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FRANKLIN PARK, WASHINGTON, D.C.

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.
DIV. OF HISTORY**

MAR 1970



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Technical Information Service**

FRANKLIN PARK

WASHINGTON, D.C.

by

GEORGE J. OLSZEWSKI

**OFFICE OF HISTORY AND HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE
EASTERN SERVICE CENTER**

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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FRANKLIN PARK

WASHINGTON, D.C.



MARCH 1970

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PREFACE

This historic survey of Franklin Park has been completed pursuant to Historical Resource Study Proposal, Central National Capital Parks, H-3 (RSP-CNCP-H-3). It is designed to provide the staffs of the National Capital Region and National Capital Parks Central with as complete a documented report as is possible at the present time based on the financial limitations of the RSP and the availability of official documentary sources.

The study covers the legal origin and administrative history of Franklin Park, the developmental stages of its landscaping, and its value to the community. It is specifically designed to illustrate the historical significance and value of this park site as an aid in preserving its natural beauty from the inroads of non-park projects.

Franklin Park was first known as "Fountain Square" and supplied pure spring water to the White House from 1819 until the "poisoning" scare of the Spanish-American War of 1898. Its importance during that period was ranked almost second to that of Lafayette Park and as a consequence it was given greater budgetary consideration than some other reservations. Yet, what landscaping was done to the eve of the Civil War was not enough to satisfy the local residents. They claimed the government had swindled them for they had bought lots close to the square and erected handsome residences in the belief that it would become as important to Washington Society as

Lafayette Square and the surrounding residences of the elite of the early administrations. No documentation had been found that the area was named after the American patriot, Benjamin Franklin.

Franklin Square obtained notoriety during the Civil War when the public hanging of a Union private was scheduled to take place there in 1862. Public opinion, however, forced the event to Iowa (now Logan) Circle. When Union troops encamped in Franklin Park, the area became a vast center of wartime commercialism. It retained its aspect of a local park, however, for fine mansions were built to the north on K Street, between 12th and 13th Streets, and were known as Franklin Row. The undulating ground and lovely topography enhanced the landscaping of the park and it became a center of rest and relaxation to the end of the nineteenth century.

The major portion of the narrative to 1925 is based on the annual reports of the Chief of Engineers; that for the period from 1925 to 1933 on annual reports of the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital; and from 1933 to the present on correspondence files of the National Capital Region, Mail and Records Branch. Photographs are from the Information Branch of the Region and the National Park Service. Others are credited where appropriate. Some documents were selected from Record Groups 24, 77, and 79 among others, at the National Archives. Joseph Sunde executed the art work. Personal ground surveys, interviews, and knowledge of the area as a former resident provided coordinating material essential to the study. Sarah Smith did an excellent typing job.

G. J. O.

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ADMINISTRATION OF FRANKLIN PARK

Organization.--The administration of Franklin Park as part of the system of public buildings and public grounds of the National Capital dates back to 1791. A brief resumé of its legal evolution is essential to an understanding of any discussion of the development of the area.

Congress empowered the President by the Act of July 16, 1790, to appoint three Commissioners to lay out a district or territory for the permanent seat of the Government of the United States.¹ It directed the Commissioners to provide suitable buildings for the President, the Congress, and for public offices for the government. The area laid out under this authority was termed the Territory of Columbia; the Federal City was named the City of Washington.

By Act of May 1, 1802, the office of the Commissioners was abolished and their duties devolved upon a Superintendent of Public Buildings to be appointed by the President of the United States.² Section 5 of Act of April 29, 1816, abolished the Office of Superintendent of Public Buildings and his duties devolved upon a Commissioner of Public Buildings.³

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1. 1 Stat. 130.
 2. 2 Stat. 175.
 3. 3 Stat. 324.

When the Department of the Interior was created by the Act of March 3, 1849, Section 9 provided: "That the supervisory and appellate powers now exercised by the President of the United States over the Commissioners of Public Buildings shall be exercised by the Secretary of the Interior."⁴ By the Act of March 2, 1867, the Office of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, after functioning for almost 51 years, was abolished. Its duties were assigned to the Office of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, War Department.⁵ On March 13, 1867, the Chief of Engineers assigned an Engineer Officer to be "in charge of public buildings and grounds." For 58 years these duties were administered by that office until by the Act of February 26, 1925, Congress created the independent office of Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital.⁶ The Director performed the duties previously assigned to the Chief of Engineers and reported directly to the President.

Under the provisions of Section 2 of Executive Order No. 6166 of June 10, 1933, "all functions of administration of public building

4. Annual Report of the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, 1933 (Washington, 1933), p. 1, cited hereafter as "ARD."

5. 14 Stat. 466. Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, 1867-1897 (Washington, 1867-1897), p. 2. The reports of the Engineer Officer in charge of Public Buildings and Grounds from 1867 to 1925 have been included as an appendix in the overall annual reports of the Chief of Engineers. These appendices have been bound separately for ready reference into separate volumes. Cited hereafter as "ARCE" with appropriate year.

6. ARD, p. 1.

[and] reservations . . . are consolidated in an Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations in the Department of the Interior."⁷ By the act of March 2, 1934, the term "National Park Service" was substituted for the "Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations."⁸ The Executive Order brought the administration of National Capital Parks under the National Park Service. The term "National Capital Parks" was used officially for the first time in the District of Columbia Appropriations Act of June 4, 1934.⁹

For almost thirty years, National Capital Parks exercised administrative responsibility over the Washington area until by Memorandum of January 22, 1962, National Capital Parks was redesignated "Region Six." Six months later, it was redesignated "National Capital Region,"¹⁰ retaining that title until 1965. On May 23 of that year, National Capital Region was reorganized into five park areas, each headed by a Superintendent. These were: Central National Capital Parks, East National Capital Parks, North National Capital Parks; the George Washington Memorial Parkway and Prince William Forest Park became a single administrative unit, as did Catoclin Mountain Park and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. A final administrative change was made on June 1, 1968, in the designation of the areas when the term "National Capital Parks-Central,

7. 47 Stat. 1517.

8. 48 Stat. 389; Thomas A. Sullivan (comp.), Laws Relating to the National Park Service, Supp. I, July 1933 through April 1944 (Washington, 1944), 203.

9. Cornelius W. Heine, A History of National Capital Parks (Washington, 1953), p. 36.

10. Ibid., Parks of the National Capital (Washington, 1963), p. 1.

-East, and -North were substituted for the three designations made in 1965. Franklin Park is now administered by the Superintendent, National Capital Parks-Central.¹¹

11. Telephone interview, Mrs. Carol Smith, Information Officer, NCR, to Olszewski, October 23, 1968.

II

HISTORICAL DATA

Introduction.--Franklin Park, known also as Franklin Square, is one of the federally owned parks whose atmosphere has changed from that of local residency to strict commercialism . It is situated on the site of U. S. reservation 3, lying between K and I and 13 and 14 Streets, Northwest. The park was originally part of the extensive land holdings of Samuel Davidson, then known as Port Royal, which extended north to Massachusetts Avenue. On March 30, 1806, President Jefferson authorized Davidson to inclose these grounds on condition that when the convenience of the city should require it, the streets would be opened.¹ Thus, it will be observed that the earliest dimensions of Franklin Park were much more extensive than the park area of today.

In 1800 there was but one wooden house on these heights when Washington became the Nation's Capital. It stood in the center of the square where an unidentified Frenchman cultivated a vegetable garden.² But it was the fresh water springs located on this site that attracted the attention of the government.

By the Act of March 3, 1819, Congress appropriated funds to pipe water from these springs to reservoirs located in the vicinity

1. Saul K. Padover (ed.), Thomas Jefferson and the National Capital, 1783-1818 (Washington, 1944), p. 365.

2. Fremont Rider, Rider's Washington (New York, 1924), p. 232.

of the White House.³ In 1822 iron pipes were laid to the south of the Franklin Park site and eventually tied in with the White House pipe lines, leading to its reservoir. Meantime, building sites were purchased to the south of Franklin Park by private individuals when they were offered for sale by the District Commissioners.

By the Act of March 3, 1828, Congress appropriated \$8,000 for the purchase and enclosure of square 9. This legislation was followed by the Act of May 25, 1832, appropriating an additional \$5,700 for piping water from the Franklin Park springs to the President's House, as the White House was originally known, and for the construction of reservoirs and water hydrants.

For obvious reasons, square 9 was first known as "Fountain Square." After 1830, it became known as "Franklin Square" for less obvious reasons. I found no documentation for the generally held observation that the park was named after the early American patriot, Benjamin Franklin, who is supposed to have had a residence in the vicinity. There may be some truth to the fact that it was named after the row of houses which had been constructed on the north side of K Street, between 12 and 13 Streets, and was generally known as "Franklin Row" during this period.⁴

3. W. B. Bryan, A History of the National Capital, II (New York, 1916), 65.

4. E. Faeltz and F. W. Pratt, Washington in Embryo (Washington, 1874), p. 17.

The Federal government acquired title to the area primarily to control the water of the springs. As late as 1881, the spring water from Franklin Park was still being used in the White House for drinking purposes. In 1885 the Chief of Engineers was urged by local residents to open the spring for public use as apparently had been the practice in the past.⁵ With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, however, rumors were so widespread that the President could be poisoned if Spanish sympathizers poisoned the open springs at their origin in Franklin Square that they were closed off. Subsequently, the use of the spring water from this area was abandoned and the District Department of Health curtailed its use, pronouncing it unfit for human consumption.⁶

In time the importance of Franklin Square as a park for rest and recreation for the inhabitants of the area outweighed the importance of the springs. By 1859 local residents complained of the action of the government in buying up lots from individual landholders at prices below what they normally would have been sold for. Lot owners said they had been induced to sacrifice their lots to the government which had publicized its plan for improving the site to make the square a public park. Furthermore, this consideration had been the main inducement for purchasers of lots fronting the square (as at K Street) to erect handsome and costly residences.⁷ The outbreak of the Civil War, however, brought new problems to

5. ARCE (1885), p. 2405.

6. Washington Herald, July 23, 1911.

7. ARCE (1859), p. 10.

the Nation's Capital as the city prepared to handle the influx of thousands of federal troops.

Franklin Square, as many other reservations of the federal government, became the scene of heavy troop use. Remnants of the 27th New York Volunteers encamped there after their flight from the first battle of Bull Run. The 12th New York Volunteers, under the command of Col. Daniel Butterfield, also encamped there for awhile. Franklin Park also became the scene of one of the first court martial cases of the war. A Pvt. Michael Lanahan was convicted of killing his superior, Sgt. S. Brennan, and sentenced to be hung. The execution was to take place in Franklin Square. Aroused public opinion forced the scene to be changed from the park to Iowa (now Logan) Circle. On the day appointed for the hanging Lanahan was marched from Franklin Park to Iowa Circle where a scaffold had been erected. Great crowds witnessed this public hanging.⁸ With the end of the war, Franklin Square was designated as one of the parks to be improved by the federal government.

The landscaping of Franklin Square in the post Civil War era was based to some extent on the plan created in 1853 for Lafayette Park by Andrew Jackson Downing, one of America's leading landscape architects.⁹ Downing's ideas were to influence the landscaping of Franklin Park, but to a somewhat lesser degree than that of Lafayette Park as will be brought out in the course of this study.

8. John Clagett Proctor, Proctor's Washington and Environs (Washington 1949), p. 339.

9. For further information on the Downing Plan, see my study Lafayette Park (Washington, 1964), passim.

III

LANDSCAPING OF FRANKLIN PARK, 1851-1933

Introduction.--The first landscaping project to be carried out in Franklin Park was in 1851 when it was graded and enclosed with a wooden fence.¹ During the Civil War , its use by elements of the Union Army as an encampment site damaged many fine trees along K Street when they were used as hitching posts. In 1866 the park was described as being handsomely laid out by the public gardener in accordance with the plans of Col. E. B. French, the engineer officer in charge of public buildings and grounds.² In 1867 it was considered to be one of the finest squares in the city. By 1870 it was praised as constantly improving with the years due to the growth of trees and plants which ornamented the park. Since it was laid out on undulating ground, it was considered to contrast favorably with the appearance of Lafayette Park.³ Beginning in 1876, children from Franklin School on the northeast corner of 13th and K Streets, Northwest, gave heavy usage to the park for it was used in good weather for classroom purposes. Lawns and walks demanded increasing upkeep and grass was protected by stakes driven into the edges of the walks.

By 1904, the Engineer Officer recommended in his annual budget estimates for the care of public buildings and parks that the annual

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1. Proctor, p. 339.
 2. ARCE (1866), p. 550.
 3. ARCE (1870), p. 977.

appropriation for Franklin Park be increased from \$1,000 to \$1,500 as the former sum was insufficient for proper maintenance work on the area. Lafayette Park was allowed \$2,000. Since Franklin Park was almost as large, this was believed to be sufficient justification for recommending an increase.⁴

Other improvements included the construction of a central fountain of Aberdeen marble in 1873; installation of gas lamps that same year; the change to electric lighted lamps in 1897; the laying out of flower beds for the first time in 1879; completion of the first inventory of trees and shrubs in 1886, including a plan showing utilities of the park; the cutting off of spring water to the White House in 1897; erection and the dedication of the Commodore John Barry Memorial in 1914; and the completion of a full inventory of the park in 1924, prior to transfer of responsibility for its administration from the Office of the Chief of Engineers to a Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks.

Animals.--Among the animals placed in Franklin Park were three eagles which had been presented by John R. French, Sergeant-at-Arms of the U. S. Senate, to Col. O. E. Babcock, engineer officer in charge of Public Buildings and Grounds. Babcock recommended to the Congress several times that funds should be appropriated for the establishment of a National Zoological Park to house and display the many types of animals that were being presented to the United States by foreign diplomats.⁵

4. ARCE (1904), p. 3924.

5. Ibid. (1876), p. 12.

Curbing.--Throughout the nineteenth century, there was no curbing in Franklin Park. When Congress ordered the removal of all high fences from the public parks of Washington in 1900, the Engineer Officer recommended that a simple granite curb be laid around the park to give it a finished appearance. To preserve the borderline between the lawns and sidewalks, a stone curb was initially set in place.⁶ By 1905, the entire lawn area was surrounded by cement coping.⁷

Drainage.--The problem of providing proper drainage for the park was constant. Drains laid prior to 1872 failed to work properly and it was found necessary to replace them to a depth of 3 feet to protect them from the action of frost.⁸ In the following year, 15 sewer traps were constructed and connected with the drains to collect and carry off surplus water, particularly after heavy rains.⁹ In 1876 pipe leading from the watchman's lodge to the main sewer line on I Street was found to be too small for the heavy load it had to carry. A new sewer line was built to correct this condition.¹⁰ In 1883, 642 linear feet of additional guttering was constructed on the margin of the park roadways. This work required 7,600 paving bricks and the construction of four new brick drain traps to connect with the main sewer lines to carry off increased surface water during heavy storms.¹¹ In 1903, 313

6. ARCE (1901), p. 3734, (1902), p. 2572.

7. Ibid. (1905), p. 2637.

8. Ibid. (1872), p. 8.

9. Ibid. (1873), p. 30.

10. Ibid. (1876), p. 12.

11. Ibid. (1883), p. 2096.

feet of 6-inch wrought iron pipe was laid to drain catch basins, and two new ones were constructed to increase surface drainage.¹²

Fountain. --In 1873, a fountain of unusual beauty was installed in the center of Franklin Square. It was constructed of polished red granite that had been imported from Aberdeen, Scotland.¹³ Due to faulty installation, however, the granite coping had to be reset and reclamped a few years later.¹⁴ Water lilies were also planted in the basin of the fountain and added much beauty to the scene.¹⁵ Due to changing weather conditions, repairs again were made to the basin in 1907, including its water supply pipes and those of the drinking fountain.¹⁶

Fencing. --The first old, wooden paling fence that had been installed and surrounded the park, was removed in 1870 and replaced by a post and chain fence.¹⁷ Wire around the flower border of the fountain basin was removed in 1897 and replaced with a lighter type of fencing.¹⁸ When Congress ordered the removal of all high fences from around the public parks and reservations, the one enclosing Franklin Park was removed in fiscal 1901 and replaced with stone coping.¹⁹

Flower beds. --Extensive flower beds were laid out for the first time in 1879, when 18 were planted with ornamental decorative palms. Subtropical foliage plants were placed in several open spaces on the lawns. Worn out lawns were dug up, exhausted soil

12. AR E (1903), p. 2540

13. Ib d. (1875), p. 8.

14. Ib d. (1877), p. 6.

15. Ib d. (1890), p. 3542.

16. Ibid. (1907), p. 2319.

17. Ibid. (1870), p. 977.

18. Ibid. (1897), p. 4044.

19. Ibid. (1901), p. 3734.

replaced, and the area resodded.²⁰ In the autumn the flower beds were planted with spring-flowering bulbs, and during the following summer tropical plants from the nursery were used to temporarily decorate the park.²¹ The hemlock spruce hedge which screened the entrance to the lodge died and was replaced by an arbor vitae hedge.²² Ninety trees were also transplanted.²³ Five flower beds that were receiving too much shade were removed in 1879 and their surfaces sodded over.²⁴

