"NATURE AS THE GREAT TEACHER": THE LIFE AND WORK OF LANDSCAPE DESIGNER O.C. SIMONDS

by

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ABSTRACT

Landscape designer Ossian Cole Simonds (1855-1931) studied civil engineering and architecture at the University of Michigan, graduating in 1878. While working at Graceland Cemetery in Chicago with his former professor, William Le Baron Jenney, Simonds met Bryan Lathrop, a civic leader and influential member of the cemetery's board. Lathrop introduced him to landscape gardening: a naturalistic style of design incorporating greenswards surrounded and interspersed with wooded areas, relying on gently curving and irregular borders and roads, and producing a visual effect similar to the landscape paintings popular in the late 1800s. Landscape design suited Simonds so well that he devoted the rest of his life to its practice.

By the turn of the century, Simonds had served as a founder of both the Park and Outdoor Art Association and the American Society of Landscape Architects. He resigned his full-time position at Graceland and established an extremely successful private practice, working for clients in Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Simonds designed two of the first eighteen-hole golf courses in the country and planned more than a dozen parks and hundreds of home grounds throughout the Midwest. He appreciated the appearance of naturally-occurring woodland borders and waterways, and relied heavily on native plants in his designs. This thesis presents a synopsis of his life and major projects.

INTRODUCTION

Ossian Cole Simonds (1855-1931) helped shape the look of midwestern landscapes from 1878 until 1931. Best known for his work at Graceland Cemetery in Chicago, Simonds' guiding belief throughout his career was in the value of creating beautiful landscape paintings out of the actual stuff of nature to provide inspiration and seclusion in human environments. He believed the best way to achieve this was to follow nature with designs that respected the topography and features of a site, that avoided formal and geometric shapes, and that used indigenous plants.

The purpose of this thesis is to present a brief biography of Simonds, to discuss his work, and to list his projects. It seeks to affirm his significance in two areas: the development of landscape architecture as a profession in the United States around the turn of the century, and the establishment of an informal, naturalistic style of landscape design in the Midwest. Despite his relevance to these two areas, however, no biography of Simonds has been written to date. This thesis will provide an initial biography and help confirm his significance, thus filling an important gap in landscape architectural history.

The biographical and project information in this study will also increase understanding of Simonds' importance to the evolution of designed midwestern landscapes and the advance of the profession of landscape architecture. It will also provide a research tool for those interested in the history of landscape architecture and others involved in restoring properties he designed. As more information on Simonds becomes available, this biographical account can be expanded and enhanced,

Simonds' Significance

Simonds is an important figure in the history of American landscape architecture for several reasons. His connections with other late-nineteenth-century practitioners, such as William Le Baron Jenney, Horace W.S. Cleveland, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and Jens Jensen, are helpful in creating a more complete picture of the beginnings of that profession. In this context, his story adds to our knowledge of the design and development of public and private sites at a time in history that has had a lasting influence.

Simonds' plans and actions have had an enduring effect because more often than not he worked with "raw" space--areas that were shaped and molded from the wild or from farm fields. Parks, cemeteries, school grounds, golf courses, and arboretums are seldom completely redesigned once built, although plantings and some design features may deteriorate or be altered without regard to the context of the overall plan.

Judging from available records and from allusions to projects for which no records exist, Simonds was a prolific designer whose work still affects our lives. This contributes to his influence and significance.

O.C. Simonds was a founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). As this organization approaches its one-hundredth anniversary in 1999, a better understanding of the lives and work of its twelve original members is of special interest. He was also a founding member of the American Association of Cemetery Superintendents, and was active in Chicago's most prestigious social clubs. Simonds designed hundreds of public and private grounds--many for fellow club members--and had an international reputation in his heyday. Yet, outside the realm of landscape architectural history, he remains virtually unknown today. Simonds warrants greater recognition--both within and without the landscape design profession--because of the magnitude and quality of his work.

Literature Review

Secondary Sources: Relatively few secondary research sources exist that specifically refer to O.C. Simonds. Mara Gelbloom's 1976 master's paper in the Department of Art History at the University of Chicago, subsequently published in The Prairie School Review as "Ossian Simonds: Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening," is the only major piece devoted entirely to him. It provides admirable background

information and good bibliographic material (although her "Prairie Spirit" thesis is questionable),[1] and is the most comprehensive discussion of Simonds and his work currently available.

Gelbloom's key source of information and inspiration was Wilhelm Miller's University of Illinois Extension Circular, "The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening," published in 1915.[2] Her thesis was predicated on Miller's definition of a "prairie style" of landscape design. Another of Gelbloom's sources, a master's thesis by Robert W. Werle entitled, "A Historical Review and Analysis of the Iowa State University Landscape From 1858 to 1966," devoted a small section to Simonds' involvement with that campus.[3] Werle also accepted and used the "prairie style" as a basic tenet and relied on it in his discussion.

Another thesis dealt with Washington Park in Springfield, Illinois, designed by Simonds just after the turn of the century.[4] Its purpose was to develop recommendations for the park's restoration, rather than to analyze Simonds' work *per se*. Two other unpublished but remarkable pieces deal with specific designs of Simonds. The first, an historical report to the Graceland Cemetery trustees, was prepared by Eifler and Associates.[5] This report documents the landscape history of the cemetery, including the landscape designers who worked there before Simonds, and illustrates Simonds' long-term (fifty-three years) impact on the property. A National

Historic Landmark nomination is now being researched and written by historian Charles Kieffer, on behalf of the Graceland trustees.[6]

The other noteworthy piece is Suzanne Carter Meldman's report on Fort Sheridan, Illinois, for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Meldman's account not only argued for the significance of Simonds' work at the fort but, due to the lack of extant documentation, sought to confirm that Simonds had in fact done the work. Two years after the report was submitted, a letter was discovered in which Simonds mentioned working at the fort, justifying Meldman's persuasive explication.[7]

Relying on Gelbloom's article for their approach to his work, a few published articles mention Simonds when discussing the development of a Midwest style of landscape architecture.[8] Simonds, however, has been receiving more attention in recent years, and new information about his actual pursuits (as opposed to his being a "prairie spirit") has been explored. These include: Diana Balmori's article on "Cranbrook: The Invisible Landscape";[9] Malcolm Cairns' The Landscape Architecture Heritage of Illinois;[10] "Laying the Foundation: Landscape Architecture at the Morton Arboretum," by Scott Mehaffey;[11] and a collaborative piece from the Chicago Historical Society and the Chicago Park District, Prairie in the City: Naturalism in Chicago's Parks, 1870-1940.[12]

Robert Grese's 1994 book, Jens Jensen, Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens, contains several paragraphs that provide

more information on Simonds' career, as does his essay, "Historical Perspectives on Designing with Nature."[13] A forthcoming multi-authored volume on midwestern landscape architects edited by William H. Tishler, FASLA, will include a chapter on O.C. Simonds' "Conservation Ethic" by Julia Sniderman Bachrach. She provides a description of his early years in the profession, and mentions specific Chicago Park District properties with which Simonds was involved. Robert Bruegmann's two-volume comprehensive collection of the works of Holabird and Roche supplies the locations and dates for several more Simonds'-designed sites.[14] (Holabird and Simonds were business partners from 1881 until 1883.)

Primary Sources: The lack of a true manuscript collection for Simonds' records greatly impeded the research for this thesis. Considerable time and effort were spent tracking down leads for possible sources of primary material. Working from original sources is, of course, the accepted approach to writing history and biography. As this research progressed, the "prairie spirit" label attached to Simonds became less viable, requiring an attempt either to confirm or refute this definition of Simonds and his design style.

Relying for the most part on Simonds' own writings, his plans, the physical evidence of his projects, and related correspondence, this thesis consolidates and synthesizes the scattered and limited information to construct the most complete overview of the man's life and work to date. It also

seeks to avoid the unquestioning acceptance of his "prairie spirit" role. It is hoped that this thesis will provide a much-needed biography of an important figure in American landscape architecture that is based on Simonds' actual philosophy and style, and not reflections of him as seen through Miller's "prairie spirit" perception.

O.C. Simonds' Projects

A catalog of Simonds' design projects is included as an appendix is. It is divided according to types of designed sites, including parks, cemeteries, golf courses, private homes and estates, schools, churches, subdivisions, and so forth. Within each category, information is given regarding location, client, date, and, when available, a source of further material for each site. This is intended to provide a structure for accommodating other, as-yet undiscovered, designs of Simonds.

Restoration

Many of the properties planted by Simonds have passed their one-hundred year mark and, because of the relative dearth of existing plans (due to subsequent loss--or never having been drawn at all), restoring or reconstructing these sites can be difficult. A broader understanding of Simonds' philosophy and a familiarity with his design concepts can facilitate restoring them to their original form and spirit. A cursory check of Illinois properties in the National Register of Historic Places yielded at least nine with Simonds'

direct involvement; Rockcliffe Mansion in Missouri is a tenth. There are probably hundreds of others, in various states of repair, that are not included in the NRHP but are worthy of restoring.

Conclusion

O.C. Simonds' contributions to American landscape design in the Midwest, and to the growth of the profession of landscape architecture, are significant in their scope and influence. An in-depth understanding of these two related subjects requires an awareness of this man and his place in history. It is the intent of this thesis to enhance such an understanding.

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Endnotes

1. Mara Gelbloom, "'Ossian Simonds,'" Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening," Prairie School Review, 12, 1 (2nd quarter), 1975, 5-18. (published version)

2. Wilhelm Miller, The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening, Extension Circular No.184 (Urbana: University of Illinois, Department of Horticulture, 1915).

3. Robert William Werle, "A Historical Review and Analysis of the Iowa State University Landscape from 1858 to 1966" (unpublished master's thesis, Iowa State University at Ames, 1966), 11-13. Werle also presented his analysis of Simonds' design style, 52-59.

4. Kirk Himelick,"Washington Park: Meeting Contemporary Demands, Preserving Historic Integrity" (unpublished master's thesis, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1976).

5. Eifler and Associates, "Graceland Cemetery, Historical Report," (unpublished, privately printed, 1992). Courtesy of Jay Womack.

6. Forthcoming, 1998; available from the Illinois State Historic Preservation Officer, or the National Park Service National Historic Landmarks division.

7. Suzanne Carter Meldman, "Fort Sheridan Historic Landscape: Ossian Cole Simonds," (report submitted to the Department of the Army Corps of Engineers, Champaign, Illinois, February, 1995), Morton Arboretum Sterling Morton Library archives (MA). Simonds to the Alumni Office at the University of Michigan, 1927, Simonds family collection of Richard and Robert Simonds (SFC). Richard is O.C.'s grandson, son of Donald.

8. Ervin Zube's "The Advance of Ecology," Landscape Architecture, March/April, 1977, 58-67, is a good example.

9. Diana Balmori, "Cranbrook: The Invisible Landscape," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, 53 (March, 1994), 30-60.

10. Malcolm Cairns, The Landscape Architecture Heritage of Illinois (Muncie, IN: Ball State University, Department of Landscape Architecture, 1993), files of William H. Tishler (WHT).

11. Scott Mehaffey, "Laying the Foundation: Landscape Architecture at the Morton Arboretum, O.C. Simonds and Clarence Godshalk, 1922-1953," Morton Arboretum Quarterly, 31, 3 (Autumn 1995).

12. Prairie in the City: Naturalism in Chicago's Parks, 1870-1940. (Chicago Historical Society, 1991).

13. Robert E. Grese, Jens Jensen: Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994; "Historical Perspectives on Designing with Nature," H. Glenn Hughes and Thomas M. Bonnicker, eds., Restoration '89: The New Management Challenge, Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the Society for Ecological Restoration, Oakland, California, 16-20 January, 1989 (Madison, Wisconsin: Society for Ecological Restoration, 1990), 39-48.

14. Robert Bruegmann, Holabird and Roche, Holabird and Root: An Illustrated Catalog of Works, 2 vols. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc. in cooperation with the Chicago Historical Society, 1991).

CHAPTER 1

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EARLY YEARS (1630-1878)

Ancestors in New England

When Ossian Cole Simonds was born near Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1855, his family had been in America for more than two centuries. Anscestor William Simonds had emigrated from England to Woburn, Massachusetts with his wife, Judith Hayward in 1639.[1] Their descendent, John Simonds, was born in Massachusetts in 1760, and his wife-to-be, Sabra Cole, was born in New York in 1793[2].

Sabra and John Simonds, Ossian Cole's grandparents, moved to Vermont after they married, where they raised a large family. Their son Joel was born in 1813,[3] and during the next several years, the family moved to Genesee in Alexander County, New York, where, on 12 April 1838, Joel married Emily Toby, also from Vermont. Through additional land purchases, the Simonds' family farm expanded from sixty-eight to two-hundred twenty-five acres, including one hundred twenty-five acres that Joel bought in 1842.[4] His older brother Ossian moved away from the family, leaving the responsibility for the farm to Joel, who taught school for ten winters to earn extra income.[5]

In the spring of 1844, Joel's and Emily's second child, Omar, was born; their first had died at birth.[6] Two more children came along, Emma in 1847 and Charlie in 1848.[7] By 1849, Joel's traditional Baptist beliefs had changed to the tenet that immortality was conditional, and soon thereafter he joined "the Adventist cause", and began preaching its doctrines.[8] Emily, his wife, died of dysentery on 25 September, 1851.[9]

The Move to Grand Rapids

Joel sold part of his farm during the spring of 1853 and the following year married Harriet Newell Garfield. With the children from his first marriage, they left western New York state to move to Michigan.[10] Settling in Grand Rapids, Simonds bought eighty acres of farmland from a Mr. Burton. He defended his decision to sell some of his land back east and buy more out west in a letter to his brother Ossian in August 1855. He explained the value of subdivision, asking, "Is not the dividing up the farms, one of the leading influences which cause the rise of property (*sic*)."[11]

The Simonds family were "rather a contented family" in their new surroundings. As Harriet wrote to relatives in New York, ". . . we have none of us been homesick. The children have been much better pleased and satisfied with our home here than I thought they would be."[12] Relatives from New York came for extended visits, easing the transition. Omar and Charlie, their two boys, helped with harvesting and other jobs, and

strawberries and blackberries were abundant that year. The family was "vegetarian strictly," and believed in "No Drugs," and the adults, at least, found it healthful and "delicious living."[13]

Joel and Harriet may have chosen Grand Rapids, Michigan, for their move because like-minded people had already settled in the area. Anne B. Henderson, a farm girl from Allegan County, married Reverend Henry Stephen Chubb, the leader of a vegetarian sect called the Bible Christians, and they had settled in Grand Haven, Michigan--about twenty-five miles west of Grand Rapids--in the early 1850s. It is likely that some of Chubb's followers located there as well.[14]

By 1855, Grand Rapids was a thriving new community with "flouring Mills, Saw Mills, Machine shops [for manufacturing steam engines], Planing Mills, Sash and door factories, Axe factory, Wagon hub factory, [and] Furnaces and Boat Making."[15] Simonds wrote to his brother back east that there were several hundred teams on the plank road each day going to Kalamazoo. In August 1855, the farm had spread to one-hundred fifty acres, and Simonds drew up plans to build a new house for his family and for fencing in his land. His wife was expecting a baby that November and, with three children already and frequent visits from many relatives, they needed more room.

Two railroad companies were laying track through the town, and even though line would go through their property, the Simonds family found the progress exciting. Joel was

pleased with the "very rich soil, dark sand, with some gravel" on his farm on Plaster Creek. The family grew corn, potatoes, and apples as well as the vegetables and berries.[16]

The baby was born on November 11, and named Ossian Cole, after Joel's brother and mother. His sister, Julia, was born family three years later. The Simonds' family real estate holdings were listed as $8,000 in the 1860 Michigan census, with an additional $2,000 in personal property; they were well off by contemporary standards. By then, the household included Joel, forty-seven, a farmer; Harriet, his thirty-four year old wife; children Omar H., sixteen, a farm laborer, Charlie O., twelve, Emma, thirteen, Ossian C., four, and Julia L., one year. Grandparents John and Sabra Simonds, a gardener aged eighty and his sixty-seven year old wife, also lived there.[17]

Adventist Beliefs

Like the Simonds, most of their neighbors had come from New York state. Samuel W. and Harriet E. Garfield bought the adjoining farm. Parents of Charles W. (1848-1938, the Simonds children's cousin), Samuel was probably Harriet Simonds' brother. Other New Englanders settled in the small community of Otsego, less than thirty miles south of the farm, and, in 1860, they began calling themselves Seventh-day Adventists. Among this group were James and Ellen G. White. After experiencing a life-changing vision in June, 1863, Mrs. White became the new religion's prophet and leader.

Many of the precepts that Mrs. White recorded in a sixteen-page manuscript the day after this event were similar to those the Simonds already followed. They forbade consumption of meat, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs. Instead, eating fruit, grains and nuts was advocated along with cleanliness, fresh air, clear water, and sunshine.[18] Already believers, Joel and Harriet became Seventh-Day Adventists. For several few decades, Mrs. White continued writing the rules she believed God was giving her. Chief among these were injunctions to "Get out of the cities into rural districts . . ."[19] She pursued this idea for many years in such pieces as "Manifold Benefits of Active Out-of-Door Life"(1876), "With a Piece of Land and a Comfortable Home"(1894), and "The Refuge of Country Places" (1908).[20] The life of the Simonds family on their farm was in accord with these sentiments.

Simonds' Youth

While growing up, O.C. explored the woods and fields around his family farm, and developed a knowledge of local plants, soil, and waterways. He attended high school in Grand Rapids, graduating in 1874. Emma Cole (1845-1910), a pioneering naturalist, taught there for twenty-six years. Cole had studied botany at Cornell University, travelled extensively in Europe visiting gardens and arboretums, and later worked for the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University. She devoted many years to studying Western Michigan's native flors, publishing Grand Rapids Flora in 1910, and later

donating her herbarium collection to the University of Michigan.[21] No records indicate if Simonds was a student of Cole's, although they were probably acquainted.

By the time O.C. was in high school, Grand Rapids had grown to the boundaries of the Simonds' farm, and Joel sold the land, moving the family into town. He also marketed a patented collapsible fencing system for a few years.[22] The family was affluent enough to enroll O.C. in the civil engineering program at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. To earn money during his college years, Simonds used his drafting skills by making patent drawings for a half-uncle who was in partnership with an attorney.[23] He also worked for three summers as a recorder for the United States Lakes Survey.[24]

John Butler Johnson, a fellow engineering student, was employed by the survey as a full-time assistant. The two worked along the Michigan coast near Saugatuck, and fell in love with the land around Pier Cove, a tiny town built among the sand dues in Allegan County, west of Ganges.[25] They decided to purchase property there, if the opportunity arose and their finances permitted. Johnson continued working in other areas of Michigan and Illinois while Simonds returned to school.

William Le Baron Jenney

Stationed at the U.S. Lake Survey Camp at Summit, in Cook County, Illinois in July 1877, Johnson wrote to Simonds back

in Michigan reporting on his Chicago area adventures. Of particular interest were the activities of Major William Le Baron Jenney (1832-1909), with whom Simonds would be studying architecture in a new program at the University of Michigan's School of Engineering that coming fall.[26] Johnson called on Jenney at his Chicago office one Saturday in mid-July, to find him alone, ". . . apparently there was nothing going on at all." Jenny explained that his "workmen" were out, but Johnson "suspected he hadn't any at all."[27]

The following week, Johnson and two other men from his survey team took the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad to Riverside, the new subdivision designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux. Jenney had designed a hotel and several houses there, including one for himself. Johnson thought it "a very pretty place indeed," a "residence park" with some fairly nice frame houses. The group passed Jenney's home, but did not stop because he had guests with him on the portico. Overall, Johnson was not impressed, telling Simonds, "The enterprise is busted and the place on the decline."[28]

Despite Johnson's unenthusiastic reports about Jenney, Simonds studied architecture with him that year as planned. Graduating with his C.E. in 1878, Simonds moved to Chicago when Jenney returned to full-time practice to work as an assistant in his office.[29]

Jenney was a landscape designer, as well as an architect and engineer. He had studied civil engineering at the Ecole

Centrale des Arts et Manufactures in Paris from 1853 to 1856, where landscape engineering was part of the program. The Bois de Boulogne and Baron von Hausmann's park and boulevard system for Paris were constructed while he was in school and later when he returned to Paris to work as a consultant. During the Civil War, Jenney met Frederick Law Olmsted at the siege of Vicksburg. Jenney was impressed with Olmsted's design for Central Park in New York and, after the war, they began a correspondence that continued for the rest of their lives.[30]

Jenney moved to Chicago at the same time the West Parks' Commission was seeking someone to design a series of parks and boulevards. He and a partner procured the job and, in 1870, Jenney wrote his first report for this board. In addition to creating a park and street plan, he devised a drainage system to augment the sewers, by digging small lakes that functioned as reservoirs. The excavated soil was used to create some variation in the otherwise flat terrain, and Jenney fashioned a landscape plan around these water features.[31]

Early Chicago Cemeteries and Their Designers

Knowing how to create a beautiful park by draining swampy land was a valuable skill in Chicago in the 1870s. Converting the low lying areas surrounding the rapidly growing city to useable, salable real estate enabled developers to build new residential and industrial sections; it also solved the problem of soggy burials. When the city expanded its limits in the 1850s, the old cemetery on North Avenue was closed to new

burials and over the next several years, most of the bodies were removed. Because of the cemetery's sandy soil and high-water table, coffins and corpses occasionally rose to the surface, causing concern for the sanitation and health of Chicago's living citizens.[32] So private companies formed to purchase land far from the new city boundaries, on which to develop sanitary and dry rural cemeteries.

Rosehill Cemetery, one of the first, incorporated in 1859, and was located about seven miles north of Chicago's downtown. Two years later, Graceland Cemetery was chartered, two miles closer to town. William B. Ogden (a future mayor of Chicago), E.H. Sheldon, Dr. S. Sawyer, and artist George P.A. Healy founded and directed the Graceland Cemetery Company early in 1860. Thomas Barbour Bryan, a lawyer and real estate magnate, served as president of the board from its beginning, wanting to make Graceland "the Mount Auburn of the West."[33] Bryan's son Daniel was Graceland's first burial, when his body was moved there from the old City Cemetery.

William Saunders (1822-1900), "the eminent Landscape Gardener of Philadelphia," and Swain Nelson (1829-ca.1912), of Chicago, took charge of the landscape plans.[34] Saunders had emigrated from Scotland in 1848 and set up a landscape gardening company with Thomas Meehan in Philadelphia from 1854-1862, during which time they worked on the design of Laurel Hill, an early rural cemetery near that city. Saunders then accepted the position of superintendent of experimental

gardens at the United States Department of Agriculture, where he remained until his death in 1900.[35] While employed at Laurel Hill, he worked on the initial layout for Rosehill and, later, the Graceland Trustees hired him as a consultant.

Nelson, who had emigrated from Sweden in 1854, started a practice in Chicago in 1856. In 1862, he worked with Saunders designing the original plan for Graceland. Over the next few years, Nelson worked on plans for Union Park and Lincoln Park, and subsequently opened a nursery.[36]

H.W.S. Cleveland (1814-1900), a landscape architect who had worked with Olmsted and Vaux at Prospect Park in Brooklyn, opened an office in Chicago in 1869, and attended to Graceland's design and planting needs for the next few years. Shortly after arriving in that city, Cleveland wrote "The Public Grounds of Chicago: how to give them Character and Expression." He expanded those ideas two years later in "A Few Hints of Landscape Gardening in the West," which included "The Relation of Engineering to Landscape Gardening," by his partner, civil engineer W.M.R. French. While each of these men contributed his own area of expertise to the projects they shared, Cleveland as the designer and French as the engineer, French's essay described the benefits that could be expected if one man was qualified in both areas.[37] (Within a decade, Simonds would be the person to fulfill that role.)

In 1872, the year that the South Parks Commissioners appointed Cleveland as landscape architect, succeeding Olmsted

and Vaux, and he published an essay on "Parks and Boulevards in Cities." He designed many private estates in the Chicago area, and continued his work with cemetery design, writing "A Few Words on the Arrangement of Rural Cemeteries" in 1881. "The Culture and Management of our Native Forests for Development as Timber or Ornamental Wood," printed the following year, expressed his concern with the wasteful forest practices in the United States.[38]

Cleveland stressed the importance of designing with the natural terrain, and taking advantage of natural views. He believed that

> the test of the architectural skill of a designer can only be attained by a careful examination of its [the plan] adaptation to the ground.[39]

He had been hired at Graceland especially for his expertise in working with natural landscape features.[40]

Bryan and Lathrop Families' Influence at Graceland

In 1856, before the inception of Graceland Cemetery, Bryan purchased one thousand acres of land for his personal estte west of Chicago, in an area known as Cottage Hill, later called Elmhurst. Here, he tried his hand at landscape gardening by having several mature elm trees transplanted from the banks of the nearby Des Plaines River--some with trunk diameters as large as eighteen inches. The Prairie Farmer reported that his twenty-one room mansion, "Byrd's Nest," was '"surrounded by thousands of newly planted trees"'.[41] Bryan's sister and her husband Jedediah Lathrop, from

Alexandria, Virginia, came for a visit with their children in 1864, and decided to stay, purchasing twenty-six acres from him. Later, when Bryan's brother-in-law Lathrop had elm trees left over from a planting job in nearby Oak Park, the two men planted them along Cottage Hill Avenue, establishing a precedent for Elmhurst streets.[42]

Lathrop's oldest son, born 6 August 1844, was named Bryan, after his uncle. During the Civil War, young Bryan travelled and studied in Europe, visiting art galleries and enjoying classical music. When he returned to Chicago, he joined his uncle's real estate business and worked with him at the Graceland Cemetery Company.[43] Compared to the rich cultural heritage of Europe, he found America lacking in beauty and refinement--especially in its designed landscapes.[44] This, combined with the influence of his father's and uncle's interest in tree planting, led Bryan Lathrop to develop a fervent interest in landscape gardening, a concern he brought to his work at Graceland.[45]

GRACELAND'S NEIGHBORHOOD

By 1867, the Graceland property in the town of Lake View comprised 275 acres and many of the town residents objected to this growth. They contended that a large cemetery was not an asset to those living around it, and wanted Graceland limited to its original eighty-six acres. The Graceland Cemetery Company published a defense of its position in 1872, arguing that if they did not own this '"low and unsightly"' land, it

would never have become '"anything more picturesque than a cabbage garden.'"[46] The issue was debated in court, and eventually, in 1879, a compromise was agreed upon whereby Graceland Cemetery itself was allowed 125 acres.[47] The other 150 acres north of Sulzer Street (Montrose Avenue) and west of Green Bay Road (Clark Street) would eventually be platted and developed as residential subdivisions, under the direction of Graceland's landscape gardener.[48]

Even so, the cemetery's allotted development was beginning to spread into the soggy soil of the former celery fields. When the trustees hired Jenney as the next landscape designer, they asked him to devise a drainage plan to make the low lying wetlands useable as a burial ground. Jenney developed a scheme similar to the one he had used at the West Parks--a lake acting as a draingage reservoir--and he sent Simonds, his new assistant with an engineering education, to supervise the job.[49]

* * * * * *

Endnotes

1. The National Cyclopedia of American Biography, Vol.XXII (New York: James T. White and Company, 1932), 91.

2. 1860 Michigan census, Paris Township, Kent County. Information in the Simonds Family Collection of Richard and Roberta Simonds (hereafter noted as "SFC.")

