

Cyrus Dallin's *The Scout*: Civic Identity Cast Through a Native  
Equestrian Monument

By  
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Matthew Bowman  
M.A., University of Connecticut, 2014  
B.A., Augustana College, 2012

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Chair: Dr. Peter Welsh

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Dr. Charles Eldredge

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Dr. Robert Warrior

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The thesis committee for Matthew Bowman certifies that this is the  
approved version of the following thesis:

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## Abstract

This thesis studies *The Scout*, a monumental bronze Indian equestrian sculpted by Cyrus Dallin and located since 1916 on a hilltop at Penn Valley Park overlooking Kansas City and the West. Emphasizing its story during the early twentieth century, this analysis utilizes local primary source accounts and secondary sources for two arguments: First, City Beautiful Movement values motivated Kansas City's procurement of *The Scout*. Second, Kansas Citians purposefully stationed the statue at its precipice to face a direction aligning with desirable identifying markers, referring allegorically to both romantic frontier pasts and industrial futures. These objectives are achieved by examining the physical sculpture along with visual and material cultures it inspired, cultures developed by publics and institutions that firmly establish *The Scout* as a civic emblem. Finally, this paper suggests *The Scout* belongs in national scholarly conversations regarding the appropriation of Indigenous bodies in space and place.

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## Introduction

In his illustration for the title page of George W. Colton's 1856 publication *Atlas for the World*, Carl Emil Doepler chose for his composition "a group of Indians in the foreground" surveying from "high above" a vista below replete with commerce and manufacturing—busy waterways, emanating smokestacks and the like. "In such images," writes Brian Dippie, "physically and emotionally we are with the Indians—we view things from their perspective." Dippie continues, "And precisely because they are passive and nonthreatening, they appeal to the viewer's sympathy." Alongside these Natives, "we look down from above," contemplating "a world no longer their own."<sup>1</sup>

I begin with Dippie's quotations because they set the stage for this thesis. My project is a study of *The Scout*, a monumental bronze Indian equestrian sculpted in 1911 by Cyrus Dallin, famed American artist of Western subjects in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (**fig. 1**). *The Scout* was first exhibited at the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, California, where it won a gold medal (**fig. 2**). Today, it is located at Penn Valley Park in Kansas City, Missouri, a place it has called home at various positions and pedestals since 1916 (**fig. 3**). This particular Indian effigy on horseback has a long, winding and eventful history. But until this point, the statue has received scant scholarly attention. I believe *The Scout* deserves far greater consideration due to its ongoing importance as a civic emblem of Kansas City. Much is at stake in the powerful symbolic dialogue surrounding the visual culture of *The Scout*. Of utmost importance are the metaphorical impacts of the statue and how they might influence modern scholarly dialogue over the appropriation of the Indigenous body—a physical landscape full of complex, diverse meanings—in American art. This thesis attempts to tease out these implications

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<sup>1</sup> Brian W. Dippie, "The Moving Finger Writes: *Western Art and the Dynamics of Change*," in *Discovered Lands, Invented Pasts: Transforming Visions of the American West*, 89-115 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 99-101.

from various vantage points, some historical and others positional. To aid in accomplishing this goal, I embedded many block quotes into my prose. Their placement was purposeful, as I urge you to read two stories intertwined as one: my analyses of *The Scout* and the firsthand accounts from the local historical record. The arguments made in this thesis are critical to gaining a deeper understanding of this significant monument, though the historical narrative behind *The Scout* is equally important, if not most enjoyable. Please allow yourself to weave in and out of my voice and those of various Kansas Citians as you proceed through this tale.

Chapter one accomplishes several aims. Its central objective is to argue that City Beautiful Movement values motivated Kansas City's procurement of *The Scout* as an integral piece to their urban beautification program in the early twentieth century, a program overseen by famed landscape architect George Kessler and other actors in the spirit of civic boosterism (fig. 4). This movement was an urban enhancement phenomenon born from concepts first tested at The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. I build the argument primarily through firsthand accounts from the Kansas City press, which reveal perceptive subtleties on the part of Kansas Citians critiquing and admiring the statue's placement in Penn Valley Park vis-à-vis conceptualizations of beauty. One letter, for instance, from Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Burtchby to the Chamber of Commerce states, "Since being located in Penn Valley Park, 'The Scout' has contributed so largely to our love of the artistic and beautiful."<sup>2</sup> In addition, I share highlights from Dallin's oeuvre that led to his eventual creation of *The Scout* along with insights to his artistic mindset relevant to the statue as gleaned from primary sources. The chapter ends with a detailed narration of the vandalism saga that has befallen *The Scout* since its arrival to Kansas City. By first sharing its beauty, my hope is that readers will vividly understand the distressing impact of its defacement.

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<sup>2</sup> *Kansas City Star*, March 11, 1917, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



While chapter one is largely historical in scope, chapter two tackles thematic issues literally surrounding *The Scout* within its local environs. Drawing from a breadth of primary and secondary source material, I incrementally analyze physical things—landmarks, topographical elements and so forth—in the statue’s line of sight to argue that Kessler and Kansas Citians purposefully stationed *The Scout* at its precipice in Penn Valley Park to face a direction that aligned with a union of identifying markers they wanted to possess. In other words, when *The Scout* peers outward, hand at temple to shroud the sunlight, comprising his visions are cultural components in the makeup of Kansas Citian identity (**fig. 5**). The local, historical record from the 1910s and 1920s—the period following procurement of the bronze and its initial burst of media and public attention—verifies such anthropomorphic readings of the statue. For example, concerned citizen Bertha Braley wrote to George Kessler, developer of the Kansas City parks and boulevards system, in 1921 with her suggestion for a proper pedestal for *The Scout*. “It has always been a pet hobby of mine, ever since Kansas City acquired this statue to have it placed upon a huge boulder,” she comments, “overlooking the city, giving the impression that the Indian, who was roaming over the prairie, suddenly arrived at a halt on the rock, and was looking upon the city.”<sup>3</sup> While this vision of *The Scout* atop a boulder never materialized, the excerpt is symptomatic of public imaginings. Countless instances of Kansas Citian commentary exist romanticizing the statue’s gaze both westward and toward downtown. From his platform, *The Scout* surveys a bustling metropolis of railroads, rivers and smokestacks that signal Kansas City’s industrial progress. Situated in a park that was once a segment of the Santa Fe Trail, *The Scout* also looks beyond the city and to a romanticized western frontier of long ago, a figurative gateway to the West as described by period commentators. This chapter, therefore, implies that

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<sup>3</sup> Bertha Braley to George E. Kessler, Nov 22, 1921, George Kessler Papers, Folder 19, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive.

urban Kansas Citians of the early twentieth century employed *The Scout* in their labors to reach modernity, efforts that relied upon the statue, the Indian form and its implied primitive past as counterpoints to use in catapulting themselves to a superior future, soaring to heights of industrial dominance.

I conclude chapter two by examining several examples of *The Scout* in Kansas City's visual culture that exhibit these aforementioned allegorical characteristics: frontispieces, poems, photographs, and nineteenth-century paintings and drawings that originated the iconographical legacy carried on by *The Scout*, this being the art historical trope of Natives on hilltops observing advancing civilization below. Therefore, the statue deserves recognition as a significant installment of this particular iconographical heritage. In addition, I consider Kansas City businesses and institutions that have appropriated *The Scout* for their individual identity agendas and the accompanying ramifications engendered by these relationships. These purposes include presidential election advertisements, streetcar adornment and branding, college football and NHL mascots, housing unit anchors, bank symbols, international replicas and others.

An added objective of chapter two is to outline reasons why *The Scout* failed to garner the nationwide recognition of some of Dallin's other Indian bronzes, namely his famous *Appeal to the Great Spirit*, and other instances of Indigenous imagery popularized by different contemporary artists. Could it be a lack of narrative interest? Or maybe the symbolism attached to *The Scout* is ambivalent toward the pervasive vanishing race theory of this era as seen in contemporary material and visual culture presenting Natives accepting their "inevitable" passing amidst emerging United States industrialization. While the statue's tranquility may have been ideal for the tenor of a public park, it could be this same trait that hindered its efficacy on a national scale. With that said, I push back on these thoughts in the conclusion, suggesting that

*The Scout* can, indeed, be elevated into larger, critical conversations regarding the meaning of the Indigenous body in space and place.

## Chapter 1: A Beautiful Indian for Penn Valley Park

In May of 1923, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) visited Kansas City, Missouri. While on a sightseeing venture through Penn Valley Park, Doyle noticed Cyrus Dallin's *The Scout* in the distance and asked his chauffeur to bring him "to the foot of the knoll it [stood] on, and then he got out and walked up to it" (**fig. 6**). The famed British writer and creator of Sherlock Holmes was impressed. "You have a very wonderful work of art in your 'Indian Scout'," he wrote in a letter to *The Kansas City Star* newspaper. "Any city in the world would be proud of it." He was speaking of the bronze equestrian statue of a Lakota on display near the edge of a summit at this park, a location it can still be found at today. The Indian atop his horse overlooks downtown Kansas City and the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers—a spectacular vista that draws visitors year-round. At ten feet in height—a common dimension for monumental sculpture casted in the Gilded Age—and 1.75 tons in weight, this monument to area tribes stakes a prominent position against the skyline. A bow and readied arrow clutched in his left hand, the Native shades his eyes from sunlight with his right hand, concentrating his attentive gaze outward into the distance; a full quiver surrounds his back if, indeed, a reload is necessary.

Doyle held *The Scout* in such high regard despite the fact that workmen were busy cleaning it with wet sponges while he approached. These men showed him the vandalism incurred on the work since its initial placement at the park in 1916; the rein strap was broken and bulged "out in a stiff, artificial way," and many of the arrows had been ripped out. Even with these acquired defects, Doyle eagerly marked the statue as a symbol of beauty for Kansas City, a symbol worthy for placement in his native Europe, in fact. Doyle wrote, "If a European city had this bronze its reputation would be as common as that of the Lion of Thorvaldsen in

Switzerland.”<sup>4</sup> Doyle’s visit to Kansas City, along with his receipt of praise for *The Scout*, can be read in his autobiography entitled *Our Second American Adventure* published in 1924.

A separate publication for Grace and Holy Trinity Church, a house of worship located at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway in downtown Kansas City, corroborated his sentiments.<sup>5</sup> The church rector evoked the anecdote about Doyle in a talk called “The Spirit of the City” to inform his parishioners of their responsibility to care for their growing surroundings by working together “to build here a righteous city.” The rector felt dismayed at hearing that Doyle was unable to “procure a reproduction of the Scout. He desired it especially to take to his children, who were waiting for him in Colorado Springs.”<sup>6</sup> To this dilemma, the rector thought, “Pictures of the Stock Yards he could purchase in plenty, but not of one of the masterpieces of the new world... We ought to care for the Stock Yards, but we ought also to care for the ‘The Scout’.”<sup>7</sup> In these cases, an agnostic fiction writer and a clergyman found common ground, agreeing that *The Scout* was a locus for aesthetic enhancement in a developing metropolis and a marker for civic identity that should be shared widely with the world at large. The brevity of Doyle’s visit to *The Scout* begs the question of how the statue made such a lasting impression upon him and countless other viewers over time. He must have been enamored with the technical brilliance of the bronze, a sophistication brought to the work by Cyrus Dallin (1861-1944), an artist who gathered his expertise over years of study in the medium. In fact, Indigenous peoples influenced his artistry at a young age and likely inspired his later designs of monumental Native equestrians like *The Scout*.

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<sup>4</sup> “Is the Scout Unnoticed as a Thing of Beauty?,” *The Kansas City Star*, May 23, 1923, Dallin Papers, Reel 182. Doyle continued, “When I go from shop to shop to try to purchase a model of it, or even a passable photograph, it is not to be had.”

<sup>5</sup> The church still stands in its original location. It is now known as Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral.

<sup>6</sup> “Is the Scout Unnoticed.”

<sup>7</sup> “The Spirit of the City,” *Grace and Holy Trinity Church V*, no. 23 (May 20, 1923), Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

Dallin was born in a log cabin in Springville, Utah. It was a frontier settlement approximately fifty miles south of Salt Lake City surrounded by an adobe wall to separate settlers from Ute and Paiute Indians. Despite the presence of a barrier, Dallin commonly wandered beyond the border to fraternize with young Natives, with whom he “modeled horses and the wild animals of their mountainous neighborhood out of common clay.”<sup>8</sup> They “would flatten a handful of clay in their hands, then press it around the end of a willow shoot” and fling it at an “enemy.”<sup>9</sup> Dallin referred to this competition as the “warrior game” and discussed how it was the foundation for a lifetime in sculpture:

When we got tired, we used to sit down at the clay bank and make models of the animals that roamed the prairie in those days—antelope, wolves, buffalo, and horses. That was where I got my liking for modeling—there at the clay bank beside the village of Ute teepees.<sup>10</sup>

These encounters would occur especially “during fall and spring” when “the Ute Indians camped near Springville to trade hides and meat to the townsfolk.” His father, “Thomas Dallin was one of those rare frontiersman who had more admiration for than prejudice against Indians. He did not discourage his children from joining the Indian youngsters in their play.” Dallin, therefore, “learned to ride like an Indian, to play Indian games, and to make and use bows and arrows after the Indian fashion. He developed a life-long interest in archery.”<sup>11</sup> Those fond memories may have moved the artist to sculpt works like *The Scout* with similar accouterments. Dallin recounted his admiration for Indians he met during his boyhood:

Those Indians whom I knew were not reservation Indians, by the way. They were a free people, proud of their heritage and their race, at liberty to come and go as they chose. They would always appear in the springtime near our settlement, and would set up their

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<sup>8</sup> John C. Ewers, “Cyrus E. Dallin: Master Sculptor of the Plains Indian,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 18, no.1 (Winter, 1968): 36.

<sup>9</sup> Patricia Janis Broder, *Bronzes of the American West*. (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1974), 93.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>11</sup> Dallin was a champion archer. A section of the Dallin Papers is dedicated to those athletic exploits with numerous newspaper clippings and details of his awards.

picturesque wigwams...They had a culture and refinement that was lacking in our settlement inside the adobe wall...it was always a treat to visit my little Indian companions in the homes of their parents. They had a civilization which was in many ways superior to ours.<sup>12</sup>

As will become clear later, Dallin's admiration for Indians comes through in the sculptural formations and careful placement of *The Scout* at Penn Valley Park.

Although he dabbled in sculpture as a boy, attention and opportunity finally found Dallin in his teenage years. In 1879 he started work sifting ore at his father's silver mine. While there the young artist used some soft white clay "to model, with improvised tools, two life-sized heads of Indians." The miners appreciated his talent and urged Dallin to exhibit the pieces at the Salt Lake City Fair. C.H. Blanchard, a Boston native who invested in area mines, and Jacob Lawrence, a wealthy investor from Salt Lake City, were impressed by the works and offered to fund Dallin's train fare to Boston in 1880 for further study to improve his craft.<sup>13</sup> While on board, "he met a delegation of six Crow Indians from the Yellowstone Valley who were on their way to Washington" for government business. Dallin had never met Plains Indians before, so the encounter expanded his purview; he "was greatly impressed by these tall, handsome, friendly" men.<sup>14</sup> "Their chief was a mammoth person over six feet tall," he continued. "All of them were big fellows and had the dignity of a Caesar. They were beautifully dressed, the finest group of men I had ever seen."<sup>15</sup> This meeting may have motivated his later choice to sculpt heroically

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<sup>12</sup> Long, 565; Broder, 93. Dallin continued, "For instance, I never saw an Indian child give corporal punishment. I never heard an Indian child shrill and impudent to its parents. Respect for their elders was inbred in the young Indians; and when a rebuke was administered, it was done in a quiet, instructive way." In another instance, Dallin wrote about the American Indian as "a human being, fundamentally like myself, subject to the same passions." See "Artistic Work of Sculptor Dallin Inspired by His Mother," 1907 newspaper clipping, Dallin Papers, Reel 184. The image of the Native struck an emotional chord in the artist.

<sup>13</sup> Ewers, 36.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>15</sup> Mae Huntington, "Dallin with the Indians," *Springfield Herald*, Mar 31, 1938, Dallin Papers. Allusions to Greco-Roman greats were common ways that artists theorized Indians at this time. The Indian painter

proportioned depictions of Plains Indians on horseback like *The Scout*. Natives certainly aroused his artistic sensibilities, as he believed them to be “esthetically the superior to the average white man.”<sup>16</sup>

With these experiences at the forefront of his mind, Dallin arrived in Boston and started work in the studio of Truman Howe Bartlett (1835-1922), noted sculptor of the *Horace Wells Monument* and father of sculptor Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865-1922).<sup>17</sup> Briefly in 1881 Dallin apprenticed for artist and poet Sidney H. Morse (1832-1903) in Quincy, Massachusetts. After acquiring his own Boston studio in Pemberton Square by 1883, Dallin won a prize for his design of an equestrian monument of Paul Revere in 1884. Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907) wrote an encouraging, albeit provisional, letter to the twenty-three year old Dallin regarding the project:

I think the horse is very good and strong and certainly if carried out as shown would be a work not to be ashamed of. The rider I must frankly say I do not like and I think you might do better. There is so much that is good in the horse and it shows so clearly that you have a good sculptor’s conception of form that I think with time and no worry you might make a credible figure to say the least.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps the advice of Saint-Gaudens compelled Dallin to travel overseas in 1888 and continue honing his trade in the Parisian atelier of Henri Michel Chapu (1833-1891) at the Académie

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George de Forest Brush (1855-1941), an American artist who painted highly classicized Natives in the Salon style and likely knew Dallin, is quoted saying, “There are more superb and symmetrical men among them than I have ever seen elsewhere, their beardless faces reminding one always of the antique.” See Diane Dillon, “Indians and ‘Indianicity’ at the 1893 World’s Fair,” in *George de Forest Brush: The Indian Paintings*, 101–29 (Burlington, VT: National Gallery of Art and Lund Humphries, 2008), 121. Yet such allusions are rare in Dallin’s written accounts.

<sup>16</sup> “New Dallin Statue Will Show the Indian Scout,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Mar 17, 1914, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>17</sup> Between 1880 and 1884, “Dallin also worked in a terra cotta factory and modeled heads for reproduction in wax for use in department store window displays.” See Ewers, 37. He likely learned about the lost wax casting method through Bartlett. See Kent Ahrens, “Cyrus E. Dallin: His Small Bronzes and Plasters,” in *Cyrus E. Dallin: His Small Bronzes and Plasters*, 25-103 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 26.

<sup>18</sup> Augustus Saint-Gaudens to Cyrus Dallin, Jan 12, 1887, Dallin Papers, Reel 141. The Paul Reverse commission was a long-term fiasco, details of which can be found in full within the Dallin Papers. Dallin finally saw the work completed and placed in the Boston Common in 1940—by that time, he was elderly.



Julian. By 1889 Dallin gained admission to the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts but declined the acceptance. Instead he started work on a monumental equestrian statue of French general Marquis de Lafayette entitled *Lafayette* at the behest of Dr. Thomas H. Evens, an American dentist living and working in Paris. The bronze was placed “at the entrance of the American industrial department” at the 1889 Exposition Universelle.<sup>19</sup> Dallin was building a robust résumé of equestrians that prepared him to perfect the subject in his Indian variants of the coming decades as demonstrated in *The Scout*.

Following this commission, Dallin turned his attention to Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show at the Bois de Boulogne, which he attended alongside the famed realist painter Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899). Together they frequented the Indian camp over the “six or seven months” of its duration, “where the sight of handsome Sioux horsemen rekindled his boyhood interest in Indians” and, in 1890, inspired him to design *The Signal of Peace*. It was the first installment in a quartet of mounted Indian statues that cemented his celebrity in the American art world and led to Kansas City’s determination to acquire *The Scout*—the follow-up to his initial group of four.<sup>20</sup> From this point forward, sketches of various Buffalo Bill Indians served as patterns from which Dallin based his Indian renderings. *The Signal of Peace* earned honorable mention at the Paris

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<sup>19</sup> William Howe Downes, “Cyrus E. Dallin, Sculptor,” *Brush and Pencil* 5, no. 1 (1899): 10.

<sup>20</sup> Downes, 10; Ewers, 38. Dallin explained his inspiration for the statue stemmed from an experience as a boy witnessing an interaction between whites and Natives: “The origin of that statue goes back to my boyhood, to a day when I witnessed a peace pow-wow between the Indian chiefs and the United States Army officers. I shall never forget those splendid looking Indians arrayed in their gorgeous head-dress, riding up on their ponies to the army camp where the pow-wow was to be held. The Indians dismounted, gravely saluted the officers, and followed them into one of the tents. The adult spectators were obliged to stay at a distance. But we small boys sneaked out behind the tent and edged forward on our stomachs until we could witness that pow-wow from under the open tent-flap.” He continued, “The pipe of peace was passed; and before it was smoked, it was pointed to the north, south, east, and west, the boundaries of the firmament, then to Mother Earth, the source of all life, then to the Great Spirit above, whither all life goes. This was done with a dignity and grace that it is impossible to describe. The chiefs spoke then, rising from their places and accompanying their words with impressive, easy gestures; and finer orators than the Indian chiefs never lived. Although we boys could not help understanding what the chiefs were driving at.”

Salon of 1890—an exceptional feat for an American artist at this time—and later received the first class medal at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago.<sup>21</sup> A contemporary critic noted the “reserve power and fine plastic sense manifested in” the work, claiming *The Signal of Peace* “undoubtedly marked the ripening of the sculptor’s talent and the opening of a distinct period of original productiveness.”<sup>22</sup> After this great success, Dallin returned to the United States for six years, taking a hiatus from Indian representations. In 1896 he ventured back to Paris for more training.<sup>23</sup> Dallin landed in the studio of Jean Damp (1854-1945), an art nouveau sculptor, medalist, and jeweler active in the Symbolist Movement who would have helped Dallin improve his modeling of surfaces to achieve greater organic naturalism.<sup>24</sup>

Progress is noticeable in the subsequent three Indian equestrians of his quartet and *The Scout* (**fig. 7**). Looking closer at *The Scout*, the attention paid to contrasting surface textures and an assemblage of subtle decorative patterns speaks to Chapu’s experimental approaches to the Greco-Roman tradition as well as Damp’s decorative interventions. Dallin portrayed the legs of the Native as the smoothest portions of the entire piece. They contrast strongly with the ruddiness and indentation present on the horse’s underbelly and the taught musculature on its limbs. Geometric designs abound: the moccasins, knife pouch, arrow satchel, belt and feather atop the head contain similar vertical lines, forming consistent rectilinear traces that break up the organic uniformity of the composition as a whole. Furthermore, the figure wears three necklaces.

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<sup>21</sup> Ewers, 38.

<sup>22</sup> Downes, 10-11.

<sup>23</sup> In 1903 he wrote of the decision to return to Europe because “after returning to America, away from the active art life of France, his work becomes mediocre and timid.” See Cyrus Dallin, “American Sculpture: Its Present Aspects and Tendencies,” *Brush and Pencil* 11, no. 6 (1903): 424.

<sup>24</sup> William Howe Downes applauded Dallin for returning to “schooling” at the age of thirty-five. “Let us pause a moment at this point to emphasize the merit of this voluntary return to tutelage and the severe, monotonous toil of the classroom...how many professional men of thirty-five are at the same time modest enough and brave enough to turn their backs on a career which is apparently just opening up a pleasing pecuniary perspective, for the purpose of disciplining their capacities and polishing their talent on the educational grindstone?” See Downes, 16.

Starting from mid-chest and moving to the neck—the first is unbroken and smooth, the second is configured into inch-long segments and the third is comprised of beads. Only an intimacy with the statue as experienced by a viewer like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle could have afforded an appreciation of these formal particulars and consciously arranged designs, highlights of its beauty. Taking into account Dallin’s fond reference to close observations of Native garb, the minute details present on *The Scout* are to be expected. Dallin recounted:

Artistically, I feel that to the Indian I owe my first glimpse into the great world of art. It was his beautifully decorated costumes, and his noble bearing that first awakened my imagination to the charm of the picturesque. I shall never forget with what joy as a boy I used to follow the Indians about and study with eager curiosity every detail of their dress.<sup>25</sup>

It follows, then, that a “beautifully decorated” Native equestrian like *The Scout* was deserving of its “picturesque” surroundings at Penn Valley Park, as I will discuss soon.

In 1899 Dallin completed *The Medicine Man*, his second Native equestrian.<sup>26</sup> Shown at the Paris Salon that year, the sculpture won a silver medal at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900. That same year marked the completion of Dallin’s Parisian sojourns. After returning to the United States, he continued labors on the Indian quartet. Dallin finished *The Protest*, the penultimate work of the set, in 1903. It was awarded a gold medal at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis but, sadly, was completed in plaster and has been lost. Finally, Dallin realized *Appeal to the Great Spirit* in 1909 (**fig. 8**). The most critically renowned work of his vast oeuvre, it secured a gold medal at the Paris Salon of 1911 before the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston purchased it for display on their grounds where it can still be found today.<sup>27</sup> As I

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<sup>25</sup> Cyrus Dallin, “The Robbins Memorial Fountain,” Address by Dallin at unveiling of *Menotomy Indian Hunter*, June 25, 1913, Dallin Papers.

