

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: The Editors Building

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 1729 H Street NW

City or town: Washington, D.C. State: District of Columbia County: \_\_\_\_\_

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

<u>David Maloney</u> Signature of certifying official/Title:	<u>DAVID MALONEY / DC SHPO</u> Date
<u>DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	<u>23 JAN 2015</u>

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
 determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
 other (explain:)

For Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

3-17-15  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:   
Public – Local   
Public – State   
Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)   
District   
Site   
Structure   
Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Hotel

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Stripped Classical

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Limestone

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The ten-story Editors building, constructed in 1949-50 by and for the Kiplinger Washington Agency as its publishing headquarters, and now a hotel, is located on the north side of the 1700 block of H Street in downtown Washington, D.C. It is located alongside other mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century high-rise office buildings, with the notable exception being the lower-scale, Georgian Revival-style Bachelor Flats (1905) immediately across the alley from the Editors Building to the west. The Editors building, the first high-rise office building on the block was designed by noted local architect Leon Chatelain, Jr. in a late Stripped Classical style. The building is stylistically transitional in that it retains the traditional massing and detail of a three-part commercial block of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century office buildings, along with a Classical entry surround, yet is fairly stripped of ornamentation and has a strong vertical emphasis. The building is characterized by its smooth-faced limestone walls and vertical window bays with spandrels imparting a sky-scraper effect. The building is set upon a low granite foundation with a limestone base articulated by a bold, central entry. The top of the building is capped by a simple attic level of punched window openings and a fluted cornice line.

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The west side of the building extends eleven bays deep along an alley with single windows in each of the bays and at each floor level. The east side of the building abuts another mid-century office building—the Matomic building—of similar height. The building extends to the rear of the lot and Hunter Alley—the service alley at the center of the square.

The Bachelor Flats, the only surviving earlier building on the block and representative of the formerly residential character of the block, is located on the west side of the access alley leading to Hunter Alley.

The building, owned and occupied by Kiplinger Washington Agency for 61 years, was sold in 2012 to OTO Development, hotel developers. The building was completely renovated on the interior and converted from an office building into a hotel, operated as a Hampton Inn. Although the interior was entirely renovated at that time, the exterior was preserved intact with the only addition being that of an awning over the central entrance.

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## **Narrative Description**

### Exterior

The Editors Building is a ten-story, steel and concrete frame building clad with limestone walls designed in a Stripped Classical style. The building measures 63' x 113' and contains approximately 73,000 square feet of space. Historically, the interior of the building was designed and used for private offices, but has just recently been converted into use as a hotel.

The principal elevation of the Editors building faces south to H Street and is divided into five bays at the building's base, and seven bays in its shaft. The base of the building is traditionally arranged with greater mass than void whereby solid limestone walls of smooth-cut panels covering the steel and concrete frame are set upon a raised pink granite foundation and are punctuated by pairs of single windows to either side of a central entry. The central entry is highlighted by a polished pink granite architrave surround with a wide frieze board inscribed with the building's name. The entry door itself—double bronze and plate glass doors—is recessed from the façade with polished granite side wall jambs and soffit matching the engaged surround. The doors and a single-light transom above both feature decorative grillwork for protection. The granite surround is decorated with a series of rosettes carved into the side trim with a leaf and tongue backband molding framing the sides and top of the door opening. To either side of this decorative band, the granite surround is smooth and undecorated. Above the band, a wide frieze board holds the building's name: THE EDITORS BUILDING in sans serif capital letters, incised into the stone. A projecting cornice with egg and dart bed molding below a box cornice and acanthus cyma top mould culminates the granite surround. The yellow bronze door grille consists of a series of open panels of *fleur-de-lis* relief moldings. Two nickel bronze light fixtures with yellow bronze *fleur-de-lis* bas reliefs matching those of the door and transom grillework are affixed to the limestone walls to either side of the entry surround.

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Pairs of single windows are slightly recessed into the limestone walls to either side of the pink granite entry. The windows are set within slightly larger frames formed by narrow reveals and a recessed panel atop the window opening. The windows consist of a pair of 1/1 replacement sash, with a single-light pane filling the long opening. A projecting cornice above the ground level windows divides the building's base from its multi-story shaft.

The shaft of the building comprises floors 3-10, with each floor identically arranged into seven vertical bays. The bays are defined by single 1/1 windows with pink granite spandrels between the floors with limestone piers separating the window bays and extending the full length of the façade. These piers, set slightly proud from the window bays, emphasize the building's verticality. At the corners, wider end piers imply a solid masonry structure to this steel frame building.

The tenth floor and attic level of the building is articulated by seven bays of single, square window openings. This floor lacks the spandrels and piers that would connect it to the floors below and is capped by a fluted cornice line. The fluted cornice is reminiscent of earlier 20<sup>th</sup>-century Art Deco detailing.

Set back from this attic level and hardly visible from the street is the building's penthouse. This penthouse only extends across the eastern half of the building, essentially accommodating the elevator shaft and stair access to a broad rooftop terrace. The terrace can be reached by a central door opening, flanked by windows. A pipe rail is set at the edge of the building's roofline. A fluted cornice like that on the main block, caps the penthouse floor.

The west alley side elevation extends nine irregular bays deep. The front five bays are set upon a pink granite base, like on the façade, and are clad in limestone. The window arrangement and treatment is similar to that of the front elevation, though the limestone has suffered abuse from trucks scrapping against it while entering the alleyway. The wall of the rear four bays is laid in beige brick and punched with windows having narrow sills and no surrounds.

The east side wall, now abutted by the adjacent Matamic building, was briefly exposed before that building's construction revealing limestone wall returns with brick on the remainder of the wall surface. There were no window openings in anticipation of new construction on this east side.

