

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, SHERIDAN GATE
(Center Gateway)
Arlington
Virginia

HABS VA-1348-B
VA, 7-ARL, 11B-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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Location: The Sheridan Gate was one of four entrances on the east side of Arlington National Cemetery, in Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia. Today, pieces of the gate remain within the boundaries of the cemetery. They are stored near the warehouses and ground maintenance area of the cemetery off of Ord-Weitzel Drive.

Present Owner,
Present Occupant,
Present Use:

The United States government owns the Sheridan Gate because it stands in Arlington National Cemetery; moreover, the U.S. army is responsible for the maintenance of the cemetery. Although it was constructed as a monumental entrance marker, the Sheridan Gate was dismantled in 1971.

Significance:

In the aftermath of the War of 1814, President Madison and his government faced the task of resurrecting many of the public buildings in George Washington's federal city. The Irish-born architect, James Hoban, oversaw much of the restoration, including the President's Mansion and its ancillary Executive Department buildings. Between 1818 and 1820, Hoban and his stonemasons were put to work on the construction of two new Executive Department office buildings located on the north side of the President's Mansion. Gracing the north elevation of each structure was an Ionic portico. Based on similarities in design, it is likely that the men who carved the ornament seen on the White House today also fashioned the columns and entablature of the 1818-20 office buildings.

In 1879, Montgomery C. Meigs initiated the transfer of the six columns from the north portico of the condemned 1818-20 War Department building to Arlington National Cemetery and used for the construction of the Sheridan and the Ord-Weitzel gateways.¹ He did so to "[preserve] these historic columns, among which have moved the chief soldiers of the Army and the chiefs of the War Department during the last sixty years, [. . .]." As formal points of entry into the park-like cemetery, the gateways

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See HABS No. VA-1348-C for information regarding the Ord-Weitzel Gate.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Annual Report 1879, p. 20; Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of War, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., H. Exdoc 1, *CIS Index* (1879-1889), vol. 1903, p. 230.

represented the influence of neoclassicism in federal America and its resurgence as a stylistic revival late in the nineteenth century.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Dates: 1818-20; 1879-1971; 1971-present. The life-span of the four Ionic columns used in the Sheridan Gate falls into three distinct phases. The columns initially helped support the north portico of the War Department building in Washington, D.C. Faced with certain destruction as plans moved forward for the north wing of the new State War and Navy Departments building in 1879, the six Ionic columns from the portico were removed. The Quartermaster General then had them reconstructed in two gateways to Arlington National Cemetery. Finally, as the cemetery pushed beyond the boundary wall and across Arlington Ridge Road, the columned gateway was no longer needed as an entrance. Dismantled again, the columns have been in outdoor storage since 1971.

The invading British army burned the public buildings in Washington, D.C., in August 1814. As a result, the White House and its ancillary Executive Department buildings stood in ruins. After the war, the damaged Neoclassical-style Executive Department buildings were repaired under the direction of Irish-born architect James Hoban. Shortly thereafter, Hoban planned two other structures, also in the Neoclassical idiom, to accommodate the expanding Executive branch of government. Located to the north of the White House, these housed the State Department and the War Department. The Northwest Executive Department building, occupied by the War Office, was constructed between 1818 and 1820. The north portico was carved during this interval, most likely by the same Scottish stonemasons who worked under Hoban to restore the White House between 1814 and 1817.³

In 1879, the War Office moved out and the old building was scheduled for demolition. Before this happened, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs arranged to have six Ionic columns and other stone work on the north portico taken off the condemned building so that his department could use the historic fabric in gateways to Arlington Cemetery. Meigs's action was part of a larger movement within Washington, D.C., to memorialize the Civil War dead; similar monuments were erected in Arlington, with the McClellan Gate and the Temple of Fame, and elsewhere in the city, as shown by the Logan Gate located on the grounds of the Old Soldiers' Home and cemetery, now called the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home and USSAH cemetery. With the north portico safely removed in April 1879, the War Department building came down the following month and ground was broken for the north wing of the emerging State, War and Navy Departments building. The central gateway was built by July 1879, and its iron gates

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"White House History" *Journal of the White House Historical Association*, no. 3 (Spring 1998), passim. See also, Anthony S. Pitch, *The Burning of Washington: the British Invasion of 1814* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998), generally. In addition, a plan for the State and War Department buildings appears in Robert Mills, *Guide to National Executive Offices* (1841); Mills was the architect for the new Treasury Building constructed to replace the one destroyed by fire in the 1830s.

installed by July 1881. Only after General Philip H. Sheridan died in 1888, and his name carved into the entablature cap, did the portal become known as the "Sheridan Gate." The gate stood until 1971.⁴

While the Sheridan Gate fell to the needs outlined in the 1966 Master Plan for Arlington National Cemetery, the columns survive. They await reconstruction.⁵

2. Architect: Claiming credit for the Sheridan Gate, Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army Montgomery C. Meigs (1816-92) wrote that he "set up the columns of the Portico of the old War Department Building at the gates of Arlington [. . .]." Meigs overstated his role in the actual construction of the gates, but it should be noted that he was, in fact, an engineer/architect who had a hand in many Washington, D.C., based projects. Examples of his efforts include the Washington Aqueduct, extending the Capitol building's dome (which brought him into conflict with Thomas U. Walter, Architect of the Capitol), and the Pension Building as well as conceiving the idea for the gateways into Arlington National Cemetery.⁷ For the Arlington gateways, however, Meigs did not act alone. Under the direction of Lt. Colonel Thomas Lincoln Casey, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the portico was taken down and transferred to Arlington.⁸ Casey also was responsible for the completion of the Washington Monument and

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Lt. Colonel Thomas Lincoln Casey, of the U.S. Army of Corps of Engineers, was in charge of raising the new structure according to the design by Alfred Mullett. The Chief Clerk of the War Office turned the old departmental building over to Casey, who then gave the portico to the Quartermaster General. This process was expedited because all parties were under jurisdiction of the Secretary of War.

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Architects Group Practice, "Survey and Analysis (f) for Reconstruction and Relocation of (f) SHERIDAN and ORD-WEITZEL Gates (f) Arlington National Cemetery," Report prepared for the Department of the Army Baltimore District Corps of Engineers, May 1974; re: fiscal year 1971, see Publications of the Federal Government (f) (Committees of Congress) House Appropriations Committee, Record Group 287, "Cemeterial Expenses, Department of the Army," pp. 2366-2397.

6

Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery.

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See Harold K. Skramstad, "The Engineer as Architect in Washington: The Contributions of Montgomery Meigs," Records of the Columbia Historical Society (1969-70): 266-284; Russell F. Weigley, Quartermaster General of the Union Army: A Biography of M.C. Meigs (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); Records of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records of Brig. General Montgomery C. Meigs, 1861-1879. Also, a good person to contact for current research on Meigs is National Park Service Historian, Dean A. Herrin, Ph.D.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 9 (1878), Document No. 1944.

Library of Congress projects, in addition to finishing Alfred Mullet's State, War, and Navy Departments building.⁹ It is not known who carved the stone for the columns, however.

Before the columns of the former portico were reconstructed at Arlington, Meigs consulted Washington, D.C., based architect John L. Smithmeyer (1832-1908). This was the same architect Meigs used in conjunction with the rostrum for the Amphitheater in Arlington National Cemetery.¹⁰ Smithmeyer provided plans and specifications for the gateways to the Architect of the Treasury and to prospective contractors for the job; it is unclear if his work only detailed the iron gates or if Smithmeyer designed the Sheridan Gate in its entirety according to parameters established but unrecorded by Meigs.

