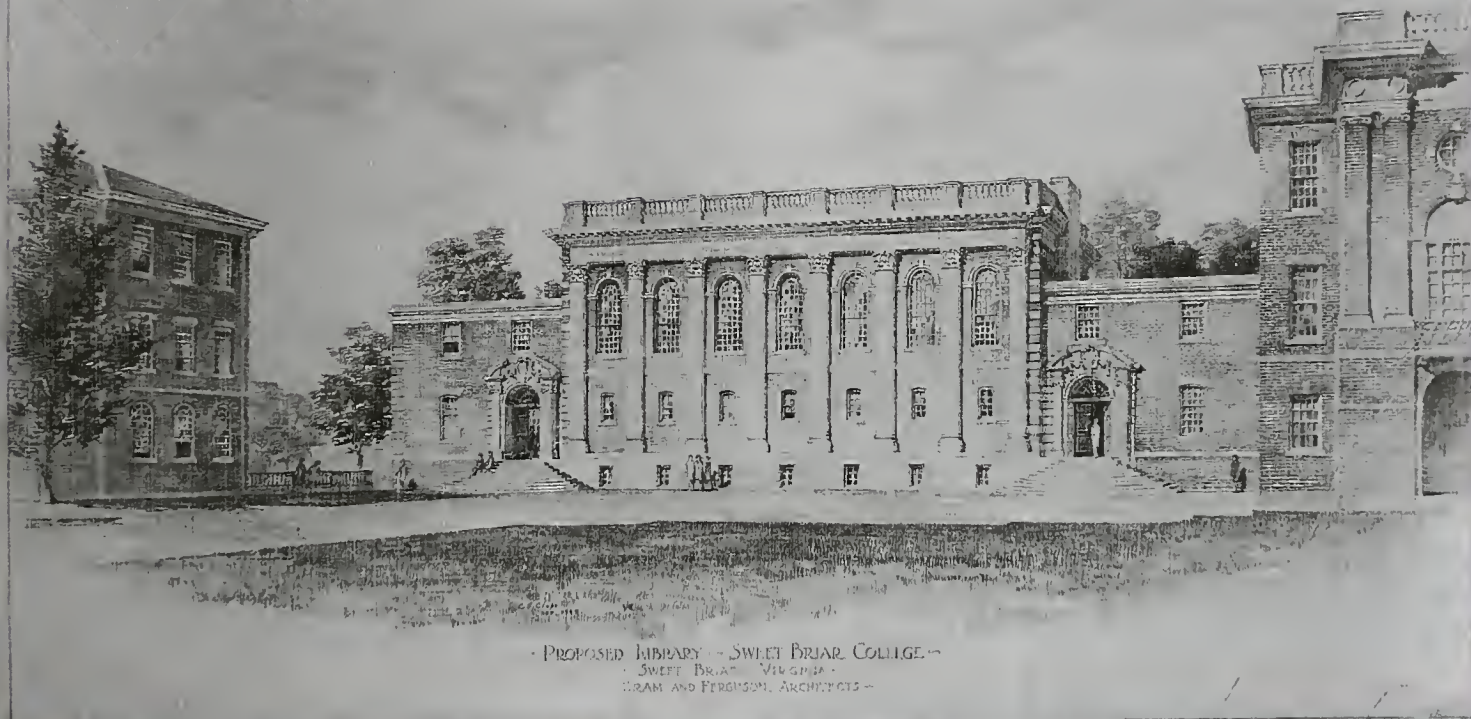


SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE



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SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE AND RALPH ADAMS CRAM:

# DREAMS AND REALITY

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*“In Virginia ...we are slowly constructing a great college for women....”*

—Ralph Adams Cram, “Recent University Architecture in the United States,” *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* (1911-12)

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE AND RALPH ADAMS CRAM:  
**DREAMS AND REALITY**  
 A Sweet Briar College Centennial Exhibition

From the Cram and Ferguson Collection, Fine Arts Department, Boston Public Library  
 Loaned courtesy of The Trustees of the Boston Public Library,  
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AILEEN H. LAING

Sweet Briar College Art Gallery  
 Anne Gary Pannell Center  
 Sweet Briar, Virginia

September 20 - December 14, 2001

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Colophon:

Cram's associate and friend, Bertram Goodhue, designed the Cheltenham font, used in the body of this catalog, for Ingalls Kimball of Cheltenham Press. First used to present Cram and Goodhue's plans for West Point, Cheltenham was introduced in 1904 and was probably the first typeface designed for both hand-setting and Linotype machine type setting. This versatile typeface has also adapted well to computer typesetting usage.

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## FOREWORD

This important exhibition, rich with detailed images from an exciting period of American architecture, focuses our attention on not only the impact of Ralph Adams Cram on the development of a distinguished college, but also how his ongoing work at Sweet Briar influenced his professional life. The exhibit thus constitutes a significant addition to Cram scholarship, and to the historical record of Sweet Briar College.

It is fitting that within six months of the chartering of Sweet Briar Institute in January 1901, to be built on the beautiful estate left by Indiana Fletcher Williams for the purpose of founding a college for women, the first trustees determined to employ a supremely talented and thoughtful young architect and architectural theorist to create a campus of classic Georgian design. Indiana Fletcher Williams had herself been deeply sensitive to the beauty of Sweet Briar Plantation, and to the importance of aesthetics in life and in architecture. (In her early twenties, she had personally overseen the realization of her dream to transform Sweet Briar House into a handsome Tuscan villa.) She, like Cram, understood that, as

Mark C. Taylor, Cluett Professor of Humanities and Religion of Williams College has said, “*What* you think is in no small measure a function of *where* you think.” She knew that the gorgeous foothills of the Blue Ridge constituted an extensive canvas on which young women would be able to paint their futures. And Cram, for whom Sweet Briar was his first major collegiate project, found the breadth of the canvas on which he could work inspiring.

Today’s Sweet Briar is what it is in large part because of its architecture. The campus that Cram designed reflected his homage to the old English concept of the residential college (“the early, the perfect, the indestructible type”) which in his view so deeply impacted “character building” that without it “no intensive scholarship can ever make amends.” One hundred years later, thousands of alumnae attest that the intense interaction—both social and intellectual—of this community is unusual, distinctive, and has been fostered from the first by the placement of buildings, the shelter of arcades and the conversation between an “academical village” and the sweeping views across the dells. Today as we shape an educational program for the twenty-first century, we focus on our residential commu-

nity as essential to our mission.

Cram insisted on “honest and enduring construction,” the only option, he believed, when one is “dealing with the eternal verities.” This, his legacy to us, has become our credo as we have worked in recent years to restore or renew the Cram buildings within our National Historic District, and to design expansions and renovations to newer buildings on campus.

For Cram, architecture was “an unerring though perishable record of civilization, more exact than written history.” (We can, for example, see in his resplendent design of a “professor’s house” how highly regarded was the faculty member in 1900.) And for Cram, Sweet Briar became an important strand of his own unerring record. What better way to celebrate our Centennial than to illuminate and honor Ralph Adams Cram as one of Sweet Briar’s true founders?

*Elisabeth S. Muhlenfeld*  
*President, Sweet Briar College*

Ralph Adams Cram may have been the designing architect of Sweet Briar, but the College would never have been built without the efforts of many people, from the men who laid the brick to the donors who made the construction possible. In the same vein, this exhibition would never have seen the light of day without the contributions of many individuals. Both were truly team efforts.

Financial support for the exhibition has come primarily from the Faculty Grants Committee and The Centennial Commission. Generous grants from the Faculty Grants Committee over several years made it possible to explore the idea and search for appropriate material. We made several forays to Boston to examine the Cram material in the Boston Public Library. Janice Chadbourne, Curator of Fine Arts, and her team were always both efficient and gracious as we pored over hundreds of drawings made by the firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson (later Cram and Ferguson) agonizing over what to select for the exhibition. We thank the Trustees of the Boston Public Library for so generously approving the loan of these drawings for our exhibition. The Centennial Commission has underwritten the publication of the catalogue and the mounting of the exhibit, itself, as a major part of the centennial celebration of the College. Louise Zingaro, Director of the Alumnae Association has been a major cheerleader for the project since its inception.

Douglas Harnsberger, Principal at Commonwealth Architects and Sweet Briar's restoration ar-

chitect, has provided invaluable help, from sharing his knowledge of the historic structures on campus to providing a glossary of architectural terms for the catalogue. Susan Smither of Commonwealth Architects assisted in the completion of the glossary and in the creation of a companion exhibition which documents the restoration of the Cram buildings at Sweet Briar.

Without the staff of Cochran Library this catalogue would never have been written. Joe Malloy must have called in all his favors to get books and photocopied material from sources that don't ordinarily lend material. Lisa Johnston found the answers to questions both trivial and serious.

The nitty-gritty of actually getting the material framed and hung on the walls of Pannell Art Gallery is due to Nancy McDearmon, Registrarial Assistant, and her staff, Emily Nichols '01, Meredith Taylor '01, Elizabeth B. Taylor '02, Chatham Monk, Traci Sorrells, and Maggie McDearmon. Large linen drawings that have been rolled up for years are not easy to persuade to lie flat while they are being framed. Nor are they easily photographed. The crisp images that appear in this catalogue are the work of Charles Grubbs, one of the area's most gifted professional photographers. Paper conservator, Mary Studt, was of particular assistance in providing advice about the appropriate way to care for this fragile material.

The President's Office made it possible to examine the minutes of the Board of Directors of Sweet Briar Institute and thanks to the persistence of Megan Jaffe, student assistant in the

President's Office, the correspondence between Meta Glass and Ralph Adams Cram was unearthed. Karen Summers and Theresa McNabb were always on hand to provide working space to examine the records and to help with photocopying.

In the summer of 1995 Julia Paris worked as our research assistant, poking around various nooks and crannies on campus for any signs of Cram's drawings or early photographs of the College. She went through numerous microfilmed copies of *The Lynchburg News* for any mention of the college during the early years of its construction. Edward Gibson, archivist and Director of The Jones Memorial Library, provided her and us with invaluable help as we sought Cram's designs for Sweet Briar. Monica Dean, former Director of Public Relations, provided funds to duplicate Cram drawings for the Jones Memorial Library Collection.

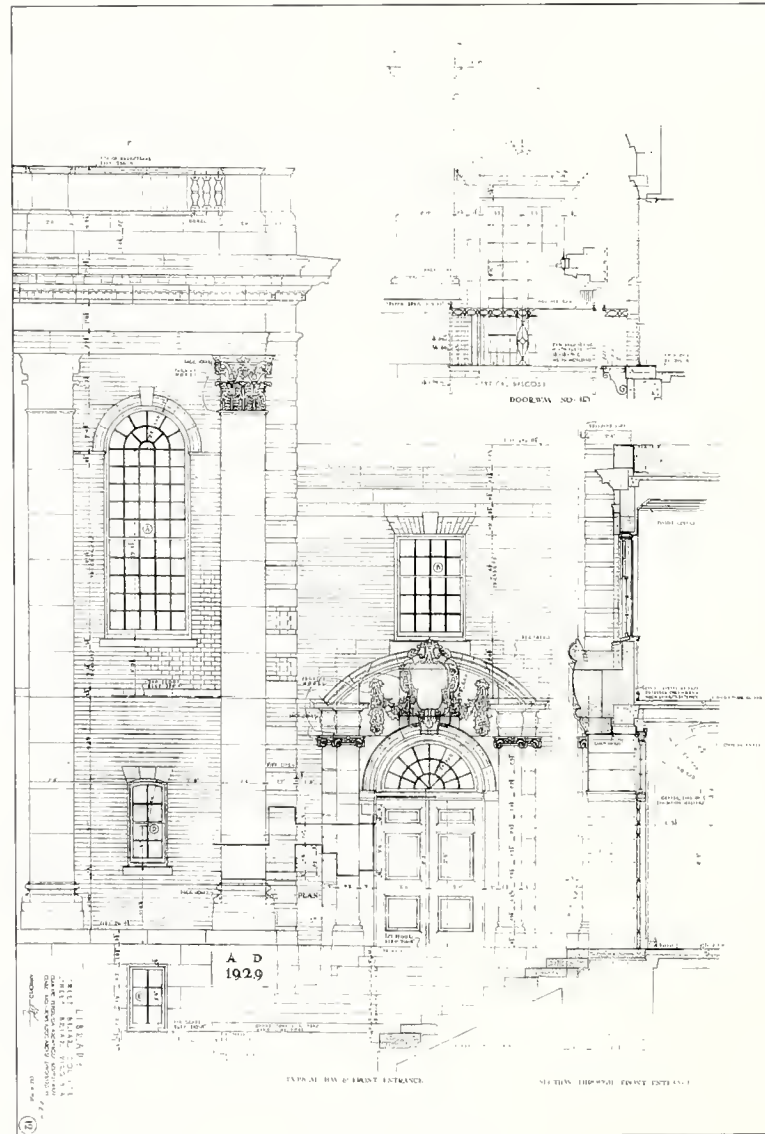
Several years ago, Charles Kestner, former Director of Buildings and Grounds at Sweet Briar, realized the historical importance of some of the material in his care and brought them to the Art Gallery for safekeeping. These form the nucleus of Sweet Briar's Cram archives and are among the most prized works of art in the Sweet Briar Art Collection.

Even the production of the catalogue was a team effort. Diane Moran, Professor of History of Art, served as its editor; her sharp eye and precise attention to detail picked up many errors and

clarified ambiguities of language. President Elizabeth Muhlenfeld took time from her busy schedule to write the Foreword and place this exhibition in the larger context of Sweet Briar's Centennial celebration. Nancy Marion of The Design Group designed the catalogue with her usual professionalism but influenced by her personal affection for her *alma mater*. Publicity, including the web site ([http://www.centennial.sbc.edu/council/alum\\_symposium1.html](http://www.centennial.sbc.edu/council/alum_symposium1.html)) has been handled under the expert guidance of Betty van Iersel, Dave Blount, and Greg Moody. Like the College itself, the exhibition, *Ralph Adams Cram and Sweet Briar College: Dreams and Reality, A Centennial Exhibition* has been a labor of love by many individuals, those whose names are mentioned and many other unsung heroines.

*Aileen H. Laing*  
*Professor, History of Art*

*Rebecca Massie Lane*  
*Director of College Galleries*



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# SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE AND RALPH ADAMS CRAM: DREAMS AND REALITY

## A Sweet Briar College Centennial Exhibition

Aileen H. Laing

Professor of History of Art, Sweet Briar College

### INTRODUCTION

The exhibition of the architectural projects, both built and unbuilt, that Ralph Adams Cram created for Sweet Briar College, is part of the year-long celebration of the College's centennial. The exhibition will be on view from September to December of 2001 but its gestation began six years ago. Only recently has the artistic importance of Sweet Briar's architectural heritage been acknowledged, and records, both written and visual, were difficult to unearth.

A foray to the Boston Public Library where most of Cram's archives have been housed yielded a rich trove of drawings: plot plans, floor plans, and elevations, but few presentation drawings. These more artistic views were designed to impress a client in contrast to the more functional ones used for the actual construction. The plans and elevations in the Cram archives are ink on linen and were the basis on which blue prints were made to be used by the construction crews. Presentation drawings in the Sweet Briar College Art Collection are all from the 1920s and later. Those from the early years of the College

exist today only in the form of illustrations in various architectural publications of the first two decades of the twentieth century and verbal descriptions in the local newspapers. Some were lost when lent to the celebration of Jamestown's Tricentennial in 1907. Others seem to have simply disappeared.

A search for written material to support the visual was also not easily obtained, but the minutes of the Board of Directors recorded the early years of the College in such rich detail that the approach the following essay must take became obvious. They dictated an architectural history of the College during the years that Ralph Adams Cram was the designing architect. After a persistent search for other early records, a wealth of correspondence between Cram and Sweet Briar's third president, Meta Glass, was unearthed in the basement of Cochran Library. Various pieces of information came to light in other parts of the Library, but many records have been lost or are still hidden from the scholar's view.

Sweet Briar is a treasure worthy of the restoration that her buildings are undergoing as part of the centennial celebration. Her written and photographic records cry out for the same loving, yet

professional attention by an archivist before more of them disappear. It is our hope that this exhibition will spur further interest in Cram's work at Sweet Briar and that material will continue to surface for future scholars to use. In 1911 Cram said, "In Virginia...we are slowly constructing a great college for women...;" one hundred years from now will we be able to say we have preserved the written and visual records of this "great college" for the future?

*...a part of our philosophy of art was that the old and eternal things, of which education was as much one as was the Church, simply had, by their very nature, to preserve the sense of continuity and show in its very forms not only its close linking up with the past but its high place above whim and changing fashion.*

—Ralph Adams Cram,  
"Have I a Philosophy of Design?" *Pencil Points* (1932)

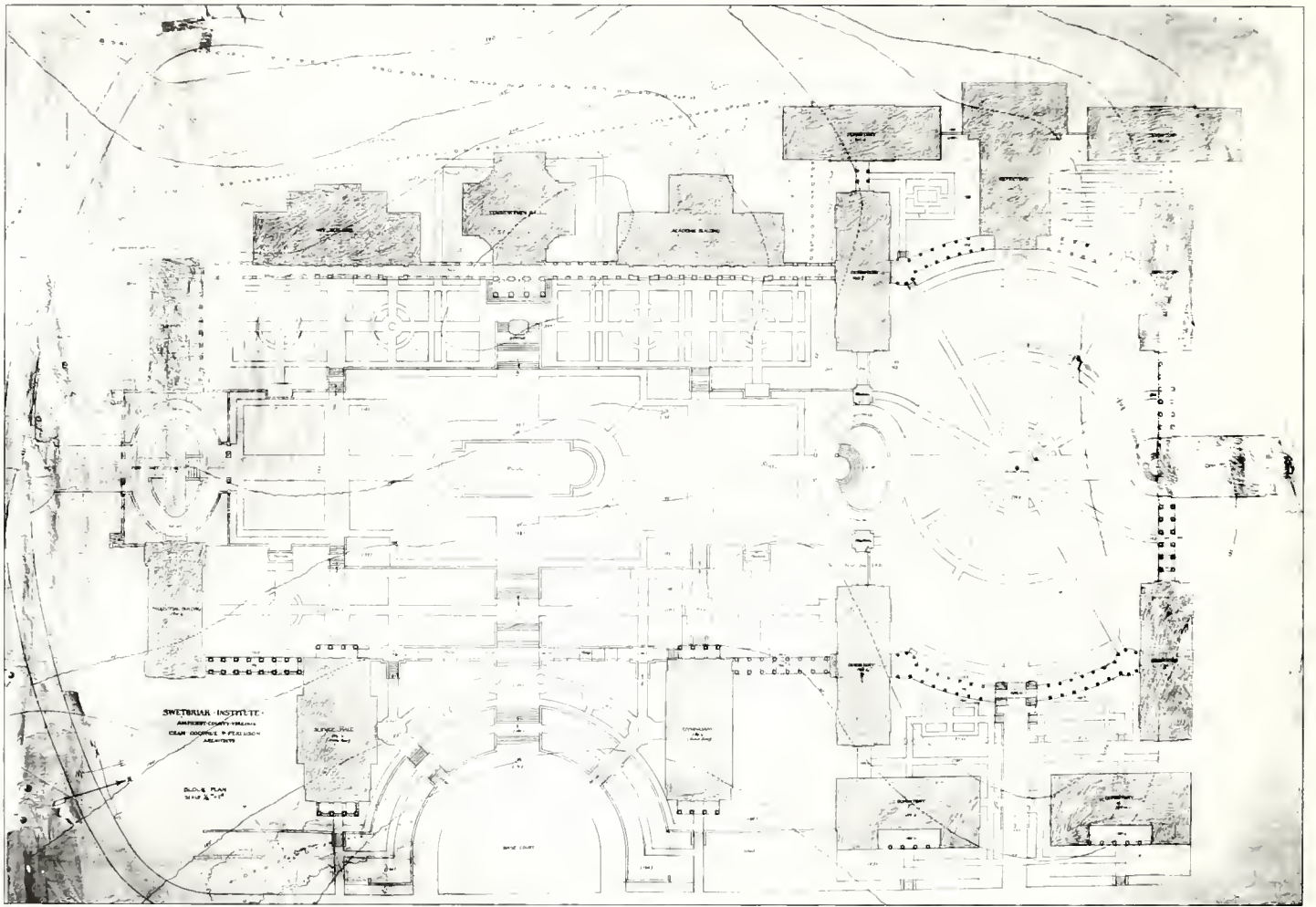


PLATE I BLOCK PLAN

## CREATION: 1900-1906

Indiana Fletcher Williams had a dream. She wanted to perpetuate the memory of her daughter, Daisy, who died at sixteen years of age. To that end she arranged to leave all her worldly goods to found a school for young women. After her death in October, 1900, her dream was realized by the four executors of her will, who increased their number to seven and became the first Board of Directors of Sweet Briar Institute.<sup>1</sup> One of the new Board members was John McBryde, the president of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute.<sup>2</sup> John McBryde's dream for the fledgling institution was to establish a place of learning of superior quality both intellectually and aesthetically.

At the first meeting of the Board of Directors on April 22, 1901 McBryde read a paper setting forth his ideas about the type of education to be offered. He argued for a combination of the Northern colleges' focus on intellectual pursuits with the practical education of the Western and Southern normal and industrial schools. He wanted to provide literary and scientific as well as artistic and industrial "branches of knowledge."<sup>3</sup> McBryde was immediately elected chairman of the Executive Committee and began to bring his dream into reality. At the August Board meeting McBryde made his pitch for quality in the physical construction of the campus. He said, "...every spot, every object should make its esthetic appeal, for attractive surroundings and artistic buildings have a profound and lasting influence on [the] hearts and minds of young girls

just emerging into womanhood."<sup>4</sup>

McBryde had apparently recently read an article by Ralph Adams Cram in *The Churchman* that impressed him, and he asked the young architect to come to Virginia to discuss plans for the college.<sup>5</sup> Cram's ideas about the role that architecture plays in our lives, can be gleaned from his numerous writings; he was as important as an architectural theorist and polemicist as he was as a practicing architect. "Good architecture," he said, "... is primarily a matter of form, proportion, composition, well chosen materials and absolute honesty of construction."<sup>6</sup> He also wrote, "False construction is simply a lie told for reasons of penury or ostentation."<sup>7</sup>

In a paper he delivered at the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1914 Cram said, "For one thing we know is that architecture is no matter of fashion or predilection, no vain but desirable amenity of life, but rather an unerring though perishable record of civilization, more exact than written history, and the only perfect showing of the civilization of a time."<sup>8</sup> In the same paper he singled out "the residential college—the early, the perfect, the indestructible type—elsewhere abandoned, ...with great loss ... in character-building... for which no intensive scholarship can ever make amends."<sup>9</sup> Clearly Cram believed that architecture provided more than a roof over one's head. Towards the end of this paper, he concluded, "...deep in our...consciousness...is the solid conviction that, after all, there are but three real things in the world,—the home, the school, and the Church,—and that

when we are dealing with eternal verities honest and enduring construction is alone admissible."<sup>10</sup>

Cram and McBryde made a formidable team in the creation of an architectural masterpiece in the open fields and woodlands of rural Amherst County, an achievement that has recently been acknowledged by the inclusion of the campus on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>11</sup> Only a few college campuses can claim this distinction. One can only surmise what conversation transpired between these two dynamic and strong-willed men as they walked across the fields and woods of Sweet Briar plantation in the summer of 1901, envisioning an academic institution that would, in effect, be a small town. But details that surface in the minutes of the Board of Directors following that meeting provide some clues.

Cram and McBryde undoubtedly discussed the layout of the campus concluding that the optimum placement was along the spine of the hill sweeping into the dells at each end.<sup>12</sup> By 1900 the styles and philosophies of A.J. Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted pervaded the American landscape. Both men were best known for their advocacy of the Picturesque style in landscaping.<sup>13</sup> Sweet Briar's woods and open fields in the rolling hills of Virginia's Piedmont would seem to have provided a natural setting for the Picturesque. But as the early site plans will show, it was the Beaux Arts style of late nineteenth century Paris and the "City Beautiful" movement following the 1893 Columbian Exposition in

Chicago that seemed to influence Cram as he began his designs for the college campus.<sup>14</sup>

In July the Board approved the creation of “separate and complete buildings for the Institute” and began the search for an appropriate location for the railroad station with a road to the College. At their third meeting, in August, 1901, McBryde “presented various plans submitted by Messrs. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson [CG&F] which were examined, admired and extensively discussed.”<sup>15</sup>

These plans showed the general arrangement of the campus and included sketches of dormitories and an academic building. McBryde was asked to pursue negotiations with the firm and obtain an approximate cost for two dormitories and an academic building. Within a year of Miss Lindy’s death, her dream was well on its way to realization.

Two undated but early site plans survive. The more developed one was illustrated in the August 23, 1902 issue of *The American Architect and Building News* [Plate 2]. The less developed one may be as early as the summer of 1901 [Plate 1]. Both indicate that Cram intended to provide more than the two dormitories and academic building requested. He produced an elaborate formal plan in the Beaux Arts tradition with a major east-west axis and two minor north-south axes, one culminating in the Refectory (now known as Pannell) and the other in Commencement Hall (ultimately the site of Cochran Library). In both site plans a total of seventeen buildings connected by a series of arcades link

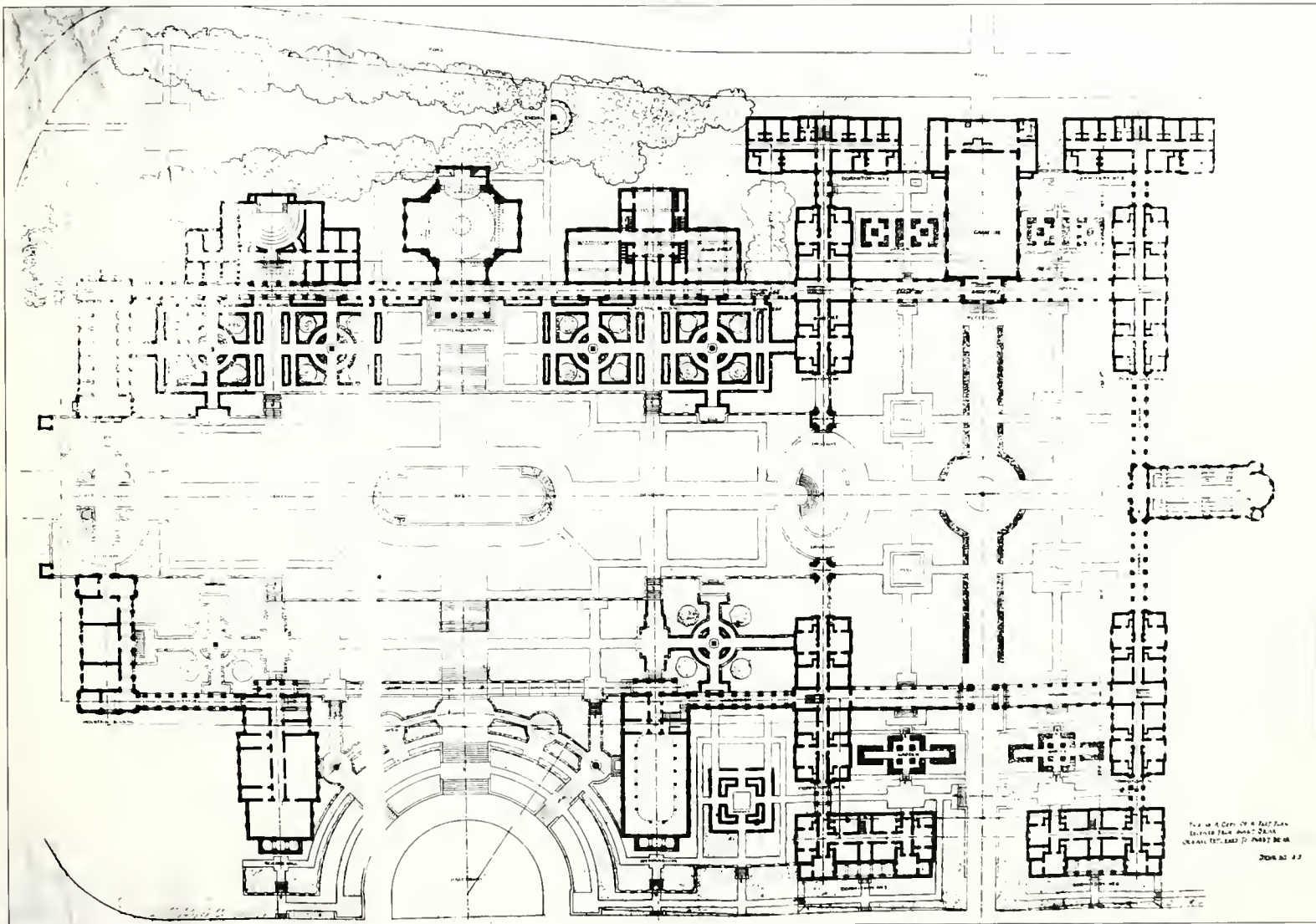
all of the functions of the College and encourage an inward focus—on the formal garden that he also envisioned.