<sup>26</sup> Unlike Dallin’s *Paul Revere*, Augustus Saint-Gaudens “was most enthusiastic over” this statue. See Ahrens, 37.

<sup>27</sup> Wayne Craven makes an interesting assessment about its importance within a growing trend for equestrian statues. Referring to *Appeal to the Great Spirit*, he writes, “As it appeared within a year of the

will explain in more detail, Kansas City vied for this statue but was unable to secure the necessary funds in time, leading them to pursue *The Scout*—Dallin’s next rendition of an equestrian Indian following the increased celebrity garnered from producing his foursome.

Dallin spent the summer of 1914 fashioning a clay model for *The Scout*, which he then sent to the Gorham Bronze Foundry in Providence, Rhode Island for casting in the French sand method.<sup>28</sup> It was his first equestrian casted in the United States rather than in Paris. Gathered from his personal correspondence with Dallin, Kansas City historian Giles Carroll Mitchell shared a first-hand account of the story about how the artist derived his life model for *The Scout* from drawings completed at Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show in Paris.<sup>29</sup> The following excerpt is instructive:

The pride of the wild west show was the splendid group of nearly a hundred Indians. Some of them had fought in the Custer Massacre, and all of them belonged to western tribes. Among the Sioux were Luther Standing Bear, Sitting Bull, Kicking Bear, and the latter’s son Phillip. In particular, Mr. Dallin made drawings of Philip. That young and stalwart brave served as the model for *The Scout*. The handsome Philip wore his hair parted and braided on each side of his head, a custom peculiar to his tribe. That is the way he was modeled in the *Scout*. The careful study given by Mr. Dallin to all of the details was evidenced by the plaited rawhide bridle tied around the horse’s nose, the expressive lower lip of the horse, and the moccasined feet of the Indian.<sup>30</sup>

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unveiling of Saint-Gaudens’ “Sherman” in Central Park, it might be said that in 1907-1908 the equestrian statue in American sculpture reached its zenith.” See Wayne Craven, *Sculpture in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968), 530.

<sup>28</sup> “Cyrus Dallin’s Statue, ‘The Scout’, Completed,” *Boston Post*, Aug, 1914, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>29</sup> There is a chance Dallin was inspired by their later performance at The Columbian Exposition in 1893. Seventy-six Sioux were present, some of them having “accompanied Cody on his European tours between 1887 and 1892.” See Dillon, 115. Since Dallin was present at both locations, it stands to reason that he could have met Philip in Chicago as well, although there is no record of that occurrence.

<sup>30</sup> Giles Carroll Mitchell, *There is No Limit: Architecture and Sculpture in Kansas City* (Kansas City: Brown-White Company, 1934), 47-48. In the preface of the book, Mitchell acknowledges Cyrus E. Dallin for his “generous assistance given me during the preparation of this book,” meaning they shared correspondence. See Mitchell, viii. He also thanks Chief Standing Bear for his assistance. In a footnote to *The Scout* narrative, he writes that Kicking Bear, the father of the model for the statue, “was an Oglala Sioux. His tribal name was Mato Wanahtaka, which literally translated means Bear Kicks. However, under the government census he was listed as Kicking Bear and so generally known.”

Dallin grounded his process in “the Greek spirit” as he described in his 1903 essay for *Brush and Pencil* entitled “American Sculpture: Its Present Aspects and Tendencies.” By looking directly at nature—in this case a real-life Indian model—“for the essentials,” Dallin could choose “dominant characteristics” deliberately and combine and arrange them to “express the larger, deeper, and more abiding truths.” Indeed, “only what is eternal and ever-recurring becomes the legitimate material for the sculptor’s art.”<sup>31</sup> He would have held his *Scout* to this high standard.

In 1918 the *Boston Massachusetts Transcript* published a story validating Dallin’s efforts to accurately portray a Lakota. The piece is called “Sitting Bull’s Son and Other Indians Inspect Dallin’s Statue in Penn Valley Park, Kansas City.”<sup>32</sup> Among the tribal members present at this gathering were:

Chief Little Bull, the son of Sitting Bull: the others were Sitting Holy, Chase in the Morning, and Young Skunk. There were also Joe R. Sack, an interpreter; M.H. Overleese, a graduate of William Jewell College, and a direct descendant of Chief Journeycake; the famous Delaware Jack Fretz, ‘second champion bronco buster of the world’; and Miss Onie Osborne.

Overall, the Natives found Dallin’s rendition to be quite truthful. They all agreed that “only a Sioux wears his hair parted and braided on each side of the head” as seen in *The Scout*. Chief Little Bull said the most, claiming that the countenance resembled

Chief Hollow Horn Bear, the Sioux whose face is depicted on the Indian nickel. He was head chief at Rosebud [Reservation], and died a few years ago [in 1913]...Then a bright and shiny buffalo nickel was produced, and, sure enough, the resemblance was striking. There was something else as well. Little Chief Bull himself in profile was seen to bear no little resemblance to the bronze figure.

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<sup>31</sup> Cyrus Dallin, “American Sculpture,” 420-421.

<sup>32</sup> One local account predates this national one. See “Sioux Indians at Penn Valley Park Yesterday Recognized the Bronze Horseman as one of their Tribe,” *Kansas City Star*, Aug 31, 1916, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library. This version details the party responsible for sending the troupe of Natives to view *The Scout*. “Omer K. Benedict, who is secretary of the Bartles Western Exhibition, ‘The Roundup,’ to be given at Federal League Park” sent “some of his Indians and cowboys” to Penn Valley Park.

On the topic of Dallin's ability to model facial likenesses, the art critic William Howe Downes discussed Dallin's 1899 equestrian statuette *Don Quixote* in an article appearing in an edition of *Brush and Pencil* from the same year. In that work, the artist formulated an "exceedingly expressive" face. Downes resumed:

The eyes are set deep in their sockets, the nose is aquiline, the cheekbones are salient, the form of the jaw and the pointed beard accentuate the idea of length and emaciation. The eyebrows almost meet in a single arch, but the vertical wrinkles between them, and the piercing, sustained, and dreamy gaze of the sad eyes well bear out the conception of a solemn, cranky, and romantic old gentleman, somewhat out of date, but eminently imposing, dignified, and even lovable.

Based on this evaluation in 1899, it seems that Dallin learned how to detail faces correctly during his second Parisian sojourn. Downes claims "The 'Don Quixote' is the artist's best work up to the present time."<sup>33</sup> It stands to reason that Dallin would have continued detailing faces attentively in *The Scout*. Thus, the approval of Native critics was to be expected.

The statue received high marks from the Natives as a whole, but one aspect of the sculpture drew criticism:

The title of the statue implies the warrior. But "The Scout" is not a warrior; he is a huntsman. He sits drooping on his horse, looking for game, the arrow ready in his bow. That was the time when there was plenty of Buffaloes, chief Little Bull said. The accouterments were those of a half-century ago, and the last big game hunting was at least thirty years ago. If the scout were awaiting the enemy, he would be sitting upright on his horse strained and tense, not easy and confident.<sup>34</sup>

This account suggests that Dallin may have misunderstood the proper iconography for an Indian scout. Yet this possible mistake may not have mattered to the artist, as he was more concerned with the allegorical strength of *The Scout*. Mitchell wrote:

In modeling the statue, many years later, Mr. Dallin wrote the writer that he had in mind the thought of connecting the present with the past, and to suggest the idea of how the Indian would have felt, could he in his imagination perceive of how his beloved country

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<sup>33</sup> Downes, 16-17.

<sup>34</sup> "The Scout is a Sioux, Sitting Bull's Son and Other Indians Inspect Dallin's Statue in Penn Valley Park, Kansas City," *Boston Massachusetts Transcript*, Sep 9, 1918, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

would look after the white man had had his will. Accordingly, he designed the Scout, his hand shading his eyes, peering into the future.<sup>35</sup>

A statue such as this one was a perfect ideological fit for placement on a promontory at Penn Valley Park: *The Scout* appears pensive and contemplative as he looks outward at his surroundings.

Besides the real-life Indian model for *The Scout*, Dallin likely formulated its iconography based on his observations of a fellow artist's creation. He probably mused of the work while exhibiting *The Signal of Peace*, his first famous Indian statue, at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Alexander Phimister Proctor (1860-1950) exhibited a plaster sculpture called *Indian Scout* near the lagoon at the Fair. Its form must have intrigued Dallin, as his later edition of the motif borrows heavily from Proctor's prototype.<sup>36</sup> Proctor possibly drew inspiration from a motif of the equestrian Plains Indian shading his eyes and looking ahead as depicted on a poster available at the Fair entitled "An American," which advertised Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show (**fig. 9**).<sup>37</sup> With that said, Dallin did not copy Proctor. Instead he tilted the composition ninety degrees to lend it more balance and a forward pointing gaze and casted it in bronze for a smoother finish. Taken together, Proctor's and Dallin's statues at the Columbian Exposition were some of the first attempts at representing the equestrian Indian in sculpture or the Indian in

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<sup>35</sup> Mitchell, 48.

<sup>36</sup> Rosa Bonheur likely took cues from Proctor when painting *Rocky Bear and Chief Red Shirt* (1889), an image with one Native on horseback in the foreground surveying a landscape while shading his eyes from the sunlight. Since they were acquaintances, Dallin likely could have borrowed this motif from Bonheur for *The Scout*. Together they met and observed Lakota performers in the Paris stop of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show in 1889.

<sup>37</sup> A. Hoen & Co. based out of Baltimore printed this particular poster. A copy is available for view at The Buffalo Bill Center of the West. Supposedly, the scout figure "appeared on Wild West Show posters beginning in 1885." In 1893 the caption "An American" was inserted into the image. See Paul Scolari, *Indian Warriors and Pioneer Mothers: American Identity and the Closing of the Frontier in Public Monuments, 1890-1930* (PhD diss., The University of Pittsburgh, 2005), 82-83.

sculpture for that matter.<sup>38</sup> By the time Dallin designed *The Scout* in 1914, “romantic Indian naturalism in American sculpture” had reached its peak, a process that began in earnest at the 1893 World’s Fair.<sup>39</sup>

The sculptor and art critic Lorado Taft (1860-1936) said, “It was the Columbian Exposition which brought Mr. Proctor into prominence...How well he executed the important decorations entrusted to him will be long remembered.” Yet Taft considered Dallin the superior sculptor of the Indian motif. Of Dallin’s impressive modeling in his Indian statues, Taft wrote, “merely intent upon expressing his thought in the simplest and most straightforward manner, he omits some portion of that delightful and distracting elaboration which distinguishes” the work of Dallin’s rivals. He continued, “We have no one who does these ‘Wild West’ subjects with the impressive gravity which Mr. Dallin puts into them,” referring to his “striking and distinctive” equestrian Indians. Still Taft praised Dallin even further:

His possible rivals are few...Mr. Proctor threatens to become, like [Hermon Atkins] MacNeil, almost too clever to be convincingly savage. By reason of excessive refinement of modeling, their works, while undeniably beautiful sculpture, have lost something of the sturdy, solid virtues of the aboriginal man...Mr. Dallin knows the horse and knows the Indian, he also knows how to model.<sup>40</sup>

In his 1968 epic *Sculpture in America*, Wayne Craven sustained Taft’s tactic of dissecting the oeuvres of Dallin and Proctor in concert. He keenly pointed out how prior to these artists, “the equestrian statue had previously been limited to portraits of military leaders”—a tradition that

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<sup>38</sup> Craven suggests a list of Indian statues that “had appeared only a few times in American sculpture.” See Craven, 516.

<sup>39</sup> Cornelius Vermeule, *Numismatic Art in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 134. Quoted in Rell G. Francis, *Cyrus E. Dallin: Let Justice Be Done* (Springville, Utah: Springville Museum of Art, 1976), 54. Here Vermeule is discussing the dominant presence of Indians as motifs in medals, but the assessment can be applied to the usage of the Indian motif as an icon in other mediums including monumental sculpture. Coincidentally, Dallin designed relief medals and often incorporated Indian likenesses in those works.

<sup>40</sup> Lorado Taft, *The History of American Sculpture* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), 477, 496-499.



carried through the Gilded Age as evidenced by Henry Merwin Shrady's *Washington at Valley Forge* in Kansas City, itself a replica installed in 1925.<sup>41</sup> However, like Taft, Craven went on to explain how Dallin's Indian equestrians stood out as archetypes in the sculptural field of Indian representation: "Dallin carried the Indian theme to a truly monumental level of artistry. No one had accomplished that before; other attempts at large-scale Indian subjects had suffered from too great a reliance on picturesqueness."<sup>42</sup> He continued by praising Dallin's modeling "with a simple and strong naturalism and without the clever, lively surface treatment of the French school."<sup>43</sup> Western art expert Patricia Janis Broder reverberated these artistic commendations of Dallin in 1974, saying, "The simplicity of his sculptural style with its emphasis on the essentials rather than the decorative gives Dallin's statues a special appeal to the aesthetic taste of the modern world."<sup>44</sup> It is safe to deduce that Dallin's version of the scout motif stands above that of his contemporary due to the evidence it shares about the technical abilities of its sculptor.<sup>45</sup>

A work as refined as *The Scout* would have been an attractive candidate for public park adornment in any city. This point returns me to the anecdotes from Doyle and the rector of Grace and Holy Trinity Church. Most important to my study is the fact that advocates for *The Scout*, like these men and others, praised Kansas City for its cohesive coordination of urban spaces with sprawling nature parks that incorporated monumental statuary as integral design elements. In this way, the accounts draw a firm parallel between *The Scout* and the burgeoning City Beautiful

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<sup>41</sup> The original dates to 1901.

<sup>42</sup> Craven, 529.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 529.

<sup>44</sup> Broder, 106.

<sup>45</sup> One more piece of evidence substantiates the ubiquity of critical assessments claiming Dallin is a better sculptor than Proctor. Proctor exhibited his *Cheyenne* posthumously at the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in 1915. The critic Eugene Neuhaus considered it "lacking in repose" and "wild and ill mannered" in contrast to other sculptures on display. Ostensibly, Neuhaus was thinking of *The Scout*, among other works, when making that judgment. Quoted in Peter H. Hassrick, *The Best of Proctor's West: An In-Depth Study of Eleven of Proctor's Bronzes* (Cody, Wyoming: Buffalo Bill Center of the West, 2017), 60.

movement—a Gilded Age civic improvement phenomenon born from the philosophies of the famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) and implemented in Kansas City by one of his most prominent students, George Kessler (1862-1923).<sup>46</sup> Fluidly imbedding natural spaces into a web of brick-and-mortar districts was the hallmark of Olmsted’s style of landscape architecture that Kessler adapted and modified for Kansas City—the magnum opus of his career.<sup>47</sup> Doyle specified:

It is wonderfully equipped with parks which are the real glory of the city, so that you drive for miles among really beautiful country without leaving the city bounds. The city possesses one supremely fine work of art erected upon a bluff in one of the parks. It is a bronze of a mounted Indian scout, life-size, leaning forward with his hand shading his eyes as he looks across the plain below.<sup>48</sup>

Agreeing with the Englishman, the rector stated, “Not far from where I am speaking, in beautiful Penn Valley Park, stands Cyrus Dallin’s statue, ‘The Scout’.” He believed it was a centerpiece to the city, a locale that “has been built a city beautiful. If not in fact, it has potentially the finest boulevard and park system in the world.”<sup>49</sup> It is clear from these descriptions that *The Scout* stood as a major symbol of civic identity for both tourists and residents of Kansas City. Many viewers saw it as an extension of nature, beautiful in its idyllic setting at Penn Valley Park (**fig. 10**). And the statue owed its symbolic efficacy to its symbiotic relationship with the surrounding environs. Kessler saw his plan fully implemented in time for the arrival of *The Scout* from Kansas City following its 1915 display at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco—the site of its unveiling to the American public, the place where the statue won a

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<sup>46</sup> Kessler’s “success in Kansas City was the gateway to nationwide recognition in the professions of landscape architecture and city planning.” See William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement in Kansas City* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1964), xvii. Prior to arriving in Kansas City, Kessler spent a few months assisting Olmsted with his design for Central Park in New York City.

<sup>47</sup> William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 212. Wilson writes, “City Beautiful adherents...often adopted Olmsted’s rhetoric and designs while rejecting some of his premises.” Wilson, 1989, 18.

<sup>48</sup> Arthur Conan Doyle, *Our Second American Adventure* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1924).

<sup>49</sup> “The Spirit.”

gold medal.<sup>50</sup> It made for a perfect crowning jewel to years of effort spent designing Penn Valley Park and its surroundings.

Despite the ready availability of critical evaluations in the Dallin Papers at the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art, published scholarship on *The Scout* has yet to situate the work in such relevant cultural and social contexts as the City Beautiful movement.<sup>51</sup> Rich implications can be found through analyzing this statue beyond its positioning within the artist's oeuvre, which constitutes the majority of scholarly attention paid to the work by art historians up to this point. One could argue that *The Scout* deserves more recognition, especially when considering Dallin's reference to it in 1917. He remarked, "This is the last of my equestrian Indians and technically I consider it my best."<sup>52</sup> This chapter and the subsequent one are my attempts to tell a fuller and more nuanced history of *The Scout*.

By pairing primary source accounts from local newspapers with the recorded intentions of local dignitaries who envisioned and carried out the City Beautiful movement for Kansas City, I will argue here that *The Scout* is an integral piece to this historical beautification program, primarily understood through the decorative and cosmetic role it played within its immediate environs at Penn Valley Park. Specifics about its placement in this park—centering on decisions about its height of display and direction it faces—frequently appear in discussions about *The*

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<sup>50</sup> Wilson, 1964, 124. He writes, "By 1915 the Kansas City park and boulevard system had assumed the shape it would show, with minor additions, for half a century."

<sup>51</sup> For the only other scholarship to reference the Dallin Papers in a brief consideration of *The Scout*, see Ahrens, 25-103. The sole monograph on Dallin from 1976 likely utilizes material about *The Scout* borrowed from the Dallin family that would eventually be lent to the Smithsonian for scanning to microfilm. See Francis, 54-55.

<sup>52</sup> Ahrens, 48. Ahrens agrees with Dallin in saying, "the Scout is handsomely modeled and proportioned, with a remarkable sense of vitality." Elsewhere Stella G.S Perry and A. Sterling Calder summarized Dallin by writing "this Scout is to be the last of his long series of Indian studies, and he believes it to be the best of them all." See Stella G.S Perry and A. Sterling Calder, *The Sculpture and Mural Decorations of the Exposition: A Pictorial Survey of the Art of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (San Francisco: Paul Elder & Company, 1915).

*Scout* in the historical record. Numerous writers and members of the public, consisting of dignitaries and the masses alike, unambiguously endowed the statue with symbolic capital. A thorough consideration of its metaphorical implications as envisaged by citizens of Kansas City will hopefully prove that *The Scout* and the plentiful catalogue of Indian statues crafted by Dallin deserve a broader examination that couches the artist's personal assessments and viewpoints into a trajectory reaching outward from this biographical platform and toward the reception of his monumental works in the public domain. There they remain on view for the populace, accruing new meanings as decades pass.

In tandem with theories of beauty shared by Dallin, a consideration of the statue in this twenty-year interval by the media, Kansas City community and visitors, and notable civic figures paints a considerably sharper image of *The Scout*, a work of public art with more at stake than most spectators realize today. *The Scout* and all of Dallin's monuments to Indigenous peoples need to be read as worthwhile case studies for discussing the Indian body as a contested and ambiguous space of public unity, fracture and dialogue worthy of standing amongst parallel conversations currently happening in interdisciplinary scholarship. For the remainder of this chapter, I will share the saga of Kansas City's acquisition of *The Scout* and then argue that City Beautiful values motivated its procurement. Audience response to the work undeniably positioned the monument at the fore of decorative green space planning efforts. Their reactions to the statue agree with art historian Marianne Doezema's requirements for deeming a public monument effective. She wrote, "The success of a public monument is measured by its ability to communicate, to elicit a response...its capacity to generate human reaction."<sup>53</sup> Without a doubt,

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<sup>53</sup> Marianne Doezema, "The Public Monument in Tradition and Transition," in *The Public Monument and Its Audience*, 9-21 (Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1977) 9. She also writes, "The public monument has a responsibility apart from its qualities as a work of art created for the public...On the other hand, the monument demands, on the part of the public, the effort to understand the artist's mode of

Kansas Citians understood the beautifying role *The Scout* played in their city and, therefore, regarded it as a signifier of civic identity.

### How *The Scout* Arrived in Kansas City

Ironically, *The Scout* was the result of a second attempt at acquiring a Dallin Indian bronze. In November of 1912, Kansas City battled with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts to acquire *Appeal to the Great Spirit*. Kansas Citian Margaret Coburn—wife of J.M. Coburn, the man who managed the Hansford Land and Cattle Company—spearheaded the campaign to obtain the statue. At this time, it was on temporary display outside the MFA. Miss Coburn visited Boston that summer and took notice of the statue. Upon her return home to Kansas City, she “wrote to a local newspaper and made the first contribution toward buying the sculptor’s work.”<sup>54</sup> Architects and artists, with the help of the Metropolitan Improvement League, lead the Boston operation.<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, Kansas City’s effort fell through after Mrs. P.C. Brooks of Boston secured the Native equestrian for the museum with a large donated sum that covered the remainder leftover from amounts already raised by subscription, meeting Dallin’s full \$12,000 asking price. It was inopportune for Kansas City, since Dallin had lobbied for his statue’s placement at Union Station. “Here, looking down upon a great Western railroad terminal,” he remarked, “it would face that force of civilization, which, more than any other, has contributed to a people’s ‘lost cause,’ and made the nearby plains too restricted for the Indians’

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expression.” Public reception of *The Scout* satisfies both accounts. It also satisfies her assessment of Gilded Age American values regarding public art; she argues that “An inherent American prejudice” existed “against that which is frivolous and merely entertaining.” See Doezema, 14. In other words, pragmatic morality guided art commissions at this time.

<sup>54</sup> “Kansas City Wants Statue,” Source Unknown, Dallin Papers, Reel 181.

<sup>55</sup> Ahrens, 45.

requirements.”<sup>56</sup> Fortunately, *The Scout* effectively communicated this allegory, which the next chapter of this thesis elucidates.

Following the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915, Kansas City once again sought after a Dallin masterpiece. Admiration published in the local newspaper from John E. D. Trask, chief of the fine arts department at the Exposition, surely influenced Kansas City’s desire for the statue. Trask wrote to Dallin, declaring *The Scout* “one of the most talked of pieces at the exposition.”<sup>57</sup> Even Lorado Taft advised Kansas City to secure *The Scout*.<sup>58</sup> This time, though, Kansas City had to compete with Franklin Steele, Jr., “a Washington [D.C.] authority on sculpture,” and the Smithsonian, that wanted *The Scout* for display between the New National Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian buildings along the Mall. Probably due to his increased notoriety after *Appeal to the Great Spirit*, Dallin now requested \$15,000 for his latest Indian bronze—a \$3,000 rate hike. Concerning this amount, one source read, “For a while the outlook was favorable—a private citizen was said to be negotiating for its purchase and presentation to the city, but that was too good to be true. The man got out of the idea and the deal fell through.”<sup>59</sup>

In spite of this hurdle, Kansas City pushed ahead. And, once more, the Coburns were front and center in the fray. In 1915 they housed Dallin during a visit to the city on his way back home from San Francisco. It was probably then that the couple obtained Dallin’s plaster study of the statue—most likely as a promotional incentive on behalf of the artist—and later in 1917

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<sup>56</sup> “Indian statue proposed for Union Station Plaza,” Nov, 1912, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive.

<sup>57</sup> “Another Statue Offer, Cyrus Dallin Would Show Kansas City ‘The Scout’,” *The Kansas City Star*, Nov 8, 1915, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>58</sup> “Dallin’s Statue a Rare Offer,” Source Unknown, Dallin Papers, Reel 182. Taft’s sister-in-law, Jessie Bartlett, wrote a letter to *The Kansas City Star* on behalf of Taft.