Smithmeyer came to Washington, D.C., after the Civil War and won a position in the Office of the Supervising Architect. He served as the "Superintendent on Public Buildings Being Erected in the Southern States" until 1872. At that time, he left public office to open a private practice with Paul Pelz; Smithmeyer and Pelz then entered and won the competition for the design of a structure to house the Library of Congress. However, Smithmeyer never received payment for his firm's winning design. Controversy plagued the library project, culminating in Smithmeyer's dismissal. Ultimately Casey was brought in to oversee the construction and later (ca. 1888) installed a relative, Edward Pearce Casey, as the architect. In addition to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., Smithmeyer was responsible for the Academic Building, now called the Healy Building, at Georgetown University.¹¹

Although Smithmeyer designed the wrought iron gates, the firm Charles A. Schneider and Sons of Washington, D.C., won the contract to furnish, deliver, and install them between 1879 and 1881. The Depot Quartermaster, A.F. Rockwell, Captain in charge of National Cemeteries, asked Casey for the derrick and other apparatus used to remove the portico from the War Department building. Rockwell hoped to borrow the equipment so that his department could put the pieces back together again in Arlington. In addition, the Quartermaster General's records reveal that some of the appropriation for national cemeteries was diverted to the raising of the gateways, circumstances that imply work was done by the Quartermaster's Department and not by outside contract. Moreover, when part of the cornice fell in July 1879, the man

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"Old Executive Office Building," files, Library, Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.; see also, Aaron V. Wunsch, "Washington National Monument," Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Records, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (HABS No. DC-428).

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery; see also, HABS No. VA-1348-A.

11

"Smithmeyer and Pelz" files, Library, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery; Records of the Office of the Adjunct General, Appointment, Commission, and Personal Branch, Record Group 94, Major John L. Smithmeyer, 1888, Document No. 3153.

reporting to Rockwell and Meigs was Thomas P. Chiffelle, also in military service. Chiffelle was in charge of the work and relayed how the cornice was put back together. It is unclear if he oversaw the stone masons who built the gate initially or was responsible for the plan that called for a continuous joint (which then collapsed) between the blocks of the cornice. Instead, Chiffelle's report recorded how he interlocked the dentil and corona blocks, providing lead toggles, so that each was secured to another which would prevent another structural failure.¹² Although he did not name him, Quartermaster General Meigs ordered Rockwell to relieve the "architect" from all connection to the work and directed Rockwell to hire a "competent superintendent of cut stone work" who could finish the job.¹³

3. Original plans and construction: In October 1878, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs struck a deal with Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Lincoln Casey, of the Corps of Engineers, who served as the Superintending Engineer for Public Buildings and Grounds.¹⁴ In charge of the construction of the State, War, and Navy Departments building, Casey also had to oversee the demolition of the structures standing in the way of the new building. The War Department building, erected in 1818-20, occupied the proposed site of the north wing of the State, War, and Navy Departments building. The War Department building, then, had to come down and this circumstance drew Meigs's attention. Meigs persuaded Casey to turn over the corners and columns of the portico from the War Department building to the Quartermaster General's department for use at Arlington. Casey, therefore, directed measures be taken to "properly mark the sections to facilitate their erection, etc., as gates to the cemetery." In March 1879, the Depot Quartermaster requested \$1000.00 from the appropriation for national cemeteries for 1878-1879; the funds would cover expenses at Arlington that were not previously

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10.

In March 1879 Smithmeyer solicited the job for the Bureau of Printing and Engraving; he was not successful. Chiffelle's name also appears in connection to fixing the corner of the Printing and Engraving Building (Building No. 1705). See Records of the Department of the Treasury, Record Group 56, Correspondence of the Office of the Secretary of Treasury, Register of Letters Received 1873-1902, vol. 27, Document No. 108; and Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Letters Sent 1871-1886, vol. 9, p. 45.

¹³

Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Record Group 107, Registers of Letters Received 1872-1885, 1900-1902, vol. 7, Document No. 2337.

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Casey was in charge of the on-going work at the Washington Monument during this time as well.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 9 (1878), Document No. 1944.

budgeted, such as the transportation and construction of the columns.¹⁶ Also in March, the Quartermaster requested that a model of the columns be carved in wood using the roman Ionic style in the capital. The next month he provided the inscription for the gateways.¹⁷

Despite Meigs's agreement with Casey, proper authority to shift the architectural artifacts from the War Department building to Arlington National Cemetery was required. Thus, Meigs summarized his efforts to save the north portico in a letter to the Secretary of War in April 1879. He wrote,

Sir, I see it announced by the public press that during this month the War Office will remove from the old building to the new, and that the old Northwest Executive buildings will be demolished and removed.

I suggested to you, some time ago, the transfer of the North Portico, which is historical, to the national military cemetery at Arlington where its columns and other stone work can be utilized and preserved in gateways much needed at the two principal entrances not already provided with handsome gates.

I spoke also to the officer who was in charge of the new building and think I understood him to say that he could aid us in this matter and would carefully take down the Portico and deliver it to us. Nothing of this, however, has been put on an official footing and record, and I now request that, if you approve, orders may issue to carry out this project.

I enclose drawings of the two gates in which I propose too preserve the columns between which walked the principal actors in the greatest struggle of our history, since the Revolution -- Lincoln, Scott, Stanton, Grant, Sherman, Meade, and other great statesmen and commanders. Also, enclosed is a copy of an inscription which I suggest.

It will probably be proper for the appropriation which is applicable to the clearing of the site for the new building to take down this portico and deliver it to the wagons of the Q.M. Department. But if there by any fatal objections to this, the Depot Quartermaster, Capt. Rockwell, can do the whole work.

There was a similar portico on the old Northeast Executive building, which was demolished, and, I think, sold for a trifle. I have never been able to trace the subsequent history of its beautiful and costly Ionic sand-stone columns, and I think they were cut up for building stone.

16

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10.

17

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery.

It would be a pity thus to lose or to destroy the portico of the War Department which has historical associations well fitting it for the gates of Arlington.

If sold, it will be destroyed, and it will fetch not a tithe of its cost or of its value to the War Department and to the country if used at Arlington.

I am, (/) Very respectfully (/) your obedient servant (/) M.C. Meigs (/)
Quartermaster General (/) Bvt, Major General U.S. Army¹⁸

Three days later the Secretary of War complied to Meigs's request. The Secretary recommended that the "pillars and portico" of the old War Department building be transferred to Arlington.¹⁹ Casey, invested with the authority to proceed, began preparations for the construction of the north wing of the State, War, and Navy Departments building. For the month of April, Casey employed (on average) one man to receive stone, one for iron-work, eight for brick-work, two for carpentry, seven for rigging, and twenty-seven for contingencies.²⁰ He hired these men for work on the north wing specifically, therefore, it is likely they dismantled the portico. In Casey's report to Congress regarding the progress of the State, War, and Navy Departments building, he stated that

[On April 7], the demolition of the portico, consisting of six plain round columns with Ionic capitals, entablature, and two antae of sandstone, from the north front of the old building for the War Department, was commenced and continued until nearly all the stones were carefully separated and safely landed on the ground. This was done in conformity with an order from the War Department to turn the stones of this portico over to the Quartermaster General of the Army, to be transferred to the Arlington National Cemetery, where the old columns could be preserved and utilized appropriately at its portals. The stones were boxed and removed by the Quartermaster General as fast as they were ready.²¹

¹⁸

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery; see also, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15.

¹⁹

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10 (April 7, 1879).

²⁰

Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of War, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., H. exdoc. 1, *CIS Index* (1879-1889), vol. 1903. See specifically, "Report on the State, War, and Navy Building (/) North Wing," p. 462. The report on the building was submitted to the Hon. Geo. W. McCrary, Secretary of War, by Thomas Lincoln Casey, Lieutenant-Colonel, Corps of Engineers.

²¹

Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of War, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., H. exdoc. 1, *CIS Index* (1879-1889), vol. 1903. See specifically, "Report on the State, War, and Navy Building (/) North Wing," p. 460.

