Campus Walks: A Guide to Georgia Tech Campus Architecture Robert M. Craig

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CAMPUS WALKS

A Guide to Georgia Tech Campus Architecture

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ROBERT M. CRAIG

by

Books by Robert M. Craig

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Atlanta Architecture: Art Deco to Modern Classic, 1929–1959 [1995]

John Portman: An Island on an Island (with John Portman and Aldo Castellano) [1997]

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Campus Walks: A Guide to Georgia Tech Campus Architecture [2022]

To G. Wayne Clough: in the tradition of Cheops, Pericles, and Brunel, the builder, statesman, and engineer of Georgia Tech's golden age of campus development.

"... One of the major endeavors of my presidency has been to reshape this campus into a place of beauty and significance..."

G. WAYNE CLOUGH, 2007

Acknowledgments

The history of campus architecture has been one of my research interests since my dissertation inquiries fifty years ago on the planning and construction of Principia College, my alma mater. That project led to the publication in 2004 by Gibbs Smith of an award-winning book, a study of a picturesque rural campus architecture, inspired by traditional, historical forms and artisan values, entitled *Bernard Maybeck at Principia College: The Art and Craft of Building.* My teaching career for four decades, however, took place on an urban, engineering campus, that of Georgia Institute of Technology, where my scholarly interests in the arts and humanities sought to find balance within a culture of technicians, scientists, and \$1.2 billion sponsored researchers.

As an historian working daily at a new home institution, I again became interested in the development of campus architecture, recognizing that resident historians had previously recorded Georgia Tech's institutional and social history, while the recorded history of Tech's campus architecture was more sporadic. Faculty historians Robert C McMath Jr., Ronald H. Bayor, James E. Brittain, August W. Giebelhaus, and others were encouraged in the early 1980s by forthcoming celebrations of the institute's centennial in 1985, to publish *Engineering* the New South: Georgia Tech, 1885-1985 (University of Georgia Press), much as I was motivated by the upcoming centennial in 2008 of the institute's architecture program to document aspects of Georgia Tech's architectural history. During the College of Architecture's 85th year, I mounted a photo exhibit on campus illustrating the Atlanta buildings of 100 alumni of the architecture school. Subsequently, my study of the life work of Francis Smith, Georgia Tech's first significant Head of Architecture, appeared in 2012, soon after the architecture school's centennial, another award-winning book entitled The Architecture of Francis Palmer Smith: Atlanta's Scholar-Architect (University of Georgia Press). Over a period of a dozen years, Francis Smith taught Tech's architecture students who would go on to build Atlanta during the 1920s and after; then, after he resigned his professorship, Francis Smith

pursued a highly successful career of over forty more years in practice designing houses, skyscrapers, and churches throughout Atlanta and the southeast. He was the first of many architecture faculty and alumni to design Georgia Tech's buildings.

The task of the present book, of compiling a comprehensive account of the institute's now 137-year architectural history, including photographing and commenting on each building, while also recording the growing collection of sculpture, murals, and stained glass comprising Georgia Tech's campus art, was made more challenging due in part to my desire to identify the architects, artists, *and* contractors responsible for the design, ornament, and construction of the many buildings on campus. I acknowledge the role of my Georgia Tech colleague Brian Bowen, a founder and now Chairman Emeritus of the Construction History Society of America (CHSA) for his influence on this study. Buildings are collaborative products of clients, architects, *and* builders—the latter (i.e., the often unsung contractors) were the individuals and companies that actually constructed the buildings. So, where known, I have included the builders as well as architects in the pages that follow.

Three individuals were especially helpful to the author throughout the research: John Holcombe, of the Office of Capital Planning and Space Management, engaged in searches of campus records, shared with me architectural drawings by which I could confirm dates and identify design firms, and responded to countless questions, research inquires, and "fact checks" throughout the inquiry. Kirk Henderson and Katie Gentilello at the Georgia Tech Archives were generous in their similar searches and efforts to obtain new information, find archival photographs, or confirm details small and large, so that the history of the campus's built environment could be as accurate as possible. I am grateful to archivist Jody Thompson for her encouragement and willingness to devote the time of her staff to this project.