<sup>59</sup> “The Scout Slipping Away: Washington Is Now after the Famous Indian Statues,” *The Kansas City Times*, January 31, 1917.

placed it on public view in a downtown window “to draw attention to the campaign” for raising the necessary funds to keep *The Scout* in Kansas City.<sup>60</sup>

Seventeen civic organizations met at the City Club to establish an official plan for funding *The Scout* on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1917. C.C. Craver, “chairman of the city beautification committee of” the Chamber of Commerce, announced that he would handle “the clerical work of taking care of subscriptions” that included large sums from local companies as well as tiny amounts given by individuals, a record of which can be found in editions of the *Kansas City Star* and *Kansas City Times* newspapers from that month and later.<sup>61</sup> The detailed lists of donors to the cause effectively rejects the myth still prevalent today that “the kids of Kansas City” or some form of fundraising campaign consistent solely of pennies and nickels from school children purchased the statue.<sup>62</sup> Kirk Savage best characterizes the origin of such myths as part of greater efforts by public officials to legitimize their projects “by manufacturing popular enthusiasm (and money).” Savage concludes, “Sponsors usually worked hard to sustain the fiction that they were merely agents of a more universal collective whose shared memory the project embodied.” Such aims, he argues, instituted “the importance of ‘the popular subscription,’ in which rich and poor,

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<sup>60</sup> “Plan for the ‘Scout’ Fund, Civic Organizations Pledge Aid in Keeping Statue Here,” *Kansas City Times*, Feb 8, 1917, Dallin Papers, Reel 182. To advertise the statue, a plaster cast of *The Scout* was on exhibit at The Fine Arts Institute, 1020 McGee Street, in Kansas City as early as December 1915. D. J. Haff to General Cusil Lechtman, December 11, 1915, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, Reel PA78. The model was also possibly at area high schools and public libraries.

<sup>61</sup> “Plan for the ‘Scout’ Fund.” At this date, the fund is at \$3,027.50. A slightly later account that details an increase in the fundraising amount can be found in “‘The Scout’ Fund \$5,873.79,” *Kansas City Star*, Feb 25, 1917. Names of individuals and corporations are listed as donors. For instance, J.C. Nichols Company is listed. They were active in City Beautiful efforts, deeding “several parcels of land to the city for what would become” a major parkway. See Patrick Alley and Dona Boley, *Kansas City’s Parks and Boulevards* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 125.

<sup>62</sup> Another great example of such a list can be found in *Kansas City Star*, March 11, 1917. Participation by children seemed more of an ideological hope. In 1917 W.T. Grant, who headed the civic department of the Chamber of Commerce, wrote, “Eleven men have subscribed \$250 each without solicitation...But it is especially fitting the work should be purchased by small popular subscriptions. Boys and girls, and especially the Boy Scouts, will find much inspiration if they can say they helped Kansas City obtain the statue.” See “Speed up ‘The Scout’ Workers,” *Kansas City Times*, Feb 3, 1917, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

young and old, were canvassed alike for their financial contributions” regardless of the legitimacy of said subscriptions as was the case with *The Scout*.<sup>63</sup>

Among the donors was Mrs. A. R. Meyer, widow of affluent refinery owner Augustus R. Meyer (1851-1905). He was the leading assistant to Kessler as the first president of the Commission of Parks, a post he held from 1892 until his death.<sup>64</sup> Delbert J. Haff (1859-1943) presided over the meeting. He was the preeminent lawyer in Kansas City at this time as well as a confidant of Kessler as the current chairman of the park and boulevard committee and organizer of the Municipal Improvement Association.<sup>65</sup> In essence, he took over Meyer’s role as the right hand man to Kessler. He was also a fervent sponsor for *The Scout* who was among the first to champion the statue, having admired “its beauty and value” while still in storage in San Francisco following the 1915 Exposition.<sup>66</sup> Haff said, “If this statue goes out of town, it will be a disgrace to Kansas City.”<sup>67</sup> Likely due to Haff’s leadership, Kansas City made a strong push

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<sup>63</sup> Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 6. Savage continues, “Sponsors had to publicize their enterprise from beginning to end; to marshal the resources and support needed to summon the symbolic and financial participation of a ‘public’ that the monument would represent. The more widely the monument campaign appealed, the more enthusiasm it seemed to generate.”

<sup>64</sup> Wilson discusses how “City Beautiful advocates were mostly male and member of the urban middle class and upper middle class. They were often the owners or managers of businesses large by community standards, for example, newspaper editors, managers of manufacturing plants, or owners of sizable retail establishments. There was some representation from smaller businesses and, rarely, skilled labor. Other prominent City Beautiful supporters included professional people: attorneys, bankers, physicians, and real estate specialists and investors. These elites worked to achieve citywide, unifying planning schemes. They articulated the purposes of planning in intensive publicity campaigns conducted through boards of trade, chambers of commerce, or various ad hoc groups.” See Wilson, 1989, 75. All of these types of actors played roles in acquiring and popularizing *The Scout*.

<sup>65</sup> Haff was also named president of the board of parks and recreation in 1909.

<sup>66</sup> Supposedly, Haff “took the matter up with” Dallin regarding “stopping the statue in Kansas City for exhibition, “where funds could be raised for its purchase to be erected in one of the city parks.” See “The Scout in Penn Valley Park-Cyrus Dallin-Sculptor,” April 5, 1928, park board minutes, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive.

<sup>67</sup> “Speed up.”



through public contributions in the forthcoming months to eke out a victory and retain *The Scout*.<sup>68</sup>

### *The Scout and the City Beautiful*

All of these aforementioned actions to secure *The Scout* for Kansas City were guided by City Beautiful principles and on-the-ground actors who championed those values. Olmsted was directly responsible for ushering in the City Beautiful epoch, and it was in Kansas City during the 1890s and the early decades of the twentieth century where Kessler strategically and structurally modified his teacher's tenets to formulate his own brand of the movement—this type became “a model for other communities as the City Beautiful movement spread across the nation, giving shapeless and ugly cities beauty and unity.”<sup>69</sup> In truth, “This unique partnership between Kessler and the parks department gave the parks and boulevard system a unique uniformity throughout the whole city that did not exist anywhere else in the country.”<sup>70</sup> Prior to the 1964 publication of William H. Wilson's *The City Beautiful Movement in Kansas City* and his second, broader study from 1989 entitled *The City Beautiful Movement*—still the exemplar analysis of its field—“critics of civic design” generally assumed “that the first widespread attempts of United States cities at rational planning” originated in the neoclassical aesthetics demonstrated at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, where the stately and broad boulevard system

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<sup>68</sup> To some the statue represented “the pennies of the poor and the dollars of the rich.” See “Sad State of the Scout,” *Kansas City Star*, April 19, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>69</sup> Alley and Boley, 9. The development of Kansas City's park and boulevard system was effectively completed a few years before *The Scout* arrived in town. In 1910 Kessler wrote to the park board: “We are closing an era, The original plan [has been] realized in general and in detail to a degree perhaps without precedence in public works...the finish is assured.” Quoted in Jane Mobley and Nancy Whitnell Harris, *A City Within a Park: One Hundred Years of Parks and Boulevards in Kansas City, Missouri* (Kansas City, MO: The Lowell Press, 1991), 21.

<sup>70</sup> Alley and Boley, 121.

envisioned by Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann for Paris made its American debut.<sup>71</sup> But as Wilson explicated, “The Fair closed in 1893, but the City Beautiful movement was not named until 1899 and did not mature until 1902 and after,” so attributing the starting date to 1893 is anachronistic.<sup>72</sup> A more accurate origin for the movement lies in the general philosophies proffered by Olmsted. He promoted a more asymmetrical, undulating composition of parks within communities that had its antecedents in the pastoral gardens of Romantic England and other European countries.<sup>73</sup> Wilson proved that Olmsted and the national enthusiasm for municipal improvements, rather than the grandeur of Greece and Rome, were the progenitors for the eventual “naturalistic park development” of Kansas City.<sup>74</sup> Olmsted even “consented to

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<sup>71</sup> Wilson, 1964, xiii.

<sup>72</sup> Wilson, 1989, 53. He explains more about lagging features that did not appear until 1902 due to the economic depression of 1893 not improving until the late 1890s. See Wilson, 1989, 64-65.

<sup>73</sup> Olmsted visited England and France in 1859 to gather inspiration from their landscape designs for his current project, New York City’s Central Park. Wilson discusses the cosmopolitan conflagration of classicism and naturalism and how that eclectic mixture inspired Olmsted. See Wilson, 1989, 24-25.

<sup>74</sup> Wilson, 1989, 70; Wilson, 1964, xiv. Wilson also cites a period critic, Thomas Adams, who said, “It is usual to assume that modern city planning in the United States had its real beginning in the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893...But the Fair represented the culmination of a period of over twenty years’ activity in the sanitary and aesthetic improvement of cities, rather than the beginning of a new period of effort.” In other words, the City Beautiful movement originated prior to 1893. Indeed, Adams traces its roots prior to the Civil War and after (an example is the rural cemetery movement). He continues, “Soon after 1890, a beginning was made with the development of the park system of Kansas City Missouri, which is especially noteworthy...” Wilson said more in his second book: “Intellectually and emotionally Olmsted never made it to the civic idealism of the City Beautiful movement. He remained unreconciled to the neoclassicism that was its hallmark...Olmsted was the landscape architect of the Chicago Fair and a major consultant, but there was no doubt of his subordination to the much younger chief of construction, the neoclassical architect Daniel H. Burnham. Olmsted fought to keep his precious Wooded Island free of exhibit buildings but finally capitulated to minor, harmonious construction. Two years later, he was denouncing Stanford White and his associates...he called them...ignorant despoilers of natural landscape.” Wilson does caution this account, stating Olmsted’s inconsistency in “his own use of formal, axial, and monumental effects,” though those aspects never overshadowed his dedication to naturalism. See Wilson, 1989, 21-22. An example is in the inspiration he took from the Universal Exposition of 1889, “where the practice of combining naturalistic and formal landscape elements with neoclassical design” was “reified, on a grand scale.” He goes on to say that Burnham “wished to ensure that those who dominated the design at the [1893] exposition, the architects, would also dominate the design of cities. He wanted those citizens who yearned for comprehensive planning to turn to architects, not to city engineers or landscape architects, for expert guidance.” See Wilson, 1989, 70.

pause in his Chicago World's Fair work to examine Kansas City and the board's plans for its improvement."<sup>75</sup>

Together with Meyer, Kessler started the Kansas City Park and Boulevard system in 1882.<sup>76</sup> Kessler heeded suggestions from Olmsted to remake "an ugly boom town," writes Wilson, "giving it miles of graceful boulevards and parkways flanked by desirable residential sections, acres of ruggedly beautiful parkland dotted with recreational improvements," a statement that alludes to the gentrification goals also underpinning the City Beautiful movement.<sup>77</sup> His was a scheme that adapted "itself to the topography, avoiding as much as possible forced routes and forced construction."<sup>78</sup> And statuary mattered in this naturalistic medley of civic enhancement—especially in Penn Valley Park, a region of the city that "must have possessed rare beauty before it was touched by the hand of man," as remarked by Kessler upon viewing the site in disarray following the razing of dilapidated shanties.<sup>79</sup> Kessler's interventions brought about a revival of attractive environs from long ago. As stated by Michele Bogart, sculptors in the City Beautiful movement "became part of a larger attempt" headed by

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<sup>75</sup> Wilson, 1964, 47.

<sup>76</sup> Meyer had prior successes as a mining magnate in Colorado. For him, "city beautification was imperative." He travelled around the United States and to Europe for research on how to design beautiful parks. See Alley and Boley, 18.

<sup>77</sup> Wilson, 1964, xvii. Gentrification denotes issues of class.

<sup>78</sup> Board of Park and Boulevard Commissioners of Kansas City, Missouri, *Report of the Board of Park and Boulevard Commissioners of Kansas City, Mo. Embracing Recommendations for the Establishment of a Park and Boulevard System for Kansas City. Resolutions of October 12, 1893* (Kansas City: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Co., 1893), 12.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 23. There are numerous references linking statuary to the City Beautiful movement in both primary and secondary sources. For example, Augustus Saint-Gaudens was appointed as an advisor for sculpture at the 1893 Columbian Exposition and attended meetings, while holding this title, for the grounds and buildings committee. See Wilson, 1989, 56. In another example, Charles Mulford Robinson (1869-1917), a pioneering urban planning theorist and proponent of the City Beautiful movement, suggested that the ideal composition of an expert commission on city planning would consist of "a sculptor, an architect, a landscape designer, and engineer, and" a theorist like himself. See Wilson, 1989, 73. Wilson goes on to explain how "magnificent monuments" were some of "the movement's successes." Wilson, 1989, 2. Furthermore, the air of collaboration between artists, sculptors, and architects at the 1893 World's Fair inspired collaboration between artists and civic officials in "living cities." See Wilson, 1989, 61.

actors like Kessler to “construct an appropriate physical and didactic setting in which public culture could flourish, and to hasten moral reform among city dwellers through transformation of the environment.” Artists such as Dallin, who likely coordinated his statue’s placement at Penn Valley Park alongside Kessler, “contended that civic sculpture could help improve the beauty and arrangement of city thoroughfares.”<sup>80</sup>

### Positioning *The Scout* in Penn Valley Park

It appears that Kessler and other Kansas City dignitaries banded together to install the statue at Penn Valley Park because it was among the first three parks envisioned in phase one of the urban renewal program finalized in 1900; in the case of this particular park, three separate blemishes needed removal to revive its “natural beauty” and to make way for *The Scout*. First, three hundred unsightly dwellings “in the broken and ugly Penn Street ravine” had to be auctioned off and cleared.<sup>81</sup> “None of the structures cost over \$2,000, and many cost little more than \$100.”<sup>82</sup> Second, the leftover, barren land “pocked with old cellar excavations and defiled by rubbish heaps” had to be removed.<sup>83</sup> Third, the unpaved roadways meandering throughout the hamlet and its boardwalks, which “dipped and rose as they followed the rugged contours,” needed to be filled and reformed. “In some places,” the walks along these misshapen paths “hung

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<sup>80</sup> Michele Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 6.

<sup>81</sup> Wilson, 1964, 47. Wilson writes more about the discouraged residents of Penn Street Ravine forced to concede their homes to the beautification project and creation of the park. “While the titans of the community battled over the fate of their land, their condemned houses slowly fell into disrepair. Porches, fences, and neighborhood morale sagged because the people did not want to repair houses that might soon be razed, but because they could find no one who would buy them, they had to go on living in them. They waited, and watched the blight of decaying houses spread across the ravine.” Wilson, 1964, 82.

<sup>82</sup> Alley and Boley, 51.

<sup>83</sup> Wilson, 1964, 122.

on wobbly stilts to give passage across the gullies.”<sup>84</sup> Such hazards and eyesores made annual flooding all the more treacherous. Wilson best captures the scene prior to Kessler’s work and how he managed to beautify the future park:

Because it tilted steeply south to north into the bed of O.K. Creek along the belt line, runoff water from the south and from higher ground on the east and west gouged the hills, tearing away topsoil needed for newly planted trees, shrubs, and fields of grass. To enlist the damaging drainage in the cause of beauty Kessler threw an earth dam thirty feet high across the low northwest section, partly filling the basin thus creating an artificial lake. Not all of the park drained into the lake, so a system of underground drains...was built to catch the destructive little rivulets and funnel them harmlessly away. Drives with cement gutters to carry more water away from the macadam roadbeds wound for over three miles through the 130-acre park. In places where the roads had to be cut into limestone cliffs, the stone was prevented from sliding by specially constructed masonry foundations designed to blend with the rocky ledges above.<sup>85</sup>

Certainly, all this ugliness had to be repaired before city planners could place a fine work of art at the top of one of those rocky ledges.

Following these redevelopment efforts, Kessler, a strong advocate for *The Scout*, made the final decision on where to display the statue in perpetuity. Historical evidence speaks directly to his involvement, in fact. E.M. Clendening, Assistant to the President of Kansas City’s Chamber of Commerce, wrote a letter to Mr. Thomas Harrington, Secretary to the Board of Park Commissioners, in 1921 requesting to know “if the park board has taken an action upon recommendation of our committee for the permanent location of the Scout.” Clendening resumed, “You may recall that Mr. C. C. Craver, Chairman of the Committee and myself visited the park board some little time ago.” These men “made the recommendation upon the advice of Mr. George E. Kessler, that the Scout be permanently placed about one hundred yards south of where it is now temporarily located.” Following “numerous conferences and due consideration,” all persons involved “felt that this location would be the very best that could be selected.” Since

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<sup>84</sup> Alley and Boley, 51.

<sup>85</sup> Wilson, 1989, 208.

Clendening served as a primary fundraiser in procuring *The Scout* for Kansas City, him being so “vitally interested” in its status was not surprising.<sup>86</sup>

Clendening’s note to Harrington concurs with a letter written a few months prior in the spring of 1921—the most definitive piece of evidence proving Kessler held the final say on placing *The Scout*. “Personally my recommendations to the Board heretofore have been indefinite,” writes Kessler, “and Mr. Dunn can inform the Board precisely the position I think that statue should occupy in Penn Valley Park.”<sup>87</sup> Kessler apparently arrived at his decision after years of consideration. His letter to the Board of Park Commissioners in 1915, while *The Scout* remained on exhibit in San Francisco, reads, “Mr. Jay M. Lee, Mr. Coburn and Miss Coburn with us considered the Station Plaza as a possible site, several of the possible summits in Penn Valley Park, and a summit that might be possible on the Outlook in West Terrace north of Seventh Street.” Kessler pondered an additional locale—“the ground on or about the Indian mound on the new eastern extension of North Terrace Park,” which in his estimation would have been “particularly appropriate.” Despite this bevy of options in scenic Kansas City, Kessler decided upon one summit at Penn Valley Park.<sup>88</sup>

Several other details within the historical record reinforce Kessler’s leadership in positioning the statue. For one thing, he was a member of the Kansas City Art Commission, an organization created in 1906 to “approve all works of art before they are accepted by the city and decide upon their location” as well as “advise city departments on the aesthetic merits of various projected improvements.” With that said, “the commission was not notably effective,” and no

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<sup>86</sup> E.M. Clendening to Thomas Harrington, June 27, 1921, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA78.

<sup>87</sup> George Kessler to E.M. Clendening, April 12, 1921, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA78.

<sup>88</sup> George Kessler to Board of Park Commissioners, June 18, 1915, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA78. An article from 1916 reinforces this letter. It states that *The Scout* is “to be placed on one of the high summits in Penn Valley Park.” See “City Advised to Buy ‘The Scout’,” Jan 16, 1916, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA25.

evidence exists linking that civic body to the procurement of *The Scout* or its placement.<sup>89</sup> Still, Kessler's presence on this board suggests his concern for Kansas City possessing fine works of public art. As stronger evidence, references in Kessler's writing imply that it was destined for the apex of a city park.<sup>90</sup> In his first report to the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners in 1893, Kessler wrote, "In Penn Valley, the principal and most attractive feature lies in the wide range of views obtained from the summits."<sup>91</sup> Elsewhere in 1903, Kessler penned, "The Penn Valley in the southwest presents many surprisingly beautiful views, and from its summits portion of the city are unfolded like a panorama."<sup>92</sup> As it went, *The Scout* eventually made it atop one of these revered summits.

However, the sculpture's ascent to the top of the hill was not immediate. When *The Scout* arrived in 1916, the statue was displayed on a concrete pedestal located some twenty-five feet below its current location atop the bluff. Supposedly, Dallin "sent it here at his own expense" and had this pedestal erected to entice the city to purchase the statue just as he had done with *Appeal to the Great Spirit* in Boston.<sup>93</sup> "It can be placed in the environment that it is hoped will be permanent and seen by those interested in securing it," said Dallin.<sup>94</sup> His tone here hinted at the likelihood that Penn Valley Park was the desired destination from the onset.<sup>95</sup> Although, the

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<sup>89</sup> Wilson, 1989, 211.

<sup>90</sup> The period historian of Kansas City, Giles Carrol Mitchell, also stated, "It was decided that the best site would be in Penn Valley Park" to situate *The Scout*. See Mitchell, 49. Penn Valley Park was basically completed by 1904, but no work of public art (statuary) rested there until the arrival of *The Scout* in 1916. Important to note is that the Kansas City parks and boulevard system was not completed until the 1920s—after the arrival of *The Scout*. See Alley and Boley, 9. So, the statue arrived near the completion of, but not after, the City Beautiful movement in Kansas City.

<sup>91</sup> Steve Penn, "Big Plans in store for other Penn," *Kansas City Star*, 2000, B1:1.

<sup>92</sup> George Kessler, "Parks and Boulevards," in *Kansas City as It Is* (Kansas City: Union Bank Note Company, 1903).

<sup>93</sup> "The Scout Slipping Away."

<sup>94</sup> "Another Statue Offer."

<sup>95</sup> Some citizens wished it to be moved to a hill facing Union Station. One source from 1917 reads, "There are many who perhaps would like to see the statue differently placed—say at the summit of the hill facing the Union Station and on a small rise of ground that might eliminate the necessity for the conventional

sculpture's subordinate position was intended to be temporary. Two articles from *The Kansas City Star* detailed its climb upward, an event that occurred between December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1921 and January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1922—approximately five years after its initial appearance in Kansas City.<sup>96</sup> “From his higher and new point of vantage in Penn Valley Park, ‘The Scout’ today shades his eyes, and so to speak, has a new outlook on life,” the first source reads. “The silent watchman yesterday was moved back three hundred feet to a higher knoll and permanent pedestal.”<sup>97</sup> Even though *The Scout* stood at an elevated point prior to the move, the media seemed excited about the prospects of its new, loftier positioning. The next day, they published a fun article mostly narrated in first person by *The Scout*, a quaint anthropomorphic touch. It reads:

The Scout is happy at last. He's at home, you see, really settled. His new residence is a very attractive natural rocky bluff in Penn Valley Park...“I like it fine,” he said, in answer to a query. “I haven't said much about it, but really, that place down there was getting on my nerves. You see, when they put me there, some five years ago, I understood that I would be there but a short time. But the months and the years passed and I became discouraged. I thought I would never get away. Oh, it wasn't bad, but that nice, smooth, grassy lawn and the symmetrical cement block on which I had to stand all the time were not at all what I had been used to, don't you know? I didn't feel at home and, in all due modesty, I was conscious of not appearing at my best. After all, my appearance demands something special in the way of settings. I've preferred this place for a long time. Notice the natural rocky base which is much more fitting as a pedestal for my horse than that little square effect down there. And here is a bit of underbrush and a tree or two which adds immeasurably in my estimation, to my—you'll pardon me?—artistic value. Please tell the people of Kansas City who for so long have been my friends, that I am highly gratified at this new expression of their affection for me and that I hope to receive visits from all my old friends and many new ones, soon.”<sup>98</sup>

In this piece, the unknown journalist posited City Beautiful tenets that aligned with the causes championed by Kessler and the fathers of Kansas City. The language flaunted public preference for *The Scout* at a high vantage point. Even more crucial, the story revealed much about public

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base on which it now rests.” Penn Valley Park ended up being the preferable option. See “Why ‘The Scout’ Belongs in Kansas City,” *The Kansas City Star*, Feb 25, 1917.

<sup>96</sup> The shift coincided with the New Years celebration; unfortunately, no record lends relevance to this coincidence.

<sup>97</sup> “The Scout Take a Ride,” *The Kansas City Star*, Dec 31, 1921.

<sup>98</sup> “The Scout at His New Home,” *The Kansas City Star*, January 1, 1922.



attitudes toward Natives; they were akin to nature. Thus, the proper setting for their bronze embodiments was amongst trees and rocky segments of earth, not manicured grasses and manufactured concrete pedestals. These sentiments matched those of Kessler, who had the final word on where to put *The Scout*. Referring to the statue, he once specified “that this figure should stand in entirely natural surroundings and on a natural base rather than an artificial or architectural pedestal.”<sup>99</sup>

More evidence from the historical record indicates Kessler’s hand in moving *The Scout* upward and lines up with the considerations described in the poignant excerpt above. One example was the landscaping chosen to enclose *The Scout* on its rocky outcropping; in his initial report, Kessler proposed “plantations of trees and shrubs” be employed “to form frames of foliage for the pictures left exposed to view” in “the park scenery.”<sup>100</sup> This aesthetic choice was likely informed by the teachings of Olmsted, who often recommended a “line of trees all around the edge of the park...to insure an umbrageous horizon line” and a space where “quiet drives, rides, and strolls may be had” with a “walled out” city on the other side of the tree line.<sup>101</sup> Kessler argued further that this foliage “can often be so arranged as to appear to incorporate distant objects of interest and make them seem portions of the park.”<sup>102</sup> Again he noted how a “bit of wilderness” was a charming aspect of his city parks, a feature “which would be entirely lost if attempts were made to finely finish” them.<sup>103</sup> Kessler’s language in the late nineteenth century at the beginning of City Beautiful efforts forecasted Penn Valley Park as the model setting for *The Scout* upon its arrival to Kansas City in 1916.

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<sup>99</sup> George Kessler to Mrs. C. A. Braley, Dec 2, 1921, George Kessler Papers, Folder 19, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department.

<sup>100</sup> *Report* (1893), 77.

<sup>101</sup> Olmsted is quoted in Wilson, 1989, 18.

<sup>102</sup> *Report* (1893), 77.

<sup>103</sup> Alley and Boley, 123.

