

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic CONSTITUTION HALL

and/or common SAME

2. Location

street & number 311 Eighteenth Street, NW not for publication

city, town Washington vicinity of

state DC code county code

3. Classification

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: cultural |

4. Owner of Property

name National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution

street & number 1776 D Street, NW

city, town Washington vicinity of state DC

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds

street & number Sixth & D Streets, NW

city, town Washington state DC

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

Check one

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered
 original site
 moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Constitution Hall, built and owned by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, faces Eighteenth Street between C and D Streets, Northwest. It was designed by the eminent architect, John Russell Pope, and is constructed of Alabama limestone. The building houses the largest auditorium in the City of Washington, with a seating capacity of 3,746 plus an additional 150 chairs on the 32' x 50' stage. Excavating for Constitution Hall was begun on August 24, 1928, and the first event held in the Hall, a Vesper Service, took place on October 23, 1929.

Constitution Hall was the first of several structures in the vicinity of The Mall in the Nation's Capital that were designed by John Russell Pope. The others are the American Pharmaceutical Institute Building near the Lincoln Memorial; the National Gallery of Art Building and the National Archives Building, between the Capitol and the White House; and the Jefferson Memorial, on the axis that crosses The Mall from the White House, completing Pierre L'Enfant's Plan of the City of Washington.¹ Pope died in 1937, the year he designed the Jefferson Memorial.

The location of Constitution Hall is a re-affirmation of the L'Enfant Plan of 1792, which was supervised and approved by George Washington. The building fronts west, and is a block long and a third of a block deep. Its neighbor to the south, on C Street, is the Pan American Union; to the north, on D Street, is the American Red Cross. Opposite its main entrance on Eighteenth Street is the United States Department of the Interior Building. Constitution Hall is one of a complex of buildings occupying an entire city square, extending to Seventeenth Street opposite the White House Ellipse, owned by the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. Soon after the Society was founded in 1890, it began acquiring the land on which it has built its headquarters buildings: Memorial Continental Hall, the Administration Building, and Constitution Hall.

The Ionic entrance portico of this Neoclassic building, facing on Eighteenth Street, is surmounted by a 90-foot-wide pediment above the name, CONSTITUTION HALL, cut in the stone frieze. The huge sculptured American eagle, and the dates "1776" and "1783" of the Declaration of Independence and the Treaty of Paris, respectively, to the right and left of the eagle, were carved in situ by the sculptor, Ulysses A. Ricci. High on the wall under the portico are five-foot-tall allegorical low-relief panels. Below each panel, and between them, are three pairs of bronze doors. Directly above the center doors is a bronze plaque inscribed: "Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair. The event is in the hands of God. George Washington to the Constitution Convention, A.D. 1787".²

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | | |
|-------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--|
| prehistoric | archeology-prehistoric | community planning | landscape architecture | religion | |
| 1400-1499 | archeology-historic | conservation | law | X science | |
| 1500-1599 | agriculture | economics | literature | X sculpture | |
| 1600-1699 | X architecture | X education | military | X social | |
| 1700-1799 | X art | engineering | X music | humanitarian | |
| 1800-1899 | commerce | exploration settlement | philosophy | X theater | |
| X 1900- | communications | industry | X politics government | transportation | |
| | | invention | | X other (specify) | |
| | | | | performing arts | |

Specific dates 1924-1930 **Builder Architect** John Russell Pope

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Summary

The National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, built Constitution Hall to accommodate their annual Continental Congresses and other activities, but it quickly became the unofficial cultural center of the Nation's Capital and a nationally known focus for all forms of the performing and literary arts. It has retained much of its importance in Washington's cultural life, despite the construction of the Kennedy Center. The Daughters of the American Revolution, from this national headquarters, have made major contributions to citizenship education, historic preservation, and historical scholarship.

Annually, several thousand delegates representing the members of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, gather in Constitution Hall during the week of April 19th (the anniversary of the Battle of Lexington and Concord) for their Continental Congress, when they report on their activities of the past year and set goals for the coming year. At this time, they reaffirm the Society's objectives as set forth in the Act of Incorporation by the Fifty-Fourth Congress of the United States in 1895, whereby the Society was created "a body corporate and politic, ... for patriotic, historical and educational purposes; to perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American Independence; by the acquisition and protection of historical spots and the erection of monuments; by the encouragement of historical research in relation to the Revolution and the publication of its results; by the preservation of documents and relics, and of the records of the individual services of Revolutionary soldiers and patriots, and by the promotion of celebrations of all patriotic anniversaries;..."

The achievements of these goals over the ninety-five years of the Society's existence are contained in its numerous publications, hundreds of them. To mention only two of these: the Society's monthly magazine, published continuously since 1892; and the annual Proceedings of the Continental Congress that, as required by the Act of Congress creating the Daughters of the American Revolution, is reported to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution who "shall communicate to Congress such portions thereof as he may deem of national interest and importance." In order to carry out the objectives enumerated in the Act of Congress, the Society built Constitution Hall.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property approximately 1

Quadrangle name Washington West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|----|
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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

B

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Only Constitution Hall itself.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mollie Somerville, Researcher

National Society

organization Daughters of the American Revolution

date January 8, 1985

street & number 1776 D Street, NW

telephone 879-3278

city or town Washington

state DC

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The architect's specifications read: "All special carving shall be done under this contract by skilled carvers, selected by the Architect, in a spirited and artistic manner, from plaster models prepared or approved by the Architect.... The cost of special carving is included under 'Allowances' and will include relief work and figures in the pediment, wreathes, ... relief panels on rear wall of and flanking main portico, and urns."³

A broad flight of steps on this, the main approach to Constitution Hall, leads past the entrance pillars supporting the portico. The approach on C Street is by way of a promenade, while a driveway leads to D Street. There are five pairs of bronze doors on each of these two sides and three pairs on the front of the building, the total representative of the thirteen original colonies.