For information and additional assistance in fact checks, I am grateful to Tristan Al-Haddad, Craig Anderson, Priti K. Bhatia, Eric B. Broadwell, Matthew Dacey-Koo, Martin Dawe, Gene Dunwody, Jr., Tim Fish, Andres Garcia, Robert C. Halverson, Noah Horton, Michael Hug, Amanda S. Jones, Dorcas Ford Jones, Christopher Leerssen, Daniel A. Nemec, John A. Reagan, Mike Roig, Aaron D. Shackelford, Michael Smith, Ron Stang, Brian Tanner, Ken Thomas,

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Mark Tiller, Seranda Vespermann, C. Marc Wagner, Janice Wittschiebe, and Randy Zaic.

During my early years on the Georgia Tech faculty, the official campus architect (1964-90) was a landscape architect, and his most signature mark on the land (most memorable to this writer) was the utilization of creosoted railroad ties for retaining walls, the pouring of acres of concrete to provide surface parking lots for automobiles, and such other insensitive landscape impositions as street bumps and driveway chains, interventions that could only be characterized as intrusions on a still automobile-accommodating campus. Georgia Tech's campus was not a model campus at the close of the 20th century.

Ironically, it has been an architect, not landscape architect, whose impact on the campus grounds has been most visible of late. Howard Wertheimer, Institute Architect and Facilities Manager, played a pivotal role in recent years (2006-13) in guiding the campus's awareness of the significance of open space, landscape design, and minimizing the adverse effects of development on land that comprises the institution's campus grounds. Wertheimer has served as steward of a remarkable campus transformation, guided by an award-winner landscape master plan and the sponsorship of world-class LEED-certified "green" architecture. The campus is now pedestrian oriented, ornamented with a collection of public art, and populated by sensitively restored historic buildings and the highest standards of sustainable contemporary architecture. Wertheimer warrants acknowledgment from those who admire today's campus and who seek to understand how it came about.

The crown belongs, of course, to Georgia Tech president G. Wayne Clough, at the helm during the years immediately following the Olympics, and whose leadership and vision transformed the campus in unprecedented (and likely never to be repeated) ways. Clough's significance to Georgia Tech's architectural history is acknowledged here, and endorsed and underscored by the dedication of this book.

Behind the scenes of every book project are always the guiding hand of the publisher and the editorial and graphic-design work of the publisher's staff. I am especially grateful to Harley Patrick and Michael Campbell for their careful guidance of this, my fifth, book with Hellgate Press. Finally, I am grateful to my wife Carole who continues to support my research and writing. She has assisted with extensive field work by helping to navigate and by keeping vigil in the car while it is momentarily parked in a borrowed reserved parking space while I am engaged in on-site photography for the book. She continues to contribute to the greater efficiency in the field documentation and production of the manuscripts.

While every effort has been made to be comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date in this survey of campus buildings and art, any error remains the responsibility of the author alone. By the time this book appears, buildings now under construction may be completed, architects for future projects under study may have been selected, and new public art may be commissioned or portable art moved. Such is the dynamic of a vital, world-class educational institution, and the history of Georgia Tech's campus architecture will continue to evolve. As Ruskin once wrote, "Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for."

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BUZZ An Eye to the Past, A Vision for the Future. Photo Robert M. Craig.





 Top: Georgia School of Technology Inscription, Carnegie Building. Center: Navy ROTC Gate (details), Julian Hoke Harris: (left to right: Architecture, Textile Industry; Semaphore "S.")
Bottom: South window, Brittain Dining Hal, Julian Hoke Harris. (left: Architecture; center: Engineering; right: Chemistry). Photos Robert M. Craig.



