

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic events, persons, or places. For instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

☒ New Submission ☐ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

University of Illinois buildings designed by Charles A. Platt

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Development of the University of Illinois master plan by Charles A. Platt,
1921-31, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois

Georgian Revival architecture at the University of Illinois, 1921-31
Urbana-Champaign, Illinois

C. Form Prepared by

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William C. Itle / SHPO
Signature and title of certifying official

3/17/00
Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Beth Boland
Signature of the Keeper

5/11/00
Date of Action

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	Page Numbers
E. Statement of Historic Contexts (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	1 - 19
F. Associated Property Types (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	20 - 23
G. Geographical Data	24
H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	24
I. Major Bibliographical References (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	24 - 26

Primary location of additional data:

University of Illinois archives, Urbana, Illinois

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 1
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT**E. Statement of Historic Contexts**

The Charles A. Platt designed buildings at the University of Illinois visually dominate the southern portion of the campus and still reveal today the key features of the Georgian Revival style of architecture and of the master plan proposed by Platt for the University. Platt came to architecture as a career from a background in etching, painting, and landscape design. By 1921, when his association with the University began, his architectural career was well established in New York City. The University had been attempting, with some success, to rationalize the physical environment of the campus for two decades prior to hiring Platt, but still lacked a consistent architectural style. Platt designed eleven buildings that not only are representative and significant individual examples of Georgian Revival style architecture but also, through their careful alignment and consistency of style and material, realize his campus master plan.

The University of Illinois, 1867-1921

When the Illinois Industrial University was organized in 1867, its facilities consisted of a single seminary building on 10 acres of land in Urbana, donated by Champaign County, as well as extensive farmlands stretching out to the open prairie to the south. This first building had been constructed in 1861 by a local committee in the hopes of attracting a seminary to the community, but no group came forward to organize an education program. After the 1862 land-grant act was passed by Congress, the county board purchased the property in 1866 to attract the proposed new state institution. Clark Griggs, mayor of Urbana and state legislator after 1867, was instrumental in negotiating the legislature's choice of Urbana, despite the limited local financial support relative to the offers of competing counties.¹

The seminary building was always viewed as a temporary accommodation until the University could build itself a main hall of its own. Finally in 1871 the legislature appropriated the necessary funds, and the

1. Willis C. Baker and Patricia L. Miller. *A Commemorative History of Champaign County, Illinois: 1833-1983*. (Champaign: Illinois Heritage Association, 1984) pp. 39-43.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 2

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

planning for University Hall began.² The location of this building received much discussion among the Trustees, for they understood clearly that its site would determine for many years the center of the University campus. The site ultimately chosen was far to the south of the old seminary, which was located at the extreme northern end of the University property along today's University Avenue. In 1874, the new University Hall opened south of Green Street, effectively fixing the center of campus. The Second Empire style of this building was copied in the Chemistry Laboratory (now Harker Hall) built in 1878 just to the east. The seminary building continued to deteriorate, and after severe damage in a wind storm in 1880, it was demolished the following year. The southward movement of the entire campus had been accomplished.³

Throughout the 1880's enrollment was fairly stable, and the existing facilities remained adequate. A sudden jump in enrollment around 1890 created a need for new construction, and rapid growth was to continue for the next twenty years.⁴ The new buildings of the 1890's were sited informally along the east-west Green Street corridor, set in a picturesque landscape garden (See Figure 2). The new buildings displayed a wide variety of styles and materials. Included in this group were the Natural History Building of 1893, built in red brick in an eclectic Queen Anne style; Engineering Hall of 1894, built of buff colored brick in a Renaissance Revival style; and the first main library (now Altgeld Hall), built of sandstone in an elaborate Romanesque Revival style in 1897.

Thus by the turn of the century, the initial, informal campus plan had been completed – the Green Street corridor was lined with university buildings. When further construction was necessary in the first decade of this century, the old debate of campus growth was reopened. The new agriculture building (now Davenport Hall) pointed the way in 1901 with a location to the south of the existing Green Street group. The 1903 Chemistry Laboratory (now Noyes Lab) and McKim, Mead, and White's 1905 Women's Building

2. Leon Deming Tilton and Thomas Edward O'Donnell. *History of the Growth and Development of the Campus of the University of Illinois*. (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1930) pp. 8-11.

3. Tilton and O'Donnell, pp. 11-16.

4. Tilton and O'Donnell, p. 17.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 3

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

(now the English Building) followed this lead and began to shape a new, more formal quadrangle. It was left to the architect of the proposed new Auditorium, University of Illinois alumnus Clarence H. Blackall of Boston, to articulate these vague ideas with a definite master plan, the first formal plan to guide future construction at the University.⁵ His plan for the area, submitted in 1906, showed a formal, symmetrical mall, lined with buildings on both sides, stretching from Green Street on the north to the new Auditorium on the south (See Figure 3). The basic idea was embraced by the Board of Trustees, and in 1908 the Auditorium established the southern boundary of what became known as the Quad.⁶ The nascent quadrangle was further developed with the addition of Lincoln Hall in 1912 and the Administration Building in 1913, both designed by the state architect W. C. Zimmerman.

Although all of these buildings were united in a formal planning scheme, there was still a wide variety of styles. The Chemistry Lab followed the Romanesque details of the library, while the Auditorium was given a symmetrical, Beaux Arts treatment. For the Women's Building, McKim, Mead, and White adopted a more domestic Georgian Revival style (although this was hidden from view with a more classical addition on the Quad side in 1913, by Zimmerman.)

Further pressures for expansion continued into the 1910's, but World War I and its aftermath of economic dislocation forced a suspension of any construction activity.⁷ During this interim, the University actively researched the question of its expansion, since the Quad delineated by Blackall had so rapidly neared completion. There was little doubt that further growth should occur on vacant land already owned by the University to the south, but the organization of buildings in this area was wide open for speculation. Already in 1909, a committee composed of architects Daniel Burnham, Clarence Blackall, and W. C. Zimmerman had recommended some sort of east-west mall south of the Auditorium, with new buildings symmetrically placed about it.⁸ The result of these discussions was the plan prepared in 1919 by Professor James M. White (See Figure 4). This plan located a major new space south of the Auditorium, far wider

5. Tilton and O'Donnell, pp. 36-39.

6. Tilton and O'Donnell, p. 43.

7. Tilton and O'Donnell, pp. 79-80.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 4 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

than the main Quad, to be defined with the new main library on the west side. South of this, a new east-west axis was to guide future development. Further outside advice resulted in the Holabird and Roche plan of 1920, which proposed a further extension of the main Quad south before the insertion of a major east-west alignment (See Figure 5). Memorial Stadium as designed by this firm in 1922 was meant to be the western terminus of this new axis.⁹ Thus, the idea of creating an east-west axis in the south campus had already been proposed prior to the involvement of Charles Platt, although the precise alignment of this proposed axis was subject to debate and no buildings yet defined it.

The Board of Trustees had long been disturbed by the lack of design unity of the campus, where each building had been given its own architectural style without consideration of the surrounding buildings.¹⁰ Enrollment quadrupled between 1913 and 1923, and the legislature was willing and able to provide funding for a major period of construction in the 1920's.¹¹ The Board of Trustees decided to hire an outside supervising architect, whose responsibility it would be to create a uniform style for the new buildings and revise the master plan of Holabird & Roche. Professor White, who had served as campus architect since 1907, would continue in his guiding role, keeping the Board of Trustees informed and ensuring that the design of each building adhered to the intent of the master plan after the original architect was no longer employed by the University. After interviewing several nationally known architectural firms, including John Russell Pope, Delano & Aldrich, and McKim, Mead, and White, the Board decided to hire Charles A. Platt of New York in December of 1921 to design the proposed Agriculture Building and to study the campus plan.¹²

8. Tilton and O'Donnell, pp. 50-78.

9. Tilton and O'Donnell, pp. 100-109.

10. Tilton and O'Donnell, pp. 111-114.

11. Keith N. Morgan. *Charles A. Platt: The Artist as Architect*. (New York: The Architectural History Foundation, 1985) p. 177.

12. "Transactions of the Board of Trustees," November 11, 1921 and December 13, 1921.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 5 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

Charles A. Platt: The Early Years

Charles Adams Platt had an interesting life filled with numerous travels, tragedies, and career changes. His many experiences led to his final endeavors as an architect and influenced his designs. He was born in New York City on October 16, 1861 to Mary (Cheney) and John Platt. As a child Platt was surrounded with many artistic role models. His mother was from an important silk-milling family from Manchester, Connecticut. His father was a corporate lawyer and a founding member of a club for gentlemen who were interested or engaged in letters and the fine arts, the Century Association. Two of his great uncles had successful careers in painting and engraving.¹³

Platt's formal art education began in 1878 with his enrollment in the Antique School of the National Academy of Design. He quickly added life drawing classes to his curriculum at the Academy in the spring of 1879. To supplement his education in painting, Platt joined the Art Student League. Later that summer in Bolton Landing, New York, he met the Philadelphia etcher Stephen Parrish and became his informal pupil of etching. Platt excelled in etching and made his first plate in 1880. In 1881 he became the youngest member of the New York Etching Club, which had a key role in the revival of etching in the United States.¹⁴

At this point, Platt shifted his focus to his painting.¹⁵ Having exhausted New York City's educational resources, he left for Paris in 1882 for a five-year stay. During his stay in Paris, Platt took advantage of his summers and traveled to Normandy, Brittany, and back to the United States to visit with other painters and practice his art. Platt was denied entry into the architecture division at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1883. The entrance exam introduced Platt to the basic principles of architecture which had been previously

13. Keith N. Morgan. *Shaping the American Landscape: the Art and Architecture of Charles A. Platt*. (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1995) p. 3.

14. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 4.