Lighting.--Individual oil lamps were used for lighting in Franklin Park to 1873 when gas pipes were installed as gas lamps were introduced in the city.²⁵ These were used until 1897 when electric lighting was installed, underground cables being used to bring in the necessary power.²⁶ In 1898, the unused gas lamps were removed from the premises.²⁷ In 1909, gas pipe was extended into the toilet rooms of the lodge and two new gaslights were installed therein.²⁸

The Lodge.--As early as 1867 a small lodge for housing tools of the watchman and rest rooms for the public had been erected in the park. At the time the square was open to the public twelve hours a day, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. In 1873 a larger lodge replaced the earlier one.²⁹ When the statue to Commodore John Barry was erected in 1914 on the 14th Street side of the park, the lodge

20. ARCE (1879), p. 1800.

21. Ibid. (1883), p. 2096.

22. Ibid. (1890), p. 3542.

23. Ibid., p. 3543.

24. Ibid. (1897), p. 4054.

25. Ibid. (1873), p. 7.

26. Ibid. (1897), p. 4055.

27. Ibid. (1898) p. 3726.

28. Ibid. (1909) p. 2341.

29. Ibid. (1873) p. 25.

was removed from its conspicuous setting in the center of the park and relocated on 13th Street halfway between I and K Streets, where it now stands.³⁰

Settees. --From time to time various types of settees, or benches, were set out in the federal park reservations. By 1889, about 1,887 settees of differing designs, some still experimental, had been set out in the parks of the city, including Franklin Park. By 1924, according to the inventory of that year, there was a total of 129 benches in the square.³¹

Trees. --Initially, beginning in 1867 when sufficient funds were finally appropriated to properly landscape the park, a large number of trees of various species were planted. Some were not adaptable to Washington's climate and by 1873 had decayed. They were removed and more adaptable types planted.³²

In 1877, the Engineer officer reported that although Franklin Park did not contain as many nor as valuable specimens of trees as Lafayette Park, the varied undulations of the ground and the manner in which the trees and shrubbery had been planted would eventually produce a very pleasing effect.³³ In 1888 such trees as Chinese arbor vitae, balsam fir, and Norway fir, which had been planted originally to improve the grounds of Franklin Park, were removed as the more valuable species obtained their growth.³⁴ Table I gives a complete list of the trees and shrubs that were

30. NAG 42, file 90/48 and 97/47, Sept. 27, 1913.

31. Plate 3 in Appendix.

32. ARB (1873), p. 7.

33. Ibid. (1877), p. 6

34. Ibid. (1888), p. 2775.

growing in the park in 1886, according to the inventory compiled by the public gardener, George H. Brown.³⁵

Walks. --To make Franklin Park accessible to the public, walks throughout it were also improved. Initially they were merely foot paths but in time were widened to five-foot asphalt walks. In 1872 they were reconstructed and improved in a manner similar to that of Lafayette Park, that is, gravel was laid down and rolled to a hard smooth walking surface.³⁶ A new brick walk was laid down on 13th Street, and the walk on 14th Street was extended to the iron fence enclosing the park.

But recurrent difficulties, caused particularly by winter weather, created annual problems until the technique of constructing walks with asphalt and sidewalks with cement was adopted. For example, in 1877, the margins of the park's walks were trampled by trespassers as heavy rains and snow formed ruts and gullies on sloping surfaces. When repaired according to contemporary techniques, they were again washed out. In his annual report for 1877, the Engineer officer recommended that the walks be re-outlined according to the original landscaping plans of the park, and that their surfaces be coated with asphalt or concrete to make them more durable. The placing of gutters, curbs, and traps at all low points for surface drainage was also recommended for keeping the walks in good condition.³⁷ In 1879, the walks were thoroughly overhauled and all loose stones, rough gravel and sand removed.

35. ARCE (1886), p. 2103.

37. Ibid. (1877), p. 6.

36. Ibid. (1877), p. 8.

A coating of screened gravel was applied to the surface and rolled.³⁸ To prevent damage to the edges of lawns by pedestrians during the severe winter of 1885, wooden walks were laid down from I to K Streets. When the high iron fence surrounding Franklin Park was removed, new pathways for pedestrians were laid down. In 1899, 43 square yards of asphalt were resurfaced. In 1900, the asphalt pavements were extended to their full 5-foot width.³⁹ In 1901, the District Government replaced the brick sidewalk on the 14th Street side of the park with concrete.⁴⁰

In April 1928 a strip of sidewalk, 9.55-feet wide and 365.46 feet long, containing about 3,490 square feet, on the east or 13th Street side of the park was officially transferred to the jurisdiction of the District government for the widening of the street at that point.⁴¹ In May 1928 the District was authorized to install a fire and police alarm box within the coping of Franklin Park near the comfort station on the 13th Street side of the park.⁴²

Watchman.--The forerunner of the present day U. S. Park Police were the watchmen who were located at each of the public reservations and squares of the city. Initially, no funds were

38. ARCE (1879), p. 1800.

39. Ibid. (1900), p. 5252.

40. Ibid. (1901), p. 3705.

41. Letter, Gen. U. S. Grant, III, Director, Public Buildings and Public Parks, to Hon. P. L. Dougherty, Pres. D. C. Board of Commissioners, April 2, 1928, file 1460 Franklin Square (9).

42. Gen. Grant to Col. W. B. Ladue, C. E., Engr. Comm. for the D. C., May 21, 1928, ibid.

appropriated by Congress for hiring them. But as the city grew and budget estimates of the Chief of Engineers continually requested \$600 to pay these unsalaried guardians of public property, Congress finally acceded to the request. As more watchmen were approved by Congress for the expanding parks system of the National Capital, their authority was extended to include arrest. Subsequently, the propriety of dressing them in uniforms so that they could be recognized by the public was brought to the attention of the Congress. In 1901, a uniform was approved for the use of these park watchmen. Its color was forest green to distinguish them from members of the District Metropolitan Police force who wore navy blue.

With respect to Franklin Park, an old inhabitant was temporarily detailed to act as park watchman in 1868.⁴³ At the time the premises were open as noted earlier for twelve hours a day. In the early 1880s, its closing was extended to 11 p.m. After 1886, the grounds remained open all night.⁴⁴

Water Supply.--In 1872, when pipes supplying water to the White House from the springs in Franklin Park were repaired, the overall system was tied in with the water supply from the Potomac. The question had not yet been resolved as to the use of Potomac water for irrigation of the park and the possible construction of a fountain in its center. By tying the pipes in to the source of supply, the future expense of re-opening the streets and sidewalks was avoided.⁴⁵ Furthermore, when the supply of spring water

43. ARCE (1868), p. 11.

44. Ibid. (1886), p. 2078.

45. Ibid. (1872), p. 8.

was curtailed to the White House on account of the poison scare during the Spanish-American war, Franklin Park was assured of a water supply principally for use in the fountain installed in 1873.⁴⁶ In 1914 it was estimated that Franklin Park was using 3,540 gallons of Potomac River water per day.⁴⁷

46. AR'E (1875), p. 8.

47. Ib d. (1914), p. 200.

TABLE I

LIST OF TREES AND SHRUBS IN FRANKLIN PARK IN 1886⁴⁸

COMMON NAME:	SCIENTIFIC NAME:	NUMBER:	VARIETIES:
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DECIDUOUS TREES

Apple	<u>Pyrus malus</u>	2	1
Birch	<u>Betula</u>	2	2
Bird Cherry	<u>Cerasus padus</u>	2	1
Buckeye	<u>Pavia</u>	2	1
Beech	<u>Fagus</u>	6	2
Cherry	<u>Cerasus</u>	2	1
Elm	<u>Ulmus</u>	21	2
Empress Tree	<u>Paulownia</u>	4	1
Hawthorn	<u>Crataegus</u>	2	1
Horse Chestnut	<u>Aesculus</u>	4	1
Honey Locust	<u>Gleditschia</u>	1	1
Hop Tree	<u>Ptelea</u>	1	1
Indian Bean	<u>Catalpa</u>	2	1
Judas Tree	<u>Cercis</u>	3	2
Koelreuteria	<u>Koelreuteria</u>	8	1
Larch	<u>Larix</u>	1	1
Linden	<u>Tilia</u>	12	2
Mimosa	<u>Acacia</u>	1	1
Maple	<u>Acer</u>	81	1
Magnolia	<u>Magnolia</u>	8	5
Oak	<u>Quercus</u>	2	2
Poplar	<u>Populus</u>	5	1
Peach	<u>Amygdalus</u>	2	1
Tulip Poplar	<u>Liriodendron</u>	1	1
Walnut	<u>Juglans</u>	1	1

DECIDUOUS SHRUBS

Althea	<u>Hibiscus</u>	12	3
Arrow-wood	<u>Viburnum</u>	9	3
Barberry	<u>Berberis</u>	2	1
Bush Honeysuckle	<u>Lonicera</u>	4	1
Burning Bush	<u>Euonymus</u>	4	1
Deutzia	<u>Deutzia</u>	14	2
Hydrangea	<u>Hydrangea</u>	2	1
Japan Quince	<u>Cydonia</u>	11	1
Lilac	<u>Syringa</u>	5	2
Mock Orange	<u>Philadelphus</u>	13	2
Privet	<u>Ligustrum</u>	2	1

48. Compiled by the Public Gardener, George H. Brown.
Ibid. (1886), p. 2103.

FRANKLIN PARK (Continued)

COMMON NAME: SCIENTIFIC NAME: NUMBER: VARIETIES:

DECIDUOUS SHRUBS (Continued)

EVERGREEN TREES

Arbor Vitae	<u>Thuja</u>	53	4
Holly	<u>Ilex</u>	1	1
Juniper	<u>Juniperus</u>	1	1
Pine	<u>Pinus</u>	5	3
Spruce Fir	<u>Abies</u>	37	2
Silver Fir	<u>Picea</u>	3	3

NOT REPRODUCIBLE

IV

MEMORIAL STATUE TO COMMODORE JOHN BARRY

Biographical sketch.--One of the earliest naval heroes of the United States was Commodore John Barry to whom an heroic statue was erected in Franklin Park in 1914. He is generally known as the "Father of the U. S. Navy." No evidence has been uncovered as to why the statue to Commodore Barry was erected in Franklin Park, other than the fact that the funds were voted for it by the Congress. Nor has any evidence been found as to why the name of the park was not changed from "Franklin" to "Barry Square" (or "Barry Park") as was the case when the Dupont and Farragut statues were authorized by Congress. Evidently, there would have been a patriotic hue and cry had the name of the park been changed from "Franklin" because of its association in the public mind with the popular Ben Franklin of revolutionary fame.

John Barry was born in 1745 in the tiny village of Ballysams-son in County Wexford, on the southeast coast of Ireland. He was born and bred to the sea. The defeat of the Irish armies by the British, their subsequent ruthless treatment of the Irish people, the denial of education to Catholics and Presbyterians alike, and the appalling starvation and death of thousands endowed the young Irishman with an unquenchable hatred for England. Like thousands of other Irish lads, he left home to avoid starvation.

Barry was ten when he shipped on a merchantman. At sea, he learned the ropes and, being an ambitious lad, rose from cabin boy to a mate's rating, surviving the tough years of eighteenth century apprenticeship aboard ships of all types, from tiny sloops to lumbering Indiamen. In 1760, at the age of 15, Barry shipped aboard a westbound merchantman and sailed up the Delaware River to Philadelphia, probably "jumping ship" as was the custom, to make his home in that city so closely associated with the venerable American patriot, Benjamin Franklin. Perhaps he met Franklin and this may be one reason why Congress approved the erection of Barry's statue in Franklin Park. From a Philadelphia merchant, Edward Denny, who claimed Irish descent, Barry was given command of the Barbados, a merchantman, and made nine round trips between Philadelphia and the West Indies.

At the outbreak of the American Revolution in the fall of 1775, Barry outfitted the first Continental fleet. On March 14, 1776, he was commissioned captain of the continental brig, the USS Lexington. Barry distinguished himself by bringing into the port of Philadelphia, the British tender HMS Edward, the first American prize of the war. In December, 1776, he saw action at the second battle of Trenton and at Princeton as aide-de-camp to General John Calwalader, when Howe's army advanced across New Jersey and threatened Philadelphia. Meantime, Congress ranked Barry as seventh captain on the Navy seniority list and commissioned him to the frigate, the USS Effingham. In September, 1777, before she was ready for sea, Barry moved the Effingham up the Delaware and

sank her on orders of General Washington. In the winter of 1777-1778, Barry ran the British batteries at Philadelphia and raided enemy shipping in the Delaware River and Bay.

Ordered to command the frigate, the USS Raleigh, Barry put to sea and was pursued by the British for 48 hours in September 1778. He later fought a gallant but futile battle off Wooden Ball Island, near the mouth of the Penobscot, Maine, against a British 64-gun ship and a frigate. In the fall of 1780, he was placed in command of a frigate, the USS Alliance, which became his flagship, and transported Col. John Laurens on a diplomatic mission to France. In subsequent engagements, Barry took several prizes on his trip, and turned the tables on two British sloops of war off Newfoundland where he lay becalmed, and had been wounded. His second voyage to France was to take the Marquis de Lafayette home to France after Yorktown. On the final cruise of the USS Alliance, Barry raided the Atlantic shipping lanes from Bermuda to Cape Sable and took four ships of the British fleet and six other prizes. Putting into Lorient to refit, Barry sailed just in advance of final peace negotiations. He touched at Martinique and Havana, and on March 10, 1783, fought the last engagement of the Revolutionary War in the Gulf of Florida, beating off three British frigates, and heavily damaging HMS Sybil.

Barry then sailed to Canton in the China trade and upon his return home retired from the sea. On June 4, 1794, he was recalled to active service as senior captain of the new U. S. Navy, and superintended construction of the frigate, the USS United States. He commanded it thereafter. During the quasi-war with

France, Barry commanded all U. S. ships in the West Indies, capturing several French privateers.

In 1799-1800, Barry transported two U. S. Commissioners to France when President John Adams tried to arrange a peaceful settlement between the two nations. Although he was retained on the list of captains after Pres. Thomas Jefferson's naval reduction of 1801, Barry was too ill to accept further naval command. He turned down command of a squadron intended for the Mediterranean in 1802 to deal with the Barbary Powers. The end for him was near. Barry died in Philadelphia, on September 13, 1803. History gained for Barry the courtesy title of "Father of our Navy." Among those valiant naval officers whom he had trained were: Stephen Decatur, Richard Somers, Charles Stewart, Jacob Jones, John Trippe and others. The entire nation mourned his death.¹

The John Barry Memorial.--The memorial to Commodore John Barry was authorized by Congress by the Act of June 8, 1906, and \$5,000 was appropriated for the purpose.² It was to be erected on public ground of the District. The legislation also authorized the formation of a special commission to be known as the "Barry Statue Commission," consisting of the Chairmen of the Senate and House Committees on the Library, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of War, and the Engineer Officer in charge of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Grounds.³

1. Encyclopedia Britannica, III, 201-202. Government of the Republic of Ireland, Eire, Weekly Bulletin of the Department of External Affairs, "Commodore John Barry," Uimhir, No. 326, v-V-1956.

2. 34 Stat. 223.

3. ARCE (1914), pp. 3368-70.

In April 1908 the Commission approved the program of competition prepared by the Engineer Officer and copies were sent to 25 American artists of Irish descent. Models were to be submitted to the Commission by December 15 of that year. Seven models were received and although none were selected, it was decided that the Memorial should be erected on the west side of Franklin Park facing 14th Street, where it now stands.

On February 25, 1909, the Commission approved three of the models and awarded first prize to John J. Boyle of New York. It failed to reach agreement, however, and two subsequent models were submitted in May 1910 by Boyle at the Commission's request. Meantime, a Commission of Fine Arts, with purely advisory powers, was created by Congress by the Act of May 17, 1910.⁴ Under the circumstances, the Barry Commission requested the Fine Arts Commission to give its views on the design for a Barry statue and the memorial in general. On December 8, 1910, the Barry Commission awarded a contract to Boyle on condition that he design another model, but that he would be prepared to modify it in accordance with the suggestions of the Fine Arts Commission. This he agreed to. Finally, on August 9, 1911, Barry's third model was approved by both the Barry Statue Commission and the Fine Arts Commission, and on November 6 Boyle was awarded a contract for the entire memorial, including the

4. Annual Report of the Commission of Fine Arts, 1915 (Washington, 1916). For material on the organization of the Commission of Fine Arts and its functions, consult my study, Dupont Circle (Washington, 1968), pp. 29-31.

statue, the pedestal and the female figure of "Victory" that was to be placed on its front or west face.

Following approval of full-scale models of the statue of Barry, the Victory figure and the memorial itself, work began immediately to complete it. Edward P. Casey had been selected as the architect, and Irving W. Payne as the landscape architect. The inscription for the memorial was approved by the Statue Commission in November 1912, with the final plan for its arrangement on the pedestal being approved in June 1913. The stone for the memorial was cut in March 1913. The foundation was completed together with the architectural setting and the terrace floor by December. When the pedestal was installed, the figure of Victory was placed on the front of the memorial. On March 26, 1914, the bronze figure of Commodore Barry, which had been cast in Brooklyn, New York, by the Roman Bronze Co., was set in place atop the pedestal and the memorial, including its landscaping, completed. Congress had appropriated \$2,500 by the Act of June 23, 1913, for the dedication which was scheduled for May 16, 1914.⁵ A total of \$48,996.92 of the \$50,000 appropriated for the construction of the memorial, and \$2,269.49 of the \$2,500 appropriated for the dedication was expended.⁶

5. 38 Stat. 36.

