



The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted: The Formative Years, 1822-1852 (Volume 1)

Frederick Law Olmsted

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"The park throughout is a single work of art, and as such, subject to the primary law of every work of art, namely, that it shall be framed upon a single, noble motive, to which the design of all its parts, in some more or less subtle way, shall be confluent and helpful."?Frederick Law Olmsted

For decades Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) designed parks and park systems across the United States, leaving an enduring legacy of designed public space that is enjoyed, studied, and protected today. Olmsted's plans and professional correspondence are a rich source for understanding his remarkable contribution to the quality of urban life in this country and the development of the profession of landscape architecture. His writings also provide a unique record of society and politics in post-Civil War America. Historians, landscape architects, conservationists, city planners and citizens' groups continue to turn to Olmsted for inspiration in their planning and protection of public open space in our cities.

This latest volume of the *Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted* presents the record of his last years of residence in New York City. It includes reports on the design of Riverside and Morningside parks and Tompkins Square in Manhattan, as well as his comprehensive plan for the street system and rapid transit routes of the Bronx. It records his continuing work on Central Park and presents his final retrospective statement, "The Spoils of the Park." In addition, the volume contains an annotated version of the journal in which Olmsted recorded instances of political maneuvering and patronage politics in the years prior to his dismissal from the New York parks department in 1878. Later chapters chronicle the early stages of his planning of the Boston park system?the Back Bay Fens, Arnold Arboretum, and Riverway. Other major commissions, each with its own political complications, were the grounds of the U. S. Capitol, the completion of the new state capitol in Albany, the designing of a park on Mount Royal in Montreal, and construction of the park system of Buffalo, N. Y. The volume also presents Olmsted's commentary on issues of the times including Reconstruction policy and Civil Service reform.

The Olmsted Papers project is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the National Trust for the Humanities, the National Association for Olmsted Parks, as well as private foundations and individuals.

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