Key Map A: Historic District

- 1. Academic Building [Tech Tower]
- 2. Old Shop Building site
- 3. The Shacks site
- 4. Knowles Dormitory site
- 5. Swann Dormitory
- 6. Electrical Engineering (Savant) Building
- 7. Bill Moore Student Success Building
- 8. Carnegie Library (Carnegie Building)
- 9. Rockefeller YMCA Building
- 10. Lyman Hall Chemistry (Chemical Laboratory) Building
- 11. William Emerson Building
- 12. Lyman Hall/Emerson Building Addition (1991)
- 13. A. French Textile Building
- 14. W. C. and Sarah Bradley Building
- 15. Whitehead Memorial Hospital (Chapin Building)
- 16. New Shop Building (John S Coon Mechanical Engineering Building)
- 17. Holland Central Heating & Cooling Plant [Power Station]
- 18. Physics [D. M. Smith] Building
- 19. President's House site [North Ave.]

Walk One: Historic District



Administration Building [Tech Tower], right. Old Shop Building, left. Photo courtesy of Georgia Tech Archives.

Academic [Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Administration] Building, "Tech Tower," 1887-88 [A1]

225 North Avenue NW Bruce and Morgan Angus McGilvray, contractor renovation, Tapp & Savini, Bickerstaff Construction Co., 1963-64 additional renovations: attic c 1980, 3rd floor c 1995, fourth floor c 1998, renamed 1998 Class of 1903 Fountain, 1911 Anak Society stairs to EE bldg and plaque, 1921 Class of 1925 World War I Memorial, 1925 Paul Howes Norcross bench, 1925

- Class of 1932 Map Box, 1932
- Sideways Marker, 1947

Omicron Delta Kappa Key, 1960 Thomas L. Vitale plaque, c 1990 Florence Rowell Pettit plaque, 1994 [Georgia Tech's First Lady 1972-86] Nelson Mandela tree, ded'd 1995 Major Peter P. Pitman [KIA 1967] Vietnam and SE Asia Monument, 1995 Class of 1950 Tower Walk, 2000 State Historical Marker¹

Old Shop Building, 1887-88; destroyed by fire April, 1892; rebuilt without tower, 1892-93; razed 1968 [A2]

Bruce and Morgan

A. J. Key, contractor (basement)

Petit and DeHaven, contractor (superstructure)

rebuilt using bricks of original building, 1892-93, F. P. Heifner, contractor plaque and remnant bricks installed by Alpha Pi Mu, Industrial Engineering Honor Society

Harrison Square, 1968 [A2]

 ["In honor of the sixth president of Georgia Tech" created after demolition of Old Shop Building]
Steam Driven, Two-Stage Air Compressor, Worthington Company of Atlanta, early 1920s.
Rosa Parks Monument, Continuing the Conversation, Martin Dawe, 2018 [N38]
The Three Pioneers, Martin Dawe, 2019 [N39]

Built on the original four-acre site donated by Edward Peters for the new Georgia School of Technology, Bruce and Morgan's Academic Building was the first of a series of late Victorian structures that the architects erected for institutions of higher learning in the southeast. These included Main Hall (1889-91, later Agnes Scott Hall) for Agnes Scott Institute (later College) in Decatur, Georgia; Main Building (1888-90, later Samford Hall at Alabama's Agricultural and Mechanical College (later Auburn University); the Agricultural Building (1891-93, later named Main Building, then Tillman Hall) at Clemson University in South Carolina; and Tillman Hall (Administration Building, 1894-95) at Winthrop Normal & Industrial College of South Carolina, Rock Hill, South Carolina. Gottfried Norrman's earlier Stone Hall



Fountain Hall, Morris Brown University. Photo Robert M. Craig.

Administration Building, Agnes Scott College. Photo Robert M. Craig.



Samford Hall, Auburn. Photo courtesy David Mark from Pixabay.



Tillman Hall, Clemson. Photo courtesy bdabney from Pixabay.

(1882, later Fountain Hall) at Atlanta University (now part of Morris Brown College in Atlanta) is in this family of towered brick buildings and may have offered something of a local precedent for Bruce and Morgan's more ordered elevation and more articulated upper tower at Georgia Tech. These several collegiate structures were consistently red brick buildings with light stone trim in what has been called an institutional Queen Anne styling with Romanesque Revival features. Further accented by gables or gabled dormers, their skylines were dominated by a prominent tower capped by a pyramidal roof.

