Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE: Illinois	
COUNTY: Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 15 1972

1. NAME

COMMON: Jackson Park Historic Landscape District and Midway Plaisance

AND/OR HISTORIC: Site of the World's Columbian Exposition

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	031

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
[X] District [ ] Building [ ] Site [ ] Structure [ ] Object	[X] Public [ ] Private [ ] Both Public Acquisition: [ ] In Process [ ] Being Considered	[ ] Occupied [ ] Unoccupied [ ] Preservation work in progress	Yes: [ ] Restricted [X] Unrestricted [ ] No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

[ ] Agricultural	[ ] Government	[X] Park	[ ] Transportation	[ ] Comments
[ ] Commercial	[ ] Industrial	[ ] Private Residence	[ ] Other (Specify)	
[ ] Educational	[ ] Military	[ ] Religious		
[ ] Entertainment	[ ] Museum	[ ] Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Chicago Park District

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE	CODE
Illinois	17

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER: County Building

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE	CODE
Illinois	17

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: [ ] Federal [ ] State [ ] County [ ] Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Illinois
COUNTY: Cook
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	[X] Excellent	[ ] Good	[ ] Fair	[ ] Deteriorated	[ ] Ruins	[ ] Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	[X] Altered	[ ] Unaltered	[ ] Moved	[X] Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Jackson Park and the Midway served as the site of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. The park, as laid out on the site of the Fair retains many features of the Exposition. The wooded Island with its surrounding lagoon is fully intact as is the north pond and the Fine Arts Building. The south pond, which originally contained a reproduction of the Santa Maria, now serves as the outer yacht basin and its breakwater approximately follows the line of the pier at the Fair. A replica, on a smaller scale, of French's statue of the Republic stands at an intersection between the wooded island and the south pond.

The Fine Arts Building, located in the north part of the park, was designed in a French Beaux-Arts style by Charles B. Atwood who became Daniel Burnham's chief designer at the death of John Root. It survives because of its construction with double thick brick walls originally needed to protect the art collections. Its plaster exterior was replaced with stone at a later time through the generosity of Julius Rosenwald. The building now serves the Museum of Science and Industry.

In addition to the Museum and statue of the Republic, the park contains three yacht basins; two beaches, a golf course, and other recreational areas. There is also a children's hospital, several yacht clubs, and a large bath house. The Midway, a forgal connection between Jackson and Washington Parks, runs through the University of Chicago. Facing on it is Midway Studios, and--a block away but also originally facing on the Midway--is Wright's Robie House, both of them Registered National Historic Landmarks. The site of Wright's famous Midway Gardens adjoins the Midway at Cottage Grove Avenue. Lorado Taft's Fountain of Time, immediately inside Washington Park at the Western end of the Midway, terminates the vista. A statue of Thomas Masark stands at the eastern end of the Midway.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☐ 18th Century	☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century	☐ 17th Century	☒ 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)*

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	☐ Education	☐ Political	☒ Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	☐ Engineering	☐ Religion/Philosophy	☐ Other (Specify)
☐ Historic	☐ Industry		
☐ Agriculture	☐ Invention	☒ Science	
☒ Architecture	☒ Landscape Architecture	☒ Sculpture	
☐ Art		☐ Social/Humanitarian	
☐ Commerce	☐ Literature		
☐ Communications	☐ Military	☐ Theater	
☐ Conservation	☐ Music	☐ Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Jackson Park and the Midway are justly famous as the sites of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. The exposition, which was to have an important effect on the evolution of architecture in the United States, contained works by the most famous American architects of the Late Nineteenth century including McKim, Mead & White; Richard Morris Hunt and Adler & Sullivan. One building, the Fine Arts by Charles Atwood (designer of the Loop Landmark, the Reliance Building) is an impressive example in America of a French Beaux-Arts type.

Many features of the Park retain the arrangements of Frederick Law Olmsted, America's foremost nineteenth-century landscape architect. The park is thus also significant as a mature design by Olmsted. The Midway is also important because, as a connection between two parks, it looks forward to Burnham's famed plan of Chicago published in 1915.

The Midway is also significant as the site of Ferris' Giant pleasure wheel, of Midway Studios (still standing) where Lorado Taft worked, of Robie House which originally looked out onto the Midway, of the Campus of the University of Chicago which borders it and of Taft's Fountain of Time where the Midway ends at Washington Park.

List of Sculpture -- Jackson Park and the Midway

Washington Park (facing Midway Plaisance west of Cottage Grove)
The Fountain of Time
Pictures of Humanity passing in review before Father Time
Lorado Taft
Donated by B. F. Ferguson Fund, Nov. 15, 1922.

Midway Plaisance (east end)
Thomas G. Masark Monument
President & Liberator of Czechoslovakia Albin Polasek
Donated by Masark Mem. Assoc. 1949

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
DEC 15 1972	

(Number all entries)

No. 8 Statement of Significance

Jackson Park (opposite 65th Street)

Replica of the Republic, originaaly standing in the Court of Honor, Columbian Exposition, 1893.
Daniel Chester French
Donated by B. F. Ferguson Fund and Woman's World Fair Fund, May 11, 1918.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., Fabos, Milde, Weinmayr. University of Massachusetts Press, 1968.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	41°	47'	35"	87°	36'	42"
NE	41°	47'	35"	87°	33'	37"
SE	41°	46'	22"	87°	33'	37"
SW	41°	46'	22"	87°	36'	42"

OR

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
°	'	"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 623 Acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Paul Sprague

ORGANIZATION
Illinois Historic Structures Survey

DATE
July 12, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
1800 S. Prairie Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Chicago

STATE
Illinois

CODE
17

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☒ Local ☐

Name

Title

Date

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

HZ No

UTM

0-300
1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE: Illinois

COUNTY: Cook

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER: DEC 15 1972 | DATE:

2nd Congressional District

Congressman: Abner Mikva

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Jackson Park Historic Landscape District and Midway Plaisance

AND/OR HISTORIC: Site of the World's Columbian Exposition

2. LOCATION Jackson and Washington Parks and Midway Plaisance Klong

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	031

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
[X] District [ ] Building	[X] Public	Public Acquisition:	[ ] Occupied	Yes:
[ ] Site [ ] Structure	[ ] Private	[ ] In Process	[ ] Unoccupied	[ ] Restricted
[ ] Object	[ ] Both	[ ] Being Considered	[ ] Preservation work in progress	[X] Unrestricted
				[ ] No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

[ ] Agricultural	[ ] Government	[X] Park	[ ] Transportation	[ ] Comments
[ ] Commercial	[ ] Industrial	[ ] Private Residence	[ ] Other *(Specify)*	
[ ] Educational	[ ] Military	[ ] Religious		
[ ] Entertainment	[ ] Museum	[ ] Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Chicago Park District

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago | STATE: Illinois | CODE: 17

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER: County Building

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago | STATE: Illinois | CODE: 17

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: [ ] Federal [ ] State [ ] County [ ] Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: | CODE:

STATE: | COUNTY: | FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER: DEC 15 1972 | DATE: DEC 15 1972

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	[X] Excellent	[ ] Good	[ ] Fair	[ ] Deteriorated	[ ] Ruins	[ ] Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	[X] Altered	[ ] Unaltered	[ ] Moved	[X] Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

DESCRIPTION:

The Midway Plaisance connects Jackson and Washington Parks. It is primarily an open strip with grass and tall elms. It is crossed by a number of north-south avenues and, near its eastern end, by the Illinois Central Railroad running on an embankment. Two roads pass through it on the east-west axis. At the western end, the vista is closed off by a large sculptural group "The Fountain of Time" (pictures of Humanity passing in review before Father Time, by Lorado Taft, donated by the B.F. Ferguson Fund, Nov. 15, 1922). Toward the eastern end of the Midway is a large equestrian statue dedicated to Thomas G. Masaryk (president and Liberator of Czechoslovakia) by Abbin Polasek donated by the Masaryk Memorial Association, 1949.

Jackson Park is situated between Stony Island Avenue and Lake Michigan and between 56th and 67th Streets. The park is now subdivided by roadways. In the northern part there is the huge Museum of Science and Industry with a reflecting basin on its south and extensive parking lot on its north. Around its perimeter there is grass and trees. South of the museum there is a watercourse with an island in the center(the Wooded Island) which was the site of Japanese temples erected for the Columbian Exposition. The watercourse passes eastward through an area of trees and grass, becomes a yacht basin, and then flows under Lake Shore Drive and between breakwaters into Lake Michigan. South of the wooded island there are open grassy areas and at a point further on, where three avenues intersect, ~~at which point~~ there is a replica of French's "Statue of the Republic" (donated by B.F. Ferguson Fund and Women's World Fair Fund, May 11, 1918) from the Columbian Exposition. Near it there is a yacht club house and a club house for the golf course that occupies the southern part of the park. To the east and north of the golf course there are two yacht basins which empty into Lake Michigan along a breakwater. North of the breakwater is a large reinforced concrete bathouse. South between the outer harbor and the lake is another yacht club and a children's hospital called La Ribida.

HISTORY:

Jackson Park and the Midway were laid out for the South Park Commission by Frederick Law Olmsted in 1871. They were essentially complete with minor deviations from Olmsted's plans by about 1879. In 1893 the Columbian Exposition was held in the Park and Midway. A plan was prepared in 1895 by Olmsted's firm for returning the park and Midway to their pre-Exposition condition. Except for minor changes here and there, and a few major ones such as the filling-in of part of the lake along the south pier, the Park and Midway still conform to the essentials of both the 1895 and 1871 plans.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☐ 18th Century	☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century	☐ 17th Century	☒ 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)*

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	☐ Education	☐ Political	☒ Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	☐ Engineering	☐ Religion/Philosophy	☐ Other *(Specify)*
☐ Historic	☐ Industry		
☐ Agriculture	☐ Invention	☐ Science	
☒ Architecture	☒ Landscape Architecture	☒ Sculpture	
☐ Art		☐ Social/Humanitarian	
☐ Commerce	☐ Literature		
☐ Communications	☐ Military	☐ Theater	
☐ Conservation	☐ Music	☐ Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Jackson Park and the Midway Plaisance are significant because their original arrangement was the work of America's famous nineteenth-century landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted. Jackson and Washington Parks and the Midway connecting them are of special interest because of the early date, 1871, of their design, contemporary with Olmsted's work at the Capitol in Washington and following directly his plan for Riverside, Illinois, and Central Park, New York. Although somewhat altered today because of the Columbian Exposition, the Park and Midway retain the general features and arrangement as envisioned by Olmsted in his plan of 1871.

Jackson Park and the Midway are also significant as the sites of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. The exposition which was to have an important effect on the evolution of architecture in the United States, contained works by the most famous American architects of the late nineteenth century including McKim, Mead & White, Richard Morris Hunt and Adler & Sullivan. One of the buildings from the fair, the Fine Arts Building (now the Museum of Science and Industry) designed by Charles Atwood, still stands. It is an outstanding example of the French Beaux-Arts classicism that was to play so large a part before the First World War in the demise of the architectural avant-garde in America.

At the western end of the Midway is a large sculptured fountain designed by Lorado Taft, Chicago's most famous early twentieth-century sculptor. Taft's studio, now a National Historic Landmark, faces the Midway between Ingleside and Drexel Avenues. The fountain is undoubtedly the best-known work by Taft.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., Fabos, Milde, Weinmayr. University of Massachusettes Press, 1968.

Ranney, Victoria Post, Olmsted in Chicago, Chicago: Donnelley, 1972.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY							OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE				LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	41°	47'	35"	87°	36'	42"		°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	41°	47'	35"	87°	33'	37"							
SE	41°	46'	22"	87°	33'	37"							
SW	41°	46'	22"	87°	36'	42"							

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Dr. Paul Sprague

ORGANIZATION
Illinois Historic Structures Survey

DATE
November 9, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
1800 South Prairie Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Chicago

STATE
Illinois

CODE
17

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [X] State [X] Local [ ]

Name

Title Director, Ill. Dept. of Conservation

Date November 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 12/15/72

ATTEST:

William Thomas
Keeper of The National Register

Date 11-28-72

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

GP 0 901.087

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Midway Plaisance

Latitude:				Longitude:			
NW	41°	47'	15"	NW	87°	36'	05"
NE	41°	47'	15"	NE	87°	35'	07"
SW	41°	47'	08"	SW	87°	36'	05"
SE	41°	47'	08"	SE	87°	35'	07"

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Jackson Park

Latitude:				Longitude:			
NW	41°	47'	34"	NW	87°	35'	07"
NE	41°	47'	34"	NE	87°	33'	37"
SW	41°	46'	23"	SW	87°	35'	07"
SE	41°	46'	23	SE	87°	33'	37

PROPERTY Jackson Park Historic Landscape Dist. and Midway Plaisance STATE Illinois

Working number 8.7.72.1200

Cook County

RECEIVED AUG 7 1972 NATIONAL REGISTE

TECH REVIEW Photos 3 7200156S

Maps ~~0~~ 2

REVIEW Maps still not adequate 11/27/72 AR
Maps received 12/14/72
NAJ

HISTORIAN Betsy is right. Olmsted seems okay. Charles 10/17/72

ARCHEOLOGIST

ARCHITECT The bibliography is ridiculously short - and only focuses on Olmsted. They've missed the boat by not going into more discussion on the architectural effects of "The Great White City" on American architecture but the important thing is to get it on the Register, so... OK Charles 11-27-72

BRANCH CHIEF

OK PSW Concur Ron 12/5/72

EDITORIAL REVIEW Cannot review without a map - We need two maps. CDA 10/18/72
One showing area in relation to city of Chicago + second (since it is a district) showing relation of individual bldgs., statues, etc. to each other. They have not justified "Science" under # 8, + the form should elaborate on "Landscape architecture." - Burnham's plan for Chicago -.

