

# Becoming Burnham

## Introduction

Daniel Burnham was a visionary architect, city planner, and urban designer who left an indelible mark on the American landscape. Born in Henderson, New York, in 1846, Burnham began his career as an apprentice in an architectural firm in Chicago. He quickly rose through the ranks, and by the 1880s, he was one of the most prominent architects in the city.

Burnham was a major force behind the development of the Chicago School of Architecture, a style that emphasized functionalism, simplicity, and the use of new materials and technologies. He was also a strong advocate for the City Beautiful Movement, which sought to create more livable and aesthetically pleasing cities. Burnham's most famous work is the Plan of Chicago, a comprehensive plan for the city's

development that was published in 1909. The plan called for a series of grand boulevards, parks, and public spaces, and it helped to shape the city's growth and development for decades to come.

In addition to his work in Chicago, Burnham also designed a number of other notable buildings and projects across the United States. These include the Washington Mall in Washington, D.C., the Cleveland Arcade in Cleveland, Ohio, and the Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri. Burnham was also a gifted urban planner, and he played a major role in the development of cities such as San Francisco, Denver, and Manila.

Burnham died in 1912, but his legacy continues to live on. He is considered one of the most important architects and city planners in American history, and his work has had a profound impact on the way we live and work. His vision for a more beautiful and livable world is still relevant today, and his ideas continue to

inspire architects, planners, and urban designers around the world.

Burnham's story is one of innovation, creativity, and vision. He was a man who was not afraid to dream big, and he had the talent and determination to make his dreams a reality. His work has left a lasting legacy on the American landscape, and his ideas continue to shape the way we think about cities and urban design.

## Book Description

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This book tells the story of Burnham's life and work. It explores his early years, his rise to prominence, and his

lasting impact on American architecture and city planning. The book is richly illustrated with photographs, drawings, and maps, and it includes a detailed chronology of Burnham's life and work.

Whether you are an architect, a city planner, a historian, or simply someone who is interested in the built environment, this book is a must-read. It is a fascinating and inspiring story of a man who changed the face of America.

# Chapter 1: The Early Years

## Burnham's childhood and family background

Daniel Hudson Burnham was born on September 4, 1846, in Henderson, New York, a small town located in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains. He was the eldest of five children born to Esther and Edwin Burnham, a prosperous farmer and businessman.

The Burnham family was a close-knit and loving one. Daniel's parents instilled in him a strong work ethic and a deep appreciation for the natural world. They also encouraged his love of learning and his passion for art and architecture.

As a child, Daniel spent much of his time outdoors, exploring the woods and fields around his home. He also enjoyed reading and drawing, and he often sketched the buildings and landscapes that he saw around him.

Daniel's early education took place in a one-room schoolhouse in Henderson. He was a bright and eager student, and he excelled in his studies. After graduating from high school, Daniel briefly attended Cazenovia Seminary, a preparatory school in Cazenovia, New York. However, he soon decided to leave school and pursue a career in architecture.

In 1865, Daniel moved to Chicago, Illinois, to begin his apprenticeship with the architectural firm of Carter, Drake, and Wight. Chicago was a rapidly growing city, and there was a great demand for architects. Daniel quickly learned the trade, and he soon became one of the firm's most promising young architects.



# Chapter 1: The Early Years

## His education and early influences

Daniel Burnham was born in Henderson, New York, in 1846. His father was a farmer and his mother was a schoolteacher. Burnham was a bright and curious child, and he excelled in school. He was particularly interested in mathematics and science.

After graduating from high school, Burnham attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. He studied civil engineering, and he graduated at the top of his class in 1867.

After graduating from college, Burnham moved to Chicago, Illinois. He worked as a draftsman in an architectural firm, and he quickly learned the basics of architecture. In 1872, he opened his own architectural practice.

Burnham's early influences included the work of the great architects of the Renaissance, such as

Brunelleschi and Michelangelo. He was also influenced by the work of the American architect Henry Hobson Richardson. Richardson's buildings were known for their bold, simple forms and their use of new materials and technologies.

Burnham's early work was also influenced by the rapidly changing city of Chicago. Chicago was a boomtown in the late 19th century, and it was a magnet for architects and engineers from all over the world. Burnham was inspired by the city's energy and optimism, and he was determined to make his mark on it.

Burnham's education and early influences helped to shape him into one of the most important architects of his time. He was a master of design, and he had a deep understanding of the relationship between architecture and the city. Burnham's work has had a lasting impact on the American landscape, and it continues to inspire architects and city planners today.

# Chapter 1: The Early Years

## His early work as an architect

Daniel Burnham's early work as an architect was marked by a strong interest in the Gothic Revival style. He was particularly drawn to the work of English architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, who was a leading proponent of the Gothic Revival style. Burnham's early buildings, such as the First Congregational Church in Evanston, Illinois, and the Unity Church in Oak Park, Illinois, reflect his admiration for Pugin's work.

In the late 1870s, Burnham began to move away from the Gothic Revival style and towards a more modern and functional approach to architecture. He was influenced by the work of architects such as Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, who were pioneers of the Chicago School of Architecture. Burnham's buildings from this period, such as the Rookery

Building and the Monadnock Building in Chicago, are characterized by their simple forms, functional design, and use of new materials and technologies.

Burnham's early work as an architect was also influenced by his travels to Europe. He was particularly impressed by the architecture of the Italian Renaissance, and he incorporated many of its elements into his own work. For example, the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, which Burnham helped to design, was heavily influenced by the architecture of the Italian Renaissance.

Burnham's early work as an architect was a significant contribution to the development of American architecture. He helped to introduce the Gothic Revival style to America, and he was a pioneer of the Chicago School of Architecture. His work had a major impact on the development of American cities, and it continues to be admired and studied today.

Burnham's early work as an architect is characterized by its diversity and eclecticism. He was willing to experiment with different styles and approaches, and he was always looking for new ways to express his architectural ideas. His early work is a testament to his creativity and his passion for architecture.

**This extract presents the opening three sections of the first chapter.**

**Discover the complete 10 chapters and 50 sections by purchasing the book, now available in various formats.**

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