

**DESIGNATION STUDY:**

**2445 Park Avenue - The Anson Brooks Mansion**



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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*Cover Photo: The Anson Brooks Mansion from the southwest at the intersection of Park Avenue and East 25th Street, Minneapolis. Courtesy of Spacecrafting, 2014*

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## Designation Study Purpose and Background

On July 9, 2013 the Heritage Preservation Commission approved Commissioner Hunter Weir's nomination of the residence at 2445 Park Avenue South for consideration as an individual landmark, established interim protection, and directed the Planning Director to prepare or cause to be prepared a designation study. On April 29, 2014, the Heritage Preservation approved a six-month extension to complete the study and continued interim protection until January 9, 2015, or until a decision is made on the designation, whichever is sooner.

This report is the designation study as defined in Section 599 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances. Included in this report is a description of the significance of the property, both individually and within the context of Minneapolis planning and heritage preservation goals. The report is based on a review of resources including historic building permits, periodicals, archival materials of the Minneapolis Collection of the Hennepin County Library, State Historic Preservation Office survey records, and city land use records.

**Table 1: Basic Property Information**

Current name	Unnamed Multitenant Office Building
Historic Name	Anson Brooks Mansion
Current Address	2445 Park Avenue Minneapolis, MN 55404
Historic Address	2445 Park Avenue Minneapolis, MN 55404
Original Construction Date	1907
Original Contractor	Charles. F. Haglin
Original Architect, Master builder, engineer, designer, artist, or craftsmen	Franklin B. Long and Louis Long, architects
Historic Use	Residence
Current Use	Office
Ward:	6
Neighborhood:	Phillips West

## **PART 1: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY**

This section provides a description of the physical characteristics of the property, including both the parcel and features on the parcel, such as structures and landscaping.

### **Parcel location, shape, and size**

The subject property is located on Park Avenue South, at the intersection of Park Avenue and East 25<sup>th</sup> Street. It is located in the Phillips West neighborhood, south of downtown Minneapolis. The parcel is rectangular in shape, measuring 100 by 275 feet, totaling 27,500 square feet. It is one of many stately homes that were built along Park Avenue between Franklin Avenue East and East Lake Street. Many of these homes were demolished and most of those remaining have been converted to commercial or institutional uses in the last half of the twentieth century. The Anson Brooks Mansion is one of only a few remaining in this corridor.

### **Description of building(s) on the property**

There are two structures on the site: The house is the primary structure on the site, and a garage that was built at the same time is secondary. The house was originally constructed as a single-family residence for the Anson Brooks family. In the late 1930s the family sold the house and from that point on it has been occupied by a number of commercial and non-profit organizations.

### **Description of the primary structure**

*Date(s) of construction:* The original building permit for the Brooks Mansion was issued on November 24, 1906. A well-known Minneapolis architectural firm, Long and Long, designed the home to serve as the primary residence of the Anson Brooks family. The original cost of construction was \$58,335. The only exterior alteration to date is a minor one; the enclosure of a small, second story porch on the north facing elevation of the porte cochere.

*Size and massing:* The mansion is an imposing three-story structure constructed almost entirely of rubble-wall limestone with a rough-cut stone foundation. It boasts accents of sandstone quoins, carved mullions, and other details such as elaborate interlaced gothic-arched parapets at the third floor, large rows of lancet windows, oval ‘bulls eye’ windows, gothic colonnades, and more. The structure has a flat roof and features massive square corner bays—akin to squat towers—at all four corners. The foundation for the main residence measures 51 by 118.5 feet. The house is sited according to the set-backs of other properties on both Park Avenue and East 25th Street.

*Architectural style:* The Brooks residence was designed in the Venetian Gothic Style and was inspired by the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Doge’s Palace (built 1340), one of the premiere landmarks in Venice, Italy (See Figure 1). Despite the massive corner bays, detailed ornamentation gives the structure the ‘lacy’ look that is characteristic of the Venetian Gothic style.

An impressive offset, one-story, crenellated entrance pavilion serves as a focal point of the west façade facing Park Avenue. The pavilion has an elaborate gothic-arch that

holds a door and sidelights made of glass and wrought iron. The main entrance leads to the library, a grand staircase, powder room and coat closet. The living room, dining room, kitchen and pantries are aligned along the south elevation (25<sup>th</sup> Street) of the residence (See Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5).

*Known original elements that are deteriorated or missing:* The building permit for the property does not show that any of the original elements of the building have been removed or altered. Photographic evidence demonstrates that the exterior of the house looks much the same today as it did when it was originally constructed. Overall, the exterior of the building appears to be in very good condition.

### **Description of the secondary structure**

*Date(s) of construction:* The original building permit does not have separate entries noting the date of construction work or the cost of the construction on the garage. A permit was granted for electrical work in the garage on December 1, 1908, however, so there is little doubt that the garage was an integral part of the residence's design from the outset.

*Location, placement, and orientation of building on the site:* The garage is located to the east of the residence and is connected to it by a porte cochere that connects it to a second-story billiard room. It is also connected to the residence by an underground tunnel.

*Size and massing:* The garage and chauffeur's quarters is a two-story structure and shares the same imposing look (albeit on a slightly smaller scale) as the house. Although it might be considered a secondary structure, the garage is an essential element of the building's architecture and altering it would significantly affect the property's integrity.

*Architectural style:* The garage is built in the Venetian Gothic style as well.

*Known original elements that are deteriorated or missing:* The garage originally included a giant turntable so the Brooks' automobile would not have to back out of the garage (Swanson, 1987). The turntable has been removed.

### **Description of landscape and landscape features**

Much like other nearby properties, the parcel that the Brooks Mansion sits on appears almost entirely flat. There is a minimal amount of landscaping on the site. Small and medium sized trees dot the site, though these are too young to from the period of significance. A hodgepodge of low bushes and other plants skirts the house and carriage house. There is no evidence that a formal landscape plan was followed.

### **Topography**

The house is situated on a large corner lot and is bordered by public sidewalks on the south and west sides. From the sidewalk the lawn slopes gently upward about eighteen inches and then plateaus into a flat yard.

## **Vegetation**

There are four large shade trees that are spaced irregularly about the front yard. There are ornamental shrubs on the east and north sides of the garage. The vegetation does not appear to be original and, although pleasant, is not remarkable.

## **Other landscape features**

The residence has stone terrace on its west side (primary façade), overlooking Park Avenue. The terrace runs along most of the width of the building (except for the entry portico) and it is partially enclosed by a solid, approximately 40-inch-high stone wall on three sides. The wall is constructed of the same material as the house. Like the garage and porte cochere, it is an essential architectural feature of the design for the mansion and it should be considered an extension of the house rather than as a separate landscape feature.