The eastern end (right side of drawing) of the campus is dominated by domestic buildings and the western by those devoted more specifically to the academic life of the college.<sup>16</sup> Cram included a chapel and dining hall within the domestic center in the tradition of English universities. The differences between the two plans are slight but significant. The less-developed one is a topographical plan with the buildings simply blocked in and labeled. This may have been the initial design created after Cram and McBryde walked the land. The second plan, labeled “This is a copy of a plot plan received from Sweet Briar. Original returned to Sweet Briar,” is much more detailed in terms of the interior layout of various buildings and serves more appropriately as a presentation piece.<sup>17</sup>

Both plans show a well-developed landscape plan with symmetrically placed parterres and pools, but here too, there are variations that suggest the design was evolving. In both a circumferential road frames the campus with the primary vehicular entry at the western end and a formal pedestrian entry on the south via several flights of steps from the “base court.”<sup>18</sup> A secondary entry point farther east passes between dormitories six and seven. In the earlier plan, one passes under an arch framing a view of the Refectory. This end of the campus is controlled by a series of concentric circles. A walnut tree stands in the center and twelve paths of varying

width radiate out to the different buildings, all of which are connected by arcades. The north and south arcades are curved and terminate in small round structures at the entrances to the four dorms. In the 1902 plan, the north-south axis on the east end is more clearly defined, perhaps by a box hedge but a very definite dot suggests the retention of the walnut tree within its circle. The circles of the first plan have been replaced by straight lines and everything has been squared off.<sup>19</sup>

A wooden model which depicts only the north-east quadrant may have been produced between the two plans and shows elements of both [Plate 3]. Circles radiate out from the walnut tree as in the simpler plan but the curving arcades have been straightened. Despite the vicissitudes of time, the model presents a clear picture of Cram’s original ideas for Sweet Briar.<sup>20</sup> The four original buildings and the Pavilion [now known as the Bell Tower] are all connected by arcades with slightly flattened arches. A retaining wall topped by a balustrade and pierced by a broad flight of steps leads one up to the parterre in front of Academic. All of this was built more or less as conveyed in the model, but two details that were not constructed reveal Cram’s ideas in a very concrete fashion. The arcade goes beyond Academic indicating that the original plan was to connect all buildings in this manner. Also, one should note the steps at the end of the retaining wall; three short flights of four steps each would have led one up to Commencement Hall.



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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
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PLATE 2 COPY OF PLOT PLAN

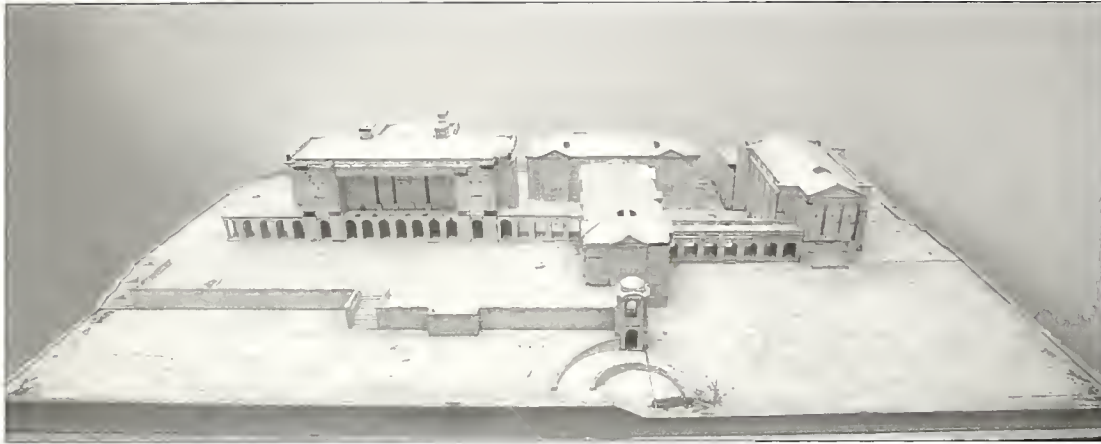


PLATE 3 THE MODEL

Commencement Hall does not appear on the model, but Bertram Goodhue's design for it was illustrated in *The American Architect and Building News* of August 30, 1902.<sup>21</sup> The domed centrally planned structure with a Corinthian portico is strongly reminiscent of Jefferson's Rotunda at the University of Virginia and appears much more Roman than any of the other buildings in the scheme. Like the Rotunda it was to be approached by a broad flight of steps, and arcades stretch to either side connecting it to the academic building on one side and the art building on the other, as is made clear in the plan. The obvious expense of erecting such a building and its rather specialized function explain why it was not part of the original construction. Perhaps its extremely close kinship to the Rotunda rather than the more elusive references to historic buildings found in the other

buildings prevented Cram from bringing this design back later when the Library was under consideration. Only the Corinthian Order and the reflecting pool in front were used in the later design.

At the time that Sweet Briar's plans were being developed, Bertram Goodhue was the firm's most gifted draftsman and he is probably the one who drew the more developed plan.<sup>22</sup> Cram commented on the division of labor in his autobiography written many years after Goodhue had left the firm:

I could see any architectural problem in its mass, proportion, composition, and articulation, and visualize it in three dimensions even before I set pencil to paper. I also had the faculty of planning and I generally blocked out all our designs at quarter scale. There my ability ceased. I had neither the power nor the patience to

work out any sort of decorative detail. At this point Bertram entered the equation, to go on without a break to the completion of the work.<sup>23</sup>

Regardless of who drew what, Cram was the one who visited the site frequently and the overall design for the fledgling institution is clearly his. Frank Ferguson, the third partner in the firm, provided engineering expertise.

Today Cram is known primarily as an architect of the Gothic style but he made it clear that other styles were more appropriate in certain circumstances. In collegiate architecture "Georgian...has established itself as a determined rival to the 'Oxford Mixture' [by which he meant a primarily Gothic style] and some of its products are not only logical and lovely, but genuinely scholastic as well.... In Virginia...we are slowly constructing a great college for women [in the Georgian style]...."<sup>24</sup> In his autobiography, he reminisced that it had been "easy to determine the stylistic basis... of Sweetbriar College in Virginia...where history, tradition, and architectural style predetermined the course to follow."<sup>25</sup> The traditional architectural style in Virginia, known as Georgian, is characterized by the use of red brick constructed in Flemish bond, sash windows that are flush with the façade, and hipped roofs. Georgian buildings emphasize symmetry from the overall proportions of the building to the placement of windows and doors.

Sweet Briar was the first major collegiate project entrusted to the firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson.<sup>26</sup> Sarah Lanford suggested several reasons that the firm took on the job: it gave them

a chance to work on a large scale as they were responsible for creating the campus *de novo*, it expanded their reputation beyond Massachusetts and, if successful, it would give them “favorable publicity.”<sup>27</sup> They were successful on all counts and soon received major collegiate commissions at West Point (1903) and the Graduate College of Princeton University (1910).

By November 1901 the Board was beginning to feel the pinch of reality when they commented that construction costs were “quite high.” A persistent theme in Sweet Briar’s architectural history is the disparity between the desire for work of the highest quality and the financial restraints of the budget. Cram came to Blacksburg to confer with McBryde on details such as the “character of the materials to be used, the finish and the specifications” and he was “astounded at ... [the] cheapness [of work there] as compared with the cost of similar work in the north.”<sup>28</sup> During all of John McBryde’s tenure on the Board, he held out for the finest quality in planning and construction. To a large extent the beauty of the Sweet Briar campus today is due to his persistence and his ability to convince others that quality in construction and aesthetics were worth paying for.

In August the Executive Committee had been authorized to invite bids “for making and laying a million bricks” or more if necessary.<sup>29</sup> In November clay was sent to Blacksburg from several sites at Sweet Briar to make test bricks; the result: “bricks of superior quality.”<sup>30</sup> However, by September of the following year McBryde reported

that “work was being delayed by a hitch over the color of the brick.”<sup>31</sup> Eventually the problems were solved, and work began in earnest in the Spring of 1903. In May of that year McBryde reported that the quality of the brick was “very satisfactory to the Architect, himself and the consulting Engineer.”<sup>32</sup> Even later McBryde reported to the Board that the “bricks are excellent and of a color harmonizing with the style of architecture adopted. The brick laying cannot be too highly commended. Mr. Cram pronounced it remarkably good, equal to the very best work of northern masons.”<sup>33</sup> The original contract did not include laying brick in Flemish bond, but McBryde said it “would wonderfully improve the appearance of the building” and the additional cost for this was approved in April 1904.<sup>34</sup>

In March 1902 John McBryde “presented the views and etchings of the Architect” to the Board and they authorized the Executive Committee “to contract for, and push on as rapidly as possible the academic, relectory and first dormitory buildings and also to provide for one residence on the lowest possible terms.”<sup>35</sup> The next day it was decided to add another dorm to this list, and by December of 1902 “colonnades” began to appear in the cost estimates. Elevations, plans and details poured out from Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson.<sup>36</sup>

Highly detailed linens were prepared from which blue prints could be made for use in the construction of the buildings.<sup>37</sup> Few of these drawings are dated but, as McBryde was authorized to get “plans for the necessary build-

*“It is of the utmost importance to make [the] surroundings harmonize with our beautiful buildings.... We have attractions in our hundred acres of splendid woods and spacious grounds that no amount of money could supply.”*

John McBryde,  
“Progress Report on Buildings,”  
Minutes of the Board of Directors,  
April 27, 1904

ings” in time for the June 1903 Board meeting, one can assume that the majority of them were prepared in the first six months of 1903. Several of the early linens have confused the directional orientation suggesting that the draftsman may have been working from the very early [1901?] plan. The main or south façade of the Refectory is labeled “East Elevation” [Plates 4 and 5]; the same confusion exists on drawings for Academic and Dorm No. 1.

Cram traveled extensively in Europe during the course of his life and also spent time in Virginia, the home of his wife, Elizabeth Carrington. Although his first love was Gothic design, he also became steeped in the more classically derived historic architecture of both regions: Virginia’s eighteenth century Colonial Georgian and England’s Renaissance Palladian revival under Inigo Jones.<sup>38</sup> This becomes evident in the elevations and details of the early buildings, such as the Refectory and Academic.<sup>39</sup>

#### REFECTORY/PANNELL [1906]<sup>40</sup>

An Ionic temple front topped by a cupola announces the public nature of the Refectory and hints at such Jonesian structures as the New Gallery of Somerset House or Marble Hill House.<sup>41</sup> [Plates 4 & 5] The brick “temple” rests on a podium base of pre-cast concrete resembling stone and thus appears elevated in the true classical sense. Granite steps rising to the entrance add physical elevation to the visual one. The stature of this major building is further enhanced by the inclusion of rich details such as cast iron

balustrades, bull’s eye windows and, in the set-back block, tablets with swags above shallow niches. A stone string-course introduces a gentle horizontal and breaks up the vertical line-up of pilasters and windows; it also connects the projecting central section with the block of the building and runs down both sides tying all sections together as well as maintaining a classical balance between horizontal and vertical.

Cram was quite specific about the material to be used, and the areas for brick, stone, composition, or plaster are clearly marked on the linens. The pediment is plaster over brick while the frieze is composition.<sup>42</sup> The podium base for the brick temple façade above was to be in limestone treated in a semi-rusticated manner. However, composition was substituted for the limestone when the Refectory was built, no doubt to reduce the cost.

CG&F provided two schemes for the ceiling decoration of the main dining hall. [Plate 6] Both derive from the elaborate plasterwork ceilings of seventeenth century England or such rarities in colonial Virginia as the ceilings at Kenmore in Fredericksburg.<sup>43</sup> Even a cursory glance at the drawing explains the comment made by the Executive Committee in April 1905 that the Refectory has been delayed by the “inability to get from the architects a plan for the ceiling of the main hall that could be put up at anything like a reasonable cost.”<sup>44</sup> It seems that the cost of the ceiling was not included in the initial contract for the building, and the building was well underway by the time these designs were re-

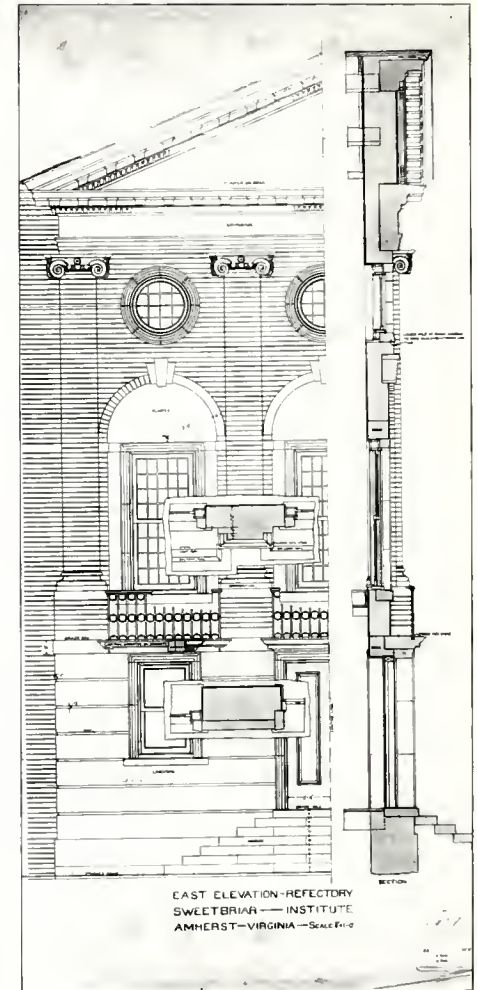


PLATE 4 THE REFECTORY



ceived prior to the Board meeting of October 19, 1904.<sup>45</sup> Against the advice of the builder who feared damaging the plaster walls if the ceiling were inserted later, but undoubtedly with an eye on the passing of time and a hope that a simpler design might be forthcoming or additional funds obtained, they ordered the plastering of the walls. The Board was faced with trying to preserve the beauty of the most public and multi-purpose building on campus without draining the financial resources unduly; reality restrained the dream. Clearly a new design was not produced, as the April 1905 statement above indicates, and Cram's rich plasterwork designs had to wait twenty-five years before being realized in an even more lavish form in the Library.

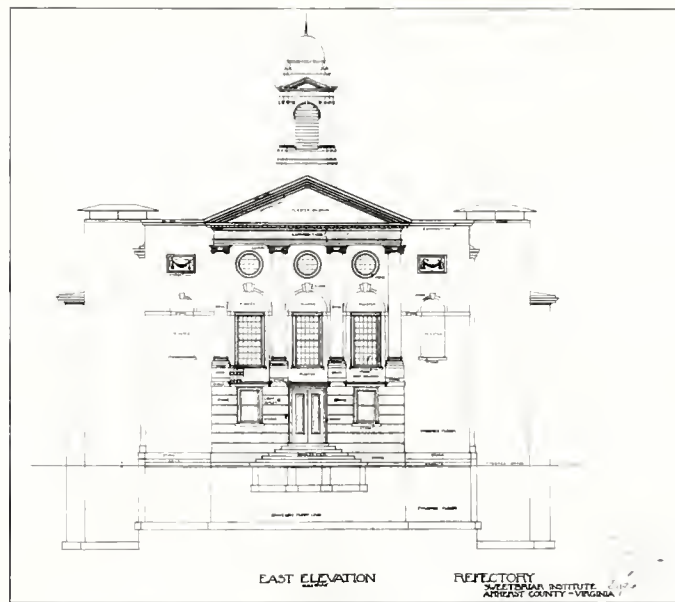


PLATE 5 THE REFECTORY

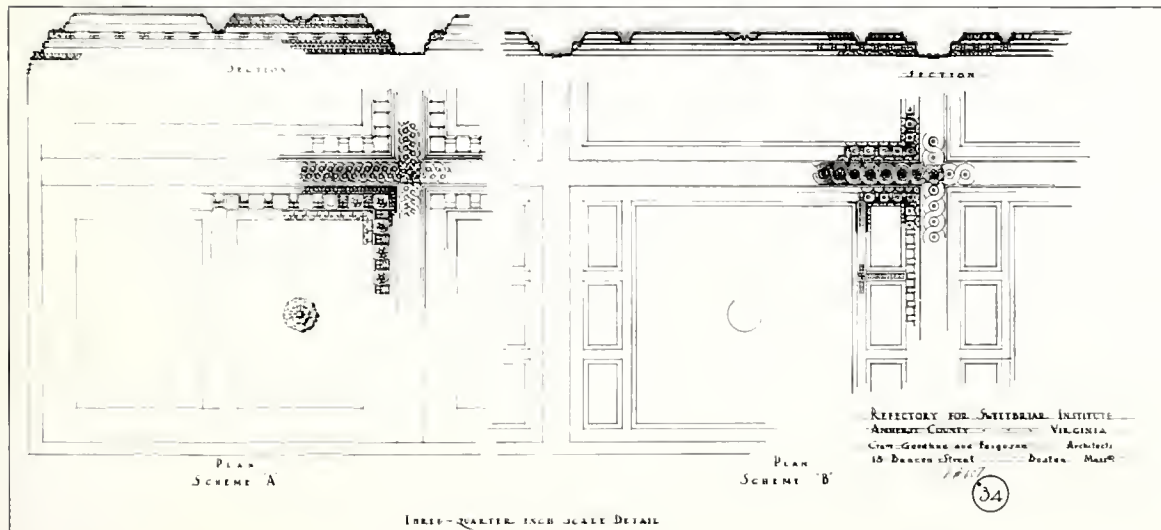


PLATE 6  
THE REFECTORY:  
TWO CEILING PLANS

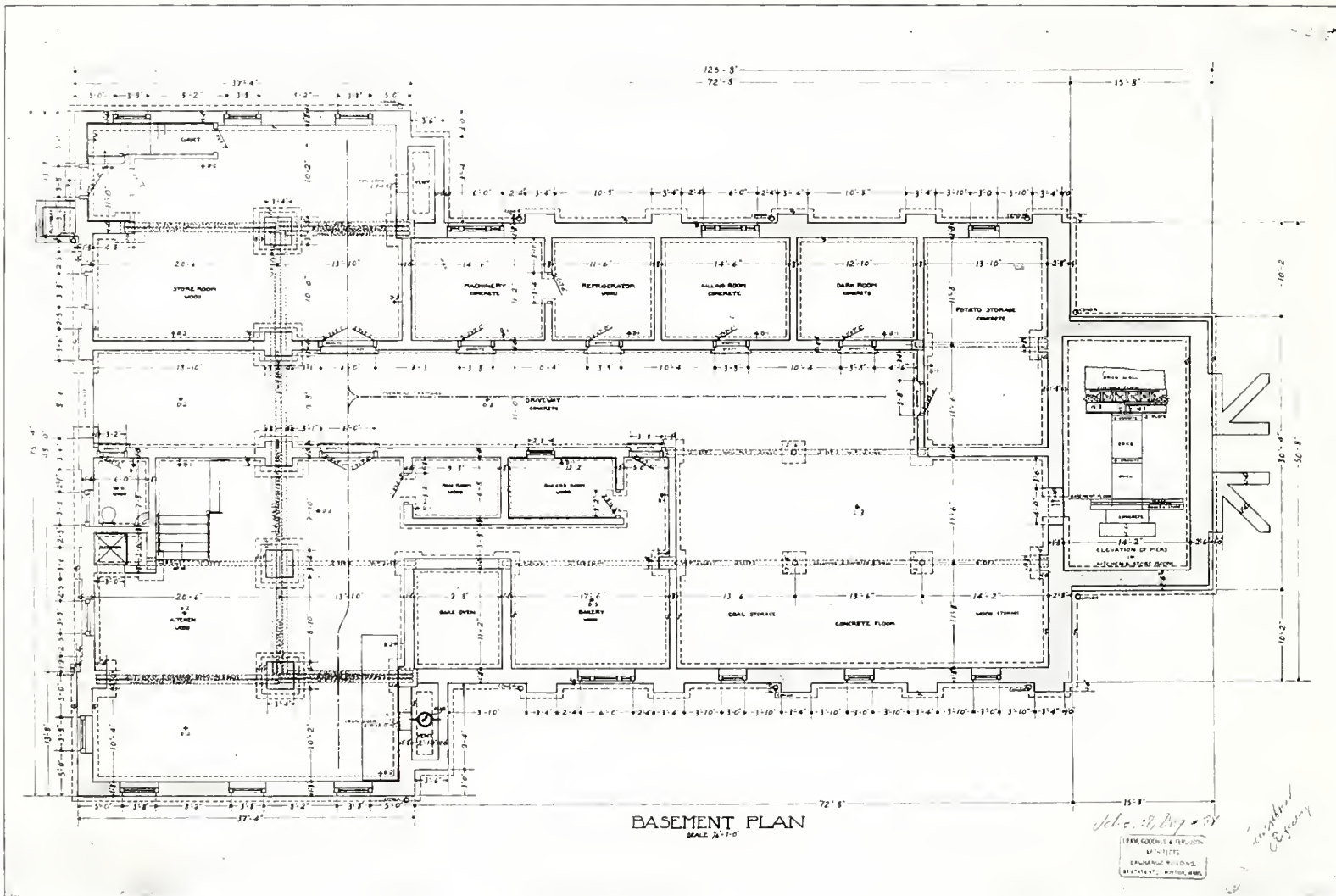


PLATE 7 THE REFECTORY

Floor plans for the Refectory spell out the various functions designated for each level and open the window a crack onto culinary culture at the turn of the century. [Plates 7 & 8 ] In the Basement drawing, large areas were designated for wood and coal storage, another large space was "potato storage," and a special room is labeled "killing room." Perhaps we, with our more delicate sensibilities, don't wish to inquire too deeply into the daily use of this space! Concrete or wood flooring is indicated depending on the use of the room.