### Interior

The interior of the Editors building was fully gutted and renovated in 2012 to accommodate new use as a hotel, leaving little historic fabric, save for one exception: the publishing company's board room which was retained for the hotel's penthouse suite. The room with its walnut paneling, wood flooring, plaster ceiling and fireplace, including the original mantel, were preserved intact.

In addition, OTO Development preserved an interior wall which is covered in fabric and on which Mr. Kiplinger had anyone who had worked on the building's construction sign their name,

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including masons, carpenters, and other workman. Other guests and dignitaries signed the wall over the years as they visited the Kiplinger Agency including Norman Rockwell and other high ranking dignitaries. A digital screen display in the hotel's lobby provides a history of the building, along with historic images of the building, its company and founders.

Currently, exterior doors open into a vestibule and then into the hotel lobby with new walls and flooring. The reception desk is located against the east side wall next to the bank of elevators, while a lobby lounge occupies the west side of the space. The upper level floors offer u-shaped corridors that give access to the hotel rooms. Before the 2012 renovation, the building's central entry led into a vestibule with walls of Tennessee gray marble and then into a modest lobby area that provided direct access to the elevators. Like the entrance vestibule, the lobby and elevator corridor had polished Tennessee marble walls and floors.

Historically, the 4th floor was the "machinery center." Although the bulk of the printing and mailing were done off-site, there was equipment for making the address plates and machinery for addressing envelopes. The 8<sup>th</sup> floor was the editorial headquarters of the newsletter and magazine and contained various private offices for editors and writers, as well as a large conference room. The 9th floor, historically the editorial home of the Kiplinger Letters, housed Mr. Kiplinger's office. This office with its walnut paneling, a fireplace with wood mantel and wood paneling above is now the hotel's penthouse suite. The basement, historically equipped with a bowling alley, now offers a small swimming pool.

Throughout the building's ownership by Kiplinger Agency, the stair halls and offices served as gallery space for the extensive and ever-expanding Kiplinger Washington Collection. This Collection was begun in the 1920s by Willard "Kip" Kiplinger and was continued by his descendants. At the time of sale of the building, the Collection was donated to area institutions, the primary recipient being the Historical Society of Washington. The hotel retains a few of the print items from the Collection on its walls.

## **INTEGRITY**

The Editors Building served as an office building from its construction in 1950 until 2011. Despite the building's 2012 conversion from office building to hotel, the building retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The building is still located in the 1700 block of H Street, NW in downtown, D.C., where it was constructed. It was the first multi-story office building in the block and still survives as a testament to this change from a primarily residential area to one of office buildings. As part of the renovation of the building to accommodate hotel use, an awning was added to the exterior, but otherwise, the building has not been added onto, and it retains most of its original materials and features, including the original door surround with the name of the building still intact.

The interior of the office building did not historically offer any architecturally exceptional spaces or detailing. Those areas of interest—the basement bowling alley and offices of Mr. Kiplinger—have been re-purposed as a swimming pool and hotel penthouse suite in an appropriate manner that retains feeling of association.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE  
COMMUNICATION  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1949-1965 (50 years from the present)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1949; 1950  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Leon Chatelain, Jr.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Editors Building is a ten-story office building constructed in downtown D.C. in 1949-1950 by the Kiplinger Washington Agency and designed by architect Leon Chatelain, Jr. The building was constructed to house the offices of the Kiplinger Agency, publisher of the business and finance periodicals, *Kiplinger News Letter* and the *Kiplinger's Changing Times Magazine*. Established in 1923, the Kiplinger Washington News Agency is still actively engaged in the publication of its newsletter and magazine, in addition to other print and on-line publications. Until 2011 when it sold the Editors Building, Kiplinger Agency was the owner and principal occupant. In addition to serving as the headquarters of the Kiplinger Agency, the building housed the Kiplinger Collection, an extensive collection of print media on historical Washington, D.C. The patriarch of the business, Willard "Kip" Kiplinger began collecting early Washington memorabilia in the 1920s, a tradition that was continued by his descendants. The 7,000-item collection of prints, lithographs, engravings, watercolors, photographs, woodcuts, maps and more historically filled the building's corridors, offices, and lobby area exhibit space, as well as a special archives room set aside for the collection. After sale of the building, the Kiplinger family donated the vast majority of the collection to the Historical Society of Washington, while setting aside a few of the pieces for the National Portrait Gallery, Mount Vernon, and the Lincoln Cottage. Today, a permanent exhibit, *Window to Washington*, showcasing a portion of the collection, is on view at the Historical Society of Washington.

The Editors Building is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for its associations with the internationally renowned Washington-based financial news organization, Kiplinger Washington Agency. The Editors building is also eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as a good example of a mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century office building designed in a transitional Stripped Classical style, and as the work of noted local architect, Leon Chatelain, Jr. The Editors Building provides a good example of transitional design in this city where building treatment and details reflect both traditional and Modern stylistic approaches. The building's three-part commercial block and its solid masonry expression is indicative of early office building design, while its smooth-faced limestone walls, lack of ornamentation and its emphasis on verticality illustrate more Modern design treatments.

During his 25-year career as a sole-practitioner from 1930 to 1956, and later as a partner in the firm Chatelain, Gauger & Nolan, Washington-born Leon Chatelain, played an important role in the city's design world. While his early career focused on residential buildings, he designed several important commercial and institutional buildings and developed a long-standing relationship with the C&P Telephone Company, designing that company's headquarters building in 1948 and several of its telephone exchange branches. In 1956, Chatelain became president of the AIA, and established his new partnership which went on to design several major commercial office buildings, and institutional projects, particularly on the Georgetown University campus.