15. Robin Karson. *The Muses of Gwinn*. (New York: Sagapress, Inc., 1995) p. 15.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 6 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

unfamiliar to him.¹⁶ The rejection did not discourage him. In 1884 he enrolled at the Academie Julian under the art studios of Gustave Rodolphe Boulanger and Jules Joseph Lefebvre.¹⁷ "Lefebvre and Boulanger emphasized drawings and paintings from life and stressed the mastery of the human form as the crucial underpinning for any great accomplishment in the arts." Before this, Platt had ignored the figure. He realized that the skills required were important even to landscapists.¹⁸ While at he Academie Julian, Platt continued to paint while becoming interested in architecture.¹⁹

In 1885 Platt met Annie Corbin Hoe and her family. He traveled with these fellow New Yorkers in 1886 from San Remo "through Genoa, Pisa, and Siena to Rome where Platt and Annie announced their engagement". They were married in Florence on April 10, 1886, and chose to remain living in Paris. Sad times came upon the couple when both of their fathers passed away later that summer. In 1887 Platt was "nominated for membership in the Century Association" and joined the Society of American Artists.²⁰ At this point in his career, Platt's paintings and etchings had been in over twenty exhibitions and many had sold. His successful paintings and etchings were of his favored subjects of harbor scenes and gentle rural landscapes. The momentum in his career as an artist was disrupted by another death in the family. His wife Annie passed away on March 18, 1887 while giving birth to their twin daughters, both of whom also died.²¹ Platt returned to New York devastated after this tragedy, but only stayed for a short time. He traveled to Massachusetts and England with fellow artists and then on to Holland by himself to further his informal studies.

After returning to New York in 1889, Platt's career regained momentum. A book of his etchings was published by DeVinne Press in New York entitled *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Works of Charles A. Platt and compiled by Richard Rice*. He "joined the Players, a New York social club for members of the

16. Karson, p. 16.

17. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 158.

18. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 63.

19. Karson, p. 15.

20. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 158.

21. Karson, p. 16.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 7UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

theater and men of letters". That summer he spent his time in Cornish, New Hampshire, with many other artists, writers, and other professionals.²² Platt went to Cornish at the invitation of his friend H. O. Walker. Many artists went to Cornish to be around sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. At Cornish artists had time to take part in serious gardening, gardening making, and artistry of choice. The situation at Cornish was stimulating and harmonious, offering beautiful scenery and encouraging artistic creativity.²³ Platt spent a majority of his summers until his death at Cornish.²⁴ While in Cornish that first summer, he designed a garden for Henry Oliver Walker. The following year Platt purchased land in Cornish and designed a house and studio for himself. The house site looked out on a sheep pasture and the distant Connecticut River.²⁵ In 1890 he was commissioned to design a summer residence in Cornish for Miss Annie Lazarus.²⁶ This was to be his first architectural commission.²⁷ The Cornish residences that Platt was commissioned to design in the early 1890s marked the beginning of his pursuit of a career in architecture. His initial interest in landscapes moved from the two-dimensional to the three-dimensional. Cornish served as a laboratory for Platt's expanding interests in designing houses and landscapes.

In 1892 Platt and his brother William traveled to Italy "to sketch, photograph, and measure the gardens of the Renaissance." The trip was planned in order to introduce his brother, who was a young apprentice of Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., to the beauties of formal landscape design.²⁸ One month after they returned from Italy, William drowned in Portland, Maine, on vacation. Platt devoted himself to his artistic work, especially the expansion of his Cornish garden.²⁹ The trip to Italy with his brother was "instrumental in the development of his ideas on architecture and landscape architecture."³⁰ In 1893, he remarried and signed a contract for a book based on his research in Italy. Two of his landscapes and seventeen etchings were

22. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 158.

23. Karson, p. 16.

24. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 5.

25. Karson, p. 17.

26. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 159.27. "Charles A. Platt." *MacMillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, vol. 3, 1982, 439.

28. Karson, p. 17.

29. Karson, p. 18.

30. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 5.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 8

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

exhibited at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago where he won medals for painting and etching.³¹ Platt's book *Italian Gardens* was published in 1894. This book established him as a "knowledgeable authority on the Italian garden and its adaptation in the United States" and allowed his career in landscape architecture to move forward.³² Following the publication of this book, Platt received numerous commissions in landscape design.

Charles Platt as Architect

From 1895 to 1902, Platt's commissions included mainly homes and gardens along the East Coast. His design of Francis T. Maxwell's residence Maxwell Court in Connecticut in 1901 is regarded as one of the finest examples of his early country estates.³³ A more public commission was the master plan for the LaSalle Gardens, a residential neighborhood development in South Detroit, Michigan. Platt officially changed his occupational listing from "Artist" to "Architect" in the New York City directory, having never apprenticed in an architectural firm or received formal architectural education.³⁴ In 1900 he traveled to Italy to buy sculpture and architectural pieces that would be used in a number of the houses and gardens he was commissioned to design. Until this time, Platt's commissions had all been residential houses and gardens. In 1902 he received his first urban and public projects, the Maxwell Memorial Library in Rockville, Connecticut, the Yondotega Club garden in Detroit, Michigan, and the pavilions for the Richmond Beach Park Association for Charles A. Schwab in Huguenot, Staten Island, New York.³⁵

In 1904 "The Architectural Works of Charles A. Platt" by Herbert Croly was published in *Architectural Record*. This article was the first major review of Platt's work as an architect, and it appeared at the time of his first commissions for urban townhouses and apartment buildings. The Astor estate office hired Platt for

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- 31. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 159.
 - 32. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 78.
 - 33. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 10.
 - 34. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 160.
 - 35. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 161.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 9

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

the first of many commissions in 1906.³⁶ These projects were urban in nature, mostly in New York City. He designed new commercial and apartment buildings and converted old existing tenements to apartments. While working for the Astor estate, Platt still continued to design residences. In 1907 Platt, along with Warren H. Manning, was commissioned to design a new house and landscape in Cleveland, Ohio, on the shore of Lake Erie for William G. Mather. Mather's estate, Gwinn, was a twenty-seven acre estate that became "one of the finest examples of American landscape architecture of the period."³⁷ Gwinn is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1908 Platt and his wife traveled to Paris, Venice, Bologna, Florence, and Naples to purchase furnishings and decorations for Gwinn.³⁸

Platt's stature and success as an architect was recognized in 1913 when the Architectural Book Publishing Company published the *Monograph of the Work of Charles A. Platt*, with an introduction contributed by Royal Cortissoz. Platt was commissioned to design the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., which was to house Asian art and American paintings from the collection of Charles Lang Freer. The museum opened to the public in 1923. From 1916 to 1921, Platt was a member of the United States National Commission of Fine Arts. This commission was "responsible for the development of public architecture, sculpture, landscaping, and monuments in Washington, D.C." During this appointment Platt developed the official design for the Arlington National Cemetery headstones which would commemorate the soldiers and sailors who died in World War I.³⁹

Platt's first of many academic commissions came in 1919. He was asked to be the planning consultant for the Homewood Campus of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. By this time his "efforts were more fully devoted to master planning and design of academic buildings and museums."⁴⁰ This type of commission allowed Platt to utilize both his talents as an architect and landscape architect. In 1921 he was appointed to assist in the development of a master campus plan at Phillips Academy in Andover,

36. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 161.

37. Karson, p. 3.

38. Karson, p. 61.

39. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 164.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 10UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

Massachusetts as well as the University of Illinois. At Phillips Academy Platt assisted and advised Guy Lowell on the campus plan and in 1927 he unofficially assumed control over the entire architectural development following Lowell's death. Platt challenged Academy trustee and Wall Street financier Thomas Cochran "to create an ideal environment for education." The goal was achieved through demolishing, moving, and altering existing buildings, constructing new buildings, and opening vistas and courtyards throughout campus.⁴¹ Simultaneous with his work at Andover, Platt was developing his plans for the University of Illinois.

Charles A. Platt and the University of Illinois, 1922-1931

Platt's plan for the University of Illinois, as developed in 1922, retained many key features of the earlier proposals for the campus (See Figure 6). The main axis determined by Clarence Blackall was to remain and be extended. A new east-west axis was to be created in the area of southern expansion, although this axis was placed much farther north than Holabird and Roche had proposed. Platt also proposed several key innovations in campus planning at the University of Illinois. Rather than trying to define these broad vistas with individual buildings, the basic unit was to be clusters of buildings. Each cluster was to be interconnected by ornamental gateways between the buildings. In addition to defining the main quads and axes, the new buildings were also to enclose smaller inner courtyards. This allowed both a monumental plan of grand axes to exist simultaneously with a more human scale plan of enclosed green spaces.⁴² Uniform cornice heights visually link the various buildings, which are typically three stories plus attic. Platt designed the buildings on campus "to emphasize long uninterrupted facades which were complemented by terraced plantings and allees of uniform trees."⁴³

For the style of architecture, Platt adopted the Georgian Revival first used on campus by McKim, Mead,

40. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 13.

41. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, pp. 15-16, 164-165.

42. Tilton and O'Donnell, p. 117-121.

43. Morgan, *The Artist as Architect*, p. 180.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 11

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

and White. The choice of a revival style, applied in a strict, simple, yet elegant way, was in keeping with the spirit of the times. Georgian Revival had just been selected for a new building complex at Harvard, in a competition for which Platt had served as a juror. The new Agriculture Building (now Mumford Hall), completed in 1924, was the first building designed by Platt on campus. In this building, the key elements of the Georgian Revival style as adapted to the campus are clear. The basic material is red brick, with continuous limestone sill courses and other detailing emphasizing the horizontals of the design. Massive chimneys rise above steeply-pitched green slate hipped roofs. Slight variations in the style of window at each level further emphasizes the division of the facade into horizontal layers. A minimum of ornament is applied with great restraint in a few key locations, particularly at the primary entrances of buildings. With some variations, this description applies to all the buildings designed by Platt on campus.

With the economy booming in the 1920's, the legislature was able to provide funding for all the requests of the University, and Platt was kept busy with a dozen projects. As the University's campus architect, Professor White would critique Platt's designs during the development stage and offer suggestions before the final designs were submitted to the Board of Trustees. Because Platt generally remained in New York and mailed his architectural plans to Illinois, Professor White gradually took on additional responsibility for working out details during construction and on-site administration, and he is credited as co-architect for some of the buildings.⁴⁴ Added to the campus were new buildings for commerce (1925) and architecture (1928), a women's dormitory (1925), a men's gymnasium (1925), the McKinley Hospital (1925), a new main library (1924-29), the President's house (1930), a women's gymnasium (1931), and additions to the armory (1927). Although these buildings run the gamut of possible function, they are united in their stylistic expression. Because so many buildings were added at one time, the campus plan proposed by Platt rapidly took shape. The library was placed where proposed by White in his 1919 plan, defining the new south Quad, together with the Commerce and Agriculture buildings. The first cluster of buildings was begun with the Architecture and Commerce buildings. Ornamental gateways designed by Platt and built along with the Architecture Building link these two buildings and enclose the interior courtyard. The final

44. Morgan, *The Artist as Architect*, p. 178-180.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 12

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

location of the long-debated east-west axis was determined by the placement of the Architecture Building facing south.

