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Campus Planning

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(The University campus has been commended much for its beauty, but its expansion has brought out new difficulties of adjustment. Professor Goldsmith's description of the problem, in the following article, is intended as the first of a series on this subject.)

THAT everyone, either consciously or unconsciously, is directly affected by the appearance and conditions of his surroundings is a fact that has been made plainly apparent to every thinking person. That the knowledge of this fact has become so general accounts for the many movements for civic betterment such as town planning commissions, city art commissions, civic center developments, and similar evidences of municipal progress. The demand for more attractive school buildings, more artistic residences, better commercial architecture, must also be attributed to an appreciation of the effect of personal environment upon the individual. Is there a new, attractive, and up-to-date school building in town? The children attending it will be alive with enthusiasm for it, while those attending the old and ugly structure will be found to be depressed by their surroundings. Have you recently built a new and artistic dwelling? Notice the pride you take in keeping the whole place attractive, while perhaps the old place was allowed to run down and look seedy. Has a new commercial building been erected, with an attractive store front? Watch how the best trade will flock to it. This effect of the physical appearance of things may be based upon an instinctive appreciation of the artistic, but it is evident that good practical common sense underlies any municipal or

private improvement undertaken on account of it. It is good business to draw trade to the store, and it is a practical step in education to make the children proud of their school.

Directly in line with such developments is the effort being made by so many educational institutions to improve campus conditions. Hundreds of universities, colleges, seminaries, academies, and other educational institutions have made or are making a careful study of campus planning with a view not only to improvement of present conditions but to provide for continuous future improvement. This is not a mere evanescent burst of aestheticism. It is deeper than an artistic aspiration toward an impossible ideal. It is much more than a theoretic spasm. It is a practical and pertinent ambition to look beyond the present and prepare in a logical manner for future growth while at the same time reaping in the immediate present a great good through conditions that will contribute to a healthy, cheerful, progressive state of mind in students and faculty alike.

Kansas has a reputation for advanced thought and progressive action. To sustain this in regard to her educational institutions it is necessary that this matter of campus development be given not only due consideration but definite action. Let us look at the conditions that prevail at the University of Kansas.

The University began approximately fifty years ago with one building—North College—which was so cheaply constructed that it has long outlived its usefulness and is now hardly safe for occupation. Following this came Fraser Hall, located at the extreme edge of a new campus. Here was an opportunity to consider future development that was neglected, probably because there was no expectation that the University would become the great institution of many buildings that we have today. Fraser, set at the eastern edge of the campus, faces east! There is no approach to the campus in front of Fraser, nor every likely to be, in view of the almost precipitous hill at the crest of which the campus terminates. Fraser cannot be made a center around which the University buildings may be grouped. Instead Fraser turns its back upon the rest of the campus! Other buildings have been erected, still without due consideration of the possible development of the campus. Snow Hall, back of Fraser, faces north upon a sweep of road that enters the campus at the eastern edge, from the north, curving toward the west past the

end of Fraser. Near the point where this drive enters the campus are Spooner Library and the newer Dyche Museum, the latter facing east and the former west. On the north side of the drive, at the curve and at an angle to all of the buildings named, stands the law school, Green Hall. At the southern edge of the campus and facing the small lawn in front of Fraser on the eastern edge, is Blake Hall, or "Physics." And crowded in on the south side, partly back of Fraser and well back of the rear line of Snow, is a dilapidated structure known as the "Medic" building. These buildings form a scattered group of which no three have any definite relation to each other. They present such an inconsequential and careless appearance in the way they just "stand around" that it is no wonder the students feel the effect and are careless enough, some of them, to thoughtlessly scatter papers and general debris—even tin tobacco boxes—over the campus. This condition is much more apparent at this north-eastern entrance to the campus than at any other place.

Westward along the drive, beyond Snow Hall, is the chemistry building on the north side, while at the south edge of the hill is the attractive building known as Fowler Shops. The most attractive feature of the eastern portion of the campus is the natural setting given to some of the buildings—Green Hall and Fowler Shops, for example—by the trees which were planted through the admirable foresight of Chancellor Marvin of the early days. Further to the west, on the south side of the drive, close to the edge of the hill, come Robinson Gymnasium, the mining and geology building and the engineering school, and back of the latter is the power plant, so placed that the soft coal smoke from its short chimney floods the south rooms of the engineering building whenever the wind blows from the south, which is sufficiently often.