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The Period of Significance extends from 1950 when the building was completed until 1965, a point 50 years from the present. Kiplinger Washington Agency sold the building in 2011.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Editors Building is significant in the Area of **Architecture** as a mid-Century office building reflecting the changing character and aesthetics of downtown. Prior to the early 1940s, the city's 20<sup>th</sup>-century public and private buildings tended to reflect traditional building forms and styles rooted in the Classical tradition. Beginning in the 1930s and early 1940s, before more overtly modern buildings were introduced into the city, modernism began to express itself through the Art Deco, Streamlined Moderne and Stripped Classical styles. The ten-story office building, often referred to in period articles as a Washington "skyscraper," reflects such a transitional aesthetic. The building's overall massing, namely its three-part commercial block, is rooted in traditional classical building forms, while its smooth limestone walls, its pared down ornamentation, and its vertical emphasis is more overtly Modern. The Editors Building provides one of the last examples of the Stripped Classical style in the city.

The Editors Building is significant in the Area of **Communications** for its association with the Kiplinger News Agency, a publisher that focused on business and finance. The original Kiplinger publication, *The Kiplinger Newsletter* was entrepreneurial in offering a subscription-based newsletter with no advertising. The newsletter was also notable in the publication industry for its introduction of an extremely concise and terse writing style later emulated by other newsletter publications. The Editors Building served as the headquarters of the Kiplinger Agency for 61 years from the building's completion in 1950 until it sold the building in 2011.

## **Historical Background**

### Kiplinger Washington News Agency

The Kiplinger Washington News Agency is a Washington, D.C.-based, three-generation family-run publisher of business forecasts and personal finance advice, available in print and on-line. The company's best known publications are its original publication—the *Kiplinger Letter*—a weekly business and economic forecasting periodical for people in management, and *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine*, a monthly finance publication. *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine* was established in 1947 to advise American families on major life decisions, namely personal money management. Originally named the *Kiplinger Magazine*, it was two years later called *Changing Times*. In 1991, the magazine was re-named *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine*. Historically, neither the letter nor the magazine carried any advertising, but relied exclusively upon paid subscriptions. Today, the total paid circulation of the company's periodicals exceeds 850,000, and Kiplinger's Web site, Kiplinger.com, receives nearly two million unique visits per month.

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Kiplinger Washington Agency was established in 1923 by a former Associated Press economics reporter, Willard M. "Kip" Kiplinger (1891-1967) who served as editor-in-chief of all publications. Willard's son Austin H. Kiplinger (b. 1918), is today editor emeritus and non-executive board chair. Austin's son Todd L. Kiplinger (1945-2008) was vice chair and vice president for investments until his death in 2008, while another son Knight A. Kiplinger (b. 1948) is editor in chief and publisher of *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine*. Knight Kiplinger is also president of the Kiplinger Foundation, a family foundation created and funded by W. M. Kiplinger in 1948 that supports a wide array of charities in the Washington area and nationwide.

Unusual among modern media companies, the Kiplinger organization is run by its editorial leadership--senior executives whose careers are rooted in journalism, rather than the business side of publishing (such as advertising and circulation sales). Like their father and grandfather founder, both Austin and Knight Kiplinger had extensive experience in daily journalism (newspapers and broadcast news, respectively) before joining the Kiplinger organization. Throughout their tenures, both father and son have continued to report, write and edit.

Unlike most other publishers, Kiplinger answers the queries of its readers as a regular feature of its subscriptions, filling requests for additional information on any subject its publication covers. Like most large-circulation magazine publishers, Kiplinger has been experiencing a shift of advertiser support from its printed publications to its Web site, which has grown significantly in traffic in recent years.

During the 1950s after nearly 30 years in the business, Kiplinger founder W. M. Kiplinger was considered a nearly infallible oracle. Of his Kiplinger Letter, Kiplinger noted in 1956:

"Practically all Washington reporting was in terms of politics. I tried to write politics in terms of economics and business, not Democrats and Republicans but the high tariff bloc and the low tariff bloc."<sup>1</sup>

In addition, Kiplinger devised a revolutionary writing style that he noted, "makes grammarians scream, but I don't think verbs, adjectives and prepositions are necessary." His style was a telegraphic one that cut away excess verbiage to reach the point. Kiplinger sought to make each line in his Letter a separate, complete sentence. Kiplinger's unique writing style was apparently copied and imitated widely.

During the 1950s, Willard Kiplinger continued to write about 80 percent of the Letter himself, though he had a staff of approximately one dozen to help gather, assess and digest the news. An admirable boss, Kiplinger apparently distributed three-quarters of the company's profits to his employees, who he referred to as associates. There was also a bonus and pension system that allowed his journalists to pull in a decent salary. Kiplinger felt that newspapermen were underpaid and stated that his reporters are "good and worth it."

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<sup>1</sup> "A Reporter Who Grosses \$4.5 Million Annually," *The Washington Post*, January 8, 1956, p. C11.

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### Kiplinger's Washington Collection

The Kiplinger Washington Collection is one of the largest private holdings of Washingtoniana. The extensive collection of more than 7,000 items includes prints, photographs, paintings and other media with a focus on Washington history and the city's built environment. Kiplinger's Washingtoniana Collection began in the 1920s when "Kip" Kiplinger purchased his first print of early Washington. As he later recounted, after purchasing 15 or 20 more prints, "I heard that he was a collector and , it pleased me so much that I got to be one."<sup>2</sup> Over the years, he brought together an invaluable collection that included such items as a signed Latrobe drawing and a first-run engraving of a rare 1792 map of Washington. The most highly valued item is a watercolor of the war-damaged Capitol, painted by New York artist George Munger in 1814. According to historian and archivist James Goode, "He came down here after the fire and painted the Capitol on the spot. To our knowledge, it's the only painting of the Capitol done on the site after the fire. It's extremely rare." The Kiplinger Collection, partially on view in the hallways, offices and exhibition room of the Editors Building, follows the changing face of the city through the years and includes thousands of items.