3. National Cyclopedia.

4. Benjamin Cole Simonds, Family Record of John Simonds (Batavia, New York: J.F. Hall Printers, 1891), 11; SFC.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Census, 1860.

8. Benjamin Cole Simonds. He may have actually joined the Millerites, a large sect that preceded the Seventh Day Adventists, also preaching that Christ's return (the Advent) was imminent. Named for their leader, William Miller, the religion was popular in New England in the 1840s. David Armstrong and Elizabeth Metzger Armstrong, The Great American Medicine Show (New York: Prentice Hall, 1991), 99-106.

9. Benjamin Cole Simonds.

10. Ibid.

11. Joel A. Simonds to Ossian H. Simonds, 18 August, 1855, The Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library, Winterthur, Delaware.

12. Harriet Garfield Simonds to "Br. Ossian and Family," August 22, 1855, Winterthur.

13. Joel A. Simonds to "Br. Ossian and Family," 19 August, 1855, Winterthur.

14. Gerald Carson, The Cornflake Crusade: From the Pulpit to the Breakfast Table (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1957), 20-22.

15. Ibid.

16. Joel A. Simonds to Ossian H. Simonds, 22 August 1855, Winterthur.

17. Michigan census, 1860.

18. Armstrong.

19. Ellen G. White, Letter 5, 1904 in "Country Living: An Aid to Moral and Social Security" (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, compiled and reprinted 1946), 10.

20. Ibid., 13,16,18.

21. "Making a Difference: Outstanding Women of Grand Rapids" (exhibit at the Grand Rapids Public Library, July, 1997).

22. Miscellaneous receipts, letters, and copyright applications, SFC.

23. Edward A. Renwick, "Recollections" (unpublished and undated paper), SFC.

24. Lieutenant-Colonel C.B. Comstock, Corps of Engineers, "Report upon the Primary Triangulation of the United States Lake Survey" (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1882), 46. I am indebted to Rob Nurre of Acorn Land Resources, Mineral Point, Wisconsin, for the information to pertaining the Lakes Survey.

25. Pier Cove Ravine Trust Association brochure, undated, privately printed, SFC.

26. National Cyclopedia; correspondence in the William Le Baron Jenney papers at the Burnham/Ryerson Library, Art Institute of Chicago, indicate that the architectural program lasted only one year before funding ran out, not two as has been suggested; Theodore Turak, William Le Baron Jenney: A Pioneer of Modern Architecture (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1986), 143.

27. John Butler Johnson to O.C. Simonds, July 15, 1877, SFC.

28. Ibid.

29. National Cyclopedia.

30. Theodore Turak, "William Le Baron Jenney: Pioneer of Chicago's West Parks," Inland Architect (March 1981), 39-45.

31. Ibid.

32. Eifler.

33. A.T. Andreas, The History of Cook County (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1884), 720. Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts is considered America's first rural cemetery, established in 1831.

34. Helen A. Sclair, "The Story of Graceland: A Prairie Landscape," (privately printed history, Trustees of Graceland Cemetery and Crematorium, 1995), 5. Courtesy of Charles D. Kiefer, historian for the Trustees of Graceland Cemetery.

35. Who was Who in America: Historical Volume 1607-1896, courtesy of USDA, National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, MD.

36. Eifler, 36.

37. H.W.S. Cleveland, A Few Hints on Landscape Gardening in the West, with The Relation of Engineering to Landscape Gardening, by W.M.R. French (Chicago: Hazlitt & Reed, Printers, 1871) When Cleveland later relocated to Minneapolis, French, the brother of sculptor Daniel Chester French, remained in Chicago, where he later became the director of the new Art Institute, a position he held unti his death. Like Simonds, French found no contradiction between his engineering background and his role as arbiter of aesthetic taste.

38. Theodora Kimball Hubbard, "H.W.S. Cleveland: An American Pioneer in Landscape Architecture and City Planning," Landscape Architecture Vol.20, No.2 (1930), 92-111.

39. Cleveland, "A Few Hints," 17, 34.

40. Hubbard.

41. Don Russell, "Elmhurst: Trails From Yesterday," (Elmhurst, Illinois: Heritage Committee of the Elmhurst Bicentennial Commission, 1977). Courtesy of Helen Geiger.

42. "Elmhurst! 150 Colorful Years" (Elmhurst, Illinois: Elmhurst Sesquicentennial Planning and Steering Committee, 1986), 4. Courtesy of Helen Geiger.

43. Bruegmann, Vol.1, 55.

44. Bringing Chicago up to European aesthetic standards must have been a common goal by the turn of the century because Henry Fuller gave similar sentiments to Trusedale, the main character in With the Procession, his historical novel about the Gilded Age in Chicago. (New York: Harper Brothers, 1895; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 73.

45. Bryan Lathrop, "A Plea for Landscape Gardening," Journal of the International Garden Club, Vol.II, 1918, 300-301.

46. A Statement of the Condition, Property, and Franchises of the Graceland Cemetery Co., 1872 as quoted in John Vinci, "Graceland: The Nineteenth-Century Garden Cemetery" Chicago History (Summer 1977), 86-98.

47. Andreas.

48. "Managers' Meeting," 7 April 1888, Record Book: Graceland Cemetery Co., 62, Graceland Cemetery archives. I am indebted to Charles Kiefer on behalf of the Trustees of the Graceland Cemetery Improvement Fund for access to this material.

49. "Dean of the Cemetery Field," The American Cemetery, September 1930, 20.

CHAPTER 2

GRACELAND: THE BEGINNING OF A MASTERPIECE (1878-1885)

Simonds at Graceland

Simonds' first assignment at Graceland was to run a line of levels from the cemetery to Lake Michigan to determine if Jenney's plan to develop a reservoir and drainage system would work. Calculations proved that it would, and in May the Board of Managers unanimously resolved

> that the plans made by W.L.B. Jenney for the improvement of the lowlands and of the west portion of the grounds embraced in the new lines of Graceland . . . are hereby accepted.[1]

Simonds supervised the installation of a vitrified pipe running from the lagoon at Graceland to Broadway Avenue, and the construction of a thirty-inch brick sewer from there to Lake Michigan. This was completed by spring of 1879 (the same year the dispute with the town of Lake View was settled) and, after draining the lagoon through their pipe system, Jenney and Simonds discovered they could easily excavate the sand and gravel under the marl of the lagoon bed to create a small lake. The managers authorized the president and treasurer "to accept the lowest responsible bid and make contracts for the excavation of soil according to the plans and specifications of Mr. Jenney . . ."[2] Removing enough of the sand and gravel

to form the lake, Simonds used this material to raise and grade the surrounding areas, much as Jenney had done in the West Parks.[3]

Despite the success of his first project, however, Simonds' new career had a potential drawback--cemeteries could have ghosts. Writing to a fraternity brother named Whipple at the University of Michigan in November 1879, Simonds admitted that "although not very superstitious, I have spent most of the time for the last year in trying to find out whether there really is such a thing as a ghost." He searched for them himself and asked night watchmen about their experiences with the supernatural, but in vain. Simonds finally relaxed his vigilance, but he decided to keep "searching for a returned specimen from the next world and when I am successful expect to take the individual on a lecturing tour."[4]

Lathrop Introduces Simonds to Landscape Gardening

Simonds had worked for Jenney at Graceland for more than a year before he laid to rest his concerns about phantoms rest. Bryan Lathrop had shared his enthusiasm for landscape gardening with him during that time, and the two had gone to Mount Auburn Cemetery near Boston, Spring Grove in Cincinnati, and other cemeteries in Cleveland, Buffalo, New York, and Philadelphia--with Simonds on the watch for ghosts. At Spring Grove, they met its renowned superintendent, Adolph Strauch, who was in a trench showing the workmen how to properly lay drain pipe.[5] Strauch was a Prussian landscape gardener who

had worked at the Royal Botanical Gardens in London, emigrating to America shortly after the Crystal Palace Exposition of 1851.[6] During his tenure at Spring Grove, Strauch refined the rural cemetery concept, minimizing curbing and fencing, and discouraging the use of monuments. He had created an open lawn cemetery, reminiscent of the open expanses of turf punctuated by groups of trees and shrubs found in English parks and in New York's Central Park. Strauch's techniques made a lasting impression on Simonds, as did his use of the term "landscape gardener."[7]

Lathrop introduced his protégé to the concept of landscape gardening as the fine art of creating a landscape painting *in situ* instead of on canvas, and soon Simonds was reading books on landscape painting by English art critic Philip Gilbert Hamerton. In the 1860s, Hamerton became fascinated with the use of imaging devices, favoring plate-glass windows as picture-frames for landscape views. He had strong beliefs regarding the positive emotional value of landscape painting, especially when contrasted with "accurate draughtsmanship" which "if it is applied to landscape, must lead to topography as inevitably as accuracy in writing leads to prose."[8]

In Landscape, published in 1885, Hamerton expressed what was to become a fundamental principle in landscape architecture, that

> the curious truth that very much of the impressiveness of natural scenery depends upon the degree in which mass

> appears to predominate over detail. An extremely detailed view of anything is rarely, if ever impressive.[9]

A decade later, Hamerton wrote Imagination in Landscape Painting, in which he defended the virtue of "perfectly passive enjoyment of natural scenery" as a desirable way of allowing the "the repose of the intellect, a sentiment Olmsted shared with him."[10] Simonds, too, found these to be agreeable ideas.

Lathrop also suggested that Simonds read J.C. Loudon and Humphry Repton, influential English horticulturists and designers. Simonds took to heart both the contents and the title of Repton's 1803 book Landscape Gardening.[11] Loudon's 1843 book, On the Laying Out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries, may well have been the first published discussion linking horticulture, landscape gardening, and burial grounds,[12] and Simonds and Lathrop could have found explicit guidance there. Simonds also eagerly read William Robinson's important contribution to public parks, Parks and Gardens of Paris, and A.J. Downing's articles in The Horticulturist and his Rural Essays.[13]

Simonds began putting these ideas into practice at Graceland, combining them with his pragmatic engineering skills. Perhaps it was his openness to the idea of creating landscape pictures with natural-looking scenery that solidified his relationship with Lathrop. Jenney believed, as did Lathrop, that one found '"in Paris above America . . . not language and manners . . . but appreciation of beauty and

excellence more especially in the fine arts."'[14] But, he adhered to the ideas of French architect/engineer Eugene Viollet-le-Duc, requesting Viollet-le-Duc's book, Discourses on Architecture as a text for his class at the University of Michigan in 1876. Viollet-le-Duc's approach to design was that of an engineer: rational, intellectual, geometric, and precise. The approach preferred at Graceland, while also rational and intellectual, was closer to the craftsman-like approach of John Ruskin,[15] employing local materials in an informal manner. In any case, when Simonds left Jenney's firm to start a partnership with William Holabird in 1880, he took the Graceland account with him.

Partnership with Holabird

Holabird had worked at Jenney's office with Simonds, and when the two set up practice in the Major Block in downtown Chicago, Graceland was their only client. Lathrop commissioned them to design furniture for his office in 1882, and from 1881-83, alterations and buildings at Graceland including a train station and cemetery office on the east side of the property.[16] In the spring of 1882, Martin Roche joined the partnership, and their architectural commissions slowly increased.[17]

Joel and Harriet Simonds moved to Chicago in 1880 to live with their son, O.C.,[18] but he still maintained close ties with friends and relations around Grand Rapids. He especially kept in touch with a young lady named Martha Elnora Rumsey. By

January of 1881 they were engaged, and were married on May 12 of that year.

Simonds had turned over his patent drawing business to Edward Renwick, five years his junior and the son of old family friends. While visiting his home town in the spring of 1882, Simonds suggested that Renwick come to Chicago and work for him at Graceland that summer. He thought his friend did not look well and that being "out of doors all the time . . . will be good for you."[19] Grand Rapids was short on opportunities at the time, and Renwick accepted the offer.

By this time, Simonds had purchased about four acres of land northeast of the cemetery that were originally part of Graceland's holdings, and had built a house that included separate quarters for his parents.[20] Renwick boarded with Harriet and Joel his first summer in Chicago because they lived close to Graceland, where he was working. But differences of opinion caused friction, because O.C.'s father was, as Renwick put it, "an odd Josy."[21] The elder Simonds adhered strictly to a vegetarian diet, which did not suit Renwick's tastes. When O.C. asked Renwick to take "some rather special photographs" of his new house and grounds, Renwick discovered, upon pulling his head out from under the camera's focusing cloth, that Joel had taken out each of the eight "precious twelve by fourteen" exposed plates to look--ruining them all. He also found Joel's lectures on religion irritating.[22] Renwick remembered these incidents more than

forty years after they occurred; one can only speculate as to their effect on the relationship between Joel and his son.

Simonds worked exclusively for Graceland, despite his partnership with Holabird. But this job did not bring money into the office, so he contributed to the partnership's expenses out of his own pocket. When Renwick completed his surveying work at Graceland that fall, Simonds suggested that Renwick fill in for him "at the munificent salary of $6.00 a week, a proposition to which Mr. Holabird agreed,"[23] in lieu of Simonds paying rent. Renwick began working at Holabird, Simonds, and Roche that October. He soon discovered that he did not know enough about architectural rendering and, surprisingly, Joel Simonds, with whom he was still boarding, taught him some basic drawing principles.[24]

With winter coming, Renwick began to dread the mile and a quarter walk from the Simonds' house to the public transportation he took downtown to his new job, and he sought closer quarters. One night he struck up a conversation on the train with A.P. Brink of Brink's Express, and within a few days, he rented a room at the Brink's home in Ravenswood, where he lived for the next few years.[25]

Superintendent, Full-Time

Simonds became so involved with the landscape work at Graceland that all questions about the grounds were now directed only to him. Thus, in 1883, he accepted a full-time position as superintendent of Graceland, and resigned from

Holabird, Simonds, and Roche. He set up an office in Graceland Station, the just-completed frame building designed by his former partners, on the east side of the cemetery--and a short two or three block walk from his home. A daughter, Gertrude Elnora, was born that February--the Simonds' first child.

The lake he helped design for the cemetery was given the name "Willowmere," and shortly after its completion, Simonds began planting its banks to create an idealized naturalistic shore line. By January of 1885, his titles--and duties--at Graceland included superintendent, landscape gardener, engineer, and surveyor. His five-year contract stipulated that he receive a $3,000 per-year salary, on the condition that "Mr. Simonds . . . devote his entire time, during said period of five (5) years, to the interests of the Graceland Cemetery Company."[26] He had already drawn and submitted a plat for the company's proposed subdivision for 106 of its acres. The managers authorized him to use the "plat as a basis for the grading of streets, [and] the planting of trees . . .," before its designation as the official plat.[27]

While all these responsibilities were more than a full-time job, what the board of managers intended by their stipulation that Simonds "devote his entire time . . . to the interests of . . . Graceland . . ." is not clear. For, by 1887, he was designing the landscape and drainage/sewer system for Fort Sheridan on a high and wooded bluff that overlooked

Lake Michigan in Highwood, Illinois, about twenty miles north of Chicago.[28] His friend William Holabird, son of Sheridan's quarter-master general, had been commissioned to design the buildings; presumably he hired Simonds.

Increasing labor unrest in Chicago, culminating in the so-called "Haymarket Riot" in 1887, made some of the wealthier citizens so uneasy that a group of Commercial Club members organized a subscription drive to raise money to buy 600 acres of land to give to the United States government for use as a military base. Club members Adolphus Clay Bartlett, Marshall Field, John Glessner, Charles Hutchinson, and Cyrus McCormick gave generously. Daniel A. Jones, owner of the Highwood property chosen for the fort, asked only $250 an acre, taking a huge loss in lieu of a direct contribution. The mystery of the Graceland Board of Manager's intent in requesting Simonds' full-time devotion to its business resolves itself in light of another connection among the gentlemen from the Commercial Club: they were all Graceland shareholders.[29]

Simonds was familiar with the bluffs and ravines of Chicago's North Shore when he took on the Fort Sheridan job. A few years earlier he had visited a Mr. Millard, another Michigan transplant, at his new home in Highland Park, just south of Highwood. Millard purchased a sizable tract of land with several ravines, on a steep cliff next to the lake. Simonds was so impressed with this natural terrain that he would recall this visit fifty years later.[30] However, the

extent and duration of his involvement with the fort can only be surmised now, because most of the plans and records are lost.

First Published Articles

Simonds' professional growth and expertise continued to expand. He appears to have begun his publishing efforts in 1885 with several articles in The Michigan Horticulturist, a journal of the Horticultural Society of Michigan edited by his cousin and close friend, Charles Garfield. These articles reflected concerns of the time, including rural and urban development, the relationship of health and sanitation to graveyards, and the study of local vegetation. In them, Simonds expressed increasing expertise in three fields. First, he characterized the landscape gardening approach to a project, involving the issues of "taste" and idealized nature Simonds learned from Lathrop, Strauch, and the English writers. Second, he described an engineering approach, based on his university training, and set forth in his suggestions for convenience and practicality in design. And third, he considered the importance of healthy, close-to-nature environments reminiscent of his parents' and Ellen G. White's beliefs, but developed the idea in a broader and secular context. These essays provide a glimpse early in Simonds' professional life of the landscape design principles he employed with remarkable consistency during his fifty-three

year career, even when they were no longer considered fashionable.

In the December 1885 issue, Simonds' "Planting a School Ground" article appeared on the front page. He carefully went through the different considerations necessary for planning pleasant school grounds, using concepts similar to those he would apply at a many kinds of places in years to come. He began by recommending that the school building be placed at the rear of its lot--to keep it as far as possible from the dirt and noise of the street, and to remove from school boys the temptation of bothering passers-by. Simonds advised making the walk to the building "as direct as possible to insure its being used." He was concerned with practical matters and urged that outbuildings be made inconspicuous by placement and planting, "so that timid children may not be deterred from using them by inclement weather or bashfulness." For plants, Simonds recommended transplanting from woodland edges and from along rail fences, to minimize costs. He suggested planting Virginia creeper, bittersweet, wild grape, virgin-bower, and green brier where vines were appropriate. Native shrubs he knew did well included juneberry, witch-hazel, sassafras, red-bunched dogwood, sumach [*sic*], hazel, and huckleberry. Local trees, including maples, elms, lindens, tulip trees, wild cherry, black walnut, and oaks, he found useful and aesthetically pleasing.

In addition to larger woody plants, Simonds encouraged using wild flowers for their color. He listed hepaticas, trillium, violets, and adder-tongues for spring; golden-rod and wild sunflowers for autumn. Hardy perennial plants were more suitable than fancy flower or foliage beds, he noted, because the latter die back in cold weather. He mentioned that it was good to get some plants from nurserymen, although he did not elaborate on this suggestion. Simonds recommended that plants be arranged in as natural a manner as possible, although he was concerned that when using native plants, neither adults or children would show them respect, perhaps picking or mutilating them. People were less apt to do that to cultivated flowers, he maintained, but he hoped his advice would promote understanding and appreciation for "everything 'wild', whether plant, bird, or animal." Simonds had confidence that these suggestions "would have a moral and civilizing influence, and would add greatly to the enjoyment of life, by teaching how to appreciate the common things around us."[31]

The following month, Simonds wrote about just "Twelve Good Native Shrubs," even though he regretted having to exclude many others. He made his selection following the sequence in Gray's Manual of Botany, rather than in order of his own preference. For each entry, he gave a brief description of the plant, followed by his recommendations for its landscape use.[32]

In the April 1886 issue, following an article on the moral question of keeping bees near someone else's grape-vines, came Simonds' next essay, "Rural Cemeteries." In it he expressed his ideas for honoring the dead, and hinted at his childhood experiences with cemeteries--and the source of his earlier concern with ghosts. In the first paragraph, he noted that children can be frightened at night by typical cemeteries, "and no wonder, for the whole thing is hideous in the day time."[33] Simonds went on to say, however, that some cemeteries could serve as models because of the "very good taste . . . shown" by their creators. These places resemble a park more than a burial ground, with "nicely kept lawns and noble trees, interspersed with graceful groups of shrubbery, form[ing] an excellent background for monuments." Gone are the standard chains and fencing around each family plot, creating one flowing lawn. Gone, too, were the five to six foot high headstones "of glaring white marble, causing them to remind one of ghosts . . . ."[34]

Citing Cleveland's Lakeview Cemetery as an excellent example of a properly planned burial ground, he singled out Dr. Warder's lot for special praise. A "lover of nature," Warder planted a scarlet oak, his favorite tree, at the center of his plot. This tree, he said, "would improve with age and be a living monument, while those made of stone would deteriorate." Simonds quoted T.H. Hoskins, another landscape enthusiast, who believed that memorial money was better spent

endowing a worthy institution than on buying a fancy grave marker, letting '"the sweet grass over my grave grow, unvexed by costly marble or granite." Simonds added that if the cost of a monument were reduced to one-tenth of what a person intended to spend on it, and the money invested instead in a larger lot, the cemetery could be made more beautiful with additional trees and shrubs--which would "increase the value of even the most humble lot."[35]

Simonds' list of physical improvements required for a decent cemetery was based on his seven years of experience at Graceland, and aimed at providing the bereaved with comfort and convenience in beautiful surroundings. The list included gravel drives passing not more than 200 feet from any spot in the cemetery, with as easy a grade as possible given the nature of the terrain and the vistas desired. Walks from the drives to family plots were to be grass, so they would not interfere with the overall picture. As with the siting of schools or houses, he advised placing monuments at the rear of the lot, away from the drive. (Despite repeated urging to forego large markers, many wealthy clients insisted on installing them anyway.)

Rather than separating lots with plants in lieu of fences, Simonds suggested that trees and shrubs be planted in groups to seclude monuments; a tree or a boulder, he suggested, would make the best monument of all. He finished this short piece by praising "the late Adolph Strauch, who did

more than any other man to improve public taste with regard to this subject."[36]

The May 1886 edition of The Michigan Horticulturist provided a look at other active members of the society. Professor L.H. Bailey submitted a short article about gardening despite the rigors of Michigan's climate. Also concerned with good taste, he stated "The elements of attraction in landscape gardening are comparatively few and simple." He suggested the judicious use of "a half a dozen kinds of ordinary trees and shrubs" planted in groups as "preferable to a thoughtless mixing of twenty rare and more beautiful kinds." These groupings could disguise any unattractive objects, and provide an attractive view from the windows of the house, a concept gaining in popularity.[37]

Following Bailey's essay came Oliver Wendell Holmes' short piece about the seed and sapling as "A Good Investment." Next was a letter from O.C. Simonds, entitled "Take Home Lessons from the Woods." Crowding several ideas into this short composition, he mentioned the pleasure of studying woods from a train car (an activity he especially loved), the surprise of not being able to purchase red-berried elders from first-class nurseries like Ellwanger and Barry's or Parson's[38], the sick feeling of seeing trees trimmed of their branches twenty feet from the ground, the lack of shrubbery for street planting, and the ornamental value in winter (which he noted is quite

long in the Midwest) of shrubs with colored twigs. He ended his letter honoring nature:

> A great deal can be learned from the woods in regard to planting . . . in groups, . . . employment of vines, and in fact, in regard to every natural feature of which a landscape gardener avails himself. With infinite variety in detail, nature is never stiff, little or undignified in her effects.[39]

Horticulture and Design in Illinois and Iowa

Simonds was, of course, not alone in learning from nature, or in enjoying and using indigenous plants. The 1856-57 Descriptive Catalogue of Fruit and Ornamental Trees from John A. & Charles Kennicott offered 134 varieties of apple tree, 56 varieties of pear, 33 of plum, 13 of cherry, and 15 of peach. Its "Ornamental Department" listed a wide selection of "native trees," including tulip trees, sycamores, willows, maples, and red buds. Curiously, European larch, European mountain ash, and Norway maple were part of this list, while oaks, ashes, elms, hickories, butternuts, thorns, dogwoods, and basswoods were listed elsewhere. Kennicott's also sold hardy ornamental shrubs, vines, and herbaceous perennials. They included instructions for transplanting everything they sold, from the smallest herb to the largest tree. Plants that were unavailable locally or that could not be propagated came from Ellwanger and Barry.[40]

John Kennicott was also a medical doctor, and the editor of the Prairie Farmer, an influential and widely circulated periodical (still published). Besides dealing with agricultural issues such as livestock and crop production, the

magazine carried a regular feature about native Illinois vegetation, called "The Flora of Illinois," written by Dr. George Vasey. A member of the State Natural History Society, Vasey was compiling, with the help of colleagues throughout the state, an exhaustive inventory of each Illinois county's native plants. In his columns, he described in taxonomic order plants belonging to each family found in the state, providing both botanical and common names, a brief description of the plant, and the circumstances under which it grew.[41]

Plant enthusiasts in Iowa started their horticultural society in 1869. At their fourth annual meeting, members were discussing such landscape topics as beautifying their prairie home grounds by planting more trees, laying out walks and roads in "graceful curves," not obstructing "the landscape view," planting flowers and shrubbery, and managing apple orchards in the hostile Iowa climate. While the society's members were interested in Iowa's native flora, J.L. Budd's prize essay on "Prairie Home-Making" expressed their feelings about their prairie and agricultural surroundings. He asked if the word "home" meant

> one of the barren Iowa homes, where the years go on in the endless round of wheat and corn and hog production? Winter after winter closing around with its endless stretch of drifting snow, leafless, treeless, bleak and arctic! . . .But here and there in our travels, like an oasis in the desert, we find a tree-embowered home with its impenetrable wind-breaks, its fruit-tree surroundings, and its evergreens as symmetrical and perfect as in the rocky pastures of our early homes.[42]

In Nebraska, the next state west, Julius Sterling Morton, future United States Secretary of Agriculture and another tree lover, initiated "Arbor Day" in 1872. His family motto became "Plant Trees," and with his son Joy, he visited Harvard's newly-established Arnold Arboretum near Boston in 1876. With Simonds' help, Joy would make their motto a reality fifty years later by establishing an arboretum just west of Chicago.[43]

Simonds' Professional Progress

Eight years after first learning about landscape gardening, Simonds had begun to establish himself as an authority on the subject. Well-situated in his position at Graceland, he was known to many men of wealth and power in Chicago. And, as a good friend and colleague of William Holabird, Simonds was a natural choice to design Fort Sheridan. His cousin Charles Garfield, nine years his senior, was by this time a respected horticulturist and pomologist in Grand Rapids and southwestern Michigan. The two men now had many common professional interests, and much to share with each other. From beginning as a neophyte engineer with Jenney at the age of twenty-two, Simonds had developed into a confident and knowledgeable superintendent and landscape gardener by the age of thirty-one.

