

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Prospect

and/or common Prospect House

2. Location

street & number Princeton University Campus  
West of Washington Rd., South of Nassau St. not for publication

city, town Princeton vicinity of

state New Jersey code 34 county Mercer code 21

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Dining Club

4. Owner of Property

name Princeton University

street & number

city, town Princeton vicinity of state New Jersey 08544

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mercer County Courthouse

street & number 209 S. Broad Street

city, town Trenton state New Jersey 08650

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Princeton Historic District  
National Register Nomination has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date June 25, 1975  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent       deteriorated  
 good             ruins  
 fair              unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Prospect in its present condition represents not only possibly the greatest residential masterpiece of a great American architect—John Notman but it is essentially the house which was Woodrow Wilson's residence when he was President of Princeton University.

Although the solarium and southeast porches have been replaced by Warren Platner's large Garden Room restaurant, and the building has been adapted to its current use as a faculty club, virtually all the changes in the historic building have been made in the service wing. That wing now houses the mass feeding service facilities and offices. The family's part of the the house is practically all there. With the exception of the Orange Room, which has been carefully restored to its Victorian colors, most of the interiors are probably as they were during the Wilson years. While we know of no paint research having been done to try to associate the current colors with chronology, we do know that similar "Colonialization" of Victorian color schemes was commonplace early in the twentieth century, i.e. in the Wilsonian period.

\*\*\*\*\*

Prospect is a Tuscan Villa designed by Philadelphia architect John Notman, and built in Princeton, New Jersey, for Thomas F. Potter in 1851-1852. The family's part of the mansion is a two-story structure with its tower on one end. At the opposite end, connected to it by a hyphen, is a service wing of three lower stories.

Set well back from the street on a fine front lawn, one approaches it through a gateway flanked by four decorative sandstone gateposts. The driveway goes between the two central gateposts, which are taller than the others. There are pedestrian gates on either side.

Carefully sited to take advantage of vistas, today the mansion is more hemmed in by lines of trees and by encroaching construction than it was originally. However, it still has a considerable garden. The mansion's walls are random-laid sandstone with quoins. The stones are a combination, part gray and part tan, giving an overall tan effect. There is an impressive porte cochere, surmounted by a balustrade. The balustrade is echoed by flanking bracket-supported balconies. There are two cast iron treillage porches. These are not shown on the Notman drawings of the Mansion.(1)

It was in 1968-69 that Warren Platner added the Garden Room at the east end, on the rear or garden side of the house, facing south. A concrete and glass structure, it has an articulated concrete sunshade which continues the waffle pattern of the dining room itself and harmonizes beautifully with the bracketed design of Notman's main cornice. Since the ground falls off at the rear of the house, Platner was able to create the Tap Room, a more informal dining room, under the main first floor dining area.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
..... prehistoric	..... archeology-prehistoric	..... community planning	..... landscape architecture	..... religion
..... 1400-1499	..... archeology-historic	..... conservation	..... law	..... science
..... 1500-1599	..... agriculture	..... economics	..... literature	..... sculpture
..... 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	..... military	..... social/
..... 1700-1799	..... art	..... engineering	..... music	..... humanitarian
..... 1800-1899	..... commerce	..... exploration/settlement	..... philosophy	..... theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	..... communications	..... industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	..... transportation
		..... invention		..... other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1851-1852

**Builder/Architect** John Notman, Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### Introduction

Woodrow Wilson's association with Prospect spanned eight years: from October, 1902 through January, 1911, a period which encompassed his presidency of Princeton University, as well as the beginning of his political career. The Princeton phase of Wilson's professional career is of particular interest, not only for the content of his educational ideas, but for the impact of his ideas and programs on his later political career. Several Wilson scholars have noted that during this period, Wilson changed in political outlook from a conservative to a progressive, a shift that helped make him an effective Democratic leader, and later, an attractive presidential candidate. This change in political perspective appears to have been related in part to certain academic policies and programs that he supported while Princeton's president. Attention has particularly focused on what has become known as the Quadrangle Plan and the Graduate College Controversy. At issue in the latter dispute was the physical positioning of the Graduate College relative to the rest of the university, as a reflection of larger ideas about the desired relationship between graduate and undergraduate education. Wilson, who saw a primary role of graduate education as providing a role model for undergraduates, sought a central location for the Graduate College on Princeton's campus. Accordingly, he chose the site of the university president's home, Prospect, for its construction. This site was opposed by various segments of the university for educational as well as for strategic reasons, and the disagreement created a rift in the entire university. The heated and protracted nature of the dispute, as well as its implications for progressive politics, gave Woodrow Wilson considerable national exposure, and if not directly leading to his resignation in 1910, certainly made him receptive to the idea of pursuing a public career. Wilson scholars have also noted that during his support for various academic programs at Princeton, Wilson was to develop a style of leadership, a way of creating support for his programs, of dealing with the opposition, of carrying his case to wider audiences in the face of immediate opposition which was later to characterize his national presidency.

During this period, Prospect as the residence of Princeton's president, served as Wilson's home and as such, was the setting of discussions of various academic programs. Additionally, because Wilson remained in Prospect until January 13, 1911, three months after his resignation as president, and two months as New Jersey's governor-elect, Prospect served as the setting of many political planning sessions, most significantly, the planning for the gubernatorial election of 1910 and the 1911 New Jersey senatorial race. The issues raised in these races would have a decided impact on the make-up of Wilson's constituency for the national presidency.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property approximately 5 acres

Quadrangle name Princeton Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 7.5 Minute Series

### UTM References

A 

1	8	5	2	9	1	5	0	4	4	6	6	1	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state New Jersey code 34 county Mercer code 21

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Diann L. Jacox, Historian & Henry J. Magaziner, Architect

organization National Park Service

date August, 1984

street & number 143 South Third Street

telephone (215) 597-9970

city or town Philadelphia

state Pennsylvania 19106

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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

date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Notman's drawings show a polygonal solarium extending south of the east wing. A photograph, marked circa 1890, shows scars from the then-recently-removed solarium, but another photo, marked 1896, shows it still in place. In any event, the Platner wing incorporates the space formerly occupied by the solarium. It also occupies the site of the southeast porch, which at one time matched the still-existing southwest porch, both porches being of cast iron grapevine treillage. A 1948 photograph shows that the southwest porch had been screened and the southeast porch had been glazed.(2)

Both Notman's preliminary and final first floor plans survive. They show how carefully he polished his original hyphen-connected two cube composition to add drama to the central atrium, improve the proportions of his rooms and subtly create a more interesting series of spaces. He also perfected the facades, making them more pleasing.

Entering the building from the porte cochere, one walks through a vestibule, then into an entrance hall and arrives at a square central foyer which is actually an atrium with a Tiffany glass skylight. The effect is very dramatic, bringing an unexpected lightness and airiness to the interior. (The Tiffany skylight existed during the Wilson period of occupancy.) Further drama is introduced into the interior by the way Notman skillfully created enfilade at different points.

The principal first floor rooms in the original house are currently called the Drawing Room, Library, Presidents' Room, Bar and Orange Room. These are all accessed either directly or indirectly from the central foyer, as is the stair hall. The latter is generous, dramatic and covered with a barrel-vaulted decorative plaster ceiling. The Presidents' Room, which is the original dining room, is larger than it was historically, since it now incorporates some small service areas. The open book shelves which line the Library once had glass doors. These were removed by the wife of one of the university's presidents. The original leaded glass doors were discovered in the basement of the University's Chapel.

Around the atrium, on the second floor of the foyer, and on the main stair, there are decorative cast iron balustrades. The stairway going up to the tower uses a classical balustrade.

The tower is a four-story structure in the family's part of the house. Its first story is occupied by the Orange Room and the second floor is a small room, now used for meetings of up to ten persons. While the third floor has a window on one side only, the top floor has pairs of four-light French doors on each side with balconies on the north, south, and west. It still affords an interesting view for quite some distance, since one can see above the trees which now limit the garden. Currently it is an employees' lounge, with an acoustical tile ceiling, indicating that it was probably used as a retreat by one of the university's presidents.

Connected by a hyphen to the family's part of the house, is the three-story service wing with normal height ceilings. It is a lower structure than the

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two-story main structure, the latter having elegant high ceilings. Originally the hyphen had been two stories of service wing ceiling height; today there are three stories. The wing is currently used for office purposes by the faculty club. Also, beyond the service wing, there is a small one-story Colonial Revival extension, of no architectural significance. Its date was not ascertained.