There is a large striped canvas awning on the south side of the porte cochere that has the address ("2445") printed on it. It is not original to the building and is easily removable.

*Driveways, walkways, patios, and garden paths:* A concrete walkway connects the public sidewalk on the west side (Park Avenue) of the residence to the terrace and main entrance to the house. There are three wide steps leading from the walkway up onto the terrace.

There is 20-car parking blacktop lot on the north side of the garage that is not original to the residence. It is possible that this the space may have been used for guests' carriages and automobiles, but there is no conclusive evidence. The blacktopped surface extends underneath the porte cochere and functions as an entrance to, and exit from the parking lot.

## **PART 2: HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The Brooks Mansion is historically significant for its association with business and civic leader Anson Brooks, its rare Venetian Gothic design by master architects Franklin Long and Louis Long, and its location on Minneapolis' "Golden Mile," a row of Park Avenue mansions built between 1900 and 1920.

### **Anson Strong Brooks Family**

Lumber baron Anson Strong Brooks was born September 6, 1852, in Redfield, NY, the youngest son of Sheldon and Jeanette (Ranney) Brooks (Brooks, 1836-1883). Anson's brothers were George, Lester, and Dwight. Sheldon and Jeanette Brooks moved their family to Minnesota in 1856. Anson married Georgiana Lillian Andros on July 24, 1876. They had two children: Paul Andros Brooks (1881-1941) and Stanley Brooks (1886-1907).

### **Brooks-Scanlon Lumber Company**

Anson's oldest brother, George, died in 1861 when Anson was only 9 years old. Twelve years later in 1873, George formed a partnership with his two surviving brothers, Lester and Dwight, and went into the grain elevator business under the name Brooks Brothers (Atwater & Stevens, 1895). Anson Brooks served as president of the company. Brooks Brothers continued until 1907 by which time it owned 35 grain elevators and had extensive holdings of other property. While still in the grain elevator business, in 1896 the three Brooks brothers went into the lumber business, opening their first double band sawmill in Cass Lake, Minnesota, in 1898. The great success of the mill led the Brooks Brothers to partner with M. J. Scanlon and Henry E. Gipson to organize the Brooks-Scanlon Lumber Company in 1901. By 1903 Brooks-Scanlon had become the largest lumber sawing mill in the Northwest (The Scanlon-Gipson Company, 1903), The partnership allowed Anson Brooks to acquire great wealth.

Lester Brooks, who had served as President of the company, died in 1902, and brother Dwight Brooks took over the Presidency. Anson served as Vice-president, and eventually President. Under Anson and Dwight's leadership, the Brooks-Scanlon Company achieved substantial growth and success, eventually opening operations throughout the United States and Canada, including Louisiana, Florida, Montana, Oregon, and British Columbia.

### **Civic Leader**

In addition to being a highly successful businessman, serving on the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce (Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, 1903), in 1904 Anson joined a number of other civic leaders—in bringing the "Father of the Waters" sculpture from Italy to Minneapolis, where today it is housed in the rotunda of Minneapolis City Hall (Allegorical Statue of the Father of the Waters, 1903). Anson Brooks' name appears on the plaque at the base of the sculpture along with city leaders such as including Samuel D. Cargill, John De Laittre, William H. Dunwoody, Edwin W. Herrick, Henry L. Little, fellow Park Avenue neighbor Sumner T. McKnight, Charles and John Pillsbury, George F. Piper, and Thomas H. Shevlin. (Figure 13).

## **Building His Venetian Gothic Dream Home on Park Avenue**

Anson and Georgiana's youngest son, Stanley, died in 1907 at the age of 19, while the family's Venetian Gothic dream home was still under construction. Upon completion of the mansion, Anson, Georgiana, and 26-year-old Paul—who by this time worked as an attorney for his father's successful lumber company—moved into their new mansion at 2445 Park Avenue where they lived with a staff of four, including servants, a housekeeper, and a chauffeur.

Anson and Georgiana continued to live at 2445 Park Avenue until 1920 when the couple (then 66 and 60, respectively), “downsized” to a roughly 12,000 square foot mansion Anson commissioned at 2535 Park Avenue (currently the home of Thomson-Dougherty Funeral Home). Anson left his Venetian Gothic palace to his only surviving son, Paul.

## **The Paul Brooks Years: 1920-1940**

Paul Brooks, his wife Hazel, and their four children (Pauline, Anson, Barbara, and Sheldon) continued to live at 2445 Park Avenue well into the 1930s. Ten live-in staff, including a gardener, nurse, cooks, maids, and chauffeurs also lived in the residence. By 1940, Paul Brooks and his family – like many of the early mansion owners along Park Avenue – had moved permanently to the family's Lake Minnetonka home.

## **Death**

Following the death of Georgiana in 1934, Anson Strong Brooks died on August 3, 1937, just one month shy of his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. Brooks-Scanlon Lumber Co. continued to operate until 1980 when it merged with the Diamond International Corp. The company's last sawmill remained active until 1994.

## **Architects: Long & Long**

Franklin B. Long (1842–1912) was a prolific Minneapolis architect perhaps most notable for his association with the firm Long and Kees (1884-1898), a partnership that resulted in some of the city's most important historic buildings, including Minneapolis City Hall, First Baptist Church (1883-85), the former Minneapolis Public Library building (built 1884, razed in 1961), the Minneapolis Masonic Temple (now the Hennepin Center for the Arts; 1888), the Lumber Exchange Building (1885), and the Flour Exchange Building (1892).

After the partnership of Long and Kees disbanded in 1898, Long partnered with his son Louis, and later with Lowell Lamoreaux. Franklin Long died in Minneapolis on August 21, 1912. The firm kept the name of Long, Lamoreaux and Long until the 1920s. By 1926, there was no one in the firm still named Long, but Olaf Thorshov, who became a partner in 1920, kept the firm under the name of Long and Thorshov because Long's name had been so well known (Lathrop, 2010).

