# Gordon E. MacNeil

## Biographical Data
- **Birth:** 10/7/1882  
  **Place:** Fort Reno, Oklahoma
- **Death:** 3/24/1945  
  **Place:** Washington, DC
- **Family:** Brothers Donald and V.V. MacNeil

## Education
- **High School:**
- **College:** Columbian College (now GWU), The Corcoran School of Art
- **Graduate School:**
- **Apprenticeship:**

*Source: Leaves of Wesley Heights, April 1945, p. 5. From MLK Library, Washingtoniana Division.*

## Architectural Practice
### DC Architects’ Registration
- **Registration Number:** Exempted  
  **Date Issued:** 1925

### Permit Database
- **Earliest Permit:** 1905  
  **Latest Permit:** 1944  
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## Professional Associations
- **American Institute of Architects:**  
  **Date(s) Enrolled:** n/a  
  **Fellow of the AIA:**
- **Other Societies or Memberships:**
- **Awards or Commissions:**

## Buildings
- **Building Types:** Houses, stores, civic buildings
- **Styles and Forms:** English Revival, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Classical Revival
- **DC Work Locations:** Cleveland Park, Wesley Heights, Spring Valley

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Significance and Contributions

Gordon Earl MacNeil was born in Fort Reno, Oklahoma, on October 7, 1882. He moved to Washington as boy and later studied architecture at Columbian College, now George Washington University. He also studied art at the Corcoran School. He joined the W.C. and A.N. Miller Company, a leading Washington-area real estate development firm, in 1914 and later became a lead architect and a director in the company.

The first building permit that lists MacNeil as architect was issued on October 4, 1905, for a detached dwelling on Wade Road, SE. He was issued three permits in 1912, and then no others until 1923 when he was issued permits for W.C. and A.N. Miller buildings. During World War I he worked as a draftsman in the office of the Surgeon General, U.S. War Department.

The communities of Wesley Heights and Spring Valley in upper Northwest Washington are MacNeil's most enduring legacies. As a lead architect and community builder on behalf of the Miller Company during the 1920s, he designed nearly all of the dwellings and community buildings in the two neighborhoods. With these communities, the Miller Company followed nation-wide trends in twentieth-century suburban development of community building. Real estate developers designed whole neighborhoods instead of just individual dwellings. Wesley Heights was developed in 1925 and Spring Valley was developed in 1929.

Wesley Heights and Spring Valley are communities of single-family detached dwellings with large private yards on lushly landscaped streets. The neighborhoods also incorporated community centers and parks. These were exclusive residential communities planned as cohesive entities. Wesley Heights is located southwest of American University. It is bordered by Nebraska Avenue to the north, New Mexico Avenue to the east, Garfield Street to the south, and Battery-Kemble Park to the west. Spring Valley is a very affluent neighborhood with large houses and tree-lined streets. It is bounded by Massachusetts Avenue to the north, American University to the east, Nebraska Avenue and Loughboro Road to the south, and Dalecarlia Parkway to the west.

The neighborhoods comprise houses built in various revival styles, including Colonial, Dutch Colonial, Spanish Colonial, and Tudor. Most of the dwellings are two-story, five-bay, brick- or stone-faced structures with gabled roofs. MacNeil varied the materials and building styles within each block to create a harmonious community that was not homogeneous. Not all of his designs were original, however, and he sometimes used published plans as foundations for his own designs.

MacNeil also designed the Wesley Heights Community Club, located at 3301-05 45th Street, NW. The Club, constructed in 1927, was, for many years, the social and commercial center of the neighborhood. The building is English Revival in style with modest ornamentation and is typical of early-twentieth century neighborhood community centers. The building is two stories and is faced with red brick and stucco. It has multiple gables, limestone quoins, a Chippendale balcony, and three-sided commercial bay windows. It originally housed clubrooms, a grocery, a pharmacy with a small post office, and the Miller Company real estate office and was listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites in March of 1997.

In 1936, MacNeil designed the grocery store (originally Spring Valley DGS Market) and gas station (originally Esso) located at 4860 and 4866 Massachusetts Avenue. These brick buildings were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in August, 2003. His last major project was the Garfinckel’s satellite department store in Spring Valley, constructed in 1942.

MacNeil lived in Hyattsville, Maryland with his brother, Donald. Gordon E. MacNeil worked for the Miller Company until his death in 1945.
Colonial Revival-style house in Wesley Heights.
From “Models of Beauty and Predictability, p. 68.

Tudor Revival-style house in Wesley Heights.
From “Models of Beauty and Predictability, p. 68.


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**Sources**

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**Other Sources:**

World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942 record for Gordon Earl MacNeil. Ancestry.com

**Notes:**

Prepared by: EHT Traceries

Last Updated: October 2010
William Johnston Marsh

Biographical Data
Birth: 1864     Place: Washington, DC
Death: 01/23/1926     Place: Washington, DC
Family: Married Margaret Lamond (1899); two daughters

Education
High School: DC Public Schools
College: Private Instruction in DC and Boston
Graduate School: Attended Art School under E. C. Messer
Apprenticeship: Hornblower and Marshall (1880-1882?)

Architectural Practice
DC Architects' Registration     Registration Number: 29     Date Issued: 04/27/1925
Permit Database     Earliest Permit: 1887     Latest Permit: 1926     Total Permits: 81     Total Buildings: 96
Practice Position Date
Hornblower and Marshall     Architect/Head Draftsman     ca. 1884-1892
Private Practice     Architect     1893-1898
Peter and Marsh     Partner/Architect     1898-1926

Commissions:

Professional Associations
American Institute of Architects     Date(s) Enrolled: 1895     Fellow of the AIA: 1895

Other Societies or Memberships: Member of the Washington Chapter of the AIA, the Washington Architectural Club, and the Cosmos Club.

Awards:

Buildings
Building Types: Residences, Commercial Buildings, Hospitals, Schools, Churches
Styles and Forms: Beaux Arts, Georgian Revival, Colonial Revival, Neo-Classical
DC Work Locations: Downtown, Georgetown, Southwest

Notable Buildings | Location | Date | Status
--- | --- | --- | ---
Evening Star Building | 1101 Pennsylvania Ave., NW | 1898 | [□ NRHP][☑ DC Historic Site]
William Syphax School | 1360 Half Street, SW | 1901 | [☑ NRHP][□ DC Historic Site]
Elizabeth G. Randall School | 65 I Street, SW | 1906 | [☑ NRHP][□ DC Historic Site]
Strong John Thomson School | 1200 L Street, NW | 1910 | [□ NRHP][□ DC Historic Site]
Takoma Branch Library | 416 Cedar Street, NW | 1911 | [□ NRHP][□ DC Historic Site]
First Church of Christ, Scientist | 1770 Euclid Street, NW | 1912 | Designation Pending
Farmers and Mechanics Bank | 3068-3072 M Street, NW | 1921-22 | Georgetown Historic District
Significance and Contributions

William J. Marsh attended D.C. public schools and, subsequently, studied under private instructors in Boston and with the artist E. C. Messer in Washington. Marsh gained experience in architecture and construction at the prominent firm of Hornblower and Marshall, where he served as the head draftsman for eight years. He established a private practice in 1892, but five years later entered into a partnership with Walter C. Peter. Both architects were native to Washington and mostly likely met while working in the offices of Hornblower and Marshall.

One of the Marsh & Peter’s earliest commissions, The Evening Star Building (1899) was also one of its most notable. The elegant 13-story Beaux Arts-style building was constructed of white marble and offered scenic vistas of the Capitol Building. Ornanmented with decorative details, it is one of the most exuberant office buildings along Pennsylvania Avenue. The grand interior two-story vaulted lobby also featured marble walls and floors. The building was constructed for the newspaper company and served as its headquarters for nearly sixty years. Following the construction of the Evening Star Building, Marsh & Peter became one of the city’s most prominent architectural firms. They designed a number of large residences for the city’s elite including Colonial Revival-style houses for Aldis B. Browne (1908) and John S. Flannery (1915) in the Sheridan-Kalorama and Kalorama Triangle neighborhoods.

The firm was also responsible for several commercial buildings including the “banking house” of the Union Trust Company (1900, demolished) and the Farmers and Mechanics Branch of Riggs Bank (1921-1922). Marsh and Peter designed the Farmers and Mechanics Branch building to address its prominent corner location at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and M Street, NW in Georgetown. The Neo-Classical building features a dramatic gold-leafed dome and an entrance flanked by Corinthian columns, leading architectural historians Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee to describe it as “one of the most effective corner buildings in the District of Columbia.”

In addition to their residential and commercial work, Marsh and Peter designed a number of public, institutional, and religious buildings. They were responsible for a remodeling and expansion of Walter Reed Hospital in 1908, the Takoma Branch Library (1911), and the First Church of Christ Scientist (1913). Marsh and Peter also designed several schools in the District including the Syphax School (1901), the Edmonds School (1903), the Randall School (1906), and the Cardozo School (1907), among others. These buildings were “temples of education” that incorporated the latest advances in school design and facilities planning.

The biographical directory The History of the City of Washington summarized Marsh and Peter’s successful practice: “Few firms that have been launched in...”
business but ten years can turn and point out the many noble structures that have been planned, designed, and erected under their supervision as can the Messrs. Marsh & Peter, whose success has been little short of phenomenal. As compared with many competitors in this and other cities, while young in years, their work stands boldly forth, bearing all the characteristics of the combined talents of members of this most progressive firm.” Marsh suffered a stroke and died at the age of 62 in 1926; however Peter continued to practice under the name of Marsh and Peter until 1932.

Sources

Vertical Files
- [X] AIA Archives
- [ ] DC HPO
- [X] HSWDC
- [X] MLK Library

Other Repositories:

Obituary:
- Publication: *Evening Star*
  - Date: 01/28/1926
  - Page:

Biographical Directories
- [ ] American Architects Directory – not in it
- [X] Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals – 1 article
- [ ] Dictionary of American Biography – not in it
  - Year/Volume: 2001
  - Page: 181
- [ ] Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects – not in it
- [X] Who’s Who in the Nation’s Capital
  - Year/Volume: 1908-09
  - Page: 313
  - Year/Volume: 1923-24
  - Page: 58-59
  - Year/Volume: 1970
  - Page: 392

Other Sources:

Notes:

Prepared by: EHT Traceries

Last Updated: October 2010
**James Rush Marshall**

### Biographical Data
- **Birth:** 10/30/1851  
  **Place:** Carlisle, PA  
- **Death:** 06/02/1927  
  **Place:** Washington, DC  
- **Family:**

### Education
- **High School:** Rutgers Grammar School (1866-1868)  
- **College:** Rutgers College (left in 1870)  
- **Graduate School:**

### Apprenticeship:

### Architectural Practice

#### DC Architects' Registration
- **Registration Number:** 74  
- **Date Issued:** 10/15/1925

#### Permit Database
- **Earliest Permit:** 1883  
- **Latest Permit:** 1920  
- **Total Permits:** 108  
- **Total Buildings:** 138

#### Practice
- **Supervising Architect of the Treasury**  
  **Position:** Draftsman/Architect  
  **Date:** 1871-1883
- **Hornblower and Marshall**  
  **Position:** Partner/Architect  
  **Date:** 1883-1923

### Professional Associations
- **American Institute of Architects**  
  **Date(s) Enrolled:** 1892  
  **Fellow of the AIA:** 1892

**Other Societies or Memberships:** Member of the Cosmos Club, the Army-Navy Club, Chi Phi Fraternity, and the Chevy Chase Club. Marshall was a founding member of the Washington Chapter of the AIA and served as its President seven times between 1890 and 1910.

### Awards:

### Buildings

**Building Types:** Residences, Government Buildings, Institutional Buildings

**Styles and Forms:** Queen Anne, Romanesque, Georgian Revival, Colonial Revival

**DC Work Locations:** Dupont Circle, Sheridan-Kalorama, Downtown

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James Rush Marshall was born on October 30, 1851 in Carlisle, Pennsylvania to parents James William and Jane Stevenson Marshall. In 1862, the family moved to Leeds, England when James W. Marshall, a professor of Latin, Greek, and French, was appointed U.S. Consul. J. Rush Marshall returned to the U.S. to attend Rutgers Grammar School and then began studying architecture at Rutgers College, but left after his junior year. He spent some time traveling in Europe with his father before returning to the U.S. in 1871 to become a draftsman in the office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury.

In 1883, Marshall entered into a partnership with Joseph C. Hornblower. Their firm was the most active in Washington from the mid 1880s through the first decade of the twentieth century. Edward Donn later wrote, “Hornblower and Marshall were the best architects in Washington in the nineties. They did a lot of work and it was all above average.” The firm established a reputation designing houses for the social and political elite of the city. Many of Washington, D.C.’s well-known early twentieth-century architects trained under or worked for Hornblower and Marshall at some point during their careers.