On the north side of the drive is the wing of the uncompleted administration building. This is the first building to be placed with any thought of future development of the campus. Before this building was begun the authorities endeavored to have a landscape architect prepare a campus plan that should harmonize, as far as possible, the existing heterogeneous array and at the same time look forward to future growth and development. As is too often the case where laudable endeavor is not properly understood, the cost of making such a study was not forthcoming.

Possibly those who refused the University the funds for this purpose looked upon it as merely an artistic desirability instead of the practical necessity which it is in reality. What modern factory would erect building after building with no consideration for efficiency of administration? Why should not an educational institution be as far sighted as a business corporation?

That the present size of the University was unlooked for in the earlier days may be excusable. That the future growth of the institution should be ignored in these enlightened days would be unforgivable. The authorities have endeavored to keep pace with the modern breadth of thought in this respect and only lack of appropriations has prevented the preparation of a studied campus plan. They have done all that could be done under the circumstances. They realized that an institution of any kind must have its administrative center, and that it logically should be a real center. To this end the new administration building was placed where it would be on a logical axis. The valley which forms the northern part of the University grounds is practically heart shaped, outlined by the upper edge of the hill. The axis of this little valley runs nearly north and south; and the administration building has been placed on this axis, at the crest of the hill, overlooking the valley. The eastern side of the hill top has been developed at random as described. Any future growth must be to the west and around to the north. A properly balanced development along these lines, with the completed administration building as a center and with the sweep of valley enclosed by buildings along the curving crest and given a proper landscape development, would make the campus of the University of Kansas one of the most beautiful in the country.

As the campus exists there is no adequate approach. From whatever point you enter the campus you come in at the back or side of some building. It is not only unimposing but belittling to the institution. The development of the north valley as described would provide an adequate approach with the additional advantage of a truly beautiful view of the buildings.

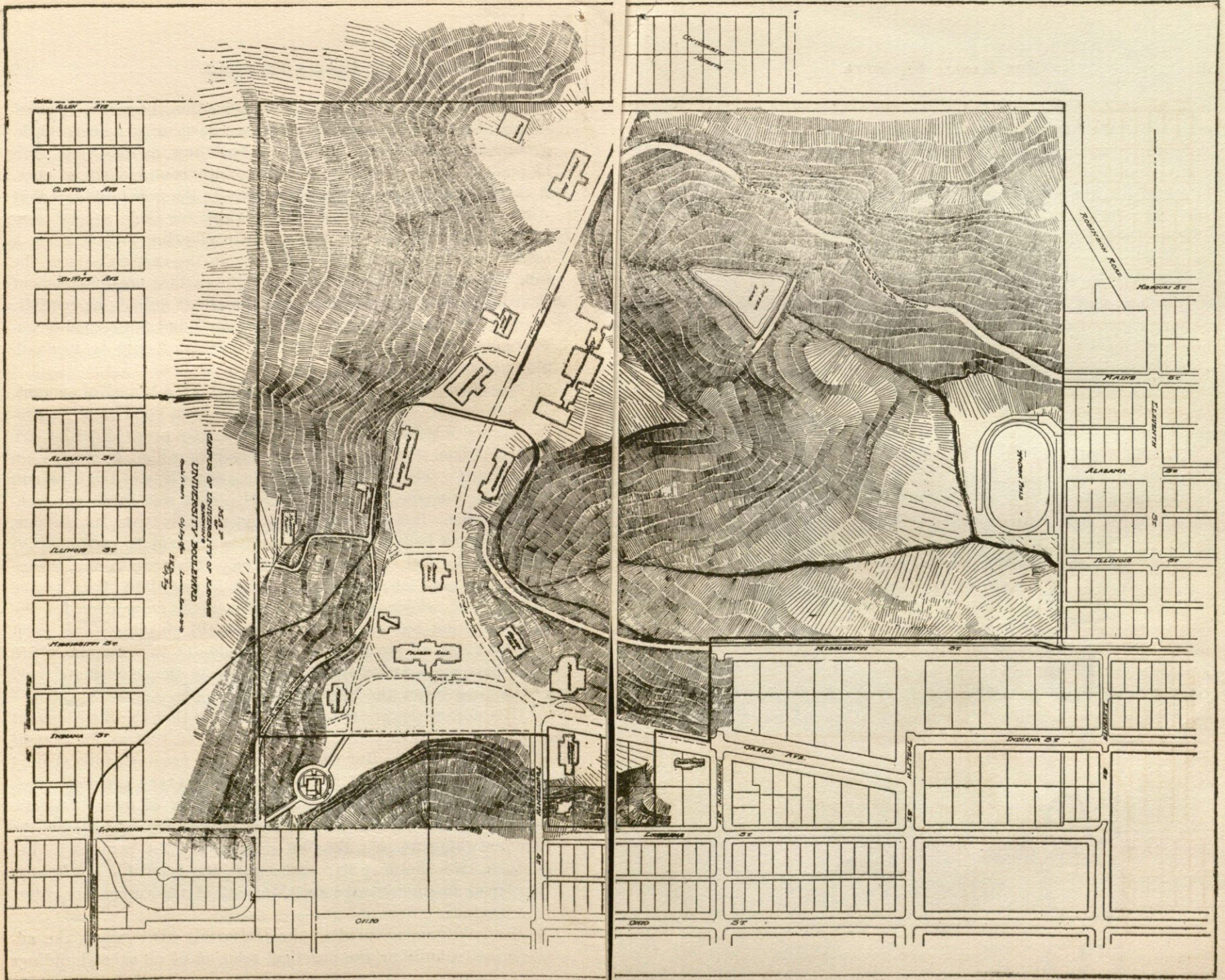
To secure this effect, however, the landscape treatment will be essential. The eastern portion of the campus is fortunate in having a fairly good growth of trees, and the upper eastern part of the valley has an excellent grove. During late years some planting has been done as limited sums of a few dollars at a

