

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES * OLMSTED COVER SHEET

Please submit completed form to: Architectural Survey Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103

PROPERTY NAME (Current/Historic) Yale University / Yale Campus		
COUNTY New Haven	TOWN/CITY New Haven	VILLAGE
JOB NUMBER Primary: 03470 Related Job Numbers: 12084, 03059		
Landscape Type <input type="checkbox"/> Park, Parkway, Recreation Area, Scenic Reservation <input type="checkbox"/> City/Regional Plan, Improvement Project <input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision, Suburban Community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College/School Campus <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Residential Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Public Building <input type="checkbox"/> Private Estate / Homestead <input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery / Burial Lot / Memorial / Monument <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Commercial / Industrial Building <input type="checkbox"/> Country Club / Resort, Hotel, Club <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Church <input type="checkbox"/> Arboretum, Garden <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition, Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous		
DATE OF ORIGINAL PROJECT: 1907-1914 SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS:		

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DESIGNER(S) (primary)

- Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.
- John Charles Olmsted
- Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
- Other firm member(s): Edward Clark Whiting
- Other notes:

Other Designers (prior to or following Olmsted project): Beatrix Farrand

Repositories consulted with source materials

- Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Olmsted Archives (online albums)
- Library of Congress
- Olmsted Online (OlmstedOnline.org)
- National Archives and Record Administration
- Connecticut State Library
- Hartford History Center
- Other:

Observations regarding features characteristic of Olmsted firm design

Surviving features resulting from the Olmsted firm's design work include: the re-working and paving with cut stone, walks at Old Campus (it is unclear how Beatrix Farrand's work in this area confirmed or reworked the earlier Olmsted paths). No other design work appears to survive.

Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. had three letters from individuals associated with Yale College (#12024)—one in 1867 from Charles E. Norton to "My Dear Olmsted" and two in 1874: One from H. C. Kingsley and one from J. Weidenmann, his partner in many projects. No drawings exist/survive from this early period. Correspondence does not occur again until 1907, which is after Old Campus Courtyard has been enclosed by a series of Tudor revival buildings along College and Chapel Streets. Several small projects ensue within this catch-all job number including a "sketch for light post," "detail for concrete basin," "granite steps at Osborn Hall." The most involved projects being a re-working of walks at Old Campus green, the design for a plaza at the Vanderbilt building, and a plaza at the entrance to the dining hall near Woolsey Hall and Woodbridge Hall. It appears that none of these projects survive, although the flagstone surface and the alignment of some of the current paths in the Old Campus green could be as proposed by

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Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects. There are no National Register listings that cover any of these areas. Olmsted Brothers (Whiting) prepared a plant list in association with this job, so there may be some large trees that survive from plantings that were done at this time but there is no planting plan that can be compared to the plant list.

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES

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I D E N T I F I C A T I O N	PROPERTY NAME (Current/Historic) Yale University / Yale Campus (Job #03470)													
	COUNTY New Haven	TOWN/CITY New Haven	VILLAGE											
	STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location) College Street, Chapel Street, High Street, and Elm Street													
	OWNER(S) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE <input type="checkbox"/> MUNICIPAL <input type="checkbox"/> STATE <input type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRIBAL <input type="checkbox"/> EASEMENT													
	LAT/LONG COORDINATES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center Point <input type="checkbox"/> Polygon 41.308859, -72.929061													
	PARCEL INFORMATION Acres: 373 PID(s): Numerous MBLU(s): Numerous													
	USE (Present) Yale University		(Historic) Yale College/University											
	SURVEY TYPE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance-Level <input type="checkbox"/> Intensive-Level													
	D E S C R I P T I O N	LANDSCAPE TYPE (Check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designed <input type="checkbox"/> Vernacular <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural/Ethnographic <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Linear <input type="checkbox"/> System/Multi-Site <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input type="checkbox"/> Maritime <input type="checkbox"/> Green <input type="checkbox"/> Park- Active Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Park-Passive Recreation or Commemorative <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify:												
		DATE OR PERIOD (Include source of date) 1907-1914 (Olmsted Research Guide Online)												
DESIGNERS (Entities that created, designed, constructed, or shaped the landscape) Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects														
DESIGN SCOPE (For designed landscapes, explain what work was commissioned) Circulation suggestions for Old Campus and interior courtyard improvement at Vanderbilt Hall and other miscellaneous landscape improvements around campus														
LOCATION OF DRAWINGS/IMAGES/SOURCE MATERIAL Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Library of Congress – Olmsted Associates Resources														
VISUAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY (Check boxes for the qualities that are key features of this landscape. If attaching descriptive narrative, consider these categories.) <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Layout & Spatial Relationships</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Water Features</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drainage</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Topography</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Buildings/Structures/Objects</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plantings/Vegetation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Space</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Views & Vistas</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Boundaries</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Design Style:</td> </tr> </table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Layout & Spatial Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drainage	<input type="checkbox"/> Topography	<input type="checkbox"/> Buildings/Structures/Objects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plantings/Vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Space	<input type="checkbox"/> Views & Vistas	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Boundaries	<input type="checkbox"/> Design Style:
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (Visual Assessment Summary)

