

Landscape Art on the Campus

To the lasting credit of the present Board of Administration it is to be recorded that they have taken the first effective forward step toward the planting of the campus according to a comprehensive and unified plan; and if what they have intended is carried forward to completion, our graduates, when they return for the Commencement reunions, will be greeted by a campus radiant with a new beauty, and the old buildings will look out upon them, not as if neglected on a bleak and windswept soil, but guarded by trees, enthroned amongst shrubberies and draped with ivy.

The planning of the campus has been entrusted to Hare and Hare, landscape architects of Kansas City, Missouri. The junior member of the firm, Mr. S. Herbert Hare, is lecturer on landscape design at the University. His thorough training in the School of Landscape Architecture at Harvard, and the high artistic value of his work in Kansas City and in other towns of the Middle West give us the assurance that the designs he is working out for the campus will rightly provide for both utility and beauty.

Those of us (and that would be all of us) who prize the surpassingly beautiful view from the campus of town and country, bounded by the sweep of the distant blue hills, need have no fear that the planting which is being done will shut out this view, for the motive of the designer is to preserve and enhance it, by so placing the trees and massing the shrubs as to frame the finest vistas and enrich the foreground of our inspiring outlook. It has not been forgotten that much of the campus, particularly that part of it where the buildings stand, crowns a hill, where our plantation must face the full strength of all the winds that blow; therefore trees and shrubs have been chosen that are well proven for hardihood under the extremes of our winters and summers, aggravated as these are on Mount Oread by periods of strong winds.

It is noteworthy how great a variety there is of plants suitable to our purposes and hardy enough to meet the severe conditions of our location. The Scotch, Austrian and white pines and the red and savin cedars have long been thriving on our hilltop, and

these we have repeated in our new planting. The American arbor vitae has been dying out of late years and now we are trying its Oriental cousin which has come to us from China and is proving quite at home under the severe conditions of western Kansas. The new grove of evergreens just north of the library, when it becomes well established, will be one of the best features of our campus. The deciduous trees of the new plantation are the hackberry, sugar maple, red and pin oaks, red bud, Chinese varnish tree, Bechtel's flowering crab, flowering dogwood, purple plum, Lombardy poplar, magnolias in three species, white fringe, Russian olive, tree of heaven, sycamore, white birch, and tree lilac.

It will come to some as a surprise that the sugar maple and the oaks have been planted on our hilltop, but it is to be recalled that the two sugar maples between Snow Hall and Fowler shops have made a good growth, while the pin oaks and mossy-cup oaks on the fringe of the golf links are becoming well established. And so we feel warranted in trying to get more of these noble trees to take root squarely on the summit of the campus where their wonderful qualities may be seen by all who follow the main-traveled paths. And if these trees succeed, as we feel confident they will, their example will go far to put down the old superstition that they will not thrive as cultivated trees in Kansas.

A large group of hackberries has been planted between the Museum and the Library. The ability of the hackberry to meet any trial of cold and heat, wind and drought no one can doubt who has witnessed how well it succeeds on the wind-swept prairies of western Kansas.

But I would not leave the impression in the minds of any who are not acquainted with our campus that its trees are few in number and species. Quite on the contrary, a portion of it is crowned with a grove, which sweeps, broadening as it advances, down the north slope of the hill, constituting there a beautiful parklike formation known as "Marvin Grove." The older trees were planted about the same time and no one of them stands out in the crowd with an air of distinction, unless we except, as after

April
1917

all we must, the big cottonwood standing between Fraser Hall and Snow Hall. This now spreads its far-reaching branches across the lawn, and it is now, in early May, a fair sight, bedecked in fresh leaves, gracefully vibrant to every breath of wind, while reflecting glints of spring sunlight (and starlight and moonlight, too, we shall not forget). The cottonwoods are really, all things considered, the most beautiful trees we have. I know I shall be disputed in this, but I also know that I have good company in my opinion. To be sure, we are not planting cottonwoods in the new plantations, because of certain regrettable qualities associated with beauty,—the weakness of the wood, for instance, coupled with the large size which is soon attained. These associated characters result in a large toll of branches to heavy winds and the weight of enshrouding ice; but although the scars on our big cottonwood show what it has lost in this way, it is today, after more than forty years on the summit of Mount Oread, a supremely beautiful tree still.