Inside Constitution Hall, a spacious lobby extends around three sides of the great U-shaped auditorium, which is surrounded by 52 boxes, their facades decorated with the various State seals. The President of the United States has a box.⁴ A blue and gold motif has been used for these interiors. In the lobby, the blue and gold colors appear in the form of stripes. In the auditorium, specially woven, custom-designed material features gold medallions and stars on a blue background, with an elaborately woven border of gold eagles surrounded with garlands. More than 500 yards of this material was used for the 25-foot-long stage curtains. The medallion and star motif is repeated in vinyl wall-covering on the front of the boxes and exit walls around the entire auditorium. The hard surface on these walls, and on the floor, was chosen for acoustical reasons.⁵

On either side of the stage are graceful twin Ionic columns, each topped by a 3-1/2-foot American Bald Eagle finished in 14-carat gold leaf. Centered above the stage is a painted lunette of the Great Seal of the United States, flanked by twelve Revolutionary flags. Under the Seal are the names of the thirteen original colonies in geographical order. Inconspicuously lodged at the foot of the stage is the three-manual Skinner organ's console. Backstage are dressing rooms and the Conductor's Room.

Also on this floor is the President General's Reception Room. Located in the northeast corner, with doors to the lobby and a passageway to the stage, this lovely and spacious formal room is used by the President General for receiving members and guests. The portrait of Mrs. Benjamin Harrison, first President General of the Daughters of the American Revolution at the time she was First Lady, is a copy of one by Daniel Huntington that was presented to the White House by the Daughters in 1892. The room's predominant colors are golden beige and crimson.

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On the floor below is a handsome lounge finished in green, gold, and cream. A pair of custom-designed and woven rugs complement the straight line lounge chairs and sofas, upholstered in antique velvet. Also located on the lower level is the Pages' Lounge, which may be used for meetings, etc.

A marble stairway, lighted by day by a large decorative bronze window of exceptional beauty, leads to the second floor of Constitution Hall. The Genealogical Library, which it was intended to house, quickly outgrew this space. A large meeting room and offices of the Children of the American Revolution occupy the north and south ends, respectively. The central area is now used to exhibit a collection of decorative and applied arts for children and young adults. It is one of the few such displays in Washington. Open to the public, it is free.

In recent years, air-conditioning was installed and obsolete wiring was replaced throughout Constitution Hall.

Footnotes

¹Map: "Plan of the City of Washington in the Territory of Columbia ceded by the States of Virginia and Maryland to the United States of America, and by them established as the Seat of their Government, after the Year MDCCC." Engraved by Thackara & Vallance, Phila., 1792.

²Plaque: Exact wording of inscription.

³Specifications for Constitution Hall, by John Russell Pope.

⁴The boxes represent the Fifty States, the District of Columbia and The President.

⁵Leopold Stokowski, who conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra in the opening concert of the 1930-1931 season, placed Constitution Hall among the six leading concert halls in America. Later, the famous American pianist, Van Cliburn, said enthusiastically: "It is a grand hall! The acoustics are splendid!" These comments, recorded in the official records of the Society, have been backed by science. The Hall has been measured by sound engineers of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, who pronounced it close to ideal for an auditorium of its size. Their opinion was later confirmed by acoustic experts of the United States Bureau of Standards when the Hall was renovated in recent years.

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The Daughters of the American Revolution and Historic Preservation

The Society's first historic site preservation effort was the appropriation, in 1896, of \$100 to save historic Jamestown Island from being washed away by the James River. The building of a protective wall preserved the site of the first successful English settlement on this continent.

The number of historic sites that have been marked by the NSDAR is estimated at 10,000. As well as marking historic sites, the NSDAR restores, preserves, and maintains historic sites. They have rescued many historic buildings that were ready to be demolished to make way for super-highways. They purchase buildings, have them moved, restore them, and then open them to the public. They have also restored old forts, bridges, and cemeteries. In addition to restoring DAR-owned sites, the NSDAR also raises funds and assists other groups who are interested in preservation. Members serve as docents, maintain gardens, and contribute appropriate items for museums and historic places.

In the past year, the DAR has begun 77 restoration projects and completed 40 of them.

The Daughters of the American Revolution and Citizenship Education

As early as 1910, DAR members pioneered in assisting immigrants who lived in their local communities to become naturalized citizens. Many of these newcomers did not speak English and did not know how to become American citizens. In order to help them, the DAR has compiled and published a Manual for Citizenship since 1921. Originally printed in 19 languages plus English, it is now printed in English only (at the request of the Immigration and Naturalization Department of the United States Department of Justice). More than 10,000,000 copies of this book have been distributed free to immigrants.

The DAR Manual for Citizenship Committee is one of several committees involved in citizenship education. Others are: Junior American Citizens, kindergarten through high school, contests and award programs; DAR Good Citizens, seniors in public and private schools, scholarship and cash award programs; American History Scholarship, \$8,000 scholarship to a high school senior; American History Month Essay Contest, 5th through 8th grades, medals and cash awards; Good Citizenship Medal, awarded to elementary, junior and senior high school students.

The Citizenship Committee awards two medals with certificates: the Medal of Honor is given to a native-born citizen and the DAR Americanism Medal is given to a naturalized citizen.

THE NSDAR initiated the observances of American History Month and Constitution Week.

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The Daughters of the American Revolution and Constitution Hall

Constitution Hall is a "Memorial to that Immortal Document The Constitution of the United States in which are Incorporated those Principles of Freedom, Equality, and Justice for which Our Forefathers Strove. Erected by The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. Cornerstone Laid October 30, 1928." These words are carved in the block of stone at the northwest corner of Constitution Hall. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, then First Lady, assisted in laying the stone, and put her card and that of the President inside it. The gavel that was used to tap the stone into place was the same one that George Washington used in laying the cornerstone of the United States Capitol.

The Honorable Charles Moore, Chairman of the National Commission of Fine Arts, was also present. In his speech, he said: "True education never ends... The work of the world will be done better if you women shall use to the fullest extent the opportunities this building will afford."¹ The Daughters had adopted promotion of education as one of their objectives when the Society was organized in 1890, and sponsor scores of projects toward this end. A perusal of the programs taking place in Constitution Hall from the opening season on lists numerous events that support this endeavor.