Surely, the pro-beautification sentiments of William Rockhill Nelson (1841-1915), fellow dignitary of Kansas City and owner of *The Kansas City Star* newspaper, also would have been on Kessler's mind when deciding where to place *The Scout*.<sup>104</sup> It was Nelson, in fact, who prompted Kessler to begin beautifying Kansas City. Referring to the period "not long after I came West," Kessler wrote, "[Nelson] asked me to submit plans for the improvement of the West Bluff." The young landscape architect proceeded to climb "into the tower of the Union Depot" to make some sketches; "Those drawings," he stated, "were the first work done on the park system of Kansas City."<sup>105</sup> A characteristic interpretation of Nelson's views on the significance of undulating, picturesque vistas reads that he "was probably the only man in Kansas City who saw that bluffs and hills and ravines had elements of real beauty."<sup>106</sup> These sorts of surroundings and lookout points, Kessler claimed, invited "rest and quiet contemplation."<sup>107</sup> A placid equestrian Indian attentively viewing the landscape in the distance—sitting slightly slumped forward in repose with veins visible from grasping his bow—was the perfect match for Kessler's and Nelson's ideal.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> "His paper became the public face for establishment of a parks and boulevard system in Kansas City." See Alley and Boley, 8. "The glories of other cities' parks and boulevards were illustrated in articles and elaborate line drawings. Interviews with out-of-town visitors and prominent local park advocates filled columns of the *Star* through the years." Wilson, 1989, 102. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that Nelson's paper became the most vocal advocate among the press for *The Scout*, publishing various articles about it. Nelson was deceased by the time *The Scout* fund was underway, but one can gather that his legacy and pension for City Beautiful efforts outlasted him. Also, even though Nelson was elderly, he was still alive when "the newspapers of" Kansas City "were energetically backing the civic organizations" to obtain *Appeal to the Great Spirit*. It seems that Nelson was in favor of acquiring an Indian statue for his City Beautiful. See "Why Kansas City Tried," *Boston Massachusetts Herald*, Nov 23, 1912, Dallin Papers, Reel 181.

<sup>105</sup> Henry Schott, "A City's Fight for Beauty," *World's Work* 11 (February 1906): 7196.

<sup>106</sup> *Kansas City Star*, Nov 16, 1880, 2. Quoted in Wilson, 1964, 9.

<sup>107</sup> Wilson, 1964, 48.

<sup>108</sup> A period article describes *The Scout* as "somber and aloof." See "The Scout at His New Home."

## Assessing a Statue's Beauty

From below, various passersby viewed *The Scout* on its hill surrounded by trees and shrubbery. Judging by their testimonials, Kessler obeyed his original city beautification propositions regarding the incorporation of objects into his parks. One journalist described the statue as a work of artistry, etched into the serene countryside as if it was comprised of the same organic matter as the flora found around it. They wrote:

He looks out upon this modern picture from a naturalistic setting of fine old trees, verdant hillsides, and rocky cliffs, with a lakelet in the valley far below. In spring, the valley nearby is abloom with the red bud and Missouri's loved hawthorn. In the fall, the hillsides are golden brown and russet. And in winter he is silhouetted against the sky, surrounded by trees that appear to have come from the etcher's needle.<sup>109</sup>

A visitor to the park would see this spectacle before them as they approach from below. Another reporter fondly described the ritual of “the public that stops on the park boulevard below the hills and climbs up to view the statue,” leading one to believe people enjoyed the gradual journey required to get a close viewing of *The Scout*.<sup>110</sup>

But more common were perceptions of drivers who appreciated the statue from afar (**fig. 11**). On this note, *The Scout* was placed on the western end nearest the road meant for “pleasure driving.” Aiding these motorists were “gently graded drives,” which engineers made “by cutting into the cliffs of stone and clay.”<sup>111</sup> In contrast, the eastern side contained the road designed for “heavy wagons and commercial vehicles.”<sup>112</sup> Kessler’s “planning of comprehensive, multi-purpose park and boulevard systems,” informed by Olmsted, fostered such spaces where drivers could enter the park from the civic center via “an ornamental traffic separation at the junction of Grand Avenue and Main Street” and then interact with public art within their line of sight

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<sup>109</sup> “Lakota Sunka Wakan,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 31, 1930, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>110</sup> “The Scout Under Fire,” *The Kansas City Star*, July 25, 1916.

<sup>111</sup> Alley and Boley, 52.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

through the windows of their cars.<sup>113</sup> From 1918 to 1929, Penn Valley Park contained an auto tourist camp on the opposite side end from *The Scout*, so such interactions were likely commonplace in that period.

The tranquil quality of *The Scout* and its natural setting attracted the eye of casual drivers on their pleasure cruises as evidenced by Arthur Conan Doyle's account and numerous references to the statue's beauty "silhouetted against the skyline."<sup>114</sup> One writer fighting for the cause of keeping *The Scout* wrote in 1917 that the statue "seems to have become inseparable from our skyline."<sup>115</sup> In coordination with that evaluation, a woman asserted that "he made a fine figure against the sky."<sup>116</sup> In another case, J.F. Marshall, "a newspaper man" from Concordia, Kansas, was returning home when "he had seen the statue on a drive about the city with friends from Detroit, and that when they came upon it standing stark on the hill against the sunset, he was so moved he made up his mind to contribute" funds for the cause to keep *The Scout* in Kansas City.<sup>117</sup> A story about an anonymous donor spoke to the same end:

A view of "The Scout" appears to be more potent in obtaining subscriptions to keep the statue in Kansas City than are arguments advanced for its merit and artistic quality. E.M. Clendening, general secretary of the Commercial Club, yesterday received this letter...Dear Sir: Last evening in riding through beautiful Penn Valley Park just as the sun was sinking behind the western hills, I was so impressed with the beauty of the scene that I am inspired to subscribe \$100 toward keeping "The Scout" where it now stands.<sup>118</sup>

Taking each of these similar accounts into consideration, it seems apparent that *The Scout* was placed intentionally at this specific locale in the park in order to achieve a romantic effect analogous to the anticipated impact of City Beautiful allure.

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<sup>113</sup> Wilson, 1989, 10, 203.

<sup>114</sup> "Kansas City," *New York American Art News*, Mar 10, 1917, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>115</sup> "Why the Scout Belongs in Kansas City."

<sup>116</sup> "The Scout Under Fire."

<sup>117</sup> "Plan for the 'Scout' Fund."

<sup>118</sup> "The Scout Fund \$5,873.79."

It was this bucolic effect that Kessler thought to be in jeopardy if the “considerable agitation” among community members to install lights at the site succeeded. Kessler “put his foot down on the project and Mr. Kessler’s word in matters of that kind is law in Kansas City.” Defending the decision, Kessler pointed out, “The location of the Scout was to carry out the history’s tradition of a tribal scout, looking at the trail ahead of him and, in this instance, seeing what marvelous changes civilization has wrought.” He continued, “He would not be doing this at night, and the light would be an error that would be laughable because he certainly could not see outside of its glare.” Kessler finished, “To light the statue would be to destroy all historical tradition that goes with it.”<sup>119</sup> Like the equestrian Native, motorists, too, were inactive at night, likely not driving through the park at that time to observe *The Scout*. Maybe this frontier metaphor was Kessler’s way of preserving the aesthetic he had developed—his zealous proclamation suggests the existence of a strong bond between him and *The Scout*.

Other members of the public spoke their minds in the press about where to station *The Scout*. More often than not, they shared Kessler’s outlook by forging a link between the City Beautiful movement, *The Scout* and its morally uplifting, escapist imagery. For example, an excerpt taken from a 1917 letter to the *Kansas City Times* written by lawyer Frank Titus, who fought to keep the statue in Kansas City, speaks further to the public’s inclination to marry *The Scout* with the charming park system. Titus said of *The Scout*, “The sole artistic feature today of the outdoor part of our city is this copy of the Indian Scout statue.” It “is more than picturesque,” and “the greatest misfortune now would be to lose one of the most impressive and beautiful sculptures ever produced in America.” Imbuing the sculpture with the ability to surmount overbearing industrialization by bringing Kansas Citians closer to nature, Titus continued:

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<sup>119</sup> “Dallin Statue to be Unlighted,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, Nov 22, 1922, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

“Mammoth slaughter houses, factories, gigantic office buildings, even boulevards, are things material...but this statue is a work of art which appeals through the intellect of the sculptor to the spiritual and eternal side of our nature.”<sup>120</sup> Correspondingly, a different Kansas Citian said:

This last week has made me believe that there are many here to whom a glimpse of a beautiful group of sculpture would bring into a busy downtown day the one reminder of the joy and grace and the fullness of life, all so easily forgotten. Surely Kansas City will not allow “The Scout” to pass away from it to another city.<sup>121</sup>

And, yet, an additional member of the public echoed these same sentiments in the local paper.

Arguing for *The Scout* to stay put, they wrote:

It is just to keep us from feeling lonely. We work all day in the great office building canyons downtown and on the way home at night, or on Sundays in Penn Valley Park, we catch glimpses of the bronze sentinel, untamed against the sky. He stands for that note of wildness in the scale of Americanism without which it would be insipid. “The Scout” is good art, or he wouldn’t get an answering thrill from that wild chord in us. The march of commerce has been a bit pitiless. It is fine to be able to see every day our little bit of rebellion against its crunching feet take concrete form in the gaunt figure that keeps its unending watch against the Western sky.<sup>122</sup>

W.C. Root—the most prominent architect of Kansas City during the Gilded Age and partner of Haff and Kessler in City Beautiful efforts—repeated this argument about the cathartic characteristics of *The Scout*. He penned, “Let us buy this and later place it permanently with the greatest care. I am sure every person in Kansas City will draw a constant pleasure from seeing it. Let me suggest that as many as possible look at the statue.”<sup>123</sup> One must assume that pressing notes in the local newspapers would have inspired the public to meet Dallin’s requested fee and retain *The Scout* as a symbol of nature in relief against a bustling, chaotic downtown. Such notes beckoned Kansas Citians to escape the artificiality of the city and visit the picturesque green

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<sup>120</sup> Frank Titus, “The Scout, Statue: It’s Values, Described as Sole Artistic Feature of Outdoor Kansas City,” *Kansas City Times*, Feb 8, 1917, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>121</sup> “Dallin’s Statue a Rare Offer.”

<sup>122</sup> “The Appeal in The Scout,” Source Unknown, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>123</sup> “The Scout Under Fire.”

space available at beautiful Penn Valley Park.<sup>124</sup> These excerpts also provide evidence for Wilson's contention that advocates of the City Beautiful "hoped for control and direction of rampant urban growth."<sup>125</sup>

Dallin, too, spoke up about *The Scout* and its relationship to the City Beautiful. During his stay in Kansas City in 1917, Dallin suggested a proper location for his statue while stressing City Beautiful rhetoric:

I cannot settle on any one place to show the statue. There are a hundred splendid show places along the miles of beautiful park and boulevard ways you have here. For a city that has grown so rapidly as this one, there has been a far-sighted development of natural beauty resources. I consider your Cliff drive and the park development there one of the most charming spots I have ever visited. There are several good display points there for my Indian.<sup>126</sup>

Just two years prior, the artist "believed that some high knoll in Penn Valley Park, where the statue could be outlined against the sky, would be a very good location."<sup>127</sup> For Dallin, it seemed, any one of Kansas City's prime elevated precipices would suffice. His insistence on a beautiful setting for *The Scout* should be expected. In his 1903 essay, he wrote, "The statues and monuments that adorn our cities and towns...should ornament and beautify our public squares, stimulating the imagination and the love of beauty in all beholders."<sup>128</sup> But despite his request, *The Scout* never settled on Cliff Drive, though its ultimate position echoed Dallin's original

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<sup>124</sup> "Beautiful parks also benefited resident businessmen who needed an escape from the unceasing care and anxiety of business," writes Wilson. "If restored by naturalistic scenes one or twice a week, they would bring greater productivity to their work and avoid an early retirement." See Wilson, 1989, 30.

<sup>125</sup> Wilson, 1989, 2. This statement also carries class connotations. Olmsted championed the City Beautiful park as "a magnet for all urbanites and a benign instrument of class reconciliation and democratization." See Wilson, 1989, 10. Olmsted admired London's parks where "urban pleasure grounds" were shared between "the aristocrats and the masses," which promoted "an interdependent, organic society." Wilson, 1989, 16. In addition, "He showed how such a system could stifle urban sectional jealousies by introducing some green space into all residential areas." Everyone had access to "diverse, specialized parks." Wilson, 1989, 26.

<sup>126</sup> "Cyrus Dallin, Sculptor, Who Gave 'The Scout' to World of Art, A Visitor," *Kansas City Journal*, Dec 3, 1915, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>127</sup> *Kansas City Times*, Dec. 4, 1915, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

<sup>128</sup> Dallin, "American Sculpture," 423.

intention to place it on a promontory.<sup>129</sup> Its placement does not seem to have disappointed him. Suzanne Green, a twelve-year-old girl from Kansas City, wrote to the artist in 1936 to share her admiration for *The Scout*. Dallin replied, “You will find that the joy and happiness that comes from loving nature and beauty is something that will always abide, and gives joy that nothing can take away.”<sup>130</sup> After all those years, *The Scout* still reminded him of the beauty inherent to nature.

An additional reason why *The Scout* belongs in the conversation about the City Beautiful movement rests on the connection the work holds to the provenance of Dallin’s prior Indian quartet. All four of those works in the series were elements in the City Beautiful movements of their respective destinations. After admiring *The Signal of Peace* at the 1893 World’s Fair, Judge Lambert Tree purchased the statue for permanent installation in Chicago’s Lincoln Park.<sup>131</sup> *The Protest* occupied a prominent position along the thoroughfare at the 1904 World’s Fair and was later “purchased by the North St. Louis Businessmen’s Association, given a bronze patina, and relocated to a plinth in O’Fallon Park, overlooking the Mississippi River.” Unfortunately, the plaster “sculpture disintegrated in the elements within a few years” due to its impermanent

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<sup>129</sup> In 1913 Dallin supposedly vied to be the sculptor of the Wanamaker monument, a project that never materialized. It was to be a monumental Indian looking out over New York Harbor at Fort Wadsworth in memoriam to all North American tribes. Perhaps this motif influenced his interest in placing *The Scout* at an overlook. See Scolari, 35-37.

<sup>130</sup> “Thanks a Young Friend, Sculptor of ‘The Scout’ Answers Letter of Girl Here,” *The Kansas City Star*, Aug 20, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>131</sup> It must be stated that the 1893 World’s Fair was a watershed moment in the popularity of the Indian motif in the art world. Indian representations were everywhere and, subsequently, appeared more frequently around the country afterward. “Indians took center stage at the exposition because they had played leading roles in the historical event the fair commemorated”—Columbus’s landing. In fact, artists integrated “their endeavors into the exposition’s thematic frame” and promoted themselves by choosing Indians as artistic subjects. Furthermore, they “advanced the fair’s high cultural ambitions. As symbols of America, Indians affirmed the fair’s patriotic ethos. The link to Christopher Columbus positioned American Indians at the starting point of a narrative of progress, which celebrated the nation’s development from a mythically untamed wilderness to a modern, industrial civilization. As icons of the primitive, they set in high relief the fair’s displays of the latest commercial achievements in technology and manufacturing.” For more useful contextualization of the Indian spectacle in 1893, see Dillon, 102.



materials.<sup>132</sup> Similar to the positioning of *The Scout* at Penn Valley Park, *The Medicine Man* “was given a place of honor against a background of greenery with no other sculptural works near it” at the Paris Salon of 1899.<sup>133</sup> It later found a lasting home at Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park; Taft referred to it there as “a conspicuous ornament of Philadelphia’s great pleasure-ground.”<sup>134</sup> Lastly, Kansas City’s drive to obtain *Appeal to the Great Spirit* gestured to their desire for ornamenting the grounds in front of Union Station. Margaret Coburn convinced the Park Board of Kansas City that it belonged on a southern terrace in the square plaza facing the new Union Station “as an appropriate ornament,” and “standing as it does at the beginning of the historic Santa Fe Trail it would be a fitting place for this symbolic Indian statue.”<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, the completion of Union Station “represented the attainment” of the “City Beautiful ideal” in Kansas City.<sup>136</sup> Outside the Museum of Fine Arts, *The Appeal to the Great*

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<sup>132</sup> Emily C. Burns, “Political Contestation in Cyrus Dallin’s American Indian Monuments,” *Archives of American Art Journal* 57, no. 1 (2018): 14. She notes Sam P. Hyde, a resident of Belleville, Illinois, who lamented the loss of a “very striking and popular statue” that was now “but a thing of pleasant memory.” See North St. Louis Businessmen’s Association, *Who’s Who in North St. Louis* (St. Louis: A.S. Werremeyer, 1925), 237. Quoted in Burns.

<sup>133</sup> Ewers, 38; Downs, 18.

<sup>134</sup> Taft, 500. For a great review of the City Beautiful Movement in Philadelphia, see David B. Brownlee, *Building the City Beautiful: The Benjamin Parkway and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989).

<sup>135</sup> “Why Kansas City Tried.” She could have been in contact with Dallin as early as 1914. See “New Dallin Statue Will Show.”

<sup>136</sup> Wilson, 1989, 193. Wilson writes that prior to the completion of Union station, the old “station surroundings were ugly and boisterous” and contained “beer halls and cheap hotels.” The architect Jarvis Hunt, during an inspection of the grounds prior to erecting Union Station, implored Kansas City to improve the exterior, especially the “clay banks” at the present-day location of the World War 1 Memorial. He said, “That park out in front is to be Kansas City’s work, and if it’s bad it’s going to show you up.” This detail infers that *The Scout* was needed to beautify the Union station environs for similar reasons of ugliness as in the old Penn Valley ravine. The Union Depot Company “was controlled...by a board of directors representing the railroads that used the terminal.” Therefore, railroad business and *The Scout* rhetorically collided in this space. Furthermore, Haff worked with Hunt on “developing modest improvements to little Station Park.” He would have heard the “variety of proposals for beautification of the station surroundings,” offered between 1911 and 1914. The quest for *Appeal to the Great Spirit* rose and fell in this same period. See Wilson, 1989, 194-204.

*Spirit* garnished Boston's plan to visually enhance their urban exteriors and facades. The placement of *The Scout* at Penn Valley Park seamlessly sustained this heritage.

These aforementioned City Beautiful circumstances in Dallin's oeuvre existed in the story of *The Scout* prior to its procurement by Kansas City. Having been showcased at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915, *The Scout* and its exhibition history aligned with that of its predecessors, meaning that its transference to Kansas City correspondingly aligned with City Beautiful tenets and carried its beauty forward to its new location. *The Scout* was positioned around a "1,100-foot-long peristyle walk" at the Exposition, "which followed the western Curve of the lagoon" behind the Palace of Fine Arts. "The lagoon," much like Penn Valley Park, "was intended as a meditative space where visitors could slow down and mentally prepare for the emotional experience of viewing art."<sup>137</sup> Period sources spoke more about its beauty in San Francisco. In her *The Sculpture and Mural Decorations of the Exposition: A Pictorial Survey of the Art of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition*, published immediately following the exhibition, Stella G.S. Perry described *The Scout* from its place of honor in the Garden Exhibit along the South Lagoon facing The Palace of Fine Arts. She wrote:

Cyrus Edwin Dallin has devoted many years and much of his high talent to the poetry and beauty of the American Indian....Surely it has an exalted beauty and is a noble example of Mr. Dallin's firm, finished, accurate method, perfection of restraint and free grace of modeling. It has a clear and beautiful directness that is almost Greek in feeling. Those who do not believe in the picturesqueness and dignity of the Indian as celebrated in these bronzes, need only to have seen the photographs in the exhibit of the Indian Memorial booth in the Palace of Education. Some of the chiefs there shown have the dignity of Caesar and the knightly splendor of heroic periods. Copies of almost all the Dallin Indians and other of his notable works appear in the Palace of Fine Arts, where Mr. Dallin is a gold medalist; They include the famous "Appeal to the Great Spirit," which stands before the Boston Museum of Art.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Emma Acker, "A Pageant of American Art: Constructing Nation and Empire at the Fair," in *Jewel City: Art from San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 116.

<sup>138</sup> Perry.

As Perry states, Dallin also presented small-scale Indian sculptures at indoor exhibits of the Exposition. *The Scout*, in coordination with these other works, lent a sense of beauty and picturesqueness to the Fair that dignitaries of Kansas City similarly coveted to better their empty Penn Valley Park. It is true that “Kanas City Civic organizations expressed considerable interest in pictures of the Scout” from the Exposition “and arranged with Mr. Dallin to exhibit the statue here on its way east.”<sup>139</sup>

In a similar publication from 1915, Sheldon Cheney listed the works found on the South Lagoon. He penned, “In regard to those works which the labels make self-explanatory, no comment is added, unless to call attention to some special quality which the unpracticed eye might miss. Where the symbolism or ‘story’ is obscure, an explanation is given.” For him *The Scout* deserved extra commentary. Cheney remarked, “Note the remarkable clean-cut quality of this equestrian statue.”<sup>140</sup> Such manuscripts would have been available to Kansas Citians and probably attracted their interest. Lastly, in yet another publication of this type, Jessie Niles Burness chose *The Scout* as the frontispiece. Underneath the image, she described the statue as “A bronze placed beside the path which borders the Fine Arts lagoon on the south. It is a part of the Fine Arts exhibit of sculpture, which for the first time in exhibition history has been given outdoor setting, the result in this instance being an absolutely appropriate placing.”<sup>141</sup>

Apparently, Burness believed an Indian equestrian in a natural outdoor setting was most

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<sup>139</sup> Mitchell, 49.

<sup>140</sup> Sheldon Cheney, *An Art-Lover's Guide to the Exposition: Explanations of the Architecture, Sculpture, and Mural Paintings, With a Guide for Study in the Art Gallery* (San Francisco: Sunset Publishing House, 1915).

<sup>141</sup> Jessie Niles Burness, *Sculpture and Mural Painting in the Beautiful Courts, Colonnades and Avenues of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco 1915* (San Francisco: Robert A. Reid, 1915), Dallin Papers, Reel 179. Burness speaks of the beauty of the Exposition. For example, he writes, “This is but the counsel of a comrade anxious that you should realize the joy of just rambling ‘round through courts and gardens of this, the latest and most beautiful of world’s expositions.” He continues, “Each palace and its encircling gardens is exactly where it belongs to make the picture complete and perfect, each piece of sculpture accents the harmony.”

appropriate; Kessler and citizens of Kansas City obviously concurred. A Kansas City correspondent to the *San Francisco Chronicle* shared their description of the statue's new environs following its arrival in town. They said, "The surroundings are primitive, although in the heart of the city."<sup>142</sup> Natural surroundings suited the connotations believed to exist between the Indian body and nature. Fittingly, Dallin agreed—he once stated, "Now, the Indian was closer to nature than we are."<sup>143</sup>

Right before the statue's arrival to Kansas City, City Beautiful rhetoric continued to encircle *The Scout*. For instance, Coburn's stress on the capacity for *Appeal to the Great Spirit* to beautify her city aligned with the way Franklin Steele Jr., likewise, underscored the potential for *The Scout* to aesthetically enhance Washington D.C. and the Smithsonian grounds. Steele wrote, "If this statue could be acquired by the city it would add greatly to our ornamental features...there should be an effort on the part of the people of this city to add this fine work of art to other ornamentations of beautiful Washington."<sup>144</sup> City Beautiful efforts were underway all across the country by 1915. *The Scout* was just one piece to that national puzzle.

Additional artists followed Dallin's lead by contributing Native statues for similar schemes in other cities. Case in point is Denver in 1917. That year Mayor Robert Walter Speer responded to the "many citizens of Denver" who wanted Alexander Phimister Proctor's sculptures "as a permanent part of the city's landscape." The mayor decided that the new Civic Center was the best spot for display.<sup>145</sup> "He had been impressed with the buildings and grounds

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<sup>142</sup> "The Scout On Old Trail," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>143</sup> Ahrens, 39.

<sup>144</sup> "Equestrian Indian Statue for National Capital," *Ironton County Register*, Mar 1, 1917, p.7.

<sup>145</sup> Interestingly, Speer employed Kessler from 1907-1908 to design the boulevard system for Denver. More information can be found in Wilson, 1989, 181.

at the exposition in Chicago” and “returned to Denver with a dream for the Queen City.”<sup>146</sup>

William H Wilson details the mayor’s efforts to procure sculpture for the Civic Center in *The City Beautiful Movement*.<sup>147</sup> Paired with Proctor’s *Broncho Buster* (1920), his equestrian Indian entitled *On the War Trail* arrived in 1922 to decorate the grounds directly in front of the capitol along the mall—a far more conspicuous position than Penn Valley Park.<sup>148</sup> With that said, *The Scout* stands on its own without a companion white cowboy to connote its merit. Its symbolism holds enough power, in and of itself, to demand consideration as a significant work of public art.

