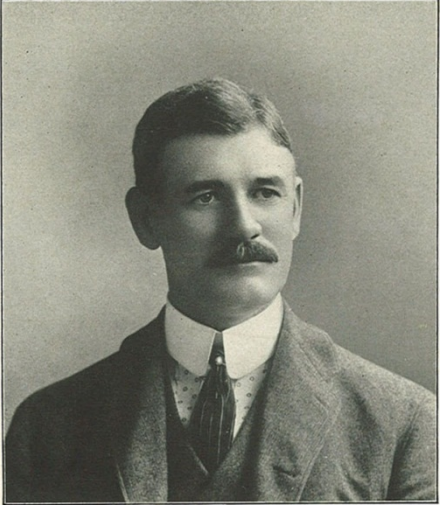


John H. Nolan		 <p><i>Source: A history of the city of Washington, Its Men and Institutions, 1903</i></p>		
Biographical Data				
Birth: 5/?/1861	Place: Washington, D.C.			
Death: 2/17/1924	Place: Washington, D.C.			
Family: father, James F. Nolan; first wife, Miss Williams (first name not known); second wife, Lida Anderson Nolan; sons, James and Charles M. Nolan; daughters, Helen R. and Bessie Nolan				
Education				
High School: St. John's College, Washington, D.C.	College: n/a			
Graduate School: n/a				
Career				
Permit Database (through 1958)				
As Builder	Earliest Permit: 1891	Latest Permit: 1916	Total Permits: 93	Total Buildings: 258
As Owner	Earliest Permit: 1893	Latest Permit: 1913	Total Permits: 19	Total Buildings: 72
*Note: In many instances, the subject is both the builder and owner. The permit counts also include permits issues to the individual and any company with which he was affiliated.				
Practice	Position	Date		
Robert I. Fleming	Apprentice	c.1880-1891		
Private Practice	Builder	1891-1922		
John H. Nolan Construction Company	Trustee	1913-c.1919		
Professional Associations				
Societies or Memberships: St. Matthews Church Choir				
Awards or Commissions:				
Buildings				
Building Types: Row houses, apartment buildings, office buildings				
Styles and Forms: Late Victorian, Beaux Arts				
DC Work Locations: Adams Morgan, Mount Pleasant, Columbia Heights, U Street, Trinidad, Capitol Hill				
Notable Buildings	Location	Date	Status	
Luzon (Westover) Apt. Building	2501 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.	1896	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NRHP <input type="checkbox"/> DC Historic Site	
Westover (The Balfour)	2000 16 th Street, N.W.	1900	Sixteenth Street Historic District	
Bond Building	1404 New York Avenue, N.W.	1900	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NRHP <input type="checkbox"/> DC Historic Site	
Gladstone and Hawarden Apartment Buildings	1419 and 1423 R Street, N.W.	1901	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NRHP <input type="checkbox"/> DC Historic Site	

Significance and Contributions

John H. Nolan was a distinguished builder in Washington D.C. whose work in the city during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries ranged from row house to commercial construction. Following in his father's footsteps, Nolan began forging his career in the building industry around 1880 as an apprentice under local master-builder, Robert I. Fleming (1842-1907, see Builders Directory entry). Nolan's exposure to the trade at an early age paired with his work under Fleming equipped the young builder with the necessary training to start his own company as a contract builder in 1891. Nolan's career as a builder in the District spanned from the 1890s to 1916 and today, his buildings stand in some of the city's finest historic districts including Dupont Circle, Capitol Hill, and Mount Pleasant. His most notable works include the Luzon (Westover) Apartment Building (2501 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.), the Bond Building (1404 New York Avenue, N.W.), the Gladstone and Hawarden Apartment Buildings (1419 and 1423 R Street, N.W.), and a series of row houses on the 1900 block of S Street, N.W. and 1400 block of U Street, N.W.

John H. Nolan was born in Washington, D.C. in 1861 to John and Mary Nolan, both of his parents were immigrants from Ireland. Nolan's father worked in the construction business and at an early age Nolan was exposed to the intricacies of the trade. Primed to enter the building industry after attending St. John's College, Nolan began an apprenticeship in the office of Robert I. Fleming, a prominent builder in the District. While working under Fleming, Nolan was exposed to all aspects of the trade including craftsmanship and financial operations. Nolan continued to work for Fleming for several years until 1891 when he decided to start his own building company. In the midst of developing his career as a



The Luzon (Westover) Circa 1915

builder, Nolan married Miss Williams in 1885. His first wife died shortly after their marriage and according to 1900 census records, Nolan lived with his four children, James, Helen R., Bessie, and Charles M., at 1829 8th Street, N.W. Soon after the death of his first wife, Nolan remarried Lida Anderson in 1901.