6. ARCE (1914), p. 3369.

Dedication of the Barry Memorial.--The dedication of the memorial to Commodore John Barry on May 16, 1914, was one of the most colorful ceremonies to be held in Washington. Franklin Park and the surrounding streets were filled to capacity and traffic was rerouted for the occasion. Irish-American societies marched with the military formations of the parade from 18th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue to the park at 14th and K Streets, Northwest. All entrances to the park were guarded by members of the First Regiment Minutemen from Fort Myer, Va., in full continental uniforms of buff and blue. Music for the occasion was provided by the U. S. Marine Band, their colorful blue and red uniforms enhanced by their glittering brass musical instruments. The parade of troops and societies was under the command of Brig. Gen. A. L. Mills, U.S.A., Grand Marshal for the event.

Dignitaries crowded the stand as stirring tributes were paid to Commodore Barry and the Irish people by President Wilson; the Hon. Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy; Admiral George Dewey; M. C. James A. Hamill; the Hon. Asa Bird Gardiner, Secretary-General of the Society of the Cincinnati; the Hon. James J. Regan, National President, Ancient Order of the Hibernians; and the Hon. Michael J. Ryan, President of the politically powerful United Irish League of America. The Rt. Rev. Alfred Harding, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Washington, read the invocation; the benediction was pronounced by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Wm. T. Russell, D.D., rector of St. Patrick's Church, the oldest Catholic church in the District.

The statue was unveiled by the great-great-grandniece of Commodore Barry, Miss Elise H. Hepburn, of Philadelphia, who was escorted to the speaker's platform by Secretary Daniels. The District National Guard rendered the salute by a battery of artillery. Eight sailors from the USS Mayflower assisted in the unveiling. Numerous floral tributes were placed around the base of the monument. The sculptor, John J. Boyle, described his work as follows:⁷

In the statue the Commodore appears in the uniform of the mixed service in which he participated, both on sea and on land. His orders are grasped in his right hand, which rests firmly on the hilt of his sword. With a belief in the cause and himself, and with supreme confidence of victory, he is surveying the horizon, prepared for action--an inspiration to all.

The marble figure, Victory, which adorns the face of the pedestal, represents the Goddess standing upon the prow of a vessel; the eagle on her right, the emblem of liberty; and in her right hand the laurel. Her sword is sheathed in peace, symbolizing a splendid service rendered the young Republic.

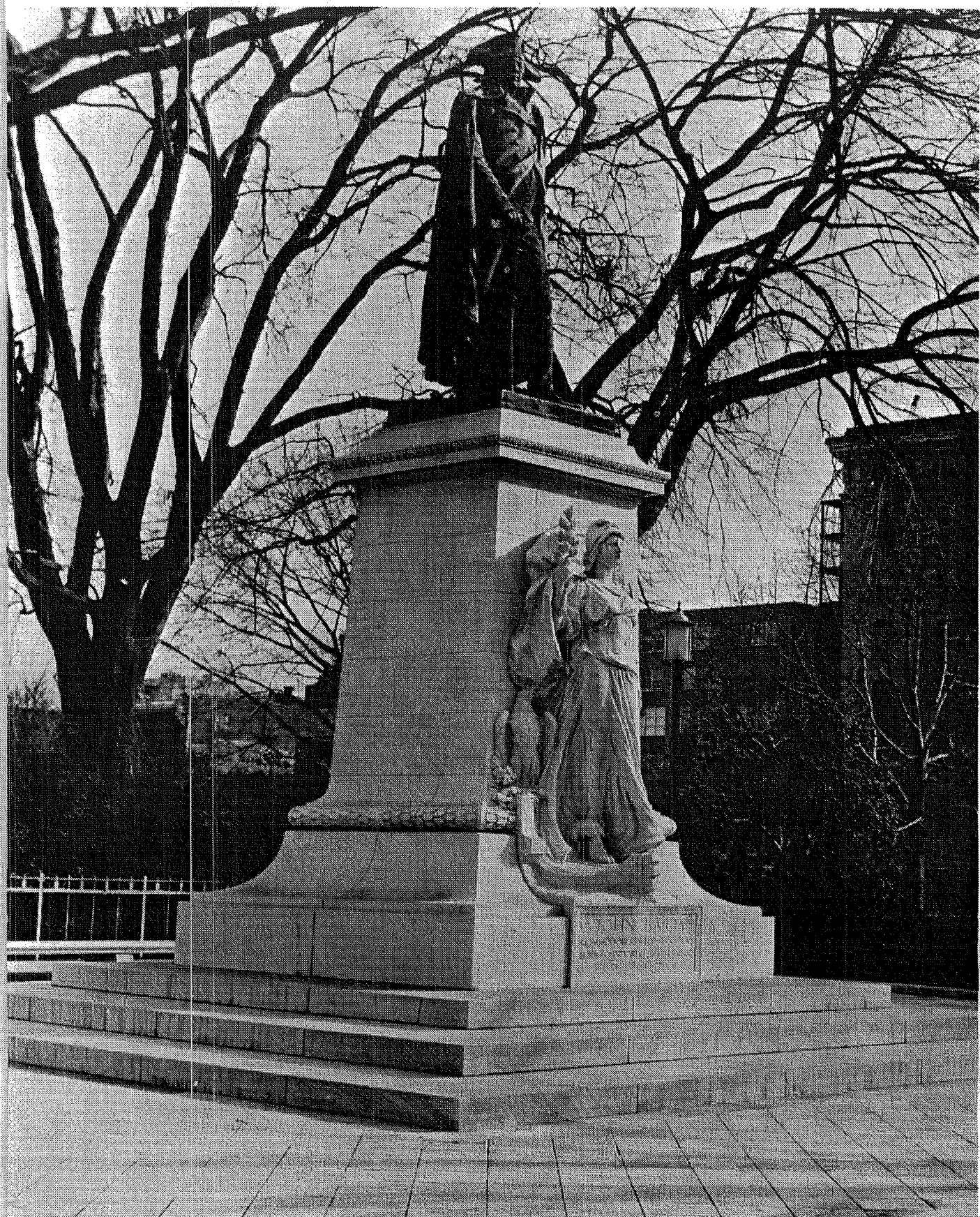
The ceremonies lasted all day at Franklin Park and ended that evening with a banquet at the famed Willard Hotel. The enthusiasm aroused by Wilson's unprecedented speech on behalf of Irish freedom was to have far-reaching implications for it was delivered on the eve of the First World War which broke out in August of that year, and Wilson was to carry his demand for Irish freedom to the peace table at Versailles in 1919. Various Irish societies continue to honor Commodore Barry yearly by the laying of memorial wreaths at the base of the monument.

7. "Program of the Ceremonies at the Unveiling of the Statue to Commodore Barry, Washington, May Sixteenth, 1914." Copy in NCR files. The Evening Star, May 17, 1914.

NOT REPRODUCIBLE



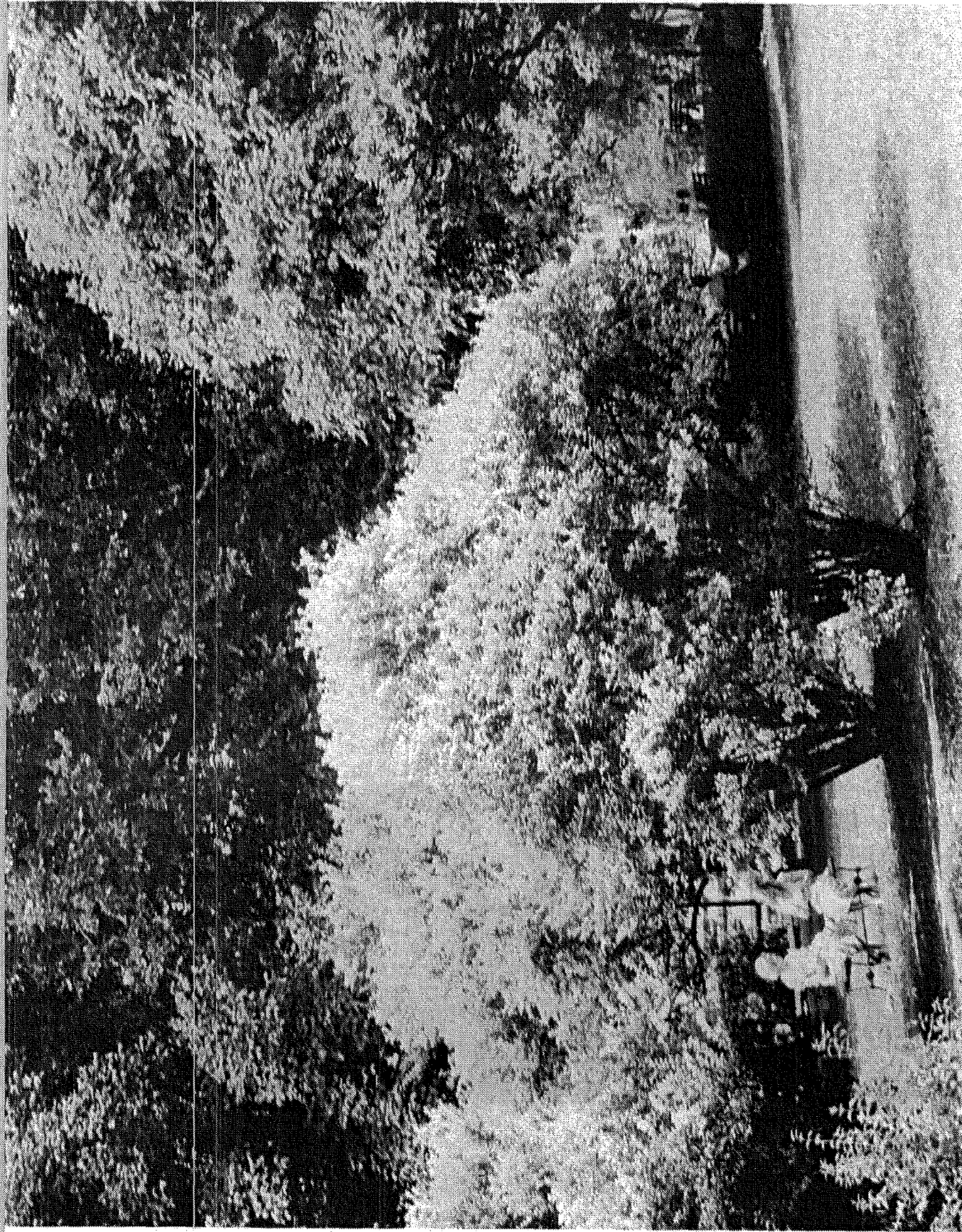
1. Commodore John Barry (1745-1803) Memorial Statue, Franklin Park



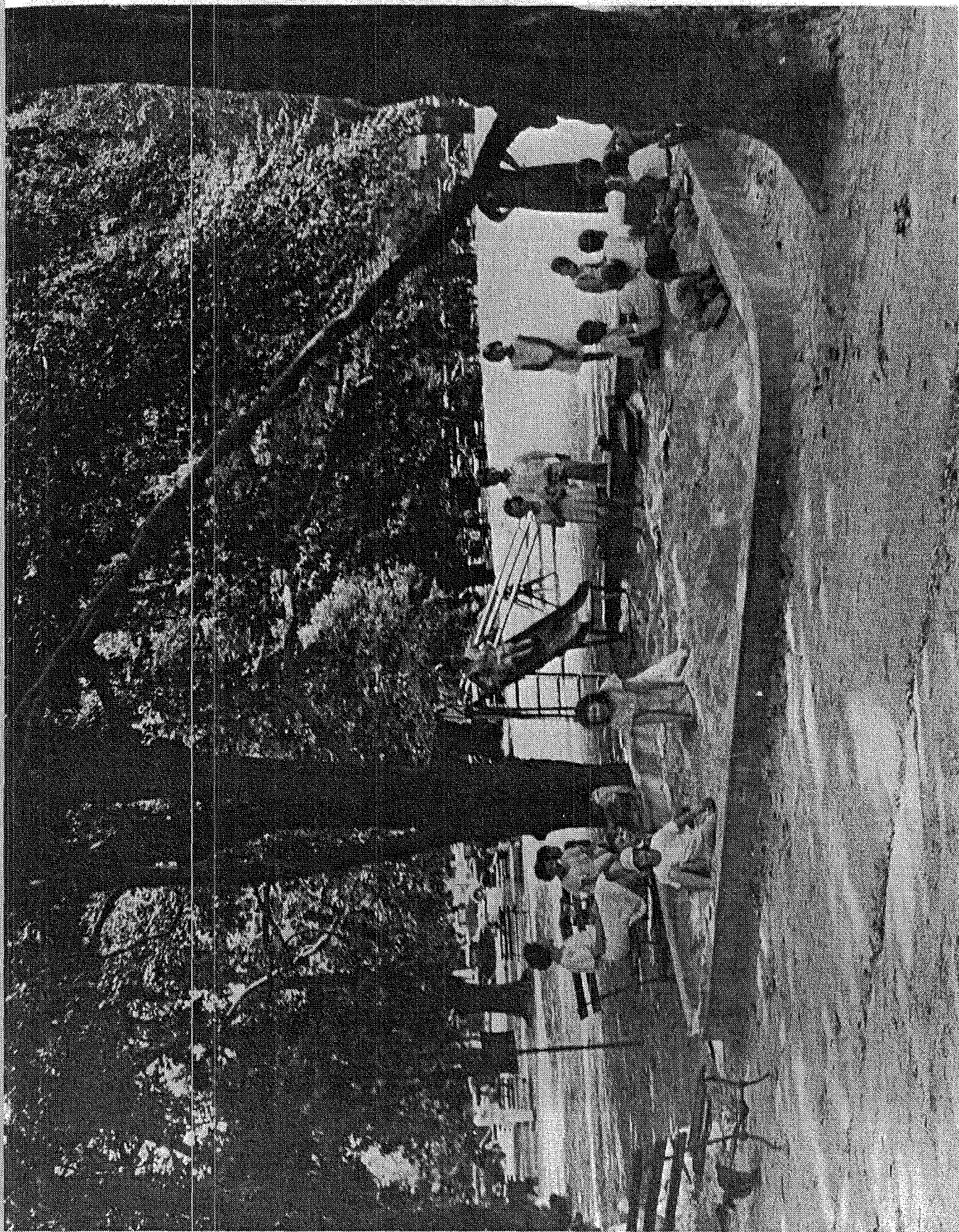
1. Commodore John Barry (1745-1803) Memorial Statue, Franklin Park



2. Location plat of Franklin Park in relation to the White House



3. Handsome golden privet offers restful surroundings, August 15, 1932



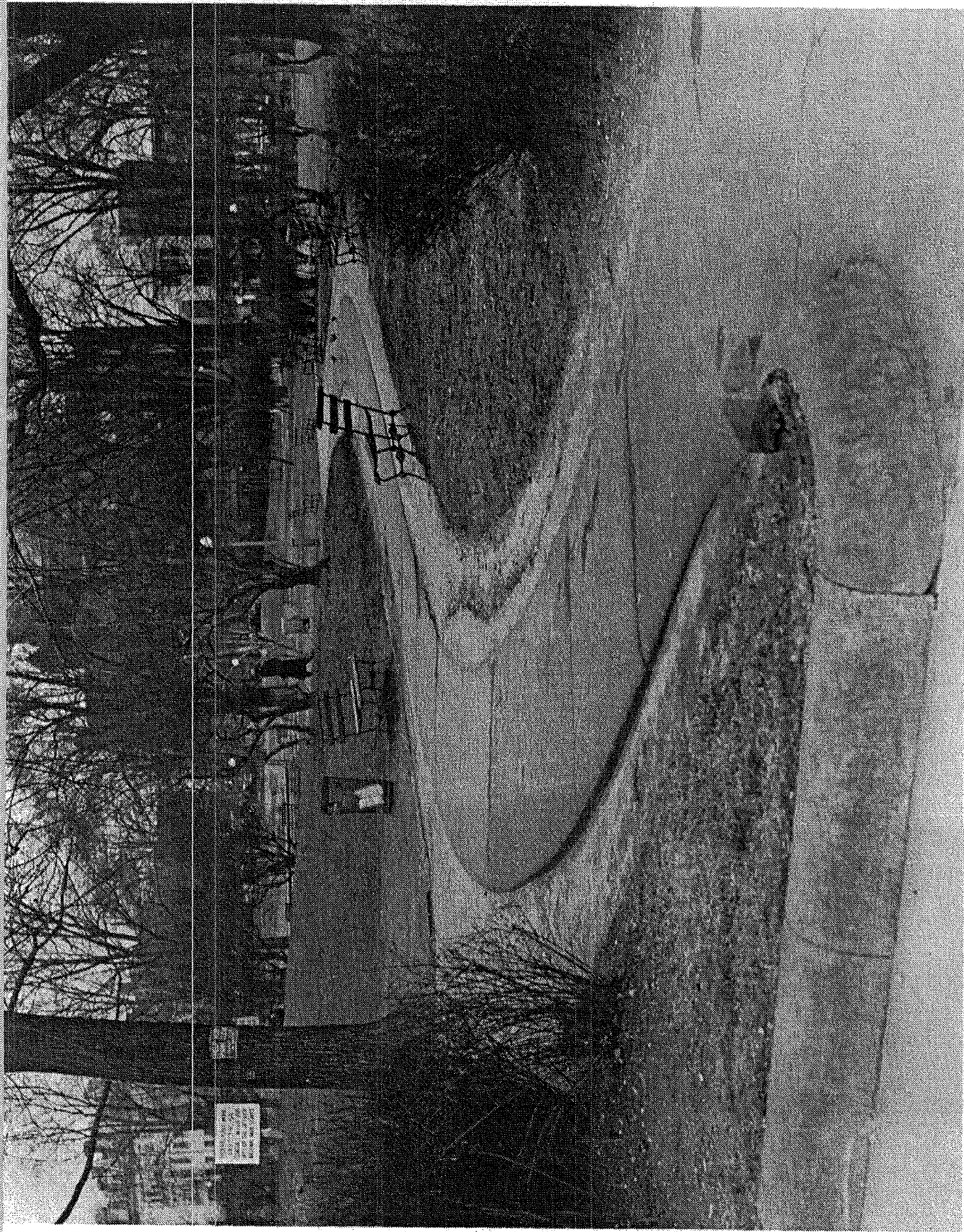
4. Children at play in sand box, Franklin Park, c. 1934