Circulation: The flagstone paving across the Old Campus green appears to be an Olmsted Brothers contribution. 1880 photographs show the “desire line” paths that crisscross the space, but they appear to be gravel. This formalization of the walk surfaces would have been desirable with the added traffic among the classrooms, dormitories, and key buildings like the library (Dwight Hall) that were surrounding this space.

Topography:

Plantings/Vegetation: A planting list was done by Olmsted Brothers (Whiting), but there is no associated planting plan in the file to which existing plants can be compared.

Drainage: Olmsted Brothers drew details of storm drainage solutions to handle the water off the proposed flagstone paths, but none were found to confirm their current status.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The nineteenth-century campus of Yale College was largely within the confines of what today is known as Old Campus, which occupies one of the original squares of the colonial city. It was a space that Olmsted Sr. knew well. He would have had relatives that preceded his generation to Yale College, and he was supposed to attend, but an eye infection held him back. He often visited when his younger brother, John, attended and became lifelong friends with some of John’s friends who became important to his later work. He bought his first farm at Sachem’s Head, near Guilford, and attended lectures at Yale during John’s years of study.

By 1870, Yale College was the largest undergraduate institution in the United States. Beginning in 1870 to 1928, the college remade itself by demolishing what was known as the “Old Brick Row” that faced College Street and erected a perimeter of Victorian Gothic buildings around its central green. Phelps Hall, in the center of College Street, was built in 1896 to look like an English gatehouse, and with its completion, enclosed the half-square defined by College, Chapel, High and Elm Streets. The interior space, that a late 19th century photograph captures before the demolition of Brick Row, had a perimeter walk mostly lined with elms, and paths that crisscrossed the grass center with additional elms in that space, much like the New Haven Green immediately south of Old Campus. College Street.