KEEPER

Acknowledge 8/9/72

National Register write-up

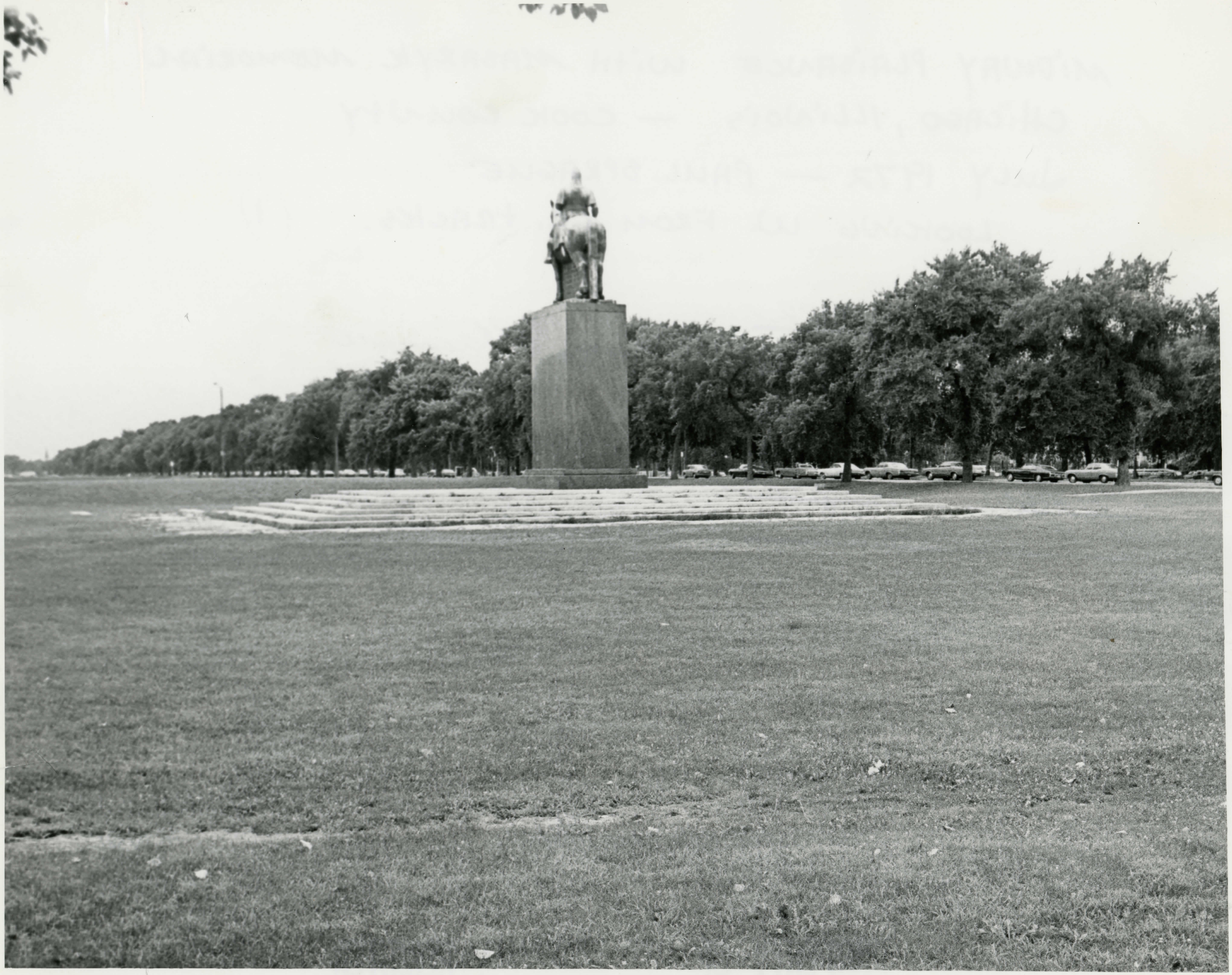
Send-back

Federal Register entry 1-2-73

Re-submit

DEC 15 1972

Register no.



MIDWAY PLAISANCE WITH MASARYK MEMORIAL
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS — COOK COUNTY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 15 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Jackson Park - Midway Plaisance

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	031

RECEIVED AUG 7 1972 NATIONAL REGISTER

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Paul Sprague

DATE OF PHOTO: July 1972

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Illinois Historic Sites Survey, 320 S. Main St., Benton, Illinois 62812

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Looking West from I. C. Tracks

NPS Nu
Title:
Loc.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 15 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Jackson Park - Midway Plaisance

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	031

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Paul Sprague

DATE OF PHOTO: July 1972

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Illinois Historic Sites Survey, 320 S. Main St., Benton, Illinois 62812

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Looking Southeast

JACKSON PARK LAGOON
LOOKING N. TO MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
8	DEC 15 1972

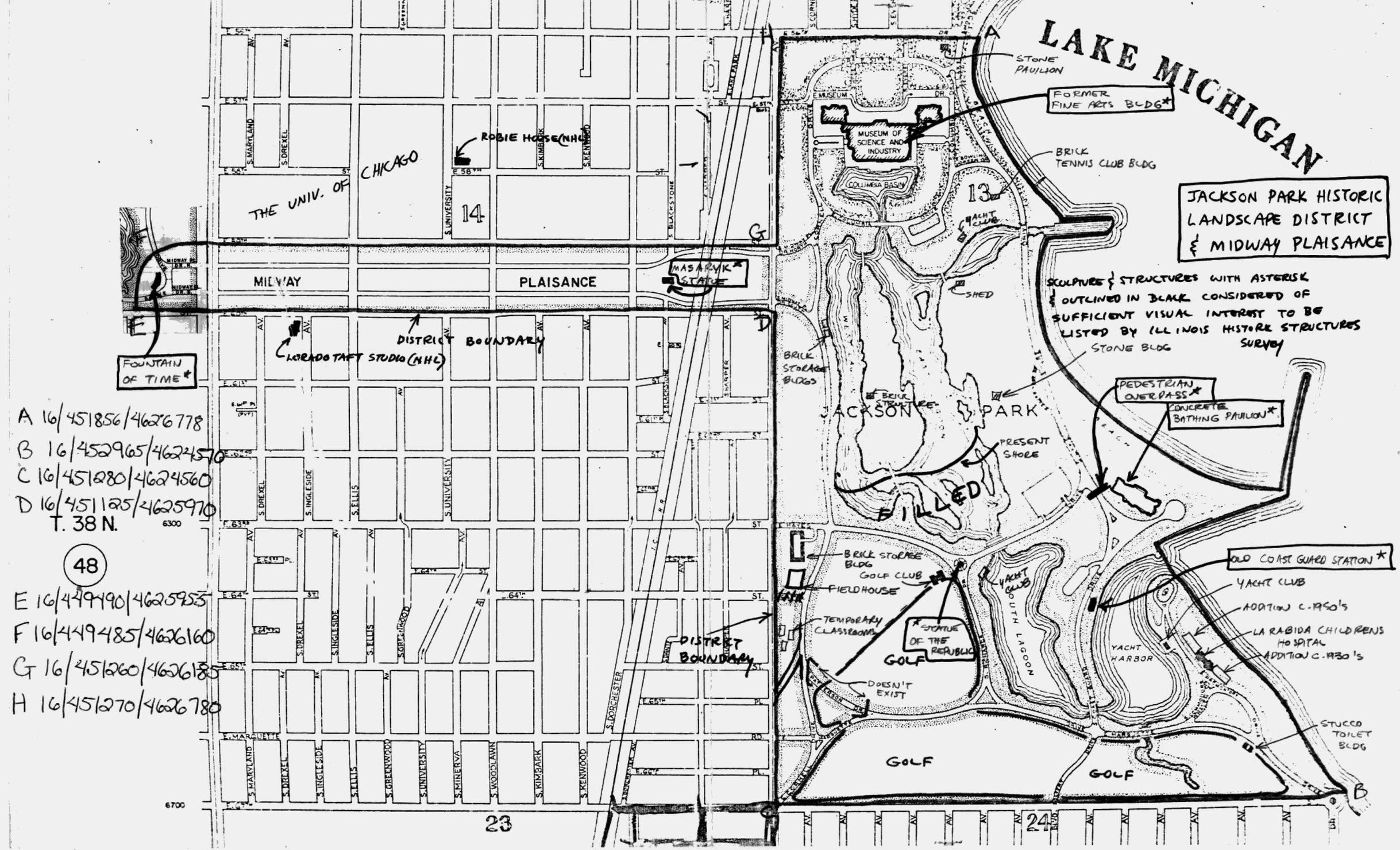
RECEIVED
AUG 7 1972
NATIONAL REGISTER

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME
   - COMMON: Jackson Park - Midway Plaisance
   - AND/OR HISTORIC:
2. LOCATION
   - STREET AND NUMBER:
   - CITY OR TOWN: Chicago
   - STATE: Illinois — CODE: 17 — COUNTY: Cook — CODE: 031
3. PHOTO REFERENCE
   - PHOTO CREDIT: Paul Sprague
   - DATE OF PHOTO: July 1972
   - NEGATIVE FILED AT: Illinois Historic Sites Survey, 320 S. Main St., Benton, Illinois 62812
4. IDENTIFICATION
   - DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Looking North to Museum of Science and Industry

NPS Number
Title:
Loc.


LAKE MICHIGAN
JACKSON PARK HISTORIC LANDSCAPE DISTRICT & MIDWAY PLAISANCE
SCULPTURE & STRUCTURES WITH ASTERISK & OUTLINED IN BLACK CONSIDERED OF SUFFICIENT VISUAL INTEREST TO BE LISTED BY ILLINOIS HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY
THE UNIV. OF CHICAGO
ROBIE HOUSE (NHL)
MIDWAY
PLAISANCE
MASARYK STATE
DISTRICT BOUNDARY
COLORADO TAFT STUDIO (NHL)
FOUNTAIN OF TIME
STONE PAVILION
FORMER FINE ARTS BLDG
MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY
BRICK TENNIS CLUB BLDG
COLUMBIA BASIN
YACHT CLUB
SHED
BRICK STORAGE BLDGS
BRICK STRUCTURE
STONE BLDG
PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS
CONCRETE BATHING PAVILION
JACKSON PARK
PRESENT SHORE
FILLED
BRICK STORAGE BLDG
GOLF CLUB FIELDHOUSE
TEMPORARY CLASSROOMS
STATUE OF THE REPUBLIC
GOLF
DOESN'T EXIST
YACHT CLUB SOUTH LAGOON
YACHT HARBOR
OLD COAST GUARD STATION
YACHT CLUB ADDITION C.1950's
LA RABIDA CHILDRENS HOSPITAL ADDITION C.1930's
STUCCO TOILET BLDG
GOLF
GOLF
A 16/451856/4626778
B 16/452965/4624570
C 16/451280/4624560
D 16/451125/4625970
T. 38 N.
48
E 16/449490/4625955
F 16/449485/4626160
G 16/451260/4626185
H 16/451270/4626780
23
24

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
DEC 15 1972	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Jackson Park - Midway Plaisance

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	17

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: Atlas of the City of Chicago, Page 49

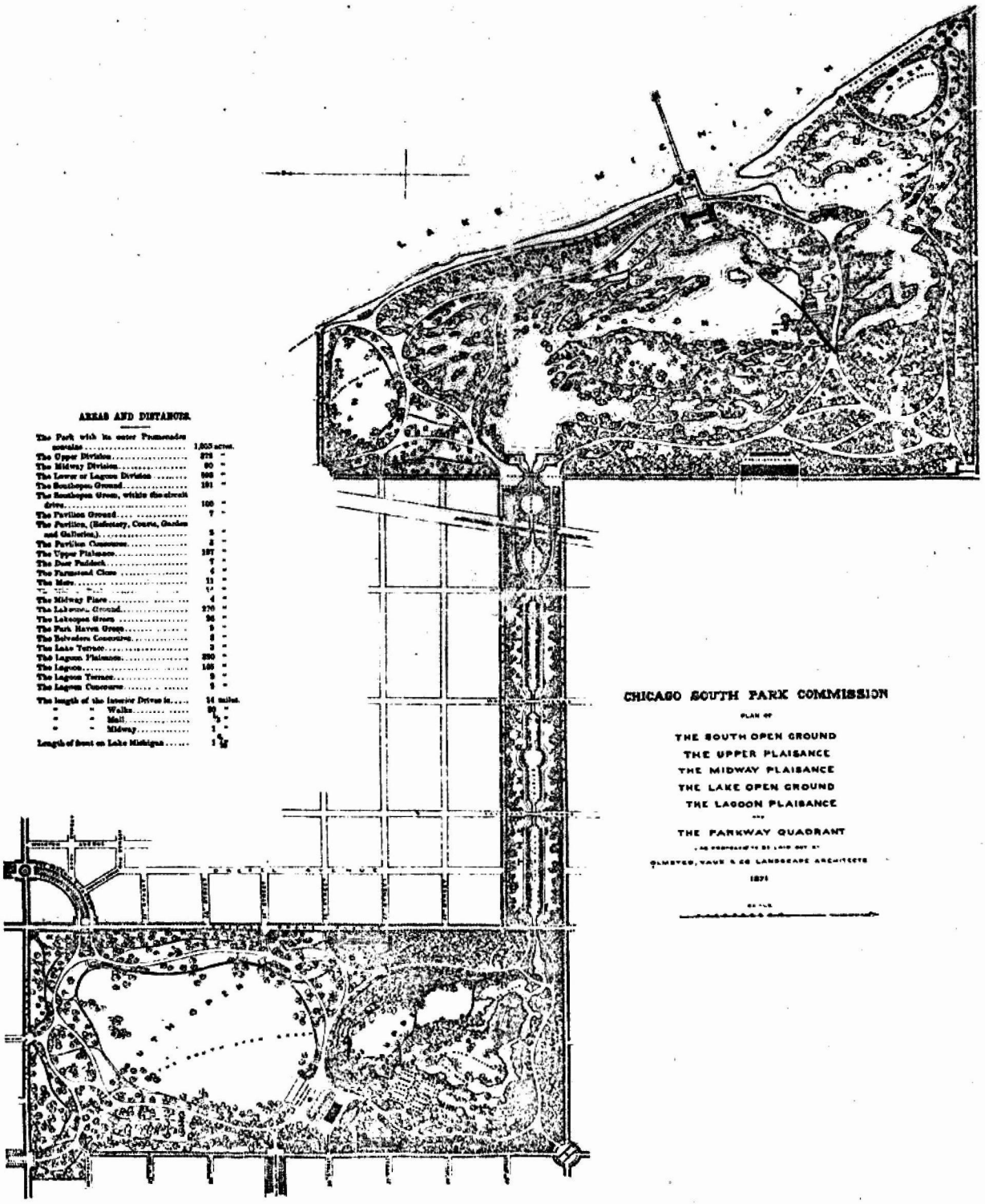
SCALE: 5½ inches = 1 mile

DATE: 1969

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property broundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.



AREAS AND DISTANCES.

