

III. Site History

Introduction

The overwhelming acclaim for the grand Beaux Arts-inspired design of the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, influenced professionals and the public alike in their appreciation for well-conceived and beautifully designed urban spaces. The success of the fair helped to inspire the "City Beautiful Movement." In 1900 Glenn Brown, Washington architect and national secretary of the American Institute of Architects, as well as others developed proposals and lobbied Congress for the creation of a grand design for the future development of Washington, D.C. At this time Landscape Architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. suggested that the formal design of the historic L'Enfant Plan continued to be an appropriate way to demonstrate the greatness of the nation's capital and its setting.

...great public edifices must be strongly formal, whether they are perfectly symmetrical or not, and this formal quality ought to be recognized on the plan of their surroundings if the total effect is to be consistent. ...where the scale of the general scheme is large, there should be a corresponding simplicity.¹

Brown's efforts inspired the legislation establishing the Park Improvement Commission of the District of Columbia, or the Senate Park Commission, of 1901-1902. Architects Daniel Burnham and Charles McKim and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. were the three key professionals appointed to the commission. The acclaimed sculptor, Augustus St. Gaudens, joined later as the fourth member. Three of them, Burnham, McKim, and St. Gaudens, had held major roles in the creation of the 1893 fair. The commission soon came to be called the McMillan Commission, after its sponsor, Senator James McMillan. In the succeeding decades various aspects of the city plan developed by the commission were implemented. As the youngest and longest surviving member of the commission, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., became the unofficial guardian of the plan, contributing his expertise to various projects through his membership on the Commission of Fine Arts (1910-1918), the National Capital Park Commission (1924-1926), and the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (1926-1932). The focus of this section of the report concerns the Lincoln Memorial, or the "western anchor" of the Mall and the centerpiece of the McMillan Commission Plan, its physical history, and the role of Olmsted and others in its development.²

The landscape of the Lincoln Memorial and the surrounding areas in West Potomac Park have a rich and varied history that is defined by six primary periods of growth and development. These include a period of early development between 1791 and 1914, when the tidal shoreline became the landform of the future park and the McMillan Commission planned for the design of the memorial, the reflecting pools, and the Watergate; a period of design development and construction, from 1914 through 1922, that culminated in the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial; a period characterized by the completion of the plans for the grounds surrounding the memorial between 1923 and 1933; and three subsequent periods, when the Lincoln Memorial and West Potomac Park came under the management of the National Park Service (NPS). Each of the NPS periods, which began

in 1933 and continue to the present, reflect the issues and concerns that have influenced changes in the landscape. The first NPS period occurred between 1933 and 1945, the second between 1945 and 1970, and the third between 1970 and 1996.

Early Development 1791-1914

Creation of a Park Site

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the area that would one day become Washington, D.C., was bordered on the northwest by the Potomac River, where stands of sweet gum, oak, and hickory stood on the flat land. To the southeast where the Anacostia River flowed toward the Potomac, the shoreline was covered in marsh. Subsequently, much of the native forest cover was cleared for the cultivation. When Pierre L'Enfant laid out the new capital on the hills above the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers in 1792, some of these fields, exhausted from a tobacco-based agriculture, had been allowed by their owners to revert to woody growth.

The natural shoreline of the Potomac followed the eastern edge of what would become the Tidal Basin and the northern side of Maine Avenue. The mouth of Tiber Creek, "a slowly meandering stream," which flowed from the north down Capitol Hill, stretched across the "flats," near the intersection of present-day 17th Street and Constitution Avenue. At the time that L'Enfant submitted his proposal for the design of the capital city, David Burns had a farmstead and cultivated fields along the north shore of the Tiber, from the mouth to the base of Capitol Hill. Both sides of the Tiber were edged in marshland that was frequently covered by large flocks of waterfowl. Wild oats, reeds, and thickets of berry bushes and other shrubs grew in places along the marsh. On the southern shore of the creek, in the area that would eventually become West Potomac Park, Dr. William Thornton had planted an assortment of saplings and shrubs on about 18 acres to catch the river silt and to establish title to the land. L'Enfant's plan called for Tiber Creek to be widened and adapted into a canal system, designed to carry commerce through the new city.³

When the Washington City Canal was finally completed in 1815, the portion of its route following the old Tiber had the effect of creating a river "island" to the south. The canal, however, failed to develop into a viable waterway. By the 1870s, the neighborhoods along its banks were considered slums, with the canal serving as a fetid sewer opening into the Potomac, rather than a commercial thoroughfare. Among the civic improvement projects of the District's territorial government (1871-1874) were the installation of sewerlines. In 1872, one line was constructed along the canal between 7th and 17th Streets, where it emptied directly into the river. To complete the sewer project, the Board of Public Works filled in and covered over the Washington Canal, a project that was completed by 1873. The land between the canal and the Washington Monument, then under construction, was also made level. Once filled, the old canal route was paved and

named B Street. Only the former lockkeepers' stone house, located at the intersection of 17th and B Street, remained to mark the site of the defunct waterway.

Another feature of the civic improvements program that affected the Potomac River shoreline was the regrading of major streets and thoroughfares in the center of the city, which occurred mostly in 1871. Dirt from the cutting and filling of streets added to the debris and silt normally brought by rain and runoff to the river. By 1870 the Potomac had become so silted and shallow in places that the shipping channels were seriously threatened. At this time, the Congress authorized the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a permanent plan to keep the channels clear by dredging and disposing of dredged materials in such a way as to prevent renewed siltation. The scope of the project, begun in earnest in 1882, included constructing containment barriers (or bulkheads), terminating the Washington channels at the Long Bridge at 14th Street, providing sluicing basins on the west to keep the channel clean, depositing the dredged materials on a tidal "flat" that stretched southeast from Long Bridge to the confluence of the river channels, narrowing the Georgetown channel, and completely filling in the marsh land located between Easby's Point (near the present crossing of the Roosevelt Bridge) and 17th Street.

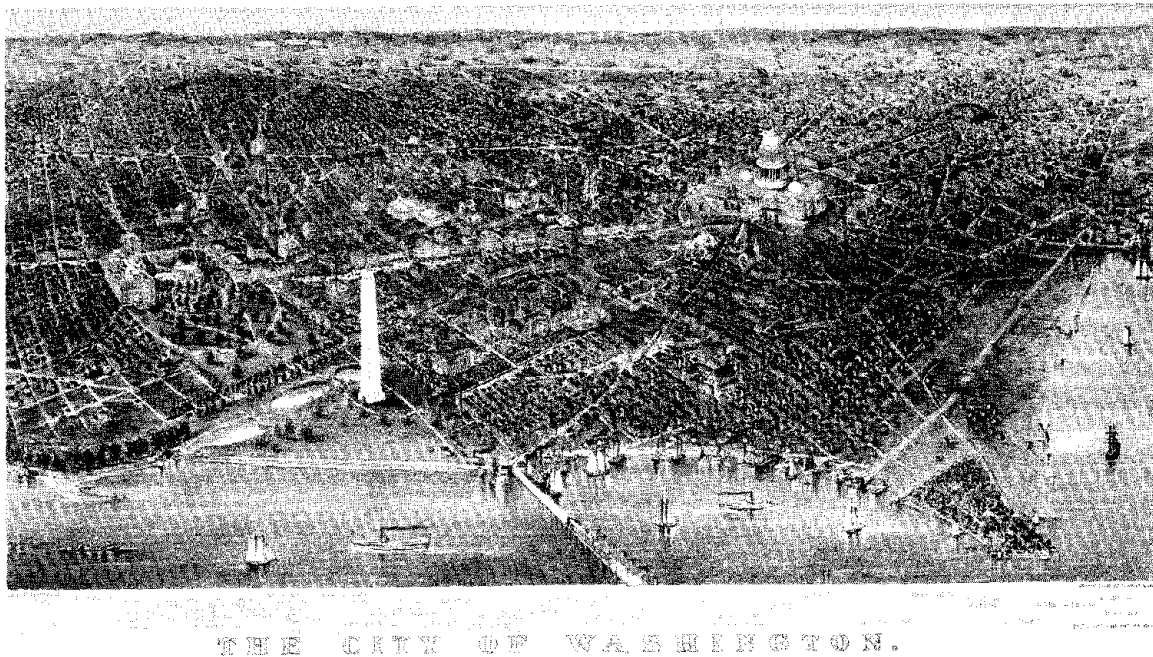


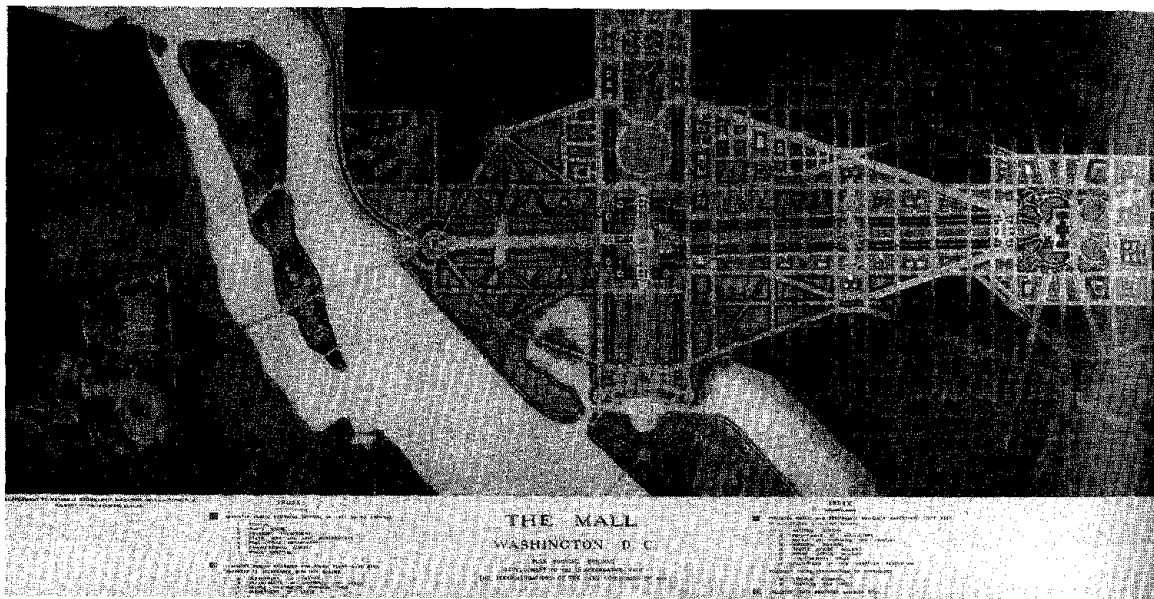
Figure 1 – The City of Washington. Birds-Eye View from the Potomac – looking north. (Drawn by Charles Parsons) Published by Currier & Ives, 1892. Courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs.