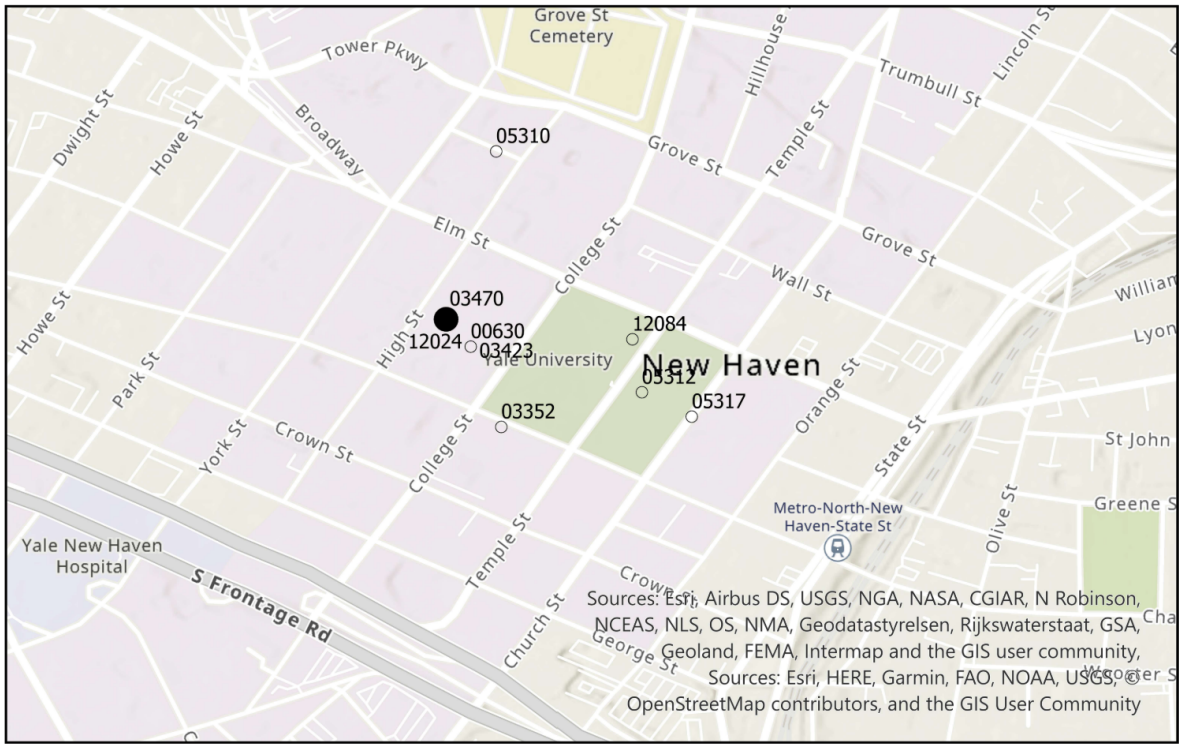
Without access to Yale University archives to support why Olmsted Brothers was contacted at this time, it can be assumed that because the dates follow the years that the firm was in the city working on the New Haven Plan and was known by reputation by many of the Civic Improvement Commission members, that they would be asked to assess and provide recommendations for areas around these relatively new buildings. Vanderbilt Hall, designed by Charles C. Haight, is one of the many small projects in the job file, has its own courtyard that opens onto Chapel Street that is not connected to the larger campus green. A similar space is the improvement of a courtyard that was to connect the, then, dining hall to Woolsey Hall in a square northeast of Old Campus.

A cultural landscape report was completed in 2021 on Beatrix Farrand’s work at Yale University. We were not able to get access to this document, but it appears from what was read that the authors did not consider the work done by the Olmsted firm and how it was or was not changed by Farrand.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Yale University / Yale Campus (#03470) / College Street, New Haven

GRAPHICS



Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community, Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

JOB: 03470 LOCATION: New Haven

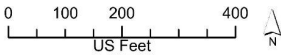


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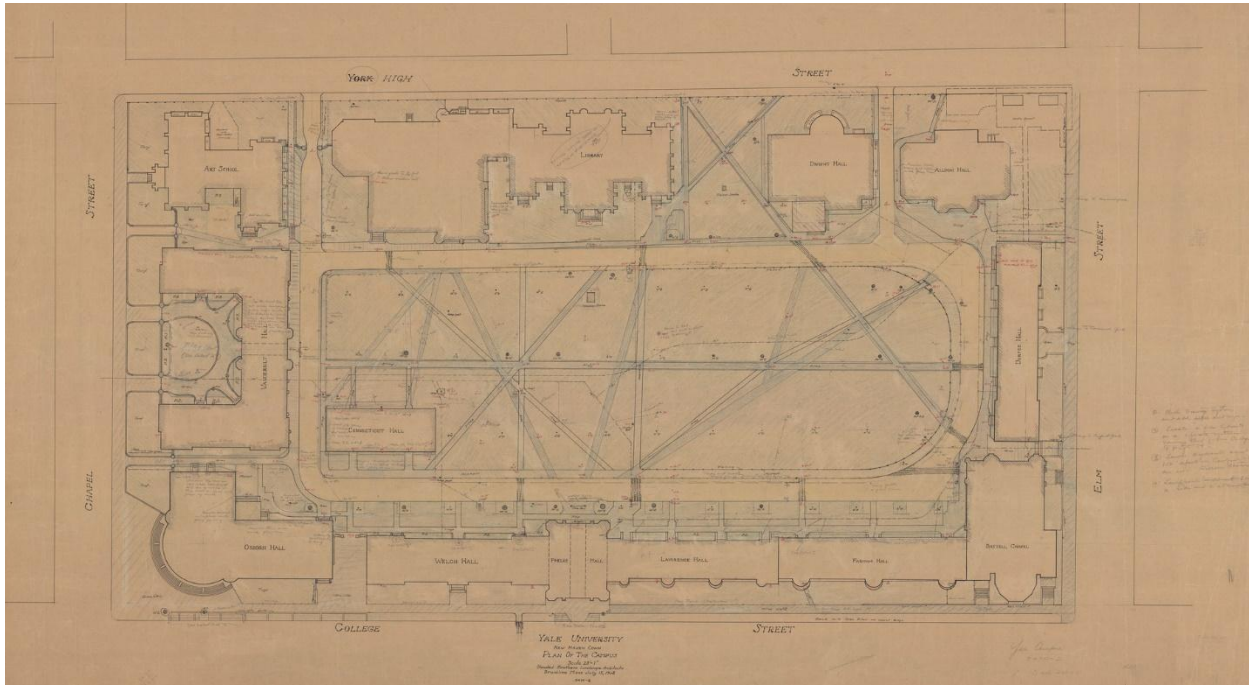