Early in their partnership, Marshall focused on interior design. According to his obituary in the *Evening Star*:

“The architect’s [Marshall’s] talents lay no less along the lines of stone, brick, steel, and mortar than of textiles, fabrics, woods, and all the materials which enter into interior decorations, His taste was as excellent as his knowledge was varied and extensive.” The firm established a reputation designing houses for the social and political elite of the city. Prominent residences that they collaborated on include the Tuckerman House located at 1600 I Street, NW (1886, demolished), the Fraser House located at R and 20th Streets, NW (1890, demolished), the Boardman House located at 1801 P Street, NW (1893), and houses for several Supreme Court Justices. Marshall gained renown for his interior work and in 1901 he was asked to design the decorations for President William McKinley’s inaugural ball in the Pension Building. As their practice flourished, Hornblower and Marshall employed several notable designers in their firm including William J. Marsh and Albert L. Harris. Indeed, many of Washington, D.C.’s best-known early twentieth-century architects worked for Hornblower and Marshall at some point during their careers.

Although the majority of their work was residential, Hornblower and Marshall were awarded two major public commissions in 1903-1904: the Custom House in Baltimore and the National Museum in Washington, D.C. These large commissions necessitated the hiring of new draftsmen and several trips to Europe to study monumental public architecture. At the insistence of the Smithsonian Institution and the McMillan Commission, the National Museum (now known as the National Museum of Natural History) was executed in a grand neo-classical style and not the “French” style complete with a Mansard roof initially proposed by Hornblower and Marshall draftsman Arthur Brown. The plans were modified several times during the course of construction. Toward the completion of the National Museum on August 22, 1908, Hornblower died while studying museums in Europe. The cause of his sudden death is unknown.
After his partner’s death, Marshall continued to practice under the same name and to focus on residential commissions. Albert L. Harris joined Marshall as a partner in 1911 and designed many of the firm’s major commissions, including the Army-Navy Club. Marshall designed a building for the United Masonic Temple with architect Frank G. Pierson, but it was never constructed. Marshall died after a prolonged illness on June 2, 1927.

Duncan Phillips House, 1612 21st St., NW
Library of Congress, HABS DC-447-1

Sources

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| ☑️ Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals – 2 articles |
| ☑️ Dictionary of American Biography – not in it |
| ☑️ Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects – not in it |
| ☐ Who’s Who in the Nation’s Capital – not in 08-09 | 1923-24 | 259 |
| ☑️ Withey Biographical Dictionary of American Architects | 1970 | 393 |

Other Sources:


Notes: See Joseph C. Hornblower biography for image of Lothrop House.

Prepared by: EHT Traceries  Last Updated: October 2010
### James H. McGill

#### Biographical Data

| Birth: 1853 | Place: |
| Death: 05/22/1908 | Place: Washington, DC |
| Family: |

#### Education

| High School: |
| College: |
| Graduate School: |
| Apprenticeship: |

#### Architectural Practice

| DC Architects' Registration | Registration Number: n/a | Date Issued: |
| Permit Database | Earliest Permit: 1872 | Latest Permit: 1900 | Total Permits: 41 | Total Buildings: 60 |

| Practice | Position | Date |
| Henry R. Seale (Seale & Clark) | Clerk/Architect | 1867-1872 |
| Private Practice | Architect | 1873-1882 |
| Private Practice | Architectural Iron Work/Building Supplier | 1883-1908 |

#### Professional Associations

| American Institute of Architects | Date(s) Enrolled: n/a | Fellow of the AIA: |
| Other Societies or Memberships: |

#### Awards:

#### Buildings

**Building Types:** Cottages/Villas, Office and Commercial Buildings, Churches

**Styles and Forms:** Italian Villa, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Second Empire, and Italianate Styles

**DC Work Locations:** LeDroit Park, Downtown

| Notable Buildings | Location | Date | Status |
| Northern Liberty Market | 5th and K Streets, NW | 1874 | Demolished in 1988 |
| LeDroit Building | 800-810 F Street, NW | 1875 | ☒ NRHP ☒ DC Historic Site |
| Dwellings | 400 Block of U Street, NW | ca. 1875 | LeDroit Park Historic District |
| Dwellings | 500 Block of T Street, NW | ca. 1875 | LeDroit Park Historic District |
| Birney Double House | 1901-1903 T Street, NW | ca. 1875 | LeDroit Park Historic District |
| Cooper House | 201 T Street, NW | ca. 1875 | LeDroit Park Historic District |
Significance and Contributions

James H. McGill began his architectural career as a clerk at the firm of Henry R. Seale in 1867. In 1870, McGill and Seale were listed as partners, practicing under the name McGill and Seale. McGill apparently left the firm in 1872, but they may have continued to collaborate throughout the 1870s (according to city directories the two men both practiced as ‘Architects, Civil Engineers, and Surveyors’ and had offices next door to each other on the 700 block of E Street, NW) (Scott 2001, 185-186 & 254). In 1874, McGill was hired to design the Northern Liberty Market on 5th Street, NW between K and L Streets (demolished in 1988). McGill’s plans employed 200 tons of steel and iron trusses manufactured by the Architectural Iron Works Company of New York to form the largest unsupported roof-span in Washington. The arched roof formed a cavernous space for the public market and was hailed as an architectural innovation.

In 1873, developers Amzi L. Barber and Andrew Langdon platted a new 55-acre subdivision called LeDroit Park in Washington County just north of the city limits. Barber hired McGill to design houses for the “romantic suburb”—LeDroit Park was to be a bucolic retreat for wealthy whites. Between 1873 and 1887, McGill designed more than 60 houses for prominent generals, professors, congressmen, businessmen and government officials in LeDroit Park. McGill advertised his work in the 1878 publication Suburban Homes: A Collection of Sixty Cottage Designs. The display of LeDroit park homes was intended to “serve as useful models to person contemplating building of suburban village homes.” McGill’s houses were handsome examples of romantic eclecticism, exhibiting elements of Italian Villa, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Second Empire, and Italianate styles (Carr, Lynch Associates). LeDroit Park presently contains 50 of the original 64 McGill houses. One block, the 400 block of U Street, NW, still retains its original McGill houses without any modern intrusions.

In addition to McGill designing their subdivision, Langdon and Barber also hired the architect to design a commercial office building in downtown. The LeDroit Building located at 800-810 F Street, NW, was constructed in 1875. The three-story Italianate building with a
raised basement of storefronts is a rare surviving example of a pre-elevator office building. The LeDroit Building features an exception façade design that reflects the civic aspirations of post-Civil War Washington. After the completion of the LeDroit Building, McGill relocated his practice to the office building.

Beginning in the 1880s, the character of Le Droit Park began to change as the remaining land was sold for rowhouse development. With demand for his cottages waning, McGill pursued a new, but related line of work as a building supply salesman. From 1882 to 1906, city directories list McGill as a purveyor of Architectural Ironwork and Building Supplies. It is possible that McGill was serving as a local subsidiary of the New York firm that had supplied the iron for the Northern Liberty Market. In this enterprise, McGill partnered briefly with James E. Clark. McGill died on May 26, 1908.

**Sources**

**Vertical Files**
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- MLK Library

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**Other Sources:**


**Notes:**

**Prepared by: EHT Traceries**

**Last Updated: October 2010**
# Thomas Milton Medford

## Biographical Data

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Family: wife, Bessie Bomberger Medford; sons, Theodore L. Medford and Charles M. Medford; daughter, Roma F. Medford

## Education

- **Grammar School**: Washington, D.C. (1876-84)
- **High School**: 
- **College**: 
- **Graduate School**: 

Apprenticeship: Edward Woltz, three year course and two years practice; received instruction from Glenn Brown, Special Course under Prof. E.J. Brasse, Philadelphia. Pa.

## Architectural Practice

### DC Architects’ Registration

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<td>Architect/ Associate Engineer/Specifications writer</td>
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### Professional Associations

- **American Institute of Architects**: Date(s) Enrolled: n/a, Fellow of the AIA:

### Other Societies or Memberships: Washington Board of Trade, Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Society of the Oldest Inhabitants of Washington, DC

### Awards or Commissions:

### Buildings

- **Building Types**: School buildings, commercial buildings, residences (detached, rowhouses, and flats), apartment buildings, swimming pool, stables, warehouses
- **Styles and Forms**: Colonial Revival, Modern Movement
- **DC Work Locations**: Capitol Hill, Mount Pleasant, Mount Vernon Triangle, 16th Street Heights, Bloomingdale, Chevy Chase, Glover Park, Petworth, Hillbrook, Greenway

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Medford, Thomas M.
<table>
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<td>601 50th Street, N.E.</td>
<td>1927-1928</td>
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<td>Residence for Mrs. A. Anderson</td>
<td>1125 Fifth Street, N.E.</td>
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<td>Residence for Leulla Whaley</td>
<td>1333 Gallatin Street, N.W.</td>
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<td>423 Eighth Street, S.E.</td>
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<td>923 Fifth Street, N.W.</td>
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<td>Rowhouses for Liberty Building Co.</td>
<td>4010-4036 7th Street, N.E.</td>
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**Significance and Contributions**

Thomas Milton Medford was a prolific Washington architect and engineer who served both the District and federal Governments for eighteen years. Native to Washington, D.C., Medford was born August 9, 1870 and attended District grammar schools. While in his youth, he was appointed one of four messengers for the 1885 inauguration of President Grover Cleveland and carried information about the line of march to the future president. Medford, in applying to register as an architect in the District, wrote that high school was not available to him. He described his architectural training as including a three-year architectural apprenticeship course under Edward Woltz and two years of office practice. He stated that he had also served an apprenticeship and worked as a journeyman carpenter. In addition he wrote that he had “received instruction” from Glenn Brown and had taken a special course with Professor E.J. Brasse in Philadelphia. Medford stated that he had been practicing architecture since 1890 and he listed

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**Trades Hall of National Training School for Women and Girls**

601 50th St., NE

_Photo by D.K. Cannan, from National Register Nomination form, September 1989_
Medford was first listed as an architect on a District building permit in 1901. Medford designed numerous residences in Washington, D.C., including rowhouses at 30-38 U Street, N.W. (1908) and houses at 1125 Fifth Street, N.E. (1914) and 1333 Gallatin Street, N.W. (1915), before joining the District’s Municipal Architect’s Office in 1917 where he worked for the next five years. During this time, he continued to design residences, primarily two-story brick rowhouses along Georgia Avenue, N.W., and Spring Road, N.W., in the newly developing area of Petworth. In 1922, Medford transferred to the United States Navy Bureau of Yards and Docks where he worked as an architect and associate engineer. Then, in 1928, Medford worked two years for the United States Public Buildings and Grounds Administration.

Medford was the architect for the Trades Hall of the National Trades School for Women and Girls (Nannie Helen Burroughs School) at 601 50th Street, N.E., in northeast Washington. Constructed in 1927-28, the building served as the main classroom building at the school, replacing the original classroom building that burned in a 1926 fire. The school was founded in 1909 by Nannie Helen Burroughs (1883-1961), the African-American educator, orator, religious leader who was an advocate for African-American history and active in the Baptist Church. Offering a unique combination of academic training for African-American young women and girls, the first of its kind in the nation, the school emphasized strong scholastics with a religious background, as well as training in domestic arts and manual skills. In addition, Medford designed the swimming pool for McKinley High School in Washington, D.C., that opened June 30, 1929.

In 1931, Medford began work in the United States War Department’s Office of the Quartermaster General where he worked as a mechanical engineer and architect for the next four years. In 1936, Medford, who had designed for some private commissions throughout his government career, went into private practice full time. The same year, Medford expanded into commercial buildings, when he designed the one-story brick People’s Drug Stores, Inc. at 4917-4949 Georgia Avenue, N.W., and a one-story brick store at 923 Fifth Street, N.W., for owner J.E. Fowler. In 1940, Medford applied for a seller’s license to the D.C. Real Estate Commission.

Medford married Bessie Bomberger in 1927, with whom he had two sons, Theodore L. and Charles M., and a daughter, Roma F. Medford died December 11, 1942 at his Washington home at 1010 Urell Place, N.E.

Medford was a member of the Society of Oldest Inhabitants, the oldest civic organization in Washington, D.C., dedicated to preserving the District’s heritage.

### Sources

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**DC Architects Directory**

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<td>“Rites for T.M. Medford to be Held Here Monday.” <em>The Washington Star</em>, December 12, 1942.</td>
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**Notes:** Medford applied to register as an architect in the District of Columbia on October 1, 1925 but his registration number, 379, indicates that it was issued much later. His registration file includes correspondence from Medford dated March 30, 1940 requesting to apply for a Senior examination for registration. His application form has penciled notations indicating that he was examined but does not show the date the registration was issued.

