

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
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27

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Strong, Hattie M., Residence Hall

other names/site number The George Washington University Women's Dorm

2. Location

street & number 620 21st Street, N.W.

not for publication N/A

city, town Washington

vicinity N/A

state District of Columbia code DC county District of Columbia code 001 zip code 20052

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
1	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Carol B. Thompson
Signature of certifying official SHPO

9/6/90
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.

Patrick W. Anderson

4/12/91

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
EDUCATION/Education-related housing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
EDUCATION/Education-related housing

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
foundation Brick
walls Brick
Limestone
roof Tin
other Wood
Iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Hattie M. Strong Hall for Women stands at 620 21st Street, N.W., on the southwest corner of 21st and G streets, N.W. Fronting on 21st Street, this Georgian Revival red brick building is six stories high and measures 128 feet wide and 38 feet deep. It was the first building constructed by the University outside Square 102, the city block bounded by 20th, 21st, G and H streets, N.W. The center section of the building, which rises an additional story above the side sections, is flanked by a stylized brick pergola. This prominent roof feature frames the seven-story center section of the building and visually anchors the center shaft to the roof of the six story mass.

The windows are symmetrically arranged on the building's smooth facades. The concrete belt courses between the first and second floors and the fifth and sixth floors provide strong horizontal breaks to the vertical movement of the building. The banded brickwork at the first floor level provides a strong base for the building.

The main entrance of Strong Hall is on 21st Street. It is elaborately treated with Classically inspired concrete pilasters and entablature. The corresponding window at the second floor is similarly treated with a concrete surround and pediment.

The regularly spaced windows have eight-over-eight light double hung sashes. They rest on concrete sills and are topped by splayed brick arches. Round arched windows at the seventh floor of the center mass are adorned with iron balconets. A denticulated cornice projects slightly above the sixth floor and breaks as it reaches the additional floor of the center section. A simple cornice adorns the seventh floor.

The pergola is a highly unusual feature for this type of building. It is formed of stylized brick piers with simple metal railings which span the openings between the piers. Standing in pairs or grouped in threes at the corners of the building. These piers form an unusual roofline that is one of the most prominent features of The George Washington University campus.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION

Period of Significance
circa 1934-40

Significant Dates
1934

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Architect: Trowbridge, A. & Faulkner,
Builder: Tompkins, Charles

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The George Washington University, by virtue of its academic ranking and its physical presence, stands as a significant institution in the District of Columbia. The history and development of the school, from its beginnings in the early-nineteenth century to its current status as a major urban university, is inextricably linked to the history and development of Washington as the nation's capital. A number of the University's buildings are especially noteworthy, either for their architectural excellence or as significant elements in the University's history. Hattie M. Strong Residence Hall at 620 21st Street, N.W., stands as an architecturally interesting structure that marked a significant point on the development of the University.

The Georgian Revival structure was constructed in 1934 to the designs of A.B. Trowbridge and Waldron Faulkner. Strong Hall was built to meet a growing demand for residential facilities and it was the first dormitory for women on the campus. Funds for the building were donated by Mrs. Henry Alvah Strong, a philanthropist and great benefactor of the University. It marked a deviation from the University's building vocabulary of the period and the last time Georgian Revival style was used on the campus.

As a handsome representation of red brick Georgian Revival residential collegiate architecture, Strong Hall embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a building type that, through its association with The George Washington University, has been significant to the development of Washington (Criteria C). It is a notable work of the firm of Trowbridge and Faulkner, architects who influenced the development of the architectural heritage of the National Capital (Criteria C). Strong Hall also marked an important period in the development of the University and should be cited for its association with an institution that contributed significantly to the development of the national capital (Criteria A). Furthermore, the building possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Application for Permit to Build, District of Columbia, No. 18823 (January 12, 1936). Located in Microfilm Room of the National Archives, Record Group 66, Washington, D.C.

Application to the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board for Designation of the George Washington University Campus Historic District. Prepared for the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A by Emily Eig, Traceries, Inc., Washington, D.C., December 12, 1984.

