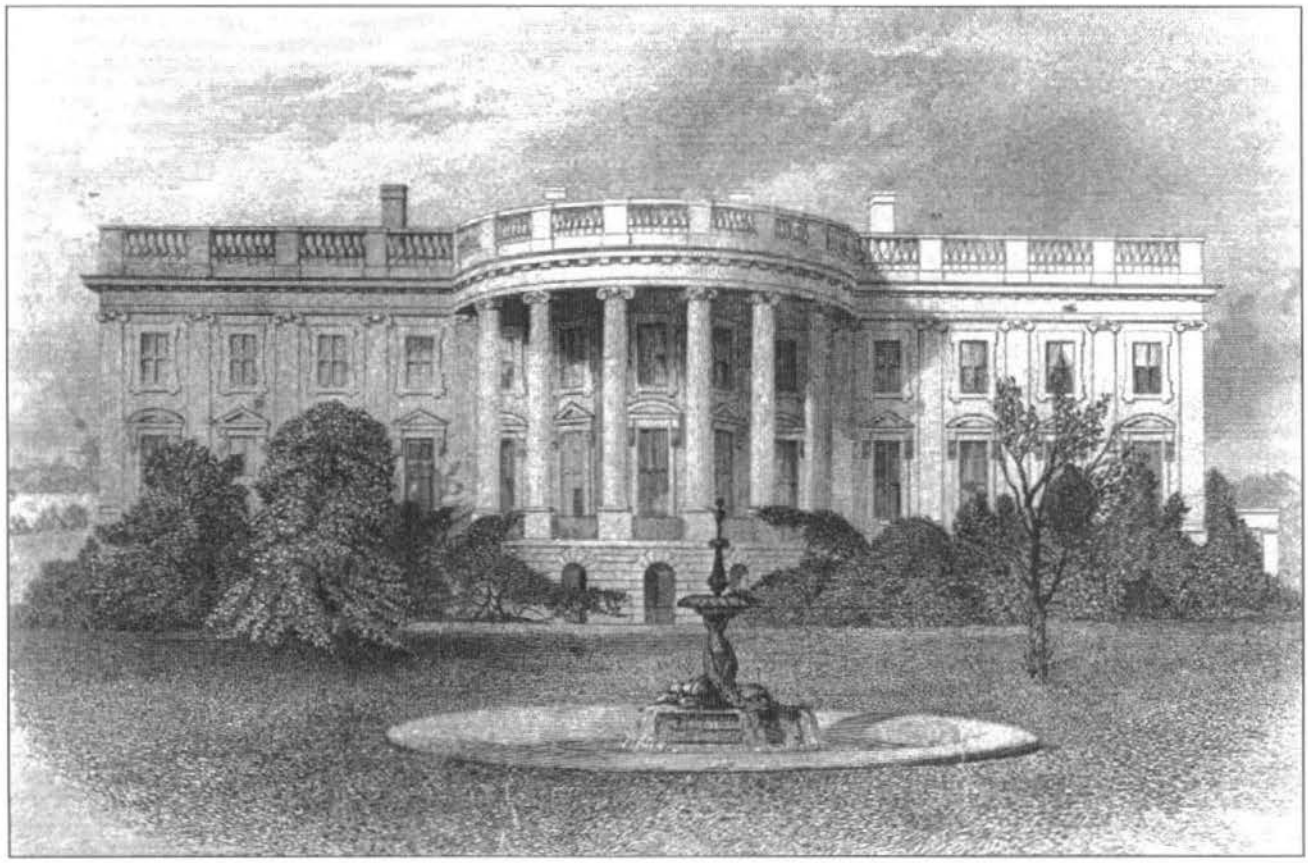

Figure 3-10: *South Front of the White House with Fountain.* Print, ca. 1861-69. Office of the Curator, The White House.

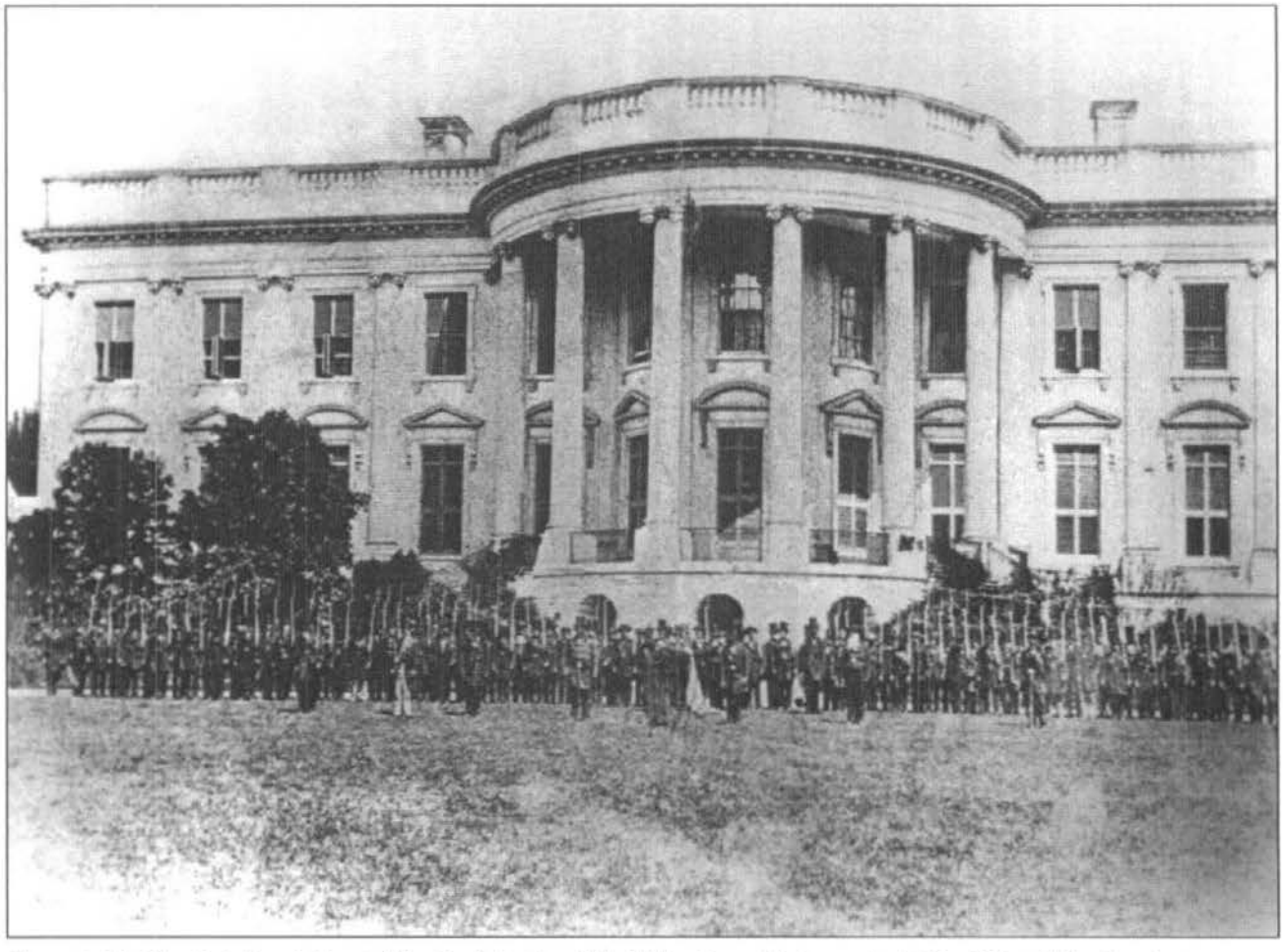

Figure 3-11: *Clay Battalion in Front of the South Portico of the White House.* Photograph, 1861. Office of the Curator, The White House.

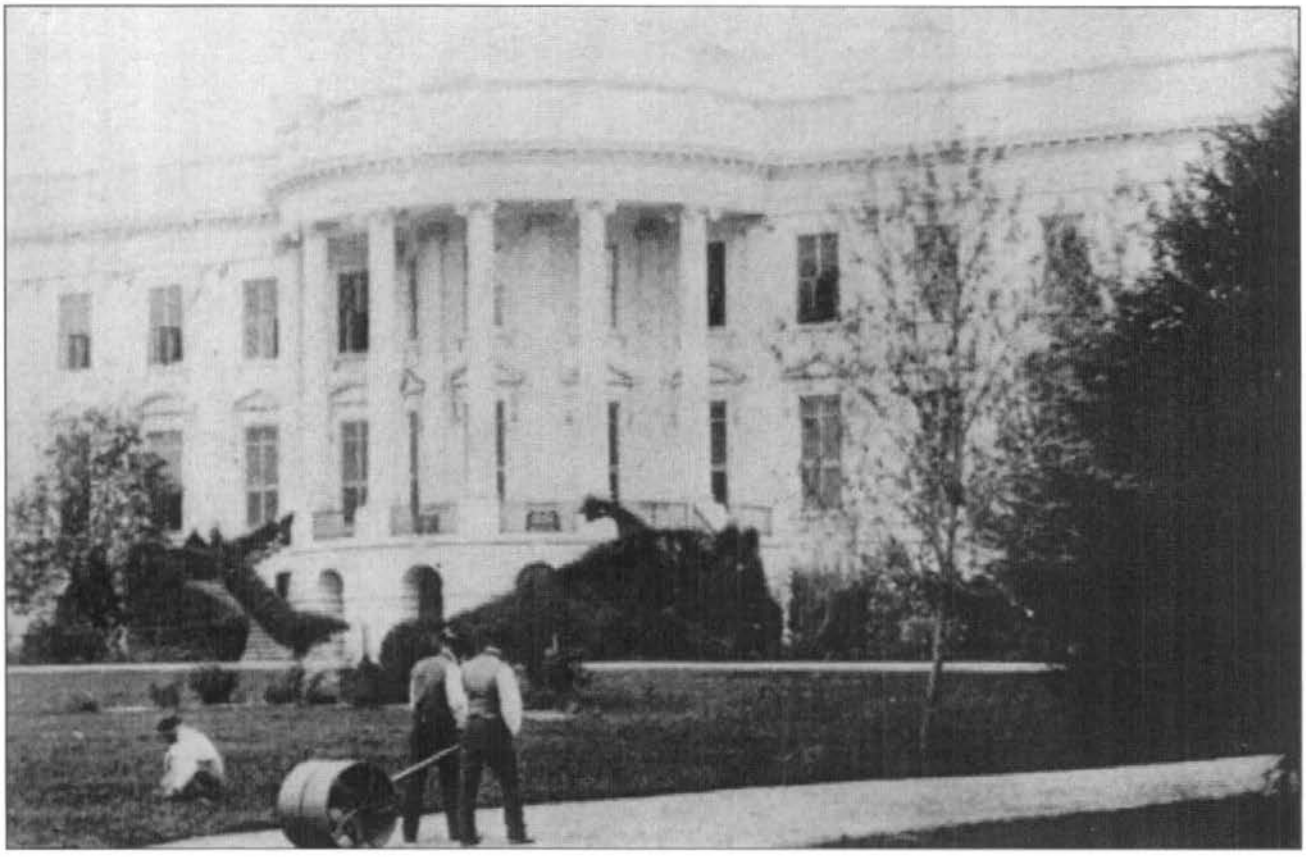

Figure 3-12: *View of the White House from the Southeast.* Matthew Brady (photograph), 1862. Private Collection of Set Momjian.

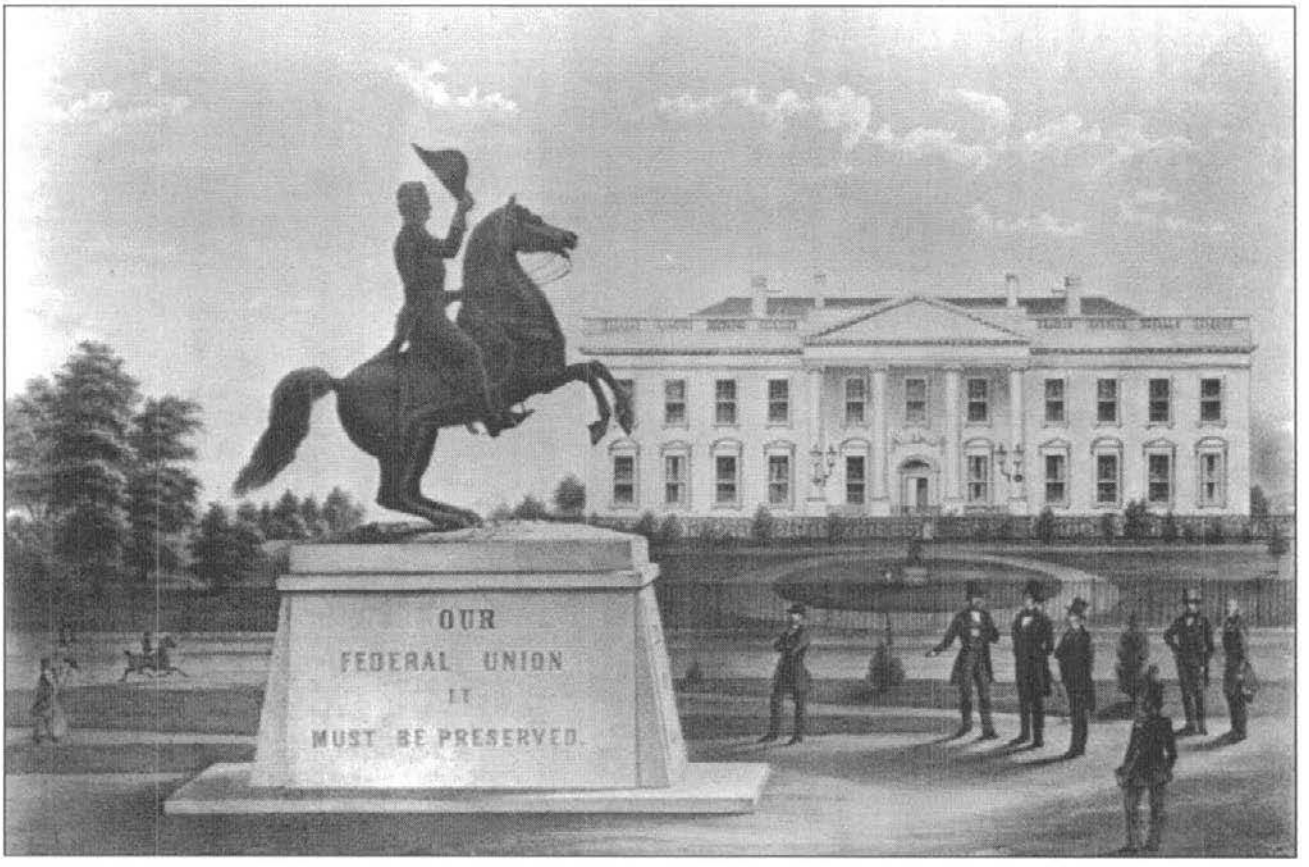

Figure 3-13: *Mills's Colossal Equestrian Statue of General Andrew Jackson*. Casimir Boehn, ca. 1853. Lithograph by Thomas Sinclair, 1858. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Figure 3-14: *Old War Building and Old Navy Building*. Photograph, pre-1870. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks, Record Group 42.

The War Building is in the front; the Navy Building behind.

Chapter 4. President's Park and the Army Corps of Engineers: 1865–1901

Between 1865 and 1901 the grounds of the White House received a lot of attention. Important modifications took place on both sides of the Executive Mansion as East and West Executive Avenues were completed. Lafayette Square continued to undergo regular maintenance and repair, while major landscaping was carried out on the Ellipse. The north wing of the Treasury Building was completed, and landscaping plans were approved. A new State, War, and Navy Building, the largest office building in Washington at the time, was built. Landscaping plans for the complex appear to have been developed, but it is not clear if they were implemented.[1]

During the Grant administration, the grounds of the President's House were extended farther south, a new system of roads and walkways was developed, and the landscape began to reflect the use of bright-colored bedding plants and other showy garden effects popular at the time. The Jefferson wall was finally taken down around 1871, when West Executive Avenue was completed and joined with East Executive Avenue in a semicircle at approximately the present location. The east-west drive just below the Jefferson wall was also removed, and a new private drive was constructed at the same location as the present-day drive. New iron fencing was installed around the enlarged south grounds to match that on the north side, and the latter was repaired and in some places replaced. In 1871 granite steps 20 feet wide were constructed at West Executive Avenue, north of the existing greenhouses. Between 1872 and 1874 a permanent bandstand was established in the center panel of the south lawn. It was removed in 1878 due to its deteriorated condition.

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1. In March 1867 Congress abolished the position of commissioner of the public buildings, and the duties were transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The officers in charge of public buildings and grounds during this period were Nathaniel Michler (1867–71), Orville Babcock (1871–77), Thomas Lincoln Casey (1877–81), Almon F. Rockwell (1881–85), John M. Wilson (1885–89), Oswald H. Ernst (1889–93), John M. Wilson (1893–97), and Theodore A. Bingham (1897–1903); Dowd, *Records of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, 37–39.

President Rutherford B. Hayes and his wife continued the tradition of presidents who influenced the evolution of the landscape of President's Park. During the Hayes administration the dilapidated Marine bandstand was removed from the south lawn, and another important popular use that has continued to the present was initiated — the Easter egg roll. In 1879 many of the gravel and concrete roadways established earlier in the decade in the lower south lawn were removed and the space converted into lawn. The mostly unused gateway at the southern end of the south lawn was also removed; as a result the iron railing and foot walk on this portion of the grounds were made continuous.

Throughout this period several proposals were made to address the problem of overcrowding at the President's House. Efforts in this regard continued almost uninterrupted until the end of the century. The poor condition of the White House itself and less than satisfactory sanitary conditions of the Tiber Canal led to the preparation of a study of alternative sites, looking to the eventual relocation of the presidential residence. Security was also an issue. Lafayette Square was guarded since Lincoln's assassination, and concerns increased after the shooting of President James A. Garfield in 1881. Privacy for the first family led to strict limits on public visitation.

In the 1870s an extensive gas lighting program was undertaken in Washington. It was regarded as both functional and attractive. A variety of cast-iron lampposts were installed. They ranged from classically simple to extravagantly complex. Electric lighting became feasible the following decade, and it was chosen to highlight the inaugural festivities of 1881. Later that year electric lights briefly illuminated Pennsylvania Avenue, but electric lighting did not become permanent until arc lights were installed in 1885.

Public use of the Ellipse appears to have been less than expected. A portion had been set aside for children's lawn games, but only two applications for playing tennis, croquet, or cricket were received, and neither was used. Permission was frequently sought to play sports far more damaging to the grounds — baseball and football — but these sports were not then allowed.

Plans continued to be developed for the various components of President's Park, but most were only partially implemented. Commissioner Nathaniel Michler urged the return to the principles of the L'Enfant plan, which had been ignored for several decades.

The Grounds of the White House

In 1852 Thomas U. Walter had proposed streets at the locations of what later became known as East and West Executive Avenues. East Executive Avenue was put through in 1866 and West Executive Avenue in 1871. They were connected to each other by the road at the south of the grounds of the President's House.

After the completion of the west wing of the Treasury Building in 1864, and especially after the construction of East Executive Avenue two years later, the east side of the President's House appeared to lack a distinctive façade and an appropriate entrance. In 1866 Commissioner Benjamin French consulted Alfred B. Mullett, who recommended the demolition of the existing east wing. Mullett designed a formal east entrance to the grounds, with a pool, fountain, central steps, and a walk leading to a new one-story colonnade on the eastern side of the building shown in a stereograph from ca. 1870 (figure 4-1).[2] The central steps divided after one flight. A second set of steps ended in two gates (one facing north and the other facing south), which in turn led to two walks, one continuing toward the north grounds, the other toward the south grounds. With this new public entrance, the need to control access to the Executive Mansion became evident. Three sets of gates regulated the entrance to the grounds on the north and east sides: (1) the north and northeast gates at Pennsylvania Avenue, which are still in place today; (2) the 1851 gates facing east and west and located closer to the north portico, where the anthemion parapet railing met the outer, lighter railing that lined the southern edge of the semicircular carriageway; and (3) the two gates at the east entrance previously described.

It is probable that at this time new fencing was installed. On the east side of the Executive Mansion the lighter, higher fencing that edged the south side of the carriageway was extended along the side of the house to the southernmost colonnade of the newly built east entrance. From that point an iron mesh fence ran alongside the house, continued along the driveway on the south side, bordered the conservatory area, and extended all the way west until it met the West Executive Avenue fence.[3]

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2. Mullet also prepared a plan to improve all the grounds around the President's House, but it was not implemented. Seale, *The President's House*, 433; *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 30, 1866, 547–48. For Alfred B. Mullett, see Dolkart, *The Old Executive Office Building*.

3. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 16, 2000.

With the end of the Civil War, the gala receptions of the pre-war years returned. The Marine Band was kept busy, and President and Mrs. Johnson supported and greatly helped the organization. The Marine Band programs were one of the few events the frail Mrs. Johnson could enjoy, as she could see and hear the band as it played under her window on the lawn.[4]

One of the most unusual programs took place on the south lawn of the President's House on July 28, 1866. It combined a gymnastic exhibition with an instrumental concert. The Marine Band provided the music for the gymnasts, and a clever system of identification was devised to let the audience know which pieces were being played.[5]

The conservatory and other parts of the west terrace were being repaired in January 1867, when the conservatory burned. Most of the plants were destroyed, either by fire or by being carried outdoors in the freezing weather. Among them was a sago palm that had belonged to George Washington and had been brought from Mount Vernon by Andrew Jackson. Greenhouse specialists submitted plans for a new structure with a frame of fireproof cast iron. The plans were rejected because of cost, but to some extent they served as a model for the conservatory that was rebuilt in 1867–68. Under the direction of Alexander McKericher, chief gardener after the departure of George McLeod, the rebuilt greenhouse was stocked with plants from Philadelphia and Long Island nurseries.[6]

In March 1867 Congress abolished the office of the commissioner of public buildings. From that date until 1933 control of federal land and buildings in Washington, D.C., came under the jurisdiction of the newly created Office of Public Buildings and Grounds under the Army Corps of Engineers. Commissioner French's responsibilities were taken over by Maj. Nathaniel Michler, Corps of Engineers. Early in 1867, before the transfer was made, Michler was asked to report on a site for a public park and a new presidential mansion.[7] For the new park, Michler strongly supported the valley of Rock Creek, with its "grand old trees" and "bold, rapid streams." For the presidential mansion, he examined four sites, including "Harewood" (the country home of W. W. Corcoran, east of the Capitol), which he seemed to

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4. Kirk, *Music at the White House*, 99.

5. Kirk, *Music at the White House*, 100.

6. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings*, Oct. 12, 1865, 3; Seale, *The President's House*, 433–34, 447, notes 34 and 59; Seale, *The White House*, 116.

7. Seale, *The President's House*, 451–52.

favor, and the home of Moncuse Robinson (adjoining the United States Military Asylum), which he also liked.[8] Rock Creek Park eventually became a reality, but a suburban presidential mansion did not.

While he never mentioned L'Enfant by name in his annual reports, Michler's respect for the integrity of the original plan is evident. In 1868 he derided current intrusions and complained that these violations hindered travel and blocked vistas. During this period he reported favorably on the condition of the grounds of the President's House but urged immediate attention to the south grounds.[9]

During Ulysses S. Grant's two-term administration the grounds of the President's House were extended farther south, a new system of roads and walkways was developed, and the landscape began to reflect the use of bright-colored bedding plants and other showy garden effects popular at the time. First Lady Julia Grant reputedly loved the Executive Mansion and brought improvements to the grounds, but wanted greater privacy for her family.[10]

Early in the Grant presidency the Jefferson wall was still in place, although cut down to half its original height. The wall was finally taken down around 1871, when West Executive Avenue was completed and joined with East Executive Avenue in a semicircle at approximately the present location. The east-west drive just below the Jefferson wall was also removed, and a new east-west private drive was constructed about 15 feet to its north, at the same location as the present-day drive.[11]

In his report for 1869 Michler described a great deal of repair work on the President's House and the addition of a "grapery" to the conservatory. He also mentioned unspecified "beneficial changes" in

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8. N. Michler, "Communication . . . relative to a suitable site for a public and presidential mansion," January 29, 1867; Seale, *The President's House*, 450–52. The 200-acre grounds at Harewood had been laid out by John Saul, but the house had not been built. Corcoran, a southern sympathizer, left the country during the Civil War, after which the government tried unsuccessfully to seize his property on Lafayette Square. See *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1930, s.v. "Corcoran, William Wilson," 440–41; and Saul, "Tree Culture," 54. According to Saul, Harewood later became the Soldiers' Home.

9. A major part of the report was devoted to the improvement of the major streets in Washington and was illustrated with proposed cross sections for Washington streets and comparative cross sections of Unter den Linden in Berlin and the Champs Elysées in Paris. Michler, "Report," in *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1867*, 524; ibid., *1868*, 9; ibid., *1869*, 498; Leach and Barthold, "L'Enfant Plan of the City of Washington" sec. 8, p. 20.

10. Seale, *The President's House*, 463; Sarah Amy Leach and Elizabeth Barthold, *Reservation No. 1: White House Grounds and Ellipse*, Historic American Buildings Survey, No. DC-689, 1993, p. 7.

11. Seale, *The President's House*, 463, 483, 503, note 32.

the garden.[12] By 1869 the small sea serpent fountain in the northern part of the south lawn had been replaced with a lower rockpile fountain, probably in the same basin.[13]

In his report for 1870–71 Michler observed that no material changes had taken place on the grounds and that they had been kept in as good order as possible, with the walks raked and rolled and the grass regularly trimmed. He noted that the completion of the "Executive Avenue," which was then under construction in connection with the new State, War, and Navy Building around the south and west sides of the President's House, would necessitate changes in the grounds. He also reported that the fountain (at this time only the small sea serpent fountain on the northern part of the south lawn was in place) had been re-cemented and new jets installed. The 1864 stable was also enlarged to accommodate additional horses.[14] In 1871–72 this stable had to be taken down to allow for the construction of the new State, War, and Navy Building. A new stable was built just south of the new complex on 17th Street opposite E Street, placing it within the Ellipse rather than on the grounds of the President's House. A handsome building with a fence in the forecourt and two piers lining the entryway, it would stand until 1911 when it was demolished.[15] However, maintenance, repairs, and additions to the 1872 stable continued to be listed under the grounds of the President's House in the annual reports.

Orville E. Babcock succeeded Michler as officer in charge. His report for 1871–72 indicates that substantial work had been completed on Executive Avenue and that some of the fill had been used for the White Lot (Ellipse). The avenue was opened through to Pennsylvania Avenue, at a location opposite today's Jackson Place, and a gate was erected at the western entrance to the avenue to match the one at the eastern side. Lampposts were also installed. The construction of Executive Avenue made it necessary to remove the "forcing house" on the grounds of the President's House, but it was rebuilt using the original materials. The construction activity on Executive Avenue understandably caused considerable disruption to the south grounds of the President's House, all of which was promptly repaired.

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12. Michler, "Report," in *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers*, Sept. 30, 1869, 501–2.

13. File, "Fountains," OC/WH.

14. Michler, "Report," in *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers*, Sept. 13, 1871, 977.

15. File and photographs, "White House Stables and Garages," Aug. 10, 1992, OC/WH. The footprint of the 1872 stable can be seen in J. Stewart's 1889 plan of President's Park, a detail of which is illustrated in figure 14 of NPS "Archeological Evaluation." There are also photographs of this stable at the OC/WH and ESF/WHL/NPS.

Babcock reported that these "inclosed grounds" had been graded, sown with grass seed and oats, and rolled. In addition, new walks were made and existing ones repaired. Surface drainage was put in at either side of the walks, and water pipes were also carried into the grounds. More than 60 trees of different varieties, varying from 3 to 8 inches in diameter, were transplanted from other reservations, including Lafayette Square, where they had become too crowded. In addition, a new 73-foot flagpole was put up.[16]

When East and West Executive Avenues were cut through, a fence was installed beginning at East Executive Avenue; as the south grounds were expanded, the entire area was eventually fenced. This fence (along East and West Executive Avenues) would remain in place until the 1930s. As the fence was being erected, three gates with piers were built. The southwest and the southeast gates were at the same location as they are today. The third gate, at the southernmost center point of the fence, was removed by the late 1870s.[17]

At this time the circular drive in front of the Executive Mansion had two fences. The outer fence (closest to the house) was the simpler and higher rail fence built in 1851. The inner fence was the anthemion railing built in 1829. Both of these fences were removed in 1872, thus increasing the view and making the north lawn appear more extensive.[18]

In 1872–73 Babcock reported major repairs to the greenhouse, including a new brick floor with greater structural stability than the previous wooden one. An iron framework for the greenhouse superstructure was planned to replace the wooden one but was not immediately installed because of cost. To the north, the old iron fence surrounding the inner circle of the driveway was taken out (apparently a continuation of work begun the previous year) and a granite curb put in its place, thus relieving this part of the landscape of a "contracted, gloomy, and close appearance." The drive was also graded and graveled, and the water supply from the Potomac was reconnected. (This water supply was used primarily for the

16. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1872*, "Appendix Y," 5–6, 9–10. It is unclear exactly what the "forcing house" was; it sounds like a place where plants were forced, but this would have been done in the greenhouses.

17. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 16, 2000.

18. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1872*, "Appendix Y," 6.

fountains on the grounds, watering the grounds, toilets and hand basins, dishwashing, etc., since springwater was used for drinking).[19]

The following year Babcock noted that replacing the wooden superstructure in the greenhouse with an iron one would cost $50,000, so this work was deferred until an additional appropriation could be made beyond the previous year's appropriation of $10,000. He also indicated that wild garlic, a problem on the grounds as well as at some other reservations, had been removed. For the first time, accurate maps were apparently prepared of the various reservations, including the grounds around the President's House. On these maps, roadways and walks, fountains, drinking fountains, drains, and gas and water pipes were indicated, as well as trees and shrubs with the common and scientific names for each.[20]

In 1874–75 the statue of Thomas Jefferson, placed in front of the President's House in 1848, was repaired and reinstalled in Statuary Hall (the Old House of Representatives) in the Capitol. Babcock again recommended that the superstructure of the greenhouse be rebuilt of iron and observed that the grounds around the President's House had been kept in good order. With the removal of the Jefferson statue, a new fountain with a brick and cement basin was added on the north grounds. A plan for a parterre of flowers around this fountain, drawn by John Stewart, U. S. surveyor, is illustrated in figure 4-2. An annotation on the plan indicates that Stewart himself implemented the design beginning September 18, 1873, although the Jefferson statue still would have been there at that time. As with most parterres, the flowers would have been set out on a yearly or seasonal basis, but the plantings are first recorded in 1874–75. Ailanthus trees and white poplars had begun to overshadow more valuable trees and were removed. The fountain immediately to the south of the President's House was repaired and fitted with a new jet. George H. Brown was appointed landscape gardener and purchased trees in nurseries in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and other states. To the north of the President's House new trees replaced old and decaying "soft" maples that had been damaged in a severe windstorm on July 4, 1874. Others were set out in the White Lot (Ellipse), as well as in the "inclosed" grounds.[21]

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19. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1873*, 9–10. Apparently this annual report was not included in the annual report of the chief of engineers.

20. No maps of this description and date have been located; *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1874*, "Appendix BB," 10–11, 13.

21. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1874, 1875*, "Appendix HH," 8–9, 10–11, 14, 15–16.

The following year a new fountain was installed in the lower portion of the south grounds. The bowl was the second largest in the city and included a French fountain jet composed of over 500 small sprays. The flagstones in many of the walks around the President's House were relaid.[22]

In June 1877 a visitor from New York State described the grounds of the President's House. Her first-person account provides a good description as they appeared at the beginning of the Hayes administration. The fountains fascinated her:

> Near the Mansion a gravelled walk winds from one side to the other among the trees, while the lower part of the grounds, more open than that nearer the house, is separated from it by a carriage-road. There are two fountains, one in each division. In the one nearest the house the water is thrown up in a multitude of fine streams which fall like the drops of a sudden summer shower, or are blown into a cloud of spray, sweeping far beyond the basin. . . .
>
> The fountain in the lower part of the grounds rises higher, in a slenderer column, and falls back into a circular, shallow pool with a pebbly edge, where come the jolly sparrows to make their morning toilets.
>
> If we pass round to the front of the White house, we find still another fountain, perhaps the most beautiful of them all. The water springs in a multitude of jets, from a cluster of mock plants, twelve or fifteen feet into the air, and resolves itself into millions of drops which fall in a swift plashing rain into the scalloped basin. The center jet is heavier and higher, and in the moonlight or starlight I have often seen it flashing like the gleam of a shining blade, when the rest of the fountain was quite invisible.[23]

The fountain at East Executive Avenue also impressed her because the water spray took the form of three plumes "like the crest of the Prince of Wales, on a gigantic scale."[24] The parterre in front of the house was removed during the Hayes administration, and the same visitor from New York seemed to regret it:

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22. *Annual Report, Commissioner of Public Buildings, 1876,* "Appendix GG," 4, 18–19. Babcock became embroiled in various scandals of the Grant administration and left his position a few days before the inauguration of Grant's successor, Rutherford B. Hayes; Seale *The President's House,* 482–64, 496.

23. Adele G., "Our Washington Letter," *Rockland Journal,* June 9, 1877, 1. The author seems to be describing the French gurg fountain, which was moved from the lower south grounds to the north grounds sometime early in the Hayes administration. See "File on White House Fountains," OC/WH.

24. Adele G., "Our Washington Letter," 1.

> Under the new *regime*, the flower-beds in the shapes of horse-shoes, stars, crescents, &c, which last year variegated this lawn, are banished, and sod from the common has taken their place. It may be an improvement, but those of the passers-by who love color for its own sake will miss the bright flowers. To be sure, petunias, lady-slippers, old maids, and phlox were apt to predominate, but as autumn came on the scarlet geranium and salvia made a brave show, the rich brown and deep crimson of the foliage plants, tempered the brilliant hues, while the "dusty miller" borders furnished a soft and pleasant gray to complete the harmony.[25]

President Hayes and his wife were committed gardeners, so it is not surprising that a considerable amount was accomplished on the grounds during his administration. On May 1, 1877, Henry Pfister, a horticulturist from Cincinnati, replaced James Nokes as gardener. By 1880 Pfister had hired a gardening staff of ten. President Hayes initiated the annual Easter egg roll on the south lawn in 1879. Because of assassination threats, public access to the grounds was strictly limited, and the Hayeses spent little time there, except to play croquet. Unlike his predecessor, President Hayes was not particularly enamored of either fountains or parterres. He had the small fountain on the upper part of the south lawn removed to put in a croquet lawn. In addition to eliminating Stewart's parterre on the north lawn, he had the elaborate French fountain jet moved from the lower fountain on the south lawn to the fountain on the north. He did, however, retain the parterres of roses and winding gravel paths on the south side of the President's House between the building and the drive. Thousands of tulip bulbs were imported from Holland. Under Hayes the conservatory was greatly enlarged, and a new rose house was constructed on the site of the present Rose Garden. It was in the conservatory and rose house rather than on the grounds that the Hayeses enjoyed family life and indulged their love of plants.[26] In March 1878 President Hayes planted an American elm near the northwest entrance to the grounds.[27]

Thomas Lincoln Casey replaced Orville Babcock in March 1877.[28] Casey's report for the fiscal year 1877–78 describes the removal of

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25. Adele G., "Our Washington Letter," 1.

26. Seale, *The President's House*, 502–6; NPS, "The President's Garden," 41–42.

27. File, "Trees Planted by Presidents in White House Grounds," OC/WH. Recent plans of the commemorative trees do not show this elm.

28. Casey's first report covered only four months and consisted primarily of recommendations. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1877*, "Appendix KK2 and 3."

both the small fountain on the upper lawn and the "dilapidated" bandstand in the middle of the south lawn, where Fredrika Bremer and others had enjoyed weekly Marine Band concerts during summer since the Tyler administration. He also noted the addition of some new flower beds.[29] Even though the bandstand was removed, it is quite likely that concerts in the south lawn continued since Casey purchased seats for the public and had them installed in the south portion of President's Park.[30]

In 1878–79 Casey called attention to the muddy condition of the drives leading to the front entrance of the President's House in winter and spring and recommended that they be paved. He also reported removing "unused gravel and concrete beds of roadways through the center of the semi-circular inclosure south of the Executive Mansion" and converting the area to grass.[31] It is possible that these were remnants of some of the roadways constructed as part of Downing's "Grounds South" in the early 1850s; but after the southern extension of the grounds of the President's House, they became part of those grounds.[32]

In 1879 many of the gravel and concrete roadways established earlier in the decade in the lower south lawn were removed and the space converted into lawn. The mostly unused gateway at the southern end of the south lawn was also removed, allowing the iron fence and foot walk on this portion of the grounds to be made continuous.[33]

During fiscal year 1879–80 the rose house was completed and the conservatory was extended up to the west wall of the main building. A thick belt of evergreen trees was planted around the stables to screen them from the ornamental grounds. Casey again urged the paving of the north drives. An attached report on water supply

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29. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1878,* "Appendix KK," 1347.

30. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1880,* 2339.

31. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1879,* "Appendix LL," 1879, 1882.

32. For a discussion of the 1873 "Premium Map" of the city of Washington, compiled by Joseph Enthoffer and published by E. F. M. Faehtz and Fred. W. Pratt, see NPS, "Archeological Evaluation," 42, figure 12. This map shows paths and drives, including a small ellipse at the southern end, in the "Grounds South" area. However, there are many uncertainties about the President's Park section of this map, and further study would be necessary before it could be accepted as an accurate representation of the Ellipse area or even the White House grounds in 1873.

33. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1879,* "Appendix LL," 1879.

indicated that the fountains on the grounds, if operated around the clock, would use 487,249 gallons of Potomac water daily.[34]

In March 1881 James A. Garfield became president, and Col. Almon F. Rockwell, a Garfield family friend, became officer in charge. During Garfield's only spring in the President's House dazzling displays of tulips continued, as in the Hayes administration.[35]

On September 19, 1881, after Garfield died, Chester A. Arthur was sworn into office. Arthur, a widower, did not seem to have a great interest in gardens but he inherited First Lady Lucretia Garfield's plans for a thorough overhaul of the interior of the President's House. Upon closer scrutiny the building appeared to be in such bad shape that Michler's study of alternative sites, prepared almost 15 years earlier, was reconsidered. It was becoming evident that overcrowding was a major issue in the Executive Residence. However, nothing was undertaken at this time other than renovation and interior decoration. At the President's House, Henry Pfister remained gardener, and George H. Brown, public gardener.[36]

For 1881–82 Rockwell did not identify any specific work on the grounds, but he noted that the stable and conservatories had been repaired.[37] In 1882–83 he reported that the stables had been enlarged and that further maintenance had been made to the conservatories. The iron fence at the north of the property was also painted and gilded.[38] In 1883 a new 40-foot stone-coped basin, larger than the previous one, was installed for the fountain north of the President's House to accommodate the full force of the jet.[39] Again in 1883–84, little was reported besides routine repairs to the stables and conservatories. However, Rockwell remarked that a plank walk that had been laid across the east-west road within the "inclosed" grounds was removed in the spring.[40]

In May 1885, following President Grover Cleveland's inauguration, John M. Wilson succeeded Rockwell.[41] Henry Pfister remained as

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34. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1880,* "Appendix NN," 2342, 2356.

35. NPS, "The President's Garden," 43.

36. Seale, *The President's House,* 529–51; Seale, *The White House,* 145–47; NPS, "The President's Garden," 44.

37. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1881,* "Appendix QQ," 2739.

38. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1883,* "Appendix RR," 2102.

39. File, "White House Fountains," OC/WH.

40. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1884,* "Appendix SS," 2340, 2347.

41. Dowd, *Records of Public Buildings and Public Parks,* 39.

gardener at the White House and George H. Brown as the public gardener.[42] During his first administration Cleveland appears to have spent little time outdoors. After his marriage to Frances Folsom, he built a house, known as Red Top, in what later became known as Cleveland Park. Here, the Clevelands spent summers and weekends.[43]

Wilson's report for 1884–85 noted routine care to the conservatories and the stables.[44] The next year continued attention was paid to the conservatories, as well as routine grounds maintenance. A small plan of President's Park was appended to the report, encompassing everything except Lafayette Square, but it is not very detailed.[45] Electric lighting became feasible during this period, and it was chosen for the inaugural festivities in 1881. Later on that year electric lights briefly illuminated Pennsylvania Avenue, but they would not become permanent until arc lights were installed in 1885. At this time arc lights were barely functional, with a conical hood from which dropped the carbon arcs. The open carbon arcs had a number of serious technological defects: an unsteady light source, poor distribution of light, and the necessity of daily trimming by a light tender.[46]

In 1886–87 Wilson reported that important new plantings had been made on the White House grounds, including ornamental flower beds designed by Henry Pfister. New trees, numerous rhododendrons, and other ornamental shrubs were set out. Theft of plants was reported for the first time.[47] In 1888–89 the greenhouses were repaired, and a new superstructure was built on the brick portion of the north greenhouse west of the conservatory. Additional flower beds and trees were planted, a few dead trees were cut down, and six large trees-of-heaven (ailanthus) were removed. The asphalt drive to the front of the President's House was repaired, and the iron fence on this side was repainted. Wilson recommended building an office for

42. NPS, "The President's Garden," 45.

43. Seale, *The President's House*, 552–73.

44. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1885*, "Appendix VV," 2509–10.

45. A list of trees and shrubs in President's Park was published, but it is impossible to identify the specific locations of the plants. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1886*, "Appendix TT," 2076, 2086, 2099.

46. Noreen, *Public Street Illumination*, 23-26.

47. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1887*, "Appendix WW," 2570, 2582–83; McPeck, "The President's Garden," 45.

the president on the site of the greenhouses, opposite the State, War, and Navy Building.[48]

Benjamin Harrison, grandson of William Henry Harrison, assumed the presidency in 1889. Although First Lady Caroline Harrison took a greater interest in all details of the President's House and its practical functioning than any previous first lady, gardening did not seem to be her forte. However, with the help of Frederick Owen, an architect in the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, she conceived a grandiose plan for enlarging the Executive Mansion.[49]

Mrs. Harrison's proposal called for expanding the rectangular White House building, with the original house remaining as the northern centerpiece. The conservatories to the west would be removed. Two buildings larger than the President's House would face each other across the south lawn. They would be connected to the house from the east and west ends by two-story structures, domed and colonnaded, with cylindrical sections placed halfway in each. The building on the east would become the Historical Art Wing, while that on the west would be the Official Wing and would house the president's offices. Mrs. Harrison's death stopped further discussion of the proposal, but plans to enlarge the President's House continued to be developed through the end of the century.[50]

During the Harrison presidency Oswald H. Ernst was appointed officer in charge of public buildings and grounds. His first report for 1889–90 (prepared jointly with Wilson) describes the grounds of the President's House in considerable detail. To the north extensive repairs were made to the flagstone sidewalks from the gates to the entrance. The asphalt walkways on the east and west sides were completely reconstructed. West Executive Avenue was resurfaced with a heavy coating of good binding gravel, and the wooden footwalks across it were removed and replaced with bluestone walks. The gravel walks south of the mansion were also recoated. All the ailanthus trees were taken out, and other trees were thinned. The spring flower beds featured some 23,000 hyacinths, tulips, and crocuses, followed by seasonal decorative plantings in summer,

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48. During 1887–88 only routine maintenance was reported. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1888,* "Appendix ZZ"; ibid., *1889,* "Appendix AAA," 2844–45.

49. Seale, *The President's House,* 574–601; Seale, *The White House,* 150–53. The Frederick D. Owen/Caroline Harrison plan would have eliminated all of the original south lawn. Although not a gardener, Mrs. Harrison was an orchid lover. For a dinner for the Mexican ambassador, Henry Pfister, still the gardener, ordered dozens of orchids from the Jardin de Plantas in Mexico City. NPS, "The President's Garden," 47.

50. Seale, *The White House, 150–53.*

along with subtropical specimens from the greenhouses. The greenhouses and stable were repaired. In 1889 President Harrison's grandchildren, Benjamin Harrison McKee and Mary Lodge McKee, planted two scarlet oaks *(Quercus coccinea)*, one of which still stands near the northeast gate to the grounds.[51] An 1890 photograph taken by Frances Benjamin Johnston (figure 4-3) from below the pool on the south lawn, shows the grounds during the Harrison administration.[52]

That same year Frances Benjamin Johnston published an article giving a few more details about the gardens at the President's House:

> There is seldom any intrusion on the peace and quiet of the President's Park. . . . Sunshine and warm weather usually lure a few loiterers to the graveled walks, but only gala occasions bring great crowds to the White House Grounds. On Saturday afternoons in July and August, the famous Marine Band occupies an improvised stand on the south lawn, and here discourses delightful music for the public pleasure. These open-air concerts are popular rather than fashionable, and attract a multitude of promenaders, all in holiday attire.
>
> The southern inclosure includes the greater portion of the private grounds, and is laid out in winding, graveled walks, provided with comfortable park benches, and shaded by stately trees. Near the house, two mounds, said to be artificial, rise above the level of the smooth slope, while a velvet lawn lies between, giving an unobstructed river vista. The many flower-beds are gorgeous with color from hyacinth time in the spring, until the chrysanthemums burn out their red and yellow fires in the fall. Clematis vines, starred with blue and white, clamber over every railing, and magnificent roses — grown like trees, in the English fashion — bloom in the great beds on the east. A profusion of other choice flowers always fills the borders and ornamental plots, but the pride of the garden during the last administration was Mrs. Cleveland's favorite, the saucy pansy. Such beds and beds of them! and such pansies! Never were finer yellow and purple beauties coaxed up from the

51. File, "Trees Planted by Presidents in the White House Grounds," OC/WH; NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds."

52. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1890*, "Appendix BBB" 3535, 3548–49. A list of the trees and shrubs was also appended to the report, but they were not broken down by park as in 1886.

> dull earth to please the dainty taste of a more charming mistress.[53]

Repairs were made to the stable and the greenhouses in 1890–91. Standard maintenance was given to the lawns, walks, and gutters, and a number of young trees and shrubs were planted. There were some 33,000 hyacinths, tulips, and crocuses in the flower beds in the spring, followed by some 30,000 decorative plants in the summer.[54] In 1891–92 the greenhouses were again repaired, and an addition was made to the stable. Massive numbers of bulbs were planted. The grounds were maintained as usual.[55]

In 1893 President Grover Cleveland began his second administration and reappointed John M. Wilson as officer in charge. George H. Brown remained the public gardener. The Clevelands were not interested in the grounds, but First Lady Frances Folsom Cleveland enjoyed the conservatory and frequently spent time there with her two small children.[56] The report for fiscal year 1892–93 identified repairs to the asphalt paving on the grounds north of the President's House. It recommended that the mounds to the south be graded and shaped, that the gravel walks be removed and replaced with artificial or granolithic stone, and that the stable be moved from the grounds near the State Department. The flower beds around both fountains were removed, and 14 new beds were laid out. The old superstructures of the rose house and the camellia house were taken down and new iron, wood, and glass ones built.

Acknowledging that earlier efforts to enlarge the President's House had failed, Wilson recommended that office space be allocated to the president in the State, War, and Navy Building.[57] Plans were developed that called for reopening the south entrance gate that had been removed in the 1870s and redesigning the lower south grounds. These plans emphasized office space and entertainment instead of the art history that had been the focus of Caroline Harrison's earlier

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53. Frances Benjamin Johnston, "The White House," *Demerest's Family Magazine* (May 1890), 389–90.

54. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1891*, "Appendix EEE," 3918.

55. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1892*, 3396–98. Nearly 43,000 hyacinths, tulips, and crocuses were planted all on the grounds of the President's House.

56. Seale, *The President's House*, 602–15.

57. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1893*, "Appendix CCC," 4315–16, 4330–31.

proposal. The new plans showed little concern for providing the first family with private space on the grounds.[58]

In 1893 Mrs. Frances Folsom Cleveland planted two Japanese maples near the south fountain; one is still standing.[59] In 1893–94 the conservatory was repaired, while recommendations continued to be made for a new superstructure. Wilson again urged separate office space for the president in a new building. Wilson noted routine maintenance of the grounds north and south of the President's House, planting of flower beds and other gardening tasks, and repairs of the stable. Plans were made to replace the flag pavement leading from the Pennsylvania Avenue entrances to the north portico with granolithic pavement. Wilson reiterated his recommendations of the previous year about regrading the mounds and removing the gravel walks and replacing them with stone.[60]

In 1894–95 the decayed superstructure of the south section of the camellia house was replaced with an iron one. The conservatory and other greenhouses were also repaired. Wilson repeated his advice to construct a separate building for presidential offices, specifying a granite structure within the grounds opposite the Treasury Building. For the grounds, he noted that the old rubble masonry wall that supported the iron fence on the north side had been repointed and the fence painted. The flag pavement had been replaced with granolithic pavement. Part of the main south drive had also been asphalted.[61] The next year Wilson again reported repairs to the greenhouses, urged a new iron superstructure for the conservatory, and recommended a separate presidential office wing on the east side. On the north and south grounds brick guttering was repaired and the asphalt roads at the entrances to the north grounds were resurfaced. A number of magnificent trees were damaged and others uprooted and destroyed by gales in May 1896.[62]

In 1896–97 the greenhouses, damaged by a hurricane on September 29, 1896, were repaired. As a result of the hurricane, 50 of the finest and oldest trees on the grounds of the President's House were destroyed, and at least 125 others were seriously damaged. In

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58. Bruce Price, "Proposed Enlargement of the President's Residence," *Harper's Weekly*, Nov. 28, 1896, 1174–75.

59. File, "Trees Planted by Presidents in White House Grounds," OC/WH; NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds."

60. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1894*, "Appendix CCC," 3266–67, 3273–74.

61. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1895*, "Appendix DDD," 4130–31, 4139–40.

62. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1896*, "Appendix DDD," 3976–77, 3985.

addition, falling trees smashed portions of the iron fence at the front of the property, requiring extensive repairs. In June the elm trees were sprayed with a "decoction of London purple and water" (an arsenate-based mixture) to stop the ravages of the elm beetle. In the fall thousands of spring bulbs were planted, timed to bloom with pansies, forget-me-nots, and daisies. In May and June the bulbs were all taken up and stored, and the beds were replanted with summer bedding plants. In his annual report Wilson again pleaded for a new superstructure for the conservatory. Extensive repairs were made to the stable, which Wilson again advised moving. He also repeated the recommendation for a separate presidential office building.[63]

William McKinley became president in 1897. At his inauguration, Theodore A. Bingham became officer in charge of public buildings and grounds. First Lady Ida McKinley, whose health was frail, took little interest in the house or its grounds, although she appreciated the roses from the conservatory. Henry Pfister, who remained as White House gardener, made daily floral arrangements for her.[64]

In 1897–98 Bingham reported that necessary repairs had been made to the stables and greenhouses and repeated earlier recommendations about replacing the conservatory superstructure. Routine maintenance was reported, as well as the usual extensive planting of flower beds for spring and summer bloom. Three old, decayed maple trees were removed. On March 18, 1898, President McKinley planted a pin oak at the northwest corner of the mansion. Fences were painted. On Easter Monday the traditional egg rolling took place on the south lawn (figure 4-4).[65]

In 1898–99 Bingham described repairs to the asphalt north drive of the President's House and to the asphalt walks in the north and west parts of the grounds. Eight iron posts with electric arc lamps were installed in September 1898, most of them on the front (north) side. A total of 20 electric arc lights had been approved for the Executive Mansion grounds; however, legal questions about laying cable across the grounds temporarily delayed installation. The grounds of the Executive Mansion had eight electric arc lights by 1899. President's Park south of the White House had nine lights, and Lafayette Square, six. Seventy-one gas burners still contributed light to the Executive Mansion grounds as well. More lights were added at the east entrance of the White House in 1899, along with "boulevard lamps"

63. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1897,* "Appendix BBB," 4031–32, 4038–39.

64. Seale, *The President's House,* 619–20.

65. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1898,* 3665–66, 3722–23, 3732–35, 3742–43.

to the tops of the "two stone pillars at the east end of the mansion"; two older lampposts were removed.[66] By 1899 the Saturday afternoon Marine Band concerts had resumed. The band performed on a sectional platform that could be removed. Bingham reported that the platform was enlarged by 12 sections with 13 additional trestles, increasing the size by 700 square feet, although the original dimensions were not reported.[67] The children's egg roll on Easter Monday continued. More repairs were made to the greenhouses and the conservatory.[68]

The report for 1899–1900 documented that the greenhouses were repaired again, and it included an illustration of the greenhouse complex at its greatest extent (figure 4-5). The 1900 egg roll was reported and illustrated. Stables were repaired, fencing was painted, and trees, vines, shrubs, and decorative spring bulbs and summer bedding plants were maintained. Another illustration (figure 4-6) shows the north side of the President's House with its fountain and planting beds. A severe windstorm on August 2, 1899, damaged numerous trees, and a fine yellow buckeye on the north lawn came down. The annual report includes a complete list of the trees and shrubs in the grounds, keyed to a map prepared by Henry Pfister, still the head gardener.[69]

In 1900 Theodore Bingham and Frederick D. Owen developed plans to enlarge the White House on a grand scale. Derived from the earlier plan for Mrs. Harrison, this design called for an open quadrangle with large side wings added to the original house. Each wing would be crowned with a shallow dome. The design called for elaborate entrances, two grand rooms, and expanded private living quarters, but no private space on the grounds. Conflict between Bingham and Senator James McMillan, coupled with the President McKinley's assassination, delayed and eventually derailed the implementation of this design.[70] Another design by Paul J. Pelz, one of the architects of

66. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1899,* "Appendix CCC," 3815–17; Noreen, *Public Street Illumination,* 28–29.

67. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1899,* 3812.

68. Beginning in the 1890s, the annual reports were illustrated with drawings and photographs. The Washington Monument was featured most prominently, but the 1898–99 document includes a photograph of the west "L" of the conservatory at the President's House. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1899,* 3814–15, 3827–28.

69. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1900,* "Appendix AAA," 5232–33, 5244–49. This map is too detailed to be read in reduction.

70. Seale, *The White House,* 159–65.

the Library of Congress, proposed a presidential mansion on Meridian Hill, but this proposal was also defeated.[71]

In 1900–1901 the greenhouses, the conservatory, the stables, and the north fence were repaired. The usual spring and summer plantings were carried out. A new shrub bed was laid out, and another bed was planted with Japanese lily bulbs. The annual egg roll took place on Easter Monday.[72]

Lafayette Square

Lafayette Square was not mentioned in the initial reports of the chief of engineers. However, the damage to the site that occurred during the Civil War, when troops trampled flower beds and hung laundry from the equestrian sculpture of Andrew Jackson, seems to have been fully repaired by 1868.[73] By this time the wide walkway from the main entrance opposite the President's House was lined with small and very neat evergreen shrubs, and fairly good-sized deciduous trees were thriving.

In his report for fiscal year 1870–71 Michler describes the square,

> No more beautifully picturesque spot can be visited in the city. The trees and shrubs and bushes are of the choicest species, and most artistically are they arranged in inviting groups. A most charming place for recreation. It has but few defects; among them the absence of under-drainage, which is absolutely necessary, owing to the very level nature of the ground.[74]

The following year Orville E. Babcock addressed some of the defects Michler had identified. An underground drainage system installed in 1857–58 was replaced because it was not working well. Inadequate drainage, however, would continue to be a problem for many years. Eight new lampposts, two of which were combined with drinking fountains, were set up. The walks had originally been made of "very coarse, unscreened gravel," which was very unpleasant to walk on;

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71. Seale, *The President's House*, 616–45.

72. The Japanese lily bulbs were a gift of Dr. John D. Jones of Washington. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1901*, "Appendix DDD," 3694–95, 3703–4.

73. Barthold, "Lafayette Square (Reservation Number 10)," 6.

74. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1871*, 977. Michler also recommended a different material for the walks and the replacement of the iron fence with a lighter and more ornamental one.

an attempt was made to improve their surfaces by rolling them with a 3,600-pound roller, but to no effect. They were then taken up and the gravel thoroughly screened and relaid with the coarse gravel at the bottom and the fine gravel at the top, interlaid with very fine gravel that had a binding quality. The walks were then rolled again. The result was a "hard, compact, and smooth foot-way." Trees were also thinned, and a new watchman's lodge was constructed on the north side of the park, with space for the watchman, a toolshed, and men's and ladies' restrooms at each end of the structure, with their own walks and evergreen screenings. Finally, two bronze vases, the gift of Secretary of the Navy George M. Robeson, were placed on granite pedestals in the park.[75] These combined efforts in 1871–72 probably represented more work than had been done on Lafayette Square in many years, but did not constitute a "redesign." The walks apparently were put back in the same place.

In 1872–73 the drainage was further improved by the addition of 17 brick traps, which were connected with the main drainage system. The trees were trimmed and the walks rolled. In 1873–74 Babcock requested $2,000 for routine maintenance and $5,000 for removing the "cumbersome" iron fence and replacing it with a post-and-chain fence. The report for 1874–75 notes that the park had received proper care and attention. Ten settees were added, and when the rough gravel worked its way to the surface of the walks, it was replaced with finer gravel and rolled.[76]

During the following year bedding plants were set along the walks and in planting beds. Two prairie dogs were placed in a cage in the park.[77] In 1876–77 Babcock remarked that the decaying gun carriages surrounding the Jackson statue had been replaced. Babcock was interested in encouraging the public to visit the park. He believed that making the park more accessible would help compensate for the negative impression of the locked gates around the White House.[78]

Thomas L. Casey's recommendations for the last four months of fiscal year 1876–77 were quite extensive.[79] He praised the care that had been spent on the park and its attractive appearance, but noted that drainage was still a problem, as were the surfaces of the walks.

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75. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1872*, 6–7.

76. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1873*, 4. Maps were made in 1874, but they have not been located. Ibid., *1874*, 11, 14; ibid., *1875*, 8, 11.

77. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1876*, 12.

78. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 14.

79. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1877*, 7.

The grass needed top dressing, and some of the flower beds were too deeply shaded.[80]

In 1877–78 additional tile drains and water catches were installed, and the lawns were top-dressed with rich compost during the winter. The lodge was painted and equipped with new gutters and downspouts.[81] The following year the walks were "recoated with a dressing of screened gravel where needed." Casey's report provides important clues to the appearance of Lafayette Park at this time. The existence of large old trees can be inferred from his statement that portions of the lawns were too deeply shaded to permit the growth of grasses. He also indicated that many magnolias, English yews, and half-hardy evergreen trees that had successfully weathered earlier winters were seriously damaged during the severe winter of 1878–79. Casey referred to "oval spaces on the lower walks," where English holly had become overgrown, and which he replanted with flowers. These sound like the oval spaces inserted into walkways that appear on earlier depictions of Lafayette Square, going back to the Boschke map of 1857 (figure 3-8). Work completed at this time included additional care of the lawn: some of the shaded areas were again top-dressed, this time with rich surface loam, and sown with orchard grass and bluegrass seed. Where the lawn was not too shaded, conditions improved. Ornamental foliage and flowering plants were put in. Settees were placed in all of the parks, and the fences were painted.[82] In 1879–80 several decaying and unhealthy trees were removed; maintenance continued on the lawn; a large number of deciduous trees, shrubs, and evergreens were planted, and walks were repaired.[83]

In his first annual report for fiscal year 1880–81, Almon F. Rockwell recorded that all drainage pipes and drains had been removed and replaced with 675 feet of 11-inch terra-cotta pipe drain. A 5-foot-wide asphalt walk was also installed, apparently running diagonally from the northwest to the southeast corner.[84] In September 1881 John Stewart prepared a plan shown in figure 4-7. Updated in 1915 to include the sculptures at the four corners of the park, there is little difference between it and the Boschke plan of 1857 (see figure 3-8).

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80. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1877,* 1.

81. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1878,* 1345.

82. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1879,* 1881–82.

83. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1880,* 2341.

84. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1881,* 2713–14.

In 1881–82 the lodge was repainted and 258 cubic yards of screened gravel were used to repair worn-out places in the walks. The fact that there were many old trees in the park is clear: tree branches overhanging the walks were trimmed, the branches of a number of "old maple and other trees" were thinned, and the trees were "headed back."[85] Substantial work was also completed in 1882–83, including asphalting another walk and repairing the watchman's lodge and drainage system. Some of the walks, probably the narrower ones around the periphery of the park, were still graveled, and the surface had to be repaired frequently with freshly screened gravel. Caterpillar cocoons were also removed from evergreens. In the fall the lawns were spread with fresh compost. The flower beds were spread with a top dressing of marl and planted in the fall with bulbs and in the spring with bedding plants.[86]

In 1883–84 a 5-foot-wide asphalt walk was laid on the graveled walk leading from the central southern entrance at Pennsylvania Avenue to the central northern entrance at H Street. Close to 1,500 linear feet of additional brick gutters were also installed. The graveled walks were repaired, and the flower beds were planted as in the previous year.[87] The following year the park received routine care, with manure spread on the lawn and spring bulbs and summer flowers planted. The gravel walks continued to be repaired and rolled. It was proposed to keep the park, previously closed at 11 P.M., open all night.[88]

At about this time (in 1885) the location of Jackson's statue was first questioned when an appropriate place for the statue of Lafayette in the park became an issue. The congressional committee decided to locate the statue at a spot midway along Pennsylvania Avenue, between the Executive Mansion and the Jackson statue. Tennessee Senator William Brimmage Bate strongly opposed it, complaining that the Lafayette statue would obstruct the view of Jackson.[89]

In 1885–86 routine maintenance was reported, and a small plan was included. It does not differ from the Stewart 1881 plan, but is less detailed. It also contains a list of the trees and shrubs then in

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85. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1882*, 2735–6.

86. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1883*, 2096.

87. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1884*, 2441.

88. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1885*, 2505.

89. Tim Kerr, "The History of the Equestrian Statue of General Andrew Jackson, Lafayette Park, Washington, D.C." (WHL/NPS, Aug. 1999), 45–46.

Lafayette Square.[90] The 1886–87 report notes that there were 172 settees in the park,[91] and it provides a brief description of Lafayette Square, as follows:

> This park . . . was one of the first city parks elaborately improved and planted, and contains a choice collection of evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs, including many fine specimens of rare species not generally found north of Washington; inclosed with a heavy ornamental iron railing; gas-lamps around and through the park; two drinking fountains; lawn surfaces planted chiefly on margins of walks, and interspersed with flower beds and borders for summer planting of exotic flowering and foliaged plants. Two massive antique bronze vases of elaborate design on granite pedestals grace the park at intersections of walks near the eastern and western entrances. The equestrian statue of General Jackson, by Clark Mills, on a white marble pedestal, surrounded by four field pieces of artillery (captured by General Jackson) occupies the center of the park; gravel and asphalt walks are in good condition, and a watchman's lodge, with necessary public conveniences, is located in this park.[92]

In 1888–89 the iron fence around Lafayette Square was removed and sent to the Gettysburg Memorial Association for use at the National Cemetery on the top of Culp's Hill. This was supposedly done at the instigation of Daniel Sickles, former New York Congressman and Union general, who had lived on Lafayette Square and had been wounded at Gettysburg. During this period iron perimeter fences were frequently removed from parks, not only in Washington, but in other cities as well. Such iron fences, even if they had gates that were always open, were perceived as both ugly and "undemocratic." As a replacement for the fence, the officer in charge, John Wilson, requested an appropriation to install granite curbing around Lafayette Square.[93]

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90. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1886,* 2078–79, 2102.

91. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1887,* 2578.

92. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1887,* 2595. This quotation demonstrates that the area was referred to as both a "square" and a "park" at this time.

93. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1889.* The iron fence from Lafayette Square is still in place at Gettysburg National Military Park. Recently acquired current photographs of it are located at ESF/WHL/NPS; additional close-up photographs were taken by Cynthia Zaizevsky. The fence is on the west side of the National Cemetery (not on Culp's Hill, as stated on the 1889 annual report) to separate it from the adjacent town cemetery. It is probable that this fence was fabricated from the design by Calvert Vaux for Downing, since the finials are in the shape of an ear of corn, as described by Vaux, although they are very stylized. (See Calvert Vaux to Marshall P. Wilder, Aug. 18, 1852, J. Jay Smith

In 1889 two new short gravel-surfaced walks were installed at the centers of the east and west sides of the park for easier public access. Graveled walks and the drainage system were repaired. The foundation for the sculpture to the memory of General Lafayette was under construction at the main entrance to the park on Pennsylvania Avenue, but the following year these foundations were taken up and moved to the new location, presumably to avoid blocking the view of the Jackson figure.[94] In March and April 1891 the marble pedestal was set into place, and the bronze figure of Lafayette was erected. The office of the commissioner of public buildings and grounds then sodded the mound and enclosed it with a granite curb, reconstructed the surrounding gravel walks, and laid a new asphalt footpath at the north side of the statue. Portions of the southeast corner of the park were so densely shaded that grass would not grow, and a ground cover of hardy ivy and vincas was used instead. Palms and other foliage plants occupied the spot at the main entrance where the foundation had originally been.[95]

The following year granite curbing was installed around the perimeter as a replacement for the iron fence that had been removed. At the southeast corner near the Lafayette sculpture, two granite-block piers with wing walls were constructed, and an ornamental lamppost and a gas lamp were installed on each of them.[96] In 1893–94 Wilson reported that the asphalt walks in the square were repaired and resurfaced, and that the vases were filled with handsome plants. The drainage system was also improved, and a new gravel path was constructed east of the lodge. In the space at the main entrance originally intended for the Lafayette sculpture, evergreen trees and yuccas were planted. Five old trees were removed.[97] In 1895–96

Collection. Site visit to Gettysburg National Cemetery, Cynthia Zaitzevsky, March 27, 1995.) For information on Sickles, who in 1859 killed his wife's lover in Lafayette Square, see Nat Brandt, *The Congressman Who Got Away with Murder* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991) and Barthold, "Lafayette Square," 5. The fence around Lafayette Park was apparently removed because of pressure from residents; if this was the case, it was not mentioned in the annual reports; NPS, *Lafayette Park*, 20. For Boston's iron fences during the period, see Cynthia Zaitzevsky Associates, "Dorchester Heights/Thomas Park, Boston National Historical Park, Cultural Landscape Report" (National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1993).

94. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1890*, 3542–43.

95. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1891*, 3912–13. The sculptors were Jean Alexandre, Joseph Falguière, and Marius Jean Antonin Mercié. The architect was Paul Pujol. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 372–73.

96. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1892*, 3390.

97. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1894*, 3279.

repairs were made to the asphalt paths and the lodge was painted. Electric lighting was recommended to replace the gas lamps.[98]

During 1896–97 the iron fence around the Jackson statue was painted, a sewer was repaired, the drinking fountains were put in good order, and some of the asphalt walks were resurfaced. The gaslights were gradually phased out.[99] The following year the exterior of the watchman's lodge was repainted. Eight lampposts, two drinking fountains, and the high iron fence enclosing the sculpture of General Jackson were restored.[100] In 1898–99 the fence was painted, worn places in the asphalt walks were repaired, and a new sewer was laid. In addition, the yearly report included a long general statement about the Washington parks and a drawing showing samples of stone and cement coping around the various reservations, including Lafayette Square.[101] In 1899–1900 worn places in the asphalt walks were repaired, and the fences around the Jackson statue and the lodge were painted. The District government replaced the old brick sidewalk around the park with cement pavement, requiring the temporary removal of the granite coping. Some grading in connection with this work was planned.[102] In 1900–1901 the grading forced by the sidewalk reconstruction was completed. Drainpipe was also laid, and repairs were made to the watchman's lodge. New brass labels were also placed on some of the trees, giving their scientific and common names.[103]

President's Park South

It is unclear whether the construction and planting of the "Grounds South" carried out in the 1850s under Downing's plan had been totally destroyed during the Civil War. The site had possibly developed such severe drainage problems by the late 1860s that it had to be entirely reconstructed. In his first report, Michler, like his predecessors, described the "disgusting" condition of the Washington Canal and urged that it either be improved or converted into a

98. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1896*, 3974, 3995.

99. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1896*, 4045, 4057.

100. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1898*, 3726.

101. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1899*, 3822–27, 3831.

102. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1900*, 5251. An illustration of one of the planted urns in Lafayette Park was also included in this report.

103. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1901*, 3705.

sewer.[104] In 1869 he reiterated the problem, but he indicated that a select committee had been appointed to address the issue.[105] The following year the committee proposed dredging the canal. Michler also recommended substantial appropriations to carry out the improvements adopted for the grounds south of the President's House.[106] In 1870–71 Michler noted that little had been done during the year on the "White Lot"; he had submitted a report, plans, and estimates for improving the Washington Canal but did not describe his suggestions.[107] There was no discussion of the Washington Canal in the report for 1871–72, but the following year it was converted into a trunk sewer.[108]

Over the next several years the annual reports record extensive filling, especially between 1873 and 1878. It is probable that the excavation for the massive State, War, and Navy Building, which began in 1871, provided additional fill for the White Lot. In 1872–73 Babcock indicated that the "grounds south of the Executive Mansion" (probably the Ellipse, since he did not specify "inclosed" grounds) had been gradually filled both by the purchase of soil and by refuse and construction debris dumped by citizens. The soil was graded as it arrived on the site.[109] The same kind of filling was reported in 1873–74.[110] Filling continued in the lower portions of these grounds in 1875–76, and roadways were repaired.[111] Large quantities of fill consisting of soil and street sweepings were deposited at the site during the first eight months of the fiscal year 1876–77.[112] Much apparently had been accomplished by the summer of 1877, when a journalist from New York, described the White Lot's "pleasantly varied surface, with clusters of fine trees here and there, and a beautifully kept greensward."[113]

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104. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1868,* 16.

105. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1869,* 498–501.

106. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1870,* 520–2.

107. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1871,* 976–7, 980–1.

108. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1872;* Reps, *Monumental Washington,* 59.

109. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1873,* 11.

110. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1874,* 3; the Ellipse was not mentioned in the annual report for 1874–75.

111. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1876,* 4.

112. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1877,* 6.

113. Adele G., "Our Washington Letter," 1.

By 1877–78 Casey reported that most of the White Lot had been filled to within about 3 feet of grade, the more sunken portions being primarily along 17th Street. He also noted another development:

> A plan of improvement after the project of Downing and as approved by President Fillmore was commenced during the year. It consists substantially of a large field or parade some 17 acres in extent, and elliptical in shape, which will occupy the center of the reservation, the remaining portions of the ground being reserved for foliage trees and shrubs, and shaded walks and drives. During the past year some 250 feet in depth of the upper part of the parade was graded, sodded, and brought into grass-land. The construction of the parade will be continued the coming year.[114]

The phrase "after the project of Downing" may be significant. A copy of the approved plan dated September 29, 1877, is illustrated in figure 4-8. Although it shows all of President's Park, with the exception of Lafayette Square, it is probable that only the grounds to the south of the White House enclosure reflect a new scheme. This plan differs significantly from both Downing's original plan (figure 3-2) and from the Boschke map surveyed in the late 1850s (figure 3-8). Downing's original "ellipse" was actually a circle; on the north it would have come all the way up to the Jefferson wall, and on the south it would have extended to Constitution Avenue. The ellipse shown on the Boschke map was much smaller and although it extended to Constitution on the south, it barely reached D Street on the north. The Casey-Hayes plan, then, represents a further modification. (This report, incidentally, seems to be the first place where the word "ellipse" is used.) In April 1877 Casey sought the advice of the Chicago landscape architectural firm of H. W. S. Cleveland and William Merchant French for the redesign of the White Lot, but this plan has been lost. At the same time William Saunders, a local landscape designer, was approached but he also turned down an offer to design the south grounds.[115]

During fiscal year 1878–79 contracts for filling, grading, and sowing the Ellipse were carried out. In addition, 34,500 cubic yards of earth were brought in to bring the grounds adjacent to 17th Street up to a grade where they could receive topsoil.[116] The following year the entire site was graded (except for an area in the center where a sewer was being constructed), covered with topsoil, and seeded. The

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114. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1878*, 1347.

115. NPS, "The President's Garden," 39–40.

116. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1879*, 1879.

western half of the 50-foot-wide roadway around it was completed.[117] In 1880 the two gatehouses that had been designed by Charles Bulfinch for the Capitol grounds, but that had been removed and put into storage in 1874, were installed at the southeast and southwest corners of the Ellipse, where they still stand.[118] Three gateposts of the same stone as the gatehouses, and presumably also from the Capitol, were moved to the southeast corner at the same time. Only one of them is within the grounds of the Ellipse; the other two are on the south side of Constitution Avenue on the Washington Monument grounds. Rockwell reported further progress in 1880–81. The central area, left ungraded the previous year, was graded and sowed in lawn seed and winter rye. The elliptical drive was completed, and elms were planted on both sides. On the west side, outside the drive, grading, topsoiling, and planting were still in progress.[119]

The following year the unfinished roadbeds and walks on the east side were surfaced and rolled. Trees and shrubs were planted in the northeastern section. In a small area in the southeastern corner roads and walks were staked and excavated. Drainage work also continued. Topsoil was spread in the area abutting 17th Street, and it was sowed with bluegrass and winter rye. Part of the northern end was still occupied by the workshops and stone sheds used during the construction of the State, War, and Navy Building. The completed sections of the Ellipse were mowed and weeded.[120]

Early photographs of the Ellipse are rare. Figure 4-9, probably from 1880, shows the nearly finished elliptical roadway, but almost no trees. One Bulfinch gatehouse is visible at the southeast corner, and the executive stable can be seen at the northwest corner; the south wing of the State, War, and Navy Building appears to be finished. At the northeast corner, close to where the Sherman Statue was later erected, the Treasury Department's photographic building stands.

In 1882–83 the southwestern corner of the grounds was completed, and a new roadway was put in from 17th and B Streets, including cobblestone gutters. About 1,000 trees and shrubs were transplanted

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117. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1880,* 2339.

118. Four other Bulfinch gateposts are located today at the New York Avenue entrance to the National Arboretum. Another is located at Constitution Avenue and Seventh Street near the National Gallery and National Archives; Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia,* 7, 151; Kirker, *The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch,* 340, photograph, 1900.

119. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1881,* 2711.

120. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1882,* 2733–4.

from other reservations.[121] In 1883–84 work continued, including bringing some parts of the grounds up to the proper grade and laying nearly 3,000 feet of additional stone guttering. A total of 312 more trees were planted, mostly in the western half of the grounds, and manure compost was laid on the grounds.[122] Work in 1884–85 consisted primarily of maintaining and planting numerous evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. Settees were also installed.[123]

In 1885–86 the grounds around the stable were raised about 18 inches. Other repairs were done, including roadway maintenance and drainage. Lawns were raked and rolled.[124] In 1886–87 a gravel-surfaced walk was constructed that ran from the intersection of D and 17th Streets to the main road around the Ellipse, covering an area of about 1,500 square feet. In the western part of the park 450 flowering shrubs and 180 deciduous and evergreen trees were planted. In May 1887 a military drill took place (one of the uses that Downing had envisioned for it), but the grass was damaged.[125]

In 1887–88 Wilson reported extensive repairs to the main road, which had been in use for only a short time. Lighting for the area also continued to be a concern. While the popularity of the Ellipse as a public area continued to grow each season, as of 1887 lights in the area were still not available.[126]

Wilson proposed that a 150-foot tower be erected in the center of the lot and equipped with six lamps of 2,000 candlepower each. The installation would cost about $750 to build and $1,533 per year to operate, he reported. The next year he reconsidered, saying that the structure would "disfigure" the Ellipse. To complement the 71 gas lights elsewhere on the Executive Mansion grounds, he recommended that seven iron electric light poles 25 feet high be placed around the perimeter of the Ellipse. Wires would be placed underground. Operating each lamp would cost 70 cents per night, for a total of $1,788.50 per year. Bids were let for the work, but arguments over cost kept the Ellipse dark.[127]

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121. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1883*, 2093–4.

122. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1884*, 2339–40.

123. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1885*, 2503.

124. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1886*, 2076, 2086.

125. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1887*, 2569–70.

126. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1888*, n.p.

127. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1885*, 2075–76, 2082–83, 2513; ibid., *1889*, 2841.

In 1888–89 work on the section south of the State, War, and Navy Building continued, including the new main drive, which later became State Place. A new bluestone walk was laid in the gravel road between the southeast and southwest gates. Wilson also recommended moving the executive stables from their site on the east side of 17th Street near the south front of the State Department to the other side of 17th Street. The park lodge in the southeast corner of the Ellipse grounds (one of the Bulfinch lodges) was repaired and reroofed after its copper roof was stolen.[128]

In 1889–90 John Wilson and Oswald Ernst reported that an old wooden stable (shed) on 17th Street was taken down and rebuilt at the rear of the president's stable. Its former site was filled and graded to correspond to the surrounding parkland. Seven high iron lampposts were installed on the outer edges of the road around the Ellipse and connected with electrical cable. Drains were repaired.[129]

In 1890–91 parts of the road around the Ellipse were resurfaced with unscreened gravel, and a number of young trees and shrubs planted to fill in gaps.[130] In 1891–92 the road south of the State Department was resurfaced with fresh gravel. Fifteen deciduous and evergreen trees were removed from the southern part of the park and transplanted to the northwest corner, along with 22 large flowering shrubs. Seven American elms were planted along the east side of 17th Street. Soil removed in the process was used to fill low ground around the belt of trees that screened the president's stable.[131] In 1892–93 Ernst noted only routine maintenance on the Ellipse, but remarked that after the occupation of the Grand Army of the Republic in September 1892, the lawn, which was seriously damaged in many places, was resown.[132]

In 1893–94 Wilson reported general maintenance and repairs to the watchman's lodge at the corner of 17th and B Streets (one of the Bulfinch gatehouses). He also strongly emphasized the need for a new asphalt walk on the inner side of the Ellipse, "the central parade . . . is now conceded to be one of the chief attractions of the President's Park." Noting that it had been designed by the "celebrated landscape artistic gardener, A. J. Downing" for "military evolutions," he hoped that it would never be disfigured with any structures. The

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128. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1889,* 2827–8.

129. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1890,* 3535–6.

130. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1891,* 3907.

131. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1892,* 3386.

132. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1893,* 4316.

walk would be useful for spectators of military drills and for the general public.[133] By 1894 seven electric lamps lit the roadway around the Ellipse.[134] An act of Congress approved March 1, 1895, authorized a portion of the grounds within the Ellipse for use as a children's playground for tennis and croquet. In the 1894–95 report Wilson again recommended an asphalt walk around the Ellipse. In the spring and summer of 1895 the park's appearance was marred by the construction of a large sewer from 15th to 17th Streets, requiring the removal of many trees and shrubs.[135]

By 1895–96 the damage caused by the sewer excavation had been repaired. Wilson again urged the construction of an asphalt walkway around the inner edge of the Ellipse. Although a portion had been set aside for children's lawn games, only two applications for playing tennis, croquet, or cricket had been received, and neither was used. Permission was frequently sought to play sports far more damaging to the grounds — baseball and football — but these sports were not then allowed. In 1896 a site just south of the Treasury was selected for the Sherman statue. Wilson recommended the removal of the Treasury Department's photographic building, greenhouses, and an old iron fence. The large gate piers would also be taken out. The area would be developed for a park to be called Sherman Plaza, designed to harmonize with the sculpture.[136]

In the report for 1896–97 the Ellipse and the grounds around it were referred to as "President's Park." For the first time, the Ellipse grounds were clearly distinguished from the "inclosed" grounds south of the executive mansion. Repairs to the road surfaces and the construction of a new walk were reported. By now the popularity of the park was causing some problems: the central lawn was being damaged by "trespass walks," and bicyclists used the oval drive for "scorching" (apparently riding fast enough to mark the road).[137] In addition, large-scale events, even when fully approved, such as the Christian Endeavor convention held in July 1896, severely damaged the lawn. Wilson once again urged the construction of an asphalt walk around the Ellipse at a cost of $10,500.[138]

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133. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1894*, 3274.

134. Leach and Barthold, *Reservation No. 1*, p. 8.

135. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1895*, 4139, 4140.

136. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1896*, 3984–6.

137. Goode, *Capital Losses*, 128, as cited in Leach and Barthold, *Reservation No. 1*, 8.

138. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1897*, 4046–47. The Martin Luther King Library has a photograph of the Treasury photographic building with tents for the Christian Endeavor

On the west side of the Ellipse construction began in 1897 on the Corcoran Gallery of Art, which had outgrown the building at the corner of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue (the current Renwick Gallery). The new building foreshadowed the development of the area as the west boundary of the monumental frame for the Ellipse. Designed by Charles Adam Flagg in 1897, Waddy B. Wood redesigned its interior in 1915, and Charles Platt its west wing in 1928. The structure relies on proximity to the sidewalk and an elaborate Greek-inspired doorway flanked by reclining lions to entice visitors. Three horizontal bands — a pink granite foundation, a smooth marble wall punctuated by fortified windows, and an elaborate Greek detailed entablature — insulate the interior. Square openings in the frieze, allowing for air circulation across the galleries in warm weather, providing a connection between street bustle and the sequestered interior. The copper roof contributes a sense of lightness to the heavy building.[139]

In 1897–98 the most worn areas of the graveled roadway were repaired. Eight dead trees were cut down, and others were trimmed. Repairs were also made to the two Bulfinch lodges, and a new apron of cobblestones was laid across the end of the new asphalt street pavement at the entrance from 17th Street opposite E Street. The Ellipse as it appeared about 1898 is illustrated in figure 4-10, a photograph probably taken from the Washington Monument.[140] In 1898–99, the gravel roadways and some of the asphalt walks were repaired further. The Treasury Department greenhouse and the photographic building were removed in preparation for the installation of the Sherman statue. Extensive screening plantings of trees and shrubs were set around the president's stables.[141] In 1899–1900 repairs were made to the stone gutters and to the broken joints in the stonework of the two Bulfinch lodges. A bridle path about a

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convention appearing in the background. The photograph (not a very clear one) was published in the *Washington Post* on Dec. 6, 1927, and a copy is at the OC/Treasury.

139. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 207; Fogle, *Proximity to Power*, 141–43.

140. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1898*, 3727. This stereograph was published by Underwood and Underwood; see William C. Darrah, *The World of Stereographs* (Gettysburg, PA: W. C. Darrah, 1977), 46–48. This photograph might date from after 1902 since the colonnade of the west terrace is clearly visible and the conservatory on top has been removed. Information from Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

141. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1899*, 3831–32.

mile long was put in around the outer edge of the park.[142] Gravel and asphalt roads and paths were repaired the following year.[143]

In 1900 in preparation for the construction of Sherman Plaza, a large angular structure west of the current statue was built to facilitate the work. The Sherman statue was cast in this building, which also became the temporary residence for the sculptor.[144]

The Grounds of the Treasury Building

Around 1865 views of the southeast lawn of the Treasury Building show parterres designed around a circular flower bed. Over the years the pattern was simplified and eventually replaced by a star pattern.[145]

Photographs from the 1860s indicate that the first outdoor lights on the Treasury Building stood at the old east front entrance at the top of the stairs, with one lamppost on either end of the stone staircase. Each fixture consisted of a singular post topped with one globe of lantern style, diamond-shaped in elevation, with triangular panes of glass held in metal frames.[146] After the building's south wing was completed in 1862, a second east side entrance was opened through the southeast pavilion. The approach to this door was made by a set of simple convex steps flanked by two lampposts on either side of the door. Details from these light posts appear in photos dating from 1862 and 1867. The earliest photos of the south front, taken soon after the completion of the south wing, do not show any form of outdoor lighting. By 1870 two lampposts appear in front of the west entrance.[147]

The south front terrace, which extends to the street, was not constructed until 1869. Lampposts appeared for the first time on the south front in photographs and engravings dating between 1870 and

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142. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1900*, 5253.

143. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1901*, 3706.

144. Lori O. Thursby, "Statues: General William T Sherman Statue, Washington D.C." President's Park Notes, no. 1, Sept. 1999, p. 9

145. Memo to John Rogers, "Fact Sheet—Treasury Building Landscaping," June 5, 1987, OC/Treasury.

146. "Outdoor Lighting History of the Treasury Building," compiled from resources in the OC/Treasury, Dec. 1986.

147. "Outdoor Lighting History of the Treasury Building."

1875. Mullet unified the exterior design of the Treasury Building by adding light fixtures to the south front terrace to complement those already in place on the west and north fronts.[148]

To allow for the construction of the north wing of the Treasury Building, the old State Department Building was demolished in 1866. The addition was completed rather quickly, with work commencing in April 1867 and being completed by 1869. The work was under the direction of Alfred B. Mullett.[149]

In October 1867 an amateur artist, Mrs. M. L. Schreiner, sketched the west side of the Treasury, East Executive Avenue, and the northeast section of the grounds of the President's House (figure 4-11). The sketch is most valuable for its depiction of East Executive Avenue and its gate on Pennsylvania Avenue, but it also reveals some plantings along the west side of the Treasury Building behind the fence (whether they are small shrubs or large bedding plants cannot be determined). By 1870, just after the completion of the north wing, a large elaborate fountain had been erected in the north entrance court of the building. Figure 4-12 shows this fountain on the occasion of President Ulysses S. Grant's inaugural ball, March 4, 1873.

The iron fence between the President's House and the Treasury, presumably along Pennsylvania Avenue, was removed in 1872 and put into place along East Executive Avenue. A light wire fence was substituted between the President's House and the Treasury.[150] The 1877 approved plan illustrated in figure 4-8 shows an elaborate layout for the grounds around the Treasury Building; it is not clear whether this layout was existing or proposed. In the 1890s the gates at East Executive Avenue were removed. In 1895–96 Wilson recommended improvements to the grounds outside the iron fence north of the Treasury Building. The result was probably the formal garden that appears in the Treasury's north court in photographs around the turn of the century (figure 4-13).[151]

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148. "Outdoor Lighting History of the Treasury Building."

149. Betty Bird, "Overview of the Architectural History of the U. S. Treasury Building," Sept. 6, 1984, 9.

150. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1872*, 5.

151. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1896*, 3985.

The Grounds of the State, War, and Navy Building

During the Civil War the old War and Navy Buildings were pushed to their limits, a situation that was exacerbated in 1866 when the old State Building was taken down to allow the completion of the Treasury Building. In December 1869 Congress created a commission to find a location for a new building.[152] Numerous earlier proposals had located a new structure on the same site as the old buildings. One of the proposals was probably the isometric view illustrated in figure 2-8.[153] Figure 4-14 is an 1869 wood engraving of Washington from the somewhat unusual point of view looking west over the old buildings toward the President's House, the Treasury, and the Capitol. While this is a beautiful view, some aspects of it are puzzling. The President's House, for example, appears to be placed too far to the south.[154]

Early in 1870 Secretary of State Hamilton Fish commissioned Alfred B. Mullett to design a new complex for the three departments. By April 16 Mullett had progressed sufficiently to present plans, now lost, which were probably in the Second Empire style ultimately adopted. Mullett's designs were accepted in 1871. Construction began on the south wing first, allowing the two existing buildings to remain functional until the new one was ready to be occupied. When completed in 1888 the State, War, and Navy complex was the largest office building in Washington, with 2 miles of corridors and 553 rooms.[155] Early views and photographs show little landscaping, except for low boundary walls and fountains. Figure 4-15 is an 1873 view of the State, War, and Navy Building from the southwest, in which these features appear. The 1877 approved plan for President's Park shown in figure 4-10 includes landscaping for the completed State, War, and Navy Building, but it is not clear if it was carried out. In 1895–96 the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds recommended the improvement of the northern part of the grounds outside the iron fencing in front of the State, War, and Navy Building.[156]

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152. Lehman, et al., "Executive Office Building," 23–25.

153. In the National Archives is a plan from January 1869 by John Crump, a Philadelphia architect, that shows the footprint of a proposed new War Building, with a proposed extension to the south, all superimposed on the footprints of the existing Old War and Old Navy Buildings. Map Division, RG 121, NA, College Park, MD.

154. *Harper's Weekly*, Mar. 13, 1869; Reps, *Washington on View*, 171.

155. Dolkart, *The Old Executive Office Building*.

156. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1896*, 3985.

Summary

Numerous projects were undertaken in President's Park between 1865 and 1900. This suggests an effort to compensate for the lack of attention that the site had received during the Civil War years and, to a certain degree it reflects the great interest that President and Mrs. Hayes had in the White House grounds. East and West Executive Avenues were developed; the east terrace was demolished to make room for a new formal east entrance to the grounds with a pool and fountain and a one-story entrance colonnade. A new system of roads and walkways was made possible by extending the White House grounds to the south and also by removing the Jefferson wall. New iron fencing was installed around the enlarged southern grounds to match the one on the north. During this period proposals were made regarding the removal of the executive residence to different sites, and plans were developed at different times to significantly enlarge the White House.

In 1877 the removal of the dilapidated bandstand temporarily suspended the tradition of weekly summer concerts by the Marine Band on the lawn. Two years later the Easter egg roll, one of the most colorful traditions associated with the White House grounds, was initiated.

Between 1865 and 1900 renovations were made to Lafayette Square, including drainage improvements, regular maintenance of gravel walks, granite curbing around the park, and asphalt walks. New lampposts were installed, and a new watchman's lodge was built on the north side of the park. The iron fence around the site was removed and sent to the Gettysburg Memorial Association. The statue of Lafayette was erected at the southeast corner.

The Ellipse was reconstructed following a modified version of Downing's original plan. Solving the serious drainage problems that the site had experienced up to this time required a major effort that took several years. The gatehouses designed by Charles Bulfinch for the Capitol were eventually relocated to their present location at the southwest and southeast corners of President's Park. In 1896 the section of the Ellipse just south of the Treasury was selected as the site for the Sherman statue. Recommendations were made to remove the Treasury Department photographic building, the greenhouses and an old iron fence to allow for the development of an area designed to harmonize with the Sherman statue.

Public use of the Ellipse increased dramatically during this period. Applications for playing tennis, croquet, or cricket were rare, but interest was high in sports that were not allowed at that time, such

Summary

as baseball and football. The popularity of the park was so high that pedestrian and bicycle use damaged the central lawn and the oval drive. An effort was made to accommodate equestrian use through the construction of a mile-long bridle path.

With the completion of the north wing of the Treasury Building, landscaping began in earnest. By 1870 plantings had been installed along the west side, and a large fountain was erected in the north entrance court. In 1877 a plan was approved for an elaborate layout for the grounds around the building; but it is not clear if this plan was ever implemented.

While the State, War, and Navy Building was completed in 1888, little progress was made in carrying out the 1877 landscaping plan.

President Park's continued to attract talented designers. Alfred B. Mullett played a crucial role in several of the projects completed during this period. He supervised the construction of the north wing of the Treasury Building, and he designed the formal east entrance to the grounds, as well as the State, War, and Navy Building. When completed in 1888 the latter became the largest official building in Washington.

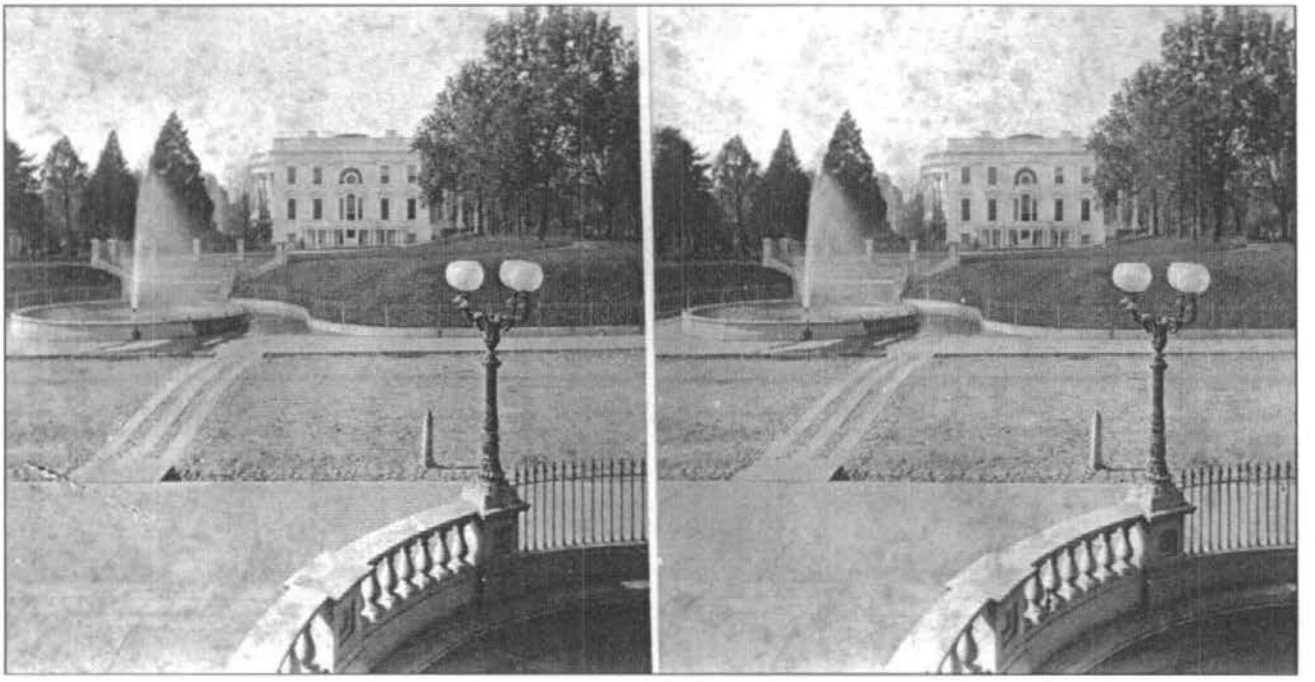

Figure 4-1: *East Front of the White House from the Treasury Building.* Stereograph, ca. 1870. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

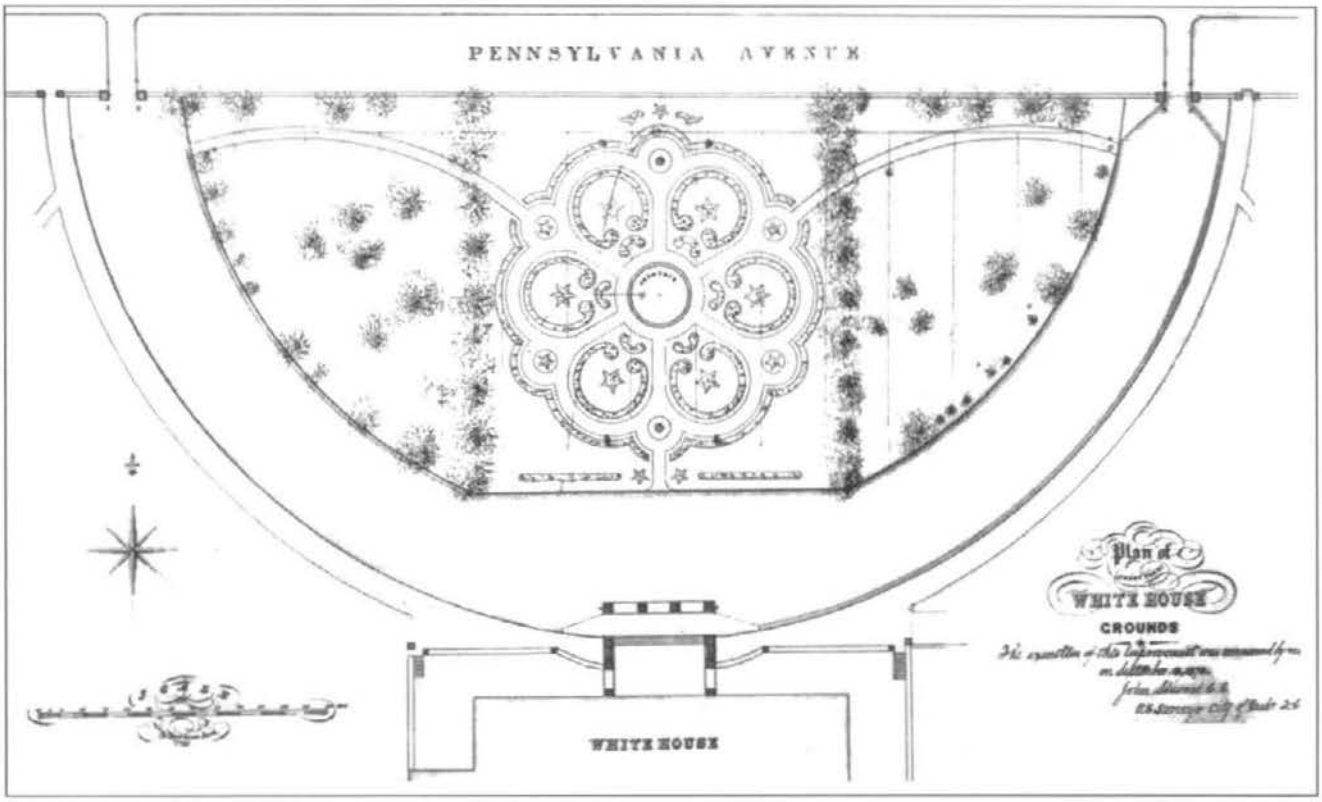

Figure 4-2: *Plan of the Front Part of the White House Grounds*. John Stewart, 1873. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

Figure 4–3: *The White House from the South*. Frances Benjamin Johnston (photograph), ca. 1890. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Figure 4-4: *Egg Rolling, Easter Monday*. Frances Benjamin Johnston (photograph), 1898. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

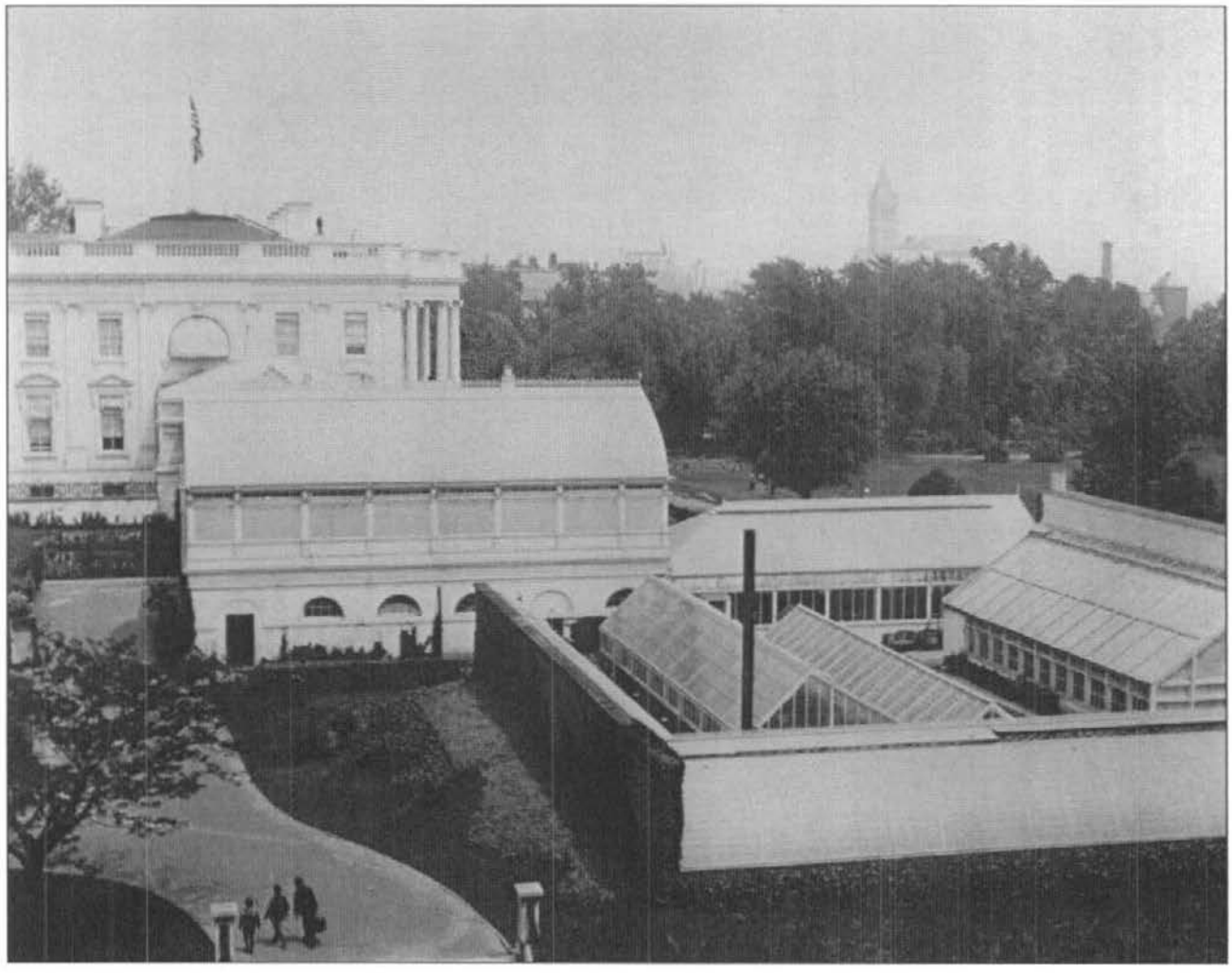

Figure 4–5: *White House Greenhouses from the West*. Corps of Engineers, *Annual Report* (photograph), 1900. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77.

