

CHAPTER II

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTRIBUTIONS

THE THREE-PART CAREER

During the period of his greatest professional contributions, 1919 to 1962, Harland Bartholomew carried on a three-part career simultaneously. He was:

Director of Planning

Newark 1913 - 1916

3 years

St. Louis 1916 - 1953

37 years

Washington 1953 -1962

8 years

His position in Washington was actually that of chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission, by presidential appointment. He served virtually full time with the staff of the commission serving under his direction and supervision. It is not at all farfetched then, to add this time to his length of service as a planning director, making the total 48 years.

Head of a Planning Firm

Bartholomew was partner-in-charge of Harland Bartholomew and Associates from 1919 to 1961, a total of 42 years. He held

a majority interest in the firm, directed its activities and was involved in all major decisions. Reaching a peak of about 60 persons in 1929, the firm was down to three when I joined in 1935. It grew fairly slowly and progressively, except for the war years, to around 240 in the early 1970s. It is now (1992) a bit smaller, about 140. From its early emphasis on the comprehensive plan, the firm's work decentralized geographically and diversified professionally--the geographical decentralization to bring its services closer to its clients and the professional diversification mostly associated with the desire of clients to carry out their own comprehensive city plans.

Teacher of Planning

His non-resident professorship at Illinois (1) was but a small part of the teaching activities of Harland Bartholomew. One year he taught a planning course at Washington University. More and more universities gave planning courses as planning became better known. No matter the amount or location of the training, it was essential that new employees be trained and particularly in "practical" office practices. There was the enormous public

ignorance of planning to be attacked through articles, speeches, and seminars. Finally, there was his own education to be attended to through extensive reading and study.



11 Harland Bartholomew giving a lecture, March 5, 1935

INTERRELATION OF THE PARTS

Harland Bartholomew's three careers-- as a planning director, head of a planning firm, and as a teacher of planning--were intermixed and interrelated. He did not do one one day and another the next, but was engaged in all three of them almost every day. He frequently arrived at his "private" office first, bringing with him a list of matters to be tended to that day. With so much going on and to be done, scheduling

time was a fine juggling act. He traveled constantly, as did his key associates. Conferences on weekends were frequent. He had another "public" office in the St. Louis Civil Courts Building and, later, in the Interior Building in Washington. Associates in his private firm would complain, but to no avail, about so much of his time spent on his planning director or teaching activities, and for what appeared to be so little compensation. Each of the three careers, however, supported and reinforced the other two.

CONDITIONS FAVORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS

Harland Bartholomew's professional career was well established before I met him in 1934 when he was 45 years old. Such a career could not be repeated today, because today the profession Bartholomew helped to establish is recognized and thriving. He was in "on the ground floor." The conditions then prevailing favored his contributions.

Planning was a new profession.

When I joined Harland Bartholomew and Associates in 1935, it was suggested that I join the American Institute of Planners. I sent in my application and my \$5.00 and was immediately accepted, becoming one of the 100 or so members. (There were 5,000 members in 1970 and almost 10,000 by 1978.) (2) The first National Conference on City Planning was held in 1909. As members of a new profession, there were few principles or standards and no certainty about what a planner did or how he did it, only a firm agreement that a nation growing more urban by the minute desperately needed to apply a strong measure of foresight to its urban

growth if a national disaster was not to occur. And the planners were just the people to apply this foresight. What an opportunity for a man with intelligence, imagination and judgment! Harland Bartholomew saw the opportunity and made the most of it.

His personality fit the opportunity.

Certainly Harland Bartholomew was not the only person to see the opportunity presented by the new profession of city planning in, say, the period between 1915 and 1925. There may have been several dozen with such perception and many of these had a far better training than he had. Why was he able to make a more significant contribution to the planning profession than any of these? His personality was the answer.

In an era completely dominated by big business and banking, he acted and looked the part of a successful businessman or banker. He looked and acted more as one of them than any of them did. Then (as now) the word "planner" conjured visions of a long-haired, dreamy-eyed, visionary who never had to "meet a payroll." Bartholomew presented the image of a serious and practical man of experience who would give you realistic advice on "how to get great things done." His courtly manners and unswerving consideration of the feelings of others helped immeasurably. Most of the time he was able to keep a quite puckish sense of humor well concealed. His sense of humor helped him live with the many follies, pécadillos, and outrageous behavior of municipal officials he had to work with.

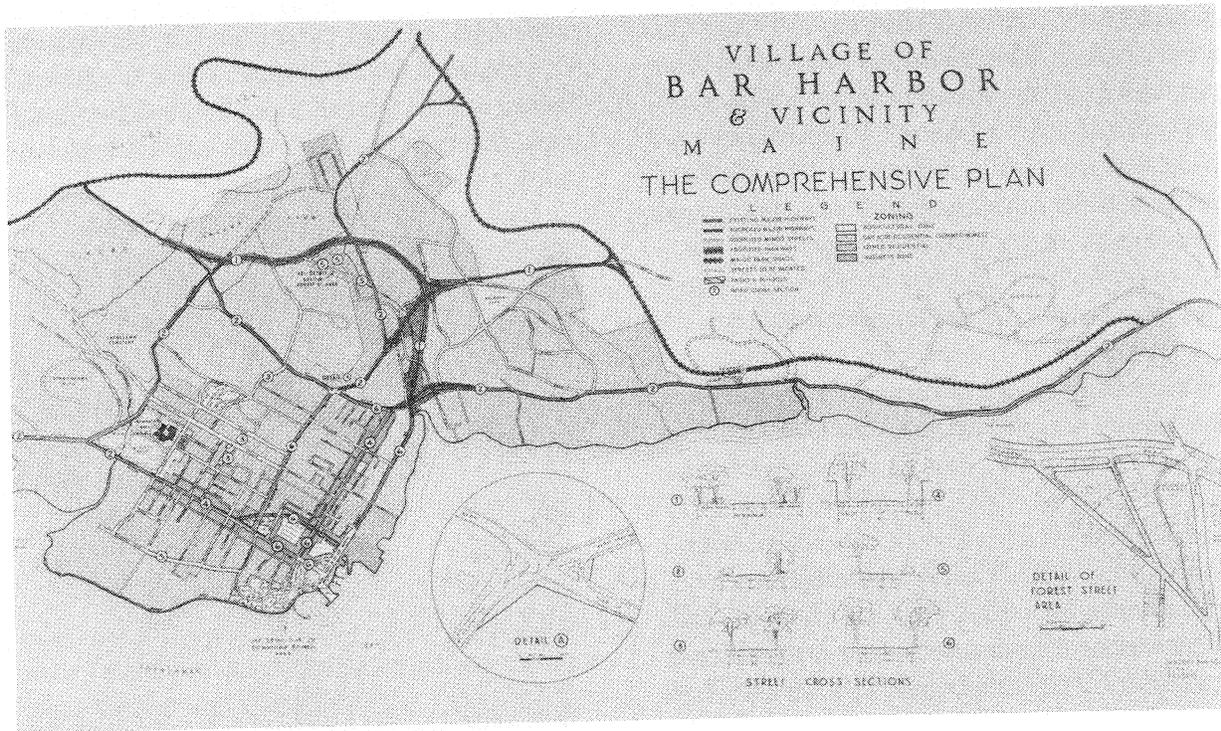
Harland Bartholomew was calm and unexcitable. In the autumn of 1947, it was very dry in New England, particularly so in Maine. A disastrous fire destroyed a large

