Form 10-300 (July 1969)

1. NAME COMMON:

AND/OR HISTORIC:

STREET AND NUMBER:

District of Columbia

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

2. LOCATION

CITY OR TOWN:

3. CLASSIFICATION

X District

Agricultural

Commercial

▼ Educational

Entertainment

OWNER'S NAME:

CITY OR TOWN:

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

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

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

Washington

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Gallaudet College

Recorder of Deeds STREET AND NUMBER:

6th & D Streets, N.W.

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

DATE OF SURVEY: March 26, 1974

National Capital Planning Commission

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

☐ Site

Washington

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

#### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

7th Street and Florida Avenue, N.E.

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

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DESCRIPTION							
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DESCRIBE THE PR	ESENT AND ORI	GINAL (if kno	wn) PHYSICA	L APPEARANCE			

The district consists of an L-shaped, 14+ acre plot of land which included the entire rectangular area planned by Olmsted, Vaux, & Co. in 1866 except. the northeast corner. This district is outlined on Map 2. The northeast corner is excluded because the nineteenth century buildings and landscaping there have been replaced by the southern section of an overly large 20th century quadrangle. The 1866 plan divided the campus into two parts separated by a large green. At the east are the academic buildings and at the west are a row of faculty residences. Chapel Hall, the focal building, is on a small hill while the President's House is on a knoll. The elaborate network of roads and paths planned by Olmsted, Vaux & Co. were never built and the present road plans are a simplification of the planned circulation. The general pattern of indirect communication among buildings was maintained. The most notable difference between the existing plan and the original plan is the main entrance and the placement of the gate keeper's house. change was made before the gate keeper's house was built in 1877-78. Also, several buildings, which were not called for in the original plan, were added after 1878.

Below are descriptions of the buildings in the district. The numbers are keyed to the maps.

1. Chapel Hall. The "Main Central Building" at Galladdet College, Chapel Hall is one of the finest examples of post-Civil War collegiate architecture in the United States and is the focal point of this nationally significant educational institution. It is a picturesque, brownstone, High Victorian Gothic Revival building designed by Frederick C. Withers of the leading mid-nineteenth century firm of Vaux, Withers and Co. Its design reflects the romantic architectural associationalism prevalent in post Civil War America. The building was consciously designed to be a symbol of the national importance of the institution the only collegiate institution for the deaf in the United States. The building has a rather ecclesiastical character and was an early important building in Washington in the Ruskian Gothic Revival style with constructional polychromy and assymmetrical planning.

The siting of Chapel Hall was determined by Olmsted, Vaux & Co. when that leading landscape architecture and planning firm made a general plan for the school's grounds in 1866. The site chosen for this facal building was previously the site of 'Rose Cottage', one of the two houses occupied by the school when it opened in 1857. Chapel Hall was erected in 1867-71 as a multipurpose building housing the institution's main assembly hall or chapel, a lecture room, dining rooms for college and primary students, a servents' dormitory, and kitchens and services in the basement. The earchitectural importance of the building was immediately recognized and drawings of it were published by the contemporary architectural press.

Chapel Hall is in the Ruskian Gothic Revival style which was popular in the 1870's, but it exhibits a restraint and fine handling of materials which creates a subdued coloristic harmony unusual in buildings in this polychrome style.

PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	<ul><li>16th Century</li><li>17th Century</li></ul>	<ul><li>☐ 18th Century</li><li>☑ 19th Century</li></ul>	20th Century
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AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Che	eck One or More as Appropr	iate)	
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Communications Conservation	Military Music	Theater Transportation	

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated the Gallaudet College Historic District a Category I Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia.

This nationally significant educational institution is the only college in the United States specifically for deaf persons. The historic district consists of most of the original campus which was planned in 1866 by Olmsted, Vaux, & Co. (See Maps 1 and 2). This leading late 19th century landscape architecture and planning firm felt that since the college's students lacked the ability to hear extra care should be taken so that "the senses of sight and smell are gratified in a most complete and innocent way." Gallaudet College's romantic informal plan was one of the firm's earliest collegiate works and is contemporary with their work at the University of California at Berkeley. This plan was substantially carried out between 1866 and 1878 although landscaping plans were simplified in execution. The 1878 campus is in a remarkable state of preservation except in the northeast section, an area excluded from the historic district.