In addition to the purchased items, part of the Kiplinger Collection includes hundreds of commissioned works—photographs, paintings and drawings—of the city's "vanishing" buildings. "Kip" Kiplinger began commissioning artists during the 1950s and 1960s to document the changes taking place in the city's built environment. In a 1963 interview, Kiplinger noted, "I am really not against progress, I just want to catch the old sights and scenes before they vanish." Kiplinger hired artists to capture not so much the landmarks of the nation's capital, but the flavor of the neighborhoods, street scenes, corners and city vistas. One of these sites, the Gichner Iron Works was described by Kiplinger in 1963:

"The Gichner iron works may not be a pretty thing in the usual sense. But catch it at dusk, and it is something to remember."<sup>3</sup>

Kiplinger would typically mount the commissioned works on the walls of the corridors and offices of the Editors Building and Kiplinger Park in Hyattsville, where the Kiplinger mechanical and printing operations were housed.

Throughout the years, Kiplinger held exhibits from his collection, opening them to the public, and in certain cases, offering them for sale. In 1971, in at least one philanthropic move, Kiplinger put some prints of old Washington up for sale to benefit a school in Virginia. The Kiplinger family and Kiplinger Agency continues to buy and commission Washingtoniana. Its collection is available for viewing via an on-line catalog and by appointment.

### Construction of the Editors Building

From its founding until World War II, the Kiplinger organization had its offices in the Press Building where it had established itself as a Washington institution. By the 1940s, the firm consisted of over 200 employees and had outgrown its Press Building offices. Kiplinger thus

<sup>2</sup> "Kip Keeps His Eye on Washington," *The Washington Post*, October 6, 1963, p. E2.

<sup>3</sup> "Kip Keeps His Eye on Washington," *The Washington Post*, October 6, 1963, E2.

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sought to build a new headquarters office for its company; however space was at a premium during and after the War and there was a shortage of building supplies. Despite this, in 1946, the company succeeded in identifying and purchasing three lots in the 1700 block of H Street near Lafayette Square two of which had been cleared and were then being used for parking. Historically, the lots had included three 19th-century residential buildings including a four-story dwelling built in 1883 that had been converted into an apartment building before being demolished and a three-story former dwelling-cum-commercial building. Like other parts of downtown, the area around Lafayette Square was, throughout the 19th century, an elite residential neighborhood. By the early 20th century, the residential character had begun to shift as businesses moved in and former dwellings were replaced with office buildings. That shift was well underway when Kiplinger purchased the vacant lots; still, the Kiplinger Building, completed in 1950, was the first large office building constructed on the block. Construction of the Editors building engendered the demolition of the surviving three-story, red brick Victorian dwelling just to the east of the Editors building.

Having secured the site, Kiplinger then hired architect Leon Chatelain, Jr. to design its headquarters building and John McShain to build the building. While designing and constructing the new building, the Kiplinger firm moved into two separate buildings—its *Letter* division occupied a former apartment house at 1907 K Street, NW and the magazine staff went to an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century house at 1729 G Street, N.W. In August 1947, a perspective rendering showing a conceptual view of the building designed by Leon Chatelain, Jr. appeared in the *Washington Post*. As described in the photo caption, the proposed 10-story building was to be constructed of concrete, steel and limestone and would measure 63 feet wide by 100 feet deep. This conceptual rendering matches the building as constructed.

Chatelain's design for the Editors Building is transitional and is best described as late Stripped Classicism. The building's overall massing, namely its three-part commercial block, is rooted in traditional classical building forms, while its pared down ornamentation and its vertical emphasis appears more modern. In its verticality—defined primarily by its window bays—the building recalls Chatelain's earlier Washington Gas Light building at 11th and H Street. Although an eclectic designer over the course of his career, Chatelain seems to have had a preference for Stripped Classicism during that time period. In addition to Washington Gas and the Editors Building, Chatelain designed a third similarly organized office building at 3rd and C Streets and Indiana Avenue (now demolished). All three of these buildings, constructed between 1941 and 1951, share the system of vertical window bays with spandrels and recessed between limestone piers.

On September 29, 1948—the 25th anniversary of the *Kiplinger Washington Letter*, the Kiplinger organization held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new building. One month later, the company put the construction drawings out to bid, and hired John McShain, Inc. to construct the local “skyscraper.” One year later, in February 1949, a permit was issued to construct the 10-story building. Construction of the building was underway in 1949 with a scheduled completion date of September 1950. In February 1950, The *Evening Star* published a photograph of the

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building under construction, showing that it had reached the 10th and final floor.<sup>4</sup> In October of 1950, upon the building's completion, Kiplinger hosted a party for the 800 workers who built the building. In characteristic fashion of his generosity, Mr. Kiplinger, gave each of the workmen a silver dollar. According to period accounts describing the event, Mr. Kiplinger spent time at the construction site and made friends with the construction workers. The same article noted that despite the \$1.8 million cost of construction and the perfectly furnished offices, Mr. Kiplinger still "pounds his old typewriter."<sup>5</sup> Kiplinger is quoted as saying "That thing must be 20 years old, but I can't get used to these new machines. I just wouldn't have one."

Upon completion of the building, Mr. Kiplinger gave every worker on the project a silver dollar as an expression of his gratitude. Also, he had anyone who had worked on the building's construction sign their name, including masons, carpenters, and other workman upon a designated interior wall. Other guests and dignitaries signed the wall over the years as they visited the Kiplinger Agency including Norman Rockwell and other high ranking dignitaries. This wall was preserved as part of the 2012 renovation.

Shortly after its 1950 construction, the then-largest office building on the block was eclipsed by construction of the adjoining "Matomic" building at 1717 H Street. This huge office building, designed and built during the Cold War, was designed to be completely self-sufficient in case of enemy attack.