part of the resort village of Bar Harbor on Mt. Desert Island, off the coast of Maine. Much of the island is in Acadia National Park, given to the nation by the Rockefeller family.

Because of his great interest in the community and in the park, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. arranged for Harland Bartholomew and Associates to prepare a plan for the village to show how it should be rebuilt after the fire. It was important for Harland Bartholomew and me to go to Bar Harbor as soon as possible to get the work started. Speed is most important to a community trying to recover from a disaster.

We obtained seats on an American Airlines DC-4 and after some delays, occasioned by weather in St. Louis, we were on our way to Boston. We landed and took off at several intervening stops without incident and approached the Boston airport on a beautiful, clear evening. To everyone's surprise, the landing was aborted and the plane went back into the air. Then it went back over the field at a low altitude with spotlights directed at the plane. None of the passengers cared much for this.

Then the pilot came on the intercom. "We have trouble," he said. The landing gears were all down; this had been confirmed by visual inspection from the ground. However, the warning light showed that the front landing gear had not locked which meant that it would collapse upon the impact of a landing. What were we to do? Two things: First, fly out over the ocean and put the plane into a steep dive. When we pulled out of the dive the force might activate the lock on the landing gear. During this process, we were to be sure that we were tightly buckled in. Then, if this didn't work, we would go farther out over the Atlantic and dump most of our gasoline so that if we landed and crashed, the fire



12 The plan prepared for the Town of Bar Harbor, Maine, to be used as a guide for rebuilding after the great fire of 1947.

would not be so large.

So, off we went. I had never been in a plane in a power dive before. It was not a pleasant experience. We tried it several times. It did no good; the warning light remained on. Then we went out a considerable distance over the water, turned the plane on one wing and then on the other and dumped out gasoline. (I was told later that this was the most dangerous part of the entire performance.)

All of this took some time. Then we came back over Logan Field, making several passes while floodlights were trained on the aircraft--presumably to help inspect the front landing gear. Any of us that were not thoroughly frightened by now became so. There must have been at least 30 pieces of emergency equipment lined up along the main runway--ambulances and fire trucks--all with their lights flashing.

The pilot came on to tell us what we were going to do. The danger, of course, was the possible collapse of the nose landing gear. Even though he would land with the nose up, the plane, as it slowed down, would place weight on the gear and if the gear collapsed, which the light said that it would, the plane might trip or sparks start a fire. To keep pressure off the gear, he would not use the brakes. He would touch down at the very end of the 7,000-foot runway, go down the entire runway, make a sharp turn into a parallel taxiway, and follow that back until the plane stopped from its own loss of momentum. This he did. It was a beautiful piece of flying. All 39 on board held their breaths and when the plane stopped the passengers all applauded.

The plane taxied to the gate. At the bottom of the steps, there was a goodly collection of representatives of the Boston

news media. However, just as the plane was reaching the gate and the passengers were lining up to get off, a large female passenger with a loud voice said, "My, isn't it nice to be here on good old terra firma rather than up there playing a harp!" The laughing faces resulting from this remark did not make very good media material, although the the story was front page news in the morning papers.

At breakfast, while waiting for our train to Bangor, HB said to me: "While all that was going on, what were you thinking about?" I replied that it was mostly of my wife and two small children in our home in University City and wondering whether I would ever see them again. What had he been thinking about, I asked. "Well," he said, "I kept thinking that I had been born in Boston and that this was the end of a round trip."

"But," he added, "don't you ever tell Lillian (his wife) about this. If she heard about it, she'd ground me for sure." And I never told the story until after Lillian's death.

Harland Bartholomew was concerned with the relatedness of things. He wanted to know where everything was in the overall scheme or plan. Harland and Lillian had come to our house for an evening of bridge and I had put a number of our records on for background music. At one point, Harland admired the music being played and asked its identity. I told him that it was Bizet's First Symphony. Then, as an afterthought, I told him that Bizet had written it when he was 17 years old. He was silent for several minutes, frowned, and then said, "We just aren't getting anywhere at all, are we? No young man of 17 is doing anything like that today."

Harland Bartholomew was a serious student of his profession. At any given

during most of his career, he probably knew more about city planning and its status in the United States than any other person. This was not easy to do. It took a tremendous amount of time, but he did it. He was always looking for new ways to solve urban problems and spent much of his time talking to people who might lead him to a solution. Personally, he was inventive, willing to try new ideas; a good listener and absorber of other people's proposals.

He was a man of high principles. He would never testify for a private interest against a public agency. Harland Bartholomew once turned down an offer of \$25,000 for two hours of testimony in a Chicago zoning case. He insisted that every piece of office work represent the latest and best professional work of which we were capable. I once saw him drop into a wastebasket the draft of a report on a city plan for a California city and order us to "start all over" because the work did not come up to his standard. I knew--and presumably he did, too--that we had spent \$20,000 on the draft that now resided in the bottom of his wastebasket.

Finally, he was a consummate salesman. Part of this was due to the fact that he knew his subject so well and part to the feeling of confidence he had and was able to generate in others so well.