time became available. The western portion, however, is practically bare. The buildings lack the charm of a natural background and setting of foliage. New buildings, as they come, will be under the same disadvantage unless provision is made at once. A campus plan that gives consideration to the new buildings that will inevitably be necessary and provides for their proper location will also provide for the requisite planting to give them a setting harmonious with the buildings on the eastern part of the hill. This planting should be done at the earliest possible moment in order to secure the advantage of growth as quickly as possible. The expense would be comparatively small and the resulting improvement in the appearance of the campus would be incalculably great.

We often felicitate ourselves upon having a beautiful campus. What we really mean is that nature has been good to us in providing a site from which the views in nearly every direction are of exceptional beauty. From the campus, which is located on the crest of a ridge extending between the valleys of the Kaw and the Wakarusa, the views to the north, east, and south are wonderfully fine. But these views do not make a beautiful campus, and one must look over and beyond the immediate surroundings to secure the full beauty of the views. It is truly a case where "distance lends enchantment." This is especially true at the western end, where the stone taken from the excavation for the administration building six years ago still encumbers the campus; and also all along the southern edge of the campus, where the repair shops and storage yards are in the immediate foreground just below the brow of the hill.

It is not on the ground of beauty alone that the development of the campus is to be desired. We are told that at the root of all beauty is Order. But what can be more practical than Order? Order and system are at the foundation of every practical business operation; lack of them at the bottom of most disasters. For success the practical element is paramount. By doing the practical thing we take the first step toward the Beautiful. Let us, then, take the next step and secure the beautiful result also. But let us begin with the development of the campus on practical grounds.

With the management of the University centered in the administration building the practical relation of all other buildings



MAP OF CAMPUS
 Showing the Proposed University Boulevard, by E. H. DUNMIRE, '06, City Engineer of Lawrence, Kansas.

to this center must be considered. Generally each building is designed for a special purpose, and this purpose should determine the location of the building with relation to the administrative center. Shall the next building that becomes necessary be located in the next vacant space irrespective of its particular use and relation to other buildings? Or shall a comprehensive and well studied campus plan be prepared, providing for such buildings as may be expected in the years to come, each located in such relation to the administrative center and each other that its purpose shall be best served? This would be logical campus planning, based on order and system. With such a plan in the hands of the University authorities it would be possible to provide the landscape treatment that would make all the difference between a bare, raw, unfinished looking campus and a strikingly beautiful campus development that would be a valuable asset to the State.

To secure such a plan will mean the expenditure of a reasonable sum of money. In the end this would be repaid many times by the saving in the cost of administration. From the practical point of view it is a necessity. The University has the facilities to do a part of the work, and the authorities, through the engineering school, have made a beginning. When the time comes to put the work in the hands of an expert, a landscape architect, to make the studied plan, it is to be hoped that the necessary cost will be furnished. In that event the University will have a continually growing asset in the steadily increasing practicality of administration. And then, having secured Order, the first step toward Beauty, it is to be hoped that the small cost that will provide the next step and actually secure a beautiful campus will also be forthcoming.

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