Tangible Heritage:
Preservation of Architectural Records within the Historic Preservation Movements of Boston, Massachusetts.

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ABSTRACT

The historic preservation and archival professions have charged themselves with protecting the irreplaceable, providing communities with tangible traces to their historical context. Although these two professions share a similar purpose, they have developed independently of one another and failed to identify or capitalize on collaborative opportunities to improve the context of the built environment through the use of original architectural records. Through a discussion of the progression of the American historic preservation movements (1850-1940 and 1950-present) and the development of the Massachusetts Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (massCOPAR), this research explores the missed opportunities for these preservation and archival communities to engage in symbiotic collaboration.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

“American tradition, born in migration and shaped in growth, is a tradition of progress through change and improvement... We must include in our concept of progress a proper environment… Historic preservation is vital to our quest for a better environment. If the past is the foundation of the present, then historic preservation is the cornerstone upon which efforts to improve present America can be built.”

– The National Register of Historic Places, 1969

While the American way of life is focused on progress and innovation there has consistently been a segment of the population concerned with the preservation of our national, regional, state and local tangible cultural heritage. Two professions concentrate on the protection of tangible cultural heritage are historic preservation and archives. Historic preservation fixed its interest on physical structures and sites, while archives protect the non-current records of everyday activity of individuals, groups, institutions, and governments that contain information of enduring value. Despite having significant overlap in their interests, these two professional communities developed independently in their roles as caretakers of historically and culturally significant materials with little recognition of the other’s efforts. As these two professions developed in a similar timeline and with similar missions, the multitude of missed opportunities for the archival and preservation professions to engage with one another is underappreciated by both communities, despite the symbiotic benefit they would gain from better-coordinated efforts.

The development of the collaborative inter-disciplinary grassroots regional organization, the Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (COPAR) in the late 1970s exemplifies both the potential and disconnectedness of the archival and historic preservation professions. Forty years after the formalization of the archival profession (1934) the first COPAR was established in New York City in 1977, followed shortly after by the Massachusetts chapter (massCOPAR) in 1978. The purpose of these regionally oriented organizations was to locate and preserve architectural records within their immediate community. COPARs derived from the collective effort of architects, librarians, preservationists, architectural historians and archivists interested in locating and preserving architectural records.3 This organization recognized that the issue of preserving architectural records was not solely a concern of archivists and worked to establish collaboration for the fullest preservation of architectural materials while maintaining the conventional silos of their professions. Despite the personal involvement of a few preservationists within the massCOPAR, this organization did not engage the profession of preservationists, nor did it identify its work as supportive of preservationists’ work. As a volunteer-based organization the massCOPAR was successful in completing a major survey of existing architectural records throughout the greater-Boston area, publishing a newsletter and several guidelines for best practice treatment of architectural records, and hosted an interdisciplinary Symposium all within its short 15-year lifetime. Although massCOPAR was only active for a short time (1978-1992), its impact on the archival profession persists.

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The timing of the development of COPARs is significant as a reflection of the maturation of the archival profession, but also within the context of historic preservation. Historic preservation developed out of regional efforts that experimented with a variety of preservation techniques and theories that built the current profession. Cultivated out of private efforts, the melding of advocacy and technical preservation became a tradition that created two major waves of public interest and support. The first movement of national historic preservation, 1850-1940, established the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The National Park Service (NPS), with the support of 1930s New Deal programs, was able to build upon this firm legislative footing to establish a centralized preservation authority. With a clear mission and the formalized coordination of regional organizations and the NPS, the second national historic preservation movement quickly rekindled after World War II. The aggressive federal urban renewal projects of the 1950s reinvigorated the preservationists’ fight to uphold “the public’s right and responsibility to control the urban environment.” The nationally oriented second movement, led by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, resulted in the passage of the 1966 Historic Preservation Act and subsequent tax acts providing financial support to preservation programs.

massCOPAR’s collection and preservation of architectural records followed a similar local and regional focus as historic preservation. The feasibility of tackling the tasks of locating, identifying and preserving architectural records determined by the regional initiatives has guided the focus of this research to Boston’s historic preservation movements as an integral case study of the national historic preservation movements to

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document the changes in practice and theory of preservation. Boston’s historic preservation efforts are significant, not for its unique story, but because other cities followed its example.\textsuperscript{5} The longevity of Boston’s private and public preservation efforts, as well as the numerous well-established archives and architectural firms make Boston an ideal landscape for discussing the presence and significance of architectural records within the historic preservation movement. Particularly since the practices developed and endorsed during the first historic preservation movement (1850-1940) by Boston, were powerfully influential in the evolution of the national and regional historic preservation practices well into the second movement (1950-present).\textsuperscript{6}

At this point, it is important to clarify the terminology and focus of this research, as both architectural records and architectural drawings will be discussed, but the drawings will be the focus. Architectural drawings refer solely to the plans, sketches, renderings, perspectives, elevations and other visual communication tools about the layout and design of a structure. Architectural records refer to all documents created by an architect during their course of business, including architectural drawings as well as contracts, budgets, correspondence, etc. While massCOPAR was concerned about the complete collection of an architect’s work, this research focuses on the preservation and use of original architectural drawings that were created for the initial construction or renovations of a structure, and have the capacity to provide greater insight into the architect’s intention and the context of their constructed design.

\textsuperscript{5} Michael Holleran, \textit{Boston’s “Changeful Times”}, 10.
Although historic preservation as a practice has a long history in the United States, the “historical scholarship in American preservation is still at an early stage,” resulting in a dearth of publications about the history of this profession and its movements as they have developed.\(^7\) The archival profession finds itself in a similar predicament as a profession in flux and constantly shifting for practical application. As both professions developed, they cultivated their own professional organizations, journals, and formal academic programs, establishing a discourse for pertinent issues in their fields. The mention of original architectural records within either of these professions is extremely limited until the 1970s and the creation of massCOPAR. Despite the success of massCOPAR to raise awareness of original architectural records for archivists and, to a lesser degree, historic preservationists, neither profession has formally discussed the potential for integration or collaboration over these records.

Archivists, architects and historic preservationists have varying degrees of appreciation for original drawings. Archivists recognize that these records have diverse initial value with the unlimited potential as tools for architectural education, architectural history scholarship, and utilitarian purposes of renovation, preservation and maintenance of structures. Architects, as a profession, have been noted to have minimal interest in their records after the completion of their project, thus hindering the availability, access and condition of historic or out-of-use architectural records.\(^8\) The architects’ disinterest


\(^8\) Implied in massCOPAR’s publications about preservation and maintenance of architectural records for architecture firms and from the results for their 1979-1980
and neglect of their records poses an additional challenge to archivists interested in collecting and preserving their papers. Historic preservationists have traditionally been unaware of the availability of architectural records until the late 1980s. Until that point, preservationists pointed to the built structure as the ultimate document, with the fullest context of the structure up until preservation efforts began, which had the unintentional side affect of maligning original architectural drawings. The role of architects is significant in the overall creation and collection of original architectural drawings, but it is the parallel struggle of archivists and preservationists to protect and share the product of an architects’ vision and design that this research intends to reconcile.

Beginning with the historic preservation movement, chapter one offers a vignette of two watershed preservation projects of national interest: President George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate (Mount Vernon, Virginia) and the reconstruction of the Colonial Williamsburg village (Williamsburg, Virginia). These two case studies provide insight into the broad spectrum of preservation work done throughout the first preservation movement (1850-1940). Chapter two provides a fuller narrative of the first preservation movement, and the significant role the social elite of Boston played in developing the amateur hobby into a formal profession. Boston’s preservation community, led by socialite William Sumner Appleton (1874-1947), helped build the theoretical discourse, established early guidelines for best practices through experimentation, and developed a network of concerned citizens to cultivate an effective survey about the existence and condition of architectural records in the greater Boston area.

9 “Successful preservation and planning could be accomplished only if undertaken in terms of total context of each building.” Elizabeth D. Mulloy, The History of the National Trust, 90.
public presence. The third chapter outlines the development of the second preservation movement (1950-present), identifying the continuities between the two movements, as well as the maturation of the preservation profession over time. Following this chronology, chapter four shifts topics from preservation to archival efforts; discussing the role massCOPAR has played in facilitating interdisciplinary collaborative partnerships and raising awareness of the value and existence of original architectural records. Throughout these chapters the opportunities for the archival and preservation professions to participate in the larger conversation about preservation and curation of the built environment are identified, and the failure for those opportunities to be seized is discussed. The final chapter offers identifies further areas of study and forecasts how the developing interests of the archival and preservation communities bring them closer to the precipice of collaborative engagement.

The relationship between the archival and historic preservation communities is not contentious; it is not a case of malicious exclusion by one profession of the other, it is an unfortunate story of a variety of missed opportunities for collaboration between two inherently related professions. Inspired by the development of the work of massCOPAR, this research explores how the silos of the archival and historic preservation professions have prevented them from appreciating potential interdisciplinary symbiotic partnerships. Neither historic preservation nor archival literature discussing architectural records mentions their associated concerns until the 1970s. Even after this threshold and the emergence of the archival voice on the topic of architectural records, little attention was given to either missed opportunities or the active preservation community’s benefit from the archival field’s efforts. In following the development of massCOPAR and the historic
preservation movements’ practices, interests, and mission this research will identify where these opportunities were overlooked by both the archival and preservation communities.
Chapter 1: Watershed Preservation Moments

“Without original plans reconstruction (or accurate reconstruction) cannot be accomplished.”
– Normal Tyler

Historic preservation in the United States has been, and always will be, politically, economically, socially and culturally contentious. Through the historic preservation rhetoric that emphasizes cultural heritage, incorporates nostalgic imagery of previous generations, and implies collectivism and inclusivity, the selection process of significant buildings has a firm foundation in establishing a dominant narrative. As the wealthy and dominant population was first to write the nation’s history, they have also controlled the design of the landscape and determined how a society will remember itself. Discussing cultural and historical significance, and identifying spaces and structures that embody or represent collective memory is an incredibly sensitive and precarious undertaking. Two of the most nationally significant and groundbreaking historic preservation projects were the saving and restoration of President George Washington’s home, Mount Vernon, and the colonial settlement in Williamsburg, Virginia (hereafter referred to as Colonial Williamsburg). These two projects were watershed moments for the preservation movement. Mount Vernon mixed private and public fundraising efforts in the first national preservation campaign, and Colonial Williamsburg reframed preservationists’ concerns from individual structures to a broader context and environment. Although the preservation community considers both projects to be

successful early examples of preservation, their varying use of documentation, emphasis on architecture and historical significance, and intended outcomes, frames Colonial Williamsburg as a more interpretive and thus less authentic product.