The director of public works of Des Moines told me when I was working there in the late 1930s: "I really don't understand how Bartholomew does it. Before I became a public official, I traveled, selling industrial products but no one ever treated me the way he is treated. When he came here to sell his services, a group of civic leaders met him at the train, took him to his hotel, took him out to dinner, gave him a fat contract, and then took him back to the train. No one ever treated me like that." Bartholomew

seldom visited a city without having friends or acquaintances there that he had met in national meetings of civic or conservation organizations. The general impression that he was doing them a real favor by talking with them (and even by working for them) started with his national reputation and this was the result of countless time spent in general activities in the advancement of the cause of urban planning.

His sales ability was never limited to securing jobs for his office. It extended to all aspects of the planning work. He was particularly effective in small groups and with plan commissions.

A dramatic example of this occurred early in World War II. We were engaged to prepare the first military master plan for Wright Field (now Wright-Patterson Field) at Dayton, Ohio--under quite difficult emergency circumstances. Following our municipal experience, we had the Army (the Air Force was yet to be) establish a planning board. At the completion of the presentation of the draft master plan, the colonel who was chairman of the board said, "General So-and-So is here today from Washington. This plan is so important that I think he should see it. I will go get him."

The colonel left and returned in about 10 minutes with, of all things, a four-star general in tow! The general was introduced to the group generally, and to Harland Bartholomew as the plan's author particularly. The general apologized, saying that he would spend but ten minutes with us as he was flying to Washington in fifteen. Bartholomew said to the general, "Let me take five of your ten minutes and explain the plan to you."

The plan was a large, brilliantly-colored drawing combining all of the complex proposals for Wright Field. It had been drawn by Arthur Schwarz, who was later

to be one of St. Louis' leading architects. Harland Bartholomew then proceeded to give a beautiful and lucid sales talk on the plan. Out of curiosity I timed him. He took four minutes and forty-five seconds.

The general then stood in absolute silence; you could have heard the proverbial pin drop. He examined every aspect of the plan. I timed him. He took exactly four minutes. He turned to Bartholomew and said, "The damn thing is all right." He turned to the colonel and said, "I appreciate the opportunity to see this. You were right to come and get me." He turned to the board and said, "Good afternoon, gentlemen."

He left. Someone on the board moved that the plan be approved. The motion passed unanimously. The American military establishment had its first "official" master plan.

Arthur Stellhorn told me:

I remember quite well when [1960] I was director of the Maryland [National Capital Park and Planning] Commission and he [Harland Bartholomew] was a consultant, how he would listen to the arguments put forth by the others, and then in his quiet way address the matter under discussion from a longer background or a different perspective, and gradually though agreeing with some of the points already made, he would turn the whole issue completely around and end up with a vote that he wanted. And the members never knew what hit them!

No matter the quality of technical training or the extent of the educational background, the urban planner must first be a promoter, a salesman. Harland Bartholomew admirably filled this requirement. It accounts for much of his success.

The country was smaller.

In 1920 the United States had a population of 106 million. It grew to 123 million in 1930, less than one-half of what it is now (1992). In 1930, there were only five cities with a population of more than one million, eight of one-half to one million, 24 of between one-quarter and one-half million, and only 56 of between 100,000 and 250,000. The smaller nation had a simpler, easier to understand, social and economic structure. The big wave of urbanization and social change was yet to come.

The power structure was much simpler.

While Harland Bartholomew was planning director for large cities, most of the work of his private firm was for smaller cities, in the 50,000 to 500,000 category, but many were less than 50,000.

The power structure of these cities was quite simple; nor did it change frequently. In most any of them, a group of 10 to 12 leading businessmen, industrialists, or bankers "called the shots." Many times these were not the political leaders at all and none of the men (there were no women) that were leaders would have deigned to hold political office. In some cities, there would be two or three who ran the place and in others, such as Kansas City where Tom Pendergast was in charge, or Memphis where Ed Crump was the "boss," you only needed one man to make a decision, on planning or anything else (3).

In the country as a whole, there was what we now might call a "good ole boy network." Somewhat associated with the graduates of such institutions as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, or Cornell, men in

leadership positions tended to know each other, to communicate with each other, and to help each other when the occasion demanded. Families were larger; family members helped each other. An entry into this informal network enabled you to get things done locally and nationally.

When I started work for Harland Bartholomew and Associates, I became a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). At that time, the society had fewer than 1,000 members and to all intents and purposes, was a gentleman's club somewhat loosely attached to Harvard University. Yet, prominent members of the society were part of the "good ole boy network" and the society, when it wanted to, could be most influential in obtaining passage of federal and state legislation and in seeing that landscape architects were on important committees and commissions. In fact, in my judgment, ASLA was probably more influential then than it is now with its almost 10,000 members and fully staffed Washington headquarters.

Those were simpler times. And this made it possible for a man as persuasive as Harland Bartholomew to influence the course of events.

He had influential friends.

Harland Bartholomew had a great knack for making friends. Two of these had major influences on his career.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (4), the son of the man who, with Calvert Vaux, had designed Central Park in New York, was America's premier landscape architect. His firm had been in existence for more than 60 years when Harland Bartholomew started his. Olmsted was keenly interested in urban planning also, although perhaps more from



13 Frederick Law Olmsted, the younger, as he appeared in later life.

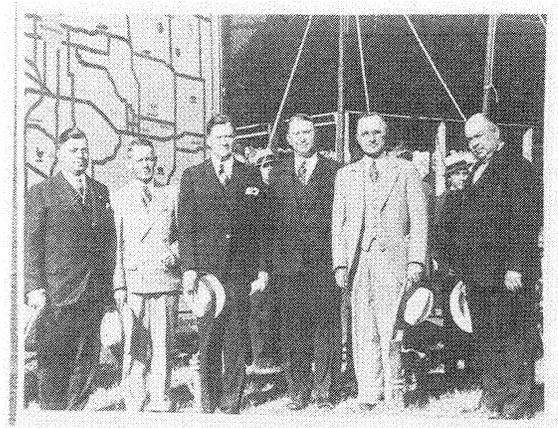
the environmental and aesthetic approach than from the "city efficient" approach, which was Bartholomew's (5).