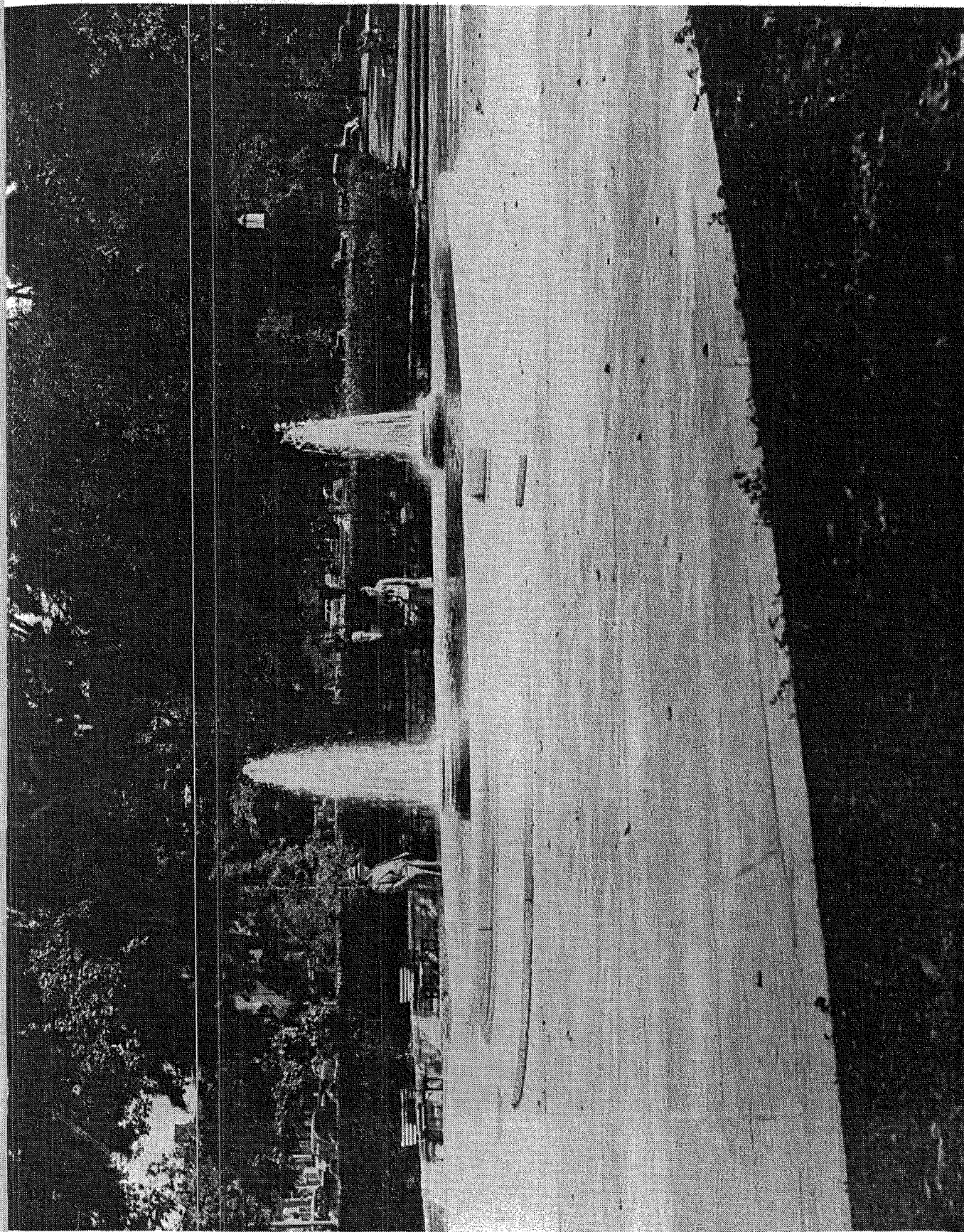
5. Tree surgeons at work, c. 1935



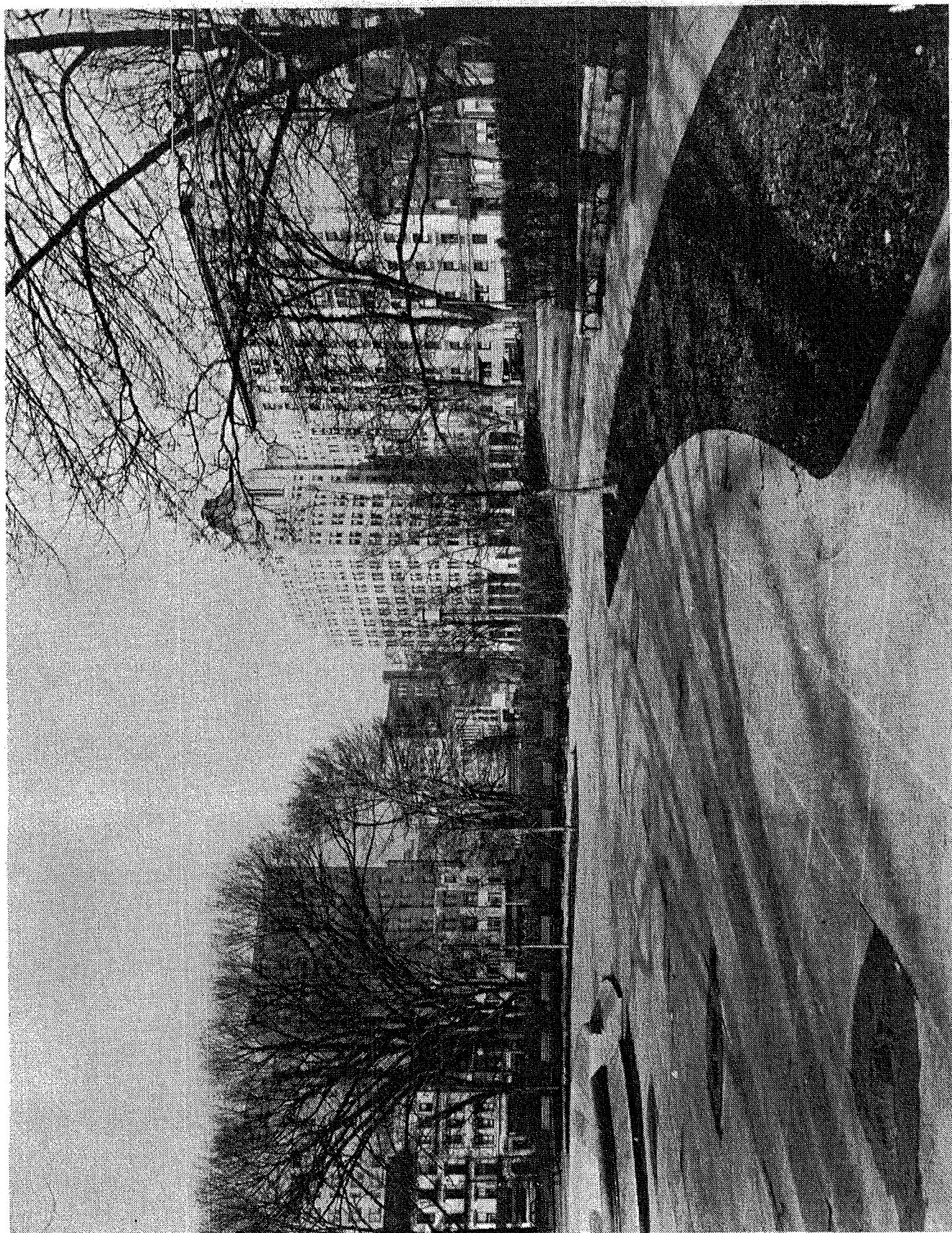
6. Condition of walks and lawn prior to rehabilitation, April 16, 1936