In 1897 congressional legislation authorized the designation of the 621 acres of reclaimed marsh and "flats" and 118 acres of tidal reservoirs as a site for a public park. By 1901, 31 acres adjacent to the Washington Monument grounds had been filled and subsequently transferred to the Army Corps of Engineers' Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPBG) to be turned into the Potomac Park. Some of this filled area had been created from dredged materials, and some from private construction projects in the District.

Contractors who had obtained dumping permits were to deposit clean fill on the “flats.” At the time of the land transfer, the site, with its uneven topography, scattered shallow water collection pools, and “wild growth of willows, grasses, bushes and trees,” was far from parklike. As the reclamation project neared completion, the outline and shape of the proposed park closely reflected the natural and historic pattern of river siltation. By 1907 the area in Potomac Park that would become the site of both the Lincoln Memorial and the Reflecting Pool had been filled to a grade of 12 or 13 feet above sea level. Eventually a base height of 14 to 16 feet would be achieved.

The McMillan Commission Plan

The 1902 report of the McMillan Commission outlined with great thought and care a significant and highly symbolic use for Potomac Park. With the understanding that their recommendations would be based on the L’Enfant Plan, members studied old maps and surveys and examined first-hand the layout of historic sites in tidewater Virginia. In June 1901 the three key members and Charles Moore, commission secretary, traveled to Europe to investigate the cities and sites that would have influenced L’Enfant. Inspired by both the work of Andre LeNotre, particularly at Versailles, and by the example of Rome, where they noted the role of the fountain as the “proper ornament” for the heat of Washington, Burnham, McKim, and Olmsted returned shortly thereafter to formulate a plan for the monuments and parks of the nation’s capital.



Map 2 - Senate Park Commission, Plan of 1901-1902, General Plan of the Mall System, March 1915. Used by permission from the National Geographic Society.

With models, artistic renderings, drawings, photographs, and a text composed by Olmsted and Moore, the McMillan Commission Plan was presented to Congress in 1902. The primary focus of the plan was the placement of public buildings and the development of a public park system. In the monumental core and on the newly reclaimed land along the Potomac, the plan called for the formal treatment, advocated earlier by Olmsted, that followed a continuation of the east/west and north/south alignments established by L'Enfant. In plan view, the design for this area appeared to be kite-shaped. The western end of the extension of the Mall axis was designed mostly by McKim. He placed a series of plazas and fountains on axis to surround the Washington Monument and located the site for a memorial to Lincoln that would be complemented by a pair of basins, one essentially oval and another that had a long, cruciform shape. The reflecting basins, which would also contain several fountains, were set in lawn that was flanked by large groves of deciduous trees. The memorial, a classical structure, with its form and style selected by the commission, was to be constructed on a circular mound, or "rond point," to be placed west of the long basin.

The commission incorporated the long-planned monumental bridge linking Potomac Park and the Mall with Arlington Cemetery into the design. The commission placed it southwest of the memorial to Lincoln. The memorial was also designed to mark the beginning of a regional park system to be planned mostly by Olmsted. A ceremonial watergate united the bridge, the park system entrance, and the memorial, with the whole design of the western end making a gateway to the river and beyond. In general, Potomac Park was to be developed according to "the landscape of natural river bottoms - great open meadows, fringed by trees along the water side."⁴

Although the McMillan Commission Plan used the axes established in L'Enfant design, the proposed placement of the Lincoln Memorial and the plan for trees along the river would, if allowed to mature, block the open views and vistas to the Potomac outlined in L'Enfant's work. Regardless of the irregularities in the McMillan design, the plan was generally well-received. Although prolonged and often heated, public debate occurred about the commission's proposal for a memorial suitable to commemorate Abraham Lincoln. In 1910 President Taft created the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) to oversee and guide the implementation of the McMillan Commission's proposals. Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. were among the first to serve on the Commission of Fine Arts.

During the course of the debate over various aspects of the report, the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPBG) worked to improve the appearance of West Potomac Park, the area of reclaimed land stretching from Easby's Point to 14th Street, SW. Although thousands of cubic yards of earth continued to be deposited in the park, the OPBG worked throughout 1906 and 1907 to complete the construction of a riverside drive, bridle paths, and footpaths. These extended along the shoreline from 17th Street, to the Tidal Basin, then turned northwest to the foot of 26th Street. The office consulted with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., about tree planting along a portion of the route. To supplement the existing willow trees, Olmsted recommended planting in grove-like groups "black and yellow birches" (*Betula lenta*, *Betula alleghaniensis*), "white and

laurel-leaved willow" (*Salix alba*, *Salix pentandra*), "Sycamore and American Elm" (*Platanus occidentalis*, *Ulmus americana*), and even pecan trees (*Carya illinoensis*). For straighter vistas, he advocated linden trees (*Tilia* sp.). However, the route appears to have been lined primarily with elm trees. In 1908 Congress also authorized the extension of B Street to the Potomac at 26th Street, which would eventually form the northern boundary of the park. Finally, during 1911 and 1912, the interior of West Potomac Park was drained and graded.⁵

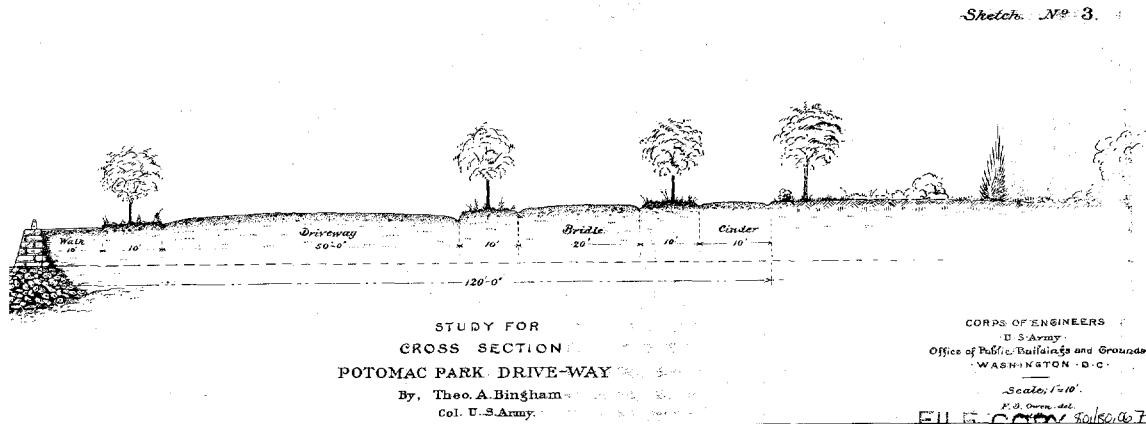


Figure 2 – Cross section of proposed Potomac Park speedway and trail system, c. 1907. NPS Map 801/801067.

By 1914 the McMillan Commission's site for the memorial to Lincoln and the corresponding long basin stretched for nearly a mile westward from the Washington Monument. It encompassed almost 700 acres and had been landscaped with scattered trees and shrubs. It had also been improved by the addition of several tennis courts on the north and organized with a simple grid pattern of drives. A narrow section of B Street that was lined with small trees formed most of the northern boundary, while mature tree-lined 17th Street formed the eastern boundary. In May 1914 the Commission of Fine Arts approved the planting done by the OPBG in the area between B Street and the memorial site and in the area set aside for the basins. Any additional fill required to develop the site further would have to be obtained from adjacent building and construction projects occurring in the vicinity.

Early Design Concepts

The Lincoln Memorial Commission was established by Congress in 1911, and a competition for the design of the memorial was announced the same year. At this time the Commission of Fine Arts strongly recommended the West Potomac Park site proposed by the McMillan Commission.

For a long distance in every direction the surroundings are absolutely free for such treatment as would best enhance the effect of the memorial. The fact that there are now no features of interest or importance, that everything is yet to be done, means that no embarrassing obstacles would

*interfere with the development of a setting in extent and perfect design, without compromise and without discord.*⁶

*It is impossible to overestimate the importance of giving to a monument of the size and significance of the Lincoln Memorial complete and undisputed domination over a large area, together with a certain dignified isolation from competing structures, or even from minor features unrelated to it. Upon no other possible site in the city of Washington can this end be secured so completely as upon the Potomac Park site.*⁷

The design submitted by Henry Bacon, a protege of Charles McKim, was selected by the Lincoln Memorial Commission. Bacon's drawings closely followed the design proposals for the structure in the renderings submitted in the McMillan Commission's report. Shortly thereafter, Bacon was commissioned to be the project's architect. Bacon himself summarized best the appropriateness of the site in West Potomac Park in his statement on the overall design intent.

*...I believed that the site in Potomac Park was the best one for a monument to Abraham Lincoln, and since devoting my time for four months to a study of its possible development, I am certain of it. Terminating the axis which unites it with the Washington Monument and the Capitol, it has significance which that of no other site can equal, and any emulation or aspiration engendered by a Memorial there to Lincoln and his great qualities will be immeasurably stimulated by being associated with the like feelings already identified with the Capitol and the monument to George Washington. Containing the National legislative and judicial bodies we have at one end of the axis a beautiful building which is a monument to the United States Government. At the other end of the axis we have the possibility of a Memorial to the man who saved that Government and between the two is a monument to its founder. All three of these structures, stretching in one grand sweep from Capitol Hill to the Potomac River, will lend, one to the others, the associations and memories connected with each, and each will have its value increased by being on the one axis and having visual relation to the other.*⁸

Although mostly concerned with the architectural details, Bacon also paid attention to the layout and the arrangement of landscape features at the Lincoln site. Shortly after he was named project architect, he wrote to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to request the specifications shown on the McMillan plan for the "avenue" between the trees west of the Washington Monument and along the proposed long basin, or canal. In 1912, Bacon also indicated his interest in the design of the landscape when he testified to the Lincoln Memorial Commission that he intended to use either elms or lindens in the planting plan. At that time, Commission members also suggested horse chestnut and pin oaks (*Aesculus hippocastanum*, *Quercus palustris*). This concern for the types of trees to be planted also anticipates the Commission of Fine Art's interest in the landscape setting for the memorial in deliberations between 1911 and 1932.

Throughout the design history of the Lincoln Memorial and West Potomac Park, various government organizations have had oversight in the areas of planning and design. In the early years of the development of the Lincoln Memorial, the Commission of Fine Arts had direct influence on all aspects of design in the memorial project. Layout, spatial relationships, planting, and site features were often conceived, shaped, and reviewed by the landscape architect member of the commission prior to approval by the full commission. Subsequently, other planning agencies and government agencies, such as the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (NCPPC) and the National Park Service (NPS), also became responsible for the Lincoln Memorial and its grounds.⁹

As the first landscape architect on the CFA and the only surviving member of the McMillan Commission, Olmsted exercised a unique influence over the development of the Lincoln Memorial grounds, serving as arbiter of design decisions regarding all aspects of the treatment of the landscape.