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Endnotes

1. "Managers Meeting, Friday, May 9th, 1879," Record Book: Graceland Cemetery Co.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Simonds to "My dear Whipple," 23 November 1879; SFC.

5. "The Dean of the Cemetery Field."

6. Vinci, 90.

7. "Dean of the Cemetery Field."

8. Philip Gilbert Hamerton, "The Chief Influences on My Career," Forum, Vol.28 (December 1894): 421-22, quoted in Marie Czach, "Philip Gilbert Hamerton: Victorian Art Critic" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana, 1985), 156. Hamerton wrote art criticism and commentaries for English and American periodicals from the 1860s on, and his later books recapitulated his view.

9. Hamerton, Landscape (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1885), 15.

10. Hamerton, Imagination in Landscape Painting (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895), 189-90.

11. "Dean of the Cemetery Field."

12. Stanley French, "The Cemetery as a Cultural Institution," in Death in American, ed. and intro. David E. Stannard (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), 87.

13. "The Dean of the Cemetery Field."

14. Jenney to his sister Bertha, 1855, quoted in Turak, Architect, 108.

15. Ibid, 167.

16. Bruegmann, Vol.1, 1-3.

17. Renwick, 29.

18. It is unclear when Simonds began to be called "O.C." instead of "Ossian"; it is possible that he began to prefer this appellation about the time he started working at

Graceland, because of the similarity of his name to the word "ossuary," meaning a "a depository for the bones of the dead." (Author's speculation)

19. Renwick, 24.

20. Simonds and his wife lived in this large but unpretentious home for the next forty years.

21. Ibid., 26.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., 28.

24. Ibid., 32. Renwick's rendering skills improved and he became a partner in Holabird and Roche in 1895.

25. Ibid., 37.

26. "Managers' Meeting, January 16, 1885," Records Book.

27. Ibid.

28. Simonds, Chicago, to W.L. Jenks, Port Huron, MI, 26 September 1928; SFC.

29. Daniel A. Jones' burial place, the one lesser known among this group, was confirmed to the author via telephone by Aki Lew of Graceland, October 1997.

30. Simonds to Charles Garfield, in "Death of Ossian Simonds," Michigan Tradesman, 94 [December 1931]. MA, OCS, Box 1.

31. Simonds, "Planting a School Ground," The Michigan Horticulturist, Vol.1, No.4 (December, 1885), 75-76. The articles in this journal are from the files of William H. Tishler (WHT). Concern for and appreciation of birds would be a continuing theme of Simonds' designs.

32. Ibid., Vol.1, No.6 (February 1886), 171-72.

33. This is included as part of "a letter recently received."

34. Simonds, "Rural Cemeteries," The Michigan Horticulturist, Vol.1, No.8 (April 1886), 266-267.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. The Michigan Horticulturist, Vol.1, No.9 (May 1886), 332.

38. Owned by Samuel Parsons, Sr., father of fellow ASLA founder Samuel Parsons, Jr.

39. Horticulturist (May 1886).

40. 1856-57 Descriptive Catalogue of Fruit and Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Plans, Cultivated and for sale at the Grove Nursery & Garden, West Northfield, Cook Co., Ill. by John A. & Charles Kennicott (Chicago: Democrat Printing, 1856). Collection of The Grove National Historical Landmark, Glenview, Illinois.

41. Dr. George Vasey, "The Flora of Illinois," The Prairie Farmer, Vol.19 and new series Vol.3, 1859.

42. J.L. Budd, "Prairie Home-Making," Annual Report of the Iowa State Horticultural Society for 1873 (Des Moines: R.P. Clarkson, 1874), 179-82.

43. "A Brief History of the Morton Arboretum," brochure (Lisle, IL: The Morton Arboretum, 1996).

CHAPTER 3

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH (1885-1892)

Ravenswood Social Life

Beginning in the mid-1880s, O.C. and Mattie Simonds became very active in the social life of Ravenswood, the town immediately west of Graceland. Lake View and Ravenswood townships had been a big celery growing area when they moved there (including land that became part of the cemetery). There still were many truck farms, and extensive plant nurseries and greenhouses in the vicinity. But these slowly disappeared as the neighborhood developed. One woman recalled her sentiments when Wood's Nursery was sold: "'To transform it into a town seemed sacrilegious.'"[1]

The Simonds joined the Ravenswood Congregational Church, as did their friends the Renwicks. Simonds offered Renwick free use of a lot on his property, suggesting that Renwick build a small house in which to live for a few years, until he saved enough money to buy his own property. Simonds would then reimburse him for the construction cost. Due to financial complications with this arrangement, the Renwicks bought the lot rather than borrowing it. Mrs. Renwick was not pleased with its location, but her husband felt confident

their land would appreciate quickly, because it faced Broadway--one of two major thoroughfares leading downtown. When the Renwicks decided to sell their half-acre lot and cottage and move to Evanston, Edward was delighted that his small piece of land was worth more than the Simonds' three and a half acres.[2]

Adjoining this parcel was the estate of A.P. Brink, the same man Renwick had met on the train one evening in the Fall of 1882.[3] Holabird and Roche designed a new house for the Brink family on this property sometime in the late 1880s; in 1900 they planned a barn for the Simonds and Brink families jointly.[4] In November 1887 the two men hosted a reception for neighbors and friends at Library Hall (later the Ravenswood Historical Society), another Holabaird and Roche design.[5] (Brink's Express later became the Brink's Armored Car Company.[6]) Lawyer (and later judge) George DuPuy and his family lived at Hermitage and Wilson, a few blocks west of the Brinks and Simonds, and became part of their social set; the friendships formed during these years lasted throughout their lives.

Dr. Wallace Calvin Abbott (1858-1921) was another neighbor who became a long-time friend. Born and raised in Vermont, he grew up on a family farm, as did Simonds and many others among this group of men. Abbott studied at the University of Michigan Medical School and helped bring Herbert Rumsey, the second Simonds child, into the world in 1886. Newly married in 1888, he borrowed $1000 to purchase a

drugstore and medical practice in Ravenswood. Abbott became so disgusted with the available medicinals that he set up a small laboratory in his kitchen to experiment with extracting "alkaloids" from plants, from which he manufactured a type of granular pill. Much easier to swallow and assimilate than the liquid remedies then on the market, Abbott's new product was an immediate success. Within a decade, his new business, the Abbott Alkaloidal Company, sold more than $100,00 worth of medicine. Charles Truax, another Ravenswood associate, filled orders for Abbott's "Dosimetric Granules." The firm continued to grow, eventually becoming the mammoth pharmaceutical firm of Abbott Laboratories.[7]

Mattie and O.C. joined with several families in Ravenswood to start the "Ravenswood Club," a social organization that gave local families an opportunity to expand their cultural horizons. Their friends the Brinks, DuPuys, Truaxes, and a dozen other families were also original members; the Abbotts joined a few years later. The club, which met in Holabird and Roche's Library Hall building at Ashland and Wilson Avenues, and the Ravenswood Home College, (another group the Simonds participated in for many years), held lectures by Club members and outside speakers, galas, and coaching parties--one of Simonds' favorite activities. These excursions went north or west into the country-side or south along the lake shore to Hyde Park, past the former Columbian Exposition grounds, requiring a coach large enough to

accommodate a dozen or more people, and pulled by a team of six horses.[8] Even in his spare time, Simonds loved to look at beautiful scenery.

The Simonds' third child, Laura May, was born February, 1888, and died two months before her second birthday. Laura was buried at Graceland, and Mattie Simonds, who had been keeping a daily journal, was unable to make another entry for more than a year.[9] During the next decade, they had three more children: Marshall Garfield, born 24 March 1891; Donald Rumsey, 13 April, 1896; and Robert Ossian, 13 May 1898.

Property in Pier Cove

In spite of their growing families and busy professional lives, neither Simonds or J.B. Johnson, his friend from engineering school and lakes survey days, had forgotten their dream of buying lake shore property at Pier Cove, Michigan. When the two men visited the place again in 1891, the little town had almost disappeared. The railroad had come through farther inland at Fennville, and the town's few remaining businesses moved or closed, causing property values to drop. Johnson and Simonds each bought several acres that year. When Simonds presented their new country place to his wife, she was quite surprised, as he had not mentioned his plans to her. Much to her credit, she managed to accommodate this new venture, even though she had just given birth to Marshall that March.[10]

The Simonds built a Gothic-revival frame home, known as the Orchard House for the apple trees O.C. planted north of it, on a large dune overlooking Lake Michigan. Over the next several years, Simonds accumulated a total of 360 acres, in an el-shaped configuration. The most northern section included beach frontage and a sand-covered bluff. On the east, the long leg of the el extended south, encompassing a pond with an old mill house and wheel, and a winding creek in a ravine. Johnson's land lay between this rectangle and the lake.[11]

During the summer and fall, the families commuted from Pier Cove to Chicago by fruit boat. The lake effect gives southwest Michigan milder winters than most of the Midwest, and with its sandy soil, the area provides an ideal climate for raising peaches, cherries, grapes, and apples. Fruit growing was a mainstay for the local farmers, with Chicago being their primary market. Commercial boats made frequent, regular trips between Chicago and the small port towns of Michigan. Going to Pier Cove, playing in the lake, visiting with the Johnsons, and inviting other families as house guests became part of the Simonds family routine, one which continued for decades after Simonds' death.[12]

Because he so loved his land at Pier Cove, Simonds started a journal in which he wrote the history of the town and his interest in it. He drew illustrations and left a note to say that as he learned more, he would add to the book. The remaining pages became a guest book for visitors to the Cove.

This proved to be so enjoyable that new books were bought as old ones were filled, and this family tradition continued into the 1930s.[13]

Jens Jensen Establishes Himself as a Designer

About the same time Simonds purchased his Pier Cove farm, another designer established a reputation for working with local conditions in a manner similar to his approach. Jens Jensen (1860-1951) had come to the United States from Denmark in the mid-1880s and, after settling in Chicago, became fascinated with the broad prairie landscape and indigenous flora of Illinois. Jensen became superintendent of Chicago's West Parks in 1890, and as his authority at the parks department increased, he began designing with native plants in a style that echoed the grassy plains and wide horizon just beyond the city limits--quite a departure from the French-inspired plans Jenney created there twenty years earlier.[14] He continued to develop and refine this style for the rest of his life, relying more each year on the local geological formations and flora as his source of inspiration.

Professional Organizations

In August 1886, Simonds was elected to membership in the Western Society of Engineers, his first professional organization. Formerly called the Civil Engineers' Club of the Northwest, H.W.S. Cleveland, W.M.R. French, and W.L.B. Jenney were other members from Chicago.[15] While his family and social lives were full, Simonds' need for professional fraternization

was not met by the society. With the growth of the rural cemetery movement in America, and its attendant increase in superintendents--with their unique responsibilities--the time had come to form an organization of cemetery professionals. In 1887, Simonds and twenty other men gathered to inaugurate the American Association of Cemetery Superintendents [AACS]. At age thirty-two, Simonds was the youngest member.[16]

The AACS convened annually. Its third meeting was held in Detroit, and Simonds spoke on the topic "Monuments and Headstones;"[17] at the 1890 AACS convention, he considered, "What trees and shrubs to plant in cemeteries?"[18] Meanwhile, his employer and mentor, Bryan Lathrop, joined with other Chicago Board of Realtors members to press for Chicago as the site for the upcoming Columbian Exposition.[19]

* * * * * *

Endnotes

1. Jennie Van Allen quoted in "Romance of Ravenswood," in A History of Ravenswood, Ravenswood-Lakeview Community Collection.

2. Renwick, 39.

3. Because Renwick had been looking for quarters closer to the train when he moved into the Brinks' home, it is unclear how this solved his problem. Perhaps living in a home that served meat (Renwick was not satisfied with the vegetarian diet at Joel and Harriet Simonds') was reason enough; perhaps living with old family friends had been too confining, especially in light of the elder Simonds' lectures on religion.

4. Bruegmann, Vol.1, 217, 290.

5. Invitation, SFC; A History of Ravenswood.

6. "Dean of the Cemetery Field."

7. Abbott Laboratories, The Abbot Almanac: 100 Years of Commitment to Quality Health Care (Elmsford, NY: The Benjamin Company, 1988), 8 & 15. Courtesy of Miriam Welty, Abbott Laboratories Director of Public Relations.

8. Miscellaneous invitations, notes, and photographs, SFC. One invitation in particular is a hand-water colored lake shore scene, and one photo shows the coach-and-six along the shore, filled to the roof with people.

9. Family history and Martha Simonds' diary, SFC. Mrs. And Mrs. Frank Button are the only other burials on the Simonds family plot; it is unknown whether they returned from Coral Gables, Florida before their deaths, or were brought back to Graceland.

10. Martha Simonds diary, SFC.

11. Map and records, SFC; on-site observations.

12. "Cove Book, Book One," 1895-1905, SFC.

13. Ibid.

14. Robert E. Grese, Jens Jensen, Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

15. Journal of the Civil Engineers' Club of the Northwest, October 8, 1879, i-iii; Journal of the Western Society of Engineers, June 1900, 33.

16. Ernest Stevens Leland and Donald W. Smith, The Pioneers of Cemetery Administration in America (Privately printed: Association of American Cemetery Superintendents, 1941).

17. L.H. Bailey, ed., Annals of Horticulture 1889 (New York: Rural Publishing Co.,1890), 92; WHT.

18. L.H. Bailey, ed., Annals of Horticulture 1890 (New York: Rural Publishing Co., 1891), 152; WHT.

19. Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago: 1871-1893 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1957), 280.

CHAPTER 4
A SPREADING NETWORK OF PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS (1892-1897)

The Columbian Exposition and Olmsted

The Chicago Board of Realtors' efforts paid off: its city would host the Columbian Exposition. Bryan Lathrop served on the Board of Directors and his uncle Thomas Barbour Bryan, who had pleaded Chicago's case before a United States Senate committee, was its vice-president.[1] Despite these high-ranking connections, Simonds himself may not have been involved with the fair. His name does not appear in any of the landscape work documentation for this exposition, not even in the Olmsted Company's scrupulous records.[2] But a brief look at the Olmsteds' work here helps set the stage for later developments in which Simonds would play a role.

Frederick Law Olmsted and Company, from Cambridge, Massachusetts, were the landscape architects to the Columbian Exposition.[3] Working with architect Daniel H. Burnham, the fair's Director of Works, they planned the arrangement of the fair grounds, relying heavily on Harry S. Codman, their representative in Chicago. Olmsted had arranged in February, 1891 for his son Frederick, Jr. ("Rick" to his father) to visit his friend George Glessner, at the family home at 1800 Prairie Avenue.[4] The younger Olmsted stayed in Chicago over

that summer, meeting Burnham, Jenney, Charles L. Hutchinson[5], and Codman, and visiting local nurseries.[6]

The elder Olmsted had worked in Chicago twenty years earlier with his partner Calvert Vaux, first as planners for the new development of Riverside, and then as landscape architects for the South Parks Commission, creating plans for the proposed Jackson and Washington Parks in 1871.[7] Because Chicago suffered a major financial depression shortly thereafter, the Olmsted/Vaux plans were never completely implemented, and the Jackson Park site remained vacant in 1891.

Having been well-acquainted previously with this low, swampy land along the lake shore about seven miles south of the business district, Olmsted was not discouraged by its drawbacks. He devised a lagoon system connecting this area with Lake Michigan, one of the exposition's most prominent and notable features. Olmsted also designed a naturalistic wooded area of several acres, to serve as a counter-point to the neo-classical setting that had been chosen by the directors. While he would have preferred a park-like setting for the entire exposition, Olmsted worked to create an environment that suited the formal, white structures of the fair, explaining that "For large, imposing buildings, the principal approach should nearly always be straight and broad."[8]

Graceland's Crematorium

During the exhibition's planning stage, Simonds and Lathrop had gone to Europe, returning home early in the spring of 1892. Presumably they toured cemeteries, gardens, arboretums, and art galleries, but the only record of the trip comes from Mattie Simonds' February entry in her diary, in which she wrote somewhat plaintively that "O.C. is still in Europe, in England somewhere."[9] When they did return, their boat was quarantined for cholera at New York and, as a director of the upcoming Columbian Exposition, Lathrop worried about the problems a cholera epidemic could cause in Chicago. As the practical-minded president of the Board of Trustees of the Graceland Cemetery Company, he decided a crematorium could quickly and hygienically dispose of contaminated remains. He sent Simonds to investigate the facilities in Detroit and St. Louis, but they did not seem adequate to him. Each cremation took forty-eight hours to complete, causing enough damage to the crematory to require its partial reconstruction. Moreover, it took a cord (128 cubic feet) of wood for each use, and to meet Simonds' pragmatic engineering values, the situation required a more efficient and economical solution.[10]

Simonds pondered other situations requiring enduring and intense heat, and noted factories that had begun using oil for combustion. He decided oil, burning hot and clean, would make a much better fuel than wood for a crematorium. Following Simonds' suggestions, Lathrop set about building just such a

facility and, in 1893, Graceland became the first cemetery with an oil-burning crematorium.[11]

The Scientific View of Death

When the AACS met in St. Louis in 1892, J.B. Johnson gave a talk at their convention on "A More Rational View of Death.".[12] Many of his ideas were reminiscent of Simonds', and the two may have discussed these concepts during vacations in Pier Cove,

> at his summer cottage on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, where for a number of years there has gathered a little community formed of his family and friends and where he was wont to spend his summers in quiet country life . . . "[13]

Johnson's objective was to encourage the funeral profession to take "a more cheerful and rational view of death itself," by thinking of death not just as a necessity but as a friend. He grounded his philosophy in the new scientific theory of human progress through evolution, believing that mortality provided the necessary motivation for life-enhancing thought and activity. Johnson "hoped the day is not far distant when cremation, the only rational disposition of the lifeless body, will be universally adopted in all civilized communities." Like Simonds, he believed the "broken shafts" and "ghastly marbles" of grave yards ought to be replaced by flowers and foliage, "inspiring trees . . . the most restful and inviting landscapes; and in place of iron fences and stone vaults give us glassy waters and shady walks.." If people

insisted on burial instead of cremation, then it should be done

> . . . in spots unobtrusively marked in beautiful parks, where earth and sky, flower and foliage, lawn and lake, birds and butterflies shall each and all bring healing and joy to the crushed and bleeding hearts which will resort thither as a thirsty traveler to rippling waters.[14]

This was the same effect Simonds was working to achieve at Graceland. However, when his father Joel died four days before Christmas in 1892, he was neither cremated nor buried at Graceland--the family buried him at Oak Hill Cemetery in Grand Rapids.[15] Many years later, in the summer of 1903, while vacationing at the family retreat in Pier Cove, J.B. Johnson was killed in a carriage accident. Simonds and a few friends and fellow engineers wrote a tribute to Johnson for the Journal of the Western Society of Engineers, reprinting his speech on "A More Rational View of Death." Johnson left a widow and several children, and they continued to spend summer at Pier Cove.

Related Activities

Landscape design had become a popular topic, and Thomas Hawkes, a Chicago architect, submitted an article to Inland Architect, giving "Hints on the Art of Landscape Gardening," published in 1894.[16] That same year Jens Jensen became the Superintendent of Humboldt Park on Chicago's West Side, a position he held for six years. Simonds served as President of the Association of American Cemetery Superintendents in 1895, and expanded his practice considerably, associating

professionally with Frank Button from his Fort Sheridan days.[17] Going to Quincy, Illinois to plan an expansion for Woodland Cemetery, he also began work on Quincy's parks, taking over where H.W.S. Cleveland had left off.[18] Simonds' former professor and employer, William Le Baron Jenney, designed and built a new home on Bittersweet Place in the new residential area northeast of Graceland Cemetery that Simonds' platted several years earlier.[19]

Golf in Chicago

The Columbian Exposition of 1893 intentionally brought new people and activities to Chicago, but one incidental introduction had as much, if not more, impact as anything else at the fair: the game of golf. The young men on the staff of Sir Henry Wood, England's Commissioner General to the Chicago World's Fair, golfed informally in the parks near the fairgrounds, arousing the curiosity of several Chicagoans. Tradition has it that four Scotsmen had played the first golf in Chicago in 1887 on the very same spot, the lake and sandy soil perhaps reminding them of seaside links back home.[20] Among those watching six years later was Henry Chatfield-Taylor, who convinced his father-in-law, Senator John B. Farwell, to allow him to use part of "Fairlawn," his Lake Forest estate on Chicago's north shore, as a small golf course. Charles Blair MacDonald, already an avid golfer and a friend of Chatfield-Taylor, designed the course. Soon dissatisfied with the few holes available there, MacDonald

convinced several friends to purchase the 200-acre Patrick Farm in Wheaton, a suburb twenty-five miles west of Chicago.[21]

They hired Simonds to design an English landscape park for the new Chicago Golf Club out of the farmland, and converted the farm house to a clubhouse.[22] While McDonald "did a splendid job" designing its playing course--reportedly the first with eighteen-holes in the United States--he planned the holes to run in a clockwise direction hugging the course's perimeter. The members did not enjoy this scheme for long and voted to redo the basic layout within a few years.[23] Simonds' close friend Bryan Lathrop, who lived in nearby Elmhurst, was acquainted with the Club's founders (and later became a member), and probably encouraged Simonds' involvement in his first golf course.

During the early days of the Chicago Golf Club, golf advocate MacDonald went east to play in Newport, Rhode Island with Stanford White--the architect responsible for the classical look of buildings at the Exposition.[24] The two also visited the course at Shinnecock Hills, Southhampton, L.I., the first actual "designed" course (nine holes) in the United States (1891), for which White had designed the clubhouse and Scottish golfer Willie Dunn planned the holes.[25]

This was the beginning of "country club life" and around Chicago, businessmen who sought something to do in the summer found golf club membership more convenient and less expensive than summer vacations.[26] Meadows and prairies surrounded

suburban Chicago, making ideal locations for the new clubs, and commuter trains from the city made travelling to them easy. Fittingly, a nine-hole golf course was built in Jackson Park on the grounds of the exposition, after its buildings were torn down, for professors from the nearby University of Chicago.

Three years after the exposition, its former Director of Works became involved with a new golf club, the second eighteen hole course in the Chicago area. Daniel Burnham, one of the one-hundred original members, received credit for finding the Glen View Golf and Polo Club location, and for convincing Simonds to design its grounds and join the club as a founder. Club records mention that William Caldwell, a Scotsman and professor at Northwestern University in Evanston, suggested the idea of a golf and country club to his friend Hugh R. Wilson, who in turn discussed the notion with a few neighbors in Evanston--among them Burnham--and before long, they were looking for a piece of property to buy.[27]

According to Angus Hibbard, another founding member, the land Burnham located and the club purchased from the John Dewes family was

> on a great rolling tract of farm and woodland, and here, where experts said it was impossible, there was made the rarest, fairest golf course of them all . . . the Glen View Golf and Polo Club, six miles west of Evanston. Beyond the boundaries of the area legally prescribed as too dry for a golf club, Glen View was a venture not alone in sport, but, most of all, in good fellowship."[28]

Soon after the group acquired the land, the State of Illinois issued a "Charter for Glen View Golf and Polo Club" and, on March 29, 1897, professional golfer Richard Leslie immigrated from St. Andrews, Scotland to plan the actual playing course and serve as the first greenkeeper.[29] Architect William Holabird, another original member (and Simonds' former partner), designed the clubhouse and stables complex.[30]

Yet, it was Simonds who helped make the "timeless standards" set for the Glen View Club golf course by its founders a reality.[31] Nearly two decades after the club's inception, Hibbard wrote:

> Names and recollections of these and many more who made Glen View come to me as I write, but one stands out for whom this beauty spot remains a monument and Nature's testimony to his artistic skill. This was O.C. Simonds, the landscape architect who planned Chicago's Lincoln Park and many another in the country, who was one of the founders of Glen View and gave to its planning his very best. Working with officers, architects, and golf experts, Simonds laid out the land, its forest, trees, and vistas, its roads and pathways. He said, "Let us here create a park to serve our pleasure, a thing of beauty; do not destroy it." His word became the law and was obeyed. When Simonds said, "Woodman, spare that tree," the tree remained. Wide lanes were cut through the forest, drained, planted, and transformed into fairways. Trees and shrubs appeared where he said they should be, and Nature responded to this artistic skill and guidance, producing a landscape whose beauty has increased with every year.[32]

Contemporaries who did not belong to the club concurred. Alexis J. Colman, writing for a leisure-time periodical in 1899, remarked:

> The main club to which Evanstonians belong is the Glen View Golf and Polo Club, located on the North Branch . . . Here a club has been established which has won one of the first places in the galaxy of Chicago organizations.