7. Walks after rehabilitation under FWA Project 641, 1936



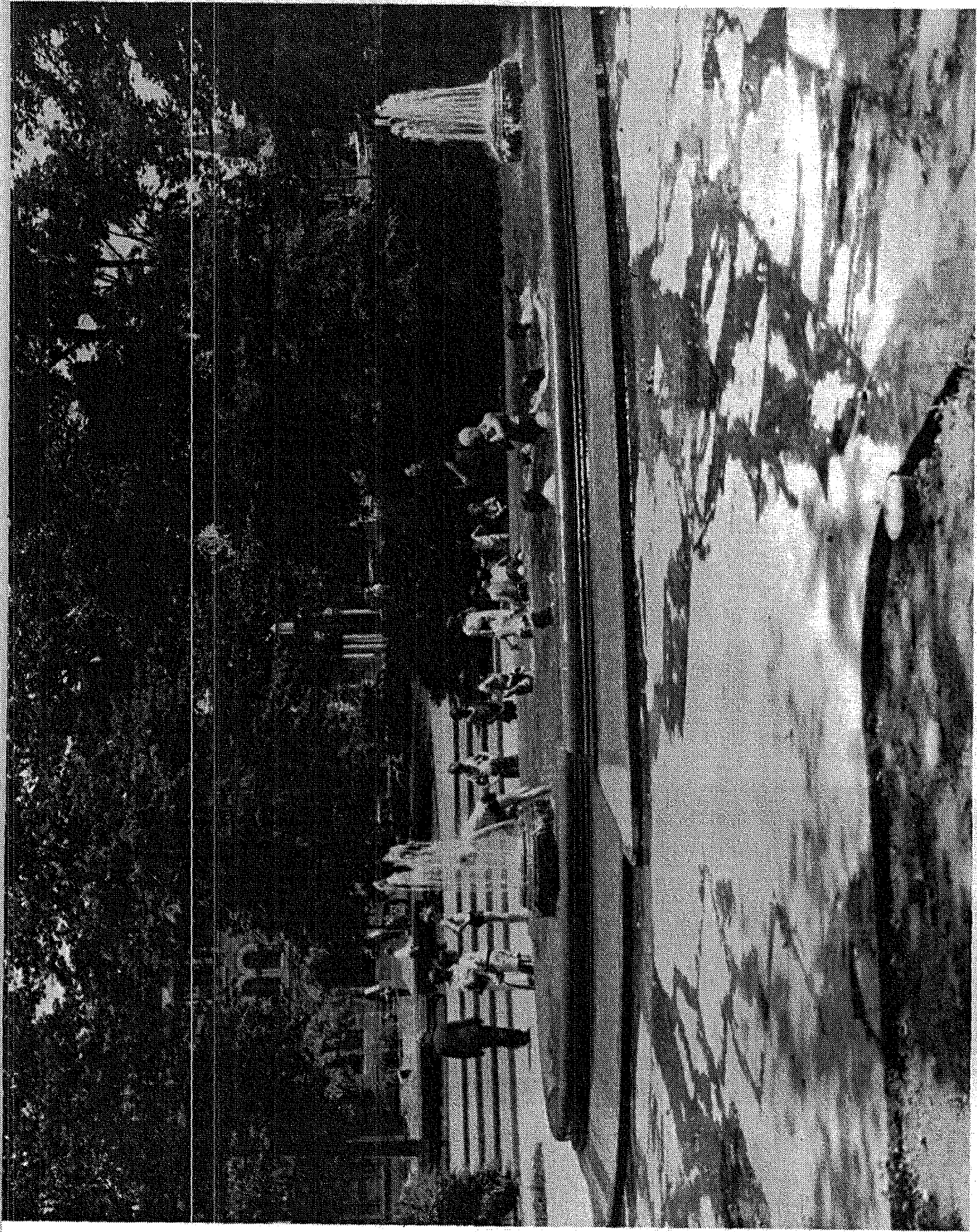
8. The new pool, October 4, 1936



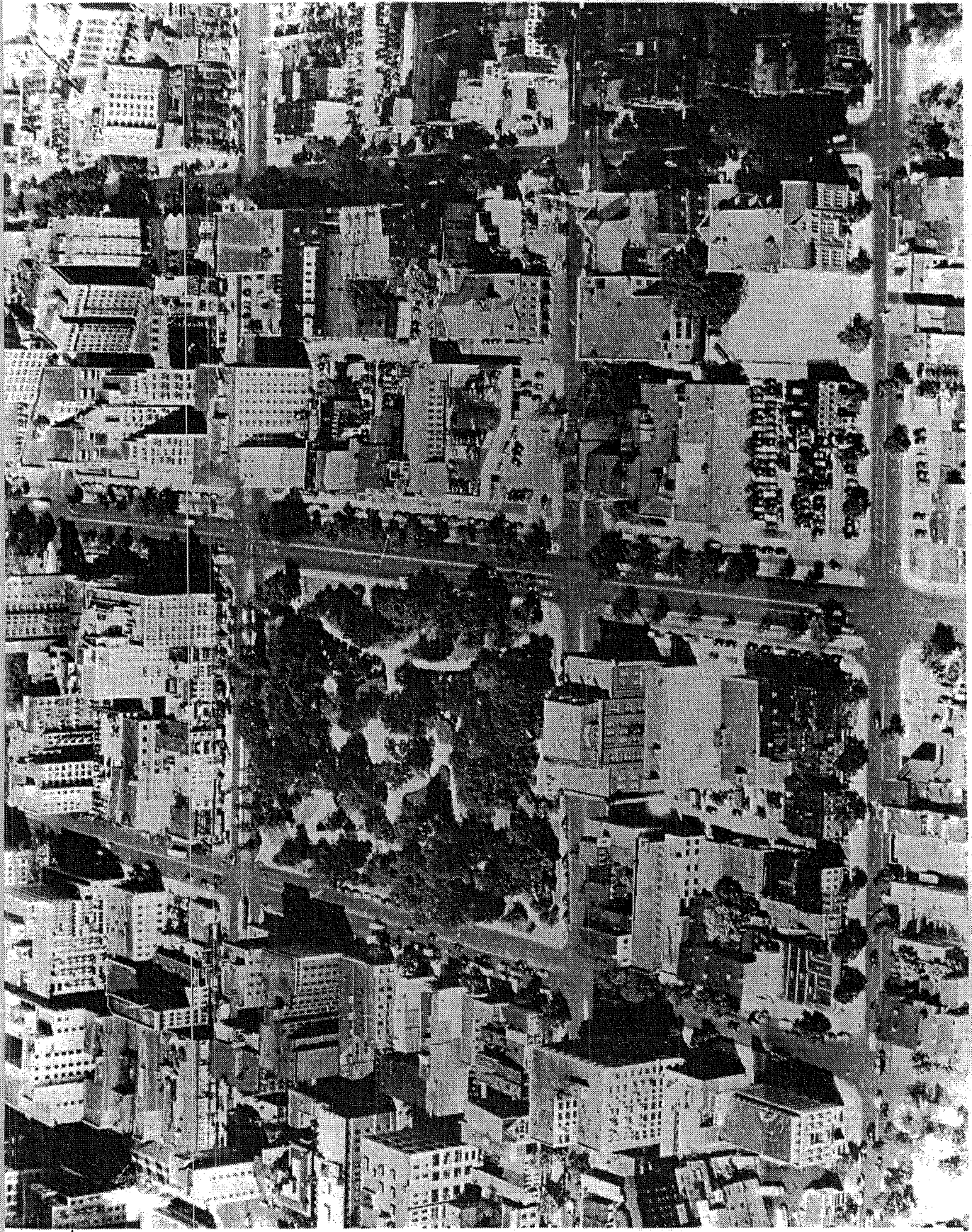
9. New flagstone walks and pool, 1936



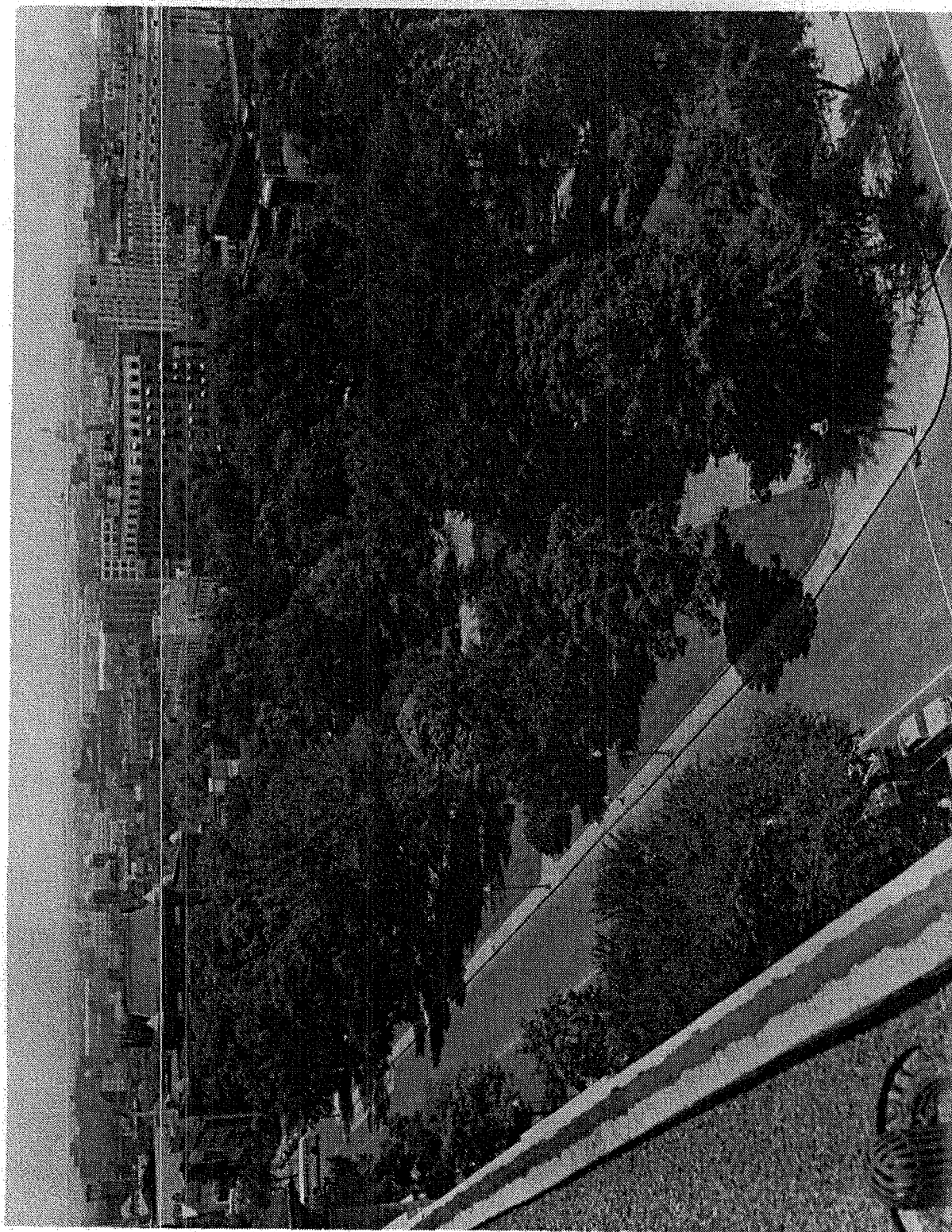
10. Lovely growth of azaleas and daffodils, April 1938



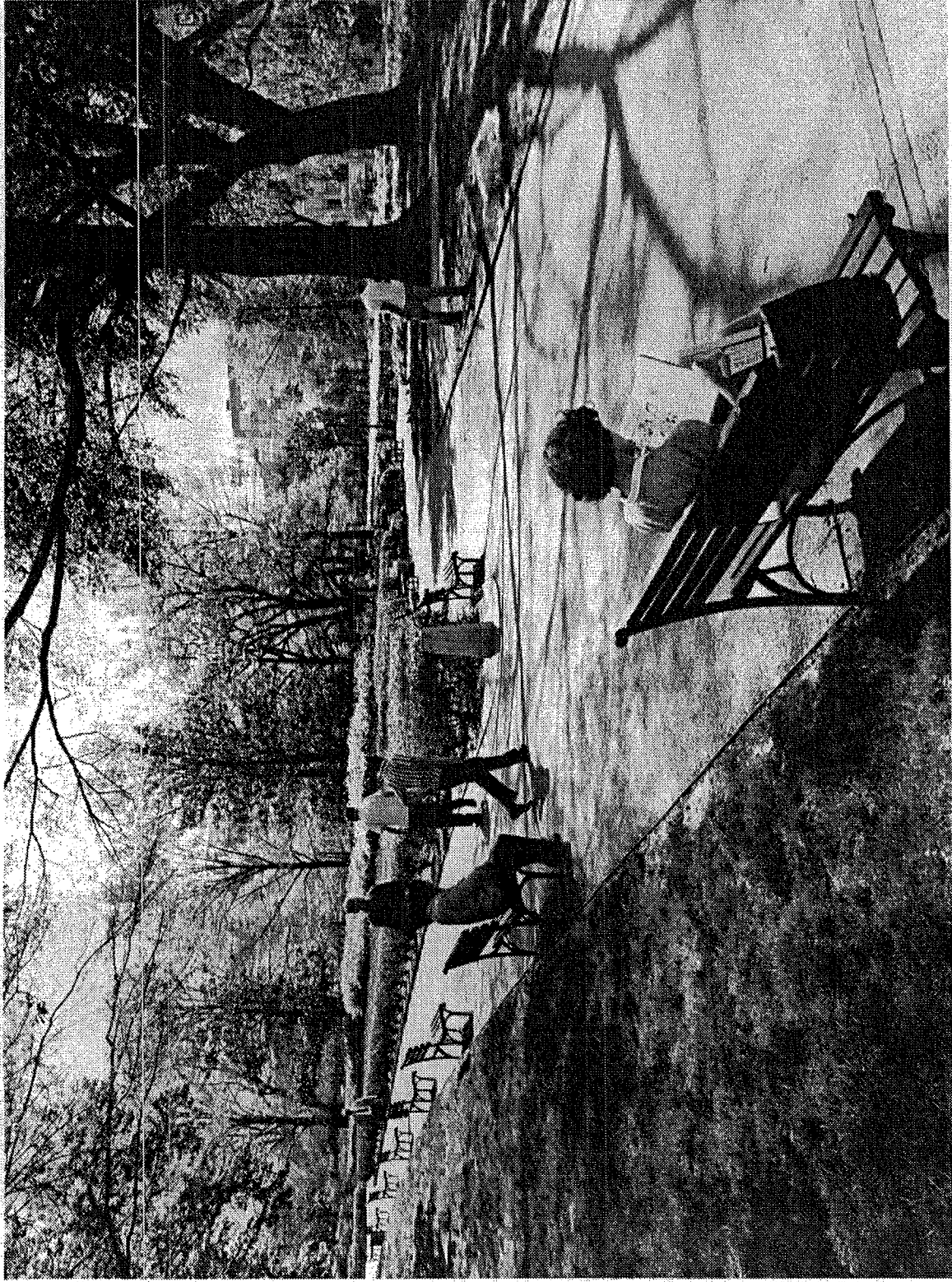
11. Children enjoying the Franklin Park pool on a hot day, July 8, 1938



12. Aerial view of the Franklin Park neighborhood, looking west, August 26, 1948



13. Panoramic view of Franklin Park looking southeast to U. S. Capitol, June 10, 1953



14. Quiet community use of Franklin Park, April 20, 1963

LANDSCAPING BY NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS, 1933-1967

Major changes of 1936-1937.--When Franklin Square came under the jurisdiction of National Capital Parks in 1933, it was one of the most rundown reservations of the city. Not only were the walks practically impossible to walk upon because of their advanced state of deterioration, but the lack of funds during the Depression Years merely served to exaggerate the lack of repair and maintenance of the overgrown lawns, rotting and unpruned trees, and the general rundown condition of the entire park. Complaints of residents of the area and of regular visitors to this site were handled in as philosophical a manner as possible. For instance, on April 13, 1931, Supt. Gartside had summarized the situation in an inter-office memorandum as follows:¹

The improvement of the walks in Franklin Park is not news to us as we are well aware of the deplorable condition of these walks. In fact we have requested funds each year for the past five years at least for the replacement of these old worn-out asphalt walks. This necessary item of maintenance has only been recognized within the last two years, when we received an item of \$10,000 for this purpose.

Work of this character is required in all of our older parks and reservations. The money appropriated is wholly inadequate to replace these walks in one, two or five year periods. The procedure followed is to replace the walks which are in the worst condition.

1. NCR file 1460/Franklin Square.

The work last year consisted of the replacing of walks in Stanton, Farragut and McPherson Parks, and while the cost of this work exceeded the authorized funds the balance was made up out of our maintenance funds.

There are probably half a dozen locations in worse condition than Franklin Park, and for this reason the work in this park cannot be promised for the immediate future.

Three years later, National Capital Parks were still attempting to reach a solution with respect to the rehabilitation of Franklin Square. On April 28, 1934, in response to another citizen's complaint of the poor condition of the walks, Supt. M. C. Finnan informed him:²

We have planned to make minor repairs to the walks in Franklin Park as a part of our regular maintenance program, but we are limited by the amount of funds available from our appropriation for this work in the extent to which this work can be carried on. We fully appreciate the necessity for completely reconditioning these walks and have requested an allotment of funds from the Public Works Administration for this purpose. We have hopes of obtaining funds from this source so that the work may be completed at an early date.

Although great public works projects were then being undertaken by the Roosevelt administration to reduce the unemployment problem throughout the country, allotments of public funds for such work as Supt Finnan indicates were still slow and time-consuming. Nevertheless various plans were being prepared for such rehabilitation

2. Letter, Supt. Finnan to E. F. Slanker, in *ibid.*

projects as Franklin Park, for instance, so that when federally - sponsored projects were approved, the Service could put them to immediate use.

One such plan was that shown in Plate VIII, "Spot plan for tree surgery work," indicating which trees were so badly deteriorated that they would have to be removed while others received proper surgery. In reviewing this plan, Thomas C. Vint, Chief, Eastern Division, Branch of Plans and Design, informed Supt. Finnan on June 7, 1934, that the "proposed work is a waste of money."³ Undoubtedly, not all shared this opinion for on July 12, Associate Forester John F. Shanklin informed Supt. Finnan that four trees, numbered 80, 81, 84, and 89 were scheduled for removal from the park prior to the tree surgery work, and that eight trees, numbered 26, 29, 30, 49, 50, 51, 82, and 116 were scheduled for removal at some future indefinite date.⁴

Rehabilitation Plans.--On May 13, 1935, Supt. Kirkpatrick submitted in a memorandum to Supt. Gartside the justification for doing a complete rehabilitation of Franklin Park at an estimated cost of \$68,000, saying, "The justification for this work seems to me to lie in [its] unsightly condition and costly upkeep. These can be corrected only by reconstruction." Kirkpatrick then set forth a complete analysis of the condition of Franklin Square, justifying the plans of NCP and their request for financial assistance from the Public Works Program to perform this work. It

3. NCP file.

4. Ibid.

also included the justification for the reconstruction of Marion Park on reservation 18 at E Street, S. E., between 4th and 6th Streets, and for Folger Park on reservation 16 at D Street, S. E., between 2nd and 3rd Streets. Kirkpatrick wrote:⁵

These parks are some of the oldest in the District of Columbia. They were designed to satisfy requirements which have long since been superseded by the demands of a growing municipality. They now have inflicted upon them a degree of usage and conditions of environment [sic] unforeseen at one time of their original development.

Walkways and pavement areas, lawn areas and plantings, have long since passed the point beyond which it is neither practical nor economical to spend money for maintenance and repairs.

Since the function of these parks is to provide for the needs of the public, and at the same time to enhance the city's beauty, a redesign consistent(sic) with present-day needs would seem to be an absolute necessity. Such redesign would include the installation of adequate and unobtrusive comfort facilities, properly [properly] laid out walkways, and planting designed with due regard to the unfavorable growing conditions prevailing in the heart of a metropolitan area. Subsidiary to these facilities should be proper drainage and water supply systems to permit efficient and economical maintenance. Plans have been prepared and approved for part of these projects and construction could be commenced within 60 days.

Finally, in late spring 1935, the Works Progress Administration approved a grant of \$73,000 for the complete rehabilitation and reconstruction of Franklin Park, the project being designated as Public Works Federal Project No. 641. Work was to begin in the winter of 1936 and was to be completed before that summer.⁶

5. NCF file.

6. Letter, Supt. Marshall J. Finnan, to A. J. Driscoll, Pres., Mid-City Citizens Assoc., Nov. 26, 1935.

Reconstruction of 1936.--With sufficient funds now available to complete the reconstruction of Franklin Park, Service officials moved rapidly and completed the selection of the necessary plans for the accomplishment of this project. Two such plans are shown in Plates VIII and IX in the Appendix. Following conferences between the Service, the Commission of Fine Arts, National Capital Parks, and the National Capital Planning Commission, the final overall plan was one selected from four alternate studies which all agencies approved.

The funds were broken down into two parts: (1) Planting contract, \$26,450, which included tree removals, purchase and planting of new trees, shrubbery, and other plant material, and top soiling; (2) Construction contract, \$46,850, which included all necessary grading, walk construction, construction of the flagstone court and pool; and the installation of all necessary drainage facilities, plumbing, lighting, seating, and water supply. The drainage and water supply work was of particular importance for all sewers, drainage, and water pipes were part of a 50-year old system.⁷ PEPCO was authorized to install 14 new street lights on the sidewalks surrounding the park.⁸

Under the planting program, 15 trees were removed and two transplanted to get them out of the way of new walkway construction. Included in the newly planted material were: 9 willow oaks, 800

7. Letter, Supt. Gartside to the Hon Guy M. Gillette, April 11, 1936.

8. Letter, Supt. Finnan to G. P. Magun, PEPCO, Dec. 26, 1935.

European hornbeams, 630 rock cotoneaster, 900 dwarf Japanese yews, and 1,055 winter creepers. The construction included the laying of a system of curving walks suited to the ground and existing trees, while maintaining the undulating topography of the park. Walks were increased from 36,732 square feet to 49,152 square feet. They were constructed of a concrete base and surfaced with a bituminous material. In the central area of the park, a paved court of flagstone surrounding an oval pool, 35 feet on the minor axis (north to south), and 50 feet on the major axis (east to west) was installed. A cut sandstone coping was installed around the edge of the pool with two fountain heads of six jets each, one at each end, the fountain heads forming columns of water about 8 feet high. The oak trees were planted in this court and surrounded by hedge formed from the hornbeams. Sufficient benches were installed throughout the walk system and the inner court provided with lighting appropriate to the new layout. New top soil was distributed throughout the park as needed together with new lawns as required.⁹ The design proved very effective and is still in use with few changes having been made from this time.

The completion of the construction work in Franklin Square generated much favorable publicity for the Service. Former critics of the conditions of the park were among the first to forward their congratulations on completion of its re-design. Among them were

9. Letter, Supt. Finnan to the Director, April 20, 1936.

the Logan-Thomas Circle Citizens' Association, the Mid-City Citizens' Association, and Frank W. Ballou, Superintendent of District Schools.¹⁰ As a final gesture, ten bird baths were installed during the summer of 1936.¹¹

The Rat Problem.--As with other park areas of the District, the control of rodents in the public reservations was a continuing one. Persons complaining of such rodents in the parks were usually the ones causing the problem. For instance, from time to time throughout the years, complaints were received of the number and the audacity of the rats in Franklin Park. Many office workers frequented the area in the daytime, enjoying its facilities during their lunch, but scattering food to the pigeons and the squirrels. Unconsumed parts of their lunch were thrown into trash receptacles which were not emptied until the following morning. Rats being always hungry would forage upon the approach of darkness and inevitably scare the park visitor by scurrying across their feet or by leaping across the benches on which they sat.

In reply to one such complaint, as an illustration, "Rudy" H. Bartel, Chief, Division of Maintenance, NCR, informed the writer, a Miss Harriet R. Strong, on June 6, 1961, for she had complained directly to the Secretary of the Interior, that "baiting rodent lairs" was a regular part of park maintenance. Bartel explained the reason for the problem as mentioned above and invited the

10. Letters to Supt., NCP, dated respectively June 5, Sept. 29, and 30, 1936.

11. Letter, Supt. Finnan to Mrs. Herbert W. Elmore, Pres., Washington Humane Society, Aug. 13, 1936.

cooperation of the writer and of the public in general. Commenting on the effectiveness of the Service's efforts in such cases to rid Franklin Square of the rats, he wrote: "To date, we have recorded a kill of 160 rats in this park. Our efforts, coupled with the cooperation of the public . . . should achieve this objective."¹² However, it was a continuing problem which still plagues the Region and undoubtedly will continue so long as food is carelessly scattered on the walks and lawns, or thrown into open trash receptacles.

The Underground Parking Garage.--In 1952 Franklin Square became a storm center when an underground parking garage was proposed for the area. From its beginning, Supt. Edward J. Kelly was one of its consistent critics.¹³

On February 15, 1950, C. C. Carter, Jr., of the C. & C. Fixture Co., Inc., an engineering and contracting firm of Mt. Rainier, Md., proposed to Charles M. Upham, Chairman, D. C. Motor Vehicle Parking Agency [the DCMVPA], construction of an underground parking garage beneath Franklin Square similar to the Union Square project of San Francisco. It was to be a four-level underground garage capable of handling 3,000 cars at a time. Its cost was estimated at \$6 million for the initial investment, depending upon the requirements of the Agency [National Capital Region] having jurisdiction thereof. Carter pointed out that an important feature of his plan was that in addition to supplying badly needed parking space, the garage

12. NC file.

13. Washington Evening Star, Nov. 16, 1952

would be of such heavy construction strength and layout design that in an emergency it could serve as a bomb shelter.