While producing these designs for the University, other work continued to fill the New York office. In 1924 Platt took on the task of completing his friend Henry Bacon's projects after his death. That summer Platt and his son William traveled through Europe to "study the arrangement and lighting in museums in preparation for designing a National Gallery of Art" which would never be realized. Later that fall William joined his father's office. In 1926 Dartmouth College and the University of Rochester hired Platt as a consulting architect for five and seven year terms, respectively. Platt was elected president of the Century Association and of the Board of Trustees of the American Academy in Rome. He was the first architect to be elected to the position of president in the Century Association. In 1929 he was commissioned by Deerfield Academy in Deerfield, Massachusetts to "oversee an extensive building campaign."⁴⁵

With the beginning of the Depression, enrollment stopped increasing at the University of Illinois and state funding evaporated, bringing this period of phenomenal growth to an abrupt end. With the completion of the Women's Gymnasium in 1931, Platt's ten year association with the University came to a close.⁴⁶

Platt's son Geoffrey joined his father's office in 1931. William and Geoffrey completed the Deerfield Academy commission after their father's death on September 12, 1933. Platt was buried in Manchester, Connecticut.

Platt's Design in the Context of American Campus Planning

The earliest completed example of an American campus planned so that a grouping of similarly-styled buildings defines a central green space is the University of Virginia as designed by Thomas Jefferson in

45. Morgan, *Shaping the American Landscape*, p. 165.

46. "Capsule History of Campus Development." Office for Project Planning and Facilities Management, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: www.admin.uiuc.edu/ppfm.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 13

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

1816-22.⁴⁷ The plan developed out of Jefferson's own idea for a higher education curriculum: for the first time a university would be wholly secular, financed by the state, to the exclusion of theology.⁴⁸ Prior to the University of Virginia, informal groupings of buildings existed at American colleges such as Harvard and Yale. These early campuses did not have overall plans and had grown incrementally, adding buildings haphazardly as space was needed.⁴⁹ Jefferson's scheme, which he referred to as an "academical village"⁵⁰ placed a major domed hall, which housed the library, lecture room, and other common facilities, at the head of an open rectangular lawn. Stretching down either side of this lawn were continuous student dormitories interspersed with the professors' pavilions.

Through the nineteenth century, such all-encompassing schemes as Jefferson's remained rare. More common was the collection of informally placed buildings, with each successive building in the changing style of the moment. A few architects drew upon the English Gothic prototypes of Oxford and Cambridge and proposed campus plans composed of linear buildings interconnected to fully enclose green courtyards. Typical of this trend was the 1893 University of Chicago plan by Henry Ives Cobb. The plan's buildings, towers, and gateways are pushed to the perimeter of the site and fully enclose several inner courtyards.⁵¹

A shift in attitudes toward campus planning came with the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, which showcased a harmonious ensemble of similar buildings symmetrically placed around a central lagoon.⁵² The crucial idea of Jefferson's plan at Virginia, the use of a single architectural style and uniform cornice heights to unify a group of buildings, was revived. During the decades after the fair, architects invariably proposed grand axial schemes for campus development that emphasized monumental, detached

47. Richard P. Dober. *Campus Planning*. (Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1963) pp. 21-22.

48. William H. Pierson, Jr. *American Buildings and Their Architects, Vol. 1: The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles*. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970) p. 317.

49. Pierson, pp. 318-319; Dober, pp. 14-19.

50. Quoted in Pierson, p. 319.

51. Dober, p. 32-33.

52. Dober, p. 34.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 14 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

buildings in a park-like setting, arranged symmetrically around large open spaces.⁵³

In his campus master plan for the University of Illinois, Platt followed this general trend arising out of the World's Columbian Exposition. The southward extension of the main campus axis, the creation of the new east-west axis, and the emphasis on a single architectural style with uniform cornice heights were all based on common planning ideas current in the years following the fair. However, Platt also innovatively extended this precedent with the use of clustered building groups to define the axes. This decision allowed for a range of outdoor spaces, from the monumental, axial open spaces of the main axes to the enclosed, irregular spaces inside each building group.

The Georgian Revival Style

During the late 19th and early twentieth centuries, the styles of architecture that were commonly used included Gothic, Tudor, Georgian, and Spanish Colonial Revivals. These styles were all inspired by past architectural trends and "enjoyed great popularity from the 1890's through the 1920's."⁵⁴ These various styles in residential buildings were known collectively as the Period House.

The Georgian Revival style had two modes, Neo-Adamesque and Neo-Colonial. The Neo-Adamesque mode took as its inspiration the Adamesque buildings of the Federal period of architecture. These designs were more elaborate and larger than the original Adamesque buildings. The Neo-Adamesque buildings "may be rectangular or boxlike, with perhaps a semicircular porch over the front door, or they may be of a more complex geometry, with curved or octagonal projections, expressing the room shapes within, played off against the basic cube."⁵⁵ The Neo-Colonial mode followed the Georgian Colonial style and was also based on English architecture from that period. These designs were all rectangular in plan,

53. Dober, pp. 36-38.

54. John S. Poppeliers, Allen Chambers, and Nancy B. Schwartz. *What Style Is It?* (The Preservation Press) p. 32.

55. Marcus Whiffen. *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles.* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1992) p. 23.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 15 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

having minimal projections, and strictly symmetrical facades. The roofs were hipped, double-pitched, or gambrel in form with Classical cornices decorating the eaves. Chimneys were placed to continue the symmetry of the design. The central portion of the facade often projected slightly under a pediment. The windows were rectangular with double-hung sash.⁵⁶

The Arlington Street Church in Boston was the first Georgian Revival building. It was designed by Arthur D. Gilman and constructed in 1859-61. Georgian Revival as a movement started in 1885 when McKim, Mead, and White designed the Taylor House in Newport, Rhode Island, in the Neo-Colonial mode, and the Cochrane House on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston in the Neo-Adamesque mode. Urban buildings began to be designed in this mode due to its use of brick, which allowed it to meet fire codes. The Georgian Revival style was "motivated by the desire to restore order to the architectural scene."⁵⁷ Until the end of the century, Georgian Revival designs were monumental structures that studiously followed past designs. The 20th century designs were more varied and numerous. The historical prototypes of the Georgian Revival style were "domestic in scale, even when their functions were not strictly domestic."⁵⁸ The domestic feeling was established through the detailing of the facades, cornices, and windows.⁵⁹

Platt's U of I buildings were designed in the Neo-Colonial mode of Georgian Revival. They have the common characteristics of the Neo-Colonial mode: minimal projections, symmetrical facades, hipped roofs, and rectangular windows. The Neo-Adamesque mode would have been too elaborately decorated for Platt's intentions for the campus plan.

At the University of Illinois, the Georgian Revival style of architecture was chosen "chiefly because it was so generally employed as an early American style and has withstood the test of time, without which test

56. Whiffen, pp. 159-160.

57. Whiffen, p. 160

58. Whiffen, p. 165.

59. Whiffen, pp. 160-165.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 16UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

no architectural style should be employed for a permanent group of buildings to be erected over a considerable span of time."⁶⁰ Platt's plan for campus was that of simple grandeur. The Georgian Revival style "was consistent with the formality of his plan and could be expanded easily to accommodate the needs of differing departments and programs."⁶¹ The Georgian Revival style also had the advantage of feeling domestic and lending a more residential feeling to campus. Professor White commented on this desire for domestication in the campus architecture:

There has been much discussion as to how the academic feeling can be obtained in an architectural group, and I feel that it has been pretty clearly demonstrated that it cannot be done with the purely monumental building, and certainly it cannot be done with the factory type. I believe that the academic feeling can best be obtained by introducing a domestic trend into the architecture.⁶²

The Continuing Impact of the Platt plan, 1932-1949

Throughout the 1930's, lack of funding forced the University of Illinois to make do with existing facilities. Finally in 1939, PWA funding from the federal government enabled the construction of two new buildings: the Illini Union and Gregory Hall. The Natural Resources Building of the same year was financed by the state Department of Registration to house the State Geological and Natural History surveys.⁶³ For all three of these buildings, the Georgian Revival style established by Platt was followed. The Natural Resources Building at its southern location opposite the Architecture building clearly followed the principles of the Platt campus plan. After the interruption caused by World War II, the University again faced critical space shortages as veteran enrollment boomed. The permanent buildings built in the early post-war years followed the basic outlines of the Georgian Revival style, albeit in an abstracted manner stripped of much detail. Steeply pitched hipped slate roofs were replaced by flat or

60. Library Building Formally Dedicated." *Illinois Alumni News*. Vol.8, No. 2 (November, 1929) 64.

61. Morgan, *The Artist as Architect*, p. 178.

62. "Completed Library Will Cost \$5,000,000." *Daily Illini, Student Newspaper of the University of Illinois*. Vol. LVI, No. 155 (March 13, 1927) 1, 4.

63. www.admin.uiuc.edu/ppfm.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 17 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

very shallow hip roofs. Typical of this period was the Electrical Engineering Building and the Lincoln Avenue Residence Halls of 1949.⁶⁴

Challenges to the Platt plan, 1950-2000

By the 1950's, the use of revival styles had fallen out of favor, and a variety of architectural firms introduced new buildings in a "modern" aesthetic to the campus. The first truly modernist building was the College of Law Building of 1955. Sparing use of red brick recalled the earlier campus architecture, but the building basically was a horizontal box of steel and glass.⁶⁵ The 1959 Ten Year Development program by Richardson, Severns, Scheeler, & Associates concerned itself primarily with the placement of buildings in logical groupings around traditional, axial green spaces but left specifics of architectural styling up to individual architects. During rapid expansion into the 1960's, modern designs became the norm for such buildings as the Assembly Hall (1963), the Education Building (1964), the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (1969), the Undergraduate Library (1969), and the Psychology Building (1970). These buildings used a variety of materials and massing; the uniformity of cornice heights and materials established by Platt was all but forgotten. Another blow to the formality of Platt's plan was the loss of numerous rows of trees to Dutch Elm disease in the early 1960's.

