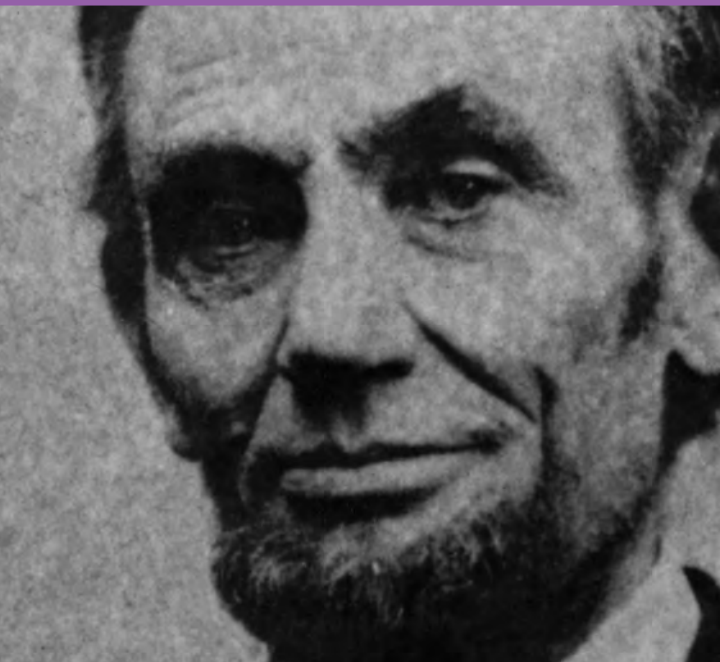


Civil War to Civil Rights

DOWNTOWN HERITAGE TRAIL



Walk in the footsteps of Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Walt Whitman, and other great Americans whose lives were intertwined with the history of the nation and its capital city.



Welcome.

Visitors to Washington, DC, flock to the National Mall, where grand monuments symbolize the nation's highest ideals.

This self-guided walking tour invites you to discover the places where people have struggled to make those ideals a reality.

Civil War to Civil Rights: Downtown Heritage Trail is the second in a series that invites you to deepen your experience of the nation's capital. Follow the trail to walk where Abraham Lincoln, newly freed African Americans, and seekers of opportunity from around the nation and the world walked and breathed the promise of our nation.

This guide, summarizing the 21 signs of *Civil War to Civil Rights: Downtown Heritage Trail*, leads you to the sites where American history lives.

The Reverend
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Washingtoniana Division,
DC Public Library*

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*As you walk this trail, please keep
safety in mind, just as you would
while visiting any unfamiliar place.*

• Civil War
to Civil Rights
Downtown
Heritage Trail

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Introduction

DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON, DC is rich in little-known historic sites, where you can touch and sense the American past. Boston, for many visitors, represents our colonial and Revolutionary War history with its Freedom Trail. Philadelphia, with the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, tells the story of the creation of the new nation. But Washington, DC has been at the heart of the struggle to preserve the Union and fulfill its dreams. *Civil War to Civil Rights: Downtown Heritage Trail* focuses on two themes—the war between the states and the continuing challenge to realize equal rights for all citizens—that link the history of the city to the history of the nation.

Between 1860 and 1865, downtown Washington drew hundreds of thousands to battle the Civil War. African Americans seeking freedom, soldiers, and citizens mingled on the crowded streets with Abraham Lincoln, Clara Barton, Walt Whitman, and Frederick Douglass. The war's end saw the city begin to emerge from a muddy backwater town to the grand capital envisioned by George Washington and city planner Peter C. L'Enfant. The Civil War transformed Washington into a true



Library of Congress

Pedestrians share Pennsylvania Ave. with streetcars and horse-drawn wagons in 1901.



A vendor at Center Market about 1890.



The slave house of J. W. Neal & Co. at Seventh Street near the National Mall was a center of the District slave trade.

center of national power, the symbol of America's democratic ideals.

The struggle for civil rights has likewise been central to the history of the city. In 1851–52 a newspaper in downtown Washington, the *National Era*, serialized a story by an unknown author, Harriet Beecher Stowe. It was called *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and had a monumental impact on the nation's will to fight the Civil War. Lincoln freed the District's enslaved African Americans eight months before the Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in the rebellious states. Nearly a century later, attorney and Howard University Professor Charles Hamilton Houston worked in his downtown office to lay the groundwork for the strategies that outlawed racial segregation. And it was at the Willard Hotel in downtown Washington that the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., put the finishing touches on his electrifying "I Have a Dream" speech.

Civil War and civil rights stand as bookends embracing more than a century of other stories about downtown DC. This Heritage Trail also celebrates the people from many nations who came to this city seeking an economic foothold. As shopkeepers and artisans, builders and laborers, they left their stories behind in the places where they lived, worked, and worshipped.

It is no accident that this Heritage Trail starts near the National Archives at Pennsylvania Avenue and Seventh Street. The shrine housing our nation's most sacred documents—the Declaration of

Sergeant Major Christian Fleetwood served with the Fourth U.S. Colored Troops and was awarded the Medal of Honor.



Moorland-Spingarn Research Center,
Howard University

Harriet Beecher
Stowe, author of
Uncle Tom's Cabin.



National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution



U.S. General Services Administration

This sign identified Clara Barton's Seventh St. office.

Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and others—stands on the former site of a vast public market almost as old as the city itself. From 1801 until the 1930s, when the National Archives was built, this space was the commercial heart of Washington, truly the city's town square. Before 1850, when slave trading became illegal in the District of Columbia, slave auctions took place at Center Market. But most of the business transacted was mundane: the majority of Washingtonians came to Center Market to find hay for their horses, produce, live chickens, and even hats and gloves. Over the years millions flocked to the shops that sprouted near the market, and later to the department stores that spread along F Street from Seventh to 15th Street.

The city's Seventh Street in fact was the primary artery for moving goods, linking farms in Maryland to the north with wharves on the Potomac River to the south. During the Civil War, it was a major route for Union troops headed into battle at Fort Stevens, one of a ring of forts quickly built in 1861 to protect the capital from Confederate attack.



Abolitionist,
orator, author,
and statesman
Frederick
Douglass.