...as the only present survivor of the designers (indeed as the one who next to McKim was most responsible for the treatment of the Mall plan) I should hate to occupy merely the position appropriate to a member of the Commission of Fine Arts as such, and to let some other fellow shape the plan to suit his own ideas, even though they might be just as good as mine. It is a case where I can perfectly well do my part in designing from the background without pay or official recognition, because I had my recognition as a member of the old Park Commission, and a continuance of what was originally unpaid work may very properly itself be unpaid. Indeed I would rather do it without personal compensation, because it would put the whole thing on a different plane if after McKim and the rest were dead I began to draw pay for work which we all undertook together as a matter of public spirit. But to sit on the side lines and let someone else overhaul the plan would be rather bitter.¹⁰

In June 1913 Henry Bacon and his staff prepared for Olmsted's review drawings of the layout for the memorial grounds and an adjacent river road. In his proposal, Bacon "endeavored to follow out the old Park Commission's plan."¹¹ He offered two schemes for the road, trying to avoid the necessity for a high retaining wall along the river. By August 1913, one of these schemes showed "the river roadway running under the proposed bridge to Arlington." Even though Bacon had refined his original designs according to Olmsted's suggestions, he continued to send his revisions to Olmsted for review. Olmsted had stipulated that the design should avoid the use of heavy retaining walls around the river edge, because walls would probably not be funded with the construction of the memorial. He also noted that the "wide roadway around the Memorial" should have its outer edge lower than its inner to prevent the appearance of a depression in the land. Bacon followed another of Olmsted's suggestions in his placement of the walks along the radial roads. Olmsted proposed that Bacon not border "the radial roadways immediately by sidewalks," but carry "the tree planting out to the line of the roadway itself" and put "the parallel walks behind the first row of trees."¹²

Development, Planting, and Dedication 1914-1922

Refinement of an Overall Landscape Plan

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Lincoln Memorial was held on February 12, 1914, Lincoln's birthdate. Construction of the foundations, which followed soon after, consisted of a "mass of concrete and steel," rising high above the ground to a height of a fair-sized building, all of which would be beneath the earth when the building was finished.¹³

After the pilgrim has grown accustomed to the notion that the foundations aren't really the superstructure, his attention is attracted by the apparent chaos which exists. Scaffolding, heavy timber, ropes scrapes of iron and odds and ends are everywhere. Workmen move around apparently without a definite plan. It is thus when a project is nearing completion.¹⁴

The laying of the cornerstone and construction of the superstructure began in February of the following year.

Throughout the various phases of the building's development, Bacon attempted to be involved with all aspects of the memorial's design, including landscape and setting. The concept for Bacon's plan for the reflecting pools came directly from the cruciform design



Figure 3 - Construction of approachway, Dec. 12, 1918. U.S. Navy photo. MRC 1-58.

shown on the McMillan Commission plan. The McMillan design was apparently Charles McKim's concept, which was inspired by the "long tree-lined stretches of water" found in the "formal landscapes at Versailles, Fontainebleu and Hampton Court." In the commission's design the pool's length was some 3,600 feet long and 320 feet wide. In 1911 Bacon described his concept for the pools:

To the east of the Memorial extending towards the Washington Monument is proposed a large lagoon which will introduce into the landscape an element of repose and beauty, and in its waters the reflection of the Memorial will add to its tranquility and retirement.

During the spring and summer of 1915, guidelines for tree planting and establishing grades in the pool area were developed in preliminary sketches by the OPBG at the urging of Colonel Harts, who was both officer-in-charge of the OPBG and secretary to the CFA. All this work was done under the personal supervision of Olmsted. At this time, Olmsted and Bacon reviewed the original McMillan Commission design of the two basins and Bacon's interpretation of it. In staking a layout of Bacon's proposed plan on the ground, Olmsted perceived a problem with the relatively shorter length and the broader width of the long cruciform-shaped pool indicated in Bacon's design, and proposed to the CFA that this pool be made longer and narrower. Although Bacon felt that the cross arms should be eliminated, his opinion did not completely sway Olmsted. Olmsted's rationale for elongating Bacon's design was based on his understanding of the historic pools, lagoons, canals, and basins visited by the commission during their 1901 European tour. Olmsted thought the proportions of the canal relative to the vista at Fontainebleu were the most appropriate example for the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool. He also felt that the relationship between the terraced rows of trees and the canal at Nymphenburg in Munich were also worthy of consideration.¹⁵

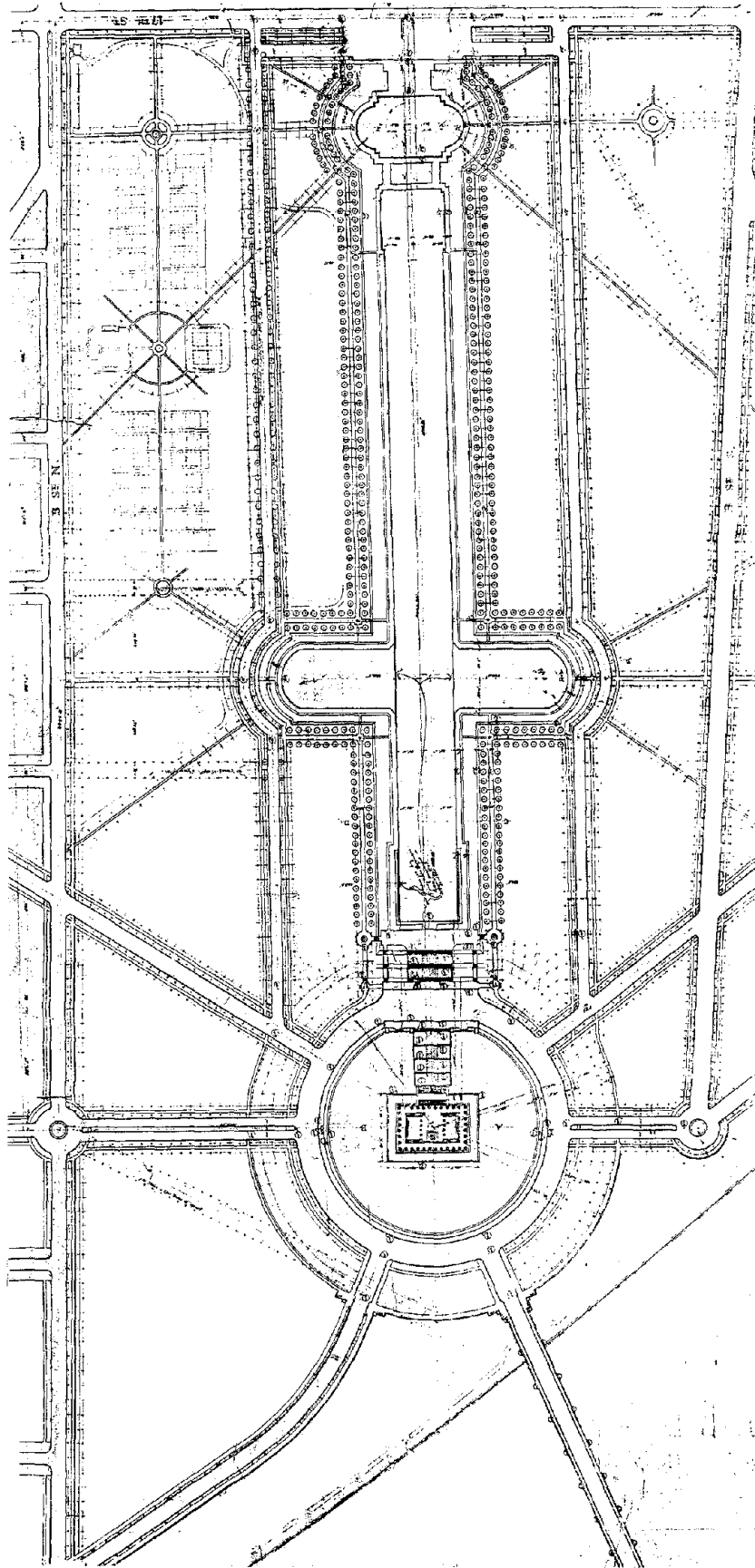
Olmsted had not only worked with Bacon on these issues, but also with Colonel Harts and J.G. Langdon, OPBG landscape architect and former employee of the Olmsted firm, to develop a plan with and without the cruciform for this area. Key to the plan for a broad corridor along the main axis was Olmsted's recommendation that the inner row of trees, which were located on each side of the basins, would be 320 feet apart, rather than the 300 feet shown in Bacon's plan. The 160-foot width of the basins would in turn occupy half of the distance between the trees. The spacing between the pairs of parallel rows of trees was set at 40 feet. Within these rows Olmsted specified the placement of individual trees in positions approximately 25 feet apart, with some adjustments given for the those planted along the curved portion of the smaller basin planned for the eastern end near 17th Street. Olmsted and the others recommended the previously established grade of 14 feet for the main axis and established a range of 14 to 16 feet for the grade on the cross arms. They selected a 280-foot width for this axis. The proposal did not provide for the excavation and installation of the cross arms portion of the pool, but it did provide for the trees outlining the cross arms to be planted to determine the spatial effect. Their plan also called for temporary drainage ditches to provide proper growing conditions for the young elm trees that would be planted there. Olmsted recommended "English elms," known then as *Ulmus campestris*.¹⁶

In accepting the recommendations of Olmsted, Harts, and Langdon, the CFA determined the need to hire a landscape architect to execute plans for the entire park area between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Olmsted suggested Landscape architect C.E. Howard of Syracuse, New York, and the commission authorized Colonel Harts to offer Howard this position. The announcement of Howard's contract described his job as assisting in the preparation of plans for the development of the circular area around the memorial, including the terraced levels, and a planting plan for both the circle and the reflecting pool axis.¹⁷

Olmsted continued to pursue finalization of the selection of "English elms" "for planting the formal vistas in connection with the Lincoln Memorial. . . ." He would not consider any other tree for use near the memorial. He strongly believed that the English elm would satisfy several design requirements with "its habits being exactly right for the purpose, and its foliage harmonizing with that of the American elm which is designed for use around the Washington Monument and to the eastward." With the assistance of the Olmsted firm, OPBG located the elms in England and ordered 500 of them from Dicksons nursery in Chester.¹⁸