Most double-hung windows are 4/4. A few are 1/2. The majority of French doors are three or four lights high. Those leading from the Drawing Room combine a four-light upper sash with a pair of three-light doors. The interior trim around the door and window openings appears to be original. The window on the stair landing between the first and second floors was, at one time, stained glass, installed by Woodrow Wilson in 1907. Today it is a figured clear glass.

Interiors in the family's part of the house present mid-nineteenth century affluence. There are beautiful plaster cornices everywhere. The Library has an elaborate Elizabethan plaster ceiling while the Drawing Room ceiling has an acanthus leaf pattern. Many of the rooms have large ornamental rosettes in the middle of their ceilings, from which chandeliers hung. Most of the original ceilings are exposed, although at least one ceiling has actually been dropped.

Mantles throughout are figured marble. Some are Baroque Revival, other are English Gothic Revival. Surprisingly, one of the rooms in the service wing has an elaborate marble mantle. This could have been the estate manager's office or possibly the Potters wanted a small, intimate, easily heated den in which to work.

While the current chandeliers are reputed to be original, two facts must be considered. Many have been converted to electric candles, which obviously post-date the Notman period. Secondly, some of the photographs in the archives show combination gas/electric chandeliers. The latter are more massive than many of the current ones and are better scaled to the very ample and impressive interiors.

Virtually all the interiors are now painted white. Frank Welsh, historic paint researcher from Philadelphia, did a series of scrappings throughout the house. As would be expected for the period, he found darker colors. The Entrance Hall had been marbled to match the true marble floor and base. The Vestibule was a warm terra cotta and the brackets at the ceiling were quite dark. An old photograph of the Library shows it to have been painted in dark tones. These are evident in the dark stain which still exists on the back of the blinds which hinge into the window jambs.

It is quite possible that the current white interiors go back to the Wilson period, when Colonialization of Victorian interiors was popular. It is likely that the French moldings were added in the Drawing Room at that time. Also the large gold leaf mirror which originally hung over the mantle was moved to another wall. It was replaced with a portrait.

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One of the most interesting interiors is the so-called Orange Room on the first floor. This was restored in accordance with the colors found by Frank Welsh. It is a square room occupying the first floor of the tower, but is surmounted by a plaster dome, supported by plaster fanlight pendentives at the four corners. The decoration is quite elaborate. It uses a rope design, an acanthus design, and an egg and dart design, all done in plaster. The walls are a muted mauve which combines with a brilliant mauve band. Also, a pale lavender is used on the dome, with certain bands being picked out in off-white and gold leaf. The top of the dome has a rosette, from which a chandelier hung, but the chandelier itself is missing. There is an elaborate drapery arrangement over the door and window. The drapes form Moorish-like double arches on an elongated frieze, with three tassels, one at each side and one in the center.

Platner's Garden Room addition commands a view of the main garden, which is behind the house. The garden is a semi-circular parterre, which retains its essentially-Notman layout. However a search of the University's archives shows that in earlier days the garden was far more elaborate than it is currently. In conclusion, it can be stated that even though some changes have been made in the house, it is still a most elegant mansion which is a great tribute to its gifted architect, to the wealthy patron who allowed him to build it and to the University which has preserved it while adapting it to current needs.

(Henry J. Magaziner)

(1) Notman's drawings for Prospect are reproduced in Constance M. Greiff, John Notman, Architect: 1810-1865 (Philadelphia: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, 1979), p. 171.

(2) Photographs of Prospect are located at the Princeton University Archives. Unfortunately, most of the photographs are not dated; of those which are, the dating on some of them appears to be suspect.

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History of Prospect

When Woodrow Wilson moved into Prospect in mid-October, 1910, about two weeks before his inauguration as the university president, Prospect and its grounds had already acquired a number of historical associations. In or about 1695, the ground that Prospect stands on was sold as part of a 400-acre tract to Richard Stockton, an early Princeton settler, and grandfather of a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Three hundred acres of the site were sold to Benjamin FitzRandolph in 1705, who in turn conveyed it to his son Nathaniel in 1734. Nathaniel contributed in 1754, the four and one half-acre lot on which the College's famous Nassau Hall was constructed. The Prospect site was developed as a farm by Jonathan Baldwin prior to the Revolutionary War, and the frame house that he had built, stood on approximately the same site as the present Prospect. In 1779, the site was acquired by Colonel George Morgan. His experience in touring the West and dealing with the Indians while an employee of a mercantile firm, helped secure for him an appointment as Agent for Indian Affairs during the Revolutionary War. He was appointed a Colonel in the Continental Army in 1777. Prospect while owned by Morgan had a three-acre vegetable garden in which Morgan engaged in scientific agriculture, conducting experiments on various strains of corn and wheat. The farms also had an extensive planting of elm trees, one hundred of which were planted at Independence Square in 1785. During the Spring of 1779, a delegation of Delaware Indians on their way to Philadelphia to address the Continental Congress, camped out on Prospect's grounds; there they signed a petition to George Washington, complaining of broken agreements. In January 1781, about two thousand Pennsylvania Soldiers who had mutined over pay camped out at Prospect where they were addressed by the Marquis de Lafayette. A June, 1783 mutiny forced the Continental Congress to flee Philadelphia to Princeton, and several sessions of the Congress were held at Prospect.(1)

The earlier frame Prospect, constructed by Baldwin and improved by Morgan, was razed to make way for the present stone Prospect. The present Prospect along with its extensive formal gardens to the south, were designed by the Philadelphia architect John Notman, and constructed 1851-1852. Notman is noted for introducing to the United States the Italianate Revival Style, of which Prospect is a very fine example, as well as the design of the Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia, which is "America's first architect-designed, park like rural cemetery".(2) The house and site, by this time reduced to thirty-five acres, were purchased in 1878 by Alexander and Robert Stuart, and presented to the College for use as the president's residence. Woodrow Wilson was the third president of Princeton to occupy Prospect.

The summer of 1902, just prior to the Wilsons' move to Prospect, was filled with preparations by both Woodrow Wilson and his wife, Ellen. The Wilsons, initially at least, were not at all enthusiastic about leaving their home on 82 Library Place that had been built for them in 1895-1896. Both Woodrow and Ellen expressed similiar sentiments about moving into Prospect, as well as how their life would be changed by Wilson's ascension from a professor of jurisprudence

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and politics to university president. Part of the apprehension was over the size of Prospect, and part was over the new responsibilities that each of them would now have. They were also concerned that this new position would curtail Woodrow's scholarly writing.

Wilson wrote to his cousin on June 27, 1902:

I believe we are at present, perversely and ungratefully bored at having to leave the delightful privacy of the beautiful home we have made for ourselves and move into the stately presidential mansion, "Prospect", where we shall be public personages. The pleasure and the real dignity will come with the work.(3)

His wife Ellen, in writing the next day, expressed a similar sentiment:

Of course it involves heavy sacrifices to people of our temperament. His literary work must suffer greatly, - just how much remains to (be) seen, and we must leave our dear home and the sweet, almost ideal life when he was (a) simple "man of letters" and go and live in that great, stately troublesome "Prospect", and be forever giving huge receptions, state dinners &c &c. We are both rather heart-broken about this side of it, but I am trying now not to let my mind dwell on it.(4)

In spite of the anticipated drawbacks, both Ellen and Woodrow were equal to the task of preparing for the move. (The Wilson family consisted of Ellen and Woodrow, their three daughters, Jessica, Margaret and Eleanor, and Woodrow's father, Reverend Joseph Ruggles Wilson, who died in January, 1903). During the summer of 1902, Ellen and Woodrow took separate vacations so that at least one of them would be at Library Place with Wilson's ill father. While Ellen vacationed in Massachusetts in mid and late July, she made plans for Prospect's carpets, wallpapers and wall hangings, and shopped in Boston antique shops for a sideboard. During the same period, Wilson, who remained in Princeton at their home on Library Place, made arrangements to rent their home, as well as preparations for the refurnishing and refurbishing of Prospect. Bedroom chairs, a side-board, a twenty-foot dining room table, and other dining room furniture were ordered, and repairs to Prospect's chimneys were arranged. In August, while Woodrow vacationed in Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire, Ellen made several trips to New York City to order draperies, linens, mirrors, chairs and an antique marble mantle. The Philadelphia architect, Walter Cope, who had designed some of the University's buildings, and was distinguished for his Collegiate Gothic designs, advised Ellen on some changes to Prospect. He recommended that one of the fireplace mantles be replaced, that some of the panelling be replaced with chair railing, and that the dining area be lighted with sidelights. He offered his advice on Prospect, gratis; likewise, he prepared drawings for some of the new