During the same period, Bruce and Morgan built several comparable county courthouses in Georgia, usually with a tower and in a brick Queen Anne institutional Victorian style with Romanesque Revival elements. Often dominating courthouse squares, these latecentury Georgia county courthouses include most notably the nolonger-extant Fulton County Courthouse of 1881-83 by Parkins and Bruce [Morgan was a draftsman for the earlier firm, a partnership which became Bruce and Morgan when William Parkins retired in 1882], as well as subsequent Bruce and Morgan courthouses for the following counties: Newton (1884), Talbot and Paulding (both 1892), Floyd (1892-93), Bulloch (1894), Monroe (1896), and Butts (1898).

Typically, the Bruce and Morgan school buildings, with their simpler lines and minimal elaboration, reflected greater budget constraints than did the county courthouses. Nevertheless, Georgia Tech's Academic Building corbels out its tower wall dormers and articulates them with small turrets and a tripartite arched window, adding greater expressive ornament. All these late-century masonry buildings sought an image of substance, stability, and permanence, each a monument of stately presence, worthy of its public institutional function.

The Atlanta Journal described the site of the new Georgia School of Technology building on the brow of a hill as "grand and imposing" and anticipated that when the grounds were "tastily laid out" and when the shade trees matured to a sufficient growth, the school's inaugural building would be "one of the most attractive and artistic features of the city."² The Atlanta Constitution agreed stating that the building was "perhaps one of the finest specimens of work in the city."³ Towers, pointing skyward, have ever denoted an architectural "marking of the land" indicating nobility, monumentality, and prominence, and so it was that the Georgia School of Technology marked its



Newton County Courthouse. Photo Robert M. Craig.

Floyd County Courthouse. Photo Robert M. Craig.



Monroe County Courthouse. Photo Robert M. Craig.



Bulloch County Courthouse, from old post card. Courtesy of Boston Public Library.

location, its self-declared stature, and its potential, majestically rising above North Avenue in Atlanta. Indeed, from the start the institution sought to move beyond the limited view of its being merely a "North Avenue trade school": "Tech Tower," from its earliest years, was the iconic image of an ever-ascending school with an eye beyond the provincial, and a hand and brain looking ever to the future.



Administration Building [Tech Tower]. Photo courtesy of Georgia Tech Archives.



Tech Tower. Photo Robert M. Craig.

The city of Atlanta was merely fifty years old, when construction began on the Academic Building for Georgia's new School of Technology. Only twenty-two years had elapsed since General Sherman had burned the city to the ground, and the builders that raised Tech Tower as the symbol of a new age of technology were of the same generation who embraced the growing spirit of the post-Civil War years, that viewed Atlanta as the city of the "phoenix rising from the ashes" of the Lost Cause. The Old South cause was linked to slavery, cotton, and a rural farm culture, which in many ways still prevailed in the state, but which was set at odds with a rapidly developing urban area seeking to take its place as the premier commercial and industrial city of the South. The virtues of a "New South Creed" were early espoused by statesman Benjamin Harvey Hill and became a major campaign calling for progressive development spearheaded by editor Henry Grady who encouraged new manufacturing and industry in the predominantly agrarian South. Hill referenced the region's natural resources citing the plentiful mountains, streams, and harbors, as

evidence of a divine purpose arguing that God intended his children to be a mechanical, manufacturing, and commercial people. Henry Grady encouraged northern manufacturing to move south, and with the advent of a New South, industry and commerce would demand leaders in technology and engineering. A new Georgia School of Technology was positioned, indeed charged, to fill that need.