A large linen room and china closet opened into the Main Hall in the First Floor drawing. Final preparation of the food would occur in the scullery in back, and dishes could be cleared to this area at the end of the meal; an elevator connected the scullery with the kitchen below. At the front of the building gracious stairs led from the vestibule up to a gallery above the Main Hall. This area opened directly into the Main Hall with a wooden balustrade to prevent anyone from falling over.<sup>46</sup> The description of the Refectory in the *Lynchburg News* of July 27, 1906 identified the gallery with a choir loft "as it is understood that for the present the refectory will also be utilized for a chapel."<sup>47</sup> The same article also refers to "intersecting rafters of dark wood" in the ceiling and "dark mahogany" wainscoting.<sup>48</sup>

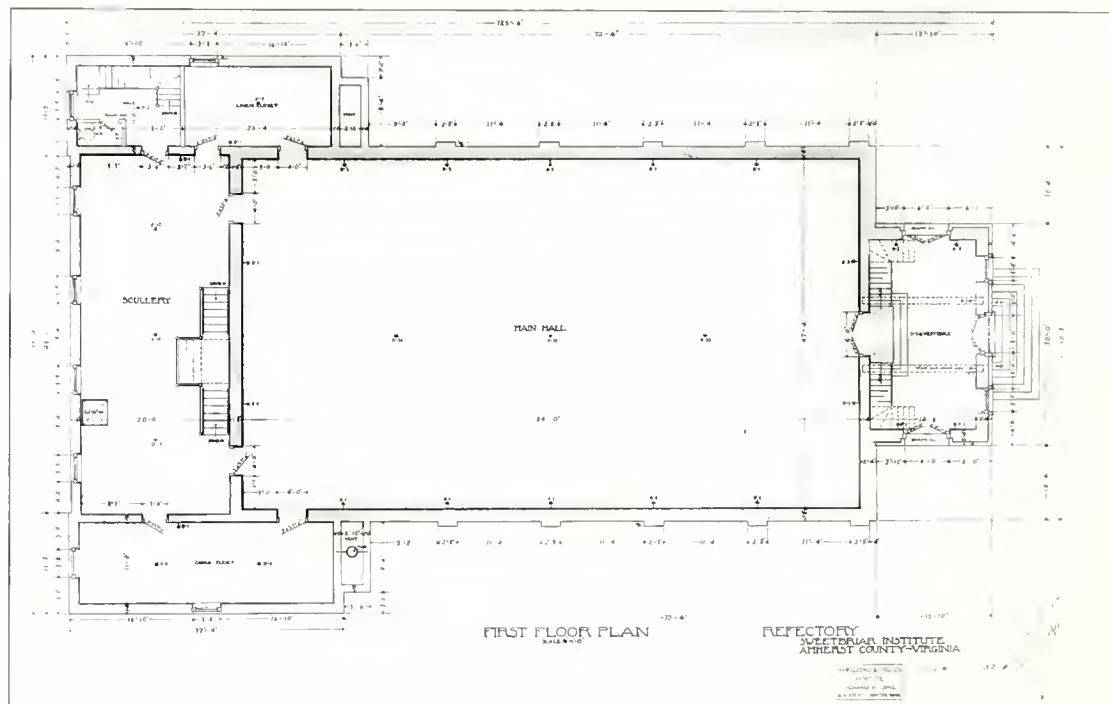


PLATE 8 THE REFECTORY

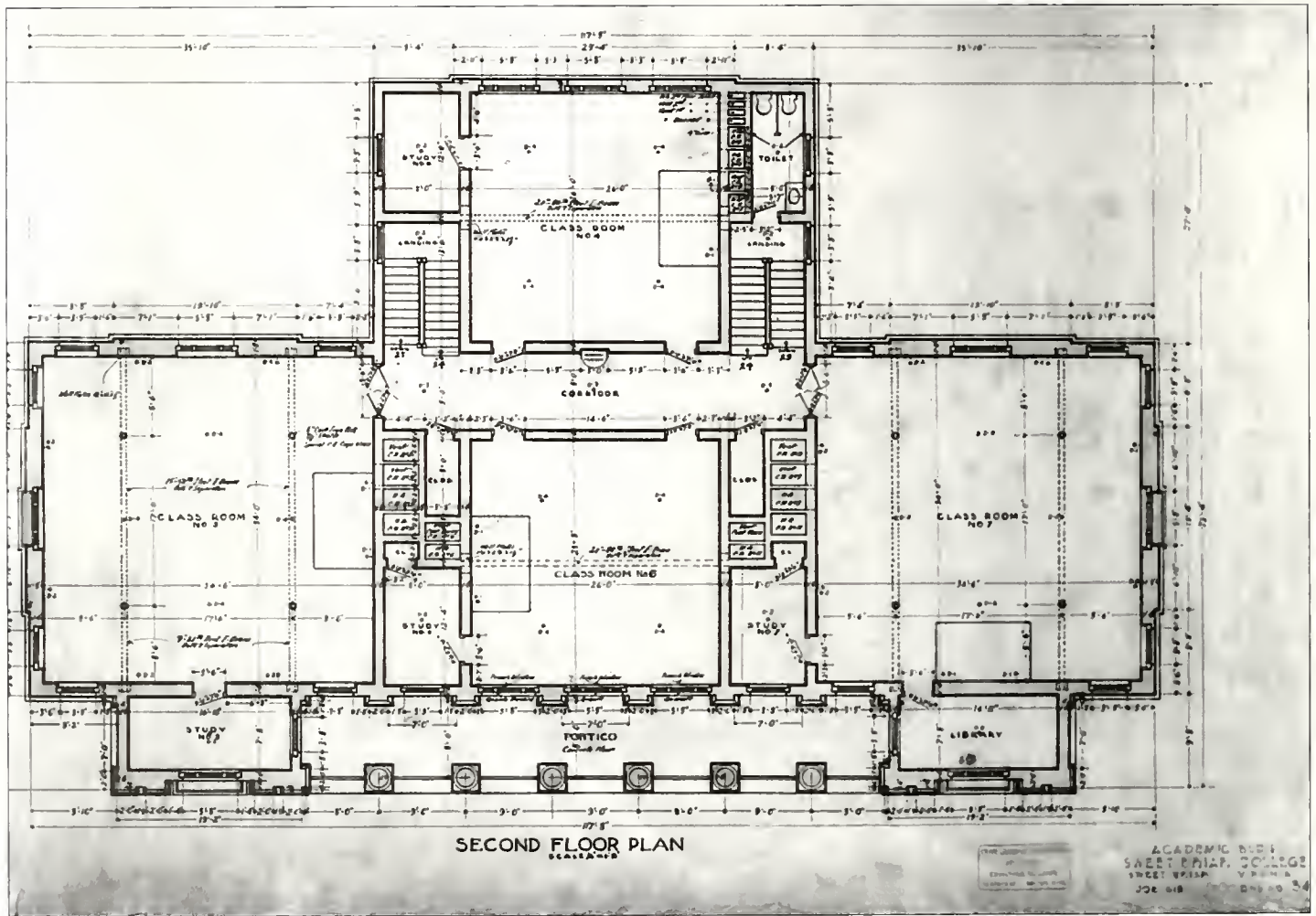
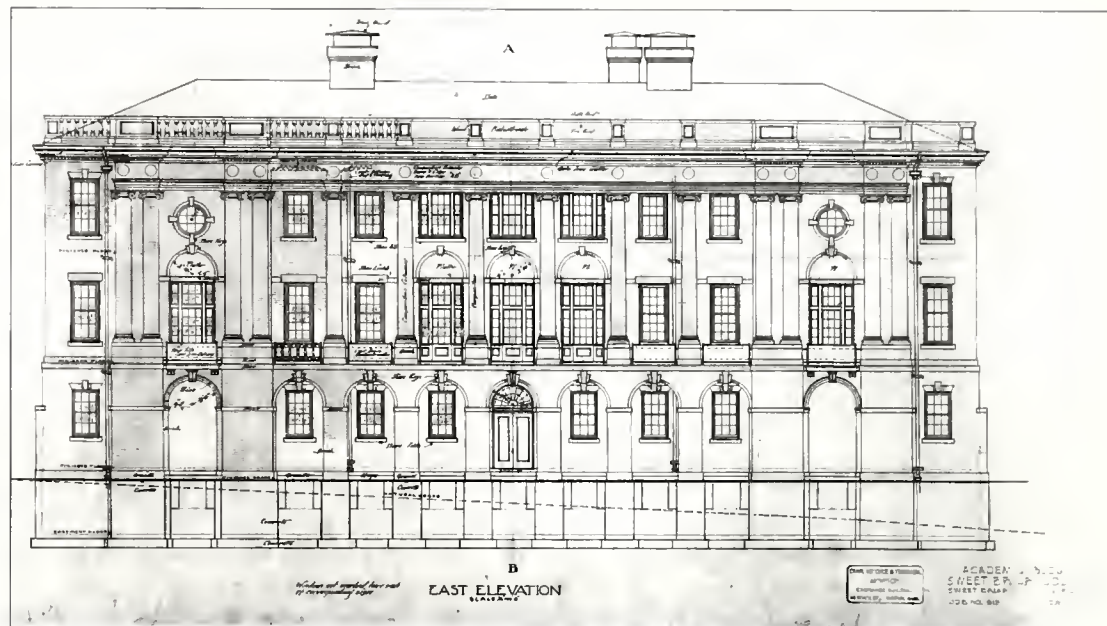


PLATE 9 ACADEMIC

## ACADEMIC/BENEDICT [1906] 49

The esteem in which both Cram and Sweet Briar's Board of Directors held the academic mission of the College is evident in the elegant design of the academic building. [Plate 10] The ghost of the façade of Inigo Jones' seventeenth century Queen's House in Greenwich hovers over the building, but never intrudes. From a distance the Ionic loggia implies a single grand space, the *piano nobile*, resting on a podium base, but on closer inspection the recessed area reveals two stories. This inner façade is articulated by Doric pilasters in brick, and three central doors are set within slightly recessed white arches. As with all of Cram's classically-inspired buildings, this one also gives the illusion of being elevated. A brick arcade with stone embellishments functions as both podium base for the *piano nobile* above and as a connective link to the dormitories.<sup>50</sup> The corner blocks contain paired Ionic pilasters that give definition to the ends of the building and frame the window treatment. A stone entablature and wooden balustrade complete the external elevation.

The linens for Academic contain the same specific references to materials as are provided on those of the Refectory: brick pilasters, composition columns with stone bases above brick plinths, a wooden balustrade and slate roof. Plaster filled arches with stone keys rise above the sash windows as in the Refectory, establishing a visual link between the two public structures.



Inside the building a grand staircase swept up to a landing, then separated into two flights to the second floor. Four classrooms opened off a central corridor, each with a small study to serve as a faculty office. [Plate 9] The Library was to be housed on the southern side of the easternmost classroom. On a visit to London in 1904 John McBryde bought a number of books in anticipation of the intellectual needs of the College.<sup>51</sup> *The Lynchburg News* of July 27, 1906 described the classrooms as "high-pitched, well lighted and well ventilated. The walls are...calcamined [*sic*] white. This...makes the rooms lighter, and moreover gives a freshness alto-

gether appropriate to school purposes. The woodwork is a rather unusual feature, the doors being finished in mahogany, while the casings, footboards and mouldings are white."<sup>52</sup>

PLATE 10  
ACADEMIC

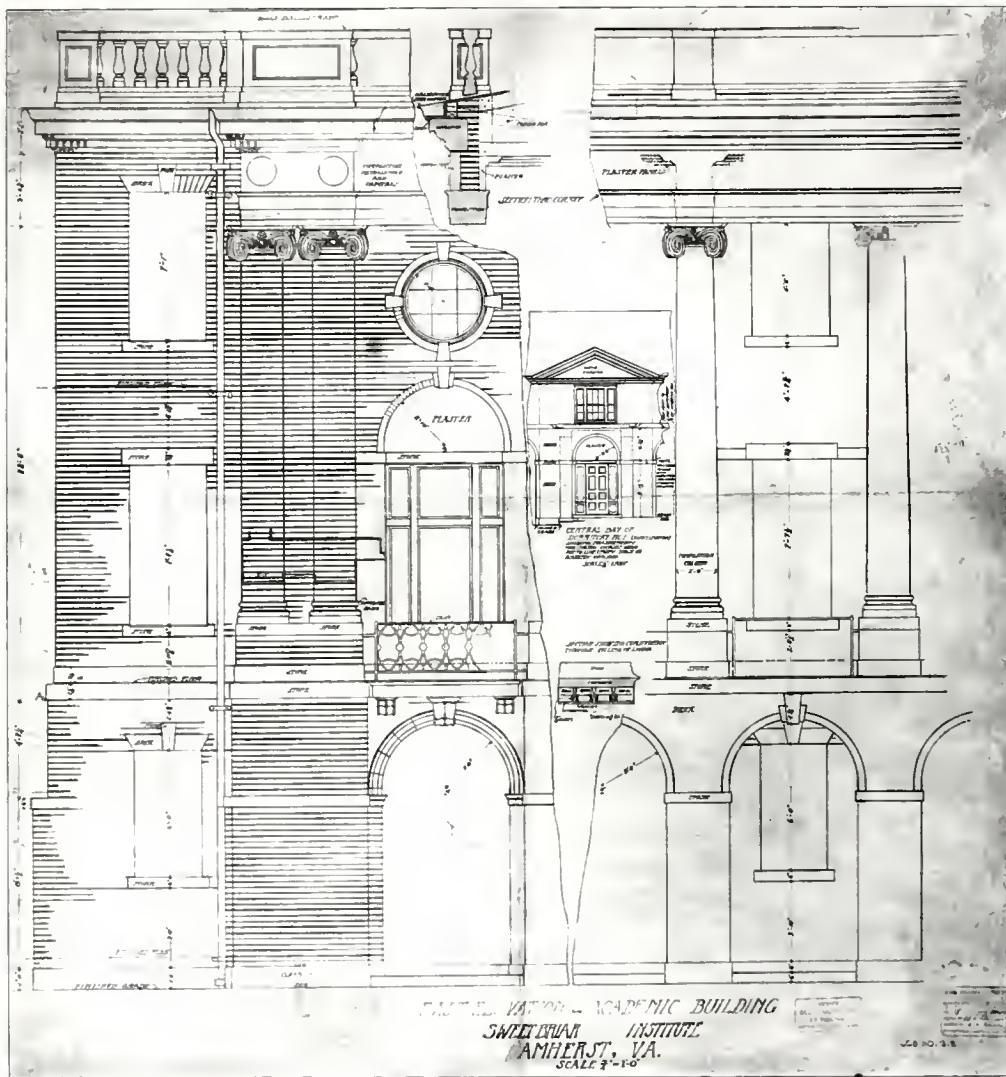


PLATE II ACADEMIC WITH THE INSET OF CENTRAL BAY OF DORMITORY NO. 1, GRAY

## DORMITORY NO. 1/ GRAY [1906] <sup>53</sup>

Academic is connected to Dormitory No. 1 by an arcade. A small section indicating the attachment of the arcade to the western side of the dorm is included in the "East Elevation" drawing for Academic.<sup>54</sup> [Plate 11] The placement of window and door under a pediment is the same as in the central bay of the eastern façade of the dormitory linking the two major façades of the building. [Plate 12] Cram distinguished his private buildings from the public ones by placing the entrances of the former at ground level.<sup>55</sup>

The three-storied brick building with hipped roof and chimneys set within the fabric of the building is in keeping with Colonial domestic buildings and such early academic structures as the Wren building at William and Mary or Hollis Hall at Harvard. The chimneys on Gray are a simplified version of those at Stratford Hall in Westmoreland County, VA. The three pedimented pavilions that project along the east front of Gray give it dignity and formality without diminishing its domestic nature. A stone string-course delineates each floor. The height of each floor differs with that of the second being slightly larger as in the *piano nobile* of an Italian Renaissance palazzo. The windows on the first and second floors are the same size, but those on the second floor appear larger by being set under a slightly recessed arch that is given further definition by a white plaster finish like those on the Refectory and Academic. The third floor windows are smaller and plainer. Thus, Cram subtly links the intermediate floor of Gray with

the *piano nobile* concept of Academic and the Refectory.<sup>56</sup> Cram has given each building its defining character, private or public, but their familial traits are also visible.

The Second Floor Plan contains three suites of two small bedrooms connected by a study, three double bedrooms, one suite with a single bedroom, and a reception room. [Plate 13] Each study has a fireplace, but, oddly, there is not one in the reception room. Each room has a closet, a feature commented on in *The Lynchburg News* (July 27, 1906): "This makes it un-

necessary for students to have trunks in their rooms."<sup>57</sup> In the summer of 1906 fees were established at \$500 for two girls in a room and \$550 for two girls in three rooms.

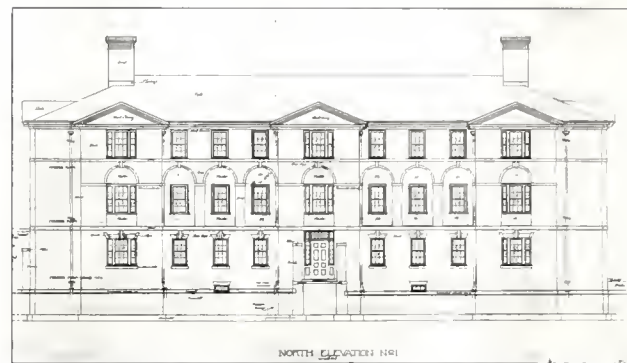


PLATE 12 DORMITORY NO. 1 GRAY [EAST ELEVATION]

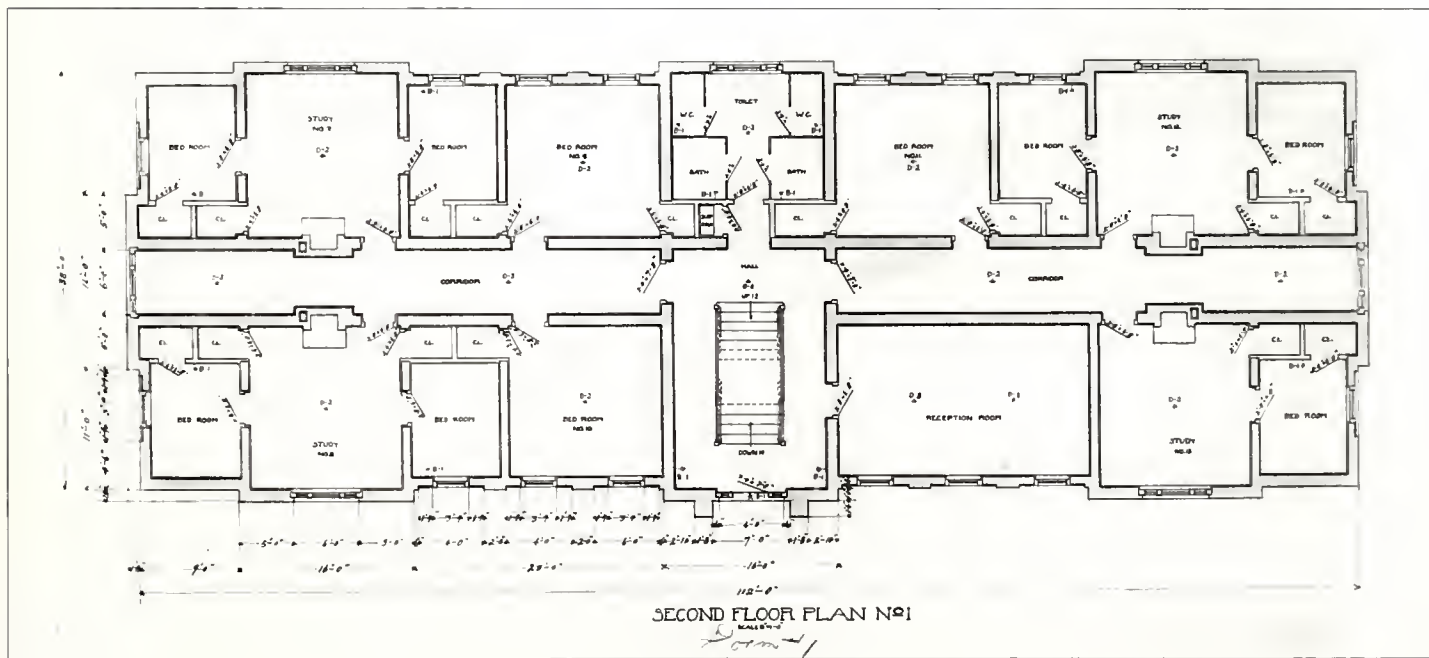


PLATE 13 DORMITORY NO. 1, GRAY

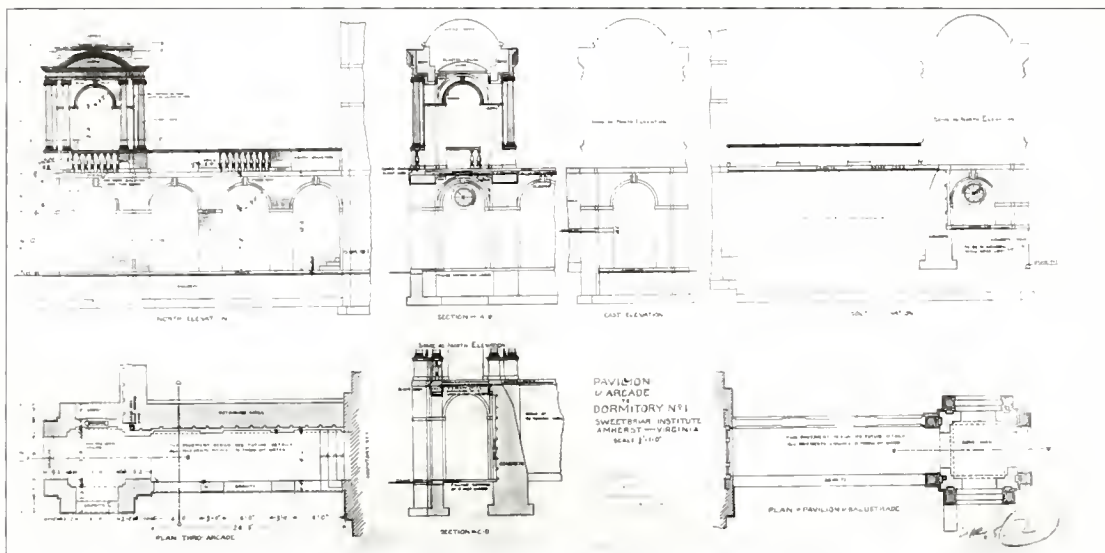


PLATE 14 PAVILION/BELL TOWER AND ARCADE

### PAVILION/BELL TOWER AND ARCADE [1906]

The designs for the elegant gardens were not detailed in these early plans, but one feature was treated in elaborate detail: the Pavilion [now known as the Bell Tower] and arcade from Gray. [Plate 14] Brick arches with stone keys and topped by a balustrade of brick and composition lead to a copper-domed Ionic pavilion. In the last bay of the arcade Cram designed a wheel window. He intended to match this pavilion with another across the oval drive to form an entrance into the eastern parterre. As the southern one was never built, the Pavilion became a type of garden folly and the signature structure on campus.<sup>33</sup>

### POWER PLANT AND LAUNDRY [1906]

Support facilities for the institution began to appear in the cost estimates by July 1903 including a President's House,<sup>34</sup> four professors' houses, a laundry, infirmary, creamery, cold storage, a power plant and a lake. Also running throughout the Board deliberations during this time were the problems of obtaining a sufficient water supply and of getting to the College by rail and by road.

Even the most utilitarian structures on the campus belonged to the same design family.<sup>35</sup> A similar classical order was maintained, but as befits industrial buildings, it spoke of Roman monumentality rather than Renaissance elegance. Brick Doric pilasters separated the façades of the

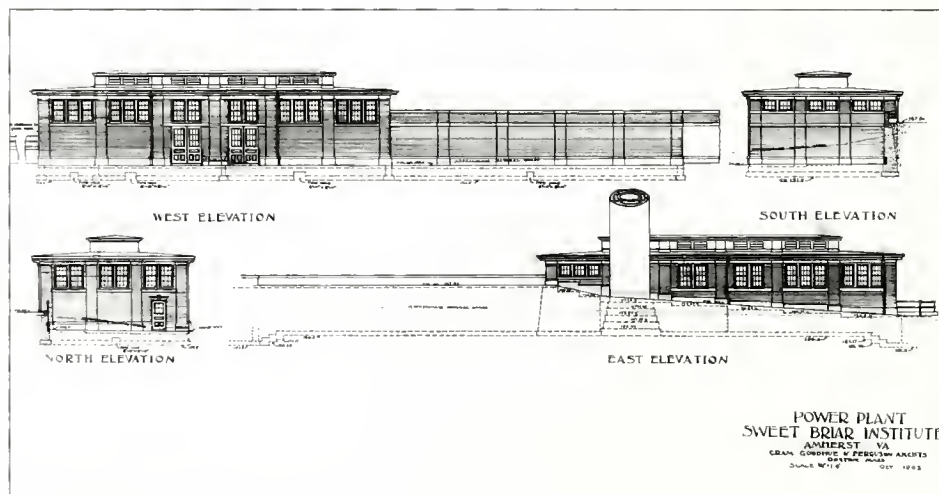


PLATE 16 POWER PLANT



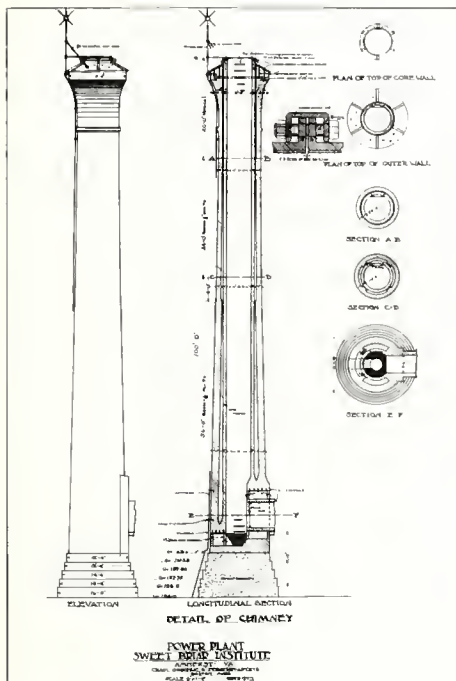


PLATE 17 POWER PLANT

Laundry [Plate#15] into bays, each articulated by a variation of the Roman diaphragm window with its tripartite divisions and slightly flattened arches.<sup>61</sup>

The sturdy proportions of the Power Plant [Plate 16] stated its serious purpose and its dependability. Like the Laundry the brick façades were subdivided into bays using a simplified version of the Doric Order. Windows were tucked up under the overhang of the roof. The long low horizontal of the building itself was offset by the soaring thrust of the chimney. [Plate 17] The flar-

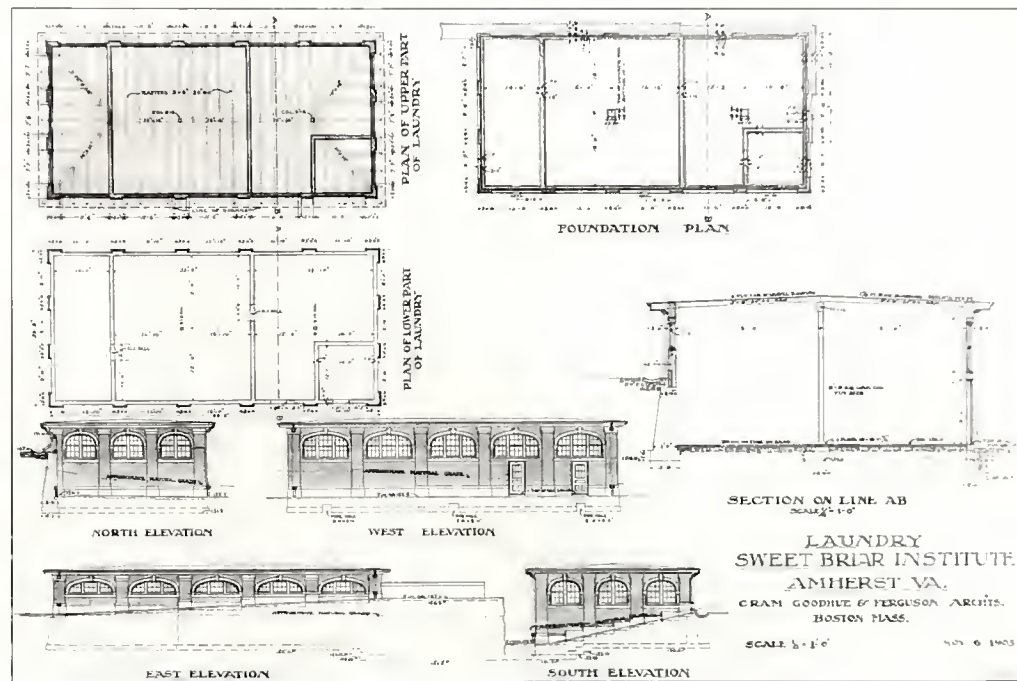


PLATE 15 LAUNDRY

ing top achieved by corbeling the brick outward gave a subtle sophistication to the utilitarian building and proclaimed its kinship with the more sophisticated structures on the hill without compromising its honest industrial function.<sup>62</sup>

Slowly a small town was emerging in the pastoral lands of Amherst County. By April of 1904 two dormitories were "approaching completion." All that remained to be done were laying the floors, putting casing on the doors and windows, and hanging doors. The Refectory was ready for its roof, and the brick had reached

the second floor of the academic building.

Access to the new institution was also being addressed. A road to the railroad siding was to be built under the supervision of the farm manager, Mr. Peyton. The arch of the bridge over the stream as one entered the campus was referred to as "a very handsome one," indicating that the entrance road was under construction by 1904.<sup>63</sup> Initially passengers alighted at Coolwell and took a carriage that went around Monument Hill to Sweet Briar House via Sunset Road (in front of the present Gym) and around the west dell.<sup>64</sup>



PLATE 18 PROFESSOR'S HOUSE

### PROFESSORS' HOUSES [c. 1904]

In April 1904 John McBryde reported that the Architect had been asked for plans "for a Professor's house not to exceed \$5000." Cram sent a "beautiful plan for a residence which could not be built, however, for less than \$8000," and it was

determined to design them "ourselves."<sup>65</sup>

In August 1904 plans for four professors' houses appear under expenditures. One of the houses included in the exhibition may be the one that was determined to be too expensive. The drawing shows a free standing portico across the front using Doric columns and with a Chippendale style balustrade at the eave line of the roof. [Plate 18] A balcony on the second floor projects out to the columns of the portico and runs across the entire front of the house. This design resembles some of the Pavilions on the Lawn at the University of Virginia. On the first floor French doors were to open from the parlor and library onto the front porch, and the floor of that porch was to be laid in herring-bone brick. Another house was considerably simpler but still had a two-story front porch with balcony at the second floor level. None of the houses actually constructed on Faculty Row followed these designs, but the floor plans of some are quite similar. Even House 1, the most elaborate of the Faculty Row houses, is simple in comparison to these drawings, with a one-story porch and no balustrade at the eave line.

