

Harry Wardman		 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Source: Washington Post, February 16, 1969</i></p>		
Biographical Data				
Birth: 4/11/1872	Place: Bradford, England			
Death: 3/18/1938	Place: Washington, D.C.			
Family: Eli and Alice Wardman, parents; Mary Hudson, first wife; Alice Rheem, daughter, Lillian Glascock, second wife; Helen Naselli, daughter				
Education				
High School: unknown				
College: n/a				
Graduate School: n/a				
Career				
Permit Database (through 1958)				
As Builder	Earliest Permit: 1898	Latest Permit: 1927	Total Permits: 467	Total Buildings: 2844
As Owner	Earliest Permit: 1899	Latest Permit: 1929	Total Permits: 509	Total Buildings: 2925
*Note: In many instances, the subject is both the builder and owner. The permit counts also include permits issued to the individual and any company with which he was affiliated.				
*As a part of nineteenth century building regulations, building permits were required for the first time in 1872 and were often not archived until 1877.				
Practice	Position	Date		
Wardman Realty and Construction Company	President	1890-1935		
Professional Associations				
Societies or Memberships: Washington Rotary Club, Racquet Club, Washington Board of Trade, Columbia Historical Society, and Washington Real Estate Board				
Awards or Commissions:				
Buildings				
Building Types: Row houses, row house flats, detached houses, apartment houses, hotels, showrooms, banks, clubs, embassies, garages				
Styles and Forms: Queen Anne, Georgian, Italian Renaissance, Beaux Arts				
DC Work Locations: Barney Circle, Bloomingdale, Brightwood, Brookland, Dupont Circle, Eckington, Lanier Heights, Petworth, Washington Heights, Woodley Park				
Notable Buildings	Location	Date	Status	
Dresden Apartments	2126 Connecticut Ave., N.W.	1909	Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District	
Northumberland	2039 New Hampshire Ave., NW	1909	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NRHP <input type="checkbox"/> DC Historic Site	
Wardman Row	1416-1440 R Street, NW	1911-1912	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NRHP <input type="checkbox"/> DC Historic Site	
Wardman Park Annex and Arcade	2600 Woodley Rd., NW	1928	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NRHP <input type="checkbox"/> DC Historic Site	

Significance and Contributions

With over four thousand structures attributed to his name, Harry Wardman is considered to be one of Washington D.C.'s most prolific developers of the early twentieth century. Wardman grew from an apprenticed carpenter in Philadelphia in the 1890s to a millionaire builder and developer in Washington by the 1920s. According to an article published in the *Washington Post* in 1969, by the time of Wardman's death in 1938, every tenth resident in the District resided in a structure he had constructed. Wardman's illustrious career in Washington began in the 1890s when he moved to the city with his first wife, Mary Hudson. Working alongside several prominent local architects, including Nicholas R. Grimm (1863-1931), Albert H. Beers (1859-1911), Frank R. White (1899-1961), and Mihran Mesrobian (1889-1975), Wardman constructed a range of building types throughout the city including row houses and luxury apartments.

A native of Bradford, England, Wardman held several occupations before coming to Washington and finding his niche in the building industry. The son of Eli and Alice Wardman, Harry Wardman grew up watching his parents operate a dry goods store in Bradford. At a young age, Wardman held his first job in Bradford as a textile factory worker where he was first exposed to mass production methods. Without a definite plan or much money to his name, Wardman left his job at the factory and his home at the age of seventeen with the intention of moving to Australia. According to Wardman, when he arrived in Liverpool he was informed that the next boat leaving for Australia would not arrive until the following month and as a result he decided to take the next boat leaving for America instead. After landing in New York in 1889 with only \$2.75, Wardman found a job at a department store as a salesman.

Soon after landing in New York, Wardman ventured to Philadelphia where he was offered a job at Wanamaker's Department Store selling clothing and he also sold industrial insurance policies part-time. Wardman worked as a salesman until he ran into a former classmate from Bradford who introduced him to his father who was a carpenter in the city. Soon after the introduction, Wardman became a carpenter's apprentice and was provided room and board with the position. Wardman quickly took to the trade and noting the ease with which Wardman managed and executed tasks on site, his employer made him a foreman for a residential development project in the city. The apprenticeship in Philadelphia boosted Wardman's early career as a builder and he sought to practice his newly mastered trade in Washington, D.C. where building prospects were on the rise. Prior to moving to D.C., Wardman met Mary Hudson, a native of Bradford who also resided in Philadelphia. According to Philadelphia marriage index records, Wardman and Hudson married in 1895.