### Vandalizing *The Scout*

Despite the aesthetic values *The Scout* held, repeated cycles of vandalism have befallen the statue ever since its initial installation at Penn Valley Park in 1916 (**fig. 12**). Regarding the popular imagination of *The Scout* from Kansas City sources, beauty and ugliness formed a binary dialectic with one another, a dialectic that has periodically shifted back and forth throughout the statue’s timeline at Penn Valley Park. At various stages, the Kansas City press lamented its accumulating damage and advocated for refurbishment. This shifting ebb and flow from repair to despair throughout the history of *The Scout* challenged its aesthetic allure imbued by the City Beautiful founders and its status as an iconic emblem of the city. I limit discussion of vandalism to the first gust for restoration in 1936, a story best told from the viewpoints of both the press and Dallin, who expressed angst over the statue’s loss of beauty.<sup>149</sup> Why must the story stop here?

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<sup>146</sup> Peter H. Hassrick, “Proctor: America’s Premier Sculptor of Western Animals and Heroes,” *Points West: A Quarterly Journal of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center* (Spring, 2004), 8.

<sup>147</sup> See Wilson, 1989, 252-253.

<sup>148</sup> Broncho is the correct spelling. Proctor likely misspelled it on purpose to avoid confusion with Frederic Remington’s *Bronco Buster* (1895).

<sup>149</sup> Giles Carrol Mitchell’s ending of his chapter on *The Scout* in his 1934 *There is no Limit: Architecture and Sculpture in Kansas City* may have raised awareness of the statue’s poor condition. He writes, “The

The City Beautiful movement virtually disappeared by the 1930s in the face of artistic modernism—figurative art was deemed passé—and impending war.<sup>150</sup> Moreover, this date marks the beginning of a three-decade hiatus in media coverage of the statue until a second push for renovation in the 1960s, suggesting historical amnesia for past obsessions with city beautification. Its fading resonance may have been generationally induced. Living Kansas Citians still held nostalgic, rich and potent memories of a more amorphous West from the prior century. But as decades passed, that symbolism progressively wilted.

In 1936 Haff, the preeminent Kansas City lawyer involved in the original acquisition of *The Scout*, handled correspondence with Dallin over how best to prevent further vandalism from accumulating on the sculpture. Haff “and some others” started a citywide crusade “for the protection of this work of art.” He wrote to the artist:

I am deeply chagrined to be compelled to communicate to you the shameful incident of the mutilation of “The Scout”, the beautiful statue which I consider your masterpiece. At least I am very sure there is no other Indian Statue, the work of human hands, that can compare with this beautiful artistic piece as it was when we acquired it for Kansas City, and I have seen them all.

The plaque attached to the base of *The Scout* upon its arrival to Penn Valley Park echoes Haff’s concerns: “Please Do Not Mutilate This Beautiful Statue.” In spite of this clear warning, the mutilators had their way.<sup>151</sup>

The desecration included “initials carved on the surface” and “removal of parts of the accouterment of both horse and Indian,” including “the quiver and arrows and the bridle rein”

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Scout deserves more appreciation than that. It should be cleaned, restored, and mounted on a pedestal having proper architectural treatment, and lifted above the easy reach of vandals.” See Mitchell, 50.

<sup>150</sup> Wilson discusses the early 1940s as “a depression and wartime American not so hostile to the City Beautiful as it was forgetful.” But the movement’s “physical legacy—tree-shaded boulevards, undulating parks, and graceful neoclassic buildings” remained for future citizens to enjoy. Wilson, 1989, 299-303. In Kansas City, one of these remaining features is *The Scout*.

<sup>151</sup> One source points out how this vandalism was “committed by a small group and we are thankful to state that this attitude is greatly in the minority and yet is so active that it causes great damage.” See Thomas Wight to Delbert J. Haff, May 4, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

and “the feather that was on the back of the Scout’s head”—vandalism bemoaned by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in his letter to the *Star* a decade prior.<sup>152</sup> Defacement was nothing new. “Actually hundreds of dullwillies have given their egos a ride in the stratosphere by cutting their initials, nicknames and such casual data into” *The Scout*, read one 1936 news source. The writer maintained, “The present generation of Scout mutilators is more enthusiastic than their pappies and mammies of twenty years ago.” Today, “Scarcely a place on the body of the Indian and his mount is free from...scrolls and scribblings usually seen on back yard fences...one of the middle West’s finest works of art being treated much like an old car in a junk yard.”<sup>153</sup>

Even though some journalists maintained a comedic air over the statue’s sad state, Haff was not laughing. His note to Dallin continued:

It was some time after this statue was located in Penn Valley Park before it received any defacement, but when once started it was an example which other fools imitated, and being out of the city a great deal of the time between 1917 and 1930, my attention was not called to this matter...you may be sure that whatever can be done at this time, will be done, as I have gone on the war-path...I shall leave nothing undone that is possible to do to restore the damage that has been perpetrated against this beautiful work of art.

Haff also shared a suggestion he received to move *The Scout* “to a position in front of the new City Hall...but as that building will be some thirty stories in height,” Haff feared it “would be completely dwarfed in such a location.” Obviously, dignitaries like Haff remained committed to keeping *The Scout* in its original City Beautiful environs and preserving its beauty.

Notwithstanding those aesthetic commitments, Haff was willing to place the statue on a 3-feet 6-

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<sup>152</sup> Delbert J. Haff to Cyrus E. Dallin, Apr 24, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182; Delbert J. Haff to Cyrus E. Dallin, Apr 20, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182; “Desecration of the Scout,” *Kansas City Post*, Apr 23, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182. The latter source continues, “The feather is shown broken off the Scout’s headdress (upper photo) and the tops of the arrows in his quiver have been broken. Part of the bridle has been removed (center) and a close up (lower) shows the extensiveness of the initial carving, with love notes occupying a conspicuous position.”

<sup>153</sup> “Sad State of The Scout.” They say more: “The arrows were removed long ago by souvenir smoothies. The leather was plucked from the Scout’s head, too, and the bow now is stringless. The reins were removed by the slickers a short time after the statue was left alone in the park. The city put the reins back on the horse and as soon as the city’s back was turned the reins were stolen again.”

inch high granite pedestal surrounded by a “4-foot iron picket fence camouflaged by shrubbery to prevent further defacement.”<sup>154</sup> Dallin disagreed.

Not hesitating to share his consternation over the statue’s “mutilation” and Haff’s impractical suggestion, Dallin sent a letter to the *Star*:

If I were a vandal on a “business bent,” I don’t think these obstacles of pink granite would offer much of a hindrance in my fell purpose. It seems to me too inadequate to even consider for a moment. The statue should be placed at a sufficient height (say eight feet) to insure security. I wish to empathetically protest against any half-way measures.<sup>155</sup>

Fortunately, the park board never employed this strategy, as it “would remove the Indian entirely from anything like a natural setting,” as said by W.H. Dunn, superintendent of parks and assistant to Kessler.<sup>156</sup> Dunn envisioned “a sloping pedestal of rough concrete” to mimic the base supporting Proctor’s 1927 *Pioneer Mother*, a sculpture group located on the north end of Penn Valley Park that remained unmarred at that time.<sup>157</sup> He hoped “that this will place the beautiful statue out of the reach of vandalism.”<sup>158</sup> For reasons unknown in the historical record, the idea failed. The fence would have been awkward, but a tall pedestal might have been appropriate. Not until 1960 was *The Scout* moved again, this time onto a higher, 9-foot tall, rocky pedestal. It remains there today, having received various restorations and a rededication in 2002. Sadly, Dallin passed away in 1944, unable to witness these developments.

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<sup>154</sup> “The Scout to a Higher Post,” *The Kansas City Star*, May 3, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>155</sup> “Scout’s Sculptor Irked,” *The Kansas City Star*, May 19, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>156</sup> Supposedly, an article appeared in the papers at this time that lampooned the notion of a fence around *The Scout*. One “had a wall built around the statue so all you could see was the top of the Scout’s head.” Delbert J. Haff to Cyrus E. Dallin, May 4, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>157</sup> “How Vandals Have Marred The Scout,” *The Kansas City Star*, Apr 24, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182. Evidently, he and members of the art commission, which included the landscape painter George V. Millet (1864-1953), wanted “the irregular concrete base” to make it look “as if the Indian just has ridden up on a promontory to look things over.” See “New Life for the Scout,” *The Kansas City Star*, Apr 28, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>158</sup> “The Scout to a Higher Post.”



In addition to his concern for its safety, Dallin probably proposed the idea of placing *The Scout* on an 8-foot tall pedestal as an aesthetic enhancement; “To the disappointment of the sculptor, and to the dismay of those who have watched the statue being abused, for some unaccountable impulse, the statue was placed on a few scant rocks.”<sup>159</sup> *The Scout* was his only heroic equestrian bronze displayed without a pediment, a fact that clearly displeased Dallin but likely was prompted by City Beautiful values that reinforced the notion of Natives symbolizing nature. Speaking on behalf of the public and press who praised the positioning of *The Scout* over the years, the architect Thomas Wight—a member of the city art commission—wrote to Haff in 1936 during the vandalism fiasco. He said, “as you know, the general view is from a much lower level and the Scout shows as a splendid silhouette in a lonesome point, as it were, in the park and I believe in general it is well placed.”<sup>160</sup> Almost certainly, Kessler followed this cultural tenet in deciding to imbed *The Scout* close to the ground on its promontory at Penn Valley Park.

Clearly, Dallin differed in opinion. He was an artist who maintained individual viewpoints on the meaning of beauty, some of which aligned with City Beautiful rhetoric and some of which intellectually superseded it.<sup>161</sup> He broadcast these beliefs to the Kansas City press during his subsequent visit in 1936 to view “the marred statue.” Dallin reiterated some of the same sentiments from his visit two decades prior while elevating others; his language precisely championed *The Scout* as a work of unabashed beauty:

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<sup>159</sup> Mitchell, 49.

<sup>160</sup> Wight to Haff, May 4, 1936.

<sup>161</sup> Dallin’s theories on beauty also owed themselves to the memories of Indians from his boyhood. He held a true appreciation for the Indigenous environments from his childhood and likely imagined *The Scout* safely inhabiting an equally hospitable milieu. His thoughts on the innate beauty of Indian encampments remembered from his youth may be insightful: “Our settlement, like other frontier settlements, was in the making. Consequently, everything existed for utility alone. There was neither the time nor the thought to develop beauty. The Indian encampments, on the other hand, were always places of beauty. There I saw beautiful colors and combinations of colors which white people are today finally adopting.” See Long, 566; Broder, 94. With surrounding foliage in the fall season, *The Scout* found a home in a location that would have met with Dallin’s aesthetic taste.

If people do not appreciate beauty give them more beauty; they will learn its uses only by association with it...Appreciation of art is a matter of education. If it seems to be lacking in some persons, it would indicate the community needs more art objects. To a child or a barbarian beauty is at first a novelty; they don't know its uses. The remedy is not to deprive them of beauty, but to give them more of it. With association they will come to know it as something to cherish and enjoy, and after that you will not need protection for works of art.

To prove his point, Dallin continued his impromptu lecture on beauty by sharing an anecdote about “the progress of the anti-billboard movement in different parts of the country,” coincidentally an undertaking fueled by City Beautiful values. Anxiety over intrusive billboards in Kansas City arose as early as 1915.<sup>162</sup> By the 1930s, though, City Beautiful efforts had waned and “an acropolis of billboards” littered the station plaza surrounding the World War 1 Memorial site near Penn Valley Park and *The Scout*.<sup>163</sup> Dallin articulated:

At first the remedy was sought in legislation, but that was a slow process. That was like stationing police to keep vandals from destroying monuments. Anti-billboard legislation ran into the snag of property rights. Much more effective was the later movement to create public sentiment against the destruction of beauty by this outdoor advertising. The right of the public to have and enjoy the beauty of nature was invoked; this was education and its results were soon apparent. People who recognized that this right was theirs and that it was being invaded brought a far more effective pressure to bear than could any law. Its force could not be resisted, and now we see in many parts of the country voluntary action by the offenders against beauty in the removal of their signs. This is the remedy, I think. Where you see billboards defacing highway views, it simply means the people of that locality haven't been educated to appreciate beauty. Otherwise they would recognize it as their right and demand it. The demand is always effective.<sup>164</sup>

This assessment of the anti-billboard movement's legacy was Dallin's window into sharing his disapproval with Kansas City over the sorry condition of *The Scout*—a tangible sign that the city

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<sup>162</sup> “Marring a City's Beauty,” Aug 16, 1915, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA25. The author pens a diatribe about “hideous signs and signboards” appearing along streets and boulevards. “Surely, we are not going to have all the beauty of this city DESTROYED by places that greet the eye everywhere along our driveways,” they implored.

<sup>163</sup> “Mr. Dallin's Criticism,” *The Kansas City Star*, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>164</sup> Dallin continued, “People who recognized that this right was theirs and that it was being invaded brought a far more effective pressure to bear than could any law. Its force could not be resisted, and now we see in many parts of the country voluntary action by the offenders against beauty in the removal of their signs.” See “Mr. Dallin's Criticism.”

lacked a sense of beauty. Yet, “This education must not be regarded as hopeless,” he told the reporter. To complete his critique of Kansas City’s dearth of aesthetic sensibility, Dallin shared an additional anecdote about his hometown of Springfield, Utah and its citizens’ innate appreciation of beauty. Dallin believed he hailed from the stock of prototypical aesthetes. He declared:

There’s a town of less than four thousand population, but it’s an art center. Every school child is an art lover. The town is as enterprising to get a new work of art—a picture, a fountain, or a statue—as most towns are to getting a canning factory. The town makes an annual appropriation for art purposes, and already has a notable collection of pictures and statuary. Its citizens give willingly of their means to eke out public appropriations to assure some desired artistic possession. That’s the spirit that makes for beauty in a community and it’s all a matter of public education. It began with the teaching that beauty is a public right, human right, that it gives pleasure, has value and is a thing to desire and possess. We do not destroy or deface the things we value or the possession of which gives us pleasure.

Dallin was trying to teach Kansas City a lesson about beauty. In contrast to the City Beautiful founders, who largely believed that beauty could be appreciated through mere experiential learning or visual contact with landscapes, objects and civic spaces, Dallin deemed it necessary to actively pursue the knowledge of beauty and participate in aesthetic appreciation on a rigorous, cerebral level. Reiterating the foundational concepts of his discourse, he concluded:

The task of educators in America is to teach its people this secret of beauty. ‘A thing of beauty is a joy forever.’ If Keats could say that about a Grecian vase, Americans ought to learn to say it about their mountains, their valleys, their highways, cities, parks and homes. These beauties are theirs no enjoy, not to destroy. Enacting laws to preserve them is futile. Laws won’t do it, much less will they force upon us a realization of the reason beauty should be preserved. Only when we love it will we preserve it, and only through the processes of education can we learn to love it. When we do there will be no more commercialization of Nature’s beauty and no more defacing of the beauty of art.<sup>165</sup>

One journalist responded to Dallin’s censure, finding value in the sculptor’s advice and agreeing that Kansas Citians must heed it to remedy their lack of appreciation for beauty and tolerance for

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<sup>165</sup> “People Need More Art, Sculptor of The Scout Views the Marred Statue,” *The Kansas City Star*, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

ugliness. He upheld the power of public opinion; “No community ever is called upon long to tolerate any condition condemned by public sentiment.” By this date, all the original City Beautiful founders had passed except for Haff, and he alone could not instill aged values. It seems that Dallin was picking up the slack. The reporter continued sharing his call to action as solicited by the artist. He wrote:

If we cannot see beauty because it is shut off by a billboard we are not likely to learn to value beauty; we are content with the billboard. Obviously here is a sad confusion of values, and one to be corrected. That isn't Mr. Dallin's job, but Kansas City's. He has shown us our defect; public education must remove it...Billboard uglification, the defacement of “The Scout,” unsightly clay banks, littered vacant land, are merely symptoms of an inartistic state of mind. Where a love of beauty exists, those conditions are not found.<sup>166</sup>

Although the journalist probably did not realize it at the time of writing this statement, the article encapsulated City Beautiful tenets in its appraisal of aesthetic deficiencies. Unsightly billboards, maimed statues, unappealing mud heaps and cluttered landscapes were anathema to Kessler, Meyer, Haff, Dunn and Dallin—all men who fought for the ideal of beauty and revered one of its leading emblems in Kansas City: *The Scout*. Dallin once remarked, “Every sculptor of imaginative power, if unfettered and encouraged, aspires to produce some work which shall reveal his conception of the beautiful.”<sup>167</sup> The fathers of Kansas City strove for the same end. This certainty makes the monument's rampant vandalism all the more distressing.

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<sup>166</sup> “Mr. Dallin's Criticism.”

<sup>167</sup> Dallin, “American Sculpture,” 423.

## Chapter 2: A View from Above

In his essay “The Frontier and the Native American” contributing to Joshua Taylor’s 1976 publication *America as Art*, John Cawelti proposes “four major traditions of cultural mythology about the West and the Indian.” His first tradition—“the West as an empty and dangerous wilderness to be conquered and civilized by pioneering”—is most instructive in connection with the themes of this chapter. Of this heritage, Cawelti states, “This was the West of manifest destiny and of the epics of the pioneers and the railroad.” These motifs, he contends, “were closely linked with another central American myth, the ideal of progress,” an ideal “perhaps most obviously symbolized in the acceleration of technological innovation and change and the extremely rapid development of America as an industrial giant” born from the “pioneering efforts of farmers on the frontier” and “aggressive entrepreneurs” who eventually transformed their lands into “great cities.” How did Natives fit into this framework? Cawelti contends, “In this scheme of things there was no place for the Indian except as an antagonist and an obstacle.” Indians, instead, “represented an earlier stage of society, doomed to be wiped out by the march of progress.” In effect, they were considered obstacles to the progress of Anglo-American civilization; therefore, an inevitable reality for Indigenous history was that “Indian cultures should give way to the advance of white civilization.”<sup>168</sup>

Cawelti’s tradition accounts for the main subjects of interest discussed in this section. From its perch at Penn Valley Park, *The Scout* comprehends several synonymous motifs in his line of sight, peering down at Kansas City proper. He sees urban space formulated by white civilization, open expanse romanticized as the former frontier of the West, and the progress of technology and industry, represented most notably by railroads and waterways. Using primary

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<sup>168</sup> John G. Cawelti, “The Frontier and the Native American,” in *America as Art*, 135-183 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976), 143.

source evidence together with secondary source contextualization, this chapter argues that Kansas Citians purposefully positioned *The Scout* on its hilltop at Penn Valley Park, overlooking downtown Kansas City and its surrounding rural environs, to conjure romantic symbolism of Kansas City's proud identity as a frontier city, a gateway to the West, and a harbinger of technological progress. Countless samples of Kansas City visual and material culture speak to this end, all employing *The Scout* as a beacon of identity politics.

The beginning of the twentieth century was a sensible time for Kansas City to call upon *The Scout* to achieve these ends. By 1900 “forty years of settling the West had passed,” write Henry Haskell, Jr. and Richard Fowler in their *City of the Future: A Narrative History of Kansas City, 1850-1950*. The Indian Wars had ceased, allowing romanticism of Native Americans to fully root itself in the cultural imagination. Frederick Jackson Turner already gave his famous speech, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where he signaled to the American public the “closing” of the frontier. No longer was Kansas City “the jumping off point for the great migration. The time has come for a hard look at itself, the time to build its place in the inland empire that was already here.” Throughout the twentieth century, romantic reflection on their city’s past was commonplace among local histories, like this one, written by two Kansas Citians. For Haskell, Jr. and Fowler, “The heart of Kansas City was with the twentieth century. The first decade was to see it grow in steel and masonry, parks and boulevards, industry, bridges, institutions, and homes”—all physical features of the city within the purview of *The Scout*.<sup>169</sup>

Perhaps a suitable entry point to this discussion entails a return to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s anecdote. Although Doyle admired *The Scout*, he critiqued its Kansas City stewards for

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<sup>169</sup> Henry C. Haskell, Jr. and Richard B. Fowler, *City of the Future: A Narrative History of Kansas City, 1850-1950* (Kansas City: Frank Glenn Publishing, 1950), 89.

failing to make available a two-dimensional print replica. In his 1924 autobiography entitled *Our Second American Adventure*, Doyle stated:

It is a really splendid statue. Two things amaze me: the one that American cities have such fine works of art in the open air, the other that, having them, they seem to take no pride in them, for one cannot get a model or an adequate photograph in the whole town. You will find stacks of picture post-cards of Studebaker's thirty-floor skyscraper, which outside the town no one in the world cares a half-penny about, save as an awful example of what may happen, while this fine "Indian Scout" are not to be had. In London or Paris they would be in the window of every fancy shop and sell readily as souvenirs. I wrote a letter to the *Star* expounding these views, so I hope I may have done a little good.<sup>170</sup>

Doyle was not alone in his disdain for the unavailability of commercial *Scout* imagery.

Numerous letters written to the Kansas City Superintendent of Parks throughout the 1920s and 1930s enquire about postcards or descriptive pamphlets of *The Scout*, all to no avail except for sepia prints from the Photographic and View Company formerly located in the Ridge building downtown. While postcards from this period exist, they are scarce. This struggle for *Scout* imagery persisted despite the fact that the statue's copyright did not prohibit reproductions; "By the terms of the deed from Dallin, all rights to the statute, including replicas, were conveyed to the trustees, Dallin retaining only the right to produce miniatures."<sup>171</sup>

In contrast, Dallin's *Appeal to the Great Spirit* was a common subject of postcards and other facsimiles available to the masses—"millions of pictures of the famous work" were "eagerly purchased by Americans."<sup>172</sup> Why was *Scout* imagery not equally replicated across the nation? The reason could be iconographical. In his relaxed, focused and sturdy gaze outward and absence of any outward markers of despair or surrender, *The Scout* appears ambivalent toward the widespread vanishing race theory common to the Gilded Age zeitgeist. This theory was

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<sup>170</sup> Doyle, *Our Second American*.

<sup>171</sup> Delbert J. Haff to W. H. Dunn, April 5, 1928, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA-78. According the park board minutes, D.J. Haff, C.C. Peters (secretary of the Emery, Bird, Thayer Dry Goods company) and C.C. Craver were the trustees. See "The Scout," park board minutes.

<sup>172</sup> See E. Waldo Long, "Dallin, Sculptor of Indians: How a Frontiersman and Artist Created His Famous Statues," *The World's Work* 54 (Sep 1927): 563.

envisaged in concurrent literature and visual representations of Natives conceding to their “inevitable” fate or demise in the face of changes like emerging industrialization—a message readily apparent in the pleading arm gesture of *Appeal to the Great Spirit*.

James Earle Fraser’s *End of the Trail* is another monumental Native equestrian of this era implying a demise of Indigenous cultures with its slumped Indian on horseback, a motif that became even more prevalent around the United States than *Appeal to the Great Spirit* (**fig. 13**). One can find its likeness casted “on belt buckles, in advertisements and commercial prints” or, ironically, “on signs designating retirement communities.”<sup>173</sup> Like *The Scout*, *End of the Trail* was on display at the 1915 Panama Pacific Exhibition but in a far more prominent position at the entrance to the Fair, likely due to the vanishing race rhetoric it espoused. In the words of Julie Schimmel, “The profile of the despondent Indian and his tired horse describes a series of downward arcs that eloquently reinforce the mood of the piece.” All but “drained of energy,” the Indian’s “spear once raised in war and the hunt, hangs downward, as if about to slip to the ground.”<sup>174</sup> The alertness and implied forward inertia of *The Scout*, in contrast, complemented Kansas City’s self-characterization. Even the figure’s head feather and the horse’s ears point forward as if pushed by the wind. Kansas City identified with this contemplative, meditative and animate Indian; thus, *The Scout* became a local icon.

Even though imagery of *The Scout* never made the cultural inroads around the nation claimed by *Appeal to the Great Spirit* or *End of the Trail*, it certainly developed into an enduring emblem of identity for Kansas City. One writer for *The Kansas City Journal* stated, “The Indians are not the ‘dying race’ they have been pictured in the fiction of the past few decades.” This writer made a case for the city to put up the necessary funds to pay for the statue. They

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<sup>173</sup> Julie Schimmel, “Inventing ‘the Indian’,” in *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*, 149-189 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 173.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.



championed a westernization of Indigenous peoples, viewing *The Scout* as a fitting symbol of this “progress.” The journalist continues:

Indians are governors and congressman and senators and splendid citizens in all the walks of life. For that very reason the “old indian” should be perpetuated in marble and bronze and Kansas should by all means be one of the conspicuous places of that perpetuation.<sup>175</sup>

Other onlookers believed *The Scout* to symbolize a peaceful and subdued characterization of a race that no longer posed a threat to industrializing societies. Many viewers noted its solemnity; for example, one spectator said, “Dallin’s ‘Scout’ is worthy of all the praise it has had for its quiet strength and sincerity.”<sup>176</sup> Another observer commented on its “easy grace.”<sup>177</sup> These responses typified public opinion. Along with observations of *The Scout* as placid, its specific placement at Penn Valley Park signified rhetorical interpretation fitting an amalgam of identities the city wanted to possess.