Fireplaces were designated for each of the four main rooms on the first floor and all but the "chamber" were to have "hard pine flooring." [Plate 19] A rear hall provided access to a large kitchen with butler's pantry and china closet. On the second floor four chambers, each with a fireplace and closet, provided ample room for a family or, as happened in the case of House #1, a small apartment house. The two chambers on the third floor were probably initially designed for servants with

direct access from the kitchen via the back stairs.

John McBryde continued to promote the benefits of having an aesthetically desirable setting. "It is of the utmost importance to make [the] surroundings harmonize with our beautiful buildings. An attractive station building, together with our splendid road, noble groves, the lawn and gardens, and lovely lake, will be our best advertisements. The furnishing of the dormitories, refectory and academic hall should also be in keeping with the tone of the buildings. We have attractions in our hundred acres of splendid woods and spacious grounds that no amount of money could supply."<sup>66</sup>

He proposed building the railroad station with a store at one end and a boat house for the lake. He said that the "grounds around the buildings and Sweet Briar house must be laid out and greatly improved. The old garden will make a beautiful flower garden, with roses predominating. These grounds will constitute the campus, which should also include the neighboring woods and the field running up to the cemetery. It will be a noble one of several hundred acres and will, if well kept, be one of the most attractive features of the school."<sup>67</sup>

Despite continued progress on the construction, it was decided at the April 1905 Board meeting that it would be "inexpedient" to open before the fall of 1906. At that same meeting McBryde reported for the Executive Committee that the two dorms were "practically finished," the academic building "should be ready by mid-summer for its equipment," and the arcades were nearly finished

with the exception of the one between the two dorms. The Apartment House (now known as House #1) and one professor's house were "rapidly going up." The Power House, Laundry, and Cold Storage were "about finished" and would soon be ready for their machinery. But McBryde's list of reasons to delay the opening runs to three pages in the Board of Directors' Minutes.<sup>68</sup> They include major and minor details. None of the buildings had heat, light or plumbing; fire escapes for the dorms and a hose and reel must be purchased. Roads and walks to connect the buildings were unfinished and the main road needed to be "macadamized." A landscape architect must be sought to provide "a complete plan for the improvement of the grounds" and cabins for servants quarters set "on the edge of the grove" behind the apartment house and each professor's house were needed, but were never built. The important buildings were to be named and it was suggested that they "should commemorate the founders or others most intimately connected with the school."<sup>69</sup> Finally, MyBryde stated that if a Fall 1905 opening was contemplated, a vegetable garden must be established immediately.<sup>70</sup>

John McBryde disappeared from the scene in December, 1905 and the records of the construction of the College became severely truncated. His health gave way and he went to Jamaica to recuperate. Ultimately he had to resign from the Board of Directors and Sweet Briar lost a vocal advocate for quality in the physical setting of the fledgling institution as well as a tireless worker with a seemingly unerring eye for detail. His eye for finances

may have been more "erring," however. He spent twice the board-approved funds on the renovation of Mt. St. Angelo without completing the job. Retrenching became immediately apparent. The Board decided to reduce the number of professors' houses from four to three in the same meeting that reported their visit to St. Angelo, where they undoubtedly viewed with horror the expensive Greek Revival extravaganza that was replacing the Tuscan Revival house begun by Elizabeth Mosby, Indiana's sister.<sup>71</sup>

In May of 1906 Mary K. Benedict was hired as the first president and she arrived on the campus in early June. At the same June meeting that introduced President Benedict the decision was taken to open the College on September 27, 1906. Dr. Benedict's recollections some thirty years later suggest that when she arrived, the physical plant was still a work in progress, one student had registered, and there was no faculty at all. "I remember ...my sight of the inside of the academic building. There was nothing in it except piles of plaster on the unstained walls.... The dormitories looked bare also, but the refectory floor looked smooth and ready to be danced on."<sup>72</sup> By July 27 *The Lynchburg News* could report that "work...has now been so far advanced as to make it possible to start with a number of buildings already completed.... [They] extend in one continuous sweep for some distance and present a truly stately appearance in their symmetry and harmony of style."

Despite the glowing description of the College by *The Lynchburg News* in July, it is clear from

the Board minutes of September 5, that much still needed to be done before students arrived on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The Southern Railroad had only agreed on September 1 to build a "shed" [station], and grading was still unfinished around the Refectory, Academic and both dorms.<sup>73</sup>

But the most serious concern was the failure of the Westinghouse Company to ship the dynamos that would produce the electricity.<sup>74</sup>

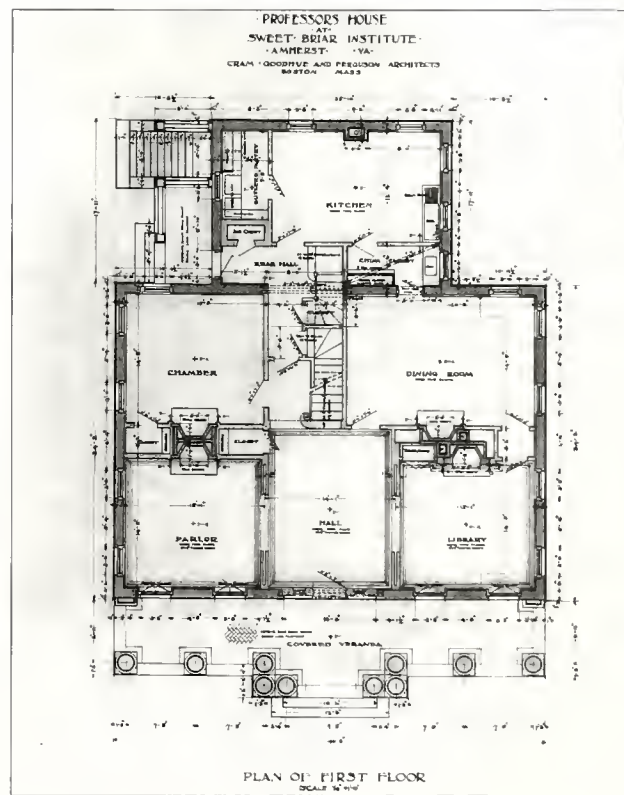


PLATE 19 PROFESSOR'S HOUSE

## EARLY YEARS: 1906-25

Somehow it all came together and fifty-one students arrived on September 27.<sup>75</sup> Two days later the board authorized the purchase of two pianos. Musical needs run like a refrain throughout the early years of the Institution and seem to have been a major factor in the decision to build additional dormitories so soon after opening. In Oc-

tober 1906 the decision was taken to make music an extra expense "as it is so costly."<sup>76</sup> By March 1907 the problem of enough practice rooms was being mentioned and in June the matter was referred to Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson. At the same time President Benedict requested the hiring of an additional music teacher and one for voice. The 1907 academic year opened with 85 students and in November the board authorized the construction of an additional dorm "to

provide rooms for students and maids and for practice rooms."<sup>77</sup> The justification for additional construction so soon after opening was that the Institution would be economically sounder with 130-150 students; the new dorm would house 60 students. The same minutes indicate that this was in lieu of building a music house due to the financial situation. Clearly a dorm that could bring in more students [and revenue] and also house practice rooms would be more cost effective.

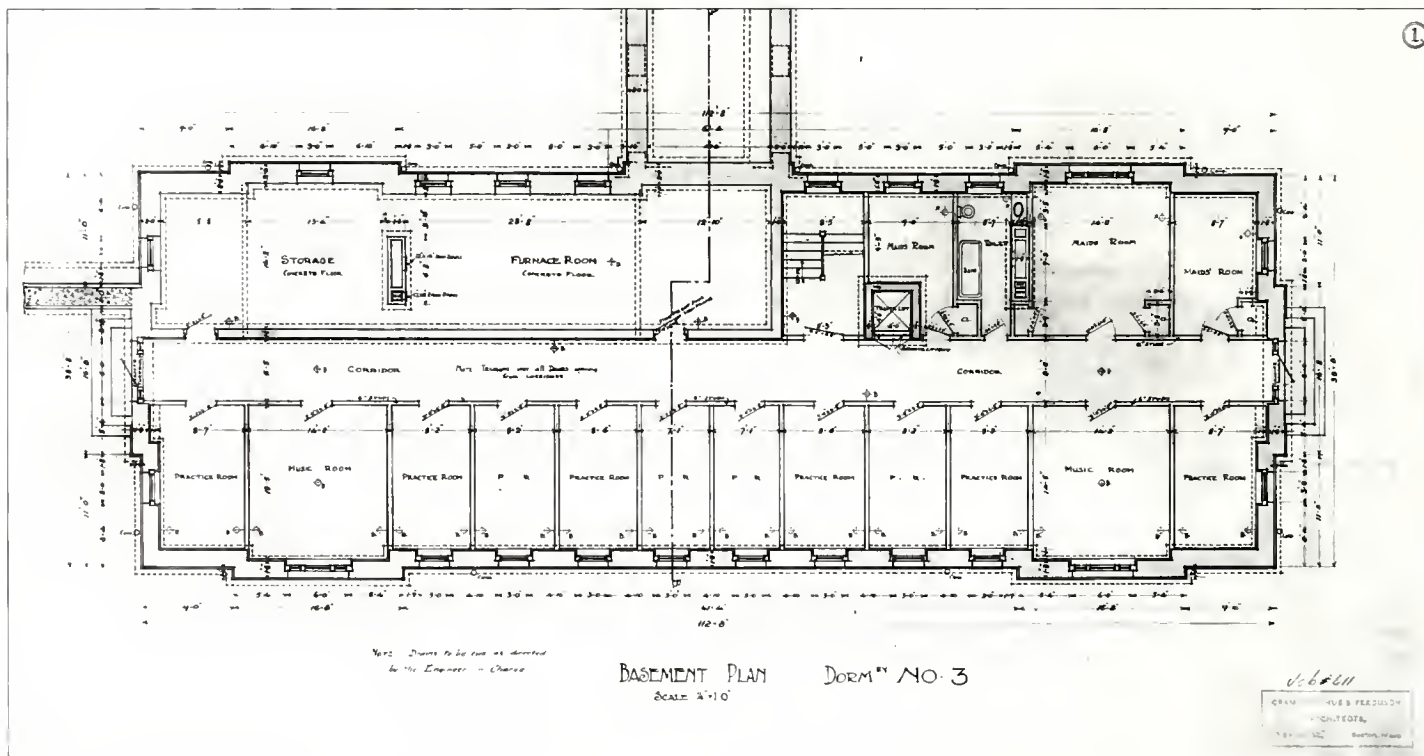


PLATE 20 DORMITORY NO. 3, RANDOLPH

## DORMITORY NO. 3 / RANDOLPH [1908]<sup>78</sup>

By September 1908 Dormitory No. 3 was almost complete. "It is a splendid building and gives accommodation for some sixty additional pupils, besides for maids, a music room and ten practice rooms."<sup>79</sup> [Plate 20] The three maids'

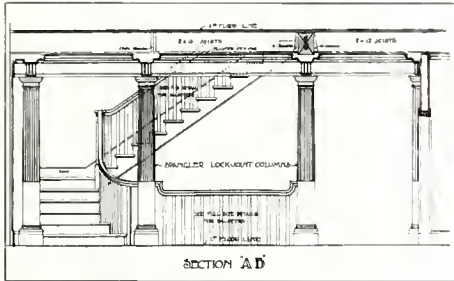


PLATE 21 DORMITORY NO. 3/RANDOLPH, DETAIL

rooms shared a bath and one of the rooms was made slightly smaller by the insertion of a "trunk lift." The First Floor Plan showed a similar mix of uses with a physician's room and office, a suite of rooms for a faculty member and both double and single rooms for students. The entrance hall of Randolph was designed to suggest that of a gracious private house. [Plates 21 and 22] Doric columns lined each wall and an elegant stair curved up to the second floor. One parlor with a fireplace opened off the right side of the hall, and another with two large windows overlooking the east dell was set on axis with the entrance hall. The young women could entertain their guests in surroundings that were similar to their home environments.

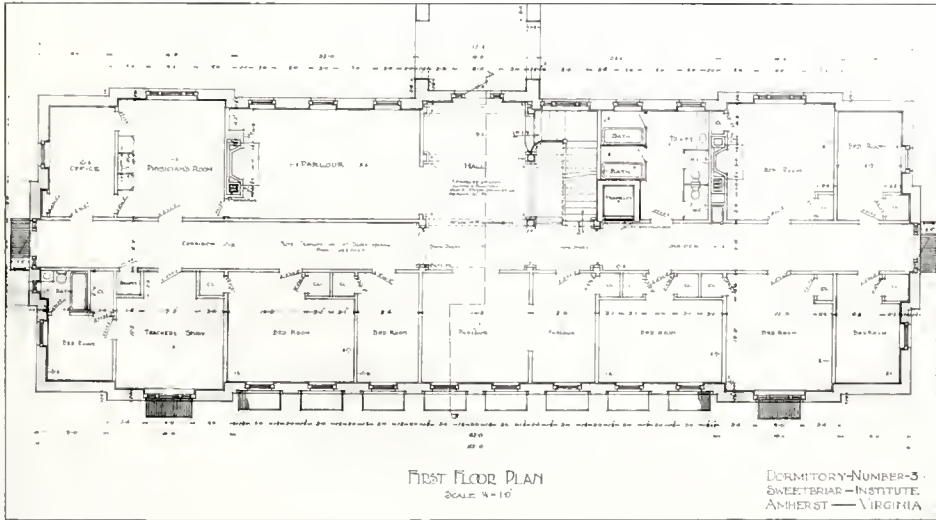


PLATE 22 FIRST FLOOR DORMITORY NO. 3, RANDOLPH



PLATE 23 DORMITORY NO. 4 / MANSON (SOUTH ELEVATION)

## DORMITORY NO. 4 / MANSON [1910]<sup>80</sup>

Within a year President Benedict reported that "every available space would be occupied in the dormitories and professors' houses this session ... [and the] greatest need of the college is a new dormitory."<sup>81</sup>

As an interim measure one of the professor's houses was altered to accommodate the overflow, and in January 1910 the Executive Committee was empowered "to have plans prepared for the construction of an additional dormitory containing an assembly hall."<sup>82</sup>

Dormitory No. 4 was ready for occupancy in September 1910. [Plate 23] It continued the basic format used in the first three dormitories (Flemish bond brick with stone string courses separating each floor, slightly projecting pavilions, and tripartite windows set within plastered arches), but it also introduced several new features. Only two pavilions project from the long

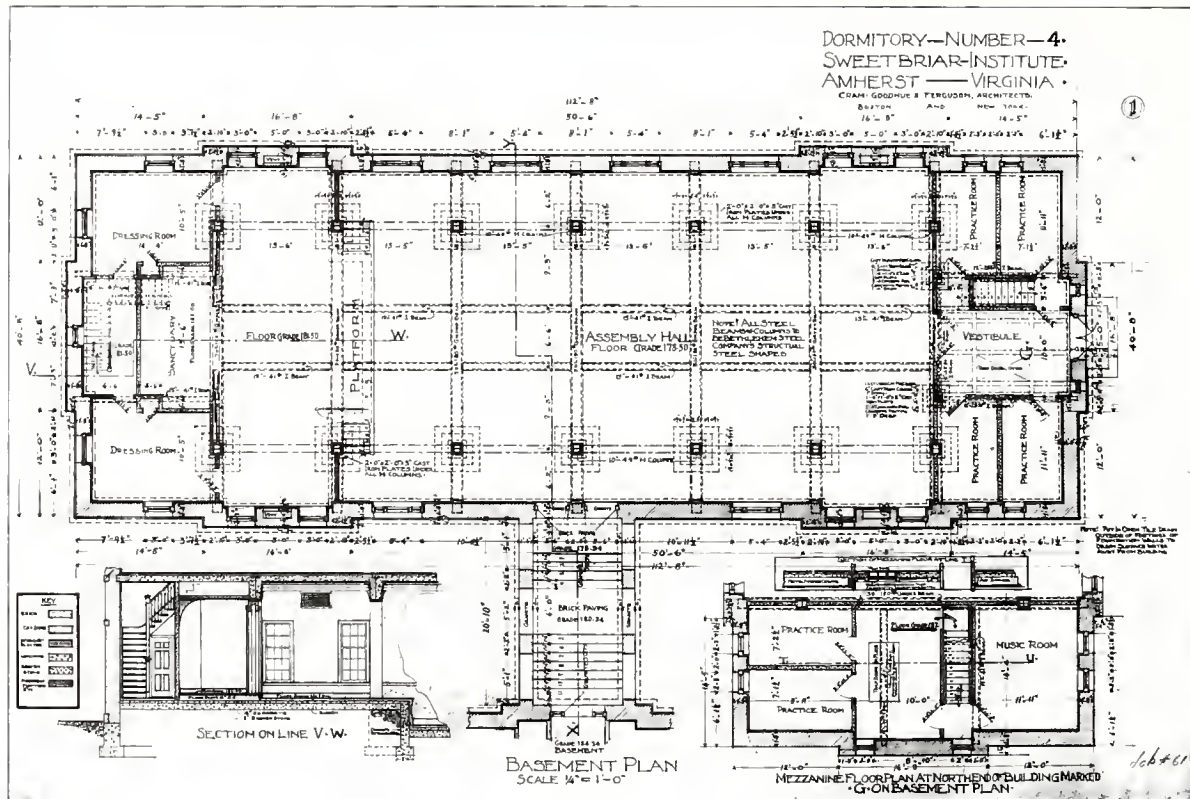


PLATE 24 DORMITORY No. 4. MANSON

facades, and a more complex arrangement of stone string-courses enhanced the scale of the *piano nobile* by omitting a break between the second and third floors. The most public room in this building was the Assembly Hall on the ground floor. [Plate 24] A large columned space with vestibule entrance at one end and both sanctuary and dressing rooms at the other be-

speaks its multi-purpose nature. It served as chapel, theatre and general gathering place for the campus community until the 1960s. As Martha Stohman records, this new space "facilitated the development of dramatic productions...to take the place of the noisy entertainments which the students devised for themselves."<sup>181</sup>

In 1911 Sweet Briar Institute enrolled 217 students and, for the first time, showed a profit. Mr. Manson, reporting for the Executive Committee, noted that the endowment had been almost totally spent on the plant, and operating expenses would have to come from tuition and farm income. On that basis and the number of applicants for the 1911 session, he recommended the

construction of another dormitory. "The cost of an additional dormitory should not be [at] all proportionate to the income derived from it. We should have to build and equip the dormitory and construct a new road from the woods to the buildings, but we do not think we should have to add to our heating or lighting equipment.... The Refectory will accommodate the occupants for another dormitory and while the lecture rooms will be crowded, Miss Benedict thinks we can get on for a time without additional space."<sup>84</sup>

### DORMITORY NO. 5 / GRAMMER [1912]<sup>85</sup>

Cram's Beaux Arts plan was put to the test with the expansion of the campus to the south. The T-shaped pairs of Gray-Carson and Randolph-Manson frame the Refectory on the north side. With the decision to build another dormitory, the site plan was consulted, and Dormitory No. 5 was placed on a line with and to the south of Randolph; the next dorm should then form a T-shaped pair with it.

Once again the firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson provided a design linking the new building to its siblings on the north side of the campus while simultaneously giving it an identity of its own. Like Gray it, too, has the "Stratford" chimney form and like Manson it has only two projecting pavilions. But stone tablets were inserted between the second and third floor windows creating a symmetrical design, and the pattern of the brick work on the top floor is unique. The linen depicting the west elevation [Plate 25] shows rectangles of varying width set between

the windows. On the south elevation drawing, the corners of these rectangles are labeled "stone" and as built the pattern is very clear with white corners and thicker mortar between the brick to establish the rectangular panels between the third floor windows.

The plan from which both Cram and the College were working at this point indicated the use of arcades to connect the buildings on the south side of the campus as had been built on the north. A single-story porch with unfluted Doric columns labeled "Temporary Porch" replaced the arcade as a major point of entry. This implies the intention to replace it with an arcade in future, and that fact is reinforced by the label "Foundation Wall Lines of Future Arcade" on both the west and north sides of the Plan of Basement Floor. [Plate 26] But in fact, it introduced a major departure that would become clearer when Dormitory No. 6 was built a decade later. Another interesting change was the off-center placement of the door under the porch. It breaks the symmetry of the façade but it may have been viewed as a practical solution because the staircase rose immediately to the left on entering the door with the parlor set to the right. This stairway would have had more consistent use than in the other dormitories as it was also the entry point to the gymnasium in the basement.

Athletic pursuits were part of the curriculum from the beginning, but there was no facility specifically designed for indoor sports until the construction of Grammer. One half of the base-

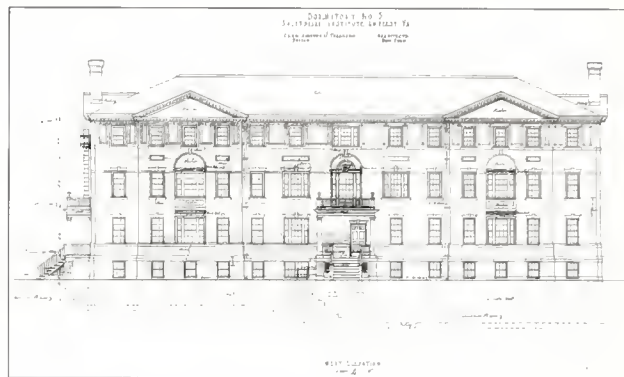


PLATE 25 DORMITORY No. 5, GRAMMAR

ment was designated "Gymnasium." The walls were to be exposed brick and the floor wood, providing an appropriate surface for basketball. However, it did not prevent Sweet Briar from losing to Bryn Mawr by a "large score" in 1923.<sup>86</sup> Providing sufficient space for music was clearly still a concern as the other hall of the basement of Grammer was set aside for that purpose. Eight practice rooms and two Music Teaching Rooms line the corridor to the north entry. A Trunk Room was entered from the stairs up to the first floor but as a cost-cutting measure, there was no Trunk Lift; baggage for storage had to be hand-carried from the students' rooms.

Enrollment had fluctuated during the teens. From the beginning students who needed additional preparation before undertaking college work had been admitted into what was referred to as the Academy. In 1914 more stringent entrance requirements designed to limit the number of pre-college students caused the enrollment to plunge to 180 [in 1913 it had been 240,

but only 74 were college students].<sup>87</sup> Entrance requirements were relaxed a bit and enrollment increased in 1915, but President Benedict did not want to continue as president of a college with serious financial problems and a small percentage of students actually doing college work. She resigned in 1916 and was replaced by Emilie Watts McVea (1916-25).

President McVea had been the Dean of Women at the University of Cincinnati. Her reply to an inquiry from the faculty made clear her position about Sweet Briar's academic standing. "You may certainly assure the students...that

the B. A. from Sweet Briar will never mean less than it does now.... Under no circumstances would I have considered leaving a University known throughout the country... for any position in an institution not of college grade."<sup>88</sup> In 1918 the Board decided to abolish the Academy, and President McVea encouraged the expansion of the curriculum to attract the modern student. New departments were introduced and existing ones divided.<sup>89</sup> In 1921 Sweet Briar was admitted into the Association of American Colleges and Universities.<sup>91</sup>

By 1921 the college began to experience

crowding once again, and converting the attic spaces of Gray and Carson for student use was discussed. In October 1922 it was reported that the College experienced the largest enrollment in its history and was in "excellent financial condition."<sup>90</sup> Views on higher education for women were changing and Sweet Briar clearly was a beneficiary. In 1923 "the present crowded condition of the college and the imperative need for more buildings" led to the authorization to proceed with construction of "an administration building and a dormitory," if the necessary funds could be borrowed.<sup>92</sup> At the same time the

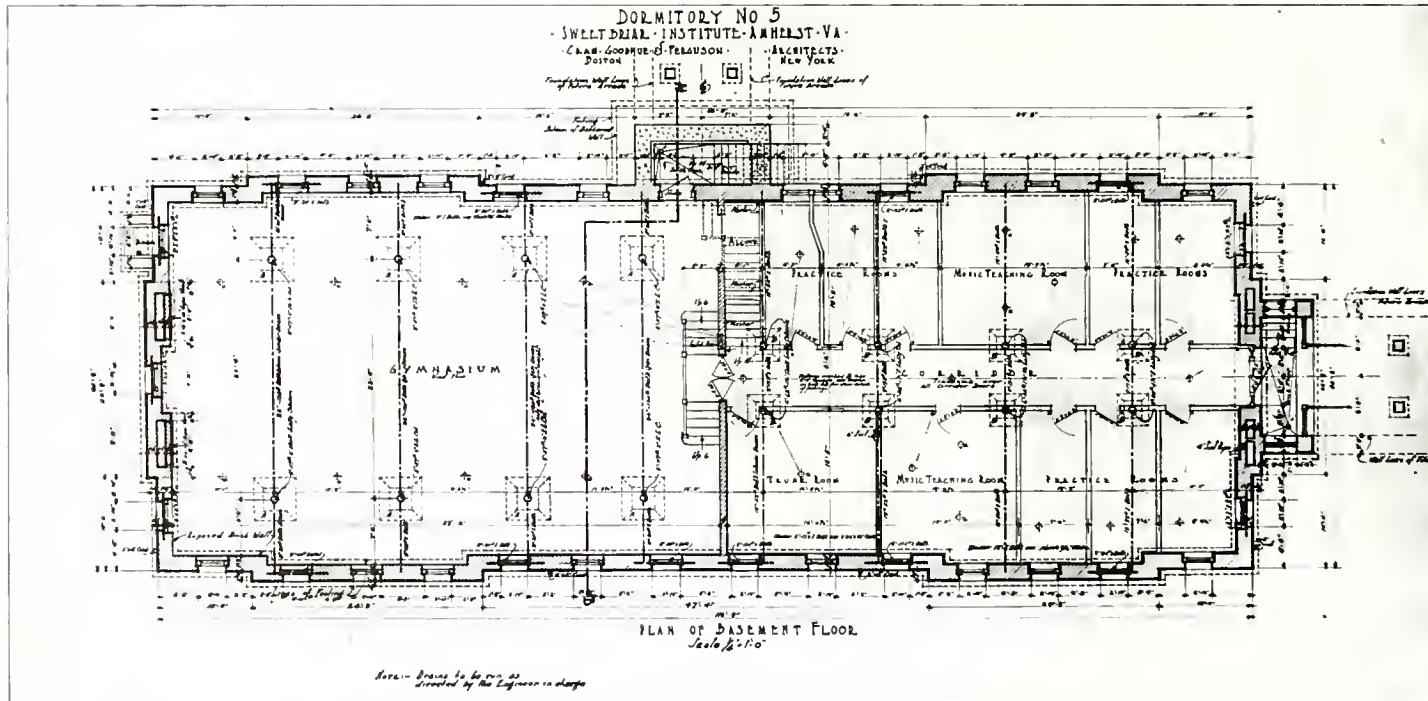
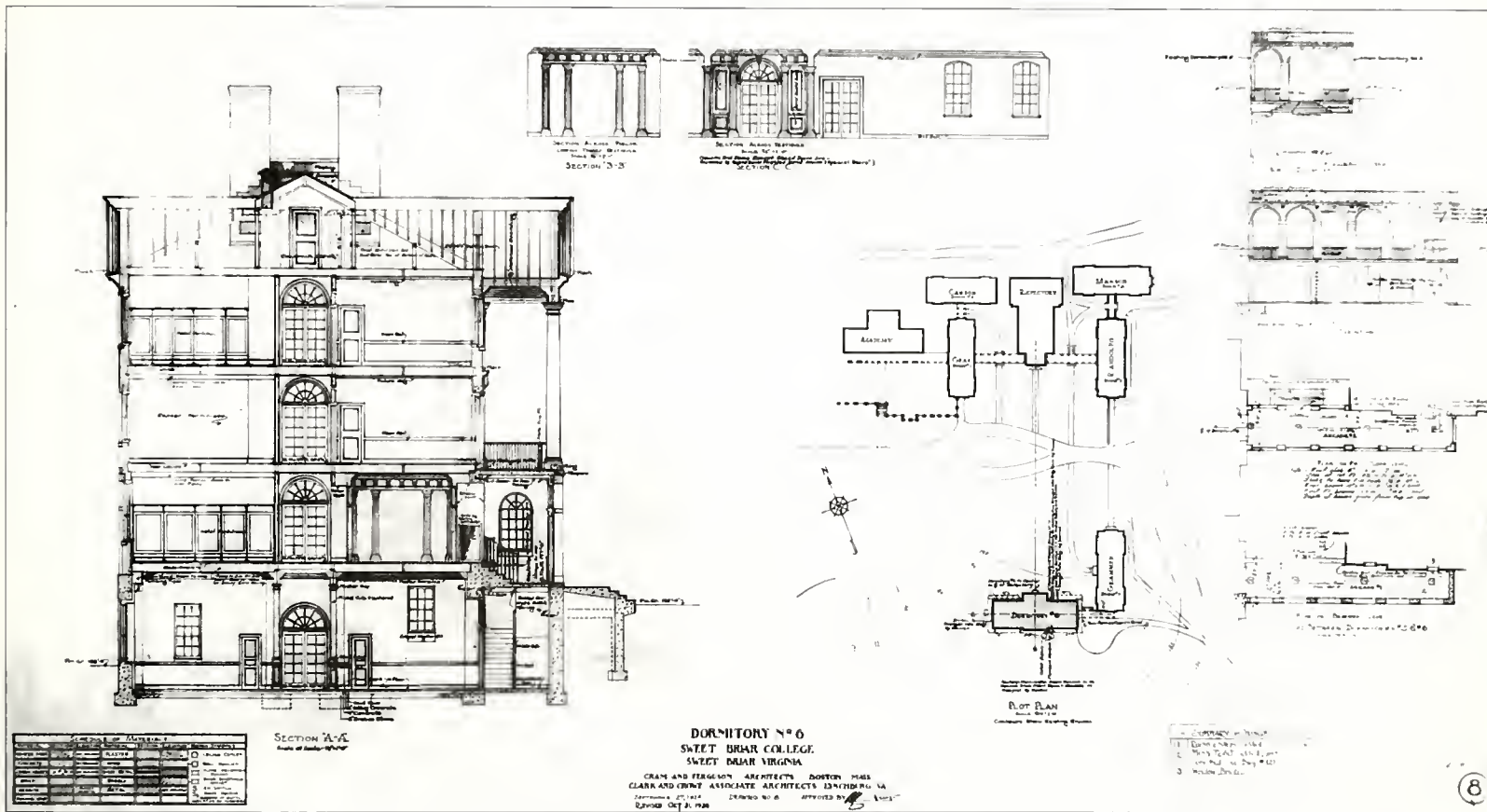