The two men met at early planning conferences, got on well together, and became good friends. Olmsted was active in many matters including that of the development of the national capital where he was a member of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. He urged Bartholomew to accept an appointment to the commission, which Olmsted could easily arrange. When Bartholomew expressed reluctance to do this, Olmsted had him engaged as consultant to the commission, which led to, among other things, Bartholomew's work on the District of Columbia's zoning ordinance. The two men collaborated on the regional major street and park system studies for Los Angeles prepared in the early 1920s. Harland Bartholomew learned much about office

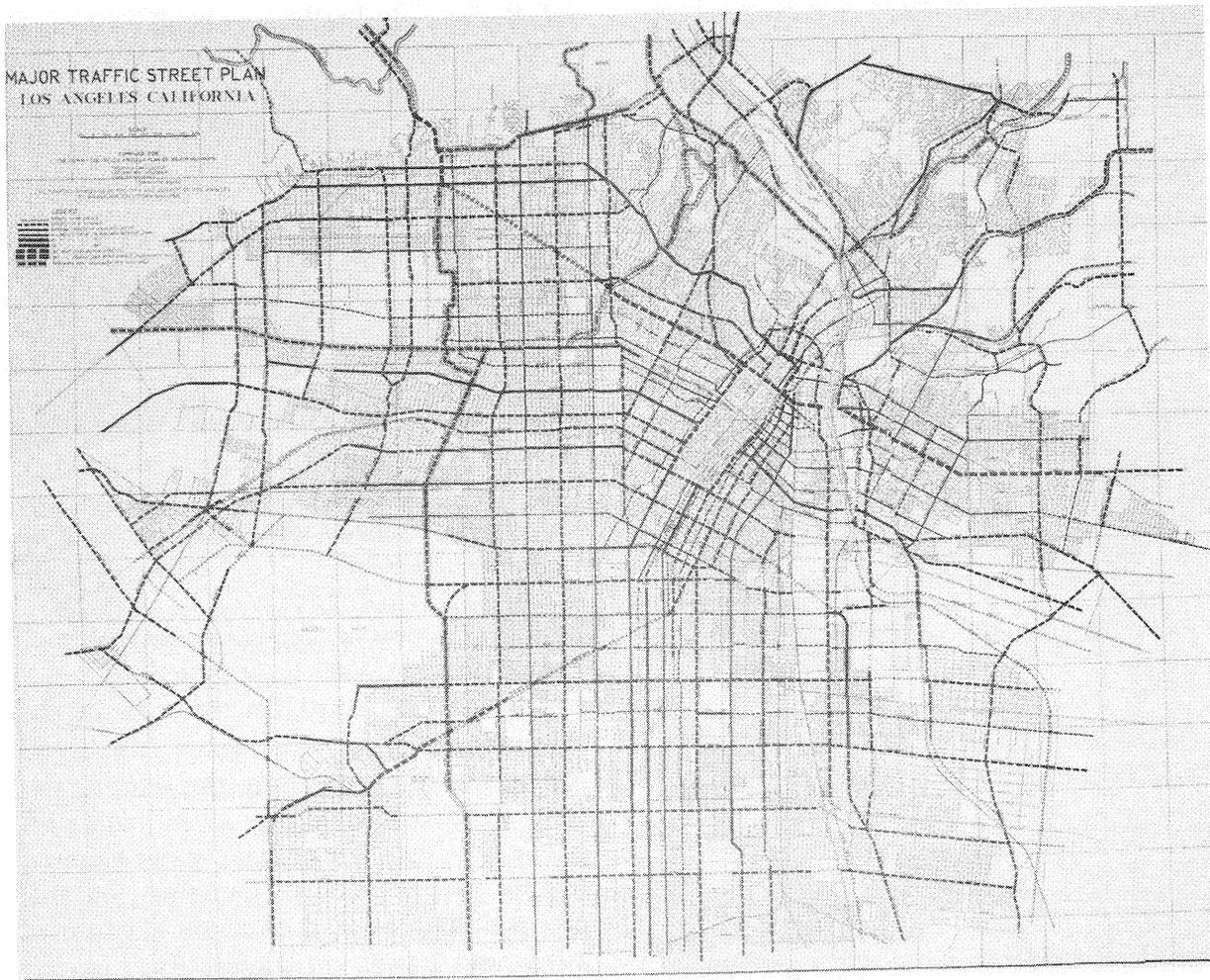
practice; how to estimate fees and how to keep books from Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.

Harry S. Truman (6) was presiding judge of the Jackson County Court when Harland Bartholomew first met him. (In Missouri, "County Courts" were the county's administrative-legislative body. With three to seven "judges," they had very limited "judicial" authority.) Truman was active in Missouri civic and political affairs and well-known throughout the state. Jackson County includes Kansas City and Truman had the backing of the powerful Pendergast political machine.

As Truman explained it, Jackson County had problems with its highway system. This was of more than ordinary concern because one of the main supports of the Pendergast machine was a virtual monopoly on the sale of ready-mixed concrete. Upon making inquiries, Truman found that two of the nation's top urban planning experts were Missouri residents: S. Herbert Hare and Harland Bartholomew. Truman consulted with both. Truman and Bartholomew appeared together many times in statewide



14 Harry S. Truman and other members of the Jackson County, Missouri Court at Sni-A-Bar Farm on October 12, 1932. Left to right are Judges Besh, Bar, Vrooman, Purcell, Truman, and Beeman.



15 Major Street Plan for Los Angeles, prepared for the "Committee on Los Angeles Plan of Major Highways" of the Traffic Commission of the City and County by Frederick Law Olmsted, Harland Bartholomew and Charles Henry Cheney, May 1924.

conferences on civic and conservation programs. Truman knew that Bartholomew visited Washington frequently in connection with his consulting work for the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. When Truman was elected senator, he asked that Bartholomew let him know whenever he came to Washington. They would meet frequently for dinner. They became great friends.

When Eisenhower appointed Bartholomew chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission, Truman was

asked what he thought of the appointment. "Excellent," he replied, "I would have appointed him myself if the fellow hadn't been a damn Republican." This friendship was particularly valuable in securing passage of urban renewal legislation.

