

Mass. Ave.

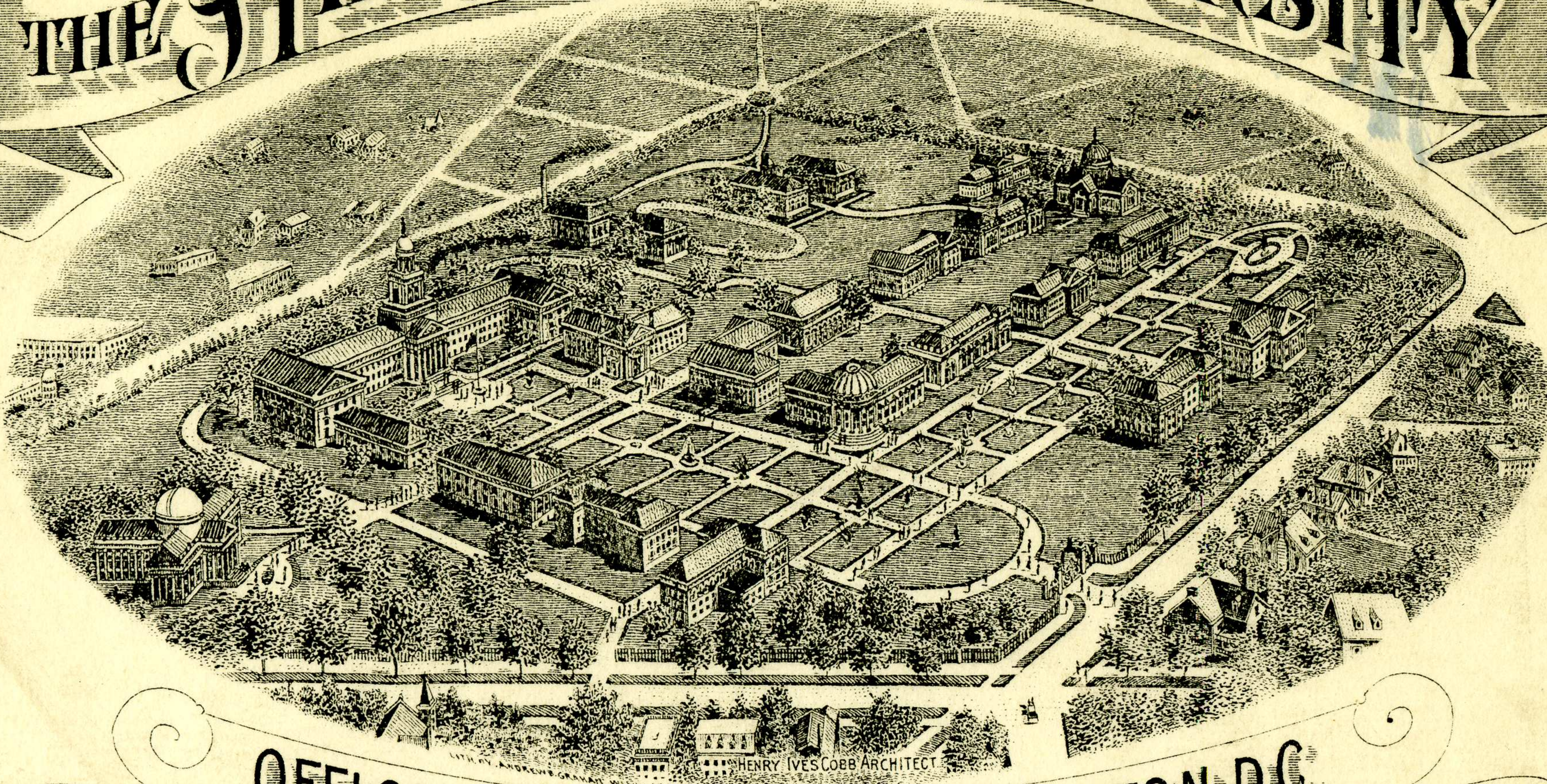
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C O P Y.

December 15, 1903.