Mount Vernon’s preservation campaign amplified America’s interest in its collective history. The universal significance of George Washington as the nation’s founding father solicited support in the early 1850s to purchase the estate from the occupying descendent of the first President, John A. Washington, who offered the entire estate for sale to the federal government in 1853. Despite the political turmoil of the late 1850s, which resulted in the outbreak of the Civil War, a nation-wide campaign soliciting donations for the purchase was fruitful, and with donations from northern, southern, and western sections of the country, the homestead of the nation’s first President was saved. The success of the Mount Vernon preservation effort, both prior to and after the Civil War (1861-1865), is the direct result of its apolitical message of fundamental patriotism.³

As a nationally significant estate, Mount Vernon served as an ideal test case in appealing for government intervention and wide-reaching solicitation of private investment in historic preservation. The main house of Mount Vernon was constructed between 1757-1778 and remained under continued ownership by the Washington family, allowing for meticulous records to persist and support the accurate restoration and reconstruction of even the simplest structures during the 1860s effort.⁴ Washington’s picturesque Georgian style Mansion had become an emblem of patriotism and inspired

⁴ Norman Tyler, Historic Preservation, 194-195.
the construction of replicas that proliferated the nation’s landscape. The significance of Mount Vernon’s architectural style as an emblem of patriotism helped establish a tradition of American architecture that became a core value as the preservation movement gained momentum. The Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association (MVLA) utilized the popularity of George Washington and their iconic image of his home to become the driving force of the campaign to preserve the claimed national monument. Their campaign used available documentation in conjunction with archaeological techniques that became standard practice of preservation.⁵

Seventy years passed between the preservation of Mount Vernon and the recreation of Colonial Williamsburg. The approaches and techniques used in each project reflect the consistencies and evolution of the discipline’s practices during the first preservation movement. While Mount Vernon had well-kept records, was prepared to become a museum, and had national investment (public and private), Colonial Williamsburg required more mediation to appreciate its historic significance, had numerous complex relationships with residents, and was solely funded by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. While Mount Vernon transitioned from utilitarian use to being preserved in less than a century, almost 150 years lapsed between the flourishing years of Williamsburg (1699-1780) and its immense restoration project begun in the 1920s. This lapse of time, in addition to predominance of vernacular structures and the availability of structural remains, shaped the preservation effort of Williamsburg. The emphasis on

architectural significance over other better-documented topics, such as culture and commerce, guided the intensive research efforts of Colonial Williamsburg to first produce the appearance of a Colonial town and secondly reflect the Colonial way of life. Without readily available architectural records to support the architecture-oriented research, archaeological techniques were favored.\(^6\) As the project evolved from a collection of buildings into the recreation of a community, the limited documentation that was previously discounted due to its lack of architectural information was given more weight. It became clear that inventories, insurance policies, engravings, and photographs provided valuable information about the town’s social and economic history.\(^7\) This supplemental, non-architectural material has continued to be used by preservationists to discern the relationships original Williamsburg citizens had with their built environment.

Historic preservationists’ reliance on the built structure and archaeological techniques during the first preservation movement (1850-1940) was largely the result of their focus on colonial structures built in the 17\(^{th}\) and 18\(^{th}\) centuries that rarely had original architectural records. Southern cities of Savannah, Georgia; Charleston, South Carolina; and New Orleans, Louisiana promoted a more inclusive approach to preservation that expanded its scope to appreciate the significance of places in combination with buildings. These preservation efforts recognized the intertwined relationship between a community’s identity and its spaces, and sought to preserve the founding sections of their ever-growing cities. With the assumption that original


\(^7\) Edward A. Chappell, the Roberts Director of Architectural and Archaeological Research at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, email message to author, February 28, 2013; Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age*, 44.
architectural drawings were not available, preservationists intuitively adopted archaeological techniques to date and determine the authenticity of structures’ attributes. Thus they valued the built structure as the definitive historical document.

As the preservation movement gained momentum in the first decades of the 20th century, the archaeological methods used in Colonial Williamsburg had become conventional practice. These conventions, in tandem with the growing association of morality with the built environment (a philosophy promoted out of Harvard College and the greater Boston preservation movement) guided the preservation of Williamsburg with an agenda of creating a nostalgic image of colonial times.8 The aesthetic of the past was associated with hardworking puritanical colonists and the Victorian age of conservative values, both of which have identifiable architectural styles. As preservationists struggled against the pressure of progress, new construction, and the increased presence of vice they associated with the modernizing world, they emphasized the value of Colonial and Victorian structures as the products of a morally superior community and thus worth saving. With this outlook and a variety of evidence, the Colonial Williamsburg project administrator, Dr. William Archer Rutherfoord Goodwin, attempted to capture the sentimental essence of a former generation of Americans within the several hundred buildings of Williamsburg Village.9 Due to the size and remote location of Colonial Williamsburg, compromises were made between maintaining the accuracy of the preservation ensured by tireless research and creating provision of convenient

9 Norman Tyler, Historic Preservation, 194-195.
accommodations for tourists. These compromises result in a more accessible historic site, albeit with a hint of inaccuracy to account for tourists’ automobiles, lodging, and restaurants.\textsuperscript{10}

Historic preservation has often been presented with the altruistic ambition of saving pieces of American history; however, particularly with the first wave of preservation, this ambition was entwined with agendas to protect a particular version of America’s history. This distinct perspective is clearly seen in the preservation efforts of both Mount Vernon and Colonial Williamsburg. Mount Vernon’s campaign began during the early rumblings of the Civil War (1853), and after successfully fundraising to purchase the property in 1858, the MVLA diplomatically delayed their work until after the Civil War, at which time they promoted the preservation effort as a means to overcome the differences between the Confederacy and Union.\textsuperscript{11} Using nostalgic rhetoric and the symbol of George Washington as the father of all parts of the nation, the MVLA’s work demonstrated preservation’s ability to transcend hostile situations and audiences. The MVLA’s work was augmented by the great centennial celebration in Philadelphia from 1876-1877 that reinforced the patriotic sentiment for the nation’s history in general and through maintaining its landscape. After the Civil War the MVLA continued to promote their work as a vital good for the nation and attempted to maintain neutral patriotism to avoid isolating or offending a particular segment of the white American population.

\textsuperscript{10} Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., \textit{Preservation Comes of Age}, 54.
The Colonial Williamsburg project also marketed itself as providing a vital good for the nation, but as a solely funded venture, by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., it was able to control the patriotic message, the intangible “spirit of the past”, through the recreation of this significant and picturesque colonial town.\textsuperscript{12} Up until this time the preservation movement preferred preserving structures in \textit{situ}. The Colonial Williamsburg project relocated and restored 88 original buildings, in addition to recreating several hundred others that had been identified through various documents and educated assumptions to create a consolidated environment.\textsuperscript{13} This deviation was necessary to effectively recreate the total and concentrated colonial environment Goodwin and Rockefeller had envisioned, as the original colonial town had become dispersed across the landscape and intermingled with contemporary structures.\textsuperscript{14} The drastic actions of relocation and reconstruction have opened Colonial Williamsburg (opened in 1933), and other museum town efforts up to criticism of authenticity and as overt examples of historical bias. These larger projects had intended messages or experiences for their visitors that they formed through technical preservation efforts as well as introducing interpretation and curation of the historically significant sites and spaces into preservation.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{12} Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., \textit{Preservation Comes of Age}, 11.  \\
\textsuperscript{13} It was during this massive project that the public began to accept the idea that architects as restorers, thus discounting or ignoring the influential and invaluable role of scholars such as A. Edwin Kendrew as decision makers. Ibid., 52.  \\
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 43.  \\
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 45.
\end{flushleft}
CHAPTER 2: Historic Preservation – The First Movement

“Better preserve than repair, better repair than restore, better restore than reconstruct.”
– Frederick L. Rath, Jr.

While progress and innovation are marketed as the cornerstones of American culture, there has consistently been a population of citizens concerned about the condition of the nation’s historical record. Within the context of the older and better-established European practice of historic preservation, America was insecure in its youthfulness in identifying structures and places of historic significance. Without the centuries-old structures that covered the countryside of England and France to easily point to as part of a past worth preserving, the earliest American colonies of Massachusetts and Virginia led the American historic preservation effort and established American preservation as a “distinctive tradition.” With two of the most historically rich and socially developed landscapes, Massachusetts and Virginia offered the largest concentrations of sites and structures significant to America’s early history.

Beginning in the early 1800s, American preservationists focused on protecting local and national history through the historical artifacts of the built and public

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environment.\textsuperscript{4} This gradual development of America’s interest in its history first manifested as the demarcation of historically significant places, events and objects with commemorative monuments. In constructing a “built heritage” Americans prioritized the monument, disregarding the actual structures or sites being commemorated and sometimes demolishing the remains of historical sites being memorialized. Boston and Cambridge were not immune to this practice, as exemplified by the construction of the Bunker Hill Memorial that ironically eradicated the remnants of the landscape of the memorialized event. This practice was discontinued as preservationists began to appreciate the added context provided by the surrounding area of a historically significant site or structure.\textsuperscript{5} With dense populations of citizens proud of their history, these cities played a significant role in guiding best practices of preservation and promoting preservation as part of the narrative of American history. Once Americans “began to acknowledge a built heritage on their own side of the Atlantic” they became concerned about preserving and restoring it.\textsuperscript{6}

Historic preservation and heritage conservation scholar Ned Kaufman outlines the appropriate yet diverse use of the term historic preservation that includes “the protection, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of communities, areas, structures, sites and objects having historic, architectural, social or cultural significance.”\textsuperscript{7} Differentiating between these similar actions is key to understanding the variation between American

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{7} \textit{With Heritage so Rich}. Compiled by the United States Conference of Mayors Special Committee on Historic Preservation. (New York: Random House, 1966), 208.
and European historic preservation practices. Europeans first restored their historic structures, rebuilding or returning to a former condition, before they were able to begin to preserve them. Learning from the development of European preservation practices, Americans had the privilege of establishing a proactive practice for preserving their structures in their existing condition, preventing the need for drastic restoration efforts. The American preference for preservation over restoration is the direct result of Englishman John Ruskin’s heeded advice to “take proper care of your monuments and you will not need to restore them.”

Ruskin played an integral role in the early preservation debates in Europe, which had a lasting impact on American preservation practices. The debate over preservation practices includes a wide spectrum of opinions, but can be compressed into two schools: John Ruskin’s purist preservation and Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc enhanced restoration. Ruskin believed that preservation was about maintaining a historic structures’ current condition. He acknowledged the building as a living object that evolved over time, and respected those changes as part of the building’s story. In contrast, Viollet-le-Duc approached preservation as an opportunity to maximize the potential of a historic structure. This practice included introducing additional details and attributes of the historic period to produce the most exemplary structure of its intended period or style. These alterations were particularly contentious when those attributes were not mentioned.

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8 Michael Holleran, “America’s Early Historic Preservation Movement (1850-1930) in a Transatlantic Context”, Towards World Heritage. 188.
9 Norman Tyler, Historic Preservation. 191.
or intended in the original structure. This debate continued into the American preservation discourse and was reflected in the evolution of preservation tactics implemented as Americans increasingly valued their history.

Before the historic preservation profession was formally developed, a tradition of discussing practical applications of individual case studies was established. Building upon early American architectural texts, such as *The Country Builder’s Assistant* (1797), preservationists framed their discussion within the craft-centric architecture profession, rather than establishing a theoretical discourse. The architecture profession’s action-oriented nature and structure-focused outlook has permeated the preservation movements’ efforts and discourse, concerning itself with practical application and implementation. This influence is clearly depicted in the way historic preservationists understand their work “to include the protection, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of communities, areas, structures, sites and objects having historic, architectural, social or cultural significance.” These instructive materials produced were, and continue to be, the standard form for communicating amongst historic preservationists, amateur and professional alike.

These early publications stressed the importance of the built environment, establishing structures as the ultimate document in understanding the cityscape and culture. While these organizations had long-term goals they recognized the constant imminent danger their projects faced, and focused their publications on advocacy and

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12 With Heritage so Rich, 208.
current activities to keep their readership engaged. As these organizations gained strength
and the feeling of permanency particularly the Society for the Preservation of New
England Antiquities (SPNEA), they began to gradually expand their scope to incorporate
broader topics of arts and crafts, the American cultural landscape, and reports on
technical attributes of preservation.13

Antiquarians and amateur historians championed the effort to incorporate historic
preservation into the fabric of America’s progress-oriented culture. These private citizens
were inspired by physical objects related to their local and national heritage, and took
action to protect against the “threatened spoliation of [their] inalienable inheritance,
[their] birthright” of the human landscape.14 Their personal hobbies of collecting
historically relevant objects, or canvassing historically significant sites laid the
foundation for the preservation movement’s basic activities. With the early efforts in
New England and Virginia throughout the 1820s to 1850s, a national preservation
movement began. The efforts of Rhode Islander Abraham Touro to preserve the first
synagogue in New England in the 1820s, the residents of Deerfield, MA to protect the
Old Indian House within their town limits in the 1840s, and South Carolinian Ann
Pamela Cunningham’s work with the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association in the 1850s, all
established a pattern for private efforts with some potential for government support.
These efforts also established the framework for the greater preservation discourse.