Application to the Joint Committee on Landmarks of the National Capital for Designation of Hattie M. Strong Residence Hall as a Historic Landmark. Submitted by The George Washington University & Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A, April, 1987.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 0.2 acre

UTM References

A

Zone Easting Northing

C

B

Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

In Square 80, portion of Lot 54 (portion of former lots 818, 819 and 19), with frontage of 128.71 feet along 21st Street, N.W., by 62.77 feet along G Street, N.W., as indicated on the supplemental map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes that portion of lot 54 in Square 80 that has been associated historically with the building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne H. Adams/ Architectural Historian

organization Wilkes, Artis, Hedrick & Lane, Ctd. date September, 1989

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 27 1981

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Strong Hall
Washington, D.C.

Section number 7 Page 2

With some exceptions, the interior of Strong Hall is virtually intact, providing a good illustration of the dormitory plan and the application of Colonial Revival design during the 1930's. The large rectangular building is bisected by central halls running both parallel and perpendicular to the street. Student rooms line either side of the longer hall on floors 2 through 6. An informal lounge is located at the center of the seventh floor, with roof terraces to either side. The first floor consists of an entrance foyer and reception hall, offices, study rooms, and a formal lounge. The Colonial Revival finishes are most evident in these rooms. Denticulated cornice molding, chair rails with wave motifs, panelled doors, as well as the Georgian Revival fireplace mantel in the formal lounge create an elegant atmosphere and reflect the penchant for Colonial Revival architecture during the interwar period.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 14 1990

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Strong Hall
Washington, D.C.

Section number 8 Page 2

History of the University

The George Washington University began in 1821 as the Columbian College under a charter granted by President Monroe. The small school was located near Florida Avenue and Sixteenth Street in northwest Washington. By 1870, it had grown to include a medical school and law school. At the urging of William Corcoran, a noted philanthropist and Columbian College trustee, the school was renamed the Columbian University in 1873, and shortly thereafter it relocated to the city's financial district on H Street, between 13th and 15th streets, N.W.

It was not until 1905 that the University adopted the name of our nation's first president. In 1904, the George Washington Memorial Foundation chose Columbian University to fulfill the president's dreams for a national university, and the following year the school was renamed The George Washington University.

Operating now as a national university, the school grew ambitious and began its search for a location which would allow for a spacious, self-contained campus environment. The reality of the cost for such a plan, however, almost destroyed the university. In 1912, faced with serious financial troubles, the University was forced to reorganize and relocate to inexpensive rental property at 2023 G Street, N.W. From this modest new beginning, the school took hold in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood and developed into a leading university.

The history of The George Washington University can be traced through four major periods of development: the Needham years, the Harris Plan, the Marvin era, and the Elliott years.

Charles Needham was president of the University from 1902 through 1912, and was instrumental in transforming the school into a national university. His optimism and visions for the school outpaced financial realities, however, and his quest for a formal campus setting ultimately crippled the school.

Upon assuming the presidency in 1902, Needham set out to elevate the university to national standing. Universities around the country were designing, redesigning and relocating their campuses to meet the challenges of a new twentieth century aesthetic, and Needham was determined to make his university a part of this movement. By 1904, the school had been selected as the university to fulfill George Washington's dream for a major academic center in the District of Columbia, and Needham developed plans to correspond to this new function. A site was selected at Van Ness Park, and an architectural competition was held for the new campus design. Percy Ash, the school's professor of architecture, invited six architectural firms to submit plans

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 14 1990

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStrong Hall
Washington, D.C.Section number 8 Page 3

proposing a general scheme for the site and specific designs for a memorial building. With the help of Charles Mikimo, Chairman of the Park Commission, and Bernard Green, Superintendent of the Library of Congress, Ash selected George B. Post and Son of New York for their classically inspired design based on the teachings of the Ecole des Beaux Arts. The five-acre site, however, proved too small for the needs of the University and a new search was launched for a more appropriate location.