Mr. Thomas W. Smith,  
 Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Smith:-

I beg to acknowledge yours of December 14th. I felt certain that you would have a visit from Mr. Croissant and his fellow-conspirator, Mr. Tait. Both of them are very persistent men, and yet, I don't know that we ought to blame them too severely. All of us are anxious to push to a successful conclusion any scheme in which we are personally interested. They control land back of us, which is now not easy of access and the opening of Mass. Ave. would of course, be of very great advantage to them. They are, however, not the only ones to profit by the opening of this avenue. It will help the American University immensely. We have greatly favored this opening all along in our history as the records both of the Trustee meetings and the meeting the Executive Committee of the University show. Resolution after resolution has been passed declaring for the opening of this avenue, and promising all possible assistance. In the record of the meeting of May 2, 1894, I find



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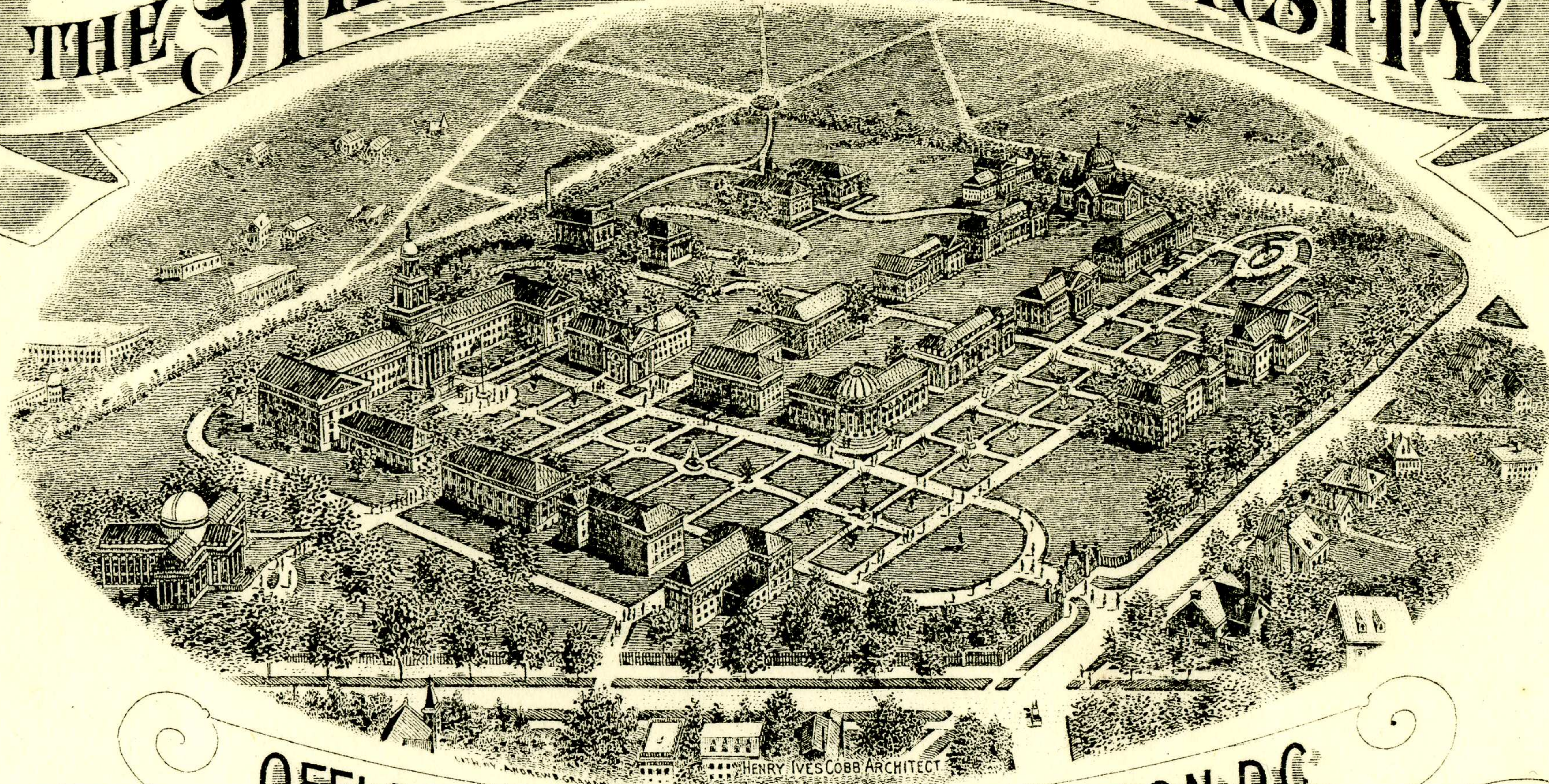
this resolution, - "That the right of way for Massachusetts Avenue and adjacent streets through the grounds of the American University be dedicated and that said right of way be dedicated at the judgment of the Executive Committee." This is a very plain statement, and not only includes Mass. Ave., but the short streets running to our northern boundary, which Mr. Glover now wants dedicated, and without which dedication, he, I fear, would refuse to dedicate the right of way for Mass. Ave. through his grounds between Wisconsin and Nebraska Avenues. He, however, stands ready at once to give full right of way for Mass. Ave. through all of his grounds, provided we dedicate through our grounds and also dedicate three of the short lateral streets at the very rear of our grounds. I believe you took the right attitude at the last meeting of our Executive Committee and I was sorry that the other members of the Committee did not agree fully with you. These lateral streets are a part of the authorized scheme of highways for the District of Columbia. Sooner or later they will be opened and we shall either have to dedicate or suffer them to be condemned, and for the sake of getting Mass. Ave. through now, which is so sadly needed and which would be of such untold benefit to us, I believe we should