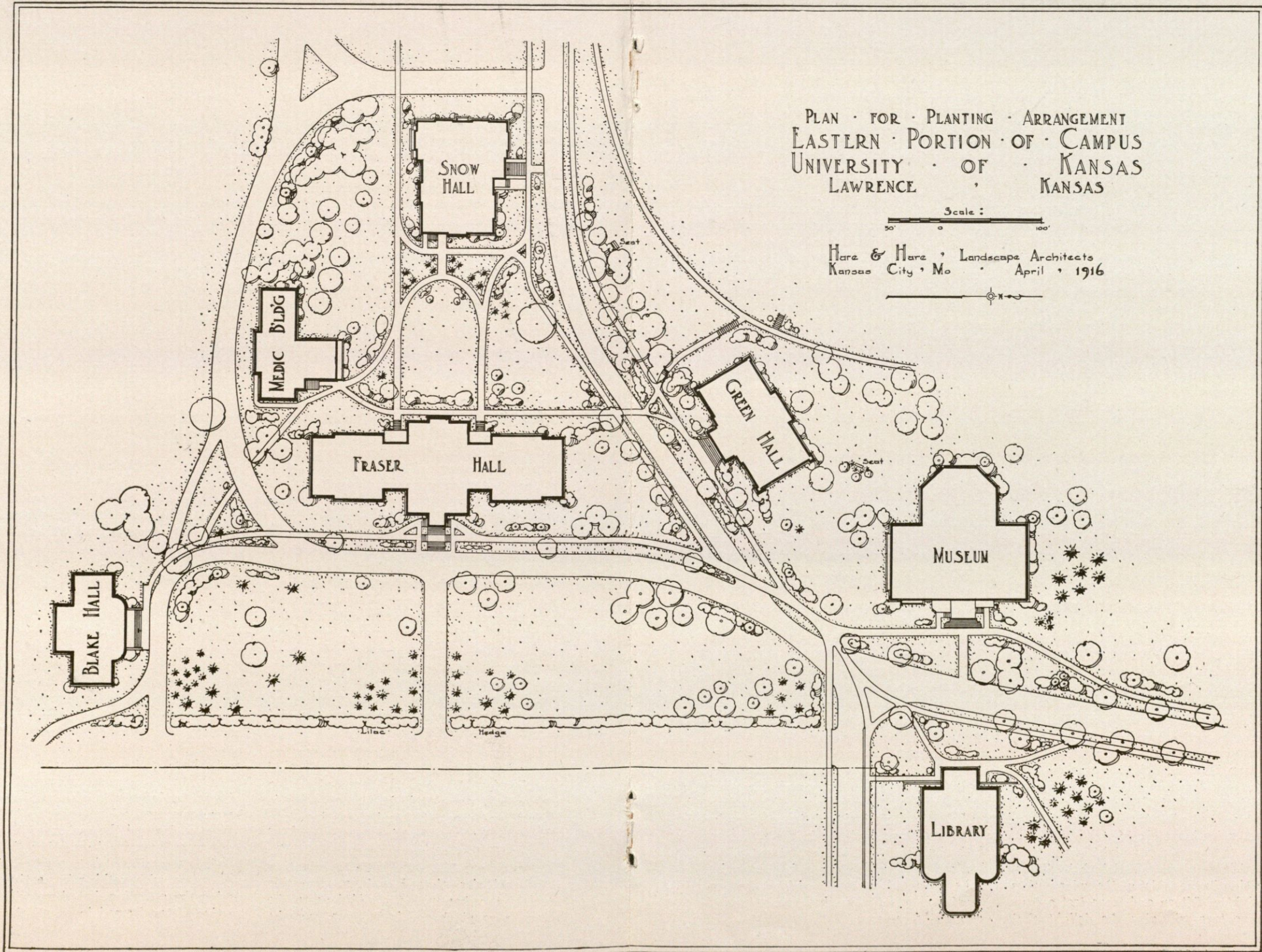
Assuming that a large percentage of the elms on the campus will survive the scourge of insects that now are at their flood-tide, the elm will still dominate the campus though all the sugar maples, oaks and hackberries recently planted should make a favorable growth; and it is our hope that the elms may maintain the leading role, with an enhancement of their effect by the contrasting character of the new kinds. This result can be looked for more confidently because the designer has massed the new trees in effective groups, instead of dispersing them in scattered association of different species, as seems to be the instinctive, but ineffective way of doing of most of us when we plant according to our own designs.