Pennsylvania Avenue, the symbolic link between the U.S. Capitol and the White House, is also our nation's ceremonial Main Street. It has been the inaugural route for every U.S. president since Thomas Jefferson took office in 1801. In April 1865 President Lincoln's funeral cortege traveled along Pennsylvania Avenue, and only a few weeks later a massive parade of victorious Union troops passed this same way.

The path from Civil War to civil rights has taken many turns. Twenty-first century Washingtonians are writing yet another chapter in the history of downtown. The 1990s saw new museums and a sports arena, restaurants, theaters, and shops turn the historic heart of Washington into a cultural and entertainment center. Visitors can enjoy the highlights of the new downtown while savoring on this trail the buildings, streets, and historic sites that remain to remind us of the rich legacy on which we build.

President McKinley's 1901 inaugural ball at the Pension Building.



Great American poet
and Civil War nurse's
aide Walt Whitman,
about 1860.

.1



Center Market, on the site of today's National Archives, offered foodstuffs, bowling, and billiards, around 1930.

Library of Congress

Market Space: Yesterday's Town Square

SEVENTH ST AND PENNSYLVANIA AVE NW

PRESIDENT GEORGE WASHINGTON identified this area for use as a public market, and one was established here in 1801, less than a year after the federal government arrived from Philadelphia. Seventh Street was the main route for farmers bringing produce to market and, during the Civil War, for soldiers traveling to many of the 68 forts that protected the city. Along Pennsylvania Avenue, which linked the White House and the Capitol, small shops nestled among boarding houses and hotels. For more than a century, the place where these streets crossed was the city's town square.

“Marsh Market,” later known as Center Market, took root along both sides of Pennsylvania Avenue. Here European Americans, enslaved and free blacks, high government officials, as well as working-class men and women mingled to shop for meat, poultry, cheese, and produce.

Nearby was the Haymarket, where people bought feed for horses and cattle and hired “hacks,” the horse-drawn taxis of the day. Before 1850, when slave trading became illegal in DC, slave auctions took place at both the Haymarket and Center Market.

In 1870 the collection of ramshackle buildings and stalls that had housed the market was replaced by a grand new Center Market building designed by Adolf Cluss. Then the largest enclosed retail market in the world, Center Market eventually housed more than 1,000 vendors. It stretched along Pennsylvania Avenue between Seventh and Ninth Streets until the 1930s, when it was replaced with the neoclassical National Archives building designed by John Russell Pope.

.2



Civil War photographer Mathew Brady.

National Archives

Ceremony at the Crossroads

SEVENTH ST AND INDIANA AVE NW

“Imagine a great wide avenue [with] solid ranks of soldiers, just marching steady all day long.”
— Walt Whitman, 1865

IT TOOK TWO DAYS for the grand parade of 200,000 victorious Union soldiers described by poet Whitman to march down Pennsylvania Avenue past this spot, headed for review by President Andrew Johnson at the White House.

Missing from the parade were members of the U.S. Colored Troops who had fought for the Union. General William Tecumseh Sherman had banned their participation.

Whitman might have been standing right here on May 23 or 24, 1865. This had been the ceremonial and commercial crossroads of the city ever since the federal government moved to the banks of the Potomac River in 1800. Pennsylvania Avenue has been the inaugural parade route for every president since Thomas Jefferson.

All around are reminders of the Civil War. A statue of Major General Winfield Scott Hancock, a hero at Gettysburg, commands a small park across Seventh Street. In the plaza across Indiana Avenue stands a memorial to the founder of the Grand Army of the Republic, Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson, which was dedicated by a few hundred grizzled veterans in 1909. The building where Civil War photographer Mathew Brady had his studio, its exterior only slightly altered, remains around the corner at 627 Pennsylvania Avenue. The headquarters of the National Council of Negro Women, Inc., at 633 Pennsylvania Avenue, was built as a hotel during the Civil War. And the three little commercial buildings at 637-641 Indiana Avenue, built in the 1820s, stood witness to it all.

.3



Clara Barton at the time
of the Civil War.

Library of Congress

Clara Barton: Angel of the Battlefield

437 SEVENTH ST NW

IN NOVEMBER 1997 a U.S. government employee named Richard Lyons peered into the dark clutter in the attic of 437 Seventh Street, inspecting the building in preparation for its planned demolition. His eyes settled on a sign, “Missing Soldiers Office, Clara Barton, 3rd Floor, Room 9.” Recognizing Barton’s name, Lyons realized that this building had been the home and office of the Civil War nurse and Red Cross founder, also known as the Angel of the Battlefield. The building had been lost to historians. Lyons ended up saving the forlorn time capsule, with Room 9 still stenciled on the door and 19th-century wallpaper hanging in shreds from the walls.

Barton, a native of Massachusetts, arrived in Washington in 1854 and found employment as a Patent Office clerk. During the Civil War women could not serve in the Union Army, so she devoted herself to feeding, nursing, and comforting the men wounded in the nation’s most costly conflict. She began her battlefield work in 1862, leaving from here for the front lines at Antietam atop a supply wagon loaded with donated food and medical supplies.

After the war, which took more than 600,000 lives, Barton made her Seventh Street home a headquarters for the search for missing soldiers that she undertook at her own expense. Eventually the government paid her \$15,000 for her efforts, thereby making her the first woman to run a federal office. She received more than 63,000 inquiries, wrote 41,855 replies, and identified about 22,000 of 62,000 missing soldiers.

4

TO THE CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON.

It is well known to you that events have transpired within the last few days, deeply affecting the peace and character of our community. The danger has not yet passed away, but demands increased vigilance from the friends of order.

The cool, deliberate judgment of the People of this community, unexceptionably and unequivocally declared, can, and will, we doubt not, if the Law is found insufficient, redress any grievance, in a manner worthy of themselves; but the fearful acts of lawless and irresponsible violence can only aggravate the evil.

The authorities, Municipal and Police, have thus far restrained actual violence; and they now invoke the citizens of Washington to sustain them in their further efforts to maintain the peace and preserve the honor of the city.

The peace and character of the Capital of the Republic *must* be preserved.

The Mayor of the City (confined to his bed by sickness) fully concurs in the above.

W. LENOX, Pres. Board of Aldermen,
J. H. GODDARD, Capt. Auxiliary Guard.
April 20, 1848.

This poster urged citizens to remain calm during the *Pearl* affair.