In 1857 Amos Kendall established a primary school for deaf and blind children in the District of Columbia across the boundary line of the Federal City at Eighth Street, N.E. Edward M. Gallaudet became superintendent of the nascent school. Gallaudet had a vision of a government supported college for the deaf and in 1864 the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb was given collegiate powers. (In 1865 blind students were taught elsewhere. In 1894 the college's name was changed to Gallaudet College in honor of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Edward M. Gallaudet's father and the founder of the first school for the deaf in the United States.)

The Institution received support from the United States Government and care was taken to insure that it expanded in an orderly fashion. Olmsted, Vaux & Co. made a master plan of the campus. From 1866 to 1878 substantial development took place and great care was taken to follow the 1866 plan.

On December 14, 1866, Edward Gallaudet, the Institution's president, requested Olmsted, Vaux & Co. to proceed to design three buildings for the campus, as he hoped to begin the central building (Chapel Hall), the president's house and one professor's house the next year. Gallaudet

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES		ම ්ලු		
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Atwood, A. W. "Gallaudet in Washing	gton: The World's Only College for	6 7 0		
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As the designated State Liaison Officer for the Na- tional Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law	I hereby certify that this property is included in the			
89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion	National Register.			
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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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NATIONAL REGISTER UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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719 Description (Gallaudet College)

Its brownstone walls with cream-colored bands of Ohio sandstone, its gray and red slate roofs, and its decorative details using other materials such as pink granite illustrate the constructional polychromy of the time. The building is asymmetrically massed as the architect carefully differentiated the various parts of the building according to use.

There are three main sections, each with its own steep mansard roof. The one-story west wing originally housed the college's dining room. The almost square central section with two story high walls contained the assembly room or chapel. The east wing was subdivided into two parts. The one story part closest to the central block had a lecture room which opened on to the assembly room by sliding doors. The one and one-half story eastern part had the primary school's dining room on the first floor and a servant's dormitory on the second floor. A full basement under all sections contained kitchens and services.

Although the east and west wings are neither aligned nor the same size, their steep mansard roofs have ridge poles at the same height and this enables the building to be viewed as a long horizontal mass asymmetrically intersected by a large cubic mass. The horizontality is increased by the stone bands. A vertical emphasis comes from the clock tower at the southwest of the central block. This tower has a steep hipped roof which reaches above the other roofs of the building and acts as a focal point tying the parts into a unified asymmetrical composition.

The west wing is approximately 49 feet long and 41 feet wide. It has an apsidal projection at the east. The central block is 61 feet long and 56 feet wide. At the southwest corner is the square clock tower whose walls are flush with the walls of the central block. A one story porch with its own shed roof extends along the south facade to the clock tower. The roof of the central block has a fleche and is broken by a gablet on the south side. The east wing is approximately 70 feet long and 47 1/2 feet wide. Its roof breaks after the lecture room to reflect the differentiation in function and the eastern section is one and one-half stories with a large hipped gablet on the south side.

Each section of the building has different window treatment on the main (south) facade. The west section has rectangular windows. The central section above the porch has a band of five large tracery windows under pointed arches with voussoirs of two alternating kinds of stone. The east

<sup>1</sup> Much of the descriptive information is from Frank Kowsky's "The Nineteenth Century Buildings on the Campus of Gallaudet College, Washington, D.C."

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7. Description (Gallaudet College Continued)

section has groupings of small Gothic windows except the gablet has rectangular windows.

Most decorative details have English Gothic Revival origins. Many carved designs are derived from designs in James K. Colling's Art Foliage (1865). An outstanding decorative feature is the entrance porch with three pointed arches carried on pink Scotch granite columns. In a triangular gablet above the central arch carved in half-relief is an American eagle with breast shield with stars and stripes. The open arcade linking Chapel Hall and College Hall is a picturesque element. It has slender white and pink granite columns with very ornate capitals supporting wide pointed arches. Both entrance porch and arcade are paved with black and white marble tiles. Originally all roofs had iron cresting but only these on the west wing have survived.

The interior has been considerably altered. The rooms in the wings have been subdivided. Fortunately the open space of the 56 foot square assembly room has been preserved as movable dividers are employed there. An outstanding feature is this room's 38 foot high, paneled ceiling with its original dark stain.

A Category II Landmark and National Historic Landmark, Chapel Hall is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It is retained in the master plan for Gallaudet College.