PLATE 26  
DORMITORY No. 5  
GRAMMAR





Executive Committee was directed to erect "a brick kiln to burn brick for the proposed new buildings."<sup>103</sup>

In April 1922 construction of four houses "opposite the present professor's houses" was authorized. These rather nondescript houses were very utilitarian but lacked any architectural distinction. In one of the interviews on which *The*

*Story of Sweet Briar College* was based, Margaret Banister reminisced that "they have been eyesores for thirty-five years, but they were desperately needed then...and they have been desperately needed ever since, and have certainly justified their existence many times over."<sup>104</sup>

In June 1924 Alexander Hoyle from the firm of Cram and Ferguson met with Pendleton Clark

of the Lynchburg firm, Clark and Crowe, to discuss the new construction.<sup>105</sup> Mr. Hoyle was requested to submit plans for both the new dormitory and an administration building "taking careful consideration of the interior plans that Mr. Clark with President McVea had worked out."<sup>106</sup> When, as always seemed to be the case with Sweet Briar's architectural ventures, the

PLATE 27  
PLOT PLAN AND  
DETAILS OF  
DORMITORY NO. 6  
REID

plans needed to be modified to reduce the cost, it was Cram and Ferguson who did so. Clark and Crowe functioned as “associated architects,” obtained the contractors, and Mr. Clark was retained for “general supervision of the college buildings.” It seems clear that the role of Clark and Crowe was increasing, but Cram and Ferguson still retained their position as principal architects of the campus buildings.

In October, 1924 John Root of Cram and Ferguson reported that the firm had drawings and specifications for the new buildings and that the best location for the new dormitory would be “west of Grammer, opposite and facing the Refectory.”<sup>97</sup> [Plate 27] Cram’s original plan for the campus was about to undergo its first radical alteration. The axial vista from the Refectory to the south would now be closed off, but this was not an arbitrary decision; it was undoubtedly determined by the mixed purpose of the new dormitory. The increased enrollment resulting from the construction of another dormitory strained the resources of the Refectory. Dormitory No. 6 was built with a dining hall in its lower level. Thus, the two dining facilities balance each other across the campus.

The small Plot Plan included on linen #8 for Dormitory No. 6 [Plate 27] indicates a road entering the campus from the east and running through what would become the center of the main Quad. This would seem to reflect the actual flow of traffic through the campus and not a firm decision to eliminate the formal landscape design with a chapel terminating the east



PLATE 28 DORMITORY No. 6, REID

end. The presence of an arcade on the plot plan and on both plan and elevation for “Arcades Between Dormitories 5 & 6” on the same sheet indicate Cram’s continued desire to link all of the buildings.

### DORMITORY NO. 6 / REID [1924]<sup>98</sup>

For the first time, a presentation drawing for one of Cram’s designs survives and it only reinforces the tragic loss of the presentation drawings for the original buildings. [Plate 28] Dormitory No. 6 was placed in the center of the southern side of the campus flanked by Grammer to the left and a proposed seventh dorm to

the right (not built until 1956). Clearly Cram intended this building to hold its own against the Refectory and to indicate its dual function as both dormitory and dining hall. A boldly projecting Ionic portico is lifted up on a rusticated podium base and the entrance is reached by a flight of steps reminiscent of its elegant sister across the Quad. The use of a gabled roof rather than the hipped roof found on all of the earlier dormitories also linked it to the Refectory with its gabled temple roof.

Once again the Board protested that the estimates were higher than those originally given. Cram and Ferguson agreed to modify the draw-

ings and specs to reduce the cost" without, however, vitally affecting the construction of the buildings.<sup>799</sup> The north elevation of Dormitory No. 6 was prepared by September 17, 1924 and revised October 31, 1924 immediately following the Board's decision of October 23. [Plate 29] Cram initialed each of the revised drawings indicating his approval of the changes. Obvious changes include the replacement of the Ionic Order with the Doric; the substitution of the simpler form would have reduced the costs con-

siderably. The rusticated stone indicated for the podium base of the portico in the presentation drawing was replaced by brick, but the stone steps remained, and scored concrete to simulate rustication at the basement level continued the concept of elevating an important building.

As the section A-A on linen #8 indicates, one had a choice upon entering the building. [Plate 27] A short flight of steps led up to the vestibule and another down to the dining hall. Reid contains the richest interior of any of the dormito-

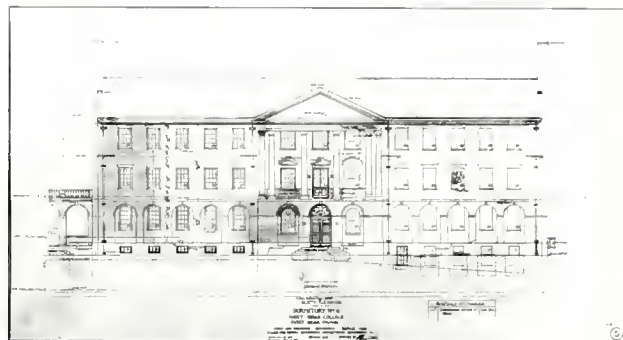


PLATE 29 DORMITORY NO. 6, REID

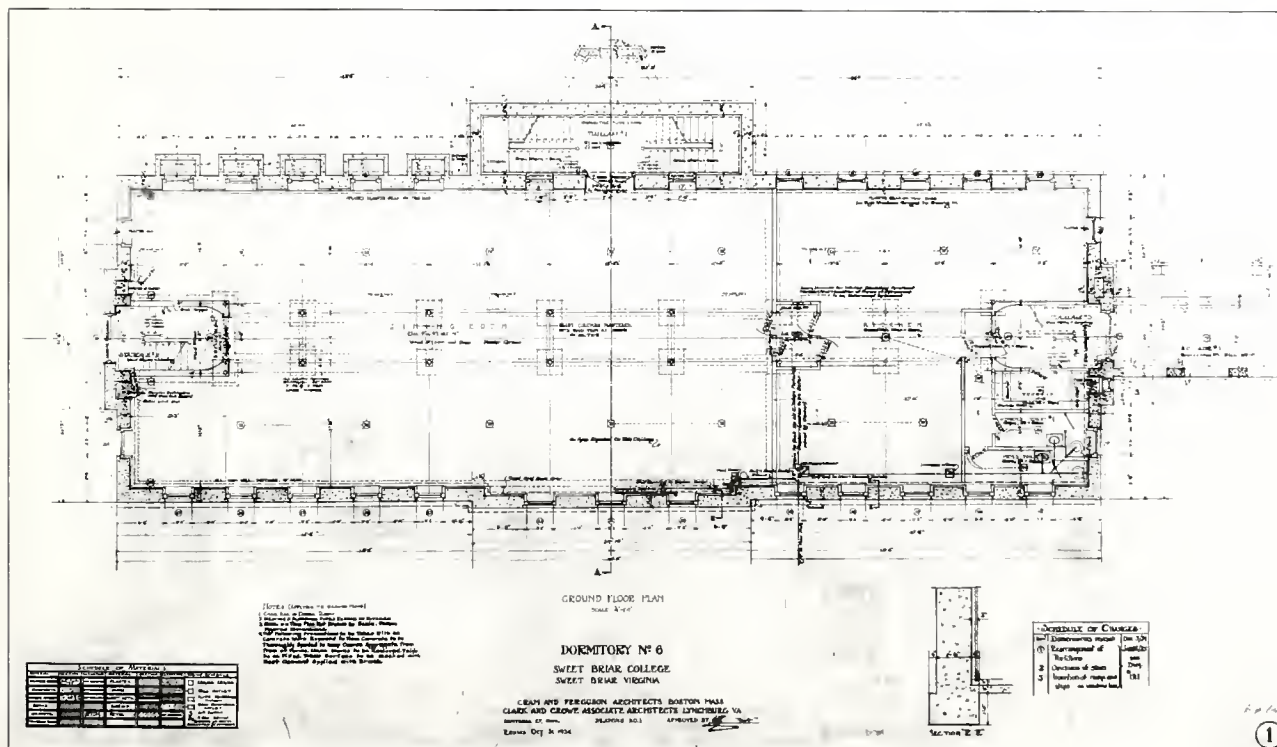


PLATE 30  
DORMITORY NO. 6  
REID

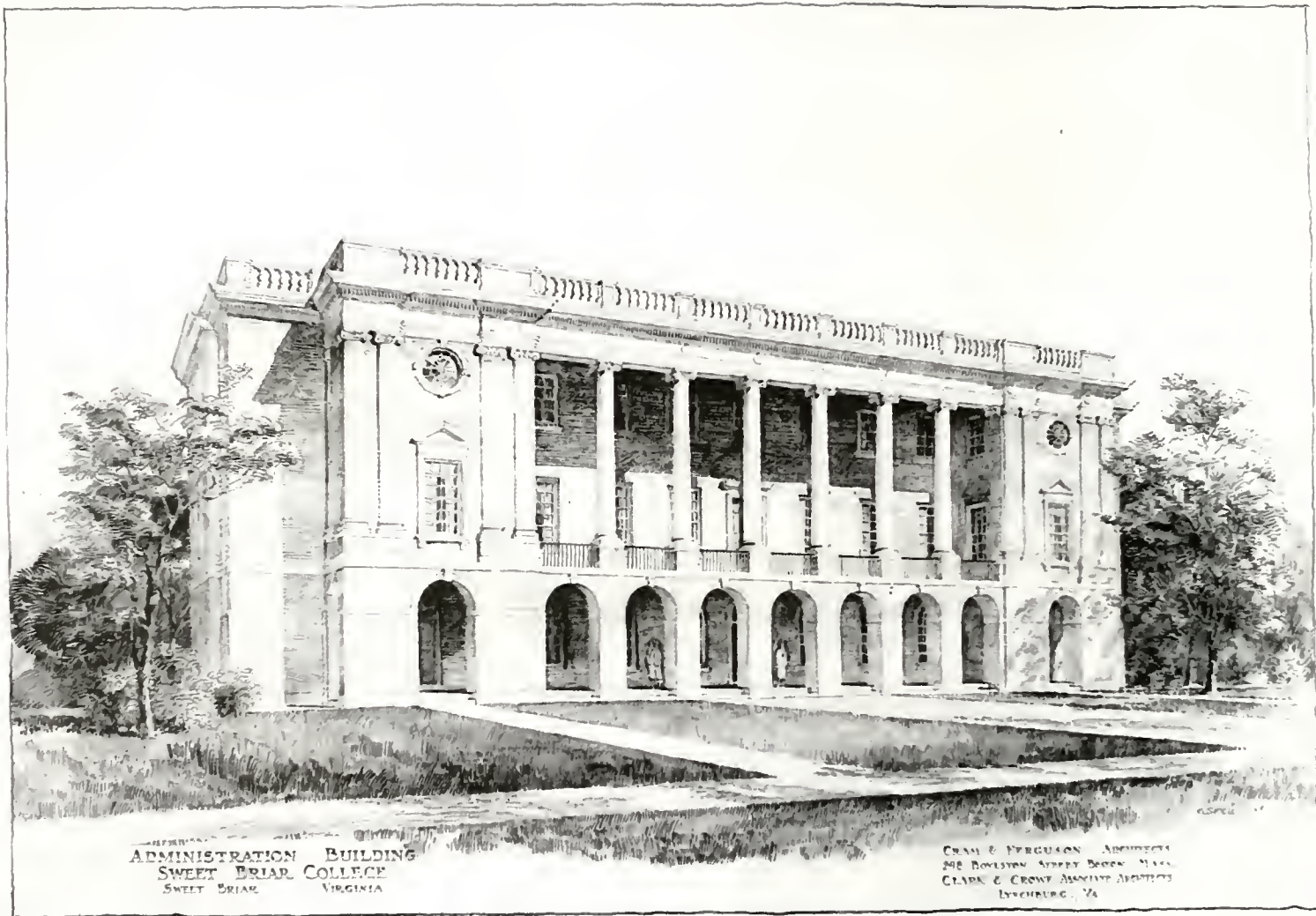


PLATE 31 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, FLETCHER

ries, probably because, unlike its siblings, it also had a public face (Sections B-B and C-C on Linen #8). The interior-exterior blend so obvious here resembles that of eighteenth century English country houses such as Houghton Hall in Norfolk. Both use stone or concrete and plaster giving them an exterior feel, and the openings into Reid's parlors from the stairwell recall the exterior window casings in the interior stair hall from the rustic to the main floor of Houghton.

The Doric Order graces the vestibule; two pairs of fluted columns support a Doric entablature and provide an entry into each of the parlors and the corridor of the dormitory. As built each parlor contains fielded paneling on its end wall; the west parlor added a decorative fireplace with a mantel embellished with Ionic pilasters and varnished a dark brown.

A double flight of steps led down to the dining room with two subsidiary flights at the east and west ends of the building. [Plate 30] The dining room itself was to be divided by a row of paired plastered columns running east to west and with windows looking both north and south to create a bright and airy room. At the east end, swinging doors opened onto the kitchen. A small storage facility was tucked into the east staircase hall; food must have been brought over to be cooked as needed, and supplies in general remained in the Refectory. Until the construction of Prothro Commons in 1983, this room functioned as the Freshman dining hall.

## ADMINISTRATION BUILDING / FLETCHER [1924]<sup>100</sup>

John Root, representing Cram and Ferguson at the October 23, 1924 Board meeting, advised placing the administration building "to the west and balancing the academic building, with a vacancy between the two buildings. The design would call, eventually, for a building between, which should be the central feature of the group; probably the library."<sup>101</sup>

This concept followed Cram's initial plans very closely. The administration building, to be named Fletcher Hall appears, at first glance, to be a mirror image of Academic; both contain a two-storied Ionic loggia above an arcaded walkway and a balustrade across the top. [Plate 31] However, on closer inspection important distinctions that reflect a growing simplification in the architecture of the College can be made. The brick Doric pilasters that articulate the wall behind the loggia in Benedict were omitted here and a single door on the second level replaced the triple entrance of Benedict. [Plate 32: compare Plate 10] Wood replaced the stone used in the entablature of the earlier building and a single row of dentil molding was set under the cornice; egg and dart as well as dentil molding had been used on Academic. On the other hand, a slightly richer treatment appeared in the staircase wings where pedimented windows were set beneath the bull's-eye windows. Perhaps the most obvious visual difference in the building as constructed is the color of the brick. In December 1923 a brick kiln was opened to prepare for

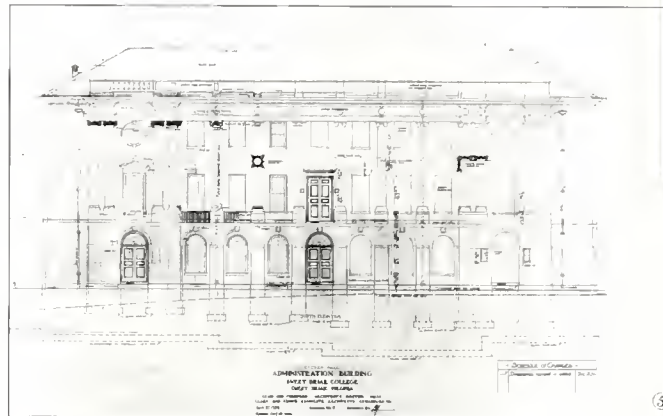


PLATE 32 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, FLETCHER

the new buildings. If the clay came from a different area, it would explain the difference in color between the brick used on Benedict and that made for Fletcher, although both projects utilized Sweet Briar clay.

# META GLASS AND RALPH ADAMS CRAM: 1925-1942

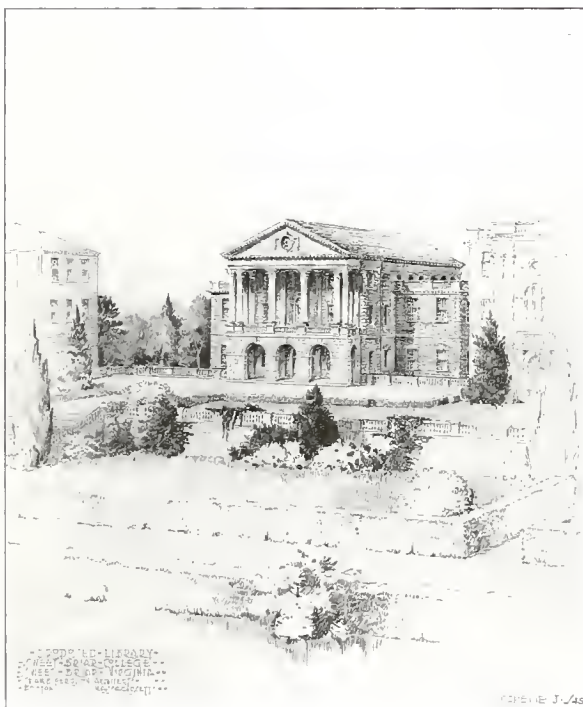


PLATE 33 PROPOSED LIBRARY

Sweet Briar's third president, Dr. Meta Glass, took a personal interest in the architectural development of the College. During her tenure as President (1925-46), she maintained a sustained correspondence with Cram, and it is clear that they became personal friends as well as professional associates. In a letter to Cram she says, "Tell Mrs. Cram she has never given me a chance to have her in my house, as she so delightfully had me in hers."<sup>102</sup> In a letter she wrote Cram in 1936 concerning the chapel, she says "I wish I might have the pleasure of sitting beside you as you sketch the chapel, as I did when you sketched the library."<sup>103</sup>

## MARY HELEN COCHRAN LIBRARY (1928)

A library is the soul of an academic institution and rightly should be singled out. Today Cochran Library is elevated on a grassy ridge with Fletcher and Benedict acting as flankers to the main structure, but when the College opened, the library was housed in a room on the second floor of the Academic building. By 1921 the facilities in Academic (having swelled to three rooms) were totally inadequate, and in 1922 the "Little Green Hut" [now the Music Box] was converted into the library.<sup>104</sup> By the mid-1920's even this new space had become too cramped to hold the growing collections, and many departments housed their own. As early as 1926, President Glass began to prepare for a new building. In a letter to her dated November 29, 1926 Cram asks that she "let us know rather in detail just what you will require in the case of the

proposed...Library." He was particularly concerned about the size of the new building. "This matter of size might have something to do with ...[the] location."<sup>105</sup>

In her later reminiscences Meta Glass said that Cram made "many trips" to Sweet Briar about the Library. But in January of 1928 it was Chester Godfrey from Cram and Ferguson who came to the campus to discuss probable locations for three new buildings: a library, a gymnasium and an auditorium.<sup>106</sup> The result was the Plot Plan of 1928 showing the placement of the library in the position of honor, the spot that Cram had initially designated for the domed Commencement Hall. [Plate 34] This plan retains the general symmetry of Cram's original design, but the Chapel has been moved to the western end of the campus and an Auditorium is located on the eastern end. Both are labeled "future" but as the correspondence between Cram and Glass in the 1930's indicate they were both very much "on the table."

One surviving presentation drawing for the new library shows a rectangular building with a Corinthian temple front elevated on an arcaded base. [Plate 33] It sits between Academic and Fletcher but is disconnected from both. Another phase in the design process exists as an illustration in the campaign literature and in the Longitudinal Section dated December 22, 1927.<sup>107</sup> [Title Page] This version flattens the temple end; Corinthian pilasters replace the columns and the base consists of one arch that seems to be the entrance door. The most distinctive element in

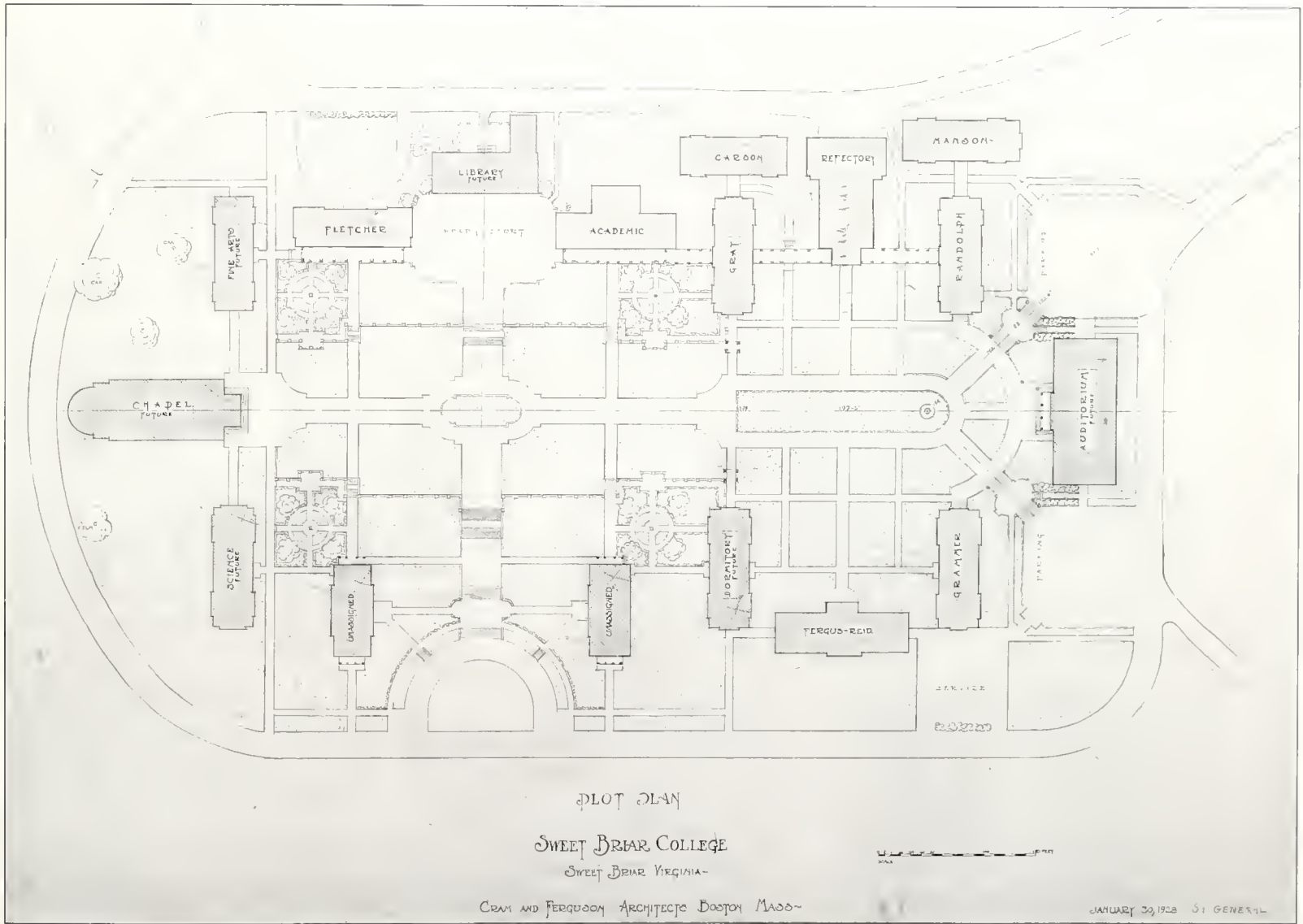


PLATE 34 1928 PLOT PLAN

this design is the way in which the library is connected to Fletcher and Academic by an arcade and the presence of a domed terminus on each side, reminiscent of the Pavilion.

In June 1924 President Glass asked the Board to approve plans for the new library “in general” so work could begin as soon as possible. They “agreed that plans approved by the donor, the administration and the architects, would be agreeable to them.”<sup>105</sup> Mr. Fergus Reid led the campaign and became the primary donor, naming the library for his mother, Mary Helen Cochran.

The presentation drawing of the “Proposed Library” of October 1928 is essentially the building as constructed.<sup>106</sup> [Plate 35 and front cover] Like one of the earlier drawings, it is separated from its neighbors, and like the other, the façade uses Corinthian pilasters rather than columns. The most important change is the reorientation so the broad side of the building has become the main façade; the temple front has been replaced with a horizontal cornice and balustrade. Thus Cochran Library became a sibling of Academic and Fletcher rather than a more exotic cousin.