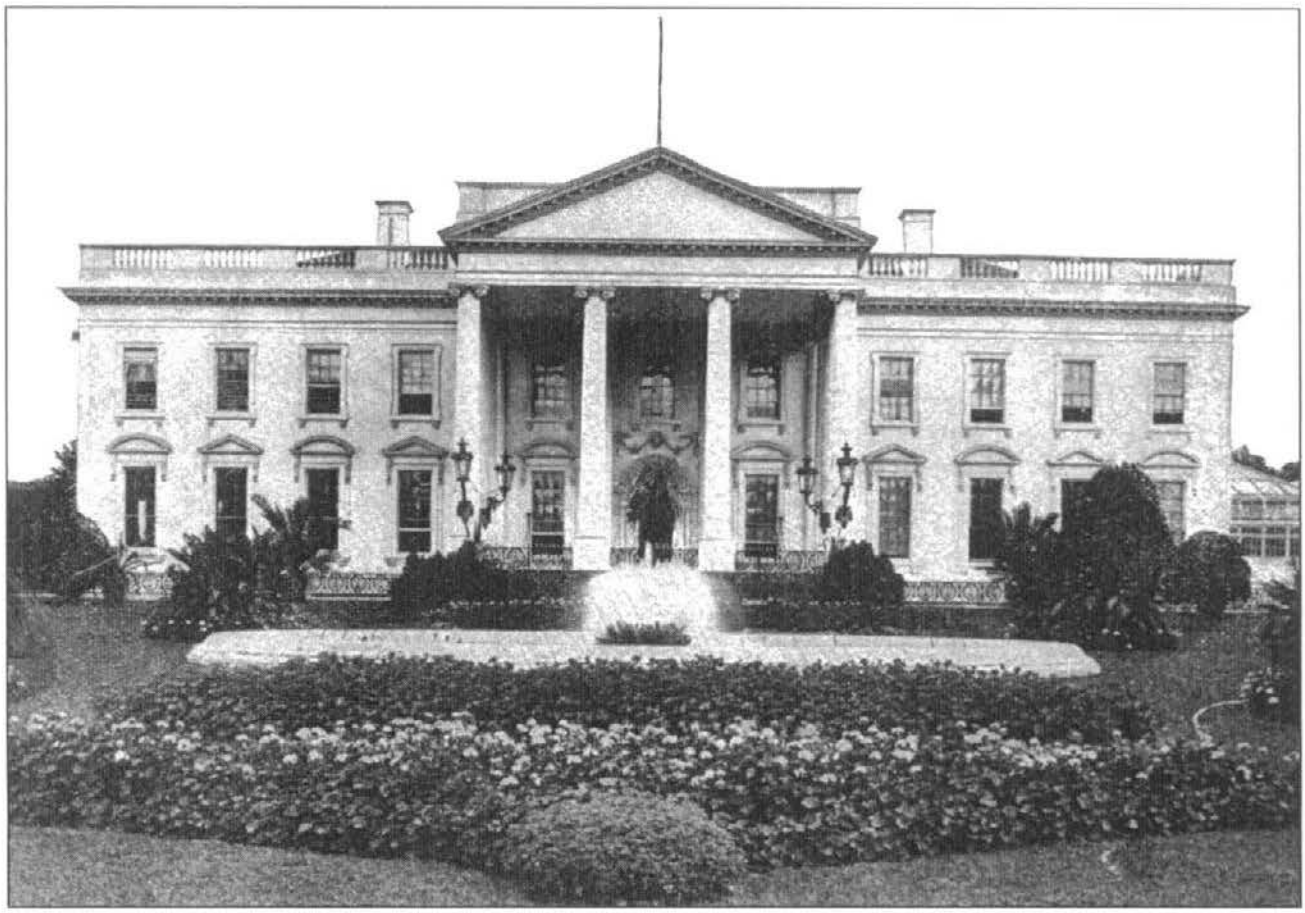

Figure 4-6: *North Front of the White House with Plantings*. Corps of Engineers, *Annual Report* (photograph), 1900. Office of the Curator, The White House.

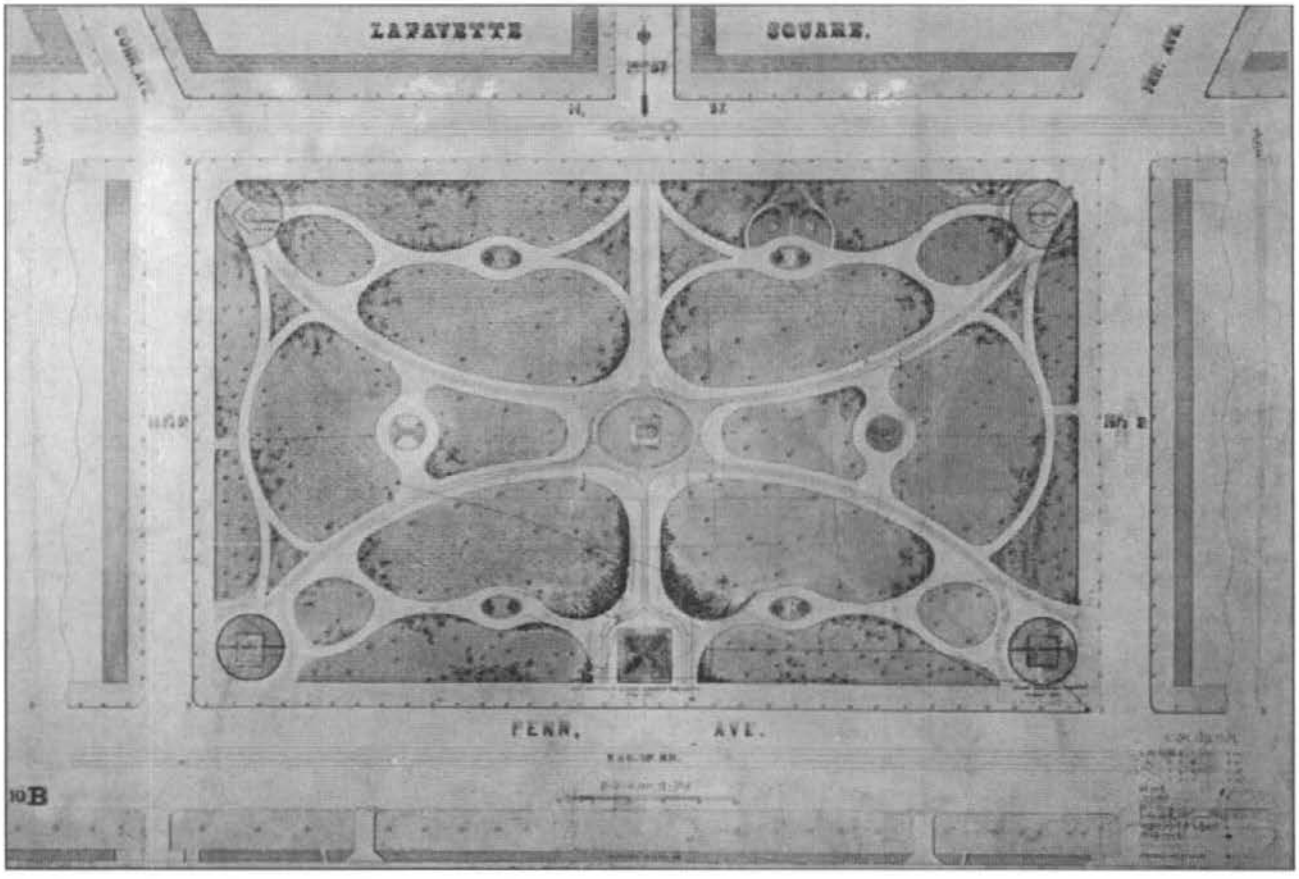

Figure 4–7: *Plan of Lafayette Square.* J. Stewart, 1881. Updated to ca. 1915. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

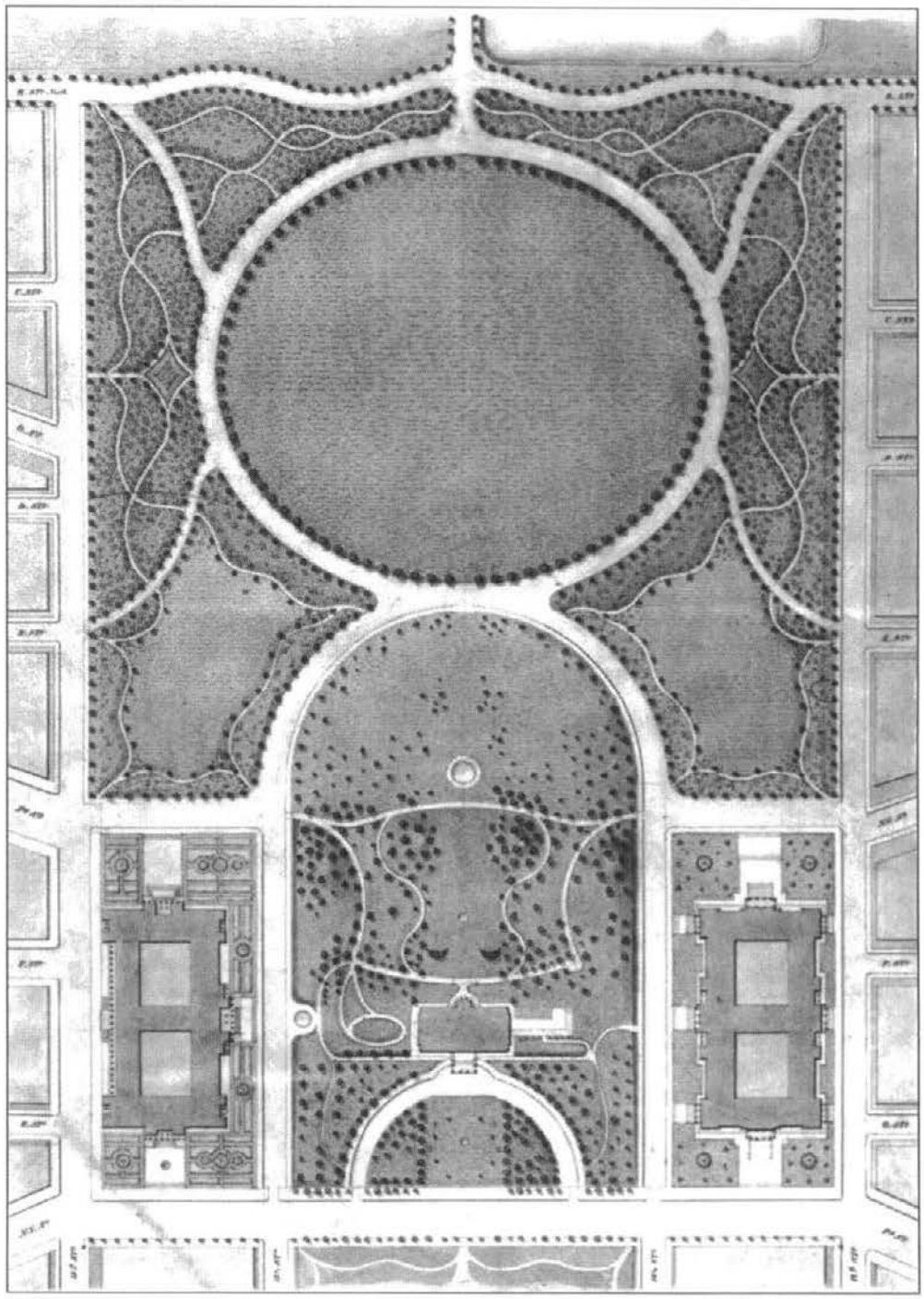

Figure 4–8: *Plan for the President's Park, Excluding Lafayette Park*. Office of the Chief of Engineers, 1877. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

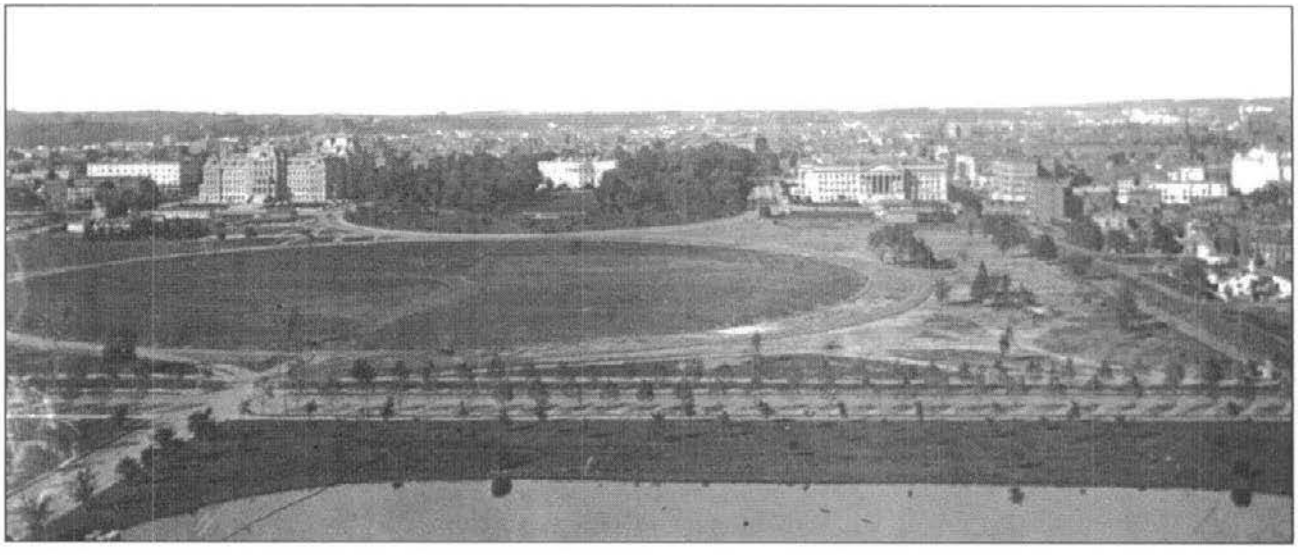

Figure 4–9: *The Ellipse under Construction*. Photograph, ca. 1880. Copied from "The President's Garden: An Account of the White House Gardens from 1800 to the Present," by Eleanor M. McPeck. National Capital Parks, Washington, D.C., 1971.

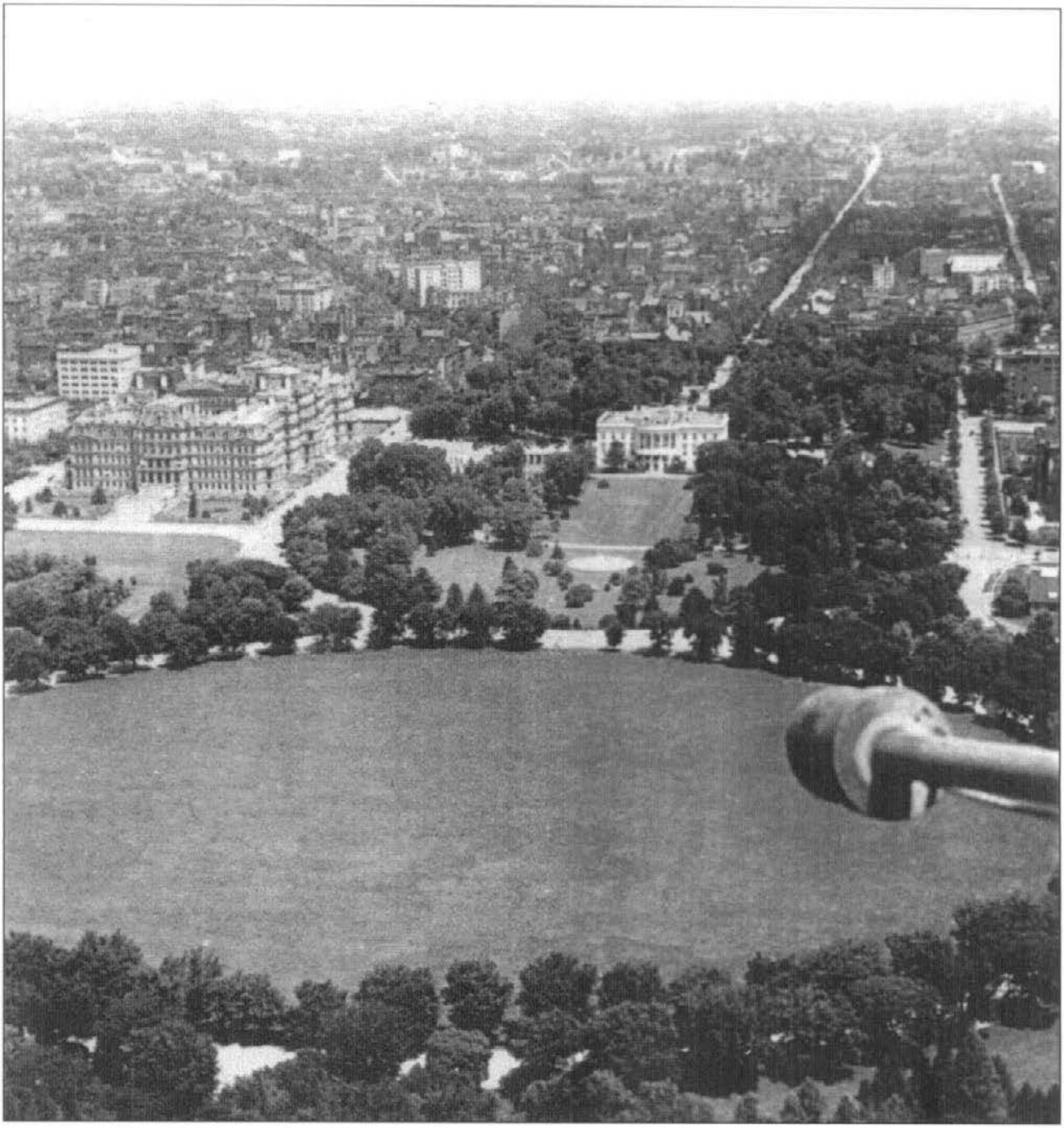

Figure 4–10: *The Ellipse*. Underwood and Underwood (stereograph), ca. 1898. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

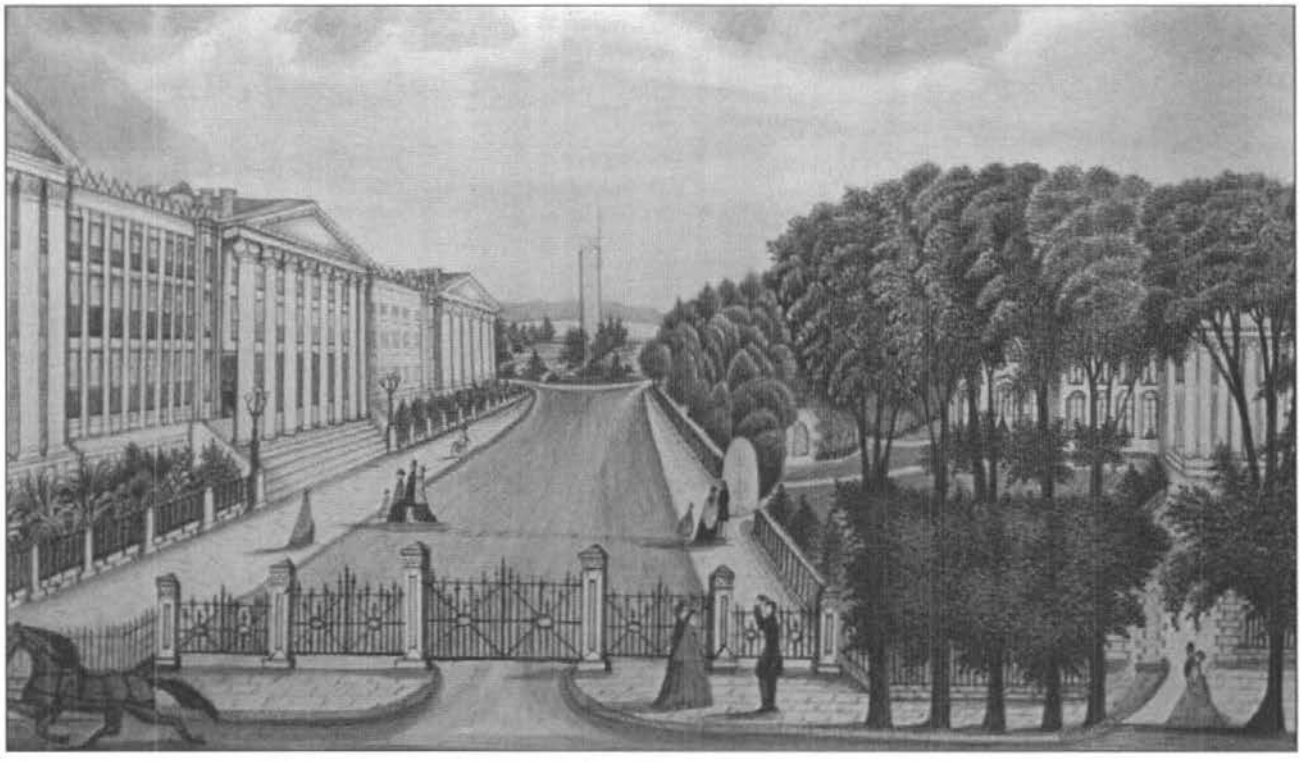

Figure 4–11: *West View of the Treasury*. Mrs. M. L. Schreiner (drawing), October 1867. Kiplinger Washington Collection.

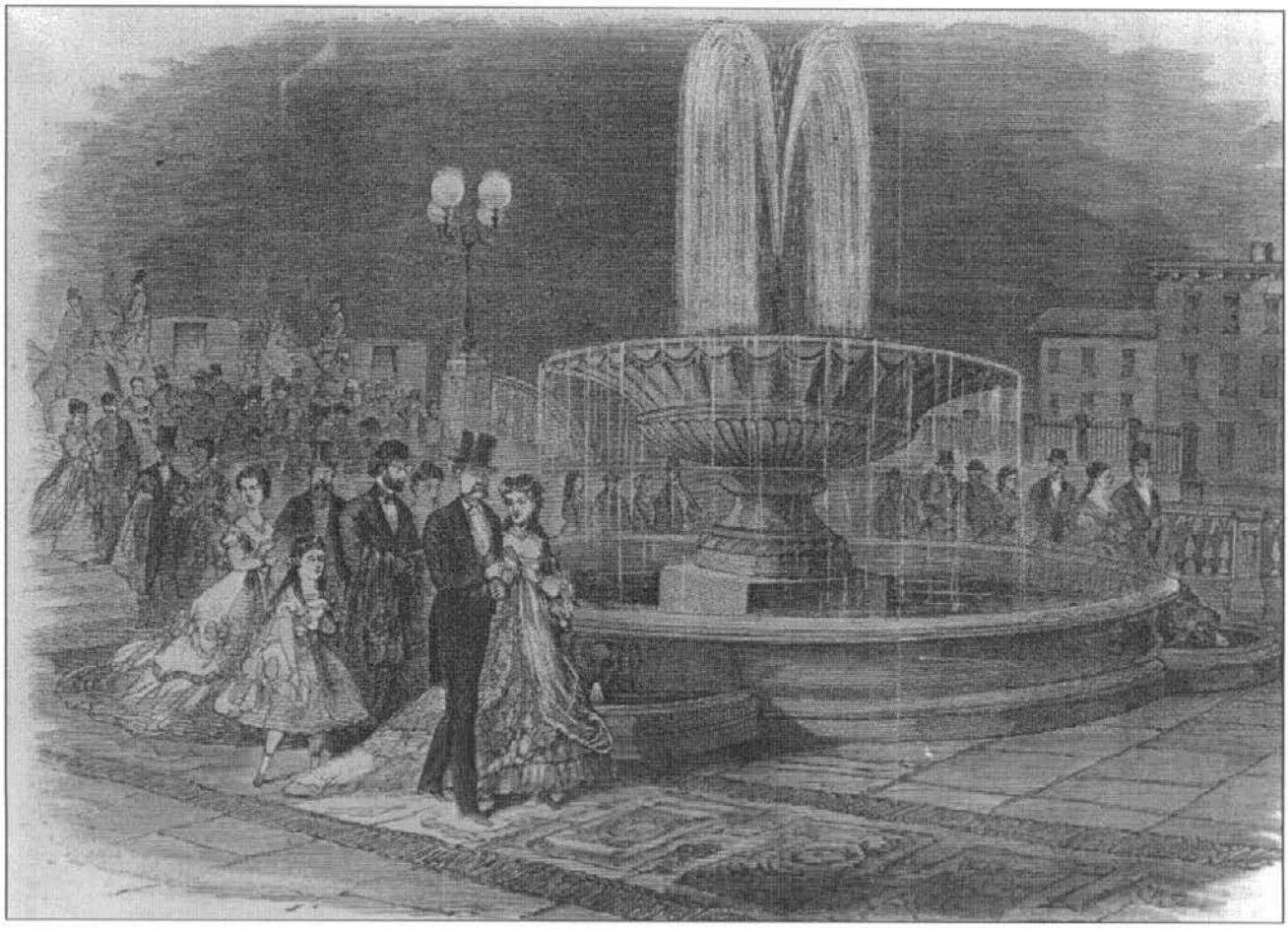

Figure 4–12: *North Front Entrance Court of the Treasury Building (showing fountain at the Inaugural Ball of Ulysses S. Grant).* Wood engraving, March 1873. Office of the Curator, The Treasury.

Figure 4-13: *Formal Garden in North Treasury Plaza*. Photograph, 1901. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Figure 4-14: *Washington City, D.C.* Theodore Davis (sketch), *Harper's Weekly*, March 13, 1869. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

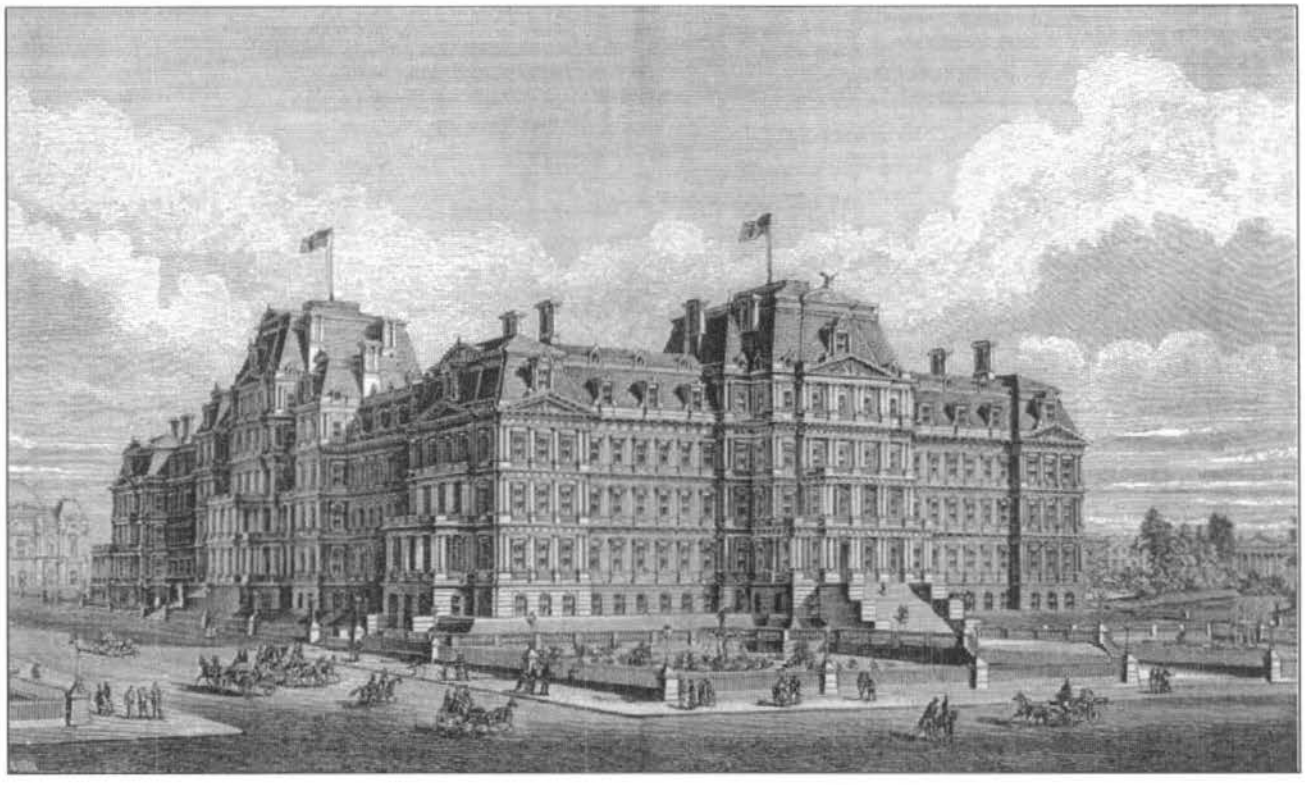

Figure 4–15: *The State, War, and Navy Building (southwest view).* Henry Lovie, 1873. Washingtoniana Collection, Martin Luther King Memorial Library.

Chapter 5. President's Park and the Influence of the McMillan Plan: 1901–1929

Between 1901 and 1929 President's Park evolved gradually.[1] During this period the influence of the McMillan plan for central Washington was significant, but it affected President's Park less than the Mall and other areas of the city. Its greatest impact on President's Park was averting the massive enlargement or the relocation of the President's House that had been proposed since at least the late 1860s. Its most important single recommendation was to restore the axial relationships between the Capitol, the Washington Monument, and the White House.[2] The Senate Park Commission's report, which many consider to be the first city-planning document of its kind, was received enthusiastically. The City Beautiful ideal, of which the McMillan plan was but one manifestation, was the predominant urban planning movement of the early 20th century, and it influenced many schemes for President's Park; the majority, however, were never implemented.

During the Theodore Roosevelt administration the White House underwent the first major reconstruction since 1818. Building the east terrace and wings and eliminating the large greenhouse complex made it possible for the first time to establish clearly defined and partially enclosed gardens to the east and west of the south portico.

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1. Officers in charge under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during this period included Theodore A. Bingham (1897–1903), Thomas W. Symons (1903–4), Charles S. Bromwell (1904–9), Spencer Cosby (1909–13), William W. Harts (1913–17), Clarence S. Ridley (1917–1921), and Clarence O. Sherrill (1921–25). In 1925 Congress established the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, combining the responsibilities of the officer in charge of public buildings and grounds and the superintendent of the State, War, and Navy Building. The directors were Clarence Sherrill (1925) and Ulysses S. Grant III (1925–33). Dowd, *Records of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, 38–39, 77.

2. The only physical legacy of the McMillan plan on President's Park is the Treasury Annex on Madison Place, the Chamber of Commerce on H Street, and the Commerce Building on 15th Street. Outside the study area the following features were implemented: (1) the construction of the Lincoln Memorial and its reflecting pool to the west of the Washington Monument, (2) the construction of Memorial Bridge across the Potomac River from the Lincoln Memorial to Arlington, (3) the removal of the train station and tracks from the Mall and the construction of Union Station, and (4) the return of an open vista on the Mall from the Capitol to the Washington Monument, with large government buildings along the Mall. Information provided by Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

President's Park acquired a large number of commemorative statues and memorials. In Lafayette Park statues of the Comte de Rochambeau, Major General Frederick Wilhem von Steuben, and Brigadier General Tadeusz (Thaddeus) Kosciuszko joined those of Jackson and Lafayette. Near the Ellipse the statue of General William T. Sherman was placed south of the Treasury Building, and a memorial to the Dead of the First Division, American Expeditionary Forces, of World War I was built south of the State, War, and Navy Building. In addition, the Zero Milestone and the Butt-Millet memorial fountain were installed. A statue of Alexander Hamilton was erected at the south entrance of the Treasury Building, but in general the grounds of the Treasury Building and the State, War, and Navy Building underwent only minor modifications. The emphasis on statuary and memorials in President's Park is typical of the capital as a whole during this period.

Presidents continued to influence decisions regarding the evolution of the site. Theodore Roosevelt was instrumental in ensuring that the President's House would stay in its historic location and in officially adopting the term "The White House." When asked, he gave Charles Moore (Senator McMillan's political secretary) authorization to quote him, saying that: "Mrs. Roosevelt and I are firmly of the opinion that the President should live nowhere else than in the historic White House."[3] His wife, however, was less successful, as she failed to prevent the removal of the controversial greenhouses and conservatory.

Commemorative tree plantings by presidents and their wives became a firmly established custom, particularly during the Theodore Roosevelt administration. Roosevelt's interest in forestry was undoubtedly a contributing factor. Although relatively few commemorative trees survive from this period, the practice has continued uninterrupted to this day.

Ellen Axson Wilson followed the tradition of first family involvement in design projects for the White House grounds. She was instrumental in redesigning the two colonial gardens that had been built under the Theodore Roosevelt administration.

Weekly summer concerts by the Marine Band continued on the south lawn almost uninterrupted during this period. They were briefly moved to the Ellipse during World War I because of security considerations. They returned to the White House grounds in 1919 after the war ended. Five years later documentation on these concerts

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3. Seale, *The President's House*, 657.

ends. It is possible that with the inauguration of the Sullivan Theatre in 1924 and the increasing popularity of the radio, the event no longer attracted the public.

Another important practice began during this period — building specific recreational amenities for presidents and their families. It started with the construction of a tennis court for Alice Roosevelt. After its removal, another tennis court was built for President Taft's daughter. In 1919 the south lawn was used as the grounds for a yearly May reception for convalescent veterans.

This period witnessed the installation of two of the most widely used street lights in Washington. Named after the Commission of Fine Arts members who participated in their design, the Millet lamppost with a single lamp was first installed in 1912, the Bacon double lamppost in 1923.

Recognizing the physical and mental benefits of exercise, during this period park planners equipped the larger city parks for sports. In the 1920s the Ellipse had areas for archery, baseball, croquet, and tennis.

Warren Harding seems to have been the first president who began posing for photographs and greeting official groups of visitors near the west garden, now known as the Rose Garden. Mrs. Harding organized parties and greeted people on the grounds.

The nation's leading architects and landscape architects continued to participate in developing designs for President's Park. The list of notables includes Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Charles Follen McKim, Cass Gilbert, Daniel Burnham, and Beatrix Farrand. However, as before, relatively few of the proposed plans were fully implemented.

The McMillan Plan

Background of the Plan

The McMillan plan grew out of the collaborative design of the hugely successful World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. Of the four members of the Senate Park Commission of 1901, usually referred to as the McMillan Commission, three — architect Charles Follen McKim, architect and planner Daniel Burnham, and sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens — had played prominent roles in the planning of the World's Columbian Exposition. The fourth, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., was too young to have been a part of this enterprise, but his father, Frederick Law

Olmsted Sr., was the landscape architect of the Chicago Exposition.[4] Except for Saint-Gaudens, whose health began failing at this time, all the members of the commission had extensive later involvement with the planning and architectural development of Washington, either at President's Park or elsewhere in the city.[5]

In 1898, to prepare for the centennial of the transfer of government from Philadelphia to Washington, a citizens committee was formed to arrange for an appropriate observance and a permanent memorial. In 1900 Theodore Bingham, the officer in charge of the public buildings and grounds, prepared a preliminary plan of his own for improving the layout of the central city, possibly with the help of local architect Frederick D. Owen. Bingham had made an extensive study of L'Enfant's life, plan, and writings, and he later contracted with landscape architect Samuel Parsons Jr. to carry the study further. The plan proposed by Bingham, Owen, and Parsons aroused a concerted wave of opposition, which was largely orchestrated by Glenn Brown, the newly elected secretary of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the author of a book on the history of the capital city. Protests came not only from artists and architects, but also from the general public. In August 1900 Brown published his own proposal for Washington in *Architectural Review*.[6]

Brown also helped Robert S. Peabody, a pre-eminent Boston architect and president of the American Institute of Architects, to organize the group's convention in Washington in December 1900. The planning of Washington would be the theme for the meeting. In the course of the convention, numerous architects such as Cass Gilbert, Paul J. Pelz, George O. Totten Jr., and Edgar V. Seeler presented proposals for a new city plan. Although he did not present a plan, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. read a persuasive address on the subject in which he advocated returning to the principles of L'Enfant.[7]

At about the same time, Frederick Owen's proposal for a massive enlargement of the White House, prepared for the McKinley administration, added fuel to the fire (see page 139). On December 12, 1900,

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4. Newton, *Design on the Land*, 353–71.

5. Saint-Gaudens was diagnosed with cancer in 1900; he lived in Cornish, New Hampshire, until his death in 1907. For more information on his life and career, see Kathy Greenthal, *Augustus Sain-Gaudens, Master Sculptor* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985), and John H. Dryfhout, *The Work of Augustus Saint-Gaudens* (Hanover, NH: The University Press of New England, 1982).

6. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 70–84.

7. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 85–92. All the plans are illustrated. See also McCue, *The Octagon*, 71–73.

these plans were displayed at a centennial luncheon at the White House, where they, like the Bingham/Owen/Parsons city plan, provoked intense opposition from the American Institute of Architects, as well as from Sen. James McMillan of Michigan, chairman of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia, and from the general public. Senator McMillan was especially outraged, since he had urged a study of the District's parks, and it was proposed that this appropriation, so far unused, be spent to enlarge the White House. McMillan then introduced a resolution that his committee should secure the services of experts to study and report on the entire park system of Washington. The Senate adopted the resolution on March 8, 1901. McMillan wanted to obtain the services of Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., whose work he had admired at the Columbian Exposition, but Olmsted was by then ailing and retired. McMillan turned to Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., only 31 at the time, as well as to Daniel Burnham, director of the works at the Columbian Exposition. Since an additional architect was needed, Burnham and Olmsted Jr. recommended Charles Follen McKim. Daniel Burnham, the oldest member of the group, was designated chairman. Senator McMillan also assigned his political secretary, Charles Moore, a former Detroit newspaperman, to assist the commission.[8]

The Development of the Plan

Burnham's idea was that the group should take a European tour to study major examples of landscape architecture and city planning on a monumental scale, especially those that had influenced L'Enfant. Before leaving, they toured sites in Virginia, including Williamsburg and the plantations of Upper and Lower Brandon, Westover, and Shirley. On June 13, 1901, Burnham, McKim, Olmsted, and Moore left for Europe (Saint-Gaudens was too ill to go). Olmsted had traveled extensively with his father and drew up the itinerary. In London they toured Hyde Park, Hatfield, Hampton Court, and Windsor Great Park, and in Paris the masterpieces of André Le Nôtre

8. The McMillan plan is discussed especially thoroughly in Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 94–154. See also Seale, *The President's House*, 654–57; Frederick Gutheim, *Worthy of the Nation: The History of Planning for the National Capital*, prepared for National Capital Planning Commission. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977), 113–36; Frederick Gutheim and Wilcomb E. Washburn, *The Federal City: Plans and Realities* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, in cooperation with the National Capital Planning Commission, 1976), 86–91; Newton, *Design on the Land*, 400–12; Thomas S. Hines, "The Imperial Mall: The City Beautiful Movement and the Washington Plan of 1901–1902," in Longstreth, ed., *The Mall in Washington*, 79–99; and Jon A. Peterson, "The Mall, the McMillan Plan, and the Origins of American City Planning," in Longstreth, ed., *The Mall in Washington*, 100–15.

— the Tuileries Gardens, Fontainebleau, and Vaux-le-Vicomte, as well as the Bois de Boulogne and the Luxembourg Gardens. Aware that L'Enfant had spent his boyhood at Versailles, they examined those gardens (Le Nôtre's most famous work), as well as the town plan. In and near Rome, they examined Hadrian's Villa, the Villa d'Este, the Villa Medici, the Villa Borghese, the Villa Madama, and the Villa Lante, as well as the Piazza San Pietro. In addition, they went to Venice, Vienna, Budapest, and Frankfurt. At all these sites they took photographs and sometimes made measurements.[9]

By the time they returned to New York the basic elements of the new Washington plan had been formulated. More precise design studies were needed, however, and these were worked out later. McMillan arranged to have part of the Senate Press Gallery turned into a drafting room. Here, James G. Langdon, a member of the Olmsted Brothers firm, supervised a group in assembling base maps; however, much of the architectural design work took place in McKim's New York office. Olmsted, with the assistance of Thomas Sears and Percival Gallagher, assumed the primary responsibility for designing parks and everything relating to landscape architecture.[10]

McMillan, Moore, and the three designers were not only concerned with the content of the study, but they also felt strongly that, in order to gain sufficient support, it should be presented to the public as vividly and effectively as possible. One element, of course, would be a detailed, illustrated report, to be written jointly by Moore and Olmsted. In addition, a large contingent of commercial artists and illustrators was hired to prepare large color renderings, and a Boston model maker, George C. Curtis, was engaged to make two large topographic models at a scale of 1 foot to 1,000 feet under Olmsted's supervision. Some of the photographs taken on the study tour (for example, the Tuileries Gardens, and the Long Walk at Windsor Castle) were enlarged. The Corcoran Gallery exhibited the drawings and models beginning January 15, 1902.[11]

At the exhibition two models showing the present and future Washington were displayed side by side under dramatic lighting. President Theodore Roosevelt, who was at first critical of the sunken garden plan for the Washington Monument, was completely won

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9. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 94–98; Newton, *Design on the Land*, 405; Charles Moore, *The Life and Times of Charles Follen McKim* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1929), 187–99.

10. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 98–9; Moore, *McKim*, 199–201.

11. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 100–6; Moore, *McKim*, 200–1; Gutheim and Washburn, *The Federal City*, 89.

over as he examined the scheme closely. On the same day that the exhibition opened, McMillan officially presented the report to the Senate. Public reaction to both the report and the exhibition was immediate and overwhelmingly positive.[12] However, as McMillan himself pointed out, the task was an enormous one, "greater than any one generation can hope to accomplish," but commitment to the plan would result in the preservation and thoughtful expansion of "the city which Washington and Jefferson planned with so much care and with such prophetic vision."[13] McMillan himself spoke with prophetic vision, since it would be many decades before the recommendations of the huge, ambitious scheme proposed in the plan published under his name would be even partly realized.

The Senate Park Commission's report was received enthusiastically by the press. Moore wrote a two-part article for *The Century Magazine*, and some of the plans were published in other periodicals, where the interested public could more easily study them.[14] Newspaper coverage was also extensive, especially in Washington papers, as well as the *New York Times*, where the noted architectural critic Montgomery Schuyler reviewed and analyzed the plan in the most laudatory terms. Professional journals such as *The American Architect* and *Architectural Record* gave the McMillan plan almost unqualified praise. At the same time, Senator McMillan began to test the waters for the formal approval and massive appropriations that would be necessary to execute the plan. On March 22, 1902, McKim and Saint-Gaudens, whose health was by then improved, came down from New York, and together with Moore, they staked the site of the Lincoln Memorial.[15] On August 11, 1902, however, Senator McMillan died suddenly at his summer home in Massachusetts.[16]

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12. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 107–8.

13. Senate Committee on the District of Columbia, *The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia* (Washington, DC, 1902), 19, as quoted in Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 109.

14. Charles Moore, "The Improvement of Washington City," *The Century Magazine* 63, nos. 4 and 5 (February and March 1902): 621–8 and 747–57.

15. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 139–43.

16. Moore, *McKim*, 217.

The Elements of the Plan

An illustration from the Senate Park Commission report clearly depicts the proposal for central Washington: a diagram showing proposed building sites (figure 5-1). From the beginning, Burnham, McKim, Olmsted, and Moore had sought to reclaim for the central city the monumental simplicity and dignity that had been the essential feature of the L'Enfant plan. Over the years, haphazard building in the vicinity of the Capitol and Mall, including the yards of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad and the ever-expanding greenhouses of the Botanic Garden, had impaired the central concepts.[17]

The single most important recommendation of the McMillan plan was to restore the axial relationships between the Capitol, the Washington Monument, and the White House. This would require the removal of the railroad, the greenhouses and other buildings, and that portion of Downing's plan that had been implemented on the Mall. Although Downing was not mentioned by name, the report describes some parts of the Mall as "highly developed according to the landscape art of the day." Nevertheless, his plan was erased from the Senate Park Commission's proposals for the Mall, as was James Renwick's romantic "castle" home of the Smithsonian Institution. Because of engineering problems that made it impossible to build adequate foundations, the Washington Monument had ultimately been constructed off-axis to both the Capitol and the White House. Obviously the monument could not be moved, but the commission proposed an ingenious "correction," which would be achieved by providing an on-axis landscaped setting for the monument.[18]

The setting for the Washington Monument was to be a great sunken garden, with fountains, grottos, and cascades somewhat reminiscent of Le Nôtre's first masterpiece, Vaux-le-Vicomte. At the north end of the north-south axis, which would pass through the central pool in the sunken garden, the White House would be visible. However, when more detailed studies were done for the proposed garden, it was found that the excavation necessary for construction would threaten the monument's structural stability. To this day, the Washington Monument has a relatively simple landscape setting. At the south end of the north-south axis, additional monuments or memorials were proposed where the Jefferson Memorial now stands, and at the west end of the east-west axis, a memorial to Abraham

17. Leach and Barthold, "L'Enfant Plan of the City of Washington," sec. 8, p. 31–33.

18. Reps cites the entire section of the report dealing with central Washington in *Monumental Washington*, 112–21.

Lincoln was planned. The east-west axis was also to be rectified, so that the Capitol and the Washington Monument would appear to be aligned.[19]

Little was said in the report about the Ellipse, except that the "White Lot" (a term that persisted into the 20th century) would be retained as the great drill ground of the District. But Downing's wooded groves and meandering walks on either side of the main space, which had been constructed in the late 1870s and early 1880s, were to be replaced by four symmetrical rows of linden trees along 15th Street and four more rows along 17th Street, which would tempt people "from the hot and busy streets of the city to the cool and quiet of the gardens or to the field of sports beyond."[20] Although the White House grounds were not specifically discussed in the report, a drawing of the vista south from the White House shows no division except a road between these grounds and the Ellipse and no planting whatsoever at the southern edge of the White House grounds.[21]

The report gave considerable attention to the grouping of new buildings to serve the executive departments. After reviewing two alternative solutions — the proposed massive expansion of the White House to accommodate both the president's home and executive offices and the conversion of the White House to offices exclusively, with the president's home relocated elsewhere — the commission made the following recommendation:

> The Commission are of the opinion that while temporary quarters may well be constructed in the grounds of the White House, a building sufficient in size to accommodate those offices may best be located in the center of Lafayette Square.[22]

This was either a misprint or a misstatement, since the text goes on to recommend that the executive departments occupy "a series of edifices *facing* Lafayette Square," and this is what is shown on the plan. It is further clarified by the suggestion that the realization of the proposal might begin by constructing office buildings in the square bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue, Jackson Place, H Street,

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19. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 119–26, 137; Moore, *McKim*, 196–97.

20. Senate Committee, *Improvement of the Park System*, 1902, as quoted in Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 121.

21. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, fig. 69, p. 125.

22. Senate Committee, *Improvement of the Park System*, as quoted in Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 132.

and Seventeenth Street.[23] When the drawings and models were viewed by Secretaries John Hay and Elihu Root, Hay was so enthusiastic that he said: "To show you how I feel: even my house can go to carry out the scheme of having Executive Department buildings around Lafayette Square." He added, however, that his house, a magnificent structure on the north side of the square designed by H. H. Richardson, would probably not be needed for offices during his lifetime.[24]

The idea of building in the center of Lafayette Square was not new in 1901. As early as 1836 Alexander Jackson Davis had sketched a proposed office building in the center of the square. And as late as 1923 the Beaux-Arts Society held their annual Paris Prize in Architecture to design a building with executive office space and suite for official receptions in Lafayette Square with an underground connection to the White House.[25]

In 1922 planner Elbert Peets published an analysis of Washington, which was essentially a critique of both the L'Enfant and McMillan plans and was published in his and Werner Hegemann's *The American Vitruvius*. Peets also took exception to the placing of any buildings in Lafayette Square but observed that this was not shown in the plans. He also pointed out that the building of the southern wing of the Treasury Building did not shut off a perfect vista but that Pennsylvania Avenue was incorrectly aligned.[26]

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23. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 132, 135.

24. As quoted in Moore, *McKim*, 203; the McMillan plan's recommendation for executive office buildings around Lafayette Square undoubtedly derived from a scheme for the square proposed by Cass Gilbert during the 1900 American Institute of Architects meeting. Many years later, Gilbert designed the Treasury Annex at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Madison Place (1917–18) and the Chamber of Commerce Building at 1615 H Street (1929). The Treasury Annex was originally supposed to extend the entire length of Madison Place, but only the southern third was constructed; Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 53, 161–64.

25. Information provided by Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS). Drawings in Public Buildings Service at Cartographic and Architectural Branch, RG 121, NA.

26. Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets, *The American Vitruvius: An Architect's Handbook of Civic Art*, edited with an introduction by Alan J. Plattus, preface by Leon Krier, and introductory essay by Christiane Crasemann Collins (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988, reprint of 1922 edition), 284–95. Chapter 7, "The Plan of Washington," was written by Peets, based on a study he made when he spent a year in Washington during World War I as a member of the Camp Planning Section of the Construction Division.

The Grounds of the White House

During the Theodore Roosevelt administration, Charles Follen McKim directed the first major reconstruction of the White House since 1818. The rebuilding of the east terrace and wings and the elimination of the large greenhouse complex (figure 4-5) made possible for the first time the establishment of clearly defined and partially enclosed gardens to the east and west of the south portico.

The issue of enlarging the White House had precipitated the Senate Park Commission's comprehensive rethinking of the plan for the city. Despite the protracted stalemate on the implementation of the McMillan plan, the related proposal to enlarge and redesign the White House moved forward rapidly. In April 1902 McKim was authorized to proceed, being given sole responsibility for the design. McKim's project was massive and involved the wholesale removal of a great deal of historic fabric and most of the existing furnishings. Only through the intervention of First Lady Edith Carow Roosevelt were some paintings and pieces of furniture associated with earlier presidents saved.[27]

On the exterior McKim planned to reconstruct the east terrace (which had been removed in 1866 by Alfred Mullet) and to restore the west terrace, as they had been in Jefferson's time. All office functions were to be removed to a temporary Executive Office Building at the end of the west terrace. A new entrance pavilion for social functions was constructed at the end of the east terrace. With the construction of the pavilion, a new carriageway was added, and the east wing steps were reconfigured and reduced. Carriage gates and piers were built as well, and lighting fixtures were added to the east and west terraces.[28] The anthemion railing at the parapet in the front of the house and the ornamental anthemion railing between the portico columns were removed. The latter was replaced with a solid masonry wall. The mesh fencing installed in the 1850s was retained along the south carriage drive; it was extended west to enclose the tennis court area, as well as the east and west gardens in an effort to provide privacy

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27. William Rutherford Mead, the business partner, was in charge of financial arrangements. Construction was in the hands of O. W. Norcross of Norcross Brothers of Worcester, Massachusetts, which had been the preferred contractor for McKim, Mead & White for many years, as well as for many other noted architects, including H. H. Richardson and his successor firm, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. Seale, *The President's House*, 659–84; and Moore, *McKim*, 204–22. See also James F. O'Gorman, "O. W. Norcross, Richardson's 'Master Builder': A Preliminary Report," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 32, no. 2 (May 1973), 104–13.

28. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 15, 2000.

for the president and his family in the newly designated east and west gardens.[29]

A greenhouse was planned on the south grounds near the current maintenance building. However, the existing greenhouses and conservatory would have to be demolished. Mrs. Roosevelt objected strongly to their removal, mostly for practical reasons, since it would be difficult to find other sources to supply the large numbers of flowers needed for decorating and gifts. Henry Pfister, who pleaded for the rare plants that he had spent years collecting, supported her. Colonel Bingham, a greenhouse enthusiast, also wanted to keep these structures. Finally, on July 2, 1902, McKim and Charles Moore traveled to Sagamore Hill on Long Island, the Roosevelts' summer place at Oyster Bay. During a somewhat rushed conference with the first lady, they agreed that the greenhouses would be removed, except for those of iron or steel construction, which would be reassembled at another location on the White House grounds. Additional greenhouses for the use of the White House would be built in the propagating gardens near the Washington Monument. This agreement was written up formally and became known as "The Treaty of Oyster Bay." McKim kept only the last part of the agreement, since none of the old greenhouses was ever rebuilt on the White House grounds.[30]

In February 1903 McKim and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. began studying the immediate grounds of the White House, even though Olmsted had been given no formal commission for this work. On February 16 McKim wrote to Olmsted: "The garden to the south is to be extremely simple . . . something of the character of Mount Vernon, namely division into parterres, surrounded with close cut hedges."[31] He enclosed a "General Plan of the President's House and Grounds" (figure 5-2), which included two large formal gardens, each divided by paths into quadrants, to the southwest and

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29. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 16, 2000.

30. Seale, *The President's House*, 667–69; Moore, *McKim*, 215–16. In 1903 beautiful but highly idealized drawings showing the White House after the McKim reconstruction were made by the eminent artist Jules Guérin and published in *The Century Magazine* to illustrate an article on the restoration. See Charles Moore, "The Restoration of the White House," *The Century Magazine* 65, no. 6 (April 1903), 806–31. A drawing of the south side of the White House from below the fountain makes the White House appear as if isolated in a remote country setting, its south front framed by the delicate bare branches of winter trees arranged in formal allées.

31. NPS, "The President's Garden," quoting McKim to Olmsted, Feb. 16, 1903, Olmsted Associates Papers, Library of Congress. It is unclear under which job this letter might be filed. Job No. 2827, "White House," which is the job under which the two drawings are filed, does not have any correspondence file at the Library of Congress.

southeast of the house. A suggested internal layout was shown for one of the quadrants. Although simple in design, these gardens would have been more than twice as large as the present ones. On February 20 Olmsted prepared a "Sketch Showing Proposed Improvements on North Side" (figure 5-3), showing a simpler arrangement of drives and paths than McKim seemed to have had in mind. Olmsted's plan proposed a service road from the west service court to a new gate on West Executive Avenue and a path from the north drive to the west terrace, with a bridge crossing over the service road. McKim's plan located the service road along the west terrace and a driveway to the West Wing.

As constructed, the gardens have no relationship to McKim's plan.[32] Soon after architectural work on the terraces was completed, a formal garden was laid out on the southwest, where the glass rose house had stood. Trees and shrubs were hauled in, and the garden was constructed on the site of today's Rose Garden. A similar garden was established on the east side of the south portico, the site of today's Jacqueline Kennedy Garden.[33]

The drawing in figure 5-2 also shows the outline of a new tennis court south of the new Executive Office Building. The tennis court, designed for the president's daughter, Alice, was said to be "most carefully laid out, with a dirt floor rolled hard and as level as a billiard table, and surrounded by a fence of wire net 10 feet high. Already it has been referred to by the casual joker as the "royal court."[34] At the same time Mrs. Roosevelt planned roof gardens with potted trees and flowering plants on both the east and west terraces.[35] Figure 5-4, a photograph taken in 1903, shows the west wing and the Roosevelt tennis court from the State, War, and Navy Building. Just to the east of the tennis court may also be seen the recently constructed clothes drying yard surrounded by an 8-foot

32. The Roosevelts supposedly asked the advice of their friend, the novelist and garden writer, Edith Wharton, who was shortly to publish an influential book on Italian villas and their gardens. However, several photographs of the colonial gardens have survived, and they do not appear to reflect Wharton's taste; Edith Wharton, *Italian Villas and Their Gardens*, with illustrations by Maxfield Parrish (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1976, reprint of 1904 edition.)

33. Seale, *The President's House*, 680–81, 713, note 42.

34. Rene Bache, "White House Roof Gardens Planned by Mrs. Roosevelt" [clipping from unidentified newspaper], July 12, 1903.

35. Bache, "White House Roof Gardens."

lattice fence, which was south of the west wing next to the laundry room, in the location of today's Rose Garden.[36]

For the fiscal year 1901–2 routine repairs were done to the greenhouses and the stable. Spring bulbs and summer bedding plants were installed, and "unsightly" trees were removed.[37] In 1902 Thomas W. Symons succeeded Bingham as officer in charge of the public buildings and grounds and Charles S. Bromwell followed him on April 26, 1903.[38] In 1902–3 Bingham and Symons reported in considerable detail on the rebuilding of the White House. Grading was done near the new east terrace. The recently constructed west garden (located where the Rose Garden is today) was laid out. The existing driveway on the north side of the house was reduced in width. A new carriage drive was developed on the west side of the grounds to access the main entrance of the West Wing.[39]

On February 22, 1904, President and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt planted two fern-leaf beeches near the east entrance of the White House.[40] On April 6, 1904, Theodore Roosevelt planted a Daimyo oak. None of these trees has survived.[41]

The roadways north of the east and west terraces and under the portico of the east terrace were repaved with asphalt in 1903–4. The gravel walks on the south grounds were also resurfaced. For the first time it was reported that "the ground immediately south of the two terraces was laid out into colonial (herbaceous) flower gardens. Gravel walks were constructed, shrubs and plants set out, a privet hedge planted around three sides of it, and flower beds made."[42] Both of these colonial gardens were illustrated in the commissioner's report for 1904 (figures 5-5, 5-6).

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36. The drying yard stayed in this location until the expansion of the West Wing during the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. Historic American Buildings Survey drawings of the White House from 1934 show the drying yard just before it was removed. (Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

37. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1902,* "Appendix DDD," 2727–28, 2731.

38. Symons occupied the position only about a year because of ill health. Seale, *The President's House,* 703–4.

39. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1903,* "Appendix EEE," 2024–25.

40. This is probably the first time when the president and the first lady became physically involved in the actual planting. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineer, 1904* photographs.

41. List of Commemorative Trees, OC/WH.

42. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1904.*

In 1904 Bill Reeves replaced long-term White House gardener Henry Pfister and became chief gardener and foreman of the White House grounds.[43] The following year, in addition to routine maintenance, the roadways and the three fountain basins were repaired. In the colonial gardens the gravel walks were rolled and the plants were cared for. A total of 2,000 boxwood bushes were planted for edging.[44] Similar maintenance was reported in 1906–7, when two large Norway maples were placed on the south grounds. The macadam roadway at the north front was repaired with crushed stone. In the winter the bay trees in tubs on top of the east and west terraces were replaced by evergreen trees.[45] The report for 1908–9 notes that an old maple tree on the north front of the White House had blown down.[46]

A week after President William Howard Taft was inaugurated on March 4, 1909, Spencer Cosby replaced Bromwell as officer in charge of public buildings and grounds. Mrs. Taft took a particular interest in running the household and brought in a professional housekeeper. Except for garden parties and other entertaining, the Tafts did not seem to spend much time on the White House grounds. Mrs. Taft became the first president's wife to take on public projects, officially designated a drive in Potomac Park the "Speedway Potomac Drive" and selected a site there for a bandstand, which was used for twice-weekly Marine Band concerts. In 1911 she was instrumental in introducing Washington's famous Japanese cherry trees, a gift of the Japanese government, which were planted along Potomac Drive as a symbol of friendship between the United States and Japan.[47]

Another major project of the Taft administration was the expansion of the Executive Office Building (which became known as the West Wing). This involved relocating and redesigning the president's office into the first Oval Office. Nathan Wyeth won the competition for this project, but his drawings have not survived.[48] These changes necessitated the removal of Alice Roosevelt Longworth's tennis court. A new court was constructed in the southern part of the grounds,

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43. Stanley McClure files, ESF/WHL/NPS. In 1904–5 the usual maintenance took place and new drains and irrigation facilities were laid; *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1905*, 2626.

44. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1906*, 2116–18.

45. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1907*, 2305; similar maintenance to the grounds of the White House was reported in 1907–8; *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1908*, 2381.

46. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1909*, 2334–35.

47. Seale, *The President's House*, 748–50.

48. Seale, *The President's House*, 756–60.

used primarily by Helen Taft, daughter of President and Mrs. Taft (figure 5-7).[49]

On January 19, 1909, just before leaving the White House, President Theodore Roosevelt had created by executive order a Council of Fine Arts. President Taft revoked the order but introduced legislation to create a permanent body to advise on the location and design of buildings and monuments. The Commission of Fine Arts was established on May 17, 1910, "to advise upon the location of statues, fountains, and monuments in the public squares, streets, and parks in the District of Columbia, and upon the selection of . . . artists for the execution of same." Exempted from the commission's review were the Capitol and the Library of Congress. President Taft appointed Daniel Burnham to chair the commission; the other six members were Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Charles Moore, sculptor Daniel Chester French, painter Francis Millet, and architects Thomas Hastings and Cass Gilbert. (Charles Follen McKim had died in 1909.) On June 17, 1910, Taft appointed Spencer Cosby, the officer in charge of the public buildings and grounds, as secretary of the commission. Continuity with the goals of the McMillan plan was assured by the presence of Burnham, Olmsted, and Moore.[50]

In 1909–10 Cosby reported that the iron mesh fence behind the Executive Office Building (West Wing), which surrounded the removed tennis court and had been taken down during construction, was put back and planted with rambler roses. A total of 111 feet of hedge was installed south of the office building, and 1,430 feet of privet hedge was planted inside the iron mesh fence around the south end of the grounds.[51] In 1910–11 eight large evergreen trees were placed along the drive leading to the north entrance of the White House. The privet hedge inside the iron fence was extended northward on both sides, and 18 small spruce trees were planted south of the office building. Changes were also made to the two roadways south of the White House: the east road was given a better curve and the west road was cut across the lawn to match the east one. In May 1911 the elm trees were sprayed with a solution of arsenate of lead to keep them from being defoliated by the elm-leaf beetle.[52]

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49. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1910*, 2657; Seale, *The President's House*, 762.

50. The commission's first major task was the establishment of the Lincoln Memorial; Sue A. Kohler, *The Commission of Fine Arts: A Brief History, 1910–1976, With Additions, 1977–1980* (Washington, DC: The Commission of Fine Arts, 1983), 1–7; Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 153–4; *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1911*, 2995.

51. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1910*, 2656–57.

52. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1911*, 2964–65.

The next year the stable south of the present-day First Division Monument was torn down. The new privet hedge inside the south fence suffered severe die-back in the winter but was cut to the ground and rejuvenated vigorously; a new flower bed 4½ feet wide was put around the south fountain and planted with 500 German and Japanese iris. Eighteen Japanese cherry trees, a gift of the city of Tokyo, were also planted near the fountain.[53] During 1912–13 two large, damaged trees on the north grounds were removed. Boxwood bushes, evergreen trees, herbaceous phlox, and Japanese iris were planted. Large quantities of bulbs, Spanish iris, pansies, dianthus, and daisies were put in the colonial gardens, along with summer bedding plants.[54]

Shortly after Woodrow Wilson's inauguration as president March 4, 1913, First Lady Ellen Axson Wilson, an artist and a garden designer, became deeply involved in plans for redoing the family quarters of the White House, which had been hardly altered since the remodeling in 1902. Nathan Wyeth prepared plans for the third floor. Minor changes were also made in the state rooms. Work was well underway by midsummer but took longer than expected to complete. On August 19, 1913, William W. Harts succeeded Spencer Cosby as officer in charge of buildings and grounds.[55]

Mrs. Wilson lost no time in making plans to redesign the two colonial gardens established during the Theodore Roosevelt administration. She perceived them as too busy for current taste and also wanted to provide a more dignified passage for her husband from home to office than by way of the basement. By early fall 1913 she was making preliminary sketches for the two gardens. She turned to Beatrix Farrand for assistance with the east garden. Farrand, who would become one of the most important American landscape architects of the first half of the 20th century, had been in practice for about a dozen years in 1912. She produced a design that, in contrast to the busy parterres of Mrs. Roosevelt's southeast colonial garden, was quiet and restrained. It featured a small rectangular lily pool in the center of the space, edged with English ivy and with an Irish yew at each corner. Around the borders were beds of tulips and other flowers in season, and rustic seats were tucked into secluded corners. Along the southern side of the garden was a low hedge. Figure 5-8 is

53. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1912*, 3485–86.

54. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1913*, 3207–78.

55. Seale, *The President's House*, 767, 774–77; Frances Wright Saunders, *First Lady Between Two Worlds: Ellen Axson Wilson* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 249–60; Dryfhout, *The Work of Augustus Saint-Gaudens*, 278–79

a perspective view of Farrand's east garden, and a photograph of the garden after construction is presented as figure 5-9.[56]

In laying out the west garden, Ellen Wilson was assisted by George Burnap, landscape architect for the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. Incorporating suggestions made by Mrs. Wilson, Burnap prepared a series of plans for this garden that included a formal "President's Walk" flanked by trees running parallel to the west terrace and long planting beds. However, bids came in far too high for this garden, and Mrs. Wilson and the White House gardener, Charles Henlock, revised it into a simpler scheme, which they executed themselves. As redesigned, the President's Walk was outlined by hedges and arbors instead of trees, and a stone tribunal featured in the original plan was omitted. The west garden of the White House as realized is illustrated in figures 5-10 and 5-11. A figure of Pan at the west end of the garden was an original feature, but its origins do not seem to be documented.[57]

For fiscal year 1913–14 Harts reported routine maintenance to most of the grounds. A severe storm on July 30 destroyed 16 trees and damaged 25 others. Woodrow Wilson himself planted an American elm northeast of the north portico some time after the storm. (The tree is no longer extant, and either died or was removed between 1977 and 1979.)[58]

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56. Jane Brown, *Beatrix: The Gardening Life of Beatrix Jones Farrand, 1872–1959* (New York: Viking, 1995), 102; NPS, "The President's Garden," 55; Diana Balmori, "Campus Work and Public Landscapes," in *Beatrix Farrand's American Landscapes: Her Gardens and Campuses* (Sagaponack, New York: Sagapress, Inc., 1985), 128–9, 185; Seale, *The President's House*, 777–79. Drawings for Farrand's White House garden are in the National Archives and in the Farrand Collection, College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley. At Princeton University Mrs. Wilson had planted a rose garden and a cedar-ringed circular pool; it was undoubtedly there that she met Farrand, who in 1912 had begun to design parts of the Princeton campus in collaboration with architect Ralph Adams Cram. Farrand designed the gardens at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington and the Rockefeller gardens in Seal Harbor, Maine. For general background on Farrand, see Eleanor M. McPeck, "A Biographical Note and a Consideration of Four Major Private Gardens," in *Beatrix Farrand's American Landscapes*, 12–61; and Jane Brown, "Lady into Landscape Gardener: Beatrix Farrand's Early Years at the Arnold Arboretum," *Arnoldia* 51, no. 3 (Fall 1991), 2–10.

57. Seale, *The President's House*, 779; Saunders, *First Lady*, 267. After less than a year and a half in the White House, Mrs. Wilson became ill and died on August 6, 1914. President Wilson married Edith Galt on Dec. 18, 1915. See Seale, *The President's House*, 784–85, 788–89, 791–94.

58. U.S. Grant to Marion Sowers, Dec. 26, 1928, cites the annual report for fiscal year 1913–14; Lorenzo Winslow, "The Executive Mansion Grounds: Plan Showing the Tree Planting and the Commemorative Trees Together with the Roads, Walks and Mechanical Services," June 1, 1943 (ESF/WHL/NPS).

Harts noted the changes that had been made to the gardens under the Farrand and Burnap plans, although he did not mention either designer by name. Water lilies were planted in the pool in the east garden. Walks were constructed in the west garden, sod was laid, and two large trees and 550 feet of hedge were planted. Routine maintenance to the White House grounds was reported for 1914–15. Plantings were numerous and the tennis court was resurfaced.[59]

The Marine Band concerts are not specifically referenced in the annual reports prior to 1904, but after this date concerts on the south lawn again became a regular event. They were moved briefly to the Ellipse during World War 1 (1917–18) for security considerations, but after the end of the conflict, they were again held on the south lawn.[60] Five years later documentation on these concerts ends. It is possible that with the inauguration of the Sylvan Theatre in 1924, the venue was moved.

In 1915–16 a new cement walk was constructed in the drying yard to replace an old wooden walk. The driveways north of the White House were given a coating of limestone chips and glutrin (probably a binding agent), then rolled with a steam roller, and the four lamps at the north entrance were repaired. In the fall thousands of spring flowering bulbs and pansies were planted in the east and west gardens. Iron water pipes were also installed to water the lawns and flower beds.[61] In 1916–17 Harts reported maintenance to the fountain south of the house and additional water pipes. The macadam and asphalt roadways were repaired, and four new arc electric lights were installed on the south grounds.[62]

During the time of U.S. involvement in World War I, strict wartime measures were observed at the White House. To demonstrate that every possible resource should be used to promote the war effort, the Wilsons kept a flock of about 18 sheep to graze on the lawn, making the wool available for auction in each state, donating the money to the Red Cross and saving the cost of mowing the south lawn. The

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59. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1915*, 1661, 3710.

60. In 1914 Harts reported that the concerts had been moved from the Ellipse to the White House grounds. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1914*, 3342. Harts was new to this job and it is quite possible that he was not aware of the location of the concerts. His report contradicts previous ones that clearly indicated that Marine Band concerts continued to be held on the south lawn every Saturday from June through September. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1909*, 2358; ibid., *1910*, 2669-70; ibid., *1911*, 3500; ibid., *1913*, 3223; ibid., *1914*, 3354; ibid., *1919*, 2049-50; ibid., *1920*, 2194.

61. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1916*, 3579–80.

62. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1917*, 3699–3700.

sheep were a picturesque sight on the White House lawn (figure 5-12), but the gardener, Charles Henlock, complained they were a nuisance. A small shed and water troughs were built on the grounds for the sheep.[63]

On September 25, 1917, Clarence S. Ridley took over as officer in charge of buildings and grounds. That year Ridley reported that 11 trees were given surgical treatment, 5 trees were chained, and 2 dead ones were removed. Evergreen trees were planted around the east fountain for winter effect and taken out in the spring. The east and west gardens (still referred to as the colonial gardens) received the usual maintenance. Irises that had been planted around the north fountain were transplanted to the south fountain. South of the White House 14 old electric arc lights were replaced with incandescent lights.[64]

In addition to routine maintenance to the White House grounds in 1918–19, some of the drives were resurfaced. The water pipes of the south fountain were repaired and a new circular spray installed. In the colonial gardens pansies, chrysanthemums, bulbs, and summer bedding plants were planted.[65]

In May 1919 a reception was held on the south lawn for convalescent veterans of World War I. This type of event was temporarily stopped after the Bonus March, but it was resumed briefly during the Truman presidency after World War II.[66]

In 1919–20 the two gates on Pennsylvania Avenue were cleaned, sanded, and painted, the statue of Pan in the west garden was cleaned and painted, and roads and walks were repaired. Flowering bulbs, herbaceous plants, and pansies were planted in the colonial gardens.[67] In 1920–21 a drainage pipe was laid in back of the stone base of the fence along Pennsylvania Avenue.[68]

On March 4, 1921, President Warren G. Harding was inaugurated. There is no evidence that the Hardings had any great interest in the grounds, but garden parties were quite common, with Mrs. Harding

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63. Seale, *The President's House*, 810–27. A drawing for the sheep cote is at the National Archives. (Information courtesy of ESF/WHL/NPS).

64. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1918*, 3777.

65. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1919*, 3819–20.

66. David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 497–98.

67. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1920*, 4110.

68. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1921*, 2055.

greeting many people on the grounds. Harding seems to have begun the custom of posing for photographs and greeting official groups of visitors near the west garden.[69]

Under Harding's administration Clarence O. Sherrill became the officer in charge of buildings and grounds. In 1922 Harding replaced the fern-leaf beeches that Theodore Roosevelt and his wife had planted near the east entrance of the White House in 1904. These trees were removed in 1942 when the East Wing was rebuilt.[70] President and Mrs. Harding planted two southern magnolias on the east entrance to the White House. The north tree, planted by Mrs. Harding, was replaced in 1947 and is credited to President Harding. The south tree, planted by President Harding, was replaced in 1942 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and since then has been Roosevelt's commemorative tree.[71]

Calvin Coolidge became president after Harding's sudden death on August 2, 1923. No major changes appear to have been made to the White House grounds during Coolidge's administration; the emphasis was again on the house itself.[72]

During this period a variety of light fixture styles can be seen around President's Park. Some of the old lanterns similar in design to those from the 1840s shared streets with arc lights. In the first decade of the 20th century round white globes were extremely common, but a decade later they began to be replaced with two of the most widely used streetlights in Washington, which were named after the members of the Commission of Fine Arts who participated in their design. The Millet lamppost, a single lamp standard (also called the Washington Globe) was first installed in 1912; the Bacon double lamppost in 1923.[73]

For 1923–24 Sherrill noted that several roadways on the grounds had been repaired and that the gateposts on Pennsylvania Avenue

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69. Seale, *The President's House*, 836–51.

70. According to the Olmsted report, the trees that Harding planted were European hornbeams; the annual report indicated that they were beeches.

71. Harding also brought in an 82-year-old gardener, Charles Lee Patten. NPS, "The President's Garden," 57. In 1922 Sherrill reported only routine care to the White House grounds and the spraying of trees to prevent defoliation by insects, *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1922*, 2182.

72. Seale, *The President's House*, 850–55.

73. Kohler, *The Commission of Fine Arts*, 37–38. For illustrations of the continued use of these light standards, see chapter 6, figure 6-10, and chapter 9, figures 9-5 and 9-6.

had been painted.[74] On May 10, 1924, Mrs. Coolidge planted a white birch tree, which had been presented by the District of Columbia Federation of Women's Clubs in honor of the mothers of presidents. President Coolidge spoke at the ceremony. The birch was planted on the lower part of the southeast lawn, but it has not survived.[75]

The following year Sherrill reported the usual care to the White House lawns, roads, walks, and gutters. In addition, the iron mesh fence at the rear of the mansion, extending from the Executive Office Building (West Wing) to the east terrace, was cleaned and painted. A lattice fence was also erected around the clothes-drying yard, and a new mesh wire fence was built at the basement entrance to the mansion.[76]

In December 1925 Major Ulysses S. Grant III, the grandson of President Grant, became director of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital. From this period onward the annual reports did not identify work on individual sites and included fewer photographs and plans that were replaced with graphs and tables.[77] However, an article published in *The National Spectator* on April 3, 1926, describes a "solitary apple tree," apparently ancient, as well as "many maples, oaks, acacia, tulip poplar, ash, cypress, magnolia, elm, buckeye, yew, Japanese flowering cherry, pine, cedar of Lebanon, basswood, Japanese varnish and boxwood trees." In the west garden there were 25 varieties of roses, while in the east "old-fashioned" garden were phlox, peonies, chrysanthemums, hollyhocks, black-eyed susans, forget-me-nots, snapdragons, and pansies. Bulbs such as narcissus, tulips, hyacinths, and German and Japanese iris were also described.[78] Some of the perennials were not typical of Farrand's plantings and may represent a deviation from her plan.

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74. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1924*, 2018–19.

75. NPS, *Administrative History*, 354 cites "White House Trees," Dec. 2, 1952, at the Harry S. Truman Library.

76. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1925*, 1937.

77. The annual report for the following year had a new format, reflecting a newly organized department. Under the new Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, there were seven divisions: Administrative, Buildings Maintenance, Design and Construction, Horticultural, Park Maintenance, Protection, and Transportation and Supply. Although the Executive Mansion still had its own section of the report, only work on the building was described, *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, 1926*, 7, 21, 23–26.

78. "Strange Features at the White House," *The National Spectator*, Apr. 3, 1926, 39–40, Stanley McClure files, ESF/WHL/NPS.

In the White House the family quarters were redone. In the course of the Coolidge remodeling serious structural problems were discovered that had been patched up but not resolved in previous remodeling. As a result, the entire attic had to be rebuilt, making it necessary for the Coolidges to move to a house on Dupont Circle for almost six months in 1927. It was through Grant's efforts that funding was secured to renovate the White House.[79]

While repairs to the roof and third floor of the White House were reported for 1926–27, no information was provided about work on the grounds. Despite the construction, the grounds were opened on Easter Monday for egg rolling, which was attended by more than 30,000 people. Between 9 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. only children under 10 with accompanying adults were let in. From 3:30 to 5 P.M. the general public was admitted, and the Marine Band performed.[80]

In 1927–28 the work on the White House roof was completed. In May 1928 the iron gates on West Executive Avenue between the White House and the grounds of the State, War, and Navy Building were removed and presented to the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society to be used as memorial gateways into Spiegel Grove State Park in Fremont, Ohio. It was reported that egg rolling again took place on Easter Monday, with about the same number of people as in the previous year. Trees in all the parks were treated with arsenate of lead to exterminate the elm-leaf beetle and caterpillars. The same treatment was used on boxwood plants against the box-leaf miner.[81]

On January 24, 1928, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. not only recommended changes in planting, but referred to work carried out the previous year, presumably at his recommendation. Apparently Olmsted was asked only to advise in an informal way on the improvement of the south vista.[82]

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79. Seale, *The President's House*, 863–77. The repairs done in 1927 led to severe structural problems in the attic, which necessitated the major reconstruction of the building during the Truman administration.

80. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1927*, 30–32, 38.

81. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1928*, 20–21, 23–24, 30–31. For the Horticultural Division, the only relevant item was that cut flowers were regularly furnished to the Executive Mansion.

82. Olmsted to Grant, Jan. 24, 1928, Library of Congress, Olmsted Associates Papers, B-files, job 2843, Fine Arts Commission, "EX." Unless otherwise indicated, all of the Olmsted Brothers' correspondence, reports of visits, and reports of conferences cited in this chapter are from this repository, collection, file, and job name and number; it will be cited hereafter as "Olmsted Associates Papers." Copies of some of the Olmsted correspondence, including an extract from the letter of Jan. 24, 1928, are also in RG 66, NA.

Olmsted apparently had been asked to examine the plantings on the sides of the south vista, which landscape architect Irving Paine had wanted to thin considerably. While not in favor of a wholesale removal of plants, Olmsted suggested moving a large Irish yew, which was directly on the axis south of the south pool. Olmsted told Grant that he hoped that no one had been "seriously shocked" by the cutting back of the hedge around the south side of the grounds, even though it looked "unpleasantly denuded."[83]

In carrying out the request for landscape assistance, Olmsted examined the general condition of the White House grounds.[84] He remarked that

> while the general effect is distinctly "respectable" . . . and while the general plan, as regards the form of the ground and the disposition of the tree-masses and means of communication and their relation to the building and to the exterior surroundings is emphatically good, it would be fair to say that almost anyone of cultivated taste and a fairly broad and appreciative acquaintance with fine examples of the landscape surroundings of great mansions, both private and official, in this country and elsewhere, would have to rate the White House Grounds as distinctly disappointing.[85]

Olmsted objected to the lack of residential character in the grounds and believed that there was little that distinguished the White House landscape from the grounds of a public institution or that indicated that a family lived there. However, he believed that there was ample opportunity to develop parts of the grounds for domestic uses. For example, considerable space existed on both sides of the south vista for secluded spaces that could be allocated for the personal and social needs of the first family.[86]

The last three paragraphs of Olmsted's 1928 letter are particularly important. Referring to McKim's renovation of the White House in 1902–3 and its failure to address the grounds, he wrote,

> [McKim] was in principle completely sympathetic with my views. But the impulse toward betterment at that time, stimulated as it was largely by the outrageously bad functional and artistic condition of the interior of the building, spent itself almost entirely in accomplishing the admirable

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83. Olmsted to Grant, Jan. 24, 1928, Olmsted Associates Papers. The privet hedge had been cut back to the ground in 1911–12

84. Olmsted to Grant, Jan. 24, 1928, 2.

85. Olmsted to Grant, Jan. 24, 1928, 2.

86. Olmsted to Grant, Jan. 24, 1928, 3.

> architectural improvement of the building and its immediate surroundings and did not have the energy to grapple broadly and completely with the problem of the grounds as a whole.
>
> I wonder whether the time is not approaching to undertake this courageously and broadly — with the utmost respect for what is good in the old design, but with an appreciation that in detail the White House Grounds have never approached the standards attained by the more distinguished examples of the grounds of private and official residences in the rest of the world or of private residences in the United States. . . .
>
> The White House Grounds ought to be such that an organization like the Garden Club of America would proudly and unhesitatingly point them out to its members or to foreign visitors of kindred interests as among the best hundred examples of residential grounds in America.[87]

A copy of Olmsted's letter to Grant was sent to Charles Moore, who replied that he agreed "thoroughly and cordially." He was uncertain, however, how much could be done until there was an adequate plan and someone "in that enclosure" who could give the matter serious attention.[88] Moore made copies of Olmsted's "confidential report" available first to First Lady Grace Coolidge and then to First Lady Lou Hoover, but did not request active consideration from either.[89] Frederic A. Delano, chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's uncle, also wrote to Olmsted, saying that the letter had impressed him very favorably.[90]

In 1928–29 bituminous paving in front of the Executive Office Building (West Wing) was replaced by a larger area of concrete so that automobiles could turn without backing. The west wall of the west terrace was found to be in bad structural condition and was reconstructed. The fence around the grounds was repainted, and the bottom of the fountain north of the White House was completely

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87. Olmsted to Grant, Jan. 24, 1928, 4. The last few paragraphs of the letter include some cross-outs and corrections, presumably by Olmsted, and these have been incorporated into the quotation.

88. Moore to Olmsted, Feb. 17, 1928, Olmsted Associates Papers.

89. Commission of Fine Arts (hereafter abbreviated as CFA), minutes of meeting, Oct. 19, 1934, project files, box 206, RG 66, NA. This entry includes the full text of Charles Moore's report on an inspection of the White House grounds on Oct. 9, 1934, as well as a full history of the early stages of the project.

90. Frederic A. Delano to Olmsted, Feb. 18, 1928, Olmsted Associates Papers.

reconstructed.[91] A March 1929 article describes white phlox planted in a surprising location: a bed on the front (presumably north) lawn near the fence enclosing the grounds.[92]

Photographs show topiaries on both the east and west terraces by the 1920s, although when they were installed is not known.[93]

Lafayette Square

The statue of the Comte de Rochambeau by sculptor Fernand Hamar was unveiled in the southwest corner of Lafayette Square on May 24, 1902.[94] That same year the gun carriages around the Jackson statue were replaced, the watchman's lodge was repainted, bare places on the lawns were resodded, and the walks were repaired. Privet hedges were planted near the watchman's lodge.[95] In 1902–3 the iron railing around the Jackson statue was repainted.[96] Repairs were made to the lodge in 1903–4, and the sod was treated and manured.[97] In 1904–5 water service was extended to the southeast part of the park, and a plan listed all trees and shrubs (see figure 5-13). Two photographs, perhaps taken by members of the Olmsted firm, survive from this period. Figure 5-14 shows the section of park closest to Pennsylvania Avenue looking east toward the Lafayette statue. The Rochambeau statue does not appear, but the photographer may have been standing beside it.[98]

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91. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1929*, 24, 28. In connection with repainting the fence, the report refers to "the fence surrounding the grounds" but does not specify a particular part of it (24). For the Horticultural Division, nothing is itemized except for the provision of flowers to the Executive Mansion.

92. Robert Sparks Walker, "When You Visit the White House," *Flower Grower* (March 1929), Stanley McClure files, ESF/WHL/NPS.

93. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/NPS/WHL), June 15, 2000.

94. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1902*, 2741, 2564–65; Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 379.

95. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1902*, 2732.

96. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1903*, 2566.

97. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1904*.

98. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1905*, 2638. It is unclear why these photographs were taken, since the Olmsted firm did not prepare plans for Lafayette Park. At the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, these two photographs are filed under job no. 2829, Lafayette Square, but there are no plans. Also, no correspondence is listed under the job number in the B-Files of the Olmsted Associates Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division. Neither photograph is dated, but the one in figure 5-15 has a notation: "Original sent to Archibald A. Hill, 11 June [19]06."

For Theodore Roosevelt's 1905 inaugural ceremonies a Court of History was set up in Lafayette Park, consisting of portrait statues, symbolic female figures, and large vases presented by the executive committee of the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. After the inauguration the sculptures were moved to the Ellipse.[99]

Numerous repairs on the lodge were made in 1905–6, and painting was done on the iron fence around the Jackson statue and elsewhere in the park. There were now 116 settees in the park. In 1905 a competition was held for a statue of Major General Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben to be erected in the northwest corner. A joint resolution of Congress in 1904 accepted the offer of the Polish-American organizations to present a statue of Brigadier General Kosciuszko, which would be erected in the northeast corner.[100] In 1906–7 the gravel and asphalt walks were repaired, and new terra-cotta drainpipe was laid to drain one of the walks.[101] For 1907–8 repairs to worn places in the gravel walks were reported, and the models for both the von Steuben and Kosciuszko statues were approved.[102] Repairs to the lodge were reported in 1908–9.[103]

In 1909–10 the lodge and the brick gutters were repaired, and the water service extended. On May 11, 1910, the Kosciuszko statue, by Antonio Popiel, was unveiled at the northeast corner. In June 1910 the full size model of one of the two bronze side groups of the von Steuben monument was approved.[104] The only maintenance reported in 1910–11 was the repair of worn places in the asphalt walks. At this time there were six electric arc lights in the park. The von Steuben statue, by Albert Jaegers, was unveiled at the northwest corner of the park on December 7, 1910.[105] In 1911–12 asphalt walkways were repaired, and the trees received professional care, with decayed cavities cleaned and filled with cement. In August 1911 and again in June 1912 the elm trees in most of the Washington

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99. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1905*, 2638, 2653-5; Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 131-2.

100. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1906*, 2129, 2145. At about this time the practice of summarizing maintenance for all the improved parks in one section of the annual report was begun. Only construction and new plantings would be reported for individual parks.

101. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1907*, 2321, 2340.

102. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1908*, 2391, 2412.

103. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1909*, 2342, 2362–63, 2366–67.

104. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1910*, 2660, 2683, 2684; Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 374–75.

105. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1911*, 2968, 2990–1; Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 382.

parks were sprayed with a solution of arsenate of lead to prevent defoliation by the elm-leaf beetle and the caterpillar.[106] In 1912–13 the asphalt walks were again repaired and a new drinking fountain and a children's sandbox were installed.[107]

In 1913–14 a new lodge was built on the same site as the old one (figure 5-15). The following year a new cement walk was laid out leading to the new lodge, and the old gravel walks were resurfaced. In 1915–16 new coping was built around the top of the lodge, which was painted. Two evergreen trees were planted, and 938 square yards of sod were laid. Two shrubbery beds were redesigned in 1916–17. In 1917–18 only the painting of the lodge was reported. Three deciduous shrubs were planted in 1918–19, and a clogged pipe attached to the drinking fountain was repaired.[108]

In 1914 Olmsted indicated that he opposed the location of the Jackson statue. He argued that it should be turned around to face 16th Street. Others agreed with this assessment, but nothing happened as a result. In 1917 a proposal was made to relocate the Jackson statue to the north of the Treasury Building. The Commission of Fine Arts opposed the move, indicating that relocating the statue so near the building would detract from both. In 1923 a suggestion was made to exchange the Jackson statue with the Washington statue at Washington Circle when the latter was returned from being repaired. It was argued that this would reunite Washington with the generals he commanded during the American Revolution. However, strong opposition from Tennesseans prevented the switch.[109]

On November 11, 1919, the first anniversary of Armistice Day, two California redwood trees were planted in Lafayette Park with "appropriate ceremonies." The redwoods were located at the eastern and western sides of the park near the location of the present pools. During 1919–20 repairs were made to the lodge and walks. Three dead trees were removed, and one deciduous tree was planted. Two evergreen and 14 deciduous shrubs were planted, and 7 evergreen shrubs were put in to replace others that had died.[110]

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106. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1912,* 3489–90.

107. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1913,* 3210, 3212.

108. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1914,* 3356; ibid., *1915,* 3713; ibid., *1916,* 3582; ibid., *1917,* 3702; ibid., *1918,* 3779.

109. Kerr, "Statue of General Andrew Jackson," 47-49.

110. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1920,* 4114.

During this period major buildings were constructed around Lafayette Square. In 1917 Cass Gilbert designed the Treasury Annex on the east side of the square at the corner of Madison Place and Pennsylvania Avenue. He assumed that eventually the building would be extended along the entire length of Madison Place north to H Street and that structures of similar character would be erected on the other sides bordering the square, an assumption that continued at least until 1933.[111] Some of the proposals for modifying the park might reflect the intent of the McMillan plan and the ideas of influential designers, such as Cass Gilbert.

Gilbert also designed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Building on H Street. It is a four-story limestone Beaux Arts classical revival building completed in 1925. While the colonnaded corner building has been altered over the years, its appearance from the street is virtually unchanged.[112]

In 1927 the Hay-Adams house, the well-known masterpiece of Henry Hobson Richardson that was constructed in 1884–86, was demolished to make room for a hotel. Named in honor of John Hay and Henry Adams and financed by Harry Wardman, the hotel was designed by Mihran Mesrobian. It is eight stories high, faced in limestone, and decorated with classical details.[113]

In *The American Vitruvius*, Elbert Peets published an analysis of Washington based on his studies in the city during World War I. He wrote,

> Lafayette Square is of such obvious beauty and value as an open square. Real "squares" are rare in Washington. There are plenty of so called "circles" and other open areas of various shapes at street intersections, but Lafayette is in quite another class. It is a court of honor before the White House, fortunate in its ample size and symmetrical plan, its freedom from bisecting pavements, its dignified houses reminiscent of the old time capital, and the relative continuity of its bounding wall, for an area loses half the value of being open if wide avenues lead out from every side.[114]

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111. Kohler. *The Commission of Fine Arts*, 80.

112. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 163.

113. Jeanne Fogle, *Proximity to Power: Neighbors to the Presidents near Lafayette Square* (Washington, DC: A Tour de Force Publication, 1999), 208–10.

114. Hegemann and Peets, *The American Vitruvius*, 292.

Peets then went on to warn against the radical transformation of the square that would result if the office buildings recommended by the Senate Park Commission were constructed.[115]

Limited activity was reported for Lafayette Square between 1920 and 1928.[116] Memorial trees were planted not only in the White House grounds but also in Lafayette Square, as in the case of the red oak planted there on April 25, 1929, by the Ladies' Association, in honor of Mrs. Grace Coolidge.[117] During this period the "park's moral character after hours drew criticism." To address this problem old trees were thinned and more electric lights were installed. A daytime guard was stationed at the watchman's lodge.[118] However, a 1927 plan for the walks in the south half may indicate that the simplification of the park had been contemplated then, although it was not carried out for almost 10 years.[119] The 1929 report noted that brief ceremonies were held and wreaths placed at the Rochambeau statue on July 1, 1928, the von Steuben statue on November 15, 1928, the Jackson statue on January 8, 1929, and the Kosciuszko statue on February 12, 1929.[120]

President's Park South

During this period a number of commemorative statues and memorials were installed in President's Park South. In 1902–3 the statue of General Sherman was completed under the supervision of Sara Rohl-Smith, the wife of Carl Rohl-Smith.[121] Coping for the Sherman statue

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115. Hegemann and Peets, *The American Vitruvius*, 293.

116. In the annual reports for 1920–21, 1921–22, 1923–24, 1925–26, 1926–27, and 1927–28 there are no sections dealing with Lafayette Square. The only action reported for 1924–25 is the sowing of grass seed. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1925.*

117. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1929*, 42, 43.

118. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 18.

119. Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, "Lafayette Park, Walks — South Half, Location and Grades," Sept. 12, 1927, plan 28-20, no source identified.

120. As in some of the previous reports, a complete listing of all the statues, monuments and memorials in the public grounds of Washington was included; *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1929*, 43, 52–57.

121. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1903*, 2563. Carl Rohl-Smith died in 1900. Sara was assisted by Lauritz Jensen, Sigvald Asbjornsen, Stephen Sinding, and Mrs. Theodore Alice Ruggles Kitson. The statue was dedicated on October 15, 1903. Funding began in 1892 with a $30,000 appropriation from Congress; the Army of the Tennessee contributed $11,000. Preparing the subfoundation, mosaic, granite curbing and grounds improvement amounted to $40,055 as of 1952. Recent lighting, sidewalks, landscaping, curbing and other work

was completed during fiscal year 1901–2. Landscape maintenance, which was listed under President's Park, consisted primarily of new bridle paths and granolithic pavements.[122] In 1903–4 it was again recommended that a footway be constructed around the inner side of the Ellipse. Thirty settees were installed on the eastern side of the park. In April 1904 the Ellipse was opened up for baseball; nine diamonds were laid out, but only three were in use at any one time. In that year the Sherman statue was finally installed; its surroundings were designated "Sherman Plaza," and landscaping was begun. A plan in the annual report shows a "Street South of the Treasury Department" in the present location of the E Street extension.[123]

Parts of the lawns damaged by ball playing were restored in 1904–5, and roads were repaired. At the northeast corner a bed was planted with tropical plants. Some of the portrait statues, symbolic female figures, and large vases associated with President Roosevelt's 1905 inaugural ceremonies were moved to the Ellipse. Among the symbolic female figures were two representing "Victory" and one each representing the "Genius of Architecture" and the "Genius of Music." The Victory figures, sculpted by Michael Tonnetti, were placed at the south entrance to the Ellipse, presumably at Constitution Avenue, and probably at the location of the present Haupt fountains. The location of the other two figures is not known, and none of them is now on the grounds. By 1905 the grounds around the Sherman statue were fully landscaped (figure 5-16).[124]

During fiscal year 1905-6 a cement walkway six feet wide was constructed around the edge of the Ellipse, and much of the sod near the walkway had to be relaid. A total of 92 trees on the east and south sides were removed because the plantings were overcrowded.[125] The resurfacing of the roadway was completed in 1907–8, and the asphalt paving on West Executive Avenue was repaired. On Easter Monday the Marine Band gave a concert for children on the north side.[126] In 1908–9 the surface of the main roadway on the north side was recoated. Post and wire fence was installed on the west side of

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was completed as of 1993. See also, Maggie Coffin "Historical Landscape Assessment: First Division Monument and Sherman Plaza, President's Park, Washington, D.C." (Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, NPS, 1996).

122 *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1902*, 2715, 2732.

123. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1904*, 3926, 3948.

124. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1905*, 2638, 2653–5; Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 131–32.

125. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1907*, 2321–22.

126. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1908*, 2392.

the park to prevent trespassing on the grass. The old bridle path was cleaned and a new branch added. Repairs also continued on the asphalt surface of West Executive Avenue. Minor repairs were made to the coping at Sherman Plaza. For the inauguration of President Taft, a fireworks display was held on the Ellipse.[127]

At this time important structures were erected on the west side of the Ellipse. The first major one, constructed between 1908 and 1910, was the Organization of American States building. Albert Kelsey and Paul Philippe Cret were the designers of one of the most exotic buildings in Washington. The triple-arched entrance of the principal façade on 17th Street forms an arcade flanked by huge pylons and two-story pavilions. One of two sculptural groups illustrates North America with a female figure and child. A similar group symbolizes South America. Above each statue, bas-relief panels illustrate, respectively, George Washington, Simón Bolivar, and José de San Martín. At the cornice lines of the pylons are an eagle as a symbol of America, and a condor as a symbol of the Andes. Mayan motifs line the base of the pilasters and the top of the parapet and adorn two copper lamps at the entrance. A red tile roof and a classical balustrade crown the building.[128]

In 1910 the Daughters of the American Revolution Memorial Continental Hall was constructed. The white marble building was conceived as a monument to the founders of the republic, as an inspiration for patriotic sentiment, and as headquarters for the organization. No single design was originally accepted. Instead Edward Pearce Casey presented an amalgamated plan that called for a 2,000-seat auditorium, a library, and a memorial room.[129]

Five years later the national headquarters building for the American Red Cross was constructed. Designed by Alexander B. Trowbridge and Goodhue Livingston, this building is a memorial to Civil War women. It attempts at symbolic reconciliation by recognizing the sacrifices of both the North and the South. The white marble Classical Revival building sits well away from the street and is characterized by gentle terraces and a long circular drive. A central projecting portico of four Corinthian columns rises two stories and supports a triangular pediment. Four identical engaged columns are

127. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1909*, 2342, 2361.

128. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 209–10.

129. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 208–9.

placed on each side of the building. The third story is set behind a balustrade that encircles it.[130]

The only work reported on the Ellipse in 1909–10 was the repair of roads. More than 25,000 square yards of macadam roadway were cleaned of dust and horse droppings and surfaced with an asphaltic oil. The roads leading from the main roadway to the northeast and southwest corners of the grounds were covered with broken stone and rolled. In 1910–11 the macadam roadways were again repaired, as were the bridle paths. Six new wooden bridges were made to carry the bridle path across the gutters. The Marine Band gave concerts here every Saturday in the summer and on Easter Monday, using portable bandstands. More repairs were reported to the roadways in 1911–12, and to the asphalt roadway on West Executive Avenue. The executive mansion stables to the south of the State, War, and Navy Building were removed in 1911. In 1912–13 a large shrubbery bed was laid out south of the State, War, and Navy Building and planted with 110 shrubs to block out "trespass paths" in this area.[131]

After Maj. Archie Butt and Francis Davis Millet died aboard the *Titanic* in 1912, friends established a fountain in their memory. Created by noted American sculptor Daniel Chester French and architect Thomas Hastings, the fountain was installed in 1913 on the Ellipse just east of the recently removed presidential stables. A public resolution by Congress, approved August 24, 1912, placed the monument on the grounds at no expense to the government. No dedication ceremony was held.[132]

In 1913–14 roadways were again repaired, and improvements were made in the area around Sherman Plaza. In 1914–15 seven large evergreen trees were planted around the Butt-Millet memorial fountain. The mosaic floor around the Sherman statue was repaired in 1914–15. The joints in the pedestal and steps were cleaned and repointed. Twelve old trees were removed in 1916–17, and 122 deciduous trees and 158 deciduous shrubs were planted. Waterlines were laid to water the trees and shrubbery, and roadways were repaired.[133] On August 2, 1916, a plan was prepared to develop the portion of

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130. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 207-8; Fogle, *Proximity to Power*, 159.

131. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1910*, 2660; ibid., *1911*, 2968, 2978; ibid., *1912*, 3485, 3490; ibid., *1913*, 3211–12.

132. NPS, "A History of National Capital Parks," by Cornelius W. Heine (Washington, DC, 1953), table IV; NPS, *President's Park South*, 44–45.

133. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1914*, 3345–9; ibid., *1915*, 3713; ibid., *1916*, 3582; ibid., *1917*, 3703; Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 134–35.

the Ellipse along 17th Street. Approved by Colonel Harts, it is primarily a planting plan that shows all of the roads, walks, and paths, including the bridle path; it is difficult to read in reduction.[134]

In 1918–19 three grass tennis courts were laid out south of the Executive Mansion near 15th and B Streets. In the northeastern part of Sherman Plaza, 56 deciduous shrubs were planted. Pavement on the east side was repaired. A new volleyball court was laid out on the Ellipse, but its exact location is unknown. Three large evergreen trees and six large and 30 small deciduous shrubs were dug up and replanted around the Butt-Millet fountain.[135] In 1919–20 extensive repairs were made to the roads around the Ellipse and to East and West Executive Avenues. New paths were also laid out from the Butt-Millet fountain to the corner of 17th Street and New York Avenue. Shrubs were replaced at Sherman Plaza.[136] Figures 5-17 and 5-18 show existing walks and trees around the Sherman statue and the drives, paths, and bridle path through the entire Ellipse area and Sherman Plaza in 1919.

The Zero Milestone was unveiled on June 4, 1923. The milestone was on the north side of the Ellipse on the north-south meridian of the District of Columbia. The official starting point for measuring highway distances from Washington, D.C., the milestone consists of a shaft of pink granite 4 feet high from Balfour, North Carolina. The architect was Horace Peaslee; Gorham Manufacturing Company cast the bronze sections.[137]

A special section of the annual report for 1923–24 notes that a site for a memorial to the dead of the First Division, American Expeditionary Forces, in the World War had been selected south of the State, War, and Navy Building, and that the concrete foundation had been completed. The cost was to be paid by members of the First Division.[138]

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134. "Development of West Portion of President's Park," Aug. 2, 1916, submitted by Chas. H. Diggs (landscape designer), recommended by O. O. Gillen (supt. of parks), and approved by W. W. Harts, plan no. 23-54.

135. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1919,* 3822.

136. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1920,* 4113. There were no sections about the Ellipse or south grounds in annual reports for 1920–21 and 1921–22.

137. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1929,* 55; NPS, *The President's Park South, Washington, D.C.,* by George J. Olszewski (Washington, DC: Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, Washington, DC, 1970), 30.

138. There was no item specifically about the Ellipse or south grounds in the annual report for 1924.

In 1923 the first National Community Christmas tree was put up in the Ellipse. Middlebury College (Vermont) presented the cut tree as a Christmas present to President Coolidge. In 1924 and following years, living trees, balled and removed after the Christmas season, were used. The 1924 tree, a Norway spruce, was planted in Sherman Plaza, which would become the site for national Christmas trees for the next 10 years.[139]

By September 30, 1924, the World War Memorial to the Dead of the First Division was completed and was dedicated by President Coolidge on October 4, 1924.[140] The monument consists of an 80-foot column of pink Milford granite from Massachusetts, one of the largest single pieces of stone ever taken from an American quarry. Cass Gilbert designed it, while Daniel Chester French, sculptor of the Lincoln Memorial, sculpted the figure of a winged Victory on top of the column. Bronze plates at the base are inscribed with the names of the 5,599 men of the First Division who were killed in the World War. The campaigns and battle honors of the First Division are carved on the column.[141] In March 1925 the earth mound around the base of the monument was sodded, and a yew hedge was planted at the top of the mound on all four sides. In April 1926 granite steps were set in position on the north side to give access to the paved area at the base of the shaft. A plan was approved in 1926 for additional landscaping around the base of the monument, but as of June 1926, work had not yet begun.[142] In 1926–27 plants were added to the privet hedge to fill in the gaps on the west, south, and east sides where steps had been proposed. Reference was again made to an approved landscaping plan, but no work had been done by June 30, 1927.[143]

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139. "1923" [National Community Christmas Tree Report], 1115-30-75/Sherman Plaza, box 10, acc. 64A-42, WH&WPP files, ESF/WHL/NPS; NPS, *Administrative History*, 211, cites Elizabeth Peeples, *American Forests*, Dec. 1940.

140. No work was done in 1924–25 to improve the ground around the base of the monument, which was several feet above the grade of the park. See *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1925*, 1962.

141. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 133.

142. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1926*, 45.

143. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1927*, 18. There is no mention of the First Division Monument in the report for 1927–28, so presumably this work had not been done. The Ellipse did not have its own section in the 1926 report, but it was noted in that report, as well as in those for 1927, 1928, and 1929, that there were four baseball diamonds and that one of four community Christmas trees had been planted in Sherman Plaza, *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1926*, 27, 28; ibid., *1927*, 36, 37; ibid., *1928*, 28–9, 30; ibid., *1929*, 38, 43.

The Grounds of the Treasury Building

In 1909 Secretary of the Treasury Franklin MacVeagh commissioned York and Sawyer, a New York City architectural firm, to study the Treasury Building. As a result, the entrance on the east side was altered, and an attic story was added (1910–21). These alterations do not seem to have involved any landscape changes.

Photographs document that before 1910 the southeast lawn of the Treasury Building showed a star pattern. After 1910 shrubbery was planted around the perimeter of the southeastern lawn. A 1915 view of the southwest lawn shows a single evergreen tree in the middle of the grassy lawn, with shrubbery around the perimeter.[144]

Around 1924 George Burnap prepared a plan to landscape the Treasury grounds (figure 5-19). It is unclear whether or not this was carried out. It became a tradition at all presidential inaugural parades for viewing stands to be set up along Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House. The stands on the north side of the Treasury Building erected for President Wilson's 1913 inaugural parade (figure 5-20) are typical. Between 1919 and 1921, because of Cass Gilbert's Treasury extension on the other side of Pennsylvania Avenue, a tunnel was excavated under the avenue.[145]

In 1923 a bronze statue of Alexander Hamilton was erected at the south entrance of the Treasury Building between East Executive Avenue and 15th Street (figure 9-22). The sculptor was James Earle Fraser, a former student and assistant of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and the architect was Henry Bacon. An anonymous donor funded it.[146] The old iron fence at the south grounds of the Treasury was also removed and replaced with a new one that might have matched the existing fence and fence piers on the west side (figure 5-21).

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144. "Fact Sheet: Treasury Building Landscaping," memorandum to John Rogers, June 5, 1987, OC/Treasury.

145. Bird, "Overview of the Architectural History of the U. S. Treasury Building," 10–11.

146. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 130.

The Grounds of the State, War, and Navy Building

Most historic photographs of the State, War, and Navy Building show its south front, and only foundation plantings of small coniferous evergreens are visible. Between 1909 and 1912 the Tafts' cow, Pauline, grazed on the lawn south of the State, War, and Navy Building (figure 5-22). Some sparse foundation plantings on the south side can be seen in this photograph. After the stable was removed in 1911, the cow may have grazed elsewhere.[147]

Between 1900 and 1943 about 29 pieces of ordnance were displayed around the building. These may have included the two cannon that were captured by the United States Navy on May 1, 1898, from the Spanish arsenal at Cavete in the Philippine Islands after the defeat of the Spanish naval squadron in Manila Bay. U.S. Navy anchors were also displayed around the State, War, and Navy Building.[148]

In 1912 a detailed study of the plantings around the State, War, and Navy Building was completed.[149] The report is not signed, but it may have been prepared by George Burnap, then landscape architect for the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. Possibly on the recommendations of this study, a large shrubbery bed was laid out south of the building in 1912–13 and planted with 110 large shrubs. The planting, which was designed to block out "trespass paths," seems to have succeeded.[150]

In 1913 Captain Douglas MacArthur, future general and World War II hero, was appointed superintendent of the State, War, and Navy Building. During his six-month tenure, MacArthur was responsible for introducing concrete urns as planters around the building and may also have been responsible for their design. Louis De Francheschi and Sons, a Washington dealer in landscaping supplies, cast the urns, which are 30 inches wide and 26 inches high. Of the original 28

147. Lehman, et al., "Executive Office Building," 45.

148. Many of these cannon were melted down in World War II. In 1984 the two cannon were borrowed from the Smithsonian Institution and put on display at the north entrance of the Old Executive Office Building. Information on the two anchors, which were borrowed from the Department of the Navy and placed at one of the entrances on the east side of the building at the same time, is from John F. Dawson and Susan Brown, Executive Office of the President, Old Executive Office Building. NPS, "A Report on the Mounting and Placement of Trophy Cannon at the Old Executive Office Building (North Entrance) by the National Park Service" (ESF/WHL/NPS, Oct. 1984).

149. "Report of the Superintendent of the State, War, and Navy Department Building," quarter ending June 30, 1912 (Office of Historic Preservation, Old Executive Office Building), 21–30.

150. *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1913*, 3211.

planters, a few of which can be seen in the 1964 photograph in figure 5-23, 26 were still in use in 1970.[151]

Summary

Between 1901 and 1929 President's Park evolved gradually. During this period the Senate Park Commission produced what is known as the McMillan plan for central Washington. While the plan did not have any direct effect on President's Park, it did avert the massive enlargement or relocation of the President's House, which had been proposed since at least the late 1860s. The only physical legacies of the McMillan plan adjacent to President's Park are the Treasury Annex on Madison Place, the Chamber of Commerce Building on H Street, and the Commerce Building on 15th Street. The McMillan plan also led to the creation of the permanent Commission of Fine Arts in 1910, which has since played a critical role in the evolution of the landscape in President's Park. The McMillan plan remained the conceptual framework within which all planning in Washington took place during this era, as its recommendations were followed in developing East and West Potomac Parks and other sites in the metropolitan area.

In 1900 Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., as Nathaniel Michler had done before, presented a persuasive address advocating the return to the principles of the L'Enfant plan. It is possible that his thinking influenced Commissioners Burnham, McKim, and Moore, since the McMillan plan also sought to reclaim the monumental simplicity and dignity that were the essential features of the L'Enfant design.

The 1902 remodeling of the White House made possible the creation of two semi-enclosed gardens south of the building. During Theodore Roosevelt's administration colonial gardens were planned by an unknown landscape designer or designers. During Woodrow Wilson's presidency the east garden was redesigned in a more formal, Renaissance style by Beatrix Farrand, and the west garden was redesigned by George Burnap and First Lady Ellen Axson Wilson. Several commemorative trees were also planted on the White House lawns.

Another important practice began during this period — building specific recreational amenities for presidents and their families. It started with the construction of a tennis court for Alice Roosevelt. After its removal another tennis court was built for Helen Taft. In

151. Lehman, et al., "Executive Office Building," 65–66, 72–73.

1919 after the end of World War I the south lawn was used for a yearly May reception for convalescent veterans.

A large number of the commemorative statues and memorials were installed in President's Park between 1901 and 1929. In Lafayette Park statues of Rochambeau, von Steuben, and Kosciuszko joined those of Jackson and Lafayette. A statue of Sherman was placed south of the Treasury Building, and a Memorial to the Dead of the First Division, American Expeditionary Forces, was erected south of the State, War, and Navy Building. In addition, the Zero Milestone and the Butt-Millet memorial fountain were installed. The emphasis on statuary and memorials in President's Park during this era reflects such memorialization in Washington as a whole.

Public use of President's Park continued. The popular Easter egg roll attracted thousands of participants, as did the weekly Marine Band concerts. Lafayette Square after hours, however, drew criticism from many; the neighborhood was no longer the prestigious area its prime location would seem to imply. Recreational activities on the Ellipse remained popular, and the installation of commemorative statues and memorials attracted ever-growing numbers of visitors.

President's Park continued to attract the nation's leading architects and landscape architects. The list of notables includes among others Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Charles Follen McKim, Cass Gilbert, Daniel Burnham, and Beatrix Farrand. However, relatively few of the proposed plans were implemented.

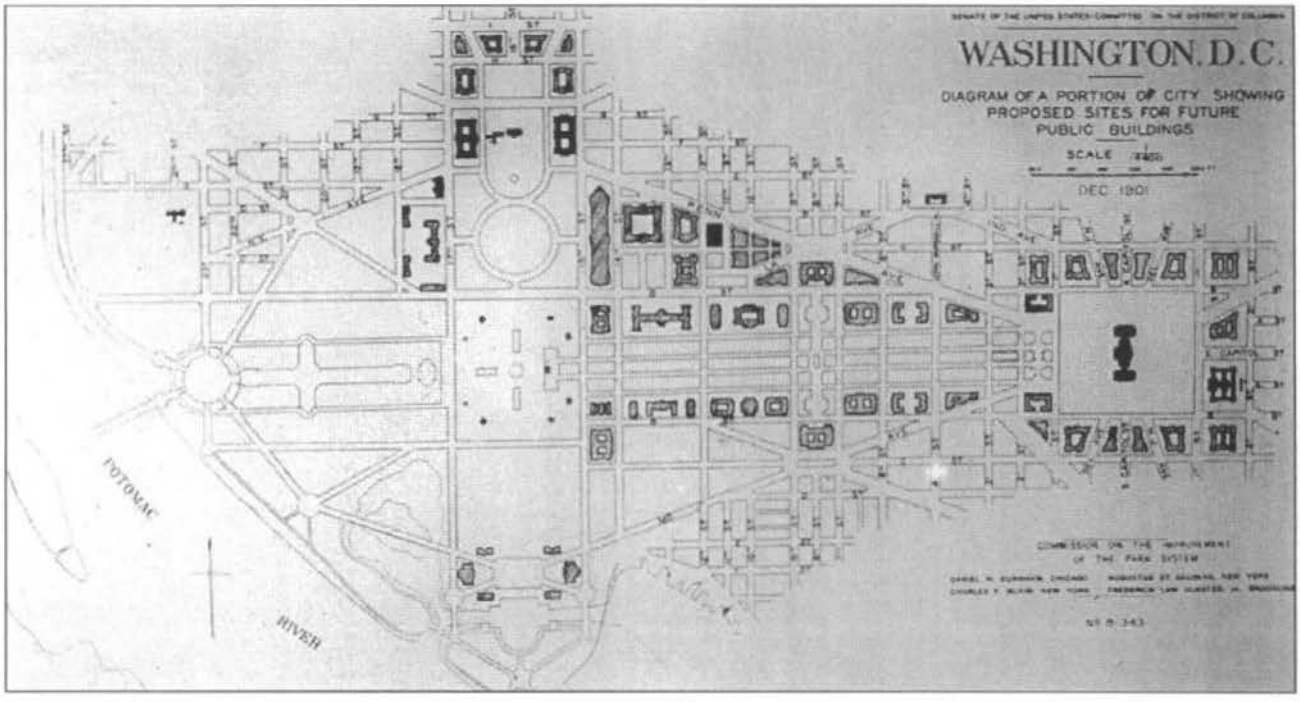

Figure 5-1: *Washington, D.C., Diagram of a Portion of City Showing Proposed Sites for Future Public Buildings.* Senate of the United States — Committee on the District of Columbia Report, 1901. Francis Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University.

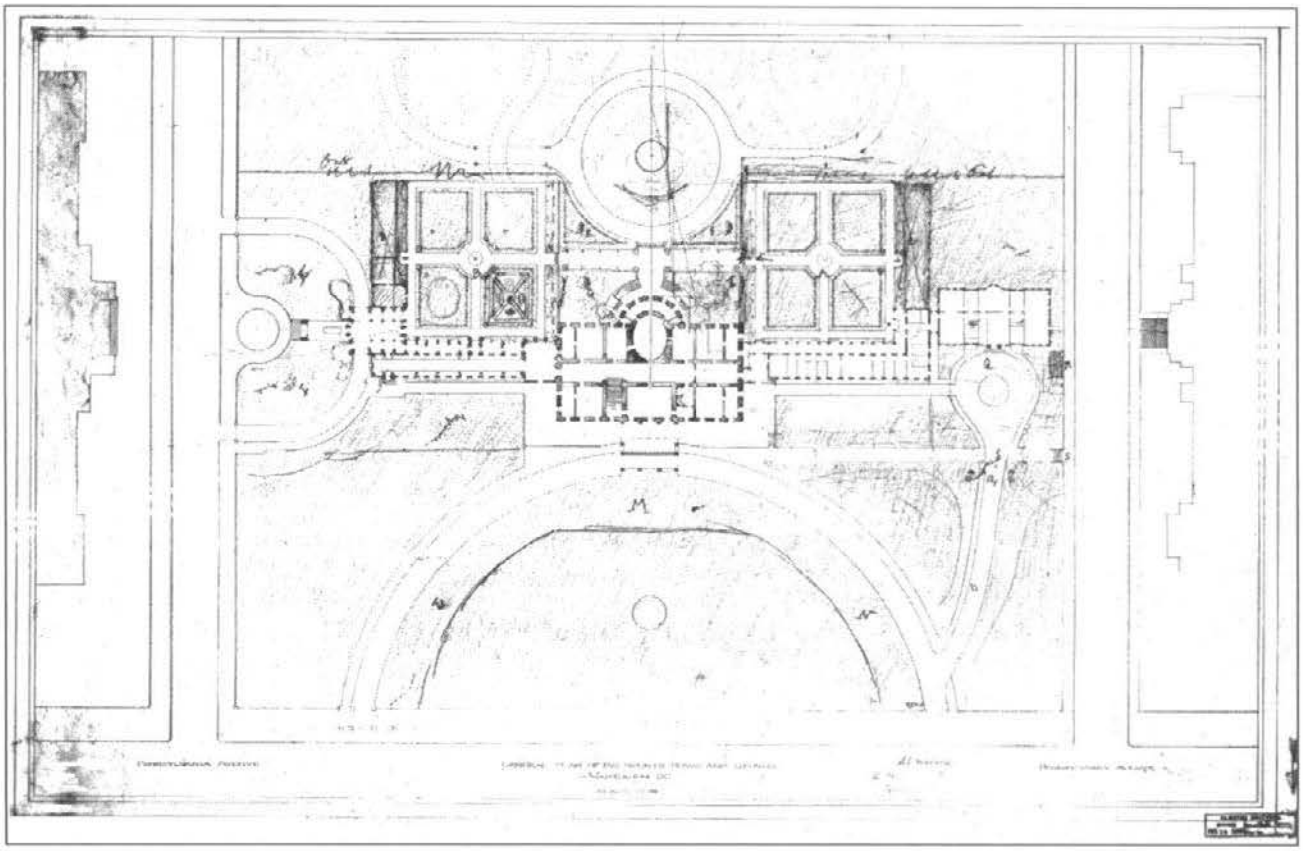

Figure 5-2: *General Plan of the President's House and Garden*. Charles Follen McKim, William Rutherford Mead, and Alexander White — Olmsted Brothers, 1903. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

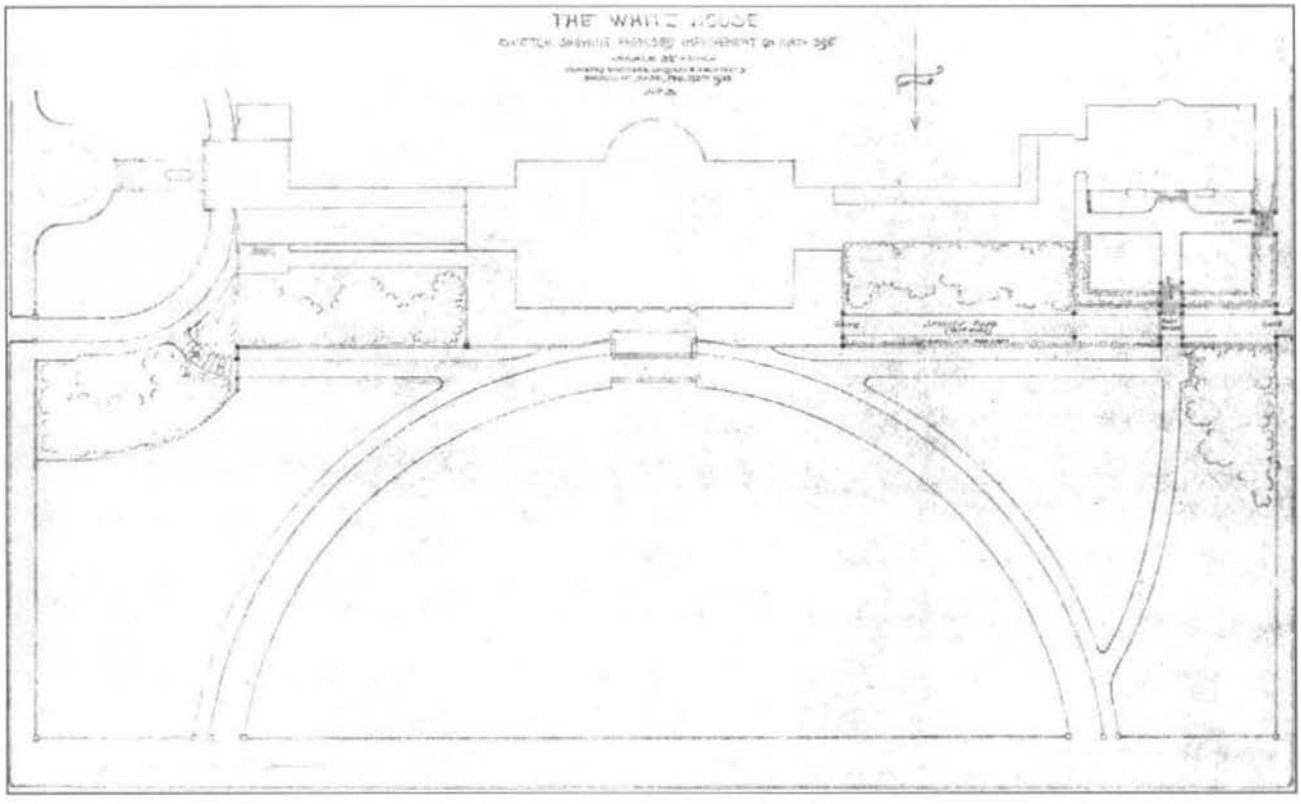

Figure 5-3: *The White House, Sketch Showing Proposed Improvements on North Side.* Olmsted Brothers, February 1903. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

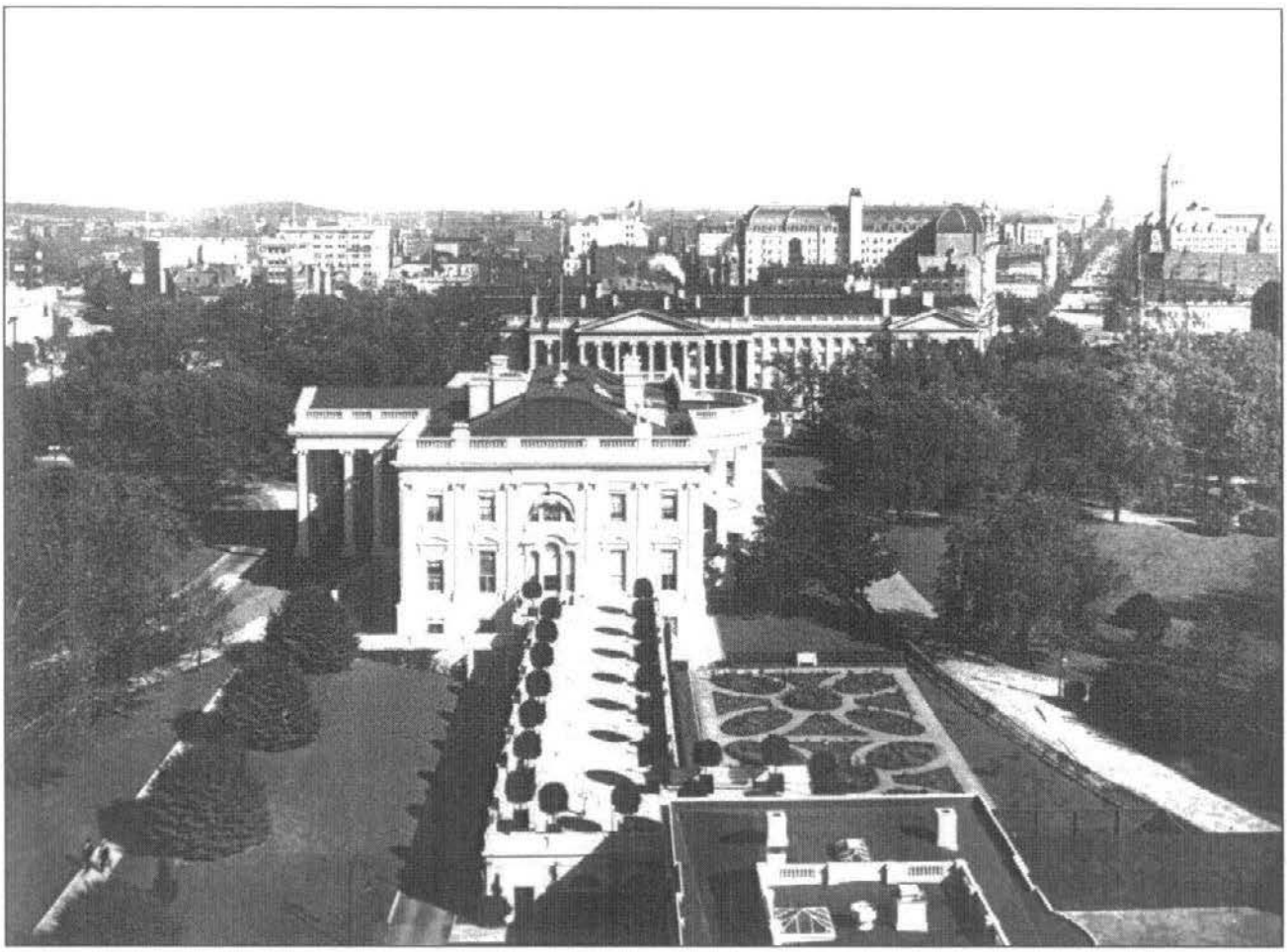

Figure 5-4: *West Elevation of the White House with the Roof of the Executive Office (West Wing) and Rose Garden in the Foreground*. Photograph, ca. 1903. Office of the Curator, The White House.

Figure 5-5: *East Colonial Garden*. Photograph, 1904. Office of the Curator, The White House.

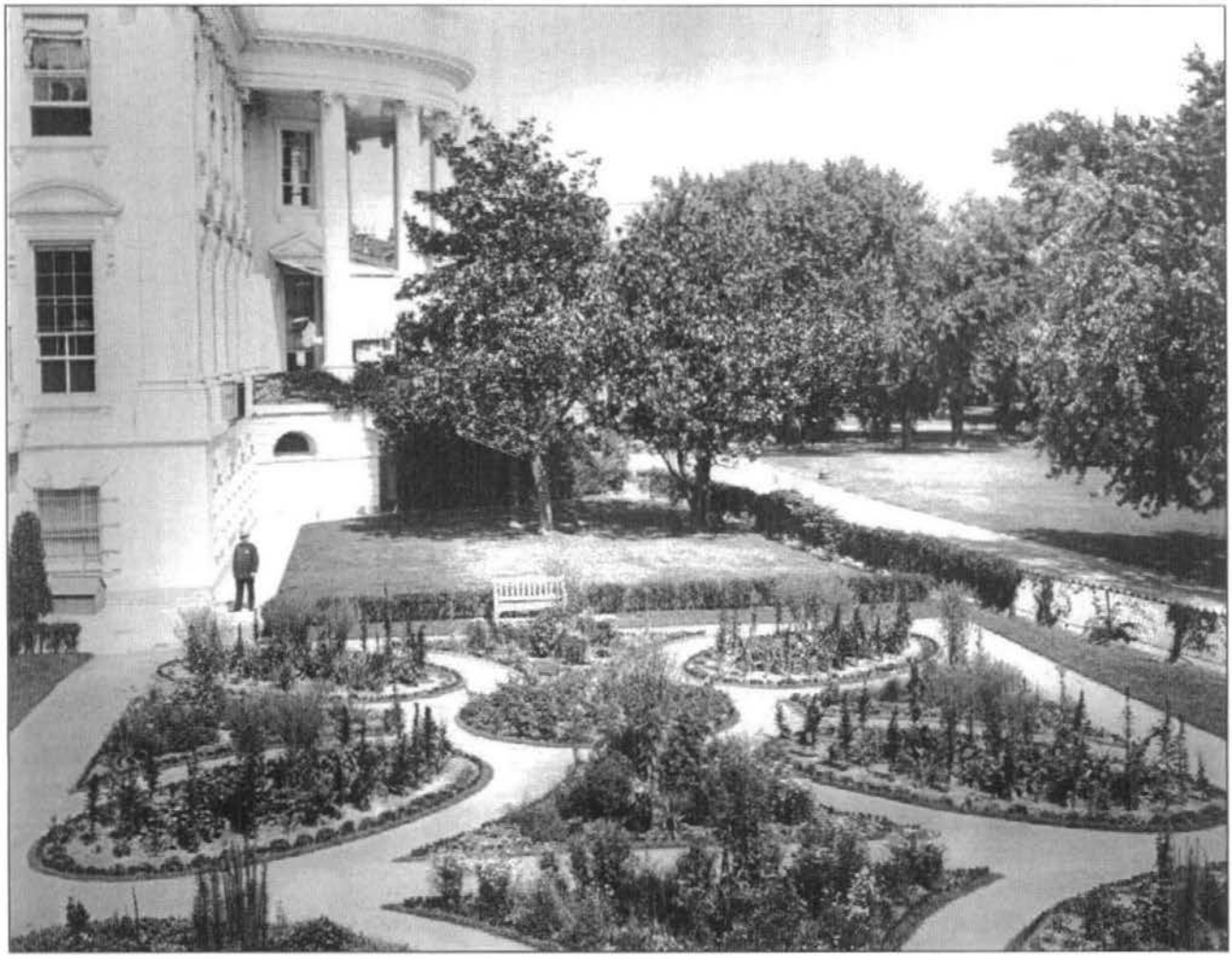

Figure 5-6: *West Colonial Garden*. Photograph, 1904. National Archives, Still Pictures Division, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77.

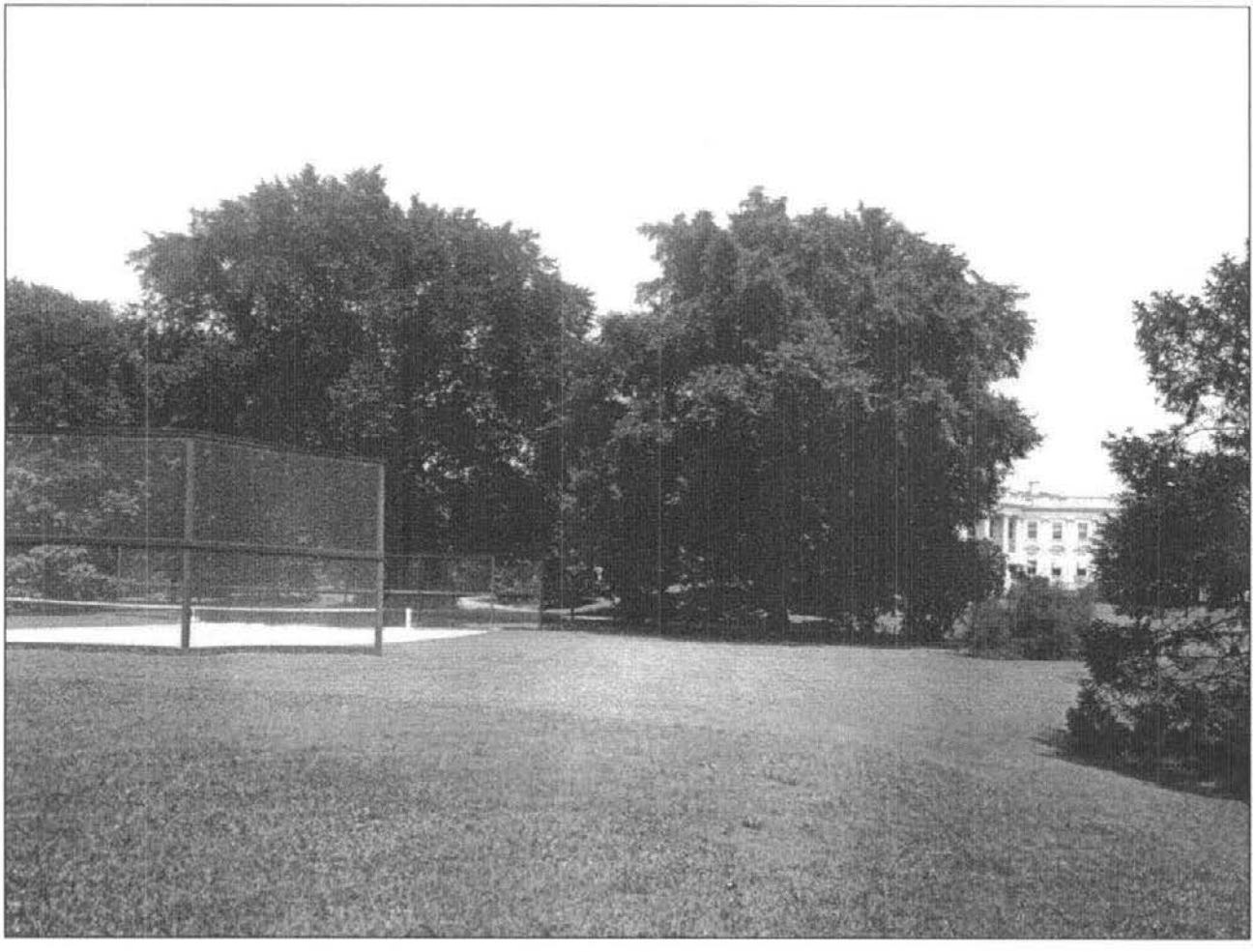

Figure 5-7: *View of Tennis Court on the South Grounds*. Photograph, post 1909. Office of the Curator, The White House.

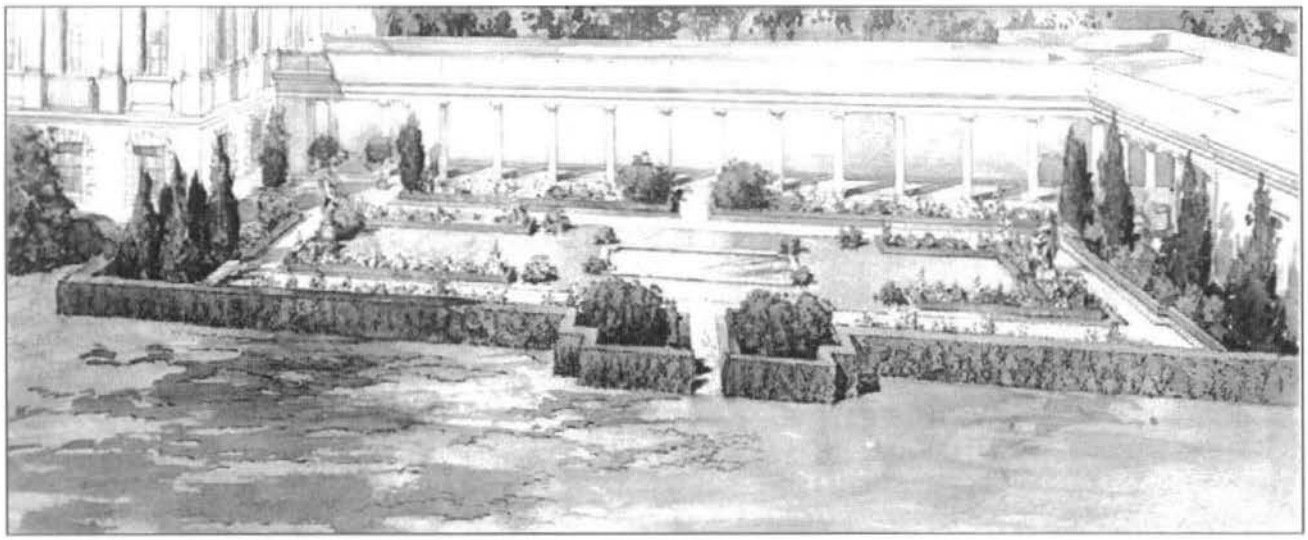

Figure 5-8: *East Garden, The White House, Washington D.C.* Beatrix Farrand, 1914. Beatrix Farrand Collection (1955-2) Documents Collection, College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley.

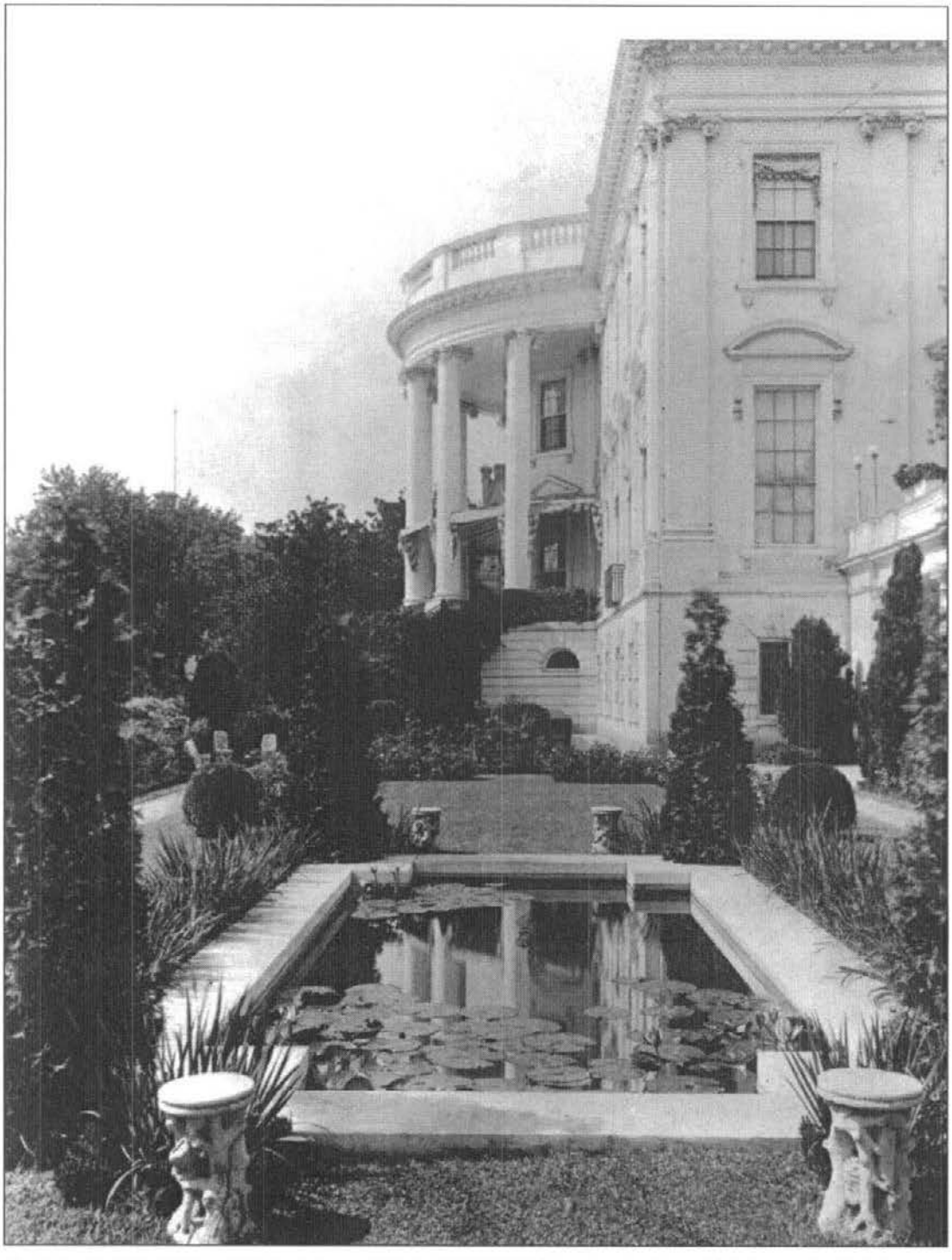

Figure 5-9: *East Garden*. Photograph, ca. 1916. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

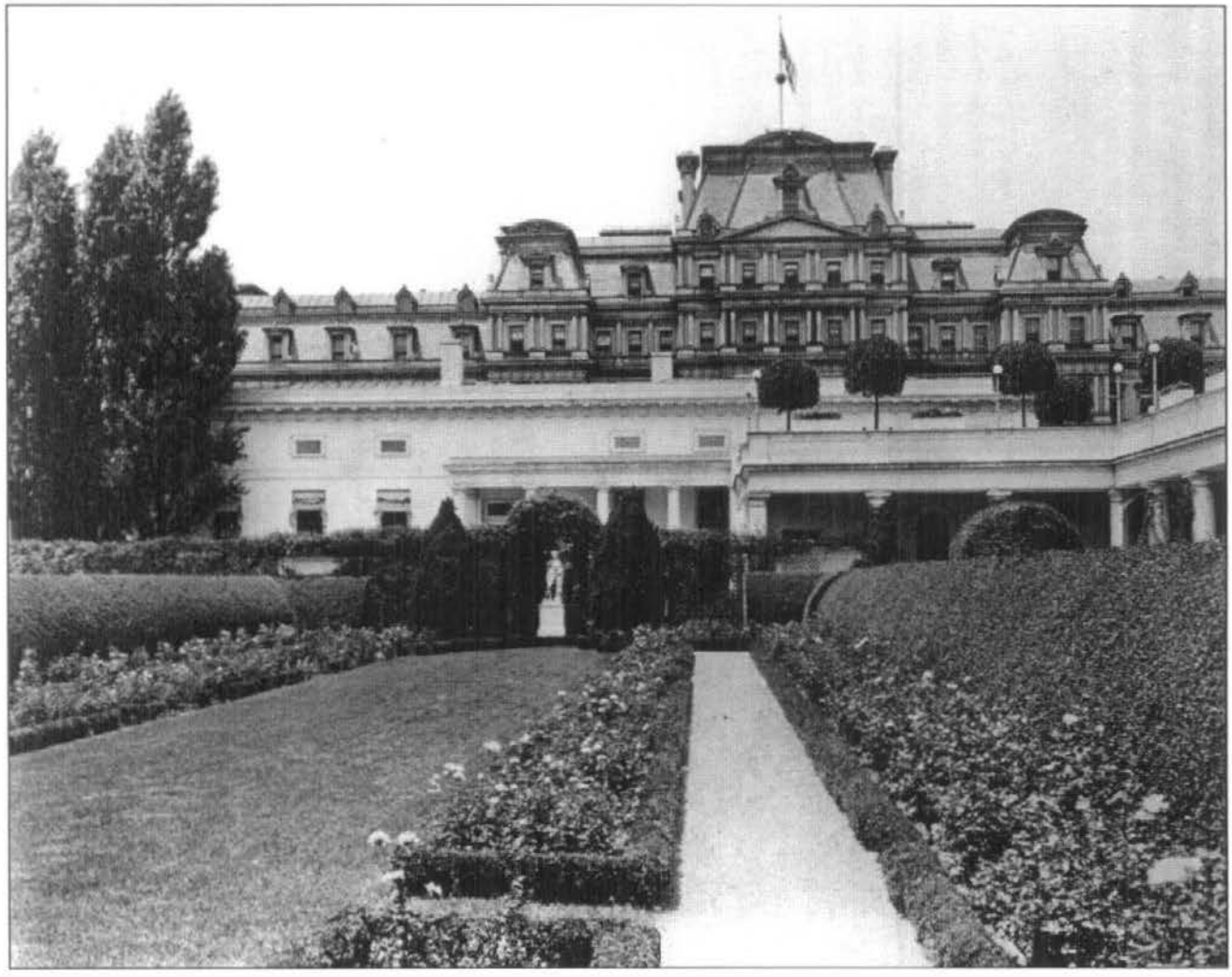

Figure 5-10: *West Garden*. Frances Benjamin Johnston (photograph), ca. 1921 (maybe earlier). Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

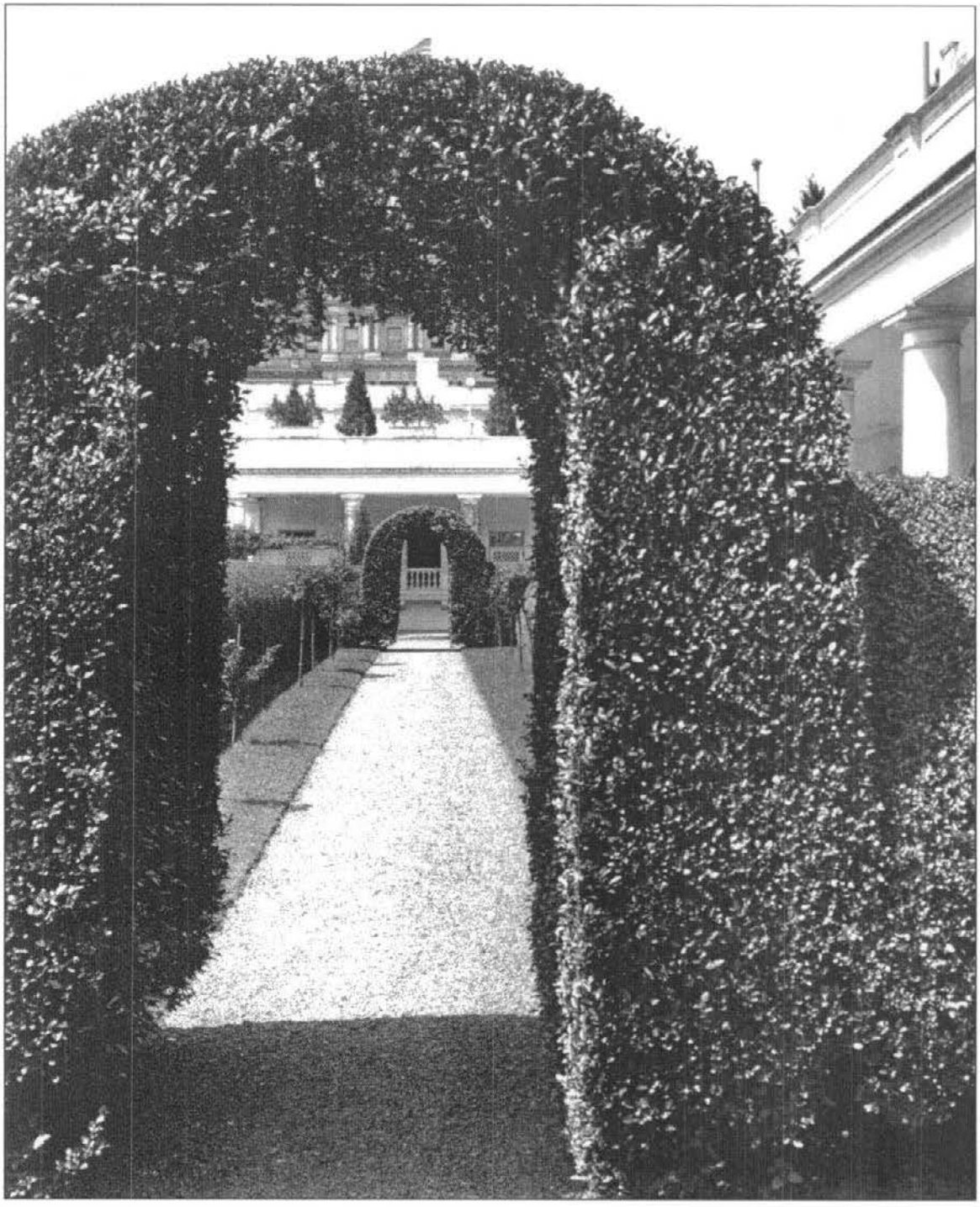

Figure 5-11: *West Garden* (detail). Frances Benjamin Johnston (photograph), ca. 1921. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

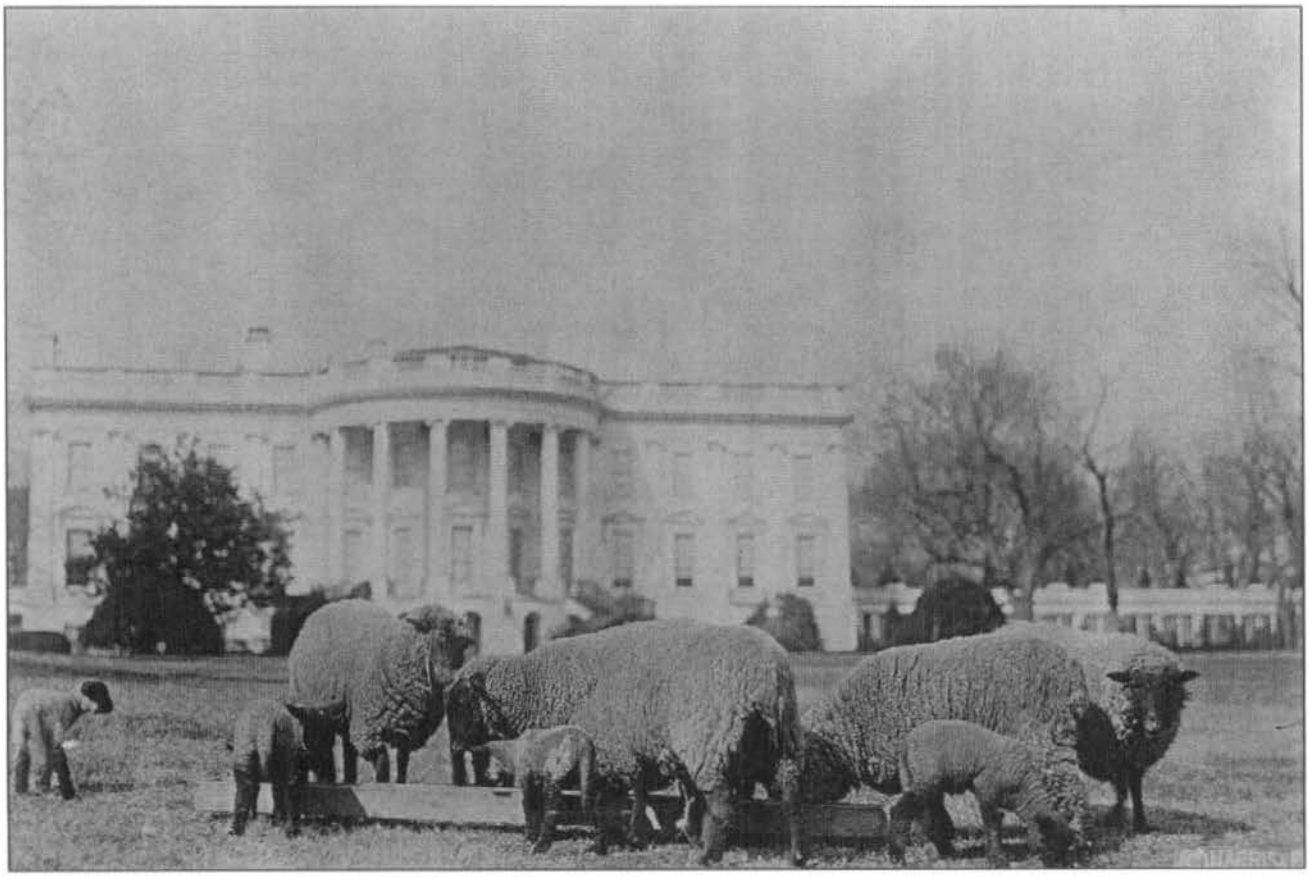

Figure 5-12: *Sheep on the South Lawn*. Photograph, ca. 1917-18. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

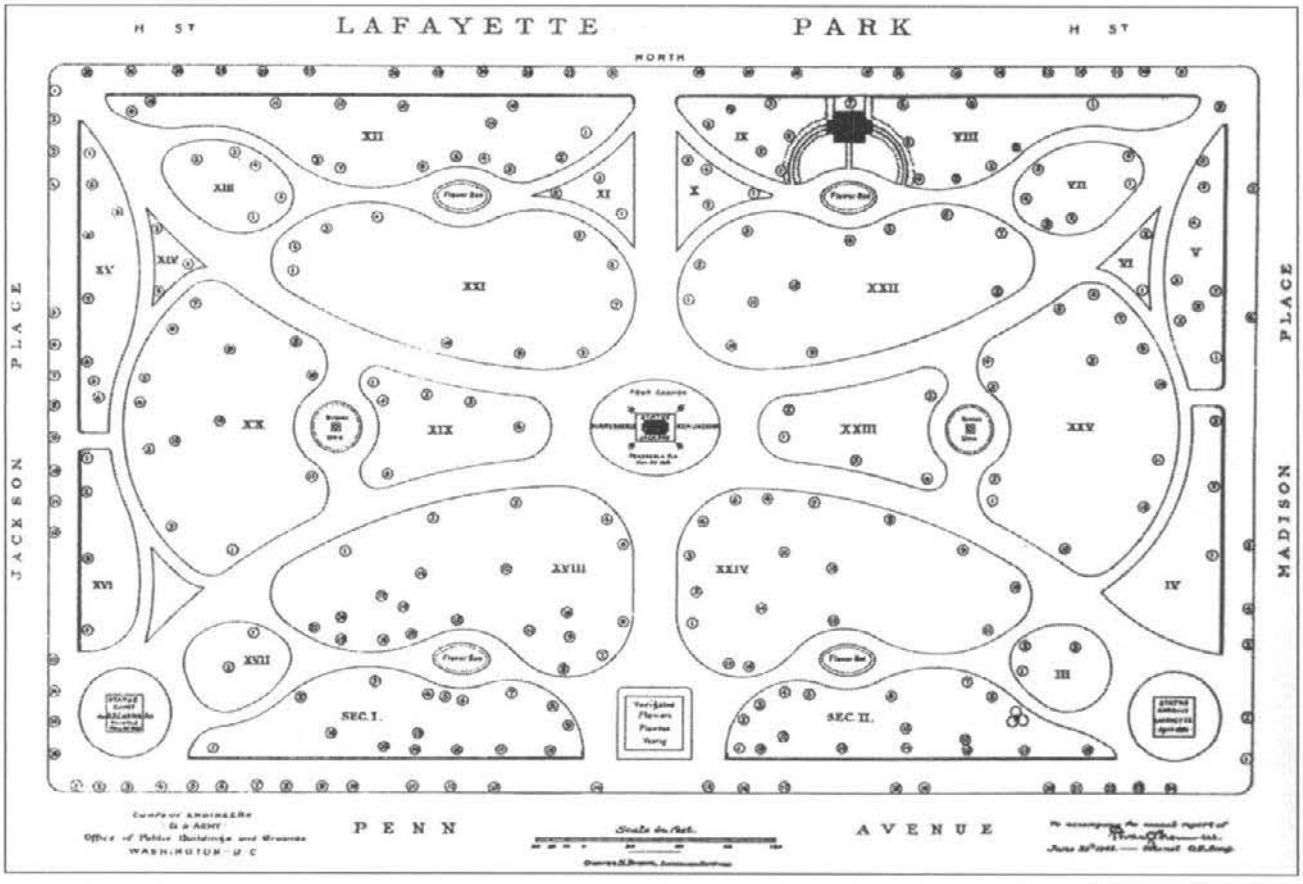

Figure 5-13: *Plan of Lafayette Park*. Corps of Engineers, *Annual Report*, 1905. National Archives, Archives Library Information Center, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77.

Figure 5-14: *Lafayette Square, Washington, D.C.* Archibald A. Hill (photograph), June 1906. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

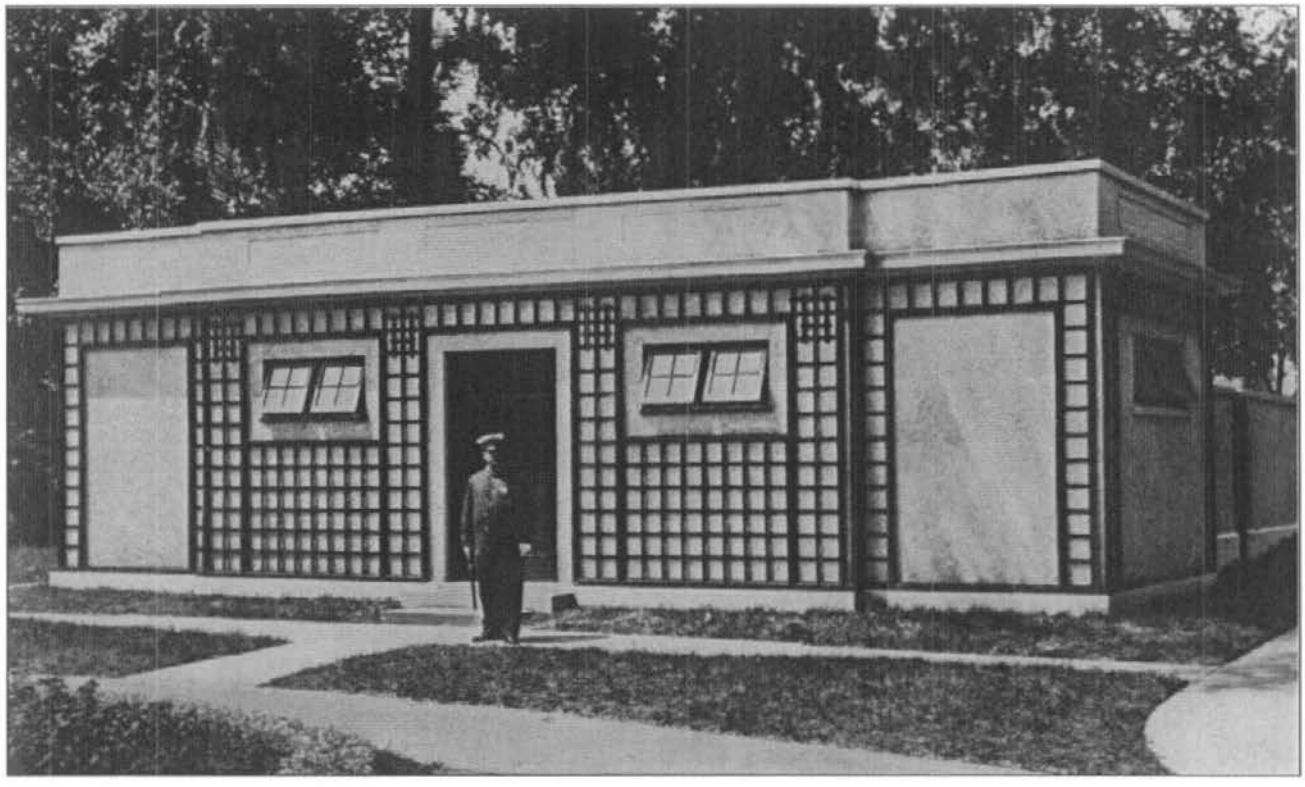

Figure 5-15: *New Park Lodge, Lafayette Park*. Corps of Engineers, *Annual Report* (photograph), 1914. National Archives, Archives Library Information Center, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77.

Figure 5-16: *Sherman Plaza Showing Landscape Gardening Treatment (view from the Treasury steps, looking south).* Corps of Engineers, *Annual Report* (photograph), 1905. National Archives, Archives Library Information Center.

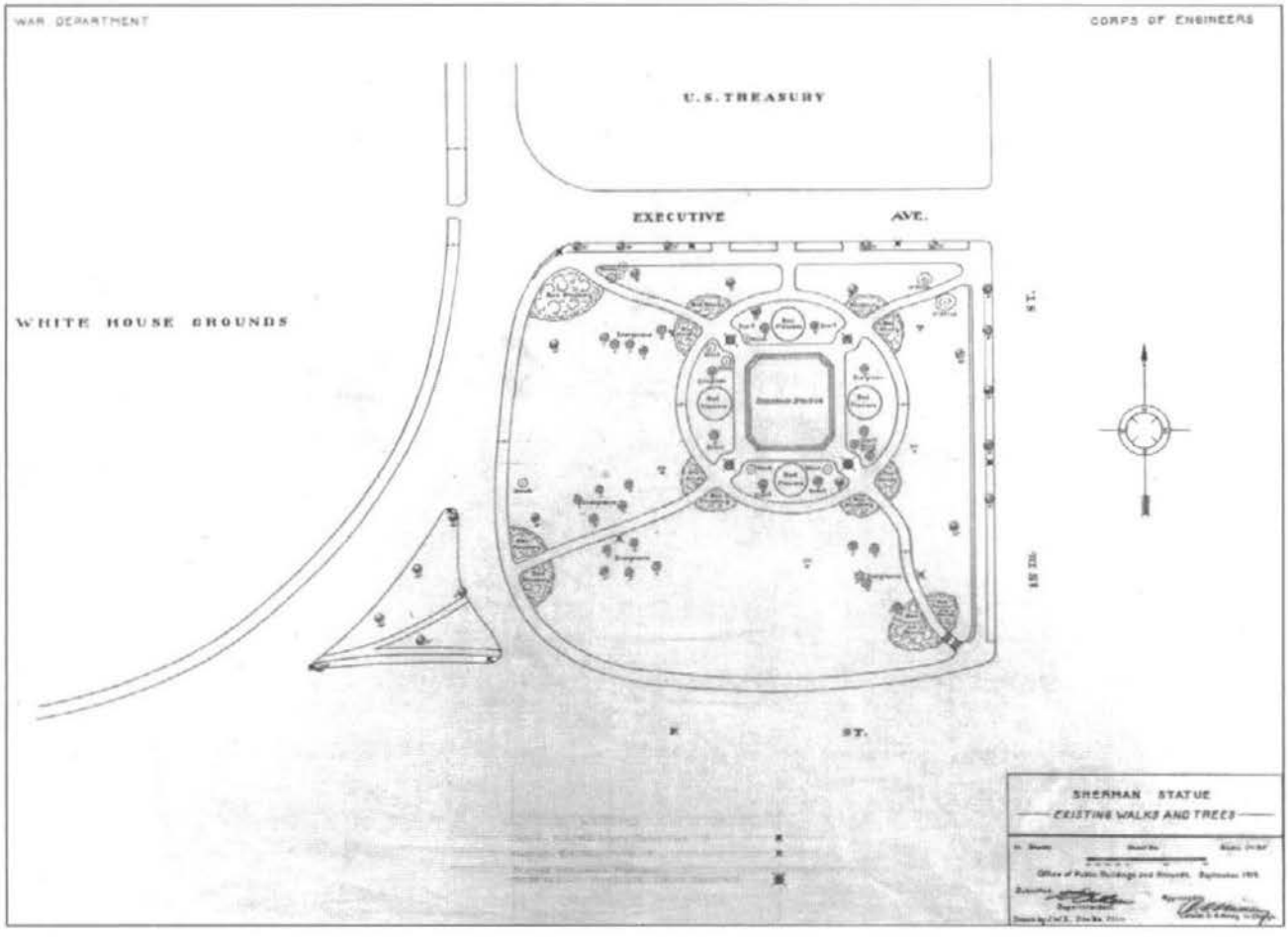

Figure 5-17: *Sherman Statue, Existing Walks, and Trees*. Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, Corps of Engineers, September 1919. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

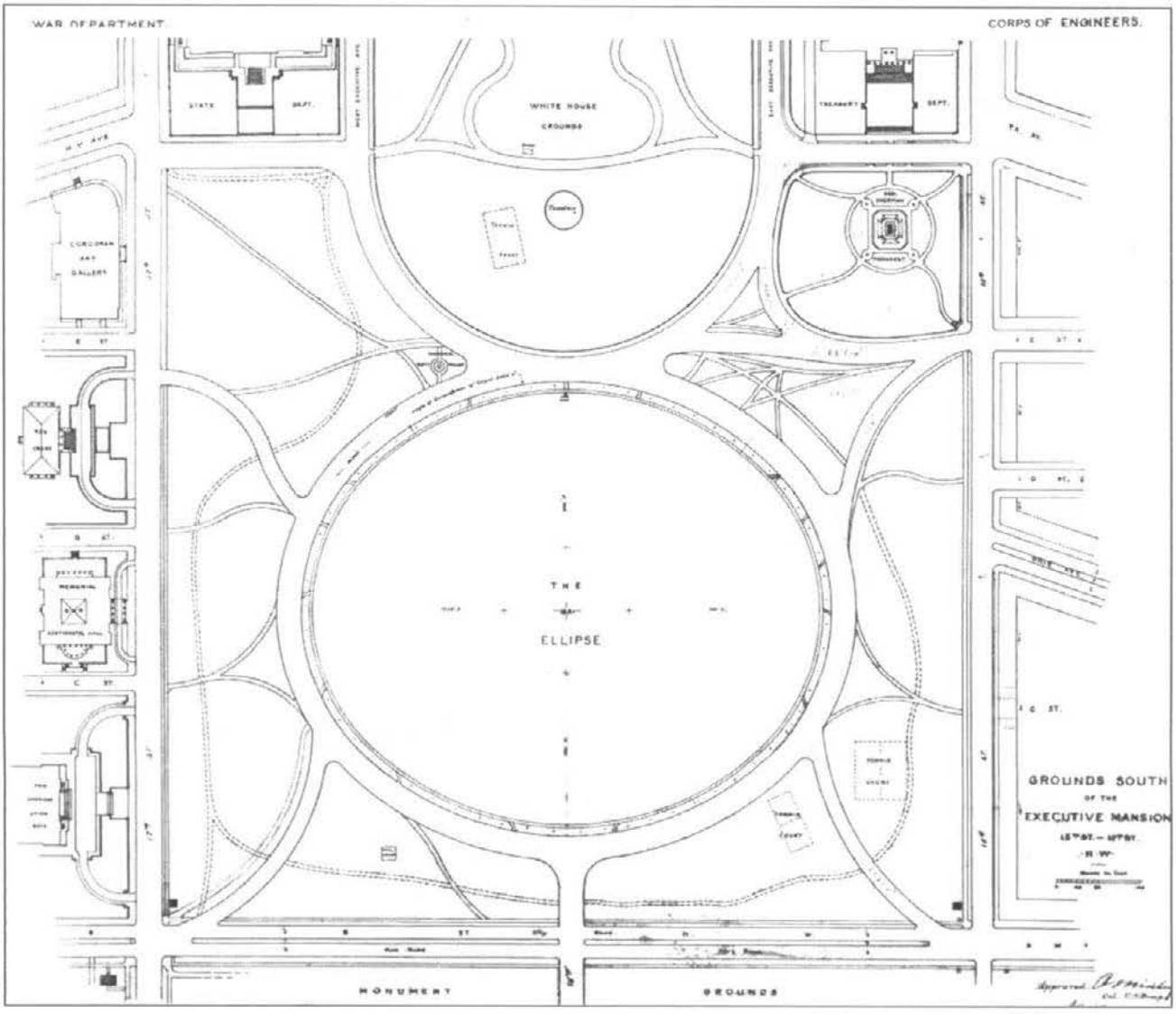

Figure 5-18: *Grounds South of the Executive Mansion*. Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, Corps of Engineers, October 1919. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

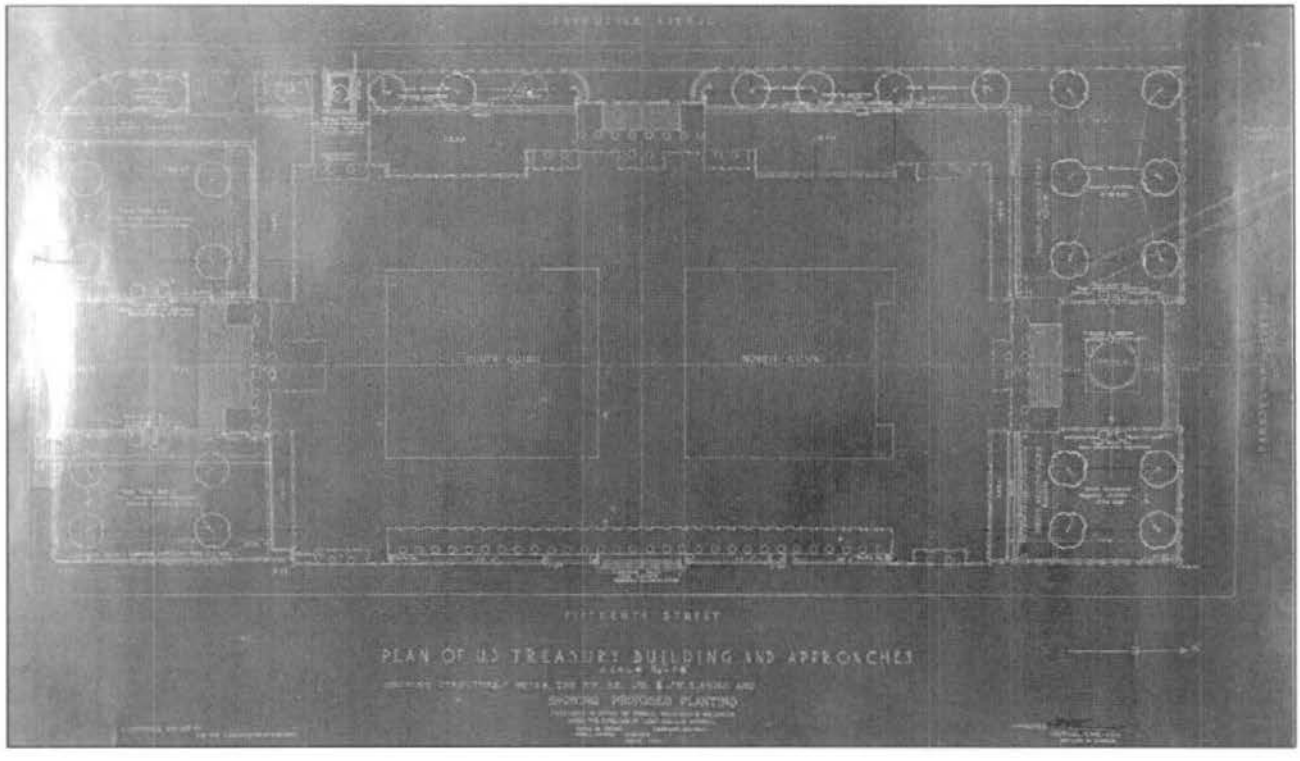

Figure 5-19: *Plan of U.S. Treasury Building and Approaches Showing Proposed Plantings*. George Burnap, 1924. Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, U.S. Corps of Engineers. Office of the Curator, The Treasury.

Figure 5-20: *Stands along the North Side of the Treasury for the Woodrow Wilson Inaugural Parade.* Photograph, 1913. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

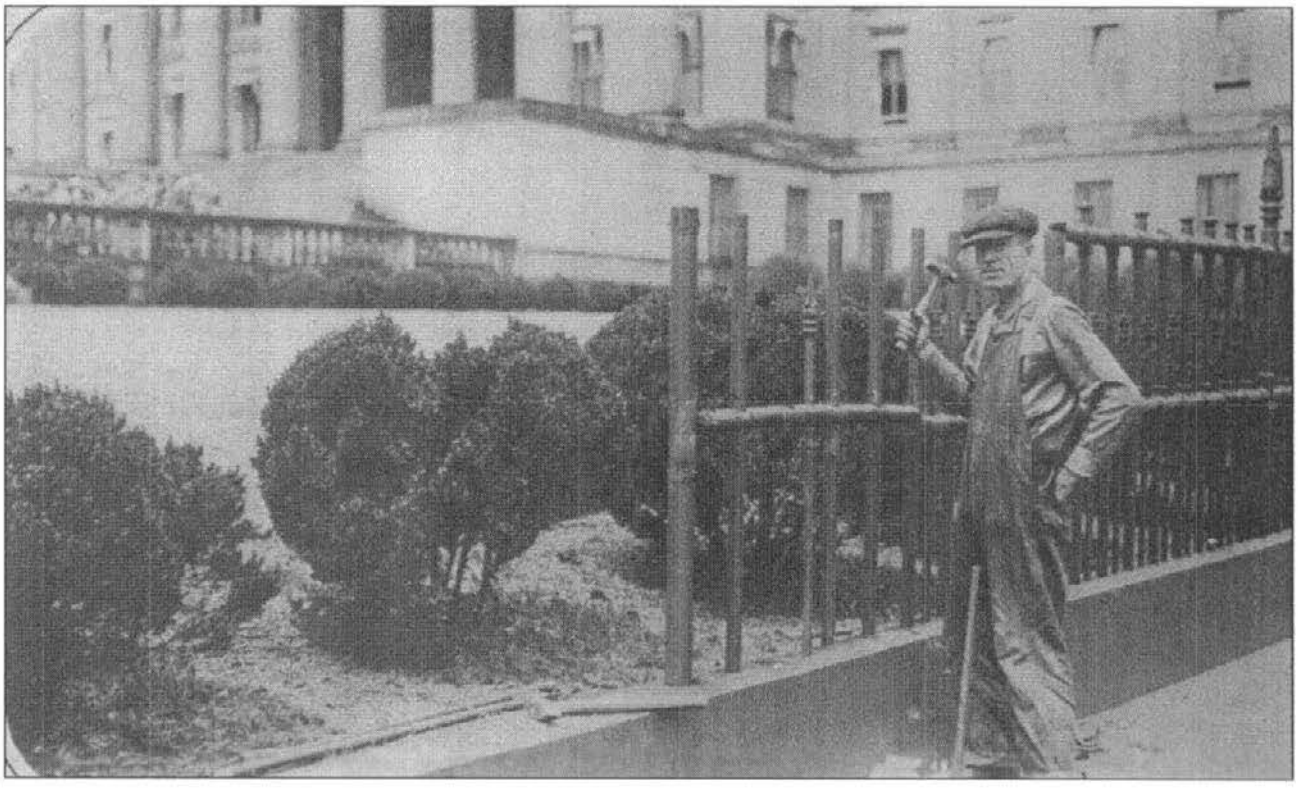

Figure 5-21: *Removal of Old Iron Fence, South Grounds of the Treasury Building.* Photograph, *The Star*, May 20, 1923. Office of the Curator, The Treasury.

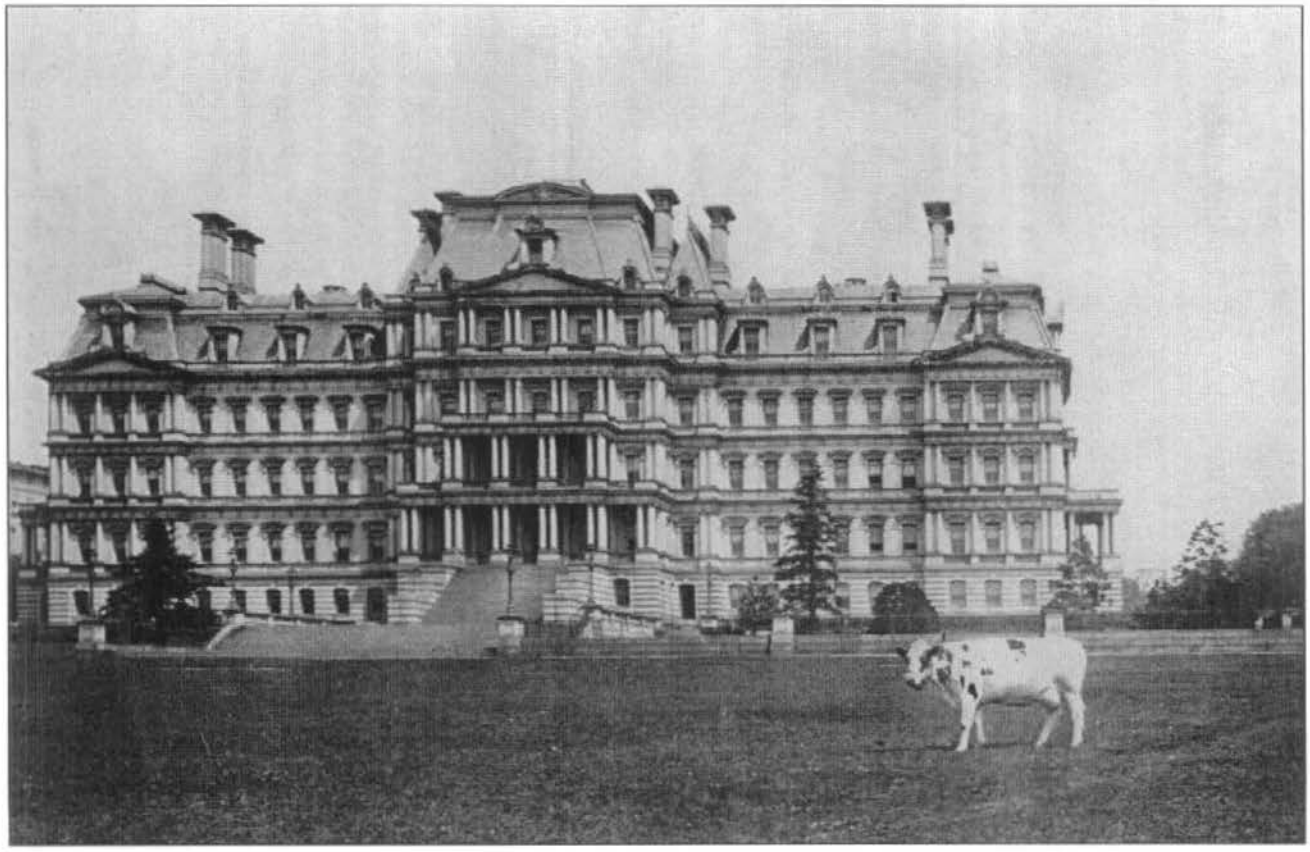

Figure 5-22: *South Facade of the State, War, and Navy Building with Pauline, the Cow*. Photograph, ca. 1909–13. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

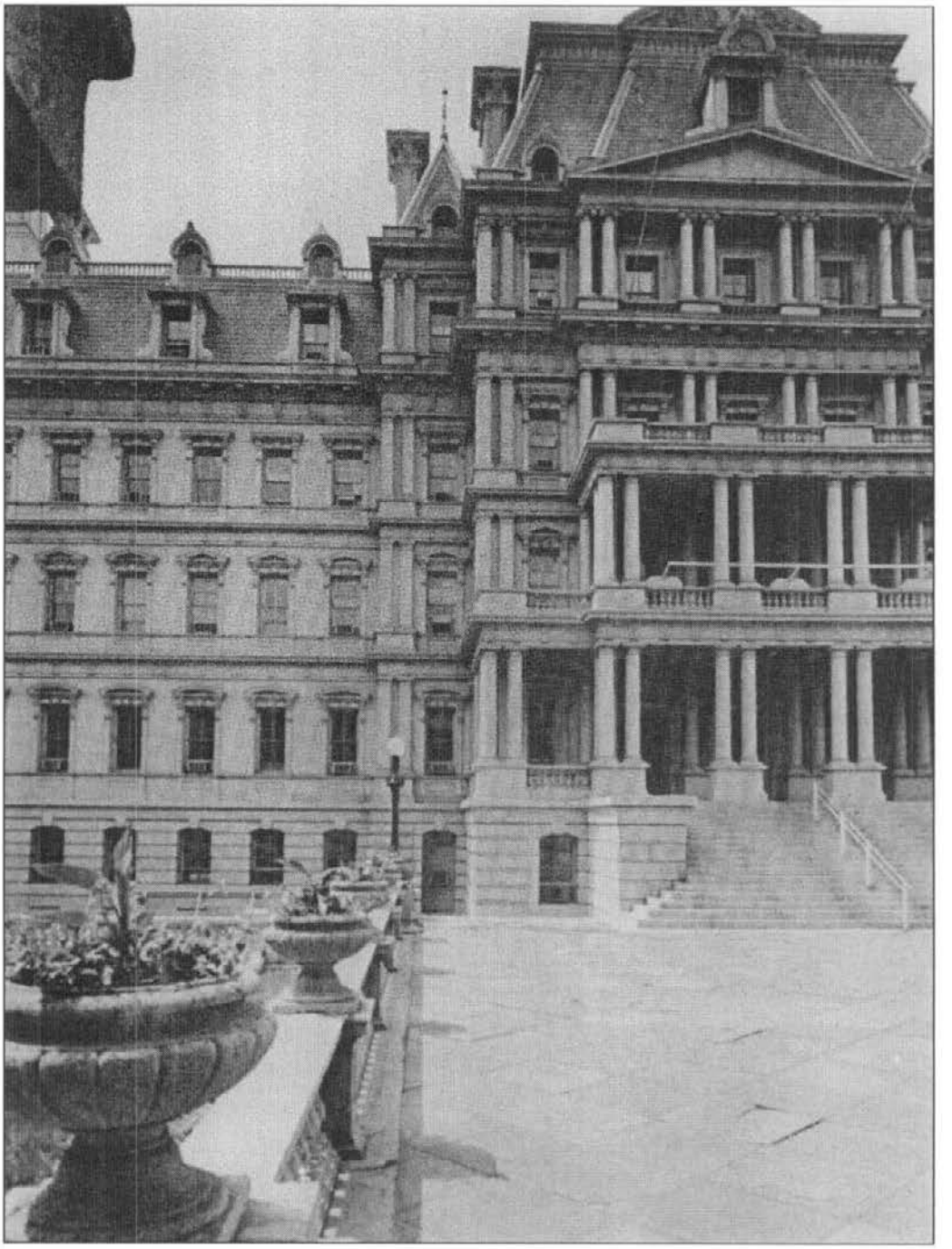

Figure 5-23: *Detail of State, War, and Navy Building with MacArthur's Planters.* Photograph, 1964. From General Services Administration, *Executive Office Building,* by Donald J. Lehman, Historical study 3 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1970).

Chapter 6. The Olmsted Plan and Its Influence on President's Park: 1929–1948

During this period the primary influence on President's Park was the 1935 plan by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and his firm.[1] Olmsted's major concept — to preserve the historic aspects of the landscape, but at the same time to adapt them to current needs — has guided landscape treatment at President's Park since that time. Olmsted criticized the lack of residential character in the grounds. He felt that there was little on the White House grounds that indicated that a family lived there, and that there was ample opportunity to develop parts of the grounds for domestic uses. For example, considerable space on either side of the south vista could be used as secluded spaces for the personal and social needs of the first family. Olmsted believed that President's Park should provide the best example of residential grounds in America.

Olmsted's 1935 plan was more of a landscape management plan than a traditional redesign. It called for revisions and improvements, especially the relocation of plantings to afford more privacy to the first family and to strengthen the north-south axis. Except for the removal of the inner east and west south drives (thus eliminating the "fiddle-shaped" pattern of this part of the south lawn, a feature that had existed since the Jackson administration), few of the proposals substantially altered the existing layout of the grounds. Most of the Olmsted's recommendations that were implemented took place in stages during the late 1930s.

Presidential involvement in the evolution of the landscape reached a peak when Franklin Delano Roosevelt assumed the presidency. Roosevelt, an inveterate amateur architect, both initiated and

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1. During this period, Ulysses S. Grant III continued as director of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital until June 16, 1933, followed by James A. Woodruff, who served until August 20, 1933. On August 19, 1933, control of the national capital parks system, including President's Park, was returned to the Department of the Interior, under the Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations (later the National Park Service). NPS administrators during this period included Frank T. Gartside (Aug. 20–Oct. 9, 1933), C. Marshall Finnan (Oct. 9, 1933–July 31, 1939), Frank T. Gartside (July 31, 1939–Feb. 1, 1940); Edmund B. Rodgers (Feb. 1, 1940–April 18, 1940); Francis F. Gillen (April 18, 1940–Jan. 2, 1941); and Irvin C. Root (Jan. 2, 1941–July 28, 1950). Dowd, *Records of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, 77; NPS, *Historic Listing of National Park Service Officials* (Washington, DC: 1991).

modified several landscape projects. During his administration he planned for new trees, such as the hemlocks by the west gate and the lilac in the northeast grounds. He was also the driving force behind the tulip poplar commemorative planting in honor of Thomas Jefferson.

In 1937 the National Park Service, using the resources of the Works Progress Administration, renovated and partially redesigned what was now formally called Lafayette Park. The plan, derived from a previous proposal, simplified and regularized the Downing design by making the inner and outer path systems equal in width and importance. The walks were resurfaced in concrete and the urns relocated close to the east and west entrances. In general the public opposed the loss of the romantic flavor that had characterized the site and was highly critical of the damage to the trees that resulted from changes in underground water conditions.

In 1931 Olmsted wrote a brief report for the Commission of Fine Arts concerning Sherman Plaza and its relationship with E Street. Some of his recommendations, such as realigning E Street, were implemented in the late 1930s. No major projects were carried out in the Ellipse between 1929 and 1948, although temporary barracks were erected there during World War II. Commemoration continued with the addition of two new monuments in 1936 — a granite District Patentees Memorial and a memorial to the Dead of the Second Division of the United States Army in World War I.

The outbreak of World War II in 1941 had a major impact on public use of the grounds. Casual visitors were barred from the north and south grounds. Sentry boxes were set up at every entrance, and both East and West Executive Avenues were closed. At the end of the war yearly May receptions for convalescent veterans resumed on the south lawn, a practice that possibly continued until the Vietnam War era.

As always, President's Park attracted the nation's leading architects and landscape architects. Between 1929 and 1948 Eric Gugler, Thomas C. Vint, William A. Delano, John Russell Pope, and Lorenzo Winslow, among others, joined Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. in providing their expertise and talent to develop important design plans. Although relatively few plans were implemented at this time, their proposals were crucial in the evolution of the landscape, and some of their suggestions have become the guiding principles in the management of President's Park.

The Grounds of the White House

Very little activity beyond routine maintenance is recorded on the White House grounds during the Herbert Hoover administration, probably reflecting the Hoovers' greater interest in furnishing the family quarters and the impact of the Great Depression, which began only a little more than seven months after Hoover took office. Only the magnolia patio west of the south portico dates from this period.[2]

Shortly after he assumed the presidency, Hoover ordered some changes to relieve crowded conditions in the Executive Office Building (West Wing), such as enlarging the lobby. No sooner had the remodeling been completed than a fire destroyed the top floor and roof on Christmas Eve 1929. This required the complete reconstruction of this part of the building. Completed in April 1930, it included new terra-cotta skylight enclosures in the attic, new floors and ceilings for the severely damaged first story, and air conditioning.[3]

The annual report for fiscal year 1929–30 identified a detailed planting plan "using choice broad-leaved flowering evergreens" for the north side of the White House porte cochère.[4] Some new plants must have been installed around the rebuilt Executive Office Building (West Wing), but they are not described. The Easter egg roll continued to be popular on the White House grounds, with more than 48,000 children taking part.[5] In 1930–31 a new water pipe and side jets were installed in the south fountain.[6] A study of the grounds was also

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2. During this period, George Harding was the White House horticulturist. NPS, "The President's Garden," 58.

3. N. P. Severin Company, the contractor that had built the new roof and attic of the White House in 1927 was in charge of the 1929 remodeling. The 1930 reconstruction was awarded to Charles H. Tompkins Co. of Washington. Seale, *The President's House*, 893–98; *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1930*, 33–35.

4. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1930*, 40. Although the report does not identify the landscape architect, it apparently was Irving Paine. The report does not indicate whether the planting, a simple grouping of yews and azaleas, was ever carried out. See NPS, "The President's Garden," 58. Under the Horticultural Division of the annual report, the only specific reference indicates that flowers were regularly furnished to the Executive Mansion. However, the report does note that the winter had been particularly harsh and had killed many roses and other shrubs. As in previous years, trees and shrubs were treated with arsenate of lead, a mixture of lime of sulfur and Sunoco oil, and a mixture of Black Leaf 400 and molasses to exterminate, respectively, elm-leaf beetles, caterpillars, and box-leaf miners. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1930*, 38–39.

5. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1930*, 51.

6. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1931*, 23, 72.

completed to assess the existing trees and shrubs, undoubtedly an early stage of the Olmsted report.[7]

In 1931–32, new trellises were installed on the south portico, as well as the usual plants and flowers.[8] Several trees were planted during the Hoover administration. On April 21, 1931, President Hoover planted an American elm at the northeast corner of the north lawn, but it has not survived. On December 21, 1931, Hoover and Kentucky Congressman Maurice Thatcher planted two white oaks on the White House grounds. Both are designated Hoover's commemorative trees and still survive today. The white oak that Thatcher planted came from Lincoln's birthplace in Kentucky and is on the lower south lawn near the fence. The white oak that Hoover planted is on the upper south lawn near the West Wing.[9] On March 23, 1932, First Lady Lou Hoover planted a cedar tree from "Ferry Farm," the boyhood home of George Washington near Fredericksburg, Virginia (figure 6-1).[10] By 1932 a hedge had replaced the mesh fencing originally installed in the 1860s.[11]

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was inaugurated president on March 4, 1933. Initially Ulysses S. Grant III stayed on as officer in charge of public buildings and public parks, but the following month he was dismissed following a dispute with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt over building a swing for her grandchildren on one of the old trees on the south lawn.[12]

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7. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1931*, 39.

8. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1932*, 16, 36.

9. "Trees Planted by Presidents in White House Grounds, John Q. Adams through Herbert Hoover," OC/WH. The most recent map of the commemorative plantings shows two white oaks planted by Herbert Hoover: one near the southeast corner of the grounds and the other just north of the western mound near the path leading to the Executive Office Building. Precise dates for the plantings are not given on this map.

10. The cedar tree does not appear to be on the White House grounds today. The site of Ferry Farm (the original house is no longer extant), near Fredericksburg, Virginia, is now a national historic monument.

11. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 16, 2000.

12. Grant was worried about damaging the bark of the tree, Seale, *The President's House*, 925. In 1933 as part of Roosevelt's reorganization of government agencies, the Department of the Interior assumed control of the National Capital Parks, including President's Park. However, the maintenance of the White House grounds remained under the control of the White House chief usher until the early 1960s, when this responsibility was also turned over to the National Park Service. The annual reports that had been prepared since 1818 ceased publication. From now on the historic record consists of NPS letters, reports, memos, plans, photographs, etc. relating to the various sites in the National Capital Region, including President's Park. NPS, *Lafayette Park*, 1; NPS, *Administrative History*, 219, 241.

Almost immediately after becoming president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt initiated several architectural projects for the White House. The first was an indoor swimming pool located in the former servants' dining room in the west terrace.[13] To accommodate Roosevelt's growing staff, the Executive Office Building (West Wing) was reconstructed to double floor space. New York architect Eric Gugler designed a receding penthouse story, which was not noticeable from the street level, and extended the basement office space southward. A large, imaginatively landscaped light well with a heavy pedestal fountain provided light for the subterranean office space (figure 6-2).[14]

Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. was asked to report on the grading and planting just south of the rebuilt structure and to prepare plans.[15] Gugler, Olmsted, and Malcolm Kirkpatrick, the resident landscape architect of the National Capital Parks, seem to have collaborated on the landscaping around the light well. The Oval Office was also relocated to the southeast corner of the building, its present location. The rebuilt Executive Office Building (West Wing) was completed by the end of November 1934.[16] The drying yard visible in figure 5-4 was removed at this time.[17]

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13. Although the press corps was responsible for initiating the pool project, money to construct it was raised from small private donations, primarily from young citizens of New York State, the much-publicized "pennies of school children." Seale, *The President's House*, 922–25.

14. Gugler's just completed Executive Office Building (West Wing) was well received by Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Gugler also worked with Mrs. Roosevelt on some projects. He had also designed the colonnade and porch area off and along the Cabinet Room and the Oval Office. File, "White House Fountains," OC/WH. Information from Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

15. Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., "White House Grounds, Report on Grading and Planting just South of Executive Offices," Oct. 11, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers.

16. The Severin Company was again the contractor. Seale, *The President's House*, 938–49.

17. The drying yard is still shown on 1934 Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) drawings but was removed shortly thereafter. Information from Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS). Interior remodelings were also undertaken at the White House, some of them of a strictly functional character. However, at the ground floor level, Roosevelt had Winslow convert a former storage area into a spacious library. In 1935 the Diplomatic Anteroom was upgraded to the present Diplomatic Reception Room, when Winslow redecorated it and found the original fireplace. Roosevelt was then able to hold his "fireside chats" in front of a real fire. Seale, *The President's House*, 957–60.

The Olmsted Plan

A comparison of Olmsted's 1935 plan for the White House grounds with other residential or public projects at that time reveals many unusual aspects. First, a study of the history of the landscape (probably at President Roosevelt's request) was a major part of the project from the beginning. Second, the emphasis was on preserving the historic aspects of the landscape and at the same time adapting them to current needs. This is a strikingly modern approach — neither an antiquarian restoration/reconstruction nor a complete overhaul of the existing design. Third, because of the Great Depression, the project started small and stayed small, a positive factor, since it prevented the more radical changes that might have been made in a more prosperous time. The Olmsted firm, however, was in a somewhat frustrating situation because it was not in charge of the project in the usual professional manner. Olmsted and other members of the firm made recommendations, either in the form of letters and memos or in the report itself, and they also made sketches. From these recommendations and sketches, NPS landscape architects made finished drawings and sometimes also developed estimates. The Olmsted firm did not supervise construction, although they were usually informed of what was going on, and on occasion they were asked for their opinion.[18]

A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

By the time Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. undertook this project he was the head of the firm established by his father. Born in 1870, the son of Frederick Law Olmsted and Mary Cleveland Perkins Olmsted, he graduated from Harvard College *magna cum laude* in 1894. In 1893, during a college vacation, he apprenticed with his father at Chicago's Columbian Exhibition, and in 1894 he spent a summer with the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey. The son did not join his father's firm, then called Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot, as a paid member until September 1895, when the senior Olmsted retired because of ill health. Thus, he did not have the advantage of long professional association with his father that his half-brother John Charles Olmsted had enjoyed. In 1897, after the unexpected death of partner Charles Eliot, the firm became first F. L. and J. C. Olmsted

18. There are 40 plan index cards at Olmsted National Historic Site. Of these, 26 were received from the National Park Service, and the Olmsted firm generated only 14. Seventeen of the cards are marked "destroyed," which could mean either that they were destroyed by accident (for example when the firm's plans vault was flooded), or that they were "weeded" by the Olmsted firm's plans clerk, Harry Perkins.

and then Olmsted Brothers, a name that was retained even after the death of John Charles Olmsted in 1920.[19]

Both before and after his service on the Senate Park Commission, Olmsted and his firm designed or advised on many public landscapes in Washington: the National Zoological Park (1890–1906); the Mall (1902–16); Rock Creek Park (1907–18); and Klingle Parkway, near Woodley Road and the National Cathedral (1912).[20] However, it was his experience on the Senate Park Commission that led Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. to devote great attention to public and quasi-public service in later life, both for the District of Columbia and for the nation as a whole. Between 1910 and 1918 Olmsted was a member of the Commission of Fine Arts; later he served on the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission. After the United States entered World War I he became manager of the Landscape Architecture Division of the United States Housing Corporation, which built housing and new towns for workers in war-related industries. Between 1928 and 1956 he served as a member of a committee of experts that advised on plans and policies concerning Yosemite National Park. During this entire time he was also responsible for many of Olmsted Brothers' most important projects, both public and private.[21] In 1903 President Theodore Roosevelt benefited from the brilliance of the promising young landscape architect; in 1934 it was the seasoned professional who advised President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

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19. Edward Clark Whiting and William Lyman Phillips, "Frederick Law Olmsted, 1870–1957: An Appreciation of the Man and His Achievements," *Landscape Architecture* 48, no. 3 (April 1958), 144–57; Laura Wood Roper, *FLO: A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 456–75. Roper interviewed and corresponded with and knew Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. In 1899 the Olmsted brothers were among the charter members of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA); Frederick was president of the society in 1908–9 and in 1919–23. In 1933 the ASLA proposed a competition for the White House grounds, although it was never held because of concerns about security. NPS, *Administrative History*, 244. Whiting and Phillips, "Olmsted," 146. See also Cynthia Zaitzevsky, "Education and Landscape Architecture," in *Architectural Education and Boston: Centennial Publication of the Boston Architectural Center, 1889–1989*, ed. Margaret Henderson Floyd (Boston: Boston Architectural Center, 1989), 20–34.

20. Charles E. Beveridge and Carolyn F. Hoffman, comps., *The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm, 1857–1950* (Boston: National Association for Olmsted Parks, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks, 1987), 4. These projects were all assigned job numbers, as were Lafayette Square and the Senate Park Commission. A job number was usually assigned on the basis of one contact or piece of correspondence; the presence of a job on the master list does not necessarily mean that it was a project that was fully designed and executed by the firm. However, of the projects listed, the National Zoo and Rock Creek Park were definitely designed and carried out by Olmsted Brothers, and some of the others may have been.

21. Whiting and Phillips, "Olmsted," 146–49.

Olmsted's Plans for the White House Grounds

In October 1932 landscape architect Gilmore D. Clarke of the Commission of Fine Arts wrote to H. P. Caemmerer, then secretary of the commission, agreeing with Olmsted's 1928 assessment (see pages 197–199) and urging that work on the White House grounds be started as soon as possible.[22] Early in 1934 Charles Moore submitted Olmsted's 1928 report to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who promptly brought it to her husband's attention.[23] Some time during the last week of April the president and Olmsted met, and Franklin D. Roosevelt instructed the landscape architect to prepare detailed recommendations for improvements to the White House grounds. At this point Olmsted requested a full account of the practical requirements that affected the grounds.[24] On May 11 Olmsted went back to Washington, examined the grounds, and met with Captain Dalrymple and Lieutenant E. P. Locke Jr. of the National Park Service. He also obtained a Photostat of the topographical map of the White House grounds. The following day, Olmsted returned with the firm's plant specialist Hans Koehler to further examine the grounds.[25]

Olmsted and Koehler field-checked the trees and shrubs on the topographical map. The first plan produced by the firm was based on a 1925 survey by the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks, "with corrections by Olmsted Brothers, 1935, especially as to names of trees" (see figure 6-3.) Although the details are difficult to read,

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22. Clarke to Caemmerer, Oct. 19, 1932, box 206, project files, RG 66, NA.

23. CFA, minutes of meeting, Oct. 19, 1934, report of Charles Moore on the landscape plan, White House grounds, box 206, project files, RG 66, NA.

24. Caemmerer to Olmsted, Apr. 18, 1934; Olmsted to Marvin H. McIntyre (sec. to the president), May 4, 1934; all in Olmsted Associates Papers.