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mouldings. The almost daily correspondence between Ellen and Woodrow during this period was filled with details about the preparations for Prospect. Ellen also arranged to have a new bathroom constructed, to have the walls scraped and new papers hung, and to have steam pipes and radiators installed for central heating. Wilson, although he was working on his inaugural address to the university, also offered detailed advice in his letters to Ellen on the furnishing choices and the heating and electrical work. He also shopped for statuary in art galleries in Massachusetts.(5) Part of the funding for the furnishings for Prospect was financed by a special Woodrow Wilson Fund, raised in the amount of five hundred dollars by two University trustees.(6) By August 25, Ellen was able to write to her husband:

I am not going to be so full of business now for a time, for the reason that that everything is under weigh. Plumbing, heating, lighting, painting, papering, carpets, shades, bedding, hangings, upholstering, refinishing are settled in detail and contracted for, and everything begun, and I can rest on my oars.(7)

The Wilsons were finally able to move into Prospect by mid October, 1902, and on October 14 the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees voted an annual two thousand dollars "to the President for entertainment and for expenses in caring for the property."(8) The money was indeed needed, judging from a December, 1906 letter that Ellen wrote to a friend, describing her social obligations at Prospect:

...There is simply no end to the "functions" I am called upon to have. This one is to the graduate students. There are three or four large receptions in the year, - five or six hundred at each, some smaller ones, four or five five formal luncheons to trustees & others, from 24 to 80 each, and a formal dinner every week or two, to from 10 to 24. Then of course there are guests constantly coming to a meal or overnight and people invited more informally to meet them at dinner, - also the University preacher from Saturday to Monday of every week. Do you wonder I am glad when summer comes and we leave for a while this great (though charming) house with its 35 rooms?(9)

One special function that the Wilsons hosted at Prospect was in 1905. In August of that year, Woodrow Wilson extended a luncheon invitation to President Theodore Roosevelt while he was in town for a football game, writing: "We would not make it a tedious or elaborate "function" our only object would be to give you a pleasant and comfortable meal and put "Prospect" our home, at your service." Roosevelt accepted and he along with his wife and several members of his cabinet lunched at Prospect with the Wilsons on December 4 of that year.(10) About a year

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later, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Carnegie, on the occasion of the presentation of Lake Carnegie to the university, lunched with the Wilsons at Prospect.(11)

Once the summer of 1902 was over, and the major furnishing and refurbishing work complete, Woodrow Wilson devoted his attention to developing his vision for the future of Princeton as a leading educational institution. Mrs. Wilson, however, did continue to work on Prospect. Two projects that she devoted an extensive amount of time and effort to were the design of a new stained glass window, and the redesign of the formal gardens located to the south of the house. In December, 1906, Mrs. Wilson, along with a Princeton trustee, commissioned Julia P. Wickham to do a stained glass for the existing window over the main staircase at Prospect. The glass, which Mrs. Wilson helped design, featured a bearded figure holding a book, and was twenty feet high and six feet wide in dimensions. The work on the gardens on the other hand, spanned several years. The original gardens as designed by John Notman were semi-circular in overall scheme. They sloped southward from the house and had two terraces. Three gravel paths that radiated out from the house formed four large grass plots. Within each of the grass plots were several narrow flower beds. Mrs. Wilson widened and united the flower beds located within each of the plots, so that the flower beds now formed a border to each of the walks. The flowers introduced by Mrs. Wilson in the flower beds included peonies, irises, dahlias and jonquils. At the center of the garden, she placed a circular pool with a fountain, around which was placed a semi-circular planting of cedars. Cedars were also planted along the southern border of the garden. Along the other borders of the gardens, where there were gaps, Mrs. Wilson planted trees and shrubs. In an area west of the formal gardens, Mrs. Wilson expanded a rose garden that had been cultivated by a previous university president's wife. A pergola with climbing roses was constructed and a sundial was placed within the the rose garden as a point of interest.(12)

One of the changes that Woodrow Wilson made later in his presidency, and which prompted an unanticipated response from the university community, was the construction of an iron fence enclosing Prospect and about five acres of grounds. Wilson's apparent reason for constructing the fence was to ensure his family's privacy. Owing to the central location of Prospect, and its beautiful gardens, Prospect was a popular picnic site for summer tourists, as well as a favored short cut for students. During the summer of 1904 Woodrow Wilson had the fence installed. Wilson met opposition to the fence from several quarters, including from student publications and some trustees concerned about the reaction of returning alumni. At the end of September, several freshman acting under the direction of upperclassmen, sunk a section of the fence several feet into the ground so that only the spikes were visible. The next month, several students participating in the annual senior parade "wearing tight-fitting black gowns, black masks, and peaked hats, represented the fence."(13) They carried sandwich placards, picturing a fence with warnings such as "Keep Out" and "Keep off the Grass", and dragged a pig in a cart, symbolizing Wilson's alleged selfishness in fencing in Prospect's grounds. Finally, during the same month, students protested violently at the Class of '79 dormitory which bordered on Prospect's grounds. Several windows in the dormitory were broken, a chandelier was torn

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down, and several entrance steps were chipped. Wilson though remained steadfast in retaining the fence.(14)

History and Significance of the Princeton Presidency

Once Woodrow Wilson made the transition to the presidency of Princeton, he offered a new and vital agenda for academic life at the university. This included revamping the undergraduate curriculum; raising admission and academic standards; restructuring the academic departments of the university; introducing a new pedagogic system; coordinating the social life of the university; and a vision of the graduate school as part of the larger needs of the university. Some of these reforms were initiated, or least discussed under the previous administration, but it was only under Woodrow Wilson's leadership that they reached fruition. Now College seniors were required to choose a major; and the prescribed courses of study for the freshmen and sophomore years were followed by a limited degree of elective courses within the area of concentration. This curriculum reform was particularly successful and was picked up, with variations, by many other American colleges. The most controversial of Wilson's changes and certainly the ones that had the most impact on his later political career were the new pedagogic method known as the preceptorial plan, the quadrangle plan and the graduate college plan.(15) At the core of Wilson's educational philosophy was the idea of the university as an organic community which should foster close and intimate ties among all segments of the university: faculty and students, upperclassmen and lowerclassmen, and undergraduate and graduate students. This was based on the idea that education was not transmitted by meeting the formal requirements of a course: attending lectures, reading books, passing examinations, doing laboratory work, or "getting up studies", but by catching the contagion of learning from a close relationship between those who had imbibed from great intellectual traditions and those who were waiting to partake of those traditions. This interaction, be it social or intellectual, could take place between scholars and students, or between older and younger students. To a greater or lesser extent, the preceptorial system, the quadrangle plan and the graduate school as envisioned by Woodrow Wilson, were underpinned by this vision.(16)

Under the preceptorial system, which was introduced by Woodrow Wilson in 1905, as a modified version of the Oxford and Cambridge tutorial systems, students would meet either in small groups or individually, to discuss the readings in a particular area of study. The purpose was not to prepare for examinations, or even to supplement the regular course work, but to move beyond the idea of education as the "mere faithful performance of set tasks" and to develop the habit of systematic and methodical study. Students through their intimate contact with the faculty would perhaps as well, catch the "contagion" of knowledge and study.(17)

As an extension of the preceptorial system, and in response to what he saw as the need to systematically coordinate and "interpenetrate" the social and intellectual life of the university, Wilson introduced the Quadrangle Plan in December, 1906.

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The proposal consisted of reorganizing the undergraduate body into residential colleges composed of students from all four classes as well as some unmarried members of the faculty. Faculty and students would room, board, fraternize and study together, and perhaps even inspire each other to greater intellectual insights. At the base of this plan was a vision of education that was "imparted by spiritual transmission, by contagion, by close and sympathetic intercourse between men and culture and learning and the younger men who are coming on, waiting for the inheritance to be transmitted to them."(18) The plan was to be facilitated by dismantling the eating clubs, and attaching dormitories to the eating club houses. Although the primary thrust of Woodrow Wilson's arguments for the Quadrangle Plan was its intellectual benefits, he also had a number of criticisms against the residential eating clubs, criticisms which were later to develop into a full scale attack on the role of wealth and special privilege in American society.