Architecturally, it is the richest building on the campus with faint echoes from Inigo Jones’ Banqueting House constructed in London in the early seventeenth century. The central brick block enriched with limestone details projects above and slightly in front of the wings. Quoining in alternating brick and stone blocks reinforces the solid mass of the corners, Corinthian

pilasters articulate the facade, and a balustrade across the top provides a transition between the solid mass of the building and the open space above. The Library is elevated on a podium base composed of a stone platform on which the pilasters in the central section rest; a stringcourse carries this concept across the wings to the corners. Elaborate entrances in each wing announce that one is entering an important space. (see Plate, page 6) Semicircular steps entice one toward the doorway recessed within a richly embellished frame that is composed of Corinthian pilasters. It is surmounted by a segmental broken pediment penetrated by a cartouche hung with swags of fruits and flowers.

In May 1929 President Glass wrote to Chester Godfrey, “the brick work is approaching the second story and we are all very much thrilled over the looks.... We are going to lay the corner stone at Commencement time but the more interesting time to see it will be in the fall and I hope you will come down and take some satisfaction for all the hard work you have done.”<sup>110</sup> This suggests that Godfrey may have had more to do with the final design than is usually thought. He and Cram collaborated on the concepts and he may have been the draftsman (the renderer), although Cram said that Godfrey “kept well out of artistic problems.” Certainly the style of the drawings changed over the course of Cram’s association with Sweet Briar.

In Sweet Briar’s usual dance between dreams and reality, changes were introduced to reduce the cost. On the exterior limestone was replaced

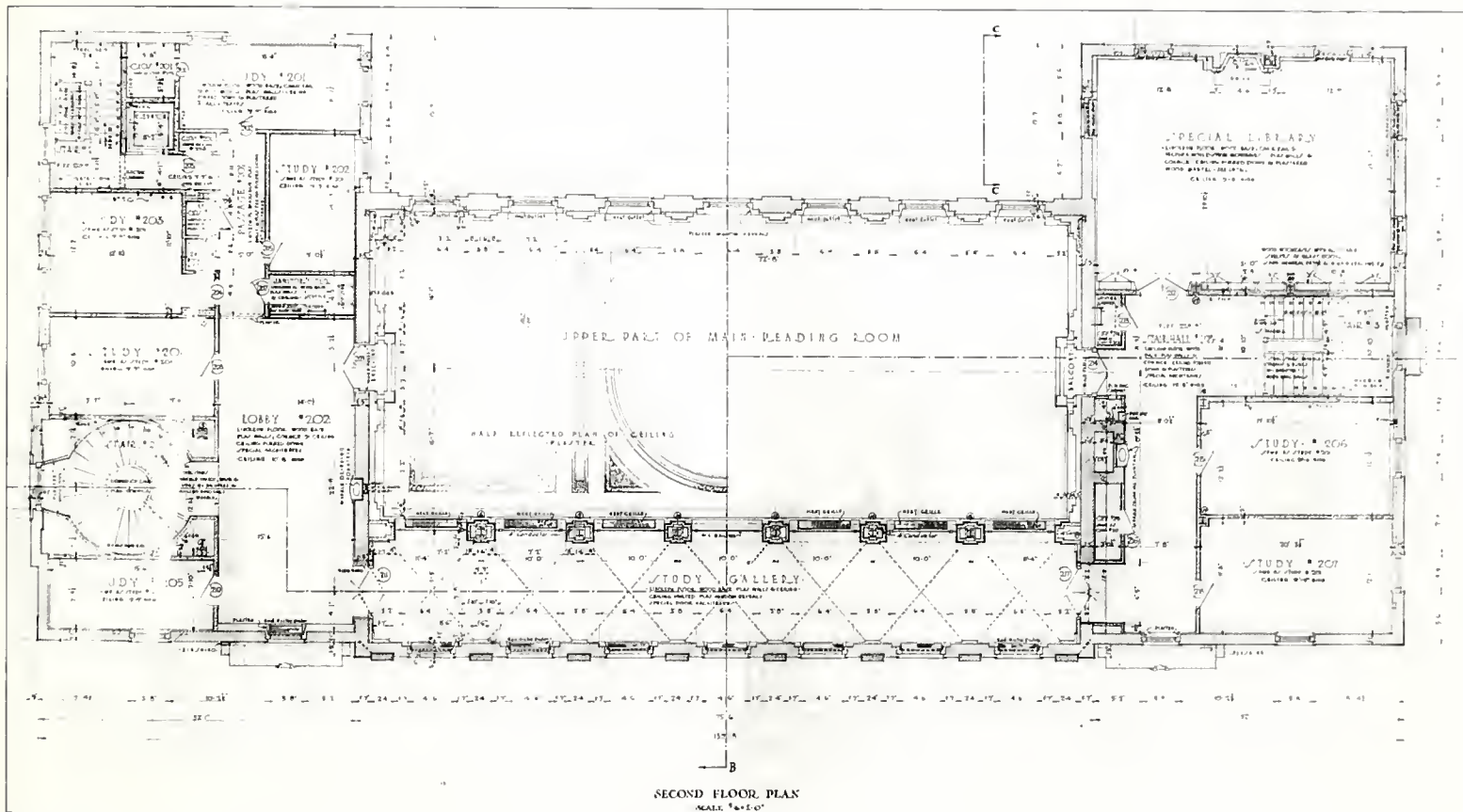


PLATE 35 LIBRARY

*“I wish I might have the pleasure of sitting beside you as you sketch the chapel, as I did when you sketched the library.”*

Meta Glass in a letter to Ralph Adams Cram dated December 17, 1936.





with “cast stone” and all of window arches, except those on the main façade, were to be built in brick, using stone only for the keystone. On the interior, linoleum rather than marble was to be used on the ground floor, except in the stair hall and vestibule, and several drinking fountains were removed.<sup>111</sup>

Despite these cost-cutting measures the inte-

rior of Cochran Library remains one of Sweet Briar’s most elegant. The Main Reading Room appears to be a double cube room in the tradition of the one at Wilton or Inigo Jones’ Banqueting Hall of Whitehall Palace. But in fact, it is a little wider and higher than its length would permit to be a copy of its seventeenth century predecessors. Once again Cram has only gently

linked Sweet Briar to its English ancestry. The room is bright and serene with large round-headed windows and white plastered walls above the bookcases. The drawing of the Second Floor Plan as approved by Cram (December 5, 1928) contains a partial detail of the elaborate plasterwork ceiling. [Plate 36] Unlike the fate of the Refectory ceiling, however, this one

PLATE 36  
LIBRARY

was actually produced. A rich melange of flowers and fruits in high relief forms the border of the geometric patterns in the ceiling, once again permitting a comparison with English seventeenth century plasterwork ceilings. On one side a study balcony provides a quiet place to work and also allows a close view of the ceiling.

The Browsing Room is a quiet sanctuary reminiscent of a library in a private house. Its paneled walls, fireplace, and book-laden shelves have, by tradition, been associated with Cram's own library. In an unsigned obituary published in the *Alumnae News* (October, 1942), the author states, "the red background of the shelves in the browsing room is a direct copy of Mr. Cram's own library."<sup>112</sup> One wonders if the author was President Meta Glass, herself, as she had visited the Crams and would have known his personal library.

A letter from Cram and Ferguson dated May 27, 1929 made reference to the design for the reflecting pool in front of the library but photographs of the newly constructed building indicated that it was not built until later.<sup>113</sup> An elevation of 1932 shows the Library with a "proposed reflecting pool" and an undated photograph of only a few years later includes the pool.<sup>114</sup> By October 1929 the Board Minutes record that the building "is practically completed. We consider it a magnificent building and do not think that any further remarks by this Committee are necessary."<sup>115</sup> Considering that this remark immediately followed the Stock Market Crash of '29, it is clear that Sweet Briar's luck continued to hold.

One wonders if Cochran would have been built at all if the planning had been delayed a year. It was dedicated at Founders' Day in October 1929 with Cram as the speaker.<sup>116</sup>

The Plot Plan of 1928 indicates a road circling around the outer rim of the campus with offshoots in various directions. [Plate 34] Parking near Randolph and Grammer as indicated on this plan suggests that the principal entrance onto campus should be at the east end. In October of 1929 Charles Gillette was called in to prepare plans and specifications "for the road approaching the college, the walks, terraces and planting on this side of the college."<sup>117</sup> By this he presumably means the north side where construction of Cochran Library had disrupted the topography. President Glass indicated in a letter to Gillette that she showed his plan to Cram who "is all in favor of a beautiful road but completely against entering the college through Carson. He thinks the entrance after one leaves the car should...be between Grammer and Randolph and is anxious for us to build, as soon as possible, the arcade that would form a proper entrance there with no building where the auditorium stood on the plan I gave you."<sup>118</sup> [Plate 42]

In November the Board approved Gillette's suggestions for a road north of the buildings and asked for a general plan "conforming as much as possible to the contour of the land instead of being a straight avenue."<sup>119</sup> A letter of November 22 from Gillette to Glass indicated that he missed meeting Cram on campus by one day despite having changed all his plans to accommodate

the architect. He rather mildly suggested that Cram's plans for a main road seemed "a long way in the future" while his "will always be a useful one and will probably serve you a long time as a main entrance thus eliminating immediately the present bad situation of a road in the quadrangle." He goes on to say that he has "a desire to see you realize your dreams for the college...."<sup>120</sup> But once again the dream came face to face with financial reality. It would seem that the association between Charles Gillette and Sweet Briar came to nothing as the correspondence ends in December 1929 with an agreement to pay the bills incurred so far but after the grading to "hold up until there are additional funds."<sup>121</sup>

In April the College decided "to construct part of the road provided for in the Gillette survey and this work is underway. We have been able to simplify Mr. Gillette's plans in many places with pleasing results, more in conformity with the general outlay of Sweet Briar than his suggestions."<sup>122</sup> But neither Gillette nor Cram was successful in eliminating the "bad situation of a road in the quadrangle."<sup>123</sup>

## PROPOSED CHAPEL [1936-38]

Cochran Library was the last building to be constructed at Sweet Briar that Ralph Adams Cram was personally involved with, but not the last that he designed for the College.<sup>124</sup> During the course of her tenure as President of Sweet Briar, Meta Glass had a long correspondence with Cram covering many topics, but the one that seemed dearest to both of their hearts was the design for a chapel. In November 1936 Cram wrote to President Glass that he had just been "given the stimulating news that you have begun to think seriously about the chapel."<sup>125</sup> In a December 1936 letter he said, "...irrational as it may seem to you, I already have designed the chapel almost completely, so you see that in any case it would be my design whether I stand over the final drawings or not."<sup>126</sup> This is in reply to Meta Glass: "I should give anything for the original Sweet Briar to be completed with your imagination and hand in completion.... While we should like you to be in every building, we feel that particularly your hand should be upon the chapel."<sup>127</sup> She continued to make it clear that the College had no funds for construction at the time.

The location of the chapel had been changed from its position in the original plans of 1902-3. The 1928 plan placed the Chapel on the western end of the main east-west axis and, because it would partially block one of the favorite views, President Glass preferred a narrow building. In 1937 she apparently sent Cram pictures of the early nineteenth century Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah as an indication of



PROPOSED CHAPEL · SWEETBRIAR COLLEGE ·  
CRAM AND FERGUSON ARCHITECTS · BOSTON · MASSACHUSETTS

PLATE 37  
PROPOSED CHAPEL



PLATE 38 PROPOSED CHAPEL

what she had in mind. His reply stated that the spire was “a little out of proportion to the building itself. We like our own design rather better... and as the perspective has been finished, we are sending it on to you ‘as is.’”<sup>128</sup>

In late 1937 a flurry of correspondence between the two focused on the interior. President Glass wanted something “lighter and more open, not severe and hard. Contemplate a rounded or pointed ceiling instead of a plain one. If you think not, all right, but let us get away from the high narrow severe look.”<sup>129</sup> This would suggest that she had seen an early, if schematic rendering of the chapel interior. In October Cram wrote that the designs for the chapel interior had been prepared and were ready for rendering. “This is rather

along English Georgian lines. It has raised a certain amount of discussion in the office... [.] it would be more consonant with the nature and placing of this chapel if the interior were lighter and more delicate and following more specifically American Colonial precedents.”<sup>130</sup>

By November Cram was ready to send interior schemes, “one largely based on Georgian precedents (St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London and Christ Church, Philadelphia); the other a more specifically Colonial scheme.”<sup>131</sup> These interiors were “rough pencil renderings of accurate perspectives” to enable the College to select the one to be completed “in color and adequate for exhibition or publication.”<sup>132</sup> President Glass’ reply of November 27 stated that the Colonial design was the “practically unanimous” choice of everyone. After many comments and suggestions about the floor plans that Cram also sent, she asked that the floor be rendered in black instead of black and white. “There is something about those squares that troubles my eye.”<sup>133</sup>

Presentation drawings dated January 3, 1938 portray an interior with a distinctly Colonial look: box pews in the nave, a narrow gallery supported on Doric pillars and a barrel vaulted ceiling (Meta Glass’ “rounded ceiling”). [Plate 37] The floor seems to be composed of multicolored blocks in soft tones, perhaps a compromise between the black and white that so distressed President Glass and her suggestion that they all be black. The exterior of the chapel reflects the sturdy design of James Gibbs’ St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, with the belfry rising up within

the fabric of the building. [Plate 38] The use of brick with stone trim, the balustrade, and the bull’s-eye window all link this structure with the first designs that Cram produced for the College.

In February 1938, Meta Glass wrote that the latest drawings of the chapel look “lovelier [*sic*] to me every time I look at it, and I cannot but believe that it will look lovely to someone else who will be in a better position than I to erect it.... Inasmuch as the chapel efforts have gone as far as we can proceed at the moment, I am asking Mr. Dew [Treasurer of the College] to send the firm the \$500 check on which we had agreed.”<sup>134</sup> In Cram’s hand-written response dated March 1 he said, “I am glad you like the last designs for the Chapel. You do not seem very encouraging in the matter of giving it reality in time and space, so I suppose I must give up hope of ever seeing it.”<sup>135</sup> These two poignant letters between old friends acknowledge that their dream will not be realized. Funds had never been easy to raise, America was still feeling the effects of the Depression and another world war was on the horizon. Cram died in October 1942 and Meta Glass retired in 1946. A chapel was not constructed until 1964. Cram’s plans, while in the possession of the College were, unfortunately, not used and the location was returned to that of the 1902-3 plan.

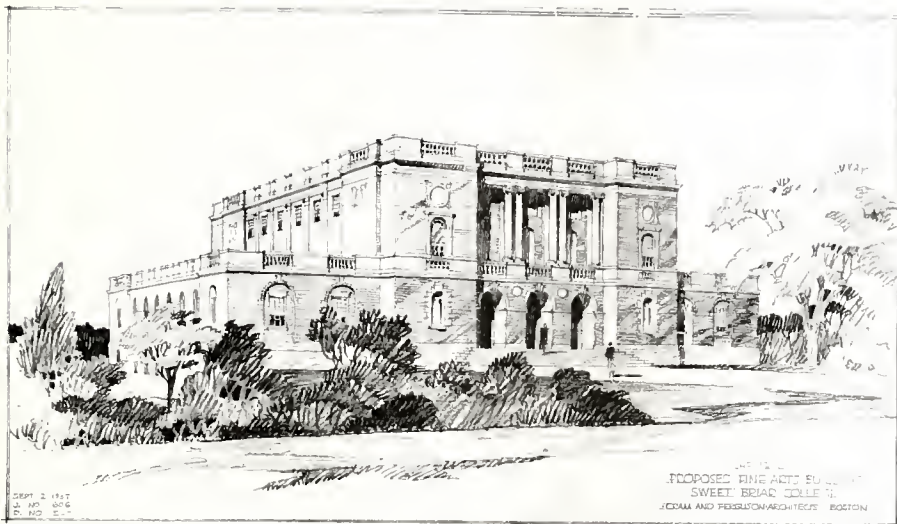


PLATE 39 PROPOSED FINE ARTS BUILDING, 1937

### PROPOSED FINE ARTS BUILDING [1937-38]

A telegram sent to Meta Glass on July 28, 1937 stated that Cram and Alexander Hoyte would arrive at Sweet Briar on Tuesday August 3, presumably to discuss the location and designs of the various buildings under consideration. The follow-up letter of August 25 from Cram to President Glass indicated that the primary purpose of the trip was to discuss the location of the Fine Arts Building.<sup>136</sup>

As early as 1902 the Art building appeared on the Plot Plan with a large semi-circular space at the rear of the structure clearly designed to be an auditorium. [Plate 2] With the construction of the "Assembly Hall" in Manson [1910], a stop-gap auditorium was created, but by the 1920s it was not large enough for the entire Sweet Briar

community to congregate in and a new space was mooted. The Ground Floor Plan of Fletcher (revised and dated October 31, 1924) contained a large auditorium but in January 1928 a fundraising brochure was being prepared for the new library, a gymnasium and an auditorium.<sup>137</sup> The Plot Plan of 1928 indicates an Auditorium at the eastern end of the campus where Cram had initially placed the chapel with a Fine Arts Building in the north-western corner next to Fletcher. In 1935 President Glass reported to the Board of Overseers that "an auditorium seemed the most needed" of all additions to the College.<sup>138</sup> In 1936 Cram expressed an interest in designing an auditorium and referred to sketches for one made by the firm in 1928. In December Meta Glass wrote: "We will make the auditorium [an] om-



PLATE 40 PROPOSED FINE ARTS BUILDING, 1938

nibus building and try to get the music and art departments in with it."<sup>139</sup> Thus thirty years after the College opened, the need for a building focused on the arts resurfaced.

The 1928 Plot Plan [Plate 34] placed the Auditorium at the eastern end of the major east-west axis of the campus. Cram was in Europe when the plan was drawn up and he expressed his unhappiness with that location for the auditorium, preferring to use the space for the major pedestrian entrance onto the campus.<sup>140</sup> He felt the better site for this building was at the western end of the campus opposite the Library. He also favored a new design for the building: "a central block with lower side wings...from every architectural point of view, this would be better than the scheme first suggested."<sup>141</sup>

Following Cram and Alexander Hoyle's campus visit in July [1937], a set of drawings was dispatched to the College. Cram's letter on August 25 says, "I have done the whole thing myself—revising and determining the plans and even making all the original drawings."<sup>142</sup> Two presentation drawings of the "Proposed Fine Arts Building" exist today, one dated September 2, 1937 and the other March 1, 1938. [Plates 39 & 40] Neither is signed, but it is tempting to speculate that the earlier one is Cram's own work. Both show the "central block with lower side wings" that he had expressed a preference for in his earlier letter. The earlier one is a much less finished drawing and seems to have been done in some haste. Both drawings are very similar with the central section of the main block recessed behind paired Ionic columns set above an arcaded base reminiscent of both Academic and Fletcher. They differ in detail, however. The earlier image shows a balustrade across the top of the central block and along the side wings while the later one suggests a more solid parapet with inset tablets for the main section, retaining the balustrade only on the side wings. Throughout the Fall of 1937 Cram and Glass exchanged correspondence as details of the Arts Building evolved. In December a letter from Cram to President Glass made reference to the donor "vanishing" and asked if Sweet Briar wanted "rendered drawings... for publication or exhibition" to enlist another donor.<sup>143</sup> He suggested floor plans, two interiors and one exterior. It is possible that the March 1, 1938 drawing is

the result of this suggestion, but this theory cannot be supported by the correspondence which drops off at this point. In May 1938 President Glass reported to the Board of Overseers that the auditorium design had cost \$3000 and was "finished up to the stage asked for at this time."<sup>144</sup> She goes on to state that working drawings and specs will be made closer to the construction date. In the event the Fine Arts Building was not built until 1962, long after the deaths of both Cram and Glass.

### PROPOSED "PROPYLAEA" [1940]

The last clutch of correspondence between Cram and Meta Glass was concerned with the entry into the main quadrangle of the campus. Each Plot plan from 1928 on attempted to restrict vehicular traffic to the outer rim of the campus, and the correspondence between Cram and Glass makes clear their abhorrence of having automobiles in the middle of the Quad. In a letter devoted to the Fine Arts Building, Cram indicated their position when he says, "As you are to exclude wheel traffic from the main campus..." and later "...when wheel traffic is ultimately excluded from the central campus."<sup>145</sup> The correspondence between President Glass and Charles Gillette in 1929 also focused on a roadway around the campus, not through it.

In late 1940 President Glass wrote to Cram raising the question again of the proper entry onto the campus. She referred to a "Propylaea" that Cram had in mind for such an entry and asked him to come down to Sweet Briar to help

decide where it should be located because "we could not afford to have a less good solution than yours would be."<sup>146</sup> Cram's response indicated his continued interest in the College, and he promised to come in the Autumn "provided by that time the world revolution now in process has not involved the United States in the general débâcle."<sup>147</sup> Cram's signature had become very shaky by this time [he was 77 years old] and he revealed in a letter of November 12 that he had not been well. It seems that he probably did not come to the campus, but President Glass did visit him in the Boston office sometime before October 11, 1940.<sup>148</sup>

A drawing entitled "Suggestion for East Entrance to Campus" dated November 8, 1940 arrived on campus evoking the following response from Meta Glass. [Plate 41] She wrote Cram that it "showed that imaginative touch that I always expect from you. I got quite excited. I could just see myself walking through that gate with great satisfaction."<sup>149</sup> The drawing includes plan, elevation and section. A small domed structure sits between Randolph and Grammer and is connected to the former by a balustraded walk; the same connecting link between the Propylaea and Grammer is implied. The plan shows a parking area in front with a formal axial walkway up several short flights of steps enabling the visitor to pass under the domed arch and onto the campus. The dome thus foreshadows that of the Bell Tower outside of Gray and the central arch links this little building to the grander ones on the campus. Cram has pro-

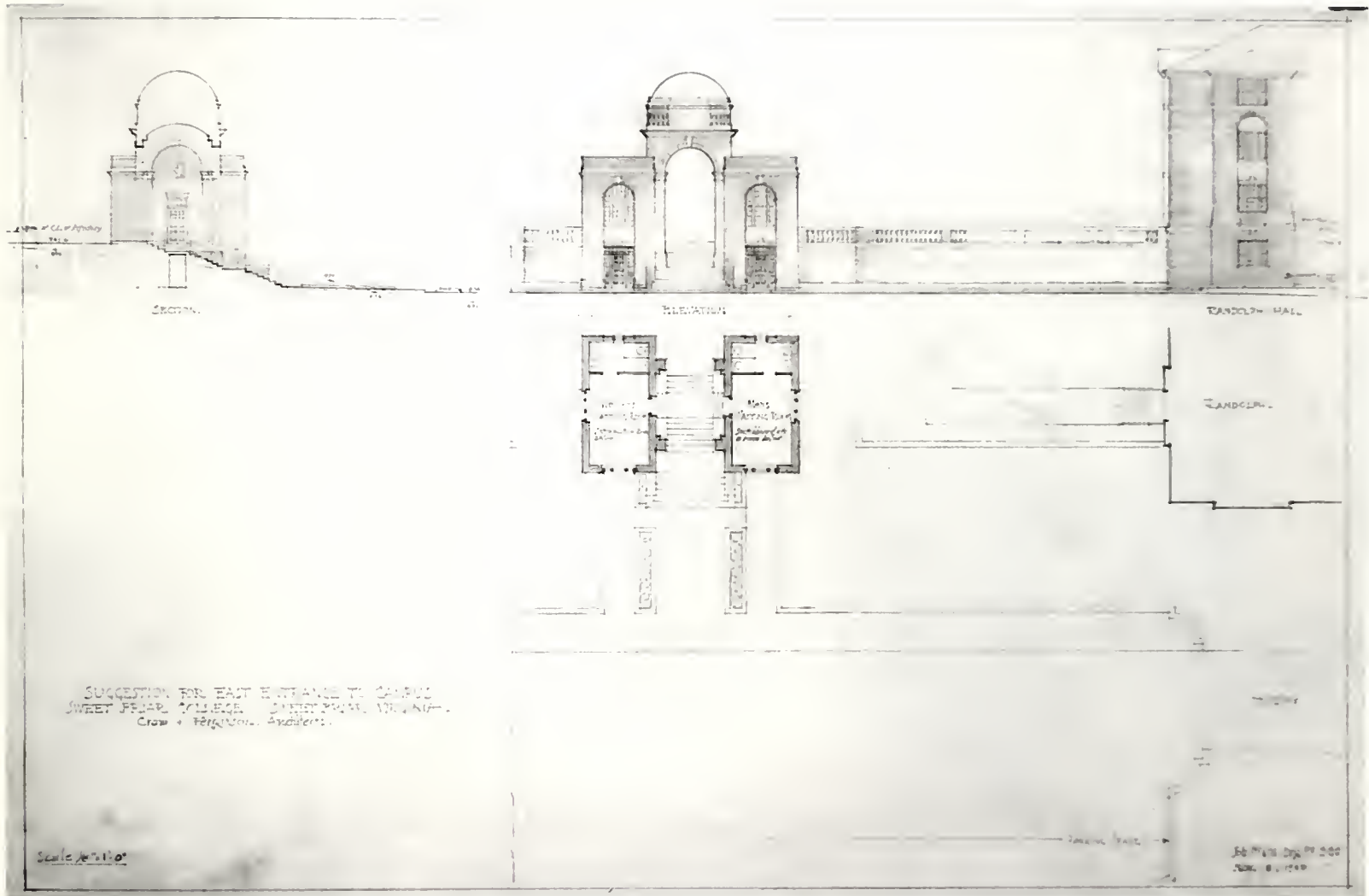


PLATE 41 PROPOSED "PROPYLAEA"

vided what appears at first glance to be an elegant conceit; from the campus it would have formed an appropriate “eyecatcher” at the east end of the Quad in the tradition of English landscape gardens. However, this little building, like its larger siblings, was to serve several functions. The two rooms on the main floor were to be

men’s and women’s waiting rooms, respectively, each with its own rest room. Below were to be the Information Office and the switchboard with public telephone. President Glass saw no reason to segregate men and women and opted for “one good looking large waiting room.”<sup>150</sup> But Cram persevered in his desire for an open arch in the center when he wrote, “the whole affect [*sic*] is obtained by this fine, direct, single entrance with the broad flight of steps.”<sup>151</sup> He concluded this letter a little pensively with “I don’t understand that there is any money available, or in prospect, for my pet ‘propylaea.’” Once again the dream was held captive to financial reality.

The Propylaea was the last design that Ralph Adams Cram provided for Sweet Briar College. He died in September, 1942. An obituary in the October *Alumnae News* of that year distilled the association between Cram and Sweet Briar when it stated that “though he was interested principally in Gothic Architecture, Mr. Cram was particularly fond of the Georgian buildings at Sweet Briar” and his death “brings a distinct loss” to the College.<sup>152</sup> When construction was needed after World War II, the loss of the unifying thread of Cram’s initial design and his oversight of all

designs brought the initial dream of our founders to an end. The next dormitory (Dew) was built in 1956 by the New York firm of Moore and Hutchins and Meta Glass Dormitory in 1960 by Clark, Nexon and Owen, the descendant firm of Clark and Crowe, who had served as associate architects on several of Cram’s buildings. The construction that has followed since then has moved away from Cram’s plan, exploiting the west end of the campus and invading the woods of the approach to campus. Economic reality triumphed in the end. Miss Indy’s dream of a school that would provide “such education in sound learning and such physical, moral and religious training as shall... best fit [young women] to be useful members of society” has prevailed, but the architectural dreams of McBryde, Cram and Glass have not survived the loss of their close supervision. The beauty of the campus, for which Sweet Briar is renowned, is based on Cram’s initial design. Despite later departures from his high standards, the main Quad remains as his legacy to the College.