25. Report of Olmsted's visit to White House, May 11 and 12, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers. Olmsted said that he obtained the Photostat of the topographical map from C. Marshall Finnan's office, then superintendent of National Capital Parks. Hans Koehler, who lived in Marlboro, Massachusetts, was employed by the Olmsted firm between 1890 and 1941 and was its chief horticultural specialist for most of that time. Among other projects in the 1920s and 1930s, he planned and oversaw all the landscaping for the home and office grounds of Olmsted Brothers in Brookline, Massachusetts. Koehler's presence on the White House job undoubtedly indicates that Olmsted considered horticulture to be one of the most important issues of this project. See employee files, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Massachusetts; "Hans Koehler, Landscaping Artist Dies," *Marlboro Daily Enterprise*, July 1, 1951, 1; and Cynthia Zaitzevsky, Cynthia Zaitzevsky Associates, in collaboration with the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, "Cultural Landscape Report, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, 'Fairsted,' Brookline, Massachusetts," Final Draft, July 1994, chapters 3 and 4 of vol. 1A: "Site History and Illustrations," and appendix H of vol. 1B, "Appendices"; Artemas P. Richardson, telephone interview with Cynthia Zaitzevsky, June 1, 1993.

this survey is one of the most useful documents of the period, recording existing conditions exactly as they were before any of Olmsted's recommendations were implemented. Among other things, it shows the Irish yew that Olmsted had complained about, located almost directly on axis to the south of the south fountain. There was also a great proliferation of flowering plant material all around the south fountain, including forsythia, saucer magnolias, and Japanese cherries planted during the Taft administration.[26] Around the fountain to the north were more forsythia and flowering quince. The east and west gardens appear to have been essentially as they were during the Wilson administration. The new landscaped light well to the south of the West Wing (figure 6-2) appears on the survey, as does the "fiddle-shaped" driveway to the south of the White House.

Most of the existing commemorative trees can be located on the plan, although they are not identified as such on the survey. In the published report, a separate map of commemorative trees was included. The survey shows that the fern-leaf beeches planted on either side of the east entrance by President and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt in 1904 had been replaced with European hornbeams. On the plan of commemorative trees, the legend indicates that President Warren G. Harding had planted the hornbeam to the south of the entrance. Its counterpart to the north does not seem to have been a commemorative tree. Both hornbeams were probably removed when the East Wing was expanded later in the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration.

By June 1934 Olmsted had obtained the services of Professor Morley Jeffers Williams of Harvard's Department of Landscape Architecture to do the historical research on the grounds of the White House necessary for the project.[27]

During September 1934 the Olmsted firm was asked to advise on grading in the immediate vicinity of the Executive Office Building (West Wing), then still being constructed.[28] By this time the firm had

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26. Eighteen Japanese cherries had been planted around the southern fountain in 1911–12, a gift of the people of Tokyo.

27. Olmsted to McIntyre, June 12, 1934; Olmsted to Williams, June 12, 1934; Olmsted to Finnan, June 12, 1934; all from the Olmsted Associates Papers. Williams had already carried out similar research on the history of the Mount Vernon grounds and was stationed at Mount Vernon that summer. Arrangements were made for Williams to have access to various historical sources, presumably some of the same ones consulted for the present report.

28. Olmsted to Locke, Sept. 20, 1934; Locke to Olmsted, Sept. 24, 1934; Olmsted to Locke, Sept. 28, 1934; all in Olmsted Associates Papers.

prepared an early draft of the report. Olmsted visited the White House grounds on September 28–29, studied certain aspects of them with Clarence E. Howard, another landscape architect from the Olmsted firm, and made revisions to the draft report. Olmsted had observed that the lighting system needed revision and that the fountains were leaking. Two conifers on the edge of the north lawn also needed to be removed.[29]

On October 9, 1934, President Roosevelt went around the grounds with Olmsted, Gugler, Moore, members of the White House staff, and an architect from the National Park Service. Several important decisions were made at this site visit and are worth quoting from Moore's account:

> The inner one of two driveways south of the White House may be eliminated.
>
> The main driveway may be narrowed directly south of the White House, so as to give more room for a box garden to be arranged so as to be appurtenant to the President's office and the Cabinet Room.
>
> The east and west driveway near the Fountain be subdued.
>
> The planting around the Fountain be kept low, so as to create no disturbance in the vista.
>
> The south vista be opened in the grounds by the elimination of now obstructing trees.
>
> The vista open to the public be enlarged to approximately 150 feet, giving the finest possible view of the White House.
>
> A high solid hedge be planted so as to screen the grounds at the east and west sides, leaving open only the south vista. Thus the concentration of the view to one point would add to its interest and effectiveness so far as the public is concerned. At the same time the privacy of the grounds, so necessary to the conception of the residence of the President, will be secured.
>
> Those trees which have outlived their beauty and usefulness be replaced by trees preferably those keeping their greenness through the winter. The tulip poplar, the magnolia and certain varieties of pine were favored.[30]

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29. "The White House Visit by F. L. Olmsted, Sept. 28–29, 1934," Olmsted Associates Papers. By the early 1940s, Howard was working for the National Park Service. (Olmsted client file, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, MA.)

30. CFA, minutes of meeting, Oct. 19, 1934, landscape plan, White House grounds, Charles Moore's report regarding an inspection of the White House grounds on Oct. 9, 1934, box 206, project files, RG 66, NA.

In 1937 the Executive Avenue fence, the gate piers, and gates were replaced to match those at Pennsylvania Avenue, except for the area between the two east entrance carriageways. Olmsted had proposed to remove the east fountain and straighten out the east entrance fence line.[31]

Before Roosevelt came out on the grounds, Olmsted spent considerable time discussing the grading around the West Wing with Eric Gugler.[32] A few days later Olmsted submitted a detailed report on the subject of "Grading and Planting just south of Executive Offices." Gugler's intention had been to disguise the new office building substructure by having the ground near it graded in an informal manner rather than designing a more formal terrace treatment. In principle, Olmsted agreed with this. After consulting with Koehler, he realized that the informal grading would require a great deal more soil, would probably kill "the immensely important great linden tree with its present perfection of massive foliage" just to the south of the substructure and would also endanger a deodar cedar some 60 feet to the southeast.[33]

As an alternative, Olmsted recommended that the subsoil filling that had already been spread over the natural surface of the ground should be removed down to the existing topsoil. The artificial appearance of the terrace could then be disguised by masking the edges with informal plantings. In addition to the two trees he wanted to save, Olmsted also referred to a "decrepit" Paulownia tree northwest of the linden that might eventually be removed. All three of these trees appear on the March 1935 survey illustrated in figure 6-3. He also recommended some changes in the grading to the east of the West Wing substructure, but he noted that this grading would be temporary and that a final plan for it would depend on a final decision about the west garden design.[34] A grading plan for this site accompanied the report.[35] On October 31, 1934, the National Park Service prepared a planting plan for the area.[36]

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31. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 16, 2000.

32. "White House Grounds. Visit, Oct. 9, 1934. F. L. O.," Olmsted Associates Papers. This is a handwritten, fragmentary report of the visit.

33. Olmsted, "White House Grounds: Report on Grading and Planting just south of Executive Offices," Oct. 11, 1934, 1–2, Olmsted Associates Papers.

34. Olmsted, "White House Grounds: Report," Oct. 11, 1934, 2–4.

35. This plan is identified as Ex. 530, file. 2843-I. No plan with this number or following this description is now in the archives at the Olmsted National Historic Site.

36. A copy of this plan is in the collections of the Olmsted National Historic Site.

The Olmsted Plan

On October 16, 1934, Olmsted submitted a 13-page report on the White House grounds, with 13 pages of explanatory notes and a map. The substance of the report had already been discussed with Roosevelt during the site visit a week earlier. It is worth noting that Olmsted's cover letter reveals that the firm did not yet have a contract for their study of the White House grounds. He explained that he had served on several unpaid commissions, such as the Senate Park Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, and was currently a member of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Olmsted offered to continue to contribute his services for the White House project, but he indicated that he had incurred considerable expenses, including substantial staff time for Koehler and others. An addendum to the report listed recommended work for which preliminary estimates were needed at that point. Olmsted sent copies of the report and covering letter to Arno B. Cammerer, director of the National Park Service.[37]

Olmsted apparently had been seriously ill during the summer of 1934 and had to take a few months off in the late fall and winter. During this interval he left the project, including the preparation of estimates, in the hands of his partner Henry Vincent Hubbard, a landscape architect and planner of great distinction, whom Koehler and Howard assisted. The estimates for road construction were to be developed primarily by the engineering staff of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, with the collaboration of Hubbard and Koehler. However, Olmsted continued to stay in close touch with them from Colorado, where he was recuperating.[38]

To ease the transition, Olmsted spent five days in Washington between October 18 and 23, making site visits and attending meetings. Howard's report described intensive discussions and conferences and further examination of the grounds.[39] An October 22 meeting was

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37. Olmsted, "Report on the White House Grounds," Oct. 9, 1934; Olmsted, "White House Grounds: List of items referred to in report of October 9, 1934, for all or most of which preliminary estimates of cost are now desirable," Oct. 16, 1934; Olmsted to the president, Oct. 16, 1934 (explanatory letter of transmittal); Olmsted to A. B. Cammerer, Oct. 18, 1934. All these items, except possibly the letter to Cammerer, are in box 206, project files, RG 66, NA, as well in the Olmsted Associates Papers in the Library of Congress.

38. Olmsted to the president, Oct. 16, 1934; Olmsted to Cammerer, Oct. 16, 1934; both from the Olmsted Associates Papers. Henry Vincent Hubbard (1875–1947), as well as being a partner in Olmsted Brothers, was a member of the faculty of Harvard University's program in landscape architecture for 35 years. He also had been the program's very first graduate in 1901. In 1929, Hubbard established the School of City and Regional Planning at Harvard, an experimental program funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. See "Henry Vincent Hubbard: An Official Minute on His Professional Life and Work," *Landscape Architecture* 37, no. 2 (January 1948), 46–57, and Zaitzevsky, "Education and Landscape Architecture," 31.

39. Clarence Howard, "Report of Visit," Oct. 18–25, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers.

attended by Koehler, Howard, and Olmsted; Lieutenant Locke; architect Lorenzo Winslow; Thomas C. Vint (chief landscape architect of the National Park Service); Malcolm Kirkpatrick (the resident landscape architect of the National Capital Parks); and Mr. Reeves (the gardener at the White House). During the meeting a telephone call came in from President Roosevelt authorizing Locke to provide the funds for the firm's services. Koehler was on the White House grounds between October 22 and 25, accompanied by Kirkpatrick, who had been delegated to formulate and draw up the Olmsted firm's concepts. Kirkpatrick had brought with him a grading plan for the grounds around the extension of the Executive Office Building, and Koehler prepared a planting study on the spot, from which Kirkpatrick was to make a finished plan.[40]

After the October 22 meeting Olmsted met further with Vint, Locke, and A. E. Demaray, associate director of the National Park Service, to discuss "ways and means." President Roosevelt had asked Locke to have estimates made for professional services and expenses and for making the improvements. Sources of funding were discussed, including the Public Works Administration, and the form that the final publication would take. Olmsted had wanted to produce an official government document, but the Secret Service had adhered to the policy of not allowing the publication of accurate official maps of either the grounds or the interior of the White House. It was decided that there would be only a few copies of the final report, but they would be very attractively presented. Two of them — Roosevelt's personal copy and the one for the White House library — would be elegantly bound. At this point, the chief task for the Olmsted firm was to prepare estimates and a draft contract.[41]

On October 29 Olmsted wired Demaray, suggesting a sum of $2,000 for a revised general plan report, covering his services and expenses, historical investigations, and the work of assistants to complete the estimates. It would not include later work on details, supervision, or other matters.[42] Demaray wired Olmsted in return asking for a lump

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40. During this meeting Olmsted read his October 9 report and explanatory notes, part of his October 15 letter to the president, his October 11 report on grading and planting south of the executive offices, and his October 11 letter to Cammerer. Koehler, "White House Grounds, Washington, D.C., Report of Visit, October 22, 23 and 24, 1934," Olmsted Associates Papers.

41. Olmsted to partners from La Junta, Colorado, Oct. 25, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers.

42. Olmsted to Demaray, telegram from Mesa Verde National Park, Oct. 29, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers. Olmsted apparently had been asked to consult on Mesa Verde National Park and possibly other national parks.

sum estimate that would include detailed plans and supervision, and Olmsted proposed $3,000.[43]

On November 6, 1934, Kirkpatrick sent Koehler blueprints of the planting plan for the vicinity of the Executive Office Building, which he had developed from Koehler's sketch.[44] On November 13 Howard and Koehler conferred with Kirkpatrick about this planting plan, which they approved. Kirkpatrick was also to make a planting plan for the rest of the grounds. Koehler and Howard were surprised to find out that at Locke's request, Kirkpatrick had made a preliminary estimate for carrying out all the work recommended, but he had not submitted it to the Olmsted firm. Koehler and Howard met with Vint and Kirkpatrick on November 17, and they explained that there had been a "precipitous demand" for the estimate and that they regretted not having sent it to the firm.[45] Howard also took some photographs on this trip, including the view of the east entrance shown in figure 6-4.

Shortly afterward, the Olmsted firm was informed that planting around the Executive Offices would begin at the end of November.[46] The planting was not actually begun until December, when some modifications were proposed to the Olmsted firm design concept as developed by Kirkpatrick.[47] On December 3 the Commission of Fine Arts, especially Gilmore D. Clarke, its landscape architect member, reviewed the plan. Clarke recommended that the new planting south of the extended executive offices be kept as simple and restrained as possible and that nothing should be added that was not absolutely necessary until the Olmsted firm had completed its study of the entire White House grounds. The submitted plan showed a large bed of plants contrary to the Olmsted report. It also showed a hedge around the edge of the sunken court. Clarke criticized the hedge because it would take light away from the offices below, and it

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43. The matter of the contract with the Olmsted firm was not settled until well into 1935. Olmsted to partners from Mesa Verde National Park, Oct. 30, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers.

44. Kirkpatrick to Koehler, Nov. 6, 1923, Olmsted Associates Papers.

45. Between November 12 and 26 Howard was in Washington most of the time with Koehler, working on Union Square, which was then under construction, and Analostan Island, as well as the White House project. "Report of Clarence Howard's visit to Washington, November 12th to 26th, 1934, in Connection with Union Square, The White House, Analostan Island"; "White House Grounds, Washington, D.C., Report of Conference, November 13, 1934, by Hans Koehler"; Howard to Henry V. Hubbard, Nov. 17, 1934; all in the Olmsted Associates Papers.

46. Olmsted Brothers to Demaray, telegram, Nov. 23, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers.

47. Finnan to Koehler, Dec. 3, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers.

would have no apparent reason for being as seen from the ground. He recommended that the hedge be replaced by ground cover of English ivy and that the sidewalk proposed just outside the president's office be relocated.[48] On December 7 Henry Vincent Hubbard went over the planting plan with Clarke and recommended that, for the time being, no more plantings should be set in this area than was necessary to keep it from appearing very raw.[49] On December 13 C. Marshall Finnan of the National Park Service responded that the planting had gone in and had been held to the minimum.[50]

Kirkpatrick inventoried the trees and shrubs on the White House grounds in January 1935, recommending which ones to keep and which ones to remove.[51] The list has survived, but no accompanying map appears to exist. Some of the locations can be identified by the survey (figure 6-3).

In February 1935 the Olmsted Brothers' contract was discussed extensively. On February 8 the firm received word that the Public Works Administration had allocated $2,000 for making the general plans for the White House grounds. The National Park Service also sent a draft contract.[52] Hubbard then prepared three separate draft contracts. The first was to cover Olmsted's services and expenses in preparing the report, the history, and the general plan. If additional services were required for the preparation of detailed plans, consulting, and supervision, Hubbard suggested entering into a second contract for these. The third draft contract was an alternative to the second, except that it specified the various plans in detail.[53]

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48. Moore to Finnan, Dec. 4, 1934, box 207, project files, RG 66, NA.

49. Hubbard to Cammerer, Dec. 7, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers.

50. Finnan to Hubbard, Dec. 13, 1934, Olmsted Associates Papers. This letter illustrates the confusion that seems to have frequently occurred because of the unusual way in which the design process was handled on this project. In this case Kirkpatrick had been asked to develop finished designs from Olmsted firm sketches and written reports, but he actually seems to have introduced fairly significant changes on his own. His resulting plans, however, were referred to as "Olmsted" plans.

51. Kirkpatrick, "Grounds of Executive Mansion," Jan. 5, 1935 (in letter from Finnan, Jan. 7, 1935), Olmsted Associates Papers.

52. Vint to Hubbard, Feb. 8, 1935, Olmsted Associates Papers.

53. Hubbard concluded, "Mr. Olmsted has felt from the very start of this work that in order to insure the best execution of the recommendations incorporated in his plan and report, it would be most desirable for him or one of his associates not only to keep in close contact with your office during the preparation of the working drawings and awarding of contracts, but also to have more or less continuously some supervision of the actual work as it is carried out on the ground." Hubbard to Cammerer, Feb. 12, 1935, Olmsted Associates Papers. See also Hubbard to Vint, Feb. 11, 1935, Olmsted Associates Papers.

By the end of February no progress had been made on the contract. A new issue had emerged: the possible redesign of the west garden and possibly of the east garden. Olmsted did not like either one, and their condition seems to have deteriorated. On February 25, Hubbard wrote to Olmsted:

> I talked today with Demaray, Vint, Finnan, two lawyers and Captain . . . Locke. No way *now* to get more than $2,000 for the Preliminary report on the White House Grounds. . . .
>
> But he does want something *now* about the formal gardens. Gugler has made an uninspired sketch which I have. If you show nothing but words, Gugler's plan may well be carried out.
>
> Some action was necessary at once, so I agreed to include a sketch for the gardens, together with the statement that we had *considered* Gugler's plan in your preliminary report. . . .
>
> Why not leave the east garden alone, except for replacing ratty and overgrown trees, and general slicking up?
>
> Why did you not propose to get rid of the rotten fountain pool on the main axis of the White House south of the cross road?[54]

Olmsted wired back from California, agreeing to this approach toward the gardens, but about the fountain he said: "Though south fountain is rotten in detail, the abundant flow of water there is agreeable from afar and seems too scarce and precious in Washington to eliminate."[55] Hubbard accordingly prepared a sketch and memorandum concerning the west garden.[56] He recommended that many features be kept, including the high hedge just south of the colonnade and the path running north-south through the east end. He also suggested various changes in order to relate the garden better to the extended office building.[57]

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54. Hubbard to Olmsted, Feb. 25, 1935, Olmsted Associates Papers.

55. Olmsted to Hubbard, telegram from Redondo Beach, CA., Mar. 3, 1935, Olmsted Associates Papers.

56. Hubbard noted that, "The garden as it stands is of no great antiquity and might therefore be subject to change, although it is evident that any change should be demonstrably a change for the better both as to its appearance and as to its use as at present contemplated." Olmsted Brothers [Henry Vincent Hubbard], "Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C., Memorandum from Olmsted Brothers to Arno B. Cammerer, Director, National Park Service, to Accompany Study for Temporary Revision of the West Garden, April 9, 1935," 1, Olmsted Associates Papers. Also in box 207, project files, RG 66, NA.

57. Olmsted Brothers, "Executive Mansion," memorandum, 1935, 2–3.

Early in March the firm received maps of trees on the White House grounds.[58] In May detailed estimates were made from the Olmsted firm's preliminary report; however, Olmsted and Hubbard believed the plans did not have sufficient details to allow for proper estimates. The firm still did not have a contract for the project.[59] In addition, the issue of the west garden had not yet been resolved, and Gugler's design was apparently still pending. Olmsted and Hubbard thought highly of Gugler as an architect, but not as a landscape architect.[60]

By June some of these issues had been resolved, and the firm was helping prepare estimates to relocate and rebuild roadways.[61] In July Olmsted and Edwin Mitchell Prellwitz, another member of the Olmsted firm, took several photographs of the White House grounds, a few of which were used in the final report submitted to President Roosevelt on October 24, 1935.[62] Figure 6-5 is Olmsted's view of the east garden, which shows the trees around the pool in a much overgrown and possibly "ratty" condition.

The final report is a slightly expanded version of the document that Olmsted had submitted a year earlier, and it incorporates the observations he made in his January 1928 letter to Grant. Olmsted's recommendations were essentially the same in all three documents.[63]

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58. The maps used nomenclature that had been determined by a Mr. Hoffman when he had been park naturalist. Malcolm Kirkpatrick (resident landscape architect) to Koehler, Mar. 2, 1935, with enclosed "List of Trees and Shrubs in the Executive Mansion Grounds," Olmsted Associates Papers.

59. Hubbard to Moore, May 10, 1935; Moore to Hubbard, May 13, 1935; Moore to Roosevelt, May 14, 1935. All in the Olmsted Associates Papers.

60. Hubbard to Moore, May 14, 1935, Olmsted Associates Papers. Also in box 207, project files, RG 66.

61. Charles C. Castella (National Capital Parks) to Gartside, memorandum, June 1, 1935; Olmsted, "White House Grounds," report of visit, June 17–21, 1935; Olmsted, "Estimate of Cost of Desirable Improvements on the White House Grounds," June 1935; all in Olmsted Associates Papers. See also Caemmerer to Moore, June 19, 1935, box 206, project files, RG 66, NA. The contract issue apparently had been settled by then, but there is no copy of the contract in the files at the Olmsted Associates Papers.

62. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President." The client file at the Olmsted National Historic Site has little information on Prellwitz, except that he worked on some of the firm's well-known estates on Long Island (Aldred and Burden) and that he eventually relocated to Providence, Rhode Island.

63. Williams's research on "The Historical Background of the Design of the White House Grounds," which consisted of a 25-page narrative and 50 annotated historic plans, maps, and views was included as part 2 of the Olmsted Brothers' final report. Williams apparently was the first person to attempt a thorough study of the history of the grounds. Most of his research, although not very detailed, still holds up today. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 56–81, plus illustrations. The original "master" of this report is at the Olmsted National Historic Site. Copies are in the Olmsted Associates Papers, at the OC/WH and ESF/WHL/NPS.

At the beginning, he described certain defects in utilitarian features of the White House grounds, such as the limitation of office space, inadequate space for cars to load and unload visitors at the east entrance, inadequate service yard space, and defects of the road system south of the White House.[64] This last problem was the most serious:

> The present system of roads within the White House Grounds south of the building is the result of numerous past changes of a rather patchwork sort, adapting very different earlier plans to changing practices in use. . . .
>
> The roads produce unpleasant landscape effects, they are not entirely convenient for the vehicular uses to which they are now put. . . .
>
> Unpleasant landscape effects of the present road system are (1) the interruption of the axial lawn by a conspicuous band of transverse roadway cutting it in two in the middle as seen from the White House, (2) the duplication of the lateral roads on each side of the axis, and (3) certain details of crowning, guttering and surface material.[65]

He then addressed general landscape defects, such as lack of privacy. Most areas of the grounds were not screened sufficiently from the outside. On the one hand he criticized the existing privet hedge, which was both too low and too "diaphanous." On the other hand the one place where the public should be allowed to look in, the end of the south axis, was blocked by inappropriate plantings.[66] He also recommended planting a few long-lived trees to replace those that were nearing the end of their life spans, but he cautioned that their exact time of demise could not be accurately predicted.[67] On this subject, he warned:

> The attempt to grow, underneath the canopy of the great old trees, young trees fit to succeed them is utterly futile in this kind of landscape; for long before such undergrowth trees could attain a respectable size they would have become distorted, by over-shading and competition, to a condition making them quite unfit to replace their spreading and full-foliaged predecessors.[68]

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64. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 2–6.
65. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 4–5.
66. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 7–9.
67. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 9–10.
68. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 11–12.

The practice he criticized must have been suggested by President Roosevelt, who may have been influenced either by the writings of Gifford Pinchot, who followed European models of forestry, or by his own observations from his youthful visits to the Black Forest of Germany with his father. Roosevelt presumably followed this practice at his own property in Hyde Park, New York, where he managed extensive forests. Olmsted apparently was able to convince the president not to institute such a program at the White House.[69]

Olmsted endorsed another tree planting proposal by Roosevelt, although it was never carried out, in the recommended location. It was

> a sylvan feature suggested by the President, and rightly noted by him as both pleasing in itself, highly characteristic of the region surrounding Washington, and relatively durable. This is a dense pure stand of nearly even-aged tulip-poplars, with columnar aspiring trunks and high foliage canopy, which would completely fill this ineffective gap within the surrounding stand of more spreading and wide-spaced trees.[70]

The "ineffective gap" was a plateau near the east boundary and southeast of the building that was then in bare turf.

Olmsted advised against the unnecessary planting of trees to avoid "frittering away" open space. He strongly recommended that trees and shrubs blocking the south vista be removed, especially a weeping beech and flowering trees near the south fountain. In general, he felt that the planting in the southernmost part of the grounds had not been well thought out and that the turf throughout the grounds should be improved. He also advised that the ornamental planting on the north side of the house be "simplified into a more dignified and less restless and self-assertive appearance."[71]

Concerning the two formal gardens, Olmsted recommended a greater richness of floral effects in both. Repeating comments in his earlier

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69. In 1940 Roosevelt mandated an identical tree replacement program at the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site in Hyde Park, a property that he had been instrumental in having the National Park Service acquire. This was official policy at the Vanderbilt site until some time after Roosevelt's death in 1945. See Patricia M. O'Donnell et al., *Cultural Landscape Report for Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site*, vol. 1: *Site History, Existing Conditions, and Analysis*, NPS Cultural Landscape Publication 1 (Boston: Division of Cultural Resource Management, North Atlantic Region, NPS, 1992), 186–88, notes 23 and 25. As of 1995, there was no cultural landscape report for the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt in Hyde Park, New York, but it is highly likely that Roosevelt followed the tree replacement policy in his own forests and grounds.

70. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 12–13.

71. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 11–17; quotation on page 16.

reports and in Hubbard's letter, he wrote that the gardens had a "makeshift look" and that the conifers in the east garden were out of scale and overgrown.[72] The defects, he felt, were "due in part to inadequacies in the original design of the gardens, in part to hasty and imperfect execution, in part to ill-advised alterations from time to time, and in part to very inadequate maintenance."[73] A redesign of both gardens with an identical, very simple layout was included in the report, presumably with floral displays around the borders (figure 6-6). The 1935 "General Plan for Improvements" (figure 6-7) incorporated the recommended simplification of the drives, revisions to the gardens, and the opening up of the south vista. Also in the report were several pairs of "before" and "after" photographs. Since these were not drawings, the photographs showing proposed conditions were obviously retouched. Figures 6-8 and 6-9 show existing and proposed conditions for views north to the White House.

President Roosevelt reacted positively to the Olmsted Brothers' report, but he returned it with a notation to his staff that it was to be taken up again with him in November 1936, if he was reelected. Locke felt that estimates should be prepared and that the opinion of the Fine Arts Commission should be sought, so that everything would be ready when Roosevelt reconsidered the matter. In February 1936 the Olmsted firm was asked for more detailed guidelines on maintaining the grounds. By January 1936 the National Park Service had prepared revised estimates for the recommended work.[74]

Specifications were made up for the revision of the roads south of the White House in March 1937 and were sent to Olmsted Brothers for review.[75] Olmsted wired back as follows:

> For historic and aesthetic reasons gravelled surface of private roads south of White House should preferably adjoin turf without any intervening border of other material. I concurred for ease of maintenance in Park Service suggestion of metal edging so thin and low as to be

72. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 17–21.

73. Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the President," 20.

74. Parker, "White House Grounds, Washington, D.C., Report of Conference," Jan. 21, 1936; Olmsted Brothers to Locke, Feb. 7, 1936; NPS, "Revised Estimate for Planning and Execution of Comprehensive Landscape Development for the Grounds of the Executive Mansion," Mar. 17, 1936. All in Olmsted Associates Papers.

75. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Public Roads, "Bid, Bid Bond, and Supplemental Specifications, Project 10A1, National Capital Parks, Roads in White House Grounds," (NPS, 1937); Vint to Olmsted, Apr. 24, 1837. Both in Olmsted Associates Papers.

unnoticeable but consider concrete curb as specified very undesirable.[76]

The Olmsted firm was also consulted about the junction of the bituminous road surface, the concrete sidewalk just south of the White House, and two new gates to be constructed on East and West Executive Avenues, necessitated by the reconstruction of the south roads.[77] When construction began on the roads in July 1937, Roosevelt asked the engineers to stake the road just south of the White House 18 feet closer than on the plan, because he felt that there was too much paved area showing from the south portico. Olmsted went to Washington, with the result that this road was brought in as the president wished, making it impossible to carry out the garden plan shown in figures 6-6 and 6-7.[78]

At least a partial clearing of the south vista seems to have begun, following Olmsted's recommendations in spring 1935. When Olmsted returned to Washington in October 1937 to confer about the new fence, he photographed the old fence looking north up the south axis (figure 6-10). Shortly thereafter the iron fences of 1818 and 1873 were removed and modern replacements installed.[79] Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers are said to have implemented some of the Olmsted Brothers' plan for the White House grounds — obviously not the road rebuilding, since that went out to bid. Although most of the photographs in a group taken by the National Park Service in spring 1939 show the road directly to the south of the White House (figure 6-11), there is one view taken farther south that shows the weeping beech that Olmsted objected to still in place (figure 6-12).

President Roosevelt enthusiastically supported the plans for new trees on the White House grounds, especially the hemlocks by the west gate and lilacs in the northeast grounds. Among the commemorative trees planted during the Roosevelt administration are three extant specimens: (1) a southern magnolia at the east entrance that had

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76. Olmsted to Vint, telegram, Apr. 29, 1937, Olmsted Associates Papers.

77. "White House Grounds. Report of Conference with Thomas C. Vint in Bar Harbor by F. L. Olmsted, May 4, 1937"; W. G. Carnes (acting chief architect) to Olmsted Brothers, May 20, 1937, enclosing blue prints of two new gates; Olmsted Brothers to Carnes, May 27, 1937. All in Olmsted Associates Papers.

78. Finnan to Olmsted, telephone message records, July 23 and July 24, 1937; "White House Grounds. Report of Visit by Olmsted, July 29, 1937"; all in Olmsted Associates Papers.

79. Finnan to Olmsted Brothers, Nov. 4, 1937, Olmsted Associates Papers; Seale, *The President's House*, 964.

been planted by President Harding (south side); (2) a small-leaved linden just outside the Rose Garden near the entrance to the Oval Office (this may be one of the two trees planted in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of England's King George VI and Queen Elizabeth; the original trees were moved farther south during the renovation of the White House in 1949–52); and (3) a white oak planted by the Connecticut Girl Scouts near the eastern end of the north grounds.[80]

In 1939 Roosevelt initiated another commemorative tree planting, this one a memorial to Thomas Jefferson. In answer to an inquiry by Roosevelt, Howard Ker (a captain in the Corps of Engineers) suggested planting a Japanese pagoda tree within the White House grounds, but the president felt very strongly that Jefferson's memorial tree should be a native American tree. He also wanted something more impressive than a single tree and favored a planting that would connect the White House symbolically, and to a certain extent physically, with the Jefferson Memorial. President Roosevelt revived his earlier idea of a grove of tulip poplar trees, as stated in Olmsted's 1935 report. In April 1939 two groups of 10 tulip poplars each were planted on either side of the south grounds of the White House not far from the east and west boundaries (figure 6-13). The western grove was west of the tennis court in the approximate location of today's maintenance facility. These tulip poplar trees were extant until at least 1947, although they cannot be seen in any photographs or aerial views located thus far. In 1971 a former White House gardener, Robert Redmond, remembered President Roosevelt inspecting the new tulip poplar plantations in a jeep.[81]

In December 1941 the National Christmas Tree was moved to the White House grounds at the invitation of President Roosevelt. A May 21, 1941, memorandum from the president directed that the tree be located just inside the south fence. The president and other dignitaries would be on the south portico, where Roosevelt would push the

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80. Harry T. Thompson (acting supt.) to Marjorie B. Gratiot, Sept. 19, 1947; map of the commemorative trees, various trees, and planting at the Executive Mansion grounds, April 1956; both at ESF/WHL/NPS. NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds."

81. Howard Ker to Hassett, Jan. 10, 1939; Roosevelt to Ker, memorandum, Jan. 10, 1939; Ker to Gartside, Mar. 4, 1939; Ker to Roosevelt, Mar. 27, 1939; Ker to Hassett, Apr. 12, 1939; all at Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York; copies also in the Papers of Harry S. Truman, Post-Presidential Files, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO (hereafter cited as HSTL). Thompson to Gratiot (*The Richmond News Leader*), Sept. 19, 1947, ESF/WHL/NPS. The last letter states that the tulip poplar groves were still on the grounds in 1947. The plan of the tulip poplar planting shown in figure 6-15 appears to be located only at the Roosevelt Library, not at the Truman Library or at any repository in Washington. See also NPS, "The President's Garden," 60. McPeck apparently interviewed Redmond.

button to light the tree. Two Oriental spruce trees that had been originally planted in 1925 were transplanted on the south grounds in 1941 and were used in alternating years as the National Christmas Tree to lessen damage. The eastern tree is still extant, but has not been decorated since 1953.[82]

Within days of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, casual visitors were barred from the White House grounds, where they had once strolled freely on the north grounds and sometimes on the south grounds. Sentry boxes staffed with Secret Service and White House guards were set up at every entrance. President and Mrs. Roosevelt rejected other measures recommended by the Secret Service, such as setting up machine gun emplacements on the roof, camouflaging the house, and painting the colonnade windows black. Another wartime measure was the closing of East and West Executive Avenues. Although World War II reduced landscaping activities at the White House, a major architectural project was undertaken in 1942: a new East Wing was constructed to provide additional offices and reception facilities needed under wartime conditions. This required a slight reconfiguration of the east pavilion driveway in 1942. East Executive Avenue remained closed for at least a year after the end of the war.[83] In 1946 President Harry S. Truman revived the yearly receptions on the south lawn for convalescent veterans. These garden parties had been an annual event some years at the White House, but had been discontinued during World War II.[84]

In October 1944 the Public Buildings Administration (PBA) of the Federal Works Agency prepared a report on proposed landscape improvements for the executive mansion grounds. The reason for this study is not entirely clear, since the Olmsted report had been completed less than 10 years earlier and the nation was still at war. Written by S. E. Sanders, landscape architect, and Lorenzo Winslow, architect for the White House, the report proposed a number of radical changes to the grounds of the White House, as well as to the Ellipse and Lafayette Park. While the Olmsted Brothers' report emphasized the need to keep the north-south axis open, the PBA report carried this concern to extraordinary lengths. For example, the pools and fountains were thought to constitute "psychological barriers" to the north-south vista and to violate "the principles of

82. Information courtesy of Krause, on file at 1115-30-15/Grounds South, ESF/WHL/NPS.

83. "For Privileged Characters," *Washington Star*, Aug. 25, 1946.

84. McCullough, *Truman*, 497–98.

unity."[85] The report recommended that the north fountain be removed altogether and that an informal pool be substituted near the southern boundary of the property to replace the south fountain. Neither Olmsted nor Hubbard liked the existing "rotten" south fountain and discussed recommending its removal, in private correspondence. On reflection, Olmsted felt the display of water in the fountain was still agreeable enough to keep it.[86]

The PBA report also proposed new designs, different from those created by Olmsted, for both the east and west gardens. The plan for the east garden called for relocating the pool from the center of the garden to the east end, near the west wall of the East Wing, an arrangement similar to the current one. It also called for placing a service entrance tunnel under the current north entrance by the West Wing. In addition, a new greenhouse and service yard west of the tennis court, near the present maintenance area, were proposed. Some of the recommendations by Sanders and Winslow, such as removing the trees near the south fountain, were entirely consistent with the Olmsted Brothers report. The infamous weeping beech (misidentified in the PBA report as a weeping birch) was still in place.[87] Except for the removal of these trees near the south fountain — which may not have been implemented until after the renovations to the building during the Truman administration — none of these recommendations was carried out.

In the first years of his presidency, Harry S. Truman, a self-styled "architectural nut," fought for major changes to the White House proper and the West Wing. Almost immediately upon taking office, he asked Lorenzo Winslow to make sketches for an addition to the west office wing that would have added 15,000 square feet, including an auditorium for press conferences. While this would have been useful, much more room was now available for executive staff in what had been the State, War, and Navy Building. Just before World War II the Pentagon had been built across the river in Virginia, and a new building for the State Department was constructed at 23rd and C Streets NW.[88]

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85. Sanders and Winslow, "Report to the President of the United States on the Proposed Landscape Improvements for the Executive Mansion Grounds" (Washington, DC: Public Buildings Administration, Federal Works Agency, 1944).

86. Hubbard to Olmsted, Feb. 25, 1935; Olmsted to Hubbard, telegram, Mar. 3, 1935; both in the Olmsted Associates Papers.

87. Sanders and Winslow, "Report."

88. Seale, *The President's House*, 1002–16; Seale, *The White House*, 232-36. For the new State Department Building, see Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 212.

In November 1945 the Commission of Fine Arts had endorsed the project for an expanded Executive Office Building in the West Wing, and the following month Congress approved an appropriation of $1,650,000 for the expansion and for a museum in the East Wing. The plan also proposed relocating the main entrance of the West Wing from the north grounds to West Executive Avenue, placing a service road under the north grounds along the West Wing to West Executive Avenue, and returning the former West Wing entrance to lawn area. Site preparation, including the demolition of the iron fence along West Executive Avenue, was well underway when a groundswell of opposition arose from the public, the American Institute of Architects, and some members of Congress. In January 1946 the funding needed for the addition was deleted from the appropriation passed earlier. By 1948, possibly in connection with preparations for the addition to the West Wing, Eric Gugler's sunken garden court fountain was removed and the court was roofed over and sodded.[89]

In 1947 modifications were made around the east entrance. The fountain, the gate piers, and the central steps, which had been reduced in 1902, were removed. A new entrance was built. A new fence matching the one along Pennsylvania Avenue was installed.[90]

That same year the White House gardener, Robert Redmond, wrote a memorandum describing the appearance of the west and east gardens and a garden that he called the Cloisters, now known as the magnolia patio, and described as a flagstone area beneath the Jackson magnolias. At this time the west garden contained 500 rose bushes and was surrounded by 4-foot-high hedges of California privet. The layout, which still included the President's Walk, sounds similar to that designed by Edith Axson Wilson and George Burnap, except that no sculpture of Pan is mentioned. This garden must have been damaged in the course of construction of the expanded West Wing, but it seems to have been put back in much the same configuration as before. The layout of the east garden was still that designed by Beatrix Farrand. The pool was described specifically: it was 24 feet long, 12 feet wide, and 3 feet deep, and it was planted in season with four tender water lilies, one at each corner, each in a different color: white, pink, yellow and blue. Redmond also mentioned the "ornate antique sandstone seats," which appear in early photographs of this

89. Seale, *The President's House*, 1002–16; Seale, *The White House*, 232–36. For the removal of the fountain, see "White House Fountains" file, OC/WH.

90. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 15, 2000.

garden and at least some of which are still in place in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden.[91]

An aerial photograph of the south grounds of the White House taken in January 1948 shows that little progress had been made in opening up the north-south vista in accordance with the recommendations of the Olmsted Brothers' report (figure 6-14). The trees near the fountain are still visible. The tulip poplar groves may be the smaller trees that appear considerably farther to the west and east of the fountain near the boundary plantations.

In 1948, over the objections of the Commission of Fine Arts, President Truman succeeded in adding the "Truman balcony" to the south portico of the White House proper. This was the greatest exterior change that had been made to the main building since Andrew Jackson constructed the north portico in 1829–31.[92]

Lafayette Park

Lafayette Square, renamed Lafayette Park in 1933, underwent few major modifications in the early 1930s. In 1930–31 one drinking fountain was replaced with one having an ornamental concrete pedestal.[93] In 1931–32 the exterior and interior of the lodge were painted.[94]

In 1932 the American Forestry Association published a brochure with a foldout map showing all the trees in Lafayette Park (figure 6-15). American elms grew along all four sides; a few English elms (remnants of an early planting along the north and south sides) survived principally in the northeast corner. A deodar cedar (related to the cedar of Lebanon), a cryptomeria, a Royal Empress tree, a bald cypress, a massive purple beech, southern magnolias (along the walk north of the Jackson statue), a large English yew, an English holly, and a white fringe tree were among the trees identified.[95] The 1932

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91. NPS, "The White House Garden," by Robert Redmond, revised Feb. 19, 1947, ESF/WHL/NPS.

92. Seale, *The President's House*, 1002–16; Seale, *The White House*, 232–6.

93. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1931*, 67.

94. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1932*, 22. Lafayette Park had been designated as Reservation 10, instead of as part of Reservation 1, since at least 1884; *Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1885*, 2504–5, 2510.

95. Frederick V. Coville and O. M. Freeman, *Trees and Shrubs of Lafayette Park* (Washington, DC: The American Forestry Association, 1932). It is conceivable that the

plan is important because the park would be modified in the late 1930s. Figure 6-16 is a montage of photographs included in the pamphlet.

Franklin D. Roosevelt sought to remove the Jackson statue from Lafayette Park. His comments indicate that he was not particularly pleased with it from an aesthetic perspective. However, Charles Moore, chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, argued for keeping the statue because it was the first equestrian monument designed and erected in the United States and it was an outstanding achievement in American art. He also argued that it would be difficult to find another satisfactory place for the statue. He strongly opposed the switch with the George Washington statue because in his estimation the latter was "one of the worst in the United States."[96] Proposals to relocate the statue continued. In 1944 the Federal Works Agency recommended its removal to open the view of the White House from the 16th street. Like those before it, this recommendation resulted in no action.[97]

In 1936–37 Lafayette Park was "reconditioned" as part of a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project. The 1936 plan (figure 6-17), which was derived from a 1921 Commission of Fine Arts proposal, simplified and regularized the Downing plan by making the inner and outer path systems equal in width and importance. It also eliminated the two short paths that led to the urns east and west of the Jackson statue and the flower beds within the paths of Downing's outer system. All paths were resurfaced with concrete. The urns were relocated close to the east and west entrances to the park. A grass panel was installed north of the Jackson statue; it was equal in width to the one south of the sculpture. Twenty-six gas lights were removed. Although these changes were not radical and were intended to "enhance" the Downing plan, the WPA reconditioning had the effect of suppressing the park's romantic flavor, making it appear more symmetrical as well as more hard-edged because of all the concrete. There was extensive photographic documentation of the project, and it was also covered in the press. In the press and in letters written to public officials and to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt there was considerable criticism of the increase in

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English elms were remnants of a planting directed by Charles Bulfinch. English elms were originally planted along the malls of Boston Common.

96. Kerr, "Statue of General Andrew Jackson," 50-51.

97. Kerr, "Statue of General Andrew Jackson," 51-52.

concrete surfaces and especially of the death of trees that occurred as a result of an unexpected reversal in underground water conditions.[98]

In September 1939 President Roosevelt reactivated a congressional act passed during the Hoover administration to allow the government to purchase the private property around Lafayette Park, but no further action took place until the Eisenhower administration.[99]

Apparently during or after World War II, Columbian Family lighting fixtures were installed on Pennsylvania Avenue around Lafayette Park and on 15th Street by the Treasury Building and Sherman Plaza. These fixtures have two globes like the Bacon-style, but they are ornamentally different, with an acanthus leaf rather than an acorn finial (see figure 9-7).[100]

President's Park South

No major projects were undertaken during this period for the Ellipse. On December 24, 1929, probably only hours before the Executive Office Building (West Wing) burned, President Hoover lighted the Community Christmas Tree in Sherman Plaza, with the usual ceremonies.[101] The Community Christmas Tree was again placed in Sherman Plaza in 1930.[102] The tree remained in Sherman Plaza through 1933, when it was moved to Lafayette Park. It went back to the Ellipse in 1939 and 1940. Between 1941 and 1953, because of wartime and postwar security concerns, the tree was moved to the south grounds of the White House. At President Roosevelt's insistence, it was placed just inside the fence so that security could be

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98. NPS, "Lafayette Park," 28, 40–48. Several of the construction photographs are used to illustrate this report, but they do not reproduce well. See also "Lafayette Park Reconditioning Completion is Expected," *The Evening Star*, Washington, Apr. 22, 1936, 1, and "Changes in Park Landscape Held Factor in Death of Trees," *Washington Post*, Aug. 13, 1937. The clippings and considerable correspondence are on file at ESF/WHL/NPS.

99. Seale, *The President's House*, 979.

100. Information courtesy of Sue Kohler (historian, Commission of Fine Arts) and David Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

101. In 1929–30 there were four baseball diamonds on the Ellipse, with 14,570 players participating in the game and more than 89,000 spectators. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1930*, 50, 56.

102. In 1930–31 just under 15,000 people played baseball on the four diamonds, with 78,400 spectators. *Annual Report, Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, 1931*, 50, 58.

maintained, but the general public could still see the tree. In 1954 it was moved to the Ellipse, where it has remained.[103]

On May 21, 1931, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. wrote a short report, or notes, on the surroundings of the Sherman statue as they related to plans for the area north of the Department of Commerce Building. Olmsted recommended realigning E Street between 14th and 15th Streets and adjusting both the topography and the planting on the ground surrounding the statue. He observed that the ground sloped down "with unpleasant rapidity" from the monument and that the planting was "in general scrappy, confused, and trivial; failing to produce masses having any effective relations of composition with the monument."[104] His final recommendation was that the entire area between the base of the monument and the surrounding streets be redesigned.[105]

E Street was extended, and some of Olmsted's recommendations were carried out in 1933. It appears that E Street was not extended completely to 17th Street until 1940. The 1939–40 project may have been a collaborative effort between the National Park Service and the District of Columbia Highways Division.[106]

In spring 1942 plans were made to erect temporary barracks for the special troops assigned to protect the president, the White House, and the Treasury. Initially the soldiers were quartered in the sub-basement of the Treasury Building. When the warm weather forced them to move out, a number of sites were considered, including the grounds of the Washington Monument and Sherman Plaza. (The open area of the Ellipse does not seem to have been seriously considered). By 1942 a site below the First Division Monument was selected, bounded by State Place, South Executive Avenue, E Street, and 17th Street. The building was a single barracks across most of the site, with three wings extending north-south, and a detached

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103. Seale, *The President's House*, 974–75; Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time*, 299; file on "Sherman Plaza, Christmas Trees," ESF/WHL/NPS.

104. Olmsted, "Surroundings of Sherman Monument in Relation to Plans for Area North of Department of Commerce Building," May 21, 1931, p. 1, 1430/Sherman, box 17 of 31, ESF/WHL/NPS.

105. Olmsted, "Surroundings of Sherman Monument," 2.

106. For the grounds of the Sherman Plaza, see J. A. Woodruff (Executive and Disbursing Officer) to Maj. John C. Gotwals (Engineer Commissioner of the District), July 31, 1933, and Gotwals to Woodruff, Aug. 3, 1933, with sketches of streets, ESF/WHL/NPS. The Cartographic and Architectural Branch of the National Archives has seven drawing sheets labeled "Sherman Park and E Street Extension," dated August 1933–January 1934, which have not been examined for this study but which may show this change. These drawings include 23-095, 23-080-1/2, 23-089, and 23-087, RG 79, NA, College Park, MD.

guardhouse (figure 6-18). The War Department classified the structure as surplus on December 31, 1946, but the building remained until 1954. In 1947 plans were made to replant the site with 17 small-leaved lindens after the removal of the barracks. An aerial photograph of the Ellipse and the White House grounds taken sometime between 1948 and 1954 (figure 6-19) shows the southern wing of the barracks to the left, as well as three of the four baseball diamonds on the Ellipse.[107]

Two new monuments were added to the Ellipse in 1936. A granite Memorial to the Patentees of the District of Columbia, donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution, was erected on 15th Street about halfway between E Street and Constitution Avenue. Carl Mose was the sculptor and Delos Smith the architect. The Memorial to the Dead of the Second Division of the United States Army in World War I was dedicated on Constitution Avenue at 17th Street. It was sculpted by James Earle Fraser (the sculptor of the Alexander Hamilton statue south of the Treasury Building); John Russell Pope was the architect. For this monument 250 tons of granite form a giant portal enclosing a gilded 18-foot sword, with the division's insignia carved on the hilt. Later additions honor the dead from World War II and the Korean Conflict.[108]

As early as 1929 William Adams Delano and U. S. Grant III discussed relocating the Bulfinch gatehouses from Constitution Avenue at 15th and 17th Streets. In 1935 the chairman of the Fine Arts Commission proposed repairing and reorienting them to the south, but he was unable to secure funds. An attempt in 1937 by the National Park Service also failed. NPS architect Thomas T. Waterman prepared drawings in 1938 that proposed relocating the gatehouses and piers to the 16th Street entrance on Constitution Avenue to frame the view of the White House. The National Park Service used WPA funds to restore the gatehouses in 1938–39 but did not reorient them. The final report strongly recommended that they be moved at some future date to a more central location so that their original relationship to the Capitol would be more apparent.[109]

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107. The correspondence on the barracks includes the following: sec. of the treasury to Brig. Gen. Albert L. Cox, Apr. 1, 1942; D. A. Phelan (major, Corps of Engineers) to National Park Service, May 27, 1942; War Department to Public Works Administration, Jan. 1947; George W. Harding (chief, Horticulture and Maintenance Div.) to file, Feb. 4, 1947; and War Department to Irvin C. Root (supt., NCP), June 23, 1947; all in ESF/WHL/NPS. The photograph in figure 6-20 is annotated "Barracks removed 1954."

108. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 137.

109. Information provided by Krause, on file at 1115-20/Colonial Furniture, ESF/WHL/NPS; NPS, "President's Park South," 40–42.

Between 1929 and 1948 great changes took place in the Mall and the Federal Triangle, which to a certain extent finally fulfilled some of the recommendations of the 1901 McMillan plan. Although these changes occurred outside the boundaries of President's Park, some of them greatly affected the immediate surroundings of the Ellipse.

In 1910 Congress had approved plans for new Justice, Commerce and Labor, and State Department buildings to be constructed between 14th and 15th Streets and Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues. A design competition for these buildings was held the same year, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the winning designs, but construction was deferred.[110] In 1926 Congress passed the Public Buildings Act, which was strongly supported by Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover. This act provided $50 million for public buildings in the District of Columbia, half of which was allocated for buildings in the Federal Triangle. That same year construction finally began on the Commerce Department Building, and by this time the entire block had been allocated to the Commerce Department. When completed in 1932, the Commerce Building was the largest government structure in the country, with 8 miles of corridors and floor space measured in acres (37) rather than square feet.[111]

In 1934 the old Botanic Garden greenhouses were finally removed from the Mall, as was the original building of the Department of Agriculture. This allowed for the beginning of an implementation strategy for the McMillan plan for the Mall. It began in a modest way with parallel rows of elms planted along either side of the Mall.[112] Aerial photography of central Washington from 1938 shows dense planting around the Ellipse of old American elms, which would be decimated by Dutch elm disease in the following years.[113]

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110. Don Barber, Arnold Brunner, and York and Sawyer won the competition. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 167–68.

111. Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 171–72. See also Gutheim, *Worthy of the Nation*, 172, 176–80.

112. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 173.

113. Also visible is the great mass of the Interior Building on C Street between 18th and 19th Streets, built in 1935–36 from designs by Waddy B. Wood (Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 206–10, 216) and the row of museums and institutional buildings along 17th Street: the Corcoran Gallery of Art (built between 1897 and 1928; Ernest Flagg, Waddy B. Wood, and Charles Adams Platt, architects), the American Red Cross (built between 1915 and 1917; Trowbridge and Livingston, architects), the Daughters of the American Revolution Memorial Continental Hall (built between 1910 and 1929; Edward Pearce Casey, Marsh and Peter, and John Russell Pope, architects), and the Organization of American States Building (built between 1908 and 1910; Albert Kelsey and Paul Philippe Cret, architects; addition built in 1948, Harbeson, Hough, Livingston, and Larson, architects).

The issue of landscaping the grounds of the Washington Monument was reexamined between 1929 and 1948. In 1928 Congress authorized the expenditure of $5 million to carry out the McMillan plan, which had proposed an on-axis landscape setting to compensate for the monument's off-axis location (see page 182). Two years later an advisory committee was established to determine if the plan was feasible. After studying the plans and conducting test borings, the committee reported that unless the monument could be underpinned to bedrock or dismantled and rebuilt on a new foundation extending to bedrock, the plan could not be carried out. At the same time, the committee considered two other plans for the monument grounds, a formal scheme by the architect William A. Delano and a simpler one by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and Henry Vincent Hubbard. In November 1932 the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission recommended that no work at all be done on landscaping the monument grounds until other essential components of the Washington plan were completed. They suggested that it would be better to wait 25 years rather than to adopt a compromise plan. By the 1990s little had changed in the vicinity of the Washington Monument.[114]

Another development that affected President's Park was the construction of the Jefferson Memorial at the far end of the south vista from the White House. John Russell Pope prepared the first design for the memorial in 1937, but the Pantheon style design failed to win the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts, which had envisioned something more like the Lincoln Memorial. Pope died in the summer of 1937, and a revised design was prepared in 1938, but that design also aroused opposition. By the late 1930s many noted architects felt that Pope's classical design was too traditional, among them Frank Lloyd Wright. Eventually, however, the original Pantheon-style monument was built because President Roosevelt favored it. It was completed in 1943.[115]

In 1944, one year after the completion of the Jefferson Memorial, a report by Sanders and Winslow strongly recommended the removal

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114. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 176–77. See also David C. Streatfield, "The Olmsteds and the Landscape of the Mall," in *The Mall in Washington*, 130–35.

115. Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 178–86; Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 102–3; Gutheim, *Worthy of the Nation*, 219–20. Scott and Lee point out that the Jefferson Memorial not only is modeled after the Roman Pantheon but that it resembles William Kent's Temple of Ancient Virtue, constructed in 1734 in the garden at Stowe, Buckinghamshire, England, which Jefferson had visited with John Adams on their garden tour of 1785. Eggers and Higgins, Pope's successor firm, prepared the revised design. See also Richard Guy Wilson, "High Noon on the Mall: Modernism Versus Traditionalism, 1910–1970," in *The Mall in Washington*, 152–53.

of trees along the vista between the White House and the Jefferson Memorial. These trees were located partly in the Ellipse, but mostly on the grounds of the Washington Monument, near the northern edge of the Tidal Basin (figure 6-20).[116] It is not known when the trees were planted, but the section on the Washington Monument grounds is visible in aerial photographs as early as the 1920s.[117] The removal of these trees is one of the few recommendations of the 1944 report that was carried out, but it is unclear when, possibly during the Truman administration.

The Grounds of the Treasury Building

In 1927 Congress authorized a statue of Albert Gallatin, Jefferson's secretary of the treasury, to be placed in the Treasury Building's north plaza (see figure 9-21). By 1934 funds were available to start preparing the site. In 1939 the large fountain installed in the plaza in the late 1800s (figure 4-12) was removed, and the level of the sunken terrace was raised to ensure that the new sculpture would be visible. James Earle Fraser, who sculpted the Alexander Hamilton statue, was again hired. The architect of the pedestal, which was erected in 1940, is not known. World War II broke out just as Fraser completed the design of the statue and was ready to cast it in bronze. The statue was cast and installed after the war and dedicated on October 15, 1947.[118]

In 1939 Anne Baker, a consulting landscape architect, designed two rose gardens for the south lawn of the Treasury. She used red roses exclusively, at the request of Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. The rose beds apparently were completed in 1939. A boxwood hedge on the south boundary was retained but developed boxwood-leaf miner. Additional work, such as installing groups of new boxwood plants in the corners of the gardens, was carried out in 1940. Recommendations were also made to plant more magnolias west of the Treasury Building. Rather than replacing the heavily

116. Sanders and Winslow, "Report."

117. Longstreth, *The Mall in Washington*, plates CVI and CXII.

118. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 370. See also "Summary of Research: Gallatin Statue," Oct. 8, 1994; undated report (description and condition); and photographs, all at OC/Treasury.

flowering tree magnolias in kind, southern magnolias were suggested, since their size would be more appropriate to the building.[119]

The Grounds of the State, War, and Navy Building

In 1930 Waddy B. Wood, a Washington architect, was commissioned to remodel the State, War, and Navy Building in the image of the Treasury. Even though Congress appropriated $3 million for the "refacing and refinishing of the exterior, and for such remodeling and reconstructing and changes in approaches as will make it harmonize generally in architectural appearance with the Treasury Building," contract disputes and the financial realities of the Depression prevented the project from being realized.[120]

Relatively little work was done on landscaping around the State, War, and Navy Building in the 1930s and 1940s. An aerial photograph taken from the south in August 1931 (figure 6-21) shows the First Division Monument and the south plaza of the State, War, and Navy Building, the latter with only a few trees.

In 1947 the piers for the gates on West Executive Avenue were removed by an act from Congress.[121]

Summary

During this period a major concept developed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. was adopted that has guided landscape treatment in President's Park to this day — preserve the historic aspects of the landscape, but at the same time adapt them to current needs. The Olmsted plan is a model for preserving historic landscape features while allowing adaptation to modern needs and conditions. Olmsted

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119. Baker's design was modified by Henry M. Boucher. Director of procurement to sec. of the treasury, memorandum, May 2, 1939; J. D. Fox (supt. of Treasury Buildings) to McReynolds (admin. asst. to the secretary), memorandum, May 17, 1939; "Specifications for Boxwood to be Planted at Treasury Rose Garden," n.d.; Boucher to Thorn, memorandum, Mar. 12, 1940; Fox to W. E. Reynolds (comm., PBA), Aug. 21, 1939; Boucher to Fox, memorandum, Mar. 8, 1940; Fox to Charles A. Peters Jr. (buildings manager, PBA), Sept. 12, 1940; L. M. Endres (acting buildings manager, PBA) to Fox, Aug. 16, 1940; and Boucher, memorandum on the Treasury rose garden, June 4, 1940; all at the Office of the Curator, Treasury.

120. Dolkart, *The Old Executive Office Building.*

121. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 15, 2000.

was also highly critical of the lack of residential character in the grounds; he felt that the opportunity existed to develop parts of the grounds for domestic uses. However, not all of Olmsted's recommendations, such as the redesign of the east and west gardens, were carried out.

Presidential participation in the evolution of the landscape continued during the Franklin Delano Roosevelt presidency. Roosevelt was an inveterate amateur architect and became personally involved in several landscape projects. He planned for new trees, such as the hemlocks by the west gate and the lilac in the northeast grounds. He was also the driving force behind the tulip poplar commemorative planting in honor of Thomas Jefferson.

In 1937 the National Park Service, using the resources of the Works Progress Administration, renovated and partially redesigned Lafayette Park. The plan was derived from a previous proposal, which simplified and regularized the Downing design by making the inner and outer path systems equal in width and importance. The walks were resurfaced in concrete, and the urns were relocated close to the east and west entrances. In general the public opposed the loss of the romantic flavor that had characterized the site and was highly critical of the damage to the trees that resulted from changes in underground water conditions.

At the Treasury Building the large fountain in the north plaza was removed and a sculpture of Albert Gallatin by James Earle Fraser put in its place. In 1939–40 Anne Baker designed two new rose gardens for the south plaza of the Treasury Building.

Two new monuments were added to the Ellipse in 1936: the granite memorial to the Patentees of the District of Columbia by Carl Mose and the Second Division Memorial, designed by James Earle Fraser and John Russell Pope. E Street was extended through to 17th Street in 1940. In 1942 barracks were erected just south of the First Division Monument for the special troops assigned to protect the president. There appear to have been no major landscape changes to the grounds of the State, War, and Navy Building during this period.

President's Park continued to attract talented architects and landscape architects. Eric Gugler, Thomas C. Vint, William A. Delano, John Russell Pope, and Lorenzo Winslow, among others, joined Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. in providing their expertise, ability, and imagination to development proposals. World War II delayed the implementation of their plans, but some of their suggestions have become the guiding principles for decisions regarding the landscape of the site.

Figure 6–1: *First Lady Lou Hoover Planting a Cedar from Ferry Farm, Boyhood Home of George Washington.* Photograph, March 1932. United Press International.

Figure 6-2: *Expanded West Wing of the White House*. Photograph, 1935. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Theodore Horydczak Collection.

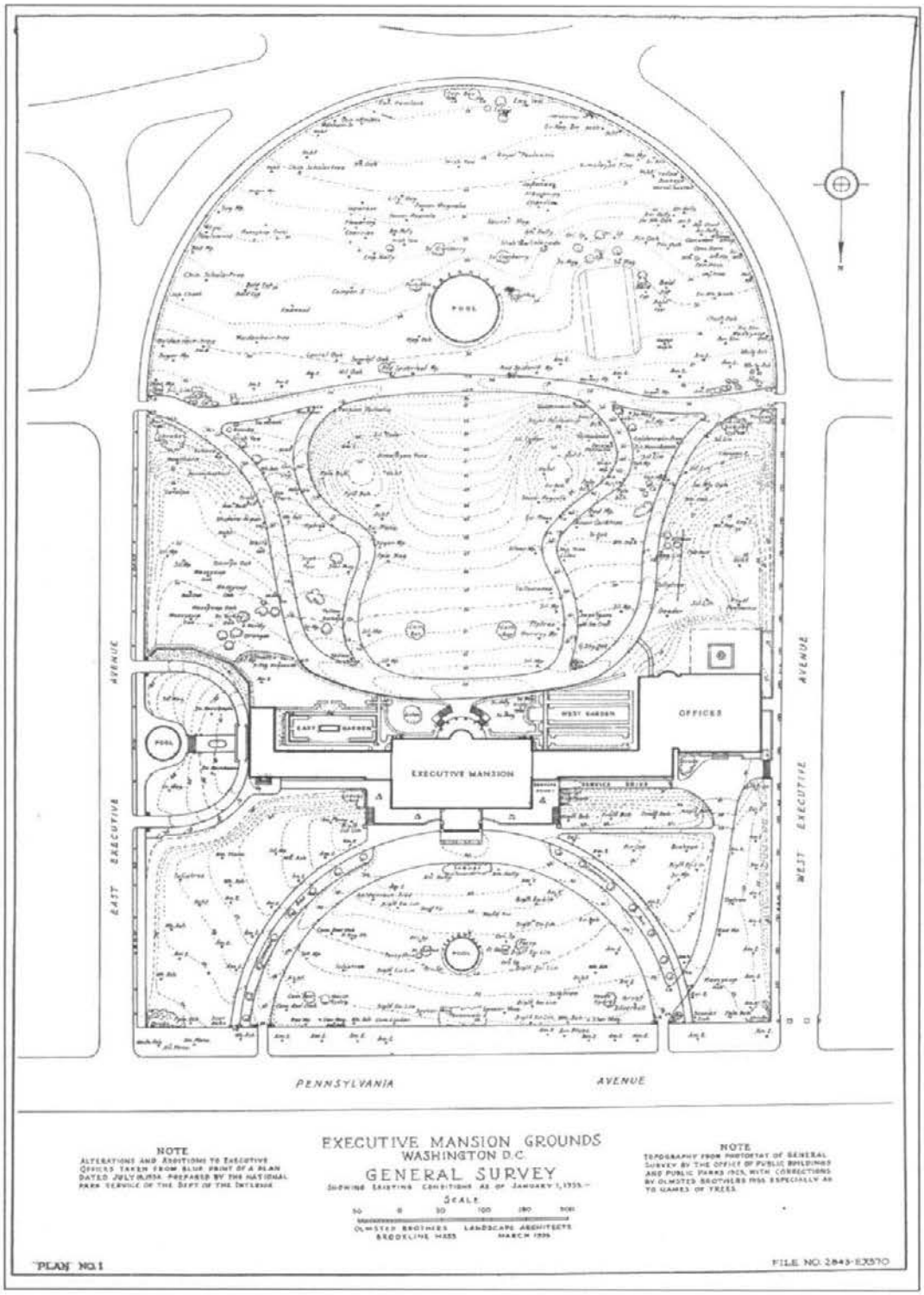

Figure 6-3: *Executive Mansion Grounds, Washington D.C.: General Survey Showing Existing Conditions as of January 1, 1935.* Olmsted Brothers, March 1935. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

Figure 6-4: *East Entrance.* Clarence Howard (photograph), November 1934. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

Figure 6-5: *East Garden*. Frederick L. Olmsted Jr. (photograph), July 1935. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

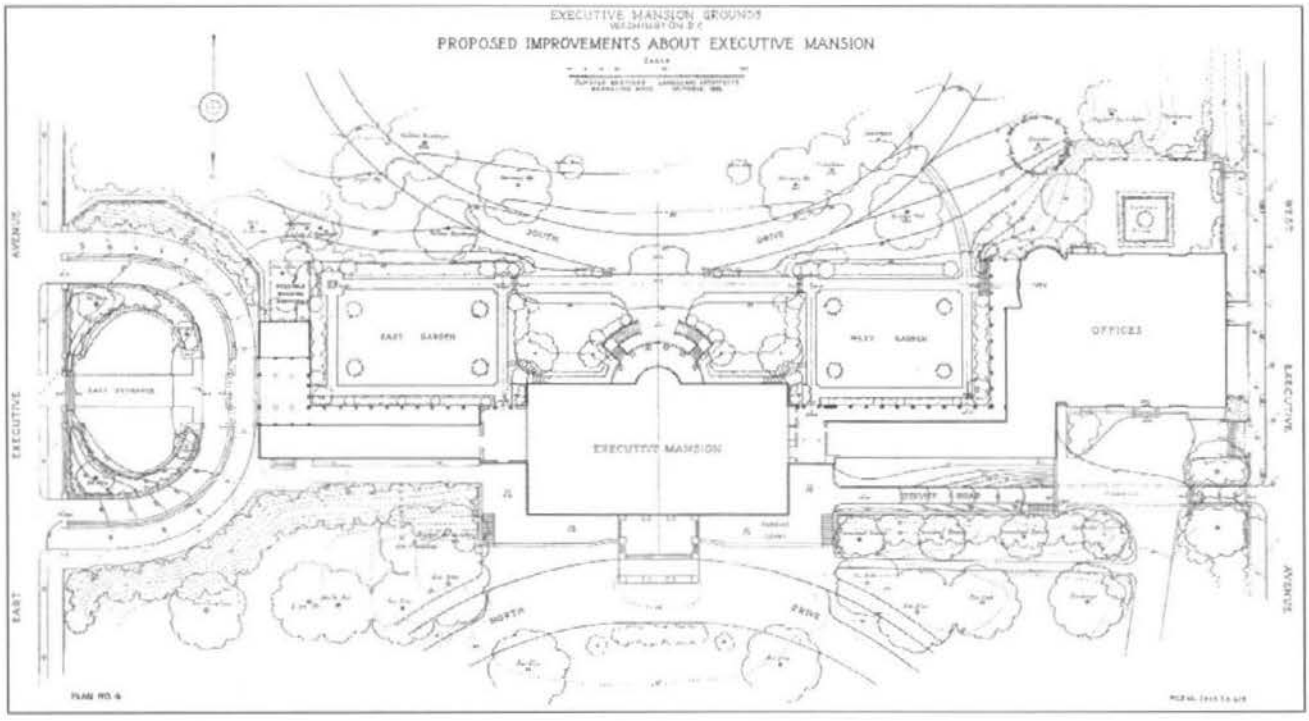

Figure 6-6: *Executive Mansion Grounds: Proposed Improvements about Executive Mansion*. Olmsted Brothers, October 1935. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

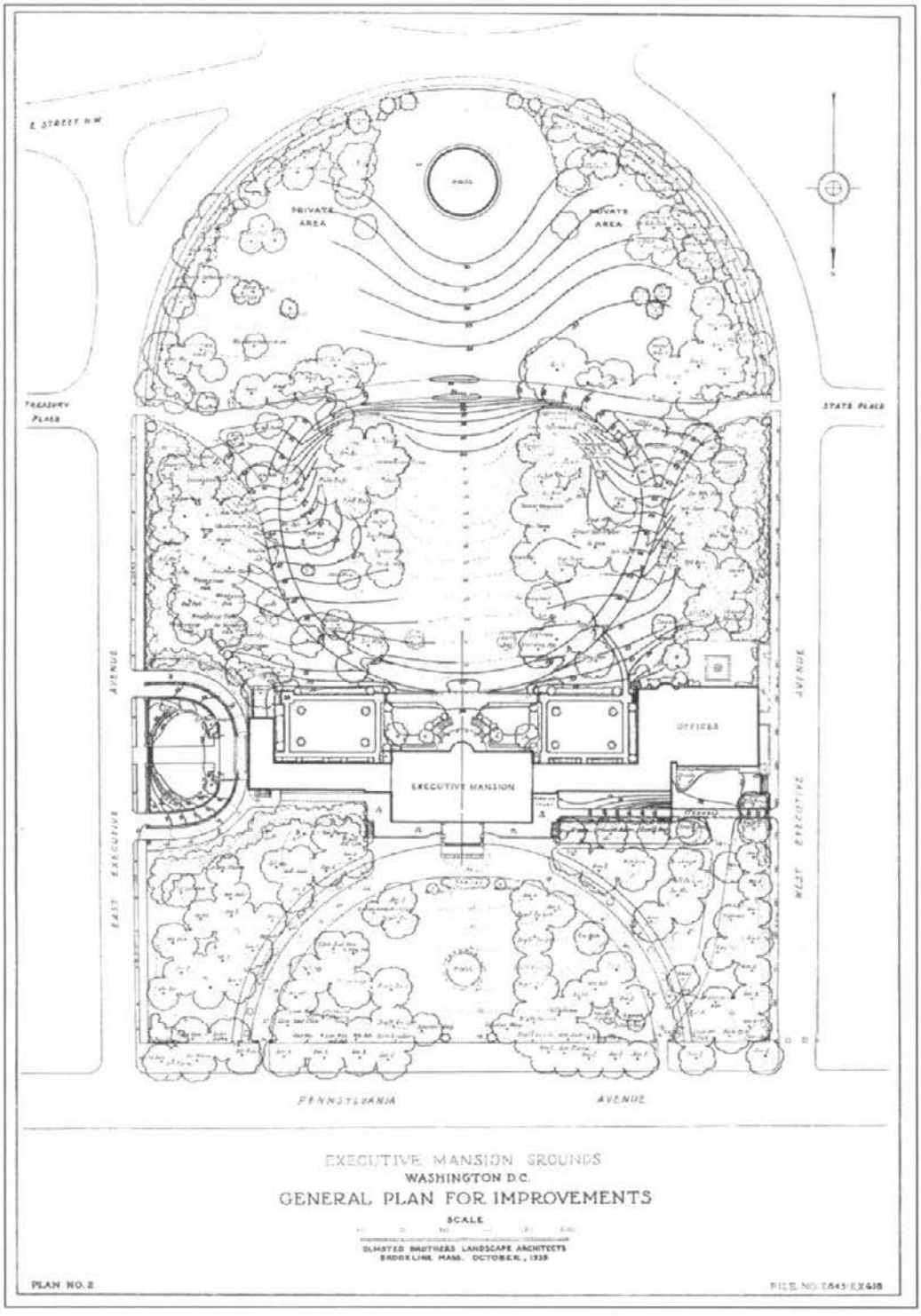

Figure 6–7: *Executive Mansion Grounds, Washington, D.C., General Plan for Improvements*. Olmsted Brothers, October 1935. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

Figure 6-8: *View from South Lawn below Fountain (current condition).* Frederick L. Olmsted Jr. (photograph), October 1935. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

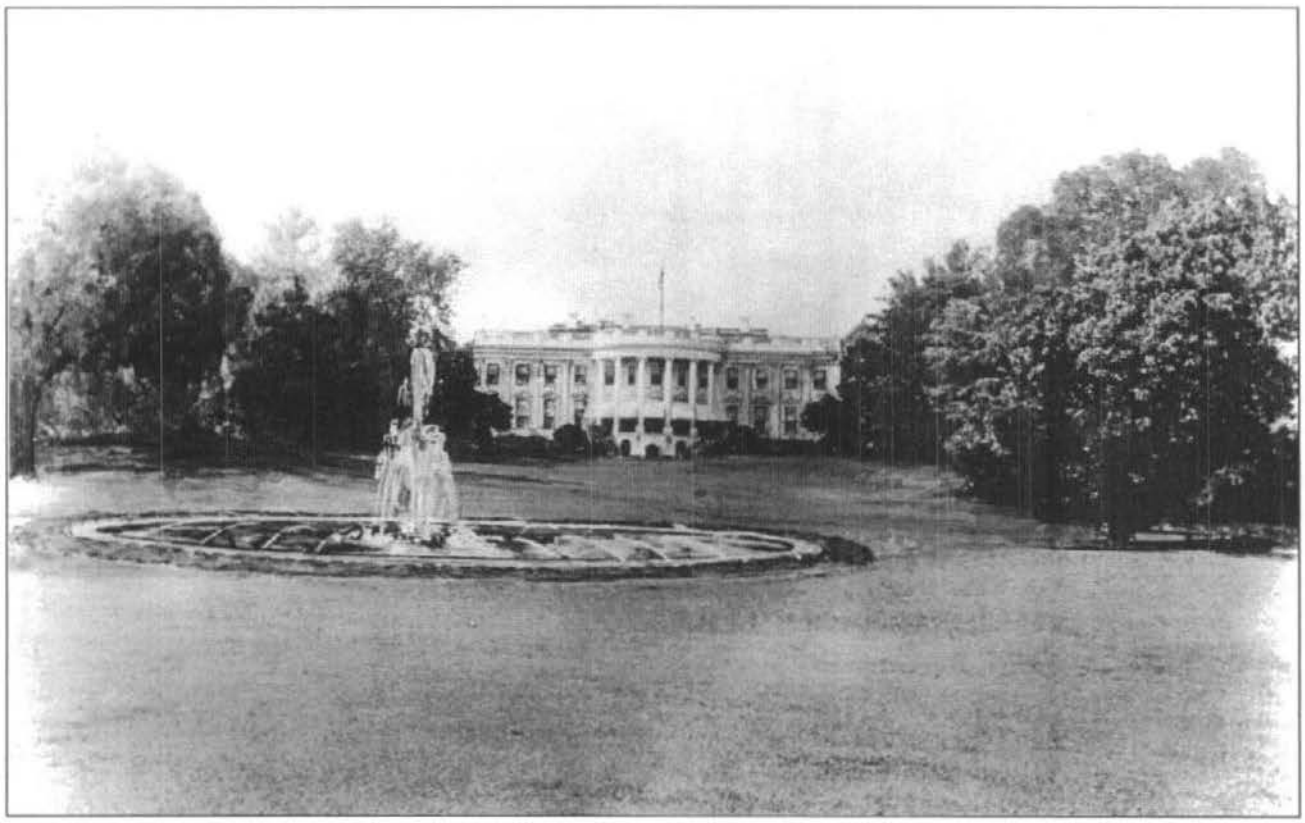

Figure 6-9: *Axial View of the White House from Street, Looking North. Proposed Condition*. Olmsted Brothers, October 1935. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

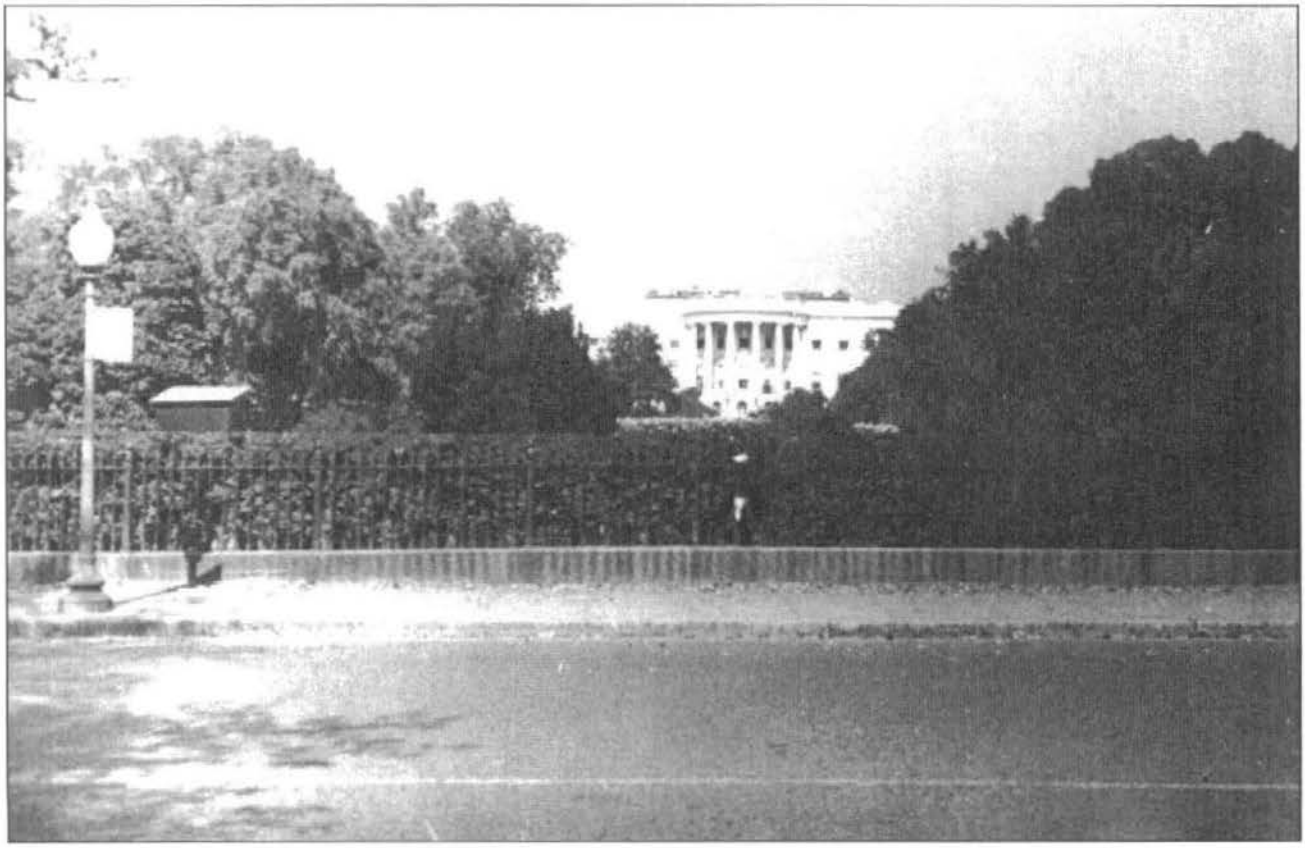

Figure 6-10: *From North Curb of Ellipse on South Axis (Top of New Fence as Designed Would Come about to Top Floor Windows as Seen from Here)*. Frederick L. Olmsted Jr. (photograph), October 1937. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

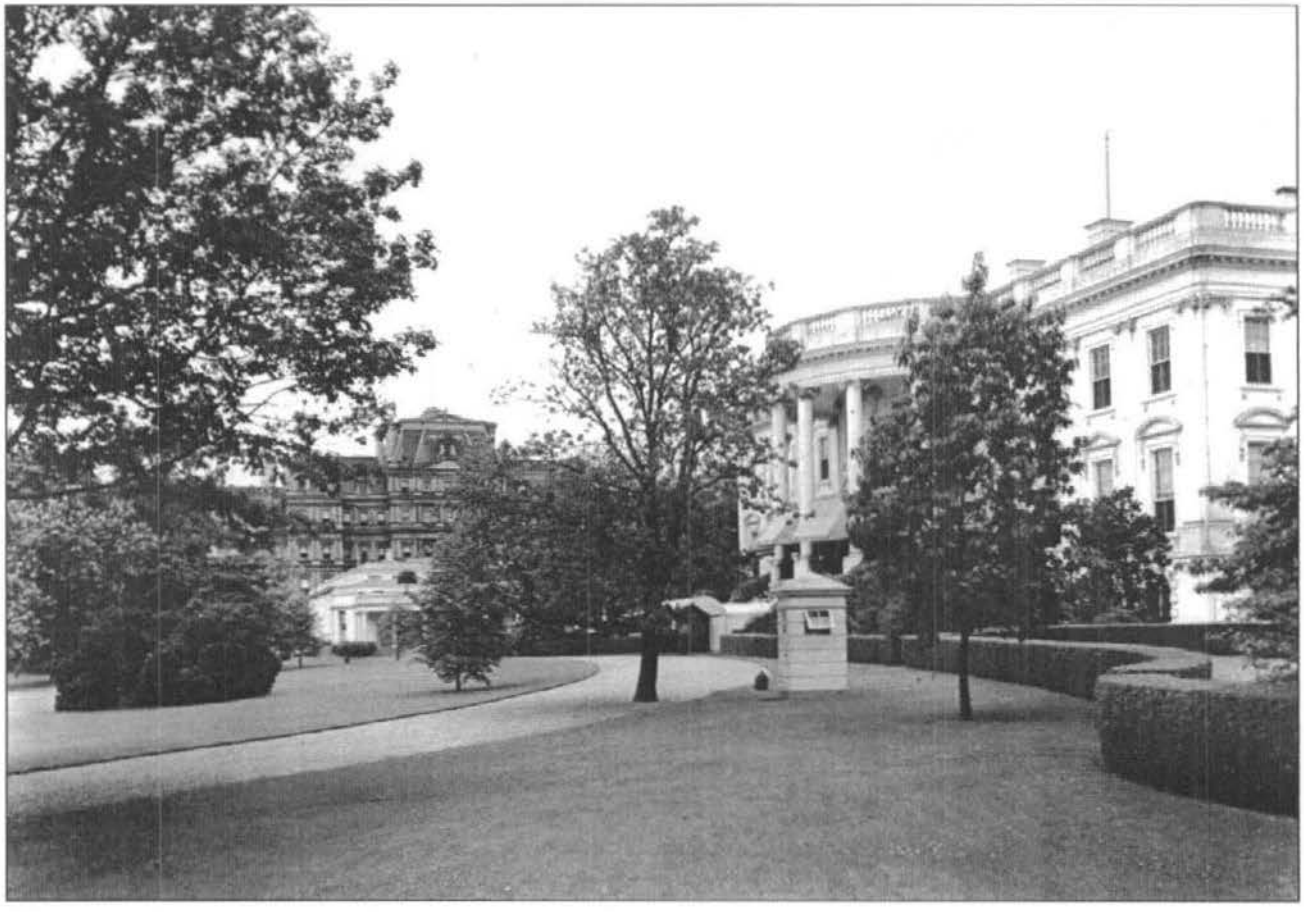

Figure 6-11: *White House from the Southeast*. Photograph, spring 1939. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

Figure 6-12: *White House from the South*. Photograph, spring 1939. National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

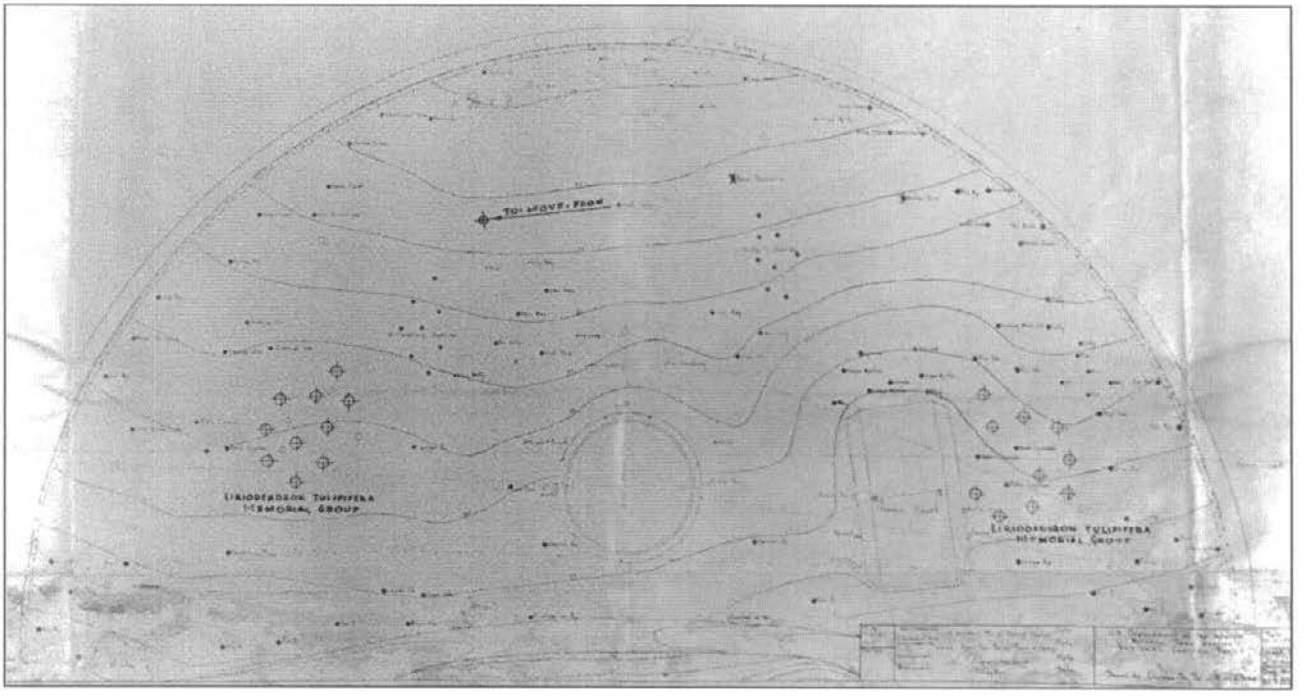

Figure 6-13: *Plan for the Location of Roosevelt Tulip Tree Groves on the South Grounds*. National Park Service, December 12, 1934. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library.

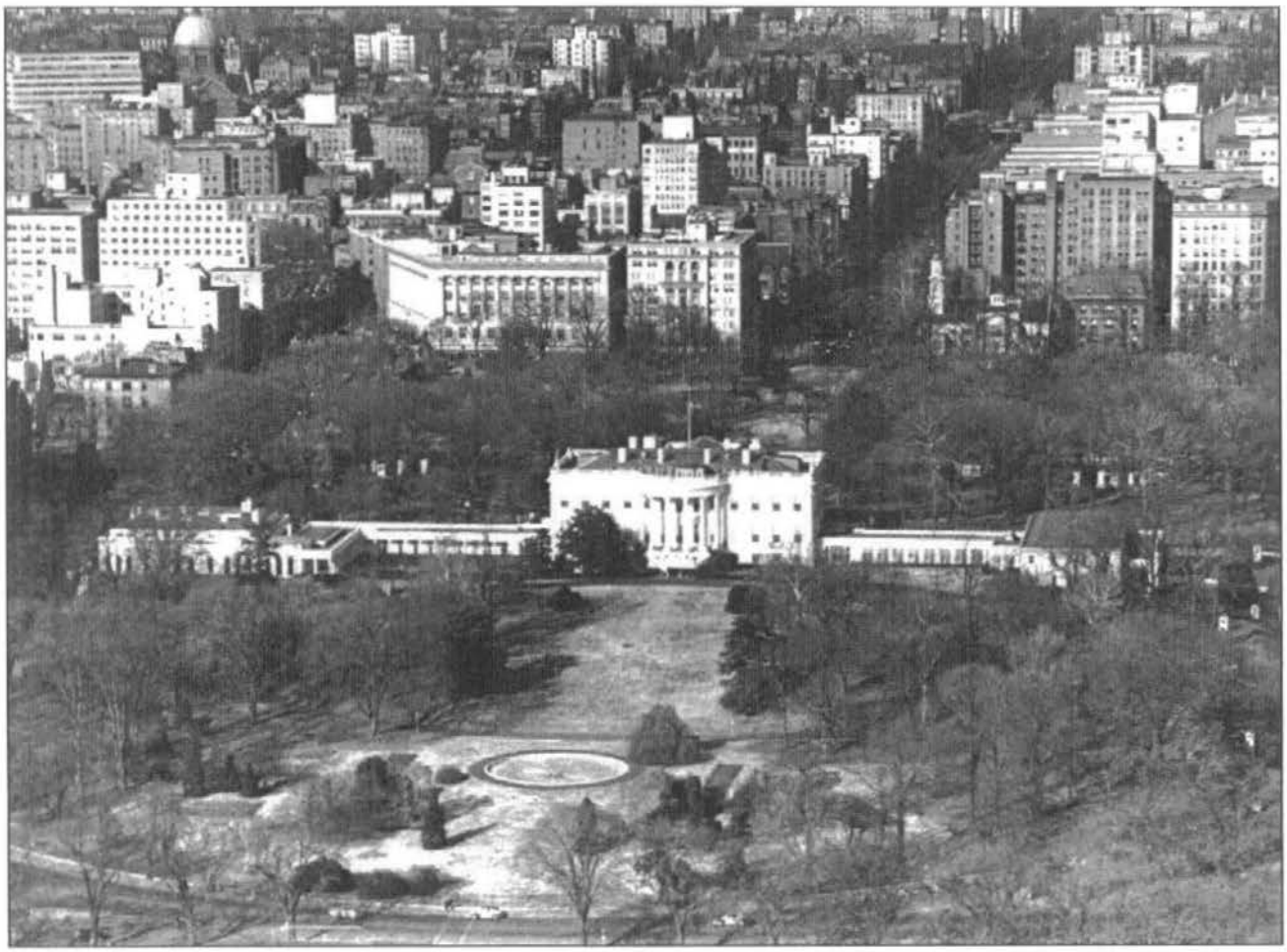

Figure 6-14: *Aerial Photograph of the White House and South Grounds*. Abbie Rowe (photograph), January 1948. National Archives, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

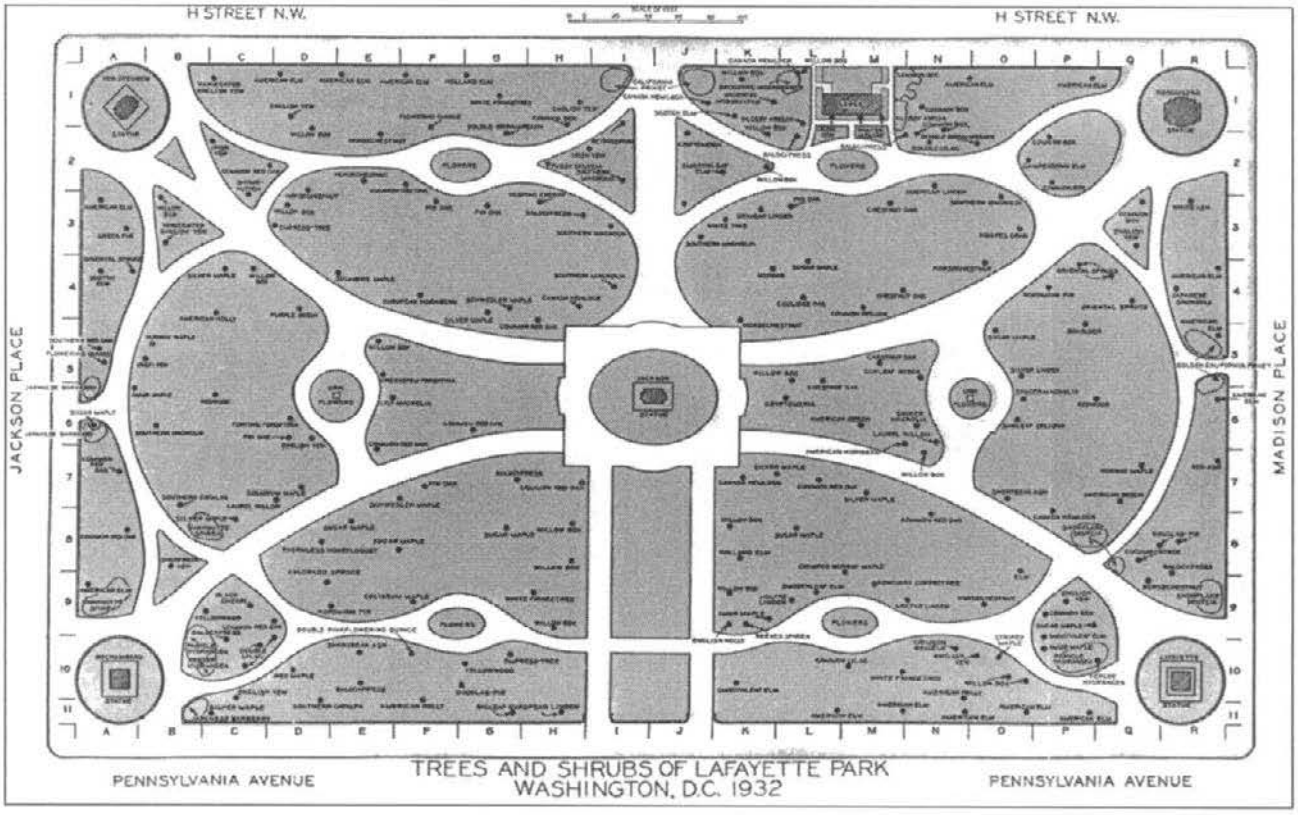

Figure 6-15: *Trees and Shrubs of Lafayette Park, Washington D.C., 1932.* Plan. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

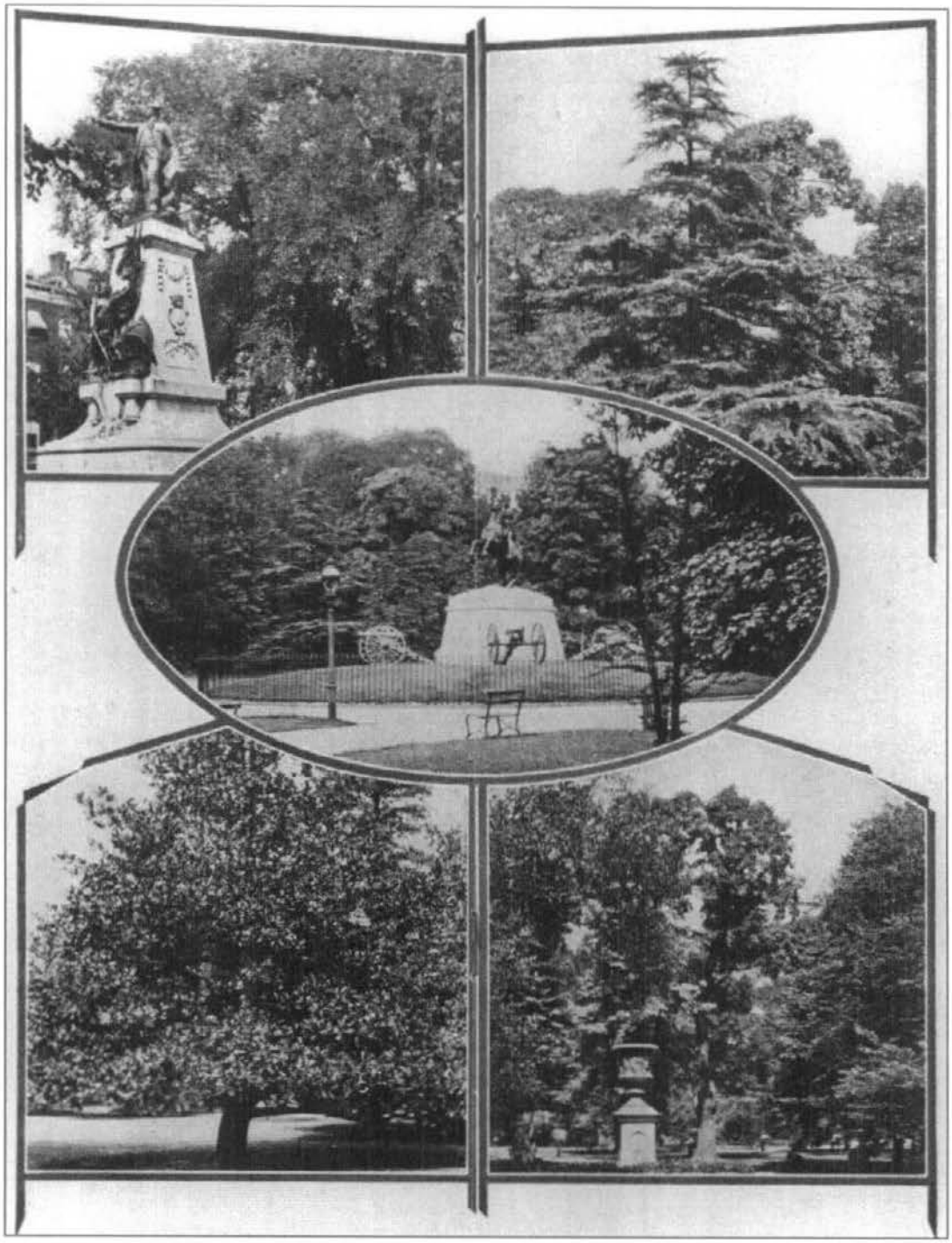

Figure 6–16: *Montage of Five Photographs of Lafayette Park.* From *Trees and Shrubs of Lafayette Park, Washington D.C.,* 1932. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

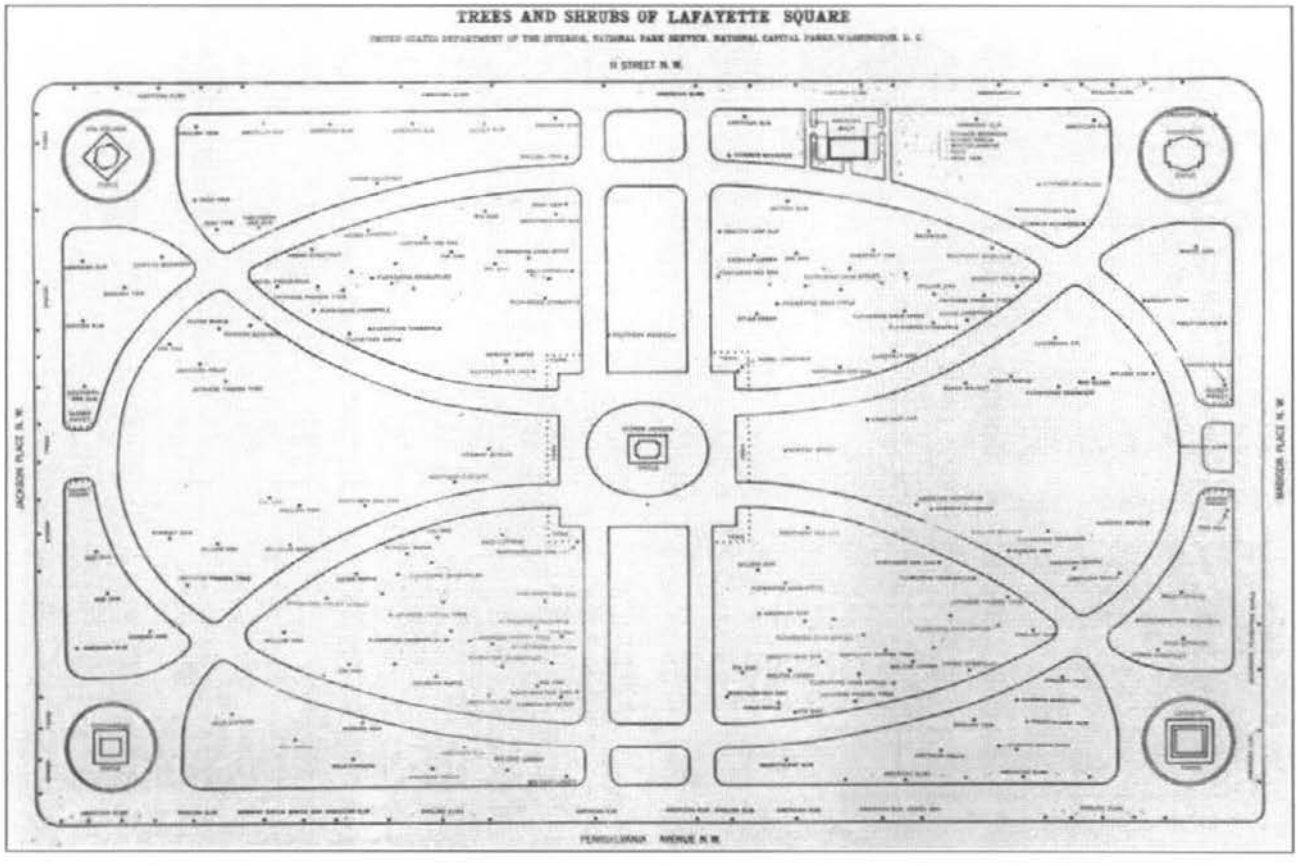

Figure 6-17: *Trees and Shrubs of Lafayette Square*. National Park Service (plan), January 1936. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

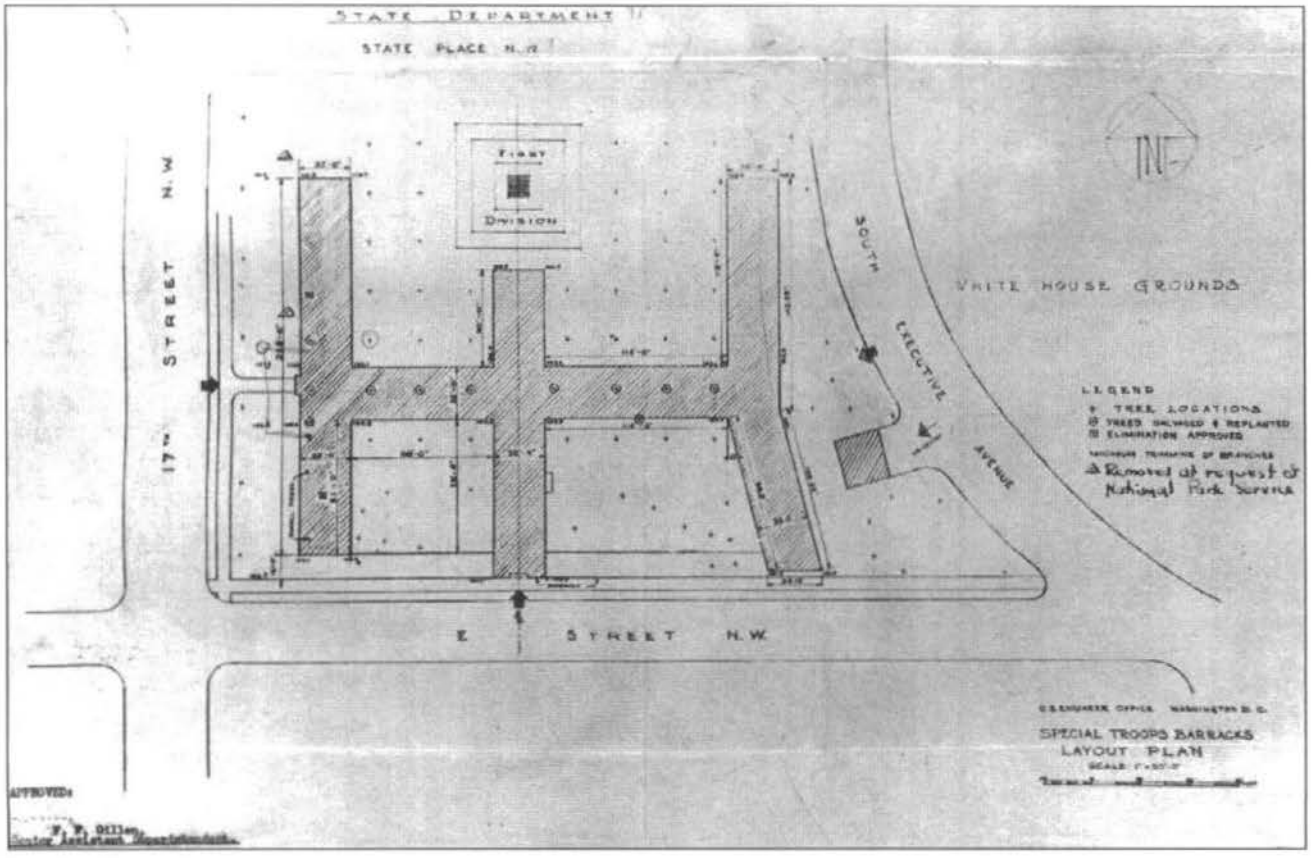

Figure 6–18: *Special Troops Barracks Layout Plan*. U.S. Engineer Office, ca. 1942. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

Figure 6-19: *Aerial View of the Ellipse and White House Grounds*. Photograph, ca. 1948–54. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Theodore Horydczak Collection.

