

PH0021971

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 24 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Holt House

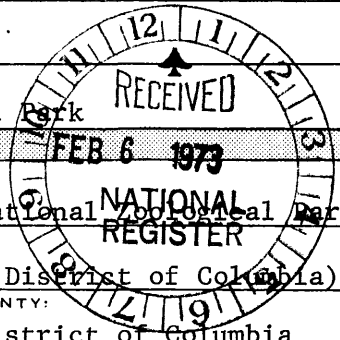
AND/OR HISTORIC:
Administration Building, National Zoological Park

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Adams Mill Road, within the boundaries of National Zoological Park

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington (Congressman Walter E. Fauntroy, District of Columbia)

STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11 COUNTY: District of Columbia CODE: 001



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Zoo Administration Building</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
United States of America (Jurisdiction, Smithsonian Institution)

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
6th and D Streets, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:
Washington District of Columbia 11

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Proposed District of Columbia Additions to the National Register of Historic Places recommended by the Joint Committee on Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: March 7, 1968 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
National Capital Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:
Washington District of Columbia 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Holt House is located on the grounds of the National Zoological Park, to the east of the main Zoo itself, and on the top of a knoll reached by a circular road off Adams Mill Road. The main facades of the house are oriented north and south, although today only the north facade is used as an entrance. The house was probably built prior to 1827, but there is no positive evidence for its date of erection. Although greatly altered and in a bad state of repair, the house is rather unusual for several reasons. In its present state, the house has a five-part plan, one of the few remaining five-part Georgian schemes in the District of Columbia. Also of architectural interest is its one-story orientation. Located on its original site, Holt House today retains a sense of its original rusticity.

Holt House has a long history of being in a bad state of repair. Its present condition is bad, and it was in a deteriorated condition when purchased by the Smithsonian in 1890. In the June 30, 1841, edition of the National Intelligencer there is an advertisement for the lease, sale or rent of the house, which mentions its bad state of repair. "It has undergone three years of deterioration by the worst treatment by those who unfortunately tenanted." The house is described as being 126 feet long, with two wings and a center building. One major discrepancy is that the house as it now stands is approximately 89 feet long and 58 feet deep at its widest part.

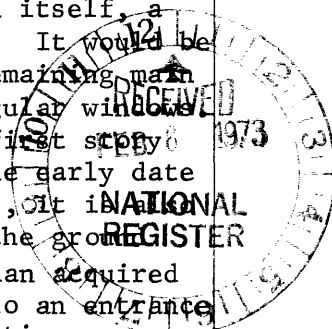
The house as it stands today reflects a series of attempts at repair and remodeling by the Smithsonian Institution beginning in 1890 and continuing into the early 20th century. For these alterations the Smithsonian employed major Washington architects: Glenn Brown, W.R. Emerson, and the firm of Hornblower and Marshall.

At present the stuccoed-brick house has a five-part plan consisting of a center section and two wings connected by hyphens. The south facade has five bays, the north has nine bays, and the sides have one bay each. The house was originally oriented to the first story; the ground floor was rebuilt by the Smithsonian and presently contains offices. The building is excavated under the center section. The Smithsonian Report of 1891 states: "several of the walls had to be removed and new foundations laid" and later Reports mention new flooring and the cutting of extra windows in the building to allow for better lighting. New woodwork was also installed and the fireplaces and chimneys altered.

Exterior modifications included the removal of the wooden entrance steps on the north which led to the first story and the opening of a main entrance on the ground floor. The original first story entrance has been changed to an 8/8 light double-hung round-headed window. The vestibule (which the steps had opened onto) has been converted into office use, and was, in itself, a later addition. This is now supported by large wooden brackets. It would be a better aesthetic solution to restore the wooden steps. The remaining main story bays on the north facade are 9/6 light double-hung rectangular windows. The south facade contains Wyatt windows in both the ground and first story bays. Although some historians have used this as evidence of the early date of the building (citing the possible influence from Tudor Place), it is quite possible that they were added later, especially those on the ground floor. According to photographs taken at the time the Smithsonian acquired the building, the south facade had a balcony and steps leading to an entrance on the main story of the southeast hyphen. The windows at this time were shuttered.

