

VLR-8/21/90 NRHP-2/1/91

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Boundary Markers of the original District of Columbia

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Establishment of the Original Boundaries of the District of Columbia

C. Geographical Data

The boundary markers of the original District of Columbia located in the Commonwealth of Virginia are within the jurisdictions of the counties of Arlington and Fairfax and the cities of Alexandria and Falls Church. They are spaced at more or less regular intervals of one mile along a line drawn between the UTM coördinates 18|322760|4295280 and 18|311570|4306900 and between the UTM coördinates 18|311570|4306900 and 18|315080|4310370.

See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation

Hugh C. Miller
Signature of certifying official

17 Dec 1990
Date

Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

Date

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number H Page 1

Baker, Marcus. "The Boundary Monuments of the District of Columbia." Records of the Columbia Historical Society. Vol. 1 (1897): 215-224.

Chase, Louise Coflin. "Boundary Stones of the District of Columbia." Manuscript on file, Washingtonian Collection, District of Columbia Public Library. (1930).

Columbia Historical Society. "The Writings of George Washington Relating to the National Capital." Records of the Columbia Historical Society. Vol. 17 (1914): 4-7.

Lawrence, Kenneth D. "Letter from Kenneth D. Lawrence to Mr. Stuntz." Manuscript on file, Virginia Collection Files, Fairfax County Public Library. 1967.

National Capital Planning Commission. Boundary Markers of the Nation's Capital. (1976).

Nye, Edwin Darby. "Boundary Stones". The Washington Star Sunday Magazine. (June 23, 1963).

Nye, Edwin Darby. "Revisiting Washington's Forty Boundary Stones, 1972." Records of the Columbia Historical Society. Vol. 48 (1973): 740-751.

Proctor, John Clagett. "Proctor's Washington and Environs." (1949).

Robinson, June. "The Arlington Boundary Stones." Arlington Historical Magazine. (October 1989): 5-19.

Shuster, Ernest A., Jr. "The Original Boundary Stones of the District of Columbia." The National Geographic Magazine, Vol. XX (April 1909): 356-359.

Statutes at Large and Treaties of the United States of America From December 1, 1845 to March 3, 1851. Vol. IX (1862): 35-37.

Terman, Mark J. "The 'Jurisdiction Stones' and Cornerstone Park." Manuscript on file in Virginia Collection, Falls Church Public Library. (1972).

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Section number H Page 2

Waters, Frances W. and Lt. Col. Robert P. The Boundary Stones. Manuscript on file, Thomas Nelson Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Arlington, Virginia. (1963).

Woodward, Fred E. "A Ramble Along The Boundary Stones of the District of Columbia with A Camera." Records of the Columbia Historical Society. Vol. 10 (1907): 63-87.

Woodward, Fred. E. "With A Camera Over The Old District Boundary Lines." Records of the Columbia Historical Society. Vol. 11 (1908): 1-15.

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ORIGINAL BOUNDARIES OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

In the summer of 1787, the framers of the United States Constitution confronted a long list of issues, ideas, problems, and solutions concerning the new government.

One such issue was the location of the capital of the new United States. To deal with this problem, the framers wrote the following in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution:

"The Congress shall have Power . . . To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square {a square of ten miles to a side, or a hundred square miles }) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States.

Many sites had been proposed as the new capital city even before the first Congress began its deliberations. Congress passed the Residence Act and it was signed into law by President George Washington on 15 July 1790. When the act was signed, Virginia and Maryland had already passed laws ceding land to the new government. The actual area approved in the act was more than the ten mile square allowed in the Constitution. The passage of the act was possible due to a compromise on the issue of the capital and the separate but important issue of the assumption of the states' war debts by the federal government.¹

Under the Act, President George Washington had the final decision on location of the exact ten mile square within the area designated as well as the three commissioners who were to supervise the survey of the site.²

On 22 January 1791 Washington appointed Thomas Johnson and Daniel Carroll of Maryland and David Stuart of Virginia as "commissioners for surveying the District of Territory accepted by the said act".

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type Boundary Markers of the original District of Columbia

II. Description

SUMMARY

This Multiple Property Documentation Form is for the twelve boundary stones now located in Virginia that marked the original District of Columbia boundary. Andrew Ellicott, assisted by Benjamin Banneker, surveyed the boundary in 1791. The first stone was placed at Jones Point on 15 April 1791. The year the stone was placed is engraved on the stone; in the case of the Virginia stones, the date on each stone is 1791. A total of forty stones

III. Significance

The boundary markers of the original District of Columbia are of national importance.

As a group, these stone markers are the enduring physical evidence of the establishment of the permanent seat of government of the United States in one of the first comprehensively planned cities of modern times. They are also directly associated with two figures of national importance, Andrew Ellicott, the principal surveyor of the entire capital city and other important boundaries and cities, and Benjamin Banneker, a gifted free black astronomer and mathematician who collaborated with Ellicott in the survey of the capital's boundaries. The markers are also the first monuments erected by the United States.

IV. Registration Requirements

Each Boundary Marker must be intact, its location known and marked, and if moved, preserved in a nearby location. If not the original marker, its replacement must be at least fifty years old.

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet for additional property types

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

It is anticipated that the multiple property listing for the Boundary Markers of the original District of Columbia, 1791, will eventually include nominations for each of the boundary stones located in Virginia which mark the boundary of the original District of Columbia. The south cornerstone and the Southwest #9 Marker are already on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic context was determined based on the legislation underlying the choice of the site of the new federal capital, which also called for the placement of the stones in Virginia. The requirements for integrity for the listing of the related properties were derived from the National Capital Planning Commission booklet, 1976, and based upon field work and documented research.

See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

I. Form Prepared By

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Two days later, President Washington issued a proclamation establishing the beginning point of the boundary lines "Running from the Court-House of Alexandria in Virginia, due South West half a Mile, and thence a due South East course". The President went on to state "I do hereby declare and make known, That all that part within the said four Lines of Experiment which shall be within the State of Maryland and above the Eastern Branch, and all that Part within the same four Lines of Experiment which shall be within the Commonwealth of Virginia . . . is now fixed upon, and directed to be surveyed, defined, limited and located for a Part of the said District accepted by the said Act of Congress for the permanent Seat of the Government of the United States".³

Washington's choice of the land necessitated an amendment to the Residence Act, as the southern part of the area chosen was not part of the land described in the act.⁴ Washington's square included the port of Alexandria as well as its wharfs. The southern boundary was only four miles from Mount Vernon.

Major Pierre L'Enfant was chosen to lay out the proposed city,⁵ while Major Andrew Ellicott was assigned to survey its boundaries.

Ellicott, born in 1754, was a professional surveyor and a member of the American Philosophical Society and owned what have been described as the finest surveying instruments in the United States at that time. These instruments are now housed in the National Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution.⁶

He had been completing important surveys since the revolutionary war, including the survey of the boundary between Virginia and Pennsylvania begun by Mason and Dixon. He was also responsible for the survey of the west boundary of Pennsylvania, from the Ohio River to Lake Erie, a line that stands today.⁷

In 1788 Ellicott, with his younger brothers, surveyed the western portions of the New York/Pennsylvania boundary; this survey included the first accurate measurement of the entire length of the Niagara River and its falls.⁸

He was a mathematics professor at West Point from 1812 until his death in 1820, and is buried at West Point.