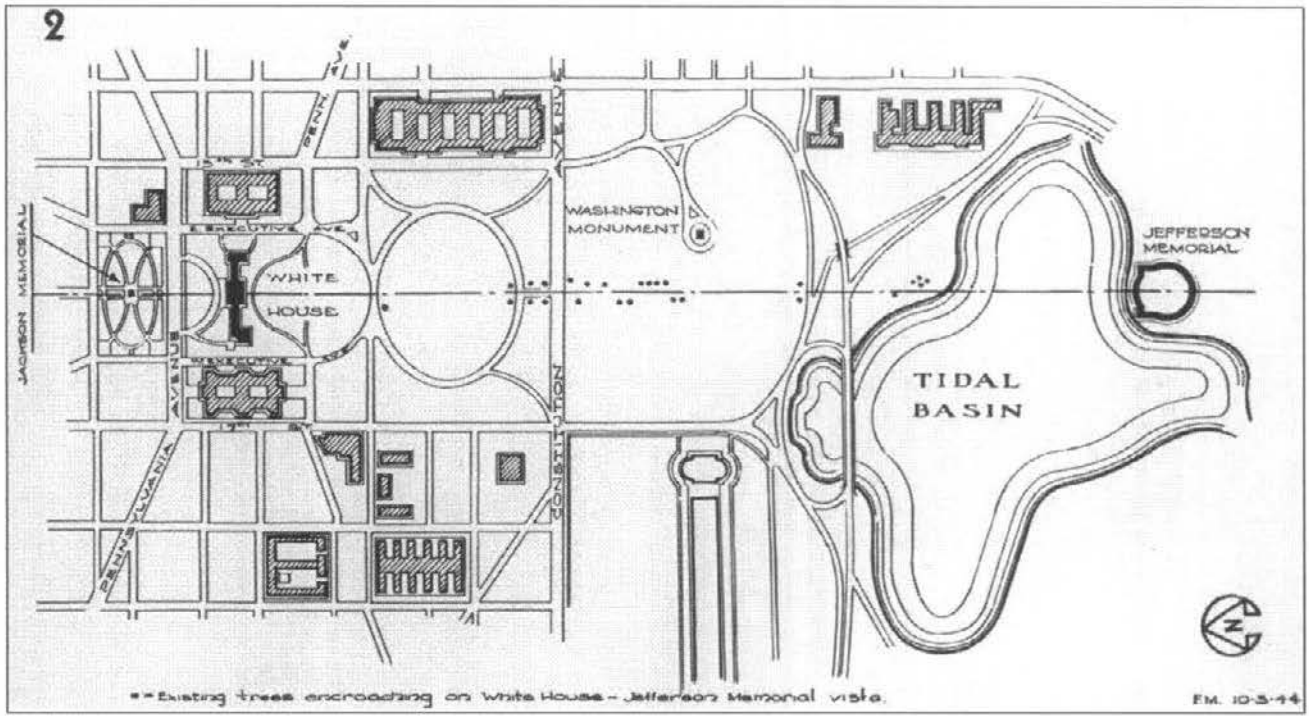

Figure 6-20: *Existing Trees Encroaching on White House — Jefferson Memorial Vista.* S. E. Sanders and Lorenzo Winslow, 1944. From *Report to the President of the United States on the Proposed Landscape Improvements for the Executive Mansion Grounds.* National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

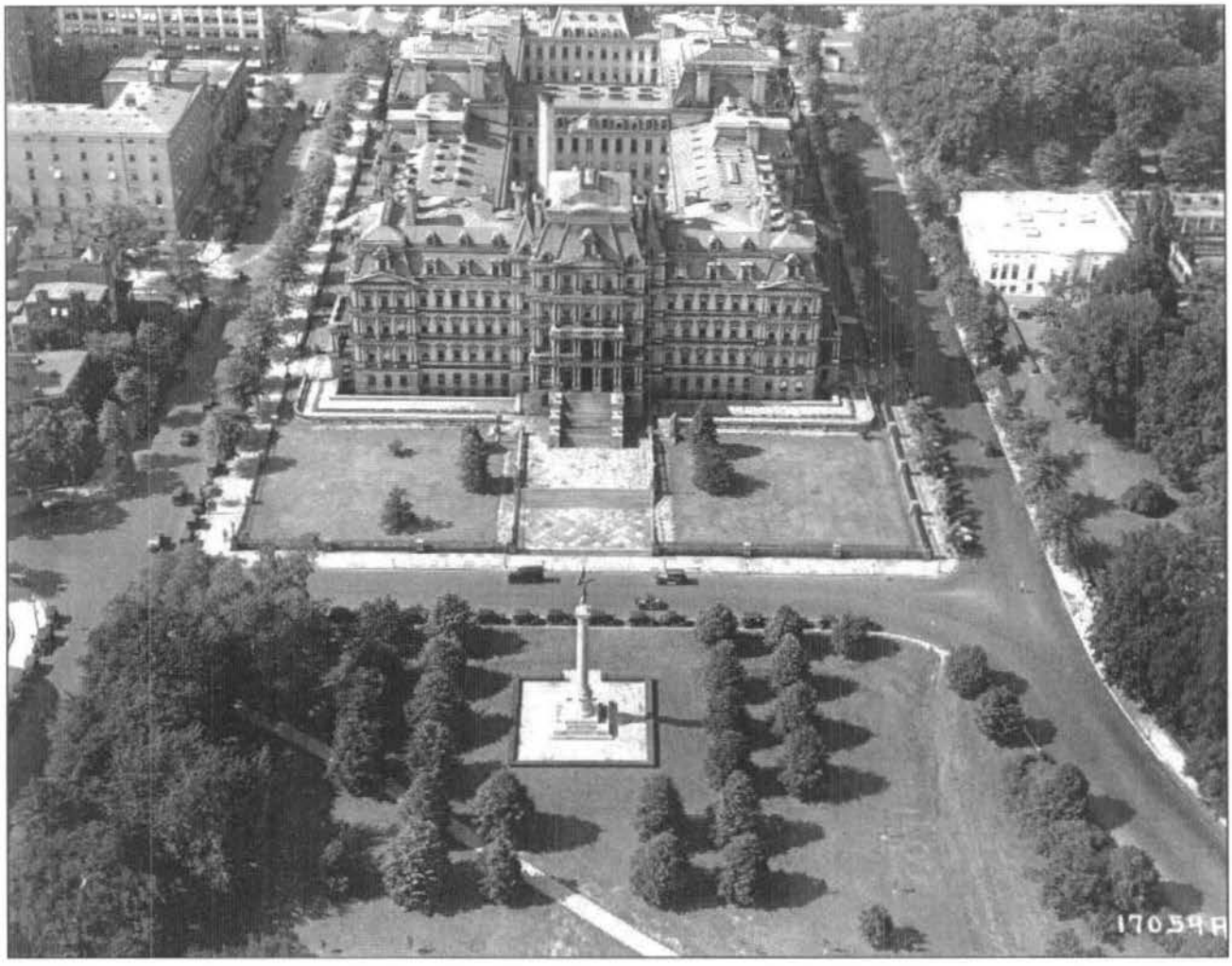

Figure 6-21: *Aerial View of the State, War, and Navy Building*. A. W. Stevens (photograph), 1931. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the Army Air Forces, Record Group 18.

Chapter 7. President's Park and the Influence of the Warnecke Plan: 1948–1969

During this period presidents as well as first ladies displayed great interest in the landscape of President's Park. President Harry S. Truman paid particular attention to the grounds and referred frequently to the Olmsted report, and several recommendations to clear the north-south axial view were implemented while Truman was president. The massive renovations to the White House during the Truman administration damaged the landscape in the immediate vicinity of the building, but it was repaired soon after the work on the building was completed in 1952.[1]

President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy also consulted the Olmsted report and carried out elements of the proposal in regards to privacy while at the same time making an effort to keep the south vista open. First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy's level of involvement in matters pertaining to the White House, the grounds, and the Lafayette Park neighborhood was almost unprecedented. Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson was equally active in conservation issues. Starting in 1965 Mrs. Johnson pursued a program of landscape beautification for Washington, D.C., which inspired similar efforts in cities across the country.

The east and west gardens of the White House were redesigned twice during this period. The first time was shortly after completion of the White House restoration. The second time Rachel Lambert Mellon (Mrs. Paul Mellon), a friend of the Kennedy family, redesigned both gardens. The new Rose Garden was completed in 1962, and the east garden in 1964. In 1965 the east garden was dedicated as the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden.[2] In 1969 a Children's Garden was

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1. An important development for this site took place in 1952 when Congress established the National Capital Planning Commission to separate park management from city planning. Two early members of the commission were Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., then in his eighties, and Charles Eliot II, nephew and namesake of the Charles Eliot who had been a partner of Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. and a distinguished landscape architect and city planner in his own right. Pamela Scott, "Two Centuries of Architectural Practice in Washington," in Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 58–59.

2. The garden's formal dedication was delayed until April 22, 1965, due to the death of former President Herbert Hoover in October 1964.

developed for the Johnson grandchildren in a secluded spot between the lower south lawn and the west fence, near the tennis court.

In the late 1950s controversy arose over a proposal to replace the small-scale residential buildings around Lafayette Park with a new executive office building on Jackson Place and a new court of claims on Madison Place. The direct intervention of both President and Mrs. Kennedy solved the problem as a plan by John Carl Warnecke was selected. The plan retained the residential scale of Jackson and Madison Places and placed the new buildings behind them. John Carl Warnecke & Associates also designed the renovation for Lafayette Square in 1969–70.

The Boy Scout Memorial and the Haupt fountains were installed in the Ellipse in 1964 and 1968 respectively. New wings were added for both the First Division Monument (1957) and the Second Division Memorial (1962). In 1954 the National Christmas Tree was moved to the Ellipse, and in that same year the Christmas Pageant of Peace started in the vicinity of the tree.

During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Council (subsequently the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation) formulated a plan that would be partially implemented in the 1970s and 1980s. The 1964 plan recommended a unified approach to the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue between the Capitol and the White House. It proposed to return to the general principles of the McMillan plan, such as restoring the axial relationship between the Capitol, the Washington Monument, and the White House, and reverting to the monumental simplicity and dignity that had been the essential feature of the L'Enfant design.

Another important feature was a recommendation for a new square extending from approximately 13th to 15th Streets and terminating in a monumental new approach to the Treasury and White House grounds. If implemented, it would have included a wall and an imposing gate to serve as a formal entrance to the "Executive Precinct," a solution that had been recommended in the 1920s and that would have forced the relocation of the Sherman statue. The square was never developed because it would have required the demolition of historic buildings and the destruction of historic open space relationships.

Leading designers continued to participate in projects affecting President's Park. Lorenzo Winslow made sketches for expanding the Executive Office Building (West Wing) and was appointed architect of the White House reconstruction (1950-1952). John Carl

Warnecke worked to remodel Lafayette Park and to restore the historical ambience of Lafayette Square. Edward Durell Stone Jr. designed the Children's Garden. The architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill prepared an ambitious plan for Pennsylvania Avenue and the National Mall that also included the Ellipse.

When John F. Kennedy became president, special landscape features were incorporated to provide his young children some level of freedom from the public eye. The construction of the Children's Garden in 1969 at the end of the Lyndon Johnson administration formally recognized this need. The tradition of developing recreational features suited to the personal interests of the president and his family became firmly established.

The Grounds of the White House

Reconstruction of the interior of the White House to correct structural deficiencies began in January 1950 and was completed on March 27, 1952.[3] While the work was in progress, most of the south grounds of the White House became a construction site, with temporary buildings covering much of the lawn down almost to the transverse road (figure 7-1). Although the Commission on Renovation of the Executive Mansion tried to protect the trees and shrubs near the building, much plant material was lost, and the east garden was obliterated. In January 1952, during the final stages of work on the building, Frank T. Gartside, assistant superintendent of the National Capital Parks, wrote to the commission indicating willingness to assume full responsibility for rehabilitating the grounds. On January 25, the commission accepted his offer. In only a little more than six weeks, the disassembled landscape was "put back together again," a process that involved moving several fully grown trees, as well as reconstructing the gardens and installing new plantings in several places on the grounds.[4] The entire operation is documented in a series of remarkable photographs.

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3. Commission on Renovation of the Executive Mansion, *Report of the Commission on the Renovation of the Executive Mansion*, compiled by Edwin Bateman Morris (Washington, DC: US GPO, 1952), 94–96 (Chronology).

4. NPS, "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Grounds Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis (ca. 1952), ESF/WHL/NPS, 1–3. The maintenance building currently on the White House grounds seems to date from the Truman administration and may be a converted construction building.

Even before the reconstruction started, the two lindens that President Roosevelt had planted in honor of the coronation of the king and queen of England had to be moved (figure 7-2). On March 7, 1952, after the reconstruction of the building, a large southern magnolia was moved to the east of the south portico to balance the Jackson magnolias on the west side (figure 7-3). Two weeks later a large saucer magnolia was transplanted to the north lawn, northwest of the fountain. The previous month 25 large boxwood had been planted north of the north portico, replacing an old Japanese holly hedge (figure 7-4). Two of the largest boxwood plants, selected because they were as old as the White House itself, became the commemorative plantings for President Truman. The north drive was also regraded. On the slope to the north of the east entrance, a new planting of azaleas was established (figure 7-5).[5]

In the course of rebuilding the White House, the east garden designed by Beatrix Farrand for Ellen Axson Wilson was completely destroyed (figure 7-6). Topsoil was brought in to regrade the site in February 1952. Speed was a prime concern in the restoration of the grounds, especially the east garden, because Queen Juliana of the Netherlands was to make a state visit on April 4, and a reception was planned for her in this garden. Not only was the grading, sodding, and planting of hedge and border plants complete, but thousands of Dutch tulip bulbs and hundreds of azalea plants, all in full bloom, were in place and ready to greet the Dutch monarch (figure 7-7).

Rehabilitation of the rest of the grounds kept pace with this garden. After the temporary construction buildings were removed, the south lawn was regraded and sodded with a mixture of Merion bluegrass and creeping red fescue. The west garden did not have to be regraded and totally reconstructed, but it was almost entirely replanted with beni-geri azaleas along the east side of the West Wing and with 1,430 new rose bushes, of such popular floribunda varieties as Improved Lafayette, Vogue, Fashion, Goldilocks, Independence, and Pinocchio. Figure 7-8 shows a diagrammatic plan of the rose varieties in the west garden and also a plan of the azalea planting at the east entrance.[6]

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5. NPS, "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Grounds," 1–3; news release, Mar. 19, 1952, Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's Files, HSTL; George W. Harding (chief, Horticulture and Maintenance Div.) to Thompson, Jan. 9, 1950, ESF/WHL/NPS. NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds."

6. The garden designs may have been based on drawings made in 1945 by Irving Paine, who died in 1950. See NPS, "The President's Garden," 62. No other landscape designer's name has been mentioned in connection with the gardens.

An aerial photograph taken after the reconstruction of the White House and the rehabilitation of its grounds is shown in figure 7-9. During the last year of his administration, Truman paid particular attention to the grounds and referred frequently to the Olmsted report.[7] Perhaps for this reason, figure 7-9 reveals that by 1953 significant clearing of the north-south axis south of the transverse road had finally been accomplished. The much-criticized weeping beech was gone, as were some other trees that had been too close to the south fountain. A few flowering trees are visible in the general vicinity of the fountain, but at a more comfortable distance from the axial view.

Information is rather sparse concerning athletic and recreational facilities during the Truman administration. Truman and his family undoubtedly continued to use the Roosevelt swimming pool. Truman enjoyed pitching horseshoes in a pit near the West Wing.[8]

While the administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower was relatively inactive in terms of landscaping, a putting green that was donated by the American Golf Association was installed on the south lawn near the path to the West Wing in 1954 (figure 7-10). Eisenhower was also the first president to use the south lawn for helicopter landings. In 1953 he ordered that roses planted the year before in the west garden be moved to West Potomac Park as an economy measure. He had pink azaleas added to the garden. Eisenhower commemorative trees include a black walnut planted on April 12, 1957; a northern red oak planted on October 14, 1960 (the president's 70th birthday), south of the present visitor entrance pavilion; a red oak planted in 1960; and a pin oak that was originally from the grounds of Mount Vernon and was planted on May 8, 1958, near the West Wing to commemorate the centennial of Theodore Roosevelt's birth.[9] The pin oak and the northern red oak are still extant. The red oak was removed in 1983 and replaced in 1984. Camellias were apparently an Eisenhower favorite. In 1956 a flame red Eisenhower camellia was planted near the south portico, and 12 others were planted near the west knoll.[10]

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7. NPS, "The President's Garden," 63. McPeck apparently interviewed George Harding.

8. Photograph in *The Living White House* (Washington, DC: The White House Historical Association, with the cooperation of the National Geographical Society, 1991), 127.

9. *Public Papers of the President, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1958* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Record Services Administration, 1959), 389.

10. NPS, "The President's Garden," 64.

As president-elect, John F. Kennedy already had determined that the west garden, later officially designated as the Rose Garden, needed to be upgraded. It was still essentially the same garden that had been hastily reassembled after the Truman renovation of the White House, a garden with roses and other flowers but without any background planting. Kennedy knew that it did not measure up to the gardens of official residences in Europe, and he wanted to take steps to improve it immediately, a resolve that intensified after a state visit to France, with stops in England and Austria.

Kennedy asked Rachel Lambert Mellon (Mrs. Paul Mellon), a family friend with a background in horticulture, to redesign the garden. The space occupied by the garden was essentially an outdoor reception room, which had to have a large central area completely free of any planting but grass so that the maximum number of people could attend events. President Kennedy presented Mrs. Mellon with a considerable design challenge: within a relatively small area, she was to design a garden that would appeal to the most discriminating taste in garden design but that would also accommodate 1,000 people for a ceremony. Late in October 1961, while walking past the Frick Museum on Fifth Avenue in New York City, Mrs. Mellon came to a decision that flowering magnolias, like those in front of the Frick, were essential to the new White House garden. The linchpin of her plan would be four large saucer magnolias, one in each corner of the garden.[11]

From this point on, the conceptual design progressed rapidly. Flower borders 12 feet wide would be planted along the north and south sides. Although Kennedy liked roses, he also wanted a variety of other flowers and had a special interest in including flowers that Thomas Jefferson might have grown. Mrs. Mellon came up with several preliminary sketches for the flower beds, divided into diamond shapes, and the president accepted her plan.[12]

In 1961 the National Park Service assumed all planning and maintenance responsibilities for the White House grounds; previously they had been under the control of the Office of the Chief Usher at the White House. To implement the new garden plan successfully, it was necessary to find a horticultural specialist within the Park Service to manage the entire operation.

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11. Perry Wheeler, a Washington landscape architect, assisted her with the design. Rachel Lambert Mellon, "President Kennedy's Rose Garden," *White House History*, 1, no. 1 (1983), 5–6; Irvin Williams (supt. of White House grounds), interview with Cynthia Zaitzevsky, Feb. 27, 1995.

12. Mellon, "President Kennedy's Rose Garden," 7–11; Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

In the course of her visits to NPS gardens in the Washington area, Mrs. Mellon met Irvin Williams, who was head horticulturist at the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. At her suggestion Williams was transferred to the White House, where he became the chief horticulturist. Mrs. Mellon and Williams found three perfect magnolias in an area called Fountain Four near the Jefferson Memorial. The fourth tree came from the vicinity of the Washington War Memorial. In the beds on either side of the central lawn, five Katherine crab apples were planted, each set within a diamond-shaped planting of santolina. Successive displays of blooming flowers, along with the roses, would be provided by bulbs in the spring; followed by dark lavender heliotrope, geraniums, lilies, and white dianthus in the summer; and by chrysanthemums and Michaelmas daisies in the fall. The redesigned Rose Garden was finished in the fall of 1962. President Kennedy used it frequently, both for ceremonies (figure 7-11) and for his own enjoyment. The four saucer magnolias are Kennedy's commemorative trees.[13]

On April 6, 1961, Senator Henry Jackson planted an apple tree for President Kennedy just southeast of the east garden.[14]

Both President and Mrs. Kennedy consulted the Olmsted report early in his administration and strongly favored its recommendations. In accordance with the report, they had masses of holly, rhododendron, and mountain laurel planted just inside the south fence to help ensure Caroline Kennedy's privacy, but they kept the south vista open. Some of these Kennedy-era boundary plantings remain, although they are replenished from time to time. In addition, the Kennedys had nine dogs, which had free run of the grounds, and a henwire fence was installed on the inner side of the boundary fence, with metal below the gates, to keep the dogs in. The Kennedys also had two ponies, Macaroni and Tex, who were housed in newly built stalls in the maintenance building near the tennis court. The condition of the lawn became a chronic problem because of brown spots caused by the leaking hydraulic systems of helicopters. An improved strain of grass seed was used, and a new sprinkler system

13. "The White House Gardens and Grounds," map, ca. 1993. Williams was also in charge of the government's large tree nursery on Dangerfield Island in the Potomac and of plantings on the Baltimore/Washington Parkway and a number of recreational centers. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

14. White House Historical Association, *The White House: An Historic Guide* (Washington, DC: The White House Historical Association, 1964).

was installed in spring 1963. However, the problem continued into the Johnson administration.[15]

During the Kennedy administration the use of the grounds for formal entertainment increased dramatically, a practice that has been followed and become more prevalent since then. Jacqueline Kennedy was instrumental in bringing cultural events to the grounds. For example, a large recital and choral shell was erected (on platforms provided by the Department of the Interior) on the south lawn to allow for a concert by the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Breckenridge Boys Choir on April 16, 1962. The development of the east and west gardens also encouraged entertaining outdoors, but it is probably the limited size of the White House that has contributed to the establishment of large outdoor tents for entertaining guests.[16]

Another plan that was formulated during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations but was not implemented until the 1970s and 1980s, and then only partially, was that of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. The corporation was formed at the recommendation of the Council on Pennsylvania Avenue established by President Kennedy after his inauguration to study Pennsylvania Avenue between the Capitol and the White House. The "Year 2000" plan, issued in 1964 by the National Capital Planning Commission, "suggested a renewal of the spirit of L'Enfant, and an application of his ideas as far as is practicable in the light of the complicated problems caused by the hard facts of twentieth-century urban life."[17] Several plans were published in the report, including the overall "Plan for Pennsylvania Avenue and Vicinity" (figure 7-12).[18]

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15. The maintenance building had evolved from a small shed built in the early part of the Taft administration. Fact sheet relating to peripheral planting, the White House grounds, ca. 1962, box 1, doc. box 14 of 31, acc. 65A-1108, ESF/WHL/NPS; NPS, "The President's Garden," 65; "Lost in the Rhododendrons," *The Evening Star*, Mar. 24, 1961. Present jet helicopters do not do this. Alton E. Rabbitt (soil conservationist) to asst. reg. dir., June 8, 1962; T. Sutton Jett (reg. dir., NCR) to J. B. West (chief usher), Aug. 20, 1962; I. J. (Nash) Castro to Asst. Reg. Dir. (Operation and Maintenance), Sept. 5, 1962; Rabbitt to J. M. Duich (Dept. of Agronomy, Penn. State Univ.), Dec. 12, 1962; all in box 1, doc. box 14 of 31, acc. 65A-1108, ESF/WHL/NPS. See also Castro to Perry H. Wheeler (landscape architect), Feb. 8, 1963; Jett to West, Feb. 15, 1963; Castro to Victor A. Renner, March 13, 1963; and Edward B. Willard to Soil Conservationist/Plant Pathologist, Nov. 3, 1965; all in box 45, document box 20 of 31, acc. 68A-3201, ESF/WHL/NPS. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

16. Information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), June 16, 2000; file 930: Concerts (White House), box 14, acc. 65A-1108, ESF/WHL/NPS.

17. National Capital Planning Commission (hereafter NCPC), *Special Streets: Plan for Virginia Avenue* (Washington, D. C.: GPO, 1964), 4, cited in Leach and Barthold, "L'Enfant Plan of the City of Washington," sec. 8, pp. 41–42.

18. The President's Council on Pennsylvania Avenue, *Report on Pennsylvania Avenue* (Washington, D.C.: 1964), 1–37.

Although initially President Lyndon B. Johnson was not concerned about landscaping issues, Mrs. Johnson was very interested in conservation and the beautification of the nation's cities. The American public was very responsive to her effort, a manifestation of the national environmental movement. Mrs. Johnson's commitment to this cause dated to her childhood, when she roamed the pastures and woods near her Texas home. The projects sponsored by Mrs. Johnson's Committee for a More Beautiful Capital and its companion philanthropic organization, the Society for a More Beautiful Capital, inspired similar projects in other cities.[19]

Shortly after her husband became president, Mrs. Johnson had the east garden, which had changed little since the Truman administration, redesigned by Mrs. Mellon. Like the west garden, the east garden features a row of European lindens, topiary hollies, and seasonal flower plantings, as well as a grape arbor designed by I. M. Pei and a small pool. It was completed in the fall of 1964 and was dedicated to Jacqueline Kennedy on April 22, 1965 (figure 7-13).

Mrs. Johnson held beautification meetings and teas in the garden, and her daughters entertained there.[20]

In 1962–63 during the Kennedy administration, plans were prepared for new guardhouses along Pennsylvania Avenue (figure 7-14). In June 1964 this project went out to bid, but the guardhouses were not constructed immediately because the bids were too high. They were eventually built in 1965. The effects of crowds during Kennedy's inauguration in 1961, combined with an unauthorized vehicle incident at the northwest gate in 1964, necessitated reworking the gate and fence systems. In 1965 the remains of the Hedl fence

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19. Martha Cole, "Flowers are Legacy," *Washington Star*, Nov. 16, 1964, box 67, document box 26 of 31, acc. 72A-6215, ESF/WHL/NPS; Donnie Radcliffe, "How Their Garden Grows: The Legacy of First Ladies Lives in the Trees, Flowers and Shrubs," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 1994. Mrs. Johnson loved the gardens and grounds of the White House and told chief horticulturist Irvin Williams that sometimes she wished she could just take her shoes off and roam through them; Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

20. Castro to Page, July 9, 1968, box 17, document box 21 of 31, acc. 72A-6215, ESF/WHL/NPS; Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 280–81; Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995; NPS, "The President's Garden," 66–67; sec. of the int. to dir. (NPS), Dec. 16, 1965, box 9, Beautification file, 1965, ESF/WHL/NPS. In December 1965 Mrs. Paul Mellon received the Conservation Service Award of the Department of the Interior for the design of both gardens. Information on Pei's contribution to the design of the arbor comes courtesy of Irvin Williams, June 14, 2000.

along Pennsylvania Avenue were taken down and replaced by a replica, the fence was realigned, and the coping was repaired.[21] Extensive work also was done on the sidewalk and street in front of the White House (figure 7-15).[22]

Several commemorative trees planted during the Johnson administration are still living. On October 16, 1964, President Johnson planted a willow oak on the south lawn near the Rose Garden. On May 3, 1968, Mrs. Johnson planted a fern-leaf beech on the north grounds in front of the west colonnade. President and Mrs. Johnson also planted a Darlington oak almost due south of the Oval Office on October 16, 1964. The Darlington oak was later removed due to decline.[23]

During the last year of the Johnson administration a new children's garden was developed in an area that First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and her children had used for a trampoline. Landscape architect Edward Durell Stone Jr. designed the garden, which President Johnson dedicated one day before he left office. Located in a secluded spot west of the tennis court amid a tulip polar grove, the Children's Garden is diminutive and very private. It consists of a small pool 2 feet deep that is set in a flagstone terrace, surrounded by holly, rhododendrons, and mountain laurel (figure 7-16). A Stayman Winesap apple is the only tree of any size. Bronze plaques with concrete casts of foot and hand prints of presidential grandchildren are set in the flagstones; the earliest are those of two Johnson grandchildren, Lucinda and Patrick.[24]

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21. Horne to ARD, memorandum, Jan. 13, 1964; Maj. Ralph C. Stover to Jett, Jan. 20, 1964, Castro to Stover, Jan. 27, 1964; Walter C. Hinkle (acting reg. chief, Facilities Maintenance), memorandum to file, Feb. 17, 1964; Preston D. Riddel (reg. chief, Facilities Maintenance) to ARD (Operations and Maintenance), memorandum, Mar. 20, 1964; all in D46/White House Fences and Gates (1962–65), box 20, acc. 68A-3201, ESF/WHL/ NPS. Hugh B. Wallis to chief (NCDC), Nov. 10, 1965, construction photographs: Guardhouses, Fence, and Sidewalk, no. 14 (general view looking east on Pennsylvania Ave. from main guardhouse, Oct. 1, 1965) and no. 17 (main guardhouse looking NW, Nov. 30, 1965), W 14-2913/White House/Guard Booth, Fence, and Walk (1965), box 22, acc. 72A-6215, ESF/WHL/NPS.

22. Castro to Baldi Construction Engineering, Inc., June 4, 1964, box 7, doc box 18 of 31, access 68A-3047, ESF/WHL/NPS.

23. "The White House Gardens and Grounds," pamphlet and map [Clinton administration]; list of presidential commemorative trees planted from the Kennedy through the Carter administrations, OC/WH, Jan. 19, 1979. NPS "The President's Garden," 67, identifies other Johnson commemorative trees mentioned besides the Darlington oak — a mountain ash near the east garden, a white dogwood, and white redbud, none of which is shown on the current map of the White House grounds.

24. NPS, "The President's Garden," 67; Williams interview, Feb. 17, 1995.

Lafayette Park

In 1949 suggestions were made for additions to Lafayette Park, including floodlighting the memorial statues. However, the Commission of Fine Arts opposed such lighting, saying that it distorted the designs and made the pieces ugly.[25]

Controversy during this period resulted from proposed plans to develop the neighborhood surrounding Lafayette Park. The eventual restoration of the area, however, was a major victory for national historic preservation since it set an important precedent and led to the eventual passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

On August 16, 1960, the favorite bench of Bernard Baruch, adviser to President Wilson and later presidents, was dedicated in his honor as the "Bernard Baruch Bench of Inspiration." This bench, northwest of the Jackson statue, was where Baruch frequently sat and talked with people. The dedication took place three days before Baruch's 90th birthday and was also celebrated concurrently with the 50th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America.[26]

Early during the Kennedy administration another attempt was made to move the Andrew Jackson statue from its current location. Charles M. Merwin, a Washington, D.C., resident wrote to the president suggesting again the switch of the Jackson and Washington statues. At this time (July 1961) the Washington statue had been taken down to allow for the construction of the K Street tunnel. But Cornelius H. Heine, chief of the Division of Public Use and Interpretation for National Capital Parks, strongly opposed the request, noting that the Jackson statue's "present location is a matter of tradition and great significance."[27]

During the Kennedy administration a joint solution was found to the long-standing need for more office space for the president's staff and the desire to preserve some of the early 19th century buildings around Lafayette Park. (According to custom, the buildings around the open space are referred to collectively as "Lafayette Square,"

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25. Demaray to the under sec. (DOI), memorandum, Mar. 4, 1949, 1460/Lafayette Park (2), box 17, acc. 66A-1097, ESF/WHL/NPS.

26. "Ceremony in Honor of the Ninetieth Birthday of Bernard M. Baruch and the Dedication of the 'Bernard Baruch Bench of Inspiration,'" sponsored by the National Capital Area Council and the Boy Scouts of America, 12 noon, Aug. 16, 1960, Lafayette Park, Washington, ESF/WHL/NPS.

27. Kerr, "Statue of General Andrew Jackson, " 52.

whereas the park proper is known as "Lafayette Park.") At the same time plans were made to redesign the park to make it also appear more typical of the 19th century, but the landscape designs were not carried out until 1969–70.

The 1901 McMillan plan had proposed developing the area around Lafayette Park, and proposals had also been made to the Commission of Fine Arts since 1917, when Cass Gilbert's Treasury Annex was constructed on Madison Place. During that period it was assumed that the entire square would be developed with large government buildings, and the Commission of Fine Arts recommended that the Treasury Annex be extended all the way to H Street and that a new State Department Building be built on Jackson Place. The existing State, War, and Navy Building could then be remodeled to "look like the treasury" and would be used for the president's executive offices. In 1958 Congress approved plans for an executive office building on Jackson Place and a court of claims on Madison Place. In 1960 Congress decided that the Decatur House should not be demolished. Bills were also introduced to preserve the Dolley Madison House, the Tayloe House, and the Belasco Theater on Madison Place, but unfortunately the theater did not survive.[28]

The General Services Administration commissioned two Boston architectural firms, each with a long history of commitment to historic preservation, to plan the development of Lafayette Square. Nonetheless, neither was able to resolve the problem of providing capacious new office buildings while at the same time retaining some of the historic houses.[29] While still a senator, Kennedy objected strongly to the plans. For most of the first two years of his presidency, he and William Walton required the two firms to produce many alternative designs. Eventually President Kennedy concluded that the old buildings would have to go, and construction drawings for the new buildings were prepared. First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy was the only holdout, saying: "The wreckers haven't started yet, and until they do, it can be saved."[30]

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28. Kohler, *The Commission of Fine Arts*, 80–82; NPS, "Historical Study of the Buildings along Madison Place, Lafayette Square, Washington, D.C."

29. The firms were Perry, Shaw, Hepburn, and Dean (the architects of the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg) and Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott (Henry Hobson Richardson's successor firm and the architects of many of Harvard University's early 20th century buildings). Kohler, *The Commission of Fine Arts*, 82–83.

30. Quoted by Mason Andrews in his article in "Lafayette Square, 1963–1983: Architecture, Preservation and the Presidency," San Francisco, CA: Office of John Carl Warnecke & Associates, [1983]. This compendium of articles apparently was produced for an exhibition of the same name in 1983.

In October 1962 President Kennedy asked architect John Carl Warnecke, an acquaintance, to review the problem of Lafayette Square. Warnecke proposed an entirely new solution. His idea was to put the new office buildings behind the existing smaller-scale buildings and to provide courtyards for the new buildings that would open onto Jackson and Madison Places. The new office buildings would be set well back from the older ones and would also be faced with dark red brick to reduce their apparent size. All the older buildings on Pennsylvania Avenue, Jackson Place, and Madison Place (with the exception of the Belasco Theater), as well as the old Court of Claims (formerly the Corcoran Gallery and now the Renwick Gallery, part of the Smithsonian Institution), and the former State, War, and Navy Building, would be preserved. The Kennedys strongly supported Warnecke's proposal and decided to go ahead with it, as long as the cost did not exceed the $30 million already appropriated for new buildings. Eventually it proved possible to build the two new office buildings, restore all of the old townhouses, demolish the inappropriately scaled office buildings, and construct new infill buildings, within the $30 million appropriation.[31]

Initial reaction was mixed. Warnecke's ideas have since become familiar through numerous examples of contextualist and post-modernist architecture, but in the 1960s they were controversial. In addition, the work was done in a piecemeal fashion, since the General Services Administration insisted that the new federal buildings be constructed before any restoration work was done on the townhouses and the infill buildings. Senator Eugene McCarthy commented, "You really had us all confused down there at Lafayette Square, Warnecke. All we could see were those two new big brick buildings towering over those dilapidated little townhouses. No one was sure if you were putting them up or tearing them down."[32]

Eventually, however, the "restoration" of Lafayette Square came to be widely regarded as a major victory for historic preservation. This was definitely a landmark project in the historic preservation movement in this country, but (through hindsight and with the benefit of current thinking) it can be seen that there were certain flaws,

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31. Warnecke had studied with Walter Gropius at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design but had also apprenticed with Bay Area architects still practicing in the Beaux-Arts tradition. Andrews, "Lafayette Square, 1963–1983"; Kohler, *The Commission of Fine Arts*, 84–5; Bernard L. Boutin, "Lafayette Square: The Final Word," *A.I.A. Journal* 39 no. 1 (Jan. 1963), 55–56; Donnie Radcliffe, "Jacqueline Onassis: The First Lady of Elegance," *The Washington Post*, May 20, 1994.

32. Andrews, "Lafayette Square, 1963–1983."

especially Warnecke's infill buildings on Jackson Place, which were designed to mimic the genuine 19th century houses on the square.[33]

In the meantime, plans went forward to make Lafayette Park look "more 19th century" as well, and the Warnecke firm was commissioned to do the landscape design. President Kennedy approved a conceptual scheme in 1962 (figure 7-17). Later, both President and Mrs. Johnson became deeply interested in the work.[34] It was not until 1969, however, that construction began on the park, as a part of Mrs. Johnson's beautification program for Washington. Construction was completed in the summer of 1970. In December 1965 the Old Dominion Foundation, established by Paul Mellon, had given $409,000 for landscaping. An important feature of the Warnecke plan was the replacement of the existing 1930s concrete walks with brick walks, although the actual path pattern was not changed. Brick walks were considered to be "traditional" and 19th century, despite the fact that the walks in Lafayette Park before 1936 had always been gravel or asphalt, never brick. The brick was intended to match the brick of the new sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places. Two new pools with fountains at the east and west sides of the park were to reinforce the east-west axis and relate the park to the entrances to the new buildings. The two urns, which had been situated at the approximate sites of the pools since 1936, were moved to their present positions on Pennsylvania Avenue. As the Lafayette Park design developed, it ran into opposition, including objections from the Commission of Fine Arts to a proposed band shell.[35]

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33. Since at least 1976, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* have stated that "alterations . . . which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged." See Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects* (Washington, DC: Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, [ca. 1976]), 4.

34. When Johnson, with the first lady's committed support, sent the bill for what would be the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to Congress, he attached a handwritten notation: "Lady Bird wants it." Quoted in Andrews, "Lafayette Square, 1963–1983."

35. George B. Hartzog Jr. (dir. NPS) to Ernest Brooks Jr. (president, Old Dominion Foundation), Dec. 15, 1965; Brooks to Hartzog, Dec. 16, 1965; DOI, Office of the Secretary; press release, Dec. 19, 1965; "Lafayette Park Revived" (clipping, newspaper not identified), Dec. 20, 1965; "Most Welcome Gift," *Washington Star*, Dec. 21, 1965; Brooks to Hartzog, Dec. 21, 1965; Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson to John Walker (dir., National Gallery of Art), Jan. 5, 1966; William Walton (chairman, CFA) to Jett, Oct. 10, 1966; Michael Painter (John Carl Warnecke & Assoc.) to Robert W. Andrews (chief, National Capital Office), Feb. 3 1967; Castro to Ashton, Feb. 27, 1967; and Painter to Theodore Swem (reg. dir.), Jan. 8, 1970; all in box 20, ESF/WHL/NPS. In 1970 John Carl Warnecke and Michael Painter set up the firm of Michael Painter and Associates as a subsidiary to provide landscape architecture and urban design services. An underground comfort station was originally planned for Lafayette Park but was never constructed. Mrs. Paul Mellon was named adviser to the landscape plan for the park.

The National Capital Planning Commission approved the Warnecke firm's design for Lafayette Park in July 1967, but bids in August 1968 were too high, and the project was again deferred. Finally, in February 1969, a $423,550 contract was awarded, which covered only the resurfacing of the walks with brick and the two elliptical pools. Construction proceeded rapidly in the summer and fall of 1969 but was not completed until the summer of 1970. During construction a high board fence decorated with paintings by Washington schoolchildren was erected around the site. Eventually new plantings were added, including saucer magnolias. The cannon around the Jackson statue were rehabilitated, and chess tables were installed in response to popular request. Azaleas were planted on an elliptical mound at the base of the Jackson statue, even though they were not part of the Warnecke plan.[36]

During the Johnson administration a visitor kiosk was installed in the northern part of the park. A concrete ramp and slightly elevated platform provide universal access to the kiosk, a hexagonal, wood-frame and glass structure painted green and blue with white trim.

Lafayette Park became the site of protests and demonstrations against the Vietnam War. This use has persisted to the present, with protests focusing on other issues. Lafayette Square, especially the side facing the White House, has become the American equivalent of the Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park in London.

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36. Mrs. Mellon withdrew as an adviser on the project in May 1967, apparently as a result of the conflicts with the Commission of Fine Arts. Mrs. Mellon to John Carl Warnecke, May 23, 1967; Warnecke to Mrs. Mellon, June 6, 1967; NCPC, "Lafayette Park: Report of the Park, Recreation and Open space Committee," July 27, 1967; Castro to Mrs. Johnson, Aug. 14, 1968; DOI, news release "Lafayette Park Restoration Begins," Feb. 7, 1969; "Fountains to Enhance Park's 19th-Century Motif," *Washington Post*, Feb. 10, 1969; Painter to Castro, Feb. 26, 1969; "New Lafayette Park To Show Its Charms," *Washington Star*, Nov. 5, 1969; all in box 20, ESF/WHL/NPS. See also Robert L. Lewis, "Lafayette Square Open, but Incomplete," *The Evening Star*, Dec. 15, 1969, box 6, document box 31 of 31, acc. 79.80.0002, ESF/WHL/NPS. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995. Information on the azaleas courtesy of Helen Matthews (President's Park/NPS), June 19, 2001.

President's Park South

In 1954 the location of the National Christmas Tree was moved to the Ellipse. The Christmas Pageant of Peace, centered near the tree, started the same year and grew increasingly more elaborate. By the Christmas season of 1961–62 the pageant included reindeer, a nativity scene, and a yule log. Until 1973 a cut tree was used.[37]

In 1957 an extension was added to the west side of the First Division Monument, and in 1962 two panels were added to the Second Division Memorial. In 1964 the Boy Scout Memorial was erected on the 15th Street side about halfway between Constitution Avenue and E Street to mark the site of the First National Boy Scout Jamboree in Washington in 1937.[38]

In 1965, as part of Mrs. Johnson's beautification program, a planting plan was developed for the northeast quadrant of the Ellipse (17th and E Streets). The plan identified marigolds to be followed by Toronto mums. For 1966 the plan envisioned petunias to be succeeded by Joanette mums. A gravel walk stretching from the northwest to the southeast curved slightly across the quadrant.[39]

In 1966 the firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill prepared for the Ellipse a schematic plan that would be revised periodically until 1969. The plan originally called for four fountains to be located roughly at the four corners of the Ellipse. By 1968 a final plan was developed, calling for five fountains, notably one on the west to balance the existing Boy Scout Memorial. Disagreement ensued not only on the number of fountains, but also on their location and building material.[40]

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37. Jett, "Requirements for the Christmas Pageant of Peace, Dec. 4, 1962"; dir. (NPS) to [Udall], memorandum, Nov. 21, 1962; Milo F. Christiansen (supt., D.C. Recreation) to all board members, memorandum, Nov. 14, 1962; Heine to James McKechnie, Oct. 15, 1962; Heine to reg. dir. (NPS), Oct. 31, 1962; Wirth to Leonard A. Baron, June 5, 1962; all in 1115-27/Christmas Pageant of Peace, box 16, acc. 65A-1097, WH&WPP files, ESF/WHL/NPS. Jerome W. Bailey, news release, Dec. 18, 1961, A8227/Special Events (1972), box 31, acc. 79-770005, ESF/WHL/NPS.

38. Cass Gilbert Jr. designed the wings for both monuments. The sculptor for the bronze of the Boy Scout Memorial was Donald DeLue; the architect of the base was William Henry Deacy. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture*, 133, 136–37.

39. Ellipse planting plan, Feb. 1965, NCR 23-226, National Capital Office, NPS; plan was amended for 1966, ibid., Dec. 1965.

40. First Lady's Committee for a More Beautiful Capital, "Report to the President from First Lady's Committee for a More Beautiful Capital," n.d. [ca. 1968]; Joseph Judge, "New Grandeur for Flowering Washington," *National Geographic Magazine* (April 1967), 500–39; information courtesy of Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS), Jan. 30, 2001.

In 1966 Rose Saul Zalles, granddaughter of John Saul (the Irish horticulturist A. J. Downing had selected in 1851 to superintend his Washington projects) presented a gift of $75,000 to the Society for a More Beautiful Capital, Inc. The funds were intended for a park site in the northwest quadrant of the Ellipse. By 1967 a design by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill called for a fountain in this area, the Zalles fountain. A bronze plaque (18" × 24") in the memory of John Saul was to be located on a bench adjacent to the fountain. A matching fountain was also proposed for the northeast quadrant of the Ellipse. The marble for the fountains was received late in 1969, but funding complications prohibited their installation.[41]

Architect Nathaniel Owings, the chairman of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, prepared construction drawings and specifications for the other two fountains. In April 1968 the National Capital Planning Commission approved plans for them to be located at the 16th Street and Constitution Avenue entrance. The material finally selected was rainbow granite, two slabs of which (weighing 55 tons each) were brought from a quarry at Morton, Minnesota, on special flatcars, lowered into place, and then carved in place by the sculptor, Gordon Newell. The fountains, completed in 1968, were made possible by a $60,000 gift from Enid Annenberg Haupt, the editor of *Seventeen* magazine, and were named in her honor. They underwent repairs in 1969.[42]

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41. In March 1968 Henraux Marble Works (Lucca, Italy) agreed to donate marble for one fountain and to reduce the cost of the marble for the second fountain. Ralph E. Becker, a trustee for the Society for a More Beautiful Capital, made the arrangements. By the time the marble was received, a cutback had been ordered in all federal construction funds, allowing only 25% of the allocated monies to be used, and these had to pertain to safety, health, and critical environmental problems. All government funds for this project were cut. In 1969 it was estimated that the total project, including the two fountains, would cost approximately $356,300. Some documents refer to the northwest quadrant fountain as the Zalles-Saul fountain, and the northeast quadrant fountain as the Henraux-Becker fountain. The Saul plaque was displayed at ceremonies on December 17, 1968, attended by Mrs. Johnson. Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Johnson, press release, Sept. 29, 1966; "Zalles Fountain 1966–1968," box WHL-7BP-06, Records of the Director, ESF/WHL/NPS; Meryle Secrest, "Beautification Gets a Boost," *Washington Post*, Sept. 30, 1966, C2. Author unknown, "History of Two Marble Fountains," Apr. 20, 1988. "Zalles Fountain 1975," box WHL-7BP-06, ESF/WHL/NPS. Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Johnson, press release, Dec. 17, 1968, D24 Hains Point Jets (1966–1968) [1 of 2], box WHL-BF-013, Records of the Director, ESF/WHL/NPS.

42. Charles E. Krueger to Castro, Nov. 28, 1967; Castro to Ralph Becker, March 6, 1968; Castro to dir. (NPS), March 11, 1968; Krueger to reg. dir. (NCR), March 1968; Charles H. Conrad (exec. dir., NCPC) to George B. Hartzog (dir., NPS), April 16, 1968; Wolf Von Eckhardt, "Gateway to Presidential Park: 2 Granite Slabs Ready for Sculptor," *The Washington Post*, Oct. 25, 1968; all in document box 21 of 31, box 16, acc. 72A-6215, ESF/WHL/NPS. Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Johnson, press release, Dec. 17, 1968, D24 Hains Point Jets (1966–1968) [1 of 2], WHL-BF-013, ESF/WHL/NPS. These fountains were originally intended to operate year-round.

The Grounds of the Old Executive Office Building

In 1966–67 new sidewalks were constructed along the Ellipse Road. Fresh sod was installed after the sidewalks were completed.[43] In 1967–68 the walks in the northwest quadrant of the Ellipse were reconstructed.[44] In 1967 a feasibility study for an underground garage was prepared by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, but it was never constructed. A new system of walks and an underground restroom were also planned. A new 1969 lighting plan for the area proposed an increase to 136 streetlights.[45]

The Grounds of the Treasury Building

In December 1950 a replica of the Liberty Bell, originally cast at the White Chapel Foundry in London in 1752 and recast by Pass and Stow in Philadelphia in 1753, was installed on the west side of the Treasury Building. The replica was cast at a foundry in the city of Annecy in the French Alps.[46]

The Grounds of the Old Executive Office Building

No changes appear to have been made to the grounds of this building during the period covered by this chapter.

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43. J and B Construction Company of Alexandria, Virginia, got the contract for the road. One of the subcontractors was Wm. G. Burton Nurseries, Landscape Contractors, of West Hyattsville, Maryland. Robert W. Andrews, Chief, NCDC, Acting Contracting Officer, to J and B Construction Company, Inc., Feb. 4, 1966; Franklin A. Hill (Burton Nurseries) to J and B Construction Company, Sept. 13, 1966. Both in document box 22 of 31, box 28, acc. 72A-6215, ESF/WHL/NPS.

44. Monte E. Fitch (NPS) to reg. dir., May 2, 1968, "Completion Report," document box 28 of 31, box 18, acc. 79-7524, ESF/WHL/NPS.

45. John Woodbridge (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill) to Jett, Feb. 23, 1967; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, "Progress Report," June 9, 1967; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill to Charles Krueger (NPS), June 13, 1967; Jett to William Walton (chairman, CFA), June 12, 1967; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, "Washington Ellipse One Level Garage Feasibility Study, Summary Report," Nov. 1967; all in document box 21 of 31, box 16, acc. 72A-6215, ESF/WHL/NPS.

46. "Statue Survey: Liberty Bell," OC/Treasury.

Summary

President's Park continued to evolve during the period 1948 to 1969, but modifications were not dramatic. They mostly followed the Olmsted recommendations, such as clearing the north-south axis view. President Harry S. Truman and President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy used the Olmsted report to guide decisions on plantings and landscape changes.

The massive renovations to the White House interior during the Truman administration damaged the landscape in the immediate vicinity of the building, but it was repaired soon after the work on the building was completed in 1952.

Although information is rather sparse concerning athletic and recreational facilities during the Truman administration, the president enjoyed horseshoe pitching in a pit located near the West Wing. Providing special recreational features to suit the interests of the presidents and their families has continued through the present. During this period a putting green was installed for Dwight Eisenhower; henwire fencing was put in to keep the Kennedy dogs inside the grounds, and stalls were built in the maintenance building for the Kennedy children's ponies; and the Children Garden was developed in a secluded area near the maintenance building.

In the late 1950s controversy arose over a proposal to replace the small-scale residential buildings around Lafayette Park with a new executive office building on Jackson Place and a new court of claims on Madison Place. The direct intervention of President and Mrs. Kennedy solved the problem as a plan by John Carl Warnecke was selected. The plan retained the residential scale of Jackson and Madison Places and placed the new buildings behind them. Warnecke's firm also renovated Lafayette Square in 1969–70, substituting brick walks for the concrete ones, and adding elliptical pools at the east and west sides of the park.

New monuments, such as the Boy Scout Memorial (1964) and the Haupt fountains (1968), were installed in President's Park South. Additions to the First Division Monument (1957) and the Second Division Memorial (1962) also date from this period. In 1954 the location of the National Christmas Tree was moved to the Ellipse and in that same year the Christmas Pageant of Peace was started in the vicinity of the tree.

During this period presidential involvement in the evolution of the grounds probably reached its highest level. Harry S. Truman, John and Jacqueline Kennedy, and Lady Bird Johnson were deeply inter-

ested in the landscape of President's Park and helped guide its evolution and use. Mrs. Kennedy was instrumental in continuing the 19th century tradition of concerts on the grounds. In an effort to encourage the arts, she was responsible for the portable bandstand built for concerts. Lady Bird Johnson expanded the use of the grounds for entertaining and became deeply involved in efforts to beautify the city and the grounds of President's Park, particularly the Ellipse.

Leading designers continued to contribute their talents to President's Park. Lorenzo Winslow oversaw the reconstruction of the White House in the early 1950s. Rachel Lambert Mellon, a friend of President and Mrs. Kennedy, redesigned both the east and west gardens. Edward Durell Stone Jr. designed the Children's Garden dedicated by Lyndon B. Johnson the day before he left office. John Carl Warnecke worked both on the redesign of Lafayette Park and the restoration of Lafayette Square. Though controversial at the time and perhaps flawed, given current standards, the result should be considered a major victory for historic preservation.

Public use of President's Park continued to be a complex issue. The need for presidential security increased, particularly as civil unrest and anti-war demonstrations became common in Washington D.C. in the 1960s and 1970s. Lafayette Park continued to be "a gathering place both for individuals everyday, and for crowds at times of celebration, protest, or when something exciting transpires at the White House."[47]

47. Seale, "The Design of Lafayette Park," 19.

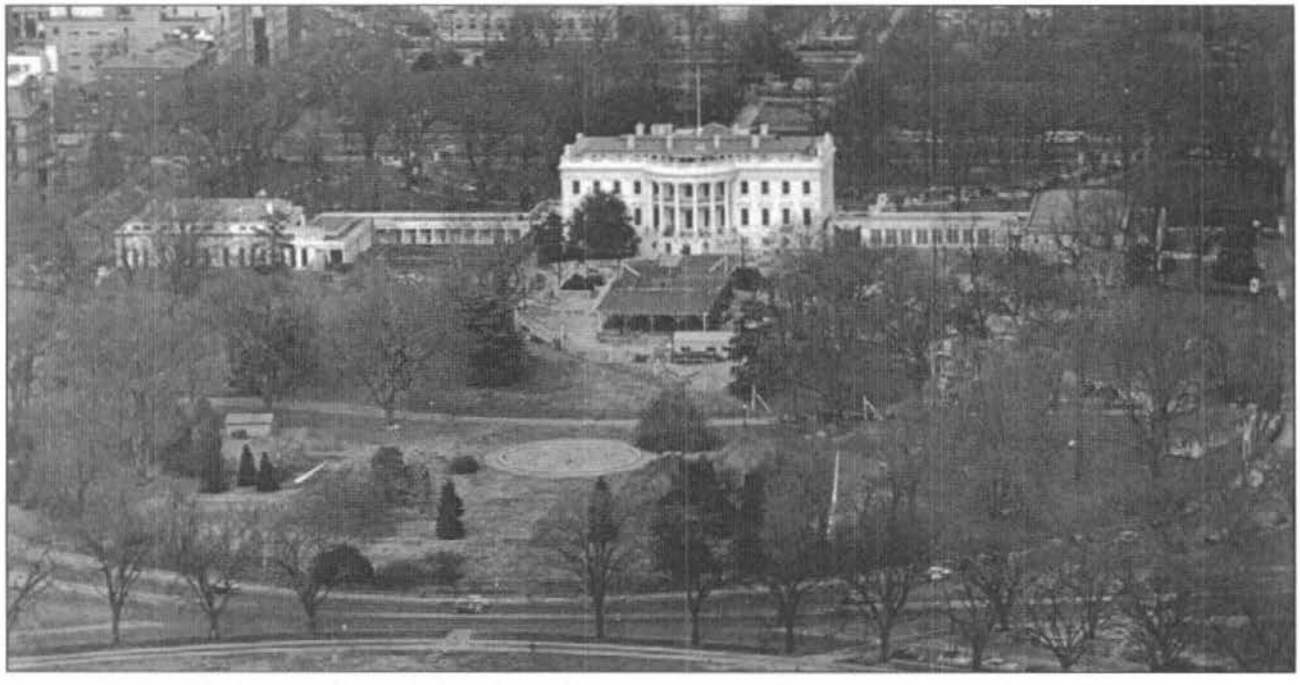

Figure 7-1: *The White House and Grounds from the Washington Monument.* Abbie Rowe (photograph), ca. 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

Figure 7-2: *Linden* (Tilia cordata) *Planted by Franklin Delano Roosevelt*. Abbie Rowe (photograph), ca. 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

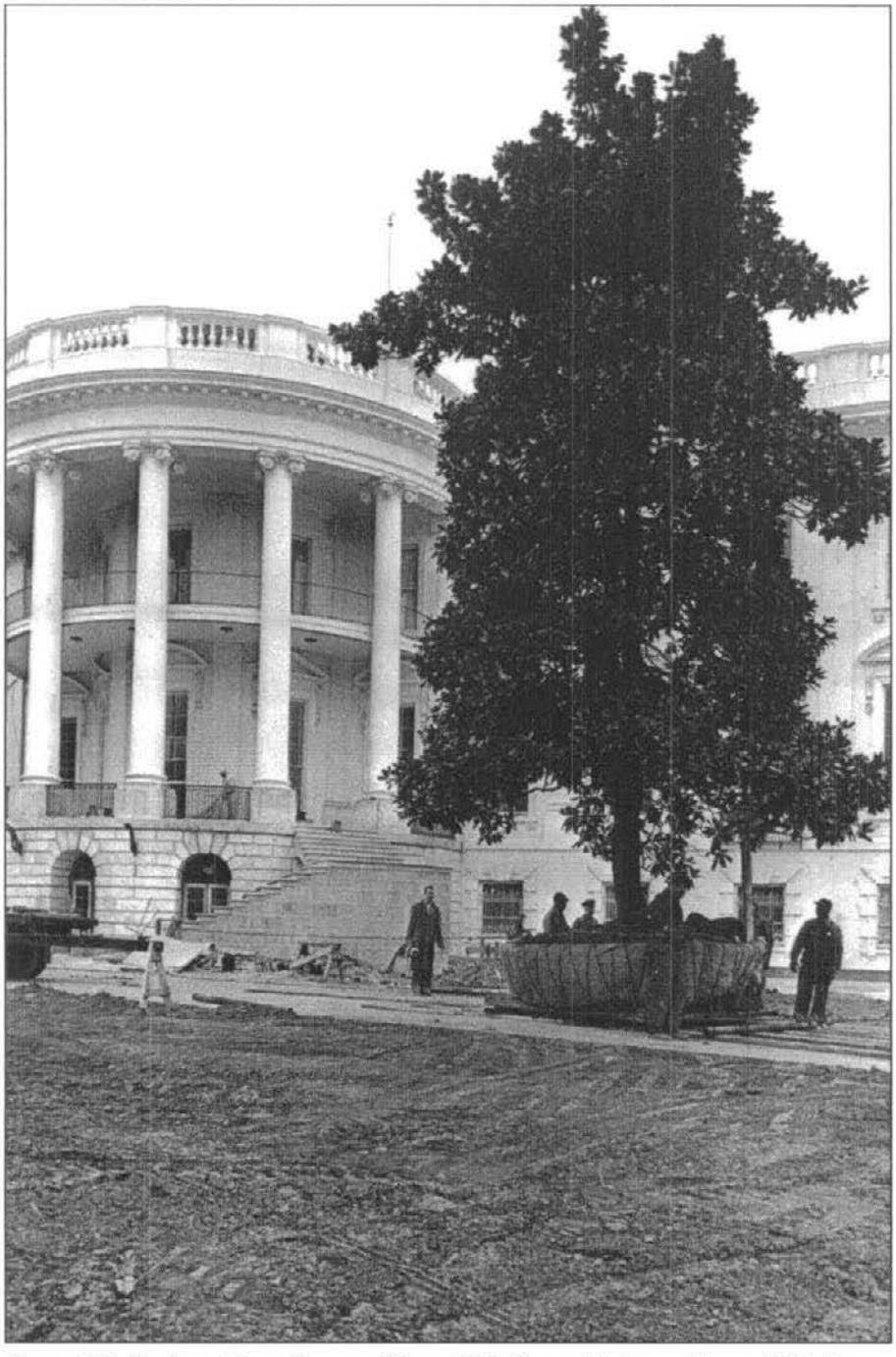

Figure 7-3: *Moving a* Magnolia grandiflora. Abbie Rowe (photograph), ca. 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

Figure 7-4: *Delivery of Boxwood*. Abbie Rowe (photograph), ca. 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

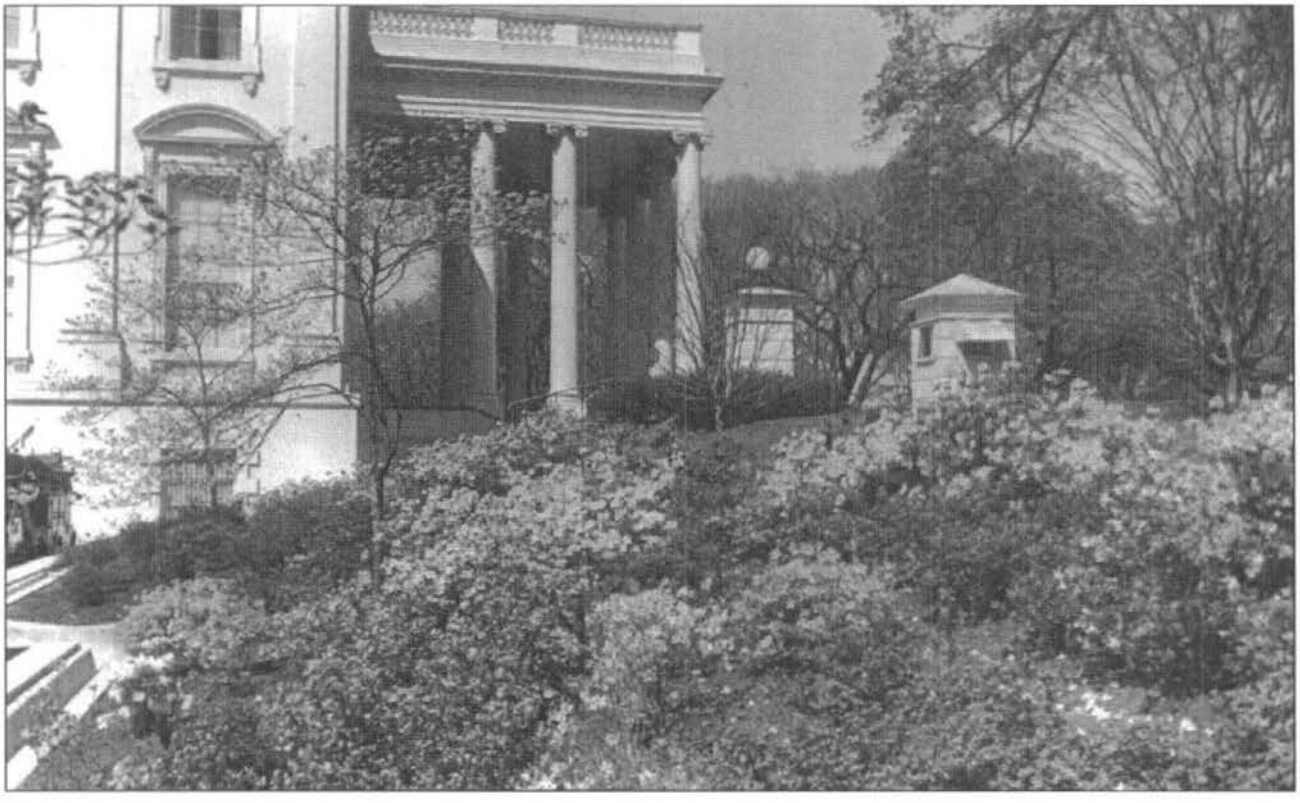

Figure 7-5: *Slope North of the East Terrace Showing Azaleas.* Abbie Rowe (photograph), 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

Figure 7-6: *South Portico and Site of East Garden.* Abbie Rowe (photograph), 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

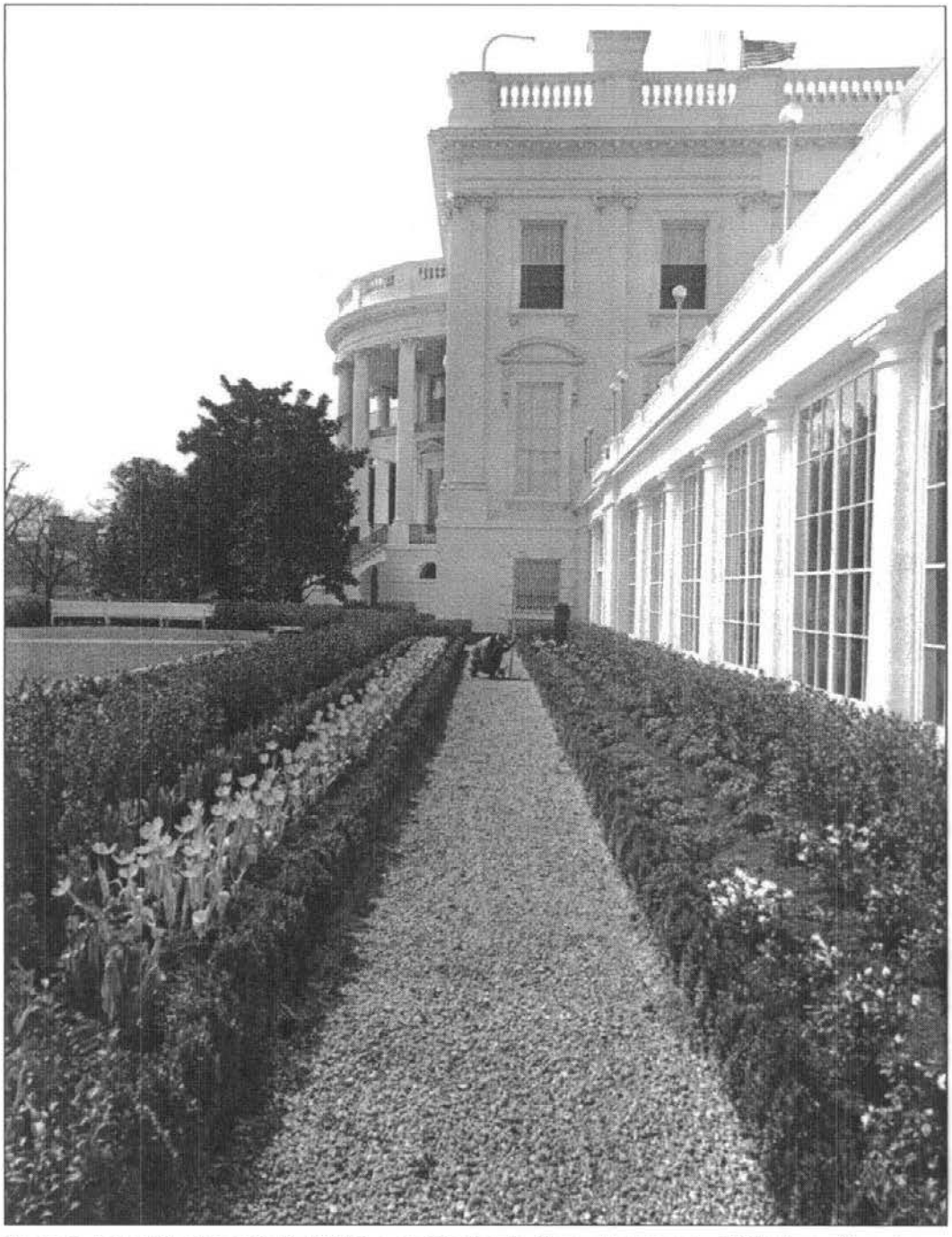

Figure 7-7: *East Garden with Dutch Tulips and Azaleas in Bloom*. Photograph, 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

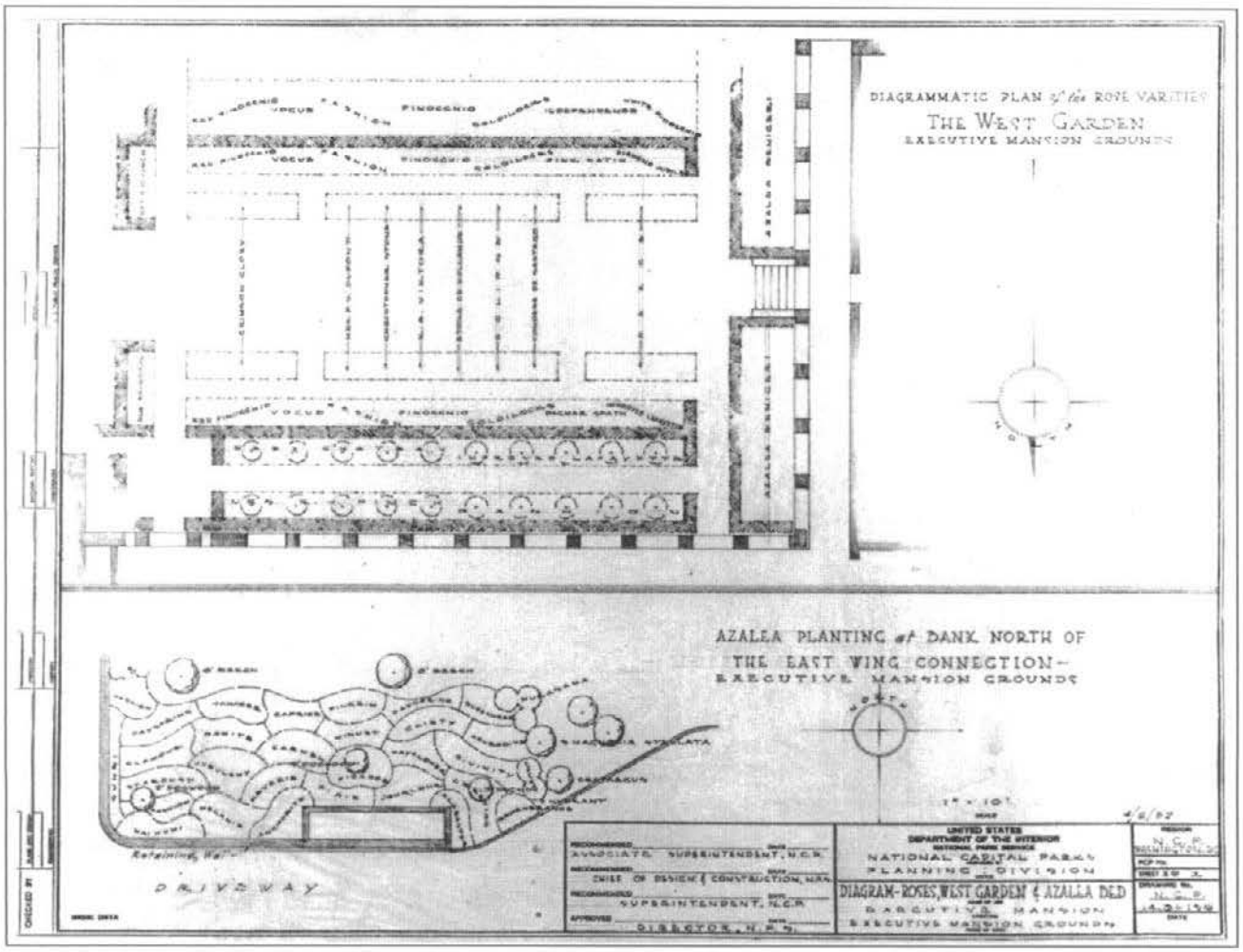

Figure 7-8: *Diagrammatic Plan of the Rose Varieties, the West Garden; Azalea Planting at Bank North of the East Wing Connection.* National Park Service, 1952. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79.

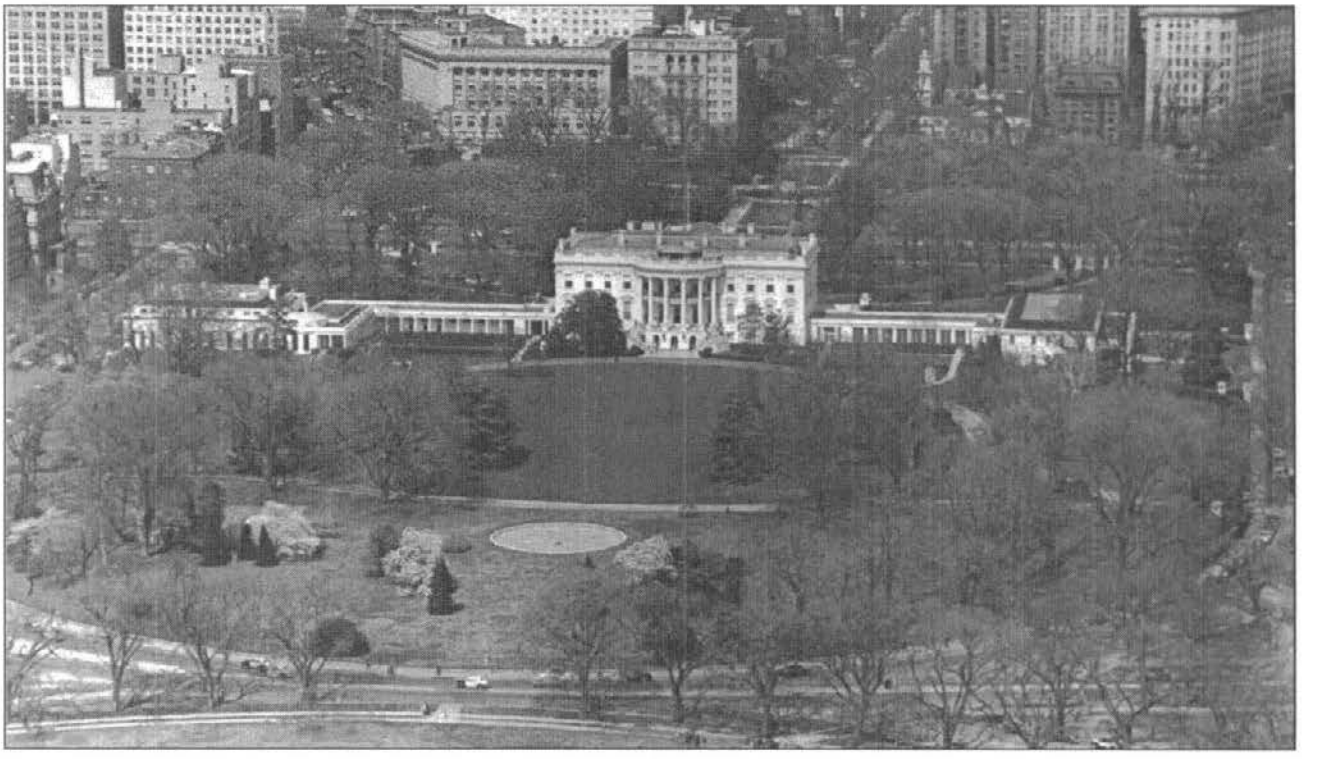

Figure 7-9: *The White House and Grounds from the Washington Monument*. Abbie Rowe (photograph), ca. 1952. From "Report on the Care and Rehabilitation of the Executive Mansion Incident to the Renovation of the White House, January, 1950, to May, 1952," by Fanny-Fern Davis, ca. 1952. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

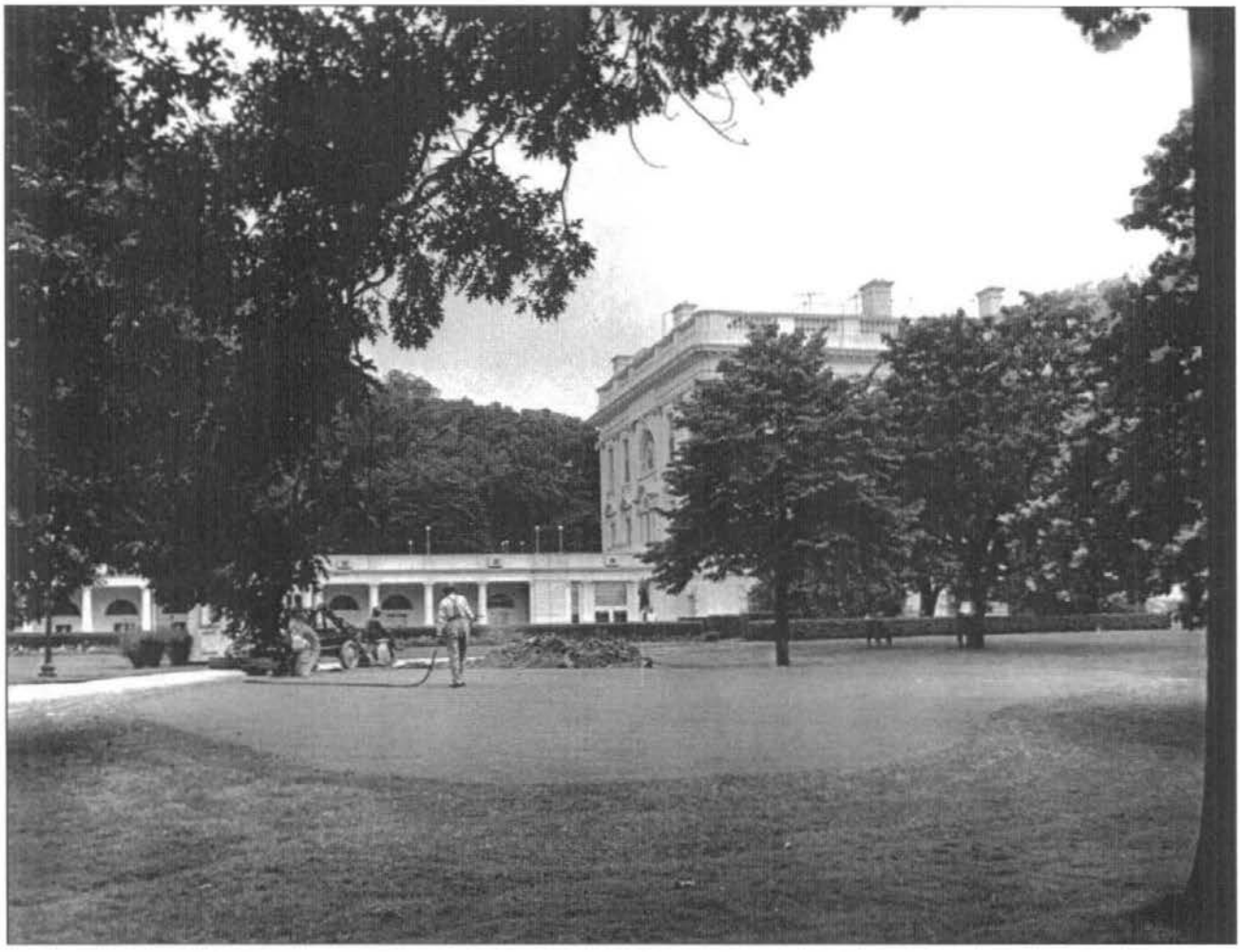

Figure 7-10: *Putting Green, Upper South Lawn, White House Grounds.* Abbie Rowe (photograph), ca. 1955. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

Figure 7-11: *President Kennedy Addressing the National Council of the League of Women Voters in the Rose Garden*. Abbie Rowe (photograph), May 1963. John F. Kennedy Presidential Library.

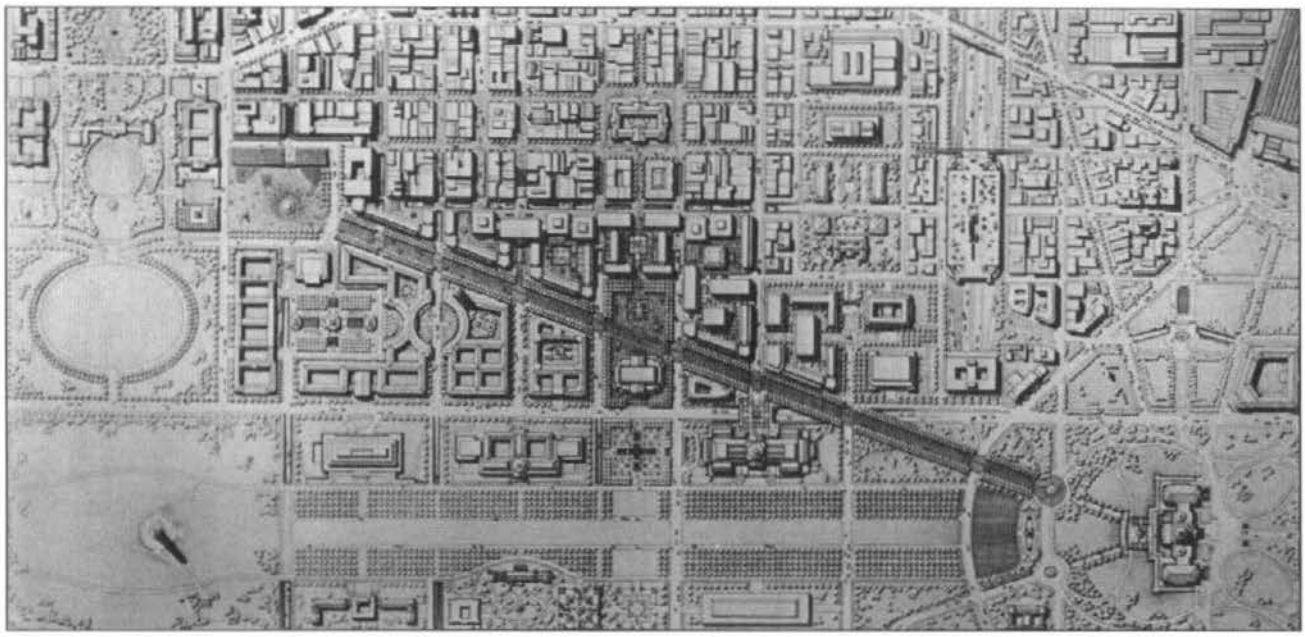

Figure 7-12: *Plan for Pennsylvania Avenue and Vicinity*. President's Council on Pennsylvania Avenue, 1964. National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of Temporary Committees, Commissions and Boards, Record Group 220.

Figure 7-13: *Dedication of the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden.* Photograph, April 1965. Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library.

Figure 7-14: *Pennsylvania Avenue Guard Shelter*. Macomber and Peter, Architects (perspective design), 1962–63. From *White House Fences and Construction*, Abbie Rowe, 1962–63. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

Figure 7-15: *Reconstruction of Fence and Sidewalk, Pennsylvania Avenue*. Abbie Rowe (photograph), 1965. From *White House Fences and Construction*. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

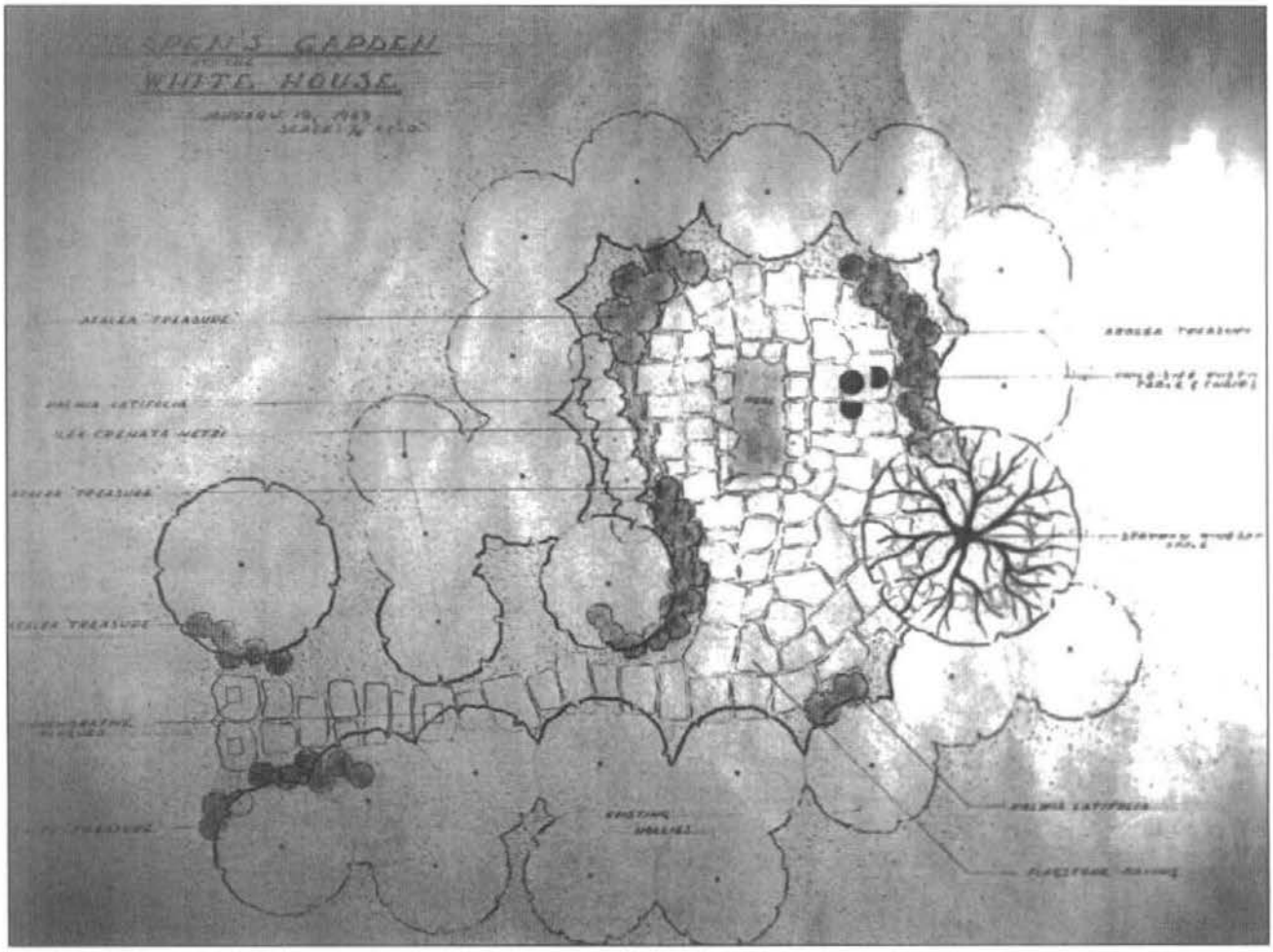

Figure 7-16: *Children's Garden at the White House*. Edward Durell Stone Jr., 1969. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

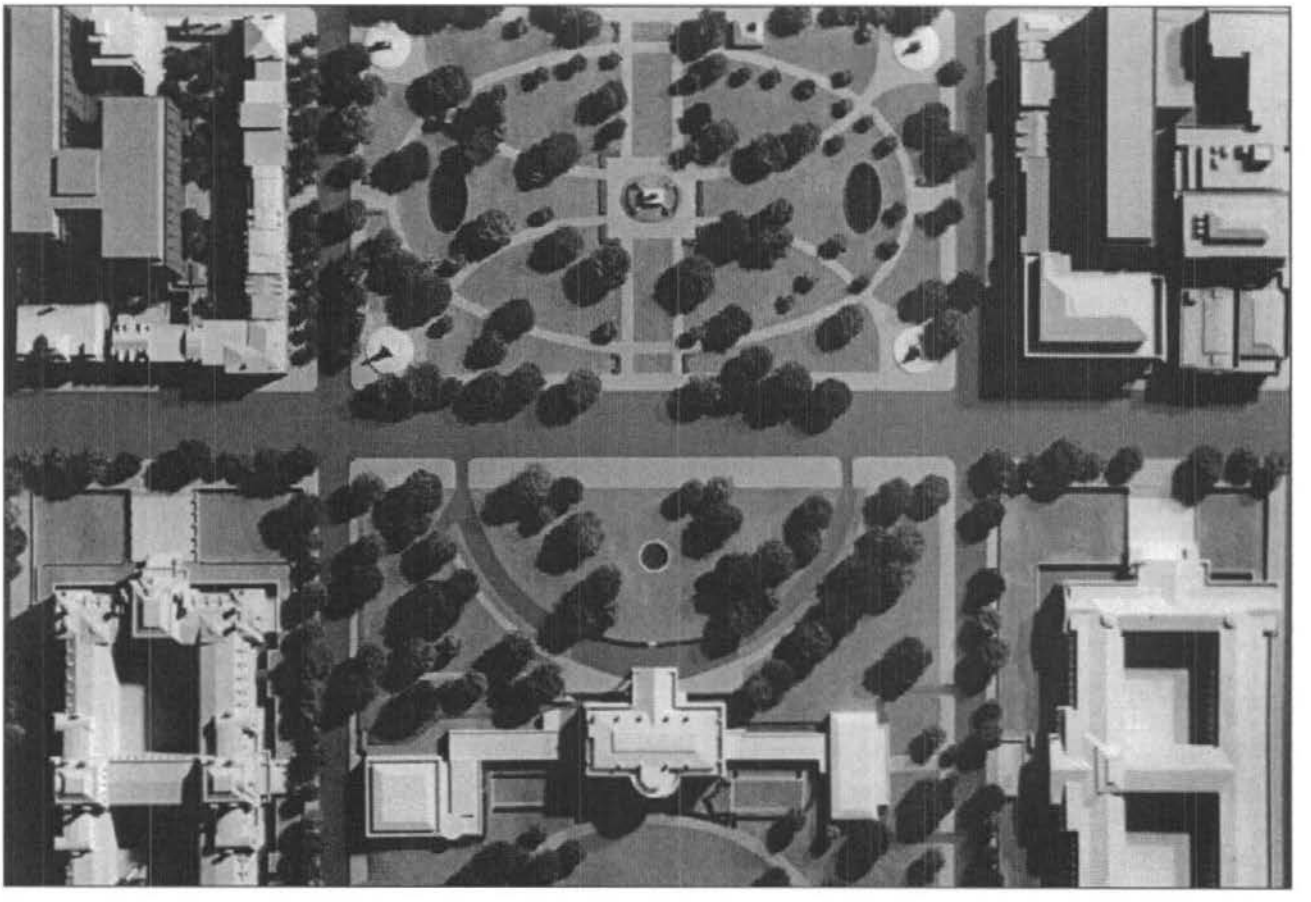

Figure 7-17: *Development Plan of Lafayette Square.* John Warnecke & Associates, 1962. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

Chapter 8. Maintaining and Refining President's Park: 1969–1994

Fewer major modifications to the landscape of President's Park took place from 1969 to 1994. Emphasis has been on the upkeep of existing features and the maintenance of the healthy conditions of the grounds.

In the early 1980s East Executive Avenue was closed to vehicular traffic; it was redesigned as a pedestrian mall in 1985–87 and renamed East Executive Park. On the White House grounds recreational facilities were removed or added to match the interests of the presidents and their families. The Eisenhower putting green and the Roosevelt swimming pool were removed. The tennis court was enlarged, a new outdoor swimming pool was constructed, a tree house for Amy Carter was put up, a jogging track was installed along the edge of the south drive, and a new putting green was added.

During this period presidents were not as actively engaged as some of their predecessors in the evolution of the landscape in President's Park. However, first ladies, particularly Pat Nixon and Hillary Rodham Clinton, continued the tradition of first family participation in modifying management practices and enhancing existing landscape features. All the administrations since that of John F. Kennedy have made extensive use of the grounds for entertaining guests, since the relatively small size of the White House limits its use for larger ceremonial dinners and festivities.

Commemorative tree plantings continued, but the locations focused on where trees had been lost due to age, disease, or storms. To replace elms killed by Dutch elm disease, more disease-resistant varieties were used. An important landscape consideration was the future of the American elm as a dominant tree throughout President's Park and the city in general. Dutch elm disease was identified in this country in the 1930s, becoming particularly epidemic in the 1940s, but elm losses in Washington peaked in the past 35 years of the century, claiming 10,000 elms.[1]

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1. Save The Elms Task Force, "Management Program for the Perpetuation of the American Elm Tree in the Nation's Capital," draft (Washington, DC: May 1, 1982), pp. 1–4, box 75, file Y 1815, ESF/WHL/NPS.

Plans to remove the lodge in Lafayette Park and replace it with underground restrooms were not implemented. Neither were plans to replace the lighting system. The sidewalk around the park was repaved with brick to match the interior paths. The problem with dying trees was solved by reducing the squirrel population.

A new visitor pavilion was added to the Ellipse in May 1994. Proposals were made to repair the Boy Scout Memorial, the Haupt fountains, and the Butt-Millet memorial fountain. A live tree on the north side of the Ellipse close to the Zero Milestone has become the National Christmas Tree. Azaleas were planted at Sherman Plaza in 1983, and the following year new light standards were installed.

From 1984 to 1994 security became an increasing concern not only on the White House grounds but also in nearby areas, such as Pennsylvania Avenue, Lafayette Park, and the Ellipse. Public use of President's Park continued with traditional activities, such as the Easter egg roll, Marine Band concerts, and demonstrations in Lafayette Park. New opportunities for the public included the highly popular White House gardens and grounds tours in the spring and fall and the summer Twilight Tattoo on the Ellipse.

Privacy and security remained important considerations in the management of President's Park, especially after cars crashed through gates on Pennsylvania Avenue All gates were replaced with similar ones built of sturdier materials.

The Grounds of the White House

Richard M. Nixon became president in 1969. At First Lady Pat Nixon's request the north and south fountains were kept illuminated year round, requiring the installation of water heaters; the White House and the flag were also illuminated, and the flag was flown 24 hours a day. For the first time the gardens and grounds were open to the public one weekend in the spring and another in the fall (see figure 8-1), a tradition that has continued to the present. Mrs. Nixon also used the gardens frequently for entertaining guests.[2]

In 1970 the Eisenhower putting green and the Roosevelt swimming pool in the west colonnade were removed. A press room was built in place of the pool. The present porte cochère at the north entrance to the West Wing was also added in 1970. The tennis court was

2. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

enlarged to standard size. In 1971 a flagstone terrace and a wooden fence were constructed next to the court. The maintenance building near the court was enlarged at about the same time. The Rose Garden was decorated for the wedding of Tricia Nixon and Edward Cox on June 12, 1971. White tree roses, madonna lilies, heliotrope, pink geraniums, and white petunias were planted in the borders, and Capitata yews were placed around the portico.[3]

President Nixon's commemorative trees were a giant sequoia planted near the south portico on May 5, 1971, and a fern-leaf beech planted on the north grounds near the entrance to the West Wing on April 10, 1972. The giant sequoia died some time before 1994.[4]

In February 1973 an automobile crashed through one of the Pennsylvania Avenue gates, stopping short of the north portico. In 1974 an Army private landed a helicopter within the south fence. That same year, a man crashed a gate on Pennsylvania Avenue, holding the Secret Service off for four hours when it appeared he was wired with explosives. As a result in 1976 the last segment of Paulus Hedl's iron fence was removed and put in storage and was replaced with a modern replica in heavier materials as part of an overall White House barrier proposal. Later that same year a man in a truck attempted to ram the new gates, which withstood the impact.[5]

During the presidency of Gerald Ford, the present outdoor swimming pool and adjacent cabaña were constructed south of the West Wing (figure 8-2). Numerous alternative designs were considered,

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3. NPS, "The President's Garden," 68. Information on the porte cochère at the main entrance to the West Wing is from ESF/WHL/NPS. The porte cochère was designed by the National Park Service. The tennis court was resurfaced with Dynaturf.

4. File on commemorative trees from the Kennedy through Carter administrations, Jan. 19, 1979, OC/WH; Ted Knap, "Nixon's Tree a Tot Destined as Tallest" (newspaper clipping, newspaper and date not identified), OC/WH; Donnie Radcliffe, "How Their Garden Grows: The Legacy of First Ladies Lives in the Trees, Flowers and Shrubs," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 1994, OC/WH; NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds."