In the legislative session of 1882, Nathaniel Edwin Harris, a Macon lawyer with connections to industrial clients, introduced a bill to establish a state technical school, and a committee was formed "to investigate the question of technical education" in Georgia. Harris is reported to have remarked, "I would rather be the author of a law establishing such a school than be Governor of Georgia."⁴

Two approaches to mechanical engineering education emerged from this study, the "shop culture" and the "school culture," and each could influence the direction the institution's physical plant would take in order to house the new technical school. The "shop culture" evolved from the apprentice system and considered practical shop experience as the core of education. The "school culture" was based on a curriculum developed by Robert H. Thurston, an American engineer and inventor who established in 1875 the first



Nathaniel E. Harris. Photo courtesy of Georgia Tech Archives.

mechanical laboratory at Stevens Institute of Technology, and who, going on to Cornell ten years later, established a premier engineering school there. Thurston stressed mathematics, theoretical sciences, and original research, and he viewed the laboratory's role as bridging the cultural gap separating the scientist from the businessman. A school should educate those fitted for intellectual pursuits as well as those with constructive faculties. Thurston's four-tier educational process envisioned common or elementary schools, manual training schools [to train artisans and laborers], trade schools for particular industries, and "finally, each state would need at least one polytechnic school to furnish engineers with advanced education in science and laboratory research,"⁵ that is to say, "professional engineers capable of doing industrial research and development."⁶

In the spring of 1883, the legislative committee chaired by N. E. Harris and investigating the technological school issue, traveled to the northeast to inspect selected engineering schools; in their view, MIT, Stevens Institute of Technology, and Cooper Union best exemplified the school culture, and among the "shop culture" institutions that the committee reviewed, Worcester Free Institute was deemed superior. The Atlanta Constitution reported that someone who had attended a recent Worcester commencement found that students "did not speak on Homer, but on bridges, steam engines, and the paving of roads."7 Worcester became the model Georgia would follow, for moral as well as practical reasons according to the committee's report. Shop work would instill in Georgia's youth the character traits of industry, and thus was born the foundational trait of the Georgia Tech experience: survival through the doctrine of hard work. N. E. Harris, in his opening day speech at the new technology school, referred to it as the "gospel of labor." The shop culture, as was later the case at the Bauhaus, allowed for items produced in the shop to be sold in order to contribute to the income of the school, and thus another tradition was born: if "external" funding could be garnered elsewhere, why fund the school adequately from the state legislature?

The committee's report shaped the initial curriculum and defined the first buildings needed for the new school. The enabling legislation that had authorized the new technology school had essentially envisioned it as a branch of the state university. One of Worcester's disciplines, civil engineering, was already established as a field of study at the University of Georgia, and it was felt in Athens that the UGA board of trustees should have a say in the deliberations regarding a new, and potentially competing (little did they know) institution. For the moment, UGA would hold on to civil engineering (although president Lyman Hall would initiate a new degree in civil engineering at Georgia Tech in 1896), but otherwise the Georgia School of Technology should follow the Worcester model, teaching courses in mechanical engineering, mining engineering, building and architecture, chemistry, and textiles.⁸ A second Tech Commission, appointed in late 1885 by the governor and on which N. E. Harris also served as chair, selected the school's site, and it too addressed what the new curriculum should be. After consultations between this commission and the board of trustees at the university in Athens, the hiring of faculty for the new technical school was authorized, as was the establishment of eight fields of study (professorial chairs): mechanical engineering, mining engineering (geology-mineralogy), architecture, chemistry, drawing, textiles, physics, and English.⁹ The state legislature, looking over the institutional shoulder and again typical of Georgia, said yes to all eight, but they would only fund five of them.

Three buildings would be required to house the proposed curriculum: a machine and workshop to contain wood and metal shop machinery; a foundry building to contain a foundry for casting iron and brass, millwright machinery, and a textile section for spinning and weaving; and finally "a three story, ornamental main college building" containing lecture rooms and classrooms properly lighted for drawing, drafting, and sketching; the main building would also contain suitable equipment for a mechanical laboratory, as well as apparatus and equipment space to supplant the machine shop.



Administration Building [Tech Tower] (right), and Old Shop Building (left). Photo courtesy of Georgia Tech Archives.