APPROVED BY 



PLATE 42 PROPOSED ENTRANCE TO CAMPUS



# NOTES

- 1 Indiana Williams was known as "Indy" to her family and close friends and as "Miss Indy" to many others, including every generation of Sweet Briar student since 1906. Three of her executors were The Rev. Arthur Gray, the Rev. Theodore Carson, and Bishop Alfred M. Randolph. The fourth, Mr. Stephen Harding, was also a board member for a short period of time, but resigned in 1903. In addition to McBryde, the other men who comprised the first Board of Directors were The Rev. Dr. Carl Grammer and Judge Legh Watts.  
The name was not changed to Sweet Briar College until 1927, but as President Benedict said, "the word [institute] just didn't seem to fit.... There seemed to be no way of changing the name formally, so I decided.... to just put "college" wherever the word "institute" was [used]." Mary K. Benedict, "Sweet Briar, 1906-1916," *Alumnae News* (December, 1937), p. 11. I intend to do the same.
- 2 John McBryde, considered the founder of "the modern VPI," was president from May 11, 1891-July 1, 1907 [Information kindly provided by Tamara Kennelly, University Archivist, Virginia Tech].
- 3 Minutes of the Board of Directors, Sweet Briar Institute [including the Executive Committee Reports] for April 22, 1901.
- 4 Board of Directors' Minutes, August 26, 1901.
- 5 Martha Lou Stohlman, *The Story of Sweet Briar College*, (Sweet Briar, VA, 1956), p. 53, stated that McBryde invited Cram to Virginia on the basis of an article on church architecture in the *New Churchman*. He may have read Ralph Adams Cram, "All Saints Church, Dorchester (Boston), Mass." *The Churchman* 79 (April 15, 1899) pp. 559-64 in which Cram says, "The problem was this: To lay out a complete scheme for a church and parish buildings adapted to the conditions, and to build at a comparatively small expense so much of the church proper as would accommodate the congregation as it then was; to sacrifice nothing of the largeness and dignity of the ultimate and nothing of the solidity of construction that should guarantee an existence that would be terminated only by accident." Substitute "school" or "college" for "church" and this statement suited the conditions

facied by Sweet Briar's Board of Directors.

- 6 An untitled manuscript dated May, 1938 as quoted in Douglas Shand Tucci, *Ralph Adams Cram: American Medievalist* (Boston, 1975), p. 25.
- 7 *Church Building: a Study of the Principles of Architecture and their Relation to the Church* (Boston, 1914), p. 85
- 8 "Recent University Architecture in the United States," *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* 19, 1911-12, p. 499. This article has been reprinted as "American University Architecture" in the *Ministry of Art* (New York, 1914; reprinted 1967), pp 169-211.
- 9 "Recent University Architecture," p. 497.
- 10 "Recent University Architecture," p. 517.
- 11 In 1995 22 buildings and 27.5 acres on Sweet Briar's property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 12 In November McBryde commented that "their [CG&F] plan for the Campus and the arrangement for the buildings is a beautiful one, and admirably adapts itself to the contour of the hill." [Board of Directors' Minutes, November 21, 1901].
- 13 The Picturesque was a style of landscape gardening in which elements were arranged in an asymmetrical fashion suggestive of the natural environment and emulating the seventeenth century paintings of Claude Lorraine. The term was introduced by Uvedale Price in his *Essay on the Picturesque as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1794).
- 14 Paul Venable Turner in *Campus, an American Planning Tradition* (Cambridge, MA, 1984) suggests that collegiate planning underwent a radical change in the late nineteenth century; the concept of a "'City of Learning' ... became common and began to influence the architectural form of the university" [p. 167].
- 15 Board of Directors' Minutes, August 26, 1901.
- 16 Many of the early drawings for the College contain incorrect directional indicators. The compass on the 1901(?) site plan has been corrected in pencil. The original arrow indicating north actually points to the east.
- 17 The original plan no longer exists at Sweet Briar. In 1907 several plans and drawings were sent to the Tricentennial celebration of the founding of Jamestown and were lost on their return to the college [Benedict, p. 5]. It remains a dream that some day these drawings will surface and be returned to their rightful place at the College.
- 18 The two ovals in the second plan are labeled "driveway" indicating that Cram initially intended vehicular traffic to enter the campus along the major axis from the west. The eastern secondary entry is also labeled "driveway," indicating a vehicular entry point focused on the Refectory. In 1902-3 this undoubtedly meant horse-drawn vehicles. Later plans indicate that Cram wished to eliminate all vehicular traffic from the center of the campus. Sweet Briar did not purchase a car until 1911 when the scarcity and high cost of feed made horse-drawn vehicles less efficient [Executive Committee Report of the Board of Directors, October 20, 1911]. In May 1906, in anticipation of opening in September, the Board had appropriated \$300 to buy a horse, some harness and a light vehicle to use in meeting visitors and sending for the mail.
- 19 Over the years Cram's formal plan with Italianate gardens and an inward focus gradually evolved into a more open landscape with gently undulating grassy terrain and glorious views out toward the mountains. The influence of English landscape architecture can be felt here. Whether or not it was consciously achieved, it is in keeping with the Georgian style architecture.
- 20 Over the years the model fell on hard times and was abandoned to the old stable where it was discovered in a very decrepit state by Ann Whitley (47), Director of the Sweet Briar Museum, and Carma Fauntleroy, former Director of College Galleries. Experts disagree on preservation methods so it has been stabilized, but it shows every bit of its 98 or 99 years! It remains, however, a rare survivor of the material produced by the firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, to elicit support for their original design for the College.
- 21 The original of this drawing no longer exists and presumably it was one of those lost on its return from Jamestown in 1907.
- 22 Similarities between this plan and the contemporary one Goodhue drew for James Gillespie in Montecito, CA support this identification as noted by Douglass Shand-Tucci in "Goodhue, Bertram (Grosvenor)," *Grove Dictionary of Art*, <http://www.groveart.com/scripts/rwisapi.dll/>, March 22, 2000. This identification can be further confirmed by a comparison of the two plans for Rice University, one by the New York firm of CG&F (Goodhue) and the other by the Boston firm (Cram). The "Boston" plan is more organic. A large circle with radiating spokes dominates one end of the campus while the "New York" plan uses a much more angular arrange-

- ment of elements all enclosed by an oval road. These two plans are illustrated in Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue*, Cambridge, MA, 1983, figures 75 and 76.
- 23 *My Life in Architecture* (Boston, 1936), pp. 77-78. Goodhue's biographer doesn't see the division of labor as neatly as this and Goodhue was unable to comment as he had died in 1924 [Oliver, p.30].
- 24 Cram, "Recent University Architecture," p. 510.
- 25 Cram, *My Life*, p. 124.
- 26 Turner, *Campus* discusses the popularity of creating a master plan for new campuses at the end of the nineteenth century under the influence of the Beaux-Arts school of design and the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Stanford, Chicago, Columbia and the new campus for Johns Hopkins are the most significant university designs of the time. The Beaux Arts plan is characterized by a sense of order and is "capable of including many disparate buildings or parts within a unified overall pattern." (p.167) It is the unifying concept of the plan that most clearly identifies Sweet Briar with the Beaux Arts school. Turner specifically mentions the "three intersecting axes" in Cram's 1902 design for Sweet Briar and notes that the design was praised for being "more pleasing, lighter and freer" than that of the University of Virginia (p. 191).
- 27 Sarah Drummond Lanford "Ralph Adams Cram as College Architect: an Historicist's Approach," M.A. thesis, University of Virginia, 1981, p. 56.
- 28 Board of Directors' Minutes, November 21, 1901.
- 29 Board of Directors' Minutes, August 26, 1901
- 30 Board of Directors' Minutes, November 21, 1901.
- 31 Stohلمان. (p. 53) indicates that Cram and McBryde initially disagreed on the color of the brick. Cram favored red and McBryde yellow brick as he disliked the idea of "red splotches on the landscape." In November 1901 clay samples from several sites at Sweet Briar were sent to Blacksburg to be burnt. McBryde agreed that the resultant red brick was "of superior quality." The "hitch" over color in September of 1902 must have been over the inconsistency of reddish tones obtained from different clay deposits, not a continued interest in yellow brick.
- 32 Board of Directors' Minutes, May 25, 1903.
- 33 Board of Directors' Minutes, April 27, 1904.
- 34 Flemish bond is a technique of brick-laying whereby headers (the short end) alternate with stretchers (the long end) and the pattern alternates in each course. Often the header has been glazed giving it a darker color and creating a pleasing pattern. McBryde's comments appear in the Board of Directors' Minutes for April 27, 1904. In 2000 Jimmy Price, a noted local brick mason who has worked at Poplar Forest among other important historic buildings, began the restoration of the brick work.
- 35 Board of Directors' Minutes, March 3, 1902
- 36 It is unfortunate that the presentation drawings for the original cluster of buildings survive only in reproduction, nor do we have any of the correspondence between CG&F and the College from this period. VPI also has no record of correspondence between McBryde and Cram.
- 37 A very fine Irish linen treated with a waxy substance was typically used for these drawings.
- 38 The plan of Sweet Briar with its buildings arranged around a quadrangle clearly reveals Cram's understanding of educational architecture deriving from the medieval monastery that mutated into the English university system with its individual colleges ranged around one or more quads. This is unlike the organization of early American colleges such as William and Mary or Harvard where all functions were initially housed in a single building. Mr. Jefferson's University in Charlottesville provided the closest parallel to Sweet Briar with its individual structures connected by colonnades to form an open-ended rectangle with a domed building at its apex.
- 39 The relationship between Sweet Briar's Georgian architecture and some of its English precedents was noted by H. Stafford Bryant, "Classical Ensemble," *Arts in Virginia* (1971), pp. 18-25.
- 40 In 1984 the Refectory was converted into a multi-purpose building housing the art history department, the Pannell Gallery, the Art Library, and the archeology laboratory. At that time the building was renamed in memory of Anne Gary Pannell, the fifth president of Sweet Briar.
- 41 Although the New Gallery of Somerset House, constructed in 1661-62, has traditionally been attributed to Inigo Jones, there is no firm evidence of this. Marble Hill House in Twickenham (ca. 1724) by Lord Pembroke and Roger Morris is a classic example of English Palladianism. Both are illustrated in John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1986), plates 145 and 300, respectively.
- 42 In John McBryde's lengthy report on the progress of construction given to the Board of Directors at their April 27, 1904 meeting, he discusses the composition to be used for many details on the buildings. It seems that the contractor did not lock in the price, which had increased considerably, and he suggests using stone instead. The additional cost for stone would be more than that originally budgeted for composition but less than the new inflated price. "Composition" as used here is an early synonym for pre-cast concrete, which is composed principally of sand, crushed stone and Portland cement." [Source: Douglas Harnsberger, Restoration Architect, Sweet Briar College, in a conversation with the author, May 2001].
- 43 Numerous examples of plasterwork ceilings in England are illustrated in Geoffrey Beard, *Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England, 1660-1820* (New York, 1981). Kenmore is illustrated in Mills Lane, *The Architecture of the Old South: Virginia* (Savannah, GA, 1996), plates 82-85 and in David Gleason, *Virginia Plantation Homes* (1989), p. 43.
- 44 Executive Committee Report in the Board of Directors' Minutes, April 23, 1905.
- 45 While it is very difficult to translate costs into today's figures, the following might indicate how surprised(!) the Board was to receive the ceiling designs with an estimated cost of \$3000-4000 for one and upwards of \$2500 for the other [Executive Committee Report to the Board of Directors, April 23, 1905]. The list of expenditures in the August, 1904 Board minutes indicate that costs for the Refectory were a little over \$11,000 at that point. As they are beginning to plaster the main dining hall by October, the building must have been under roof by this time or very close to it. Thus the ceiling alone would have been about 1/4 of the total expenditure on one building alone...and all of the fittings still needed to be paid for.
- 46 Renovation of this building in the mid-1980s changed the look of the vestibule and the staircase; the "balcony" space itself was preserved, but it no longer opens directly onto the Main Hall.
- 47 In fact, chapel was held in Academic, not the Refectory in the first year [Stohلمان, p. 90].
- 48 The wainscoting, removed in the 1980s restoration, was poplar but the dark ceiling beams appear in photos of 1906 (photographic section of Stohلمان]. It is possible that the "dark mahogany" mentioned in the newspaper

- article was actually a mahogany stain; *faux* woodwork was very popular at the end of the nineteenth century.
- 49 In 1976 Academic was renovated and rededicated as Benedict Hall in memory of Mary K. Benedict, the first president of Sweet Briar.
- 50 All early plans indicate that Cram intended to use arcades to connect all of the buildings, but as constructed the western buildings stand alone.
- 51 His purchase included Pepys' *Diary* in 6 volumes, 39 volumes of the works of Shakespeare, Lamière's *Classical Dictionary*, and Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary* (32 volumes). The *Lynchburg News* (July 27, 1906) states that the contents of the library "will be gathered largely from the private library of the Fletcher family. Mrs. Williams having been a Miss Fletcher."
- 52 Like the woodwork in the Refectory, this may also actually have been *faux* mahogany. Still, it conveys the impression of crispness with a flavor of the Arts and Crafts Movement so popular at the turn of the century. All interior woodwork was removed when the building was renovated in 1976.
- 53 The first two dormitories were named for men who served both as trustees of Indiana Fletcher Williams' will and as founding members of the Board of Directors of the College. The Rev. Arthur Gray was rector of Ascension Church, Amherst, VA and the Rev. Theodore Carson was rector of St. Paul's Church, Lynchburg. The Fetters worshipped at both churches.
- 54 This is actually the south elevation of Academic.
- 55 In fact, if entering Gray from the Quad, one does mount several steps into the arcade, but the effect is a ground-level entry.
- 56 In his "Progress Report on the Buildings" presented to the Board of Directors in April 1904, John McBryde comments that the architects put a "balustrade around the roofs of all their buildings in their drawings, including the dormitories. In their detailed plans and specifications they put them on their two other buildings but omitted them on the dormitories." The lost presentation drawing submitted by CG&F and illustrated in *The American Architect and Building News* of 1902 shows a balustrade on both dormitories. Despite McBryde's plea that balustrades be included on all buildings, the dorms were built without them, undoubtedly another cost-cutting measure. Their absence also adds another way in which public and private buildings are differentiated.
- 57 The article continues: "True to progressive methods, a common trunk room is arranged in the basement, for it has been found impracticable in large schools to have it otherwise."
- 58 For years the Pavilion served as the bus stop. In the 1980s, bells were added and it became known as the Bell Tower. In 2001 a new gatehouse, whose design reflects this little conceit, was to be placed on the edge of the woods. It was to serve as a beacon for guests entering the winding drive, indicating the campus buildings beyond the woods and to recall the follies in an English landscape garden. Unfortunately, it was placed within the woods where its visual and iconographic impact has been diminished.
- 59 Initially, the President's house, referred to as the Executive Mansion, was to be at Mt. St. Angelo and extensive renovations to the dwelling were begun before President Benedict arrived and announced that she would live at Sweet Briar House. Mt. St. Angelo had been the home of Miss Indy's sister, Elizabeth Fletcher Mosby. At her death it reverted to her sister and became part of the Sweet Briar estate. In 1909 Mt. St. Angelo was sold to the Walker family and didn't return to Sweet Briar until the 1960s.
- 60 Floor plans for the creamery, laundry and the power plant were given to CG&F by Sweet Briar according to John McBryde's "Progress Report of Buildings" in the April 27, 1904 Board of Directors' Minutes.
- 61 These windows can be found in late Imperial Roman buildings such as the Baths of Caracalla or the Basilica of Constantine and Maxentius.
- 62 These buildings have been radically altered over time, but the chimney of the power plant still asserts itself on the skyline of the campus.
- 63 Taken from the "Progress Report on Buildings" given by John McBryde for the Executive Committee at the April 27, 1904 Board of Directors' meeting. In 1922 profits from the Book Shop were used to build the entrance gates (Stohlman, p145).
- 64 Based on Mrs. Manson's account of her first visit to Sweet Briar in 1903 as told to Martha von Briesen in 1954 (Stohlman papers in Cochran Library, Sweet Briar, VA)
- 65 "Progress Report on Buildings" by John McBryde, Board of Directors' Minutes, April 27, 1904.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Ibid. The remaining acres of the plantation were to function as a working farm to support the students and staff of the College. Other land owned by Miss Indy was gradually sold off to pay expenses.
- 68 Board of Directors' Minutes, April 25-27, 1905, pp. 200-202.
- 69 However, when President Benedict arrived in June of 1906 they had still had not been named.
- 70 Sprinkled throughout the minutes are references that indicate the intention to make the college self-sufficient. As early as 1901 John McBryde brought a horticulturalist from VPI to discuss planting an orchard and a vegetable garden. In October of 1905 strawberry beds were being planted and there is mention of asparagus and celery beds. The cost of a poultry house is mentioned in the October 16, 1905 minutes.
- 71 An "architect" is mentioned, but not by name and the Greek Revival style of St. Angelo would preclude naming Cram as the designer. Board of Directors' Minutes, December 14, 1905.
- 72 Benedict, p. 5.
- 73 The "depot" had still not arrived by early October. The first students were met in the pouring rain by the side of the tracks [Stohlman, pp. 78-79].
- 74 Westinghouse promised to make a temporary arrangement for lighting and, as no mention is made of the College opening by candlelight, one can only assume that they did.
- 75 Benedict, p. 8. 36 of the 51 students were boarders.
- 76 Board of Directors' Minutes, October 17, 1906.
- 77 Board of Directors' Minutes, November 14, 1907.
- 78 Dormitory No. 3 was named for the Rt. Rev. Alfred Magill Randolph, Bishop of Virginia and the first president of the Board of Directors of the College (1901-17).
- 79 Board of Directors' Minutes, September 1908.
- 80 Nathaniel Clayton Manson, in whose honor Dormitory No. 4 was named, became chairman of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors upon the resignation of Dr. McBryde. During his years on the Board (1903-24), he managed the College's financial matters with great skill and also served as friend and mentor to many generations of students. Having lost his only child as a young girl, the Sweet Briar students became surrogate daughters [Stohlman, pp. 60-62].
- 81 Board of Directors' Minutes, September 19, 1909.
- 82 Board of Directors' Minutes, January 7, 1910.

- 83 Stohlman, p. 115.
- 84 The location of roads had occupied the Board since its inception. The phrase "construct a new road from the woods to the buildings" is followed by the authorization to "change the road" to accommodate the new building. After the entrance drive crosses the arched bridge, the ghost of the original road curves to the left: the gingko trees that lined it are still in place and the roadbed is still visible.
- 85 The Rev. Carl E. Grammer of Norfolk was one of the original members of the Board of Directors (1902-44), serving as President from 1917-33.
- 86 Stohlman, p. 139
- 87 Stohlman, p. 120.
- 88 Stohlman, p. 132.
- 89 New departments of physics, social science, education and physical education were introduced. History became a separate department as did biology [Stohlman, p. 134]. By 1919 enrollment had increased to the point where the abolition of the Academy was possible [Stohlman, p.143]
- 90 Stohlman, p. 144
- 91 Board of Directors' Minutes, October 26, 1922. No figures were given.
- 92 Board of Directors' Minutes, October 25 and December 13, 1923.
- 93 Ibid. The October 24, 1924 minutes indicate that Mr. Watts had burned more bricks than was initially called for.
- 94 Stohlman p. 145.
- 95 Alexander Hoyle along with Frank Cleveland and Chester Godfrey had become full members of the firm in 1925, but the name remained Cram and Ferguson. At the departure of Goodhue in 1914, the firm had changed its name for the third and final time to Cram and Ferguson.
- 96 Board of Directors' Minutes, June 26, 1924
- 97 Board of Directors' Minutes, October 23, 1924.
- 98 The building was named in honor of Mr. Fergus Reid, member of the Board of Directors from 1905-41 [President 1933-41] and a major donor to the project. In June of 1925, 362 students were on campus and 427 were expected for the following year
- 99 Board of Directors' Minutes, October 23, 1924
- 100 Fletcher Hall was named in honor of three generations of the Fletcher family. Elijah Fletcher purchased the property in 1830, and at her death in 1900 Indiana Fletcher Williams left the land to establish the College in memory of her daughter, Maria [Daisy].
- 101 Board of Directors' Minutes, October 23, 1924
- 102 Letter from Meta Glass to Ralph Adams Cram [hereafter MG and RAC], dated December 11, 1936 [Presidential files, Correspondence 1936-37, A-C].
- 103 Letter from MG to RAC dated December 17, 1936 [Presidential files, Correspondence 1936, A-C]. In a letter dated February 21, 1938 she refers to a visit they made together to St. John the Divine in New York. She "recalled the morning when I had the privilege of climbing up and down the scaffolding and hearing from you something of how you solved the problems" [MG to RAC, February 21, 1928; in Cram Archives of Boston Public Library.]
- 104 This structure had been built in 1919 for social functions and then used for the campus YWCA, but in 1922 it became the library. Miss Dee Long, English professor 1919-50, reminisced about "the sun pouring through the windows, the 'intimacy with the books...all about you, waiting to be picked up and read.'" She also recalled Sunday evenings when faculty and students would gather around the fireplace for readings. The building was initially located on the site of the present Development Office, but in 1929 two men and a mule pulled this little building to its present site where it was converted into the Music Building. Stohlman, p.164-165.
- 105 Letter in Cochran Library Archives.
- 106 According to Cram, Chester Godfrey, along with Frank Cleveland and Alexander Hoyle were promoted from junior partners to full members of the firm of Cram and Ferguson in 1925. He goes on to say that Godfrey "has kept well out of artistic problems, having troubles enough of his own, what with contractors [and the] general supervision of engineering and construction." *My Life in Architecture*, p. 80
- 107 The illustration used in the campaign material to raise funds for the new library was based on another presentation drawing no longer extant. *Alumnae Campaign News*, March 9, 1928 [Presidential files, Sweet Briar College].
- 108 Board of Directors' Minutes, June 4, 1928.
- 109 The drawing is signed and dated C. S. Clapp Oct. 1928.
- 110 Presidential Files, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1929,A-H.
- 111 "Changes in Plans and Specs for Library" dated January 23, 1929. Carpeting replaced the linoleum in the Reading Room, the Study Gallery and the lobby by the early 1970s and "the demise of the 'battleship linoleum'...was not regretted by anyone" according to Patricia Wright, "The Mary Helen Cochran Library: an Informal History" *Sweet Briar Alumnae Magazine*, Fall, 1985, p.4.
- 112 *Alumnae News*, October, 1942, p. 13
- 113 This letter from Alexander Hoyle to Clark and Crowe in Lynchburg states that "if President Glass desires that the pool should follow more closely the ideas discussed by herself and Mr. Cram some time ago..." they will be revised [Presidential Files, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1929, A-H].
- 114 The pool was removed in the 1960s but, as a centennial gift to itself, the College rebuilt it, this time with a small fountain in the center. The architect of the new pool was Douglas Harnsberger of Commonwealth Architects in Richmond.
- 115 Board of Directors' Minutes, October 24, 1929.
- 116 Cram's presence and the story that the Browning Room was modeled after his own library certainly lend credence to his personal involvement in the design of the building, despite the clear references to Godfrey at several stages. Cram's talk that day was entitled "Old Books for New Values," a topic appropriate both to the occasion and to Cram's philosophy.
- 117 Letter from Charles Gillette to Meta Glass dated October 25, 1929 [Presidential Files, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1929, A-H]. Charles Gillette was at that time becoming acknowledged as an expert on landscape design in Virginia. He had restored the gardens at Kenmore in Fredericksburg, under the auspices of the Garden Club of Virginia, and was working at Agecroft Hall and Virginia House in Richmond. George C. Longest, *Genius in the Garden, Charles F Gillette and Landscape Architecture in Virginia* (Richmond, 1992).
- 118 Meta Glass to Charles Gillette, October 29, 1929 [Presidential Files, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1929, A-H].
- 119 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Board of Overseers, November 7, 1929.
- 120 Charles Gillette to Meta Glass [Presidential Files, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1929, A-H].

- 121 Longest (p. 200) lists Sweet Briar as a client (#0361), but there is no record of work actually done for the college. He says that Gillette purged his files regularly. He "often destroyed materials he felt to be of no further use to the firm ... [as well as those] belonging to clients with whom he had had strong disagreements." (p. 173)
- 122 President's Report to Board of Overseers, May, 1930.
- 123 In 1935 Miss Elsetta Gilchrist, one of the first female graduates of the Cambridge School of Landscape Architecture (Sweet Briar, Class of 1927), became a "consultant on Grounds at Sweet Briar" [Board of Overseers Minutes, October 28, 1935]. She, too, failed to eliminate the road through the center of the campus.
- 124 As early as 1926 there are references to a gymnasium, but in September 1930 Cram wrote President Glass, "After much study and very careful consideration we have become convinced that the only prompt and efficient method of preparing plans for the proposed Sweet Briar Gymnasium is through placing this work in the hands of Messrs. Clark and Crowe. "The reasons he gave were" the technicalities and special requirements" of the building which "cannot properly be handled at long distance." He intimates that Cram and Ferguson will provide scale drawings for the exterior and that they are to see and approve all of the final drawings. A rendering of the Gymnasium by Cram and Ferguson exists, but it is quite different from what was built [RAC to MG, September 5, 1930: Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Gymnasium, 1930-31]. In 1925 Clark and Crowe had been the designing architects for the Mary Harley Health Center with Cram and Ferguson acting as Associates Architects.
- 125 RAC to MG, November 13, 1936 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1936: A-F].
- 126 RAC to MG, December 17, 1936 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1936: A-F].
- 127 MG to RAC, December 11, 1936 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1936: A-F].
- 128 RAC to MG, July 21, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence 1937, A-F]. The church Meta Glass mentioned is the Independent Presbyterian Church, Savannah, GA (1817-19) illustrated in Mills Lane, *Architecture of the Old South, Georgia* (Savannah, 1996).
- 129 MG to RAC, September 29, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence 1937, A-F].
- 130 RAC to MG, October 28, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence 1937, A-F]. Cram goes on to say that the second design "has been worked out, but the perspective sketch" isn't ready because Mr. Hoyle "who is the one to render these two interior perspectives and wishes to do so..." is on jury duty.
- 131 RAC to MG, November 15, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1937: A-C].
- 132 Ibid. The rest of the letter is filled with specific details about spacing of interior columns, the location of a small chapel to seat about 40 people, choir vesting rooms and quarters for visiting clergy. All of this indicates that Cram (and President Glass) were in the full throes of design for a building for which no funds existed. They actually seemed to egg each other on in their enthusiasm for a Cram-designed chapel.
- 133 MG to RAC, November 27, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1937: A-C].
- 134 MG to RAC, February 21, 1938. In Cram Archives of the Boston Public Library.
- 135 RAC to MG written from Beaufort, SC [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1938: A-F].
- 136 Telegram in presidential papers of Meta Glass at Sweet Briar College. Drawings for a proposed "Art Building" were sent in late August and, in a letter from Cram to Glass of October 1, reference is again made to a "Music-Drama-Speech Building."
- 137 Board of Overseers' Minutes, January 21, 1928.
- 138 Board of Overseers' Minutes, October 28, 1935
- 139 MG to RAC December 19, 1936 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1936: A-F]. In a December 14, 1936 letter to MG devoted primarily to the chapel designs, Cram had written, "...we are almost equally interested in the auditorium." [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1936: A-F].
- 140 Meta Glass to Charles Gillette: "[Mr. Cram ] thinks the entrance after one leaves the car should by all means be between Grammer and Randolph.... That [1928 Plot] plan was made while Mr. Cram was in Europe and he seriously objects to that auditorium." [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1929: A-H].
- 141 RAC to MG July 20, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1937: A-C].
- 142 RAC to MG August 25, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1937: A-C].
- 143 RAC to MG December 13, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1937: A-C].
- 144 Board of Overseers' Minutes, May 30, 1938
- 145 RAC to MG July 20, 1937 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1937: A-C] and RAC to MG November 12, 1940 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1940: A-G].
- 146 MG to RAC July 5, 1940 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1940: A-G].
- 147 RAC to MG July 8, 1940 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1940: A-G].
- 148 RAC to MG on October 11, 1940: "Since your visit to the office, we have found what seems to be an adequate topographical survey of that area where the proposed 'propylaea' may go" [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1940: A-G].
- 149 MG to RAC November 16 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1940: A-G].
- 150 Ibid.
- 151 RAC to MG November 27 [Presidential Files, Sweet Briar College, Correspondence, 1940: A-G].
- 152 Although there is no signature on the obituary, it is tempting to assign it to Meta Glass. A verbatim conversation between the two old friends is quoted and the general tone of the little essay is in keeping with her letters to the architect during the fifteen plus years of their association.