5. Paul Hodge, "White House Gates To Be Replaced," *The Washington Post*, Feb. 26, 1976; Ann Devroy and Pierre Thomas, "White House Security Has Been Breached Several Times Before," *Washington Post*, Sept. 13, 1994; Jeffrey Smith, "Note Reveals Suspect Was Ready To Die," *Washington Post*, Oct. 31, 1994; "Vehicle Barrier Proposal: White House Prepared," by Ronald Dickson (architect, NCP) and John Longworth (civil engineer, NCP), passim; assoc. dir. (WHL) to dir. (NCP), memorandum: "Environmental Assessment: White House Gates Project," n.d.; Office of White House Liaison, "Environmental Assessment: White House Gates Project," Apr. 20, 1976, Gates II/General Repairs/White House, box 69; Vikki to Fish, Dec. 17, 1976; Atkins to Teets, "Paramount Filming Request," Sept. 21, 1976; all in A7217/Reading File (Aug. 1976–Dec. 1976), WHL-AM-010. Kelly to Lumbermens Mutual Casualty Co., Mar. 18, 1952, 950-13/Fences and Gates, box 4, acc. 64A-42, ESF/ARD/WHL/NPS.

including several for an elaborate enclosed pool.[6] Like her predecessor, First Lady Betty Ford enjoyed using the gardens for entertaining guests.[7]

On October 20, 1975, Mrs. Ford planted an American elm, the Bicentennial Tree, to the west of the north portico. The grounds maintenance facility was expanded in 1976, when the flagstone terrace and the wooden fence were constructed next to the tennis court.[8] On January 13, 1977, President Ford planted a white pine south of the East Wing. Both are still living.[9]

President Jimmy Carter planted two commemorative trees during his presidency that are still living: a red maple on the north grounds near the northeast entrance on November 17, 1977, and a cedar of Lebanon on the western Jefferson mound on April 28, 1978.[10] The red maple replaced an American elm that President Wilson had planted on December 18, 1913, but that had died of Dutch elm disease. First Lady Rosalynn Carter planted a threadleaf Japanese maple northeast of the south fountain on April 13, 1978. President Carter also had a tree house built for his daughter Amy. A free-standing rather than a conventional structure, the tree house stood on the ground among the lower branches of a Blue Atlas cedar on the west Jefferson mound.[11]

In addition to commemorative trees, numerous other trees were planted, some of them to replace elms killed by Dutch elm disease. Most of these were replaced by a more disease-resistant strain called American elm 'Horace Wester.' On May 9, 1977, a severe windstorm caused a European linden on the north grounds to fall, severely damaging another European linden so that it had to be removed.

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6. Photographs and other documents at D2215 and D32, ESF/WHL/NPS.

7. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

8. NPS, "Reservation No. 1: White House Grounds and Ellipse," by Elizabeth Barthold, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS no. DC-689 (Washington, DC, 1993), 3.

9. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995; file on presidential commemorative trees, Jan. 19, 1979, OC/WH; "The White House Gardens and Grounds," map [Clinton administration]. The fern-leaf beech does not appear on the map or list.

10. File on presidential commemorative trees, Jan. 19, 1979, OC/WH; NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds."

11. NPS, "The Executive Residence and Grounds" (Denver: Denver Service Center, 1981); Radcliffe, "How Their Garden Grows." A picture of the tree house is in the NPS report.

Both the Rose Garden and the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden were planted seasonally with a variety of bulbs and annuals.[12]

During the first term of the Reagan presidency additional plantings were made. On May 13, 1982, First Lady Nancy Reagan planted two white saucer magnolias on either side and slightly to the north of the north fountain. These replaced the magnolias put in at the time of the 1952 renovation of the grounds. In April 1983 three hybrid type American elms were substituted for the lost elms on the north side of the grounds. On April 14 and April 20, 1984, two diseased fern-leaf beeches on the north grounds were replaced with two new ones of the same variety, a gift of Mrs. Paul Mellon. On August 5, 1984, a huge bur oak dating from the 19th century had to be taken out on the north grounds. In December 1984 President Reagan planted a commemorative sugar maple on the north grounds at the entrance to the West Wing from West Executive Avenue to replace an English elm that had to be removed. A seedling of the John Quincy Adams elm was planted beneath its parent on the east Jefferson mound on March 31, 1982, as a future replacement. On April 14, 1983, a black gum was put in to replace a declining European beech on the west Jefferson mound. On August 8, 1981, and August 16, 1982, two American elms were removed in the southern part of the grounds and replaced with hybrid American elms on November 16, 1984.[13]

The Rose Garden was renovated in 1981 under the guidance of Irvin Williams. There were discussions with Mrs. Mellon about modifying the design of the garden since it had become overly shady. In the end major changes were not implemented, but more roses and other flowers were planted at the request of First Lady Nancy Reagan, among them a Nancy Reagan hybrid tea rose and a Pat Nixon floribunda rose. The crab apple trees were pruned, and the osmanthus holly trees were clipped back to let in more light. New true dwarf English boxwood borders were planted to replace the greenpillow boxwood edging. The Rose Garden was back in use in August 1981. In 1982 the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden was rehabilitated as well, with no change to its basic design. The existing Kingsville boxwood was replaced with greenpillow boxwood, and the Washington hawthorn was removed and replaced with Elaeagnus

12. NPS, "The Executive Residence and Grounds;" NPS, "Gardens of the White House Grounds" (Denver Service Center, 1979).

13. NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1980–1984* (Denver Service Center, 1984); NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds."

shrubs to frame the trellis window. The floral patterns and colors were changed to display shades from white to pastel yellows.[14]

Another important project between 1980 and 1984 was the extension of the grounds maintenance building near the tennis court, begun during the Carter administration and completed by August 1983. In 1984 the boxwoods at the East Wing were replaced with smaller boxwoods in a flowing, curvilinear pattern.[15] At the end of President Reagan's first term, Irvin Williams was named superintendent of grounds.[16]

Much landscaping activity occurred during the second Reagan term. In May 1988 a willow oak replaced the large bur oak removed in 1984. On September 10, 1986, the giant sequoia that President Nixon had planted on the south grounds in 1971 was removed. In April 1987 Nellie R. Stevens hollies were planted along the east perimeter fence near the southeast gate, the existing rhododendrons were replaced with Delaware Valley white azaleas, and additional wintercreeper was put in as ground cover. On October 7, 1987, a silver Atlas cedar on the east Jefferson mound replaced a former specimen that had blown down several years earlier. A heavy storm on May 24, 1988, broke off a huge branch from an American elm near the tennis court. The limb fell across the court and destroyed a saucer magnolia and two American hollies. They were replaced in June with Nellie R. Stevens hollies and a star magnolia. On October 24, 1988, President Reagan planted a commemorative 14-year-old willow oak on the south grounds not far from the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden. It replaced a scarlet oak that was planted in 1955 and removed in August 1988 because of disease.[17] All the Reagan commemorative trees were extant as of 1994.

In September 1985 the east and west service drives on the north grounds were resurfaced with asphalt, and the oval in front of the West Wing was modified. In 1987 the south grounds roadway was

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14. Rachel Lambert Mellon, "The White House Rose Garden: Photographed at the Peak of Its Spring Color, The Garden Design for President Kennedy Has Just Been Restored at the Request of President and Mrs. Ronald Reagan," *House and Garden* (Sept. 1984), 121–28, 251–53. Except for the last few paragraphs, which deal with the Reagan restoration, this article is the same as that published in *White House History*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1983), 4–11. New photographs were also included. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995; NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1984–1988*.

15. NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1984–1988*.

16. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

17. NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1984–1988*; Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

also resurfaced with asphalt. The same year the asphalt on the roadway under the east portico was removed to expose the earlier cobblestone drive. In 1986 improvements were made to the Children's Garden: a pathway was built leading out to the west, Nellie R. Stevens hollies were added to enhance the feeling of enclosure, azaleas and liriope were planted for color, and the Stayman Winesap apple tree was replaced with a Red Delicious variety. The south fountain was repaired in 1987. Sod was replaced in the south grounds in 1987 and 1988. In August 1988 the swimming pool and deck were repaired. Leyland cypress were planted west of the pool. They were at least 20 feet tall and had root balls about 8 feet in diameter. Irvin Williams had found them in a farmer's field as a hedgerow. The trees were numbered and installed in the same configuration as they grew, providing an instant hedge to screen the pool from the Old Executive Office Building.[18] New plants placed around the pool, included azaleas, hollies, and ground cover.[19]

In 1986 the President's Patio and the west patio (or the Chief of Staff's Patio), two small and private spaces for the relaxation of the president and his staff, were built south of the West Wing. The President's Patio features stone paving, steps, and walls, including a high wall on the west side, with a lion's head fountain over a small pool. The plantings include Japanese maples, hollies, azaleas, ground cover, and annual and perennial beds. The west patio has a white arbor and stonework paving. Plantings consist of red maples, hornbeams, azaleas, and Japanese hollies.[20]

During the Reagan administration, especially in the wake of another bomb explosion in the Capitol, a number of security measures were implemented. In 1982–84 a new visitor entry building with metal detectors and other security equipment was built south of the East Wing. The building was opened to use on May 28, 1984, and the landscaping was completed the following October. In 1983–84 the guard booths at the northwest and southwest gates and at the East Wing were extended to incorporate security magnetometers.[21] Numerous articles appeared in the press in 1983 about threats to White House security and the various steps being taken, including

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18. NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1984–1988.* Information on the pool hedge is courtesy of Carol Whipple (Denver Service Center [DSC], NPS).

19. Package 422, box 167, ESF/WHL/NPS.

20. Package 422, box 167, ESF/WHL/NPS.

21. The architects were Wiley and Wilson of Richmond, Virginia. Wold Von Eckardt, "A New White House Entrance," *Time,* June 28, 1982, 68; NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1980–1984.*

dump trucks filled with sand blocking entrances to the grounds and barricades along Pennsylvania Avenue.[22] In 1984 John Carl Warnecke recommended that Pennsylvania Avenue be closed and a tunnel be built in front of the White House; the abandoned street would become a landscaped pedestrian way.[23] Perhaps in response to this proposal, newspaper articles appeared about closing Pennsylvania Avenue.[24]

The permanent closure of East Executive Avenue to vehicular traffic was preceded by decades of discussion and design proposals. In the 1960s the architectural firm of Nicholas Satterlee had prepared plans for a landscaped pedestrian mall, which were not implemented. These recommendations were reconsidered in the late 1970s.[25] To test the new concept, East Executive Avenue and Alexander Hamilton Place had both been closed to all but official traffic in April 1983. Following the success of the temporary closing, plans and sketches were prepared.[26] In the final design, a grass panel replaced much of the former roadway, although a narrow asphalt road for vehicle access remained on the east and a pedestrian walk on the west. Willow oaks were planted, and round planters filled with seasonal flowers were installed along the pedestrian walkway. Benches, bollard lighting, and black wrought-iron security gates were also part of the design. The project was begun in September 1985 and completed by February 1987.[27] In 1987 the Secret Service requested

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22. Marjorie Hunter, "Shadow over White House Security," *New York Times*, May 12, 1983; Martin Weil and Michael Martinez, "Trucks at White House for 'Security Reasons,'" *Washington Post*, Nov. 23, 1983, B1, B4; "Barricades," *Washington Post*, Dec. 28, 1983; Devroy and Thomas, "White House Security Has Been Breached Several Times Before."

23. John Carl Warnecke, "Current White House Problems of Security, Traffic and Appearance: An Historical Analysis and Planning Proposal," (Washington, DC) Apr. 1, 1984.

24. Stephen Engelberg, "How Secure Must 'the People's House' Be?" *New York Times*, Apr. 26, 1985.

25. NPS, "Chronology," [1981]; NPS, "East Executive Avenue Closing," [1981]; NPS, "The Relationship between D.C. Department of Transportation and the National Park Service Re: Closing East Executive Avenue," Sept. 14, 1981; NPS, "East Executive Avenue Closing," [1981]; all in box 72, ESF/WHL/NPS. The media paid much attention to the closing of East Executive Avenue. See "Traffic as It Used to Be," *Washington Post*, June 5, 1983; Kenneth Bredemeier, "East Executive Ave., Goodbye," *Washington Post*, Dec. 7, 1984; Marcia Slacum Greene, "Pedestrian Mall Being Built Between White House, Treasury," *Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 1985. The concept design for the new pedestrian way was by Merrick Smith, a landscape architect with the Denver Service Center of the National Park Service (DSC/NPS), which executed the detailed design

26. "Redevelopment of East Executive Avenue Design Analysis," n.d.; "East Executive Avenue Closing," Aug. 10, 1982; "East Executive Avenue. Consultation between the National Park Service and Treasury Department," May 27, 1983; all in file A7217, box DC-013, ESF/WHL/NPS.

27. NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1984–1988.*

the removal of the trash receptacles along East Executive Avenue, feeling that they could be used as hiding places for bombs. They were replaced with a new kind of receptacle with a locking lid.[28]

In 1988 there was increasing concern about West Executive Avenue, which had been closed to through-traffic for many years but which was becoming congested with traffic coming into the West Wing and the Old Executive Office Building. Insufficient parking was available for the workers in these buildings, and West Executive Avenue was taking on the appearance of a parking lot.[29] This condition remained in 1994.

The Pennsylvania Avenue bollards project was also carried out in 1988. Exposed-aggregate concrete bollards were installed to replace the concrete barriers that had extended along Pennsylvania Avenue from East Executive Park to West Executive Avenue. The project also involved new granite curbs, edging, and restored street lights; it was completed in October 1988.[30]

Several commemorative trees were planted during the administration of George Bush. In 1989 President Bush planted a Patmore ash on the south grounds near the drive leading to the southeast entrance to the grounds. He planted an eastern redbud to the rear of the visitor pavilion in 1990, and in 1991 a Rivers purple beech on the northern slope of the east Jefferson mound. On May 14, 1991, President Bush and Queen Elizabeth II of England, who was in Washington for a state visit, planted a small-leaved linden on the south lawn, replacing one Franklin D. Roosevelt had planted in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of her father, King George VI. Because the John Quincy Adams elm had to be taken down, First Lady Barbara Bush planted an American elm grafted from the Adams elm on the east Jefferson mound on December 5, 1991. The replacement American elm was planted in almost exactly the same spot as the original. When the John Quincy Adams elm was taken down, a chipper was brought in. Rather than being allowed to rot away over a period of time, as often happens, the entire root system of the old elm was removed at once. Scions, seedlings, and grafts had been harvested from the original

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28. Vance Fisher, memorandum for the record, Oct. 21, 1987; assoc. reg. dir. (WHL) to reg. dir. (NCR), Nov. 24, 1987; Carol Whipple (WHL), memorandum for the record, Dec. 28, 1987; Vance Fisher, memorandum to the record, Feb. 1, 1988; McDaniel to Clint L. Howard (special agent-in-charge, U. S. Secret Service), March 17, 1988; all in PRPK-460, box 167, ESF/WHL/NPS. The trash receptacles, called the Pennsylvania Avenue receptacles, were made by Canterbury International, Sherman Oaks, California.

29. Smith (DSC/NPS) to McDaniel (WHL/NPS), May 17, 1988, ESF/WHL/NPS.

30. NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1984–1988.*

tree for some time and propagated at Princeton Nurseries in New Jersey.[31] All the commemorative trees planted during the Bush administration were still living as of 1994.

In 1989 a new flagstone walk was installed in the Rose Garden to correct turf damage during special events. A similar flagstone walk was added at the same time in the Children's Garden. Between June and July 1991 the West Wing entranceway was redesigned to regrade and allow for handicap accessibility. New paving, curbs, drainage structures, planters, and a revision to the parking layout on West Executive Avenue were carried out. That same year the pedestrian walk on the north grounds driveway was renovated, necessitating the removal and replacement of large Japanese yews. A European linden on the north grounds was blown down during a thunderstorm in 1992. A ring count showed the tree to be 152 years old, dating the other European lindens on the north grounds to about 1840. Between 1989 and 1992 the peripheral plantings on the southernmost grounds were renovated and augmented extensively. Several dogwoods died in this period because of the new fungal blight *(Discula anthracnose)* and were replaced with resistant cultivars. Nellie R. Stevens hollies and American hollies were added along the east and west perimeters of the south grounds.[32]

The swimming pool during this period is shown in figure 8-3. Also, a private donor contributed a three-quarter sized bronze stag, which is displayed in the area behind the swimming pool cabaña near the President's Patio.[33] A horseshoe court was constructed near the southeast end of the pool deck in 1989 to allow the president to pursue his favorite activity (see figure 8-4). Helleri hollies were planted nearby in an informal hedge, and a yellow-fruited American holly was added for winter interest.[34] A new putting green (donated by a private contractor) and a partial basketball court were put in

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31. NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds"; Radcliffe, "How Their Garden Grows"; *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1988–1992;* Barbara Bush, *Barbara Bush: A Memoir* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994), 415; Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995.

32. NPS, *White House Grounds and Gardens, 1988–1992,* 8–10; information on West Wing entranceway redesign provided by Carol Whipple (DSC/NPS). Merrick Smith did the initial concept sketch and Whipple carried out the final design and construction documents. The work was completed from 6:00 P.M. to 3:00 A.M. using NCR-Brentwood "day" labor forces, as Chief of Staff John Sununu did not like the dirt and noise during the day.

33. Information from O'Brien (DSC/NPS) and McDaniel (WHL/NPS). The Office of the Curator at the White House has limited information about the bronze stag.

34. NPS, "Proposed Sites for Horseshoe Pit Court," Nov. 1988; Harriet Johnson Brackey, "Horseshoe Makers Hope for Presidential Pitch," *USA Today,* [Nov.?] 1988; both in file 49.0, box 156, ESF/WHL/NPS; NPS, *The White House Grounds and Gardens, 1988–1992,* 9–10.

near the tennis court in 1991.[35] In 1991 after a parade down Pennsylvania Avenue to mark the end of Desert Storm, veterans and their families were invited to a picnic on the Ellipse. In 1992 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the laying of the White House cornerstone a time capsule was installed at the southwest corner of the Executive Residence. Designed by Norman Koonce, it consists of a bronze plaque on a granite base.

After William Jefferson Clinton became president in 1993, a jogging track was installed along the edge of the south drive. The jogging track, built with donated funds, was placed within the existing footprint of the drive, so that no widening was necessary. During a storm in 1993, a magnolia branch fell on the wooden pergola in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden; the pergola was rebuilt. In 1993 President and Mrs. Clinton planted three trees in locations where commemorative trees had been lost: a small-leaved linden near the West Wing, an American elm to the northwest of the south fountain, and a willow oak to the east of the south fountain (figure 8-5). In 1994 First Lady Hillary Clinton planted three white dogwood trees in the triangle of land between the transverse drive and the western branch of the south drive.[36]

Early in the Clinton administration, landscape architect R. Merrick Smith made a study of the White House grounds, addressing such issues as privacy and the south lawn, the possible addition of volleyball courts, and East Executive Park. Screening for privacy continued to be a particular concern. At the time the report was written some temporary measures had been adopted to provide more privacy, such as setting plants in large containers along the southwestern edge of the transverse road (see figure 9-18).[37]

In the spring of 1994 Mrs. Clinton, as honorary chairman of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, initiated a program to exhibit contemporary American sculpture in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden. In conjunction with the Association of Art Museum Directors, J. Carter Brown (a member of the preservation committee,

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35. NPS, *White House Grounds and Gardens, 1988–1992*, 10.

36. NPS, "The White House Gardens and Grounds"; White House Historical Association, *The White House: An Historic Guide* (Washington, DC: White House Historical Association, with the cooperation of the National Geographic Society, 1994), map on pp. 154–55; team site visit to White House grounds with Ludy Schneider, Dec. 12, 1994. Additional information from McDaniel (WHL/NPS).

37. Smith (DSC/NPS), "Report," [ca. spring 1993], ESF/WHL/NPS. The south bollards project along E Street was completed in April 1993; information from Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS).

chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, and director emeritus of the National Gallery) explored possibilities and conceived the idea of dividing the country into regions from which various museums and public collections might lend sculptures on a rotating basis to the White House for six months. George W. Neubert, director of the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, was then asked to prepare an exhibition drawn from the collections of Midwest museums. The first exhibition opened in October 1994, featuring 12 works of art produced over more than 70 years of the 20th century. Among the sculptors represented were Alexander Calder, Ellsworth Kelly, Gaston Lachaise, Paul Manship, Louise Nevelson, and George Segal. The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation sponsored the exhibition with the cooperation of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House and the White House Historical Association. To make room for the exhibit, a statue of a girl holding a plant and a watering can, sculpted by Silvia Shaw Judson, was removed from the east garden and placed in storage.[38]

Because of several events in the fall and winter of 1994 — an airplane crash on the south lawn near the south portico and two shootings at the White House — security measures were once again thoroughly reevaluated. In the plane crash of September 13, 1994, one of the Jackson magnolias lost a limb about 6–8 inches in diameter, as well as some bark.[39]

Thanks in large part to the long tenure of Irvin Williams as superintendent of grounds at the White House, a consistent policy has been followed in regard to commemorative tree plantings and the care of the grass and trees. Commemorative tree plantings are largely undertaken to replace major specimen trees that have been lost to disease, age, or natural disaster. As far as possible, the same kind of tree is planted to replace the missing one. American elms receive the same care as the other trees on the grounds: they are pruned using sterile tools, sprayed with a 1% oil spray, and fed three pounds of 10-6-4 fertilizer every three years. They are not injected against Dutch elm disease. In almost all cases, American elms are replaced with American elms. Sometimes more disease-resistant hybrids such as Horace Wester have been used. In other cases, as with the John Quincy Adams elm, seedlings or grafts from original trees on the grounds have been used. A few replacement elms have been seedlings

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38. Judith Weinraub, "First Lady Finds Niche for Art," *Washington Post*, Oct. 12, 1994; "Twentieth Century American Sculpture at The White House, An Exhibition," Washington, D.C., Oct. 1994; information about the Judson statue from Irv Williams, October 2001.

39. Information from McDaniel (WHL/NPS).

of a remarkable American elm near the Tidal Basin that appears to be immune to Dutch elm disease. Since Washington, D. C., is in an area that is a bit too far north for southern grasses and too far south for northern grasses, maintaining the lawns has always been difficult. Various solutions have been tried, but for some time fescue has been used on both the north and south grounds and has worked out well.[40]

Lafayette Park

In the early 1970s, as a part of various projects in Washington to celebrate the bicentennial of American independence, proposals were made to remove the lodge in Lafayette Park and replace it with underground restrooms. Nothing came of these proposals, although the existing lodge was renovated in 1980.[41] Controversy regarding the removal of the lodge continued into the 1990s. Most of the statues in Lafayette Park were restored during this period.

In 1982 a proposal was made to replace the lighting system in Lafayette Park, which had not been part of the renovation that took place in 1969–70. The existing lights, dating from the 1930s, had become extremely difficult to repair. It was proposed to replace them with a Washington type 14N cast-iron post with a 150-watt high-pressure sodium lamp of a type in use on the south grounds of the White House. This particular style had been approved in 1934 and had the "acorn" type lamp typical of the period.[42]

The interior paths in Lafayette Park were resurfaced with brick in the 1969–70 renovation, but the sidewalk around the perimeter was not, since this sidewalk was the responsibility of the District of Columbia, not the National Park Service. In the early 1980s this decision was reexamined, and in 1983 the perimeter sidewalk along Pennsylvania

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40. Williams interview, Feb. 27, 1995. The American elm on the Tidal Basin has been inoculated with Dutch elm disease but has not contracted it. As Mr. Williams says, "This may be the American elm of the future!" As of February 1995, Mr. Williams supervises 14 to 15 staff, some on the grounds and some, including masons, on the buildings

41. Document box 30 of 31, box 10, ESF/WHL/NPS; also D 24.

42. Pete Gill to McDaniel, June 28, 1982, with illustrations of various sizes of Washington types of street lights; "Lafayette Park Lighting System: Proposal," July 27, 1982; both in box 72, ESF/WHL/NPS. There are also undated photographs of lights in Lafayette Park in box 89. This proposal, however, was not implemented.

Avenue was repaved with brick. Since then Madison and Jackson Places and H Street have also been repaved with brick.[43]

In 1982 the replacement of missing trees in Lafayette Park "compatible with squirrel habitat" became controversial. Most of the missing trees were in the northwest section of the park. Recommended replacements included Kousa dogwood, white oak, sugar maple, shagbark hickory, and American holly.[44] There was considerable controversy during this period over squirrel damage to the parks in Washington, which generated research on urban wildlife by the Center for Urban Ecology.[45] Limiting the squirrel population has been beneficial to the trees that have successfully recovered.

In 1990 a proposal was made to repair the fountains in Lafayette Park.[46]

President's Park South

In 1954 the location of the National Christmas Tree had been moved to the Ellipse, and up to 1973 a cut tree from a different state was used each year. Since then a live tree has been planted. The tree stands on the north side of the Ellipse, close to the Zero Milestone but slightly off-axis to the east. Mr. and Mrs. William E. Meyers of York, Pennsylvania, donated a 30-foot Colorado blue spruce in 1978.[47] A replacement Colorado blue spruce has been planted on the Ellipse as a backup.[48]

In 1969 as a result of President Nixon's decision to cut back all federal construction funds, previous plans to landscape the area west of the Ellipse, including the Zalles-Saul and the Henraux-Becker fountains, were stopped. At Mrs. Zalles's insistence, an effort was made to include the project as part of the Bicentennial program, but

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43. Assoc. solicitor (conservation and wildlife, NPS) to solicitor, Aug. 7, 1981, box 66, ESF/WHL/NPS; NPS, "Plan for Sidewalk Replacement, Lafayette Park," Aug. 24, 1983, Whipple, box 168, ESF/WHL/NPS.

44. Carolyn O'Hara, memorandum for the record, with list of trees and sketch map, May 7, 1982, box 61, ESF/WHL/NPS. It is not clear whether the recommended trees were planted.

45. Information from McDaniel (WHL/NPS).

46. "Repair Fountains, President's Park," Oct. 26, 1990, approved Aug. 27, 1991, file PRPK-827, box 175, ESF/WHL/NPS.

47. OC/WH.

48. Information from McDaniel (WHL/NPS).

Congress failed to authorize the required funds, which had been estimated to be approximately $356,300. However, on May 5, 1976, the bronze plaque in honor of John Saul was placed in the northwest quadrant of the Ellipse along E Street. Early in 1979 Mrs. Zalles donated $13,000 to beautify the area of President's Park in the vicinity of the visitor kiosk. At this time she requested that the National Park Service move the Saul memorial plaque to its current location northwest of the Ellipse visitor pavilion along E Street.[49]

In April 1976 in conjunction with the Bicentennial celebration, the White House visitor program officially started. The ticketing system for White House tours became necessary to accommodate the increasing numbers of visitors. The initial program consisted of ticket distribution for timed tours, continuous entertainment, and covered bleacher seating on the eastern half of the Ellipse from April to October. Several small facilities were built to accommodate the needs of visitors waiting for tours. The NPS octagonal shaped kiosk provided information. At an adjacent kiosk gifts and souvenirs were sold. Farther south, steps led to underground restrooms. Even farther south refreshments were provided at a nondescript building.[50]

In 1987 a proposal was made to redesign the Christmas Pageant of Peace and to move it to the eastern side of the Ellipse; the proposal was not implemented.[51] By Christmas 1994 the Pageant of Peace included small Christmas trees representing each state in the Union, as well as the five territories and the District of Columbia, a yule log, live Luray deer (instead of reindeer), a nativity scene, and music.[52] The temporary structures necessary for this display intruded on the central north-south vista.

During the 1970s the mosaic floor around the base of the Sherman statue was repaired, solving a problem that had persisted since 1906 when frost caused cracks in the floor. Repairs in 1925, 1929, and 1947 had consisted mostly of filling cracks and relaying loose marble tile on a restored concrete bed. By 1974 the National Park Service decided to replace the marble mosaic floor with a different material and foundation that could still retain most, if not all, of the qualities of the original design. Consequently, it was decided to recreate the

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49. Author unknown, "History of Two Marble Fountains," Apr. 20, 1988; "Zalles Fountain 1975," WHL-7BP-06, Records of the Director, ESF/WHL/NPS.

50. Information courtesy of Krause (WHL/NPS), June 15, 2000.

51. Park manager (President's Park) to assoc. reg. dir. (Professional Services), et al., June 1, 1987, file PRPK-815, box 175, ESF/WHL/NPS.

52. Site visit, Zaitzevsky, Dec. 18, 1994, including information on a sign about the 40th year of the Pageant of Peace.

design and colors of the original in terrazzo. The work was completed in 1976.[53] In October 1983 azaleas were added at Sherman Plaza, and the following year new Millet lampposts were installed.[54]

In 1988 parking problems in President's Park led to a reconsideration of the 1967 plan by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill for an underground garage beneath the Ellipse.[55] In 1979 a proposal was made to close Alexander Hamilton Place and to merge the grounds of the Treasury and those of Sherman Plaza, but it was not accepted.[56]

In 1990 recommendations were made to repair the fountain at the Boy Scout Memorial, the Haupt fountains, and the Butt-Millet fountain, in conjunction with other work on fountains in President's Park. Because the Butt-Millet fountain lacked a foundation, it did not sit level with the ground, preventing an even water flow over the basin and causing the growth of fungus.[57]

Sherman Plaza underwent major rehabilitation in 1991. The National Park Service contracted with the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation to renovate the site. The primary objective was to completely replace the deteriorated sidewalks with precast concrete London pavers and granite trim and to replace all other walkways with gray exposed-aggregate concrete. Twelve new cast-iron Millet-style light fixtures were installed, plus park benches, trash receptacles, and a drinking fountain. The flowers and plants around the plaza were also reinstalled. Bordering the sidewalks on each side of the statue are rows of low deciduous shrubs that enclose beds of Japanese holly. At corner entrances to the plaza are azalea beds. The Japanese holly were new to Sherman Plaza, but the azaleas were probably first planted in the 1960s.[58]

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53. Thursby, "Sherman Statue," 50–51.

54. Darwina L. Neal (landscape architect, Design Services, NCR) to park manager (President's Park), Dec. 8, 1982; contracting officer (NCR) to Harold Hagen (project inspector), Oct. 12, 1983, re: planting projects at Sherman Park and other parks; Ralph R. Ross (chief, Div. of Contracting) to Spring City Electrical Mfg. Co., Spring City, PA, re: notification of award, Sept. 27, 1984; all in box 67, ESF/WHL/NPS.

55. Merrick Smith to McDaniel, May 17, 1988, with attached sections of the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill proposal and plans, file PRPK-455, box 175, ESF/WHL/NPS.

56. "Pennsylvania Avenue Development Area. Sherman Park and Treasury Terrace, 15th and E Streets, NW, Executive Director's Recommendation," May 25, 1979, box 76, ESF/WHL/NPS.

57. "Repair Fountains, President's Park," Oct. 26, 1990, approved Aug. 27, 1991, file PRPK-827, box 175, ESF/WHL/NPS.

58. Thursby, "Sherman Statue," 52–53.

In May 1994 a new temporary visitor pavilion designed by Mary Oehrlein and Associates was dedicated on the northeast side of the Ellipse (figure 8-6). It replaced the kiosk that had been installed during the Lyndon Johnson administration. The facility provides information, underground restrooms, handicapped accessible facilities at the first floor, plus a gift shop and snack bar.[59]

The Grounds of the Treasury Building

In 1985 Arthur Cotton Moore prepared an unsolicited proposal for the Treasury's south plaza as part of an "Aesthetic Master Plan." This plan was never implemented.[60] In the late 1980s the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the Treasury was improved, and willow oaks were planted there. The original installation did not do well, and the area was replanted.[61]

The Grounds of the Old Executive Office Building

In 1984 the Old Executive Office Building received two cannon on loan from the Smithsonian Institution. Cast in Seville, Spain in 1875, they were captured by the United States Navy on May 1, 1898, from the Spanish arsenal at Cavete in the Philippine Islands after the defeat of the Spanish naval squadron in Manila Bay. They may have been among the 29 pieces of ordnance displayed around the former State, War, and Navy Building between about 1900 and 1943.[62]

In 1984 the Department of the Navy, Navy Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, lent two anchors (L1984 A and B) to the

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59. Barthold, "White House Grounds and Ellipse," 17; dedication information from Krause (ESF/WHL/NPS)

60. Information from McDaniel (WHL/NPS). Scott and Lee, *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, 157, incorrectly state that the Moore plan was carried out. Arthur Cotton Moore Associates, "Aesthetic Master Plan of the Treasury Building and Annex Building, Department of the Treasury, Washington, D.C." (Washington, D.C., 1985).

61. "Summary of Pennsylvania Avenue Sidewalk Tree Installation," n.d.; McDaniel to Charles B. Respass (dep. asst. sec. for admin., Dept. of the Treasury), date too faint to read; file 307, box 167, ESF/WHL/NPS; landscape architect to Calvin Thomas (chief, Project Development, D.C. Dept. of Public Works), June 9, 1989, file PRPK-307, box 167, ESF/WHL/NPS.

62. "A Report on the Mounting and Placement of Trophy Cannon at the Old Executive Office Building (North Entrance) by the National Park Service," Oct. 1985, ESF/WHL/NPS. In 1999 the Old Executive Office Building was renamed the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Old Executive Office Building. Both are Badlt MFG type, 76 inches high, 58 inches wide, and 75 inches across, serial numbers 14173 and 14181. They are inscribed "USN" and weigh 1,011 and 1,027 pounds respectively.[63] According to a photograph in the Historic Preservation Office of the present-day Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, these anchors may also have been previously displayed at the building as early as 1910.

Summary

Between 1971 and 1994 the landscape of President's Park continued to evolve. One of the most significant changes was the closure of East Executive Avenue to vehicular traffic and its redesign as a pedestrian mall (East Executive Park). Few large-scale changes have been made on the White House grounds. Ceremonial tree planting has continued. New trees have been planted in locations where trees were lost; vegetation plans have been modified, and the spaces, particularly on the west side of the grounds, have been periodically redesigned to better serve the recreational and social needs of the current occupants of the White House.

During this period the tennis court was enlarged, a new swimming pool and cabaña were constructed south of the West Wing, and a President's Patio and a west patio were designed and developed in 1986. Various elements, such as the new visitor entrance building, have also been added to tighten security around the White House. Improvements were made to the Children's Garden, including the installation of a flagstone walk and additional vegetation to enhance the feeling of enclosure. The drives on both the north and south grounds were resurfaced; the grounds maintenance building was expanded; and the swimming pool and deck, as well as the south fountain, were repaired.

First Lady Pat Nixon requested that the north and south fountains be illuminated year around. Both the Rose Garden and the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden were renovated. First Lady Hillary Clinton initiated a program to exhibit contemporary American sculpture in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden. The sculpture exhibitions showcased works from museums in various regions of the country.

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63. John F. Dawson (Executive Office of the President, Office of Administration) to O'Brien (DSC/NPS), fax memo, Oct. 13, 1993.

The Pennsylvania Avenue bollards project was completed in 1988. Proposals to upgrade the lighting system in Lafayette Park and to remove the lodge were made, but never implemented. The perimeter sidewalks were paved with brick to match the interior paths.

Throughout President's Park, there has also been a general and gradual upgrading of streets, paths, sidewalks, lighting, benches, and trash receptacles, as well as continued renewal of plantings.

During the last decade security has become an increasing concern not only on the White House grounds, but also on Pennsylvania Avenue, in Lafayette Park, and on the Ellipse. Public use of President's Park still continues with traditional activities, such as the Easter egg roll, Marine Band concerts, and public demonstrations in Lafayette Park. New opportunities for the public include the highly popular White House gardens and grounds tours in the spring and fall and the Twilight Tattoo on the Ellipse.

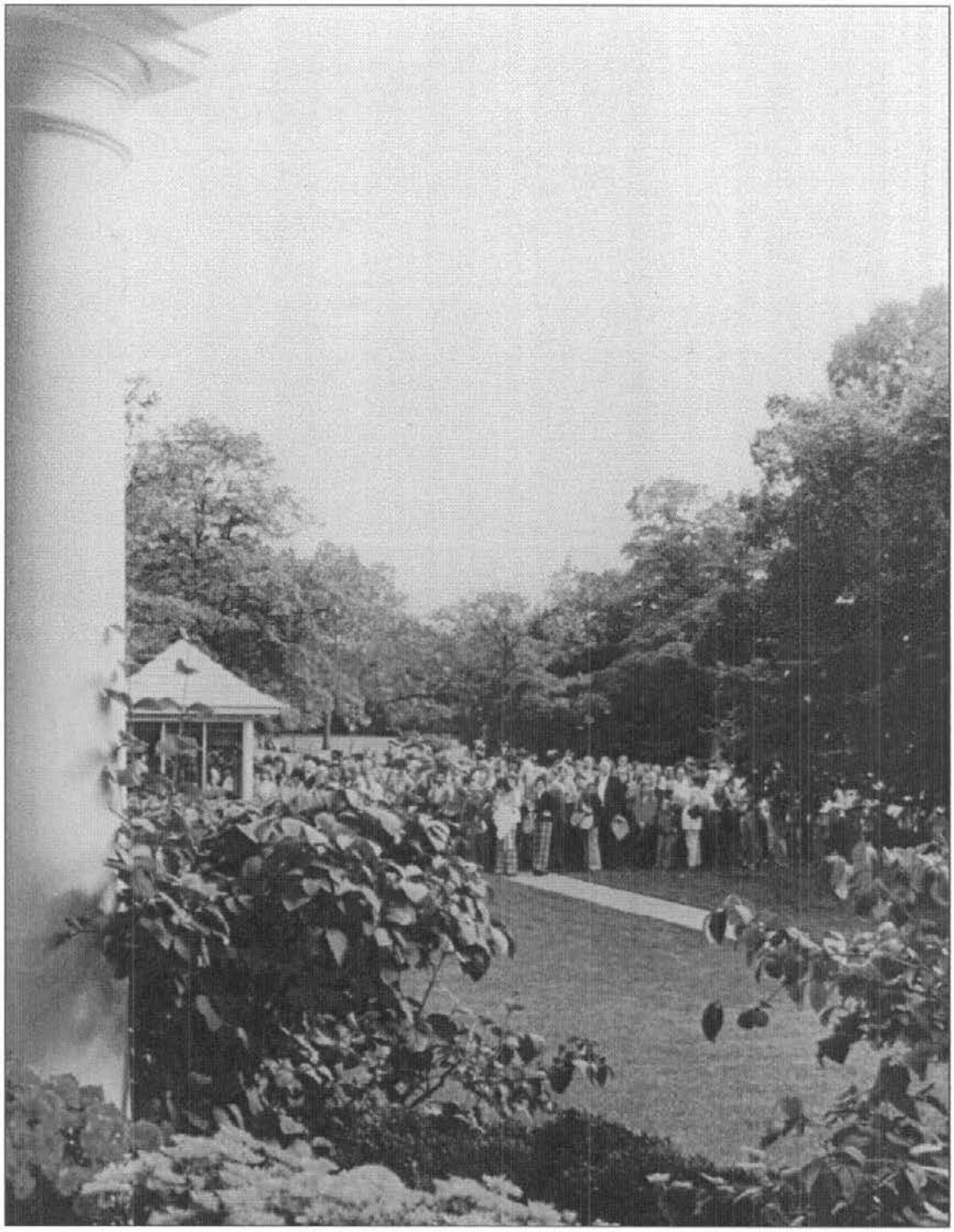

Figure 8-1: *White House Garden Tour Visitors Walking along the South Driveway near the West Wing.* Photograph, 1973. National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials Project.

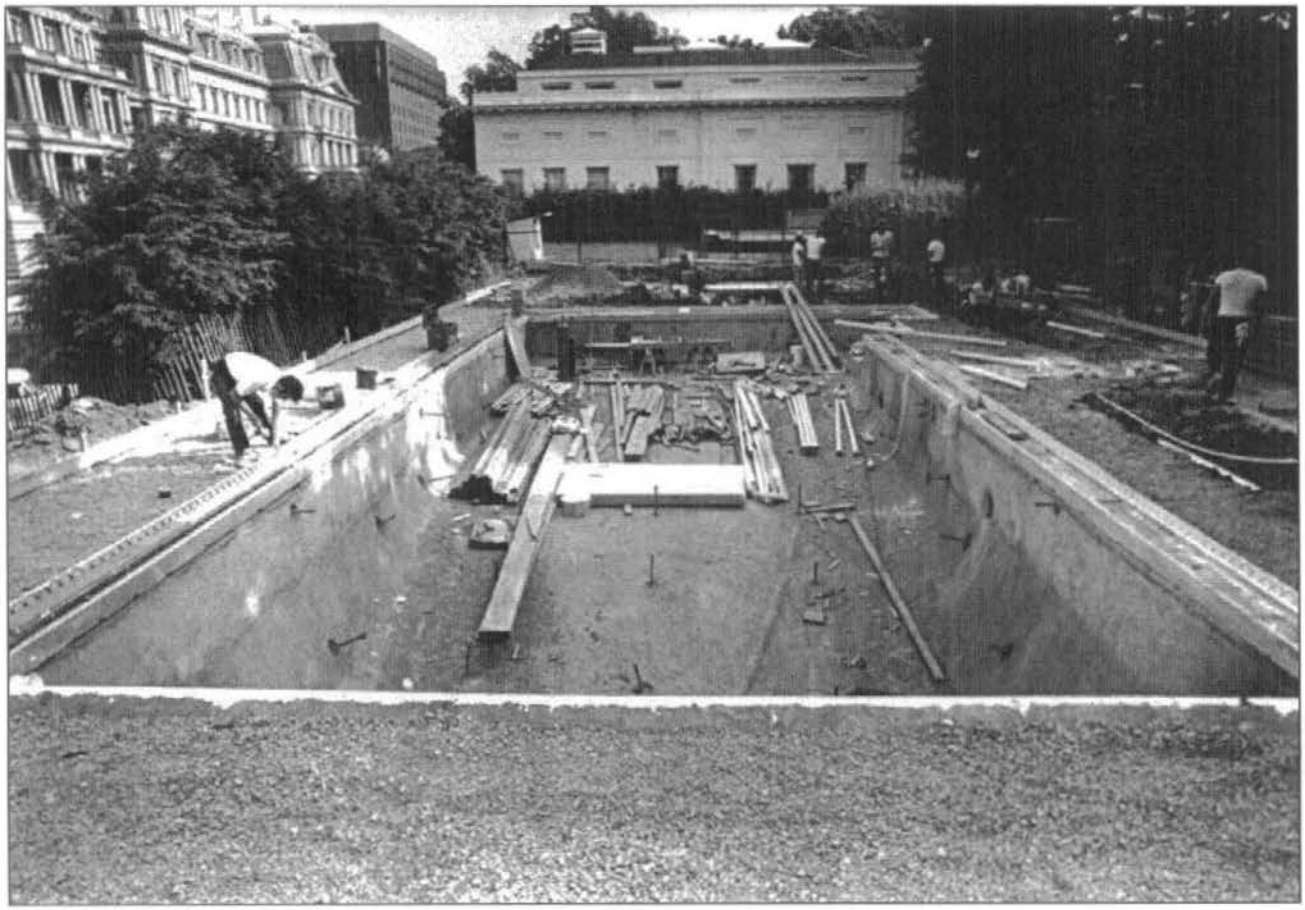

Figure 8-2: *Construction of Swimming Pool*. Photograph, June 1975. National Park Service, Office of White House Liaison.

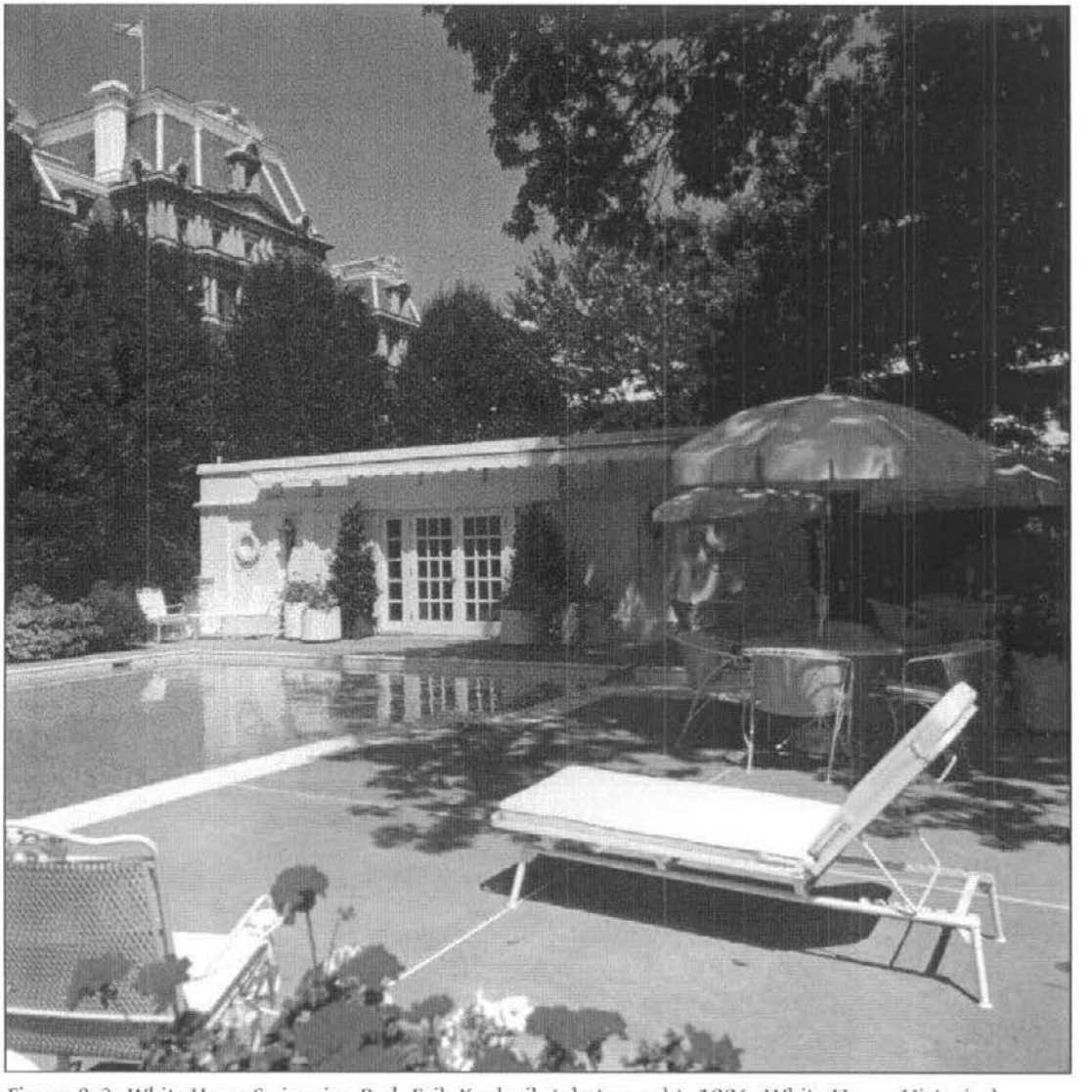

Figure 8-3: *White House Swimming Pool*. Erik Kvalsvik (photograph), 1996. White House Historical Association.

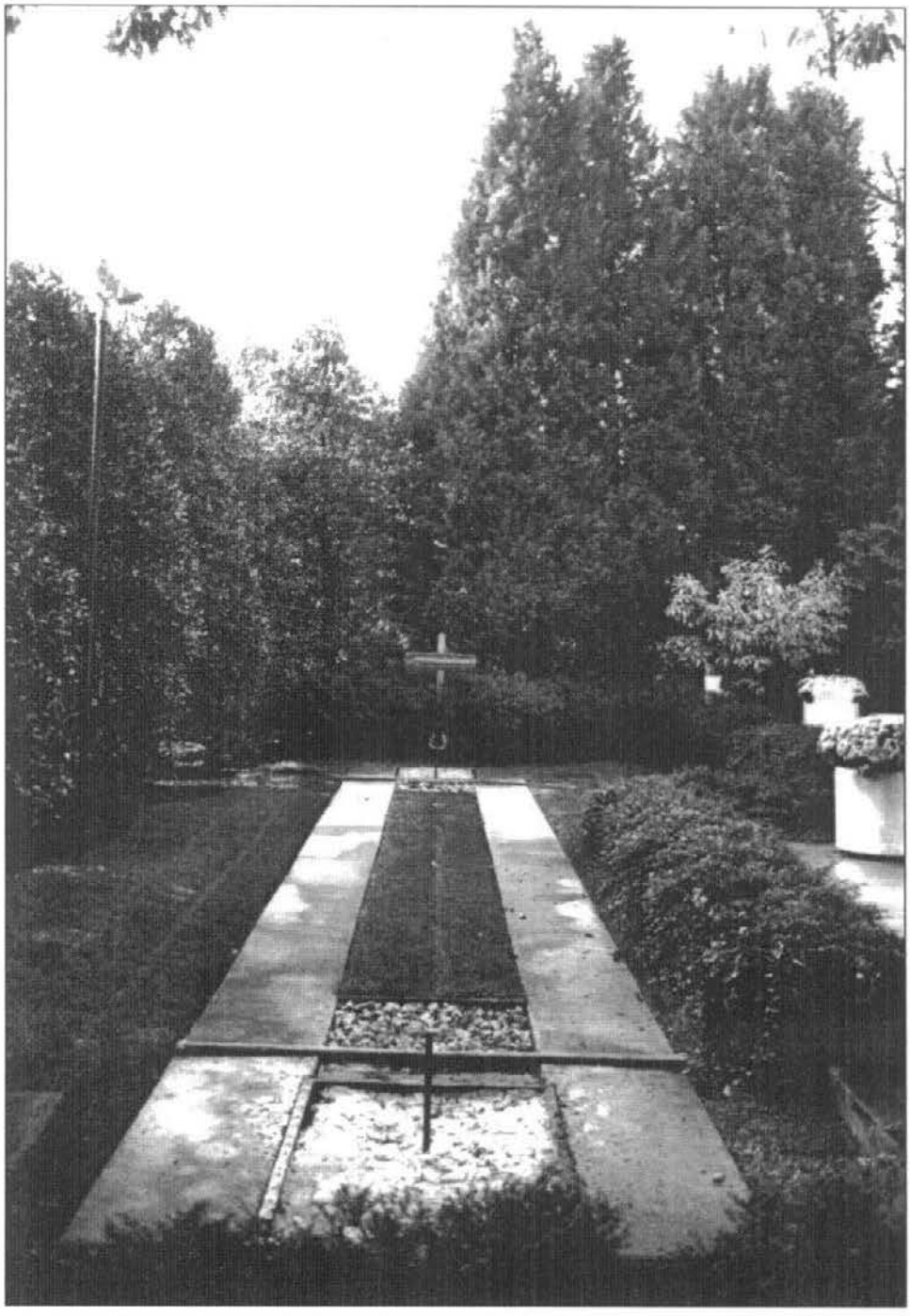

Figure 8-4: *Horseshoe Pit Built for President George H. W. Bush*. Photograph, 1989. Office of the Curator, The White House.

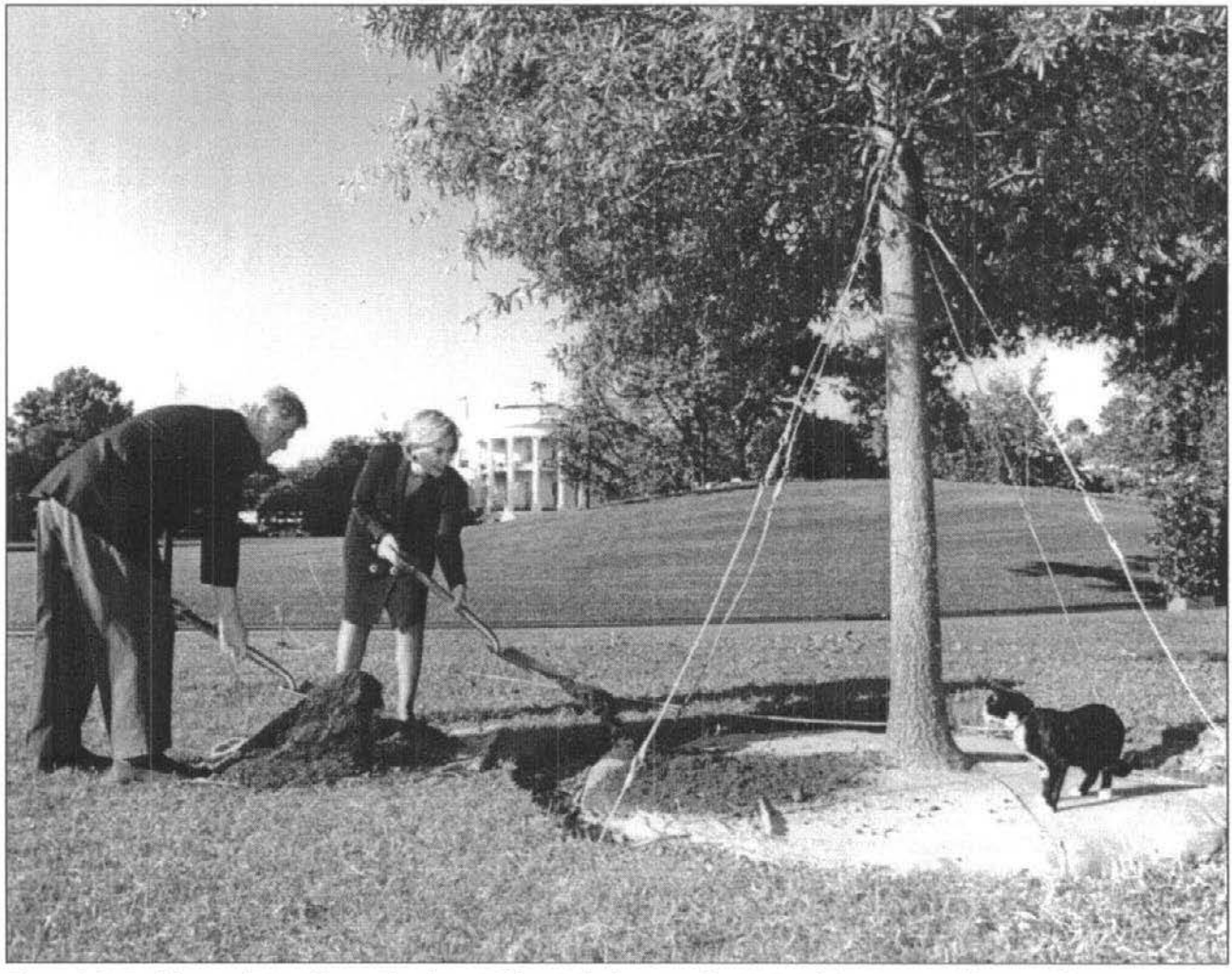

Figure 8-5: *President and Mrs. Clinton Planting a Willow Oak*. Photograph, 1993. White House. William J. Clinton Presidential Materials Project.

Figure 8-6: *Ellipse Visitor Pavilion*. Digital image, 1999. National Park Service, President's Park.

The White House and President's Park

Part II: Existing Conditions

Chapter 9. The White House and President's Park Today

The Grounds of the White House

The North Lawn

The landscape of the White House is one of gently sloping lawns. The expansive north lawn provides a forecourt for the White House and creates a recognizable image of the presidency, President's Park, and Washington, D.C., as the nation's capital city (figure 9-1). From the north lawn steep earthen banks and retaining walls make the transition in grade to the south-sloping topography of the south lawn.

Landscape Design

The north lawn is divided into three sections by a semicircular paved access drive that leads to the north portico of the White House. Within the drive is a predominantly open, semicircular lawn with a circular fountain in the center, which provides the primary visual link to the north portico. To each side of the center panel are more wooded lawn areas. The west lawn area is primarily used as a broadcast site by the news media; it is crossed by a drive leading to the West Wing and the ground floor level of the White House. The east lawn area has no such auxiliary use. The service drive to the ground floor level of the White House on the east originates at the east entry from East Executive Park.

Walls and fencing adjacent to Pennsylvania Avenue, East Executive Park, and West Executive Avenue define the extent of the north lawn. A granite-retaining wall approximately 18 inches high flanks the lawn on the west and east. Along Pennsylvania Avenue the wall is constructed of mortared sandstone rubble with a range of colors including reds, tans, browns, and grays. A tooled granite capstone extends the length of the wall with picket, post, and crossbar fencing approximately 7.5 feet tall, set in the capstone. The fence includes an ornamental center panel with gothic elements, which are repeated at the northeast gate.

Four gates allow access to the north lawn: on the northeast and northwest, East Executive Park, and West Executive Avenue. The northeast and northwest gates are pedimented granite and limestone gateposts that are painted white and topped by wrought-iron gas lamps; they support ornate steel gates that replicate the original wrought-iron gates. The West Executive Avenue entrance has pedimented granite with limestone gateposts. The East Executive Park entrance has flat metal gateposts with simple lanterns. The gates have some design elements, but are not replicas of the original wrought-iron gates.

Much of the north lawn's vegetation is mature or approaching maturity. The effect is of a well-established, parklike landscape. Shade trees provide a dappled, cooling effect during summer; in winter the many elms reinforce the edges of the lawn and its drives and walks. Vegetation consists of deciduous canopy trees, flowering trees and shrubs, and evergreen trees and shrubs planted within large expanses of lawn. In addition, there are seasonal plantings of flowering annuals, perennials, and bulbs and foundation plantings of evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubs, and ground covers. Colorful seasonal plantings surround the fountain in the spring, summer, and fall (figure 9-2).

Commemorative Features

Commemorative trees planted on the north lawn between circa 1889 and 1994 include the following:

- two white saucer magnolias (*Magnolia* × *Soulangiana 'Alba'*) — Nancy Reagan
- a scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*) — Benjamin Harrison
- a white oak (*Quercus alba*) — Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- a red maple (*Acer rubrum*) — Jimmy Carter
- several boxwoods (*Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa'*) — Harry Truman
- two fern-leaf beeches (*Fagus sylvatica 'Asplenifolia'*) — one for Lady Bird Johnson, and one for Patricia Nixon
- an American elm (*Ulmus americana*) — Betty Ford
- a sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) — Ronald Reagan

Bronze plaques and markers identify commemorative plantings.

Ancillary Structures

Four guardhouses in this area are used to provide security and monitor entry to the grounds (figure 9-3). Two are at the ends of the

semicircular entry drive adjacent to Pennsylvania Avenue; two other guardhouses of similar design are adjacent to the West Executive Avenue pedestrian gate and the semicircular entry drive just east of the north portico. The largest is adjacent to the west entrance from Pennsylvania Avenue and serves as the primary entry point for communications and media personnel.

The circular concrete fountain is painted white and has a rounded coping and a central jet. Floodlights set below the rim of the basin on the south side illuminate the fountain at night.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian circulation includes a semicircular concrete walk adjacent to the formal entry drive, the broad paved areas east and west of the north portico, an east-west concrete walk linking the north portico area to the west access/service road, granite steps at the White House entrance, metal access ramps on the east side of the north portico, stairs adjacent to the retaining walls flanking the north portico, and walks leading from the West Wing to West Executive Avenue (figure 9-4). Gates control pedestrian access to the grounds from Pennsylvania Avenue, East Executive Park, and West Executive Avenue.

Just outside the perimeter fence along Pennsylvania Avenue, a broad concrete sidewalk with scored square panels is open to general pedestrian use. Massive bollards linked by iron chains form a continuous vehicular and pedestrian barrier at the curb along the entire Pennsylvania Avenue frontage and flank the aprons of the entry drive. Placed at 5-foot intervals, each bollard consists of a stainless steel pipe anchored into a foundation and filled with concrete, covered with a cast concrete sleeve.

Site Furnishings

Several utilitarian features are associated with the north lawn. These features include the post-and-chain barriers, trash receptacles, and floodlights. Temporary site furnishings include portable chairs, electrical wires, and camera stands related to communications and media uses. Although movable, this equipment remains on the site from day to day in much the same location.

Bacon-style lampposts, painted dark gray, are located adjacent to the curb along Pennsylvania Avenue at regular intervals. Used throughout much of metropolitan Washington, D.C., the Bacon design features a fluted shaft atop an octagonal base with an ornately scrolled cross bracket and two molded acrylic lights with integral

finials (figure 9-5). Another design popular in metropolitan Washington is the Millet lighting standard used on the north lawn adjacent to the West Wing and elsewhere on the White House grounds (figure 9-6). Painted black, it features a cast-iron fluted shaft with a circular, flared base that supports a single cast-acrylic light with an integral finial. A third type of lighting standard is known as the Columbian Family, which is a simplified Bacon-style lamppost. This type of lamppost is found along Pennsylvania Avenue around Lafayette Park and along 15th Street by the Treasury Building and Sherman Plaza (figure 9-7).

Views

The north lawn is visible from Pennsylvania Avenue and Lafayette Park, and the principal view from the north lawn is to Lafayette Park (figure 9-8). The Treasury and Old Executive Office Buildings restrict views to and from the north lawn on the east and west and form a backdrop, particularly during the winter months. The north lawn is visible from these buildings' upper stories.

The Upper South Lawn

The White House, with its semicircular south portico and grand, curving stairways, visually dominates the expansive upper south lawn (figure 9-9). The upper south lawn, which slopes gently to the south, forms a visual corridor that links the White House, the Ellipse, and the Mall.

The upper south lawn is used for a variety of purposes. The president often greets visiting heads of state, makes presentations to foreign dignitaries, and participates in other outdoor events on the south lawn, and most frequently in the east garden (also known as the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden or the First Lady's Garden) and the west garden (the Rose Garden or the President's Garden). The Rose Garden provides an outdoor setting for the president to speak to the press or guests. Traditionally, ceremonial and social events have taken place in the east garden. The upper south lawn is also associated with various commemorative activities. The tradition of presidential tree planting has taken place here intermittently since the administration of John Quincy Adams, as documented by a marker on one of the Eisenhower commemorative plantings (figure 9-10).

The expansive upper south lawn provides the president's family and guests opportunities for strolling, entertaining, and unstructured outdoor games and sports.

The upper south lawn area is a large central open space planted in grass, delineated by a circular drive and a variety of landscaped areas: the east garden, the west garden, the magnolia patio, the President's Patio, the west patio, and the Jefferson mounds. The established recreational facilities include a swimming pool, putting green, and jogging track. The presidential helicopter also lands on the upper south lawn. The three guardhouses on the upper south lawn are south of the east garden, south of the west garden, and south of the swimming pool.

The upper south lawn's vegetation is varied and well maintained. There are foundation plantings, formal garden plantings, deciduous shade and canopy trees, evergreen trees and shrubs, deciduous flowering trees and shrubs, and seasonal plantings of annuals, perennials, and bulbs. The formal gardens near the White House include geometrical planting beds and clipped hedges of evergreen shrubs, lines of small trees, and seasonal plantings of flowering species. Large trees and shrubs are planted at the edges of the open expanse of lawn surrounded by the circular drive. Plantings of ornamental trees and shrubs, including two blue atlas cedars, camellias, and English ivy, crown the Jefferson mounds. The Jefferson mounds, which symmetrically frame views both to and from the White House, are in the southeastern and southwestern portions of the central lawn. An American elm on the eastern mound is a graft of the original tree planted nearby by John Quincy Adams. The original is believed to have been the oldest surviving tree on the White House grounds until it had to be removed.

East Garden. The east garden is adjacent to the White House along the south façade of the east colonnade (figure 9-11). The White House, the east terrace, and the East Wing frame the garden to the west, north, and east, and there are clipped hedges to the south. The garden's central lawn is flanked on the north and south by a formal parterre of clipped evergreen shrubs with geometrical plantings of seasonal flowers and herbs. The lawn and parterres are set within a perimeter network of steel-edged brick walks.

A pergola and a rectangular pool are located outside the perimeter walk at the west and east ends of the garden. The three-bay white wooden pergola has two rows of four slender Tuscan columns that support a perpendicular grid of lintels, beams, and laths.[1] A brass

1. The pergola was originally constructed of wood, but has been replaced with a fiberglass structure to eliminate the recurring need for repair and replacement; Ludy Schneider (White House gardening staff).

plaque on one of the columns, dated 1965, dedicates the garden to Jacqueline Kennedy. A concord grapevine growing at the northeast corner is trained on the pergola. The area beneath the pergola is paved in a brick basketweave pattern. A simple wooden bench occupies the pergola's central bay. Two white-painted ornate cast-iron benches flank the pergola against a backdrop of holly osmanthus hedge. Two cast-iron benches, similar in design and setting to those at the opposite end of the garden, flank the pool. Two sculpted limestone benches, with rustic designs of entwined branches, birds, and small animals, are painted white and set along the eastern gravel walk adjacent to the east terrace and near the garden's entrance from the south. First Lady Hillary Clinton initiated a program to exhibit contemporary American sculpture by regional artists in the east garden on a six-month or one-year rotating basis. The sculptures from American museums were displayed in alternating panels of the parterre and on the central lawn.

Ornamental plantings in the east garden include the following:

trees — clipped forms of American holly, a row of small-leaved lindens

shrubs — clipped hedges of holly osmanthus, convex-leafed holly, Green Pillow boxwood, and dwarf boxwood

perennial herbs and flowers — such as lavender cotton, plantain lily, rosemary, dusty miller, thyme, and other flowering plants that provide color during spring, summer, and fall

West Garden. The west garden is a formal garden east of the Oval Office (figure 9-12). Previously this location was the site of a greenhouse; the current garden features roses as well as spring-flowering trees, evergreen shrubs, perennials, herbs, and seasonal plantings set within geometrical beds that border the central lawn on the north, west, and south. A flagstone walk running north-south and an adjacent patio are located along the east end of the garden; open walkways within the west colonnade and West Wing provide pedestrian circulation along the garden's north and west sides. A wooden bench, a gift of Mrs. Paul Mellon, who redesigned the existing garden in 1962, is located on the flagstone patio. An ornate cast-iron bench, similar to those in the east garden but painted black, stands in the garden's northeast corner.

Four commemorative trees mark the garden's corners. Installed in 1962, these saucer magnolias were planted in memory of John F. Kennedy. Other flowering trees include a Winter King hawthorn planted near the flagstone patio and numerous Katherine crab apples in rows along both of the linear planting beds. Beneath the crab

apples are roses that give the garden its name. Rose varieties include Iceberg, Pat Nixon, and John F. Kennedy. The evergreen shrubs used in the garden — holly osmanthus and true dwarf boxwood — create a dark green backdrop for the deciduous flowering plants; some are clipped to form hedges. Herbs, perennials, bulbs, and annuals provide additional spring, summer, and fall color.

Other Garden Areas. The Andrew Jackson southern magnolias, the oldest extant trees on the White House grounds, are located adjacent to the south portico. At the base of the trees is the magnolia patio, an intimate sitting area furnished during the warmer months with metal lawn chairs.

The President's Patio is a small, enclosed, sunken patio south of the West Wing that was built during the Reagan administration. Ornamental evergreen trees and shrubs at the edge of the paved area, as well as flowering deciduous trees and shrubs, create a secluded, intimate garden room. Its cascading fountain is set within a stone wall (figure 9-13). Water flows from a cast lion's head into a shell-shaped basin that empties into a larger pool sunken below the level of the adjacent walkway. A low retaining wall, constructed of the same stone as that used for the western wall, bounds the patio on the north and east.

Plants in the President's Patio include American holly, European hornbeam, Nellie R. Stevens holly, spreading English yew, Japanese spurge, Delaware Valley White azalea, compact Japanese holly, Marie's doublefile viburnum, and creeping lilyturf.

The west patio is another small private space built during the Reagan administration. Located southwest of the West Wing, it has a white arbor and stonework paving. Plantings consist of red maples, hornbeams, azaleas, and Japanese hollies. A statue of a girl holding a plant and a watering can, sculpted by Silvia Shaw Judson, formerly in the east garden, is located here.

The swimming pool area is south of the President's Patio. It is on a plateau well above the level of adjacent West Executive Avenue and is surrounded by a terrace of scored concrete panels. The pool complex comprises a rectangular pool, a paved terrace, a cabaña, a guard-house, planters and planting beds, a retaining wall, and paved walks. Low, circular concrete planters with evergreen shrubs and white wrought-iron patio furniture are arranged around the swimming pool. The one-story cabaña at the north end of the pool is a rectangular flat-roofed building faced with stucco and painted white. Two multiple paned French doors with sidelights occupy the building's central bay; recessed stucco panels articulate the adjacent wall

surfaces on the east and west. Two wall-mounted black metal coach lanterns flank the entry doors. Tall evergreen trees surrounding the pool provide privacy; the guardhouse is at the southwest corner of the pool area, just beyond the evergreen screen. Pool area plantings include Leyland cypress trees, yellow-fruited holly, Nellie R. Stevens holly, Delaware Valley White azaleas, convex-leafed holly, Helleri holly, English boxwood, English ivy, and Japanese spurge.

A putting green is set within the circular drive on the west side of the upper south lawn. Nearby are an unpainted wooden bench and an upright drinking fountain.

Commemorative Features

Commemorative trees planted on the upper south lawn from 1834 to 1994 include the following:

- two willow oaks (*Quercus phellos*) — Ronald Reagan; Lyndon B. Johnson
- four saucer magnolias (*Magnolia* × *Soulangiana*) — John F. Kennedy
- two southern magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*) planted in 1834 — Andrew Jackson; believed to be the oldest extant trees in President's Park
- an eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) — Gerald Ford
- an eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis 'Alba'*) — George Bush
- a northern red oak (*Quercus borealis*) — Dwight D. Eisenhower
- two small-leaved linden (*Tilia cordata*) — Franklin D. Roosevelt; George H. W. Bush and Queen Elizabeth II, on the occasion of her visit
- a Rivers purple beech (*Fagus sylvatica 'Riversii'*) — George H. W. Bush
- a Patmore ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica 'Patmore'*) — George H. W. Bush
- an American elm (*Ulmus americana*) — Barbara Bush
- a cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) — Jimmy Carter
- a white oak (*Quercus alba*) — Herbert Hoover
- a pin oak (*Quercus palustris*) — Dwight D. Eisenhower
- a threadleaf Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum 'Dissectum Ornatum'*) — Rosalynn Carter
- a small-leaved linden (*Tilia cordata*) — William J. Clinton
- three Cherokee Princess dogwood (*Cornus florida 'Cherokee Princess'*) — Hillary Rodham Clinton

Near the Jackson magnolia trees, at the southwest corner of the Executive Residence, is a bronze plaque set on a granite base that

reads, "Time Capsule, October 13, 1992, George Bush, President," commemorating the 200th anniversary of the laying of the White House cornerstone.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

The circular drive provides vehicular access to the White House south entrance and is a prominent feature of the upper south lawn. The asphalt-paved drive has no curbing and is lined with steel edging; the inner portion, which is paved with an asphalt and rubber aggregate composite material, provides a surface for jogging. The drive connects on the south with the asphalt-paved transverse road that divides the south lawn. Gates at the east and west ends of the drive provide vehicular access at the junction of South Executive Avenue with Hamilton Place and State Place.

The upper south lawn's pedestrian circulation includes the paired Alabama limestone stairs of the south portico and the stone-paved area at its ground floor entrance. This area serves as a vehicular drop-off point from the circular drive; a five-pointed brass star is inset into the paving stone border.

Paved areas for pedestrians include the flagstone-paved President's Patio, the concrete paving around the swimming pool, the limestone stairs connecting the Oval Office with the Rose Garden, the flagstone walks and patio of the west garden, limestone walks along the south facade of the White House, the flagstone-paved magnolia patio, the brick-paved area under the east garden pergola, the brick walks with metal edging strips of the east garden, and a number of flagstone walks connecting the swimming pool area, the east and west gardens, and the utility areas with the circular drive.

Site Furnishings

The upper south lawn includes numerous small features in addition to those associated with specific gardens. A number of ornate white-painted metal benches, similar to those in the east garden, are located beneath trees within the central lawn. A three-quarter size bronze stag is set against a backdrop of evergreen plantings near the Oval Office, as is a rope swing hung from a branch of the Eisenhower commemorative pin oak. Black cast-iron lampposts adjacent to roadways within the upper south lawn are of the single-light Millet design. In the northeastern portion of the central lawn, unpainted wooden slats set flush with the lawn surface cover a stone milk trough that dates from the Andrew Jackson administration.

Views

The dramatic views to the south facade of the White House from the Ellipse and South Executive Avenue are across large expanses of open lawn, framed by trees and shrubs. From the high ground of the upper south lawn views are toward the Mall, the Washington Monument, and the Jefferson Memorial.

The Lower South Lawn

The lower south lawn encompasses the area between the transverse road and the perimeter fence adjacent to South Executive Avenue (figure 9-14). It contains many ornamental trees and shrubs. This area provides a visual foreground to the White House when seen from South Executive Avenue, the Ellipse, and the Mall (figure 9-15).

Landscape Design

The large semicircular open space has dense screen plantings of deciduous and evergreen trees, ground covers, and shrubs along its eastern and western sides. These plantings direct views to and from the White House along a north-south sight line and provide privacy for portions of the lawn. The lawn's central focal point is the large circular concrete fountain sited on axis with the south portico. The fountain has eight small jets of water surrounding a larger central jet. Evergreen shrubs and flowering annuals surround the fountain (figure 9-16).

The Children's Garden contains a flagstone walk, a sunken lily pond, small-scaled ornate cast-iron benches and chairs painted white, and plantings selected for shade tolerance. The hand and foot imprints of presidential grandchildren are cast in concrete and are marked by bronze plaques (figure 9-17). A plaque notes the dedication of the garden: "The White House Grounds from The President and Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, Christmas, 1968." Flagstones surround the pond, which has a wooden cover during the winter months. Evergreen plants that dominate the small, secluded garden include American holly and evergreen rhododendrons and azaleas. The garden also is planted with creeping lilyturf and seasonal flowering annuals, perennials, and bulbs.

The lower south lawn accommodates both structured and unstructured recreational activities, as well as special events requiring tents or other temporary structures. Developed recreational facilities include the tennis courts, a half basketball court, and a jogging track.

Ornamental plantings on the lower south lawn include deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, ground covers, and seasonal flowering plants. Species include yew, Japanese holly, bald cypress, American elm, English holly, viburnums, American holly, crab apple, Kousa dogwood, oriental spruce, and various species of oaks and magnolias. Evergreen trees have been planted in green-painted portable planters that can be moved into various positions to block views into the south lawn from the adjacent city streets (figure 9-18).

Commemorative Features

Commemorative trees — each identified by a bronze plaque — include the following:

- two Japanese threadleaf maples (*Acer palmatum 'Dissectum Ornatum'*) — one for Frances Folsom Cleveland and the other for Rosalynn Carter
- a white oak (*Quercus alba*) — Herbert Hoover
- a willow oak (*Quercus phellos*) — President and Mrs. Clinton
- an American elm (*Ulmus americana*) — President and Mrs. Clinton

Ancillary Structures

A guardhouse is located at each end of the east-west transverse road. Metal bollards and metal chain have been installed near the western guardhouse at State Place. A maintenance complex of three block and metal service sheds and buildings is sited in the western part of the lower south lawn (figure 9-19). The buildings are accessible from the west end of the transverse road by a service drive leading south, terminating in an asphalt-paved service court. Portable brown rubber trash receptacles are located near the maintenance facilities, and a metal trash bin is just west of the buildings.

West of the maintenance area is a small recreation area with a concrete-paved half basketball court. A pedestrian walk of flagstone pavers leads to this area from the maintenance area drive. There are wooden picnic tables and benches near the basketball court, and there is a wooden sign at the tennis court entrance. The tennis court, west of the central fountain, is surfaced with an asphalt-rubber composite material similar to the running track. The court paving extends to the southwest, providing a small area furnished with wrought-iron patio furniture. This area also gives access to a drinking fountain and lavatory in the eastern part of one of the adjacent maintenance buildings. The tennis court is surrounded by chain link fencing and is screened by ornamental plantings of trees and shrubs. Plantings

include American holly, convex-leafed holly, Nellie R. Stevens holly, and catawba rhododendron.

Site Furnishings

Black cast-iron, single-light Millet-style lampposts are adjacent to the transverse road. Low black metal light fixtures provide perimeter lighting along the fence enclosing the White House grounds. A helicopter guidelight mounted in the oriental spruce on the lower south lawn facilitates helicopter landings at night.

Views

Views from the lower south lawn include those to the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Mall, and the National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse, as well as a glimpse across South Executive Avenue to the First Division Monument.

The Grounds of the Treasury Building

The massive neoclassical style Treasury Building creates a visual boundary for the White House and the north lawn on the east (figure 9-20). The Treasury is immediately adjacent to the 15th Street sidewalk on the east; a fence defines the balance of the lot's perimeter. On the west, planted terraces separate the Treasury from East Executive Park. A paved terrace flanked by grass terraces creates a forecourt to the building's north and south porticoes. Large statues of Albert Gallatin and Alexander Hamilton are centrally placed on the north and south entry terraces, respectively. The major staff entrance to the building is at 15th Street; the additional entrance on the west side features a replica of the Liberty Bell. A parking area and an entrance for the secretary of the treasury, accessible from East Executive Park, are near the southwest corner of the building. Limited parking is available along the western and southwestern sides of the building.

The primary use of the Treasury is for executive branch offices, with some auxiliary service and support facilities. Some department personnel use the two terraces and open areas north and south of the building for lunchtime picnicking and reading. Most of the Treasury Building site is not accessible to the public, although there are public tours of the building on weekends.

Landscape Design

Retaining walls related to grade changes between the grounds around the Treasury and the surrounding street create large level spaces around the building for parking, outdoor terraces, and lawns. Drainage structures that collect stormwater are located in the terraces and lawn areas, including a French drain that encircles the Gallatin statue on the north terrace, and a concrete gutter behind the retaining wall in the northwestern corner of the building. The terrace paving pattern — alternating square slabs of red sandstone and bluestone set in a diamond pattern — is similar to that of the Old Executive Office Building.

Vegetation includes the lawn areas edged with American holly and star magnolia, as well as planting beds east and west of the north and south terraces for seasonal flowering plants. Some beds have been planted with roses. There are raised granite planting beds along the east side of the Treasury; the beds are treated as an extension of the building's foundation and remain at a constant level despite the drop in grade to the south along 15th Street. The walls range from a height of street level to more than 5 feet above the pavement. Trees and shrubs have been installed in the planters, and seasonal flowering plants are added in the spring, summer, and fall.

Commemorative Features

The bronze statue of Albert Gallatin is located at the center of the north terrace (figure 9-21). The statue's granite base is inset with copper stars and lettering. The statue and its base are set upon a small, square terrace paved with large and small river rocks, raised above the level of the north terrace by two granite steps.

The bronze statue of Alexander Hamilton, located on the south terrace, has a pink granite base, featuring carved fasces at the corners and ribbon and vine swags (figure 9-22). A decorative border of large and small river rocks set in mortar surrounds the base, elevated above the level of the south terrace by three granite steps.

A bronze plaque (installed by the Kiwanis Club of Washington, D.C., in 1929) on the northeast corner of the Treasury commemorates the signing of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty between Canada and the United States.

Ancillary Structures

A guardhouse is adjacent to the south parking area entrance near East Executive Park. A concrete retaining wall, partially free standing and covered with stucco, is at the edge of the entrance to the parking area. The freestanding portion of the wall has a granite capstone.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Vehicular circulation includes the asphalt parking around the basement level of the Treasury to the west and the road providing access to this lower level from Hamilton Place. This road is paved with glazed concrete pavers at its intersection with Hamilton Place. A vehicular approach "bridge" provides access to the Treasury at the level of East Executive Park at the southwest corner of the building. There are both surface and underground parking facilities. Pedestrian circulation systems include the north and south terraces, which are paved with square slabs of red sandstone and bluestone pavers in an alternating diamond pattern. Granite stairways lead east and west from the terraces to the lawns. Ornamental wrought-iron gates are set into the balustrade along the east and west sides of the terrace. Access to the north terrace is limited to those admitted to the Treasury; it is not accessible from Pennsylvania Avenue.

The adjacent streets are asphalt with square-cut granite or bluestone curbing and brick gutter pans along their margins. The sidewalks along Pennsylvania Avenue, 15th Street, Hamilton Place, and East Executive Park are open to the public and are surfaced with large precast panels of light gray exposed aggregate concrete with a ground surface that gives the appearance of terrazzo. Bands of dark gray granite pavers define the sidewalk perimeters. Identical granite bands extend across the sidewalk to mark tree wells adjacent to the curb. Portable metal ramps have been set over many of the stairways to improve accessibility.

Site Furnishings

Wrought-iron picket fencing set between granite piers or, in some areas between iron posts, encloses the site on the northeast, north, west, south, and southeast. The fencing is set atop retaining walls along Pennsylvania Avenue; in other areas a granite curb into which the pickets are set defines the modest difference in grade between the Treasury grounds and adjacent public spaces. The northwest and southwest terraces form a landscaped transition between the higher elevation of East Executive Park and the basement level parking on

the Treasury's west side. Temporary black metal fencing encloses the central portion of the western lawn area south of the Treasury.

Wood-slat benches with metal frames have been placed in various locations. There are also unpainted wood benches, as well as wooden picnic tables and benches. Cylindrical trash receptacles with dark anodized metal slats and a removable liner are located along the sidewalk on several sides of the building. Portable wooden planter boxes painted dark green are located near the 15th Street entrance. Ornate cast bronze tree grates cover the tree wells along Pennsylvania Avenue and 15th Street. Large granite bollards 3 feet high, set on paving slabs of darker granite, are located near the Treasury Building's west entrance.

Cast-iron lampposts in the form of slender fluted columns with encircling vines are located east and west of the Gallatin and Hamilton statues. The two on the north terrace are painted off-white; those on the south terrace are white, and each has a white glass globe light. Lampposts along 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue are the twin-light Bacon design; those along Hamilton Place and East Executive Park are the single-light Millet design. Four black metal floodlights (each on a metal post set on a concrete base) adjacent to the north and south terrace balustrades illuminate the Treasury's north and south porticoes.

Views

From the Treasury it is possible to view the Capitol. From the upper stories the White House grounds, the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, and the Mall are visible.

The Grounds of the Old Executive Office Building

Sited in the center of its fenced block, the massive Second Empire style Old Executive Office Building (named the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building in 1999) creates the White House's visual boundary on the west. A paved terrace flanked by grass terraces forms a forecourt to both the north and south porticoes (figure 9-23). Two courtyards located north and south within the building provide onsite parking and are accessible from both West Executive Avenue and 17th Street. Cast-iron fencing with pointed leaf-shaped finials, set between carved granite piers, bound the building's four street edges (figure 9-24). The north fence is set in stone retaining walls. The West Executive Avenue entrances are part

of a limited access area that includes the west entrance to the White House.

The primary use of this building is for executive offices; employees use the building's north and south lawns for outdoor lunches and reading. Security operations limit access to the grounds and building.

Landscape Design

Two large pedestrian terraces extend from the center of the north and south façades; each terrace is defined on the east and west by a granite balustrade set between a series of regularly spaced granite piers topped with concrete urns (figure 9-25). The terrace paving pattern is alternating square slabs of red sandstone and bluestone set in a diamond pattern (similar to that at the Treasury). Other related features include the granite entry stair with inset metal handrails, a simple wrought-iron gate marking the north entrance, and an ornate gate between the southeast terrace and the lower lawn.

There are willow oaks and red oaks along Pennsylvania Avenue, and English oak, saucer magnolia, and southern magnolia along West Executive Avenue. Lawn areas are north and south of the building, with edge foundation plantings of Japanese holly, azaleas, inkberry, yew, and juniper in mulch beds. There are also southern magnolia, saucer magnolia, and Japanese maple trees; and junipers are planted in concrete urns along the east side of the building.

Commemorative Features

Two Badlt MFG type anchors, inscribed with "USN," on loan from the U.S. Navy, are located at the east entrance. Two 5-inch brass trophy guns captured in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War are located at the north entrance to the building.

Ancillary Structures

Guardhouses are located at the 17th Street and West Executive Avenue entry points. Various structural features located in building courtyards include covered stairs in the south courtyard, HVAC/ utility structures in the north and south courtyards, and a brick shed in the south courtyard.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Vehicular circulation includes paved asphalt streets, access drives, and parking in the north and south courtyards. Pedestrian circulation includes public sidewalks as well as walks within the limited access area. The wide sidewalks along Pennsylvania Avenue, 17th Street, and State Place are constructed of precast concrete panels with granite pavers similar to those surrounding the Treasury; street tree wells and lampposts are set in the sidewalk. The concrete sidewalk east of the building is scored in a square pattern.

Site Furnishings

At each corner of the office building bronze signs with raised lettering mounted on tall iron posts with finials identify the building. A similar but larger plaque interpreting the history of the building is attached to the north terrace entry gate. Ornate black cast-iron lampposts top the granite piers of the perimeter fence. On the south and east sides the posts have a tapered shaft with a widely flared base highlighted by a band of gilt stars; at the top a torchlike base supports a single globe of white glass. The same basic design is used on the west side, but four smaller globes surround the central globe. Lighting standards along Pennsylvania Avenue are the twin-light Bacon design; those along 17th Street and State Place are the simpler, single-light Millet design. Black metal floodlights set on concrete bases illuminate the building facades at night.

Wood picnic tables with metal frames and wood and metal benches are located intermittently along the east side of the building, and there is a metal bike rack in the south courtyard near the exit. Portable litter containers have metal frames painted white and aggregate concrete inset panels. There are low, round concrete planters along the east side of the building. Steel edging strips define the planting beds in the north and south garden areas.

Views

From the upper floors are views to the north and south lawns of the White House grounds.

East Executive Park

East Executive Park, a limited access roadway, is lined with sidewalks, grass strips, and rows of trees. The Treasury's imposing four-story facade reinforces the avenue's linearity (figure 9-26). Steel gates, which replaced similar wrought-iron gates, mark the north and south entrances; two associated guardhouses monitor pedestrian and vehicular access.

East Executive Park provides access to the East Wing of the White House for staff, people on public tours, and state dinner guests. To a lesser degree it provides access to the Treasury Building, as well as limited parking for White House and Treasury staff. East Executive Park is a publicly accessible pedestrian link between Pennsylvania Avenue and Hamilton Place.

Landscape Design

Low granite retaining walls and iron fencing separate the White House grounds from East Executive Park. Within the fence, additional wrought-iron fencing approximately 3.5 feet high separates the East Wing entry area from the north and south lawns; a small gate in the south portion of the fencing allows access to the south lawn. Pedestrian and vehicular access to East Executive Park from the north and south is monitored at entry gates. The ornate wrought-iron, vehicular gates are painted black and embellished with bronze stars and eagles; they are set between two square iron gateposts with raised panel moldings on each side. The gateposts, also painted black, are mounted on granite foundation blocks and are topped by single, wrought-iron lanterns. Two similar gateposts and two smaller gateposts topped with urn-shaped finials support three gates, which form the associated pedestrian entrances to East Executive Park.

The gateposts flanking the U-shaped drive, along with their ornate wrought-iron vehicular and pedestrian gates, are similar in design to those at the Pennsylvania Avenue entrances to the White House. The posts, approximately 7 feet high, have pedimented capstones; the limestone block portions are painted white, and their granite bases are unpainted. Two other gates provide access, one at the visitor entrance building south of the East Wing entry drive and the other where the fence forms a semicircular forecourt to the East Wing. This gate, which provides access from the public sidewalk, has arrow-shaped wrought-iron pickets and is flanked by two wrought-iron posts with scroll detailing, which are topped by single wrought-iron lanterns.

The east fountain, which occupies the center of the adjacent sidewalk forecourt, lies on the east-west axis between the White House East Wing and the west portico of the Treasury (figure 9-27). A dark band of granite paving encircles the 2-foot deep fountain, which has a circular granite pool with a single water jet.

Vegetation in East Executive Park includes trees, shrubs, and ground covers. Trees such as willow oaks line the street in tree-planting beds along the west side of the Treasury and in mulched tree wells in the concrete public sidewalk, protected by black metal chain fencing. Other vegetation includes ornamental plantings and ground cover such as winter creeper, Japanese holly, azaleas, Nellie R. Stevens holly, boxwood, saucer magnolia, serviceberry, Japanese snowbell, and lawn.

Commemorative Features

Two southern magnolias *(Magnolia grandiflora)* dominate the lawn adjacent to the East Wing. The magnolia north of the central approach walk was planted in 1947 to replace the tree planted in 1922 for President Warren G. Harding; the magnolia south of the walk was planted for President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942.

Ancillary Structures

The visitor entrance building near the south gate of the U-shaped drive is constructed of limestone blocks, with columns on granite pedestals and double doors of anodized metal (figure 9-28). Four white wood frame guardhouses are located at vehicular entrances in this area: at the southern entrance to East Executive Park, at the south arm of the East Wing entry drive, at the north entrance to East Executive Park, and at the north arm of the East Wing entry drive.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Circulation systems in East Executive Park include its north-south asphalt street and adjacent parking area in front of the East Wing. A U-shaped drive with granite curbing extending west from the parking area provides vehicular access to the East Wing. Beneath the East Wing porte cochère, the drive is paved in granite set in a fish scale pattern; between the porte cochère and the perimeter fence, the drive is paved in asphalt. Low granite bollards mark the edges of the drive. The main sidewalk extending the length of East Executive Park is made of precast concrete panels with granite pavers similar to those surrounding the Treasury. It continues uninterrupted by the

asphalt entry drive to the East Wing. Crosswalks and ramps are constructed of the same materials. Sidewalks within the fence at the East Wing entry area are composed of large pieces of granite. The sidewalk leading to the White House near its intersection with the porte cochère has a decorative diamond pattern. Flagstones set in sand extend through the gate between the east entry and the south White House lawn.

Site Furnishings

Lampposts set at regular intervals along the public sidewalk are of the single-light Millet design. Floodlights of black metal and glass are located in the East Wing entry area. Stained backless wooden slat benches with black, ornate metal frames are located along the public sidewalk. Two water fountains are located along the public route. Black metal litter containers, similar in design to those used at the Treasury, also are located at regular intervals along the sidewalk. Upright sign panels at the north and south entrances to East Executive Park provide information about President's Park. Each sign is supported by black metal posts and is sheltered by an overhanging hipped brown metal roof with square battens. Adjacent to the signs, a low granite retaining wall defines a planting bed containing evergreen shrubs, ground covers, and seasonal flowering plants. Low circular concrete planters containing juniper are distributed throughout East Executive Park and at the north and south entrances.

Temporary metal post-and-chain fencing protects lawn areas within East Executive Park, and bollards are used extensively in this area. Low granite bollards mark the edges of the U-shaped drive at the east entry; there is a slightly larger bollard where the pavement changes from asphalt to granite under the porte cochère; and bright metal bollards and chains fill the spaces between the columns of the porte cochère. Metal bollards painted black and decorated with bronze stars have been installed along East Executive Park. Low concrete bollards mark the corners of the wrought-iron gates and limestone posts at the entry to the U-shaped drive.

Views

Views in the vicinity of the east entry and East Executive Park include a view due south to the Washington Monument and limited views of the south grounds of the White House.

West Executive Avenue

West Executive Avenue is a limited access road closed to the general public. It serves primarily as a vehicular access, parking, and circulation space for executive branch staff, and as a pedestrian area linking the present Eisenhower Executive Office Building and the White House (figure 9-29). The predominant feature of the space is the north-south roadway, reinforced by the parallel facades of the West Wing of the White House on the east and the more massive Old Executive Office Building on the west. West Executive Avenue is set below the level of the north lawn by one building story.

Landscape Design

Street trees planted in sidewalk tree wells include willow oak and red oak. Low, circular concrete planters near the awning entrance of the West Wing of the White House contain junipers.

A long canvas awning and concrete planters with evergreen shrubs and seasonal plantings mark the basement level entrance to the West Wing of the White House from West Executive Avenue. The lower floor windows of the West Wing have planter boxes with seasonal flowering plants in the spring, summer, and fall.

Ancillary Structures

A small guardhouse at the north entrance and a larger guardhouse at the south entrance serve as major entry points for staff. A wrought-iron gate flanked by two stone pillars provides access from West Executive Avenue to the north lawn.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

West Executive Avenue and the angled parking spaces along both sides of the roadway are paved in asphalt; the concrete sidewalks adjacent to the avenue are scored with a square pattern and edged with granite curbing on both sides.

Site Furnishings

A low granite retaining wall and a wrought-iron fence along the perimeter of the White House grounds limit general public access. The pedimented stone gateposts and wrought-iron gates at the Pennsylvania Avenue and State Place entrances to West Executive

Avenue are similar to those at the north lawn access points. Concrete bollards and metal chains also mark the Pennsylvania Avenue entry.

Millet-style lampposts are used at regular intervals along both sides of the street.

Views

From West Executive Avenue it is possible to view portions of the north lawn of the White House grounds, Pennsylvania Avenue, the Old Executive Office Building, and State Place.

Lafayette Park

Lafayette Park comprises the entire block bounded by H Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, Madison Place, and Jackson Place. Centered on the north-south axis of 16th Street, the park slopes gently southeast toward Pennsylvania Avenue. The park contains a variety of canopy and ornamental trees and shrubs arranged informally amid a geometric network of brick paths (figure 9-8). The five monumental and commemorative statues in the park honor military heroes. The central equestrian statue of Andrew Jackson occupies the point where the north and south parabolic walks intersect the 16th Street axis. The four corner monuments honor European military leaders who supported the American cause during the Revolution — the Marquis de Lafayette, the Comte de Rochambeau, Baron von Steuben, and Brigadier General Tadeusz Kosciuszko.

Buildings around Lafayette Park have uniform setbacks and range in height from four to eight stories on the north and three to five stories on the east and west. They orient the square south toward the more open landscape of the White House.

Uses

The park is primarily a public common that provides a setting for informal and unstructured outdoor recreational activities as well as a major open space north of the White House.

The park's proximity to and visibility from the White House have made it a frequently used site for First Amendment demonstrations. The sidewalk along the south side of the park, directly across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House, is the primary location for demonstrators and placards (figure 9-30), but on occasion demon-

strations have taken the form of temporary encampments within the park itself.

The park traditionally has provided the urban area with a landscaped open space for strolling, sunning, lunching, playing chess, and enjoying other casual outdoor recreational activities. Today's park visitors frequently feed the park's numerous squirrels, pigeons, and seagulls.

Landscape Design

Within the park the network of elliptical, parabolic, and parallel paths define the varied geometrically shaped lawn panels, which contain a wide variety of canopy and ornamental trees, shrubs, and seasonal flower planting beds. Paired walkways oriented north-south through the center of the park define the 16th Street axis. The elliptical brick path is symmetrical about both the 16th Street axis and a central east-west axis, with the Jackson statue at the intersection of the two axes. Parabolic brick paths to the north and south connect the Jackson statue with the monuments located at the park's four corners. The two major lawn panels astride the east-west axis each contain an elliptical pool and are connected to the walkway system by smaller brick paths. A concrete ramp and slightly elevated platform provide universal accessibility to the NPS kiosk.

The two pools are of exposed aggregate concrete. Each pool contains two circular arrangements of inward- and upward-pointing water jets surrounding a central water jet; submersible floodlights provide nighttime illumination.

Much of the vegetation in the park is mature, and some of the older trees appear to be in decline. The diversity of species provides a rich, green setting for the park in summer as well as an interesting variety of plant forms and growth habits in winter. Vegetation consists of deciduous canopy trees, flowering trees and shrubs, and evergreen trees and shrubs set within geometric expanses of lawn. There are seasonal plantings of bulbs, annuals, and perennials in the rectangular panels north and south of the Jackson statue and in the circular mounds at the bases of the four corner monuments. The American Peace Society, the American Institute of Park Executives, and the Daughters of the American Revolution have sponsored commemorative tree plantings. Azaleas are planted on the elliptical mound at the base of the Jackson statue, and a yew hedge encloses the adjacent plaza.

The park contains a number of features related to its pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems, such as street curbing, granite

walkway edging, and light posts. Fencing types include both cast-iron and post-and-chain styles. Site furnishings include benches, game tables, and seats on the west side of the park, and drinking fountains, trash receptacles, and a bird feeder near the east pool.

Commemorative Features

Each monument in the park features a bronze portrait sculpture of its subject atop a stone pedestal and is decorated with additional figural bronze sculptures, stone carvings, and inscriptions. The four corner monuments are located at the centers of circular earthen mounds edged with granite curbing and planted with azaleas.

Installed in 1853, the Jackson statue — the oldest of the five — faces west and is elevated on a granite pedestal with canted sides. The statue depicts Jackson on a rearing horse at the Battle of New Orleans (figure 9-31). The west side of the pedestal is inscribed "The Federal Union, It Must Be Preserved," above which is inscribed "Jackson." Cannon captured by Jackson in Pensacola, Florida, point outward from each of the four corners of the pedestal. The statue is on an elliptical landscaped mound edged with granite curbing. The mound, approximately 3 feet high, is planted with grass. A continuous cast-iron fence of round pickets with lance-shaped finials separates the mound from a surrounding rectangular brick-paved area; there is a gate of similar design on the north side. A clipped yew hedge approximately 18 inches high borders the brick paved area on the east and west.

The Marquis de Lafayette statue faces south at the park's southeast corner. Installed in 1891, the bronze portrait statue is 8 feet tall and 4 feet wide; it is set atop a 28-foot-tall marble pedestal featuring bronze sculpture groups on each side (figure 9-32). On the south face a seated female allegorical figure of the United States imploringly hands a sword to the general. The east face features portrait statues of the Comte d'Estaing and the Comte de Grasse. On the west is a portrait group of the Comte de Rochambeau and the Chevalier du Portail. The north face includes two cherubs holding hands and indicating a cartouche, on which is inscribed, "By the Congress in commemoration of the services rendered by Lafayette and his compatriots during the struggle for independence of the United States of America."

The Comte de Rochambeau statue, dated 1901, faces south at the southwest corner of the park. It features an 8-foot statue of Rochambeau atop an ornate granite pedestal. He is holding a windblown map and pointing southwest (figure 9-33). On the

monument's south side, at Rochambeau's feet, a bronze allegorical group symbolizes French assistance to the American Revolution. The Rochambeau family coat of arms is carved on the west face of the pedestal; the French coat of arms is on the east. The north face bears the inscription: "We have been contemporaries and fellow laborers in the cause of liberty and we have lived together as brothers should do in harmonious friendship — Washington to Rochambeau, February 1, 1794."

The Baron von Steuben statue, installed in the park's northwest corner in 1910, features an 8-foot bronze portrait sculpture facing northwest and standing atop a massive granite pedestal with applied bronze ornament and bas-relief carvings (figure 9-34). On the pedestal's northeast face is a large bronze allegorical group, "Military Instruction," depicting a seated warrior demonstrating the use of a sword to a youth. On the southwest another group, "Commemoration," depicts a woman and child grafting a branch onto a tree, symbolizing American gratitude and acceptance of Prussian assistance during the American Revolution. The front (northwest) face features a lengthy inscription in bronze, and the southeast face bears a plaque in relief honoring Col. William North and Maj. Benjamin Walker, von Steuben's aides-de-camp.

The General Kosciuszko statue was installed in the northeast corner of the park in 1910. The 8-foot bronze portrait sculpture of the general faces north and stands atop a granite pedestal inscribed "Kosciuszko" (figure 9-35). Two figural groups are located on the east and west sides of the pedestal. The group on the east face depicts Kosciuszko in an American uniform freeing a captured American soldier. The group on the west face shows a fallen Kosciuszko commanding a soldier representing the Polish army. The pedestal's north face features an eagle with outspread wings atop a quarter globe above the inscription "Saratoga." A similar sculpture of an eagle struggling with a snake on a quarter globe showing Poland is located on the south face of the pedestal above the inscription "Raclawice." The south face of the pedestal also bears the inscriptions, "And freedom shrieked as Kosciuszko fell," and "Erected by the Polish National Alliance of America and presented to the United States on behalf of the Polish American citizens, May 11, 1910."