Carter's plan called for two-lane, two-way entrances and exits at mid-block points on 13th, 14th and I Streets with all curb parking around Franklin Square eliminated. He agreed that his organization would heed the "special requirements" of the agency having jurisdiction to insure that the redeveloped park and parking would conform to "all aesthetic, recreational, and other park considerations". He requested that the D. C. Motor Vehicle Parking Agency pass a resolution urging the cooperation of other agencies in the furtherance of this project since it would help achieve the objective stated in the preamble to the Motor Vehicle Parking Facility Act of 1942, i.e., that assistance be given to private investors desiring to assist in the alleviation of the District's serious parking congestion. Carter also desired that Upham write a letter to the National Capital Parks, advising it of Carter's proposal and request that it [NCP] approve such plans so that it could go ahead with construction plans and develop cost estimates. In seeking justification for asking for such cooperation, Carter stated the reason for his views and the anticipated eventual result:¹⁴

In view of the initial investment which we are making, in time and effort, in the development of construction plans and other pre-operating costs which we have incurred, we would, of course, expect that we would have the exclusive long-term lease agreement on this property, at a nominal rental. The long-term lease period

14. NCR file 1460/Franklin Square.

would be necessary for us to amortize the investment under conditions of nominal rental, which would require a long period of time, say 50 years, at which time the property, with all construction improvements, would then revert to the present owners [National Capital Parks]. We are sure you will appreciate the reasonableness of this request.

Two days later, on February 17, 1952, the proposal for this underground garage was presented at the request of the DCMVPA at their headquarters and was attended by representatives of National Capital Parks. Supt. Root, in commenting on the meeting, appended the following note to a copy of Carter's proposal:¹⁵

Note: Representatives of the Co. appeared before the D. C. Parking Agency. They were told Franklin Square was not a good location even if available. Staff of P. A. will try to find a suitable site on private property to interest this capital.

LS Root

Feb. 17, '50

On July 30, 1952, Chairman Upham informed Edward J. Kelly, then Superintendent, NCP, that the DCMVPA was providing "guidance and assistance" to the Morrison-Knudsen Company who had prepared an initial set of drawings on the parking proposal for Franklin Square. Upham forwarded a set of the drawings to Kelly as a prelude to entering into formal negotiations in the matter, requesting consideration thereof:¹⁶

We sincerely hope that the National Capital Parks will study the proposed plan sympathetically with a view toward finding some way to make it possible to provide underground parking at this site, taking into account the potential benefits to our citizens and visitors to the National Capital.

15. Original letter underlined in Ibid.

16. Ibid.

There is no record of any reply having been made to this suggestion by Supt. Kelly or any other Service official. However, within a few months the matter was again brought up, this time by the Board of Commissioners who, apparently, were not aware of the Service's strong objections to any such proposal to the use of the original reservations of the city, but in particular of the Service's outright opposition to the use of park land for commercial purposes.

On October 15, 1952, F. Joseph Donohue, Pres., D. C. Board of Commissioners, informed Conrad L. Wirth, Director, National Park Service, of the progress to that date of the plans for the proposed underground parking facility at Franklin Square and of its recent decision in the matter and the reason thereof:

In view of the very serious need of additional parking space in this general locality, the Board of Commissioners has likewise gone on record as favoring this project.

Donohue further pointed out the anticipated benefits to both municipal and federal interests, that Supt. Kelly had been informed of its details and that it was ". . . hoped that you will give this proposal your favorable consideration." He also requested Director Wirth to inform the Board of "the minimum criteria under which the Park Service would be willing to endorse this project."¹⁷

On November 17, 1952, in an office memorandum, Harry T. Thompson, Acting Supt., NCP, informed Director Wirth that he had prepared the letter as directed in answer to Commissioner Donohue. Thompson also stated that he had attended a meeting held by the District

17. NCR File 1460/Franklin Park.

Motor Vehicle Parking Agency on November 14 at which time he had been asked by the Agency to state the position of the National Park Service on the proposed parking facility. Apparently the DCMVPA withdrew its support of the garage proposal when Thompson informed them of the Service's objections and that, most probably based on inside information he may have had, Thompson suggested to the Director:¹⁸

I have further information that leads me to believe that the Commission will now withdraw their previous approval of this garage proposal, and that they will request the Planning Commission to remove this item from their next Agenda.

In the circumstances, I think we might well withhold a reply of any kind to Mr. Donohue's letter with reasonable assurance that the problem will have solved itself without the necessity of any action on the part of the Park Service.

Without a doubt, the Director had his own views on the subject and wanted them to be very strongly impressed on the D. C. Board of Commissioners. By letter, dated November 24, 1952, Director Wirth informed Commissioner Donohue of his strong opposition to any such requests or commercial use of park property. Because of its precedent setting scope, Wirth's letter is included here in full,¹⁹ for when a similar proposal was made a decade later in 1961 to build a garage beneath Farragut Square to alleviate the parking problem, it was the opposition of the Service that maintained this park's integrity from the inroad of non-park projects. Undoubtedly, this was also a consideration in the naming of the subway to be

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS COPY

NOV 24 1952

Hon. F. Joseph Donohue, President
Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia
District Building
Washington 4, D. C.

My dear Mr. Donohue:

I have received your letter of October 15, referring to preliminary plans and a proposal by the firm of Morrison-Knudsen to construct an underground parking garage at Franklin Square Park.

I must inform you that we will oppose the use of Franklin Square Park, or any other park lands, for commercial purposes such as is proposed in your letter. The park lands in Washington, especially in the old City, play a vital part in the character of the National Capital. A garage with a roof garden on it cannot, and will not, serve in their place.

Everyday, we are confronted with proposals from commercial interests to use park lands to save the cost of real estate in furthering their projects. We have no objection to their trying to obtain public lands for such purposes, but we cannot agree that they should be permitted to succeed. Franklin Square Park is needed by the general public for park purposes, even more today than it was when originally set aside. We should be grateful to the founders of the National Capital for setting aside areas such as this for park purposes. The entire basic concept of park development and park use dictates against such use as has been proposed.

I appreciate your submitting this matter to me, and I am sorry that I cannot agree with your request to use Franklin Square Park for garage purposes.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) Conrad L Wirth

Conrad L. Wirth
Director

HTThompson/rd
COPY for National Capital Planning Commission
National Capital Parks (2)

built 60 feet below ground under Farragut Square, but which will be officially known as the Connecticut Avenue and K Street Metro station, rather than the Farragut Square Metro stop. Most probably, as happens in the majority of circumstances under similar conditions, the riding public and the newspaper world will call it the Farragut Square station. However, the import and point is that it will have no such official designation, although there have been some hints of the planned subway stop at Dupont Circle receiving such designation.²⁰

However, the situation was definitely resolved after receipt of Director Wirth's letter. On November 25, 1952, Commissioner Donohue informed the Director of the Board's action as follows:²¹

At their Board Meeting on Thursday, November 20, 1952, the Board of Commissioners voted to withdraw their support of this project in view of information received that operators of established parking facilities plan to erect approximately 1400 additional spaces in the vicinity of Franklin Park on privately-owned property.

This action ended all further discussion of the matter with respect to Franklin Square.

20. See my study on Farragut Park (Washington, 1968), for the final solution of this type of non-park proposal when District Building Regulations were enacted requiring builders to provide sufficient parking space for tenants in basement garages.

21. NCR file.

VI

FRANKLIN PARK AND THE COMMUNITY

The Contemporary Scene.--Far-reaching changes have occurred in the community use of Franklin Park since its initial importance in the history of Washington as being the source of spring water for the White House. Its early use as a park of rest and relaxation for the neighborhood residents and the scene of summer classes for school children from the Franklin School during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was changed to a center of commercialism and the scene of many religious meetings during World War I, the depression years and those of the Thirties. The overall landscaping changes wrought during the Roosevelt administration, plus the cheap commercialism of subsequent years, has transformed it into a center of contemporary agitation over civil rights. Franklin Park is now the center of an area of strip joints, night life, and pandering. Its present vice-ridden status no longer endears it to the visiting public. Yet it might be well to examine some of the better aspects of a way of life associated with the park in the past that has all but disappeared.¹

Special Events.--Among the special events which took place in Franklin Park and for which the National Park Service issued permits

1. The material of this section is based upon an analysis of more than 30 years of correspondence in the files of the National Capital Region, Mail and Records Branch. See files NCP, 1460/ Franklin Square (9), #1 and 2, and NCR, D-24, Franklin Park.

when the occasion required were the following:

October 29 is celebrated annually as Navy Day and the Navy Department usually makes it an occasion to lay wreaths at the foot of all statues in the District dedicated to the memory of American naval heroes. In Franklin Park, a wreath is usually laid at the foot of the memorial to Commodore John Barry.

From June 8 to 12, 1942, the now defunct Washington Times-Herald sponsored the Fifth Annual Outdoor Art Fair in Franklin Park, which was well attended.² In 1948, many of the park reservations had a space designated as the "open area" where peaceful crowds could gather and for which no permit or advance notification to the Service was required. In Franklin Park this open area was the north-south axis between I Street and the center display fountain, approximately 100 feet north of the street curb line.³ On August 6, 1948, this area was used by the Washington Committee for Consumer Protection to protest a fare increase by the Capital Transit Company.⁴

On January 13, 1951, the Chase Photo Studio was granted a permit to photograph the George Washington Medical School student body.⁵ The school is one block south on H Street. On March 16, 1963, in honor of St. Patrick's Day, the Irish War Veterans, D. C.,

2. Letter, F. F. Gillen, Actg. Supt., to Blake Ehrlich, Art Fair Director, Times-Herald, May 26, 1942, in NCP file #2.

3. Letter, Supt. J. C. Root to Mrs. Frances Klafter, Chairman, Washington Committee for Consumer Protection, Aug. 4, 1948, in NCP file #2.

4. Ibid.

5. Letter, Supt. Ed. Kelly to E. Schaefer, Jan. 5, 1951, in NCP file #2.

Post No. 17, were permitted to lay a wreath at the foot of the Barry Memorial Statue under the usual restrictions.⁶

Children Bathing.--As early as July 1934, soon after Franklin Park came under the jurisdiction of National Capital Parks, complaints against the children, both white and Negro, bathing in its pool plagued the Service. In reply to one such complaint, Supt. Finnan wrote:⁷

You are advised that we are doing everything possible to discourage the children bathing in the fountain. It is not that we are unsympathetic toward the needs of the youngsters trying to seek relief from the intense heat but rather because of the conditions created by such bathing are insanitary and the damage caused to fountains and surrounding areas amounts to such that this office is unable to financially support such practices.

Complaints were also forwarded to the Service by members of the Senate and the House from area residents. These were usually explained by the fact that there were insufficient park police to be on duty at all hours to prevent the practice. At times, when some of the children feared they would be apprehended, they would run away nude through the park and streets. When attempts were made to interest parents in controlling the actions of their children while on park property, the police were usually met with stony-faced silence. Yet newspapers, in particular, were always sympathetic toward the children bathing in the pool, if only

6. Letter, C. W. Heine, Asst., Reg. Dir., C. I. & U., to Arthur P. Gill, Q.M., Irish War veterans, D. C. Post 17, Mar. 14, 1963, in NCR file.

7. Letter, Supt. C. M. Finnan to John P. Wagner, July 10, 1934, in NCP file #1.

for traditional reasons.⁸

When some few children were brought before the Juvenile Court, for violation of park regulations, they were dismissed. This experience prompted Park Police Chief, Capt. Henry Holmes, to remark in later years as the problem continued unabated, "We can't expect much help from the Juvenile Court."⁹ As in the case of abuse of the basin at the foot of the Dupont Memorial Fountain in Dupont Circle, area residents suggested putting up a fence around the pool and the installation of a screen beneath the level of the pool water.¹⁰

As far back as 1938, in a memorandum of July 26, addressed to Supt. Gartside, Chief M. Kirkpatrick of the Maintenance Division, NCP, wrote:

I believe the only sensible policy is to make no attempt to prevent children from using the pools in the parks and congested areas. The only practicable precautionary measure seems to me to be the installation of chlorinating equipment of the Proportioneer Type.

Gartside's reaction was simply the word "No" with his initials scrawled across the face of the memorandum.¹¹ But from the overall view point and since the practice has continued throughout the years to this day, the park police are helpless to enforce park regulations against such acts. With the newspapers continuing in a

8. Memorandum, Pvt. C. P. Apfelbach, USPP, to Capt. P. J. Carroll, Cmdg., July 25, 1938, in NCP file #1. Letter, J. P. Wagner to Actg. Supt. F. T. Gartside, undated, *ibid*.

9. See file NCP, #1.

10. See my study, Dupont Circle (Washington, 1968), for the handling of similar problems.

11. NCP file #1.

sympathetic manner to play up the scenes of children disporting themselves in the park pools and fountains, and with parents refusing to accept the responsibility for disciplining their children, apparently nothing can or will be done by anyone.

Religious Meetings.--Franklin Park, particularly during the Thirties, has always been a center of religious gatherings. The practice was abused by various sects, and finally the Service withdrew permission to hold such meetings as a matter of principle, and areas on the outskirts of the city were designated where they could be held without regard to religious tenets. Actually the religious controversy arose over the abuse of the privilege of being authorized to conduct such meetings in the park. It reached such a white hot temper that it involved President Harry S. Truman and the Service had to resolve the issue.

The Young Men's Christian Association was one of the first organizations to hold religious services in Franklin Park before the outbreak of World War I. On June 1, 1934, an onlooker, S. F. Smith, wrote to the NCP asking, "Why is the same right [to hold religious meetings] on street corners withheld from the Salvation Army?"¹² There appears to be no recorded answer.

During the summer of 1942, the Elder Rothus Henderson was permitted to conduct a religious meeting in the park. Owing to complaints of his conduct during these meetings, his permit was revoked. During September 1945, religious services were allowed

12. Copies of this and all succeeding correspondence referred to in balance of this section will be found in NCP file #1.

to be conducted by the Men's Missionary Society of the Sligo Seventh Day Adventist Church on Saturday evenings between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. Because of complaints of the residents of the area, they were not permitted to use any form of amplification equipment.

Some meetings got out of hand, however, and in a memorandum on the subject of PA systems, Lt. H. F. Stewart, U. S. Park Police, informed Capt. J. Raspberry on July 18, 1948, that Police Regulations of the District, Article VI, Section I, and under Section 3.3 of Park Regulations, which made it applicable to the park system, forbade the use of public address systems in public space.

When crowds of 300 to 400 began to attend meetings of the Sligo Seventh Day Adventist Church in Franklin Park, with its directors ignoring the regulation against the use of a PA system, its permit was revoked. A permit was granted to the Watchtower Society of Jehovah's Witnesses Sect during August 1948, when they agreed to have their PA system only loud enough for the immediate assemblage to hear. Upon showing satisfactory conduct of their meetings, the permit was extended to October 1948. Gradually, however, the meetings got out of hand, and the Service had to take action to prohibit all types of religious meetings in Franklin Park.

On October 15, 1951, the Rev. Charles A. Hart, Associate Professor of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America, Brookland, in a letter to President Harry S. Truman, protested the action of the Service in forbidding the use of Franklin Park on Sunday afternoons for a religious forum. Hart complained that they had "carried on peaceful discussions in the park for 18 years," and

that he considered it a subterfuge of the Service to offer "impossible places away from the center of population and otherwise useless."

On December 7, 1951, Dale E. Doty, Assistant Secretary to the Secretary of the Interior, writing on behalf of the President to the Rev. M. Hart, said:

The decision to prohibit meetings in Franklin Park was reached upon the recommendation of the Park Police after repeated complaints from nearby residents and tenants of adjacent office buildings.

Professor Hart replied that he considered "this prohibition of the Park Division . . . entirely unnecessary and arbitrary." On January 31, 1952, Asst. Secy. Doty replied to Prof. Hart that the decision was taken because of difficulties experienced in dealing with various "other" groups who spoke on subjects objectionable to "adults of good morals and unfit for the ears of children." For these reasons, the "park authorities were constrained to discontinue issuing permits for meetings in Franklin Park." Doty then called Hart's attention to other sites for outdoor meetings which would be available to the Catholic Evidence Guild or "any other religious groups."