JOB: 03470 LOCATION: New Haven PROJECT: Yale University

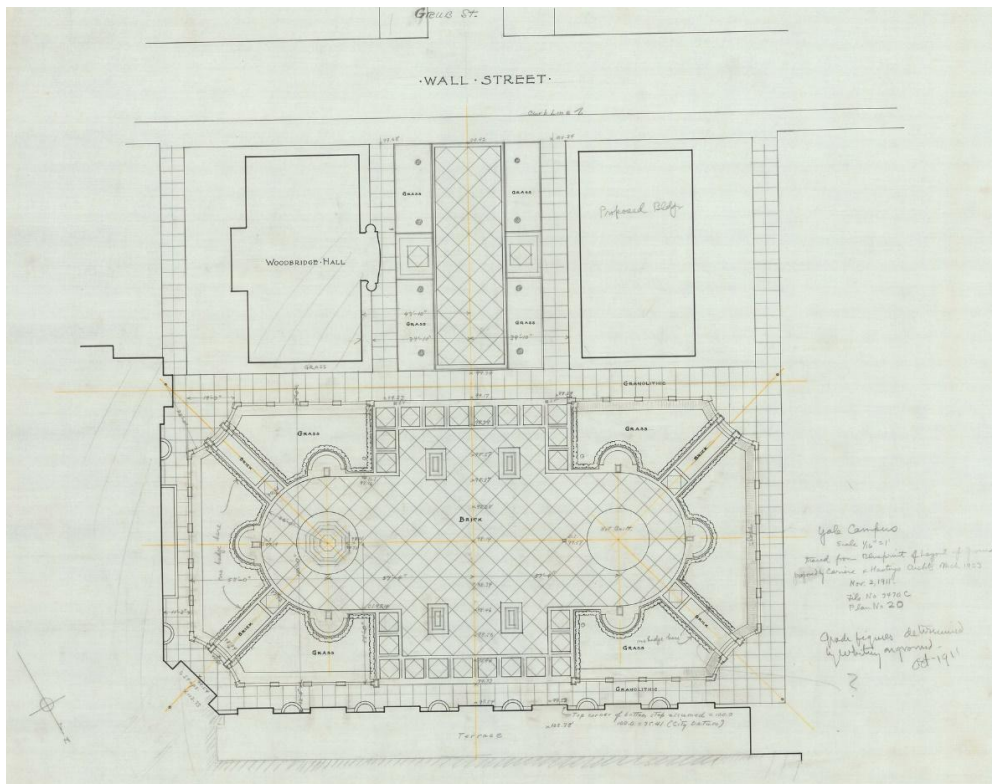


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Yale University Plan of the Campus, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1908. (Source: courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