This change, however, which would require an additional \$2,500,000, caused several of the earlier funding pledges for the Van Ness site to be voided and thus marked the beginning of the school's financial crises. Bank notes became due on the Van Ness property, refinancing demanded more capital, and operating expenses were used to cover the mounting debts. Compounded by the economic panic of 1907, the school found itself unable to pay its professors and on the verge of bankruptcy.

Drastic measures were needed to save the University from financial ruin. In 1908, Needham was swiftly replaced by Admiral Charles Herbert Stockton. After a long distinguished naval career, Stockton was called upon to exercise his strict discipline on the failing school. Costs were cut, realistic goals identified, and finally relocation achieved. In 1912, the school moved to its present Foggy Bottom location and purchased its first building at that site, the former St. Rose's Industrial School.

This step marked the beginning of a new era for the school. With its financial situation now stabilized, and adequate space secured, the school could now concentrate on developing an appropriate campus. Through the influence of a newly elected trustee, Maxwell Woodhull, a neighbor to the school, the Board of Trustees was encouraged to expand its campus at the Foggy Bottom location. The once fashionable neighborhood was in transition, and the lowering real estate prices gave the school the opportunity to acquire the property needed for a formal campus plan.

Between 1910 and 1920, and under the leadership of Stockton, Woodhull and William Collier, president between 1918 to 1921, the University gradually acquired numerous lots in the south portion of Square 102, the city block bounded by 20th, 21st, G and H streets, N.W. In 1921, Woodhull bequeathed his house at the corner of 21st and G streets to the school, further establishing the University's stronghold in that block.

Post-World War I activity increased enrollment at the University and placed further space demands on the school. Washington developer and University trustee Harry Wardman encouraged the Board to purchase a building at 14th and K

SEP 14 1990

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStrong Hall
Washington, D.C.Section number 8 Page 4

streets for the law school, but after some deliberation, the Board reaffirmed its commitment to Square 102, and acquired the building strictly for investment purposes. It was now official: The George Washington University would permanently develop its campus at Square 102 in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood of Washington.

Howard Lincoln Hodgkins became president pro tempore in 1921, and immediately set out to develop the formal campus that had been the dream of the school for so many years. In 1922, Hodgkins proposed the purchase of 2014 H Street, the renovation of the G Street buildings, and finally the development of Square 102 into a formal campus. The plans were presented by Albert Harris, a professor of architecture at the University and the District of Columbia's newly-appointed Municipal Architect.

William Mather Lewis was elected as the permanent president of the University in 1923, and under his direction the Harris Plan was begun. By 1925, two of the eight proposed buildings of the Harris Plan were completed. Corcoran Hall, begun in 1923, was located at the western edge of Square 102 and Stockton Hall, completed in 1926, was located across the quadrangle at the eastern terminus of the cross-axial plan.

As the campus was finally taking shape, problems arose concerning the future of the medical school. Talk of mergers with other area health programs not only cast doubts on continuation of the medical and nursing schools, but also halted progress on the development of the other branches of the school. It was not until 1927 that the issue was resolved and that plans for the quadrangle could be resumed.

That same year, however, a new president was appointed to the University. President Cloyd Heck Marvin rejected the principals of the Harris Plan and set out to develop a new image for the University. Marvin approached the University in a completely different manner than his predecessors, bringing a new direction and philosophy to the school. One of his primary objectives was to enhance the image of the University by improving its physical environment and expanding the campus. The Harris Plan was rejected, and Marvin embarked on a new campaign which stressed his belief in functional architecture. Between 1928 and 1934, the school acquired nineteen additional properties in the areas surrounding Square 102, and several new buildings were erected that set a new style for the school grounds.

The Georgian Revival style that was employed in the quadrangle was abandoned for a more direct and modern architecture. Stuart and Bell Halls were constructed on either side of Lisner Hall and displayed a simple rectangular

SEP 14 1999

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStrong Hall
Washington, D.C.Section number 8 Page 5

massing of red brick. Although they were not intended as permanent additions to the campus, the buildings nevertheless conveyed Marvin's approach and feeling toward the campus were later adopted as the new architectural style for the school.