Others. There were many others. Plan Commission membership then would frequently include civic leaders, industrialists, bankers, engineers, and lawyers of considerable stature. These would turn up later as governors, senators, Supreme Court judges, heads of national boards or

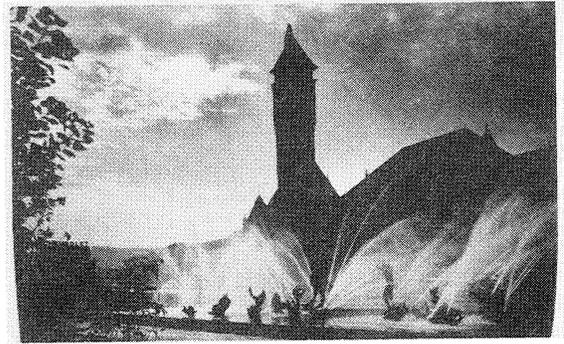
commissions. From these, there was access to the power structure of the nation itself and then on to the White House itself.



16 S. Herbert Hare. Illustration from an article on his career from the *Kansas City Star* of July 5, 1931.

Three stories illustrate Bartholomew's relationship to the power structure:

Getting the Aloe Fountain Built



17 Aloe Plaza and Fountain in front of the Saint Louis Union Station. The fountain is the "Meeting of the Waters" by Carl Milles.

Civic leaders in St. Louis, in the years before World War I, proposed a major parkway or boulevard, on the scale of the Avenue 9th of July in Buenos Aires (460 feet wide), to extend from the river to the west. This boulevard was to be lined with public buildings and to be a major element in the city's structure. Funding for this proposal was defeated in a city election in 1912, and it was this defeat that, in due time, inspired creation of the City Plan Commission, which brought Harland Bartholomew to St. Louis.

Remnants of the proposal remain. Major parts of it have been realized, including the mall extending from the Arch to Tucker Boulevard and the Civic Center, which extends to Aloe Plaza in front of the Union Station.

Louis Aloe had been a significant civic leader and had been president of the Board of Aldermen. His widow, seeking a suitable memorial to her husband, proposed a major fountain in the block across Market Street from the Union Station, with Carl Milles selected as the sculptor and designer of the fountain (now the famous "Meeting of the

Waters"). To Harland Bartholomew fell the task of negotiating the design and construction of the fountain. Milles at that time was working and teaching at the Cranbrook Institute near Detroit.

It was during the Depression in the early 1930s. Milles, despite his fame, had no work at all; the St. Louis assignment was a godsend for him. During one of their conferences Milles told Bartholomew that, as an expression of his gratitude, he would like to have HB lunch with the Swedish ambassador at the embassy the next time he was in Washington. Bartholomew expressed interest and appreciation and thought no more about it.

In December of 1931, Bartholomew was asked by President Hoover to participate in a conference on Home Building and Home Ownership. He was to preside over and conduct one of the major sessions, an afternoon meeting starting at 3:00 p.m. He checked into his Washington hotel and had not been in his room very long when there was a knock on the door. When he opened the door, he was surprised. Standing at the door was a Swedish Army officer, in uniform, and with an envelope on a silver tray. In the envelope was an invitation to lunch for the next day, the day of the session at which Bartholomew was to preside. Thinking he could easily attend the lunch and then go to the conference session, and looking forward to such an interesting and extraordinary occasion, he accepted with pleasure.

The lunch indeed was a magnificent affair and extremely pleasant, as such affairs usually are. Bartholomew thoroughly enjoyed himself. There was just one thing, though, that he had not counted on.

This was during Prohibition. Even after Prohibition's repeal, Harland Bartholomew was a very modest partaker of alcohol. One

drink, or at the most two, was all he was ever interested in and, during Prohibition, he did not drink at all. However, Prohibition did not apply to the Swedish Embassy. There was an aperitif before lunch; two wines during lunch; brandy after lunch. In the cab on the way to conduct the session, Bartholomew could sense that all was not well. How dreadful! A man of his position, reputation and dignity, inebriated in public!

What to do? He had his usual notes on the back of one of his hotel's envelopes but he was sure that he was unable to make too much sense out of them. Extremely concerned, he slowly approached the speaker's table, sat down and looked around the room. Lo and behold, in the first row sat Henry Vincent Hubbard, head of the



18 *Henry Vincent Hubbard*

Department of Landscape Architecture and City Planning at Harvard University. Bartholomew had a sudden inspiration.

At 3:00 p.m. he rose to his feet and, exerting the absolute maximum of concentration that he had ever done in his entire life, he welcomed those in attendance. Then he explained that he had intended to give an opening address but, upon entering the room, he had noticed the presence of a man who knew far more about home building and home ownership than he did and that he would like to call on Henry Hubbard of Harvard University for a few opening remarks.

Hubbard rose to his feet. Bartholomew gratefully sank into his chair. Hubbard's opening remarks were very good indeed. But, best of all, they went on for 90 minutes. At the end of them, Bartholomew was himself; the danger had passed. He carried the meeting to a successful conclusion with complete aplomb and with an undying gratitude to Harvard University.

The Williamsburg Tunnel

Attending the annual city planning conference in 1935, Harland Bartholomew happened to sit next to Kenneth Chorley, president of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., the organization carrying out the restoration of Williamsburg, the colonial capital of Virginia. Chorley told Bartholomew of the difficulties they were having with the location of the Colonial National Parkway across the peninsula.

The parkway was to go from Yorktown through Williamsburg to Jamestown, and was to be an important visitor access with tourist facilities coordinated with the parkway--a key element in the design of the Williamsburg community. The colonial city was centered on the Duke of Gloucester

Street, an east-west, wide avenue located on the ridge that separated the York and James Rivers. The city was arranged in an east-west direction. Yorktown was north, Jamestown south. The parkway would go north-south. The situation was basically awkward.

The National Park Service and Colonial Williamsburg, Inc. had made many studies. No one liked any of them. Probably thinking that he had little to lose, Chorley engaged Bartholomew to look into the matter. Following our standard procedure, we prepared alternatives. We did not like any of them either and soon became discouraged, too.

In 1936 we would work Saturday mornings. Because they frequently traveled during the week, Saturday was a time when Bartholomew, as well as his partner, Russell H. Riley, would be in the city. Saturday morning work would spill over into the afternoon, although when the weather was good, Bartholomew would head for Bellerive Country Club for golf; and later sometimes Russell Riley and I would head for the golf course also.