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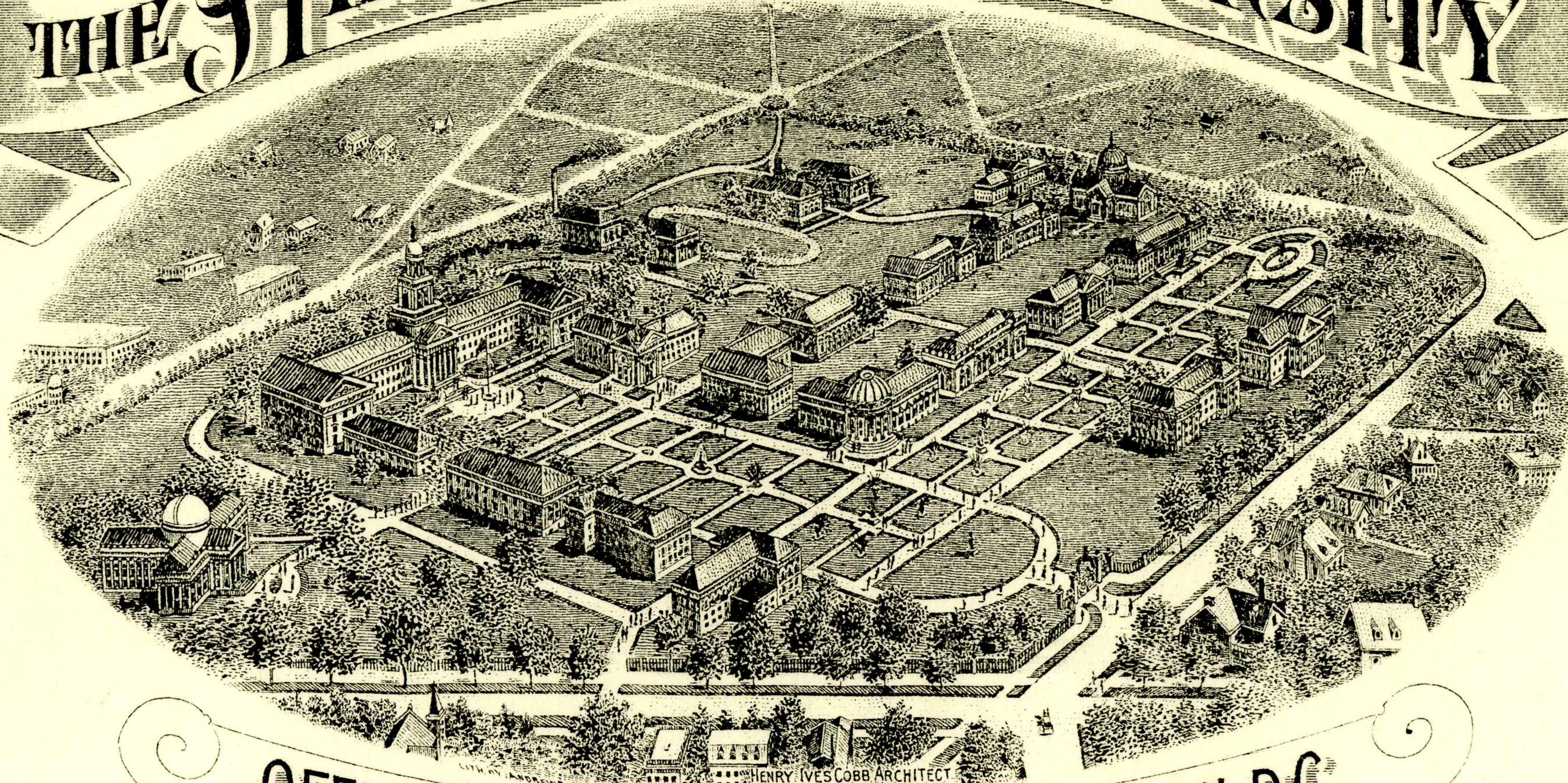
make the dedication. Mr. Glover, while looking out for his own interest, is a warm friend of our enterprise and would not ask us to make an unwise move, and I believe him to be too large a man to attempt to make any gain out of us for himself. He wields a mighty influence with the Committees on the District of Columbia in Congress, and if he is once determined that Mass. Ave. shall go through to the District line, he can secure the needed appropriation. He holds the key to the situation. I don't believe we can afford to antagonize him, and still I don't think we ought to let him ride over us, but I don't believe he has any such thought in his mind. For that reason I wish that our Trustee meeting might have been held yesterday, so that this matter could have been fully canvassed and settled, for if it is delayed too long we may be too late and fail to get what we greatly need for our advancement. I don't feel that I ought to force this matter on the Executive Committee, but if a sufficient number of them will signify their desire for a meeting, I can then call it, and the matter can be more fully discussed. From letters and telegrams from Bishop McCabe, I fear he will postpone the Trustee meeting until February or March, and that may be too late for us. There will be a strong