**Prepared by:** EHT Traceries  
**Last Updated:** October 2010
### John A. Melby

#### Biographical Data
- **Birth:** 9/20/1880  
  **Place:** Toronto, Canada
- **Death:** 1943  
  **Place:** Washington, DC
- **Family:** Married Viola Ragland in 1914; six children (John, Jr., Francis, William, Paul, James, Catherine)

#### Education
- **High School:** South Division High School, Chicago, IL
- **College:** Clark University, Atlanta, GA (1898-1899)
- **Graduate School:** University of Illinois, Urbana, IL (1900-1905)

#### Apprenticeship:
- None listed

#### Architectural Practice

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<td>Samuel M. Plato (Louisville, KY)</td>
<td>Draftsman and Architect</td>
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#### Professional Associations
- **American Institute of Architects**  
  **Date(s) Enrolled:** n/a  
  **Fellow of the AIA:**

#### Other Societies or Memberships:
- None listed

#### Awards or Commissions:
- None listed

#### Buildings

**Building Types:** Dwellings, churches, gas stations, stores

**Styles and Forms:** Bungalow Craftsman, Colonial Revival

**DC Work Locations:** Capitol View, Capitol Hill, Northeast

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Significance and Contributions

John Alexander Melby was an African-American architect who came to Washington, D.C. in 1923. His work in the city includes numerous one-story, frame dwellings and brick row houses in the northeast quadrant, particularly in the Capitol View neighborhood and in the vicinity of Howard and Gallaudet Universities. In addition, he designed two churches, two gas stations, and several stores and small apartment buildings.

Born in Toronto, Canada on September 20, 1880, John A. Melby was the son of an American father, Perry Melby, and a Canadian mother, Catherine Elizabeth Melby. Catherine Melby died in childbirth, and Perry Melby soon moved to Chicago, Illinois with his infant son.

From 1898-1899, John Melby attended Clark University in Atlanta, Georgia, returning to Chicago in the summers to work as a draftsman for Macdonald Engineering Company. In 1899, he became the second African American to enroll in the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In 1904, he left the university before completing the architecture degree, and returned to work at Macdonald Engineering Company.

From 1906 to 1909, Melby was an instructor of Mechanical Drawing and Architecture at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. In April 1910, he worked as an engineer in Gary, Indiana, where he lived with his wife, Viola Ragland Melby. In 1915, he again returned to Macdonald Engineering Company in Chicago, remaining there for three years before establishing his own firm in Gary, specializing in “practical engineering, house plans, concrete block [construction], contracting, [and] estimating.” (Wilson, p. 278) Melby’s firm was unsuccessful, and he took jobs at U.S. Steel and the U.S. Post Office in Gary before moving to Louisville, Kentucky in 1921. In Louisville, he worked as an architect and draftsman in the office of architect Samuel Plato. In 1922, Melby served as principal architect for a brick church in Louisville.

Melby began practicing architecture in Washington, D.C. on June 17, 1923. His first documented commissions in the city date to 1925, when the Capital View Realty Company hired him to design the first of more than forty dwellings in the Capitol View neighborhood. Located on either side of East Capitol Street just east of the Anacostia River, Capitol View was developed in the 1920s by African-American businessman John Whitelaw Lewis. Lewis developed the neighborhood as a residential suburb for African Americans. To construct the houses, Lewis hired both white and African-American architects; other African-American architects who worked in Capitol View included the...
Melby's houses stand within the DePriest Village area of Capitol View and are modest, one- or one-and-a-half-story, frame houses. Several take the form of vernacular bungalows, and feature full-width porches supported by wood columns that rest on masonry piers.

The Capitol View Realty Company also hired Melby to design a building for the Antioch Baptist Church (later known as the Capital View Baptist Church) at 17 Division Avenue NE. Built in 1928, this frame church was demolished sometime before 1947. Melby designed two other churches in Washington. In 1929, he received a building permit for a $16,000 edifice at 1107 (now 1105) 50th Street NE for a different Antioch Baptist Church. The building permit indicated that it was constructed of concrete block; the current church building has a brick veneer and may contain all or part of the original church building. Melby also designed the Glendale Baptist Church at 4504 Gault Place NE in 1933. This frame sanctuary is no longer extant.

From 1927-1931, Melby designed several two-story, brick row houses and duplexes for John M. King, a developer and builder who worked in northeast Washington. Many of these houses are located in the vicinity of Howard and Gallaudet Universities. One notable block of surviving row houses designed by Melby is located at 1937-1949 Capitol Avenue NE, just west of Mount Olivet Cemetery. These two-bay, two-story, brick row houses display variations in the parapet rooflines and the decorative, contrasting brick work on their flat-front facades. Another notable block is located on the west side of the 1800 block of Corcoran Street NE (constructed 1928). He also designed at least one duplex in nearby Alexandria, Virginia (113 and 113A Hume Avenue).

Melby designed a few small apartment buildings and stores throughout his career, and worked for individual property owners as well as developers. In the early 1930s, Melby designed three automobile-related buildings: two gas stations and a public garage.

Melby's last building permit was issued in 1939, for a two-story, brick building with stores on the first floor and living space above. He died four years later, in 1943, at his home in Washington.

Sources

| Vertical Files | ☐ AIA Archives | ☐ DC HPO | ☐ HSWDC | ☐ MLK Library |
| Other Repositories: | Washington Post searched through ProQuest; District of Columbia Office of Planning, Property Quest; Ancestry.com |
### Biographical Directories

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### Obituary

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### Other Sources:

- District of Columbia, Board of Examiners and Registrars. John Alexander Melby correspondence with the Board. District of Columbia Archives, Washington, D.C.

### Notes:
The Historical Society of Washington, DC’s research library was inaccessible during the course of this project phase; only online records from the library were consulted.

### Prepared by: History Matters, LLC

Last Updated: November 2011
# Louis D. Meline

## Biographical Data
- **Birth:** ca. 1852  
  **Place:** St. Louis, Missouri
- **Death:** 10/15/1905  
  **Place:** Washington, DC
- **Family:** Married Manche Hosman

## Education
- **High School:**
- **College:** Georgetown College
- **Graduate School:**
- **Apprenticeship:**

## Architectural Practice
### DC Architects' Registration
- **Registration Number:**  
  **Date Issued:**

### Permit Database
- **Earliest Permit:** 1890  
  **Latest Permit:** 1905  
  **Total Permits:** 21  
  **Total Buildings:** 46

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## Professional Associations
### American Institute of Architects
- **Date(s) Enrolled:**
- **Fellow of the AIA:**

## Other Societies or Memberships:

## Awards or Commissions:

## Buildings
### Building Types: Residences
### Styles and Forms: Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Federal Revival
### DC Work Locations: Dupont Circle, Massachusetts Avenue, Sheridan-Karolama, Chevy Chase

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**Significance and Contributions**

Louis D. Meline was an artist turned architect. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Meline moved to Washington as a child when his father, Florant M. Meline, took a job with the U. S. Treasury Department. His brother, James F. Meline, would later serve as Assistant Treasurer of the United States. Unlike his brother, Louis Meline did not follow his father into managing the nation’s finances. Instead, in 1867, he enrolled in Georgetown University to study music and drawing. Meline excelled at the fine arts, taking second place in an annual drawing class competition. Around 1878, Meline established himself as a professional artist in Washington, specializing in still life and genre works. A biographical sketch of the young artist in *Historical and Commercial Sketches of Washington and Environs* gushed “In Mr. Meline’s work will be discovered a remarkable individuality and character that makes his work conspicuous, and which promised to place him among the leading artists of our country.” In addition to painting, Meline taught art; some of his pupils reputedly included members of “leading families of the city and District.”

It is unknown if Meline received any training in architecture, or if he simply relied on his abilities as an artist to design buildings. Regardless, by the turn of the twentieth century, Meline was listed as an architect in city directories. His first buildings, which he designed beginning in 1890, were rowhouses clustered around Dupont Circle. Meline often built the houses on speculation and funded their construction himself. Beginning in 1898, Meline designed a number of investment properties along Massachusetts Avenue, NW including 2208-2212 (1898-1899), 2205-2207(1902), 2304 (1901), and 2324 (1905). The designs for these three-story brick rowhouses drew heavily on classical European precedents. Meline placed great emphasis on the buildings’ entrances with elaborate door surrounds including ornate fanlights. In the late 1890s, Meline partnered with real estate salesman Henry Earle to promote home sales in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Meline contributed a number of plans for Chevy Chase houses which were printed in architectural trade magazines as examples of ideal suburban houses. The houses he designed in Chevy Chase included the Lieutenant Semly House at 4 Laurel Parkway (circa 1896).

In 1902, Meline designed a Colonial Revival-style house near Embassy Row as a residence for himself and his wife, Manche (nee Hosman) at 2224 R Street, NW. Built at a cost of $16,000, the mansion was a testament to Meline’s shrewd investments in the fast-growing and fashionable northwest quadrant of Washington and in Chevy Chase. Three years later, Meline fell ill and was taken to the Georgetown University Hospital where he died on or around October 15, 1905. His obituary reported that his death had been a shock to his friends in the city’s prominent business and social circles. He was credited in the *Evening Star* as having done “much for the upbuilding of the northwest section of the city.”
## Sources

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### Biographical Directories

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### Other Sources:


### Notes:

Prepared by: EHT Traceries

Last Updated: October 2010
# Mihran Mesrobian

## Biographical Data

Birth: 5/24/1889  
Place: Afyon Karahisar, Turkey  

Death: 9/21/1975  
Place: Chevy Chase, MD  

Family: Married Zabelle Martmanian in 1914; Sons Nourhan (James?), Ara, and Ralfe; granddaughter Caroline Mesrobian Hickman

## Education

High School: Afion Armenian High School (1903)  
College: Imperial Fine Arts School of Constantinople (1908)  

Graduate School:  
Apprenticeship:  

**Source:** Washington Post, 9/26/1975, C10

## Architectural Practice

### DC Architects’ Registration

Registration Number: 784  
Date Issued: 8/14/1951

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<td>Wardman Construction Co.</td>
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<td>c. 1926-1930</td>
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## Professional Associations

American Institute of Architects  
Date(s) Enrolled: n/a  
Fellow of the AIA: n/a

**Other Societies or Memberships:**

**Awards or Commissions:** 1926, National Award for Excellence, AIA, for Carlton Hotel

## Buildings

**Building Types:** Hotels, apartment buildings, garden apartments, stores, houses  
**Styles and Forms:** Italianate, Renaissance Revival, Colonial Revival, Streamline Moderne, Art Deco, Byzantine  
**DC Work Locations:** Woodley Park, Downtown, Dupont Circle, Cathedral Heights; Arlington, VA

### Notable Buildings

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<tr>
<td>Cathedral Mansions</td>
<td>2900, 3000, 3100 Connecticut Avenue NW</td>
<td>1922-25</td>
<td>✗ NRHP ✗ DC Historic Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>The English Village</td>
<td>Woodley Park</td>
<td>1923-24</td>
<td>✗ NRHP ✗ DC Historic Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carlton Hotel</td>
<td>923 16th Street NW</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Sixteenth Street Historic Dist.</td>
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<td>Hay-Adams Hotel</td>
<td>800 16th Street NW</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Lafayette Sq &amp; 16th St. Hist. Dist.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wardman Tower</td>
<td>2600 Woodley Road NW</td>
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Mihran Mesrobian was a prolific architect best known for the lavish residential hotels he designed in the 1920s and 30s for Harry Wardman, president of the Wardman Construction Company. Mesrobian blended conventional elements of the Colonial Revival style with design elements and materials of the Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and Byzantine styles to create often luxurious and ornate structures that have come to represent Washington, DC.

Mesrobian was born in Afyon, Turkey to Armenian parents in 1889. At age fifteen, he took the entrance exams and was placed into the second year class at the Academie des Beaux Arts in Istanbul because of his drawing ability; he completed the five year course in four years, graduating in 1908. He took the position of Municipal Architect in Smyrna where he met Zabelle Martmanian, also from Afyon—they were married on May 23, 1914. After working in Smyrna, he served as an architectural engineer for the Turkish Army during World War I. After the war, increasing hostilities of the Turks toward Armenians prompted Mesrobian to immigrate to the United States—he settled in Washington in 1921. That same year, at the age of thirty-two, he began working as a draftsman for Harry Wardman, one of the city’s most prolific and well known developers.

One of Mesrobian’s first projects for Wardman was Cathedral Mansions, the first apartment house in Washington, D.C., modeled after a resort hotel. Wardman and Mesrobian went on to pioneer this trend in Washington apartment housing in the 1920s and 30s. Cathedral Mansions is a complex of three large buildings (Cathedral Mansions South, Cathedral Mansions Center, and Cathedral Mansions North) constructed from 1922 to 1923, located at 2900, 3000, and 3100 Connecticut Avenue, NW—it is the largest apartment house that Wardman constructed between 1905 and 1929 and, at the time of its completion, was the largest apartment complex south of New York. The complex contained 492 apartment units in three adjacent buildings and was designed in the Colonial Revival style. The buildings are faced with red brick and feature limestone quoins; they are capped by side-gabled and hipped roofs with dormer windows.