Time and time again local publications stressed its elevated location in concert with these desired identities. Once more, the rector of Grace and Holy Trinity Church opines in ways fruitful to this measure:

It would be well for us this week to go up into Penn Valley Park and stand where ‘The Scout’ sits his horse. He is looking out over the heart of this city. His eyes our keener than ours and he has the advantage of being mounted. But he sees no Union Station, no Star Building, no Federal Reserve Bank building, no Post Office dome, no Church spires. But you say they were not there when the Scout gazed on the scene. That is it precisely. They were not there. They never would be there in the ‘Scout’s’ vision. In his eyes there was no dream of cities. He never thought of himself as a fellow worker with his Great Spirit. Yet everything was here then which makes Kansas City great now. It was all here waiting for the dream, waiting for the builder.<sup>178</sup>

For the sake of extolling the greatness of Kansas City, the rector whitewashes and denies the true vision of *The Scout*. In reality, the statue watches over Union Station, the Star building, the

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<sup>175</sup> “Keep the Scout here,” *The Kansas City Journal*, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>176</sup> *San Francisco Bulletin*, Sep 2, 1915, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>177</sup> “Another Statue Offer.”

<sup>178</sup> “The Spirit.”

Federal Reserve bank building, post offices and houses of worship. After 1910, in fact, “twelve-story skyscrapers towered over a downtown area that now centered along Tenth and Eleventh Street” within the statue’s scrutinizing gaze.<sup>179</sup> But according to the rector and others, *The Scout* signified a dying race mired in the past. The primitive, antiquated, ancient Indian, in effect, paved the way for Kansas Citians to take hold of their modern, urban identity in the early twentieth century.

In a different article, written in 1921 during the statue’s maneuver 300 feet upward to its current position at Penn Valley Park, a reporter for the *Kansas City Star* suggested a figurative resonance of its new station: “From his new position, “ it reads, “he can see the Missouri-River circling like a silver belt [along] the northern boundary of Kansas City; the rolling hills of Wyandotte County; the maze of railroad tracks in the West Bottoms and the belching stacks of Kansas City’s industrial arteries,” specifically in its “direct line with the smokestack of the Turkey Creek power plant.”<sup>180</sup> A journalist remarked on these distant features seventeen years prior. *The Scout* had not yet arrived in 1904, though citizens were already appreciating the park’s vistas. “From nearly all the high spots in the park portions of the city may be seen and nearly always in an aspect somewhat surprising but always pleasing,” it reads. “The busy O.K. and Turkey creek valley with factories and warehouses appear far away...The Missouri River bends until it appears to be a bay.”<sup>181</sup> The likelihood that Kessler and others considered these distant

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<sup>179</sup> George Ehrlich, *Kansas City Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1900*, Rev. ed. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 66.

<sup>180</sup> “The Scout at Home now,” *Kansas City Star*, Dec. 30, 1921.

<sup>181</sup> “In Penn Valley a Neglected Ravine that has Become a Beautiful Park,” *Kansas City Star*, July 17, 1904. An article from 1902 elaborated on new developments at Penn Valley Park, especially blasting of rock to make room for roadways. Referring to “one of the high points of the town” looking over “the Kansas valley and the western and southwestern parts of the city” where *The Scout* later stands, it reads, “The view from that point is one of the finest to be had in a city of beautiful prospects.” Furthermore, it previews the popularity of the park in years to come, which by 1909 had been nicknamed ‘the beautiful.’ It states, “Later, with its admirable succession of hills and valleys and level places made more beautiful

structures and topographies when placing *The Scout* years later is extremely high. These statements are the most complete summaries of the statue's range of vision in the historical record, but quite possibly the following quote from the *Kansas City Times* in 1917 is most representative of public sentiment regarding *The Scout* as a symbol for Kansas City's rise to the status of industrial giant in the early twentieth century:

The statue is in truth an epitome in miniature of the transformation of the great territory west of the Missouri River from a state of nature to a rich and populous empire, and as such this historic work is itself unique and far beyond the ordinary. Compared with other equestrian statues elsewhere, whether here or abroad, this Indian Scout is far in the lead with its historic perspective, as well as in its power of suggestion.<sup>182</sup>

Such articles render abundantly clear that Kansas Citians purposely positioned *The Scout* at this particular elevated environment in order to link the work with the industrial metropolis growing rapidly in its eyesight.

### Rivers, Railroads, Gateways and Trails

Kansas City branded itself using two primary characterizations: as a meeting point for the main arterial waterways of the region—the Kansas and Missouri Rivers—and as a mid-continental railroad hub. Charles Glaab locates a dual metaphor placing Kansas City's railroads and rivers in tandem; champions of building the city into a railway giant in the late 1850s “permitted no doubt that all railroads would have to converge on the geographical focal point of the mid-continent, the juncture of the Missouri and Kansas Rivers,” the linchpin “in making the city the commercial center of a vast Western empire.”<sup>183</sup> As follows, *The Scout* fits into a

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and its vantage points for fine landscapes made accessible it will become the most frequented park in Kansas City.” *The Scout* followed all these developments. See “Penn Valley Park Changes,” *Kansas City Star*, June 1, 1902, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive.

<sup>182</sup> “Plan for the ‘Scout’ Fund.”

<sup>183</sup> Charles Glaab, *Kansas City and the Railroads: Community Policy in the Growth of a Regional Metropolis* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 29. Also see Glaab, 102.

historical trajectory of romantic rhetoric linking rivers and Indians. Alexis de Tocqueville encapsulated the connection between Native extinction and Anglo-advancement via transportation technologies as early as 1840 in his *Democracy in America*. Regarding their “inevitable destruction,” Tocqueville wrote:

They seem to have been placed by Providence amid the riches of the New World only to enjoy them for a season; they were there merely to wait till others came. Those coasts, so admirably adapted for commerce and industry; those wide and deep rivers;...the whole continent, in short, seemed prepared to be the abode of a great nation yet unborn.<sup>184</sup>

In his essay, “A Fortnights in the Wilds,” Tocqueville elaborates on his view of the vanishing Indian:

An ancient people, the first and legitimate master of the American continent, is vanishing daily...and disappearing from view over the land. In the same spots and in its place another race is increasing at a rate that is even more astonishing. It fells the forests and drains the marshes; lakes as large as seas and huge rivers resist its triumphant march in vain. The wilds become villages, and the villages towns.<sup>185</sup>

*The Scout*, a bronze effigy embodying Tocqueville’s notion of “ancient people,” looks over Kansas City and its dynamic waterways and active railways—end results of a “triumphant march” brought by settler colonialism. “From 1911 to the outbreak of the first World War Kansas City made its greatest effort to navigate the Missouri River.” Energetic civic campaigns gave rise, for example, to “4,200 persons” putting “more than a million dollars into the stock of the Kansas City, Missouri River Navigation company.”<sup>186</sup> Senator Thomas H. Benton prophesied all these happenings in 1845:

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<sup>184</sup> See Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, The Henry Reeve Text as revised by Francis Bowen, ed. Phillips Bradley, 2 vols. (1840; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1945), I, 26. Quoted in Kenneth Maddox, “Asher B. Durand’s *Progress: The Advance of Civilization and the Vanishing American*,” in *The Railroad in American Art: Representations of Technological Change*, 51-69 (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988), 58.

<sup>185</sup> See Alexis de Tocqueville, “A Fortnight in the Wilds,” in *Journey to America*, ed. J. P. Mayer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 329. Quoted in Maddox, 65.

<sup>186</sup> Haskell, Jr. and Fowler, 110.

There, gentleman, where the rocky bluff meets and turns aside the sweeping current of this mighty river; here where the Missouri, after running its southward course, turns eastward to the Mississippi, a large commercial and manufacturing community will congregate, and less than a generation will see a great city on these hills.<sup>187</sup>

Upon the statue's arrival in 1916, the long legacy of river fervor in Kansas City had reached an apex. Kessler and his fellow founding fathers of the City Beautiful movement, in fact, constitute this next generation foretold by Benton. They placed *The Scout* on its rocky bluff, forever to gaze upon the industries below.

Furthermore, the positioning of *The Scout* also resonates with Kansas City's identity as the proverbial gateway to the West. Book length histories and newspapers alike echoed this pride. For instance, Haskell, Jr. and Fowler wrote, "Building a beautiful city went hand-in-hand with seizing its commercial opportunities at the gateway of the West"—a statement that encapsulates Kansas City's industry, position at the Western boundary, and City Beautiful foundation.<sup>188</sup> "Greater Kansas City: The 'Nerve Center of the Middle West' and the Gateway to an Empire of Boundless Possibilities," the opening essay to the Kansas City Press Club's *Men of Affairs in Greater Kansas City, 1912: A Newspaper Reference Work*, perhaps best demonstrates Kansas City's pride as the "gateway to the Southwest" in the years leading up to purchase and placement of *The Scout*. Drawing parallels between Kansas City's heritage as a gateway and its modern industrial advancements, the editor writes:

Kansas City has from the first been the recognized gateway between the East and the West, being in the early times the starting point for the picturesque wagon trains and stage lines that carried freight and passengers...before the coming of the railroads, the first of which to be built across the plains had its beginning here. This was in the early '60s. Rail connection with the East had been established already and the commercial

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<sup>187</sup> "The Spirit."

<sup>188</sup> Haskell, Jr. and Fowler, 98.

importance of Kansas City assured. The city's growth has been rapid and virtually uninterrupted.<sup>189</sup>

Of particular relevance to the linkage between *The Scout* and Kansas City's identity as doorway to the West were journalists' mentions of Penn Valley Park containing a marker for the Santa Fe Trail (**fig. 14**). Numerous contemporary sources support this claim, including Dallin. A 1915 edition of *Kansas City Men's Journal* quotes the artist of *The Scout*:

I understand that Kansas City people have done the Scout the honor of considering it the true spirit of the West. The opinion is the same at the "end of the trail" in San Francisco. They think the Indian belongs there instead of this end of the trail. They have given him the great position at the entrance of the Fine Arts building gazing over the lagoon.<sup>190</sup>

Evidently, Dallin agreed with Kansas Citians that *The Scout* was a more proper embodiment of the frontier than Fraser's *End of the Trail*. But his was not the only remark printed in the local papers. A *Kansas City Times* article, also from 1915, applauded "'The Scout', which Kansas City hopes to have overlooking one of its old trails some day."<sup>191</sup> Another noted "its dominating position on the old Santa Fe Trail makes it especially fitting and proper that some great work typifying the life of the Old West be placed here."<sup>192</sup> Finally, one member of the committee in charge of acquiring *The Scout* described the work as "more than picturesque, for in that keen gaze we recall all the heroism and romance of the Santa Fe Trail and the making of the West."<sup>193</sup> This same committee saw to placing the statue "on the ridge overlooking the Santa Fe Trail between Summit Street and the lake in Penn Valley Park." In fact they "unanimously agreed" to this positioning at their meeting in the City Club room. The article concludes, "By placing it

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<sup>189</sup> Arthur N. Alkire, "Greater Kansas City: The 'Nerve Center of the Middle West' and the Gateway to an Empire of Boundless Possibilities," in *Men of Affairs in Greater Kansas City, 1912: A Newspaper Reference Work*, 2-3 (Kansas City, Missouri: The Kansas City Press Club, 1912), 2.

<sup>190</sup> "Cyrus Dallin, Sculptor, Who Gave."

<sup>191</sup> *Kansas City Times*, Dec 3, 1915, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

<sup>192</sup> "Speed up."

<sup>193</sup> "Plan for the 'Scout' Fund."

where it will overlook this historic highway it is believed that the purpose of bringing the statue here will be best served.”<sup>194</sup>

The historical record reinforces these analogies from the local press concerning *The Scout* and the Santa Fe Trail. Developers of the transcontinental railroad, for instance, targeted Kansas City when planning its route. “The line would cross the Mississippi and Missouri rivers...and at Kansas City would strike the great natural road to Santa Fe,” writes Glaab. “The Santa Fe trail, the best track in the world for a railroad, provided the only route upon which a railroad could or would be built west of Kansas City.”<sup>195</sup> As early as 1904, one article touting the hillside vistas available in newly beautified Penn Valley park reads, “Where this wide, smooth driveway of stone shines white in the sun was the Santa Fe Trail fifty years ago.”<sup>196</sup> In another article entitled “A City’s Fight for Beauty,” writer Henry Schott shares an anecdote about Kessler and him “standing on a knoll 200 feet above the lake” in Penn Valley Park. Schott recalls them looking below where “the main plan of Penn Valley lay as if a great map.” The author quotes Kessler, who asked, “Do you see the wide roadway coming out of that clump of trees and winding over the hill to the south? That road is a part of the old Santa Fe Trail.”<sup>197</sup> Schott does not provide a date for this encounter, but it would have occurred prior to his essay publication in 1906 and, thus, prior to the arrival of *The Scout*. Since 1916 it has stood on these same grounds, watching vigilantly across the Kansas prairies—the former pathways of the Santa Fe Trail.

Journalists continued to indicate the statue’s personification of the West: “He will peer down with his hand shaded eyes on the former roving grounds of the race he represents,” wrote

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<sup>194</sup> “‘Scout’ Statue Here Soon,” *Kansas City Star*, May 9, 1916, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA26.

<sup>195</sup> Glaab, 73.

<sup>196</sup> “In Penn Valley a Neglected.”

<sup>197</sup> Schott, 7204.

one, providing a “silent reminder of the old West.”<sup>198</sup> Another local source argued for “Why *The Scout* Belongs in Kansas City.” They raised the question, “Is ‘the Scout’ destined to typify the Southwest to future generations?” The author continued:

For the statue embodies in a high degree those characteristics that have the power to make a monument achieve greatness in the right setting... ‘The Scout’ grips the imagination of the West. And because a scout has always been a kind of literary symbol of the West, the figure will appeal to Eastern eyes...there is no single figure that so readily suggests the trail and its compelling invitation...as a lone Indian on his horse. Dallin’s statue stirs the imagination because it is here in Kansas City on the line where the Indian made his last stand, where the trails vanished into untrod spaces, where memory of pioneer days is still fresh.<sup>199</sup>

Still, the local newspapers hold additional commentary claiming *The Scout* perfectly represents the West by way of its arrangement at Penn Valley Park. One pundit stated, “It was ‘made for Kansas City’.” They sustained:

Kansas City is the very heart of the old Indian country. Within a radius of a few hundred miles hundreds of thousands of red men once roamed the prairies. Once can stand at the junction and almost with a rifle ball reach points rich in the Indian lore of the great West...Especially as the ‘capital’ of the great Southwest, so indissolubly connected with the history of the Indian, should Kansas City retain this splendid symbolic reminder of days that have long since passed away.

Having dreamt of Indian lore in lands surrounding Kansas City, they complete their thought by playing avatar, offering a forlorn glimpse into the eyesight of *The Scout*:

Here within a few miles from the former home of ‘Buffalo Bill’ is the place where ‘The Scout’ should look out through all coming years upon the hills and plains which were once his habitat, his face turned to the setting sun, so pathetically typical of the going down of the sun of his ethnological history.<sup>200</sup>

Frank Titus aroused analogous sentiments about the vanishing race and their lifeways symbolized in *The Scout* through his note to *The Kansas City Times*:

Intelligent Americans see in this sculpture an epitome to date of the Nation’s history west of the Alleghenies...When the Red Man thus portrayed ruled and roamed the boundless

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<sup>198</sup> “The Scout at Home now.”

<sup>199</sup> “Why ‘The Scout’ Belongs in Kansas City.”

<sup>200</sup> “Keep the Scout.”



plains from the Saskatchewan to the Rio Grande, now the homes of millions of industrious citizens, as well as the granary of the Nation, at that time merely the pastures of countless buffalo—the founders of this, the youngest of the metropolitan cities of the New World, pitched their tents here at the verge of the so-called Great American desert.

Importantly, Titus then references tribes formerly occupying the Missouri Valley region, particularly around the Kaw or Kansas River. “The descendants of these founders readily recall the day when the Indian was no stranger,” writes Titus, “in the hamlet at the Kaw’s mouth, and the buffalo and antelope aided in furnishing diet to the hardy settlers of the frontier.” Kansas Citians placed *The Scout* in view of the juncture between the Kansas and Missouri rivers, likely unknowingly harkening back to the original inhabitants of these lands. Titus concludes with a poetic pitch for *The Scout* to remain at its elevated precipice:

So it is clear that of all places this reminder of the old days should find its permanent on our glorious Missouri hills, and the bronze savage continue to peer throughout the centuries into the West, where rest the bones of his race beside those of the ponies the dead warriors hope to again ride upon the hunting grounds of Eternity.<sup>201</sup>

A theme joining many of these accounts is *The Scout* as mediator between the past and present. One, for instance, marks *The Scout* as “an instant glimpse of the old and the new Kansas City as it was forty years and as it is today.” The bronze reconciled changes from the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries all while “shading his eyes as he peers over the lands his fathers trod at the rush of civilization.”<sup>202</sup> Journalist Agnes Edwards’ interpretation reverberates the theme: “His hand is raised to his eyes,” she writes, “and he is looking, not only for friend or foe but looking out—into the future.”<sup>203</sup> Altogether, these accounts render indisputable the intentions of Kessler

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<sup>201</sup> “Plan for the ‘Scout’ Fund.”

<sup>202</sup> “Dallin Statue to be Unlighted.”

<sup>203</sup> Agnes Edwards, “A Daylight Sketch,” Aug, 1914, Dallin Papers, Reel 182. A later essay from 1950 continued this type of interpretation, calling *The Scout* “a tangible link between the not-too-distant past and the vigorously dynamic present.” See “Well Tended Parks and Boulevards Enrich Kansas City’s Beauty” in *Kansas City Centennial Souvenir Program, 1950-1850*, 116-119 (Kansas City, MO: The Kansas City Centennial Association, 1950), 118.

and the Kansas City community to arrange *The Scout* at Penn Valley Park in a manner that induces romantic feelings about an imagined frontier past and hopeful industrial future.

Moreover, consideration of the 1927 push to reposition *The Scout* suggests further significance of the statue's westward facing direction to Kansas Citians. A few letters and articles proposed changing the direction of *The Scout* to face the *Pioneer Mother*, a statue by A. Phimister Proctor recently dedicated at an adjacent bluff at Penn Valley Park. But E.M. Clendening, a high-ranking official in the Chamber of Commerce, disagreed. He was an original organizer for the procurement and positioning of *The Scout*. He exclaimed in a letter:

To my mind the Scout is intelligently and splendidly located, he occupies a position of prominence in this community...From Penn Valley Park he can be seen without inconvenience, and he has really become the pride of the village...We cannot move statues about to accommodate new comers.<sup>204</sup>

In the same decade, members of the public crafted poems romanticizing the Scout's rhetorical westward thrust and submitted them for publication in the local newspapers, buffering Clendening's urging to maintain the statue's original positioning. Rowena Ray Cowherd's composition reads:

The Scout, majestic, stands upon a hill  
O'er looking wooded slopes and teeming streets  
Peering with shaded eyes, as swift yet still  
The reddening sun the smoky hillside meets  
Outstretched before his watchful, constant gaze  
A city of a thousand hills has sprung  
A frontier river town, but now a maze  
Of towering brick that white men skyward flung  
A musing sentinel with thoughtful eyes  
Astride his patient horse through wind and sun  
He marvels at the Pale Face conqueror's rise  
Where once the stamping buffalo had run  
With sorrow chiseled on his brooding face  
He marks the fateful passing of his race

Alice Wilson Oldroyd grapples with similar themes in her poem:

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<sup>204</sup> E.M. Clendening to N.A., Nov 15, 1927, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Archive, PA-78.

O Scout, do you care if I pause to dream  
 Across the hills with you—  
 Across the valleys that lie between  
 And the many years that intervene  
 To watch the gold in the late sun's gleam  
 And the cloud-clear sky of blue?  
 O First American, what do you see  
 Along the horizon, far—  
 A silhouette line of sinewed braves  
 A pulsing forest of treetop waves  
 Or do you vision, along with me  
 The glories of things that are?  
 Perhaps, though your eyes are bronzed and cold  
 And your heart is ever still  
 While my eyes search for life's desire  
 And my heart throbs with a living fire  
 The same strange visions we two behold  
 Of futures we may fulfill  
 Then, somewhat I may learn from you  
 Brave Figure upon the height—  
 Alert in your fixed activity  
 Gazing out toward the trails to be  
 Above the old and above the new  
 Yet looking always for something true—  
 O Scout, do I learn alright?<sup>205</sup>

Both authors romantically envision the statue's vista. For them *The Scout* gazes upon past and present simultaneously—frontier and city, woods and streets, buffalos and cars, Indians and settlers. Such emotional output by members of the public speaks to the allegorical influence *The Scout* held and still holds over Kansas Citian identity.

#### The Aesthetic and Legacy of Indians Cresting Hilltops

Indeed, the arrangement at the precipice of a hilltop imbues *The Scout* with aesthetic value befitting its metaphorical power. "From points of vantage downtown," one 1927 source reads, "persons can see the Scout sharply outlined against the horizon. They will have a three-

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<sup>205</sup> "N.D.," Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

quarter view with each line silhouetted against a background of blue sky.”<sup>206</sup> Numerous newspaper sources include illustrations of *The Scout* that establish an aesthetic affinity with its surroundings. Along the same lines, photographers captured pictures of *The Scout* in order to include imagery representative of Kansas City in their respective shows. In 1936 Count Henrik Carl Arthur von Schoenfeldt of the Royal Photography Society of London incorporated the statue into his “first of a series of photographs” contributing “to establishing Kansas City as one of the loveliest and most picturesque communities in America.”<sup>207</sup> Likewise, in 1946 the Kansas City photographer Frank Meister included an image for his one-man show at the Woman’s City Club.<sup>208</sup> Its strong affiliation with the core identity of Kansas City led graphic artists to choose *The Scout* peering outward from its ridge for adornment on the covers and frontispieces of important books and journals. Numerous examples exist: the 1921 program for the Kansas City Centennial Association’s celebration; the Missouri Valley Historical Society’s 1921-1924 journals entitled *The Annals of Kansas City*; the American Library Association Bulletin’s 1957 Kansas City Conference issue; and two separate Hallmark publications celebrating Kansas City—*Kansas City: An Intimate Portrait of the Surprising City on the Missouri* from 1973 and *Kansas City: A Celebration of the Heartland* from 1991 (**fig. 15**).

These countless examples of *The Scout* in visual culture bear resemblance to several nineteenth-century pictures of Indians cresting hilltops—a trope that steadily grew in popularity and may have influenced the statue’s positioning at Penn Valley Park. Perhaps Asher B. Durand cemented the motif’s legacy with his *Progress* (1853), an oil painting that portrays “the entire history of the development of the East Coast by white settlers” unfolding below “before the eyes

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> “Pictorial Kansas City: The Scout,” *Kansas City Star*, May 3, 1936, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>208</sup> “The Scout,” *Kansas City Times*, Mar 4, 1914, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

of three Native Americans” positioned “at a craggy vantage point in the foreground” (**fig. 16**).<sup>209</sup> They watch as “nineteenth-century transportation from horse-drawn wagon to canal boat to railroad” progresses before their eyes.<sup>210</sup> Kenneth Maddox invokes a period critic who warned of the ramifications of such progress on Natives:

The axe of civilization is busy with our old forests, and artisan ingenuity is fast sweeping away the relics of our national infancy. What were once the wild and picturesque haunts of the Red Man, and where the wild deer roamed in freedom, are becoming the abodes of commerce and the seats of manufactures.<sup>211</sup>

Maddox later quotes another contemporary reviewer “wistfully” noting “a sense of decline and destruction” in *Progress*, a “picture that purports to celebrate progress”:

At the right of the picture are seen the various improvements of the age—the telegraph—railroad—canal—manufactory—steamship...At the left, the wild Indian is seen taking a last look at the land of his fathers, and for the last time treading those mountain glades, so beautiful in their wild scenery, but so soon to change and disappear before the white man’s resistless march of improvement.<sup>212</sup>

Albert Boime recites a different reviewer who emphasizes these Indians’ impending demise:

The wild Indian is taking a last look at the land of his fathers, and for the last time treading those mountain glades, so beautiful in their wild scenery, but soon to change and disappear before the white man’s resistless march of improvement.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Susan Danly, “Introduction,” in *The Railroad in American Art: Representations of Technological Change*, 1-50 (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988), 5. Leo Marx elaborates on this setting: “The unpleasing disarray that surrounds the red men—the unsightly rocks and the ugly, jagged, dead tress—is a vestige of that untrammelled, menacing, wild nature whose conquest had long been seen as a prerequisite for the very existence of American society. By setting this rude, slack, unimproved state of nature against a highlighted vision of the industrious, ordered, advancing society that is about to replace it, Durand leaves little doubt about how we are to see the plight of the pathetic ‘savages.’” See Leo Marx, “The Railroad-in-the-Landscape: An Iconological Reading of a Theme in American Art,” in *The Railroad in American Art: Representations of Technological Change*, 183-208 (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988), 202.

<sup>210</sup> Danly, 5.

<sup>211</sup> See “The Fine Arts: Exhibition at the National Academy,” *The Literary World*, May 15, 1847, p. 348. Quoted in Maddox, 53.