The Park with its outer Promenade contains	1,055 acres.
The Upper Division	372 "
The Midway Division	80 "
The Lower or Lagoon Division	502 "
The Southopen Ground	191 "
The Southopen Green, within the circuit drive	100 "
The Pavilion Ground	7 "
The Pavilion, (Refectory, Courts, Garden and Galleries)	3 "
The Pavilion Concourse	2 "
The Upper Plaisance	197 "
The Dore Paddock	7 "
The Farmstead Close	6 "
The Mere	11 "
" " "	17 "
The Midway Place	4 "
The Lakeopen Ground	270 "
The Lakeopen Green	36 "
The Park Haven Grove	9 "
The Belvedere Concourse	3 "
The Lake Terrace	2 "
The Lagoon Plaisance	230 "
The Lagoon	140 "
The Lagoon Terrace	9 "
The Lagoon Concourse	9 "
The length of the Interior Drives is	14 miles.
" " Walks	20 "
" " Mall	½ "
" " Midway	1 "
Length of front on Lake Michigan	1 ½ "

CHICAGO SOUTH PARK COMMISSION

PLAN OF

THE SOUTH OPEN GROUND
THE UPPER PLAISANCE
THE MIDWAY PLAISANCE
THE LAKE OPEN GROUND
THE LAGOON PLAISANCE
AND
THE PARKWAY QUADRANT

LAID DOWN BY

OLMSTED, VAUX & CO. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

1871

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
DEC 15 1972	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Jackson Park - Midway Plaisance

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Chicago

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	17

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
"Plan for the South Park", 1871, Ranney, etc., Page 8

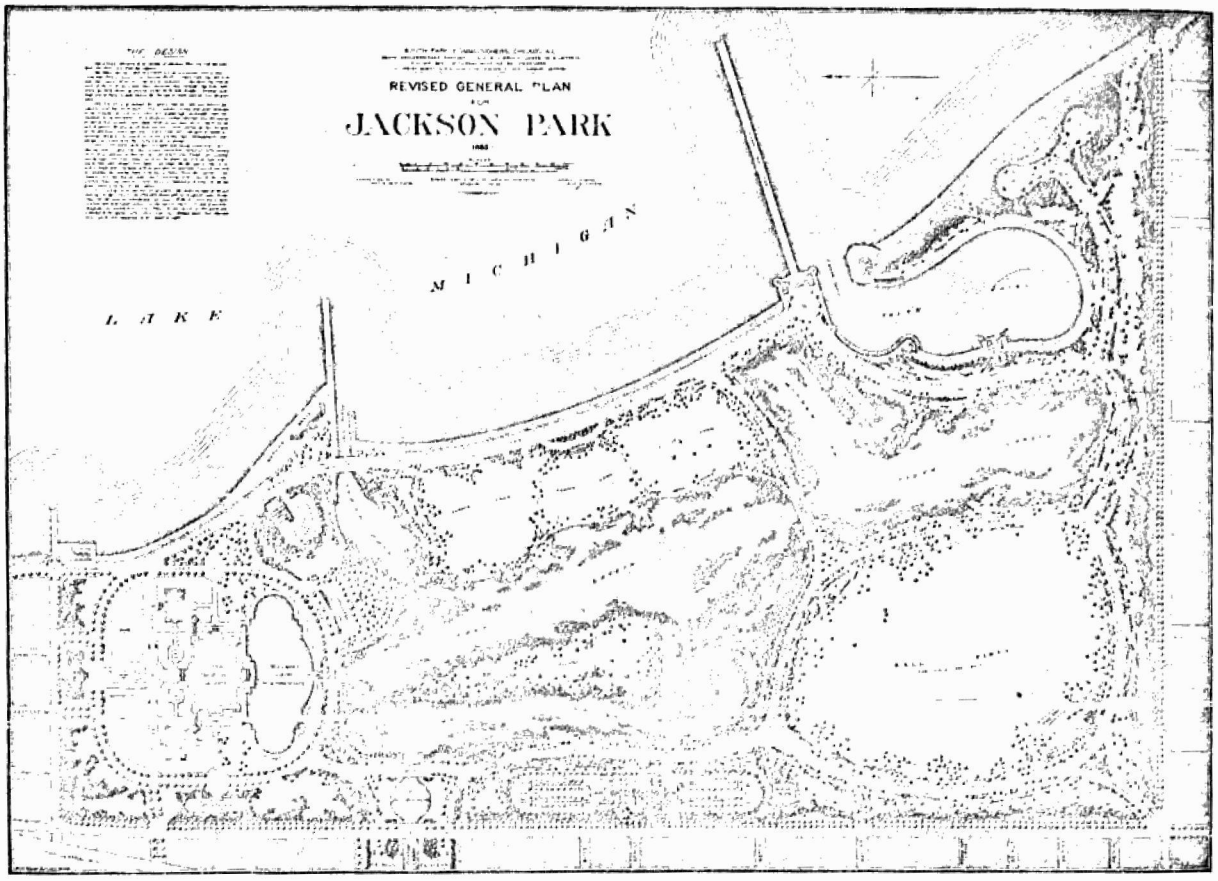
SCALE:

DATE:

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property broundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.



Revised General Plan for Jackson Park, 1895, by Olmsted's son, stepson, and their partner Charles Eliot. Olmsted's mind was failing at this time but the plan incorporates many of his ideas. Although a six-lane highway now runs through it, Jackson Park retains the main features of this plan.

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STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	17

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: "Revised General Plan for Jackson Park", 1895, Ranney, etc., page 2

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DATE:

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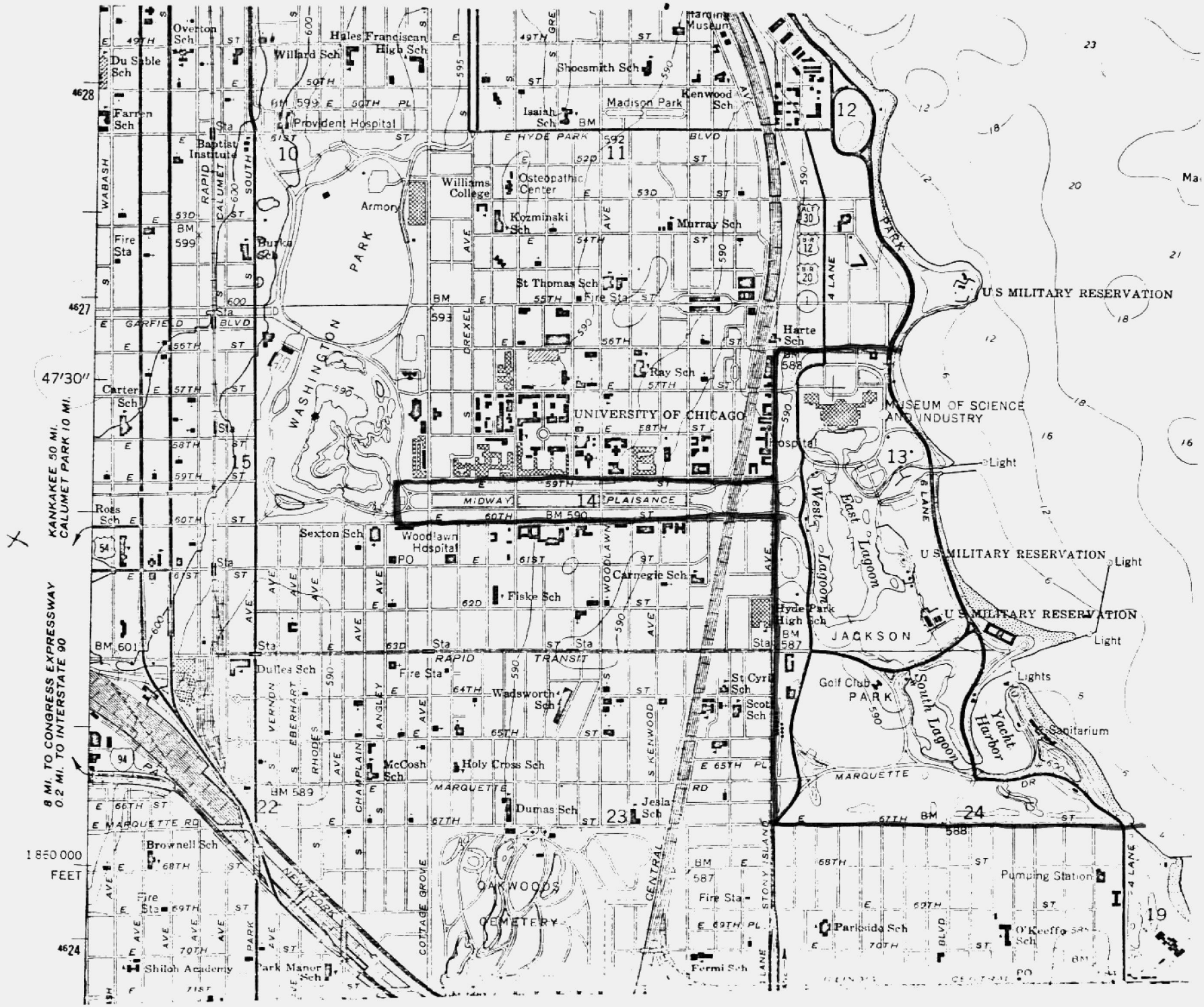
Overton Sch
Hales Franciscan High Sch
Willard Sch
Du Sable Sch
Farren Sch
Provident Hospital
Baptist Institute
Armory
PARK
Williams College
Osteopathic Center
Kozminski Sch
Murray Sch
Burke Sch
St Thomas Sch
Fire Sta
Harte Sch
Ray Sch
U S MILITARY RESERVATION
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY
Carter Sch
Ross Sch
Sexton Sch
Woodlawn Hospital
Carnegie Sch
Fiske Sch
Hyde Park High Sch
JACKSON
PARK
Golf Club
South Lagoon
Yacht Harbor
Sanitarium
Dulles Sch
Wadsworth Sch
St Cyril Sch
Scott Sch
McCosh Sch
Holy Cross Sch
Dumas Sch
Jesse Sch
OAKWOODS CEMETERY
Brownell Sch
Shiloh Academy
Park Manor Sch
Pumping Station
Parkside Sch
O'Keeffe Sch
Fermi Sch
MIDWAY PLAISANCE
E HYDE PARK BLVD
E GARFIELD BLVD
E MARQUETTE RD
MARQUETTE DR
RAPID TRANSIT
WASHINGTON
WABASH
RAPID CALUMET SOUTH
DREXEL AVE
WOODLAWN AVE
VERNON AVE
EBERHART AVE
RHODES AVE
LANGLEY AVE
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S KENWOOD AVE
COTTAGE GROVE
NEW YORK
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47'30"
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4627
4624

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
DEC 15 1972	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Midway Plaisance

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	031

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: Jackson Park Quad

SCALE: 1:24,000 7.5

DATE: 1963

RECEIVED DEC 15 1972 NATIONAL REGISTER

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

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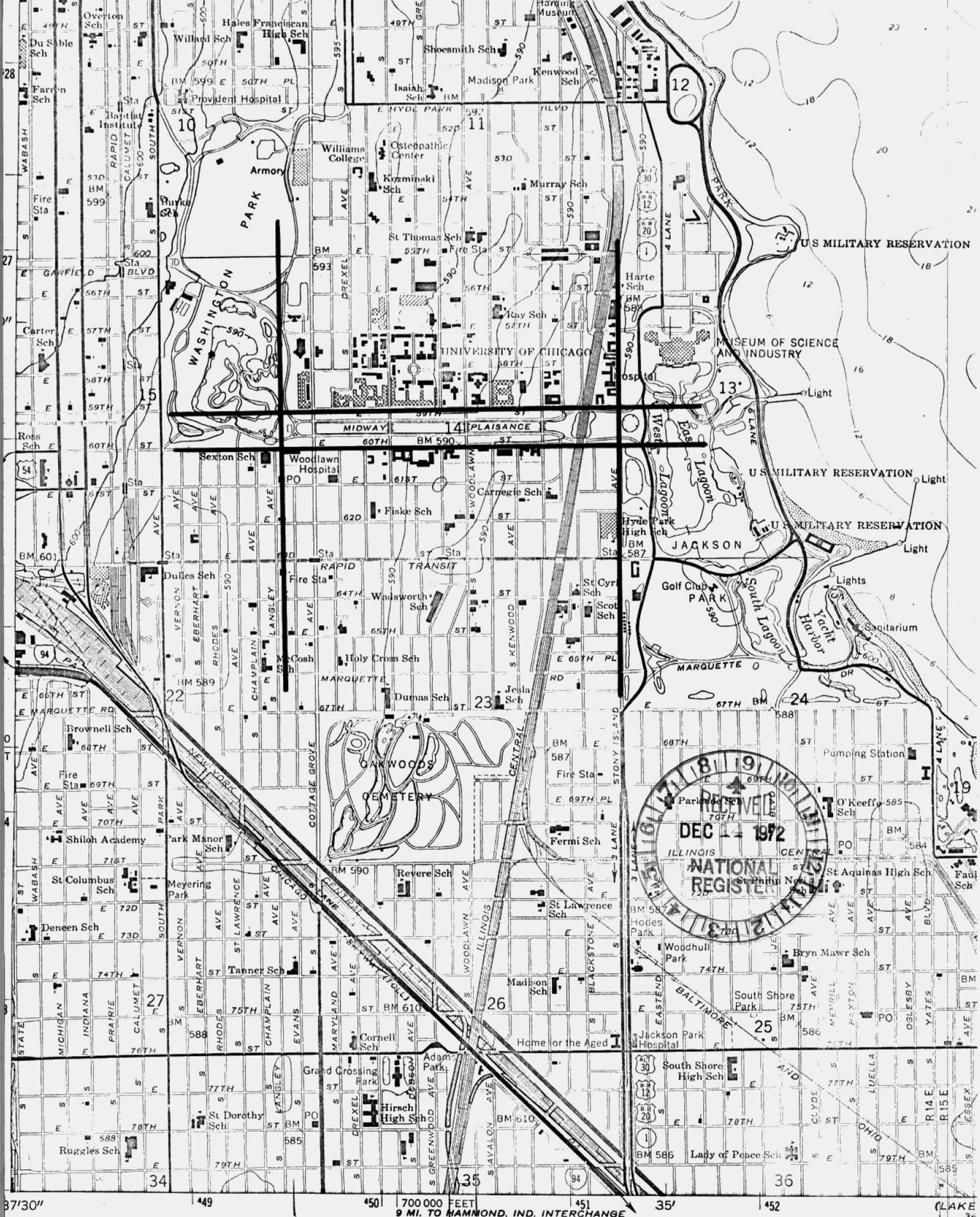
3. Latitude and longitude reference.



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with State of Illinois Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and City of Chicago

Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1962–63. Topography by planetable surveys 1926. Revised 1963

Selected hydrographic data compiled from U. S. Lake Survey Charts 75 (1960), 751 and 752 (1963)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Illinois coordinate system, east zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

MN
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0°23'
7 MILS
1½°
27 MILS

UTM GRID AND 1963 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE

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CONTOUR IN
DATUM IS
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NA
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICA
AND BY THE STATE GEOLOG
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MA

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Illinois	
COUNTY	
Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER DEC 15 1972	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Jackson Park

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chicago

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Illinois	17	Cook	031

RECEIVED DEC 14 1972 NATIONAL REGISTER

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: Jackson Park Quad

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FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGIC
AND BY THE STATE GEOLOG
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STATE OF ILLINOIS
RICHARD B. OGILVIE, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
102 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
400 SOUTH SPRING ST.
SPRINGFIELD 62706

CHICAGO OFFICE — 1227 S. MICHIGAN AVE. 60605

August 1, 1972

Mr. William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register
Room 3209
1100 L Street
Washington, D. C. 20005

Dear Mr. Murtagh:

Enclosed please find a National Register Nomination form for the Jackson Park Historic Landscape District and Midway Plaisance.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this nomination.

Sincerely,

William G. Farrar

William G. Farrar
Illinois Historic Sites Survey
320 South Main Street
Benton, Illinois 62812

WGF/jah

Enc.

Mrs. George A. Ranney, Jr.
4915 South Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Ms. Elizabeth Archambeault
National Register of Historic Places
1100 L Street N.W., Washington 20005 October 19, 1972

Dear Ms. Archambeault:

Many thanks for the information about the National Register, and thanks in advance for sending me your brochure and the list of registered places.

I enclose a copy of my booklet Olmsted in Chicago for your file on the proposed Jackson Park - Midway Plaisance Historic District. It shows that Frederick Law Olmsted planned Jackson Park, the Midway Plaisance and Washington Park together as the "Chicago South Park" over twenty years before the Columbian Exposition. Physically this three-park complex exists today much as Olmsted envisioned it in 1871, except that a canal was never built along the Midway. It could with justification be nominated for historic park status even if Jackson Park and the Midway Plaisance had not been used for the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893.

With the combined interest of the original Olmsted South Park, the World's Fair, the rebuilt Jackson Park in 1895 and the later sculpture on the Midway, the area has a rich history and would make a very good addition to the National Register.

Sincerely,

Victoria Ranney

Victoria Post Ranney

STATE OF ILLINOIS
RICHARD B. OGILVIE, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
102 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
400 SOUTH SPRING ST.
SPRINGFIELD 62706

CHICAGO OFFICE — 1227 S. MICHIGAN AVE. 60605

ILLINOIS HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY GLESSNER HOUSE
1800 South Prairie Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616

November 9, 1972

Henry N. Barkhausen, Director
Illinois Department of Conservation
102 State Office Building
400 South Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Director Barkhausen:

Enclosed please find a National Register Nomination Form for the Jackson Park - Midway Plaisance Historic District. It has been carefully revised by Dr. Sprague, and is, I am sure, satisfactory.