The greatest deficiency of our campus through all these years has been its lack of shrubberies. There is the lilac hedge. No one who has seen it in bloom as we see it today can forget it. And then there are the thin lines of deutzias in the rear of Fraser Hall that have never been quite happy on our hill. But with the planting of shrubberies that has been done this spring, together with the additions to the trees, a great change is to come over the

face of the campus, the extent of which we may apprehend with the help of the planting plan here published. I will speak first of the extension of the lilac hedge on the east boundary in front of Fraser. It will be recalled that this extends north to the driveway running east from the front entrance of Fraser Hall and that beyond the driveway the hedgeline in time past was continued with arbor vitae. This had so died out in recent years that only a few trees remained, and these have been transplanted in appropriate groups to make room for a continuation of the lilac hedge to Adams street; so that within a few years the great sight we see now in lilac time will be multiplied by two, and the brown thrushes, cat birds and red birds that have shown an artistic preference for lilac bushes for nesting can extend their habitat through the new hedge. Fortunately the class of 1903 has anticipated this by setting a beautiful terra cotta bird bath beside the pine near this hedge. When one observes this corner of the campus he can not fail to observe how great an improvement has been accomplished even now, simply by removing the few arbor vitae that remained in the old hedge and planting them in groups near by, in association with the savin cedars and the red cedar already well established there, and the newly-planted Chinese arbor vitae.

One of my colleagues asked me recently whether the new planting had not been really overdone. As one estimates this by looking at the many tree and shrub areas on the planting plan, or by noting the numerous spaded-up areas over the greensward as he walks about, the bare soil of these plots being just now the most conspicuous thing about them, one might be inclined to answer the question in the affirmative. But we see now only the bare beginnings of what is to be. When the shrubs have grown up so as to cover the ground allotted to them they will appear quite as fundamentally an organic part of the campus as the blue grass and the old trees now do; and the campus will appear immeasurably more interesting then, for its whole top will not be spread out in one broad view, with nothing in particular focussing the attention, but there will be attractive vistas framed in on all sides, and

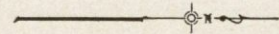
APRIL
1917



PLAN · FOR · PLANTING · ARRANGEMENT
 EASTERN · PORTION · OF · CAMPUS
 UNIVERSITY · OF · KANSAS
 LAWRENCE · KANSAS

Scale :
 50' 0 100'

Hare & Hare, Landscape Architects
 Kansas City, Mo. April, 1916



many pleasing points of view of all the buildings where now they face one bleakly, to say nothing of the interesting discoveries to be made of the aspects of the shrubberies themselves. Let me here quote a principle of landscape design from Humphrey Repton applicable to this very situation.

"The eye, or rather the mind, is never delighted with that which it surveys without effort at a single glance, and therefore sees without exciting curiosity or interest. It is not the vast extent of lawn, the great expanse of water, or the long range of wood that yields satisfaction; for these, if shapeless, or which is the same thing, if their shape, however large, be too apparent, only attract our attention by the space they occupy. To fill that space with objects of beauty, to delight the eye after it has been struck, to fix the attention where it has been caught, to prolong astonishment into admiration, are purposes not unworthy of the greatest designs."

We should call attention to an important fact that will become more apparent by contrast as the shrubs attain to their maximum size, namely, that the shrubberies are laid out close to the buildings, walks and drives, leaving ample space of open greensward for freedom of view and assembling of students under the shade of the trees for summertime classes and outdoor parties.