The Archives of the American Red Cross as well as those of the Daughters testify to wartime activities. The Red Cross was given the lobby space in the Hall for its Prisoners of War relief work in 1941. The Daughters converted the basement area of the Hall into a nursery school for servicemen's children, and built a play-yard for them on the adjacent grounds. When benefit concerts were scheduled, the Daughters gave the Hall free of charge.

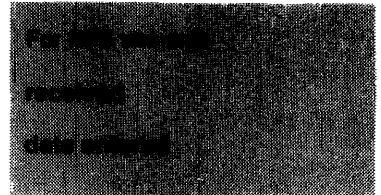
Constitution Hall was the only auditorium of suitable size and facilities for the cultural arts in Washington for more than forty years. Musically, every major orchestra in the world, as well as every outstanding individual artist, has performed in the Hall. Dance troupes, bands, and debaters have appeared on its stage. The series of lectures given in Constitution Hall by the National Geographic Society over the past fifty years is a record unequalled in any other known such building, a total of 2,000 to date.²

Architectural Significance of Constitution Hall

In 1928, the Jury of The Architect's Advisory Council of the District of Columbia placed Constitution Hall in its top classification of buildings-- Class I: COMMENDED, and listed it as "Distinguished Architecture: Outstanding among buildings of its type."³

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Washington architects emphasized a notable feature of Constitution Hall: "Excellent circulation is afforded here by the triple frontage which permits entrances on three sides--the carriage ramp on the north side being the most notable. Within, these entrances are connected by a grand promenade."⁴

At the laying of Constitution Hall's cornerstone on October 30, 1928, the Honorable Charles Moore, Chairman of the National Commission of Fine Arts (part of whose speech is quoted above), spoke words of high praise:

Because the Daughters of the American Revolution have made their buildings a constituent part of the National Capital plan, the laying of the cornerstone of Constitution Hall has a national significance.... Mrs. Brosseau [President General, NSDAR], for your auditorium you and your committee have chosen your architect well. Among his professional brethren he stands the peer of any as a designer in those forms of buildings that have won enduring merit since charm came to be added to stability.... If there be a lack in the Washington of today, it is our lack of consideration for those things that make for the highest civilization. Towards filling that need this building will be a necessary physical contribution.

In the years since then, the Daughters of the American Revolution have maintained and preserved the building's Neoclassic design.

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The Need for a Larger Auditorium is Recognized

The Daughters of the American Revolution were urgently in need of a new, and larger, auditorium by 1924, having outgrown the auditorium, seating 1,666, in their first building, Memorial Continental Hall. That year, the President General of the Society, Mrs. Anthony Wayne Cook, was authorized to secure and submit tentative plans for the erection of an auditorium on the vacant land facing Eighteenth Street. In December, John Russell Pope, New York architect, presented his first plans for the new building, but these were thought to be for a structure that was too large, and too costly. In January, 1925, he submitted a second plan and this was accepted by the Society at its annual meeting, the Continental Congress, the following April. Pope estimated that the new auditorium building would cost \$1,825,000. He arrived at this approximate figure by putting the cost of a cubic foot at \$1.00. The breakdown amounts were: building, \$1,575,000; architect's fees, \$150,000; and furnishings not included in the building cost, \$100,000.

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A Distinguished Architect

John Russell Pope was born in New York City, and studied architecture at Columbia University, graduating in 1894 at age 21. He was awarded a scholarship in 1895, and spent the next five years in Europe studying the classic architecture of Italy and France. As a result, he believed that the buildings he would design, incorporating what he had absorbed, would enrich American architecture. The Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893 set a pattern for public buildings of white stone instead of red brick and furthered Pope's objectives. Before designing Constitution Hall, Pope's abilities had been recognized at home and abroad. He won an award from the Architectural League in 1916 for his Scottish Rite Temple (in Washington, D.C.) and the Gold Medal of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1918. France had made him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor in 1922. He served on national and federal commissions and, in 1933, became president of the American Academy in Rome.

Pope designed several structures in Washington, five of them in the vicinity of The Mall. "Other architects may possibly have designed more structures for our capital city than he, but none, certainly, has contributed more to its present level of good taste. Constitution Hall, belonging to the Daughters of the American Revolution, has the classic restraint of the Scottish Rite [Temple, 1915] without and the same artistry within;...."⁵

Constitution Hall as a Cultural Center

The Daughters' initial purpose in building Constitution Hall had been to provide seating for the delegates to the Society's annual meetings. But even before the first of these meetings took place in April, 1930, the Hall had been used for concerts, lectures, and other cultural events connected with the performing arts. At the laying of the cornerstone on October 30, 1928, the Honorable Charles Moore, Chairman of the National Commission of Fine Arts, made this prediction: "For the highest form of music, the symphony concert, this auditorium will make suitable and adequate provisions. It may lead to a permanent orchestra. You may make it a platform for the world's thinkers, as well as a place to honor men of achievements."⁶

All these predictions became realities immediately after the Hall was completed. The 1930-1931 season opened with the International Oratorical Contest and was followed by a series of afternoon and evening concerts by the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Sousa's Band. Among individual artists were Metropolitan Opera stars Edward Johnson, Beniamino Gigli, Grace Moore, and

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Maria Jeritza, the outstanding tenors and sopranos, respectively, of their time; José Iturbi, Josef Hoffman, and Serge Rachmaninoff, pianists; Fritz Kreisler and Yehudi Menuhin ("Phenomenal Boy Violist"); Roland Hayes, tenor and John Charles Thomas, baritone. The Beethoven Festival of the Boston Symphony Orchestra with a chorus of 250 voices, the Don Cossack Male Choir, and a dance company also performed in the Hall that first season.