On one of these Saturday mornings, the three of us reviewed the studies for the parkway through Williamsburg. It was frustrating. You could not go through the restored area and to go around lengthened the parkway and provided no suitable place for a centrally-located visitor center or for the proposed lodge and inn to accommodate visitors.

The studies were drawn on prints of United States Geological Survey maps with contours. Which of the three of us first noticed the little valleys is lost in my memory, as all three of us became aware of two little valleys, one leading in from the north and the other going out to the south. The heads of the valleys were separated by



19 Williamsburg Lodge

a fairly short distance and, most important, no major historic buildings were along Duke of Gloucester Street where it separated the heads of the valleys.

Look, we said to each other, what we can do, we can bring the parkway down from Yorktown and up one little valley (and a pretty one, too), go under the Duke of Gloucester Street and the restored area in a tunnel and then leave to the south down the second valley (also a pretty one) on our way to Jamestown. We would, as a by-product, open up close-in central sites for the visitor center and the Inn and Lodge. How long would the tunnel have to be? Only about 1,200 feet and, of course, it would only need to be two lanes wide as the parkway was not to carry heavy volumes of traffic.

We had found the solution and a real exciting one it was, too. Yet, what would the reaction be to proposing a tunnel under a tiny town of but a few thousand people in Virginia. Would this be another New Deal boondoggle? We completed the drawings on the tunnel alternative. Bartholomew bundled them up and took them back to Chorley to find out.

The reactions could have been anticipated. The first was of incredulous dismay. But then, after consideration of the alternatives, the advantages appeared including that of cost. Even with the cost of the tunnel--because of the shorter distance--the tunnel alternative was less costly than the others. After some consideration, Mr. Chorley and other officials of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc. approved. The next step was to talk to John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Harland Bartholomew and Kenneth Chorley did just that, and after some time he approved.

Then came meetings with the National Park Service and finally their approval. At the last meeting came a very serious question. "Who," said the director of the Park Service, "will explain this to Mr. Ickes? I am not going to," he added. Harold Ickes was Secretary of Interior. He was noted for his ability, integrity, and terrible temper. No one on his staff ever wanted to talk to him and particularly on a subject or about a project that might not be very popular with him. After considerable discussion, the group decided to send a delegation of two people to see Mr. Ickes--Harland Bartholomew and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. An appointment was secured. The delegation of two, somewhat nervous, showed up outside Mr. Ickes's door.

As they entered the office, Ickes looked up from his desk, scowled at them, and asked what they were there to see him about. Never a person to mince words, Rockefeller said that they were there to get his approval for their plan to carry the Colonial National Parkway under Williamsburg in a 1,200-foot tunnel. Bartholomew said that the reaction was one of the most unforgettable experiences that he had ever been through.

Ickes really glared at both of them,



20 Tunnel to carry the Colonial National Parkway under Williamsburg being built in 1940.

turned red in the face, said it was the most damn fool idea that he had ever heard of, and said that the President would (and should) fire him if he ever approved such a thing. The diatribe went on a good half hour, only stopping when Ickes ran out of breath.

Rockefeller then explained that Ickes's reaction was the same as his when he first heard of the tunnel idea. He summarized their many studies and deliberations and asked Bartholomew to explain the alternatives, which Bartholomew did, emphasizing the fact that the tunnel was cheaper and more convenient for the

visitors. Ickes gradually settled down, listened closely, and then agreed. When Bartholomew and Rockefeller left, they heard him muttering to himself: "But how am I ever going to explain this to Franklin Roosevelt?"

The tunnel was built. It and the visitor facilities have been a great success. The firm has continued to do planning work in and around Williamsburg ever since, and much of our extensive practice in Virginia stems from this association--and from the Saturday the three of us sat around the drafting table looking at the U.S.G.S. map.

After the meeting with Mr. Ickes,

Chorley told Bartholomew that our work under the original agreement was now concluded and that he was paying the remainder of the fee. "But," he said, "Mr. Rockefeller wanted him to retain our firm in case they needed additional work and he (Chorley) suggested a retaining fee of (as I recall) \$400 per month." Every month the check would arrive, yet we were never asked to do anything. Bartholomew wrote Chorley noting this fact and suggesting that the arrangement be terminated. Chorley agreed, saying that Mr. Rockefeller had thought our original fee much too low and had used this stratagem to pay us what he thought was a fairer compensation.

When we were working on the original Colonial Parkway plans, Frederic M. Robinson joined our staff. Fred was an old friend, having been one class behind me at Illinois. The summer of 1936 was dreadfully hot in St. Louis. For two months, daily high temperatures went from 95 degrees to 105 degrees. There was no air conditioning. We prepared the Williamsburg drawings on heavy prints of a base with brightly-colored, opaque water colors. The result was handsome. However, the work was frustrating. The high temperatures dried out the water color solutions so that they would not flow through the pen. Then we would sweat continuously and, if you touched a part of the drawing, your skin would pick up or smear the color. When we finished a drawing we were ready for a celebration.

Late one morning we did finish one drawing. Fred rolled it up after it had dried and put it at one end of the drafting table. At that point, for the first time in weeks, a breeze came in one window (it was a corner office) and blew the drawing out the other window.

We were nine stories above Locust Street, a heavily traveled thoroughfare with

streetcars. Fred and I rushed to the window and looked out helplessly as the drawing floated out, back-and-forth, lazily descending to Locust Street. But then, a miracle! As the drawing dropped below the level of the two-story building across the street, a second breeze wafted it up and deposited it on the roof of Miss Hulling's Cafeteria. Fred said, "You watch it." He rushed for the elevator, crossed the street, explained our problem to a startled Miss Hulling, obtained access to the roof, and retrieved the drawing.

It was not damaged at all. There was not even any dirt on it. Fred and I always thought that the good Lord was watching out for us--and for Williamsburg. But after that we were much more careful.