We must not expect too much of our new plantation just at first. While it is true that the groups of young evergreens create a marked effect at the outset, it will take two years for the shrubs to feel settled in their new environment, and still more years before they take on their natural forms and bloom luxuriantly. However it will be interesting to forecast what we may expect a few years hence by citing just a few details of the planting plan. Approaching the Museum from the north one will see a group of pink weigelas surrounding a clump of African tamarisks eight to ten feet tall with graceful branches and feathery foliage, and covered at this season with innumerable small pink flowers; then a large clump of spice bush, six to eight feet high, bearing, as one can see right now, wine-colored flowers about a half inch in diameter. Rising in the midst of the spice bushes to a height of fifteen and more feet a Russian olive tree will give the delight that

many of us feel in its graceful branches, clothed in shining brown bark, beset with leaves of silvery sheen against which in late May are the fragrant yellow flowers.

The next bed on the east of the walk will be occupied equally by the well-known von Houtte's spiraea and purple-flowered Persian lilac, and rising above the lilac some double-pink-flowering cherries. In the next bed a few steps in advance erect forsythias will rise to a height of eight feet, and these will be bordered at either end with Billard's spiraea, five to six feet tall, bearing spikes of bright pink flowers from July to September. Across the road, immediately in front of the Library entrance, a long bed of pink Japanese roses will flower abundantly in May, and then intermittently all summer, and after the flowers will come the pink fruits that hang on through the winter. At the southeast corner of Green Hall will be a large bed of drooping forsythias and common lilac, while the entrance steps will be flanked by masses of Japanese bush honeysuckle. The forsythias and lilacs will grow to a height of eight to ten feet, and the honeysuckles will rise to six feet.

Enough has now been said to show that the shrubberies which now appear insignificant, because the plants are small and not in full leaf, will ere long spread out to commanding proportions and furnish a very significant setting for the architectural features of the campus. It is becoming more and more the practice for architects and landscape designers to work together in making the designs of the buildings and the planting of the grounds a unified composition, and it is a matter of good fortune that our students of these subjects are soon to have before them on the campus the happy results of the co-operation of these arts, although not the best possible examples because the landscape designer was obliged in this instance to come in and do the best he could after the architectural work and the laying out of the walks and drives had all been done. The results would have been much better if we had had the co-operation of the landscape designer in the placement of the buildings and the laying out of the circulation for pedestrians and vehicles; but we have learned our lesson and we shall not repeat our mistake in the future development of the campus.

May I now, in closing, call attention to examples of the association of the two arts that will be of especial interest to donors to their Alma Mater of such monumental gifts as the useful stone seats. Mr. Hare has not neglected in his design such a gift from the class of 1914, for it will be noticed that for attendance thereon have been assigned two formal *catalpa bungeis*, ten *tamarix africanas*, and seven *ligustrum regelianums*. Another such instance, and one of deep interest to those who are acquainted with the early history of the University, is the beautiful stone seat donated by Kate Stephens, which has been given a

setting of evergreens, and red buds to which it has been poetically inscribed. This will be found between Green Hall and the Museum building, very thoughtfully placed where one who has climbed the slope from the street car station may stop and rest and drink in the view through Marvin Grove and across the golf links out to the blue hills in the far distance. And if haply the time is April the masses of purple-pink flowers on the overhanging branches of the twin red buds will radiate the loyal thought that inspired this gift.

W. C. STEVENS.

Lord, save my soul alive from books and men!

I have been crushed again and yet again
For standing squarely out against a world
Of dogma from the desk and rostrum hurled
At heads, unbent and impious—such as mine—
That will not with a ready grace incline
To hear the learned few's stale parrotings
Of dead men's wisdom.

Oh, but here are things
More worth than these, my masters, more than these!
The lilac hedge in April, if you please!
The wild crab-apple at its beauty's best,
Aloof upon the links; against the west
The tall dark pine trees in a solemn row;
The glistening red roofs of the hill a-glow
Against the autumn rain; and, strange and white,
North Hollow when the sleet falls over-night.

And these things quicken me to living—these!

Tonight I saw the sun set through the trees,
And after that the creeping mists from gray
Grew grayer yet and deeper until they
Had blurred the valley lights and softened down
To half-dimmed stars the white lights of the town.
And far above it all, serenely high,
A little young moon in the western sky.

On these—not books—Lord, let my spirit thrive!
By these—not men—Lord, save my soul alive!

* * *