By 1888, two new towered landmarks on the nine-acre, north-Atlanta campus fulfilled this vision: the Academic Building and the flanking Machine [Old Shop] Building (1887-88, razed) expressed in their lofty forms an ambitious look to the future. As Warren Drury has concluded, "the very towers... announce[d] the intellectual and civic aspirations of this 'New South Creed' Technical School."¹⁰ Side by side stood the hand and brain, the shop culture and school culture, the blacksmith foundry and the intellectual academic building! Initially focused on the future of a New South, Georgia Tech's progressive attitude spread through subsequent generations—ambitious, unwilling to accept limits, impatient and unconstrained in its aspirations. A century later the ambitious school joined ambitious city leaders to propose the long shot that Atlanta might host the modern Olympics and that the North Avenue trade school would house the Olympic village. Naive? Absurd? The gospel of work. Innovation turning potential into reality. Such would characterize the institution throughout its history—in recent years embracing a global outlook and goal: to become *the* premier engineering school for the twenty-first century.



Tech Tower detail. Photo Robert M. Craig.

In addition, these two nobly-towered Bruce and Morgan buildings, beyond announcing in 1888 the opening of a new technical school for the state and region, also sought to be *de rigueur* in current architectural taste. Although the Academic Building was not symmetrical, its centrally placed tower made it appear so, while the flanking Machine Shop building, built by Bruce and Morgan at the same time, was self-consciously picturesque, with an asymmetry more akin to the architects' county courthouses of the period. If the prominence of a courthouse in a small southern town served to embody in its monumental form the authority of county government and the legal, social, and agricultural services on which local residences of small and dispersed communities depend, so builders of colleges similarly understood the potential meaning and content that towered forms could bring to a campus community.



Administration Building [Tech Tower], entry steps and porch. Photo Robert M. Craig.

Stand before the Academic Building and look up at its entry porch and tower above; we can almost sense the history of this bully architecture. If not muscular in the earlier nineteenth century "style" of muscular Gothic, the building, nevertheless, exuded strength and stability, however unstable may have been the school's finances and however inadequate were its facilities in those early years. On Oct 20, 1905, Teddy Roosevelt charged up those porch stairs to give a speech to the 500 school of technology students gathered below, and then Teddy shook each student's hand heartily—the first US President to visit Georgia Tech. "America can be the first nation," TR said, throwing the carrot out to a technology school whose history would be marked by a competitive urge to be first among engineering schools. Roosevelt challenged the students to do their part to make America first, a goal that can be accomplished "only by the kind of training and effort which is developed and is symbolized in institutions of this kind."¹¹ The challenge to be great, for America, was his theme, and bully for him! Here were gathered individuals, each already in Captain Lyman Hall's boot camp, training to become "a helluva engineer" three years even before the fight song was first published (1908 *Blue Print* yearbook). The setting was right for the male gathering: barrel chested architecture, as this pair of towered, academic and machineshop structures might well have seemed to Roosevelt's audience. Like the speaker, the masonry architecture was vigorous, broad shouldered, and solid.

Warren Drury has described Georgia Tech's Academic Building stylistically as an embodiment of the aesthetic currents that informed recent "Ruskinian" architecture.¹² This is true, but not, however, in any reference (as "Ruskinian" often implies) to the almost strident polychromatic surfaces of Ruskin-inspired High Victorian Gothic. On the other hand, Bruce and Morgan adopted Ruskin's call for a noble architecture, expressive of power and "governing" form, and the architects' courthouses and main halls on campuses trumpeted that architectonic strength. An architecture of power, according to Ruskin, would evidence a "severe... majesty,"-embracing the true meaning of that now grossly overused word: awesome. Powerful architecture, according to Ruskin, "depends for its dignity upon arrangement and government received from human mind [and] becomes the expression of the power of that mind, and receives a sublimity high in proportion to the power expressed."13 Such institutional works become monuments which Ruskin considered to be gifts to posterity. Whether or not Bruce and Morgan could have predicted the role "Tech Tower" would play in the hearts and minds of alumni-symbolizing for 20thor 21st-century students the spirit of the school in the present as well as the nostalgic past—nonetheless, the tower of this inaugural campus building remains in the memory of students of every generation. Bruce and Morgan intended their buildings to be memorable in this Ruskinian spirit. "Every human action gains in honor, in grace, in all true magnificence, by its regard to things that are to come," Ruskin wrote in the Lamp of Memory.