- 2. College Hall. This fine example of polychrome High Victorian Gothic Revival architecture was included in the 1866 plan. The east wing, designed by architect E.S. Friedrich, was erected in 1866. The main block of the building, designed by architect F.C. Withers, was erected in 1874-77 with J.G. Meyers as supervising architect. At this time alterations were made to the Friedrich wing. Important in its own right, College Hall is an irreplaceable structure complementing and enhancing Chapel Hall. The northwest wing is the oldest remaining building erected for the college. The second stage of the master plan for Gallaudet College calls for its demolition with the site remaining vacant.
- 3. Sophia Fowler Hall. Erected in 1916-18, this building was designed by architects O.A. Mechlin, I. Charles Stair, and F.L. Pearsons under Elliott Wood, Architect of the Capitol. The Primary School built in 1859, 1862, and 1865-6 was located on the site now occupied by Fowler Hall. The building is an intrusion in the district. The second stage of the master plan calls for its demolition with the site remaining vacant.

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Description (Gallaudet College Continued)

- 4. <u>Gate Keeper's House</u>. The architect of this house erected in 1877-78 was probably F.C. Withers. It was located in front of Chapel Hall in the 1866 plan but was resited prior to construction in 1877-78. The Gate Keeper's House is a picturesque small Gothic Revival building. It is retained in the master plan.
- 5. The President's House. This is a large, red brick high Victorian Gothic Revival house located on a knoll at the southwest corner of the campus. The house, erected in 1867-68 and designed by F.C. Withers, is approximately sixty feet north of Florida Avenue. It is surrounded by informally land-scaped open space. A circular drive separates it from a row of three High Victorian Gothic Revival Professors' Houses at the north. A large green separates it from academic and administrative buildings at the northeast. The house is oriented so that its main facade faces north toward the faculty houses. Most of the buildings on the campus visible from the President's House were designed by F.C. Withers and were built between 1867 and 1885.

The house is very suburban or rural in character and it is important to remember that in the 1860's the school had a suburban location. The building's design is in the mid-nineteenth century Downing tradition of a dwelling with informal landscaping, picturesque features, and an open plan. There are also features characteristic of post-Civil War architecture such as the "constructional coloration" and the greater plasticity (particularly present in the entrance portal).

The building has a number of parts and numerous accents from dormers, gables, chimneys, and projections. However, there is a unity from the general compactness of the outline and the careful organization of openings. This unity is enhanced by the use of similar decorative motifs.

The house has a 2-1/2-story, brick main block approximately 53'8" by 48'. This block has a broadly overhanging, steep mansard roof broken over each bay by a dormer, gable, or hipped gable. The main block has three bays on its north-south facades and two on its east facade. Centrally located on the north side is a projecting 2-1/2-story brick entrance bay, 14'5" by 10'. Extending the full length of the east side is a one-story frame veranda. A semi-elliptical, one-story bay projects from the southwest bay of the south facade. At the west is a two-story brick service wing, 30'9" by 26'. This wing has a steep mansard roof broken by gables over 2nd story windows. Attached to the service wing at the west is an enclosed, one-story, frame porch, one bay wide. A frame, 1-1/2-story stair wing with shed roof occupies the northwest corner between the main block and the service wing.

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7. Description (Gallaudet College Continued)

The main block and service wing have red brick walls laid in common bond in Flemish variation. There is variegation due to the brownstone foundation and the brownstone bands connecting window lintels. Most openings are rectangular with 2/2-lights. Over major windows are alternating brick and brownstone voussoirs in pointed arches. The arches are filled in with thin bricks laid in a recessed herringbone pattern. Around the main entrance is a very plastic, one-story brownstone portal with buttresses. The ornament on this portal and on the tympanum of the window above the door is derived from James K. Colling's Art Foliage (1865). The frame porch at the east has king post braces and quatrefoil ensemble. This porch is in poor condition.

The first floor plan of the main block has a central hall with plant room at the south and two rooms on each side. Between the west rooms is a handsome stair. The plan exhibits the openness, concern for views, and separation of service wing characteristic of Downing's plans. The addition of the plant room is a post-Civil War characteristic and possibly derived from a design in Robert Kerr's The Gentlemen's House (1864).

The interior has a number of outstanding decorative features. The main rooms of the first floor have dark woodwork and handsome wood and tile mantels. The newel of the stair supports an intricate wood carving of an Indian. Handsome stain glass panels separate the plant room and the central hall. A Category II Landmark, the President's House is retained in the master plan.