The eating clubs, located along Prospect Avenue, had been formed by Princeton undergraduates in the late nineteenth century, to provide room and board for upperclassmen, as well as rooms for visiting alumni. By the early twentieth century, the eating clubs had developed an autonomous social life of their own, which Wilson believed prevented the university from realizing its full intellectual potential. With the support of wealthy alumni, the clubs were able to build expensive and elaborate houses along Prospect Avenue. Wilson argued that clubs created inappropriate social divisions within the university community between upper and lower classmen, and clubbable and nonclubbable students. The clubs, Wilson argued, introduced into the university community a standard of social interaction based upon wealth and social privilege, which prevented students of different backgrounds or even different graduating classes from associating. Freshmen and sophomores devoted a great deal of time and mental energy into cultivating the "right" social connections to gain admittance to the "right" clubs and this distracted from the intellectual aims of the university.(19)

Wilson argued that the Preceptorial Plan, which fostered close relationships between mature scholars and students, had begun to move education beyond the "mere faithful performance of set tasks" to the development of a genuine enthusiasm for learning and knowledge. The residential eating clubs however, and undergraduate life generally, precluded the university from realizing the full benefits of the preceptorial system, by totally divorcing the social life of the students from the intellectual aims of the university. The students in their involvement in residential eating clubs as well as a host of athletic, dramatic, literary, and musical activities, had lost sight of their intellectual goals. These distraction, or "sideshows", as Wilson was fond of calling student social activities, had "became the vital, spontaneous, absorbing realities", whereas "the work of its classrooms and laboratories, has become the merely formal and compulsory side of its life." Wilson argued that the residential eating clubs removed from the sphere of university influence a great deal of the mental energies of the students. The result was that the university "which gives life to those clubs and constitutes

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their ostensible raison d' etre, seems in danger of becoming, if the present tendencies of undergraduate organization are allowed to work out their logical results, only an artistic setting and background for life on Prospect Avenue".(20)

The quadrangle proposal met with disapproval from many segments of the university community, many of whom acknowledged the worst abuses of the eating club system and offered proposals for reforms, but none of whom felt that the quadrangle plan was necessary. Several members of the faculty and administration were particularly critical because they felt that Wilson had not consulted with them prior to introducing the plan. The Quadrangle Plan controversy was officially over in 1908 when the Board of Trustees, under pressure from students and alumni, voted not to accept the plan, but to reform specific abuses of the eating club system. In spite of the trustees' decision, Wilson continued to seek independent support for his position from the faculty, and to speak and write about the plan among students, alumni, and the public at large. For several years afterwards, he criticized the social life of the American colleges, offering the Quadrangle Plan as a solution. Eventually, Wilson's critique of college social life developed into a general critique of wealth and special privilege in American society. For example, in an unpublished February, 1910 paper entitled "The Country and the Colleges," Wilson argued that democracy, which was necessary for the spirit of learning to prosper, was being replaced by a standard of social interaction based upon social selection. He blamed wealth and special privilege for a host of undergraduate activities and for "the reproduction in college life of those social conditions and means of success which so disturb and distract, which threaten to displace the course of study." He offered as a solution, the residential college system, consisting of faculty and graduate and undergraduate students, as a way of bringing colleges back to their major goal of intellectual development.(21)

The final dispute that Woodrow Wilson was involved in while president of Princeton, and which was to have the most immediate implications for his political career, was the graduate college controversy. Superficially the graduate college controversy was over the physical location of the residential graduate college. The major protagonists, Woodrow Wilson and Andrew West, Dean of the Graduate School, disagreed over whether the new residential graduate college was to be located at the center of the university and be closely related to the undergraduate school, or be located off campus and have a separate and distinct identity. Wilson in his 1902 inaugural address had called for a centrally located graduate college that was intimately related to the undergraduate school. This was part of his larger view that education was imparted by the intimate interaction between older and younger students. He envisioned that both undergraduate and graduate students would eat, lodge and fraternize with one another, and thereby exalt the intellectual life of the entire university. As such the graduate college would be "one of the chief instrumentalities we can hope for by which to permeate the University as a whole with a consciousness of the higher occupations and ideals of scholarship."(22)

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Initially, both West and Wilson were agreed about the central location of the graduate college, as well as "the direct and invaluable help the Graduate College will supply in harmonizing, invigorating, and elevating the life and thought of the undergraduate students." (23) Following the establishment in 1905 of an experimental residential graduate college called Merwick, located on an estate one-half mile away from the campus, West changed his mind. By 1907 West was arguing that a central location for the permanent graduate school would present too many distractions for its students. As the dispute progressed it became clear the location per se was not the only issue, but was part of the larger dispute of who would chart the course and direction of the university. Under the previous administration, West had been given broad powers as Dean of the Graduate School; he was responsible for admissions, fellowships, curriculum, and degree requirements. Because of Wilson's strong ideas about the graduate school, as well as the concern about West's power, shared by a number of established scholars that Wilson had recruited to Princeton, the dean's authority became an issue. (24)

In any case, the issue appeared to be settled in 1908. Wilson, with the support of the university architect, Ralph Adams Cram, persuaded the trustees that the university president's residence, Prospect, should be the site of the new residential graduate college. Cram assured the university that owing to the beauty and dignity of the site, its central location relative to the rest of the campus, and Cram's ability to develop an architectural composition for the graduate school at Prospect which would "coordinate the buildings of the university into an intimate group," that Prospect would be an ideal site for the graduate college, as well as a fitting symbol of the intimate relationship between undergraduate and graduate education. Two alternate proposals were developed by Cram for Prospect. One called for the removal of the Prospect building and the rearrangement of its grounds and gardens to accommodate the new graduate college; the other called for the construction of the graduate college on Prospect's grounds, with the Prospect mansion remaining. On April 7, 1908, the Board of Trustees voted to accept Prospect as the site of the graduate college. The mansion was to be removed, and the college was to be constructed in an area located between Prospect and the '79 Hall dormitory. (25)

The issue of the residential graduate college was reopened in April, 1908 by alumnus William Cooper Proctor, Cincinnati soap manufacturer and childhood friend of Andrew West, when he offered \$500,000 to the university to build the residential graduate college. He stipulated however, that the Prospect site be rejected, because it would not accommodate the future expansion of the school. He chose instead the golf links which were located a mile away from the main campus. Wilson made numerous attempts to get Proctor to either change his mind about the Prospect site, or to choose a site more centrally located so as to allow the interaction of undergraduate and graduate students. Proctor refused and what developed between 1908 and 1910 was a long and protracted dispute between Wilson and West, but eventually involving Proctor, numerous members of the board of trustees, the alumni, the national press, and finally the public at large, over the question of the location of the graduate school. During the course of the

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controversy, the issue expanded from the residential graduate college, and the university community per se, to the issue of wealth, special privilege and social democracy in the nation at large.(26)

Faced with opposition from Proctor and West, Wilson attempted to create support from both the faculty and the Board of Trustees. In writing to a trustee in December, 1909 he argued regarding Proctor's stipulations that:

I cannot accede to the acceptance of gifts upon terms that take the educational policy of the University out of the hands of the Trustees and Faculty and permit it to be determined by those who give money.(27)

A decisive showdown was held at a Board of Trustees meeting in January, 1910, which led to a polarization between Woodrow Wilson and members of the trustees, as well as the effort by some of the trustees to force Wilson's resignation. In the face of opposition, Wilson, as he had done in the quadrangle plan dispute, took his case to the alumni and the public at large. His first public effort was in the form of a letter to Herbert Bruce Brougham, editor of the New York Times, who had previously solicited information from Wilson regarding the graduate school controversy. In this letter, Wilson made several connections between the graduate school controversy and the undergraduate school situation, and argued that Proctor would "extend to the sphere of the graduate life of the University, the same artificial and unsound social standards that already dominate the life of the undergraduates". He went on to write:

The question of the site for the residential buildings of the Graduate College has figured prominently in the discussion simply because the physical isolation of the College would play an important part in the separation of its life from the general life of the University and would contribute to the spirit of social exclusiveness which we particularly desire it should not have.