New England, and specifically Boston, played an integral role in the development
of American historic preservation. Boston’s historic neighborhoods demonstrated

13 For example: Waterhouse, Dorothy S. “Old-Time New England Primer of
14 Samuel Adams Drake quotes in James M. Lindgren, Preserving Historic New England,
31.
preservationists’ creativity and led to the development of private and public initiatives including deed agreements, land easements, district restrictions, and restoration efforts of individual structures. Preservation has been a consistent part of Boston’s cultural fabric starting in 1810 with the proactive effort of the Beacon Hill community through the introduction of easements and covenants into deeds to protect the larger landscape from the potential threats of the growing population of immigrants and the general public’s interest in new construction. Building on its early beginnings, Boston blended deed restrictions with environmental permanence and urban planning by the 1850s and developed a tradition of local controls on real estate development. The 1863 Massachusetts Supreme Court case Parker v. Nightingale established “Neighbor’s Rights”, formalized these community-oriented controls giving Boston Brahmins (members of the traditional upper-class and cultural elite) stronger controls over the construction and repurposing of buildings in their neighborhoods. This type of initiative exemplifies the Brahmins’ concern over the impact of immigrant populations on the landscape, which they perceived as disrupting their homogenized and virtuous depiction of the past. This xenophobia facilitated strong ties between Boston’s preservation and immigrant assimilation efforts as the Brahmins attempted to comprehensively control both the built and cultural climate.

15 Michael Holleran, Boston’s “Changeful Times”, 71-79.
16 Easements and covenants were introduced to Beacon Hill as a privately motivated effort of Boston elite families, such as George Hayward and his descendants. The purpose was to protect the integrity of these historic and fashionable neighborhoods by prohibiting particular disruptive repurposing of buildings (i.e. restaurants and saloons). Ibid., 67.
17 Ibid., 71.
18 Ibid., 73.
19 James M. Lindgren, Presence of the Past, 31-33.
The wide range of formal legal maneuvers established in Boston provided the necessary foundation for preservation to expand its scope and influence, enabling the addition of architectural significance to as a viable rationale for preserving a structure by 1870. This new rationale was used in the fight to preserve both the Old South Church (1876) and Bulfinch State House (1898) in Boston, which were two of the earliest missed opportunities for incorporating original architectural records into the preservation process. However, the appreciation of architectural significance would not be coming until decades later, once the American architectural profession was fully formed.20

Boston’s preservation community, nonetheless, had created a formidable movement by the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries.

The concurrent development of the Arts and Crafts Movement alongside the first wave of the historic preservation movement in Boston has expanded the discourse of preservationists to incorporate the tangential communities of art, museums, architects, historians, and antiquarians.21 The marrying of these two communities benefited from the disproportionate wealth of Bostonians during the late 1800s and early 1900s that shared a collective interest in the city’s history, and had the means to define visual culture as well as set the parameters for public discourse about art.22 With this financial support and the availability of finely crafted historic structures, the convergence of the arts and crafts movement with the preservationists’ focus on 17th and 18th century vernacular structures,

20 The first American architectural program was not established until 1865, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which was not equipped to support or participate in the advocacy and conversation about architectural significance.
22 Ibid., 19.
directed the discussion towards esoteric aesthetics and tangible lessons about the intricacies of craftsmanship.\textsuperscript{23} From the latter conversations, the use of archaeological techniques improved for preservationists working with finely crafted, typically wood-worked, historic objects, such as bannisters and interior detailing.\textsuperscript{24} In applying artistic valuation to the construction of historically significant structures Boston’s arts and crafts movement complimented the preservation movement, and elevated architecture to a form of fine art. It was at this time that museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Art in New York, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and the Museum of Fine Art in Boston began to collect artistic elements (e.g. woodworked paneling and bannisters, or intricate wallpaper) of historic buildings that further supported the acceptance of those architectural elements as artworks. Even with new professions and communities entering into the preservation discourse, SPNEA’s publications still failed to mention the utility of documentation, besides personal papers, that supported claims of historical significance. The downplaying of the value or use of architectural documentation during preservation efforts has continued throughout the professional literature discussing both the practices

\textsuperscript{23} The favoring of fine crafted woodwork was another way preservationists and members of the Arts and Crafts Movement were able to mask their dislike of trade unions and industrialization. This is significant in looking at celebrated buildings where preservationists appreciated the craftsmanship, but did not pay homage to the builders themselves. The lack of interest in the history of trade unions and building crafts hinders preservationists’ ability to understand the technical history of buildings. Such a dynamic results in the distorted perception of the actual cost of well-crafted construction, which is a subject for further study outside of this paper.

\textsuperscript{24} Artistic wooden bannisters, paneling and moldings became the subjects of heated dispute between museum curators and historic preservationists. Historic preservationists became defensive of these attributes as museums developed collections of American architectural elements, such as the Metropolitan Museum’s \textit{Life in America, 1700–1800} gallery.
and history of the preservation movements.\textsuperscript{25} The interdisciplinary theoretical and technical foundation instituted by the first wave of the preservation movement broadened the profession, and facilitated its transcendence from an amateur activity into a profession.\textsuperscript{26}

The first preservation movement established a profession that viewed its work as “the practice of conserving man-made structures, sites and objects of historical, aesthetic, and/or archaeological importance.”\textsuperscript{27} This mindset instituted the standard practice of accepting the building as the most authoritative document, which made other documentation less necessary. It discounted the value of available textual and architectural records as superseded documentation.\textsuperscript{28} The original records, which may not have been available or even have existed, were treated negligibly in comparison to the explicit value placed on photographs, measured drawings, and documentation produced throughout the preservation process.\textsuperscript{29} Without easy access to original architectural

\textsuperscript{25} Such as: Holleran’s \textit{Boston’s “Changeful Times”: origins of preservation & planning in America}; Hosmer’s \textit{The Presence of the Past}; Mulloy’s \textit{The History of the National Trust for Historic Preservation 1953-1973}; and Tyler’s \textit{Historic Preservation: an Introduction to its History, Principles and Practice}.

\textsuperscript{26} It is worth noting here the museums had a complex relationship with the first historic preservation movement. Museums were interested in recreating historical realities through the creation of period rooms. While simultaneously promoting public interest in architecture and historic buildings, they were also seen as vandals for stripping impressive historic buildings of their finest qualities (most notably the wood work). Appleton perceived museums as poachers, while appreciating their ability to make historic architectural features more readily accessible to a broader audience than the isolated museum houses of SPNEA that stayed in \textit{situ}.


\textsuperscript{28} James M. Lindgren, \textit{Preserving Historic New England}, 98.

\textsuperscript{29} Similar to or based on the standards established in 1933 for the Historic American Building Survey.
records and alternative documentation practices, the preservation community was not interested in finding or using original documentation.

The development of the preservation profession and its publications reflect the vibrant but small community associated with the early historic preservation movement, which allows for an alternative explanation for the de-emphasis of original architectural material. Due to the expected shared understanding amongst preservationists, the early discussions focused on tangible techniques and tools to achieve the greatest outcome for the physical structure, while glossing over how to research historical significance. The shared knowledge of antiquarians and historians is reflected in their publications, which may explain why they focused on “how to” guides for implementing archaeological techniques on structures over discussing research methodologies into available documents. The technical complexity and constantly improving archaeological or modern recording techniques is another explanation for the additional weight this topic was given. Regardless of the reasons for the lack of inclusion of architectural records in the literature produced by the historic preservation movement and profession, it remained underrepresented.

As the early publications indicate, preservationists’ concern over Boston’s cityscape and other urban areas made the built environment the battleground between “progress” and “tradition.” While this unifying message was the crux of SPNEA’s efforts, the preservation community experienced internal fissures debating “good preservation” versus “preservation in good taste.” The Ruskin school of puritanical preservation resonated with the Boston Brahmins, who focused on “good preservation,”

and accepted the significant building in its current condition as the state in which to preserve the structure. The Viollet-le-Duc method was never favored in Boston, but became actively discriminated against after its poorly received implementation in the restoration of Paul Revere’s house (1907-1908).\textsuperscript{32} The complete refurbishment of Paul Revere’s house was argued to have returned the structure to a picturesque state unrecognizable to Revere, and thus not meeting the intended purpose of historic preservation, to offer a glimpse into the lives for former generations.\textsuperscript{33}

Ruskin’s theory of the connection between morality and the built environment was introduced to the Boston elite in the 1890s by Harvard professor and close friend of Ruskin, Charles Elliot Norton. Through nostalgic elevation of Victorian and puritan colonial structures, Norton and his students criticized modern structures for reflecting their corrupted society and sought to conform their built environment to a higher moral standard.\textsuperscript{34} The deep roots of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts within the nation’s historic fabric and an expressed interest in protecting that environment made for a vibrant landscape for experimenting with various preservation techniques. Boston’s preservation efforts were typically private ventures to reinforce the colonial aura that sentimental, wealthy and well-established Brahmins of the city valued. Their interest in maintaining the cultural milieu espoused from Harvard College across the Charles River came from an appreciation of how the built environment reinforced the morality and status of its inhabitants. Advocating for morality was constantly used to defend against the disruptive and rapid development throughout the city in the name of progress. Under this altruistic

\textsuperscript{32} Norman Tyler, \textit{Historic Preservation}, 194-195.
\textsuperscript{33} Michael Holleran, \textit{Boston’s “Changeful Times”}, 217.
pretense of enabling assimilation for the influx of immigrants and reinforcing the traditional fabric of puritanical New England, the Brahmins argued the necessity of preservation.

A member of the Boston social elite and a leader of the first preservation movement in New England, William Sumner Appleton embraced Ruskin’s proactive approach to preservation as an ongoing activity that was an issue of control rather than permanence. Appleton appreciated the intense planning required for sustainable preservation. As a result he was largely responsible for the development of historic preservation in America as a formal profession in the beginning of the 20th century. He presented an aggressive, comprehensive preservation vision to systematically appreciate and preserve “historically significant” architecture, which is an integral component of the modern preservation profession. He identified the risks that “progress” posed to the historical foundation of his beloved New England, which inspired his call for a comprehensive survey of extant historic structures. He believed such a record would better prepare SPNEA and concerned citizens to protect the existing cultural fabric. This ambition was in direct opposition to the redevelopment promoted by the local government, which reinforced the understanding of “old is bad, new is good.”

Appleton’s scientific approach to preservation established a standard value for evaluating structures, while simultaneously expanding the scope of history to include the

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36 Appleton’s campaign against “progress” began with such issues as the Boston Transit Commission’s 1906 subway construction plans, which Appleton declared as “vandalism” and “desecration” of the traditional Boston Commons. James M. Lindgren, *Preserving Historic New England*, 43.
average person as well as heroic figures.\textsuperscript{37} Appleton believed there was a hierarchy within preservation placing archaeological techniques at the top. This approach remained fundamental to the tradition of preservationists accepting the building as the ultimate document.\textsuperscript{38} Because he believed the physical object was the most reliable text, Appleton advocated recording the details of significant spaces. Through drawings, photographs and textual recording Appleton sought to document the alterations to structures to ensure that future generations could distinguish the original attributes from later adjustments.

Coincidentally, the Massachusetts State government separately addressed the need for authoritative building records throughout the Commonwealth in 1920 as a public safety concern.\textsuperscript{39} Across the 14 subsequent iterations of the records retention schedule for Building Plans and Specification Records, since 1920 (mostly recently updated in 2012) there has been a clear construction-oriented utilitarian interest in plans, drawings and specifications requiring retention until the project’s completion or the lifetime of the building, with no mention of residual benefit from these materials.\textsuperscript{40} Focused on current and future construction records, this government initiative to collect architectural records and to establish an authoritative record of constructed spaces throughout the Commonwealth was neither referenced nor utilized by Appleton, despite his interest in establishing a comprehensive resource documenting extant buildings. Additionally,

\textsuperscript{37} Michael Holleran. Boston’s “Changeful Times”, 227.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{39} Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30 Section 42: Records conservation board; composition; powers and duties; sale or destruction; records defined; inquiries from departments or agencies.
Appleton’s interest in vernacular structures would not allow him to appreciate current architectural drawings collected by the Building Plans and Specification Records as a potential resource for future generations of preservationists.