Contemporary sources on Wardman differ on the exact year he arrived in Washington D.C.; however, according to city directories, Wardman is listed as carpenter in Washington as early as 1892-93 living at 505 L Street, N.W. That same year, Wardman is also listed at 1237 G Street, NW in the business listings under "Carpenters and Builders." An article in the *Washington Times* from 1921 states that Wardman worked as a carpenter for several years in Washington and was known amongst builders as a good "trimmer out." The article goes on to state that around 1898 Wardman began building independently, "buying with his savings one lot and making a building loan to put up a house" then he would sell the property. Wardman's speculative development practices began in the late 1890s and continued throughout the 1920s.

The earliest known building permit with Wardman listed as the builder was recorded in 1898. Under this permit, Wardman teamed with local architect Nicholas R. Grimm (see Architects Directory entry) to construct a two-story private stable at 1310 N Street, NW (no longer extant) for the Japanese Legation. After this project, Grimm became Wardman's chief architect in 1899. The pair worked together on hundreds of residential structures, including apartment buildings, and row houses, for roughly six years until 1905. Throughout much of his career, Wardman worked closely with several prominent architects in Washington. Wardman's consistent employment of local architects was rare for a speculative builder during the late 1890s to early 1900s, attesting to both his dedication to quality design and the rise of corporate architects.

According to city directory listings, by 1900, Wardman lived at 201 Morgan Street, NW and was still listed as a carpenter. Wardman formed a favorable reputation for himself in Washington as he continued to work for himself as a carpenter and for others on high-profile projects in the city, such as the Willard Hotel (1401 Pennsylvania Avenue,

NW). Wardman and his wife inevitably settled in the Brookland neighborhood and during this time his daughter Alice was born. With his professional career on the rise, Wardman's personal life took a tragic turn when his wife Mary died in 1900. Now raising and supporting his daughter alone, Wardman took on new work at a rapid pace. Several accounts say that Wardman rode to and from various construction sites on his bicycle with his tool box attached to his handle bars.

In 1902 Wardman was contracted to construct a three-story house for local tailor and businessman Henry G. Bergling located at 1219 6th Street, N.W. (no longer extant). Impressed by Wardman's work, Bergling recommended the builder for other construction jobs and helped Wardman obtain financing through the Home Savings Bank. Bergling's recommendations and financial backing helped to launch Wardman into some of the most successful years of his practice. By the early 1900s, Wardman capitalized on the influx of government workers flocking to Washington and the new streetcar lines in the city and rapidly constructed buildings in areas north of Florida Avenue, N.W. including the Brightwood neighborhood. In 1901 the Washington Sanitary Improvement Company, a housing organization, hired Wardman to construct thirty-six two-story low-income properties in the Eckington neighborhood. Following this contract, Wardman's business flourished.

Throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, Wardman continued to develop an astounding number of row houses across the city in neighborhoods including Bloomingdale, Petworth, and Columbia Heights. In order to meet demands, keep prices low for buyers, and turn a profit, Wardman implemented, what some later referred to as, the "Wardman formula" when selling these properties. This formula determined the sale price of the house and was based on the construction cost plus ten percent of the total cost. With this method, Wardman was able to satisfy the market demands and as a result his profits soared and his success captured the attention of new potential investors. Wardman's row houses were typically two- to three-story brick buildings and many were considered to be "front-porch row houses." Wardman's front-porch row houses remain extant throughout the city today including a row located in the Adams Morgan neighborhood at 2429-2437 Ontario Road, N.W. (1913). In a continued effort to meet housing demands and maintain low costs, Wardman also pioneered a style of row houses that divided the structure into two identical apartment units within one row house. Referred to as "row house flats," this style of row house construction did not catch on in D.C., however examples of Wardman's row house flats remain in the Bloomingdale area.

In addition to row house construction, Wardman also focused on apartment building and hotel construction. Wardman's early apartments were modest in size, however, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, Wardman's apartments shifted to a grander style intended for more affluent residents. Wardman's most notable examples of apartment buildings include the Northumberland (1909, 2039 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.) and the Dresden (1909, 2126 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.) in Dupont Circle, and the Brighton (1909, 2123 California Street, N.W.) in Kalorama Heights. Each of these examples was designed by Albert H. Beers, a prominent local architect who worked for Wardman between 1905 and 1911.



The Dresden, 2126 Connecticut, Ave.

Towards the end of the 1910s, Wardman was a man of great wealth as a result of his steady work and increasingly large ventures. In 1909 Wardman married his second wife Lillian Glascock from Asheville, North Carolina. One year later, the couple had their first and only child together, Helen. Despite wanting to return to England, Wardman had a mansion constructed for him and his family at the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Woodley Road, N.W. (no longer extant). In 1916 Wardman's first daughter, Alice, married Edmund Rheem, a director of the mortgage