I have enclosed also a stamped envelope to Ms. Carol Shul at the National Register Office in Washington. If you would send this form to her after you have approved it,* I would be most appreciative, as she is expecting it.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this nomination.

Yours sincerely,

Cynthia Ann Durko

Cynthia Ann Durko, Office Manager
Illinois Historic Structures Survey

* PLEASE SIGN UNDER ITEM NO. 12.

ENCLOSURES

STATE OF ILLINOIS
RICHARD B. OGILVIE, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
102 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
400 SOUTH SPRING ST.
SPRINGFIELD 62706

CHICAGO OFFICE — 1227 S. MICHIGAN AVE. 60605
ILLINOIS HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY GLESSNER HOUSE
1800 South Prairie Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616

November 9, 1972

Ms. Carol Shul
Room 3209
1100 "L" Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shul:

We have just finished a revised edition of the National Register Nomination form for the Jackson Park Historic Landscape District and Midway Plaisance. It has been sent to Director Barkhausen for his approval and should be arriving at your office sometime soon.

We are sorry for the delay, but sometimes these things fall into rather slow channels.

Thank you for your patience.

Yours sincerely,

Cynthia Durko

Cynthia Durko, Office Manager
Illinois Historic Structures Survey

STATE OF ILLINOIS
RICHARD B. OGILVIE, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
102 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
400 SOUTH SPRING ST.
SPRINGFIELD 62706

CHICAGO OFFICE — 1227 S. MICHIGAN AVE. 60605

December 6, 1972

Miss Nadine Jones
Room 3301
1100 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20005

Dear Miss Jones:

Enclosed are copies of the revised map for the Jackson Park National Register nomination. One set of coordinates designates the Park boundaries. The other set designates the boundaries of the Midway Plaisance. Attached to each map form and map is a continuation sheet giving the latitude and longitude coordinates.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

William G. Farrar

William G. Farrar, Director
Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey
320 South Main Street
Benton, Illinois 62812

WGF/jah

Enc.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered DEC 15 1972

Name	Location
Jackson Park Historic Landscape District and Midway Plaisance	Chicago Cook County

Also Notified

Hon. Charles H. Percy
Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson, III
Hon. Abner Mikva

Director, Northeast Region

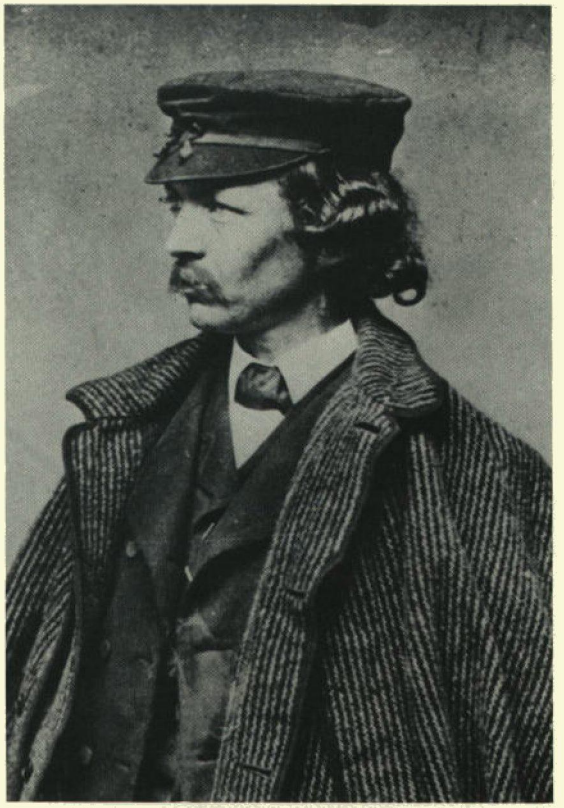
PHR NRowland:mm 12/13/72

State Liaison Officer
Mr. Henry N. Barkhausen
Director
Department of Conservation
102 State Office Building
400 South Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Olmsted in Chicago

Olmsted in Chicago

By Victoria Post Ranney



Frederick Law Olmsted
about 1860. Courtesy
Olmsted Associates,
Brookline, Massachusetts

Printed by R. R. Donnelley & Sons
Chicago, 1972
The Open Lands Project
Designed by Robert Lipman

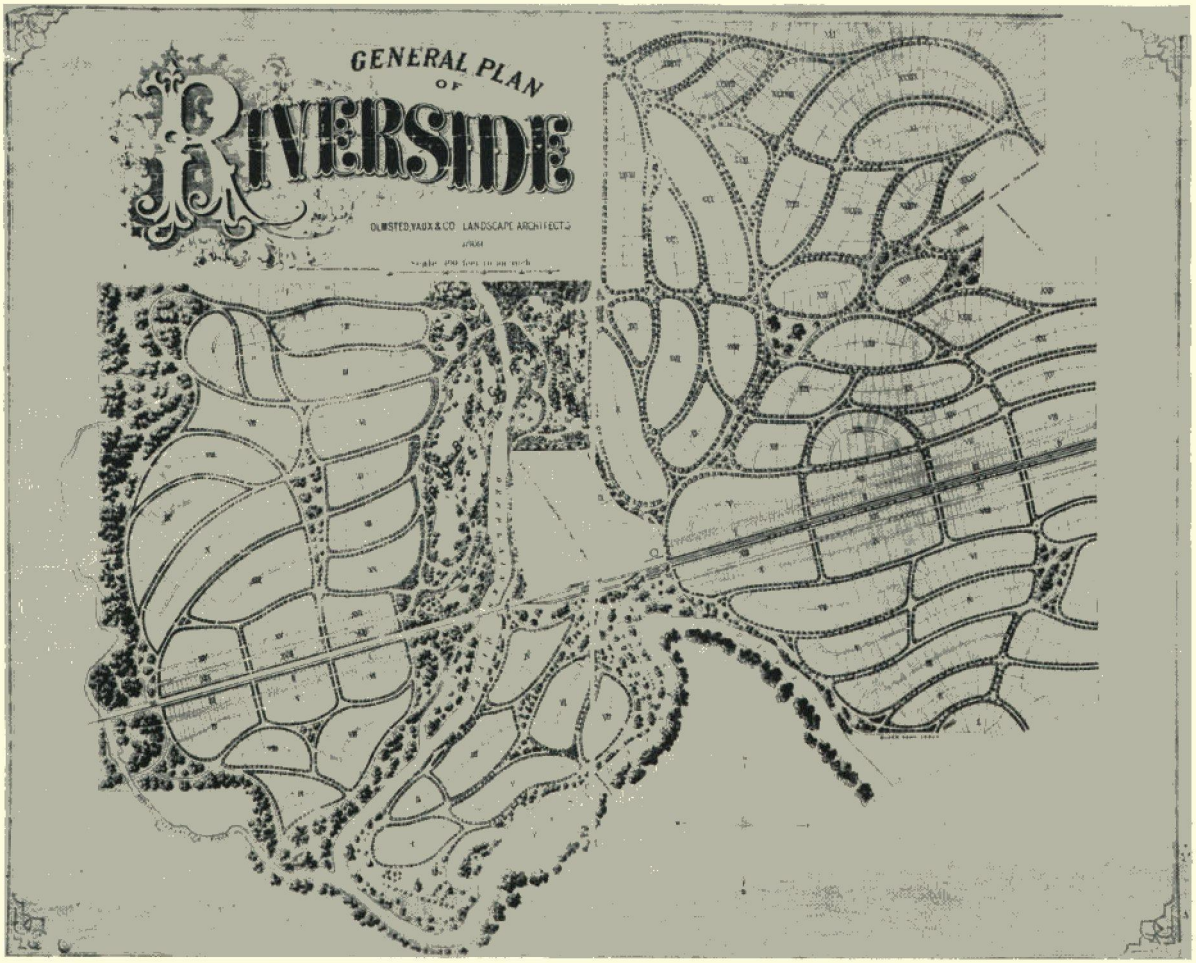
Revised General Plan for Jackson Park, 1895, by Olmsted's son, stepson, and their partner Charles Eliot. Olmsted's mind was failing at this time but the plan incorporates many of his ideas. Although a six-lane highway now runs through it, Jackson Park retains the main features of this plan.

Chicago has a great tradition in its parks. The Chicago School of Architecture is well recognized as a flowering of creative talent in the period of expansion after the Civil War. What is less well known is that at the same time, supported by the same active citizens and the same economic boom, other movements to build the city determined its future for the next hundred years.

A group of capable and determined men who had first joined forces in defense of the Union campaigned when the war was over for stricter control over the slaughterhouses, clean water and streets, and a sound school system. They established many of the city's cultural institutions and were responsible for its ring of boulevards and parks. They had a vision of what the city might become, a practical ability to get things done, and an appreciation of artistic talent. To plan their largest park—the "South Park," now Washington and Jackson Parks and the Midway Plaisance—they called on the leading park designer of his time, Frederick Law Olmsted.

Olmsted himself was a man of vision. His vision was culled from long and rich experience. He was directly involved in many of the great issues of his day—slavery, Tammany Hall politics, public health reform, conservation of the national parks, and the City Beautiful movement. It is perhaps because Olmsted's career was so diverse that no biographer has yet pieced together the different phases of his life, though he wrote regularly and prolifically. His yet unpublished letters to contemporaries reflect this diversity and form one of the great collections in American history.

Olmsted lived from 1822 to 1903, a life which spanned the transformation of America from an agricultural nation of ten million people to an industrial one of seventy-five million. At a time when the frontier was closing and Americans were moving to the cities, Olmsted believed that nature had a controlling effect on man's behavior. So he undertook in the course of a long career to save nature or recreate it for new industrial conditions. He designed seventeen large urban parks across the continent, including Central Park in New York, Belle Isle in Detroit, Prospect in Brooklyn, Franklin in Boston and Mount Royal in Montreal. In city planning he advocated streets which follow the natural contours of the land instead of a grid pattern. Beyond the cities he planned suburbs to combine urban conveniences with the advantages of living close to nature. He was one of the



General Plan of Riverside, Illinois, 1869. Olmsted, Vaux and Company.

first to see the need to reserve our most spectacular wilderness scenery. Acting as chairman of the original Yosemite Park Commission in 1865, he drew up guidelines for national parks; later he campaigned to save Niagara Falls. A leader in all these areas, Olmsted stands out as the first great environmental planner in America.

Olmsted came to Illinois in 1868 to design a new community, the suburb of Riverside, and he stayed to design Chicago's huge South Park. There the ambitious plans he proposed for an aquatic pleasure ground were allowed to drop after the Great Fire of 1871. When over twenty years later Olmsted returned to Chicago as designer of the World's Columbian Exposition grounds in 1893, he found that people of all sorts loved his parks. He then had another chance to create a water setting and activities for the people. This he did, creating

inspired precedents for total planning. The Exposition initiated the City Beautiful movement which Daniel Burnham's Chicago Plan of 1909 epitomized. Olmsted's stepson John C. Olmsted and son Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., worked with Burnham on the park designs.

Olmsted's plans for Chicago are useful guides even today for those who care about the parks and urban environment. They provide an insight into how the parks were meant to be used, and how they should be used today. Moreover, the history of how the parks were developed, and how Olmsted was chosen to design them, provides an instructive example of Chicago's civic leadership at its best. Chicago, and the country, have much to learn from the story of how a great city and a great man one hundred years ago established Chicago's great heritage in its parks.

Olmsted the Man

Frederick Law Olmsted had an unusually varied experience of nature and human behavior. Until he was over forty he had what might be called a checkered career. As a child he was sent away from his home in Hartford, Connecticut, to be educated by a succession of small-town preachers. He lived in their families, and if he did not get a classical education, he developed a taste for travel and observing customs and landscapes in different places. He went to Yale, and dropped out twice. He worked in a dry goods store and then, undergoing the traditional New England test of manhood, sailed to China before the mast. He worked for a progressive farmer in upstate New York and then persuaded his father to set him up on his own model farms, first in Connecticut and then on Staten Island, New York.

When he tired of farming he travelled to Europe and in 1852 wrote an account of his tour called *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England*. He returned to pick up the farming but gave it up to travel on horseback through the South and determine for himself the burning question of the day: whether slavery was a viable institution in America. His observations were printed in the *New York Times* in correspondence later collected as *The Cotton Kingdom*, often considered the finest factual account of the antebellum South. A success in the literary world, he became editor of *Putnam's Monthly Magazine*. That enterprise went bankrupt, however, and debts led him to apply for the job as Superintendent of Central Park, which was in 1857 an

undeveloped tract of land north of the city, the site of pig runs and tanneries. He came to know the terrain and Calvert Vaux, an English-born architect who had worked with Andrew Jackson Downing, the man who popularized Romantic landscape architecture in America and convinced New Yorkers that they needed a great park. In 1858 Olmsted and Vaux collaborated on a prize-winning design for the park.

They were appointed landscape architects of the Central Park, but this did not mean that Olmsted was settling down to a permanent career in the field. Instead his literary interests led him to talk with his friends Charles Eliot Norton and E. L. Godkin about founding a new weekly—the one which eventually was called *The Nation*. When the Civil War broke out, Olmsted, whose skills at handling large numbers of workmen had been recognized in Central Park, was asked to be the chief executive of the United States Sanitary Commission.