Despite the rejection of the Georgian Revival style, however, the sensitivity to the siting of the new buildings reinforced the earlier axes and symmetry.⁶⁶ For example, the Undergraduate Library was placed in a formal, symmetrical position astride the main campus axis east of the main Library, and the Education Building was placed to align symmetrically with the ornamental gateway designed by Platt next to the Architecture Building. Also, a few buildings followed the more traditional styles of the previous era, usually when dictated by site considerations, as in the Commerce West building of 1962, which

64. Allen S. Weller. *100 Years of Campus Architecture at the University of Illinois*. (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1968) pp. 26-27.

65. Weller, pp. 28-29.

66. www.admin.uiuc.edu/ppfm.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 18 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

completed the clustered grouping of Architecture and Commerce with a strict Georgian Revival exterior indistinguishable from the buildings of the 1920's. With the 1969 Sasaki Associates landscaping plan, the axial vistas and formal placement of trees on the green spaces of campus was reasserted, but this plan was not comprehensive and did not deal with architectural concerns.⁶⁷

In 1986 the University adopted a new comprehensive master plan prepared by Sasaki Associates (See Figure 7). Many key elements of this plan sought to strengthen and revive the scheme of Platt, especially in the southern portion of campus. New buildings were again to be sited in a formal and symmetrical fashion along the major north-south and east-west axes. Formal landscaping, begun anew in 1969, was extended to unify the campus visually. The principles that Platt had used to develop the south campus were applied to the engineering campus north of Green Street, where new open spaces were created through demolition and land purchases.⁶⁸ Along with this more formal master plan in the late 1980's and 1990's came an abstract architectural vocabulary derived from the Georgian Revival style. Typical was the Beckman Institute of 1988, the Grainger Engineering Library of 1994, and Temple Hoyne Buell Hall for architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning of 1995. This return to a much simplified Georgian Revival expression included the revival of Platt's idea for ornamental gateways to connect groups of buildings, as seen with the Grainger Library and Beckman Institute.

Conclusion

Despite the continually changing tastes in architectural style, the work of Charles Platt in the 1920's determined the current plan of the campus of the University of Illinois, in part because of the volume of construction that Platt was personally able to oversee, a period of exponential expansion that has never been equaled. The key features of Platt's work – the Georgian Revival style, the east-west and north-south axes, the groups of buildings linked around interior courtyards – have remained clear despite subsequent changes.

67. www.admin.uiuc.edu/ppfm.

68. www.admin.uiuc.edu/ppfm.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 19

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

What set Platt apart from his colleagues was his "ability to conceptualize a simple design idea and to adapt the design to meet the real day-to-day needs of his clients." When he was commissioned to design a building, Platt could not separate the interior from the exterior when designing a domestic commission. He insisted on having control over the design of both the house and the garden. His emphasis on the planning of the interior and exterior is why Platt's designs are recognized and received high praise. His designs of formal gardens were "nearly always bilaterally symmetrical and laid out in axial relation to the house."⁶⁹ Platt believed that symmetry and its effects were ideal for architectural and site development. He viewed plants as objects and thus his planting techniques were architectural in nature.⁷⁰ Platt even selected and arranged the interior furnishings.

Platt's training as an etcher and painter was reflected in all of his projects. The sensitivity to detail influenced by this training "led him to think of any project as a composition in both two and three dimensions."⁷¹ During his career as an artist, architect, and landscape architect, "he completed about 250 projects, ranging from houses and gardens to schools, campuses, museums, and office buildings."⁷²

69. Karson, 19.

70. Karson, 20.

71. Morgan, *The Artist as Architect*, p. 10.

72. Karson, 20.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 20

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

F. Associated Property Types

<i>Original Name</i>	<i>Date of Completion</i>	<i>Contemporary Name</i>
Agriculture	1924	Mumford Hall
Commerce ¹	1925	David Kinley Hall
West Residence Hall ^{1,2}	1925	Evans Hall
Men's Gymnasium ^{1,3}	1925	Huff Hall
McKinley Hospital ^{1,2}	1925	—
Library ^{2,4}	1926-29	—
Armory Additions ¹	1927	—
Architecture ⁵	1928	—
President's House ¹	1930	—
Dairy Manufactures Lab ¹	1931	Agricultural Bioprocesses Lab
Women's Gymnasium ^{1,2}	1931	Freer Hall

1. Designed in association with James M. White.
2. Substantial subsequent additions.
3. South addition completed in 1927, planned north addition never built.
4. Platt's design built in three phases: First unit and first portion of bookstack wing completed by 1926, second unit and second portion of bookstack wing completed by 1928, third unit completed by 1929.
5. Included the construction of a pair of ornamental gateways at the east and west ends.

1. Description: Between December, 1921, when he was hired by the Board of Trustees, and the fall of 1931, when the Women's Gymnasium was completed, Charles A. Platt designed ten new buildings for the University of Illinois, as well as a substantial addition to the Armory. Professor James M. White, University

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number F Page 21

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

Supervising Architect and professor in the School of Architecture, would critique Platt's designs and offer suggestions; on some projects, his input was substantial enough that he is credited as co-architect. All of the buildings use the Georgian Revival style of architecture. They are red brick buildings with limestone trim and green slate steeply pitched hipped roofs with dormers. Carved stone ornamental detailing is usually limited to areas around major entrances. The massing of the buildings is simple, generally rectangular, and they are 2 + 3 stories high, plus attic and basement. The buildings support a variety of University functions, including instruction, research, recreation, health care, and housing. The relationships among individual buildings as elements in the master plan prepared by Platt is revealed through the consistency of materials and cornice heights and the careful placement on the site.

2. Significance: The Charles A. Platt designed buildings at the University of Illinois are significant under Criterion C for architecture as excellent local examples of the Georgian Revival style. Further research may show that they could be considered examples of state or national significance. The massing of most of the buildings is intentionally simple, with rectangular, T-shaped, and U-shaped plans predominating. Platt achieved a horizontal emphasis in the buildings through continuous sill courses and cornices and the variation in window type at each level. Each level of windows usually has a different pattern of sash and transom: sometimes 6 over 6, sometimes 6 over 9, sometimes segmental arches, sometimes flat arches, sometimes with transoms, sometimes without. Massive brick chimneys rise out of the hipped roofs as the sole vertical elements on each building. Carved limestone ornamental details are used sparingly and are typically concentrated around primary entry doors. Entrances are found symmetrically disposed on the facade and set into projecting porches, recessed porches, or are merely flush with the wall under a decorative pediment. Often, the windows in the bay above the entrance are also given extra ornamental detail. The door usually is part of a larger building mass, such as five projecting bays under a pediment.

High-quality, permanent materials were used on the exteriors, with the interiors much simpler. Red brick walls with limestone ornament and green slate roofing are the most obvious materials, but even the copper downspouts and wrought iron gates and railings were designed and crafted to enhance the design and be as permanent as possible. In general, the interiors are utilitarian in nature. Plastered clay tile

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 22

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

partitions and linoleum flooring are typical. Bare concrete floors are used, as well as exposed brick interior walls. However, areas such as lobbies, stairwells, and corridors that were not likely to ever need remodeling were usually executed in more expensive materials such as terrazzo for floors or wood paneling or stone for walls. Also, the interior doors invariably feature elaborate millwork and hardware and often marble thresholds as well. Most of the interior plans are straightforward, with classrooms and offices placed along double-loaded corridors. The exact placement of partitions does not necessarily correspond regularly with the exterior; sometimes pairs of windows are split between adjoining rooms. The need for future remodeling was obviously anticipated, and only a few interior spaces are elaborately detailed and designed as permanent spaces. Many of the Platt buildings have received substantial modern additions. Since Platt envisioned many of his designs as merely the first portions of larger complexes (especially with the Library and the McKinley Hospital), these additions do not automatically detract from the integrity or historic value of the building.

Many of the buildings are also significant under Criterion C as excellent local examples of Community Planning and Development. Further research may show that they could be considered examples of state or national significance. Platt's campus plan is generally representative of the current trends in campus planning for its period; however, the idea of the building group composed of multiple individual structures connected by ornamental gateways is an innovative feature unique to his plan. Each building designed by Platt was meant in some way to establish and reinforce the master plan he had created. The uniformity of cornice heights, roof pitch angle, and materials and specific placement along major and minor axes are all aspects of his architectural designs that realize his master plan. Formal landscaping, particularly rows of trees and decorative stone bollards and planters surround each building and relate them to the axial spaces of the master plan. The pair of ornamental gateways at either end of the Architecture Building connecting it to the adjacent buildings and enclosing the inner courtyard are major architectural elements that blur the division between building and site and are examples of the manner in which separated buildings were interconnected to form larger building groups.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 23

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

3. Registration Requirements: In order to qualify for listing under Criterion C for Architecture, individual buildings must adhere to the basics of the Georgian Revival style. Because the exterior effect of the buildings was considered more important than the specific configuration of the interior, it is more important for buildings to retain integrity on the exterior, including the original windows and roofing, for individual listing on the National Register. Major interior spaces that were finished in greater detail with above average quality of materials should also be basically intact. Because substantial reconfiguration of interior partitions will not alter the basic design intent, the integrity of the typical functional spaces is less important. Additions must be evaluated for their impact on the historic design intent and their adherence to the overall style and level of detail of the building. Additions that deviate radically from the ultimate ground plan envisioned by Platt, that are executed in an incompatible architectural style, that alter major interior spaces, or that alter highly detailed historic facades may make a building ineligible.

