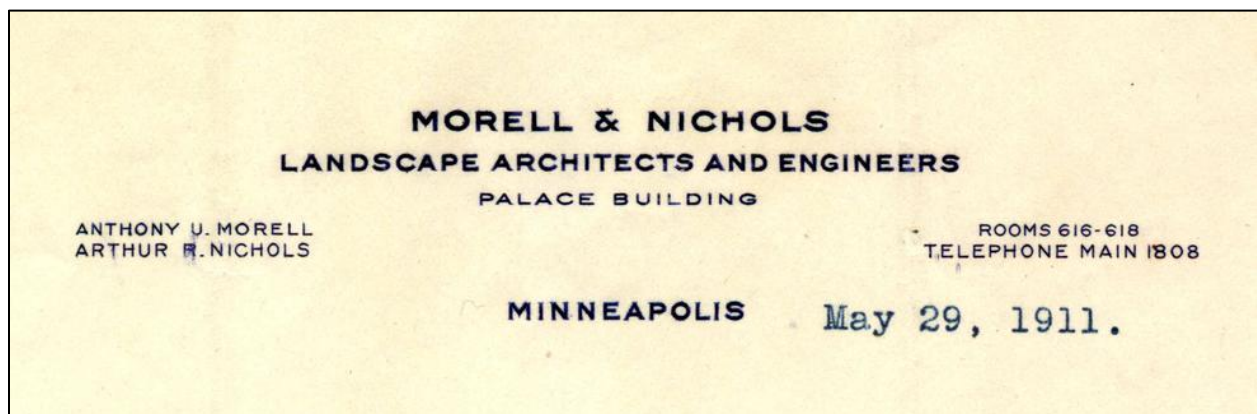


Letters from Landscapers

Edited by Trail End State Historic Site Superintendent Cynde Georgen; from *Trail End Notes*, July 2002

According to former Wyoming State Parks & Historic Sites Landscape Architect John Mahoney, Trail End's grounds were the first professionally landscaped privately-owned grounds in the state of Wyoming. The architects, Morell & Nichols of Minneapolis, Minnesota, created detailed plans, including several that were never carried to fruition. By examining the architects' original intent, we learn why the grounds are laid out as they are.

The original letters from Morell & Nichols to John B. Kendrick are housed at the Wyoming State Archives in Cheyenne, with copies on file at Trail End.



Letterhead, Morell & Nichols, 1911 (Construction Era Documents Collection, TESH5)

29 May 1911 - As soon as we are in receipt of the survey map ... we will begin to study out the entire situation and prepare the general scheme ... We wish to assure you that all the work connected with the improvements of your grounds will receive our earnest attention and we trust that we will be able to assist you to lay out your grounds in the most practical and attractive way.

1 July 1911 - The main court in front of your residence is sufficiently large for turning ... carriages, automobiles, etc., and will harmonize with your residence. ... A low wall approximately eighteen inches high will enclose the court and the corner piers can be treated with ornamental jardinières.

The drying yard as shown on the scheme located in the center of the services yard around which the coal and other deliveries can be brought will be very useful for drying purposes and the location of same near the house seems to be very logical.

Although you may not want to erect the greenhouse for some time to come we have located same south of the corral and made provision for a combination of greenhouse for growing flowers ... as well as hot-beds next to the greenhouse which could be very useful for growing early vegetables and flowers. The small fruit and vegetable garden located west of the greenhouse will give you ample space for growing some berries, fruit and vegetables for your house.

The first section of the flower garden will be treated in a very simple way. The turf and the low hedges will be main features of this arrangement. The second part of the garden ... will be principally devoted to growing of hardy perennial flowers. The pool as located in the center of the flower garden will be a very attractive feature in itself and such hardy flowers like Iris and Lilies will surround the pool and give it a good setting. The pergola located at the end of the garden will be the main feature of the garden and the arrangement of flowers in front of it will make a very attractive part of your grounds.

The section of your grounds south of the main court and east of the flower garden is utilized for an informal arrangement of walks and groups of native shrubs and wild flowers and this arrangement will furnish distinct variety to your grounds.

The arrangement of groups of trees and shrubs aims principally on giving setting to your residence and other buildings as well as to frame the grounds and give you as much privacy as possible and to show up the lawn to the best of advantage thus forming an harmonious whole. The large unbroken stretch of lawns in front of the main court and between the main drive and the orchard framed by groups of trees and shrubs along the boundary lines will be a very attractive feature in itself.

21 September 1912 - You wish us to show the location of the hydrants for watering the grounds and also show the irrigation system for the grounds. We sympathize deeply with you regarding the difficulty in keeping the lawn in fine condition by means of sprinkling the lawn, and we are also of the same opinion as you that it will be well to have an irrigation system worked out so that you can flood the lawn from time to time and thus help the sprinkling during the critical period.

15 March 1913 - You will notice in the planting scheme that in the outlined groups there are located a number of evergreen and deciduous trees which in combination with the flowering shrubs and the herbaceous plants make the group strong, giving same a natural landscape effect.

The planting list contains all the desired varieties among the evergreen trees, deciduous trees, deciduous shrubs, bush roses, vines, herbaceous plants, etc., which in our opinion will prove

perfectly hardy in your climate and will withstand also the arid climatic conditions. The list at the first glance represents a large number of varieties, but in order to make the grounds interesting throughout the entire season, it will be desirable to have quite a large variation of the various plants. ... Some of the plants will blossom in the early Spring, others during the summer months and still others in Fall.

Among the evergreen trees and also among the deciduous trees there are shown a few native cottonwood trees which would be well to plant quite thick. These trees being of rapid growth will give some shelter from the hot sun and winds to the evergreen trees and the imported deciduous trees during the first few years. These Cottonwood trees, however, should be regarded only as temporary trees and after the other trees have developed sufficiently and will be able to take care of themselves, the Cottonwood trees should be gradually removed in order to leave space for developing of the other varieties.



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