

NATIONAL PARK SEMINARY, PRACTICE HOUSE
(Walter Reed Medical Center Annex, Building No. 120)
Linden Lane, northwest corner of power plant building
Silver Spring
Montgomery County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-1109-U

HABS
MD
16-SILSPR,
2U-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

National Park Seminary, Practice House¹ (Walter Reed Medical Center Annex, Building No. 120)

HABS
MD
16-5165PE,
24-

HABS No. MD-1109-U

Location: The Practice House is located in the northwest corner of the power plant building in between Main's dining wing and the Colonial clubhouse.

Significance: The Practice House is a small component of the campus grounds, but its large neoclassical portico is a prominent eye-catcher. It reflects Ament's obsession with Beaux-Arts detailing and his often haphazard means of incorporating it on the campus.²

History:

The Practice House for music instruction was constructed on the east side of Main in 1906.³ The Practice House is attached to the northwest corner of the boiler house, or power plant, which seems both dangerous and noisy for facilities where students' rehearse music lessons. There are no photographs or descriptions of the building before the portico was added to the north facade in the 1920s.

Description:

The Practice House's most distinguishing characteristic is its massive pedimented, three-bay front portico with half-fluted Doric columns. The dentiled pediment has a decorative stained-glass fanlight. The six two-story columns enclosed a two-tiered patio. The ground floor was adorned with two Greek statues, an ornate cast-concrete table, and a cast-concrete bench with griffin ends. A half-story above the patio was a porch with balustrade. Recessed against the original facade of the building was a second-story balcony with rail. Of all these decorative features, only one bench remains on the site. All other decor was removed. The balustrades were replaced by simple metal-pipe rails.

Entry doors to elevated causeways are located on the east and west sides of the building. A large stone stairway on the west side of the porch adjoins a stone arch that supports the causeway leading to Main. The massive portico and various later additions obscure the brick building to which they are attached. Partially visible to the east of the portico is a stuccoed wall capped by a

¹ For a complete description of the Power Plant to which the Practice House is attached, see also the service buildings report (HABS No. MD-1109-V).

² See Campus Planning section in HABS No. MD-1109 for a statement of significance of the Beaux Arts design.

³ "National Park Seminary," *Sunday Star*, 1906. NPS clipping file, Washingtoniana, DC Public Library.

Spanish Revival parapet with green trim; it is a glimpse of the power plant to which the Practice House is attached.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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