Library of Congress

The Roots of Freedom and Equality

SEVENTH AND F STS NW

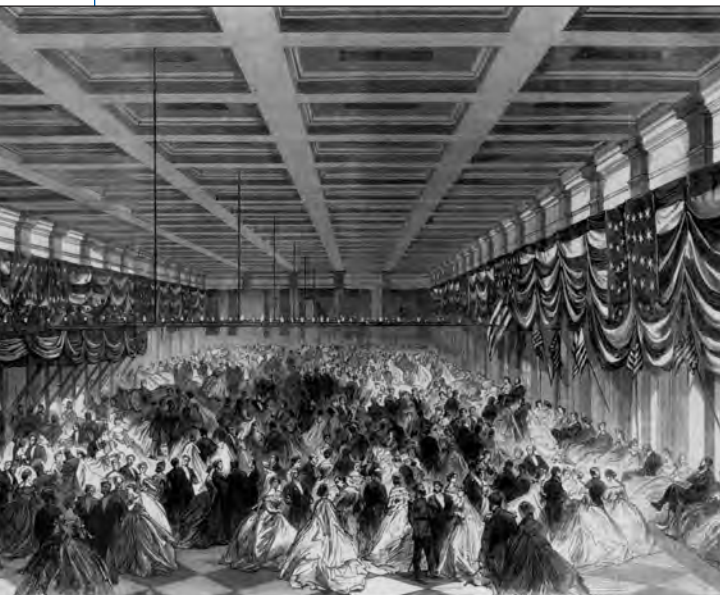
ONE EVENING IN APRIL 1848, city officials tried to calm angry mobs gathering on this corner and threatening to destroy the presses of the *National Era*. Seventy-seven enslaved men and women had just been caught escaping aboard the sailing ship *Pearl*, and the crowd blamed the anti-slavery *Era*, a newspaper with offices nearby. *Era* editor Gamaliel Bailey regularly had written of the irony of slavery in the capital of a nation dedicated to liberty and equality. He was one of many activists who made Washington, DC, a national center for abolitionism.

The potential riot was quelled, and the *National Era* survived but, tragically, most of the enslaved were sold south.

In 1851 and 1852, in new offices just a block and a half south of here, the *Era* serialized a novel by a little-known author named Harriet Beecher Stowe. Her book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, sold an astonishing 300,000 copies its first year. Its dramatic story of slavery intensified sectional rivalries and, many believe, made war inevitable.

About 100 years later, on this same block, Charles Hamilton Houston picked up the struggle to turn freedom into equality for African Americans. Houston was a practicing attorney at 615 F Street and a professor of law at Howard University. Among his students was Thurgood Marshall, who would lead the successful legal battle that resulted in the 1954 Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, in which racial segregation in public schools was declared unconstitutional. Marshall, later a Supreme Court Justice, credited Houston for laying the groundwork for *Brown* and the modern Civil Rights movement.

.5



Lincoln's second inaugural ball
was held in the Patent Office,
now a Smithsonian museum.

Library of Congress

Abraham Lincoln Walked Here

F ST BETWEEN SEVENTH AND NINTH STS NW

AT 10:30 PM ON MARCH 4, 1865, a tired and gaunt President Lincoln arrived here accompanied by his wife Mary, dressed in white lace and silk with purple and white flowers in her hair. In the Grand Hall of the Patent Office (today the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery), wounded soldiers had been moved to make way for Lincoln's second inaugural ball. Revelers awaited the star of the evening.

It was a bittersweet affair. Union victory was in sight, but the ravages of war weighed heavily on the president. He left the party early. In five weeks the war would be over; in six, Lincoln would be gone, felled by an assassin's bullet at Ford's Theatre just two blocks away.

Lincoln came this way often. The Patent Office and the General Post Office (now a hotel), across F Street, were the two most important federal buildings to be built after the White House and the Capitol. Robert Mills, architect of the U.S. Treasury, had a hand in both designs. The buildings dwarfed the surrounding houses and shops, including the nation's first telegraph office run by Samuel F.B. Morse.

During the war, this street saw intense activity. The Post Office doubled as a food commissary. The Patent Office was a hospital. Walt Whitman witnessed the second inaugural preparations in the same wards where he had helped the wounded. He recorded the dramatic contrasts: "To-night, beautiful women, perfumes, the violins' sweetness ... then... the glassy eye of the dying."

.6



An artist's 1880s rendering of Booth making his escape.

Washingtoniana Division, D.C. Public Library

John Wilkes Booth's Escape

NINTH AND F STS NW

TWELVE-YEAR-OLD HENRY DAVIS and his brother often looked out the back window of their Ninth Street home before going to bed. They were fascinated by the comings and goings of actors and stagehands at the rear of Ford's Theatre, at the other end of the alley.

On the evening of April 14, 1865, Henry went to bed early, but his brother stayed up. He witnessed a man limp from the back door of the theater, struggle onto a horse being held for him, and dash down the alley toward F Street. It was the famous actor and Confederate supporter John Wilkes Booth, the matinee idol of his day. He had just shot Abraham Lincoln as the president sat in his box watching *Our American Cousin*.

Booth had been stalking the president for months. But the murder plan had come together only hours before, when Booth and his co-conspirators met at the Herndon House, a rooming house that once stood on the southwest corner of Ninth and F. There they agreed Lewis Powell would kill Secretary of State Seward, and George Azerodt would kill Vice President Johnson. Booth took Lincoln for himself.

Azerodt's will apparently failed him. Powell severely wounded Seward. But Booth's bullet hit home. Lincoln died in the Petersen House, across from Ford's, at 7:22 the next morning.

Booth fled on horseback to Virginia and hid in a tobacco shed. Twelve days later he was discovered and shot by federal soldiers. He died soon after.

.7



The main aisle of Woodies awaits customers, around 1950.

Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Woodies Comes to F Street

F ST BETWEEN 10TH AND 11TH STS NW

In 1879, two young entrepreneurs from Massachusetts were looking for a new location for their dry goods business. “Washington, D.C. is the place for us,” Samuel Walter Woodward wrote Alvin Lothrop.

Woodward recognized the vitality and promise of the nation’s post-war capital. Since the end of the Civil War just 14 years earlier, Washington had found new importance as the center of a strong federal government. In addition, a major modernization program led by Alexander R. “Boss” Shepherd, head of the city’s Board of Public Works, had contributed freshly paved streets and avenues, sewers, gaslights, and street trees by the thousands. Horse-drawn public streetcars carried people from their homes to a developing commercial center downtown.