> A forest innocent of an axe had to be cut out or tunneled through to lay out part of the course, and leveling, sodding, and all kinds of landscape work had to be done; but the results of this outlay of money and labor has been one of the most picturesque courses in the country. The club-house is on a knoll in the center of the grounds.[33]

Situated on 200 acres of agreeably varied terrain, the club's site and requirements were ideally suited to Simonds' approach to landscape gardening. Designing the course around the Dewes' seventy-five year old log cabin and old family cemetery, the North Branch of the Chicago River, and the naturally occurring groves of trees, Simonds incorporated the fairways, roads, and walks unobtrusively into the natural surroundings. By taking advantage of the gently rolling terrain, he created "long views" down his gently curving roads, leaving as many trees intact as possible, with openings through woods onto sweeping prospects across the fairways. He situated the clubhouse near the center of the grounds, atop the highest hill, and the club celebrated its grand-opening in June 1898. As Hibbard said, "The land responded to his artistic skill, producing a landscape whose grace and elegance increase each year."

* * * * * *

Endnotes

1. Elmhurst! 150 Colorful Years (Elmhurst, IL: Elmhurst Sesquicentennial Planning and Steering Committee, 1986), 4, Helen Geiger collection.

2. Olmsted Collection, 1891-1893, LOC; Olmsted Client Card File, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

3. The firm named changed to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot in 1893. FLO letters, LOC.

4. John J. Glessner to Olmsted, 21 February 1891, Frederick Law Olmsted Letters, Library of Congress; Glessner also contributed to the purchase of land in Highwood for the construction of Fort Sheridan in the mid-1880s.

5. Hutchinson was another Fort Sheridan sponsor and Graceland investor.

6. Olmsted, Jr. to his father, 23 June 1891; Olmsted to his son, 28 June and 6 July 1891, ibid.

7. Olmsted to Burnham, 22 September 1891, Olmsted Letters, Library of Congress; Olmsted to Codman, 4 November 1891 and subsequent letters, ibid.

8. Olmsted to Phillip Codman, 3 March 1893, ibid.

9. Martha Simonds' diary, SFC.

10. "Dean of the Cemetery Field."

11. Ibid.

12. It is probable that Simonds invited him to speak at the meeting. Johnson and his family had moved to St. Louis in 1883, when he accepted the chair of Civil Engineering at Washington University in that city.

13. O.C. Simonds, C.W. Melcher, T.L. Condron, and J.W. Schaub, "John Butler Johnson: A Memoir," Journal of the Western Society of Engineers (1902), 2-11.

14. Ibid., 11.

15. Simonds family genealogy, SFC.

16. Turak, 19.

17. Book of Chicagoans.

18. Cairns.

19. Turak, 207.

20. Colman, 112.

21. Herbert Warren Wind, The Story of American Golf (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1956), 28-35.

22. Alexis J. Colman, "The Golf Clubs of Chicago," reprinted in Golf: A Turn-of-the Century Treasury, Mel Shapiro, ed. (Seacaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1986), 119.

23. Wind, 28, 33-35.

24. Wind, 38.

25. Wind, 23-25.

26. Colman, 112.

27. The First Hundred Years, Robert L. Snyder, ed. (Glenview, Illinois: privately printed, 1997). The Glen View Club's centennial book.

28. Angus Hibbard, "Golf and the Glen View Club," excerpt from Chapter XXXI: Associations of Choice, n/d, Glen View Club files.

29. Carlyle E. Anderson, "Glen View Club, 1897-1987" (Glenview, Illinois: privately printed brochure, 1987), 5.

30. Bruegmann, Vol.1, 174-75.

31. The First Hundred Years.

32. Hibbard.

33. Colman, 116.

CHAPTER 5

THE FOUNDING OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS (1897-1900)

The Park and Outdoor Art Association

As the popularity of golf clubs expanded, there was also a growing appreciation throughout the country for professionally designed places of recreation. In April, 1897, the City of Louisville Board of Park Commissioners resolved to call

> a convention of Park Commissioners, Park Architects, and Park Engineers of the United States, for the purpose of discussing such matters as appertain to park development, in order that a wider influence may be exerted throughout the country in the line of park work and in proper construction of pleasure grounds for the people.[1]

They received a good response, with thirty-five people attending the meeting, including John C. Olmsted, Warren H. Manning, and Ossian C. Simonds.

Presentations at the first convention of the Park and Outdoor Art (as the members named it) covered a wide range of topics.[2] There were discussions on a city-by-city basis about the number and size of public parks, costs of establishing and maintaining the parks, city population and park cost per capita.[3] Thomas H. Macbride, Park Commissioner from Iowa City, spoke about "Rural Parks in a Prairie State," expressing

his concern that the agricultural landscape required aesthetic consideration.[4] Manning talked about "Park Design and Park Planting," pointing out that

> The character of the native growth will often decide in favor of one piece of land over another . . . a park designer places the greatest importance upon the existing growth upon a piece of land.[5]

Olmsted looked at a bigger context with "The True Purpose of a Large Public Park," stating that public parks were the product of an educated elite, rather than the people at large. The goal of parks was

> to provide for the dwellers in cities convenient opportunity to enjoy beautiful natural scenery and to obtain occasional relief from the nervous strain due to the excessive artificiality of city life,

as his uncle Frederick Law Olmsted had been suggesting for decades.[6]

Several people had written to the Louisville Parks Commission the previous winter in response to a request concerning the need for "an association of those interested in outdoor art." Before his untimely death in March, 1897, landscape architect Charles W. Eliot of Cambridge, Massachusetts, wrote that he favored an organization that could encompass everyone interested in the subject, not just professionals.[7] J.C. Olmsted believed that it wasn't yet time to form a professional association, thus a "more comprehensive society" was in order. Mrs. Marianna Griswold Van Rensselaer, architecture critic and Olmsted enthusiast, also thought that

such an alliance ought to include both professional and amateur members.[8]

H.W.S. Cleveland was on the other side of the fence, writing that his preference was to "allow none but strictly professional men to become members," presaging the formation of another group two years later. Liberty Hyde Bailey, Professor of Botany and Horticulture at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York (born and raised in Michigan), and Charles W. Garfield, author and horticulturist in Grand Rapids, Michigan, both wrote that the main membership and management of such a group belonged with "bona fide landscape gardeners," and those who taught or wrote about the subject should be included within a separate membership category.[9]

Landscape gardener Simonds, along with Professor William Trelease, Director of the Missouri Botanical Gardens in St. Louis, were concerned with ethical considerations. They saw the most important membership restriction as being the exclusion of those who profited from the sale of materials, especially plants. Simonds was perfectly satisfied to include professional designers, teachers, editors, writers, and

> patrons of the profession who are in a position to and who do influence public taste in the right direction, and by superintendents of public grounds whose income is derived from a salary.[10]

During the conference's concluding session, Simonds urged that, while the Park and Outdoor Art Association was now functioning, it was important to carefully and thoughtfully tend to its development. Three committees were established to

guide it: executive, publication, and constitution and by-laws. Committee membership included those not attending the May meeting. Manning served on all three, and Olmsted, Van Rensselaer, Bailey, Garfield, Simonds, and Charles Sprague Sargent, Arnold Arboretum director, drafted the constitution and by-laws.[11]

"The Landscape-gardener and his work"

Sargent was also publishing the periodical Garden and Forest during the 1890s, and in its '97 issue, he reprinted portions Simonds' essay from Park and Cemetery.[12] Only two columns long, it expressed succinctly the major principles on which Simonds based his approach to landscape gardening. Gleaned from his nearly twenty years of experience, these ideas were destined to change very little over the next thirty-four years.

Simonds explained his reasons for referring to himself a "landscape-gardener." "Landscape-engineer," he thought, brought to mind images of "scars along mountain sides, of the destruction of beautiful scenery along river banks, of the changing of watercourses into sewers . . ." (Nonetheless, he remained active in the Western Society of Engineers!) "Landscape-architect," even though used by some of the "foremost landscape-gardeners in this country," conjured up "summerhouses, pavilions, balustrades, fences, hedges and things with stiff and formal lines." For Simonds, the term "landscape-gardener" was the appropriate one. He used the

word "landscape" in the sense he had learned from Philip Gilbert Hamerton, signifying "a consistent picture." "Gardener" meant rather simplistically one who uses the "materials . . . found in a garden."[13]

Simonds suggested the written works on landscape-gardening of Humphry Repton, John Claudius Loudon, Andrew Jackson Downing, Edward Kemp, William Robinson, Frederick Law Olmsted, Samuel Parsons, and Mrs. Van Rensselaer. He credited the latter with coining the term "Art-Out-of-Doors", the name used that same year for the new association begun in Louisville,[14] and he agreed that his profession ranked among the fine arts.

The rest of the article explained differences between what an engineer or a horticulturist might do compared with the art of landscape gardening. Simonds made it clear that while the landscape-gardener needed to know soils, drainage, road construction, architecture, botany, horticulture, climate, and the "social habits of the people" who would use the locale, he also must be able to arrange the entire construction in a pleasing manner, and provide scenic vistas. He needed to be able to plan for an ever-changing work of art that would grow and fluctuate with time. His engineering skills had to encompass not only the materials and conditions with which he worked, but also the convenience, comfort, and safety of the humans for whom the project was planned.

As an artist, the landscape-gardener needed to know how to plan for colors at different seasons and varying heights. Simonds thought it best if the designer inspected his work as frequently as possible to make adjustments as required to achieve the landscape pictures he had planned. He had just such opportunities to guide the picture's development at many of his projects over the years, with Graceland Cemetery evolving into his long-term masterpiece.

"Residence Streets"

Continuing his affiliation with the Michigan Horticultural Society, Simonds wrote a comprehensive guide to "Residence Streets" for its Annual Report for 1898. In it, he examined the engineering features to be considered, including grade, drainage, location, intersections, and width of roads. Concurrent with these practical considerations, Simonds discussed the aesthetics of streets. A slight curve was more attractive to him than a straight road, but not to be used arbitrarily. Curves could be used to lessen the grade, to preserve a tree, or to offer a view. He offered specifics about many details--for example, he suggested that the width of roads without street car lines ought to occur in multiples of eight feet. If the road was to curve, it ought to do so "by a long gentle curve rather than a short turn." Instead of justifying this with pragmatic human or engineering considerations, Simonds said,

> We might imagine that the tree to be saved had some feeling of modesty, and so begin to turn long before

> reaching it, and thus relieve it of any embarassment [*sic*] it might feel from occupying too prominent a position or appearing to be in the way."[15]

A New Affiliation with Graceland and New Assignments

The next year brought a major change: Simonds resigned from Graceland's superintendency, and became its consulting landscape gardener and a member of its board of managers.[16] This gave him the freedom and flexibility needed to pursue a private design practice. One of his first projects after resigning from Graceland was to plan another cemetery. His "Planting Plan for Seeley Cemetery, La Crew, Iowa, 1899" looked like Graceland in miniature. The list of plants included many of his favorites: Norway and Schwedler's maples, elms, willows, crab apple, common and Thunberg's barberries, honeysuckle, snowberry, Indian currant, rosa rugosa, forsythia, and honey locust. The lawn areas on either side of the entrance drive and gate were delineated with stone curbing, a highly unusual feature in a Simonds' design.[17]

The cemetery was located near Farmington, in the southeastern corner of the state, not in the vicinity of any other properties known to have been designed by him, at least not by 1899. One possible link for the commission was Simonds' aunt. His father's sister, Patience, had married Hiram Selden Hunn in New York state in 1851, and moved west, settling in Des Moines, Iowa. From time to time, Simonds would stop to visit them when he was travelling in the area.[18] Farmington is located approximately 125 miles southeast of Des Moines, and

both places are situated on the Des Moines River. However it came about that the Sharon Presbyterian Church retained Simonds to design their small cemetery, this was one of the few truly rural cemeteries for which his involvement is documented.

That spring, he made a topographical survey and designed an "ornamental plat" for Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin. While he was in town, the city fathers commissioned him for a comparable project for their public parks. By the fall of 1899, the city had already implemented Simonds' recommendations and enacted an ordinance to prevent "the beating or cleaning of carpets on all city park land and other public grounds," a concern that even the far-sighted Park and Outdoor Art Association had not thought to address.[19]

American Society of Landscape Architects

Leaving his full-time position at Graceland also enabled Simonds to change his professional status from cemetery superintendent to landscape-gardener. On 4 January 1899, he met with eleven other interested individuals in Samuel Parsons' New York office, and together they established the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).[20] The group included Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and his cousin/step-brother John Charles; Downing Vaux, the son of Olmsted's partner, Calvert; Misses Elizabeth Bullard and Beatrix Jones; Nathan F. Barrett, Daniel W. Langton, Charles N. Lowrie, George F. Pentecost, and

Parsons from New York; Warren H. Manning, formerly with the Olmsted Company; and Simonds from Chicago.[21]

The ad hoc constitution committee of 1899 was manned by Parsons, J.C. Olmsted, Manning, Vaux, and Simonds; Simonds also served on the executive committee from 1899 until 1907. He managed to attend annual meetings in New York regularly for the first few years. In April and March of 1902, the ASLA held its First Annual Exhibition. Miss Jones displayed a plan, an isometric drawing, and a perspective sketch for the grounds of Anson Phelps Stokes, Esq., of Darien Connecticut. The Olmsted Brothers brought topographical maps, plans, and planting plans for three clients.

Among the exhibiting members, only Simonds' listing in the catalog did not specify the location or client for his "Plans of a subdivision. Two Plans of Drives, with Photographs of same."[22] This tendency to use anonymous illustrations in his writing remained throughout his career. He attended a monthly meeting in February, 1907, at which the Committee on Seal reported on its progress in designing a emblem for the society and Simonds gave a talk called "Western Notes." Illustrating his presentation with photographs, he discussed country houses and their landscape design in the Chicago area, and looked briefly at solutions for smaller city lots. He discussed practical matters in road and walk construction, ending his talk with his favorite themes: designing to create landscape

pictures and teaching an appreciation of aesthetics to clients.[23]

Simonds' two employees joined the ASLA in 1902 as junior members. Frank Button had worked with Simonds as an engineer on the Fort Sheridan project in the late 1880s and early 90s. His name was on the company letterhead until about 1916, when he moved to Coral Gables, Florida and went into landscape design on his own. The other man, Svend Lollesgaard, was on Simonds' staff until at least 1913, and more is not known about him.[24]

Club Memberships

Over the next decade, Simonds joined several other professional organizations, including the American Forestry Association, American Civic Association (with many others from the Park and Outdoor Art Association), Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Ethical Culture Society. He also became an active participant in Chicago's new mens' clubs--the Cliff Dwellers, University, and City clubs, making new business connections and gaining new clients.[25]

The House Beautiful

Simonds became nationally known by the end of the century. He wrote two different series of articles for The House Beautiful, a magazine dedicated to improving the aesthetic taste of American women. The first, entitled "Home Grounds," presented Simonds' advice for choosing a site, practical guidelines for placing walks and drives (reminiscent

of the "Residence Streets" advice), and suggestions for plants providing winter bird food.[26] He promoted his cardinal design principle, based on the landscape painting concept of using the sky as a canvas on which to place trees, shrubs, grass, water, and, if need be, buildings and walks.

The next sequence of articles Simonds (or the editor, perhaps) called more grandly "The Surroundings of a Country House." They touched briefly on unspecified Chicago area properties, and discussed general ideas for beautifying larger estates. In the October 1899 issue of House Beautiful, Simonds took pains to refute a piece on "Formal Gardens" in a recent (but unnamed) magazine. Among other comments, its author claimed that:

> Deception is a primary object of the landscape gardener and thus to get variety and deceive the eye into supposing that the garden is larger than it is, the paths are made to wind about in all directions, and the lawns are not to be left in broad expanse, but dotted about with pampas grasses, foreign shrubs, or anything else that will break up the surface.[27]

Simonds responded "Not at all" to these accusations. Instead, he believed his objective was to create beautiful scenery, sometimes by obscuring ugly sights. He ended the essay by saying:

> The landscape gardener seeks first to appreciate the natural beauty of a place, and then makes the most of these features in his design. He has a reason for everything, even though it may only be that "it will look well."[28]

Simonds wrote a few more for this series, the last one published in August 1900. Interestingly, the three

illustrations accompanying his article in the June issue that year, entitled "Lawns and How to Grow Them," show only formal gardens with tightly clipped shrubs and hedges, geometrically shaped flower beds, and walks criss-crossing the yard for no practical purpose. The article makes no reference to the pictures.[29] Because some readers could have found his lack of appreciation for formal design offensive, the magazine's editors may have been attempting to mitigate the issue. This is worth noting here for two reasons. First, while Simonds himself did not like formal design, he very seldom criticized it in his writings, preferring to not address the subject at all. He accommodated formal features in his clients' designs when they so desired. Second, the formal/informal dichotomy turns up repeatedly throughout the rest of his career.

International Recognition

Simonds and Graceland Cemetery achieved an international reputation in 1900, when the Paris Exposition awarded Graceland Cemetery its Silver Medal for "the best sets of twelve views in cemeteries of any country." Spring Grove in Cincinnati, Graceland's--and Simonds'--fundamental inspiration, received the Gold Medal.[30] His new private practice was an immediate success, and several important commissions originated in 1900. Simonds planned the home grounds for Lyman Bement in Indianapolis and an estate for a McCormick daughter in Huntsville, Alabama.[31] He designed a small park for the City of Kenosha, Wisconsin, to surround their new

public library. Kenosha citizen Zalmon Simmons donated the entire project--the land, building, and architects' fees. He hired Daniel Burnham to plan the library, and Burnham's firm came up with a smaller version of the neo-classical structures from the World's Fair seven years before. Undaunted, Simonds drew up a landscape park with gently curving walks and masses of shrubs and trees encompassing the square building.[32] To date, this is the only known Burnham/Simonds collaboration, and nothing further is known about their working relationship, if indeed one existed at all.

* * * * *

Endnotes

1. "First Report of the Park and Outdoor Art Association," (Louisville, Kentucky, 1897), 5.

2. To this group, "outdoor art" implied an idea similar to Simonds' concept of creating landscape "paintings" out of the actual environment; its use of this term did not refer to sculpture or other art works outdoors instead of indoors.

3. "First Report," 8-9.

4. Ibid., 37-41.

5. Ibid., 50-54.

6. Ibid., 11-19.

7. "First Report," 68.

8. Ibid., 70.

9. Ibid., 70-71, 74-75.

10. Ibid., 72.

11. Ibid, 4.

12. Simonds, "The Landscape-gardener and his Work," Garden and Forest; A Journal of Horticulture, Landscape Art and Forestry, Vol.X (21 July 1897), 282-83.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Simonds, "Resident Streets," Annual Report for 1898 of the Michigan Horticultural Society, 3-11, SFC.

16. Leland, no page number.

17. Nomination form, National Register of Historic Places, Seeley Cemetery, La Crew, Iowa, Section 7, Pages 8, 13, 16. Prepared by W.C. Page, WHT.

18. Simonds family genealogy and miscellaneous notes, SFC.

19. Richard P. Hartung, Michael Gorecki, and David Preece, "Intensive Survey Report, Historic Resources of the City of Beloit, Wisconsin," Department of Community Development, City

of Beloit, 1984, WHT.

20. Simonds' opinion on the society's name is unknown.

21. Harold A. Caparn, James Sturgis Pray, and Downing Vaux, eds., Transactions of the American Society of Landscape Architects From its inception in 1899 to the end of 1908 (New York: American Society of Landscape Architects, 1926).

22. Ibid., 9.

23. Ibid., 91.

24. Transactions of the ASLA, 7; National Cyclopedia.

25. National Cyclopedia.

26. He mentioned only three specifically: barberry, bittersweet, and buckthorn. Buckthorn had not become the ecological problem a century ago that it is today; while barberry also "escapes" from cultivated areas into natural areas, it is not as invasive.

27. Quoted in Simonds, "The Surroundings of a Country House," The House Beautiful, Vol.VI, No.5 (October 1899), 227.

28. Ibid., 232.

29. Simonds, "Lawns and How to Grow Them," The House Beautiful, Vol.VII, No.7 (June 1900).

30. Photocopy of announcement with photograph of both sides of the medal, SFC.

31. Blueprints, MA.

32. Original plan and recently written history courtesy of Merike Phillips, Kenosha.

CHAPTER 6

IN DEMAND AROUND THE MIDWEST (1899-1903)

Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association

The Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association (MPPDA) contacted Simonds in August of 1899 to ask him to "look over the proposed Tenney Park for two days and to prepare preliminary plans the improvement thereof."[1] Hired on a day-by-day basis, Simonds worked with the MPPDA for several years. There is no record documenting its introduction to Simonds. However, he may already have been coming to Madison to visit relatives and friends. Martha, one of his father's sisters, had married in New York and moved west, as had Simonds' aunt Patience in Des Moines. She and her husband, Samuel Allen Warner, settled in Windsor, Dane County, Wisconsin, just north of Madison, to care for their grandchildren when their daughter died in the early 1860s. Other Warner children moved to the Madison area, and became prominent in business and politics.[2] Another incentive for Simonds to visit Madison came in 1899, when his close friend J. B. Johnson accepted the departmental chairmanship in engineering at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and moved there from St. Louis with his family. Given these connections, it is easy to imagine

Simonds becoming acquainted with John Olin, a moving force behind the MPPDA.

His first project in Madison was the development of Tenney Park by converting a marsh to a lagoon and planting the resulting dry ground with grass, trees, and shrubs.[3] The park was located at the southeast corner of Lake Mendota, and its east boundary was the Yahara River, which flowed south into Lake Monona. Simonds designed plantings and bridges over the river between the two lakes in 1903.[4] That same year Simonds completed his work for the Madison General Hospital Association, advising on building placement and grading. He also worked on plans for Vilas and Brittingham Parks, and laid out the scenic and wooded Lake Mendota Drive that wound its way up and down hills just west of the university, managing to save the "quarry and ridge retained " to make the roadside scenery "far more interesting than [would] a uniformly sloping grade."[5]

The MPPDA work involved some of Simonds' favorite terrain features. Bluffs and ravines, lakes and rivers, winding roads--he must have thoroughly enjoyed his days in Madison. He returned several times beginning in 1911 to work on at least four subdivisions.

The MPPDA was so well organized and so successful in achieving its goals that within a few years its Annual Report was in demand all across the country, where other cities and towns sought to establish park systems. Its efforts came at

the same time the Park and Outdoor Art Association, which promoted similar ideals, merged with the American League for Civic Improvement to form the American Civic Association.[6] Warren Manning, F.L. Olmsted, Jr., and O.C. Simonds served as vice-presidents; Charles Mulford Robinson of Rochester, New York, was secretary. G.A. Parker, the group's vice-president of its Parks Department, asked Olin for a copy of the MPPDA Annual Report in 1904.[7] Robinson was "exceedingly interested" in the Report and in the association's pamphlet, "Madison Parks as a Municipal Investment." [8] Victor Lawson, publisher of the Chicago Record newspaper, asked for a copy of the by-laws in 1901, as did the Manning Brothers of Boston.[9]

Illinois citizens were interested in the same issues. E.J. James, President of the University of Illinois was Chairman of the Illinois Outdoor Improvement Association, and A.P. Wyman, also from the university, its secretary. Wyman wrote to Olin in the fall of 1909 inviting him to speak to the IOIA. Unable to do so, Olin suggested they invite Charles Brown, the MPPDA's secretary and photographer.[10] Simonds may have been active with the Illinois organization as well.

Charles Garfield's Efforts in Michigan

Simonds' home town of Grand Rapids had its Park and Boulevard Association, and his cousin Charles Garfield, now president of the Grand Rapids Savings Bank, received a copy of the MPPDA's annual report each year.[11] Garfield and two other GRPBA members, the president and vice-president of the

National City Bank of Grand Rapids, met with Olin and Simonds in Madison in July of 1904 so the men from Michigan could personally tour the parks.[12] Garfield, however, was more heavily involved with the Michigan Forestry Commission, of which he was president. He estimated that about one-third of that state had been burned or cut over, and was now "an unproductive waste area." The commission was fighting for a permanent Forest Reserve of six million acres, to protect, among other things,

> the unparalleled beauty of our state; the availability of our harbors; the safety of soil from erosion; the even flow of our streams; and our commercial fruit growing."[13]

By 1909, they had at least succeeded in establishing a Board of Park and Cemetery Commissioners for Grand Rapids.[14]

Parks and Engineers

The June edition of the Journal of the Western Society of Engineers carried Simonds' written discussion of an article by A.C. Schrader, a park engineer. Schrader considered parks and boulevards from an engineering perspective, and Simonds used the opportunity to express the virtues of the softer discipline of landscape gardening.

> The true use of a park is in serving as a place of rest and recreation . . . [offering] a certain measure of seclusion while breathing pure air, feasting one's eyes on the fresh green foliage, taking in the varied scenery, and perhaps listening to the songs of birds is the real reason for its existence.[15]

Rather than criticize Schrader, Simonds proposed additions to his ideas. He concluded by giving his appreciation for "men in control of parks who occupy their positions on account of

their knowledge and experience and of the love they have for their work," and by expressing his pleasure that the Western Society of Engineers was interested in the topic of parks and boulevards.