During this period architect Henry Bacon worked on other aspects of the grounds surrounding the Lincoln Memorial. In July 1915 he prepared studies on the "cheek blocks, steps and flagging." In December Bacon demonstrated his continuing interest in the final design for the grounds by offering for the CFA's approval an alternative to Howard's plans for the eastern approach. After a discussion of the design issues that extended over the course of several meetings, the CFA instructed Howard to develop a "skilled general plan" incorporating elements of the designs submitted by both Howard and Bacon. Howard's drawings, slightly modified by Olmsted, were approved by the commission in the fall of 1916. Elements of the plan included widening north and south 23rd streets, limiting the roadways around the memorial to one rather than the two originally proposed, making the one circular roadway into a narrow route only 60 feet wide, and establishing a tree-filled perimeter consisting of five curving rows of deciduous tree with selected openings in the rows.¹⁹

In 1915 and 1916, as construction of the walls, colonnade, columns, and main cornice neared completion on the memorial itself, 398 of the English elms ordered from England were planted in four parallel rows flanking the vista between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. The other 104 trees were planted south of the parallel rows. As part of the planting, drain tile for improving soil conditions was also laid in this area. In this same year Bacon completed the design for the raised terrace and the wall surrounding the memorial and for the approachway, or main walk, leading up to it. The fill used to create the terrace and form the visual base for the memorial was brought by temporary railway from the Interior Department construction site at 18th and F Streets, N.W., and placed around the foundations of the Lincoln Memorial. Once the area behind



Map 3 - 1916 C.E. Howard plan of "Potomac Park Improvements" from B Street N. to B Street S. and 17th Street to the Potomac River. NPS Map 801/80095.

the raised terrace wall had been filled, the top was sodded and a gravel walkway laid around all four sides of the terrace level. Bacon planned for these gravel and cobblestone walks to serve as drainage along top of the raised terrace.²⁰

Efforts to Complete the Park

When the superstructure of the memorial was completed in 1917, efforts were underway to complete the overall landscape setting for the Lincoln Memorial. A new bulkhead, or seawall, which followed the shoreline for approximately 3,000 feet, was constructed along the river between the Lincoln Memorial and the Highway Bridge at 14th Street. The design called for filling in the shallow shoreline of the Potomac behind the seawall to extend the shoreline west of the Lincoln Memorial. The proposed extension would create more room for the full effect of the “rond point,” or end point of the east/west axis, which consisted of the Lincoln Memorial, its base, the circular terrace and roadway. Grading of the radial roadway northeast of the Lincoln and of the circular road around the memorial was also initiated, as was the preparation of the soil for the lawn on the circular terrace. Much of this work was completed in 1919. However, the concrete gutters, sidewalks and curb were not completed until 1922.

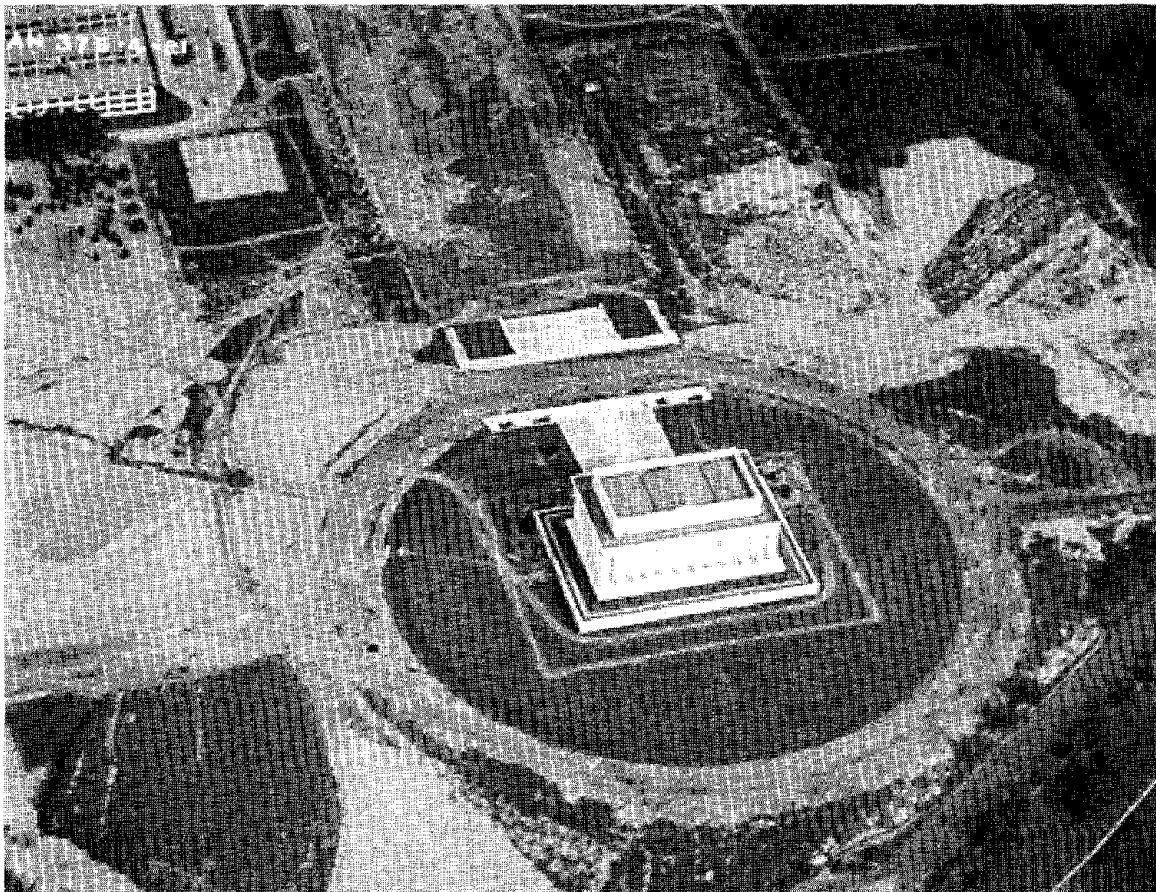


Figure 4 – Grading operations around the memorial, April 17, 1921. MRC 1-60.

At the same time, the OPBG worked to improve other sections of West Potomac Park and to prepare the area for the completion of its development. In 1915 improved portions of the park benefitted from a flock of grazing sheep brought there to fertilize and to promote the establishment of the lawn. On the unimproved interior portions, sod was lifted to create beds for the planting of approximately 1,500 trees and 3,100 shrubs. Nurseries were also established. On both sides of 17th street, sidewalks were installed between existing rows of American elms (*Ulmus americana*), planted in 1907. When they started to excavate the pools, several of the 17th Street trees were removed along the east and west sides of the road to provide an opening for the visual extension of the east/west axis of the Mall into West Potomac Park. The relatively narrow opening limited the view zone to the width of the new Reflecting Pool. The old Washington Canal lock keeper's house, which extended into the southwest portion of the intersection of 17th Street and B Street, was relocated 49 feet to a new site west of the corner to improve traffic circulation.

Other changes in the park occurred between 1916 and 1918 as a result of World War I. To make a site for the construction of temporary government office buildings, the area between the proposed basins and B Street North was cleared of 23 tennis courts and all existing shrubs and trees, including some 5,000 young trees. By March 1918 two three-story structures had been constructed. These were occupied by the War Department and were intended for use for the duration of the war. Shortly thereafter, additional structures were put up in the same area. Collectively these were known as the Navy and Munitions Buildings. A parking lot for automobiles was laid out in the area between the buildings and the northern most row of elm trees. A post-and-wire fence enclosed the lot with a line of fast-growing poplars (probably *Populus nigra* 'Italica') providing some screening.²¹

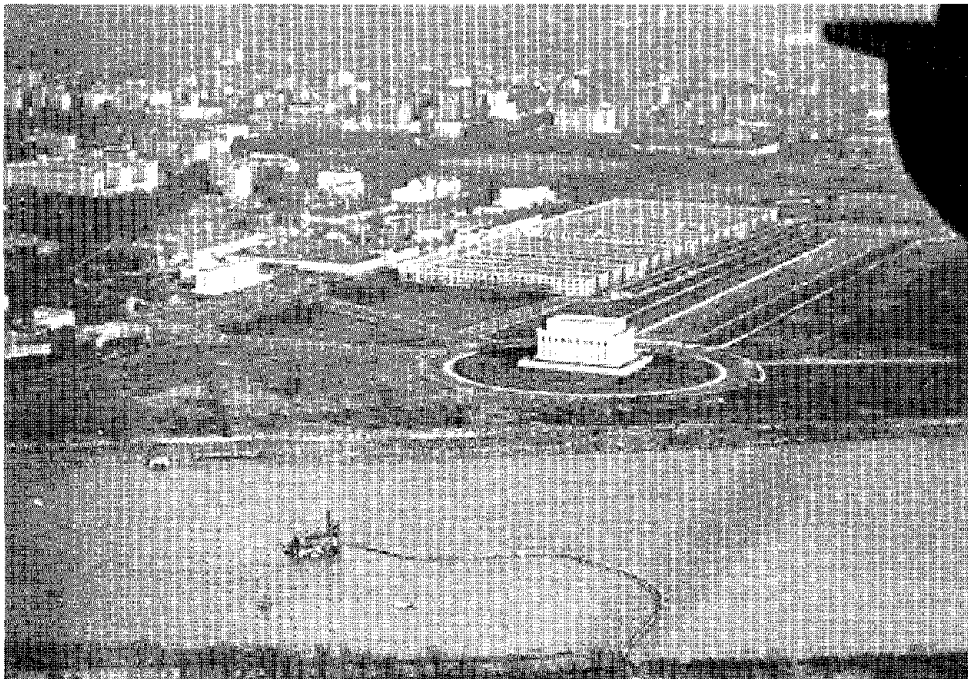


Figure 5 - Finished grading of circular road and partial completion of radial roads, 1921. MRC 1-62.

Planting Plan for the Inner Circle - East Front

In 1919, with all structural work on the memorial nearing completion, the OPBG assigned responsibility for the development of a landscape plan for the circular terrace around the Lincoln structure to staff Landscape Architect Irving Payne. Bacon's original concept for the vegetation around the memorial was noteworthy for its lack of specifics. In 1911 Bacon had merely stated that

*It will be conspicuous from many points of view and by means of openings in the encircling foliage, will be seen in its entirety from six different monumental approaches. Its whole eastern and western facades will be exposed to view, the former towards the Washington Monument, and the latter towards the Potomac River and the hills of Arlington.*²²

Without specific direction, Payne attempted initially to design a treatment that complimented Bacon's concept. Payne eventually submitted nine planting plans for the circular terrace to the Commission of Fine Arts for consideration.

The OPBG first sought approval for Payne's design at a meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts, held at Cornish, New Hampshire on September 20, 1919. At this meeting, James Greenleaf, Olmsted's successor on the CFA, outlined his objections to Payne's plans. Greenleaf's statements were consistent with the character of his work on the landscape for large, country estates. A master of spatial composition, Greenleaf frequently employed "seemingly random spacing" to soften rectilinear plans in his estate designs. He introduced this approach to the Commission of Fine Arts and later to the Arlington Memorial Bridge project, where he would serve as consulting landscape architect. Greenleaf apparently felt that Bacon's original landscape design for the planting around the memorial, which was based on the McMillan Commission plan, and Payne's interpretation of Bacon's work, was inappropriate for the architectural character of the completed building.