And Americans were flocking to Washington to take government jobs and start businesses.

To serve them, Woodward & Lothrop opened their Boston Dry Goods Store in 1880 near Center Market at Seventh Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Seven years later they moved to this location. Their modern establishment, by 1887 greatly expanded and called a department store, offered such innovations as a “one-price” policy, which meant customers did not have to bargain with clerks.

With their move, Woodward & Lothrop led the development of F Street as the city’s premier downtown shopping boulevard. Eventually other major retail establishments joined them, including Garfinckel’s at 14th Street and the Hecht Company at Seventh.

Affectionately known as “Woodies,” F Street’s first department store was a Washington tradition until it closed in 1996.

.8



A woman's suffrage march
on the avenue, 1913.

Washingtoniana Division, D.C. Public Library

Pennsylvania Avenue

10TH ST AND PENNSYLVANIA AVE NW

FROM THIS SIGN YOU CAN SEE Pennsylvania Avenue, the inaugural parade route for every president since Thomas Jefferson and local Washington's "Main Street" since the city's founding. Jefferson planted the first trees along the avenue, and in the early days of the city it was a promenade lined with shops, hotels, and boarding houses. Mary Todd Lincoln shopped here. President Lincoln's funeral procession traveled this route.

Pennsylvania Avenue has been the scene of countless parades and demonstrations. Collectively the people who have marched along the avenue—soldiers, suffragettes, civil rights activists, anti-war protesters, gay rights advocates, and the Ku Klux Klan, to name a few—serve as reminders of the freedoms embedded in the Constitution and expanded by the Civil War.

During the Civil War, the avenue's south side was a dangerous and disreputable section known as "Murder Bay," where adventurers found gambling houses, saloons, cheap hotels, and houses of ill repute. Some called it "Hooker's Division," a pun on General Joseph Hooker's name and the popular term for the prostitutes concentrated by police in this area. Prostitution was outlawed in 1914. Light industry remained until the 1930s, when a growing federal government consolidated offices that had been scattered in rented buildings around the city and built the complex of neoclassical buildings known collectively as the Federal Triangle.

The north side of the avenue continued as a commercial area, but lost customers as suburbanization offered options elsewhere. In the 1970s, the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation began revitalizing the north side, adding new buildings while preserving some of the best of its 19th-century landmarks.

W.1



Senator Jefferson Davis
and his wife Varina Davis,
members of Epiphany Church.

Library of Congress

The Church of the Epiphany

1317 G ST NW

CHURCH SPIRES DOMINATED Washington's skyline at the time of the Civil War, symbolizing the importance of houses of worship in the religious, social, and political life of the nation's capital. The Church of the Epiphany—and 10 other downtown churches, now razed—witnessed the suffering of the wounded soldiers for whom they served as temporary hospitals. Planks laid on top of the pews supported hospital beds.

Episcopalians founded the Church of the Epiphany in 1842. By the time of the Civil War, this was a residential neighborhood of strong Southern sympathies. Washington, although the capital of the Union, was a Southern city, carved originally from the states of Maryland and Virginia. Many Washingtonians had family and friends in the South, and brothers and sisters, husbands and wives often held conflicting loyalties. Even First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln had three brothers fighting for the Confederacy. Northerners accused the city of being “Secesh,” short for secessionist.

Before the war, Senator Jefferson Davis, who would become president of the Confederacy, lived nearby and was an Epiphany Church member. The Reverend Charles Hall, Epiphany's rector, balanced his Southern sympathies with loyalty to the Union. He was so persuasive that Secretary of War Edwin Stanton accepted his invitation to worship at Epiphany, before it became a hospital. Many Union generals followed suit, and President Lincoln himself came here for the funeral of General Frederick Lander of the Army of the Potomac, one of the first generals to die in the war.

W.2



An Emancipation Day celebration
in Franklin Square, 1866.

Library of Congress

Franklin Square

13TH AND K STS NW

PURE WATER ONCE BUBBLED from a spring in this square, when it was far from the center of town. In the early 1830s the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers piped the spring water to Andrew Jackson's White House, the first running water to supply the executive mansion.

The acreage north of the square had already begun to develop into a fashionable residential area before the Civil War. However it became decidedly less tranquil in 1861, when Union soldiers from the 12th New York Infantry Regiment filled the square's grassy expanse with tents and the sound of drill commands. President Lincoln's Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton lived at 1323 K Street. Occasionally the president was seen parked in an open carriage, conferring with Stanton.

After the war, Franklin Square continued to attract the city's elite. Cecilia Sherman, wife of John Sherman, the Secretary of the Treasury in the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes (1877–1881), described her move to a new house in this area as “going into the country.”

Franklin School, designed by Adolf Cluss and completed in 1869, is the only vestige of this fashionable community. The building's elegant combination of Gothic, Romanesque Revival, and Second Empire styles is testimony to the pride the city took in its public school system.

Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, transmitted the first wireless message from Franklin School to his nearby laboratory on L Street in 1880.

Into the 1890s, African Americans made Franklin Square the rallying point for their annual Emancipation Day celebrations.

W.3



Members of Asbury Church,
as photographed by the noted
Addison Scurlock, 1931.