From analyzing all the correspondence of National Capital Region in relation to this particular subject, it can only be said that the Service cannot be partial to any one group or religious sect in preference to another for there would never be any settling of the problem. With the present situation of Franklin Park being the center of the "lesser strip of Washington" (U and 14th Streets

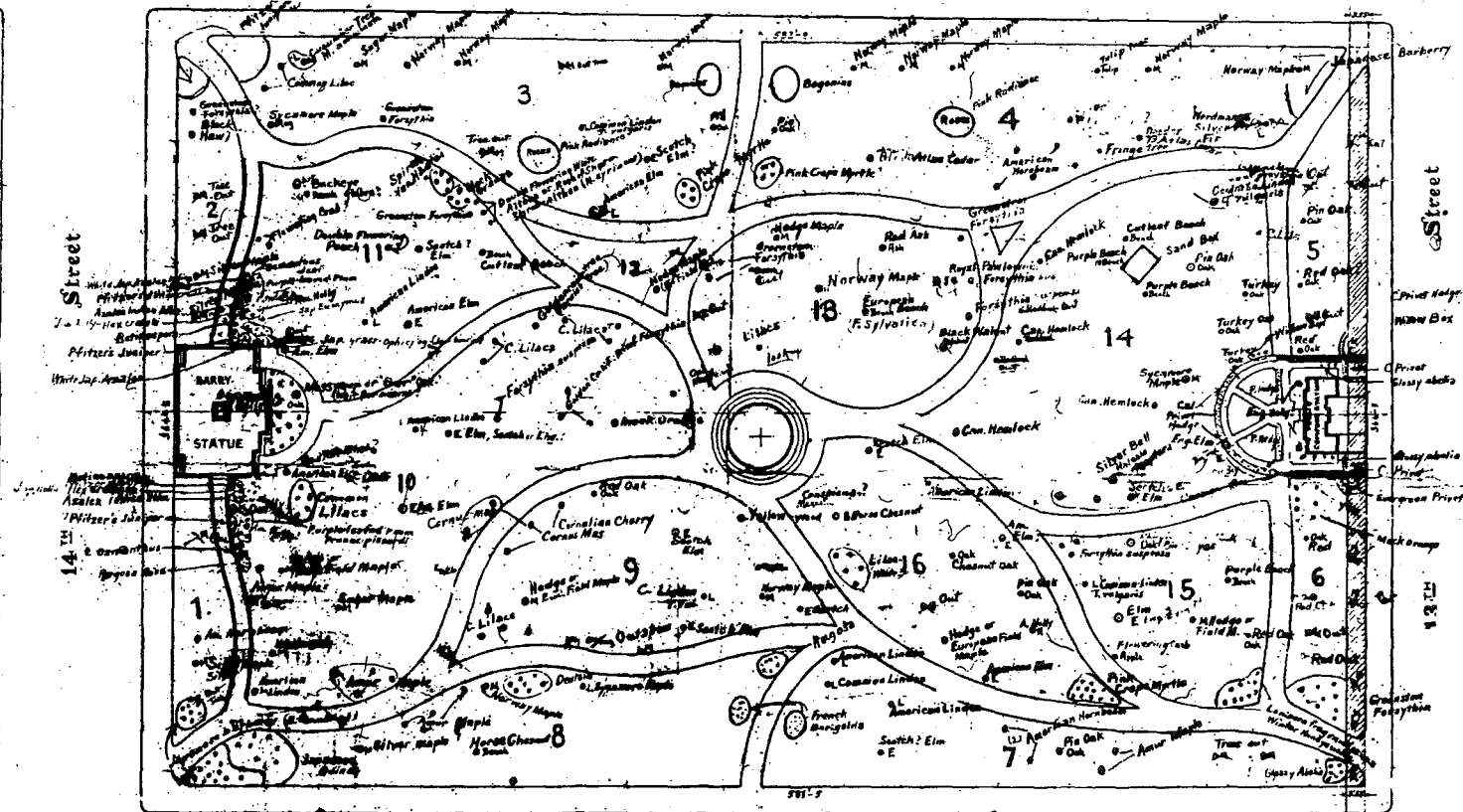
being the "main" strip) along with all the strip-tease joints, and the park itself being a center of pandering, perhaps it is just as well that religion is not being mixed in with this general atmosphere which at the time of the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was also the scene of rioting and merchant store burnings. However, there is hope for the future of Franklin Park from a long-range viewpoint for heavy real estate investments are starting to show results after a modest beginning which commenced about a decade ago. The newly-completed Franklin Building, a modern 10-story office building on the corner of 14th and I Streets is one of the best symbols of hoped for changes of the future.

APPENDIX

The following pages are partly illegible. However, they have been included in order to provide the reader with as much information as possible. If additional information is desired contact the National Park Service, Division of History, Washington, D. C. 20006.

51-A

K. Street N.W.



I

Street
9th St

NOTE: AREA IN RED TRANSFERRED TO ACORN
MARCH 1926

FRANKLIN PARK	
MAINTAINED BY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	
FOR THE ARMY & NAVY	
MAINTAINED BY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	
APPROVED	SUPERVISOR
MAINTAINED BY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	IN CHARGE
MAINTAINED BY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	MAINTAINED BY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Plate I

[illegible]

Plate II

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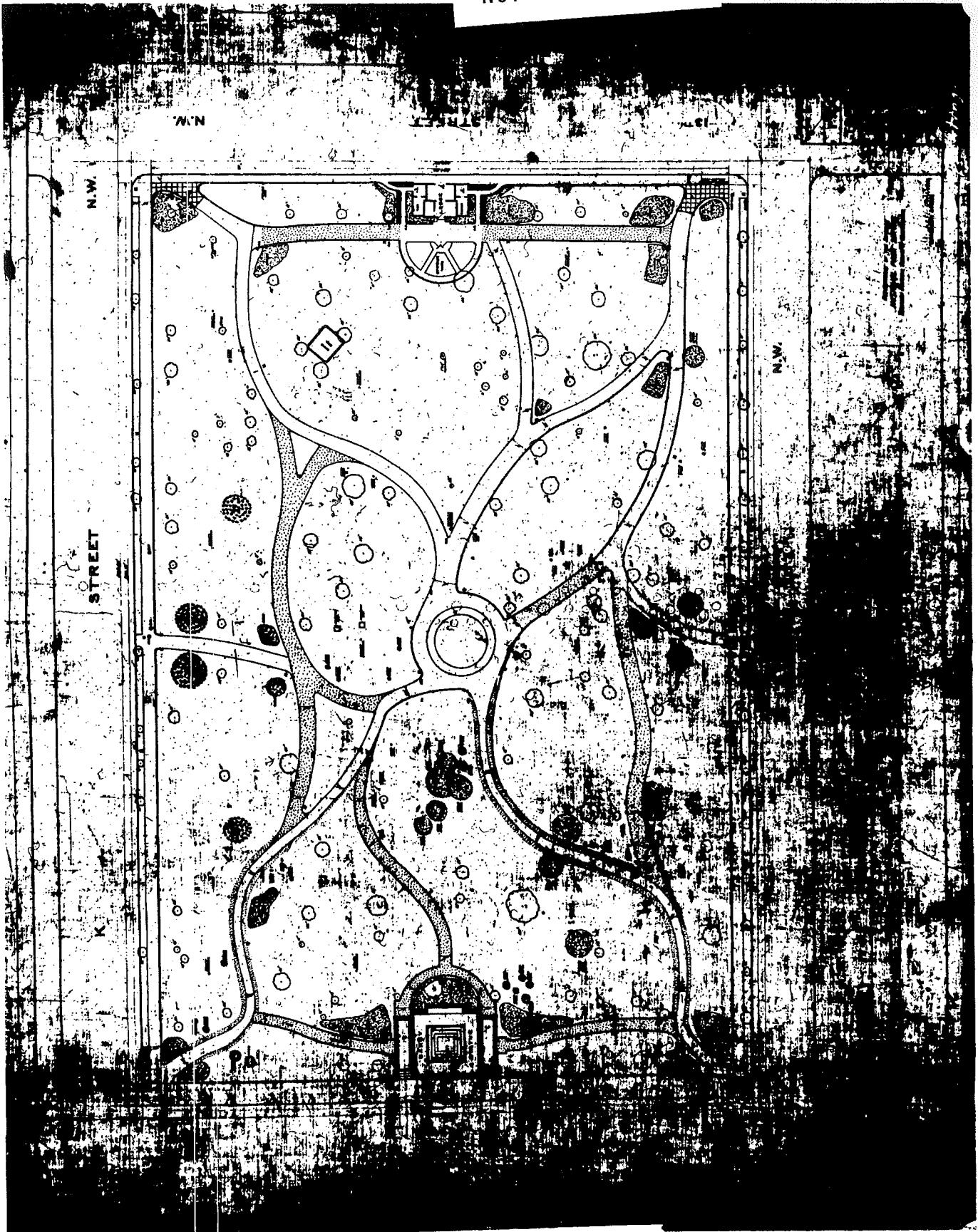
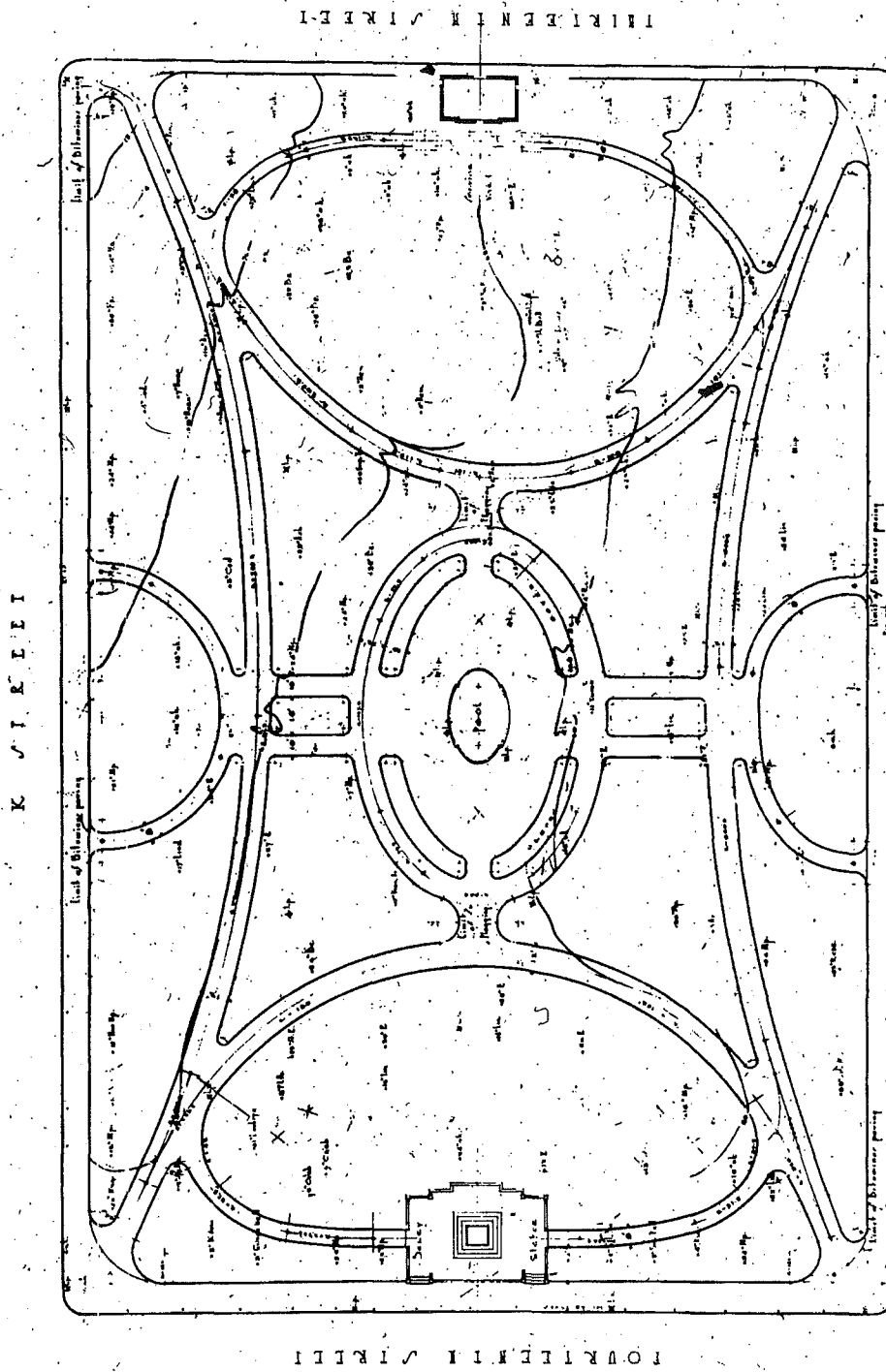


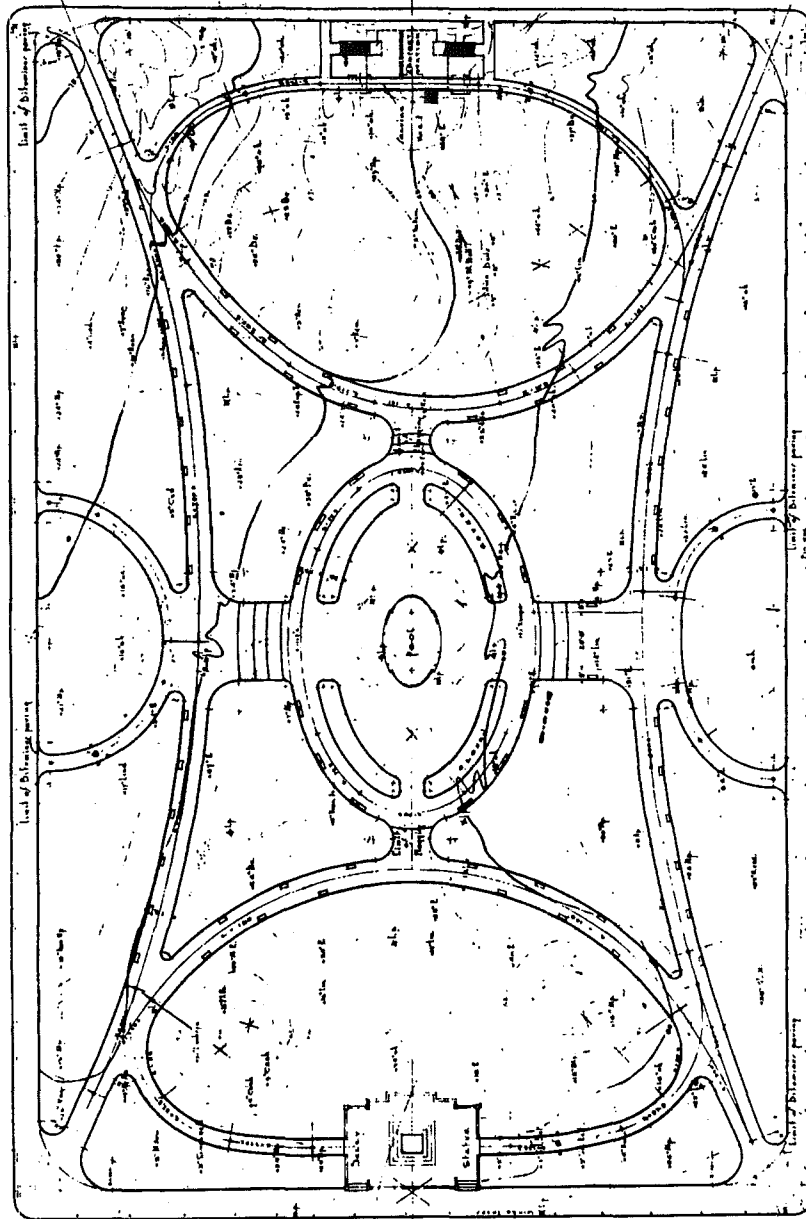
Plate III

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REVISION	DATE	BY	REASON
1	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Original plan
2	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
3	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
4	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
5	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
6	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
7	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
8	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
9	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan
10	1/1/19	J. C. WIEBE	Revised plan

Plate IV



LYLE S. TRILEY

61A09447

[illegible]