Marvin turned back to the Georgian Revival style only once before his functional architecture became the sole design formula for campus buildings. The Hattie M. Strong Residence Hall for Women, begun in 1934, was designed in the Georgian Revival style because that style was commonly associated with houses and thus deemed appropriate for a women's dormitory. Strong Hall was the last building to use this style, however, and Marvin quickly returned to modern designs with abstracted ornamentation.

The principle architect hired by Marvin for these new buildings was Waldron Faulkner. Although Faulkner used the Georgian Revival style on Strong Hall, he seemed more comfortable with the designs he produced for Lisner Hall, the School of Government building and Lisner Auditorium. These buildings were presented in modern formulas where the geometrical massing, form, and line are the essence of the buildings.

The school's commitment to Waldron Faulkner as the campus architect reflects the school's growing financial resources and desire to establish a sophisticated presence in the community. His ideas coincided with Marvin's principles, and together they created an identifiable image for the George Washington University.

In more recent years, the campus continued to grow under the leadership of President Lloyd H. Elliott. Elected as president in 1965, Elliott strengthened the school's position among institutions of higher learning by expanding the school's research capabilities and academic programs. He orchestrated the construction of an additional 3.7 million square feet of space for the campus, including a medical school, student center, athletic center, academic building and support facilities. Additionally, activity continued to focus on Square 102 in realization of the Heaton and Harris design for a formal campus. The Jacob Burns Law Library, designed by Mills, Petticord and Mills, was constructed in 1970, and the law school complex, designed by Keyes, Condon and Florance, was completed in 1984. The quadrangle itself recently underwent renovation to provide a well-landscaped central focus to the campus continuing the Marvin philosophy of providing a cohesive quality to the University.

The Hattie M. Strong Hall is an important component of the campus environment. It stands as the first dormitory constructed for women, demonstrating the school's commitment to its female enrollment. The building is

SEP 14 1990

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStrong Hall
Washington, D.C.Section number 8 Page 6

an architecturally pleasing execution of the Georgian Revival style and gains added importance as the last building to display this style.

The Strong Residential Hall for Women was begun in 1934 through a \$200,000 donation from Hattie M. Strong, a Washington resident and later a Trustee for The George Washington University. Strong's philanthropic tendencies were first felt by the University when she established a financial assistance program for needy students. Her donation in 1934 for a women's dormitory helped realize the vision of then President Marvin for a residential campus.

Construction on the building was completed in 1936 by builder Charles Tompkins. Designed by Alexander Trowbridge and Waldron Faulkner, Strong Hall continued the Georgian Revival style of Corcoran and Stockton Halls, providing a visual unity to the campus buildings. Faulkner was later responsible for two other George Washington University buildings, Lisner Hall and Lisner Auditorium. Additionally, he designed numerous other institutional buildings including Vassar College Infirmary, District of Columbia Morgue, Suburban Hospital in Bethesda, the Salvation Army Building, as well as buildings for such prestigious local preparatory schools as St. Alban's School, The Madiera School, Potomac School, Holton Arms School, Mt. Vernon Seminary and others.

Faulkner (1898-1978), Paris-born and Yale University-trained, was a principal in a successful architectural practice from 1927 to 1968. His firm began in 1927 as a joint New York City-Washington, D.C. office. Although it maintained its New York address until 1939,¹ the primary influence of the practice was in the national capital and its suburbs, where Faulkner's office (under its several names) erected numerous hospitals, educational structures, office and commercial buildings, and single-family houses.