The Sanitary Commission, originally authorized to advise on the health and medical condition of the volunteer army, soon operated hospital transport ships, co-ordinated supplies sent from all over the country, set up lodges and feeding stations for exhausted and wounded soldiers, and pressed a reluctant army bureaucracy for camp sanitary regulations. Olmsted worked himself to the verge of collapse with the Commission, then accepted as a health cure a lucrative job managing the Mariposa Mining Estate in the gold-filled foothills of the Sierra Nevadas. He arrived in California, took stock of the state of

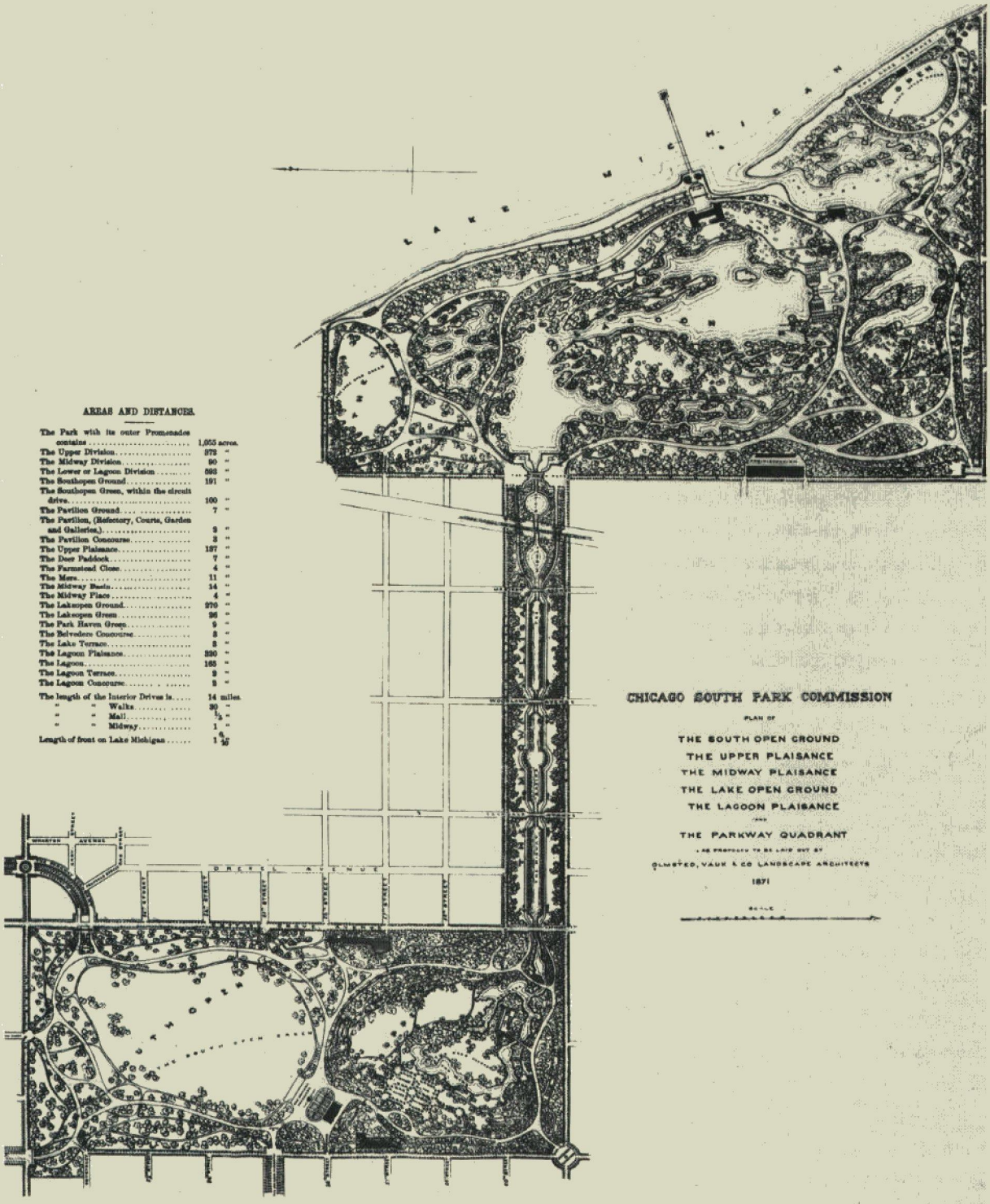
View in the South Park. Courtesy Special Collections, the University of Chicago Library.

civilization in the United States and his own career, and decided that when he returned from the frontier he would concentrate on the calling for which he was most fitted: landscape architecture.

From that time until his death in 1903 he was a landscape architect, but in a much broader sense than we think of the profession today. It included, of course, the planting of trees and bushes in picturesque groupings, the creation of artificial lakes and the laying out of paths through shady glens to scenic lookouts. All this was part of the 19th Century romantic movement, and large parks laid out in this fashion were seen as a healthy antidote to industrialization in big cities. But Olmsted was more than an artistic arranger of landscape. He was a social and scientific planner on a broad scale who believed he could change the whole moral and cultural level of our democracy by careful planning of the environment. He believed that nature had a good effect on the psyche and behavior of man. This moral influence, he believed, was especially necessary where dwellings crowded together in large cities produced "morbid conditions of the body and mind," and caused "nervous feebleness or irritability, and various functional derangements." By bringing people in an industrial society into contact with nature and each other in a carefully planned environment, he felt he could increase their aesthetic sensitivity, their physical well-being, and their civilized appreciation of others. With a population so enlightened, he hoped, democracy might more easily prove a workable institution.

It was because of his vision of what planning could do for the population of an industrial society that Olmsted is important to the twentieth century. It is in this context that his seemingly disparate early experiences fall into place. To be nearly forty before settling down to a permanent career may seem irresponsible, especially since at thirty-seven Olmsted married his brother's widow and took on the care of her three children, still depending on his patient father to foot bills for his various enterprises. But in the light of his greater career, the planning of environments which would affect people in positive ways, little of his early experience was wasted.

In planning parkways for Chicago and Riverside he used his knowledge of the great boulevards and promenades of Europe, where people of all classes came together in a sociable manner. In draining the swamps of Boston's Fenway and Chicago's Jackson Park he was using



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" " Mail	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
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Length of front on Lake Michigan	$1\frac{6}{10}$ "

CHICAGO SOUTH PARK COMMISSION

PLAN OF

THE SOUTH OPEN GROUND
THE UPPER PLAISANCE
THE MIDWAY PLAISANCE
THE LAKE OPEN GROUND
THE LAGOON PLAISANCE
AND
THE PARKWAY QUADRANT

AS PROPOSED TO BE LAID OUT BY

OLMSTED, VAUX & CO. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

1871

SCALE

the experience of his two intensive years in public health with the Sanitary Commission. In making suggestions for the moral and cultural improvement of the average American, he was not, as has been claimed, merely showing white Anglo-Saxon Protestant paternalism, though he did believe in an elite and felt his Connecticut heritage very strongly.

Olmsted was qualified to plan for the average American because he had experienced more contact with people across this country than perhaps any other person of his time. In the nineteenth century it was the fashion for European travellers—Mrs. Trollope, her son Anthony, and Charles Dickens among them—to tour America briefly and then go home and write a popular book about the uncivilized people across the ocean. Olmsted claimed he was more qualified than any of them—except possibly de Tocqueville—to speak on American character. He knew people in rural Connecticut as if they were an extended family. On his trips to the South he lodged in the shacks of shiftless Appalachians and the apple-pie homes of industrious German immigrants in West Texas. He met every sort of slave from degraded field hands to the independent lumbermen who were hired out on seasonal contracts in the Great Dismal Swamp of North Carolina. As superintendent of Central Park he directed up to five thousand laborers, most of them recent immigrants from Europe. As head of the Sanitary Commission he talked with soldiers from Virginia to Missouri, conducting a personal statistical survey into the reasons why they volunteered. In the California mining towns of Mariposa County he managed people with scarcely any common basis of civilization: Digger Indians, Chinese, Blacks, Mexicans, and every sort of white American and European.

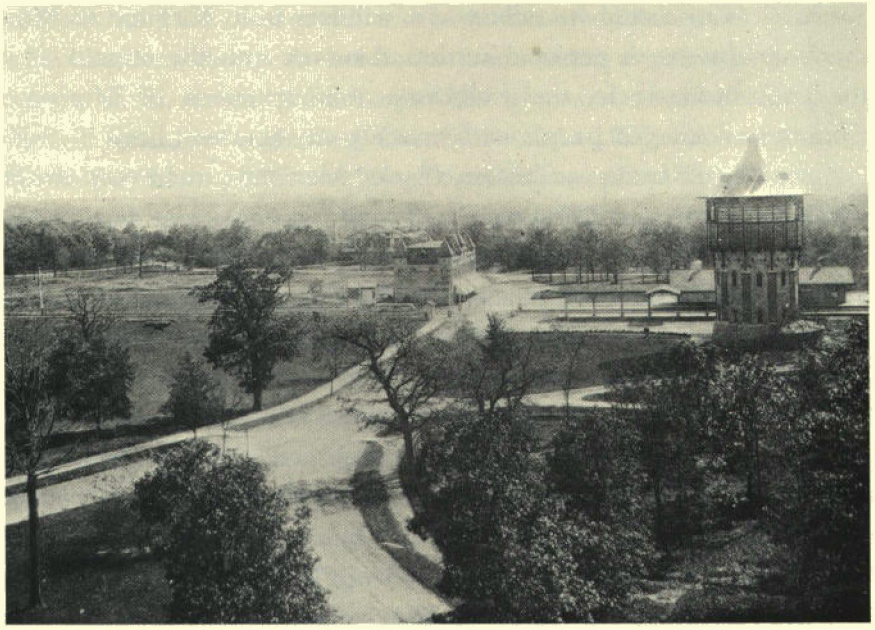
He himself had pondered the reasons for the lack of civilization in so many of the American people. The European travellers, bound by aristocratic prejudices, jumped to the conclusion that political institutions were the controlling factor, and that a democratic society could never produce a civilized population. Olmsted did not think this was the problem. He blamed our half-civilized state on an unformed social and physical environment. He called it the "frontier condition."

Olmsted saw the frontier condition in our large cities and the South as well as the West. He said it existed wherever people were reluctant

Opposite
Plan for laying out the South Park, 1871, Olmsted, Vaux and Company. Note the basins along the Midway Plaisance. Courtesy Special Collections, University of Chicago Library.

to rely on each other, where mutual dependence existed only in the smallest social units, where a man would trust his partner or perhaps others of his own nationality but had no sense of a broader community of men. In the South and California the distrust between ethnic groups was so strong that violence became habitual even among whites. The lack of community precluded co-operation and the division of labor, so everyone tried to be a jack-of-all trades and no one was an expert. Slipshod methods rather than craftsmanship were the rule.

How to remedy this frontier condition? Olmsted thought it could be done by social and environmental planning. Well before Emancipation he devised a system to improve the state of the slaves. He saw that slavery bred slack habits because masters were afraid to train their slaves to the point of internal standards and self-reliance, so he outlined a wage-incentive program through which slaves could buy up their freedom by working overtime. Those who achieved their freedom would have learned to work hard for their own benefit; at the same time their masters would be compensated. In another scheme for social improvement, Olmsted set up a reading room in Mariposa with the latest popular magazines and papers when he found out that the only entertainments for the miners were bars and a cockfight every Sunday.



Riverside under construction about 1870. In the center is the town's first store block, designed by Frederick Withers of the Olmsted and Vaux firm. Behind it is William Le Baron Jenney's Riverside Hotel. The water tower at right allowed water to be supplied to the third floor of every house in Riverside. From *Picturesque Riverside*. Courtesy Chicago Historical Society.

Environmental planning could alleviate frontier conditions in rural areas, he thought. Unpaved country roads afflicted women especially. Most of the year they trained and adapted themselves to avoid going out, the difficulties were so great. Thus they missed the chance to exercise in the open air and cultivate a taste for the beautiful by observing nature. For everyone in rural areas, poor roads held back the exchange of goods, services and ideas. Therefore in designing the model suburb of Riverside, Olmsted's first priority was the installation of all-weather roads.

The residence of John C. Dore on Fair Bank Road, Riverside, designed by Olmsted, Vaux and Company. The house still stands today. From *Riverside in 1871.*

Riverside, the Model Suburb

At Riverside in 1868, Olmsted and Vaux planned an environment for civilized living. The site was 1600 acres nine miles west of Chicago on the banks of the Des Plaines River. It offered two rare and prized features in the Chicago area—elevation and a full-grown forest. It was healthy; Olmsted found no mosquitoes or lake flies even among the bushes near the water on a warm August evening. The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad made its first stop outside the city at what would be the center of town.

Olmsted knew that despite the nineteenth century move to the cities there was "a counter-tide of migration, especially affecting the more intelligent and more fortunate classes" in Paris, London, Vienna, Berlin, New York, Boston and Philadelphia. People were separating their places of residence from their places of work and moving to the country. They wanted the pure air, cool shade and chance for exercise which the country offered, but they did not want to sacrifice the conveniences to which they had become accustomed in the cities. They did not want to drive over muddy or dusty roads to market, to pump and carry water, to clean kerosene lamps or be isolated from their friends. They wanted "the country with the discomforts eliminated, the country plus city conveniences," in fact, the golden mean between the two kinds of life. And this was what the Riverside Improvement Company, with Olmsted's help, proposed to give them.

To insure harmonious social intercourse, Olmsted designated informal village greens, commons and playgrounds, with croquet and ball grounds, sheltered seats and drinking fountains. Along the Des Plaines River he planned a public drive and walk, boat landings,

terraces, balconies overhanging the water, and pavilions of rustic character, half overgrown with vines, from which to watch regattas. Despite the existence of the railroad, Olmsted urged the Improvement Company to build a stylish carriage road to the city. "A road suitable for pleasure-driving is one of the greatest common luxuries a civilized community can possess," he wrote. The Riverside-Chicago parkway would fill Chicago's pressing need for a promenade ground.

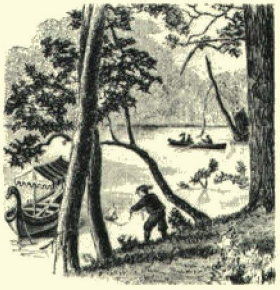
> "The promenade is a social custom of great importance in all the large towns of Europe. It is an open-air gathering for the purpose of easy, friendly, unceremonious greetings, for the enjoyment of change of scene, of cheerful and exhilarating sights and sounds, and of various good cheer, to which the people of a town, of all classes, harmoniously resort on equal terms, as to a common property. There is probably no custom which so manifestly displays the advantages of a Christian, civilized and democratic community, in contradistinction from an aggregation of families, clans, sects, or castes. There is none more favorable to a healthy civic pride, civic virtue, and civic prosperity. As yet, the promenade has hardly begun to be recognized as an institution in Chicago, but there is no doubt that it soon must be, and it is evident from the present habits and manners of the people, that when once established, the custom will nowhere else be more popular or beneficent in its influence."

If Olmsted's expectations were high, those of the Riverside Improvement Company were equally ambitious. It was not for nothing that

The promenade along the Jackson Park lakefront. Olmsted intended the pier in the distance to protect the inlet, emphasize the relation of the park to the lake, and attract people. Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library.

its founders had called out the architects of the famed Central Park. After his first trip to the site in the summer of 1868, Olmsted wrote home to his wife Mary, "The business at Chicago is very large—a private enterprise in which it is intended we shall put in services as partners or stockholders. They want to go to work at once and employ 2000 men, contemplate expenditures for improvements of 1,500,000 dollars." Within a month Olmsted and Vaux had a contract from E. E. Childs, President of the Improvement Company, promising $15,000 worth of house lots as their initial fee. At Childs' insistence they worked night and day to complete plans of the property so the engineers and builders could start in.

The public park along the DesPlaines River in Riverside. From *Riverside in 1871*, a promotional brochure of the Riverside Improvement Company.



Troubles developed with Childs. He failed to guarantee publicly that the Olmsted and Vaux plan would be rapidly and completely executed. He told Olmsted there was a strong demand for the lots when in fact not one bona fide sale had been made. He jacked up the prices of the lots and attempted to pay Olmsted and Vaux with lots at his own inflated valuation. Lacking cash, he continued to pay them in lots, but plagued their office in New York with bills to be paid immediately. In October 1869 Childs announced he would build a house for himself in the center of Long Common, the central village green and "keystone" of the whole design. Olmsted and Vaux threatened to resign and splash their reasons all over the Chicago papers. When Childs backed down they agreed to stay on, but left for good in May 1870, returning two of their eight lots in settlement.

Nevertheless the main features of the Olmsted and Vaux plan were carried out in the first years and the town developed around them. In 1871 a promotional pamphlet boasted that Riverside roads "are all laid out in curved lines, and are as finely laid, guttered and drained, and are today as firm as those of Central Park, New York." 700 of its 1600 acres were roads, borders, and parks. The 160 choice acres on both sides of the river were a public park to which, it was claimed, a Chicagoan might proudly take a citizen of New York or London. The engineer L. Y. Schermerhorn had improved the naturally good sanitary conditions by building masonry silt basins every 300 feet along the roads and tile drains in front of each residence.