Long & Long's work is associated with the following locally and nationally designated landmark:

- Anne C. and Frank B. Semple House at 100-04 Franklin Avenue West, 1901 (Local and National Designation)

Under the name Long and Kees, Franklin Long's work is associated with the following locally and nationally designated landmarks

- Minneapolis City Hall/The Municipal Building at 315 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, 1889-1905 (Local and National Designation)
- Flour Exchange Building at 310 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, 1892/1909 (Local and National Designation)
- Farmers and Mechanics Bank at 115 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, 1891-92/1908 (Local and National Designation)
- William S. Nott House at 15 Groveland Terrace, 1893-94 (Local Designation)
- Frank B. Long House at 25 Groveland Terrace, 1894 (Local Designation)
- Lumber Exchange Building at 423-25 Hennepin Avenue, 1885-1890 (Local and National Designation)
- Masonic Temple at 524-30 Hennepin Avenue, 1888-1890 (Local and National Designation).

Other notable commercial buildings associated with Long & Long include, but are not limited to (Millett, AIA Guide to the Twin Cities, 2007; Millett, AIA Guide to Downtown Minneapolis, 2010):

- Renaissance Square (Andrus Building) at 512 Nicollet Mall, 1898
- The Hotel Minneapolis (Security Bank Building) at 201 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, 1906
- Valspar Headquarters (Minnesota Linseed Oil Paint Co.) at 1101 Third St. Sought, 1904
- Minikahda Country Club at 3205 Excelsior Blvd, 1899/1902
- Maryland Apartments at 1346 LaSalle Ave, 1907
- North Star Mini Storage (Boyd Transfer and Storage Warehouse) at 400-410 Lake St. East, 1902

After his father died, Louis Long's continued his partnership with Lowell Lamoreaux under the firm name Long, Lamoreaux and Long. Their work includes at least one locally and nationally designated landmark:

- Oakwood Minneapolis (Central YMCA) at 36 Ninth St. South, 1917-19 (Local and National Designation)

Louis Long's work in association with Olaf Thorshov under the firm name Long and Thorshov includes, but is not limited to:

- Medical Arts (Yeates) Building at 825 Nicollet Mall, 1923

Franklin and Louis Long's catalog of commissions—both during their partnership and in association with other partnerships, namely Long and Kees—represent a variety of architectural and building types. Based on previous locally and nationally designated works, Franklin Long is recognized as one of the city's premiere architects and is considered a master architect. Louis' catalogue, while not as extensive as his father's, is also impressive and could qualify him for master architect status, as well. The Anson S. Brooks Mansion conveys the original design intent of Long & Long, with few exterior or

interior modifications to the building's original design. The Anson Brooks Mansion is an intact and preserved example of the work of these prolific master architects.

### **Venetian Gothic Style:**

Designed in the Venetian Gothic style, 2445 Park Avenue is a unique structure in Minneapolis, the Twin Cities, and the region. The exterior is an exercise in what architectural historian Larry Millett calls a "rare example of the Gothic style in the Twin Cities" and like "a little piece of Venice on Park Avenue" (Millett, *AIA Guide to the Twin Cities*, 2007). Long & Long's design for the Brooks Mansion was, in fact, inspired by the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Doge's Palace (built 1340), one of the premiere landmarks in Venice, Italy (Figure 1).

The Venetian Gothic style originated in 14<sup>th</sup> Century Venice with the confluence of Byzantine styles from Constantinople, Arab influences from Moorish Spain, and early Gothic forms from mainland Italy. Chief examples of the style are the Doge's Palace and the Ca' d'Oro in Venice.

The publication of British architectural critic John Ruskin's book "The Stones in Venice," touched off a revival of Venetian Gothic architecture in the late nineteenth century. A small number of American architects (Charles Amos Cummings, Frank Furness, Norman Shaw, William Robert Ware, Willard T. Sears and Frederick W. Stevens) designed buildings, mostly commercial or ecclesiastical, in the Venetian Gothic style. Despite their efforts and interest, examples of Venetian Gothic architecture remained relatively rare in the United States. New York had between two and three dozen Venetian Gothic buildings, mostly commercial, but very few of them are still standing (Gray, 2014). No other known structure in the Twin Cities was designed in this style. And while there are churches in the Twin Cities that display Gothic influences, there are no extant structures—particularly residential—that embody in their entirety such a unique Venetian Gothic form as the Brooks Mansion.

### **Park Avenue: Minneapolis' "Golden Mile":**

The setting of the Brooks residence on Park Avenue, the city's "Golden Mile," makes it a distinct element of Minneapolis architectural and landscape identity. Beginning in the late 1800s, as commercial development was encroaching on the original mansion districts in downtown Minneapolis (located around Fifth Avenue South and Seventh Street and in and around the Loring Park neighborhood), the city's earliest, most influential and wealthiest residents and business elite (magnates in the then-booming lumber, grain, real estate, and newspaper industries) sought refuge in outer-lying areas where they could build more tranquil "urban estates." They wanted to be far enough outside of the urban core to offer desired peace and quiet and protection from further commercial encroachment, yet close enough to downtown for an easy commute to and from their businesses, shopping and entertainment. Park Avenue quickly became the residential district of choice and the city's most fashionable street for building large, opulent, architect-designed homes.

From the outset, the stretch of Park Avenue from Franklin Avenue south to East 28<sup>th</sup> Street was platted and planned to attract the most prominent Minneapolitans. It soon became the most sought-after and prestigious residential street in the city. In short, it was Minneapolis' answer to St. Paul's Summit Avenue. Its original design included:

- An impressive, wide expanse unlike any other in the City, bisected by a narrow, 36-foot wide, two-way roadway, flanked by ten extra feet of boulevard on each side
- 100-foot building setbacks
- Deep lots of approximately 230 feet

By the early part of the 1900s, the City's elite had built 35 mansions along the Golden Mile. Among these residents were men who had made their fortunes in the milling industry: Frank Peavey, James Bell, Franklin Crosby, Edmund Phelps, Frank Heffelfinger and Charles Harrington. Prominent lumberman Sumner T. McKnight lived in a mansion three blocks north of the Brooks residence. Swedish newspaper mogul Swan Turnblad lived one block south.

The mansions of the Golden Mile were designed in an array of popular nineteenth and early-twentieth century architectural styles, all rendered by Minneapolis' most prolific architects, including William Channing Whitney, Harry Wild Jones, Boehme & Cordella, Kees & Colburn, Franklin Long, Lowell Lamoreaux, Orff & Joralemon, LeRoy Buffington, Charles Sedgwick, Bertrand & Chamberlin, Septimus J. Bowler, Theron Potter Healy, Bertrand & Keith, and others.

In the early 1890s residents formed the Park Avenue Improvement Association to protect their interests and safeguard the area's reputation as the finest residential street in the city. Association members levied taxes of ten cents per lineal foot upon themselves for the purpose of managing plantings and boulevard maintenance, tree trimming and insect spraying, street sweeping, traffic regulation, and the strict enforcement of the 100-foot building setback rules. In 1889, the association went so far as to privately finance a two-mile project that made Park Avenue the first street in Minneapolis to be paved with asphalt.