(Continued on Form 10-300a)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



6. SIGNIFICANCE

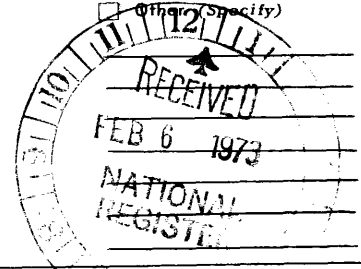
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1827

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated Holt House, the National Zoological Park's present administration building, a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. The house was built by 1827, and is one of the few remaining houses in the District of Columbia with a five-part Georgian plan. Over the years people have come to associate Holt House with Presidents John Quincy Adams, Jackson, and Van Buren, but no substantial evidence has been uncovered to support these claims. Since 1891 it has served as the administrative headquarters for the National Zoological Park.

The Holt House is generally assumed to have been built in 1805; however, the earliest construction date that can be confirmed is 1827. This is the date that appears on an inscription in one of the building's old window panes, now deposited in the Smithsonian Institution's Division of Political History. The inscription reads--"Hurra for Hickory--O.S. Paines--December 12, 1827. Hurra for Hickory." The first mention of the house in any official records is a reference to the building in the 1831 will of Roger Johnson. The Johnson family owned the property from 1809 to 1835.

Due in part to the above cited window pane inscription the Holt House has come to be associated with President Andrew Jackson. The tract of land upon which the house stands was originally called "Pretty Prospect", but came to be known as "Jackson Hill" by 1841. The reason for this change in name however is unknown. There is no documentary evidence which supports the claim that the house once served as a summer refuge for Andrew Jackson or any other Jackson associations with the building.

Holt House has also been linked with Jackson's presidential rival, John Quincy Adams. But again the only evidence directly linking Adams to the house is an inscription on another of its window panes - "McDonald Huzza for Adams... Down with Hickory's enemies... Hickory for Ever." President Adams did own the adjoining property, "Pleasant Plains," from 1823 to 1848 but there is no reference to Holt House in his papers. However, since Adams was the uncle of Roger Johnson's wife, Louisa Catherine Johnson, he may well have been a visitor to the building.

Claims linking the house to President Martin Van Buren have been found to be baseless.

Confusion has even developed around the owner from whom the house derives, its name, Henry C. Holt. Henry Holt was a medical doctor who came to Washington from New York and purchased the property with which we are concerned in 1842. The Holt with whom he has at times been confused is Judge Joseph Holt. Judge Holt was "the judge who helped pack Mrs. Surratt and the

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Collins, Herbert. The Holt House. Unpublished Ms, Smithsonian Institution, Division of Political History. 1967.

Smithsonian Institution. Annual Reports, 1890 - 1970. National Zoological Papers, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

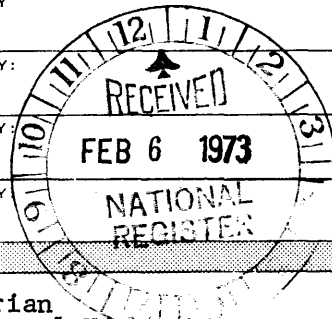
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 52' 29"	77° 02' 50"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **less than one acre**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Leonard H. Gerson, Urban Historian**
Suzanne Ganschinietz, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: **National Capital Planning Commission** DATE: **Jan. 10, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER: **1325 G Street, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE: **11**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: [Signature]

Title: Deputy Mayor-Commissioner

Date: _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/24/73

ATTEST:
[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 4/13/73

1/2/502 500/40/1000000
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
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	APR 24 1973

(Number all entries)

7. Description - Holt House

The saddleback roofline varies with the additions; it runs east-west over the center and end wings, and north-south over the hyphens. There is a wooden denticulated cornice which appears at the gable ends of the roof.