A railroad station, gas and water works, and an ice house were up. Frederick Withers, an architect in the Olmsted and Vaux firm, built the first store and office block and the community church. Vaux de-

Watching a regatta on the DesPlaines River. From *Riverside in 1871.*

signed several private residences. The most famous architect at Riverside was William Le Baron Jenney, who in 1885 built the world's first steel-frame skyscraper, the Home Insurance Building in Chicago. Jenney collaborated with Schermerhorn on the water tower which has since become Riverside's landmark. He also designed the elegant chalet-style Riverside Hotel and private houses for himself, E. E. Childs and a number of others. All Riverside houses were designed to blend in with the setting. They had to be thirty feet behind the lot line, and walls along the road or between lots were not allowed. Each resident was required to maintain one or two living trees between his house and the road.

In October 1871, the great Chicago fire burned the Improvement Company's office downtown on Clark Street with all its plans and records. Though Riverside was untouched and Jenney's Riverside Hotel stayed open all winter to accommodate the homeless, the Improvement Company suffered. After the fire, capital which might have been invested in Riverside went for rebuilding projects in the city. In the Panic of 1873 the Company failed.

Riverside today retains much of the flavor Olmsted intended. An Illinois Supreme Court decision affirmed the public nature of its park land. The backbone of the Olmsted and Vaux plan, the gracefully

curving roads, still stands out on a map of the Chicago metropolitan area. In the town, a century after it was planned, the roads still suggest the best of suburban living and imply "leisure, contemplativeness, and happy tranquillity."

The "Civilized Men" of Chicago Start a Park System

While Olmsted was having his troubles at Riverside with a developer who was less than reliable, he began to draw on a whole different set of acquaintances in Chicago. As General Secretary of the Sanitary Commission he had come into contact with the country's most serious leaders in philanthropy and public health, since the Commission coordinated a network of some seven thousand aid societies and distributed their money, supplies, and clothing to Union soldiers. In Chicago a group of men who would be the movers of the city's creative postwar period first joined forces in support of the Union and the Sanitary Commission. Two of the most important for Olmsted were Dr. John Rauch and Ezra McCagg.

Dr. John Rauch, a member of the Chicago branch of the Sanitary Commission, led the city's campaign for better sanitary conditions and parks. In 1858 he had circulated a petition to discontinue burials in the City Cemetery, now the southern end of Lincoln Park. Because of the water level of the nearby lake, its graves were only three to four feet deep, yet during the war nearly 4000 Southern prisoners of war, a third of them smallpox victims, were buried there. Rauch's warnings of smallpox and cholera in this putrefying area prodded the citizens toward action. Chicago, like many other cities in the nineteenth century, began to see that parks were a way to clear poorly-drained, disease-bearing land.

Ezra B. McCagg had been president of the Chicago Sanitary Commission during the war. To Olmsted he represented the civic-minded men who led the city. The son of a New York State farmer, McCagg had come to Chicago as a young man, trained as a lawyer, and acquired land in payment for debts. When land values boomed he found himself extremely wealthy. Olmsted wrote about him:

> "Mr. McCagg attends regularly to his law-business, going regularly into the business quarter of the city every morning and spending the day as ever you or I have done. He is, like all Chicago men of business, excessively held to it. He has great and difficult trusts upon him. Besides which he is a member or officer of nearly every respectable public institution; is presi-

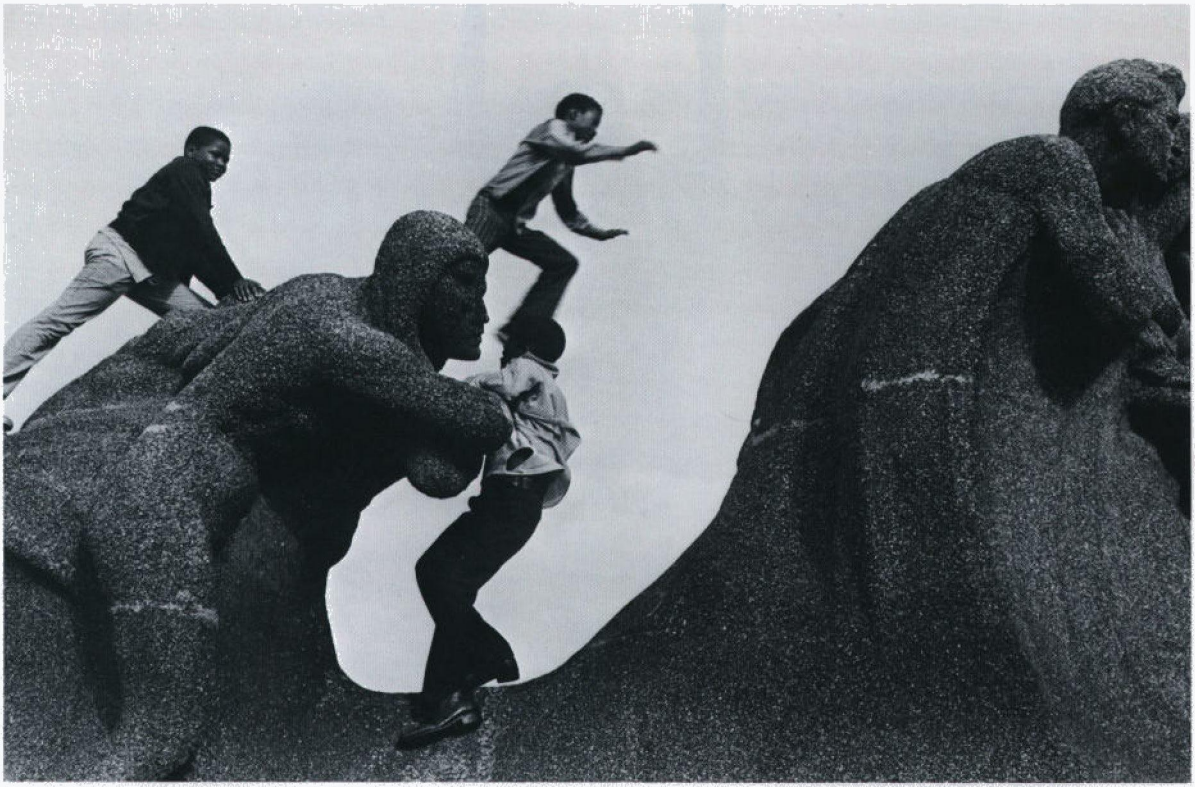
dent of the Chicago Club, of the Chicago Public Library and so on and on. What I am most struck by is the real gratitude which he evidently feels when any tolerably sensible and respectable man asks him for money for a new purpose, a special charity or what not simply because he can take this man's word that it is right—he has taken the trouble to look into it and form an opinion which I, McCagg, cannot get time to do."

Olmsted stayed on North Clark Street with McCagg and his family, whom he characterized as "the most hospitable people on the continent." He wrote of them, "While they seem to be very simple, almost frivolous and playful in their habits of mind, they must have a serious instinct, strong human sympathy and very clear common sense, and I really feel as if they were about as good a production of our Western Civilization and Christianity as I ever hope to see."

In 1867 McCagg had drawn up a bill to establish a huge park south of the city in the suburb of Hyde Park. The South Park extended from the lake into the "wilderness' and contained over a thousand acres. It was by far the city's largest park. Governor William Bross talked with Olmsted about it and was an enthusiastic supporter. Paul Cornell, the wealthy real estate developer of Hyde Park, spent the winter of 1867 in Springfield pushing the bill through the legislature. When it was turned down in a referendum, its proponents did not give up. The sanitary reformers combined with the real estate interests. They set their sights higher and lobbied for three bills which would ring the city with parks on the North, West and South Sides. In February 1869, all three passed, and those of the West and South Park Commissions were approved in referendum.

The passage of the park bills caused a flurry of excitement. The Lincoln Park bill, passed first, named Ezra McCagg to its first Commission and he was immediately elected president. On March 1st he wrote Olmsted in New York on behalf of the board, asking him to prepare a design for laying out and improving Lincoln Park. Dr. Rauch wrote that he was preparing the way to have Olmsted make a study of all the Chicago parks. Olmsted would have liked the job of designing a whole system of parks and boulevards. Some years later he did it in Boston, creating a famous "Emerald Necklace" for the city. But in Chicago the job never did materialize because there was no authority governing all the parks; the Commissions were independently set up by state legislation and the city did not control them. Each handled its planning differently.

Washington and Jackson Parks as they are today: An essay by Ken Allison, Chicago photographer.

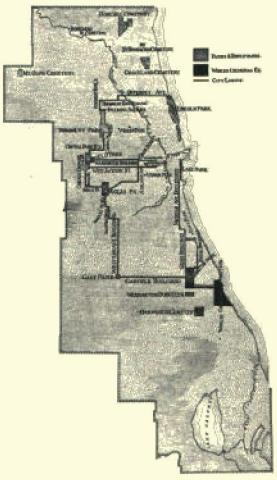


The Lincoln Park Commission, which had not been submitted to a referendum, lacked independent taxing power. The Mayor of Chicago refused to issue it bonds to buy up land and the Supreme Court upheld his refusal. When the towns of North Chicago and Lake finally collected a park tax in February 1870, the first payment was to E. B. McCagg for expenses he had paid for out of his own pocket. As a park commission report says, litigation rather than landscape gardening occupied their attention for the first year. In the next few years, while Olmsted was on the scene in Chicago, the Commissioners concentrated on protecting the lake shore, constructing a lake shore drive, and preparing the land for "ultimate" permanent improvement. The reports do not mention Olmsted and Vaux.

It has often been claimed that Olmsted designed the Chicago West Park system—Humboldt, Garfield and Douglas Parks and the boulevards connecting them. There is no evidence to this effect in the West Park Commission Reports or the Olmsted papers in the Library of Congress. The West Park Reports of 1870, 1871 and 1872 show that the architect William Le Baron Jenney laid out the West Parks with his associates from Riverside, Schermerhorn and Bogart. Olmsted indeed may have been interested in landscaping the parks, but he failed to get the job. In a letter of January, 1870, Jenney wrote him politely, "Please allow me to express my thanks for the pains you took in writing the long and highly instructive letter. I hope to profit thereby. At present the Commissioners are busily occupied in acquiring the necessary land, and are not ready for even preliminary designs." As for later involvement, the Olmsted professional papers in the Library of Congress show no record, and Chicago Historical Society maps of improvements in Garfield and Humboldt Park up to 1885 name O. F. Dubuis as Landscape Architect.

A Water Park in the Prairie

The commission which Olmsted and Vaux did get was the biggest of them all. Vaux, in Chicago on Riverside business in October 1869, was asked to meet with the South Park Commissioners, one of whom was Paul Cornell. They were still acquiring property for the main park, they told him, and did not expect him to start work on that portion immediately. But they wanted surveys, working plans and specifications for two boulevards or parkways, then called Drexel



The park and boulevard system of Chicago in 1893. From the *Century World's Fair Book for Boys and Girls*, 1893.

and Kankakee Avenues, which would link the South Park with the city to the north. On October 9 Vaux proposed to do the job for $4000, and after some hesitation, the South Park Commissioners agreed. Six months later, on April 7, 1870, they hired Olmsted and Vaux to design the South Park itself. Their fee would be $15 an acre, with $2500 initially and the rest on receipt of the plan. Within the month Olmsted and Vaux resigned from Riverside and turned their attention to Chicago and the South Park.

It was not easy to make a thing of beauty on the South Park site. The Lower Division, later to be Jackson Park, was swampy sand dunes, and the Upper Division, subsequently Washington Park, was flat prairie. Because of the lake winds and a water table very close to the surface, no trees grew to any impressive height. Olmsted and Vaux wrote drily, "The fact should be recognized that none of the sites and no part of any one of the sites which have been reserved for parks at Chicago would generally elsewhere be recognized as well adapted to the purpose."

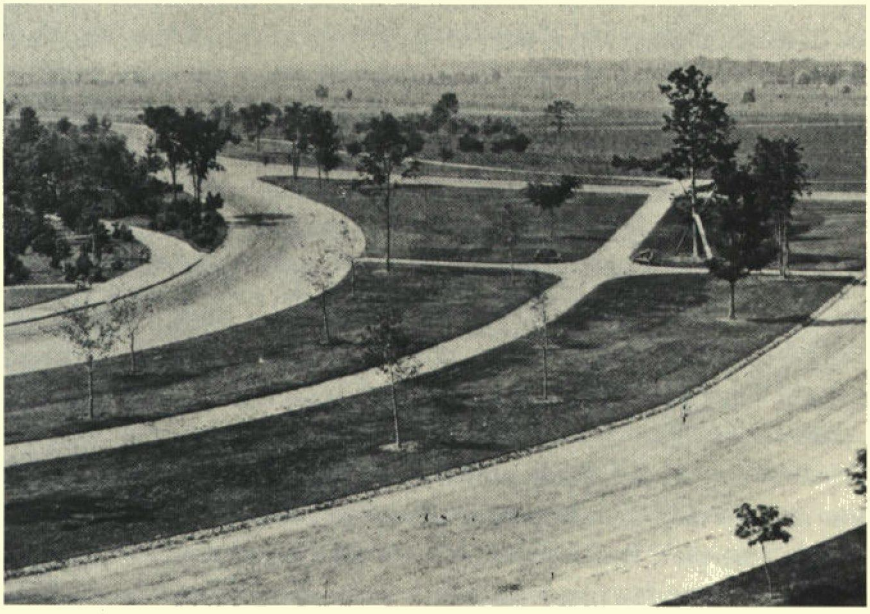
But somehow in Chicago a disadvantage became a challenge. The undertaking was bold and Olmsted and Vaux were buoyed by a sense that a great city was rising "upon ground plans now forming and foundations now laying." They thought it would be a city with a metropolitan character and influence, because it had not only commercial advantages but also scientific, artistic, and social attractions. And a park would contribute to these.

There were two features to the site: the prairie and the lake. The prairie was not picturesque but it had one advantage. Olmsted explained that New York had recently gone to great expense to reduce large portions of Central Park to prairie-like simplicity. Without any work at all, Chicago had the same aspect. The northern half of Washington Park could be laid out as one hundred acres of open turf. This "Southopen Ground" would be about the size of the Champs de Mars in Paris; it would be the largest open space planned for parades and games anywhere in this country. It would achieve the primary object of a great urban park, which was to create "an antithesis to its bustling, paved, rectangular, walled-in streets." Nothing could do this better than "a large meadowy ground of an open, free, tranquil character," and this would be the first feature that would impress people on entering the park. Coming from the city via the Southopen

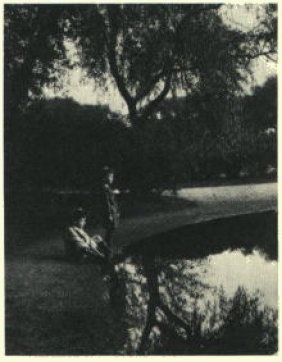
Parkway or the Southgrove Parkway—now Martin Luther King Drive and Drexel Boulevard—visitors would see a nearly level greensward stretching without a perceptible break for over a mile, ending only at the trees around the pond at the southern end of Washington Park.

The other significant feature of the South Park landscape was Lake Michigan, "fully compensating for the absence of sublime or picturesque elevations of land." To extend the scenic influence of the lake, Olmsted and Vaux proposed an ambitious and expensive undertaking. Jackson Park was then a series of marshy sandbars, and one third of all its surface was below high water level. They proposed to cut a channel through the beach so that the swamp water could flow out. Then they would dredge the swamp, piling the sand and mud up on the shores high enough so that sizeable trees could grow there without being waterlogged. From the lagoon thus created in Jackson Park the landscape architects planned to dredge right down the center of the Midway Plaisance and into Washington Park, where they would excavate an artificial pond or "mere."