Other commemorative features in the park include the cannon at the Jackson statue and the two ornate bronze Navy Yard urns set atop classically designed granite pedestals on the Pennsylvania Avenue side of the park (figures 9-36). A bench at the northwest corner of the paved area surrounding the Andrew Jackson statue was dedicated as the Bernard Baruch Bench of Inspiration by the National Capital Area Council and the Boy Scouts of America in 1960. A

commemorative plaque is affixed to a granite marker adjacent to the bench (figure 9-37).

Ancillary Structures

The lodge, located between the north parabolic path and the sidewalk along H Street, is the only major element that deviates from the park's symmetrical organization. This is the only surviving structure of four identical buildings erected in Lafayette, Lincoln, Franklin, and Judiciary Squares. The one-story, three-bay wood-frame structure is covered in tan-painted stucco and has a flat roof behind a low parapet (figure 9-38). It contains a storeroom, a locker room, and two restrooms (which have been closed for public health reasons); there is an exterior walled enclosure on the north side.

The NPS kiosk is just to the southwest, adjacent to the paired central walks. It is a hexagonal, wood-frame and glass structure, painted green and blue with white trim. It has a hexagonal, concave pavilion roof with broad overhangs.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

The rectangular park set within the city grid provides a focal point for the streets that radiate from the park. Pennsylvania Avenue has been closed to public vehicular traffic since 1995. H Street carries two lanes of traffic in both east and west directions, with limited parking (primarily for tour buses) along the eastbound side. Traffic signals are installed at the intersection with Jackson Place and Connecticut Avenue (northwest corner), Madison Place and Vermont Avenue (northeast corner), and with 16th Street midway along the northern park boundary. Jackson Place is limited to northbound traffic only. Parallel parking is permitted along the east side of the street, with angled pull-in parking along the west side. Madison Place provides for single lanes of traffic in both north- and southbound directions. Parallel permit-only parking occupies the east side of the street; the curb lane along the west side of the street accommodates public bus stops.

Sidewalks surrounding the park are brick, as are the sidewalks across from the park along Jackson and Madison Places. Rectangular tree wells are set into the brick sidewalks; they are generally consistent in size but irregularly spaced. The sidewalks along the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue and the north side of H Street are concrete.

Site Furnishings

The park's benches have cast-iron frames supporting wood slat seats and backs. They generally are arranged in linear groupings and mounted on brick paved areas adjacent to the paths.

The park's wood-slat litter containers with removable metal liners are similar in design to the benches. In general, the park's site furnishings are constructed of durable materials such as granite (curbing, edging), exposed aggregate concrete (game tables/seats, drinking fountain), cast iron (Saratoga-style light posts, benches; see figure 9-39), and bronze (cannon, urns). The wooden parts of benches and trash receptacles show evidence of weathering and deterioration, and some of the light post luminaires are broken or missing.

Views

Just as Lafayette Park is a visual focus within the city grid and forms an important viewshed for the White House north lawn, it also provides an important vantage point for views to other focal areas in the city. Each of the three major radiating streets originating at the park is associated with other focal areas along its length that are visible from Lafayette Park. The view north along 16th Street to Scott Circle is a major organizing element of the park's central north-south axis and parallels the major view available from the north portico of the White House. There are additional views from the northwest corner of the park, up Connecticut Avenue to Farragut Square, and from the northeast corner up Vermont Avenue to McPherson Square. The most notable view, however, is to the south of the north facade and north lawn of the White House, a view made more prominent by the slightly higher elevation of the park compared to Pennsylvania Avenue.

President's Park South

President's Park South consists of the Ellipse proper, Sherman Plaza, and the First Division Monument.

The Ellipse

The Ellipse, the large public open space south of the White House grounds, measures approximately 1,600 feet by 1,100 feet. The most prominent feature is the elliptical lawn — 1,000 feet by 850 feet — bordered by a road (figure 9-40). There are masses of large canopy and ornamental trees and some shrubs, along with paved curvilinear walks, to the west and east. Lawn and trees occupy much of the space south of the Ellipse. The Ellipse contains recreational facilities, a visitor pavilion, monuments, and memorials.

A consistent urban edge is given to the Ellipse by buildings lining 15th and 17th Streets. Three large, well-known freestanding buildings — the American Red Cross Building, the Organization of American States headquarters, and Memorial Continental Hall — are aligned with a consistent setback to the west along 17th Street across from the Ellipse. The Department of Commerce building is opposite the Ellipse on 15th Street, extending the entire block between Constitution and Pennsylvania Avenues.

Uses

Current uses associated with the Ellipse are similar to what they have been traditionally: open space used primarily for recreation, commemoration, cultural events, and ceremonies. The Ellipse visitor pavilion provides basic visitor services. In addition there are limited service/support and supply/storage uses. Vendors selling food, clothing, and souvenirs set up temporary booths along 15th and 17th Streets during the day (figure 9-41).

Cultural traditions associated with the Ellipse include the lighting of the National Christmas Tree each year in early December and the annual Christmas Pageant of Peace. The National Christmas Tree is decorated with ornaments and lights, as are 56 smaller trees representing states and territories. Infrastructure for the event includes painted wood identification signs for each state or territory; plywood walks with metal chain-and-bollard edging set in concrete blocks; a stage and a plywood amphitheater painted blue that faces the stage; temporary folding chairs for performances; a nativity scene constructed of wood and plywood; a brick fire pit containing

"Ye Olde Yule Log"; chain-link pens for eight reindeer; a plywood box containing a large television that plays a videotape of the previous year's lighting ceremony; and speakers for a sound system. A temporary gravel road provides access for official vehicles to Pageant of Peace events.

At other times of the year various parts of the Ellipse are used for both passive and active recreational purposes. Facilities include six sand horseshoe pitches on the eastern side and a sand volleyball court on the western side.

Commemorative uses are related to the area's military memorials. Memorial and/or military ceremonies occur in Sherman Plaza, at the First Division Monument, and the Second Division Memorial on Memorial Day and Veterans' Day, as well as in conjunction with other scheduled events and observances.

Landscape Design

The primary organizing element of the Ellipse is its central lawn. The lawn's elliptical form is reinforced by the concentric arrangement of the sidewalk, a row of American elms, and the Ellipse Road. The National Christmas Tree is planted at the northern end of the Ellipse, just east of the central north-south axis from the White House (figure 9-42). The large Second Division Memorial is sited in the southwestern portion of the Ellipse, the Bulfinch gatehouses mark the southeast and southwest corners, and the two Haupt fountains flank the entrance from Constitution Avenue.

Historically, the Ellipse area was a marshy floodplain of the Tiber Creek and the Potomac River that was filled in the 1870s. Following heavy rains, water pools in the southern portions of the Ellipse. Bald cypress trees have been planted in this area, apparently in response to intermittently wet conditions. Lawn drains or drop inlets have been installed to collect excess storm water from open lawn areas.

Elms comprise more than half of the vegetation in the Ellipse. Rows of American elms border the Ellipse Road. Although careful maintenance practices have saved some of the trees from disease and death, many have been lost. American elms are also found east and west of the Ellipse and along Constitution Avenue and 15th and 17th Streets. The masses of trees east and west of the Ellipse include deciduous canopy and shade trees such as hackberry, white oak, Japanese scholar tree, red maple, basswood, yellow buckeye, and groves of bald cypress in the northeast, southeast, northwest, and southwest corners. Groves of evergreens have also been planted along the western side of the area beyond the Ellipse. Species include

American holly, Colorado blue spruce, white pine, and fir. Flowering trees and shrubs are also found in the areas east and west of the Ellipse, including cornelian cherry and star magnolia east of the Ellipse.

Commemorative Features

The Second Division Memorial is in the southwestern portion of the Ellipse facing Constitution Avenue (figure 9-43). The memorial's large, tripartite, pink granite wall provides an architectural backdrop for a monumental gold-leafed sculpture of a hand wielding a flaming sword. The sculpture, which is framed in a central opening in the granite wall, is set on a granite pedestal inscribed "To Our Dead 1917–1919." The names of battles in which Second Division forces died are engraved and highlighted in gilt on the granite walls on each side of the central opening. The flanking low granite walls, which were added in 1962, bear inscriptions commemorating Second Division losses in World War II on the west wall and in Korea on the east wall. Three wide stairs lead from the surrounding lawn to a dais enclosed by the granite walls. A tall metal flagpole to display the American flag marks each of the two front corners of the symmetrical memorial. Plantings of American holly and clipped Japanese holly hedges surround the memorial on the north. There are flower beds for seasonal displays of pansies, and annuals at the western and eastern edges of the memorial.

The Boy Scout Memorial is due east of the Ellipse adjacent to 15th Street (figure 9-44). The primary focus of the memorial is an elliptical pool about 18 inches deep, located in the center of a granite terrace. The pool has an inscribed granite coping that reads

> This memorial was authorized by the Congress of the United States and created in recognition of the fiftieth anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America in grateful tribute to the men and women whose generosity, devotion, and leadership have brought scouting to the nation's youth and to honor all members of the Boy Scouts of America who in days of peace and times of peril have done their duty to God and their country.

A bronze sculpture of a uniformed scout stands northeast of the pool, accompanied by two classical figures, a woman (Motherhood) holding a gilded flame and a man (Fatherhood) holding an oak branch, a helmet, and a cloak. The Boy Scout motto is engraved on the northwest side of the statue's hexagonal granite base. Backless benches of wood slats with concrete bases that bear bronze medallions of the Boy Scout emblem are set on concrete foundations

facing the pool. Since the Ellipse walk network does not extend into the memorial area, foot traffic has worn earthen paths in the lawn between the Ellipse visitor pavilion and the memorial.

The Butt-Millet memorial fountain was installed in 1913 to commemorate Archibald Butt and Francis Davis Millet, two prominent Washington passengers who died in 1912 on the *Titanic*. Located near the crosswalk leading between the Ellipse and the First Division Monument, the granite fountain with its central square column is set on an octagonal pedestal with an aggregate concrete base (figure 9-45).

The two Haupt fountains, which flank the central entrance to the Ellipse Road from Constitution Avenue, were gifts of Enid Annenberg Haupt. Designed by Catherine Henry, sculpted by Gordon Newell, and installed in 1969, each fountain is an 18-foot-square slab of Minnesota rainbow granite with rough-cut edges and a polished upper face. Within each square slab is a circular basin with a single central jet; the basin is supported by a brick pedestal that extends outward at its base to form a surrounding circular, brick-paved terrace (figure 9-46).

The Ellipse also includes several smaller monuments. The Zero Milestone, a 4-foot-tall shaft of pink granite topped with a bronze compass, commemorates the location of the first and second transcontinental motor convoys across the Lincoln Highway in 1919 and 1920 and marks the official starting point of all U.S. roads (figure 9-47). It is in the center of the elliptical walkway at the northern end of the Ellipse, on axis with the White House and the Jefferson Memorial. The bronze engineering marker of the Historic American Engineering Survey is set in the sidewalk adjacent to the milestone's base. The Memorial to the Original Patentees of the District of Columbia is next to the sidewalk adjacent to 15th Street. The memorial, a granite shaft installed in 1936 through the efforts of the Daughters of the American Revolution, is inscribed with the names of the patentees whose land grants embraced the site of the federal city (figure 9-48). A small bronze plaque honors John Saul, the horticulturalist who assisted Andrew Jackson Downing with the plantings in President's Park.

Ancillary Structures

The two gatehouses at the intersections of Constitution Avenue with 15th and 17th Streets were designed by Charles Bulfinch, architect of the Capitol (figure 9-49). Originally placed near the U.S. Capitol, they were moved to their present locations in 1880. The gatehouses

are built of cut, rough-finished sandstone. Each front facade has an intricately carved frieze, cornice, and rectangular pediment. Doric columns flank the circular-headed entry. The two structures are identical apart from the square stone blocks supporting the columns on the west gatehouse. A stone gatepost, similar in design to the gatehouses, is located near the east Bulfinch gatehouse at the northwest corner of 15th Street and Constitution Avenue. Two similar gateposts are located just outside the project area at the southwest and southeast corners of the intersection.

The Ellipse visitor pavilion is in the northeast quadrant of the Ellipse near E Street and sited in the midst of mature elms (figure 9-50). Designed by Oehrlein and Associates, the pavilion faces the Ellipse Road. It is a one-story stucco-clad building painted light gray with white trim. The low-pitched hipped roof of standing seam metal has a prefinished steel cornice and is supported by a colonnade of 24 cast-stone columns. This colonnade creates a broad covered area that shelters visitors from wind, sun, and precipitation. The pavilion sits on a terrace paved in cast concrete and granite; additional concrete pavers extend beyond the terrace and link with the Ellipse sidewalk system. Low concrete walls and broad, shallow concrete steps define the terrace edges; the walls provide informal visitor seating and accommodate planting beds at the terrace corners. The pavilion, intended as a temporary facility with an expected life of about a decade, provides restroom facilities, an information desk, a food service station, ticket windows, a first-aid station, an NPS office and locker room, and a sales area.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Three entry roads connect the Ellipse Road to 15th Street and the intersections of Constitution Avenue with 15th Street and 17th Street on the northeast, southeast, and southwest, respectively. To the north, the east-west alignment of E Street digresses southward where South Executive Avenue and the Ellipse Road join it. The Ellipse and its side panels are bound by 17th Street, E Street, 15th Street, and Constitution Avenue, which are paved with asphalt and have brick gutters and granite curbing. Crosswalks and granite wheelchair ramps are provided.

The wide concrete sidewalk along Constitution Avenue is scored in a square pattern; the same materials are used for the narrower sidewalk along 15th Street. Part of the sidewalk along 17th Street is paved with rectangular pavers. Missing pavers have been replaced with poured concrete; in other areas there is no formal sidewalk, only bare earth. West of the central area, curvilinear paths paved in

either concrete or asphalt run between the Ellipse Road and 17th Street, E Street, and Constitution Avenue. There are few paved pedestrian walks east of the Ellipse Road; informal pedestrian use has resulted in the creation of earthen paths. Other features associated with pedestrian circulation include metal bollards and post-and-chain enclosures, painted black, along E Street sidewalks and paths within the Ellipse, as well as steel edging along asphalt walks.

Site Furnishings

Ornamental and security fencing flanks the lower south lawn of the White House. Bollards and chains limit access to planting areas along pedestrian walks north of the Ellipse. During the Pageant of Peace, chain-link fencing and snow fencing enclose the event area to limit the number of access points.

Site furnishings include wood slat and metal frame benches set on concrete pads along 15th and 17th Streets; backless wood-slat and concrete-base benches surrounding the Boy Scout Memorial; drinking fountains constructed of exposed aggregate concrete along the sidewalk; and plastic recycling bins and elevated wood-slat litter containers with metal liners throughout the site. Signs include the interpretive sign at the southeastern edge of the walk around the Ellipse lawn that identifies monument and memorial locations as well as various vehicular directional signs. A raised ventilation and utility structure of square cut granite is set atop a molded concrete pedestal located adjacent to 15th Street near its intersection with Constitution Avenue.

Lampposts within the Ellipse are of the single-light Millet design used throughout metropolitan Washington, D.C., and in President's Park. Those located along 15th Street, 17th Street, and Constitution Avenue are of the twin-light Bacon design.

Views

From the Ellipse there are views to historic buildings along 15th and 17th Streets, the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument, and across the expansive south lawn to the south facade of the White House. The open Ellipse lawn extends views from the White House grounds to the Ellipse, the Washington Monument, and the Jefferson Memorial.

Sherman Plaza

Sherman Plaza, south of the Treasury Building and east of the White House grounds, occupies the entire block bounded by 15th Street, E Street, Hamilton Place, and South Executive Avenue (figure 9-51). The plaza is often seen against the backdrop of the Treasury Building's south facade. The focus of the parklike area is the General William Tecumseh Sherman statue, sited on a terrace sloping east and south and overlooking 15th Street and Pershing Park to the east, and E Street and the Ellipse to the south.

Landscape Design

The Sherman statue, which is on axis with the Treasury Building's south portico, is set in a lawn traversed by diagonal walks and dominated by numerous mature willow oak trees. The monument is slightly east of the center of the plaza (figure 5-17). Its location overlooks the sloping portions of the site, giving it a commanding presence when viewed from 15th Street or E Street. Within the surrounding landscape areas, diagonal walks of cast-in-place exposed aggregate concrete lead to the monument plaza, also paved with exposed-aggregate concrete. Approach walkways respond to the varying topography of the site, with the northwest walk nearly level, the southwest and northeast walks at a gentle incline, and the southeast walk incorporating broad stairs to traverse the steeper sloped portions of the site. Granite walls, approximately 18 inches high and terminating with volutes, mark the junctions of the walkways with the paved plaza.

Willow oaks set in the broad expanses of grassy lawn extend along the four sides of Sherman Plaza, with a double row on the park's west side and a single row on the east. The edges of the monument plaza are defined by Japanese holly hedges enclosing planting beds of seasonal bulbs and annuals. There are azalea beds where the diagonal walks intersect with the sidewalks. Precast concrete planters are positioned along Hamilton Place and at the park's southwest corner.

Commemorative Feature

The monument features a bronze equestrian statue of William Tecumseh Sherman facing north, set atop a granite pedestal decorated with bronze figural sculptures, scenic plaques and medallions. The pedestal sits on a granite platform with life-sized bronze soldiers at each of its four corners. Steps lead from the platform on each side to a terrazzo terrace with inlaid decoration and inscriptions.

Pedestrian Circulation

Sidewalks surround Sherman Plaza on all four sides. The walk along 15th Street is 18 feet 4 inches wide, with rectangular tree wells spaced at regular intervals. This sidewalk features precast, exposed aggregate concrete panels with the dark gray granite strips that are characteristic of newer sidewalks throughout President's Park. Sidewalks along the other three street frontages consist of more traditional, cast-in-place, exposed-aggregate concrete paving. Sidewalks along South Executive Avenue are 10 feet wide; along Hamilton Place they range from 6 feet wide at the ends to 16 feet 3 inches wide in the middle. They are accompanied by continuous planting strips next to the street. Granite curbing defines the street edges of Sherman Plaza on the north, east, and south; on the west curbing is of sand-colored concrete.

Site Furnishings

Cast-iron Millet lampposts are set symmetrically within each side of the Japanese holly hedge. Rows of cast-iron and wood benches — five each on the north and south sides and six each on the east and west — are located inside the granite walls around the statue; a cast-iron trash receptacle is located at both ends of each row. A bronze drinking fountain is near the northwest corner of the plaza.

Views

There are three principal views looking east, north, and south from Sherman Plaza. The more prominent views to the north and south are unobscured by trees; the view north is of the south facade of the Treasury Building while that to the south is of the Ellipse landscape, with the Washington Monument in the distance. The view east is toward Pershing Park and the Post Office tower. Both the Treasury facade and the Sherman statue are visible when looking north from E Street.

First Division Monument

The First Division Monument is prominently located on an elevated site in the northern part of the block bounded by State Place, South Executive Avenue, E Street, and 17th Street. Originally the monument was dedicated to the memory of First Division members who died during World War I, but subsequently it has been expanded to include First Division losses during World War II and in Korea and

Vietnam (figure 9-52). A lawn that is shaded by masses of canopy trees covers much of the landscape surrounding the monument.

Landscape Design

Granite stairs with flanking granite cheekwalls descend from the central paved terrace to the lawn south of the monument, and are set in a sloping, grass-planted bank that provides a transition in grade from the monument to the lawn. As a result of the raised grade and to prevent root suffocation for the large canopy trees near the monument's base, dry-laid stone tree wells are set into the bank along the southern edge.

Clipped yew hedges border the earthen terraces on the north and south of the monument. Additional plantings of yew surround the monument on the east and west sides. A seasonal planting bed in the shape of a large number one is the dominant lawn feature south of the monument. In keeping with the First Division nickname of "Big Red One," it is planted with red flowering species during the spring, summer, and fall months. Other vegetation includes a mixed deciduous canopy of trees that is primarily composed of American lindens planted in the grass lawn.

Commemorative Feature

The rectangular monument, installed in October 1924, was designed by Cass Gilbert and sculpted by Daniel Chester French. It is symmetrical in design and measures approximately 200 feet long and 75 feet wide. The monument's tripartite ground plane features a central paved terrace of granite sets, flanked by two earthen terraces that terminate in granite walls. Its central focus is a tall marble and granite column set on a granite pedestal and topped by a gilded bronze figure of Lady Victory, located in the center of the paved terrace. Bronze plaques on the pedestal bear the names of First Division members who died in World War I. The granite walls at the west end of the monument commemorate First Division losses during World War II (designed by Cass Gilbert Jr. and added in 1957). A central inscribed granite monolith is flanked by low granite walls and topped with bronze plaques bearing the names of division casualties. Similarly arranged granite walls at the east end of the monument commemorate First Division losses in Vietnam added in 1977. Exposed aggregate concrete walks link the World War II and Vietnam portions of the monument to the central paved terrace.

Pedestrian Circulation

Scored concrete sidewalks are adjacent to each of the four bordering streets. A steel-edged asphalt walk extends diagonally northwest to southeast from the intersection of State Place and 17th Street to the intersection of South Executive Avenue and E Street.

Site Furnishings

Wood slat benches with metal frames, similar in design to those used in Lafayette Park, face the sidewalk along 17th Street.

Views

Views from the First Division Monument area include the historic buildings along 17th Street, the Old Executive Office Building, and the Ellipse lawn.

Exhibit 9.1: The Grounds of the White House — Existing Conditions Features, 1994

Feature Number* / Feature
(*The first digit of the numbering system refers to the chapter of this document where the feature is first described.)

The North Lawn

206 Entry Drive
214 North Portico
423 Granite Curb at Entry Drive
439 Fountain
443 Benjamin Harrison Scarlet Oak
607 Saucer Magnolia
612 Franklin D. Roosevelt White Oak
703 Harry S. Truman Boxwood
705 Azaleas
726 Guardhouses
729 Lady Bird Johnson Fern-leaf Beech
734 Iron Fencing along Pennsylvania Avenue with Lighting Fixtures
801 Porte Cochère
804 Patricia Nixon Fern-leaf Beech
808 Betty Ford American Elm
810 Jimmy Carter Red Maple
816 Nancy Reagan Saucer Magnolias
822 Ronald Reagan Sugar Maple
840 Sidewalk Flanking Entry Drive
841 Japanese Yews along Pedestrian Walk
849 Bollards along Pennsylvania Avenue

The Upper South Lawn

113 West Terrace
119 Jefferson Mounds
210 South Portico
215 Jackson Southern Magnolias
412 Transverse Road
504 East Terrace
602 Magnolia Patio
605 Herbert Hoover White Oak
616 Circular Road
618 Franklin D. Roosevelt Small-leaved Linden
704 Southern Magnolia
712 Dwight D. Eisenhower Pin Oak
713 Dwight D. Eisenhower Red Oak
717 West Garden (Rose Garden)
718 John F. Kennedy Saucer Magnolias
720 East Garden (Jacqueline Kennedy Garden)
721 Pool in East Garden
723 Lyndon B. Johnson Willow Oak
726 Guardhouses
807 Swimming Pool and Canbaña
809 Gerald Ford White Pine
813 Jimmy Carter Cedar of Lebanon
820 Black Gum
824 President's Patio
825 Chief of Staff's Patio
827 Ronald Reagan Willow Oak
829 Horseshoe Court
830 George H. W. Bush Patmore Ash
834 George H. W. Bush Eastern Redbud
835 Grafting John Q. Adams Elm
836 George H. W. Bush and Queen Elizabeth II Small-leaved Linden
837 George H. W. Bush Rivers Purple Beech
838 Putting Green
842 Jogging Track
844 William Clinton Small-leaved Linden
846 Pergola in East Garden
848 Hillary Rodham Clinton Dogwoods
851 Time Capsule and Marker

The Lower South Lawn

411 Iron Fence
426 Fountain
451 Frances Folsom Cleveland Japanese Maple
520 Tennis Court
528 Flower Bed around Fountain
606 Herbert Hoover White Oak
702 Maintenance Building
716 Massed Plantings
730 Children's Garden
811 Rosalynn Carter Japanese Maple
821 Hybrid Elms
832 Flagstone Walk to Children's Garden
839 Basketball Half-court and Horseshoe Pitch
843 President and Mrs. Clinton Willow Oak
845 President and Mrs. Clinton American Elm
850 Bollards along South Executive Avenue

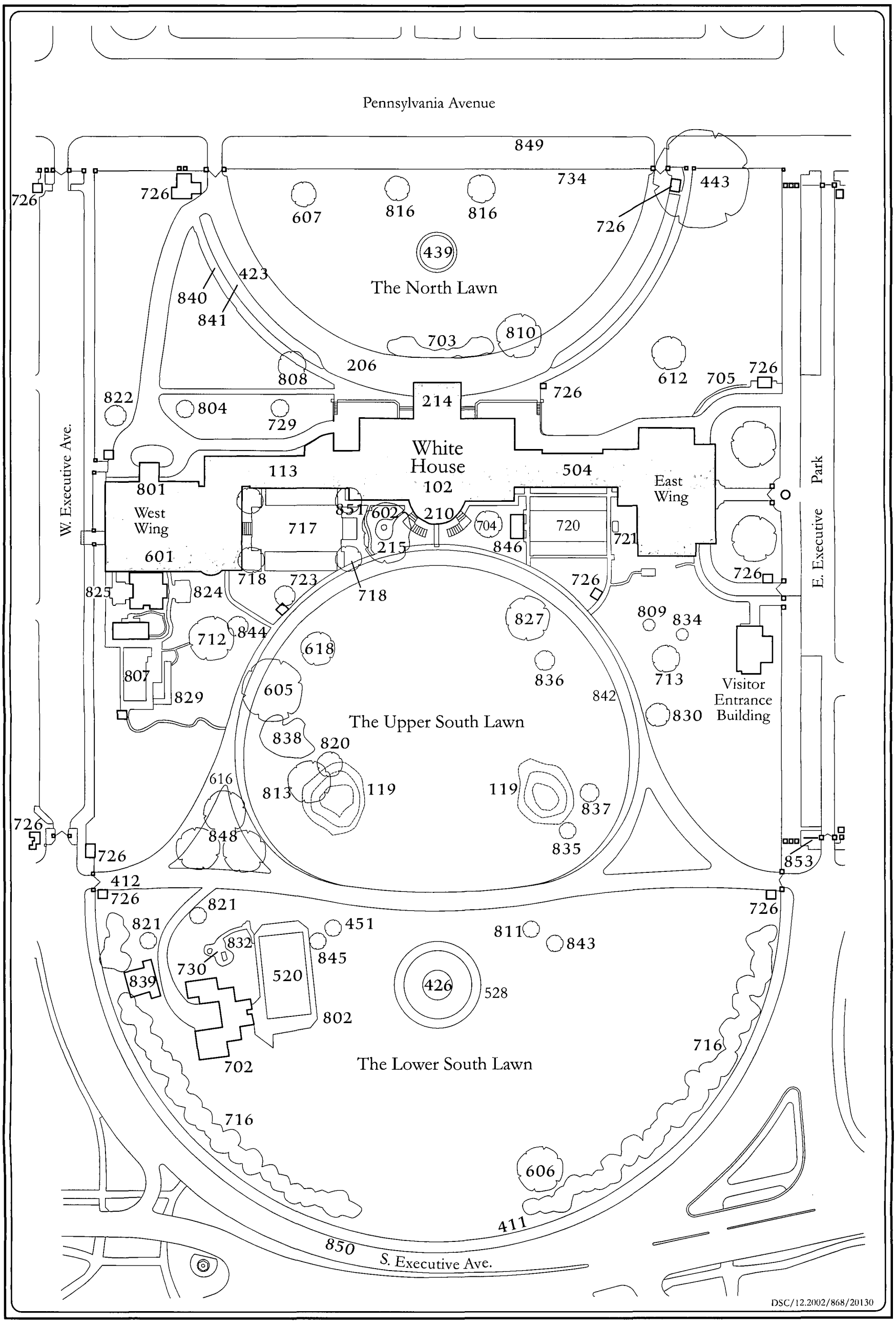

Exhibit 9.1: The Grounds of the White House — Existing Conditions Features, 1994

Exhibit 9-2: President's Park — Existing Conditions Features, 1994

Feature Number* / Feature
(*The first digit of the numbering system refers to the chapter of this document where the feature is first described.)

Lafayette Park

307 Andrew Jackson Statue
418 Navy Yard Urns
427 Gun Carriages
446 Lafayette Statue
454 Fence around Jackson Statue
502 Rochambeau Statue
523 von Steuben Statue
524 Kosciuszko Statue
534 Lodge
715 Bernard Baruch Bench of Inspiration
732 Elliptical Pools
736 NPS Information Kiosk
737 Game Tables

East Executive Park

551 Warren Harding Southern Magnolia
624 Franklin D. Roosevelt Magnolia
726 Guardhouses
852 East Fountain
853 Information Panels

West Executive Avenue

726 Guardhouses
727 Covered Entry

President's Park South
The Ellipse

433 Ellipse Road
518 Sidewalk around Ellipse Road
555 Zero Milestone
728 Paths
815 Backup Christmas Tree
847 Visitor Pavilion
848 John Saul Plaque

Sherman Plaza

512 Sherman Statue

The Grounds of the Treasury Building

556 Hamilton Statue
628 Gallatin Statue
701 Replica of Liberty Bell

Old Executive Office Building

531 Concrete Urns

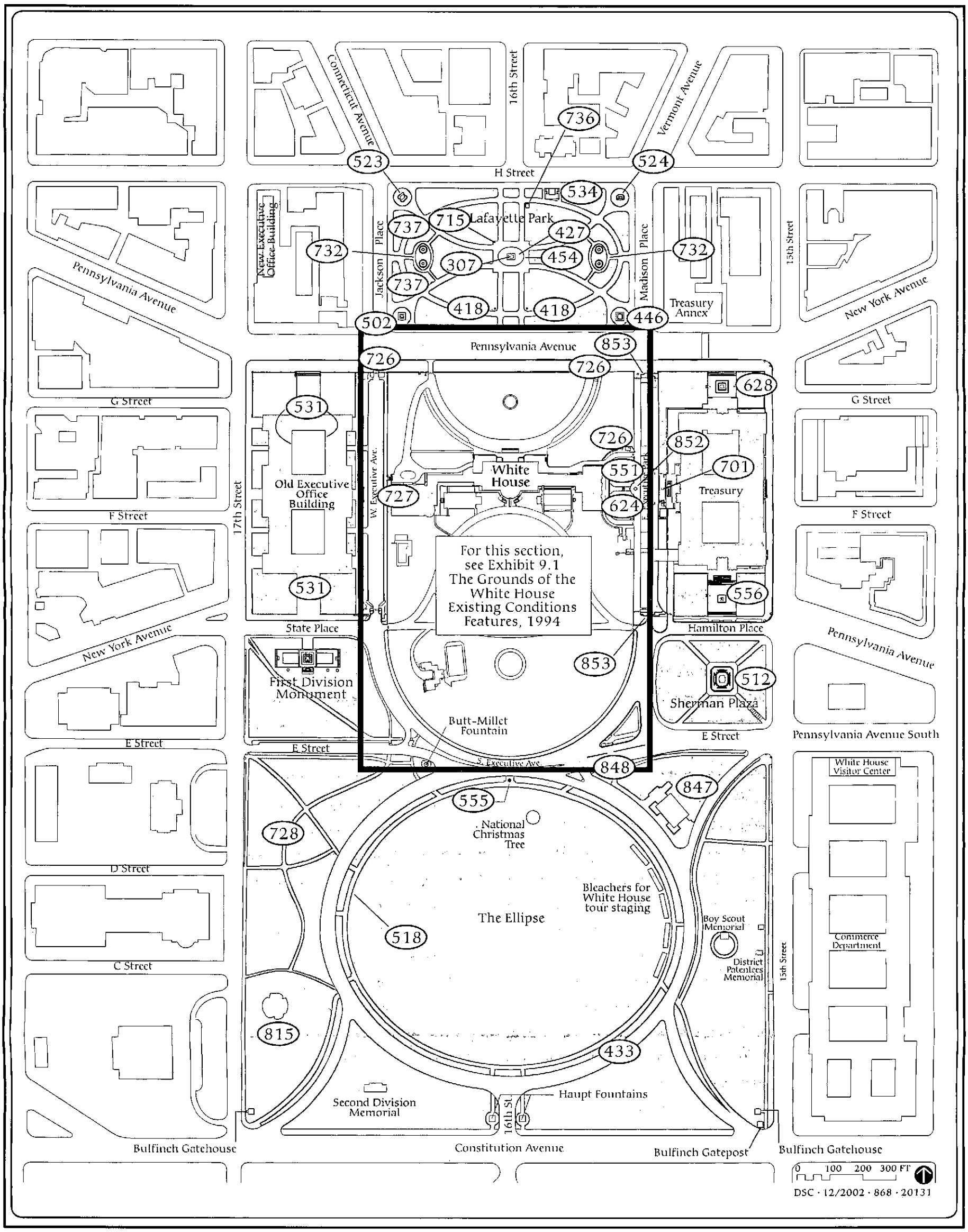

Exhibit 9-2: President's Park — Existing Conditions Features, 1994.

Figure 9-1: *The North Façade of the White House.*

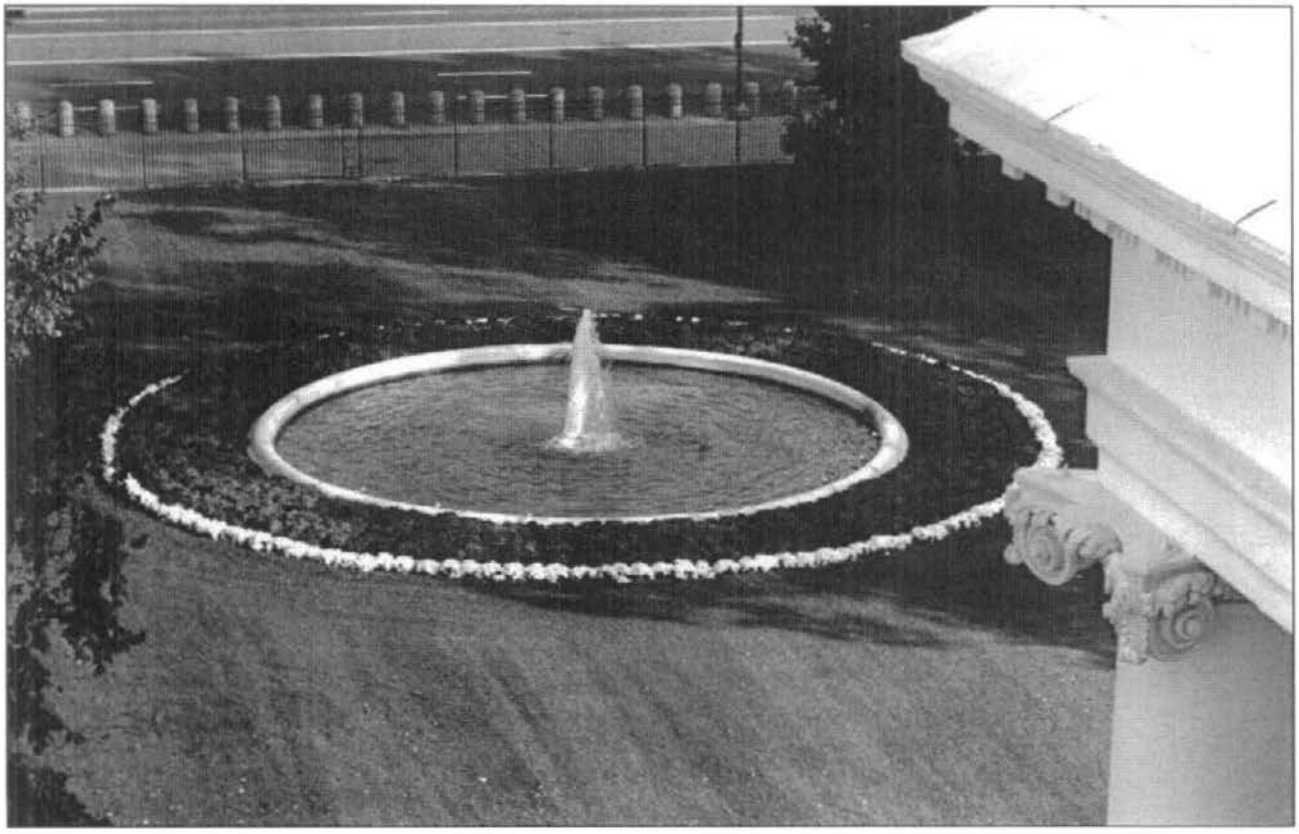

Figure 9-2: *The White House North Fountain.*

Figure 9-3: *Guardhouse Northeast of the White House.*

Figure 9-4: *The North Lawn (looking southwest).*

Figure 9-5: *Bacon-Style Lamppost.*

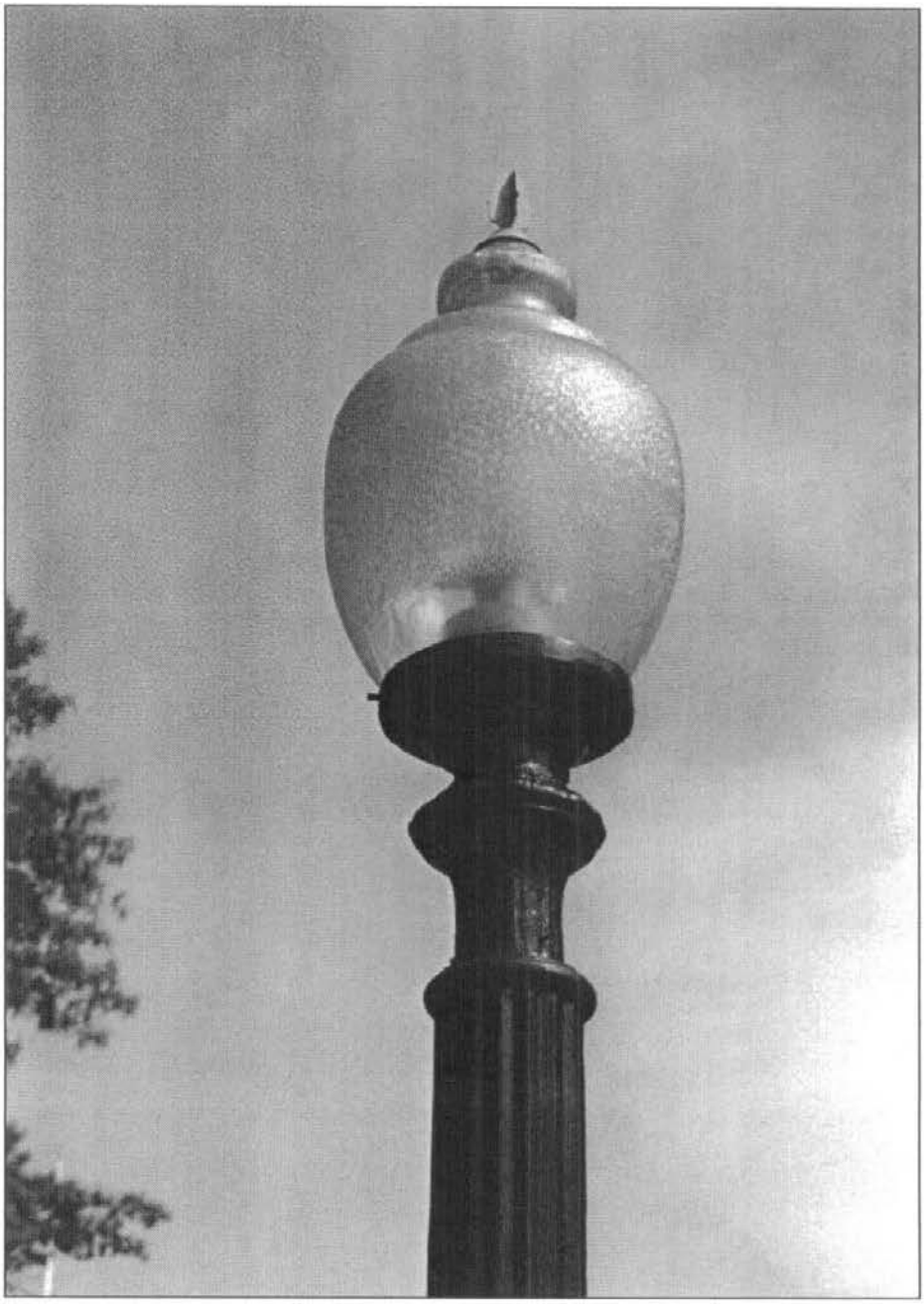

Figure 9-6: *Millet-Style Lamppost (Washington, D.C., Globe).*

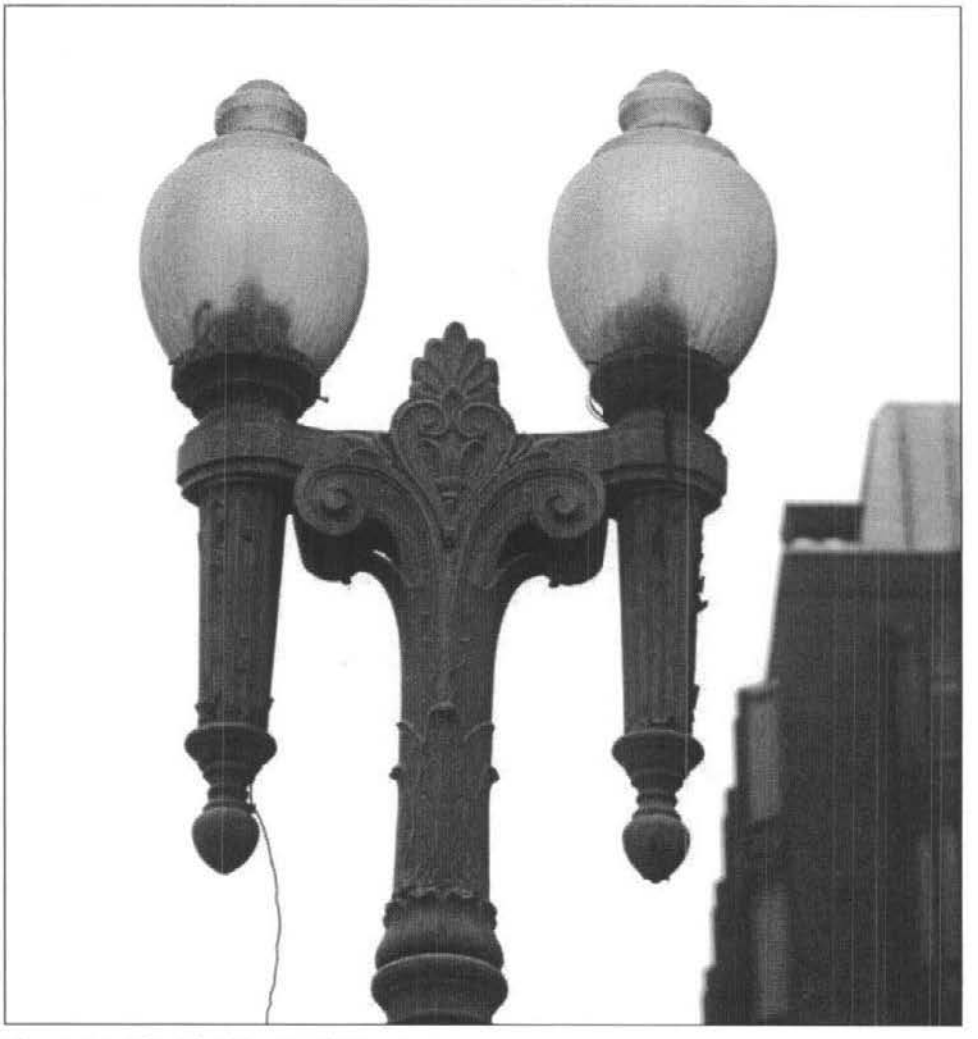

Figure 9-7: *The Columbian Family Lamppost.*

Figure 9-8: *View from North Portico to Lafayette Park.*

Figure 9-9: *Fountain in the Lower South Lawn.*

Figure 9-10: *Detail of the Eisenhower Pin Oak Commemorative Marker.*

Figure 9-11: *The East Garden (known as the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden), Looking West toward the Pergola.*

Figure 9-12: *The West Garden (known as the Rose Garden).*

Figure 9-13: *The President's Patio.*

Figure 9-14: *The Lower South Lawn.*

Figure 9-15: *Tourists along South Executive Avenue.*

Figure 9-16: *The White House South Fountain (looking southeast).*

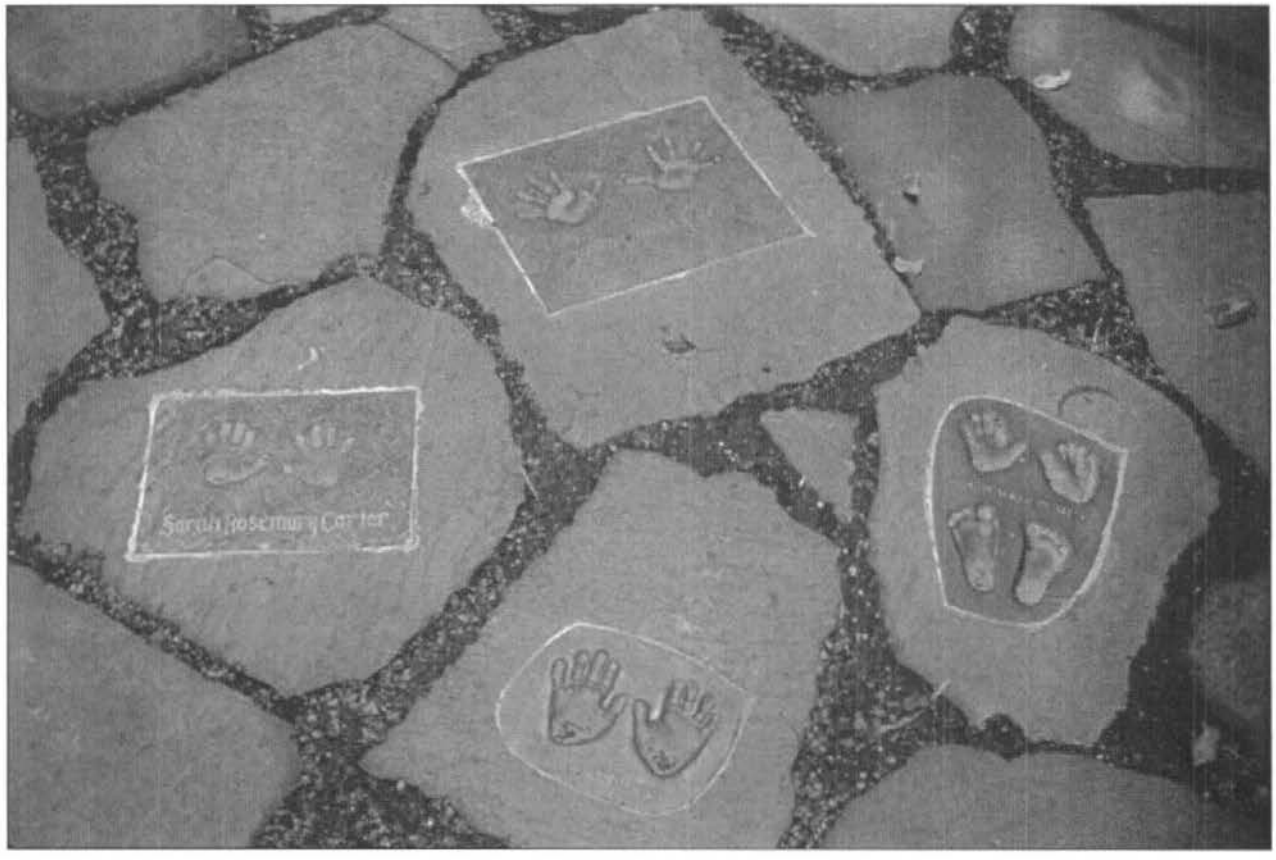

Figure 9-17: *Bronze Plaques in the White House Children's Garden.*

Figure 9-18: *Evergreens in Wooden Planters along the White House Transverse Road.*

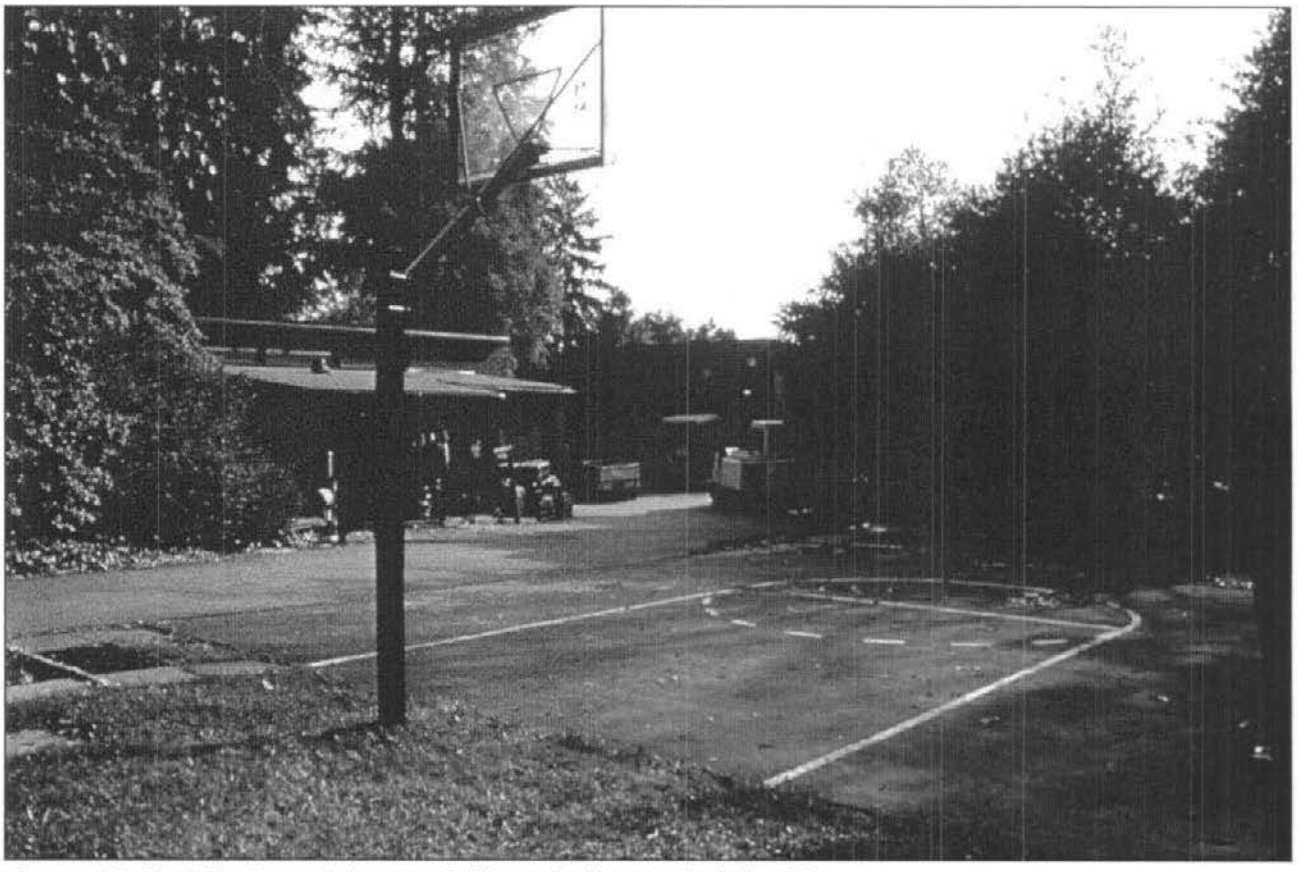

Figure 9-19: *The White House Maintenance Facility and Adjacent Basketball Half-court.*

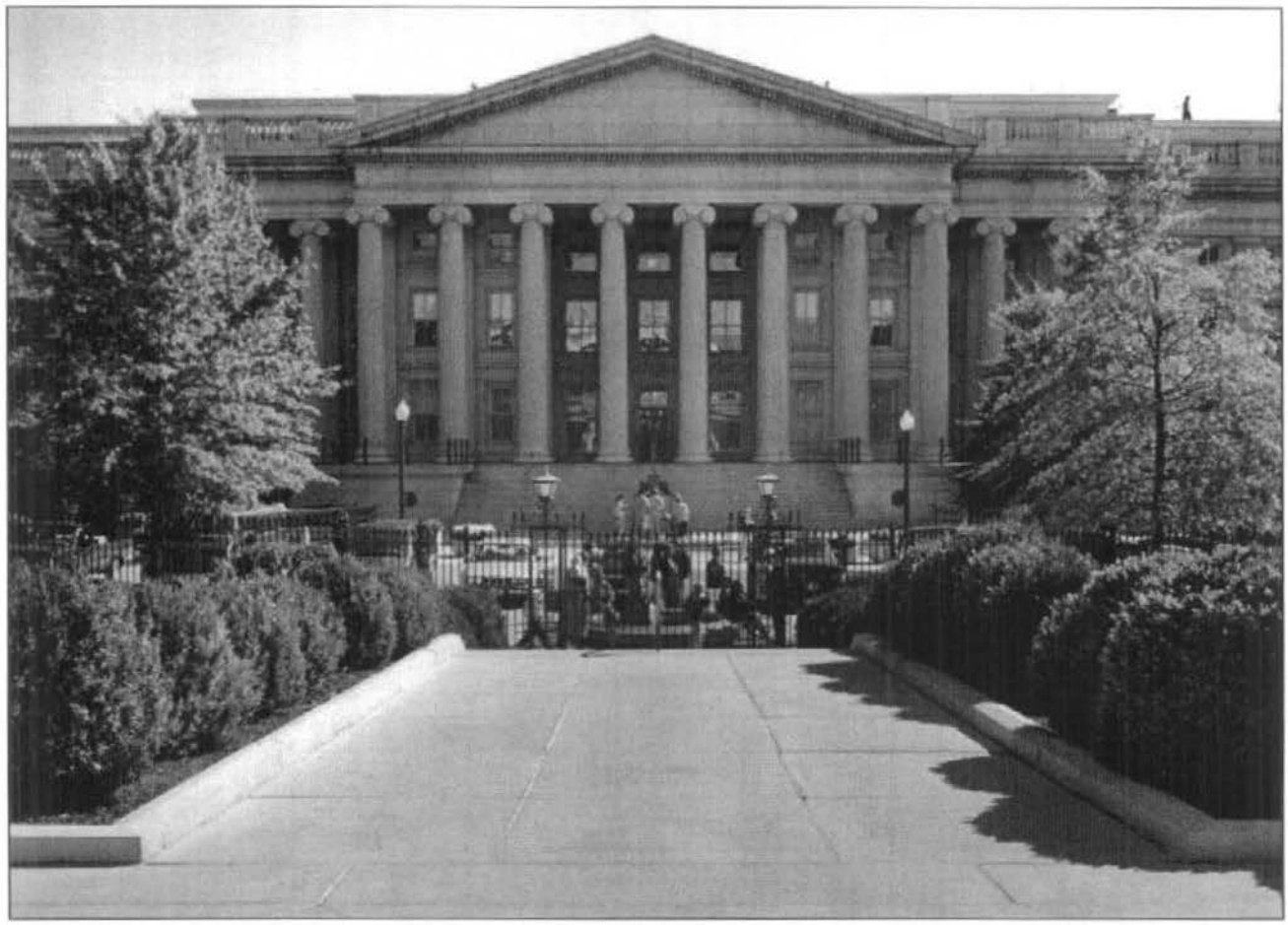

Figure 9-20: *The West Façade of the Treasury Building (seen from the East Wing).*

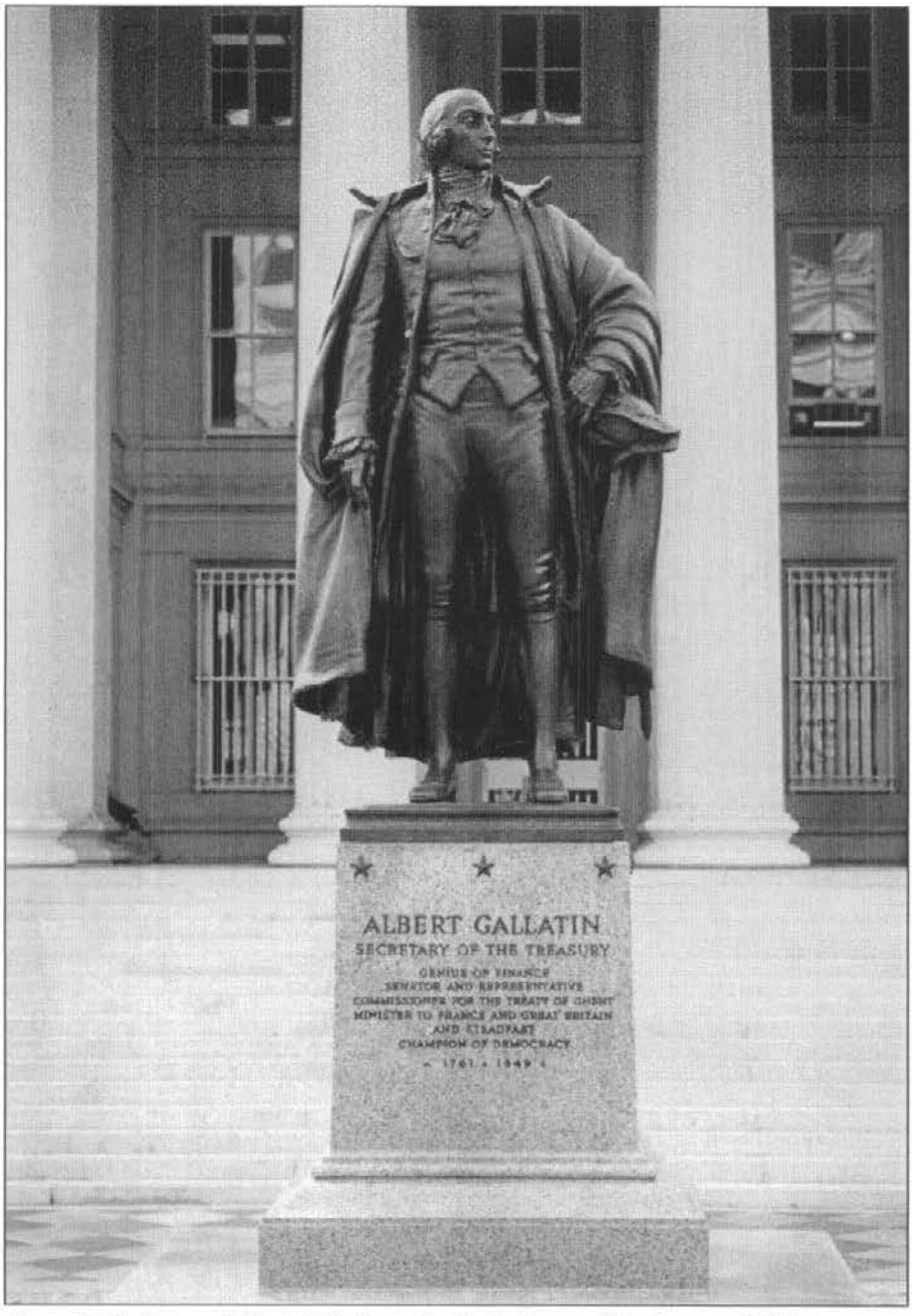

Figure 9-21: *Statue of Albert Gallatin on the North Terrace of the Treasury Building.*

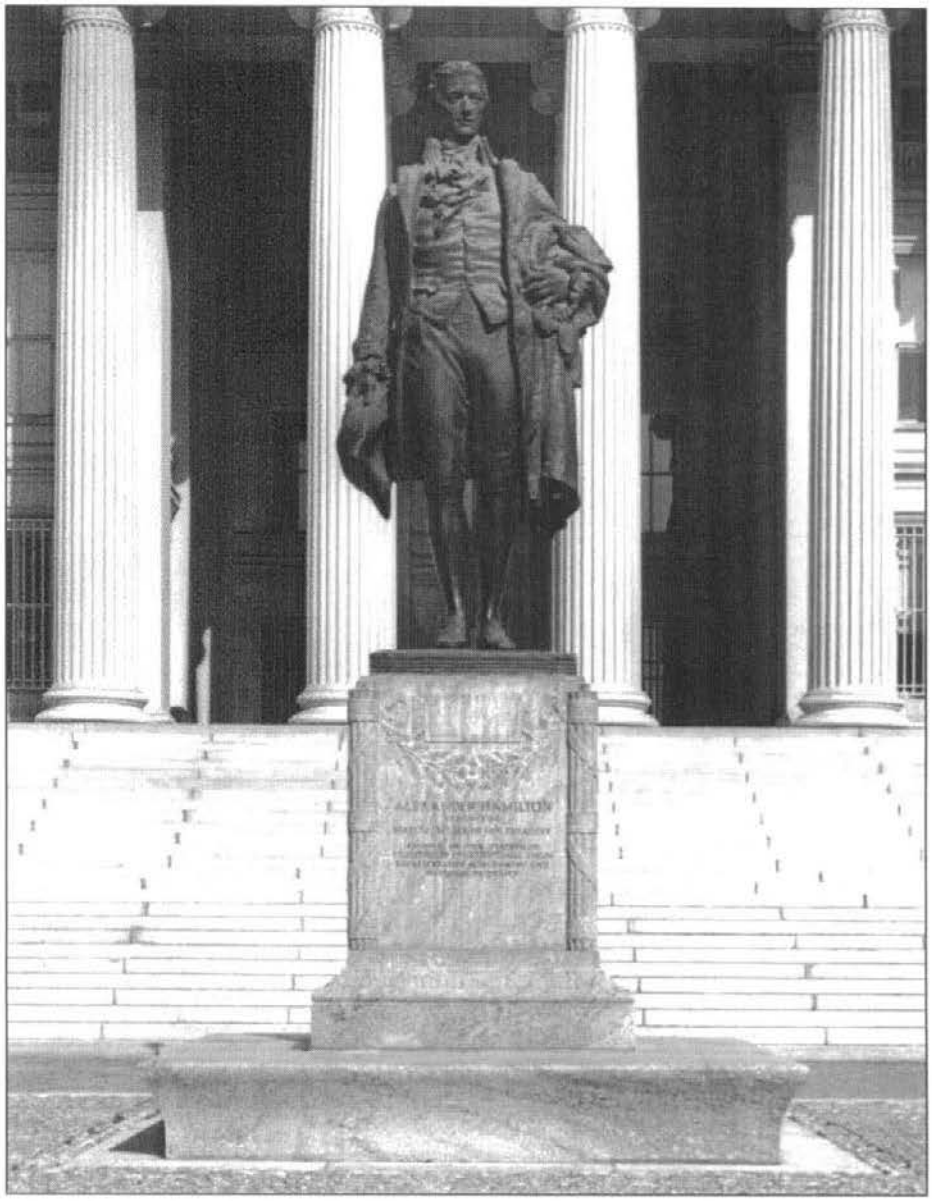

Figure 9-22: *Statue of Alexander Hamilton on the South Terrace of the Treasury Building.*

Figure 9-23: *The Old Executive Office Building along 17th Street.*

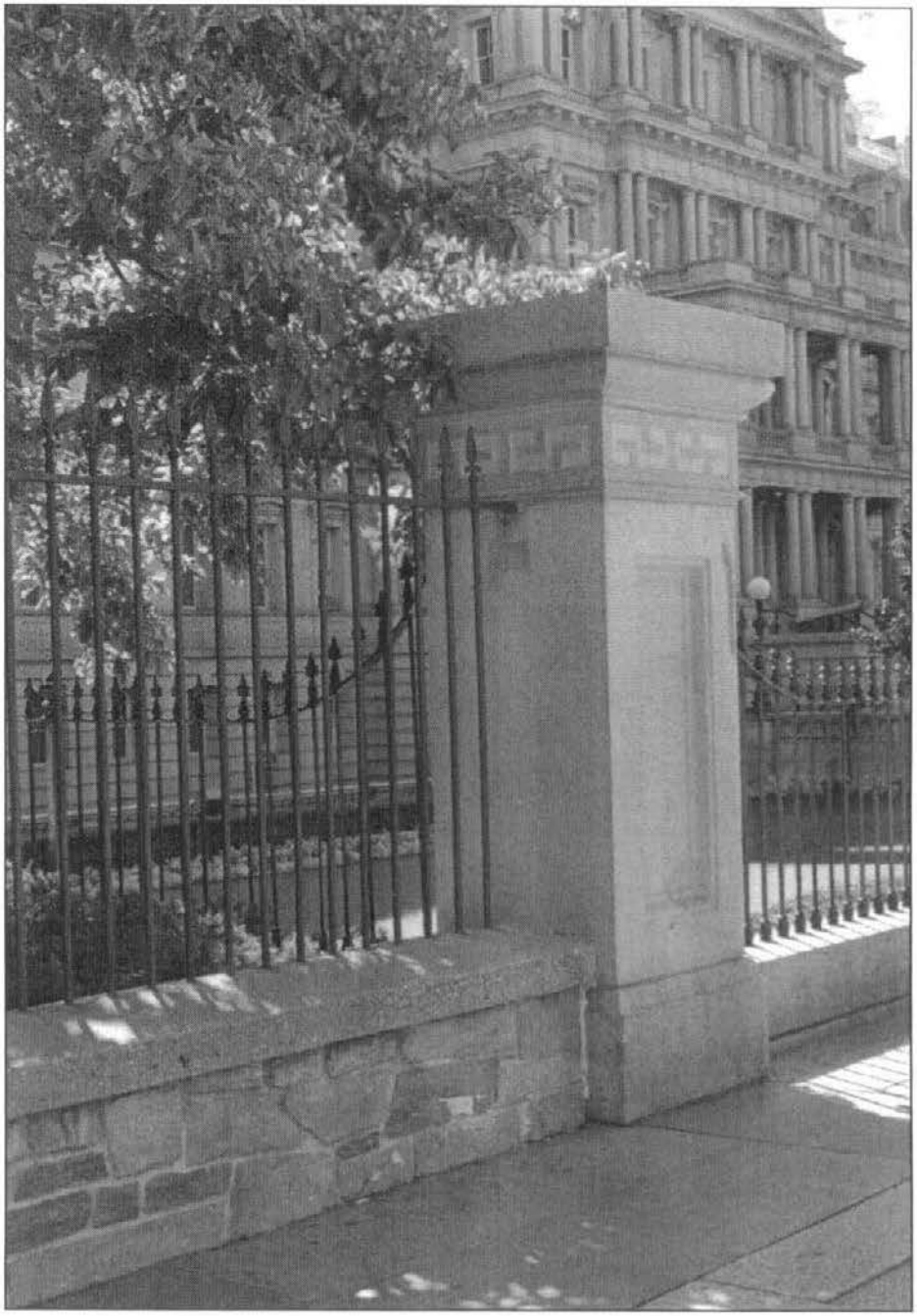

Figure 9-24: *Granite Pier and Iron Fencing at the Old Executive Office Building (northeast corner).*

Figure 9-25: *Urn at North Terrace of the Old Executive Office Building.*

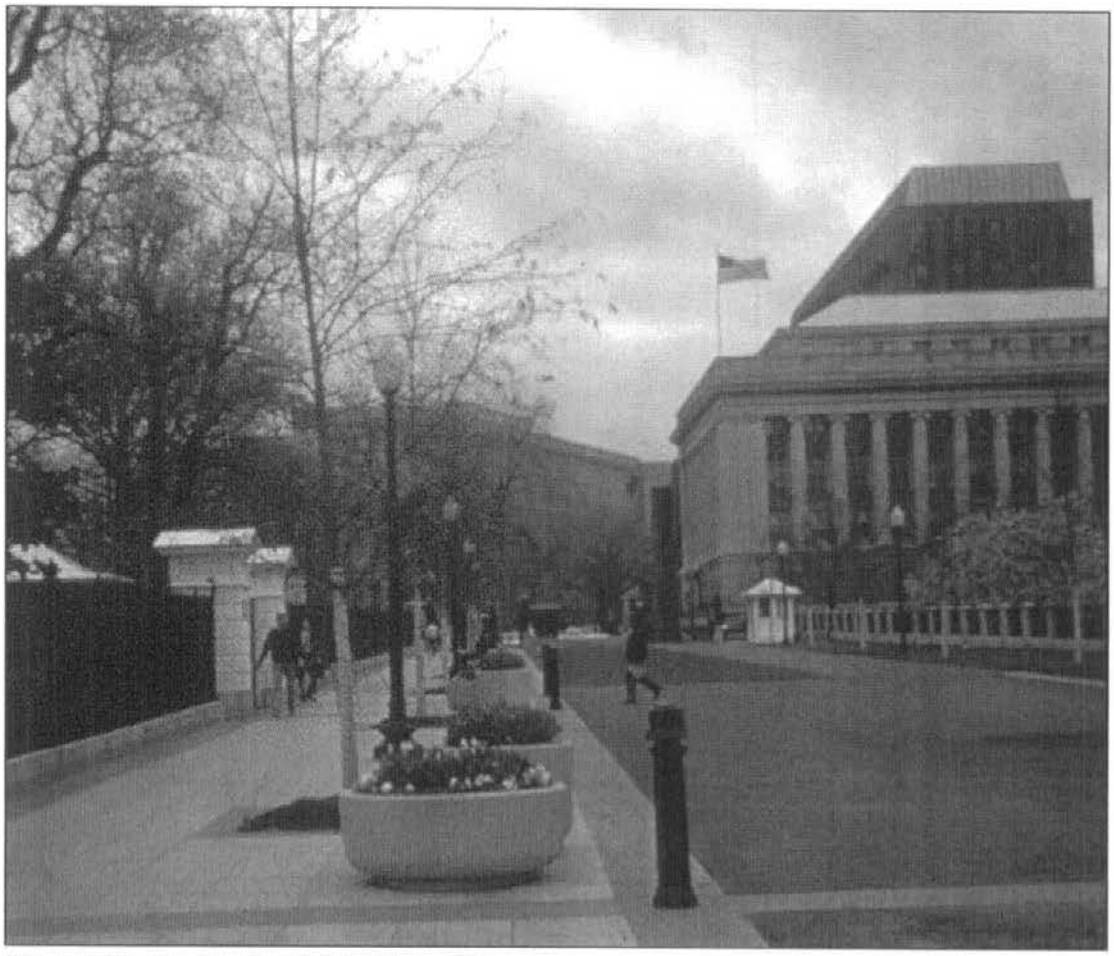

Figure 9-26: *East Executive Park (looking north).*

Figure 9-27: *East Fountain and Entrance to the East Wing.*

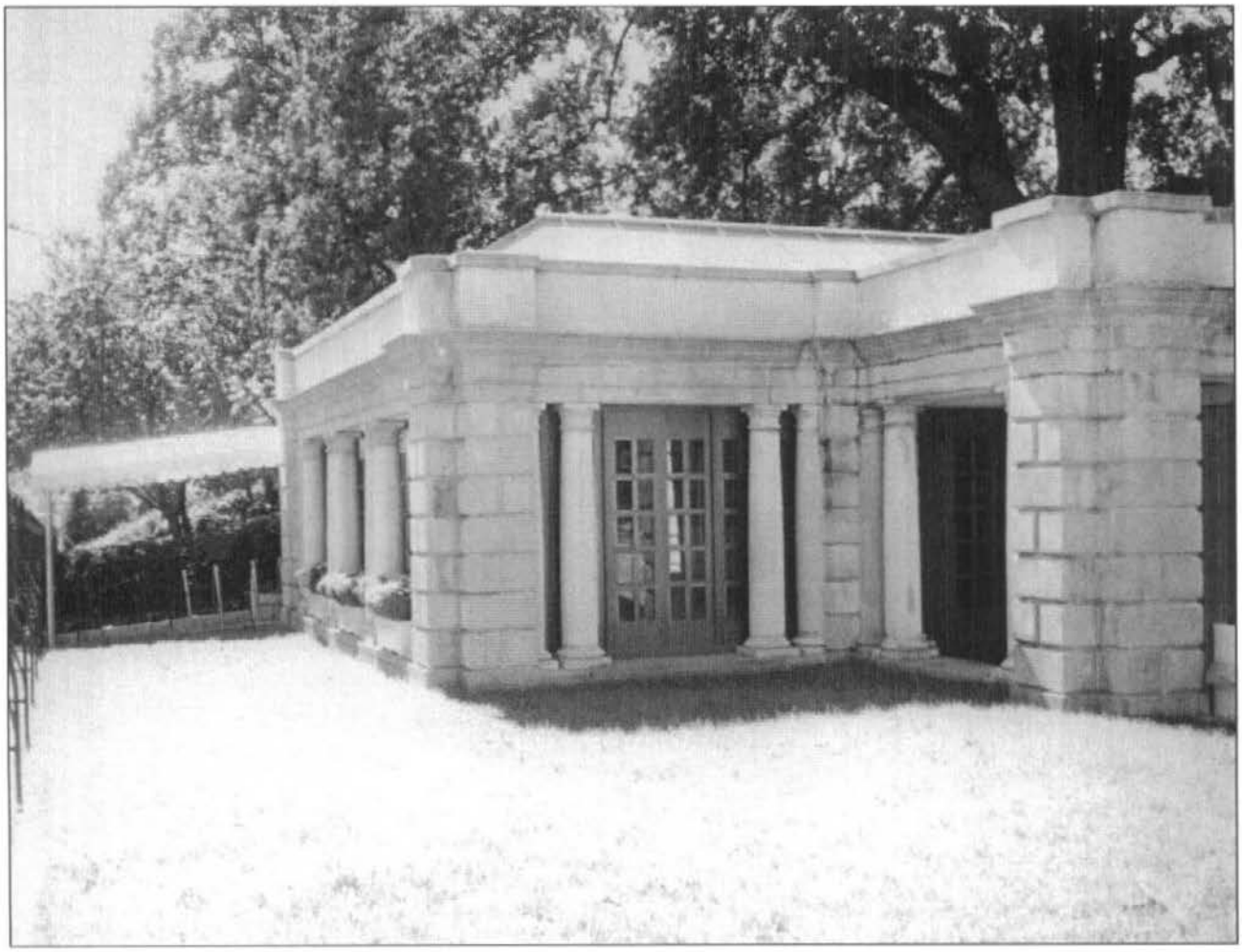

Figure 9-28: *Visitor Entrance Building.*

Figure 9-29: *West Executive Avenue (looking north).*

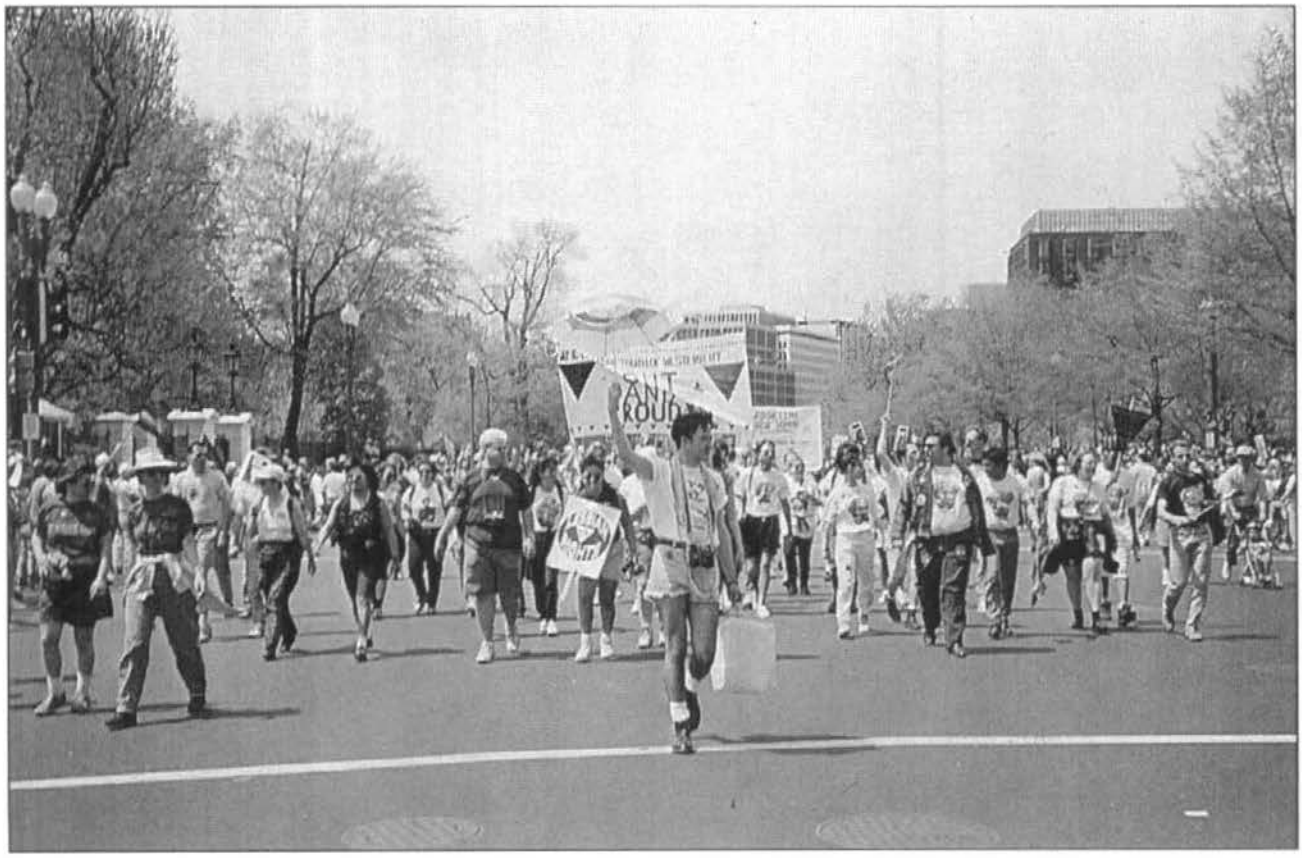

Figure 9-30: *Demonstrators along Pennsylvania Avenue (Lafayette Park is on the right; the White House on the left).*

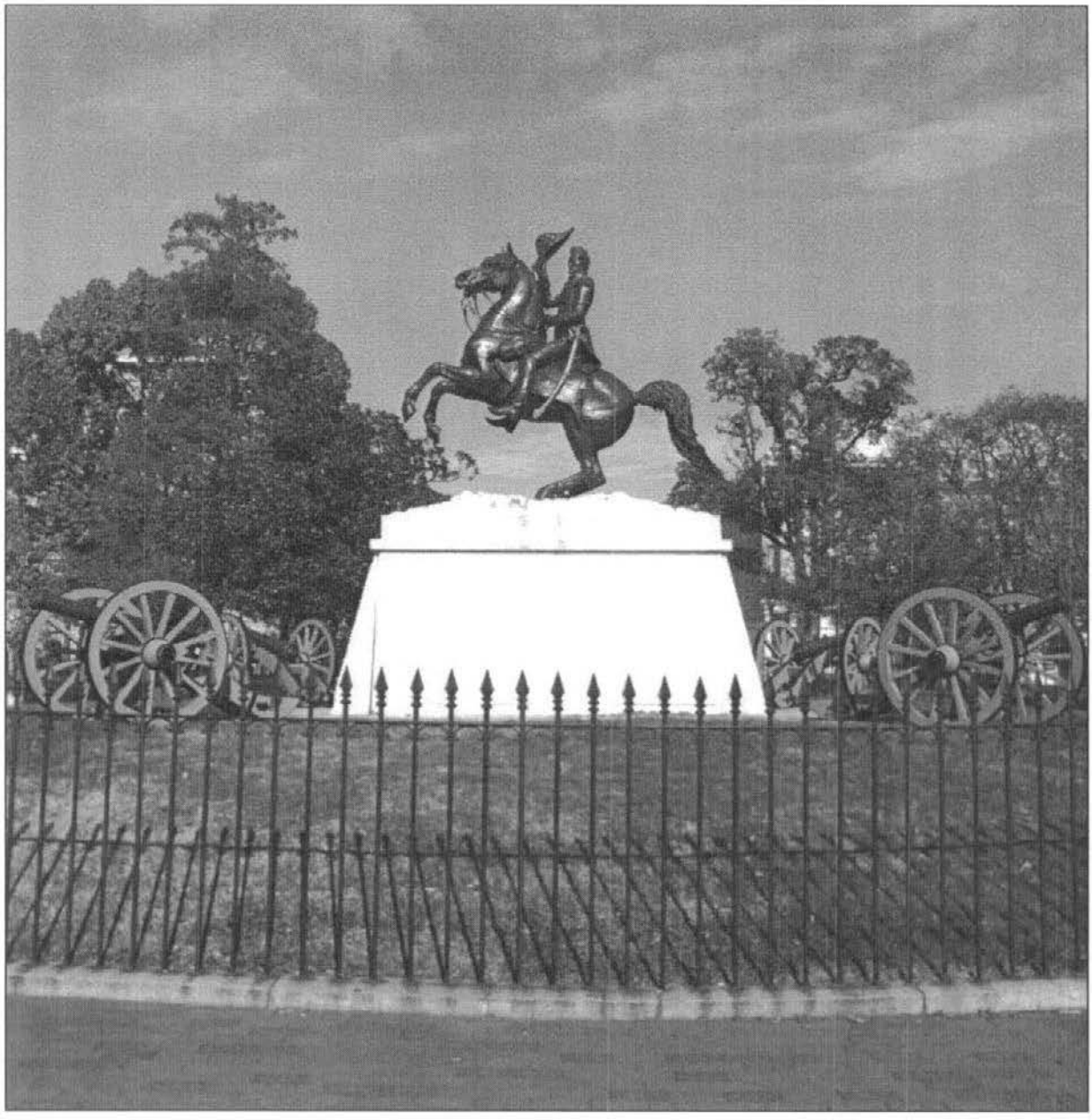

Figure 9-31: *The Andrew Jackson Statue and Cannon.*

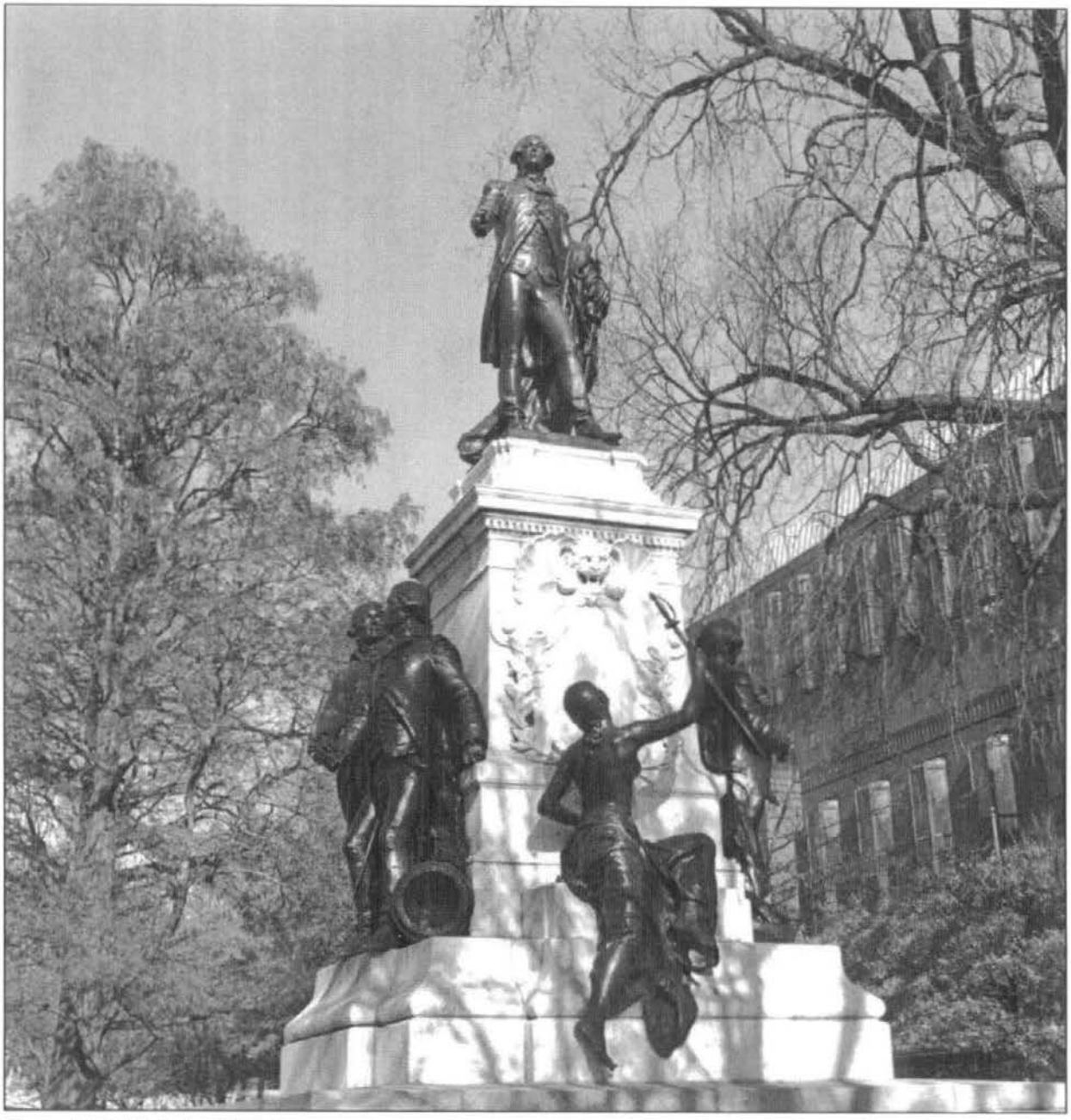

Figure 9-32: *The Lafayette Statue.*

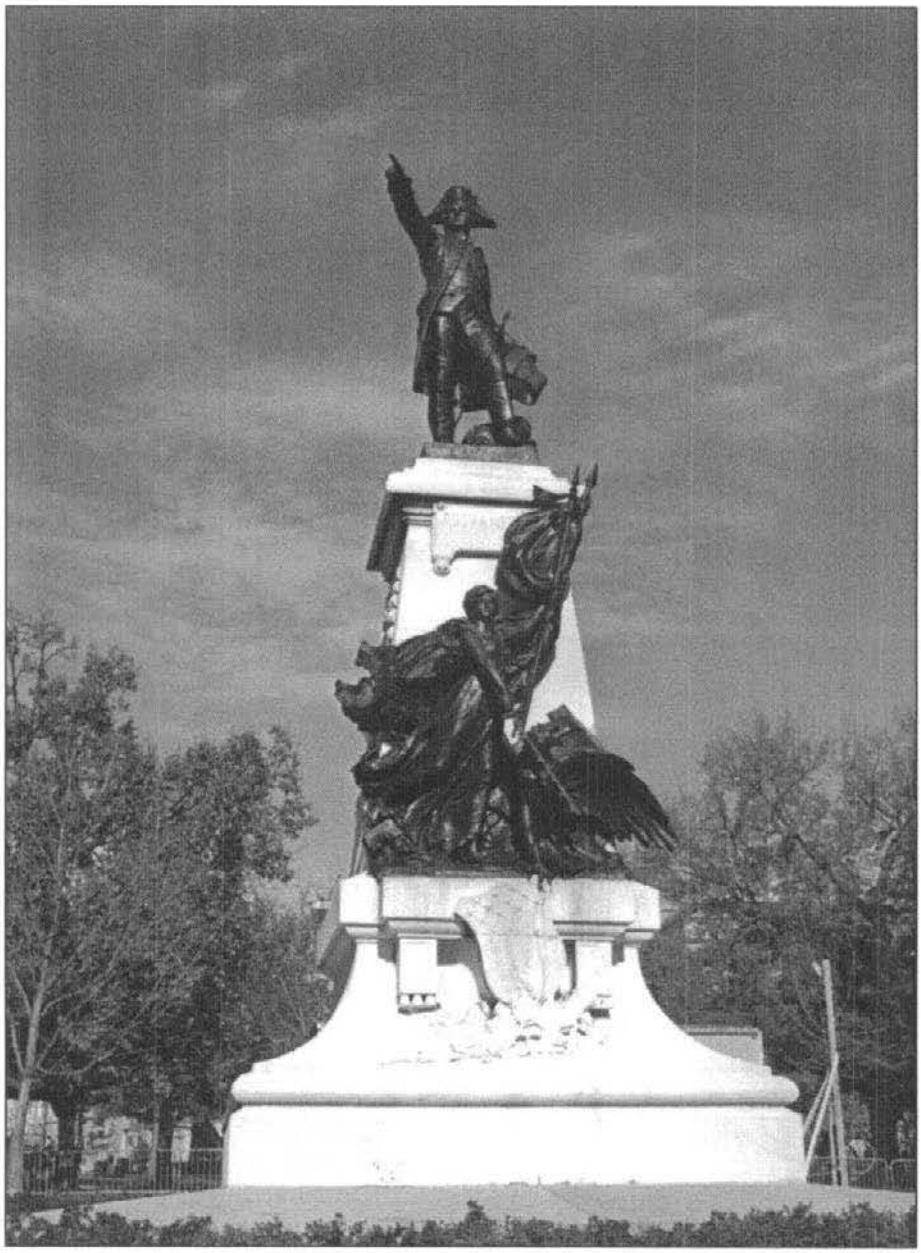

Figure 9-33: *The Rochambeau Statue.*

Figure 9-34: *The von Steuben Statue.*

Figure 9-35: *The Kosciuszko Statue.*

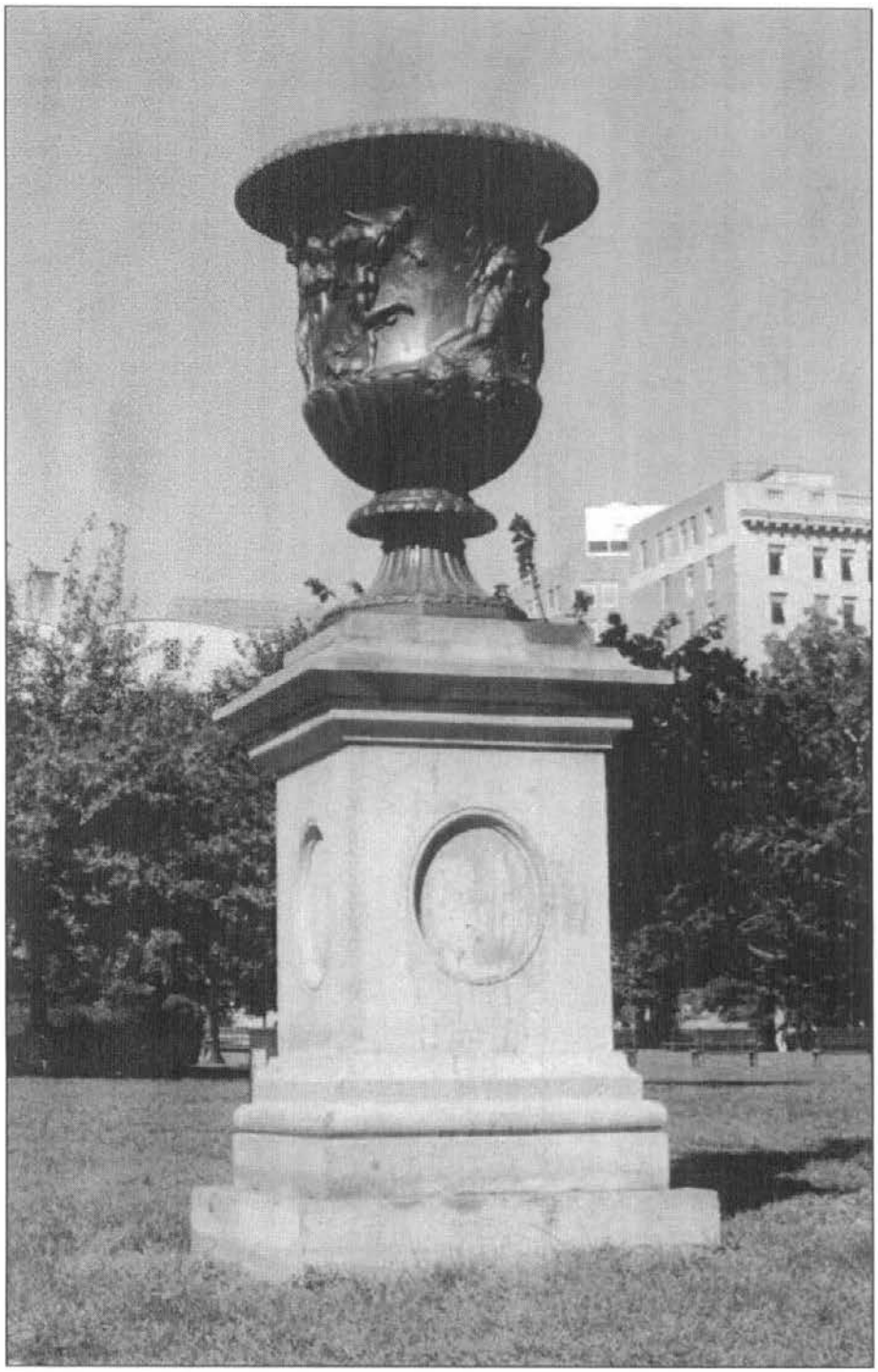

Figure 9-36: *The Navy Yard Urn, Lafayette Park (east side).*

Figure 9-37: *The Bernard Baruch Bench of Inspiration and Commemorative Plaque.*

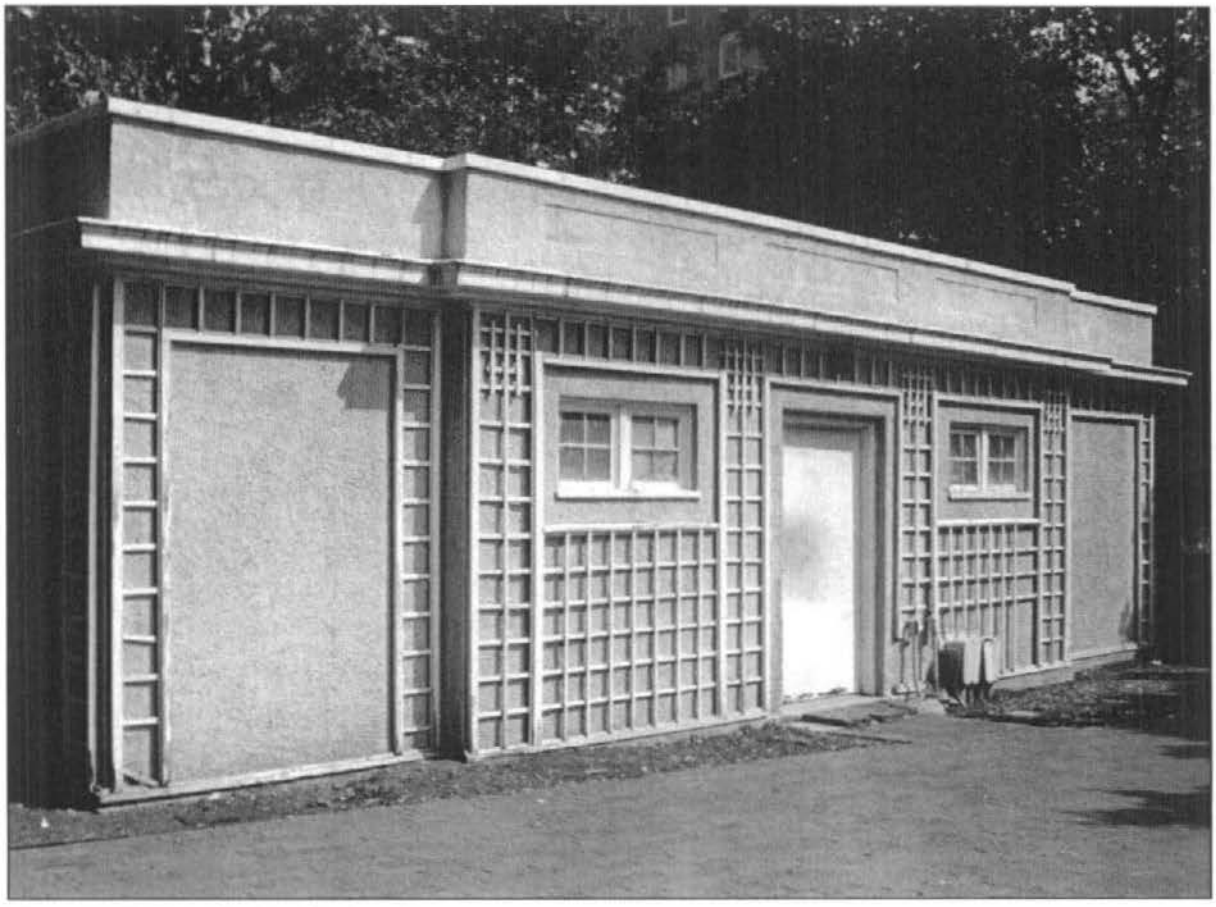

Figure 9-38: *The Lodge in Lafayette Park.*

Figure 9-39: *Saratoga-Style Lamppost.*

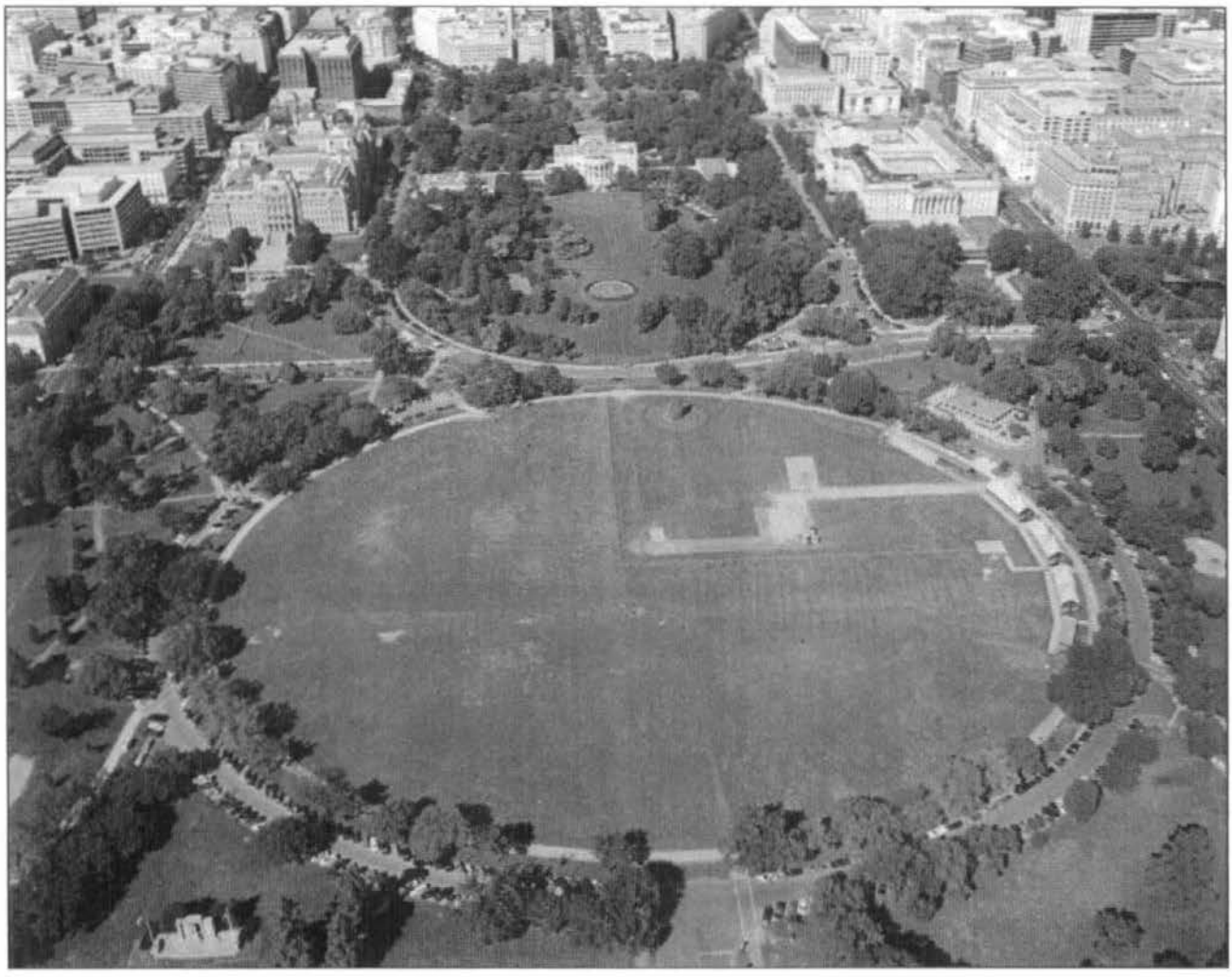

Figure 9–40: *The Ellipse.*

Figure 9-41: *Vendors along 15th Street.*

Figure 9-42: *The National Christmas Tree.*

Figure 9-43: *The Second Division Memorial.*

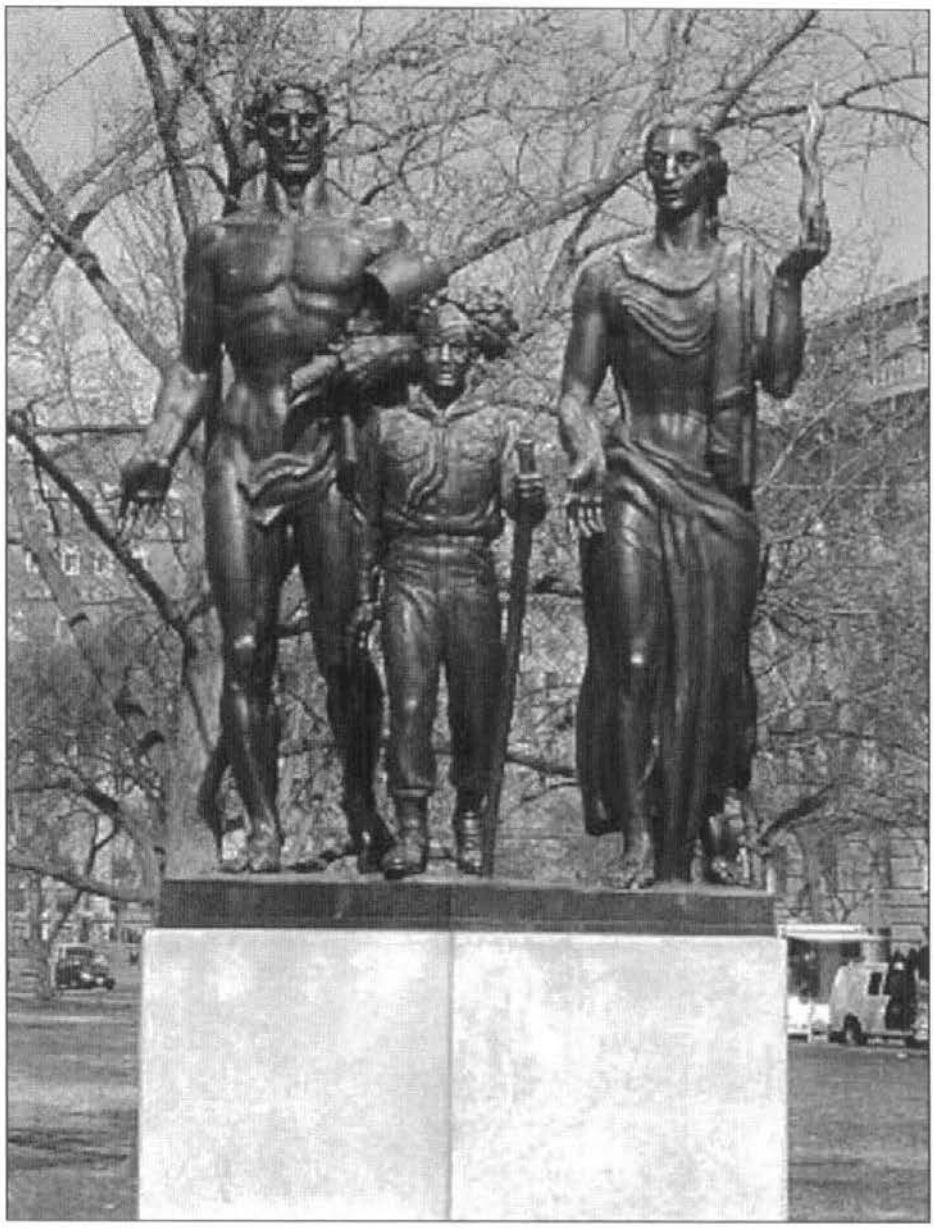

Figure 9–44: *The Boy Scout Memorial.*

Figure 9-45: *The Butt-Millet Memorial Fountain.*

Figure 9-46: *The West Haupt Fountain.*

Figure 9-47: *The Zero Milestone and Historic American Engineering Survey Marker.*

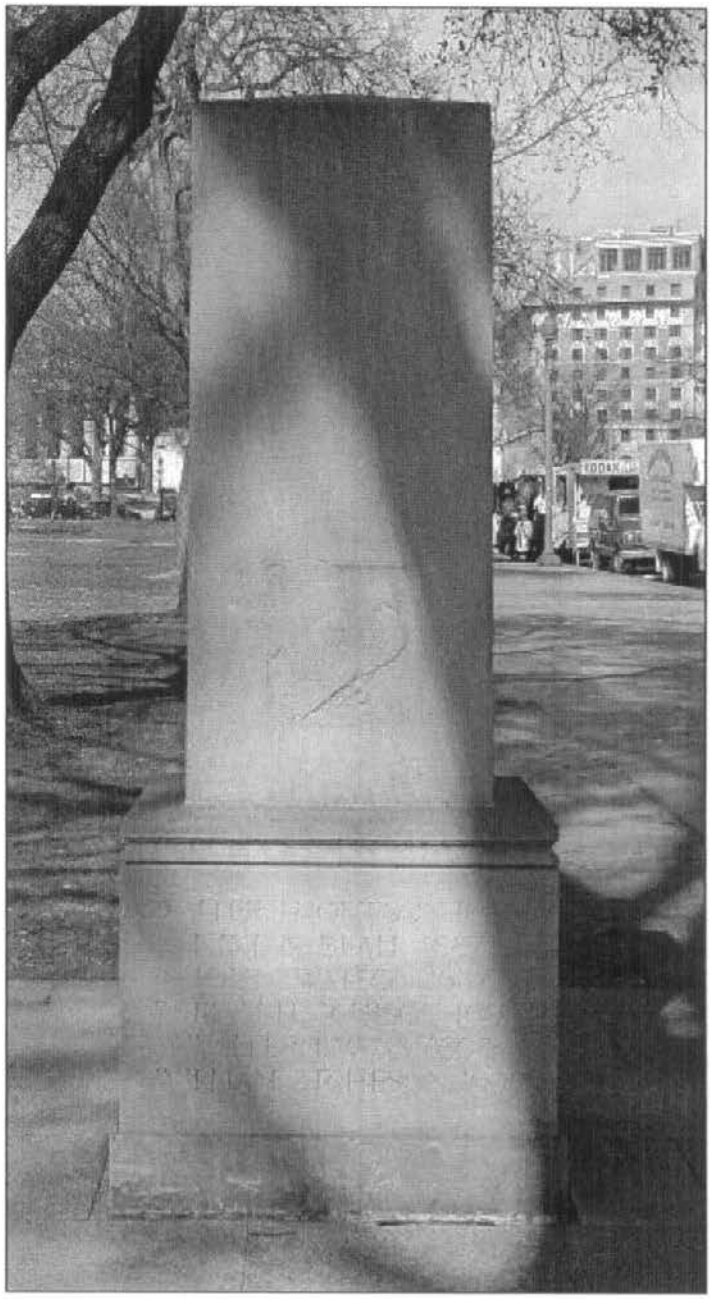

Figure 9-48: *DAR Memorial to the Settlers of the District of Columbia (District Patentees Memorial).*

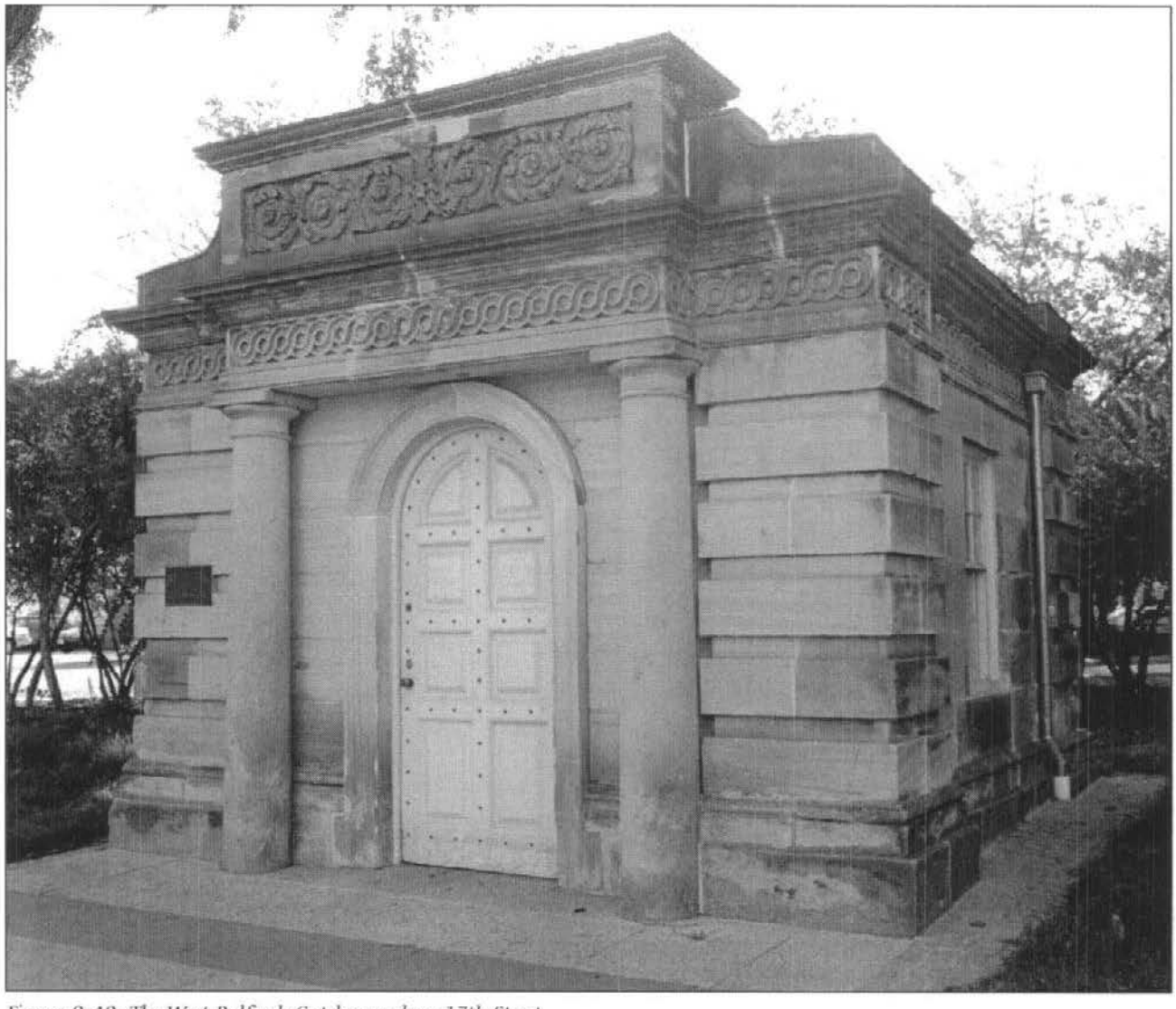

Figure 9-49: *The West Bulfinch Gatehouse along 17th Street.*

Figure 9-50: *The Ellipse Visitor Pavilion.*

Figure 9-51: *Sherman Plaza.*

Figure 9-52: *The First Division Monument.*

The White House and President's Park

Part III: Significance and Integrity

Chapter 10. Evaluation of Significance

The White House and President's Park are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places and recorded on five inventory/nomination forms: one each for the White House, President's Park South (or the Ellipse), the Lafayette Square Historic District, the United States Department of the Treasury, and the Old Executive Office Building (now the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building). The five forms were prepared between 1959 and 1979, a period when little research had been done on the history of American landscape architecture and few reliable publications were available on the subject. On only two of the forms — President's Park South and the Lafayette Square Historic District — is landscape architecture checked off as an area of significance, and even on these two forms the history of the landscapes and their significance is only briefly discussed.[1]

Properties may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under three values and four criteria. They may be eligible because of their associative value (criteria A and B), their design or construction value (criterion C), or their information value (criterion D). According to national register standards, properties may be eligible for the national register under the following criteria:

> *Criterion A:* If they are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
>
> *Criterion B:* If they are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
>
> *Criterion C:* If they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

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1. NPS, National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, "The White House" (Washington, DC, 1959); National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Forms: "President's Park South" (Washington, DC, 1979), "Lafayette Square Historic District" (1970), "United States Department of the Treasury" (1971); "Executive Office Building" (1971); "L'Enfant Plan of the City of Washington, District of Columbia" (1994).