The number of these events almost doubled in the second season. On November 2, 1931, the first concert ever of the National Symphony Orchestra, with Hans Kindler, founder of the orchestra, conducting, took place in Constitution Hall. The Hall was the "home" of the National Symphony Orchestra for more than forty years. Even after the Kennedy Center was built in 1972, the orchestra came back to the Hall to make special recordings.

The Hall is also the "home" of the National Geographic Society's lecture series. The regular season series of lectures started in 1933-1934 but there were special lectures before then. At the close of the current 1984-1985 season, the National Geographic Society will have given a grand total of nearly 2,000 lectures in the Hall. Nestled high in the ceiling of the auditorium, behind the west balcony, are 16mm and 35mm motion picture sound projectors and spot lights. The stage curtains hide a portable motion picture screen.

In the years since October 26, 1929, a roster of the artists, impresarios, orchestras, choral groups, bands, distinguished lecturers, and great and near great that have appeared on the stage of the magnificent auditorium reads like an international Who's Who. An abbreviated list follows:

The National Symphony Orchestra gave its first concert in Constitution Hall on January 31, 1930, and the Hall was the National Symphony Orchestra's "home" until 1972. More than 100 different orchestras have performed in the Hall.

The first public event took place on October 26, 1929, an International Oratorical Contest.

The National Geographic Society presented its first lecture in Constitution Hall on May 16, 1930, and began its first series of season lectures in 1933. The seventeen-week, three lectures per week series continue to be given in the Hall.

Many private individual lecturers have appeared on the stage of Constitution Hall. Sir Winston Churchill delivered a lecture on "The World Economic Crisis" on February 12, 1932. Other lecturers include Admiral Richard Byrd, Amelia Earhart, Lowell Thomas, Bennett Cerf, Ralph Bunche, and Carl Sandburg.

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Individual performers: Roland Hayes, Efrem Zimbalist, Burl Ives, Harry Belafonte, Leontyne Price, Fritz Kreisler, Maurice Chevalier, Mahalia Jackson, Victor Borge, Lily Pons, John Charles Thomas, Van Cliburn, Marian Anderson,* Fred Waring, Jascha Heifetz, Artur Rubinstein, Yehudi Menuhin, and Charles Laughton.

Groups: Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Howard University Chorus, Don Cossack Chorus, Robert Wagner Chorale, Vienna Choir Boys, Trapp Family, St. Olaf Choir, Korean Choir, Obernkirchen Choir, and numerous national and international dancers.

Footnotes

¹Verbatim Record, Recording Secretary General's Office, NSDAR.

²Miss Joanne Hess, National Geographic Society, by telephone, October 17, 1984.

³Report of The Architect's Advisory Council, December 11, 1928.

⁴A Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C., Washington Chapter, American Institute of Architects; McGraw Hill, 1965, 1974, p. 100, #9.

⁵W. Francklyn Paris, The Hall of American Artists. New York University, 1951, p. 38.

⁶Verbatim Record, Secretary General's Office, NSDAR.

*See addendum, item 8, pages 16 and 17.

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

THE FOUNDERS OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY, DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By adoption of a resolution of the Sixth Continental Congress (1897), four women were named as Founders:

Whereas, Miss Eugenia Washington, Miss Mary Desha and Mrs. Ellen Hardin Walworth did, on August 9, 1890, prepare the constitution and appoint the leading officers of the National Society, which were confirmed at the first public meeting, on October 11, 1890, and did in the interval prepare, publish and circulate application papers and other appliances for organization, and thus initiated and established the Society, which therefrom entered upon its successful career; and,

Whereas, Mrs. Mary S. Lockwood inspired a general interest in this subject, thus founding, by her pen, in the article published July 13, 1890, that she be recognized as the founder, and four medals be awarded to these founders of the Society.

Resolved, That these four founders of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, viz: Eugenia Washington, Mary Desha, Ellen Hardin Walworth, and Mary S. Lockwood shall be, and hereby are, officially recognized as founders.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed by the Continental Congress to prepare four medals to be commemorative of the work done by the said four founders, the same to be designed by a skilled artist, and that said medals be formally presented to the said founders--Eugenia Washington, Mary Desha, Ellen Hardin Walworth, and Mary S. Lockwood--to be retained by them during their lifetime, and at their demise to be returned to the Society, there to be deposited among the valuable historical mementos of our Society; and be it

Resolved, That all expenses attending the procurement and presentation of said medals be paid from any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Miss Washington and Miss Desha held positions in the Federal government. The former was a Virginian. The latter, a native of Kentucky, had recently returned to Washington from Alaska where she taught school. Mrs. Walworth, a lawyer, came from Illinois but received her legal training at the University of New York and conducted classes in parliamentary law in that city. Mrs. Lockwood, an author and newspaper writer, was born in New York City. The two last named women were widows.

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Eugenia Washington (1840-1900), holder of National Number One, served as one of the two first Registrars General, who jointly held office at that time. Affectionately called "Miss Eugie," Miss Washington was a modest and retiring person. Although suffering from a serious eye condition that made writing difficult, she diligently carried out the duties of her office.

We want a patriotic society founded on service and I will not become a member of an organization which is founded on rank and not on the service of the ancestors.

Mary Desha (1850-1911), designer of the Society's Seal, was a Vice President General of the newly formed Society. (The family name had originally been DuChene, but at this time was pronounced "Deshay," with the accent on the last syllable.) Her standard of action as a Daughter was the Constitution, and she would not permit the slightest departure from it.

I want the ladies to vote, but I want it to go on record that I wish to adhere to the strict letter of the Constitution.

Ellen Hardin Walworth (1832-1915) was the first Recording Secretary General. She was president and founder of the Art and Science Field Club of Saratoga (New York): it was she who suggested that the Society present a portrait of Mrs. Benjamin Harrison to the White House. Mrs. Walworth was by authorization of the Board of Management of May 7, 1892, editor of the Society's Magazine.