Due to the clear lack of an architect’s involvement, and thus a lack of architectural records produced, in the construction of structures from the 1600s through the mid-1800s, especially vernacular buildings, New England preservationists relied upon archaeological techniques. Within this finite scope of significant structures, preservation began as a mostly document-independent practice, relying on archeological techniques, vital records such as deeds, and the assumption that structures were the foundational artifact. These practices were established out of necessity, due to the lack of construction documentation. Nevertheless, there were some rare instances of early American structures with existing original architectural records, such as Mount Vernon. The success of the Mount Vernon campaign had been incredibly influential on preservation efforts, and could have afforded an opportunity to publicly promote and recognize the significant impact documentation can have on restoration and preservation. The MVLA did not publicize its utilization of available construction records; however, the unique nature of Mount Vernon’s restoration allowed preservationists, like Appleton and the New England community, to downplay the significance and use of original architectural records for their minimally documented vernacular and builder-designed structures.41 Early preservationists solidified their practices of using archaeological techniques, measured drawings, and documenting the preservation process with photographs, while

ignoring the possibility of existing original drawings and subordinating their value to the physical structure.\(^{42}\)

Preservation’s professionalism built a strong network of regional organizations, such as the SPNEA and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), and prompted intensified efforts in pushing for a national preservation initiative. After failing to save the John Hancock House (demolished in 1863 due to governmental impotency to purchase the property in the allotted amount of time) or provide substantial assistance with the preservation Mount Vernon, American preservationists formed bias against government involvement in preservation.\(^{43}\)

Irrespective of this prejudice, these private regional organizations began to experience public support on the local level (e.g. 1903 purchase of Park Street Church as the first building in Massachusetts purchased by government for the purpose of preservation) and recognized the potential benefits of a nation-wide preservation effort.\(^{44}\)

Capitalizing on this public support, SPNEA appealed to the larger community (and trained architects) to

\(^{42}\) James M. Lindgren, *Preserving Historic New England*. 105-106. These forms of documentation liken those initially solicited by SPNEA; their continued use indicates how powerful and thoughtful the foundational preservation practices are.


\(^{44}\) In their campaign to preserve the Park Street Church, the Committee for the Preservation of the Park Street Church, Boston, continuously reminded the Legislature of its failure to act on the Hancock House (demolished in 1863). This campaign was successful in convincing the Legislature to purchase the Park Street Church as a preservation effort in 1903 “on the grounds of historic interest and architectural beauty” as an effort of eminent domain.

*The Preservation of Park Street Church Boston*, issued by the Committee for the Preservation of the Park Street Church. (Boston: Geo. H. Ellis Co. Printers, 1903), 38.
establish “a complete collection of views and accounts of all the notable old buildings and sites in New England.”\textsuperscript{45}

With limited staff and a membership of amateurs and volunteers, the desired systematic survey was not possible. However, a partnership with the Boston Architects Society in 1914, allowed the SPNEA to develop its library of photographs, maps, and postcards to include measured drawings from throughout New England.\textsuperscript{46} In addition to the solicitation of materials, SPNEA developed and sustained a library and museum along with its preservation efforts. These two fields had been, and continue to be, closely associated with archives, but the first wave of historic preservation did not mention archival practice or principals in their literature. The failure for archives to engage early on with preservation organizations that developed an appreciation for documentation allowed the gap to persist between these two professions.

The relationship between the national and local historic preservation efforts developed symbiotically, as regional organizations such as the SPNEA and the MVLA perpetually influenced one another as well as benefited from the development of a national movement in the early 1930s. These private efforts of citizens and organizations gradually strengthened the movement’s influence over the general public and the government. Federal support for preservation was slow to develop, despite the early efforts of the 1906 Antiquities Act that addressed national parks and monuments. The Antiquities Act was an Executive Branch initiative with the National Park Service (NPS) created ten years later in 1916. The NPS carried out the responsibilities of this Act and

\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Bulletin of SPNEA}. 2(1911): 20.
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Bulletin of SPNEA}. 5(1914): 23.
maintained sites owned by the federal government. After creating the Colonial National Historic Parks in 1913, the NPS, under the direction of Stephen T. Mather (1916-1929) and Horace M. Albright (1929-1933), began to campaign for the expansion of the natural park system to encompass historic sites and memorials in addition to the natural landscape. The combination of Mather and Albright’s campaign to consolidate the administration of all federal parks and monuments with the economic climate of the Great Depression led President Franklin D. Roosevelt to sign Executive Order 6166, which, among other things, combined "all functions of public buildings, national monuments, and national cemeteries" within the National Park Service. This consolidated power provided the NPS the opportunity to begin supporting the interests and initiatives of the historic preservation community. With the signing of the Executive Order 6166, Arno B. Cammerer (1933-1940) became the director of the NPS and oversaw the implementation of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS).

The HABS project was the result of a collaborative effort of the NPS, the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and the Library of Congress. Its purpose was to document historic structures throughout the United States. In line with many initiatives during the Great Depression, this program

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47 As a subordinate body of the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service was the ideal organization to take the lead in preserving the built and natural environment. Although it was appropriately charged with preservation responsibilities, the NPS experienced a variety of obstacles in obtaining the necessary power to enforce preservation policies with other departments (such as the Department of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Urban Development).


gave unemployed architects profession-appropriate work and filled a void that had been repeatedly identified by regional preservation organizations, most notably the SPNEA, for an inclusive survey of extant historic structures. HABS records included an assembly of measured drawings, photographs, and written data on early American architecture. The records produced by this program were the first national effort to define the necessary attributes to document the full context of a historically significant structure and provided standardized recording methods to communicate the significant attributes of the structures recorded. The initial HABS program disproportionately documented the nation’s built environment, focusing on metropolises of the east coast, due to the pre-existing concentration of professional architects in that area and the limited travel budget of the program. Despite its regional limitations HABS offered the first national-scale documentation effort to provide a robust and multi-format record of America’s built environment.\textsuperscript{50} HABS not only expanded upon Appleton’s early aspirations of a systemic record of extant structures, but also reinforced the tradition of preservationists recording their efforts independent of any existing documentation.

In creating a resource that was intended to be comprehensive, the issue of selection is critical. While the selection process for HABS subjects is a complicated matter that cannot be properly explored in this paper, it is important to note that regional concentrations of architects were not the only influential factor. The issue of selection throughout the historic preservation movement offers significant insight into the biases that determine what is intentionally recorded and preserved. With the objective of

“forging national identity through tangible traces,” preservationists’ made purposeful selections in their work to support particular historical narratives.51 The issue of how regional and national identities are created, presented and maintained continues to be hotly debated within the preservation community, as it is similarly discussed in the archival profession.

The changes in the selection and use of historical structures demonstrate the evolution of historic preservation. The earliest saved structures, such as Mount Vernon (1858) and the dozens of buildings in New England, were preserved to serve as house museums with a clear message of preserving the nation’s virtuous material culture.52 Preserving a building for its active and intended use, such as the Bulfinch State House (1864-67), proved to be a more difficult fight with ideological underpinnings. To preserve structures for utilitarian purposes brought economic feasibility and practicality into question for the repurposing of older buildings. This message developed as preservation became a masculine activity that “intended to showcase efficiency, order and progress” and uphold the “city’s puritan conscience, end class conflict and eradicate slums.”53 Utilizing Boston’s wealth, Appleton sought to ameliorate the ambitions of the business elite, and aligned preservation’s interests with those of the Boston Chamber of Commerce.54 The formation of this early bond has allowed preservationists to constantly present their interests as business-friendly, emphasizing the community focus, functional diversity, and reduction of sprawl (as seen in later efforts such as Faneuil Hall and

52 James M. Lindgren, Preserving Historic New England. 41.
53 Ibid., 45
54 Ibid., 44-46, 105.
Quincy Market). The Bulfinch State House set the precedent for preserving a structure for its architectural significance and was the first instance of the architectural community’s engagement in a preservation project. Preservationists were interested in maintaining the integrity of the building and keeping the iconic placement of the golden dome in Boston’s skyline, but recognized that calculated compromise, such as the added wings of the State House (1895), would simultaneously uphold their paternalistic control over the city’s aesthetic and demonstrate the adaptability of historic structures for modern use.

The concept of integrating preservation within the modern environment gained popularity (partially as a way of ensuring economic feasibility of preservation), broadening the accepted and expected uses of preserved structures. Following the lead of private citizens who preserved their historically significant homes, SPNEA would lease its residential properties as needed to ensure the financial sustainability of their work. The Colonial Williamsburg Village project also proved flexible in creating arrangements with existing residents to allow their continued use to residents after the preservation of the structures. From these early projects and adaptations, the second wave of historic preservation developed with the mission of changing the meaning of preservation from museums to active use, incorporating history into everyday life. As contemporary heritage conservator Ned Kaufman says: “History is important, and it’s not over.”

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57 Ibid.
58 Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age*. 36.
Chapter 3: Historic Preservation – The Second Movement

“At best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future.”¹
– William Murtagh

Interrupted by America’s involvement in World War II (WWII) (1941-1945), historic preservation was able quickly reestablished its momentum. The swells of interest in the built environment’s historic value, interrupted by the events of WWII, developed out of private and non-profit efforts that crept into the public domain as a result of popular interest. While the popularity of preservation had similar growth patterns in each wave, a fundamental shift in the definition and purpose of preservation took place between the 1935 Historic Sites Act and the establishment of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949.

World War I (WWI) had presented the “eternal conflict between the forces of destruction and the forces of preservation”; but it did not postpone local efforts the way World War II required American preservationists to suspend their efforts despite the elevated risks posed to antiquities and structures.² Although WWI had raised serious concerns within the preservation community, it did not have as dramatic an impact on the United States built environment as WWII. America’s entry into WWII in 1941 hampered government preservation efforts and returned the burden to the private sector, which was

also severely distracted by the war. The hiatus of preservation during WWII deflated the first preservation movement’s momentum, allowing post-WWII urban renewal to develop and flourish unimpeded. As a result, there had never been a greater need for historic preservation in the United States than during the post-WWII urbanization push. While urban renewal and historic preservation were clearly in opposition, the similar semantics of preservationists and the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Federal Urban Renewal Programs (FURP), discussing rehabilitation and restoration of the urban landscape, has confused the general public which inappropriately melded together these two communities. Within this context the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) was established (1949), presenting itself as the advocacy adversary of pro-redevelopment organizations.

The second wave of the preservation movement began as “a passionate struggle to change how society imagines, preserves, and inhabits its heritage.” This new generation of preservationists claimed that: “successful preservation and planning could be accomplished only if undertaken in terms of total context of each building.” Like the first movement, this context did not include an emphasis on the original records but referred solely to the comprehensive, surrounding physical elements. Preservationists’ primary concern for the loss of cultural identity through the destruction of physical

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5 Ibid. 205.
7 Elizabeth D. Mulloy, *The History of the National Trust*, 90.
attributes that make up the “total environment” resulted in the creation of measured drawings to document historic and at-risk structures. The use of measured drawings offered a clear opportunity for archival intervention to promote original architectural records and provide other documentary support. Building upon the framework and skills developed by the first generation of preservationists, the second preservation movement focused on weaving historically significant structures into the modern landscape. During the 1950s and 1960s, the entire field of historical interest promoted the cause of popular, accessible, interpretive and sound history.\(^8\)

The initiatives of HUD and FURP raised preservationists’ concern for documenting extant structures as these national-scale programs increased the risk of demolition of historic buildings that were often located in the most blighted sections of established cities and the explicit target of urban renewal programs. This national concern resulted in the creation of the National Register of Historic Places in 1966, hereafter referred to as the National Register. The National Register is the official statement identifying “which properties merit preservation.”\(^9\) The structures listed on the National Register have been identified as historically or architecturally significant. Placement on the registry is subject to change as buildings gain significance or experience a change that disqualifies them from this authoritative inventory.