Faulkner's impact on mid-twentieth century Washington, D.C., was significant. It is fair to say that through family background and education, as well by marriage to the daughter of the Chicago patron of modern architecture, Avery Coonly, Faulkner was connected to, and aided in his career by, people of considerable wealth and influence. Among the works of the firm are the Washington residence of Mr. and Mrs. L.C. Strong (1932); the campus and original twelve buildings of the Madeira School in Virginia (1936); the Lisner Home for Aged Women (1940); the Potomac River Lodge of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Meyer (near Greenway, Virginia); Suburban Hospital (1943) and St. John's Episcopal Church (1948) in Bethesda, Maryland; the Massachusetts Avenue headquarters of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1956); the Washington Evening Star Newspaper plant and offices (1958); the American Chemical Society building (1959); and the Brookings Institution (1960) in Washington, D.C.; St. Agnes Hospital in Baltimore (1962); and Silver Spring's Holy Cross Hospital

SEP 14 1966

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStrong Hall
Washington, D.C.Section number 8 Page 7

(1963). In the mid-1930's and early 1940's, Waldron Faulkner was effectively the campus architect for George Washington University. He was named official campus architect for Vassar College in February 1938,² and he designed a number of structures for such prestigious local preparatory schools as St. Alban's, Holton Arms, and Potomac over the period of several decades.

Although serious architectural criticism of Waldron Faulkner's work is almost absent from professional periodical literature, several of his early designs for private homes attracted attention. For example, his small, traditional wooden house for E.H. Corlett in Lake Katonah, New York, received an Honorable Mention in the 1931 Better Homes in America Competition judged by a committee appointed by the American Institute of Architects. In the case of the 1931 competition, the jury was composed of five architects, including three from Washington, D.C.: Arthur B. Heaton, Irwin S. Porter, and Waddy B. Wood.³ In the December 1932 and December 1934 issues of The Architectural Record, Faulkner's designs for the handsome houses of Mr. and Mrs. C.L. Strong (Washington, D.C.) and Alan T. Klots (Oyster Bay, New York), respectively, are featured in illustrated articles of several pages each.⁴ Both houses derive inspiration from the simple massings and roof lines of French Norman vernacular architecture, and typify Faulkner's preference for clean lines, white-washed brick, metal casement windows painted peacock blue, and black slate roofs. They are commodious and comfortable, but completely unpretentious houses.

Waldron Faulkner's respect for the native landscape and for regional traditions in architecture were strongly praised by Architectural Forum in an illustrated review of the 1936 design for the Madeira school campus and buildings.⁵ In this project Faulkner associated with architect A.B. Trowbridge. The architectural journal complemented not only the choice of the so-called "Federal" style of architecture, but also the site plan of the group of buildings, which "follow the simple symmetrical pattern which was developed to its highest point in this country in the University of Virginia. . . The group has an extremely attractive appearance, due not only to the charm of its landscaping and the pleasant surroundings, but also to the intimate scale of the buildings and the simplicity with which the materials have been handled."⁶

In March 1940, Architectural Record highlighted the open spaciousness of the light-filled Potomac River lodge Faulkner designed for Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Meyer, near Greenway, Virginia, and commented on the successful siting of the house, and the architect's sensitive use of the materials, including painted white pine and large areas of steel sash.⁷ Faulkner's economical use of building materials was greatly admired in his wartime design for Suburban Hospital, a building which was examined in the architectural magazine Pencil Points in 1944.⁸ The writer of the review noted that the "architects had to run

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 14 1990

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStrong Hall
Washington, D.C.Section number 8 Page 8

a veritable obstacle course of wartime limitations and restrictions," and remarked further, "[t]hat the finished group is as good as it is reflects much credit on the architects' ingenuity; the plan has many unusual features which we present in considerable detail."⁹

The several works of the architectural office of Waldron Faulkner cited above--which attracted the attention and praise of the national architectural press--were from the period in which Faulkner designed a number of buildings for The George Washington University. Unfortunately, in the case of The George Washington University commissions, no critical reviews of the architecture of the Hattie Strong Residence Hall for Women (1936), the University Library (1936), the Hall of Government (1938), the Lisner Auditorium (1941)--all works of the Faulkner firm--have been located, other than what seem to be the local newspapers' reproduction of the press releases issued by the University itself.