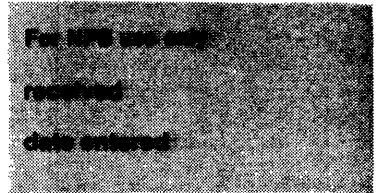
That the Board of Management publish a monthly magazine, which shall contain the report of the proceedings of the Continental Congress, and from time to time, the proceedings of the Board of Management, and such reports as may be sent from the respective Chapters, all to be under the charge of Mrs. Ellen Hardin Walworth, subject to the supervision of the Board.

Mary Smith Lockwood (1831-1922), the "Pen Founder" of the Society, was its first Historian General. A small, slight but extremely energetic woman, she was the author of several books and a member of the National Press Association. Although the oldest of the Founders, she was the last survivor among them. It is Mrs. Lockwood who is credited with having spoken the first words in behalf of Memorial Continental Hall, in a motion she introduced at the second organizational meeting on October 18, 1890.

That after this Association has assisted in the completion of the monument of Mary Washington, the next effort shall be to provide a place for the collection of Historical relics.... This may first be in rooms, and later in the erection of a fireproof building.

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ADMINISTRATION BRIEFS OF THE PRESIDENTS GENERAL
NATIONAL SOCIETY, DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

1890-1892 Mrs. Benjamin Harrison (Caroline Scott). Society incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia. DAR Magazine authorized. (Published continuously since 1892.) Died in office.

1893-1895; 1896-1898 Mrs. Adlai E. Stevenson (Letitia Green). NSDAR granted a charter by the Congress of the United States. Children of the American Revolution created as a Society.

1895-1896 Mrs. John W. Foster (Mary Parke McFerson). Created office of Librarian General (Genealogical Library). Authorized Revolutionary Relics Committee (Museum). Contribution made to first historic restoration project (Jamestown embankment).

1898-1901 Mrs. Daniel Manning (Mary Margaretta Fryer). Recruited more than 500 nurses for the Spanish-American War; hospital corps organized. A War Relief Committee formed to aid needy families of soldiers. Presented launch to U.S. government as a tender to hospital-ship Missouri.

1901-1905 Mrs. Charles W. Fairbanks (Cornelia Cole). Memorial Continental Hall site purchased; 72 architects submitted designs in competition; Edward Pearce Casey of New York awarded contract; cornerstone laid 1904 during Continental Congress. NSDAR initiated citizenship classes for foreign-born.

1905-1909 Mrs. Donald McLean (Emily Nelson Ritchie). NSDAR interest in mountain schools begun. Continental Congress of 1909 held in Memorial Continental Hall.

1909-1913 Mrs. Matthew T. Scott (Julia Green). Work among American Indians begun. Conservation Committee authorized. NSDAR presented statue of George Washington costing \$40,000 to University of Washington.

1913-1917 Mrs. William Cumming Story (Daisy Allen). During World War I, a standing committee for war relief authorized, to work with Advisory Board of the Council of National Defense; NSDAR undertook support of French war orphans.

1917-1920 Mrs. George Thacher Guernsey (Sarah Elizabeth Mitchell). Society loaned land to U.S. government for World War I temporary office building; purchased \$100,000 in Liberty Loan Bonds; contributed money to care for some 5,000 war orphans. President General visited France to study needs of French village of Tilloloy which Society had pledged itself to restore: water supply rebuilt, 60 houses completely furnished, livestock supplied.

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1920-1923 Mrs. George Maynard Minor (Anne Belle Rogers). Conference on Limitation of Armament held in Memorial Continental Hall; tablet of appreciation presented by U.S. government. Social and educational work among the immigrants at Ellis Island begun: first Manual of the United States for Immigrants and Foreigners published.

1923-1926 Mrs. Anthony Wayne Cook (Lora Haines). Published pamphlet on correct use of the Flag. Projects: Madonna of the Trail monuments, one in each state crossed by the National Old Trails Road; Pilgrim Memorial Fountain, Plymouth, Mass.

1926-1929 Mrs. Hall Brosseau (Grace Lincoln Hall). Constitution Hall built and dedicated. Founders Memorial and last Madonna of the Trail statue unveiled. Memorial to Caroline Scott Harrison: rehabilitation of main building at Oxford College for Women, Oxford, Ohio. Furnished George Washington's house in Philadelphia during Sesquicentennial Exposition.

1929-1932 Mrs. Lowell Fletcher Hobart (Edith Erwin). George Washington's Bicentennial: NSDAR presented oil painting of Martha Washington to Lee Mansion in Arlington Cemetery. Yorktown Sesquicentennial: two bronze tablets listing names of American and French soldiers who died there dedicated and unveiled.

1932-1935 Mrs. Russell William Magna (Edith Scott). NSDAR instrumental in having government officials photostat early U.S. census records. Occupational therapy provided by DAR at Ellis Island, at U.S. government request.

1935-1938 Mrs. William A. Becker (Florence Hague). Inaugurated annual \$1,000 contributions each to Kate Duncan Smith (KDS) and Tamassee DAR Schools. American Indians Committee authorized. Surrender Room at Yorktown furnished. Originated: National Defense News; Good Citizens Medal for boys and girls; Junior American Citizens Clubs, 21,418 members, sponsored by NSDAR.

1938-1941 Mrs. Henry M. Robert, Jr. (Sarah Corbin). 50th anniversary projects: presented Caroline Scott Harrison portrait to President Harrison Mansion, Indianapolis; construction of Archives Room; continuation of Penny Pine (conservation) Projects.

1941-1944 Mrs. William H. Pouch (Helena R.). Aid offered U.S. government for national and civilian defense. Corridors of Constitution Hall used as offices by American Red Cross; Red Cross Unit organized; Air Raid Shelter, Hospital Room established; War Relief Service Work Rooms created; Constitution Hall used for benefit performances for Community War Fund and United China Relief; contributions totaling \$340,000 for equipment, blood plasma, blood

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donor centers and station wagons, etc. Occupational therapy work extended to Staten Island Marine Hospital. Memorial Bell Tower, Valley Forge, cornerstone laid, Carillon presented and dedicated.