- 6. <u>Professor's House</u>. Designed by Vaux, Withers & Co. and erected in 1867, this house is on the 1866 plan. It is a good example of Gothic Revival domestic architecture. It is the first building on the campus designed by Withers. It will be replaced in the third stage of the master plan by graduate apartment buildings.
- 7 & 8. Professors' Houses. F.C. Withers was architect of these houses erected in 1874-75. On the 1866 plan, they are good examples of Gothic Revival domestic architecture. They will be replaced in the third stage of the master plan by graduate apartment buildings.
- 9. <u>Professor's House</u>. Erected prior to 1885 and demolished since 1967, the architect of this house is not known. On the 1866 plan, it was a typical late 19th century frame residence of no particular architectural significance.



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- 7. Description (Gallaudet College Continued)
- 10. Faculty House. Erected prior to 1885, the architect of this house is not known. It is within the area planned by Olmsted, Vaux & Co. but the plan locates the fifth house in the row with the other faculty houses. It is a typical late 19th century frame dwelling, in scale with the other buildings. It will be replaced in the second stage of the master plan with graduate student apartment buildings. It appears to be in poor condition.
- 11. Old Gymnasium. Designed by F.C. Withers, this building was erected in 1879-81 with J.G. Meyers as supervising architect. Its picturesque design is derived from Swiss architecture. It is within the area planned in 1866 but is not included in the plan. It appears to be in poor condition and will be replaced in the second stage of the master plan by graduate apartments.
- 12. <u>Kendall Hall</u>. The architect of this building erected in 1884-85 was F.C. Withers. Within the area planned in 1866, it is not included in the plan It is in scale with the older buildings and is the last building on the campus designed by Withers. It is retained in the master plan.
- 13. Statue of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. This sensitive bronze group by sculptor Daniel C. French was unveiled on June 26, 1889. It portrays Gallaudet with his first pupil. Given by the National Association of the Deaf, it is an important work by French and one of Washington's finest statues. It is retained in the master plan.

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8. Significance (Gallaudet College Continued)

requested that the Central Building be Gothic or Romanesque and that it have brownstone walls and a clock tower. The plans for the buildings were actually made by the architectural firm of Vaux, Withers & Co. This firm was closely associated with the school's planners, as Vaux was a member of both firms. James G. Naylor was the contractor and Emil S. Fredrick the supervising architect.

Frederick C. Withers (1828-1901) designed the buildings at Gallaudet. Withers was an English architect who immigrated to the United States around 1852 to work with Andrew J. Downing. Withers worked with Olmsted and Vaux on Central Park in New York City. In 1866 he formed a partnership with Vaux which lasted until 1871. This firm is best known for their High Victorian Gothic Revival designs, such as Jefferson Market Courthouse in New York City (on the National Register of Historic Places).

The first building by Withers completed at Gallaudet was the Professor's House erected in 1867. The President's House and Chapel Hall were begun at the same time but due to their larger size and more elaborate designs took longer to complete. Both the President's House and the Professor's House are located on land purchased from Capt. Patterson after the Olmsted, Vaux and Co. plan was made. However, both buildings are sited as determined by the plan as it called for the purchase of this property. The existing original plans for the President's House are dated March 16, 1867. The house's design largely conforms with these plans. By August 1867 the building was ready for rafters and was roofed by the winter of 1867. Gallaudet in the Annual Report dated October 26, 1868, stated that the house was nearly complete. The house was occupied by Gallaudet and his family in December 1868.

Probably in 1887 a frame stair wing was added in the northwest corner where the main block joins the service wing. From 1887 to 1889 the newly admitted female students in the college were temporarily living on the third floor of the President's House. The stairs were probably built to enable the students to reach their rooms without going through the President's quarters.

The house has undergone relatively little modification excepting the addition of modern utilities. It contains a considerable amount of furniture dating from the occupancy of Edward M. Gallaudet. The foundations and basement of Chapel Hall were built in 1867. In early 1868 preliminary plans for the building were altered when a second story was added over the primary school dining room in the east wing. The existing original plans for the building are dated April 30, 1868, and the completed building largely conforms to these plans. By October 1869 parts of the building were being roofed and in 1870 the dining rooms and basement were occupied. The completed structure was dedicated on January 29, 1871, during a ceremony attended by President