Asbury United Methodist Church

Asbury United Methodist Church

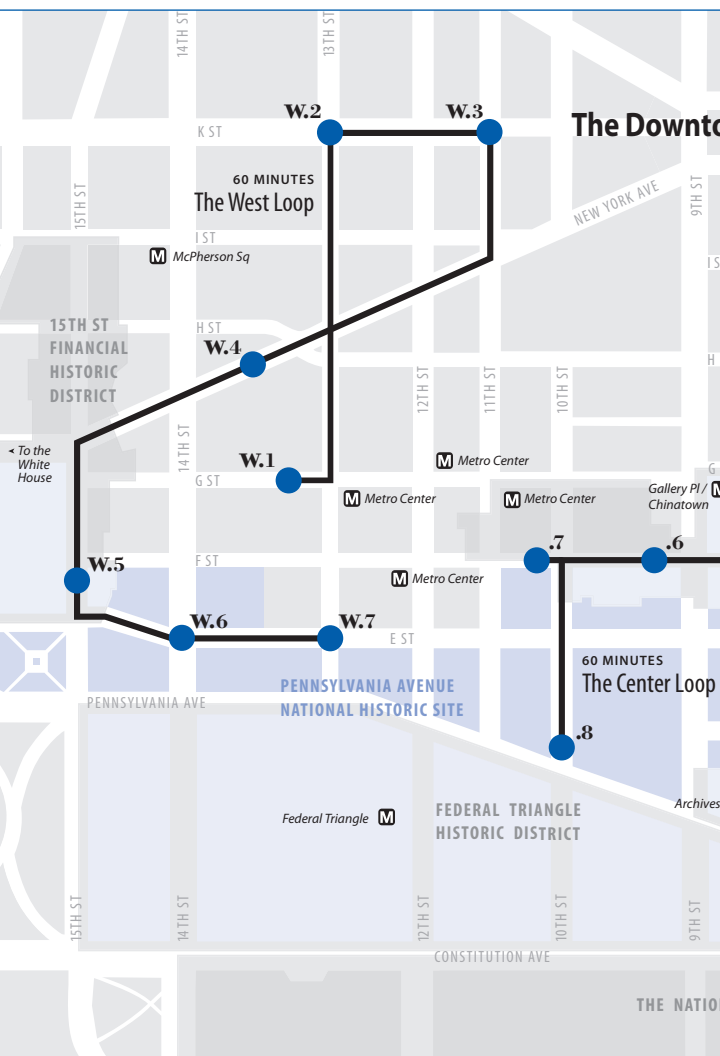
11TH AND K STS NW

STORIES OF SLAVERY AND FREEDOM, of struggle and achievement, are woven through the history of this church. Asbury United Methodist was founded in 1836 by 75 men and women — free and slave — from Foundry Methodist Church. By the Civil War, Asbury’s membership of 600 made it the largest of 11 African American congregations then in Washington. In recent years Asbury counted among its members descendants of enslaved men and women who attempted a dramatic escape to freedom in 1848 aboard the sailing ship *Pearl*.

The number of black churches in Washington at the time of the war reflected the historically strong presence of African Americans in the population: 29 percent when the city was founded in 1800. By 1830 free blacks outnumbered enslaved. Despite “Black Codes” that severely restricted their movements and activities, free African Americans practiced a variety of trades, ran their own businesses, and established schools. By 1860 they owned property in every quadrant of the city.

Asbury United Methodist is the oldest black congregation in the District of Columbia on its original site. The Gothic Revival style church, dating from 1915, replaced Asbury’s second home, which in 1866 had replaced the original building. Like Foundry Methodist at 16th and P Streets, Asbury is built of Port Deposit (Maryland) granite.

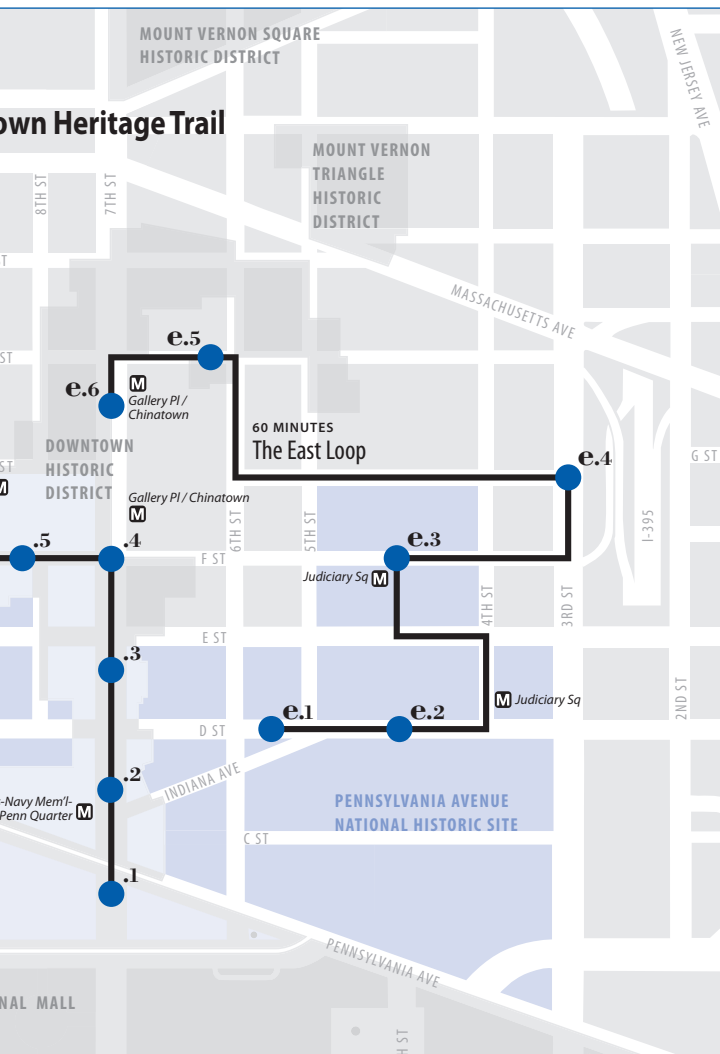
Asbury’s members have always played leading roles in the life of the city. The church’s spiritual, educational, and humanitarian activities have symbolized the efforts of black congregations throughout Washington, DC to attain equality for the city’s many African American communities.





Civil War to Civil Rights, Downtown Heritage Trail, is composed of 21 illustrated historical markers, each of which is capped with an **H**.

The trail is divided into three loops, each of which takes about 60 minutes to walk. You can begin your journey at any point along the route.

- **Center Loop** signs are numbered “.1, .2,” etc.
- **East Loop** signs are numbered “e.1, e.2,” etc.
- **West Loop** signs are numbered “w.1, w.2,” etc.



Sign .1 (Center Loop) is found on Seventh Street just south of its intersection with Pennsylvania Avenue and one-half block from the Archives/ Navy Memorial  station on Metro's Green and Yellow lines.

You can also begin the trail at one of three other downtown  Metro stations: Metro Center (near Signs w.1, w.7, .5 and .6), Judiciary Square (near Signs e.2 and e.3), and Gallery Place/Chinatown (near Signs .4 and e.6).

W.4



President Lincoln and family in a
portrait by William Sartain.