According to Greenleaf, the circular terrace called for "... a strong rugged type of informal planting, with irregular rounded foliage masses, in general about the base of the retaining wall."²³

*{A}round the foundations and platform terrace there should be bold, strong outlines of evergreen, which do not spire up against the masonry, but form a big, broad outline... The planting should be begun right, in a small way, so that the real results, showing the grounds fully developed and the planting of trees, etc., well grown would show for not perhaps fifty years.*²⁴

Greenleaf noted that yews (*Taxus* sp.) can reach a width of 25 feet and a height of nearly 15 feet.

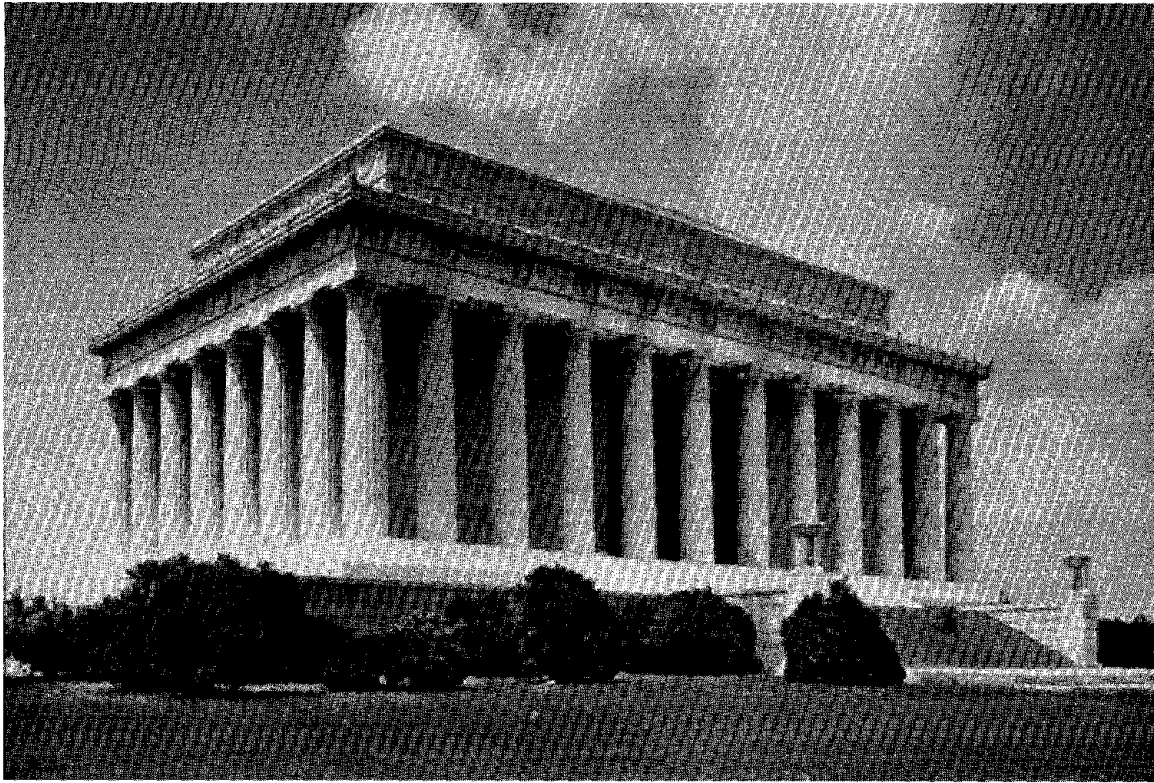


Figure 6 – Mature boxwood and yew shrubs on southeast side of Lincoln Memorial, August 1922. MRC 2-16.

Greenleaf's specific recommendations included using the six or more large yews of differing varieties and the large "box bushes" (*Buxus sempervirens*) indicated on Payne's plan. However, his views differed from Bacon's view and Payne's interpretation in several key areas. Greenleaf called for "rugged," seven-foot wide hedges flanking the sides of the steps. Mass planting shown by Payne should be "eliminated so that the edge of the Memorial at each end should be straight, but there should be some good background." A bushy vine growth planted along the retaining wall should be used to "break up the diversion of lines."

The 1919-20 planting plans submitted after the Cornish meeting reflected these and subsequent discussions. These plans showed the locations of masses of shrubs and were based in part on the availability of large scale plant material known to be growing on other federal reservations located throughout the city. The use of boxwood and English yew trees was approved for the area immediately adjacent to the retaining wall on the east, and at the southeast and northeast corners. Bacon continued to insert his ideas on various landscape treatments. One of his ideas entailed the addition of a large spreading vine covering the pink granite surface of the raised terrace wall. To illustrate this concept, Bacon added to the record a photograph of an English manor house overwhelmed with vines. At one time, Bacon objected to the use of boxwood in the planting design. He apparently changed his mind after reviewing Payne's installation of the planting plan at the site in July 1920. Bacon then expressed his preference for large box shrubs rather than the yew trees already planted on opposite sides of the entrance steps. The Commission

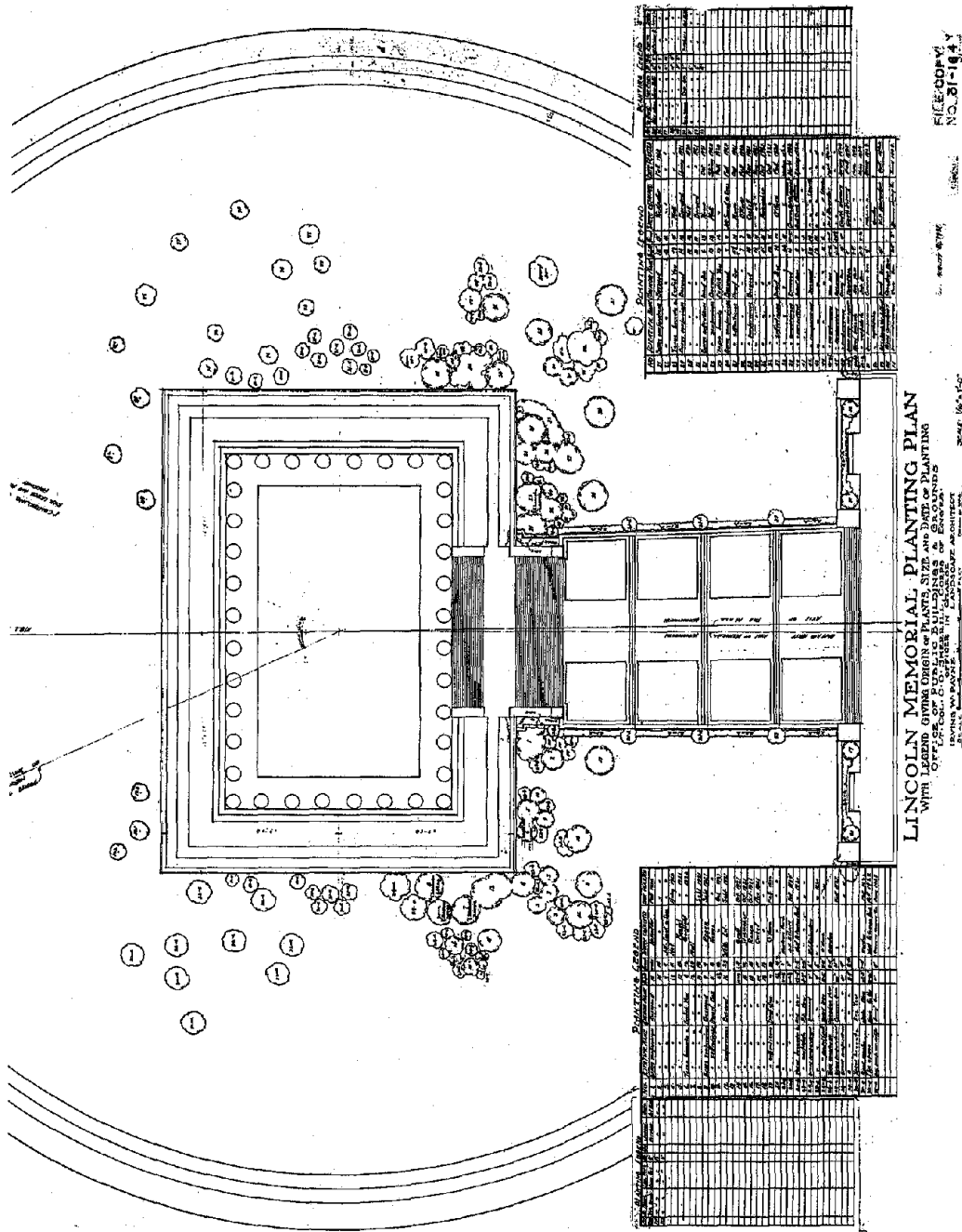
recommended that the two yews in question, being of thinner habit, be replaced by 12-15 foot high boxwood “to secure the desired effect of strength and solidarity (by a heavier leaved material).”²⁵

Throughout the process, Greenleaf and the CFA continued to further refine and exercise control over the planting plan. The Office of Public Buildings and Grounds started to prepare beds inside the inner circle of the memorial grounds in December 1919, with the intention of planting some 44 large specimens of boxwood and 6 holly (*Ilex opaca*) trees shown on the plans. In the spring of 1920, the commission specified that only mature, large-scale specimens shrubs should be selected for the Lincoln Memorial. However, by the end of the year, only 15 specimen boxwood shrubs and one yew tree had been installed on the eastern side. Not until the fall of 1922, after the memorial’s dedication, were “10 additional boxwood trees (known then as *Buxus sempervirens* ‘Arborescens’), 164 linear feet of boxwood hedge (consisting of dwarf boxwood, or *Buxus sempervirens* ‘Suffruticosa’) and 200 trailing vines planted.”²⁶ Also, at that time, ground on the south side of the memorial was filled in, brought up to grade, and then prepared for lawn. Subsequently, the CFA called for different treatments on the west side and at the southwest and northwest corners, recommending the use of pines, such as Swiss stone (*Pinus cembra*), Scotch (*Pinus sylvestris*), mountain and mugo pines (*Pinus mugo*), be used.