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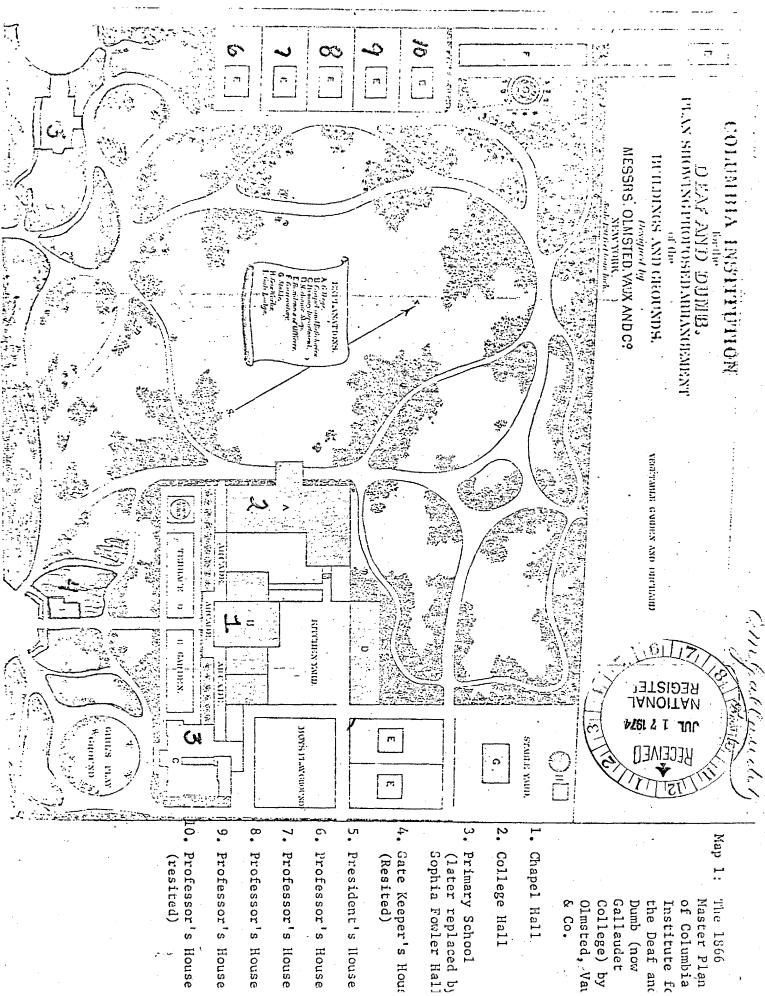
#### 8. Significance (Gallaudet College Continued)

In 1874-77 College Hall, also designed by Withers, was erected northwest of Chapel Hall and connected to it by a handsome pointed arched arcade. College, Hall, a brick High Victorian Gothic Revival building forms a unified composition with Chapel Hall. During the construction of College Hall the terrace and steps in front of Chapel Hall were constructed. Also in the 1870's the wooden veranda on the north side of the west wing of Chapel Hall was bricked in. On June 26, 1889, a statue of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet by Daniel C. French was unveiled. This statue, one of the finest in Washington, is located in front of the main entrance of Chapel Hall.

Today the exterior of Chapel Hall retains its 1870's appearance. The interior has undergone considerable alteration. At present the building contains offices in the east and west wings and in the basement. The central assembly room is used by the public relations department. There is interest in rehabilitating the building for use as a visitor's center and as a Hall of Fame of outstanding deaf persons.

In 1870 the college purchased Kendall Green, an area of approximately 90 acres behind the original campus. This land enabled the school to expand in recent years to the north and has preserved the nineteenth century campus. From 1879 to 1885 a few buildings were added in the area planned by Olmsted, Vaux & Co., but their placement is in keeping with the general concept of the plan and the late Victorian designs are in scale with earlier structures. In 1889 French's statue was unveiled in front of Chapel Hall. The district has undergone little change since 1885. The most signifficant is the demolition of the Primary School erected in 1859, 1862, and 1865-6 and the erection on its site in 1916-18 of Sophia Fowler Hall. Since 1967 a small frame house, not designed by Withers, was replaced by tennis courts.





Map 2: The Boundaries of the Gallaudet College Historic District

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#### Buildings included in the district:

- 1. Chapel Hall
- 2. College Hall
- 3. Sophia Fowler Hall
- 4. Gate Keeper's House
- 5. President's House
- 6. Professor's House
- 7. Professor's House

- 8. Professor's House
- 9. Professor's House
- 10. Professor's House
- 11. Old Gymnasium
- 12. Kendall Hall
- 13. Statue of Gallaudet