Since its construction, the Kiplinger Agency has rented out a portion of the building for private office use. During the 1950s and 1960s, several trade associations could be found in the building, including Universal Shipping Company and the Institute of Scrap Iron and Steel. During the 1980s, the many organizations appear to have given up their space to individuals who appear to have rented rooms, rather than floors, for their small businesses.

In 1958-60, Kiplinger expanded its operations and built a second office building, this one outside of the city in Hyattsville in Prince Georges County, Maryland. This one-story 40,000 square-foot "garden-type" building was designed and built to house the publishing and circulation offices of Kiplinger Editors. Of the company's then 400 employees, 100 of them were to remain in the downtown Editors Building. According to news reports at the time, W. A. Kiplinger chose to build the new building in a suburban location to accommodate his workers and to facilitate parking. The new building (no longer occupied by Kiplinger Editors), was designed by Leon Chatelain's firm, Chatelain, Gauger and Nolan and similarly built by McShain Builders.

#### Leon Chatelain, Jr., Architect (1902-1979)<sup>6</sup>

Leon Chatelain, Jr. was an award-winning architect and leader in the profession who served as president of the American Institute of Architects and as President of the Board of Trade. Over the course of his career, Chatelain designed a wide variety of buildings ranging from residences and churches to office buildings. Chatelain was born in Washington, D.C., and educated in

<sup>4</sup> See, "Top Story Reached," *The Evening Star*, February 11, 1950, B-2.

<sup>5</sup> "Kiplinger is Host to Workmen Who Erected his New Building," *The Evening Star*, October 15, 1950.

<sup>6</sup> Biographical information on Leon Chatelain, Jr. gleaned from the entry on him in the D.C. Architects Biographies project (D.C. Historic Preservation Office, 2010).

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public schools, graduating from McKinley Manual Training School (later known as McKinley Technical High School). He attended night classes at George Washington University from 1920 to 1926 while working as a draftsman for Philip M. Jullien and Arthur B. Heaton. He then became a draftsman for Waddy B. Wood. In 1930 he went into private practice under the firm name Leon Chatelain, Jr. Wood, who was not able to pay him in the depths of the Depression, gave Chatelain a telephone company project to help him get started on his own, according to Chatelain's son, Leon Chatelain III. Much of Chatelain's early work both before and after World War II was residential design for both individual clients and developers. He designed hundreds of single family dwellings for Howard Homes, many of which were constructed in Northeast Washington. In 1936 he was one of the local Washington architects who formed the Architects Small Home Service under the auspices of the Perpetual Building Association to produce plans for small, affordable houses available to the Association's members for a small fee. During the war he designed buildings for the U.S. Navy. Chatelain's residential designs were always in traditional styles, most often Colonial Revival.

Throughout his 25-year career from 1930 to 1956, Chatelain's work focused primarily on residential buildings. However, he did venture outside of the domestic, designing the Washington Gas Light building (1941-42); the Westmoreland Congregational Church (1948-55); the Editors Building (1949-50); the office building at 3rd and C Streets, NW (1950); the McDonough Gymnasium (1952) at Georgetown University; and several buildings for the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company. Chatelain developed a long-standing relationship with the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company, designing its headquarters building in 1948 and several telephone exchange branches.

When Chatelain was about to assume the presidency of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1956 and knew that he would have less time to devote to his practice, he formed the partnership of Chatelain, Gauger & Nolan. The firm, with partners Earl V. Gauger and mechanical engineer James A. Nolan, became known for its institutional buildings, especially those for Georgetown University, and commercial office buildings. The firm also worked on several churches and facilities for the armed services. Major projects included the Equitable Life Insurance Company (subsequently FNMA Headquarters, 1957), the national headquarters of the Associated General Contractors of America (1958), the International Monetary Fund Bank Buildings (1960-61), the Retail Clerks International Association (Suffridge Building, 1969), and the Group Hospital Insurance Headquarters (1969).

Chatelain's work in his early years reflects the influence of Heaton and Wood, both masters of traditional styles. His office buildings are transitional in style, reflecting traditional building forms, but a Stripped Classical vocabulary. His three office buildings—the Washington Gas Light, the Editors building and the office building at 3rd and C Streets, N.W. are all similar in appearance with vertical bays of windows with spandrels and a pronounced central entrance. Chatelain's son, an active architect in D.C., in 2010 described his father as probably most comfortable with the Colonial Revival style but said that he did not have a signature style. According to his son, Chatelain was open to new ideas and influenced by what he read and what he saw in his travels. He worked closely with his designers and his buildings were the products of teamwork and exploration.



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Chatelain's buildings received numerous local, national, and international awards, including eight from the Washington Board of Trade for Excellence in Architecture. Chatelain was also a pioneer in the movement to make buildings accessible to the handicapped and helped establish the first approved design standards for constructing barrier-free buildings. He lobbied extensively for the adoption of American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accessibility standards, working with the Easter Seals organization.

In 1970, after Gauger retired from the firm, Chatelain merged the firm with another Washington architectural firm under a new name. The new partnership, called Chatelain, Samperton & Nolan, specialized in institutional designs, such as banks, churches, hospitals, and office buildings. Chatelain retired in 1974 and died in 1979. His firm, known as Chatelain Architects, P.C., headed by Chatelain's son Leon Chatelain III, and still in operation in 2010, eighty years after its founding, is probably the oldest Washington, D.C., architectural firm continuously in business in the District of Columbia.