Some of Mesrobian’s other early designs for Wardman were for semi-detached houses, like those in Fort Stevens Ridge. Fort Stevens Ridge was planned as a 50-acre neighborhood of six-room brick semi-detached dwellings. The neighborhood is located east of Georgia Avenue at Rittenhouse Street and is roughly bounded by Peabody, Fifth, Underwood, and Ninth Streets. Wardman constructed the first section between 1922 and 1927, and it appears that the Capitol Contracting Company took over development of Fort Stevens Ridge in 1931 after Wardman went bankrupt. Other firms were also involved in developing Fort Stevens Ridge from 1931 to 1936, including the Schneider Company, the Federal Construction Company, Taylor & Van Vranken, and most prominently, the D.C. Developing Company. Mesrobian stayed on with each firm to design rowhouses, duplexes, and...
Mesrobian was also instrumental in designing English Village in the Cathedral neighborhood (c. 1923-24), bounded by Woodley Road, 29th and 34th Streets, and Cleveland Avenue. The units in this neighborhood were attached in threes and unified by rooflines and facades to create the impression of one large dwelling. The buildings were designed in the “English vernacular,” with irregular massing, employing mostly Colonial and Tudor Revival styles.

By 1926, Mesrobian had become the chief designer for Wardman’s firm. While his original designs were for single-family dwellings and apartment complexes, he is best known for his luxury residential hotels such as the Carlton, 1926 (923 16th Street, NW); the Hay-Adams, 1927 (800 16th Street, NW); and the Wardman Tower, 1928 (2600 Woodley Road, NW). The Carlton, now the St. Regis Hotel, and the Hay-Adams are variations on the Villa Farnesina, a Roman Renaissance palazzo and reflect Mesrobian’s classical architectural training.

In 1928, Mesrobian completed plans for the Wardman Gardens, Harry Wardman’s last big development concept. The ambitious project involved a large apartment complex of 747 units to be built on a site south of the Wardman Tower. However, financial problems resulting from the construction of the Wardman Tower made it impossible for Harry Wardman to construct the Wardman Gardens project. By 1930, Wardman was forced to declare bankruptcy and Mesrobian opened a private practice, occasionally working for Wardman until the latter’s death in 1938.

In his private practice, Mesrobian’s commissions included the Dupont Circle Building at 1350 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. (1931), a rug store at 1214 18th Street, N.W. (1931), Sedgwick Gardens (1931-32), and several garden apartment complexes in Arlington, Virginia. The Dupont Circle Building was an apartment-hotel designed between 1930 and 1931. This wedge-shaped structure is ornamented with bas-relief and stylized friezes but is also reminiscent of modern design in its geometry and simplicity. This was a difficult project because of the triangular of the site and the need to incorporate an earlier one-story building already located on the site. The Dupont Circle Building reached the maximum zoning height at the time and was one of the tallest buildings on Dupont Circle. The building is also significant because it marked Dupont Circle’s transition from a largely residential area to one dominated by commerce and businesses.

Sedgwick Gardens, designed in 1931-32, illustrates Mesrobian’s skill in combining architectural styles—Mesrobian utilized Byzantine, Medieval, and Islamic elements and united them under an Art Deco scheme. Mesrobian also designed several apartment buildings and complexes in Arlington. His first Virginia apartment project was Court House Manor (or Garden), 1233 N. Court House Road (1940), and 1301 N. Court House Road (1941, demolished 1981), followed by Wakefield Manor...
Mesrobian, Mirhan

Mesrobian’s work also included Lee Gardens (now Sheffield Court on North Wayne Street) and several Arlington shopping centers.

Mesrobian officially retired in 1956 at the age of 67, but designed the Armenian Apostolic Church of St. Mary’s (4125 Fessenden Street, NW) the same year. He died in 1975 of a heart attack.

Sources

Vertical Files

- AIA Archives
- DC HPO
- HSWDC
- MLK Library

Other Repositories:

- Obituary: Publication: Washington Post
  Washington Star-News
  Date: 9/26/1975
  9/25/1975
  Page: C10
  unknown

Biographical Directories

- American Architects Directory – not in it
- Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals – not in it
- National Cyclopedia of American Biography
- Directory of District of Columbia Architects: 1822-1960
  59 53
- Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects – not in it
- Withey Biographical Dictionary of American Architects – not in it

Other Sources:


Notes:

Prepared by: EHT Traceries

Last Updated: October 2010
# B. Frank Meyers

## Biographical Data

| Birth: | 1865 | Place: Nazareth, PA |
| Death: | 7/2/1940 | Place: Washington, D.C. |
| Family: | Father John Granville, brother Louis H., wife Nina L.D. |

## Education

| High School: |
| College: |
| Graduate School: |
| Apprenticeship: |


## Architectural Practice

### DC Architects' Registration
- Registration Number: n/a
- Date Issued:

### Permit Database
- Earliest Permit: 1892
- Latest Permit: 1931
- Total Permits: 143
- Total Buildings: 298

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<td>B. Frank Meyers</td>
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## Professional Associations

- **American Institute of Architects**
  - Date(s) Enrolled: n/a
  - Fellow of the AIA:

## Other Societies or Memberships:

## Awards or Commissions:

## Buildings

### Building Types:
- Theaters, rowhouses, houses

### Styles and Forms:
- Classical Revival

### DC Work Locations:
- Downtown, Kalorama Triangle, Mount Pleasant, Dupont Circle, Park View, Capitol Hill

### Notable Buildings

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<td>1910-1956 Calvert Street, NW</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Kalorama Triangle Hist. Dist.</td>
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<td>Empress Theater (demolished)</td>
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<td>Georgia Theater (demolished)</td>
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<td>Carolina Theater (demolished)</td>
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Significance and Contributions

Benjamin Franklin Meyers (1865-1940), known as B. Frank Meyers, contributed many rowhouses and theaters to the Washington, D.C., area. Meyers was born in 1865 in Nazareth, Pennsylvania. He moved with his family to Washington, D.C., as a child and attended school there. He also received his architectural training in Washington, D.C., but it is not known where. His father, John Granville Meyers, was a local builder and architect.

The first building permit that lists B. Frank Meyers as architect was issued on August 1, 1892, for two dwellings located at the corner of Monroe Street and Morgan Avenue, NW. He is said to have assisted his father, John Granville Meyers, in drawing plans for the Christian Heurich House (1307 New Hampshire Avenue, NW) in 1892 and the Mount Pleasant Congregational Church (demolished) at 1410 Columbia Road, NW in 1896. No other permits were issued to B. Frank Meyers until 1895, when he began designing for L.E. Breuninger, a prolific Washington-area real estate developer. Meyers designed the dwellings located at 1237-1251 Irving Street, NW for Breuninger between 1895 and 1896. In 1897, Meyers began working with his brother, Louis H. Meyers, a builder. Louis Meyers, then working with a partner named Anderson, commissioned B. Frank to design duplexes at 3553-3563 11th Street, NW.

In 1904, Meyers again worked with his brother, this time partnered with a man named Wunderly, to construct rowhouses in the Kalorama Triangle neighborhood. In 1904, Meyers designed the rowhouses at 1910-1956 Calvert Street, NW, and 1701-1715 Euclid Street, NW. He also designed the rowhouses located at 2711-2735 Ontario Road, NW, and 1721-1733 Columbia Road, NW. In 1905, he designed the dwellings at 1961-1979 Biltmore Street, NW. Altogether he designed over thirty houses in the Kalorama Triangle area.

In 1906, Meyers worked with another speculative building firm, Schmidt and Brandt, to design the rowhouses at 1502-1518 E Street, SE. He designed most of his rowhouses for speculative builders and attached or semi-detached houses for both builders and a number of individual clients.

Meyers designed only a handful of detached dwellings during his career. These buildings include the houses at 3400-3404 Macomb Street, NW, which he designed in 1914 for the W.C. and A.N. Miller Company. These houses are large, two-and-a-half-story, single-family dwellings influenced by the Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles. He also designed the rowhouses at 17-29 Rock Creek Church Road, NW, in 1916 for the Miller Company.

From 1910 to 1914, as movie theaters became popular throughout the city, Meyers embraced the design of these buildings. Between 1906 and 1913, ninety-seven movie theaters opened in Washington, D.C., of which Meyers designed at least nine. His first theater, constructed in 1910, The Empress, was located at 416 9th Street, NW (demolished). It was one story in height and embellished with classical ornament. The theater was marked by Ionic columns that flanked the entrance and supported a wide segmental pediment. Rows of bare electric lights, spaced at regular intervals, accentuated the frieze and cornice.

Other theaters designed by Meyers, all demolished, include the Georgia Theater (1912) at 3318-3324 Georgia Avenue, NW, the Carolina Theater (1913) at 103-107 11th Street, SE, the Liberty Theater (1914) at 1419-1423 North Capitol Street, NE, the Belmont Theater (c. 1914) at 2114 14th Street, NW, the Crystal Theater (1910) at 621 7th Street, NW, and the Stanton Theater (1913) at 513 C Street, NE. He also designed a theater in 1914 for the Bloomingdale area, but it was never built.
Meyers retired in 1933 due to ill health and died of a heart attack in 1940 at the age of seventy-five.

**Sources**

**Vertical Files**
- ☐ AIA Archives
- ☐ DC HPO
- ☐ HSWDC
- ☐ MLK Library

**Other Repositories:**

**Obituary:**
- Publication: *The Washington Star*
- *The Times-Herald*
  - Date: 7/3/1940
  - 7/5/1940
  - Page: unknown

**Biographical Directories**

- ☐ American Architects Directory – not in it
- ☐ Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals – not in it
- ☐ Dictionary of American Biography – not in it
- ☑ Directory of District of Columbia Architects: 1822-1960
  - Year/Volume: 2001
  - Page: 191
- ☐ Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects – not in it
- ☐ Withey Biographical Dictionary of American Architects – not in it

**Other Sources:**

**Notes:**
- Prepared by: EHT Traceries
- Last Updated: October 2010
# John Granville Meyers

## Biographical Data
- **Birth:** 9/13/1834  
  **Place:** Nazareth, PA
- **Death:** 12/12/1902  
  **Place:** Washington, DC
- **Family:** Wife Maria A., sons B. Frank and Louis H.

## Education
- **High School:**
- **College:**
- **Graduate School:**
- **Apprenticeship:**

## Architectural Practice

### DC Architects' Registration
- **Registration Number:** n/a
- **Date Issued:**

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<td>Architect</td>
<td>1875-1902</td>
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## Permit Database
- **Earliest Permit:** 1877
- **Latest Permit:** 1900
- **Total Permits:** 79
- **Total Buildings:** 128

## Professional Associations
- **American Institute of Architects**  
  **Date(s) Enrolled:** n/a  
  **Fellow of the AIA:**

## Other Societies or Memberships:

## Awards or Commissions:

## Buildings
- **Building Types:** Rowhouses, dwellings, government buildings
- **Styles and Forms:** Romanesque Revival, Richardsonian Romanesque, Queen Anne
- **DC Work Locations:** Northwest, Dupont Circle, Columbia Heights

## Buildings

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<td>Christian Heurich House</td>
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<td>1892-1894</td>
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<td>1410 Columbia Road, NW</td>
<td>1896</td>
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<td>General Hazen House (demolished)</td>
<td>1601 K Street, NW</td>
<td>1881</td>
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<td>Rowhouses</td>
<td>1908-1920 Sunderland Pl., NW</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Dupont Circle Historic District</td>
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<td>Commercial Building</td>
<td>415 7th Street, NW</td>
<td>1883</td>
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Significance and Contributions

John Granville Meyers was born in 1834 and was a native of Nazareth, Pennsylvania. As a young man, he worked as a stone mason and at the age of eighteen began work as a carpenter. He was also a contractor and builder in Pennsylvania before he moved to Washington, D.C. He established himself as an architect in Washington in the 1870s, where he designed a three-story office building at 1323 G Street for his practice.

The first known permit that bears Meyers’s name as architect was issued in 1877 for two dwellings on 7th Street, NW.

Meyers designed many privately commissioned houses in Northwest Washington in last third of the nineteenth century, including residences for Judge C. Nott, Mr. Chris Ruppert, Mrs. E. Cullinan, Judge Lewery, Gen. Hazen (1601 K Street, NW, permit #1187, 1881), and others. Meyers designed homes in the Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival styles, utilizing concrete, red brick, and rusticated stone.