For Criterion C for Community Planning and Development, individual buildings should be judged based on their importance in defining the primary north-south and east-west axes established by Platt, both through their location and their use of cornice heights, materials, and massing comparable to adjacent buildings. Also relevant for some of the Platt-designed buildings is their role in defining building-groups and inner courtyards. Since none of the proposed building-groups was entirely completed during the period of historic significance, it is only necessary to show how an individual building related to other Platt-designed structures and began to define a proposed inner courtyard and how this has influenced subsequent development in that area of the campus.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number G, H, I Page 24

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

G. Geographical Data

All buildings are located on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign County, Illinois.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Information from the University of Illinois Archives and the University of Illinois Office of Project Planning and Facilities Management was used to develop the basic list of buildings designed by Charles A. Platt. Research into the history of campus, the life and works of Platt, and visual inspection of the buildings was used to develop the statement of significance and the criteria for inclusion on the National Register. Detailed information about each building was available from the survey conducted by the Preservation and Conservation Association in 1986.

I. Bibliographic Resources

Major resources can be found in the University of Illinois Library and the University Archives in Urbana, Illinois, or in the collection of the Preservation and Conservation Association. Further bibliography on each building is available in the Ricker Library of Art and Architecture at the University of Illinois. Figure 1 is taken from *Shaping the American Landscape* by Keith N. Morgan; Figures 2-7 from Appendices to the Historic Preservation Plan of the University of Illinois. The attached historic photographs and sketches are taken from several issues of *The Architect* magazine.

General Bibliography on Charles A. Platt and the History of Campus

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number I Page 25

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number I Page 26

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

Sources on Specific Buildings

"Inventory of Significant Architecture and Sites on the Campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign." Intensive level surveys of each building on campus conducted by the Preservation and Conservation Association in 1986. Summary report published 1987.

"Final Study, McKinley Memorial Hospital." *The Architect* 2 (April 1924) 30.

"Final Study, Men's Gymnasium." *The Architect* 2 (September 1924) 498.

"Women's Residence Hall." *The Architect* 2 (September 1924) 500.

"Main Entrance Details [McKinley Hospital]." *The Architect* 3 (February 1925) 410.

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

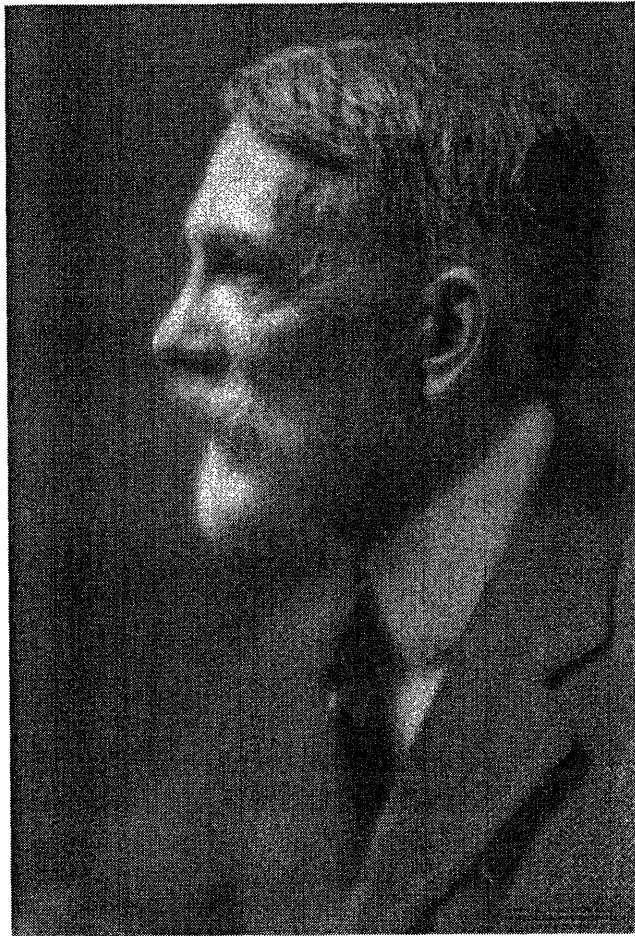


Figure 1. Charles A. Platt in 1923

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

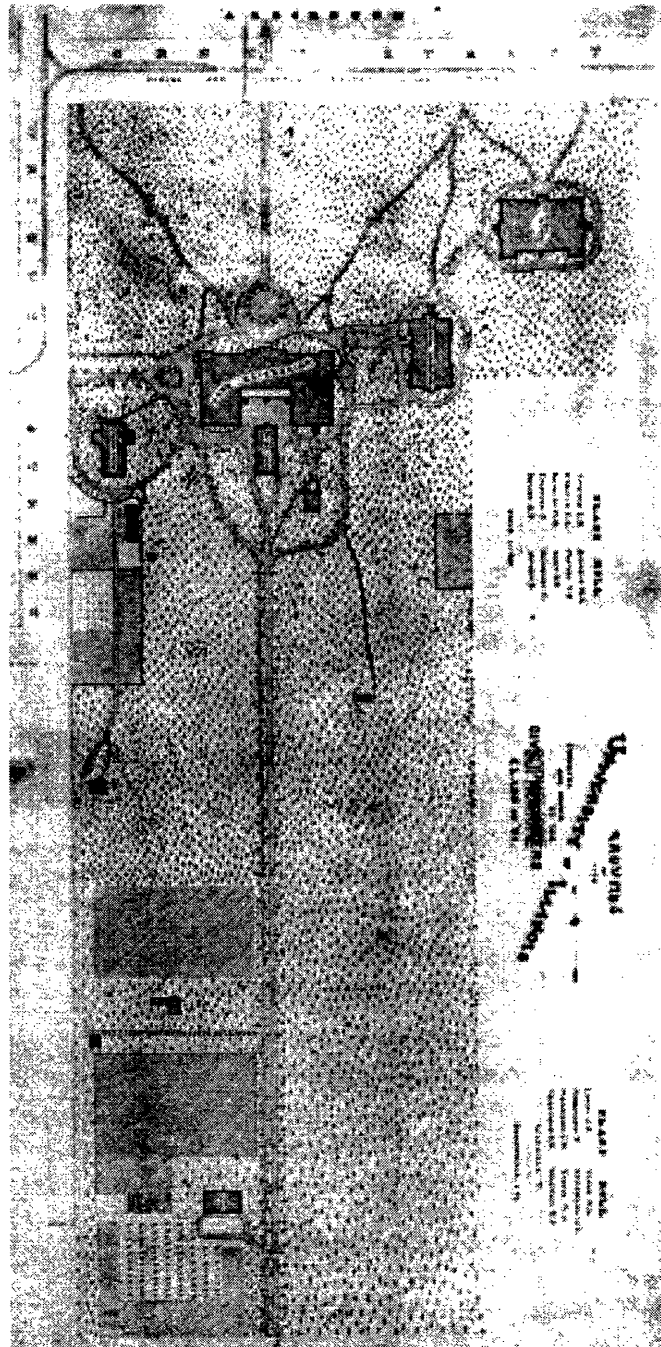


Figure 2. Grounds of the University of Illinois, 1894.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