Chatelain was president of the American Institute of Architects from 1956 to 1958, president of the Washington Metropolitan Chapter of the AIA. (1940-1941), and a founder and president of the Washington Building Congress. President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Chatelain chairman of the National Commission on Architectural Barriers to the Handicapped in 1966. Its recommendations led to the enactment of the 1968 architectural barriers law. He was also a member of the President's Committee for Employment of the Handicapped. In addition, Chatelain was active in business and civic affairs in the community, serving as president of the Washington Board of Trade, the Washington Kiwanis Club, the Metropolitan Police Boys Club, and the D.C. Society for Crippled Children. Chatelain conducted numerous charitable campaigns in Washington and served on the board of directors of the YMCA. Chatelain was also a member of the Capitol Hill Circus Saints and Sinners, and Congressional Country and Cosmos clubs, as well as a Mason and member of the Almas Shrine.

#### John McShain, Builder (1898-1989)

John McShain was a Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.-based building contractor whose firm, John McShain, Inc., was the 10th largest construction firm in the country at its height of business in the 1940s and 1950s. Although he lived in Philadelphia, McShain was a major builder in Washington, so much so that a biography of him is titled, "The Man Who Built Washington."

McShain was born in Philadelphia in 1898 to immigrant parents from County Derry, Ireland. His father was a carpenter who established a successful business responsible for the construction of many Catholic churches, schools, rectories and convents. When his father died in 1919, John McShain left college to return to Philadelphia to take over the family construction business. McShain received his first major commission in 1929 from the City of Philadelphia. McShain opened branch offices in Washington, D.C. in 1929 and in Trenton, N.J. in 1936 and Baltimore in 1937. McShain's career in Washington began in 1934 with the construction of the John Adams building of the Library of Congress and took off during the New Deal era of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Many of John McShain's projects, both in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. were financed with funds made available through the Works Progress Administration.

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During the 1940s and 50s McShain became one of most visible and successful builders in the city. His projects included the Jefferson Memorial (1939), the State Department building (1940), the Pentagon (1940), National Airport (1941), the Internal Revenue Building (1942), the Pentagon (1943), the Bethesda Naval Hospital, the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Dupont Circle underpass (1949), and the White House Renovation (1950-51). At the same time that McShain was working on federal government projects, he was also involved in some city projects and private developments.<sup>7</sup>

Within the private sector, McShain is known to have built the Longfellow office building, the Editors Building, an office building at 3rd and C Streets, N.W. (demolished) and the Georgetown University Hospital building. John McShain and Leon Chatelain, Jr. worked together on the Editors Building (1949-50) and the 3rd and C Street, NW office building (1950). The Kennedy Center, built in 1971, was one of the last projects that McShain's firm undertook in D.C.

In the 1940s, McShain invested some of his profits in the hotel business, primarily in Philadelphia. After completion of the White House renovation, McShain began to have health problems and so removed himself from the day-to-day activities of his business. At that time, he took up horse racing, buying and selling race horses and he purchased a stable in New Jersey, called Barclay Stables. In 1959, McShain purchased a 25,000 acre estate in Ireland, eventually spending more and more time there, while still maintaining his business in the United States. McShain died on September 9, 1989.

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<sup>7</sup> According to the D.C. Historic Building Permit database, McShain built several dwellings and apartment buildings for the Alley Dwelling Authority and a sewerage treatment facility.

Editors Building  
Name of Property

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“A Reporter Who Grosses \$4.5 Million Annually: That’s Kiplinger, Famed Writer of Business Letters,” *The Washington Post*, January 8, 1956, C11.

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“Kiplinger is Host to Workmen Who Erected his New Building,” *The Evening Star*, October 15, 1950.

Editors Building  
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“Kip Keeps His Eye on Washington, *The Washington Times Herald*, October 6, 1963, p. E2.

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McManus, Kevin. “Building on Kiplinger’s Traditions,” *The Washington Post*, June 14, 1993.

“New Building Designed with Bomb Shelters,” *The Washington Post*, March 17, 1951, p. 6.

“Proposed 10-Story Building To House Kiplinger Projects,” *The Washington Post*, August 24, 1947, p. R3.

“Top Story Reached in Editors Building,” (photo), *The Evening Star*, February 11, 1950, B-4.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

Editors Building  
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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** Less than one acre (6,671 square feet)

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.900482 | Longitude: -77.041107 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927    or     NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Editors Building at 1729 H Street, NW occupies Lot 0854 in Square 0127.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Editors Building has occupied this lot and square since its construction on the site in 1950.

Editors Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kim Williams  
organization: D.C. Historic Preservation Office  
street & number: 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
city or town: Washington, D.C. state: \_\_\_\_\_ zip code: 20024  
e-mail kim.williams@dc.gov  
telephone: 202 442-8840  
date: December 2014

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: The Editors Building  
City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.  
County: Washington, D.C.  
Photographer: Kim Williams  
Date Photographed: December 2014

State:

Editors Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:**

View looking northwest showing the south façade and west side elevation of The Editors building with the Bachelor Flats to the west.

1 of 10

View looking north west showing south elevation of The Editors building

2 of 10

View looking north showing south elevation of The Editors building

3 of 10

View looking north showing detail of front door surround

4 of 10

View looking skyward showing detail of cornice at west corner

5 of 10

View looking north showing detail of window spandrel above front entrance

6 of 10

Interior view of renovated first floor (hotel lobby) looking west

7 of 10

Interior view of renovated first floor looking north, showing elevator bank to right