Nolan experienced rapid success after going into business for himself in the 1890s. The first D.C. building permit on which Nolan is listed as the builder, was filed in 1891 and called for the construction of a two-story brick building located at 616 A Street, S.E. This row house located in the Capitol Hill area was designed by local architect Franklin T. Schneider (1859-1938, see Architects Directory entry). Nolan contracted with several other prominent architects in Washington over the course of his career including Nicholas T. Haller (1850-1917, see Architects Directory entry), George S. Cooper (1864-1929, see Architects Directory entry), and Wood, Donn and Deming (see Architects Directory entries). Nolan worked with Haller again in 1896 on the Luzon (Westover) Apartment Building located at the northwest corner of 25th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.). This apartment building was the first of several prominent apartment buildings constructed by the emerging builder.

During the early years of his career as an independent builder, Nolan's work comprised of mostly contracted residential structures. By the late-1890s, Nolan expanded his practice and partook in speculative development in D.C. and by the turn of the century, Nolan worked equally on contracted projects and speculative undertakings. The first notable example of Nolan's speculative work is considered to be a six-story apartment building located at 2000 16th Street, N.W., constructed in 1900. Designed by George S. Cooper, the Balfour, was lauded in the *History of the City of Washington: It's Men and Institutions* of 1903 as "the handsomest apartment house in Washington." Nolan partnered again with Cooper on an office building for Charles H. Bond & John C. Davidson in 1900. Known as the Bond Building (712 14th Street, N.W.), this seven-story office building located just east of the White House, was constructed for an estimated cost of \$200,000.

DC Builders & Developers Directory

Following the completion of the Bond Building, Nolan's reputation as a builder greatly increased. Credited with on-time and quality construction, Nolan was contracted to construct several large-scale buildings including the following apartment and office buildings: the Davidson Building (formerly Nolan's office, 1899, 1413 G Street, N.W.), the Gladstone and Hawarden (1901, 1419 and 1423 R Street, N.W.), the Belmont (1904, 1821 Belmont Road, N.W.), and Airy View Apartments (1910, 2415 20th Street, N.W.). While Nolan's list of work included several large-scale projects, throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, Nolan also constructed several row houses and upscale dwellings in neighborhoods in the northwest and northeast quadrants. These dwellings included a series of row houses along the 1900 block of S Street, N.W. and the 1100 block of Staples Street, N.E.



The Balfour, 2000 16th Street, NW, Photo by EHT Tracerics, August 2012

In 1913 following a series of successful construction projects, Nolan filed for bankruptcy after amassing \$380,000 worth of debt through real estate transactions. One year prior to filing for bankruptcy, Nolan invested heavily in the Columbia Heights neighborhood and constructed several row houses along the 1100 block of Columbia Road, N.W. Primed to start a new business with a clean slate, one month after claiming bankruptcy Nolan became a trustee of John H. Nolan Construction Company along with four other investors. Between 1914 and 1916, under his newly formed construction company, Nolan was listed on four building permits in D.C. These projects were some of Nolan's last projects in the city and consisted largely of residential structures in the Adams Morgan and Kalorama neighborhoods, including a three-story row house at 1918 S Street, N.W. (1915).

Nolan's work in D.C. came to a standstill around 1916; however he continued to work as a builder outside the city in Maryland in areas such as Forest Glen and Indian Head. Nolan died on February 17, 1924 in Walter Reed Hospital. According to his obituary published in the *Washington Post*, Nolan was taken to Walter Reed on a special order given by then Secretary of War, John Weeks. Referred to in the *Washington Post* as one of the District's "best known constructors of modern buildings," Nolan consistently provided the city with high-quality and prominent structures for over twenty-five years. Nolan's legacy remains in several neighborhoods throughout the city including: the downtown area, Adams Morgan, Mount Pleasant, U Street, Trinidad, and Capitol Hill.

Sources		
Vertical Files	<input type="checkbox"/> AIA Archives	<input type="checkbox"/> DC HPO
	<input type="checkbox"/> HSWDC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MLK Library
Other Repositories: DC Building Permits Database, Ancestry.com, National Archives		
Obituary:	Publication: <i>Washington Post</i>	Date: February 19, 1924 Page: 5
Biographical Directories	Year/Volume	Page
<input type="checkbox"/> Who's Who in the Nation's Capital		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History of the City of Washington: It's Men and Institutions	1903	315-16
<input type="checkbox"/> Washington Past and Present		
<input type="checkbox"/> Prominent Personages of the Nation's Capital		

DC Builders & Developers Directory

Other Sources:

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*The Bond Building at 14th Street and New York Avenue, NW.
Undated photo from the National Photo Co. via Streets of Washington blog.*