By April 9, the Quartermaster General's office received a memorandum from the Chief Clerk of the War Office that recorded the transfer of the portico from the War Department building that was about to be demolished. Accompanying the memorandum were drawings and a copy of the inscription for the proposed gateways.²² (These are now missing). Also on April 9, it was suggested to the Quartermaster General that the gateway project be contracted out. Money to pay for the contract could come out of the appropriation and so work could continue past the end of the fiscal year in June.²³ However, the Depot Quartermaster, A.F. Rockwell, asked for the derrick and other necessary pieces of equipment that Casey had used to dismantle the portico.²⁴ It can be inferred from Rockwell's request of Casey that the government did not contract out the job. The Quartermaster, moreover, recommended that \$2000.00 be taken from the funds earmarked for national cemeteries for next fiscal year (1879-1880). The \$2000.00 was needed "on the account of the construction of the gateways at Arlington Cemetery."²⁵

On May 22 the Chief Clerk of the War Office signed the old building over to Casey, vouching for the removal of all necessary materials from the premises. The clerk said, "I have the honor and pleasure to turn over said building to you for such disposition as you may desire to make of it." Once the War Office was vacated, demolition began. Ground was broken for the north wing on June 17, 1879.²⁶

In July, the Quartermaster had the design and model of the new gateways at Arlington delivered to the Washington, D.C., architect John L. Smithmeyer. The architect was then to provide drawings for the gates.²⁷ The plans and specifications for the iron gates were completed

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Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Record Group 107, Registers of Letters Received 1801-1889, vol. 193 (1879), Document No. 3845.

23

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Letters Sent 1871-1886, vol. 8.

25

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15.

26

Congress, House, State, War and Navy Building, 50th Cong., 1st sess., H. exdoc, 337, *CIS Index* (1879-1889), vol. 2561.

27

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15. See also, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10 (1879); and Records of

in September. The Quartermaster General's office then solicited proposals; they hoped to obtain at least a dozen bids and placed advertisements in city newspapers throughout the United States.²⁸ In April 1880, the specifications were modified, omitting the bronze planned for the center but retaining all other elements of the approved design. The gates would be executed in iron only.²⁹ By May 6, fourteen companies submitted proposals in response to the advertisement for "Wrought Iron Gates for Arlington National Cemetery, VA." They included:

C. Rittenhouse and Sons	Norristown, PA	\$5,000.00
Steward and Stevens	Philadelphia, PA	\$11500.00
Henry Seivers	Washington, D.C.	\$5785.50
Manly and Cooper	Philadelphia, PA	\$6500.00
J.A. Spear & Co.	Boston, MA	\$6800.00
Jacob Blatzheim	Washington, D.C.	\$5200.00
Bubier & Co.	Boston, MA	\$5500.00
C.A. Schneider & Sons	Washington, D.C.	\$4850.00
Broomell Miles & Co.	West Chester, PA	\$9500.00
James and Kirtland	New York, NY	\$6982.00
Bartlett, Robbins & Co.	Baltimore, MD	\$6148.00
J.B. & J.M. Cornell	New York, NY	\$8240.00
M. Clements	Cincinnati, OH	\$6850.00
The Snead & Co. Iron Works	Louisville, KY	\$7495.00 ³⁰

The next day the Depot Quartermaster recommended that the lowest bid be accepted, thereby choosing C.A. Schneider and Sons of Washington, D.C. His suggestion was not adopted right away. Even at the end of the month the contract had not been awarded. Bidders were reassured that cost was not the determining factor -- instead it would depend on facilities available.³¹ In July, C.A. Schneider and Sons received the contract. The firm was to "furnish, deliver, and set

the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15. See also, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10 (1879).

29

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Letters Sent, 1871-1886, vol. 10. (The letter was dated April 13, 1880, and was addressed to A.F. Rockwell from the Depot Quartermaster).

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Abstract of proposals (name, location, \$) were found in Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery.

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Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery.

the gates into place.” Before they could begin work, however, a \$2500 bond was needed.³² By March 1881, the Depot Quartermaster reported that C.A. Schneider and Sons would have one pair of gates set in May and the other by July 1st.³³ In August, an additional \$48.00 was spent on extra hinges and eyes for the iron gates.³⁴

Plans for the Arlington gateways existed; the Supervising Architect of Treasury billed the Depot Quartermaster for photographing them; the Quartermaster referenced plans, photographs, and models. None of these items were found. Only the specifications for the wrought iron gates exist.³⁵ However, in spite of now-missing documents, Captain Rockwell reported to Congress that

The two gateways on the east front of the Arlington Cemetery, constructed with the columns and materials taken from the portico of the old War Department building, have been completed and add a handsome and interesting feature to this already beautiful cemetery.

Rockwell also noted that \$4217.55 of his budget was spent on cemetery “gates.”³⁶

4. Alterations and additions: In July 1879, Thomas P. Chiffelle reported that a large portion of the center gateway’s cornice collapsed. The historic fabric was damaged; but it was repaired and secured by lead toggles.³⁷ Three years later the Superintendent of Arlington

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Letters Sent, 1871-1886, vol. 10.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 12 (1881), Document No. 413.

34

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery. See also, Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 12 (1881), Document No. 1266.

35

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 17; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 11.

36

Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of War, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., H. exdoc. 1, *CIS Index* (1879-1889), vol. 1903. Report from the Office of National Cemeteries submitted to the Secretary of War by Captain A.F. Rockwell, in charge of cemeteries. See pp. 476, 478.

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Records of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 10; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Letters Sent 1871-

Cemetery requested permission to offer a \$25.00 reward for information regarding the gateways. He did so because someone mutilated the new iron gates and he hoped the money would aid in the guilty party's detection and conviction.³⁸ Also in 1882, the Clerk of the Court in Alexandria, B. Austin, asked that "Garfield" be inscribed on the fourth column of the center gateway at Arlington. His request was denied.³⁹

After U.S. Grant died in 1885, his name was carved into the fourth column instead of Garfield's. Meigs, although retired, still exercised control over the appearance of the Arlington gates. He wrote to the current Quartermaster General Holabird,

When in the year A.D. 1879 I set up the columns of the Portico of the old War Department Building at the gates of Arlington I dedicated them to the greatest names of the war for the Union. Those of Lincoln, Stanton, and Scott were then duly engraved upon their respective shafts. But as Genl Grant was still with us one column was left blank though plainly intended to bear his name. He has now passed away and I request you to cause to be engraved on the fourth column the great name which it was intended to bear and thus complete the first monument to his immortal memory.⁴⁰

Similarly, after General Philip H. Sheridan died in 1888, his name was carved into the entablature. From this inscription, the center gateway became known as the "Sheridan Gate." Also in 1888, the Depot Quartermaster requested \$275.00 for improvements and lettering the gateways in east front of Arlington, Virginia, national cemetery. Authorities granted his request and the funds were allocated in November 1888.⁴¹ Two years later, the gates were repaired, painted and lettered.⁴²

1886, vol. 9; Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Record Group 107, Registers of Letters Received, 1872-1885, 1900-1902, vol. 7, Document No. 2337.

38

Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 12 (1882), Document No. 820.

39

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery. See also, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 12 (1882), Document No. 2094.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery, 1885.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery, 1888.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Annual Reports 1894-

In 1902, authorities estimated they would need \$79.80 to repair the stonework, to re-letter in black, to paint the columns with two coats of a lead and paint mixture, and gild the gates.⁴³ In 1905, 1906, and 1915 heavy rains damaged the roads and approach to the Sheridan Gate.⁴⁴

Stone contractors, Roubin and Janerio, Inc., were hired to dismantle the Sheridan Gate in 1971.⁴⁵ The location of the iron gates crafted and assembled by Charles A. Schneider and Son is not known at this writing.

5. Building History: In 1800, two red brick buildings housed the Departments of Treasury, State, and War. Located in President's Square, these buildings flanked the White House.⁴⁶ The buildings were identical in design. Unfortunately, the British burned the two buildings during the War of 1812.⁴⁷

Because the two Executive Branch office buildings were in close proximity to the White House, many people influential in the creation of the federal city have been associated with their design. George Washington, for example, approved the prototype for the Executive Office buildings in March of 1797; the initial design was submitted by George Hadfield (1763-1826). The plans called for a two-story building with an attic. It was to be fifteen bays long and fronted by a portico with four Ionic columns and a parapet entablature. Hadfield, however, was not placed in charge of the construction and the structure did not follow his design exactly.⁴⁸ It has

⁴³ 1920, Annual Report 1890, p. 200.

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1890-1914, Document file No. 85160.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1890-1914, Document file No. 213212; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Annual Reports 1894-1920, Annual Report 1915, p. 5.