<sup>212</sup> See *The Illustrated News* I (April 30, 1853): 280. Quoted in Maddox, 56.

<sup>213</sup> “Exhibition of the National Academy of Design,” *The Knickerbocker* 42 (July 1853): 95. Quoted in Albert Boime, *The Magisterial Gaze: Manifest Destiny and American Landscape Painting c. 1830-1865* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 75.

Leo Marx analyzes the Natives' "postures, their semi-nudity, the wild, unimproved bot of nature they occupy—all of these," for Marx, "convey a strong impression of their powerlessness. It is as if they are about to be backed right out of the picture by the oncoming march of progress."<sup>214</sup>

Finally, Boime summarizes these prototypical encounters found in landscape painting of this era. For him, "the presence of this figure signifies the contest between wilderness and natives on the one hand and civilization and technology on the other."<sup>215</sup>

*The Scout*, too, observes the marshaling advancements of industrialization in his midst. In this way, both Dallin's and Durand's hilltop Indians reverse "the stock romantic nineteenth-century images of the philosopher on a hillside mediating upon the ruins of the civilization below" as seen in images like the frontispiece engraving from *A New Translation of Volney's Ruins* (1802).<sup>216</sup> Instead Dallin and Durand employed Native bodies in "the position of the spectator vis-à-vis the bifurcated landscape" split between the separate spheres of Indian and industry. Referring to Durand's canvas, Angela Miller writes, "The structure of *Progress* encourages identification not with the subject but with the objects of the transforming program of nationalism—the Indians themselves." As avatars "they gaze out upon the scene in the spectatorial role of the viewer gazing upon Durand's painting. In this moment of identification," Miller maintains, "both viewer and Indians find themselves distanced from the landscape of technological progress"—a different form of artwork spectatorship than, for instance, an onlooker appreciating the painting merely as visual spectacle.<sup>217</sup> Just as Indians serve as substitutes for New Englanders in the foreground of *Progress*, *The Scout* doubles for Kansas Citians gazing upon their romantic frontier pasts and growing industrial futures.

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<sup>214</sup> Marx, 201.

<sup>215</sup> Boime, 79.

<sup>216</sup> Maddox, 56.

<sup>217</sup> Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825-1875* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 164.

An additional example of this motif, the Indian body peering down at civilization from a ridge, is John Gadsby Chapman's *The First Ship*, a now-lost painting from 1837 of which an 1842 engraving published in *The Token and Atlantic Souvenir* is all that survives. A lone Indian stands at a precipice with one arm raised, apparently greeting "the first approach of western civilization, unaware that the event signals the beginning of his own destruction."<sup>218</sup> In fact, this Indian gazes "upon the forces that will eventually annihilate his people."<sup>219</sup> The pose and arm positioning of the Native in this engraving likely influenced Durand's *The Indian Vespers, Last of the Mohicans* (1847), which shows "a lone figure of an Indian with raised right hand" standing "on a promontory beneath the protective boughs of a tree and" surveying "the horizon."<sup>220</sup>

A period descriptor for this motif—"the savage watching the approach of the white settler"—shared by *The Scout* and Durand's canvases is "The Advance of Civilization." Maddox stresses that Durand's *Progress* was the archetype of this theme, illustrating for the first time in American painting "the settlement of the American continent, and the respective destinies of the two races who here come into collision." In turn, Maddox shares several instances of "The Advance of Civilization" appearing in American ephemera dating to the middle and late nineteenth century. In 1844 "the subject was used for the frontispiece of S.G. Goodrich's *A Pictorial History of the United States*, and variations of the theme appeared in his almost endless series of children's textbooks." Several contemporary bank note engravings similarly merged the motif into their designs. Maddox writes, "In one engraving" produced by the American Bank Note Company "the space is reduced telescopically so that the savage, rather than viewing the distant threat of civilization, directly confronts the various components of urban activity, thus graphically illustrating the collision of the destinies of two races." Other examples include

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<sup>218</sup> Maddox, 57.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

several frontispiece engravings in *Harpers Weekly*, the cover page for *Frank Leslie's Historical Register of the Centennial* (1876), or the cover of Olin D. Wheeler's *Wonderland 1900*, a guidebook published by the Northern Pacific "to promote the Yellowstone tourist experience."<sup>221</sup> But possibly most akin to *The Scout* in its placement at Penn Valley Park is the cover for the September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1905 souvenir booklet advertising the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, also known as "Portland Day" (**fig. 17**). The page features "an image of an American Indian chief seated on horseback at the edge of the forest, overlooking the fairgrounds below," as described by Sarah Moore.<sup>222</sup>

Imagery of Natives overlooking civilization from a hilltop emerged, too, "in the paintings of a number of lesser-known artists during this time" including Samuel Seymour's *Indians*, *Salmon Falls* and O. Rodier's *View of Ottawa, Illinois, from Starved Rock*.<sup>223</sup> DeWitt Clinton Boutelle's *The Indian Hunter* (1843) and *Indian Surveying a Landscape* (1855) are two more representative oil paintings containing the leitmotif within the oeuvres of lesser-known artists. With that said, prestigious painters occasionally integrated the same motif into their canvases. Frederic Remington's *Hostiles Watching the Column* from 1896-1897 and *Last of His Race (Vanishing American)* from 1908 stand out as prominent examples (**fig. 18**). In this way, *The Scout*, in its position at Penn Valley Park, stands conspicuously within a lineage of admired artworks exhibiting Natives on hilltops surveying civilization below.

Furthermore, several examples of nineteenth-century American imagery laud Manifest Destiny through celebration of the railroad as the literal vehicle ushering in a new technological era in the West. Paul Scolari captures the tension between Natives and trains popularized by

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<sup>221</sup> Marguerite Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 51.

<sup>222</sup> Sarah Moore, *Empire on Display: San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 35.

<sup>223</sup> Maddox, 61.



period artists. “The Indian, with his primitive modes of transportation and weaponry, horse and spear,” writes Scolari, “represents a passing way of life on the American continent” impossible to match “the culture of technological progress represented by the train.”<sup>224</sup> Along these lines, Leo Marx writes of the nineteenth-century train as a powerful rhetorical device, “a divinely ordained instrument for penetrating the wilderness, driving out the Native Americans, subduing the earth, and taking dominion over the vast trans-Mississippi West.”<sup>225</sup> Typically accompanying the railroad as a corollary motif is the Indian body as witness to the territorial expansion wrought by rail. *The Scout*, again, inherits this iconographical lineage. As Susan Danly states, “The displacement of the Indian by the railroad quickly became a major motif in both the visual arts and travel writing about the West” in the nineteenth century that maintained momentum into the early twentieth century. One early instance she cites is the prestigious Philadelphia photographer J.C. Browne, who in 1867 wrote about disastrous impacts “of the railroad on the indigenous populations of the West”:

The rail is driving the [buffalo] rapidly away, for the locomotive roars louder and runs faster than he; and the Indians on the prairies share his disgust, and will go with him to distant feeding grounds, whenever this “warpath” as they call it, is completed.<sup>226</sup>

Possibly “the most dramatic confrontation brought about by the incursion of the railroad into the West was between the white settlers and the Native American populations.” Out of the multitudinous examples of pictures that pit Indians against encroaching trains, Thomas Nast’s illustration in the title page of Albert D. Richardson’s travel book *Beyond the Mississippi* (1867) is probably most exemplary of this conflict. Two Natives in the foreground stand directly on the tracks in front of an approaching train. They appear surprised as they turn their backs to meet the

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<sup>224</sup> Scolari, 61.

<sup>225</sup> Marx, 191.

<sup>226</sup> See John C. Browne, “A Photographer among the Prairie Dogs and Buffaloes,” *The Philadelphia Photographer* 4 (1867): 206. Quoted in Danly, 21.

headlight with a shocked gaze. The train represents gradual “incursion into a pastoral setting,” an invasion segmenting “the undeveloped wilderness” of Indigenous peoples “from the civilized world.” Brian Dippie interprets Nast’s picture as an affirmation of commentary by one Chicago journalist, who in 1867 wrote:

All conquering civilization will be borne upon the wings of steam to the uttermost parts of the western plains, preparing the way for safe and rapid settlement by white men, and compelling the savages to either adopt civilization or suffer extinction.<sup>227</sup>

In Fanny Frances Palmer’s print entitled *Across the Continent. “Westward the Course of Empire Takes its Way”* (1868), “the smoke from the train literally obscures the Indians’ view of the wilderness” as they remain arrested on horseback—a countenance of curiosity reminiscent of Kansas City’s Native equestrian bronze, *The Scout*.<sup>228</sup>

Indigenous observations of railroads from an elevated vantage point also emerged in nineteenth-century paintings. Henry Farny (1847-1916), famed genre painter of the West who remains largely underappreciated in American art histories, famously crafted scenes adopting the motif. Notable among his canvases is *Morning of a New Day* from 1907 (**fig. 19**). Farny depicts a large group of Natives traversing a dangerous and snowy mountain pass. Several members of the group gaze toward the opposite side of the canyon at a train careening along its tracks. Alexander Nemerov situates the work within “the historical story of industry’s appearance on the frontier—trains, wagons, and steamboats eyed warily by Indians, whose point of view each painter repeatedly adopts.” Farny’s train “augurs the end of the ‘happy days’” and “announces the

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<sup>227</sup> *Chicago Journal*, November 18, 1867. Quoted in Dippie, 99.

<sup>228</sup> Danly, 17-21.

modern age's actual and spiritual mechanization" in contradistinction to "a traditional, older way of life."<sup>229</sup>

All of this aforementioned nineteenth-century imagery previews the intended symbolic resonance of *The Scout*, looking over terminals and tracks along the West Bottoms at the southern edges of Kansas City. The editor of *Men of Affairs in Greater Kansas City, 1912* captured the state of affairs in the railroad industry just four years prior to the positioning of *The Scout*:

As a railroad center Kansas City stands second in the United States. Virtually every system which traverses the continent has terminals or connections here. Thirty-four lines at present enter the city. Nearly three hundred passenger trains are operated into the Union Station every day, with a considerable number stopping at the eight other stations within the ten-mile radius. The new Union Station, in course of construction, will be the second largest in the United States and one of the most costly and complete.<sup>230</sup>

James Shortridge explains Kansas City's railroad boom, particularly in consideration of terminal facility enlargements, in his more recent history from 2012. "By 1900," he writes, "the tracks and freight depots of the Rock Island, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas, the Milwaukee Road, the Frisco, the Burlington, and the Santa Fe lines completely filled the lowland east of the stockyard and south of Fourteenth Street."<sup>231</sup> Undoubtedly, the Kansas Citians who pushed to obtain *The Scout* in the second decade of the twentieth century placed it at Penn Valley Park with the intention of conjuring metaphorical allusions to the vast sea of train-tracks along OK Creek and the West Bottoms in the statue's midst.

Moreover, plenty of nineteenth-century imagery forecasts the physical arrangement of *The Scout* in sight of industrial smokestacks in the surrounding urban Kansas City environment.

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<sup>229</sup> Alexander Nemerov, "Doing the 'Old America': The Image of the American West, 1880-1920, in *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*, 285-343 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 311.

<sup>230</sup> "Greater Kansas City," 2.

<sup>231</sup> James Shortridge, *Kansas City and How it Grew, 1822-2011* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012), 75.

Of interest is one bank note engraving found in the collection of The New York Public Library. A “dispossessed Indian surveys a manufacturing city of billowing smokestacks. Beside him, a windmill, decrepit and unused, stands in disrepair.” Its sails, symbols “of power on New York’s seal, have become as impotent and as anachronistic to an industrialized America as the Indian.” Kansas Citians likely positioned *The Scout* in direct view of bustling industries in the valleys below Penn Valley Park to symbolize this intention. It is true that the 1910s—the decade preceding procurement of *The Scout*—saw “the first sustained period of industrial growth.” Haskell, Jr. and Fowler state, “The largest single industrial event was the building of the Standard Oil Refinery at Sugar Creek.” By 1909 “thirty-six manufacturing concerns started operation in the Blue valley district,” while the Armourdale district in Kansas City, Kansas—falling within the northwest gaze of *The Scout*—was booming. “By 1913,” just three years prior to the statue’s arrival, “a large number of comparatively small factories using sheet metal products gave Kansas City third place in the field,” which was a competitive position in the American motor car assemblage industry accompanying their established strengths in the cracker, confectionary, soap, lumber, livestock, and packing industries.<sup>232</sup> In short, *The Scout* arrived in Kansas City at a moment of tremendous economic and manufacturing growth—its station at the summit in Penn Valley Park put these thriving industries in full view.

### Appropriating *The Scout*

In addition to the historical bond existing between *The Scout* and Kansas City’s romanticized conceptualization of itself as an industrial giant on the western frontier,

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<sup>232</sup> Haskell, Jr. and Fowler, 98-99. Kansas City’s livestock and packing industries stood “second only to that of Chicago, on which it is gaining at a rapid rate” by 1912. At this time, approximately “twenty thousand persons are directly employed about the one hundred and sixty acres of yards at the eight packing establishments...The finest live stock exchange building in the world shelters the firms through whose hands this enormous business passes.” See “Greater Kansas City,” 2.

appropriations of *The Scout* by Kansas City businesses and institutions correspondingly elevate the statue to the status of civic emblem. It was, in fact, the architect W.C. Root, who in 1916 first advocated for *The Scout* as “something characteristic of the city” and urged Kansas Citians to “play ourselves up as the Scout City, put the Scout on our flag, on our seal, our stationary and advertising.”<sup>233</sup> Many of his proposals bore fruit. In 1928 The Prospect Hill Congregational Church of Kansas City placed an image of *The Scout* in their bulletin prior to the Presidential election eventually won by Herbert Hoover. An excerpt under the image reads, “May such a watchful spirit overlook our whole country this Election Day and may we have the far-seeing eyes of the old Indian scout, peering far beyond the world horizons, with international dreaming in its vision...as well as a brave facing of our national issues.”<sup>234</sup>

The Kansas City Public Service Company adapted *The Scout* “to beautify” their new streetcars and buses in 1937. As a matter of fact, the company requested ideas from the public for a new emblem (**fig. 20**). Earl C. Statler of 300 West Armour Boulevard won \$100 in prize money for suggesting *The Scout*. A journalist quoted Statler: “And I also had sunlight on my Scout, who was painted in a darker shade. They decided to make him white, but I think mine was the prettiest.”<sup>235</sup> Even though Statler was somewhat disgruntled at the alterations made by the Public Service Company, this collaborative moment is significant in its accent on *Scout* imagery; evidently, *The Scout* engendered allusions to travel and physical movement, a connection that likely grew organically from the universal understanding of *The Scout* as a beacon for the frontier and the West. The emblem itself contains *The Scout* within a heart motif—a public symbol for Kansas City as the “heart of America” found, among other places, prominently

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<sup>233</sup> “The Scout Under Fire.”

<sup>234</sup> *Prospect Hill Messenger* 8, no. 8 (Oct 28, 1928), Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

<sup>235</sup> “The Scout is A Juggler, Between Sides of a Street Car, He Will do a Quick Change,” *Kansas City Times*, Mar 31, 1937, Dallin Papers, Reel 182.

displayed on the letterhead from The Chamber of Commerce. They were definitely proud of the new emblem. “The transit company showed off its new trolley bus fleet by driving one on its route, festooned with pennants and [an] oversized Kansas City Public Service logo” containing *The Scout*.<sup>236</sup> Of additional interest is the 1930s sightseeing car taking its name from *The Scout*. One can see “Scout” written in bold letters on the side with an arrow pointing through the name in a forward direction that underscores an obvious relationship to movement and travel (**fig. 21**).

*The Scout* has performed a variety of other reputational roles for institutions in the Kansas City metropolitan area. For example, Haskell Institute (located in Lawrence, Kansas)—known since 1993 as Haskell Indian Nations University—incorporated *The Scout* on pamphlets distributed at annual banquets celebrating Troop C, 114<sup>th</sup> Cavalry starting in 1926 (**fig. 22**). Based out of Haskell, it was the only Indian troop in the United States Army following its official recognition in 1924. Haskell also emulated imagery from the statue for several illustrations embedded within the text of the November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1934 anniversary issue of the *Indian Leader*, their bimonthly publication. Soon after, in 1937, alumni representing the University of Kansas and the University of Missouri assembled together at *The Scout* for a photo opportunity in recognition of “the birth of a collegiate ‘tradition’ with the dedication of a tom-tom [drum] to be awarded annually to the winner of the Thanksgiving day football game between” the two universities.<sup>237</sup> On another occasion, the NHL’s Kansas City Scouts were named for the sculpture in a citywide contest in the late 1970s, and the team subsequently adorned their jerseys with a visual interpretation of the statue. This former NHL franchise conceivably inspired The Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley Scouts to employ *The Scout* as the moniker for their athletic teams. Most recently, in 2004, James Calcara, managing

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<sup>236</sup> Monroe Dodd, *A Splendid Ride: The Streetcars of Kansas City, 1870-1957* (Kansas City: Kansas City Star Books, 2002), 143.

<sup>237</sup> “N.D.,” Dallin Papers, Reel 182

principal of CDFM architects, unsuccessfully proposed to build housing units at Penn Valley Park at the site of the current tennis courts, using the statue as a “public amenity anchor” for the development.<sup>238</sup> One of the only lasting appropriations of *The Scout* can be found in the symbol for United Missouri Bank, its resonance owed to generations of Kemper family philanthropic acts to preserve *The Scout* began by R. Crosby Kemper Sr. in the 1940s. In 1960 R. Crosby Kemper II of the City National Bank & Trust Co. bequeathed \$10,000 for the statue’s restoration—a political move with roots in his father’s actions in the 1940s to pay for a restoration that continued through the family banking line into the 2000s with his son pledging funds to renovate *The Scout* in advance of its rededication in 2002. Finally, *The Scout* has drawn attention overseas. In 1992 Jim Brothers, a sculptor based out of nearby Lawrence, Kansas, produced a half-size, six-foot bronze replica of *The Scout* for display in the Kansas City exhibit at the U.S. Pavilion for Expo ’92 in Seville, Spain. This exhibit commemorated the twenty-five year “anniversary of the sister-city relationship between Kansas City and Seville.”<sup>239</sup> Formally donated to Seville following the exhibition, tourists and Spaniards alike appreciate the replica to this day.

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<sup>238</sup> Kevin Collison, “A Plan with a View: Potential of Penn Valley Park Inspires Planners, but Unsettles Some Others,” *The Kansas City Star*, 2004.

<sup>239</sup> Brian Burnes, “The Scout rides again,” *The Kansas City Star*, March 5, 1992.

## Conclusion

*The Scout* is ubiquitous among the visual and material cultures of Kansas City. My preceding chapter shared merely a glimpse into the vast catalogue of its imagery adopted by local institutions for promotional purposes. Many others exist: lithographs, postcards, greeting cards, wedding photos, just to name a few. However, do these modern iterations of *Scout* culture still hold the same symbolic capital as the statue sustained in the early twentieth century? While *The Scout* maintains a presence in the cultural ethos of contemporary Kansas City, its incidence is but a shimmer of the statue's former figurative life, a life documented in this thesis. Maybe Kansas City needed *The Scout* in the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s to solidify their identity. It certainly performed cultural work in those decades, imbuing vigor and energy into a growing Midwestern city proven by the abundance of enthusiastic firsthand accounts from the early twentieth century. But once Kansas City formulated its identity, their statue transformed into a backdrop—most often a photo op—that no longer speaks to the city in the same ways.

Two recent episodes in the story of *The Scout* suggest instability in its current meaning. In 2011 someone “splashed a gallon of gray paint all over the back of The Scout,” running “down the horse's black tail” and covering “its haunches.” The vandal left an empty paint can at the base. Isadore Adger, a local rollerblading enthusiast who enjoys riding past the statue “at sunset on the scenic hill in Penn Valley Park that overlooks downtown,” informed the local press of its damage. The newspaper article also quoted Joanie Shields, coordinator for Adopt a Monument, a preservation group that works on endangered public artworks. She said *The Scout* “was refurbished and rededicated about 10 years ago, and vandalism hasn't been a big problem since then. But people climbing on the statue keep breaking off the reins”—a comment that



addresses the sporadic nature of this statue's vandalism saga and resultant cleanings, waxes and repairs.<sup>240</sup>

In 2013 the Kansas City artist A. Bitterman designed a large-scale artboard showing himself standing atop scaffolding and pointing a rifle directly at the front of *The Scout*. United Missouri Bank, dedicated funder of repairs to the statue, originally commissioned the sign for display at one of its branches but withdrew their support upon viewing the controversial image. Bitterman then decided to display the picture on a billboard at 19<sup>th</sup> and Baltimore across from the bank, but that attempt failed, too, when public complaints resulted in removal (**fig. 23**). Yet Bitterman defended his creation, calling the poster “a conversation with history” that “invites the viewer to examine ways in which the past intersects with the present to define our sense of place.” He explained how “it carries a historical narrative of what white people at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century wanted the Indian to be. The artist on the scaffolding is confronting that narrative.”<sup>241</sup> Bitterman's artist statement fully encapsulates his intentions:

The Scout is not an Indian. It is a sculpture of an Indian. It represents a narrative created by and for white culture. What's what I'm taking aim at. Images like these (the sculpture itself) perpetrate a controlling narrative that masks the stories we don't want to hear or acknowledge. In this case, that would be genocide and virtual extinction of an entire group of people. The sculpture itself and our willingness to take it for granted, is offensive. We (the dominant culture) assimilate and lay claim to things we don't won in ways that will make our history more palatable. If someone looks at my image (the billboard) and sees me shooting an Indian, then that person is looking through the lens of an expired narrative that once fueled a settlement culture. It doesn't matter if that person is an Indian, part-Indian, or no Indian at all.<sup>242</sup>

Moses Brings Plenty, an Oglala Lakota and community outreach organizer from the Kansas City Indian Center, found fault with Bitterman's views. In fact he “was affected by it.” *The Scout* represents his particular tribal nation, and because of his personal affinity for the representation,

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<sup>240</sup> Lynn Horsley, “Paint Damages Scout Statue in Penn Valley Park; Paint: Scout Statue Is a Symbol of KC,” *The Kansas City Star*, 2011, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

<sup>241</sup> “Controversial Public Art in Crossroads Comes Down Early,” KCUR 89.3, Sep 30, 2013.

<sup>242</sup> A. Bitterman, “The Scout/PR,” artist statement, Sep 27, 2013.

Brings Plenty stated, “I’m thankful. I’m very thankful, especially for the minds and emotions of the children” in response to receiving word of this billboard’s removal. “And this day and age,” he continued, “we don’t want our children to feel ashamed of who they are and their traditions and their culture.”<sup>243</sup> Fortunately, this philosophical and sociopolitical tussle resulted in a public forum about the billboard; both Bitterman and Brings Plenty were present. Bitterman respectfully commented on Brings Plenty’s words, effectively negotiating a common ground. “He started speaking Lakota and addressed the suffering of his people,” stated Bitterman. “As a person of white culture, I’m part of the hegemony. What could I possibly say to him that would mean anything?” Turning to an analysis of his billboard, he continued, “The magnitude of the offense is still incomprehensible. What do I have to answer that? Shame. That’s what the work pivots on.” With the image, Bitterman was attempting to push against the “white cultural imagining of an Indian, made within 20 years or less of the final push of genocide”—petrified ideas and stories inherited from the past that deserve unpacking.<sup>244</sup> In his words, *The Scout* is “an expired narrative, the hollow emblem of a city.”<sup>245</sup> Still, Bitterman understood that the Native community could interpret his project as another attempt by white culture to control the manufactured narrative of Indigenous peoples in the United States. “Moses did what he had to do to control the message of a historically subjugated group,” stated Bitterman.<sup>246</sup>

The upshot here is that both the incidence of splashed paint and the disagreement between Bitterman and Brings Plenty over the statue’s meaning serve as stark reminders that representation of the Native body is an active ideological battlefield. These cases likewise testify to Kirk Savage’s assessments of public monuments in the Gilded Age. “Began as a project

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<sup>243</sup> “Controversial Public Art.”

<sup>244</sup> Alice Thorson, “A Bitterman aims to provoke,” *The Kansas City Star*, May 13, 2015.

<sup>245</sup> Laura Spencer, “Public Art will go on Display, Despite Withdrawal of Commission,” *KCUR* 89.3, July 16, 2013.

<sup>246</sup> “A. Bitterman aims.”

designed by particular actors for particular political ends,” he writes, “the monument was transformed into the image of the people—even if some part of the people” such as paint splashers or ideological naysayers “took the unusual step of contesting that image.”<sup>247</sup> In this way, vandals and critics of *The Scout* continue to voice their grievances physically and verbally just as they did in the early twentieth century.