Faulkner seems to have worked harmoniously with the powerful personality of The George Washington University president Cloyd Heck Marvin, whose term began in 1927, and who undertook a program of expansion of university facilities that was curtailed only by World War II. Faulkner's happy association with the University continued through the period of construction of The George Washington University Hospital in the early 1950's. Faulkner's designs for such university structures as the hospital were reviewed periodically by the Commission of Fine Arts. Generally, they received the almost unanimous and immediate approval of the Commission members.¹⁰

The choice of the Georgian Revival style for Strong Hall marks a departure from Marvin's predilection for functional architecture, and was reintroduced to acknowledge the residential nature of the building. Strong Hall was the last University building to be designed in this style, with Faulkner producing bold modern designs for his subsequent campus buildings.

SEP 14 1990

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Strong Hall
Washington, D.C.

Section number 8 Page 9

1. John D. Gane, ed., American Institute of Architects Directory, (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1970), 268.
2. "Waldron Faulkner Named Vassar College Architect," Evening Star 11 February 1938, B-1.
3. "Prize-Winning Small Houses," Architectural Record 71, no. 4 (April 1932): 235-55.
4. "Portfolio of Current Architecture," Architectural Record 72, no. 6: 361-384; "Portfolio of Houses," Architectural Record 76, no. 6: 397-412.
5. "The Madeira School, Greenway, Virginia," Architectural Forum 66, no. 6 (June 1937): 523-526.
6. Ibid., 527.
7. "House on the Potomac River," Architectural Record 87, no. 3 (March 1940): 70-71.
8. "Suburban Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland," Pencil Points, April 1944, 49-53. Faulkner was by this time in partnership with Slocum Kingsbury and regularly associated with John W. Stenhouse.
9. Ibid., 49-50.
10. From 1957 to 1960, Waldron Faulkner served on the Shipstead Panel of the Commission of Fine Arts, which helped to advise the commission on design matters relating to private buildings fronting on public spaces in the certain areas of Washington.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 19 1990

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Strong Hall
Washington, D.C.

Section number 9 Page 2

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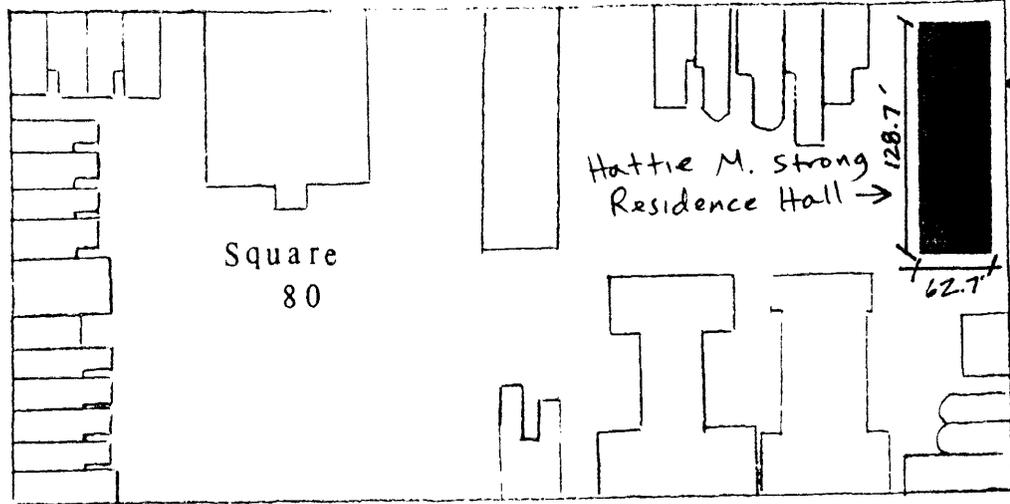
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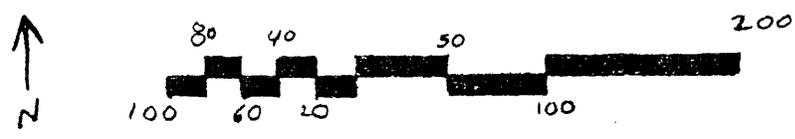
22nd ST., N.W.



21st ST., N.W.

③
②
①

F ST., N.W.



⊕ Numbers keyed to photographs