Concepts for the West Side

Although the OPBG landscape architect was also charged with developing planting plans for the west side of the memorial, the design concept that was finally approved was Greenleaf’s. Greenleaf advocated both coniferous and glossy-leaved evergreens planted in distinct groupings for the west side. One combination he suggested, which differed from the east side, was magnolia and pine planted together with the idea that the pine would be removed when the magnolia matured. He envisioned *Magnolia grandiflora*, with its year-round beauty and upright, broad-leaved character, providing a strong background for the rear of the memorial. Magnolia, however, was not so strong as to interfere with a good view of the memorial from Arlington, and would serve as a foil to the already approved plantings for the east side and corners. He felt magnolia to be especially effective in relation to the large scale vista from the proposed parkway “sweeping from the northwest” designed to link Rock Creek with Potomac Park and the Lincoln Memorial. The CFA approved of his suggestion, that “magnolia trees should be planted in the vicinity of the inner edge of the great circle,” which would eliminate the need for evergreen planting at the northwest and southwest corners of the retaining wall. The commission also adopted a 2 to 1 slope for the lower terrace level near the entry to the memorial at this time.

Irving Payne’s interpretation of these recommendations did not completely satisfy Greenleaf. Payne did incorporate “numerous openings through a grove of trees, which when observed from various positions on the “Great Terrace,” or from the road bounding the “Great Circle,” opened up everchanging vistas.” However, his schemes showed the



Map 4 - Irving Payne as-installed planting plan for first phase of the Lincoln Memorial foundation planting, 1920-1928. Courtesy of the National Archives.

trees and shrubs far away from the retaining wall in an arrangement that was too regular and geometric. Greenleaf continued to struggle to convey his ideas to Irving Payne. He envisioned plantings with numerous bays and indentations for informality with views of the Lincoln Memorial from the northwest and southwest preserved. At the same time, Greenleaf believed that certain vistas should be visible from the colonnade on both the north and south sides of the memorial.

Payne's drawings for the west side were finally approved by the commission in January 1920. In them, as Greenleaf had suggested, *Magnolia grandiflora* served as a backdrop to the structure. In addition, a large, wedge-shaped, open section separated plantings along the northwest and the southwest segments of the western retaining wall. Transition plants, uniting the vegetation on both the east and west sides, consisted of American and English hollies (*Ilex opaca* and *Ilex aquifolium*) and mugo pines. However, the design for the west side was put aside for several years until construction of the Arlington Memorial Bridge was near completion in 1931-1932. When the plan was finally implemented, James Greenleaf no longer served on the CFA, but was the consulting landscape architect for the Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission.²⁷

Efforts to Complete the Design

Between 1920 and 1921, the project of filling behind the new seawall west of the Lincoln continued, as did the grading for park grounds located outside of the circular roadway. In January 1921 two plans for the completion of the circular roadway were submitted. One called for a 9-inch crown, using no catch basins or curbing, while the second proposed an 11-inch crown without a curb. The CFA approved the concepts of both designs with the understanding that the slope differential between the inner and outer edges of the roadways were to be designed to keep the road from appearing sunken. Shortly thereafter, Congress appropriated funds for the construction of roads and walks around the Lincoln Memorial. The final design for the circular roadway called for a 60-foot bituminous macadam road, with curb and gutter and edged by a fifteen-foot sidewalk of "scrubbed concrete." Catch basins were designed, but apparently not installed at this time. Twenty-third Street, NW was designed with a grassy median down the center. The sidewalks paralleling this radial road were set back from the curb and constructed of "smooth concrete."²⁸ While these plans were being formulated, examination of the recently constructed masonry approaches and the terrace around the memorial revealed that these were settling at a faster rate than anticipated by the project's engineers. As a result, the original slab foundations were removed, and new foundations, built to bedrock, were installed in March 1921. The concrete sidewalks and curbs around the inner circle and on the east side of the outer circle to north and south 23rd Street were completed in the fall of 1922. The radial roadway in the southeast quadrant was also prepared for construction. This road would thereafter be named French Drive for Lincoln sculptor Daniel Chester French.

Both Bacon and Daniel Chester French complained that dirt and dust from the various grading operations around the memorial in 1921 had soiled the sculpture of Lincoln.

Regardless, all grading, planting, and road improvements on the west side of the building were temporarily suspended pending funding by Congress for the development of the Arlington Memorial Bridge. Design of the bridge's eastern abutment and the layout for the riverside drive connecting Rock Creek Park and the route to the "Speedway" along the Potomac River was expected to include the landscape treatment for the west side of the Lincoln Memorial. In November 1921 Bacon acquiesced to limited illumination of the memorial by specifying that streetlights on the traffic circle should be the sole source of exterior lighting. He recommended the Potomac Park lamppost and globe. In July 1922 he provided sketches of a lamppost with a spherical globe and the designs for two small memorial fountains. He had designated on his plan for the west end of the pool that the fountains should be located near the concrete steps leading down from the circular roadway. His streetlight design was not selected for the circle and the fountains were never installed. However, the need for lighting the exterior of the Lincoln Memorial would not be revisited until 1926.

The Reflecting Pool

During 1919 and 1920 the CFA undertook the finalization of the design for the reflecting pools, including the grading and planting plans for the basins and the adjoining areas. The CFA advocated an initial shallow excavation, at a temporary level, mostly for ease of maintenance. Once the official depth was determined, a permanent treatment would be designed. These temporary measures may explain the ditch-like appearance of the pools seen in some of the early photographs of the area. Excavation for the pools began in November 1919, with the excavated earth removed for use on the creation of the circular terrace around the memorial. As with the filling of the raised terrace, a temporary and "small narrow gauge industrial railway" carried the fill dirt across the site from the pools to the inner circle. Elimination of the cross arms was discussed again, with the commission generally in favor of their removal from the design. Bacon continued to be against the cross arms, as well. Olmsted preferred to reserve judgement until after the long section of the larger pool had been installed.²⁹

Members did note that the unsightly temporary war buildings on the north side of the reflecting pool prevented any construction of the cross arms on that side. In fact, the increasing permanence of the temporaries seemed to be in direct conflict with the open design originally envisioned for the monumental core.

In a vista over two miles long, these three large structures [Capitol, Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial] so placed that they will be forever free from proximity to the turmoil of ordinary affairs, and the discordant irregularity of adjacent secular buildings, will testify to the reverence and honor which attended their erection, and the impression of their dignity and stateliness on the mind of the beholder will be augmented by their surroundings, for which we have a free field for symmetrical and proper arrangement.³⁰

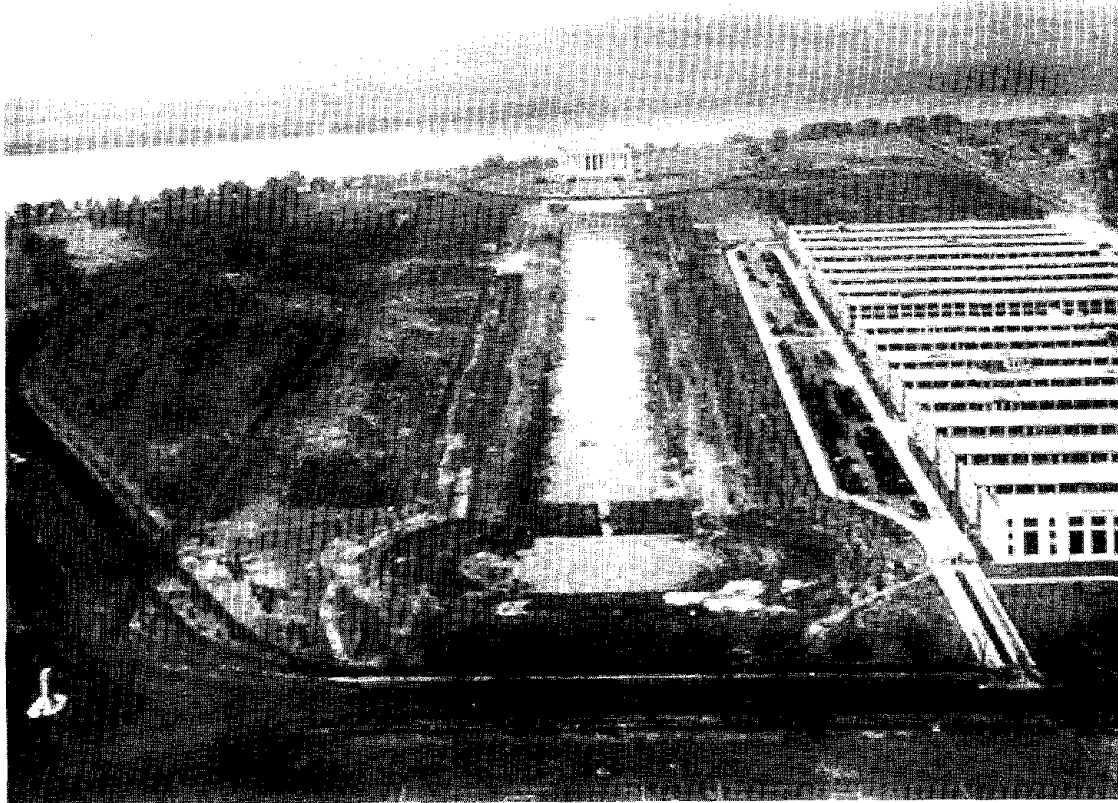


Figure 7 – View from Washington Monument showing ditch-like appearance of pools and temporary nursery on the south side of the pools, 1921. MRC 1-53

Olmsted's earlier opinions seem to have had the most enduring influence on the commission's decision to construct only the long section, to lengthen the basin, and to eliminate the squared-off, or jogged, portions of the pool's outline on the western end. The cross arms remained on the plan and were to be delineated, where possible, on the ground by the tree planting. In revisiting this issue, Greenleaf viewed the cross arms as a way to force the removal of the temporary buildings, although he acknowledged that the arms were out of scale with the design as it existed on the ground. In November 1920 the commission finally approved the extension of the western edge of the basin's coping. They extended the pool by an additional 20 ½ feet to a point located 55 feet east of the bottom steps leading up from the basin toward the memorial. The length of the long pool thus became 2,000 feet; the length of the transverse pool was 300 feet.

In June of 1921, the CFA determined the design of the coping and edge for the reflecting basin and the smaller basin sited immediately west of 17th street. The CFA approved a 3-foot wide coping that was 9 inches thick with a ¼ inch radius edge, as well as a pool depth of 2-3 feet. The coping was to be flush with any adjacent sidewalk and grass areas, so that contiguous materials would appear to be a continuation of each other. Later that year granite from Mt. Airy, North Carolina, was selected for the coping. Excavation, laying of conduit, and the foundation for the coping were all completed in 1921. Water supply and an extensive drainage system for the pool and the surrounding area were also incorporated into the completed design. Although D.C. public water supply served as the

main water source, additional quantities came from rainwater runoff directed to the pool from the memorial and its approaches. The coping foundations were supported by 20-foot piles standing on bedrock, with reinforced concrete beams supported by the piles. The stability from the piles and beams was used to mitigate the effects of any future settling on the coping. Through trial and error, contractors working with the OPBG developed a water-proof base consisting of an asphalt coated membrane, slate, and concrete tile. The dark color of the tile created the illusion of greater depth and a more profound reflection.