My own ideals for the University are those of genuine democracy and serious scholarship. The two, indeed, seem to be to go together. Any organization which introduces elements of social exclusiveness constitutes the worst possible soil for serious intellectual endeavor.(28)

When Brougham published his editorial on February 3, 1910, he quoted liberally from Wilson's letter, and in addition, made clear that what was involved was not simply a question of educational policy, but the problem of special privileges. He argued that the controversy at Princeton was indicative of the current trend of colleges to be less concerned with producing men of learning than in "fostering mutually exclusive social cliques, stolid groups of wealth and fashion, devoted to non-essentials and the smatterings of culture."(29)

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In addition to writing this letter, Woodrow Wilson, as he had done in the quadrangle plan controversy, took his case over the heads of the board of trustees and appealed directly to the university alumni. Beginning in March, 1910 he made a series of speeches to alumni clubs in Baltimore, Brooklyn, Jersey City, St. Louis, New York, Pittsburgh and Chicago. The Pittsburgh speech, made on April 16, was the most acrimonious of the series in that Wilson portrayed himself as a crusader for democracy in the fight against social exclusiveness. He argued that the American colleges, like the Protestant churches, had separated themselves from the common people, and the true voice and spirit of America and were now serving the wealthy and special privileged. He then asked his audience:

Will America tolerate the seclusion of graduate students?  
Will America tolerate the idea of having graduate students set apart? America will tolerate nothing except unpatronized endeavor. Separate a man, separate him from the rough and tumble of college life, from all contacts of every sort and condition of man, and you have done a thing which America will brand with its contemptuous disapproval.

Further, he declared:

I have dedicated every power that there is in me to bring the colleges that I have anything to do with to an absolutely democratic regeneration in spirit, and I shall not be satisfied—and I hope you will not be—until America shall know that the men in the colleges are saturated with the same thought, the same sympathy that pulses through the whole great body politic."(30)

The controversy, as acrimonious though it was, did not end for the university until May, 1910, upon the death of Isaac Wyman, a wealthy alumnus who left what was originally estimated to be a multi-million dollar estate. West was appointed an executor of the estate, and the bulk of the money was to go towards building the residential graduate college.

Woodrow Wilson, while graciously accepting defeat in the controversy, was privately quite disturbed. In a June, 1910 letter he describes how he attended a luncheon at Dean West's house for the opposing side in the graduate school controversy. Although he was gracious enough to escort the guests through Prospect's gardens afterwards, at the luncheon he "moved amongst those dames and gentlemen like a man trying not to overhear their thoughts or to show any consciousness of their complacent triumph and condescension in their bearing". He also said that if Proctor renewed his offer to the university on terms that Wilson found difficult to accept, he would resign.(31)

In fact, during the Spring of 1910, even while the graduate school controversy was at its height, Wilson was engaged in intensive discussions with New Jersey Democratic party leaders about the upcoming gubernatorial race. Colonel George B.

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Harvey, editor of Harper's Weekly and the North American Review, and a long time supporter of Wilson for high political office, spent a night with the Wilsons at Prospect during this period. He urged Wilson to become a candidate and asked Wilson if he were offered the nomination without any effort on his part, would he be willing to accept it. Wilson answered: "If the nomination for governor should come to me in that way, I should regard it as my duty to give the matter very serious consideration." Wilson consulted with friends among Princeton's trustees and got their assurance that he was free to pursue the gubernatorial race without any debt to his friends. Finally on July 15, 1910, in the form of a letter to two local newspapers, Wilson announced that he would accept the nomination if it were offered to him.(32)

On September 16, 1910, the day after Wilson received the nomination, he announced his decision to resign as president of Princeton effective at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees which was on October 20, 1910. On September 19 he met at Prospect with several New Jersey Democratic party bosses, to discuss his campaign strategy as well as to gain the support of Democratic legislators from Mercer County.(33) In the interim there was considerable discussion among Wilson's supporters and detractors on the Board of Trustees, as to how Wilson's resignation should be handled.

Some of Wilson's supporters wanted his resignation to be accepted pending the outcome of the November election, but his detractors among the trustees disagreed. If he would not resign, they were prepared to force his resignation. One of the trustees prepared a resolution to the effect that Wilson's gubernatorial candidacy was "so inconsistent with the retention of his office as to work to the injury of the University," and was prepared to offer this resolution at the trustees' meeting. The night before the trustees meeting, a member of the board came to Prospect to inform Wilson that he must present his resignation. The resignation was presented and accepted on October 20, 1910.(34)

Wilson was quoted in the New York Evening Post on October 21, 1910, as saying, "The resignation of course takes effect at once. I shall remain in Prospect only so long as it takes us to make plans to move elsewhere." Although Wilson's resignation had been accepted, there was some sentiment, even among his detractors on the board, that there should be some flexibility as to how long Wilson's salary should be continued, and how long he would remain at Prospect. Apparently some contentiousness developed among the trustees over these issues as well, and although the Wilsons were invited to stay on at Prospect, it was not without considerable anger on Wilson's part. As it developed, Wilson and his family remained at Prospect until January 13, 1911, three months after his resignation and four days before his inauguration as governor.(35)

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Public Career:

It is at this juncture in Woodrow Wilson's life, the end of his Princeton presidency and the beginning of his governorship, that several Wilson scholars have found continuities and causal relationships between his educational philosophy and policies on the one hand, and his political outlook and career on the other. Chief among Wilson scholars is Arthur Link, editor of the definitive Papers of Woodrow Wilson, and author of The Road to the White House. Link is joined in his analysis by Henry W. Bragdon, author of the biography, Wilson: The Academic Years. Both Link and Bragdon argue that Wilson developed a style of leadership at Princeton that allowed him to move forward with new and innovative programs at the beginning of both his academic and national presidencies, but that this style became a liability for him in the graduate school controversy at Princeton, as well as in the League of Nations debate in Washington. Link writes:

The Princeton period was the microcosm of a later macrocosm, and a political observer, had he studied carefully Wilson's career as president of Princeton University, might have forecast accurately the shape of things to come during the period when Wilson was president of the United States. What striking similarities there are between the Princeton and the national periods! During the first years of both administrations, Wilson drove forward with terrific energy and momentum to carry through a magnificent reform program, and his accomplishments both at Princeton and Washington were great and enduring. Yet in both cases he drove so hard, so flatly refused to delegate authority, and broke with so many friends that when the inevitable reaction set in he was unable to cope with the new situation. His refusal to compromise in the graduate college controversy was almost Princeton's undoing; his refusal to compromise in the fight in the Senate over the League of Nations was the nation's undoing. Both controversies assume the character and proportions of a Greek tragedy.(36)

Additionally, Link argues that the experience at Princeton influenced Wilson to make a basic change in his view of American society, which in turn had a decisive impact on his political career. This argument is made in the context of a comparison of Wilson's political outlook from 1908 through 1912, the period which corresponds to Wilson's involvement in the graduate school controversy, and his nomination and election as governor of New Jersey. During this period, Woodrow Wilson changed in political and economic outlook from a conservative to a progressive. As a progressive Wilson was able to win the gubernatorial election in 1910 as well as the presidential election of 1912. Link attributes Wilson's shift in political allegiance to three factors: a change in his ideas about the role of wealth and power in American society, political expediency, and the graduate school controversy.(37)

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By 1907, Link argues, although Wilson did not think of himself as a progressive, he accepted the progressive diagnosis of American society: "that the trouble with American society was that economic power and ownership of property had been concentrated among a few men, who exercised political power out of all proportion to their numbers; that obviously something had to be done to restore the political balance." (38) The logic of this analysis, Link argues, eventually forced Wilson to abandon conservative and laissez-faire solutions to correct the ills of American society. Additionally, Link argues that Wilson had long wanted a political career, and must have realized that he could not have a public career without the support of the insurgent progressives within both the Democratic and Republican parties. Wilson moved towards progressivism in part then, to launch his political career.