8 of 10

View looking skyward from alleyway showing north (rear) elevation

9 of 10

View looking north showing west (side) elevation along access alley

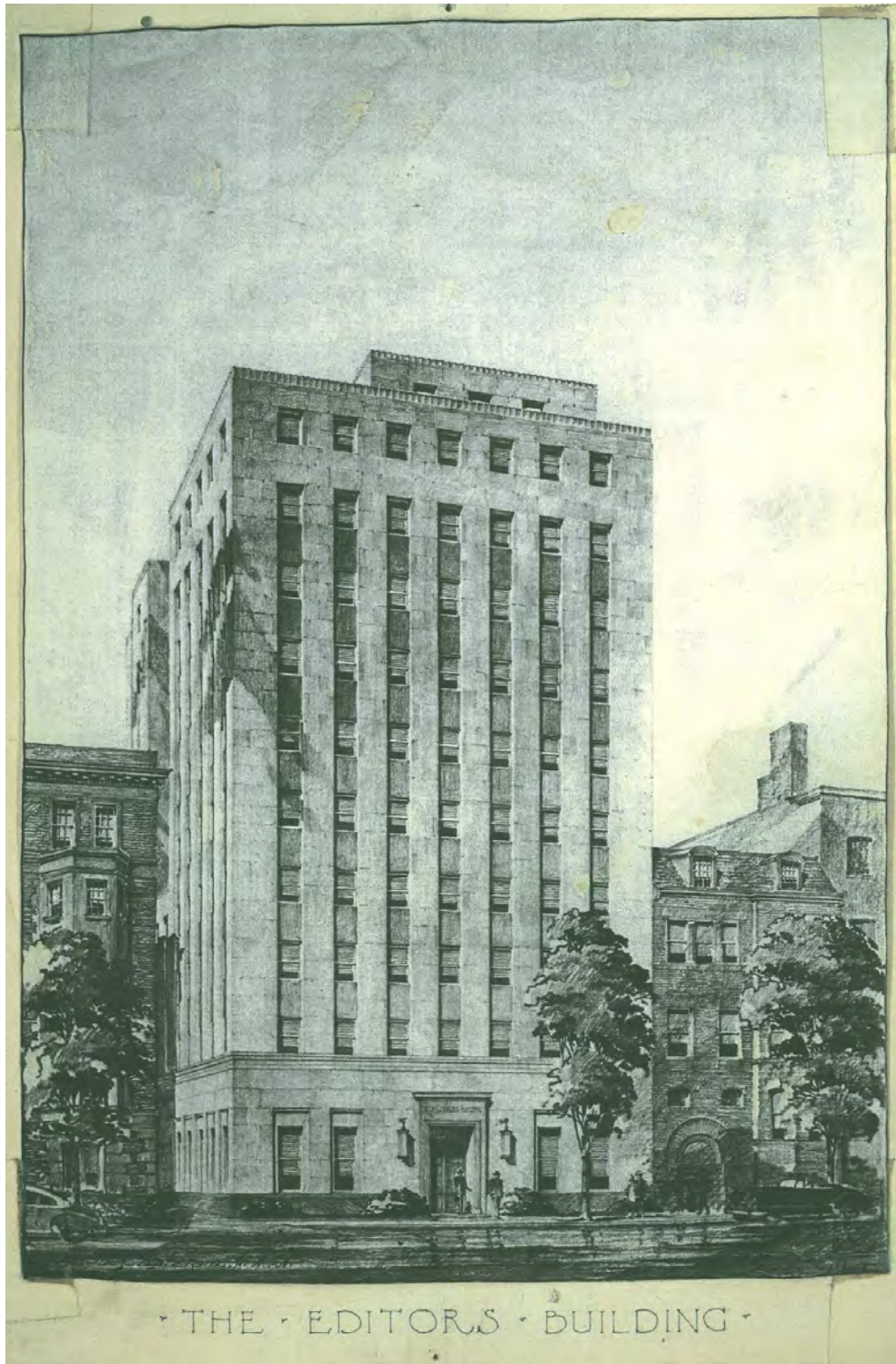
10 of 10

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Editors Building  
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Historic rendering of The Editors Building, 1949-1950



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Photograph, December 1948, showing vacant site of The Editors Building (Note the Bachelor Flats to the west).  
(From personal collection of Leon Chatelain III, Chatelain Architects)

Editors Building  
Name of Property

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The Editors Building under construction, December 1949  
(From personal collection of Leon Chatelain III, Chatelain Architects)

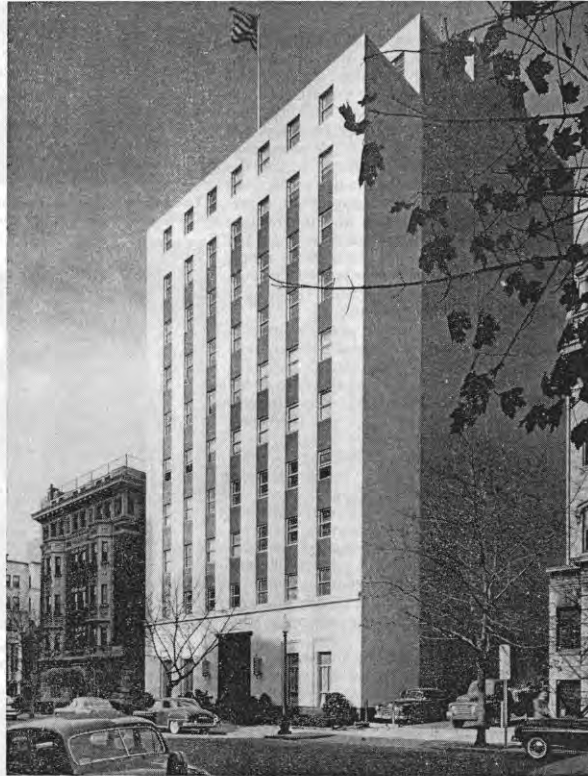
Editors Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

## NEW BUILDINGS

New Editors Building planned as a "business home"

Handsome new Editors Building, located near the White House in Washington, was designed for the purpose of housing the well-known Kiplinger News Letters and the magazine, "Changing Times"



### • In Washington, D. C.

THE extent to which planning is done before the construction of a new building is reflected in the finished product, and the new Editors Building in Washington, D.C., is the result of several years of planning.

The owner and architect started out with two objectives: to build a building for the purpose of hous-

ing a publishing business, and to design the structure so as to provide its occupants with the greatest comfort during their work days.