The interior at present reflects the adaptive use of a house to an office facility. It is presently in a very bad state of repair due to leakage and termite damage. As stated previously, most of the floors and woodwork were replaced when the Smithsonian first occupied the house. The winding stairs were added to each hyphen. A skylight was added to provide additional light to the large central room and the fireplaces were altered. The house originally was oriented to the first floor, but the Smithsonian renovated the ground floor when it acquired the house; thus it now functions as a two-story building.

The house offers great potential for restoration and remodeling, and could possibly provide some evidence for architectural influence in the District in the early 19th century. However, an archeological survey needs to be done to determine what is original to the house.

8. Significance - Holt House

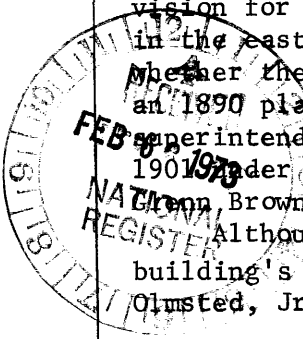
Lincoln conspirators off to the gallows." Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams were reportedly quite friendly with Judge Holt and often visited his house. This may be a major cause for the unfounded claims linking Adams and Jackson to Henry Holt's house.

The Holts sold the property in 1890 to the Smithsonian Institution, to be used as part of the original site for the National Zoological Park. Holt House was made the Zoo's administration building at that time and continues to serve in that role.

As indicated in the accompanying description, Holt House underwent major alterations when it became the Zoo's administrative headquarters. An 1891 report states - "The old building was found to require much more extensive repairs than were anticipated. It is a long, low structure, built rather for coolness and country retirement than for purposes of business activity." A skylight was placed in the first floor's large, central room to provide sufficient light for the library and an intended display of "fauna and flora of North America." The 1890 renovation plans also included provision for an apartment for the Smithsonian's Secretary, Samuel P. Langley, in the eastern part of the first floor, but it is difficult to determine whether the work was executed. The Zoo's 1893 annual report again mentions an 1890 plan for living quarters in the Holt House, this time for the Zoo's superintendent. Major changes in the building continued to be made through 1901 under the direction of various prominent architects - W.R. Emerson, Clifton Brown, and Hornblower and Marshall.

Although major alterations were undertaken, the significance of the building's design was recognized from the beginning. In 1903 Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., the leading landscape architect whose firm was responsible for

(Continued on Form 10-300a, page 2)



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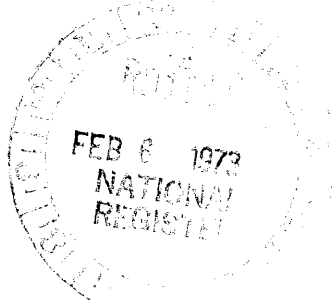
(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