Finally, Link argues that the prolonged and bitter nature of the graduate school controversy had an impact on Wilson's outlook on wealth and power in American society, and that this changed outlook pushed him towards progressivism. Link writes:

First of all, it should be noted, the graduate college controversy was important in effecting Wilson's change of mind; the bitterness of the controversy was instrumental in releasing Wilson's latent idealism, in causing an outpouring of his idealistic emotions. Rightly or wrongly, he came to the conclusion that the forces of wealth were opposed to social and educational democracy. The deduction Wilson made from his Princeton experiences was obvious: the same forces that were attempting to corrupt Princeton were already at work corrupting American society. Certainly he had come consciously to this decision by the time he made his speech at Pittsburgh on April 16, 1910. (39)

Bragdon essentially agrees that both the graduate school controversy and political expediency helped trigger Wilson's shift towards progressivism, but adds in addition, the role of the quadrangle plan dispute. He argues that although the press treated the quadrangle plan dispute as a struggle between special privilege and social democracy, Wilson emphasized the academic aspects of the plan. Eventually Wilson's own perception became more progressive in interpretation; he believed that he had been defeated in his proposal by the forces of wealth and special privilege. In that way, the residential eating club issue became "transmuted into a broader democratic sympathy" and contributed to Wilson's shift towards progressivism. (40)

An additional issue is the extent that Wilson's increasingly radical and intransigent position in the graduate school controversy was influenced by his political aspirations. Bragdon argues that Wilson's wife Ellen, and very likely, Wilson as well, were very aware of the favorable national publicity that he had gotten from the dispute. Bragdon argues that Wilson's willingness to exalt the graduate school

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controversy into an issue of the masses versus the special privileged, was very likely "a bid for political favor." He cites here a February, 1910 letter from Wilson's wife, Ellen. The particular issue being discussed in the letter was Wilson's attempt to get Dean West removed from his office. When Wilson's efforts proved unsuccessful, Ellen was able to see a positive side to it. Ellen wrote to her husband:

There is one point in the plan which does appeal to me, viz. that it sets you free again to leave if you wish,-that is to accept the nomination for governor and go into politics. If they had turned West out you would, of course, be obliged to stay no matter how outrageous the Alumni were. If I were you I should accept their proposition coolly, rather indifferently,-saying that of course if the trustees won't vote to turn him out, he can't be turned out,-and there is nothing more to be said about it;-then keep my own counsel, stay in for the present and next year run for governor. This thing has strengthened you immensely throughout the whole country, it is said that there have been hundreds upon hundreds of editorials and all wholly on your side.(41)

Although Wilson did not actually begin his political career until 1911, he had as early as 1902 attracted the attention of influential politicians and would-be president-makers. One of these was Colonel George B.M. Harvey, editor of Harper's Weekly and the North American Review. After Harvey attended Wilson's inauguration ceremonies at Princeton, he read Wilson's writings, and was convinced that Wilson was the man to provide the Democratic party with a new conservative leadership, partial to the concerns of industrial and business interests, and able to stop the regulatory policies of the progressives. Although Wilson did not express an interest in the national presidency at this early date, Harvey in the coming years sought to build a base of conservative support for Wilson among the New Jersey Democratic machine politicians and nationally, among moneyed political and economic conservatives. During the Spring of 1906, Harvey started a publicity campaign for Wilson, with several favorable articles and editorials published in both the Harper's Weekly and the North American Review, supporting Wilson as a presidential candidate. In 1907, he appointed one of his writers, William O. Inglis, to help in his efforts to get Wilson elected as president in either 1908 or 1912. Harvey's efforts attracted the support of other conservatives including "Wall Street bankers, utilities magnates, conservative editors, representing those interests,"(42) all of whom were interested in some relief from Theodore Roosevelt's progressivism.

Prior to the national presidency Harvey wanted Wilson to hold a public office. His target was the New Jersey senatorial race of 1907. United States Senators from New Jersey were elected by the state legislators, and because of the Republican majority, it was unlikely that any Democratic candidate would win. Nonetheless, Harvey urged Wilson to accept the nomination as a way of attracting favorable

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publicity and support. Harvey secured the support of the New Jersey machine politicians for Wilson's nomination, including James R. Smith, leader of the Newark-Essex County Democratic machine; James R. Nugent, chairman of the state Democratic committee; and Robert Davis, head of the Jersey City-Hudson County Democratic machine. The Democratic bosses supported Wilson as a way of thwarting the candidate of the insurgent progressives within the party. As it developed, Wilson withdrew his name from the nomination because the progressive candidate was a personal friend and former classmate. In withdrawing however, Wilson was very careful not to suggest any support for the progressives.(43)

Wilson for his part, while still president of Princeton, obliged the political and economic conservatives by writing articles and making speeches that won for him the support and admiration of conservative Democrats. During this period, Wilson was critical of William Jennings Bryan and other "radical theorists and populists" within the Democratic party, as well as Theodore Roosevelt's progressive policies. He opposed government regulation of business, as he did labor unions. An August 1907 "Credo" summarized Wilson's conservative political and economic views. In response to the progressive argument for business regulation, he argued that "trusts and combinations" were legitimate and efficient ways to run businesses. He believed that the Constitution was adequate to "remedy the wrongs which have corrupted modern business." Rather than additional laws to regulate business, he argued that all business transactions should be made public, and those specific individuals within corporations who were responsible for financial wrongdoings should be singled out and punished under criminal or civil law.(44)

Gradually, Wilson changed his mind on certain elements of his conservative credo. The initial change was in the form of acknowledging that indeed large corporations represented a threat to the interests of the larger society. In his June 1909 Baccalaureate Address to Princeton graduates he said that business "was a honest man's game; no crooks or blacklegs were wittingly admitted into it."(45) The implication in this speech was that modern business abuse was not caused by a few dishonest individuals, but rather by men who worked within the limits of the law, but pursued their exclusive interest. The logical extension of this was that government regulation rather than simply the prosecution of specific individuals was necessary.

Wilson also developed an interest in municipal reform. The particular reform that interested him was "simplification" of municipal government, or the short ballot. If municipal government was simplified by reducing the number of elective office, he argued, then the public could make responsible decisions about the candidates without the aid of machine politicians. Government would then become more responsive to the public because the corrupt political bosses would no longer be needed to help the public distinguish the many candidates. When the Short Ballot Association was organized in the Fall of 1909, Wilson was a member of its advisory board, and in October 1909 he became its president.(46)

A break with his conservative supporters did not become obvious until Wilson was at the end of his gubernatorial campaign. Wilson's nomination had been engineered by

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Colonel Harvey, and the machine politicians Smith, Nugent and Davis. It had been opposed at the convention by the progressives. Prior to receiving the nomination, Wilson had assured the politicians of his loyalty. In a June 1910 letter he wrote, "I would be perfectly willing to assure Mr. Smith that I would not if elected Governor, set about fighting and breaking down the existing Democratic organization and replacing it with one of my own." He made this commitment on the condition that he "was absolutely free in the matter of measures and men."(47) All of the men involved in launching Wilson's career had the explicit understanding that Wilson's gubernatorial election was a prelude to the presidential race of 1912.

During the gubernatorial campaign, Wilson was continuously dogged by progressives in both the Democratic and Republican parties on the nature of his relationship with Colonel Harvey and the machine politicians. Wilson was initially evasive, but finally was forced to respond to a list of queries on a range of issues of interest to the progressives from George L. Record, a Republican progressive candidate for the United States Congress. In his response he identified himself with a number of progressive reforms including: a public utilities commission that would fix rates for public service corporations; the extension of the primary law to include high offices; the popular election of the United States Senators; a corrupt campaign and election practices act; and a workmen's compensation act. The really dramatic admission that Wilson made in this letter was on the nature of the alliance between industrial and business leaders on the one hand; and machine politicians from both political parties, on the other. Wilson agreed with Record that a relationship existed between public utility owners and machine politicians that resulted in favorable franchises for the utilities, direct payments and campaign contributions for the politicians, and higher rates for the public. Wilson, in addition, identified James Smith, James Nugent and Robert Davis as the individuals responsible for that system within the New Jersey Democratic party. He added that if he was elected, he would not allow the machine politicians to influence him in matters of appointments, legislation, and policy.(48) Wilson reiterated this pledge of independence in his last campaign speech. Just three days before election day, he stated, in spite of his prenomination pledge:

When I was approached with regard to the nomination for the Governorship, I understood it to be distinctly represented to me that the purpose of those who asked my leave to use my name for that purpose was that I should be invited to take the leadership of the Democratic party.(49)

This statement was certainly a matter of concern to the machine politicians, but at this late date there was nothing to be done. Wilson was elected governor of New Jersey, on November 8, 1910 by a margin of 49,056 votes, and with his election came a Democratic majority in the state legislature.