# A BUILDING CHRONOLOGY OF SWEET BRIAR

1900	Indiana Fletcher Williams dies	1928	Cochran Library (Cram and Ferguson) Riding Ring
1901	Sweet Briar Institute chartered Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson hired as architects	1929	Patteson House
1906	first students arrive buildings completed by Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson Academic/Benedict Gray (Dorm No. 1) Carson (Dorm No. 2) Refectory Power Plant, Laundry, Ice Factory Pump House (Wiley and Wilson) Faculty Row brick houses	1930	Book Shop, Post Office with Faculty apartments above (now Public Relations and Development) Gymnasium (Clarke and Crowe)
1908	Randolph (Dorm No. 3; Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson)	1937	Deanery, Faculty Row
1910	Manson (Dorm No. 4; Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson)	1941	Boat House (Pendleton Clark)
1912	Grammer (Dorm No. 5; Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson)	1956	Dew (Dorm No. 7; Moore and Hutchins)
1921	Music Box (originally library) Front Gates (gift of Faculty)	1960	Glass (Dorm No. 8; Clark, Nexon, Owen)
1922	Reid (Dorm No. 6; Cram and Ferguson)	1930	Babcock Fine Arts Center (Clark, Nexon Owen)
1923	Boxwood Inn (Clarke and Crowe) Hill House (apartments for maids by Clarke and Crowe) Fletcher (Cram and Ferguson) Mary Harley Health Center (Clarke and Crowe)	1964	Chapel (Oliver and Smith) Guion (Clark, Nexon, Owen) Dana Wing of Cochran Library
by 1926	stucco houses on Faculty Row	1969	Wailles Center (Clark, Nexon, Owen)
		1971	Rogers Riding Center (Charles Kestner)
		1975	Prothro Natatorium (Clark, Nexon, Owen)
		1980	Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (Clark, Nexon, Owen)
		1983	Prothro Commons (Marcellus, Wright, Cox, and Smith)

# EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

The exhibition is taken from two collections, the Cram and Ferguson Collection, Fine Arts Department, Boston Public Library. Loaned courtesy of The Trustees of the Boston Public Library (hereafter Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL), and the Cram Collection, Sweet Briar College Art Gallery (hereafter Cram Collection, SBC)

## CAMPUS PLANS

### **Block Plan** (Plate 1)

Sweetbriar Institute [Sweetbriar]  
Amherst County Virginia  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Scale 1/16" = 1'0"  
42 5/8" x 61 3/8"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **Copy of Plot Plan** (Plate 2)

LR: "This is a copy of a plot plan received from Sweet Briar original returned to Sweet Briar"  
LR: Dwg. No. S3  
43 1/3" x 61 1/4"  
mylar reproduction of linen original  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **Architectural Model** (Plate 3)

Showing Refectory, Academic, Pavilion /Bell Tower  
Dormitory No. 1/Gray and No. 2/Carson  
c. 1902  
35" x 54 1/2" x 9"  
painted wood  
Cram Collection, SBC

### **1928 Plot Plan** (Plate 34)

reproduction [original lost]

### **Longitudinal Section** (Title Page)

Chapel Section, Fine Arts, Administration, Library,  
Academic, Dormitory No. 1 /Gray, Refectory, Dormi-  
tory No. 3/Randolph, and Auditorium  
Sweetbriar College, Sweet Briar, VA.  
Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston, Massachusetts  
LR: "December 22, 1927/ S10"  
Scale 1"=80'0"  
8 1/4" x 19 3/4"  
Graphite on tissue paper  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## REFECTORY / PANNELL

### **East Elevation Refectory Detail [actually**

**South]** (Plate 4 )  
Sweetbriar Institute  
Amherst Virginia  
LR: in pencil, "Job 607"  
Stamped, "Cram Goodhue and Ferguson  
16 Beacon St Boston Mass  
No. 20 1-10-03  
Drawn by C.N.G.  
Traced by C.N.G."  
Scale 3/4" = 1'0"  
43" x 25"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **East Elevation Refectory [actually South]**

(Plate 5 )  
Sweetbriar Institute  
Amherst County, Virginia  
LL: in pencil, "Refectory"  
LR: Stamped, "Cram Goodhue and Ferguson  
Architects  
Exchange Building  
58 State St. Boston Mass."  
In pencil, "Job No. 607/ Dwg. #7Y"  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
24 5/8" x 42 3/4"  
ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **North Elevation [actually East]**

LL: in pencil, "Refectory"  
LR: in pencil, "Job # 607 Dwg. #6Y"  
Stamped, "Cram. Goodhue, and Ferguson  
Architects  
Exchange Building  
58 State St. Boston Mass."  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
24 3/4" x 42 1/2"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **Basement Plan** (Plate 7 )

LL: in pencil, "Refectory"  
LR: in pencil, "Job #607 Dwg. #3Y  
Sweetbriar Refectory"  
Stamped, "Cram. Goodhue, and Ferguson  
Architects  
Exchange Building  
58 State St. Boston Mass."  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
24 3/4" x 42 1/2"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **First Floor Plan Refectory** (Plate 8)

Sweetbriar Institute  
Amherst County, Virginia  
LR: Stamped, "Cram. Goodhue, and Ferguson  
Architects  
Exchange Building  
58 State St. Boston Mass."  
in pencil, "Job #607, Dwg. #4Y  
Sweetbriar Refectory"  
Scale 1/4"= 1'0"  
24 11/16" x 42 3/8"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Plan Scheme A, Plan Scheme B. Three-Quarter Inch Scale Detail** (Plate 6)

Refectory for Sweetbriar Institute  
Amherst County Virginia  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
15 Beacon Street Boston Mass  
LR: in pencil, "34, Job #607"  
Scale: 3/4" = 1'0"  
18" x 34 1/4"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## ACADEMIC / BENEDICT

**East Elevation Academic Building [actually South]** (Plate 9)

Sweet Briar College  
Sweet Briar, Virginia  
LL: in pencil, "Academic"  
LR: stamped, "Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson Architects"  
Exchange Building  
53 State Street Boston, Mass"  
LR: "Job No. 613 Dwg. No. 36"  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
24 1/4" x 42 5/8"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**East Elevation Academic Building Detail [actually South]** (Plate 11)

Sweetbriar Institute  
Amherst, VA  
LR: Stamped, "Cram Goodhue and Ferguson  
58 State Street Boston Mass  
No. 19 Jan. 12  
Drawn by H.C.B.  
Traced by H.C.B."  
in pencil, "Job 613"  
Scale 3/4" = 1'0"  
43 1/8" x 36 7/8"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Second Floor Plan Academic Building**

(Plate 10)  
Sweet Briar College  
Sweet Briar Virginia  
LR: Stamped, "Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Exchange Building  
53 State Street Boston, Mass"  
Job 613 Dwg. No. 34  
LR: in pencil, "5x"  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
25 5/8" x 42 5/8"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## DORMITORY NO. 1 / GRAY

**North Elevation No. 1 [Actually East]**

(Plate 12)  
C: in pencil, "Dorm #1"  
LR: in pencil, "Job #614" in circle, "7"  
Stamped, "Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Exchange Building  
53 State St., Boston, Mass"  
scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
18 1/4" x 42 3/8"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Second Floor Plan Dormitory No. 1**

(Plate 13)  
C: in pencil, "Dorm #1"  
LR: in pencil, "Job 614" in circle, "4"  
Stamped, "Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, Architects  
Exchange Building  
53 State St., Boston, Mass"  
scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
18 7/8" x 42 1/2"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Pavillion [sic] & Arcade to Dormitory No. 1**

(Plate 14)  
Sweetbriar Institute  
Amherst - Virginia  
C: Stamped, "Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, Architects  
Exchange Building  
53 State St., Boston, Mass"  
LR: in pencil, "Job #615", in circle, "2"  
scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
18 15/16" x 39 1/4"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## LAUNDRY & POWER PLANT

**Laundry** (Plate 15)

Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA.  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
LR: "Nov. 6, 1903"  
scale 1/4" = 1'0" and scale 1/8" = 1'0"  
21 1/4" x 39 3/4"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Power Plant** (Plate 16)

Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA.  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
LR: "Oct. 1903"  
Scale 1/8" = 1'0"  
20 7/8" x 39 3/8"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL



**Detail of Chimney Power Plant** (Plate 17)

Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA.  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
C: "Nov. 6, 1903"  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
39 3/4" x 20 3/4"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## PROFESSORS' HOUSES

**Front Elevation Professors House** (Plate 18)

At Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
24 5/8" x 21 13/16"  
ink and gouache on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Section on line A-B Professors House**

At Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
21 3/16" x 24 3/8"  
ink and gouache on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Plan of First Floor Professors House**

(Plate 19)  
At Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
24 3/8" x 21 1/8"  
ink and gouache on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Plan of Second Floor Professors House**

At Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
25" x 21 3/16"  
ink and gouache on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Plan of Third Floor Professors House**

At Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
24 5/8" x 21 5/16"  
ink and gouache on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Front [t] Elevation Professors House**

Sweet Briar Institute  
Amherst VA  
Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects  
Boston Mass  
in circle, "6"  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
24 3/8" x 22 7/8"  
ink and gouache on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## DORMITORY NO. 3 / RANDOLPH

**West Elevation Dorm<sup>FY</sup> No. 3**

LR: Stamped, "Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson  
Architects  
15 Beacon St., Boston, Mass."  
In pencil, "Job 611"  
UR: in circle, "4"  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
21 1/4" x 39 3/4"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**No. 11 3/4 Inch Scale Detail of Hall and Staircase/ Dormitory No. 3** (Plate 22, detail)

Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson: Architects: Boston & New York  
C: Stamped, "Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson  
Architects  
15 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.  
No. 11 April 18/08  
Drawn by J.A.W.  
Traced by J.A.W.  
Approved by FEC.  
LR: in pencil, "Job 611"  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
21 3/8" x 39 3/4"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Basement Plan Dorm<sup>FY</sup> No. 3** (Plate 20)

UR: in circle, "1"  
LR: in pencil, "Job 610"  
Stamped, "Cram, Goodhue, & Ferguson, Architects  
15 Beacon St., Boston, Mass."  
Scale 1/4" = 1'0"  
21" x 39 3/4"  
ink on linen  
Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **First Floor Plan Dormitory Number 3**

(Plate 21)

Sweetbriar Institute

Amherst-Virginia

LR: stamped, "Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson  
Architects

15 Beacon St., Boston, Mass."

UR: 2

LR: Randolph (in pencil)

Job 611 (in pencil)

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

21" x 39 3/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **DORMITORY NO. 4 / MANSON**

#### **East Elevation Dorm<sup>RY</sup> No. 4 [actually South]** (Plate 23)

Sweetbriar Institute, Amherst, VA

Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects Boston and  
New York

UR: in circle, "5"

LR: in pencil, "Job 610"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

22 3/8" x 36 3/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

#### **Basement Plan Dormitory Number 4**

(Plate 24)

Sweetbriar Institute

Amherst VA

Cram Goodhue and Ferguson, Architects  
Boston and New York

UR: in circle, "1"

LR: in pencil, "Job 610"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

22 1/4" X 37 1/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **DORMITORY NO. 5 / GRAMMER**

#### **West Elevation Dormitory No. 5** (Plate 25)

Sweet Briar Institute Amherst Va

Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects

Boston New York

UR: in circle, "5"

LR: in pencil, "Job #609, Dwg. #2Z"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

23 1/4" X 40 1/2"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

#### **Section A-B / South Elevation Dormitory No. 5**

Sweet Briar Institute Amherst Va

Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects

Boston New York

UR: in circle, "7"

LR: in pencil, "Job #609 / Dwg. #5Z"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

23 1/2" x 40 3/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

#### **Plan of Basement Floor Dormitory No. 5**

(Plate 26)

Sweet Briar Institute- Amherst Va

Cram Goodhue and Ferguson Architects

Boston New York

UR: in circle, "1"

LR: in pencil, "Job #609, Dwg. #4Z"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

23 3/8" x 40 5/8"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **DORMITORY NO. 6 / REID**

#### **Dormitory No. 6 [Presentation Drawing]**

(Plate 28)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar, Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects

248 Boylston Street

Boston, Mass

Clarke & Crowe Associate Architects

Lynchburg, VA

LR: "S8"

24" x 35"

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

#### **North Elevation Dormitory No. 6** (Plate 29)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Associate Architects Lynchburg Va

September 27, 1924 Drawing No. 5

Revised Oct. 31, 1924 Approved by RAC FWF

LR: in pencil, "Job 603", in circle, "5"

Scale: 1/4" = 1'0"

25 3/8" x 45 3/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Section A-A, B-B,C-C and Arcades between Dormitories 5 & 6 Dormitory No. 6,**

**Plot Plan** (Plate 27)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Associate Architects Lynchburg Va

September 27, 1924 Drawing No. 8

Revised Oct. 31, 1924 Approved by RAC FWF

LR: in pencil, "Job 603", in circle, "8"

Scale: 1/4" - 1'0", 1/50" = 1'0", 1/8"=1'0"

25 1/4" x 45 3/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**Ground Floor Plan Dormitory No. 6** (Plate 30)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Associate Architects Lynchburg Va

September 27, 1924 Drawing No. 1 Approved by RAC

FWF

Revised Oct. 31, 1924

LR: in pencil, " Reid Job 603" in circle, "1"

Scale: 1/4" = 1'0"

25 1/4" x 46"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**First Floor Plan Dormitory No. 6**

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Associate Architects Lynchburg Va

September 27, 1924 Drawing No. 2

Revised Oct. 31, 1924 Approved by RAC FWF

LR: in pencil, "Job 603", in circle, "2"

Scale: 1/4" = 1'0"

25 3/8" x 45 3/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## ADMINISTRATION BUILDING / FLETCHER

**Administration Building [Presentation Drawing]** (Plate 31)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar, Virginia

Cram & Ferguson, Architects

248 Boylston Street Boston, Mass

Clarke & Crowe, Associate Architects

Lynchburg, Virginia

LR: in pencil, "S7/ 10/27/24"

24" x 34"

graphite and colored pencil on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

**South Elevation Administration Building**

(Plate 32)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Associate Architects Lynchburg VA

Sept:27, 1924...Drawing No. 5...Approved by RAC

Revised Oct. 31, 1924

C: in pencil, "Fletcher Hall"

LR: in pencil, "Job #603" in circle, "5"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

24 2/4" x 41 5/8"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

**First floor Plan Administration Building**

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Associate Architects Lynchburg VA

Sept:27: 1924...Drawing No. 2...Approved by RAC

Revised Oct. 31, 1924

C: in pencil, "Fletcher Hall"

LR: in pencil, "Job #602, in circle, "2"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

24 1/4" x 41 3/4"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## LIBRARY

**Proposed Library [Presentation Drawing]**

(Plate 33)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar, Virginia

Cram and Ferguson, Architects

Boston, Massachusetts

LR:"Scheme J S45"

14 1/2" x 12"

Graphite on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

**Proposed Library** (Cover and Plate 35)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar, Virginia

Cram and Ferguson, Architects

Signed in Grass, C:"C. S. Clapp / Oct. 1928"

LR: 10/16/28

15" x 27"

Graphite on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

### **Typical Bay and Front Entrance Library**

(Acknowledgements Page)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar, Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Assoc Archts Lynchburg VA

Approved RAC Dec. 15. 1928

LL: in pencil, "Job 604", in circle, "12"

Scale 3/4" = 1'0"

48" x 32 1/2"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **Second Floor Plan Library** (Plate 36)

Sweet Briar College

Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston Mass

Clark and Crowe Assoc Archts Lynchburg VA

Approved RAC Dec. 15. 1928

LR: in pencil, "Job 604", in circle, "5"

Scale 1/4" = 1'0"

32 1/2" x 48"

ink on linen

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

## CHAPEL

### **Proposed Chapel [Presentation Drawing Exterior]** (Plate 38)

Sweetbriar College

Cram and Ferguson Architects

Boston, Massachusetts

LL: J-792 / S-16 / Jan. 3, 1938

21" x 17"

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

### **Proposed Chapel [Presentation Drawing Interior]** (Plate 37)

Sweetbriar College

Cram and Ferguson Architects

Boston, Massachusetts

LR Jan 3. 1938 JOB 792 DR 5

21 1/2" x 19"

Graphite and watercolor on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

### **First Floor Plan Proposed Chapel [Presentation Drawing]**

Sweetbriar College

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston, Massachusetts

LR: J-792, DR NO. S-18

15" x 22"

Graphite and gouache on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

## FINE ARTS BUILDING

### **Scheme D, Proposed Fine Arts Building [Presentation Drawing]** (Plate 39)

Sweet Briar College

Cram and Ferguson Architects Boston, Massachusetts

LL: Sept. 2, 1937 / J. No. 606 / D. No. S-27

14" x 24"

Graphite on paper.

Cram Collection, SBC

### **Proposed Fine Arts Building [Presentation Drawing]** (Plate 40)

Sweetbriar College

Cram and Ferguson Architects

Boston, Massachusetts

LL: J-606 / S-48 / Mar. 1, 1938

14" x 24"

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

Cram Collection, SBC

## PROPYLAEA

### **Suggestion for East Entrance to Campus** (Plate 41)

Sweet Briar College Sweet Briar Virginia

Cram and Ferguson Architects

LR: "Job No 606 Dwg No S-50

Nov. 8. 1940"

Scale 1/8" = 1'0"

24 1/4" x 36 1/4"

graphite on tissue

Cram and Ferguson Collection, BPL

### **Entrance to Campus [Presentation Drawing]** (Plate 42)

View Between Proposed Auditorium and Randolph Hall

Sweet Briar College Virginia

LR: Cram & Ferguson Architects

Roger Haywood Del. January 30, 1928 / S2 General

19 1/2" x 14 1/2"

Graphite on paper

Cram Collection,

# GLOSSARY

Douglas Harnsberger  
Susan Smither

**ARCADE** A covered walkway whose roof is supported by a series of archways on both sides. It is also referred to as a *loggia* when one side is attached to a larger building.

**BALUSTER** A straight or turned decorative vertical element in a railing.

**BALUSTRADE** A series of balusters placed between a top rail and a bottom rail to form a railing.

**BARREL VAULT** A masonry vaulted ceiling whose form is a semicircle in cross section. The proposed Sweet Briar Chapel ceiling is an example.

**BAY** The organizational division of a building's façade into units as typically determined by window and door openings. Also used to describe the interior division of a building, especially churches.

**BELFRY** A bell tower or a room in which bells are located. A belfry is an element of the Pavilion at Sweet Briar.

**BLUE PRINTS** Copies of architectural drawings produced through direct contact of the original drawing with light sensitive paper. The image produced is in reverse – white lines appear on a dark blue background. Blue prints were used for working drawings, but not as final presentation drawings. They have largely been replaced today by large scale photocopying.

**BROKEN SEGMENTAL PEDIMENT** A segmental pediment is a pediment formed from a segment of a semi-circle, not a triangular form. A “broken” segmental pediment is one with a section removed at the top. It is sometimes infilled with a decorative feature. Segmental and broken pediments are often used to highlight classical entrances such as at Cochran Library.

**CALCIMINE** A coating of calcium, glue and water applied over finish plaster walls in preference to paint.

**CAPITAL** The uppermost decorative element of a classical column. Benedict, Fletcher and Reid Halls provide examples at Sweet Briar.

**CARTOUCHE** A low relief ornament typified by scroll motifs around a circular convex panel bearing an inscription or crest. See the limestone cartouche at Cochran Library.

**CAST STONE** An artificial stone formed from concrete consisting of cement, sand and crushed stone fragments.

**CHIPPENDALE** A chinese style rail detail as popularized by Thomas Chippendale's *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director* (1754) and a favorite rail design of Jefferson's Monticello.

**COMPOSITION** An early synonym for pre-cast concrete, which is composed principally of sand, crushed stone and Portland cement. It is a less refined version of cast stone.

**CORINTHIAN** The most formal of the three fundamental classical Roman orders (Doric, Ionic and Corinthian), it is characterized by columns with slender proportions, an ornate capital with rows of acanthus leaves and fern-like volutes, and an elaborate entablature.

**CUPOLA** A domed structure placed in an elevated position, often on the ridgeline of a roof. The Cupola on the Refectory is an example at Sweet Briar.

**DENTIL** A small tooth-like block found in series as part of an entablature on the Ionic and Corinthian orders.

**DIAPHRAGM WINDOW; THERMAL WINDOW** A semicircular window divided into three parts by two vertical lines. It was used in Roman Thermae or baths.

**DORIC** The most masculine of the three fundamental classical Roman orders (Doric, Ionic and

Corinthian), it is characterized by columns of sturdy proportions, a simple capital, and entablature with stacked bands of concave, convex and flat moldings.

**EAVE LINE** The lowest edge of a roof projection over an exterior wall.

**EGG AND DART** A motif used on entablatures and moldings which consists of alternating oval and spear-shaped elements.

**ENTABLATURE** The part of an architectural order which is located above a column line and below the roof. It is further divided into sections of moldings: the lowest of which is the architrave; the middle is the frieze and the uppermost is the cornice.

**FAÇADE** Generally used to describe the front elevation, or wall, of a building, it can also refer to secondary elevations.

**FIELDDED** Referring to something divided into separate fields, such as with a geometric pattern.

**FLAT ARCH** An “arch” which does not arc, but is essentially horizontal. The slanted bricks and key-stone lock the arch in its horizontal position. Reid Hall has examples of flat arches.

**FLEMISH BOND** A technique of brick laying whereby headers, the short end, alternate with stretchers, the long side, and the pattern alternates each course. Often the header has been glazed giving it a darker color and creating a pleasing pattern. The Flemish bond pattern can be seen throughout Sweet Briar College.

**FLOOR PLAN** A drawing indicating the layout of a building's exterior and interior walls as seen at a horizontal section cut a few feet above the floor.

**FLUTED COLUMNS** Columns which have vertical concave grooves equally spaced around its circumference.

**FOLLY** A structure placed in the landscape to provide amusement or to accent a view.

**FRIEZE** The central part of an entablature, it is char-

acterized by a flat plane on which ornamental motifs are placed according to the appropriate classical style.

**GABLE ROOF** A simple pitched roof forming two triangular shaped pediments at the end walls.

**HIPPED ROOF** A roof pitched inward at an angle on all four sides of a building.

**IONIC** The most feminine of the three fundamental classical Roman orders (Doric, Ionic and Corinthian), it is characterized by columns of slender proportions, an elegant capital with large volutes on the front and back, and an elegant entablature. *Variation:* SCAMOZZI IONIC – Named after Italian architect Vincenzo Scamozzi (1552-1616), the volutes on a Scamozzi Ionic capital appear on all four sides and are turned out at 45 degree angle on each “corner.” Fletcher Hall has examples of Scamozzi Ionic capitals.

**KEYSTONE** The wedge-shaped block at the top of an arch which bears the forces from both sides and holds the arch in place.

**LINENS; INK-ON-LINEN** Original finished architectural drawings executed with ink on linen fabric. Linens were the preferred form of presentation drawing until the 1950s.

**LOGGIA** An attached arcade or colonnaded porch. Sweet Briar House has a second story loggia.

**MACADAMIZE** An early method of a gravel and asphalt paved road surface developed by Scottish civil engineer, John Loudon McAdam (1756-1836).

**PARTERRE** A formal patterning method for gardens whereby flat planes of planting beds are geometrically arranged. Cram’s perspective draw-

ings illustrate parterre gardens.

**PEDIMENT** The triangular element comprised of sloped gables and horizontal cornice found on the front of a portico or above doorways and windows. It can also appear as a segmental arch as at Cochran Library.

**PIANO NOBILE** (*italian*) The main living level in a house, located one story above the entry ground level. Benedict Hall alludes to a piano nobile with its large second floor loggia.

**PILASTER** A nonstructural engaged pillar, ornamented as a half column.

**PILLAR** A generic term for any vertical support such as a column, pier or post.

**PLOT PLAN** A site plan illustrating the layout for specific plots of land, typically to make legal ownership distinctions.

**PORTICO** A pedimented projecting entry porch supported by columns.

**PRESENTATION DRAWING** An architectural drawing prepared for the explicit purpose of presenting the final design proposal, often in perspective with site context, in a manner aesthetically pleasing to the client and therefore utilizing high quality materials and techniques.

**PROPYLAEA** (*greek*) A gated structure serving as the main entryway into a precinct.

**QUOINING** Blocks of masonry forming the corner of a building which originally provided structural support and were later employed for visual effect only.

**RUSTICATION** A method of accentuating the joints between blocks of stone by beveling the corners or recessing mortar joints in order to give a stur-

dier appearance.

**SECTION; CROSS SECTION** A type of architectural drawing where an imaginary cut line is made through an elevation, revealing the profile of the cut elements and the elevation of what is visible beyond the cut plane.

**STRINGCOURSE; BELT COURSE** A projecting horizontal course of decorative exterior masonry which wraps the building and often expresses the location of interior floor heights.

**VOLUTE** A scroll-like form used as the primary ornament on an Ionic capital and as a complementary ornament to acanthus leaves on Corinthian capitals.

**WHEEL WINDOW** A circular window with a minimum of eight tracery elements radiating outward from the center. Below the Pavilion/Bell Tower at Sweet Briar is a wheel window.

**WORKING DRAWING** A technical architectural drawing emphasizing measurements and details, intended to be used by architects and contractors for construction purposes, not for presentation purposes.