In 1889, Meyers designed the ten three-story brick dwellings at 1803-1819 19th Street, NW, and 1843 S Street, NW, originally owned by Tyler and Rutherford. While most of his buildings were masonry construction, Meyers designed several frame houses as well. For example, he designed a frame cottage for B.F. Martin at Brightwood Park in 1892 (demolished). The two-story dwelling with a cellar and attic was located at 811 Jefferson Street, NW. It featured an octagonal bay with a pyramidal roof, gables, and wide verandas.

The same year, he and his son, B. Frank, designed and constructed the three-story brick dwellings at 1216-1220 New Hampshire Ave, NW, (demolished). In 1893, he independently designed and built the three-story brick dwellings at 2108-2116 Ward Place, NW (demolished).

Meyers’s most recognized building is the Christian Heurich House or Mansion, also known as the Brewmaster’s Castle, located at 1307 New Hampshire Avenue, NW. Constructed from 1892-1894, the house was commissioned by Christian Heurich, a philanthropic German immigrant and owner of the Heurich Brewery. The building rises three-and-a-half stories and was the city’s first fireproof house, built of reinforced steel and poured concrete. This was a novel construction technique at the time and unheard of for residential construction. The elevations, however, were faced with brick and stone in keeping with the Richardsonian Romanesque style fashionable at the time. The dwelling features a heavy arched porte-cochere, a cylindrical corner tower with conical roof, turreted wall dormers, gargoyles, and round-arched windows. A two-story attached conservatory features a tiled mansard roof and an arched facade of copper. The building was listed on the DC Inventory of Historic Sites in 1964 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1969; the interiors were designated in the National Register in 2002. The Christian Heurich House was the home of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., from 1955 to 2003.

Similar in style and appearance to the Christian Heurich House was the Mt. Pleasant Congregational Church, constructed in 1896. Meyers may have collaborated with his son, B. Frank Meyers, on the design for the church. Now demolished, the building was located at 1410 Columbia Road, NW.
Meyers was a pioneer in the use of poured concrete for residential building. He devised and patented several processes and formulae for making “artificial stone blocks,” as his obituary states. He also patented a process for building mausoleums to facilitate sanitary interment for which he was awarded a medal by the Franklin Institute in 1890.

Between 1896 and 1898, Meyers worked as a speculative builder, designing and constructing at least fifteen dwellings in Northwest Washington.

In addition to his residential work, Meyers was a supervising architect of College Hall at the College for the Deaf and Dumb (now Gallaudet University). He also contributed to the construction of government buildings, including the State, War, and Navy Building (now the Old Executive Office Building) by Alfred Mullett next to the White House. Meyers died on December 12, 1902, of a kidney disease at the age of 68.

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**Sources**

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<th>Vertical Files</th>
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| ☒ 2001 | 149, 191 |


**Other Sources:**


**Notes:**

**Prepared by: EHT Traceries**

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Meyers, John Granville
Frank Pierce Milburn  

Biographical Data

Birth: 12/12/1868 Place: Bowling Green, Ky.
Death: 9/21/1926 Place: Asheville, N.C.
Family: Married Leonora Lyttle, two sons and one daughter

Education

High School: Fayetteville, Arkansas 1883-1887
College: Arkansas Industrial University, Fayetteville, S.C. (one year)
Graduate School:
Apprenticeship: Worked with father, T. T. Milburn ca. 1889-1890

Architectural Practice

DC Architects' Registration  Registration Number: 10  Date Issued: 5/1/1925
Permit Database  Earliest Permit: 1909 Latest Permit: 1926 Total Permits: 64 Total Buildings: 70

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<td>F. P. Milburn, Kenova, W. Va.</td>
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<td>1890-1893</td>
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<td>F. P. Milburn, Winston, N.C.</td>
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<td>F. P. Milburn &amp; Company, Charlotte, N.C.</td>
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Professional Associations

American Institute of Architects  Date(s) Enrolled: n/a  Fellow of the AIA:
Other Societies or Memberships: Elks, Masonic Order
Awards or Commissions:

Buildings

Building Types: Railroad stations, courthouses and other public buildings (principally in early years in southern states), college buildings, office buildings, apartment houses, churches, banks, schools, residences.

Styles and Forms: Chicago School, Beaux Arts, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival

DC Work Locations: Downtown, Upper Northwest, Capitol Hill

Notable Buildings  Location  Date  Status
Interstate Building  1319 F Street, N.W.  1912  ☑ NRHP ☑ DC Historic Site
Real Estate Trust Building  801 14th St., N.W. (now 1333 H St., N.W.)  1913  ☑ NRHP ☑ DC Historic Site
American Federation of Labor  901 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.  1915  ☑ NRHP ☑ DC Historic Site
Southern Railway Building  Pennsylvania Ave and 13th St., N.W., (southwest corner)  1916  ☑ NRHP ☑ DC Historic Site

Source: Vivian, *A Practical Architect*
Frank Pierce Milburn was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in 1868. He attended the Arkansas Industrial University in Fayetteville, Arkansas, for a year but his principal training was working with his father who specialized in designing and building court houses. He established his own practice in 1890, initially working principally on courthouses. First located in Kenova, W. Va., he moved his office to Winston, and then Charlotte, N.C. and then to Columbia, S.C. He expanded his practice to other public and commercial buildings and designed projects in numerous southern states. According to biographer Lawrence Wodehouse, in his first fifteen years of practice, "Milburn designed nineteen railroad stations for the Southern and other allied railway systems, twenty-six county courthouses, fifteen residences, nine college buildings, including five for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in addition to offices, churches, banks, schools, and jails." He designed additions to the South Carolina and Florida state capitols.

The Southern Railway Company, for whom Milburn had built a number of stations, offered Milburn the official position of architect for the company in 1902 which involved some work in Washington. In 1906, desiring to expand his practice, he moved his firm to Washington. He took the gifted designer who had headed his drafting department since 1903, Michael Heister, into full partnership in 1909 and the firm became Milburn, Heister & Co. Milburn's son, Thomas Yancy Milburn, who studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, joined the firm in 1914.

Milburn's style was described by Wodehouse as "typical of nineteenth century eclectics, sometimes following the great American triumvirate of architects, Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886), Louis Sullivan (1856-1924), and Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959), and at other times adopting the classical attitudes of the Neo-Classical Revival or Beaux Arts Classicism."

The major buildings of Milburn's early practice had been predominantly courthouses and other public buildings and railway stations in various southern states but after he moved to Washington, D.C, large office buildings became an important part of the practice. These included the American Federation of Labor building, the Southern Railway Building, the Potomac Electric Power Company building, the Interstate Building and the Real Estate Trust Building. The firm also designed the Washington Auditorium, the District National Bank, the Union Savings Bank, several other banks and various office buildings for government use. Many of these have been demolished but the Real Estate Trust Building, now known as 1333 H Street, N.W., the Interstate Building at 1319 F St., N.W., and the American Federation of Labor building at 901 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., are among those still standing. Other prominent buildings were the Powhatan Hotel (demolished) and the 1916 and 1924 Lansburgh's Department Store additions. The firm designed apartment buildings constructed at 2514 14th Street and 1016 16th Street, N.W., and at 307 S Street and 219 T Street, N.W., in Eckington. Milburn was a close friend of the University of North Carolina's president, Francis P. Venable, and the firm designed thirteen buildings for the Chapel Hill campus. Milburn's largest commission was to design the Bureau of Printing and other government buildings in Peking (Beijing) for the Imperial Government.

John Clagett Proctor wrote in 1930 that Milburn's firm was said to have "designed more public buildings than perhaps any other architectural firm in America." His practice was unusual for its time both in that it was regional rather than local — he was said to have the largest practice in the South by 1900 — and in its specialization in certain types of buildings, beginning with courthouses and eventually progressing to large steel-frame office buildings.

Milburn died in 1926 but Milburn's son Thomas Yancy Milburn, who had become Milburn, Heister & Co.'s president in 1925, and Heister continued to practice under the name Milburn, Heister & Co. until 1934, the last year the firm was listed in Washington city directories. The last District of Columbia building permit issued to the firm was dated May 10, 1933.
Sources

Vertical Files
☐ AIA Archives ☐ DC HPO ☑ HSWDC ☐ MLK Library

North Carolina State University Library, Historical Society of Washington, D.C., and Library of Congress each have some editions of the promotional booklets Milburn and, later, Milburn, Heister & Co. published on their work.

Obituary: Publication: *Washington Star* Date: 9/21/1926 Page:

Biographical Directories

☐ American Architects Directory – not in it
☒ Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals – 5 articles
☒ National Cyclopedia of American Biography
☒ Directory of District of Columbia Architects: 1822-1960
☐ Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects – not in it
☒ Who’s Who in the Nation’s Capital – not in 08-09
☐ Withey Biographical Dictionary of American Architects – not in it

Other Sources:


**Notes:** Beginning in 1901, Milburn, published a series of booklets with designs and plans of his works, some of which are in the collections of the Library of Congress and the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. Early editions were titles, “Designs from the Work of Frank P. Milburn.” Later editions were published by Milburn Heister & Co. Some are undated.

The number of permits issued is only for those issued to Milburn & Heister in Milburn’s lifetime. An additional six permits list the firm as architect in the years 1926-1933 before the firm was dissolved in 1934. For additional photographs of Milburn & Heister works, see biography of Michael Heister.

Prepared by: EHT Traceries

Last Updated: October 2010
Otho Harvey Miller

Biographical Data
Birth: 1/31/1878 Place: Bridgewater, Rockingham Co., VA
Death: 4/29/1951 Place: Washington, DC
Family: Unmarried

Education
High School: Bridgewater, VA (1892-1894)
College: Unknown.
Graduate School: International Correspondence Schools (1897-1903)
Apprenticeship: Washington Architectural Club Atelier (1910-1915)

Architectural Practice
DC Architects’ Registration
Registration Number: 16 Date Issued: 4/17/1925
Permit Database
Earliest Permit: 1921 Latest Permit: 1929 Total Permits: 21 Total Buildings: 21
Practice | Position | Date
--- | --- | ---
O. Harvey Miller, Staunton, VA | Architect | 1909
U.S. Department of the Treasury | Draftsman | 1913
U.S. Department of the Treasury | Architect | 1914-1918
O. Harvey Miller (Washington, DC & Bridgewater, VA) | Architect | 1917-1951

Professional Associations
American Institute of Architects Date(s) Enrolled: 1921-1950 Fellow of the AIA:

Other Societies or Memberships: Freemasons.

Awards or Commissions:

Buildings
Building Types: Banks, office buildings, dwellings, stores
Styles and Forms: Colonial Revival, Neoclassical Revival
DC Work Locations: Downtown, Capitol Hill, Shaw, Anacostia, Mt. Vernon Square
Notable Buildings Location Date Status
--- | --- | --- | ---
The Carpenters Building 1010 10th St./1001 K St. NW 1926 NRHP DC Historic Site
International Exchange Bank 477 H Street NW 1923 NRHP DC Historic Site Downtown Historic District
American Building Association 300 Pennsylvania Avenue SE 1929 NRHP DC Historic Site Capitol Hill Historic District
American News Company 1121 5th Street NW 1928 NRHP DC Historic Site Mt. Vernon Square Historic District
Notable Buildings | Location | Date | Status  
--- | --- | --- | ---  
National Association of Letter Carriers Headquarters | 100 Indiana Avenue NW | 1951 | ☐ NRHP ☐ DC Historic Site  
**Significance and Contributions**

Trained as a carpenter in his hometown of Bridgewater in western Virginia, Otho Harvey Miller moved to Washington, D.C. in 1910. He studied architecture through a correspondence school and with the Washington Architectural Club Atelier. He began his architectural career working for the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and then established his own practice in 1917. Miller designed several dwellings and commercial buildings, but is best known for his bank buildings, and for The Carpenters Building at 10th and K Streets, NW. (National Register, 2003).

O. Harvey Miller was born on January 31, 1878, in the town of Bridgewater in Rockingham County, Virginia. The youngest of Samuel and Anna Miller’s four children, as a young man, O. Harvey Miller worked as a carpenter like his father. Between 1897 and 1903, he completed a degree in architecture and engineering from the International Correspondence Schools. By 1909, he had moved to Staunton and set up his own office. The following year, he moved to the nation’s capital.

Soon after moving to Washington, Miller began studying with the Washington Architectural Club Atelier. In 1913, he took a position as a draftsman for the U.S. Department of the Treasury; the following year, he was promoted to the position of architect for the Treasury. In 1915, he completed his studies with the atelier. He worked for the Treasury Department until 1918, but at the same time, began practicing architecture independently. His earliest known buildings were located near his home in western Virginia. Between 1914 and 1917, he designed a “Colonial Residence” for R.R. Brown in Harrisonburg, Virginia (1914) and a Presbyterian church in Raphine, Virginia (1917).

In 1917, Miller established an office in the McLachlen Bank Building at 1001 G Street, NW. At the same time, he maintained an architectural practice in his hometown of Bridgewater, Virginia. In 1921, he became a certified architect in Virginia, and successfully applied for membership in the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Four years later, in 1925, he was accepted as a registered architect in the District of Columbia.