1944-1947 Mrs. Julius Y. Talmadge (May Erwin). War projects: \$86,566 to U.S. Navy, Marine, Coast Guard, and Mayo General Hospital; \$3,400 for radio head sets donated to bed patients at Staten Island Hospital; DAR members purchased more than \$152,000,000 war bonds; triptychs donated for battlefield worship, \$2,000; presented U.S. Navy Award of Achievement for outstanding services in World War II. Buildings used by war units reconditioned for DAR use. Contributed \$25,000 each to two DAR Schools, KDS and Tamassee, on their 25th anniversaries; \$1,100 each to 12 Approved DAR Schools.

1947-1950 Mrs. Roscoe C. O'Byrne (Estella A.). Over \$350,000 in cash contributed to DAR Schools. Addition to Administration Building approved and built. National Tribute Grove in California dedicated, \$26,000.

1950-1953 Mrs. James B. Patton (Marguerite Courtright). Silk American Flag presented for Speaker's Rostrum, U.S. House of Representatives; General Douglas MacArthur speaker at Continental Congress, April 1950. Special Award to NSDAR from Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge. President General by invitation of U.S. Defense Department, joined on inspection tour of 5 military services training centers; presided at Yorktown ceremonies.

1953-1956 Miss Gertrude Sprague Carraway. Constitution Hall renovated and repainted, approximate cost, \$175,000. Constitution Week commemoration started in 1955, with DAR help, by U.S. Senate and continued in 1956; NSDAR received a special award from Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge for outstanding observance of this commemoration. Additional annual awards to service academies; new medicine, nursing, and occupational therapy scholarships.

1956-1959 Mrs. Frederic A. Groves (Allene Wilson). Authorized committee to commemorate American History Month. Acquired 98 original letters, documents, and manuscripts from all 74 statesmen who attended the Constitutional Convention in 1787. Award of Merit established recognizing patriotic service directed toward preservation of our Constitutional Republic. Friends of the Museum formed to further work of DAR Museum. New Americanism Medal authorized for Naturalized Citizens. Allene Wilson Groves Cottage at Tamassee endorsed.

1959-1962 Mrs. Ashmead White (Doris Pike). Meadow Garden, former home of George Walton (a Signer of the Declaration of Independence), given to Georgia State Society, NSDAR. Doris Pike White auditorium-gymnasium at KDS built.

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1962-1965 Mrs. Robert V. H. Duncan (Marion Moncure). Published "In Washington: The DAR Story" to commemorate 75th anniversary of NSDAR. Emphasis on public relations. Interest in youth projects: \$1,000 annual DAR Good Citizen National Award established; junior members of DAR stressed.

1965-1968 Mrs. William Henry Sullivan, Jr. (Adele Erb). 75th Anniversary Administration. In 1966, the Washington National Symphony, with Van Cliburn as guest soloist, gave a special concert in the newly air-conditioned and refurbished Constitution Hall, the first such equipped auditorium in Washington with the largest capacity audience under one roof. The President of the United States and Mrs. Johnson attended. Adele Erb Sullivan Administration Building constructed at Tamassee DAR School; dormitory completed and furnished at St. Mary's Episcopal School for Indian Girls. "DAR Patriot Index" compiled. Awards established: Dr. Anita Newcomb McGee Award to Army Nurse of the Year; DAR ROTC Medal; \$8,000 NSDAR American History Scholarship for senior high school students; Citation to U.S. Marine Band. Committees established: United States of America Bicentennial; DAR Service for Veteran-Patients; Department of American Historical Research. President General visited U.S. Armed Forces in combat area, S. Vietnam, where she awarded 47 DAR Americanism Medals. Special DAR Museum events for Armed Forces personnel and tickets given to hospitalized Vietnam veterans for Constitution Hall events. President General received by First Lady, Mrs. Johnson, to present nine pieces of crystal from a service given to President Warren G. Harding in 1921.

1968-1971 Mrs. Erwin Frees Seimes (Betty Newkirk). National Symphony Orchestra booked programs in Constitution Hall for the summer, first time ever. Americana Collection indexed and catalogued. Genealogical Society of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) microfilmed the DAR Library holdings. Presented Certificates of Honor to families of U.S. servicemen killed in Vietnam. Seimes-Thomas Classroom Building at KDS DAR School built. DAR Magazine: awarded Freedoms Foundation George Washington Honor Medal; published list of marked graves of Revolutionary soldiers and patriots. Continental Congress (annual meeting) televised in Constitution Hall by National Broadcasting Company, a first. Rose Garden in Independence Hall Park, Philadelphia, presented to National Park Service, January 1971.

1971-1974 Mrs. Donald Spicer (Eleanor Washington). Project: "A Gift to the Nation;" refurnishing of Governor's Council Chamber and Assembly Committee Room on second floor of Independence Hall. NSDAR accorded membership in Veterans Administration National Advisory Committee. DAR Museum accredited by American Association of Museums. Air Force Band initiated free Sunday afternoon concerts in Constitution Hall. President General one of two women invited to week-long Joint Civilian Orientation Conference conducted by Department of Defense, touring military installations in five states.

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1974-1975 Mrs. Henry Stewart Jones (Sara Roddis). Project planned: murals in East Corridor of House of Representatives, United States Capitol. President General member of Editorial Committee of The Hereditary Register of the United States of America. Flag of U.S.A. presented to Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C. Died in office.

1975-1977 Mrs. Wakelee Rawson Smith (Jane Farwell). Special emphasis on Bicentennial of U.S.A. Completed project of murals, a "Bicentennial Tribute to the United States of America." Citations presented to U.S. Capitol Historical Society and its president, Mr. Fred Schwengel, and to Mr. Allyn Cox, muralist. Buildings constructed and renovated at KDS and Tamassee DAR Schools. Authorized book on historic and memorial buildings owned by the DAR anywhere. Produced "Home and Country," an audio-visual film of NSDAR. Flags presented: U.S. Flags for rostrums of the Senate and the House of Representatives and five new State Flags at the United States Naval Academy. Special Museum programs for children inaugurated. President General elected to Board of Trustees of the United States Capitol Historical Society.