Because of their wealth, Park Avenue residents were among the first in the City to own automobiles or "horseless carriages." Anson Brooks was no exception. His estate included a garage built for automobiles rather than a carriage house. One of its most interesting, though no longer extant features, was a turntable that meant that the chauffeur never had to back out of the garage.

On June 21<sup>st</sup> every year, residents of the avenue hosted a "Parade of Autos" on Park Avenue. Residents and others spent the day driving up and down the avenue to show off their cars.

But their revered automobiles played a major role in the avenue's decline. By the 1920s, wide-spread automobile ownership had increased the conveniently-paved avenue's traffic, dust, and noise levels considerably. Aside from its smooth paved surface, Park Avenue's close proximity to downtown, and straight north-south route, also made it an ideal choice for downtown commuters from the expanding city limits to the south. And so as early as 1920, the next phase of migration for the City's wealthiest founding residents began. Just as commercial encroachment 20-30 years earlier drove them from the early downtown mansion districts, so, too, had the automobile sent Park Avenue residents clamoring for new, increasingly fashionable, more tranquil, and less-traveled residential areas such as Lake of the Isles and Lake Minnetonka.

Despite strong, decades-long advocacy efforts from Park Avenue's hold-out residents to curb the traffic, in 1948 the City of Minneapolis converted Park Avenue's original 36-foot wide, two-way roadway into a one-way, northbound artery (Minneapolis City Council Proceedings, 1948). In 1955, the City widened the roadway to 56 feet, and added a third lane, thus eliminating a full 20 feet of boulevard green space in order to further accommodate the then growing suburban commuters into downtown. In 1967, Interstate 35W opened just a few blocks west of Park Avenue, but Park's three-lane, one-way configuration remained the same.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, urban renewal took the form of demolition and left only eight Park Avenue mansions between Franklin Avenue and East 28<sup>th</sup> Street in its wake. (By contrast, the far more modest—albeit architect-designed—wood-frame residences south of 28th Street remained largely intact). To date, only the Swan Turnblad Mansion (American Swedish Institute) at 2600 Park Avenue (Local and National Designation), and the Charles M. Harrington Mansion at 2540 Park Avenue (Local Designation) have received historic designations.

### **PART 3: RATIONALE FOR LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION**

Local historic designation is an official action that promotes the preservation of historic resources by recognizing specific people, places, and events that are deemed to be significant in relation to the history and heritage of Minneapolis. Through the requirements set out in the Heritage Preservation chapter of the City's Code of Ordinances, the act of designation establishes a series of protections that are administered through the ordinance to ensure protection of significant places throughout the city against demolition or inappropriate alterations.

#### **Designation Criteria**

Title 23 Chapter 499.210 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances lists seven criteria that are considered when trying to determine whether a property is worthy of local designation as a landmark because of its particular significance. The Brooks Mansion is considered below in relation to each of the seven designation criteria.

#### **Criterion #1: The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.**

Park Avenue between Franklin Avenue and East 28<sup>th</sup> Street in the era of Anson Brooks was known as Minneapolis' "Golden Mile." It was one of 35 architect-designed homes built for several of the City's wealthiest and most prominent businessmen and civic leaders. By the 1920s the wealthy residents of Park Avenue had begun to move to other, less busy, areas of the city. Many of their former homes came to house commercial and non-profit organizations and over the years the majority of homes along Park Avenue were demolished. Only eight of them remain today.

#### **Criterion #2: The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.**

The Brooks residence is significant for Anson Brooks and members of his family. Anson Strong Brooks made his fortune in both the grain and lumber milling industries. In 1896, Anson Brooks and two of his brothers, Dwight and Lester, started the Brooks Brothers Milling Company. In 1901 they partnered with M. J. Scanlon and Henry E. Gipson and by 1903, Brooks-Scanlon had become the largest lumber sawmilling operation in the Northwest.

Brooks was also prominent in a number of civic organizations, most notably the Chamber of Commerce. He was one of a number of prominent citizens who arranged to have the Father of Waters sculpture brought from Italy to Minneapolis where it is prominently displayed in the rotunda of Minneapolis City Hall.

#### **Criterion #3: The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity.**

Park Avenue between Franklin Avenue and East 28<sup>th</sup> Street in the era of Anson Brooks was known as Minneapolis' "Golden Mile." It was one of 35 architect-designed homes built for several of the City's wealthiest and most prominent businessmen and civic leaders. By the 1920s the wealthy residents of Park Avenue had begun to move to other, less busy, areas of the city. Many of their former homes came to house commercial and

non-profit organizations and over the years the majority of homes along Park Avenue were demolished. Only eight of them remain today.

**Criterion #4: The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.**

The property is historically significant because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Venetian Gothic style, an architectural style that is rare not only in Minneapolis but throughout most of the United States.

**Criterion #5: The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.**

The subject property is not significant under criterion 5. The landscape, while attractive, is unexceptional.

**Criterion #6: The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.**

The Brooks Mansion The subject property is significant because of its association with Franklin and Louis Long. A catalog of their commissions—both during their partnership and in association with other partnerships, namely Long and Kees—represent a variety of architectural and building types. Based on previous locally and nationally designated works, Franklin Long most certainly is recognized as one of Minneapolis' premiere architects and would be considered a master architect. Louis's catalogue, while not as extensive as his father's, is also impressive and could qualify him for master architect status, as well. The Anson S. Brooks Mansion conveys the original design intent of Long & Long, with virtually no exterior or interior modifications to the building's original design. The Anson Brooks Mansion is an excellent, intact, and beautifully preserved example of the work of these prolific master architects. Other examples of Long and Long's work are given in part two of this designation study.

**Criterion #7: The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.**

The subject property has not yielded information important in prehistory. According to the State Historic Preservation Office any archaeological significance is likely to be associated with the construction of the residence itself rather than from an earlier period.

**Integrity of historic resource**

The following is an assessment of the Brooks Mansion as related to the seven aspects of integrity, as defined by the Department of the Interior:

**Location**

The original building permit for this home shows that the building was constructed onsite at 2445 Park Avenue, indicating that it maintains its integrity of location.

## **Design**

The property embodies distinctive characteristics of the Victorian Gothic architectural style and retains its architectural integrity. The design of the residence remains almost exactly as its owner and architects intended. The only exterior alteration is a minor one: the enclosure of a small, second story porch on the north-facing elevation of the porte cochere.