Babler Park

In 1876, in a reaction to a political situation in St. Louis County, the City of St. Louis separated itself from the County, becoming a city-county. Civic leaders of that time, exercising a considerable amount of foresight, put the city limits way out in the county to enable development of a city many times larger than the 170,000 persons that occupied St. Louis in 1870. But this was not enough. By 1920, growth reached these limits here and there and, by 1930, it was spilling over into St. Louis County. Other growth was occurring across the Mississippi River in Illinois. Having worked on the Regional Plan of New York and its environs, Harland Bartholomew was sensitive to the problems created by this situation. Partly through his initiative, a "Regional Planning Association," primarily consisting of representatives of planning agencies and civic groups throughout the region, was formed.

The National Resources Planning Board prepared several regional plans as samples,

illustrating the type of more broadly-based planning that they thought should be going on. One of these was to be a regional plan of a large urban area, and St. Louis was chosen as that example. To collect data, draw maps, and put a report together, a WPA project was organized and unemployed design professionals put to work on the sample regional plan.

The plan was completed and published in 1934. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* published a summary of the plan as a supplement to its Sunday newspaper, highlighting the proposals for a most ambitious system of large parks and parkways for the metropolitan area. In the hilly, forested areas in west St. Louis County, the plan proposed extensive large natural park areas.

About 10:00 a.m. on the Monday following the publication of the supplement, Jacob Babler called at our office. A prominent citizen, he had been active in the Missouri Republican party. In his hand he clutched a copy of the *Post-Dispatch* supplement. He was quickly ushered in to see "Mr. B," as Harland Bartholomew was known in the office.

Babler got to the point immediately. "Bartholomew," he said, "I own 5,000 acres of land in west St. Louis County that you propose for a public park. What a wonderful idea. I never would have thought of it. I want to give the land as a memorial to my brother, Dr. Edmund U. Babler. Whom should I give it to--the city, the county, or the state?"

The answer to Mr. Babler's question did not turn out to be too simple. The city did not want the land; it was too far away from the city limits, and neither did St. Louis County. In fact, the county had no official interest in parks until the 1970s and then only after citizen groups had forced it to.

But with the State of Missouri, it was different. The state had a plan for its park system and, with the help of the WPA, the CCC and other agencies of the Roosevelt administration, was making great strides in improving its park units. The state accepted the gift. With it came a trust fund from Babler to enlarge the park by straightening the boundaries.

A master plan was prepared and approved and a WPA project gotten underway to carry out substantial improvements. In company with thousands of others, we visit the park several times a year. It is particularly delightful in the fall when the hardwood forest turns into a multicolored fantasy.

The road Harland Bartholomew chose to follow by no means was one of unbroken smoothness. During the years prior to the formation of Harland Bartholomew and Associates, the consulting practice placed Harland Bartholomew at cross purposes with several influential planners, including Walter Blucher. When Blucher became executive director of the American Society of Planning Officials (ASPO), the antagonism became more pronounced. William Anderson, who had been on the staff when the Newark plan was revised in 1947, subsequently became director of planning for Corpus Christi, Texas. After he had been in Corpus Christi for several years and became well known and greatly respected in Texas planning circles, Anderson was asked if he would accept membership on ASPO's board of directors. He said he would. He was then told that there was a rumor going around that he had once worked for Harland Bartholomew and Associates. He said that he had and furthermore that he was proud of it. Anderson was then told that it was too bad but that ASPO had a policy that no one

who had ever worked for Harland Bartholomew and Associates could be a member of its board of directors. Leadership and prominence do cause jealousy. Nor was there any reason for competitors to be other than envious. Bartholomew was young, aggressive, and successful--supremely so, it would appear. With success comes some arrogance or the appearance of arrogance.

There were bitter differences of opinion also on the zoning plans and ordinances, particularly in St. Louis. To the planner, zoning was the means for bringing some order to the city. To the real estate interests, zoning was an annoying interference with their freedom to earn a living, or become wealthy. St. Louis realtors had little good to say about Harland Bartholomew; nor did the realtors in many other cities where his firm proposed zoning regulations.



21 *St. Louis Post Dispatch* photograph showing the results of breaking the residential zoning on Lindell Boulevard. Areas with commercial zoning now look worse and have a lower value. "Serves them right" said Harland Bartholomew.

He was active in professional organizations.

Harland Bartholomew was active in his professions, making major contributions to

the infant planning profession and to the older and more established American Society of Civil Engineers. Activity and prominence with the civil engineers were most important to successful practice of city planning. In the days before there were many city managers, the city engineer and the city attorney were the people mayors and city councils turned to for advice. When it came to recommending someone to prepare a city plan, the city engineer was likely to choose someone active in his own professional group who might be relied upon to give sound and practical advice. Activities in the infant planning organizations had a similar impact, particularly when they led to awards or elections as an officer.

Members of the staff of Harland Bartholomew and Associates were encouraged to follow his example, to attend meetings, serve on committees, run for office, and write articles. Because voluntary professional organizations are constantly looking for people to do just such things, the policy was a good one and a rewarding one.

There was much to be learned from others who were struggling with concepts for urban planning in the United States. The first National Conference on City Planning and the Problems of Congestion was held in Washington, D.C. in 1909. Harland Bartholomew was not there, not being 20 years old at the time of the meeting. However, we do know that he attended the sixth conference because he gave a report on the Newark Plan, and the one after that, because the program included a report on the St. Louis Plan, and, so far as we know every other one after those.

These conferences led to the formation of the American City Planning Institute in 1917 with Frederick Law Olmsted as

president. (Subsequently this became the American Institute of Planners and then the present American Institute of Certified Planners.) Harland Bartholomew became the Institution's sixth president (1927-29).

At the same time Harland Bartholomew was active in the parallel citizens' organization, the American Planning and Civic Association. He served on its advisory committee, on its Board of Directors, as vice president, and as president.

In 1967 the American Institute of Planners chose Harland Bartholomew to guide the celebration of its 50th anniversary. It was a distinguished committee including, in addition to Bartholomew:

Charles A. Blessing, Vice-Chairman
Russell Van Nest Black
Frederick P. Clark
John T. Howard
C. McKim Norton
Paul Opperman
William L.C. Wheaton
C. David Loeks
Irving Hand, and
Robert L. Williams

The committee decided to produce works of two types. The first was an account of what had happened in the first fifty years. The result of this was *American City Planning*, by Mel Scott (8). The second was an attempt to look ahead: *Environment for Man, The Next Fifty Years* (9) which included articles by thirteen distinguished persons; *Environment and Policy, the Next Fifty Years* (10), 25 contributors, and *Environment and Changes, The Next Fifty Years* (11). The latter three books reported on the Portland conference of the American Institute of Planners (1966) and on the Washington Conference of 1967.