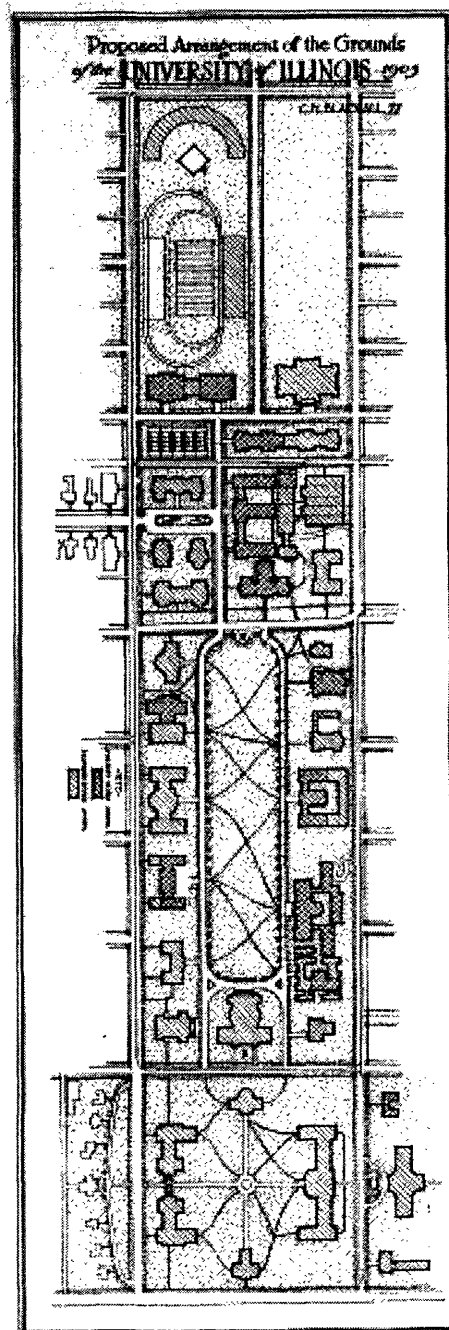


Figure 3. Clarence H. Blackall Plan, 1905

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

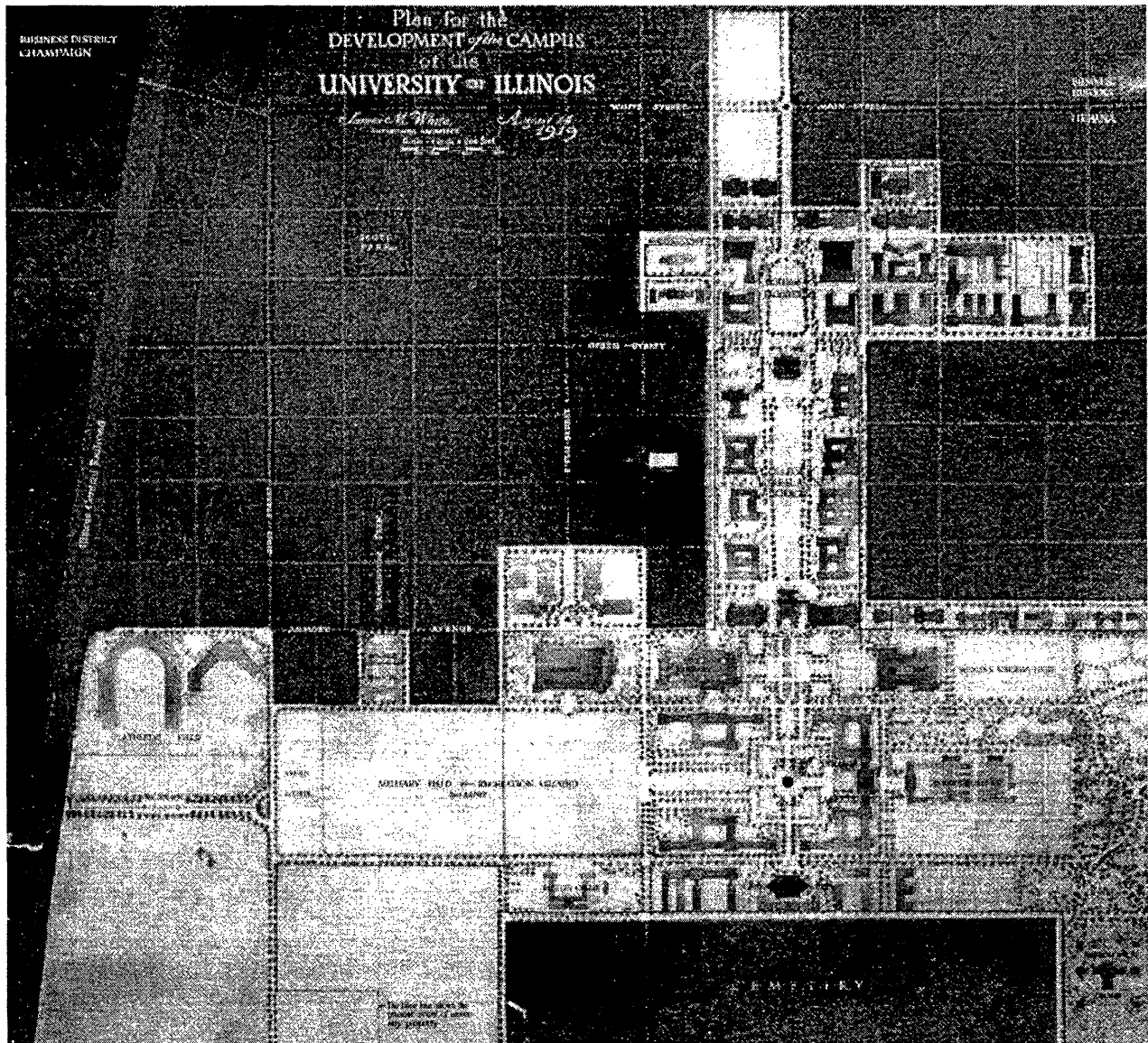


Figure 4. James M. White Plan, 1919

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

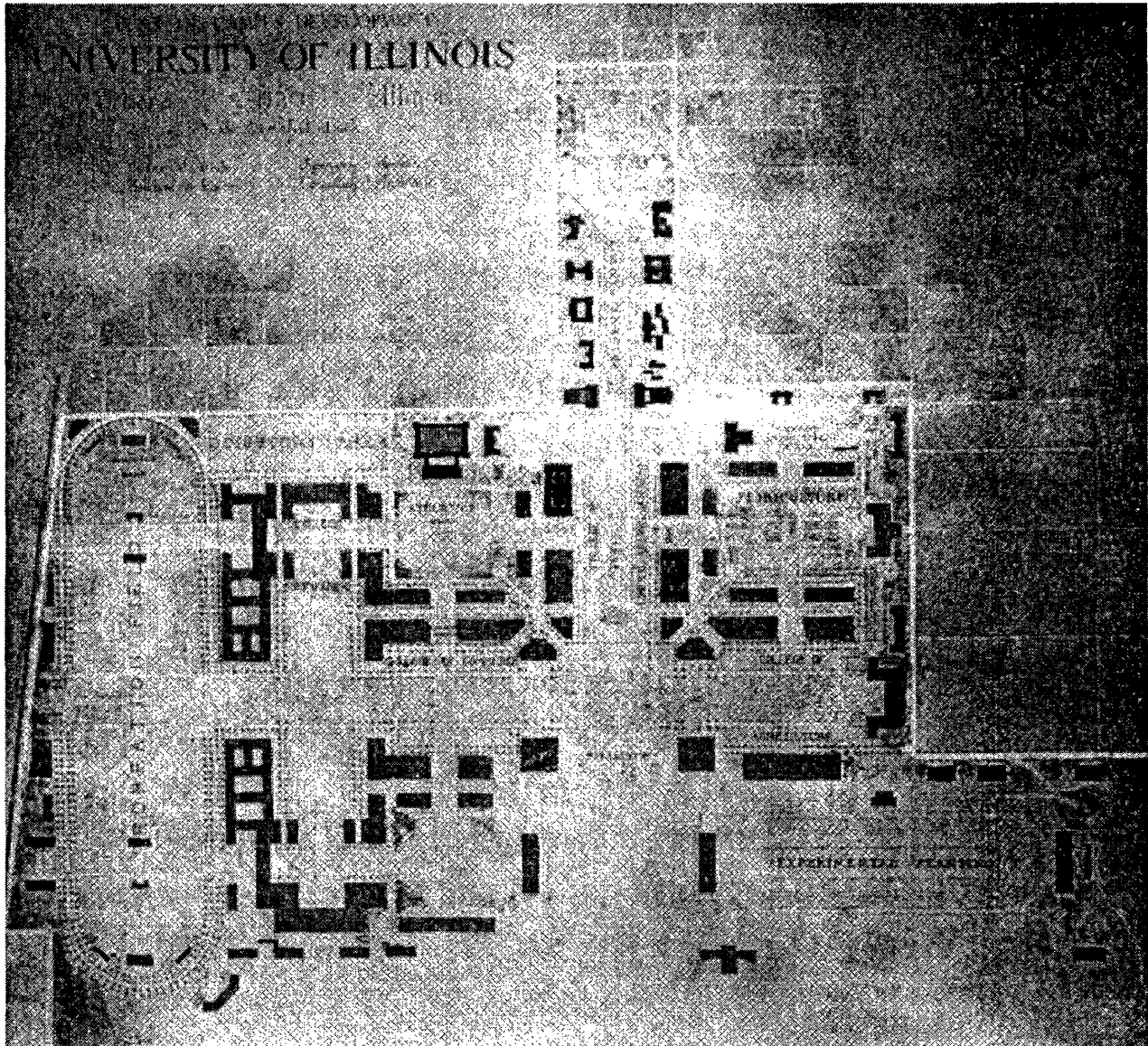


Figure 5. Holabird and Roche Plan, 1920

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

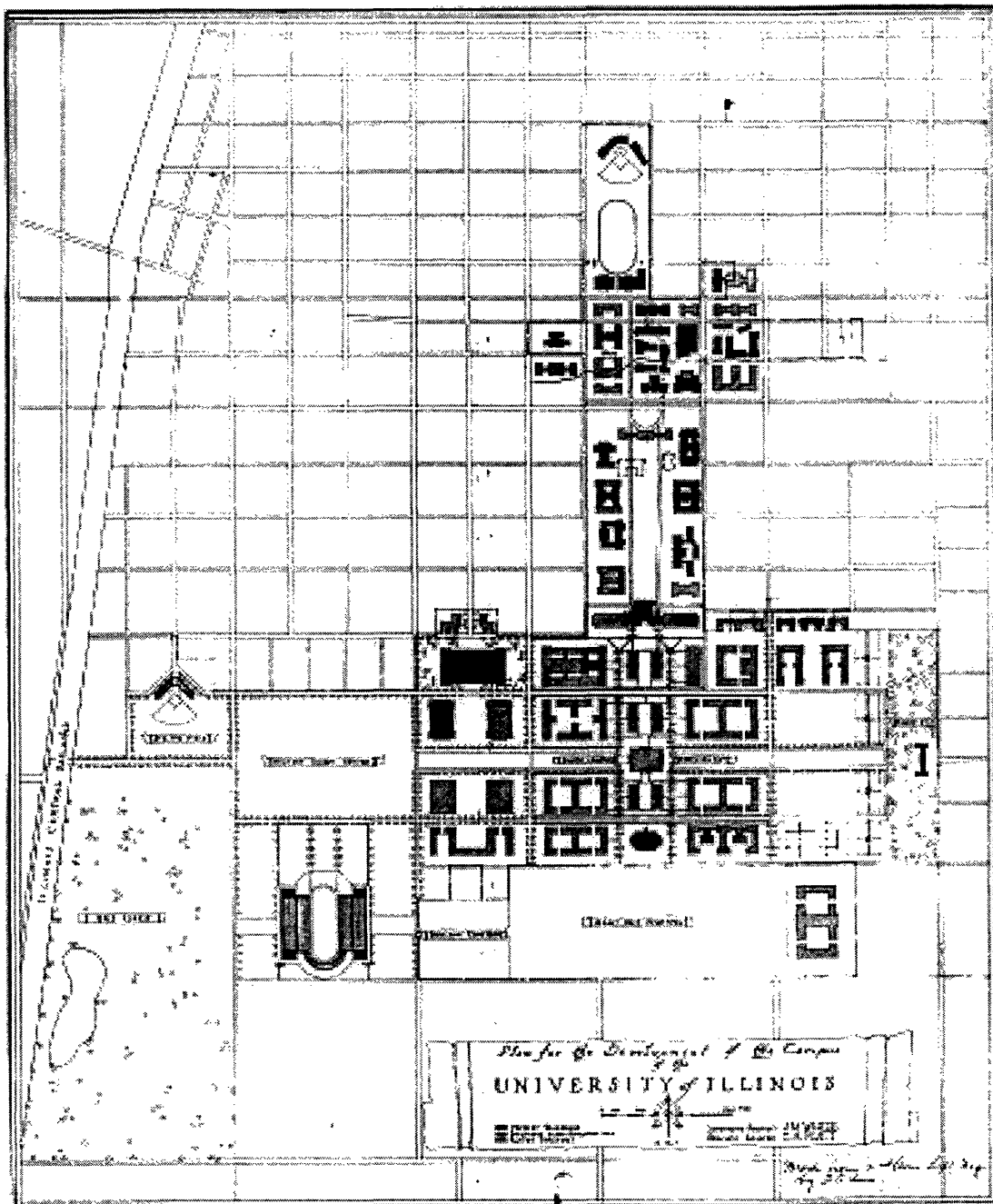


Figure 6. Charles A. Platt Plan, 1922, revised to show completed buildings as of 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