Although installation of fountains for the smaller pool was not undertaken at this time, the planned design for the fountains was to incorporate

...a huge water display with two center jets sending water high into the air and 150 side jets around the edges with water issuing toward the center. An electrical display is planned which will illuminate the fountains at night.³¹

However, neither pool was completed in time for the memorial's dedication in May 1922. The larger basin was filled with water for the first time the following December. Concrete walks around the pools were only partially completed by June of 1923 and were only fully installed by 1924. To complete the effect of the long, uncluttered vista, over 550 trees and shrubs were removed from the area south of the reflecting pool. Grading and seeding on both the north and south sides also took place at this time. Once the pools were complete, maintenance personnel planned to flood the surfaces when ice formed on the pools to create two skating rinks for the public's use.³²

Dedication of the Memorial

Although the grounds surrounding the Lincoln Memorial had not yet been fully developed by the time of the official dedication on May 30, 1922, many of the key elements were in place. The raised terrace, approachway, and reflecting pool steps had been constructed and subsequently secured to bedrock. Mature specimens of boxwood and yew had been planted in groupings along the east or front facade. These irregular masses of shrubs marked the inside corners at the raised terrace steps and wrapped the outside corners on the northeast and southeast. Four large box shrubs had been planted at the entrance to the approachway in the two walled beds surrounding the entry benches. Two additional boxwoods flanked the outside pedestals. However, the low box hedge proposed for the area behind each bench had yet to be planted. Small, no-yet mature elms lined the two paths that paralleled the reflecting pool and the transverse, or oval, pool on the eastern end. Openings on both the north and south side had been created in the rows of trees for the future cross arms section of the reflecting pool. Trees on the south marked that uncompleted segment, while on the north the presence of the parking lot for the temporary Navy and Munitions buildings prevented such a planting.³³ Neither pool held water. Fountains and walks along the pools had yet to be installed. The coping on the edge, however, did provide some hard surface for the some 50,000 people that had gathered to view the dedication from this area.



Figure 8 – Dedication festivities for the official opening of the Lincoln Memorial, May 30, 1922. MRC 1-30.

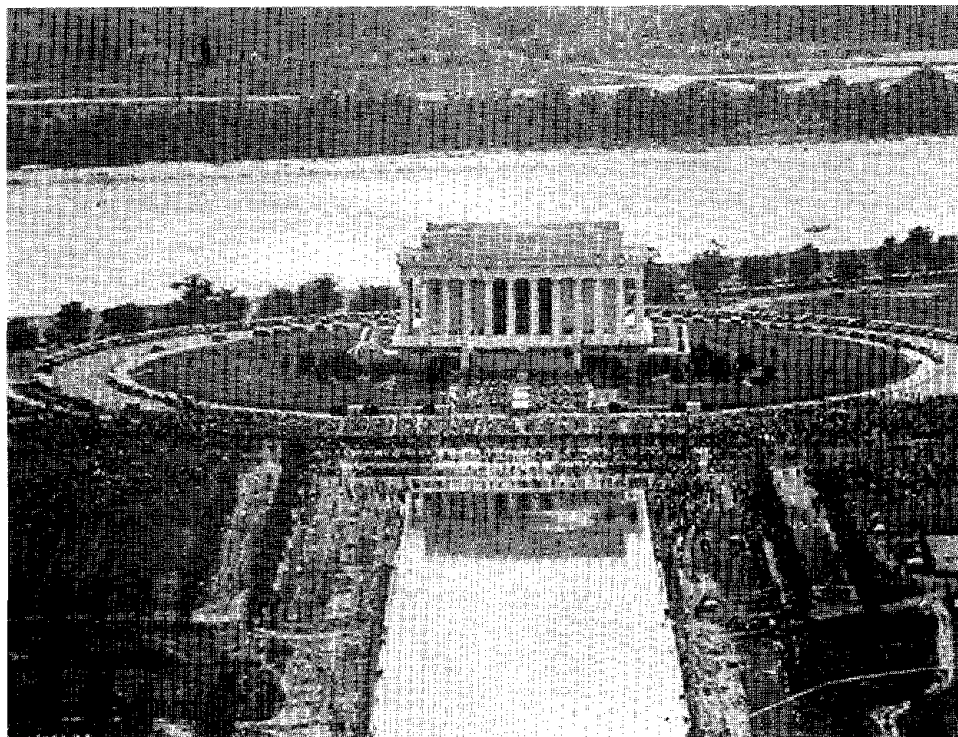


Figure 9 – Partially planted east side of Lincoln Memorial during the dedication ceremony, May 30, 1922. MRC 1-31.

At the dedication, invited guests were seated on the approachway levels, while other honored individuals were seated on chairs that had been set up on the top of the raised terrace. Here along the terrace wall, the organizers, the Lincoln Memorial Commission, had installed a temporary guardrail. From their vantage point, these guests could see that the arrangement of walks and drives around and emanating from the circular terrace was not yet complete. The circle drive had been paved and the sidewalk had been installed around the eastern segment of the inner edge as far as the 23rd Street radial. Twenty-third Street, N.W. and, the as-yet unnamed, Bacon Drive had also been paved and improved with sidewalks along each side. Much grading and seeding for lawn remained to be done as well. Completion of the radial roads and walks, the reflecting and transverse pools, the walks along the pools, and the installation of streetlights would occur shortly thereafter. Planting on the west side of the memorial and the development of the Watergate and the roads connecting the area to the proposed memorial bridge and the regional parkway system would not occur until the beginning of the next decade.³⁴

Completion of the Lincoln Memorial Grounds 1923-1933

Completion of Specific Projects - The Rainbow Pool

In May 1923, The American Institute of Architects (AIA) organized a tribute to Henry Bacon that was held at the Lincoln Memorial. The AIA honored Bacon with a dinner under a tent set up near the smaller basin. A triumphant procession along the full length of the pool, with Bacon riding on a ceremonial barge, followed the dinner. At the Lincoln steps, Chief Justice William Howard Taft, who had served as chair of the Lincoln Memorial Commission, decorated Bacon.

At the time of the tribute to Bacon, the fountains planned for the small, transverse pool had not been installed. The fountain for this pool was designated the "Rainbow Fountain" in October 1924, when during a trial run just before its dedication a rainbow formed above the fountain's spray. Operating with 124 nozzles arranged in an elliptical pattern near the outer edge of the pool, and with two clusters of nine north and south of the center, the fountain made a "hazy vista" through which to view the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. Evidently provision was made at this time for the necessary electrical connections to install a colored light display in the future. In 1925, an inspection of the fountain by members of the Commission of Fine Arts resulted in the following observation and objection: too many spouts and the "playing" fountain obstructed the view of the Lincoln Memorial from 17th Street.³⁵ According to various sources, the fountain indeed was occasionally illuminated at night.³⁶

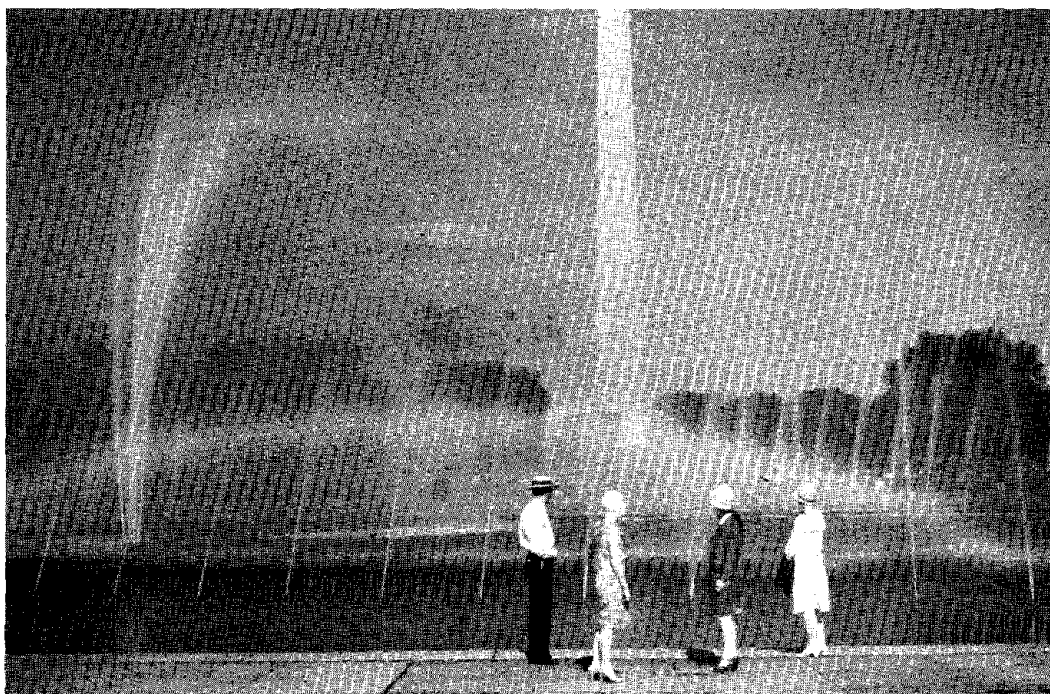


Figure 10 – Rainbow Pool fountain in all its glory as shown in National Geographic, April 1935, by Jacob Gayer. Used by permission from the National Geographic Society.

