

THE BURNHAM BLOG

[Vision & Theme](#)

[About the Logo](#)

[Centennial Committee and Staff](#)

[Sponsors](#)

[Newsroom](#)

[News Coverage](#)

[Press Releases](#)

[E-News & Social Media](#)

[The Burnham Blog](#)

[Get Involved](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Seeing behind the scenes in the writing and selling of The Plan of Chicago

By Patrick T. Reardon on Mon., 06/29/2009 –7:54 am.

A century ago, civic leaders were fairly formal types, and it was rare that they permitted themselves to be photographed in anything but a staged setting.

That's why the photographs from the archives of Edward H. Bennett, the co-author of the Plan of Chicago, are so delightful.

As I wrote on Friday, one of the photos shows Daniel Burnham in the studio headquarters of the Plan's staff, writing what may be his 310-page draft of the Plan. The image is from a group of photos labeled "The Crowd at 1800," a reference to the studio on the 18th floor of the Railway Exchange Building (now the Santa Fe Building).

But there are other photos and documents from the Bennett archives, donated last November to the Lake Forest College library by his grandson, Edward Bennett III, that, for the first time, take viewers behind the scenes of the writing and selling of the Plan.

Here --- just days before the 100th anniversary of the publication of the Plan on July 4, 1909 --- are some examples:

Bennett (right) and Fernand Janin, a staff artist on the Plan. From "The Crowd at 1800."

THE BURNHAM BLOG

Urban planning touches every part of your day to day life. Join the conversation that is shaping the region for the next 100 years.

➔ [Register or Login to comment](#)

SUBSCRIBE VIA RSS



Use our RSS feed to track new blog posts.

ABOUT THIS BLOG

This blog is about history, planning and the future. It's rooted in the recognition that we live in a world that is created by plans – and by the failure to make plans. [\[MORE\]](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

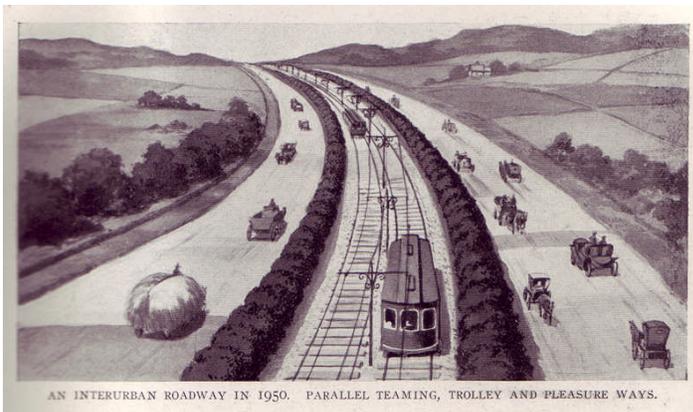
[Patrick T. Reardon](#) is a Chicagoan, born and bred. He has been writing about the city, its region and planning issues, mainly in the Chicago Tribune, for nearly 40 years. [\[MORE\]](#)



Five draftsmen in the rooftop studio. From “The Crowd at 1800.”



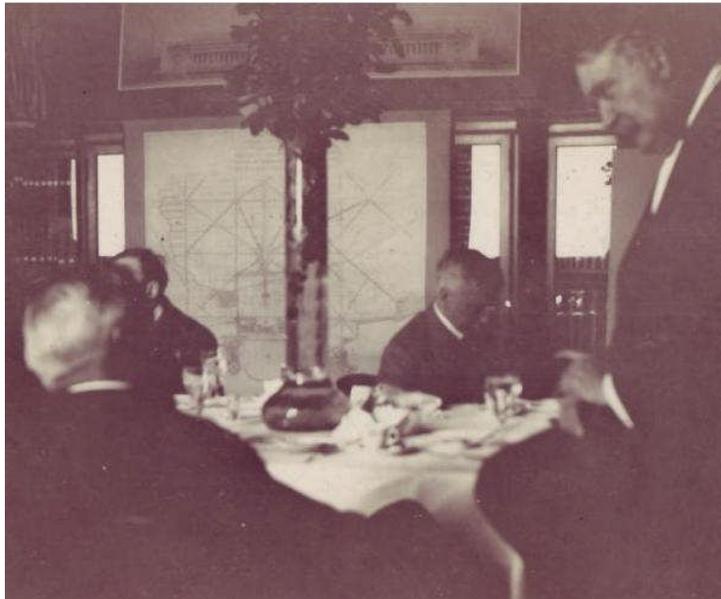
A rendering, done in 1908, of how an interurban roadway might appear in 1950. Obviously, today’s Dan Ryan Expressway doesn’t serve hay wagons and horse-drawn buggies, but its CTA line down the median doesn’t look all that different from the street car tracks here.



This image is from a 1910 luncheon in Burnham's office, honoring Charles Dyer Norton, the chairman of the Commercial Club's plan committee, who had just been named chief of staff to President William Howard Taft. Burnham is below the chandelier, next to the man whose face is obscured by smoke.



Here, at the same luncheon, is Burnham "working the crowd and employing his charisma to hold his team together to implement the Plan," according to Arthur Miller, the archivist and librarian for special collections at Lake Forest College.



One of Bennett's sketches for the frontispiece of the Plan (below) gives an example of multitude of ways in which he was involved in writing and preparing the document:



Here's the frontispiece by Jules Guerin as published in the Plan.