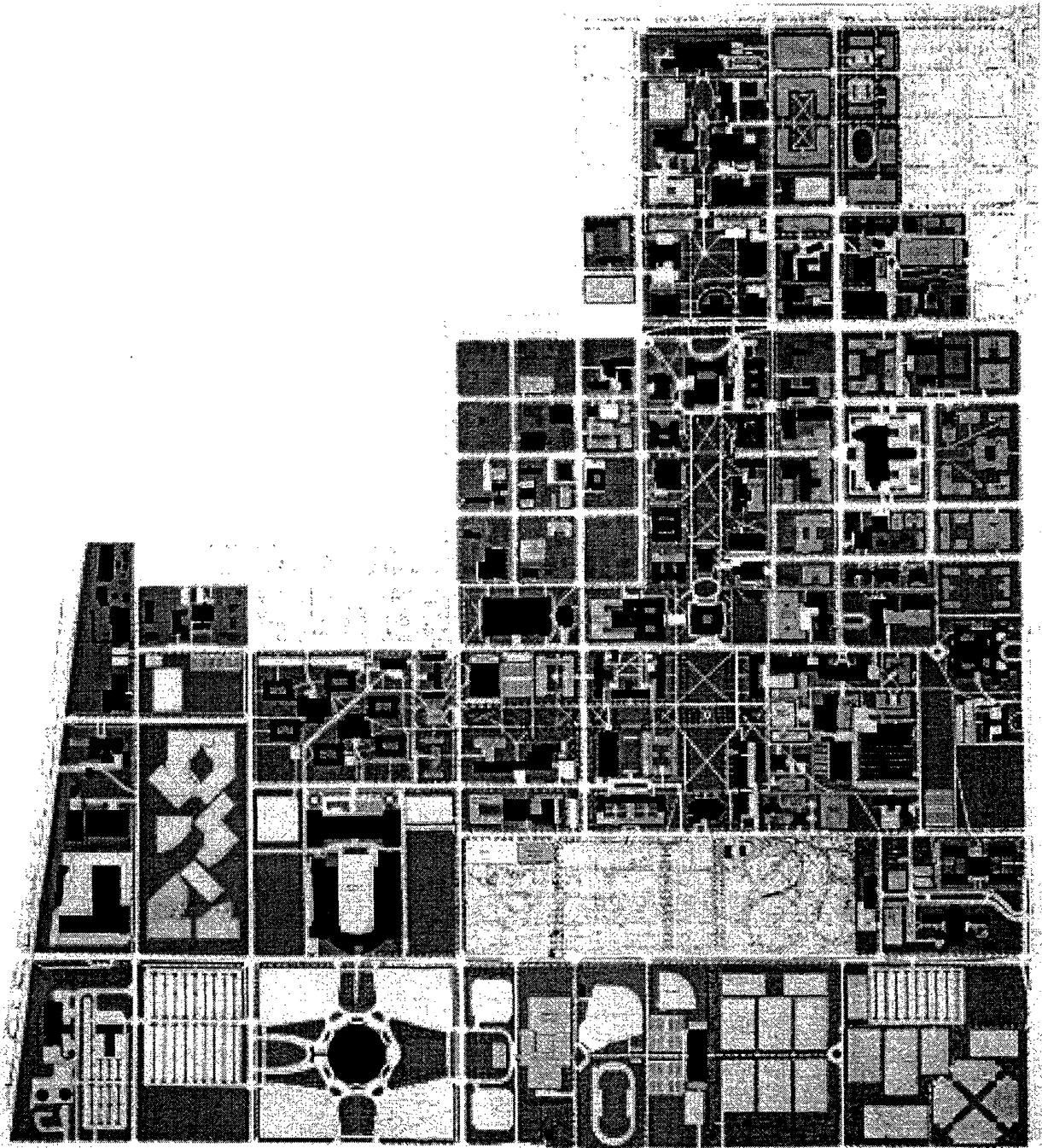


Figure 7. Sasaki Associates Plan, 1986, revised to 1990.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT

Buildings Designed by Platt

1. Agriculture (Mumford Hall)
2. Commerce (David Kinley Hall)
3. West Residence Hall (Evans Hall)
4. Men's Gymnasium (Huff Hall)
5. McKinley Hospital
6. Library
7. Armory additions
8. Architecture
9. President's House
10. Dairy Manufactures
(Agricultural Bioprocesses Lab)
11. Women's Gymnasium (Freer Hall)

Post-Platt Georgian Revival Buildings

- A. Natural Resources Building (1939)
- B. Gregory Hall (1939)
- C. Illini Union (1939-1941)
- D. Triad Residence Halls (1940)
- E. Commerce West (1962)

Other Buildings Mentioned in the Text

- F. Electrical Engineering Building (1949)
- G. Lincoln Avenue Residence Hall (1949)
- H. College of Law (1955)
- J. Education Building (1964)
- K. Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (1969)
- L. Undergraduate Library (1969)
- M. Psychology Building (1970)
- N. Beckman Institute (1988)
- P. Grainger Engineering Library (1994)
- Q. Temple Hoyne Buell Hall (1995)



9, one-half block east

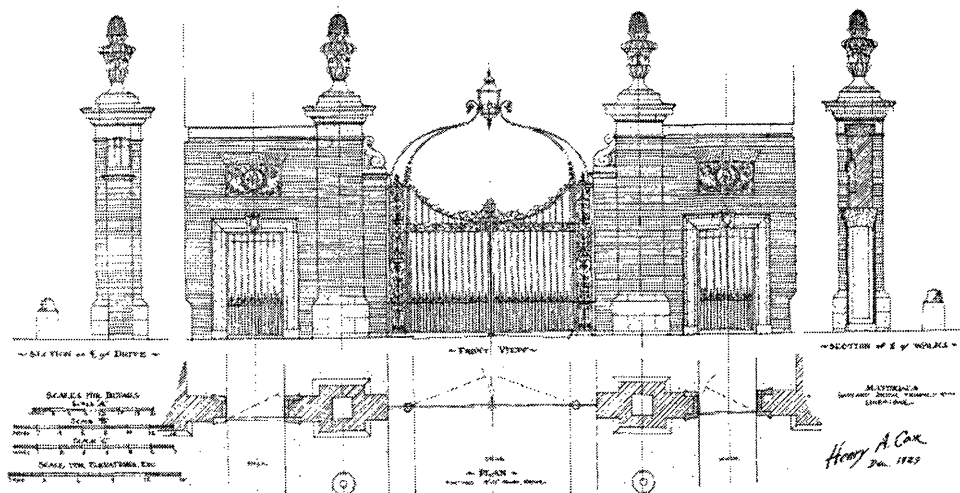
Figure 8. Plan of the campus of the University of Illinois, 1999.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

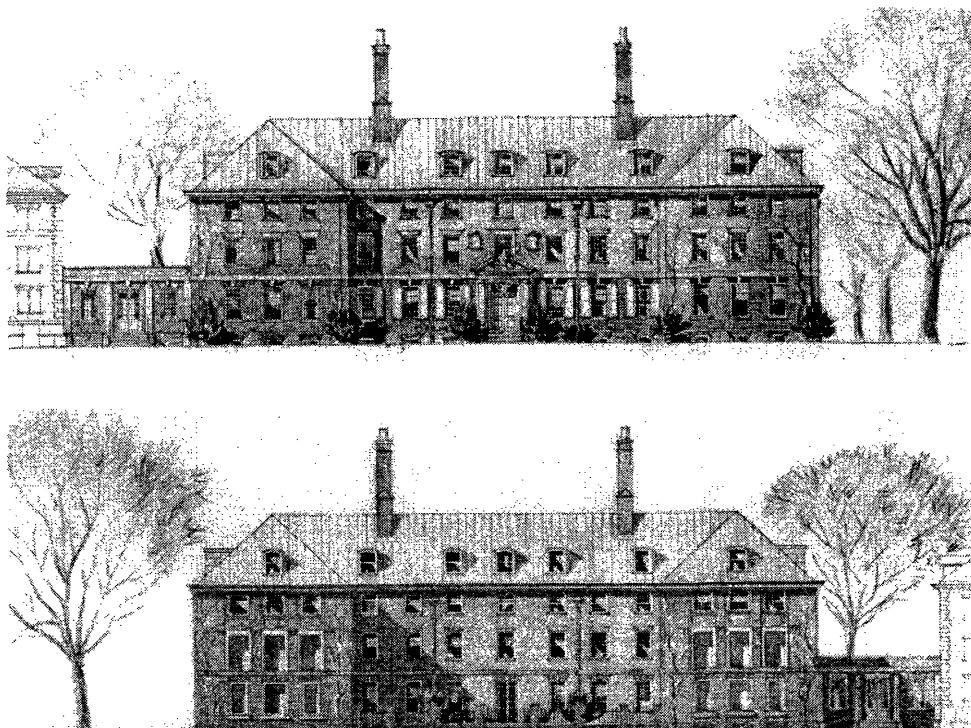
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT



Sketch of the gateway adjacent to the Architecture Building, 1929.