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Keyes, Lethbridge and Condon, Architects, "Relocation of the Ord-Weitzel and Sheridan Gates at Arlington National Cemetery," p. 4.

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See Robert King, "Appropriation No. 1, Plat, 1800, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; see Ralph H. Ehrenberg, "Mapping the Nation's Capital: The Surveyor's Office, 1791-1818," Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress 36 (1979): 304-307; the plat is re-printed in "White House History," p. 55. See also, William W. Warner, At Peace with Their Neighbors (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1944), pp. 125-128.

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See Pitch, "A Lighting Occupation," chap. in The Burning of Washington: the British Invasion of 1814, pp. 130-152, especially pp. 130-131, 163.

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Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects, vol. 2, ed. Adolf K. Placzek (New York: Free Press and London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1982), s.v., "George Hadfield."

been assumed that the stone for the porticos came from the same Aquia quarry that supplied the masons working at the White House.

After the War of 1812, James Hoban (ca. 1762-1831) was responsible for the reconstruction of the Executive Office buildings. He did not recreate the Hadfield prototype. Hoban, for example, added architectural details such as the Palladian windows in the end walls and a beltcourse.⁴⁹ In 1816, the two Executive Department buildings were described as having two stories above a white stone basement and measuring 120' x 60' each.⁵⁰ Later, the buildings were extended with a third story-pitched attic. Between 1816 and 1818, the replacement office buildings held the Executive Branch offices of Treasury, State, War, and Navy. In 1818, crowded conditions led to the addition of two other Executive Office buildings by the White House. These buildings, located to the north of the 1816 structures, contained the State and War Departments. This left the Treasury and Navy Departments in the other two. The State and War Departments' buildings each had an Ionic portico supported by six columns on the north side and rectangular windows in the end walls, in lieu of Palladian, at the second floor.⁵¹ In 1833, however, the Treasury Building burned; architect Robert Mills designed a new structure for the department. This left only the three Hoban-era office buildings intact.

Hoban's 1818 State Department building fell victim to the Treasury Building's expansion in 1866. Its Ionic portico disappeared with the building. The War Department building was razed in 1879 and the Navy Department's in 1884. These were demolished to make way for Alfred B. Mullet's State, War, and Navy Departments building, constructed between during the 1870s and 1880s in the Second Empire-style. This edifice is presently known as the Old Executive Office Building.⁵²

Although the four buildings disappeared in the nineteenth-century, the elaborate stone detailing from the War Department building was salvaged. The six columns were re-erected in Arlington National Cemetery as decorative gates, memorializing Civil War heroes Sheridan,

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Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects, vol. 2, ed. Adolf K. Placzek (New York: Free Press and London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1982), s.v., "James Hoban."

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John Ballosborne, "The Removal of the Government to Washington," Records of the Columbia Historical Society 3 (1900): 149.

51

See Baroness Hyde de Neuville, Sketch of the White House and nearby office buildings, ca. 1820, Stokes Collection, New York Public Library, New York, New York; Daniel P. Reiff, Washington Architecture 1791-1861: Problems in Development, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, 1971), pp. 28-29.

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James M. Goode, Capital Losses: a Cultural History of Washington's Destroyed Buildings (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979), pp. 292-296. See also, Montgomery Meigs's letter referenced above & taken from Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, vol. 15.

Lincoln, Scott, Stanton, Grant, Ord, and Weitzel.⁵³ In the Sheridan Gate, four columns supported a neoclassical entablature; the remaining two columns and classically inspired urns comprised the Ord-Weitzel Gate. In 1971, the Sheridan Gate and Ord-Weitzel Gate were demolished and the remnants stockpiled. The whereabouts of the iron gates is unknown at this time, however.

6. Ionic Columns: The six columns that once distinguished the north portico of the War Department building and afterwards used to demarcate two of the east side gateways into the national cemetery at Arlington, Virginia, belong to the Ionic order. Derived from classical architecture, the orders consist of columns and an entablature. Physically, the orders are just another manifestation of the age-old post and lintel construction seen in ancient monuments, such as those in Egypt and at Stonehenge in England. However, the orders give proportion to trabeated structures in a way that is separate from Nature and natural forms. In the hands of the Greek builders, the post and lintel or column and beam form of the orders suggests a delicate equilibrium of forces, of load and support, that symbolizes their country's cultural character. The Greeks called upon geometric figures, at once abstract and precise, to logically express their philosophical ideals of balance, symmetry, and rationality as well as their desire to perfect human intellectual and physical power.⁵⁴

Columns of the Ionic order generally have a base, fluted shafts, and volutes in the capital. The earliest, classical examples of the Ionic have two volutes per capital with one each in the front and rear faces. The practice of employing four volutes began with Vincenzo Scamozzi (1552-1616) who bent the volutes inward so that each face of the column capital would be consistent. Subtle changes were made to alter Scamozzi's capital further, such as curving the abacus so that it follows the contour of the volute, but it is Scamozzi alone who adjusted the

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This kind of memorial was repeated in Arlington. Columns from the Patent Building were transferred to Arlington and used in a "Temple of Fame." The eight columns were inscribed with the names of Washington, Lincoln, Grant and Farragut in the cornice, as well as Meade, Hancock, Garfield, McPherson, Reynolds, Thomas, Mansfield, Sedgwick, and Humphreys on the individual column shafts. See Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery, memo dated May 26, 1888. (Note by this date, the center gateway cornice and columns were inscribed but the entablature was not; also, the north gateway columns were not yet inscribed).

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Vincent Scully, *Architecture: the Natural and the Man-Made* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), pp. 34-64; and Leland M. Roth, *Understanding Architecture with Its Elements, History and Meaning* (paperback ed., New York: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 19-26; Marvin Trachtenberg and Isabelle Hyman, *Architecture from Prehistory to Post-Modernism: the Western Tradition*, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., and New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1986), pp. 92-93.

model form.⁵⁵ The six Ionic columns in Arlington Cemetery reflect Scamozzi's four volute design.

The Ionic order characterizing the six columns in Arlington National Cemetery is one of just five that comprise a kind of architectural canon today. Initially, there were only three orders: the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian; these originated in ancient Greece. While the Corinthian order came from the city of Corinth, "Doric" and "Ionic" referred to the major dialects in the Greek language. Ionian Greek was spoken by those living in western Anatolia, beginning between 700 and 600 BC; and it, for example, was the language of Homer. Notably, as the dialect was formed so too were the rules for the orders of Greek architecture.⁵⁶ To the three Greek orders, the Romans added the Tuscan and the Composite.

By the 8th c. BC, the Greeks had created architecture of monumental scale to celebrate and symbolize their victories and their deities. They shaped heroic figures out of geometric forms. By the 7th c. BC, the Greeks began putting columns around their temples, such as those seen in the Temple of Hera (Juno) at Samos and the Temple of Artemis (Diana) at Ephesus. In these temples, the Ionic order invoked images of the upright human form through the columns that served as "vertical, self-sufficient, geometric units."⁵⁷ Because the Ionic order was associated the female body, its columns and volute capitals were perceived as feminine. The Ionic, in spite of its gender, was not sexy. Instead the women represented in the Ionic were both graceful and matronly. While the Ionic was female, she was not effeminate; the female deities

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Marc-Antoine Laugier, An Essay on Architecture (paperback ed., translated with an introduction by Wolfgang and Anni Herrmann, Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1977), pp. 48-51; Claude Perrault, Ordonnance for the Five Kinds of Columns After the Method of the Ancients (paperback ed., Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1993), pp. 116-128, passim; Robert Tavernor, Palladio and Palladianism (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), pp. 106-114, 181-204, passim; and Joseph Rykwert, The Dancing Column: On Order in Architecture (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 2-24, 239-248; see also Vincenzo Scamozzi, L'Idée della Architettura (1615).

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Rykwert, pp. 110-115.

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Scully, "The Greek Temple," chap. In Architecture: the Natural and the Man-Made, pp. 39-64, passim; Andrea Palladio, The Four Books of Architecture (paperback ed., with an introduction by Adolf K. Palczek, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965), pp. 19-20, plates 16-20.