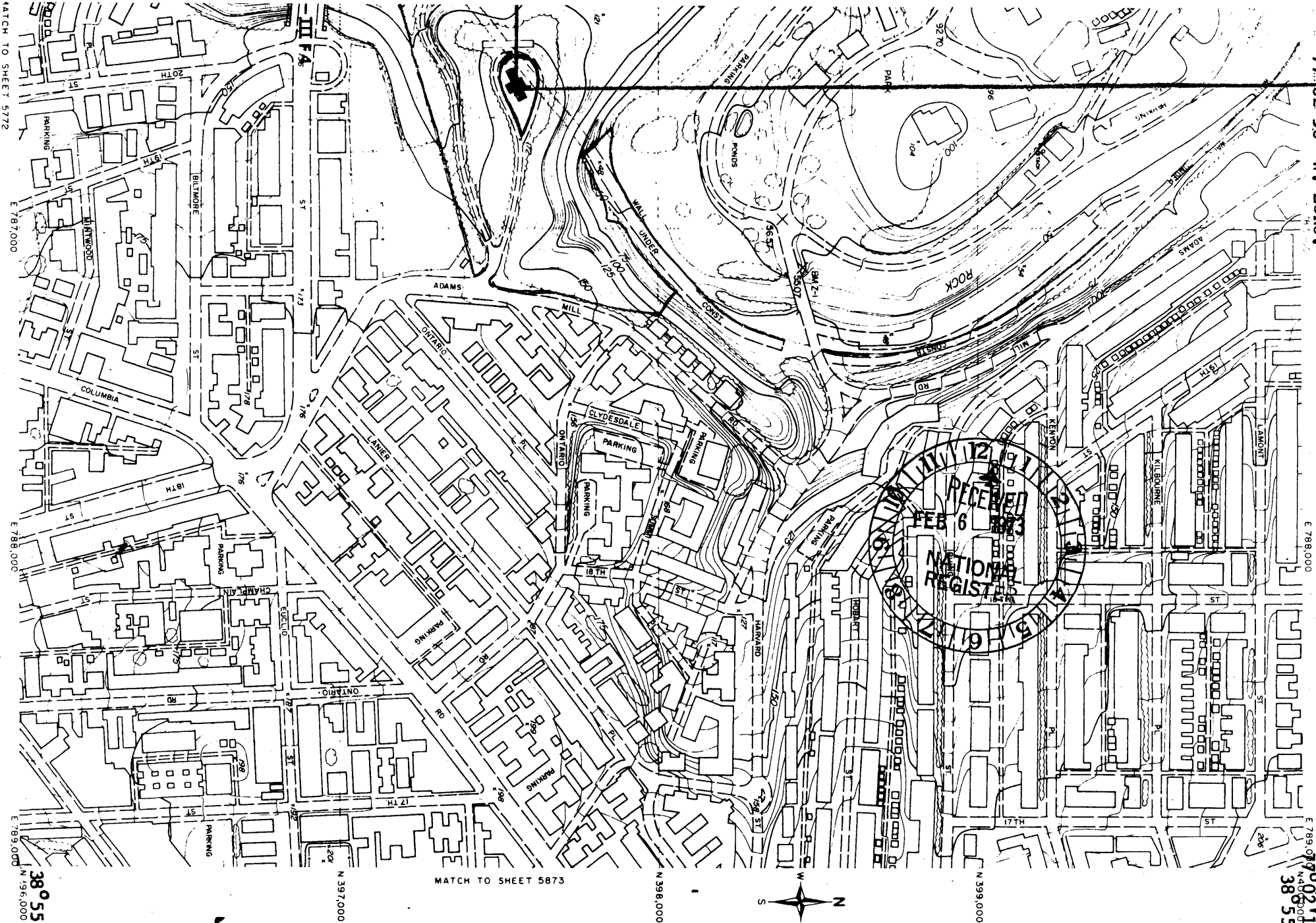
8. Significance - Holt House (cont.)

the Zoo's early planning, recommended Holt House's architectural style as a model for future buildings at the Zoo - "Fortunately you have in the park already, in the charming old building used as the office, an example of a style in which the surface of the roof is not an important feature, which is well identified with the locality, which is economical of construction, and which can be made very agreeable in a quiet, refined way, not clashing with its surroundings or unduly striking the attention." Secretary Langley also recognized Holt House's fine architectural character. In a 1901 letter concerning the house's alterations he asked that the ivy growing into the upstairs window not be disturbed and that a memorandum be made of the position of the two winding staircases which were to be removed, "so that they may be restored, if desired."

The approved 1972 Master Plan for the National Zoological Park recommends that Holt House be restored and used as a residence for visiting scholars. The rusticity of the grounds surrounding the house is also to be preserved.



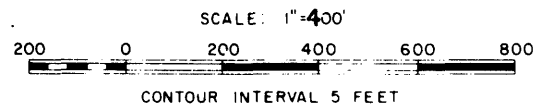
77°02'50" W. LONG.




38°55'14" N. Lat.
5773

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC

Prepared By ALSTER & ASSOCIATES, INC Engineers
Washington, DC Utilizing Stereophotogrammetric Methods
Aerial Photography Taken February 1965



Refer Corrections To This Map To:
Department Of Highways And Traffic
Office Of Planning And Programming

 Holt House
National Zoological Park

38°55'53" N. Lat.
77°02'19" W. Long.