## **Setting**

While many of the original homes on Park Avenue have been razed, including on the 2400 block, the Brooks Mansion is part of a group of four contiguous existing structures on the east side of the street that were built as single-family homes. The Brooks Mansion retains its integrity of setting.

## **Materials**

The property retains the integrity of its materials. There have been no significant changes and the house is as it was designed and constructed in 1907.

## **Workmanship**

The Brooks Mansion retains its integrity of workmanship. There is nothing to suggest, either in the permit record or in photographic evidence, that there has been substantial removal, replacement or alteration of original elements of the house. The only exterior alteration is a minor one: the enclosure of a small, second story porch on the north-facing elevation of the porte cochere.

## **Feeling**

The Brooks Mansion retains its integrity of feeling. Grouped in close proximity with three of the other remaining houses on the block, the Brooks Mansion still is able to provide a sense of how the street appeared around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Association**

The Brooks Mansion retains its integrity of association relative to all four of the designation criteria for which it is significant. The property continues to convey the intent of its original owner, Anson Brooks, as well the Venetian Gothic design by master architects Long & Long. While the remaining mansions of the Golden Mile are spread across multiple blocks of Park Avenue, the Brooks Mansion and surrounding structures retain a uniform large setback from the street that was a key feature of the Golden Mile.

## **Other Considerations**

### **Relationship to the 1990 Minneapolis Preservation Plan**

The Brooks Mansion is historically significant for its association with business and civic leader Anson Brooks, its rare Venetian Gothic design by master architects Franklin Long and Louis Long, and its location on Minneapolis' "Golden Mile," a row of Park Avenue mansions built between 1900 and 1920. These areas of significance align with the

Business and Industry, Architecture, and Residential Development contexts of the *Minneapolis Preservation Plan*.

### **Relationship to the body of locally-designated properties in Minneapolis**

The City of Minneapolis designates properties that represent and reflect elements of the city's culture, social, economic, religious, political, architectural, or aesthetic history as local heritage landmarks. As of January 2015, over 150 individual properties have been designated as landmarks in the City of Minneapolis. Two of Park Avenue's other mansions have been locally-designated. One is the Swan Turnblad mansion (American Swedish Institute) at 2600 Park Avenue. The other is the Charles M. Harrington mansion (St. Mary's Student Center) at 2540 Park Avenue. The Turnblad mansion is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

No other locally-designated properties were built in the Venetian Gothic style. In fact, no other Venetian Gothic structures are known to exist in the region.

Franklin Long and his son, Louis, have an extensive list of properties that are locally or nationally designated (see Part 2 of this study for further details).

One other locally-designated property was designed by master architects Long & Long, the Anne C. and Frank B. Semple House at 100-04 Franklin Avenue West (also listed on the National Register of Historic Places). Franklin and Louis Long's individual portfolios include several other locally-designated properties, as outlined in this study in Part 2: Historic Significance.

### **Comprehensive and Long-Range Planning**

Title 23, Chapter 599.260 of Minneapolis Code of Ordinances requires the planning director to submit all proposed designations to the Minneapolis City Planning Commission for review and comment on the proposed designation. In its review, the City Planning Commission shall consider but not be limited to the following factors:

- (1) The relationship of the proposed designation to the city's comprehensive plan.
- (2) The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area.
- (3) The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council.

*The relationship of the proposed designation to the city's comprehensive plan:*

The designation of the subject property meets relevant policies of the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth.

Policy 3.7 states, "Maintain the quality, safety and unique character of the city's housing stock." The subject property serves as an enduring example of Minneapolis' safe, and unique housing: and example that has thrived for over a century.

Policy 8.1 states, "Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city's architecture history, and culture." Implementation step 8.1.1 continues, "Protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance." Designating the Brooks mansion as a

historic landmark would directly meet the intent and goal of Policy 8.1. The protections placed on the property as a result of designation would serve to meet policy objective 8.1.1.

*The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area:*

Designation of the Brooks Mansion will keep intact one of the last remaining mansions on the “Golden Mile,” on a block face of Park Avenue that remains mostly residential.

*The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the City Council:*

There are no adopted small area plans for the area where the property is located.

### **National Register Status**

This property is not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

### **State Designation**

The property has not been designated by the state of Minnesota as a historic district, historic place, or historic site.

### **Period of Significance**

The period of significance for the Brooks Mansion is 1907-1940, beginning with the issuance of the building permit and ending with the Brooks family moving to Lake Minnetonka.

**PART 4: REGISTRATION AND CLASSIFICATION INFORMATION**

<b>NAME OF PROPERTY</b>	
Historic Name	Anson Strong Brooks Residence
Current Name	Lemna Corporation
Other Names Used	
<b>LOCATION OF PROPERTY</b>	
Street and Number	2445 Park Avenue South
Is building located on its original site?	Yes
Date if moved	
<b>OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY</b>	
Owner's Name	Lemna Corporation
Owner's Address	2445 Park Ave. So. Mpls., MN 55407
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	
Ownership of Property	Private
Category of property	Commercial
Number of contributing resources within property	Buildings: 1 Structures: 1 (garage) Sites: 0 Objects: 0
Number of non-contributing resources within property	Buildings: 0 Structures: 0 Sites: 0 Objects: 0
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places?	No
Date of NRHP listing?	
<b>USE AND FUNCTION</b>	
Historic Use	Single-family residence
Current Use	Office
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	
Architectural classification/style	Venetian Gothic
Materials:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundation</li> <li>• Roof</li> <li>• Walls</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rough-cut stone</li> <li>• Flat Roof</li> <li>• Rubble-wall limestone</li> <li>Sandstone quoins, carved mullions</li> </ul>

Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission  
 Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development  
*Designation Study for 2445 Park Avenue – The Anson Brooks Mansion*