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(4).

effort made at the General Conference session, next May, of the Methodist Church, at Los Angeles, California, to have the five million dollar restriction stricken out of their recommendation concerning the American University, and leave solely in the hands of the Trustees, the time for the beginning of actual work. If Mass. Ave. were being opened, so that our grounds would be a little more accessible, it would have great weight in helping along this relief which we are expecting from the General Conference.

Now concerning the street railway, I believe with you that there is some thought of pushing it from the Tennallytown electric line on Wisconsin Avenue down through University Park. They must have some street car facilities for the park, if it is to grow. It is now <sup>really</sup> a twenty minute walk from the Tennallytown Railway to the College of History of the American University. When taking visitors out there I am always embarrassed over the distance, and they at once say to me, how do you hope to succeed here with no better street car accommodations, what will the students do? I can only respond that when the time comes for us to have students, there will be ample facilities for transportation. I believe that a street railway rarely ever hurts any property. Our College of

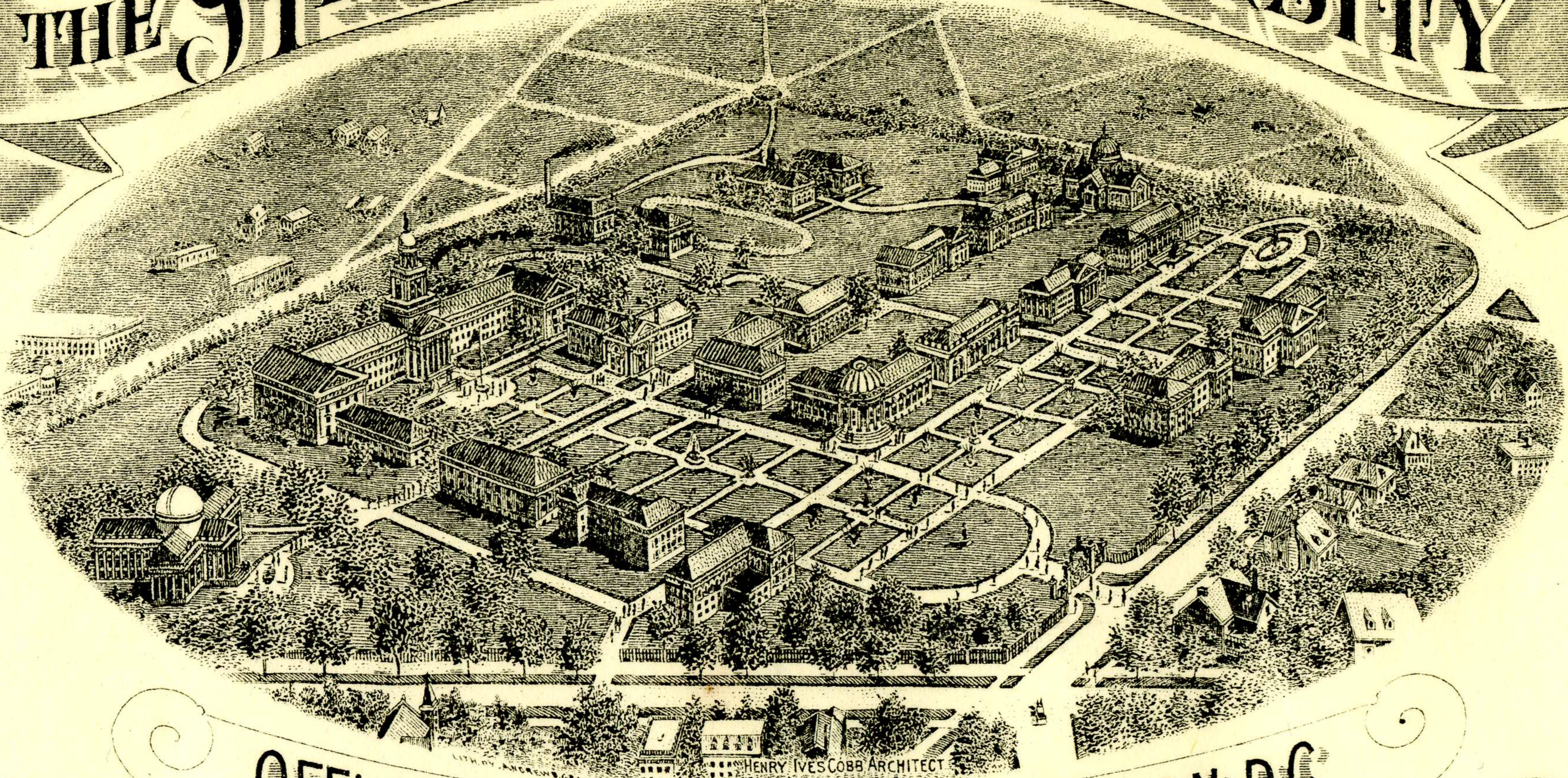


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*John*  
 History is ~~two~~ hundred feet from Mass. Ave. There is only to be one other building, according to our plans, between the College of History and Mass. Ave., so that when that second building is erected, it will still be in the neighborhood of ~~five~~ <sup>two</sup> hundred or ~~six~~ <sup>three</sup> hundred feet from the line of Mass. Ave., too far away to be disturbed by the noise. The residences of the professors, which we hope to put on the narrow strip of land between Mass. Ave. and our northern boundary line, will in no wise suffer from a street car line on the avenue. This will bring people directly to our grounds, and I think is our one chance, for ten years to come, to get street car accommodations to our site. There is no hope of a line near us at the south. Suppose, as likely will be the case unless we help the matter along, that they should run a car line from Wisconsin Avenue through Loughboro Road, across Nebraska Avenue, and thence down into University Park. We would still have a half mile walk left from the car line to our College of History, and if that line were to go through, with as little population as we have at present, it would be many a long year before another car line would be built any nearer to us. This car line directly to our grounds would be a mighty argument in our favor when we come to



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(6).

make our appeal at the general Conference.

Now this is the way the matter presents itself to me. I may be all wrong about it. I wish I had a chance to talk it over with you face to face. I feel that this is the crisis and that we ought to take advantage of every movement that might help us, even if other people are being benefitted by it. If you will join in a call for a meeting of the Executive Committee, I will try to get them together.

Pardon so long a letter, but I wanted you to have my views concerning this matter.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) W. L. Davidson,

Secretary.

EWF