Throughout 1923 and 1924, landfill along the banks of the Potomac River continued to extend the area behind the new seawall to the west of the Lincoln Memorial.³⁷ By mid-1925, all significant changes in the landform at the Lincoln Memorial had been completed. Projects that had transformed the areas included the filling up and grading of the ground around the structure; the construction of the circular macadam drive and the radial roads coming off the circle; the excavation and finishing of the long reflecting pool with concrete walks along each edge; the installation of the transverse pool and fountain; and the grading of the areas adjacent to the long pool with the laying of parallel walks on either side.³⁸

During the period following the memorial's dedication, Daniel Chester French, Henry Bacon, the CFA, and the OPBG addressed the issues of both exterior and interior lighting.³⁹ In January 1926, 18 street light units were placed uniformly around the outside perimeter of the circle, opposite all four sides of the structure. The acorn-style lamp globe selected had been designed by General Electric for use in the District's streetlight system, as had a special incandescent lamp also developed by G.E.⁴⁰ In January 1927 the CFA approved an interior lighting installation that brought about a "quiet, subdued light at night," and that had been designed with the assistance of both Daniel Chester French and W. D'Arcy Ryan of G.E. for the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks (OPBPP was the successor to the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds established in 1925). The project was contracted out to the firm of Biggs and Kirchner, who installed 24 floods for the illumination of the statue and additional 125 lights for general lighting purposes. Lighting the interior of the structure at night became critical by 1927, when visiting hours were periodically extended into the early evening. However, completion of the lighting

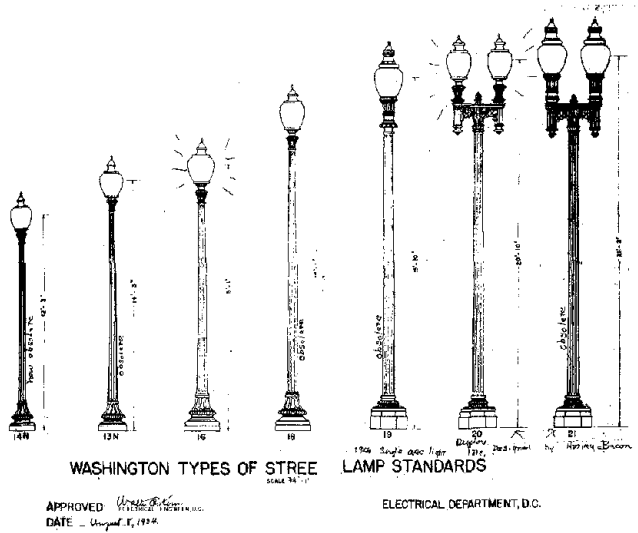


Figure 11 - D.C. street lamp standards as adopted in 1923.

installation did not occur until 1929. By April 1930 the Memorial was scheduled to stay open until 9:30 P.M. throughout the year.⁴¹

Another response to the increase in visitation was the 1927 construction of two “public comfort stations” under the raised terrace on the eastern front of the building. Two openings for entrances were cut through the raised terrace wall on both sides of

the steps leading up to the memorial. Spaces for the restrooms were created behind the wall and a pair of bronze doors were hung at each entrance. Access to the “stations” from the approachway came from the two sets of sidewalks coming off the main walk and passing through the foundation planting. Construction activity associated with this project may have adversely compacted the soil surface along the approachway. In subsequent years, compaction from other projects and special events in this area would adversely affect adjacent shrubs.⁴²



Figure 12 – Narrow passageway under boxwoods to “Men’s” restroom south of the main steps, May 1, 1927. MRC 2-11.

Additional Trees and Shrubs

Throughout this period, the OPBG continued to strategically place trees and shrubs, especially on the circular terrace immediately surrounding the memorial. One of

these shrubs, a large, specimen boxwood, had been moved from the grounds of the Corcoran estate and former residence of Daniel Webster, to the Lincoln Memorial site in 1922, and planted in Webster’s memory.⁴³ In 1924, hardy vines were planted to grow on the raised terrace wall. These were soon visible on the wall at the base of the west facade, where few shrubs had been installed since the dedication ceremony. More boxwood shrubs and “hedge plants” (*Buxus sempervirens* ‘Suffruticosa’) were planted between 1924 and 1926 along the approachway and around the memorial in unspecified locations.⁴⁴

In addition to OPBG's work on the grounds, they worked with various civic groups and organizations to plant memorial trees in West Potomac Park. On May 23, 1923, the lieutenant governor of Massachusetts and the mayors of 39 cities in the commonwealth planted 40 American elm trees along French Drive, creating the "Massachusetts Avenue of Memorial Trees."⁴⁵ Mrs. Coolidge and the president of Oberlin College planted the first individual memorial tree on the Lincoln grounds on November 5, 1923. Elsewhere in

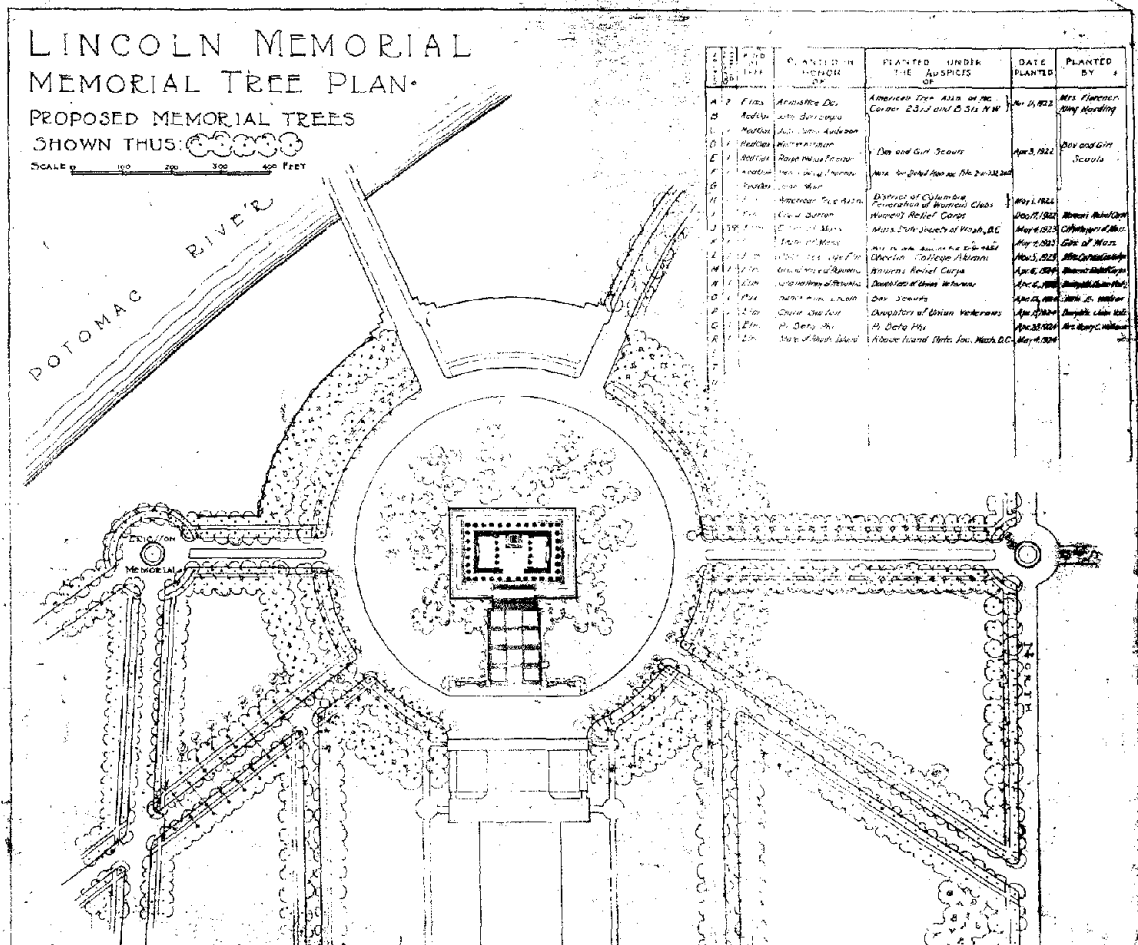
the park, Rhode Islanders planted the Liberty Tree to commemorate the 148th anniversary of that state's independence from Great Britain. The American Forestry Association gave two elms, one for the Army and one for the Navy, to begin an international avenue. The Boy Scouts of the District of Columbia planted a white oak nearby to honor Nancy Hanks, Lincoln's mother. Additional locations around the Lincoln Circle and along the radial roads were designated for memorial trees to be planted by the relatives of former servicemen. These trees would have no commemorative marker, save a small identification tag. One group of children planted a red oak near Bacon Drive and B Street, N.W. to honor John Burroughs and to complete a grouping of dedicated trees, serving as a "hall of fame" to John Muir, Henry Thoreau, Walt Whitman and John James Audubon. Not all requests for living memorials were granted. One, for example,



Figure 13– View of newly planted elms along radial roads and Reflecting Pool area, 1927. MRC 1-54.

concerned a proposal to plant a white birch in the area as a memorial tree. Because the planting plans for both the east and west facades of the Lincoln called for a variety of evergreen plants, the CFA refused to approve such a radical change in concept. The CFA reaffirmed that

*The success of the planting already in place calls for the completion of the scheme, the essence of which is the honor to the memory of Abraham Lincoln and not a shrine for votive offerings.*⁴⁶



Map 5 - One of the many memorial tree plans for the Lincoln Memorial circle and radial roads area, 1924. NPS Map 801/80081.

Between 1927 and 1928, the Horticulture Division of the OPBPP worked to complete the approved planting plan for the north, east, and south sides and focused on several other issues affecting the area around the memorial. Fifteen large magnolia trees were transplanted from the memorial grounds to another location in West Potomac Park. In turn, seven large, tree-type boxwood were planted at the memorial. During this period, the division noted in the annual reports that the elm leaf beetle and the caterpillar caused “usual damage” to the public reservations in the city. Although West Potomac Park was not specifically cited for pests, the large number of elm trees growing on the grounds

around the memorial and along the Reflecting Pool may have been treated for these problems. By 1928, the box-leaf miner was also cited as a pest for extermination. Whether the boxwood shrubs around the Lincoln Memorial were affected by box-leaf miner has yet to be determined.⁴⁷

Park Developments

In 1924 the CFA approved the location for the development of a secondary focal point, south of the Lincoln Memorial. This point had been on the 23rd Street axis designated on the McMillan Commission Plan. The site, which overlooked the river directly south of the "Great Circle," was set aside for a memorial to John Ericsson, Swedish-born inventor of the screw propeller and designer of the U.S. Navy's famous ironclad warship, the *Monitor*. The monument was designed to be set in a small traffic circle, prominently located at the southern end of 23rd Street. While preliminary site preparation took place in 1924, realization of the project was delayed for several years. The dedication, using a plaster casting to mark the place for the future statue, was held on May 1926, but sculptor James Earle Fraser's work was not completed until July 1927. As with the west side of the Lincoln Memorial, final treatment of the grounds around the Ericsson Memorial was scheduled for completion at the same time as the construction of the Arlington Memorial Bridge approaches, which occurred in 1932.⁴⁸

Other developments occurred in West Potomac Park that had less immediate impact on the grounds around the Lincoln Memorial but would eventually become significant issues for this part of the park. The impact of the shift from passive recreation to more active sports on adjacent park land was one of the concerns voiced when the second of two golf courses in West Potomac Park opened in 1924. The first nine-hole course had been laid out in an adjacent area just northwest of the Lincoln Memorial in 1923; the second was located in the far southeast area of West Potomac Park. Both were operated under a concession arrangement.⁴⁹ The improvement of adjacent streets to thoroughfares, which brought about increases in automobile traffic and the need for parking, was another concern. When B Street North was realigned, extended from Capitol Hill to the river, widened, improved, and renamed Constitution Avenue during September of 1931, such a through-route was inadvertently created. Requests to allow automobile parking at the Lincoln were brought before the Commission of Fine Arts in both 1931 and 1934. The CFA did not grant these requests, and although the public adhered to the existing parking restrictions, parking was prohibited on the west side of the circle in 1934. However, a taxi stand was permitted.⁵⁰