Rockcliffe Mansion

Across the Mississippi River from Quincy, Illinois, Hannibal, Missouri, was a booming city in 1900. The childhood haunt of author Samuel Clemens and an important river port, Hannibal was home to several millionaires who sought to outdo one another in residential lavishness. Lumber baron John J. Cruikshank topped them all. Buying the highest bluff in the area, Cruikshank had the site's existing mansion moved to the west side of the property and hired Barnett, Haynes, and Barnett, cathedral architects from St. Louis, to design a colossal brick home commanding a magnificent view of the Mississippi River and surrounding hills on the south and east sides. He then hired Simonds to plan the grounds, reputedly spending $75,000 to implement the design.[16]

The plan incorporated a series of gardens within concentric circles, the rings and borders of trees and shrubs corresponding to the edges of terraces built to accommodate the extremely steep property. The large number of vines on the planting list covered Rockcliffe's almost vertical hillside. On the lowest terrace, Simonds planted a vegetable garden and orchard. On the middle level and the areas next to the house, he designed wooded walks following the hillside

contours, opening onto extraordinary vistas of the Mississippi and views far into Illinois. Simonds planned the grounds for the other house on the property as well, as an integrated part of the complete design.[17]

The planting list for Rockcliffe included many of the species he used in most of his residential designs. Simonds' favorites included: spirea (especially van Houteii), Indian currants, sweet briars, Rosa rugosa, and viburnums. He also used imported species--forsythia, barberry, and buckthorn. Near the veranda he preferred lilacs, climbing roses, and honeysuckle for their fragrance. To cover the steep slopes around Rockcliffe, its porches and large veranda, more vines were planted than in his other projects. These included Virginia creeper, Japan Ivy, wild grapes, clematis, climbing honeysuckle and roses, and matrimony vine (Lycium vulgare). The St. Louis Post Dispatch called it the "finest country house in Missouri."[18]

John Cruikshank died in 1924 and was buried in Riverside Cemetery atop another bluff that overlooked Hannibal from the southeast, and from which Rockcliffe could easily be seen. Because he spent most of his fortune building and furnishing his mansion, Cruikshank left little money to his widow. She had Rockcliffe boarded up and moved next door to the relatively smaller Cruikshank house that had been relocated to make room for the new mansion.[19] Except for youthful vandals,

the house was left alone, and the grounds, like the house, slowly deteriorated.[20]

A New Park in Springfield

Impressed with Simonds' reputation for Graceland and the parks at Quincy, the Pleasure Driveway and Park District of Springfield, Illinois (at the same latitude as Hannibal) hired Simonds in December of 1900 to prepare a topographical map and propose a plan for Washington Park. His map indicated the location of individual trees, of wooded, open, and water areas, and elevations. Simonds then platted the park grounds, including walkways and drives, ponds, and new plantings, and he recommended a construction schedule for completing these features. The Park District followed his advice, and by 1907 had implemented most of the plan.[21]

The University of Chicago

By early 1901, the Trustees of the University of Chicago asked Simonds to design plantings for their new, rather barren looking campus. On the university's board were Charles Hutchinson, Martin Ryerson, Jr., and Adolphus Clay Bartlett--all investors at Graceland and Fort Sheridan. Simonds supervised planting that spring and the construction of some of the planned drives and walks. Adhering to his tried and true principles of using dense shrubbery to hide buildings, laying out slowly curving paths to give a sense of intimacy and surprise to a location, and creating a park-like setting

to block out the surrounding city, he began transforming the campus just as he had done at Graceland and the golf courses.

Unfortunately, other trustees, university architects Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge, and President William Rainey Harper had different ideas. They objected to the "markedly curvilinear system of drives and walks," and the "shrubbery plantations" that had been installed. When this group complained about the location of the main entrance and the lack of a central courtyard near the science laboratories, Simonds tried to appease them by modifying his plans, but to no avail. They hired the Olmsted Brothers to examine the grounds and Simonds' plans, and provide a written report of their findings.

John Charles Olmsted inspected the campus, and wrote a thirty-plus page report late in the winter of 1902. He consoled the trustees, telling them

> It seems perfectly natural that the Trustees should have accepted Mr. Simonds' preliminary report, for the ideas advanced by him in that report certainly sound attractive and reasonable to anyone not pretty thoroughly versed in matters of architectural and landscape design.[22]

Olmsted allowed that while Simonds was very good at cemetery design, he was out of his depth with this campus. He concluded that the University of Chicago needed a landscape plan that augmented, not (in his opinion) detracted from, the English gothic architecture of its buildings. A similar formal treatment had been provided for the classical buildings

at the Columbian Exposition a few blocks away and a decade earlier.

The Olmsted report had an impact on the Trustees--they replaced Simonds with the Olmsted Brothers. The vision they shared was of a cloistered campus, reminiscent of Oxford or Cambridge.[23] Trustee Hutchinson had visited Oxford in 1900, going so far as to take measurements of the buildings he thought most serviceable for their needs in Chicago. The Olmsteds understood the goal, and designed four courtyards and a quadrangle during their work there.[24] Both Hutchinson and Ryerson commissioned the Olmsteds to plan the grounds for their estates in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and asked for plans for the Yerkes Observatory down the road in Williams Bay in order to use up plants leftover from their own places.[25]

New Projects with Lathrop

Whether or not the University of Chicago project had an effect on Simonds personally, his business continued unabated. Bryan Lathrop and his wife, Helen Aldis, purchased property in York Harbor, Maine. They retained Holabird and Roche to design a large vacation home for them and asked Simonds to look over the land and design a suitable setting. Bryan Lathrop became a member of the board of directors of Lincoln Park, and had Simonds named Consulting Landscape Gardener, positions they held until 1913, and then again a few years later. Their major undertaking was the reclamation of a four-mile stretch of land along Lake Michigan from Diversey Parkway

to Devon Avenue, on which to expand the park.[26] Simonds Drive, in Lincoln Park north of Foster Street, commemorates his involvement.

Early in 1903, Simonds went to Europe again. He wrote home to Mattie from Venice, and she noted in her diary that he was "so far away."[27] That year, he renamed his business "O.C. Simonds and Company," and began to refer to his profession sometimes as "landscape design."[28] As noted by his wife (although she did not elaborate), he travelled by train to Maine in September, probably to visit York Harbor, and to Oregon in November, perhaps to see their son Herbert, who had recently moved there. He enjoyed seeing the countryside from the windows of a train, and with an expanding clientele in many states, Simonds worked this way increasingly for the rest of his career.

* * * * * *

Endnotes

1. "Special Meeting of Directors," Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association, 7 August 1899, Records 1893-1938, State Historical Society of Wisconsin Archives, Microfilm 1011.

2. Benjamin Cole Simonds, SFC; Ernest Warner, Genealogy of the Warner Family (Madison, Wisconsin: privately printed, 1919), SFC.

3. Ibid., 39.

4. Carolyn J. Mattern, "Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association" brochure (Madison, Wisconsin: Historic Madison, Inc., 1994).

5. Simonds to John M. Olin, 14 and 18 August 1903, John M. Olin Papers, 1872-1924, Wis.Mss Ez and unprocessed, SHSW Archives.

6. Clinton Rogers Woodruff to Olin, 10 March 1905, ibid.

7. G.A. Parker to Olin, 5 July 1904, ibid.

8. Charles Mulford Robinson to Olin, 22 June 1909, ibid.

9. J.S. Graff for Victor Lawson to Olin, 26 April 1901; Manning Brothers to Olin, 15 August 1901, ibid.

10. Wyman to Olin, 26 October 1909, ibid.

11. Garfield to Olin, 2 July 1904, ibid.

12. Garfield to Olin telegram, 3 July 1904, ibid.

13. Garfield to Olin, 28 April 1905, ibid.

14. C.J. Post to the Madison Park and Boulevard Association [*sic*], 12 May 1909, ibid.

15. A.C. Schrader, "Parks and Boulevards," and Simonds, "Written Discussion," Journal of the Western Society of Engineers, Vol.V, No.3 (June 1900), 157-171.

16. Rockcliffe Mansion brochure; nomination form, National Register of Historic Places, from the files of Roberta and Hurley Hagood.

17. Rockcliffe Mansion, "Plan of the Grounds for Mr. John Cruikshank; O.C. Simonds and Company, Landscape Gardeners,

Chicago, Illinois, 1901," at Rockcliffe Mansion; on-site observations.

18. The page from the Sunday supplement in which Rockcliffe was featured hangs on the kitchen wall at the mansion.

19. Roberta and Hurley Hagood, Hannibal Yesterdays (Hannibal, MO: Hannibal Free Public Library, 1992), 167-68.

20. Very little of the original planting remains today; some of the walks and drives are intact. Asphalt driveways and parking lots have been added for cars and tour buses on the lower terrace levels since the house itself has been refurbished and is open to public tours.

21. Himelick, 7.

22. Olmsted Brothers to C.L. Hutchinson, Chairman of the Committee of Trustees, University of Chicago, 20 March 1902, 4. President's Papers, 1889-1925, Department of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library.

23. Jean F. Block, The Uses of Gothic: Planning and Building the Campus of the University of Chicago, 1892-1932 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) 62.

24. Ibid., 64, 196.

25. Ibid., 254. Charles Yerkes made a fortune establishing street car lines and was another early force at the University of Chicago.

26. Grese, Jensen, 38-39.

27. Martha Simonds' diary, March 1903, referring to her husband's letter dated 5 February, SFC.

28. National Cyclopedia.

CHAPTER 7

EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY WORK (1903-1912)

Publications with L.H. Bailey at Cornell

In 1900, distinguished Cornell horticulturist Liberty Hyde Bailey started a periodical called Country Life in America. Simonds wrote an article for it on "The Planning and Administration of a Landscape Cemetery," and would write for or be featured in the magazine for more than fifteen years. Wilhelm Miller, Bailey's associate and former student, had worked on the magazine and edited How to Plant a Flower Garden in 1903, to which Simonds contributed the chapter "Trees for Home Grounds."[1] Miller himself wrote a piece about "The Sargent Home Near Boston." Bailey later edited a Manual of Horticulture, published in 1910, which included several pages by Simonds on drainage.

More Midwest Projects

The next year brought more assignments. Simonds planned a campus for the Central States Normal School in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, some seventy miles northeast of Grand Rapids.[2] He worked on the estate of the Colvin sisters in Lake Forest, a small park in Springfield, and new projects in

Ann Arbor and Quincy. Simonds also called on clients in to LaSalle, Lake Geneva, Mackinack [sic], and Dubuque.[3]

In 1905, Simonds designed Vilas Park, with its zoological garden, for the Madison Parks and Pleasure Drive Association, and he returned the following year to work on Brittingham Park, on the shore of Lake Monona. Travelling around the Midwest, he designed home grounds for Thomas R. Kackley in Indianapolis, R.P. Murdoch in Wichita, Kansas, and E.K. Hardy in Akron Ohio. He was called in to consult on city park design at Dixon, Illinois, on the Rock River, an affiliation that would last for many years. Closer to home, he planned a small urban campus for the Academy of Our Lady just south of Chicago, and designed small estates for J.L. Stack and Mrs. E.L. Gaylord in south suburban Midlothian, the site of a new eighteen-hole golf course.[4]

North of Chicago, J. Ogden Armour developed his elegant estate in Lake Forest, and hired Simonds to designed a bridge for him.[5] In less happy circumstances, wholesale grocer William Hoyt commissioned him to create a garden setting for the church he built in memory of his daughter and her children, who perished in the Iroquois Theater fire in 1903. Situated on a steeply sloping, triangular piece of land on Sheridan Road in Winnetka, Christ Church's Memorial Church was built of stone with a celtic cross at its apex, resembling an old English chapel. Simonds created a lush park around the building and its existing graveyard, fencing off the grounds

from the neighbors and the roads with thick plantings of snowberries, viburnums, wild crabapples, native hawthorns, barberries, and black locusts. At the north corner of the property, inside the trees, he planted a perennial garden of helenium, Joe Pye weed, golden rod, and wild asters. He filled in the parkway between the sidewalk and Sheridan Road with aromatic sumacs.[6]

In 1906, Simonds designed the surroundings for Rehoboth, the Lake Geneva, Wisconsin summer estate of the Hubbard Carpenter family from Chicago. The long, narrow lot ran north from the lake to the state highway. Under Simonds' direction, more than three-fourths of the property was densely planted. His entrance drive gently wound through these woods, finally arriving at the mansion with a framed view of the lake--right through the glassed-in hall in the middle of the house. As spectacular as this approach was, it caused confusion to carriage drivers unfamiliar with the layout, especially in the dark. One night, a fire-truck almost drove into this hall, but was turned away in the nick-of-time by one of the Carpenters' servants.[7]

Harriet Simonds, O.C.'s mother, died that year at the age of eighty. She and Joel never felt at home in Chicago, and so she was interred with her husband at Oak Wood Cemetery in Grand Rapids, rather than at Graceland.[8] Herbert, Simonds' eldest son, wrote many years later that he and his grandmother had a warm and special relationship and, even though Herbert's

memory was not always accurate, his childhood recollections of often going next door to visit her after school for cookies and attention stand out among his early remembrances.[9]

Simonds next began working on one of his northernmost projects, John Henes Park in Menominee, Michigan, on the Upper Peninsula. He received his first arboretum commission that same year, also in Michigan. University of Michigan alumni Esther and Walter Nichols donated 27.5 acres on which to create a tree garden for research and pleasure. Simonds used native plants "to emphasize and enhance the Arboretum's rolling topography and breathtaking overlooks . . . [when he] designed the sweeping vistas and intimate coves . . . ."[10]

Brucemore and Cedar Rapids

About this same time, Simonds began a twenty-year affiliation with the Douglas family of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Founders of the Quaker Oats Company, the Douglases acquired their estate from Caroline Sinclair, an elderly widow who wanted a smaller home in town. The Douglases had hired Simonds in 1906 to plan grounds for their property in Charlevoix, Michigan (some twenty miles farther north than Menominee). At Brucemore, as they called their Cedar Rapids home, Simonds worked with existing features to customize the site. He altered the expansive front lawn by planting additional groups of shrubs and small trees, thereby adding visual interest while increasing privacy. The back drive was expanded and turned into the main entrance.[11]

Working here intermittently for two decades, Simonds gradually changed the look of the property. He set aside space near the house for flower gardens, and one of the DuPuy daughters (the family friends from Ravenswood) prepared its planting plan, visiting Brucemore several times from 1910-1912.[12] Simonds' associate, J. Roy West, took over some of the responsibilities here, and in 1926, near the end of Simonds and Company involvement at Brucemore, West arranged for the purchase of enormous urns from E.E. Soderholtz in Maine, which he placed dramatically at one end of the pond, near the southeast corner of the estate. Over the years, Simonds and Company designed grounds for several other homes in Brucemore's neighborhood.[13]

Large Projects in Michigan

Back in Michigan, Henry Booth, a well-to-do publisher, had bought 225 acres of relatively unproductive farmland in Bloomfield Hills, near Detroit, circa 1905. He intended to turn the property into a country estate and working farm, a popular endeavor among the wealthy at that time. He did much of the early landscape planning himself, with assistance from Englishman H.J. Corfield, a horticulturist and designer. By 1908, he hired Simonds to assist with road design, and by 1910, Simonds was ordering trees by the thousands to enhance the scenery and seclusion of Cranbrook, as Booth called his estate. Simonds continued working there well into the 1920s, having an strong impact on what became the campus of the

Cranbrook Academy of Art shortly after affiliation ended. In 1925, Booth hired architect Eliel Saarinen to design buildings and landscape, marking the entrance of a new era at Cranbrook.[14]

By 1909, Simonds' alma mater, the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, began its own department of landscape gardening, due, in part, to Simonds' influence. He became a non-resident lecturer, like his teacher Jenney thirty years earlier, making the 492 mile round trip by train.[15] Aubrey Tealdi, a designer who may have worked in Simonds' office, became an instructor.[16] Simonds' lectures were similar in style and content to his writings, combining specific advice for drainage, or plant selection, or road construction, with general suggestions for creating landscape pictures to provide a pleasing environment.[17] He also found time to serve as ASLA vice-president.

Riverview Park to Hannibal

Eight years after he finished his work for John Cruickshank at Rockcliffe Mansion, Simonds was working in Hannibal again. Wilson Pettibone, another lumber magnate, donated a few hundred acres of land on bluffs above the Mississippi River to the city for park and recreational use. Naming it Riverview Park, he established a governing board of nine citizens (including John Cruickshank), provided an endowment to maintain the park, and paid for Simonds' design services. Because this land had already been cleared for

farming, Simonds was able to incorporate magnificent views of the river into the park's design.[18] He planned the drives through the park with as minimal incline as the steep terrain permitted.[19] Complaints that it would only be accessible to carriage and horse owners motivated Pettibone to have Simonds provide a concrete stairway into the park for pedestrians.

Hannibal native Mark Twain died the following year and the state of Missouri commissioned a memorial at Riverview Park in his honor. While Pettibone had stipulated that the park was to be as "primitive" as possible, with no man-made objects such toilets, tables, or benches, he made an exception for the monument. Simonds designed the setting on the highest point in the park, before the monument was selected,

> for the guidance of the competing sculptors, and the final choice of the [sculpture] design was influenced as much by its particular fitness for the locality selected as by the sculptor's conception of the man to be commemorated.[20]

The model made by Frederick C. Hibbard, of Chicago, won the competition. A life-like statue of Twain looking off into the distance, it fit perfectly into its location atop the high bluff in Riverview Park. Park and Cemetery featured the memorial in its December issue and included a copy of Simonds' site plan and section through the site.[21]

In 1924, Pettibone asked Simonds to design a new area of Riverview Park on his donation of additional acreage.[22] And seven years later, the city of Hannibal developed a new park on its riverfront and once again, Simonds assisted them.[23]

Two hundred twenty-five part-time workers constructed Nipper Park, providing work to those who needed money during the Depression. Simonds' suggestions were carried out, although he may not have finished his plan for the park before his death later that year.[24]

Dawes House in Evanston

Around the time Simonds planned Hannibal's Riverview Park, financier Charles Gates Dawes hired him to redesign the grounds of the mansion he bought in Evanston, Illinois. Dawes lived just a block from Daniel Burnham and a short distance from William Holabird. He was also an acquaintance and correspondent of Kenoshan Zalmon Simmons, for whom Simonds had designed a library park (and Burnham the library). Any of these connections could have led Dawes to hire Simonds, but there is no record of their relationship in either man's papers. Henry Edwards-Ficken (who designed Gifford Pinchot's family home "Grey Towers," in Pennsylvania[25]), created the chateauesque, red brick house for Dr. Robert Dickinson Sheppard, treasurer and business manager of Northwestern University.[26] Completed around 1896, the house was built on the northwest corner of a nearly two-acre lot overlooking Lake Michigan. A turf-covered terrace ran along the library on the east side of the house, facing the lake; lawn dotted by trees and shrubs covered the rest of the grounds.[27]

When he began working at the Dawes house, probably in 1910, Simonds drew a site plan to inventory existing

vegetation and structures. He noted diseased or dying trees and shrubs, as well as obtrusive sights to be blocked with foliage. This evolved into a second stage plan, with proposed additions and changes. Finally, by 1912, he prepared a new blueprint and planting plan for the entire site.[28]

Simonds developed his design to frame the lake view. Unlike the steep bluffs he had covered with vines in Missouri, this land was flat except for the slight incline leading up to the terrace. Taking this topography into account, Simonds made changes on the Dawes grounds that incorporated his ideas of what made a house beautiful and a landscape artistic, while accommodating client requirements and climate limitations. He added plants along the driveway fences between the west and north neighbors to establish a dense foliage screen. New trees along the front walk softened the entrance and the roses and shrubs to the side of the front steps diminished the facade's severity. Simonds introduced foundation plantings around the house's perimeter, placing snowberries on the north side. Roses, honeysuckle and Virginia creeper filled in the east side of the terrace, giving a visual transition from the house to the lake. A new front terrace along the south side he hidden partially with flowering shrubs such as Indian currant, forsythia, and weigela. He planted hydrangeas under the windows of the east side parlor. Dawes family photographs from the 1910s show them entertaining on their terrace near Simonds' exuberant plantings.[29]

At the back of the house, on the north end of the property, hemlock, dwarf mountain pine, and a trailing juniper filled the empty spot east of the garage. A cement balustrade delineated the north end of the terrace, and a winding path lined with hostas led back to the service drive and garage, replacing the grass that had been there. Northeast of the house, just south of the service drive, Simonds put in a "wild garden" of native plants and grape vines, and he transformed the drive into one of his favorite landscape features: a slowly curving, densely planted road, that made a mystery of whatever lay beyond it--even though it was only a half-block long. He added trees and shrubs to plantations throughout the grounds, creating a lusher look. The privet hedge around the property's perimeter remained, a rarity in Simonds' plans. Trimmed to a height of two to three feet, the hedge served the dual purposes of delineating the Dawes' property while maintaining an open, park-like setting with lake views. No other written documentation remains to explain Simonds' relationship with Dawes, who later became Vice President of the United States and American Ambassador to the Court of St. James.[30]

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Endnotes

1. Wilhelm Miller, ed., How to Plant a Flower Garden: A Manual of Practical Information and Suggestions (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1903).

2. Plan at MA.

3. Martha Simonds' diary, SFC.

4. The greenkeeper for the Midlothian Golf Club finds no reference to Simonds in the club's history.

5. Plan at MA.

6. Plan at MA. Forty years later, church members hired landscape architect Ralph Rodney Root to convert the entire garden into a churchyard for the interment of ashes. Only Simonds' driveway and a few large trees remain of his original scheme; the churchyard, while visually striking, is a very different style.

7. Plan in Warren Manning Collection, Special Collections, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. Lake Geneva History, 15-17, local history collection at the Lake Geneva Public Library.

8. Benjamin Cole Simonds.

9. Herbert R. Simonds, Memoirs (unpublished typescript, undated), SFC.

10. "Nichols Arboretum" informational brochure (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan, 1996).

11. Cecelia Rusnak, ASLA, Historic Landscape Report for Brucemore, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Vol.1 (State College, PA: March 1997), WHT.

12. The DuPuys had three daughters, Genevieve, Helen, and Mary; since the Brucemore papers refer only to "Miss DuPuy," it is unknown which woman was the designer.

13. Rusnak.

14. Diana Balmori, "Cranbrook: The Invisible Landscape," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, 53 (March, 1994), 30-60.

15. Turak, 148.

16. Walter A. Donnelly, Wilfred B. Shaw, and Ruth W. Gjelsness, eds., "Landscape Architecture," The University of Michigan, An Encyclopedic Survey, Vol.III, Parts VI and VII (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1953), 1312.

17. Simonds' "Lecture Notes," file of Robert E. Grese, Department of Natural Resources, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

18. Roberta and Hurley Hagood, Hannibal Too (Marcelline, MO: Walsworth Publishing, 1986), 228-30.

19. Ibid. Hannibal, Too repeated an earlier writer's strange conclusion that Simonds' roads through the park turned to the left in what that writer thought was "the English style," and therefore Simonds was English.

20. "Mark Twain Memorial and Its Setting," Park and Cemetery, Vol.22, No.10 (December 1912), 236-38.

21. Ibid.

22. "Strolling was a pleasant pastime," Hannibal Courier-Post (June 20, 1980): 9; Hagood, Hannibal Too; Simonds to Pettibone, October 31, 1929. The Courier-Post story credits "W.T. Lengue and a Mr. Cohan of Chicago, both with the firm of architects who planned the improvements . . . same landscapers who designed the lawn of the Cruikshank home" with directing the work at Riverview Park in 1908-09. The source of this information is not known, and the names of these two men do not appear in any other materials discovered to date. George Carroll Cone, a lecturer at the University of Michigan and perhaps an associate of Simonds could conceivably be the "Mr. Cohan" mentioned in the Courier-Post.

23. Hagood, Hannibal Too; notes in Hagood files copied from Pettibone papers in possession of Wilson Pettibone's great-nephew in Hannibal; Tuesday, January 9, 1931 page from O.C. Simonds' desk calendar, "Sent letter to Roy [J.Roy West, Simonds' partner] enclosing one to Mr. Pettibone to be copied and sent to Hannibal with plan of park."

24. Ibid., 235.

25. Conversation with Mark Burnett, Evanston Historical Society (EHS) archivist, April 1996.

26. Margery Blair Perkins, Evanstoniana: An Informal History of Evanston and Its Architecture Barbara J. Buchbinder-Green, ed. (Chicago: Chicago Review Press and Evanston Historical Society, 1984): 92; "Charles Gates Dawes House," brochure (Evanston, Illinois: Evanston Historical Society, n/d).

27. Photographs in the collection of EHS.

28. All three versions in the collection of the EHS.

29. Dawes family photographs in EHS collection.

30. Plans and photographs in EHS collection; Mr. and Mrs. Dawes lived in this house from 1910 until their deaths in the mid-1950's, willing it to Northwestern University, with the understanding that the Evanston Historical Society be its tenant.

CHAPTER 8

CONTENDING WITH THE "PRAIRIE SPIRIT" (1911-1916)

Madison Subdivisions

Simonds went back to Madison in 1911 to plat a new subdivision called the Highlands, just to the west of the city. His cousin, Ernest N. Warner, was president of the land company. Because the property had been grazed, there were no shrubs or trees; but it was steep and hilly, with splendid views of Lake Mendota to the north, pastoral vistas in two other directions, and Madison to the east. Simonds laid out the roads following the site's topography, as he had for the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association's projects a few miles away. He installed plantations of his preferred trees and shrubs: indigenous maples and oaks, Indian currants, hawthorns, barberries, and elms.[1]

Despite the developers' good intentions, the thirty-seven multi-acre lots did not sell quickly, and many who bought did not build.[2] Among the few who did were Thomas Brittingham and Edith and Frederick Davis, people with strong ties to the MPPDA.[3] Brittingham had donated land along Lake Monona for a park and Simonds created a park from it in 1906. Edith Davis' father, Magnus Swenson, was a wealthy sugar processor who had

moved from Chicago to Madison, quite likely because of his involvement with the MPPDA. Both families built large, unique homes on their estates, setting the standard for subsequent lot buyers.[4]

In 1912, after thinking about it for several years, Ernest Warner subdivided his farm a mile or two northeast of the Highlands into Spring Harbor.