The National Register has served as a productive space for discussing and establishing criteria for evaluating historically and architecturally significant structures.

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These criteria have been established with broad parameters, allowing for emphasis to be placed on natural and built spaces alike. While the National Register has fulfilled one of Appleton’s core values and ambitions, it remained limited in its scope of documenting historically significant structures. Although it does serve as a comprehensive survey, it does not consciously promote the incorporation of original architectural records and drawings into the preservation process. The current Keeper of the National Register, Carol Shull, explains that the National Register is very sensitive to the preservation community’s amateur roots, and seeks to reduce potential obstacles for applicants when other supportive evidence (i.e. maps and photographs) are more readily and easily accessible.  

Architectural records and drawings, both original and measured, have a hefty cost associated with the time required to search for or to produce them. National Register Director, Betsy Friedberg, and Deputy of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Director of Preservation Planning, Michael Steinitz, of the Massachusetts Historical Commission explained that the cost to obtain or look into architectural drawings, original or measured, is an unnecessary barrier to the already time-intensive and expensive venture of nominating a building to the National Register. Thus the National Register but does not require or even suggest applicants look into the availability of original or measured drawings, but rather demands a photograph and map in addition to the descriptive and historical information about the property.

To support the growth of the preservation profession that was developing a national image through the National Trust and securing its place on the national agenda

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10 Carol Shull, Interviewed by Aliza Leventhal, Phone Interview. Boston, March 14, 2013.
through the Historic Preservation Act, academic preservation programs were established. Columbia University created the first academic historic preservation program in 1964 as a practitioners program. Practical application had been the foundation of preservation programs, and thus little analytical, historical work on the historic preservation movement has been produced. As the preservation profession and community solidified its external message, it became more comfortable reflecting on its evolution and better equipped to identify and appreciate its significant figures.

Major scholastic works on the subject of historic preservation did not emerge until 1965, with Charles Hosmer’s *The Presence of the Past: A History of the Preservation Movement in the United States before Williamsburg*. In this seminal text Hosmer establishes a firm timeline of preservation efforts beginning in 1796 with the emigration of the “Father of American Architecture,” British architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe, II, up to the 1937 National Parks Service Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments Advisory Board meeting. Through a linear progression that is firmly embraced by the preservation community, Hosmer notes the motivations of communities to engage in preservation efforts and how those impact the creation of a preservation profession. Significant motivators identified by Hosmer include: ancestral worship, antiquarianism, patriotism, and professional development (specifically in relation to the American Institute of Architect’s multiple early failed attempts to establish a historic preservation committee). There is significant overlap in these motivations, but through debates over prioritizing architectural or historical significance over the other the preservation profession has refined its interests.

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Elizabeth Mulloy carries Hosmer’s themes over into her 1976 text *The History of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1953-1973*, which provided a detailed chronicle of the development of the second preservation movement. Mulloy shares Hosmer’s outlook on the evolution of the preservation profession that offers little criticism of the larger impact on society and champions the positive potential of preservation. As members of the historic preservation community, familiar with the traditional archeological techniques, Hosmer and Mulloy do not investigate how preservation practices were established beyond who introduced particular tools or values. The authors’ unwavering acceptance of historic preservation efforts and techniques stunts the scholastic conversation about this field and reinforces the acceptance of the unilateral history of the profession.

In 1981 Hosmer followed up on his introductory text and published a comprehensive two-volume work entitled: *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949.*[^13] This text also framed historic preservation optimistically as an underdog fight against the powerful, and destructive machines of “progress” and urban renewal. The exhaustiveness of this text provides Hosmer with the opportunity to expand his scope beyond the linear progression of events fully discussed in his first text, to also discuss the layered agendas of preservationists. Hosmer’s exploration of motivations for preservation continues in this text, and incorporates the motivations of external forces, such as the automobile, in the development of preservation interests and practices. The countless battles preservationists

have fought, for a building, a community, or for the idea of the built environment as a shared record of society, are well documented in this seminal text. Michael Holleran adopts Hosmer’s breadth and depth approach, but with a narrowed geographic focus in his 1998 text Boston’s “Changeful Times.” In providing a close examination of the development of preservation in Boston, Holleran identifies Boston’s integral role in the national preservation movements as one of the first concerted regional efforts to preserve structures. Holleran frames preservation efforts in a positive light but is also critical of the underlying ambitions of early preservationists, such as William Sumner Appleton (1874-1947), who, as a member of the Boston elite, worked fervently to assimilate immigrants and perpetuate a nostalgic and elitist history of New England. Holleran offers a more balanced discussion of preservation’s development without contradicting Hosmer or Mulloy, because neither of those scholars established an explicit argument about the progression of historic preservation as profession or movement. Holleran also does not make an explicit argument about the preservation efforts in Boston, but, like Hosmer and Mulloy, establishes a thorough foundation for scholarship to build upon.

Norman Tyler followed Hosmer’s comprehensive approach in his concise 2009 text Historic Preservation: An Introduction to its History, Principles, and Practice. As the title implies, Tyler attempts to provide a general overview of the major events in historic preservation, as well as a synopsis of preservation practices and architectural styles. With a neutral tone and an organization reminiscent of a guide or manual, Tyler’s text comfortably fits into the corpus of the publications related to the history of historic preservation, which includes a few pieces of scholarship intertwined with many guides,

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manuals, and propaganda publications by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. A prime example of a NHTP publication is the 1966 text *With Heritage so Rich* “told [preservationists] what [they] needed to do,” which outlined the issues of legislative roadblocks and reaffirmed the dependent relationship of the national movement on the strength of the local efforts.\(^{15}\)

These authors depict historic preservation as an evolution of technological and advocacy efforts. All four of these scholars present the development of the historic preservation discipline as sequential battles over specific sites founded in pedagogical differences of aesthetics and culture associated with the built environment. The preservationists’ struggle is framed as protecting the landscape from the reckless and aggressive actions of urban renewal and American “progress,” a narrative exposes the biases of these authors. The authors’ positive-leaning subjectivity limits their capacity to critically analyze preservationists’ efforts. Presenting society as firmly dichotomous, these scholars establish preservationists, with the moral high ground of protecting the nation’s historical landscape, as the protagonist against the malicious destruction done in the name of “progress.” As mentioned, Holleran and Hosmer effectively raise concerns about motivations of early preservationists, identifying xenophobia, racism and politics as underlying interests of preservationists such as Colonial Williamsburg project manager, Dr. William Archer Rutherfoord Goodwin (1869-1939). Goodwin successfully built a picturesque colonial town that contentiously omitted undesirable attributes of the original Williamsburg, such as a deemphasized presence of slavery. While Holleran and Hosmer

identify underlying motivations of some individual preservationists, as a whole the authors present little debate amongst themselves over the development of the preservation movement or its intentions. While the authors highlight their particular interests, they have yet to contradict or outright dispute the chronology of their peers, producing a standardized history of the young profession.

By focusing on either the first (1850-1940) or second (1950-present) movement of historic preservation, or on a specific preservation effort such as Eric Gable and Richard Handler’s treatment of Colonial Williamsburg, the current discourse offers little explicit comparison between the two movements.16 Contemporary historic preservation scholar James Glass invites discussion by dubbing the second preservation movement as “a new national historic preservation program,”17 but this idea is not as actively engaged or further pursued the way articles about methods, themes and adaptive practices in the journal *Historic Preservation* are.18 The lack of interest in discussing the variations and development of historic preservation movements may be the result of the profession’s perceived inclusivity and cohesion that supports a unifying linear progression to describe the profession’s development. This linear narrative does not offer an opportunity for preservationists to appreciate the major shift from the local and private efforts to national and public support, and then back again.

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18 First published in 1961, *Historic Preservation* is the quarterly publication of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This magazine shares similar themes as its predecessor publications, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities Bulletin: *Old Times New England*, focusing on active projects, innovative methods and advocacy issues.
More significantly for this research is the approach scholars have taken in examining the techniques of historic preservationists. Portraying a similar attitude and value as preservationist practitioners, historic preservation scholars highlight the effectiveness of archeological techniques and appreciate the documentation efforts of preservation activities. William Sumner Appleton is most often referenced for his progressive campaigns to establish a comprehensive survey of all historically significant structures throughout New England and his adamant use of photography to extensively document his preservation projects. Major projects, such as the collaborative Historic America Building Survey (1933), are noted as innovative and effective resources by the authors, but are not evaluated for their potential skewing of preservation efforts. Although providing a wealth of knowledge about the implemented practices, little consideration is given to what other methods of research and documentation could or should have been utilized by historic preservationists. This oversight, particularly the disregard for original architectural records and drawings, deserves further discussion. Due to the absence of scholastic discussion about the practical and theoretical development of historic preservation, the publications and discourse of the historic preservation profession plays a significant role in understanding this discipline.

The perception modern preservation professionals, such as Carol Shull and Betsy Friedberg, have towards their documentation practices perpetuates the limited discussion about original records. Shull and Friedberg explain that the documentation requirements for National Register nominations are intended to ensure the inclusivity of diverse values

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and views of history. This welcoming disposition facilitated collaboration with like-minded organizations, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA, founded in 1970), which capitalized on the aligned interests of preservation of the built environment and conservation of the natural environment. The NPS’s initial mission in 1916 to conserve the national landscape established an early bond between environmental conservation and built preservation. The transportation and urban housing bills of the 1960s posed serious threats to the preservation of the “total environment” that preservationists argued captured a community’s history in the palimpsest of the built environment. The EPA was able to effectively synchronize its public message with historic preservation, but the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA, established in 1934) did not attempt to merge its interests with historic preservation. The persistence of the gap between archives and preservation over 50 years of concurrent existence evolved from the local to national level, further solidifying the partition between them. Although the NPS, NTHP, EPA and NARA have overlapping missions concerned with the protection of Americans’ rights, heritage, and environment, their efforts cannot be fully realized because the lack of physical objects are separated from archival materials. The ability for three out of four of the above-mentioned organizations to build relationships demonstrates that cooperation is possible and welcomed, but the archival community has not seized those opportunities.

The narrow focus of the NTHP-led movement has made the preservation conversation inaccessible to the archival community, unintentionally prohibiting the

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incorporation of archival interests in the broader tangible heritage conversation. The exclusion of original documents from preservationists’ internal discussion has been detrimental to archival engagement but not as significantly as the absence in the public discourse, which has denied archives access to an engaged, vocal and influential audience. Archives are less public than a building on a public street, the risks posed to archival collections are not perceived as dramatic as the destruction of a building, thus historic preservation has the advantage in raising public awareness. Public support has been the asset of preservationists and their effective communication to the public remains integral to their success. This public support was established through messages of patriotism, environmentalism, and financial benefit. Preservationists touted collaboration and interdisciplinary engagement as integral to the successful protection of the built environment, yet in all of its rhetoric (which is incredibly similar to that of the archival community) it did not include archives as a partner. While the archival community was not invited into the larger fight, it did not try to join either. The missed opportunities to

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21 It is ironic to note that as the NTHP led the discussion of appropriate preservation practices into the 1980s it concurrently gave up and donated its library to the University of Maryland in the 1980s. The NTHP’s collection policy had been limited to texts on the architectural structures and thus the NTHP never collected original or measured architectural drawings.