The Ephesian Artemis (temple) was one of the seven wonders of the world. Tradition says that a group of amazons brought a cult of Artemis to Ion and then built this temple. The amazons ruled much of the Ionian coast in the second millennium. It is known that the cult of Artemis was strong throughout Asia Minor; examples of the mature Ionic order -- as seen in Ephesus -- are found in Marseilles, Italy, the Nile Delta, and in the Persian mountains. These were built around the time of the temple of Artemis in Ephesus as well. See Rykwert, pp. 248-249, 255-260, 265-267.

were capable of severe and violent behavior and so the order that represented them incorporated the goddesses's harsh and soft sides.⁵⁸

The legends surrounding the origins of the architectural orders were recorded by Vitruvius in 1st c. BC. The story begins with Dorus, who was the son of Hellen and the nymph Pythia. He also was the king of Achaea. The order used by Dorus in his building projects became known as the "Doric." Later, the Athenian Greeks established thirteen colonies along the coast of Asia Minor. This outpost was under the command of Ion and was named Ionia. There, the Ionians constructed temples to honor their gods. In the Temple of Apollo they used the order seen in Achaea ("Doric"), basing it upon the bodily proportions of a man's foot to his overall height (one-sixth). The Doric order represented the strength and beauty of a man. For their temple dedicated to Diana, the Ionians again used the footprint formula. In this instance, however, they wanted to represent the slenderness of a woman and so carved the column thickness to be one-eighth of its height. The Ionians crowned the column with volutes, rather like a double scroll, evoking an image of a woman's hair. The column shaft was fluted like the folds of a matron's dress. Thus, the Ionians connected their new order to the perceived delicacy, adornment, and proportions of a woman. The third order, the Corinthian, was made in imitation of a maiden. Vitruvius then offered a disclaimer for posterity had altered the dimensions prescribed in the myth he just recited. By Vitruvius's time, the Doric was based on a one-to-seven ratio and the Ionic required nine equal parts. What remained constant, then, was the use of the idealized human body as a scale.⁵⁹

In sum, Vitruvius accounted for the appearance of the three Grecian orders in human terms. The verticality of the columns suggested, in an abstract geometrical way indicative of Greek thought, the human body. The Doric was strong, muscular, and male. The Corinthian was a young girl, delicate and fragile. The Ionic was the median between the two. Usually described relationally, somewhere between strength of the Doric and the fineness of the Corinthian, the Ionic "is pleasing through its regularity." It was not too coarse or too refined, too hard or too soft. The Ionic, seemingly, was distinctive visually in its own right only by its volutes.⁶⁰

Relating the orders to the human figure puts architecture within the larger context of Greek artistic expression, serving as evidence of how they viewed themselves. In sculpture, for example, the isolated human body was a prevalent subject, whether it was naked and male or

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George Hersey, The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture (1988; 4th printing, Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 59-67, passim.

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Vitruvius, The Ten Books of Architecture, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (Harvard University Press, 1914; paperback ed., New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1960), pp. 102-104; Kruff, pp. 21-29.

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Laugier, pp. 48-51.

clothed and female. The interplay between the human form and the column is demonstrated by the telamones in Sparta (Doric and male) and the caryatids (Ionic and female). The Erechtheium in Athens has the best known, extant example of caryatids in its south porch. Others are found in Delphi and still more built by Roman design. However, even for the telamones and caryatids, it was not a specific nude or model that was copied by the Greek craftsmen but rather a type or idealized form that could be imitated and abstracted into a post or column.⁶¹

Vitruvian legend accounts for the first caryatids in Carya, a city in Greece that did not actively support the Greeks in their war with Persia. After the war was won by Greece, the matrons of Carya were enslaved. The loss of the Caryan women, who were bound and paraded through the streets, is expressed architecturally through the heavy cornice they as caryatids were forced to support. In the Ionic order, the punitive sacrifice of these bound matrons is implied. The victims -- the city's matrons -- perceived in the Ionic columns reinforce architecture's role as the exhibitor of justice accomplished.⁶² The ornament of the orders represents the sacrifices made for justice, honor, achievement, and religious duty. It is fitting then that the Ionic order graced public buildings of justice, of arts and letters, like the courts, government buildings, libraries, and seminaries.⁶³

In 1452, Leon Battista Alberti acknowledged the Composite order along with the three Grecian orders in his treatise, but it was the illustrated works of Sebastiano Serlio (1537) and Vignola (1562) that addressed all five orders. The legacy of Serlio's and Vignola's work was the regulation of the orders into a rigid proportional system. After Serlio and Vignola, the sixteenth century (and onward) defined the orders through their column heights. The height was obtained through integral multiples of the column shaft's lower diameter.⁶⁴ The orders were predictable in

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Rykwert, "Literary Commonplace," chap. In The Dancing Column, pp. 116-141, passim.

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Vitruvius, pp. 102-104; Rykwert, pp. 133-135, 237-239. However, Carya was better known historically as the center of a cult honoring Artemis (Diana). Notably it was a temple to Artemis that the Ionic was first used in its canonical form, and in a cultural center dedicated to the same deity, the Ionic caryatids first appear. See Rykwert, p. 135.

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Hersey, pp. 69-75, passim; Asher Benjamin, The American Builder's Companion, 6th ed. (R.P. & C. Williams, 1827; reprint, paperback ed., with an introduction by William Morgan, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969), pp. 4, 30-37, 44-47. With this in mind then it was appropriate for Thomas Jefferson's Virginia State Capitol (1785-89) and for James Hoban's Executive Department buildings for the State and War Departments (1818) to be executed in the Ionic order.

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Hanno-Walter Krufft, A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present, trans. Ronald Taylor, Elsie Callander, and Antony Wood (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994), p. 41-50, 73-76, 80.

proportion, held to precise mathematical formulas that allowed for use of the form without regard to historical, literary, and mythical associations.⁶⁵

Models for contemporary projects based on an order are known through visible, three-dimensional examples built by the ancients and through architectural treatises written by Palladio, Serlio, and Vignola among others. Heirs to the cultural traditions that produced Ionic temples in classical Greece and Rome, the six columns now in Arlington National Cemetery were crafted during the early nineteenth-century period when Neoclassicism dominated architectural practices on both sides of the Atlantic. Government, moreover, was the primary patron at this time. Here, for example, it was President George Washington who determined the site of the Executive Department buildings; after the War of 1812, it was the Neoclassical architects George Hadfield and James Hoban who were responsible for the War Department's design.

Although no longer perceived as representative of classical heroes and deities in ca. 1800 America, the orders symbolized a culture based in liberty, learning, and beauty. The legacy of self-governing Greek city-states and a republican Rome was recognized universally. The classical ideologies wielded an influence similar to that created by the catholic church but was steadfastly secular and so appropriate for the democratic experiment in America. To reiterate its role as heir to Greece and Rome, the American democracy attached its aspirations to classical forms. It adopted classical architecture for its public buildings. By doing so, the young republic expressed its independence from England and promoted its own ideals and models. The fledgling democracy turned, instead, to the orders outlined in pattern books and followed the mathematical formulas they provided.

Through the purity of the geometric forms, the balance of trabeated construction, the order of parts to the whole, the new government in Washington, D.C., proclaimed itself an equal player on the world stage. Its values shaped its buildings and its buildings reminded those at home and abroad of its democratic principles. It was no accident that Thomas Jefferson modeled the Virginia State Capitol on a structure he thought to be the product of republican Rome (Maison Carree); nor was it chance or cost alone that dictated the change from a Corinthian to an Ionic portico for the state capital. The Ionic was "neat rather than luxuriant" and yet was majestic enough to inspire truth and justice. Similar views remained current after the British burned Washington, D.C., in 1814, and so the focal points of Pierre l'Enfant's plan -- the Capital and the President's House -- were reconstructed along Neoclassical lines. Similarly, the ancillary buildings of the Executive Department around the President's House were rebuilt in the Neoclassical-style. By the middle of the nineteenth-century, classical architecture stubbornly spoke of an unified nation in a time of sectional strife. Perhaps the gateways erected at Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs's urging were his proclamation of the union

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Hersey, p. 156.

preserved. By keeping the Ionic order of federal-period Washington intact, the gates were a visual reminder of the principles that guided and shaped the early republic.⁶⁶

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

1. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The four columns taken from the old War Department building and used in the Sheridan Gate are examples of the Ionic order. Based on classical precedents, the orders of architecture consist of columns and an entablature. The columns and entablature act, structurally, as post and lintel construction and so became the basis of many building projects. The Ionic order is recognizable through its column capital with large double scrolls or volutes.