The advantages of this system of waterways were many. It would secure deep and thorough drainage of the Midway and Washington Park, and add to the chances of making trees flourish there. It would improve the drainage of the neighboring land, eliminating unhealthy



The South Park under construction, with uninhabited prairie in the distance. Courtesy Chicago Historical Society.



Life in the South Park. Courtesy Special Collections, University of Chicago Library.

swamps and reducing pulmonary complaints and children's diseases. It would lock the three divisions of the park into one obvious system, allowing fish and waterfowl to swim, and people to boat and skate, from Washington Park to the lake.

Washington Park would be accessible to boats coming from downtown. Olmsted thought overland access to the principal recreation ground of the city would be tedious and uninteresting for most people coming from the city and the north side, so he proposed to make the inlet from the lake a principal gateway to the South Park, and emphasize it with a two hundred foot pier. At that time steamers provided the cheapest and most pleasant transportation for large numbers of people, and Olmsted foresaw a day when "the toiling population of Chicago, relieved from work at an early hour on the last of the week, will be carried to the South Park by many tens of thousands at the cost of a few cents." Once there they could hire small boats cheaply and travel through nearly all parts of the park quietly, agreeably, and without fatigue. He noted that this would be especially pleasant for invalids, convalescents and mothers with children in arms. In Central Park, he told the Commissioners, from four to six thousand people used the small boats daily, at a cost of ten cents each.

He compared the potential South Park with the Lido in Venice and the Haga Park in Stockholm, both of which had water approaches. He also thought of Panama, which he had seen on the way to California. Fascinated with tropical lagoons, their intricacy and dripping foliage, he decided to adapt that effect for matter-of-fact, grid-plan Chicago. With proper shaping of the banks and careful planting, he said:

> "You can secure a combination of the fresh and healthy nature of the North with the restful, dreamy nature of the South, that would in our judgment be admirably filled to the general purposes of any park, and which certainly could nowhere be more grateful than in the borders of your city, not only on account of the present intensely wide-awake character of its people, but because of the special quality of the scenery about Chicago in which flat and treeless prairie and limitless expanse of lake are such prominent characteristics."

When Olmsted and Vaux surveyed the South Park site in 1870, it was in uncultivated and sparsely inhabited country. In the thousand acres of the park there were not more than a dozen small dwellings. This country setting suggested that it be treated as a holiday park—a

great roaming ground like Fontainebleau outside Paris, to which people would go out by train and spend a whole day. But calculating on the growth of Chicago, Olmsted predicted that South Park would soon be in the center of a populous and wealthy district. If so, many people would use it for daily exercise and recreation. To be well adapted to such habitual use, he decided, it would need a much greater variety of features and accommodations.

The activities proposed in the Olmsted and Vaux plan were imaginative and varied. Those who wished to swim could do so from the boathouse at the north end of the Jackson Park lagoon. For those driving along the Lakefront, a concourse or meeting-place was laid out near the pier. Next to the concourse the Belvedere restaurant faced the lake on one side and the lagoon on the other. From it a lawn sloped down to the lagoon, where there was a formally planted terrace for concerts. Music was to float out over the water to the Belvedere and to the picnic grounds on the west, where trees planted in glades and groves would form the setting for croquet parties and children's dances. Swings, summer houses and boat landings with sheltered seats overlooked the lagoon.

In Washington Park was a Ramble, a region of broken ground thickly planted with large shrubs, ferns and mosses. Shady paths winding through it led to sequestered seats and arbors. West of the pond a formal mall of trees and fountains was planned as "a con-

Small boats were available for hire on the pond in Washington Park, excavated in the early 1870's, and the Jackson Park lagoon, shown here after 1895. If the 1871 South Park plan had been implemented, boats would be able to travel from Washington Park to the Lake. Courtesy Special Collections, the University of Chicago Library.

venient open-air rendezvous and assembly ground for large picnic parties, and for societies and fraternities, Sunday School and other organizations." Off the Mall opened four square lawns for entertainments and exhibitions which required platforms or stagings.

In Jackson Park Olmsted hoped to have the finest aviary in the world. He planned numerous rushy islands without boat landings to provide isolated coverts and breeding places for birds. He proposed that the Commission stock all birds that would endure the climate including the American swan and other birds of the upper Great Lakes and far West. He suggested that the Commissioners trade the young for exotic birds from the great zoos and private parks of Europe.

There were to be animals in the park as well. In Jackson Park inconspicuous arrangements could be made for "special classes of animals to which the circumstances would be congenial, as bisons, elks, bears; or amphibians, as seals and sea-lions." East of the pond in Washington Park, he laid out a seven-acre paddock for deer. They would look free but in fact be kept from the area where children played by an underwater fence. The grass of the Southopen Ground was to be kept short by sheep and a few cows, "the milk of which may be sold by the glass to visitors as is done in St. James Park in London." (This was another public health measure; city mothers welcomed the opportunity to purchase pure milk for their children.)

Overlooking the Southopen Ground, near the site of the present swimming pools, Olmsted planned a Pavilion: a large refectory building, where meals would be served, and in front of it a large area covered by trellises and surrounded by galleries or roofed promenades. Concerts would be held in front of the pavilion and the audience could walk under the vine-covered trellises and galleries and enjoy ices and coffee at seats and tables to the side. The roof of the gallery toward the Southopen Ground would serve as a grandstand for parades, exhibitions and fireworks displays.

Olmsted arranged for safe activities both day and night in the South Park. In the daytime pleasure grounds or "plaisances" filled with shrubs and winding paths would be open for rambles and picnics. At night these were to be closed, but open "park" areas without shrubbery to hide in would be lighted for walking and athletic activities. Ironically, the Midway, intended to be plaisance scenery, today has the character of open park.

Sheep in the South Park. Courtesy Special Collections, University of Chicago Library.

The festive variety of activities which Olmsted and Vaux proposed for the South Park is remarkable, particularly when measured against the lack of equipment and planned activity in the same parks today. They established activities to draw people to the parks on the assumption that it would be good for them and improve their behavior. Today, perhaps assuming bad public behavior, park administrators have removed a number of the major attractions of the parks of earlier days, including public boating and restaurants.

After the Fire

Five months after Olmsted and Vaux submitted their design to the South Park Commissioners, the Great Fire of 1871 swept the city north of 12th street. Olmsted, who saw the city three weeks later, had renewed faith in its spirit. In a letter to the *Nation* he wrote, "I had partly expected to find a feverish, reckless spirit, and among the less disciplined classes, an unusual current setting towards turbulence, lawlessness, and artificial jollity, such as held in San Francisco for a long time after the great fire there—such as often seizes seamen after a wreck. On the contrary, Chicago is the soberest and most clearheaded city I ever saw." The clearing of the wreckage was proceeding in a driving but well-ordered way. In relief work, the most qualified

private individuals, trained in the Chicago tradition of public service, were coming to the fore. A sense of recovery was already in the air. "How the city is to recover from this blow no one can yet see," wrote Olmsted, "but the difficulty is engaging the study of its best and most conservative minds; and that in some way it will recover, and that it will presently advance even with greater rapidity, but with far firmer steps, than even ever before, those most staggered and cast down by it have not a shadow of a doubt."

The South Park itself was not touched, and yet it suffered from the fire. The Commissioners' office in the Tribune building was destroyed, with all its plans, accounts, contracts and vouchers. A nearly complete assessment roll, which was to assign holders of property adjacent to the park their share of park costs, burned. All work on the park was suspended and all employees except a small police force were discharged. For some months only two contracts were made. All records had to be reconstructed. It was nearly a year later that the Commissioners hired H. W. S. Cleveland, an associate of Olmsted, to carry out the South Park plan. Then they undercut its spirit with one crucial instruction. Cleveland was told to change the design to avoid "extensive alterations of the natural surface." The reason given was economy.

The waterways joining the parks were thus the victims of the fire. Yet the South Park plan could have been executed later in the 1870's; it could be done today. A choice was made not to do so, and was no economy at all. At least Paul Cornell thought so, and said as much to Olmsted. From the beginning, Cornell wrote in 1877, Commissioner L. B. Sidway had wanted to change the Olmsted plan. Until the fire, Cornell and two commissioners had successfully opposed him, but after it, when Potter Palmer and Chauncey Bowen joined the board, Cornell's side was overpowered. Olmsted's "Southopen Parkway" was renamed "Grand Boulevard," and its six rows of trees replaced with two. Its sidewalk and bridle path were destroyed for a thirty-foot wide lawn which cost more to maintain. After Drexel Boulevard was graded according to Olmsted's design, Sidway changed it at a cost of five thousand dollars. He built a botanical garden which had already cost over ten thousand. "In every important change we made in your designs and plans," Cornell wrote, "it has cost us much more than it would to have followed them."

Drexel Boulevard, looking South from Oakwood Boulevard. Olmsted designed its groves, fountains and arbors to "invite rest and contemplation." Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society.

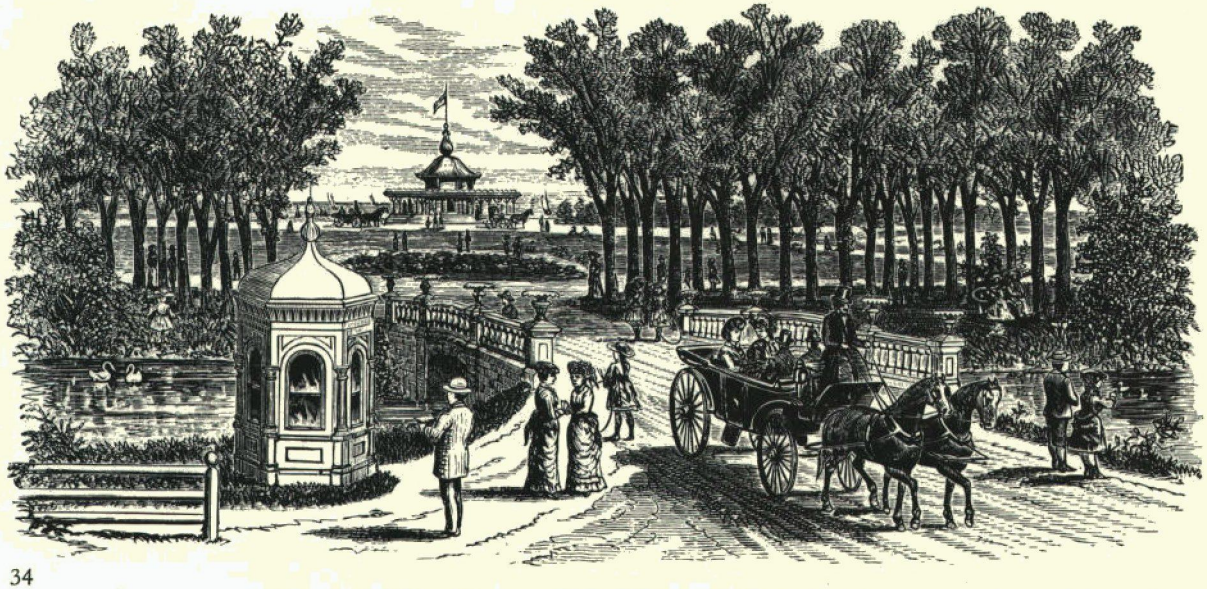
Olmsted lost his battle for the waterways, but he had planned activities for people as well as landscape, and many of these were adopted. The parks were an instant success. By 1874 the northern portion of Washington Park was open to the public. There were boats to row on the pond, and weekly open-air concerts drew large crowds. The promenade along the Jackson Park lakeshore became the institution he predicted. By 1875 most of Washington Park had been improved and four boulevards—Grand, Drexel, Pavilion and Oakwood—were complete. Grand Boulevard attracted fast drivers who whipped past straight rows of trees down a central drive. Drexel Boulevard, patterned on the Avenue de l'Imperatrice in Haussman's Paris, had a central ornamental space a hundred feet wide, where people strolled among shrubbery, fountains and walks. A bronze fountain and statue of Francis Martin Drexel, the banker and philanthropist for whom the boulevard was named, was donated by his sons and placed at the head of the boulevard. Along these boulevards great mansions sprung up, and a drive to South Park became a fashionable outing for the wealthy. Those who lacked private carriages could ride in the horsedrawn phaeton which regularly left the corner of Drexel and Oakwood Boulevards for a thirty-cent tour of the parks.

By the 1890's, thanks to improved public transportation on the

South Side, all classes could visit the Park. Cable car tracks ran along State Street and Cottage Grove Avenue. As early as 1873 H.W. S. Cleveland built a Ramble near Cottage Grove where it could be reached easily by families on foot. By 1893 the carfare had been reduced from fifteen to five cents, and men, women and children on foot were the majority in the Park. People also came by elevated railway, and the Illinois Central Railroad stopped opposite the entrance to Jackson Park. A contemporary observer, Andreas Simon, wrote, "Even the most distant quarters of the city sent large delegations of tenement-house occupants, dwellers in unhealthy, disease-breeding basements, to the shady meadows of the South Parks."

Olmsted believed the environment of the parks could uplift the people and his hopes apparently were coming true. Vandalism was rare, and Simon claimed that the public knew how to prize the noble sycamores, maples, catalpas and other magnificent trees of Washington Park and the boulevards. He wrote about South Park, "Its civilizing and humanizing influence is something wholly uncalculable. The visitors belong to every class and grade of society, and yet every one seems there to be on his good behavior."

At the time Chicago had a far more diverse population than it has now. Over half the people were foreign-born, and tension between nationalities ran high. There was extensive poverty, misery and dis-



The Entrance to Jackson Park, from Andreas, *History of Chicago*, 1886.

ease. The country rocked with bloody labor strikes and seven policemen were killed in the Haymarket riot of 1886. Nevertheless, crowds in these years were not discouraged in the parks. Olmsted had set out a broad policy for treatment of the people: "The grand fact, in short, that they are Christians, loving one another, and not Pagans, fearing one another, should be everywhere manifest in the completeness, and choiceness, and beauty of the means they possess of coming together, and especially of recreating and enjoying them together on common ground, and under common shades . ." The commissioners in the nineteenth century followed his policy and provided every appropriate facility—from pony rides to free equipment for baseball and tennis. The policy worked, apparently without the vandalism, theft and riot which have occupied the thoughts of latter-day park administrators.

Planning a Total Environment: The World's Fair

In the summer of 1890 Olmsted returned to Chicago to design a great world's fair. The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, was an extraordinary undertaking. It capped Chicago's postwar growth and confirmed her position as one of the great cities in the world. Temporarily civic leaders and great professionals joined forces to salute the coun-

The Columbian Exposition under construction, showing staked shoreline of the Wooded Island. Courtesy Chicago Historical Society.

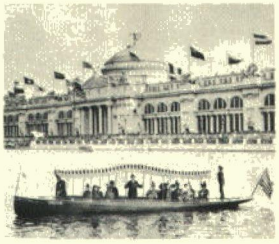
The Court of Honor of the World's Columbian Exposition. The board of the Exposition hired the most noted artists and architects of the day. Daniel Chester French designed the statue of the Republic in the background, Frederick MacMonnies created the Columbian Fountain in the foreground. Architects included McKim, Meade and White, George B. Post, and Louis Sullivan. Daniel Burnham coordinated all efforts as Chief of Construction. From *Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition*, 1893.

try's progress. Despite serious poverty and labor discontent, the Fair caught the popular imagination, and public support was clear. In this atmosphere, Olmsted revived his idea of a Venetian pleasure ground and finally saw it achieved.