Even before Wilson was able to leave Prospect, his declarations of independence from the machine politicians were put to the test. During the course of the campaign, Wilson had committed himself to a number of progressive reforms, including

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the extension of the primary to U.S. Senate office, and the direct election of Senators. James E. Martine had won the Democratic party nomination, but because it was not anticipated that the Democrats would achieve a majority in the state legislature to facilitate the election of a Democratic Senator, neither Martine nor the primary was taken seriously. After the election however, the senatorial race became a test of whether Wilson would reject the conservatives and politicians who had engineered his nomination, and become a progressive in deed as well as in word.

After Wilson's November 8 election as governor, James Smith Jr., the Newark-Essex County boss, came to Prospect, seeking to secure Wilson's endorsement for his candidacy for the U.S. Senate. Smith had served a previous term as senator and urged Wilson to ignore the results of the primary and support him. Initially Wilson did consider supporting a candidate other than Martine, but felt that Smith was totally unacceptable. Wilson was concerned that Smith's candidacy would alienate the progressives by lending credence to the suspicion that Wilson's gubernatorial nomination had been secured in return for Smith's election to the Senate. Wilson then tried to remain neutral in the senatorial race, but the progressive legislators argued that Martine had to be supported for the Senate in order to honor the principle of extending the primary to the U.S. Senator's office. Additionally they made clear that if Wilson did not lead the fight against Smith in the senatorial race, his reform program would not receive their support in the upcoming legislative session. When Smith insisted upon seeking the office, Wilson initiated a campaign to discredit both Smith and the machine politicians.(50)

A major portion of the campaign to discredit Smith was conducted by Wilson out of Prospect. On November 20 he held a meeting at Prospect with two New Jersey newspaper editors in which he urged them to persuade the Democratic editors throughout the state to assist in the effort to persuade Smith not to run for the Senate. Meanwhile, he took his appeal directly to the Democratic legislators-elect. On December 5 he invited the thirteen members of the Hudson County delegation to Prospect. The ten that attended heard Wilson argue that if Martine was not elected to the Senate, the New Jersey Democratic party would lose its credibility. On December 18 a reporter from the New York American noted that while his interview with Wilson was in progress, Wilson's "political friends were waiting in the next room to devise means to prevent the plundering and traitorous elements of Democracy from again appearing in the United States Senate in the portly person of Mr. Smith." On December 20 the eleven-man delegation from Essex County met with Wilson at Prospect, and heard his appeal to reject Smith for the Senate. The next day, the five assemblymen from Newark who had been responsible for officially requesting Smith to enter the senatorial race were invited to Prospect and heard Wilson's appeal. On December 22, he met the five remaining Essex County assemblymen in New York. On December 23, Wilson met with the five legislators-elect from Union, Hunterdon, Middlesex, and Bergen counties. After meeting with the legislators in his home, he then went to the newspapers of New Jersey, arguing that if Smith was elected he would continue the old alliance of business and machine politicians. Finally, beginning on January 13, 1911, four days before his

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inauguration as governor, he made a series of speeches throughout New Jersey urging Smith's defeat. The results of Wilson's efforts were positive; he succeeded in persuading the legislators to elect Martine as senator.(51)

Another result of Wilson's successful defeat of Smith was that he was able to establish himself as head of the New Jersey Democratic party, which in turn helped him get his reform program in the areas of workmen's compensation, public corporation regulation, a corrupt campaign and election practices act, and direct primaries through the legislature. In addition, the fight with the Democratic machine won for Wilson a great deal of favorable national attention that helped establish him as a progressive of national stature. Link argues that an even more important and subtle result of this successful fight was the impact on his later presidential career. Link writes:

Without victory in the senatorial fight, it is safe to assume, Wilson could not have secured the passage of the reform laws that he persuaded the legislature to enact in the spring of 1911; without these reform accomplishments behind him he would not have won the presidential nomination in 1912. One other important result of the controversy, hardly noticed at the time, was that Wilson's war on the New Jersey machine caused Harvey's presidential schemes for Wilson to tumble like a house of cards. Harvey had erected an elaborate presidential structure, the chief foundation stone of which was the support of moneyed conservatives and machine politicians in other parts of the country. After Wilson had shown his true colors with regard to politicians who had the temerity to oppose him, the veteran bosses quickly turned away from his support. The reform program of the 1911 New Jersey legislature and Wilson's subsequent progressive development gave the coup de grace to Harvey's plans.(52)

Wilson's Departure from Prospect

The Wilsons remained at Prospect until January 13, 1911, just four days before Wilson's inauguration as governor of New Jersey. In the same way that he had expressed regret at having to leave his home on Library Place to move into the "stately" Prospect, he now expressed regret at having to leave Prospect. His sadness was as much about leaving his home as it was about the changes in his family life. The move from Prospect coincided with a major shift in his household. His daughter Jessie was to live in Philadelphia while doing settlement work; his daughter Margaret was in New York, studying music; and he, his wife Ellen, and daughter Nellie were to live at the Princeton Inn until early summer. On January 13, 1911, the day of his move from Prospect, he wrote to a friend expressing regret and apprehension about the changes. He wrote:

We have just left "Prospect" and I am writing from a little den, quite strange to me, in the Princeton Inn.... Alas! It

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is not pleasant: My heart aches at the break-up of the old life, interesting and vital as the new life is. I did not realize it until it touched our home, and sent us into lodgings at an inn. I feel like a nomad!(53)

But two days later, he wrote to his friend:

I am well, astonishingly well. We have moved out of "Prospect," as I told you, and just a little touch of the sense of "home" is beginning to attach to the Inn. After all, home is not a place, so much as an atmosphere and association....(54)

(Diann L. Jacox)

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Notes:

Abbreviations used in the Notes:

PWW: The Papers of Woodrow Wilson  
WW: Woodrow Wilson  
EAW: Ellen Axson Wilson

- (1). V.L. Collins, "Prospect near Princeton," Princeton University Bulletin 15(June 1904): 164-181.
- (2). Constance M. Greiff, John Notman, Architect: 1810-1865, (Philadelphia: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, 1979), p. 14.
- (3). Woodrow Wilson to Harriet Woodrow Welles, June 27, 1902, in Arthur S. Link, ed., The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Vols. 12-22 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), Vol. 12, p. 462.
- (4). Ellen Axson Wilson to Florence Stevens Hoyt, June 28, 1902, PWW 12: pp. 463-464.
- (5). WW to EAW, July 1902: 13,14,15,16,17,18,21, August 1902: 6,8,13,14,19,20,21; EAW to WW, July 1902: 12,14,15,16,17,18,19,22,24, August 1902: 3,5,7,9, 10,11,13,14,15,17,19,25,27, PWW 14. Eleanor Wilson McAdoo, ed. The Priceless Gift: The Love Letters of Woodrow Wilson and Ellen Axson Wilson, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), pp. 225-230.
- (6). PWW 14: p. 43, note 1.
- (7). EAW to WW, August 25, 1902, PWW 14: p. 107.
- (8). "The Finance Committee's Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," October 14, 1902, PWW 14: p. 144.
- (9). EAW to Anna Harris, December 1, 1906, PWW 16: p. 493.
- (10). WW to Theodore Roosevelt, August 8, 1905, PWW 16: pp. 172-173; "Army and Navy Crowd," Daily Princetonian, December 4, 1905, reprinted in PWW 16: pp. 242-243.

Also interesting is the number of other American presidents who were guests at Prospect. While Wilson was president of the university, Grover Cleveland was a Princeton trustee and undoubtedly a visitor to Prospect. In later years Presidents William Howard Taft, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, and Harry Truman, were all

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visitors to Prospect as was General Dwight Eisenhower. Other distinguished visitors included Albert Einstein, William Dean Howells, Booth Tarkington, General John J. Pershing, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, General Leonard Wood, and Marshal Ferdinand Foch. (Newsclippings from Princeton Archives: Princeton Herald, May 2, 1930; Princeton Herald, October 31, 1930; New York Times, November 5, 1933; Princeton Herald, June 20, 1947; New York Times, July 27, 1957.)