> He would walk over his land with his cousin Ossian Simonds, widely known landscape architect from Chicago, and visualize proposed roads and homesites. He pictured a development for his farms . . . [that was] quiet and exclusive.[5]

Simonds followed the contours of the hills to lay out the roads, and created a wooded setting for the lots carved out of his cousin's farm.

That same year, John McKenna, another real estate developer, bought fifty-seven acres of farmland a few miles farther east adjacent to the University of Wisconsin campus. He named it "College Hills" in hopes of attracting professors and their families, and gave it the slogan, "Where the Woodlands Meet the City."[6] McKenna also hired Simonds to plat his subdivision. This was to be more intensively developed than the Highlands, with three lots per acre. Lake Mendota Drive, which connected the city and the campus with College Hills and neighboring Eagle Heights (a wooded park on a hill with panoramic vistas), was part of the MPPDA road system that Simonds planned several years earlier, and thus he was already familiar with the area. He replaced old roads within the new

town, first finding optimal home sites and then locating the roads to reach these spots, once again following the contours of the hill to provide gentle slopes.[7]

College Hills, like the Highlands, was slow to develop. It was outside the bounds of city services and there was no transportation to the capitol, and during World War I, McKenna lost his investment in the venture. Undaunted, by 1922 he purchased fallow farmland on the west side of College Hills, named the new area "Shorewood," and hired Simonds to design roads and plantings as he had before. The time was right, and Shorewood (soon merged with College Hills to become "Shorewood Hills") was an immediate success.[8] Mrs. McKenna, who had moved against her will to the first house in her husband's College Hills development in 1913, grew to love the area and had a special appreciation for Simonds' work there. In her reminiscences of the early days, she said,

. . . he accentuated the relationships of hills and lake shore and produced innumerable, often breath-taking vistas. These landscapes present infinite variety during the passage of daily shadow and sunshine and the seasonal transformations from leafless trees to full foliage and the bloom and green of gardens and lawns.[9]

Between McKenna's two projects, Simonds helped design Nakoma, another new Madison suburb in 1915.[10] On the southwest corner of Lake Monona, southwest of the city, Nakoma was less hilly and picturesque than the other new developments, and it

too was a subdivision for Madison's upper-middle class. Franz Aust, who had just begun teaching at the University of Wisconsin, was a landscape architect who had studied with Simonds at the University of Michigan and worked with Wilhelm Miller at the University of Illinois Landscape Extension Service. He became involved in laying out Nakoma's streets and lots, and developing its planting plan.

Rock River Projects

The same year he began working on the Highlands in Madison, Simonds was retained to design Lowell Park in Dixon, Illinois. Located a few miles north of town, it was another site that suited his tastes perfectly. The land encompassed a hill that led down to the Rock River, and Simonds planned winding drives through wooded areas that opened onto vistas of the water below and forests in the distance.[11] John Charles Olmsted had already been at work there. In 1906, Olmsted made a topographic sketch of Dixon, from which he drew a map. Two years later, he supplied plans for "Woodcote," the park superintendent's cottage, and his company drafted a general plan for the park.[12] Whether all of Olmsted's suggestions for Lowell Park were implemented or not, it appears that Simonds created the final road system and planting scheme.

After Simonds' death, J.Roy West continued his company's affiliation with the park until the late 1930s.[13] As with many Simonds-designed sites, there was little active management after his tenure, and the park became very overgrown. His

son, Robert O. Simonds, considered consulting in the 1940s, but decided against it.[14]

Simonds was involved in other Rock River area projects. Twenty miles north of Dixon, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lowden purchased several thousand acres on which to create their country retreat. He was a lawyer, and later, governor of Illinois; she was George Pullman's daughter.[15] They named their place "Sinnissippi" and hired Simonds to plan the layout of its working farm, the placement of roads and buildings, and the planting of trees. In the same vicinity, Simonds donated his services to explain to highway engineers how to lay out Illinois Route 2 along the west side of the Rock River, from Dixon to Byron, to take advantage of the river views and hilltop vistas, creating one of the very scenic highways in American, planned for beauty as well as practicality.[16]

J. C. Olmsted was working with the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, Ohio, in the 1910s, planning a backyard garden contest for employees living in corporate housing. Among Simonds' remaining papers is an entire series of professional photographs of these yards in Dayton. Unfortunately, he left no explanation of his interest in them.

President of the ASLA

Simonds served as the president of the ASLA from in 1913 to 1914, the first Midwesterner to do so. At the February, 1913 meeting, he "gave an interesting talk on topics of general interest and Mr. Nolen[17] spoke on the 'City Planning

Committee.'"[18] The monthly meeting for May was held in Chicago, and it may have been the organization's first meeting in that city. Gathering at the Hotel LaSalle, members attending included: Simonds, Frank Button, and Svend Lollesgaard of O.C.Simonds and Company; Warren Manning; John Nolen; John Charles Olmsted; and Aubrey Tealdi. There were two guest speakers that evening: W.M.R. French, Director of the Art Institute, who gave a talk on his work with H.W. S. Cleveland, and Wilhelm Miller, from the University of Illinois, who explained what the Extension Service was doing in the field of landscape gardening.[19]

At the first meeting of 1914, Simonds spoke on extension work being done in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Rural improvement was a popular topic in the Midwest at this time, but it may have been more of a novelty for landscape people in the east. Simonds also addressed the need for a common name for their profession.[20]

Indian Hill Club

In 1913-14, Simonds worked on another North Shore golf club. Called the Winnetka Country Club at its inception, by 1914 it became the Indian Hill Club. At first, Simonds "the famous landscape architect," was hired to "criticize the plans made by golf architect H.H. Barker," and "to consider the problem of landscaping the additional lots which were for sale" around the club's perimeter. But he also took on the task of designing a drain tile system because, unlike the Glen

View Club a few miles south, this land along the Skokie River was so low and flat it flooded. As part of this system, he created or expanded an existing pond to accommodate overflow.[21]

Simonds' 1914 plan shows tree and shrub placement on adjoining residential lots, as well as on the golf course proper. In his typical rendering style, the vegetation is portrayed as miniature cabbage roses on the plan. No planting list is attached, and many areas seem rather sparse, compared to other Simonds' designs. As with most of his projects, there is no remaining records to indicate the duration of Simonds' involvement there.

The Prairie Becomes a Style

Wilhelm Miller was featuring Simonds' and Jensen's work in his University of Illinois extension circulars at this time. The relationship between Simonds and Miller requires some discussion here, even though it did not bear directly on any landscape projects.[22] Formerly associated with L.H. Bailey at Cornell, Miller came to the University of Illinois about 1912. How he came to be employed there is unknown,[23] and equally obscure are Miller's reasons for making a gospel of his "prairie school" philosophy. As "Head of Division of Landscape Extension," he travelled and lectured throughout the state, and published circulars under the auspices of the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Department of Horticulture. His involvement with rural beautification evolved from his work with the Country Life movement, and

developed into a specific concern for how things ought to be done in Illinois. Judging from responses to his campaign, however, it appears to have been a one-man campaign-- but one that would have a long-lasting effect.

In Miller's 1914 circular, The "Illinois Way" of Beautifying the Farm, he gave many directives for improving rural scenery, most of them based on principles of landscape painting similar to those that Simonds had employed for more than thirty years. Miller called these precepts the "Illinois Way"--the "'Illinois Way' of Planting a Lawn", the "'Illinois Way' of Sheltering Stock," and the "'Illinois Way' of Screening Unsightly Objects."[24] He was unstinting in his praise of the men who "no longer fear or despise the prairie; they love it and are opening our eyes to its true wonder and beauty."[25] Many belonged to the Cliff Dweller's Club and believed in "'local color.'" He listed sculptor Lorado Taft, writer Hamlin Garland, architects Louis H. Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, and landscape gardeners O.C. Simonds and Jens Jensen as the primary examples.

By the following year, Miller had developed his Illinois concepts further, publishing The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening.[26] This circular, like the previous, was offered "Free to anyone in Illinois who will sign a promise to do some permanent ornamental planting within a year." In it, he expanded upon earlier ideas, tying midwestern architecture and landscape design together. Miller decided the predominant

feature of the prairie was horizontality and began using the word "stratified" to describe characteristics he thought specific to Illinois prairies, applying it to almost anything that had a horizontal aspect.[27] Miller's writing was energetic and stimulating, and while some writers and designers began adopting his ideas, not everyone was swept along.

Early in 1915, he sent two questionnaires to people on his list of "local color" proponents. One included "Two Definitions" for his terms "Prairie Style of Architecture" and Prairie Style of Landscape Gardening" (his third revision of the definition).[28](See Appendix.) The other form queried his respondents regarding the history of the term "Prairie School," and asked whether or not they would sign their name to accepting the phrase. Frank Lloyd Wright wrote back saying he was "unwilling to wear any tag which will identify me with any sect or system." Wright felt that Louis Sullivan could not "figure in any form other than grotesque as the founder of a 'Prairie School of Architecture,'" and that as far as he knew, Sullivan had never found the prairie to be an influence.[29]

Resolute, Miller submitted most of his new publication, including proposed photographs and captions, to Simonds for suggestions before printing. Receiving the package on 19 July, Simonds wrote a six-page response the next day, and returned it all to Miller by express. He began by saying "The 'Prairie Spirit' and 'Prairie Style' do not appeal to me as to

some." "Boasting" was not Simonds' way. He went on to give specific criticism or praise for each of the sections and photographs. Simonds did not get enthused about the "Illinois Way." "I think I have a stronger feeling for Michigan than for any other state." Regarding plants, "Prairie Rose is a suitable and appropriate name . . . Why should we call it the 'Illinois Rose?'"[30]

Simonds found the illustrations of Jensen's work "very satisfying." [Miller jotted his response on the letter, "generous praise to a rival."] But he thought Miller's attempt to connect Jensen's planting design in the Garfield Park (Chicago) Conservatory "with the prairie . . . rather far fetched."

> It is beautiful and well done, but the lessons from nature which would inspire it might have been learned in a mountainous region.[31]

Simonds was not comfortable with Miller's Illinois obsession. "As I read over your manuscript, I sometimes wonder if you do not try to make facts fit a theory rather than theory fit the facts." Miller did not think so. He noted on the letter (although not in his reply to Simonds) "But these combinations are Nature's own, as cited by Cowles in his Plant Societies of Chicago!" Simonds did "not yet feel that here is a distinct 'Prairie Style.'" His own approach was to "simply do that which . . . will make the most beautiful effect."[32]

Despite these reservations, however, Simonds ended the letter apologizing for not being able to spend more time reviewing the material Miller had sent. He also

> hope[d] that my skepticism regarding the 'Prairie Style' will not give you any offense. I fully approve of the spirit of your work and believe it will be of great benefit to the state.[33]

Miller wrote back thanking Simonds for his comments, taking into account "that your point of view about the 'Prairie Style' is very conservative," and while he worked on his circular, "felt the restraining influence of Mr. Lathrop and yourself." "Mr. Jensen's criticisms," on the other hand, were "more radical, and show[ed] more feeling." But Miller found Simonds' comments "couched in such amiable and gentle spirit that I cannot possibly take any offence." He was deeply satisfied with Simonds' closing remark about the benefit of his work.[34] Miller left Illinois the following year to establish up a private design practice in Michigan, and the "Prairie Style" issue subsided.[35]

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Endnotes

1. Norman K. Risjord, Madison's Highlands: A Community with a Land Ethic (Madison: The Highlands Association, 1988), WHT.

2. Jon Kollitz, "The Highlands: A Landscape History" (unpublished paper, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1988), WHT.

3. Risjord.

4. Ibid.

5. Elizabeth Warner Risser, unpublished biography of her father, Ernest N. Warner, 1930. Courtesy of Susan O. Haswell.

6. College Hills advertisement, Village of Shorewood Hills archives. I am grateful to Professor Thomas Brock, Village of Shorewood Hills historian, for access to archival materials.

7. Marcia Nickels McKenna, "The Birth of College Hills," in The Story of Shorewood Hills (Shorewood Hills Village Board, 1958), 7 & 14.

8. Thomas Brock, unpublished history of Shorewood Hills. Courtesy of Dr. Brock.

9. McKenna, 14.

10. Tricia Canaday, "The Story of Nakoma" (unpublished paper, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992), WHT.

11. Author's conversation with Dixon landscape architect and historian Dean Sheaffer, August 1996.

12. Olmsted Brothers job file cards, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

13. One of West' daughters lived in Dixon because her husband worked for a public utility company there, according to a fellow employee in conversation with Dean Sheaffer.

14. Author's conversation with Robert C. Simonds (son of Robert O.), Pier Cove Michigan, July 1997.

15. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lowden were buried at Graceland on the Lowden, Pullman, and Miller family plot. Author's telephone conversation with Peter Olsen of Graceland Cemetery Company, November 1997.

16. Sheaffer.

17. John Nolen, landscape architect and city planner from Boston, re-designed some of the Madison parks immediately after Simonds' affiliation ended, and devised a comprehensive plan for the city.

18. Transactions, 1909-21, American Society of Landscape Architects, 18 February 1913.

19. Ibid., 8 May 1913.

20. Ibid., 13 January 1914.

21. Original plan in the groundskeeper's office at Indian Hill Club. According to superintendent David Schlagetter, in conversation with the author, July, 1997, the plan had been found laying in a ditch on the golf course. He reclaimed it, and is having a reproduction drawn.

22. Christopher Vernon and Robert Grese each questioned the validity of the "Prairie Spirit" label for Simonds, but neither pursued the matter. Christopher Duane Vernon, "The 'Illinois Way': Wilhelm Miller and the Gospel of the Prairie School" (unpublished master's thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1988); Robert E. Grese, Jens Jensen, Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1994).

23. Vernon, 86.

24. Wilhelm Miller, The "Illinois Way" of Beautifying the Farm, Circular 170 of the Agricultural Experiment Station (Urbana: University of Illinois, Department of Horticulture, 1914), 1,3,4.

25. Ibid.

26. Miller, The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening, Circular 184 of the Agricultural Experiment Station (Urbana: University of Illinois, Department of Horticulture, 1915).

27. The word "stratified" meant "in layers" in 1915 as it does today, and most often describes sedimentary rock or a method of germinating seed. When Simonds pointed out that some of the plants Miller called "stratified" did not in fact branch horizontally, Miller responded that they were "stratified when old." (Simonds to Miller, 20 July, 1915.)

28. I am indebted to Robert Grese for copies of these questionnaires. They were among Simonds' papers given to him by Barbara Valentine, Simonds' granddaughter, of Green Bay,

Wisconsin.

29. Letter from Frank Lloyd Wright to Wilhelm Miller, February 24, 1915, printed in Frank Lloyd Wright: In the Cause of Architecture (New York: Architectural Record, 1965), 49-52. I am indebted to Professor William H. Tishler for bringing this information from his files to my attention.

30. Simonds to Dr. Wilhelm Miller, 20 July 1915, Record Series 8/12/3, Box 2; Agriculture-Horticulture Subject File, 1898-1919, Folder: Horticulture (Dept. Of) Landscape Extension, R-S, 1914-16, University Archives, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I am grateful for Robert T. Chapel of the University Archives for locating these materials.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Miller to Simonds, 23 July 1915, ibid.

35. Vernon. With renewed interest in Frank Lloyd Wright in the early 1970s, University of Chicago art history student Mara Gelbloom wrote a master's paper in 1974 entitled "Ossian Cole Simonds: 'The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening,'" published two years later in The Prairie School Review. While presenting well-researched background information about landscape gardening, Gelbloom uncritically accepted Miller's thesis that Simonds based his style of landscape design on the native plants and horizontality of the prairie, as well as his description of Simonds' "sylvan rooms." From an analysis of the plans for the Quincy Parks from 1895 to 1913, she concluded that he increased his use of native plants over the years, whereas recent research does not confirm this trend. Unfortunately, despite some excellent material in this article, the "Prairie Spirit" concept has been taken out of context to label Simonds, against his own preference and against the truth of his work.

CHAPTER 9

COLLABORATION WITH TWO PROMINENT CLIENTS: MORTON AND NOYES (1915-1925)

Working with Noyes

LaVerne W. Noyes, a long-time friend and client, hired Simonds to go with him to his alma mater, Iowa State University at Ames, to re-design parts of the campus in 1915. Noyes was a self-made man, inventor, founder, and president of the Aermotor Company in Chicago, maker of water-pumping and electricity-generating windmills.[1] They had worked together before when Simonds assisted the Illinois Industrial School for Girls plan cottage placement on its new campus, a forty-acre farm in Park Ridge, in 1907.[2] Noyes and his wife, Ida, donated a new residence cottage. After his wife's premature death in 1912, he privately published a book of her poetry, giving a copy to Simonds.[3] The Noyes had no children and LaVerne keenly felt the loss of his wife, throwing himself into more philanthropic projects than ever.

Donating money and time to Iowa State was a labor of love. Noyes had graduated in 1872 and, while there, worked with president A.S. Welch on his campus beautification plan. Welch, like Lathrop in Chicago those same years, had cultivated a passion for pastoral landscapes. Iowa

Agricultural College, as it was then known, was brand new and in need of campus planning. Welch took the job on, hiring student workers to do the digging, hauling, and planting. Welch's goal so impressed young Noyes that forty-five years later, when in a position to help, he went back to reactivate the early vision. Iowa State bestowed on him an honorary Doctor of Engineering while he was there.[4]

Once again, as at Lowell Park, John Charles Olmsted was there first. Hired in 1906, Olmsted visited the campus to examine the site. His twelve-page report convinced the trustees not to install an intended electric railway across the grounds by comparing the idea to the open sewers of New Orleans. He also thought that the engineering and mail buildings were situated in too casual a fashion for their formal style. Iowa State did not ask Olmsted for further assistance although, as the campus grew, it used his suggestion to construct a symmetrical axis with a large square courtyard.[5]

Most of Simonds' involvement at Iowa was concentrated at the southwest corner of campus. He designed a small lake, to be called "Lake LaVerne," with wooded areas of small trees and shrubs.[6] Rather than making drawings for others to follow, Simonds personally directed the construction and planting. He was also responsible for softening the look of the formal buildings around the square grass courtyard by adding vines, foundation plantings, and larch trees.[7] Simonds worked with

L.H. Pammel, Professor of Botany, in acquiring species that interested his students, and in finding inexpensive plant labels.[8] He continued to advise on campus landscape matters until 1923 but, less than ten years later, the lake was re-worked and the masses of vegetation were removed, under the direction of Professor P.H. Elwood, Jr.[9]

Noyes donated an even larger sum of money to the University of Chicago to build a memorial to his wife. The women's residence and social center was built facing the Midway Plaisance on the south end of the campus. He asked Simonds to design a plan for the small front and back areas, giving him another opportunity utilize his own design approach on the campus.[10] Ida Noyes Hall opened in 1918, inspiring the two men to re-design the Plaisance, incorporating a waterway from Washington Park (to the west) down the Midway to Lake Michigan.[11] They submitted their plans in April to the University of Chicago Board of Trustees, who turned the matter over to the Committee on Buildings and Grounds.[12] The board and the committee were not enthused, and the following year reported that

> an informal conference with the South Park Commission reveals that there is little likelihood of the adoption of Mr. O.C. Simonds' plan for the improvement of the Midway Plaisance.

They moved to cease "further consideration" of the matter.[13]

Noyes died in 1919, bequeathing $2,500,000 to the University for scholarship money for veterans and their direct

descendants. He and his wife were interred at Graceland Cemetery.

Lathrop's Death

While Simonds was in the midst of these projects, Bryan Lathrop died on 13 May, 1916. He was buried at Graceland, near Lake Willowmere, with a simple marker. Simonds treasured their relationship for the rest of his life, following the landscape precepts he had learned from Lathrop in his beginning days at Graceland. He often quoted or mentioned Lathrop in his writings, and in an interview when he was seventy-five, recalled his mentor's kind and cultured demeanor.[14]

With their two older sons, Herbert and Marshall, serving overseas during the war, these must have been difficult years for O.C. and Mattie. However, both returned home unharmed. Simonds continued his trips to Ann Arbor as a non-resident lecturer in the Department of Landscape Design. C.G. Cone, from Simonds' office, was teaching there now, and Aubrey Tealdi had been promoted from instructor to assistant professor. During this time, Simonds visited clients in Grand Rapids and Madison and, in October of 1918, accompanied by his wife, he went to the Glen View Club[15] to plan a setting for a fountain and sculpture. Club member E.S. Jackman commissioned sculptor Andrew O'Connor to create a statue of a group of Boy Scouts, which he then gave to the club. Holabird and Roche

prepared the architectural details, and Simonds worked out fountain particulars and a planting plan.[16]

International Garden Club

The Journal of the International Garden Club carried two articles by Simonds in 1918. He illustrated the first, "Landscape Gardening in its Relation to Roadside Planting," with a photograph of "An English Lane," lined with shrubs and trees and slowly curving around out of sight, inviting the pedestrian or rider to follow. On the next page, there was a picture of Wildwood Drive in Graceland Cemetery, which was remarkably similar to the English road. At the end of that issue, in "Notes and News," Simonds submitted a short note introducing Bryan Lathrop's article, "A Plea for Landscape Gardening."[17] In a subsequent edition, he wrote about the "Care of Woods and Ravines," he urged restraint in raking leaves from the woods, offering a glimpse into the source of his motivation for naturalistic design:

> Doubtless nearly everyone remembers the pleasure of a day spent in the woods. The first wild flowers, the new leaves, the element of mystery, the chances to make new discoveries and the perfect freedom, give more pleasure than is usually received from a visit to the most cultivated and well-cared-for park.[18]

Simonds maintained that ravines were especially sensitive to the removal of leaf litter, and he listed eight management considerations. Noting that "brown leaves are not objectionable in appearance," he mentioned Hamerton's belief that an oak leaf was the best subject for practice drawing.

The next year Simonds was on the road again, travelling to Ames, Omaha, Springfield, and Dixon. In April he went to Lansing, perhaps to design the state capitol grounds,[19] and in May, to Akron. Another trip west in November took him to Dixon for the third time that year, and to near-by Grand Detour.[20]

Landscape Gardening

After years of writing articles and booklets, lecturing and educating, Simonds wrote his only full-length book. Landscape Gardening, as he simply called it, was published by Macmillan in 1920, part of the "Rural Science" series edited by L.H. Bailey. Three-hundred thirty-one pages long, it covered such topics as "The Saving of Natural Features and Resources," "Land," "Planting Materials," "Water," "Home Ground," and "Landscape-Gardening for Arid and Semi-Arid Regions." In the first chapter, "The Aims of Landscape-Gardening," Simonds began "The purpose of this book is to help make our country more beautiful."[21] Not only was the landscape gardener called upon to achieve that goal by actively working on "home grounds, roadsides, river banks, [and] parks," but he must "open . . . the eyes of those who fail to see such beauty as already exists." [22]

For his first illustration, Simonds chose a photograph of a landscape painter at work under a bridge. The picture itself resembles a landscape painting, and recalls Constable's statement that for him, '"art could be found under every

bridge."'[23] Simonds' text compared the art of landscape gardening to that of the landscape painter:

> He studies the out-of-doors. He looks at nature on line usually varying but a few degrees from the horizontal.[24] He notes the sky lines, the masses of foliage, the lights and shadows, the varying colors and shapes of leaves and flowers, the lay of the land, the reflections in water. He learns the things that make a view pleasing, and then when he grades lands, plants trees, shrubs, and flowers, introduces water, rocks, or other objects, he makes use of the pleasing effects he has learned to produce pleasing scenery appropriate to the situation and the locality. His canvas, the background for his work is the sky . . . . Nature indeed is a most helpful and willing partner in all the real work of a landscape-gardener, and also his best teacher . . . . The landscape-gardener . . . must wait years for the picture he conceives to develop fully.[25]

Simonds explained anew his preference for the title of landscape-gardener over that of landscape architect, stating

> He is often called a 'landscape architect,' but architect implies building, working with lumber, bricks, stone, mortar, glass, metals, in short, materials that are for the most part rigid and fixed. The work of the landscape-gardener is largely with things that are alive, growing, changing. As Bryan Lathrop has said, 'It is not the name so much as the idea behind it which is objectionable.' To use the word 'architect' tends to take away that freedom and gracefulness that should go with the development of beautiful landscapes.[26]

The landscape-gardener needed to have "a love and appreciation of natural beauty." He had to be conversant in world history, astronomy, geology, physiography [physical geography], botany, zoology, and chemistry. In addition, he had to be skilled in construction and possess artistic talent. He ought to be willing to serve the betterment of humanity, and

> His compensation in a material way should correspond with that received by men in other professions; but in the

> satisfaction that comes from seeing and producing beauty, from breathing fresh air, getting outdoor exercise and all the delights that go with the country and the great outdoors and in the pleasure and satisfaction of doing helpful constructive work, no profession can vie with this new art.[27]

Apparently, the book received good reviews because Simonds later sent several of them from unnamed American periodicals and from the London Times and The Gardener's Chronicle from England to the National Cyclopedia of Biography as background information about himself.[28] One exception was an unsigned review in Landscape Architecture, the ASLA's journal.[29] The author warned that

> Three things should be borne in mind by the landscape designer who picks up Mr. Simonds' volume: it appears in the Rural Science Series, which sets a certain atmosphere for the book, an atmosphere especially suited to the expression of Mr. Simonds' naturalistic ideals; it rests on the conception that 'the special domain of the landscape-gardener or landscape designer is to protect the *appearance* of the great out-of-doors;" and, in thus being destined for popular use . . . One need have no hesitation in recommending the volume as first reading for rural clients, women's clubs, and men engaged in out-door work . . .[30]

Quoting a long passage about the landscape-gardener's approach to beautifying the "'country as a whole,'" the reviewer summarized,

> We thus see the field for Mr. Simonds' landscape gardener is far smaller than that generally understood to be covered by the landscape architect of today.