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

New York Avenue Presbyterian Church

1313 NEW YORK AVE NW

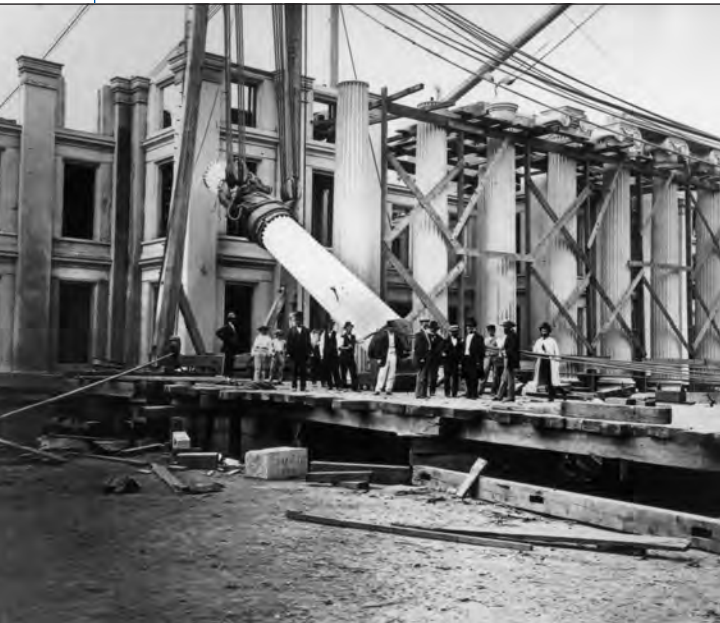
“The churches are needed as never before for divine services,” President Lincoln declared from his pew in New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. While other churches were occupied by the federal government as offices and hospitals during the Civil War, Lincoln insisted this church remain open for worship. The pastor, Dr. Phineas D. Gurley, was the president’s spiritual guide through the war and during the fatal illness of Lincoln’s young son Willie, who bequeathed his small savings of \$5 to the church.

President Lincoln regularly traveled the short distance from the White House to attend New York Avenue Presbyterian. Its congregation was founded in 1793 by Presbyterian carpenters building the White House. Lincoln’s hitching post remains outside; his pew stands in this somewhat enlarged, 1950s replica of the original church. The president found solace in the church’s midweek Bible classes.

An 1862 document in Lincoln’s handwriting, proposing that the federal government end slavery by paying owners for their freedom, is displayed in the church’s Lincoln parlor. The plan was carried out only in Washington, DC.

The white building at 1307 New York Avenue once was the home of the *Washington Times-Herald*. Eleanor Medill “Cissy” Patterson, who took over as publisher in 1939, created the nation’s first round-the-clock newspaper and became one of the most powerful women in the nation. Socialite, businesswomen, and political activist, she was a dominant force in the city’s political and social life until her death in 1948. Although the name never caught on, Patterson called this intersection Herald Square.

W.5



The Treasury's north front
under construction, 1867.

Department of the Treasury

The United States Treasury

15TH ST BETWEEN E AND F STS NW

THE GRAND, PILLARED United States Treasury, its first section designed by Robert Mills in 1836, was the financial command center for the Union. It was here between 1861 and 1865 that Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase raised the unprecedented sum of \$2.7 billion to finance the government and the war.

Chase issued bonds and instituted internal revenue taxes, including the first personal income tax in the United States. He printed paper money called “greenbacks,” and also developed the nation’s first system of national banks to provide financial stability—a network that remained in place until our present Federal Reserve System was devised early in the 20th century.

Chase’s accomplishments were unparalleled. Shortly after his resignation from the Treasury in 1864, President Lincoln appointed him Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Activity swirled around this building throughout the Civil War. The 5th Massachusetts regiment camped here, cooking in the courtyard. The basement became a bunker for the president and his cabinet in case of Confederate attack. It was here, also, that the short-handed federal government hired large numbers of women for the first time. “Lady clerks” trimmed by hand the huge sheets of paper greenbacks invented by Secretary Chase.

In 1863 the Treasury provided the setting for an experiment devised by President Lincoln. Here all slave owners in the District of Columbia received payments after freeing their slaves — a model never carried out anywhere else in the country.

W.6



Hacks wait for customers outside
Willards' Hotel during the Civil War.

Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

The Willard InterContinental Hotel

14TH AND E STS NW

AT 6:30 ONE MORNING in February 1861, President-elect Abraham Lincoln and his security team (headed by Alan Pinkerton) slipped into Willards' Hotel, an earlier version of the hotel on this site. Assassination threats dictated this quiet arrival. The Lincoln family stayed for 10 days leading up to his inauguration on March 4. At the time Willards' was hosting a peace conference, a last-ditch effort by delegates from 21 states to avert civil war.

A hotel has occupied this site since 1816. Young Henry Willard became manager in 1847 and bought it with his brother in 1850. When the current Beaux-Arts structure was built in 1901, it was one of Washington's first skyscrapers. The architect, Henry Hardenbergh, also designed the Plaza Hotel and original Waldorf-Astoria in New York City.

The notable moments at Willards' are legion. Julia Ward Howe, a hotel guest during the Civil War, was awakened one night to the sound of Union troops marching by, singing as they went. Then and there she penned the words of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, the song that became the Union anthem.

After the war President Ulysses S. Grant frequently relaxed with brandy and a cigar in Willards' lobby. As word spread about his nightly ritual, many men congregated there waiting to approach him about their causes. Grant called them "lobbyists," and the label entered the national lexicon.

In August 1963, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., finished work on his famous "I Have a Dream" speech in his Willard suite.

W.7



The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivering his "I Have a Dream" speech, 1963.

Washingtoniana Division, D.C. Public Library

Freedom Plaza

13TH AND E STS NW

FREEDOM PLAZA HONORS the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The civil rights leader completed his historic “I Have a Dream” speech in the Willard Hotel diagonally across from the plaza, before delivering it to a crowd of 200,000 at the Lincoln Memorial.

Freedom Plaza also recalls Washington’s first city planner, Peter C. L’Enfant, with a partial image of his 1791 plan for the city inscribed on its surface. L’Enfant envisioned Pennsylvania Avenue as a great ceremonial street linking the Capitol and the White House. The plaza’s open space reinforces this symbolic connection, despite the fact that the Treasury blocks the view, the result of a questionable 1836 decision by President Andrew Jackson.