- (11). "The Formal Opening of Lake Carnegie," Princeton Alumni Weekly, December 8, 1906, in PWW 16: p. 503.
- (12). PWW 16: p. 535, note 1; WW to Cleveland Hoadley Dodge, December 20, 1906, PWW 16: p. 536; McAdoo, pp. 225, 229. The Wilson stained glass window was removed in 1933 by the wife of a subsequent university president, and in the 1970's found its way into a Princeton pub. (Daily Princetonian, April 15, 1981, newclipping, Princeton University Archives.)
- Mrs. John Grier Hibben, "Changes in the Prospect Garden," (typescript, 1930-1931, Princeton University Archives), pp. 5-6; Mrs. John Grier Hibben, "Prospect," (typescript, n.d., Princeton University Archives), p.11; Frederic C. Rich, "Prospect: The Search for a Garden," Princeton University Library Chronicle, 42(Autumn 1980):13-15; Sherwin Hawley, "The Wilson Garden in Princeton, N.J.," Country Life in America, September 1913, pp. 44-45.
- (13). Henry W. Bragdon, Woodrow Wilson: The Academic Years, (Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 303-304.
- (14). "Students Jeer Dr. Wilson," New York Herald, October 9, 1904, in PWW 15: p. 507; "Editorial," Daily Princetonian, October 13, 1904, in PWW 15: pp. 509-510.
- (15). "Editorial Note: The New Princeton Course of Study," PWW 15: pp.277-292.
- (16). Wilson discussed his developing educational philosophy in the following articles: "Princeton for the Nation's Service," October 25, 1902, PWW 14: pp. 170-185; "An Address to the Princeton Alumni of New York," December 9, 1902, PWW 14: pp. 268-276; "Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," December 8, 1904, PWW 15: 558-569; "The Preceptors," April 28, 1905, PWW 16: pp. 84-85; "New Plans for Princeton," June 24, 1905, PWW 16: pp. 146-149; "Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," December 14, 1905, PWW 16: pp. 260-261; "A Supplementary Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," December 13, 1906, PWW 16: pp. 519-525; "Report on the Social Coordination of the University," June 6, 1907, PWW 17: pp. 176-186; "Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University,"

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January 9, 1908, PWW 17: 590-594; "An Address to the Princeton Club of Chicago," March 12, 1908, PWW 18: pp. 18-34; "What Is a College For," August 18, 1909, PWW 19: pp. 334-347; "Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," January 1, 1910, PWW 19: 690-695; "The Country and the Colleges," February 24, 1910, PWW 20: pp. 157-172.

- (17). "Report on the Social Coordination of the University," PWW 17: p. 177; "The Preceptors," PWW 16: pp. 84-85; "New Plans for Princeton," PWW 16: pp. 146-149.
- (18). "The Country and The Colleges," PWW 20: p. 163.
- (19). "A Supplementary Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," PWW 16: pp. 519-525. "Report on the Social Coordination of the University," PWW 17: pp. 176-180.
- (20). "What Is a College For?," PWW 19: pp. 340-341; "Report on the Social Coordination of the University," PWW 17: p. 184.
- (21). "The Country and the Colleges," PWW 20: p. 160. Arthur S. Link, Wilson: The Road to the White House (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), pp. 46-57; Bragdon, pp. 272-274, 316-336.
- (22). "Princeton for the Nation's Service," PWW 14: pp. 182-183; "Report to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," PWW 17: p. 593.
- (23). Andrew F. West, The Proposed Graduate College of Princeton University, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1903), p. 11. (Copy in Princeton University Archives).
- (24). Bragdon, pp. 314-315; 353-356; Link, pp. 59-66; John M. Mulder, Woodrow Wilson: The Years of Preparation, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 203-208.
- (25). Ralph Adams Cram to WW, April 4, 1908, PWW 18: pp. 225-226; WW to Ralph Adams Cram, April 7, 1908, PWW 18: pp. 226-227; Edward Wright Sheldon to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University, April 9, 1908, PWW 18: pp. 247-250; Ralph Adams Cram to Edward Wright Sheldon, March 30, 1908, PWW 18: pp. 250-254.
- (26). Accounts of the graduate college and school controversy can be found in Link, pp. 60-91; Bragdon, pp. 353-383; and Mulder, pp. 203-228.
- (27). WW to Moses Taylor Pyne, December 25, 1909, PWW 19: p. 630.
- (28). WW to Herbert Bruce Brougham, February 1, 1910, PWW 20: pp. 69-71.

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- (29). "Editorial," New York Times February 3, 1910, in PWW 20: pp. 74-76.
- (30). "Pittsburgh Speech," Princeton Alumni Weekly, April 20, 1910, in PWW 20: pp. 374-376.
- (31). WW to Mary Allen Hulbert Peck, June 5, 1910, PWW 20: pp. 500-501.
- (32). Link, p. 142; Bragdon, p. 392; "Editorial Note: Colonel Harvey's Plan for Wilson's Entry into Politics," PWW 20: pp. 146-148.
- (33). Link, pp. 172-173; Bragdon, p. 397.
- (34). PWW 21: pp. 362-363, note 1; "A Proposed Resolution of the Board of Trustees of Princeton University," PWW 21: p. 353.
- (35). Cleveland Hoadley Dodge to WW, October 21, 1910, PWW 21: p. 385; Charles Williston McAlpin to WW, November 3, 1910, PWW 21: p. 539.
- (36). Link, pp. 90-91; Bragdon finds a similiar relationship between Woodrow Wilson's academic and political careers, pp. 382-383.
- (37). Link, pp. 122-123.
- (38). Link, p. 122.
- (39). Link, p. 123.
- (40). Bragdon, pp. 330, 335, 349-352.
- (41). EAW to WW, February 28, 1910, PWW 20: p. 189; Bragdon, pp. 377-378; McAdoo, pp. 261-262.
- (42). Link, p. 102.
- (43). Accounts of Wilson's entry into politics , especially in connection with Colonel Harvey, can be found in "Editorial Note: Colonel Harvey's Plan for Wilson's Entry into Politics," PWW 20: pp. 146-148; Link, pp. 98-132; and Bragdon, pp. 384-404.
- (44). "A Credo," August 6, 1907, PWW 17: pp. 335-338; Wilson's conservative outlook is discussed in Link, pp. 94-122; and Bragdon, pp. 337-349.
- (45). "Baccalaureate Address," June 13, 1909, PWW 19: p. 248.

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- (46). Wilson's developing progressive political and economic outlook is discussed in Link, pp. 122-132; and Bragdon, pp. 349-352; 385-404.
- (47). WW to John Maynard Harlan, June 25, 1910, PWW 20: pp. 540-541; and Link, p. 143.
- (48). WW to George Lawrence Record, October 24, 1910, PWW 21: pp. 406-411.
- (49). Trenton Evening Times, November 7, 1910, quoted in Link, p. 198.
- (50). Link, pp. 209-210.
- (51). Matthias Cowell Ely to WW, November 23, 1910, PWW 22: pp. 85-86, and note 1; WW to Oswald Garrison Villard, December 5, 1910, PWW 22: pp. 135-136, and note 1; "An Interview," New York American, December 18, 1910, in PWW 22: p. 217; and Link, pp. 206-237.
- (52). Link, pp. 236-237.
- (53). WW to Mary Allen Hulbert Peck, January 13, 1911, PWW 22: p. 329.
- (54). WW to Mary Allen Hulbert Peck, January 15, 1911, PWW 22: p. 334.

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Geographical Data

The nominated acreage includes Prospect as well as the gardens and grounds located within the iron fence surrounding the property. This corresponds to Prospect's boundary as defined by Woodrow Wilson in 1904, when he had the iron fence erected.

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List of Maps and Photographs

1. Princeton Quadrangle, NJ  
7.5 Minute Series  
UTM References:  
18 529150 4466110
  
2. Princeton University Campus Map
  
3. Prospect (circa 1870's)  
View from south, illustrating  
Prospect and gardens as  
designed by  
John Notman  
  
(Princeton University Archives)
  
4. Prospect (n.d)  
View from south, illustrating  
Prospect and gardens  
as replanted by  
Mrs. Ellen Wilson  
  
(Princeton University Archives)
  
5. Prospect (April, 1984)  
View from south illustrating  
Prospect with Warren  
Platner's addition  
  
(Henry J. Magaziner, NPS)
  
6. Prospect (April, 1984)  
Interior view of atrium  
in central foyer  
  
(Henry J. Magaziner, NPS)