1977-1980 Mrs. George Upham Baylies (Jeannette Osborn). Held in Lobby of Constitution Hall: first art show and first antique show. Home Economics Building constructed at KDS DAR School. Special gala celebration of 50th anniversary of Constitution Hall and 75th anniversary of Memorial Continental Hall. Naval Education & Training Center, Newport, Rhode Island, added to list of service academies receiving NSDAR awards. President General advisory member of Board of Outstanding Young Women of America; invited to join American Newspaper Women's Club; served on advisory board of drug rehabilitation center in Washington, D.C.

1980-1983 Mrs. Richard Denny Shelby (Patricia Walton). Two First Day Issue stamp ceremonies held in DAR Library by U.S. Postal Service. Medals of Honor presented by NSDAR to S. Dillon Ripley, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, and L. Bruce Laingen, Foreign Service Officer, Iranian hostage; to Fran McKee and the Hon. Margaret Chase Smith. First Outstanding Veteran Patient Award presented. American Flag presented to 1981 National Boy Scout Jamboree; American Flag flown over U.S. Capitol presented to National Headquarters of The Girl Scouts of America; small American Flags presented to 1982 World's Fair for July 4th Extravaganza. Pilgrimage of Remembrance: visit to Europe--England, France. First major loan exhibition in DAR Museum, "The Jewish Community in Early America." Established Outstanding Teacher of American History Award. Yorktown Bicentennial: NSDAR Bus Tour to Yorktown; bronze plaque dedicated in memory of men of French Fleet in Battle Off the Virginia Capes. Special events in Constitution Hall: 25th Anniversary of Country Music Association; first Executive Forum in Hall with President of U.S. and Cabinet attending; Vietnam Veterans Salute.

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1983-1986 Mrs. Walter Hughey King (Sarah McKelley). Treaty of Paris Bicentennial Celebration: DAR Tour to Paris with more than 200 DAR members, August 25 - September 3, 1983. Marker dedicated at Yorktown Square honoring Peacemakers Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and John Adams; President General addressed people of Paris at reception given by Mayor; NSDAR hosted dinner at Chateau de Versailles attended by more than 500; President General led Executive Officers and Pages with Flags in march up the Champs Elysees to Arc de Triomphe where wreath was placed at France's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. DAR Peacemaker Award presented to: Mrs. Douglas MacArthur, Madame la Marechal LeClerc de Hautecloque; Secretary of the Army, the Honorable John O. Marsh; the Vice President of the United States, the Honorable George Bush. Publications: DAR Library Catalog, 2nd edition; "Black Courage, 1775-1783" (black soldiers and patriots in the American Revolution); "The Arts of Independence" (DAR Museum collection); and, in celebration of the 100th birthday of the Statue of Liberty, promoted "In Search of Liberty - The Story of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island." DAR Day, June 14, at 1984 Louisiana World Exposition, New Orleans - President General Grand Marshal for Flag Day Parade. Also Grand Marshal of Fourth of July National Independence Day Parade, Washington, D.C.

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ADDENDUM

Miss Anderson performed at Constitution Hall several times, beginning in the 1940s. Far more well known, however, is an occasion on which she did not sing there. A controversy developed in 1939 when the Daughters of the American Revolution did not grant permission for a concert by Miss Anderson in Constitution Hall. The hall was previously booked for the date originally requested for Miss Anderson's concert, but in addition the DAR at that time had a policy of inserting clauses in Constitution Hall contracts that allowed "whites only" to perform in the hall. As a result of the public controversy surrounding the exclusion of Miss Anderson from the hall, it was arranged for her to perform at the Lincoln Memorial. On Easter Sunday of 1939 she sang an outdoor concert at the Memorial attended by an estimated 75,000 people, including a number of Federal officials. This event became an emblem of struggle for equal opportunity and against racial segregation for many Americans.

In a statement prepared in 1973, the DAR described the situation that arose following the initial request for the use of Constitution Hall in these words:

Because of a series of unfortunate misunderstandings afterward, a controversy developed, and Miss Anderson sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. International publicity which followed was extremely detrimental to the DAR, and dramatically but incorrectly made a segment of the public regard the DAR as racist. It has been said that the incident was the first successful Civil Rights activist event.

In 1939, Washington was, as it had always been, a segregated city. This was still the situation in 1945, when Eleanor Roosevelt wrote in her column, 'My Day:' 'I do not think one can hold the DAR alone responsible.' Other concert halls, theaters, churches, restaurants, hotels, schools, golf courses, and even government cafeterias were segregated in Washington as they were over much of the country.

Segregation was an ugly part of America's history and most of our institutions shared the blame."

It is certainly true that the DAR was not alone in imposing restrictions based on race. In many Washington theaters and movie houses, audiences were segregated. It is questionable, however, that any commercial theaters or concert halls in the District of Columbia, other than Constitution Hall, had a formal policy of excluding black performers from their stages, even where blacks were excluded from audiences. Certainly, black performers appeared on "white" stages in Washington through the 1930s and before. It is also true, though, that after the DAR denied permission for the concert, the DC Board of Education refused an application for Miss Anderson to perform in the auditorium of one of the city's high schools for white pupils. Race

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was apparently a factor in this decision. The Board of Education later reversed its decision, but with a proviso to the effect that this should not be considered as setting a precedent, and this proviso proved unacceptable to the concert sponsors. In the press, the issue of the segregation of the DC public school system was discussed in connection with this controversy.

DAR members have at times indicated that in their opinion the public controversy over this matter was unleashed too quickly for the DAR to consider in a dignified way, free of public pressure, whether to make an exception to the "white performers only" policy in Miss Anderson's case and to consider alternative concert dates. In any case, the DAR National Board of Management, meeting in February, 1939, voted not to set aside the "white artists only" policy for Miss Anderson.