Criterion D: If they have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.[2]

The landscape of President's Park meets criteria A through C. This report recommends that the President's Park landscape should be recognized as being of exceptional significance from 1791 through the present. The landscape of President's Park is one of the most significant in the country. Unlike most other historic sites, its significance derives not only from its role in the past, but from its role in the foreseeable future. This landscape will continue to be a symbol of the presidency and the nation. It will continue to be the private residence of the president of the United States. It will continue to function as the public seat of the executive branch of government and as the ceremonial center for the reception of national and international figures. It will continue to link the White House to other executive offices and to the legislative and judicial branches of government. It will continue to attract talented landscape designers and architects. It will continue to reflect the needs of the current occupants of the While House and to reveal important aspects of its historic evolution. It will continue to dazzle visitors with its immaculate lawns and floral displays.

This report will examine the significance of the site under the criteria A (event), B (persons), and C (design/construction). Criterion D has been addressed in the "Archeological Evaluation" published in 1995.[3]

Criterion A: Event

Context: The Presidency and the Administration of the Executive Branch of Government

The landscape of President's Park is significant under criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places because for more than two centuries it has been the setting for and the symbol of the American presidency — a meaning that includes but transcends its association with individual presidents. It was planned by Washington, Jefferson, and L'Enfant to be not only the president's home, but the working center of administration, a residence and place of relaxation, and a ceremonial setting for entertaining visiting heads of state and eminent national and international figures.

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2. NPS, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register bulletin 15 (Washington, DC: n.d.), 11–21.

3. NPS, "Archeological Evaluation."

Five landscapes compose President's Park — the White House, the Treasury Building, the Old Executive Office Building, Lafayette Park, and President's Park South. The first three are the focus of the administration of the executive branch of government. The other two components of the President's Park landscape are public parks with strong symbolic associations. During the early years of its history, Lafayette Park was known as President's Square, and to this day it acts as a forecourt to the White House. Additionally, it is the site of five commemorative sculptural figures or groups, representing President Andrew Jackson and four Europeans who assisted Americans in their struggle for independence — the Marquis de Lafayette, the Comte de Rochambeau, Baron von Steuben, and General Kosciuszko. Framing the White House to the south, the Ellipse accommodates further sculptures and monuments, commemorating individuals and groups important in the nation's history. The Ellipse also provides a powerful visual and symbolic link with the major presidential memorials just outside the boundaries of President's Park — those commemorating Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The Ellipse also acts spatially as a fulcrum. It links the north-south axis of President's Park to the east-west axis of the Mall and the Capitol, a function that was inherent in the L'Enfant and Downing plans and that was further strengthened by the recommendations of the Senate Park (McMillan) Commission for the Mall formulated in 1901–2 and partially realized in the mid 20th century.

Treating this complex as a single landscape makes sense for several physical and historical reasons. First, L'Enfant's plan presented the entire site as the President's House. Although the specific landscape features were not delineated, the design included an area that roughly corresponds to the size and location of President's Park today. Second, these five distinct units are physically very close, and what occurs in one area visually affects the others. For example, development on the Ellipse could adversely impact the open vistas to and from the White House. Third, although the individual landscapes did not evolve concurrently, their history is closely intertwined. For example, Jefferson proposed the construction of terraces to connect the President's House with the executive office buildings on either side. The construction and completion of the Treasury Building required the removal of stables at the White House. The construction of the Executive Avenues and the excavation for the massive State, War, and Navy Building, which began in 1871, provided needed fill for the grounds of the Ellipse.

President's Park has become the symbol of the nation. Not only is it the site of state dinners and other ceremonial affairs but of Easter egg rolls and national Christmas trees, a place where world-famous

musicians are asked to perform for one president and winners of the Boston marathon jog with another. For security reasons the grounds of the White House are not accessible to the general public, except for the semiannual tours of the gardens and grounds and the Easter egg roll. Throughout its history levels of security have varied. At times access to the grounds has been rather easy; at other times security considerations strictly limited who could enter the site.

The landscape of President's Park has evolved over time, responding to its functions as a private home, a ceremonial residence, an executive office park, a military headquarters, a tourist site, and a point of public assembly and recreation. Sometimes development of the site has been formal, relying on dialogue and plans. More often it has been informal, in reaction to various pressures over the years. Of the various plans prepared for President's Park, only L'Enfant's was comprehensive.[4]

As a symbol of the American presidency, which serves a dual administrative and ceremonial function, the landscape of President's Park is unique in the nation. Within this context, the landscape of President's Park has national significance. The period of significance is 1791 to the present.

Criterion B: Persons

President's Park is significant under criterion B of the National Register of Historic Places because it is associated with all presidents of the United States, including George Washington, who helped select and plan the site but never resided in the White House. The site is also associated with first ladies, many of whom played an important role in the development of the landscape; with many presidential children who either lived at the White House or frequently visited; and with the official hostesses of unmarried or widowed presidents.

The association of this landscape to first families is complex since not all of the occupants of the White House were equally involved in developing ideas for the grounds. Many of them, however, played key roles in designing, suggesting modifications, or adopting a course of action that has had a long-term impact on this site. Jefferson provides a good example of presidential participation. He was instrumental not only in selecting and planning the site, but he also cooperated with Benjamin Latrobe in designing the first plan for

4. William Patrick O'Brien (IMRO/NPS) assisted in the formulation of this paragraph.

the grounds of President's House. In this regard he set an important precedent that was followed by many of his successors.

The landscape of the White House has also been modified to adjust to the needs of first families. This trend has accelerated during the 20th century as there is greater awareness of the need to provide privacy and a certain measure of recreational opportunities within the site for the occupants of the White House. Providing security for the president and the first family and visiting dignitaries has also become an increasingly important consideration in managing this landscape.

President's Park is also associated with many heads of state who have visited. In some cases they have left a specific reminder of their visits, such as a commemorative tree that they helped plant. For most visits a level of flexibility in landscape management has been required that is not normally associated with historic properties. The White House is a special site that must constantly adjust to the changing needs and styles of presidents and their guests.

President's Park is also significant through its association with other important individuals — leading landscape architects and designers, gardeners, architects, sculptors, administrators, and engineers who have contributed to its development. The most important of those in this last group are discussed in greater detail under criterion C.

Within this context, President's Park has national and possibly international significance for the period 1791 to the present.

Criterion C: Design/Construction

Several problems in evaluating the significance of the President's Park landscape are unique to this site. First, President's Park, in a strict design sense, comprises five different landscapes: two parks, the grounds of two office buildings, and the grounds of one residence. For the purposes of this project these various components are considered one landscape, even though at different periods only one or two of the individual landscapes may have undergone significant changes. As previously indicated, treating this complex as a single landscape makes sense for several physical and historical reasons

Second, because this landscape, particularly the White House grounds, has been in a constant state of evolution, it is probable that no one period, style, method of construction, or master designer is represented here in a very pure state. President's Park should be considered a layered landscape in which everything to the present

may be significant, even though only remnants of the earliest periods may have survived. For the White House grounds it is likely that the Olmsted plan of 1935 survives with fairly high integrity, except for the east and west gardens, which have been redesigned twice since then.

Under criterion C the landscape of President's Park meets three of the four requirements to make a property eligible for the national register:

> It embodies the distinctive characteristics of at least three types, styles, and periods — late 18th century Baroque formalism in city planning, mid-19th century romanticism in landscape architecture, and the early 20th century "City Beautiful" movement.
>
> It represents the work of at least three masters associated with these periods — Pierre-Charles L'Enfant, Andrew Jackson Downing, and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.
>
> It possesses high artistic value.

The fourth requirement (that it represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction) does not apply.

The following discussion focuses on the three most logical contexts for President's Park under criterion C.

Context: Late 18th Century City Planning

In connection with this context, a number of European cities, most of them either capital or princely cities, will be briefly examined. Most were planned, either as a whole or in part. They include palaces or executive residences with associated landscaped grounds; sometimes they also have a planned relationship to a legislative or other government building. The relationships that exist to this day between the White House, its own grounds, the adjacent public landscapes, the Capitol, and the Washington street system are a legacy of the L'Enfant 1791 plan, which was inspired by a number of European models. The context explored here, however, is not primarily a L'Enfant context; although attention will be given to cities that L'Enfant knew either personally or from plans, other cities that have no proven connection to L'Enfant will be examined as well.

It should be noted that planned cities outside the United States frequently came into being as a result of authoritarian political regimes.[5] Washington, Jefferson, and the founders of this nation, working with L'Enfant, were able to translate the aesthetic ideal of a city planned for and by an authoritarian regime into one that reflected the framework of a new political democratic system.

When he began planning the city of Washington, L'Enfant asked Jefferson for plans of various cities, specifying London, Madrid, Paris, Amsterdam, Naples, Venice, Genoa, and Florence. From his own collection Jefferson sent L'Enfant plans of Frankfurt am Main, Karlsrühe, Amsterdam, Strasbourg, Paris, Orléans, Bordeaux, Lyons, Montpelier, Marseilles, Turin, and Milan.[6] L'Enfant might have been personally familiar with the French cities for which Jefferson sent plans, as he had been brought up at Versailles and undoubtedly knew the city of Nancy, France, as well.

In some of these cities the parallels with Washington are formal and visual; in others, there is more of a functional and ceremonial similarity. L'Enfant did not copy directly any of these city plans; like any good designer, he came up with his own creative synthesis, successfully adapting it to the U.S. political and physical environment.

In the case of Paris the planning principle that is most relevant to L'Enfant and this discussion is the principle of axial extension. Paris's royal monumental axis originates at the former palace of the Louvre, with its various additions over time, extends west to the site of the former Tuileries Palace, the Tuileries Gardens, the Place de la Concorde, the Champs Elysées, and the Rond Point des Champs Elysées (figure 10-1).[7] The Parisian principle of a sequence of open spaces — forecourts, gardens, and parks — associated with the residence of a head of state and extending axially into the city has much in common with L'Enfant's plan for President's Park.

The most famous aspects of Versailles are the palace itself and the gardens by André Le Nôtre, but they are all of a piece with the town, which was developed concurrently along the sides of the three

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5. Norma Evenson, "Monumental Spaces," in *The Mall in Washington, 1791–1991*, ed. Richard Longstreth (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1991), 19–34.

6. Frederick Doveton Nichols and Ralph E. Griswold, *Thomas Jefferson, Landscape Architect* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 46–56.

7. Edmund M. Bacon, *Design of Cities* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1978), 186–95; Wolfgang Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and Architecture, 900–1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 307–27; *Architectures Capitales: Paris, 1979–1989* (Paris: Electa Moniteur, 1989), 16–27.

radiating approach roads. At regular intervals were uniform squares, built according to precisely formulated regulations. Despite the authoritarianism of the Bourbon kings, particularly Louis XIV, the palace and gardens of Versailles were relatively easy to access by the public. Proper dress was the only requirement to visit the park, and anyone who had been presented to the king could enter the palace.[8]

The President's Park section of the L'Enfant plan has much in common with the part of the town of Versailles in the vicinity of the palace, especially the three radiating avenues that converge on the Place d'Armes, the Cour d'Honneur, and the palace. In L'Enfant's plan, Lafayette Park (then President's Square) served the same function as the Place d'Armes.

At Nancy the principle of a series of connected open spaces related to the residence of a head of state is similar to President's Park. The greatest achievement of designer Emmanuel Héré was a series of three connected courts and spaces, still an ideal embodiment of late 18th century town planning (see figure 10-2).[9]

There is no evidence that L'Enfant ever visited London, yet he might have been familiar with Christopher Wren's scheme for rebuilding the city after the fire of 1666 (figure 10-3), a plan that has some similarities to L'Enfant's plan for Washington. At Greenwich, however, Wren realized an impressive plan to frame Inigo Jones's Queen's House with the buildings of his own Royal Naval Hospital. The design exhibits a formal but not a real functional parallel with President's Park. The relationship between the buildings of the Royal Naval Hospital and the Queen's House is similar to that between the Treasury and Executive Office Buildings and the White House. There is, however, a greater disparity of scale (figure 10-4).[10]

In the city of Westminster, where the royal palaces, Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament, and other government buildings are located, the main ceremonial route is the Mall, which progresses from Buckingham Palace past St. James Palace, the Admiralty and the Horse Guards to Trafalgar Square and then turns sharply south toward the Houses of Parliament (figure 10-5). The development of

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8. Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 253–60.

9. Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 226–30; Siegfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), 143–47; Bacon, *Design of Cities*, 177–79.

10. John W. Reps, *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 15–19; Bacon, *Design of Cities*, 172–73.

the gardens of Buckingham Palace and of the surrounding public spaces has many similarities to that of President's Park.[11]

St. Petersburg's urban character resembles Washington more closely than any European city, except for Paris and Versailles. The city plan as a whole has a strong resemblance to Versailles, although the river, canals, and islands are also reminiscent of Venice (figure 10-6).[12] The city plan of St. Petersburg was reinforced by a remarkable architectural consistency. This resulted from the strict design controls imposed by the St. Petersburg architectural commission, which functioned from 1760 to 1796. During this period German, French, and Italian architects were frequently commissioned for important buildings, as well as architects from Moscow.[13] The parallels between the plan for St. Petersburg and that for Washington are very marked, especially in the areas near the Russian palaces and the three radiating avenues (*prospekts*).

Before 1791 Williamsburg was the American city most closely modeled after Versailles. It was laid out in 1699, probably by Governor Francis Nicholson using the plan of the Le Nôtre gardens at Versailles as the model. In Williamsburg the Duke of Gloucester Street, which extends a mile from the College of William and Mary to the Capitol, is the main axis (figure 10-7). At Versailles the main axis extends from the palace down the grand canal and then disappears into infinity with no visible terminus. At Williamsburg the cross axis has one arm only, which terminates at the Governor's Palace. At Versailles, the cross axis is the Petit Canal, one arm of which terminates at the Grand Trianon and the other, which once led to a zoo, now has no monumental terminus.[14] The relationships at Williamsburg between the Capitol and the Governor's Palace, with its gardens and Palace Green, are similar to those between the Capitol and the White House and its associated open spaces.

The landscape of President's Park has its origins in the 1791 L'Enfant city plan for Washington. Influences and parallels with the L'Enfant plan can be traced in many European cities, but the principal model seems to have been the plan for Versailles. A secondary model

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11. Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 327–39. Bacon, *Design of Cities*, 200–13. Roy Strong, *Royal Gardens* (New York: Pocket Books, 1991); Susan Lasdon, *The English Park: Royal, Private and Public* (London: André Deutsch), 1991.

12. Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 267–71; Bacon, *Design of Cities*, 196–99; Iuri Alekseevich Egorov, *The Architectural Planning of St. Petersburg: Its Development in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, trans. Eric Dluhosch (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1969).

13. Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 272–75.

14. Reps, *The Making of Urban America*, 108–14.

probably was the royal axis in Paris. Similar plans in other European cities, especially St. Petersburg, the unexecuted Wren plan for the rebuilding of London, and Wren's plan for Greenwich, were themselves derived from Versailles, but may have been direct influences on L'Enfant as well.

The specific criterion that applies to the context of international city planning of the late 18th century is criterion C, design/construction. The President's Park landscape, as an integral component of the L'Enfant plan of the city of Washington, "embodies the definitive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction" — that is, late 18th century city planning, a movement that was French Baroque in origin and international in influence.

Within this context, the landscape of President's Park has national and probably international significance. The period of significance for this context would be 1791 to ca. 1820, the end date corresponding to the rebuilding of the White House and flanking office buildings after the War of 1812.

Context: Andrew Jackson Downing

Andrew Jackson Downing (1815–52) was a pivotal figure in the history of American landscape architecture. However, all his early landscape designs were residential. Downing's plan for the public grounds of Washington was his first and only plan for a public park or system of parks and also the first such plan in the United States. It preceded the Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. and Calvert Vaux plan for Central Park in New York City by six years. Furthermore, no other landscape design by Downing survives, even in a fragmentary condition.[15]

Downing's 1851 plan for the public grounds of Washington, including the President's Park component (the Ellipse or "Parade" and the grounds of the President's House), is also a prototypical example of mid 19th century romanticism in American landscape design, as is his plan for Lafayette Square. Downing was the chief proponent of this style, which emphasized curvilinear path and road systems, the use of a wide variety of plant materials, and the picturesque and irregular massing of trees and shrubs. This style influenced Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. and many others. The connection between Downing and Olmsted is especially significant, since Calvert Vaux,

15. Tatum, "The Downing Decade," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 1–42; Tatum, "Nature's Gardener," in *Prophet with Honor*, ed. Tatum and MacDougall, 43–80.

who was Downing's partner from 1850 until the latter's death in 1852, became Olmsted's partner in 1857. The two together won the competition for the "New-York Park," or Central Park, and stayed in partnership until 1872. Downing's death at the age of 37 cut short a career that was just beginning to turn in a new direction and also prevented his Washington plan from coming to full realization.

Downing's landscape design for President's Park was also an important early example of the American park movement. Downing's writings, which were published just before undertaking the Washington project, show an exceptional awareness of the need for parks in American cities, particularly in the older cities on the east coast, which, due to immigration and industrialization, were rapidly becoming severely congested and afflicted by epidemics of cholera and other diseases. A key document is an article on "The New-York Park," which he wrote in August 1851, while working on the Washington public grounds. Rather than stressing aesthetics, Downing made a case for a large park in New York City on social, sanitary, and humanitarian grounds, just as Olmsted was to do for New York, Brooklyn, Boston, and many other cities in the following decades. Downing's statements were almost identical to those made by Olmsted in his 1870 address "Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns" and many other writings.[16]

Washington did not yet suffer from immigration and crowding, but it is clear that Downing felt that his plan for "The Public Grounds of Washington" should serve as a national model that would encourage cities across the country to establish similar parks. It would be a "Public School of Instruction in every thing that relates to the tasteful arrangement of parks and grounds."[17]

The portions of Downing's plan for Washington that are still extant, in any form, are all within President's Park and represent both his only remaining public work and his only remaining project of any kind. While Lafayette Square does not reflect Downing's 1851 presentation plan, the square has been documented as his design, and there seems little doubt that it stayed close to its original plan (with the exception of the four corner sculptures) until the late 1930s.

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16. A. J. Downing, "The New-York Park," August 1851, reprinted in Andrew Jackson Downing, *Rural Essays*, ed. George William Curtis (New York: Da Capo Press, 1974, reprint of 1853 edition), 147. Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., "Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns," 1870, in *Civilizing American Cities: A Selection of Frederick Law Olmsted's Writings on City Landscapes*, ed. S. B. Sutton (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1971), 43–99.

17. A. J. Downing, "Explanatory Notes to Accompany the Plan for Improving the Public Grounds at Washington," NA.

Criterion C: Design/Construction

Documentation also clearly indicates that a revised version of Downing's plan for the Ellipse (Parade) was executed, partly under his supervision, in the early 1850s but was severely damaged during the Civil War years. Under the presidency of Rutherford Hayes, Downing's plan for the Ellipse was loosely implemented with some modifications from the presentation plan. It was finally completed by the early 1880s. There is insufficient documentation to determine how much design work according to Downing's original or a later revised plan was accomplished at the White House.

The landscapes of Lafayette Park and the Ellipse "embody the definitive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction" that is mid 19th century romanticism in American landscape design. It also represents the work of a master. Within this context, the landscapes of Lafayette Park and the Ellipse have national significance.

The period of significance for this context would be 1850 to ca. 1885, the end date representing the reinstatement of a modified version of the Downing plan for the Ellipse during the Cleveland administration.

Context: Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

Olmsted Brothers was the preeminent American landscape architectural firm of its period. Active between 1898 and 1957, the firm produced thousands of designs for projects of all types all over the United States and in Canada. After the retirement of his father in 1895 and the death of his brother, John Charles Olmsted, in 1920, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. became the principal of the firm, with an outstanding reputation in civic design service as well as in his private practice. Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.'s association with President's Park began in 1901 when he was appointed a member of Senator McMillan's Senate Park Commission. In 1902 he also advised Charles F. McKim informally on gardens and drives, when the latter was working on the renovation of the White House. By the time of his 1934–35 plan for the White House grounds, prepared for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Olmsted had also served as a member of the Fine Arts Commission and on other national commissions and advisory committees, including one for the National Park Service.

Olmsted's "Report to the President of the United States on Improvements and Policy of Maintenance for the Executive Mansion Grounds," did not propose radical revisions to the existing landscape. Clearly, the aim was not to produce a grand "country place" design of the type that the firm was noted for and had executed on the north shore of Long Island, New York, and elsewhere. The White

House plan should not be compared with projects of this type. The Olmsted report also included a very important historical component, specifically requested by President Roosevelt and prepared by Professor Morley Williams of Harvard University. The only critical design change that was carried out as a result of the Olmsted plan was the removal of the inner "fiddle-shaped" drives on the south lawn, which had been there since the Jackson administration. Another suggestion was the redesign of the east and west gardens, but this would not be accomplished for close to three decades. Most of the other recommendations pertained to relocating plantings, not only to secure more privacy for the first family, but also to open up the south vista toward the house.

The landscape of the White House owes much of its present character to the Olmsted plan of 1935, which was more of a landscape management plan than a redesign. As the section on site history has documented, the recommendations of this plan were to preserve as much of the existing landscape as possible, while removing what were then considered to be outdated or impractical features (the "fiddle-shaped drives"). The report is an early and model example of a plan that reconciles the preservation of existing historic landscape features with the adaptation of the landscape to modern conditions. The basic directives of the 1935 Olmsted plan are still official policy at the White House today. The report itself is consulted frequently and still guides many of the landscape management decisions at the site. It is very rare, and perhaps even unprecedented, for a landscape or planning report to remain relevant, valuable, and in active service after 60 years.

According to criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places, the landscape of the White House "embodies the definitive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction" — that is, early 20th century management of historic landscapes and sensitive redesign of such sites. It also embodies the work of a master, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., the eminent landscape architect who was then the senior partner of the firm that his father had started and which was noted for residential design as well as for park planning, conservation, and campus design. Within this context, the White House landscape has national significance.

This period of significance would be 1934–52, the end date corresponding to the realization of some of the recommendations of the Olmsted plan after the White House remodeling in 1949–52. However, since the Olmsted report is still in use today, a case might be made for extending this date to the present and into the future.

Summary

Although other landscape architects/"masters" contributed to the design of the White House and President's Park, such as Beatrix Farrand, John Carl Warnecke, and Edward Durell Stone Jr., their efforts involved only discrete portions of the grounds rather than an overall plan for the site.

Summary

Five contexts have been examined in the course of this chapter:

1. *The Presidency and the Administration of the Executive Branch of Government.* The landscape of President's Park is significant within this context, which encompasses the entire administrative and ceremonial history of the site from its earliest period. The level of significance is national and possibly international, and the period of significance is 1791 to the present. The applicable national register criterion is A, event.

2. *First Families.* The landscape of President's Park is significant within this context for its association with all of our presidents and first ladies. In some cases, the association extends to other members of their families, as well as to foreign heads of state and other dignitaries. The level of significance is national and possibly international, and the period of significance is 1791 to the present. The applicable national register criterion is B, persons.

3. *Late 18th Century City Planning.* The President's Park landscape is significant in that it is based on developments in European late Baroque city planning, especially exemplified by the royal axis of Paris, the town plan of Versailles, Christopher Wren's plans for Greenwich and the rebuilding of London, and the plan of St. Petersburg, Russia. The first three of these plans and the first phases of the planning of St. Petersburg were completed well before the late 18th century, but they were established prototypes. Drawing in some cases from his personal experience of these cities and in some cases from maps provided by Thomas Jefferson, L'Enfant derived his own plan. The level of significance is national and possibly international, and the period of significance is 1791 to ca. 1820. This date was chosen as the end date because it signals the rebuilding of the White House and flanking office buildings after they were burned by the British in 1814. The applicable national register criterion is C, design/construction.

4. *Andrew Jackson Downing.* The landscape of President's Park appears to be significant within this context, which encompasses the involvement of the nation's most important mid 19th century landscape designer, whose plan for the public grounds of Washington was conceived and partially executed in the last two years of his life. The level of significance is national, and the period of significance is 1850 to ca. 1885, the end date representing the reinstatement of a modified version of the Downing plan for the Ellipse during the Cleveland administration. The applicable national register criterion is C, design/construction.

5. *Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.* The landscape of President's Park appears to be significant within this context, which represents the conception and production of the Olmsted "Report and Plan for Improvements and Policy of Maintenance for the Executive Mansion Grounds." This context applies only to the grounds of the White House and not to the rest of President's Park. The level of significance is national, and the period of significance is 1934 to 1952, the end date corresponding to the implementation of some Olmsted recommendations. However, the Olmsted report is still in use today, and the end date should be the present. The applicable national register criterion is C, design/ construction.

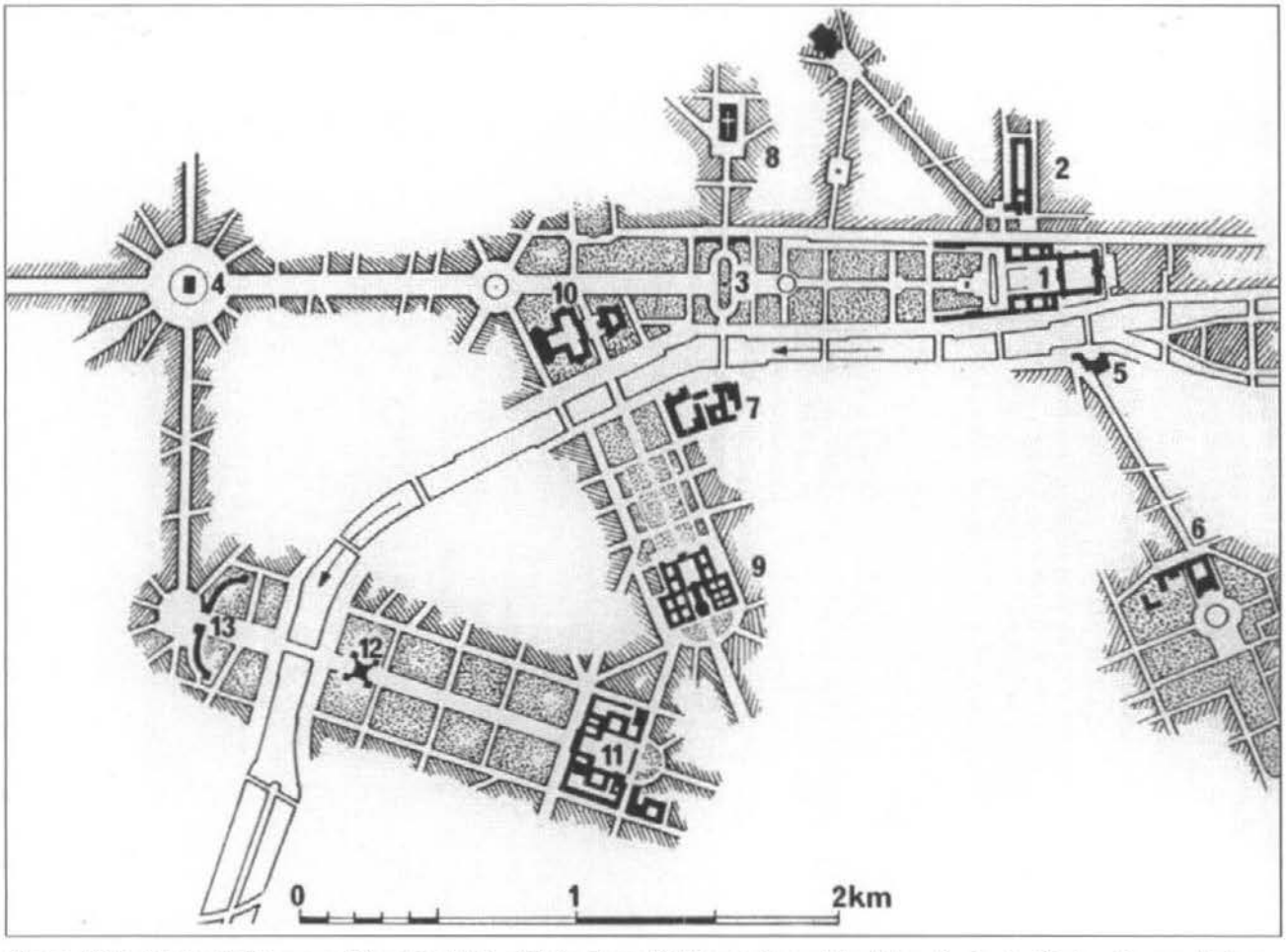

Figure 10-1: *Schematic Diagram of the Royal Axis of Paris*. From Wolfgang Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and Architecture, 900-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

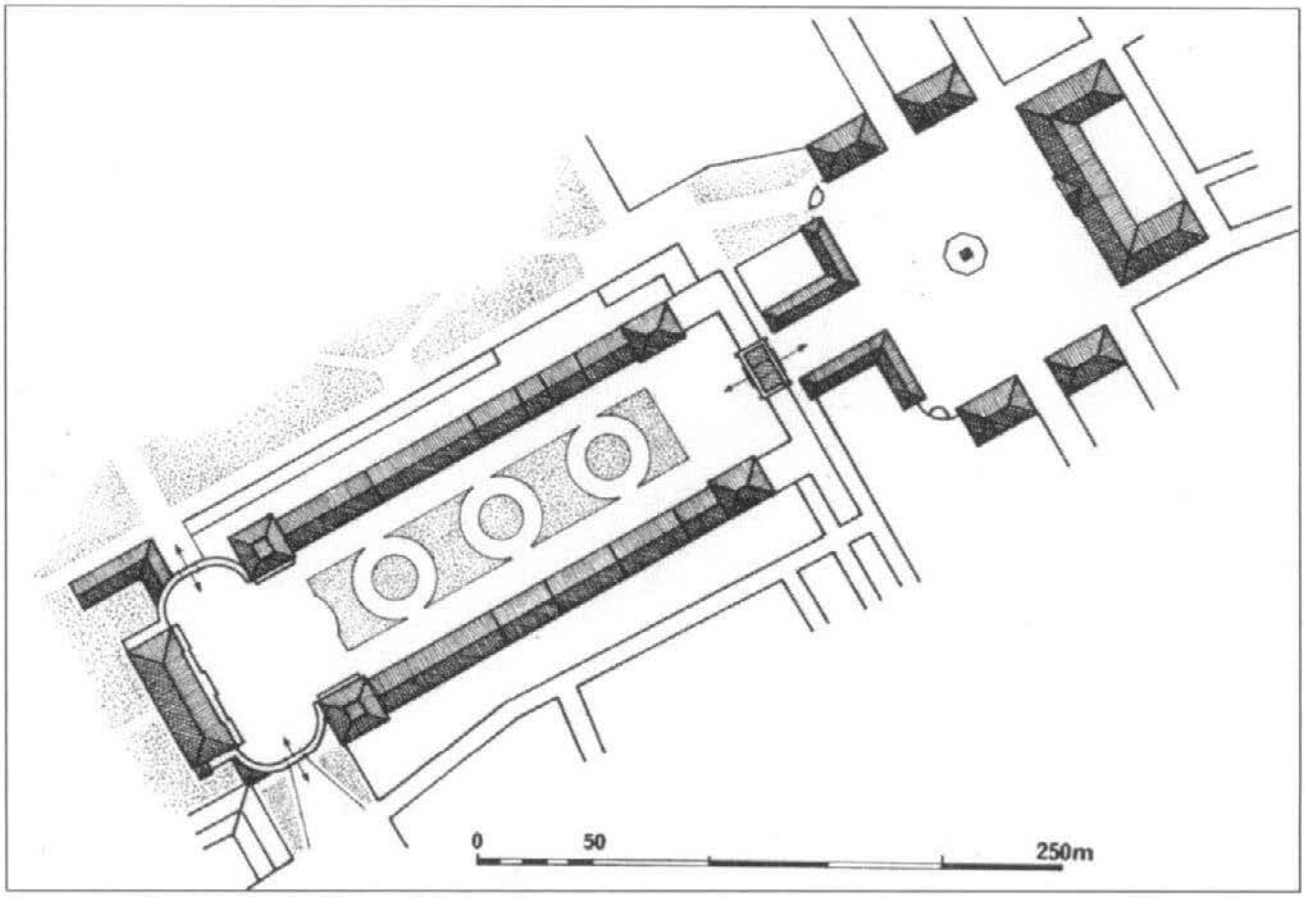

Figure 10-2: *Nancy, Place Stanislaus and Place de la Carriere.* From Wolfgang Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and Architecture, 900–1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

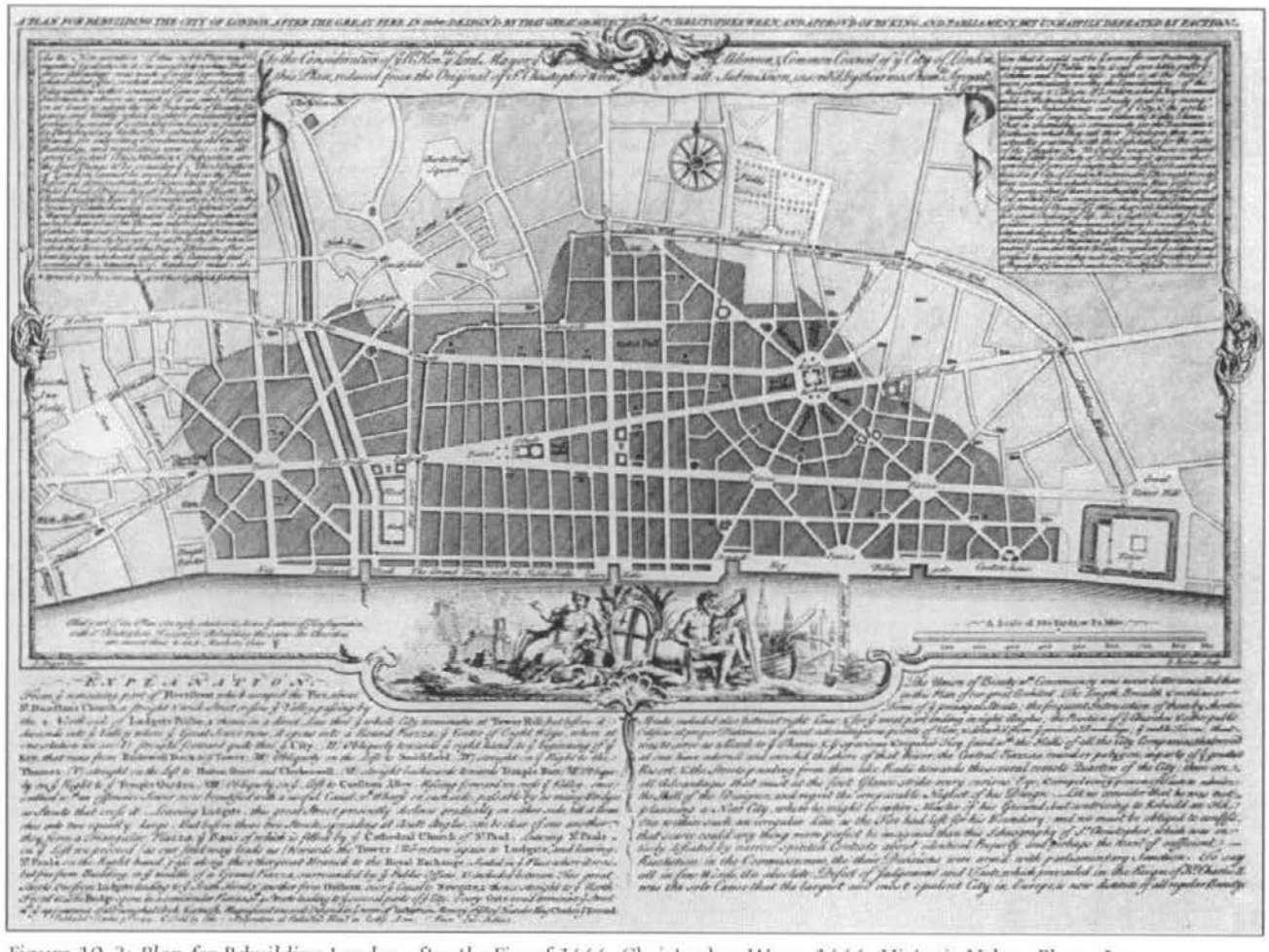

Figure 10-3: *Plan for Rebuilding London after the Fire of 1666*. Christopher Wren, 1666. Historic Urban Plans, Inc.

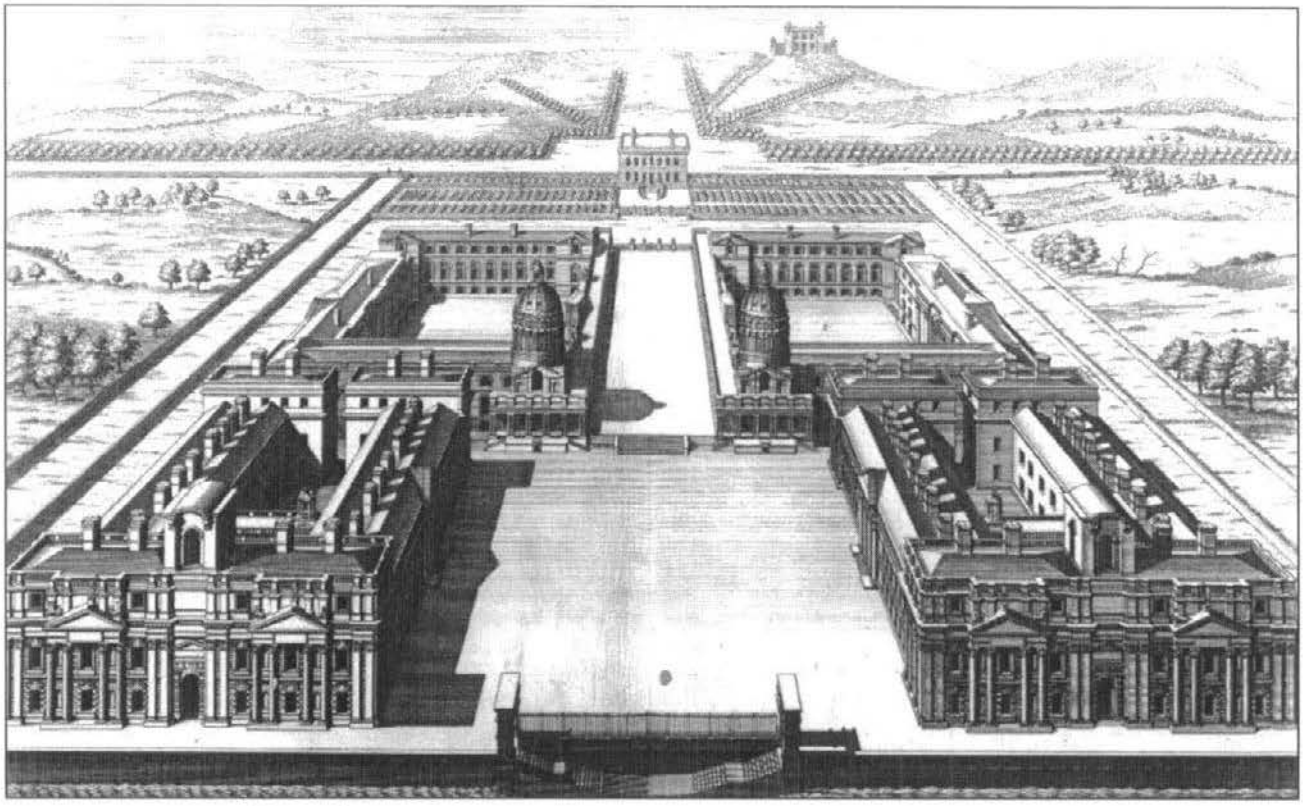

Figure 10–4: *Prospect of the Royal Hospital at Greenwich to the River Thames.* Christopher Wren, 1699. From Colin Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus,* vol. 3 (London, 1725). Library of Congress, Rare Books.

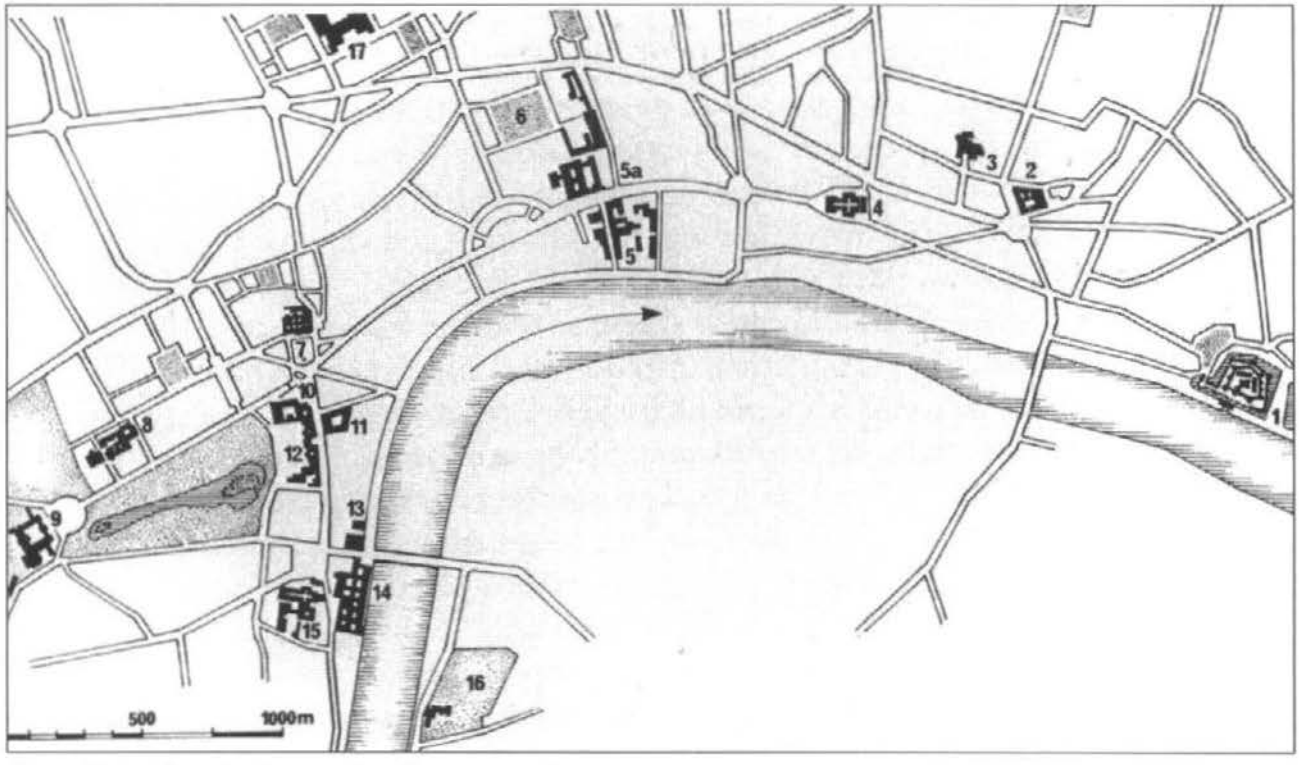

Figure 10-5: *Schematic Diagram of London*. From Wolfgang Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and Architecture, 900–1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

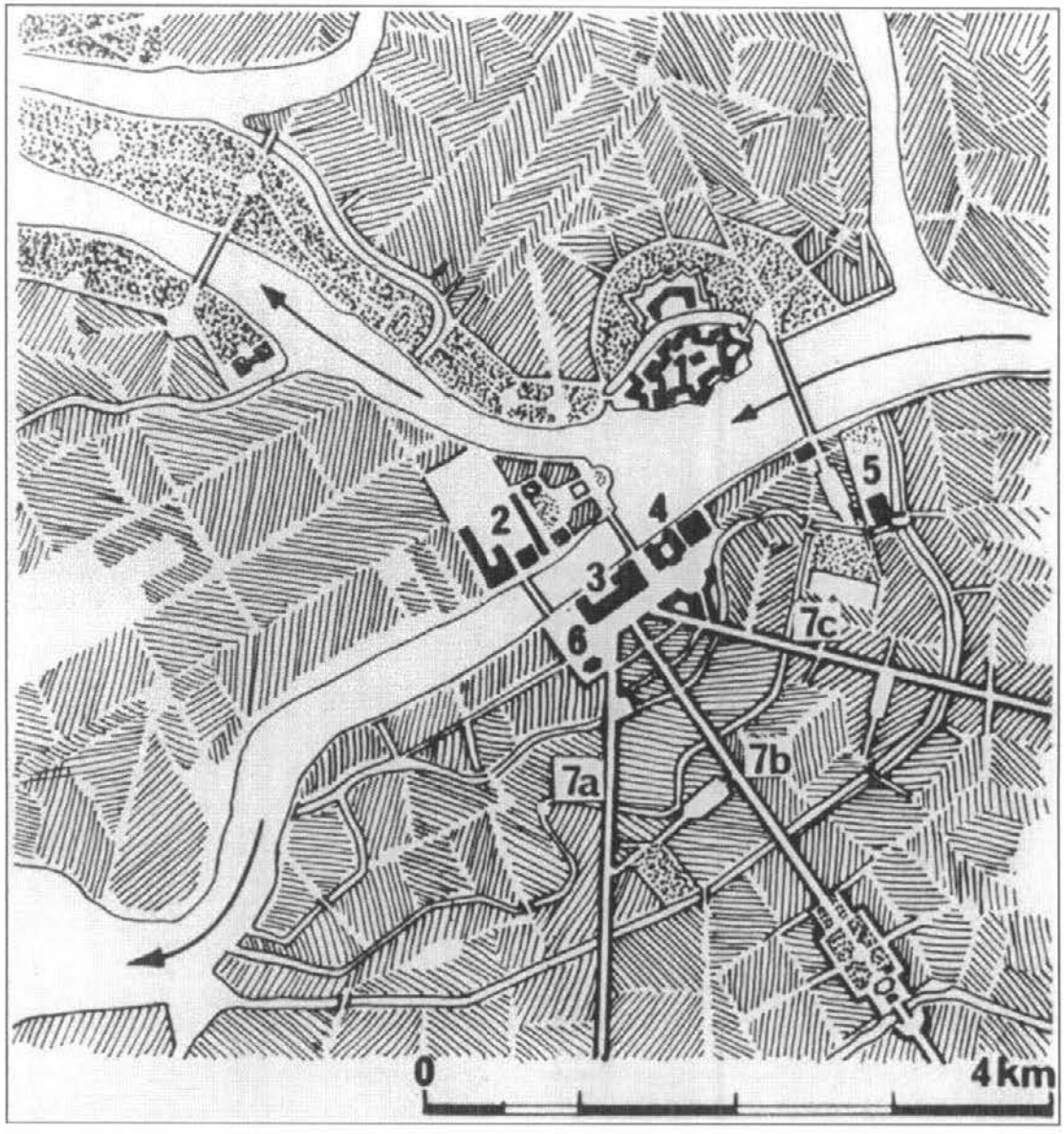

Figure 10-6: *Schematic Diagram of St. Petersburg*. From Wolfgang Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and Architecture, 900–1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

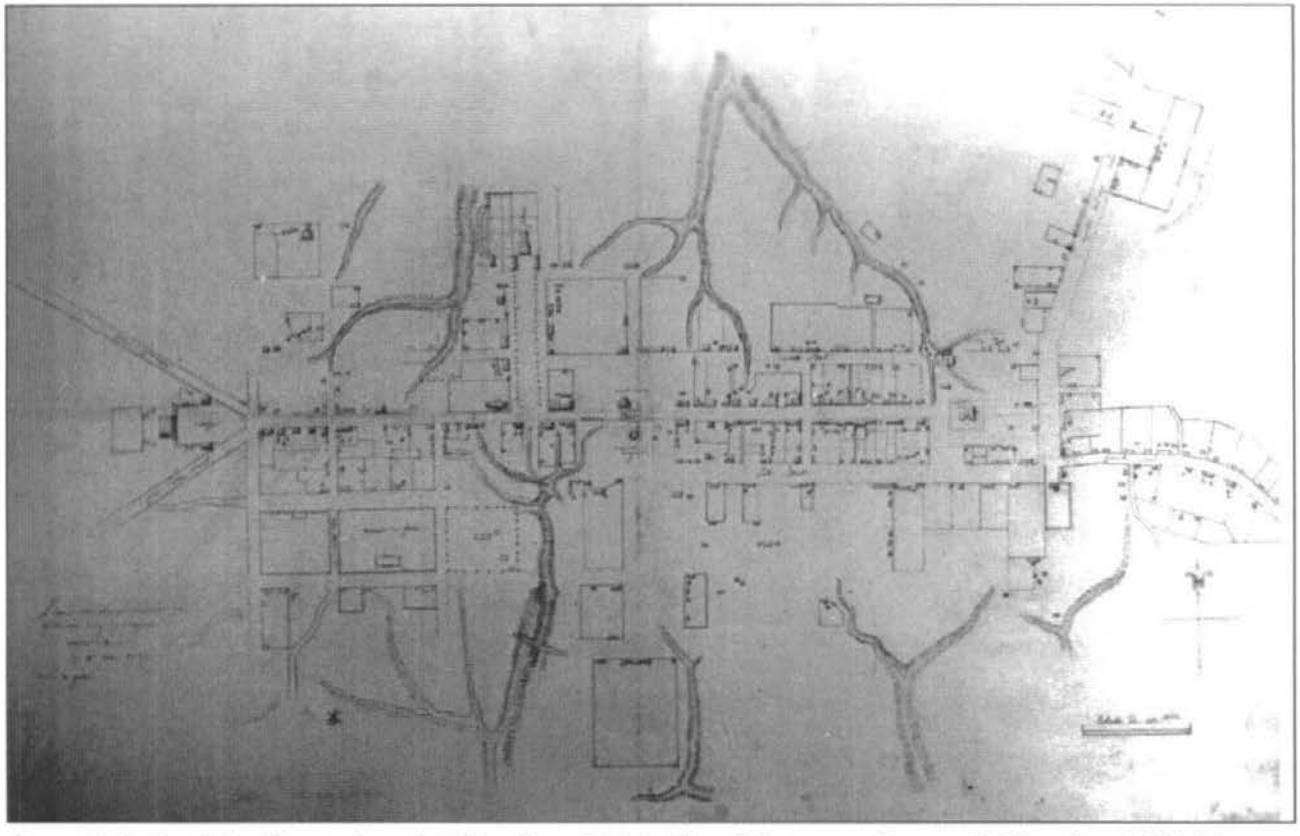

Figure 10-7: *Plan de la ville et maisons de Williamsburg, Virginia (Plan of the town and houses of Williamsburg, Viriginia).* 1786. Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

Chapter 11. Evaluation of Integrity

The landscape of the White House and President's Park has been the focus of activities associated with the U.S. presidency and the administration of the executive branch of government since the beginning of the nation in the 18th century. It is a dynamic, layered landscape that reflects its development and use for over two centuries. It represents many historic periods and is related to several historic contexts. Change occurs regularly, as dictated by operational, security, and privacy requirements.

For the purpose of this document President's Park has been defined as a designed historic landscape.[1] The President's Park landscape includes the White House, Lafayette Park, the Treasury Building, the Old Executive Office Building, and the Ellipse.[2] The National Park Service's *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* describes a designed historic landscape as:

- significant as a design or work of art;
- consciously designed and laid out by a master gardener, landscape architect, architect or horticulturist according to a design principle, or an owner or amateur using a recognized style or tradition;

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1. The NPS *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* defines the other landscape classifications as follows:
   - Historic vernacular landscape — a landscape whose use, construction, or physical layout reflects endemic traditions, customs, beliefs, or values; in which the expression of cultural values, social behavior, and individual actions over time is manifested in physical features and materials and their interrelationships, including patterns of spatial organization, land use, circulation, vegetation, structures, and objects; and in which the physical, biological, and cultural features reflect the customs and everyday lives of people.
   - A historic site is a landscape significant for its association with a historic event, activity, or person.
   - An ethnographic landscape is a landscape containing a variety of natural and cultural resources that associated people define as heritage resources. Small plant communities, animal habitat, and subsistence and ceremonial grounds are included.

2. The White House and the Ellipse, in turn, can be subdivided into component landscapes. For example, the north lawn is a component landscape of the White House. Others include the Rose Garden and the upper and lower south lawns. President's Park South can also be divided into component landscapes, such as the Ellipse, the Sherman Plaza, and the First Division Monument.

- associated with a significant person, trend, or event in landscape gardening; or
- having a significant relationship to the theory or practice of landscape architecture.

The President's Park landscape has evolved as a result of multiple uses and historical factors. It possesses distinct physical landscape characteristics, types and concentrations of historic features, as well as specific uses that have influenced its evolution. Some changes or layers may be more important than others because of their association with particular events or persons or their design character.

For integrity to be present, a cultural landscape must continue to represent "the authenticity" of its "historic identity, [as] evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic period."[3] The clearest evaluation of integrity is based on the presence of identifiable components of the original design. To evaluate the historical integrity of a designed landscape, it is essential to compare its appearance and function to its historical appearance and function. The relationship between present function and that intended or actually in use during the period of significance may also affect the integrity of a designed historic landscape.[4]

President's Park has evolved to such an extent that no single period, style, method of construction, or designer is represented in a pure state. As a result, the evaluation of integrity is based on the understanding that some degree of change is inherent and that change has ensured the continued use of the site for its original and intended use as the official and private residence of the head of the executive branch. Indeed, it is President Park's associative importance that makes changes within the period of significance acceptable. For President's Park, restoration to a specific period design or plan, for example, would be likely to strip away features that relate to other historical contexts and periods.

The condition of a landscape affects integrity evaluations to some extent. Condition and integrity are interrelated, but distinct, aspects of the existing state of a cultural landscape. Condition, however, is not the primary determinant of whether or not a feature retains integrity. While a deteriorated or diseased feature may contribute to

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3. NPS, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, National Register Bulletin 16A (Washington, DC, Interagency Division, 1991), 4

4. NPS, *How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes*, by Timothy Keller and Genevieve P. Keller, National Register Bulletin 18 (Washington, DC: n.d.), 6-7.

landscape integrity, a feature in excellent condition may not necessarily contribute to integrity. The evaluation of integrity took into account condition assessments of individual features in President's Park; these assessments were based on field investigations conducted in 1993 and 1994. While poor maintenance may negatively affect integrity in many landscapes, the reverse is sometimes true for President's Park, where an exceptional degree of maintenance in some areas has resulted in the removal, replacement, or alteration of historic fabric and features that would have contributed to integrity. For example, damaged, diseased, or unattractive vegetation is often removed for aesthetic reasons.

The criteria for assessing integrity, as established for the National Register of Historic Places, have been considered for this landscape and include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. *Location* is the place where the significant features that characterized a property occurred. *Design* refers to the composition of natural and cultural elements, comprising the form, plan, and spatial organization of a property; *setting* refers to the physical environment within and surrounding a property. *Materials* are the actual fabric of buildings, outbuildings, roadways, fences, and other landscape features. *Workmanship* is the quality exhibited in the ways people have fashioned their environment for functional and decorative purposes. *Feeling*, although intangible, is the perception evoked by the presence of physical characteristics that reflect the historical scene. *Association* is the direct link between a property and the important events or persons that shaped it.[5]

Integrity evaluations address the following inquiries concerning President's Park:

- To what degree is the historic character associated with a specific historic context present?
- Does the present landscape possess the ability to reflect significant aspects of the designs and plans associated with L'Enfant, Downing, and Olmsted?
- Does the landscape retain original historic fabric?
- How do the site's current landscape characteristics contribute to or detract from integrity? To what extent are they the same or different from the characteristics known to have existed during the period of significance?

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5. NPS, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*, by Linda Flint McClelland, J. Timothy Keller, Genevieve P. Keller, and Robert Z. Melnick, National Register Bulletin 30 (Washington, DC: n.d.), 22–23.

Evaluation of Integrity

Context: The Presidency and First Families, and the Administration of the Executive Branch of the United States Government

The landscape of President's Park retains authentic features from many historic periods. These features reflect the character of this landscape as it has evolved over two centuries. Changes in this landscape are significant because of their association with significant persons or events or with significant designers or design trends. In these instances the alterations or additions have achieved significance in their own right over time. In this layered landscape, even the work of L'Enfant, Downing, Olmsted, and others can be seen as part of a continuum. Throughout the history of the site, presidents have participated and contributed to the planning, design, and/or implementation process. The L'Enfant, Downing, and Olmsted work, for example, is associated not only with those designers but also with Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Millard Fillmore, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Substantial changes have not prevented a definite pattern of landscape continuity. The architectural integrity associated with the major buildings and structures within President's Park is significant in these contexts. The White House (first built in 1792; major rebuildings following the War of 1812 and during the Truman administration), the Treasury Building (the first Treasury was established 1798; the new Treasury in 1836 and modified subsequently), and the Old Executive Office Building (1871–88) establish the site's physical identity and provide continuity from one period to the next. These building sites have remained constant, although the buildings have increased in size and undergone periodic rehabilitation to meet changing executive needs. Still they retain a considerable degree of integrity of materials and workmanship. Although certain details, for example paving materials in Lafayette Park, have changed over time, the continuous use of President's Park as a public common and park enhances the overall landscape integrity. The continuity of commemorative vegetation also enhances landscape integrity. Even if an original tree has been lost, like the John Quincy Adams elm or the magnolia originally planted in 1922 for President Warren G. Harding, replacement trees meet the criteria for integrity with regard to location, feeling, and association.

Change in the landscape of President's Park has often been incremental. A number of features have been built, installed, or planted without changing the underlying landscape that has survived from

earlier periods. This additive process is especially relevant in evaluating the effects of the post World War II changes to the White House grounds, which include a number of features related to privacy, security, and recreation. The addition of the swimming pool in the Ford administration, the President's Patio in the Reagan administration, and the jogging track in the Clinton administration are part of this additive process. Their addition does not diminish the integrity of the landscape. These changes reveal information about the individual presidents, their families, their preferences, pastimes, and occupations, and even the times of their administrations.

This context acknowledges a landscape with substantial integrity of location, feeling, association, and setting related to the resources listed for criterion A. The landscape reflects a mix of private, public, recreational, and working uses in conjunction with its development as the center of the executive branch of government. President's Park represents the broad spectrum of uses associated with the executive government and the domestic lives of presidential families. The site has been gradually developed to accommodate both private and public uses. Initially developed as the executive residence and office surrounded by largely undefined open space, President's Park over time has been defined as the site of national memorials and monuments; as a symbolic, national open space associated with the American rights of free speech, assembly, and protests; and as a major visitor attraction in the nation's capital.

The development of Lafayette Park and the Ellipse prior to the Civil War not only represents a romantic 19th century design but also national trends in design associated with improving urban environments and creating picturesque and healthful public parks. The subsequent addition of military monuments and memorials relates to larger national contexts associated with the public commemoration of military heroes. Their addition does not diminish the integrity of earlier significant designs. The rehabilitation of Lafayette Park during the WPA era and in the late 1960s is also indicative of national trends in urban design. The direct involvement of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations underscores the strength and continuity of association with the executive residence and grounds. These and other additions reflect later generations' attitudes toward the use and treatment of public open space and actually enhance integrity because they contribute to the distinct identity of President's Park as belonging not just to the president but to all American people. Indeed, the integrity of these designs adds to the overall integrity of President's Park under criteria A and B.

President's Park is a composite of modifications, improvements, and changes. The continuum of use and association unifies the disparate

elements and characteristics from various historic periods and gives the property its distinctive identity. While all changes that have occurred between 1791 and 1994 reflect the evolution of the site and represent the historical setting and scene at various periods in history, they may not be all equal in significance, either for association or for design. For example, alterations to public spaces, such as the creation of monuments and memorials, may have greater importance and permanence than the individual recreational facilities on the White House grounds that are associated with various first families.

The direct associations with presidential families and households and with the events and trends that affected their daily lives make President's Park a unique landscape. As the only landscape associated with the domestic life of each presidential household since the administration of John Adams, President's Park reflects both the continuity and the evolution of the presidents' living and working environment. The White House, which is the focus of President's Park, is both residence and office to the nation's chief executive.

First families over time have had different requirements, concerns, and aesthetic values. These are often reflected through additions or alterations to the White House landscape. The White House garden designs of Rachel Lambert Mellon are significant and retain integrity for their association with the Kennedys and the Johnsons, who were committed to enhancing the White House and its grounds. Subsequent changes to the gardens have resulted in only minor modifications to the Mellon design, and the gardens can be said to retain integrity for the first families context. The Children's Garden, designed by Edward Durell Stone Jr. for the Johnson grandchildren, has also retained its integrity. Rotating installations of regional sculpture exhibits in the east garden initiated by Hillary Rodham Clinton are designed to be temporary and do not affect the integrity assessment for the garden design. As is so often the case for President's Park, the installations provide linkages and continuity from one administration to another. Changes instituted by or for one family are adapted and modified to meet the needs or interests of a subsequent presidential family.

The landscape of President's Park has retained certain qualities and features that have persisted through different periods and that have allowed the site to accommodate periodic changes. Indeed, it is the sum total of changes that have occurred to this site since 1791 that enhances the site's integrity of feeling and association.

Just as the White House landscape has changed to meet the changing needs of various administrations, Lafayette Park and the Ellipse have

experienced landscape changes related to changing trends and tastes in landscape design and to the changing character of the surrounding neighborhood. Memorialization efforts, in particular, relate to criterion A for both Lafayette Park and the Ellipse. Between 1891 and 1911 the military monuments commemorating the contributions of Lafayette, Rochambeau, Kosciuszko, and von Steuben to the American Revolution were installed at the four corners of Lafayette Square. The installations, although not identified as part of any specific plan developed for the park, have achieved significance over time as public memorials related to the late 19th century memorial movement, and they do not diminish the integrity of the park. Similarly the many memorials in President's Park South, ranging from the Sherman statue to the Haupt fountains, enhance rather than detract from integrity.

Context: Late 18th Century City Planning

The primary historic period for the late 18th century city planning context is 1791–1814, which is associated with the L'Enfant plan and which applies to the park in its entirety. The essential character of L'Enfant's French Baroque 18th century city plan survives. It is not only visually apparent but has been acknowledged for many decades as pivotal to urban planning and decision making in managing this site and other areas of the capital city. As early as 1868 Nathaniel Michler urged a return to the principles of the L'Enfant plan, which had been ignored for several years.

The area set aside by L'Enfant for the President's House and grounds is immediately identifiable today both onsite and in contemporary maps. The alignment of New York and Pennsylvania Avenues and of 15th, 16th, and 17th Streets has remained constant since the initial implementation of the L'Enfant plan. Indeed, these avenues and streets still bear the original names indicated on the 18th century plan. The sight line down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol, which was established in the L'Enfant plan, has endured except for the placement of the Treasury Building and is respected as a planning and design element for this area.

L'Enfant specified the location for the President's House and grounds. Although constructed substantially smaller than proposed, the executive residence has occupied this site since its initial development. The plan also included parklike uses for the southern segment of the site, the current lower south lawn and the Ellipse, both of which have been parklike open spaces throughout the history of the site. The L'Enfant plan depicts a roughly elliptical terrace in the center of a landscaped open space and includes a series of landscaped terraces

stepping down to the elliptical terrace. Although there are no actual terraces today, this arrangement is consistent with the present south-sloping topography of President's Park south of the White House. The landscaped open space south of the President's House and its connection to the landscaped open space extending west from the Capitol was indicated in the L'Enfant plan. However, this relationship has been altered somewhat by the creation of Constitution Avenue in the general vicinity of the historic Tiber Creek and Washington Canal.

The addition of buildings on both sides of the White House is consistent with the L'Enfant plan, even though the extant features postdate the period of significance identified for the late 18th century context. On the L'Enfant plan the President's House and the adjacent buildings are depicted in a formal and symmetrical arrangement that differs from the actual locations of the Treasury and the Old Executive Office Building. Although in a slightly different location, the arrangement corresponds to the present-day buildings' overall design symmetry.

Lafayette Park, indicated on the L'Enfant plan as open space, has remained open throughout its history despite development designs. The existing views from Lafayette Park up Connecticut Avenue to Farragut Square, up 16th Street to Scott Circle, and up Vermont Avenue to McPherson Square generally correspond to the views that L'Enfant proposed.

The private nonfederal development of the adjacent blocks closely parallels the historic mixed uses of Lafayette Square. Its architectural character is unlike that which existed historically, but the same is not true of the individual lot pattern for the blocks fronting on 15th and 17th Streets. This type of nonfederal development has remained constant for areas north of Pennsylvania Avenue on the east side of President's Park and north of New York Avenue on the west side. In addition, the use and development of 17th Street south of New York Avenue is consistent with the land use patterns indicated on the L'Enfant plan. However, the construction of the Department of Commerce Building on 15th Street between Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues is a departure from the small lot development indicated on the 18th century plan.

The treatment of the New York and Pennsylvania Avenues intersections also departs from the L'Enfant plan. The L'Enfant plan indicates the siting of the President's House at this intersection in an open plaza; in the present configuration the White House and flanking executive office buildings are set in a limited access area. The L'Enfant plan, however, did indicate buildings, although they were to

have been located farther south and more distant from the executive residence than the present buildings. The public common that developed as Lafayette Park is a landscaped park rather than a plaza as indicated on the L'Enfant plan as part of the open space network of the street. The later 19th century landscaped park that developed on this site as a result of Downing's plan was more defined than any delineation apparent on the L'Enfant plan.

On the L'Enfant plan a series of repetitive, small-scale elements indicates a somewhat restricted area north of the President's House, suggestive of the need for an enclosure or barrier to differentiate between the street and the residential grounds. The current placement of nonhistoric boundary and security demarcations, which include both perimeter fencing and bollards on the sidewalk, approximate these locations.

The L'Enfant plan effectively established the predominant land development pattern of the area. The northern portion of the site was enclosed by the city plan, while the southern portion overlooked an undefined meadow or lawn that has been developed into a parklike open space of the south lawn and the Ellipse. This distinction is still evident today. The north lawn and Lafayette Park are more intensively developed than the south lawn and the Ellipse, which remain open. It is likely that this arrangement of uses was in response to the natural characteristics of the site, with the higher land elevations in the north and the marshy areas associated with Tiber Creek in the south.

President's Park possesses integrity when evaluated in the context of late 18th century city planning. The fact that the essential characteristics of L'Enfant's French Baroque plan have survived reflects its widespread acceptance as the original and enduring design concept, and it is this concept that has been used to inform and direct planning and design decisions affecting spatial organization, circulation, land use, and vistas associated with President's Park. Andrew Jackson Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. worked within the overall plan established by L'Enfant. Both accepted and were influenced by this plan, and both contributed substantially to the interior definition of the park that L'Enfant did not develop. The Downing plan for Lafayette Park acknowledged the view corridors that L'Enfant suggested, and it established park entrances at the northwest and northeast corners and at the center of the north side. The Olmsted plan's strong north-south axial relationship with the White House grounds to the south is also consistent with the L'Enfant plan. Contemporary designers and planners have continued to acknowledge L'Enfant's original design intent.

Evaluation of Integrity

The primary spatial organization characteristics of the L'Enfant plan have endured for two centuries and are evident in the existing landscape. The plan as implemented in the period of significance included radiating avenues, a hierarchy of streets, focal point buildings, and irregularly shaped blocks, and was developed in response to the area's topography and hydrology. These features are still present today. The geometric layout of the 18th century plan is still visible in the arrangement and configuration of streets, avenues, and open spaces.

Context: Andrew Jackson Downing

The historic period for the Downing design extends from 1850 to 1885. It applies primarily to Lafayette Park and to a lesser degree to the Ellipse. Both are significant as early examples of the American park movement and for their association with notable landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing. Their enduring use as public open spaces has remained constant since the Downing era.

Lafayette Park

President Thomas Jefferson authorized the establishment of Lafayette Park when he decided it was too large to be part of the grounds of the President's House. Although Charles Bulfinch developed a plan for the park, it is not clear how much of this plan was ever implemented. The grounds remained unembellished through at least the Jefferson administration.

The Downing plan articulated a specific design response for this open space that had not been fully developed before. Downing introduced a 19th century romantic landscape design into the area's overall 18th century city plan. The plan specifically established the overall spatial organization of Lafayette Park. This organization has not changed substantially since the plan was implemented in the mid 19th century, even though specific design details have been modified. Park boundaries have remained the same; exterior circulation patterns have not been altered significantly, despite changing transportation modes; and interior circulation has only been modified in minor ways over time. There are substantially fewer plantings today than in the romantic era. Documented vegetative losses would indicate that few, if any, plantings survive from the Downing plan.

The Boschke survey of 1861 (figure 3-8), the most accurate historic graphic representation of the Downing plan, has been used as the basis for comparing the historic period and existing conditions in

Lafayette Park. The major aspects of the Downing plan that survive are the central location of the Andrew Jackson equestrian statue within an elliptical planting bed, the symmetrical arrangement of paths and other design elements in relation to both the north-south and east-west axes, the informal planting arrangement of trees and shrubs, the curvilinear network of paths defining irregularly shaped areas of lawn, entrances at the park's four corners and at the center of the north and south sides of the park, and perimeter sidewalks along each of the park's four adjacent streets. The NPS/WPA rehabilitation of the park in 1936-37, followed three decades later by the implementation of the Warnecke plan, imposed a 20th century urban design on an underlying 19th century romantic design.

The greatest changes in Lafayette Park from the Downing plan are associated with 20th century modifications and include alterations to the park's internal circulation system, and the loss of original detailed features and the addition of new ones. The implementation of the Warnecke plan in 1969–70 included constructing the elliptical pools on the park's east and west sides, creating narrow connecting walkways to the pools, changing walkway paving materials from concrete to brick, relocating the Navy Yard urns to their present location at the park's Pennsylvania Avenue entrance, and installing the NPS information kiosk and site furnishings.

Despite changes, Lafayette Park retains the underlying spatial organization and design that characterize the Downing landscape design context. In general, park rehabilitations have diminished but have not destroyed the integrity of its spatial design. Some changes, in fact, are significant under criteria A and B, if not criterion C. The park retains sufficient integrity of location and association, even though the integrity of feeling has been diminished with changes in design, materials, and workmanship. The existing park setting remains primarily low-rise, although it is not entirely 19th century in character. Vehicular traffic and on-street parking are particularly apparent; site furnishings intended for modern uses also diminish the integrity of setting. The park still reflects its derivation from a 19th century, shaded park with ornamental and canopy trees despite its substantial vegetative losses over time. The integrity of vegetative material is not strong, and there have been no apparent attempts to reestablish the vegetation of the Downing period. The presence of the Navy Yard urns enhances integrity even if they do not occupy their intended or original locations. This finding of integrity is also influenced by the rare survival of other implemented projects associated with Downing and with the park's possible role as an early landscape design for a public park in the United States. Diminished integrity must be considered in light of the park's role as a rare survivor of its type in both instances. Lafayette Park probably retains

more integrity than any other surviving property related to this context. It also preserves much of its ability to portray Downing's original design intent.

In summary, the Andrew Jackson Downing context for President's Park relates primarily to Lafayette Park. Even though Lafayette Park has been redesigned three times since the Downing plan (in the 1870s, 1930s, and 1960s), significant aspects of the park's romantic 19th century design are still apparent. The persistence of these features supports a finding of significance for the design context developed under criterion C. However, given its intensity of use and number of renovations, its historical integrity is not totally intact.

The Ellipse

The Downing plan was also responsible for the initial development of the Ellipse. Downing's original layout showed the area as a circle, a configuration that apparently was never implemented. Instead, the ellipse became the character-defining shape of the space. It is not clear exactly how much of the Downing plan was actually implemented. Although substantial expenditures were made for plantings and other landscape improvements in the area, major documented losses resulted from the poor drainage of the area, and the features that were implemented did not survive for long. On the eve of the Civil War official reports indicated that the Downing plan had not fared well, primarily because of the failure of drainage and sewer systems. The inability to successfully drain the area led to major losses before vegetation could become well established. The extensive military use of the area during the Civil War resulted in additional damage to the area.

In summary, the implementation of Downing's ideas for what is now the Ellipse appears to have been short-lived. Furthermore, the lack of visual documentation from the historic period makes an integrity evaluation difficult since it is not clear to what extent the plan was carried out. Losses of features, such as plant material, are well documented. In addition, descriptions of the area during the Civil War suggest that the Ellipse might retain little integrity in the Downing context apart from the integrity of location and association.

Context: Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

The historic period for the Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. context is 1935–94 and applies primarily to the White House grounds. The White House grounds also possess significant features that predate and postdate 1935 and that contribute to the site's integrity apart from the context of the Olmsted landscape management plan.

The implementation of the Olmsted 1935 plan adapted the White House grounds to the needs of its 20th century occupants. This plan is largely responsible for differentiating the public and private areas of the White House grounds, a distinction that remains characteristic today. The plan identified areas of the grounds that could be screened visually and that would afford private outdoor spaces for use by the presidential household. Recent changes to the grounds, particularly the many recreational facilities that have been developed during the last two decades, have occurred in the private areas of the grounds. The more public portions of the grounds have experienced change to a lesser degree since the implementation of the Olmsted plan.

The Olmsted plan contributed to the efficiency of circulation and the need for the privacy of the presidential household as reinterpreted during the first decades of the 20th century. Characteristics of the plan that endure include the planting redesign intended to strengthen the lawn's north-south axis and to increase privacy on the east and west portions of the south lawn. In addition, the implementation of the plan also resulted in the loss of earlier features: the plan called for the replacement of the 1818 and 1873 fencing and the removal of the fiddle-shaped drive on the upper south lawn. The drives were inefficient for vehicular use and were also considered unattractive; there was also some realignment of the northern end of the surviving outer drive.

The legacy of the Olmsted plan is still evident on the White House grounds: the vehicular circulation Olmsted proposed and that President Franklin D. Roosevelt modified continues to be the predominant vehicular circulation pattern on the south lawn. The practice of maintaining a vegetative screen on the east and west sides of south lawn has survived. The view corridor to the south has endured, becoming a familiar visual representation of the White House as seen from South Executive Avenue and the Ellipse. The White House grounds and its vegetation have continued to be maintained according to the overall management principles proposed in the Olmsted plan.

Other changes initiated in this period were associated with increased wartime security needs, and they established important security

precedents. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor sentry boxes were established at each entrance to the grounds; visitors were barred from the White House grounds where previously they had freely strolled; and East and West Executive Avenues were closed to traffic. Since these changes relate to the significance of the site under criterion A, they do not diminish overall integrity.

There have been considerable additions to the White House grounds since 1945. However, an examination of existing conditions indicates that no addition has departed substantially from the principles of the Olmsted plan. Subsequent additions on the grounds include the Children's Garden, the President's Patio, the swimming pool complex, the basketball court, and the jogging track. Other development projects include the expansion and further development of the guardhouses, the construction of a visitor entrance building, and the development and expansion of the maintenance facility. In general, these types of actions have occurred in areas that as a result of the Olmsted plan are screened with dense vegetation and are not highly visible. Changes in these areas have tended to reflect the interests, needs, and tastes of each first family.

Additions to the landscape since the Olmsted plan do not diminish the integrity of the Olmsted context of landscape management in terms of overall design and spatial organization. Essentially, the plan is still in effect in that its vegetative management philosophies provide guidance for tree maintenance and replacement. The circulation patterns established by the plan survive, as do site boundaries, land use, and significant view corridors. The White House landscape possesses substantial integrity when evaluated in terms of an Olmsted landscape. It retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. The greatest degree of change has been in individual plantings and in the addition of small garden features and the redesign or addition of recreational facilities. As a result, the integrity of materials and workmanship from the 1935–45 era is especially strong. Vegetation appears to be replaced frequently, in keeping with the high level of maintenance associated with this site. Changes to the White House grounds occurred prior to and following the adoption of the Olmsted plan, and they are expected to continue in the future as administrations and executive policies change.

Summary

Integrity has been evaluated in the context of both the American presidency (including first families) and the administration of the executive branch of the United States government. A comparison of the existing landscape appearance and composition with the historic appearance and composition as presented in the site history reveals a high and complex level of integrity for these contexts. The various qualities and characteristics that existed historically are often present today, sometimes in substantially the original form, but also at times in modified ways that reveal how they and their settings have evolved over time. At President's Park the very process of landscape evolution has become significant, therefore the evolved landscape possesses integrity because of the unique historical associations of this site.

President's Park possesses integrity when evaluated in light of the late 18th century city planning context. The fact that essential characteristics of the L'Enfant plan have survived is indicative of its widespread acceptance as the original and enduring design concept. It continues to be used to guide decisions affecting spatial organization, circulation, land use, and views and vistas for the site. The plan strongly influenced Andrew Jackson Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., and it still influences contemporary designers and planners.

The Olmsted plan is still in effect today. Its management philosophy provides guidance for vegetation maintenance and replacement. The circulation patterns that the plan identified still survive, as do the site boundaries, land use, and significant view corridors. Despite its evolving nature, the White House landscape possesses substantial integrity when evaluated in terms of the Olmsted recommendations. It retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. The greatest changes have been in individual plantings and in the addition and modification of small garden features and recreational facilities.

Chapter 12. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The landscape of the White House and President's Park has been the focus of activities associated with the U.S. presidency and the administration of the executive branch of government since 1800, when John and Abigail Adams moved into the White House. It is a dynamic, layered landscape that reflects its development and use for over two centuries. It represents many historic periods and is related to several historical contexts. Change occurs regularly as dictated by the operational, security, and privacy requirements of the Executive Office of the President.

The current landscape of President's Park has evolved as a result of a multitude of uses and historical factors. It possesses distinct physical landscape characteristics, types and concentrations of extant historic features, as well as specific uses that have influenced its evolution. Some changes or layers may be more important than others because of their association with particular events or persons or the character of their designs.

President's Park as it exists today has undergone modifications and improvements. The continuum of use and association unifies the disparate elements and characteristics from various historical periods and gives the property its distinctive identity. While all changes that have occurred between 1791 and 1994 reflect the evolution of the site and represent the historic setting and scene at various periods, they may not be all equal in significance, either for association or for design. For example, alterations to public spaces, such as the erection of monuments and memorials, may have greater importance and permanence than the individual recreational facilities on the White House grounds that are associated with various first families.

Following the guidelines for the National Register of Historic Places, appropriate historic contexts have been developed for the landscape of President's Park, and a preliminary assessment of significance has been made, as discussed in chapter 10. The integrity of the President's Park landscape has been assessed, and its character-defining features are described in chapter 11.

Five specific contexts of significance have been developed under criteria A, B, and C of the National Register of Historic Places:

(1) *The presidency and the administration of the executive branch of government* — criterion A, event; period of significance: 1791 to the present

(2) *First families* — criterion B, persons; period of significance: 1791 to the present

(3) *Late 18th century city planning* — criterion C, design/construction; period of significance: 1791–1820

(4) *Andrew Jackson Downing* — criterion C, design/construction; period of significance: 1850–85

(5) *Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.* — criterion C, design/construction; period of significance: 1934–52 (possibly until the present)

The landscape of President's Park is nationally significant under all of these contexts. In addition, it may be internationally significant under the first three contexts.

In chapter 11 it was determined that the landscape of President's Park has a high degree of integrity for all contexts through the present. Combining all contexts with their associated levels and periods of significance, it can therefore be stated that the site has national significance under criteria A, B and C of the National Register of Historic Places for the period 1791 through the present.

Recommendations

President's Park is a dynamic landscape that is continually evolving. It is extremely complex; it has a very long history; and it is associated with presidents, first families, designers, and leading national and international figures. Writing the definitive history of such a landscape is not a simple process. No single set of records can provide answers to all the questions and issues regarding the evolution of this landscape since its original design by Pierre Charles L'Enfant in 1791. New and pertinent information continues to become available on a regular basis. Incorporating this new information will require periodic revisions of the site history. In some cases the changes might be minor, but in others they might require substantial rewriting and modification of the overall interpretation. To accommodate this ongoing process, the Office of White House Liaison should consider issuing revised or updated sections of the site history or other

segments of this document periodically (possibly every 5 to 10 years), depending on the amount of information uncovered.

To adequately document the landscape resources at President's Park, the Office of White House Liaison should consider developing an automated database that would include visual materials. With modern scanning technology, it would be possible to create a database of existing features with a relatively small amount of time and effort. It would also be appropriate to identify photo points on the grounds to facilitate picture taking and the eventual comparison of changes over time. As additional funds became available, this automated database could incorporate historic materials, such as plans and drawings. This system would facilitate access to information; it would permit quick response to research questions; and it would allow for the relatively easy incorporation of newly discovered documents. It might be possible to use it in conjunction with a Geographic Information System that would track all the identified landscape resources at the site and their evolution through time. This type of system would also allow site maps to be quickly updated and for photographic materials to be easily retrieved.

Several aspects of the history of this landscape need further analysis. Specific details on the installation and removal of fencing, descriptions of specific fencing types, the recycling of certain portions, and in some cases the replacement of fences with hedges should receive further attention. Some of these changes were for aesthetic reasons, but it seems that in other cases they were the result of privacy or security considerations.

By the 1820s the fence north of the President's House along Pennsylvania Avenue supported oil lamps, but it is not clear when they were first installed. Gas light fixtures replaced the oil lamps by the late 1840s, but descriptions of specific models, and dates of installations and removals, are difficult to establish. Information on the installation of electric arc lights and their replacement with incandescent lighting also needs to be compiled.

In writing this document an effort was made to gather a substantial portion of the available information on commemorative plantings. However, this is a difficult topic because often there is no information on trees that have died and their replacements. At times the available information is contradictory.

Once this information has been compiled and cross-referenced, it would be important to develop site maps that will graphically demonstrate how the landscape has evolved through time. These site

maps could be accompanied by appropriate photographs or drawings that would document specific features for specific periods.

Finally, a systematic analysis of landscape characteristics (such as views and vistas, spatial organization, circulation, use, and cluster arrangements) should be conducted. An evaluation of the changes through time would greatly enhance the quality of this document and assist in guiding management decisions.

The relationship between the landscape of President's Park and the surrounding neighborhoods needs to be systematically analyzed. This is also a complex research topic that will require substantial effort, particularly if the existing national register nominations do not include adequate information on the development of the adjacent landscapes. As in the case of the White House and President's Park, research will require the examination of extensive documentation and cannot be solely based on a limited set of official records.

Use is one of the aspects of President's Park that is most difficult to document systematically. The complexity of evaluating this landscape stems in large part from the multiple uses associated with it. The annual reports of the commissioner of public buildings and the chief of engineers provide very valuable information, but they seldom address this topic. It is not possible to identify one set or one type of record that would include all the required data for this site. Therefore, this effort would require judicious analysis of a broad spectrum of historical data.

Ceremonial functions and uses are probably among the most important aspects of the site. However, the information available is fragmentary and needs to be pieced together to provide a systematic perspective of how ceremonial uses changed with time. For example, ceremonies were held associated with the cornerstone laying in 1792. The arched entry at the southeast gate (figure 1-8) completed by Benjamin Latrobe during the Jefferson administration was ceremonial in nature. Presidents were feted on the lawn during inaugural activities, and they reviewed troops from its doorways.[1] President Abraham Lincoln addressed the crowds from the north portico. Major gaps in information still exist for the 19th and early 20th centuries. Ceremonial uses of the Ellipse and Pennsylvania Avenue also need to be explored.

Other uses characterize the landscape of President's Park. Since the first decade of the 20th century certain areas have become the

1. This information was provided by O'Brien (IMRO/NPS), February 2000.

recreational grounds for presidents and first families. John Quincy Adams's interest in horticulture is well documented, but information on the activities of other 19th century presidents is scattered.

Public use of the grounds has also changed over time. The site is synonymous with the idea of political democracy, and it has always been necessary to maintain the notion of presidential accessibility. Security issues have often prevented public access, but no systematic trend can be easily established. Concern about the safety of the president was heightened after the attempt on Andrew Jackson's life at the Capitol in the 1830s and increased dramatically after Lincoln's assassination. However, at times rules were apparently relaxed and public crossing of the grounds was not forbidden. Information on this topic is also sketchy and needs more systematic development and interpretation.

While the landscape of the White House and President's Park is without a doubt aesthetically beautiful and reflects great care and pride, its beauty is derived from intensive horticultural practices and relies primarily on the use of attractive exotic plants. It might be appropriate to consider a more sustainable approach to the horticultural management of the site by reinstituting a precedent set by President John Quincy Adams almost 200 years ago. Adams dedicated a portion of the grounds to develop an arboretum of American trees and plants. It would be interesting to explore the reapplication of Adams's concept, at least to certain portions of the grounds, where a cross section of the native vegetation of the United States could be planted, possibly on a rotating basis. The White House would then become a national example of the beauty and importance of native vegetation and would establish a precedent to be followed throughout the nation.

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The following abbreviations have been used throughout the footnotes:

DOI	Department of the Interior
DSC	Denver Service Center (NPS)
ESF	Executive Support Facility(NPS)
NA	National Archives
NPS	National Park Service
OC	Office of the Curator
PBA	Public Buildings Administration
RG	Record Group (NA)
WH	White House
WHL	White House Liaison (NPS)
WPA	Works Progress Administration

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