Scots 1998

18-32

Plate V

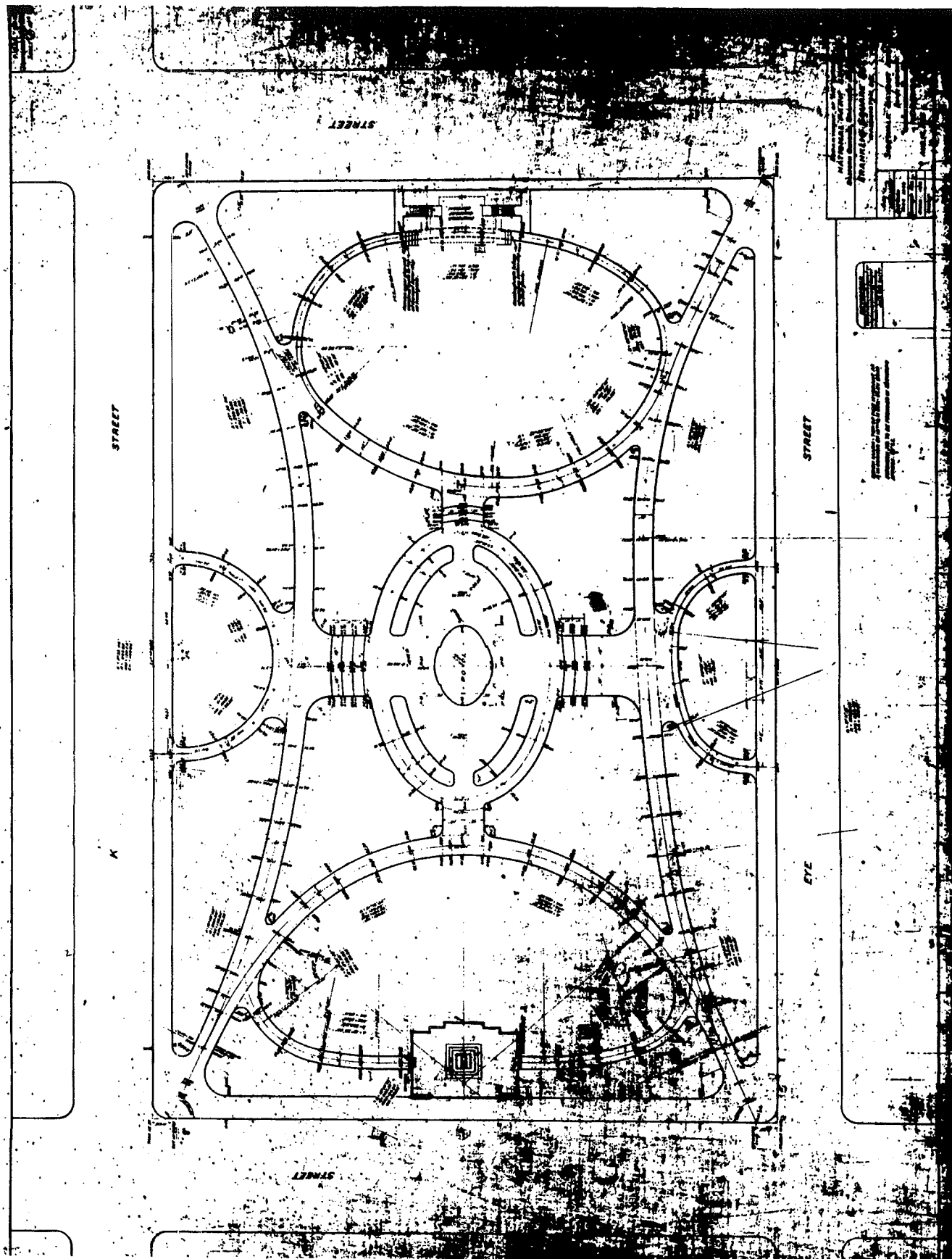
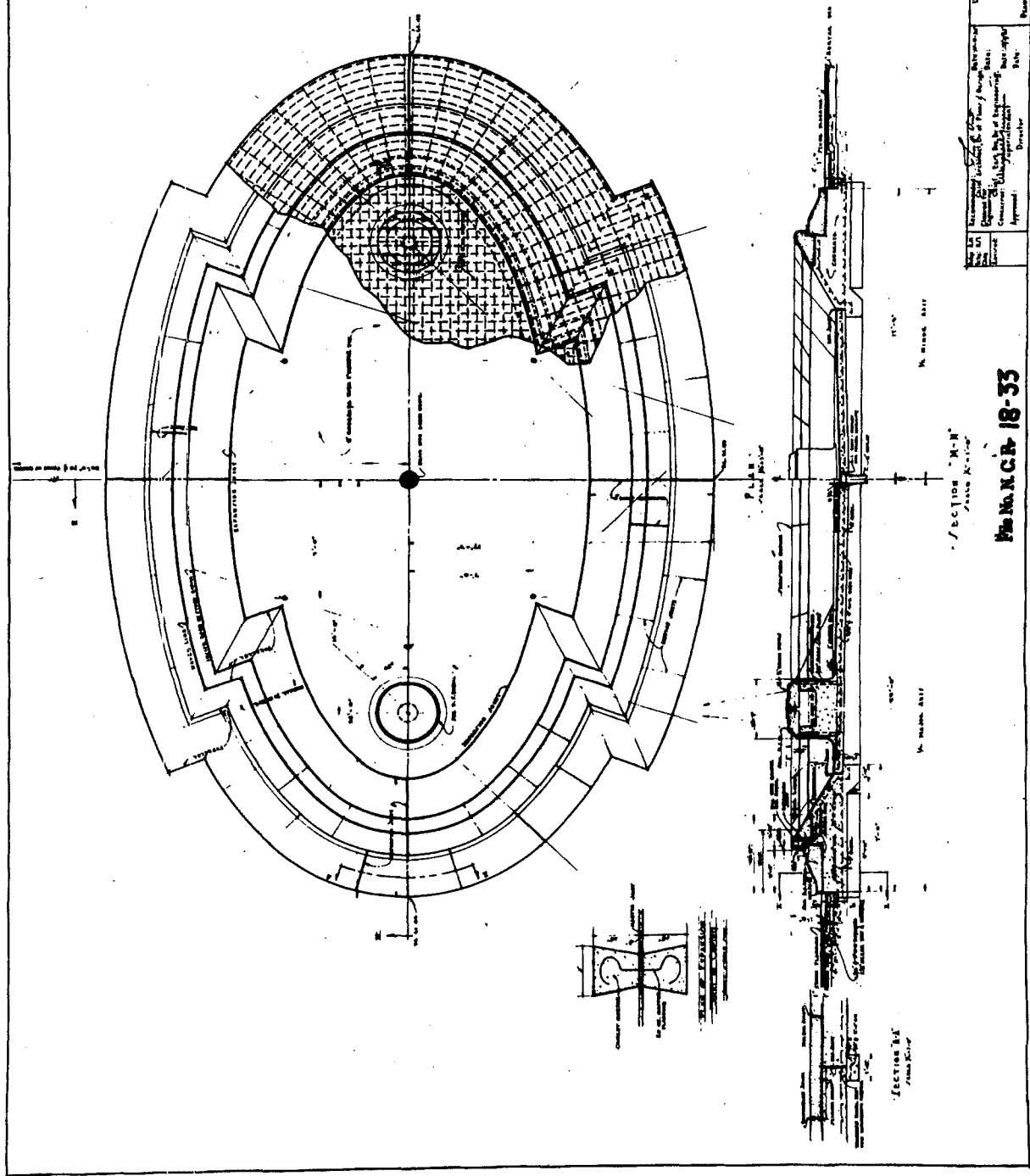


Plate VI

10-17-33
 Contract No. 18-33
 Sheet 2 of 5



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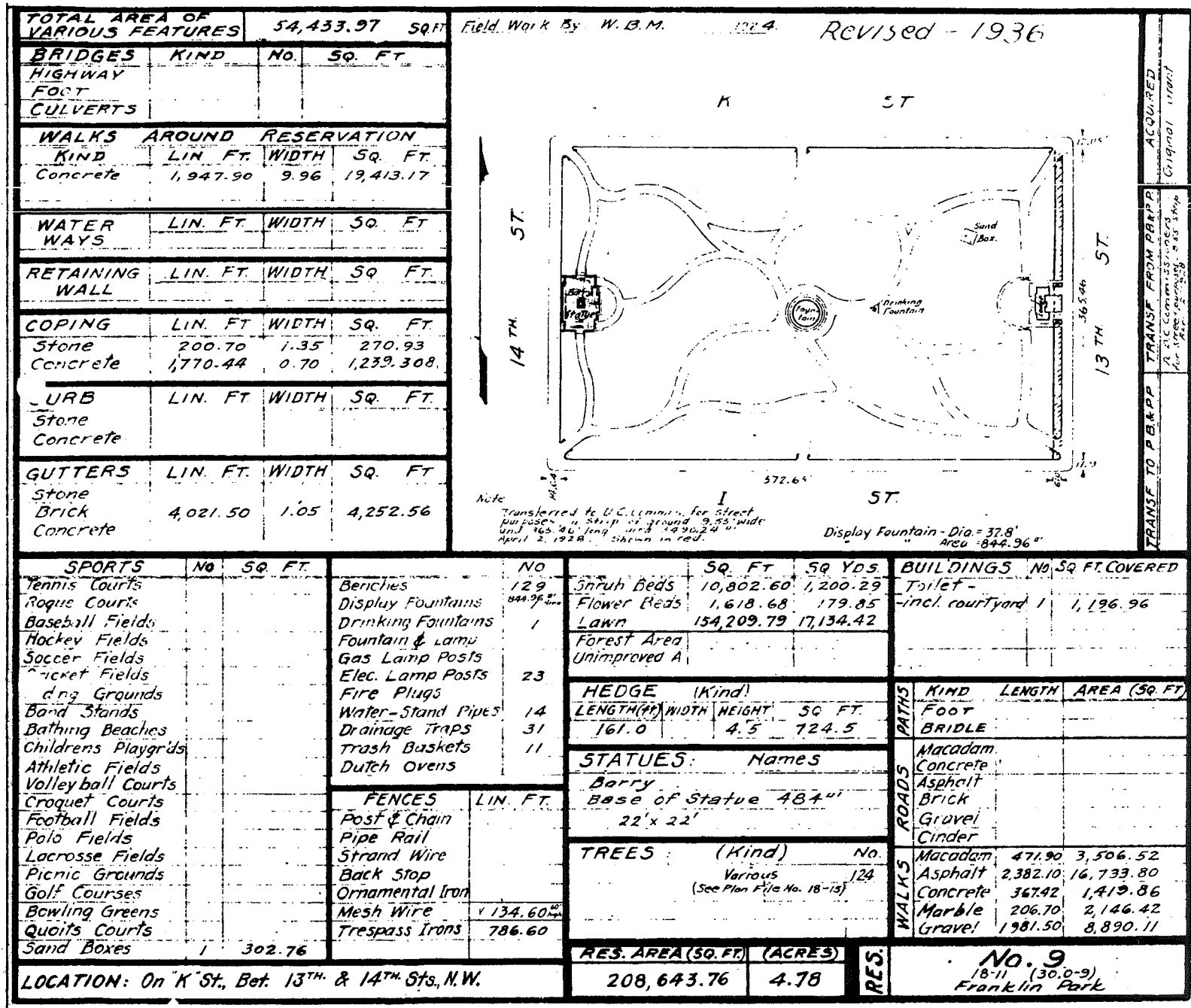
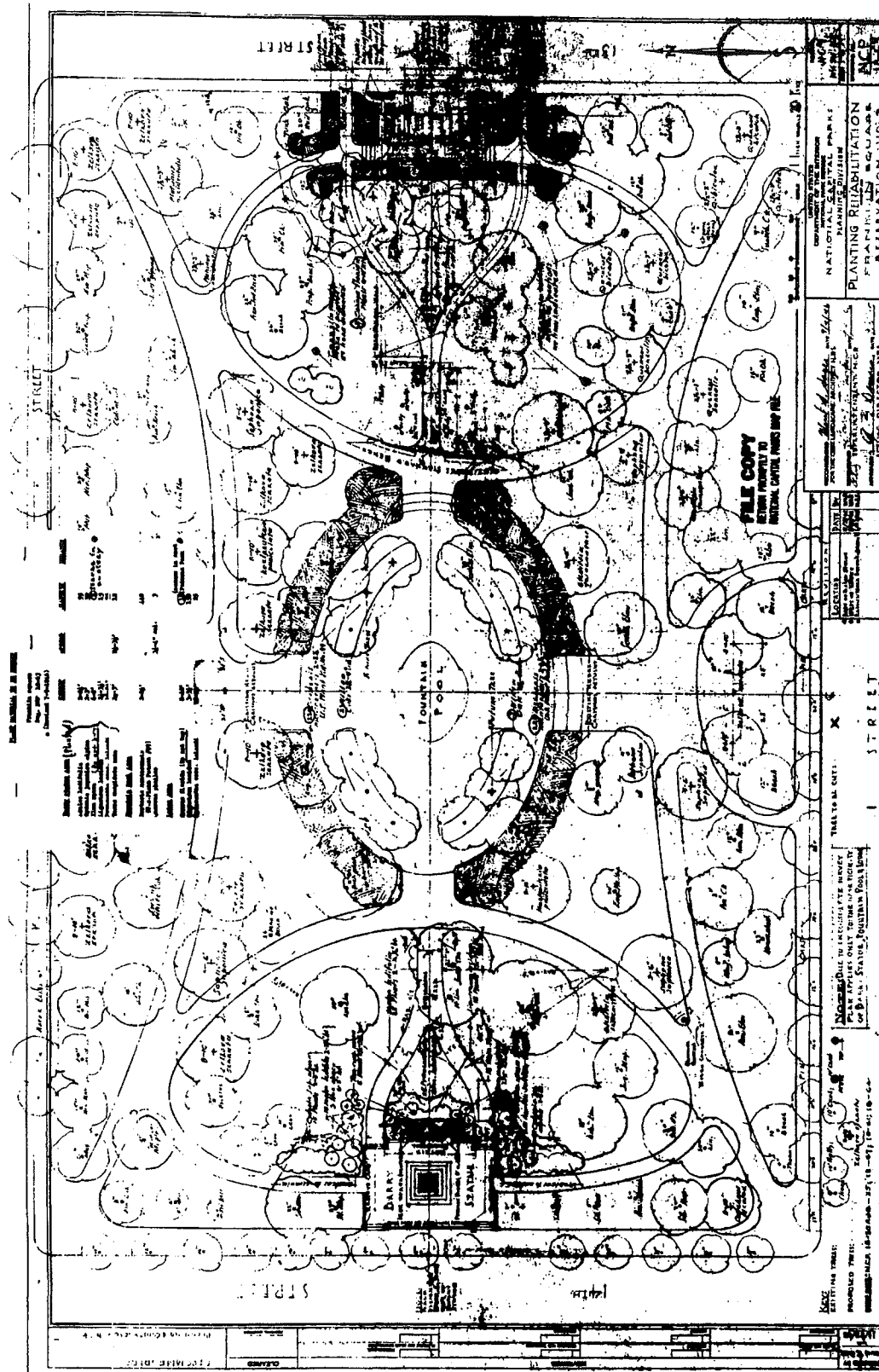


Plate IX



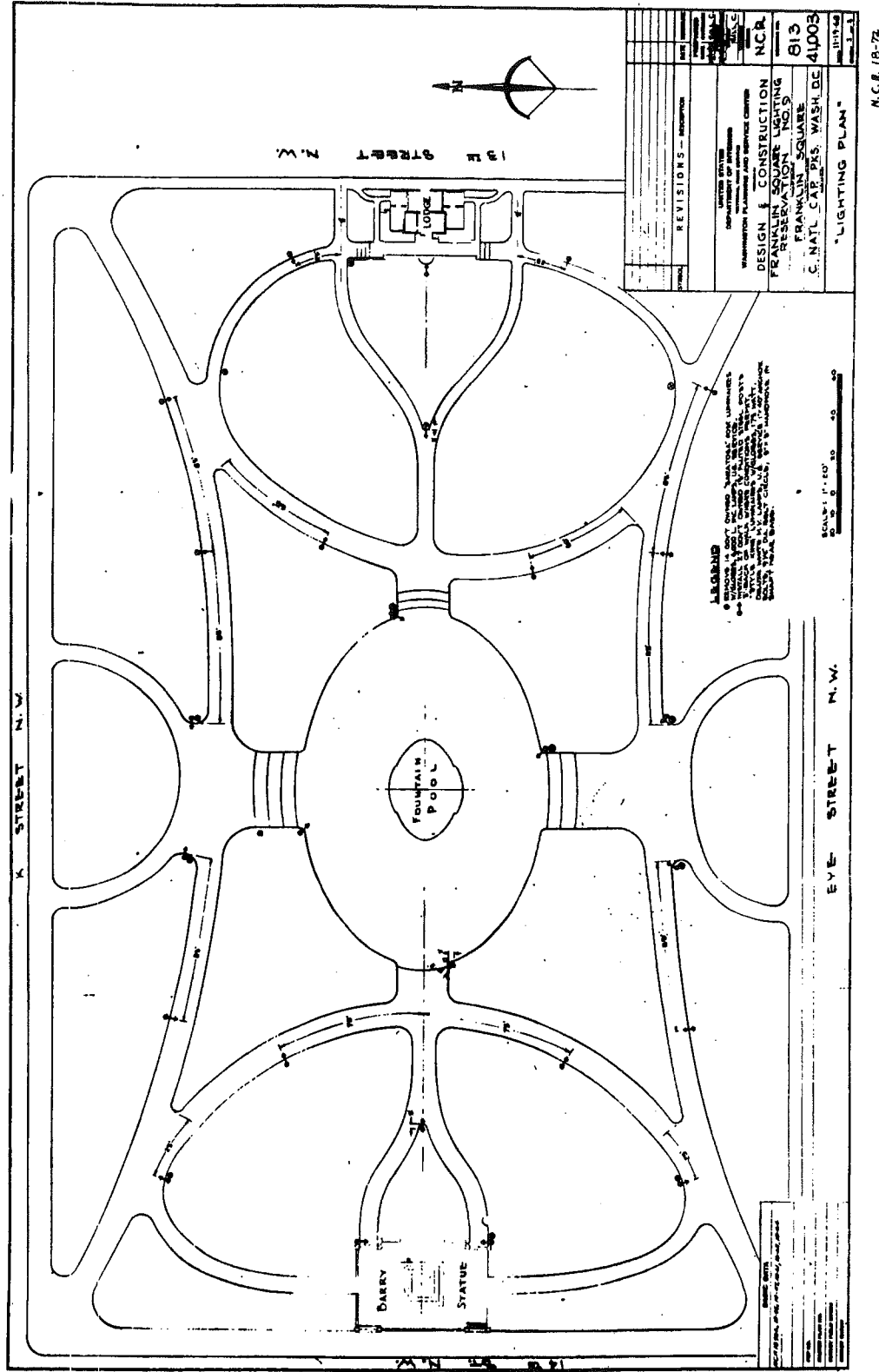


Plate XI

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