Building permit records indicate that between 1917 and 1925, Miller designed primarily dwellings and stores in the District. He completed designs for several small, vernacular dwellings for developer and builder Otho W. Hammond. The larger dwellings that Miller designed during this period generally reflect the Colonial Revival style. He designed four retail stores in Washington, D.C. during this period. Two are extant: 1313 11th Street, NW (1921) in the Shaw Historic District, and 500 13th Street SE. (1924). Both are two-story, brick commercial buildings with flat fronts and restrained architectural detailing on the upper stories. Drawings of Miller’s design for the now-demolished Linger Bedding Store at 925 G Street, NW (1922) appeared in the *Washington Post* on April 9, 1922. The drawing shows more elaborate architectural embellishments on the upper stories, including three Palladian windows and intricate brick work.

3202 Ely Place SE; 1921
*District of Columbia Office of Planning; 2004*
In the early 1920s, Miller made a name for himself as a bank designer. He designed banks in the District of Columbia, as well as in Middleburg (Middleburg National Bank, 1925) and Strasburg, Virginia (Peoples National Bank Building, 1927). In 1923, he completed designs for the International Exchange Bank at 477 H Street, NW in the Downtown Historic District. Other notable bank buildings include the American Building Association bank building at 300 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE (1929) in the Capitol Hill Historic District, and the Franklin National Bank building at 10th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW.

Miller was also well-known for the office building he designed in 1926 for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. Located at the northwest corner of 10th and K Streets, NW, this eight-story office building – also known as the Carpenters Building – was listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. In contrast to Miller’s bank buildings, which display ornate Neoclassical details, the Carpenters Building features more restrained Colonial Revival-style architectural detailing. Another design mode is evident in Miller’s American News Company building at 1121 5th Street NW. Built in 1928 and located in the Mount Vernon Square Historic District, the building is distinctly industrial in character. Its exterior is dominated by large, multi-pane factory-style steel windows separated by brick pilasters.

The database for Washington, D.C. building permits indicates that no permits were issued to Miller after 1929, when he received a permit for the American Building Association bank building. However, he continued to practice architecture until his death in 1951. From 1930 to 1951, he appears to have worked primarily on government projects. In the 1930s, he worked for the U.S. Coast Guard designing the main buildings for the Washington Radio Station [now the Coast Guard Telecommunication and Information Systems Command (TISCOM)] on Telegraph Road in Fairfax County, Virginia. After Miller completed the designs and sometime prior to 1939, the Coast Guard terminated his appointment. In 1937, he was working as an associate architect for the Treasury Department; his exact dates of employment are not known. Business directories indicate that he retained his architectural office in the McLachlen building through the 1930s. The D.C. Office Buildings Survey (1991) indicates that at the time of his death in 1951, Miller was in the process of designing a new eight-story, limestone-clad headquarters for the National Association of Letter Carriers at 100 Indiana Avenue, NW; the building remains the group’s headquarters today.
During the 1930s, Miller may also have done architectural work with the Allied Architects, a loose confederation of prominent local architects who banded together to pursue large public and semi-public commissions in the city. Miller was one of the founding members of Allied Architects, which formed in 1925, under the leadership of Horace Peaslee and other prominent members of the D.C. Chapter of the AIA. Modeled on a similar architectural group started in Los Angeles in 1919, the Allied Architects worked collaboratively, sometimes holding internal design competitions and then selecting and combining the best elements of the winning designs. The group’s bylaws provided for one-fourth of the corporation’s net proceeds to be spent on efforts to advance architecture in the District of Columbia and to educate the public about good design.


O. Harvey Miller died on April 29, 1951, at age 73, at his home in Washington, D.C.

Sources

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**Obituary**

- **Publication:** *Washington Post*
- **Date:** 5/3/1951
- **Page:** B2

**Other Sources:**

- District of Columbia, Board of Examiners and Registrars. O. Harvey Miller Application for Registration. District of Columbia Archives, Washington, D.C.
- District of Columbia, Board of Examiners and Registrars. O. Harvey Miller correspondence with the Board. District of Columbia Archives, Washington, D.C.

**Notes:** The Historical Society of Washington, DC’s research library was inaccessible during the course of this project phase; only online records from the library were consulted.

**Prepared by:** History Matters, LLC

**Last Updated:** November 2011
**Victor O. Mindeleff**

**Biographical Data**

Birth: 06/02/1860  Place: London, England  
Death: 03/26/1948  Place: Southern Maryland?  
Family: Married Jessie Louis Randall (1883); two children

**Education**

High School: Emerson Institute (1874-1878)  
College:  
Graduate School:  
Apprenticeship:

**Architectural Practice**

**DC Architects' Registration**  
Registration Number: 7  Date Issued: 9/24/1925

**Permit Database**  
Earliest Permit: 1892  Latest Permit: 1932  Total Permits: 42  Total Buildings: 61

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**Professional Associations**

American Institute of Architects  
Date(s) Enrolled: 1920  Fellow of the AIA: 1926

**Other Societies or Memberships:** President of the Washington chapter of AIA (1925-1926); Member of the AIA Board Examiners; Member of the Contract Commission, the Lien Law Commission, and the Conference on Survey Bonds; Active in the Cosmos Club and the Cathedral Heights Association.

**Awards or Commissions:**

**Buildings**

**Building Types:** Life Saving Stations, Rowhouses, Apartment Houses, Stores, Residences  
**Styles and Forms:** Shingle Style, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival  
**DC Work Locations:** Greater U Street, Mount Pleasant, Strivers’ Section

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<td>GW University President’s Office</td>
<td>2003 G Street</td>
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<td>Chicamacomico Life Saving Station</td>
<td>Rodanthe, N.C.</td>
<td>1911</td>
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Source: Washington Post 02/11/1924
Significance and Contributions

Victor O. Mindeleff was born in London, England, but relocated to Washington, D.C., with his parents, Dimitri and Julia, when he was less than a year old. Mindeleff attended a four year high school program at the Emerson Institute. In 1885, he took a position with the Smithsonian Bureau of Ethnography. While at the Smithsonian, Mindeleff studied the culture of the American Southwest under famous explorer John Wesley Powell as a part of the United States Geological Survey. During his travels, Mindeleff surveyed prehistoric dwellings in New Mexico and Arizona. He later published a book, *The Study of Pueblo Architecture*, and produced models of the dwellings that are now housed at the Smithsonian Institution.

His survey of pueblo dwellings may have led Mindeleff to pursue a career in architecture after leaving the Bureau of Ethnography. He established a private practice in Washington around 1892. Mindeleff’s early work consisted of rowhouses near Dupont Circle and the George Washington University campus, in the northeast quadrant of the city, and in the Petworth neighborhood. In 1897, Mindeleff was selected as an architect for the U.S. Life Saving Service (which later became the Coast Guard). He served in this capacity for approximately 20 years, apparently while still maintaining his private practice in DC. As an architect for the Life Saving Service, Mindeleff typically designed Shingle-style rescue station buildings with prominent lookout towers. Examples of his work are located Maine, North Carolina, Virginia, and Michigan. The Mindeleff-designed Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station in Rodanthe, North Carolina, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Mindeleff may have also designed other government buildings; city directories and the *American Art Annual* list him as an employee of the U.S. Treasury in the early 1900s.

Beginning in the twentieth century, Mindeleff expanded his work in DC to include flats, apartment houses, and stores. He most likely left the Coast Guard around 1920 as it underwent a reorganization and consolidation. Afterwards, he focused primarily on single-family dwellings in the District’s interwar suburban neighborhoods. Designs by Mindeleff typically incorporated elements of the Queen Anne, Shingle Style, and Colonial Revival Styles, resulting in eclectic buildings. In 1927, *Who’s Who in the Nation’s Capital* described his practice as consisting primarily of the design of detached residences with accompanying gardens, including the complete layout of country places, and community planning adjusted to varied topography. Mindeleff credited his horticultural skill to his wife, Jessie Louis Randall, who he married in 1883.

In 1924, Mindeleff was elected as president of the Washington-Metropolitan Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and held the position through 1926. Mindeleff was an artist as well as an architect. He painted in oils and watercolors and occasionally exhibited his work at the Washington Water Color Club, the Society of Washington Architects, and in New York galleries. After retiring from private practice, Mindeleff moved to Southern Maryland where he created lace-like brown ink drawings on cloth and tended his garden. He died on March 26, 1948.
### Sources

**Vertical Files**
- ✔️ AIA Archives
- ❌ DC HPO
- ❌ HSWDC
- ❌ MLK Library

**Other Repositories:**

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<th>Date: May, 1948</th>
<th>Page: 219-220</th>
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**Biographical Directories**

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**Other Sources:**

**Notes:**

Prepared by: EHT Traceries  
Last Updated: October 2010

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Mindeleff, Victor O.  
Page 3 of 3
Louis R. Moss

Biographical Data
Birth: 02/19/1883 Place: Wilson, N.C.
Family: Wife, Wortley Montague Moss; son Howell Moss

Education
High School: Wilson, N.C., High School
College:
Graduate School:
Apprenticeship: Ferguson and Calrow, Norfolk, Va.

Source: Washington Post, 05/01/59, C2

Architectural Practice
DC Architects’ Registration
Registration Number: 95 Date Issued: 10/28/1925

Permit Database
Earliest Permit: 1920 Latest Permit: 1949 Total Permits: 301 Total Buildings: 463

Practice
Cutler & Moss
Individual practice
Position
Partner, architect
Architect
Date
1921-23
1923-52

Professional Associations
American Institute of Architects Date(s) Enrolled: n/a Fellow of the AIA:

Other Societies or Memberships:
Awards or Commissions:

Buildings
Building Types: Row houses, duplexes, apartments, detached residences, commercial arcade.
Styles and Forms: Classical Revival, Colonial Revival
DC Work Locations: Chevy Chase, Barnaby Woods, MacArthur Blvd., Hawthorne neighborhood

Notable Buildings
Location
Date
Status
Chevy Chase Arcade
5522 Connecticut Avenue
3312, 3314, 3434, 3518, 3522, 3526, 3530, 3534, 3538, 3542
Porter St., NW
1925
NRHP DC Historic Site
Cleveland Park Historic District
Barnaby Woods development
Northwest D.C.
1934-38

Shady Brook Development
Conduit Rd. (MacArthur Blvd.)
1939

Yates Gardens development
Alexandria, VA
1940

NRHP DC Historic Site
Significance and Contributions

Louis Rountree Moss was born in Wilson, N.C., on February 19, 1883, and attended both grammar school and high school there. He began studying architecture in 1905 at the International Correspondence School before starting an apprenticeship at the offices of Ferguson and Calrow in Norfolk, Va. After approximately three years with Ferguson and Calrow, Moss declined an offer to be a senior architectural draftsman for the U.S. government. The majority of his time in Norfolk was spent working in the office of John Kevan Peebles, but he did leave Peebles’ office for a time to join the Board of Design for the Jamestown Exposition of 1907, where he gained valuable experience and exposure working with east coast architects of the era. These included James Ritchie of Boston and Otto Faelton (who later designed with James Gamble Rogers and taught at Yale and at the University of Pennsylvania). According to his application for registration as an architect in Washington, D.C., Moss worked in architectural offices in Norfolk from 1910 to 1917, and began practicing as an architect in October of 1913. He designed a shirt factory, an addition to the Freemason Street Baptist Church, and an addition to a bank in Norfolk in 1912, 1914, and 1915, respectively. While it is unclear during which years Moss worked for whom while in Norfolk, he worked both for Peebles and for Benjamin F. Mitchell.

Moss moved to Washington, D.C., between 1917 and 1919 and worked for J.H. Burton & Co., a timber company based in New York, designing portable housing for the United States government at the time of the First World War. He is listed as an architect in the 1920 and 1930 Federal Censuses for the District of Columbia. He practiced with Howard Cutler as Cutler & Moss in Washington, obtaining permits to build more than 20 detached houses in northeast and northwest Washington between 1921 and 1923. In a letter dated September 10, 1925, Moss told the D.C. Board of Examiners and Registrars that he and his partner had won the Scottish Rite Cathedral competition in Washington, competing against “many of the local architects.” Cutler & Moss did not own any of the properties for which they designed, and the firm was not issued any permits after 1923.