22 While this is a glib explanation for the better-established public interest in historic preservation over archives, the instances that the destruction of archives is publicized is comparatively rare to that of historic buildingsthreated with demolition. The physical presence of buildings in comparison to the location of archival collections within repositories positions the historic preservation effort to engage communities far easier and with more dramatic rhetoric than archivists are accustomed to using.

23 Topics such as integrity and authenticity or concern for proper techniques for unique materials are two fundamental areas of concentration for both archivists and historic preservationists. These topics have developed within these industries separate from one another, demonstrating how closely aligned their interests are.
engage archives in the broader conservation conversation remain constant in both the first
and second preservation movements.

Since the late 1980s historic preservation professionals have begun to appreciate
the value and utility of original architectural records. This recently developed interest has
limited potential, due to architects’ poor record keeping practices that produce incomplete
or damaged collections. This shift has resulted in organizations such as the International
Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) making an explicit connection between the
perceived importance of a building and the potential of associated records.24 This
significant point has been overlooked, if not completely ignored, despite the preservation
movement’s emphasis on architectural significance throughout the second half of the 20th
century. Regardless of this oversight in relation to original architectural records, modern
preservation professionals continue to promote surveys of their built environment and
thorough documentation of their efforts, producing an ironic documentation milieu that
favors modern interpretation over historical record. With 1.4 million individual structures
and sites listed on the National Register, and a growing HABS collection housed at the
Library of Congress, there is clearly space for documentation within the American
historic preservation movement, it just has yet to be realized.25

24 *Guide to recording historic buildings.* compiled by ICOMOS. (London; Boston:
Butterworth Architecture, 1990), 42
25 National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places. “National Register of
Historic Places.” National Park Service.
http://nrhp.focus.nps.gov/natreghome.do?searchtype=natreghome (accessed March 18,
2013).
Chapter 4: COPAR, Archives, and Architectural Records

“Considering the intrinsic artistic value of architectural drawings and the documentary significance of all types of architectural records, it is deplorable that we have been so tardy in recording and preserving this heritage.”

– massCOPAR, 1979

The discussion of architectural records within the archival profession moved at a similarly sluggish pace as within the preservation movement. A full 40 years passed from the formation of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in 1934 to the first branch of COPAR in New York (1977). Although the COPAR formed separately from the SAA, it was quickly embraced by the larger professional organization and has been strongly associated with the archival community as a result. While delayed in its youth, the matured archival profession has become more aggressive in its discussion of preserving architectural records and drawings. This value is not couched in the context of the historic preservation movement but identified as documenting the past for the undefined benefit of the future. Prior to the creation of COPARs in the 1970s there was very little discussion about architectural records in general, or architectural drawings specifically, within the main professional journal *The American Archivist*, leaving few other outlets for this type of discussion. The absence of this conversation gave the COPARs in various states a sense of immediacy to tackle a problem long ignored, as seen in the engaging language they used in applications for grants and the solicitation of information.

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from architecture firms.\textsuperscript{3} massCOPAR’s 1985 \textit{Symposium on the Appraisal of Architectural Records} formally introduced topics of legality, financial feasibility, and strategic planning in developing collections on architectural records.\textsuperscript{4} Through this pioneering meeting a clear agenda was set to address the unique issues architectural records, particularly drawings, would pose for archives, most notably copyright and financial challenges.\textsuperscript{5}

In 1979, massCOPAR lamented the tardiness in recording and preserving the heritage documented by architectural records and drawings.\textsuperscript{6} While an incredible amount of information can be gleaned from a variety of records produced by architects throughout their course of business, massCOPAR argued that architectural drawings, and “especially original working drawings, are the essential visual documents for the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{3} The following passionate explanation of the significance of architectural records in a November 1979 mailing from massCOPAR to the architecture, archival, library and other related fields: “Considering the intrinsic artistic value of architectural drawings and the documentary significance of all types of architectural records, it is deplorable that we have been so tardy in recording and preserving this heritage. Much of value has already been lost through neglect; much that remains is buried in local repositories, private collections, and architectural offices. Potentially rich sources of architectural records are firms and family held collections. Yet these are particularly vulnerable to destruction. Improper and inadequate storage facilities have also contributed to major losses. But it is impossible to make long-range plans to save architectural records without first identifying their location, nature and condition.” Letter, massCOPAR, November 1979 mailing, box 6, folder 14, massCOPAR Collection. Architecture and Design Collections, The MIT Museum.
\item \textsuperscript{6} Letter, massCOPAR, November 1979 mailing, box 6, folder 14, massCOPAR Collection. Architecture and Design Collections, The MIT Museum.
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construction project.”⁷ In essence, massCOPAR asserted that architectural drawings, which are neither fine art nor manuscript, provide additional insight into the design process. massCOPAR’s astute observation is not only true about the archival and library fields, but also for historic preservation and architecture.

ARCHIVES

“COPAR is merely a group of volunteers. The architectural profession must define their archives with us, and work together. There are not enough archives to take the boxes of disorganized records that exist in the basements of many firms.”

– Nancy Carlson Schrock

The archival profession was formally established in the United States with the formation of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in 1933 and the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in 1936, over a hundred years after numerous archival repositories had developed in the United States. Very similar to the first historic preservation movement, archives were initially established and cared for by educated and invested persons associated with traditional academic fields. Due to its diverse beginnings that produced a variety of description and arrangement practices, the archival profession endeavored to develop best practices for arrangement and description to address the disciplinary biases imposed on early archival collections. Both archives and historic preservation had existed on an amateur basis for over a hundred years before maturing into formal professions in the first half of the 20th century.

Although archives had a comparable development as historic preservation, the former’s broad interest in preserving the records documenting the human experience and

cultural heritage encompassed a much larger quantity of materials than the latter. As the archival profession matured, archivists became aware of the biases within their collections and have sought to rectify the unbalanced histories their collections supported. To balance the historical record archivists became more proactive in their collection practices, seeking record-creators out and emphasizing the value of documents produced by the diverse populations that make up a society. In order for archivists to collect materials of enduring value that record the everyday activity of individuals, groups, institutions, and governments, record producers’ must have some appreciation of their own materials. Architects have traditionally given little consideration for their records beyond the built structure, creating a significant obstacle for archivists to collect their materials and address the unique issues architectural documentation raise.

Due to architects’ preference towards their buildings as their lasting record, their poor treatment of their paper-based documentation, and the development of inexpensive and fragile mediums for the production of architectural records during the early 1900s, the delay in the intentional collection of these materials in archives is understandable. Architects produced contextually and physically complicated collections due to their use of frail trace paper and acidic blueprints for most of their numerous iterations of design and construction records. In addition to the challenges the medium of architectural records pose, archival collections have also faced obstacles in embracing visual literacy (the ability to read an image or non-text artifact as its own language or rhetoric) and opening up their purview to non-textual records of diverse mediums.\(^8\) Progress of the

\(^8\) This collection pattern parallels the development of the historical discourse’s acceptance of alternative texts as authoritative records of history.
latter is reflected in the expansion of collection policies and libraries, archives, academic centers, and historical societies such as the Columbia University Avery Library’s shift from a fine arts focus (its 1890 intention) to include architecture (beginning in early 1920s) and the creation of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Rotch Library of Architecture and Planning in 1938.

The development of the architecture profession in the United States was necessary for archives to begin the collection of architectural records. Early American architecture was the product of Europeans or Americans educated in the French and British schools of Beaux Arts and Georgian styles respectively. Not until 1865 did MIT establish the first academic architectural program, which was quickly followed by Cornell University (1871), Columbia University (1881) and Harvard University (1893). MIT organically developed a collection of architecture and design, currently housed at the MIT Museum, as the byproduct of architecture students’ theses projects and the travel drawings of prominent architects in the field that were originally used as educational tools. The first library to intentionally collect architectural texts and the professional papers of American architects was Columbia University’s Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library.

Founded in 1890, the Avery Library did not begin formally collecting architectural drawings, records and manuscripts until the 1920s and 1930s. At this time the Avery Library recognized the dearth in collecting American architectural records and went about establishing itself as the American counterpart to the Royal Institute for


British Architects (RIBA), an enormous national collection effort in Britain since 1834. While the RIBA was the product of active and engaged architects, the Avery Library’s efforts were not related directly to any effort by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to preserve or record the development of American architecture. There are now several major universities, municipal library systems, and private collections of architectural records have developed over the last hundred years.\footnote{The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects. “The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects: A Resource Guide to Finding Information About Past Architects.” The American Institute of Architects. http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/Architectural%20archives.aspx (accessed: March 21, 2013).}

The Avery Library developed a collection of American architects’ drawings to rival the Royal Institute of British Architects. The Avery Library’s expansive collection traces the development of the American architecture profession. MIT’s collection of thesis drawings and significant architects’ traveling drawings provide a unique look into the development of architectural education. While these collections are impressive, their narrowly defined, intended audience of architecture students and scholars perpetuates the categorization of manuscript and archival collections as passive resources compared to the action-oriented profession of historic preservation. Due to this perception of these education-oriented architectural collections, their librarians and archivists are limited in their ability to naturally engage with preservation professionals. As the general archival profession has become more proactive and engaged with its designated communities of donors and users this obstacle has slowly been overcome. Beginning less than a decade before HABS, and decades before the formal establishment of the Library of Congress’ Prints and Photographs Division, the growth of the Avery Library is indicative of the
collection practices of architectural materials within the larger library and archival communities.

The gradual collection of architectural records is not unique to the academic library environment. The Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Division organically developed through multiple iterations and restructurings from 1860 to its current state established in the 1940s.\textsuperscript{11} Evolving from the Department of Graphic Arts and the Fine Arts Division, the Prints & Photographs Division formally included architectural records and drawings on a limited basis. With the exclusion of the intentionally collected HABS measured drawings, the Library of Congress’ happenstance inclusion of original architectural records illustrates some interest and value associated with architectural records during the 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries.\textsuperscript{12}

Despite the lack of communication between the archival and historic preservation fields, the former intuitively and unknowingly adopted the latter’s model of setting specific goals (i.e. comprehensive surveys) and tangible tasks (i.e. creating technical manuals). In 1996, the \textit{American Archivist} published a special issue focusing on architectural records and drawings, noting the unique challenges and qualities of architectural records, and the limitations of archival repositories to adapt to them. Since the turn of the last century two seminal works, \textit{Architectural Records: Managing Design}\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11} The records of buildings the federal government is responsible for are housed at the Library of Congress, with the Architect of the Capital’s office, or with the particular departments and agencies of the federal government. These materials are unorganized amongst these various departments, who have demonstrated little apparent concern for the condition of their records. An example of this is The American Housing Act’s (Garden Houses) records are in over 10 different places.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{American Prints in Library of Congress; a catalog of the collection}, compiled by Karen F. Beall. (Baltimore: Published for the Library of Congress by the Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), xi.
and Construction Records (2006) and Line, Shade, and Shadow (2010), have been produced to address the physical and descriptive issues associated with the diverse formats of architectural records. As the academic world and “traditional” researchers embrace alternative or nontraditional materials, archives began to collect those items in more a sophisticated and active manner. Thus collections of architectural records and drawings are closely tied to the development of scholarship around architecture and its history. Due to the youth of the architecture profession in the United States and its general disinterest in the records it produces, collections have slowly matriculated into archival repositories, which also delayed the discussion of these records within the archival field.

Appreciating the gradual incorporation of architectural records in the archival environment, massCOPAR embraced the general archival standards of access and preservation to guide its interdisciplinary effort to protect and treat these materials. With this attitude and the archival community’s reaction to massCOPAR’s work, the grassroots organization’s efforts are framed as representative of the archival profession’s development. The 10-year gap between the passage of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act and the establishment of massCOPAR demonstrates how the archival and historic preservation professions were disconnected. While archives and historic preservation were simultaneously acting on similar goals of cultural preservation and record and using similar rhetoric, they have yet to unite as allies for a common cause.