2. Condition of fabric: The Sheridan Gate was damaged severely in the 1971 dismantling process, particularly the stylobates and the entablature frieze. Once taken apart, keeping the pieces in outdoor storage exposed them to an increased amount of dampness because it allowed water to penetrate all surfaces resting on the ground. The painted exterior surfaces of the columns, moreover, inhibited natural water evaporation. This, combined with the pitfalls of outdoor storage, contributed to the deteriorated condition of the sandstone seen today. Moreover, the exposed metal parts are rusted. The aforementioned paint is peeling, presenting a blistered surface, and the capitals are fragile with pieces breaking off to the touch. Vandals have spray-painted graffiti, mostly of a racial bias, over the various parts of the column shafts, capitals, and entablature.⁶⁷

2. Description:

1. Overall dimensions:⁶⁸ Measured just before it was dismantled, the Sheridan Gate stood 34' 2 1/2" above the boundary wall of the national military cemetery. The gateway

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Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* (1985; rev. ed., New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1995), pp. 605-34; Hersey, pp. 149-156; Scully, "Palladio, the English Garden, and the Modern Age," chap. In *Architecture: the Natural and the Man Made*, pp. 313-366, passim; Roth, pp. 413-415.

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Site visit, March 1999 & Summer 1999; Also, please see Architects Group Practice, "Survey and Analysis for Reconstruction and Relocation of SHERIDAN and ORD-WEITZEL GATES Arlington National Cemetery," Report prepared for the Department of the Army Baltimore District Corps of Engineers, May 1974, pp. 1-4; and HABS photographs and field notes.

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Measurements taken from Architects Group Practice, "Survey and Analysis (/) for Reconstruction and Relocation of (/) SHERIDAN and ORD-WEITZEL GATES (/) Arlington National Cemetery, Report prepared for the Department of the Army Baltimore District Corps of Engineers, May 1974.

consisted of a pair of columns to either side of the entry that rose about 23' up to the Ionic capitals and entablature (architrave, frieze, cornice). Between the paired columns swung iron gates that, when open, granted access into the cemetery grounds. The opening measured 12' across. Each column pair (with a radius of 1'10") stood on a rectangular sandstone base that was just over 11' across and almost 4' deep. The architrave measured approximately 32' across, and above it, the flat frieze extended approximately 28' across (set back from the architrave by 3 1/4" on each side). The row of eighty-three dentils running across the front (and eighty-three across the back) in the cornice extended almost 34'; there were also nine dentils on each side. The cornice cap measured approximately 37' across while the entablature cap that steps up twice measured 32' and 29' respectively.

2. Foundations: The columns stood on sandstone bases, or stylobates, which in turn rested on stone piers. The iron gates, that opened into the cemetery, were attached to the piers as well. The Sheridan gateway was "constructed as [an] integral part of the original, [Seneca sandstone boundary] wall" that defined the eastern edge of the cemetery.⁶⁹

3. Structural system: When standing, the columns and entablature together were an example of the traditional post and lintel construction. The shafts of the columns were made of six pieces. There are angled rectangular holes cut into the top of the shaft sections; these were necessary for the construction process and used to lift the pieces into place. Also visible in several of the sections or drums is a Masonic symbol, presumably carved into the stone by the mason who created the columns. Holding the entablature into place was a system of metal (iron) I-beams and bolts buried inside the masonry. The metal beams reinforced the masonry entablature; this was done after the entablature collapsed in 1879. Unfortunately, once erected the entablature was not meant to be taken down again. Dismantling it required removing the metal parts and in so doing damaged the entablature severely.⁷⁰

4. Ornament: The Ionic order, with American embellishments, graced the President's House, the portico of the northern two Executive Department buildings (State and War), and again in 1829-30 was repeated in the north portico addition to the White House. Floating above the volutes and acanthus leaves, just beneath the abacus of the capital, is a rose. This motif also

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Keyes, Lethbridge & Condon, Architects, "Relocation of the Ord-Weitzel and Sheridan Gates at the Arlington National Cemetery," Report prepared for the Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Support Services, 1973, p. 2.

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See Architects Group Practice, "Survey and Analysis (/) for Reconstruction and Relocation of (/) SHERIDAN and ORD-WEITZEL GATES (/) Arlington National Cemetery," Report prepared for the Department of the Army Baltimore District Corps of Engineers, May 1974, pp. 1-2; and Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, Captain A.F. Rockwell to the Quartermaster General June 11, 1879; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Letters Sent 1879-1889, Montgomery C. Meigs, Quartermaster General, to Captain A.F. Rockwell, July 16, 1879; Site visit, 1999.

appears in the White House column capitals and a slightly more “windblown” rose is used in tandem with American white oak leaves and acorns in the garlands decorating the White House walls. The rose, signifying an American flower, replaced the palmette which traditionally was carved between the volutes in classical buildings. Beneath the Scamozzi-inspired volutes is the classical egg and dart molding in the echinus, and below that is a variation of bead molding (alternating round and elongated shapes) in the astragal. The capitals and shafts of the columns were painted white. The letters inscribed into the shafts memorializing “Scott,” “Lincoln,” “Stanton,” and “Grant,” however, were lined with lead and painted black. Each letter was 6" high.⁷¹

Similar to the column shafts, ornament in the entablature consisted of white paint and lettering. In lieu of the classical Ionic frieze, which generally was decorated by figures carved in relief, the frieze of the Sheridan Gate received an inscription that revealed its history. It read,

SIX COLUMNS ERECTED IN THE PORTICO OF THE WAR OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, IN 1818, WERE ON THE DEMOLITION OF THAT
BUILDING IN APRIL, 1879, TRANSFERRED TO THE GATEWAYS OF THIS
ARLINGTON NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERY

The letters telling the story of the Ionic columns were 5" tall.⁷² The cap of the entablature was inscribed with “Sheridan” after the General’s death. The height of the “Sheridan” inscription letters was 11".

Also providing ornament were the wrought iron gates, made in two folds to swing upon hinges and pivot steps from notches cut into the granite piers and base blocks. Motifs captured in the gates included scroll work, palmettes, rosettes, and sword and dagger trophy in the center. The specifications for the gates called for “[. . .]the very best American wrought iron, smoothly forged, [so that] the lines of the design [could] be expressed truly and in an artistic manner, and it is desired that these gates should be worked with a view of making them the best that American workmanship can produce.” Inscribed on the gates was “dulce et decorum est pro patria mori,” roughly translated as “it is sweet and noble to die for your country.”⁷³

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See Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery.

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See Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of War, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., H. exdoc. 1 *CIS Index* (1879-1889), vol. 1903, p. 366.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery; at the author’s request, the Latin inscription was translated by David M. Barrett in December 1999.