Directly across Freedom Plaza is the John A. Wilson Building, home of the government of the District of Columbia. The building was constructed in 1904, when the city was governed by three presidentially appointed commissioners. In 1974 the city regained “home rule” and the right, lost a century earlier, to elect a mayor and city council. The building is named for Council Chair John A. Wilson (1943-1993), a champion of equal rights for DC citizens.

The National Theatre on E Street is a Washington institution. The historic “Theatre of Presidents” has entertained every First Family since its doors first opened in 1835. President Lincoln and his family attended the National many times, and on the evening of the president’s assassination at Ford’s Theatre, his son Tad was in the audience here.

e.1



Senator Daniel Webster
addresses the U.S. Senate.

Library of Congress

Senator Daniel Webster

D ST BETWEEN FIFTH AND SIXTH STS NW

SENATOR DANIEL WEBSTER, eloquent advocate for the preservation of the Union and a political giant in pre-Civil War America, lived and worked in a house that once stood near the corner of Fifth and D Streets.

The Massachusetts senator put his unmatched oratorical skills to work in support of the Compromise of 1850—a series of congressional acts that delayed the fracture of the Union for about 10 years. The compromise ended the slave trade in the District of Columbia, but also strengthened the fugitive slave law, compelling citizens to help capture and return runaway slaves.

Webster was near the end of his life in 1850 when he made his last great speech on the Senate floor in defense of the Union. As usual, spectators crowded the galleries to hear the spirited congressional debates that offered both entertainment and education.

In Webster's day, this was a fashionable neighborhood of fine homes and magnificent churches, close to the Capitol and City Hall. Among the many dignitaries who lived here were Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, Vice President John C. Calhoun, and Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase. President Lincoln attended the wedding of Kate Chase to Senator William Sprague of Rhode Island in her family home at Sixth and E Streets, now demolished.

Occupying part of the Webster residence site is the DC Recorder of Deeds building, at 515 D Street since 1941. Frederick Douglass, the distinguished African American leader, served as recorder of deeds in the 1880s.

e.2



The Flannery statue of Lincoln,
atop its column.

Library of Congress

Old City Hall

D ST BETWEEN FOURTH AND FIFTH STS NW

THIS IMPOSING GREEK REVIVAL building was Washington's first City Hall, designed by George Hadfield and built between 1820 and 1850. It housed the city's court and an elected mayor and city council until 1871. Its prestigious, elevated site overlooked Pennsylvania Avenue and bordered Judiciary Square, a hub of community life.

This building also stood witness to the end of slavery in the District of Columbia. President Lincoln had authorized up to \$1 million to compensate those DC slaveowners who were loyal to the Union for the loss of their human property. A three-man commission, working here, had the impossible task of putting a monetary value on human life. It was an experiment by Lincoln, designed to solve the issue of slavery through "compensated emancipation." In the end, the plan was carried out only in Washington. Slaveowners received their payments at the U.S. Treasury.

The Lincoln statue at the building's entrance was the first public monument in the United States to the assassinated 16th president. It was paid for almost entirely by District residents who were appalled that he had been killed in their city. Designed by sculptor Lott Flannery, who had known Lincoln, the statue was dedicated in 1868. Originally it stood atop a 35-foot-tall column.

e.3



Infantrymen march in a portion of the terra cotta frieze that encircles the building.

National Building Museum

The National Building Museum

F ST BETWEEN FOURTH AND FIFTH STS NW

THE NATION'S ONLY MUSEUM dedicated to American achievements in architecture, urban planning, construction, engineering, and design is appropriately housed in one of the most extraordinary structures in the nation's capital.

Constructed between 1882 and 1887, this faux Italian Renaissance palace was built to house the Pension Bureau, which administered thousands of pensions owed to Civil War veterans, widows, and orphans. It was designed by an engineer, Major General Montgomery C. Meigs, who had served the Union cause as quartermaster general. Meigs himself lost his son, John Rogers Meigs, in the Civil War. Some consider this building the Vietnam Veterans Memorial of its day.

Although the building was modeled on Rome's Palazzo Farnese, its provisions for light, air circulation, and fireproofing made it the federal government's first modern office building. Built in red brick rather than the white sandstone and marble of other federal buildings, it was ridiculed by many at the time. "It's too bad the damn thing is fireproof," quipped General William Tecumseh Sherman.

A 1,200-foot-long terra cotta frieze encircles the entire building, depicting all the Union forces in the Civil War – infantry, cavalry, and artillery troops, and naval, quartermaster, and medical personnel. Inside, massive 75-foot-tall columns, made of brick and finished to look like marble, punctuate a 300-foot-long Great Hall.

Threatened with demolition in the 1960s, the building was saved by citizen action. It became home to the National Building Museum by act of Congress in 1980.

e.4



The first Adas Israel synagogue
moves to its new home at Third
and G Streets, 1969.

The Washington Post Company

Lillian and Albert Small Jewish Museum

THIRD AND G STS NW

THIS IS THE OLDEST SURVIVING SYNAGOGUE building in Washington. Constructed in 1876 by Adas Israel Congregation at Sixth and G Streets, it served the German-Jewish immigrant shopkeepers in the neighborhood. Albert Small, a member of the congregation, grew up nearby and recalled that “the neighborhood was our whole life [and] the synagogue was the focal point.”

When the congregation outgrew this sanctuary in 1906, a Greek Orthodox congregation and later a carry-out restaurant took its place. Threatened with demolition in 1969, the structure was moved to its present location and restored as a museum, bearing the name of its benefactors, Lillian and Albert Small.

This former synagogue symbolizes the rich immigrant history of the eastern section of Washington’s downtown. Beginning with the Irish and German craftsmen who arrived in the early 19th century to work on government buildings, the area has offered newcomers from around the world a place to establish an economic foothold.

Their legacy surrounds you. Holy Rosary Catholic Church, founded about 1913 near its present site at Third and F Streets, served the surrounding Italian community and still celebrates Mass in Italian. St. Mary, Mother of God Catholic Church at Fifth and H Streets, established in 1846 by Germans, holds Mass in Latin and Cantonese. St. Patrick Catholic Church, on 10th Street between F and G, was founded in 1794 and originally served Irish immigrants. And two former synagogues went on to serve Baptist congregations.

e.5



The Lincoln assassination
conspirators, as portrayed in
the popular press of the time.

Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Mary Surratt's Boarding House

604 H ST NW

THE MODEST BRICK BUILDING at 604 H Street is intimately connected to the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theatre, just five blocks from here. During the Civil War it was a boarding house run by a Maryland-born widow, Mary Surratt. Like many in this Southern city, she was quietly sympathetic to the Confederacy. One of her sons served in the Confederate Army; another, John, had been a Confederate spy.

John Surratt had become friendly with the actor John Wilkes Booth. The dashing Booth was the matinee idol of his day, but he hated President Lincoln and had been plotting for months to kidnap him. On April 14, 1865, the plan changed to murder. Several of the co-conspirators he recruited, including John Surratt, lived in this house. Although no formal meeting ever took place here, President Andrew Johnson reflected a popular belief in calling the house "the nest in which the egg was hatched."

Three days after the April 14 assassination, police visited Mrs. Surratt. When Louis Powell, already identified as part of the plot, showed up just as the authorities were leaving, they decided Mrs. Surratt was implicated. She was arrested, tried, and hanged with three others at Fort McNair in Southwest Washington on July 7, 1865. Booth was tracked to a Virginia tobacco shed, where he was shot and mortally wounded. John Surratt escaped to Canada and went free. Whether Mary Surratt was actually guilty of conspiracy continues to be a subject of debate.

e.6



On Leong Merchants Association,
formerly at 618 H Street.

Washingtoniana Division, D.C. Public Library

Chinatown

SEVENTH ST BETWEEN H AND G STS NW

MORE THAN 280 DRAGONS, crowned by 700 glazed tiles, look down from the Chinatown Friendship Archway before you. Symbols of the spirits that bring rain and prosperity in China, these carved and painted dragons are fitted together like a giant jigsaw puzzle in the ancient Chinese building tradition of *gongxi*, or balancing. Seven roofs weighing nine tons each are cantilevered, with no nails, almost 50 feet above the street.

This is the largest single-span Chinese archway in the world, designed by Chinese-born Washington architect Alfred Liu and erected in 1986. A joint project of the governments of Washington, DC and its Chinese sister city Beijing, it marks the entrance to Washington's Chinatown in a statement of international friendship. Chinese and American craftsmen worked side by side to construct it.

Washington's Chinese community dates back to the 1880s, when immigrants settled along Pennsylvania Avenue between Third and Sixth Streets. Forced out by construction of the Federal Triangle in the 1930s, the community relocated here with the help of the On Leong Chinese Merchants Association into homes once occupied by German and Jewish immigrants. Some of the city's oldest pre-Civil War buildings, with flat fronts and sloped roofs, can still be seen behind updated façades.

While many Chinese Americans have left this area for newer homes in the city and suburbs, the community is dedicated to preserving a slice of Chinese culture downtown. The Chinese New Year is celebrated here annually with a dragon parade and firecrackers.

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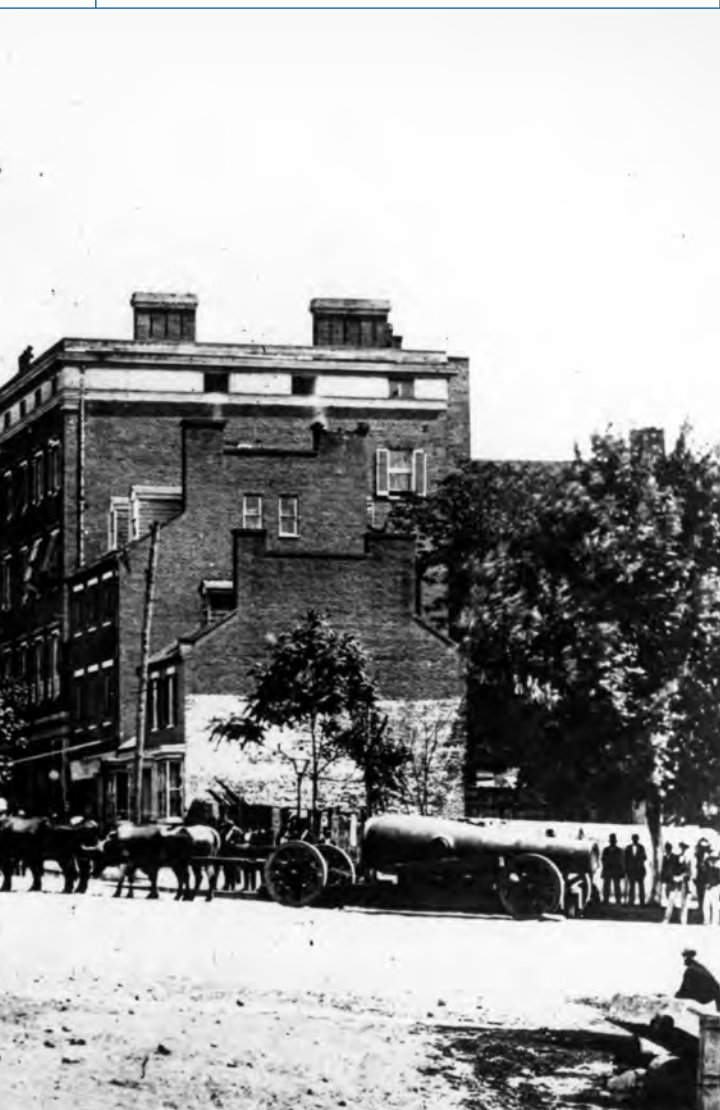
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A team of oxen lugs an enormous
Rodman gun across the intersection
of 15th St. and Pennsylvania Ave.

Library of Congress

Sources

THE SITES OF CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS just scratch the surface of the multi-layered history of downtown Washington, DC. For more information, please consult resources in the Washingtoniana Division, DC Public Library, and the Kiplinger Library of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. In addition, see:

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Cultural Tourism DC is grateful to Gelberg Signs for providing street banners marking *Civil War to Civil Rights: Downtown Heritage Trail* during the Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration.

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- An old boarding house frequented by the Lincoln conspirators.
- The alley through which John Wilkes Booth fled after shooting the President.
- The home and office of famed Civil War nurse Clara Barton.
- A church that was used as a hospital during the Civil War.
- The city's oldest synagogue, now a museum of Jewish history.
- A faux Renaissance palace turned building museum.
- The hotel where the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., put the finishing touches on his "I Have a Dream" speech.



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