The development of the New York City COPAR in 1977 prompted a new wave of conversations within the historic preservation field, and caught the attention of the

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13 This was not an explicit intention, but rather a default mentality of the founding members of massCOPAR.
Library of Congress as an underserved area of valuable materials. The Library of Congress offered to provide a permanent home for the records of New York City’s COPAR in 1980, with the ambition to build a National Union Index of Architectural Records (published in 1986). Despite the founding Director of the Library of Congress’ Center for Architecture, Design and Engineering, C. Ford Peatross’, interest and engagement in COPARs’ endeavors the national support for these regional efforts was short-lived. massCOPAR founder, Nancy Carlson Schrock, recollects that new editions of this newsletter were in constant demand by the regional organizations, and felt the limited quantity over the 13-year-period to be a lack-luster response from the Library of Congress.

In understanding the development of American archival collections of architectural records, it is clear that the availability of these materials has been incredibly limited. Additionally, while these materials became a collection priority at specific institutions during the 1920s amidst the height of the first wave of the historic preservation movement, there is little evidence of any connection between these simultaneous activities. The multitude of missed opportunities by the library and archives

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16 This momentary support may be a mirroring of the regional COPARs’ momentum, or a reflection of inconsistent interest on the national level, the sporadic publication of the COPAR newsletter by the Library of Congress from 1982-1995 does not provide clear support for either theory.
field to insert itself into the historic preservation movement have been underappreciated by both communities, despite both professions being disadvantaged as a result of their uncoordinated efforts.

**massCOPAR and Architectural Records**

“The preservation of architectural records is a natural adjunct to the preservation of historic buildings and landmarks.”

– Alan Lathorpe

Architectural records and drawings slowly matriculated into archives with little formal discussion within the architectural or archival professions. “Before the 1970s, architectural records and drawings were a neglected area of historic research and preservation. Neither art nor manuscript [sic], they were often tossed out or stored in forgotten corners of attics, libraries, and offices.” As the selective and gradual collecting of libraries and archives shows, architectural drawings are difficult to classify, teetering between two genres without any clear alignment. The Massachusetts Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (massCOPAR) identified a plethora of challenges for archivists working with architectural records including: the complexity in content and variety of mediums, unique copyright and other legal issues, and the considerably larger size than standard manuscript collections. Repositories take all of those critical factors taken into consideration when accessioning collections.

These complexities and the ambiguity of architectural records as a medium are further challenged by their elevation to “high art” in the arts and crafts movements in Boston and elsewhere. A foundational argument for the preservation of architecturally

significant structures has been: “anyone can make a copy, but it takes a master to create an original.”¹⁹ This attitude can and should be applied to the artistically appreciated architectural drawings as another iteration of that master’s ideas and design. This is particularly relevant in comparing measured drawings with blueprints from the original drawings of pencil and pen on trace paper or vellum. The treatment of architectural drawings as a form of high art, as architecture was elevated to during the first historic preservation movement, has created additional hurdles in maintaining complete collections of architectural records, most notably in the division of collections as individual architectural drawings are treated as independent pieces.²⁰

The variety of treatments of architectural records outside of archival repositories prior to 1980 has resulted in the damage and separation of architectural collections, which served as the catalyst for the regional branches of COPAR to form. These organizations, in particular the massCOPAR, proved effective in developing collaborative cross-industry relationships to approach the issues associated with comprehensively collecting architectural records. The 1985 massCOPAR Symposium on the Appraisal of Architectural Records exemplifies the breadth of professions concerned about the use of architectural records. Hosted seven years after the organization began, the Symposium addressed the legal and financial issues of architectural drawings, as well as their treatment as artworks. These three areas demonstrate the extensive external pressures on architectural records within and outside of archival repositories.

The value of a complete collection of original drawings, including potential artworks, provides a richer text of the master architect’s design process. The artistry of originals provides insight into the design and drafting processes. These drawings document the development of various architectural styles visible in the original drawings that cannot be substituted with formulaic measured drawings. Measured drawings record the “as built” structure that emphasizes the historically or architecturally significant attributes and directs the contractor’s attention to preservation priorities. This prescribed purpose inhibits measured drawings from capturing or addressing the nuances of the originals.

The full set of original drawings for a project provides a clear record of the architect’s thought processes, potentially identifying any influencing persons or elements, and establishes a fuller context of the architect’s intention in developing their design. The additional context of design concepts that the original drawings offer is substantial within the framework of the two competing schools of purist preservation (English John Ruskin) and enhanced restoration (French Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc). The substantial difference between measured and original drawings raises the question how those original materials have been disregarded for so long. In appreciating the unique information original drawings offer, the reproducibility and uniformity of prints or measured drawings

21 Appleton and the first historic preservation movement continuously sought additional context. Preservationists’ pursuit of context resulted in the expansion of the archeological techniques beyond the structure’s surface, to include the structure’s internal elements (i.e. insulation and building materials), to the soil, and neighboring structures. This interest in contextualizing the construction and continued use of structures offers significant support to believe that preservationists would have been interested in the original materials, had they thought to look for them. This is further supported by the modern preservation profession that has expressed some appreciation for the existence of original architectural records within archives.
become more apparent as finite tools for communication about a building. This is not a
devaluation of prints or measured drawings for their documentation of a structure, but a
diminished appeal as prints due to their lack the authenticity and “construct[ion] [of] a
new history or archaeology of knowledge…[that is] part of new cultural tradition.” 22

Despite developing a decade after the second preservation movement had
succeeded in passing the Historic Preservation Act, massCOPAR did not recognize its
work as related to that of historic preservationists. The development of the archival,
conservation, legal, and history communities united under a common cause, as reflected
in massCOPAR’s broad mission statement of “identify[ing] architectural records, [and]
support[ing] the preservation and accessibility of these records as collections in
Massachusetts.” 23 While the timing conspicuously coincides with the competition
between the reinvigorated historic preservation movement and urban renewal efforts, the
larger tumultuous cultural environment did not directly influence these regional
organizations, even though massCOPAR’s rhetoric shared a similar tone as the National
Trust. Although this mission does not align with the specific aims of the historic
preservation movements, it resonates thematically with preservationists’ fundamental
work and interests. massCOPAR intended to establish standard treatments and collection
practices of architectural records in general, rather than focusing solely on historical
structures or collections of historically significant architects’ records. The regional
organization identified architectural records as a neglected resource most notably within

22 Tracing architecture: the aesthetics of antiquarianism, eds. Dana Arnold and Stephen
23 Nancy Carlson Schroock, and Mary Campbell-Cooper. Records in Architectural Offices:
Suggestions for the Organization, Storage, and Conservation of Architectural Office
the architectural field, but the observation applies to the historic preservation profession as well. massCOPAR argues that the original architectural records provide a fuller documentation of all structures, including significant buildings of interest to historic preservationists. massCOPAR recognized that the buildings themselves were the “tangible monuments to an architect’s dream,” but not the only records of his/her thought. Preliminary sketches, measured drawings, blueprints, specifications, correspondence and models can offer a wealth of information otherwise unavailable.  

The marginal attention these materials had previously received rallied members of tangentially related professions in support of a common goal of preserving architectural records and making them accessible. The access component of massCOPAR is similar in nature to that of early preservationists who felt compelled to not only raise awareness of existing historically significant materials, but to also facilitate the public’s use and understanding of those materials. massCOPAR focused on mediating relationships between records producers and those repositories prepared to take and care for architectural records. The clear audience for massCOPAR’s publications – namely architects, archival repositories interested in collecting architectural materials, and architecture researchers – demonstrates the organization’s lack of interest in, or awareness of, its potential utility for the historic preservation community.

massCOPAR’s lack of engagement with the historic preservation community stems from its impetus, as two of its founders, Lorna Condon and Nancy Carlson Schrock explained. The organization’s development was only coincidental in relation to the

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prosperity of the second wave of the historic preservation movement.\textsuperscript{26} The professions of the founders of massCOPAR included conservation, preservation, archives, and libraries, demonstrating a shift in the preservation movement’s appreciation of architectural records as an asset.\textsuperscript{27} This influence, while not overtly apparent to the founders until prompted to consider these campaigns in tandem, must have reflected subtler influences of the historic preservation movement in this records-oriented organization’s initiatives. Lorna Condon of SPNEA’s successor organization Historic New England and Nancy Carlson Schrock, conservator for the MIT Libraries insist that their interest in preserving architectural records solely reflected the expanding scope of the conservation and archival communities and was not influenced by the growing presence of historic preservation.\textsuperscript{28} While the memories of these massCOPAR founders lack a clear connection to preservation, in 1988 massCOPAR founder Schrock had explicitly acknowledged the subconscious influence of the preservation movement’s values and momentum. In that 1988 paper she states “since [1975], local and national efforts to preserve architectural records have coincided with the growth of an active historic preservation movement that advocates renovating and restoring older

\textsuperscript{26} Lorna Condon. Interview with Aliza Leventhal. In-person interview. Boston, MA. February 8, 2013.
\textsuperscript{27} The founding members of massCOPAR include: Nick Olsberg, the state archivist in 1978; Rob Roch, representative of the Boston Society of Architects; Ardys Kozbial and Tess Cedarholm from the Harvard University libraries and the Boston Public Library respectively; Nancy Carlson Schrock conservator for the MIT libraries; and Lorna Condon, from Historic New England; and Elizabeth Banks from the Olmstead National Historic Site.
Despite this publication, the massCOPAR members’ general outlook and the continued separation of their efforts from historic preservation work indicates that these professions continue to miss opportunities for building symbiotic relationships.  

The massCOPAR’s primary concern was determining the availability and condition of previously unaccounted records from the numerous influential architects in the greater Boston area. massCOPAR approached its mission in a similar fashion to the first wave of historic preservationists focusing first on identifying and locating existing architectural materials, and then protecting and preserving those collections once discovered. Unlike historic preservationists, which relied on the structure to develop context, massCOPAR was primarily interested in an architect’s or architectural firm’s complete collection, rather than focusing on individual structures. Following the archival provenance-driven tradition, massCOPAR attached historic significance to the architect or architectural firm and the broader context of their work. massCOPAR did not favor or emphasize any particular attribute of historical significance that could be applied to architectural records (e.g. an architect’s fame or the significance of an architectural style).

30 “It is as important to save architectural records as it is to save the buildings themselves. They document specific buildings and present evidence on the careers of individual architects that is unavailable anywhere else. Such records all too often do not survive their creators, much less the buildings they depict. Yet they are invaluable to the study of architecture and can be of exceptional aid to preservationists. They frequently are of intrinsic artistic merit and always are historically significant” Lathorpe, Alan. “Architectural records: a heritage on paper.” Historic Preservation, 25 (1973): 41.
Echoing the initial preservationists’ efforts, massCOPAR publicized a concise mission of making such records available. The future would determine their historic value.\textsuperscript{31}

Despite being a solely volunteer venture of full-time workers, massCOPAR sprang into action immediately with a nominal grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to implement a feasibility study for surveying the architecture offices and firms of the greater Boston area in 1979. The feasibility study’s goal was to prevent further destruction by firms of their architectural records of all kinds, either intentionally or through neglect. This feasibility study proved fruitful, and in 1980 massCOPAR received a slightly more sizeable grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to implement their pioneering project. Surveys mailed to architectural firms of the greater Boston area were supplemented with in-person interviews that provided additional insight into the physical conditions architectural records were exposed to under the care of firms. This community-engaging project again mirrored the inclusive and collaborative effort of the first preservation movement. Like their preservation predecessors, massCOPAR explicitly solicited the involvement of architects and developed a comprehensive reference tool, the \textit{Guide to Architectural Resources in Boston and the Vicinity} in 1981.\textsuperscript{32} This was the first of several publications massCOPAR produced to support the care and use of architectural records in the greater Boston area. Once its extensive survey was completed and made publically available, co-founder Schrock collaborated in the publication of \textit{Records in Architectural Offices} –

\textsuperscript{31} Lorna Condon. Interview with Aliza Leventhal. In-person interview. Boston, MA. February 8, 2013.
Suggestions for the Organization, Storage and Conservation of Architectural Office Archives, which addressed the condition of architectural records and provided general advice for improved care of those materials.\textsuperscript{33}

One of the greatest finds from this survey was locating a significant cache of city and state public safety records that had been unknowingly stored in a police barrack, and the subsequent placement of them into the state archives.\textsuperscript{34} The discovery of extensive 7,300 cubic foot collection of Public Safety and Division of Inspection records that had previously been neglected demonstrates that original records were available, but not valued and definitely not utilized beyond their immediate intended purpose.\textsuperscript{35} In addition to the collective work of massCOPAR members, many worked professionally on sizeable collections of important architects, such as the Peabody & Stearns collection donated to the Boston Public Library, the H.H. Richardson collection at Harvard University, and the acquisition of The Architects’ Collaborative collection by the MIT Museum. This professional work provided massCOPAR members with the valuable experience that allowed them to produce authoritative resources on best practices for architectural firms to care for their records.