3. Site:

In 1862, Congress passed a law to levy taxes in the “insurrectionary” districts in a thinly veiled attempt to confiscate Confederate-held property. Because gaining prime real estate was the motivation for the act, the direct tax could only be paid by the owner. The Lees sent a cousin to pay the taxes for their Arlington estate, however, the payment was refused. Two years later, when Secretary of War Edwin Stanton asked the Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs to find land for a burial ground near Washington, D.C., he suggested Arlington. No other parcel was surveyed or considered. In June 1864 the government bought the Arlington estate for \$26,800.00; it was eligible for sale because the Lees had “defaulted” on the property taxes. By the end of 1864 over seven thousand Civil War dead were buried in Arlington.⁷⁴

The rightful heir to Arlington, George Washington Custis Lee, sued for compensation after the war. The case went to court in 1877, and finally in 1882, the United States Supreme Court upheld Lee’s title to the Arlington property. In this case, the U.S. government hoped squatters’ rights would support their cause. After all, the military occupied the estate throughout the war, establishing Fort Whipple and Fort McPherson, a Freedman’s Village, and national cemetery on the premises. The Arlington house also was headquarters for the Quartermaster General. However, the tax sale was dubious and the Supreme Court returned Arlington to its lawful owner. Lee then sold Arlington to the government for \$150,000.00.⁷⁵

Concurrent to the legal battle for Arlington, authorities recognized that something had to be done about the condition of the capital city. Efforts to clean up the District of Columbia

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See Kathryn Allamong Jacob, Testament to Union: Civil War Monuments in Washington, D.C. (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), pp. 3-17, 153-157. In its defense, the report made by the committee for military affairs regarding the Arlington property stated that [Arlington] “was appropriated to the use of the Government as a cemetery for Union soldiers and the interments now number 15,207. It is estimated that the Government has expended \$231,000.00 in its improvement. During the rebellion the estate was sold for arrearages of taxes, and the United States became the purchaser. [. . .] The title acquired at the tax sale of the Arlington estate is, perhaps, cumulative, but the ownership of the Government does not depend upon its validity. (Emphasis mine) That the conqueror has a right to take so much of the conquered territory as may be necessary for cemeteries, forts, and arsenals is too clear to admit of controversy.” Obviously, the government felt the need to re-assure itself of the propriety of its actions. See Congress, House, Reports of Committees, “Arlington Property and National Cemeteries,” 41st Cong., 3rd sess., *CIS Index* (1870-71), vol. 1464, pp. 1-5, to accompany H.R. No. 2715; and Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Annual Reports 1894-1920, Annual Report 1883, p. 20; Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Annual Reports 1894-1920, Annual Report 1884, p. 24. Moreover, in 1878, Congressmen worried that the “unsettled” condition of the title to the Arlington estate put the appropriation for a new approach road to the cemetery in jeopardy. See Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Correspondence 1871-1889, vol. 9, Document No. 2291.

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Karl Decker and Angus McSween, Historic Arlington (Washington, D.C.: Decker and McSween Publishing Company, 1892), pp. 78-85; “Freedman’s Village,” files, Administration Building, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

began. Sewers were buried, sidewalks lit, and streets paved. The unhealthy canals were in-filled. Avenues and parks were laid out, following the l' Enfant plan, with squares and circles left open for statues or memorials. Public and private campaigns were organized to raise monuments to the heroes of the war, hoping to fill in the city's vacant squares and circles. As the century drew to a close, the "city beautiful" movement brought more attention to the nation's capital. Ultimately, the Macmillan Commission of 1901 and the establishment of the Commission of Fine Arts would ensure that the city continued to develop along the plan drawn by George Washington's designer, Pierre l'Enfant. These impulses crossed the Potomac River pulling the national cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, under the Commission's jurisdiction. As such, the War Department consulted the Commission regarding its design projects in the cemetery. Examples include the building of the Memorial bridge and the Memorial gateway, as well as choosing the site for the *USS Maine* Memorial and for the new Amphitheater. Similarly, the Commission requested that the Quartermaster draw up a master plan for the cemetery in 1921; it worried that the interment of the dead from the Great War threatened the aesthetic character of the cemetery.⁷⁶

Although the Civil War and Montgomery C. Meigs brought Arlington National Cemetery into existence and the War Department with the Commission guided its development, the design was shaped by the tradition of rural or "garden" cemeteries. These rural cemeteries began in reaction to the increasingly urban environment and over-crowded church graveyards. As American cities burgeoned, a feeling that something was lost accompanied the progress. The rural landscapes, first created in cemeteries and then in the urban parks, represented a quieter, healthier time. They also spoke to the virtues of middle class America, a purer more grounded condition believed to be closer to the Jeffersonian ideal of an agrarian republic, now overshadowed in commercial city centers. The primary advocate for the benefits of the picturesque countryside - Andrew Jackson Downing - was also America's first prominent landscape gardener. In his books, Downing suggested that the natural landscape could elevate and refine the mind through the sense of grace, elegance, and picturesqueness of carefully integrated, fine architectural and gardening forms.⁷⁷

In the 1850s, the heirs of Downing experimented with a cleaner, simpler setting - one more pastoral than picturesque. In cemetery design, this shift to the pastoral produced a balance between Nature and the man-made memorials to the dead. It also opened up the landscape by limiting the size of markers and by removing trees and large shrubs. Guided by Adolph Strauch, Spring Grove cemetery in Cincinnati first adopted this idea of the "landscape-lawn." Strauch shared Downing's successors Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux's fondness for

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Master Plan, 1966, rev. 1967, Administration Building, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, p. 24; Jacobs, pp. 3-17, passim.

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Sloane, pp. 94-95. See also, Aaron V. Wunsch, "Laurel Hill Cemetery," Report prepared for HABS & the NHL nomination, 1997-99, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. The HABS record is available to the public through the HABS/HAER Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

naturalism in design. These men, among others, forged environments in cemeteries and urban parks that kept monuments from overwhelming the open space by emphasizing a harmony of the whole rather than the individualism of particular lots. This is particularly visible in Arlington. The rows and rows of headstones, standardized in the 1870s, made of marble or granite affirm visually the democracy of death. Officers and enlisted men are interred there, but the memorials are the same. The repetition of one form over and over in the landscape creates a reverent aura, and a sense of community, of equality, among those who died fighting for democratic principles. The pastoral cemetery landscape, like that in Arlington, clearly stated America's commitment to her dead.⁷⁸

In 1883, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs drew from the influences of the landscape architects in his description of the grounds of National Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia. Meigs said that Arlington National Cemetery was

[. . .] tastefully laid out and appropriately ornamented, [the grounds] have been provided with sustained and permanent improvements -- roads, drives, and entrances -- and with the care and attention devoted to its maintenance always presents a handsome and attractive appearance. The cemetery in reality is not only a place of sepulture, but an extensive park of rare beauty, complete within itself and it seems fitting that it should form part of the comprehensive system of improvements and beautifying the water front of the city contemplated and inaugurated by special direction of Congress.⁷⁹

Although Meigs was defending the government's seizure of the strategically located Lee property in Arlington, he does so by emphasizing the park-like quality of the cemetery. This park-like atmosphere was a deliberate creation of Meigs, as was his choice of Arlington as the site for America's premier national cemetery.

By the 1890s, the main entrances to the national cemetery that Meigs established at Arlington were along the Georgetown-Alexandria road that "skirts the hills of the cemetery and winds its way along the level ground below." Off of the Georgetown-Alexandria road were four gates, rising dramatically up from of the stone wall that defined the cemetery boundaries. Three of the gates opened between columns and arches, and the fourth swung between "massive piles of masonry that once formed a portion of the old War Department building." The north gate was the Ord and Weitzel Gate, that was flanked by a tall columns topped by a funeral urn with the Generals's names inscribed on the shafts; next was the larger, more "imposing" Sheridan gate

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David Charles Sloane, The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. 94-95, 99-127, passim; Master Plan, 1966, rev. 1967, Administration Building, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, pp. 25-28.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Annual Reports 1894-1920, Annual Report 1883, p. 20.

that opened between four columns supporting a “moulded piece of cross stone”; the third gate was the McClellan gate of red sandstone; and the fourth was a new gate “little used” in 1892.⁸⁰ From the last three gates, roads “pass beneath the spreading branches of gigantic oaks, and wind about on terraces, flanked by smooth rolling lawns. [. . .] The Government has improved the roads [of the park-like cemetery] and smoothed down the rough places, but the natural beauty of the place remains [intact].”⁸¹ Leading up from the Ord and Weitzel gate, however, the landscape changes from flowers near the early burials, to dense woods and deep ravines. As it does so, the setting creates a sense of wonder as the visitor travels toward the apex of the hill. Near the top, the woodland yields to the landscaped lawn near the house and more closely resembles the environment seen from the other thoroughfares.⁸²

To ensure the park-like cemetery itself was as permanent and monumental as the gateways he built along the Georgetown-Alexandria road, Meigs consulted Olmsted. The landscape architect advised him to establish a setting of dignity and tranquility. If done so properly, Olmsted predicted the national cemetery would become a sacred place to upcoming generations of Americans.⁸³

That Meigs was successful in defining a sacred space at Arlington is recorded in the master plans of 1920s and 1960s; each was forced to deal with problems brought on by the automobile and the duality of tourists and mourners visiting the cemetery. Guiding each was a desire to preserve the historic character of Arlington and its park-like setting. To do so, proposals designated areas for the memorials, roads, and walks with regard to the “sacred nature of the place.” However, after the 1966 master plan when the cemetery expanded beyond Arlington Ridge Road, the Ord and Weitzel Gate and the Sheridan Gate were removed.⁸⁴ In these gates, Meigs had saved a piece of Washington’s earliest material culture. He also used them as grand-scale historic markers at the formal entrances into the cemetery. With their destruction, concerns for automobile transportation seem to have outweighed Meigs’s

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Decker and McSween, p. 86.