Since the new building was designed for a specific purpose — the operation of the Kiplinger publishing firm — all space was efficiently utilized to produce the desired result. The interior decora-

tions were planned to provide attractive and comfortable working conditions for both editors and business office personnel.

The building occupies an area of approximately 63 x 113 feet, and contains a boiler room level, sub-basement, ten stories, and two penthouses — one for the air conditioning plant and one for the

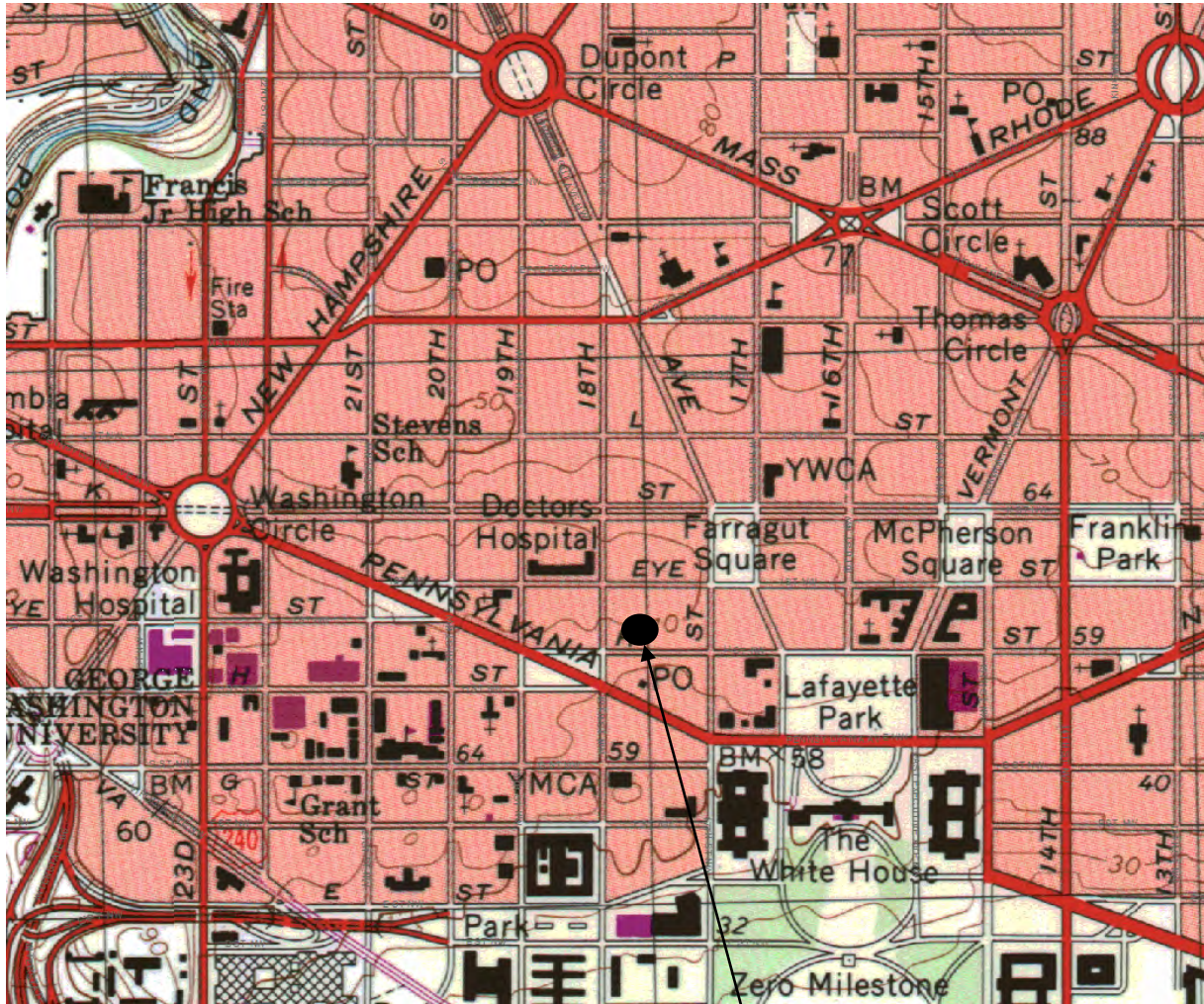
Reprinted from March, 1951, BUILDINGS, The Magazine of Building Management  
Copyright 1951

Historic view of The Editors Building, 1951  
(From *Buildings, The Magazine of Building Management*, 1951)



Editors Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
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USGS Washington West Quad Map

Editors Building  
1729 H Street NW  
Washington, D.C.



Editors Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State



Site Plan Showing The Editors Building  
1729 H Street NW  
(From GIS, Office of Planning, 2014)

Editors Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State



Map showing National Register Boundaries of The Editors Building, 1729 H Street NW

Editors Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State



Key to Photographs





COFFEE



175

FedEx







Waldorf Astoria  
New York



ESTABLISHED 1888

1729

hello.

WELCOME

Ho



















1949

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Editors Building, The

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 1/30/15      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/05/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/20/15      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/17/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000072

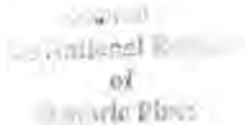
REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    3-17-15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:



RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: January 23, 2015

TO: Patrick Andrus

FROM: Kim Williams *KW*

RE: Transmittal Letter for The Editors Building and the Hill Building National Register nominations

The enclosed disk, Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for The Editors Building to the National Register of Historic Places. The enclosed Disk 2 (of 2) contains photographs as per the NR photo requirements of The Editors Building.

The enclosed disk, Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Hill Building to the National Register of Historic Places. The enclosed Disk 2 (of 2) contains the Hill Building photos as per the NR photo requirements.