He found the chapter on city planning "entirely superficial," and the idea of "embellishment by planting" equally disappointing. He did appreciate the high quality of the photographs, and noted that the chapter on arid and semi-arid

regions "show[ed] a keen appreciation of the esthetic value of land forms." But the reviewer did not like the actual physical book, saying it was "most uncomfortably heavy to hold . . . the index is very poor." He concluded lamely by saying:

> Whatever we may find to criticize unfavorably, we realize that we are reading the sincere words of a man who knows and believes in the greatness of the landscape art . . ."[31]

Sargent and the Arnold Arboretum

However, many others found Simonds' approach to landscape design as set forth in his book more agreeable. The year Landscape-Gardening was published, Simonds and his wife visited Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sprague Sargent and toured the Arnold Arboretum with them.[32] Sargent had been the arboretum's director since its inception in 1872. The two men had been acquainted since the 1890s--if not earlier--when Sargent edited Garden and Forest,[33] the popular publication in which Simonds' important essay "The Landscape-gardener and his Work" was reprinted from the more narrowly focused Park and Cemetery.

Wealthy and well-educated, Sargent came from a prominent New England family, and had been interested in horticulture since childhood. His cousin, Henry Winthrop Sargent, was a friend and client of Andrew Jackson Downing, giving Charles first-hand experience with Downing's work and philosophy. Turning the arboretum's 265 acres of hilly farmland into a "tree-garden" to go with Harvard's botanic garden, Sargent used principles similar to those Loudon followed in 1840 for

his plan for the Derby Arboretum. This included a museum-like collection of plants arranged in logical order, placed in such a way as to form a pleasing landscape.[34] Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. strengthened the overall design of the arboretum in the 1880s.[35]

Joy Morton's Arboretum

Forty-nine years later, while still director of the Arnold Arboretum, Sargent received a letter in December, 1920 from a Chicagoan named Sterling Morton. Morton wrote to ask where he could purchase books about the Arnold, and was modest enough to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the reply. He also mentioned his grandfather, Julius Sterling Morton, founder of Arbor Day in the United States in 1872, and a former Secretary of Agriculture.[36] In the exchange of correspondence, Sargent learned that Joy Morton, Sterling's father and chairman of the Morton Salt Company, was ready to realize his lifelong dream of establishing a Midwestern arboretum. His vision had begun in 1876 when, at the age of twenty-one, he visited the then-new Arnold Arboretum with his father, Julius.[37]

Joy Morton soon took over the discussions with Sargent, and in June of 1921 he went to see the Arnold Arboretum again and meet Sargent. At some point during these early letters and meetings, Sargent recommended Simonds to Morton.[38] Morton took Sargent's advice, and within two weeks of his visit to

Jamaica Plain, he wrote to Sargent that Simonds "will aid in the preparation of a tentative plan, if his health permits."[39]

The next day, Morton met for lunch with Jean Cudahy, his daughter, and Simonds to present his "scheme for establishing an arboretum" on land he owned twenty-five miles west of Chicago. Mrs. Cudahy was as enthusiastic and committed to the project as her father. Morton had thought about this project for nearly fifty years, and wanted an arboretum that "would rival or surpass Kew Gardens in London or the Arnold Arboretum at Boston." Knowing full well the cost, he was prepared to provide "plenty of money to develop" it. This one would remain in Morton's private ownership, with restricted public admittance. Simonds responded that he was very pleased that Morton had asked him to work as consulting landscape-gardener for the rest of Simonds' life.[40]

On 18 June, Simonds and Morton walked together around the site intended for the arboretum. Seven days later, Simonds sent Morton a three-page letter, "to be filed away as a record of the early days of the Morton Arboretum," outlining their preliminary plans, clarifying Morton's wishes, and describing the conditions of the land. In it, Simonds recommended that in addition to securing "specimens of all the trees and shrubs which will grow in Northern Illinois" it was equally important "to preserve forever some native forest without molestation." He had often written about the long time span to be considered when designing a landscape, and

this concern would be exemplified at the arboretum. He told Morton that "In considering the arboretum one must think of the people who will visit it fifty, one hundred, two hundred or more years in the future." The size of the arboretum Morton was proposing impressed his landscape-gardener, who pointed out that it would be twice as large as the Arnold or Kew, and he reiterated the "importance of an artistic arrangement as well as one showing different species."[41]

The collaboration of Morton, Sargent, and Simonds created a synergy and enthusiasm that achieved a great deal in a short time. By 23 June 1921, Bartlett and Blair of Simonds and Company completed a topographic survey and established the boundaries for the new arboretum. Simonds was out on the property again the next day, staking out the center-line of the main drive and walking through the woods to find suitable places for lakes. He was already designing as he walked, choosing appropriate tree species for low areas near the DuPage River. In a letter to Joy Morton, the first of a series he would write over the next few years documenting the arboretum's progress, he suggested that the arboretum drive go underneath the highway (then called Joliet Road) to the eastern portion of the grounds to avoid crossing the highway at grade level.[42]

Morton and Simonds developed a solid relationship almost immediately, based on their ability to express honest concerns to one another. Morton wrote to Simonds, asking him to look

at farm buildings on his next visit and to give his opinion on their suitability for housing the "local working force." He also noted that they had a "good general understanding" of each other's views.[43]

Early in July, Sterling Morton expressed doubts in writing to his father about the proposed scope of the arboretum, and Joy Morton passed these on to Simonds. He responded to Joy Morton in writing, explaining in no uncertain terms the values that he believed the arboretum would provide, basing his ideas on four decades of landscape gardening experience. Despite his earlier interest in the project, Morton's son felt that financial resources ought be put to better use finding cures for diseases and increasing the nation's monetary wealth. Simonds' rejoinder acknowledged the worth of those goals, and then eased to the elder Morton's qualms by discussing the underlying questions.[44]

He began by asking what an arboretum was, and what purpose it would serve. Webster's definition, as quoted by Simonds, was "a place where trees and shrubs are cultivated for scientific or educational purposes; a botanical garden of trees." From this, he inferred that a wide range of places could be included, from Kew Gardens to small collections like Luther Burbank's garden, because they both added to the "food supply and the beauty of our surroundings." He suggested that providing benefits to those who are "well and strong" is just as noble an effort as helping those who are suffering.

While an arboretum's basic function was to display a variety of trees and shrubs for educational reasons, Simonds also believed that the planning and growth of an arboretum included forestry, horticulture, and landscape gardening, and among these, forestry was most important. He had been concerned for many years with reforestation and the value of woodlots to agriculture, establishing a tree nursery on his farm in Michigan as a practical way of encouraging tree planting. Horticulture's value, he believed, could not be called into question. As for landscape gardening, he knew that many considered it "a useless and wasteful art, if they [gave] it any recognition." But, he continued, in his opinion, it should rank higher than art or music because it alone satisfies all of our senses--echoing the earlier sentiments of his mentor, Bryan Lathrop. Considering the opinions of both Morton men, Simonds recommended that the arboretum contain

> all hardy trees and shrubs which are useful in the production of food, production of lumber, and the creation of scenery...also...a collection of medicinal plants.[45]

This arboretum, he concluded:

> should exceed all previous efforts. It should contain a thousand pictures more beautiful than any that have been painted by the best painters, and varieties that will be hardy and happy at the arboretum should be used. It should, in fact, be a temple where religion is felt rather than expressed in words, or if given vocal expression this ... should come from the throats of song sparrows, robins, thrushes, redbirds, and feathered warblers.

Joy Morton agreed, and proceeded to develop the Arboretum at full speed.[46]

Sterling apparently relaxed his attitude, because he visited the arboretum at Tervuern, Belgium in August of that year. Involved with a Chicago firm that manufactured steel labels, he was now interested in how could use them for identifying plant names at his father's arboretum, thereby making it a museum and educational facility. His father and Simonds were involved in designing the labels, too, and they consulted with Sargent regarding the Arnold's plant labelling system.[47] Sargent made a special trip to visit Morton's new arboretum that autumn and Morton, grateful for Sargent's continuing interest and advice, donated $2500 to the Arnold Arboretum in October.[48] The next month, Morton sent Sargent a draft of the arboretum's purpose and goals; Sargent responded by revising the paragraph describing his idea of a scientific arboretum.[49] It should be "equipped with an herbarium, a reference library, and laboratories for the study of trees . . . ,' so that the plants themselves, and their economic potential could be explored. Much to Morton's credit, he spared no expense in incorporating these suggestions.

In the meantime, Simonds hired a photographer to document the changes as the land was re-shaped and planted. Jun Fujita made enough photographs to submit a handwritten invoice for $758.34.[50] Park and Cemetery later reported,

> Joy Morton, president of the Morton Salt Company, has given 400 of his 2,000 acres to what will be known as the Morton Arboretum. It will be to the scientific forester and gardener what his laboratory is to the chemist, and to the everyday nature lover a spot where he can see both

> his own native trees and trees imported from foreign lands.[51]

Surprisingly, it does not mention Simonds' involvement, even though he was a member and past-president of its sponsoring organization, the American Association of Cemetery Superintendents.[52]

Later that month, Simonds again went to Jamaica Plain to visit Sargent, tour the arboretum, and interview a "young Austrian" there, perhaps Heinrich Teuscher, as a possible superintendent for Morton.[53] Sargent was satisfied that they had "fully discussed the Arboretum" and he compiled a list of trees he thought would grow well in Illinois.[54] It was just a year since Sterling had sent his first letter to the Director of the Arnold Arboretum.

By January of 1922, Simonds was staying overnight at Thornhill, Morton's estate adjacent to the arboretum, and supervising a young landscape architect named Clarence Godshalk, who had been hired the previous fall.[55] Simonds ordered most of the plants himself, many from Naperville Nurseries, one of his favorites and just a few miles away. On the eighteenth of that month, he wrote his third report for Morton, reviewing the progress to date. The first lake was completed; the second nearly so. Roads were planned, newly acquired land had been surveyed, poor trees had been removed, and Godshalk was in charge of pruning.[56] Alfred Senn from Chicago was hired as superintendent and was ready to go to work as soon as the ground thawed. Sargent "expressed his

hearty approval" while visiting and encouraged Morton to plant the "largest collection of hawthorns in the world" on one hundred acres of the arboretum.[57]

Simonds and Company had drawn planting plans for the different sections, including a pinetum in the southwest corner. While the Mortons vacationed in Honolulu, Simonds prepared a general plan for locating 2200 to 2300 species and varieties of trees and shrubs. He intended to plant first on the west edge and east sides of the property because the central areas were still in agricultural use. Species that were more difficult to find would be sent to him from the Arnold's collection. He planned a lilac garden near the highway, with two hundred varieties--lilacs were one of his favorite plants. Simonds set aside different collection areas, including one for viburnums and another for roses, and placed willows, alders, and poplars along the river and stream banks. He felt by now that the "Arboretum is gradually taking on a definite shape and character."[58]

Joy Morton wrote to Charles Sargent in May that "Mr. Simonds is spending four nights a week at my house and most of his daylight time in the Arboretum. It is coming along splendidly and its development is most satisfactory. We are both delighted."[59]

That summer, Simonds and his wife Mattie, with his cousin Charles Garfield and his wife Emma, took a trip abroad. As

Simonds explained in a letter to Morton, written aboard their ship, the trip was

> partly for the ladies, partly for rest and relaxation, and partly to take another look at Kew, see the arboretum at Brussels, and to visit various other collections of trees and shrubs in different parts of France and Great Britain.[60]

The rest of the six-page letter dealt with progress at the Morton Arboretum, including an inventory of 138,160 plants set out that April and May. Areas had been named, such as the Ozarks, Hemlock, Evergreen, and Pine Hills, and Sargent Glade. "Marmo," a contraction of Margaret Morton, was being considered as a name for the first lake.[61] He listed fifteen projects needing attention, including such items as building a bridge, constructing a propagating house, erecting more fences, and starting the lilac garden.[62]

At the end of July, the Simonds and Garfields visited the arboretum at Brussels and met with Professor Bommer, its director. In a letter to Morton, Simonds described the tour and the layout of the garden.[63] He had been puzzled by the lack of labels, but was satisfied when Bommer explained that because of free public access, vandals had destroyed them. He felt that this "show[ed] the wisdom of [Morton's] idea in regard to fences and the limited admittance of visitors." He signed off hoping the arboretum would keep the Mortons "young and interested for the next twenty-five years."[64]

Designing and planting continued at the arboretum that fall. The Rochester, New York Parks Department sent plants

that were unavailable locally or from the Arnold. Simonds his ideas about landscape gardening and his goals for the Morton Arboretum with Godshalk, who had already been promoted to arboretum superintendent.[65] Holabird and Roche, Simonds' former partners, designed a library, swimming pool, and cottage for the Morton estate; they were completed in 1924.[66] Meanwhile, Simonds investigated sources for herbarium cases.[67] On December 14, the Morton family and other board members signed the formal indenture for the Morton Arboretum. It named the trustees and successors, gave the legal description of the institution, and provided an indenture clause stipulating that the land could not be sold and would remain forever intact.[68]

Simonds' involvement continued for several more years, slowly tapering off over the rest of the decade. In July of 1924, he wrote to Morton with planting recommendations and adjustments. That August, Morton asked for his comments on a proposed arboretum booklet. A few letters were exchanged in 1928 and 1929, with the last written in November of 1931.[69]

* * * * * *

Endnotes

1. Thomas Wakefield Goodspeed, "La Verne Noyes, The University of Chicago Biographical Sketches, Vol.1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1922), 257-77.

2. Holabird and Roche designed several buildings for the school, which received endowments from the Julius Rosenwalds, Potter Palmers, George Strauts, Pattens, and Talcotts, as well as the Noyes. (Bruegmann, Vol.1, 336-37.)

3. Personally addressed copy, SFC.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid, 96-99.

6. "The Campus," Report of Iowa State Board of Education, 1916, 266. Special Collections, The Parks Library, Iowa State University.

7. Werle, 13. A few larches are still standing, about the right height to be eighty years old.

8. L.H. Pammel to President R.A. Pearson of Iowa State College, 21 March 1916, PP-1, 25/5, Grounds Committee, University Archives, Iowa State University.

9. Elwood was a younger ASLA member responsible for producing the first photographic record of works of ASLA members in 1924; he later became the chairman of the ISU Department of Landscape Architecture.

10. General Plan of Grounds for Ida Noyes Hall, December 1915, Architectural Drawings Collection, Box 19, Special Collections, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago.

11. Goodspeed, 274.

12. Trustees, Board of, Minutes, Vol.10, 1917-18, 403, University Archives, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago.

13. Ibid., Vol.11, 1919-20, 17.

14. "Dean of the Cemetery Field."

15. Martha Simonds' diary, SFC.

16. Bruegmann, "Glen View Club-Boy Scout Fountain," Vol.2, 138.

17. Simonds, "Landscape Gardening in its Relation to Roadside Planting," Journal of the International Garden Club, Vol.II, No.2 (June 1918), 187-201 & 300-301; "Care of Woods and Ravines," ibid., No.3, September 1918, 421-24.

18. Ibid., 421.

19. Martha Simonds' diary, SFC; courthouse plans at Morton Arboretum archives.

20. Four years later, Holabird and Roche designed a house for E.J. Brundage, Attorney General of Illinois, at Babson Farms in Grand Detour. (Bruegmann, Vol.1, #960.) There is no mention of Simonds, but it is possible that his trip there in 1919 included a visit with Brundage.

21. Simonds, Landscape-Gardening (New York: Macmillan Company, 1920), 1.

22. Ibid., 3.

23. Quoted in Kenneth Clark, Landscape into Art (London: J. Murray, 1949), 74.

24. This is one of the few places Simonds mentions the horizontal in landscape design, despite Wilhelm Miller's insistence it was a major theme for him.

25. Ibid., 6-7.

26. Ibid., 17-18.

27. Ibid., 24-25.

28. Simonds' 1931 desk diary,

29. "Book Reviews," Landscape Architecture, XI, No.3 (April 1921), 155-57.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Martha Simonds' diary, SFC

33. Simonds, "The Landscape-gardener," 282-83.

34. Ida Hay, Science in the Pleasure Ground: A History of the Arnold Arboretum (Boston: Eastern University Press, 1995),

WHT.

35. Cynthia Zaitzevsky, Frederick Law Olmsted and the Boston Parks System (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1982).

36. Sterling Morton to the Director of the Arnold Arboretum, 22 December 1920, Sterling Morton Correspondence, Archives of Sterling Morton Library, Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL. All subsequent correspondence is from the Morton Arboretum's archives.

37. Ibid., January 1922.

38. "A Brief History of the Morton Arboretum" brochure (Lisle, Illinois: The Morton Arboretum, 1996).

39. Morton to Sargent, June 1921. This appears to be the earliest reference to Simonds' poor health.

40. Simonds to Morton, 25 June 1921.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Morton to Simonds, 11 July 1921.

44. Simonds to Morton, 13 July 1921.

45. Ibid.

46. Simonds to Morton, 18 January 1922.

47. Morton to Simonds, 6 September 1921; "Morkrum Mfg. Co." at 1410 Wrightwood, Chicago, owned by Howard Krum and Sterling Morton, with labels and markers made by Ryerson & Sons, letterhead, MA.

48. Morton to Sargent, 12 October 1921.

49. Sargent to Morton, 26 November 1921.

50. Simonds' bills for the month on behalf of Morton, 1 December 1921.

51. "New Parks and Improvements," Park and Cemetery (December 1921): 266.

52. Ibid.

53. Teuscher later worked at Morton Arboretum as its botanist.

54. Sargent to Morton, 27 December 1921.

55. Clarence Godshalk and his wife Margaret were guests of the Simonds in Pier Cove the next summer, signing in the Cove Book on 6 September 1923.

56. Simonds to Morton, 18 January 1922.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.; plans for the Morton Arboretum, MA.

59. Morton to Sargent, 1 May 1921.

60. Simonds to Morton, 8 July 1922.

61. The name "Marmo" stuck and is still used today.

62. Simonds to Morton, 8 July 1922.

63. Simonds to Morton, 1 August 1921.

64. Ibid.

65. Scott Mehaffey, "Laying the Foundation: Landscape at the Morton Arboretum, O.C. Simonds and Clarence Godshalk, 1922-1953," The Morton Arboretum Quarterly, Vol.31, No.3 (Autumn 1995), 36. In September of 1923, he and his wife Margaret visited the Simonds at Pier Cove. (Cove Book, 6 September 1923, SFC.)

66. Bruegmann, #925.

67. Simonds to Morton, 1922.

68. 14 December 1922

69. Morton Correspondence, MA.

CHAPTER 10

"A BETTER HERITAGE FOR LATER DAYS CAN NO MAN LEAVE" (1922-1960)

York Harbor

On their return in September, 1922 from visiting European gardens, Simonds and his wife stopped to visit their son, Robert, in York Harbor, Maine. Twenty years earlier, Simonds had designed grounds for the summer home that Bryan and Helen Lathrop had built on the land they bought here in 1900. Soon thereafter, concerned with the town's appearance, Lathrop campaigned for planting more street trees, and engaged his friend to work on the project.[1] By 1910, Lathrop began purchasing enough property to create a subdivision (400 acres). Simonds prepared the plat for him and became an investor in the undertaking.[2]

They named their development York Harbor Hills, and their group the Seabury Land Company. As with College Hills and the Highlands in Madison, which were platted around the same time, the lots did not sell quickly, and few houses were built. Simonds kept pursuing its development, however, and Robert--a graduate of Landscape Design Department at the University of Michigan--was sent to oversee the work. By 1926, when Robert married Gladys (Gerry) McConnal (also a landscape architect

with a degree from the University of Michigan), the York Harbor Hills promotional brochure listed Herbert R. Simonds (the oldest son) as a company director, Robert as Superintendent of Improvements, and Simonds and West of Chicago as Landscape Designers. It boasted that:

> The plotting has not been done on paper in the conventional manner. Rather the land was studied and the house sites selected to afford the best ocean view without disturbing the outlook from other houses.. Only after the house sites had been carefully located were the plot boundaries fixed. Roads follow the natural curves and grades so as to preserve the park-like beauty of the rolling hills. The result is a plan which gives to small acreage the freedom and seclusion usually associated with large estates.[3]

But efforts to develop a successful subdivision dragged on, throughout the depression of the early 1930s, until the Simonds family relinquished its interests.[4]

In 1922, Simonds commissioned his old friends Holabird and Roche to design a storefront building for part of his Chicago property fronting on Montrose, although he apparently did not build it.[5] He redesigned Montrose Cemetery in Chicago that year. Situated on the city's northwest side, it had been in existence for many years before Simonds drew this comprehensive plan.[6] That spring and fall he worked on projects in Dixon, and gave his "Nature as the Great Teacher" lecture for students at the University of Illinois.

Florida

By 1924, Simonds became interested in tung oil, a quick-drying varnish ingredient and wood preservative recently discovered in China. Extracted from the subtropical tung

tree, the Agricultural Experiment Station in Florida was exploring its potential as a cash crop. Simonds' cousin, Charles Garfield, owned property in DeLand in central Florida and Simonds purchased about twenty-five adjacent acres by the mid-1920s. He had probably been enticed there by the mild weather, since he had been in poor health since at least 1921.[7] Always interested in new plants and projects, the two men became fascinated with the prospect of raising tung trees to make money and of the opportunity to appreciate plants that could flourish in the south.[8] This enterprise never furnished the desired results, although the industry grew rapidly in the next decade. Simonds decided to divide and sell his land, apparently with little success.[9] He sold his house and lot on Montrose in Chicago in 1927, investing some of the profits in a thirty-six unit apartment building on Greenleaf Street in Rogers Park.[10] He and Mattie then moved in with their daughter Gertrude and her husband, William Walker, who lived on Junior Terrace, just a few blocks from their old home.[11]

ASLA Works of Members and a Gold Medal

P.H. Elwood, the professor of landscape architecture at Iowa State responsible for remodelling its campus after Simonds, published the first photographic collection of works of ASLA members in 1924. For Simonds' section of the book, he printed a few pictures of Graceland, and two of private estates. At the front of the book, was a small, unidentified photograph of a tree with tulips around its base, beside a

gently curving road. It, too, was a scene in of Graceland. Yet, in his introduction to the collection, Elwood made it clear that to conform to professional standards a designer had to be equally proficient in both formal and naturalistic styles. Although he chose Simonds' rustic design for the book's frontispiece illustration, Elwood's emphatic statement about the two design methods was a harbinger that the days of the landscape-gardener were on the wane.[12]

Despite landscape gardening's decline within the landscape design profession, the Architectural League in New York awarded Simonds their gold medal for landscape design in 1925. This was especially prestigious because it only gave an award the years it could find a worthy recipient. As concerned as ever with proper professional standards, Simonds served on the ASLA's newly formed Ethics Committee beginning in 1926.[13] The Association held its annual meeting at the Hotel Sherman in Chicago that year. Guest speakers included architect Dwight Heald Perkins and landscape designer Jens Jensen, who talked about the native landscape.[14]

Some Objections to Landscape Gardening Methods

The American Mercury, edited by H.L. Mencken, published landscape architect Elbert Peets denunciation of "The Landscape Priesthood" in 1927--an entirely different view of the profession of landscape architecture.[15] Aiming specifically at "the true Olympians, the fifty Fellows of the American Society of Landscape Architects," Peets claimed that

"the introduction of the English landscape style of gardening was a calamity of the first magnitude."[16] He believed it had stifled any real creativity in American design, was antithetical to vernacular gardening styles, and that the society's rhetoric about the unique requirements of a landscape designer was so much "foliage of logical distinction [under which] will be found the fungi of economic interest."[17]

By name, he mentioned the three Olmsteds, the two Eliots, and Hubbard and Kimball of Harvard.[18] He expressed his disdain for the American Academy in Rome and the landscape architecture department in general at Harvard. Peets never mentioned Simonds, but his invective against the natural style of design fully included every precept Simonds employed.

> Cemeteries, as everybody knows, are always landscaped . . . It is truly pitiful to see normally straight-edge minded engineers trying to equal the trick streets and yawpy intersections of the initiates.[19]

As for "Rural Beautification," Peets briefly touched on the edition of Landscape Architecture that dealt with landscape extension work, singling out a "photograph of a previously gaunt farm home beautified with a curved walk and flocculent shrubbery." Other than suggesting that students have their minds opened with "pedagogical dynamite," however, Peets did not propose any remedies to what he saw as a dire situation.[20]

Working with the Bell Family

But Simonds believed whole-heartedly in his design philosophy, and so did many others. In 1928, he went to Bethesda, Maryland to consult with Gilbert Grosvenor,

Alexander Graham Bell's son-in-law and founder of the National Geographic Society, about his estate, Wild Acres. Simonds was further engaged by the family to plan a fitting last resting place for Bell on their property in Nova Scotia, and to engineer the re-location of sixteen-ton boulder as his grave marker.[21] He also commuted to Madison to lecture on landscape gardening, and enlarged his tree-nursery at Pier Cove.[22]

Honorary Master of Arts

The University of Michigan awarded Simonds an honorary Master of Arts degree in 1929. The spokesman for the school called him "a staunch defender of the natural charm of American landscapes . . . A better heritage for later days can mo man leave."[23] Simonds continued to work, even though he was not well. He went to a clinic called the "Health School" in Chicago that year for some stringent dietary suggestions of a morning "starch meal," a noon-time "protein meal," and a night "fruit meal," as well as large doses of various mineral salts and oils.[24] That winter, O.C. and Mattie went to Florida to escape the Midwest's bitter weather.[25] Their son Marshall, who had been superintendent of the Green Bay, Wisconsin, Parks Department, moved to Chicago to join his father's firm. Walter Studley, his nursery manager at the Cove, bought a new Ford truck for the business,[26] and Simonds served on a special ASLA committee planning a memorial for Frederick Law Olmsted.[27] The American Cemetery published a charming and informative interview, calling him "The Dean of the Cemetery Field."[28] It

included Simonds' own recounting of the early days at Graceland with Jenney, experiences transplanting trees, and his impressions of Adolph Strauch at Spring Grove.