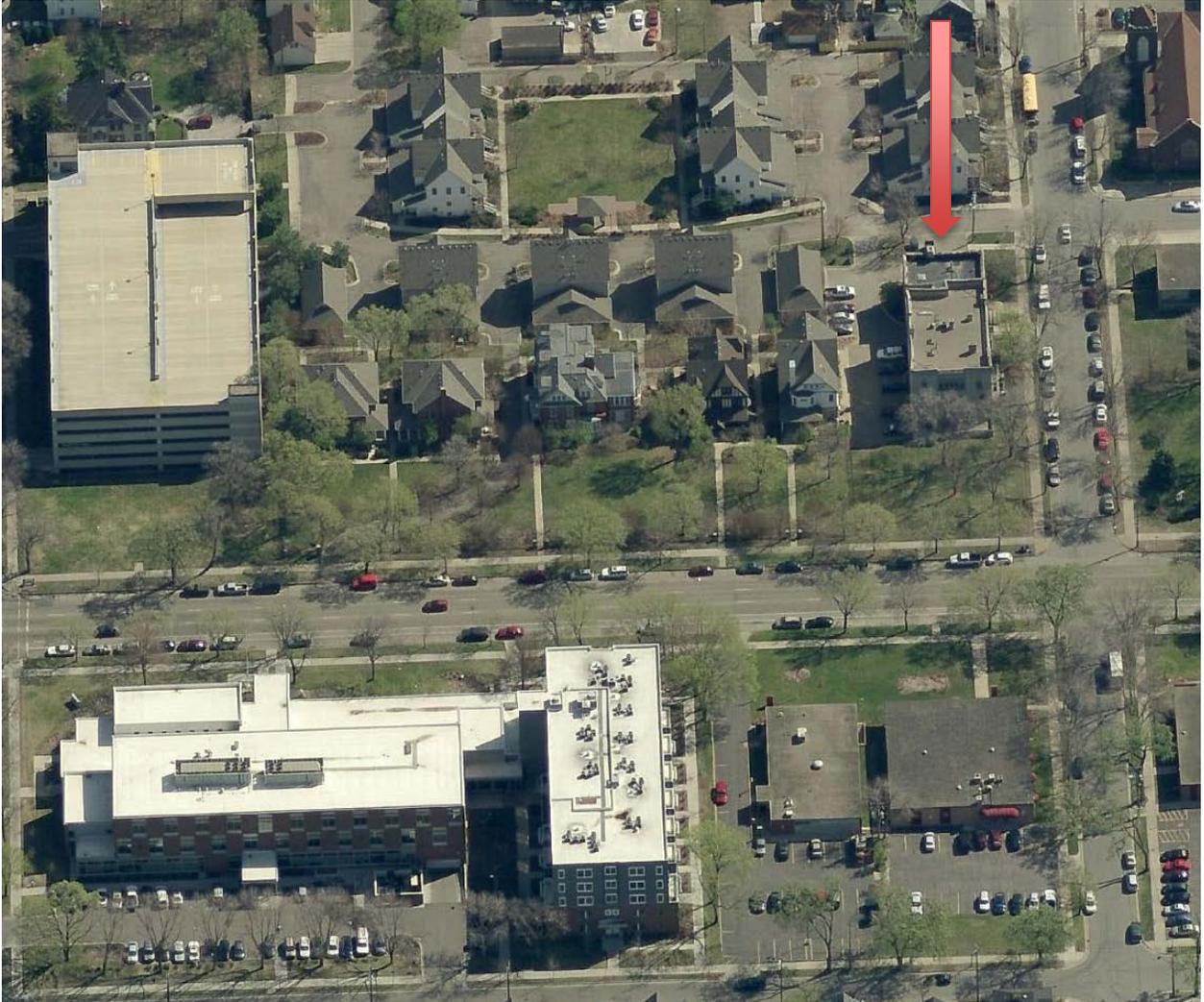
<b>STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE</b>	
Applicable local designation criteria	599.210 (2)(3)(4)(6)
Related local context (s)	Architecture, Neighborhood Development, Master Architect, Significant Persons
Significant dates	1907
Period (s) of significance	1907-1940
Names of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen, and/or architects	Franklin B. Long and Louis Long, architects
<b>MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES</b>	
	See Sources Section
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL DATA</b>	
Size of parcel	27,800 square feet
PIN number	35-029-24-23-0040
Legal Description	Lots 5, 6, 7, 8 of Block 2 Bell Brothers Addition

## **PART 5: PHOTOGRAPHS, DRAWINGS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS**



**Figure 1. Doge's Palace (built 1340), Venice, Italy, served as Long & Long's inspiration for the Anson S. Brooks Mansion.**

[Photo](#) by [Vladimir Varfolomeev](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC 2.0](#).



**Figure 2. Aerial view of subject property, looking east.**

Source: Bing Maps



Photo courtesy of Spacecrafting

Figure 3. Front entrance pavilion showing original terrace and entry doors.