His first task was to choose a site, and he adhered to his original belief that the lake was Chicago's outstanding scenic asset. Though there was much agitation for an inland site at elegant Washington or Garfield Park, Olmsted contended that grandeur of architecture should be associated with grandeur in nature. In Chicago the one object of natural grandeur was the lake. Olmsted first chose a lakefront site north of Lincoln Park, but the railroads would not agree to supply it transportation. Jackson Park, well served by trains, became the final choice.

Olmsted immediately removed a major problem of the old South Park site. He ruled out the use of Washington Park for buildings and rejected the stables and race course of the nearby Washington Park Club as the site of a livestock show. He wanted to avoid the straggling and incoherent character of a disjointed site, and would have eliminated the Midway if he could. Space was scarce, however, so the Midway became the site of the less grand features of the fair: the "Streets of Cairo," Libbey's Glass Works, Hagenbeck's Animal Show, exhibits from foreign lands, and the original Ferris Wheel.

The Jackson Park site was still forbidding and bleak. Only the northern tip had been improved; nine-tenths of the site consisted of sandy ridges and swampy vegetation. The water level rose and fell, the subsoil was watersoaked, and the largest trees were only forty feet high. But now progress could be made. Olmsted had the backing of the Exposition Board, and Daniel Burnham, the Chief of Construction, carried out his plans. A deadline spurred them on. The South Park Commissioners had been able to put off major changes to the landscape. The Exposition, though postponed once, had to be ready by the summer of 1893.

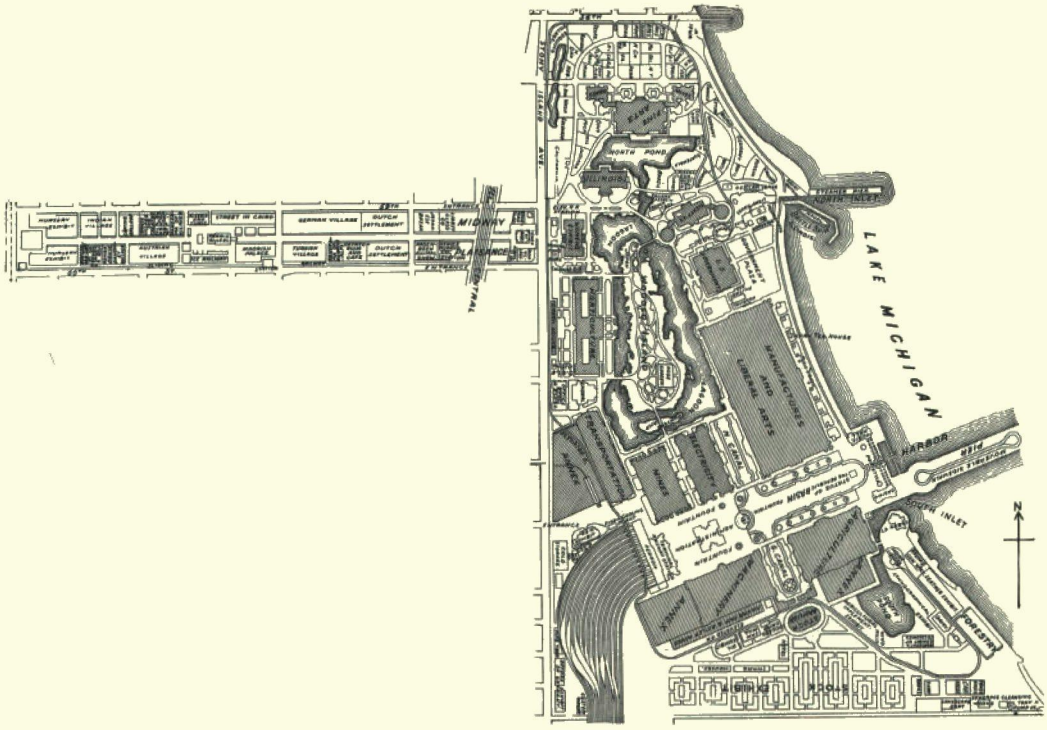


One of the fifty electric-powered boats which carried visitors through the waterways of the Exposition. The awnings, inspired by ones Olmsted had seen in Southern China and the tropics, sheltered passengers from the hot Midwestern sun. From *Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition*, 1893.

When the summer came, the show was ready. Huge exposition buildings in the classical style faced each other across the water of the Court of Honor. The elaborate MacMonnies Fountain splashed, and gondolas and silent electric launches moved across the surface; flocks of waterfowl added a picturesque note. A verdant lagoon and wooded island relieved the formality and whiteness of the buildings. The island, just as artificial as the classical court, was constructed of dredged-up soil, carefully arranged in irregular shorelines and pegged to prevent slipping. The restful effect of its intricate green foliage was the result of parties sent foraging for willows, cat-tails, and pond lilies on the shores of lakes and rivers in Wisconsin and Illinois.

The fair was a total environment, and Olmsted wanted every detail to add to a total festive effect. He demanded that Burnham banish all "screeching steamers" and advertising boats from the lake ("A disgusting nuisance and an injury to the undertaking"). He had fifty silent electric launches built for trips through the Court of Honor, lagoon and canals. He fought Burnham to have them made small and delicate, insisting that their object was not to transport the largest possible number of people but to contribute to the general scenic and poetic effect of the Exposition. He was adamant that they not exceed thirty feet in length and that nothing should be seen above their gunwales "unless it is of a floating or fluttering aspect, such as a streamer on a light staff, or a light low canvas canopy or awning." Anything heavier would clash with the landscape, he claimed, and "suggest a solid, soulless, money-making corporation purpose, rather than a series of light-hearted parties of pleasure."

For the delight of the visitors Olmsted proposed that exotic water



Map of the World's Columbian Exposition, 1893. Olmsted introduced canals, lagoons, and the Court of Honor as a poetic setting for the Exposition buildings.

craft from foreign lands be placed near the bridges. Gondolas were built and equipped in Venice for the Exposition. At Olmsted's suggestion full-sized replicas of Columbus' three ships were brought from Spain.

Olmsted, over 70 in 1893, recognized that people had shortcomings and made plans to offset them at the Exposition. He thought the crowd was too businesslike, going through exhibits as if they were a duty. Therefore he prescribed cheerful incidents to seem like impromptu happenings in the crowd: small moving parties of singers, lemonade peddlers in picturesque dresses, strolling banjo players, foreigners from the Midway in full native costume. A trumpet or French horn player might move from point to point on the Wooded Island. Where people were likely to scribble their names in public places he suggested providing guestbooks. He proposed that inexpensive little plants be sold as mementoes to deter the theft of souvenirs.

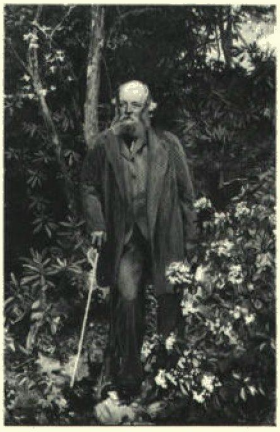
Olmsted was concerned with the total influence of the fair—its ability to delight, control or educate each visitor. Because he planned its overall festive effect, the fair seemed harmonious. The "White City," where classical buildings, romantic landscape and even human

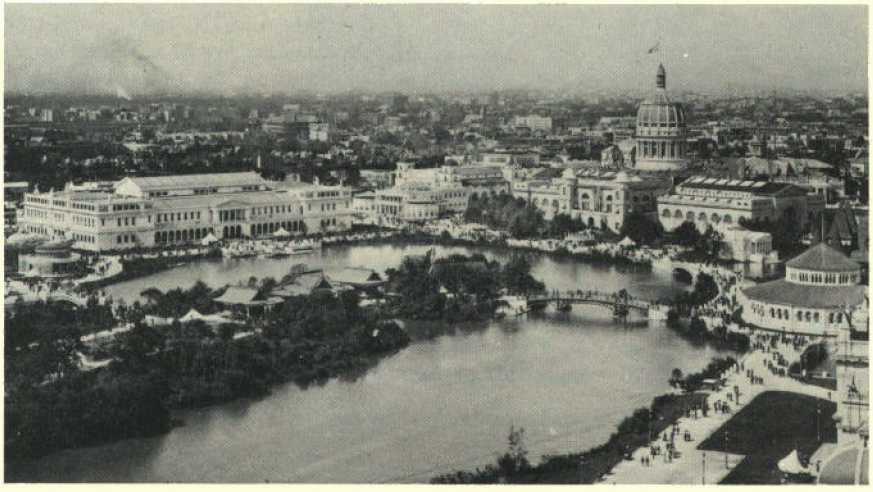
incident had unity, soon caught the imagination of America. It became a model of comprehensive urban planning, an image of what a "City Beautiful" could be.

After the Exposition buildings were dismantled and the Olmsted firm redesigned the site as a park in 1895, the White City still lived on in the minds of Americans. Olmsted died in 1903, but his son F. L. Olmsted, Jr., and stepson John C. Olmsted kept in touch with Daniel Burnham and planning in Chicago. In 1904 Olmsted Brothers designed a series of parks for the Chicago South Park Commissioners: Mark White Square, Marquette Park, Odgen Park, Palmer Park, Russell Square, Sherman Park, Armour Square and Hamilton Park. In 1910 they were asked to design a "parkway in the lake" between Grant and Jackson Parks to implement Daniel Burnham's Chicago Plan of 1909. Grant Park and other jobs followed.

Though the Olmsted firm kept up connections with Chicago well into the twentieth century, Chicago's Olmsted heritage goes beyond the number of parks the family planned. At a time of its formative growth Frederick Law Olmsted Senior provided the city with his vision, and what he saw still applies today. He showed the city the potential for pleasure in its lake, and the popularity of providing rich and varied activities for people to enjoy together in the parks. He thought in terms of the whole metropolitan area, proposing parkways to make the suburbs and parks accessible to all. After a hundred years of industrialization, Chicagoans should look at Olmsted's plans for their city and demand as much today.

Frederick Law Olmsted, by John Singer Sargent, painted while Olmsted was designing the grounds of George W. Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina. Courtesy Biltmore House and Gardens.





View of the Fair looking northwest, with the Wooded Island in the foreground. Olmsted designed the picturesque and meandering shoreline of the lagoon to contrast with the formal rectilinear shores of the canals and Court of Honor. On the island is the Japanese Ho-oden or pavilion, which stimulated the interest of Frank Lloyd Wright and others in Oriental architecture. From *Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition*, 1893.

Notes and Sources

Letters and other unpublished material referred to are in the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers or the Olmsted Associates Papers in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Olmsted the Man

The best biographical account of the whole span of Olmsted's life available to date is the introduction in Charles C. McLaughlin, *Selected Letters of Frederick Law Olmsted*, unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1960. Biographical notes and information on Central Park can be found in Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Theodora Kimball, editors, *Frederick Law Olmsted, Landscape Architect* (New York: 1922, 1928). Many of Olmsted's plans are printed in Julius g. Fabos et al, *Frederick Law Olmsted, Senior: Founder of Landscape Architecture in America* (University of Massachusetts: 1969). *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States* (*New York*, 1856), *A Journey Through Texas* (New York: 1857) and *A Journey in the Back Country* (New York: 1860) were compiled in two volumes as *Journeys and Explorations in the Cotton Kingdom* (London: 1861). For information on the U.S. Sanitary Commission see William Quentin Maxwell, *Lincoln's Fifth Wheel* (New York: 1956). Olmsted's "The Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Trees: A Preliminary Report (1865)" is published with an introductory note by Laura Wood Roper in *Landscape Architecture*, October 1952, 12–25. Olmsted's thoughts on civilization and the frontier condition are taken principally from his unpublished manuscript on American civilization in the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers.

Riverside the Model Suburb

The main sources here are Olmsted, Vaux and Company, *Preliminary Report on the Proposed Suburban Village at Riverside, Near Chicago* (New York: 1868) and the Riverside Improvement Company, *Riverside in 1871* (Chicago: 1871) a promotional brochure with many facts and engravings. Olmsted wrote his wife about Riverside on August 23, 1868. The troubles with Childs are indicated in a number of letters, notably Olmsted to E. Larned, November 10, 1868, Olmsted to E. E. Childs, October 18, 1869, and Olmsted to E. B. McCagg, December 31, 1874. Herbert J. Bassman, editor, *Riverside Then and Now* (Riverside: 1936) provides historical information about the town.

The "Civilized Men" of Chicago Start a Park System

For a lively general view of the Chicago Parks movement and the men behind it, see Lois Wille, *Forever Open, Free and Clear* (Chicago: 1972), Chapter 5, "A City Circled by Parks." The description of Ezra McCagg and his family are in Olmsted's letter to Mr. Field, April 11, 1871. Information about the South Park comes from A. T. Andreas, *History of Chicago*, Volume III (Chicago: 1886) 167–171, and Andreas Simon, editor, *Chicago, the Garden City* (Chicago: 1893), 40–59. Schick, *Chicago and Environs* (Chicago: 1891) describes facilities in the parks and boulevards. Dr. Rauch wrote Olmsted about studying the whole Chicago park system on April 13, 21 and 22, 1869. Information on Lincoln Park is in Lincoln Park Commissioners, *Report of the Commissioners and a History of Lincoln Park* (Chicago: 1899) 20–30. On the West Parks see West Chicago Park Commissioners, *Reports* for 1870, 1871, 1872, including report of Jenney, Schermerhorn and Bogart to the President of the West Chicago Park Commissioners, 1871. W. L. B. Jenney wrote Olmsted on January 24, 1870.

A Water Park in the Prairie

Vaux describes landing the South Park job in letters to Olmsted in October, 1869. The primary source in this section is Olmsted, Vaux and Company, *Report Accompanying Plan for Laying out the South Park* (Chicago: 1871), printed in the Chicago South Park Commission's *Report to the Board of County Commissioners of Cook County*, (Chicago: 1872).

After the Fire

The fire was October 8 and 9, 1871. Olmsted's article "Chicago in Disaster" was datelined November 2, and printed in the *Nation* November 9. The South Park Commission's 1872 *Report* and H. W. S. Cleveland, *Landscape Architect's Report to the Commissioners of the South Park* (Chicago: 1873) explain the changes in park policy after the fire. Cornell wrote Olmsted his version on January 10, 1877. The descriptions of the parks after 1871 are from Andreas' *History of Chicago*, III, 167–71. The quotations from Simon are in *Chicago, the Garden City*, 51 and 52. Olmsted's policy for treatment of the people is in the *Riverside Report*, 27–28.

Planning a Total Environment: The World's Fair

For the deliberations about the site of the Fair see Olmsted, "A Report Upon the Landscape Architecture of the Columbian Exposition to the American Institute of Architects", *The American Architect and Building News*, September 9, 1893, published the same month in *The Inland Architect and News Record*. Further details are in Olmsted's *Report* to Lyman T. Gage, president of the Exposition, August 18, 1890, in the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers. The letters quoted about boats and other details of the Fair are in the same file. The July 15, 1910 letter from the South Park Commissioners requesting a design for a south lake shore drive is from the Olmsted Associates Papers. These papers, largely filed by job number, record the work of the Olmsted firm before and after the death of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. They constitute one of the great untapped sources in the history of city planning in America.