Despite massCOPAR’s lack of attention to preservationists, their inclusive approach to preserving architectural records and incorporating many related professions

\textsuperscript{34} Nancy Carlson Schrock. Interview with Aliza Leventhal. In-person interview. Cambridge, MA. February 21, 2013.
had some impact on the larger architectural and historic preservation communities. massCOPAR did not establish a direct relationship with preservationists, but was able to do so with proactive outreach to connect to engaged architects. In including architects in their survey of the greater Boston area for architectural materials (1979), massCOPAR raised the local architectural community’s awareness of the condition of their records and in the intrinsic value others saw in those records. The small impact of COPARs in general within the preservation community is most notably reflected in the professional journals of the historic preservation profession (e.g. *Architectural Journal* and *Historic Preservation*) that published a few short articles making note of the organization’s existence with a small mention of their mission.

massCOPAR played an integral role in laying the foundation for the archival community to take on the challenges of collecting, preserving and describing architectural records. By explicitly discussing the issues of architectural records, massCOPAR’s research, surveys, publications, and meetings developed best practices for the treatment of analog architectural records for archives and architectural firms alike. Through those methods of communication massCOPAR raised archivists’ awareness of the impending issues of slowly matriculating collections of architectural records and engaged diverse but related communities to address their shared concern of the future for architectural records. Despite the initial enthusiasm for a national effort, it was not sustained and dissipated as the regional COPARs lost momentum towards the end of the 1980s.

Many factors affected the decline of COPAR’s efforts and presence, including the personal and professional lives of the volunteer founding members, the changing climate
and technological advancements of architectural drafting, as well as the consolidation of archival interest in architectural records through the establishment of the Architectural Records Roundtable by the Society of American Archivists (SAA). Without new members to share the burden of massCOPAR’s work, the founding members were unable to sustain their drive and commitment, allowing the volunteer organization to fall by the wayside as the Society of American Archivists increased its efforts to address architectural records as an archival concern. The dissolution of massCOPAR is significant in forecasting the future trajectory of the preservation of architectural records, which has degenerated into isolated projects.36

massCOPAR’s effort to protect architectural records from “improper and inadequate storage facilities [had] contributed to major losses,” was taken up by the archival community in 1990 under the SAA’s governance.37 The SAA created the Architectural Records Roundtable that built a community of archivists working with collections of architectural records, providing a formal space to discuss the description and preservation issues of architectural records. Since its formation, the Roundtable has published books and articles, as well as established a supportive network of professionals to address the fundamental archival concerns of access and use for these unique materials. These resources helped archivists elevate their treatment of architectural records to meet professional standards, but they do not address the motivations for

36 These isolated efforts are also the result of stronger professional communities. Archivists develop better techniques and more robust collection policies to better appreciate and preserve architectural records, while preservationists have broadened their scope to appreciate original drawings when available.
collecting architectural materials or attempt to promote the existence of these collections with potential designated communities such as historic preservationists.

The SAA’s Architectural Records Roundtable aspires to fulfill the mission of their preceding organization, but the narrow nature of the SAA’s professional scope fails to perpetuate the same level of inclusive and engaging advocacy of the grassroots COPAR. COPARs aggressive campaigning for collaboration made some headway in the realm of engaging preservationists in conversation about the presence and potential value of architectural records, such as the late 1970s articles in the journal *Architectural Record*. Instead of maintaining the inclusive effort of the regional COPARs, the SAA’s Architectural Records Roundtable addressed architectural records solely as an archival concern, focused on establishing standards for the description, arrangement and preservation of architectural collections. This shift in focus allowed the archival (document) and historic preservation (object) communities again to function separately.

The international museum community, such as the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS, founded in 1965) and International Confederation of Architectural Museums (ICAM, founded in 1979), has become an alternative and inclusive space for proactive museum curators, archivists, architects and preservationists to discuss the overlap of their professions, although with limited functionality. After almost 20 years since the dissolution of massCOPAR the SAA’s Architectural Records Roundtable developed a taskforce in 2012 to address the issues of electronic architectural drawings created in proprietary software known as Computer-Aided-Design or CAD and Building-

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Information-Modeling or BIM. The CAD/BIM taskforce is adopting a similar model as COPAR by appealing to a wider community of professionals using or interested in CAD and BIM or related 3-dimensional design software programs.

Through its gradual and methodical development the archival profession established sound practices for addressing the physical and descriptive issues of analog architectural records independent of related communities such as preservation. As technology becomes more pervasive in archival collections the profession has adapted to engage records producers and users to determine new best practices for born-digital materials. The simultaneous development of a more proactive archival profession, the growing presence of architectural records within archival repositories, and the revival of the COPAR interdisciplinary methodology (as seen in the CAD/BIM taskforce) the archival community has developed a fertile environment for the actualization of partnerships with related industries and potential patrons.
**Chapter 5: CONCLUSION**

“We have lost much of the record of the historical past and much is in jeopardy”

– Carl Feiss

While the preservation movement began, in its amateur form, over one hundred years before the incorporation of massCOPAR in 1979, preservationists and the massCOPAR organization have followed similar trajectories in their approach to preserving their respective cultural documentation (buildings and drawings). These groups share an independently developed methodical approach of first identifying the full scope of material available, and then determining the most effective treatment and access methods for the materials. Similarly, the publications of these two professions reflect their inherent action-oriented natures, focusing mainly on providing narrowly focused practical guides and manuals that offer some theoretical framework supporting the actual practices. The creation of the regional COPARs most clearly illustrates the possibility for mutual benefit between these professions as this collaborative organization explicitly sought to address architectural materials in their full context, a claim preservationists similarly make about the built structure. Although this regional organization had a short life of less than two decades, the archival and historic preservation professions have developed contemporaneously since the first half of the 20th century. The efforts of these two professions to protect and preserve the fabric of America’s history through

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documents and the built environment offered multiple (overlooked) opportunities for collaboration.

There are several parallels in the development of historic preservation in the greater Boston area with massCOPAR: an interest in collaboration, establishment of professional practices, and a firm understanding of the vital role advocacy plays in achieving intended outcomes. Unlike historic preservationists’ subjective selection of historically and architecturally significant structures, massCOPAR was interested in preserving all architectural records. It was concerned with the architectural community’s lack of interest in their produced records and the future of those otherwise neglected materials. Regardless of the scope of massCOPAR (archives) and historic preservationists, they shared a similar rhetoric emphasizing the intrinsic value in their documents (textual and structural) developed by previous generations and the need to ensure access and context to those documents. Preservationists, much like archivists, believe that without their work “the evolving story of our places would be a sadly one-sided affair.”2 As curators of the built environment and of available documentation, neither preservationists and archivists are entirely neutral of bias in their work; however, the constant expansion of topics, communities, and documentation sought out and accepted as historically and culturally significant demonstrates the growing commitment of these professions to establish a comprehensive historical narrative. Through their preferred mediums both professions make a claim to preserving our cultural heritage, this research does not assert that either is more affective in their goal, but that had these

communities coordinated their efforts a much richer context could be constructed and saved.

Despite their comparable messages, there is no evidence that these professions made any attempt, expressed any interest in, or indicated any awareness of their potential symbiotic relationships. Preservationists have framed their efforts as a battle over a constantly endangered built environment, drawing a parallel between their movement and the greater architecture industry, which emphasizes the structures as their primary interest. As preservationists developed their practices independent of the original documentation (whether it was available or not), they have essentially dismissed original drawings and records as necessary for preservation purposes. The finite concentration of preservationists has limited their appreciation and utilization of the design iterations and aesthetic ideas employed in making a structure, such as an architect’s conceptual drawings and writings. As the movements matured, preservationists’ narrow scope has blinded them to the irony of their interest in documenting their work, while disregarding the original or measured drawings.

Through collaborative initiatives COPARs have raised archivists, architectural scholars, and preservationists’ awareness of the value and availability of original architectural records. Efforts such as massCOPAR’s regional surveys and facilitation of architects’ papers into archival repositories has increased the availability of architectural records, including those of historically and architecturally significant structures, which has reduced the costs preservationists associated with obtaining such rare records and improved possibility of utilizing these materials. Since the early 1990s there has been a slight increase in preservationists’ appreciation for additional documentation, such as
original architectural records, to gain a fuller understanding of the context of historically significant structures.\(^3\) This development hints at an imaginable budding collaborative relationship between preservationists and archivists, but there is still little push from either profession to make preservation of these records a prioritized agenda item.

Although historic preservation and archives have firmly established themselves as professions within the United States, they are still youthful fields within the scholastic world. These communities have significant areas yet to be explored, particularly in terms of their overlap and potential for mutual benefit. With a richer and more publically recognizable history, the preservation movements’ disinterest in marrying their efforts with the collection of architectural records has potentially had a more detrimental impact on the availability of original architectural records than the inaction of archivists. This possibility further compounds the archival community’s limitation in accessing materials from missed opportunities for collaboration. This is an area for further study to fully understand the impact the isolation of these two professions has had on their development, success, and future initiatives. Additionally, the architectural, preservation and archival academic and professional training programs must be further explored to identify the areas of overlap and divergence of these professions to use as a springboard for future collaborative efforts amongst these communities.

While massCOPAR may have been an opportunity to capitalize on the collaborative potential, it failed, and demonstrates the severe discontinuities in the separate approaches to similar material. Historic preservation continues to expand its scope of historical and architectural significance, and through this effort it has developed

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an appreciation for ever-more diverse mediums of supportive evidence. As the general archival profession becomes more proactive in engaging within its own field and with like-minded endeavors, such as preservation, the potential use and success of protecting the treasures of American culture will continue to improve. As archives build their collaboration skills through partnerships with the library and museum communities, and as computers and the Internet continue to bring nations, communities and professions closer together, the intentional collaboration of the archival and historic preservation professions is not far off. The historic preservation discourse appreciates the role of preservation within a changing society, as a “stabilizing force, a continuum that provides us visual and psychological evidence of where we have been – as a guide to where we might go.” The same could and is said about archives.

The responsibility for preserving the cultural heritage and collective memory of our cities and nations does not solely rest on the shoulders of archivists or preservationists. Together they serve equally vital roles in offering interpretations of the built environment that they personally curate through their professional practices. Each profession has its emphasis, the built structure and its original documentation, and with both parts available a more comprehensive understanding of the environment we live in and how it was created can be achieved. Through continued growth, proactive

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4 Projects such as the Society of American Archivists’ Architectural Records Roundtable’s Computer-Aided-Design and Building-Information-Modeling Taskforce, which intends to engage a variety of industries internationally to solve the growing question of computerized three-dimensional design, indicates the archival profession has begun to re-realize the benefit from collaboration.

engagement and professional self-awareness these two communities should be able to align their interests for the common good of a richer appreciation of our tangible heritage.
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