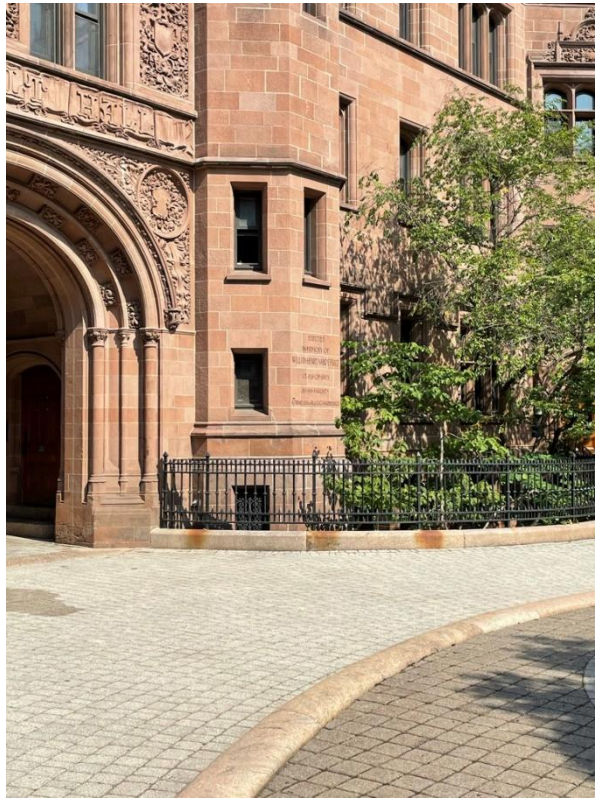
Yale Campus, plaza near Woodbridge Hall, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects, 1911. (Source: courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



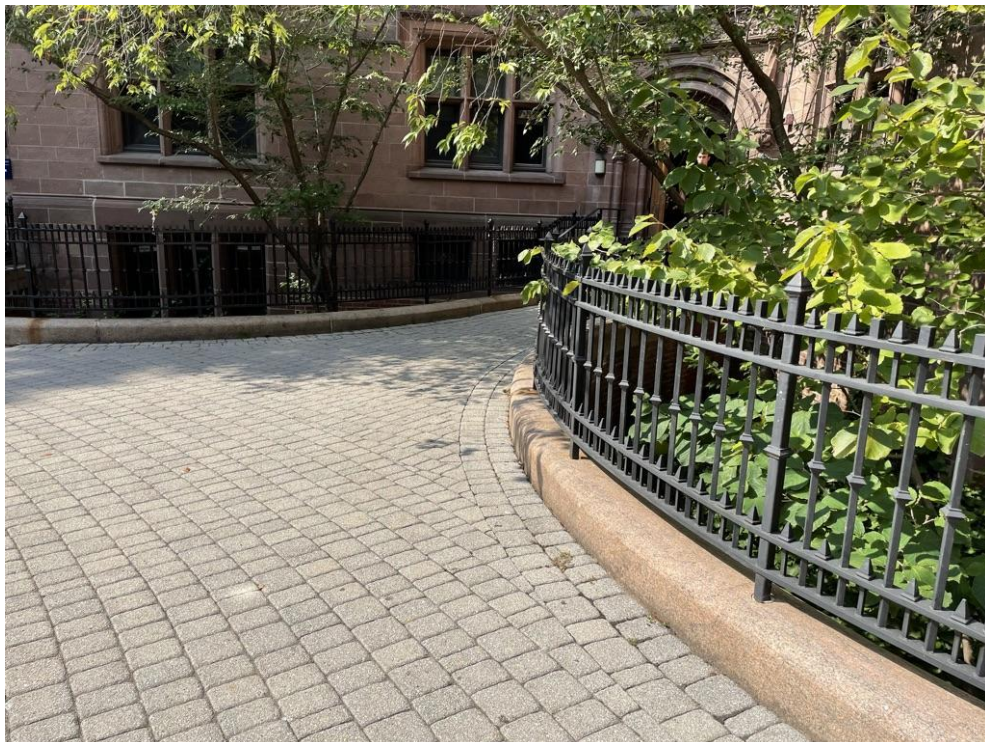
View east looking down one of the flagstone walks on Old Campus. (All photographs taken by author in 2021 unless otherwise noted)



View looking at the façade of Dwight Hall.



Vanderbilt Hall – existing plaza paving and pink granite curbing.



Detail of granite block paving with pink granite curbs at Vanderbilt Hall.