Photo courtesy of Spacecrafting

Figure 4. Park Avenue (front) facade with entrance and terrace



Photo courtesy of Spacecrafting

Figure 5. South elevation, along East 25th Street



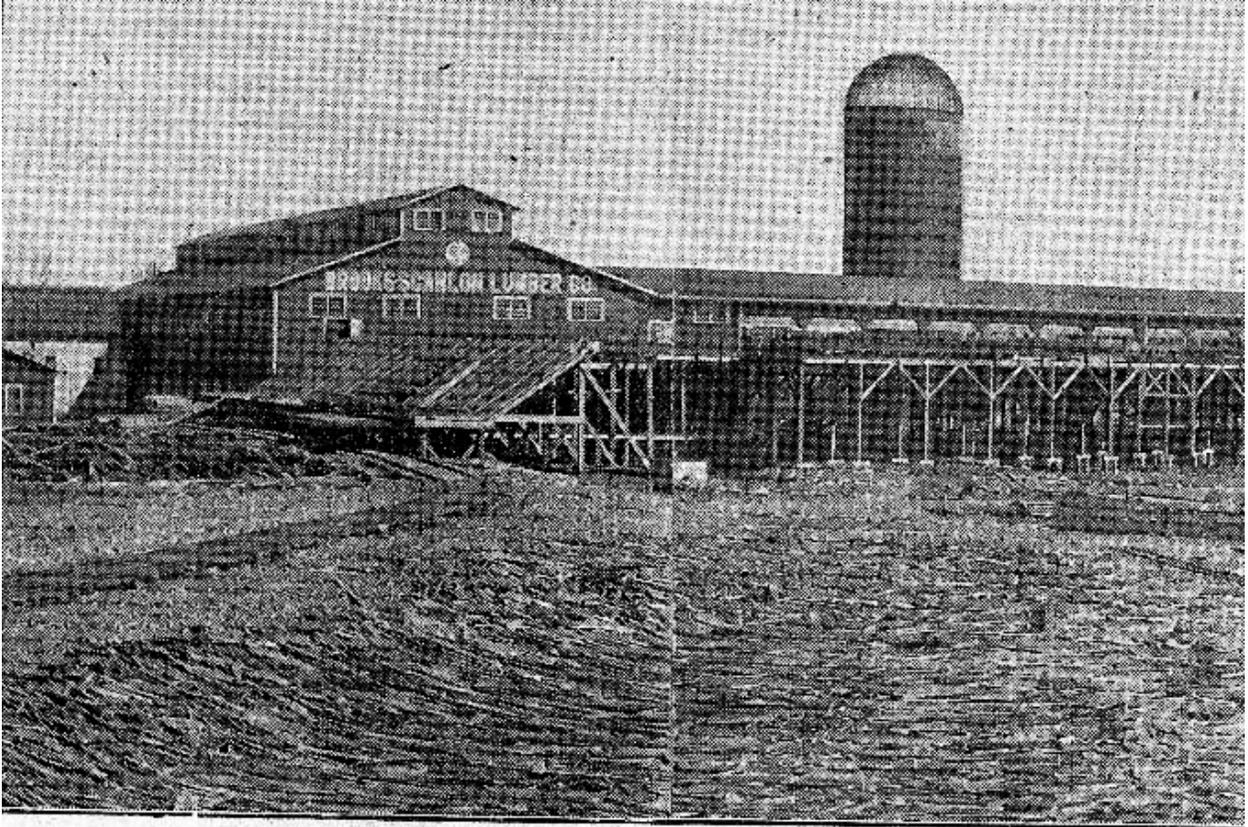
Photo courtesy of Spacecrafting

Figure 6. Porte cochere looking south between the house (right) and garage (left)



Photo courtesy of Spacecrafting

**Figure 7. Third-floor veranda with Venetian Gothic colonnade**



THE LARGEST LUMBER SAWING MILL IN THE NORTHWEST.

Bassett & Co.—412 S 1st.  
 Johnson, F. L. Co.—3d cor. 3d av S.  
 North Star—River bank, foot 3d  
 av N.  
 Stetson & Nelson, 6th cor. 2d av N.  
 (E. D.) and 9th cor. Central av.  
 Union Planing Mills, R. B. Langdon  
 & Co., proprietors, 3d cor 10th av S.  
 The manufacturers of sash, doors  
 and blinds were:  
 Bardwell, Robinson & Co.—Foot  
 13th av S on M. & St. L. R. R.  
 Fraser, Holbrook & Co.—Main cor.  
 1st av S.

the world, it is equally true that some  
 of the larger operators must soon look  
 elsewhere for timber lands. Many of  
 the wealthy lumbermen of Minneap-  
 olis and the northwest are turning  
 their attention to the Pacific coast,  
 and are making heavy investments in  
 that part of the country. The Mis-  
 sissippi Valley Lumberman gives the  
 following very interesting resume of  
 the operations of northwestern men on  
 the coast:  
 "Perhaps the largest individual

eastern Washington, as well  
 trolling one of the largest bc  
 fir and cedar in British Co  
 These men are both experienc  
 bermen and are making succ  
 low them to the timber of the  
 large amount of Idaho pine is  
 east for use in the sash and d  
 tories to take the place of th  
 ing supply of white pine, and  
 Humbird and Glover are reap  
 returns.  
 "Among the other invest

Figure 8. The Brooks-Scanlon Lumber Company noted in The Minneapolis Journal, November 26, 1903.

... Robbins of St. Paul, who erected in fir; H. L. Jenkins, Minneapolis, who owns both mills—fir, cedar and spruce—in northern Washington and south-British Columbia, in which he recently purchased the largest plant in the world, and S. H. Bowman of the S. H. Bowman Lumber Company, of Minneapolis, both a manufacturer and distributor of fir and cedar in the state of Washington, and furnishes much of the lumber for his large line of retail stores in the Mississippi valley states."

The development of the Pacific lumbering operations is still very small. The states of Wisconsin and Minnesota produced seven and a half percent of all kinds of lumber.



**THE SCANLON-GIPSON COMPANY.**

The Scanlon-Gipson Lumber company is one of the largest concerns in the northwest. With its allied concern, the Brooks-Scanlon Lumber company, it has an annual capacity of 235,000,000 feet. The company was organized ten years ago and built a mill at Nickerson, Minn., securing a large tract of timber in which it is still operating. Three years later it purchased a yard in this city from H. F. Brown, which it has continued to operate to this day.

In 1898 the company invested in timber lands and erected a mill at Cass Lake. In 1901 the Brooks-Scanlon Lumber company secured a large amount of standing timber north of Duluth and erected one of the largest and best mills in the northwest at Scanlon, Minn., on the Northern Pacific and Great Northern lines. Scanlon is three miles from Cloquet and about eighteen from Duluth. The company is not interested in retail yards, but its wholesale business extends over twelve states, and it maintains a selling office at Chicago.

The officers are D. F. Brooks, president; A. S. Brooks, vice president; M. J. Scanlon, treasurer; H. E. Gipson, secretary, and P. R. Brooks, assistant secretary.

**BARDWELL-ROBINSON CO.**

**Manufacturers and Wholesalers of Sash, Doors, Moldings, etc.**

This company began business under the name of Bardwell & Bisbee in 1873, being composed of C. S. Bardwell and L. C. Bisbee. Shortly after Mr. Bisbee sold his interest to S. C. Robinson, the firm name changing to Bardwell, Robinson & Co. In 1879 C. N. Robinson became a member of the firm. The factory was then at the foot of Thirteenth avenue S. To meet demands of increasing business, in 1884 the commodious factory (the present location) was built, at Twenty-fourth avenue N and Second street, to which numerous additions have since been made. On May 15, 1892, the firm incorporated. Seven months thereafter C. S. Bardwell died.

**A. E. WHITMORE.**

**Wholesale and Retail Lumber Dealer.**

One of the enterprising and progressive lumber merchants of the city is the gentleman whose name appears at the head of this sketch.

He began his business career in the year 1886 in the employ of W. P. Clark and continued in this position until 1900, when he established his own lumber yard.

His natural ability and experience soon enabled him to build up a lucrative local business as well as extending the field of his operations thruout the northwest. He makes a specialty of cedar, telegraph and telephone poles.

**THE H. B. WAITE LUMBER CO.**

The H. B. Waite Lumber company, with offices in the Lumber Exchange, was organized about eight years ago by C. P. Bratnober and H. B. Waite, the latter managing the business. The firm at once made a specialty of Washington cedar shingles and Pacific coast lumber and, as it grew, extended its operations to the westward.

To-day the firm is manufacturing pine lumber at Minneapolis to the extent of about 20,000,000 feet annually, while it also manufactures and handles each year 5,000 car loads of western shingles and lumber. Its mills are located at Clear Lake, Ballard, Getchell, Granite Falls and Parkers Spur, Wash. Ultimately the major portion of the business will be in the handling of the product of these mills.