Therefore, when we build, let us think that we build for ever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, "See! this our fathers did for us.¹⁴

As one takes a campus tour, and learns to "read" the buildings, this is how Tech Tower speaks to us.

The aesthetic preachings of John Ruskin were evidenced in American collegiate architecture, in churches, and in other institutional buildings from the late 1860s into the early 1880s to the extent that Vincent Scully has argued that Ruskin "remained the basic reading of all architects in America during the '70s, and during this period [Ruskin was] rarely mentioned with less than profound respect."15 At Ivy League schools of the northeast, the influence during the 1870s of Ruskin's Seven Lamps of Architecture is especially in evidence: witness Cornell's Sage Hall (1875), Sage Chapel (1873), and Cornell President Andrew Dickson White's residence (1871) all designed by Charles Babcock (the latter with William Henry Miller); Harvard's Memorial Hall (1870-74) by Ware and Van Brunt; Princeton's Chancellor Green Library (1871-73) by William A Potter; and Yale's Farnham Hall (1869-70) by Russell Sturgis. As Kermit Parsons has noted, writing of the decade's campus architecture in his history of Cornell, "Mr. Ruskin would be pleased."16 Cornell's Sage Hall, for example, was directly modeled on Deane and Woodward's Oxford Museum (1855-61) in England, which is considered "one of the first fruits of Ruskin's teachings,"17 Harvard's Memorial Hall is a secular cathedral in form and a full embodiment, in its Ruskinian polychromatic surface treatment, of what nineteenth century critics called the Ruskin-inspired "Streaky Bacon Style,"18 and on and on.

Georgia Tech's Academic Building was not styled in the full-fledged High Victorian Gothic of these Ivy League Ruskinian landmarks, although some buildings in downtown Atlanta clearly were: Fay and Moser's polychromatic St. Philip's Episcopal Church or their Italianate and equally striated Moore-Marsh Building, built four years earlier, were unrivaled in their Ruskin-inspired polychrome. Fay and Moser's variegated brickwork and surface patterns stand apart from Bruce and Morgan's work, displaying much more of the streaky bacon style of William Butterfield's and George E. Street's church design in England: Butterfield's Keble College Chapel, 1873-76, for instance, or Street's St. James Westminster (1861). On the other hand, during a late-century period when Victorian architectural expression could be overly enthusiastic and even bombastic, Tech Tower & the Old Shop Building embodied a Ruskinian plain style, still powerful as a juxtaposition of art and technics but without the High Victorian Gothic gymnastics of color, contrasting materials, and surface pattern. Constructed almost a generation later than Keble College, and under economic constraints which would repeatedly plague state campus architecture in years to come, Georgia Tech's first buildings were by comparison, highly restrained.



Tech Tower, ornament on porch. Photo Robert M. Craig



Tech Tower, ornamental column capital on porch. Photo Robert M. Craig.



Tech Tower, candle snuffer caps on turrets. Photo Robert M. Craig.

Nonetheless, Tech Tower remains unmistakably Victorian and embraced other Ruskin virtues. The English critic's call for craftsmanship in architecture is reflected in the Academic Building's carved capitals, stylized floral keystone, and incised bands [Drury believes these to be Christian symbols of fish] on the entry porch, as well as in the building's surface enrichment of circles in squares [decorative rosettes] spread over panels between windows and in the molded and corbelled brickwork on the tower. At the top of the tower, the shadowed texture of friezes, panels, and corbelled wall

gables, as well as the form-shaping brickwork of rounded corners and turrets, the latter delicately capped with conical "candle snuffer" roofs, climax the composition.



Administration Building, 1909 view. Photo courtesy of Georgia Tech Archives.

Beyond what John Unrau has referred to as Ruskin's close view where the intricacies of ornament are disclosed, the building's Ruskinian character is also marked by the distant view: a "governing" monumentality and weighty, formal stability and substance, embodied in the powerful building mass and aspiring tower. Unrau observes, "Ruskin...displays a considerable interest in the large-scale volumetric