In 1955 the American Institute of Planners gave Harland Bartholomew its Distinguished Service Award. For his work on the Fiftieth Anniversary celebration, he was given the Fiftieth Anniversary Award, the citation saying in part:

A leader in the field of urban planning for more than a half-century, Harland Bartholomew early recognized the interrelated nature of social, economic and physical factors affecting man's use and enjoyment of his environments. His pioneering studies of land use contributed immeasurably to improving the general understanding of functional aspects of urban use . . . his practice as head of a major planning firm providing service to cities, counties and regions throughout the country have helped to form and constantly to improve the standards and methodology of the practice of the profession of city planning.

Finally, the American Institute of Certified Planners designated Harland Bartholomew as a *Planning Pioneer* in 1988. When the AICP established serial numbers for its members Harland Bartholomew became "Certified Planner, Certificate No. 1."

Activities in the American Society of Civil Engineers did not result in as many offices and honors. (The ASCE is ten times as big as the AIP.) He joined in 1919, became a full member in 1921 and a fellow in 1959. He was elected to honorary membership (the ASCE's highest membership grade) in 1962. He was chairman of the Society's "Committee on Land Subdivision," which produced the "Land Subdivision Manual." Published by the Society in 1939 this manual (ASCE Manual 16) was influential in steering the civil engineering profession away from the grid-iron street plan and toward the curvilinear system so popular in post World War II development. To produce a

manual for a major engineering society was an important professional accomplishment.

Harland Bartholomew was made an Honorary Member of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1958. These professional activities, the offices held, the awards received, and the manual written added immeasurably to Harland Bartholomew's reputation and to his influence and success.

SUMMARY

The extraordinary contributions made by Harland Bartholomew to the practice of urban planning in the United States may be explained by:

1. The opportunities offered by a new profession,
2. Bartholomew's ability to take advantage of these opportunities because of his character and personality,
3. The country's smaller size,
4. The simpler power structure, both locally and nationally,
5. Bartholomew's friendships and ability to attract the support of the power structure, and
6. Bartholomew's activities with professional organizations.

WHAT WE WERE TRYING TO DO

In the early years, and even later in the mid-1930s when I was first exposed to city planning, it did seem fairly simple. There were no uncertainties about the purpose of city planning and very few about how the purpose was to be accomplished.

The purpose of city planning was to bring order into the chaos that was the American city building process. This was to be done by looking ahead; anticipating

economic and population growth; converting this growth into estimated needs for various land uses, transportation facilities, schools, parks, sewer, water, and drainage facilities; then making the optimum arrangement for these future uses and facilities on paper and doing this in careful relation to what was there and to the conditions and opportunities afforded by the site of the city; and then by diverse means, ranging from legal orders (zoning) to persuasion, even to inspiration, getting the myriad of public and private persons and organizations engaged in building the city to follow the plan. An obvious important way to persuade them to follow the plan was to get them to participate in its preparation--make it their plan.

The process, in concept, was almost as simple as "a place for everything and everything in its place." The result could



22 Alfred Bettman

not help but be an improvement, no matter how imperfect the plan or disorderly the process of carrying it out. The result would be a better environment produced at a lower cost. The enormity of the benefits overwhelmed the modesty of the cost of putting the process into effect. In the Euclid, Ohio zoning case, which established the legality of zoning, Alfred Bettman's brief emphasized that the quality of the plan mattered little in comparison with the certainty of chaos that was to ensue if there was no plan at all. The plan did not have to be, in fact could not be, perfect, Bettman thought. Bartholomew emphasized the need for the "best possible" plan.

The argument was effective and persuasive. Planning became popular, became accepted, became respectable. Planning neither prevented nor solved our urban crises. Planning dealt only with the physical aspects of cities and these reflected social and economic trends that were not to be planned. The urban crises came from the great waves of social and economic changes. No amount of tinkering with the physical urban patterns could have affected these one iota.

FOOTNOTES

- II-1 For a short history of planning education at the University of Illinois, see "*How City Planning Education Developed at a 'Cow College'*" by Albert Guttenberg and Louis Wetmore, published in "Planning and Public Policy," Bureau of Urban and Regional Planning Research, Volume 10, No. 1, February 1984, University of Illinois
- II-2 See the Introduction to *The American Planner*, and particularly pages 28 and 29 I-1 Chapter One
- II-3 See *Reform and Reaction - City Politics in Toledo*, Jean L. Stinchcombe, Belmont Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., California, 1968

- See also *City Politics*, Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, Harvard University Press and M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1963
- II-4 Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., 1870-1957. No biography has been written of this most influential and distinguished man whom Horace M. Albright, former director of the National Park Service called, "the greatest park man in the world." Apparently, too much attention has been directed to his father, the founder of the profession of landscape architecture in the United States. The April 1958 issue of *Landscape Architecture* contains *Frederick Law Olmsted 1870-1957 - An Appreciation of the Man and His Achievements*, by Edward Clark Whiting and William Lyman Phillips, both associated in the Olmsted firm and Fellows of the American Society of Landscape Architects, but this short article does not adequately enable us to understand his career.
- II-5 Olmsted wrote (quoted in the April 1958 *Landscape Architecture* article -II-4 above): "Early in the 1900's, my attention was caught by experiments in comprehensive city planning and zoning which had been gradually taking place in Europe, especially in the early 1870's in Germany. I studied them in operation there and in France and England, and I have taken part in the slow, uphill struggle to get intelligent and comprehensive planning of a common-sense kind applied to the changing physical and economic and social conditions of American communities, urban and regional." During his later years Olmsted was to devote himself to the problems of the conservation of natural scenery and most notably to the California redwoods. One such redwood grove was named for him.
- II-6 Harry S Truman, 1884-1972, thirty-third president of the United States. Judge of the County Court of Jackson County 1922-1924, presiding judge 1926-1934, U.S. senator 1934-1944, vice president 1944-1945 (April 12, 1945), president 1945-1952. *Memoirs* were published 1955-1956.