In 1925 Moss designed the Chevy Chase Arcade on Connecticut Avenue for developer Edward H. Jones. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2003, the arcade is Moss’ most famous design. The building accommodates commercial space on the first floor and office space on the second, and was intended to serve as a model for further commercial development in the Chevy Chase suburb. The style of the building is Classical Revival, featuring a five-bay front elevation with Doric pilasters and a central arched opening that faces Connecticut Avenue. The front elevation also features large plate glass commercial windows. Inside the two-story arcade, store fronts on each side are separated by black marble pilasters that hold an ornate entablature and cornice. A barrel-vaulted ceiling extends above the clerestory of the second story. The distinctive arcade building type and the high artistic style make this building locally significant.
Moss designed rowhouses, duplexes, apartment buildings, and detached residences from the end of his practice with Cutler in 1923 until the 1940s. The majority of his work consisted of detached houses and rowhouses, which were mainly two story structures in colonial revival styles. These dwellings were located primarily in northwest Washington, D.C. Moss designed several houses in the Cleveland Park Historic District on Porter Street from 1926 to 1928. Between 1930 and 1934 he designed 12 detached houses for W.C. & A.N. Miller scattered in northwest D.C. on Foxhall Road, Fordham Road, Van Ness Street, McKinley Street, and 49th Street. He then designed over 60 detached homes for M.B. Swanson, and thus is responsible for the majority of the dwellings in the Hawthorne neighborhood defined by Beech Street to the south, Western Avenue to the west and north, and 32nd Street to the east. Included in his work in Washington were 25 houses in the Barnaby Woods development, north of Tennyson Street between Rock Creek Park and the Montgomery County line. His designs included frame structures, red brick, masonry, and tile, and often featured a steep front gable. Moss also designed dwellings for Shady Brook, Inc. in the 4800 block of MacArthur Boulevard in 1939.

Late in his career, Moss moved to Alexandria, Va. and appears to have moved his work there as well. In 1941 he became involved in a residential project in Alexandria known as Yates Gardens. He designed a subset of these contiguous homes that were meant to evoke the sense of Alexandria’s colonial past while providing every modern luxury.

Moss married Wortley Montague of Virginia at the age of 22, and the couple had a son, Howell. Moss and his wife and son resided in Washington on 20th Street, N.W., on Eye Street, N.W., and then in Alexandria during the latter part of Moss’ career. He lived and worked on Edsall Road in Alexandria, Va., and died there in 1959 at the age of 76.

**Sources**

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**Obituary:**

Publication: Washington Post  
Date: 05/01/1959  
Page: C2

**Biographical Directories**

- American Architects Directory – not in it
- Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals – not in it
- Dictionary of American Biography – not in it
- Directory of District of Columbia Architects: 1822-1960  
  Year/Volume: 2001  
  Page: 65, 203
- Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects – not in it
- Withey Biographical Dictionary of American Architects – not in it

**Other Sources:**


Moss, Louis R. World War I Draft Registration Card. September 1918.


**Notes:** Permit and Building totals are a combination of listings for “Louis R. Moss” (275 permits, 437 buildings), “L.R. Moss” (4 permits, 4 buildings), and “Cutler & Moss” (22 permits, 22 buildings).

Prepared by: EHT Traceries

Last Updated: October 2010
Alfred Bult Mullett

**Biographical Data**

Birth: 04/11/1834     Place: Taunton, Somerset Co., England
Death: 10/20/1890     Place: Washington, DC
Family: married Pacific Pearl Myrick (1865)

**Education**

High School:
College: Farmers College, Ohio
Graduate School:
Apprenticeship: Isaiah Rogers (Cincinnati, OH)

**Architectural Practice**

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| Permit Database | Earliest Permit: 1884 | Latest Permit: 1892 | Total Permits: 27 | Total Buildings: 32 |

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**Commissions:**

**Professional Associations**

American Institute of Architects

Date(s) Enrolled: Fellow of the AIA:

**Other Societies or Memberships:**

**Awards:**

**Buildings**

**Building Types:** Government Buildings, Offices, Residences, Churches,

**Styles and Forms:** Second Empire, Italianate, Greek Revival

**DC Work Locations:** Downtown, Georgetown

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<td>1317 F Street, NW</td>
<td>1885-87</td>
<td>NRHP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baltimore Sun Building</td>
<td>7th Street and Penn. Ave., NW</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>DC Historic Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central National Bank (add.)</td>
<td>2517-2525 Penn. Ave., NW</td>
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Significance and Contributions

Born in England to parents Augustin Aish and Hannah Bult Mullett in 1834, Alfred Bult Mullett moved with his family to Glendale, now a suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1845. He graduated from nearby Farmers’ College and after returning to Cincinnati from travels in Europe he began his architectural career with the firm of Isaiah Rogers around 1856. Although Mullett began as a draftsman, Rogers quickly made him a partner in the business. In 1861, Mullett left the firm to organize a regiment in support of the Union war effort. Although he was appointed a lieutenant, Mullett was dismissed after the enlistment quota was met. In 1863, after competing for the position of Supervising Architect of the Treasury—Secretary Salmon P. Chase offered Isaiah Rogers appointment instead—Mullett joined the Architect of the Treasury staff. Mullett was initially hired as a clerk, a position that he felt was beneath his standing. By 1863, Rogers appointed Mullett Assistant Supervising Architect of the Treasury. During this period, all federal construction projects were supervised by the Treasury Department. Therefore, the Supervising Architect of the Treasury was charged with overseeing the design of important federal commission across the county. Rogers resigned in 1865, and Mullett was appointed as Supervising Architect, a position he would retain until 1874.

As Supervising Architect, Mullett oversaw federal construction projects worth more than $50 million. Additionally, Mullett exercised his considerable architectural skill to personally design more than 40 buildings that would serve as prototypes for government buildings across the nation. These included the Courthouse and Post Office in Springfield, Illinois (1866-1869); the St. Louis Customhouse (1873-1884), and the San Francisco Mint (1869-1874). These buildings employed a range of styles including Second Empire with Italianate influences and Greek Revival. In Washington, Mullett received accolades for his design of the State, War, and Navy Building (now the Eisenhower Executive Office Building) at 17th and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. Erected between 1871 and 1888 at a cost of $10 million, Mullett executed the building in a Second Empire version of the French Renaissance style. Throughout his career as Supervising Architect, Mullett resisted the popular trend of Gothic-style buildings, which he considered too ecclesiastical for government buildings. Instead, he looked to classical styles for inspiration.

Following a dispute with Treasury Secretary Benjamin H. Bristow, and suffering from mental fatigue, Mullett resigned as Supervising Architect in 1874. He returned briefly to the Treasury Department to oversee certain projects, but clashed with his successors. He did not actively practice for a decade. No building permits list him as architect until 1884 nor was he listed in city directories as an architect. Then, around 1884, he was joined by his sons, Thomas A. and Frederick M. Mullett, and J. F. Denson, formerly of the Supervising Architect’s office, in private practice. A. B. Mullett and Company made many notable contributions to the Washington cityscape including houses, offices, hospitals, and churches. The Sun building, constructed between 1885 and 1887, was one of the company’s early works. Mullett designed the nine-story skyscraper with a tripartite design, one of the first tall buildings in the nation to feature this innovation. A. B. Mullett and Co. would often employ state of the art building technology in its designs. The Sun Building, built to house Baltimore Sun offices, is one of the earliest Washington, D.C., examples of a
new building form, the tall elevator building. It was of fireproof construction, with a skeleton frame and had a passenger elevator.

Mullett constructed his own residence with adjacent rowhouses at 2517-2525 Pennsylvania Avenue in 1889. However, he was unable to sell three of the dwellings, which compounded financial difficulties he incurred stemming from a longstanding dispute with the Treasury over his fees in designing the State, War and Navy Building. Mullett’s wife, Pacific, was also ill. Several of Mullett’s biographers contend that the architect suffered from an undiagnosed mental disorder; although the extent of his illness is unknown, it may have contributed to Mullett’s taking of his own life on October 20, 1890.

**The Sun Building**

1317 F Street, N.W.

*National Register Nomination, 1982*

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Notes:


The permits listed in the permit database include two permits issued after his death and are presumably the work of his firm rather than Mullett’s work: an October 1891 permit for four dwellings and a June 1892 permit for two dwellings.
Frederick Vernon Murphy

Biographical Data
Birth: 2/16/1879       Place: Fond du Lac, Wisconsin
Family: Married Marjorie Cannon 1936, three sons.

Education
High School: Chicago North Division High School, 1897
College: Studied drawing, Chicago Art Institute, 1896-97
Graduate School: Columbian University (now George Washington University), 1899-1901; Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, 1905-1909.

Architectural Practice
DC Architects' Registration
Registration Number: 34       Date Issued: 4/2/1925
Permit Database
Earliest Permit: 1912       Latest Permit: 1949       Total Permits: 102       Total Buildings: 113
Practice                          Position                          Date
Office of Supervising Architect, Treasury Architect 1909-1911
Murphy and Olmsted, Architects Partner/Architect 1911-1937
Frederick V. Murphy Principal 1938-1940
Murphy & Locraft, Architects Partner/Architect 1940-1957
Catholic University Head of School of Architecture, professor 1911-1949

Professional Associations
American Institute of Architects       Date(s) Enrolled: 1920       Fellow of the AIA: 1931


Awards or Commissions: Washington Architectural Club, Travelling Scholarship, 1905; Gold medal for Meritorious Design, Board of Trade, Washington, D.C., 1927; Medal of Société des Architectes Diplômés par le gouvernement Français, 1929; Honorary L.L.D. Canisius College, Buffalo, N.Y., 1927; Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, 1929; Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory, awarded by Pope Pius XI, 1939.

Buildings
Building Types: Religious, educational, military, commercial
Styles and Forms: Classical and exotic revival styles, Romanesque, Collegiate Gothic
DC Work Locations: Catholic University, Northeast and Northwest Washington, D.C.

Notable Buildings

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<td>Mullen Memorial Library</td>
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<td>1929</td>
<td>□ NRHP □ DC Historic Site</td>
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Frederick Vernon Murphy was both an architect and an educator. He was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, in 1879 but spent most of his early years in Chicago where he graduated from public school in 1897. He studied drawing at the Chicago Art Institute and in 1899 accepted a position as draftsman in the Office of the Supervising Architect, U.S. Treasury Department. He worked there for six years and, after being awarded the Washington Architectural Club’s Travelling Scholarship in 1905, Murphy entered the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. He received his diploma in 1909 and returned to the Office of the Supervising Architect. While there he designed the U.S. Barge Office in Dayton, Ohio, and several post offices.

In 1911, Murphy accepted the position of professor of Architecture at Catholic University and also entered into private practice with Walter B. Olmsted, a colleague at the Office of the Supervising Architect. For almost forty years he continued to teach while also maintaining an active private practice specializing in academic and religious buildings.

At Catholic University, Murphy was founding Head of the Department of Architecture. Under Murphy’s leadership both the department and its students won numerous prizes. He retained the position as head until 1938 and continued to teach until 1950. Murphy's proposed design for the University campus was not implemented but his firm, Murphy and Olmsted, designed many of the University's buildings. Two of the firm’s most notable campus buildings are the John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library and the Martin Maloney Chemical Laboratory (now Chemical Library). Other buildings on or near the campus included St. Paul's College (Paulist Fathers Novitiate); Ward Hall, the School of Liturgical Music; the 1913 dining hall and gymnasium; and St. Anselm's Abbey, 14th and D Streets, N.W.

Murphy and Olmsted designed numerous churches constructed in the Washington, D.C., area including the Sacred Heart Church, a District of Columbia Historic Site. According to Murphy’s son, John C. Murphy, the Sacred Heart Church was Murphy's favorite project and he quoted his father's description of it: "The triumphal arch, visible immediately upon passing through the portico, into the interior, enclosing the sanctuary, recalls in scale and grandeur many churches of the early days of Christianity in the City of Rome itself." The Byzantine elements designed to evoke the early days of Church are also found in other churches designed by Murphy and Olmsted. The interior finish of exposed concrete aggregate, created John J. Early, was first used in this church and Early credited his subsequent success to this project. Murphy's churches in other cities include the St. Francis De Sales Church in Buffalo, N.Y., (a Buffalo landmark), Holy Family in Dayton, Ohio, St. Mary’s Church in Mobile, Alabama, and the St. Charles College chapel in Catonsville, Md. Murphy was associate architect on the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Murphy also worked with Allied Architects, Inc., an organization of architects formed during the Depression to work on federal buildings. In that capacity he was involved in the design of the Cannon House Office Building. President Harry Truman appointed Murphy to the Commission of Fine Arts and he served from 1945 to 1950.