This policy had not been instituted until March of 1932, at which time the renowned black tenor Roland Hayes and the Hampton Institute Choir had already performed at Constitution Hall. The clause was dropped by the DAR in 1953, after black artists had performed at the Hall in several benefits, and after Dorothy Maynor had performed there in 1952, becoming the first commercially sponsored black artist to appear in the Hall since before 1939.

The publicity that arose as a result of the DAR's refusal to open their Hall to Marian Anderson in 1939 focused public discussion on a national scale on the issue of racial discrimination. The Easter Sunday concert was a highly public gesture that had powerful symbolic value and has become part of popular consciousness of the history of race relations in the United States. For some contemporaries, it acquired special meaning because of events in Europe that also raised issues of personal liberties and unjust discrimination. Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes was not alone in his concerns when he said:

I cannot but believe that the DAR's action in banning Miss Anderson was immediately known in Moscow, Berlin and Rome and that it has given aid and encouragement to the opponents of true democracy.

Perhaps this is among the reasons why, in an era when, as the DAR has correctly pointed out, segregation was widespread, the refusal to allow one singer to perform in Constitution Hall became a cause célèbre and provoked a nationwide debate about racial injustice.

(This addendum was prepared by National Park Service staff in compliance with a recommendation made by the National Park System Advisory Board at a meeting in May, 1985, when the Board considered the nomination of Constitution Hall for National Historic Landmark nomination.)

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PRIMARY BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

The major sources of material for this landmark nomination are the original records of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution in the Society's Archives. Manuscript Minutes of the National Board of Management from 1890 to date were consulted for references to the site and buildings. The blueprints and specifications of the architect, John Russell Pope, as well as the correspondence between him and the Society's President General, were primary material. Others:

Public Law No. 19, H.R. 3553, An Act to Incorporate the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Second Day of December, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety Five.

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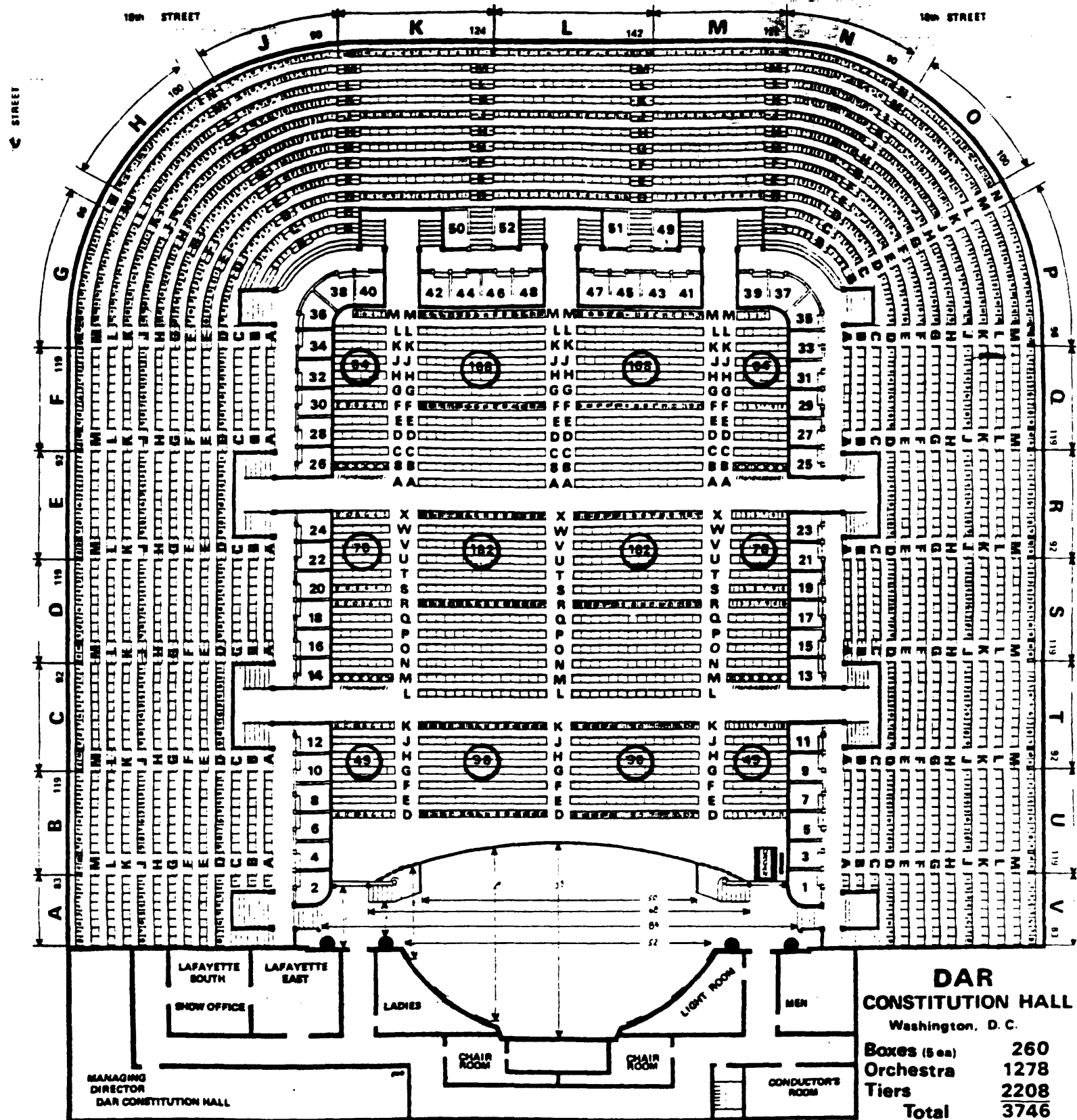
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DAR CONSTITUTION HALL
Washington, D. C.

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Boxes (5 ea) | 260 |
| Orchestra | 1278 |
| Tiers | 2208 |
| Total | 3746 |

The floor plan of the auditorium. (Courtesy, NSDAR, 1985)