**PARK RAPIDS LUMBER COMPANY**

The Park Rapids Lumber company has a mill at Park Rapids, Minnesota, with a yearly capacity of about 15,000,000 feet, and sell its lumber in the immediate territory tributary to Park Rapids.

The company built the mill there for the purpose of sawing a contract of timber consisting of about a hundred million feet, which it had bought from J. S. Pillsbury & Co. It has been operating there about four years.

The officers of the company are J. E. Glass, president; C. W. Sawyer, vice president; C. H. Carpenter, sec-

Figure 9. Article detail: The Brooks-Scanlon Lumber Company noted in The Minneapolis Journal, November 26, 1903.



Figure 10. The Minneapolis Journal, Minneapolis, Minn, March 30, 1903, Part II -- Chamber of Commerce Edition. Anson Brooks is pictured sixth row down, third photo from the right.



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**T**HE finest marble statue of heroic size in America—one of the notable achievements of modern sculpture—will soon adorn a public square in Minneapolis.

The spontaneous generosity of prominent Minneapolitans has resulted in the purchase of a statue of Mississippi, Father of Waters, a colossal work in Carrara marble, on which the American sculptor, Professor Larkin G. Mead, has been working for many years in his studio at Florence, Italy.

The purchase was inspired by Mr. Roy Herrick, of this city, who saw the statue frequently during his residence in Florence. Since returning home last fall he has secured the co-operation of men already known for their public spirit. They have purchased the great marble, and will erect it in Minneapolis without cost to the city. The donors are—A. S. Brooks, S. D. Cargill, John De Lattre, William H. Dunwoody, E. W. Herrick, S. T. McKnight, Henry L. Little, Charles J. Martin, John S. Pillsbury, Jr., Charles S. Pillsbury, George F. Piper, Thomas H. Shevlin and The Minneapolis Journal.

Professor Mead, one of America's leading sculptors in Italy, has passed the most of his artistic career in Florence. He received his title from his connection with the *Accademia delle Belle Arti* of world-wide fame. His brother, William Rutherford Mead, the celebrated architect, of the New York firm of McKim, Mead & White, enjoys a most enviable reputation on this side of the Atlantic.

Many persons will recall the heroic frieze representing the Olympian divinities which Professor Mead sculptured in his Florentine studio for the world's fair of 1903, and which deservedly called for much favorable criticism.

Had it not been for Mr. Herrick's wide acquaintance in the art world, he might never have known of this wonderful work, and Minneapolis might not now have been its proud possessor. For the Mississippi river god has never been exhibited, and has never left the artist's studio, where, still unfinished, it was photographed for the first time last year at the special request of Mr. Herrick.

The statue was originally ordered eighteen years ago, and was intended as a private gift to the city of New Orleans. Soon afterwards the man who gave the order sustained severe pecuniary reverses and at his death his heirs were unable to carry out his intentions. Professor Mead, however, remained so interested in his conception of the subject, and so confident of a final artistic triumph, that he

The statue represents man in a half reclining position, made Osiris appear when he was a god. A detailed description of the statue as a competent critic's leading art journal of Florence.

"This distinguished work on a marble statue tended to portray the grandeur and glory. And well defined characteristics of that work, which is equal to the 'David,' and for the most part, is a masterpiece of art."

"The river god is shown in a half reclining position on the high shores of the river, from which the water flows majestically over his god's left elbow. His right hand is out of Indian corn, from which the river flows out, thus showing both the mighty stream. On the left, intermingled with water lilies, and with water lilies from the river, symbolizes the same attitude of reverence and majesty as its image as conceived by the artist."

The American observer than does this Italian god's head, the Indian to indicate the product of the several regions from which the river flows.

An interesting feature accompanying half-tone is which the figure reclining is especially appropriate for phase of the great world is doing towards the river, which it flows on its long journey.

In giving form to a single block of marble, the artist shows, that has been quarried within four hours of the river god, if it were of the height. The statue of the original weight of the marble is of the finest possible grain and

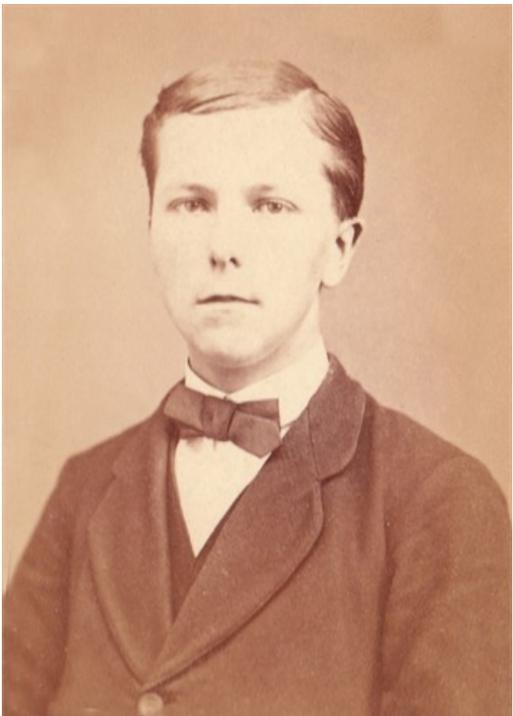
Figure 12. Article detail: Moving Father of the Waters to Minneapolis City Hall, The Minneapolis Journal, March 13, 1903.



Figure 13. Father of Waters Sculpture, Minneapolis City Hall Rotunda, with plaque showing Anson S. Brooks as one of the donors (photos by Ryan Knoke, 2013)



**Figure 14. Anson Strong Brooks as a young boy. Courtesy of Ancestry.com**



**Figure 15. Anson Strong Brooks as a teenage boy. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.**



**Figure 16. Anson Strong Brooks as a young man. Courtesy of Ancestry.com.**



**Figure 17. Anson Strong Brooks, 1916, during the time he lived at 2445 Park Avenue. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society**

## **Part 6: Sources and References**

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**Part 7: Appendices**

- Appendix A HPC Action initiating nomination
- Appendix B Nomination staff report
- Appendix C HPC Actions from Nomination hearing
- Appendix D Letter to SHPO
- Appendix E Letter from SHPO
- Appendix F Staff report to City Planning Commission
- Appendix G Staff report to Heritage Preservation Commission
- Appendix H HPC Actions from Designation hearing
- Appendix I Request for Council Action
- Appendix J Zoning and Planning Committee Actions
- Appendix K Actions of the Full City Council
- Appendix L Publication in *Finance and Commerce*