Simonds' Last Year

In Florida again, Simonds ordered tung oil trees in January of 1931. Wilson Pettibone in Hannibal, Missouri, who had hired him several times to create and guide his Riverview Park, contacted him to work on a new park along the river and, on 6 January, Simonds sent him a preliminary plan for Nipper Park.[29] That July, Simonds spoke at a meeting of the American Association of Cemetery Superintendents at Oakland Cemetery, one of his former projects, in Freeport, Illinois.[30] He visited an old friend, Anton Hodenpyl, at his home in Long Island later that month, and became ill while there. His health did not improve when he returned to Chicago and in November he entered Lake View Hospital. On Saturday, November 21, Simonds died of complications from his gastric ulcer.

A funeral service was held for him at Graceland's chapel at 2 p.m. the following Monday, and later that day, the cemetery's plant propagator named two of his new chrysanthemum varieties for Marshall's two daughters, Margaret and Barbara, in Simonds' memory.[31] Despite his fifty-three year affiliation with the place known as his masterpiece, in accordance with his own wishes, Simonds' was cremated (in the oil-burning facility at Graceland) and his ashes spread under his favorite beech trees, the "church beeches," in the ravine at Pier Cove.

When his wife died seven years later, the family spread her ashes there as well.

The Simonds' real estate investments were hard-hit by the financial crash of 1929. Even though their Montrose Avenue property would have sold for several hundred thousand dollars in 1927, the building on Greenleaf and the land in Florida had no buyers. After Simonds' death, Mattie was forced to auction off their furniture in Michigan (much of it came from their Chicago house) for a few dollars. If her daughter and son-in-law had not bought their Pier Cove farm, she would have lost that as well.[32]

Simonds' Family Legacy

Partner J. Roy West and son Marshall kept Simonds and West firm going for several more years. When West died in November of 1941, he was cremated at Graceland, and his ashes returned to his family. Both Marshall and Robert worked in Illinois for the Civilian Conservation Corps during the mid-1930s, and eventually Marshall moved back to Green Bay.[33]

Simonds' daughter, Gertrude, and her husband were founding members of the Prairie Club in the early years of the century. Dedicated to learning about the natural ecology of the southern Lake Michigan region, with instruction from dunes expert Henry Cowles and prairie expert Jens Jensen, the group frequently travelled to Simonds' ravine at Pier Cove on its excursions.[34] After her father's death, Gertrude kept the Michigan property as close to his intentions as she could, and

when the state proposed building a highway through the ravine in 1960, she fought to have the road constructed farther east, leaving his beloved ravine unscathed.[35] The property that O.C. and his friend J.B. Johnson purchased in 1891 is still held by their respective families, and the ravine, while much overgrown from Simonds' original plan, still contains the church beeches, wild roses, and many other plants put there by Simonds.[36]

Julia Simonds Fletcher, Simonds' sister, lived in Grand Rapids throughout her life. Holabird and Roche designed a house for her, built on property adjacent to the old family farm, which had been purchased by their cousins, the Garfields. Her brother and their cousin, Charles, created a small subdivision in the area immediately south of their land. Together, Julia Fletcher and Charles Garfield donated the remaining acreage from the farm to the city of Grand Rapids for a public park, and Garfield and his wife are buried there, with a large boulder for their gravestone. Originally called Garfield-Fletcher Park, now known simply as Garfield Park, it is undergoing renovation with funding from the National Park Service as of this writing.

Hodenpyl Woods, a few miles northeast of Garfield Park, is another enduring Grand Rapids' heritage created by Simonds. Developed and financed by his childhood friend Anton Hodenpyl, the two men created this wooded park and drive to preserve a

small piece of the area's forests as they were before the early settlers.

Lacking Simonds' artistic guidance, the landscape pictures he envisioned for these locations are gone. But because his family and friends shared his concern that these landscapes endure "for generations to come" (as he had expressed it to Morton), these sites are open, green spaces in an otherwise densely populated area. The landscape-gardening profession one of its greatest practitioner when Simonds died, but his heritage of respecting and preserving "nature as the great teacher" still enriches our lives.

* * * * * *

Endnotes

1. York Harbor booklet, SFC.

2. Map, O.C. Simonds & Co., 1910, showing roads, rivers, and vegetation, SFC.

3. Seabury Land Company, "York Harbor Hills, Maine," brochure, n/d (date established by the company name "Simonds and West," to which "O.C. Simonds and Co." was changed in 1925, according to an announcement card in Morton Arboretum collection).

4. Miscellaneous records and correspondence between Simonds and his sons Robert and Herbert, SFC; author's conversations with Roberta Simonds, 1997.

5. Bruegmann, Vol.2, 240.

6. I am grateful to Diane Lanigan, horticulturist and cemetery historian, for this information.

7. Morton to Sargent, June 1921.

8. Preliminary Report on Experiments with the Tung Oil Tree in Florida, U.S. Department of Commerce and University of Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 171 (May 1924); and miscellaneous other brochures about tung oil, SFC. Simonds purchased $12.50 worth of tung oil trees in January of 1931, according to his desk diary.

9. DeLand Daily News, 23 January 1929, 1.

10. Real Estate News, 1970, MA.

11. In correspondence and records for 1927-1931, Simonds address is given as 754 Junior Terrace, the same as the Walkers'.

12. Elwood.

13. Transactions, 85-86.

14. Ibid.

15. Mencken's attitude was conducive to such points of view. During his days as Baltimore Herald drama critic, he reportedly said, '"The first job of the reviewer is to write a good story . . . It doesn't make much difference whether what he says is fundamentally sound or not . . . Don't hesitate to use the actors roughly: they are mainly idiots."' (as quoted in

Indian Hill; the first 75 years, 1914-1989, privately printed by the club, 7.)

16. Elbert Peets, "The Landscape Priesthood," The American Mercury, Vol.X No.37 (January 1927), 94.

17. Ibid., 98.

18. Henry Vincent Hubbard and Theodora Kimball (later Hubbard).

19. Ibid., 95.

20. Ibid., 97.

21. Author's conversation with Robert C. Simonds, July 1997; photographs of the planting and boulder-moving in his collection.

22. Simonds to Walter Studley, 10 April 1928; several plant inventories and nursery order forms dated throughout the 1920s (for as many if not more non-native tress as indigenous), SFC.

23. Louis E. Ayres, "Ossian Cole Simonds," University of Michigan Alumnus, 12 December 1931, SFC.

24. "The Health School" diagnosis and prescription sheet, SFC. These remedies apparently did not solve his problems, because he died from a gastric ulcer two and a half years later.

25. J. Roy West to Simonds, 6 January 1930, SFC.

26. Paperwork and license, SFC.

27. Transactions, 1920; Olmsted Client Card File.

28. "The Dean of the Cemetery Field." (The "incident" was meeting Bryan Lathrop.)

29. Simonds' 1931 desk diary, 6 January, SFC.

30. Park and Cemetery, December 1931, 301-302.

31. Author's conversation with Barbara Simonds Valentine, Green Bay, Wisconsin, June 1997.

32. Author's conversation with Roberta Simonds, 1996; inventory of Simonds' household furnishings, SFC.

33. Author's conversation with Robert C. Simonds, July 1997.

34. Gertrude's diaries and photographs, SFC.

35. "Battle is Won; Road Won't Go Through Simonds' Sanctuary," [unidentified Grand Rapids newspaper] 31 May 1960, SFC; author's conversation with Roberta Simonds, June 1997.

36. Site observations, July 1997; Simonds' original plan re-drawn by Roberta Simonds, SFC.

AFTERWORD

O.C. Simonds had an influence on the style and standards of landscape design in the Midwest for generations (as did his mentor, Bryan Lathrop). While many, if not most, of his plantings have deteriorated or overgrown beyond recognition, or have been replanted, the general scheme of many of these sites still follows his original plan. Some of our favorite streets and gardens continue to reflect his belief that landscape design was the most comprehensive art.

While exploring the many disparate pieces of information about Simonds and his projects, it became obvious that he was, "if not an originator of trends, a conduit of taste,"[1] and as such, he is significant not just for his own contributions to landscape design, but for his effect upon and his reflection of broader cultural movements. A study of his life suggests interesting questions and issues for further examination. Among these are: the intersection of horticulture and design in the late nineteenth century; the different and strongly held views within the design profession, as expressed in its literature; and the role clients played in the broader process of design trends.[2] Other, inter-related subjects include: the functions of the Country Life movement and the landscape extension programs in a broader context than design

(especially their relationships to eugenics); the connection between geographic/environmental determinism theories popular in the early years of the twentieth-century and landscape design; and Wilhelm Miller's fanatical promotion of the "prairie spirit."

Simonds' career provides a nucleus for further studies. Many of his wealthy, influential clients (Lathrop and Noyes, to name just two) are unheard of today; yet they too were instrumental in molding the Midwest, and some familiarity with them would fill in missing pieces of history. Simonds' nursery business in Pier Cove, as documented in odds and ends of letters and receipts in the family collection, deserves having its story told.

And then there are the design projects themselves. Gathering the loose plans from the four corners into one safe archival holding would protect them from further disintegration and provide researchers the opportunity to compare plans, conserving time and effort.[3] For all of his contributions to the midwestern landscape and to the landscape profession, he merits the consolidation of his remaining materials into a collection--although Simonds himself might modestly disagree.

* * * * * *

Endnotes

1. Czach (referring to Hamerton), 477.

2. One pioneering study of this subject was Leonard K. Eaton's Two Chicago Architects and their Clients: Frank Lloyd Wright and Howard Van Doren Shaw (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969).

3. Suggestion of Charles Kiefer.

APPENDIX A

O.C. SIMONDS' PROJECTS

Note: Simonds designed several hundred more projects than so far compiled. While most of them have disappeared, there are many others to be included as other researchers discover them.

Type/Name	*Date*	*Location*	*Source*
Arboretums			
Morton Arboretum	1921-25	Lisle, IL	MA
Nichols Arboretum	1907	Ann Arbor, MI	Nichols
Cemeteries			
Bell, Alexander G. (Gravesite; photographs)	1920s	Novia Scotia	RCS
Graceland Cemetery	1878-1931	Chicago, IL	Graceland
Kranz Cemetery Lot	n/d	Graceland	SFC
Memorial Cemetary (*sic*)	n/d	Oyster Bay	FLO
Montrose Cemetery	1922	Chicago, IL	Montrose*
Oakland Cemetery	n/d	Freeport, IL	P&C
Seeley Cemetery	1899	LaCrew IA	WHTC
Washington Cemetery	n/d	Indnplis., IN	ISU
Wooodland Cemetery	n/d	Hastings, MI	on-site
Woodland Cemetery	1895	Quincy, IL	Cairns
Estates and Home Grounds			
Colvin, The Misses	1904	Lake Forest, IL	MA
Cooper, A.A.	n/d	Dubuque, IA	MA
Cruttenden, John	1904	Quincy, IL	MA
Dawes, Charles Gates	1910-12	Evanston, IL	EHS

Douglas family:			
Brucemore	1907-27	Cedar Rapids, IA	WHTC
	1906	Charlevoix, MI	WHTC
Fletcher, N.A.	1894-95	Grand Rapids, MI	RB-CHS
Frost, A.C.	n/d	unknown	MA
Gaylord, Mrs. E.L.	1905	Midlothian, IL	MA
Goddard, Prof. E.C.	1904	Ann Arbor, MI	MA
Grosvenor, Gilbert (Wild Acres)	1920s	Bethesda, MD	RCS
Hardy, E.K.	1906	Akron, OH	MA
Hibbard	Before 1912	Winnetka, IL	CLA
Hodenpyl, Anton	n/d	Long Island, NY	SFC
Kackley, Thomas R.	1905	Indianapolis, IN	MA
King, Rockwell	1899	Chicago, IL	MA
Lathrop, Bryan	1890s	Chicago, IL	ER
		York Harbor, ME	SFC
Lawson, Victor	n/d	Green Lake, WI	SHSW
Lowden, Frank (Sinnissippi Farm)	191?	Oregon, IL	ALA
Lyman, Bement	1900	Indianapolis, IN	MA
McCormick, Miss	1900	Huntsville, AL	MA
Murdock, R.P.	1905	Wichita, KS	MA
Peterson, Dr.R.	1903	Ann Arbor, MI	MA
Rockcliffe Mansion	1900-01	Hannibal, MO	on-site
Stack, J.L.	1905	Midlothian, IL	MA
Stillwell, Homer A.	1905	Chicago, IL	MA
Wright, FL house	n/d	near Madison, WI	MA list

Golf Courses			
Chicago Golf Club	1894	Wheaton, IL	on site
Glen View Golf Club	1897	Golf, IL	on site
Indian Hills Club	1914	Winnetka, IL	on site
Parks			
Ann Arbor	n/d	Ann Arbor, MI	Grese
Baltimore	n/d	Baltimore, MD	FLO
Dixon Parks	1905-20	Dixon, IL	Sheaffer
Frick Park	n/d	Pittsburg, PA	NC
John Henes Park	1906-07	Menominee, MI	SFC/WHT
Library Park	1900	Kenosha, WI	Phillips
Lincoln Park	1903-13	Chicago, IL	CPD
Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Assn. Tenney Park Vilas Park Brittingham Park	1900-?	Madison, WI	MPPDA
New York	n/d	New York, NY	FLO
Nipper Park	1931	Hannibal, MO	Hagood
Quincy Parks	1895-?	Quincy, IL	Cairns
Riverview Park	1908	Hannibal, MO	Hagood
"Small Park"	1904	Springfield, IL	MA
Washington Park	1907	Springfield, IL	U of I
Personal Projects			
Simonds, O.C.	1881-1927	Chicago, IL	SFC
	1920s	DeLand, FL	SFC
	1891-1931	Ganges, MI	SFC
	1910-31	York Harbor, ME	SFC

Schools			
Academy of Our Lady	1905	Longwood, IL	MA
Beloit College	1900	Beloit, WI	WHTC
Central States Normal	1904	Mt. Pleasant, MI	MA
Illinois Industrial School for Girls	1907	Park Ridge, IL	RB-CHS
Iowa State University	1915	Ames, IA	ISU
Lake Forest College	1892-93	Lake Forest, IL	LFC
Michigan Agricultural College	n/d	Michigan	FLO
University of Maryland	n/d	Maryland	FLO
Subdivisions			
Chicago Streets	[1880s]	Chicago, IL	MA
Courtland/Palmer Sq.	n/d	Chicago, IL	MA
The Highlands	1911	Madison, WI	WHTC
Nokoma	1915	Madison, WI	WHTC
Shorewood Hills	1911-23	Shorewood Hills, WI	Brock
Spring Harbor	1912	Madison, WI	EW
Miscellaneous			
Armour, J. Ogden	1905	Lake Forest, IL	MA
Frederick Law Olmsted Memorial	1920		FLO
Landscape plan	n/d	Birmingham, MI	DB
Christ Church	1905	Winnetka, IL	MA
Fort Sheridan	1885-86	Highwood, IL	OCS
Michigan State Capitol	n/d	Lansing, MI	MA
* *	*	* *	*

Key to abbreviations:

ALA=American Landscape Architect
CLA=Country Life in America
CPD=Chicago Park District
DB=Diana Balmori, "Cranbrook"
DS=Dean Sheaffer
EHS=Evanston Historical Society
ER=Edward Renwick' memoirs
EW=Ernest Warner biography
FLO=Olmsted Client Card File, FLO Historic Site, NPS
ISU=Iowa State University
MA=Morton Arboretum
MA list=only mentioned on handwritten list at MA
MPPDA=Madison Parks and Pleasure Drive Association Records
NC=National Cyclopedia of Biography
OCS=Simonds
P&C=Park & Cemetery
RB-CHS=Robert Bruegmann/Chicago Historical Society
RCS=Robert C. Simonds
SFC=Simonds Family collection
SHSW=State Historical Society of Wisconsin
WHTC=William H. Tishler collection

* recent discovery by Diane Lanigan

APPENDIX B

National Register of Historic Places Listings with which O.C. Simonds was affiliated:

*1. Buena Park Historic District, Chicago (1984): Graceland Cemetery, Marine Drive, Irving Park Road, Montrose Avenue. Simonds platted streets.

*2. East Ravenswood Historic District, Chicago (1991): Lawrence Avenue, Clark Street, Irving Park Road, Ravenswood Avenue. Simonds platted streets on west side of Clark Street, between Irving Park and Montrose.

*3. Bryan Lathrop House, Chicago (1974): 120 East Bellevue Street (Fortnightly Club). Simonds designed the small back yard (not restored).

*4. Getty Tomb at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago (1974).

*5. Charles Gates Dawes House, Evanston, National Historic Landmark (1976): 225 Greenwood Street. Simonds redesigned the grounds for Dawes circa 1910-12 (not restored).

**5. Washington Park, Springfield, IL. Restored and adapted to Simonds' original design, 1901.

**6. Seeley Cemetery, LaCrew, IA, 1899. Partial restoration.

7. Lorado Taft Midway Studios, Chicago (1966): 6016 S. Ingleside.

*10. Rockcliffe Mansion, Hannibal, MO, 1901.

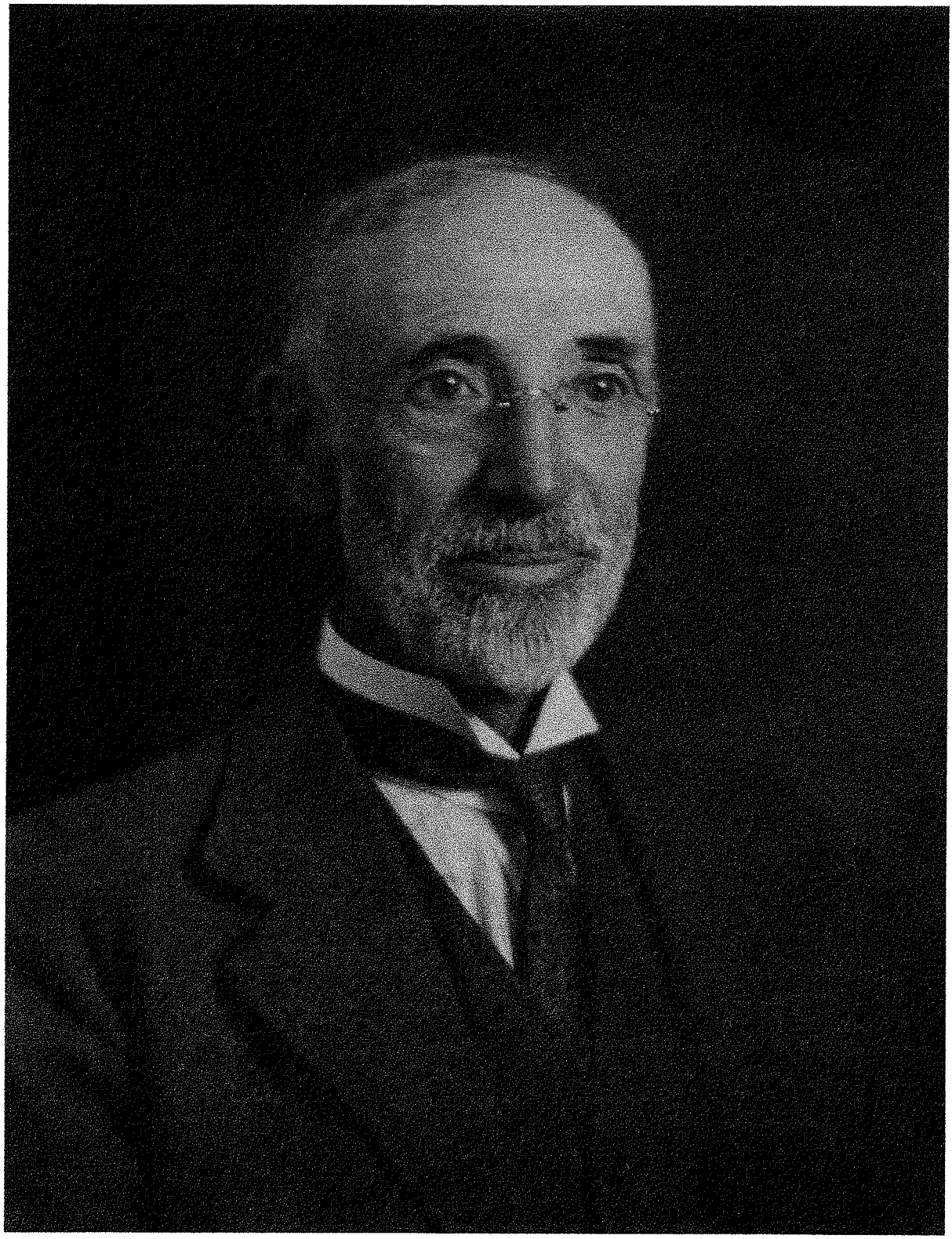
*11. Lincoln Park, Chicago: includes Simonds Drive underpass between Wilson and Lawrence.

**12. In process: Graceland Cemetery National Historic Landmark nomination, Chicago. [1998]

* Simonds was directly involved at the site, but National Register listing granted for other reasons.
** Simonds was directly involved at the site, and National Register listing granted, at least in part, for his work.
(Date denotes when listed in National Register.)

APPENDIX C

ILLUSTRATIONS

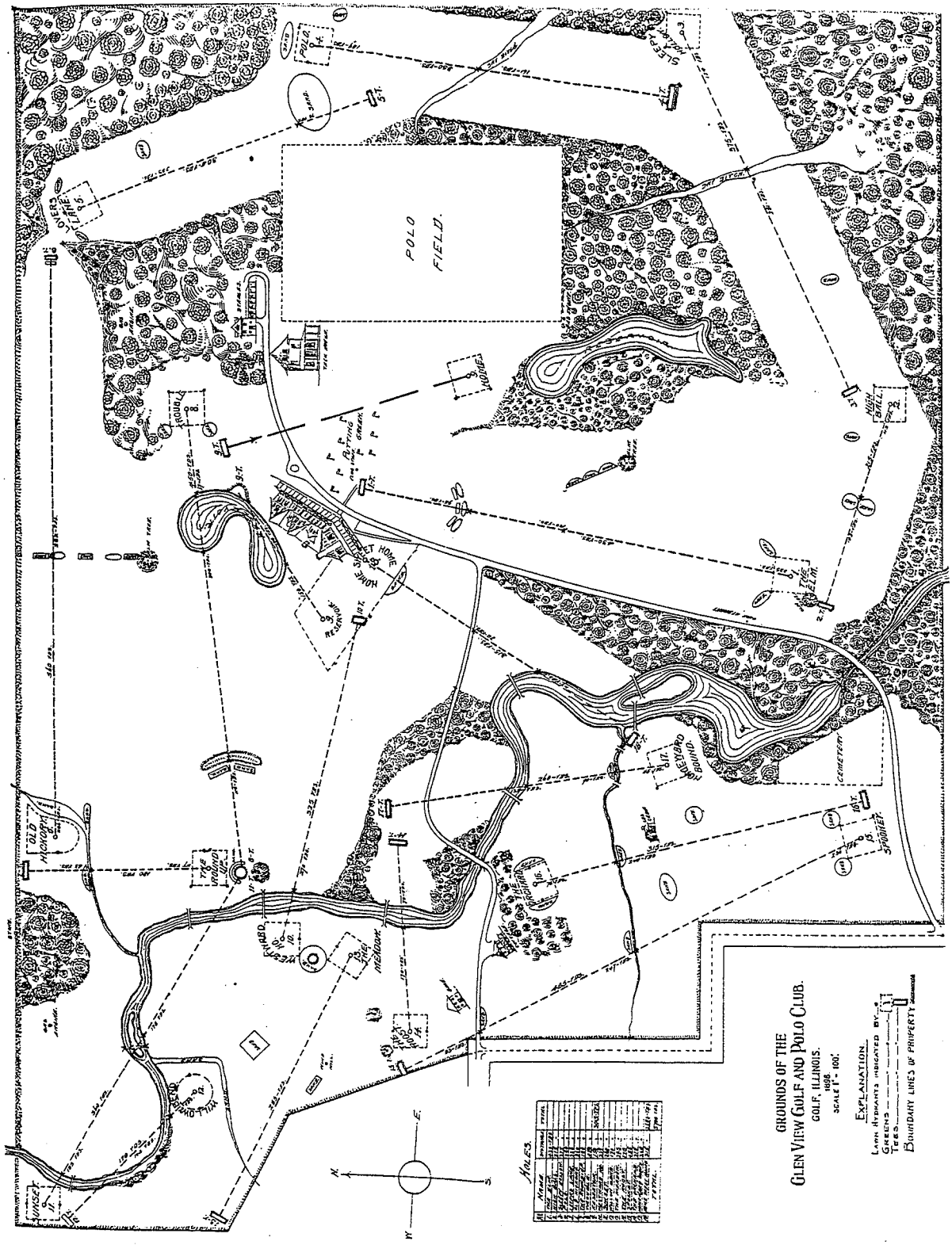


O.C. Simonds, ca. 1930
(Photograph courtesy of Richard and Roberta Simonds)

The Simonds Family, ca. 1900
Back, l. to r., Robert, Herbert, Gertrude, Marshall
Front, l. to r., Mattie, O.C., Donald
(Photograph courtesy of Richard and Roberta Simonds)

View from Simonds' office at Graceland, ca. 1904
(Used with permission of the Trustees,
Graceland Cemetery Improvement Fund)

Lake Willowmere at Graceland
(Used with permission of the Trustees,
Graceland Cemetery Improvement Fund)



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Key to abbreviations:

MA	Morton Arboretum
GVC	Glen View Club, courtesy of Roberta Nichols
SFC	Simonds Family collection
SHSW	State Historical Society of Wisconsin
WHTC	William H. Tishler collection

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Date