Even though *The Scout* resonates strongest on a local level, its imagery fits into national narratives regarding larger scholarly conversations such as those interrogating the preponderance of Natives utilized as cultural mascots. Bill Anthes writes, “The controversy over the use of Indian names and images bespeaks a deep divide between Native Americans and non-Native people.” There exists “a fundamental and incommensurable disagreement about the meaning of history and the right to use and control symbols of Native American heritage.” But Anthes reminds us that fans intend their evocations of Indigenous team names “not as insults, but as honorific celebrations of America’s Indian culture.” What side should we take? Its sculptor and Kansas City purchasers perceived *The Scout* as Sioux, a term today known pejoratively as a misnomer disrespectfully clumping Lakota and Dakota peoples of the Great Plains into one convenient, mass group. Sitting Bull’s son, when visiting *The Scout*, recognized, rather, that the statue specifically represented a Lakota. Placing the statue into this national mascot debate could be profitable. Anthes raises a point from one end of the dispute: “Indeed, throughout the Midwest and across the country, Native names...are an important part of non-Natives’ sense of place and history—instilling feelings of rootedness and community for many.”<sup>248</sup> Surely,

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<sup>247</sup> Savage, 7. Also of note, he writes, “But a funny thing happened once a monument was built and took its place in the landscape of people’s lives: it became a kind of natural fact, as if it had always been meant to be.”

<sup>248</sup> Bill Anthes, *Edgar Heap of Birds* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 7-9.

similarly productive conversations from both sides will arise upon investigation of Native bronzes found elsewhere around the nation.

An additional avenue of research worth pursuing is an investigation of Dallin's motivations to sculpt *The Scout* and other equestrian Indians. Historian John C. Ewers wrote:

Dallin actively advocated the cause of sculpture in America, although he decried the fact that American sculptors had to spend their lives executing orders for dull memorials to defunct statesmen and military heroes. It is noteworthy that many of Dallin's best-known works were not commissioned at all. He executed them because he felt impelled to do so, but encountered little difficulty in finding a market for them. And he preferred to memorialize a people rather than a person.<sup>249</sup>

*The Scout* falls into this category: a sculpture exhibited to the public on loan until they assembled funds to pay the artist and keep the work permanently. Moreover, *The Scout* is not a political figure, nor is he an army veteran. In Dallin's words, the Indian as subject is "first of all a human being, with emotions and affectations."<sup>250</sup> Quotes like these have led scholars to consider Dallin's Indian monuments as critiques to "US treatment of Native communities during western expansion" or challenges from the sculptor against US imperialism—core sections of the thesis offered in the latest installment of Dallin scholarship by Emily C. Burns. However, her argument rests on an assumption; Dallin's goal was to draw "attention to the mistreatment of Native communities."<sup>251</sup> Despite his nostalgic reminiscences about Natives, could he be using this story to his advantage in creating a market for his work? He was a magician with the press, as the newspaper clippings in the Dallin Papers prove, though, he occasionally contradicted himself. For instance, Dallin said, "I do not blame the white man for taking the Indian's lands... That was the white man's privilege."<sup>252</sup> Was he or was he not sympathetic to western expansion? Having

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<sup>249</sup> Ewers, 42.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>251</sup> Burns, 4-6.

<sup>252</sup> "Cyrus Dallin Dreams Great Memorial to American Indian," *Boston Sunday Advertiser*, Nov 22, 1925, Dallin Papers, Reel 184.

grounded *The Scout* in the City Beautiful movement—a program with both local and national ramifications—and established its role as an identifying marker for Kansas City and its inhabitants, an interrogation of Dallin’s intentions as rooted in national conversations over Indianness and Indianicity during and beyond the Gilded Age could yield productive results.

Finally, Dallin scholarship as a whole could move in new directions. Pulling from some of Dallin’s rhetoric, Burns argues that he intentionally formulated his Indian representations to draw “attention to the mistreatment of Native communities” and to critique their treatment by the U.S. “during western expansion.”<sup>253</sup> Her paper opens discourse on the larger national concerns implied by Dallin’s works. However, it remains beholden to an old scholarly conversation popularized by E. Wilbur Pomeroy and Ethel Pomeroy in their 1914 essay for the *Arts & Decoration* journal entitled “Cyrus E. Dallin and the North American Indian: Four Statues Which Express the Fate of a Dying Race.”<sup>254</sup> Burns challenges their popular thesis that claims the four statues serve as a narrative sequence, though her essay continues to adhere to the convention of interpreting the meaning of Dallin’s first four Indian statues—a trend one sees in virtually all publications on Dallin after 1914.<sup>255</sup> Kent Ahrens has surmised that Dallin capitalized on the notion of a quartet in order to market his art, since “he made no mention of his intention to produce a cycle of four equestrians until after” casting the supposed fourth entry,

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<sup>253</sup> Burns, 4.

<sup>254</sup> See E. Wilbur Pomeroy and Ethel Pomeroy, “Cyrus E. Dallin and the North American Indian: Four Statues which Express the Fate of a Dying Race,” *Arts & Decoration* (1910-1918) 4, no. 4 (February 1914): 152-153.

<sup>255</sup> See Long, 563-568; John C. Ewers, “Cyrus E. Dallin: Master Sculptor,” 34-43; Craven, 527-531; Broder, 92-106; Francis, 35-63; Carol Clark, “Indians on the Mantel and in the Park,” in *The American West in Bronze*, Ed. Nancy Grubb (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 25-55.

*Appeal to the Great Spirit.*<sup>256</sup> Maybe consideration of *The Scout* and other Indian bronzes beyond Dallin's revered quartet could help art historians analyze the artist in novel, valuable ways.

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<sup>256</sup> See Ahrens, 37-39. Ahrens summarizes additional shorter writings from just prior to 1914 that brand Dallin's Indian foursome.

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Illustrations



Cyrus Dallin (1861-1944) (fig. 1)



Cyrus Dallin, *The Scout*, Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915 (fig. 2)



Cyrus Dallin, *The Scout*, Kansas City, MO, Penn Valley Park, 1914, pedestal since 1960 with refurbishments (fig. 3)



George Kessler (1862-1923) (fig. 4)



View from *The Scout* (fig. 5)



Cyrus Dallin, *The Scout*, Kansas City, Missouri, Penn Valley Park, 1914, after 1922 (fig. 6)

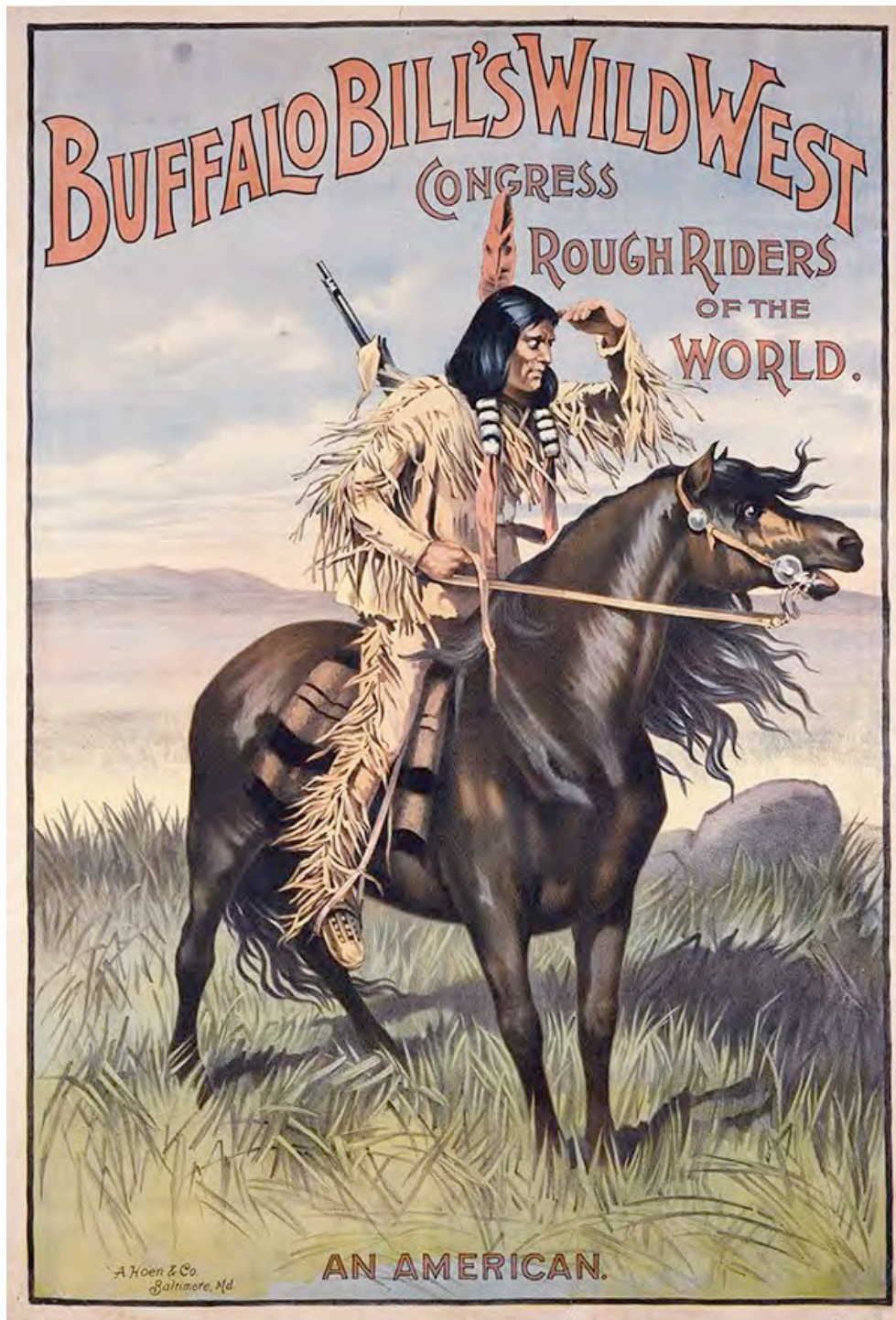


*The Scout*, detail (fig. 7)

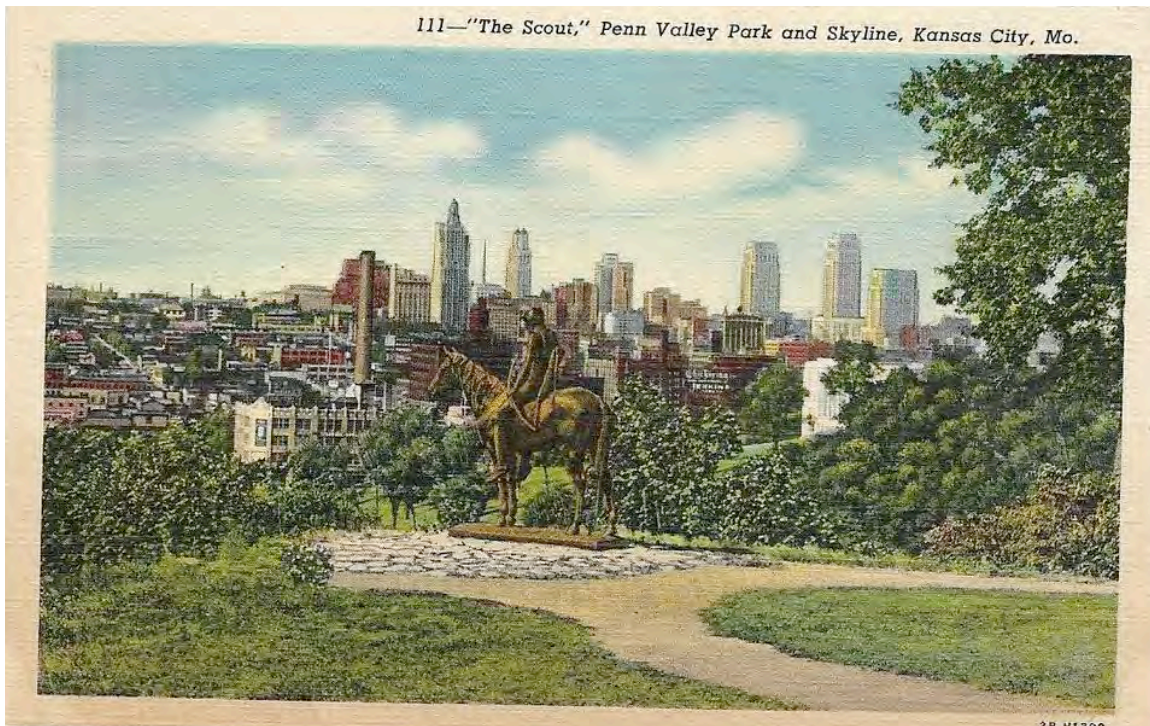


Cyrus Dallin, *Appeal to the Great Spirit*, MFA, Boston, 1909 (fig. 8)

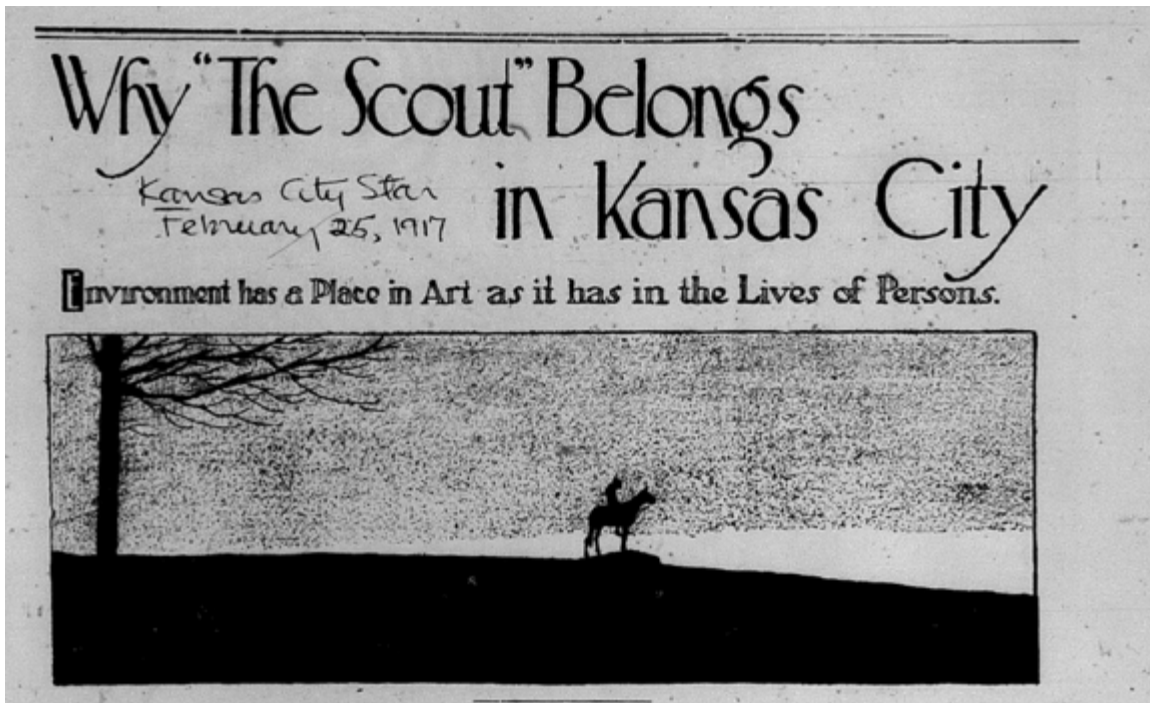




Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show poster, 1893, Buffalo Bill Center of the West (fig. 9)



Penn Valley Park, Kansas City, Missouri (fig. 10)



Newspaper illustration of *The Scout* showing silhouette against sky, AAA, Dallin Papers, Reel 182 (fig. 11)



*The Scout*, vandalism detail, c. 1930s, AAA, Dallin Papers, Reel 182 (fig. 12)



James Earl Fraser, *End of the Trail*, plaster exhibited at Panama Pacific International Exposition, 1915  
(fig. 13)

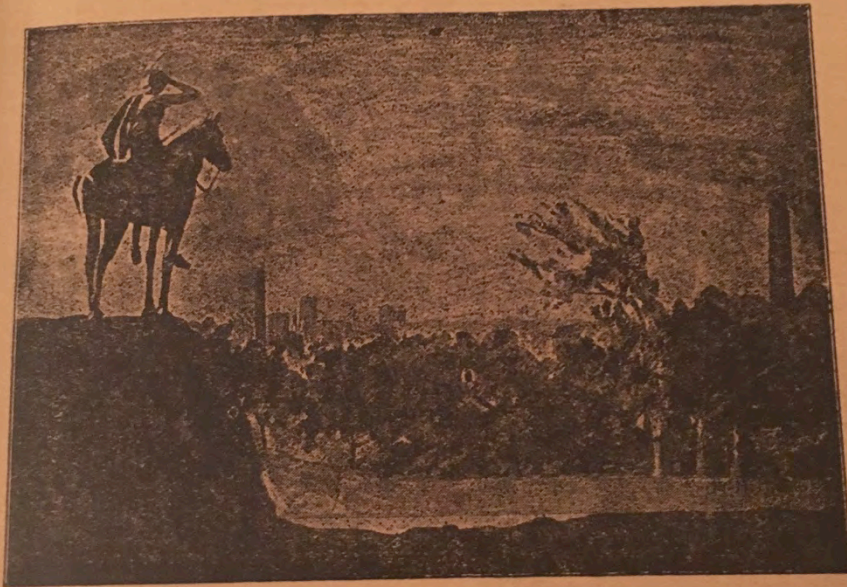


Santa Fe Trail marker, Penn Valley Park, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library (fig. 14)

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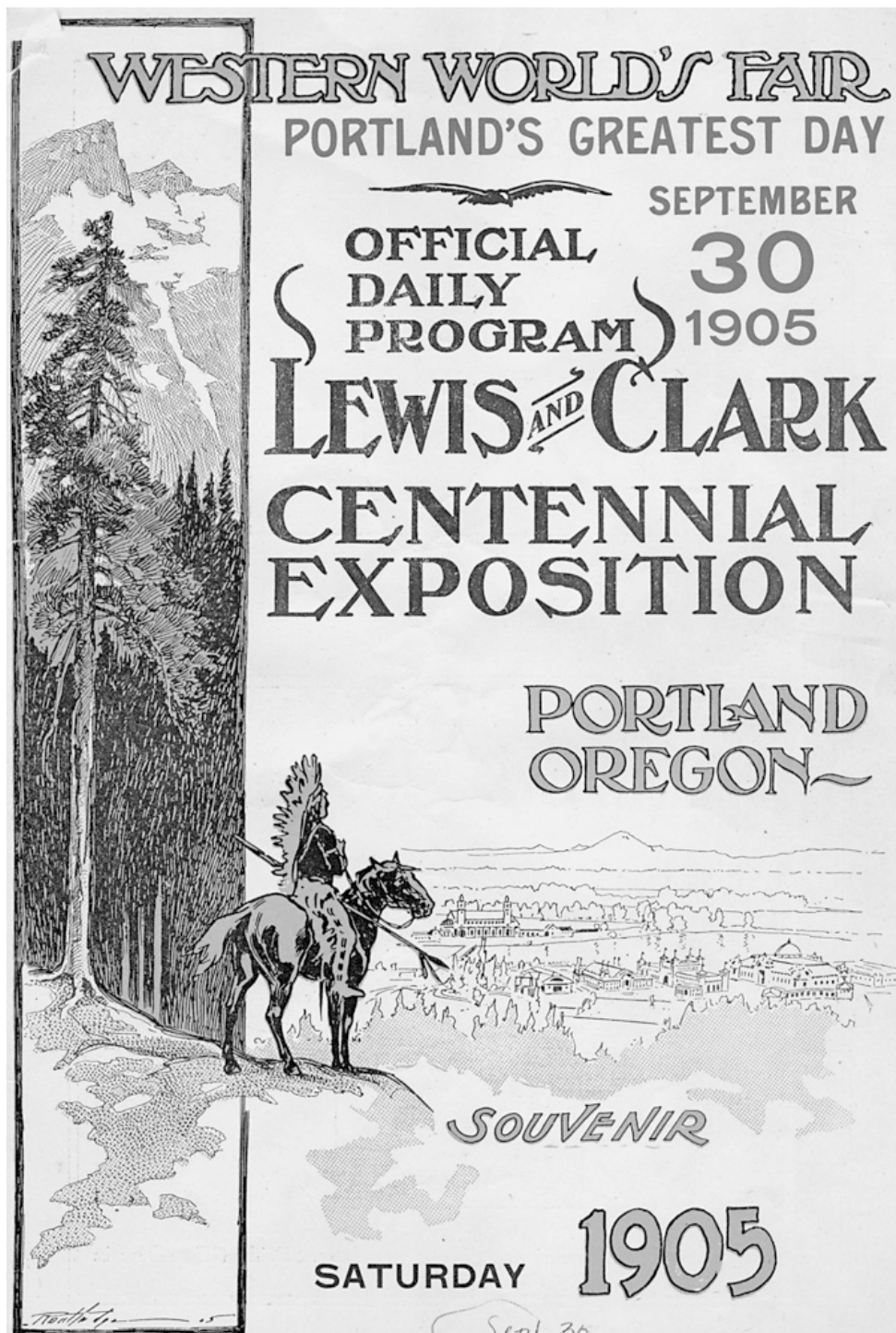
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Missouri Valley Historical Society's 1923 journal entitled *The Annals of Kansas City* (fig. 15)



Asher B. Durand, *Progress*, 1853 (fig. 16)





Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition "Portland Day" poster, 1905, Oregon Historical Society (fig. 17)



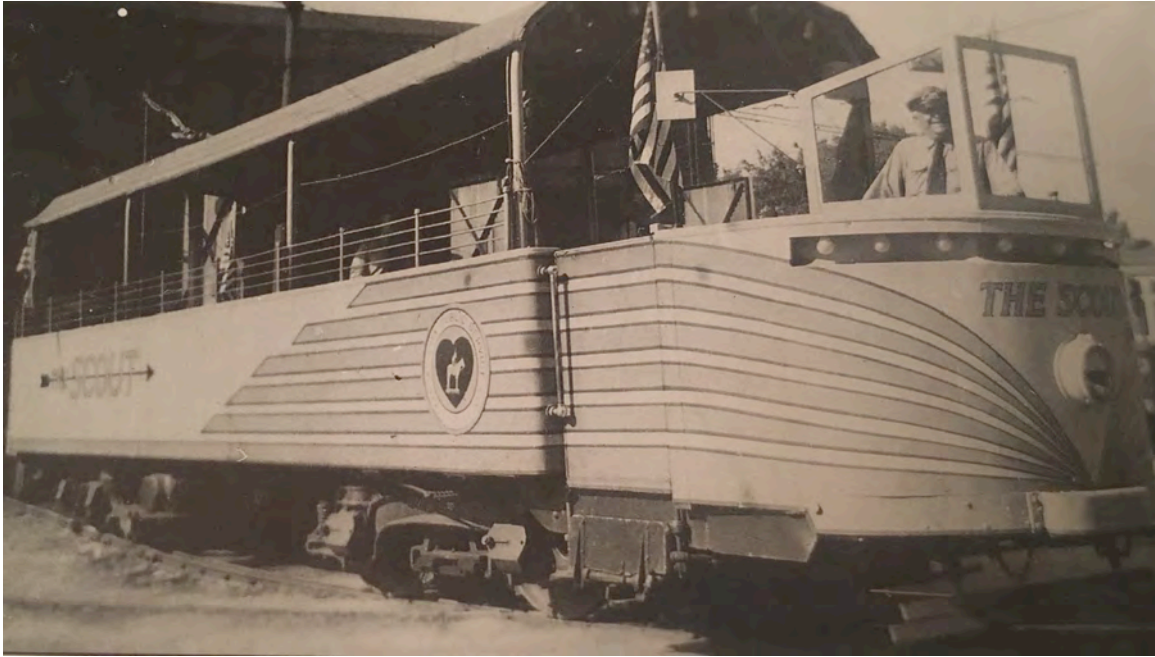
Frederic Remington, *Hostiles Watching the Column*, 1896-1897, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO (fig. 18)



Henry Farny, *Morning of a New Day*, 1907 (fig. 19)



Kansas City Public Service Company logo, 1937, AAA, Dallin Papers, Reel 182 (fig. 20)



Scout sightseeing car, Kansas City, MO, c.1930s, from *Kansas City Streetcars Remembered* (fig. 21)

# THIRD ANNUAL FEAST

TROOP C, 114TH CAVALRY

APRIL 16, 1927



The only Indian Cavalry Troop in the Military Forces of the United States. Federally recognized May 15, 1924. Carried away honor of the Banner Troop of the State three months later; Banner Troop at inspection Cavalry regiment 1925; Banner Troop at the Encampment 1925; Banner Troop at the Encampment 1926. Put on exhibition drill for the Governor 1924, 1925, and 1926; exhibition drill before the assembled troop of entire camp 1925; drilled at American Royal by special invitation of Directors in Kansas City, Mo., 1925; Exhibition drills at Soldiers Field Stadium, Chicago, Ill., 1926, and took special part in the pageant, "The Birth of Chicago."

Banquet pamphlet displaying *The Scout*, Cultural Center and Museum, Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, KS (fig. 22)



A. Bitterman, The Scout billboard, 2013, kcur.org (fig. 23)