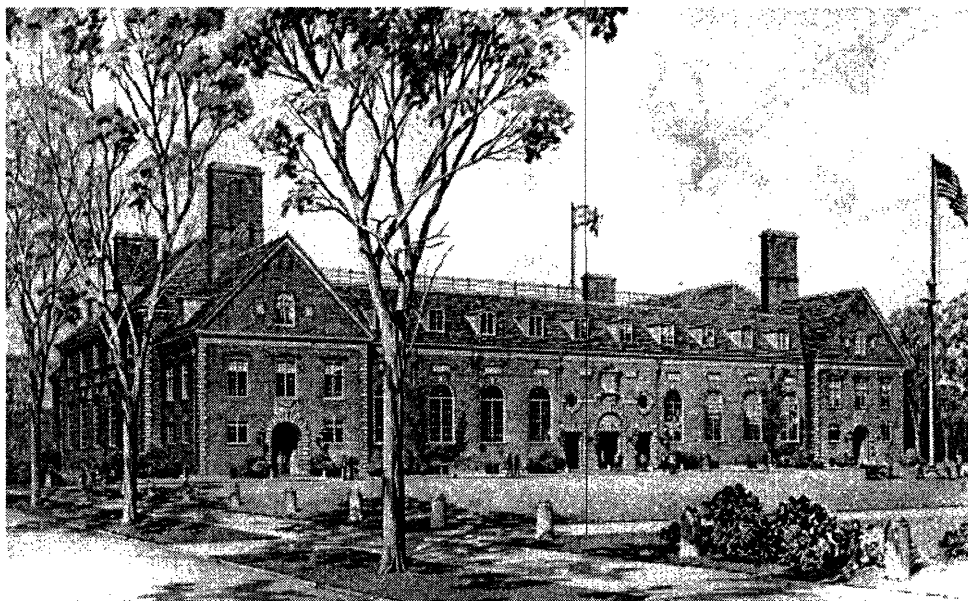
North and south facades of the West Residence Hall, 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT



Sketch of the Men's Gymnasium, 1924.
The planned north addition shown in the sketch has never been built.



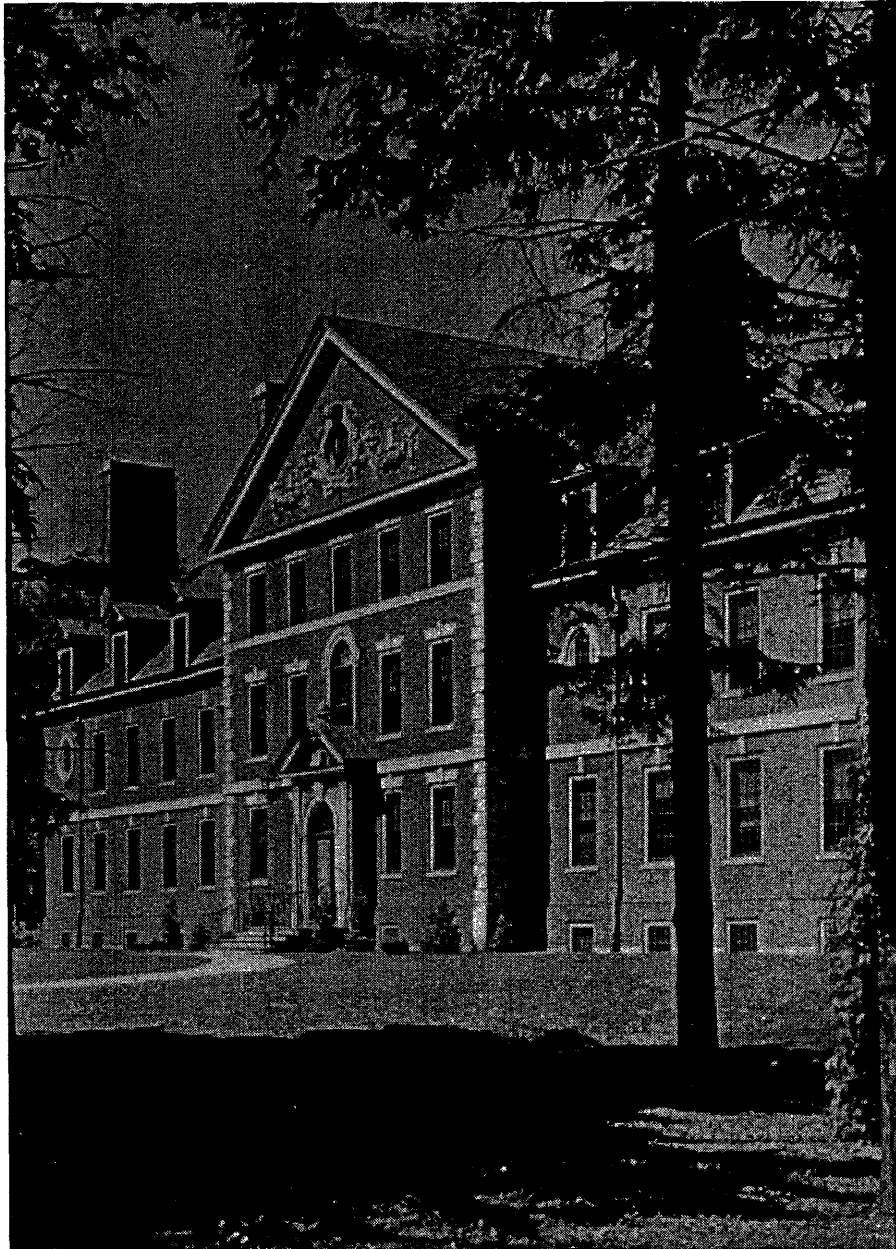
Sketch of the McKinley Hospital, 1924.
The south addition only was built as shown in the 1940's.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

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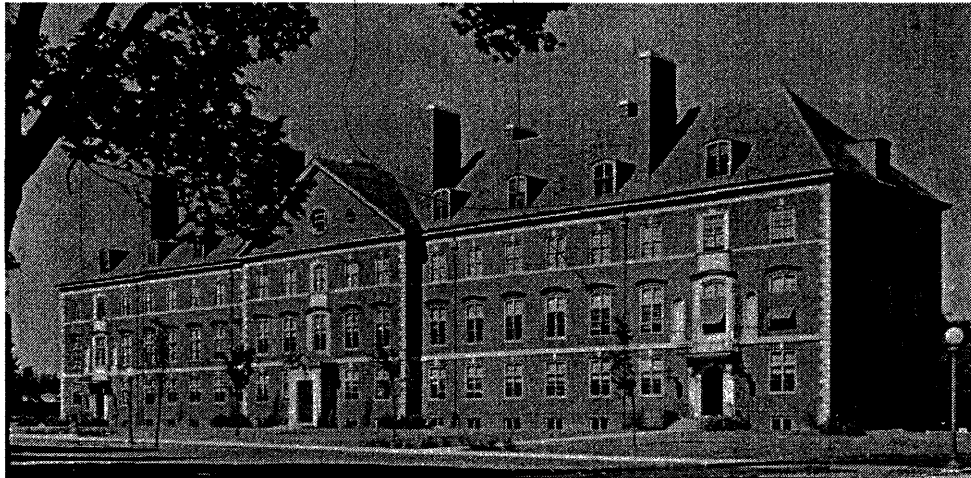
McKinley Hospital in 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY CHARLES A. PLATT



Commerce Building in 1927.



Men's Gymnasium in 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

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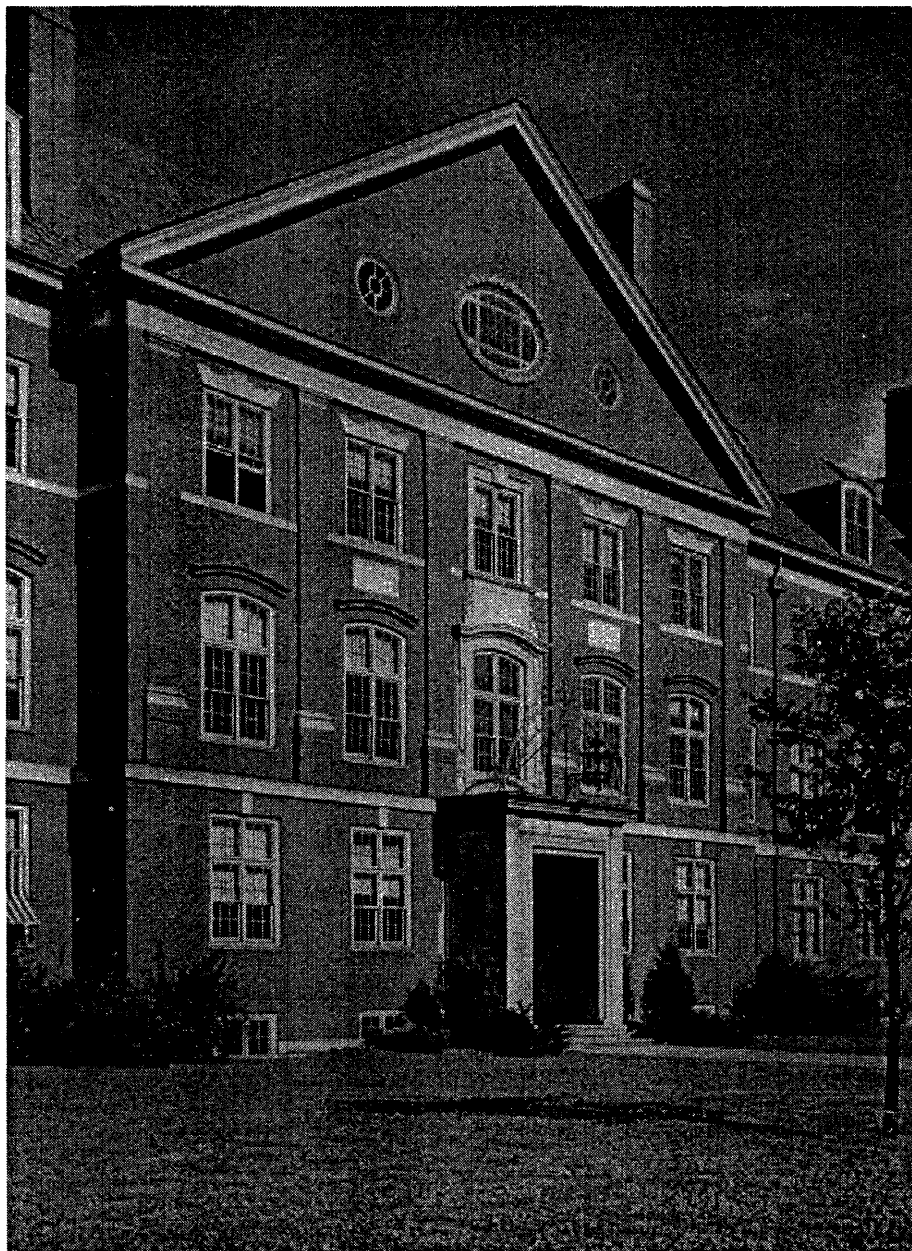
Armory entrance in 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

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Agriculture Building in 1927.