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Decker and McSween, p. 87. Roads connecting the two gates and springs were requested by the Quartermaster General in 1874. He wanted roads traversing the grounds between the mansion and public road. See Records of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records relating to Function: Cemeteries, 1828-1929, Arlington National Cemetery, 1874.

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Decker and McSween, p. 87.

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Sloane, pp. 113-115.

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See Master Plans for Arlington National Cemetery, Administration Building, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

architectural statement regarding the permanency of the Union and respect for those who died preserving the United States.

PART III: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

4. Architectural drawings

Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

In the Administration Building of Arlington National Cemetery, the architectural flat files contain various maps of the cemetery, illustrating its development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On these maps, the roads leading to and from the gateways are delineated as well as the locations of the center and north gates into the cemetery.

National Archives @ College Park, Maryland.

In the records for Public Buildings and Parks, there are several plans for Arlington National Cemetery that show the entrance gates in situ. Although no plan specifically for the War Department building (1818-79) exists at the Archives, there are two plans of its counterpart on the northeast side of the White House. (The War Department building was on the northwest). This building was the old State Department building. It was razed to make room for the additions to the Treasury Building. The plans for the Treasury and the old State Department buildings also are located in the records for Public Buildings and Parks (Record Group 42).

5. Early views

Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

In the Administrative Building of Arlington National Cemetery, there are at least two reports written about the Sheridan and Ord-Weitzel Gates that include photographs (one each) of the gates.

Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.

The General Photograph Collection held by the Columbia Historical Society covers Washington between the 1870s and the 1990s. In this collection, there are several photographs and/or copies of photographs that capture the War Department building in situ. One source pictures the Sheridan Gate in Arlington National Cemetery; it is J.F. Jarvis's guide, Washington & Vicinity, of 1897. The historical society also makes available to researchers several published photographic sources. They include:

Kelly, Charles Seddarth. Washington Then and Now: Sixty-nine Sites Photographed in Past and Present. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1984. (See pp. 62-63)

Miller, Frederick M. and Howard Gillette. Washington Seen: A Photographic History, 1875-1965. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995. (See p. 10)

Moore, Joseph West. Picturesque Washington: Pen and Pencil Sketches. Providence: J.A. & R.A. Reid, 1886. (See p. 190)

Reed, Robert. Old Washington D.C. in Early Photographs, 1846-1932. New York: Dover Publications, 1980. (See image nos. 162-188)

Reps, John W. Washington on View: The Nation's Capital Since 1790. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991. (See pp. 53-55, 70-72, 94, 112, 138, 149-150, 170-71).

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

In the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress, there are several early views of the Executive Department buildings (State, War, and Navy) as well as the Sheridan Gate in situ. Several of these images are available through the on-line catalogue of Prints and Photographs, although copies must be paid for through the Library as usual. A plan of the War, State & Navy Departments buildings is included in Robert Mills Guide to National Executive Offices (1841) and a copy of this plan is available at the Library in Prints and Photographs "Washingtoniana." Xerox copies of the images found in the collections held at Prints and Photographs are in the field notes for reference purposes.

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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Annual
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Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, [U.S. Army], Record Group 92, Records of
Brid. General Montgomery C. Meigs 1861-1879, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

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Consolidated Correspondence files 1794-1915, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

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7. Likely sources not yet investigated

Resources at Arlington National Cemetery need to be explored further. A more detailed search through the architectural flat files for drawings or illustrations is necessary as well as

locating the maintenance records for the gates for most of the twentieth century. Similarly, some information may be stored in the Treasury Department's curatorial department such as photographs or drawings. These materials were not in the National Archives, and it is possible (though unlikely) that they are held by the Curator. In addition, the office of the Architect of the Capitol may have some information pertaining to the old War Department building and the columns; the records at the National Archives for the Architect of the Capitol from that time period did not have photographs, plans, or contracts.

8. Supplemental material

Significant Dates:

- 1792 George Washington selected James Hoban's design for the President's House.
- 1793 James Hoban appointed Superintendent Architect for the Capitol.
- 1794 Scotsman Collen Williamson, the master mason, was dismissed from the White House project; members from Lodge No. 8 came from Scotland to Washington, D.C., to work on the White House; members from the lodge included George Thomson, James White, Alexander Wilson, Alexander Scott, James McIntosh, Robert Brown, and probably Alexander Reid. The lodge's signature work is evident in the rich carving seen in the swag over the north door of the White House, especially in the windblown rose, stylized American white oak leaves, and acorns.
- 1795 George Hadfield appointed Superintendent of Construction of the Capitol.
- 1797 George Washington approved George Hadfield's design for the Executive Office buildings.
- 1798 Exterior of White House completed; Lodge No. 8 members either returned to Scotland or went to work on other government projects (such as the Capitol); Work on Treasury building started; George Hadfield resigned as Superintendent of Construction of the Capitol.
- 1799 Construction of other Executive Office building begun.
- 1800 Construction completed on the Treasury Department building and the War Department building; these were built under James Hoban's direction and after George Hadfield's design.
- 1803 George Hadfield designed wings and center of Custis-Lee House (now of Arlington National Cemetery).
- 1814 The British burned public buildings in Washington, D.C.

- 1816-17 Reconstruction of Treasury and State/War/Navy Departments buildings, under James Hoban's direction, begun.
- 1817 George Hadfield designed the central portico of the Custis-Lee House.
- 1818-20 Construction of two new Executive Office buildings, located to the north of the existing two, begun.
- 1820 Baroness Hyde de Neuville sketched President's Square.
- 1833 Treasury Department burned.
- 1836 Construction of Robert Mills' Treasury Building begun.
- 1864 Cemetery for Union Soldiers created on 210 acres of the Lees' Arlington property.
- 1866 State Department building demolished to make room for the north wing of the Treasury building.
- 1871 McClellan Gate erected in Arlington National Cemetery as its main entrance gate; construction of State, War, and Navy Departments building begun.
- 1879 The War Department building (1818) razed; but the ionic columns from its portico were saved. These were re-erected as the Sheridan Gate and the Ord-Weitzel Gate in Arlington National Cemetery.
- 1881 C.A. Schneider and Sons completed the iron gates and installed them in the gateways
- 1882 The U.S. Supreme Court returned Arlington to George Washington Custis Lee, who then sold it to the government because of the cemetery established there.
- 1884 Navy Department building demolished.
- 1888 State, War, and Navy Departments building completed.
- 1971 Cemetery expansion prompted the closing of Ridge Road and the removal of the east wall. Because the gates were located here, they were taken down as well. The stonework was salvaged.

PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, SHERIDAN GATE
HABS No. VA-1348-B
(page 34)

Documentation was undertaken in the winter of 1999 by the Washington, D.C., office of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the National Park Service. The principles involved were E. Blaine Cliver, Division Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), and Paul D. Dolinsky, Chief, HABS. The project was sponsored jointly by the Department of the Navy and by HABS/HAER. The documentation was initiated by Paul D. Dolinsky, with Catherine C. Lavoie, Supervisory Historian, and Mark S. Schara, HABS Architect. The report was written by Virginia B. Price, HABS Historian. Large format photography was produced by Jack E. Boucher, HABS Photographer.