All D.C. building permits issued for Murphy’s projects were issued in the name of his firm, Murphy and Olmsted or his subsequent firm, Murphy & Locraft, with the exception of about a dozen buildings in the period, 1937-1940, when his first partnership came to a close because of Olmsted’s illness and death. The Apostolic Delegation (now the Papal Delegation) at 3339 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., is an example of Murphy’s work in this interim period. After Olmsted’s death Murphy formed a partnership with his former student, Thomas H. Locraft, who later also succeeded Murphy as head of his Department of Architecture at Catholic University. They worked together on Murphy’s final major work, the Lorraine American Cemetery and Memorial in St. Avold (Moselle), France. Other commissions included the School of Foreign Service and the Reiss Science Building at Georgetown University, the Schools of Nursing Education and of Social Service at Catholic University, and the John Carroll and Holy Cross High Schools.
## Sources

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<th>MLK Library</th>
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<td>American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, Catholic University of America; Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division</td>
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### Obituary:
- **Publication:** Washington Post
- Washington Star
- **Date:** May 5, 1958
- May 5, 1958
- **Page:** B2

### Biographical Directories

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### Other Sources:
- Murphy, John C. and Michael V. Murphy. "A Preliminary Listing of the Work of the Following Architectural Firms..." (Draft). American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, Catholic University of America

### Notes:
- See also entry for Walter B. Olmsted.
Claude Nelson Norton

Biographical Data
Birth: 11/29/1889  Place: Washington, D.C.
Death: 4/19/1957  Place: Hyattsville, Md.
Family: Married Marie L., 1911; children Granville, Joseph; Elizabeth (Buranich); 2nd wife, Inez R Sweeney; son Claude R.

Education
High School: Public schools, Washington, D.C., 1897-1905
College: George Washington University, 1907
Graduate School:
Apprenticeship: Wyeth & Cresson, 1907-1910, drawing and detailing; B. Stanley Simmons, 1/4" scale plans.

Architectural Practice
DC Architects’ Registration  Registration Number: 132  Date Issued: 5/1/1925, Lapsed 1933, reinstatement denied 1950-1956
Permit Database  Earliest Permit: 1917  Latest Permit: 1946  Total Permits: 224  Total Buildings: 418
Practice  Position  Date
Clarke Waggaman  Design construction and supervision  (no date given)
W. Granville Guss, civil engineer  Draftsman, superintendent of construction  1916-1917
Donn & Deming  Draftsman, supervision, Palmerton, Pa.  (no date given)
Frederick Pyle  Design/drawing for City Club competition  1917-1928, 1939, 1948
Individual practice  Principal  1951-1956
Warren Shoemaker  Architect  

Professional Associations
American Institute of Architects  Date(s) Enrolled: n/a  Fellow of the AIA:
Other Societies or Memberships:  
Awards or Commissions:  

Buildings
Building Types: Detached dwellings, row houses, apartment houses.
Styles and Forms: Colonial revival, classical revival, Craftsman, Art Moderne
DC Work Locations: Kalorama Triangle, Cathedral Heights, Georgetown, Forest Hills, Dupont Circle, Edgewood.

Notable Buildings  Location  Date  Status
Residence  2801 34th Place, N.W.  
Residences  3001, 3005, 3009, 3015 Albemarle St., N.W.  
Apartment house  2010 Kalorama Road, N.W.  
Garage  2329 Champlain St. N.W.  

Source:
Significance and Contributions

Claude Nelson Norton was born and raised in Washington, D.C. He attended local public schools and studied architecture for one year at George Washington University. He then apprenticed for three years, 1907-1910, at the architectural firm, Wyeth & Cresson (Nathan C. Wyeth and William Penn Cresson). Over the next seven years, before establishing his own practice in August 1917, Norton worked briefly for a number of noted Washington, D.C., architects including B. Stanley Simmons, Clarke Waggaman and Donn & Deming. When listing these architects on his 1925 application to register as an architect in the District of Columbia, Norton said that he could not recall the dates he worked for them. From his description of his work for each of these architects it appears that he may have been hired for specific assignments. Although Norton began practicing on his own in 1917, this may not have been full time. In the 1920 census he was described as a draftsman working for wages in an architectural firm.

Throughout his career, almost all the buildings Norton designed were residential. His work includes detached and semi-detached houses, row houses and apartment buildings. His name first appears on permits in 1917 and many of his early dwellings are wood frame colonial revival style detached or semi-detached dwellings in suburban areas of northwest Washington. He also designed some modest brick rowhouses which featured Colonial revival details.

Norton designed his first apartment house in 1921. The Colonial revival style two-story red brick apartment house at 1715 Swann Street, N.W., (1922) is an early example of Norton's apartment design. It was built for the real estate firm Boss & Phelps which commissioned Norton to design several apartment houses and numerous single family dwellings in the early 1920s. Most of Norton's designs were for speculatively built housing. In 1923 Norton designed several large groups of modest rowhouses in northeast Washington for developer Morris Cafritz including 2400-2438 2nd Street in the Edgewood neighborhood.

In the mid 1920s, when housing construction was booming in Washington, D.C., and nationally, many of Norton's commissions were for substantial detached houses in some of the city's more expensive neighborhoods including Cathedral Heights and Forest Hills. The estimated cost of these dwellings ranged as high as $25,000. Designed for a number of different speculative builders, they were predominantly in the popular Colonial Revival style.

In the mid-1920s, Norton also designed several mid-rise apartment houses such as the Colonial Revival style building at 2010 Kalorama Road, N.W. (1924). In the same year he designed a large stone, brick and concrete garage at 2329 Chaplain Street, built at an estimated cost of $70,000, which was one of the buildings he listed as an example of his work at the time he registered as an architect in 1925. Up through 1930 a large proportion of Norton's work was individually designed dwellings for a middle and upper middle class market.

Norton did not list himself as an architect in city directories in the years 1929 through 1938. It is probable that during some of that time he was in the employ of one or another developer. In the early 1930s he worked in some capacity for the Shapiro Construction Company and its affiliated company, Harvard Terrace Development Corporation, on a large development project in Mount Pleasant developing squares along Harvard, Hobart, Irving and Lamont.
Streets and Walbridge Place. George T. Santmyers, Joseph Abel and Norton each designed sections of the project. Norton designed forty dwellings for the development, primarily on Walbridge Terrace with some dwellings on Lamont and Irving Streets. He published a signed promotional article on the development's exhibit house before the ones he designed had been built. The houses, priced between $8,000 and $10,000, were advertised as bargains in economically difficult times and were targeted to a comfortably-off clientele. Norton wrote that the living room was large enough for a piano and the dining room provided room enough for a maid to serve quickly. The basement boasted a large paneled ballroom with flooring suitable for dancing (sometimes referred to in later advertisements as a recreation room). The Shapiro firm claimed that it was the first in Washington, D.C., to make such use of basement space. The ballrooms designed by Norton were described as miniature nightclubs with built-in bar. Although the Walbridge Place rows designed by Norton were advertised as "colonial" they are eclectic in style both inside and out with Craftsman and Tudor elements on the exterior. The living room had either a "Georgian or Tudor type" corner fireplace (to leave more wall space for furniture) and a "Gothic" entrance into the dining room. Modern conveniences included mirrored "Hollywood" bathrooms and a built-in two-car heated garage. The permits were issued in 1932 and the construction was completed in 1933.

In subsequent years, Norton's work output, as measured by D.C. permits, dwindled to almost nothing. In 1933 four permits were issued for single family dwellings he designed for builder Alfred T. Newbold for whom he had designed quite a few dwellings in the 1920s. Between 1934 and 1938 he is named on only three permits. In 1939 he designed one apartment building which, stylistically, is very different from his previous work. The three-story, 43-unit building at 5301 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., has Art Moderne features including an entrance flanked by glass blocks. His next and final work in the D.C. permit database (except for a 1946 permit for three dwellings that were not built) was an apartment building at 4520 MacArthur Boulevard, N.W., minimally ornamented in the Art Moderne style.

Norton's personal life lacked stability and his personal problems contributed to the decline of his practice. In the years that he was listed in city directories as an architect (1918-1928) his business address changed almost every year. In 1927 his wife, mother of three of his children, formally charged him with desertion and neglect. Three years later the 1930 census shows him living with his second wife and their 7-year-old son and they claimed to have been married eight years. In 1933, Norton allowed his architect's registration to lapse. He developed a serious drinking problem and police reports submitted to the Board of Examiners and Registrars of Architects showed that between 1938 and 1950 he was charged with drunkenness 27 times.

In 1950 Norton's second wife died and in that same year Norton sought to have his registration reinstated. However, the Board had been notified by a client that Norton had fraudulently assured her that his plans for remodeling a rental property had been approved by the city's building inspectors when in fact he had erased the changes the inspector had made to the plan. Norton arrived drunk at his subsequent interview with the Board. Over the next six years Norton unsuccessfully challenged the Board's refusal to reinstate his registration. Architect Warren Shoemaker took pity on Norton and hired him at a small salary. Norton greatly reduced his drinking but failed to show up when the Board agreed to reconsider his case in 1954. Finally, in 1956, the Board definitively refused to restore his registration. Norton died the next year.

**Sources**

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Publication: *Washington Post*

Date: 4/21/1957  
Page: A14

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### Other Sources:


Norton, Claude N. "Architect Decides Numerous Details." *Washington Post*, June 12, 1932, R1


Shapiro, J.B. "New Method Used in Selling Homes." *Washington Post*, June 19, 1932, R4


### Notes:

Prepared by: EHT Traceries  
Last Updated: October 2010
# Walter B. Olmsted

## Biographical Data

- **Birth:** 12/21/1871  
  **Place:** Spring Mills, N.Y.
- **Death:** 12/9/1937  
  **Place:** Washington, D.C.
- **Family:** wife, Margaret J., one daughter

## Education

- **High School:**
- **College:** Alfred College, New York, 1885-1889
- **Graduate School:**
- **Apprenticeship:**

Source: *Washington Star, 11 December, 1937*

## Architectural Practice

### DC Architects' Registration
- **Registration Number:** 109  
  **Date Issued:** 1/13/1926

### Permit Database
- **Earliest Permit:** 1908  
  **Latest Permit:** 1937  
  **Total Permits:** 80  
  **Total Buildings:** 82

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## Professional Associations

- **American Institute of Architects**  
  **Date(s) Enrolled:** 1920  
  **Fellow of the AIA:**
- **Other Societies or Memberships:** Washington Architectural Club
- **Awards or Commissions:**

## Buildings

**Building Types:** Religious, educational, military, commercial

**Styles and Forms:** Classical and exotic revival styles, Romanesque, Collegiate Gothic

**DC Work Locations:** Catholic University, Northeast, Northwest

### Notable Buildings

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<th>Notable Buildings</th>
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<td>St. Peter’s School</td>
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<td>Sacred Heart Church</td>
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<td>Martin Maloney Chemical Laboratory (now Library)</td>
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<td>1913</td>
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<td>Velati Mausoleum</td>
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<td>1916</td>
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Significance and Contributions

Walter B. Olmsted was born in Spring Mills, New York. He attended Alfred College in New York state from 1885 to 1889 but did not graduate. As a young man he worked in the Office of the Supervising Architect in the Department of the Treasury. There he met Frederick V. Murphy with whom he shared a drafting table.

In December 1911 Murphy and Olmsted formed a partnership and went into private practice under the name Murphy and Olmsted. They practiced together until Olmsted’s death, after a long illness, in December 1937. Virtually all building permits were signed in the name of the partnership and thus most of the firm’s work cannot be specifically credited to either partner. However, when Olmsted registered as an architect in the District of Columbia, he listed four projects which he had designed and supervised. These were the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (1914); St. Peter’s School, St. Peter’s Parish, Baltimore (1917), the Velati Mausoleum in Rock Creek Cemetery (1916); and the Charles J. Cassidy residence on Michigan Ave., N.E. (1915).

Olmsted’s partner Frederick V. Murphy was the founding head of Department of Architecture at the Catholic University of America. Murphy and Olmsted designed many of the University’s buildings. Two of the firm’s most notable campus buildings are the John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library and the Martin Maloney Chemical Laboratory (now Chemical Library). Other buildings on or near the campus included St. Paul’s College (Paulist Fathers Novitiate); Ward Hall, the School of Liturgical Music; the 1913 dining hall and gymnasium; and St. Anselm’s Abbey, 14th and D Streets, N.W.

Murphy and Olmsted designed numerous churches constructed in the Washington, D.C., area including the Sacred Heart Church which is a District of Columbia Historic Site. The firm’s churches in other cities include the St. Francis De Sales Church in Buffalo, N.Y. (a Buffalo landmark), Holy Family in Dayton, Ohio, St. Mary’s Church in Mobile, Alabama, and the St. Charles College chapel in Catonsville, Md.

| Martin Maloney Chemical Laboratory (now Library) Catholic University of America Washington, D.C., ca. 1930-1934 Historical Society of Washington, D.C., CHS 09875B |

Olmsted, Walter B.
## Sources

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### Other Repositories:
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- **Publication:** *Washington Post*
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- **Date:** 12/11/1937
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### Biographical Directories

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### Other Sources:
- Murphy, John C. and Michael V. Murphy. "A Preliminary Listing of the Work of the Following Architectural Firms..." (Draft). American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, Catholic University of America

### Notes:
- See also entry for Frederick V. Murphy.

### Prepared by: EHT Traceries

**Last Updated: October 2010**